

successful. Till some twenty-five years ago, no one had ever ascended to our present elevation, and it had always been previously spoken of as unattainable. Macculloch, writing in 1825, declares neither man nor beast ever stood on these heights, except perhaps the goats, when, according to the local legend, "they disappear once in the twenty-four hours to get their beards combed." Macculloch himself made seven unsuccessful expeditions in five successive seasons; and few, even now, ever attempt it. So we felt very pleased, although we could not claim the honour of a Mont Blanc ascent. It had taken us about three hours and forty minutes from the inn. Oh! what a glorious day it was! In general, even when it is pretty quiet elsewhere, the winds are wild and furious here: now, only as gentle breaths blow over us as were pleasant and safe after our exertions. Even in the midst of fine weather, clouds will descend from the sky above; mists will rise up from the sea on all sides, or will come out, as it were, from their hiding-places in those narrow, dark, cold corries, and congregate about these spires from all points of the compass, and that, on so short a notice as to constitute one of the difficulties and dangers of the locality: to-day, however, not a cloud was near, nor a mist to be seen, except at early morning and late evening.

[To be continued.]

MEN I HAVE KNOWN.

SAMUEL ROGERS.

REMINISCENCES of the late poet and banker have recently been published; but they tell us little about him, except that he kept a sort of note memorandum of what happened to be said by certain distinguished men when in his company. The record is very scanty, and much of it so curt and fragmentary as to have no applicable meaning, and the bard of "Memory" himself has no figure on the cartoon. What I remember of him possesses little of "the pleasures of memory;" and may perhaps be as little interesting; but he filled for many years a singular space in the public eye, and a few touches may include him in my miniature gallery of "Men I have Known."

Rogers was reputed a wit, and did say some good things; but many of the best were said by others, and fathered upon him (as the use is), especially when there was any bitterness in the joke, which was his characteristic. His going to Holland House by the Hammersmith stage-coach (in days when cabs and omnibuses were unknown), and asking the loitering driver what he called it, is not one of his worst: being answered, "The Regulator," he observed that it was a very proper name, as all the rest *go by it*. Luttrell and Rogers were intimate friends and rival wits, and disliked each other accordingly. I have used the word friend, but it did not appear that the nonogenarian (whatever he might have enjoyed half a century before) had any friends. I never saw about him any but acquaintances or toadies. Had he outlived them? No; he was not of a nature to have friends. He was born with the silver spoon in his mouth, and

had never needed a friend in his long, easy journey through life. The posthumous laudation lavished upon him by his political cronies was purely of the *de mortuis nil nisi bonum* kind. He never received that coin when alive; for, if the truth be told, his liberality and generosity were small specks which could not bear blazon, and he was radically ill-tempered. Now, nobody can love a cantankerous person, even though placed in such fortunate circumstances as not to be always offensive. His whole career was too sunny. There were neither clouds nor showers to nourish the sensitive plants which adorn humanity—nothing but showy sunflowers. No lovely dew-dipped blossoms; no sweet buddings of refreshing scent; no soft green tufts sending up grateful incense, as when varying seasons produce their beneficial influence, and the breezes and the rains (ay, the storms) from heaven serve but to root and expand the spirit's growth.

Few men who have had nothing but an even tenor of their way, are duly touched with feeling for the distresses of their fellow creatures, which they have never experienced. In the absence of any higher motive to benevolence, there was not even a trace of *bon hommie* about Rogers. Sarcasm and satire were his social weapons. Kindness and geniality do not crop out in any account of him that I have seen; and this negative describes the individual of whom I did not care to know much. The constant little bickering competitions between him and Luttrell were very entertaining to some minds. They met once, and did not squabble. It was in the Crystal Palace, into which they were both wheeled in chairs, when no longer able to walk!*

Taste, or in another word, refinement, like avarice or gluttony, tends essentially to selfishness; and in Rogers I marked a signal type of the class, with a very small modicum of the redeeming feeling which occasionally qualifies it. I have known men of the most refined taste who were also distinguished by the sweetest of human sympathies. In these, however, taste was only a lesser component part of the being, not a ruling and engrossing passion—if passion it can be called, which is so abstractly passionless.

In his writings, as in his daily life, Mr. Rogers was fastidious. In correcting the press, only Campbell could equal him for anxiety to polish. On one occasion I chanced to see a sheet of one of his poems ("Italy," I think) as it was passing through the printer's hands, and pointed out some very slight errors. The reader told him of this hyper-criticism (for it was nothing more), and he cancelled the whole of the impression, and introduced the required alterations at the expense of above £100. In other respects he would not be guilty of anything like extravagance. On the contrary, there was a curious spice of the miser-economy in his nature. He was fond of going to evening parties, at-homes, conversaciones, or however called by fashion; and instead of being attended by his

* This meeting reminds me of the story of Lord North and Colonel Barré meeting at Tunbridge Wells Spa, when both were blind with age. "Ah, Colonel," said the witty ex-Premier, "you used to abuse me much in the House, and I retorted; but now we should be very glad to see each other."

carriage, as a wealthy man, he would walk home with his umbrella. It was upon an occasion of this kind that he met with the accident which crippled him during his later years, and no doubt hastened his death. Yet, when his bank was robbed, he did not show the least regret for his loss, only an intense desire to discover the plunderers.

His almost open breakfast parties, of three or four artists or literary men who had the *entrée*, were pleasant enough, from the news and gossip gathered into them; and his dinners, wisely limited in the number of the guests, abounding in luxuries, usually graced by distinguished individuals, and sometimes by most interesting groups, must be classed among those high social enjoyments which few have the means to command, and fewer still know how to accomplish and appreciate.

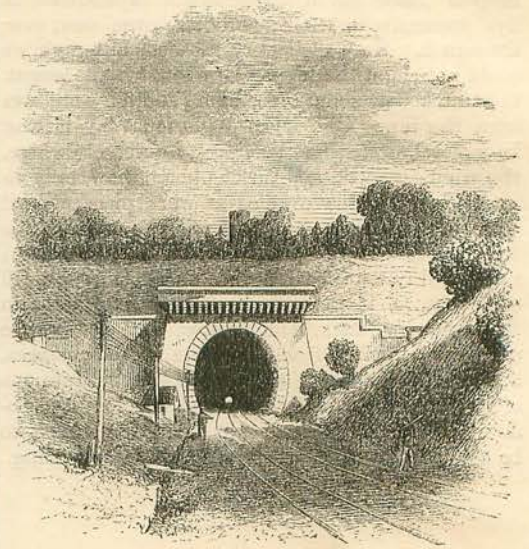
His personal appearance was extraordinary, or rather, his countenance was unique. His skull and facial expression bore so striking a likeness to the skeleton pictures which we sometimes see of Death, that the facetious Sydney Smith (at one of the dressed evening parties I have spoken of) entitled him the "Death-dandy!" and it was told (probably with truth) that the same satirical wag inscribed upon the capital portrait in his breakfast room, "Painted in his life-time."

Withal, Rogers possessed refined and elegant tastes; and his cultivation of poetry exalted his mind above its inherent worldliness, as far as was possible in one devoid of the nobler influences which transform and elevate humanity.

RAILWAY TUNNELS.

In the early history of railway enterprise, it was imagined by alarmists that to be carried through cavernous apertures deep below the surface, excluded from the light of heaven, and breathing an atmosphere unventilated, while polluted with subterranean effluvia, with combinations of smoke and steam, would dangerously shock the nerves of passengers and be prejudicial to health. A committee of physicians, surgeons, and chemists was therefore appointed to examine the tunnel at Primrose Hill, then in progress, who pronounced the apprehension perfectly groundless—a decision which experience has amply confirmed. The railway tunnels have been constructed at a very varying expense: from £20 to £160 per linear yard, owing to the different character of the ground—stiff clay, loose sand, and rocky strata, easily worked or of a very hard texture. Tunnelling is frequently the cheapest through rock, as blasting is practicable, and the expense of a brick lining may sometimes be saved. The Penmaenback tunnel, on the Chester and Holyhead railway, is driven through basaltic rock, which entirely supports itself. But the Penmaenmawr tunnel, on the same line, though cut through greenstone, required to be lined throughout with masonry; and the Bangor tunnel, which was at first considered sufficiently solid to support itself, from the hardness of the stone through which it is driven, has been lined with brick, owing to symptoms of not being able to withstand the action of the weather. Shakspeare's

Cliff, near Dover, presented peculiar difficulties to operations of this kind, arising from the crumbly texture of the chalk, and the mass being traversed by fissures; but a very beautiful tunnel was constructed, and one of the firmest ever made—a double one, formed of two pointed parabolic arches, soundly lined, so that the superincumbent weight has a central support.



KILSBY TUNNEL.

In making long tunnels, unexpected ground is sometimes reached, notwithstanding careful experimental borings beforehand to ascertain the strata; and the contractor finds that all his calculations have been based upon wrong premises. This was remarkably exemplified in the instance of the Kilsby tunnel, the longest on the line between London and Birmingham. The strata beneath were found by numerous borings to be the shale of the lower oolite, and the execution of the work was contracted for at £90,000. During its progress, it was discovered, to the astonishment of the engineer, and the dismay of the contractor, that a quicksand beneath a bed of clay occupied some twelve hundred feet of the line of the tunnel. No sooner was it tapped, than the water poured out in apparently exhaustless quantities, as if from a subterranean lake. The obstruction seemed perfectly insurmountable. Appalled by it, the contractor took to his bed; and, though relieved by the company from his engagement, he languished and died. The total abandonment of the work was contemplated, when the engineer determined to attack the difficulty with formidable means. But it required eight months to carry off the water, though thirteen steam-engines, two hundred horses, and twelve hundred and fifty men were employed in the task; and the drainage was carried on night and day at the rate of eighteen hundred gallons a minute. Instead of being executed for £90,000, the cost of the tunnel was about £300,000. Two years and a half were occupied in completing it. Thirty-six millions of bricks were consumed in the lining, which, according to calculation, would nearly make a footpath a