



CHRISTMAS CAROL, 1845.

TUNE.—Packington's Pound.

"THE intrigues of this month shall we e'er comprehend?
Will the Dons, when the Parliament meets, give a clue?
Will one Tory among them speak out like a friend,
On the why and because of this famous to do?
Is it really the case
That the Whigs are in place,
Because Peel, when his colleagues assembled, appall'd them
By a cool proposition,
To toss to perdition,
Both the faith and the force that in office install'd them?"

Thus groan'd out a grumbler, all sulky and sour,
But for Christopher's temper such trash was too much;
And it soon made the malecontent quiver and cower,
When he saw preparations for handling the Crutch.
"Lay your croaking aside,"
The old gentleman cried,
"Or I'll make you eat up each ungenerous word;
Not our deadliest foe,
Such injustice should know,
And far less shall a friend be convicted unheard."

"Come read here their Mottoes extracted from Burke
For the Commons,—here for the Peerage from Lodge;
Say, can these be consistent with pitiful work,
On a par with some Whiggish O'Connellite dodge?
Thought at present a cloud
May the mystery shroud,
Till secrecy's seal from their lips be removed;
When the truth shall appear,
It will all become clear,
And the words here inscribed shall again be approved."

"Ne'er believe that Peel's noble Industria plann'd
Aught design'd of its honors his fame to despoil,
Aught but Justice to Industry, Justice to Land,
To the loom and the ploughshare, the sea and the soil.
His hand will still hold,
Straight, steady, and bold,
The scales where our wealth and our welfare are weigh'd:
Still though tempests may blow,
And cross currents may flow,
He will steer our good ship till at anchor she's laid."

"But surely that terrible leader of Walter's
Was not utterly void of foundation in fact.
Was the Cabinet really not full of defaulters,
And resolved for a time on that ruinous act?"
"Cease, blockhead, to babble
Your ganderlike gabble:
Could Repeal e'er be Reason Contents me with Graham,
Could the Ne Nimium
Of good Gordon succumb,
Or the Stanley's Sans Changer be changed into shame?"

"With Avito Honore would Wortley turn tail.
To his Præsto et Persto is Binning untrue?
Could the Spero Timere of Somerset quail,
Or a Ripon with treachery blot Foy Est Tout?
Could the princely Buccleuch
Stoop the star spangled blue
Of his Bellenden banner when Leaguers came on?
Proved the Lion a jest
On great Wellington's crest?
Did his Virtus exude at the shriek of Lord John?"

"Arthur falter'd?—I'll swallow such impudent flames
When the ears of the sow yield us purses of silk;
When there's no Devil's Dust in the Cotton Lord's shams,
And the truck-master's pail holds unmystified milk.
Not a Tory, I swear,
Will be forced to declare
In the face of the Nation's assembled Senatus,
That from duty he shrunk,
Or once felt in a funk
About Cobden, and Bright, and some rotten potatoes!"

"We shall see them again, even now or ere long.
Upon Wisdom and Equity taking their stand,
Calm, able, and upright, harmonious, and strong,
In peace and prosperity ruling the land.
Firm, faithful, and true,
What they say they will do—
No Right unprotected, no Wrong unredress'd;
While Writers of Letters
And all their abettors
Stand in swaggering impotence caught and confess'd."

The Cricket on the Hearth, a Fairy Tale of Home. By CHARLES DICKENS. Bradbury and Evans.

[FROM THE ATHENÆUM.]

MANY surmises have been indulged in by the admirers of Mr. Dickens touching the character of his annual tale for the present season; whether he would again read a social or political lesson, and risk a new controversy on matters of opinion or practice, or retire to the ground of fancy and feeling, and content himself with an imaginative story that should be both amusing and instructive on a purely literary basis. The fact, that the new book was announced as a "Fairy Tale" gives no assistance towards deciding the question, since it was found that a "Goblin Story" could be used as a medium for the gravest morality. One glance at the book, however, soon convinced us that it was an attempt to blend the fantastic and actual in an argument, which, while it was indebted to humble life for its materials, involved in its mode of treatment more grace and skill than pertain to many a more ambitious theme. The story is, indeed, of the simplest; and, we think, is altogether dependent on the author's manner for its interest. We recognise the master's hand, but cannot conceal from ourselves that such experiments are perilous. The success with which it has been made in this instance must, however, be its justification. Love, friendship, devotion, mental struggle under doubtful circumstances, the triumph of good feelings, and the reward of generous forbearance, mingle in the tale; which, in many parts, rises to a tone of sentiment that, in its elevation, must command the sympathy of the wisest and the best.

It opens with a picture of the domestic ideal, which, as it indicates, besides being beautiful in itself, the key-note of the composition, must be quoted:—

The Kettle began it! Don't tell me what Mrs. Peerybingle said. I know better. Mrs. Peerybingle may leave it on record to the end of time that she could not say which of them began it; but I say the Kettle did. I ought to know, I hope? The kettle began it full five minutes by the little wax-faced Dutch clock in the corner before the Cricket uttered a chirp. * * It appeared as if there were a sort of match, or trial of skill, you must understand, between the Kettle and the Cricket. And this is what led to it, and how it came about. Mrs. Peerybingle going out into the raw twilight, and clicking over the wet stones in a pair of pattens that worked innumerable rough impressions of the first proposition in Euclid all about the yard—Mrs. Peerybingle filled the Kettle at the water butt. Presently returning, less the pattens: and a good deal less, for they were tall and Mrs. Peerybingle was but short: she set the Kettle on the fire. In doing which she lost her temper, or mislaid it for an instant; for the water being uncomfortably cold, and in that slippy, slushy, sleety sort of state wherein it seems to penetrate through every kind of substance, patten rings included—had laid hold of Mrs. Peerybingle's toes, and even splashed her legs. And when we rather plume ourselves (with reason too) upon our legs, and keep ourselves particularly neat in point of stockings, we find this for the moment, hard to bear. Besides, the Kettle was aggravating and obstinate. It wouldn't allow itself to be adjusted on the top bar; it wouldn't hear of accommodating itself kindly to the knobs of coal; it would lean forward with a drunken air, and dribble, a very Idiot of a Kettle, on the hearth. It was quarrelsome; and hissed and spluttered morosely at the fire. To sum up all, the lid, resisting Mrs. Peerybingle's fingers, first of all turned topsy-turvy, and then, with an ingenious pertinacity deserving of a better cause, dived sideways in—down to the very bottom of the Kettle. And the hull of the Royal George has never made half the monstrous resistance to coming out of the water, which the lid of that Kettle employed against Mrs. Peerybingle, before she got it up again. It looked sullen and pig-headed enough, even then; carrying its handle with an air of defiance, and cocking its spout pertly and mockingly at Mrs. Peerybingle, as if it said, "I won't boil. Nothing shall induce me!" But Mrs. Peerybingle, with restored good humour, dusted her chubby little hands against each other, and sat down before the Kettle: laughing. Meantime, the jolly blaze arose and fell, flashing and gleaming on the little Haymaker at the top of the Dutch clock, until one might have thought he stood stock still before the Moorish Palace, and nothing was in motion but the flame. He was on the move, however, and had his spasms, two to the second, all right and regular. But his sufferings when the clock was going to strike, were frightful to behold; and when a Cuckoo looked out of a trap-door in the Palace, and gave note six times, it shook him, each time, like a spectral voice—or like a something wiry, plucking at his legs. * * Now it was, you observe, that the Kettle began to spend the evening. Now it was that the Kettle, growing mellow and musical, began to have irrepressible gurglings in its throat, and to indulge in short vocal snorts, which it checked in the bud, as if it hadn't quite made up its mind yet, to be good company. Now it was, that after two or three such vain attempts to stifle its convivial sentiments, it threw off all moroseness, all reserve, and burst into a stream of song so cosy and hilarious, as never maudlin nightingale yet formed the least idea of. So plain, too! Bless you, you might have understood it like a book—better than some books you and I could name, perhaps. With its warm breath gushing forth in a light cloud which merrily and gracefully ascended a few feet, then hung about the chimney corner as its own domestic Heaven, it trolled its song with that strong energy of cheerfulness, that its iron body hummed and stirred upon the fire; and the lid itself, the recently rebellious lid—such is the influence of a bright example—performed a sort of jig, and clattered like a deaf and dumb young cymbal that had never known the use of its twin brother. That this song of the Kettle's was a song of invitation and welcome to somebody out of doors; to somebody at that moment coming on, towards the snug small home and the crisp fire; there is no doubt whatever. Mrs. Peerybingle knew it, perfectly, as she sat musing before the hearth. It's a dark night sang the Kettle, and the rotten leaves are lying by the way: and above, all is mist and darkness, and below, all is mire and clay; and there's only one relief in all the sad and murky air; and I don't know that it is one, for its nothing but a glare of deep and angry crimson, which the sun and wind together set a brand upon the clouds for being guilty of such weather: and the widest open country is a long dull streak of black; and there's hoar frost upon the finger-post, and thaw upon the track; and the ice it isn't water, and the water isn't free; and you couldn't say that anything is what it ought to be; but he's coming, coming, coming!—And here, if you like, the Cricket did chime in! with a Chirrup, Chirrup, Chirrup, of such magnitude, by way of chorus; with a voice, so astoundingly disproportionate to its size, as compared with the Kettle; (size! you couldn't see it!) that if it had then and there burst itself like an over-charged gun: if it had fallen a victim on the spot, and chirruped its little body into fifty pieces: it would have seemed a natural and inevitable consequence, for which it had expressly labored. The Kettle had had the last of its solo performance. It persevered with undiminished ardour; but the Cricket took first fiddle and kept it. Good Heaven, how it chirped! Its shrill, sharp, piercing voice resounded through the house, and seemed to twinkle in the outer darkness like a Star. There was an indescribable little trill and tremble in it, at its loudest which suggested its being carried off its legs, and made to leap again, by its own intense enthusiasm. Yet they went very well together, the Cricket and the Kettle. The burden of the song was still the same; and louder, louder, louder still, they sang it in their emulation.

The harmonious conflict between the Kettle and the Hearth-Cricket still proceeds—we are obliged to abridge—yet one bit more:

There was all the excitement of a race about it. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket a mile a-head. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle making play in the distance, like a great top. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket round the corner. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle sticking to him in his own way: no idea of giving in. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket fresher than ever. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle slow and steady. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket going in to finish him. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle not to be finished. Until at last, they got so jumbled together, in the hurry-skurry, helter-skelter, of the match, that whether the Kettle chirped and the Cricket hummed, or the Cricket chirped and the Kettle hummed, or they both chirped and both hummed, it would have taken a clearer head than your's or mine to have decided with anything like certainty. But of this, there is no doubt: that the Kettle and the Cricket, at one and the same moment, and by some power of amalgamation best known to themselves, sent, each, his fireside song of comfort streaming into a ray of the candle that shone out through the window; and a long way down the lane. And this light, bursting on a certain person who, on the instant, approached towards it through the gloom, expressed the

whole thing to him, literally in a twinkling, and cried, "Welcome home, old fellow! Welcome home, my Boy!"

The husband of Mrs. Peerybingle is a carrier—a sturdy figure of a man, much taller and much older than herself,—"a lumbering, slow, honest man,"—she a lively, fairy sort of a little woman, gay as he was grave. Mr. Dickens recognises in them not only his hero and heroine, but "the true Poetry of Heart," for the sake of which we can "hear to have them talking prose and leading lives of prose." Let us see how he carries out this ideal.

The usual matrimonial endearments at these kinds of reunions having passed, the disposition of the parties received some fuller development, and an amiable superstition of theirs being recorded that "to have a Cricket on the Hearth is the luckiest thing in all the world;" we are then visited with a sad instance of the stolid carrier's habit of forgetfulness. The parcels have all been duly arranged by the faithful wife, (called in tenderness by her husband "Dot,") and the final question put,—"So these are all the parcels, are they, John?"

"That's all," said John. "Why—no—I—" laying down his knife and fork, and taking a long breath, "I declare—I've clean forgotten the old gentleman!" "The old gentleman?" "In the cart," said John. "He was asleep, among the straw, the last time I saw him. I've very nearly remembered him, twice, since I came in; but he went out of my head again. Halloo! Yahip there! rouse up! That's my hearty!"

The Stranger appears an old deaf man. The party is soon joined by one Caleb Plummer, a toy-maker, who studies his profession evidently *con amore*,—and who, as we learn from his conversation, has a Blind Daughter—and by Tackleton, a toy-merchant. The description of the latter we must extract, if only to show the power of style to make much of small things. He

—was a man whose vocation had been quite misunderstood by his Parents and Guardians. If they had made him a Money-Lender, or a sharp Attorney, or a Sheriff's Officer, or a Broker, he might have sown his discontented oats in his youth, and after having had the full-run of himself in ill-natured transactions, might have turned out amiable at last, for the sake of a little freshness and novelty. But cramped and chafing in the peaceable pursuit of toy-making, he was a domestic Ogre, who had been living on children all his life, and was their implacable enemy. He despised all toys: wouldn't have bought one for the world; delighted, in his malice, to insinuate grim expressions into the faces of brown-paper farmers who drove pigs to market, bellmen who advertised lost lawyers' consciences, moveable old ladies who darned stockings or carved pies; and other like samples of his stock in trade. In appalling masks; hideous, hairy, red-eyed Jacks in Boxes; Vampire Kites; demoniacal Tumblers who wouldn't lie down, and were perpetually flying forward to stare infants out of countenance; his soul perfectly revelled. They were his only relief, and safety-valve. He was great in such inventions. Anything suggestive of a Pony-nightmare, was delicious to him. He had even lost money (and he took to that toy very kindly) by getting up Gohliu slides for magic lanterns, whereon the Powers of Darkness were depicted as a sort of supernatural shell-fish, with human faces. In intensifying the portraiture of Giants, he had sunk quite a little capital; and, though no painter himself, he could indicate, for the instruction of his artists, with a piece of chalk, a certain furtive leer for the countenances of those monsters, that was safe to destroy the peace of mind of any young gentleman between the ages of six and eleven, for the whole Christmas or Midsummer Vacation. What he was in toys, he was (as most men are) in all other things. You may easily suppose, therefore, that within the great green cape, which reached down to the calves of his legs, there was buttoned up to the chin an uncommonly pleasant fellow; and that he was about as choice a spirit and as agreeable a companion, as ever stood in a pair of bull-headed looking boots with mahogany-coloured tops.

But Toy-maker and Toy-merchant both are gone; still the old deaf stranger unaccountably remains: nay, more, desires a bed, which the wife is anxious to grant. There have also been some mysterious intimations between her and him which have somewhat troubled John. He finds, however, consolation in his pipe, which she has filled for him—"being out-and-out the best filler of a pipe in the four quarters of the globe;" the smoking of which, in turn, fills, naturally enough, the room with visionary shapes—

And as he soberly and thoughtlessly puffed at his old pipe; and as the Dutch clock ticked; and as the red fire gleamed; and as the Cricket chirped; that genius of his Hearth and Home (for such the Cricket was) came out, in fairy shape, into the room, and summoned many forms of Home about him. Dots of all ages, and all sizes filled the chamber. Dots who were merry children, were running on before him, gathering flowers, in the fields; coy Dots, half shrinking from, half yielding to, the pleading of his own rough image; newly-married Dots alighting at the door, and taking wondering possession of the household keys; motherly little Dots, attended by fictitious Slowboys, bearing babies to be christened; matronly Dots, still young and blooming, watching Dots of daughters, as they danced at rustic balls; fat Dots, encircled and beset by troops of rosy grand-children; withered Dots, who leaned on sticks, and tottered as they crept along. Old Carriers, too, appeared, with blind old Boxes lying at their feet; and newer carts with younger drivers ("Peerybingle Brothers" on the tilt); and sick old Carriers, tended by the gentlest hands; and graves of dead and gone old Carriers, green in the churchyard. And as the Cricket showed him all these things—he saw them plainly, though his eyes were fixed upon the fire—the Carrier's heart grew light and happy, and he thanked his Household Gods, with all his might, and cared no more for Gruff and Tackleton than you do.

We are next presented with a picture of Caleb Plummer and his Blind Daughter, seated in his eccentric apartment, drawn with much artistic power—for Caleb, though but of toys, is an artist, and to his daughter no less than a sorcerer;—having, in pity to her blindness, described all things connected with their state, calling, and dwelling, in such fancy hues as, in her imagination, made the life they lived enchantment.

The Blind Girl never knew that ceilings were discoloured; walls blotched, and bare of plaster here and there; high crevices unstoppered, and widening every day; beams mouldering and tending downward. The Blind Girl never knew that iron was rusting, wood rotting, paper peeling off; the very size and shape, and true proportion of the dwelling, withering away. The Blind Girl never knew that ugly shapes of delf and earthenware were on the board; that sorrow and faint-heartedness were in the house; that Caleb's scanty hairs were turning greyer and more grey before her sightless face. The Blind Girl never knew they had a master, cold, exacting, and uninterested; never knew that Tackleton was

Tackleton in short; but lived in the belief of an eccentric humorist who loved to have his jest with them; and while he was the Guardian Angel of their lives, disdained to hear one word of thankfulness. And all was Caleb's doing; all the doing of her simple father! But he too had a Cricket on His Hearth; and listening sadly to its music when the motherless Blind Child was very young, that Spirit had inspired him with the thought that even her great deprivation might be almost changed into a blessing, and the girl made happy by these little means. For all the Cricket Tribe are potent Spirits, even though the people who hold converse with them do not know it (which is frequently the case); and there are not in the Unseen World, Voices more gentle and more true; that may be so implicitly relied on, or that are so certain to give none but tenderest counsel; as the Voices in which the Spirits of the Fireside and the Hearth, address themselves to human kind.

An annual Pic-nic party, at these humble lodgings, assembles the *dramatis personæ* already mentioned, with the addition, among others, of May Fielding, the toy-merchant's intended; but who had been long ago engaged to Edward Plummer, the toy-maker's son. The boy, however, had gone to "the Golden South Americas," and is now given up as hopeless. He has, nevertheless, returned just in the nick of time: that Old Deaf Man was none other than he; poor Mrs. Peerybingle had made early discovery of his disguise, but kept his secret, though duly advising, of course, poor May Fielding of it. But this secret keeping is likely to have fatal results. The Carrier, having discovered that there is a disguise, becomes naturally jealous, and gives way to such suggestions as "make the seated heart knock at the ribs." Here it is that Mr. Dickens has specially called in his imagination to give dignity to his action.

The Dutch clock in the corner struck Ten, when the Carrier sat down by his fireside. So troubled and grief-worn, that he seemed to scare the Cuckoo, who, having cut his ten melodious announcements as short as possible, plunged back into the Moorish Palace again, and clapped his little door behind him, as if the unwonted spectacle were too much for his feelings. If the little Haymaker had been armed with the sharpest of scythes, and had cut at every stroke into the Carrier's heart, he never could have gashed and wounded it, as Dot had done. It was a heart so full of love for her; so bound up and held together by innumerable threads of winning remembrance, spun from the daily working of her many qualities of endearment; it was a heart in which she had enshrined herself so gently and so closely; a heart so single and so earnest in its Truth: so strong in right, so weak in wrong: that it could cherish neither passion nor revenge at first, and had only room to hold the broken image of its Idol. But slowly, slowly; as the Carrier sat brooding on his hearth, now cold and dark; other and fiercer thoughts began to rise within him, as an angry wind comes rising in the night. The Stranger was beneath his outraged roof. Three steps would take him to his chamber door. One blow would beat it in. "You might do Murder before you know it," Tackleton had said. How could it be Murder, if he gave the Villain time to grapple with him hand to hand! He was the younger man. It was an ill-timed thought, bad for the dark mood of his mind. It was an angry thought, goading him to some avenging act, that he should change the cheerful house into a haunted place which lonely travellers would dread to pass by night; and where the timid would see shadows struggling in the ruined windows when the moon was dim, and hear wild noises in the stormy weather. He was the younger man! Yes, yes; some lover who had won the heart that he had never touched. Some lover of her early choice: of whom she had thought and dreamed: for whom she had pined and pined: when he had fancied her so happy by his side. Oh agony to think of it! She had been above stairs with the Baby, getting it to bed. As he sat brooding on the hearth, she came close beside him, without his knowledge—in the turning of the rack of his great misery, he lost all other sounds—and put her little stool at his feet. He only knew it, when he felt her hand upon his own, and saw her looking up into his face. With wonder? No. It was his first impression, and he was fain to look at her again, to set it right. No, not with wonder. With an eager and inquiring look; but not with wonder. At first it was alarmed and serious; then it changed into a strange, wild, dreadful smile of recognition of his thoughts; then there was nothing but her clasped hands on her brow, and her bent head, and falling hair. Though the power of Omnipotence had been his to wield at that moment, he had too much of its Diviner property of Mercy in his breast, to have turned one feather's weight of it against her. But he could not bear to see her crouching down upon the little seat where he had often looked on her, with love and pride, so innocent and gay; and when she rose and left him, sobbing as she went, he felt it a relief to have the vacant place beside him rather than her so long cherished presence. This in itself was anguish keener than all; reminding him how desolate he was become, and how the great bond of his life was rent asunder. The more he felt this and the more he knew he could have better borne it to see her lying prematurely dead before him with their little child upon her breast, the higher and the stronger rose his wrath against his enemy. He looked about him for a weapon. There was a Gun hanging on the wall. He took it down, and moved a pace or two towards the door of the perfidious Stranger's room. He knew the Gun was loaded. Some shadowy idea that it was just to shoot this man like a Wild Beast, seized him; and dilated in his mind until it grew into a monstrous demon in complete possession of him, casting out all milder thoughts and setting up its undivided empire. That phrase is wrong. Not casting out his milder thoughts, but artfully transforming them. Changing them into scourges to drive him on. Turning water into blood, Love into hate, Gentleness into blind ferocity. Her image, sorrowing, humbled, but still pleading to his tenderness and mercy with resistless power, never left his mind; but staying there, it urged him to the door; raised the weapon to his shoulder; fitted and nerved his finger to the trigger; and cried "Kill him! In his Bed!" He reversed the Gun to beat the stock upon the door; he already held it lifted in the air; some indistinct design was in his thoughts of calling out to him to fly, for God's sake, by the window—when, suddenly, the struggling fire illuminated the whole chimney with a glow of light; and the Cricket on the Hearth began to chirp! No sound he could have heard; no human voice, not even her's, could so have moved and softened him. The artless words in which she told him of her love for this same Cricket, were once more freshly spoken; her trembling, earnest manner at the moment was again before him; her pleasant voice—oh what a voice it was for making household music at the fireside of an honest man!—thrilled through and through his better nature, and awoke it into life and action. He recoiled from the door, like a man walking in his sleep, awakened from a frightful dream; and put the Gun aside. Clapping his hands before his face, he then sat down again beside the fire, and found relief in tears. The Cricket on the Hearth came out into the room, and stood in Fairy shape before him. "I love it, said the Fairy Voice, repeating what he well remembered, "for the many times

I have heard it, and the many thoughts its harmless music has given me," "She said so!" cried the Carrier. "True!" "This has been a happy Home, John; and I love the Cricket for its sake!" "It has been, Heaven knows," returned the Carrier. "She made it happy, always—until now." "So gracefully sweet-tempered; so domestic, joyful, busy, and light-hearted!" said the Voice. "Otherwise I never could have loved her as I did," returned the Carrier. The Voice, correcting him, said, "Do." The Carrier repeated, "as I did." But not firmly. His faltering tongue resisted his control, and would speak in its own way, for himself and him. The Figure, in an attitude of invocation, raised its hand and said: "Upon your own hearth"—"the hearth she has blighted," interposed the Carrier. "The hearth she has—how often!—blessed and brightened," said the Cricket: "the hearth which, but for her, were only a few stones and bricks and rusty bars, but which has been, through her, the Altar of your Home; on which you have nightly sacrificed some petty passion, selfishness, or care, and offered up the homage of a tranquil mind, a trusting nature, and an overflowing heart; so that the smoke from this poor chimney has gone upward with a better fragrance than the richest incense that is burnt before the richest shrines in all the gaudy Temples of this World!—Upon your own hearth; in its quiet sanctuary; surrounded by its gentle influences and associations; hear her! hear me! Hear everything that speaks the language of your hearth and home!" "And pleads for her?" enquired the Carrier. "All things that speak the language of your hearth and home, must plead for her!" returned the Cricket. "For they speak the Truth." And while the Carrier, with his head upon his hands, continued to sit meditating in his chair, the Presence stood beside him; suggesting his reflections by its power, and presenting them before him, as in a Glass or Picture. It was not a solitary presence. From the hearthstone, from the chimney; from the clock, the pipe, the kettle, and the cradle; from the floor, the walls, the ceiling, and the stairs: from the cart without, and the cupboard within, and the household implements; from everything and every place with which she had ever been familiar, and with which she had ever entwined one recollection of herself in her unhappy husband's mind; fairies came trooping forth. Not to stand beside him as the Cricket did, but to busy and bestir themselves. To do all honour to Her image. To pull him by the skirts, and point to him when it appeared. To cluster round it, and embrace it, and strew flowers for it to tread on. To try to crown its fair head with their tiny hands. To show that they were fond of it and loved it; and that there was not one ugly, wicked, or accusatory creature to claim knowledge of it—none but their playful and approving selves.

We present this as a specimen only of the able manner in which Mr. Dickens has given to the jealous thoughts of the poor tormented husband a picture language. It would be unjust to the author to quote more of the description: it will be sufficient to add that his hero's better nature triumphs, and that consequently all ends happily. The *denouement* is so obvious as not to need detail; but the extracts we have given will satisfy the reader that, in regard to style and careful execution, this "Fairy Tale" equals the best of its author's productions.

UHLICH.

(From the Glasgow Weekly Report.)

Our account of the movement of Ronge would present but an imperfect view of the condition of the German churches: without some notice of a still more extraordinary movement, originating in the very heart of German Protestantism, and led on by an intimate friend of Ronge, Uhlich, pastor in Pommelte, a village of Prussian Saxony. Among the innumerable religious contests demanding attention in almost every corner of the world, there is not one that bears the slightest relationship to that of which the Saxon minister stands forth as the champion and representative. The vital struggle, in near England as in far Tahiti, is not a forward one. It is entirely directed to prevent a retrogression to the ceremonial and centralizing worship of the Middle Age. Indeed, the spirit of advancement with difficulty keeps its ground. Timorously and unwisely it had divorced itself from that inductive philosophy which supplied its life-blood and its energies; and till the nuptials be again solemnised—till the alumni of Oxford again fill the deserted benches of her scientific halls—that power which Knox, in his parochial education, so instinctively sought, will be for ever deficient; and the best efforts of the best minds of England will never be able to do more than keep the foot firm on the spot where it is already planted. In Scotland, the contest is more ecclesiastical than doctrinal. Among the Vaudois, it is between an alarmed religion in the clergy, and an eager but masked atheism in the Government. Ronge only aims at impelling one part of mankind forward to where another part have been long localised. The Russian Siemasko flogs and tortures Catholic nuns into the Greek faith. Young Italy, Young Spain and Young France, forgetful of the mid course recommended by the Roman Moralists, seek refuge in indifference, from a zeal of which they are long weary. No nation can present us with an Uhlich. He is an unprecedented phenomenon, which Germany alone could have produced; and strikingly reminds us of the late Rammohun Roy, in his efforts to develop the capabilities of his national belief. He does not aim to keep Prussian Protestantism from falling back; nor is his energy exerted to crush it; nor to convert one of its existing forms into another. The singularity of his position consists in this, that his efforts tend to develop Protestantism—to transfuse its *spirit* into another *body*—to extract out of it a more profound and *modern* signification; whether for evil or for good it is not for us, who are simply chroniclers, to decide.

To give a clear idea of the doctrines of the "Protestant Friends," the followers of Uhlich, would be difficult, indeed impossible; for, through the Municipality of Berlin, they have loudly declared, that as the house of the Heavenly Father has many mansions, their society presents a home for brethren of many tendencies (*tendances*). Their most striking characteristic is the intense importance they attach to the inward conviction, feelings, and conscience of the *individual*. Worship they assert to consist neither in the performance of certain forms, nor in the profession of certain formularies, nor in the attachment to particular bodies, but in the intention of the *individual heart*—in the purity of an honest practice, founded on individual belief carefully adopted, and individual devotional sentiment intimately felt. Hence their rejection of Confessions, whether of Augsburg or otherwise, which they regard as simply ecclesiastical fictions, intended to confer one *uniform* religious character upon bodies necessarily consisting of men of every shade of religious opinion. Every man is bound, according to them, to use his own individual reason in

developing his own belief from the teachings of the Bible. He must digest its doctrines through his own organs, and not through those of other men. As each, according to the vigour of his faculties, and the extent of his enlightenment, must necessarily, more or less, vary in his conclusions, which will be exactly adapted to the development of his mind, they deduce, as a corollary, that variety of doctrine, being the inevitable result of the laws of nature, can be no obstacle to Christian fellowship, and that Heresy is a word which, in the true church, ought to remain altogether without a meaning. The human mind they believe to be continually moving on—"good spirit of the age" eternally progresses. As the spiritual eye changes, so must the spiritual object; and thus religion will continually put on forms more beautiful, and attain to developments more divine—a series of magnificent metamorphoses which Confessions only tend to impede, or to prevent. The office of their pastors is, of course, reduced to that of counsellors; they recognise no right, either in State or church, to prescribe formularies; they look upon Christianity principally as a sublime rule of duty, which is necessarily immortal, and which requires no guarantee for its everlasting subsistence, but spiritual liberty and the eternal wants of the human heart. Such, so far as we can understand it, is the *spirit* of the disciples of Uhlich.

We can only briefly sketch their rise and progress. The effects of the French Revolution were to create in Germany an elastic spirit of individual speculation; and, necessarily, to paralyse the central ecclesiastical authorities. The Prussian Monarch, instinctively recognising this tendency as in the end destructive of non-constitutional Monarchy, advanced its mortal enemy, Eichhorn, to the Ministry of Spiritual affairs. Uhlich, sensible of the imminent peril of this appointment, procured, in June 1841, a meeting at Gnadau of clergymen favorable to his views. They drew up a species of declaration, and adopted the title of "Protestant Friends." Meetings were subsequently held in Halle and Magdeburg. Officials, schoolmasters, merchants, clergymen, peasants, and citizens of every rank, crowded to them from all quarters. Köthen was then selected as the grand rendezvous of the party, whither the great Prussian Railways poured in their streams of votaries. Uhlich's next object was, to constitute living organizations. There existed in the country, societies named "Gustavus Adolphus" Associations, the object of which was, to aid and assist Protestants living in Catholic countries. In these the followers of Uhlich speedily obtained the preponderance, and took advantage of the opportunity to establish Citizen Associations everywhere throughout the country, for the propagation of their views. So overwhelming was the influence obtained by the immense energy and brilliant talents of Uhlich, that any voice raised to oppose him was instantaneously drowned amid the unanimous disapprobation of the multitude.

Immediately on the proclamation of Johannas Ronge, the Catholic Reformer formed an intimate acquaintance with the Protestant, and their opinions are, to some extent, identified. The great Uhlich Meeting at Köthen, on the 15th of last May, which was attended by deputies from all quarters, and thronged with many thousands of enthusiastic Germans, thoroughly alarmed Frederic William. Uhlich, by a stroke of despotic power, was forbidden to travel, and suspended from his pastoral duties. The Meetings of the Protestant Friends were peremptorily prohibited. Encouraged by the exhortations of the "Evangelical Church Gazette," and protected by the fostering hand of the Monarch, the Ultra-Orthodox party in the Prussian Church began to rally, and form associations chiefly clerical. This, however, excited the anger of the Town-councils, who are favorable to the cause of Uhlich. The Municipality of Berlin addressed a remonstrance to the King, which was angrily replied to. A second remonstrance was, however, sent up, and still more angrily replied to. From mutual recrimination, the contest proceeded to hostile deeds. The Government suspended from the exercise of his consistorial functions Professor David Schulze, who had taken a part favorable to the cause of the Movement. Undaunted by this autocratic intimidation, the Delegates at Breslau voted the freedom of their city to the Professor; and resolved to ply the King with vigorous remonstrances against his violent repression of the assemblies of the Protestant Friends. And so matters remain at present.

It cannot be denied that this movement presents every element of power and stability. The leader is a man of vast learning—of untiring energy—undaunted courage—popular address—and brilliant talents. His past career proves him, beyond question, a man of rapid scheming and great worldly wisdom, able to seize upon existing organisations, and convert them to his own purposes. His followers are not the young and thoughtless, but the sober and substantial burghesses of the great cities. His views have taken firm hold of every class of society. Among lawyers, merchants, peasants, they are equally popular. They are eagerly adopted by the Town-councils, and are, doubtless, doubly endeared to them by their identification with the cause of constitutional liberty. The movement is led on by members of the clergy; and, therefore, cannot be designated a laic conspiracy against the Church. The whole force of the Universities is exerted in its favor. The Crown Prince himself is even said to have bitterly reproached his brother for the attitude he has adopted towards it. But the most pregnant proof of its resistless power is the condition of the opposite party, who, distracted and divided amongst themselves, look helplessly to the secular arm; and hope that the violent measures of the monarch may effectually paralyse the efforts of his people.

But it is not so much in relation to Prussian Lutheranism that we notice the efforts of Uhlich. There is no man intimately conversant with British society, and able to read the future in the present, who cannot at once predict that the time is not far off—nay, has even already begun—when the impulses of German thought must contribute their momentum to quicken the motions of our island churches. We had an age of speculation—an age brilliant beyond all former epochs for the intellectual glory of our Northern Metropolis. That passed away; for the struggle of a growing commerce for the unrestrained freedom of its limbs, demanded a more practical philosophy. Then came the era of the Economists—the days of Adam Smith and Bentham, whose lofty speculations, brought down to earth by more homely hands, ended in the vast social changes represented by the Reform Bill. The golden visions that men, in their enthusiasm, looked forward to, were not adequately realised; and all hastened from the