

## WEEP NOT.

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Weep not for joys that ne'er could last,  
The bright, the beautiful, the past;  
Mourn not Faith's broken diadem,  
Hope sparkles still in every gem;  
Though now thy sun may set in sorrow,  
Be sure he'll brightly rise to-morrow.

If storms and darkness round thee loom,  
And all forsake thee in that hour,  
Look up; the rainbow's tints divine  
Give promise joy again shall shine,  
Foretells thy sun will shortly rise  
In fairer, bluer, brighter skies.

Weep not o'er nature's sad decay,  
Though autumn leaves must fade away,  
Sweet spring, with all its smiling train,  
Will scatter gladness yet again,  
And bless the fruitful earth anew  
With beauty and with blossom too.

Weep not because the young hath fled,  
The fairest numbered with the dead,  
Mourn not their lot, nay, rather bless,  
They're sweetly shrouded in loveliness;  
Thou'lt meet again with joy and bliss  
In other, fairer worlds than this!

Then weep no more when dark array  
Of clouds doth chase thy joy away;  
Faith points beyond the gloomy sky,  
And bids thee wipe thy streaming eye;  
Though now thy sun may set in sorrow,  
Be sure he'll rise again to-morrow!

E. T.

### THE CRY OF THE SOLDIER.

March on! o'er India's burning plain,  
O'er snow-topp'd Alps, down rugged steeps;  
Our country bids us on again—  
Its thirst for honor never sleeps.  
Rulers at home our deeds command,  
They bid us save our native land  
From plunder, and from death:  
Whilst forth, ambitious to contend,  
Protected by the sword, they send  
The trumpet's blasting breath.  
March on! my comrades, we are slaves,  
Ruled by the nine-fashed scourging rod;  
They march us onward to our graves—  
Do thou be merciful, oh, God!

*The Buchanites from First to Last.* By JOSEPH TRAIN, author of "The History of the Isle of Man," &c. Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons. 1846.

THE rise, progress, and extinction of the Buchanites—a sect of fanatics that appeared in Scotland about seventy years ago—exhibits a strange and humiliating chapter in the history of human folly. Had we not still later evidences of the lengths to which popular credulity may be carried in such matters, we should be disposed to regard the whole narrative of the Buchanite fanaticism as an extravagant fiction. But we remember our own Johanna Southcote and Thom of Canterbury; and with all our reliance upon the good sense and piety of the descendants of the Lowland Covenanters, we cease to wonder even at their absurdities in matters of creed and worship.

Scotland has a high reputation for pure morality founded upon a scriptural basis. It is the last place in these kingdoms where we should expect to see gross pretensions to inspiration—to the total falsification of all the recognised doctrines of Christianity—set up, and enthusiastically sustained by a band of mad zealots. Whatever absurdities of that kind might be enacted elsewhere, the descendants of the Covenanters, at least, might be supposed to be exempt from the infection. But there is no security in human reason against the most fantastic fooleries in articles of faith. The very richness of the soil only seems to render it the more liable to the growth of weeds.

At the time when these monstrous pranks of the Buchanites were played in the Lowlands, the popular belief in witches had not quite passed away. The common people still held to the old superstitions, and the mob, recoiling with horror, from the new sectarians, attributed their proceedings to demoniac influences. There was as much fanaticism on one side as the other—certainly as little reasonableness. The persecutions to which these miserable Buchanites were exposed partook more largely of the character of the heresy their persecutors condemned, than of the Christianity they espoused. On neither side was there any benevolence—on both sides blind, furious, and bigotted hostility. The history, from the beginning to the end, is discreditably to the country; and displays the religious education of the people—which commanded all existing opportunities of enlightenment and power—in a degrading aspect. They, at least, had Christianity and authority with them, while the Buchanites were single-handed, helpless, and, it is only charitable to suppose, insane. The ferocity with which the isolated wretches were treated entitles them, in some measure, to our pity. We turn with aversion from their besotted doctrines and hideous practices; but we cannot conceal from ourselves that the Christian way of dealing with such lamentable delusions is not by uproar and brutal violence. Christianity has worthier weapons in its armoury than bricks and bludgeons.

Like most of these crude novelties, the Buchanites derived their origin from an obscure source. Elspath Simpson was the daughter of a man who kept a wayside public-house, near Banf. She was born about 1738, and was sent out of her father's house by her step-mother while she was yet a child, to take service in a family which appears to have been poorer than her own. Her business was to herd the cows, and such was the indigence of the place, that she used to sleep at night stretched on a bag before the fire, with a sack for covering. It would have been a brave prophecy to foretell from this wretched beginning the founder of a sect that was to occupy so large a space of public attention in subsequent years.

At length she was taken into the employment of a relation, who taught her to sew and read, and who intended to bring her out to the West Indies, whither her relative was called by family affairs. They rested at Greenock on their way; but while waiting there for a vessel, Elspath fell into dissolute company, and appears to have contracted the most abandoned habits. This fixed her destiny for life. But she had an ambition above the stews, and succeeded in "trepanning" (to use the language of one of her historians) a working potter, named Robert Buchan, into a marriage. We learn that no parish register of the union can be traced. But that goes for nothing, Parish registers are not indispensable tests of the marriage ceremony in Scotland.

Her licentious conduct so afflicted her husband's sense of shame that he retired with her to her native place, and left her there, proceeding to Glasgow on his own account in search of employment. At Banf, Mrs. Buchan set up a school; but having neither method nor industry, the speculation failed. Besides, just about this time she began to neglect everything, for she had been favored by a divine apocalypse, charging her with a holy mission, to the accomplishment of which she sacrificed all other concerns. Her resolution was equal to any exigency. No temptation could turn her aside from her purpose—no perils could daunt her. The high courage with which she entered upon her frantic scheme would have invested a better cause with dignity. The first feeling with all people who thus imagine themselves called out of the mass to execute some heavenly trust, is that of martyrdom. They seek martyrdom before it comes. They set out with the spirit of the martyr, and avow their readiness to die for their faith, long before anybody dreams of offering them the slightest opposition. It is this quality of superfluous violence which gives such an air of wanton enterprise to their doings, and furnishes illiterate and vulgar minds—always glad to assert their superiority over greater intellectual developments—with such ready excuses for ridicule and contempt. Yet we cannot refuse to recognise in such passages as the following, from the early letters of this remarkable woman, the presence of determined mental energy:—

Had there been a gallows erected at every door where I had an opportunity of speaking of Christ, or of hearing him spoken of, I would not have stayed from going there; and the more any sought to keep me back, it only tended the more to stir me up to run the faster.

Mrs. Buchan used to attend the fellowship meetings, and her new doctrines, which rapidly involved her in an extensive correspondence, drew her at last into open hostility with the clergy. It is not very easy to explain the exact scope and nature of her views; but the principal points—the startling novelties—may be briefly described. She believed herself to be the woman described in the Revelation of St. John as being clothed with the sun and moon; she pretended to have brought forth the man-child, who was to rule the world with a rod of iron, and she had influence enough to prevail upon the Rev. Mr. White, the minister of a Relief congregation at Irvine, to assume this character; she held that marriage was contrary to Scripture; she maintained the open faith of a community of goods and intercourse; she asserted that the soul was inseparable from the body; and she promised to translate her followers direct to heaven, without putting them through the pain of dying. And there were found an entire congregation of people in Scotland to embrace these doctrines, and to follow her with an implicit belief in the revelation with which she pretended to be charged!

Her first great convert was Mr. White at that time a popular preacher in the West of Scotland. White was, of course, cast out by his people, and from that time he devoted his zeal to Mrs. Buchan, who took upon herself the significant title of Friend-Mother. It was necessary that Mr. White should break off with his wife, for which, however, he was amply recompensed by the careful tendering of his new spouse. As the knowledge of these matters spread, public decency was so outraged that the people became clamorous and indignant. The meetings of the Buchanites were held in secret; but being soon discovered, the populace, roused by the scandalous reports of their doctrines and manner of worship, surrounded the house, smashed the windows, and captured the Friend-Mother as she was endeavouring to make her escape by a back way:—

She was accompanied by Mr. Gibson, a very strong man, who, when one of the rabble was about to lay violent hands on her, grasped her round the waist with his arms, and would not part with her till a drunken fellow cut one of his hands with a joeteleg. A general shout of joy was instantly raised for the capture of the witch-wife who had "cast her glamour" over the minister. After dragging her through all the streets of the town, nearly in a state of nudity, many were for ducking her in the river, but the majority were for hounding her home to her husband, to the sound of an old tin kettle! and they actually trailed her to Stewarton, a village eight miles distant from Irvine, on the road to Glasgow. Andrew Innes says:—"Mr. White and I, concealed by the darkness of the night, followed at a short distance all the way. We heard them anon insult her about her feigned attachment to Christ. They would raise her up as high as they could, calling aloud for her to fly now to heaven like Enoch or Elijah, at the same time letting her drop to the ground, exclaiming, 'She cannot fly yet, we must take her on a little further, and try her again!' When they came to a bridge at Stewarton, they took her to the ledge for the purpose of throwing her into the river, and would have done so, had not one of the party opposed them, saying, 'She has done us no personal harm, therefore we will not kill her outright—let her husband do that if he pleases when he gets her home.' This timely interposition seemed to divert them from their intention of drowning her. As they dragged her into Stewarton, the noise which they made in the street caused the people to come running out, many with candles in their hands; the crowd soon became very great, and the night being very dark, they lost sight of her suddenly, nor could they find her again."

The Andrew Innes, who gives this account, was the most devoted and sincerest of all the Buchanites, and a man, too, on other points, of such strong sense, that it is wonderful how completely he was snared. But Mrs. Buchan had great personal powers of control and fascination; her volubility, sometimes amounting to eloquence, was irresistible; and her intimate knowledge of Scripture, and singular capacity for argumentation, enabled her to retain that hold over her followers which the originality and energy of her character acquired for her in the first instance.

Heresies are not easily put down by outrages. Persecution,

says the old dogma, makes martyrs, and martyrs make proselytes; and so it happened in this case. The Buchanites increased. They got some wealthy people amongst them who brought their wives into the community, loosened from all religious obligations. It was now high time for the magistracy to interfere, which they did effectually by decreeing that Mrs. Buchan should be sent out of the royalty, giving her only two hours to pack up and be off. The spectacle of her adherents gathering about her at this crisis is at once melancholy and ludicrous:—

"As the news of this decision," says Mr. Innes, "soon reached all concerned, we assembled with all speed in Mr. White's house, but such was the hurry, that some had scarcely time to pack up a hand-bundle, put out the fire, and lock the door. The founder of our society only was required to leave the town, but those from Muthill, in particular, were already nearly destitute for her sake, and they individually were resolved to share her fate, as were many of the Irvine people also.

"With this intention we had rallied round her in Mr. White's parlour, each man with a staff in one hand, and a small bundle in the other, each woman with her coats kilted, and a small bundle in a handkerchief tied round her waist. Mr. and Mrs. White seemed rather downcast, but Friend-Mother was more cheerful than ordinary. She spoke to us individually, and quoted passages of scripture with surpassing aptitude, to fortify our minds in that trying hour. She often repeated the 28th verse of the 16th chapter of Matthew, with great composure and dignity. 'Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.' When the magistrates and constables appeared at the door, she proceeded with them, Mr. White accompanying her on one side, and Mr. Gibson on the other. The women and children followed, the men bringing up the rear.

The streets through which we passed were crowded to such an excess, that the constables could scarcely open a passage. All those that came from Muthill were very ill used; the people made sport of pushing their staves between our legs so as to make us fall, and then pushed others over us, chiding us, at the same time, for ruining ourselves by following an old witch-wife who had evidently cast her cantrips over us. Just as the magistrates were about to return, a drunken sailor tore off the cap of our Friend-Mother, and pulled her to the ground, and then ran past the magistrates, exclaiming, 'I have got a right handful of her hair,' and joined his companions without being interrupted or molested by the authorities.

Robert Burns had a *liaison* with one of these young kilted girls, and speaks of them as "carrying on a great farce of pretended devotion in barns and woods, where they lie and lodge altogether." Such was the course to which this banishment led. The picture of the procession, going forward and singing on their way to the New Jerusalem, is very striking:—

Several old people still remember seeing the Buchanites on this occasion. Mrs. Buchan, attired in a scarlet cloak, the discarded minister, and one or two of her higher dupes, were seated in a cart, while the remainder of the company followed on foot. These were, for the most part, "clever chieftains, and bonny, spanking, rosy-cheeked lasses, many of them in their teens. They were generally dressed in the simple garb of peasant maids of the Lowlands of Scotland. Over their dark petticoats, they wore short gowns, reaching from the chin half-way down the thigh, and fitted close to the bosom. They were bareheaded, and their locks, permitted to grow unusually long, were restrained from falling in a fleece over the back and bosom by small buckling-combs."

Forty-six people set out on this journey; but their number was considerably augmented as they advanced, chiefly by recruits from England. As they went along—keeping their faces towards that point in the heavens from whence they expected the Messiah—they found great difficulty in procuring lodgings, sometimes sleeping in barns, or by the side of haystacks, or in the woods. At last they got accommodation at New Cample, in the barn of a Mr. Davidson, who, being paid for whatever he supplied to them, had no other care in the matter. Their manner of living at this time shows tolerably clearly the real nature of their society.—Innes *loquitur*:—

For want of accommodation in the barn, on account of so many visitors, who often kept Friend-Mother and Mr. White speaking all day, we were obliged to cook our scanty fare in the farmer's kitchen—which oftentimes consisted of potatoes boiled and emptied into a basket, and set on a small table, so that those who were pleased to withdraw from hearing the controversy in the barn, might take up one with its skin on, and either dip it in a little salt, or take a bit of salt herring to it, or a drop of milk, when that was attainable. But after the first rush of visitors was abated, the barn, of course became less crowded; we then cooked there, and got our meals more regular. All sat at the same table, and partook alike of the same food, with the exception of our Friend-Mother, who either served those at table herself, or was employed in directing others to do so. When the meal was over, she always pointed to one of the men to stand up before her, to whom she directed the subject of her discourse, while we all listened; after which, a hymn being sung, we separated, and she commonly went to take a walk in the fields with Mr. White.

Having neither hay nor straw for bedding, and Mr. Davidson having none to give us, we were obliged to go to the moor and gather heather for that purpose. This we bound in bundles about six feet long, and four feet broad, thereby forming a bed for two persons. These bundles were placed in a double row on the barn-floor, leaving room scarcely for a single person to pass between them. These beds were not hard, on account of the heather being closely pressed together with the tops uppermost; but we had at first no more bed-clothes than a single blanket to each bed, and all made pillows of their body-clothes. When we had nearly completed our up-putting, Mr. Hunter and several other persons arrived from Irvine, and contentedly lay down on heather beds—there being now no distinction of persons among us—those who had wives being as if they had none.

We need not follow out the quotation to show the way in which this "apostolic life" was passed.

Soon afterwards, with Mr. Davidson's help, they built a house, or cabin, called in derision by the country people "Buchan Ha'." Here they herded together somewhat more commodiously, having their dormitory in a loft, while Mr. White and the Friend-Mother were rather more comfortably lodged below. But we must refer to the book for the curious details.

One of the impositions of Mrs. Buchan was a forty days' fast. At the end of the forty days she led her dupes to believe that they would be translated to Heaven, and she took them to the top of a hill for that purpose. There the emaciated multitude tossed their skeleton arms in the air—but all to no purpose. The translation was not vouchsafed, and Mrs.

Buchan got out of the dilemma by ingeniously assuring them that the failure arose from their own deficiency of faith—a deficiency in which your true fanatics are always ready to believe. It is worthy of note that, at this juncture, while her followers were reduced to the most ghastly condition of skin and bone, Luckie Buchan as she was called, realised the image of ruddy health. "She was like one of those beauties," says the historian, "who crowd the canvas of painters with hillocks of rosy flesh; her hair was unbound, and hung profusely over her back and shoulders." This triumph over famine was the best part of the miracle.

But, perhaps, the most astounding tenet established in this society was that which may be described as the community of children. When a child was born it belonged to everybody—or nobody. It was separated from its parents, who were never to know it again in that natural relation. Here is one instance, furnished by Innes:—

Katherine Gardner nursed her child for about eight months, when it was taken from her and given to another woman. The child grew up, and lived in the society for twenty years, without knowing either the one or the other of her parents, so far as I ever heard or saw, although we were both there all the time; neither of us having been a night absent from her, from the time of her birth till the day of her death.

It was even supposed that infanticide was enjoined and practiced in some cases; and the horrible apprehension that such means might be resorted to, induced the withdrawal of some of the most influential members. The feeling created in the country by these affairs led to some magisterial investigations, but no evidence of such crimes could be traced, nor is it likely, on all accounts that they were ever really committed.

Mrs. Buchan supported her character with wonderful ability throughout. Her influence continued unabated over the bulk of her adherents; but White was so deep in the mystery to hold out as long as the rest. At length he began to ill-treat her, and, although she still wore her bold and energetic front, there is no doubt she sickened and drooped under the bad usage of the favored disciple. The translation, to which her followers looked forward with such steady faith, took place in the common way of all flesh; and the Friend-Mother, instead of being carried off into the clouds with all her living attributes, died quietly one day in her bed at Buchan Ha'. Still her disciples would not give her up. They were confident she would come to life again:—

A platform had been erected in the centre of the barn, on which the coffin, containing the body, was placed; but the lid of the coffin was not nailed down, in order that no obstruction might be placed in the way of her ascension! As the first period for her return drew near a close, those who were in the secret waited in breathless expectation for the commencement of her re-animation: but only a few of Mr. White's disciples were permitted to enter the barn on the last evening of the *lake-wake*, if it might be so called. During the night, how they disposed of the body no one but themselves knew; but having cut a hole in the roof of the barn, exactly above where the corpse lay, they next day told the rest of Luckie's deluded followers that an angel had come and carried her away before their eyes, and, as a certain proof of the truth of this assertion, showed the aperture in the roof of the barn through which they had ascended.

The truth was that Andrew Innes, fearing that they would bury her, contrived in the middle of the night to carry out the body and conceal it among the sheaf corn. The pious trick, was detected, and the body recovered and secretly buried by Mr. White. Where it was deposited, however, nobody knew, and great clamour was raised by some members of the woman's family, who appealed to the authorities on the subject. The fear of increasing the popular fury restrained the magistrates from taking any public step in the matter; but Sir Alexander Gordon made an appointment with Mr. White to meet him at midnight for the purpose of being taken to the place of her interment:—

On arriving at the appointed place, Sir Alexander Gordon met Mr. White and George Hill, and proceeded forthwith to Kirkgunzeon churchyard, a distance of three miles, where they arrived by break of day. White informed the sheriff that he and his companion were the only persons present at the interment of Mrs. Buchan, and were the only individuals that knew the exact place where she was laid; that they had taken advantage of a lately-made grave; and, the better to ensure concealment, that they had raised the coffin, and placed that of Mrs. Buchan beneath it. On this violated grave being pointed out to Sir Alexander, he caused it to be again opened, and both coffins taken out; when laid on the sward, and the lids removed, he examined the contents himself. The coffin first disinterred contained the body of a man; which he ascertained by passing one of his fingers along the lower part of the face to feel the beard; the other that of a woman, carefully packed in feathers, which the sheriff instantly recognised as the remains of Mrs. Buchan, having frequently seen her when in life.

For thirty years this matter remained a profound secret, and was only disclosed at the end of that time to the writer of the memoir by the son of Sir Alexander Gordon. In the meanwhile, all the Buchanites were dispersed, and died off one by one—all except Andrew Innes, and he remained faithful to the end. "I am left alone," he wrote in his old age, "like the pelican in the wilderness, in appearance, but that is not really the case. I sleep every night in my Friend-Mother's house, and breakfast with her family in the morning."

Old Andrew lived on, still looking for the advent of the Woman in the Revelations, which never came. He got possession of the corpse, and kept it safely in a sort of cellar, where he daily spent many hours beside the remains of his mistress:—

This little charnel-house being attached to the end of the dwelling-house, in which was the bed-closet of Andrew Innes, and in which he generally sat when not engaged in out-door work, the bones in the cell were directly opposite the back of the bedroom fire, as was supposed for the purpose of keeping them dry; but twice every day in the year, with the greatest regularity, he heated a flannel cloth at his fire, and then pushed it with a poker through a hole in the wall at the back of the grate, made for that purpose, whence the cloth fell into the rude coffin where the skeleton lay. He then went out at a back door in his bedroom, removed the former flannel, and carefully spread that newly heated over the skeleton. "This," my informant (who was for a long time his only personal attendant) says "he invariably performed, with as much privacy as if his life solely depended on the concealment of these bones." The flannel last removed from the

bones he always bound round his head when going to bed at night, under the superstitious belief that it was a preventive from every ill by which mankind is afflicted.

In this frame of mind he foretold the day of his own death, which took place exactly as he prophesied; and, agreeably to his testamentary desire, the bones of the Friend-Mother were buried with him in the grave.

And so ends the history of the Buchanites.

*Wit and Humour, selected from the English Poets; with an illustrative Essay, and Critical Comments.* By LEIGH HUNT. Smith, Elder, and Co.

Wit, poet, prose-man, party man, translator, Hunt, thy best title yet is Indicator!

So said Charles Lamb. His friend has since established a better right to the more sacred of these names, but still retains, and we hope rejoices in, Elia's favorite title. The delightful series of poetical extracts continued in this volume, will form, when completed, a colossal *Indicator*.

There is none of the race of critics, present or past, who selects with such unerring and delicate tact, or recommends his selections to the relish of others in such fitting home-going, easy, and elegant words. We know of no poetical criticism to compare with Mr. Hunt's, not simply for that quality of exquisite taste, but for its sense of continuity and sustained enjoyment.

*Wit and Humour* is the second volume of the series, of which *Imagination and Fancy* was the first, and *Action and Passion* is promised as the third. These titles would of themselves explain that the design extends beyond a collection of elegant and disconnected extracts, while it combines the best features of such collections. The two volumes already published are precisely the books one would wish to carry for companionship on a journey, or to have at hand when tired of work, or at a loss what to do for want of it. They are selections of the best things some of our best authors have said, accompanied with short but delicate expositions and enforcements of their beauty. With their prefatory notices of each poet, their critical notes on each quotation from him, and their italics indicating the selector's favorite lines—it is as though a friend took down volume after volume from our shelves; read aloud their choicest passages; marked, by the emphasis of his voice, what he liked the best; and interspersed his brief, graceful, deep-felt comments on the author and his ideas. They are truly most genial, agreeable, social books.

The illustrative essay to this volume of *Wit and Humour* sets off in a happy mood, pervaded with the spirit of its subject. It reads as if the essence of all the good sayings or all the wits and humorists in whose writings the author had been revelling while culling his samples and simples, mixing with his own animal spirits and love for keeping up the ball of merriment, had broken forth in irresistible overflow of playful imagery. A good-natured jest at Dr. King the civilian, "one of the minor, or rather the mimic poets who have had the good luck to get into the collections," introduces the remark that "laughable fancies have as many ways of expressing themselves as those which are lachrymose; gravity tending to the fixed and monotonous, like the cat on the hearth, while levity has as many tricks as the kitten;"—on which Mr. Hunt proceeds thus to speak, much to the purpose:

I confess I felt this so strongly, when I began to reflect on the present subject, and found myself so perplexed with the demand, that I was forced to reject plan after plan, and feared I should never be able to give any tolerable account of the matter. I experienced no such difficulty with the concentrating seriousness and sweet attraction of the subject of "Imagination and Fancy;" but this laughing jade of a topic, with her endless whims and faces, and the legions of indefinable shapes that she brought about me, seemed to do nothing but scatter my faculties, or bear them off deridingly into pastime. I felt as if I was undergoing a Saint Anthony's Temptation reversed—a laughable instead of a frightful one. Thousands of merry devils poured in upon me from all sides—doublets of Similes buffooneries of Burlesques, stalkings of mock-heroes, stings in the tails of Epigrams, glances of Inuendos, dry looks of Ironies, copulences of Exaggerations, ticklings of mad fancies, claps on the back of Horse-plays, complacencies of *Unawarenesses*, floundering of absurdities, irresistibilities of Iterations, significancies of Jargons, wailings of Pretended Woes, roarings of Laughters, and hubbubs of Animal Spirits; all so general yet particular, so demanding distinct recognition, and yet so baffling the attempt with their numbers and their confusion, that a thousand masquerades in one would have seemed to threaten less torment to the pen of a reporter.

This is followed up by the celebrated *catalogue raisonné* of the phenomena of Wit which occurs in Barrow's *Sermons* (the local habitation of this exposition being itself an unconscious play of humour); and with brief allusion to the more prominent English writers on wit and humour. Mr. Hunt then sketches his own simple non-metaphysical plan: "I resolved to confine myself to what was in some measure a new, and might at all events be not an undesirable or least satisfactory mode of discussion, namely, as thorough an account as I could give of the principal forms both of Wit and Humour, accompanied with examples." To his enumeration, however, he has prefixed some felicitous remarks on laughter, wit, and humour, which contain all the metaphysics of the matter with which his readers need trouble themselves:

We are so constituted that the mind is willingly put into any state of movement not actually painful; perhaps because we are then made potentially alive to our existence, and feel ourselves a match for the challenge. Hobbes refers all laughter to a sense of triumph and "glory;" and upon the principle here expressed, his opinion seems to be justifiable; though I cannot think it entirely so on the scornful ground implied by him. His limitation of the cause of laughter looks like a saturnine self-sufficiency. There are numerous occasions, undoubtedly, when we laugh out of a contemptuous sense of superiority, or at least when we think we do so. But on occasions of pure mirth and fancy, we only feel superior to the pleasant defiance which is given to our wit and comprehension; we triumph, not insolently but congenially; not to any one's disadvantage, but simply to our own joy and re-assurance. The reason indeed is partly physical as well as mental. In proportion to the vivacity of the surprise, a check is given to the breath, different in degree, but not in nature, from that which is occasioned by dashing against some pleasant friend round a corner. The breath recedes only to re-issue with double force; and the happy convulsion which it undergoes in the process is Laughter.

Of wit as the cause of laughter, following up this train of thought, he says:—

Our surprise is the consequence of a sudden and agreeable perception of the incongruous; sudden, because even when we laugh at the recollection of it; we undergo, in imagination, a return of the suddenness, or the liveliness of the first impression (which is the reason why we say of a good thing that it is always "new") and agreeable, because the jar against us is not so violent as to hinder us from recurring to that habitual idea of fitness, or adjustment, by which the shock of the surprise is made easy. It is in these reconciliations of those jars, these creations and re-adjustments of disparities, and the delightful faculty of the wit and humourist is made manifest. He at once rouses our minds to action; suggests, and saves us the trouble of a difficulty; and turns the help into a compliment, by implying our participation in the process. . . . Wit may be defined to be the *Arbitrary juxtaposition of Dissimilar Ideas, for some lively purpose of Assimilation or Contrast, generally of both*. It is fancy in its most wilful, and strictly speaking, its least poetical state; that is to say, Wit does not contemplate its ideas for their own sakes in any light apart from their ordinary prosaic one, but solely for the purpose of producing an effect by their combination.

Of humour:—

*Humour*, considered as the object treated of by the humorous writer, and not as the power of treating it, derives its name from the prevailing quality of *moisture* in the bodily temperament; and is a *tendency of the mind to run in particular directions of thought or feeling more amusing than accountable*; at least in the opinion of society. It is therefore, either in reality or appearance, a thing inconsistent. It deals in incongruities of character and circumstances, as Wit does in those of arbitrary ideas. The more the incongruities the better, provided they are all in nature; but two, at any rate, are as necessary to Humour, as the two ideas are to Wit; and the more strikingly they differ yet harmonize, the more amusing the result. Such is the melting together of the propensities of love and war in the person of exquisite Uncle Toby; of the gullible and manly in Parson Adams; of the professional and the individual, or the accidental and the permanent, in the Canterbury Pilgrims; of the objectionable and the agreeable, the fat and the sharp-witted, in Falstaff, of honesty and knavery in Gil Blas; of pretension and non-performance in the Bullies of the dramatic poets; of folly and wisdom in Don Quixote; of shrewdness and doltishness in Sancho Panza; and it may be added, in the discordant yet harmonious co-operation of Don Quixote and his attendant, considered as a pair: for those two characters, by presenting themselves to the mind in combination, insensibly conspire to give us one compound idea of the whole abstract human being; divided indeed by its extreme contradictions of body and soul, but at the same time made one and indivisible by community of error and the necessity of companionship.

Mr. Hunt accounts for the fact that wit and humour do not always excite laughter by pointing out that, when they do not, they will be found to be associated with other emotions or operations of the mind.

He then proceeds to hunt out wit and humour under those different forms and aliases of which they have as many as a Scapin or a Mathews. He begins with the simple simile and metaphor, proceeds to parody and to extravagance in general, and winds up with humours of mere temperament, moral or intellectual incongruities, and genial contradictions of the conventional. We can only afford space for a few brief specimens of the happy manner in which those themes are illustrated.

The third form of wit in Mr. Hunt's classification is:

What may be called the *Poetical Process, the Leap to a Conclusion, or the Omission of Intermediate Particulars in order to bring the Two Ends of a Thought or Circumstance together*;—as in one of Addison's papers above mentioned, where he is speaking of a whole Book of Psalms that was minutely written in the face and hair of a portrait of Charles the First:

"When I was last in Oxford, I perused one of the *whiskers*, and was reading the other, but could not go so far in it as I would have done," &c.—*Spectator*, No. 58.

That is to say, he perused that portion of the book which was written in one of the whiskers; but the omission of this commonplace, and the identification of the whisker itself with the thing read, strike the mind with a lively sense of truth abridged, and in guise of a fiction and an impossibility.

Our next extract is characteristic both of the essayist and the essay. Mr. Hunt is too sincere a worshipper of pure and high imagination, to countenance any slight that even genuine wit can offer it. Hence his hearty protest against a joke which he heartily enjoys. He takes his laugh out, and then tells us it is too bad:—

But the most agreeable form of irony, especially when carried to any length, is that which betrays the absurdity it treats of (or what it considers as such) by an air of *bonhomie* and good faith, as if the thing ridiculed were the simplest matter of course, and not at all exposed by the pretensions with which it is artfully set on a level. It is that of Marot and La Fontaine; of Pulci, Berni, and Voltaire. In the elder of these Italians, and in the two oldest of the Frenchmen, it is best assumed, as far as regards simplicity; but in Berni and Voltaire it is most laughable, because by a certain excess and caricature of indifference it gives its cue to the reader, and so makes him a party to the joke, as rich comic actors do with their audiences. Such as Voltaire's exquisite banter on *War*, in which he says, that a monarch picks up a parcel of men "who have nothing to do, dresses them in coarse blue cloth at two shillings a yard, binds their hats with coarse white worsted, turns them to the right and left, and marches away with them to glory."—*Dictionnaire Philosophique*. Art. *Guere*.

Thus also, speaking of the *Song of Solomon* (to the poetry of which, and the oriental warrant of its imagery, he was too much a Frenchman of that age to be alive, notwithstanding his genius), he says of it, that it is not in the style of the Greeks and Romans; but then he adds, as if in its defence, that Solomon was "a Jew;" and "a Jew is not obliged to write like Virgil." ("Un Juif n'est pas obligé d'écrire comme Virgile."—*Id.* Art. *Solomon*.)

It is impossible to help laughing at this, however uncritical. Very lucky was it for the interests and varieties of poetry, that the East was not obliged to write like the West; much less to copy a copyist. Voltaire was a better Christian than he took himself for, and the greatest wit that ever lived; but Solomon had more poetry in his little finger at least, of the imaginative sort—than the Frenchman in his whole mocking body.

In the good humour inspired by such writing as this, we would be anything but critical, or we might object to a want of zeal in speaking of some special favorites of ours among the English humorists, and an over zeal in speaking of others. All honor to Sterne in every shape, we say; he has probably not even yet arrived at the fullness of his fame; but, while we acknowledge the far thoughted humanity of My Uncle Toby, shall we assert that Shakspeare was "no anticipator?" Shall