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Editor's Table

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EDITOR'S TABLE.

This student at college looks forward with pleasing anticipations to the goal, where ends his academic toil; to the period, when no longer he shall be restricted to this "miniature world" which he now occupies; but when he shall, under new circumstances and relations, enter upon a life for which this is preparatory, and of which this is a true epitome. The ignis fatuus in the distance ever plays its pranks upon the fancy of ardent youth. Attracted by its brilliancy he pursues, but by pursuit does not approach save to the place where imagination pictured it; for it has fled as if conscious that to distance it owed its enchantment. Thus contentment eludes his grasp; he seeks, but ever seeks in vain the hidden treasure until life's short span is most ended. Now, looking back upon his phantom chase, he sees that often he would have seized the prize had not a repulsive principle, which he unconsciously nourished within himself, driven it before him, to dangle continually in the future; now, when the flame of anticipation can burn but dimly, unless rekindled by the torch of immortality, dissatisfaction still makes him its prey. He reflects upon those hours as the most happy of his life, which, when passing, he least suspected. Those hours which once he wished were gone, he would now gladly recall from their slumberings; but, though not enjoyed as they passed, they are gone for ever. Time in its ceaseless march brings him his wish, and with it, disappointment; but gazing still upon some fancied happiness in the future, he would that the interval of even years might pass in the pleasant dreams of a single night, and bring him quickly to the fruition of his hopes:—

"Oh! how impatience gains upon the soul
When the long-promised hour of joy draws near!
How slow the tardy moments seem to roll!
What spectres rise of inconsistent fear!"

Thus, longing for the speedy approach of future joy, we would dwindle down the three-score years and ten to a few short days made up of moments of unrealized expectations.

That we cannot avoid our destiny, is a theory much acted upon, whatever may be the general opinion respecting its truth abstractly. It is a beautiful prospect, to look forward with an eye of fancy upon future greatness, which, we flatter ourselves, awaits us. Nor is the scenery defaced by labor and toil which interpose. As rocks, hills, and cliffs impassable appear, to the distant observer, like gradual ascents from the plane, which serve to relieve the eye from dull monotony; so these, so long as kept in the future, seem but pleasant recreation to the traveler. Present toils alone seem hard to undergo. It is easy to resolve well; and thus, while unbiased by the employment of present means, it is shown that we are aware that we must shape our own destiny: but, when the time to put these resolutions into practice, is present—when bewildered by the formidable array of duties, we defer them, and re-resolve; it is then, that our actions show that we would believe that we are destined to be great, and must be, though the means be not used, for nothing can prevail against the fates. Thus we are apt to consider graduating, not only as the end, but often, as the object of college toil—imagining that all other things shall be added unto us.

To us, the long looked for period has at length almost arrived. That week, in
which we will have to give an account of our thoughts and actions here, alone remains, and we shall have reached the goal. We have brushed the dust from books long since laid by, and have brightened our memories, more dusty. We have carefully examined the coffers in which we have been laying up treasures—current paper money and private documents—that we may be able to draw hence assistance in the darkest moment of the approaching night. Like a sentenced criminal anxious for the fatal hour, we say, let it come—let the lowering cloud inevitable bring its worst speedily. But we are not as those without hope. Although the unpleasant task is before us of telling all we know, and what is more unpleasant, of telling what we do not know, yet the anticipated end—

"A beam of comfort, like the moon through clouds, Gilds the black horror, and directs our way."

The recess, after the close of college duties, while we shall not yet have left the academic shades, will certainly be the most pleasant, if not the most profitable part of our college life. He who finds pleasure in books, may in them seek it still,—but free. He who is fond of variety, when tired of ease, may in books find relief,—but free. To him, whom morning slumbers delight, the prayer-bell will ring in vain; for

"No sound shall awake him"—before breakfast time.

Those, who are pleased with the ladies, and who are never more delighted than when in their society, may then, without danger to their minds, expose their hearts by visiting them quite often. Many know well by sad experience, that this was not safe before. When once the heart is gone, the new possessor claims as her own just right, every thought and the will, and the poor victim makes a willing surrender. Then, they may go on excursions and walks with the ladies, without risk to further improvement at college by becoming more inclined to the study of love than of philosophy. Moreover, there is this one thing which will be pleasant to us all; we will have nothing to do while all others are busy. It is a pleasant thing to have a companion in grief; but no one, who has not experienced it, can conceive how delightful it is to "bore," and disturb the other students, when they are busy, and we have nothing to do ourselves.

Our reflections were here interrupted by a thought of our speedy entrance upon the turmoils of professional competition. It is a critical period in our lives, when we are compelled to decide what part in the machinery of society we shall fill—what place nature best designed us. Here, it has been the object to develop and train the whole mind, and especially, those parts which were less favored by nature; but then, it will be important to discover what pursuit, from the peculiar character of our minds, best suits us, and to that, to direct our energies. Mistakes here, though often made, are fatal. Many a Franklin, Story, Rush, or Edwards has spent his life unknown in drudgery and care, and has buried his mind in labor and toil, unconscious that nature, partial in her gifts, had designed him for his nation's service and pride. On the other hand, not a few, ambitious for popular distinctions, or captivated by some ideal honor or wealth which they hope to acquire, enter upon a profession, thinking these a necessary consequence. Many a lawyer, or physician, or even clergyman—though I speak here with reverence—if talent had been considered in deciding his calling, would have given his attention to some pursuit, where excellence depends upon bodily strength, and not upon mind. To the diversity of sciences and arts which are necessary for the prosperity of society, there is a corresponding diversity of tastes and talents. Only when there is this adaptation between the mind and the pursuit, does man venture behind the curtain of ignorance, and discover truths else unknown, and diffuse light where before was only darkness.
The Man made of Money: by Douglas Jerrold.—We read a few years ago a work, entitled "Story of a Feather." We thought it one of the most delightful creations we had ever perused; its pathos and humor were so exquisitely treated and intermingled, that we were carried along as in a pleasure-boat,—charmed with the sprays on every side, and sighing at the end of the ride that we could go no further. We naturally, then, anticipated a rich treat when it was announced that the author of "St. Giles and St. James"—the bona fide "Caudle" lecturer—the veritable London Punch man, had issued a new work; and hastened accordingly to read it.

The production is certainly very strangely "done up," yet we fancy every one will perceive its object. The hero is a man whose wife has a great affection for the needful, greater, probably, than for her spouse. And she not unfrequently exhibits this affection by questions relative to the possession of the same. The oppressed husband, driven to despair, finally exclaims, "I wish to Heaven I was made of money." His wife utters a hearty "amen." And, strange to say, the wish comes true—the man's heart is one roll of bank notes! We then follow the moneyed man; go with him to Parliament—to Jogtrot Hall—to the dueling ground, where he receives a ball through the left ventricle of his heart, and goes off the ground a living, breathing, moneyed man still, to the infinite discomfiture of the physician. We follow him through all these stages; at the same time seeing him waste away with every expenditure from his heart-bank; until we exclaim with Basil, "Blessed if you don't look as if you'd been locked out last night, and carried to bed through the key-hole." But last of all we see his wealth turn into ashes!

There are many incidental scenes and characters, in connection with the main thread of the story, which are pleasing and instructive. Many domestic narratives which are well told; and especially beautiful are some of them as contrasted with the moneyed man's household.

The book is not as good as "The Story of a Feather;" it lacks the pathos which renders that so interesting, but it has the same perpetual flow of wit which is so highly characteristic of the author. There is in Jerrold's writings a studied originality which seems to prevent in some degree naturalness of incident. His power as a humorist is rather inferior, by no means to be compared to that of Dickens; but, on the other hand, in the character of a wit he is more brilliant than any of his cotemporaries.

There is one very evident and very bad fault in the Fancy before us; it is, that there isn't enough of it; he doesn't complete his characters. We look longingly after the Halcyon; and when it dies away in the distance, we are really pained that we shall see no more of the Carraways. We wished to see Basil and Bessy living in domestic enjoyment in the "Antipodes"—and the old man happy in the lot of his declining years. Where he might learn—what the moneyed man would have felt in his heart, had it not been composed of bank notes—the truth of that couplet of Virgil's:

\[
\text{Qui} \quad \text{metus omnes et inexorabile fatum} \\
\text{Subjecit pedibus, strepitum que Acherontis avari.} \\
\text{GEORG. ii. 492.}
\]

\[
\text{Happy the man,} \\
\text{His mind possessing in a quiet state,} \\
\text{Fearless of fortune and resigned to fate.}
\]

Dryden.

We received the above work from Mr. Jacob Erb (at Kneedler's old stand), who keeps a very attractive counter indeed; having constantly on hand a fine selection from the innumerable publications of the day.