

PORTRAITS
Coloured OF
Curious Characters

IN

LONDON,

&c. &c.

WITH

DESCRIPTIVE AND ENTERTAINING
ANECDOTES.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY AND FOR W. AND T. DARTON,

No. 10, Holborn-Hill.

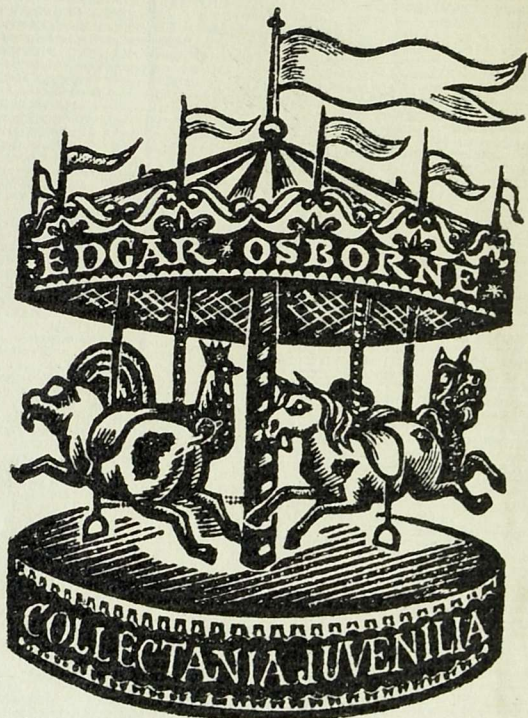
1803.

[PRICE SIXPENCE.]

Alexander

Mary Prior

BH



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III

PORTRAITS
OF
CURIOUS CHARACTERS
IN
LONDON,
&c. &c.

WITH DESCRIPTIVE & ENTERTAINING ANECDOTES.

“There’s none but has some fault; and he’s the best,
“Most perfect he, who’s spotted with the least.”

LONDON:
PRINTED BY AND FOR W. AND T. DARTON,
No. 40, Holborn-Hill.

1806.
[PRICE SIXPENCE.]



NATHANIEL BENTLEY, Esq.

Known by the name of Dirty Dick,

Late a Hardware merchant, in Leadenhall-street.

MR. BENTLEY resided at the corner of the
avenue leading to the house formerly the Old

Crown Tavern, Leadenhall-street, not far from the East India House.

The house and character of this eccentric individual are so well described in a poem published in the *European Magazine*, for Jan. 1801, that we shall transcribe it :

“ Who but has seen (if he can see at all),
 ’Twixt Aldgate’s well-known pump and Leadenhall,
 A curious hard-ware shop, in general full
 Of wares, from Birmingham and Pontipool?
 Begrim’d with dirt, behold its ample front,
 With thirty years collected filth upon ’t:
 See festoon’d cobwebs pendant o’er the door,
 While boxes, bales, and trunks, are strew’d around
 the floor.

“ Behold how whistling winds and driving rain,
 Gain free admission at each broken pane,
 Save where the dingy tenant keeps them out,
 With urn or tray, knife-case, or dirty clout!
 Here snuffers, waiters, patent screws for corks;
 There castors, card-racks, cheese-trays, knives and
 forks.

Here empty cases pil’d in heaps on high;
 There pack-thread, papers, rope, in wild disorder lie.

“ O say, thou enemy to soap and towels!
 Hast no compassion lurking in thy bowels?
 Think what thy neighbours suffer by thy whim,
 Of keeping self and house in such a trim!
 The officers of health should view the scene,
 And put thy shop and thee in quarantine.
 Consider thou, in summer’s ardent heat,
 When various means are tried to cool the street,
 What must each decent neighbour suffer then
 From various vapours issuing from thy den.

“ When fell disease, with all her horrid train,
 Spreads her dark pinions o’er ill-fated Spain,
 That Britain may not witness such a scene,
 Behoves us doubly now to keep our dwellings clean.

“ Say, if within the street where thou dost dwell,
 Each house were kept exactly like thy cell;
 O say, thou enemy to brooms and mops!
 How long thy neighbours could keep open shops,
 If following thee in taste, each wretched elf,
 Unshav’d, unwash’d, and squalid like thyself,
 Resolv’d to live?—The answer’s very plain,
 One year would be the utmost of their reign:
 Victims to filth, each vot’ry soon would fall,
 And one grand jail-distemper kill them all.

“ Persons there are, who say thou hast been seen,
 (Some years ago) with hands and face wash’d clean;
 And would’st thou quit this most unseemly plan,
 Thou art (’tis said) a very comely man:
 Of polish’d language, partial to the fair,
 Then why not wash thy face, and comb thy matted hair?
 Clear from thy house accumulated dirt,
 New paint the front, and wear a cleaner shirt.”

Many are the reports concerning his civility, and polite manner of attending to the ladies whenever they have honoured him with their commands; and several curious persons have come to town from various parts of the country, on purpose to see so remarkable a figure.

Before the powder-tax was introduced, Nathaniel frequently paid a shilling for dressing that head, which of late years, he scarcely seemed to think worthy of a comb! He mends his own clothes and washes his own linen, which

he proudly acknowledges. His answer to a gentleman who wished to convert him to cleanliness, was "It is of no use, Sir, if I wash my hands to-day, they will be dirty again to-morrow." On being asked whether he kept a dog or cat to destroy rats, mice, &c. he replied, "No, Sir, they only make more dirt, and spoil more goods than any service they are of; but as to rats and mice, how can they live in my house when I take care to leave them nothing to eat?" If asked why he does not take down his shutters which have been so long up, or why he does not put his goods in proper order, his answer is, "he has been long thinking of it, but he has not time."

With all Nathaniel Bentley's eccentricities, it must be acknowledged, he is both intelligent and polite: like a diamond begrimed with dirt, which, though it may easily conceal its lustre in such a state, can easily recover its original polish—not a diamond indeed of the first water—not a rough diamond—but an *unwashed* diamond.

In his beauish days, his favourite suit was blue and silver, with his hair dressed in the extremity of fashion, but now—strange fancy—his hair frequently stands up like the quills of the porcupine, and generally attended in his late shop without a coat, while his waistcoat, breeches, shirt, face, and hands, correspond with the dirt of his warehouse.



ANN SIGGS,

Contrast to the character last mentioned.

THOSE who are in the practice of walking the principal streets of this metropolis, leading from Bond-street to Cornhill, must have been attracted by the daily appearance of Ann Siggs, a tall woman, walking apparently easy with crutches and mostly dressed in white, sometimes wearing a jacket or spencer of green baize; yet

always remarkably clean in her dress and appearance.

It does not appear, however, that this female ranks very high among the *remarkables*, having but very few eccentricities and nothing very singular, except her dress and method of walking. The great burthen of warm clothing which she always wears, is not from affectation or a disposition to promote popular gaze, but from the necessity of guarding against the least cold, which she says always increases a rheumatic complaint with which she is afflicted.

When we consider the great number of beggars who daily perambulate London, and the violence they commit against decency, cleanliness, and delicate feelings, one naturally feels surprised they are so often the receivers of the generosity and bounty of the passing crowds; but independent of the commendable garb which adorns the interesting figure of Ann Siggs, we have repeatedly noticed another rare quality so very uncommon among the mendicant tribe, and that is, a silent and modest appeal to the considerate passenger, which almost involuntarily calls forth enquiry.

She is about fifty-six years of age and is said to have a brother still living, an opulent tradesman on the Surrey side of the water; she also had a sister living at Isleworth, who died some time since.

This medicant receives from the parish of St. Michael's, Cornhill, a weekly allowance, which

with the benevolence of some well-disposed persons, probably adds considerably to her comforts,

“But cannot minister to the mind diseases’d.”

It appears she has lived in Eden-court, Swallow-street, upwards of fifteen years, the lonely occupant of a small back room, leaving it at 9 o'clock every morning to resume her daily walks.

Her father lived many years at Dorking, in Surrey, maintaining the character of an industrious, quiet, and honest man, by the trade of a taylor, and who having brought up a large family of eight children, died, leaving the present Ann Siggs destitute of parental protection at the age of eighteen; and after many revolutions of bright and gloomy circumstances that have attended her during her humble perambulations, which the weakest minds are by no means calculated to endure, these have in some measure wrought upon her intellects. She is however perfectly innocent.

MEMOIRS OF THE CELEBRATED
MARTIN VAN BUTCHELL,

Surgeon, Dentist, &c.

OF MOUNT-STREET, BERKELEY-SQUARE.

THE appellation of extraordinary may, indeed, well apply to this ingenious and whimsical man. All the remarkable eccentricities which have yet been the characteristic of any man however cele-



brated may all hide their diminished heads before Martin Van Butchell. He is the morning star of the eccentric world; a man of uncommon merit and science, therefore the more wonderful from his curious singularities, his manners, and his appearance. Many persons make use of means to excite that attention which

their merit did not deserve, and for the obtaining of credit which they never possessed. It appears as an exception to these rules that the singularities of Martin Van Butchell have tended more to *obscure*, than to *exalt* or *display* the sterling abilities, which even the tongue of envy has never denied him.

The father of Martin Van Butchell was very well known in the reign of George II.; being tapestry maker to his Majesty, with a salary of £50 per annum attached to the office.

The education of the son was equal to the father's circumstances; who lived in a large house, with extensive gardens, known by the name of the "*Crown House*," in the parish of Lambeth, where several of the gentry occasionally lodged for the beauty of the situation and air; the son who had many opportunities of improvement, by and through the distinguished persons who paid their visits at his father's house, was very early taken notice of and very soon possessed a knowledge of the French language, and arrived at many accomplishments. He maintained a good character, with a prepossessing address; recommendations which induced Sir Thomas Robinson to solicit his acceptance to travel with his son as a suitable companion, in a tour through Europe. This offer, it appears, was not accepted; but in a short time after, he joined the family of the Viscountess Talbot, where as groom of the chambers he remained many years, a situation so lucrative as to enable him to leave

and pursue with vigour his endeared studies of mechanics, medicine, and anatomy.

The study of the human teeth accidentally took up his attention through the breaking of one of his own, and he engaged himself as pupil to the famous Dr. J. Hunter. The profession of dentist was the occasion of first introducing him to the notice of the public; and so successful was he in this art, that for a complete set of teeth, he has received the enormous price of eighty guineas! We have heard of a lady who was dissatisfied with teeth for which she had paid him ten guineas, upon which he voluntarily returned the money; scarcely had she slept upon the contemplation of this disappointment, before she returned, soliciting the set of teeth, which he had made her, as a favour, with an immediate tender of the money which she originally paid, and received them back again.

After many years successfully figuring as a dentist, Martin Van Butchell became no less eminent as a maker of trusses for ruptured persons. A physician of eminence in Holland having heard of his skill in this practice, made a voyage for the purpose of consulting him, and was so successfully treated, that in return for the benefit received, he taught Martin Van Butchell the secret of curing fistulas; which he has practised ever since in an astonishing and unrivalled manner.

The eccentricities of Martin now began to excite public notice: upon his first wife's death, who, for the great affection he bore towards her, he was at first determined never should be bu-

ried; after embalming the body, he kept her in her wedding clothes a considerable time, in the parlour of his own house, which occasioned the visits of a great number of the nobility and gentry. It has been reported, that the resolution of his keeping his wife unburied, was occasioned by a clause in the marriage settlement, disposing of certain property, *while she remained above ground*: we cannot decide how far this may be true, but she has been since buried. He has a propensity to every thing in direct opposition to other persons; he makes it a rule to dine by himself, and for his wife and children also to dine by themselves; and it is his common custom to call his children by whistling, and by no other way.

Next to his dress, and the mode of wearing his beard, one of the first singularities which distinguished him, was walking about London streets, with a large Otaheitan tooth or bone in his hand, fastened in a string to his wrist, intended to deter the boys from insulting him, as they very improperly were used to do, before his person and character were so well known.

Upon the front of his house, in Mount-street, he had painted the following puzzle:

BY
HIS MAJESTY'S

Thus, said sneaking Jack, speaking like himself,
I'll be first; if I get my money, ROYAL I don't care who suffers.

LETTERS PATENT

MARTIN
VAN BUTCHELL'S

NEW INVENTED

With caustic care — and old Phim

SPRING BANDS
AND FASTNINGS

Sometimes in Six Days, and always ten—
the fistulæ in Ano.

FOR

THE APPAREL
AND FURNITURE

July Sixth

OF

Licensed to deal in Perfumery, i. e.

HUMAN BEINGS

Hydrophobia cured in thirty days,

AND

BRUTE CREATURES

made of Milk and Honey.

which remained some years. In order a little to comprehend it: some years ago, he had a famous dun-horse, but on some dispute with the stable-keeper, the horse was detained for the keep, and at last, sold by the ranger of Hyde-Park, at Tattersal's, where it fetched a very high price. This affair was the cause of a law-suit, and the reason why Martin Van Butchell interlined the curious notice in small gold letters, nearly at the top as follows:—"Thus, said sneaking Jack, speaking like himself, I'll be first; if I get my money, I don't care who suffers."

After losing his favourite dun-horse, a purchase was soon made of a small white poney; which he never suffers to be trimmed in any manner whatever; the shoes for it are always fluted to prevent slipping, and he will not suffer

the creature to wear any other. His saddle is no less curious. He humorously paints the poney, sometimes all purple, often with purple spots, and with streaks and circles upon his face and hinder parts. He rides on this equipage very frequently, especially on Sundays in the park and about the streets.

The curious appearance of him and his horse have a very striking effect, and always attracts the attention of the public. His beard has not been shaved or cut for fifteen years; his hat shallow and narrow brimmed, and now almost white with age, though originally black; his coat a kind of russet brown, which has been worn a number of years, with an old pair of boots in colour like his hat and about as old. His bridle is also exceedingly curious; to the head of it is fixed a blind, which in case of taking fright or starting, can be dropped over the horse's eyes, and be drawn up again at pleasure.

Many have been the insults and rude attacks of the ignorant and vulgar mob, at different times, upon this extraordinary man; and instances have occurred of these personal attacks terminating seriously to the audacious offender. One man, we remember, had the extreme audacity to take this venerable character by the beard; in return, he received a blow from the injured gentleman, with an umbrella that had nearly broken a rib.

We shall now endeavour to exhibit his remarkable turn for singularity, by his writings, as pub-

lished at different times in the public prints, and affording entertainment for the curious :

“ Corresponding—Lads—Remember Judas :— And the year 80 ! *Last Monday Morning, at 7 o’Clock, Doctor Merryman, of Queen-street, May-fair, presented Elizabeth, the wife of Martin Van Butchell, with her Fifth fine Boy, at his House in Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, and—they—are—all—well. Post Master General for Ten Thousand Pounds (—we mean Gentlemen’s—Not a Penny less—) I will soon construct—such Mail-Coach—Perch—Bolts as shall never break !*

To many I refer—for my character : Each will have grace—to write his case ; soon as he is well—an history tell : for the public good ;—to save human blood, as—all—true—folk—shou’d. *Sharkish* people may —keep themselves away,———*Those that use me ill—I never can heal ; being forbidden—to cast pearls to pigs ; lest—they—turn—and—tear. Wisdom makes dainty : patients come to me, with heavy guineas,—between ten and one ; but—I—go—to—none.*”

Mender of Mankind ; in a manly way.

In another advertisement, he says :

“ That your Majesty’s Petitioner is a British Christian Man, aged fifty nine—with a comely beard—full eight inches long. That your Majesty’s Petitioner was born in the County of Middlesex—brought up in the County of Surrey—and has never been out of the Kingdom of England. That your Majesty’s Petitioner (—about ten years ago—) had often the high honour (—before your Majesty’s Nobles—) of conversing with your Majesty (—face to face—) when we were hunting of the stag—on Windsor Forest.”

“*British Christian Lads* (—Behold—now is the day—of Salvation. Get understanding;—as the highest gain.—) Cease looking boyish;—become quite manly!—(*Girls* are fond of hair:—it is *natural*.—) Let your beards grow long: that ye may be strong:—in mind—and body: as were great grand dads:—Centuries ago; when John did not owe—a single penny: more than—he—could—pay.”

Many more, equally whimsical advertisements, might be selected, and many additional anecdotes might be told of him; but what we have here recorded concerning this complete *original* may be depended upon. Not one word of which is contrary to truth.

PARTICULARS RELATING TO

JOHN STATHAM,

A REMARKABLE BLIND YOUNG MAN,

Well known about the streets of London.

It seems that this extraordinary character was born blind, about the year 1768. Having been deprived of his father, whilst very young, he was taken care of by his father-in-law, a brass founder; and, early in life, habituated to attend very constantly the public worship of the Church of England; but it appears, the visits he then made to places of worship were more from the authority of his father-in-law, than from any religious he had for the benefit of assembling



amongst religious people; on the contrary, he was averse to the practice of going to church, and therefore it is not to be wondered at, that he should be found at length, professing openly, by words and actions, similar dislike even to religion itself. But his continuance in these sentiments was suddenly changed, in accidentally

meeting with the Countess of Huntingdon's Hymns, and the preaching of a gentleman at Spa Fields Chapel, so that he became more and more enraptured with the sublime doctrines of the Gospel; and has ever since constantly attended upon the dissenting meetings. And though blind, he does not *walk in darkness*, like too many professing christians, "who have eyes, but see not."

Those who have the use of their sight, and have been constantly resident in London, are not better acquainted with the town than poor Statham. With astonishing precision, he finds his way, from street to street, and from house to house, supplying his customers with the various periodical publications that he carries; and this only by the means of an extraordinary retentive memory. His constant companion, being a stick, whereby he *feels* his way. Such is his care and recollection, that he has never been known to lose himself.

Whilst living with his father-in-law, he paid great attention to the brass foundery business, and still remembers the process of that art. On the death of his father-in-law, poor Statham became possessed of a very small freehold estate: the produce of which is, however, so trifling, that were it not for the occasional assistance of benevolent persons, and his little magazine walk, the wants of nature could not be supplied. He uses every exertion within his power to increase his weekly pittance; but the cruelty exercised upon him by inconsiderate people has, at dif-

ferent times, given him severe pain and bitter disappointment: the inhumanity we allude to, is that of sending him orders for magazines to be taken to places, several miles distant, which when purchased and conveyed to the fictitious place, he has been told, "No such books have been ordered, nor is there any one of that name lives here." Now if the persons so treating a poor defenceless man, only reflected a moment, at least, they would forbear the shameful exercise of such wanton cruelty.

As we have hinted at the strength of his memory, we will now produce some facts to substantiate the truth. He can repeat all the Church of England service, and a great part of the Old and New Testament; some particular portions of Scripture which he considers remarkably striking, he delivers with peculiar emphasis: besides the recollection of Lady Huntingdon's Hymns. Every sermon he hears he will go over, when returned home, with astonishing precision.

Equal to his retentive memory is his ingenuity, possessing an extensive knowledge of metals, copper, tin, brass, pewter, &c. &c. He can likewise tell if pinchbeck is or not a good mixture of copper and brass of equal proportion!

And no less remarkable is his retention of hearing: we remember upon a time, a person only having been once in his company, and after an absence of some months the same gentleman paid him a second visit; poor Statham immediately looked to the spot from whence the voice proceeded, and having repeatedly turned

his head, without any further information, instantly addressed the gentleman he recollected.

It appears he is extremely fond of music, and what is called spiritual singing. His mode of living is always regular and frugal; strong liquors, so much used by the poor of this country, are by him religiously abstained from. These circumstances cause him to receive the advantages of a regular good state of health, and that cheerfulness of mind and patience in suffering, so very conspicuous in his character.

ANNE LONGMAN,

SINGER AND MUSICIAN.

WE have now to take notice of a female, who never fails to attract particular notice; she is mostly attended by a crowd: with the assistance of a musical instrument, called a guitar, she adds her own voice, which combined with the instrument, has a very pleasing effect.

A decent modesty is conspicuous in this person, more so than in any other we have ever witnessed following so humble a calling. She is wife to a soldier in the foot-guards, and lost her sight by suckling twin children, who are sometimes with her, conducted by a girl, who seems engaged to assist the family both at home and out of doors. Cleanliness, at all times the



nurse of health, is by nine-tenths of the poor of this land banished existence, as if it were matter of misery to be distinguished by a clean skin and with clean clothes; now this rarity, we speak of, is amply possessed by Anne Longman, and though not quite so conspicuous in this particular as Ann Siggs, yet she lays strong claim to pity and charitable sympathy. It cannot be supposed that her husband possessing only the salary arising from the situation of a private in

the foot-guards, can support without additional assistance, himself, his wife quite blind, and a family of four children, without encountering some severe trials and difficulties; so that upon the whole, it is matter of satisfaction and pleasure to find, that incumbered as she is, some addition is made to their support through the innocent means of amusing the surrounding spectators by her melody.

JOHN and ROBERT GREEN,

THE WANDERING MINSTRELS.

THESE pedestrians form a singular sight; twins in birth, and partners in misfortunes in life; they came into the world blind, and blind are compelled to wade their way through a world of difficulties and troubles.

Though nothing very remarkable can be recorded of them, yet, there is something in their looks and manners that at least renders them conspicuous characters.

They are continually moving from village to village, from town to town, and from city to city, never omitting to call upon London, whether outward or homeward bound. It is observable, however, they never play but one tune, which may account for their not stopping any



length of time in one place. For upwards of twenty years they have always been seen together.

John and Robert Green are visitors at most country fairs, particularly at the annual Statute Fair, held at Chipping Norton, which they never fail to attend; and at this place, it appears, they were born.

When in London they are always noticed with a guide; and as soon as the old harmony

is finished, one takes hold of the skirt of the other's coat, and in that manner proceed until they again strike up the regular tune. We are inclined to think the charity bestowed upon them is not given as a retaining fee, but rather to get rid of a dissonance and a discord, which from continual repetition becomes exceedingly disagreeable; though in this manner they pick up a decent subsistence.

TOM AND HIS PIGEONS,

A noted Character,

ABOUT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, &c.

THOMAS SUGDEN seems determined to distinguish himself from the rest of his brethren, by carrying two pigeons upon his shoulders, and one upon his head; healthy and fine birds continue so but a little time with him. He is the dirtiest among the dirty; and his feathered companions soon suffer from this disgusting propensity; one week reduces their fine plumage and health to a level with the squalid and miserable appearance of their master, whose pockets very often contain the poor prisoners, to be ready to bring them forth at the first convenient stand he thinks it most to his advantage to occupy; and from this mode of conveyance are they indebted for broken feathers, dirt, &c.



Sugden, a native of Yorkshire, lost his sight in a dreadful storm, on board the *Gregson*, merchantman, Captain Henley, commander: the particulars he sometimes relates, and attributes his misfortunes to an early neglect of parental admonition, when nothing but sea could serve his turn. He addresses his younger auditors upon this subject, and remonstrates with them on the advantage of obedience to their parents.



ROGER SMITH.

ELEVATED as the bell ringing tribe are above this humble creature, the correct manner of his ringing, with hand-bells, various peals and song tunes, would puzzle the judgments of a very large portion of regular bred belfry idlers.

Numbers of persons have attended upon his performance, particularly when his self-con-

structed belfry was in existence, near Broad Wall, Lambeth, containing a peal of eight bells, from which he obtained a tolerable livelihood; here he was soon disturbed, and obliged to quit to make way for some building improvement. He has ever since exercised his art in most public places, on eight, ten, and sometimes twelve bells, for upwards of twenty-four years. He frequently accompanies the song tunes with his voice, adding considerably to the effect, though he has neither a finished or powerful style of execution. While he performs upon the hand-bells (which he does sitting), he wears a hairy cap, to which he fixes two bells; two he holds in each hand; one on each side, guided by a string connected with the arm; one on each knee; and one on each foot. It appears, he originally came from the city of Norwich, and was employed as a weaver in that place some years, but, having (from a cold) received an injury to his sight, resigned his trade for the profession which necessity now compels him to follow.

GEORGE ROMONDO,

Well known for his imitative abilities

AND GROTESQUE APPEARANCE.

It seems the important study of ass braying, wild boar grunting, and the cry of hungry pigs,



has engaged for some years the attention of this original. In addition to these harmonious and delightful sounds, another description of melody he successfully performs, which is on the trumpet, French horn, drum, &c.

An Italian took a fancy to his wonderful ingenuity, and had him imported into England. As an inducement to obtain George's consent to leave the city of Lisbon, in Portugal, the place of his

nativity, he was most flatteringly assured of making his fortune.

Romondo took shipping for England, safely arrived in London early in the year 1800; and soon after commenced operations in a caravan drawn by horses, nearly resembling those used by the famous Pidcock, for the travelling of his wild beasts up and down the country. In this manner Romondo began making a tour of England, from fair to fair, under the style and title of "THE LITTLE MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN." He now became alternately pig, boar, and ass, for the Italian's profit, with an allowance of 2s. 6d. per day, for himself. It is natural to suppose such a speculation could not be attended with success; the event actually turned out so; and after some time it was given up, and our poor mountain hero left by this cunning Italian, to shift for himself.

He, however, soon after commenced operations upon his own account and continues to this day to exercise his surprising talents!

He is about forty-three years of age, wears a cocked hat, drooping a prodigious length over his shoulders, completely in the fashion of a dustman or coalheaver, and with a coat actually sweeping the ground. In height he is about three feet six inches; his legs and thighs appear like a pair of callipers; he is said to be, in temper, very good natured; and is very fond of the ladies, often kissing their elbows, which come exactly parallel with his lips, as he walks the streets of London; and in exchange, many

a box on the ear has been received, with apparent good nature. At particular times, he is seen in his full dress, with a round fashionable hat, white cotton stockings, and red slippers.

TOBY,

A CONSPICUOUS NEGRO.

A frequent visitor about the streets of London.

FROM the unintelligible crying jargon this man utters, while supplicating charity, one would be induced to suppose him ignorant of the English language, but he possesses, at least, as perfect a knowledge of it as most persons in his humble sphere.

The use of his own native language is of great advantage to him, in exciting the pity and fixing the attention of the passenger; and is, besides, a great inducement to many, to extend their charity to this apparently distressed stranger. Indeed he exercises every art, and leaves no method untried, to work upon the various dispositions of those he supplicates. Very often he will preach to the spectators gathered round him, presuming frequently to make mention of the name of Jesus; and, sometimes he will amuse another sort of auditors, with a song; and *when begging*, he always appears bent dou-



ble, as if with excessive pain and fatigue. But here again is another deception and trick of a very shallow manufacture: for in the same day we have seen him when outward bound, in the morning, so bent double as with a *fixed* affliction; but on his return home in the evening after the business of the day is closed, this black Toby reverses his position, lays aside all his restraints, walks upright, and with as firm a step as the nature of his loss will allow, begins talking Eng-

lish and ceases preaching. To all appearance, a daily and universal miracle appears to be wrought; for scarcely are he and his jovial companions assembled together in one place and with one accord; or rather scarcely has liquor appeared upon the table, than the blind can see—the dumb speak—the deaf hear—and the lame walk! Here, indeed, as Pope has said, one might

“ See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing :”

Or, as he has nearly said upon a more solemn occasion,

“ Hear the dumb sing; the lame his crutch forego,

“ And leap, exulting, like the bounding roe.”

To descend from the imitations of these poetic strains, we add that to such assemblies *

* From some such meetings as these, we suppose the following circular club letter to have been issued :

“ The company of all mumpers, cadjers, match makers, dandelion diggers, dragon fogrum gatherers, water-cress fishers, and others, is earnestly requested, to morrow evening, at the Old Blind Beak's Head, in Dyot-street, St. Giles's, at 9 o'clock precisely. As the house has been altered, the company will be accommodated with a large room up stairs; but those who are not really lame, are desired to leave their sticks and crutches at the bar, to prevent mischief. After the admission of new members, the president will give directions from the chair, for avoiding of beadles and all other unlucky persons; point out for the benefit of country

as those just described, Toby is a visiting member, and is frequently called upon from the chair to amuse the company ; and as a beggar's life is avowedly made up of extremes: from these midnight revels, he adjourns to a miserable two-penny lodging, where, with the regular return of the morning, as a carpenter putteth on his apron, or as a trowel is taken into the hand of a bricklayer ; even so Black Toby, laying aside all the freaks of the evening, again sallies forth in quest of those objects of credulity, that will ever be found in a population so extensive as that of this metropolis.

Toby was employed on board a merchantman, bound from Bermuda to Memel, and in the voyage, from the severity of the weather and change of climate, lost the whole of his toes in the passage. From Memel, he found his way to

members, the best parts for strolling, the method of making artificial sores, &c.

“ Mr. Nick Froth, the landlord, also informs his friends and customers, that on account of the many evening lectures and methodist meetings, in the winter season, the club will meet an hour later than usual. He will also allow sprats to be broiled on the tap-room fire, let his boy fetch hogs' maws and sheep's heads. — And that he likewise sends strong beer in white jugs or black tin pots (out of a blind) to any of the stands, at a reasonable distance from his house. —

N.B. A good stand to let, now occupied by a person, who is under the necessity of going into the Lock Hospital.

England, on board the Lord Nelson privateer, and ever since has supported himself by the improper charity he receives from begging.

MEMOIRS OF THE FAMOUS

Sir JOHN DINELY, Baronet;

One of the Knights of Windsor.

“ Take him for all in all,

“ We ne’er shall look upon his like again.”

SIR JOHN DINELY is descended from a very illustrious family, which continued to flourish in great repute in Worcestershire, till the last century, when they expired in the person of Sir Edward Dinely, Knight.

The present heroic Sir John Dinely has, however, made his name conspicuous by stepping into a new road of fancy, by his poetic effusions, by his curious advertisements for a wife, and by the singularity of his dress and appearance.

Sir John now lives at Windsor, in one of the habitations appropriated to reduced gentlemen of his description. His fortune, he estimates at three hundred thousand pounds, *if he could recover it!*

In dress, Sir John is no changeling; for nearly twenty years past he has been the faithful resemblance of the engraving accompanying this account. He is uncommonly loquacious, his conversation is overcharged with egotism, and such a mixture of repartee and evasion, as to excite doubts in the minds of superficial observers, as to the reality of his character and



abilities. With respect to his exterior, it is really laughable to observe him, when he is known to be going to some public place to exhibit his person; he is then decked out with a full bottomed wig, a velvet embroidered waistcoat, satin breeches and silk stockings. On such occasions as these, not a little inflated with family pride, he seems to imagine himself as great as any lordling: but on the day following, he may be seen slowly pacing from the chandler's shop,

with a penny loaf in one pocket, a morsel of butter, a quartern of sugar, and a three-farthing candle in the other.

He is still receiving epistles in answer to his advertisements, and several whimsical interviews and ludicrous adventures have occurred in consequence. He has, more than once, paid his addresses to one of his own sex, dressed as a fine lady; at other times, when he has expected to see his fair enamorado at a window, he has been rudely saluted with the contents of very different compliments. One would suppose, these accidents would operate as a cooler, and allay in some degree the warmth of his passion. But our heroic veteran still triumphs over every obstacle, and the hey-day of his blood still beats high; as may be seen by the following advertisement for a wife, in the *Reading Mercury*, May 24, 1802 :

“Miss in her Teens,—let not this sacred offer escape your eye. I now call all qualified ladies, marriageable, to chocolate at my house every day at your own hour.—With tears in my eyes, I must tell you, that sound reason commands me to give you but one month’s notice before I part with my chance of an infant baronet for ever: for you may readily hear that three widows and old maids, all aged above fifty, near my door, are now pulling caps for me. Pray, my young charmers, give me a fair hearing; do not let your avaricious guardians unjustly fright you with a false account of a forfeiture, but let the great Sewel and Rivet’s opinions convince you to the contrary; and that I am now in legal possession of these estates; and with the spirit of an heroine command my three thousand pounds, and rank above half the ladies in our imperial kingdom. By your ladyship’s directing a favourable line to me, Sir John Dinely, Baronet, at any house in Windsor Castle, your attorney will satisfy you, that if I live but a month, eleven thousand pounds a year will be your ladyship’s for ever.”

Sir John does not forget to attend twice or thrice a year at Vauxhall and the theatres, according to appointments in the most fashionable daily papers. He parades

the most conspicuous parts of Vauxhall, and is also seen in the front row of the pit in the theatres; whenever it is known he is to be there, the house is sure, especially by the females, to be well attended. Of late, Sir John has added a piece of stay tape to his wig, which passes under his chin; from this circumstance, some persons might infer that he is rather chop-fallen; an inference by no means fair, if we still consider the gay complexion of his advertisements and addresses to the ladies.

PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE
POLITE GROCERS OF THE STRAND.

“ Brother John and I.”

OUR engraving represents two singular characters, whose eccentric humour is well worthy of the attention of the *curious*. Messrs. AARON and JOHN TRIM are grocers, living at No. 449, Strand, nearly opposite Villiers-street; at this shop curiosity would not be disappointed of the expected gratification, from the personal appearance of the two gentlemen behind the counter, if there was nothing else to strike the attention. One of the gentlemen is so short, as frequently to be under the necessity of mounting the steps to serve his customers. And the shop itself displays no common spectacle: a dozen pair of scales are strewed from one end of the counter to the other, mingled with large lumps of sugar and various other articles; the floor too is so completely piled with goods, one upon



the other, and in all parts so covered that there is passage sufficient but for one person at a time to be served; and we believe there is no shop in the neighbourhood so much frequented, although there are a great many in the same business within two hundred yards of A. and J. Trim. Their shop is remarkable for selling, what is termed "a good article." These gentlemen

exercise the greatest attention to their customers, and such good humour and urbanity of manners, as to be characterised the “POLITE GROCERS.” They were born in the same house in which they now live, and have remained there ever since; and where their father, a man well esteemed, died some years back, leaving the business to his sons, with considerable property.

The church of England never had more regular attenders upon its ministry and forms of worship than in the persons of Messrs. Aaron and John Trim, whose attendance at the public worship, at St. Martin’s, in the Strand, is as regular with them as the neglect and desertion is common by the generality of its members.

The whole of the business of the Polite Grocers is conducted by themselves, with now and then the assistance of a young woman, who appears principally to have the management of the Two-penny post; and from the extent of their trade, the smallness of their expences, and their frugality, it is generally supposed they must be rich; but though extremely talkative upon any other subject, yet on every point relating to themselves and their private concerns, they very properly maintain the most impenetrable closeness and reserve.

Abounding as this age does with so many temptations and examples of extravagance and waste, it requires no small portion of resolution to maintain a due observance of economy, to be kept from following the public current, in its wasteful fashions and extravagant expences. Now that the *Polite Grocers* maintain this economy, cannot be doubted; and which, in the present situation of things, must be considered no small virtue. Economy without penuriousness, liberality without prodigality!



ANN JOHNSON,

THE HOLBORN LACE WEAVER,

A conspicuous blind woman.

ANN JOHNSON is a poor industrious widow, cleanly, sober, and decent, inoffensive and honest, and quite blind. The engraved portrait of this interesting figure may be depended upon for its faithful representation of the much-to-be-pitied original. She was born at

Eaton, in Cheshire, on St. Andrew's day, old style, in the year 1743, was apprenticed to a ribband weaver at the early age of ten years, and was twenty-four years old when she lost her sight occasioned by a spotted fever.

Sitting exposed to the inclemency of hot and cold, of wet and dry weather, for upwards of six and twenty years, in the open streets of London, might naturally undermine a constitution the most vigorous and healthy. It certainly has considerably affected Ann Johnson, whose regular appearance, even in the bitterest days of winter has been as uniform as the finest in summer, on Holborn-hill, upon the steps at the corner of Marmaduke and Thomas Langdale's house, the distillers. Here she exhibits the expert manner in which she makes laces, attracting the notice of the considerate passenger; she is rendered additionally interesting, by the cheerfulness of her conversation and the serenity of her countenance, using words, in effect, similar to the following beautiful lines:

“Are not the ravens daily fed by thee?
And will thou clothe the lilies, and not me?
Begone distrust!—I shall have clothes and bread,
While lilies flourish, or the birds are fed.”

She resides at No. 5, Church-lane, Bloomsbury, and has been an inhabitant of London upwards of thirty-eight years. We particularly recommend her to the considerate attention of every little girl or young woman, and when they are in want of any laces, to think of Ann Johnson.—Such great industry deserves encouragement.



SAMUEL HORSEY,

A REMARKABLE MAN WITHOUT LEGS,

Called the King of the Beggars.

SUCH as have seen this man in London (and there are very few that have not) will be instantly struck with the accuracy of the engraving.

He has literally *rocked* himself about London for upwards of nineteen years, with the help of a wooden seat, assisted by a short pair of crutches; and the facility with which he moves, is the more singular, when

we consider he is very corpulent ; he appears to possess remarkable good health, and is about fifty-six years of age. In his life we have no great deal to notice, as wonderful or remarkable. His figure alone is, what renders him a striking character; not striking for the height or bulk of his person, but for the mutilated singularity and diminutive size so conspicuously attracting when upon his move in the busiest parts of London streets; in places that require considerable care, even for persons well mounted upon legs, and possessing a good knowledge of the art of walking, to get along without accidents; but even here, poor Samuel works his way, whilst buried, as it were, with the press of the crowd, in a manner very expeditious and tolerably free from accidents, except being tumbled over now and then by people walking too much in haste.

MISS THEODORA DE VERDION,

commonly known by the name of

CHEVALIER JOHN THEODORA DE VERDION,

Who lived in London, disguised as a man, a teacher of languages, and a walking bookseller.

THIS singular woman was born in the year 1744, at Leipsic, in Germany, and died at her lodgings in Upper Charles-street, Hatton-Garden, London, July 15, 1802. She was the only daughter of an architect, of the name of Grahn, who erected several edifices, in the city of Berlin, particularly the church of St. Peters. She wrote an excellent hand, and had learned the mathematics, the French, Italian, and English languages,



and possessed a complete knowledge of her native tongue. Upon her arrival in England, she commenced teacher of the German language, under the name of Dr. John de Verdion. In her exterior, she was extremely grotesque, wearing a bag wig, a large cocked hat, three or four folio books under one arm, and an umbrella under the other, her pockets completely filled with small volumes, and a stick in her right hand.

She had a good knowledge of English books; many

persons entertained her for her advice, relative to purchasing them. She obtained a comfortable subsistence from teaching and translating foreign languages, and by selling books chiefly in foreign literature. She taught the Duke of Portland the German language, and was always welcomed to his house; the Prussian Ambassador to our court received from her a knowledge of the English language; and several distinguished noblemen she frequently visited to instruct them in the French tongue; she also taught Edward Gibbon, the celebrated Roman historian, the German language, previous to his visiting that country. This extraordinary female has never been known to have appeared in any other but the male dress since her arrival in England, where she remained upwards of thirty years; and upon occasions she would attend at court, decked in very superb attire; and was well remembered about the streets of London; and particularly frequent in attending book auctions, and would buy to a large amount, sometimes a coach load, &c. Here her singular figure generally made her the jest of the company, and sometimes the object of their wagghery.

Her general purchase at these sales was odd volumes; which she used to carry to other booksellers, and endeavour to sell, or exchange for other books. She was also a considerable collector of medals and foreign coins of gold and silver; but none of these were found after her decease. She was a great deal at the Furnival's Inn coffee-house, in Holborn, dining there almost every day. Here, though she concealed her sex, she could not help exhibiting her natural disposition, as an extraordinary lover of good eating. She would have the first of every thing in season, and was as strenuous for a large quantity, as she was dainty in the quality of what she chose for her table. At times,

it is well known, she could dispense with three pounds of solid meat.

She was also much inclined to extravagant drinking; and once in particular, was so completely intoxicated, at Furnival's Inn coffee-house, that being incapable of walking home, two persons were compelled to assist her, who took advantage of her inebriation, and verified her sex beyond all possibility of doubt.

Another evening, some young gentlemen who knew her foibles, followed her from the coffee-house, surrounded and jostled her, charged her with picking one of their pockets; to get rid of this accusation, she referred the matter to the master of the coffee-house, who of course, spoke in her favour; and with which pretending to be satisfied, they went away, highly delighted with their frolic, they having some very strong suspicions she was a woman.

The disorder of a cancer, which finished the career of this remarkable lady, was occasioned by a fall down stairs, by which her breast was hurt. This circumstance, she was at length compelled to make known to a German physician, who prescribed for her, when the disorder turned to a dropsy, and defied all cure.

To follow lovers, women there have been
 Disguis'd as men, who've dar'd the martial scene;
 Or, in pursuit of an inconstant swain,
 Experienc'd all the dangers of the main.
 Not so DE VERDION, for some other plan
 She laid aside the woman for the man.
 Perhaps she thought, that female garb and looks
 Ill spoke the gravity of German books:
 That as a woman she could not pretend
 To teach, translate, and literature to vend;
 That as a woman, she could never be
 A DOCTOR, since 'tis man takes that *degree*:
 Who can deny that a *bag wig* denotes
 More sense, more consequence, than *petticoats*?

And probably our hero-heroine knew,
 That otherwise her nostrums would not do!
 But haply Prudence urg'd this strange disguise,
 (For in concealment modesty oft lies).
 Assur'd she'd have to deal with wicked men,
 She might have chose this metamorphose then;
 And as poor women, always weak are thought,
 Security from men's appearance sought:
 Then let not ridicule insult her name,
 For who can tell but virtue was her aim;
 That she disclaim'd her sex through pious care,
 And thus, ye fair ones, left a name that's *fair*;
 For, nature's common frailties set aside,
 She liv'd a christian, and a christian died;
 Nor man nor woman by attire is known,
 The PROOF OF ALL WILL BE THE HEART ALONE!

DANIEL LAMBERT,

Aged Thirty-six Years.

THE astonishing weight of this man is fifty stone and upwards, being more than seven hundred pounds; the surprising circumference of his body is three yards four inches; his leg, one yard and an inch; and his height, five feet eleven inches; and though of this amazing size, entirely free from any corporal defect.

This very remarkable personage received his birth in Leicester; at which place he was apprenticed to an engraver. Until he arrived at the age of twenty years, he was not of more than usual size, but after that period he began to increase in bulk, and has been gradually increasing, until within a few months of the present time. He was much accustomed to exercise in the early years of his life, and excelled in walking, riding, and shooting; and more particularly devoted himself to field exercises, as he found himself inclined to corpulency; but to the great astonishment of



his acquaintance, it proved not only unavailing, but really seemed to produce a directly opposite effect. Mr. Lambert is in full possession of perfect health; and whether sitting, lying, standing, or walking, is quite at his ease, and requires no more attendance than any common sized person. He enjoys his night's repose, though he does not indulge himself in bed longer than the refreshment of sleep continues.

The following anecdote is related of him:—Some time since, a man with a dancing bear going through the town of Leicester, one of Mr. Lambert's dogs taking a dislike to his shaggy appearance, made a violent attack upon the defenceless animal. Bruin's master did not fail to take the part of his companion, and, in his turn, began to belabour the dog. Lambert, being a witness of the fray, hastened with all possible expedition, from the seat or settle (on which he makes a practice of sitting at his own door) to rescue his dog. At this moment the bear, turning round suddenly, threw down his unwieldy antagonist, who from terror and his own weight, was absolutely unable to rise again, and with difficulty got rid of his formidable opponent."

He is particularly abstemious with regard to diet, and for nearly twelve years has not taken any liquor, either with or after his meals, but water alone. His manners are very pleasing; he is well-informed, affable, and polite; and having a manly countenance and prepossessing address, he is exceedingly admired by those who have had the pleasure of conversing with him. His strength (it is worthy of observation) bears a near proportion to his wonderful appearance. About eight years ago, he carried more than four hundred weight and an half, as a trial of his ability, though quite unaccustomed to labour. His parents were not beyond the moderate size; and his sisters, who are still living, are, by no means, unusually tall or large. A suit of clothes costs him twenty pounds, so great a quantity of materials are requisite for their completion.

It is reported, that among those who have recently seen him was a gentleman weighing twenty stone: he seemed to suffer much from his great size and weight. Mr. Lambert, on his departure, observed, that he would not (even were it possible) change situations with him for ten thousand pounds. He bears

a most excellent character at his native town, which place he left, to the regret of many, on Saturday, April 4, 1806, in a carriage built on purpose; and on his arrival in London took up his abode at Mr. Robinson's, Tunbridge and toy warehouse, No. 53, Piccadilly, where he sees and converses with company, every day, excepting Sundays, from eleven till five o'clock. The admittance is one shilling.

It is quite uncertain how long he will remain in town; but from the multitudes of visitors that flock to see him, it is supposed he will be induced to continue here until the close of the ensuing winter season.

N.B. There is a very good portrait of Daniel Lambert, published by W. and T. Darton, Holborn, on a coloured sheet, with particulars concerning him, price One Shilling.

MARY JONES,

COMMONLY CALLED MAD MOLLY,

*Well known about Cheapside, Newgate-street, Holborn-
Bridge, &c. &c.*

WHIMS wild and simple lead her from her home,
'Mongst London's alleys, streets, and lanes, to roam.
When morning wakes, none earlier rous'd than she,
Pity she claims and kind humanity.
Affliction sad hath chas'd her hard,
Frailty her crime, and mis'ry her reward!
Her mind's serenity is lost and gone,
Her eyes grown languid, and she weeps alone.
And oft the gaily-passing stranger stays
His well-tim'd steps, and takes a silent gaze;



Or hears repeated, as he passes nigh,
One short but simple word "*Good-by*",
A beauty once she was in life's gay morn;
Fled now's her beauty, and she's left forlorn.
Once was she happy, calm, and free,
Now lives in woe, in rags, and misery.

A revolution too hath taken place,
In manners, actions, and grimace.
Unlawful love has marr'd her former peace,
Quick vanish'd hope; and left her sorrow, grief!
She merits every kind protecting care:
Of generous bounty let her have her share.
Childish and trivial now are all her ways;
In peace, Oh! let her live; with comfort end her days.

A WELL KNOWN CARVER,

IN FLEET-MARKET, ANNO 1806.

“HOT OR COLD.”

Hot or cold, she carves away
Ham and Beef all through the day;
Enough of work she's sure of finding,
In stopping hunger or stomach lining.
Through winter's cold or summer's heat,
Full is the shop whene'er we see 't.



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