LITERARY SELECTIONS.

Front bravely the object of your worst apprehension, and your shadows will commonly make your fear ground-less.

TRUTH.—He who brings nibble to bear against truth finds in his hand a blade without a hilt—one more likely to cut himself than anybody else.

ACTIVITY.—In the affairs of life, activity is to be preferred to dignity; and practical energy and despatch are better than premeditated contemplation.

FALSEHOOD.—Every violation of truth is not only a sort of suicide in the liar, but is a stab at the health of human society. The most profitable lie pays a ruinous tax.

GEOLOGISTS IN THE ROUGH.—Mr. T. Hawkins, in his "Book of the Great Sea Dragons," tells a characteristic story about the findings of his men in the Lias quarries. Two quarrymen at Street had turned over the great table in which the bones lay imbedded, enough being exposed to make them conclude it was the usual "I wonder what 'tes," says the one. "Oh, a vlery dragoen a-man-be," replies his fellow; "I've a-zeen zum zo mee zo man-be; hah." "Here's at un." A tremendous blow with the mallet. "How he do zound; I wonder if the stone be hollo." Another tremendous blow. "Ha! zmoke—vire-stwone is terrible hard; het un agoen, Jack." Oh my Tritarasnotius! broke in half! "There's hee lindeed!" exclaimed Jack. "And there's vire, 'e got a head!" A blow follows this question that breaks the head and neck—or rather the slap, as the skeleton was hurled to the centre of the floor of the quarry. "No, 'tooes bet o' a head—zoo zine o' one 'e lys." "Dosten bet un in the right place." "Hang the twoo!" Another miserable blow, which deprived the tail of its "Wuest ell Mester Hawkins say!" "Oh, we can tell un that we didn't know what 'twere and wanted to zee a bit." "And so," says Mr. Hawkins, "they reduced the fine fragstone to nearly thirty pitiful pieces, and stabbed the bones as a Spanish matador does a bull—all over."

PARISH WOMEN.—How far Parson females have been wanted from the prejudices of a barbarous age, may be judged from the following incident. A young curate, with the sanction of their parents, refuse to accompany their husbands to distant places where they are employed, unless though the chance of matrimony could be dragged no further than the limits of the towns in which they were born and flourished in wedlock. The following is another instance in point, wherein the husband threatened to discard his wife should she remain any longer away from him, and wherein the bonds of wedlock were mutually cut asunder, by mutual consent, by a private release effected under the immediate superintendence of the editor of the *Spectator*. A Parsee, at present residing at Hyderabad, in Scinde, seeing that several messages failed to induce his wife to join him, sent a letter to Bombay, to bring his wife to Hyderabad. This arrangement though backed by strong recommendations, had no better success, and even a second letter failed. Judge solicitor, failed to bring back the woman to a sense of her duty to her husband. Finding all his efforts of no avail, he caused a novel advertisement to be published in one of the Guzzatee journals, warning his wife that if she did not join him within eight days from the date of the lawyer's notice, she would no longer consider her as her husband, and that he would discard her overmore. This advertisement was not intended to, and the consequence has been a dissolution of marriage which was effected referred to. As an instance of the deplorable consequences of early marriages under such circumstances, it is alleged that these parties were married when the girl was six months old.—*Times of India.*

THE PRINCIPLE OF LIFE.—The fortnight's number of the *Revue Contemporaine* contains a very interesting article by Dr. Brion, on one of the most disputed questions of the day—the principle of life. The article is not of a nature to admit of satisfactory analysis, but the following extract will give an idea of the curious questions on which it touches:—"Anatomy, says Dr. Brion, "has arrived at the knowledge of this truth, now admitted by all—viz., that every living being, whatever degree of organization it may subsequently attain, rises in existence as a simple cell. The cell! that is the initial anatomical element of every organised being. This primordial cell is immediately endowed with the vital force which produces it, since it is endowed with a life, and presently possesses contains either a plant, an animal, or man. This simple cell possesses, in its protoplasm, all the energy necessary for the continuation of its existence, whatever the situation may be; it absorbs nourishment, divides into segments in order to form other cells, the number of which will go on constantly increasing, until the being which is to reach from its birth to its death and size peculiar to its species. For some time nutrition will be the only manifestation of this primitive life. Now in this primordial state the cell is not yet individual in individuality: it is already, potentially at least, a man, for otherwise it would be not enough: it is not only a man, but it is already such or such a man, individualized, personified. So, after it shall have acquired its full development, being which has begun by it this cell possesses a sense of its own, which it will not lose until its death; it will be an individual in possession of its own independent life in the species to which it belongs."—*Galignani.*

CONTEMPLATION OF THE MIND.—It must be one that a man will best gain command over those intellectual faculties which he knows are his strongest, by cultivating the faculties that somewhat lack strong constitution them. He in whom imagination is opulent and fervid will regulate it by discipline in exercise by forcing him self to occupations or studies that require plain sound sense. He who feels that the bias of his judgment or tendency of his sympathies is towards the positive and anti-poetic forms of life, will best guard against the narrowness of scope and feebleness of grasp which characterise the intellect that sees nothing across only in commonplace, by warming his faculties in the glow of imagining genius; he should not forget that where the intellect is strongest, it is most in danger of the pride of scientific learned discovered for themselves. Aim of really great imagination will be found to be those of well-disciplined some branch of knowledge that requires critical and severe reasoning. Men of really great capacities for practical business will generally be found to indulge in a predilection for works of fancy. The favourite reading books or children of high order will seldom be poetry or fiction. Poetry or fiction is with them a relaxation. Their favourite reading will be generally in works called abstract or dry—politics, metaphysics, abstract problems of criticism, or delicate nicetics of conscience. On the other hand, the favourite reading of celebrated writers is generally novels. Thus in some minds of large powers there is an unconscious struggle perpetually going on to preserve equilibrium. The eye soon loses its justness of vision if always directed towards objects that are seen in one distance—the soil soon exhausts its produce if you draw from it one crop.—Sir. E. B. Lytton, in *Blackwood's Magazine for April.*

EUROPEANS AND ASIATICS.—The rapid growth and progress of modern nations in Europe has left Asia so far behind, that the older race has become as a child in the grasp of the younger, and incapable of maintaining its existence in actual conflict. There is a dull consciousness of this fact in the Asiatic mind, and of the giant power wielded by the younger and still despised branches of the great human family. And only thus is the collateral fact to be accounted for, that no people or nation of Asiatic blood ever yield to the superior strength of the European without a dogged and determined resistance. There is another often continued long after all hope of success which have died out of their hearts. Like the Greeks of the Byzantine empire, and later, the Turkish and Chinese Italians of the middle ages, the Chinese and Japanese are brought in contact with race surging upon them from unknown heights, and the limits of civilisation—barbarians, in a word, far superior to themselves in bone, and thew, and sinew, in prowess and in military tactics, but still barbarians. Hence in Asia, civilisation all else constitutes superiority in their estimation in comparison with main language, literature, religion, and philosophy, she only religion or philosophy that is having a real existence or value. As Gothic Goths and Vandals trembled before the effeminate Byzantine Court, and Mahomet the Gaul, so can we the hosts of China or Japan, though in other respects professedly inferior to barbarians, the result is still the same. The triumph over their inferiors and their ignorance of arms does not constitute any superiority, and recognition of superiority, but leaves behind their hearts and consoles themselves unconsciously, in secret a cumulative and rankling contempt for their conquerors.—*A Lord's Capital of the Orient.*

SUPERSTITION; PAST AND PRESENT.—In looking back to the history of witchcraft, it is not surprising that popular ignorance and superstition which it discloses that it was our ancestors were. Enlightened as the present age considered itself, and boasting of the great power which show her great an influence the powers of darkness still retain and how imperfectly the boasted spread of knowledge has yet displaced them, we cannot but wonder fondly imagine that human credulity and prejudice can never cease to be the grave forms of a bygone age. In a former generation, may read his own refutation in the feelings and minds of his own. It was only the other day that a Midland farm labourer murdered his fellow-servant because she regarded him, as he supposed, with an evil eye. And, lo! it is proved that the same kind of stupid delusion may be found in the centres of intelligence as well as in remote corners of the country, it lately happened, in London itself, that a young man was tried for a brutal assault on an aged woman, he has been the only motive for which was that she had bewitched him. These are instances of the extent, and easily be multiplied. Its area has contracted; it is no longer epidemic, but local and isolated, yet it exists still, and this fact proves shocks the surprise we might otherwise feel at the delusion which seems so common among large masses of the people. What appears at the present day really astonishing is the attitude which the learned professions in former days adopted in presence of these phenomena, and the views formerly entertained about them by the enlightened minority. We measure our advance in civilisation, not by the existence of such or similar forms of the ancient peasantry, but by the alteration in the views entertained on the subject by the educated and enlightened classes. It is quite possible—may, indeed, probable—that here and there, in the fens of Lincolnshire, a perfect model might be found at the present day for the stupidity and superstition that was rife in the seventeenth century. It is quite impossible that a Lord Chief Justice of the present day should use the language which Sir Matthew Hale is reported to have used at the trial of the Suffolk witches, or that learned and pious divines should imitate the example of the two Hetherings.—*Quarterly Review.*

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

THE SPIRITUAL PECKSNIFF.

(From the Examiner.)

THE Pecksniff of the Episcopal Bench is the Bishop of Oxford. Hereafter it will hardly be believed that Dickens did not draw the character from the life, and a few years hence it will scarcely be credible for if Pecksniff is not a subdued likeness of Wilberforce, Wilberforce is a studied and exaggerated imitation of Pecksniff. If the Bishop of Oxford has been taken for the original of Pecksniff, it is accounted for Suppose him in all circumstances to ask himself how Mr Pecksniff would acquit himself, what would be his turn of thought and expression upon every question, and he will find the key to the Bishop's benignant mood and eloquence. For instance, a pretty parish church has been repaired, and put in smart order, how would Mr Pecksniff deliver himself upon the occasion? Clearly, Would it be in these precise words, amplifying and adorning the undoubted truth that a church in good repair is preferable to one in a dilapidated state—"I am perfectly confident that everybody as we meet and mingle, and mixed, the building in which we meet for such a purpose as worship produces, little by little, yet, in the end, very great effects upon us. If it bears every mark of neglect that a building can bear, if the mortar crumbles, if the buize with which, as the very cheapest possible material, its old pews are lined are fusty and musty, if its windows are cracked and let in the wind at every single orifice, if the selfish man seeks for a shelter his rheumatic shoulder by raising the family pew so that he can shut out the draught from the corner where he reposes, but leaves the poor man, with shoulders equally susceptible of rheumatism, open to the selfisness draught, that is a very humbling, and I think a very painful exhibition, and if every one is calculating whether on this particular day he is to catch that severe cold which he must catch some day, he is in no condition to enter upon worship as for the man whose selfishness is sheltered in his comfortable pew, I am sure he can be in no mood for the service of God" ... ... Now it is quite certain that this was not written by Dickens for Pecksniff, but it is equally certain that it could, and should have been so written, and that it is to be regretted it was not. Indeed in all Pecksniff proper there is not a speech more characteristic of him and appropriate. The truth, indeed, must be confessed, that the Bishop of Oxford has surpassed Pecksniff. How thoroughly Pecksniffian is that commencement:—"I am perfectly confident that, constituted as we men are, body and soul mixed, the building in which we meet for such a purpose as worship produces. little by little, yet, in the end, very great effects upon us;" and then follows, of course, a recital of all the squalid circumstances of neglect and decay where the selfish rich man takes care of himself, fencing himself in with a lofty pew, who Pecksniff is sure is in no mood for the service of God. The selfish man's care of himself and neglect of his neighbour, as regards draughts of wind, is in the mouth of the Bishop of Oxford Pecksniff, a very humbling and, he thinks, a very shameful exhibition. That is a very fine sentiment, but why should it be confined to church pews and draughts of wind? The Bishop has his comfortable house and keeping out the weather, and he is in no mood to him gets the rheumatism, which disables him for work, in a dilapidated hovel admitting all the winds and waters of heaven. We dislike pews, we think such things unsuitable in a place of worship, but it does not seem to be quite certain that while pews are in use the possession of a good one argues a selfishness constituting a humbling and shameful exhibition. Pecksniff will not apply the same argument to a grand house adjoining a miserable cottage. He does not think it shocking that the Bishop lives in a palace of Cuddesden, while some of his poor neighbours are sickening in unwholesome hovels. He does not think it is shamefully selfish that the Bishop goes home in his carriage while the poor lame man limps the same road on foot. The argument goes against the inequalities of condition, and in the spirit in which it is used has been illustrated in Canning's nursery rhyme; but it is thoroughly appropriate to the character of Pecksniff, who, having delivered it with all unction, goes home to his exclusive comforts, rejoicing that he is not like his beggarly neighbours. In the last fine passage the Bishop Pecksniff is perfection. "It (the Church) is the common hall of the parish, the common home of all their best feelings [here there should be a tear if possible], the common place where they meet, and the centre in individuality: it is already, potentially at least, a man, for otherwise it that is not enough: it is not only a man, but it is already such or such a man, individualized, personified. 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ABOLISHING THE DECALOGUE.

(From the Spectator.)

There is something very touching in the diversity of gifts and tastes (especially on religious subjects of Sunday bear) draw together the heterogeneous strings of our bigoted contemporaries the *Record* and the *Morning Advertiser*. Sunday beer, indeed, tends to make a wide breach between those loving hearts, which ought to be in unison. Nothing can offer a cheery kind of sentimental bicuin with a lofty "practical" and "neologian" organs. The *Record* has now in many successive issues been laboriously striving to "hew in pieces before the Lord" a paper of exceedingly yet great circulation and professedly religious as well as catholic-minded spirit, called "Good Words" which disseminates a spirit of cordial charity in a sphere where it is most of all needed, and which, moreover, is a paper whose intellectual culture is necessarily more advanced dogmatism, therefore, if it takes hold at all, is particularly narrow and deadly. There is no limit to the extent to which the *Record* records that "Good Words" has admitted into its pages a story by Principal Tulloch, called "Beginning Life," in which that gentleman recommends young people, with certain flimsy restrictions, not only shooting, fishing, cricket, golf, but billiards, and "all games of which that is in type," oratorios, operas, theatres, dancing, and festive parties of youth." The *Record* seems with difficulty to refrain from using once a censorship of the press, merely to put down this horrid publication, which calls itself "evangelical." It gives "Good Words" very bad words indeed—the pious equivalent, in fact, for common swearing. "Good Words" is broad enough, intimate our pious contemporary, in one sense, for it is on the broad way that leads to destruction. "We deprecate," thus concludes one of the invectives, "the possession of 'Beginning Life' in families of young man. It is a pernicious book, and we fear that it will begins life trusting such a guide, and moulded by such influences, will make but a miserable ending of it in this world, and will have a fearful beginning of life in that which is to come." We can easily read this without thinking of the exhortation which the artist Fusell, we think it so, used to address his wife when she betrayed signs of impatience: "Swear a little, my dear, it will ease you mightily." Evil has all licence to the temper in which a swearing in the sacerdotal disguise of commination is not less but more vicious than the frank profanity. Of course, the drift of our contemporary's repeated and unceasing preparatory efforts is to persuade evangelical families that "Good Words" is a snake in the grass. A lay colleague of the *Record*, however, who tries to wash a little genuine bigotry down the throat of the working men of England with every glass of ale they drink (whether taken on a week day or on Sunday), has honoured us this week with special notice. We confess there was at first something very pleasant in the unconscious humour of the *Spectator* when he found the *Morning Advertiser* of Tuesday week dropping a tear of perhaps rather intemperate congratulation over an admission that had appeared in our columns. With that slightly manlin geniality with which it loves to contemplate the weaknesses of its brother, that repentedly, its leading article begins by proposing a kind of toast to this journal, and then rambles off into the abrupt style of elevated and incoherent remark by which toasts are generally accompanied. Our contemporary is the physical sentiment, for the brimming up and overflow of the "fulness of this penesive mind," was a remark made in our last issue, and highly approved by our contemporary as a sign of sentimentality in this effect. Amicable cases seem to fancy that, because it is in the power of a state to abolish the decalogue, they have therefore the right to do so." The next series of remarks is so exceedingly incoherent, and contains such a curious notion of "abolishing" a law, that we must suppose the thread of the discussion had been unhappily lost:—"The *Spectator* denies the right of a state legislature in America to abolish the decalogue. Yet, the Spectator, we believe, very quietly while an English bishop has tried to abolish it. Dr. Colenso has striven to make us believe that the book of Exodus was not written by Moses but by Samuel, nearly four hundred years after Moses was dead. If that were true, then all scenes and descriptions of chapter xx must be regarded as mere Eastern romance, and, as a matter of fact, we have no decalogue at all. It we could hold with the Bishop of Natal, we should agree to the *Spectator*, 'Not abolish the decalogue! Why not? It would only abolish the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments.'" "Only the like abolishing the 'Arabian Nights!'" Surely, this last idea is more than usually difficult. How to an author publishing a fiction seems the kind of question a man sets himself in very bad nightmares, or delirious fevers. We should certainly have thought it a good deal easier to abolish a reality than a fiction—to abolish something than nothing." There is a fugitive character about nothing which makes it difficult to catch, and before you abolish a thing one would think one must have hold of it. We always thought, too, that the moral law existed and exists in the mind of God, and that once impressed upon it "fleshy tables of the heart," by whatever means, it would bind us; so that how even the wickedest bishop could ever hope to abolish it, it is not easy to see. Perhaps we have no right to entertain the wrong opinion that Divine law is eternal and was not invented when it was first communicated to us; and that the manner of that communication is not the primary matter; but these opinions, if they happen to be right, seem to dishonor Dr. Colenso's power to effect mischief and the *Morning Advertiser's* opportunities for despair. After all,—deliriously as the *Advertiser* states its case, the idea it wishes to inculcate, that by questioning a human document, you may incidentally "abolish" a divine law, and, perhaps, an eternal mind, is the same ideal goal which drives on the *Record* to far more effective persecutions of men and newspapers, and even swins before the minds of the bishops who have undertaken to persuade with such amazing unanimity of unfairness the heresies of Dr. Colenso. The Bishop of Manchester, we are sure, feels uncomfortable even about his own admission as to the non-existence of that second stomach of the hare, but, in the meantime, humiliating, fearful, but still true, that most of thibigotry really springs from the dim feeling that God depends on the Bible, not the Bible on God (instead of a revelation, they make the scriptures, in fact, a wall. They insist on putting the hare's second stomach of the hare, but a thousand other petty and problematic facts, between themselves and the divine mind, and then naturally enough get into a cold-sweating panic, when, in fact, the heresy which threatens such facts. It is the dreadful dream that the divine justice may be proved not to exist to all which makes human injustice so often the characteristic of theologians. If they were calm and tender, they would see that the scriptures, in fact, are not the scriptures, but the Divine law which is putting on the scriptures, in the shape of a revelation, and that the Divine law which is putting on the scriptures, in the shape of a revelation, and that the Divine law which is putting on the scriptures, in the shape of a revelation, and that