

ART. V. *Travelling Sketches in Russia and Sweden, during the Years 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808.* By Robert Ker Porter. 2 vols. 4to. pp. 600. London. Phillips. 1809.

IT has seldom been our misfortune to meet with a greater quantity of what, by the courtesy of England, are termed good things, than is here presented to us by the study and travel of Mr. Porter. These volumes are indeed a very wilderness of sweets, comprising jests, some original, and others very little the worse for wear, adapted to every possible occasion of life. If we are laid fast by want of horses, or mutiny of drivers;—if we are bitten by bugs or bears;—if our inns are dirty, if our mistresses ‘*olfac*,’ (vol. i. p. 144); or, worse than all, if we have a marquis for our fellow-traveller;—we have here a treasury at hand to refer to, for the most approved and facetious manner of venting our murmurs. Then there are puns mournful, puns merry, and puns sentimental, many of which, it must be owned, are introduced in company where (if it were not that a good thing must be always worth having) we should never expect to find them. Thus, Mr. Porter stops us short in a storm, to quibble on the name of a rock;—and in a grave treatise on the situation and history of Archangel, he, with somewhat more wit than gentleness, remarks, on that ancient and wealthy town, that ‘*Arch-Devil*’ would be its fittest name. And here we cannot but commend his prudence in guarding against the dulness of some readers, and the inattention of others, by marking the least conspicuous of his jokes, according to the advice of the Reverend Mr. Brand, in *Clarissa*, ‘*by a different mode of printing* ;’—a precaution to which we readily acknowledge ourselves indebted for the discovery of some of the very best things in the book.

To speak seriously, however—were not this bad taste, this idle merriment, continually intruding on the reader’s attention, we might have derived, if not much information, at least considerable amusement from the sketches of a good-humoured, amiable man, who is pleased with himself and every thing around him, and who has really had more opportunities of becoming acquainted with the manners and habits of the higher classes, than generally fall to the lot of travellers in the northern states of Europe.

These states, in many respects, as interesting (though in a different way) as even the delightful climates of France and Italy, and, for several years, almost the only opening afforded to the curiosity of an Englishman, have as yet been very imperfectly described by any tourist. Of statistic writers, there are indeed enough, and to spare; but of these it may be observed, that it is a defect inherent in

in their system, to want the power of delineating with force and expression the temper and character of a country; to catch the manners living as they rise; and to point out the bearing of each particular custom and ceremony, in itself apparently unimportant, on the ideas and actions of the people. It is this which constitutes the essential difference between the travels of Bruce, and the dull common-place book of Dr. Shaw;—it is this, which, even where the narrative is avowedly fictitious, distinguishes Barthelemy's *Anacharsis* from Potter's *Grecian Antiquities*; and which would elevate such a tour as Sweden and Russia deserve, above the tedious and indistinct descriptions of Tooke and Storch, and Guthrie and Catteau. There exist, however, many circumstances to prevent the appearance of such a tour as we speak of, through the Northern states. Those who have passed hastily through them, have seldom found courage to possess themselves of the language, though the languages of Sweden and Denmark are, to an Englishman, of very easy acquirement, and would amply repay his trouble, both from their connection with the history of his own, and the valuable stock of knowledge to which they are the key. In Russia, it is true, the entire novelty, both of language and alphabet, and (in spite of Lomonozoff, Sumarokoff, and Karamsin) the dismal want of literature, or of any fruits to be reaped from the most successful labour, have been sufficient to deter from its study almost every man who was not stimulated by mercantile interest, or the ambition of rising in the state. And those who, by such hopes or interests, have been long established in the country, are apt to lose by degrees that discrimination which enabled them at first to seize instinctively the prominent features of the place or people, and to convey them with warmth and feeling to those who know less than themselves.

It is a misfortune too, with the generality of foreigners, that even among the educated part of the Northern population, neither French nor English can be considered as sufficient passports, even if the language of the country be put out of the question. French is indeed the language of the court and the nobility, but among the elderly people, the military, (particularly in the remote provinces,) the middle classes of life, and the clergy, German is at least equally necessary, and these are precisely the sort of people from whom most real knowledge may be acquired. It is thus that the traveller, excluded from all intercourse with 'week-day man,' and more attracted, perhaps, by the flattering attentions of counts and princes, is apt to see mankind only in those moments when all mankind are alike, when the insipid uniformity of amusement has destroyed every thing peculiar or characteristic, and where little but the presence or absence of a carpet, the difference of hours, and the number of servants, distinguish a Russian from an English card-table. And

And even to this society, unprofitable as it generally is, the persons who are most likely to commit their observations to writing, are not always enabled to penetrate. Merchants are an abomination to the Muscovites; and the clergy, who form no trifling part of the English tourists, are generally referred, by the opinions of the great, to the same class as their neglected '*popas*.' After what has been said, it will excite no surprise to learn, that a Northern tour, such as it ought to be, is still a desideratum. The best guides to Sweden and Norway may perhaps be found in a little volume, entitled '*Promenade en Suede, &c.*' by a pert Frenchman named Latocnage;—and in the virulent caricatures of Acerbi, which, caricatures as they are, were so severely felt in Sweden, as to prove in some degree that there existed a resemblance.

Mr. Coxe, indeed, though he is rather a compiler than an observer, gives us much useful observation;—but the rest are all alike unworthy of criticism, from the flippant inaccuracy of Wraxall, down to the utter emptiness of Sir John Carr. Russia has had her Acerbi, in De la Chappe, whose work (Frenchman and prejudiced as its author always appears) deserves attention, from the splendour and accuracy of its engravings, and the powerful description of manners and character. Lord Macartney too, in a short sketch, which every body must wish longer, has given more information than is to be met with in ten such quartos as those we are now reviewing;—but for more detailed pictures of that style of manners, which is not yet extinct in the bulk of Russian society, we must still go back to the antiquated volumes of Lord Carlisle and Olearius. There remains a chasm which Dr. Clarke we hope will fill.

Mr. Porter, in his preface, premises, that

'It is not the studied work of an author, bringing forward deep researches, valuable discoveries, and consequential observations, that is now laid before the public, but the familiar correspondence of a friend, noting the manners of the people with whom he associates, their fashions, their amusements, the sentiments of the day, and mingling with these a few occurrences happening to himself, and the reflections to which they gave rise.'

Now to all this we have no objection. Many entertaining books have been written, without either 'deep researches, valuable discoveries, or consequential observations;'—and the letters of Lady Mary W. Montague,—nay, of Pope and Pliny, were all written on 'the sentiments of the day, a few occurrences relating to themselves, and the reflections to which they gave rise.' But though we have no objection to the plan of his work, and would by no means lay on him so useless a task as to 'recompose the whole,'—
yet

yet we cannot allow him to plead the want of time as an excuse for not correcting its blunders.

Mr. Porter, with the usual flourish of 'parting pains,' and 'joys of expected return,' sets sail for Cronstadt, August 29, 1805.—'Though the wind was favourable, he must have had an extraordinary voyage, since 'not many days elapsed,' says he, 'before I saw the shores of old England gradually disappear, and those of Denmark rising along the horizon.'

If there is any meaning at all in this, it must be that his favourable wind blew in his teeth for several days, so as to keep him in sight of England, 'old England,' as he tenderly terms it;—and that by some strange accident, such as seldom happens in the German ocean, England had hardly vanished from his sight, when he found himself off the coast of Denmark. The next day, he informs us, he landed at Elsineur: here he quarrelled with the town, because he could not find 'the deep shadows of the platform, encounter the gray ghost of the royal Dane, and kill Polonius in the queen's closet!' He does not suffer us, however, to leave it till he has gone through the whole story of Hamlet, which unfortunate prince is murdered over again by a vile translation from the vile Latin of Saxo Grammaticus. We extract a specimen from this 'rough diamond,' as he calls it;—it is Hamlet's address to his mother.

'By what a course of folly hast thou become a common whore!—Granted, thou *mare-mated*, that thy victory is gained,—that thou art now linked to the sun of thy lechery;—nature of brutes!—and like them, ye lose no moments of gratification, impelled but by your beastly wishes. I had forgot, to one worn out, and self-consumed by much enjoyment, these examples are excellent, and to a married woman's mind, most suitable. Age, forsooth, it must be preferable too, to carry on such warm desires as far as they will extend, that she should be a husband's brother's wife! And to add yet *unto* its pleasures, she must not stand to gain the foul accomplishment, but by the *bearing down* her wedded lord.—Thou dam of cruelty! &c. &c. &c.'——'I well know,' continues Mr. Porter, 'how feeble is my unpractised pen in transmitting the strength of the original;—but take it as the shadow of a sublime subject, and you will see sufficient to afford you an opportunity of judging how much the Hamlet of Saxo Grammaticus and the Hamlet of Shakspeare thought alike!'

Mr. Porter arrived at Cronstadt on the 12th of September, and gives a lively picture of the barbarous and motley population of a Russian town.

'Men with long beards, brown and sun-burnt skins, strangely shaped caps, and greasy skin habits of all possible forms, were mingled with a few dressed in the fashion of our nation, and numberless others in the

dapper cut uniforms of their own military, naval, and civil departments. This widely contrasted crowd meeting my eyes, at the moment my ears were first saluted with a language I had never before heard, made altogether so strange an impression on my mind as is not to be described. I seemed in a new region, and indeed every sense was called forth to wonder and exercise.'

The island on which Cronstadt is built, 'exceeds,' (extends, we suppose, is meant,) 'nearly five English miles in length, but no more than one in breadth.' The fortifications, raised by Peter the Great, from drawings by his own hand, which are still preserved: the well-constructed forts in the gulph, and the difficulty of navigation, renders it almost impregnable. He bestows just praise on the 'basins, docks, canals, and spacious moles, fronted by solid and colossal masses of granite.' The town and public buildings, though magnificent at a distance, appear to have suffered by the caprice of the late emperor, and still more by that eternal variation of plan which often distinguishes despotism.

We admit, in its fullest extent, the merit of the benevolent Admiral Hennacoff, who interposed in behalf of the English, removed from Cronstadt, by the order of Paul;—but we were a little startled on reading, that these sufferers were sent '*many thousand versts* into the interior;' a march which would have brought them almost to Kamtcahtka. Kostroma, we believe, and Yaroslav, a distance of 600 versts, (enough, in all conscience,) were two of the most distant points; and it should be observed, to the honour of the nobles and manufacturers of those remote, but populous regions, that large subscriptions were immediately raised, for the relief of the victims of tyranny who were sent there.

From Cronstadt, Mr. Porter proceeds to St. Petersburg:—In his account of this noble city, what first requires our notice, is the strange indistinctness of his description, which is so overlaid with eulogium, so stuffed with indiscriminate praise, that we are completely bewildered in a vast huddle of 'superb,' and 'grand,' and 'beautiful objects.'—'Such grandeur and symmetry in building!'—'Every house a palace, and every palace a city.'—'The taste of the emperor,' 'the same august hand,'—'colossal pillars,'—'Imperial magnificence.'—'Trees, fruits, and flowers,'—'luxuriant maze of oranges, myrtles, and clustering vines,' occur in every sentence, and resemble rather the puff of an auctioneer, than the description of an artist. This vague and general praise is particularly tantalizing in the instance of the metropolitan church, which, with 'its forest of columns,' deserves a far more accurate account.—Though very inferior in size, and on a plan completely different from St. Paul's or St. Peter's, it merits indeed the highest praise for the boldness of its interior.

'The

‘ The pillars for the inside of the church, are to be each of one entire stone,—the shaft, in length, 52 feet, polished to the utmost perfection, and surmounted with a capital of the Corinthian order, richly gilt and burnished. Niches are formed on the exterior, for the reception of bronze statues of saints, 15 feet high. And at some distance, in front of the building, is to be erected a single column of granite, 200 feet in length,’ (we apprehend some exaggeration here,) ‘ a piece of that size sufficient to form it, having lately been discovered.’

Amid all these flowers of rhetoric, Mr. Porter entirely forgets to point out the remarkable resemblance of the internal plan to that of St. Stephen’s, Walbrook, on which it bids fair to be an improvement;—and what is still more inexcusable, says nothing of the bold semi-circular portico, which, though the idea is borrowed from that of St. Peter’s, is of far more colossal proportions, and only fails from the badness of its materials, a perishable free-stone, covered with stucco, which is lamentably contrasted with the polished granite of the interior. To this, however, which is the misfortune of the public buildings in Petersburg, Mr. Porter has wilfully shut his eyes; he can see nothing but beauties, and where he does not find them ready-made, he adds them from his own fancy, and according to his own notions of elegance. These are sometimes singular, as where he talks of ‘ the stately mansions of the nobility, the roofs of which are curiously painted in rich colours,’—a style of decoration which we should conceive not a little barbarous and tawdry. In justice, however, to the Russian nobles, we must assure the reader, that these curious paintings never existed, but on the retina of Mr. Porter’s imagination. It is in the same manner he assures us, that

‘ The glare of bricks, or the frippery of plaster, seldom offend the eye in this noble city.—Turn where you will, rise immense fabrics of granite;—and did you not know the history of the place, you might suppose that it had been founded on a vast plain of that rocky production.’

Now, though the ‘ glare of brick’ seldom offends the eye, Mr. Porter may be assured, that he is only preserved from this offence, by the ‘ frippery of plaster;’—since, however strange it may seem, there are hardly ten stone buildings in Petersburg;—and those of so bad a kind, that, as in the instance of the cathedral, a plaster covering is necessary;—where this is omitted, or not yet supplied, Mr. Porter himself must have seen (as in the building for the academy of arts) the poverty of the original materials. The granite, of which he is so liberal, is as yet, chiefly confined to the quays, which are indeed stupendous, the bridges over the Fontanka canal, and the ramparts of the citadel. With all these imperfections,

Petersburgh, as a whole, is perhaps the noblest city in the world, though we cannot agree in praise, so indiscriminately and idly lavished.

The following is a singular picture of the want of mechanic invention, which prevails where slaves are employed. The tribute at the end is deservedly paid to the care and attention of the weak, though well-meaning Sovereign of Russia.

‘ Many of the labourers employed on these buildings, come some thousand versts from the interior ; and when the frost sets in, they retire thither again, to await the more genial season, which will allow them to recommence their toil. The multitudes now engaged in forming the various parts of these large works, are interesting and curious. All difficulties connected with their business, are overcome by human exertions alone. What in England would be easily performed by one horse, with a little mechanical aid, is here achieved by the united strength of numbers of men. Hence there is much useless labour to regret. Frequently we see a hundred men, with ropes and handspikes, busied in accomplishing no more than one quarter of that number, with a few of our assisting inventions, would easily finish in half the time. Setting aside utility, these groups add to the picturesque of the scene, which is considerably heightened by their long beards, rugged sheep-skins, and uncouth attitudes. How strange it is to look on these apparently savage beings, and think that from their hands arise such elegant and classical structures ! Indeed, I never saw in all its parts so regularly built a city ; nor in any place, so much attention to keep all in due order. The present Emperor, who, like its illustrious founder, has the perfecting of this residence at heart, leaves no suggestion unexecuted, which can increase its ornament, or the people’s convenience.’

It is whimsical in an artist to speak of the great Falconet in this manner :

‘ The name of the artist is Falconet ; *he was a Frenchman*, but this statue, for genius and exquisite execution, would have done honour to the best sculptors of any nation !’

Surely the being a Frenchman does not prevent a man from becoming a good sculptor.

After a meagre account of the Taurida and Hermitage, and an interesting detail of the institution for promoting the arts and sciences, we find ourselves plunged at once into the mysteries of the Greek Church, which are given from Dr. King’s work, with sundry comments by the ingenious selector. We know not what the Princess S—— will say to the following, on the marriage ceremony.

‘ On the perusal of the whole of this service, I prefer its principle before that used in the English Church on the same occasion. Here
we

we do not meet with vows of an everlasting love ; a vow which is in no person's own power to keep.'——' All these unreasonable pledges are avoided in the Greek ritual, and hence it interferes not with either the law of nature, or the law of the land.'

Our traveller seems on the whole much elated with the discoveries which he has made in the Greek Church, but he cannot help expressing some fears, though very needlessly, that he may be considered as an intruder. He likens himself, with singular propriety, to Clodius, who attempted, as every classical reader must remember, to print and publish the liturgy of the Bona Dea, and, as Mr. Porter informs us, was 'hooted for his pains.'—This classical spirit is indeed very visible in many parts of these volumes. 'The frozen Neva, and the furred, and muffled nobles, recal to his mind the naked youths, and olive trees of the Olympic Stadium ; and all his Grecian fury is awakened against the miscreants, who stole ' the tomb of Homer,' and sold it to Count Strogonoff. It was not thus, he tells us, that '*Homer himself*' behaved :—

' He did not send mariners to steal away the monument of Achilles from the promontory of Sigeum ; but he travelled thither himself : he stood by his hero's grave, and while invoking the spirit within, his own mighty genius,' (*oh mercy ! mercy !*) ' his own mighty genius burst the confines of the tomb, and the hero appeared !!!—The vision passed before the poet, clad in arms, and in glory ; and he beheld the light no more. Insufferable brightness drank his visual ray,—but lit up all within, with Heaven's immortal fires. And Alexander too, that powerful monarch, might not he, who uprooted empires, have easily raised from the ground a block of marble,' (supposing, we guess, that the tomb of Achilles was of that material,) ' and ordered the monument of his often-boasted model, the great Achilles, to be brought to Macedon ! But no ; he also went to Sigeum to pay his vows to this illustrious shade, and placing a crown upon the tomb, exclaimed " Achilles, thou wert thrice happy !—Happy in thy valiant life, happy in such a friend as Patroclus, and happy in such a poet as Homer, to immortalize thy memory !!! " '

We can only compare this to the history of Godfrey of Bouillon's intrigue with Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, as related by Dean Swift.

The military of this vast empire must be always one of the most interesting and important subjects of discussion. His attachment to the army, Mr. Porter says, is the first-born passion of his breast,—and he in consequence gives us a very erroneous account of their pay, which he makes to a private, three roubles and thirty copecks annually, instead of three times that sum. To this he adds a miserably defective account of the Donsky Cossacs, who no longer, as he supposes, preserve the right of electing their own
Hetman,

Hetman, and who, instead of 16,000, can raise, if necessary, 60,000 cavalry. The rest of his account is merely occupied by the uniform of the troops, which, it is some comfort to discover, is no less inconvenient and foppish than our own.

From Petersburg, we are glad to attend Mr. Porter to Mosco; —his journey, like that of the Athenian ambassadors in Aristophanes, being performed over wide plains.

ἔφ' ἄρμαμαζῶν μαλθακῶς κατὰκείμενος.

He was received, as every one is at Mosco, who brings good letters of introduction, with hospitality; and arrived in time to be present at the public dinner, given in honour of Prince Bragation. We willingly insert the portrait of this eminent man, the favourite pupil of Suvarrof.

‘He is below the middle stature, of a dark complexion, deeply tinged with the climates which he has served; his eye is small, quick, and penetrating; his nose a very high aquiline, and his face, perfectly Georgian (he being of that country), expresses the most charming affability and sweetness; his demeanor is in unison with his countenance, being demonstrative of a modesty as winning, as it is admirable in so idolized a character.’

We could however excuse the prose translation of some idle Russ verses on the same hero. The horn music which he heard on that occasion, is unknown except in Russia or Poland.

‘It was invented by a Prince Gallitzin in the year 1762. This instrument consists of forty persons, whose life is spent in blowing one note. The sounds produced are precisely similar to those of an immense organ, with this difference, that each note seems to blend with its preceding and following one: a circumstance that occasions a blunt sensation to the ear, and gives a monotony to the whole. However, the effect possesses much sublimity, when the *performers are unseen*; but when they are visible, it is impossible to silence reflections which jar with their harmony. To see human nature *reduced to such a use*, calls up thoughts very inimical to admiration of strains so awakened. I enquired who the *instrument* belonged to? (by that word, both *pipes* and *men* are included!) and was told it had just been purchased by a nobleman, on the recent death of its former possessor.

‘Some of these individuals, thus destined to drag through a melancholy existence, play at different times on several pipes of various sizes which breathe the higher notes; but the base pipes have each their unchanging blower; they are extremely long, and are laid upon a machine or trussel, close to which the performer stands, and places his mouth to the smaller extremity of the pipe, in a horizontal position. The shape is exactly that of a hearing trumpet; a screw is inserted near the bell of the tube, to give it a sharper or flatter note,

as

as may be required. The performers are in general thin and pale, and I have little doubt, but that the quantity of air the instrument takes, and the practice necessary for perfection in execution, must subtract many years from the otherwise natural term of their lives.'

We have given this description as we found it, though it is, after all, very absurd to whine over those, who are no otherwise pitiable, than all musicians must be, and we apprehend, are as healthy as a common regimental band ; nor are their lives more spent in this employment, than the blowers of clarionets in the Middlesex militia ; if indeed so much, as their powers are seldomer called into practice : and the slave who blows occasionally one of these horns, is, off the stage, employed like other servants, as footman, coachman, or gardener.

At Mosco, Mr. Porter is much more accurate than at Petersburg ; he is a little awakened from the amazement with which he was afflicted on his first landing, and his description of that singular and delightful town, though highly coloured, is scarcely overcharged. We could willingly make many extracts from this part of his work, but one must suffice, which will be recognised by every visitor of Mosco, and is taken from his description of the Kremlin, the interior circle of the city ; the ancient imperial residence, founded on a lofty hill, and parted from the ' Tartar town,' (as Mr. Porter very judiciously translates ' Khitai Gorod') by a brick wall very high, whitened, and embattled in the eastern manner.

' At various distances are towers, square and round, with spiral minarets, covered with scaly tiles, like the skin of a fish, painted green, yellow, and crimson, surmounted with a gilded ball and fane. It is curious to observe the similarity between this turretted bulwark, and the well-known Chinese wall, so well portrayed in Lord Macartney's account of his embassy to China. The resemblance is so close, that we might think the same engineer had exerted his abilities in both countries. Before I left the precincts of this interesting place, I ascended the tower of the church of Ivan the Great, which commands a view of the whole surrounding plain. Although the monotonous paleness of winter then shrouded its bosom, yet the *coup-d'œil* was transcendantly magnificent. The sun shone with untempered splendour through an atmosphere, whose clearness cannot be conceived in England ; the variegated colours on the tops of innumerable buildings ; the sparkling particles of snow on the earth and palaces ; the fanes and crescents of the churches flashing their blazing gold ; and added to all, the busy world beneath, passing and repassing in their superb dresses, and decorated sledges, presented such a scene of beauty and grandeur, that I should have thought myself repaid for my disagreeable journey, had I even been obliged to return to St. Petersburg immediately, in beholding so glorious a view.'

Mr.

Mr. Porter is however mistaken in thinking that the church, respecting which the famous story is told of Ivan II., was within this circle. It is the Casan church, immediately without the holy gate of the Kremlin, on the building of which, that atrocity, generally considered as fabulous, is said to have happened. We are presented with a somewhat exaggerated, yet, in a lover, a very pardonable eulogy, of the beauty of the Muscovite ladies; but Mr. Porter is really more severe than justice will allow, on the unfortunate Grisettes, whom he saw at the bath. Their form is Asiatic, and their bosoms partake of that general relaxation, but certainly not in so enormous a degree as he wishes us to believe. He speaks with much justice of the superior morality of the Russian females, to the sentimental ladies of Germany, or the voluptuous Houris of Paris. The character, in fact, of this people, associating with slaves during childhood, and rather instructed in languages, than in books, in many points resembles that of the West Indian Creole; gentle, indolent, outwardly irreligious, and in private superstitiously observant of every tittle of the ordinances of their church; ostentatious in public, and domestic amid their family, they are at once cruel mistresses to their slaves, and charitable to any object of distress they meet with,—slovenly devotees behind the scenes, and voluptuous Cleopatras on the open stage.

He is unreasonable in his complaints of the prison, which is built after a plan given by Howard, and when compared with even the lodgings at Mosco, not pre-eminently filthy; in many points, contrasted with the German prisons, it is exemplary. Of Russian humanity indeed, and of the liberality in which they are almost unequalled, the numerous hospitals, the colleges, orphan houses, &c. &c. supported by private donation, are noble proofs; and there are few countries, where even the prisons receive more regular visits from the officers appointed to inspect them. With all their childish parade, their 'cow's bladders,' and Asiatic ignorance, this should be remembered in their favour: that their officers and soldiers are cruel, arises more from stupidity, than wickedness—from want of perception, rather than want of humanity. Yet certainly, the men in particular, and all the lower classes are immoral, and the name of 'unprincipled,' which the genius of Ledyard affixed to Russia, may be taken, as no unfair general account of a nation of forty millions of rational creatures, who are now awakened to discontent, and murmuring under their slavery. The nobles already

Incedunt per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.

The explosion will be terrible.

Mr.

Mr. Porter, on his return to Petersburg, falls in with many Gypsies. This extraordinary people, who are found in every part of Europe, and many of Asia and Africa, and of whose origin, or first appearance, though comparatively modern, no good account has yet been published, are the same in Muscovy, as they are in Spain, and in both countries equally unaccountable. Mr. P. fancies they resemble the Jews; and it is indeed a singular fact, that the Jews in Juvenal's time, are described as living in the same manner, and occupying nearly the same place in society, as the present race of Gypsies, supporting themselves by palmistry, and wandering with a household establishment of hay and panniers.

On our author's arrival at Petersburg, he is again seized with a fit of wondering and praising; he sees, however, a person knouted—gives us a description of his own paintings in the new Admiralty, and returns on the wings of love to Mosco.

To those who justify the inactivity of England, during the campaign in Poland, by the pretence that Russia was not to be relied on, we recommend the following paragraph, of the truth of which, no doubt we think need be entertained.

‘An ukase has been issued, obliging the nobility to furnish peasants, to the additional amount of 200,000, between Petersburg and Cazan; each proprietor is to furnish five soldiers, out of every hundred slaves, with clothing, arms, and provisions for three months, and also provide pay, during that time, for each, at the rate of a rouble a month.’

Contrast this energy with what follows a few pages after.

‘The whole cry here, is the non-arrival of our troops off Dantzic, and he who till then greeted every Englishman as a brother, now turns from even a friend of that nation, with a cold bow of suspicion.’

Before the Russian zeal was chilled by our selfishness, Mr. P. had opportunities of seeing large bodies of those irregular auxiliaries, who are only summoned in the most urgent necessity, pass through Mosco for the frontiers. Inefficient as such troops were in the field, we cannot help sympathising in the glow, with which he describes these barbarous warriors, who bore again to the heart of Poland, those banners, which had not been seen there since the domination of the Golden horde, and the sultans of Kipshak.

‘As this strange people passed forward, I was so struck by their appearance, so peculiar, grand, and picturesque; so totally different from any thing in our quarter of Europe, that I thought myself transported back many centuries.—I was viewing the armies of Tchingis Khan, or Tamerlane!—In short, I could not believe the scene to belong to the present times; and every object conspired to preserve the illusion.

illusion. The men were cased in shirts of mail, with shining helmets, and armed with long pikes, adorned at the top with various coloured pennons. Their other weapons were swords, bows, and arrows; each sheaf of the latter containing twenty-four. The bows were short, and of the Asiatic form and materials, not well made, neither were their arrows carefully feathered or straight. Yet in spite of these disadvantages, their dexterity in shooting at a distance, or at objects in rapid motion, is amazing.'

Mr. Porter's return to England, was through Finland and Sweden, and contains little which calls for criticism; there are many mistakes, but not of material consequence, and as his stay was short, they are more excusable than in Mosco, or Petersburg. Like other travellers through Sweden, he fights over again the battles of Charles XII., and according to his never-failing custom, he expatiates learnedly on the present uniform of the guards. He finds, too, as usual, bad inns, amiable peasants, respectable pastors, and venerable archbishops; the Queen is all loveliness, the King (poor Gustavus) all spirit and dignity, and the people the most loyal under the sun. Of their loyalty, they have since given a very conspicuous proof; and if Mr. P. had been endued with ears, he might, even then, have heard quite sufficient to show that a doubtful legitimacy, an unpopular war, and above all, the deeply remembered injuries inflicted by the last Gustavus on their diet and constitution, were all preparing to burst on the brave but unfortunate young man, who then sat on the throne of the Goths and Vandals.

There are some interesting particulars respecting Gustavus Vasa, and a short account of the mines and of Upsala. Near this latter place, he is particularly pleased with the sonorous name of the plain of Furissival, which, with all respect to its dignity, he presents to us in large letters.

He pays a due tribute of praise to the great sculptor Sergel, though he cannot help misspelling his name. Then, after lamenting and admiring the royal family of France, whom he met at Gottenburgh, and wondering, with all Europe, at our unaccountable Swedish expedition, he re-embarks for England.

We did not notice, because the task would have been endless, the many defects in Mr. P.'s mode of spelling foreign names: thus we have 'Drojeka,' for Droshka; 'Porphyrogenneta,' for Porphyrogenetes; 'Gorgorin,' for Gargarin; 'Jutchinna,' for Gatchina; 'Upsilius,' for Afzelius; 'Danamora,' for Dannemora, and many others. With regard to the plates, which from an artist of Mr. P.'s talent might be expected to display the utmost spirit and exactness, it is our duty to observe, that the aquatinta views are really infamous, possessing neither the merit of execution nor accuracy:

curacy: the coloured sketches of figures are better, and do him credit, with the exception of the Calmuc. On the whole, we dismiss Mr. P.'s travels as a book, which will seldom find a place in a library, but may lie without offence on a table; which, if not the best, is far from the worst account of one of the most interesting countries in the world. If he ever publishes again, we entreat for more drawings, and fewer travelling sketches; nor shall we be displeased to see him pay some little attention to the finishing of the first, and the spelling of the latter; above all, we warn him to shun the tomb of Homer, and

Interfusa nitentes
Vitare æquora Cycladas.

ART. VI. *Intolerance the Disgrace of Christians, not the fault of their Religion.* By the Rev. Christopher Wyvill. pp. 112. Johnson. London.

IT is of the first importance towards accuracy of reasoning, to define terms before we assent to propositions.—Intolerance, Mr. Wyvill tells us in his title-page, is the disgrace of Christians. If the term be used in the accepted sense—i. e. of a disposition to force the consciences of men, to propagate religious tenets by fire and sword, and to persecute and destroy for matter of faith, we trust that there are few members of the church of England who do not fully accede to the truth of this proposition. But what is Mr. Wyvill's understanding of it? When our readers are informed that he is pleased to brand with this opprobrious title, those laws against the admission of dissenters into offices of trust and power, by which the framers of our constitution thought proper to guard the Established Church, we apprehend that their unwillingness to assent to the proposition in *this* sense, may probably bear an exact proportion to the readiness, with which they acceded to its truth in the other.

Of Mr. Wyvill, we are disposed to know nothing more than what is unfolded in the work before us. It were an act of injustice to suppose him otherwise than sincere in the plans which he proposes. We give him full credit for sincerity; but here we must stop: for we can neither approve the cause which he undertakes, nor commend the temper and manner in which he thinks proper to discuss the question. We greatly wish that age had matured his judgment, and cooled his ardour for crude and chimerical plans of innovation: we wish it had taught him to deal more in solid reasoning, and less in vague declamation; above all we wish, that experience had impressed upon him how little any cause

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