he walked before it, brandishing his crab stick, was, in twenty or thirty years, to pass into a vehicle whose rapidity was somewhat dangerous upon roads very unscientifically made. Chatterton tells his sister that on his ride outside the stage from Bristol to London, the coachman complimented him upon his courage in sticking upon the roof without holding to the iron. A Prussian clergyman Charles Moritz, travelling in England in 1782, for the most part on foot, being anxious to return to London, mounts the outside of a "post coach" at Leicester. To him it was a new situation. "I sat nearest the wheel, and the moment that we set off, I fancied that I saw certain death await me." The machine seemed to fly; it was a miracle that they still stuck to the coach. "At last, the being continually in fear of my life became insupportable, and as we were going up a hill, and consequently proceeding rather slow than usual, I crept from the top of the coach, and got snug into the basket."* The increased speed of the stage operated no reform in the conveyance of letters by the post. The letter-bags were carried by boys on horseback. If a bag reached its destination in safety, without being rifled, it was more by a happy chance than by any care of the post-office authorities for the prevention of robbery. As to accelerating the conveyance of letters that was an impossibility. The post that left London on Monday night reached Worcester, Birmingham, Norwich, Bath, on the Wednesday afternoon. A letter from London to Glasgow was only five days on the road. What more could be done? The manager of the Bath theatre proposed a plan for bringing the letter-bags from Bath to London, in sixteen or eighteen hours. Great was the merriment at so wild a scheme amongst the wise officials. Mr. Palmer persevered; and he had the support of a more vigorous power than that of the salaried haters of innovation. Mr. Pitt took the project under his care; and in 1784 the first mail-coach left London. There was an end of robberies of the mail—of the system under which "the mail is generally entrusted to some idle boy without character, mounted on a worn-out hack, and who, so far from being able to defend himself, or escape from a robber, is much more likely to be in league with him."† The letters went safely, and they went at twice or thrice their former speed.

Inns. Half a century ago the inns of a small English "Borough" were described by Crabbe. More than half a century before Crabbe, Fielding and Smollett had shown us the inns of their time. Much of the poet's description is now of things passed away. The

* "Travels through various parts of England."
† Palmer's plan—presented to Mr. Pitt.

hostelries described by the novelists are as obsolete as the old signs over the London shops. We now rarely find the "Head Inn" of the time when the world travelled in carriages with post-horses; when the ready chaise and smart driver were to be had in five minutes; when the ample yard contained "buildings where order and distinction reign;" when the lordly host bent in his pride to the parting guest; when the lady hostess governed the bar and schooled the kitchen.* According to Fielding, "it was the dusk of the evening when a grave person rode into an inn, and, committing his horse to the ostler, went directly into the kitchen, and, calling for a pipe of tobacco, took his place by the fireside, where several other persons were likewise assembled." The grave person was Parson Adams, a clergyman of much learning, but humble means; who had been accustomed to take his cup of ale in the kitchen of the squire who had given him his curacy of twenty-five pounds a-year, and whose lady did not think his dress good enough for the gentry at her table. It is true that in a nobler apartment of this inn there was another clergyman, named Barnabas, who had condescended to administer ghostly consolation to a poor man supposed to be dying; but "proceeded to prayer with all the expedition he was master of, some company then waiting for him below in the parlour, where the ingredients for punch were all in readiness, but no one would squeeze the oranges till he came." Select as the company in the parlour might be, there was no distinction in the kitchen. The next day, in that general temple of good cheer, the reverend punch-maker, the surgeon, and the exciseman, "were smoking their pipes over some cider-ale;" and Parson Barnabas having learnt the profession of Parson Adams (for his cassock had been tied up when he arrived) invited him to adjourn, with the doctor and the exciseman, to another room, and partake of a bowl of punch. This libation finished, Barnabas takes his seat upon a bench in the inn yard, to smoke his pipe. This inn—the great coach inn—was a very different affair from the little public-house on the side of the highway described by Smollett: "The kitchen was the only room for entertainment in the house, paved with red bricks remarkably clean, furnished with three or four Windsor chairs, adorned with shining plates of pewter and copper saucepans, nicely scoured, that even dazzled the eyes of the beholder."† In this description there is nothing obsolete; nor have the "parlour splendours" of Goldsmith's Auburn inn passed away—"the royal game of goose"—the "broken tea cups wisely kept for show." It was proper that corporal Trim should take his seat

* Crabbe—"The Borough."
† "Sir Launcelot Greaves."

in the kitchen of the Village inn; and natural that the sick lieutenant's son should make at the kitchen fire a piece of thin toast that his father fancied with a glass of sack. But Parson Adams, and Parson Barnabas, and the surgeon, and the exciseman, drinking in the kitchen, is a scene of other times. Forty years later, landlords and landladies were growing exclusive, and despised vulgar company. The Lutheran clergyman, Moritz, set out upon a pedestrian tour to Oxford and the midland counties. Walking seems to have been considered in those days only fit for the poorest. The tired and hungry German enters an inn at Eton, and with difficulty obtains something to eat, and a bed-room that much resembled a prison for malefactors. "Whatever I got, they seemed to give me with such an air as showed too plainly they considered me a beggar. I must do them the justice to own, however, that they suffered me to pay like a gentleman." He was rejected when he applied for a bed, even at common ale-houses. At last he obtained a place of refuge at Nettlebed. "They showed me into the kitchen, and set me down to sup at the same table with some soldiers and the servants. I now, for the first time, found myself in one of those kitchens I had so often read of in Fielding's fine novels; and which certainly gave me, on the whole, a very accurate idea of English manners." The next day, being Sunday, the pedestrian, having put on clean linen, was shown into the parlour; and "was now addressed by the most respectful term, sir; whereas the evening before I had been called only master."

Of the infinite diversities of the Public Refreshment life of London, there are ample materials for a full description if our space would afford any such elaboration. The kindly Scot who let a lodging to Roderick Random over his chandler's shop, told him, "there are two ways of eating in this town for men of your condition—the one more creditable and expensive than the other; the first is to dine at an eating-house, frequented by well dressed people only; and the other is called diving, practised by those who are either obliged or inclined to live frugally." The young surgeon was disposed to try the diving, if it were not infamous. His landlord gave him convincing proof of its propriety: "I have seen many a pretty gentleman, with a laced waistcoat, dine in that manner very comfortably for threepence half-penny, and go afterwards to the coffee-house, where he made a figure with the best lord in in the land." The experiment is determined on, and the hero of the novel dines luxuriously off shin of beef, "surrounded by a company of hackney coachmen, chairmen, draymen, and a few footmen out of place or on board wages." When he is become more ambitious,

he dines at an "Ordinary"—a mode very different from the French table d'hôte,and never quite naturalized in London. The ordinary had more success in the suburbs — such as Goldsmith frequented. "There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and a pastry, kept at this time at Highbury-barn, at tenpence per head, including a penny to the waiter; and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade." * The chop-houses were more popular than the ordinaries. "In these common refectories you may always find the jemmy attorney's clerk, the prim curate, the walking physician, the captain upon half-pay." † The tavern life of Dr. Johnson is as familiar to us as his rusty wig. The houses of entertainment which he frequented are as famous as the Devil Tavern of his dramatic namesake. We know by common fame, as well as from Boswell, of "the Mitre Tavern in Fleet-street, where he loved to sit up late"—the "old rendezvous" were grave divines and smart lawyers came to listen to his violent politics, his one-sided criticism, his displays of learning, his indignation against vice and meanness, his banter of Goldsmith, and his insolence to Boswell. Johnson maintained that "a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity." "There is nothing," he affirmed, "which has been yet contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn;"—and then he repeated, "with great emotion," Shenstone's lines:

> "Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
> Where'er his stages may have been,
> May sigh to think he still has found
> The warmest welcome at an inn."

When Goldsmith, to complete what he called "a shoemaker's holiday," had finished his refection at Highbury-barn, he and his companions, about six o'clock in the evening, "adjourned to White Conduit-house to drink tea; and concluded by supping at the Grecian or Temple-exchange coffee-house, or at the Globe in Fleet-street." White Conduit-house, near Islington, was an especial resort of the citizens. The coffee-houses, although frequented by peculiar classes, were open to all men. The "Connoisseur" has described the coffee-houses of 1754. Garraway's, frequented by stockbrokers; the Chapter, by booksellers; the Bedford, "crowded every night with men of parts," who echoed jokes and bon-mots from box to box; White's, where persons of quality resorted, who

* Quoted from "The European Magazine" in Foster's "Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith," book iv.

† "Connoisseur," June 6, 1750.

do not trouble themselves with literary debates, as at the Bedford. "They employed themselves more fashionably at whist for the trifle of a thousand pounds the rubber, or by making bets on the lie of the day." * The fashionable coffee-houses were gradually transformed into exclusive clubs, of which form of social life we shall have presently to speak. The more plebeian coffee-house had sometimes to endure intruders, who asserted the independence which Englishmen sturdily maintained in the last century. Dr. Thomas Campbell, in 1775, strolled into the Chapter coffee-house, which he heard was remarkable for a large collection of books, and a reading society. "Here I saw a specimen of English freedom. A whitesmith in his apron, and some of his saws under his arm, came in, sat down, and called for his glass of punch and the paper, both which he used with as much ease as a lord. Such a man, in Ireland, and I suppose in France too, or almost any other country, would not have shown himself with his hat on, nor any way, unless sent for by some gentleman: now really every other person in the room was well dressed." † The Irish Dr. Campbell must have indeed been surprised at the contrast between England and Ireland, where, according to Arthur Young, nothing satisfies a landlord but unlimited submission. "Disrespect, or anything tending towards sauciness, he may punish with his cane or his horsewhip with the most perfect security." ‡

"Such places of pleasure as are totally set apart for the use of the great world I meddle not with." Thus writes Fielding, in his capacity of magistrate. § He goes on to say, "though Ranelagh and Vauxhall, by reason of their price, are not entirely appropriated to the people of fashion, yet they are seldom frequented by any below the middle rank." Ranelagh was opened in 1742: "The prince, princess, duke, and much nobility, and much mob besides, were there," according to Walpole. In two years Ranelagh had "totally beat Vauxhall." The usual amusement was to parade round and round the Rotunda. The dullness was occasionally relieved by the depravity of the masquerade. Nevertheless, on ordinary nights, the dazzling illumination of the building; the music; the cheap refreshments (half-a-crown entrance included tea, coffee,

* No. I.

† "Diary of a Visit to England, in 1775." "The Edinburgh Review" (October, 1859) gives an interesting article on this curious book, published at Sydney in 1854. The Reviewer supposes that his copy is "the only one on this side of the equator." The author of this History met with a copy at the French Exhibition of 1855; and seeing its peculiar value wrote several notices of it, during his visit to Paris, in an English journal, in which he had an interest, "The Town and Country Newspaper."

‡ "Tour in Ireland," vol. ii. p. 127.

§ "Causes of the Increase of Robberies;" section i.

or punch); the opportunity of looking upon lords with stars and ladies with hoops,—these attractions drew a motley group to Ranelagh, who were either genteel or affected gentility. The landlady of the Prussian clergyman, a tailor's widow, told him that she always fixed on one day of the year in which, without fail, she hired a coach and drove to Ranelagh.* Johnson moralises upon this scene: "When I first entered Ranelagh it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced anywhere else. But, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think." † Vauxhall was cheaper than Ranelagh in its price of admission, but far more costly in its refreshments. The citizen takes his wife and two daughters to the garden; grumbles over a chicken, no bigger than a partridge, which costs half-a-crown, and vows that the ham is a shilling an ounce. As he leaves the lamp-lit walks, he moralises also: "It would not have cost me above fourpence-halfpenny to have spent my evening at Sot's Hole; and what with the coach-hire, and all together, here's almost a pound gone, and nothing to show for it." ‡ There was a great deal of good company indeed, declared the citizen's wife, though the gentlemen were so rude as to stare at her through their spy-glasses. Lady Caroline Petersham, "looking gloriously jolly and handsome," goes to Vauxhall with a large party, of which were lord Granby, "very drunk," and Horace Walpole, and Harry Vane. Lady Caroline minced seven chickens in a china dish, and steward them over a lamp; and Betty the fruit-girl brought her strawberries and cherries, and supped by them at a little table. "The whole air of our party was sufficient to take up the whole attention of the gardens; so much so, that from eleven o'clock till half an hour after one, we had the whole concourse round our booth," and Harry Vane took up a bumper and drank their healths.§ Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs were humble imitators of Lady Caroline Petersham and Harry Vane. They "would sit in none but a genteel box; a box where they might see and be seen." ‖ The Pantheon was opened in 1772—"a new winter Ranelagh in Oxford Road." Dr. Campbell was there in 1775, and saw "the duke of Cumberland and lady Grosvenor, a fine woman, lost to all sense of modesty;" and "lady Archer, painted like a doll, whose feathers nodded like

* Moritz, "Travels through England."

† Boswell, 1777.

‡ Connoisseur, No. 68.

§ Walpole to Montague, June 23, 1750.

‖ "Citizen of the World," No. 71.

the plumes of Mambrino's helmet;" and some still more disreputable ladies who had longer peacock feathers.* Such was the mixed society of the public places of London, before the people of quality grew more exclusive, and set up coteries in which profligacy could be screened from vulgar eyes.

It has been said, "The Stage, at this period (1774), was either a school of immorality, or a vehicle of slander." † We venture to think that the Stage, at this period, was singularly untainted with the grosser vices of society; and that what is termed its slander was a fearless expression of contempt for crimes and follies which even the pulpit suffered to flourish in their rankness. Looking candidly at the time when Wycherley, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Farquhar, and Mrs. Centlivre, had been succeeded, as the popular dramatists, by Goldsmith, Colman, Cumberland, Murphy, Sheridan, and Mrs. Cowley, it can scarcely be denied that the theatre was, comparatively, a school of purity. Blemishes of course there were. It was still too much the fashion to assign the virtues of truth and sincerity to the dissipated, and the vices of hypocrisy and meanness to the decorous. Situations and expressions that would not now be tolerated were presented and uttered without offence. But there was no systematic endeavour to make licentiousness the foundation and corner-stone of wit. The chief complaint against the stage of that time was, that "the most popular plays and farces, if they were not founded on the scandal of the day, contained pointed allusions to the gossip of political and fashionable society, and persons conspicuous in either." ‡ Political and fashionable society had scarcely a right to complain of the scandal, when it was so little careful of its own reputation. We may well believe that the personalities of Foote, objectionable as a system of personal satire always must be, kept many of the fashionable in awe of ridicule, who held in scorn the disapprobation of the classes below them in rank; and somewhat abated the imitative ambition of many of the rich pretenders to distinction of the middle classes, who esteemed their fellows only in the proportion of their wealth.§

The Theatre, under the management of Garrick, directed, however imperfectly, the course of public taste. He did, what Betterton had done before him, he gave Shakspere an extended popularity

* "Diary," p. 47.

† Massey—"History of England during the reign of George III.," vol. ii. p. 220.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ The masterly essay of Mr. Forster on "Samuel Foote," amply refutes the notion that he was a mere mimic who caricatured peculiarities of manner, and an unprincipled lampooner who sold his forbearance.

by his wonderful power as an actor. But it was amongst the exaggerations of that flattery which had attended Garrick when living, and followed him in death, to pretend that the actor had given new life to the poet; that Garrick and Shakspere were for ever to shine as "twin stars." There had been thirteen editions of Shakspere's Plays when it was pretended that they were sunk to death and lay in night;* of which nine editions had appeared in the preceding forty years. Garrick did also what Tate had done before him. He mangled Shakspere, giving improved versions of Romeo and Juliet, the Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest, the Taming of the Shrew, the Winter's Tale, Cymbeline, and Hamlet. He patched the mammock'd plays with tawdry rags, in the "design to adapt them to the present taste of the public." † His conception of Shakspere was as imperfect as his notion of the costume in which Shakspere's characters should be presented. But Garrick unquestionably made the people understand the true and the natural in dramatic art, as opposed to the pomposity and the exaggeration of the actors whom he supplanted. Garrick, according to the critical Mr. Partridge, did nothing in Hamlet beyond what any man would do in similar circumstances: "I am sure if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did." The king, who spoke "half as loud again," was the actor for Partridge's money. ‡ The town had sense enough to confirm the verdict of Churchill, in the "Rosciad," of "Garrick, take the chair."

The Bath of the middle of the last century is familiar to all readers of the light literature of that period. The city, early in the reign of Anne, began to be frequented by people of fashion; but the nobility refused to associate with the gentry at any public entertainments. Gentlemen came to the balls in boots, and ladies in aprons. A dictator arose in the person of Mr. Richard Nash, who was elected Master of the Ceremonies, and presided over the company who assembled in a booth to dance and game.§ During a reign of many years this king of Bath had got his unruly subjects into tolerable order. He had compelled the squires to put off their boots when they came to the balls, and the ladies to forego their aprons. His dominions were the resort of all the sharpers and dupes in the land, when the London season was over. Every game of

* Epitaph on Garrick in Westminster Abbey:

"Though sunk to death the forms the Poet drew,
The Actor's genius bade them breathe anew."

† "Biographica Dramatica."

‡ "Tom Jones."

§ Goldsmith—"Life of Nash."

chance was here played without restraint, and Nash had his full share of the spoil of the unwary. At Tunbridge he established a colony; and, like a great monarch, he often travelled there in state to receive the homage of his subjects, drawn in a post-chariot by six grays, with out-riders, footmen, and French horns. All went merrily till a cruel legislature passed an Act to declare Basset and Hazard and all other games of chance illegal. The statute was evaded; and an amended law was next year passed, to declare all games with one die or more, or with any instrument with numbers thereon, to be illicit. The law-makers did not foresee that an instrument with letters thereon might be as effectual; and the well-known game of E. O. was invented, and first set up at Tunbridge. Nash brought the game to Bath, not to offend the decorum of the Assembly-Room, but to be carried on snugly in private houses, to which Nash introduced those who had money to lose, confederating with the E. O. table-keepers for a share of their profits. This answered for some time, until another statute effectually put down all gaming-houses and gaming-tables, as far as law could accomplish their suppression. There was no resource for the persecuted people of quality but to establish private clubs.

CHAPTER XXII.

View of manners continued.—The Duke of Queensberry.—Club-life.—Excessive Gaming.—Excesses of Charles Fox.—Dress.—Conversation.—The Squires of England.—The Country Justice.—The Clergy of England.—The Universities.—Professional Classes.—The Mercantile Class.—The Lower orders.—The Rabble.—Mobs.—Police of London.—The Prisons.—Social Reformers.—Howard.—Coram.—Hanway.—Raikes.—Education.—Rise and Growth of Methodism.

A FEW years after the beginning of the present century, there was to be seen in Piccadilly, on every sunny day, an emaciated old man sitting in a balcony, holding a parasol. The coachman of the Bath road as he drove by would tell some wondering passenger that there was the wicked duke of Queensberry; that he kept a man in readiness to follow any female not insensible to the bewitching ogles of his glass eye; that his daily milk bath was transferred to the pails of the venders of milk around Park-lane; with many other tales, more befitting the days of the second Charles than of the third George. This very notorious nobleman died in 1810, at the age of eighty-six. As Dr. Johnson was the link between the varying literature of two periods, the duke of Queensberry was the link between the changed profligacy of two generations. He had flourished as the earl of March and a lord of the bed-chamber in the times when to violate every decency of life was to establish a claim to wit and spirit; when "at the rehearsal, on Wednesday night, of the Speech, at lord Halifax's, lord Lichfield came extremely drunk, and proposed amendments;"* when sir Francis Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762, held his frantic orgies with his brother "Franciscans" at Medmenham Abbey, drinking obscene toasts out of a sacred chalice; when George Selwyn said, with as much truth as wit, when one of the waiters at Arthur's Club was committed on a charge of felony, "What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate." Queensberry lived on, into an age of comparative decorum, which to him was as insipid as he thought the Thames seen from his Richmond villa: "I am quite tired of it—there it goes, flow, flow, flow, always the same."† He had no resources for amusement

* "Selwyn and his Contemporaries," vol. i. p. 352.
† "Life of Wilberforce," vol. iii. p. 417.