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in the two volumes—or, if it is not, then "The Lay of the Brown Rosarie" is. In this last the ballad-character is elevated—etherealized—and thus made to afford scope for an idealism at once the highest and most vigorous in the world. The peculiar fables of the author are here too, dropped bodily, as a mantle, in the tumultuous movement and excitement of the narrative.

To be Continued.

FASHION.

Mr. Willis in his Lecture on Fashion, talks of the absurdities of fashion, as though fashion itself were anything but an absurdity. He makes a note of the puzzling fact, that only the least enlightened part of mankind adopts a fashion suited to its wants and keeps it unchanged. But he makes no guess at the cause of this singular truth, for which we are sorry, since we have no time to look into the depths of it that we can discern. Perhaps fashion is only the changing form of Progress towards perfection, and if we glance over the fashion plates of the last five centuries, we can hardly

arrive at any other conclusion; and yet the fashions of ladies' dresses at the present day are very nearly as outrageous as they were fifty years ago, when George the Third was compelled to issue a command to restrain their growing redundancies, to save him the expense of enlarging his Palace; since, to such extreme breadth did the Court ladies carry their gowns, that not more than half a dozen could inhabit the same room with comfort. We have an example of a fashionable lady of that period before us, taken from the "Gallery of Fashion," published in 1796.

This is sufficiently monstrous; and yet only 50 years ago, women were habited in such attire, which seems like an attempt to burlesque dress, this was the fashion at the most refined and modest court in Europe. Contrasted with the fashion of the present day, it is not very grotesque, nor very absurd. The worst part of it still remains, the puffed waist of the wearer and the monstrous waste of the dress. We give an instance of the present taste, which every body will see has not been exaggerated, as the fashions usually are in the fashion plate, of ladies' magazines. Indeed, this has been taken from the life, but the lady not wanting to be recognized by her friends, has turned her back upon the public.



Ben Johnson has given the most correct definition of fashion in his Discoveries that we have ever seen.  
"Nothing is fashionable until it is defamed."  
This leaves nothing more to be said. But if any body should

doubt that fashion is, essentially, deformity; let it be thought on for a moment why fashion endures for so short a time; not because of its hideousness. Any fashion that were beautiful would endure forever. We never grow weary of anything that is pure, or beautiful or good. But gentlemen

charity, high mindedness, youth and loveliness, have never been in the fashion. Early rising, industry, fortissimo, simple diet, comfortable apparel, have never been in fashion among the fashionable. But the opposite of these. Dueling always has been, and is now, the very extreme point of fashion. So is wine drinking; so are late hours, unhealthy food, and killing dresses.

OLE BUL'S NIAGARA.

BY L. MARIA CHILD.

*[From the lines of criticism, on Ole Bul's great performance, which has pervaded the press, and the reported silliness of his auditors, it would seem that people went to hear Niagara in Indian robes, expecting to see musicians rejected from the gas-lights about its performance. Singers, and came away disappointed, because they were not thoroughly soaked in the spray of his instrument. It would doubtless give entire satisfaction if he were to play it with an accompaniment from a Croton hybrid. Let him take the lead at the next performance. But we have never heard of anybody, save Mrs. Butler, who did not feel disappointed at the first night of the great Concert; it could hardly be expected that the idea, presented in the tones of a violin, should be more successful in a first impression, than the tremendous reality itself. But here was one who had never, if no more, at the first representation of Niagara, as the following letter will show.—Ed.]*

You ask me for my impressions of Ole Bul's Niagara. It is like asking an Æolian harp to tell what the great organ of Freyberg does. But since you are pleased to say that you value my impressions, because they are always my own, and not another person's; because they are spontaneous, disinterested, and genuine; I will give you the tones as they breathed through my soul, without anxiety to have them pass for more than they are worth.

I did not know what the composer intended to express. I would have avoided knowing, if the information had been offered; for I wished to hear what the music itself would say to me. And thus it spoke: The serenely beautiful opening told of a soul going forth peacefully into the calm bright atmosphere. It passed along, listening to the half-audible, many-voiced murmurs of the summer woods. Gradually, tremulous vibrations fill the air, as of a huge cauldron seething in the distance. The echoing sounds rise and swell, and finally roar and thunder. In the midst of this, stands the soul, striving to utter its feelings.

"Like to a mighty heart the music seems,  
That years with melodies it cannot speak."

It wanders away from the cataract, and again and again returns within sound of its mighty echoes. Then calmly, reverentially, it passes away, listening to the receding choros of Nature's tremendous drums and trombones; musing solemnly as it goes, on that vast sheet of waters, rolling now as it has rolled, "long, long time ago."

Grand as I thought Niagara when I first heard it, it opened upon me with increasing beauty when I heard it repeated. I then observed many exquisite and graceful touches, which were lost in the magnitude of the first impression. The multitudinous sounds are bewildering in their rich variety.

"The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep."

"The whispering air  
Sends inspiration from the rocky heights;  
And dark recesses of the caverned rocks;  
The little rills, and water numberless,  
Blend their notes with the loud streams."

There is the pattering of water-drops, gurgling, twitterings, and little gushes of song.

"The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
As if with pipes and music rare.  
Some Rome's Gossamer were theirs,  
And all the leaves in festive play,  
Were dancing to the minstrelsy."

The sublime waterfall is ever present, with its echoes; but present in a calm contemplative soul. One of the most poetic minds I know, after listening to this music, said to me, "The first time I saw Niagara, I came upon it through the woods, in the clear sunlight of a summer's morning; and these tones are a perfect transcript of my emotions." In truth, it seems to me a most wonderful production; a perfect disembodied poem; a most beautiful mingling of natural sounds with the reflex of their impressions on a refined and poetic mind. This serene grandeur, this pervading beauty, which softens all the greatness, is probably the principal reason why it does not captivate the ears of the public, as much as they had anticipated.

It is a great disadvantage to any work of art to be much talked of before it appears. People had formed all sorts of expectations, and were disappointed not to hear their own conceptions uttered in sound. Some expected to hear all Niagara, with its powerful bass notes, on the violin alone; and apparently forgot that they owed to Ole Bul's genius the grandly-expressive orchestral accompaniment. Some, it is said, even complained that they did not hear the cataract. Their ears might have been better satisfied, perhaps, if there had been a great hydrant running, or a huge water-wheel revolving, behind the scenes.

I supposed that Niagara was not received with loud applause, because the souls of the audience were, like my own, too much stilled by its solemn and majestic beauty. When I heard that many were disappointed in it, I felt as if my spirit would be suffocated to remain in a city, that had not souls to appreciate a production like that. But one never need distrust the human soul. It always responds to what comes from the soul. During the following days, people who were strangers to Ole Bul, were continually saying to me, "I was indignant at the want of enthusiasm." "Really, I have never before been so much impressed with Ole Bul's genius." Then came tidings that foreign critics, and musical amateurs, who were present, thought it a composition full of majesty and beauty, and were surprised that it was not received with warmer applause. Like all refined and skillfully elaborated productions, it will take time to grow upon the popular ear. If I were to hear it a hundred times, I should discover some new beauty every time, though I should never be able thoroughly to appreciate it. The artist has thrown into it the earnest strength of his soul, and prepared it with great care, because he wished to offer a fitting tribute to this country. Perhaps America will not discover the magnificence of the compliment, till applauding Europe teaches her its value.

At the second concert, a Rosno Gossamo, of Ole Bul's composing, greeted my ears for the first time. It is the lightest, simplest thing imaginable; like the hum of bees among the flowers. It is the very SHIRT OF JOY, throwing smiles and roses as she dances by.

Then, too, I heard THE SOLITUDE OF THE PEARL for the first time; and never did music so move the innermost depths of my soul. Its spiritual expression breathes through heavenly melodies. With a voice earnest and plaintive as the nightingale, it spoke to me of inward conflict; of the soul going forth into solitude, alone and sad. The infinite stretches itself out, in darkness and storm. Through the fierce tempestuous struggle, it passes alone, alone, as the soul must ever go through all its sternest conflicts. Then comes self-renunciation, humility and peace. And thus does the exquisitely beautiful music of this PEARL SOLITUDE lay the soul lovingly into its rest.

Many, who have hitherto been moderate in their enthusiasm about Ole Bul, recognize in these new compositions