

along: and there is generally an air of tranquil endurance about our nautical friends: they look upon illness as a certain work that they are engaged for—destiny being a skipper not to be mutinied against—and so wait.

One youth, with something between a grin and a blush, hints that milk diet is scarcely substantial enough for the existing state of his constitution, and receives an accession accordingly. Then we come to a brown fellow, who looks quite like an Englishman, but who is a Norwegian, and whose language is unintelligible. However, surgical tact joined to experience soon understands his case. The next patient is very, very far gone with consumption—he, poor fellow, asks for lime-juice; one is glad to think that there is still anything which can promise him pleasure here. We pass on, silent and thoughtful. Even severe illness does not damp the handsome Prussian in the neighbourhood; who seems comically excited at the bluff fat nurse, and grunts actively while that remarkable old woman tucks him up.

The darkness grows deeper; the breezes shiver on the night tide, and it is time to leave this huge hull, which looms so loftily through the dusk. One feels the emotion of relief at parting from this scene of pain and weariness—and feels it to be a somewhat ungrateful emotion—thinks how anxious everybody ought to be to aid an institution so valuable and so peculiar—an institution which appeals to what is best in the heart, and by so much that is attractive to the imagination.

#### THE CATALOGUE'S ACCOUNT OF ITSELF.

I AM the Catalogue of the Great Exhibition. You are the Public. I intend to have some private talk with you, and pour into your ear the story of my early life.

Of a class of celebrated men there is a common saying, that

“They learn in suffering what they teach in song.”

I, as a celebrated Catalogue, had much to go through with ere I learnt that which I teach now in the Illustrated edition, the official edition, the French edition, the German edition, and the twopenny edition. I call myself a celebrated Catalogue, and I consider myself a work of great importance. My father, the Exhibition, certainly begot in me an illustrious son, who shall hand down his name for the refreshment of posterity. My mother, the Committee, by whom I was brought forth, has, I think, been abundantly rewarded for her pains. There would have been a visible blank in the world's history if I had not been born.

On matters of business it is well known that my manner of speaking is extremely terse;

I'm none of your diffuse Catalogues that quote poetry out of unpublished manuscripts, or out of Scott, and have as many explanations to make as Ministers when Parliament is sitting, or as turtle-doves who have wounded one another's feelings, and desire to re-establish peace. I say a great deal, to be sure, but then there is a great deal in what I do say. This being my business habit, and which, as you know, fits me uncommonly tight, I feel it a relief now to throw off restraint, and wear something a little easier; something more flowing. In fact, I mean to flow out now into a tide of gossip; to pour into your ear, confidentially, a stream of information on the subject of my early life, and to unbend; if I may say so, to un-catalogue myself; to loosen myself from the accustomed bondage by which I am compelled to travel only on a certain path. Still it is possible that a confirmed business character, like mine, may slip into the old train. Fond of arithmetic by nature, Walkingame is Byron to me, and my Wordsworth is De Morgan. Should these facts peep out, and should my figures be Arabic, with less entertainment in them than some other Arabian things that might be mentioned, you must shrug your shoulders, and say, It's his way; for, after all, what is he but a Catalogue!

What but a Catalogue? No, don't say that, because it sounds a little like depreciation. Now, I cannot afford to be depreciated, because, as it is, my greatness is not fairly understood. Mr. Dando's appetite for oysters was large; but what would you say about Mr. Dando when you reached home after dining with that Major Cartwright, whose own notion of a dinner you will find put down in one of Southey's common-place books? Said he to the young poet, “I make only two cuts at a leg of mutton. The first, takes all that is on one side; the second, all that is on the other. After that, I put the bone across my knife to get the marrow.”

The epic grandeur of Major Cartwright's dinner, with its two sublime cuts, would put out of your mind the lesser lyric of a Dando, though nineteen dozen of natives should give *clat* to his performance. The clatter going on about that horrid Exhibition building keeps me, I fancy, too much unobserved. If I were to draw another parallel (the term is mathematical, but I am not yet in a state of Demorganisation)—were I to draw another parallel, I should allude to the great mountain, Chimborazo, which is said in its first aspect to disappoint all travellers. The enormous magnitude of all surrounding features, dwarfs the chief feature to the mind; there are no Brighton Downs or Salisbury Plains at hand, as objects of comparison. Now, you have made a Chimborazo of the Exhibition, and it towers in Hyde Park, and you are astounded, and you do not look at the surrounding

elevations. Call the peak Paxton, if you please; but I tell you that this peak is the centre of a mountain system, which presents grand and bold heights to your view. Call me a mountain, and my peaks, if you will, you may call Ellis, Playfair, Yapp (my compilers), Clowes (my printer), and so forth. Never mind measuring comparative heights. Around Mont Blanc are many mountains; there are many large hills clustering round Snowden. One fool makes many; one wise man makes more: and one great fact creates around it generally other facts great in themselves, although less lofty than the centre around which they are collected. In this way I am great, and what I want to talk to you for now, is this: I want to have my greatness understood.

I shall begin by quoting from a high authority, namely, myself; and, when I say myself, I mean the Illustrated Catalogue. There I provide you with a little information, which I will repeat in a condensed form; and then, with as much modesty as is consistent with a proper self-respect, I shall have pride and pleasure in communicating to you some additional particulars. In the first place, you are aware that I am not one of your ordinary Catalogues; a list of books, or specimens already arranged and ticketed, made in a quiet way by a gentleman who walks among the articles in dressing-gown and slippers; then deliberately printed and revised in presence of the original articles which it is designed to comprehend. No, nothing of the sort. I was a Catalogue before the Crystal Palace was an Exhibition. From the north and the south, from the east and the west, my fragments were brought together in ships, and deposited by postmen at Hyde Park, in one party-coloured heap. Tah-tsi here, Shah Tishoo there, Sharps over the water, John Smith at the Antipodes, Oawehoitoo in the Sandwich Islands, Monsieur Tonson of Provence, Herr Grubstik of Heinfettersdorf, Ben Ismael, and Paskyvit-chikoffsky, and fifteen thousand people more;—deliberately I say, fifteen thousand people, of all climes, all tempers, and all manner of hands at literary composition, had to be written to, and from each had to be received his modicum of "copy." Before the articles described were sent, or when they were upon the road, each contributor was applied to for his description of the articles he meant to send. Overwhelming might have been the eloquence of Shah Tishoo, descending on his carpet; stupifying might have been the account given by Meinherr Grubstik of his case of pipe-heads. If no precaution had been used, I should have been even a more wonderful thing than I now am; but there would have been a something fearful in my composition. I should have been a monster like that chronicled in Frankenstein. To obviate this inconvenience, printed forms were supplied to the contributors. "These forms,

which were to be to the Catalogue what the manuscript of an author is to his proposed work, were framed with care, and were accompanied with instructions for filling them up, which suggested those points on which interesting or important information might be supplied, together with the descriptive account. There were four varieties, each appropriated to one of the four great sections of Raw Materials, Machinery, Manufactures, and Fine Arts. The essential characters of these forms were similar in each section, but the instructions for filling them up differed necessarily with the peculiar differences suggested by each section. The subjoined form represents that used in sending in descriptions of machinery, and is a type of those used in the other sections:—

"List of Articles of MACHINERY to be exhibited by

Exhibitor's Surname.		Christian Name.	
Country.		Address, stating nearest Post Town.	
Capacity in which the Exhibitor appears, whether as <i>Producer, Importer, Manufacturer, Designer, Inventor, or Proprietor.</i>			
No. of Articles.	DESCRIPTIONS.		

In order to facilitate their classification on being returned by exhibitors, the forms in the four different sections were printed in black, blue, red, and yellow, the latter applying to sculpture and fine art, the former to raw materials, and the intermediate ones respectively to machinery and manufactures. Every exhibitor was required to send in one of these forms, accompanied with a duplicate in every respect similar to it, and in so doing was supplied with a "receipt for Catalogue forms," which was a guarantee for the reception of his goods into the building." A very large number of these forms were printed and supplied to Local Committees, and to all exhibitors who applied for them; together with instructions for filling them up. These I omit. They are well-articulated skeletons on which to construct a succinct and sufficient description; general forms like the "Rules for taking Cases" given to medical students in many of our hospitals.

Of the two copies sent in, one was held by the Executive Committee; the other placed in the hands of the compiler, Mr. Yapp. The directions above specified, of course, did give a certain uniformity and a reasonably manageable character to the separate flakes of the great storm of description. It is also to be understood that many of the exhibitors neglected altogether, or postponed to the last minute, their answers; many answered in their own rambling way, with a good deal

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of self-laudation; and many who endeavoured to comply with the desires of the Executive, made a sad mess of their descriptions, "unaccustomed as they were to public writing." These returned forms had then to be taken as they came, and referred to their respective classes. The classes were thirty in number, and the classifier was Dr. Lyon Playfair. The forms were then gone through in the compiler's office; all superfluous matter was as far as possible crossed out of them; knotty sentences were unravelled as far as time permitted, and bad grammar mended. The sending out of forms occupied several men for nearly a month, during which time they had folded, enclosed, and directed more than fifty thousand printed epistles. I am not quoting my Illustrated Edition now, but have begun to gossip, for I want to tell you a few odd things more in detail about my compilation. The most minute information, I know, is welcome, when it concerns any celebrated character. The office of my compiler was opened in the Building in Hyde Park, on the 21st of January, 1851, with a staff composed of the compiler-in-chief, and three *aides-de-plume*. After the lapse of a few weeks, this number was increased by one, and remained then fixed, until the middle of April, when it was further increased. Six individuals then worked on with occasional aid until the end of May; when five, or less, were found to be sufficient, and in the beginning of July all compilation duty ceased.

The returns of exhibitors from divers parts began to meet each other in the compiler's office towards the end of January. As they came, they were sorted into sections, and arranged alphabetically. Then they were re-examined to ascertain how many had neglected to bring duplicates; and duplicates were made in the office to supply all such deficiencies. For a third time, the returns were then examined, in order to compare them with a list of the proposed exhibitors; and not a few supernumerary papers, sent on speculation, were in this way detected and cast out. Then followed the grammatical revision; and, finally, the packet in each class had its contents numbered, and the numbers registered, before it passed out of the compiler's office, and into the office of the printer.

The first parcel reached the printer's on the 31st of January, and on the 31st of March, six thousand and ten returns (from exhibitors in Great Britain and Ireland) had been sent to be set up in type. After this time the printer was supplied at a more leisurely pace; and on the 22nd of April, the number of forms set up had advanced to six thousand two hundred and forty-one. The Colonial and Foreign returns were proceeded with simultaneously. Returns from the colonies were sent to press between the 6th of March and 21st of April; foreign returns between February 3rd and April 23rd, on which day

the last fragment of my original manuscript was laid at the printer's door. The briskest of the foreign states, if we must judge by its promptitude in sending a return, was Tunis. The second parcel of foreign returns came from Lubeck, and the third from Switzerland. All the matter about which I have been speaking, was first printed for the Illustrated Edition of the public's humble servant, and kept set up in a fragmentary manner, until that work was revised for publication. Proof impressions, taken from these fragments, were sent to the gentleman charged with the scientific revision of the work, Mr. Robert Ellis, who allotted the various portions to the scientific annotators. For a few remarks upon those annotators, I must refer once more to the information given by my Illustrated self.

Of course, among the returned forms, there would not only be grammatical confusion to correct, but a large number of scientific blunders. Things would be falsely named; foreign scientific words would be inaccurately rendered, familiar objects of trade would be popularly expressed, and throughout the whole range of the Exhibition, a Catalogue supplied by thousands of people differently educated, would have no precision, uniformity, or coherence. There was a German once, named Feuerstein (flint), who went to French Canada. The Frenchmen there could make nothing of his outlandish name, so they translated it, and called him Gun-flint. The English occupied, after a time, that part of Canada, and as Gun-flint remained among them, he was again translated into Peter Gun. So you would have had in your Catalogue here, Feuerstein; there, Peter Gun; and never could have known them both to represent one and the same name. To obtain uniformity, therefore, the plan was adopted which I now quote:—

"A number of scientific gentlemen gave their consent to undertake the revision and correction of proofs of the returned forms in their peculiar departments, with a view to remove from them those errors which might present themselves, and to supply what might appear requisite to give prominence to their really important features. In addition to this, it appeared advisable, as critical observations were necessarily inadmissible, to relieve the tedium of mere description, and to assist in pointing out the leading features of interest in the objects described, or in direct relation with them, by appending, as the subjects of the proof suggested, such brief annotations as might appear best calculated to effect these objects.

"As a certain degree of harmony of procedure was considered absolutely necessary, in order to give a consistent character to such corrections and annotations, supplied as they would be from a variety of sources, a few suggestions of certain general principles were adopted, and as far as possible acted upon.

It is not necessary to reproduce the whole of these suggestions in their original form; but since it is important that exhibitors should be informed of the principles which, to a great extent, guided and determined the corrections and annotations which are found in this work, they are here subjoined." Attention was particularly directed to the suggestion, under the head "annotations," by which critical notices were strictly excluded from the annotations appended to the descriptions.

In sending about slips, many of them consisting of three or four lines cut out of other proofs, of course there arose danger of inextricable confusion when the little slips, or snips, should all come back again, and have to be re-arranged.

A simple method of ascertaining not merely the place in the Catalogue, but its entire history, its destination, annotator, and return, was, however, contrived, and the history of every proof has thus been accurately recorded. The information thus obtained was so accurate and precise, that on the temporary delay of very small proofs, their original destination was instantly discovered, together with the date of transmission, and the name of the annotator to whom they had been sent. Much punctuality characterised the return of the dismembered portions of this large volume. Had not such been the case, the original plan of scientific and technical revision could not have been persisted in.

But, while all this work was going on, I was being taught to speak in French and German, by gentlemen engaged especially for that purpose.

Furthermore, and finally, the slips of the large Catalogue, revised, annotated, and re-revised, were placed before the compiler, that he might condense each description into an average of about three lines, for the shilling, or "Official Catalogue." The reduction of the whole of the proofs of the British Exhibitors only, occupied the compiler, almost without any intermission, from the 24th of March to the 24th of April—just a month. The Foreign and Colonial portion was commenced on the 10th and finished on the 28th of April, so that the rough proof of the Catalogue was only completed two days before the opening of the Exhibition; fifty-two persons having been employed in the compiling and the annotating of these two English Catalogues.

It was not until all, or nearly all, the fragments were in the printer's hands, that the final numbering and arrangement could take place; so that, at the last moment, all my inside was twisted up and down. Classification this was called. The classification began at the printer's just before the arrival of the last corrected slips; and they came, as I told you, only two days before the Exhibition would be open, and the Catalogue would be demanded by the public. Woe be to the printer who should go to bed at such a crisis. The "Official Catalogue" was classified,

made up, printed, and bound in four days. The first perfect impression was only produced at ten o'clock at night upon the eve of the eventful opening. Ten thousand Catalogues, properly bound, were punctually delivered, at the building, on the morning of the 1st of May. The two copies presented to Her Majesty and to the Prince, that morning, elegantly bound in morocco, lined with silk, and with their edges gilt, had been bound, lined, and gilded in six hours. Now, perhaps, you do begin to wonder that you had a Catalogue at all upon the 1st of May, and are no longer surprised that, in that first edition, there were included descriptions of articles which the describers had neglected afterwards to send, or that the articles which had arrived, of unexpected bulk, or otherwise exceptionally, could not be placed properly in the building, according to the exact numerical order that had been established in the Catalogue. Most of the errors of my first edition are corrected in my second. Now I mean to tell you a few more things about myself, well calculated to excite your admiration.

My "Official" self makes three hundred and twenty pages, or twenty sheets of double foolscap folded into eight. Two hundred and fifty thousand copies of this having been printed; one hundred and five tons of paper have been consumed therein; and, upon this paper, the duty paid is one thousand four hundred and seventy pounds. The publications connected with the Catalogues, and the number of pages in each, are as follows:—

English, French, and German Catalogues . . . . .	960
Descriptive and Illustrated ditto . . . . .	1400
English and French Synopsis . . . . .	192
Hunt's Handbooks . . . . .	1000
Penny and Twopenny English and French Plans and Guides . . . . .	48
Priced Lists . . . . .	500
Advertisements . . . . .	160
Jury Reports . . . . .	750
Pages . . . . .	5010

The new type of these publications is retained, set up for constant use and correction, and the weight of metal thus employed is fifty-two thousand pounds.

Up and down the courts of the Exhibition, I have been in the company of a good many people who have audibly voted me a bore. I trust that I shall not again have to complain of this. I contain the composition of some fifteen thousand authors; most of them authors for the first time, who have had their exercises pruned, and their diction occasionally mended. Now, the first production of an author, if only three lines long, is usually esteemed by himself as a sort of Prince Rupert's drop, which is destroyed entirely if a person makes upon it but a single scratch. Some thousand authors, therefore, are dissatisfied with the attempts made to render me available for public use.

I say no more; having thus far indulged you with my confidence, I wrap myself in dignified reserve, conscious that I have told you quite enough to secure for myself your respect henceforward.

## CHIPS.

## A BUSH FIRE IN AUSTRALIA.

THE following account of the Bush Fire which, in February last, desolated the whole country around Geelong, is extracted from the correspondence of a recent settler—a young man who is part owner of a farm in the district which suffered most. The letter is dated March 12th, 1851.

On Thursday, February 6th, I had my first introduction to one of the "small peculiarities" of Australian life; viz., a Bush Fire. The season had been unusually dry, and the grass, in consequence, ready to catch fire at the least spark. For some days we had seen the smoke of several fires around us, but none near enough to cause us any alarm. Thursday morning was intensely hot: there was a hot wind—a regular sirocco blowing. You cannot have the least idea of the heat here: one day, in Melbourne, I saw the thermometer standing at one hundred and forty-five degrees in the sun, and one hundred and five degrees in the shade!

About one o'clock on this said Thursday, a farmer named Rawlings, who lives about a mile and a half from us, sent a man to us for assistance. He said that a fire, which had begun at Lake Golar, a place twenty-five miles off, was rapidly approaching his house. Our next neighbour, Dent, myself, and two men who were putting up a hut near us, started off to render any help we could. When we came to Rawlings's farm, we found the fire had not yet reached it, so we went on to see which way it was coming. After walking half a mile, we saw it advancing in a red line through the grass, as fast as a man could run. From the direction of the wind, we thought it would avoid both ours and Rawlings's farm, so we stood for a considerable time watching it as it moved along in a line parallel to our road home. All of a sudden the wind shifted, and the fire came rushing up to where we were standing; the flames from the long grass rising more than eight feet high, and forming a line about a mile long.

As you may imagine, the only thing we could do was to run for it; and run we did, until we came to Rawlings's stacks of wheat. They were in a field surrounded by bush fences. These bush fences, I may explain, are made of felled trees, drawn into a line; the gaps being filled up with small branches. The fire caught the field at one corner, and ran up two sides of the fence like lightning; the flames rising and roaring in a manner which you town's-people can only imagine by picturing a whole street on fire at once. The

smoke was so thick that, although only a few yards from the stacks, we could scarcely see them; and the lighted leaves came flying about us in a fiery shower. There was not a minute to lose; we were obliged once more to fly from our insatiable enemy, and, at the top of our speed, to run for our lives; for if the flames had run up the fence on another side of the field before we crossed it, we should have been surrounded by the fire, and smothered, if not burnt to death.

As it was, we reached the fence just in time, and succeeded in keeping a little in advance of the fire until we reached a road which runs on one side of Mr. Dent's ground, which is surrounded by bush fences the same as Rawlings's. Here we determined to make a stand and try to put out the fire, as the grass was short along the road; and we were reinforced by my partner and another man he had brought with him.

The way we manage to put out a Bush Fire when it runs through short grass, is to cut green boughs, to take them in our hands, and to beat out the flames as they advance up to the road. It seemed to me to be an almost impossible task to extinguish such a formidable fiery line with such puny engines as branches of trees; however, I set to work with the others, and we did succeed in stopping the fire for a quarter of a mile along the road. We were congratulating ourselves on our victory, when a spark from some half-extinguished grass flew across and set fire to Dent's fence. Here a renewal of our labours, with tenfold vigour, was necessary, and, fortunately, we were again successful; for the wind having lulled a little, we were able to prevent the fire from spreading by pulling down the fence on each side of it.

We thought we were safe at last; when, to our dismay, we saw another body of flame advancing in a straight line for the fence on the other side of Mr. Dent's ground. Off we started to meet this new aggression; and, after a hard fight, were again conquerors. By the time this was accomplished, we thought ourselves safe at last. It began to get dark, so we went home and had some tea, and then we commenced a perambulation of our ground, to see how far the conflagration had extended. We found that the two fires had joined below our own ground, so that it and Mr. Dent's formed an island in the midst of the fiery sea. During the whole night we could almost see to read by the light of the fires burning round us. In every direction there were trees blazing high up in the air, seeming like sentinels of the fiery army with which we had been contending all the afternoon. Towards morning some rain fell, which obviated any further danger of the flames spreading.

Next day we learnt that all the country between us and Geelong—about twelve miles—had been burnt; farm-houses, stacks, and everything; but fortunately only few persons