vant returned with two bottles of port wine, glasses for his visitors, and a huge dock-glass, holding at least a pint, or himself. Then the great man deliberately put an end to conversation by abruptly declaring that he felt unable to discuss German philosophy or American politics; pushed one bottle and the glasses toward us; and held the other bottle by the neck as if fearful it might somehow disappear. Impatiently motioning us to partake, he at once helped himself to a good half pint of wine, to which was added half as much cold water. This was repeated, until in half an hour's time his own bottle had been entirely emptied. We said some pleasant things and came away. My German friend was furious; more furious over the quality of the wine that had been served to us than the poet's apparent antipathy to the philosophies of his countrymen. The same evening in London, while we were still in company together with a few literary friends at a Covent Garden resort, the German author indignantly related the incident. The entire party laughed merrily at our discomforture, and one, a well known actor, finally said:

"Henry Irving is the only person who ever really got the best of Lord Tennyson regarding his famous port wine. He was visiting him about two years since. When the dessert came on, the poet left the table and retired to his study with Irving. Here a bottle of his favorite port, a glass for Irving, and the same huge dock-glass, with a pitcher of water, was set before him. In a few moments Lord Tennyson fell asleep. Irving gently disengaged his hand from the neck of the bottle, took it to his own side of the study table, and leisurely drank its entire contents before the poet awoke. The remainder of Irving's visit was distinguished by extreme hilarity on his part, and a well defined coolness on the part of the laureate; but Irving has always been ecstatic over his achievement, and possesses the extraordinary distinction of being the only man living, aside from the laureate himself, who ever really drank an entire bottle of Lord Tennyson's rare old port wine.

In foreign travel, as in some other things, we are often the victims of our own opaqueness or prejudice. In London and other British cities the American will notice little signs at street corners, in crowded, narrow thoroughfares, in parkways, and at all sudden turnings traversed by vehicles, reading "*Keep to the left.*"

Some years ago when I first noticed this it worried me. I wanted to understand it, and, like a true American, perhaps protest about it a little. I approached a London policeman with the earnest inquiry:

"Beg pardon, officer, but might I ask why, in London, everything goes 'To the Left?"

Like one of Mrs. Jarley's figures his head moved stately. He regarded me one awful, official moment with contemptuous pity. His head moved back again. Then with withering scorn he answered:

"An' w'y in 'ell shouldn't it?"

I had never thought of that. After observing and thinking a little, I saw that the English are right in keeping to the left. Drivers being seated at the right, there is absolutely no other way in which to utilize every inch of crowded street. In keeping to the right, as with us, no driver can safely judge distance, when meeting or passing other vehicles. Here, where the drivers' heads practically come together over their wheelhubs when meeting or passing, far greater speed is secured; while danger and loss from clashing wheels are almost wholly avoided. There is wisdom in discarding a bad custom for a good one, wherever we may find the latter.

There is one custom of the British gentry and nobility, as old as the English railway system, which can never, save in a modified way, have its counterpart even with the most offensively recent accessions to our American "aristocracy." That is for a gentleman and his wife to occupy a first-class compartment of a railway carriage, apparently for the better accommodation of their lap-dog, while their children and servants are crowded and banged about in a second or third-class compartment of the same train.

Perhaps this custom was never quite so unpleasantly impressed upon me as when returning from London to York over the Great Northern Railway. I happened for a time to be the sole occupant of a firstclass compartment, and had fallen asleep. Parties had entered unknown to me, and I was awakened just as the London suburbs were reached by an unusual commotion.

A plump English lady, past forty, with wild eyes and a long, smooth-shaven upper lip, was struggling with the rear portion of a tiny, white Porto Rico lap-dog. Opposite her, on the same seat, a burly Englishman was pleading with the same animal, which had set its teeth with much persistent firmness in the tenderest portion of its master's nose.

It was a young lady dog. Its ringlets had been so sheared as to give it the appearance of a fierce Numidian lion. It was exceedingly nervous and excitable, and its master had nagged the creature,—"Derby," pronounced Darby, it was called—until it had retorted by grabbing the pursy gent's nose as though it had been a rat.

"God bless me soul, Darby! D'ye know y'ave me nose quite set between yer pretty little teeth? [A quiet tweak by Darby.] Darby, dear! I say, Darby! Darby—there's a darling! God bless me, but its a brave girl! [Another emphatic tweak.] Precious child: there now! Mind ye, Darby, dear, I've no notion of tearing away from ye, Darby. God bless me, Darby, I 'aven't such a thought. Oh, no, pretty creature! But, God bless me, wife, cawn't ye som'ow, ye know, entice the beast away? Iv'e been very cool—ah, Darby, there's a dear!—but, 'pon me word, I'm fast exhausting. Wife! woman!—Show Darby the creams! 'Eav'n 'elp me, but this is a go, though! 'Ave a cream Darby; do! There's a dear, though. God bless, me, but the creams did it, though!"

They really had done it. Darby had been shown some French creams of which she was very fond, and evidently preferred them to her master's nose. The pursy gent seemed fit for an apoplectic stroke on account of that organ, which had suffered not more than a good pinch; but the lady's moanings at the possibility of Darby's nervous system having received too severe a shock were something piteous indeed.

As we alighted at King's Cross station, after milord, milady and "Darby" had been tenderly bestowed in a handsome brougham, it transpired that the man and wife's five children, two maids and the other miscellaneous luggage, all of whom and which had shared a third-claas compartment with as many uncouth Yorkshire yokels were left behind to reach home as best they could by way of a raging London "thripenny" 'bus.

There is a quaint little inn of Edinburgh, hard by St. Andrew's Square, in which I love to make my home when in "Auld Reekie;" for a while it is but a few steps from the city's peerless Princess Street, it is still within the precincts of a fine old residence district, made famous by the haunts of a score of the great literary Scotchmen of other days.

Much going and coming between this inn and central city places brought to my notice the fact that nearly every pleasant summer night when the hush of evening had fallen upon the town, a marvelous singer of the tenderest ballads of Scotland came that way, stood for a quarter of an hour or so in the quiet entrance to St. Andrew's street; and at intervals to the accompaniment of an accordion sang sweetly for those who tarried.

At chance glimpses of the singer and his regular evening audience I noticed, too, that the man never solicited alms. He stood quite still in the middle of the street, and now and then some one of the crowd, in the pauses of his singing, would step quietly up to him and place a coin within his hand. These were copper coins always, and they nearly always came from the pockets of poor people. Finally, the songs and the scene touching my own heart, I went and placed a coin in his hand, as others had done before me.

Then for the first time I saw that the man was blind. I saw, besides, such a face as will haunt me all my lifetime. I cannot tell you what painter has put most of hopeful patience, exalted resignation and sublime faith into any one face upon canvas. But here was a face that instantly revealed them all. I went back to him. I told him I would like to know him; asked him if I could come to his home, or if he could find his way to my lodgings; and in a moment more we had arranged for a meeting at the little St. Andrew's street inn for the morrow.

When he came his first words put us both as warmly in touch as though our hearts had been open to each other for a lifetime.

"I knew by your voice," he said sadly, "you saw through my sightlessness. An' we blind folk are mair canny at seein' than ye think. You make rhymes. So do I." This deprecatingly. "God knows my heart is satr t' sing wi' a pen, too!"

So I knew he had already sung "wi' his pen," and made him there and then repeat his rhymes. Here was another Burns in rags and obscurity. Surely this is so. Then I went with this blind poet and singer, John Connell, to his home, No. 12, Gibbs' Entry (second flat) Nicholson Street, Edinburgh; away up among the densely inhabited wynds