

A Description of Modern Birmingham eBook

A Description of Modern Birmingham by Charles Pye

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

A Description of Modern Birmingham eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	6
Page 1.....	7
Page 2.....	9
Page 3.....	11
Page 4.....	13
Page 5.....	15
Page 6.....	17
Page 7.....	19
Page 8.....	21
Page 9.....	22
Page 10.....	23
Page 11.....	24
Page 12.....	25
Page 13.....	27
Page 14.....	29
Page 15.....	31
Page 16.....	33
Page 17.....	35
Page 18.....	37
Page 19.....	39
Page 20.....	41
Page 21.....	43
Page 22.....	44

Page 23.....	46
Page 24.....	48
Page 25.....	50
Page 26.....	52
Page 27.....	54
Page 28.....	55
Page 29.....	57
Page 30.....	59
Page 31.....	61
Page 32.....	63
Page 33.....	65
Page 34.....	67
Page 35.....	69
Page 36.....	71
Page 37.....	73
Page 38.....	75
Page 39.....	77
Page 40.....	79
Page 41.....	81
Page 42.....	83
Page 43.....	85
Page 44.....	87
Page 45.....	89
Page 46.....	91
Page 47.....	93
Page 48.....	95

Page 49.....	97
Page 50.....	99
Page 51.....	101
Page 52.....	103
Page 53.....	104
Page 54.....	105
Page 55.....	107
Page 56.....	108
Page 57.....	109
Page 58.....	110
Page 59.....	112
Page 60.....	114
Page 61.....	116
Page 62.....	117
Page 63.....	119
Page 64.....	120
Page 65.....	122
Page 66.....	124
Page 67.....	126
Page 68.....	127
Page 69.....	128
Page 70.....	130
Page 71.....	132
Page 72.....	133
Page 73.....	135
Page 74.....	137

Page 75.....	138
Page 76.....	139
Page 77.....	140
Page 78.....	142
Page 79.....	143
Page 80.....	145
Page 81.....	146
Page 82.....	147
Page 83.....	149
Page 84.....	150
Page 85.....	151
Page 86.....	153
Page 87.....	154
Page 88.....	155
Page 89.....	156
Page 90.....	158
Page 91.....	160
Page 92.....	161
Page 93.....	162
Page 94.....	164
Page 95.....	166
Page 96.....	168

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
WHO COMPILED A DICTIONARY		1
OF ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY		1
FOR THE		2
LINES		2
MODERN		5
EMPHATICALLY TERMED		5
OUT-PATIENTS.		19
LINES		49
ENTITLED		49
OBSERVATIONS		50

Page 1

Produced by Jonathan Ingram, Bradley Norton and PG Distributed Proofreaders

A description
of
modern
Birmingham
whereunto are annexed,
observations

Made during an Excursion round the Town,

*In the summer of 1818,
including*

Warwick and Leamington

BY CHARLES PYE;

WHO COMPILED A DICTIONARY OF ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY

* * * * *

[symbol] May be had of all Booksellers. *Anti-Jacobin*, May, 1804.

PYE'S *dictionary of ancient geography*.

The author's avowed object, is to arrange the ancient and modern names, in a clear and methodical manner, so as to give a ready reference to each; and in addition to this arrangement of ancient appellations both of people and places, with the modern names, he has given a concise chronological history of the principal places; by which the book also serves in many cases as a gazetteer. We find upon the whole a clear and practical arrangement of articles which are dispersed in more voluminous works. Mr. Pye has condensed within a narrow space the substance of Cellarius, Lempriere, Macbean, &c. In short the work will be found very useful and convenient to all persons reading the classics or studying modern geography, and to all readers of history, sacred or profane.

British Critic, June, 1804.

PYE'S *dictionary of ancient geography*.

This may be recommended as a very convenient, useful, and relatively cheap publication of the kind, and may very properly be recommended for schools. The author

very modestly desires that such errors and omissions as will unavoidably appear in an attempt of this nature may be pointed out to him, for the benefit of a future edition.

Monthly Review, October, 1805.

We prefer the old mode of having separate divisions; the one including ancient and the other modern geography, to that of uniting both under the same alphabetical arrangement. When the title of this work is considered, it is somewhat incongruous that the account of places should be inserted under the modern names, and a mere reference under that of the ancient. These accounts appear to be in general correct, but they are in our judgment too brief to be satisfactory. As the above writer says he prefers two alphabets to one; the editor hereby sets him at defiance to produce two books in any language (however large they are,) from whence the student or traveller can collect such information as is contained in this small volume, price 7s.

Mr. Pye also published a correct and complete representation of all the provincial copper coins, tokens of trade, and cards of address, on copper, that were circulated as such between the years 1787 and 1801; when they were entirely superseded by a national copper coinage. The whole on fifty-five quarto plates, price 20s. being a necessary appendage to every library; there being a very copious index.

Page 2

To Wm. Damper, Esq.

One of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace

FOR THE

Counties of Warwick and Worcester.

SIR,

As you occasionally amuse yourself with topographical pursuits, deign to accept of the following pages, from

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant_,

Charles Pye.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Whoever may take the trouble of looking into the following pages, will soon perceive that in some instances the editor has been very brief in his description of the public institutions; to which he pleads guilty, and accounts for it by observing, that the undermentioned card[1] was written and delivered by him personally, to every public institution, at the respective places where the business is transacted, and when he called again, after a lapse of two months, there were several instances where all information was withheld.[2] Having, as he thought, proceeded in the most genteel way, by soliciting assistance in a private manner, he feels doubly disappointed in not being able to give the public such information as might reasonably be expected in a publication of this kind.—Had his endeavors been seconded by those who are to a certain degree interested in the event, there are several points that would have been explained more at large; but being deprived of such assistance, he ventures to appear before the tribunal of the public, and to give them the best information that he has been able to obtain. Any person who discovers errors or omissions, that will take the trouble of rectifying them, and conveying the same through the medium of the publisher, will confer an inestimable favour on

Their obedient servant,

CHARLES PYE.

[Footnote 1:—are respectfully informed, that it is in contemplation to publish a Description of Modern Birmingham, and the adjacent country for some miles around it;

therefore any information they may think proper to communicate will be strictly attended to by Their obedient servant, *Charles Pye.*]

[Footnote 2: The Birmingham Fire Office, the three Canals, &c.]

LINES

Written by the late John Morfitt, Esq. Barrister.

Illustrious offspring of volcanic toil!
Pride of the country! glory of the isle!
Europe's grand toy-shop! art's exhaustless mine!
These, and more titles, Birmingham, are thine.
From jealous fears, from charter'd fetters free,
Desponding genius finds a friend in thee:
Thy soul, as lib'ral as the breath of spring,
Cheers his faint heart, and plumes his flagging wing.

'Tis thine, with plastic hand, to mould the mass,
Of ductile silver, and resplendant brass;
'Tis thine, with sooty finger to produce
Unnumber'd forms, for ornament and use.

Page 3

Hark! what a sound!—art's pond'rous fabric reels,
 Beneath machinery's ten thousand wheels;
 Loud falls the stamp, the whirling lathes resound,
 And engines heave, while hammers clatter round:
 What labour forges, patient art refines,
 Till bright as dazz'ling day metallic beauty shines.

Thy swords, elastic, arm our hero's hands;
 Thy musquets thunder in remotest lands;
 Thy sparkling buttons distant courts emblaze;
 Thy polish'd steel emits the diamond's rays;
 Paper, beneath thy magic hand assumes
 A mirror brightness, and with beauty blooms.
 With each Etruscan grace thy vases shine,
 And proud Japan's fam'd varnish yields to thine.

Thine, too, the trinkets, that the fair adorn,
 But who can count the spangles of the morn?
 What pencil can pourtray this splendid mart.
 This vast, stupendous wilderness of art?
 Where fancy sports, in all her rainbow hues,
 And beauty's radiant forms perplex the muse.
 The boundless theme transcends poetic lays,—
 Let plain historic truth record thy praise.

The Roads pointed out

TO PLACES DISTANT FROM BIRMINGHAM.

Miles	Folio		
Alcester	.. 21	186	
Atherstone	.. 20	178	
Banbury	.. 42	134	
Barr-beacon	.. 7	188	
Barr-park	.. 5	122	
Bath	.. 87	176	
Bilstone	.. 11	101	
Blenheim	.. 52	133	
Bristol	.. 84	176	
Bromsgrove	.. 13	176	
Buxton	.. 61	163	
Cheltenham	.. 51	176	
Chester	.. 75	101	



Coalbrook Dale	.. 30	101
Coleshill	.. 10	180
Coventry	.. 18	161
Derby	.. 40	163
Dublin	.. 218	101
Dudley, thro' Oldbury	.. 9	130
Dudley, thro' Tipton	.. 10	125
Dunchurch	.. 29	161
Edgbaston	.. 1	190
Edinburgh	.. 298	113&163
Evesham	.. 31	186
Glocester	.. 52	176
Hagley	.. 12	169
Halesowen	.. 7	169
Handsworth	.. 2-1/2	106
Harborne	.. 3	182
Henley-in-Arden	.. 14	133
Hockley House	.. 10	133
Holyhead	.. 158	101
Kidderminster	.. 18	169
King's Norton	.. 6	186
Knowle	.. 10	134
Leamington	.. 22	133&134

Page 4

Leeds	.. 109	113&163
Leicester	.. 43	180
Lichfield	.. 16	163
Liverpool	.. 104	113&163
London, thro' Coventry	.. 109	161
—, Henley-on-Thames	.. 118	133
—, Uxbridge	.. 114	133
—, Warwick & Banbury	.. 119	134
Malvern	.. 32	176
Manchester	.. 82	113&163
Matlock	.. 55	163
Meriden	.. 12	161
Northampton	.. 42	161
Northfield	.. 6	176
Nottingham	.. 50	163
Oxford	.. 61	133
Rowley	.. 7	193
Rugby	.. 31	161
Sedgley	.. 14	110
Sheffield	.. 76	163
Shenstone	.. 13	163
Shrewsbury	.. 45	101
Smethwick	.. 2	130
Solihull	.. 7	135
Stafford, thro' Walsall	.. 26	113
—, Wolverhamp.	.. 30	101
Stourbridge	.. 12	130&169
Stratford-upon-Avon	.. 22	133
Sutton Coldfield	.. 8	163
Tamworth	.. 16	163
Tipton	.. 8	125
Walsall	.. 9	113
Warwick, by Knowle	.. 20	134
—, by Hockley House	.. 20	133
Wednesbury	.. 8	110
West-Bromwich	.. 6	108
Wolverhampton	.. 14	101
Worcester	.. 26	176
Yardley	.. 3	192
York	.. 132	113&163



INDEX.

Air, Assay office, Assembly rooms, Asylum for children, — for deaf & dumb, Ball rooms, Baptist's meeting, Barracks, Baths, Beardsworth's repository Birmingham canal, — fire office, — metal comp., Births and burials, Blue coat school, Bodily deformity, Brass, — works, Breweries, Brickwork, neat, Burial ground, Butchers, Calvinist's meeting, Canal, Birmingham, —, Warwick, —, Worcester, Carriers by water, Catholic chapel, Chamber of commerce, Chapel, St. Bartholomew, — St. James's, — St. John's, — St. Mary's, — St. Paul's, Charities, private, Church, Christ, — St. Martin's, — St. Philip's, Clubs, Coaches, Coaches, stage, Copper, Corn mill, Court leet, — of requests, Crescent, Crown copper company, Crowley's trust, Deaf and dumb, Deritend house, Dispensary, Dissenter's school, Duddestonhall, Factoring, origin of, Fairs, Fentham's trust, Fire office, Fish shops, Free grammar school, General hospital, — provident society, Glass houses, Gold and silver, Gun trade, account

Page 5

of, Hackney coach fares, Hen and chicken's inn, Hides, raw, Hospital, Hotel, hen and chicken's, —, Nelson's, —, royal, —, swan, Houses, Humane society, Huntingdon's meeting, Jew's synagogue, Ikenield street, Improvements in the town, Inland commercial society, Innovation of the post office, Interesting information John-a-Dean's hole Lady well Lancasterian school Lench's trust Liberality of the town Library, new —, public —, theological Magistrates Manufactories Markets Metal company Methodist meeting Mining and copper comp. Miscellaneous information Musical festival National school Neat brick work Nelson's statue — tavern New library — meeting Newspapers New union mill Old meeting Origin of factoring Panorama Parsonage house Philosophical society Piddock's trust Places of worship Population Post office — innovation Principal manufactories Prison Private charities Proof house Protection of trade Provident society Public breweries — library — office — scales Quaker's meeting Raw hides Remarkable circumstance Roman road Rose copper company Royal hotel Scales, public Schools Situation Smithfield Square Stage coaches Statue of Lord Nelson Steam engines improved Steel house Sunday schools Swan hotel Swedenburgians Theatre Theological library Town improved Trade protected Trust, Crowley's — Fentham's — Jackson's — Lench's — Piddock's Vase, a remarkable one Vauxhall Union mill Warwick canal Water Worcester canal Workhouse Worship, places of

MODERN

BIRMINGHAM,

EMPHATICALLY TERMED

THE TOY-SHOP OF EUROPE.

This extensive town, which, from its manufactures, is of so much importance to the nation, is distinguished in the commercial annals of Britain, for a spirit of enterprize and persevering industry. Its inhabitants are ever on the alert, and continually inventing some new articles for traffic, or making improvements in others, that have been introduced in foreign countries; and by their superior skill, aided by machinery, are enabled to bring into the foreign market an endless variety of manufactured goods, both useful and ornamental, which they sell at a more moderate price than any other manufacturers of similar articles in the known world.

Comparisons are odious, and therefore to be avoided. That the inhabitants are become wealthy, there is indisputable evidence, but to whom they are indebted for their opulence, different opinions prevail.



The writer of these pages was born in the year 1749, and having been an attentive observer more than fifty years, he is convinced that the extensive trade now carried on in this town, is principally to be attributed to the enterprising spirit of the late Matthew Boulton, Esq. who, by his active and unremitting exertions, the indefatigable perseverance of himself and his agents, together with the liberal manner in which he patronized genius, laid the foundation.

Page 6

This town is situated near the centre of the kingdom, in the north west extremity of the county of Warwick, and so near the verge of it, that within the distance of one mile and a half from the centre, on the road to Wolverhampton, a person removes himself into Staffordshire, and on the road to Alcester, about the same distance from the centre, you are in the county of Worcester.

The superficial contents of the parish is two thousand, eight hundred, and sixty-four acres.

The situation of the town is very uneven in its surface, but not in any part flat; on which account the rains and superfluous water, remove all obstructions, and contributes in a considerable degree to the salubrity of the air.

From the remarkable dry foundation of the houses, and the moderate elevation on which they are erected, the celebrated Dr. Priestley pronounced the air of this town to be equally pure as any he had analysed. The water is also allowed by medical practitioners, to be of a superior quality, and very conducive to the health of the inhabitants, who are scarcely ever afflicted with epidemic diseases.

The foundation of the houses is, with very few exceptions, a dry mass of sandy rock, from whence there are not any noxious vapours arise, and on that account, the cellars might be inhabited with safety, but that is not customary here.

In approaching the town, you ascend in every direction, except from Halesowen; on which account the air has free access to every part of it, and the sun can exercise its full powers in exhaling superfluous moisture.

In this favoured spot, the inhabitants enjoy four of the greatest benefits that can attend human existence; air more pure than in many other places; water of an excellent quality; the genial influence of the sun; and a situation not in the least subject to damps.

The adjacent lands are of an inferior quality, but by cultivation they are rendered tolerably productive; those immediately surrounding the town, are almost in every direction converted into gardens, which are in general rented from one to two guineas per year, and without a doubt are very conducive to the health of the inhabitants.

The waste lands about the town being inclosed in the year 1800 were found to contain two hundred and eighty nine acres, which land now lets from thirty to fifty shillings per acre.

The only stream of water that flows to this town is a small rivulet, denominated the river Rea, which takes its rise upon Rubery Hill, near one mile north of Bromsgrove Lickey, about eight miles distant, from whence there being a considerable descent, numerous reservoirs have been made, which enables the stream, within that short space, to drive

ten mills, exclusive of two within the town; and what is very remarkable, some person has erected a windmill very near its banks, where the ground is not in the least elevated. This curiosity of a windmill being erected in a valley, is very visible soon after you have passed the buildings on the road to Bromsgrove.

Page 7

Notwithstanding there is only one stream of water, the streets are so intersected by canals, that there is only one entrance into the town without coming over a bridge, and that is from Worcester.

At the top of Digbeth, very near the church-yard of St. Martin's, there is a never-failing spring of pure soft water, wherein is affixed what is called the cock pump; which being free to all the inhabitants, it is a very common thing to see from twelve to twenty people, each of them with a pair of large tin buckets, waiting for their turn to fill them, and this in succession through the whole day. From this very powerful spring there is a continual stream that runs through the cellars, on each side of the street, and several of the inhabitants have therein affixed pumps, from which innumerable water carts are filled every hour of the day; notwithstanding which, during the greatest heats and droughts, there is always a super-abundance of that necessary and valuable article.

Immediately above the same church-yard, and near to the principal entrance, there is another pump, constructed in such a singular manner, that I have no hesitation in saying, there never was one of the same before, nor ever will be in future.

LADY WELL.

This inexhaustible spring of soft water has for a series of years been encircled by a brick wall, which forms a very capacious reservoir; from whence there are at least forty people obtain a livelihood, by conveying the water in buckets to different parts of the town. An attempt was made in July, 1818, to prevent the public from having access to this invaluable water; but by the commissioners of the street acts interfering, it remains open to the public.

No town in existence can be more plentifully supplied with water than this is, nor in a more commodious manner, for every respectable house either has a pump to itself, or one pump to serve two houses; and in every court, where there are a number of small houses, that useful appendage is not in any instance wanting, for the accommodation of the tenants.

In various parts of the town the water is soft, but it is not so in general; and to supply that defect, numerous people find their advantage in conveying that useful article in carts, and innumerable others in carrying it with a yoke and two buckets, to those who are in want of it, which they sell at the rate of from ten to twelve gallons for one penny, according to the distance.

Near one mile and a half from the centre of the town, there is, on the road towards Coleshill, a chalybeate spring, which some years back was in general repute, but now little attention is paid to it.



The lands in the vicinity of this town are beyond all doubt higher than any other in the kingdom; there being three instances of springs issuing from them that take two different courses. One instance is upon Bromsgrove Lickey, from whence two springs arise, one of which flows into the Severn, and the other into the Trent.—Another instance is at the Quinton, on the road to Halesowen, from whence there issues two springs, each of them taking the same course as those from Bromsgrove Lickey. The third is at Corley, in the vicinity of Packington, where they pursue the same courses. These springs arise in a triangular direction, Birmingham being in the centre.

Page 8

To demonstrate what has been advanced respecting the salubrity of the air and purity of the water, the hotel, in Temple-row, was erected in the year 1772, upon the tontine principle. There being fifty shares, of course the same number of lives must be nominated at that time, of whom there were, in the middle of October, 1818, forty-five still living.

Another instance may be adduced, equally appropriate. There are at the present time, 1818, still living, and in health, seventeen persons, (and there may be several more), who all of them received their education under one schoolmaster, the youngest of whom is sixty-nine years of age.

And what is still more remarkable, although there were in the middle of November more than three hundred and eighty children in the asylum, there was not one sick person in that numerous family.

ST. MARTIN's CHURCH

Is undoubtedly of great antiquity, and to trace its foundation is at present impossible, tradition itself not giving any clue. It was originally erected with stone, but the exterior being decayed by time, in the year 1690 the body of the church, and also the tower, were cased with bricks of an admirable quality, and mortar suitable to them, for at this time there is scarcely any symptoms of decay. The elegant spire has been several times injured by lightning, and during its repairs the workmen have contracted the length of it considerably. It was at one time (whatever it is now) the loftiest spire in the kingdom, measuring from its base to the weathercock. The person who repaired it in 1777 made the observation.—There are, no doubt, several steeples more lofty, measuring from the ground, the towers of which extend to a great height, whilst this at Birmingham is very low.—There are within the church two marble monuments, with recumbent figures upon them, but no inscription, and are, like the church, of such ancient date, that no person has yet presumed to say when they were executed nor for whom, (only by conjecture); but let the artists be who they would, the effigies do them great credit, and were highly deserving of better treatment than they have experienced. In the church is a fine-toned organ. In the steeple are twelve musical bells, and a set of chimes, that play with great accuracy a different tune every day in the week, at the hour of three, six, nine and twelve; and they are so contrived, that they shift from one tune to another, by means of their own machinery. On the south side of the tower there is a meridian line, which was affixed there by Ferguson, the astronomer, so that when the sun shines, the hour of twelve may be ascertained to a certainty. Birmingham is only one parish, except for church fees, and in that respect, the rector of St. Philip's presides over a small part within the town. The Rev. Charles Curtis is rector of Birmingham: the Rev. Edmund Outram being rector of St. Philip's, in Birmingham. The regimental colours, late belonging to the Loyal Birmingham Association, are suspended in the east window, over the altar. This church is computed to accommodate 2200 persons.

Page 9

ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH.

The scite of the church-yard, parsonage, and blue-coat school was the gift of Mrs. Elizabeth Phillips, and her son and daughter in law, Mr. and Mrs. William Inge, the ancestors of William Phillips Inge, Esq. without stipulating for the presentation. This superb edifice was designed in the year 1710, by Thomas Archer, Esq.[3] who was gentleman of the bed chamber to her majesty Queen Anne, and who, it is universally allowed by all who have taken particular notice of this building, was possessed of superior abilities, and a refined taste as an architect. An act of parliament being obtained for the erection of it in the year 1709, the same was begun in 1711, under a commission, granted to twenty of the neighbouring gentry, who were appointed by the bishop of the diocese, under his episcopal seal; whose commission was to expire twelve months after the church should be erected. It was consecrated in the year 1715, but not finished till 1719, when the commissioners resigned their authority into the hands of the diocesan, in whom the presentation rests.

[Footnote 3: He also designed the church of St. John, in Westminster.]

The money expended by the commissioners, two years after the consecration, did not amount to quite L5000; but then it must be recollected, that a very large proportion of the materials were given, and conveyed to the spot free of expence. A considerable sum of money being left unpaid; this circumstance was made known to his majesty, George Ist, by the intercession of Sir Richard Gough, when he, in 1725, generously contributed six hundred pounds towards the completion of it; and the inhabitants, to express their gratitude for this favour, affixed the crest of Sir Richard Gough, as a vane, on the top of it.

The urns upon the parapet of the church, which contribute in a considerable degree to its appearance, were placed there when the celebrated Baskerville was church-warden, in the year 1750. The organ possesses full tone and great power; the paintings, mouldings, and gildings are superb, and do great credit to those who were employed. Under the centre of the church there is a capacious vault, which extends the whole length of it. The dome in some degree resembles that of St. Paul's, in London, and in the tower underneath it are ten musical bells, and a set of chimes that play a different tune every day in the week, at the hours of one, four, seven, and ten; which tunes shift of themselves by means of the machinery. On the south side of the tower there is a meridian line affixed, by means of which, if the sun shines, the hour of twelve is known to a certainty. This elegant pile of building has been examined with the greatest minuteness, by numerous architects, both within and without, and by all of them declared to be the work of a master; it being equally convenient as it is elegant. The church-yard, by which it is surrounded, corresponds with the building; its area contains four acres of

Page 10

ground, wherein are numerous gravel walks, ornamented with double rows of lime trees, which during summer form shady walks, and being surrounded with excellent buildings, it represents such a scene as probably cannot be surpassed in Europe. The parsonage-house is at the south east corner of the church-yard, where the present rector, the Rev. Edmund Outram, D.D. resides. This church is calculated to accommodate 2000 auditors.—At the north east corner is a spacious building, with a stone front, which is a charity school, wherein there are at this time one hundred and eight boys and fifty-four girls, receiving their education.—(See *Blue Coat School*.)

CHRIST CHURCH.

The land whereon this edifice is erected was the gift of William Phillips Inge, Esq. whose ancestors about a century ago generously gave the scite upon which the church of St. Philip's stands. It is situated at the upper end of New-street, and the first stone of it was intended to have been laid by his present majesty, George the 3d, in person; but it having pleased the Almighty to afflict him with indisposition, that ceremony was performed by the Earl of Dartmouth, on the 22d of July, 1805, in presence of the bishop of the diocese, who was attended by numbers of the nobility, clergy, gentry, the trustees appointed under the act of parliament, and a numerous assemblage of the inhabitants. Although his majesty's malady did not admit of his being present upon this occasion, as it is understood he very much wished to be, he in a very condescending manner gave directions for the payment of one thousand pounds, from his private purse, towards the completion of the building. The body of the church being free to all description of persons, is fitted up with benches for their accommodation; but rent being paid to the clergyman for kneelings in the galleries, they are finished in a style of elegance, with mahogany, supported by light pillars of the doric order. The church was consecrated with great solemnity on the 13th of July, 1813, by the Honourable and Right Rev. James Cornwallis, bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, and an appropriate sermon preached by the Rev. Edmund Outram, D.D. the worthy rector of St. Philip's church, who selected his text from one of the beatitudes—“*The poor have the gospel preached unto them.*”—The bishop, in whom the presentation rests, afterwards gave to the Rev. J. Hume Spry, whom he had appointed to the living, the sum of one hundred pounds, to purchase bibles and prayer books, for the use of the congregation, or that part of it whom he perceived to be the most regular in their attendance. Divine service was first performed by the aforesaid clergyman, on Sunday the 18th of July, at half past ten o'clock in the morning, and in the evening at six o'clock. The ascent to the galleries is by a double geometrical staircase, of stone, with ballustrades of iron, coated with brass, which appear light and produces an elegant

Page 11

effect; these, with the railing at the altar, were an entire new manufacture, invented by Mr. B. Cooke, whose manufactory is carried on at Baskerville House. The altar piece, designed by Mr. Stock, of Bristol, is of mahogany, above which is a painting by Mr. Barber, representing a cross, apparently in the clouds. These being completed in June, 1815, an elegant well-finished organ, built by Elliott, of London, was erected about the same time; and is considered to be one of the most powerful and well-arranged instruments in this part of the kingdom. The present organist is Mr. Munden. The portico and spire were both of them erected by Mr. Richardson, of Handsworth; the former at the expense of L1200 and the latter L1500, which was completed in 1816. In the year 1817, a clock was affixed in the tower, by Mr. Allport, which has four dials, and each of them both hour and minute hands. This place of worship is computed to accommodate 1500 hearers.

Isaac Hawkins Brown, Esq. the late worthy representative for Bridgnorth, who had on several occasions rendered his powerful services to this town, being co-trustee with the Rev. Thomas Gisborne, under the will of Isaac Hawkins, Esq. they had considerable sums of money at their disposal, for benevolent purposes, and out of those funds he proposed to appropriate the sum of one thousand pounds towards the erection of a free church in Birmingham.

In consequence of this liberal suggestion, a town's meeting was convened, whereat it was unanimously resolved to petition parliament on the subject, under sanction of the bishop of the diocese, who in the most handsome manner proposed to annex the prebendary of Tachbrooke, in aid of the said benefice. A liberal subscription immediately commenced among the inhabitants, who were most powerfully assisted with large sums contributed by the nobility and gentry, resident in the vicinity. Considerably more expenses being incurred during the erection of the building than what had been calculated upon, it was considered necessary to make a second application to parliament, to empower the trustees to convert the arches under the church into catacombs, under the idea that they would be readily disposed of at the rate of four pounds each; the trustees purchasing one third of them. In this calculation they have been very much disappointed, there having as yet only two corpse been interred there; but it is presumed, that when the inhabitants are familiarised to that mode of sepulture, they will prefer them to the present custom of erecting vaults, which are attended with considerably more expense.

The erection of this free church confers great credit on the town, as the want of such accommodation was very apparent, from the increased population; and this is manifest by its being so well attended; the congregation being considerably more numerous than can be accommodated, and they express their satisfaction by decent and orderly behaviour.

Page 12

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHAPEL.

The land whereon this chapel is erected was the gift of John Jennens, Esq. who possessed a considerable estate in and near this town. It was erected in the year 1749, in the centre of an extensive burial ground, and is fitted up in a very neat and commodious manner. Mrs. Jennens contributed towards its erection the sum of one thousand pounds, and the remainder was raised by subscription. The altar piece was the gift of Basil, Earl of Denbigh, and the communion plate, consisting of 182 ounces, that of Mary Careles. There has since been erected a fine-toned organ. The present chaplain is the Rev. Charles Warneford. This chapel is calculated to accommodate 800 auditors.

ST. MARY'S CHAPEL.

Mrs. Weaman being possessed of some land at that time on the outside of the town, made a present of the ground whereon it is built, reserving to herself the presentation. It was erected in the year 1774, in an octagon form, and being very spacious, the diminutive steeple attached to it, is not by any means proportionate. The present incumbent is the Rev. Edward Burn, A. M.—This place of worship is computed to accommodate 2000 hearers.

ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL.

This elegant pile of building was erected in the year 1779, upon land the gift of Charles Colmore, Esq. reserving to himself the presentation. The ground whereon it stands being a declivity, is not altogether suitable for such a pile of building, but at that time it was the most eligible spot at his disposal. The attendants upon this place of worship raised a subscription, and in the year 1791 caused a beautiful window of stained glass to be placed over the communion table, representing the conversion of St. Paul; by that ingenious artist Francis Eginton; price four hundred guineas. Although the inside is thus ornamented, the steeple remains to be erected, it being at present only delineated upon paper. The present incumbent is the Rev. Rann Kennedy. This chapel is calculated to accommodate 1130 persons.

ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, DERITEND

Was originally founded in 1382, during the reign of Richard 2d. This place of worship, which is a chapel of ease to the parish of Aston, appears to have been erected in the year 1735, and to which the tower was added in 1762, wherein eight musical bells and a clock were affixed in 1777. The perpetual curate is the Rev. John Darwall, A.M. This chapel is calculated to accommodate 700 persons.

ST. JAMES'S CHAPEL, ASHSTED.

This structure was erected by an eminent physician, John Ash, M.D. for his own residence, but before the building was completed, he went to reside in London; and having disposed of this property to Mr. John Brooke, he converted it into a place of worship, which was consecrated in the year 1810. Minister, the Rev. Edward Burn, A.M. This place of worship is capable of containing 1200 auditors.—N.B. The two last are in the parish of Aston.

Page 13

Burial Ground.

The different cemeteries within the town being crowded with the bodies of the deceased, it was considered proper to purchase three acres of land near to the chapel of St. Bartholomew, as an additional burying ground; for which the sum of L1600 was paid to the governors of the Free School. This ground is divided into two parts, each of which is inclosed by a brick wall, surmounted by iron palisadoes, and gates of the same at the entrance, which are secured by locks. It was consecrated on the 6th of July, 1813, by the bishop of the diocese.

Births and Burials.

It will undoubtedly be expected that something should be said under this head, but the different sectaries, who never come near the church upon either occasion, are so numerous, that nothing like a regular estimate can be made.

Chapel in Broad-street,

FOR CATHOLICS.

The religious of this persuasion erected a place of worship in the year 1789, which was considerably improved in 1800; it is situated in Broad-street, and fitted up in a commodious manner, with an organ. They have also another chapel in Shadwell-street.

Meeting in Bull-street,

FOR THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

This pile of building, although destitute of ornaments has a very respectable appearance, and the inside of it is fitted up in a very appropriate manner. There is at the back of it an extensive cemetery, and another small one in Monmouth-street.

Old Meeting,

FOR PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

This substantial and well-constructed pile of building, particularly the roof, was erected about the year 1793; the old one, which gave name to the street, having been destroyed by fire in 1791. Had this meeting been erected in a more spacious street, it might have been seen to advantage, but its beauties are here lost. The interior is fitted up to correspond with the exterior, and therein is affixed a fine-toned organ. The officiating ministers are the Rev. R. Kell and the Rev. John Corrie. There is a spacious burial ground attached to this meeting.

New Meeting,

FOR PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

This substantial edifice, being cased with stone, fronts towards Moor-street; the former erection, which gave name to the street, being destroyed by fire in 1791. This, like the old meeting, is fitted up in a neat and convenient manner, in every respect, being furnished with an organ suitable to the size of the building. The Rev. John Kentish and the Rev. James Yates are the ministers.

Meeting in Carres Lane,

FOR CALVINISTS.

This is a neat and commodious pile of building, in every respect suitable for the purpose intended.—In Livery-street the Calvinists converted a riding-school into a place of worship, which is commodiously fitted up and will hold a numerous congregation.

Page 14

This religious society have another place of worship in Bartholomew-street, and have lately completed a fourth, upon a very extensive scale, in Steelhouse-lane, which was opened for divine service on the 9th of Dec. 1818. It is fitted up with pews, capable of containing 2000 auditors, and is lighted by means of gas, in the most superb manner. A scion from this meeting has lately fitted up a warehouse in Bristol-street, as a place of worship.

Meeting in Cherry-street,

FOR METHODISTS.

This building was erected in the year 1782, and opened as a place of worship by the celebrated John Wesley, it being fitted up in a commodious manner for the purpose.

This sect has increased in a surprising manner; they having since erected one extensive meeting in Belmont-row, another in Bradford-street, and a fourth in Oxford-street.

Meeting in Cannon-street, FOR PARTICULAR BAPTISTS.

This extensive and well-arranged pile of building was erected in the year 1804; and at the back of it is a school upon a large scale, for the youth of that persuasion.

This society have become so numerous, that they possess a meeting upon an extensive scale in Newhall-street, and another in Bond-street. There is also a meeting for general baptists in Lombard-street, Deritend.

Meeting in King-street,

FOR THE FOLLOWERS OF LADY HUNTINGDON.

This place of religious worship was originally a theatre; where some of the most celebrated performers have made their appearance; but it has for several years been appropriated to the performance of divine service, being fitted up in a commodious manner for that purpose.

New Jerusalem Temple,

FOR SWEDENBURGIANS.

This small place of worship is situated in Newhall-street, directly opposite the coal wharf, and is fitted up for the accommodation of those who embrace the tenets of Swedenburg.

Synagogue,

FOR THE JEWS.

The Israelites having from some cause abandoned their ancient place of worship, have erected another suitable for their devotion, which is finished in a neat manner, and makes a respectable appearance, in Severn-street, near the Lancasterian School.

In this town every individual worships his maker in whatever way his inclination leads him, without the least notice being taken or remarks made; if a person's conduct is exemplary, or if he does not give way to any vicious propensities, no one will interrupt or interfere with him.

Lench's Trust.

In the time of Henry the 8th, an inhabitant, named William Lench, bequeathed some land, which is vested in sixteen trustees, for the purpose of keeping the streets within a certain district in repair, and to erect almshouses, which the trustees have complied with, there being twelve of that description erected by them at the bottom of Steelhouse-lane, for the benefit and residence of the same number of aged people. There are nine others in Dudley-street, and four in Park-street, wherein fifty-two aged females reside. The present rental is about L600 per ann.

Page 15

Fentham's Trust.

In the year 1712,—Fentham bequeathed L100 per annum to teach poor children to read, and for cloathing ten poor widows of Birmingham. The children educated by this trust, are maintained and educated in the blue coat charity school, being for distinction sake cloathed in green.

Crowley's Trust.

In the year 1733, Mrs. Crowley left six houses in trust; the rents of which were to support ten girls, who are also in the same school.

PRIVATE CHARITIES.

Society for cloathing destitute Women and Children.

In the year 1800, a few ladies impressed with benevolent ideas associated together, and formed a society for the above purpose: the subscriptions were fixed at three shillings and five shillings per quarter; the former to distribute five shillings and the latter seven shillings, in articles of cloathing.

There have in general been from ninety to one hundred and ten subscribers, who have annually relieved near four hundred persons, by accommodating them with comfortable cloathing, by the aggregate sum arising from these small contributions.

It is hoped that this very slight sketch of the institution may induce many others to unite in this most beneficial mode of relieving the poor. Subscriptions and donations for this charity are received at Mr. Cadbury's, in Bull-street.

The Female Benevolent Society.

This highly commendable institution was established in the year 1802, for the purpose of relieving indigent married women when they are confined by reason of child-birth, or other infirmities. Two visitors are appointed, who examine into every person's situation that applies for assistance, and they administer such relief as the nature of the case seems to require. A subscriber of three shillings per quarter, may, if they think proper, recommend one object to receive five shillings, and a subscriber of six shillings, two objects, who may each of them receive five shillings, or one woman when she lies in may receive ten shillings, or one poor widow or sick person may receive nine-pence per week during the quarter. In the first nine years of this establishment, the sum of L417. 16s. was distributed among sick and indigent females, and since that time the society has been upon the increase, but no report has been printed. Subscriptions and donations for this charity will be received by Mrs. Dickenson, Summer-hill.

The Depositing Society

Have for their object, to improve the condition of the poor, by inciting them to diligence and habits of economy; encouraging them to deposit any sum of money weekly with a committee of ladies, who allow small premiums upon every shilling that is deposited with them. Their view is, to enable the poor to discharge debts, redeem pledges, purchase coals, cloathing, bedding, &c. The last printed report states, that from the 1st of January, 1815, to Midsummer,

Page 16

1816, the deposits amounted to L538. 11s. 6d. and that the sum of L120. 3s. 2d. had been paid in premiums to 189 poor persons, making in the whole the sum of L658. 14s. 8d. By this statement it appears that the poor were benefited more than 22 per cent, on their deposits, which is undoubtedly very great encouragement. Subscriptions and benefactions in aid of this society will be received by Mr. J. Dickenson, treasurer, Summer-hill. This society appears to have been established fifteen years.

Institution for providing Nurses for poor married Women, when lying in. This laudable society of ladies originated in the year 1814, and since its establishment more than 700 persons have by their means been attended to, in a comfortable manner; their assistance having been extended to 129 objects of charity during the last year, and to 77 of them money has been distributed.

Institution for providing Clothes for new-born Infants.

The object of this society is to raise a fund, and to purchase linen, flannel, &c. which the ladies make into suitable cloathing for the intended purpose. Each subscriber of two shillings and six-pence annually, may recommend one object to receive a suit of cloathing, and in proportion for a larger sum.

Lying-in Charity at the Five Ways.

This is supported entirely by voluntary contribution and liberal donations; several of its contributors, much to their honour, having in a benevolent manner assisted the charity by their industry in making different articles with their own hands. Its object is to supply poor married women with linen, during the time they are confined from child-birth, and also to furnish them with a set of linen for the infant. They are at the same time presented with two shillings and six-pence towards paying the midwife.

Deritend and Bordesley Society for assisting the sick Poor with clean Linen.

This charity was instituted in the year 1806, and is conducted by a committee, consisting of six visitors, a treasurer, and a store-keeper. Any person wanting relief must procure a note, and deliver it to one of the visitors, who having seen the sick person, gives an order for such linen as appears necessary, and this they retain so long as the visitor thinks they have occasion for it; and when requisite, the house is cleaned, and money given for their support.

If the stock of linen will admit of it, women are accommodated for the space of one month, whilst they are lying-in. Since this society was first instituted, more than nine hundred poor persons have derived benefit from it, within the limited district of Deritend and Bordesley.

Sick Society, Cannon-street.

This society has been established for a series of years, for the weekly visiting, relieving, and instructing the sick poor, of every denomination; about three hundred of whom are visited and relieved by this society annually.

Page 17

A society was established about seven years back, and is still continued, for lending blankets to poor people during the winter season.

At St. Mary's chapel there is a benevolent society, for relieving the indigent sick; and the congregation have likewise established a school of industry, for females, which is supported by voluntary subscription.

The editor is given to understand, that every religious society in the town has a charitable institution belonging to it, that are each of them confined to their own congregation. There is an Auxiliary Bible Society and also a branch of the Missionary Society.

The Free Grammar School

Was founded by King Edward 6th, in the fifth year of his reign, and endowed with lands, which, by the increased value of such property, now produce more than two thousand pounds per annum. The present building was erected in the year 1707, and is well adapted for the intended purpose.

This seminary has the privilege of sending ten exhibitioners to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, who are each of them allowed thirty-five pounds per annum, for the space of seven years.

The management of these revenues is vested in twenty governors, who annually, from their own body, select a bailiff; and when any governor dies, they are empowered to elect another to supply his place. In the centre of the building there is a small tower, with a whole-length figure of the founder. This school is regulated by a chief master, who receives a liberal salary, a second master, and two ushers, who are assisted by a person to teach writing and another to instruct the pupils in drawing. The present head master is the Rev. John Cooke. There is also a librarian. In the large room there is an elegant marble bust of the founder, by Scheemaker, which is much admired for its sculpture.

The governors of this school support one extensive preparatory school in Shut-lane, and there are four others for boys, to each of which there are two sets of pupils: one of them attends by day and the other in the evening. There are also two others for girls.

The Blue Coat School

Is situated in St. Philip's church-yard: it was erected in the year 1724, but considerably enlarged in 1794, at the expense of L2800. It possesses an annual income of L700, and therein are educated, maintained, and cloathed 108 boys and 54 girls, in the arts of reading, writing, arithmetic, sewing, knitting, &c. In front of this building there are two statues, a boy and a girl, in the habit of the school; they were executed by a statuary of

this town, named Grubb, and do him infinite credit, for they would not disgrace a Roman artist. Adjoining to the school there is a spacious area, for the amusement and recreation of the boys, and a separate one for the girls. The inhabitants subscribe liberally towards its support, and every six months, sermons are preached at all the places of worship upon the

Page 18

establishment, and afterwards there is always a collection, to which many people contribute in a very liberal manner. To this institution some considerable legacies have been bequeathed; and in the year 1795, the lord of the manor granted a lease for 999 years, of four acres of land upon Birmingham Heath, at one shilling per annum, for its benefit.—Persons desirous of viewing the interior of the premises may be accommodated upon making application to the master, Mr. Jones.

It appears by the printed accounts of this school, published in the year 1817, that some young men, who received their education there, have formed an association, under the title of '*True Blues*,' each of whom contributes a weekly sum towards the parent institution, and that the trustees have received at different times from this association the sum of one hundred and fifteen pounds and three-pence.

The Protestant Dissenters' Charity School

Is situated in Park street, commodious premises having been purchased for that purpose. In this school females only are admitted, to the number of thirty-six, who are maintained, cloathed, and educated, by voluntary subscription, and collections made after sermons, which are preached annually at the old and new meeting houses.

The National School

Is situated in Pinfold-street, where a substantial pile of building was erected in the year 1813, capable of containing on the ground floor, five hundred boys, and on the upper story, four hundred girls. This seminary is only intended for the instruction of those children who are brought up according to the established religion, and is conducted upon the Madras system, originally invented by Dr. Bell. This building is inclosed by a lofty brick wall, within which there is vacant ground for the recreation of boys and girls separately. This institution is under the management of Mr. Martin for the boys, and Mrs. Chawner for the girls. Since the institution of this school, 1906 boys and about 1000 girls have received instruction.

The Royal Lancasterian Free School

Was erected in Severn-street in the year 1809, where boys of all denominations are instructed in reading, writing, and accounts. The room is calculated to accommodate four hundred pupils, and since its erection 1800 have derived the benefit of education. In this seminary visitors are uniformly received with kindness, and respectfully informed of any particulars they may think proper to enquire after, by the master, Mr. Thomas Baker. An examination taking place every Saturday, no visitors are admitted on that day between the hours of ten and twelve; but at any other time, the school is open for

inspection during school hours. During the year 1818, 215 boys left the school, having been instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Upon a similar plan there is a school established for the instruction of females, which is situated in Park-street.

Page 19

Sunday Schools.

These institutions are exceedingly numerous, in every part of the town, and not only so, but they are remarkably well attended to, by those of the established religion; and each denomination of dissenters endeavours to out-vie the other in these establishments. The children are all of them neatly cloathed of a Sunday, numbers of them by contributing one penny per week to that purpose, which with donations that are made, effectually answers the end proposed.

The General Hospital.

The exterior of this substantial building was erected in the year 1766 under the superintendence of an eminent physician, John Ash, M.D. but for want of funds, it lay dormant for the space of twelve years; when, in 1778, some well-disposed people stepped forward, and solicited subscriptions in so earnest a manner, that during the next year the hospital was prepared to receive patients, and during the first nine months there was admitted,

IN-PATIENTS.

Discharged cured 135

Relieved 38

Absented themselves 3

For irregularity 2

Incurable 1

Died 5

Remained on the books 41

OUT-PATIENTS.

Discharged cured 108

Relieved 55 For non-attendance 5

Made in-patients 5

Remained on the books 71

By this statement it is evident that the faculty exerted their skill, and exercised their humanity, by giving their attendance gratis. In a few years, the patients became so numerous, that in 1790 it was considered necessary to add two wings to the building. It is supported by voluntary subscription, and once in three years a music meeting is held, from which it derives unprecedented advantage. At the meeting which took place in 1817, the gross receipts, during the three days' performance, amounted to the sum of L8476. 6s. 9d., of which the treasurers of the hospital received the sum of L4290. 10s. 10d.; there not being an instance upon record of any institution receiving so much benefit, or such extensive patronage, from a similar source. A list of the donations and benefactions are recorded in the hall, which enable the committee to extend relief to numerous individuals, who otherwise might perish for want of medical assistance.

In the year ending Midsummer 1818, there were relieved 1167 in-patients and 2541 out-patients, including 766 for the cow-pock, who all of them did well. The under-mentioned physicians and surgeons attend gratuitously, and give their advice and assistance in the most humane manner; it being impossible to enumerate any place where greater attention and humanity are practised.

PHYSICIANS.

DR. J. JOHNSTONE,
DR. BOOTH,

DR. MALE,
DR. DE LYS.

SURGEONS.

Page 20

MR. FREER,
MR. WOOD,

MR. DICKENSON,
MR. VAUX.

House Apothecary, Mr. ALFRED JUKES.
Matron, .. Mrs. RANDALL.

The Dispensary.

This laudable institution originated among a select society, and was carried on in a private manner for some time; until they were joined by the late Matthew Boulton, Esq. who took it under his patronage in the year 1793, when a house was taken in Temple-row, and an establishment formed; he taking upon himself the office of treasurer, saying, "if the funds of the institution are not sufficient for its support, I will make up the deficiency." It continued in Temple-row, supported by voluntary subscriptions and donations, until the year 1808, when a commodious building having been erected for the purpose, in Union-street, at the expense of more than two thousand pounds, the establishment, consisting of a house apothecary, another for the compounding and dispensing of the medicines, and a midwife, removed there. Those who have previously received a recommendation, are here accommodated with medical advice and assistance, gratis, and the females in the time of need are attended at their own dwellings by the midwife, as are also sick patients, who are too ill to attend personally. Since this dispensary was first established, there have been 37139 sick patients, 6223 midwifery, and 13964 persons inoculated in the vaccine manner, at the expense of the institution; of whom 2523 sick, 387 midwifery, and 434 vaccine inoculation, were attended to during the last year, ending Michaelmas, 1818; the subscriptions amounting to L599.11s.

PHYSICIANS.

DR. DE LYS, DR. ECCLES,
DR. LEE,

SURGEONS.

MR. BARR,
MR. VICKERS,
MR. J.S. BLOUNT,

MR. RUSSELL,
MR. INGLEBY,
MR. HODGSON.

Resident Surgeon and Apothecary, Mr. J. M. BAYNHAM.
Dispensing Apothecary, Mr. JOHN TOMPSON.

The Workhouse.

This extensive establishment for the accommodation of the poor, is situated in Lichfield-street, and is under the management of twelve overseers; six of whom are made choice of at Lady-day and the other six at Michaelmas; so that there are always some in office, who having been initiated, understand the rules and customs of the house. In addition to the overseers, there are one hundred and eight guardians, elected by the inhabitants who pay levies, and they continue in office for three years, during which time they possess all the power and authority of overseers, except making and collecting of rates, from both of which they are exempt, nor can they be compelled to assist therein as guardians; but the serving of this office does not excuse them from being chosen into any other.

Page 21

The church-wardens and overseers for the time being are guardians by virtue of their office; and at the expiration of the year, they may continue to act as such, or not, at their option. The appointment of treasurers, clerks, governors, and other officers, with their servants, is vested in the guardians; who are required to keep regular accounts of their proceedings, which must be signed by the chairman at every meeting they hold. All fines, forfeitures, and other public monies are required to be paid into the hands of the guardians, whose duty it is to meet every week, and also after every quarter-day.

In the year 1816, trade being at a very low ebb, the applications for relief were so very numerous, that in order to support this establishment, between Michaelmas in that year and the same time in 1817, it was necessary to collect thirty-six levies, which produced the astonishing sum of sixty thousand two hundred and fourteen pounds, seventeen shillings, and six-pence. From Michaelmas, 1817, to the same time in 1818, there was twenty-eight levies, which produced the sum of fifty-one thousand nine hundred and forty-three pounds, nine shillings, and nine pence halfpenny.

Asylum for the Infant Poor belonging to the Parish of Birmingham.

In the year 1797 the overseers and guardians being convinced of the evils that arose from the system then pursued, of placing the children out at nurse, in the vicinity of the town, formed the resolution of taking certain premises situated in Summer-lane, where all the children might be properly attended to and taken care of.

This being done, a committee of overseers and guardians were appointed to superintend the institution: they being made choice of annually, meet every Monday for the purpose of examining the demands on the asylum drawing cheques for the amount of the bills on the cashier of the workhouse, and inspecting the state of the institution.

The average number of children who have been maintained, cloathed, and educated, for the last twelve months, has been three hundred and eighty; of whom three hundred are employed in manufacturing of pins, straw plat, and lace. The produce of the children's labour since the institution was established, has been progressively accumulating, and that to such a degree, that the committee have been enabled to purchase the premises they inhabit, with about two acres of land, which with the additional buildings and improvements, are now worth nearly six thousand pounds, and are the property of the parish.

The whole of this information is very interesting, but what follows is highly deserving of attention. This account was written at the asylum, in the middle of November, 1818, when there was not in this numerous family one sick person.

Philosophical Society.

Page 22

This institution is indebted for its origin to a few scientific inhabitants, who held a meeting in the year 1800, and having disclosed their ideas to others, they afterwards formed themselves into a society, who having engaged premises and procured proper apparatus, devoted a considerable portion of their time to experimental philosophy; occasionally delivering lectures among their own members. This being carried on as a private society for several years, continually increasing in numbers, they in the year 1813 purchased commodious premises in Cannon-street, which they fitted up in a similar manner to the Royal Institution in London, and it is now become a most valuable establishment. The various lectures that have been delivered by the different fellows of this society, on mechanism, chemistry, mineralogy, and metallurgy, have produced very beneficial effects, and contributed in a considerable degree to the improvement of gilding, plating, bronzing, vitrification, and metallurgic combinations. At one of these lectures, in the year 1812, Dr. De Lys descanted upon the advantages an unfortunate class of society (the deaf and dumb) might derive, if they were put under proper management; and to elucidate the subject, he introduced a girl, about eight years of age, who, labouring under those defects, he and his friend Mr. A. Blair, had been very attentive to,—she, being in other respects endowed with an excellent capacity, paid great attention to what was going forward, and with promptness executed, or rather anticipated, the wishes of her instructors, which proved a very animating and affecting spectacle. This circumstance gave rise to *A General Institution for the Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Children*.

A few days after this girl had been brought forward, a private meeting took place, when it was determined to establish an institution, under the above title.

On the 4th of December, 1812, a general meeting was held, and a committee appointed, who, after making numerous enquiries to find a person properly qualified to superintend the concern, did at length fix upon Mr. Thomas Braidwood, who at that time conducted a private school of the same description, at Hackney; he being initiated in the mystery by his father and grandfather.

When the plan of this institution was made known to the grand jury at the summer assizes for the county of Warwick, in the year 1813, it was universally patronized by them; and when the magistrates, and other leading characters in the county of Stafford, were apprised of it, they, with the greatest liberality, gave it their support, as did the Earl of Plymouth, and other persons of high consideration in the counties of Worcester, Salop, and Derby.

On the 11th of January, 1814, the school was opened, with a few children, as day scholars, and a short time after, the number was increased to fifteen; three of whom came from a distance, and were provided for, free of any expense to the institution, which was at that time held in the town. Lord Calthorpe having erected some building at Edgbaston, in a delightful situation, on an eminence, that commands a view of Birmingham and the adjacent country for some distance, he, at the suggestion of Dr.

Edward Johnstone, granted an advantageous lease of it, together with some surrounding land, for the use of this institution.

Page 23

At the anniversary which took place on the 29th August, 1814, his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, as president of this institution, attended in person, when the committee announced, that every annual subscriber of one guinea, and every donor of ten pounds are entitled by lot to nominate a child into this institution, and that the sum of four shillings per week be required with every child, for lodging, maintenance, and instruction in the asylum.—At the anniversary held on the 4th of August, 1815, the committee made a report, that the asylum was opened on the 4th of January last, and that twenty children had been admitted, to which number they recommended the subscribers to ballot for the admission of eleven others, the funds being adequate to support that number, with the four shillings per week.

At the anniversary held on the 16th of August, 1816, the committee recommended a ballot for six additional boys, and proposed to reduce the weekly sum paid with each pupil from four to three shillings.

In the year 1817, no circumstance took place deserving of notice, but at the anniversary in 1818 the Marquis of Anglesea presided, and there were four additional pupils admitted. The whole number in the asylum at the present time being thirty-two, several of whom have made great proficiency in drawing.

General Institution for the Relief of Persons labouring under bodily Deformity.

This institution, which is supported by voluntary contributions, was established in New-street on the 24th of June, 1817, under patronage of the Earl of Dartmouth, and during the first year of its establishment, 235 patients were relieved, under the care of Mr. John Felton.

Magistrates.

The county magistrates who act for this town, some of whom attend at the public office, in Moor-street, every Monday and Thursday, are the Rev. Dr. Spencer, of Aston; William Villers, Esq. of Moseley; George Simcox and Theodore Price, Esqrs. of Harborne; Wm. Withering, Esq. of the Larches; William Bedford, Esq. of Birch's Green; William Hamper, Esq. Deritend House; Edmund Outram, D.D. St. Philip's Parsonage; and Isaac Spooner, Esq. of Witton.

The Public Office

Is a neat stone-fronted building, erected in the year 1806, at the expense of L9000, in Moor-street; the ground floor of which is appropriated to the use of the commissioners of the street acts, and on the upper floor, the magistrates transact the public business of the town, for which purpose some of them attend every Monday and Thursday. At other times, when it is requisite to convene a public meeting of the inhabitants, it is made use



of for that purpose. Behind this building there are apartments for the prison-keeper and his attendants, also.

The Prison.

Which is a spacious building, with a commodious well-paved yard, for the accommodation of those unfortunates who are therein confined; it being divided into two parts by a lofty brick wall, for the purpose of separating the male from the female prisoners, who have each of them their separate apartments during the day, and at night they are secured in distinct cells.

Page 24

The Prison, in Bordesley.

This being a licensed public house, numerous objections may be made to it; but under the superintendence of that humane magistrate, William Hamper, Esq. every accommodation and convenience that the place will admit of is appropriated to the benefit of those who are there confined, consistent with their security.

Court Leet.

In the latter end of October, a court leet is held for the lord of the manor, when the low bailiff summonses a jury, and the annual officers are appointed by them: the low bailiff, in whom all the power is vested; the high bailiff, whose duty it is to see that justice is done between buyer and seller, by rectifying the weights and dry measures; two constables; one headborough, who, if he thinks proper to be vigilant, can act as constable; but if either of them are in town, he is not compelled to act; two high tasters, who should examine into the quality of the ale and its measures; two low tasters, or meat conners, whose duty it is to examine all meat brought to market, and if any that is unwholesome is exposed to sale, they are to destroy it; two affeirsers, who ratify the rent and amercements between the lord and his tenants; and two nominal officers, under the title of leather sealers, who have no business to attend to, except a good dinner twice a year.

Deritend being a hamlet of Birmingham, its inhabitants attend this court leet, where a constable being elected for them, he and the officers for the town are all sworn, in the name of the lord of the manor. The constables of Birmingham are empowered to act in Deritend, but the constable of Deritend cannot act in Birmingham.

Court of Requests.

In the year 1808, the commissioners of this court, who are seventy-two in number, were empowered by act of parliament to decide any pecuniary differences between parties, not exceeding the sum of five pounds. The commissioners, three of whom are a quorum, meet every Friday morning, at the office, in a court, about the centre of High-street, and nearly opposite to New-street. Two clerks are constituted by the act to attend the court, who being always of the law, give their judicial assistance; they are chosen alternately by the lord of the manor and the commissioners, being continued for life. At the expiration of two years, ten of the commissioners are balloted out, and ten other of the inhabitants are made choice of, as their successors. From the decision of this court there is no appeal, and there are frequently two hundred causes decided in one day; there are two sets of commissioners sitting at the same time, for the dispatch of business, who in general give so much satisfaction to both parties, that it is very unusual to hear any remarks made upon their decision.

Humane Society.

In the year 1790, a society was formed, under the above title, to assist in the recovery of persons apparently drowned, which is now transferred to the hospital.

Page 25

Society for the Protection of Trade against fraudulent Bankrupts, Swindlers, &c.

This society was formed in the year 1804, to prevent any flagrant attempts to impose on the honest and unwary, by fraudulent bankrupts and swindlers, and to detect cheats of every description; also to prevent the friends and suspected accomplices of such persons from being appointed assignees or trustees, to the detriment of the creditors at large.

Chamber of Commerce.

In July, 1813, a public meeting was convened, for the purpose of establishing a bond of union among the mercantile interests in this town, under the above title; but at present it does not appear to have made much progress.

The Assay Office

Is situated in Little Cannon-street, where all plate manufactured in this town and its vicinity must be sent, for the purpose of ascertaining the quality of the silver and being stamped with the proper marks, denoting that it is standard, and has paid the proper duties.

Gold and Silver. The quantity of these precious metals consumed in this town and neighbourhood every week is incalculable, and if it could be ascertained would appear incredible; there being in wrought plate about two thousand ounces; but the quantity of silver used in plating of different articles, it is not possible to discover, nor can the quantity of gold used in different manufactories be made known, but it is computed by those who have the best means of obtaining information on the subject, that there are more than one hundred ounces of gold purchased by the gilders every week, which is spread over the articles in such a superficial manner, that not a single ounce of it ever returns to the crucible again. From the same source of information, it is computed that there are more than one thousand ounces of silver used every week, which never reverts back again in its pristine state as silver.

Copper.

There being a great consumption of this article in the different manufactories, a society was formed in the year 1790, under the title of *The Birmingham Mining and Copper Company*.

Who, having established connexions at Redruth, in Cornwall, and Swansea, in Wales, the copper is brought to this town, and disposed of among the manufacturers, to the mutual advantage of both parties.

In the year 1793, there being a great demand for this article, on account of a national copper coinage, an association was entered into, who stiled themselves *The Rose Copper Company*,

Who established smelting works at Swansea, in Wales, and principally vend the article in this town.

Trade continuing to increase, a third establishment took place, in 1803, under the name of *The Crown Copper Company*,

Who erected smelting houses, and render the article in a proper state for sale, at Neath, in Wales.

Envious of other people's prosperity, a fourth company obtruded itself upon the public, called the Union, who having overstocked the market, disposed of their concern to the other companies, and dissolved itself.

Page 26

Under this head, the editor considers it no more than an act of justice, to observe, that the manufacture of copper bolts, for fastening the timbers of ships together, was invented by Mr. John Westwood, an inhabitant of this town.

Brass.

This article, so necessary to the manufacturers in this town, was for a great length of time procured from the wealthy people of Bristol, which caused a manufactory, of brass to be established here, about the year 1740, but that being upon a small scale, the principal supply came from the place before-mentioned, until the year 1781, when a number of manufacturers associated together, and established a manufactory of brass, upon an extensive scale, in this town, under the denomination of *The Birmingham Metal Company*.

For the purpose of supplying themselves and their neighbours with that article, at a regular rate; the Bristol people being accustomed to raise or fall the price at discretion. This gave rise to another company, who erected extensive works, and established a manufactory of brass, at Smethwick.

Trade increasing, a third company was formed, who erected works, and commenced manufacturing of brass, at Spon-lane, West-bromwich; so that the town is now amply supplied with that article; for the companies at a distance have their agents, who dispose of large quantities.

Steel House.

In the beginning of the last century, a furnace was erected on the outside of the town, for the conversion of iron into steel, and houses being erected in its vicinity, they were denominated Steelhouse-lane. That the woollen manufactory is of great importance to this kingdom must be admitted, but if the demand for fine steel goods should ever revive again, and be equally brisk as it was thirty years back, there is not in my mind a doubt, but the iron and steel trade would produce more profit to the nation than that of woollen, if it does not at the present time. Wool is produced from the surface of the earth, and iron is by dint of labour collected from its bowels; consider the numerous hands employed in the mines and the furnaces to bring it into a rough state, either for casting or the forge, and when it is in a proper state for either, the endless variety of articles it is manufactured into; the whole export of which, being all produced by labour, is every shilling of it profit to the nation. Gold can only be wrought in any quantities to a certain determinate value, but who can fix the price at which articles made of steel may be sold. Should it please the Almighty to continue the blessings of a general peace, the people on the continent will soon recover themselves, and whenever that is the case, and money circulates freely among them, they will then turn their thoughts to superfluities, and as no other article will bear so high a polish and appear so brilliant as those which are manufactured of steel, there is the greatest probability of that trade

being revived.—An attempt to enumerate the different articles now made in iron and steel, would be in vain; yet none of the more valuable are at this time in request.

Page 27

Previous to the year 1760, there were very few travellers, (if any,) went from Birmingham with intent to sell the manufactures; the custom at that time, and for many years afterwards, was, for the ironmongers in different parts of the kingdom to bring their money and orders with them, and to wait until the goods were brought in, and see them packed before they left the town. The ironmongers in large towns then supplied their neighbours in smaller places with the different articles, and numbers of people used to attend different markets, where they kept a stock of goods.

This mode of conducting business being both troublesome and expensive, the ironmongers, instead of coming twice a year as some of them did, deputed some person to receive goods on their account, allowing a commission for so doing. This opened the eyes of those who received the goods, and induced them to collect patterns and travel on their own account; which being found advantageous, it has been practised ever since.

Twenty years back the trades carried on in this town were, with few exceptions, light articles, that depended upon fancy, but since that time, there have been numerous works established for manufacturing useful and substantial articles, both for the foreign market and home consumption; and the orders are so extensive that several people keep carts, for the purpose of delivering their own manufacture to the merchant.

Principal Manufactories.

Within this town are manufactured every metallic article, both for use and ornament, that can be necessary in a house; the variety of japan goods, both useful and ornamental, is prodigious; the brass founders produce an infinite variety of articles; and the platers also; the manufacturers of buttons, guns, swords, locks of every kind, jewellery and toys, employ the greatest part of the population. To these may be added a great variety of articles, exclusively for the foreign trade. Lately a manufactory of watches has been established, upon a very extensive scale, in gold, silver, metal, and covered cases.

Birmingham Canals.

In the year 1767 an act of parliament was obtained to cut a canal from this town to the collieries, which was completed in 1769, at the expence of L70000, being 500 shares at L140. each, which in 1782 was sold for L370. in 1792, L1170 was the price of them, and when the first meeting was held respecting the grand junction canal, in the church, at Stony Stratford, one was there sold for L1375. Since that time, the proprietors have been authorised by parliament to divide each share into two parts, which is in fact doubling the number of shares, in order that they may be rendered more saleable, and for one of these divided shares, L900 was offered and refused in the summer of 1818. There is now a regular communication by water between this town, London, Liverpool, Manchester, and Bristol; to the three former places, goods are delivered on the fourth day, upon a certainty; there being relays of horses stationed every fifteen miles.

Page 28

The Worcester Canal

Was opened for the passage of boats, by forming a junction with the Birmingham canal, on the 21st of July, 1815, by means of which goods may be conveyed from the upper part of this town, to London, one whole day sooner than they can by steering immediately into the Warwick canal. At King's-Norton, this canal is conveyed under ground, by means of a tunnel, two miles in length, which is in width 16 feet and in height 18 feet, yet it is so admirably constructed, that any person by looking in at one end, may perceive day-light at the other extremity. The pound of water extends on a level for the space of fourteen miles, when it descends into the river Severn by means of fifty-eight locks.

The Warwick Canal

Was opened for the passage of boats, by forming a junction with the Birmingham canal, in the year 1800.

A communication being opened between the Birmingham and Worcester canals, in the year 1815, there are now two different routes by which goods may be conveyed from this town to London, by water; one of them is, by an immediate junction of the Birmingham canal with the Warwick, which is accomplished by means of nineteen locks; the other is, by passing into the Worcester canal, on the same level; from thence into the Stratford canal, which is also on the same level, and from thence into the Warwick canal.

Boats from the wharfs within the town; Bird's, White-house's, Robinson's, and Crowley's, are capable of delivering goods in London one whole day sooner by the latter route than they can do by the other, and the merchants and ironmongers in the metropolis are hereby informed of that circumstance. The boat-owners by proceeding on this route, are necessitated to advance a small sum of immediate money, for tonnage, more than they do on the other route; to counterbalance that, the boats are exempt from the wear and tear of passing through twelve locks, and an extra day's expense; therefore, when both circumstances are taken into consideration, the expenses cannot vary much either way, and to the London merchant one day is, at times, of the utmost importance.—On that account, there is no doubt that those who are apprised of this circumstance, will order their goods to be conveyed by way of the Stratford canal.

The trade of this town has within the last fifteen years increased in an astonishing manner; for in the year 1803, six weekly boats were sufficient to convey all the merchandize to and from this town to Manchester and Liverpool, but at the present time, there are at least twenty boats weekly employed in that trade.

At the same period, the competition was so great between the carriers to London, that they procured a number of boats, but it was with difficulty they could find lading for five or six in a week; whereas, at the present time, there are at least eighteen boats per week, constantly employed at the different wharfs in that traffic.

Page 29

The Theatre.

This superb pile of building was erected in 1774, and an additional portico in 1780, the whole together forming one of the most elegant theatres in Europe. There are in the front of it, over the attic windows, two busts, in bas relief, of exquisite workmanship; one representing Shakespear, and the other Garrick.

In the month of August, 1792, the interior of this building was in a malicious manner set on fire, which consumed all the scenery, dresses, &c. and although liberal rewards were offered for the discovery of the incendiaries, no proof could be established, though suspicions were very strong. Thus circumstanced, the proprietors purchased several adjoining houses, and in the space of four years re-erected the theatre, upon an enlarged scale, so that it will contain more than 2000 people. In the centre building, towards the front, is an elegant assembly room, which is fitted up in a sumptuous style, and the two wings are occupied as a tavern, which, from the great author of the drama, is called the Shakespear. In the year 1807, it was made a royal theatre, and on that account the proprietors are entitled to let it for such performances as other royal theatres are, without being under controul of the magistrates.

As a theatre, it opens in June and closes in September.

This substantial and well-constructed pile of building, being on a line with the street, it cannot be seen to any advantage, except you ascend the roof of St. Philip's church. This theatre is now lighted by means of gas, in a most brilliant manner.

Musical Festival.

Once in three years, during the month of October, the vocal and instrumental performers of the first class are assembled here in greater numbers than any other part of the kingdom can boast. They are collected together at a prodigious expense, for the purpose of performing oratorios, three successive mornings, in the church of St. Philip. In the evening of each day, select concerts are performed in the theatre; and when those performances are closed, the company who are assembled, whilst they are under the same roof, are ushered into an elegant and well-furnished ball room, where they amuse themselves for the remainder of the evening; refreshments being provided upon the spot. These performances are conducted in such a superior style, that great numbers of the nobility and gentry who reside at a considerable distance, are induced to attend. The profits arising from these musical entertainments being appropriated to the benefit of the General Hospital, many of them contribute in a very liberal manner by donations to that institution. The last performances took place in October, 1817, when the committee of managers, after they had defrayed all incidental expences, paid to the treasurers of the general hospital the sum of L4296. 10s. 10d. the total receipts being L8476. 6s. 9d.

The next festival is intended to be celebrated in October, 1820.

Page 30

There being two rooms of large dimensions, that are each of them fitted up in a style of elegance, as ball rooms, one at the hotel in Temple-row, and the other adjoining the theatre in New-street, there are during winter, subscription concerts and assemblies held at each of them.

Independant of these, private concerts are occasionally held at each of them; those at the hotel being of some years' establishment, the room, although eighty feet in length and thirty-three in breadth, is so completely occupied, that any person who is desirous of becoming a member must probably wait two or three years before they can obtain admission.

Panorama.

A pile of building was erected in New-street, for the purpose of exhibiting paintings of this description, which has lately been converted into an auction room.

Deritend House.

This stone-fronted mansion was erected in 1786, as a tavern, under the name of the Apollo, and in consequence of its bowling green, was for several years much frequented. It was afterwards divided into two private houses; but in 1816 being purchased by Wm. Hamper, Esq. that gentleman greatly improved the premises and again converted it into one dwelling, which he makes his residence, and which, from its extensive gardens and pleasant situation, is much admired.

Duddeston or Vauxhall,

So called after that place of fashionable resort near London, is little more than a mile from the centre of the town.

This was the ancient residence of the Holt family, and within memory contained some good paintings, as the gardens did a number of lead statues, large as life, and some smaller ones; but depredations being committed by stealing some of them, the others were removed.

These delightful gardens, which contain a very spacious bowling green, an orchestra, a great number of commodious gravel walks, on the borders of which are numerous lofty trees, of various kinds, together with parterres, where flowers of different sorts were accustomed to be seen, were, till of late years, resorted to by none but the genteeler sort of people, and from their retired situation, are every way capable of being made one of the most rural retreats for public amusement of any in the kingdom. Times are now completely changed, it being turned into an alehouse, where persons of all descriptions may be accommodated with that or any other liquor, on which account the upper classes of the inhabitants have entirely absented themselves.



By adopting this method, the editor is of opinion, that the present occupier is accumulating more money than any of his predecessors.—There are, during summer, fire works occasionally exhibited, and sometimes concerts of vocal and instrumental music.

The Crescent.

Several years have now elapsed since a plot of ground, 1182 feet in length, forming a terrace seventeen feet above the wharfs, was laid out for the purpose of erecting some superior buildings in that form, and the wings were soon after constructed according to the plan; but as yet very little progress has been made in the central buildings.

Page 31

The Barracks.

In the year 1793, government took a lease of five acres of land, near Ashsted chapel, at the rate of one penny per square yard, whereon they expended the sum of thirteen thousand pounds, in the erection of barracks to accommodate one hundred and sixty-two men, with their horses.

Birmingham Fire Office.

In the month of March, 1805, the monied interest in this town opened an institution under the above title; there being three hundred subscribers, at L1000. each. Their office is in Union-street, which for chasteness of design is equal to any other building in the town.

The Inland Commercial Society.

The merchants, and others, who were accustomed to send goods to, or receive them from Liverpool, having experienced, not only great delays, but the packages being pilfered, to their great prejudice, established this concern, in order to counteract such proceedings in future.

Theological Library.

The first rector of St. Philip's church, the Rev. Wm. Higgs, having bequeathed this library for the use of the clergy in Birmingham, and its vicinity, and the sum of two hundred pounds to make further purchases, a handsome library was erected by the Rev. Spencer Madan, in the year 1792 for its reception, adjoining to the parsonage house, he being at that time rector.

Public Library.

An institution under this title was established in the year 1779, and is now held in an elegant pile of building, erected on the tontine principle, by the subscribers, situated in Union-street. In front of the building is the following inscription:

AD MERCATURAM BONARUM ARTIUM PROFECTUS, ET TIBI ET
OMNIBUS DITESCES.

Which is thus englished,—

RESORTING TO THE MART THE SCIENCES, YOU WILL GROW RICH,
BOTH FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

This library contains about sixteen thousand volumes, and there are about five hundred and sixty subscribers.

New Library.

Some disagreement arising among the subscribers to the public library, gave rise to this institution, which was established in the year 1796, in a commodious room for the purpose, situated at the lower part of Cannon-street, where there are about three thousand volumes.—From the committee of this library I have received every assistance, and from the librarian every information it was in his power to give.

General Provident Society.

This society originated in the year 1800, for the benefit of the working class; it consists of upwards of four hundred members, who are aided by about fifty-five honorary members, who contribute annually to the fund, which consists of three thousand four hundred pounds, funded property. A member when sick receives eight shillings per week, and when past the age of sixty-five, he receives four shillings per week during his life. The dependant subscribers contribute no more than four-pence per week, although, in addition to the foregoing, they receive medical assistance gratia.

Page 32

Clubs.

Under this denomination, the workmen assemble at the public-houses they usually resort to, and by contributing a small sum weekly, they raise a fund, from whence, if any member is afflicted with illness, he receives a certain sum for his support, according to the rules of the society to which he belongs; every separate club having rules and orders peculiar to themselves.

Piddock's Trust.

In the year 1728, William Piddock devised his farm, containing about nine acres of land, at Winson Green, in trust, for the purpose of educating and putting out apprentice, poor boys belonging to the parish of Birmingham, or other discretional charities. It is vested in the constables, church-wardens, and overseers for the time being. This estate now produces about I cannot learn what.

The baneful effects produced by spirituous liquors, which has made such dreadful havoc among the populace in many other manufacturing towns, is, to the credit of the working people, very little encouraged.

To the credit of the inhabitants, the spirit of gambling is almost unknown here; there being more of it practised in many small towns than there is in this extensive one. The magistrates invariably suppress those public houses where it is encouraged.

Wilday's Royal Hotel, Temple-row.

As a proof how salubrious the air is in this neighbourhood, this capacious and substantial pile of building was erected in the year 1772, upon the tontine principle; divided into fifty shares, at £100 per share, and there are at this time, October, 1818, forty-five of the parties, whose lives were nominated, now alive.

It has an elegant entrance through a capacious saloon, at the extremity of which there is a noble flight of stairs, leading to an elegant and spacious assembly room, in length, including the orchestra, wherein there is a handsome and fine-toned organ, eighty feet, and in breadth thirty-three feet. It is fitted up in a tasteful and decorative manner, with three rich cut-glass chandeliers, five lustres, and six large mirrors.

This hotel is considered one of the first in point of comfort and accommodation, and not being subject to the annoyance of stage coaches, makes it a very desirable residence for families who think proper to reside any time in the town, to inspect the different manufactories and show rooms.

This hotel has been honoured with the presence of Prince William of Gloucester, Lord Nelson, the Duke of Wellington, the Grand Duchess of Oldenburgh (now Queen of Wirtemberg, and sister of Alexander, Emperor of Russia), the King of France, the Grand

Dukes Nicholas and Michael, &c. &c. This house is also considered one of the first in the kingdom for the accommodation of posting, where an extensive supply of horses and carriages are always in readiness.

Statue to the Memory of Lord Nelson.

Page 33

Nearly at the top of the market-place, and fronting St. Martin's church, a statue of this never-to-be-forgotten hero was exposed to public view, on the 25th of October, 1809; the day on which was celebrated the jubilee of our august sovereign George 3d. It was executed in bronze, by Westmacott, a statuary of the first eminence, at the expense of L2500, which was raised by voluntary subscription, to immortalize the memory of that much-lamented admiral. The attitude of the figure is expressive of that dignity and serenity with which the original was characterised, and the resemblance is upon the whole admitted to be more than usually correct. The circular pedestal whereon it is erected, is ornamented with figures in alto relievo, in a bold and masterly style, the limbs being so disposed, that except real violence is used, they are not liable to be injured. The relative proportion of the whole is admirable, and the general effect it produces gives the utmost satisfaction. As an artist, every praise is due to Mr. Westmacott, for the admirable skill he has displayed, and also for his unassuming conduct in presence of the committee, who had been appointed to superintend its execution.

On the scaffolding being removed, and the statue exhibited to public inspection, the following illustration of it was distributed by Mr. Westmacott:—

“In this work, intended to perpetuate the greatest example of naval genius, simplicity has been the chief object in the arrangement. The hero is represented in a reposed and dignified attitude, his left arm reclining upon an anchor: he appears in the costume of his native country, invested with the insignia of those honours by which his sovereign and distant princes distinguished him. To the right of the statue, the grand symbol of the naval profession is introduced. Victory, the constant attendant upon her favourite hero, embellishes the prow. To the left is disposed a sail, which being placed behind the statue, gives breadth to that view of the composition. Above the ship is a facsimile of the Flag Staff Truck of l'Orient, which was fished up by Sir Samuel Hood, the day following the battle of the Nile, and presented by him to Lord Nelson; the same being deposited at Mitford, as a trophy of that ever-memorable action. This group is surmounted upon a pedestal of statuary marble; a circular form having been selected, as best adapted to the situation. To personify that affectionate regard which caused the present patriotic tribute to be raised, the town of Birmingham is represented in a dejected attitude, murally crowned, mourning her loss; she being accompanied by groups of genii, or children, in allusion to the rising generation, who offer consolation to her, by producing the trident and the rudder.”

In front of the pedestal is the following inscription:—

THIS STATUE
IN HONOUR OF
ADMIRAL
LORD NELSON,
WAS ERECTED
BY THE

INHABITANTS OF BIRMINGHAM
A. D. MDCCCIX.

Page 34

The whole is inclosed by iron palisadoes, in the form of boarding pikes, connected by a twisted cable. At each of the four corners is fixed a cannon, erect, from which issues a lamp post, representing a cluster of pikes, supporting a ship lantern.

The late Mr. Joseph Farror, of this town, at his decease, bequeathed six-pence per week, to be paid for ever, out of rents arising from a house in Bradford-street, for keeping the basement and statue of Lord Nelson clean and free from dirt, which is received by the wardens of St. Martin's church.

Proof House.

Although government have at all times a large store of fire arms in the tower of London, yet, after the revolution had taken place in France, and England was threatened with an invasion, the numerous volunteers who offered their services at that time, to repel the enemy, required such a profusion to be distributed among them, that it became necessary to purchase large quantities from any part of the continent where they could be procured; and the volunteers of this town were supplied with muskets from Prussia. The words 'liberty' and 'equality', used by the French military, produced such an effect on the continent, that England was necessitated to manufacture arms for its own defence. Thus situated, application was made to the gun-makers in this town, but the number of hands at that time employed in the trade was so limited, that they could only supply small quantities; but when war was renewed, after the peace of Amiens, great encouragement being given by government, the manufacturers of arms in this town were, in the year 1804, enabled to supply five thousand stand of arms monthly.

At that time, so many workmen had obtained a knowledge of the trade, that in the year 1809 the government were supplied with twenty thousand stand of arms monthly, and in 1810, the number was increased from twenty-eight to thirty thousand monthly; and that number was regularly supplied until the peace of Paris.

In order to expedite the business, a proof house was established by government, in Lancaster-street, under an inspector from the board of ordnance.

An act of parliament was obtained in the year 1813, for the erection of a proof house in this town, where all barrels of guns, pistols, blunderbusses, *etc.* must be proved and marked, under a severe penalty; and since that time, the manufacturing of fowling pieces has increased to a considerable degree.

It is situated on the banks of the canal, in Banbury-street, and is conducted under the direction of three wardens, who are annually made choice of from the body of guardians and trustees, they being nominated in the act of parliament.[4] In addition to them, the Lords Lieutenants for the counties of Warwick, Worcester, and Stafford, the members serving in parliament for the said counties, for the time being, respectively, and the

magistrates acting within seven miles of the town of Birmingham, are appointed as guardians.

Page 35

[Footnote 4:

John Heeley, Warden.

John Adams, Warden and Treasurer.

William Allport, |
Bartholomew Redfern, | Auditors of Accounts.

William Ryan, Warden.

Robert Wheeler	John Oughton	John Jones
Richard Sutherland	John Smith	John Mabson
Joseph Tarton	John Olive	Stephen Wallis]

The corn mill at the bottom of Snowhill was erected about the year 1781: the brick work of this extensive building, which is excellent in its kind, was executed by Mr. Edward Jones, according to contract; which was, for bricks, mortar, and labour, one guinea per thousand. This mill, and also that adjoining, were erected by the late Mr. James Pickard, and were the first steam engines that worked by a rotatory motion, he being the person who first applied the crank to those machines, and for which invention he obtained a patent, but I do not know that he ever erected any others; for Messrs. Boulton and Watt, in order to evade the patent, substituted the sun and planet wheels, which they continued to use until the patent expired.

At the latter mill, where metal was rolled and other business carried on, a pump was fixed, and a boy employed to work it, for the purpose of keeping the machinery cool; but after some time, the youth being inclined to play, fixed a pole from the engine to the lever of the pump, which gave rise to the practise that was afterwards followed, of making the engine supply itself with water for that purpose. The boy for his ingenuity was afterwards employed withinside the mill.

Union Mill.

There being a great scarcity of corn in the year 1795, the wealthy inhabitants raised a subscription, and having purchased a large quantity of foreign corn, at Liverpool, it was soon conveyed here, but it very unfortunately happened that at the time, neither wind nor water mills could be worked, to grind it. From this circumstance, Mr. William Bell, a man who possessed a fertile genius, suggested the idea of erecting a steam mill, and set on foot a subscription for that purpose, there being about seven thousand subscribers, at one pound each. It was for several years very doubtful whether this mill

could be supported or not; but having surmounted those difficulties, it has for several years been a very profitable concern; shares being at the present time eagerly sought after, at three pounds ten shillings per share.

This mill turning out so beneficial, and the boundaries of the town being extended to a considerable degree, the same Mr. Bell projected another, which he called *The New Union Mill*.

Upon a more extensive scale than the former, which was in time carried into effect; but like other things in an infant state, it has difficulties to encounter. The committee having expended as much money in superfluous buildings, as would have supported the mill in credit.

Steam engines are erected in every direction round the town, they being found to accelerate business, and abridge manual labour.

Page 36

Public Breweries.

Of these there are three; one of them situated in Warstone-lane, belongs to Forrest and Sons; another in Deritend, is the property of Richards and Goddington; and the third is near Broad-street, conducted by a public company.

Glass Houses.

The manufacture of flint glass, and the various methods of ornamenting it, gives employment to a great number of people in this town; it having within the last twenty years increased to a very considerable degree; there being at this time, in the town and its immediate vicinity, six glass houses in full work.

Beardsworth's Repository for Horses and Carriages,

Is upon an extensive scale, about sixty yards from the S.W. corner of Smithfield, where there are always a variety of both on sale, and a public auction takes place every Thursday in the forenoon.

Smithfield

Is situated about sixty yards to the S. of St. Martin's church. Neat cattle, sheep, and pigs being exposed to sale, upon the identical spot where the ancient barons of Birmingham were accustomed to hold their midnight revels, and to feast their dependants. The hospitable mansion having been demolished long since, the moat was filled up, and the ground prepared in a very commodious manner for the intended purpose, against Michaelmas Day, 1817, at which time the fair was proclaimed, and it has since been used as a market.

Inspection of Raw Hides.

Parliament having passed an act to prevent frauds from being practised in raw hides, a very convenient situation was fixed upon for their examination, in Park-street, where two persons are annually appointed to inspect them.

Public Scales.

A short distance from the statue of Lord Nelson, one of the beadles is stationed every market day, with the public scales and weights, where any person may weigh whatever articles of provision they have purchased, free of expense, which is a very laudable institution, and has proved of the greatest utility.

Improvements.

Within the last twenty years, the interior of the town has experienced very considerable improvements; numerous houses adjacent to the church yard of St. Martin have been entirely removed, and the space they occupied is thrown open to enlarge the market place.

The entrance into several streets have been made considerably wider, and by that means rendered more commodious; some of the streets have been re-paved, and the water conveyed by culverts, instead of annoying the pedestrian as it used to do. Some parts of the town are already lighted by gas, and preparations are making for the general use of it; but in those streets where it has been introduced, a great part of the brilliant light it produces is obscured for want of clean lamps. Those who have the care of them, either do not know how, or will not be at the trouble of making a strong

Page 37

lie of ash balls and hot water, which with a little labour and attention will remove the greasy particles that adhere to them.—It having been customary to fix the lamps adjacent to the houses, the same method is still pursued; but if light cylindrical lamp posts of cast iron were fixed between the curb stone and the water course, every part of the street would be benefited by the alteration. The lamps should be made with a hole in the bottom, similar to those used in halls, and fit into a socket at the top of the lamp post.

This fashionable mode of producing artificial light, gives employment to great numbers of people in this town, not only for the use of public streets, but also elegant branches for the interior of houses.

Newspapers.

There are four published in this town: Aris's Gazette, by Mr. Thomas Knott, jun. on Monday morning; Swinney's Birmingham Chronicle, by Mr. James Ferrall, on Wednesday evening; the Birmingham Commercial Herald, by Messrs. Richard Jabet and Co. on Saturday evening; also, the Argus, on the same evening.

The Markets.

Although there is not any shelter for the country people, yet in the most stormy weather this town is abundantly supplied with provisions of all kinds, every Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. This being the grand mart, the fertile vale of Evesham pours forth its fruit and vegetables in great profusion; and as auxiliaries, the vicinity of Tamworth and also of Lichfield send hither great quantities; in short, whatever provisions of a good quality are brought here, the market is never overstocked.

The butchers in this town are dispersed over every part of it, where they live and enjoy those comforts with their families that it is not possible to do when they are congregated together in shambles; and in this extensive town, no person is necessitated to lose much time, or walk far from home, to provide for his family.

Considering the distance from hence to the sea coast, the inhabitants are well supplied with fish of various kinds, and at a moderate price.

Opposite the quaker's meeting in Bull-street, there is, in front of the house occupied by Mr. Standley, a most admirable piece of brick-work, (the lock-maker's arms, under a most beautiful arch), such as is very seldom seen, and does infinite credit to whoever executed it; but some simpleton has defaced the arms to a considerable degree, by colouring them to represent stone. This was about as necessary as paint is for the faces of women:—to make them look worse afterwards. This exquisite performance



appears to have been done about one hundred and fifty years; the house having been invariably in the possession of a person eminent as a lock-maker during the above period.

In Moor-street, there is another specimen of the same kind, about one hundred yards above the public office, which was executed in the year 1671, being arms, a chevron between three goats' heads, and a goat's head for a crest. Such specimens of brick work as these are very seldom seen.

Page 38

Square.

There is near the centre of the town, what is called the Square; the buildings which surround it were uniform; but one eighth part was some years back fronted with stone, and converted into a tavern, which is denominated the Stork. This house of entertainment, from its private situation and being near the centre of the town, is much resorted to by travellers; there being capacious stabling behind, and in front there are some shrubs, inclosed by iron pallsadoes. For those who are at leisure, there is an excellent billiard table.

John-a-Dean's Hole.

At the bottom of Digbeth, about forty yards from Deritend Bridge, there is on the left a water course that receives a small drain from Digbeth, and also from the adjacent lands; which stream separates the parishes of Aston and Birmingham, and is known by the name of John-a-Dean's hole, from a person of that name who is said to have lost his life there.

Baths, near Lady Well,

Are always ready for the accommodation of hot or cold bathing, and also for immersion or amusement, together with sudorific apartments. The swimming bath is in length thirty-six yards, and in breadth eighteen yards, containing more than 2000 hogsheads of spring water, and gradually slopes from the depth of one to five feet; being situated in the centre of a garden, wherein are twenty-four apartments to undress and dress in; the whole being surrounded by a wall, ten feet high, and fine lofty trees. There are also very decent baths in Newtown-row, near Lancaster-street.

Houses.

By an accurate survey, taken in the year 1810, it appears that there were then 9196 front houses, and 8214 back houses, within the connected streets of Birmingham, which, reckoning five and a half to a house, makes the population 97,405. There appears to be about 400 houses erected annually, which will make the number at the present time 18510, and the population 101,805.

The old Roman road, denominated Ikenield-street, that extends from Southampton to Tyremouth, enters this parish near the observatory in Ladywood-lane, crosses the road to Dudley at the Sand Pits, and proceeding along Warstone-lane, leaves the parish in Hockley-brook; but is distinctly to be seen at the distance of five miles, both in Sutton park and on the Coldfield, in perfect repair, as when the Romans left it.

The Parsonage House



Of St. Martin, situated near Smallbrook-street, is in all probability one of the most ancient entire buildings in this part of the country; it being a low, half-timbered erection, surrounded by a moat; in front of which is, what was the tythe barn, being near sixty yards in length, now made use of as warehouses.

Page 39

By late regulations in the post office, an innovation has crept in that is highly reprehensible, and ought not to be continued. Before mail coaches were established, Coleshill was a place of considerably more note than, as a post town, than Birmingham, it being very common for people in the north to direct their letters for Birmingham, to turn at Coleshill. This being the case, if the directors of the post office think proper to change the route for their own convenience, that is no reason why the public should be charged with the expense. Dudley and Coleshill being both of them the same distance from Birmingham, what reason can be assigned why a letter to Dudley should be four-pence and to Coleshill six-pence?

The country for a few miles round the town is in every direction studded with houses, belonging to the opulent inhabitants of Birmingham, or of those who have retired from the busy scenes of life.

Whoever walks much about this town, will perceive one very remarkable circumstance: at the top of a street you ascend into the houses by a flight of steps, and in the lower part of the same street, you descend into some of the houses; this is exemplified in Edmund-street, and particularly in Newhall-street and Lionel-street.

There are two fairs in the year, one of them is held on Thursday in the Whitsun week, and the other on the last Thursday in September: the horses being exposed for sale in Bristol-street; the neat cattle, sheep, and pigs in Smithfield.

The established market is on Thursday, but the town being so populous, there is a very good market both on Monday and Saturday. Hay and straw are exposed for sale every Tuesday, in Smithfield.

Jackson's Trust.

George Jackson, of Birmingham, mercer, gave certain premises, in Deritend, for placing out two apprentices, annually; present rent, six pounds per annum.

Some years back, the church of St. Martin being under repair, the workmen discovered that the four pinnacles, (one at each corner of the tower), were very much decayed, upon which, the powers at that time in authority concluded, that they should be re-constructed, and to make a finish, fixed a vane upon each of them, without considering, that, the steeple being in the centre, it was not possible for the wind invariably to act upon all alike; consequently, any other termination would have been more appropriate.

In the jurisprudence of this town, there is one remarkable circumstance; the chief constable of Hemlingford hundred, wherein Birmingham is situated, is of course superior to the two constables of this town; yet they, by virtue of their office, preside over the common prison, and of course the appointment of prison-keeper is vested in them; but, strange to relate, the chief constable of the hundred is keeper of the prison, in

Birmingham: consequently, although he is their superior, he is at the same time subservient to them.

Page 40

Private Carriages.

Within this town and its immediate vicinity there are more than fifty carriages, of different descriptions, on four wheels, and upwards of three hundred on two wheels, that pay the duty.

The number of hackney coaches that ply in the streets is twelve, under the following regulated fares.

Hackney Coach Fares.

Under one mile	1	6
1 mile and under 1-1/2	2	0
1-1/2 mile and under 2	3	0
2 miles and under 2-1/2	4	0
2-1/2 miles and under 3	5	0
3 miles and under 3-1/2	6	0
3-1/2 miles and under 4	7	0

An extra half fare if carrying more than four persons.

Time.

For every forty minutes, one shilling, and for every twenty minutes afterwards, six-pence in addition. If employed, or kept in waiting, betwixt the hours of twelve o'clock at night and five o'clock in the morning, double the above fares are allowed.

The late Mr. Baskerville, whose printed works are in such high estimation, both for paper and print, resided at a place called Easy Hill, at that time quite distant from the town; the house being encircled by an extensive paddock. At this place he erected a mill for the making of paper, in which article he excelled all his contemporaries, as he also did in the formation of his types, which, to the disgrace of this country, were permitted to be sold into France. This once delightful spot is now surrounded with buildings, the house wherein he resided is converted into a manufactory, and the land into wharfs.

About twenty yards above the statue in honour of Lord Nelson, there was within memory the market cross, from whence the roads in every direction were measured; but from some cause or other, that custom has been altered, and it is difficult to say from what part of the town some of the roads are now measured; for example, the road to Walsall. This road having been considerably shortened and improved, is now considered to be eight miles distant: (it was some years back, ten miles); but from the centre of one town to that of the other, will measure nine miles; and whoever travels that road must very justly pay for that distance.



The road to Stourbridge and Kidderminster is another instance where the mile stones are not to be depended upon; for the one mile stone on that road is considerably more than that distance from the centre of the town.

The horse roads round this town were, within memory, from the rains, constant wear, and no repair, worn into such hollow ways, that in some instances, particularly in Bordesley, a waggon, when loaded with hay, the top of it was not so high as the foot path on the side: it was at one time fifty-eight feet below the surface. There are still remaining two specimens of the old roads, but they have been for many years useless, except in going to the adjacent grounds. One of

Page 41

them is situated a little beyond the sign of the Bell, on the right hand side of the Worcester road, and leads towards the Five Ways. The other begins at Edgbaston church, and continues till you arrive at the toll-gate, on the Bromsgrove road; but, thanks to the trustees of the turnpikes, the roads in every direction are now upon a par with others, and in one respect surpass most of them throughout the kingdom, by having on the side of every one, a foot path, for the accommodation of pedestrians.

This town, not being restricted by any charter, strangers from whatever quarter they may come, here find an asylum, and pursue their avocations with as much freedom, and are no more subject to molestation, than a native inhabitant. Trade of every kind may be exercised here, and let a person's religious opinions be whatever they may, he is at liberty to exercise them; there being in this town eight places of public worship, according to the establishment, one for the society of friends, two for protestant dissenters, three for calvinists, two for Roman catholics, four for methodists, four for baptists, one for Swedenburgians, one for jews, and one for the followers of Lady Huntingdon.

The buildings in this town extend to the distance of near three miles in every direction, reckoning from the top of Camphill, and it was some years back, upon a certainty, the largest town in the kingdom. This was ascertained by actual measurement; for soon after Mr. Aikin published his history of Manchester, Mr. John Snape, a very accurate surveyor, drew a plan of this town, upon the same scale as Mr. Aikin's. Since that time, I cannot say which of the two towns have encreased the most; but, if Manchester has extended its buildings with more rapidity than Birmingham, it is a very extensive place.

Notwithstanding the extent of this town, there is very little distinction between it and a village; all the difference is, its fairs and market, for the smallest town has a constable to preside over it, and this, although so extensive and populous, is governed by two constables.

Although this town is of such considerable magnitude, and one of the principal thoroughfares between London and Dublin, there are no more than three places where the superior class of travellers can be accommodated with horses and carriages; the Royal Hotel, near St. Philip's church; the Swan Hotel, in High-street, and the Hen and Chickens Hotel, in New-street.

For the accommodation of the next class, there are the following taverns and inns: the Stork, in the Square; the Nelson, opposite the statue of his lordship, in the market-place; the Union, in Union-street; the Saracen's Head, in Bull-street; the George, and the Castle, in High-street; the Red Lion, the George, and the White Hart, in Digbeth; the Rose, in Edgbaston-street; and the, Woolpack, in Moor-street.



From the Nelson, the Swan, the Hen and Chickens, the Saracen's Head, the George, or the Castle, those who travel by public carriages may be conveyed to any part of the kingdom. The principal avenue leading to and from this town is Great Hampton-street, which, as its name imports, is on the road to Wolverhampton, but it is also the road to Walsall and likewise to Dudley. In this capacious road several streets concentrate, but I would recommend a stranger to proceed down Snowhill.

Page 42

The next avenue, in point of importance, is Camphill, on the road to Stratford, where several streets and roads are united.

It is deserving of notice, that however large or small the houses are, the partition walls are uniformly brick and mortar, and with few exceptions, the floors of small houses are laid with quarries, which in a great degree accounts for there being so few fires of any consequence within this extensive town.

There is not any thing in this town, or its immediate vicinity, that can attract the attention of an antiquarian: it appears that there once was a castle, encircled by a moat, situated near the Ickniel-street, or Warstone-lane; the foundation of which is still perceptible, and covered an area of twenty square perch; but the ground whereon it stood has been so frequently turned over, that it is only by the difference in the verdure that it can be discovered.

The present occupier of the land has at different times taken up about four thousand of the bricks, which were burnt very hard, and resembled those now in use, but were not so large.

About four miles distant there once stood Weoliegh castle, which was surrounded by a moat; but the site of the castle is now a garden, and not a vestige of the building remains, except a small part of the foundation, which may be discovered at the edge of the moat, that remaining entire.

Having concluded my observations respecting the public concerns of Birmingham, I cannot restrain myself from remarking, that there is at Warwick castle a most magnificent marble bacchanalian vase, of astonishing dimensions, it being seven feet in diameter and twenty-one in circumference, which is encircled on the outside with fruit, leaves, and branches of the vine, the latter being entwined so as to form two massive handles, with grotesque masks at the end of each; the whole being in exact proportion to the magnitude of the vase. This unique specimen of ancient sculpture was discovered in the baths of the Emperor Adrian, and presented by the Queen of Naples to Sir Wm. Hamilton, the British ambassador at that court, by whom it was forwarded as a present to the late Earl of Warwick; who, when it was unpacked, and he had taken a survey of it, immediately gave orders for the erection of a splendid green-house, wherein it is now deposited.

Mr. E. Thomason, of this town, who had been a pupil of the late Mr. Boulton, at Soho, no sooner saw this remarkable production of the fine arts, than he conceived the idea of forming one of the same magnitude in metal; and accordingly solicited permission to make models from it, which his lordship in the most condescending manner permitted him to do. Mr. Thomason without delay made preparations for the undertaking, and the metallic vase has been under the hands of different artists above four years, and is now nearly completed. This unique performance in metal, is in every respect a perfect

resemblance of the original, and weighs several tons; the ground of it is bronzed, and at the present time highly relieved in light and shade; but I understand it will, when complete, be considerably more so, by two novel and distinct processes of oxydation, that will endure for ages.

Page 43

This sumptuous metallic vase may be seen at Mr. Thomason's, who manufactures an endless variety of articles, for several of which he has obtained letters patent. The royal series of medals, and various others, are exclusively of his manufacture. Persons of rank who are curious may there see the art of chasing, or sculpturing in basso and alto rilievo, together with various operations in the art of metallurgy.

Bankers Draw upon, Taylors and Lloyds, Dale End: Hanbury and Co.

Woolley, Moilliet, and Gordon, Cherry-street: Lubbock and Co.

Attwoods, Spooner, Goddington, and Co. New-street: Spooner and Co.

Smith, Gibbins, Smith, Gibbins, Goode, and Co. Union-street:
Esdaile and Co.

Freer, Rotton, Lloyd, and Co. New-street: Hanbury and Co.

Galtons and James, Steelhouse-lane: Barclay, Tritton, and Co.

* * * * *

Post Office,

UNDER THE SUPERINTENDANCE OF MISS GOTTWALTZ.

All letters intended to be forwarded by the same day's post, should be put into the box one hour before the time mentioned below.

Sheffield Mail

Every morning, at nine o'clock; which takes all letters for Lichfield, Tamworth, Atherstone, Uttoxeter, Rudgley, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Gainsborough, Brigg, Barton, Kirton, Caister, Coltersworth, Grantham, Grimsby, Lincoln, Market Raisin, Sleaford, and Stamford, in Lincolnshire, Rutlandshire, Sheffield, Barnsley, Wakefield, Leeds, Halifax, Rotherham, Bradford, Huddersfield, Keighley, Otley, Doncaster, Ferry-bridge, Howden, Bawtry, and Selby, in Yorkshire.

Manchester Mail

Every morning, at half past nine o'clock; which takes all letters for Walsall, Willenhall, Wolverhampton, Stafford, Stone, and Newcastle, in Staffordshire, Cheshire (except Malpas), Lancashire, Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Yorkshire (except those places which go by the Sheffield mail), Conway, in



Carnarvonshire, Flintshire (except Overton), Denbighshire (except Rhuabon, Wrexham, Llangollen, and Chirk), Woore and Market Drayton, in Shropshire.

Walsall Mail

Every day, at eleven in the forenoon; which takes all letters for that town and its delivery.

Holyhead Mail

Every day, at eleven in the forenoon; which takes all letters for West-bromwich, Wednesbury, Willenhall, Bilston, Wolverhampton, Shiftnall, and the intermediate places, Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Ellesmere, Whitchurch, Bridgnorth, Merioneth, and Montgomeryshire, Rhuabon, Wrexham, Llangollen and Chirk, in Denbighshire, Malpas, in Cheshire, and Overton, in Flintshire, Ireland (except the south-west part, which goes by way of Bristol), Anglesea, and Carnarvonshire (except Conway).

Bewdley Mail

Every day, at half past eleven o'clock; which takes all letters for Tipton, Dudley, Stourbridge, Kidderminster, Stourport, and places adjacent.

Page 44

Oxford Mail

Every day, at ten minutes before three o'clock; which takes all letters for Henley-in-Arden, Stratford-upon-Avon, all Oxfordshire, Abingdon, Farringdon, Wallingford, Wantage, and Lambourn, in Berkshire, Cricklade, Swindon, Highworth, and Wootton Bassett, in Wiltshire, Bourton-on-the-Water, in Gloucestershire, Shipstone, in Worcestershire, High Wycombe and Beaconsfield, in Buckinghamshire, Uxbridge and Southall, in Middlesex.

London Mail

Every day, at four o'clock (except Saturday); which takes all letters for Coventry, Nuneaton, Coleshill, Rugby, Southam, Leamington, and Warwick, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire (except High Wycombe and Beaconsfield), Wooburn, Dunstable, Bedford, Silsoe, Leighton Buzzard, Tempsford, Pottton, and Biggleswade, in Bedfordshire, St. Alban's, Berkhamstead, King's Langley, Tring, Watford, and Barnet, in Hertfordshire, Wokingham, in Berkshire, Arlesford, Gosport, Basingstoke, Fareham, Havant, and Petersfield, in Hampshire, Great Bedwin, in Wiltshire, Surrey, Kent, Suffolk, Essex, Sussex, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Middlesex (except Uxbridge and Southall), which go by the Oxford mail.

Bristol Mail

Every day, at five o'clock in the afternoon; which takes all letters for the intermediate places: Worcestershire, (except Shipstone and those parts sent by the Bewdley mail), Stow, Bourton-on-the-Water, and Moreton-in-Marsh, in Gloucestershire, South Wales, Herefordshire and Monmouthshire, Ludlow and Bishop's Castle, in Shropshire, Reading, Hungerford, and Newbury, in Berkshire, Somersetshire, Wiltshire (except those parts which go by way of Oxford and London), Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall, south-west parts of Ireland, and Hampshire (except those places sent by way of London).

The various posts arriving so early in the day, the office is shut at eight in the evening.

Overcharges allowed from eight in the morning to half past ten in the forenoon, and from five to eight in the evening.

Arrivals,

Bristol, at eight in the morning. London, at twenty-five minutes past ten. Bewdley, at twelve at noon, Oxford, at one. Manchester, at two. Holyhead, at three. Sheffield, at a quarter past four. Walsall, at half past five.

This account of the post is corrected up to the 29th of May, 1819.



COACHES.

From the Nelson Hotel, (late the Dog Inn.)

Bridgnorth, the Union coach, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, at nine o'clock. Dudley, the royal Defiance, every afternoon, at four.

Holyhead, the Union, a light post coach, every morning, at nine.

London, the Oxford royal mail, every afternoon, at three.

-----, the Union, a light coach, through Oxford, every day, at half past twelve.

-----, the original post coach, through Oxford, every evening, at a quarter past six.

-----, a coach, every morning, a quarter before six, and arrives in London at nine in the evening.

Shrewsbury, the Union, a post coach, four insides, every morning, at nine.

Page 45

Stourbridge, the royal Defiance, every afternoon, at four.

From the Swan Hotel.

Bath, a light coach, through Worcester and Gloucester, every morning (except Sunday), at six o'clock.

Bristol, the Hero, through Worcester, Gloucester, &c. every morning (except Sunday), at half past six.

Cambridge, a coach through Coventry, Stamford, Stilton, &c. every morning, at eight.

-----, the Rising Sun, through Coventry, Dunchurch, and Northampton, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, at five.

Chester, the Prince of Orange light coach, through Wolverhampton, Shiffnal, Salop, Ellesmere, and Wrexham, every morning (except Monday), in twelve hours, at half past six.

Coventry, coaches every morning, at five and eight, and afternoon, at one, two, and four.

Dudley and Stourbridge, a coach every afternoon, at four.

Holyhead, the royal mail, through Wolverhampton, Shrewsbury, &c. every morning, at eleven.

-----, the Prince of Wales, through Salop, every morning at ten, (passengers booked throughout.)

Kidderminster, a coach, every afternoon, at a quarter before four.

Leamington, a coach, through Knowle, every morning, at eight.

Leicester, the Alexander, through Coventry, every morning, at eight.

-----, a coach, through Bedworth, Hinckley, &c. every day (except Sunday), at one.



Lichfield, the Cobourg, every afternoon, a quarter before four.

Liverpool, the Regulator, through Wolverhampton, Stafford, Stone, Stoke, Hanley, Burslem, Lawton, Sandbach, Middlewich, and Northwich, every morning, at six.

London, the royal mail, through Coventry, &c. every afternoon at four.
-----, a light day coach, carrying four insides and ten out, every morning, at four, in fifteen hours.

London, the Royal Balloon, four insides, every afternoon (except Sunday), at a quarter before three, and on Sunday at one.

Manchester, the royal mail, the same as from the Hen and Chickens.

-----, the Eclipse, through Wolverhampton, Stafford, &c. every morning, at seven.

Nottingham, the royal mail, the same as from the Hen and Chickens.

-----, a coach, through Derby, every morning, at seven.

Oxford, a light coach, every morning (except Sunday), at eight.

Sheffield, the royal mail, the same as from the Hen and Chickens.

-----, the Blucher post coach, through Lichfield, Uttoxeter, &c. every Saturday, Tuesday, and Thursday morning, at six.

-----, the royal Telegraph, through Lichfield, Burton, Derby, &c. every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday morning, at seven.

Shrewsbury, the Prince of Wales, every morning, at eleven.

-----, the royal mail, every morning, at eleven.

Stourbridge and Kidderminster, every morning, at half past seven.



Page 46

Warwick, a coach, through Knowle, every morning, at eight.

Worcester, the True Blue, through Bromsgrove, every afternoon, at three.

From the Hen and Chickens,

Bath, a light post coach, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning, at six.

Bristol, the royal mail, every evening, at five.

Cambridge, the royal pilot post coach, through Coventry, Leicester, &c. every day, at half past twelve, except Sunday.

Cheltenham, the royal post coach, through Bromsgrove, Worcester, &c. to the Plough Hotel, every morning, at eight.

Holyhead, the Prince of Wales post coach, through Shrewsbury, &c. every morning, at ten.

Lichfield, a coach, four times every day.

London, the Prince of Wales post coach, through Oxford, Henley-on-Thames, &c. to the George and Blue Boar, Holborn.

Manchester, the royal mail, every morning, at a quarter past ten.

-----, the Express post coach, through Uttoxeter, Leek, Macclesfield, &c. to the Moseley Arms Inn, in twelve hours, certain, every morning, at eight.

Nottingham, the royal mail, every morning, at a quarter past nine.

Oxford, the post coach, through Henley, every evening, at six.

Sheffield, the royal mail, every morning, at a quarter past nine.

-----, the royal Telegraph coach, through Lichfield, Derby, &c. every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday morning, at seven.

-----, the royal Telegraph, through Lichfield, Uttoxeter Ashbourne, and Bakewell, every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday morning, at six.



Wolverhampton, a coach, four times every day.

Worcester, the new True Blue post coach, every afternoon, at three.

-----, the royal Defiance post coach, every morning, at eight, and returns in the evening.

-----, a coach, four times every day.

From the Castle and Saracen's Head Inns.

Aberystwith and Barmouth, a coach, every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday morning, at eleven.

Alcester, a coach, every morning, at eight.

Banbury, the Regulator, through Warwick and Leamington, every morning, at eight.

Bath, the Star coach, through Evesham, Cheltenham, &c. every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning, at half past six.

Bilstone, coaches six times a day.

Bridgnorth, a coach, through Wolverhampton, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, at eleven.

Bristol, the Duke of Wellington, through Bromsgrove, Worcester, and Gloucester, every morning, at seven.

Cambridge, the Rising Sun, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, at half past five, through Daventry, Wellingbrough, and Huntingdon, in one day; carries four insides.

Carlisle, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, a coach, by way of Preston and Lancaster, every morning and evening.

Cheltenham, a coach, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings.

Page 47

Chester, the Prince of Orange, carrying four insides, every morning, at six, (Mondays excepted.)

Coventry, coaches every day, at a quarter before one and half past two.

Daventry, coaches, every morning, at five, and every afternoon, at half past two and four.

Dudley, coaches, every morning, at seven, and every afternoon, at four and five.

Exeter and Plymouth, a coach, every morning, at seven, (Monday excepted.)

Holyhead, the royal mail, every morning, at eleven, through Salop and Bangor.

-----, a new post coach, every day, at eleven, sleeps at Shrewsbury, and arrives the following day in time for the packet.

Liverpool, the Bang-up post coach, in fifteen hours, carrying four insides only, through Wolverhampton, Stone, Knutsford, and Warrington, every morning, at six.

-----, the Defiance, a light coach, through Lichfield and Rudgley, on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and through Walsall, Cannock, and Stafford, on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, every afternoon, at four.

London, the royal mail, every afternoon, at four.

-----, the Crown Prince day coach, in sixteen hours, every morning, at five.

-----, the royal Union, through Coventry, every afternoon, at half past two, (except Sunday), when it goes at one.

-----, the Defiance, a light coach, through Warwick and Leamington, every afternoon, at half past two, from the Saracen's Head.

Manchester, the Eclipse, a post coach, through Wolverhampton, Stafford, Stone, Newcastle, and Congleton, in twelve hours, every morning, at seven.



Northampton, a coach, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, returns the same day.

Nottingham, the royal Dart, a post coach, through Tamworth and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning, at half past eight.

Oxford, the Bang-up post coach, every morning, at eight.

Shrewsbury and Chester, a post coach, through Ellesmere, every morning, at six.

-----, the Prince of Wales post coach, through Wolverhampton and Shiffnal, every morning, at eleven.

-----, the royal mail, every morning, at eleven.

Walsall, the royal mail, every day, at twelve, and returns the same day.

-----, a light coach, every afternoon (except Sunday,) at five.

Warwick and Leamington, the Regulator, every morning, at eight, and returns the same day.

-----, the Telegraph, every afternoon, at three.

Wolverhampton, seven coaches every day.

Worcester, the True Blue, a post coach, every afternoon, at three.

From St. George's Tavern.

Bristol, a coach, every morning, at seven.

Cheltenham, ditto ditto, at seven.

Chester, ditto, through Wolverhampton, every morning, at six.

Coventry, ditto, twice everyday.



Page 48

Dudley, ditto, every day.

Holyhead, ditto, through Wolverhampton, every morning, at nine.

Kidderminster, ditto, every day.

Lichfield, ditto, ditto.

Liverpool, ditto, through Wolverhampton, every morning, at nine.

London, ditto, through Coventry, every afternoon, at three.

Shrewsbury, ditto, through Wolverhampton, every morning, at nine.

Stourbridge, ditto, twice every day.

* * * * *

Atherstone, a coach, by Samuel Smith, from the Cross Guns, Dale-end, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Darlaston, a coach, every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, from the Saracen's Head, Snowhill.

Dudley and Stourbridge, a mail cart, from the Warwick Arms, Snowhill, every day.

Sutton Coldfield, a coach, by Charles Smith, from the Cross Guns, Dale-end, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday, Warwick, a coach, by Wm. Barrows and Co, from the liquor shop, Monmouth-street, every afternoon, at three.

Wednesbury, Bilstone, and Wolverhampton, a coach, by Joseph Boddison, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, at five.

Willenhall, a coach, by John Alexander, from the Barrel, Snowhill, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

* * * * *

Carriers by Water.

Bird, George Ryder, three cranes wharf, Crescent, loads fly boats daily, to Bristol, Dudley, London, Stourbridge, Stourport, Wolverhampton, Worcester, and all parts of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Northamptonshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and all parts of the united kingdom.

Bradley and Co. Broad-street wharf, load fly boats daily, to Liverpool, Manchester, and all parts of the North.

Crocket and Salkeld, wharf, Great Charles-street, load fly boats daily, to Liverpool, Manchester, and all parts of the north.—N.B. No other firm conveys goods all the way to Liverpool by their own vessels.

Crowley, Leyland, and Hicklin, Crescent wharf, load fly boats to Bristol, Coventry, Derby, Gainsborough, Hull, Liverpool, London, Manchester, and Oxford.—N.B. Wine and spirits are conveyed in boats secured by locks.

Danks, Samuel, and Co. Broad-street wharf, and also one in Gas-street, load boats to Bath, Bridgnorth, Bristol, Gloucester, Kidderminster, Shrewsbury, Stourport, Worcester, and all the western parts of England. Heath, Tyler, and Danks, Great Charles-street, load boats daily, for Dudley, Stourbridge, Wolverhampton, *etc.*; also Chester, Derby, Gainsborough, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, &c.

Jackson, Thomas, wharf in Holt-street, loads boats to Atherstone, Coventry, Fazeley, Hinckley, Stourbridge, Tamworth, &c.

Page 49

Pickford and Co. wharf on the Warwick canal, load boats daily, and convey goods to London, Liverpool, and Manchester; which they deliver on the fourth day at each place; and to all other parts of the kingdom with the greatest expedition. Robinson, Corbet, and Co. wharf in Broad-street, load fly boats to London, Stourbridge, Stourport, Wolverhampton, Worcester, and all intermediate places; also to Bristol every spring tide.

Skey, R. S. Worcester wharf, loads boats daily for Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick, Worcester, and all intermediate places.

Smith, Joseph, and Sons, load boats at Worthington and Co.'s wharf, Great Charles-street, for Burton and Gainsborough, from whence the goods are forwarded by a steam vessel of their own, in one day certain, to Hull; they also convey goods to Nottingham. Swaine (late Thomas), Friday-bridge wharf, loads boats three days every week, for Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Lichfield, Nottingham, Shardlow, Tamworth, &c.

Webb, H. and Co. Aston-Junction wharf, load boats to Atherstone, Coton, Coventry, Fazeley, Hinckley, Nuneaton, &c.

Wheatcroft, N. and G. Crescent wharf, load fly boats every Tuesday and Friday, for Barnsley, Derby, Leeds, Leicester, Sheffield, Wakefield, and all parts of the north.

Whitehouse and Sons, Crescent wharf, load fly boats to London, and all the intermediate places, every Tuesday and Friday; and slow boats daily.

Worthington and Co. wharf, Great Charles-street, load fly boats daily, for Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, &c. and deliver goods to responsible and regular carriers to the north of England, and Scotland.

To enumerate a long list of carriers by land, would not be in the least interesting to strangers, nor can it be of any use to the inhabitants, they being published in the Birmingham almanack, and also in the directory.

The number of boats specified above, are sufficient to convince any person, that the manufactures of this town are of the first importance, they being laden with goods manufactured in this town and its vicinity.

LINES

Selected by permission of the Author from a manuscript,

ENTITLED

Birmingham, a Fragment

WHICH IS INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION.

They are supposed to be part of a prophetic oracle, delivered by the priests of the god Woden.

Had we, Oh Birmingham, for thee design'd
A trade that's partial, and a sphere confin'd,
Thou'dst been a city, near some stream or shore,
To bless some *single* district and no more;
But thou must minister to thousand wants,
Of cities, countries, islands, continents:
Hence *central* be thy station—thus thy town,
Must make each port around the coast her own.



Page 50

Let bright invention rove where no one awes,
Unfetter'd by dull, narrow, civic laws,
Which shut out commerce, ingenuity.
Where bloated pride, in sullen majesty,
And drowsy pomp sits notionally great,
While she on every stranger shuts her gate.

Let ingenuity here keep her seat,
For works minute, or works immensely great,
We to thy native sons the gift impart,
Of bright invention, and of matchless art,
Skill'd to devise, to reason, to compute,
Quick to suggest, and prompt to execute;
What some have but conceiv'd, do thou amend,
Mature and perfect, to some noble end.

Let fertile genius' bright, inventive powers,
In all their vigorous energy be yours.

Let savage nations who thy stores behold,
Give Britain in return, their useless gold,
Their gems, their pearls, their diamonds impart,
And boast the change, and prize the gift of art.

Thus shall thy polish'd wares of choicer worth,
Gain all that's rare, from ev'ry clime on earth.

Thy skill superior let our monarchs own,
And deem thee *a bright jewel in their crown*.

OBSERVATIONS

Made during an Excursion

To Wednesbury in Staffordshire, distant eight miles, on the road to Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury.

You proceed down Snowhill, and having passed the one mile stone, there are a few trees close to the road side, and opposite to them there is an extensive view over Barr-beacon, and the adjacent country, including the lofty trees in Aston park; over whose tops, the elegant spire of that church is seen. In descending the hill, when you have passed the buildings, the eye is delighted, on the right hand, with an extensive view over Hunter's nursery grounds, and on the left is Hockley abbey: this building was erected upon a piece of waste, boggy land, about the 1779, by Mr. Richard Ford, an

ingenious mechanic of Birmingham, who, among other things, invented a one-wheel carriage, which he constructed entirely of iron; and for his ingenuity in the formation of that vehicle, the society of arts presented him with their gold medal. As he employed a number of hands, several of whom expended nine or ten shillings each week at the alehouse, it occurred to him, who was not given to drink, that he would lay aside two shillings every day; and having done so for a considerable time, as his business required him to keep a horse and cart; when they were at leisure, he sent them to Aston furnace,[5] to bring away large masses of scoriae, usually termed slag or dross, that lay there in great abundance. Having collected together a large quantity of it, he began to erect this building, to represent ruins; and to add to the deception, there is in the front of the house, in small pebble stones, the date, 1473; and all this was done, as he informed the writer of this article, without

Page 51

advancing any other money than the fourteen shillings per week. It is now nearly overgrown with ivy, and if no account had been given of the materials with which it is erected, posterity might have been at a loss to know what substance the walls were built with. Hubert Galton, Esq. now resides there, who pays rent for the house, and about fifteen acres of land, more than L100. per annum, exclusive of the enormous parochial taxes of Birmingham, which for these premises, from Michaelmas, 1816, to Michaelmas, 1817, amounted to the astonishing sum of sixty-one pounds and ten shillings, viz. thirty-six levies for the poor, at 30s. each, three highway levies, at 30s. each, and two levies for the church, at 30s. each. In the back ground, beyond this, is seen a glass-house, belonging to Messrs. Shakespear and Fletcher.

[Footnote 5: A blast furnace, for the making of pig iron, very near at hand.]

You now cross the Bourn, a small stream of water, that separates Warwickshire from the county of Stafford, and passing by Mr. Boulton's plantations on the left, when you are about half way up the hill, there is on the right hand, Prospect-house, where the late Mr. Eginton carried on his manufactory of stained glass.

At the two mile stone, on the left, is the entrance to Soho, where Matthew Robinson Boulton, Esq. resides, who is proprietor of the *Soho Manufactory*.

The road leading to this magnificent pile of building is on the left, when you have passed through the turnpike. The spot upon which it is erected, was, in the year 1764, a steril, barren heath, and so it continued until 1793, when it was inclosed by act of parliament. The late Mr. Boulton, in the first instance, expended more than nine thousand pounds in the erection of buildings, exclusive of machinery. He soon after removed his manufactory from Birmingham; and then this enterprising genius established a seminary of artists; men of ingenuity being sought after, from all parts of Europe, and patronised with the greatest liberality: thus fostered by his benevolence, they soon produced an imitation of the *or molu*.—These metallic ornaments in the form of vases, tripods, candelabras, &c. found a ready sale, not only in this kingdom, but in France, and almost every part of civilized Europe. This business being established, silver articles were manufactured in such profusion, that it became necessary to make application for an assay office to be established in Birmingham; which was carried into effect in the year 1773. About this time, a mechanical process was discovered of copying pictures, in oil colours, which was brought to such perfection, that the most experienced connoisseurs were sometimes deceived. The process was chiefly under the direction of Mr. Francis Eginton, who afterwards commenced the business of staining glass.

Mr. Watt having obtained a patent for the improvement of steam engines, came and settled at Soho, in 1769, where he erected an engine, upon his own principles; which answering the intended purpose, he in 1775, obtained from parliament a prolongation of

his term for twenty-five years. A partnership being now formed between Mr. Boulton and Mr. Watt, an extensive manufactory of these engines was established at Soho, and conveyed from thence to most of the deep mines and extensive works, where great power was requisite.

Page 52

In 1788, a mint was erected at Soho, to be worked by the steam engine; from the rolling of the copper into sheets, afterwards passing it through steel, polished rollers, and then cutting out the blanks; all which was performed with the greatest ease and regularity by girls, instead of employing able men. This was not the whole, for the coining machines were worked with greater rapidity and exactness, by boys, from twelve to fourteen years of age, than could be done, by the former process, by a number of strong men, and their fingers not being in the least endangered; the machine depositing the blanks upon the dies, and when struck, it displaced one piece and deposited another.

To facilitate the manufacturing of steam engines, they erected an iron foundry, at Smethwick, on the banks of the Birmingham canal, where nearly all the laborious part is consigned to the engine. Engines are here manufactured from one horse to two hundred horse power, all acting together. Handsworth common being inclosed, enabled Mr. Boulton to extend his grounds to a considerable degree, which form an agreeable separation from his own residence, and forms a much admired scene of picturesque beauty.

A person wandering through these secluded walks, or on the banks of the various lakes and water falls, which adorn them, may here enjoy the sweets of solitude and retirement, with equal composure, as if he was far distant from the busy scenes that are close at hand.

What is here enumerated are all of them manufactured or carried on at the Soho, at the present time:—steam engines of every description, and for all purposes, where great power is requisite; coining of medals, or medallions, of any size required; silver and plated articles, of every description, such as tea urns, vases, tureens, dishes, candelabras, and every necessary article to decorate the table or the drawing room; metals of every description are here rolled, to any length or breadth required; patent copying machines; fine polished steel fire irons; steel buttons; ornaments for stove grates; fenders, or any other article in steel, where taste and elegance are necessary.

Handsworth, in Staffordshire, distant two miles and a half. Leaving Soho, you come to the elegant village of Handsworth, where, the common lands of the parish being inclosed by act of parliament, in 1793, they have probably been as productive, if not more so, than others of a similar nature in any other part of the kingdom; for there are now at least one hundred and fifty respectable houses erected upon the ground, which, before it was inclosed, lay entirely waste; and plots of the same land have been sold from two hundred pounds to a thousand pounds per acre.

Page 53

About one quarter of a mile distant from Soho, is the residence of Miss Boulton, whose house is secluded from public view, by a lofty brick wall; and half a mile farther, going down a lane, by the sign of the Queen's head, a landscape of considerable interest exhibits itself; including Soho, Birmingham, and the intermediate country, to the monument. In the grounds, on the right, opposite the three mile stone, is a grand picturesque view of the whole country, including Barr-beacon, Aston church, and the lofty trees in the park. About half a mile farther, you arrive at the verge of Sandwell park, a seat belonging to the Earl of Dartmouth, and opposite, on the left, is a grand panoramic view of the country, including the ruins of Dudley castle.

The church is an ancient gothic stone building, dedicated to St. Mary, with a square tower, of grey-stone; the body is of an irregular form, the workmanship being rude and tasteless. It appears to be much neglected, and out of repair, both inside and out; and neither in respect to size or decorations, does it bear any analogy to the number of the population, or the wealth of the parishioners. Indeed, if the structure of the church should be a criterion to judge of the opulence of the inhabitants, a stranger would certainly conclude, that they were most of them tenants at rack rent, and greatly burdened with poor. The only objects deserving of notice, are two monuments; one in the inside, and the other on the out. The one erected to commemorate the late Matthew Boulton, Esq. is the work of the celebrated Flaxman, and adds another wreath of laurel to the brow of that classical artist. It is of white and blue marble, and is surmounted by a bust, which is the best representation extant of that enterprising and deserving man, to whose memory it is sacred. The other is an humble tomb-stone, remarkable as being one of the last works, cut by his own hand, with his name at the top of it, of that celebrated typographer, Baskerville, but this, being neglected by the relations of the deceased, has been mutilated, although the inscription is still perfect, but so much overgrown with moss and weeds, that it requires more discrimination than falls to the lot of many passing travellers to discover the situation of this neglected gem. To those who are curious, it will be found close to the wall, immediately under the chancel window. This precious relic of that eminent man is deserving of being removed, at the expense of the parish, and preserved with the greatest care, withinside the church. Mr. Baskerville was originally a stone-cutter, and afterwards kept a school, in Birmingham.

[6]

[Footnote 6: Since writing the above, the Rev. T. L. Freer, who is rector, and the wealthy parishioners have entered into a liberal subscription, and being aided by government with the sum of five hundred pounds, they have undertaken to rebuild the body of the church, according to an elegant plan, designed by W. Hollins, statuary and architect, of Birmingham, without making any rate on the inhabitants.]

Page 54

There is only one more of his cutting known to be in existence, and that has lately been removed and placed withinside the church, at Edgbaston; to which place please to refer.

West-Bromwich, in Staffordshire, distant five miles.

The church is an old tower structure of stone, dedicated to St. Clement; the body having been of late years rebuilt, has two side aisles, handsomely pewed, and galleries all round. The officiating clergyman is the Rev. Charles Townsend.

The waste lands in this parish being inclosed by act of parliament in the year 1804, has produced a very beneficial effect; for, by the side of the main road, which scarcely produced a blade of grass, there are now numerous houses erected, and the lands about them are very productive. The new inclosed lands now let from three pounds to five pounds per acre, and a great part of it is in tillage.

In this extensive parish, the new inclosed land has been sold from one hundred to eight hundred and forty pounds per acre; and the neighbourhood is now become so populous, that it is in contemplation to erect a new church, there being in the beginning of October last more than three thousand pounds subscribed for that purpose.

The following works of considerable magnitude are, already established, and now in full work:—

Birmingham brass company, in Spon-lane. James Taylor, cast steel manufactory. Archibald Kenrick and Co. iron-founders. Samuel and John Dawes, iron and steel-masters. Izons and Whitehurst, foundry for kitchen furniture. Elwell and Hortons, iron-founders. Thomas Price, iron-master. Bagnall and Son, iron-masters. William Bullock and Co. iron-founders, and manufacturers of kitchen furniture, improved coffee mills, &c. Charles Bache, manufacturer of bar and sheet iron, old forge. William Chapman, grinder and polisher, Burstelholme mill. Samuel Elwell, iron-master, Friar-park forge, — Tickell, iron-master. Isaac Horton, boiler-maker. Edward Fisher and Co. iron-masters. John U. Rastrick, manufacturer of steam engines.

Before you arrive at the six mile stone, the road divides, and you proceed on the right hand for another mile, when, on a sudden, the eye is highly gratified with a view of *Wednesbury*. Which is erected on a declivity; and on the summit, the church, with its lofty spire, makes a very unusual and respectable appearance. This church is a beautiful gothic edifice; the body and tower of which is coated with Parker's cement, but the chancel remains as before. Tradition says, that on this spot there was, in former times, a Saxon castle. Withinside the church there are numerous ancient monuments, and an inscription, signifying that William Hopkins, yeoman, Richard Hawkes, and Robert Carter, caused the chimes of this church to be made and set up, at their equal and proper cost and charges, A. D. 1635. The clock, which is represented to be a

remarkable good one, has a pendulum upon an unusual construction, the rod being fourteen yards in length, and the ball of it weighs 100 pounds.

Page 55

Here are eight musical bells, the two trebles being fixed in 1558; the sixth has an inscription, "William Comberford, lord of this manor, gave this bell, 1623."—"On the seventh is, Sancta Bartholomew, ora pro nobis." And on the tenor is inscribed, "I will sound and resound to thee, O Lord, to call thy people to hear thy word."

The church yard is of considerable extent, and being in such an elevated situation, those who profess to delineate panoramas may here find ample scope to display their abilities; for there is not only a view of the following churches, but the towns and villages wherein they are situated, are several of them under the eye of the spectator from this lofty eminence, viz. Walsall, Willenhall, Darlaston, Wolverhampton two churches, Bilstone, Sedgley, Dudley, two churches and the ruins of the castle, West-bromwich, Tipton, Wednesfield, Brierly-hill, and Rushall; in addition to the above, by ascending the roof of the church, you command Birmingham and Aston, together with numerous engines that are at work in its vicinity; the whole when combined form such a rich and variegated scene as probably cannot be equalled in any other situation.

In the vicinity of Wednesbury there are numerous mines of coal, wherein great numbers of people are employed, whilst others pursue the different branches of gun-making; springs, steps, and other articles used by coach-makers, are also manufactured here, together with wood screws, hinges, and of late, apparatus for the gas lights.

In the year 1742, when the methodists were spreading their doctrines through the kingdom, some disturbances took place here on that account; and soon after, Mr. Wesley, the preacher, was waited upon by Sir John Gonson, one of the Middlesex justices, who notified to him that he and his brethren had received orders from above to do justice to him and his friends, whenever they should make application; his majesty being determined, that no man in his dominions should be persecuted for conscience sake. Posterity will scarcely credit, that in Britain, and at so late a period as 1742, justice was not to be obtained but by an order from court; and that such order was issued, reflects infinite credit on the sovereign, George 2d, who commanded it. This mandate was not by any means premature; for it became absolutely necessary, to quell the increasing tumults. In Staffordshire, the populace rose upon their employers, from whom they demanded money, and if that was not complied with, they threatened to serve them as they had done the methodists. A quaker, when riding through Wednesbury, was attacked by them, pulled from off his horse, and dragged to a coal pit, where it was attended with difficulty to prevent their throwing him in. This gentleman, not being so much attached to his principles as to refuse the protection of the law, prosecuted them at the assizes, which caused those tumults to subside in Staffordshire.

Darlaston.

Page 56

This place, being only one mile distant, I went there; but neither on the road or in the village could I perceive any thing deserving of attention; the inhabitants being employed in the same pursuits as at Wednesbury.

Walsall, in Staffordshire, distant nine miles, on the direct road to Stafford.

You proceed down Snowhill, and having passed the buildings, you perceive on the right hand Hunter's nursery grounds, from whence there is a good prospect of the town of Birmingham, in a clear day. On the left, Hockley abbey, and the plantations of Mr. Boulton, present a rich scene in front, with a glass-house in the back ground. At the bottom of the hill you cross a small stream of water, which separates Warwickshire from the county of Stafford. In ascending the opposite hill, on the right hand is Prospect-house, where the late Mr. Eginton carried on his manufactory of stained glass. Soon after the road divides, when, turning to the right hand, it leads you by a row of respectable houses, and when through the toll gate, you leave what was once Handsworth common, and immediately on the left is a handsome house, with a beautiful avenue of lime trees; once the seat of the ancient family of Sacheverel, but now the property of Joseph Grice, Esq.

A little farther on the right is a simple though tasteful lodge, leading to Heathfield, the elegant mansion of the celebrated James Watt, Esq. who is well known to all scientific men, for the great improvements he has made in steam engines, and various other useful works. A few years back, the adjacent ground was a wild and dreary waste, but it now exhibits all the beauty and luxuriance that art assisted by taste can give it. Woods and groves appear to have started up at command, and it may now vie with any seat in the neighbourhood, for rural elegance and picturesque beauty. Descending the hill, the parish church of Handsworth presents itself to view, and a short distance before you arrive at it, is the parsonage-house, where the Rev. Lane Freer resides.—It is a very excellent house, and possesses more conveniences and luxuries than are usually to be met with in the habitations of the clergy. About a mile farther on the right is the elegant residence of N. G. Clarke, Esq. one of the king's counsel; a gentleman highly distinguished for acuteness and perspicuity in his profession, and thorough hospitality in his house. Still farther on the left, as you descend a steep hill, there is a fine view, at a considerable distance, of the domains of Hamstead hall. It is a very elegant and modern-built mansion, the old one having been taken down some years since, which was for many generations the seat of the ancient and respectable family of the Wyrleys, who possessed the manor and very large property in this parish. On the demise of the late John Wyrley, Esq. the whole of this estate was left by will to George Birch, Esq. at whose decease it devolved upon his only son, the

Page 57

present Wyrley Birch, Esq. It is difficult to conceive a more beautiful residence than this, as it contains all that hill and dale, wood and water, aided by extensive views, can do, to make a place delightful and desirable: these seem here to have been combined in the most beautiful manner; for the river Tame meanders through this enchanting and extensive domain; on whose banks are numerous groves of trees, and from a solid rock there arises a lime tree, of unusual magnitude, whose branches spreading in an horizontal direction became so heavy, and injured the trunk to such a degree, that in order to preserve the body, it not only became necessary to lop off the principal branches, but to bind it together with iron in different ways, by hooping of it, and passing a bar of iron through it, in the same manner as buildings are frequently done, to preserve them. At the height of three feet, it girths twenty-three feet and rises to the height of seventy feet. The rock upon which this tree grows, is of such a nature, that there is a grotto of considerable size cut in it, wherein the roots from this tree spread themselves in different directions. This inestimable estate, although for so many generations the patrimonial possessions of the family, has been lately transferred by the proprietor to the Earl of Dartmouth, and is now in the possession of William Wallis, Esq.

In the valley is a corn mill, worked by the river Tame, over which there is a substantial bridge. Near the summit of the opposite hill, the road passes close by the residence of Mr. Wren, who is well known in Staffordshire, as an agriculturist. Near half a mile farther on the left is an ancient white house, which has been occupied as a school for a number of years. From the green opposite, if you face about, there is an extensive view over the country; two of the Birmingham churches and the monument being conspicuous objects. A very short distance farther is a gravel pit, opposite to which is a rich and luxuriant view for a considerable distance. At the finger post, two miles before you arrive at Walsall, there is a beautiful landscape, and when you approach near the town, by looking the contrary way, there is a rich and variegated view over the country. A little before you enter the town, there are two respectable houses, one on each side of the road; that on the left is the residence of Mr. Richard Jesson, an attorney, and at the other, which is built of stone, Mr. John Adams, a merchant, resides.

This road to Stafford is nearer by five miles than going through Wolverhampton, and the accommodations are in every respect equal: independant of that circumstance, whoever travels this road is not incommoded by the numerous colleries and engines that are adjacent to the other.

Walsall.

Page 58

This town, being considered a borough, by prescription for a number of years, was incorporated by letters patent, bearing date 22d February, in the 13th year of King Charles 2d; the government thereof is vested in a mayor, with the assistance of twenty-four capital burgesses, who are authorised to sue and are liable to be sued, by virtue of a common seal. William Webb was appointed the first mayor, whose successor is to be elected and sworn into office on the feast of St. Michael. The mayor and his brethren are authorised to fix upon a recorder and town clerk, who are empowered to hold a court of record, whenever it is requisite, to determine any actions or pleas, for sums of money exceeding forty shillings, and not more than twenty pounds. There are also two serjeants at mace, who are under their directions; the late mayor, and one other capital burgess, being in the commission of the peace for the borough and foreign, they have authority to take cognizance of all crimes committed within their jurisdiction, except conspiracy, murder, felony, or any thing touching the loss of life. They are also empowered to have a common prison, where all offenders may be detained, until discharged by due course of law. By this charter, the mayor, recorder, and twenty-four capital burgesses are exempt from serving upon any juries at Stafford.

The seal of this corporation is three fleur de lis and three lions quarterly, with two lions as supporters; over the arms is a crown without an arch, and over the rim of the crown there are five fleur de lis. It is nearly the size of a crown piece, with a latin inscription, in very ancient characters. It is deposited with Joseph Stubbs, who is town clerk, and steward of the manor to Lord Bradford. The arms of the town appear to be a bear with a ragged staff.

The guildhall is situated in the High-street, one wing of which is the Dragon inn, and the other is a large room where the corporation assemble to transact business, and is called the mayor's parlour, under which is the prison for the town.

The ancient wooden staves belonging to the corporation are still deposited in the hall, and are curious relics of antiquity, being ornamented with heads of various animals, rudely carved.

The sheriff of the county, by his deputy, holds a court in this town, at the Castle inn, every third Monday, for the recovery of debts, under forty shillings; but the expenses are excessive to both debtor and creditor, and if the latter loses his cause, his expenses alone will amount to six or seven pounds.

In the year 1452, Thomas Mosely, of Moxhull, in Warwickshire, being then lord of Bascote, in that county, gave it in trust to William Lyle and Thomas Magot, for the use of the town of Walsall. In 1539, the inhabitants were summoned by the bellman to repair to the church, where a dole was distributed, amounting to the sum of seven pounds, ten shillings, and nine-pence. Some time after, an attempt was made to discontinue this dole, which caused the populace to assemble, who forced the same to be continued; at

which time it was distributed to about fourteen thousand people, nine thousand of whom were supposed to reside in Walsall.

Page 59

The church is a vicarage, dedicated to St. Matthew, or All Saints: it is an ancient pile of building, singular in its appearance, being in the form of a cross, the transept of which is composed by large side chapels, whose roofs lie east and west, parallel to the body of the church. The tower, which is situated at the south-west angle of the west front, is strong, plain, and far from inelegant, being built with coarse lime stone, on which a new spire was erected since 1775, when a set of eight musical bells were fixed there, by Mr. Rudhall, of Gloucester; the weight of the tenor being more than twenty-three hundred, and the key note E flat.

The following inscriptions are round the bells:—

1. "When us you ring, we'll sweetly sing."
2. "Fear God, honour the king."
3. "Prosperity to the parish."
4. ditto ditto.
5. "The Rev. John Darwall, vicar."
6. "Thomas Rudhall, Gloucester, founder."
7. "Thomas Hector, Edward Licet, Thomas Overton, Deykin Hemming, church-wardens."
8. "I to the church the living call, And to the grave do summon all."

The font of this church is alabaster, of an octagon form, with shields, richly sculptured.

On each side of the chancel are eleven stalls, very entire, the seats of which, being lifted up, exhibit a series of grotesque figures, curiously carved, in bas relief; no two of which resemble each other. Over the communion table is a large painting, representing the last supper.—The vicarage, where the Rev. Philip Pratt resides, is in a delightful situation, being on an eminence, and encompassed with lofty and majestic trees.

There are three fairs in the year, *viz.* February 24th, Tuesday in the whitsun week, and the Tuesday before St. Michael; at which time the races take place, and have been for a number of years both numerous and genteely attended; as a proof of it, the inhabitants in the year 1809 expended the sum of thirteen hundred pounds in the erection of a grand stand; in the lower apartments of which is a billiard table, where they resort for recreation. The fair at whitsuntide is not held by charter, but being market day, at that holiday time is considered a fair by prescription. There is in this town a charity school for twenty-four boys and sixteen girls, who are all cloathed in blue: they are instructed and cloathed gratis, but neither lodged nor boarded. The expenses attending

this school are defrayed by subscriptions, donations, and sermons preached on the wake Sunday, which is the Sunday before St. Michael. The school-room is near the George hotel. There is also a free grammar school, near the church, founded by Queen Mary, in the first year of her reign, which she endowed with certain lands that are vested in trustees. The High-street is spacious, and therein are some respectable shops, and a conduit for the use of the inhabitants.—Park-street is also a wide one, but there are numerous low houses in it.

Page 60

The town has a singular appearance; its situation being upon a bold eminence, from whose summit arises a fine old gothic church, with a lofty spire, the streets and houses descending in every direction. In the vicinity are numerous lime stone quarries, some of which are open from the surface, and from others it is drawn up through a shaft, similar to coal mines.

Mr. Siddons, the husband of the celebrated actress, was born in Rushall-street, in this town, whilst his father kept a public-house, known by the sign of the London apprentice, whose death was occasioned by sparring or wrestling with a person named Denston. The present Mr. Siddons was originally a barber, but having an inclination for the stage, he joined the itinerant company of Mr. Kemble, and married one of his daughters, who afterwards proved the heroine of the stage. Another well-known character was also a native of this town, viz, Thomas Haskey, the celebrated ventriloquist, who was by trade a bridle bit maker; but whilst an apprentice he left his master, and entered into the army, where he lost a leg and obtained a pension. When young, he did not know the abilities he possessed, but hearing O'Burn, he endeavoured to imitate him; and when Mr. Stanton's company of performers were at Walsall, he repeatedly from the gallery entertained the audience by sham dialogues, in two voices, between himself and Tommy. He was an ignorant man, but possessing this unusual faculty, he was frequently sent for by Lord Dudley, to entertain the company at Himley, upon which occasions, he always hired a post chaise to convey him there. He afterwards went to London, and performed at Sadler's Wells in the year 1796, and when his benefit came on, he cleared L200.

About one mile from the town, on the road to Wolverhampton, is a strong chalybeate water, called Alum well.

About one mile and a half from Walsall, near to Bentley hall, at a place called Pouck hill, as some workmen were opening a quarry, they discovered numerous basaltic columns, some of which are from four to five feet in diameter, of various lengths, some singularly waved, others straight; some of the joints short and others extend to the length of five or six feet: they lie nearly in an horizontal position, and resemble at a distance large trees piled one upon another.

The chief articles manufactured in this town and its vicinity are bridle bits, stirrups, spurs and other articles either used or sold by the saddlers.

Barr Park, distant five miles, on the road to Walsall.

The hospitable mansion of Sir Joseph Scott, Bart, is surrounded by a park of considerable extent, wherein there is the greatest variety of undulating hills and dales, wood and water, together with such extensive views, as can only be found in this part of the kingdom. To this park there are three entrances, and at every avenue the worthy

proprietor has erected an elegant lodge, from whence there are capacious carriage roads

Page 61

to the mansion. One of these lodges is about five miles on the road to Walsall, to which you approach by taking the right hand road, opposite a house of entertainment, the Scott's arms, and then taking the second turning to the left conducts you to the lodge. On entering the park, a circular coach drive leads to the holly wood, through which you proceed by a serpentine road near half a mile, when a beautiful sheet of water presents itself to view, along whose banks you pass near a mile before you arrive at the mansion.

The situation of the building is low in front of the water, but being screened by rising ground and lofty trees, it must be very warm in the winter. On the left of the house, a walk leads you to the flower garden, which is laid out with great taste, containing flowers and small shrubs of the choicest and rarest kinds, together with a fountain in the centre. From hence there are delightful views, and among others over the adjacent country, Birmingham is distinctly seen. At the distance of about two miles farther, towards Walsall, there is another lodge, which is the entrance from Walsall, and leads you by a spacious serpentine road through the Marrian wood, which is composed of various shrubs and evergreens, and conducts you to a most elegant chapel, with a beautiful and well-proportioned spire, underneath which you enter into one of the most sumptuous places of worship in the universe. There are in the whole eleven lofty windows, and seven of them are ornamented in the most elegant manner with stained glass, by Eginton: they are all full length figures, large as life, with their proper attributes. The first represents Fortitude, the second Temperance, the third Justice, in the fourth, which is over the communion table, is the apotheosis of a child, after the Rev. Mr. Peters, the fifth represents Hope, the sixth Charity, and the seventh Prudence. The pews and every other part correspond, there being a sumptuous organ, with a gallery in front of it, which extends on each side, before two windows. In a spacious cemetery there are some tombs, much more elegant than are usually met with; there is also a yew tree of large dimensions, which is grown much higher than trees of that species do in general, and also some venerable elms, together with the village school. Close adjoining is another lodge, and the road from it conducts you over an elegant bridge, on the right of which is a cascade.

There is also another lodge, at a place called the Quieslet, about six miles on the road to Barr-beacon, where a spacious road conducts you for a considerable distance, by a plantation of oaks, and so through the park, wherein there are fixed numerous seats, which command delightful and comprehensive prospects, and among others may be seen the extensive sheet of water in the vale, backed by a grand screen of venerable oaks and verdant hills; at same time, from amidst the nearer trees and shrubs, the house appears to emerge, and adds considerably to the scene. From the various knolls with which this park abounds, there are several that command a view of Birmingham, and also of the woods in Sandwell park.

Page 62

There is also a view of the ruins of Dudley castle, and from another eminence the churches of Wolverhampton and Wednesbury are seen, with the elegant spire of Barr chapel in front. From the lodge at the approach from Walsall there is an extensive view over the country, bounded in the horizon, to the left by Dudley castle, the Rowley hills, &c. and to the right by the Wrekin and other mountains in Shropshire.

To Dudley, in Worcestershire, through West-bromwich, ten miles on the road to Stourbridge.

You proceed down Snowhill, pass by the Soho, through Handsworth and West-bromwich, and along the Wolverhampton road, near six miles, when the road divides, and you take to the left, having the ruins of Dudley castle full in view. After crossing the Birmingham canal, you come to *Tipton, eight miles.*

In this parish the following works are carried on in an extensive manner:—

Blair and Stevenson, soap and lead.
Harrison, Oliver, and Co. Horsley iron-works.
Walker and Co. Gospel-oak iron-works.
Dixon, Turton, and Co. have three furnaces.
Round, Caddick, and Co. Old church forge.
Messrs. Parkers, iron-masters.
Zephaniah Parkes and Co. iron-masters.
Messrs. Willets, iron-masters.
Birmingham Co. iron-masters.
Bagnall and Co. iron-masters.
Moat colliery.
Horsley ditto.
New Church ditto.
Tibbington ditto.
Glebe Land ditto.
Ockerhill ditto.
Puppy Green ditto.
Dudley Port ditto.
Birmingham Co. ditto.
Brookhouse ditto.

The church is dedicated to St. Lawrence, of which the Rev. James Bevan is perpetual curate. From hence you pass by the Dudley brewery, and having ascended the hill, arrive at *Dudley, ten miles.*

In this town there are two parish churches, one of which is dedicated to St. Thomas, and is now rebuilding in a magnificent manner, to which a lofty spire is attached; it being in height 170 feet, and therein are ten musical bells: of this church the Rev. Luke

Booker, L.L.D. is vicar. The other is dedicated to St. Edmund, wherein a free gallery has been erected by subscription; over which the Rev. Proctor Robinson presides.

The different sects of presbyterians, baptists, quakers, methodists, and independants, have each of them their respective places of worship.

There is a free school, founded by King Edward 6th, two national schools, on the plan of Dr. Bell, and one Lancasterian ditto. The inhabitants who have a taste for reading, have established a library, wherein there are more than three thousand volumes.

There are here five glass houses, two of which belong to Messrs. T. and G. Hawkes, where the most superb articles are manufactured; another to Mr. John Roughton; a fourth to Price, Cook, Wood, and Co.; and the fifth is at Holly-hall, belonging to Zephaniah Parkes and Co.

There are also the following iron-works established:—

Page 63

Zephaniah Parkes and Co. Messrs. Attwoods, three furnaces. Glazebrook and Whitehouse. Salisbury, Hawkes, and Co. — Banks. Wainwright, Jones, and Co.

At the priory, there is a powerful steam engine, belonging to Mr. Benson; and on the road to Birmingham is a brewery, belonging to a public company. In the environs are numerous mines of coal, ironstone, and lime; which land, where the mines have not been worked, sells in general for about one thousand pounds per acre.—Nails and heavy iron-work employ a great part of the population.

The ancient castle, of which there still remains the keep and the gateway, is said to have been erected about the year 700, by a person named Dodo, from whom the name of the town is derived. Underneath the hill, whereon the castle was situated, there are stupendous caverns, from whence the lime stone has been conveyed away, which are truly august, being of considerable extent, and proportionably high; the roof being supported by rude pillars of vast dimensions, which have been left by the miners for that purpose. There is one tunnel that perforates the hill entirely, being in length near two miles: it is in height thirteen feet, in width nine feet, and in one part sixty-four feet below the surface.

These enormous subterranean works, with the method of procuring the stone, are highly deserving the attention of strangers, who have there an opportunity of seeing this useful article forced from its natural situation by means of gunpowder; raised from the bowels of the earth, and conveyed through the country by means of inland navigation, to serve the purpose of the agriculturist, and also the architect. In these rocks there are numerous marine productions, and among others, one which the miners denominate a locust, for which they have been known to refuse its weight in gold; it being understood that there is only one other place in the kingdom where they are to be found. The mines of coal in this vicinity are from ten to twelve yards in thickness, which circumstance it is said does not take place in any other part of the kingdom. A stranger approaching Dudley after it is dark, will be astonished to see the numerous fires in different directions, which proceed from the furnaces, forges, and collieries; the latter converting their small coal into coke.

The noble proprietor of these extensive mines and the ruins above them has for several successive years planted innumerable trees of different kinds around the castle hill, and during last summer (1818) he caused avenues to be cut through them, which form the most romantic, picturesque, and diversified shady walks, extending over numerous hills and dales, that can be imagined; the views that occasionally present themselves when least expected, are enchanting, and when you arrive at the summit, there is a most extensive prospect over the counties of Worcester, Stafford, Derby, Leicester, Warwick, Salop, Hereford, and part

Page 64

of Wales: it is not only extensive, but full of variety, comprising hills and dales, woods and villages, populous towns, and busy seats of manufacture; a scene that may be justly termed, of various view, warm and alive with human habitations.—From this eminence eighteen churches are discernable; viz, those of Dudley, Birmingham, West-bromwich, Walsall, Rushall, Wednesbury, Darlaston, Tipton, Bilston, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, Sedgley, Briery-hill, Oldswinford, and Pedmore; also the fine obelisk and castle at Hagley; the elegant seat of Lord Westcote; Envil, the admired seat of Lord Stamford; and part of the woods at Himley, the spacious and beautiful seat of the humane, generous, and noble proprietor of these ruins. The stupendous mountains of Malvern (though near forty miles distant), bounding the horizon towards the south, are grand and noble features in the scene; as are also those of Clent, Abberley, the Cleys, and the Wrekin;

“Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab’ring clouds do often rest.”

To Dudley, in Worcestershire, through Oldbury, distant nine miles.

Having passed the Sand-pits and Spring-hill, you cross the Birmingham canal and enter upon what was Birmingham heath, which being inclosed in the year 1800, was found to contain 289 acres, which land now lets from thirty to fifty shillings per acre.

On the right hand is a boat-builder’s yard, and on the left a glass-house, belonging to Messrs. Biddle and Lloyd. Proceeding towards the windmill, you perceive at a short distance on the right hand another glass-house, belonging to Messrs. Shakespear and Fletcher. Ascending the hill, there is on the right an extensive view over the adjacent country, including Barr-beacon, Mr. Boulton’s plantations, and Winson-green, a neat house, in the possession of Mrs. Steward. On the left is Summerfield-house, late the residence of John Iddins, Esq. but now of James Woolley, Esq. and beyond it, a neat white house, occupied by Mr. Hammond. Over an apparently wooded country, you have a windmill in full view, and when at the foot of the hill, on the right is Smethwick grove, the residence of John Lewis Moilliet, Esq.

* * * * *

You now enter Smethwick, which is in Staffordshire, and ascending the hill, a neat brick house makes its appearance on the right hand, where John Reynolds, Esq. resides, who, by succeeding to what was considered by Mr. Lane, his predecessor, to be a worn out trade, accumulated a considerable fortune, and has retired from business to enjoy it near twenty years. At the summit of the hill on the left is Shireland hall, which is now converted into a seminary for young ladies, under the superintendence of Miss Marmont.

There are in Smethwick some works of considerable magnitude, *viz.* Messrs. Boulton and Watt's manufactory for steam engines; an extensive soap work, belonging to Messrs. Adkins and Nock; a manufactory of brass, under the denomination of the Smethwick brass company; and also one of British crown glass, belonging to Thomas Shutt and Co. There is a house called the Beakes, where Wm. Wynne Smith, Esq. resides.

Page 65

The place of worship is a chapel of ease to the parish of Harborne, and is a neat modern brick tower building, of a single pace, lofty and coved, about sixty feet by twenty-four, and well paved, with a gallery at the west end. The present incumbent is the Rev. Edward Dales, who resides in the neat parsonage-house on the south side of the chapel yard.

Leaving Smethwick, you proceed towards Oldbury, upon which road the trustees are making great improvements, by widening the road and turning the course of a brook, over which they are building a bridge, which when finished will be a great accommodation. This village is situated in the county of Salop, and is a chapel of ease to Halesowen. A new court-house was erected here in the year 1816, where the court of requests is held once a fortnight. The protestant dissenters have here a neat place of worship, as have also the methodists. Close to the village are several coal mines, and a blast furnace, belonging to Mr. Parker.[7]

[Footnote 7: From this place you have an excellent view of Rowley hills, the ruins of Dudley castle, and the fine woods in Sandwell park.]

About a mile distant, on the left of the road is the Brades, where Messrs. William Hunt and Sons have established a considerable manufacture of iron and steel, which they form into scythes, hay knives, trowels, and every kind of hoe now in use. This road from Birmingham to Dudley is at least one mile nearer than going through West-bromwich, and in my opinion will be sufficiently commodious for the traffic there is between the two towns. The distance is only nine miles, and in travelling that short space of ground you are in four different counties; Birmingham being in Warwickshire; Smethwick, in Staffordshire; Oldbury, in Shropshire; and Dudley in the county of Worcester.

N. B. Since writing the above, the bridge is completed, and the whole line of road improved to a considerable degree.

To Hockley-house, ten miles, on the road to Stratford-upon-Avon and also to Warwick.

You proceed through Deritend, up Camp-hill, and when near the summit, there is on the right hand an ancient brick building, called the Ravenhurst, the residence of Mr. John Lowe, attorney, who is equally respectable in his profession, as the house is in appearance. A short distance beyond on the left is Fair-hill, where Samuel Lloyd, Esq. resides, and on the opposite side of the road is the Larches, the abode of Wm. Withering, Esq.—This house, when it belonged to Mr. Darbyshire, was known by the name of Foul Lake, but when Dr. Priestley resided there, he gave it the name of Fair-hill; afterwards, being purchased by Dr. Withering, he altered the name of it to the Larches. Having passed through the turnpike, on the left is Sparkbrook-house, John Rotton, Esq. resident. At the distance of one mile and a half the road to Warwick branches off to the left, and on the summit of the hill is Spark-hill-house, inhabited by Miss Morris.



Opposite the three mile stone is a very neat pile of building, called Green-bank-house, where Benjamin Cooke, Esq. has taken up his abode. A little beyond, at a place called the Coal-bank, there is a free school, which is endowed with about forty pounds per annum.

Page 66

At a short distance on the left is Marston chapel, which is usually called Hall-green chapel: it was erected and endowed by Job Marston, Esq. of Hall-green hall, with about ninety acres of land, and other donations.

At the distance of five miles, you pass through a village called Shirley Street; and at the distance of another five miles, you arrive at Hockley-house; a place of entertainment, where travellers of every denomination are accommodated in a genteel manner, and on reasonable terms. About one mile from hence, on the road to Stratford, is Umberslade, or Omberslade, where the Archer family were used to reside, but it is now untenanted.

From Hockley-house to Warwick, ten miles.

At the distance of one quarter of a mile, there is on the right a view of Lapworth church, and on the left is Pack wood-house, which is at present unoccupied. At Rowington, the Warwick canal is carried at an immense expense over a deep valley, and also through a tunnel of considerable length; on the left is the village church, to which you ascend by steps cut in the solid rock, and near to it is the handsome residence of Samuel Aston, Esq. from hence you proceed through Hatton to Warwick.

To Warwick, twenty miles—Leamington, twenty-two miles.

You proceed through Deritend and Bordesley, continuing upon the Stratford road for one mile and a half, when you turn to the left; and at the distance of two miles there is a view over a well-wooded country, with the spire of Yardley church on the left. At Acock's-green there is a prospect nearly similar; and in a field, opposite the five mile stone, there is an extensive picturesque landscape, with a sheet of water in front, which covers about thirty acres;[8] in the midst of which is a small island, with some trees upon it, that adds considerably to the scene.

[Footnote 8: This sheet of water is the reservoir of the Warwick canal.]

Solihull, distant seven miles.

This beautiful, neat, and clean village had at one time a market, but that has been discontinued for a long time. There are still three fairs annually; one on the 29th of April, another on the 11th of September, and the third on the 12th of October. There are here several genteel and commodious houses; the vicinity being very respectable. The church is an ancient gothic pile of building, with an elegant spire. The Rev. Charles Curtis is rector.

Leaving the village, on the right you pass by Malvern-hall, the residence of H.G. Lewis, Esq. and afterwards arrive at Balsall Temple, which in former days belonged to the knights templars, and at their dissolution the knights hospitallers became possessed of it, in whom it remained till the general dissolution of the abbies. It was afterwards

converted into an hospital, for the reception of indigent women, either unmarried or widows, to be selected from Balsall and Long Itchington,

Page 67

in Warwickshire, Trentham, in Staffordshire, or Lillenhall, in Shropshire. This institution is now in great prosperity, the annual income amounting to near L1500; the number of its alms-women is at present thirty. The buildings are extensive and substantial, forming a complete square, and healthfully situated on the verge of a spacious and fertile green. The trustees are the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, together with the Earls of Warwick and Aylesford, assisted by other respectable gentlemen in the county, who have placed the whole institution under the immediate charge of a master, with a salary of L150. per annum, who is at this time the Rev. J. Short.

To those who admire antiquity, Balsall church will be a pleasing object, as it now remains nearly in the same state as it was when first erected, about seven hundred years back. Its dimensions are one hundred and two feet long, thirty-eight broad, and fifty-seven high. At the east and west ends are lofty windows, extending from the roof nearly to the ground, and on each side are three noble windows. The heads of all the windows are ornamented with beautiful tracery, and no two of them resemble each other. There are no divisions withinside, and what distinguishes the chancel from the body of the church is an ascent of three steps. The walls are very substantial, and so clustered with ivy, that it forces its way through any small fissures into the interior. Over the west door there is a low turret, and below the cornice is a row of ten heads, in a good state of preservation, which are considered to be of excellent workmanship.

Near the church is the ancient hall of the templars, formerly a splendid apartment, but now it is converted into a barn, which is represented to have been one hundred and forty feet in length.

A little farther is Springfield, the elegant and delightful mansion of Joseph Boulton, Esq. and at a short distance is Knowle, which is a small old town, on elevated ground, in the midst of fertile fields. This church is of considerable size, and exhibits marks of antiquity in its remains of stained glass and grotesque carved work.

Not far from hence is Baddesley-Clinton-hall, the seat of Edward Ferrers, Esq. and about one mile beyond is a small inn, known by the name of Tom o'Bedlam, near to which is a venerable oak tree, supposed to be two hundred years old, measuring in girth twenty yards, from which one branch extends across a road thirty feet wide. You next come to Wroxhall abbey, the residence of Christopher Wren, Esq. a descendant from the noted Sir Christopher Wren, who erected St. Paul's cathedral, in London. The church of Wroxhall is an ancient structure, forming one side of a square, the buildings of the abbey forming the other three sides. The windows, which are ornamented with stained glass, are remarkably fine: the two figures of Moses and Aaron are admired, not only for the drapery, but also for the splendid colours.

Page 68

About one mile before you arrive at Hatton, there is to the left a pleasant view over a well-wooded country, in the midst of which the ivied towers and magnificent battlements of Kenilworth castle present themselves to view. Hatton is a small village over which the celebrated and learned Dr. Parr presides. At Hatton-hill, near the two mile stone, there is an extensive and diversified prospect over the fertile tract that surrounds Warwick; in every part highly cultivated, and adorned with woods, encircled by gently-rising hills; and in the back ground are seen Shuckburgh-hill on one side and Edge-hill on the other.

Warwick. This ancient town is seated on a rock, to which you ascend in every direction, there being four avenues; one from Birmingham, another from Stratford, a third from Coventry, and a fourth from Banbury. The eminence on which the town is erected is itself encircled by hills at the distance of from two to three miles, which bound the prospect in every direction, except to the N.E. where you may see into Northamptonshire, and to the S.W. where the eye ranges over an extensive country, backed by the hills in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. The surrounding country is very fruitful, being cultivated with great care, and the enclosures separated by beautiful hedges, which are richly adorned with trees in a flourishing condition, and also by the river Avon, which meanders here in a considerable stream, and near Warwick is augmented by the junction of the Leam. The town being seated on a dry eminence, is exposed to the genial influence of the sun, which rarifies the air, and renders the atmosphere so salubrious and warm, that in its vicinity the seasons are frequently earlier by a fortnight than they are at the distance of twenty or thirty miles. The four principal streets cross each other at right angles, and lead to the cardinal points.

Great improvements have of late been made in them, by the introduction of culverts, repaving the carriage roads, and laying the footpaths with flags. Lamps are lighted during the winter months, at the expense of the corporation, who have in a commendable manner widened the narrow parts of some streets, and removed numerous obstructions; which gives an air of liveliness to this once sleepy town, and the inhabitants, being rowed from their lethargy, are now become active and industrious. —The canal from Birmingham comes to this town, from whence it is continued to Napton, where it unites with the Oxford, and by means of it, with the grand junction canal.

The town is governed by a mayor, twelve aldermen, and twelve principal burgesses, with a town clerk and a recorder, who are empowered to make laws for the regulation of the borough, and upon all offenders to impose reasonable fines and penalties. Here are two manufactories of cotton, one of lace, and one of worsted, all of them upon an extensive scale, which contribute considerably to the cheerful activity

Page 69

and increasing population. There are here held twelve fairs annually; the market, which is well supplied, is on a Saturday; the quarter sessions for the county, and also the assizes.—The horse races take place in September, and a second meeting of the same kind is held in November. This borough sends two members to parliament, who are elected by those who pay scot and lot; the number of electors being about five hundred.

Here are two churches; one dedicated to St. Mary and the other to St. Nicholas: there, are also places of worship for presbyterians, quakers, independants, baptists, and Wesleyans.

In the vicinity, the following places are deserving of attention:—Guy's cliff, the ruins of Kenilworth castle, Stoneleigh abbey, Charlcott-house, and Combe abbey. Passing over the new bridge, on the road to Leamington, there is a grand picturesque view of Warwick; there being in the foreground the rich meadows, with the Avon meandering through them, the church of St. Nicholas, and the trees behind, which form a dark shade. Near to it is the castellated entrance into the castle, and the elegant tower of St. Peter's chapel. On the right is the priory, with its beautiful woods. The town is perceptible in the centre, with the tower of St. Mary's, which rises above the variegated and extensive groves of the castle. On the left is the principal object, the castle, which raises its lofty embattled towers over the shady groves with which it is surrounded. The elegant bridge, whose span is 105 feet, is a prominent feature in the landscape.

On the road leading to Tachbrook, about one mile from the town, the eye is gratified with a rich and luxuriant landscape, wherein appears the church of St. Nicholas, the priory, the hospital of St. John, the tower of St. Mary's church, and, to crown the whole, the castle.

The walks and rides in the vicinity of this town present innumerable objects deserving of attention, and whoever takes delight in rural scenery, may here be amply gratified.

In addition to these works, there is a considerable manufactory of hats, and an iron-foundry; to which may be added a corn mill, wherein are five pair of stones, and three of them constantly in motion, by which means they are enabled to grind and dress three hundred bushels of flour every day.

The County Hall.

This is an elegant pile of building, with a stone front, ornamented with pillars of the Corinthian order, to which, the ascent is by a flight of steps, through folding doors, into a noble room of just proportions, being ninety-four feet in length and thirty-six in breadth. At each end are semicircular recesses, surmounted by cupolas, and fitted up with convenient galleries, where the two courts of justice are held; the criminal court being

on the right, and that for civil causes on the left; between which there is accommodation for the servants and attendants upon the court. Above there is an apartment where the petit juries

Page 70

occasionally retire, and adjoining it is the room where the grand jury assemble. The quarter sessions for the county are also held in this hall, and in it all county meetings are convened. During the races there is a temporary boarded floor laid down, and the hall is converted into a ball-room, the two recesses being fitted up for card parties: the pillars with which it is ornamented are encircled with wreaths of lamps, and what was before the solemn court of justice, is now converted into a brilliant and sportive scene, where gaiety and fashion take place of their predecessors.

The Court House.

This spacious and elegant pile of building is appropriated to the use of the body corporate, there being two rooms on the ground floor; that on the right is where the mayor and aldermen hold their assemblies, and the other is fitted up as a court, where the sessions are held for the borough. On the second floor, there is a commodious, well-proportioned apartment, sixty feet by twenty-seven, which is fitted up in an elegant manner with superb cut-glass chandeliers of large dimensions, at one end of which is an orchestra and also a card room adjoining. In this room annual entertainments are given by the mayor, and public meetings for the borough are convened. In it public lectures upon any particular subject are occasionally delivered, and it is also sometimes used as a ballroom.

The Market House.

This substantial building does credit to the town; it being very convenient for those who bring the produce of their farms to market. The upper apartments are made use of as store-rooms for the arms and accoutrements of the military within the county. From its summit there is a fine view of the town, and also a prospect of the surrounding country.

The Stone Bridge.

This elegant structure, which is erected across the river Avon, consists of one arch, measuring 105 feet in the span, at the expense of four thousand pounds: one thousand was contributed by the corporation, and the remainder was defrayed by the Earl of Warwick.

The Iron Bridge.

The rock whereon this town is erected being cut away, to make a road into it twenty-four feet wide, Charles Mills, Esq. one of the members for the borough, caused an iron bridge to be erected at his expense, across this road, and thereby formed a junction between the marketplace and the Saltsford.

The Theatre.

The town not being very extensive, this building was erected to correspond with the population: it is no ways remarkable in its external appearance, but it is fitted up in a neat and convenient manner within, and is always opened during the races.

College School.

Page 71

This ancient pile of building is of considerable size, and in it the native children of the parish, who think proper to take advantage of the institution, are educated free of expense; but as the course of instruction is prescribed to the learned languages only, its utility as a free school for general education is very contracted. The salary of the master, who must be a clergyman of the established religion, is seventy-five pounds, and he having but little employment, has an assistant, who receives annually thirty pounds, exclusive of other emoluments. To this school two estates were left in trust, to provide two exhibitions of seventy pounds each, for two young men, natives of the town, towards defraying the expense of their education, at Oxford, for the space of seven years.

There is also a public library, wherein is a considerable collection of well-chosen books, chiefly of modern literature; but the building that contains it is not deserving of notice.

The charitable donations and benefactions that have been left to this town are very numerous, and amount to a large sum of money.

Here are six different alms-houses, one school wherein thirty-nine boys are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and thirty-six girls are instructed in reading, writing, sewing, and knitting. There is also a school of industry, and four sunday schools. A lying-in charity is also established here, for the relief of poor married women, residing within the borough, who each of them are accommodated with a set of child-bed linen for one month, one pound of candles, one pound of soap, and during the winter months, with two hundred weight of coals. They are also provided with a sufficient quantity of caudle, together with proper attendants, and all necessary medical advice. In addition to the before-mentioned there are two poor-houses.

There is also a very ancient building, denominated Leicester's hospital, for the reception of twelve indigent men, who are termed brethren, together with a master, who must be a clergyman of the established church, and in preference to all others, if he offers himself, the vicar of St. Mary's. It is endowed with land, which at the time was valued at L200 per annum, but now amounts to near L2000, exclusive of the vicarage of Hampton-in-Arden, which is in the gift of the brethren, who usually bestow it upon the master. It had long been ascertained that the clear annual rental of the estate far exceeded all that could be required for the support of the number of brethren in the hospital, and that the salary of the master was fixed at fifty pounds per annum.

Page 72

In the year 1813, this important business was brought before parliament, when it appeared, that each of the brethren received, clear of all deductions, about L130 per year each, which sum the act leaves them in the possession of; but it provides, as vacancies occur, either by death or otherwise, on the admission of every new member, his annual income shall not exceed L80, and that the surplus L50 shall one half of it go to the increase of the master's salary, until it amounts to L400 per annum, and the remainder is to form a fund for the support of ten additional members. The qualification for admission being now fixed at L50 per annum: no candidate is to be possessed of an income exceeding that. Adjoining to the hospital is a chapel, which is neatly fitted up for the use of the brethren, the master, and his family, who daily assemble there for morning and evening prayer, except on those days when service is performed at St. Mary's, where their attendance is then required.

St. Mary's Church.

This stately building taken altogether makes a very respectable appearance, particularly the tower, wherein are eight bells and a set of chimes; what is very remarkable, the principal entrance into the church is under the tower; therefore it admits of a grand view down the middle aisle, which being terminated by the east window, is seen to great advantage. There is in this church an excellent organ, and numerous monuments, but none of them any ways remarkable. From the south transept of this church, you descend by a flight of steps to St. Mary's chapel, and enter therein by folding doors, which, when opened, the eye is astonished upon viewing the interior of this beautiful and magnificent structure, which is considered to be as fine a specimen of gothic architecture as any in the kingdom, it being in the pointed style of the middle order. This chapel, having been twenty-one years in building, was finished in the year 1464, and including the monument erected to commemorate the Earl of Warwick, cost L2481, an amazing sum at that period. In the chapel there are five sumptuous monuments.

St. Nicholas's Church.

This incongruous pile of building is of modern date, being opened for divine service on the 17th September, 1780.

County Gaol.

This extensive, substantial, and commodious pile of building is of solid stone, and in all respects so complete, that every purpose it was intended to answer is fully accomplished. The area of this prison contains near an acre of ground, which is surrounded by a wall twenty-three feet high, and of proportionate strength.

County Bridewell.

This building is of stone, and contains numerous apartments, in every one of which there is a glazed window and an iron door, the sleeping rooms being furnished with iron bedsteads and chaff beds, with two rugs to each. A donation is made to every prisoner, on being released, according to the distance he is from home and behaviour during confinement. One or two shirts or shifts, a pair of shoes, or a jacket, are presented to those who have been in prison six months.

Page 73

The Castle.

The necessary limits to which this work is confined, will not admit of describing that magnificent and sumptuous pile of building; therefore those who are desirous of seeing a description of it, are referred to the local historian.

The Priory.

This ancient edifice is in the immediate vicinity of Warwick: it was originally a complete square, three sides of which still remain, the fourth having been removed.—The western side appears to have been part of the ancient chapel, there still remaining part of the baptismal font, which is of stone, richly ornamented, and is highly deserving the attention of an antiquarian.

It is situated on a pleasing eminence, embosomed in the ancient and majestic groves, surrounded by delightful gardens and an extensive park, and presents such a beautiful sylvan scene as is rarely to be met with. The undulated surface of the ground, intermingled with numerous sheets of water, are richly adorned with trees of various kinds, of vigorous growth and the most beautiful forms, among which the elm and the chesnut are particularly conspicuous. Through this park there are several footpaths open to the public, and are the most rural and delightful walks imaginable.

Guy's Clift.

Leland, the antiquarian, who wrote in the time of Henry 8th, speaking of this delightful and romantic place, says, "It is the abode of pleasure, and a place delightful to the muses: there are natural cavities in the rocks, small but shady groves, clear and chrystal streams, flowery meadows, mossy caves, a gentle murmuring river running among the rocks, and to crown all, solitude and quiet, friendly in so high a degree to the muses."

The approach to this romantic place is from the Coventry road, by the side of shady plantations, until you arrive at a lofty stone arch, through which you enter the court yard, the whole of which is hewn out of the solid rock, and underneath there are subterraneous passages and cellars, wherein the atmospheric air produces so little effect, that during the heats of summer or the colds in winter the thermometer only varies one degree. In this court there are numerous stables excavated out of the solid rock, as are some of the lower apartments of the house, which is an elegant modern mansion, and near to it is the ancient chapel, with its embattled towers and gothic windows, as it was originally built in the reign of Henry 6th, and is still in good repair. Those who admire the productions of early genius will here be highly gratified, there being great numbers of original paintings, and some copies, executed by the only son of the worthy proprietor of Guy's clift, whose premature death at the age of twenty-two,

caused inexpressible grief to all who were honoured with his acquaintance. Exclusive of these, there are others by artists of the greatest celebrity.

Page 74

The ancient pleasure grounds exhibit a great variety of pleasing objects, and also numerous curiosities; among others, a mill that was in being before the Norman conquest, it being mentioned in doomsday book. There is also Guy's well, where this renowned champion was accustomed to slake his thirst, which is described by Leland as follows, it still remaining in the same state as it was then—"The silver wells in the meadows were enclosed with pure white sleek stones, like marble, and a pretty house, erected like a cage, one end only open, to keep comers from the rain." The apartments under the chapel, where the chantry priests were used to reside, still remain entire, without having undergone any alteration. Near to this spot is Guy's cave,

"Where with his hands he hew'd a house,
Out of a craggy rock of stone,
And lived, like a palmer, poor,
Within that house alone."

This bears the appearance of being a natural eave, for the upper part does not exhibit any marks where the tool has been made use of, but the lower part does; and here, tradition says, this mighty warrior was interred, and also his wife, fair Phillis. Over this cave is fair Phillis's walk, who, it is related, was accustomed to resort here, whilst her husband, though not known to her as such, was performing his devotions in the cave below. From these delightful and romantic walks there are numerous opportunities for an expert draughtsman to exercise his abilities.

Leamington Priors.

The distance between Warwick and Leamington is only two miles, and there are two distinct roads, both of them excellent; and whether a person rides or walks, if the mind is susceptible of pleasing ideas, neither time nor fatigue will be thought of. The roads about Leamington are in excellent order, and present numerous delightful and picturesque views, which are fully described by Mr. Field, and also by Mr. Moncrief in his Guide to Leamington, wherein he has introduced some appropriate, entertaining, and amusing poetry. Whoever resorts to these saline springs in search of amusement, if he has money and time at command, cannot fail, during the season, between May and November, of being highly gratified, except the mind is entirely depraved. To every visitant, the guide of Mr. Moncrief will not only be useful but entertaining. The poetical epistles of Miss Fidget are not only descriptive but very humorous, and the poetry of Mr. Pensile is very appropriate.

Before Leamington rose into esteem, there was a facetious man resided there, named Benjamin Satchwell, by trade a shoemaker, who, when any differences arose among the villagers, he was in general the mediator; they not being at that time cursed with either a wrangling lawyer or an hypocritical methodist. He was also the village poet, and frequently exercised his talents in praise of the waters, and likewise of any respectable person who came with intent to derive benefit from

Page 75

them. He is said to have kept annals in verse of its rise and progress, and also cases of cures performed by the virtues of the saline spring, and that he let them out to the visitors for their amusement, on certain terms. Admitting this to be true, is it not very singular that Mr. Bisset, nor his predecessor, Mr. Pratt, should neither of them introduce these *jeu des esprits*, for the entertainment of their readers, or why did not Mr. Moncrief collect them together; they certainly would have increased the sale of his work? As they are overlooked by the local historians, it is not likely that a casual visitor should stumble upon them.

This village having for a series of years been celebrated for a spring of saline water, it has for some time become fashionable to resort there. The first baths were erected in the year 1786, now called the Centre well, by Mr. Thomas Abbots, a native of the place; the beneficial effects of the water having been noticed and recommended by Dr. Kerr, of Northampton, and Dr. Allen. At this time there were two baths, one of them hot and the other cold, which for several years afforded sufficient accommodation for all invalids who resorted there, and were in general lodged at the adjacent cottages, there being no more than two small inns, the Bowling Green and the sign of the Dog.

Dr. Edward Johnstone, of Birmingham, having recommended the use of these waters to several of his patients, the number of visitants increased annually, so that in 1790, Matthew Wise, Esq. caused another well to be opened, now called the Road well, where he erected a range of baths, more spacious than the others, to which was annexed considerably more conveniences, with some pretensions to elegance; but as yet no additional apartments were provided for the accommodation of strangers, except a few more of the cottagers fitting up additional rooms, it being no more than a rural and retired village.

In the year 1794, Dr. Lambe, a physician of eminence, who resided at Warwick, published in the fifth volume of the *Memoirs of the Manchester Philosophical Society*, an accurate analysis of the Leamington water, by which it appears to possess the same genial influence on the human frame as the water of Cheltenham, which was then rising into celebrity. There was one very material difference between the waters of Leamington and those of Cheltenham, there being at the former place an abundant supply of the mineral water, not only for drinking but for hot and cold bathing; whilst, on the contrary, the saline spring at Cheltenham scarcely produced a sufficient quantity for drinking. The influx of visitors to Leamington now increased with such rapidity, that every cottager exerted himself to fit up lodgings, and every house to which lodgers resorted improved their appearance; in short, new wells were opened, new houses erected, and not only new streets formed in the old town, as it was now called, but a plan was drawn for the erection of a new town, which has within a few years increased in a most astonishing manner.

Page 76

The Dukes of Bedford and Gordon, attended by their Duchesses, having visited and remained at Leamington for some time, it induced the Earl of Aylesford, who is lord of the manor, and of course, proprietor of the spring, to visit Leamington, where, having made the necessary enquiries, he gave orders that the spring should be properly inclosed, at his expense, securing to the poor the benefit of the waters, and had he lived, it was his intention to have erected baths for their accommodation. The visitants increasing in number, Mr. Wise has augmented the number of his baths, there being one cold bath, four hot for the use of gentlemen, seven for ladies, and one for children, all fitted up with Dutch tiles, or Derbyshire marble, and furnished for the convenience of invalids, with hand rails: to each of the baths is attached a dressing room, with a fire-place in it. Adjoining these baths there is a small but elegant pump-room; the water being raised by a horse engine.

In 1810, a fourth well was opened, which is called the Bridge well, and is situated near the bridge, close to the river: it belongs to Mr. Robbins, who has erected one large cold bath, three hot baths, and one for children.—These, with the exception of the last, are accompanied by convenient dressing-rooms; the water being raised by a horse engine.

The South well, the property of the Rev. Mr. Read, was opened in the same year, (1810), where there are one cold bath, formed with Dutch tiles, three hot baths, one of them being marble, and one for children: these baths are very neat, but they have not the convenience of dressing-rooms.

During the same year, (1810), a sixth well was opened on the north side of the river, where a magnificent suite of baths and a spacious pump-room are erected, at the expense of twenty-five thousand pounds; there are twenty in number, hot, cold, tepid, vapour, and shower; one of them being a chair bath, which is an admirable contrivance to immerge the invalid, on the chair where he was undressed, into the bath, in a secure and easy manner.—These baths are spacious, and admirably constructed with Dutch tiles, and most of them have the accommodation of dressing-rooms. The water is raised by a steam engine of two horse power; and to the great credit of the proprietors, they have devoted one hot and two cold baths to the use of the poor. This extensive building exhibits a noble front, the central part being one hundred and six feet in length and thirty in height, to which there are two wings, each of them extending thirty-feet and in height twenty. A spacious colonade, formed by double pillars of the Doric order, encompass it on three sides, all of native stone, makes this building rank among the first and most magnificent structures in the kingdom. It was designed and executed by Mr. C.S. Smith, architect of London. The baths for the use of the ladies are nearest to the river, and those at the other end are for gentlemen,

Page 77

the entrance to them being from the two wings. The entrance to the pump-room, which is extensive, lofty, and of exact proportions, is through folding doors at each extremity of the central building.—The ornaments of the ceiling, the cornices, and in fact, the whole interior embellishments, are chaste and simply elegant. On one side the light is introduced through seven windows, and on the opposite side by one window of large dimensions, composed of stained glass. Underneath this window there are two elegant chimney pieces, formed of Kilkenny marble. At the western extremity of the room, on an ornamental pedestal of Derbyshire marble, there is the pump, if it may be so called, it having a bason in the centre, which is enclosed by a neat mahogany ballustrade. The visitors receive the water in glasses from beautiful damsels, and to whom it is usual to give a gratuity. The terms for drinking the water at these baths is 3s. 6d. per week, exclusive of the gratuity. At the other wells it is 2s. 6d. per week, and the gratuity. The terms for bathing appear to be in general, 3s. for a warm bath, 2s. for that of a child, and 1s. 6d. for a cold bath, with a gratuity to the attendant.

In the year 1816, a seventh well made its appearance in Clemens-street, which bears the pompous title of the imperial sulphuric medical font, and ladies' marble baths. There are here four baths, with a dressing-room to each, and also an elegant pump-room.

Lest seven wells and fifty baths should not be sufficient to accommodate the visitors at Leamington, preparations are making for the eighth well, near Ranelagh gardens, where the baths are intended to be more splendid than any of the former, and also the pump-room, under the title of the Spa.

From the hour of seven to nine in the morning is the accustomed time to promenade and drink the water, though numbers defer it till after breakfast, and bathe in the evening before they retire to rest.

When the warm baths are not in use, they are invariably kept and shewn empty, being filled in presence of the visitor, or during the time he is preparing to use them; the process of filling not requiring more than three minutes. The cold baths are in general emptied and of course filled every day, or more frequently if required; but of late they are not much resorted to, the warm or tepid bath being preferred. The prevailing opinion among medical men is, that the latter is by far the more efficacious in most disorders, and more conducive to health than the former; because, where a person continues immersed in saline water for some time, it enters into the pores of the skin, and by that means is more likely to be of benefit in cutaneous or other disorders for which it is usually recommended.

The houses in Union-parade, Upper Union-street, Cross-street, and others, being erected, some public-spirited gentlemen, in order to attract the attention of the public, in

the year 1813 resolved to erect an assembly-room that might vie with, if not excel those of Bath and Cheltenham.

Page 78

This, at the expense of ten thousand pounds, was carried into execution by a pupil of the celebrated Wyatt. The spacious front of this beautiful edifice is constructed with native stone, wherein no superfluous ornaments are admitted. In the central part there are a range of seven windows, supported by light pilasters of the Ionic order, surmounted by a plain entablature. Two handsome wings project from the main building, and judiciously relieve it; they contain those apartments that are usual and necessary appendages to a large assembly room.—There are two entrances into this building; one on the eastern side, from Union-parade, through a small porch, supported by four Ionic columns; the other, the principal entrance, is from Upper Cross-street, through a pair of large folding doors in the right wing, into the hall. The hall is spacious and well-proportioned, the refectory being opposite to the entrance. To the right is a billiard-room, containing a massive mahogany table, made by Fernyhough, of London, said to be worth one hundred guineas, and to the left a flight of stairs conducts you to another billiard-room, which, although it is not quite so spacious, is equally commodious as the other. On the same side you enter the ball-room through a pair of folding doors: this magnificent room measures in length eighty-two feet, in width thirty-six, and in height twenty-six. From the ceiling, which is beautifully ornamented with stucco, three superb chandeliers of cut glass are suspended, which with those in the other apartments are said to have cost one thousand guineas. The range of windows aforementioned are furnished with curtains of crimson moreen, edged with black fringe. On the opposite side of the room there are two fire-places, the chimney pieces being formed of Kilkenny marble, highly polished, over which are two ornamental mirrors of large dimensions. At the upper end is the orchestra, to the left of which is a door leading into the card room, which is a spacious and elegant apartment, and beyond it is a reading-room, well provided with the London and provincial newspapers, to which are added some of the most esteemed periodical publications. On ball nights, this room is appropriated for tea. From the month of June till November balls are held every Thursday night, at eight o'clock, and card assemblies occasionally throughout the season. The whole concern is under the direction of a committee, the master of the ceremonies being C. Stevenson, Esq.

Mr. George Stanley, mason, of Warwick, laid the first brick of the first house erected at new Leamington, 8th October, 1808. This first house was built by Mr. Frost, of Warwick, and stands at the corner of Upper Cross-street, opposite the assembly rooms; in honour of him there is now a street bears his name, (Frost-street.)

The Theatre.

This neat building, upon a diminutive scale, was erected in 1814, immediately in front of the Bath hotel, the exterior appears to be coated with Parker's cement, and the interior is ornamented with views of Leamington, Warwick, Guy's Clift, &c, and fitted up with some taste.

Page 79

The Post Office.

This necessary and convenient place for all descriptions of people to resort to, is situated about two hundred yards east of the church, where there are gardens, kept in neat order, for the accommodation of those who wait with impatience for their letters; or they may promenade from the office to Gordon house.

Ranelagh Gardens

Are regularly improved every season, and with their various amusements, are deserving of attention.

The Church

Is an ancient pile of building, dedicated to All Saints, which, from the great influx of visitors, being found too small for their accommodation, an entire new wing was constructed in 1816, and it still requires to be farther extended, or a new one erected. A moderate subscription from the wealthy visitors would do much towards it. The officiating minister, the Rev. E. Trotman, is only engaged to do single duty on a Sunday, but to accommodate the visitors, he performs a second entire service, and to remunerate him for his attention, subscription books are opened. During the season of 1818, another hotel was begun, upon which twenty thousand pounds being appropriated to the completion of it, is a sum sufficient to render it equal to any other house of entertainment in the kingdom.

An elegant suite of rooms have recently been opened, entitled the Apollo, where assemblies were held every fortnight, during winter. Boarding houses are continually opening every week, and in every quarter of the town there are good houses in a state of forwardness, against the present season.

A Hint from the Editor.

From the rapid manner in which the buildings encrease at Leamington, it is evident that there is a superabundance of money, and as soft water is a scarce article within the town, could not a portion of that superfluous money be advantageously employed in conveying that useful and necessary article to the respective houses, by means of a steam engine, there being a powerful spring at no great distance?

To Meriden, twelve miles, on the road to Coventry.

You proceed through Deritend and Bordesley, when you take the left hand road, and having crossed the Warwick canal, the ruins of Bordesley house are in full view; they having continued in that state ever since the year 1791, when the house was demolished by an infuriated mob. The land by which it is surrounded has been parcelled out, and advertised to be let for building. On the left is a farm-house,

denominated the Garrison, from whence there is an extensive view over the town of Birmingham; and on this eminence it is supposed that Oliver Cromwell planted his artillery to overawe the town; but the majority of the inhabitants being favourable to his cause, there was no necessity to make use of it; and what gives weight to this supposition is, that this spot being about one mile and a half from Aston hall, it is very probable that from thence the artillery played upon that mansion, as a ball penetrated into the interior of it. At the distance of three miles and a half, there is a road on the left, which leads to the village of Yardley.

Page 80

Having passed the four mile stone, you ascend a gently rising hill, and when at the summit a delightful and extensive view presents itself; there being a windmill in the front, and on the left the tower of Sheldon church is seen, and also the steeple of Coleshill church.

Elmdon Hall.

The seat of A. Spooner Lillingston, Esq. is an elegant modern pile of building, on the right of the road, at the distance of six miles. It is situate in an extensive lawn, interspersed with shrubberies, from whence there are variegated and extensive prospects, the churches of Birmingham, Solihull, and Yardley being distinctly seen, backed by Barr-beacon, the Rowley hills, &c. and withoutside of the lawn the spire of Coleshill church is a pleasing object. The church, which is a neat stone building, was erected by Abraham Spooner, Esq. the entrance is under the tower, which admits of exhibiting to great advantage, an elegant window composed entirely of stained glass. In the centre is a representation of the last supper, delicately executed in a circle, about nine inches in diameter, date 1532. There are also three ovals, representing Faith, Hope, and Charity, executed in a masterly manner, apparently about the same period. There is also a neat organ, of a size suitable to the place.

At a short distance farther, there is on the right a church upon an eminence, with a delicate spire, at a place called Church Bickenhill; and a short distance beyond is an extensive and variegated prospect, with Coleshill church on the left. Having crossed the river Cole at Stonebridge, at the distance of half a mile on the left is Packington hall, the seat of the Earl of Aylesford, which is a substantial modern stone building, situated in a park, wherein are some of the most noble oak trees that are to be found in the kingdom. There are also numerous sheets of water, and the church, which was erected by the late Earl, after a plan of Bonomi's, which is an immense arch, both interior and exterior, after the manner of the Italians, and is nearly in the centre of the park. The organ was made by order of Handel, and presented by him to the late Earl; it being esteemed a very fine toned one.—The altar-piece represents angels paying adoration to the Saviour, and is painted in a masterly style by Rigaud.

The archery ground made use of by the woodmen of Ardeu is bounded by a plantation on the left of the road, about one mile before you arrive at Meriden. The members of this society hold several meetings each summer, when they shoot for various prizes. On the ground there is an elegant building erected, where the members dine, or take refreshment, and at other times it serves as a general deposit for their bows and arrows. This is almost the only society of woodmen now in the kingdom. At Meriden there is a commodious inn, adjacent to which are delightful gardens, and the accommodation for travellers are excellent.

To Sutton, distant eight miles, on the road to Lichfield.

Page 81

You leave Birmingham, through Aston-street and the adjacent buildings in the parish of Aston, which extend for a considerable distance along the road. Having passed the buildings, you soon after cross a small stream of water, that has performed its office of turning a corn mill, which you perceive on your left hand. This mill was within memory a forge, for the making of bar iron.—There is another mill upon the same stream, a short distance above, known by the name of Aston furnace, which was a blast furnace for the purpose of making pig iron to supply the forge below, and must have been made use of as such for a prodigious number of years, the slag or refuse from it forming an immense heap only a few years back, which has been conveyed away to make and repair the roads, and in some instances to erect buildings.[9] This mill has been considerably enlarged, and a steam engine erected contiguous to it, and is now used as a paper mill. From an adjacent hill there is a good view over the town of Birmingham.

[Footnote 9: See Hockley abbey, on the road to Wolverhampton.]

A lofty brick wall now presents itself to view, by which the park belonging to Aston hall is surrounded: it being by computation three miles in circumference; within which there is a great abundance of valuable timber, and it is also well stocked with deer. When the wall recedes from the high road, keep by the side of it, which leads you to the parish church, and also to the mansion house or hall, which is a brick building, erected by Sir Thomas Holt, about the year 1636, at the same time that he enclosed the park. He also erected alms houses, for five men and five women, which he endowed, with eighty-eight pounds per annum, out of the manor of Erdington. The hall has of late years been in the possession of Heneage Legge, Esq. but is at present unoccupied, and the whole estate is upon sale.[10]

[Footnote 10: Since writing the above, the mansion of Aston, together with the park, has been purchased by Messrs. Greenway and Whitehead, of Warwick, who have converted the house into two tenements, disposed of the deer, turned the park into enclosures, and fallen the timber.]

The church which is dedicated to St. Peter and Paul, is a stone building, with a lofty spire, and contains several monuments of the Holt family; it is also ornamented with two windows of stained glass, by Eginton. In the church-yard there is a remarkable grave stone, which is fixed east and west.[11] The present incumbant is the Rev. Benjamin Spencer, L.L.D.

Sir Lister Holt, the late proprietor of this estate, not having any children, and being at variance with his only brother, (who succeeded to the title), he entailed the estate upon four different families, none of whom had or are likely to have any children, although they have been in possession of it for the space of near forty years.

[Footnote 11: It is a thick stone, about two foot in height, on which is the following inscription:—

Page 82

EAST SIDE;

HERE
LIETH THE
BODY OF
REBECKAH
PEMBORTON
WIF OF ISAAC
PEMBORTON
BVRI 27 OF
DECEM 1660

HERE
LIETH THE
BODY OF
ISAAC PEM-
BERTON HE
DEPARTED
DECEM 4: 1697
AGED 76

WEST SIDE.

THO I AM
HERE LAID
LOW IN GRAVE
THINK ON THE
COVNSEL WICH
I GAVE THO TRO
VNLES MAY TO Y
DECEND: A GRAC
LOVS BLESSIN
IN THE END

THE FIRST
STONE SET VP
IN THIS YARD
THO OTHERS SINCE
MORE FINLY CARVED
WAS IN REMEMBERANCE
OF SHE
AN OBJECT OF
MORTALITY]



Returning into the main road, you perceive on the left a double row of lofty elms, that extend about half a mile; and at the termination of the vista, Aston hall and the lofty spire of the church produce a grand effect. On the right there is a sheet of water that turns a mill for the use of the Birmingham manufacturers. You soon after cross Salford bridge, to the right of which is an aqueduct that conveys the Birmingham canal over the river Tame. The village of Erdington does not contain any object deserving of attention, but a little beyond on the right is Pipe hall, an ancient seat of the Bagot family, now occupied by the Rev. Egerton Bagot.

In the vicinity there are several neat houses, which are chiefly inhabited by wealthy people, who have retired from Birmingham. A short distance from hence Mary Ashford was found drowned on the 27th May, 1817.

About the fifth mile stone, the eye is gratified on the left with an extensive view over the country, which continually varies for a considerable distance, until a most beautiful and picturesque landscape presents itself; a white house belonging to a mill and an extensive sheet of water being in front, Barr-beacon in the back ground, and the woods in Sutton park on the right.

Sutton Coldfield.

This remarkably neat and clean town is situated about midway between the town of Birmingham and the city of Lichfield; lying south from the latter place, its name is supposed to be derived from South Town, and by corruption, Sutton. There is a very considerable portion of land near this town, where travellers say the air is equally sharp and cold as it is upon the highlands of Scotland, and from this circumstance the latter part of its name originates. Independant of this tract of land, there is another contiguous to it, which is denominated the park, wherein a part of the Roman road, called Icknield Street, still remains perfect; there is also a spring called Rounton well, whose water is remarkably cold and produces a very copious stream, to which numerous people who are afflicted with cutaneous disorders resort, and derive considerable benefit from drinking and bathing therein. It cures the most virulent itch in the human species, and also the mange in dogs, if sufficient care is taken to wash them well in the stream, but a slight washing will not produce the desired effect.

Page 83

The church is an ancient stone building, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and the present rector is the Rev. John Riland, who is also patron of the living. Within the church there is an organ, and some monuments deserving of attention; there are also three vaults, two of which having been opened, the coffins and their contents were mouldered into dust, although they had been deposited there within the memory of man.

This town was incorporated by the eighth Henry, at the solicitation of Vesey, bishop of Exeter, who was his chancellor, and a native of this place. It is denominated a corporate body, by the name of the warden and society of the king's town of Sutton Coldfield, and consists of twenty-four members besides the warden, with a grant to them of the whole manor and lordship of the parish, together with a tract of waste ground, called the park, containing about 3500 acres, wherein is great abundance of valuable timber, on condition of paying into the exchequer a fee farm rent of fifty-eight pounds per annum.

The said Bishop Vesey erected fifty-one stone houses in the parish and also a free grammar school, which he liberally endowed with land, and ordained by the statutes, that the master should be a layman, which is strictly adhered to. He also procured for the inhabitants a market, and the extraordinary privilege that every person who erected a house in Sutton, should be entitled to sixty acres of land in the park.

Here are two fairs annually, for horses, neat cattle, and sheep; the one on Trinity Monday and the other on the 8th of November; when, for every horse that is sold, a toll must be paid of four-pence, and a reputable voucher produced by the person who sells it; the marks and age of the animal being registered. By the same charter, the inhabitants of Sutton are exempt from toll in all fairs and markets. The deputy steward or town clerk holds a court of record every three weeks, for the trial of civil actions, and holds to bail for forty shillings and upwards.

Sessions, court leet, and other customary courts are held, and the charter expressly says, that they shall have and exercise as much privilege and power as the city of Coventry; but this they do not practise, for they commit felons to the county gaol. Every inhabitant is a landed man, which is drawn by ballot every four years; and no county officer can enter this franchise, to arrest, &c. without especial license.

The town of Sutton is seated on such an eminence, that although there are fourteen large pools of water within the parish, and some of them very extensive, there is not the smallest stream runs into it; the town being supplied with water by springs within it. The air is very salubrious, the water in general soft, the situation delightfully pleasant, the neighbourhood genteel, and accommodations in general very excellent. In the vicinity is Four-oaks hall, the seat of Sir E.C. Hartopp; Moor hall, the residence of — Hacket, Esq. and Ashfurlonghouse, which is at present unoccupied.

Page 84

To Halesowen, seven miles, on the road to Hagley, Stourbridge and Kidderminster.

You proceed up Broad-street and Islington, through the five ways toll-gate; when the road inclining to the right, there is a double range of respectable houses, denominated Hagley-row, which have been erected by the opulent inhabitants of Birmingham; where they not only enjoy fresh air, but the parochial taxes of Edgbaston do not bear any proportion with those of Birmingham. On the right hand is an observatory, a lofty brick building, seven stories high, which bears the name of the Monument: it was erected by John Perrot, Esq. about the year 1758, from whence there is an extensive view over the adjacent country in every direction. The house adjoining is the residence of John Guest, Esq. Having passed the one mile stone, the admirer of nature will proceed with solemn pace and slow, every step he takes varying the scene; one object being lost to view, which is succeeded by another equally beautiful. On the left there is an extensive and picturesque prospect, which continues without interruption for a considerable distance; and when the scene closes on that side, turn your eyes to the right, where there is a landscape equally fine; which, over the inclosures, takes in Smethwick, with Shireland hall in the front. A very short distance farther on the left there is an extensive and variegated landscape, with a house called the Ravenhurst in full view; the prospect being bounded by Bromsgrove Lickey and Frankley Beeches. At the three mile stone is the Lightwoods, a neat brick house, the property and residence of Miss Grundy, from whence there are some enchanting prospects. In these woods there are small shrubs grow in great abundance, which produce black fruit, known by the name of bilberries, of which during some years the poor people make a plentiful harvest.—Ascending the hill there is a delightful view over the enclosures, commanding the villages of Harborne and King's Norton; the two parish churches being conspicuous objects. From the Beech-lane there is a fine view, having the hills of Clent and Cofton in the distance.

At a place called the Quinton, near the five mile stone, there is a grand prospect, and from this eminence there arise two springs, one of which flows into the Severn and the other into the Trent. On the left is Belle Vue, the residence of James Male, Esq. from whence, as its name imports, there is a grand panoramic view of the country, that fills the mind with the most sublime ideas, such as cannot be described either by pen or pencil. In descending the hill opposite some cottages, there is a road leading to *The Leasowes*.

Wherein the inimitable Shenstone took so much delight, and decorated in such a manner, that in his days they were spoken of and resorted to by all people of refined taste, who came within a day's ride; and not an individual ever left them without expressions of astonishment at what they had seen and heard from the worthy proprietor, who warbled forth his verses in such a melodious manner, and on such subjects, that delighted every ear, as his diversified shady walks did every eye.

Page 85

His remains were interred in the church-yard of Halesowen, to whose memory, some years afterwards, a small stone pillar, with an urn on the top of it, was fixed near the vestry door, within the church, but has since been removed within the chancel, to make room for a magnificent marble monument, to the memory of Major Halliday, executed by Banks, for which he received about one thousand pounds; there being on each side of it a figure, large as life; one representing Patience and the other Fortitude.

On the pillar to the memory of Shenstone is the following inscription:—

Whoe'er thou art, with rev'rence tread
These sacred mansions of the dead.
Not that the monumental bust,
Or sumptuous tomb, here guards the dust
Of rich, or great, (let wealth, rank, birth,
Sleep undistinguished in the earth.)
This simple urn records a name,
That shines with more exalted fame.
Reader! if genius, taste refin'd,
A native elegance of mind;
If virtue, science, manly sense;
If wit that never gave offence;
The clearest head, the tend'rest heart,
In thy esteem e'er claim'd a part;
Ah! smite thy breast, and drop a tear;
For know, thy Shenstone's dust lies here,

R.G. and J. HODGETS.
A.O.P.

The Leasowes are now in the possession of Matthias Attwood, Esq. and these delightful walks, although their beauties have been curtailed to a considerable degree, by conveying the Netherton canal across the valley, close by them, are still highly deserving the attention of all persons who take delight in rural scenery; and for the accommodation of those who are inclined to meditate and contemplate, numerous seats are affixed, in different directions. Such scenes as these walks afford are very seldom to be met with in any part of England; therefore those who are in pursuit of amusement, will not regret if they devote one day to view them; and as they consist of hill and dale, it will of course cause some fatigue, which may with ease be alleviated, there being close at hand a neat and comfortable house of entertainment, kept by Betty Taylor. The source of the river Stour is in these grounds.

When near the bottom of the hill, the road divides; that on the right leads to Stourbridge, and the other to *Halesowen, in Shropshire*.



This place has been considered as a borough, by prescription, from time immemorial, and is supposed to have been represented in parliament at a very early period; but what ancient writings they were in possession of, being (as I am informed), conveyed to London and never returned, they have now none to exhibit. A court leet is held annually, when two officers are appointed, under the appellation of high and low bailiff; but I cannot understand that they enjoy any emolument, or are in possession of any jurisdiction. In the reign of King John, he founded a monastery here, and the church is supposed to have been erected about

Page 86

the same period; it being an ancient building, dedicated to St. John; with a lofty spire. The present incumbent is the Rev. — Robinson. Near a mile distant there are still some remains of the monastery, and to the professed antiquary there is probably something deserving of his attention. In digging two holes to fix a gate, a short time since, there was found a considerable quantity of stained glass, in small fragments, some few of which are preserved, as are also some square tiles or quarries, about five inches broad and one thick, with curious devices upon them. It is now denominated the manor farm, and is the property of Lord Lyttleton. Dr. Nash, in his appendix to the history of Worcestershire, gives the following extract from the papers of Bishop Lyttleton.

Halesowen Abbey.

This ancient structure was situated about half a mile south of the town, on what is now called the manor farm, near the road leading to Northfield. King John, in the 16th year of his reign, granted a charter to Peter de Rupibus, bishop of Winton, by which he gave the manor and advowson of the church of Hales, with its chapels, to found a religious house in this place. In consequence of this grant, a convent of Praemonstratensians was established A.D. 1218, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. John the evangelist, and furnished with monks from the abbey of Welbeck, in Nottinghamshire. This religious order were canons, who lived according to the rule of St. Austin, and afterwards reformed by St. Norbet, at Praemonstre, in Picardy. They were called white canons, from their habit; which consisted of a white cossack, with a rotchet over it, a long white cloak, and a white cap. They continued under the jurisdiction of the abbot of Praemonstre, who received contributions from them, till the year 1512, when they were exempted by Pope Julius 2d. The churches and a large proportion of the tythes of Walsall, Wednesbury, Rushall, Clent, and Rowley, were granted to this convent, by successive monarchs, which was also richly endowed by opulent individuals. The abbot and convent held ten large farms in their own hands. In the reign of Henry 8th, the clear income amounted to L380 13s 2d. a large sum, considering the value of money in those days. In 1489, when the whole number of religious amounted only to seventeen, there were every week consumed in bread 20 bushels of wheat and rye. And in the course of the year, 1110 quarters of barley, 60 oxen, 40 sheep, 30 swine, and 24 calves; a proof that great hospitality and charity prevailed here at that time. The monastery consisted of an abbot, prior, sub-prior, sacrist, chanter, cellarer, and custos infirmorum: the monks never exceeded twenty in number.

At the visitations of their superiors, punishments if requisite were inflicted for immoralities. The house and church appear to have been stately edifices; the chancel, if not the whole of the choir, being paved with flat tiles, painted in a curious manner, some of them being now occasionally found; and the few ruins still extant cover an extensive plot of ground, exhibiting fine specimens of Saxon and Gothic architecture.

Page 87

Several persons of note have been buried in the church, particularly John, Lord Botetourt, baron of Weoleigh castle, near the high altar, under a tomb of alabaster; Sir Hugh Burnell, also baron of Weoleigh; Sir William Lyttleton, of Frankley, and others, about the year 1507.

This monastery was dissolved A.D. 1558, by Henry 8th. The common sigillum, or chapter seal, was in the reign of Henry 4th, a representation of the blessed Virgin, in a sitting posture, with the infant Christ on her left knee, and in her right hand a sceptre. The arms of this abbey were, azure a chevron argent, between three fleur de lis.

The situation of Halesowen is in a deep valley, and the surrounding country presents the most majestic appearance; being diversified with hills and dales in such a manner, that at every step you take new beauties arise, and the scene varies so much, that the eye is unceasingly delighted, without dwelling upon any particular object. This district cannot, properly speaking, be described, either with pen or pencil: the innumerable varieties of similar objects that present themselves to view, must be seen before any person can form the least idea of them.

To Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, distant thirteen miles, on the road to Worcester, Gloucester, and Bristol.

You proceed up Smallbrook-street, when a spacious road opens to the left, and being clear of the buildings, the spire of King's Norton church, which is six miles distant, forms a pleasing object.

On the left you have a picturesque view of the country, which continues without any intermission nearly the space of three miles. There is in this valley, what is very unusual to be seen in such a situation, a windmill; and as you proceed, there are in the same valley several water mills, that are made use of by the Birmingham manufacturers. This view is skirted by buildings erected on the road to Alcester, and when near the two mile stone, you perceive among the trees, Moseley hall, which is a modern stone building; the residence of Mrs. Taylor. Exactly, opposite, on the right hand, is the parish church of Edgbaston, and also the hall, which is surrounded by a park, wherein are some lofty trees, and an extensive sheet of water. This mansion house, or hall, is now occupied by Edward Johnson, M.D. a person of considerable eminence in his profession.

A short distance beyond the three mile stone the road crosses the Worcester canal; from which bridge, if you look towards Birmingham, there is a rich and variegated landscape, consisting of hill, dale, wood, and water. At the four mile stone there is a most extensive view on each side of the road, and also in front; the spire of King's Norton church, Frankley Beeches, and the Clent hills, being prominent features.

Page 88

Having passed the five mile stone, there is on the right a beautiful view over the enclosures, backed by the beeches, at Frankley. Before you arrive at the six mile stone is Northfield, from whence there is on the left a beautiful landscape; the elegant spire of King's Norton church being distinctly seen. From hence to Bromsgrove is seven miles, in great part over the Lickey, where the eye is gratified with numerous extensive views, from one of the highest spots of land in the kingdom. This is ascertained by two springs that issue from it, one of which, flows into the Severn and the other into the Trent.

To Coleshill, distant ten miles, on the road to Atherstone.

You leave Birmingham through Coleshill-street, and having passed by Ashted-row, you perceive the lofty trees in Vauxhall gardens, which must be left on the right hand, and a few hundred yards afterwards, keeping the right hand road, you pass by, on the right, Duddeston, an elegant pile of building, the residence of Samuel Galton, Esq. but it is scarcely discernable, on account of the shrubberies by which it is surrounded. You now pass through the village of Saltley, and at the extremity, on the left, is Bennett's hill, where Mr. William Hutton, the venerable historian of Birmingham resided, and ended his days. This residence, so denominated by the proprietor, was originally a very small house, with the entrance in the centre, and a small room on each side, to which has been added two wings, or rather rooms, being only one story in height: there is a wall by the road side, five feet high, the top of which is on a level with the top of the parlour windows; the entrance to it having been altered from the front to the side. The eccentricity of the owner appears, by terming that a hill, which on inspection will be found in a low situation, on the side of a hill. This is noticed, because his peculiar manner of writing, his quaint expressions, and the tales he relates of himself, have caused a considerable sale for his productions, and numerous people, when they are taking an excursion, will travel some distance to view the residence of their favourite author.

A short distance beyond, on the summit of the hill, commands an extensive view of Birmingham, the venerable trees in Aston park, the spire of that church, and Barr-beacon. As you pass along the road, this delightful prospect varies every step you take for a considerable distance. These lands, formerly known by the name of Washwood heath, being inclosed in the year 1803, now let from forty to fifty shillings per acre. At the four mile stone, there is on the right a cheerful prospect over the country, with the lofty spire of Yardley church in full view. About half a mile farther, on entering a small common, the eye is delighted with an extensive and variegated view; the spire of Coleshill church being very discernable.

Castle Bromwich, distant five miles and a half.

Page 89

Here is an ancient venerable mansion, where that eminent statesman, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, used to reside. His successor having been honoured with the title of Earl of Bradford, the eldest son of the present Earl, Lord Newport, has fixed his residence here. In the village is a neat place of worship, erected by Sir Orlando Bridgeman, who endowed it with the tythes of the parish, it being a chapel of ease to the parish of Aston.

About half a century back, when there was considerable traffic between London and Chester, the road passed through this village, and supported two respectable inns, but the mode of conveyance being changed, one of the inns is converted into a farm-house, and the other has very little custom; for the road from Birmingham to Coventry also passed through here; but it is totally deprived of that also, and is now little more than the road to Coleshill. On the road you pass by Coleshill park, an ancient seat of Lord Digby; within which there are numerous hawthorn trees of unusual magnitude: one of them produces five stems, each equal in size to a moderate man's body. Time, that devours every thing, has here made great havoc among them, and also destroyed some oaks of large dimensions.

Coleshill.

Yew trees being of slow growth, and the wood of close texture, are little subject to decay; yet there is in this church-yard, the remains of a yew tree, still alive, three parts at least of which is mouldered away, and only a small part of the trunk remains.

The architecture of the church is the decorated gothic or English style: it is erected on a considerable eminence, from whence there is an extensive and variegated view over the adjacent country. The interior of the church, which is dedicated to St. Peter, is spacious, and contains some monuments that are well executed; among others, there are two recumbent effigies of cross-legged knights, supposed to be of the ancient Clinton family, and those to commemorate the Digby's are numerous. It has a beautiful tower, from whence there arises an elegant spire, which being injured by lightning, it was of course taken down, and the present erection is not so lofty by fifteen feet as the former.

Coleshill has a weekly market on Wednesday, and five annual fairs, where there are numerous horses and cattle exposed to sale. Before the establishment of mail coaches it was a very considerable post town, but that is not the case now, the route being changed. The town is situated on an ascent, and in the valley flows the river Cole, from whence its name is derived. The domestic buildings are in general of a respectable appearance, and there are some modern erections that unite ornament with spacious dimensions.

Shustock.

This village is situated three miles from Coleshill, on the road to Atherstone, and is noticed as being the birthplace of that celebrated antiquarian, Sir William Dugdale, whose father being a clergyman, he was born at the rectory house, and dying at Blythe hall, his remains, and those of his lady, were deposited in a vault on the north side of the chancel in Shustock church.

Page 90

Maxstoke Castle

Is situated about one mile east of Coleshill, and is erected in the form of a parallelogram, encompassed by a moat. At each corner is an hexagonal tower, with embattled parapets. The entrance is by an august and machicolated gateway, strengthened on each side by a tower of hexagonal form. The gates are covered with plates of iron, and the marks of the useless portcullis are yet visible. A portion of this edifice was accidentally destroyed by fire, but the greatest part of the ancient building still remains, and is an interesting specimen of the architectural arrangements in the 14th and 15th centuries. Among other apartments, are the spacious hall, an extensive dining room, with a door and chimney piece, which are carved in a very curious manner, and also the chapel. In the walls of the great court, there are yet remaining the caserns or lodgments for the soldiers. This venerable pile of building is now the habitation of Mrs. Dilke. A short distance from the castle are the remains of a priory, whose ruins are rendered mournfully picturesque, by the varieties of ever-green foliage with which they are cloathed in almost every direction.

To Hat-borne, in Staffordshire, distant three miles.

Passing up Broad-street and Islington, when you are through the Five-ways^[12] toll-gate, the centre road leads to Harborne. On the left is a neat white building, called Greenfield-house, the properly and abode of Hyla Holden, Esq. and a little farther on the same side of the road is the parsonage-house of Edgbaston; the resilience of the Rev. Charles Pixell.

[Footnote 12: There are now six ways, Calthorpe's road being opened in the year 1845.]

Passing by Harborne heath cottage, when you arrive at the summit of the hill, is an excellent house, where Mr. Richard Smith resides; from whose premises there is an extensive view over the adjacent country, particularly Edgbaston and King's Norton.

A short distance beyond, on the right, there is a delightful view of enclosed ground, and the Lightwoods; with a white-fronted house, called the Ravenhurst, in the centre, the residence of Mr. Daniel Ledsam, which altogether forms a beautiful landscape. Where the roads divide pass on the left, leaving the village, called Harborne Town, which is principally inhabited by men who obtain a livelihood by forging of nails, and proceed down the road which leads to Bromsgrove, where on the left is a preparatory school, for boys under ten years of age, which is conducted by Mrs. Startin. This house commands a pleasant view over the grounds that have been laid into a paddock by Mr. Price, whose neat and elegant residence, with its beautiful undulated grounds, are also on the left.



A few paces below Mr. Price's, you arrive at a small triangular grass plot, which is called the cottage green, and is surrounded by cottages, superior in neatness of appearance to what are usually met with. From hence there is a most delightful landscape of Mrs. Careless's house, which is surrounded with verdant meadows, having a considerable sheet of water in front, and in the back ground are Frankley Beeches, with the adjacent hills of Cofton and the Lickey.

Page 91

There are in this vicinity some most delightful prospects, which are seen to great advantage from the handsome houses of Mr. Green Simcox, and also of his father, George Simcox, Esq. the former on the right hand and the latter on the left, as you proceed towards the church. This is an ancient tower Structure, the body having of late years been rebuilt in a neat and commodious manner; consisting of a single pace, well pewed, with a modern gallery at the west end and another at the north east corner; it is a vicarage, dedicated to St. Peter; the present vicar being the Rev. Richard Robinson.

From this church-yard the eye is again delighted with extensive and beautiful prospects; and from thence, proceeding towards Northfield, a bridge has been lately erected by subscription, which separates the parishes of Harborne and Northfield, and also the counties of Stafford and Worcester. The stream of water gives motion to a mill, belonging to Mr. Price, and feeds the mill pond, which is a fine sheet of water covering twenty-four acres. Not far from hence there is a delightful shady walk, which extends through the grounds of Mr. Price and Mr. Simcox for near a mile, and at intervals commands delightful and romantic prospects.—Within a few yards of the aforesaid bridge, the counties of Stafford, Worcester, and Warwick unite.

Returning towards Birmingham, at the sign of the Golden Cross you pass up Mitchley-lane, which separates the counties of Stafford and Warwick; the land on the right being in the parish of Edgbaston, the property of Lord Calthorpe, and on the left in Harborne, belonging to Theodore Price, Esq. About half a mile up this lane, on the left, at Fulford's farm, there is an interesting view over Mr. Price's paddock, of King's Norton, with its lofty spire, Cofton hills, Bromsgrove Lickey, Frankley Beeches, Cleat hills, &c. &c. Passing by a neat cottage belonging to Mr. Frears, you come again into the Harborne road, at Mr. Smith's.

In this village there is a free school for the children of the inhabitants, and also for those in the hamlet of Smethwick; but the endowment is slender. Here are also three Sunday schools, which are equal to any in the kingdom, the children being cloathed in a very neat manner, by each of them subscribing one penny per week; and as all the respectable inhabitants are honorary members, they subscribe one penny each also. Formerly this was a very poor village, and the roads leading to it were in all directions very bad, until the late worthy Thomas Green, Esq. having purchased the manor house and a large estate there, he afterwards improved the roads, and was at all times anxious to improve this his native spot. A monument in the church describes his character.—The old manor house was the residence of Judge Birch, and the only respectable building in the parish; which is now a common farmhouse, where there are some vestiges of old village elegance, and some comfortable apartments: it is the property of Mr. Simcox. Harborne being situated upon very high ground, and the soil light, renders the air very salubrious; instances of longevity being very numerous, particularly one couple, James Sands and his wife, one of whom; as is recorded in Fuller's Worthies, lived to the age of 140, and the other to 120.

Page 92

To King's Norton, in Worcester shire, distant five Mile.

You leave Birmingham, either through Alcester-street or up Camphill, where there is a half-timbered house, inhabited by Mr. John Simcox, an attorney. In a field nearly opposite there is perhaps the best view over the town of Birmingham that can be taken. A short distance beyond, on the right, is a row of houses, to which is given the name of Highgate. A little farther, on the left, is a tan-yard, upon an extensive scale, the property of Mr. Avery Homer.

In a field near the two mile stone, there is a grand panoramic view of Birmingham, and the adjacent country for several miles on each side of it, which is seen to the greatest advantage in an afternoon. A little beyond is Moseley hall, an elegant stone building, erected about twenty-five years since, by the late John Taylor, Esq. and is now the residence of his widow.

The village of Moseley has nothing to attract attention. The place of worship is a chapel of ease to King's Norton: it has an ancient stone tower, but the body of it has been rebuilt of late years with brick; the officiating clergyman being the Rev. Edward Palmer. In this neighbourhood William Villers, Esq. resides, who has for a number of years been an active magistrate for the town of Birmingham. A little beyond Moseley hall there is on the right an extensive and picturesque view over Edgbaston and the adjacent country, with the monument on the right. Proceeding only a few yards farther, the scene varies in a considerable degree; the monument being on the left, a glass-house in the centre, and the front of Moseley hall in full view; over the roof of which is seen some of the buildings in Birmingham.

Upon a turn of the road, the eye is gratified with a fine view over Bromsgrove Lickey, Frankley Beeches, and the adjacent hills; with the spire of King's Norton church on the left. You next pass through the village of King's Heath, and about one mile before you reach King's Norton, there is on the right a most noble, picturesque, and variegated view over an extensive country, diversified with wood, hill, and dale; the Worcester canal being in the valley. When you arrive at the finger post, the eye is delighted with a grand view over the country; the village and church being in front..

King's Norton

The land for a considerable distance round this village being the property of the crown, as King's-heath, King's-wood, etc.; denote, King Edward 6th founded a free grammar school on the north east side of the church-yard, and endowed it with the sum of fifteen pounds per annum, (the inhabitants at that time preferring money to land), for a master and usher; which still remains the same to the present day. In the time of King William 3d, when the land-tax was first established, the inhabitants, to express their loyalty, gave an account of their estates, at the full value, and on that account they have ever

Page 93

since been rated in the same manner; this district paying four shillings in the pound, at the same time that Birmingham did not pay four-pence. This being the case, the stipend allowed for the master and usher was of course reduced in that proportion. The Worcester canal passing through this parish, and the land being considerably elevated, it enters a tunnel sixteen feet wide and eighteen feet high, which continues for the distance of two miles, and is so accurately formed, that it is said any person may look in at one end and perceive the light at the other end; and in this parish the Worcester and Stratford canals form a junction.

The church, is a richly ornamented gothic building, with a lofty spire, although only a chapel of ease to Bromsgrwe. The officiating-clergy man is the Rev. — Edwards.

To Barr-beacon and Aldridge, on the road to Stafford.

Proceeding down Walmer-lane, otherwise Lancaster-street, you pass by a small portion of Aston park wall, keeping it on your right hand, and some time after cross the river Tame over Perry-bridge, when there is a road to the left which conducts you to Perry hall, an old moated mansion, within a small park; the property and residence of John Gough, Esq. who is an eccentric character. In the winter he courses with his tenants, who are all of them subservient to him; and during summer, having some deer, he disposes of the venison. If any of the neighbouring gentry send him an order for a haunch or a neck, he waits until further orders arrive; and when the principal part is engaged, he then kills a buck, and executes his orders; the inferior parts serving for self and family, although his annual income must be at least ten thousand pounds. He is said to be in possession of some valuable paintings, but there are very few people indeed who can obtain a sight of them.

At the distance of five mites, when the roads intersect each other, proceeding on the right hand, at the distance of three quarters of a mile is the catholic college, at Oscott. About one-mile farther is a place called the Quieslet, where the left hand road conducts you to an elegant lodge, the entrance into Barr-park, which is described on the road to Walsall, that being a turnpike road. You soon after arrive at a clump of trees, on the summit of a hill, which is Barr-beacon, from whence there is perhaps a prospect equally extensive and beautiful as any in the kingdom. From hence there is a view over great part of the following counties, viz. Warwick, Leicester Derby, Stafford, Chester, Salop, Worcester, Nottingham Northampton, Oxford, Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Brecknock, Radnor, and Montgomery; whilst the scene to the south west commands a view of Birmingham and its most populous vicinity of mines, manufactories, &c. This beacon, being the property of Sir Joseph Scott, when he is at home, a very large flag is hoisted, and upon any public occasion several pieces of cannon are fired, which produce a grand effect. The adjacent ground, for a very considerable extent, lay waste,

until an act of parliament was obtained in 1798 for its inclosure. This land now lets from five shillings to twenty shillings per acre.

Page 94

Aldridge, in Staffordshire, nine miles.

The principal road from Birmingham to Stafford lay through this village, until of late years the turnpike road through Walsall and Cannock having been considerably improved, this road to the county town is nearly if not quite abandoned; yet it leads to Hednesford (usually pronounced Hedgeford), where numerous horses are annually trained for the turf, upon Cannock heath. *To Edgbaston, in Warwickshire, distant one mile.*

Having passed up Broad-street and Islington, when you are through the turnpike, the left hand side of Ladywood-lane, the whole of Hagley-row, the road to Harborne, Calthorpe's road, and the right hand side of Islington-row, are all of them in this parish. Indeed the lands hereabouts are almost exclusively the property of Lord Calthorpe, whose ancestors purchased this estate, early in the last century for £25,000, and he will not permit any manufactories to be established upon his land which tends in a great degree to make the neighbourhood respectable and genteel.

The first Houses in Calthorpe's-road were erected in the year 1815; the establishment for the deaf and dumb being erected about two years before. This asylum is under the superintendence of Mr. Braidwood, and is described among the public institutions in Birmingham.—(See page 39.)

There were, in former times, within this parish, three parks, Edgbaston-park, Mitchley-park, and Rotten-park, but the two latter have many years since been thrown into inclosures. The park of Edgbaston remains entire, and the mansion within it is now the residence of Edward Johnson, M.D. who is very eminent in his profession.—The church is an ancient gothic tower, the body having of late years been very much modernized, and fitted up withinside in a very neat and commodious manner. The officiating clergyman is the Rev. Charles Pixell. There have been within the last three years a great number of genteel houses erected by the opulent inhabitants of Birmingham, who not only enjoy fresh air, but the parochial taxes of this parish do not bear any proportion with those of Birmingham. At this toll-gate, which bears the name of Five-ways, there are now, by the opening of Calthorpe's road, six separate and distinct roads. About half a mile from the toll-gate, there is on the right of the Hagley road, an observatory, a very conspicuous pile of building, seven stories high, which is usually called the Monument: it was erected by John Perrot, Esq. about the year 1758, from whence there are extensive views over the adjacent country, in every direction. The adjoining house is the residence of John Guest, Esq.

There was in this church-yard a grave-stone, cut by the hands of that celebrated typographer, Baskerville, (who was originally a stone-cutter, and afterwards kept a school in Birmingham), which is now removed and placed withinside the church. The stone being of a flaky nature, the inscription is not quite perfect, but whoever takes delight in looking at well-formed letters, may here be highly gratified: it was erected to

the memory of Edw. Richards, an idiot, who died 21st September, 1728, with the following inscription :—

Page 95

If innocents are the favourites of Heaven,
And God but little asks where little's given,
My great Creator has for me in store
Eternal joys; what wise man can have more?

There is another head-stone, cut by him, with his name upon it, in the church of Handsworth, and are the only two known to be in existence.

Yardley, in Worcestershire, distant three miles.

The road to this village lies up Deritend and Bordesley, then crossing the Warwick canal, you leave the ruins of Bordesley-house, and when through the turnpike, there being three roads you proceed along the centre, in which there are good accommodations for the pedestrian, but the carriage road does not appear to have experienced any improvement since it was first formed; for before you reach the village, the road is for a considerable distance from twenty to forty feet below the surface of the ground, on each side of it.

The church, which is dedicated to St. Giles, is an ancient pile of building. The tower and elegant spire above it appear at this time as firm and substantial as at their first erection, although they are so ancient that there are not any records to say when they were built: the body of the church is not so perfect. In the chancel there are several monuments to commemorate the Greswolds, an ancient family, formerly resident in this parish. The patronage rests with Edmund Mesey Wigley, Esq. The present vicar is the Rev. Joseph Fell. Adjoining the church-yard is an half-timbered building of large dimensions, which is a free school, liberally endowed, the salary of the master being L100 per annum.

The land in this parish being very suitable for making of tiles, innumerable quantities are there manufactured, for the supply of Birmingham.

To Rowley Regis, in Staffordshire, distant seven miles.

You proceed towards Kidderminster, until you arrive at the toll-gate, two miles and a half distant, when the right hand road leads to this village; where, in all probability, there are more jew's harps manufactured than there are in all Europe beside.

The admirer of nature, (for no art has ever been practised here,) may be gratified with various extensive and luxuriant views. There is not any thing either in the church or in the village deserving of notice; but there is, not far distant, a rude, rugged, and misshapen mass of stone, which is situated on the summit of a hill, and projects itself several yards higher than the ground adjoining: it is by the inhabitants denominated Rowley hail-stone; and when at a considerable distance from it, on the foot road from Dudley, it has the appearance of some considerable ruins.

From this spot the views are more extensive than can easily be imagined, over a beautiful and romantic country, Birmingham being vary visible.

[Illustration]

* * * * *

W. Talbot, Printer, Exeter-row,

Page 96

Birmingham.