

# **The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook**

## **The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction**

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# Page 1

## THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Vol. XIX. No. 543.] Saturday, April 21, 1832. [Price 2d.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Melrose Abbey.*

[Illustration: Melrose Abbey.]

*(From a finished sketch, by a Correspondent.)*

These venerable ruins stand upon the southern bank of the Tweed, in Roxburghshire. The domestic buildings of the monastery are entirely gone; but the remains of the church connected with, as seen in the above Engraving, are described by Mr. Chambers[1] as “the finest specimen of Gothic architecture and Gothic sculpture of which this country (Scotland) can boast. By singular good fortune, Melrose is also one of the most entire, as it is the most beautiful, of all the ecclesiastical ruins scattered throughout this reformed land. To say that it is beautiful, is to say nothing. It is exquisitely—splendidly lovely. It is an object of infinite grace and immeasurable charm; it is fine in its general aspect and in its minutest details; it is a study—a glory.” We confess ourselves delighted with Mr. Chambers’s well-directed enthusiasm.

[1] Picture of Scotland, vol. i.

A page of interesting facts towards the history of the Abbey will be found appended to the “Recollections” of a recent visit by one of our esteemed Correspondents, in *The Mirror*, vol. x., p. 445. In the present view, the ornate Gothic style of the building is seen to advantage, but more especially the richness of the windows, and the niches above them: the latter, from drawings made “early in the reign of King William,” were originally filled with statues; and, connected with the destruction of some of them, Mr. Chambers relates the following anecdote “told by the person who shows Melrose:”

“On the eastern window of the church, there were formerly thirteen effigies, supposed to represent our Saviour and his apostles. These, harmless and beautiful as they were, happened to provoke the wrath of a praying weaver in Gattonside, who, in a moment of inspired zeal, went up one night by means of a ladder, and with a hammer and chisel, knocked off the heads and limbs of the figures. Next morning he made no scruple to publish the transaction, observing, with a great deal of exultation, to every person whom he met, that he had ‘fairly stumpet thae vile paipist dirt *nou!*’ The people sometimes catch up a remarkable word when uttered on a remarkable occasion by one of their number, and turn the utterer into ridicule, by attaching it to him as a nickname; and it is

some consolation to think that this monster was therefore treated with the sobriquet of 'Stumpie,' and of course carried it about with him to his grave."

The exquisite beauty and elaborate ornament of Melrose can, according to the entertaining work already quoted, be told only in a volume of prose; but, as compression is the spirit of true poetry, we quote the following descriptive lines:

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If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,  
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;  
For the gay beams of lightsome day  
Gild but to flout the ruins gray.  
When the broken arches are dark in night,  
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;  
When the cold light's uncertain shower  
Streams on the ruin'd central tower;  
When buttress and buttress, alternately,  
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;  
When silver edges the imagery,  
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;  
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,  
And the howlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,  
Then go—but go alone the while—  
Then view St. David's<sup>[2]</sup> ruined pile;  
And, home returning, soothly swear,  
Was never scene so sad and fair.

\* \* \* \* \*

By a steel-clench'd postern door,  
They enter'd now the chancel tall;  
The darken'd roof rose high aloof  
On pillars, lofty, light, and small;  
The key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,  
Was a fleur-de-lys or a quatre-feuille;  
The corbells<sup>[3]</sup> were carved grotesque and grim;  
And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,  
With base and capital furnish'd around,  
Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

\* \* \* \* \*

The moon on the east oriel shone,  
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,  
By foliated tracery combined;  
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand  
'Twixt poplars straight the osier wand  
In many a freakish knot had twined;  
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,  
And changed the willow-wreaths to stone.<sup>[4]</sup>

[2] Built by David I. in 1136.

[3] Corbells, the projections from which the arches spring,  
usually cut in a fantastic face, or mask.

[4] Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel."

The monks of Melrose were caricatured for their sensuality at the Reformation. Their Abbey suffered in consequence; for the condemnator, out of the ruins, built himself a house, which may still be seen near the church. "The regality," says Mr. Chambers, "soon after passed into the hands of Lord Binning, an eminent lawyer, ancestor to the Earl of Haddington; and about a century ago, the whole became the property of the Buccleuch family."

\* \* \* \* \*

## **LACONICS.**

*(For the Mirror.)*

The most important advantages we enjoy, and the greatest discoveries that science can boast, have proceeded from men who have either seen little of the world, or have secluded themselves entirely for the purposes of study. Not only those arts which are exclusively the result of calculation, such as navigation, mechanism, and others, but even agriculture, may be said to derive its improvement, if not its origin, from the same source.



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Where a cause is good, an appeal should be directed to the heart rather than the head: the application comes more home, and reaches more forcibly, where it is the most necessary—the natural rather than the improved faculties of the human understanding.

Common sense is looked upon as a vulgar quality, but nevertheless it is the only talisman to conduct us prosperously through the world. The man of refined sense has been compared to one who carries about with him nothing but gold, when he may be every moment in want of smaller change.

The grand cause of failure in most undertakings is the want of unanimity. This, however, we find is not wanting where actual danger, as well as possible advantage may accrue to the parties concerned. It is whimsical enough that thieves and other ruffians, while they bid open defiance to the laws, both of God and man, pay implicit obedience to their own.

Aristotle laid it down as a maxim “that all inquiry should begin with doubt.” Whenever, then, we meet with mysteries beyond our feeble comprehension, would it not be more rational to doubt the very faculty we are employing—the capacity of our reason itself.

The most politic, because the most effectual way of governing in a family, is for the husband occasionally to lay aside his supremacy; so in public, as well as private life, that king will be most popular who does not at all times exercise his full prerogative.

It would appear that there is a great sympathy between the mind of man and falsehood: when we have a truth to tell, it takes better, if conveyed in a fable; and the rage for novels shows, that we may not only divert extremely without a syllable of truth, but truth is even compelled to borrow the habit of falsehood to secure itself an agreeable reception.

In our intercourse with others, we should endeavour to turn the conversation towards those subjects with which our companions are professionally acquainted: thus we shall agreeably please as well as innocently flatter in affording them the opportunity to shine; while we should acquire that knowledge which we could no where else obtain so well.

What an extraordinary method of reducing oneself to beggary is gambling! The man who has but little money in the world, and knows not how to procure more without risking his life and character, must needs put it in the power of fortune to take away what he has. Put the case in the opposite light, it is just as absurd: the man who has money to spare, must needs make the experiment whether it may not become the property of another.

It is a mistake to suppose a great mind inattentive to trifles: its capacity and comprehension enable it to embrace every thing.

The failing of vanity extends throughout all classes: the poor have but little time to bestow on their persons, and yet in the selection of their clothes we find they prefer such as are of a flaring and gaudy colour.

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Philosophy has not so much enabled men to overcome their weaknesses, as it has taught the art of concealing them from the world.

That a little learning is dangerous is one of our surest maxims. If knowledge does not produce the effect of ameliorating our imperfect condition, it were, without question, better let alone altogether; it is not to be made merely an appendix to the mind, but must be incorporated and identified with it.

They who have experienced sorrow are the most capable of appreciating joy; so, those only who have been sick, feel the full value of health.

By the expression “common people,” is meant the man of rank as well as the more industrious peasant; for in our estimate of men, the mind, and not the eye, is the most proper judge.

Some men are, of course, more original thinkers than others, but all, without exception, who hope to appear in print with any effect, must first be readers themselves. It was said by Dr. Johnson, that more than half an author’s time was occupied in reading what others had said concerning the subject he was himself writing upon.

Every man, in his more serious moments, must confess that he has done few things in the course of his life he would not wish undone; and experience must have shown him that the things he most feared would have been better than those he most prayed for.

Vanity is our dearest weakness, in more senses than one: a man will sacrifice every thing, and starve out all his other inclinations to keep alive that one.

The man who trusts entirely to nature when he is sick, runs a great risk; but he who puts himself in the hands of a physician runs a still greater: of the two, nature would seem the better nurse, for she will, at all events, act honestly, and can have no possible interest in tampering with disease.

A great idea may be thus defined:—it gives us the perception of many others, and it discovers to us all at once what we could only have arrived at by a course of reading or inquiry.

We are told to place no faith in appearances, yet it will be found a wiser course to judge from the human countenance rather than the human voice: most men place a guard over their words and their actions, but very few can blind the expression that is conveyed by the features.

To assist our fellow-creatures is the noblest privilege of mortality: it is, in some sort, forestalling the bounty of Providence.

There is no doubt that memory, although it may be cultivated, is originally a gift of nature; so, also, application must be regarded as a natural endowment; for there are some men, however well disposed, who can never bring themselves to grapple closely with any thing.

It has been suggested that man has no real necessity for clothing. All other creatures are furnished with every necessary for their existence, and it is improbable one nobler than them all should be left in a defective condition: there are some nations, in severer climates than ours, who have no notion of clothing; and, even in civilized life, the most tender parts of the body are constantly exposed, as the face, neck, &c.

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It is the temper of a blade that must be the proof of a good sword, and not the gilding of the hilt or the richness of the scabbard; so it is not his grandeur and possessions that make a man considerable, but his intrinsic merit.

F.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE KNIGHT'S RETURN.

*From the German.*

*(For the Mirror.)*

"Page, what sound mine ears is greeting,  
Whence the lime-trees wave in pride?"

"'Tis, sir knight, the herds that bleating,  
Wander o'er the mountain's side."

"Say, my page, what means this singing?  
Notes so sad, some ill betide;"  
"In the village, crowds are bringing  
From the chapel, home a bride."

"Say then, why so slowly passes  
Yon dark-rob'd and silent train?"  
"From the saying bridal-masses,  
Monks are coming o'er the plain."

"Speak then, why I now behold it;  
Whence yon banner's milk-white hue?"  
"Ask no further, they unfold it  
To the bride an honour due."

"Say, my page, what means that writing  
Graven on yon marble-stone?"  
"'Tis the youth and maiden plighting  
Love to one, and one alone."

"How, my page, that name the dearest?  
See, and true its meaning tell."  
"Know, and tremble as thou hearest,  
"'Twas for secret love she fell."

“What! my page, if thus ’tis written,  
If for love she dar’d to die,  
Bertha dead! if thus ’tis written,  
As she perish’d, so will I.”

H.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SCOTCH ECONOMY.

*(To the Editor.)*

The amusing letter of S.S. in No. 536, of *The Mirror*, has but so very recently met my eyes, that I have been obliged unavoidably to allow some weeks to elapse ere I noticed it. Indeed, to advert to it at all, I should not have considered necessary, but that your correspondent seems to imply a doubt as to the accuracy of my assertion, in the article “Shavings,” (vide No. 533, p. 83.) Permit me, for the satisfaction of your readers to state, that I was no “flying tourist,” when the fact of a very considerable waste of fuel in Edinburgh, (fuel which would, I thought, sell in England, if not wanted in Scotland,) came repeatedly, I may say, almost daily, under my own personal observation. A residence of two years in Edinburgh (yes, it certainly was “the Scottish capital,” for I had previously resided during a longer period in the Irish one,) enabled me to state what I then beheld, with a scrutiny which certainly would not have been warranted by a mere casual visit of two days, two weeks, or two months; that the circumstance should have irritated S.S. I cannot consider any fault of mine; my statement was correct. The possibility of Irish

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labourers being employed to build in Scotland, as they are very generally in England, does not seem to have occurred to your correspondent; I confess it did to me, but considered, to mention it in my trifling "Domestic Hint," quite unnecessary, since, had their wastefulness been hitherto unknown to their employers, it might henceforth, if they pleased "to take a hint," be by them materially checked. In days when the complaint of poverty is universal, when the working classes find it difficult to carry on any employment which shall bring them bread, and when thousands wander over the united kingdom with no apparent means of subsistence, I did not imagine that a "Hint," as to a possible source of emolument (were it confined but to half a dozen individuals) to the poor, would be considered a meet subject for ridicule. I said, or intended to say, if shavings and loose chippings of wood are of little value for fuel in Scotland, they are acceptable in England; and why, if the proprietors of new houses choose during their erection, to save the fuel they produce, and of which I repeat I have seen vast quantities burnt, and bestow it as a charity on such persons as might think it worth acceptance for sale, "over the Border;" why they should not do so, I have yet to learn.[5] However, waiving this scheme, which S.S. may be inclined to think rather Utopian, and conceding, that if Scotland needs not for fuel, her refuse chips and shavings, they would not answer in that light as a marketable commodity in the sister country, still wood and wood-ashes have become of late years, agents so valuable and important in chemistry, and other sciences and arts, as to furnish another, and all-sufficient reason why no reckless destruction should be allowed of an article, every species of which may be rendered, under some modification, of utility.

[5] Has Scotland no paupers to whom the gift of wood fuel might prove acceptable, in spite of peat? We have in England abundance of wood, yet our own poor are distressed for it, glad to pick up sticks for firing, and often steal it from fences, &c. in their necessity, and the gift of wood is to them a charity, as well as that of coals. Why should aught that could be made of use, be wantonly destroyed? It is contrary to Scripture; it is in opposition to common sense.

Respecting the well preserved eggs of Scotland; though S.S. is probably aware of the circumstance, yet some of your readers may not be, their sale in England (and indeed I have understood America) brings her in no inconsiderable profit. In this country they arrive, and I have my account from an eye-witness, in large deal boxes, most curiously packed, relying solely on each other for support; since, set up perpendicularly on their ends, with no straw, heather, saw-dust, or any other material to fill the interstices between them, the fate of every box of this fragile ware depends, during its journey and unlading, on the safety or fracture of a single egg; but such is the nicety and compactness of their packing, that rarely, if ever, an accident occurs.

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M.L.B.

\* \* \* \* \*

### PRICE OF TEA.

(To the Editor.)

As I have been a subscriber to *The Mirror* from its commencement, and very frequently refer to its pages with much pleasure and profit, I hope I may be allowed to correct a statement made in No. 541, p. 222, under the article *Tea*. It is said that the profit of one pound to sell at 7\_s\_. is 2\_s\_. 2\_d\_.

s. d.

Thus, cost price 2 5

Duty 2 5

Profit 2 2

---

7 0

In all retail houses of any respectability in the Tea trade, I am sure that Tea costing 2\_s\_. 5\_d\_. at the sale is never sold above 6\_s\_. per lb. and in five out of six shops of the above description 5\_s\_. 4\_d\_. and 5\_s\_. 6\_d\_. is the utmost price demanded for such Tea. I and my family have been in the trade, in one house, considerably more than half a century, and I can assure you, that from 6\_d\_. to 8\_d\_. per lb. is the present retail profit upon Tea sold at the East India Company's sales, under 3\_s\_. per lb.

S.

In reply to this note, the authenticity of which we do not question, we can only refer the writer to our distinct quotation from "the evidence of Mr. Mills, a Tea Broker, before the House of Lords." In our 15th volume, No. 414, p. 104, the proportion of profit is differently stated from an article in the *Quarterly Review*. A pound of 11\_s\_.

Hyson

s. d.

Costs at the Company's Sale 4 4

King's Duty 4 4

---

8 8

Retailer's profit, brokerage, &c. 2 4

---

11 0



We have often received from one of the most extensively dealing retail Tea-dealers in the metropolis, an assurance, similar to that of our correspondent, S. so that we do not require the substantiation he proffers.—*Ed. M.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The Naturalist.

#### GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY.

Observers of Nature seem to be just now appreciating the observation of the benevolent *Gilbert White*, of Selborne, who lived and died in the last century: “that if stationary men would pay some attention to the districts on which they reside, and would publish their thoughts respecting the objects that surround them, from such materials might be drawn the most complete county histories.” Accordingly, a little system of rural philosophy has been founded upon the best of all bases, home-observation, and such books as have resulted from these labours, promise to make the study of Nature more popular than will all the Zoological, Botanical, and Geological Societies of Europe. Among these works we include the cheap reprint of the *Natural History of Selborne*; Mr. Rennie’s delightful observations which are scattered through the Zoological volumes of the *Library*

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of *Entertaining Knowledge*; but more especially the *Journal of a Naturalist*, published by Mr. Leonard Knapp, about three years since, and stated by the author to have originated in his admiration of Mr. White's *Selborne*. The volume before us is the result of a congenial feeling, and is written by Edward Jesse, Esq., deputy surveyor of his majesty's parks, by means of which appointment he must have possessed peculiar opportunities and facilities of observation, as is evident in the local recollections throughout his volume. Thus, we find miscellaneous particulars of the Royal Parks and Forests, and from the writer's residence on the bank of the Thames, (we conclude, near Bushy Park,) a few Maxims for an Angler. The whole is a very charming *melange*, with a most discursive arrangement, it is true, but never falling into dulness, or tiring the reader with too minute detail. We intend, therefore, to range through the volume, and gather a few of its most interesting gleanings to our garner.

Our author thinks he has discovered the use for the remarkable and, indeed, what appears disproportionate length, of the

Claws of the Skylark.

"That they were not intended to enable the bird to search the earth for food, or to fix itself more securely on the branches of trees, is evident, as they neither scratch the ground nor roost on trees. The lark makes its nest generally in grass fields, where it is liable to be injured either by cattle grazing over it, or by the mower. In case of alarm from either these or other causes, the parent birds remove their eggs, by means of their long claws, to a place of greater security; and this transportation I have observed to be effected in a very short space of time. By placing a lark's egg, which is rather large in proportion to the size of the bird, in the foot, and then drawing the claws over it, you will perceive that they are of sufficient length to secure the egg firmly, and by this means the bird is enabled to convey its eggs to another place, where she can sit upon and hatch them. When one of my mowers first told me that he had observed the fact, I was somewhat disinclined to credit it; but I have since ascertained it beyond a doubt, and now mention it as another strong proof of that order in the economy of Nature, by means of which this affectionate bird is enabled to secure its forthcoming offspring. I call it affectionate, because few birds show a stronger attachment to their young."

Instinct allied to reason.

Several interesting anecdotes are quoted to show that there is something more than mere instinct, which influences the conduct of some animals. Bees and spiders afford many traits, but we quote the elephant and parrot:

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"I was one day feeding the poor elephant (who was so barbarously put to death at Exeter 'Change) with potatoes, which he took out of my hand. One of them, a round one, fell on the floor, just out of the reach of his proboscis. He leaned against his wooden bar, put out his trunk, and could just touch the potato, but could not pick it up. After several ineffectual efforts, he at last *blew* the potato against the opposite wall with sufficient force to make it rebound, and he then, without difficulty, secured it. Now it is quite clear, I think, that instinct never taught the elephant to procure his food in this manner; and it must, therefore, have been reason, or some intellectual faculty, which enabled him to be so good a judge of cause and effect. Indeed, the *reflecting* power of some animals is quite extraordinary. I had a dog who was much attached to me, and who, in consequence of his having been tied up on a Sunday morning, to prevent his accompanying me to church, would conceal himself in good time on that day, and I was sure to find him either at the entrance of the church, or if he could get in, under the place where I usually sat.

"I have been often much delighted with watching the manner in which some of the old bucks in Bushy Park contrive to get the berries from the fine thorn-trees there. They will raise themselves on their hind legs, give a spring, entangle their horns in the lower branches of the tree, give them one or two shakes, which make some of the berries full, and they will then quietly pick them up.

"A strong proof of intellect was given in the case of Colonel O'Kelly's parrot. When the colonel and his parrot were at Brighton, the bird was asked to sing; he answered 'I can't,' Another time he left off in the middle of a tune, and said, 'I have forgot.' Colonel O'Kelly continued the tune for a few notes; the parrot took it up where the Colonel had left off. The parrot took up the bottom of a lady's petticoat, and said 'What a pretty foot!' The parrot seeing the family at breakfast said, 'Won't you give some breakfast to Poll?' The company teased and mopped him a good deal; he said 'I don't like it.'—(From a Memorandum found amongst the late Earl of Guildford's Papers.)"

Eels.

Several pages are devoted to the economy of these curious creatures, and as many points of their history are warmly contested, Mr. Jesse's experience is valuable.

"That they do wander[6] from one place to another is evident, as I am assured that they have been found in ponds in Richmond Park, which had been previously cleaned out and mudded, and into which no water could run except from the springs which supplied it.[7] An annual migration of young eels takes place in the River Thames in the month of May, and they have generally made their appearance at Kingston, in their way upwards, about the second week in that month, and accident has so determined it, that, for several years together

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it was remarked that the 10th of May was the day of what the fishermen call eel-fair; but they have been more irregular in their proceedings since the interruption of the lock at Teddington. These young eels are about two inches in length, and they make their approach in one regular and undeviating column of about five inches in breadth, and as thick together as it is possible for them to be. As the procession generally lasts two or three days, and as they appear to move at the rate of nearly two miles and a half an hour, some idea may be formed of their enormous number.

[6] From the following lines of Oppian, the rambling spirit of eels seems to have been known to the ancients—

The wandering eel,  
Oft to the neighbouring beach will silent steal”

[7] I have been informed, upon the authority of a nobleman well known for his attachment to field sports, that, if an eel is found on land, its head is invariably turned towards the sea, for which it is always observed to make in the most direct line possible. If this information is correct (and there seems to be no reason to doubt it.) it shows that the eel, like the swallow, is possessed of a strong migratory instinct. May we not suppose that the swallow, like the eel, performs its migrations in the same undeviating course?

“Eels feed on almost all animal substances, whether dead or living. It is well known that they devour the young of all water-fowl that are not too large for them. Mr. Bingley states, that he saw exposed for sale at Retford, in Nottinghamshire, a quantity of eels that would have filled a couple of wheelbarrows, the whole of which had been taken out of the body of a dead horse, thrown into a ditch near one of the adjacent villages; and a friend of mine saw the body of a man taken out of the Serpentine River in Hyde Park, where it had been some time, and from which a large eel crawled out. The winter retreat of eels is very curious. They not only get deep into the mud, but in Bushy Park, where the mud in the ponds is not very deep, and what there is, is of a sandy nature, the eels make their way under the banks of the ponds, and have been found knotted together in a large mass. Eels vary much in size in different waters. The largest I ever caught was in Richmond Park, and it weighed five pounds, but some are stated to have been caught in Ireland which weighed from fifteen to twenty pounds. Seven pounds is, I believe, no unusual size. The large ones are extremely strong and muscular. Fishing one day at Pain’s Hill, near Cobham, in Surrey, I hooked an eel amongst some weeds, but before I could land him, he had so twisted a new strong double wire, to which the hook was fixed, that he broke it and made his escape.”

Sir Humphry Davy's opinions respecting eels are quoted from his *Salmonia*:<sup>[8]</sup> Mr. Jesse adds:

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[8] See MIRROR, vol. xii. p. 253.

“It is with considerable diffidence that one would venture to differ in opinion with Sir Humphry Davy, but I cannot help remarking, that, as eels are now known to migrate *from* fresh water, as was shown in the case of the Richmond Park ponds, this restless propensity may arise from their impatience of the greater degree of warmth in those ponds in the month of May, and not from their wish to get into water still warmer, as suggested by Sir Humphry Davy. Very large eels are certainly found in rivers, the Thames and Mole for instance, where I have seen them so that they must either have remained in them, or have returned from the sea, which Sir H. Davy thinks they never do, though I should add, that the circumstance already related of so many large eels being seen dead or dying during a hot summer, near the Nore, would appear to confirm his assertion. If eels are oviparous, as Sir Humphry Davy thinks they are, would not the ova have been found, especially in the conger,—many of which are taken and brought to our markets, frequently of a very large size? It does not appear, however, that any of the fringes along the air-bladder have ever arrived at such a size and appearance as to have justified any one in the supposition that they were ovaria, though, as has been stated, distinguished naturalists, from the time of Aristotle to the present moment, have been endeavouring to ascertain this fact. Since the above was written, I have been shown ova in the lamprey, and what appeared to have been melt taken from a conger eel, at a fishmonger’s in Bond-street. These specimens were preserved by Mr. Yarrell, of Little Ryder-street, St. James’s, who had the kindness to open two eels, sent to him from Scotland, in my presence, and in which the fringes were very perceptible, though they were without any ova. That ingenious and indefatigable naturalist is, however, of opinion that eels are oviparous, though he failed in producing proof that the common eels were so.

“In further proof, however, of eels being viviparous, it may be added (if the argument of analogy applies in this case), that the animalculae of paste eels are decidedly viviparous. Mr. Bingley also, in his animal biography, says that eels are viviparous. Blumenbach says, too, that ‘according to the most correct observations they are certainly viviparous.’ He adds also, that, the eel is so tenacious of life, that its heart, when removed from the body, retains its irritability for forty hours afterwards.”

We are not inclined to attach very considerable importance to Mr. Bingley’s experience, much as we admire his entertaining *Animal Biography*: we believe him to be classed among book-naturalists, and he wrote this work many years since.

(*To be continued.*)

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## QUEEN ANNE’S SPRING, NEAR ETON.

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[Illustration: Queen Anne's Spring, near Eton.]

(From a Correspondent.)

The accompanying sketch represents a sequestered spot of sylvan shade whence rises a Spring which tradition designates Queen Anne's. Here the limpid crystal flows in gentle, yet ceaseless streams, conveying "Health to the sick and solace to the swain."

It has some claims to antiquity; and its merits have been appreciated by royalty. Queen Anne was the first august personage who had recourse to it; in later times, Queen Charlotte for many years had the pure element conveyed to her royal abode at Windsor, and in 1785, a stone, with a cipher and date, was placed there by her illustrious consort, George III. This spring is situate at Chalvey, (a village between Eton and Salt Hill,) on the property of J. Mason, Esq., Cippenham. It was the observation of the esteemed and celebrated Dr. Heberdeen, that it but required a physician to write a treatise on the water, to render it as efficacious as Malvern.

URANIA.

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Spirit Of The Public Journals.

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## STATE OF MAGIC IN EGYPT, BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

At the Consul General's table, in Egypt, in August, 1822, the conversation turned on the belief in magic; and the Consul's Italian Staff propounded the following story, which seemed to have perfect possession of their best belief. They said that a magician of great name was then in Cairo—I think a Mogrebine; and that he had been sent for to the Consul's house, and put to the following proof:—A silver spoon had been lost, and he was invited to point out the thief. On arriving, he sent for an Arab boy at hazard out of the street, and after various ceremonies, poured ink into the boy's hand, into which the boy was to look. It was stated, that he asked the boy what he saw, and the boy answered, "*I see a little man,*"—Tell him to bring a flag,—"*Now he has brought a flag.*"—Tell him to bring another.—"*Now he has brought another.*"—Tell him to bring a third,—"*Now he has brought it.*"—Tell him to bring a fourth.—"*He has brought it.*"—Tell him to bring the captain of them all.—"*I see a great Sheik on horseback.*"—Tell him to bring the man that stole the spoon.—"*Now he has brought him.*"—What is he like?—"He is a *Frangi*, poor-looking and mesquin." After which followed other points of personal description not remembered; but which drew from the Staff the observation, that a European of exactly those qualities had been about the house. We expressed our desire to be introduced to the magician, and the Consul gravely intimated it might hurt

the prejudices of his wife, as being a Catholic; to the great mirth of the beautiful Consuless when she was told of it, who, though a Catholic and an Italian, declared she was the only person in the family that set all the magicians in Egypt at defiance.



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Having some time afterwards established ourselves in a house of our own, on the edge of the garden of the Austrian Consulate (as I remember by the token that a Turkish officer who had been taking his evening walk of meditation, very gravely opened the window from the garden, put in first one leg of his huge trousers and then the other, and strode into the room followed by his pipe-bearer, as being the shortest cut into the street; though I must do him the justice to say he laughed and was very conversable, when I brought him up with a salam and a cup of coffee, by way of demonstrating there was somebody in the house besides the Arab owner), we sent for the magician. I remember a well-dressed personable man, of what, after the fashion of the nomenclature in the Chamber of Deputies, might be called the young middle-age. He agreed to show us a specimen of his art, though I do not recollect that the nature of it was defined. He fixed upon our little boy of seven years old to be his instrument; and I remember he talked some nonsense about requiring an innocent agent, and how a woman might do as well, if she could plead the innocent presence of the unborn. He dispatched a servant into the bazar, to procure frankincense and other things which he directed; and on their being produced we all retired into a room, and closed the doors and windows. An earthen pot was placed in the middle of the floor, containing fire, and the magician sat down by it. He placed the little boy before him, and poured ink into the hollow of the boy's hand, and bid him look into it steadily. I think the mother rather quailed, at seeing her child in such propinquity with "the Enemy;" but recovered herself on being exhorted to defy the devil and all his works. And the thing was not entirely without danger from another quarter; for it was understood the Pasha had directed a special edict against all dealing with familiar spirits; and the Pasha's edicts were not altogether to be trifled with, as we knew from the mishap of a poor Indian servant, who was caught in the bazar in the fact of taking thirteen of the Pasha's tin piasters in change for a dollar, when the political economy of Cairo had decreed that twelve were to be equal in public estimation, and was immediately incarcerated in the place of skulls, or at least of heads, from which it is supposed he would have come out shorn of his beard and the chin it grew from, if the Consular cocked hat and Abyssinian charger had not proceeded at a gallop to the Court at Shubra, to claim him as a subject of the British crown; and much did poor Baloo vow, that no earthly temptation should take him again to quit the gentle rule of the old Lady in Leadenhall-street, who, though she pinches a Peishwa and mercilessly screws a renter when it suits her, it must be allowed has a reverent care for the heads of all her lieges, and gives them a fair chance of going to their graves with the members nature had bestowed on them.

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*Hisce positis*, as the logicians say, the magician began his process. The boy was innocent of fear; being in fact a person rather perplexed and imperfect in those parts of theology that should have caused him to feel alarm. His native nurse first taught him to kiss his hand to the moon walking in brightness; which, being especially reprobated in the book of Job, we persuaded him to renounce. We next found him making salams as he passed the fat old gentleman with an elephant's head, and other foul idolatries bedaubed with rose-pink and butter, that show themselves on various milestone-like appurtenances to an Indian road. After his visit to the Persian Gulph he leaned more towards monotheism; and I once found him seated between two guns on the quarter-deck of an Arab frigate, in the midst of a fry of devotees of little more than his own age, busily engaged in chanting canticles in praise of Mohammed the "amber-ee." His early leaning towards the ugly gods of Hindostan, had made it a delicate matter to introduce him to our Evil Principle; and the fact was, that when he afterwards saw the Freischutz in England, we had no means of making him comprehend the nature of the crimson fiend, but by telling him he was a relation of his old elephant-headed friend Gunputty. On the whole I imagine there never was a better subject to cope with a sorcerer; and when he asked the cause of the immediate preparations we told him the man was going to show some feats of legerdemain such as he used to see in India. The magician began by throwing grains of incense upon the fire, bowing with a seesaw motion and repeating "*Heyya hadji Capitan, Heyya hadji Capitan;*" which being interpreted, if it was intended to have any meaning, would appear to imply "*Hurra, pilgrim Captain!*" being, as I understood it at the time, an invocation by his style and title, of the spirit he wished to see. When nothing came, he increased his zeal after the manner of a priest of Baal, and seemed determined that if the "Captain" was sleeping or on a journey, he should not be missed for want of calling. One slight *variorum* reading I observed. Instead of saying to the boy "What do you see?" as had been reported—he said "*Do you see a little man?*" which, if he had been accessible to fear or phantasy, was manifestly telling him what he was to look for. The boy, however, resolutely declared he saw nothing; and the sorcerer continued his calls upon his spirit. When in this manner curiosity had been roused to something like expectation, the boy suddenly exclaimed, "I see something!"—*Tremor occupat artis*;—when he quashed it all by adding, "I see my nose." By the dim light of the fire, he had succeeded in getting a glimpse of his own countenance reflected in the ink. The magician doubled his exertions by way of carrying the thing off; but there was much less gravity in his audience afterwards; and at last he was forced to declare that the spirit would not come, and the reason he

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believed was because we were Christians. He said, however, if an Arab boy was substituted the spirit would come. A servant therefore was sent out to bring a boy by the offer of a piastre, and one was soon produced. Whether there was any confederacy or not, I had no precise means to ascertain; but I was inclined to think not. The Arab boy was trusted with the ink in place of the European, and on the magician's asking him the leading question "Do you see a little man?" he took but one look and answered "Yes." The orders then followed "Tell him to bring a flag." &c. to all of which, whether operated on by some dread of refusing, or by the natural inclination of one rogue to help another, he duly answered that the thing was done. I do not remember any further *denouement* that there was; and so ended the magic of the magician of Grand Cairo.

Being disappointed in this experiment, we began to seek for the opportunity of making others, and offered a reward for any person who would show us a specimen of imp or spirit. One man was produced, who was stated to be of considerable fame. He said he would show me a spirit; but I must go out with him three nights running to a cross road at midnight, and perform divers ceremonies and lustrations which he proceeded to describe. I believe he he had got an inkling, that I intended to leave Cairo the next day. I told him, however, that I would cheerfully go through any ceremonies he might propose. He next said, it would be necessary that I should repeat the name of the spirit I called for, eleven thousand times; and this I assured him I would painfully perform. He then said, he was afraid at my age the operation would be dangerous. I wonder whether the rogue meant that I was too young, or too old, or too middle-aged; for I was exactly thirty-eight. Seeing that I only pressed him the more, he took his fee and walked off, intimating that there was no use in doing these things with Frangis.

I saw another instance in Cairo, of the way in which a story accumulates by telling, and the degree in which even sensible Europeans by long residence are induced to give into the beliefs they find around them. The conversation turned one day on the power of charming serpents, supposed to be inherent in certain descendants of the *Psylli*. One of the Consular Staff immediately declared, that a most remarkable instance of the fact had happened in the Consul-General's own courtyard the day before. That one of those gifted men had come into the yard, and declared he knew by his art that there were serpents in the stable; and that he had immediately gone and summoned forth two snakes of the most poisonous kind, which he seized in his hands and brought, in the presence of the relator, to the Consular threshold. Now it happened to me to see the whole of this scene. I was wandering about the Consul's court, gazing at the curiosities scattered around, enough to have set up any European museum with an Egyptian branch, and particularly, I

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remember, at a lame mummy's crutch, found with him in his coffin, on which it is possible the original owner hopped away from the plague of frogs. An old rural Arab of respectable appearance was standing at the Consul's door, holding in his hand the crooked stick which an Arab keeps to recover the halter of his camel if he happens to lose it while mounted, and presenting altogether a parallel to a substantial yeoman with his riding-whip, come to town to do a little justice business with the Mayor. A stable-keeper came and said, that two snakes had made their appearance in the stable; on which the Arab, being no more in the habit of fearing such vermin than a European farmer of fearing rats, proceeded towards the stable, and I followed him. Sure enough there were two snakes in dalliance in the horse's stall; and my construction was, that it was the poor animals' St. Valentine. The Arab, however, ruthlessly smote them with his gib stick, in a way that showed an exact comprehension of what would settle a snake; and brought them hanging by the tails and still writhing with the remains of life, and laid them at the threshold of the house. I looked at the snakes, and felt a strong persuasion that they were of a harmless kind; but whether they were or not, was of small moment as the Arab treated them.

I remember in India once driving one of the snake-jugglers to discovery. He told the servants there were snakes in the stable; and offered to produce one. He accordingly went, with piping and other ceremonies, and soon demonstrated a goodly *cobra de capello* struggling by the tail. He secured this in his repertory of snakes, and said he thought there was another; on which he went through the same operations again. Though he had been too quick for me on both occasions, I offered him a rupee to produce a third, which he agreed to; and this time I saw the snake's head, struggling rather oddly in his nether garments. He ran into the horse's stall, rushed forward with a shriek to distract attention, and then I saw him jerk out a snake of some four feet long, and drag it backwards by the tip of the tail as if desperately afraid of it. Knowing his snakes must be an exhaustible quantity, I proffered a second rupee for another, taking care to keep between him and the snake-basket; which he declined. But on turning round and giving him a chance to communicate with his receptacle, he quickly presented himself with the assurance that now he thought he knew where a serpent might be lodged. The Indian servants all devoutly believed in his skill; but it is impossible not to be ashamed of Europeans, who adorn their books with marks of similar gullibility.—*Abridged from Tait's Edinburgh Mag.*

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## Notes of a Reader

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**RECREATIONS IN THE LAW.**

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Gentle reader, we are not about to direct your notice to the Temple Gardens, the olden feasts in our Law Halls—through which men ate their way to eminence—nor to prove that looking to a Chancellorship is woolgathering—nor to invite you to the shrubby groves of Lincoln's Inn, or to promenade with the spirit of BACON in Gray's Inn. All these may be pleasurable occupations; but there is mirth in store in the *study* of the Law itself, which is not “dull and crabbed as some fools (or knaves) suppose.”

In a recent *Mirror*, (No. 540) this may have been made manifest to the reader in the Legal Rhymes, quoted by our correspondent, *W.A.R.*;[9] but lo! here is a volume of evidence in “*The Conveyancer's Guide*,” a Poem, by John Crisp, Esq., of Furnival's Inn; in which the art of Conveyancing is sung in Hudibrastic verse, and said in notes of pleasant prose. Happy are we to see Mr. Crisp's volume in a third edition, since we opine from this success the bright moments of relief which his Muse may have shed upon the *viginti annorum lucubrationes* of thousands of students. We have not space for quotations from the poem itself, in which *Doe* and *Roe* figure as heroes, with their occasional friend Thomas Stiles. We can only say their movements are sung with the terseness and point which we so much admire in the great originals, so as to make men acknowledge there is good in every thing. Our extracts are from the Introduction and Notes. First is

### A LEGAL GLEE.

“A woman having a settlement,  
Married a man with none,  
The question was, he being dead,  
If that she had was gone.  
Quoth *Sir John Pratt*, her settlement  
Suspended did remain,  
Living the husband—but him dead,  
It doth revive again.

“CHORUS OF PUISNE JUDGES.  
“Living the husband—but him dead,  
It doth revive again.”

[9] ERRATA in one of our correspondent's “Legal

for “six beaches,” read “six braches.” for “book ycleped,” read “*bock ylered*.” for “token” read “*teken*.” for “Hamelyn” read “*Howelin*.”

Corrected from Blount's *Tenures*, p. 665, ed. 1815.

A print of Westminster Hall, by Mosely, from a drawing made by Gravelot, who died in 1773, bears the following versified inscription:—

“When fools fall out, for ev’ry flaw,  
They run horn mad to go to law,  
A hedge awry, a wrong plac’d gate,  
Will serve to spend a whole estate.  
Your case the lawyer says is good,  
And justice cannot he withstood;  
By tedious process from above,  
From office they to office move,  
Thro’ pleas, demurrers, the dev’l and all,  
At length they bring it to the *Hall*;  
The dreadful hall by Rufus rais’d,  
For lofty Gothick arches prais’d.

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“The *first of Term*, the fatal day, Doth various images convey; First, from the courts with clam’rous bawl, The *criers* their *attornies* call; One of the gown discreet and wise, By *proper* means his witness tries; From *Wreathock’s* gang, not right or laws, H’ assures his trembling client’s cause. *This* gnaws his haudkerchies, whilst *that* Gives the kind ogling nymph his hat; Here one in love with choristers, Minds singing more than law affairs. A *Serjeant* limping on behind, Shews justice lame as well as blind. To gain new clients some dispute, Others protract an ancient suit, Jargon and noise alone prevail, Whilst sense and reason’s sure to fail: At *Babel* thus *law terms* begun, And now at West —er go on.”

At page 24, of the Poem, there is a happy allusion to the permanence or lasting of a limitation:

“But if the limitation’s made  
So long as cheating’s us’d in trade,  
Or vice prevails: ’tis then a fee,  
As good as ever need to be:  
For tho’ ’tis base instead of pure,  
Alas it ever will endure.”

Upon this passage is the following confirmative note: “Cheating will always prevail, in defiance of all human laws, for it cannot be avoided, but so long as contracts be suffered, many offences shall follow thereby.”—(*Doctor and Student*, c. 3.) In buying and selling, the law of nations connives at some cunning and overreaching in respect of the price. By the civil law, a just price is said to be that, whereby neither the buyer nor seller is injured above one moiety of the true and common value; and in this case the person injured shall not be relieved by rescinding the sale, for he must impute it to his own imprudence and indiscretion.

The origin of *Fee-tail estates*:

“The expression, fee-tail, was borrowed from the feudists, among whom it signified any mutilated or truncated inheritance from which the heirs general were cut off, being derived from the barbarous word *taliare* to cut.—(2 *Blac. Comm.* 112.)

*Fines and Recoveries* (as *fund and refund*,) are like the poles, arctic and attractive. Of the latter is the following *quid-pro-quo* anecdote:

“A physician of an acrimonious disposition, and having a thorough hatred of lawyers, was in company with a barrister, and in the course of conversation, reproached the profession of the latter with the use of phrases utterly unintelligible. ‘For example,’ said he, ‘I never could understand what you lawyers mean by docking an entail.’ ‘That is very likely,’ answered the lawyer, ‘but I will explain it to you; it is doing what you doctors never consent to—*suffering a recovery*.’



Among the notes to *Rights and Titles* is the following:

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“Master *Mason*, of *Trinity College*, sent his pupil to another of the fellows to borrow a book of him, who told him, ‘I am loth to lend books out of my chamber, but if it please thy tutor to come and read upon it in my chamber, he shall as long as he will.’ It was winter, and some days after the same fellow sent to Mr. *Mason* to borrow his bellows, but Mr. *Mason* said to his pupil, ‘I am loth to lend my bellows out of my chamber, but if thy tutor would come and blow the fire in my chamber, he shall as long as he will.’

In the next page is a note on the *Nature of Property*, in the perspicuous style of a master-mind:

“There is nothing which so generally strikes the imagination, and engages the affections of mankind, as the right of property; or that sole and despotic dominion which one man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in total exclusion of the right of any other individual in the universe. And yet there are very few that will give themselves the trouble to consider the original and foundation of this right. Pleased as we are with the possession, we seem afraid to look back to the means by which it was acquired, as if fearful of some defect in our title; or at best we rest satisfied with the decision of the laws in our favour, without examining the reason and authority upon which those laws have been built. We think it enough that our title is derived by the grant of the former proprietor, by descent from our ancestors, or by the last will and testament of the dying owner; not caring to reflect that (accurately and strictly speaking) there is no foundation in nature, or in natural law, why a set of words upon parchment should convey the dominion of land; why the son should have a right to exclude his fellow creature from a determinate spot of ground, because his father had so done before him; or why the occupier of a particular field, or of a jewel, when lying on his death bed, and no longer able to maintain possession, should be entitled to tell the rest of the world which of them should enjoy it after him.—(2 *Blac. Comm.* 2)“The two *sheriff's of London* are the *one sheriff of Middlesex*; thus constituting in the latter case, what may be denominated, in the words of *George Colman the Younger*, (see his address to the Reviewers, in his *vagaries*,) ‘a plural unit.’ Henry the First, in the same charter by which he declared and confirmed the privileges of the City of *London*, (and among others, that of choosing their own sheriffs,) conferred on them, in consideration of an annual rent of 300\_l., to be paid to his majesty and his successors for ever, the perpetual sheriffalty of *Middlesex*. This was an enormous price; 300\_l. in those days were equal to more than three times as many thousands at the present time.

Here is a lively commentary upon the *Inclosure Acts*:

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“To a pamphlet which was published some years ago, against the propriety of enclosing *Waltham Forest*, the following quaint motto was prefixed:

“The fault is great in man or woman,  
Who steals a goose from off a common,  
But who can plead that man’s excuse,  
Who steals the common from the goose?”

How to decide a Chancery Suit:

“The *Shellys* were a family of distinction in *Sussex*. *Richard* and *Thomas Shelly* were a long time engaged in litigation; and Queen Elizabeth hearing of it, ordered her Lord Chancellor to summon the Judges to put an end to it, to prevent the ruin of so ancient a family.”—(*Engl. Baronets*, ed. 1737.)

With these pleasantries we leave the *Conveyancer’s Guide*, hoping it may be long ere the witty author sings his “Farewell to his Muse.”

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Manners & Customs of all Nations.

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## THE CURFEW BELL.

(*For the Mirror.*)

Hark! the curfews solemn sound;  
Silence, darkness, spreads around.

There are now but few places in which this ancient custom—the memento of the iron sway of William the Conqueror—is retained.

Its impression when I heard it for the first time, will never be effaced from my memory. Let not the reader suppose that it was merely the *sound* of the bell to which I allude; to use the language of Thomas Moore, I may justly say, “Oh! no, it was something more exquisite still.”

It was during the autumn of last year, that I had occasion to visit the eastern coast of Kent. Accustomed to an inland county, the prospect of wandering by the sea shore, and inhaling the sea breezes, afforded me no trifling degree of pleasure. The most frequented road to the sea, was through a succession of meadows and pastures; the

ground becoming more irregular and broken as it advanced, till at last it was little better than an accumulation of sand-hills. I have since been informed by a veteran tar, that these sand-hills bear a striking resemblance to those on that part of the coast of Egypt, where the British troops under the gallant Abercrombie were landed.

The evening was beautifully calm, not a sound disturbed its tranquillity; and the sun was just sinking to repose in all his dying glory. At this part of the coast, the sands are hard and firm to walk upon; and on arriving at their extremity, where the waves were gently breaking at my feet, "forming sweet music to the thoughtful ear," I looked around, and gazed on the various objects that presented themselves to my view, with feelings of deep interest and pleasure. The evening was too far advanced to discern clearly the coast of France, but its dim outline might just be traced, bounding the view. Every now and then a vessel might be seen making her silent way round the foreland, her form gradually lessening, till at last it was entirely lost in the distance. As it grew darker, the strong, red glare of the light-house shedding its lurid gleams on the waves, added a novel effect to the scene.

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At the very moment I was turning from the shore, to retrace my steps, the deep tone of a distant bell fell on my ear. It was the Curfew Bell—which had been tolled regularly at eight o'clock in the evening, since the days of the despotic William.

The vast changes that had taken place in society, in fact, in every thing, since the institution of this custom, occupied my thoughts during my walk; and I felt no little gratification in the assurance that what was originally the edict of a barbarous and despotic age, was now merely retained as a relic of ancient times.

It may be thought romantic, but the first hearing of the Curfew Bell often occurs to my memory; and there are times when I fancy myself walking on that lone shore, and the objects that I then thought so beautiful, are as distinctly and vividly seen as if I were actually there.

REGINALD.

The only drawback from the interest of this brief paper is that the writer does not state the name of the Village whence he heard the Curfew Bell.

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## BARBAROUS PUNISHMENTS.

It is almost inconceivable how long Englishmen have retained their barbarous practices. It is not more than a century since a trial for witchcraft took place in England, and hardly eighty since one occurred in Scotland. The crime of coining the King's money is still treated as treason, and women, for the commission of this crime as well as that of murdering their husbands, were sentenced to be strangled, and afterwards publicly burned. In London this horrible outrage upon civilized feelings was perpetrated in Smithfield. One of these melancholy exhibitions took place within the memory of many persons. The criminal was a fine young woman, and the strangling had not been completed, for when the flames reached her at the stake, she uttered a shriek. This produced, as it well might, a general horror, and the practice was abandoned, though the law was not abrogated. It was the mild and enlightened Sir Samuel Romilly who first brought in a bill to annul the old acts which ordered the most revolting mutilation of the corpses of traitors, agreeable to a sentence expressed in the most barbarous jargon. Mark, this was only a few years since, I believe in 1811.

What must have been the taste of our forefathers, who suffered miscreants to obtain their livelihood for the moment by stationing themselves at Temple-bar, after the rebellion in 1745, with magnifying-glasses, that the spectators might more nicely discriminate the features of those unfortunate gentlemen whose heads had been fixed over the gateway. No London populace, however tumultuary, would now for a moment



tolerate such an outrage upon all that is decent and humane—(From a clever letter in *the Times* of April 12, by Colonel Jones.)

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## THE SELECTOR AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

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### THE ALTRIVE TALES.

By the Ettrick Shepherd.

Mr. Hogg proposes to collect and reprint under the above title, the best of the grave and gay tales with which he has aided the Magazines and Annuals during the last few years. The Series will extend to fourteen volumes, the first of which, now before us, preceded by a poetical dedication and autobiographical memoir. The poem is an exquisite performance; but the biography, with due allowance for the Shepherd's claim, is a most objectionable preface. It is so disfigured with self-conceit and vituperative recollections of old grievances, that we regret some kind friend of the author did not suggest the omission of these personalities. They will be neither advantageous to the writer, interesting to the public, nor propitiatory for the work itself; since the world care less about the squabbles of authors and booksellers than even an "untoward event" in Parliament; and if the writer of every book were to detail his vexations as a preface, the publication of a long series of "Calamities" might be commenced immediately.

To our way of thinking, the pleasantest part of the Shepherd's memoir is his reminiscences of men of talent, with whom his own abilities have brought him in contact. Thus, of

*Southey.*

"My first interview with Mr. Southey was at the Queen's Head inn, in Keswick, where I had arrived, wearied, one evening, on my way to Westmoreland; and not liking to intrude on his family circle that evening, I sent a note up to Greta Hall, requesting him to come down and see me, and drink one half mutchkin along with me. He came on the instant, and stayed with me about an hour and a half. But I was as grieved as well as an astonished man, when I found that he refused all participation in my beverage of rum punch. For a poet to refuse his glass was to me a phenomenon; and I confess I doubted in my own mind, and doubt to this day, if perfect sobriety and transcendent poetical genius can exist together. In Scotland I am sure they cannot. With regard to the English, I shall leave them to settle that among themselves, as they have little that is worth drinking.

"Before we had been ten minutes together my heart was knit to Southey, and every hour thereafter my esteem for him increased. I breakfasted with him next morning, and remained with him all that day and the next; and the weather being fine, we spent the time in rambling on the hills and sailing on the lake; and all the time he manifested a delightful flow of spirits, as well as a kind sincerity of manner, repeating convivial poems and ballads, and always between hands breaking jokes on his nephew, young Coleridge, in whom he seemed to take great delight. He gave me, with the utmost

readiness, a poem and ballad of his own, for a work which I then projected. I objected to his going with Coleridge and me, for fear of encroaching on his literary labours; and, as I had previously resided a month at Keswick, I knew every scene almost in Cumberland; but he said he was an early riser, and never suffered any task to interfere with his social enjoyments and recreations; and along with us he went both days.



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“Southey certainly is as elegant a writer as any in the kingdom. But those who would love Southey as well as admire him, must see him, as I did, in the bosom, not only of one lovely family, but of three, all attached to him as a father, and all elegantly maintained and educated, it is generally said, by his indefatigable pen. The whole of Southey’s conversation and economy, both at home and afield, left an impression of veneration on my mind, which no future contingency shall ever either extinguish or injure. Both his figure and countenance are imposing, and deep thought is strongly marked in his dark eye; but there is a defect in his eyelids, for these he has no power of raising; so that, when he looks up, he turns up his face, being unable to raise his eyes; and when he looks towards the top of one of his romantic mountains, one would think he was looking at the zenith. This peculiarity is what will most strike every stranger in the appearance of the accomplished laureate. He does not at all see well at a distance, which made me several times disposed to get into a passion with him, because he did not admire the scenes which I was pointing out. We have only exchanged a few casual letters since that period, and I have never seen this great and good man again.”

In the Recollections of Wordsworth we find related the affront which led to Hogg’s caricature of Wordsworth’s style, an offence which shut out the Shepherd from the society of the amiable poet of the Lakes.

“This anecdote has been told and told again, but never truly; and was likewise brought forward in the ‘Noctes Ambrosianae,’ as a joke; but it was no joke; and the plain, simple truth of the matter was thus:—

It chanced one night, when I was there, that there was a resplendent arch across the zenith from the one horizon to the other, of something like the aurora borealis, but much brighter. It was a scene that is well remembered, for it struck the country with admiration, as such a phenomenon had never before been witnessed in such perfection; and, as far as I could learn, it had been more brilliant over the mountains and pure waters of Westmoreland than any where else. Well, when word came into the room of the splendid meteor, we all went out to view it; and, on the beautiful platform at Mount Ryedale we were all walking, in twos and threes, arm-in-arm, talking of the phenomenon, and admiring it. Now, be it remembered, that Wordsworth, Professor Wilson, Lloyd, De Quincey, and myself, were present, besides several other literary gentlemen, whose names I am not certain that I remember aright. Miss Wordsworth’s arm was in mine, and she was expressing some fears that the splendid stranger might prove ominous, when I, by ill luck, blundered out the following remark, thinking that I was saying a good thing:—‘Hout, me’em! it is neither mair nor less than joost a treeumphal airch, raised in honour of the meeting of the poets.’ ‘That’s not amiss.—Eh?

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Eh?—that's very good,' said the Professor, laughing. But Wordsworth, who had De Quincey's arm, gave a grunt, and turned on his heel, and leading the little opium-chewer aside, he addressed him in these disdainful and venomous words:—'Poets? Poets?—What does the fellow mean?—Where are they?' Who could forgive this? For my part, I never can, and never will! I admire Wordsworth; as who does not, whatever they may pretend? but for that short sentence I have a lingering ill-will at him which I cannot get rid of. It is surely presumption in any man to circumscribe all human excellence within the narrow sphere of his own capacity. The '*Where are they?*' was too bad! I have always some hopes that De Quincey was *leeing*, for I did not myself hear Wordsworth utter the words."

Appended to this anecdote is a characteristic observation on the poetry of Wordsworth.

"It relates to the richness of his works for quotations. For these they are a mine that is altogether inexhaustible. There is nothing in nature that you may not get a quotation out of Wordsworth to suit, and a quotation too that breathes the very soul of poetry. There are only three books in the world that are worth the opening in search of mottos and quotations, and all of them are alike rich. These are, the Old Testament, Shakspeare, and the poetical works of Wordsworth, and, strange to say, the '*Excursion*' abounds most in them."

We chanced to fall upon the Shepherd's allusion to the liberties taken with his name in *Blackwood's Magazine*, which work owes its establishment and much of its early success to Mr. Hogg's co-operation. We believe it to be pretty well known that the offensive language attributed to the Shepherd in the "*Noctes*" has no more to do with Mr. Hogg than by attempting to imitate his conversational style. This impropriety, which is beyond a literary joke, was reprobated some months since by the *Quarterly Review*, but here the offending parties are properly visited with a burst of honest indignation which may not pass unheeded. Mr. Hogg says

"For my part, after twenty years of feelings hardly suppressed, he has driven me beyond the bounds of human patience. That Magazine of his, which owes its rise principally to myself, has often put words and sentiments into my mouth of which I have been greatly ashamed, and which have given much pain to my family and relations, and many of those after a solemn written promise that such freedoms should never be repeated. I have been often urged to restrain and humble him by legal measures as an incorrigible offender deserves. I know I have it in my power, and if he dares me to the task, I want but a hair to make a tether of."

The Shepherd appears to have written since 1813, fifteen volumes of poetry and as many volumes of prose, besides his contributions to periodical works; and, what is not the less extraordinary he was forty years of age before he wrote his first poem.

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The Tales in the present volume are the Adventures of Captain Lochy, the Pongos, and Marion's Jock.

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### THE GATHERER.

*Marriage Tree.*—A marriage tree, generally of the pine kind, is planted in the churchyard, by every new-married couple, in the parish of Varallo Pombio, in the Tyrol. A fine grove of pines, the result of this custom, now shades this churchyard.

W.G.C.

*Slippery Love.*—Thevenard was the first singer of his time, at Paris, in the operas of Lulli. He was more than sixty years old when, seeing a beautiful *female slipper* in a shoemaker's shop, he fell violently in love, unsight, unseen, with the person for whom it was made; and having discovered the lady, married her. He died at Paris in 1741, at the age of 72.

P.T.W.

Character of England.

Anglia, 1 Mons, 2 Pons, 3 Fons, 4 Ecclesia, 5 Faemina, 6 Lana.

(That is to say:)

For 1, Mountains; 2, Bridges; 3, Rivers; 4, Churches faire; 5, Women; and 6, Wool, England is past compare.

G.K.

*On our Lady Church in Salisbury.*

How many dayes in one whole year there be,  
So many windows in one church we see,  
So many marble pillars there appear,  
As there are hours throughout the fleeting year.  
So many gates, as moons one year do view,  
Strange tale to tell, yet not so strange as true.

G.K.



*Astronomical Toasts.*—Lord Chesterfield dined one day with the French and Spanish ambassadors. After dinner, toasts were proposed. The Spanish ambassador proposed the King of Spain under the title of the Sun. The French ambassador gave his king as the Moon. Lord C. then arose, “Your excellencies,” said he, “have taken the two greatest luminaries, and the Stars are too small for a comparison with my royal master. I therefore beg to give your excellencies, Joshua.”

*Talleyrand.*—(The following *bon mot* is worthy of extract from the *Literary Gazette*, and smacks of the raciest days of the noble utterer.) M. Talleyrand was enjoying his rubber, when the conversation turned on the recent union of an elderly lady of respectable rank. “However could Madame de S----- make such a match? a person of her birth to marry a valet-de-chambre!” “Ah,” replied Talleyrand, “it was late in the game; at nine we don’t reckon honours.”

*Remarkable Circumstance.*—William Cohan, who was at Oxford in the year 1575, when the sweating sickness raged at that place, and who has given a brief account of its ravages, says, “It began on the sixth day of July, from which day to the twelfth day of August next ensuing, there died five hundred and ten persons, all men and no women.”

P.T.W.

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*A Loyalist.*—The Earl of St. Alban's was, like many other staunch loyalists, little remembered by Charles II. He was, however, an attendant at court, and one of his majesty's companions in his gay hours. On one such occasion, a stranger came with an importunate suit, for an office of great value, just vacant. The king, by way of joke, comsired the earl to personate him, and demanded the petitioner to be admitted. The gentleman addressing himself to the supposed monarch, enumerated his services to the royal family, and hoped the grant of the place would not be deemed too great a reward. "By no means," answered the earl, "and I am only sorry that as soon as I heard of the vacancy, I conferred it on my faithful friend, the Earl of St. Alban's," pointing to the king, "who constantly followed the fortunes, both of my father and myself, and has hitherto gone unrewarded." Charles granted, for this joke, what the utmost real services looked for in vain.

T. GILL.

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