

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Vol. 19, No. 548.] *Saturday, may 26, 1832.* [Price 2d.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Staines new bridge.*]

This handsome structure has lately been completed, and was opened on Easter Monday last, April 24, by their Majesties and the Court passing over with suitable ceremony. This was a gala day for Staines and its vicinity; for, independently of the enthusiasm awakened by the visit of the popular Sovereign, the completion of so useful and ornamental a fabric must have been an occasion of no ordinary interest to every inhabitant of the district.

The *programme*, as the French would say, of the day's *fete* has been so recently given in the "chronicles of the times," that we need not repeat it. A few descriptive particulars of the Bridge, from *The Times Journal*, may be found to possess a more permanent value:—

"It consists of three very flat segmental arches of granite. The middle arch of 74 feet span, and the two side arches of 66 feet each; besides two side arches of 10 feet each for the towing-paths, and six brick arches of 20 feet span each, two on the Surrey side, and four on the Middlesex side, to allow the floods to pass off. The whole is surmounted by a plain, bold cornice, and block parapet of granite, with pedestal for the lamps, and a neat toll-house. The approaches to the Bridge on either side form gentle curves of easy ascent. The cost of the Bridge and approaches has been about 41,000*l*. The appearance of the whole is very light and elegant. This is owing chiefly to the slight dimensions of the piers, which are smaller in proportion to the span of the arches they support than those of any other bridge in England; but this slight appearance does not, we understand, detract in any degree from their strength, or from the durability of the superincumbent structure."

From the same authority we gather this circumstantial account of the Bridges erected at Staines from the year 1262:

"The first erection mentioned in the archives of Staines, was a wooden bridge, said to have been erected in the year 1262; it was constructed of piles of oak driven into the bed of the river and covered with planks. We hear of no new erection from that period down to the year 1794; but from that year to the present, there have been not less than four new bridges in succession, and on nearly the same site. In the year 1794 and 1795, a new bridge, of three semicircular arches of stone, from the design of the

celebrated Paul Sandby, was erected, but, from some defect in its construction, it lasted only five years, when it was replaced by a very elegant bridge of one arch, of 180 feet span, of cast iron, from the design of Mr. Thomas Wilson, the architect of the celebrated bridge over the river Weir, at Sunderland.

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The design was attributed to the noted author of the *Rights of Man*; but the arch designed by him was cast in the year 1790, by Messrs. Walkers, at Rotherham, whence it was brought to London, and erected at the bowling-green of the Yorkshire Stingo public-house, where it was exhibited to the public; Paine not being able to defray the expense, the arch was taken down and carried back to Rotherham; part of it was afterwards used in the Sunderland bridge, and part, it is supposed, in the Staines bridge. This last, like its immediate predecessor, was not destined to last long, for it had scarcely been opened one month, when it was found necessary to close it to the public, the arch having sunk in a very alarming degree. His late Majesty King George the Third was said to have been among the last to pass over it. In this emergency the late Mr. Rennie was consulted, who pronounced the bridge altogether dangerous, in consequence of the weakness of the abutments. No alternative remained but to remove the iron bridge entirely, and patch up the old wooden bridge until a new one of wood was built. That bridge, which is the present old bridge, continued to stand, with various repairs and alterations, until the year 1828, when, in consequence of the decay of the piles, and the continual heavy expenses required to uphold it, the Commissioners determined to build a new one of more durable materials. Messrs. Rennie were therefore applied to for designs, and a bill was brought into Parliament to authorize the Commissioners to raise funds. The works were commenced in the spring of 1829, and on the 14th of September following the first stone was laid by their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Clarence (their present Majesties). Since then, the works have been carried on to their present completion under the direction of Mr. G. Rennie and Mr. Brown, the superintendents, and Messrs. Jolliffe and Banks, the contractors."

The Engraving is from a Sketch by our obliging Windsor Correspondent: it was taken from the old bridge, whence the spectator enjoys a delightful view of Windsor Castle, through the centre arch of the new fabric.

By the way, we noticed the project of this new stone bridge, in connexion with our Engraving of the new church at Staines, in vol. xii. of *The Mirror*, August 30, 1828.

* * * * *

THE WRECK.

(FOR THE MIRROR.)

No mare, no more, o'er the dark blue sea,
Will the gallant vessel bound,
Fearless and proud as the warrior's plume
At the trumpet's startling sound;
No more will her banner assert its claim



To empire on the foam,
And the sailors cheer as the thunder rolls
From the guns of their wave-girt home!

Her white sails gleam'd like the sunny dawn
On the brow of the sapphire sky,
And her thunder echoed along the cliffs,
Awaking the seamew's cry;
Oh! it was glorious to see her glide
Triumphantly over the sea,
With her blue flag fluttering in the wind,
The symbol of victory.

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But she lies forlorn in the breakers now,
Her stately masts are gone,
And cold are the hearts of the dauntless crew
That yielded their swords to none;
The gun is hush'd in her lofty sides,
And the flute on her silent deck;
Alas! that a queenly form like hers
Should ever have been a wreck!

Thus Hope's illusions droop away
From the heart which their beauty won,
And leave it forlorn as the gallant ship,
Ere its summer of life is begun.
It is peopled with lovely images,
As o'er the sea it glides,
But wreck'd is its deep idolatry
On the dark and stormy tides.
Deal. G.R.C.

* * * * *

THE ARBALEST OF ROBIN HOOD.

(TO THE EDITOR.)

In No. 538, of *The Mirror*, is described an elegant Cross-bow, and a desire expressed for information where such things are *now* to be seen. I have lived many years in Yorkshire, and have seen several kinds of these bows at *Kirklees Hall*, the seat of Sir George Armitage, a few miles from Huddersfield. Amongst those bows I saw one, at least six feet long; but some of them were not more than two or three feet in length. There were also a variety of weapons of war, with helmets, and some curious boots, which buttoned on the leg from top to the bottom, and had wooden soles. They were then kept in an attic on the top of the leads over the hall. Many of these relics are said to have belonged to the famous "Robin Hood," who lies buried in the park; the remains of the ancient grave-stone having been surrounded with a handsome iron railing, by the late Sir George Armitage; in the wall is an old inscription on brass; it is situated in a very gloomy place. Not far distant from his grave are the remains of a Nunnery, and a burial-ground, with tombs in it; but I could find no date, either in the house or on these tombs. One of the tombs has this inscription round its edge:

"Sweet Jesus of Nazareth, show mercy to Elizabeth Stainton, late
Prioress of this place."

If an intelligent person were to call at the Hall, he would be able to gather much information of an authentic nature respecting Robin Hood.[1]

[1] We hope this note may meet the eye of some of our Yorkshire correspondents.

JOHN BATEMAN.

* * * * *

SONGS, FOUND IN THE ALBUM OF A DELIA CRUSCAN POET.

(FOR THE MIRROR.)

THE HUMMING-BIRD.

BY T. MOORE, ESQ.

Thou winged gem, whose starlike splendour
Gleams on the bosom of the rose,
I lore thy light when skies are tender,
And winds are wandering to repose.
The Grecian lute, the Moorish song,
And Crockford's home, with all that's in it,
May challenge fame from many a throng,
But thou, *alone*, fair bird, canst win it!



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I've often watch'd thy plumage glancing
So evanescent in thy bower,
And heard thy silver voice entrancing
Soothe me, as music soothes the flower.
Although diminutive as me,
Thy song is sweeter, who can doubt it?
So, as I cannot sing like thee,
I'll break my lute, and live without it.

G.R.C.

THE SKYLARK.

BY L.E.L.

Thou minstrel of the sunny air,
Thy vocal fount is rich with song,
And fragrant breezes softly bear
Its silver melody along.

I love to hear thy liquid note
When bees are humming on the rose,
And in their sapphire ocean float
The stars prophetic of repose.

Thou feel'st the sunny influence
Like Memnon's fabled lyre of old,
And wanderest in the beam intense
Which turns the liquid air to gold.

The spirit's bright imaginings
Ne'er soar'd to loftier spheres than thee,
And if I had, thy fairy wings,
Afar from earthly haunts I'd flee.

Inspid are the weekly themes
Of ——'s imbecile review,
Whose page with adulation teems,
And makes me "beautifully blue."

But cockney praise is ebbing fast,
And Sappho's lute has lost its power,
And surely my career is past
Like Summer's brightest, loveliest flower.



Arcades ambo, Moore and me
Are Delia Crusca's sweetest doves,
And ours too is the poetry
Which meditative beauty loves.

Sweet bird, farewell! and be it thine
To thrill the blue air with thy song;
But fame will wreath this brow of mine,
If I am right, and *Pope* is wrong.

G.R.C.

* * * * *

DOMESTIC LIFE IN AMERICA.

(IN A LETTER FROM A CORRESPONDENT AT CINCINNATI.)

This town is far superior to our late place of sojourn, Pittsburgh, being spacious and clean, with handsome houses and wood for fuel. Pittsburgh, on the contrary, is dirty and confined, abounding in iron works burning coal, which gives forth a denser smoke than English coal. The houses in this place, when we visited it in 1818, were mostly of wood; these have been in general removed on wheels drawn by oxen and horses, and placed in the suburbs, whence they are now removing once more. Here are four markets well supplied with the necessities, and even the luxuries, of life, including almost everything you can think of, and many things which you have never thought of. Apple butter, for instance, is one of the latter, and is made by stewing apples in new cider, after it has been boiled down to one-third of its bulk. It is sold at 6-1/4 cts. per quart, and is very delicious. The fruits of this country are abundant: apples are excellent, and in profusion; peaches are plentiful

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in most seasons, but sometimes totally fail; grapes grow wild and *tame*, *i.e.* cultivated or imported; cherries are not very good, and dearer than at Pittsburgh; pears, strawberries, and raspberries are not so choice as with you; quinces are plentiful and fine; wild plums perfume the whole house, like jessamine or mignonette, and are excellent for pies and tarts. The persimon is a fruit to which you are a stranger; it may be ranked with the plums, but has four stones, and is not fit to eat till bitten by the frost, when its austere and astringent taste disappears, and it becomes nearly transparent, and as rich and sweet as Guava jelly. The May-apple, or Mandrake, a wild fruit, is a favourite with our young folks; it grows on a single-steemed plant, usually one foot high, and is about the size of a plum, but with seeds, and in taste resembling a highly flavoured pear. The custard-apple, or paw-paw, is my favourite, and my boys go with me into the woods to gather them when ripe. In the summer, water melons, musk melons, nutmeg melons, and Cantaloupes may be seen in large heaps in the market, or in carts or wagons, at 6-1/4 to 25 and 50 cts. each, some weighing 40 lbs.

Egg-plants, which you have seen as curiosities, are here brought to market; some of them of purple colour, are as large as a child's carpet-ball: they are sliced and fried in butter, and I am told have the flavour of fried oysters. Cucumbers are unfortunately superabundant, and the free use of them induces a variety of diseases which are attributed to the climate. Squashes, cimolins, and cushas, are gourds which are mashed up with butter like turnips; pumpkins of this country are very sweet, and make delicious pies, or rather cheesecakes; cranberries are brought from a distance, and pine-apples are not very expensive, being brought up the river from Bermuda.

Among the natural curiosities of the country, are the Stone Mountain in Carolina, which may rank in antiquity with Stonehenge. It is remarkable for a circular wall of stone of great thickness, probably built by a people distinct from the present race of Indians, who are quite incapable of erecting any building except a wigwam, or a pile of loose stones over a grave. Next is the Kentucky Cavern, or as it is called, on account of its magnitude, the Mammoth Cave. I have an account before me of its being explored by a party in 1826, who penetrated into this gloomy, though spacious, hollow for *fifteen miles*, and were prevented from proceeding from extreme fatigue; they found the names of persons written at the farthest part. There are numbers of rooms as they are called, which are yet unexplored. In one of these, a few miles from the entrance, there was discovered many years since, a female figure sitting with a mat wrapped round her shoulders; she was quite dried to a mummy, and has for many years been exhibited in a caravan, through the United States.

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The river Ohio is here a quarter of a mile wide, and, as there is no bridge, the traffic into Kentucky is accommodated with steam ferry boats. Newport and Covington opposite, are pretty objects to look at from this side, but will not bear a nearer inspection. *Big Bone Lick*, where abundance of Mammoth bones have been discovered, is not far hence. Mr. Bullock of the London Museum is here, and has at the Lick discovered many rare specimens of bones, amongst which is a mammoth's head, with evidence of its having been furnished with a trunk, and of course having been an elephant of immense size. He has also found hoofs of horses with their bones in a fossil state, proving that the horse has been indigenous. The horses in this town being a mixture from those of South America, where they are wild—are of various colours. Some are brown and white, like pointer dogs, others are spotted like Danish dogs, and some with curled hair. I saw one which was white as far as the fore-quarter, and the rest sorrel.

An eye-witness has just related to me the following, which lately occurred in New Harmony:

A snake about two feet long, was seen to enter the hole inhabited by a crawfish,[2] from which he soon retreated, followed by the rightful tenant, who stopped in defensive attitude at the mouth of his habitation, raising his claws in defiance. The snake turned quickly round, and seized the head of the crawfish, as if to swallow him; but the crawfish soon put an end to the conflict by claspings the snake's neck with his claws, and severing the head completely from his body. This may appear marvellous; but Audubon tells a story of a rattle-snake chasing and over-taking a squirrel, which folks in America doubt.

[2] Is not this a species of land-crab?—ED. M.

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SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

* * * * *

POTTERY.[3]

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 284.)

CHINA.

The name China, by which the ware that I am about to describe is known in England, shows sufficiently the country from which we have received it. The term porcelain, which is applied to it on the continent of Europe, is Italian; *porcellana* being in that language the name of those univalve shells forming the genus *cypraea* of the conchologist, which have a high arched back like that of the hog (*porco*, Ital.), and are



remarkable for the white, smooth, vitreous glossiness of the surface about the mouth of the shell, and sometimes, as in the common cowry (*Cypraea moneta*), over the whole surface.

[3] By Mr. A. Aikin, in Trans. Soc. Arts.

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The introduction of the Chinese porcelain soon excited a strong desire in the various countries of Europe to imitate it; but as the establishment of experimental manufactories for this purpose required the expenditure of considerable sums, and at a risk beyond the means of private persons, it is chiefly to the munificence of the sovereigns of Europe that the public are indebted for the first steps made in this interesting art. In Germany, chemists and mineralogists were set to work; the latter to seek for the most appropriate raw materials, and the former to purify and to combine them in the most advantageous proportions. The French government adopted the very sensible plan of instructing some of the Jesuit missionaries, who at that time had penetrated to the court of China, and into most of the provinces of that empire, to collect on the spot specimens of the materials employed by the Chinese themselves, together with the particulars of the process. The precise result thus obtained is not known; for as a considerable rivalry existed between the different royal manufactories of this ware, the most valuable information would of course be kept as secret as possible.

Of the European manufactories of porcelain, that established at Miessen, near Dresden, by Augustus Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, in the early part of the 17th century, was the first that aspired to a competition with the Chinese. In compactness of texture and infusibility it was reckoned perfect a hundred years ago. It is not quite so white as some of the French and English porcelains, but is inferior to none in its painting, gilding, and other decorations.

The French royal manufactory at Sevres, near Paris, has been for several years in a gradually advancing state, with regard to the whiteness, compactness, and infusibility of the body, the elegance of the forms, the brilliancy of the colours, the elaborateness of the drawing, and the superb enrichments of the gilding. The private manufactories of porcelain in France imitate and approach more or less near to the royal establishment.

At Berlin and at Vienna are royal porcelain manufactories in high esteem, as well as in some of the smaller states of Germany.

BRITISH PORCELAIN.

The first manufactories of porcelain in England were those at Bow, and at Chelsea, near London. In these, however, nothing but soft porcelain was made. This was a mixture of white clay and fine white sand from Alum bay, in the Isle of Wight, to which such a proportion of pounded glass was added as, without causing the ware to soften so as to lose its form, would give it when exposed to a full red heat a semi-transparency resembling that of the fine porcelain of China. The Chelsea ware, besides bearing a very imperfect similarity in body to the Chinese, admitted only of a very fusible lead glaze; and in the taste of its patterns, and in the style of their execution, stood as low perhaps as any on the list. The china works at Derby come, I believe, the next in date; then those of Worcester, established in 1751: and the most modern are those of

Coalport, in Shropshire; of the neighbourhood of Newcastle, in Staffordshire, and in other parts of that county.

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The porcelain clay used at present in all the English works is obtained in Cornwall, by pounding and washing over the gray disintegrated granite which occurs in several parts of that county: by this means the quartz and mica are got rid of, and the clay resulting from the decomposition of the felspar is procured in the form of a white, somewhat gritty powder. This clay is not fusible by the highest heat of our furnaces, though the felspar, from the decomposition of which it is derived, forms a spongy milk-white glass, or enamel, at a low white heat. But felspar, when decomposed by the percolation of water, while it forms a constituent of granite, loses the potash, which is one of its ingredients to the amount of about 15 per cent, and with it the fusibility that this latter substance imparts.

The siliceous ingredient is calcined flint; and in some of the porcelain works, (particularly, I believe, those at Worcester,) the soapstone from the Lizard-point, in Cornwall, is employed. These are all the avowed materials; but there is little doubt that the alkalies, or alkaline earths, either pure or in combination, are also used, in order to dispose the other ingredients to assume that state of semi-fusion characteristic of porcelain.

(The principal processes are) the grinding and due mixture of the ingredients, in order to obtain a mass sufficiently plastic; the forming this mass on the wheel; the subsequent drying of the ware; the first firing, by which it is brought to the state of biscuit; the application of the firmer colours occasionally on the surface of the biscuit; the dipping the biscuit in the glaze; the second firing, by which the glaze is vitrified; the pencilling in of the more tender colours on the surface of the glaze; and the third and last firing that is given to the porcelain.

It is not for me to determine which of our English porcelains is the best; probably, indeed, one will be found superior in hardness, another in whiteness, a third in the thinness and evenness of the glaze, a fourth in the form of the articles, a fifth in the design, and a sixth in the colours. In hardness and in fusibility, they are probably all inferior to the Dresden and to the Sevres porcelain; for pieces in biscuit and in white glaze, from both these manufactories, are imported in considerable quantities, in order to be painted and finished here. But it is equally certain, that the last ten years have seen the commencement, and, in part, the completion, of such improvements in this fabric, as will probably place the English porcelains on an equality with the best of the continental European ones.

Advantage has recently been taken of the semi-transparency of porcelain biscuit to form it into plates, and to delineate upon it some very beautiful copies of landscapes and other drawings, by so adapting the various thicknesses of the plate as to produce, when held between the eye and the light, the effects of light and shadow in common drawings. The invention originated in the ingenuity of our French neighbours.

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NOTES OF A READER

IMPROVEMENT OF LANCASHIRE.

The west of England has considerably the advantage over the eastern side of the island. One way or another nature did much more for it. It is true, that the eastern side was civilized much earlier; yet human ingenuity and industry have of late years been much more successfully employed in turning the gifts of nature to the best possible account. Ireland and America are customers, for whom, though they were long in coming, it was worth while to wait. After all, Lancashire is the most remarkable and characteristic feature in the comparison. From being among the most backward parts of England, this county has *worked* its way into the front rank. The contrast between its condition up to the middle of the last century, and the astonishing spectacle which it exhibits at present, belongs to the transformation which a hundred years create in a newly settled country like America, far more than to the gradual improvements and changes of an old English county.

It would be curious to analyze the concurrent causes, and marshal the successive steps, by which Lancashire has advanced;—not only succeeding in appropriating to itself a leading interest in the creative inventions of Watt and Arkwright, but connecting its name in honourable alliance with literature and science. The very circumstances from which a contrary presumption would originally have been drawn, have (singularly enough) principally contributed to its extraordinary progress. Lancashire owes the canals, by which the commercial thoroughfare of that end of England has been turned from the Humber to the Mersey, to the enterprise of a *Peer*. It owes the docks, which have about them almost a Roman presentiment of future greatness, to the spirit of a *Corporation*. It owes the taste and accomplishments, by which the character of its wealth has been raised above the drudgery and fanaticism of money-getting, almost entirely to the zeal of a few *Dissenters*. The name of Governor Clinton is not so pre-eminently united with the canal policy of America, as is the name of the Duke of Bridgewater with the canals of England. He staked his last shilling on the chance of thus cutting out an inland north-west passage to the Atlantic. The corporation of Liverpool, by an enlightened application of their vast resources, have accelerated, consolidated, and secured the realization, of every expectation and contingency which fortune threw in their way. They have hastened, not to say, anticipated, events. There can be as little doubt of the effect which the light radiating from the assemblage of Priestley, Wakefield, Aikin, &c. at Warrington; from the presence of Percival, Henry, Ferriar, and Dalton, at Manchester; and from that of Roscoe and Currie at Liverpool, spread over their circle. The literary attainments and cultivation of the manufacturers and merchants of Lancashire, as a body, seem otherwise likely long to have lagged

behind their general powers of understanding, and their real station in society.—
Edinburgh Review.

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ENNUI OF FASHION.

It must be owned that five years form an awful lapse in human life:—a lapse whose hours and minutes leave no where a trace more sharp and injurious than on the minds and countenances of individuals involved in the buzzing, stinging gnatswarms of fashionable life. Elsewhere, existence marches with a more dignified step, and the scenes pictured among the records of our memory assume a grander aspect; they lie in masses,—their shadows are broader,—their lights more brilliantly thrown out. But reminiscences of a life of ton are as vexatious as they are frivolous. The season of 1829 differs from that of 1830, only inasmuch as its quadrilles are varied with galoppes as well as waltzes, and danced at Lady A.'s and Lady B.'s,—instead of the Duchess of D.'s, and Countess E.'s. The Duchess is dead,—the Countess ruined;—but no matter!—there are still plenty of balls to be had. “Another and another still succeeds!” Since young ladies *will* grow up to be presented, lady-mothers and aunts *must* continue to project breakfasts, water parties, and galas, whereby to throw them in the way of flirtation, courtship, and marriage. Mischief, in her most smiling mask, sits like the beautiful witch in Thalaba at an everlasting spinning-wheel, weaving a mingled yarn of sin and sorrow for the daughters of Fashion. Although the cauldron of Hecate and her priestesses has vanished from the heath at Forres, it bubbles in nightly incantations among the elm-trees of Grosvenor Square; and Hopper and Hellway, Puckle and Straddling, now croak forth their chorus of rejoicing where golden lamps swing blazing over the ecarte tables, and the soft strains of the Mazurka enervate the atmosphere of the gorgeous temples of May Fair. Never yet was there a woman *really* improved in attraction by mingling with the motley throng of the *beau monde*. She may learn to dress better, to step more gracefully; her head may assume a more elegant turn, her conversation become more polished, her air more distinguished;—but in point of *attraction* she acquires nothing. Her simplicity of mind departs;—her generous, confiding impulses of character are lost;—she is no longer inclined to interpret favourably of men and things,—she listens without believing,—sees without admiring; has suffered persecution without learning mercy;—and been taught to mistrust the candour of others by the forfeiture of her own. The freshness of her disposition has vanished with the freshness of her complexion; hard lines are perceptible in her very soul, and crowsfeet contract her very fancy. No longer pure and fair as the statue of alabaster, her beauty, like that of some painted waxen effigy, is tawdry and meretricious. It is not alone the rouge upon the cheek and the false tresses adorning the forehead, which repel the ardour of admiration; it is the artificiality of mind with which such efforts are connected that breaks the spell of beauty.

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From the Fair of May Fair.

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BAMBOROUGH CASTLE

Is situate on the romantic coast of Northumberland, "over against" an obscure town of the same name. It stands upon a basalt rock, of a triangular shape, high, rugged, and abrupt on the land side; flanked by the German Ocean, and strong natural rampires of sand, matted together with sea rushes on the east; and only accessible to an enemy on the south-east, which is guarded by a deep, dry ditch, and a series of towers in the wall, on each side of the gateway. Nature has mantled the rock with lichens of various rich tints: its beetling brow is 150 feet above the level of the sea, upon a stratum of mouldering rock, apparently scorched with violent heat, and having beneath it a close flinty sandstone. Its crown is girt with walls and towers, which on the land side have been nearly all repaired. The outer gateway stands between two fine old towers, with time-worn heads; twelve paces within it is a second gate, which is machicolated, and has a portcullis; and, within this, on the left hand, on a lofty point of rock, is a very ancient round tower of great strength; commanding a pass subject to every annoyance from the besieged. This fort is believed to be of Saxon origin. The keep stands on the area of the rock, having an open space around it. It is square, and of that kind of building which prevailed from the Conquest till about the time of our second Henry. It had no chimney; but fires had been made in the middle of a large room, which was lighted by a window near its top, three feet square. All the other rooms were lighted by slit or loop holes, six inches broad. The walls are of small stones, from a quarry at Sunderland on the sea, three miles distant: within them is a draw well, discovered in 1770, in clearing the cellar from sand and rubbish; its depth is 145 feet, cut through solid rock, of which seventy-five feet are of whinstone. The remains of a chapel were discovered here, under a prodigious mass of land, in the year 1773; its architecture was pure Saxon, and the ancient font being found, was preserved in the keep. The chapel has been rebuilt on the old foundations.

[Illustration: (*Bamborough Castle before the general repairs.*)]

The founder of the Castle is stated by Matthew of Westminster to have been Ida, King of Northumberland. Sir Walter Scott sings

Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they
here,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown.[4]

[4] Marmion.

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It was destroyed by the Danes in 993; but about the time of the Conquest was in good repair. In 1095, it was in the possession of Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, when it was besieged, and, after much difficulty, taken by William II. The castle lost the greatest part of its beauty in a siege after the battle of Hexham. Camden tells us "from that time it has suffered by time and winds, which throw up incredible quantities of sand from the sea upon its walls, through the windows which are open." Sir John Forster was governor of it in Elizabeth's reign; and his grandson John obtained a grant of it and the manor from James the First. His descendant, Thomas, forfeited it in 1715; but his maternal uncle, Nathaniel, Lord Crewe, bishop of Durham, purchased his estates, and bequeathed them to charitable purposes in 1720. The sunken rocks and shifting sands of this coast had long been a terror to the mariners, but under his lordship's will, Dr. Sharp, then archdeacon of Durham, fitted up the keep of the Castle, for the reception of suffering seamen, and of property which might be rescued from the fury of the ocean. Regulations were also adopted, both to prevent accidents on the coast, and to alleviate misfortunes when they had occurred. A nine pounder, placed at the bottom of the great tower, gives signals to ships in distress, and in case of a wreck, announces the same to the Custom House officers and their servants, who hasten to prevent the wreck being plundered. In addition to this, during a storm, horsemen patrol the coast, and rewards are paid for the earliest intelligence of vessels in distress. A flag is always hoisted when any ship is seen in distress on the Fern Islands or Staples; or a rocket thrown up at night, which gives notice to the Holy Island fishermen, who can put off to the spot when no boat from the main can get over the breakers. Life-boats have likewise been added to the establishment. The vast increase of the residuary rents of the Castle estates also enables the trustees to support within its walls two free-schools, a library, infirmary, thirty beds for shipwrecked sailors, and a granary, whence poor persons are supplied with provisions at the first price.[5] Altogether, the establishment of Bamborough merits the epithet of "princely," which it has received from the historians of the county. Its philanthropic endowment has not been suffered to decay with the romance of olden time, but the charitable intentions of the testator are fulfilled, so as to maintain a lasting record of his active benevolence. Such magnificence may be said to eclipse all the glitter and gleam of chivalry, and make them appear but as idle dreams.

[5] See *Mirror*, vol. xiii. p 415.—One of the best features of the establishment is the gratuitous circulation of the library for twenty miles round; the books being lent to any householder of good report residing within twenty miles of the castle.

A boundless view of the ocean presents itself from the towers of Bamborough Castle, studded with small islands, having the Coquet Island on the south, and the Holy Island on the north.

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MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

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ORIGIN OF EPSOM RACES.

In a pleasant little volume modestly entitled *Some Particulars relating to the History of Epsom*, the following facts are collected with much diligence. At the present season, they may be acceptable to our readers.

“When these races first commenced, we have not been able with certainty to trace. Few writers, who mention the district, do more than simply state the fact, that horse races are annually held at Epsom.

“Whether they were at first periodical or occasional, we will not presume to determine, though the latter is, we think, the most probable.

“Races, it is generally agreed, took their origin from, if they did not give birth to, the Olympic games. The first information we have of their existence in this country is in the reign of Henry II. At that time, and for many ages afterwards, the sport must have been merely a rude pastime, perhaps as destitute of the science of the present system, as of the vices, which are too generally engendered by it.

“There can be no doubt, that Epsom downs (or as they are frequently, though erroneously written in old writings, Banstead downs) early became the spot, upon which the lovers of racing indulged their fancy. And, perhaps, the known partiality of King James I., for this species of diversion, will justify us in ascribing their commencement to the period when he resided at the palace of Nonsuch.

“The following extract from Clarendon’s History of the Rebellion, will shew, that during the troubles of his unfortunate successor, Charles I., races upon Epsom downs, were viewed as no uncommon occurrence.—’Soon after the meeting, which was held at Guildford, 18th May, 1648, to address the two Houses of Parliament, that the King, their only lawful sovereign, might be restored to his due honors, and might come to his parliament for a personal treaty, &c.—a meeting of the royalists was held on Banstead (Epsom) downs, under the pretence of a horse race, and six hundred horses were collected and marched to Reigate.’

“King James had imbibed a predilection for horse races, before he ascended the English throne; they were in high estimation in Scotland during his minority, previously to which, the English parliament seem to have turned their attention to the subject.

“We find, that in the time of Henry VII. and his successors, Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, several acts of parliament were made to prevent the exportation of horses to Scotland, and other parts.

“There is an entry in the Lord’s Journal, June 15th, 1540—’At length, the bill is read this day, for encouraging the breed of horses, of a larger stature, and despatched with unanimous consent, and without a dissenting voice.’

“The great men of Elizabeth’s reign, appear to have been fully disposed to profit by the example and injunctions of her father. Italian masters were invited over; the art of managing horses became an universal accomplishment, among the nobility and gentry of England; but most of the professors, both of equitation and farriery, were foreigners.

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"Horses were not yet kept exclusively for the purpose of running races, but gentlemen matched their hunters or hacknies, and usually rode the race themselves.

"The most fashionable trial, however, of the speed and goodness of their horses, was hunting red herrings, or 'the train scent,' as it was then called, from the body of some animal, which had been previously drawn across hedge and ditch. Here the scent was certain and strong, and the hounds would run upon it to the end, with their utmost speed. The matched horses followed these hounds, and to be in with them, was generally accounted a very satisfactory proof of goodness.

"Markham, and that celebrated riding master, Michael Baret, describe, also, another mode of running matches across the country in those days denominated the wild goose chase; an imitation of which has continued in occasional use, to the present time, under the name of steeple hunting; that is to say, two horsemen, drunk or sober, in or out of their wits, fix upon a steeple or some other conspicuous distant object, to which they make a straight cut over hedge, ditch, and gate. We think our readers will do any thing but smile, at this rational pastime for reasonable creatures.

"The wild goose chase, however, at last became more regular and better conducted. It was prescribed, that after the horse had run twelve score yards, he was to be followed wherever he went by the others, within a certain distance agreed upon, as twice or thrice his length. A horse being left behind twelve score, or any limited number of yards, was deemed beaten, and lost the match.

"These rude and barbarous modes of horse-racing gave way, in the reign of James I., to the more scientific, accurate, and satisfactory trials, of the horses carrying stated weights, over measured and even ground.

"That monarch, as has before been intimated, brought with him from Scotland, a strong predilection for the turf, which must have prevailed to a considerable degree in that country, for we find, that during his reign there, and before his accession to the crown of England, it was deemed necessary to restrain, by an express law, the passion of the Scots for horse-racing, and laying large bets on the events.

"The reign of James I. may be fairly stated, as the period when horse-racing first became a general and national amusement. The races appear to have been at that time conducted nearly in the same style, as to essentials, as in the present day.

"They were then called bell courses, the prize being a silver bell; the winner was said to bear or carry the bell.

"Regular prizes were now run for in various parts of England. The king and his court, frequently attended races at Croydon and Enfield, in the vicinity of London.

“The first match, upon record, in this country, was one against time, which occurred in the year 1604, when John Lepton,[6] a groom, in the service of King James I., undertook to ride five times between London and York, from Monday morning until Saturday night, and actually performed the task within five days.

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[6] This should be John Lenton, and the year 1603,—See *Mirror*, vol. xvii, p. 181.

“At this period, much attention was paid to the pedigrees of horses, for the purpose of enhancing their reputation and worth. The training discipline, in all its variety of regular food, clothing, physic, airing, and gallops, was in full use; and the weights that race horses had to carry were adjusted; the most usual of which were ten stone.

“We find that, soon after the accession of Charles I., an ordinance was issued, enjoining the substitution of bits or curbs, instead of snaffles, which had probably been of late introduction in the army. Not long afterwards, the king granted a special licence to William Smith and others, to import into this kingdom, horses, mares and geldings; further enjoining them to provide coach horses of the height of fourteen hands and above, and not less than three, nor exceeding seven years of age.

“During the civil wars, amusements of the turf were partially suspended, but not forgotten; for we find that Mr. Place, stud-master to Cromwell, was proprietor of the famous horse, White Turk, (the sire of Wormwood and Commoner) and of several capital brood mares, one of which, a great favourite, he concealed in a vault, during the search after Cromwell's effects, at the time of the Restoration, from which circumstance, she took the name of the Coffin Mare, and is designated as such in various pedigrees.

“King Charles II., soon after his restoration, re-established the races at Newmarket, which had been instituted by James I. He divided them into regular meetings, and substituted, both there and at other places, silver cups or bowls, of the value of one hundred pounds, for the royal gift of the ancient bells, which were in consequence generally dropped, both in name and effect.

“William III., though not fond of the turf, paid much attention to the breed of horses for martial service; and in his reign some of the most celebrated stallions were imported.

“George, Prince of Denmark, was a great amateur of horse-racing. He obtained from his royal consort, Queen Anne, grants of royal plates for several places, among which Epsom is, however, not mentioned.

“King George I. is not handed down to us as a sporting character; but towards the latter end of his reign, the change of the royal plates into purses of hundred guineas each took place.

“In the 13th year of the reign of King George II., an act, cap. 19. was passed, 'to restrain and prevent the excessive increase of horse races.'

“By this act, after reciting 'that the great number of horse races for small plates, prizes, or sums of money had contributed very much to the encouragement of idleness, to the

impoverishment of many of the meaner sort of the subjects of this kingdom, and to the prejudice of the breed of strong and useful horses;' it was enacted that no person should, thenceforth, enter and start more than one horse, mare or gelding, for one and the same plate, prize, or sum of money. And that no plate, or prize of a less value than 50l. should be run for, under the penalty of 200l.

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"It was also by the same act further enacted, that at every such race, for a plate or prize of the value of 50l. and upwards, each horse, if five years old, should carry ten stone; if six years old, eleven stone; and if seven years old, twelve stone. And that the owner of any horse, carrying less than the specified weight, should forfeit his horse, and pay the penalty of 200l."

(TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.)

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THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

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THE FAIR OF MAY FAIR.

The volumes of sketches of fashionable life with this quaint title will serve to amuse a few inveterate novel-readers; while occasional pages may induce others to take up the thread of the narrative. The flying follies of high life, or rather, we think, of affected ton, are hit off with truth and vigour, and there is a pleasantry in the writer's style which is an acceptable relief to the dulness of common-place details. We shall endeavour to detach a scene or two, one, as a specimen of "the art of ingeniously tormenting," and the incipient waywardness of a newly-married pair.

"From the first months of his domestication with his wife at Wellwood Abbey, Sir Henry Wellwood had intended, had *longed*, to commence his little system of tender remonstrance; but the slightest insinuation of a difference of opinion was sufficient to fan the embers of Henrietta's distemperature into a conflagration. The blaze was not strong, indeed; for the lady had always been accustomed to find a fit of wilfulness, or of affected despondency, more available and becoming than one of hasty anger. But she was tolerably expert in those piquant flippancies of speech which harass the enemy like a straggling fire; and could contrive, when it suited her purpose, to make herself as disagreeable as if her face had not been that of a cherub, or her voice seraphic.

"'A woman,' quoth La Bruyere, 'must be charming indeed, whose husband does not repent, ten times a day, that he is a married man.' Sir Henry Wellwood would have scoffed at the axiom. The 'idol of his soul' was still an idol; although, like the votaries of old, he had managed to discover that it was not wholly formed of precious metals; that its feet were of clay! He still fancied himself the happiest of mortals; particularly when Henrietta, in her best looks and spirits, was riding by his side through the Wellwood plantations, listening to the project of his intended improvements;—or seated in her boudoir sketching designs and modelling plans for his two new lodges. Sometimes



after dinner she would busy herself with her guitar, and insist on his attempting a second to her Italian nocturno; sometimes she persuaded him to lend her his arm towards the village, to assist in executing that easy work of benevolence, the depletion of her silken purse. At such, moments she was indeed enchanting;—and the fascinated Wellwood was quite willing to echo the chorus of Mrs. Delafield's visitors, that he had 'drawn a prize.'

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“But the sands of life are not formed exclusively of diamond sparks. Flint and granite mingle in the contents of the hour-glass; and Sir Henry often found himself required to listen to fractious complaints of old Roddington’s innovations, of Lawford’s negligence—of roses that would not blow at the gardener’s bidding,—of London booksellers, who would not send down the new novels in proper time,—of old women who refused to be cured of their rheumatism, and young ones who declined becoming scholars at her platting school. His own misdemeanours, too, were frequent and unpardonable. He had a knack of carrying off the very volume she was reading,—of losing *her* place, and leaving his own marked by leaving the unfortunate book sprawling upon its face on the table, like a drunkard on the ground. He often kept her waiting five minutes for her ride, or twenty for dinner; would stop and detain her, in their walks, while he corrected the practical blunders of some superannuated hedger and ditcher; had a trick of whipping off the thistle-tops while driving her in the garden chair, to the imminent indignation of her ponies; was sometimes seen to nod after dinner, when the morning’s run had been a good one; and had an opinion of his own in politics, which precisely reversed those of Lady Mandeville and her coterie.—In a word, he was often very ‘tiresome!’ and whenever the fair Henrietta was excited into pronouncing that sentence on his proceedings, it was a signal for ill-humour for the remainder of the day; or rather till the spoiled child would condescend to be coaxed into a more satisfactory mood of mind.”

But we are more struck with the appalling fidelity of the following scene in a tale named *the Divorcee*. The heroine, Amelia, is married in early life to a Mr. Allanby, “a man with 10,000*l.* per annum, and a grey pigtail:” the match turns out a miserable one: Amelia’s dishonour by Vavasor Kendal, her divorce, and Mr. Allanby’s death are told in a few pages—the guilty pair, Vavasor and Amelia, flee to Paris, and we are introduced to this faithful picture of Parisian vice:—

“The infirmity of Amelia’s health served at least to release her from those forced efforts of gaiety which had recoiled so heavily on her feelings. Her day for vivacity was gone. —In an atmosphere whose buoyancy is exhausted, the feather falls as heavily as the plummet.

“But instead of commiserating the languor and feebleness extending from the physical to the moral existence of the invalid, Vavasor only made her dulness an excuse for flying to the relief of society more congenial with his own tendency to vice and folly. Lady Emlyn who in London was the leader of a coterie devoted to the excitements of high-play,—a coterie that felt privileged to inveigh with horror against ‘gambling,’ because its members ventured their thousands on games where cunning tempers the fortuities of chance,—on the manoeuvres of *ecarte* and whist instead of the dare-all risks of

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hazard and rouge-et-noir,—had now removed her card-table from Grosvenor-square to a splendid hotel in the Rue Rivoli; where she had the honour of assembling, twice a week, a larger proportion of the idle and licentious of the exclusive caste, than could be found in any other suite of drawing-rooms in civilized Europe. Her *salon* was in fact crowded with busy ranks of those swindlers of distinction who, in opposition to their brethren of lower pretensions, (the chevaliers d'industrie), ought surely to be termed the chevaliers de la paresse. Among these, the brilliant air and lively effrontery of Captain Kendal secured him a warm acceptance; and by frequenting the circle of Lady Emlyn, he had not only the gratification of escaping from the insipid mediocrity of the home his vices had created, but acquired the power of indulging in others which were now still dearer to his heart.

“Vavasor Kendal was an expert player. Like other frigid egotists, his head and heart were always at leisure; and his successes had been the means, on more than one occasion, of extending his means of disgraceful enjoyment. At least, however, his career lay on the verge of a precipice; for playing at a stake beyond the limit of his fortune, a single faltering step might at any hour precipitate him into an abyss of shame and ruin. Amelia was often tempted to doubt whether she had more cause to dread that intoxication of triumph, which induced him to still further excesses, or the reverses tending to aggravate the violence of temper to which she was an habitual victim. The fluctuating fortunes of the gamester,—his losses or gains,—were equally a source of suffering to herself. But the Carnival was drawing to a close; she soon began ardently to wish that his sister might grow weary of the increasing dulness of the French capital, and migrate among other swallows of the season, in search of new pleasures.

“Long had she been in expectation of an announcement to this effect, when one night, —a cold cheerless night in March,—Vavasor exceeded even his ordinary period of absence. The habitually dissolute of Paris rarely keep late hours. Vice does not form with *them*, as with the English *roue*, an occasional excess, but is consistent and regular in its habits. Captain Kendal usually returned home between two and three; and Amelia was accustomed to sit up, and by her own services lighten the labours of their scanty establishment. It was *she*, the invalid, who was careful to keep up light and fire for the tyrant of the domestic hearth.

“But on this occasion two o'clock came,—three, four, five o'clock,—and no Vavasor. Hour after hour she listened to the chime of the gaudy timepiece decorating their shabby apartment; and while the night advanced, in all its chilly, lonely, comfortless protraction, shivered as she added new logs to the dying embers, and as she hoped or despaired of his return, alternately replaced the veilleuse by candles,

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the candles by a veilleuse. She had already assumed her night-apparel; and alter wandering like an unquiet spirit from her own apartment to the sitting-room and back again, a thousand, thousand times,—after reclining her exhausted frame and throbbing head against the door of the ante-room, in the trust of catching the sound of his well-known step upon the stairs, she threw herself down on the sofa for a moment's respite. But in a few minutes she started up again.—Surely that was *his* voice, which reached her from some passenger in the street below, some passenger humming an air from the new Opera, according to Vavasor's custom, when returning flushed with the excitement of success? Again and hurriedly did she prepare for his reception,—again place his chair by the fire, his slippers beside it; and stand with a beating heart and suspended breath, to await the entrance of the truant. But, no! it was *not* him. The wanderer had hastened onwards to some happier home. The street was quiet again. She would take a book and strive to beguile the tediousness of suspense.

“Dreary indeed is that hour of the twenty-four which may be said to afford the true division between night and day; when even the latest watcher has retired to rest, while the earliest artisans scarcely yet rouse themselves for the renewal of their struggle with existence;—when even the studious, the sorrowing, and the dissipated, close their over-wearied eyes;—and when those who 'do lack, and suffer hunger,' enjoy that Heaven-vouchsafed stupor affording the only interim to their consciousness of want and woe. The winds whistle more shrilly in the stillness of that lonely hour. Man and beast are in their lair, and unearthly things alone seem stirring;—the good genius glides with a holy and hallowing influence through the tranquil dwelling of virtue; the demon grins and gibbers in the deserted but reeking chambers of the vicious. Even sorrow has phantoms of its own; and when Amelia found herself a lonely watcher in the stillness of night, the kind voice of old Allanby,—the voice that was wont of yore to bid her speak her bosom's wish that it might be granted,—often seemed creeping into the inmost cell of her ear. She could fancy him close beside her,—taunting her,—touching her,—till, starting from her seat, she strove to shake off the hideous delusion. Sometimes the soft cordial tones of her mother,—her mother, who was in the grave,—seemed again dispensing those lessons of virtue of which her own life had afforded so pure an example: sometimes the playful caresses of her boys seemed to grow warm upon her lips—around her neck. Yes! she could hear them, see them:—little Charles, who, in his very babyhood, had been accustomed to uplift his tiny arm in championship of his own dear mother;—Digby, the soft, tender, loving infant, whose every look was a smile, whose every action an endearment!—And now they appeared to pass before her as strangers; changed—matured—enlightened;—without one word of fondness—one gesture of recognition!

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“From such meditations, how horrible to start up amid the dreariness of night, nor find a human heart unto which to appeal for comfort,—a human voice from which to claim reply in annihilation of the spell that transfixed her mind. The cold cheerless room, the flickering light, the desolation that was around her, struck more heavily than ever on her heart. ‘Oh! that this were an omen!’ she cried, with clasping hands, as she listened to the howling of the wind upon the lofty staircase leading to their remote apartments. Drawing closer over her bosom the wrapper by which she attempted to exclude the piercing night-air, Amelia smiled at the thought of the chilliness of the grave,—of the grave, where the heart beats not, and the fixed glassy eye is incapable of tears.

“‘I shall lie among the multitudes of a strange country,’ faltered she; ‘there will be no one to point out with officious finger to my sons, the dishonoured resting-place of their mother,—their *divorced* mother! Vavasor will be freed from his bondage—free to choose anew, and commence H more auspicious career. But for me he might have been a different being. It is *I* who have hardened his heart and seared his mind. And oh! may Heaven in its mercy touch them,—that he may deal gently with me during the last short remnant of our union!’

“A harsh sound interrupted her contemplations;—the grating of his key in the outer door,—of his step in the ante-room. Mechanically she rose, and advanced to meet the truant who had kept her watching,—who had so *often* kept her watching,—so often been forgiven. A momentary glimpse of his countenance convinced her that he was in no mood even to wish for indulgence. His brow was black—his eyes red and glaring. After a terrified pause, she tendered him her assistance to unclasp his cloak; but with a deadly execration he rejected the offer.

“‘Are the servants up?’ said he sullenly.

“‘Not yet.’

“‘So much the better! I must be off before they are on the move.’

“‘Off? Vavasor!—for the love of Heaven—’

“‘Be still! Do not harass me with your nonsense. I was a fool to come here at all; only it may be necessary for you to know explicitly to what you may trust for the future.’

“Amelia sank stupefied into a chair.

“‘In one word, I am a ruined man. To-night’s losses have made me as hopeless as I ought to have been long ago. I have lost—but no matter!—I know I played like a fool. What is to be expected from a miserable dog like me, who has thrown away his prospects, and is harassed with all sorts of cares and annoyances?—No matter!—To-

morrow the thing will be blown; and before my creditors get wind of the business I shall be half way to Brussels.'

"'To Brussels?' faltered Amelia.

"Of course it is out of the question hampering myself with companions of any kind at such a moment. Besides, my sister has only afforded me the means of getting out of the scrape, on condition that *you* return to England to your family. I have no longer the power of maintaining you; but if you are inclined to co-operate in the only plan that can save us both from starving, Sophia will secure you an allowance of fifty or sixty pounds a year.'

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“Amelia was silent.

“If not, you must take your chance; for I can do nothing further for you. For Heaven’s sake don’t treat me with a scene; for I have only a few minutes to pack up my property! The fiacre is waiting; there is not a moment to lose. Well, Amelia! what do you say?—I want an answer. Do you, or do you not choose to go to England?”

“Amelia made an affirmative movement;—she could not utter a syllable. And Vavasor instantly passed into his own room to make his preparations for immediate flight.—She never knew in what manner he took his last leave of her. When the servants proceeded to their occupations on the following morning, they found her insensible on the ground; but when restored to consciousness, the continued absence of her husband and a note of five hundred franks which he had deposited in her work-box for the purpose of enabling her to quit Paris, served to prove that the dreadful impression on her mind was not a mere delusion of the night. Alas! she was soon compelled to admit that she had looked upon him for the last time.”

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THE CABINET ANNUAL REGISTER FOR 1831

Is a well-arranged digest of the history of the past year, in a more concise and compact form than such matters are chronicled in that woolly work—the Annual Register. The Parliamentary Summary is brief but satisfactory, and the Occurrences are copious enough for the most gossiping reader. The volume has been produced in truly good style, is, in all respects, cheap, and deserves encouragement.

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RETROSPECTIVE GLEANINGS.

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ORIGIN OF THE HOUSE OF RUSSEL.

“The Russel family (say Britton and Brayley,) may date the era of their greatness to a violent storm, which happened about the year 1500, on the coast of Dorset; a county which appears to have been the birthplace of their ancestors, one of whom was Constable of Corfe Castle, in the year 1221. Philip, Archduke of Austria, son of the Emperor Maximilian, being on a voyage to Spain, was obliged by the fury of a sudden tempest, to take refuge in the harbour of Weymouth. He was received on shore, and accommodated by Sir Thomas Trenchard, who invited his relation, *Mr. John Russel*, to wait upon the Archduke. Philip was so much pleased with the polite manners and

cultivated talents of Mr. Russel, who was conversant with both the French and German languages, that on arriving at court, he recommended him to the notice of Henry VII., who immediately sent for him to his palace, where he remained in great favour till the king's death. In the estimation of Henry VIII. he rose still higher; by that monarch he was made Lord Warden of the Stannaries, Lord Admiral of England and Ireland, Knight of the Garter, and Lord Privy Seal, and on the 9th of March, 1538, created Baron Russel, of Cheneys, in the county of Bucks, which estate he afterwards acquired by marriage. At the Coronation of Edward VI. he officiated as Lord High Steward, and two years afterwards, in the year 1549, was created Earl of Bedford. He died in 1554, and was buried at Cheneys, where many of his descendants have also been interred," &c. &c.

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“Henry VII. (says Pennant,) often resided at Baynard Castle, and from hence made several of his solemn processions. Here, in 1505, he lodged Philip of Austria,[7] the matrimonial King of Castille, tempest-driven into his dominions, and showed him the pomp and glory of his capital.”

P.T.W.

[7] There is an old (full-length) engraving of this personage, and I am in the possession of one.

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COVENTRY CHARITY.

(FOR THE MIRROR.)

Bablake Hospital, in the city of Coventry, was originally founded in 1506, by Thomas Bond, Mayor. Part of this hospital furnishes a residence for a number of boys, who are educated and clothed in blue, through the *justice* and benevolence of Thomas Wheatley, Mayor, in 1556, whose servant, sent to Spain by him to purchase some barrels of steel gads, brought home through an unaccountable mistake, a number of casks filled with ingots of silver and cochineal, which were offered for sale in an open fair, as the articles alluded to, and bought as such. This worthy ironmonger and card-maker made every possible effort to discover the person who sold them, but without success. He then honourably converted the profits to this charity, to which he added part of his own property. P.T.W.

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CURIOUS PARLIAMENT.

(FOR THE MIRROR.)

Acton Burnel, is a village in Shropshire, about three miles from Great Wenlock, where a Parliament was held in the reign of Edward I., 1284. Many of the Welsh nobles who had taken up arms were pardoned by this Parliament, and the famous act, entitled *Statutum de Mercatoribus*, was passed here, by which debtors in London, York, and Bristol, were obliged to appear before the different Mayors, and agree upon a certain day of payment, otherwise an execution was issued against their goods. The Lords sat in the castle, and the Commons in a large barn, the remains of which are still to be seen. P.T.W.

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FOUR LEARNED SISTERS.

(FOR THE MIRROR.)

Sir Anthony Cooke, who was preceptor to King Edward VI., and great grandson to Sir Thomas Cooke, Lord Mayor of London, in the year 1462, was particularly fortunate in his four daughters, who were all eminent for their great literary attainments.

Mildred, the eldest, married William Cecil, Lord Burleigh. She was learned in the Greek tongue, and wrote a letter in that language to the University of Cambridge.

Anne, the second, was the second wife of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper, and mother of the great Lord St. Alban's. She was greatly skilled in Greek, Latin, and Italian, and had the honour of being appointed governess to King Edward VI.

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Elizabeth, the third, was first the wife of Sir Thomas Hobby, ambassador to France, and afterwards, of John, Lord Russel, son and heir of Francis Russel, Earl of Bedford. Such was her progress in the learned languages, that she gained the applause of the most eminent scholars of the age, and for the tombs of both her husbands, she wrote epitaphs in Greek, Latin, and English.

Catherine, the fourth, who was the wife of Sir Henry Killegrew, was famous for her knowledge in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues, and her skill in poetry. She was buried in the chancel of the church of St. Thomas Apostle, in Vintry Ward, London, where there is an elegant monument erected to her memory, with an inscription composed by herself. Sir Anthony Cooke lived at Gidea Hall, near Romford, in Essex, and had the honour of entertaining Queen Elizabeth here, in the year 1568. Mary de Medicis, mother of Queen Henrietta Maria, was also entertained in this mansion, the night before her arrival in London.

P.T.W.

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PARISH REGISTERS OF ST. BRIDE'S.

At the great fire of London, nearly all the churches and records were consumed, wherefore scarcely any registers are to be found in the city of an earlier date than the above period. In searching the muniments preserved in St. Bride's Church, Fleet-street, for a history of that parish, Mr. Elmes, the architect, discovered a few days since, that, although the church was destroyed, the records were left uninjured. He has accordingly brought to light a series of vestry books from 1653, embracing regular accounts and entries of the calamitous fire, and the proceedings of the parish authorities during that eventful period, till the re-opening of the church for public worship; together with register books of baptisms, burials, &c. from 1587, nearly eighty years before the fire, continued without interruption to the present day. One of them is a complete record of every meeting of the Committee for rebuilding the present splendid church, from its commencement to its completion, containing many curious items relative to contracts with the workmen, their prices, &c.; meetings with Sir Christopher Wren, Mr. Hooke, and other eminent persons, and the arrangement entered into for accommodating the parishioners with pews and seats after the completion of the church. There are also adjudications of property, settlements of boundaries, and many other interesting documents of that eventful period.

From the *Globe* journal.—(Mr. Elmes will be recollected as the author of a valuable Life of Sir Christopher Wren, published a few years since in quarto, and of several practical works on architecture. We are happy to learn that a kindred enthusiasm to that shown in this great biographical labour, has led him to undertake the history of one of the

proudest monuments of Wren's genius—the church of St. Bride. Mr. Elmes may therefore be considered peculiarly fortunate in his discovery of these relics, and his work will be looked for with additional curiosity.)

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THE GATHERER.

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Oriental Apologue.—A blind man having contracted a violent passion for a certain female, married her, contrary to the advice of all his friends, who told him that she was exceedingly ugly. A celebrated physician at length undertook to restore him to sight. The blind man, however, refused his assistance. “If I should recover my sight,” said he, “I should be deprived of the love I have for my wife, which alone renders me happy.” “Man of God,” replied the physician, “tell me which is of most consequence to a rational being, the attainment of happiness or the attainment of truth?” S.H.

Honour.—William the Third having insisted on Lord H——n’s giving him his *honour* not to fight a man who had given him a box on the ear, his lordship was obliged seemingly to comply; but as soon as he was out of the king’s presence he fought the man. The king was, at first, highly incensed at his breaking his word with him, and asked him how he came to do so, when he had just given him his honour. “Sire,” replied his lordship, “you were in the wrong to take such a pledge, for at the time I gave it you, I had no honour to give.” S.H.

Doll’s Eyes.—Insignificant as may appear this petty article of commerce, it is well known to keep in employ several thousand hands, and goes to show the vast importance of trifles to a country of decided commercialists. Mr. Osler, an intelligent manufacturer of Birmingham, gave the following statement before the Committee of the House of Commons, in 1824. “Eighteen years ago, on my first journey to London, a respectable looking man in the city asked me if I could supply him with doll’s eyes, and I was foolish enough to feel half offended; I thought it derogatory to my new dignity as a manufacturer, to make doll’s eyes. He took me into a room quite as wide, and twice the length of this, (one of the large rooms for Committees in the House of Commons,) and we had just room to walk between the stacks, from the floor to the ceiling, of parts of dolls. He said these are only the legs and arms, the trunks are below, but I saw enough to convince me that he wanted a great many eyes; and as the article appeared quite in my own line of business, I said I would take an order by way of experiment, and he showed me several specimens. I copied the order, and on returning to the Tavistock Hotel I found it amounted to upwards of five hundred pounds.” SWAINE.

Eggs.—The duty paid on eggs imported at Ramsgate within the last three months, exceeds the sum of 2,000l.—(*Morning Herald.*) The rate of duty is, as stated in our last, 10d. on every 120 eggs.

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The Druids and the Mistletoe—Pliny, in his *Natural History*, tells us, “The Druids held nothing so sacred as the mistletoe of the oak, as this is very scarce and rarely to be found, when any of it is discovered, they go with great pomp and ceremony on a certain day to gather it. When they have got everything in readiness under the oak, both for the sacrifice and the banquet, which they make on this great festival, they begin by tying two white bulls to it by the horns, then one of the Druids, clothed in white, mounts the tree, and with a knife of gold, cuts the mistletoe, which is received in a white sagum; this done, they proceed to their sacrifices and feastings.” This festival is said to have been kept as near as the age of the moon permitted to the 10th of March, which was their New Year’s Day. The common mistletoe was the golden bough of Virgil, and was Aenea’s passport to the infernal regions. P.T.W.

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