

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Vol. 20, No. 564] *Saturday, September 1, 1832.* [Price 2d.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Belvoir castle.*]

Belvoir Castle, (or Bever, as it was formerly and is now sometimes called,) in situation and aspect partly resembles “majestic Windsor.” It has a similar “princely brow,” being placed upon an abrupt elevation of a kind of natural cliff, forming the termination of a peninsular hill, the basis of which is red grit stone, but now covered with vegetable mould, well turfed by nature and art, and varied into terraces of different elevation. It has been the seat of the noble family of Manners for several generations; it claims the priority of every other seat in the county wherein it is situate; and is one of the most magnificent castellated structures in the kingdom.

This castle, in some topographical works, is described as being in Lincolnshire. Camden says, “In the west part of Kesteven, on the edge of Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, there stands Belvoir Castle, so called (whatever was its ancient name) from the fine prospect on a steep hill, which seems the work of art.” Burton expressly says that it “is certainly in Lincolnshire,” and the authors of *Magna Britannia* are of the same opinion; but Mr. Nichols, whose authority on subjects of local history, respecting Leicestershire, is generally decisive and satisfactory, states that “the castle is at present in every respect considered as being within this county with all the lands of the extra-parochial part of Belvoir thereto belonging, (including the site of the Priory,[1]) consisting in the whole of about 600 acres of wood, meadow, and pasture land; upon which are now no buildings but the castle, with its offices and the inn. It would be a difficult matter, notwithstanding, to trace out with accuracy, the precise boundary of the two counties in this neighbourhood.”

[1] At Belvoir was formerly a priory of four black monks, subordinate to the Abbey of St. Alban, in Hertfordshire, to which it was annexed by its founder, Robert de Belvideir, or De Todenci, in the time of William the Conqueror. It was dedicated to St. Mary; and was valued, at the Dissolution, at L104 19s. 10d. per annum. Dr. Stukely, in the year 1726, saw the coffin and bones of the founder, who died in 1088, dug up in the Priory chapel, then a stable and on a stone was inscribed in large letters, with lead cast in them, *Robert de TODENE le FVDEV R*. Another coffin and cover near it was likewise discovered with the following inscription:—“The Vale of Bever, barren of wood, is large and very plentiful of good corn and grass, and lieth in three shires, Leicester, Lincoln, and much in Nottinghamshire.”

That Belvoir has been the site of a castle since the



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Norman Conquest appears well established. Leland says, "The Castle of Belvoir standeth in the utter part of that way of Leicestershire, on the nape of an high hill, steep up each way, partly by nature, partly by working of men's hands, as it may evidently be perceived. Whether there were any castle there before the Conquest or no I am not sure, but surely I think no rather than ye. Toteneius was the first inhabiter after the Conquest. Then it came to Albeneius, and from Albeney to Ros."

The Belvoir estate came into the Manners family, by the marriage of Eleanor with Robert de Manners of Ethale, Northumberland. Eleanor was the eldest sister of Edmund, Lord Ros, who resided at the manor-house of Elsinges, in Enfield, Middlesex, where he died without issue in the year 1508. His sisters became heiresses to the estates, and Belvoir being part of the moiety of Eleanor, became the property of the Manners family, who have continued to possess it to the present time.

As the possessors of this castle and lordship have been chiefly persons of considerable eminence, and many of them numbered among the great men of history, it may be as well to interweave a few notices of them with a brief chronological account of the noble structure. Robert, the first Norman lord, died in 1088, and was buried in the chapter-house of the Priory, where Dr. Stukely discovered the stone already named, to his memory. "By a general survey taken at the death of Robert, it appears that he was in possession of fourscore lordships: many of which, by uninterrupted succession, continue still to be the property of the Duke of Rutland. In Lincolnshire his domains were still more numerous. In Northamptonshire he had nine lordships; one of which, Stoke, acquired the additional name of Albini, when it came into the possession of his son." William de Albini, son of the above, succeeded to these lordships; and, like his father, was a celebrated warrior: according to Matthew Paris, he valourously distinguished himself at the battle of Tinchebrai, in Normandy, September 27, 1106; where Henry I. encountered Robert Curthose, his brother. This lord obtained from Henry the grant of an annual fair at Belvoir, to be continued for eight days. During the changeful reigns of Stephen and Henry II., the castle fell into the hands of the crown, and was granted to Ranulph de Gernons, Earl of Chester; but repossession was obtained by de Albini, who died here about the year 1155. William de Albini, (alias Meschines and Britto,) the next possessor of Belvoir, endowed the Priory here with certain lands, and, in 1165, certified to Henry II. that he then held of him thirty-two knights' fees under the old feoffments, whereby he was enfeoffed in the time of Henry I. William de Albini, the third of that name, accompanied Richard I. during his crusading reign, into Normandy: he was also one of the sureties for King John, in his treaty of peace with Philip of France. He was too, engaged in the barons'

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wars in the latter reign, and was taken prisoner by the king's party at Rochester Castle; his own castle at Belvoir also falling into the royal hands. He was likewise one of the twenty-five barons, whose signatures were attached to Magna Charta and the charter of Forests at Runnemede. This lord richly endowed the priory of Belvoir, and founded and endowed a hospital at Wassebridge, between Stamford and Uffingham, where he was buried in 1236. Isabel, of the house of Albini, now married to Robert de Ros, or Roos, baron of Hamlake, and thus carried the estates into a new family. The bounds of the lordship of Belvoir, at this time, are described by a document printed in Nichols's History. This new lord obtained a license from Henry III. to hold a weekly market and annual fair at Belvoir. He died in 1285, and his body was buried at Kirkham, his bowels before the high altar at Belvoir, and his heart at Croxton Abbey; it being a practice of that age for the corporeal remains of eminent persons to be thus distributed after death. The next owner, William de Ros was, in 1304, allowed to impark 100 acres under the name of *Bever Park*, which was appropriated solely to the preservation of game. He died in 1317: his eldest son, William de Ros, took the title of Baron Ros, of Hamlake, Werke, Belvoir, and Trusbut; was Lord High Admiral of England, and sat in parliament from 11 Edw. II. to 16 Edw. III; he died in 1342. Sir William de Ros, knight, was Lord High Treasurer to Henry IV.; he died at the Castle in 1414, and bequeathed 400_l. "for finding ten honest chaplains to pray for his soul, and the souls of his father, mother, brethren, sisters, &c." for eight years within his chapel at Belvoir castle. John and William Ros, the next owners, were distinguished in the wars of France; the former was slain at Anjou; the latter died in 1431, and was succeeded by his son, Edmund, an infant, who, on coming of age, engaged in the civil wars of York and Lancaster: he was attainted in 1641, and his noble possessions parcelled out by Edward IV; the honour, castle, and lordship of Belvoir, with the park and all its members, and the rent called castle-guard, (then an appurtenance to Belvoir,) being granted in 1647, to Hastings the court corruptionist.[2] The attainder was, however, repealed, and Edmund, Lord Ros re-obtained possession of all his estates in 1483: he died at Enfield, and the estates then passed into the Manners family, as we have stated.

[2] "The Lord Ros took Henry the VIth's part against King Edward, whereupon his lands were confiscated, and Belever Castle given in keeping to Lord Hastings, who coming thither on a time to peruse the ground, and to lie in the castle, was suddenly repelled by Mr. Harrington, a man of power thereabouts, and friend to the Lord Ros. Whereupon the Lord Hastings came thither another time with a strong power, and upon a raging will spoiled the castle, defacing the roofs, and taking the leads off them.—Then fell all



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the castle to ruins, and the timber of the roofs uncovered, rotted away, and the soil between the walls at the last grew full of elders, and no habitation was there till that, of late days, the Earl of Rutland hath made it fairer than ever it was.”—*Leland*.

George, eldest son of the above-named Robert Manners, succeeded to his father's estates, including Belvoir: in his will, a copy of which is given by Mr. Nichols, dated Oct. 6, 1513, he is styled “Sir George Manners, knight, Lord Ros.” He was interred, with his lady, in a chantry chapel, founded by his father-in-law, Sir Thomas Ledger, in the chapel of St. George, at Windsor. His son, Thomas, Lord Ros, succeeded him, and was created by Henry VIII. a knight, and afterwards Earl of Rutland, a title which had never before been conferred on any person but of the blood royal. This nobleman aided Henry in the dissolution of the monasteries, and for his zeal received from the monarch several manors and estates. He caused many of the ancient monuments of the Albinis and the Rosses to be removed from the priory churches of Belvoir and Croxton to that of Bottesford. He also restored and in part rebuilt the castle, which had been in ruins since Hastings's attack. The state of the castle at this period is thus described by Leland:—“It is a straunge sighte to se be how many steppes of stone the way goith up from the village to the castel. In the castel be two faire gates; and the dungeon is a faire rounde towere now turned to pleasure, as a place to walk yn, and to se al the counterye aboute, and raylid about the round (wall,) and a garden (plotte) in the midle. There is also a welle of grete depth in the castelle, and the spring thereof is very good.” Henry, the second Bard of Rutland, succeeded his father in 1543; and in 1556 was appointed captain-general of all the forces then going to France, and commander of the fleet, by Philip and Mary. Edward, the third earl, eldest son of the former, succeeded in 1563: Camden calls him “a profound lawyer, and a man accomplished with all polite learning.” John, a colonel of foot in the Irish wars, became fourth earl in 1587, and was followed by his son Roger, the fifth earl, who dying without issue, his brother Francis was nominated his heir, and made the sixth earl. He married two wives, by the first of whom he had only one child, named Catherine, who married George Villiers, the first Duke of Buckingham. Her issue, George, the second Duke of Buckingham, dying without an heir, the title of Lord Ros of Hamlake again reverted to the Rutland family. By a second marriage he had two sons, who, according to the monument, were murdered by wicked practice and sorcery.[3] George was created seventh earl in 1632; and was honoured with a visit from Charles I. at Belvoir castle, in 1634. The eighth earl was John Manners, who attaching himself to the Parliamentarians, the castle was attacked by the royal army, and lost and won again and again



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by each party, till the earl being "put to great streights for the maintenance of his family," petitioned the house of peers for relief, and Lord Viscount Campden having been the principal instrument in the ruin of the "castle, lands, and woods about Belvoyre," parliament agreed that 1,500l a year be paid out of Lord Campden's estate, until 5,000l be levied, to the earl of Rutland. In the civil wars the castle was defended for the king by the rector of Ashwell, co. Rutland. In 1649, the parliament ordered it to be demolished; satisfaction was, however, made to the earl, whose son rebuilt the castle after the Restoration. John, the ninth earl, succeeded his father in 1679. He preferred the baronial retirement and rural quiet of Belvoir, to the busy court; though he was created Marquess of Granby, in the county of Nottingham, and Duke of Rutland. He died in 1710-11, and was succeeded by his son John;^[4] whose eldest son became the third Duke of Rutland, and was the last of the family who resided at Haddon, Derbyshire. He died in 1779, and was succeeded by his grandson, Charles, Lord Ros, fourth duke, who died lord lieutenant of Ireland in 1787, when his son John Henry, the present and fifth duke succeeded to the titles and estates.

^[3] As illustrative of the folly and superstition of the times, it may be interesting to explain this. Joan Flower, and her two daughters, who were servants at Belvoir Castle, having been dismissed the family, in revenge, made use of all the enchantments, spells, and charms, that were at that time supposed to answer their malicious purposes. Henry, the eldest son, died soon after their dismissal; but no suspicion of witchcraft arose till five years after, when the three women, who are said to have entered into a formal contract with the devil, were accused of "murdering Henry Lord Ros by witchcraft, and torturing the Lord Francis, his brother, and Lady Catharine, his sister." After various examinations, before Francis Lord Willoughby, of Eresby, and other magistrates, they were committed to Lincoln gaol. Joan died at Ancaster, on her way thither, by wishing the bread and butter she ate might choak her if guilty. The two daughters were tried before Sir Henry Hobbart, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and Sir Edward Bromley, one of the Barons of Exchequer, confessed their guilt, and were executed at Lincoln, March 11, 1618-19.^[4] "The *great Marquess of Granby*" born in 1721, was the son of this duke. During the rebellion he raised a regiment of foot. In 1758, being lieutenant-general, he was sent into Germany, and eminently distinguished himself under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. He died in 1770, and was buried with his ancestors at Bottesford, where, a few years since, there was no monumental record of his name!

It is now time to speak of the present magnificence of Belvoir. The castle which surrounds a quadrangular court, occupies nearly the summit of the hill, which

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is ascended by superb stone steps. On the castle are mounted seven small pieces of cannon, which were presented to the Duke of Rutland by George the Third; from these pieces 21 rounds were fired Nov. 5, 1808, in commemoration of the Gunpowder Plot. The view from the terraces and towers comprehends the whole vale of Belvoir, and the adjoining country as far as Lincoln, including twenty-two of the Duke of Rutland's manors. On the southern slope of the hill are enclosed terraces, on which there are several flower-gardens, surrounded by extensive shrubberies. The kitchen-gardens extend to eight acres. The park is of great extent, and contains fine forest trees which form a woodland beneath the hill, so extensive as to afford shelter for innumerable rooks. There are likewise thriving plantations, containing some remarkably fine young oaks.

Belvoir Castle has one of the most superb *interiors* in the kingdom: its furniture and decorations are of the most costly description. It also contains one of the most valuable collections of paintings, whether considered for the variety of schools, or the judicious choice of the works of each master. Among those who have contributed to this invaluable assemblage, are Poussin, Carlo Dolci, Guido, Claude Lorraine, Salvator Rosa, Murillo, Reubens, Teniers, and Reynolds. The collection was principally formed by John, the third duke, and Charles, his successor, who were munificent patrons of the arts. All the modern pictures, of which there are a considerable number, were collected by the former duke.

The last general repairs of Belvoir Castle are stated to have cost the noble owner upwards of 60,000L. The structure has been more than once extensively injured by fire. A conflagration there in October, 1816, consumed a large portion of the ancient part of the castle, and several of the pictures. Among them was Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Nativity*, a composition of thirteen figures, and in dimensions 12 feet by 18. This noble picture was purchased by the late Duke of Rutland for 1,200 guineas.

* * * * *

THE PAINTER'S LAST PASSION.

A hectic hue is on my feverish cheek,
And slowly throbs my pulse—but it will cease;
And cease, too, will the visions instinct,
Impalpable, and deep, that haunt my soul!
Death, who can dash the chalice from the lips
Of Pleasure's votary, and hush the lyre
While poetry is breathing on its strings;
Death, who can quench the spirit which portrays



Beauty's resemblance on the marble urn,
Will steep my feelings in oblivion's gloom,
Ere wintry winds disperse the sunny leaves
That cluster round the bosom of the rose.
But I have communed with enchanting shapes,
And felt the silver gush of many a song
Amid the air, until my spirit seem'd
Instinct with glorious draughts of paradise!



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Mine eyes have scarcely closed their burning lids
For many a night; and I have watch'd the stars
That smiled upon me from the brow of heaven,
Like deep blue orbs familiar to my youth;
But now abstraction clouds me, and the fire—
Ambition's fire—it can be nothing less—
Deserts its lonely shrine; but I must give
The last bright touch to this bewitching form,
This pictured rainbow of my solitude!
I have invested her with loveliness
More pure than beings of the earth assume,
And Memory calls her beauteous image back
From the forgotten things of distant years,
Warm, eloquent, and holy, as the balm
Of flow'rs impearl'd with dew, which summer skies
Diffuse around—I mark the marble brow
Of polish'd symmetry, the eyes more blue
Than violets in their vernal bloom, the neck
Swanlike, and moulded with ethereal grace;
And feel their magic influence on my mind.
I will embody them, and give the stamp
Of fervid genius to their various charms,
Ere this last aspiration is extinct
In the unbroken slumbers of the tomb!
For I have had prophetic monitors
To warn me of my fate, and I must leave
All that is lovely in this lovely world.

It is a summer eve—the sunbeams tinge
The glassy bosom of the quiet lake;
The music of the birds enchants the air,
And Nature's verdant robe is gemm'd with flow'rs.
From which the breeze derives its liquid balm.
Oh! in my youth, this hour has been to me
Bright as the fairy arch upon the clouds
Of earthly grief and gloom, and even now
It gives the silent fountain of my heart
A renovated action, and recalls
The energies that long ago were mine.
My fancy wanders as I thus portray



The lineaments on which 'tis bliss to gaze:
How beautiful their prototype! to whom
I breath'd in youth the most impassion'd words,
And felt as if Elysium had disclosed
Its glory to my eye—around this brow,
Stainless as marble, cluster golden curls
Like sunbeams on the bosom of the cloud,
And o'er the radiant azure orbs beneath,
The snowy lids suspend their glossy fringe.
Upon such beauty shall my pencil stamp
Its immortality, and make it seem
More beautiful in Fancy's softest glow;
And, my beloved! when this warm hand that traced
Thy pictured charms is mouldering in the dust,
Thou wilt proclaim the painter's mastery,
And consecrate the canvass with a power
Which shall defy the wasting hand of Time!

G.R.C.

* * * * *

PRESERVATION OF A HUMAN BODY.

In a vault under the Font of the Old Church of St. Dunstan in the West, has lately been discovered the leaden coffin of a "Mr. Moody," (without a Christian name,) who "died in the year 1747, aged 70 years." After this interment of 85 years, the face was found not decomposed, but perfect; the mouth extended—the teeth and eye-brows unimpaired, and to the touch, the flesh solid (covered with a cloth) and no appearance of worms; which puzzles the common opinion that such insects prey upon the dead:



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“And food for worms brave Percy!”

exclaimed Prince Henry over the expiring body of Hotspur.

This observation was made by a person who saw the remains on the 8th of August, 1832, an older object by twelve years, and without teeth,—a gum-biter!

An old inhabitant of CLIFFORD'S inn.

* * * * *

THE ROSE OF THE CASTLE.

A summer morn, with all its golden light,
Gilded the snowy bosom of the cloud,
And robed the verdant earth with sunny hues.
The bees sang music to their passion-flow'rs,
The birds, with melody which seem'd to gush
From joyful hearts, entranced the crystal air;
But, spectre-like, the ancient castle frown'd
Over the deep, whose softly-rippling waves
Reflected its array of ruined towers.
In times of old, the gallant chiefs for whom
Its stately walls arose, the men who made
Their names a terror to the Saracen,
Adopted as their symbol in the field,
The rose—that flower of faction and of blood!
I saw it sculptured on the marble shield
Which graced the lofty gate, it was enroll'd
Among the records of departed days;
Over the hearth, upon the pictured crest
It met mine eye, and to my mind recall'd
The glorious deeds of England's chivalry.

The Rose—it appear'd on the portal proud,
Which the ivy robed in its mournful shroud;
As the sunshine gleam'd in the silent hall
I traced its image upon the wall.

Although the castle was old and grey,
And its summer of glory had pass'd away,
Though the roof had fall'n, and the walls sunk low,
The rose still smiled in the sunbeam's glow.



But, oh! that symbol of purest faith
Had cheer'd the heart in the hour of death,
And shone triumphant o'er the brave
As they crush'd the power of the sceptred slave.

It seem'd like a spell on the lips of all
Whom the trumpet call'd from their festive hall,
And the soldier to it upturn'd his eye
As he lay on the grassy turf to die.

But it gleams no more on land or sea,
A star to the feudal chivalry!
On the silent hearth, and the ivied tower,
Hath it found a last forsaken bower. G.R.C.

* * * * *

RETROSPECTIVE GLEANINGS.

* * * * *

Spirit drinking.

(TO THE EDITOR.)

Much as has been said about gin-drinking in the present times, it would appear from the following curious extract, that our forefathers (of the last century,) were more addicted to that pernicious custom, than we are even in the nineteenth century:—



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“Several of his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace for the County of Middlesex, having, in pursuance of an order of a former Quarter Session, made an inquiry into the houses and places where Geneva and other such pernicious distilled liquors are sold by retail, about this time made their report; by which it appears, to the great surprise and concern of those who have the trade and welfare of the public truly at heart, that there are in the limits of Westminster, Holborn, the Tower, and Finsbury divisions (exclusive of London and Southwark) 7,044 houses and shops, where the said liquors are publicly sold by retail, (which in several parishes, is computed to be, at least, every sixth house,) besides what is privately sold in garrets, cellars, back-rooms, and other private places.

“That of this number, no less than 2,105 are unlicensed; and that Geneva is now sold, not only by distillers and Geneva shops, but by above 80 other inferior trades; particularly chandlers, weavers, tobacconists, shoemakers, carpenters, barbers, tailors, dyers, labourers, &c. &c.; there being in the Hamlets of Bethnal Green, upwards of 90 weavers who sell this liquor.”

“JANUARY 20TH, 1736.” G.K.

* * * * *

THE DEATH OF ADAM.

(FROM THE GERMAN.)

When Adam was nine hundred and thirty years old, he felt in himself the word of the judge, “Thou shalt die.” Then spoke Adam to the weeping Eve: “Let my sons come before me, that I may see and may bless them.” They all came at their father’s word, and stood before him, many hundred in number, and prayed for his life. “Who among you,” said the old man, “will go to the holy mountain? Very likely he may find pity for me, and bring to me the fruit of the tree of life.” Immediately, all his sons offered themselves; and Seth, the most pious, was chosen by his father for the message. He besprinkled his head with ashes, hastened, and delayed not, until he stood before the gate of Paradise. Then prayed he, “Let my father find pity, kind-hearted one, and send to him fruit from the tree of life.” Quickly there stood the glittering cherub, and instead of the tree of life, he held a twig of three leaves in his hand. “Carry this to thy father,” said he, friendly, “his last consolation is here; for eternal life dwells not on the earth.” Swiftly hastened Seth, threw himself down, and said, “No fruit of the tree of life bring I to thee, my father, only this twig has the angel given me, to be thy last consolation here.” The dying man took the twig, and was glad. He smelled on it the fragrance of Paradise, and then was his soul elevated: “Children,” said he, “eternal life dwells not for us on the earth; you must follow after me; but on these leaves I breathe the refreshing air of another world.” Then his eyes failed; his spirit fled hence.



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Adam's children buried their father, and wept for him thirty days; but Seth wept not. He planted the twig upon his father's grave, at the head of the dead man, and named it the twig of the new life, of the awakening up out of the sleep of death. The little twig grew up into a high tree, and by it many of Adam's children strengthened themselves with comfort of the other life. So it came to the following generation. In the garden of David it blossomed fair, until his infatuated son began to doubt on immortality; then withered the twig, though its blossoms came among other nations. And as on a stem from this tree, the restorer of immortality gave up his holy life; from it the fragrance of the new life scattered itself around far among all nations. W.G.C.

* * * * *

ANCIENT NAVAL LAWS.

The laws made by Richard I. for the preservation of good order in his fleet, when he was sailing to Palestine, were as follows:—He that kills a man on board shall be tied to the body and thrown into the sea. If he kills one on land he shall be buried with the same. If it be proved that any one has drawn a knife to strike another, or has drawn blood, he shall lose his hand. If he strike with his fist, without effusion of blood, he shall be thrice plunged into the sea. If a man insult another with opprobrious language, so often as he does it, to give so many ounces of silver. A man convicted of theft, to have his head shaved, and to be tarred and feathered on the head, and to be left on the first land the ship shall come to. Richard appointed officers to see these laws executed with rigour, *two of which officers were bishops*. A.H.K.—T.

* * * * *

NOTES OF A READER

THE ATMOSPHERE.—CLIMATOLOGY.

(FROM PART XIV. OF KNOWLEDGE FOR THE PEOPLE; OR, THE PLAIN WHY AND BECAUSE.)

Why may the atmosphere be termed a fourth kingdom of Nature?

Because it extends its influence in an equal degree over the three kingdoms, the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral, operates upon each after a distinct manner, and appears rather to be independent, and allied to all of them, than to be rightly included within any one.

Why is a knowledge of the atmosphere important to the naturalist?



Because it serves to throw much light on the history and functions both of the animal and vegetable creation; for it is through this great medium that heat, light, electricity, oxygen, and the great springs of vital phenomena, are conveyed to all classes of organized matter. It is by means of this wonderful agent, that we gain the theory of respiration in all classes of creatures possessing animal life; and that we become acquainted with the migrations of animals, as well as many of their peculiar instincts and habits.

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It is the atmosphere that enables us to account for the periodical changes in the plumage of birds and the furs of animals, and the variety of colours to be found amongst them. By means also of the elasticity of the atmosphere, sounds and odours are transmitted to sensitive beings. Atmospheric phenomena, it may be safely inferred, attracted the observation of mankind in the earliest ages: we know that the Egyptians and the Greeks wrote upon the subject; the Jews too, a pastoral people, "could discern the face of the sky;" and even in our day, shepherds may be ranked among the weather-wise. "This is a fine morning, a soft day, or a cold evening," are modes of salutation with us, as commonly as is the "Salem Alikem" (Peace be with you!) amongst the inhabitants of the more serene countries of the East. Shenstone says, though with nearly equal spleen and truth: "there is nothing more universally commended than a fine day: the reason is, that people can commend it without envy."

Why do we call the atmosphere a fluid?

Because it has a tendency to move in all directions, and consequently rushes in and fills every space not previously occupied by a more solid substance. Hence we find, that every cave, crevice, place, and vessel, having communication with the atmosphere, if it be not filled with something else, is filled with air; against which it is no argument that we do not see it, as it is perfectly transparent, and consequently invisible.

Why do birds fly?

Because of the inertia of the atmosphere, which gives effect to their wings. Were it possible for a bird to live without respiration, and in a space void of air, it would no longer have the power of flight. The plumage of the wings being spread, and acting with a broad surface on the atmosphere beneath them, is resisted by the inertia of the atmosphere, so that the air forms a fulcrum, as it were, on which the bird rises, by the leverage of its wings.

Why is air generally considered to be invisible?

Because, though a coloured fluid, and naturally blue, its colour acquires intensity only, or, in other words, becomes visible only, from the depth of the transparent mass. According to rigid Newtonians, air is transparent, or, rather, invisible; and the azure colour of the atmosphere arises from the greater refrangibility of the blue rays of light. Other philosophers imagine that the blue tint is inherent in air; that is, that the particles of air have the property of producing a blue colour, in their combination with light.

Why are the most distant objects in a prospect of a blue tinge?



Because their colours are always tinted by the deepening hues of the interjacent atmosphere. Again, the blending of the atmospheric azure with the colours of the solar rays, produces those compound and sometimes remarkable tints, with which the sky and clouds are emblazoned. Hence, the mountains appear blue, not because that is their colour, but because it is the colour of the medium through which they are seen.



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Why do the Heavens appear blue?

Because of our looking at the dark vacuity beyond our atmosphere through an illuminated medium. Were there no atmosphere, it is universally admitted the appearance would be perfectly black, except in the particular direction of the sun, or some other of the heavenly bodies, and since the atmosphere is transparent, this blackness (if such an expression may be used) must be seen through it, only somewhat modified by the rays of light reflected by the atmosphere to the eye, from the direction in which we look. For this reason, the clearer or more transparent the atmosphere is, the darker is the appearance of the heavens, there being then less light reflected by the atmosphere to the eye. In the zenith, the appearance is always darker than nearer the horizon; and from the tops of high mountains, the heavens in the zenith appear nearly black.—*Mr. B. Hallowell, in the American Journal of Science and Arts.*

Why does the heat of temperature of different parts of the earth vary?

Because of the position of the place with respect to the equator, or rather to the ecliptic, or, more strictly still, with respect to the plane in which the earth revolves around the sun; for on this relation depends the temperature of the place, so far as it is produced, directly, by the influence of the sun. Maltebrun ascribes to it the following influences: 1, the action of the sun upon the atmosphere: 2, the interior temperature of the globe: 3, the elevation of the earth above the level of the ocean: 4, the general inclination of the surface, and its local exposure: 5, the position of its mountains relatively to the cardinal points: 6, the neighbourhood of great seas, and their relative situation: 7, the geological nature of the soil: 8, the degree of cultivation, and of population, at which a country has arrived: 9, the prevalent winds.

Why are the strata of air upon all mountains of successive coldness?

Because the air does not acquire immediately, by the passage of the solar rays, a considerable degree of heat. Thus, with the elevation of land, cold may be said to increase in very rapid progression. Winter continues to reign on the Alps and the Pyrenees, while the flowers of spring are covering the plains of northern France. This beneficent appointment of Nature considerably increases the number of habitable countries in the torrid zone. It is probable, that at the back of the flat burning coasts of Guinea, there exist in the centre of Africa, countries which enjoy a delightful temperature; as we see the vernal valley of Quito, situate under the same latitude with the destructive coasts of French Guyana, where the humid heat constantly cherishes the seeds of disease. On the other hand, it is the continued elevation of the ground, which, in the central parts of Asia, extends the cold region to the 35th parallel of latitude, so that in ascending from Bengal to Thibet, we imagine ourselves in a few days transported from the equator to the pole.—*Maltebrun.*

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Why does the destruction of forests sometimes prove beneficial to a country?

Because a freer circulation of air is thus procured—but carried too far, it becomes a scourge which may desolate whole regions. We have a sad example of this in the Cape de Verde islands, not to mention others. It is the destruction of forests, and not a supposed cooling of the globe, which has rendered the southern part of Iceland more accessible to the dreadful cold which is too often produced by those masses of floating ice which are intercepted and detained by its northern coasts.—Ibid.

Why do mountains influence climates?

Because, although they cannot prevent the general motions of the atmosphere from taking place, they may, by stopping them in part, render particular winds more or less frequent throughout a certain extent of country. Maltebrun observes, there cannot be a doubt that the Alps contribute in securing to Italy its delightful and happy climate, its perpetual spring, and its double harvests.

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THE NATURALIST.

THE TOAD FISH.

[We quote these interesting details from a paper on the Sargasso Weed, or gulf weed, with which a certain part of the Atlantic Ocean is generally covered, and amongst which Toad Fish are found. The reason of the weed accumulating has given rise to much difference of opinion, which is the main subject of the above communication, by Mr. Benet, of Bulstrode-street, to the *Naval Magazine*[5]][5] We are happy to perceive that the above journal rises in interest and value as it proceeds; and merits all the encouragement our notice of its first appearance may have induced our readers to confer upon it.

[Illustration: Toad Fish]

The figure represents one of those fishes to which, on account of their uncouth appearance, the name of Toad Fish has been popularly given. Under this denomination there have been included many very dissimilar kinds, extreme ugliness being held as alone sufficient for the establishment of an undeniable claim to the title. The present fish, and those nearly related to it, advance, however, peculiar claims to the appellation. Their belly and side fins are borne upon supports which project from the body in the semblance of limbs, their similarity to which is increased by the jointed form they acquire at the point of union of the fin with its support, and still farther by the finger-like appearance of the rays of these fins, which are unconnected by membrane at their tips. This curious structure imparts to these fishes not only somewhat of the outward form of



a quadruped, but also a portion of its habits, and they are, accordingly, capable of crawling like toads among the sea-weeds and rocks which they usually inhabit; the side fins, which are placed farther back

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than those of the belly, performing on each occasion the functions of hinder feet. Nor is this mode of locomotion confined to the water alone; it may, also, be exercised by them on land, for their gill-openings are so small, that evaporation takes place but slowly from within them, and thus the gills are kept moistened, and the circulation of the blood is preserved, even out of the water, for two or three days. So remarkable a deviation from the usual appearance and habits of the class to which they belong, has naturally caused them to be regarded as objects of curiosity; and it is recorded, that living specimens have been successfully transported from the East to Holland, where they have been sold at considerable prices.

The fishes of this genus, to which Commerson gave the name of *Antennarius*, (on account of the filament which they possess on the forehead,) are met with in the sea of warm climates, in the east as well as in the west. They subsist chiefly on small crabs, to surprise which they hide themselves among the sea-weed, or behind stones. Their flesh is said not to be edible; it may, perhaps, have been rejected, on account of their disgusting appearance, and is certainly too small in quantity to allow of its being important as an article of food. In swimming, they usually gulp down air, and, thus distending their capacious stomachs, enlarge themselves into a rounded half-floating mass, much in the same manner as the globe of balloon fishes. Their nearest affinity is to the fishes known as anglers, with which they agree in the form of their gill-openings and fins, and in the possession of filaments on the head; but the monstrously disproportioned head of the anglers, which is depressed from above downwards, and the enormous opening of their mouth, readily distinguish them from the Toad Fishes, whose head is of moderate size, and, like their bodies, compressed laterally. They are either smooth or variously hairy or bristly, and are always destitute of the regular scales with which fishes are generally invested. They are furnished, especially on the lips and the under parts, with numerous short, loose processes of skin, which add considerably to their sense of touch. There is great variety in the different kinds in the length of the filament on the head, and its termination is still more varied; in some it is almost simple, as though formed of a single undilated hair; in others, it is surmounted by a small, dense, globular mass of short filaments; and in others again, it has two, or even three large fleshy processes at its end, not unlike the baits which terminate the fishing filaments of the anglers.

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In the species figured, the *Antennarius laevigatus*, the skin is smooth, and furnished with short loose processes; the filament on the head is short, and terminated by a small knob of clustered minute filaments; this is succeeded by two other processes, each resembling a fin supported by a single ray, and fringed, especially towards its upper part, by loose portions of skin; to these succeed the back fin, supported, as usual, by many rays. The colour is pale, irregularly blotched, spotted, and streaked with brown, the markings varying considerably in different individuals; it is also dotted irregularly with white. By these characters it may be known from the other species of the genus, with which it appears to have been associated by Linnaeus, under the common name of *Lophius Histrio*. It was first scientifically distinguished by M. Bosc, a French naturalist, who observed it, on his voyage to America, among the Sargasso weed: he described and figured it, not without some imperfections, in the *Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle*. It has since been figured, but not described, by Dr. Mitchell in the *Transactions of the New York Society*; and one very nearly resembling it has been described by Mr. Bennett with a figure, in the *Geological Journal*. The genus to which it belongs is most completely treated of by M. Cuvier, in the *Memoires du Museum d'Histoire Naturelle*.

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SELECT BIOGRAPHY

[Illustration: Cuvier]

Cuvier, the great naturalist, paid the debt of nature in May last, after a life devoted to science with an unwearied application and a success exceeded by none in modern times. He was born at Montbelliard in 1769, a year which gave to so many remarkable men—a Napoleon—a Chateaubriand—a Wellington—a Humboldt, &c. and his first discoveries were on the Mollusca, and shook to its base the zoological classification which then universally prevailed.

Invited to Paris to fill the place of Professor of Comparative Anatomy at the *Jardin des Plantes*, his lectures speedily drew crowds around him, attracted by his popular eloquence and lucid arrangement. His next work, *Lecons d'Anatomie Comparee*, 1805, was rewarded by the Institute with the decennial prize for the work which had contributed the most to our knowledge of the Natural Sciences during that period. At the same period he published a series of Memoirs on the Anatomy of the Mollusca, and devoted his attention to a detailed examination of the fossil remains of the bones of mammiferous animals; he particularly examined the numerous fossils in the environs of Paris, assisted in the geological part of his task by his friend M. A. Brogniart. The sagacity and accuracy which M. Cuvier displayed in the examination of fossil bones, raised this branch of inquiry to the dignity of a perfectly new science, which has thrown a powerful light on geology, and directed it into a more philosophical



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route. A number of works and of elaborate memoirs published since by various naturalists, have shown the prodigious influence which the labours of Cuvier have exercised on the study of geology, of the animal kingdom, and even of fossil botany. M. Cuvier amused himself during these laborious works by particular researches which would alone have been sufficient to have distinguished any other man, such as his five Memoirs on the Voice of Birds, on Crocodiles, and on numerous subjects of zoology; such also as his descriptions of the living animals in the menagerie, &c. In all his works, even to the minutest details, we discover the same luminous, clear, and methodical mind, and the sagacity which characterized him. Feeling the want of a work which should present a general view of his ideas on zoological classification, he published in 1817 his work entitled *Le Regne Animal distribue d'apres son Organisation*, in 4 vols, 8vo. which speedily became the text-book of all zoological students. When employed on this work he felt how far in arrear of the other branches of zoology was that which respects the class of fish, and saw how much difficulty had accumulated in it, as well from our ignorance of the anatomy of these animals, and the impossibility of determining with precision the laws of their comparative organization, as from the want of large collections, and perhaps also from the too artificial spirit which had hitherto prevailed in ichthyology. He employed his influence to form a collection in the Paris Museum of specimens of fish from all parts of the world, and was so successful in his endeavours that the number of specimens which at first scarcely amounted to 1,000, in a few years amounted to 6,000. Of these he dissected a large portion with a care hitherto unknown, having the advantage of an able associate in the study of the details in M. Valenciennes; he was thus enabled in a period of time that may be called short, looking to the extent of the results, to collect the materials of his great *Histoire Naturelle des Poissons*, of which eight volumes have appeared, with their appropriate plates, and for the continuation of which we have to look to his laborious assistant. The recent embarrassment among the Paris publishers having occasioned a stoppage in the progress of this work, M. Cuvier availed himself of this (as the part prepared for the press was already in advance of the printer) to make preparations for republishing his *Lecons d'Anatomie Comparee*, of which a second edition had been long anxiously called for. This design, however, he was not permitted to complete; but it is to be hoped that we shall not be long deprived of the edition he had contemplated, and that it will be accompanied with those beautiful and accurate plates on which he had bestowed so much pains, and in the execution of which he himself excelled; for he was a skilful draftsman, and seized external forms with rapidity and accuracy, and possessed the



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art of representing in his drawings the forms of organic tissues in a style peculiar to himself. His last course of lectures, on the History of the Natural Sciences, and on the Philosophy of Natural History, delivered at the College of France, is now publishing in livraisons, and will extend to three or four vols, 8vo. This work, however, we believe, has been published without his consent or revision. His memory was prodigious, and he scarcely knew what it was to forget anything. Although his great powers were more particularly devoted to natural history, no part of science was a stranger to him, and his taste for literature and works of imagination was particularly refined and elegant. In his *Eloges* of illustrious men, delivered in his capacity of perpetual secretary of the Academy of Sciences, he always displays the utmost impartiality and love of truth; he never debased the dignity of science by any love of intrigue, and displayed the utmost disinterestedness in his efforts to promote science. The qualities of his heart were not less estimable than those of his head, and he possessed the happy art of inspiring his friends with an unalterable attachment. His conversation was varied and animated, adapted by turns to every subject, and he may truly be said to have been the grace and ornament of society. We must not forget the great services he rendered to public education as head of the University; his Report on the State of Primary Education in Holland is a lasting monument of his solicitude for the education of the people, and all those who have observed his conduct with regard to the higher branches of education, know how constantly his influence was directed to favour their progress and to remove obstacles. In other departments of the civil service into which he was successively called, as Master of Requests, Counsellor of State, President of the Section of the Interior, Director of Protestant Worship, (for he was an enlightened and liberal Protestant, and watched over the interests of his co-religionists with constant solicitude,) and at last as a Peer of France—in all these he displayed the same superiority of talent. The office of Censor of the Press, which was offered to him, he, to his eternal honour, refused. Such was the man whose loss the world has now to deplore: but the mind that traced her age and history—in the wrecks of ages dug from her bosom—will live for ever in his works to enlighten and instruct mankind.—*Foreign Quarterly Review*.

Cuvier is said to have died of a paralytic affection of the oesophagus. His body was examined by several eminent pathologists: his brain is stated to have presented a mass of extraordinary volume, weighing three pounds thirteen and a half ounces; a fact which will be treasured up by contemporary phrenologists as evidence of Cuvier's great intellectual capabilities.

[Cuvier was Professor of Geology in the College of France. The chair, vacant by his death, has just been filled by the appointment of M. Elie Beaumont, celebrated for his investigation of mountain formations.]



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NEW BOOKS

LEGENDS OF THE RHINE.

[These are three novel-sized volumes from the prolific pen of Mr. Grattan, whose *Highways and Byeways* have probably started off hundreds of scribbling tourists to the Continent, much to the annoyance of the keepers of old castles and other necromantic haunts. These Legends, however, have little to do with the Rhine, which is perhaps fortunate for their success, as most of the traditionary stories of the romantic river have been dished up in as many forms and fashions as French cooks are accustomed to serve up eggs. A few of our Correspondents have tried their taste, but we hope not the reader's patience, in *Rhin-onomy*; and Mr. Planche, moreover, has wandered and sailed up and down the district, picking to new van its mystic stories in every form common to our literature. We have enjoyed every inch of the stream and its banks, coloured after nature, in a panorama on paper, to put into your pocket or portmanteau; and just now Views on the Rhine are publishing in sixpenny portions, and becoming as little rare as Views on the Thames; till we may as well say thick as leaves on the Rhine, as in Vallainbrosa. Mr. Grattan's Legends are stated to be freely adapted from the literature of the countries where the scenes are laid. They consist of some ten or dozen stories of untiring length but too much for entire extract. For the sake of some delightfully graphic writing we are induced to quote a portion of one of the tales—*The Curse of the Black Lady*, a legend of the twelfth century. The scene lies in the Low Countries, and introduces an admirably-drawn portrait of a knight of the period.]

The Castle of the Countess of Hainault at Mons was a complete specimen of the splendid architecture of the twelfth century, or that which is now called Gothic; pointed windows abounding in coloured glass, unpolished marble, heavy wooden doors, thickly studded with iron nails, leading into immense corridors, interminable passages, and branching staircases.

It was early in a morning of the month of February, that the horn of a knight was heard beyond the castle wall, and immediately replied to by the warder; and when the draw-bridge was slowly replaced and the portcullis heavily withdrawn, a knight followed by a squire, whose surcoat bore the Flander's lion, entered. The cap of the knight was of black velvet, and slight bars of steel, bent into the form of a semicircle, crossed each other at the top of his head and served at once for defence and for ornament. His boots of thick leather reaching almost to the knees bespoke him an inhabitant of a maritime country, having spurs formed of a single point of iron, long and obtuse, and these being gilt would have announced the wearer's rank in chivalry, even if his whole equipment and

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bearing had not proclaimed his right to the deference with which he was received. As he dismounted from his horse, he threw off the large mantle, not unlike the military cloaks of our days, and discovered the knightly armour, which showed to peculiar advantage his powerful limbs. A straight black tunic without sleeves descended to his knees. It was fastened by a silver girdle, from which depended on one side a strong sword, and on the other a dagger, the richly wrought handle of which seemed to declare it of Turkish make. His arms and hands were covered with a steel tissue, sitting close and so flexible that it yielded lightly to every motion. The squire who followed him was old, and a certain familiarity was mingled with the respect of his manner, and seemed to declare that he had been long accustomed to his master. In truth he had served the father of our knight, and the latter had grown up beneath his attendance, which had not unfrequently become his protection. His armour, far from adorning his person, scarcely left a human figure visible beneath its heavy plates of iron, fastened by nails whose monstrous heads seemed cast in the same mould with those which strengthened the heavy oak doors of the palace. His helmet seemed the section of a water-pipe of cast iron. Visor it had none; but in its place was a plate or bar of iron descending from the forehead to the chin, almost touching the nose and mouth, and he had a group of arms suspended from his saddle. It was Sir Guy de Dampierre and his squire.

The seneschal conducted them with much ceremony to the knight's apartments in the castle, where a small table placed by the side of an enormous log-fire in the middle of the room, and plentifully furnished with cold salted and dried meats, together with the thin wines of France, and the more potent juice of the German grape, soon made him forget the cold and thirst he had endured in the forest. The beer he quaffed with peculiar pleasure, as it invitingly foamed in a silver tankard, which had been thickly embossed by the abbot of Wansfort, and presented by him to the Emperor Baldwin previous to his embarkation for the Holy Land.

Having praised the flavour of the beer and helped himself to some slices from a well cured wild boar's head, he said to the chamberlain, "And Baldwin of Avesnes is not yet arrived, you say?"

"No, Count," replied the chamberlain; "we expected he would be with you."

"Why, my road lay through Namur, and he comes directly from Bruges. I marvel therefore he be not arrived—and I have news for him," said the knight.

[The next page includes a passing notice of the *introduction of chimneys* into England, referable, though not without dispute, to this date:—]



The warder's horn was again heard; and after due time the person in question made his appearance. He looked harassed and fatigued, and gladly took the seat Count Guy pointed to, close by his own, and having stirred the logs which burned lazily in the huge hearth, he observed, "Methinks the wood emits this sulphureous vapour more strongly than ever. I marvel, Guy, that you have not repaid the compliment of the English king's invitation to your weavers, by bringing over workmen to build you some of those long narrow passages which, beginning just over the fire, project from the top of the house to carry off the smoke."



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“What mean you, Baldwin?”

“Nay, have you not heard that in England they are beginning to build along the end of the rooms, lodges or troughs to contain the fuel, on the base of which they raise a brick funnel, through which all the smoke mounts and so evaporates at the top of the house?” replied Baldwin.

“Think you then, d’Avesnes, that the whole room can be warmed with the fire at one end of it, particularly if the smoke be carried out?”

“Indeed they say,” replied d’Avesnes, “it casts a strong heat everywhere.”

[“The Black Lady” is thus characterised:—“They speak of her as one entirely destitute of natural sensibility; they hint at some dark practices, and they designate her so frequently by the epithet of the ‘Black Lady,’ that many, both in Hainault and Flanders, are ignorant that this is not really her title.” Here follows a whole-length portrait of this specimen of black-letter majesty.]

In the tapestried room into which the brothers were conducted, sat the Black Lady of Brabant on a throne elevated considerably above the floor. The dais was covered with the same rich tapestry as the hangings which covered the walls, for even in this early age Bruges was celebrated for such manufactures. The draperies of the throne were of purple velvet fringed with gold, with a canopy and curtains of the same rich materials, the latter being looped back with a massive cord and tassels. The constable supported one side of the throne, and the seneschal the other. Below these were the cup-bearer and grand huntsman. Six pages were placed about the steps of the throne, and the same number of ladies in waiting were also there. Yet Marguerite herself wanted not the surrounding magnificence to mark her superior dignity of “Countess by the grace of God,” then accorded to only one county besides her own; for there was a sort of fearful majesty about her towering height, unbowed either by the weight of years (and she had already passed what the Psalmist has declared to be the age of man) or luxurious indulgence. Her face was pale and marked by deep furrows, indicating an unlimited indulgence of the strong passions which had rendered her life so unquiet. Her eye was black, and retained all the fire of lively feeling, yet it was sunken. Her forehead was low, yet there was an inflexibility of resolve in its deep lines that added much to the majestic character of her appearance. Her teeth too were perfect, and her thin and colourless lips left them visible to attract the painful admiration excited by their contrast with the unlovely expression of her features; her chin was small. Her hair was all drawn from her face to the crown of her head and concealed under the black lace veil, which concealing the upper part of her forehead, fell over each shoulder even to her feet. Her upper garment was a long mantle of black velvet lined with ermine, which, opening in front, fell over the arms of her throne, and discovered a dress of



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crimson cloth of Bruges of that beautiful sort called *ecarlite*. The bodice was drawn tightly to her shape by rich gold cord, the ends of which, finished by heavy tassels, fell downwards to the edge of her robe. The crimson tunic reached only to her knees, and discovered an under dress of white Syrian silk, on which was a border of gold, evidently of oriental workmanship. Her hard bust was covered by many rows of the finest Asiatic pearls, and depending from her girdle was a rosary of jet, which sustained a richly embossed golden cross, probably enshrining a piece of wood of the true cross from Palestine. The small gold crown which circled her brows, and the sceptre she held, were evidently made by the same skilful artist—probably the work of the celebrated Erembert, Abbot of Wansfort. Her arms, which notwithstanding her towering statue were disproportionably long, were covered by sleeves of the finest Bruges linen, which however only appeared at the shoulders and elbows, the rest of the arm being covered with the crimson cloth which formed the tunic, and these were laced with gold cord down to the waist, where the Bruges linen formed a cuff. Her form was harsh and bony, and no grace of motion relieved its outlines; for she was so fearfully still, you might have thought the living form had been placed in sight of the Gorgon's head and so transformed to stone. Her features seemed alike immovable, all sunk into a dark, fixed, and settled discontent with life.

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THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

[This is the seventeenth volume of the *Library of Entertaining Knowledge*; and, like the majority of its predecessors, it aims at rendering popular, and of obvious interest, subjects which had hitherto been abstruse and uninviting. It is the first of a series of volumes to be published on the Antiquities of the British Museum, so as in some measure to set them free from their national imprisonment; for such we must term any assemblage of works of art (the property of the country), which are not unconditionally open to public inspection. The portion before us is the first of two volumes devoted to the Egyptian Antiquities in the Museum. It has been diligently compiled; and rendered more interesting than would be a bare account of what the Museum contains, by correct notices generally “of the history of art among the Egyptians.” The best authorities have been consulted and acknowledged, as Hamilton, Heeren, Gau, and Belzoni, and the more recent labours of Mr. James Burton. The whole is attractively arranged in chapters; on the Physical Character of Egypt; Political Sketch of Ancient Egypt, and the monuments of the respective divisions of the country. We subjoin an extract, containing a graphic outline of *Thebes*:]

We pass by Kenneh, on the east bank, from which travellers may go to Cosseir to embark on the Red Sea; we hasten by the remains of Kouft, the ancient Coptos, and

the solitary propylon of Kous, standing alone without its temple,—to the plain of Thebes, to the most wonderful assemblage of ruins on the face of the earth.



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All travellers agree that it is impossible to describe the effect produced by the colossal remains of this ancient capital; nor does it lie within our plan to attempt this description at present any farther than is necessary to make our readers acquainted with the general character and localities of the existing temples of Egypt.

No knowledge of antiquity, no long-cherished associations, no searching after something to admire, is necessary here. The wonders of Thebes rise before the astonished spectator like the creations of some superior power. "It appeared to me," says Belzoni, "like entering a city of giants, who, after a long conflict, were all destroyed, leaving the ruins of their various temples as the only proofs of their former existence." Denon's description of the first view of Thebes by the French army, which he accompanied in the expedition into Upper Egypt, is singularly characteristic. "On turning the point of a chain of mountains which forms a kind of promontory, we saw all at once ancient Thebes in its full extent—that Thebes whose magnitude has been pictured to us by a single word in Homer, *hundred-gated*, a poetical and unmeaning expression which has been so confidently repeated ever since. This city, described in a few pages dictated to Herodotus by Egyptian priests, which succeeding authors have copied—renowned for numerous kings, who, through their wisdom, have been elevated to the rank of gods; for laws which have been revered without being known; for sciences which have been confided to proud and mysterious inscriptions, wise and earliest monuments of the arts which time has respected;—this sanctuary, abandoned, desolated through barbarism, and surrendered to the desert from which it was won; this city, shrouded in the veil of mystery by which even colossi are magnified: this remote city, which imagination has only caught a glimpse of through the darkness of time,—was still so gigantic an apparition, that at the site of its scattered ruins, the army halted of its own accord, and the soldiers, with one spontaneous movement, clapped their hands." It is, however, rather unfortunate for Denon's description, that another traveller denies that there is such an approach to Thebes as is mentioned in the extract, and he assures us that the ruins cannot be seen till the traveller comes near them; and further, that to produce such astonishing effects as the Frenchman describes, we ought to be very near them or *among* them. Without pretending to reconcile these contradictions, we can readily believe that the ruins may produce a considerable effect, even at some distance, if Denon's drawings are at all correct. As to the impression made by a near inspection of these wonderful remains, there is no discrepancy among travellers.

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Thebes lay on each side of the river, and extended also on both sides as far as the mountains. The tombs, which are on the western side, reach even into the limits of the desert. Four principal villages stand on the site of this ancient city,—Luxor and Carnak on the eastern, Gournou and Medinet-Abou on the western side. The temple of Luxor is very near the river, and there is here a good ancient jettee, well built of bricks. The entrance to this temple is through a magnificent propylon, or gateway, facing the north, 200 feet in front, and 57 feet high above the present level of the soil. Before the gateway stand the two most perfect obelisks that exist, formed, as usual, of the red granite of Syene, and each about 80 feet high, and from 8 to 10 feet wide at the base. Travellers differ in their estimate of the width of the base, some, perhaps, taking the actual measure on the surface of the soil while others may make allowance for that part that is buried; for that the soil is much elevated will appear from what follows: “Between these obelisks and the propylon are two colossal statues, also of red granite; from the difference of the dresses it is judged that one was a male, the other a female, figure;—they are nearly of equal sizes. Though buried in the ground to the chest, they still measure 21 and 22 feet from thence to the top of the mitre.” Another cause of discrepancy in the measurements may be, that the adjacent sides of the obelisks are of different dimensions; which is generally the case.

It is this gateway that is filled with those remarkable sculptures, which represent the triumph of some ancient monarch of Egypt over an Asiatic enemy, and which we find repeated, both on other monuments of Thebes, and partly also on some of the monuments of Nubia, as, for example, at Ipsambul. This event appears to have formed an epoch in Egyptian history, and to have furnished materials both for the historian and the sculptor, like the war of Troy to the Grecian poet. The whole length of this temple is about 800 feet.

But the remains of Carnak, about one mile and a quarter lower down the river, are still more wonderful than Luxor: one of the buildings is probably the temple of Ammon, which we know from Diodorus was on this side of the river. An irregular avenue of sphinxes, considerably more than a mile in length (about 6,560 feet), connected the northern entrance of the temple of Luxor with it; but this was only one of several proud approaches to perhaps the largest assemblage of buildings that ever was erected. For a minute description of Carnak we must refer to the plans in the great French work, and to Dr. Richardson’s and Mr. Hamilton’s accounts. The irregularities in the structure and approaches of this building show that the various parts of it were raised at different periods, for indeed it would have been impossible for any one sovereign to have completed such a monument in his life-time; and we know, also, that the great

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temple at Memphis received numerous additions during a long succession of ages. Some parts, both of this temple and of the larger building at Carnak (sometimes called a palace), have been constructed out of the materials of earlier buildings, as we see from blocks of stone being occasionally placed with inverted hieroglyphics. It is impossible without good drawings and very long descriptions, to give anything like an adequate idea of the enormous remains of Carnak, among which we find a hall whose roof of flat stones is sustained by more than 130 pillars, some 26 feet, and others as much as 34 feet, in circumference. The remains on the western side of the river are, perhaps, more interesting than those on the east. That nearly all the monuments of Thebes belong to a period anterior to the Persian conquest, B.C. 525, and that among them we must look for the oldest and most genuine specimens of Egyptian art, is clear, both from the character of the monuments themselves and from historical records; nor is this conviction weakened by finding the name of Alexander twice on part of the buildings at Carnak, which will prove no more than that a chamber might have been added to the temple and inscribed with his name; or that it was not unusual for the priests to flatter conquerors or conquerors' deputies by carving on stone the name of their new master. Thebes was the centre of Egyptian power and commerce, probably long before Memphis grew into importance, or before the Delta was made suitable to the purposes of husbandry by the cutting of canals and the raising of embankments.

[In a note to this passage, it is stated that "Herodotus has given no description of Thebes. Denon several times quotes Herodotus for what is not in that author. But this is so common, even with people who have claims to scholarship, that it has become almost a fashion to say that any thing is in Herodotus." So that the audience of Lord Goderich with the late King, as described in the *Edinburgh Review*, in the Herodotean (or says he and says she) dialect, is no great license.]

[The volume is profusely embellished.]

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THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

ERRORS OF THE DAY.

The devoutest believers in "the march of intellect" must at intervals be almost driven to renounce their creed in despair. Errors which were supposed to have been exploded centuries ago, sometimes reappear on a sudden, and propagate themselves for a season with a rapidity which no reasoning can pursue, no ridicule arrest. Notions, worthy only of the dark ages, spring up in the glare of the supposed illumination of the present day, and resist all the efforts of the Briarean press itself to dispel them. At one time, it is a pious Hungarian prince who performs preternatural cures, at the request of the friends of the sick parties in Ireland, conveyed through that



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droll medium for a miracle, the Hamburg letter-bag! At another, it is an old dropsical impostor, whom thousands of blaspheming dupes venerate as a second virgin quick of a new Messiah! A short time since animal magnetism was in vogue; and the strong will of certain gifted individuals was believed to have the power of entering into a mystical communication with the spirits of others, and of absolutely controlling their whole physical and mental being! To-day we are startled by the actual exhibition of a miracle, the “unknown tongue,” on alternate Sundays, at the Caledonian Chapel in Regent Square, London! If at any time we are tempted to plume ourselves on the fact, that the belief in ghosts and witchcraft has disappeared, we are quickly humiliated by the recollection that there are yet thousands of devout believers in the prophecies of Francis Moore, physician; or by overhearing the rhapsodies of some millenarian dreamer, who as confidently gives us the date of the opening of the New Jerusalem as if he were speaking of the New London Bridge.—*Quarterly Review*.

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PUBLIC CREDIT.

It is physically impossible to carry on the commerce of the civilized world by the aid of a *purely* metallic currency—no, not though our gold and silver coins were every tenth year debased to a tenth! Why, in London alone, five millions of money are daily exchanged at the Clearing-house, in the course of a few hours. We should like to see the attempt made to bring this infinity of transactions to a settlement in coined money. Credit money, in some shape or other, always has, and must have, performed the part of a circulating medium to a very considerable extent. And (by one of those wonderful compensatory processes which so frequently claim the admiration of every investigator of civil, as well as of physical economy) there is in the nature of credit an elasticity which causes it, when left unshackled by law, to adapt itself to the necessities of commerce, and the legitimate demands of the market. Well may the productive classes exclaim to those who persist in legislating on the subject, and are not content without determining who may, and who may not, give credit to another, what kind of monied obligations shall, or shall not, be allowed to circulate—that is, to be taken in exchange for goods at the option of the parties—well might they exclaim, as the merchants of Paris did to the minister of Louis, when he asked what his master could do for them—“Laissez nous faire,”—“Leave us alone, to surround ourselves with those precautions which experience will suggest and the instinct of self-preservation put in execution.”—*Ibid*.

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HOARDING MONEY.



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There can be no doubt too that “*hoarding*” coin goes on to a considerable extent, and greatly augments the scarcity, and consequently the value of the precious metals. Even the old practice of “making a stocking” is by no means given up in rural districts. We ourselves, but a few days back, personally witnessed an old crone, the wife of a small, and apparently poor farmer, in a wild pastoral district, bring no less than three hundred sovereigns in a bag to a neighbouring attorney, to be placed by him in security: her treasure having accumulated till she was afraid to keep it longer at home. Such examples are by no means so rare as may be imagined. The failures of so many country banks in 1825 destroyed the confidence of country people in the bank-notes of the present banks, and causes their preference of gold. The failure of many attorneys, as well as of those country banks which received and gave interest on deposits, and (with the exception of the savings banks, which are very limited in the amount of the deposits they allow) the total absence, in the rural districts of England, of any safe and accessible depositaries for the savings of the economical, such as the invaluable Scotch banks, have tended most injuriously to discourage economy; and where that principle was strongly ingrafted, have converted it into a practice of hoarding,—have caused that to stagnate in unprofitable masses which, spread through proper channels, would have stimulated new industry and new accumulations, and added both to the wealth of the owner, and to the general stock.—*Ibid.*

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INVENTION OF PRINTING.

[Our Correspondent, W.M. of the Regent’s Park, should read the following announcement, which supersedes the necessity of printing his communication. At least, we do not feel ourselves justified in doing so, without reference to the undernamed German work.]

It is proposed to erect a monument in Mentz, by public subscription and support of all nations, to Gutenberg, the great inventor of the art of printing, and to celebrate the immortal discovery in a grand and becoming style. The erection is to take place in 1836, being the fourth centenary anniversary of the great achievement, for it is capable of historic proof that Gutenberg communicated his discovery of movable letters to some friends at Strasburg in 1436, to which city he had retired on account of some disturbances in his native place: vide Schaab’s *Geschichte der Erfindung der Buchdruckerkunst*, Mainz, 1831, 3 vols. 8vo. The subscriptions and support, in particular, of printers, booksellers, authors and literary bodies, is solicited. Kings and princes, in behalf of the best interests of their subjects and of civilization, it is hoped, will not be backward to support so noble a design. The public will be informed, from time to time, by means of the daily papers and journals, of the progress of the subscription, for which the smallest sums will be received, and the names of the donors entered in a



book kept by the Corporation of Mentz, to which all communications are requested to be addressed.—*Foreign Quarterly Review*.



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GOETHE

A medal, in commemoration of Goethe, has been struck at Berlin. On one side is the portrait of the deceased, by the celebrated Leonard Posch, crowned with laurel, bearing the inscription Jo. W. DE GOETHE NAT. XXVIII AUG. MDCCXXXIX. The likeness was taken a few years ago at Weimar, and has been universally admired for its accuracy. On the reverse is represented the Poet's Apotheosis. A swan bears him on his wings to the starry regions, that appear expanded above, and to which the Poet, having a golden lyre in his left arm, extends his right arm with longing gaze. On this side is the inscription AD ASTRA REDIIIT D. XXII MART. MDCCCXXXII—*Ibid.*

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THE GATHERER.

_ Wilkes's Luckiest Number _.—A rich farmer in Devonshire made a will, in which the following article was found:—"I bequeath to John Wilkes, late member of parliament for Aylesbury, five thousand pounds sterling, as a grateful return for the courage with which he defended the liberty of his country, and opposed the dangerous progress of arbitrary power."

Owen's Alms-houses, Islington, were founded by Dame Alice Owen, in consequence of a providential escape. In the fields, near this spot, in the reign of Queen Mary, the archers frequently exercised with bows and arrows. Dame Owen walking with her maid, and observing a woman milking a cow, was desirous of trying to milk the cow herself, which she did, when on leaving the cow, an arrow pierced the crown of her hat, without doing her the least injury. In gratitude for her escape, she built the school and houses. For many years an arrow was fixed on the top of them. SWAINE.

Origin of Tory.—Our friend, Mr. George Olaus Borrow, who has devoted his attention specially to the Celtic dialect, suggests that the long-disputed etymology of the word Tory may be traced to the Irish adherents of Charles II., during the Cromwellian era. The words *Tar a Ri* (pronounced *Tory*.) and meaning *Come, O King*, having been so constantly in the mouths of the Royalists as to have become a by-word to designate them. Mr. Borrow's paper on the subject has appeared in the *Norfolk Chronicle*.

Toast.—May the man who wins a woman's heart never be instrumental in breaking its peace.

Progress of Life.



When man full thirty years has spent,
The road at times both rough and stony,
To clear life's vapour, and repent
He seeks the stream of Matrimony!

Caught at last.—Sir Jervis Elwayes, lieutenant of the Tower, being much addicted to gaming, used to say, in his prayers, “Lord, let me hanged, if ever I play more.” He broke this serious prayer a thousand times, and at last was hanged on Tower Hill, in 1615, for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury.



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Edward the Confessor took great delight in Haverley Bower, in Essex, it being woody, solitary, and fit for devotion; but it so abounded with warbling nightingales, that they disturbed him in his devotions. He earnestly prayed for their absence, since which time it is superstitiously said, never nightingale was heard to sing in the park, though occasionally the warbler is heard outside the pales.

Wages.—In 1352, (25th Edward III.) the wages paid to haymakers was 1d. a-day; a mower of meadows, 3d. a-day, or 5d. an acre; reapers of corn in the first week of August, 2d., in the second 3d. per day, and so on till the end of August, without meat, drink, or other allowance; finding their own tools. For threshing a quarter of wheat or rye, 2-1/2d.; a quarter of barley, beans, peas, and oats, 1-1/2d. A master carpenter, 3d. per day, other carpenters 2d. A master mason 4d. per day, other masons 3_d_, and their servants 1-1/2d. per day. Tilers 3d., and their “knives” 1-1/2d. Thatchers 3d. a-day, and their knives 1-1/2d. Plasterers, and other workers of mud walls and their knives in like manner, without meat or drink, and this from Easter to Michaelmas; and from that time less, according to the direction of the justices. T. GILL.

Literary Quizzing.—Of all human quizzing, ancient and modern, plebeian or patrician, nothing equals that now in triumphant practice in the lists of literature. From Zoilus to the penny newspapers, never has there been criticism, penned or spoken, so bitterly pungent as some of the grave laudatory articles, by which authors are now quizzed down to zero in the popular reviews. Satan Montgomery is bantered with the name of Isaiah; Miss Landon by a comparison with La Rochefoucault; and Don Trueba, with Pigault le Brun. This is a refinement in cruelty. It is twining the rack with flowers; and hanging a man with a cord of gold. The sentence of the reviewer should be “Yea, yea; and nay, nay!” A Barmecide’s feast of fame is a supererogation of malice. We hold that all authors so derided have a right to call upon their critics to make good their words; and build up the visionary castles of their *Fata Morgana*, (like London Bridge in the nursery song) with “gravel and stone;” or rather, “with silver and gold.” A heavy mulct should be imposed on literary quizzing.—*Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine*.

Cross Readings, (from the Spanish.)—Suddenly King Alphonso Riberro Fernando rose from his couch, and sallying from his tent with fierce looks and sword in hand—swore the total annihilation of every bug in the Castiles.

And the king with great despatch, forthwith ordered a strong body of cavalry, for—there was a mouse scratching behind the wainscot.

So the queen, Mary, rising majestically from her throne, with imperial, yet gentle look, exclaimed in a sweet voice—“Scratch Poll’s head.”

There was a goodly array of gay knights following the king to the hunt—the rats being numerous they afforded good sport.

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These specimens of Spanish satire came out in the form of cross-readings, a few months after the death of Cervantes; they were affirmed to be by that illustrious author; how truly so I know not. R.N.

Cannon Clock.—In the gardens of the Palais Royal and the Luxembourg, at Paris, is a specimen of this contrivance invented by one Rousseau. A burning-glass is fixed over the vent of a cannon, so that the sun's rays, at the moment of its passing the meridian, are concentrated by the glass, on the priming, and the piece is fired. The burning-glass is regulated, for this purpose, every month.

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