

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.

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* * * * *

[Illustration: *Natural tunnel, in Virginia.*]

NATURAL TUNNEL, IN VIRGINIA.

Rock Bridges occupy the same pre-eminence amongst the sublimities of nature, that artificial bridges maintain amidst the labours of man. Both alike inspire us with admiration, though we are enabled to obtain but unequal results as to their respective origins. The bridge, built by human hands, is, indeed, a triumph of the perfection of skilful contrivance; the strength and beauty of the arch are among the most simple yet exquisite results of science, wonderful as they may appear to the untaught beholder: but how shall we explain the formation of stupendous rock-arches across deep ravines and rolling torrents, in countries where none but the wild and picturesque forms of nature rise to gladden the eye and heart of the inquiring traveller? Of the latter description are the natural bridges which abound in the State of Virginia; as Rockbridge, which gives name to the county in which it is situated, and the wild and fantastic bridges of Icognozo; all of which are more extensively recognised among the wonders of creation than the specimen here presented to the reader.

This Tunnel is in Scott county, Virginia; but was so little known beyond its immediate neighbourhood, as to induce Lieut.-Col. Long, (U.S. Army,) to communicate its



description to Mr. Featherstonhaugh's *American Journal of Geology and Natural Science*; and the following narrative of the Colonel's Excursion will be read with interest:

“During the past summer, I visited a remarkable natural bridge in Scott county, Virginia, to which I have given the name of Natural Tunnel, on account of its striking resemblance to artificial structures of that kind.

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“The immediate locality of this tunnel is upon a small stream called Buck-eye, or Stock Creek. This last name owes its origin to its valley having been resorted to by the herdsmen of the country, for the attainment of a *good range*, or choice pasture-ground, for their cattle. The creek rises in Powell’s mountain, and is tributary to Clinch river, which it enters at the distance of between two and three miles below the tunnel. The aspect of the surrounding country, and especially of that to the northward of the tunnel, and constituting the southerly slope of the mountain just mentioned, is exceedingly diversified, and broken by elevated spurs and ridges, separated from each other by deep chasms, walled with cliffs and mural precipices, often presenting exceedingly narrow passes, but occasionally widening into meadows or bottoms of considerable extent. The mural precipices just mentioned occur very frequently, bounding the valleys of the streams generally in this part of the country, and opposing ramparts of formidable height, and in many places utterly insurmountable. Such are the features peculiarly characteristic of *Wild Cat Valley*, the *Valley of Copper Creek*, of Powell’s and Clinch rivers, and of numerous other streams of less note, all of which are situated within a few miles of the Natural Tunnel.

“To form an adequate idea of this remarkable and truly sublime object, we have only to imagine the creek to which it gives a passage, meandering through a deep, narrow valley, here and there bounded on both sides by walls, or *revetements*, of the character above intimated, and rising to the height of two or three hundred feet above the stream; and that a portion of one of these chasms, instead of presenting an open, *thorough cut* from the summit to the base of the high grounds, is intercepted by a continuous unbroken ridge, more than three hundred feet high, extending entirely across the valley, and perforated transversely at its base, after the manner of an artificial tunnel, and thus affording a spacious subterranean channel for the passage of the stream.

“The entrance to the Natural Tunnel on the upper side of the ridge is imposing and picturesque in a high degree; but on the lower side the grandeur of the scene is greatly heightened by the superior magnitude of the cliffs, which exceed in loftiness, and which rise perpendicularly—and, in some instances, in an impending manner—two or three hundred feet; and by which the entrance on this side is almost environed, as it were, by an amphitheatre of rude and frightful precipices.

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“The observer, standing on the brink of the stream, at the distance of about one hundred yards below the debouchure of the Natural Tunnel, has, in front, a view of its arched entrance, rising seventy or eighty feet above the water, and surmounted by horizontal stratifications of yellowish, white, and grey rocks, in depth nearly twice the height of the arch. On his left, a view of the same mural precipice, deflected from the springing of the arch in a manner to pass thence in a continuous curve quite to his rear, and towering in a very impressive manner above his head. On his right, a sapling growth of buck-eye, poplar, linden, &c., skirting the margin of the creek, and extending obliquely to the right, and upward, through a narrow, abrupt ravine, to the summit of the ridge, which is here and elsewhere crowned with a timber-growth of pines, cedars, oaks, and shrubbery of various kinds. On his extreme right is a gigantic cliff, lifting itself up, perpendicularly from the water’s edge, to the height, of about three hundred feet, and accompanied by an insulated cliff, called the Chimney, of about the same altitude, rising, in the form of a turret, at least sixty feet above its basement, which is a portion of the imposing cliff just before mentioned.

“Desirous of illustrating this paper by a front view of the Natural Tunnel where the creek issues from it, I have, with the assistance of a particular friend in this city—to whom I am indebted for the accompanying drawing[1]—been enabled to furnish a sketch which very faithfully represents some of the appearances I have described. The embellishments last mentioned, however, viz. the chimney and its accompaniments, could not be comprised in the landscape.

“The following passages are from my own private journal:—

“Saturday, Aug. 13, 1831. Having ascended Cove ridge, we turned aside from our route to visit the natural bridge, or tunnel, situated on Buck-eye, or Stock creek, about a mile below the Sycamore camp,[2] and about one and a half miles from a place called Rye cove, which occupies a spacious recess between two prominent spurs of Powell’s mountain, the site of the natural tunnel being included within a spur of Cove ridge, which is one of the mountain spurs just alluded to. Here is presented one of the most remarkable and attractive curiosities of its kind, to be witnessed in this or any other country. The creek, which is about seven yards wide, and has a general course about S. 15 W., here passes through a hill elevated from two to three hundred feet above the surface of the stream, winding its way through a huge subterraneous cavern, or grotto, whose roof is vaulted in a peculiar manner, and rises from thirty to seventy or eighty feet above its floor. The sides of this gigantic cavern rise perpendicularly in some places to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and, in others, are formed, by the springing of its vaulted roof immediately from its floor.

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The width of the tunnel varies from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet. Its course is that of a continuous curve, resembling the letter S; first winding to the right as we enter on the upper side, then to the left, again to the right, and then again to the left on arriving at the entrance on the lower side. Such is its peculiar form, that an observer, standing at a point about midway of its subterranean course, is completely excluded from a view of either entrance, and is left to grope in the dark through a distance of about twenty yards, occupying an intermediate portion of the tunnel. When the sun is near the meridian, and his rays fall upon both entrances, the light reflected from both extremities of the tunnel contributes to mollify the darkness of this interior portion into a dusky twilight.

“The extent of the tunnel, from its upper to its lower extremity, following its meanders, is about 150 yards; in which distance the stream falls about ten feet, emitting, in its passage over a rocky bed, an agreeable murmur, which is rendered more grateful by its reverberations upon the roof and sides of the grotto. The discharge of a musket produces a crash-like report, succeeded by a roar in the tunnel; which has a deafening effect upon the ear.

“The hill through which this singular perforation leads, descends in a direction from east to west, across the line of the creek, and affords a very convenient passage for a road which traverses it at this place, having a descent in the direction just mentioned of about four degrees.

“The rocks found in this part of the country are principally sandstone and limestone, in stratifications nearly horizontal, with occasional beds of clay slate. A mixture of the two former frequently occurs among the alternations presented by these rocks. A variety of rock resembling the French burr occurs in abundance on Butcher’s-fork of Powell’s river, about twenty miles northwardly of the Natural Tunnel. Fossils are more or less abundant, in these and other rocks. Fossil bones, of an interesting character, have been found in several places. Saltpetre caves are numerous. Caves, sinks, and subterranean caverns, are strikingly characteristic, not only of the country circumjacent to the Natural Tunnel, but of the region generally situated between the Cumberland mountain, and the Blue ridge or Apalachian mountain. Bituminous coal, with its usual accompaniments, abounds in the northerly parts of this region; and in the intermediate and southerly portions, iron, variously combined, often magnetic, together with talcose rocks, &c. &c. are to be met with in great abundance.

“The mountains in this vicinity—long. 82 deg. to 84 deg. W. from Greenwich, lat. 35 deg. to 36 deg. N.—are among the most lofty of the Allegheny range. Several knobs[3] in this part of the range, among which may be enumerated the Roan, the Unaka, the Bald, the Black, and Powell’s mountains, rise to the height of at least four thousand five hundred feet above tide.”

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Mr. Featherstonhaugh remarks, that the Natural Tunnel has not been worn through the rock by the long-continued action of running water is evident, not from the cavernous structure alone of the general country, but from the form of Powell's mountain, in a spur of which the Tunnel passes transversely.

Mr. Featherstonhaugh further concludes the Tunnel to be a natural cavity in the rock, for, if such had not been the case, "it is evident that the stream would have been deflected from its line; would have followed the base of the hill, and have turned the extreme point."

Little is known of the geology of the country in which this Tunnel is situate, notwithstanding the popularity of the natural bridges of the State. The rock before us would appear to belong to that class which geologists commonly term Perforated Mountains, which some suppose to have been bored through, in part, at least, by the persevering industry of man. "Such phenomena," observes Maltebrun, "are, however, mere eccentricities of nature, and differ from caverns only from the circumstance of having a passage entirely through them. The Pierre-Pertuise in Mount Jura, and Pausilippo, near Naples, are instances of this kind. The Torghat, in, Norway, is pierced by an opening 150 feet high, and 3,000 long. At certain seasons of the year, the sun can be seen darting its rays from one extremity to the other of this vault. Near New Zealand is a rocky arch through which the waves of the sea pass at high water." [4] The latter, one of the Piercy Islands, will be found engraved and described in *The Mirror*, vol. xix. p. 145.

[1] See the Cut.

[2] This designation has been given to a spot in the Valley of the creek, where formerly stood a hollow sycamore (*platanus occidentalis*) tree of an enormous size, the remains of which are still to be seen, and in the cavity of which, whilst it stood, fifteen persons are said to have encamped at the same time together.

[3] Out-liers of any particular ridge.

[4] Physical Geography, book viii.

* * * * *

THE LATE SIR WALTER SCOTT.

(From the Note Book of a Tourist.)

In the summer of 1829, I made a Tour of the Borders. On the 16th of August, I arrived in Melrose. I came on the top of the coach from Jedburgh, in company with two intelligent fellows, a young Englishman of fortune (apparently,) and a Russian nobleman. We put up at the George, where we found about five tourists, redolent of sketch and note books, drinking toddy and lying in wait to catch a sight of the lion of the neighbourhood, Sir Walter. The voracity with which they devoured any anecdotes of him was amusing. In the evening it came on a peppering storm. I had foreseen this on our route from *Jeddart*. The Eildons had mounted their misty cap, always a

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sure prognostic of rain; in fact they are the barometer of the district. I then prevailed on my two companions to forego their visit to the Abbey that night. We therefore had in old Davidson, the landlord of the Inn, and my companions submitted him to an interrogatory of three long hours' duration. One little anecdote of fresh occurrence struck me as possessing some interest. I will record it. About a month before, a poor maniac presented herself at the gates of Abbotsford. She desired to see Sir Walter. The servant denied her admittance, but such was the earnestness of the poor creature, that *auld Saunders*, on her pressing application, went and informed his master, "that a puir demented lassie was at the gett (gate) greetin' like a bairn." Sir Walter had the kindest of hearts; "O admit her puir thing," he said. The woman no sooner entered than she fell on her knees in reverential awe before Sir Walter. Her story was simply this. She belonged to Aberdeen; she was married to a young farmer in that neighbourhood and had not long before given birth to a beautiful infant, the first pledge of their loves. The pains of birth had injured her mental equanimity, and eluding the vigilance of her keepers she set forward one evening in search of the great enchanter, whose works had in happier hours beguiled her with their beauty. She travelled for a week; the distance from Aberdeen to Abbotsford was about a hundred and fifty miles. She had walked every step. Sir Walter did what he could to soothe her distracted mind, and get her wasted frame recruited. But after some time he deemed it advisable to exercise his judicial power and put her in a place of security, until definite intelligence could be procured of her friends and relations. Jedburgh is the county town of Roxburgh; and thither all wanderers of this and a less gentle race are sent. A post-chaise was sent for from old Davidson, of the George, and when it was at the door of Abbotsford, Sir Walter induced the poor girl to enter it, promising to accompany her "out a ridin'." She entered—looking for him to follow. The door was instantly closed, and the post-boy lashing and spurring his horses, darted off in a second. She gave a piercing shriek, looked wildly round her, and abandoned herself to the most agonizing despair; exclaiming in a tone of the utmost pathos, "ah! deceitfu' man, hae ye beguiled me too!"—and then she sunk back in the carriage, and buried herself in the deepest silence. * *

18th August. Set out to view the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey. Called on Capt. (now Sir David) Erskine, from whom I received the politest attention. His housekeeper acted as my cicerone, and conducted me over the venerable pile. These time-worn ruins stand on the north bank of the Tweed, by which they are almost surrounded, and are backed by hills covered with wood, of the richest foliage. The abbey as well as the modern mansion house of the proprietor, is completely embosomed in wood. Around this

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sylvan spot the Tweed winds in a beautiful crescent form, and the scene is extremely interesting, embracing both wood and water, mountain and rock scenery. The whole gives rise to sentiments of the most pleasing, devotional tranquillity. The place, however, at which I paused, was St. Mary's Aisle: "here," I said to myself, "will the mighty minstrel sleep, when his harp shall be silent!"—and here I offered the votive tribute in anticipation, which thousands will follow me in, now that he is, too truly, alas! no more. At the little iron palisading I stood, and said, "here Scott will sleep:" in this, fate has not deceived me. He rests there now. Peace to his manes!

August 20. Down at the Abbey this night. It would be absolute folly to note down what I saw or thought of this most remarkable monastic structure. Every album possesses it, in all the beauty of its fairy architecture; its tabernacles, its niches and canopies, and statues, pinnacles, pediments, spires, and the tracery of its vaultings.

The decorated work is most exquisitely executed. The mouldings are still so sharp, that they seem as lately from the chisel of the mason. The south transept window and door are the most perfect of the ruins. The day light of the window is twenty-four feet by sixteen, divided by four mullions. The tracery and cusplings are all of the decorated style of the Gothic. It is furnished with crotchets and creeping foliage. There are a number of niches, canopies, and tabernacles, on the south transept; and the corbels that support the statues, are carved with grotesque figures; some representing monks with cowls upon their heads, others musicians playing upon different kinds of instruments; some are most hideous to look at. Sir Walter procured casts of many of these grotesque figures, which on a visit to Abbotsford, I observed placed in the ceiling of the hall. He has clothed them in a new dress, more suited to the social scene of their present locality. But, I always ramble into the *shop*, when I get on architecture. Let me narrate the occurrence of this night. As I was pacing the great aisle of the abbey, a carriage drove up to the gate. "Sir Walter Scott!" said the keeper, brushing past me to receive him. A lady alighted. I heard "good night!" responded by a person in the carriage, who drove off with it. Who can this be, thought I to myself. It was dusk—the lady advanced with a stately step. I moved aside. "In these deep solitudes and awful cells!" methought I heard her say. She ascended to the bell-tower. "Who is that lady?" said I to the keeper when he entered. "That, sir," said he, "is Mistress Hemmins, the poet writer, wha is on a visit to Maistre Lockhart, and she cam just noo in Sir Walter's carriage, and she wants to be alane, sir, by hersel." I took the hint, and made for the George and my glass of toddy, unwilling to deprive the world of those lays, which Melrose, the rush of the Tweed, and midnight would, no doubt, inspire in the fair authoress.

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August 23. At Galashiels, a semi-rural demi-manufacturing town on the banks of the “braw, braw Gala water.” Not having the good fortune to get to Abbotsford from Melrose, I started over the hill which looks down on Galashiels, towards that destination. Abbotsford I need not render an account of. But my approach to it was not deficient in interest.

On arriving at the summit of the hill overlooking the Tweed, it burst upon my sight. I looked down on the grounds in which it is settled, as on a map. The skill and industry of Sir Walter is not more remarkable in his literary than in his rural works. The house stands in a bare, barren corner of Selkirkshire, (I think) but by admirable management, he has enclosed it with fine, hardy young wood, and quite altered its appearance.

At the bottom of the hill I took the boat at the ferry, and resting in the middle of the stream, the Tweed, and looked around me. I saw a person on the opposite bank appearing and disappearing in the wood which comes down to the water’s edge. I drew near. He was dressed in a short, green coat and cap, and was amusing himself with the antics of a large dog. The place—the time—the air—the gait—every thing conspired: “Who’s that, lassie?” said I to my little boat rower; “That, sir? that’s *himself*, that’s the shirra” (sheriff.) Yes, it was the man—he himself—the pride of Scotland—her boast—the intellectual beacon of her hills—it was Sir Walter Scott!

Sept. 3. At Selkirk. At Mitchell’s Inn, where I was introduced to the celebrated Jamie Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. He had come, I think, from a fair held at the Eildons. We got over a jug of toddy. Our conversation turned on the church service of the kirk of Scotland, and we rambled into poetry in conversing on the psalms. I pointed out to the shepherd, that a fair fame might be achieved by arranging the Psalms of David, and superseding the barbarities of Sternhold and Hopkins. James maintained that the present edition in use in Scotland, could *not* be improved. He said that the question had been agitated in the General Assembly, and Sir Walter Scott was applied to, to furnish an improved versification, but he answered, stating that it would be a more difficult matter to get the people to adopt them, than to furnish the same. Any alteration in this respect would be looked upon as little better than sacrilege, and he therefore advised that the present form should be continued in. “Watty’s a sensible chap,” said the shepherd, speaking familiarly of Sir Walter, “and if he laid a finger on o’or venerable psalmody, I wad pitch a louse at him, wha hae ever loved the man as my ain brether.”

* * * * *

During the last years of Sir Walter’s life, he visited in the counties of Berwick, Roxburgh, and Selkirk, the various scenes which his graphic pen has delineated and incorporated in his minstrelsy and romance. The summer when the preceding notes were made, I happened to be in Kelso, and took ride one day to visit the worthy minister of a neighbouring parish, in which the celebrated border *keep* Smailholme tower is situated, the scene of the fearful legend embodied in the poem “The Eve of St. John.”

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We rode over to it: it is situated on a crag or ridge of rock, high in the north range of hills, the Lammer-muir, which spring from the splendid vale of Teviot and Tweed, commanding an unbounded prospect on the east and west; the south is terminated by the Cheviots and the English border.

We found the Tower in possession of a party, and the Rev. Mr. C—— rode forward to report, in case we should be deemed intruders. He came back shortly, and it was no other than Sir Walter himself, with several members of his family, who had accompanied him to bid a final farewell to *Smaillum keep*. As I afterwards heard, he was in the highest spirits, and repeated the poem for the gratification of his party, in that impressive manner for which he was remarkable, in giving the necessary effect to his own compositions. The party brought a cold collation with them: before leaving, Sir Walter surveyed the beautiful prospect at his feet, the Tweed and Teviot meeting in sisterly loveliness, and joining their waters in the valley, with the golden fields of England in the distance; when filling a glass of wine he drank with fervour, in which all joined him, “baith sides of the Tweed.”

I.

* * * * *

OLD ENGLISH ARMOUR.

(*From a Correspondent.*)

Previous to the time of Edward I., the body-armour may be distinguished by the appellations of *trelliced*, *ringed*, *rustred*, *mascled*, *scalad*, *tegulated*, *single-mailed*, and *banded*. The *trelliced* method has not been properly ascertained: it probably consisted of leather thongs, crossed, and so disposed as to form large squares placed angularly, with a round knob or stud in the centre of each. The *ringed* consisted of flat rings of steel, placed contiguous to each other, on quilted linen. The *rustred* was nothing more than one row of flat rings, about double the size of those before used, laid half over the other, so that two in the upper partially covered one below. *Mascled*; the hauberk composed of several folds of linen, covered with diamond-shaped pieces of steel touching each other, and perforated: so called from their resemblance to the *meshes* of a net. *Scaled*; formed of small pieces of steel like the scales of fish, partially overlaying each other. This species was used only during the reigns of Henry II and Richard I. The *tegulated* consisted of little square plates, partly covering one another, like tiles.

Single Mail was composed of rings set edgewise on quilted linen. It came into use about the close of John's reign, and continued to be partially worn till that of Edward I. At the commencement of Henry III.'s reign, it covered not only the head, but hands, legs, and feet. It was very heavy, and likewise the rings were liable to be cut off by the



blow of a sword; which latter circumstance, perhaps, introduced the contrivance of *banded* armour, which was composed of parallelogramic pieces of metal, sown on linen, so placed as to fold perpendicularly over each other, like palings, and kept in their places by bandy or hoops of leather.

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We now come to the *Double-chain Mail*, consisting of interlaced rings, which made its first appearance in the triumphant reign of Edward I. It is said to be of Asiatic invention, and was composed of four rings within a fifth, each of which was rivetted. *Single-chain mail* was worn by the Crusaders, in Henry III's time; and when the number of rings was doubled, it became *double-chain mail*. Its great advantages were compactness and pliability. Horses were now clothed in mail.

In the latter part of Edward III.'s reign, the *double-chain mail* became so covered with pieces of steel as to cause them in a little time to supersede it altogether. This, therefore, was termed *mixed*. The *double-chain* hauberk had been found, owing to its weight, to press injuriously upon the chest; to remedy which, a breastplate of steel was contrived, which being placed underneath, kept the mail from pressing upon the stomach. The throat was protected by a chain-covering that surrounded the neck, and hung down to the shoulders like a tippet.

We now come to *Plate Armour*. In Henry IV.'s reign, the adoption of the *mixed* armour soon pointed out, by experience, the inutility of retaining the *ringed* hauberk. The thighs and legs were no longer covered with *double-chain mail*, and the arms only partially. A back-plate was added, which, with the breast-plate, formed a cuirass. During the use of *mixed* armour, the arms, thighs, knees, and legs were covered with plates of metal; and for the hands were invented gloves of plate, with fingers, called *gauntlets*.

From the Conquest to the time of Richard III., the fashion was to ride with the toes down; after which period, the heel was dropped, and the toe raised. Spurs were not screwed to the armour before the time of Henry V.

No higher degree of perfection was ever attained in armour than during the reign of Richard III. The outline of the suit was most elegant, the workmanship most elaborate, and the choice of ornaments full of taste.

* * * * *

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS AT HEREFORD.

In the county of Hereford, some of the Romish and feudal ceremonies are yet practised. On the eve of Old Christmas-day, there are thirteen fires lighted in the cornfields of many of the farms, twelve of them in a circle, and one round a pole, much larger and higher than the rest, and in the centre. These fires are dignified with the names of the Virgin Mary and twelve Apostles, the lady being in the middle; and while they are burning, the labourers retire into some shed or outhouse, where they behold



the brightness of the apostolic flame. In this shed they lead a cow, on whose horns a large plum-cake has been stuck, and having assembled round the animal, the oldest labourer takes a pail of cider, and addresses the following lines to the cow with great solemnity:

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"Here's to thy pretty face, and thy white horn,
God send thy master a good crop of corn,
Both wheat, rye, and barley, and all sorts of grain,
And next year, if we live, we'll drink to thee again."

After which the verse is chanted in chorus by all present.

They then dash the cider in the cow's face, when, by a violent toss of her head, she throws the plum-cake on the ground; and if it falls forward, it is an omen that the next harvest will be good; if backward, that it will be unfavourable. This is the commencement of the rural feast, which is generally prolonged till the following morning.

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS IN MEXICO.

"Christmas is in Guadalajara," says Mr. Hardy, "a season of great diversion. The portales (colonades), which are much better than those of the city of Mexico, and infinitely more numerous, are all well lighted up with candles, surrounded by coloured paper shades, standing on little tables, which display a great assortment of sweetmeats and fruits. The ladies and gentlemen walk about, finely dressed, under the portales, and convert it into a fashionable promenade.—From seven till ten, there is not perhaps a single family in the whole town which has not taken a few turns in their gayest dresses, to witness the sweetmeat exhibition—to see and to be seen. It may be well to give the traveller a gentle hint with respect to the 25th of December: nothing borrowed on that day is ever returned. It is, in short, to the Mexicans, who call it. 'La noche buena,' what April fool-day is to us. Therefore, traveller, beware! It is the occasion of much frolic and amusement."

W.G.C.

* * * * *

NEW YEAR'S GIFTS.

The custom of New-year's Gifts is very ancient, and was formerly carried to a great extent. The sovereign used to accept gifts from his courtiers and principal favourites, and was also in the habit of making presents to certain individuals; the prince, however, always taking care that the presents he received greatly exceeded in value those which he gave. It is recorded of Bishop Latimer, that on one occasion he presented to his master, Henry VIII., instead of a sum in gold for a New-year's Gift, a New Testament, with the leaf folded down at Hebrews, ch. xiii., v. 4.—on reference to which the king

found a text well suited as an admonition to himself. Queen Elizabeth supplied herself with wardrobe and jewels principally from new year's gifts. Dr. Drake has given a list of some of these presents;—amongst the items we find the following: "Most of the peers and peeresses of the realm, the bishops, the chief officers of state, her majesty's household, even as low as the master of the pantry and head cook, all gave her majesty a Christmas-box,—consisting either of a sum of money, jewels, trinkets, or wearing

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apparel. The Archbishop of Canterbury usually gave 40l., the Archbishop of York 30l., and the other prelates from 10l. to 20l. The peers gave in the same proportion;—whilst the peeresses presented rich gowns petticoats, shifts, stockings, garters, &c. Her physician presented her with a box of foreign sweetmeats; and from her apothecary she received a box of ginger-candy and a box of green ginger. Ambroise Lupo gave her a box of lute-strings; and Smith, the royal dustman, presented her majesty with two bolts of cambric.”

W.G.C.

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SUMPTUARY LAWS.

These laws were made to restrain excess in apparel, costly furniture, eating, &c.

Zaleucus, the ancient philosopher and legislator of Greece, ordained that no woman should go attended with more than one maid in the street, except she was drunk. He prohibited the use of wine, otherwise than as a medicine, &c.

Among the Romans there were sumptuary laws to restrain the number of guests at feasts;—not only the master of the feast, but all the guests too, were liable to the penalty. It was also enacted, that more than ten asses should not be spent at any ordinary feast. Ten asses was the price of a sheep.

Luxury was restricted in England in 1337; wherein the prelates and nobility were confined to two courses every meal, and two kinds of food in every course, except on great festivals. All who did not enjoy a fee estate of 100_l_ per annum were also prohibited from wearing furs, skins, or silk; and the use of foreign cloth was confined to the royal family alone—to all others it was prohibited. An edict was issued by Charles VI. of France, which says, “Let no one presume to treat with more than a soup and two dishes,” 1340.

Sumptuary laws were made in England, in former times, against picked shoes, short doublets, and long coats. The dandies of ancient days wore the beaks or points of their shoes so long, that they encumbered themselves in their walking, and were forced to tie them up to their knees; the *fine gentlemen* fastened theirs with chains of silver, or silver gilt, and others with laces. This ridiculous custom was in vogue from the year 1382; but was prohibited, on the forfeiture of 20_s_ and the pain of cursing by the clergy, 1467.

In the reign of King Henry IV., Camden says—Pride was got so much into the foot, that it was proclaimed that no man should wear shoes above *six inches broad at the toes*;

and other garments were so short, that it was enacted, under Edward IV., that no person under the condition of a lord wear any mantle or gown, unless of such length.

P.T.W.

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MARRIAGE CUSTOM.

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The following singular, though highly *useful* custom, formerly existed in England: viz.—“There was usually carried before the mayde, when she shoulde be married, and came to dwell in hir husbände’s house, *a distaffe, charged with flaxe, and a spyndle hanging at it*, to the intente shee might bee myndeful to lyve by hir labour.” The foregoing is extracted from “A Treatise wherein dicing dauncing, vaine plays, or enterludes; with other idle pastimes, commonly used on the Sabbath-day, are proved by the authoritie of the word of God, and ancient writers; by John Northbrook, minister and preacher of the word of God.”

JUVENIS.

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NATIONAL CAPRICES.

The Persian, it is said, will endure suffocation before he will blow the fire with his breath; the Indian places supreme perfection in besmearing himself with cow-dung; the Mussulman believes himself purified from all his sins by the ablution of his head and arms: the only question with him is, “whether the ceremony ought to begin at the elbow or at the points of his fingers;” but so great is the difference of opinion on this head, that if two Mahometans meet on a journey, and accost each other with brotherly affection, by the one beginning his ablution at his fingers’ ends, and the other at his elbow, they instantly separate and become mortal enemies.

WALTER E.C.

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RETROSPECTIVE GLEANINGS.

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THE POST OFFICE.

In the year 1635, Charles I. directed his postmaster to open a communication between London and Edinburgh, &c. &c. In 1653-4, the revenues of the Post-office were farmed by the Council of State and Protector, at 10,000_l_ per annum. Some idea of their progressive increase may be gained by the perusal of the following:—

1664 L21,000 1674 43,000 1685 65,000 1688 76,318 1697 90,505 1710 111,467 1715
145,227 1744 235,492 1775 345,321 1785 463,753 1793 607,268 1814 2,005,987

Since 1814, Mr. Macculloch considers the revenue of the Post-office to have been about stationary.

ANTIQUARES.

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BEDE'S CHAIR.

[Illustration: BEDE'S CHAIR.]

This curious relic is preserved in the vestry of the ancient church of Jarrow, two miles from South Shields, in the county of Durham. It is a large chair of oak, traditionally said to have been the seat of the VENERABLE BEDE, the pre-eminent boast of the monastery, a portion only of the church of which establishment remains at Jarrow. The chair is very rudely formed, and, with the exception of the back, is of great age.

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To have been possessed by Bede, it must be eleven hundred years old; but there is no precisely authentic testimony of its belonging to that learned writer. The Danes and Normans are said to have plundered the monastery of all its valuables; though it is reasonable to suppose, that the monks would preserve the seat of their principal with more reverential care, and attach to it more importance, than they would to any other article of furniture. Mr. Fosbroke, the diligent antiquarian, refers to it as Bede's Chair in accredited manner; that is, as taken for granted, or without note or comment of doubt.

Venerable Bede was born at Wearmouth, A.D. 672, only a few years after the introduction of Christianity into Northumberland. When seven years of age, he was received into the monastery of his native place, where his infant mind acquired the rudiments of that knowledge which has rendered his memory immortal. When only nineteen, he was ordained deacon; and, even at that early age, was regarded as exemplary for his piety and studious life: he was subsequently removed to the new foundation at Jarrow, where he continued to study throughout a long life. The results of his monastic seclusion furnish a bright page even in these dark ages. "Such was the authority of his writings, that, though only a humble monk in the most remote, barbarous, and recently converted of the Saxon principalities, he attained (what was even then) the singular honour of being the most celebrated writer of Christendom for more centuries than one." [5] His great work is entitled, an "Ecclesiastical History," detailing ecclesiastical with civil events; which was, indeed, inevitable, when the ecclesiastics were the only men of knowledge. Bede believed in miraculous interpositions, and honestly related them; nevertheless, our obligations to his industry are invaluable. To him we owe all our knowledge of English history, from the landing of the Saxons in Kent to his time, (nearly three centuries,) and all our certain information respecting the various tribes who then inhabited the island: from him it is apparent that the work called the Saxon Chronicle copies long passages. Bede also translated St. John's Gospel into English; and it is said, that a copy of some of St. Paul's Epistles, in Bede's handwriting, is still preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. His works, published at Basle, extend to eight folio volumes.

Bede died May 26, 735, in the sixty-third year of his age. He was first buried in his own monastery, but his remains were afterwards removed, and interred in Durham cathedral; and, being subsequently canonized, he was enrolled in the Romish calendar of saints. His character is thus drawn by William of Malmesbury:—"He was a man, that, although born in the extreme corner of the world, yet the light of his learning spread over all parts of the earth. All the hours which he had to spare from the monastic exercises of prayer, and singing in the choirs by day and night, (in which he was constant, and very devout,) he most diligently spent in study, and divided his whole time between that and his devotions."

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The Chair is not the only memorial of Bede preserved in this neighbourhood. About one mile west of Jarrow is a *Well*, still called *St. Bede's*, to which it was customary, almost as late as the middle of the last century, to convey diseased children, and, after dropping in a crooked pin, to dip them for the recovery of their health: round the Well, also, on every Midsummer Eve, was a great resort of the neighbouring people, with bonfires, music, and dancing. The mystical properties of the Well are not of difficult solution: since it was reasonable enough to associate the restorative effects of cold bathing with sanctity; and the rejoicings at the spring were indicative of the gladness of the people, in connexion with a name endeared to them, by the wisdom, virtue, and benevolence, of its possessor.

[5] Sir James Mackintosh.

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GOLD-BEATING.

Early in the 17th century, great surprise was excited upon the promulgation of the fact, that the Parisian gold-beaters could produce 1,600 leaves, or 105 square feet, from one ounce of gold; but the surprise of the public was redoubled, when, upon the discovery of the fine skin now in use, they found that 147 square feet could be produced from the same quantity.

ANTIQUARES.

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MONUMENT OF A CRUSADER.

In the great north aisle of Winchester Cathedral, in a dark nook immediately adjoining the wall of the choir, is the mutilated effigies of a Crusader, recumbent on an oblong stone. The figure is armed cap-a-pee, in a hauberk,[6] with sword and shield, the latter of which bears, quarterly, two bulls passant, gorged with collars and bells, and three garbs, being the armorial bearings of the noble family of De Foix, of which was the Captal de Buck, one of the first Knights of the Garter, at the commencement of the Order. On a slab, placed perpendicularly against the adjoining wall of the choir, are several shields, emblazoned with the arms of the royal families of England, France, Castile. Leon, &c. There is no inscription remaining to point out for whom this figure was intended; but Gall, in his "Antiquities of Winchester," gives the following inscription as having existed on the monument:—"Hic jacet Willielmus comes de insula Vana, alias *Wincall*;" the parish of that name lies on the river Itchin, and might formerly have been insulated. The verger of Winchester Cathedral, in reply to an inquiry made by the editor

of the “Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet,” said, it was a knight of the name of *Fox*, evidently meaning *De Foix*. This figure suffered severely from the iconoclasts, at the time of Cromwell’s taking possession of Winchester. Amongst other mutilations, they have entirely hacked away the right leg, leaving only the foot connected with the lion couchant, against which the figure rests.

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This Engraving will be received by the attentive inquirer, as an interesting specimen of the sepulchral architecture of olden times; and, judging from the mutilated remains, its original beauty would have reminded us of the remark of an antiquarian writer,—that he never saw a fine monument out of England.

[Illustration: (*Monument of a Crusader, in Winchester Cathedral.*)]

[6] A tunick, or frock of armour, with wide sleeves, reaching a little below the elbow, terminating with a broad, gilt border, and having a hood, not separate. Its first introduction in armour is referred to the time of William II.

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THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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CHOICE APHORISMS.

(*From 144, in Fraser's Magazine.*)

It is perfectly possible to make champagne from gooseberries, equal to that yielded by the grape. *Exempli gratia*: Lord Haddington, who is a first-rate judge of wines, had a bottle of mock and one of real champagne set before him, and was requested to say which was which. He mistook the product of the gooseberry for the genuine article; and many persons, reputed good judges, have done the same thing.

By putting a piece of lump-sugar, the size of a walnut, into the tea-pot, you will make the tea infuse in one-half the time. This fact is well known to bag-men and stage-coach travellers.

Members of dilletanti societies are generally especial asses: their eternal talk about the fine arts, drawing, colouring, harmony, composition, chiaro-scuro, fore-shortening, design, and so forth, is enough to turn the stomach of a horse. The thing is the more insufferable, because they absolutely know nothing of the subject, and have about as much real appreciation of works of genius as a pig possesses for the inventions of Watt or Daedalus.

While prigs of the above description are eternally chattering about such topics, men who are really eminent in the fine arts never say a word on the subject. Goldsmith describes this matter well in his account of Sir Joshua Reynolds:—



To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill he was still hard of hearing;
When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff."

When I see a man who affects to doubt everything he hears, I never hesitate about writing him down an ass. A great doubter is a solemn and self-conceited prig. How amusing is it to see the blockhead shake his empty pate, compress his lips into a sneer, and turn up his absurd unmeaning eyes in dubious disbelief, when he hears aught which he thinks it would imply sagacity to discredit! Such persons imagine, that to be a great doubter implies wisdom; whereas, in their case, it has its origin in constitutional phlegm and stupidity.

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Arguers and spouters are invariably asses.

If you wish to make yourself agreeable to any one, talk as much as you please about his or her affairs, and as little as possible about your own. People are such downright egotists themselves, that they cannot tolerate egotism in others.

A person who cannot relish absurdity and wit, and must, moreover, have a satisfactory reason for whatever is said or done, is a philosophical blockhead.

The best tooth-powder in the world is Armenian hole, a pennyworth of which will serve a man for six months.

If a man pronounces you a liar, it is very absurd to call him out for the same. This ceremony does not prove that you are *not a liar*; it only shows, that you possess sufficient courage to stand at the distance of twelve paces, while a pistol—probably a leadless one—is fired at you.

Snuff-taking in a woman is abominable, unless she be very aged—say eighty, or upwards—when it is rather becoming than otherwise.

Young girls, of from fourteen to seventeen, are fond of aping the woman in their dress, and are partial to long shawls, which give the young things a matronly appearance. When they become women in reality, they are rather too apt to go upon the opposite tack, and to assume the dress and airs of the girl.

A well-made man always looks shorter than he is; ditto a well-made woman.

A story-teller, or dealer in anecdote, is an abomination that ought to be expelled from all well-regulated societies. A man of an original and truly powerful mind never deals in anecdotes, unless it be for the purpose of illustrating some general principle. Women and weak men are all addicted to the vice. If a person of this description begins to annoy a company with his or her twaddle, the only cure for it is to affect deafness—a very convenient infirmity at times.

A hint to Cooks.—Roasted chestnuts, grated or sliced, make an excellent addition to the stuffing for turkeys or geese.

Another hint.—In boiling salmon, split the fish from head to tail; if you do not do this, but boil it entire, or cut horizontally through the middle, it is impossible to cook it thoroughly, the thickness of the back and shoulders being such, that, if the outside be properly done, the inside must needs be little better than parboiled. On the Tweed, and other salmon districts, the latter system is held in abomination.



A clever servant is almost invariably quick tempered. The reason is obvious: superior talent is always accompanied by pride, which must meet with many petty annoyances in the menial state.

Never praise or talk of your children to other people; for, depend upon it, no person except yourself cares a single farthing about them.

Sea-gull eggs, when boiled hard and eaten cold, with pepper, salt, vinegar, and mustard, make a delightful breakfast dish. Many persons have an antipathy to such eggs; but it is from eating them in the soft state, when they have always a fishy taste. Try them as above, and they will change their opinions upon the subject.

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If a person has a great knack at finding out feats of legerdemain, you may pronounce him a blockhead. I never knew a clever man who was worth a farthing at detecting such tricks.

I have a profound veneration for great liars of a certain class. On this account Baron Munchausen, Major Longbow, and Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, are my especial favourites. Men of this description are invariably good-tempered, benevolent, and generous; and will, any day, treat you to a bottle of wine, provided you do them the favour of listening to their adventures.

Important to Drunkards.—If, an hour before sitting down to drink, you take a grain or two of opium, you will be able to withstand a much greater quantity than otherwise of liquor. This fact has escaped the observation of Macnish.

Some stupid people suppose that imagination and philosophy are incompatible. Blockheads! Was not Bacon, the greatest of philosophers, one of the most imaginative of men? There is more true philosophy in the writings of Shakespeare, Milton, and Scott, than in those of all the metaphysicians that ever existed.

An accomplished woman, in common parlance, means one who sings and dances well, knows a little French, a little Italian, a little drawing, a little embroidery, and not much of any thing, excepting fashionable novels; in which she is a great adept.

A lady's album is generally worth looking at, as a psychological curiosity, indicative, to a considerable extent, of the taste and feelings of its owner.

If a man borrows a shilling from you, and on being dunned pretends to have forgotten it, you may with considerable safety set him down for a liar.

When a man finds it convenient to tell a lie, he should sport a good thumping one when he is about it. If a great lie serves his purpose better than a little one, why hesitate between the two, when the sin is equally great in both cases? The former has this advantage, that, when detected, its enormity may be so great as to enable the person to pass it off as a piece of quizzery, which can never be done with the latter.

Heroic liars, such as the Baron or Major, are a godly race; but those who practise the sin in a small way, and keep fibbing about trifles are a despicable crew, and should be held by the heels, and soused head down-most in a firkin of small beer.

Men who are, or who fancy themselves to be good singers, are great bores. The airs which they assume in company are most insufferable. If asked for a song, they affect, with an aspect of the most hypocritical humility, that really they cannot sing—that their voice is out of order—that they are hoarse, and so forth; the fellows all the while being most anxious to show forth, only wanting to be pressed, in order to enhance their own

importance, and stimulate the curiosity of the company. Nor is this the worst of the case; for no sooner do they perpetrate one song, than they volunteer a dozen, interlarding

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the intervals between their performances with pedantic disquisitions on music, and flooring every man who ventures to hazard an opinion on the subject. These people, whether amateur or professional, must be extinguished; and the best way to accomplish their overthrow, and reduce them to their native insignificance, is, in the first instance, to take them at their word, and not urge them to sing. By so doing, they immediately take the pet, and sport mum for the rest of the evening. The same remarks apply to musical people in general, whether in the shape of fiddlers, fluters, horn blowers, thumpers on the pianoforte, &c. These individuals can think of nothing else but their favourite pursuit, and imagine all the world to be equally interested in it. Take a musician off music, and he is the most ignorant of animals. A good story in illustration of this is told about Madame Catalani. Being at a large party in Vienna, where Goethe was present, she was much surprised at the great respect with which that illustrious man was treated. On inquiring his name, she was informed it was the celebrated Goethe. "Celebrated!" said the siren; "what music did he ever compose? Why, I never heard of him!"

An absurd prejudice prevails among many people against the skate. If this fish is hung up and dried for a day or two, then cut in slices, done on the gridiron, and eaten with butter, it is most delicious.

N.B. The female skate is more delicate than the male.

Persons who indulge in conundrums, charades &c. are invariably poor creatures; as are those who have a knack at finding out such trifles. The same remark applies to punsters. It is difficult for a man of sterling talent to perpetrate a pun, or to solve an enigma. On the latter account, Oedipus must have been an ass.

A fact.—Nine-tenths of the catsup which is sold in the shops is a vile compound of liver and the roan of fish, seasoned with vinegar, pepper, and other condiments. If you wish the article genuine, you must procure mushrooms, and make it yourself.

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FERDINAND VII. OF SPAIN.

There is no court in Europe about which so little is known as that of Madrid, and certainly no European sovereign whose character and habits have been so studiously misrepresented as those of Ferdinand. The first time we beheld this monarch, we could scarcely credit the evidence of our senses. Walking in the gardens of the Retiro, at the time crowded with company, we encountered a portly old gentleman, quite unattended, habited in a plain, blue coat and nankeen trousers. This was Ferdinand, *El Rey*



absoluto, whom, in our mind's eye, we had long sketched with the dark pencil of a Murillo. On a countenance that we expected to have seen marked by all the dark and fiery passions of a Caesar Borgia, we beheld an expression of *bonhomie*—a total absence

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of hauteur, still less of ferocity; in fact, so totally different was he in appearance from all that we had preconceived, that it was with some difficulty we could persuade ourselves that our cicerone was not practising upon our credulity. So much, then, for the notion, that he never trusts himself out of his palace without being surrounded by a formidable guard. Perhaps no monarch is oftener seen without, or evinces less fear for his personal safety, than the tyrant Ferdinand.

By men of all parties, at Madrid, he is spoken of as a man not naturally vicious, but equally prone to good or evil, according to the direction impressed upon him towards either of these two ends, arising from a wily indolence of character, that, conscious of its own inability, throws itself on another. Leave him, say they, but the name of king, his secretaries, his valets, and his favourite amusements,—give him his Havanna cigars, (a lot of which he sends daily to the officer of the guard,)—and he would willingly consent to any change that might be proposed to him. The faults or the vices of Ferdinand are owing to his neglected and defective education; no care was taken to prepare him for his high station.

It was in the spirit of party that he embroidered a petticoat for the Holy Virgin, solely with the view of pleasing and cajoling the clergy; for, in his heart, Ferdinand is rather a devotee to pleasure than religion. In his habits he is remarkably domesticated; he rises at an early hour, and passes the greater part of the day in his wife's apartment, of whom he is passionately fond. The queen unites to a very graceful figure an interesting expression of countenance, that sometimes wears an appearance of sadness. Such is Ferdinand of Spain, whose actual demise will disclose scenes that at present almost set political calculation at defiance.

Ferdinand has been married four times:—1st, To Marie Antoinette, daughter of the King of the Two Sicilies; 2ndly, To his niece, the Infanta of Portugal, Maria Isabella; 3rdly, To the Princess Maria Josepha-Amelia, daughter of Prince Maximilian of Saxony; and, lastly, to his present queen, Maria Carletta, daughter of the late King of Naples.—*Metropolitan*.

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NOTES OF A READER.

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ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF EMIGRATION TO BRITISH AMERICA.

One of the disadvantages of emigration is the separation of friends for ever. Time and distance no doubt gradually obliterate from our mind the most endearing recollections; but, under untoward circumstances, which will at times cross the path of every mortal in the most favourable situations, the emigrant's, and particularly the female emigrant's, breast must be "stung with the thoughts of home," on comparing the many conveniences and comforts, and society, which they enjoyed in their fatherland, and

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which cannot be within their reach in their newly adopted country for many years to come, and perhaps not within the period of their lives. Unavailing wishes that they were back to their own country have been expressed by many, who looked with dread on the hardships they had to encounter at their first settlement. The labour required to clear a forest of gigantic trees is appalling to a man who has nothing to depend on but the physical strength of his own body; and if its powers have been impaired by low living, arising from a want of employment previous to the period of his emigration, and if he have a wife and large family depending on him for support, that labour must be exercised at the outset to a painful degree. All the shelter he can expect in the first winter of his sojourn is in a house of trees piled together, and his wooden furniture must consist of the rudest construction, blocked out of the timber which he himself has cut down. Though the air is clear and bracing, the intensity of the cold in winter is far beyond what he can conceive, and the heat in summer is so great for a short period as to blister the skin, if left exposed to the influence of the sun's rays. The diversity of temperature in the seasons causes an additional expense in the provision of clothes for the winter. Mosquitoes swarm on every new settlement, and annoy every one by their stinging and raising inflamed spots over the body. Rubbing strong vinegar over the parts is said to alleviate the pain. Fires of wet chips, lighted at the doors of the cabins, will prevent the ingress of these troublesome insects. When a clearance has been made the mosquitoes are not so troublesome. They dwell chiefly in the woods, and in the vicinity of swamps, and come out in hot weather. A small, black fly annoys also very much, by settling among the hair in the morning and evening. Sleep is completely driven away when they make an attack, and they produce the most uneasy sensation.

The state of the roads prevents a constant or rapid communication between places; and in a new country, where coin as the circulating medium is scarce, and barter exists as the medium of exchange, difficulties are often encountered in disposing of the surplus stock of agricultural produce. The intrusion of wild animals is an evil which ought not to be overlooked as affecting a new settler. If the cattle and sheep are not penned up at night, they may be partly destroyed by the ferocity of the bears. Bears, however, are not numerous. But squirrels and racoons, of which there are plenty, may destroy the corn crops materially, particularly in any season that is unfavourable to the formation of beech masts and nuts. Mice and rats eat the seed of the Indian corn after it is in the ground, so that two or three successive sowings are sometimes necessary.

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The advantages, on the other hand, which emigrants may enjoy in our American colonies are numerous and important. The first and great advantage is constant employment, whether labour be required for the improvement of their own land, or that of an employer. Constant employment bestows vigour on the bodily frame, and contentment to the mind. Labour, it is true, is not so high priced in Canada as it was when labourers were scarcer, but still an able-bodied agricultural labourer can get 2s. 6d. a-day, and skilful mechanics as much as 5s. and their victuals. The soil being quite new and fresh, it is naturally fertile, and it will give a good return for the labour bestowed upon it, and, of course, the exercise of superior skill and industry will produce extraordinary results. The climate in summer, too, being so very superior to this country, that many products of the soil may be obtained there with little trouble, which cost much trouble and expense here. Not only the ordinary grains can be grown to perfection, but maize, garden vegetable produce, and fruits of all kinds, grow luxuriantly. It is found, however, that the grafted trees from this country thrive much better, and produce more and better fruits, than the natural trees of the country. Abundance of provisions, then, for the largest families may be always obtained in our American colonies during the whole year. This assurance of abundance not only produces contentment of mind, but endues that spirit of independence which forms a valuable ingredient in a manly character. All accounts agree in the happy and contented state in which the emigrants are found, even in the midst of toil. Ample future provision for the family soothes the mind of the emigrant in the hour of dissolution. Not a trifling advantage consists in the absence of all vexatious imposts or burdens. There are no stamp-duties. Taxes there must be in all civilized communities, but there they are "trifles light as air." One dollar per hundred acres of land is about the annual amount of taxation to an emigrant. Besides all that, he may make his own malt, brew his own beer, make his own candles and sugar, raise his own tobacco, and tan his own leather, without dread of being exchequered. And last, though not least, of these advantages, is the almost unlimited space which lies open for settlements. For many generations yet unborn, good land and constant employment will await the arrival of the emigrant in the forest lands of our American colonies. These advantages counterbalance the evils of a new country, but, combining the former with the latter, emigrants should check the ardour of enthusiasm. They must consider that perseverance alone will insure success. They must make up their mind to work ere they can prosper. If they wish to possess land of their own, they must take money with them to give in exchange for that land. Having obtained the land which they desired to possess, they must consent to endure hardships before they can obtain

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even a shelter, and they must wait with patience the returning seasons before they can reap the fruits of their industry. All these considerations cannot be too strongly urged on the mind of the emigrant, for if they are not expected and guarded against, disappointment and vexation will assuredly ensue. "It is a matter of the first importance," says Mr. M'Gregor, "for a man living in the United Kingdom, to consider, before he determines on expatriation, whether he can, by industry and integrity, obtain a tolerably comfortable livelihood in the country of his nativity; whether, in order to secure to his family the certain means of subsistence, he can willingly part with his friends, and leave scenes that must have been dear to his heart from childhood; and whether, in order to attain to independence, he can reconcile himself to suffer the inconveniency of a sea voyage, and the fatigue of removing with his family from the port where he disembarks in America, to the spot of ground in the forest on which he may fix for the theatre of his future operations; whether he can reconcile himself for two or three years, to endure many privations to which he had hitherto been unaccustomed, and to the hard labour of levelling and burning the forest, and raising crops from a soil with natural obstructions, which require much industry to remove. If, after making up his mind to all these considerations, he resolves on emigrating, he will not be disappointed in realizing in America any reasonable prospect he may have entertained in Europe. These difficulties are, indeed, such as would often stagger the resolution of most emigrants, if they had not before them, in every part of America, examples of men who must have encountered and have overcome equally, if not more disheartening hardships, before they attained a state of comfortable affluence."—*Quart. Journ. Agr.*

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THE SILK MANUFACTURE.

The principal branches of this manufacture consist in the dyeing, winding, warping, throwing, and weaving. The first needs no explanation; the winding is the process between the throwing and the weaving. After the silk is thrown it is dyed, and then wound off preparatory to the loom. The warping is stretching the parallel threads on the loom, preparatory to weaving.

Throwing silk, is twisting two threads into one for the purpose of weaving. The single thread, as wound off from the cocoon, is designated the raw silk.

There are two descriptions of thrown silk. One is called *tram*, and consists of two threads simply twisted together. This description of thrown silk is used in the shuttle or transverse threads of a piece of silk on the loom. The other variety of thrown silk is called *organzine*. In this, the single threads are first twisted up, previous to their being twisted together. This is used for the warp, or parallel threads upon the loom.

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Throwing of silk was an important branch of manufacture in this country, until the duties were reduced in 1826. Since that period it has declined. The manufacture of thrown silk is chiefly carried on at Macclesfield, Congleton, and in the West of England. As silk can be thrown more cheaply in foreign countries than it can be in England, there has been a difference between the throwsters and the weavers of Coventry and Spitalfields, the latter having requested the protecting duty against foreign thrown silk to be reduced, to the manifest injury of the former.

It may be as well to explain to the reader the weights which are used in the silk trade. The weight of silk is estimated by *deniers*, an old Italian weight, of which twenty-four are equal to an ounce, used only in the silk trade, in the same manner as the weight called a *carat* is employed by those who deal in diamonds, and other precious stones. It is the custom to reel off, upon an engine established in the silk trade, a measure of four hundred ells of tram or organzine, (which are both double threads,) and the weight of this quantity establishes the fineness or coarseness of the silk. Four hundred ells of the finest Italian tram will weigh eighteen deniers; and although this silk will occasionally run so coarse as to weigh forty deniers, the qualities mostly in use vary in weight from eighteen to thirty deniers. The China and Bengal silk varies from thirty-five to eighty deniers in its weight. Turkey silk, the importation of which has lately much increased, and which is worked up in the single thread on account of the coarseness of the texture, varies from thirty to fifty deniers; which, as the others are weighed in the tram or double thread, will be in the proportion of sixty to one hundred deniers.

Silk is the staple manufacture of France, and has always received the fostering protection of the government. The raw material is the produce of the country; and, as the growers of silk are not permitted to export it, it is purchased by the manufacturers at a much cheaper rate than it can be procured by us. The value of the raw silk yearly produced in France is estimated at about three millions and a half sterling—the produce of manufacture at about two millions and a half; so that the silk trade of France is to be valued, on the whole, at about six millions sterling.

This is the estimate which is made by the acknowledgment of the French government; but there is every reason to suppose that it is much more considerable. This is certain;—that it is of the greatest value to that nation, and has received such protection, and, in consequence, is in that flourishing condition, that, at present, no other country can compete with it.—*Metropolitan*.

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RECENT VISIT TO THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

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Mr. Fergusson in his notes made during a Visit to the United States and Canada in 1831, says: after breakfast I took leave of my friend, and walked on for the Falls, leaving the stage, in which I had secured a place, to follow. The day was delightful, and as I ascended the steep hill from Queenston, I overtook a soldier of the 79th in charge of the baggage wagons, leaning on his musket, and wrapt in admiration of the surrounding scenery, "*It's mair like Scotland, sir, than any thing I've seen sin' I left it,*" was the poor fellow's remark, and truly it was far from misapplied, making due allowance for difference of scale. The country from Queenston to the Falls is well settled, and finely diversified by farms, orchards and open forest. The soil is perhaps light, but in some places of a stronger description, and all apparently fertile, desirable land. A very beautiful property, originally laid out by the ill-fated Duke of Richmond, and subsequently possessed by Sir Peregrine Maitland, adjoins the Road. The house, which is in the cottage style, of wood, seems large and commodious. This estate is in a very favourable situation, and has been lately sold for 2,000l.; it contains about 450 acres of good, useful land. The distance from Queenston to Niagara is about seven miles, and I sauntered on the whole way, the coach not overtaking me. About four miles from the Falls, the sound came upon my ear like the murmur of Old Ocean on a rugged strand. In certain states of the atmosphere and the wind this is heard at a much greater distance. The noise gradually increased, and by and by the spray was seen rising in columns above the trees. A splendid and extensive establishment was soon after recognised as Forsyth's hotel, and, under feelings far more intense than common curiosity, I hurried forward to a point, where Niagara in all its glory came in view. From the increasing facility of migrating now-a-days even from one end of the world to another, Niagara has lost somewhat of that mysterious halo with which it was wont to be enveloped; but still it must ever be Niagara. The most eloquent descriptions, I should think, must prove inadequate to convey a just conception of the scene. Nor can the pencil, I imagine, ever do it justice. A cataract may be said, as regards the painter's art, to differ from all other objects in nature. The human face and figure, the rich and varied landscape, the animal and vegetable world, may with sufficient propriety be delineated *at rest*, but quiescence forms no feature here. The ceaseless roar, the spray mounting like clouds of smoke from the giant limekiln, and the enormous sheet of water which rolls into the abyss, can only be felt and understood by repeated visits to the scene. My attention was for a time distracted by the rapids which are extremely interesting, and with any other neighbour than the Falls would excite the highest admiration and wonder. After some time spent in contemplation,

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I proceeded to my friends, where a kind and comfortable home awaited me. Mr. C. possesses a residence which is certainly one of the most romantic domiciles in the world. The house stands on a small lawn upon a point overhanging the rapids, and about half a mile above the Horse-Shoe Fall. The garden is behind, washed by a fine branch of the river, which encircles a wild and thickly wooded island, and on every side new and interesting prospects appear. The river is a mile across, and of great depth, and, for the same distance above the Falls, is one sheet of foam. We sauntered down in the evening to the river side, and the rapids lost nothing by a closer inspection. My bedroom looked directly upon them; I could watch the smoke of the Fall, as I lay on my pillow; and with the wild roar of the cataract sounding in my ears, I closed my first day at Niagara. The following morning proved fine, and we devoted the forenoon, of course, to the Falls. Lake Erie had just broken up, and the icebergs came crushing down the rapids, in a way highly interesting. My friends being quite at home in all the mazes of the river side, conducted me by a wild and rugged route to the edge of the Table-rock, when, upon emerging from a tangled brake, I beheld the Horse-shoe or great British Fall, pouring down its volume of ice and water, at the distance of a few feet from where we stood. The rock felt to me as though it vibrated, and a large mass did in fact lately give way, soon after a party had retired from the precarious stance. It is limestone, full of ugly fissures and rents. A narrow wooden staircase conducts adventurous travellers to the bottom of the Fall, where a sort of entrance is generally effected to a short distance under the sheet, and for which performance a certificate in due form is served out. The stair was at this time under repair, and the accumulation of ice below perfectly reconciled me to wave pretensions to such slippery honours. At some distance below the Fall, and opposite to the American staircase, there is a ferry, to which a safe and most romantic carriage-road has been lately formed, out of the solid rock, at no small labour and expense. When a similar accommodation shall have been provided upon the American side, it is expected to prove a lucrative concern, but at the present foot-passengers only can be landed in the States. The little skiff had just put off, with a party from the Canada shores, and got involved in streams of ice, in a way somewhat hazardous, and which rendered it impossible for the boatmen to return. The scene from the ferry is indeed magnificent, the Horseshoe, the American Fall, and Goat Island being all in view, with the great pool or basin eddying in fearful and endless turmoil. In the evening I walked up the river side towards the village of Chippeway, to visit a natural curiosity upon Mr. C.'s estate. A spring surcharged with sulphuretted hydrogen gas rises within a few paces of the river. A small building is erected over it, and when a candle is applied to a tube in a barrel, which encloses the spring, a brilliant and powerful light is evolved. Close adjoining are the remains of extensive mills burnt by the Americans during last war. The water privilege is great, and machinery to any extent might be kept in play.—*Quart. Journ. of Agriculture.*

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THE GATHERER.

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Dramatis Personae.—The stages and theatres of the Greeks and Romans were so immense, that the actors, to be heard, were obliged to have recourse to metallic masks, contrived with tremendous mouths, in order to augment the natural sound of the voice. This mask was called by the Latins *persona*, from *personare* (to sound through); and delineations of such masks as were used in each piece were generally prefixed to it, (as we now prefix the names of the characters in our modern plays), as appears from the *Vatican Terence*. Hence *dramatis personae* (masks of the drama); which words, after masks ceased to be used, were understood to mean *persons of the drama*.

J.E.J.

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Punctuality.—The late hospitable Colonel Bosville had his dinner on the table exactly two minutes before five o'clock, and no guest was admitted after that hour; for he was such a determined observer of punctuality, that when the clock struck five, his porter locked the street-door, and laid the key at the head of the dinner-table. The time kept by the clock in the kitchen, the parlour, and the drawing-room, and the watch of the master, were minutely the same. That the dinner was ready, was not announced to the guests in the usual way; but when the clock struck, this superlative time-keeper himself declared to his guests, "Dinner waits." Boileau, the French satirist, has a shrewd observation on this subject: "I have always been *punctual at the hour of dinner*," says the bard, "for I knew that all those whom I kept waiting at that provoking interval would employ those unpleasant moments to sum up all my faults."

THOMAS GILL.

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Volcanoes.—According to Dr. Ure, there were, in 1830, 205 burning volcanoes on the globe. Of these, 107 occur in islands, and 98 on continents, but ranged mostly along their shores.

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Former Junction of England and France.—From the correspondence pointed out by Mr. William Phillips, the geologist, between the strata of Dover and the hills west of Calais; and by M. de la Beche, between the strata of the coast of Dorset and Devon, and those

of Normandy, it may be inferred that the English Channel is a submarine valley, which owes its origin in a great measure to diluvial excavation, the opposite sides having as much correspondence as those of ordinary valleys on the land.

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Soldiers.—English soldiers were at one period distinguished by badges, like those worn by watermen. The general colour of their dresses appears to have been white; though, in 1544, a part of the forces of Henry VIII. were ordered to be dressed in blue coats, guarded with red, without badges, the right hose red, and the left blue. In 1584, Elizabeth ordered the cassocks of the soldiers sent to Ireland to be a sad green, or russet; though the cloaks of the cavalry were red. In 1693, the dresses of the soldiers were grey, and those of the drummers purple; but the red uniform was probably adopted when the House of Hanover acceded to the throne.

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In the time of Cromwell and Charles II. ordinary hats were lined with iron plates, to prevent assassination.

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Choristers.—The singing boys are, probably, the only officers of the Catholic Church retained to this day by the Royal Family; for at the Reformation, when masses, &c., had wholly ceased, Queen Elizabeth retained on her establishment four sets of singing-boys, attached to St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and that of the Royal Household. For the support of these bands, she issued out warrants, like the other English sovereigns, for taking up "suche apt and meete children as are fitt to be instructed and framed in the art and science of musicke and singing."

* * * * *

A Ha! ha! Fence.—Bridgman, a landscape gardener, early in the last century, is supposed to have introduced in the Royal Gardens at Richmond, the sunk fence for boundaries, instead of walls: an attempt considered so astonishing, that the common people called them Ha! has! to express their surprise at the sudden termination of their walk.

* * * * *

Sheridan's Funeral.—Mr. Moore has omitted one of the most touching and heart-stirring anecdotes connected with the funeral of Sheridan. The noble and select company had assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to departed genius, and the coffin was about to be placed in the hearse, when an elegantly-dressed personage, who pretended to be distantly related to the deceased, entered the chamber of death. At his urgent entreaties to view the face of his friend, the coffin lid was unscrewed; and, to the horror and surprise of the bystanders, he pulled out a warrant, and arrested the body! Mr. Canning and Lord Sidmouth went into an adjoining room, and paid the debt, which (it is said) amounted to 500l.

THOMAS GILL.

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Dr. Walcot, to Shield the Composer.—The following was sent to Shield, the ingenious composer, for his ivory ticket for admission to a concert, by his friend Peter Pindar:—

Son of the *string* (I do not mean Jack Ketch,
Though Jack, like *thee*, produceth *dying tones*;)
Oh! yield thy pity to a starving wretch,
And for to-morrow's *treat*, pray send thy *bones*.

THOMAS GILL.

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Epitaph on Mr. Death, the Actor.

Death levels all, both high and low.
Without regard to stations;
Yet why complain,
If we are slain?
For here lies one, at least, to show
He kills his own relations.

J.E.J.

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THE AUTHOR OF THE SKETCH-BOOK.

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