

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

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Page 1

THREE BOROUGHES:

1. *Dunwich, Suffolk.*
2. *Old sarum, Wilts.*
3. *Bramber, Sussex.*

Proposed to be wholly disfranchised by "the Reform Bill."

We feel ourselves on ticklish—debateable ground; yet we only wish to illustrate the topographical history of the above *places*; their parliamentary history must, however be alluded to; but their future fate we leave to the 658 prime movers of government mechanics. Mr. Oldfield's *History of the Boroughs*, the best companion of the member of parliament, shall aid us: instead of companion we might, however, call this work his *family*, for there are six full-grown octavo volumes, which would occupy a respectable portion of any library table.

* * * * *

Dunwich is a market town in the hundred of Blything, Suffolk, three and a half miles from Southwold, and one hundred from London. It was once an important, opulent, and commercial city, but is now a mean village. It was also an episcopal see, but William I. transferred the see to Thetford, and thence to Norwich. Dunwich stands on a cliff of considerable height commanding an extensive view of the German Ocean, and we learn that its ruin is owing chiefly to the encroachments of the sea. It is a poor, desolate place, as the cut implies. Mr. Shoberl, in the *Beauties of England and Wales*, tells us "seated upon a hill composed of loam and sand of a loose texture, on a coast destitute of rocks, it is not surprising that its building shall have successively yielded to the impetuosity of the billows, breaking against, and easily undermining the foot of the precipice." Certainly not, say we; and it is equally un-surprising that seven out of its eight parishes having been long ago destroyed, their political consequence should not exist beyond their extermination. Mr. Oldfield, whom we remember to have often met, was a man of jocose turn, and he has not spared Dunwich his whip of humour, for, speaking of its gradual decay by the sea, he says—"the encroachment that is still making, (1816) will probably, in a few years, oblige the constituent body to betake themselves to a boat, whenever the king's writ shall summon them to the exercise of their elective functions; as the necessity of adhering to *forms*, in the farcical solemnity of borough elections, is not to be dispensed with."

We must be brief with its representative and political history. "Out brief candle!" It has sent members since the 23rd Edward I. Bribery and other irregularities against the sitting members in procuring votes were proved in 1696: in 1708, Sir Charles Bloyce, one of the bailiffs was returned, but upon a petition proving bribery, menaces, treating, &c. this was proved to be "no return:" Sir Charles was declared not capable of being

elected, "as being one of the bailiffs; nor had the other bailiff alone any authority to make a return, the two bailiffs making but one officer." [1] In 1722 another bribery petition was presented, but the affair was made up, and the complaint withdrawn. After this display of venality, it is amusing to read that the corporation consists of two bailiffs and twelve *capital* burgesses. [2]

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[1] The reader may often have noticed in county advertisements the two sheriffs designated as *one officer*. Thus, in the advertisement of the recent Middlesex election:—

Sir Chapman Marshall, } Sheriff of Middlesex.
Sir W.H. Poland. }

[2] This reminds one of the admiration of the Lord Mayor in Richard III. by George the Second, so ill-timedly expressed by the King to Garrick, the stage king:—

“Fine Lord Mayor! capital Lord Mayor! where you get such Lord Mayor?”

Mr. Oldfield described this borough fourteen years ago, as consisting of only forty-two houses, and *half a church*, the other part having been demolished. Here *were* six if not eight parish churches: namely, St. John's, (which was a rectory, and seems to have been swallowed up by the sea about the year 1540;) St. Martin's, St. Nicholas's, and St. Peter's, which were likewise rectories; and St. Leonard's and All Saints, which were impropriated. The register of Eye also mentions the churches of St. Michael and St. Bartholomew, which were swallowed up by the sea before the year 1331. The ocean here appears to have almost a corporation swallow. The walls, which encompassed upwards of seven acres of land, had three gates. That to the eastward is quite demolished; but the arches of the two gates to the westward continue pretty firm, and are of curious workmanship, which nature has almost covered with ivy.

By aid of the excellent parliamentary *anatomy*, in the *Spectator* newspaper, we learn that DUNWICH, according to the census of 1821, contained 200 persons.

The “patrons,” or “prevailing influence,” are Mr. M. Barne and Lord Huntingfield. The number of votes is 18.

The members “returned” to the last parliament were F. Barne and the Earl of Brecknock, who were also returned at the recent election.

* * * * *

Old Sarum, Wilts, the second Borough, has been already fully illustrated in vol. x., No. 290, of *The Mirror*. It fell, or was rather pulled down, in consequence of a squabble between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities; and soon after 1217, the inhabitants removed the city, by piecemeal, to another site, which they called *New Sarum*, now Salisbury. The site of the old city was very recently a field of oats; and the remains of its cathedral, castle, &c., were heaps of rubbish, covered with unprofitable verdure. We may therefore say,

Ubi seges, *Sarum* fuit.

Mr. Britton, in the *Beauties of England and Wales*, discourses diligently of its antiquarian history, which we have glanced at in our tenth volume. It is in the parish of Stratford-under-the-Castle; and under an old tree, near the church, is the spot where the members for Old Sarum are elected, or rather deputed, to sit in parliament. The father of the great Earl of Chatham once resided at an old family mansion in this parish; and the latter was first sent to parliament from the borough of Old Sarum, in February, 1735; yet “the great Earl Chatham called these boroughs the excrescences, the rotten part of the constitution, which must be amputated to save the body from a mortification.”—*(Oldfield.)*

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Few particulars of its representative history are worth relating. The borough returned members to Parliament 23rd Edward I., and then intermitted till 34th Edward III., since which time it has constantly returned. By the return 1 Henry V. it appears that its representatives were with those of other boroughs elected at the county court.

Old Sarum was the property of the late Lord Camelford, who sold it to the Earl of Caledon. The suffrage is by burgage-tenure. The voters, seven, are nominated by the proprietor; but (says Oldfield) actually only one.

The population of Old Sarum is included in the parish, and is not distinguished in its returns.

The proprietor is Lord Caledon; and the members in the last parliament were J.J. and J.D. Alexander, who were again returned at the recent election.

The Cut is an accurate view of the old borough, with Salisbury Cathedral in the distance.

* * * * *

Bramber is here represented by the forlorn ruins of its Castle. It is in the hundred of Steyning, rape of Bramber, Sussex, and is half a mile from Steyning. It sent members as early as the two previous boroughs; it afterwards intermitted sending, and sometimes sent in conjunction with Steyning, before the 7th Edward IV. There is much "tampering" in its representative records: in 1700, one Mr. Samuel Shepherd was charged with these matters here, and in Wiltshire and Hampshire, when he was ordered to the Tower of London; but a week afterwards, Mr. Shepherd was declared to have absconded. In 1706, a Mr. Asgill, one of the Bramber members, was delivered out of the Fleet by his parliamentary privilege, and the aid of the Sergeant-at-Arms and his mace; but in the following month he was expelled the house for his writings.

The right of election is in resident burgage-holders; and the number of voters is stated to be twenty. The place consists of a few miserable thatched cottages. The Duke of Norfolk is lord of the manor. The cottages are one half of them the property of the Duke of Rutland, and the other of Lord Calthorpe, who, since the year 1786, have each agreed to send one member.[3]

[3] It is related, that in an election contest, in 1786, the tenant of one of the cottages had the integrity to reject L1,000 for his vote.

The history of the Castle seen in the Cut merits note, especially as it is the only relic of the former consequence of the place. It was the baronial castle of the honour of Bramber, which, at the time of the Conqueror's survey, belonged to William de Braose,

who possessed forty other manors in this county. These were held by his descendants for several generations by the service of the knights' fees; and they obtained permission to build themselves a castle here; but the exact date of its erection is not known. Its ruins attest that it was once a strong and extensive edifice. It appears to have completely covered the top of a rugged eminence, which commands a fine view of the adjacent country and the sea, and to have been surrounded by a triple trench. The population of Bramber is in the Returns of 1821—ninety-eight persons. The members in the last parliament were the Honourable F.G. Calthorpe and John Irving; at the recent election, the members returned were J. Irving and W.S. Dugdale.

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* * * * *

Such is an outline of the histories of the annexed three Boroughs. Two of them are sites of great beauty; and we leave the reader to reflect on these pleasant features in association with their rise, decline, and we opine, political extermination.

* * * * *

MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

* * * * *

ORIGIN OF THE COBBLER'S ARMS.

Charles V., in his intervals of relaxation, used to retire to Brussels. He was a prince curious to know the sentiments of his meanest subjects, concerning himself and his administration; he therefore often went out *incog.* and mixed in such companies and conversations as he thought proper. One night his boot required immediate mending; he was directed to a cobbler not inclined for work, who was in the height of his jollity among his acquaintance. The emperor acquainted him with what he wanted, and offered a handsome remuneration for his trouble.

"What, friend," says the fellow, "do you know no better than to ask any of our craft to work on St. Crispin? Was it Charles the Fifth himself, I'd not do a stitch for him now; but if you'll come in and drink St. Crispin, do, and welcome—we are merry as the emperor can be."

The sovereign accepted his offer; but while he was contemplating on their rude pleasure, instead of joining in it, the jovial host thus accosts him:

"What, I suppose you are some courtier politician or other, by that contemplative phiz! —nay, by your long nose, you may be a bastard of the emperor's; but, be who or what you will, you're heartily welcome. Drink about; here's Charles the Fifth's health."

"Then you love Charles the Fifth?" replied the emperor.

"Love him!" says the son of Crispin, "ay, ay, I love his long-noseship well enough; but I should love him much more, would he but tax us a little less. But what the devil have we to do with politics! Round with the glass, and merry be our hearts!"

After a short stay, the emperor took his leave, and thanked the cobbler for his hospitable reception. "That," cried he, "you're welcome to; but I would not to day have dishonoured St. Crispin to have worked for the emperor."

Charles, pleased with the honest good nature and humour of the fellow, sent for him next morning to court. You may imagine his surprise, to see and hear that his late guest was his sovereign: he was afraid his joke on his long nose would be punished with death. The emperor thanked him for his hospitality, and, as a reward for it, bid him ask for what he most desired, and to take the whole night to think of it. The next day he appeared, and requested that for the future the cobblers of Flanders might bear for their arms a boot with the emperor's crown upon it.

That request was granted; and so moderate was his ambition, that the emperor bid him make another. "If," says the cobbler, "I might have my utmost wish, command that for the future the company of cobblers shall take place of the company of shoemakers."

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It was accordingly so ordained by the emperor; and to this day there is to be seen a chapel in Brussels adorned round with a boot and imperial crown, and in all processions the company of cobblers take precedence of the company of shoemakers.

G.K.

* * * * *

SINGULAR TENURE.

King John gave several lands, at Kepperton and Atterton, in Kent, to Solomon Attefeld, to be held by this singular service—that as often as the king should be pleased to cross the sea, the said Solomon, or his heirs, should be obliged to go with him, to *hold his majesty's head*, if there should be occasion for it, “that is, if he should be sea-sick;” and it appears, by the record in the Tower, that this same office of *head-holding* was actually performed in the reign of Edward the First.

J.R.S.

* * * * *

“AS BAD AS PLOUGHING WITH DOGS.”

(*To the Editor.*)

Famed as your miscellany is for local and provincial terms, customs, and proverbs, I have often wondered never to have met with therein this old comparative north country proverb—“As bad as ploughing with dogs;” which evidently originated from the Farm-house; for when ploughmen (through necessity) have a new or awkward horse taken into their team, by which they are hindered and hampered, they frequently observe, “This is as bad as ploughing with dogs.” This proverb is in the country so common, that it is applied to anything difficult or abstruse: even at a rubber at whist, I have heard the minor party execrate the business in these words, “It is as bad as ploughing with dogs,” give it up for lost, change chairs, cut for partners, and begin a new game.

H.B.A.

* * * * *

CROESUS.—A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

(*For the Mirror.*)



Cyrus, Courtiers, and Officers of State. Croesus bound upon the funeral pile which is guarded by Persian soldiers, several of them bearing lighted torches, which they are about to apply to the pile.

Croesus.—O, Solon, Solon, Solon.

Cyrus.—Whom calls he on?

Attendant.—Solon, the sage.

Croesus.—How true thy words
No man is happy till he knows his end.

Cyrus.—Can Solon help thee?

Croesus.—He hath taught me that
Which it were well for kings to know.

Cyrus.—Unbind him—we would hear it.

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Croesus.—The fame of Solon having spread o'er Greece, We sent for him to Sardis. Robed in purple, We and our court received him: costly gems Bedecked us—glittering in golden beds, We told him of our riches. He was moved not. We showed him our vast palace, hall, and chamber, Cellar and attic not omitting— Statues and urns, and tapestry of gold, Carpets and furniture, and Grecian paintings, Diamonds and sapphires, rubies, emeralds, And pearls, that would have dazzled eagles' sight. Lastly, our treasury!—we showed him Lydia's wealth! And then exulting, asked him, whom of all men That in the course of his long travels he had seen He thought most happy?—He replied, "One Tellus, an Athenian citizen, Of little fortune, and of less ambition, Who lived in ignorance of penury, And ever saw his country flourish; His children were esteemed—he lived to see His children's children—then he fell in battle, A patriot, a hero, and a martyr!" Whom next?—I asked, "Two Argive brothers, Whose pious pattern of fraternal love And filial duty and affection, Is worthy of example and remembrance. Their mother was a priestess of the queen Of the supreme and mighty Jupiter! And she besought her goddess to send down The best of blessings on her duteous sons. Her prayers were heard—they slept and died!" Then you account me not among the happy?

To which the sage gave answer—

"King of Lydia! Our philosophy Is but ill suited to the courts of kings. We do not glory in our own prosperity, Nor yet admire the happiness of others. All bliss is brief and superficial, And should not be accounted as a good, But that which lasts unto our being's end. The life of man is threescore years and ten, Which being summed in the whole amount Unto some thousands of swift-winged days, Of which there are not two alike; So those which are to come, being unknown, Are but a series of accidents: Therefore esteem we no man happy, But him whose happiness continues to the end! We cannot win the prize until the contest's o'er!"

Cyrus.—Solon hath saved one king
And taught another! Torchmen, we relieve
The captive Croesus.

CYMBELINE.

* * * * *

PAUL'S CROSS.

(*For the Mirror.*)

"——Friers and faytours have fonden such questions To plesse with the proud men, sith the pestilence time,[4] And preachen at St. Paul's, for pure envi fo clarkes, That praiers have no powre the pestilence to lette."

Piers Plowman's Visions.

[4] The great plague in 1347.

The early celebrity of Paul's Cross, as the greatest seat of pulpit eloquence, is evinced in the lines above quoted, which give us to understand that the most subtle and abstract questions in theology were handled here by the Friars, in opposition to the secular clergy, almost at the first settlement of that popular order of preachers in England.

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Of the custom of preaching at crosses it is difficult to trace the origin; it was doubtless far more remote than the period alluded to, and *Pennant* thinks, at first accidental. The sanctity of this species of pillar, he observes, often caused a considerable resort of people to pay their devotion to the great object of their erection. A preacher, seeing a large concourse might be seized by a sudden impulse, ascend the steps, and deliver out his pious advice from a station so fit to inspire attention, and so conveniently formed for the purpose. The example might be followed till the practice became established by custom.

The famous Paul's Cross, like many others in various parts of the kingdom (afterwards converted to the same purpose,) was doubtless at first a mere common cross, and might be coeval with the Church. When it was covered and used as a pulpit cross, we are not informed. Stowe describes it in his time, "as a pulpit-crosse of timber, mounted upon steppes of stone, and covered with leade, standing in the church-yard, the very antiquitie whereof was to him unknowne." We hear of its being in use as early as the year 1259, when Henry III., in person commanded the mayor to swear before him every stripling of twelve years old and upwards, to be true to him and his heirs. Here in 1299, Ralph de Baldoc, dean of St. Paul's, cursed all those who had searched, in the church, of St. Martin in the Fields, for a hoard of gold, &c. Before this cross in 1483, was brought, divested of all her splendour, Jane Shore, the charitable, the merry concubine of Edward IV., and, after his death, of his favourite, the unfortunate Lord Hastings. After the loss of her protectors, she fell a victim to the malice of crook-backed Richard. He was disappointed (by her excellent defence) of convicting her of witchcraft, and confederating with her lover to destroy him. He then attacked her on the weak side of frailty. This was undeniable. He consigned her to the severity of the church: she was carried to the bishop's palace, clothed in a white sheet, with a taper in her hand, and from thence conducted to the cathedral, and the cross, before which she made a confession of her only fault. Every other virtue bloomed in this ill-fated fair with the fullest vigour. She could not resist the solicitations of a youthful monarch, the handsomest man of his time. On his death she was reduced to necessity, scorned by the world, and cast off by her husband, with whom she was paired in her childish years, and forced to fling herself into the arms of Hastings. "In her penance she went," says *Holinshed* "in countenance and pase demure, so womanlie, that, albeit she were out of all araie, save her kirtle onlie, yet went she so faire and lovelie, namelie, while the woondering of the people cast a comlie rud in hir cheeks, (of which she before had most misse) that hir great shame won hir much praise among those that were more amorous of hir bodie than curious of hir soule." She lived to a great age, but in great distress and miserable poverty; deserted even by those to whom she had, during prosperity, done the most essential services.

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From this time the Cross continually occurs in history. "It was used not only for the instruction of mankind by the doctrine of the preacher, but for every purpose, political or ecclesiastical; for giving force to oaths; for promulgating of laws, or rather the royal pleasure; for royal contracts of marriage; for the emission of papal bulls; for anathematizing sinners; for benedictions; for exposing of penitents under the censure of the church; for recantations; for the private ends of the ambitious; and for the defaming of those who had incurred the displeasure of crowned heads."

Bishop King preached the last sermon here, of any note, before James I., and his court on *Midlent Sunday*, 1620. The object of the sermon was the repairing of the cathedral; and the ceremony was conducted with so much magnificence, that the prelate exclaims, in a part of his sermon,—“But will it almost be believed, that a King should come from his court to this crosse, where princes seldom or never come, and that coming to bee in a state, with a kinde of sacred pompe and procession, accompanied with all the faire *flowers* of his field, and the fairest *rose* (the Queen) of his owne garden!” The cross was demolished by order of Parliament in 1643, executed by the willing hands of Isaac Pennington, the fanatical Lord Mayor of that year, who died a convicted regicide in the Tower. It stood at the north-east end of St. Paul’s Churchyard; a print of the cross, and likewise the shrouds, where the company sat in wet weather, may be seen in Speed’s Theatre of Great Britain.

J.R.S.

* * * * *

ADA.

(*For the Mirror.*)

She stood in the midst of that gorgeous throng,
Her praise was the theme of every tongue;
Warriors were there, whose glance of fire
Spoke to their foes of vengeance dire,
But they were enslaved by beauty’s power,
And knelt at her shrine in that moonlit bower.
Sweet words were breathed in Ada’s ear
By many a noble cavalier;
Maidens with fairy steps were there,
Who seemed to float on the ambient air,
But none in the mazy dance could move
Like Ada, the queen of this bower of love!
The moon in her silvery beauty shines
On this joyous throng through the lofty pines;



Lamps gleaming forth from every tree,
All was splendour and revelry;
Sweet perfumes were wafted by every breeze
From the flowering shrubs and the orange trees,
Mingling with sounds which were borne along
From the lover's lute and the minstrel's song;
Fair Ada's praise was the theme of all,
She was the queen of this festival.

* * * * *

She left the crowd and wandered on—
Where, oh where is the maiden gone?
She hears no longer the minstrel's lay,
The last sweet notes have died away,
Like the low, faint sound of maiden's sigh.
When the youth that she loves is standing by.

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* * * * *

But where, oh where is Ada gone?
She is kneeling in a dungeon lone;
Her fillet of snowy pearls has now
Fall'n from its throne on her whiter brow,
And her fair, rich tresses, like floods of gold,
Gleam on the floor so damp and cold.
Her cheek is pale, but her eye of blue
Now wears a bright and more glorious hue;
It tells of a maiden's constancy,
Of her faith in the hour of adversity;
On a pallet of straw in that gloomy cell,
Is a captive knight whom she loves so well,
That she's left her joyous and splendid bower
To dwell with him in his dying hour,
To pillow his head on her breast of snow,
To kiss the dew from his pallid brow;
With smiles to chase the thoughts of gloom
Which darken his way to an early tomb,
To shed no tear, and to heave no sigh,
Though her heart is breaking in agony.

M.A.J.

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

* * * * *

PITCAIRN'S ISLAND.

The *Quarterly Review* (89) last published, is, indeed, a *Reform* Number; for all the papers, save one, relate to some species of reform or improvement.—Thus, we have papers on Captain Beechey's recent Voyage to co-operate with the Polar Expeditions—Population and Emigration—the notable *Conspiracy de Babeuf*—the West India Question—and last, though not least, “the Bill” itself. We have endeavoured to adopt from the first paper, some particulars of a spot which bears high interest for every lover of adventure; the reviewer's observations connecting the extracts from Captain Beechey's large work.

His Majesty's Ship Blossom, Captain F.W. Beechey, sailed from England May 19, 1825, and having looked in at the usual stopping places, Teneriffe and Rio de Janeiro, proceeded round the Horn, and touched at Conception and Valparaiso, on the coast of Chili. In a few days the Blossom reached the Easter Island, of Cook. Her next visit was to Pitcairn's Island, which the reviewer thinks "the most interesting point in the whole voyage." We do not proceed in the outline, but "look in" at "the Island." To this spot, as the public have for some years been aware, the Mutineers of the Bounty carried that ship, after they had deprived Capt. Bligh of his command, and turned him adrift in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.[5]

[5] Who does not recollect the delightful narrative published some years since by Mr. Mariner, in his account of the Tonga Islands; the poem of "the Island," by Lord Byron; and countless dramatic representations of this unhappy affair. We remember an affecting version about seven years since at Sadler's Wells Theatre: and only a few weeks since a few of its incidents were embodied in a melo-dramatic piece called "Neuha's Cave, or the South Sea Mutineers," at Covent Garden Theatre.

In the end, only one white man, old Adams, remained alive of the mutineers who had landed. Of these, only one died a natural death; another was killed by accident; six were murdered; and but one remained to tell the tale.

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After the greater number of the party had been murdered off, things went on pretty smoothly, till one M'Coy, who had been employed in a distillery in Scotland, tried an experiment with the tea-root, and succeeded in producing a bottle of ardent spirits. This induced one Quintal to 'alter his kettle into a still,' and the natural consequence ensued. Like the philosopher who destroyed himself with his own gunpowder, M'Coy, intoxicated to frenzy, threw himself from a cliff and was killed; and Quintal having lost his wife by accident, demanded the lady of one of his two remaining companions. This modest request being refused, he attempted to murder his countrymen; but they, having discovered his intention, agreed, that as Quintal was no longer a safe member of their community, the sooner he was put out of the way the better. Accordingly, they split his skull with an axe.

Adams and Young were now the sole survivors out of the fifteen males that landed upon the island. Young did not live long.

Adams was thus left the only Englishman on Pitcairn's Island. Being thoroughly tired of mutiny, bloodshed, and irreligion, and deeply sensible of the extent of his own guilt, he resolutely set about the only sound course of repentance, by exhibiting an amended life, and by training up in habits of virtue those helpless beings thrown upon his care for good or for evil.

He had an arduous task to perform. Besides the children to be educated, the Otaheitan women were to be converted; and as the example of the parents had a powerful influence over their children, he resolved to make them his first care. His labours succeeded; the Otaheitans were naturally of a tractable disposition, and gave him less trouble than he anticipated. The children also acquired such a thirst after scriptural knowledge, that Adams in a short time had little else to do than to answer their interrogatories, and put them in the right way. As they grew up, they acquired fixed habits of morality and piety; their colony improved, and intermarriages occurred; and they now form a happy and well-regulated society, the merit of which, in a great degree, belongs to Adams, and tends to redeem the errors of his former life.

The affection of these simple islanders for the venerable father of the colony is the best proof of the success which has attended his instructions; and it is really astonishing to observe how much has been accomplished by an illiterate seaman—strongly excited, indeed, and prompted to persevere in his course by motives which never err. When it was seen by these poor people that Adams did not immediately return from the Blossom (off the island), they took alarm, lest he should be detained; and one of their party, a recent settler, and a sea-faring man, having discovered the ship to be a vessel of war, their fears redoubled. When, at last, the old man landed, his daughter, Hannah, hurried to the beach to kiss her father's cheek, with a fervency demonstrative of the warmest affection.

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It seems to have been a part of Adams's policy to make religious ceremonies an important part of their daily business, not merely an occasional duty. In describing a dinner scene, after stating that the knives and forks, though more abundant than he had expected to find in so remote a part of the world, were scarcely enough according to civilized notions, he goes on thus—

“The smoking pig, by a skilful dissection, was soon portioned to every guest, but no one ventured to put its excellent qualities to the test, until a lengthened *Amen*, pronounced by all the party, had succeeded an emphatic grace delivered by the village parson. ‘*Turn to*’ was then the signal for attack; and as it is convenient that all the party should finish their meal about the same time, in order that one grace might serve for all, each made the most of his time. In Pitcairn's Island it is not deemed proper to touch even a bit of bread without a grace before and after it; and a person is accused of inconsistency if he leaves off and begins again. So strict is their observance of this form, that we do not know of any instance in which it has been forgotten. On one occasion I had engaged Adams in conversation, and he incautiously took the first mouthful without having said his grace; but before he had swallowed it he recollected himself, and feeling as if he had committed a crime, immediately put away what he had in his mouth, and commenced his prayer.”

The “village parson” above alluded to is thus described by Capt. Beechey:

“They have very fortunately found an able and willing master in John Buffet, who belonged to a ship which visited the island, and was so infatuated with their behaviour, being himself naturally of a devout and serious turn of mind, that he resolved to remain among them; and in addition to the instruction of the children, has taken upon himself the duty of clergyman, and is the oracle of the community.”

Our gallant officers were not a little disappointed to find that the ladies were excluded from the table. Indeed the Pitcairn islanders appear to have adopted, though not in all its rigour, the South Sea prejudice against allowing a woman to eat in the presence of her husband. In some parts of the Archipelago this crime is punishable by death. The only thing like an argument by which the men defended this custom was, that as the male was made first, he ought on all occasions to be served first: a new reading of the saying “first come first served.” The good-natured woman-kind of Pitcairn's Island, however, seemed far from considering themselves neglected or ill-used in this matter, for they remained behind the seats, flapping away the flies, and chatting with their guests.—The couches prepared for the strangers consisted of palm-leaves, covered with native cloth: the sheets were of the same material.

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“The whole arrangement was extremely comfortable, and highly inviting to repose, which the freshness of the apartment, rendered cool by a free circulation of air through its sides, enabled us to enjoy without any annoyance from heat or insects. One interruption only disturbed our first sleep—it was the pleasing melody of the evening hymn, which, after the lights were put out, was chanted by the whole family in the middle of the room. In the morning also we were awake by their morning hymn, and family devotion.”

In speaking of the scenery of the island, Captain Beechey describes a singular spot set apart for himself by the ringleader of the mutiny.

“At the northern extremity of this ridge is a cave of some interest, as being the intended retreat of Christian, in the event of a landing being effected by any ship sent in pursuit of him, and where he resolved to sell his life as dearly as he could. In this recess he always kept a store of provisions, and near it erected a small hut, well concealed by trees, which served the purpose of a watch-house. So difficult was the approach to this cave, that even if the party were successful in crossing the ridge, as long as his ammunition lasted, he might have bid defiance to any force. An unfrequented and dangerous path leads from this place to a peak which commands a view of the western and southern coasts.”

In the account given by Adams, it is stated that Christian was uniformly cheerful; but, as he was a man of education, and by no means without feeling, we must suppose that this serene aspect was the result of effort; and we can readily conceive the bitterness with which, on retiring to this cave, like a hunted wild-beast, he gave way to the deep sense of shame and unavailing remorse which must at all times have weighed on his mind.

The Pitcairn islanders are no great musicians, and sing all their songs to one air. Captain Beechey, with a laudable desire to improve and enlarge their taste in this matter, begged one of his officers, who played on the violin, to favour the natives with a tune; but though it was well executed, the new melody appeared to be wasted on the audience. None of them, he says, appeared to have the least ear for music.

One of the officers took considerable pains to teach them the 100th psalm, that they might not chant all their psalms and hymns to the same air, but they did not evince the least aptitude or desire to learn it.

These interesting people appear to be strongly possessed with the binding nature of a promise, however remote the period in which it was made, or however indiscreet in itself. Of this we have the following rather pathetic example:—

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“Wives upon Pitcairn’s Island, it may be imagined, are very scarce, as the same restrictions with regard to relationship exist as in England. George Adams, son of the Patriarch, in his early days, had fallen in love with Polly Young, a girl a little older than himself; but Polly, probably at that time liking some one else, and being at the age when young ladies’ expectations are at the highest, had incautiously said, she *never would* give her hand to George Adams. He, nevertheless, indulged a hope that she would one day relent; and to this end was unremitting in his endeavours to please her. In this expectation he was not mistaken; his constancy and attentions, and, as he grew into manhood, his handsome form, which George took every opportunity of throwing into the most becoming attitudes before her, softened Polly’s heart into a regard for him, and, had nothing passed before, she would willingly have given him her hand; but the vow of her youth was not to be got over, and the love-sick couple languished on from day to day, victims to the folly of early resolutions.” “The weighty case was referred for our consideration; and the fears of the party were in some measure relieved by the result, which was, that it would be much better to marry than to continue unhappy, in consequence of a hasty determination made before the judgment was matured. They could not, however, be prevailed on to yield to our decision, and we left them unmarried.”

It gives us particular pleasure to have it in our power to relieve the anxiety of our sentimental friends, who cannot bear that a romance should end unhappily, by quoting the following passage from a letter addressed from Pitcairn’s Island to Captain Beechey, and dated the 19th March, 1830:—“George Adams is married to Polly Young, and has two sons.”

The same communication, we are grieved to add, contains also this sentence:—“I am sorry to inform you that John Adams is no more; he departed this life March 5th, 1829, aged 65, after a short illness. His wife survived him but a few months.”—His memory will not be so short-lived. Of all the repentant criminals we have read about, we think the most interesting is John Adams; nor do we know where to find a more beautiful example of the value of early good instruction than in the history of this man—who, having run the full career of most kinds of vice, was so effectually *pulled up* by an interval of leisurely reflection, and the sense of new duties awakened by the heaven-inspired power of natural affections.

This letter is from Mr. John Buffet, who still continues to officiate as clergyman of the colony. He describes the natives ‘as being all satisfied at present with their little island, which they do not wish to leave;’ which remark he thinks it right to make in consequence of his having received a letter from Mr. Nott, missionary, saying that a ship was coming to remove the inhabitants of Pitcairn’s Island

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to Otaheite, or some other of the Friendly Islands. For our parts we trust this will not be attempted without much larger consideration than such a matter is likely to have met with, in the of late grievously over-worked state of our public offices—distracted as they have all been by incessant change of hands, to say nothing of systems. Should the population increase, as doubtless it will ere long, beyond the means of subsistence which so small a spot affords, there will never be wanting opportunities for the roving spirits among them, male and female, to emigrate to other parts of the world; but we confess we should witness with great regret the summary breaking up of so virtuous and happy a community. To hear of these innocent creatures being transplanted *per saltum* into any of the sinks of wickedness in New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land, would be utterly horrible. It would not be much better than leaving 'Sweet Auburn' for the hulks.

Captain Beechey winds up his account of these interesting people in the following words, with which, as they are calculated to leave a very pleasing, and we believe a just impression on the reader's mind, we shall conclude our notice of this part of the voyage:

'During the whole time I was with them, I never heard them indulge in a joke, or other levity, and the practice of it is apt to give offence: they are so accustomed to take what is said in its literal meaning, that irony was always considered a falsehood, in spite of explanation. They could not see the propriety of uttering what was not strictly true, for any purpose whatever.' The Sabbath-day is devoted entirely to prayer, reading, and serious meditation. No boat is allowed to quit the shore, nor any work whatever to be done, cooking excepted, for which preparation is made the preceding evening. I attended their church on this day, and found the service well conducted; the prayers were read by Adams, and the lessons by Buffet, the service being preceded by hymns. The greatest devotion was apparent in every individual, and in the children there was a seriousness unknown in the younger part of our communities at home. In the course of the Litany they prayed for their sovereign and all the royal family with much apparent loyalty and sincerity. Some family prayers, which were thought appropriate to their particular case, were added to the usual service; and Adams, fearful of leaving out any essential part, read in addition all those prayers which are intended only as substitutes for others. A sermon followed, which was very well delivered by Buffet; and lest any part of it should be forgotten or escape attention, it was read three times. The whole concluded with hymns, which were first sung by the grown people, and afterwards by the children. The service thus performed was very long; but the neat and cleanly appearance of the congregation, the devotion that animated every countenance, and the innocence

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and simplicity of the little children, prevented the attendance from becoming wearisome. In about half an hour afterwards we again assembled to prayers, and at sunset service was repeated; so that, with their morning and evening prayers, they may be said to have church five times on a Sunday.'All which remains to be said of these excellent people is, that they appear to live together in perfect harmony and contentment; to be virtuous, religious, cheerful, and hospitable, beyond the limits of prudence; to be patterns of conjugal and parental affection; and to have very few vices. We remained with them many days, and their unreserved manners gave us the fullest opportunity of becoming acquainted with any faults they might have possessed.'

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ANECDOTE GALLERY.

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Religious works do not usually unbend so pleasantly as in the following, from the *Christian's Magazine*:—

Joseph II. Emperor of Germany.—In one of those excursions which this emperor frequently took *incog.* he proceeded to Trieste. On his arrival, he went into an inn, and asked if he could be accommodated with a good room? He was told, that a German bishop had just engaged the last; and that there were only two small rooms, without chimneys, unoccupied. He desired a supper to be prepared. He was told there was nothing left but some eggs and vegetables, the bishop and suite having engaged all the poultry. The emperor requested that the bishop might be asked if he would allow a stranger to sup with him. The bishop refused, and the emperor supped with one of the bishop's almoners, who was not admitted to his master's table. The emperor asked him what they were going to do at Rome? "My lord," replied the almoner, "is going to solicit a benefice of fifty thousand livres, before the emperor is informed of its being vacant." They changed the conversation. The emperor wrote a letter to the chancellor of Rome, and another to his ambassador there. He made the almoner promise to deliver both letters, agreeably to their address, on his arrival in Rome. He kept his promise—the chancellor presented the patent for the benefice to the astonished almoner!

* * * * *

Character of Dr. Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man.—This eminent prelate was venerable in his aspect, meek in his deportment, his face illuminated with benignity, and his heart glowing with piety: like his divine master he went about doing good. With the pride and avarice of prelacy he was totally unacquainted. His palace was a temple of charity. Hospitality stood at his gate, and invited the stranger and beggar to a plenteous

repast. The day he devoted to benevolence, and the night to piety. His revenue was dedicated to the poor and needy; and, not contented

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with relieving the wants, and mitigating the woes of mankind, he was solicitous, by precept and example, to conduct his little flock to the kingdom of heaven. He died in the ninety-second year of his age, justly revered and lamented by the whole island; while his grave was watered with the tears of those whom his bounty had supported, his benignity had gladdened, or his eloquent piety had turned into the paths of righteousness. Reader, admire the virtues of this excellent man, but do not stop short at admiration—"Go thou and do likewise."

* * * * *

Robert Grossthead, Bishop of Lincoln.—When a husbandman claimed kinship with this prelate, and thereupon requested from him an office,—“Cousin,” replied the bishop, “if your cart be broken, I’ll mend it; if your plough be old, I’ll give you a new one; and even seed to sow your land! but a husbandman I found you, and a husbandman I’ll leave you!”

* * * * *

Wheatley, Mayor of Coventry.—Bablake Hospital, in Coventry, was founded by Mr. Thomas Wheatley, Mayor of Coventry, in 1566. It is an asylum for old men and boys, and owes its origin to the following singular circumstance: Being engaged in the iron trade, Mr. Wheatley sent an agent to Spain to purchase some barrels of steel gads. When the casks arrived and were examined, they were found to contain cochineal and ingots of silver. After fruitless endeavours to rectify the mistake, and restore this valuable treasure to its right owner, he bestowed the money it produced, to which he added his own estate, on the building and endowment of this institution.

* * * * *

A Robber converted into a Bishop.—Kirk Maughold, in the Isle of Man, although now a poor place, is not destitute of ancient fame, arising from the following circumstance:—The captain of a band of Irish robbers, repenting of his crimes, retired hither, and became eminent for his piety, on which account he was chosen bishop of the island. There still remains, near the church gate, a square pillar, inscribed with a testimony of his virtues and exploits. The church is built on a lofty promontory, in the middle of a very large burial ground.

* * * * *

Bonaparte and the Koran.—When Bonaparte was in Egypt, one of the principal Osmanlis was lavish in praise of the Koran, in the general’s presence, “It contains,” said he, “every thing.”—“Does it contain the service of cannon?” asked Bonaparte, with a

smile. The Turk paused for a moment. "Certainly it does, general; for as it contains every thing, it must contain that."

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Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book.—An obscure individual at Blackburn is said to be in possession of the prayer-book presented by Henry VIII. to his daughter Elizabeth at her confirmation. This antiquarian curiosity was (it is stated) stolen from its deposit at Hampstead Court about the beginning of the last century, and the librarian dismissed for losing so valuable a volume. It is enriched with notes or mottoes in manuscript, and is even conjectured to be the actual token by which Essex might have saved his forfeit life, if it had been delivered to the queen. The title-page represents a triumphal arch, and has these words in black letter: "C. Certeine, Prayers and Godly Meditacyions very nedefull for every Christien." The imprint is: "Emprinted at Marlboro, the yere of our Lord a Mccccxxxviii, per me Joanis Philoparion." The volume is in good preservation, bound in velvet, with the royal arms and roses emblazoned.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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THE KING.

Authentic narrative of a plan, (now first made public,) for capturing Prince William Henry, his present Majesty, during his stay at New York in 1782; with the original letters of General Washington.

(From the Athenaeum.)

It must be remembered that, wild as this project may seem, it was sanctioned by the cool deliberate judgment of Washington; and it cannot, therefore, be doubted, that his Royal Highness was, for a time, in a situation of great though unknown danger. We leave it to our readers to speculate on the possible consequences, had the plan succeeded.

When his present Majesty William IV. served as a midshipman in the British navy, he was for some time on the coast of the North American colonies, then in a state of revolution, and passed the winter of 1782 in the city of New York. He is still borne in lively recollection by many of the elder inhabitants of that city, as a fine bluff boy of sixteen: frank, cheery, and affable; and there are anecdotes still told of his frolicsome pranks on shipboard. Among these, is the story of a rough, though favourite, nautical joke, which he played off upon a sailor boy, in cutting down his hammock while asleep. The sturdy sea urchin resented this invasion of his repose; and, not knowing the quality of his invader, a regular set-to of fisty-cuffs ensued in the dark. In this, it is said, the Prince showed great bottom; and equal generosity on the following morning, when he

made the boy a handsome present of money. His conduct in this boyish affair is said to have gained him the hearts of all his shipmates.

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The Prince manifested, when on shore, a decided fondness for manly pastimes. One of his favourite resorts was a small fresh-water lake in the vicinity of the city, which presented a frozen sheet of many acres; and was thronged by the younger part of the population for the amusement of skating. As the Prince was unskilled in that exercise, he would sit in a chair fixed on runners, which was pushed forward with great velocity by a skating attendant, while a crowd of officers environed him, and the youthful multitude made the air ring with their shouts for Prince William Henry. It was an animating scene, in the bright sunny winter-days, so common in that climate, and probably still retains a place in his Majesty's memory.

While the Prince was thus enjoying himself in the city of New York, a daring plan was formed, by some adventurous partisans of the revolutionary army, to pounce upon him and carry him off from the very midst of his friends and guards. The deviser of this plan was Colonel Ogden, a gallant officer, who had served with great bravery in the revolutionary army from the very commencement of the war, and whose regiment at that time was stationed in the province (now state) of New Jersey.

The present statement is drawn up from documents still preserved by the family of Col. Ogden, a copy of which has been obtained from one of his sons. The Prince at the time was living on shore, with Admiral Digby, in quarters slightly guarded, more for form than security, no particular danger being apprehended. The project of Colonel Ogden was to land secretly on a stormy night, with a small but resolute force, to surprise and carry off the Prince and the Admiral to the boats, and to make for the Jersey shore. The plan was submitted to General Washington, who sanctioned it, under the idea that the possession of the person of the Prince would facilitate an adjustment of affairs with the mother country, and a recognition of the United States as an independent nation.

The following is a copy of the letter of General Washington to Col. Ogden on the occasion. The whole of the original is in the handwriting of the General:—

To Col. Ogden of the 1st Jersey Regiment.

“Sir,—The spirit of enterprise so conspicuous in your plan for surprising in their quarters, and bringing off, the Prince William Henry and Admiral Digby, merits applause; and you have my authority to make the attempt in any manner and at such a time as your judgment shall direct.” I am fully persuaded, that it is unnecessary to caution you against offering insult or indignity to the persons of the Prince or Admiral, should you be so fortunate as to capture them; but it may not be amiss to press the propriety of a proper line of conduct upon the party you command. “In case of success, you will, as soon as you get them to a place of safety, treat them with all possible respect; but you are to delay no time in conveying them to Congress, and report your proceedings, with a copy of these orders.

“Given at Morris Town, this 28th day of March, 1782.

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“G. WASHINGTON.

“*Note.*—Take care not to touch upon the ground which is agreed to be neutral—viz., from Raway to Newark, and four miles back.”

Before relating the particulars of this plan, it may be expedient to state, that the city of New York is situated on the point of an island which advances into the centre of a capacious bay. A narrow arm of the sea, vulgarly called the East River, separates it on the left from Long or Nassau Island; and the Hudson, commonly called the North River, separates it from the state of New Jersey. The British army was in possession of the city, and was strengthened by a fleet; but the opposite bank of the Hudson, which is about two miles wide, was under the power of Congress, and the revolutionary army was stationed at no great distance in New Jersey, in a winter encampment of wooden huts.

The party that should undertake this enterprise would have to embark in boats from the Jersey shore: and it was essential that the whole affair should be accomplished between sun and sun.

The following is the plan intended to be observed, copied literally from the original, in the handwriting of Col. Ogden:—

“It will be necessary to have four whale-boats (which can be procured without cause for suspicion); they must be well manned by their respective crews, including guides, *etc.*; beside these, one captain, one subaltern, three sergeants, and thirty-six men, with whom the boats can row with ease.—N.B. It is known where the boats are, and that they can be collected without suspicion, with their oars-men; and it is taken for granted, the owners will not object, though, for fear of giving the least cause of alarm, nothing has as yet been said to them.” “The time of embarkation must be the first wet night after we are prepared. The place is not yet agreed on, as it will be necessary to consult those skilled in the tides previous to determining, which must be put off until we are as nearly prepared as possible, for fear of inferences being drawn from our inquiries. We must, however, set off from such part of the Jersey shore, as will give us time to be in the city by half past nine. The men must be embarked in the order of debarkation.” “The Prince quarters in Hanover Square, and has two sentinels from the 40th British regiment, that are quartered in Lord Stirling’s old quarters in Broad Street, 200 yards from the scene of action. The main guard, consisting of a captain and forty men, is posted at the City Hall—a sergeant and twelve, at the head of the old slip—a sergeant and twelve, opposite the coffee-house—these are the troops we may be in danger from, and must be guarded against. The place of landing at Coenties Market, between the two sergeants’ guards, at the head of the old slip and opposite the coffee-house.

“The order of debarkation to agree with the mode of attack, as follows:—

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“First—Two men with a guide, seconded by two others, for the purpose of seizing the sentinels—these men to be armed with naked bayonets and dressed in sailors’ habits—they are not to wait for anything, but immediately execute their orders.” “Second—Eight men including guides with myself, preceded by two men with each a crow-bar, and two with each an axe, these for the purpose of forcing the doors should they be fast, and followed by four men, entering the house and seizing the young Prince, the Admiral, the young noblemen, aides, &c.

“Third—A captain and eighteen to follow briskly, form, and defend the house until the business is finished, and retreat a half gun-shot in our rear.

“Fourth—A subaltern and fourteen, with half of the remaining boats’ crew, and form on the right and left of the boats, and defend them until we return—the remainder of the crews to hold the boats in the best possible position for embarking.

“Necessary—Two crow-bars, two axes, four dark-lanterns, and four large oil-cloths.

“The manner of returning as follows:—

“Six men with guns and bayonets, with those unemployed in carrying off the prisoners, to precede those engaged in that business, followed by the captain (joined by the four men from the sentry) at a half gun-shot distance, who is to halt and give a front to the enemy, until the whole are embarked in the following order—

“First—The prisoners, with those preceding them.

“Second—The guides and boatmen.

“Third—The subalterns and fourteen.

“Fourth—The rear.”

Such was the daring plan laid for the capture of the Prince, and which, even if not fully successful, might have placed his Royal Highness in a most perilous predicament. It appears, however, from a fragment of a letter addressed by General Washington to Col. Ogden, and apparently written almost immediately after the preceding one, that some inkling of the design had reached Sir Henry Clinton, then in New York, and Commander-in-chief of the British forces. General Washington communicates, in his letter, the following paragraph from a secret despatch, dated March 23rd, which he had just received from some emissary in New York:—

“Great seem to be their apprehensions here. About a fortnight ago a great number of flat boats were discovered by a sentinel from the bank of the river (Hudson’s), which are

said to have been intended to fire the suburbs, and in the height of the conflagration to make a descent on the lower part of the city and wrest from our embraces His Excellency Sir H. Clinton, Prince William Henry, and several other illustrious personages, since which great precautions have been taken for the security of those gentlemen, by augmenting the guards, and to render their persons as little

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exposed as possible.”

In another letter, dated Newburgh, April 2nd, 1782, General Washington observes, “After I wrote to you from Morris Town, I received information that the sentries at the door of Sir Henry Clinton were doubled at eight o’clock every night, from an apprehension of an attempt to surprise him in them. If this be true, it is more than probable the same precaution extends to *other* personages in the city of New York, a circumstance I thought it proper for you to be advertised of.”

This intelligence of the awakened vigilance and precautionary measures of the British commander, effectually disconcerted the plans of Colonel Ogden, and His Royal Highness remained unmolested in his quarters until the sailing of the squadron.

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THE SELECTOR

AND

LITERARY NOTICES OF *NEW WORKS*.

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MICHAEL SCOTT, THE WIZARD.

No. 22 of the *Family Library* is another volume of pleasant biography; for, to speak the truth, the biographies, or *biographetts* of this series are the most agreeable reading of the day. The Lives are not of undue length, and anecdote and judicious remark are abundantly scattered along each of them. There are no dry details of “birth, parentage, and education;” but these particulars are given with more attractions. In short, the Lives are just suited for parlour and drawing-room libraries, and many a reader who could not be persuaded to turn to Dr. Chalmers’s lengthy two-and-thirty tomes of Biography, would be tempted to sit down and read a volume of the *Family Lives* outright.

The volume before us is the first of “the Lives of Scottish Worthies,” by Mr. Patrick Fraser Tytler, author of an excellent History of Scotland. It comprises Alexander III., Michael Scott, Sir William Wallace, and Robert Bruce. We quote from Scott, who, though a wizard, deserves rank among “Worthies,” and the philosophers and scholars of his time. Thus, Mr. Tytler says “he was certainly the first who gave Aristotle in a Latin translation to the learned world of the West. He was eminent as a mathematician and an astronomer, learned in the languages of modern Europe—deeply skilled in Arabic, and in the sciences of the East; he had risen to high celebrity as a physician—and his

knowledge of courts and kings, had recommended him to be employed in a diplomatic capacity by his own government.” The following passage is, however, from “his more popular and wider honour”—his superstitious character,—whilst, as Mr. Tytler prettily observes, “his miracles and incantations are yet recorded beside the cottage fire, by many a grey-headed crone, and his fearful name still banishes the roses from the cheeks of the little audience that surround her.”

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In the brief but interesting accounts of this singular man, which we meet with in the ancient Chronicles of Italy, it is mentioned that he was the inventor of a new species of casque or steel basnet, denominated a cervilerium,[6] which he commonly wore under the furred or velvet cap, used by the learned of those times. The origin of this invention is curious. In those dark periods, when the belief of magic was universal, not only amongst the lower ranks, but with the learned and educated classes of the community, it was reported that the Wizard, having cast his own horoscope, had discovered that his death was to be occasioned by a stone falling upon his bare skull. With that anxiety which clings to life, he endeavoured to defeat the demon whom he served, and by repeated incantations constructed this magic casque, which he vainly deemed invulnerable. But his fate, according to the tradition of Italy, was not to be avoided. In passing a cathedral, when the bell was ringing for vespers, Michael entered to pay his devotions, and forgetful of his cervilerium, which was fixed inside his cap, uncovered as he reverentially knelt upon the stone floor. The moment of his fate was arrived. The rope of the belfry had loosened one of the carved corbels which ornamented the interior of the roof beneath which the Magician knelt; before he could remove, the sharp and heavy mass descended on his forehead, and whilst it confirmed the infallibility of his prescience, in an instant deprived him of life. Michael, however, according to the account of Benvenuto da Imola, had strength enough to lift up the stone, and ascertain its weight, after which he declared it was of the exact size he expected; and that nothing was left him but to die, which he did accordingly,[7] after very properly making his will. It is needless to remark that this fable is confuted by the return of Michael to his native country; but it appears to have been the origin of a tradition still current amongst the peasantry of Scotland, and which ascribes a miraculous power to the bonnet of the Wizard. It is curious to find the tale of the invulnerable cervilerium of the Italians, travelling on the breath of credulity and superstition into the “far north countrie” of which the Magician was a native, and only changed by tradition from the blue steel worked and welded by magic art, into the blue bonnet which was waited on by Scottish demons, who were heard wailing in mid air when it was waved by its dreaded master.

[6] Riocobaldi Ferrariensis Historia Imperatorum—in Muratori, vol. ix. p. 128.

[7] Benvenuto da Imola. Comment on Dante book xx. c. 115.

It is well known to the student of Italian literature, that the Magician has obtained a niche in the Inferno of Dante.

“Quel altro che ne fianchi e così poco
Michele Scoto fu, che veramente
Delle magiche frode seppe il gioco.”

Another poet of Italy, but of infinitely inferior note, Theophilo Folengi, who published a collection of Latin Macaronic verses, under the fictitious name of Merlinus Coccaius,

has given, in strange and almost unintelligible language, a singular picture of his incantations.



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"Behold renown'd Scotus take his stand
Beneath a tree's deep shadow, and there draw
His magic circle—in its orb describe
Signs, cycles, characters of uncouth shapes;
And with imperious voice his demons call.
Four devils come—one from the golden west,
Another from the east; another still
Sails onwards from the south—and last of all
Arrives the northern devil; by their aid
He forms a wondrous bridle, which he fits
Upon a jet black steed, whose back, nor clothes,
Nor saddle, e'er encumber'd—Up he mounts,
Cleaves the thin air like shaft from Turkish bow,
Eyes with contemptuous gaze the fading earth,
And caprioles amongst the painted clouds.
Oft, too, with rites unhallow'd, from the neck
Of his dark courser he will pluck the locks,
And burn them as a sacrifice to Him
Who gives him power o'er Nature: next he limns
With silver wand upon the smooth firm beach
A mimic ship—look out, where ocean's verge
Meets the blue sky, a whitening speck is seen,
That nears and nears—her canvass spreads to heav'n;
Fair blows the wind, and roaring through the waves,
On comes the Demon ship, in which he sails
To farthest Ind—but this adventure needs
A sacrifice more potent—human marrow
Scoop'd from the spine, and burnt to the dark power
Whom he must serve. 'Tis said that he who wears
His magic cap, invisible may walk,
And none so lynx-eyed as detect his presence,
In the most peopled city—yet beware,
Let him not, trusting to the demon's power,
Cross the white splendour of the sun, for there,
Although no palpable substance is discern'd,
His shadow will betray him."

Such is a somewhat free translation of the verses of the pretended Merlinus Coccaius. [8] It is well known that many traditions are still prevalent in Scotland concerning the extraordinary powers of the Wizard; and if we consider the thick cloud of ignorance which overspread the country at the period of his return from the continent, and the very small materials which are required by superstition as a groundwork for her dark and mysterious stories, we shall not wonder at the result. The Arabic books which he

brought along with him, the apparatus of his laboratory, his mathematical and astronomical instruments, the Oriental costume generally worn by the astrologers of the times, and the appearance of the white-haired and venerable sage, as he sat on the roof of his tower of Balwearie, observing the face of the heavens, and conversing with the stars, were all amply sufficient to impress the minds of the vulgar with awe and terror. "Accordingly," says Sir Walter Scott, in his *Notes on the Lay of the Last Minstrel*, "the memory of Sir Michael Scott survives in many a legend, and in the south of Scotland any work of great labour and antiquity is ascribed either to the agency of Auld Michael, of Sir William Wallace, or of the devil."

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Some of the most current of these traditions are so happily described by the above-mentioned writer, that we cannot refrain from quoting the passage. "Michael was chosen," it is said, "to go upon an embassy to obtain from the King of France satisfaction for certain piracies committed by his subjects upon those of Scotland. Instead of preparing a new equipage and splendid retinue, the ambassador retreated to his study, and evoked a fiend, in the shape of a huge black horse, mounted upon his back, and forced him to fly through the air towards France. As they crossed the sea, the devil insidiously asked his rider what it was that the old women of Scotland muttered at bedtime. A less experienced wizard might have answered, that it was the Pater Noster, which would have licensed the devil to precipitate him from his back. But Michael sternly replied, 'What is that to thee? Mount, Diabolus, and fly!' When he arrived at Paris, he tied his horse to the gate of the palace, entered, and boldly delivered his message. An ambassador with so little of the pomp and circumstance of diplomacy, was not received with much respect, and the king was about to return a contemptuous refusal to his demand, when Michael besought him to suspend his resolution till he had seen his horse stamp three times. The first stamp shook every steeple in Paris, and caused all the bells to ring, the second threw down three towers of the palace, and the infernal steed had lifted his foot to give the third stamp, when the king rather chose to dismiss Michael with the most ample concessions, than to stand the probable consequences. Another time, it is said, when residing at the tower of Oakwood, upon the Ettrick, about three miles above Selkirk, he heard of the fame of a sorceress, called the witch of Falsehope, on the opposite side of the river. Michael went one morning to put her skill to the test, but was disappointed, by her denying positively any knowledge of the necromantic art. In his discourse with her, he laid his wand inadvertently on the table, which the hag observing, suddenly snatched it up, and struck him with it. Feeling the force of the charm, he rushed out of the house; but as it had conferred on him the external appearance of a hare, his servant, who waited without, halloo'd upon the discomfited Wizard his own hounds, and pursued him so close, that in order to obtain a moment's breathing to reverse the charm, Michael, after a very fatiguing course, was fain to take refuge in his own jaw-hole, Anglice, common sewer. In order to revenge himself of the witch of Falsehope, Michael, one morning in the ensuing harvest, went to the hill above the house with his dogs, and sent down his servant to ask a bit of bread from the goodwife for his greyhounds, with instructions what to do if he met with a denial. Accordingly, when the witch had refused the boon with contumely, the servant, as his master had directed, laid above the door a paper which he had given him, containing, amongst many cabalistical words, the well-known rhyme,

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"Maister Michael Scott's man
Sought meat, and gat nane."

[8] Merlini Coccaii Macaronica, xviii, p. 273.

Immediately the good old woman, instead of pursuing her domestic occupation, which was baking bread for the reapers, began to dance round the fire, repeating the rhyme, and continued this exercise, till her husband sent the reapers to the house, one after another, to see what had delayed their provision, but the charm caught each as they entered, and, losing all idea of returning, they joined in the dance and the chorus. At length the old man himself went to the house, but as his wife's frolic with Mr. Michael, whom he had seen on the hill, made him a little cautious, he contented himself with looking in at the window, and saw the reapers at their involuntary exercise, dragging his wife, now completely exhausted, sometimes round, and sometimes through the fire, which was, as usual, in the midst of the house. Instead of entering, he saddled a horse, and rode up the hill, to humble himself before Michael, and beg a cessation of the spell, which the good-natured warlock immediately granted, directing him to enter the house backwards, and with his left hand take the spell from above the door, which accordingly ended the supernatural dance. * * * Michael Scott," continues the same author, "once upon a time was much embarrassed by a spirit, for whom he was under the necessity of finding constant employment. He commanded him to build a cauld, or dam-head, across the Tweed at Kelso; it was accomplished in one night, and still does honour to the infernal architect. Michael next ordered that Eildon Hill, which was then a uniform cone, should be divided into three. Another night was sufficient to part its summit into the three picturesque peaks which it now bears. At length the enchanter conquered this indefatigable demon, by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of the sea-sand." [9]

[9] Notes to the lay of the Last Minstrel, p. 255.

The embellishments, six in number, are engraved in a pleasing style by W.H. Lizars. Two of them,—a Norwegian Barrow, and Turnberry Castle, are very effective.

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.

SHAKSPEARE.

* * * * *

An Irish knight was married to the daughter of a noble lord, a connexion of which the knight was somewhat proud. Boasting of this union once to a friend, he observed that his lordship had paid him the highest compliment in his power. "He had seven daughters," said he, "and he gave me the *ouldest*, and he told me, too, that if he had an *oulder* I should have her."

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A SHIRT WITHOUT A SEAM.

At Dumferline, in the corporation chest is preserved a man's shirt, wrought in the loom about a century ago, by a weaver of the name of Inglis. The shirt was formed without a seam, and finished without any assistance from the needle; the only necessary parts he could not accomplish were the neck and sleeve buttons.

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C.D.

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In the days of King Henry VII. when the king demanded the tenth penny for carrying on the war in Brittany, and some of the courtiers in the House of Commons spoke of the king's want in a very high tone, Sir John Fineux, an eminent lawyer at that time, made use of this expression, "Mr. Speaker, before we pay anything, let us see whether we have anything we can call our own to pay with;" for which saying, the king immediately made him a judge; in which office he acted with as much integrity as in that of a representative in the Commons.

G.K.

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