

The Mirror Of Literature, Amusement, And Instruction eBook

The Mirror Of Literature, Amusement, And Instruction

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Vol. 14, No. 391.] *Saturday, September 26, 1829.* [Price 2d.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Gurney's improved steam carriage.*]

MR. GURNEY'S IMPROVED STEAM CARRIAGE.

Mr. Gurney, in perfecting this invention, has followed Dr. Franklin's advice—to tire and begin again. It is now four years since he first commenced his ingenious enterprise; and nearly two years since we reported and illustrated the progress he had made. (See *mirror*, vol. x. page 393, or No. 287.) He began with a large boiler, but public prejudice was too strong for it; and knowing people talked of high pressure accidents; the steam, could not, of course, be altogether got rid of, so to divide the danger, Mr. Gurney made his boiler in forty welded iron pipes; still the steam ran in a main pipe beneath the whole of the carriage, and the evil was but modified. At length the inventor has detached the engine and boiler, or locomotive part of the apparatus, which is now to be fastened to the carriage, and may be considered as a *steam-horse*, with no more danger than we should apprehend from a restive animal, in whose veins the steam or mettle circulates with too high a pressure. Fair trials have been made of the Improved Carriage on our common roads, the Premier has decided the machine “to be of great national importance,” from sundry experiments witnessed by his grace, at Hounslow Barracks; and the coach is announced “really to start next month (the 1st) in working—not experimental journeys—for travellers between London and Bath.”[1] Crack upon crack

will follow joke upon joke; the *Omnibus*, with its phaeton-like coursers will be eclipsed; and a journey to Bath and the Hot Wells by steam will soon be an everyday event.

Descriptions of Mr. Gurney's carriage have been so often before the public, that extended detail is unnecessary. Besides, all our liege subscribers will turn to the account in our No. 287. The recent improvements have been perspicuously stated by Mr. Herapath, of Cranford, in a letter in the *Times* newspaper, and we cannot do better than adopt and abridge a portion of his communication.

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"The present differs from the earlier carriage, in several improvements in the machinery, suggested by experiment; also in having no propellers;[2] and in having only four wheels instead of six; the apparatus for guiding being applied immediately to the two fore-wheels, bearing a part of the weight, instead of two extra leading wheels bearing little or none. No person can conceive the absolute control this apparatus gives to the director of the carriage, unless he has had the same opportunities of observing it which I had in a ride with Mr. Gurney. Whilst the wheels obey the slightest motions of the hand, a trifling pressure of the foot keeps them inflexibly steady, however rough the ground. To the hind axle, which is very strong, and bent into two cranks of nine inches radius, at right angles to each other, is applied the propelling power by means of pistons from two horizontal cylinders. By this contrivance, and a peculiar mode of admitting the steam to the cylinders, Mr. Gurney has very ingeniously avoided that cumbersome appendage to steam-engines, the fly-wheel, and preserves uniformity of action by constantly having one cylinder on full pressure, whilst the other is on the reduced expansive. The dead points—that is, those in which a piston has no effect from being in the same right line with its crank,—are also cleared by the same means. For as the cranks are at right angles, when one piston is at a dead point, the other has a position of maximum effect, and is then urged by full steam power; but no sooner has the former passed the dead point, than an expansion valve opens on it with full steam, and closes on the latter. Firmly fixed to the extremities of the axle, and at right angles to it, are the two 'carriers'—(two strong irons extending each way to the felloes of the wheels.) These irons may be bolted to the felloes of the wheels or not, or to the felloes of one wheel only. Thus the power applied to the axle is carried at once to the parts of the wheels of least stress—the circumferences. By this artifice the wheels are required to be of no greater strength and weight than ordinary carriage-wheels; and, like them, they turn freely and independently on the axle; but one or both may be secured as part and parcel of the axle, as circumstances require. The carriage is consequently propelled by the friction or hold which either or both hind-wheels, according as the power is applied to them jointly or separately, have on the ground. Beneath the hind part drop two irons, with flat feet, called 'shoe-drags.' A well-contrived apparatus, with a spindle passing up through a hollow cylinder, to which the guiding handle is affixed, enables the director to force one or both drags tight on the road, so as to retard the progress in a descent, or if he please, to raise the wheels off the ground. The propulsive power of the wheels being by this means destroyed, the carriage is arrested in a yard or two, though going at the rate of eighteen or twenty miles an hour. On the right hand of the director lies the handle of the throttle-valve, by which he has the power of increasing or diminishing the supply of steam *ad libitum*, and hence of retarding or accelerating the carriage's velocity. The whole carriage and machinery weigh about 16 cwt., and with the full complement of water and coke 20 or 22 cwt., of which, I am informed, about 16 cwt. lie on the hind-wheels."

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Mr. H. then enumerates the principle of the improvements:—"That troublesome appendage the fly-wheel, as I have observed, Mr. Gurney has rendered unnecessary. The danger to be apprehended in going over rough pitching, from too rapid a generation of steam, he avoids by a curious application of springs; and should these be insufficient, one or two safety valves afford the *ultimatum* of security. He ensures an easy descent down the steepest declivity by his 'shoe-drags,' and the power of reversing the action of the engines. His hands direct, and his foot literally pinches obedience to the course over the roughest and most refractory ground. The dreadful consequences of boiler-bursting are annihilated by a judicious application of tubular boilers. Should, indeed, a tube burst, a hiss about equal to that of a hot nail plunged into water, contains the sum total of alarm, while a few strokes with a hammer will set all to rights again. Lastly, he has so contrived his 'carriers,' that they shall act without confining the wheels, by which means there is none of that sliding and consequent cutting up of the road, which, in sharp turnings, would result from inflexible constraint.

"Hills and loose, slippery ground are well known to be the *res adversae* of steam-carriages; on ordinary level roads they roll along with rapid facility. In every ascent there are two additional circumstances inimical to progressive motion. One is, that carriages press less on the ground of a hill than on that of a plain, thus giving the wheels a less forcible grasp or bite. But this may be easily remedied in the structure of a carriage, and is not of very material consequence in the steepest hills that we have. The other is more serious. When a carriage ascends a hill, the weight or gravity of the whole is decomposable into two—one perpendicular, and the other parallel to the road. The former constitutes the pressure on the road, the latter the additional work the engine has to perform. Universally this is the same part of the whole carriage and its load together, which the perpendicular ascent of the hill is of its length. With these principles, if we knew the bite of the wheels on the road, we could at once subject the powers of Mr. Gurney's carriage to calculation.

"Now, from one of the experiments made in the barrack-yard, at Hounslow, I find we can approximate towards it. For instance, with one wheel only fixed to the 'carriers,' the carriage drew itself and load of water and coke (about 1 ton), with three men on it, and a wagon behind of 16 cwt. containing 27 soldiers. This, at the rate of 1-1/2 cwt. to a man, in round numbers is 4 tons. Estimating the force of traction of spring carriages at a twelfth of the total weight, it consequently gives a hold or bite on the road of 1-12 of 4 tons, or 6 2-3rds cwt. per wheel, or 13 1-3rd cwt. for the two wheels. This is likewise the propelling force of the carriage. Supposing, therefore, we were ascending a hill of 1 foot rise in 8, which I am assured exceeds in steepness any hill we have, we should be able to draw a load behind of 2 tons 2 cwt., or between 3 and 4 tons altogether....

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“On a good level road I think it not improbable it might draw, instead of 7 tons which our experiment would give, from 10 to 11, besides its own weight, or 100 ordinary men, exclusive of 2 or 3 tons for carriages; and up one of our steepest hills, 3 tons besides itself, or 25 men besides a ton for a carriage. This it would do at a rate of 8, 9, or 10 miles an hour. For it is a singular feature in this carriage, and which was remarked by many at the time, that it maintained very nearly the same speed with a wagon and 27 men, that it did with the carriage and only 5 or 6 persons. But there is a fact connected with this machine still more extraordinary. For instance, every additional cwt. we shift on the hind or working wheels, will increase the power of traction in our steepest hills upwards of 4 cwt., and on the level road half a ton. Such, then, is the paradoxical nature of steam-carriages, that the very circumstance which in animal exertion would weaken and retard, will here multiply their strength and accelerate. This, no doubt, Mr. Gurney’s ingenuity will soon turn to profitable account.

“It has often been asserted that carriages of this sort could not go above 6 or 7 miles an hour. I can see no reasonable objection to 20. The following fact, decided before a large company in the barrack-yard, will best speak for itself:—At eighteen minutes after three I ascended the carriage with Mr. Gurney. After we had gone about half way round, ‘Now,’ said Mr. Gurney, ‘I will show you her speed.’ He did, and we completed seven turns round the outside of the road by twenty-eight minutes after three. If, therefore, as I was there assured, two and a half turns measured one mile, we went 2.8 miles in ten minutes; that is, at the rate of 16.8, or nearly 17 miles per hour. But as Mr. Gurney slackened its motion once or twice in the course of trial, to speak to some one, and did not go at an equal rate all the way round for fear of accident in the crowd, it is clear that sometimes we must have proceeded at the rate of upwards of twenty miles an hour.”

The Engraving will furnish the reader with a correct idea of such of Mr. Gurney’s improvements as are most interesting to the public. The present arrangement is certainly very preferable to placing the boiler and engine in immediate contact with the carriage, which is to convey goods and passengers. Men of science are still much divided on the practical economy of using steam instead of horses as a travelling agent; but we hope, like all great contemporaries they may whet and cultivate each other till the desired object is attained. One of them, a writer in the *Atlas*, observes, that “if ultimately found capable of being brought into public use, it would probably be most convenient and desirable that several locomotive engines should be employed on one line of road, in order that they might be exchanged at certain stages for the purposes of examination, tightening of screws, and other adjustments, which the jolting on passing over the road might render necessary, and for the supply of fuel and water.”

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An effectively-coloured lithographic of Mr. Gurney's carriage (by Shoesmith) has recently appeared at the printsellers', which we take this opportunity of recommending to the notice of collectors and scrappers.

[Footnote 1: "Literary Gazette," Sept. 19, 1829.]

[Footnote 2: The propellers, I am informed, are not absolutely discarded. They are now not fixed, but movable, and reserved for extreme possible emergencies, or for certain military purposes.]

* * * * *

PUNNING SATIRE ON AN INCONSTANT LOVER.

You are as faithless as a *Carthaginian*,
To love at once, *Kate, Nell, Doll, Martha, Jenny, Anne.*

Swift.

* * * * *

BRIMHAM ROCKS[3] BY MOONLIGHT.

(FOR THE MIRROR.)

The sun hath set, but yet I linger still,
Gazing with rapture on the face of night;
And mountain wild, deep vale, and heathy hill,
Lay like a lovely vision, mellow, bright,
Bathed in the glory of the sunset light,
Whose changing hues in flick'ring radiance play,
Faint and yet fainter on the outstretch'd sight,
Until at length they wane and die away,
And all th' horizon round fades into twilight gray.

But, slowly rising up the vaulted sky,
Forth comes the moon, night's joyous, sylvan queen,
With one lone, silent star, attendant by
Her side, all sparkling in its glorious sheen;
And, floating swan-like, stately, and serene,
A few light fleecy clouds, the drapery of heav'n,
Throw their pale shadows o'er this witching scene,



Deep'ning its mystic grandeur—and seem driven
Round these all shapeless piles like Time's wan spectres risen

From out the tombs of ages. All around
Lies hushed and still, save with large, dusky wing
The bird of night makes its ill-omened sound;
Or moor-game, nestling 'neath th' flowery ling
Low chuckle to their mates—or startled, spring
Away on rustling pinions to the sky,
Wheel round and round in many an airy ring,
Then swooping downward to their covert hie,
And, lodged beneath the heath again securely lie.

Ascend yon hoary rock's impending brow,
And on its windy summit take your stand—
Lo! Wilsill's lovely vale extends below,
And long, long heathy moors on either hand
Stretch dark and misty—a bleak tract of land,
Whereon but seldom human footsteps come;
Save when with dog, obedient at command,
And gun, the sportsman quits his city home,
And brushing through the ling in quest of game doth roam.



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And lo! in wild confusion scattered round,
Huge, shapeless, naked, massy piles of stone
Rise, proudly towering o'er this barren ground,
Scowling in mutual hate—apart, alone,
Stern, desolate they stand—and seeming thrown
By some dire, dread convulsion of the earth
From her deep, silent caves, and hoary grown
With age and storms that Boreas issues forth
Replete with ire from his wild regions in the north.

How beautiful! yet wildly beautiful,
As group on group comes glim'ring on the eye,
Making the heart, soul, mind, and spirit full
Of holy rapture and sweet imagery;
Till o'er the lip escapes th' unconscious sigh,
And heaves the breast with feeling, too too deep
For words t' express the awful sympathy,
That like a dream doth o'er the senses creep,
Chaining the gazer's eye—and yet he cannot weep.

But stands entranced and rooted to the spot,
While grows the scene upon him vast, sublime,
Like some gigantic city's ruin, not
Inhabited by men, but Titans—Time
Here rests upon his scythe and fears to climb,
Spent by th' unceasing toil of ages past,
Musing he stands and listens to the chime
Of rock-born spirits howling in the blast,
While gloomily around night's sable shades are cast.

Well deemed I ween the Druid sage of old
In making this his dwelling place on high;
Where all that's huge and great from Nature's mould,
Spoke this the temple of his deity;
Whose walls and roof were the o'erhanging sky,
His altar th' unhewn rock, all bleak and bare,
Where superstition with red, phrensied eye
And look all wild, poured forth her idol prayer,
As rose the dying wail,[4] and blazed the pile in air.

Lost in the lapse of time, the Druid's lore
Hath ceased to echo these rude rocks among;
No altar new is stained with human gore;
No hoary bard now weaves the mystic song;



Nor thrust in wicker hurdles, throng on throng,
Whole multitudes are offered to appease
Some angry god, whose will and power of wrong
Vainly they thus essayed to soothe and please—
Alas! that thoughts so gross man's noblest powers should seize.

But, bowed beneath the cross, see! prostrate fall
The mummeries that long enthralled our isle;
So perish error! and wide over all
Let reason, truth, religion ever smile:
And let not man, vain, impious man defile
The spark heaven lighted in the human breast;
Let no enthusiastic rage, no sophist's wile
Lull the poor victim into careless rest,
Since the pure gospel page can teach him to be blest.

Weak, trifling man, O! come and ponder here
Upon the nothingness of human things—
How vain, how very vain doth then appear
The city's hum, the pomp and pride of kings;
All that from wealth, power, grandeur, beauty springs,
Alike must fade, die, perish, be forgot;
E'en he whose feeble hand now strikes the strings
Soon, soon within the silent grave must rot—
Yet Nature's still the same, though we see, we hear her not.

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J. Horner.

Wilsill, near Pateley Bridge, Sept. 1829.

[Footnote 3: Yorkshire. This wonderful assemblage lies scattered in groups, covering a surface of nearly forty acres of heathy moor. The numerous rocking-stones, rock-idols, altars, cannon rocks, &c. evidently point out this spot as having been used by the Druids in their horrid and mysterious ceremonies. The position of some of these rocks is truly astonishing; one in particular resting upon a base of a few inches, overhangs on all sides many feet; while others seem suspended and balanced as if they hung in air.]

[Footnote 4: Human sacrifices formed part of the religious rites of the Druids.]

* * * * *

MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

* * * * *

PLEDGING HEALTHS.

The origin of the very common expression, to *pledge* one drinking, is curious: it is thus related by a very celebrated antiquarian of the fifteenth century. "When the *Danes* bore sway in this land, if a native did drink, they would sometimes stab him with a dagger or knife; hereupon people would not drink in company unless some one present would be their *pledge* or surety, that they should receive no hurt, whilst they were in their draught; hence that usual phrase, I'll *pledge you*, or be a pledge for you." Others affirm the true sense of the word was, that if the party drank to, were not disposed to drink himself, he would put another for a *pledge* to do it for him, else the party who began would take it ill.

J.W.

* * * * *

RUSSIAN SUPERSTITION.

The extreme superstition of the Greek church, the national one of Russia, seems to exceed that of the Roman Catholic devotees, even in Spain and Portugal. The following instance will show the absurdity of it even among the higher classes:—

A Russian princess, some few years since, had always a large silver crucifix following her in a separate carriage, and which was placed in her chamber. When any thing fortunate happened to her in the course of the day, and she was satisfied with all that had occurred, she had lighted tapers placed around the crucifix, and said to it in a

familiar style, "See, now, as you have been very good to me to-day, you shall be treated well; you shall have candles all night; I will love you; I will pray to you." If on the contrary, any thing happened to vex the lady, she had the candles put out, ordered her servants not to pay any homage to the poor image, and loaded it herself with the bitterest reproaches.

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THE SELECTOR;

AND LITERARY NOTICES OF *NEW WORKS*.

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LIBRARY OF ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

FRUITS.

This Part (5) completes the volume of “Vegetable Substances used in the Arts and in Domestic Economy.” The first portion—*Timber Trees* was noticed at some length in our last volume (page 309,) and received our almost unqualified commendation, which we are induced to extend to the Part now before us. Still, we do not recollect to have pointed out to our readers that which appears to us the great recommendatory feature of this series of works—we mean the arrangement of the volumes—their subdivisions and exemplifications—and these evince a master-hand in compilation.

Every general reader must be aware that little novelty could be expected in a brief History and Description of Timber Trees and Fruits, and that the object of the Useful Knowledge Society was not merely to furnish the public with new views, but to present in the most attractive form the most entertaining facts of established writers, and illustrate their views with the observations of contemporary authors as well as their own personal acquaintance with the subjects. In this manner, the Editor has taken “a general and rapid view of fruits,” and, considering the great hold their description possesses on all readers, we are disposed to think almost too rapid. We should have enjoyed a volume or two more than half a volume of such reading as the present; but as we are not purchasers, and are unacquainted with the number to which the Society propose to extend their works, we ought not perhaps to raise this objection, which, to say the truth, is a sort of negative commendation. Hitherto, we have been accustomed to see compilations of pretensions similar to the present, executed with little regard to neatness or unity, or weight or consideration. Whole pages and long extracts have been stripped and sliced off books, with little rule or arrangement, and what is still worse, without any acknowledgment of the sources. The last defect is certainly the greatest, since, in spite of ill-arrangement, an intelligent inquirer may with much trouble, avail himself of further reference to the authors quoted, and thus complete in his own mind what the compiler had so indifferently begun. The work before us is, however, altogether of a much higher order than general compilations. The introductions and inferences are pointed and judicious, and the facts themselves of the most interesting character, are narrated in a condensed but perspicuous style; while the slightest reference will prove that the best and latest authorities have been appreciated. Thus, in the History and Description of Fruits, the Transactions of the Horticultural Society are frequently and pertinently quoted to establish disputed points, as well as the journals of intelligent travellers and naturalists; with occasional poetical embellishments, which lend a charm even to this attractive species of reading.

To quote the history of either Fruit entire, would not so well denote the character of the work as would a few of the most striking passages in the descriptions. In the introductory chapter we are pleased with the following passage on *Monastic Gardens*.

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“The monks, after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, appear to have been the only gardeners. As early as 674, we have a record, describing a pleasant and fruit-bearing close at Ely, then cultivated by Brithnoth, the first Abbot of that place. The ecclesiastics subsequently carried their cultivation of fruits as far as was compatible with the nature of the climate, and the horticultural knowledge of the middle ages. Whoever has seen an old abbey, where for generations destruction only has been at work, must have almost invariably found it situated in one of the choicest spots, both as to soil and aspect; and if the hand of injudicious improvement has not swept it away, there is still the ‘Abbey-garden.’ Even though it has been wholly neglected—though its walls be in ruins, covered with stone-crop and wall-flower, and its area produce but the rankest weeds—there are still the remains of the aged fruit trees—the venerable pears, the delicate little apples, and the luscious black cherries. The chestnuts and the walnuts may have yielded to the axe, and the fig trees and vines died away;—but sometimes the mulberry is left, and the strawberry and the raspberry struggle among the ruins. There is a moral lesson in these memorials of the monastic ages. The monks, with all their faults, were generally men of peace and study; and these monuments show that they were improving the world, while the warriors were spending their lives to spoil it. In many parts of Italy and France, which had lain in desolation and ruin from the time of the Goths, the monks restored the whole surface to fertility; and in Scotland and Ireland there probably would not have been a fruit tree till the sixteenth century, if it had not been for their peaceful labours. It is generally supposed that the monastic orchards were in their greatest perfection from the twelfth to the fifteenth century.”

Again, the

NATURALIZATION OF PLANTS.

“The large number of our native plants (for we call those native which have adapted themselves to our climate) mark the gradual progress of our civilization through the long period of two thousand years; whilst the almost infinite diversity of exotics which a botanical garden offers, attest the triumphs of that industry which has carried us as merchants or as colonists over every region of the earth, and has brought from every region whatever can administer to our comforts and our luxuries,—to the tastes and the needful desires of the humblest as well as the highest amongst us. To the same commerce we owe the potato and the pine-apple; the China rose, whose flowers cluster round the cottage-porch, and the Camellia which blooms in the conservatory. The addition even of a flower, or an ornamental shrub, to those which we already possess, is not to be regarded as a matter below the care of industry and science. The more we extend our acquaintance with the productions of nature, the more are our minds elevated by contemplating the variety,

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as well as the exceeding beauty, of the works of the Creator. The highest understanding does not stoop when occupied in observing the brilliant colour of a blossom, or the graceful form of a leaf. Hogarth, the great moral painter, a man in all respects of real and original genius, writes thus to his friend Ellis, a distinguished traveller and naturalist:—'As for your pretty little seed-cups, or vases, they are a sweet confirmation of the pleasure Nature seems to take in superadding an elegance of form to most of her works, wherever you find them. How poor and bungling are all the imitations of Art! When I have the pleasure of seeing you next, we will sit down, *nay, kneel down if you will*, and admire these things.'

* * * * *

"It is one of the proudest attributes of man, and one which is most important for him to know, that he can improve every production of nature, if he will but once make it his own by possession and attachment. A conviction of this truth has rendered the cultivation of fruits, in the more polished countries of Europe, as successful as we now behold it."

The work then divides into *Fruits of the Temperate Climates*, and of *Tropical Climates*; the first are subdivided into Fleshy, Pulpy, and Stone Fruits and Nuts, in preference to a strict geographical arrangement. Under "the Apple" occur some very judicious observations on

CIDER.

"The cider counties of England have always been considered as highly interesting. They lie something in the form of a horse-shoe round the Bristol Channel; and the best are, Worcester and Hereford, on the north of the channel, and Somerset and Devon on the south. In appearance, they have a considerable advantage over those counties in which grain alone is cultivated. The blossoms cover an extensive district with a profusion of flowers in the spring, and the fruit is beautiful in autumn. Some of the orchards occupy a space of forty or fifty acres; and the trees being at considerable intervals, the land is also kept in tillage. A great deal of practical acquaintance with the qualities of soil is required in the culture of apple and pear trees; and his skill in the adaptation of trees to their situation principally determines the success of the manufacturer of cider and perry. The produce of the orchards is very fluctuating; and the growers seldom expect an abundant crop more than once in three years. The quantity of apples required to make a hogshead of cider is from twenty-four to thirty bushels; and in a good year an acre of orchard will produce somewhere about six hundred bushels, or from twenty to twenty-five hogsheads. The cider harvest is in September. When the season is favourable, the heaps of apples collected at the presses are immense—consisting of hundreds of tons. If any of the vessels used in the manufacture of cider are of lead, the beverage is not wholesome. The price of a



hogshead of cider generally varies from 2l. to 5l., according to the season and quality; but cider of the finest growth has sometimes been sold as high as 20l. by the hogshead, direct from the press—a price equal to that of many of the fine wines of the Rhine or the Garonne.”

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* * * * *

OLD APPLE TREES.

“At Horton, in Buckinghamshire, where Milton spent some of his earlier years, there is an apple tree still growing, of which the oldest people remember to have heard it said that the poet was accustomed to sit under it. And upon the low leads of the church at Romsey, in Hampshire, there is an apple tree still bearing fruit, which is said to be two hundred years old.”

The *Fig* and the *Fine* are equally interesting, and in connexion with the latter we notice the editor’s mention of the fine vineyard at Arundel Castle. Aubrey describes a similar vineyard at Chart Park, near Dorking, another seat of the Howards. “Here was a vineyard, supposed to have been planted by the Hon. Charles Howard, who, it is said, erected his residence, as it were, in the vineyard.” Again, “the vineyard flourished for some time, and tolerably good wine was made from the produce; but after the death of the noble planter, in 1713, it was much neglected, and nothing remained but the name. On taking down the house, a stone resembling a millstone, was found, by which the grapes were pressed.”[5] We were on the spot at the time, and saw the stone in question. Vines are still very abundant at Dorking, the soil being very congenial to their growth. “Hence, almost every house in this part has its vine; and some of the plants are very productive. The cottages of the labouring poor are not without this ornament, and the produce is usually sold by them to their wealthier neighbours, for the manufacture of wine. The price per bushel is from 4s. to 16s.; but the variableness of the season frequently disappoints them in the crops, the produce of which is sometimes laid up as a setoff to the rent.”[6]

We have heard too of attempts in England to train the vine on the sides of hills, and a few years since an individual lost a considerable sum of money in making the experiment in the Isle of Wight.

At page 257, observes the editor,

A VINEYARD

“Associated as it is with all our ideas of beauty and plenty, is, in general, a disappointing object. The hop plantations of our own country are far more picturesque. In France, the vines are trained upon poles, seldom more than three or four feet in height; and ‘the pole-clipt vineyard’ of poetry is not the most inviting of real objects. In Spain, poles for supporting vines are not used; but cuttings are planted, which are not permitted to grow very high, but gradually form thick and stout stocks. In Switzerland, and in the German provinces, the vineyards are as formal as those of France. But in Italy is found the true vine of poetry, ‘surrounding the stone cottage with its girdle, flinging its pliant and luxuriant branches over the rustic veranda, or twining its long garland from tree to

tree.’[7] It was the luxuriance and the beauty of her vines and her olives that tempted the rude people of the north to pour down upon her fertile fields:—

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'The prostrate South to the destroyer yields
Her boasted titles and her golden fields;
With grim delight the brood of winter view
A brighter day, and heavens of azure hue.
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose.
And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows.'[8]

"In Greece, too, as well as Italy, the shoots of the vines are either trained upon trees, or supported, so as to display all their luxuriance, upon a series of props. This was the custom of the ancient vine-growers; and their descendants have preserved it in all its picturesque originality.[9] The vine-dressers of Persia train their vines to run up a wall, and curl over on the top. But the most luxurious cultivation of the vine in hot countries is where it covers the trellis-work which surrounds a well, inviting the owner and his family to gather beneath its shade. 'The fruitful bough by well' is of the highest antiquity."

Passing over the Mulberry, Currant, Gooseberry, and the Strawberry, the account of the Egg Plant is particularly attractive; and that of the Olive is well-written, but too long for extract.

Among the *Tropical Fruits*, the Orange and the Date are very delightful; and equal in importance and interest are the Cocoa Nut and Bread Fruit Tree. In short, it is impossible to open the volume without being gratified with the richness and variety of its contents, and the amiable feeling which pervades the inferences and incidental observations of the writer.

A word or two on the embellishments and we have done. These are far behind the literary merits of the volume, and are discreditable productions. Where so much is well done it were better to omit engravings altogether than adopt such as these: "they imitate nature so abominably." The group at page 223 is a fair specimen of the whole, than which nothing can be more lifeless. After the excellent cuts of Mr. London's Gardener's and Natural History Magazines, we turn away from these with pain, and it must be equally vexatious to the editor to see such accompaniments to his pages.

[Footnote 5: Picturesque Promenade round Dorking. Second Edit. 12mo. 1823, p. 258, 259.]

[Footnote 6: Ibid p. 143.]

[Footnote 7: The Alpenstock, by C.J. Latrobe, 1829.]

[Footnote 8: Gray's Alliance of Education and Government.]

[Footnote 9: See the second Georgic of Virgil.]

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SHAKSPEARE'S BROOCH.

[Illustration]

(TO THE EDITOR OF THE MIRROR.)

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Having frequently observed in your valuable publication the great attention which you have paid to every thing relating to the “Immortal Bard of Avon,” I beg leave to transmit to you two drawings (the one back, the other front) of a brooch or buckle, found near the residence of the poet, at New Place, Stratford, among the rubbish brought out from the spot where the house stood. This brooch is considered by the most competent judges and antiquarians in and near Stratford, to have been the personal property of Shakspeare. A. is the back; 1 and 2, faint traces of the letters which were nearly obliterated, by the person who found the relic, in scraping to ascertain whether the metal was precious, the whole of it being covered with gangrene or verdigris. 3 and 4 are the remains of the hinge to the pin. Fortunately the W. at the corner was preserved. B. represents the front of the brooch; 1, 3, and 5, are red stones in the top part (similar in shape to a coronet) 2 and 4 are blue stones in the same; the other stones in the bottom or heart are white, though varying rather in hue, and all are set in silver.

HJTHWC.

N.B. The above is shown to the curious by the individual who found it—a poor man named Smith, living in Sheep Street, Stratford.

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS

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The greater portion of the following Notes will, we are persuaded, be new to all but the bibliomaniacs in theatrical lore. They occur in a paper of 45 pages in the last Edinburgh Review, in which the writer attributes the Decline of the Drama to a variety of causes—as late hours, costly representations, high salaries, and excessive taxation—some of which we have selected for extract. In our affection for the Stage, we have paid some attention to its history, as well as to its recent state, and readily do we subscribe to a few of the Reviewer’s opinions of the cause of its neglect. But to attribute this falling off to “taxes innumerable” is rather too broad: perhaps the highly-taxed wax lights around the box circles suggested this new light. We need not go so far to detect the rottenness of the dramatic state; still, as the question involves controversy at every point, we had rather keep out of the fight, and leave our Reviewer without further note or comment.

NOTES ON THE DRAMA.

(FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, NO. 98.)

ORIGIN OF ADMISSION MONEY.

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There were at Athens various funds, applicable to public purposes; one of which, and among the most considerable, was appropriated for the expensed of sacrifices, processions, festivals, spectacles, and of the theatres. The citizens were admitted to the theatres for some time gratis; but in consequence of the disturbances caused by multitudes crowding to get seats, to introduce order, and as the phrase is, to keep out improper persons, a small sum of money was afterwards demanded for admission. That the poorer classes, however, might not be deprived of their favourite gratification, they received from the treasury, out of this fund, the price of a seat—and thus peace and regularity were secured, and the fund still applied to its original purpose. The money that was taken at the doors, having served as a ticket, was expended, together with that which had not been used in this manner, to maintain the edifice itself, and to pay the manifold charges of the representation.

“DRAMATIC REPRESENTATIONS NATURAL TO MAN.”

Travellers inform us, that savages, even in a very rude state, are found to divert themselves by imitating some common event in life: but it is not necessary to leave our own quiet homes to satisfy ourselves, that dramatic representations are natural to man. All children delight in mimicking action; many of their amusements consist in such performances, and are in every sense *plays*. It is curious, indeed, to observe at how early an age the young of the most imitative animal, man, begin to copy the actions of others; how soon the infant displays its intimate conviction of the great truth, that “all the world’s a Stage.” The baby does not imitate those acts only, that are useful and necessary to be learned; but it instinctively mocks useless and unimportant actions and unmeaning sounds, for its amusement, and for the mere pleasure of imitation, and is evidently much delighted when it is successful. The diversions of children are very commonly dramatic. When they are not occupied with their hoops, tops, and balls, or engaged in some artificial game, they amuse themselves in playing at soldiers, in being at school, or at church, in going to market, in receiving company; and they imitate the various employments of life with so much fidelity, that the theatrical critic, who delights in chaste acting, will often find less to censure in his own little servants in the nursery, than in his majesty’s servants in a theatre-royal. When they are somewhat older they dramatize the stories they read; most boys have represented Robin Hood, or one of his merry-men, and every one has enacted the part of Robinson Crusoe, and his man Friday. We have heard of many extraordinary tastes and antipathies; but we never knew an instance of a young person, who was not delighted the first time he visited a theatre. The true enjoyment of life consists in action; and happiness, according to the peripatetic definition, is to be found in energy; it accords, therefore, with the nature and etymology of the drama, which is, in truth, not less natural than agreeable. Its grand divisions correspond, moreover, with those of time; the contemplation of the present is Comedy—mirth for the most part being connected with the present only—and the past and the future are the dominions of the Tragic muse.

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GRECIAN THEATRES.

The climate of Athens being one of the finest and most agreeable in the world, the Athenians passed the greatest part of their time in the open air; and their theatres, like those in the rest of Greece and in ancient Rome, had no other covering than the sky. Their structure accordingly differed greatly from that of a modern playhouse, and the representation in many respects was executed in a different manner. But we will mention those peculiarities only which are necessary to render our observations intelligible.

The ancient theatres, in the first place, were on a much larger scale than any that have been constructed in later days. It would have been impossible, by reason of the magnitude of the edifice, and consequently of the stage, to have changed the scenes in the same manner as in our smaller buildings. The scene, as it was called, was a permanent structure, and resembled the front of Somerset House, of the Horse Guards, or the Tuileries, and was in the same style of architecture as the rest of the spacious edifice. There were three large gateways, through each of which a view of streets, or of woods, or of whatever was suitable to the action represented, was displayed; this painting was fixed upon a triangular frame, that turned on an axis, like a swivel seal, or ring, so that any one of the three sides might be presented to the spectators, and perhaps the two that were turned away might be covered with other subjects, if it were necessary. If parts of Regent Street, or of Whitehall, or the Mansion House, and the Bank of England, were shown through the openings in the fixed scene, it would be plain that the fable was intended to be referred to London; and it would be removed to Edinburgh, or Paris, if the more striking portions of those cities were thus exhibited. The front of the scene was broken by columns, by bays and promontories in the line of the building, which gave beauty and variety to the facade, and aided the deception produced by the paintings that were seen through the three openings. In the Roman Theatres there were commonly two considerable projections, like large bow-windows, or bastions, in the spaces between the apertures; this very uneven line afforded assistance to the plot, in enabling different parties to be on the stage at the same time, without seeing one another. The whole front of the stage was called the scene, or covered building, to distinguish it from the rest of the theatre, which was open to the air, except that a covered portico frequently ran round the semicircular part of the edifice at the back of the highest row of seats, which answered to our galleries, and was occupied, like them, by the gods, who stood in crowds upon the level floor of their celestial abodes.

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Immediately in front of the stage, as with us, was the orchestra; but it was of much larger dimensions, not only positively, but in proportion to the theatre. In our playhouses it is exclusively inhabited by fiddles and their fiddlers; the ancients appropriated it to more dignified purposes; for there stood the high altar of Bacchus, richly ornamented and elevated, and around it moved the sacred Chorus to solemn measures, in stately array and in magnificent vestments, with crowns and incense, chanting at intervals their songs, and occupied in their various rites, as we have before mentioned. It is one of the many instances of uninterrupted traditions, that this part of our theatres is still devoted to receive musicians, although, in comparison with their predecessors, they are of an ignoble and degenerate race.

The use of masks was another remarkable peculiarity of the ancient acting. It has been conjectured, that the tragic mask was invented to conceal the face of the actor, which, in a small city like Athens, must have been known to the greater part of the audience, as vulgar in expression, and it sometimes would have brought to mind most unseasonably the remembrance of a life and of habits, that would have repelled all sympathy with the character which he was to personate. It would not have been endured, that a player should perform the part of a monarch in his ordinary dress, nor that of a hero with his own mean physiognomy. It is probable, also, that the likeness of every hero of tragedy was handed down in statues, medals, and paintings, or even in a series of masks; and that the countenance of Theseus, or of Ajax, was as well known to the spectators as the face of any of their contemporaries. Whenever a living character was introduced by name, as Cleon or Socrates, in the old comedy, we may suppose that the mask was a striking, although not a flattering portrait. We cannot doubt, that these masks were made with great care, and were skilfully painted, and finished with the nicest accuracy; for every art was brought to a focus in the Greek theatres. We must not imagine, like schoolboys, that the tragedies of Sophocles were performed at Athens in such rude masks as are exhibited in our music shops. We have some representations of them in antique sculptures and paintings, with features somewhat distorted, but of exquisite and inimitable beauty.

THE ROMAN STAGE.

The Drama of ancient Rome possesses little of originality or interest. The word *Histrion* is said to be of Etruscan origin; the Tuscans, therefore, had their theatres; but little information can now be gleaned respecting them. It was long before theatres were firmly and permanently established in Rome; but the love of these diversions gradually became too powerful for the censors, and the Romans grew, at last, nearly as fond of them as the Greeks. The latter, as St. Augustine informs us, did not consider the profession of a player as dishonourable:

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“Ipsos scenicos non turpes judicaverunt, sed dignos etiam praeclaris honoribus habuerunt.”—*De Civ. Dei*. The more prudish Romans, however, were less tolerant; and we find in the Code various constitutions levelled against actors, and one law especially, which would not suit our senate, forbidding senators to marry actresses; but this was afterwards relaxed by Justinian, who had broken it himself. He permitted such marriages to take place on obtaining the consent of the emperor, and afterwards without, so that the lady quitted the stage, and changed her manner of life. The Romans, however, had at least enough of kindly feeling towards a Comedian to pray for the safety, or refection, of his soul after death; this is proved by a pleasant epitaph on a player, which is published in the collection of Gori:—

Pro jocis, quibus cunctos
oblectabat,
Si quid oblectamenti apud
vos est
Manes, insontem reficite
Animulam.”

COSTUME.

It is probable that the imagination of the spectator could without difficulty dispense with scenes, particularly if the surrounding objects were somewhat removed from the ordinary aspect of every-day things; if the performance were to take place, for example, in the hall of a college, or in a church.

The costume that prevails at present almost universally, is so barbarous and mean, and it changes in so many minute particulars so frequently, that it is impossible to conceive the hero of a tragedy actually wearing such attire. A more picturesque dress seems therefore to be indispensable; but the essentials of the costume of any time, from which dramatic subjects could be taken, are by no means costly. All that is absolutely necessary in vestments to content the fancy, might be procured at a trifling expense, and the hero or heroine might be supplied with the ordinary apparel of Greece, or Rome, or of any other country, at a small price. We must carefully distinguish, however, between the necessities and the luxuries of deception; the form, and sometimes the colour, demand a scrupulous accuracy; the texture is always unimportant. We may comprehend, therefore, how the old English theatre, notwithstanding the small outlay on decorations, by a strict attention to essentials, possessed considerable attractions; we may readily believe, that there were many companies who were maintained by their trade; “that all those companies got money and lived in reputation, especially those of the Blackfriars, who were men of grave and sober behaviour.”

THE OLD DRAMA.

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Our literature is remarkably rich in old dramas; but they are of little use to the present age. Fastidiousness and hypocrisy have grown for many years, slowly but surely, and have at last arrived at such a pitch, that there is hardly a line in the works of our old comic writers, which is not reprobated as immoral, or at least vulgar. The excessive squeamishness of taste of the present day is very unfavourable to the genius of comedy, which demands a certain liberty and a freedom from restraints. This morbid delicacy is a great evil, for it renders the time of limitation in all comic writings exceedingly short. The ephemeral duration of the fashion, which is all the production of a man of wit can now enjoy, discourages authors. There is no motive to bestow much care on such compositions, and they fall below the ambition of men of real talents—for the best part of the reward of literary labour consists in the lasting admiration of posterity; and as some new fastidiousness will consign to oblivion, in a short time, every comic production, it is plain that such a reward cannot be reasonably anticipated. We are more completely, than any other nation, the victims of fashion. Everything here must either be in the last and newest fashion, or it must cease to be. The despotism of fashion in dress, in furniture, and in the pattern of the edges of plate, is perhaps inconvenient—it is, however, not very important; but it is a cruel grievance that it should interfere with and annihilate an entire department of our literature.

HOURS OF REPRESENTATION.

Dramatic representations were formerly given, not only in Greece and Rome, but in England also, in the daytime, and in the open air. “The Globe, Fortune, and Bull, were large houses, and partly open to the weather, and there they always acted by daylight;” and plays were first acted in Spain in the open courts of great houses, which were sometimes covered, in whole or in part, with an awning to keep off the sun. The word *sale*, which is used as a stage direction, meaning not *exit*, but he enters, *i.e.* he comes out of the house into the open air, is an evidence of the old practice. We are inclined to think that the morning is more favourable to dramatic excellence than the evening. The daylight accords with the truth and sobriety of nature, and it is the season of cool judgment: the gilded, the painted, the tawdry, the meretricious—spangles and tinsel, and tarnished and glittering trumpery—demand the glare of candle-light and the shades of night. It is certain, that the best pieces were written for the day; and it is probable, that the best actors were those who performed whilst the sun was above the horizon. The childish trash which now occupies so large a portion of the public attention could not, it is evident, keep possession of the stage, if it were to be presented, not at ten o’clock at night, but twelve hours earlier. Much would need to be changed in the dresses, scenery, and decorations,

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and in many other respects, in the pieces, the solid merits of which would be able to undergo the severe ordeal; and if we consider *what* changes would be required to adapt them to the altered hours, we shall find that they will be all in favour of good taste, and on the side of nature and simplicity. The day is a holy thing; Homer aptly calls it [Greek: *ieron aemar*], and it still retains something of the sacred simplicity of ancient times. It is, at all events, less sophisticated and polluted than the modern night, a period which is not devoted to wholesome sleep, but to various constraints and sufferings, called, in bitter mockery, Pleasure. The late evening, being a modern invention, is therefore devoted to fashion; to recur to the simple and pure in theatricals, it would probably be necessary to effect an escape from a period of time, which has never been employed in the full integrity of tasteful elegance; and thus to break the spell, by which the whole realm of fancy has long been bewitched. An absurd and inconvenient practice, which is almost peculiar to this country, of attending public places in that uncomfortable condition, which is technically called being dressed, but which is in truth, especially in females, being more or less naked and undressed, might more easily be dispensed with by day, and on that account, and for many other reasons, it would be less difficult to return home.

DECLINE OF THE DRAMA.

It is not unlikely that the drama would be more successful if it were conducted more plainly, and in a less costly style. The perfection of the machinery and scenery of the modern theatres, seems to be unfavourable to the goodness of composition and acting; since the accessories are so excellent, the opinion is encouraged, that the principals are less important, and may be neglected with impunity. The effect of good scenery at the first glance is, no doubt, very striking, but it soon passes away. If we saw a Garrick acting Shakspeare in a large hall, without any scenes, we should cease in a few minutes to be sensible of the want of them. We are almost disposed to believe, that exactly in proportion as scenery has been improved, good acting has declined.

The present age is too much inclined to make human life, in every department, resemble a great lottery, in which there are a very few enormous prizes, and all the rest of the tickets are blanks. The stage has not escaped the evil we complain of; on the contrary, it is a striking instance of the mischief of this unequal partition. The public are of opinion, that it is impossible to reward a small number of actors too highly, and to pay the remainder at too low a rate; to neglect the latter enough, or to be sufficiently attentive to the former. On our stage, therefore, the inferior parts, and indeed all but one or two, and especially in tragedies, where the inequality is more intolerable, and more inexcusable, are sustained in a very inadequate manner. In

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foreign theatres, on the contrary, and especially in France, the whole performance is more equal, and consequently more agreeable. There is perhaps less difference than is commonly supposed between the best performers and those in the next class. Whatever the difference be, it is an inconvenience and an imperfection that ought to be palliated; but we aggravate it. The first-rate actor always does his best, because the audience expect it, and reward him with their applause; but no one cares for, or observes, the performer of second-rate talents: whether he be perfect in his part, and exert himself to the utmost, or be slovenly and negligent throughout, he is unpraised and unblamed. The general effect, therefore, of our tragedies, is very unsatisfactory; for that is far greater, where all the characters are tolerably well supported, than where there is one good actor, and all the other parts are inhumanly murdered. This latter is too often the case on our stage for with us art does little, nothing being taught systematically. The French players, on the contrary, are thoroughly drilled, and well instructed, in every requisite.

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BISHOPS' SLEEVES.

To Joan it has been always conceded that she is as good as her lady in the dark, but it is only of late years that Joan has presumed to rival her mistress in the light. The high price of silks and satins protected the mistress against this usurpation of her servant in the broad day. Clad in these, she was safe, as in a coat of mail, from the attack of the domestic aspirant, who was seldom able to obtain possession of the outworks of fashion beyond an Irish poplin or a Norwich crape. The silks and satins were a wall of separation, as impenetrable as the lines of Torres Vedras, or the court hoop and petticoat of a drawing-room in the reign of George III. The new liberal commercial system has entirely changed the position of the parties. The cheapness of French silks, and other articles of dress, has placed female finery within the reach of even moderate wages, and a kitchen-wench will not condescend to sweep the room in any thing less than a robe of *Gros de Naples* or *batiste*. Something must be done on the part of the mistress to arrest the progress of invasion, and assert the vested rights of the superior classes of female society. Invention is the first quality of genius, and to woman it is granted in a high degree. Thus gifted, the mistress, in a happy moment, conceived the idea of bishops' sleeves, an article of dress which precludes all hope or chance of imitation in the kitchen. A muffled cat might as well attempt to catch mice, as a maid-servant to go about the business of the house in bishops' sleeves. She could not remove the tea-equipage from the table without the risk of sweeping the china upon the floor; if she handed her master a plate, he must submit to have his head wrapped up in her sleeve;

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and what a figure must the cook present after preparing her soups and sauces! The female servant thus accoutred might, indeed, perform the office of a flapper, and disperse the flies; but although this was an office of importance among the ancients, it is dispensed with at a modern table. With the introduction of bishops' sleeves, the rivalry on the part of the maid must cease, and the mistress remain in undisturbed possession of her pre-eminence. Every friend of good order, every one who would retain each individual female in her proper place in society, and prevent its members from trespassing on each other, must, therefore, rejoice in bishops' sleeves; and devoutly pray, that differing from every other fashion that ever preceded it, the fashion of bishops' sleeves may endure for ever.—New Monthly Magazine.

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SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY

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IRIS LUNARIS.

That rare and beautiful phenomenon the *Iris Lunaris*, or moonlight rainbow, was observed by Mr. W. Colbourne, jun. and a friend of his, from an eminence about a quarter of a mile from Sturminster, on the evening of the 14th instant, about twenty minutes before nine o'clock, in the north-west. Its northern limb first made its appearance; but after a few minutes, the complete curvature was distinctly and beautifully displayed. The altitude of its apex seemed to be nearly forty degrees. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the appearance of this arch of milky whiteness, contrasted as it was with the sable rain fraught clouds which formed the background to this interesting picture. It continued visible more than five minutes, and gradually disappeared at the western limb.

RURIS.

Sturminster.

WESTPHALIA HAMS

Are prepared in November and March. The Germans place them in deep tubs, which they cover with layers of salt and saltpetre, and with a few laurel leaves. They are left four or five days in this state, and are then completely covered with strong brine. At the end of three weeks they are taken out, and left to soak for twelve hours in clear well-water; they are then exposed, during three weeks, to a smoke produced by the branches of juniper.—*From the French.*

LONDON PORTER.

The bitter contained in porter, if taken wholly from hops, would require an average quantity of ten or twelve pounds to the quarter of malt, or about three pounds per barrel; so that if we consider the fluctuation in the price of hops, we shall not be surprised at the numerous substitutes, by which means the brewer can procure as much bitter for sixpence as would otherwise cost him a pound.

Quassia is, probably, the most harmless of all the illegal bitters. The physicians prescribe the decoction to their patients to the extent of a quarter of an ounce of the bark a day—as much as the brewer was accustomed to put into nine gallons of his porter.—*Library of Useful Knowledge*.

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BLACK GAME

Have increased greatly in the southern counties of Scotland and north of England within the last few years. It is a pretty general opinion, though an erroneous one, that they drive away the red grouse; the two species require very different kinds of cover, and will never interfere.—*Note to White's Selborne, by Sir W. Jardine.*

BIRDS OF PREY.

All birds of prey are capable of sustaining the want of food and water for long periods, particularly the latter, but of which they also seem remarkably fond, drinking frequently in a state of nature, and during summer washing almost daily.—*Ibid.*

EGYPT.

M. Champollion, in one of his recent letters, tells us that the whole of the island of Elephantina would hardly make a park fit for a good citizen of Paris, although certain modern chronologists would fain make it into a kingdom, in order to dispose of the ancient Egyptian dynasty of the Elephantines.

In another letter dated March last, he says, "Our establishment is in the Valley of Kings, which may truly be called the abode of death, as not a blade of grass is to be found in it, nor any living creature, except the jackall and hyaena, which the night before last devoured, at the distance of 100 steps from our palace, the ass which had carried my Barabra servant Mahomet, during the time that he was agreeably passing the night of the Ramadan in our kitchen, which is in a royal tomb, entirely dilapidated."—*Translated in the Literary Gazette.*

BEET-ROOT SUGAR.

The Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter for September, among the advantages which will probably lead to the discontinuance of the cultivation of sugar by slaves, enumerates the rapid extension of the manufacture of beet-root sugar in France; a prelude, as the editor conceives, to its introduction into this country, and especially into Ireland.

DRY ROT.

The American Commodore Barron recommends pumping air from the holds of vessels as a remedy against dry rot; the common mode of ventilation, by forcing pure air, or dashing water into the hold, being found an imperfect preservative.

ALLOYED IRON PLATE.



Iron, coated with an alloy of tin and lead, so as to imitate tin plate, and not to rust, is now manufactured to a considerable extent in Paris; and its use for sugar-pans and boilers, and in the construction of roofs and gutters is expected to be very considerable.

INTERESTING QUESTION.

Whether in the sea there be depths where no creature is able to live, or whether a boundary be assigned to organic life within those depths, cannot be ascertained. It, however, clearly appears from the observations made by Biot, and other naturalists, that fishes, according to their different dispositions, live in different depths of the ocean.—

From the German.

CATS.

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In Kamtschatka, Greenland, Lapland, and Iceland, there are no cats, nor does the lynx in Europe extend farther than Norway.—Ibid.

VESSELS MADE OF THE PAPYRUS.

The last number of the *Magazine of Natural History* contains an article of great interest, on Vessels made of the Papyrus, illustrated with cuts, from which it appears that vessels have from the earliest times, been formed from the paper reed, and that they are at present in use in Egypt and Abyssinia. The author is John Hogg, Esq. M.A. F.L.S. &c. whose antiquarian attainments have greatly assisted him in the elucidation of this very curious subject.

REMAINS OF LA PEROUSE. [10]

M. Derville, who commanded the *Astrolabe*, in the lute-voyage undertaken to search for traces of the expedition of La Perouse, considers the island, the summits of which were observed fifteen leagues to windward, by the frigates *La Recherche* and *L'Esperance*, which composed the expedition of Admiral D'Entrecasteaux, in 1793, and to which the name of the *Isle de la Recherche* was then given, to be the identical island, Vanikoro (or Vanicolo) on the shores of which the remnants of La Perouse's vessel have been found. The geographical position of latitude and longitude of the *Isle of Vanikoro*, agrees exactly with that of the island to which the name of *Recherche* was given by D'Entrecasteaux. That island was then confounded with the number of other islands, which had been seen by the expedition, and which it had been found impossible to examine in detail.—*Athenaeum*.

STUDY OF CHEMISTRY.

Numbers there are, far above the lower classes, who still consider the elements of all things as consisting of earth, air, fire, and water; an error which classical-learning, no less than the expressions of common parlance, tends to perpetuate. Let us hope that the days are at hand, if not already arrived, in which the acquirement of such fundamental knowledge will be looked upon as at least equally necessary with the study of languages, and the cultivation of taste and imagination.—*Library of Useful Knowledge*.

[Footnote 10: For a Report of this discovery, see MIRROR, vol. xiii p. 409.]

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.—SHAKSPEARE.

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ORIGIN OF THE WORD WORSTED.

Worsted, in the county of Norfolk, though formerly a town of considerable trade, and much celebrity, is now reduced to a village, and the manufactures, which obtained a name from the place, are removed to Norwich and its vicinity.

Shakspeare has not been very courteous towards the *worsted gentry*; had he lived in our times, they might have *worsted* him for a libel: he says in King Lear, "A base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three suited, hundred pound, filthy, worsted stocking knave."

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P.T.W.

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I asked a poor man, how he did? He said, he was like a washball, always in decay.—
Swift.

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CAT-FANCIER.

Lady Morgan gives the following anecdote in her *Book of the Boudoir*. “The first day we had the honour of dining at the palace of the Archbishop of Taranto, at Naples, he said to me, you must pardon my passion for cats, (*la mia passione gattesca*) but I never exclude them from my dining-room, and you will find they make excellent company.” Between the first and second course the door opened, and several enormously large and beautiful Angola cats were introduced by the names of Pantalone, Desdemona, Otello, &c. They took their places on chairs near the table, and were as silent, as quiet, as motionless, and as well behaved, as the most *bon ton* table in London could require. On the bishop requesting one of the chaplains to help the Signora Desdemona, the butler stepped up to his lordship, and observed, “My Lord, La Signora Desdemona will prefer waiting for the roast.”

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ANCIENT FAMILY.

There was much sound truth in the speech of a country lad to an idler, who boasted his ancient family: “*So much the worse for you,*” said the peasant, as we ploughmen say, “*the older the seed the worse the crop.*”

* * * * *

At North Ferryby, in Yorkshire, the following very instructive lines, are inscribed on a handsome tablet to the memory of Sir T. Etherington, an Alderman of Hull, and late a resident in the above place:—

“Taught of God we should view losses, sickness, pain, and death, but as the several trying stages by which a good man, like Joseph, is conducted from a tent to a court; sin his disease, Christ his physician, pain his medicine, the Bible his support, the grave his rest, and death itself an angel expressly sent to relieve the worn out labourer, or crown the faithful soldier!”

Louis XIV. was presented with an epitaph by an indifferent poet, on the celebrated Moliere. "I would to God," said he, "that Moliere had brought me yours."

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ON MEMORY.

What an unknown and unspeakable happiness would it be to a man of judgment, and who is engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, if he had but a power of stamping all his own best sentiments upon his memory in some indelible characters; and if he could but imprint every valuable paragraph and sentiment of the most excellent authors he has read, upon his mind, with the same speed and facility with which he read them?—*Watts*.

* * * * *

Upon a stone in St. Margaret's churchyard, at Lynn, in Norfolk, is the following inscription to the memory of William Scrivenor, Cook to the Corporation, who died in the year 1684:—

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Alas! alas! *Will Scrivenor's* dead, who by his art,
Could make death's skeleton edible in each part,
Mourn, squeamish stomachs, and ye curious palates,
You've lost your dainty dishes and your salades;
Mourn for yourselves, but not for him i'th' least
He's gone to taste of a more heav'nly feast.

At Whitchingham Magna, in the same county, is the following epitaph to Thomas Alleyne, gent. who died Feb. 3, 1650, and his two wives:—

Death here advantage hath of life I spye,
One husband with two wives at once may lye.

* * * * *

A recent American newspaper has the following notice to its readers:—"The editor, printer, publisher, foreman, and oldest apprentice (*two* in all,) are confined by sickness, and the whole establishment is left in the care of the *devil*."

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