

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction, Vol. 12, Issue 328, August 23, 1828

Various

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

VOL. XII. NO. 328.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1828. [PRICE 2d.

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ANCIENT PLAN OF OXFORD CASTLE.

[Illustration: Oxford Castle]

By these mysterious ties the busy pow'r
Of mem'ry her ideal train preserves
Intire; or, when they would elude her watch,
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion.

AKENSIDE

Gentle, courteous, and _patient_ reader--to understand the above plan,

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it is requisite that you carry your mind's eye back to those troublous times when men enjoyed no protection, but in opposing force to force; and to a period when _every man's house was his castle_, though not in the metaphorical sense we have since been accustomed to apply these words, viz. to the protection and security of British subjects.

Few portions of our island have been more amply illustrated, by antiquarians, than OXFORD; and from one of these we learn that a Keep Tower, or Castle, existed here a considerable time before the conquest; for Alfred lived here; and Harold Harefoot was crowned and resided here; and one of Alfred's sons struck money here. Hearne has likewise identified this fact by the very ancient and original arms of Oxford, which have a castle represented, with a large ditch and bridge. Upon the same authority we learn that Offa "built walls at Oxford," and by him, therefore, a Saxon castle was originally built at Oxford.

Leland, Dugdale, and Camden, on the other hand, affirm that the castle at Oxford was built by Robert D'Oiley, who came into England with William the Conqueror; and the Chronicles of Osney Abbey, preserved in the Cottonian library, even ascertain the precise date of this great baron's undertaking, viz. A.D. 1071. No question, therefore, can remain, but that this illustrious chieftain either repaired or rebuilt the castle; but as we have shown, upon equal authority, there was a Saxon castle, fit for a royal residence at Oxford, long previous to D'Oiley's time. About the year 1794, several Saxon remains were discovered here; but our engraving represents the castle in Norman times, with Robert D'Oiley's magnificent additions, and is a facsimile of a plan by Ralph Agas, in 1538, which, allowing a little for bad or unskilful drawing, may be taken as a perfect specimen of Norman military architecture, and will, we are persuaded, be received by our readers as a popular and interesting illustration of the warlike character of the age in which the castle was erected.

For the description we are indebted to a MS. account of Anthony Wood, in the Bodleian library, who informs us that at one of its entrances was "a large bridge, which led into a long and broad entry, and so to the chief gate of the castle, the entry itself being fortified, on each side, with a large embattled wall; and having several passages above, from one side to the other, with open spaces between them, through which, in times of storm, whenever any enemy had broken through the first gates of the bridge, and was gotten into the entry, scalding water or stones might be cast down to annoy them."

On passing through the gate, at the end of this long entry, the fortification stretched itself, on the left hand, in a straight line, till it came to a _round_ tower, that was rebuilt in the 19th of Henry III.[1] And from thence went a fair embattled wall, guarded for the most part with the mill-stream underneath, till it came to the high tower joining to St. George's church.[2]

From hence, says the manuscript, the wall went to another gate, now quite down, opposite to the abovementioned; and leading to Osney, over another bridge; close to which joined that lofty and eminent mount, sometime crowned with an embattled tower. The manuscript adds, that for the greater defence of this castle, there was, on one of the sides of it, _a barbican_; which seems to have not merely been a single tower, but (according to an ancient deed) _a place_, or outwork, containing several habitations; and from other accounts it further appears, that there were more barbicans than one.

The ruins of certain other towers of the castle, besides the barbicans, and those already described, are also said to have been standing till 1649; when they were pulled down to erect new bulwarks for the parliamentary garrison.

This is an abstract of Anthony Wood's manuscript, which agrees with Agas's drawing, except that in his sketch, the tower between the gate-tower and St. George's, is represented square instead of being round. Antiquarians also infer that in the drawing it was intended to represent the great keep-tower as standing upon the top of the mount, and not by the side of it.[3]

Some discoveries made in 1794, throw much light on the history of the castle, and warrant a conclusion that in its area were several buildings. Wells were then cleared out, and among the rubbish were found horses' bones, dogs' bones, horse-shoes, and human skeletons; the appearance of the latter is not easily accounted for, unless they were the bodies of malefactors, who had been executed on the gallows placed near the castle, in later ages, that might have been flung in here, instead of being buried under the gibbet. We must however pass over many interesting facts, and content ourselves with a mere reference to the empress Maud being besieged here in 1141, and her miraculous flight with three knights, all escaping the eyes of the besiegers by the brightness of their raiment; Maud having just previously escaped from the castle of the Devises, as a dead corpse, in a funeral hearse or bier. The reader will not be surprised at the decay of the castle, when he is informed that it was in a dilapidated state in the reign of Edward III.

The castle was situate on the west side of the city of Oxford, on the site of the present county gaol. In 1788 little remained except the tower, which was for some time used as the county prison, and part of the old wall could then be traced 10 feet in thickness. In the castle-yard were the remains of the ancient sessions-house, in which, at the _Black Assize_, in 1577, the lieutenant of the county, two knights, eighty esquires and justices, and almost all the grand jury, died of a distemper, brought thither and communicated by the prisoners; and nearly one hundred scholars and townsmen fell victims to the same disorder.

We have been somewhat minute in the preceding description, but we hope not more so than the exhaustless curiosity of the public on such subjects appears to warrant. Indeed, these interesting details are only a tithe portion of what we might have abridged. The warlike habits of our ancestors are always attractive topics for inquirers into the history of mankind, and their study is not

Dull and crabbed as some fools suppose,

but a treasury or depository of useful knowledge, by enabling the inquirer to draw many valuable inferences from the comparative states of men in the several ages he seeks to illustrate. The enthusiasm of such pursuits is, likewise, an everlasting source of delight; for who can visit such shrines as Netley, St. Albans, or Melrose, without feeling that he is on holy ground; and although we are equally active in our notice of the architectural triumphs of our own times, we must not entirely leave the proud labours of by-gone ages to be clasped in the ponderous folio, or to moulder and lie neglected on the upper shelves of our libraries.

We have to acknowledge the loan of the original of the engraving, from a lineal descendant of D'OILEY[4], the founder or repairer of the Castle at Oxford--a name not altogether unknown to our readers.

[1] The sum of 144_l. 5_s_. was expended in the rebuilding.

[2] By an odd mode of expression in the MS., it should seem as if this tower itself, or at least some building adjoining it, was formerly made use of as a _royal residence_, for the words are, _from hence went a fair embattled wall, guarded for the most part with the mill-stream underneath, till it came in the high tower, going under St. George's College, and the king's

house employed formerly as a campanile belonging to that church_.

[3] Grose fell into an error on this point, in his 3rd volume of Antiquities, for in his copy of Aga's plan, he placed a large keep tower just at the foot of an artificial mount--an anomaly in fortification. The same punster who described _fortification_ as _two twenty fications_, would call this a _Grose_ blunder.

[4] When Robert D'Oiley, in the reign of Henry V. built the abbey at Osney, for monks and regulars, and gave them the revenues, &c. of the church of St. George, in the Castle, it is said in the Osney chronicle, that there "Robert Pulen began to read at Oxford the Holy Scriptures, which had fallen into neglect in England. And after both the church of England and that of France had profited greatly by his doctrine, he was called away by Pope Lucius II., who made him chancellor of the holy Roman church." This short effort, to which the Pope's preferment put a stop, seems to have been the true origin of the DIVINITY LECTURE, and of the DIVINITY SCHOOLS at Oxford; and of the studies of the SORBONNE at Paris.

* * * * *

THE "INTELLECTUAL CAT."

(_For the Mirror_)

The _cat mania_ has hitherto been more popular in France than in England. To be sure, we have the threadbare story of Whittington and his cat; Mrs. Griggs and her 86 living and 28 dead cats; Peter King and his two cats in rich liveries; Foote's concert of cats; and the newspaper story of tortoiseshell male cats--but in France, cats keep better company, or at least are associated with better names. Thus, MOLIERE had his favourite cat; Madame de Puis, the celebrated harpplayer, settled a pension on her feline friend, which caused a law-suit, and brought into action all the most celebrated lawyers of France; and M. L'Abbe de Fontenu was in the habit of experimenting on these animals, one of which he found could exist twenty-six months without drinking! which fact is recorded in the History of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, 1753.

Our present portrait is, however, of more recent date, being a free translation from _Le Furet de Londres_, a French paper published in London, whose columns are an agreeable accompaniment for a cup of coffee. It is a mere _bagatelle_, and as an amusing trifle may not be unacceptable.

My pretty little Puss, it is high time that I should pay a just tribute to your merits. We often talk of people who do not esteem you; therefore, why should I blush to give publicity to your perfection?

You are exceedingly well made; your fur boasts of the delicate varieties of the tiger; your eyes are lively and pleasing; your velvet coat and tail are of enviable beauty; and your agility, gracefulness, and docility are, indeed, the admiration of all who behold you! Your moral qualities are not less estimable; and we will attempt to recapitulate them.

In the first place, you love me dearly, or at least you load me with caresses; unless, like the rest of the world, you love me for yourself's sake. I know well that you like me less than a slice of mutton, or the leg of a fowl, but that is very simple; I am your master, and a leg of

mutton is as good again as one master, twice as good as two masters, &c.

You possess great sense, and good sense too, for you have precisely such as is most useful to you; for every other kind of knowledge will make you appear foolish.

Nature has given you nails, which men unpolitely call claws; they are admirably constructed, and well jointed in a membrane, which is extended or drawn up like the fingers of a glove; and at pleasure it becomes a terrific claw, or a paw of velvet.

You understand the _physical laws of good and evil_. A cat who strangles another will not be more culpable than a man who kills his fellow men. My dear Cat, the great Hobbes never reasoned more clearly than you do!

You forget the past--you dream not of the future; but you turn the present to account. Time flies not with you, but stands still, and all your moments appear but as one. You know that your muscles will give action to your limbs, and you know no other cause of your existence, than existence itself. My dear Cat, you are a profound _materialist_!

You flatter the master who caresses you, you lick the hand that feeds you, you fly from a larger animal than yourself, whilst you unsparingly prey on the smaller ones. My dear Cat, you are a profound _politician_!

You live peaceably with the dog, who is your messmate; in gratitude to me, you regulate your reception, good or bad, of all the animals under my roof; thus, you raise your claw against such as you imagine mine enemies, while you prick up your tail at the sight of my friends. My dear Cat, you are a profound _moralist_!

When you promenade your graceful limbs upon a roof, on the edge of a casement, or in some situation equally perilous, you show your dexterity in opposing the bulk of your body to the danger. Your muscles extend or relax themselves with judgment, and you enjoy security where other animals would be petrified with fear. My dear Cat, you perfectly understand the _laws of gravity_!

If through inadvertence, blundering, or haste, you lose your support or hold, then you are admirable; you bend yourself in raising your back, and carry the centre of gravity towards the umbilical region, by which means you fall on your feet. My dear Cat, you are an excellent _natural philosopher_!

If you travel in darkness, you expand the pupil of your eye, which, in forming a perfect circle, describes a larger surface, and collects the greater part of the luminous rays which are scattered in the atmosphere. When you appear in daylight, your pupil takes an elliptic form, diminishes, and receives only a portion of these rays, an excess of which would injure your retina. My dear Cat, you are a perfect _optician_!

When you wish to descend a precipice, you calculate the distance of the solid points with astonishing accuracy. In the first place, you dangle your legs as if to measure the space, which you divide in your judgment, by the motions of your feet; then you throw yourself exactly upon the wished-for spot, the distance to which you have compared with the effect on your muscles. My dear Cat, you are a skilful _geometrician_!

When you wander in the country, you examine plants with judicious nicety; you soon select that kind which pleases you, when you roll yourself on it, and testify your joy by a thousand other gambols; you know also the several grasses, and their medicinal effects on your frame. My dear Cat, you are an excellent _botanist_!

Your voice merits no less eulogium; for few animals have one so modulated. The rhyming pur of satisfaction, the fawning accents of appeal, the vigorous bursts of passion, and innumerable diatonic varieties, proceed from your larynx, according to the order of nature. My dear Cat, you are a _dramatic musician_!

In your amusements, you prefer pantomime to dialogue; and you neglect the pen to study the picture. But then what agility! what dancing! what cross-capers! The difficulty never impairs the grace of the feat. Oh, my dear Cat! you are a _delightful dancer_!

Lastly, my dear Puss, show me a man who possesses as many kinds of knowledge as you do, and I will proclaim him a _living cyclopaedia_, or concentration of human wisdom. But, what do I see? I am praising you, and you are fast asleep! This is still greater philosophy.

* * * * *

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

(_For the Mirror._)

Yes, radiant spirit, thou hast pass'd
Unto thy latest home,
And o'er our widow'd hearts is cast
A deep and with'ring gloom!
For when on earth thou wert as bright
As angel form might be:
And mem'ry shall exist in night,
If we think not of thee.

For, oh, thy beauty o'er us came
Like a fair sunset beam,
And the sweet music of thy name
Was pure as aught might deem.
With silent lips we gaz'd on thee,
And awe-suspended breath--
But thine entrancing witchery
Abideth not in death.

And all that we suppos'd most fair
Is but a mockery now;
No beam illumines the silken hair
That traced thy smiling brow.
The cheerless dust upon thee lies,
Death's seal is on thee set,
But the bright spirit of thine eyes
Shines o'er our mem'ry yet!

As in some dark and hidden shell
Lies ocean's richest gem,
So in our hearts shall ever dwell
The spells thou'st breath'd in them!
Why should we weep o'er the young flow'rs
That cluster on thy sod?
Stars like them glow in heav'n's bright bow'rs
To light thee up to God!

R.A.

* * * * *

"TROUT BINNING" IN WEST-MORELAND.</h3>

(_To the Editor of the Mirror_.)

--"Now is the time,
While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile,
To tempt the trout."
THOMSON.

I have not yet done with this subject; and as it strikes me you are an angler, I think the article a seasonable _bait_ for you.

I was certainly much entertained with your extracts from Sir Humphry Davy's _Salmonia_ ; and from your being pleased to mention my name in commenting on its merits, I took the hint, and resolved to send you another leaf from my journal. You will easily imagine the abundance of fish in Westmoreland when I inform you, that they seldom use the line there, except in rivers, since they can take them much easier with their hands as before mentioned. I will now account for the trout frequenting such small brooks. There are frequent floods in that county, at certain periods of the year, which sweep the fish in shoals from the mountain rivulets, or perhaps the fish always go down with the flood, for the rivers and rivulets are all well stocked afterwards; and in my opinion it is on account of the rivers being so full, that great quantities are obliged to inhabit the neighbouring brooks, all which empty themselves in the rivers. At the latter end of the year, that is, the spawning season, the large trouts (which are become very loose and flabby) take to the small brooks to deposit their spawn; after which they return to the rivers. At this time there are, in consequence, many young trouts, which remain, I should imagine, till next year, when I believe they go to the rivers; for during that time I have seldom caught trouts weighing more than from half a pound to a pound, though in such a "beck" as "Cannon's," which runs directly into the Eden, I have taken them at all times very large--and this is how I account for the difference. I should observe, that at the "_back end_" of the year, immensely large trouts may be caught, which come up to spawn; but they are generally, when caught, immediately thrown into their element again, as they are worth nothing, on account of the looseness of their flesh.

But to the subject. _Trout binning_ is a name given to a peculiar method of taking trout. A man wades any rocky stream (Pot-beck for instance) with a sledge-hammer, with which he strikes every stone likely to contain fish. The force of the blow stuns the fish, and they roll from under the rock half dead, when the "binner" throws them out with his hand.

Night-Fishing.--I have frequently gone out with a fishing party at about ten o'clock at night to spear trout. We supplied ourselves with an eel spear and a lantern, and visited Cannon's "beck." We drew the light gently over the water near the brink. Immediately the light appeared, both trouts and eels were splashing about the lantern in great quantities. We then took the spear, and as they approached, thrust it down upon them, sometimes bringing up with it three or four together. One night we took nearly twenty pounds of trout and eels, which, for the short time we were out, may be considered very fair sport, and some of those were of a very large size.

Should you notice this, I may be led to recur to the subject in a future paper.

W.H.H.

* * * * *

A proud man is a fool in fermentation,
that swells and boils over like a porridge-pot.
He sets out his feathers like an owl,
to swell and seem bigger than he is.

* * * * *

THE TOPOGRAPHER.

AN EXCURSION TO THE RUINS OF RIEVAULX AND BYLAND ABBEYS; AND TO THE
RESIDENCE OF LAURENCE STERNE, COXWOLD, YORKSHIRE.

(_For the Mirror_)

"The air around was breathing balm,
The aspen scarcely seem'd to sway;
And, as a sleeping infant calm,
The river stream'd away--
Devious as error--deep as love,
And blue and bright as heaven above."

Alaric A. Watts.

Though I am as romantic a being as ever breathed on the face of this beautiful earth; yet, I will promise the reader, that in detailing the events of an interesting day, I will not tinge them with that colouring; yet, such a glorious bard as Wordsworth could, alone, do justice to our excursion. Leave him to wander alone in that woody dell, with the thrilling picture spread around him--the sinking walls of elaborate Gothic, clouded by the hanging woods--the rural dwellings of the illiterate peasantry scattered below the templed mount--and the mourning stream and its rustic bridge--thus entranced, his fairy spirit would pour forth a flood of pensive and philosophic song.

It was on the dawning of a fine morning in August, that I left the brick-and-mortar purlieu of home, and in company with two young friends, commenced this excursion. The diversified chain of the Hambleton Hills, bounding the fruitful valley of Mowbray, rose at the distance of six miles before us; and whose summit we intended reaching before breakfast. The varying aspect of these rocky eminences requires the descriptive charms of Sir Walter Scott, or the pencil of Salvator Rosa, to do them justice. Within two miles of them, you might imagine yourself in the ruins of the Roman amphitheatre, whose circular walls reared their dark-gray forms to the heaven; and the inimitable description which Byron has given us of that edifice, occurs to the recollection; though no waving weeds and dew-nurtured trees crown the apparent ruin--

"Like laurel on the bald first Caesar's head."

On a nearer view, they change their appearance, and you might suppose that the remains of some fortified castle, typical of the feudal system, looked over the heather which clothes their rocky sides; whilst the detached pieces of rock, which rolled from the summit eighty years ago, appear amongst the furze, like the tombs of Jewish patriarchs in the valley of Jehosaphat at Jerusalem, darkened by the lapse of ages. To the right of our path lay the solitary and frail memorials of the monastery of Hode, founded by Roger de Mowbray, and afterwards attached to the abbey of Byland. Shortly after passing Hode, we arrived at the base of Hambleton, and began to ascend its rocky front; we had climbed half the ascent, when, on cautiously turning ourselves, an indescribable picture presented itself in the vale and its objects below; the solemn silence

of the early hour--the first greeting of the morning sun--the glittering and distant lake of Gormire, guarded by towering hills to the right--and, to the left, rocks which have stood whilst generations of heroes and kings have passed away; and, beyond this vivid scene, in dim perspective, arose the western hills, tinged with delicate blue, and scarcely discernible from the clouds which floated over them. Even the enraptured travellers, who stood gazing from the summit of Mont Blanc, were not more delighted than the enthusiastic trio who looked from the brow of Hambleton on that memorable morning. But our object was not attained, and we set forward with replenished vigour, to cross the heather-heath, whose bleak aspect prepared us for the paradise which smiled below the other side of the hills. The first prominent object which met our view, was the terrace, with its classical temples at each of its terminations; and next, the wood encircled hamlet of Scawton, at whose little alehouse we enjoyed a hearty breakfast; and then set forward to explore our beloved region of Rievaulx; our path being through a mountainous wood, which nearly kissed the sky, and obscured the rustic road which divided it: after several windings through this leafy labyrinth, we arrived at a point where the wood was more open, and the dell considerably wider. It was after passing a picturesque cottage and bridge, that the first view of Rievaulx Abbey broke upon us. It was then that the first outline of its "Gothic grandeur" was displayed to us. Crossing the little bridge of Rieval, we proceeded along the banks of the Rye, which morosely rolled along, scarcely deigning to murmur its complaints to the woody hills which skirted it, as if in pique for the ruin of its sublime temple, and the disappearance of its monastic lords. The village of Rieval, constructed out of the wreck of the spacious abbey, displays some reverence for the preservation of inscriptions dug out of the building; and the little windows which lit the cells of studious monks five hundred years ago, now grace the cottages of illiterate peasants. We took a facsimile of one inscription, in Saxon letters, merely denoting the name of the monastery.

The rustic beauty of the hamlet has been copiously eulogized by antiquarians and provincial historians. The beautiful foliage of its trees, varying in colour, appears like fleecy clouds of verdure, rising one above the other, over which a still deeper shadow is cast by the towering woods on each side of the valley; and in the midst of this fairy region, as if conscious of its proud pre-eminence, rises the sacred edifice, clothed in mourning of nature's deepest shade:[5]

Oh! many an hour of ecstasy
I past within its fading towers;
When life, and love, and poesy,
Hung on my harp their sweetest flowers.

To indulge a little in reverie--"how are the mighty fallen!"--Here was once worshipped the virgin amidst the glittering pomp of monkish solemnity; when burst the beams of morning through the tracery of yon mighty window--

"Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,"

and threw the glowing emblazonry of the tinted pane upon the Mosaic pavement of the choir; while the loud and slowly-pealing matin reverberated through the sumptuous church. Here was interred with ceremony of waxen taper and mid-night requiem, the noble founder of this dilapidated fane, Sir Walter L'Espece, beneath that wreck of pillar and architrave and those carved remains of the chisel's achievement--he who deemed that the sepulchre

"Should canopy his bones till doomsday;
But all things have their end."

The ruins of this religious house are more entire and superb than any

other in the kingdom. The nave of the church is wholly gone; but the choir, one of its aisles, great part of the tower, and both the transepts, still remain. The church, instead of being east and west, approaches more to the direction of north and south; so that the choir is at the south end, and the aisle which should have been north, is on the east. Some have supposed this anomaly to be produced at the rebuilding of the church; but Drake in his "Evenings in Autumn," thinks it was in consequence of the disposition of the ground, which forms a lofty mount on the east. Adjoining the ruins of the nave on the west, are the remains of the cloisters, measuring one hundred feet each way. On the opposite side stands a splendid building, extending in length towards the west one hundred feet, and in breadth thirty; this structure appears to have been the refectory, accompanied by a music gallery. Parallel to this, and in a line with the transept, is another extensive ruin, several feet longer than the refectory, and about the same breadth, which was the dormitory; at the west end of which the walls are ancient, and seem to be coeval with the original abbey.[6] The form and ground plan of this building are the same with the abbey of Whitby; though the latter is not so copious in its dimensions. Several members of the noble families of Ross, Scroop, Maltbys, and Oryby, were interred in the chapter-house and choir here. Aelred, the third abbot of Rievaulx, was a man of great literary qualifications, and this abbey possessed an extensive library, which was destroyed by the Scots, in one of their lawless incursions--when the studious produce of the holy brotherhood, assembled by years of incessant study was committed to the reckless flames--and doubtless amongst the collection were many works of the learned abbot Aelred; a character from whom we might suppose the "northern magician" had sketched the striking portraiture of the enthusiastic father Eustace, in his "Monastery."

After inspecting this interesting edifice, we left its hallowed precincts, and took the hilly path leading to a beautiful terrace, which overlooks the vale; each end of which is decorated with two modern temples, one in the Grecian and the other in the Roman style of architecture. Here are some gaudy copies of the old masters, with some originals, which adorn the centre and side compartments of the ceiling--Guido's Aurora, (copy); Hero and Leander, Diana and Endymion; Hercules and Omphale, &c.--the whole by the pencil of Bernini, an Italian artist. From this terrace the view is enchanting; the distant hills of barren Hambleton subsiding into the fruitful vale; and nearer, fertile fields intersected with wood and mossy rocks; and immediately beneath the eye, the pale and ivied ruin, mouldering over the dust of heroes who fought at Cressy, and of noble pilgrims who died in the Holy Land, and were conveyed to this far-famed sanctuary for interment--

"Which now lies naked to the injuries
Of stormy weather."

Not far from this Elysium is the seat of Lord Feversham, (late Charles S. Duncombe, Esq.) the owner of the estate, called Duncombe Park, where is a piece of fine sculpture, called the Dog of Alcibiades, said to be the work of Myron, and ranked among the five dogs of antiquity. Here is also the famous Discobolus, which is esteemed the first statue in England. Among the splendid collection of paintings is a candle-light scene (woman and child) by Rubens, which cost 1,500 guineas. The mansion was designed by Sir J. Vanbrugh. Leaving this bewitching retreat, we proceeded down the sides of the woody mount; and after some tedious inquiries respecting our road through this wild region, we were directed to take a path through a sloping wood; but useless are all attempts to describe our route through this wilderness. Sometimes our weary feet were relieved from the rough stones and briars by an intervening lawn; and at others we were entirely shrouded from "day's garish eye" by entwining trees. Our rugged pilgrimage was rendered more endurable by the anticipation of shortly seeing Byland abbey; but still my romantic spirit was loitering in the pillared aisles of Rievaulx. By and by we

quitted the wood, and having descended a deep ravine, we climbed a barren moor, over which we had proceeded half way, when to my unutterable joy, we discovered the far-off fane of Rievaulx, whose wan towers just peered from out of the hanging woods. Pursuing our way we soon exchanged the trackless moor for a much more grateful domain. A sloping wood on each side of us opened into a wider expanse, and the turrets of Byland abbey appeared in the distance. At this moment we forgot the toil of threading harassing woods and crossing wide heaths. After refreshing ourselves we proceeded to view the ruin.

Byland abbey was founded in 1177, by the famous Roger de Mowbray, who amply endowed it, and was buried here. He retired hither after being perplexed and fatigued with useless crusades, and suffering the deprivation of nearly all his property by Henry II. Martin Stapylton, Esq. the present proprietor of Byland, discovered from some ancient manuscripts the precise situation in the ruin, where were deposited the bones of the illustrious chieftain; and after removing these relics of mortality which had been hid for six hundred years, he conveyed them in his carriage to Myton, and interred them in the church-yard. The abbey of Byland is memorable for having given concealment, (though not a sanctuary!) to Edward II. who, when flying from his enemies in the north, in 1322, took shelter here, and was surprised by them when at dinner, narrowly escaping, by the swiftness of his horse, to York; and leaving his money, plate, and privy seal, a booty to the savage and exterminating Scots. Byland abbey has nearly disappeared; the only perfect remains are the west end, a fine specimen of Saxon and Gothic, and a small portion of the choir. The church, its transepts, north and south aisles, and chancel, are gone; and the dormitory, refectory, cloisters, &c. have scarcely left any trace of their gorgeous existence. The lonely ash and sturdy briar vegetate over the ashes of barons and prelates; and the unfeeling peasants intrude their rustic games on the holy place, ignorant of its former importance, and unconscious of the poetical feeling which its remains inspire. We quitted its interior to inspect a gateway situated at a considerable distance from the principal ruin, through which the abbey appears to great advantage about four hundred yards beyond this arch.

[5] For an interesting account of the founding and a view of this abbey, see the MIRROR for Sept. 30, 1826.

[6] Eastmead's "Historia Rievallensis."

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ON VIEWING THE RUINS OF BYLAND ABBEY THROUGH THE DETACHED GATEWAY ON THE WEST.

Oh! beauteous picture! thou art ruin's theme,
And envious time the Gothic canvass sears.
Thy soft decay now almost wakes my tears,
And art thou mutable? or do I dream?
The transept moulders to its mound again;
The fluted window buries in its fall
The rainbow flooring of the fretted hall;
And long the altar on that earth has lain.
Now could I weep to see each mourning weed
So deeply dark around thy wasting brow;
If life and art are then so brief--I bow
With less of sorrow to what is decreed:
Ye faded cloisters--ye departing aisles!
Your day is past, and dim your glory smiles!

Four miles from Byland is Coxwold, once the residence of the celebrated

Laurence Sterne, author of *Tristram Shandy*, &c. It is a beautiful and romantic retreat, excelling the "laughing vine-clad hills of France," which attracted the spirit of our English Rabelais to luxuriate amidst them. Here we gained admittance to the little church, an interesting edifice, noted for its sumptuous monuments to commemorate the Fauconbridge and Belasyse families, and for its being the scene of Sterne's curacy. A small barrel organ now graces its gallery, which responded to the morning and evening service in Yorick's day. On prying about the belfry we discovered an old helmet, with the gilding on it still discernible, which we at first supposed to be intended as a decoration to some tomb; but its weight and size precluded that supposition. In the church of Coxwold, the moralist might amass tomes of knowledge, and acquire the most forcible conviction of the fleeting nature of earth and its possessors. On glancing around he would perceive the heraldic honours of a most noble and ancient family now extinct--the paltry remains of the splendid helmet, which had decked, perhaps, the proud hero of feudal power, thrown into a degrading hole with the sexton's spade, and the sacred rostrum where the eloquence of the second Rabelais has astonished the village auditors, and perhaps led them to doubt that such intellect was mutable, now filled by another! Our curiosity was attracted, on leaving the church, to Shandy Hall, once the residence of Sterne, situated at the termination of the village. Two females, elegantly attired in mourning, were parading the garden; immediately I saw them I thought of the beautiful Eliza; she to whom the fickle Yorick swore eternal attachment, and then "lit up his heart at the shrine of another," leaving Eliza to wonder--

"-----that fresh features
Have such a charm for us poor human creatures."

Perhaps in this edifice, Eugenius, (the witty Duke of Wharton,[7]) and his boon companion, have sported their puns and repartees over the glass; whilst the laughter-moving Sterne, pursuing the dictates of his heart, has wet the dimpling cheek of Eugenius by some random effusion of imagination and sensibility. What two noble spirits have there displayed their intellectual brilliance; and what a gratification to have heard the author of "The Monk at Calais," and "My uncle Toby," eliciting smiles and tears by turns, till the delighted heart could scarcely determine whether joy or sorrow caused the most exquisite feeling.

But to conclude our peregrination--the glory of Hode, Rievaulx, and Byland abbeys has departed--their founders, ecclesiastics and patrons, have become dust--the crumbling arch and tottering pillar alone record "the whereabouts" of the rendezvous of heroes and kings--and rooks construct their dwellings where the silver crucifix once reared its massy form, before crowds of adoring monks--the hoarse croak of the raven is now heard through that valley where pealed the vesper bell; and the melancholy music of the lonely river succeeds the solemn chant of mass;--laugh and jest resound where monkish praise quivered through the Gothic space--the helmet and coronet of blood and birth are fallen from their wearers--and the genius and eccentricity of Sterne, and the wit of Wharton, are for ever extinct:

"And fortress, fane and wealthy peer
Along the tide of time are borne.
And feudal strife, with noble tears
Forgotten in the lapse of years."

[7] Of Skelton Castle, author of "Crazy Tales," and of the "Continuation of Sterne's Sentimental Journey."

H.

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CROMLEH IN ANGLESEA.

[Illustration: Cromleh in Anglesea.]

Cromlehs are among the most interesting of all monumental relics of our ancestors; but the question of their original purposes has excited much controversy among the lovers of antiquarian lore. They are immense stones, by some believed to have been the altars, by others, the tombs, of the Druids; but Mr. Toland explains the word cromleac, or cromleh, from the Irish crom, to adore, and leac, a stone—stone of adoration. Crom was also one of the Irish names of God; hence cromleac may mean the stone of Crom, or of the Supreme God. The cromleac is also called Bothal, from the Irish word Both, a house, and al, or Allah, God; this is evidently the same with Bethel, or house of God, of the Hebrews.

The above vignette represents a Cromleh at Plas Newydd, the seat of the Marquess of Anglesea, in the Isle of Anglesea. This part of the island is finely wooded, and forcibly recalls to the mind its ancient state, when it was the celebrated seat of the Druids, the terrific rites of whose religion were performed in the gloom of the thickest groves.

The Cromleh at Plas Newydd is 12 feet 9 inches long, and 13 feet 2 inches broad, in the broadest part. Its greatest depth or thickness is 5 feet. Its contents cannot be less in cubic feet and decimal parts than 392,878,125. It follows, therefore, from calculating according to the specific gravity of stone of its kind, that it cannot weigh less than 30 tons 7 hundreds. The engraving is copied from "The Celtic Druids," by Godfrey Higgins, Esq. F.S.A. 4to, 1827, one of the most valuable antiquarian volumes it has ever been our good fortune to secure; and by the aid of an esteemed correspondent, we hope shortly to introduce a few of its curiosities more in detail than we are enabled to do at present.

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NOTES OF A READER.

WOMAN AND SONG.

(_ From a graceful little volume, entitled, "Poetical Recreations," by C.A. Hulbert. _)

Oh, who shall say that woman's ear
Thrills to the minstrel's voice in vain?
She hath a balm diffusing tear,
She hath a softer, holier strain—
A cheering smile of hope to give,
A voice to bid the mourner live.

She hath a milder beam of praise,
Her heart a soil where Truth may bloom,
And while her drooping flowers we raise,
They yield us back a rich perfume.
Her influence bids our talents rise
'Neath Love and Fancy's native skies!

I heard an infant's lisping tongue
Address his mother's smiling eye,
And fondly ask his favourite song—
His soul seemed wrapt in harmony;

She sung--and gave the cheering kiss,
Which made the poet's fortune his.

His mother saw his fancies stray
To fragrant poesy, and leave
The dull pursuit of fortune's way,
'Till some would chide and others grieve;
But she had marked the rising flame,
And led and nourish'd it to fame!

When verse his mind to writing bore,
And genius shed its lustre there,
How proudly did she con it o'er,
Unconscious fell the blissful tear:
'Twas her's to lighten care's control,
And raise the drooping, pensive soul.

Her labour past, another breast,
Still lovely woman's, urged his pen--
Pure love was sent to make him blest,
And bid his fancies flow again:
She yielded to his minstrel pride
The heart, the hand to lips denied!

Quick roll'd the years in tranquil peace,
The peace by harmony begun.
And numbers charm'd each day of bliss,
That flowing verse and concord won:
His Mary's music soothed his woe,
And chased the tear that chanced to flow.

Death came--and Poetry was o'er,
The chords of song had ceas'd to thrill,
The Minstrel's name was heard no more,
But one true heart was heaving still--
His Mary's voice would nightly weave
Its lone, deep notes around his grave!

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CLAUDE LORRAINE.

Lanzi, in his History of Italian Painting, gives the following
exquisite encomium on this prince of landscape painters:

"His landscapes present to the spectator an endless variety; so many views of land and water, so many interesting objects, that, like an astonished traveller, the eye is obliged to pause and measure the extent of the prospect, and his distances of mountain and of sea, are so illusive, that the spectator feels, as it were, fatigued by gazing. The edifices and temples which so finely round off his compositions, the lakes peopled with aquatic birds, the foliage diversified in conformity to the different kinds of trees, all is nature in him; every object arrests the attention of an amateur, every thing furnishes instruction to a professor. There is not an effect of light, or a reflection in water which he has not imitated; and the various changes of the day are nowhere better represented than in Claude. In a word, he is truly the painter who, in depicting the three regions of air, earth, and water, has combined the whole universe. His atmosphere almost always bears the impress of the sky at Rome, whose horizon is, from its situation, rosy, dewy, and warm. He did not possess any peculiar merit in his figures, which are insipid, and generally too much attenuated; hence he was accustomed to remark to the purchasers of his pictures, that he sold

them the landscape, and presented them with the figures gratis."

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"TINTORETTO," says his biographer, "produced works in which the most captious of critics could not find a shade of defect."

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KISSING THE FOOT.

Rollo, the celebrated Danish hero, (whose stature is said to have been so gigantic, that no horse could carry him) on becoming a feudatory of the French crown, was required, in conformity with general usage, to kiss the foot of his superior lord; but he refused to stoop to what he considered so great a degradation; yet as the homage could not be dispensed with, he ordered one of his warriors to perform it for him. The latter, as proud as his chief, instead of stooping to the royal foot, raised it so high, that the poor monarch fell to the ground, amid the laughter of the assembly.

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BOHEMIAN BLESSING.

Now sleep in blessedness--till morn
Brings its sweet light;
And hear the awful voice of God
Bid ye--Good Night!
Yet ere the hand of slumber close
The eye of care,
For the poor huntsman's soul's repose
Pour out one prayer.

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REVIEWING.

There are three ways of reviewing a book. First, to take no more notice of it, or of its author, than if neither the one nor the other had ever been produced--cautiously to avoid the most distant allusions to their names, characters, or professions, thereby avoiding all personality, in their case at least, all intrusion, either into public or private life. Secondly, to select all the good passages, and to comment upon them with such power and vivacity, that beside your pearls they seem paste. Thirdly, to select all the best passages, and to string them all together on a very slight thread--like dew-drops on gossamer--and boldly palm it upon the public as an original article.--_Blackwood's Mag_.

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MOTTOES FOR SUN DIALS.

By the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles.

MORNING SUN.--_Tempus volat_.
OH! early passenger, look up--be wise,

And think how, night and day, TIME ONWARD
FLIES.

NOON.--_Dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum_.
Life steals away--this hour, oh man, is lent thee,
Patient to "WORK THE WORK OF HIM WHO SENT
THEE."

SETTING SUN.--_Redibo, tu nunquam_.
Haste, traveller, the sun is sinking now--
He shall return again--but never thou.

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THE PINE-APPLE.

Oviedo extols the pine-apple above all the fruits which grew in the famous gardens of his time, and above all that he had tasted in his travels in Spain, France, England, Germany, the whole of Italy, Sicily, the Tyrol, and the whole of the Low Countries. "No fruit," says he, "have I known or seen in all these parts, nor do I think that in the world there is one better than it, or equal to it, in all those points which I shall now mention, and which are, beauty of appearance, sweetness of smell, taste of excellent savour; so that there being three senses out of the five which can be gratified by fruit, such is its excellence above all other fruits or dainties in the world, that it gratifies those three, and even the fourth also; to wit the touch. As for the fifth, that is to say, the hearing, fruit, indeed, can neither hear nor listen, but in its place the reader may hear and attend to what is said of this fruit, and he will perceive that I do not deceive myself in what I shall say of it. For albeit fruit can as little be said to possess any of the other four senses, in relation to the which I have, as above, spoken, of these I am to be understood in the exercise and person of him who eats, not of the fruit itself, which hath no life, save the vegetative one, and wants both the sensitive and rational, all three of which exist in man. And he, looking at these pines, and smelling to them, and tasting them, and feeling them, will justly, considering these four parts or particularities, attribute to it the principality above all other fruits."

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STONE-MASON'S CRITICISM

Mr. Bowles, the vicar of Bremhill, Wilts, is accustomed occasionally to write epitaphs for the young and aged dead among his own parishioners. An epitaph of his, on an aged father and mother, written in the character of a most exemplary son--the father living to eighty-seven years--ran thus:--

"My father--my poor mother--both are gone,
And o'er your cold remains I place this stone,
In memory of your virtues. May it tell
How _long one_ parent lived, and _both_ how well,"
&c.

When this was shown to the stone-mason critic, (and Mr. Bowles acknowledges he has heard worse public critics in his time,) he observed, that the lines _might_ do with a _little_ alteration--thus:--

"My father, and my mother too, are dead,

And here I _put_ this grave-stone at their head;
My father lived to eighty-seven, my mother
No quite _so long_--and _one_ died after _t'other_."

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PLEASURES OF HISTORY.

The effect of historical reading is analogous, in many respects to that produced by foreign travel. The student, like the tourist, is transported into a new state of society. He sees new fashions. He hears new modes of expression. His mind enlarged by contemplating the wide diversities of laws, of morals, of manners. But men may travel far, and return with minds as contracted as if they had never retired from their own market-towns. In the same manner, men may know the dates of many battles, and the genealogies of many noble houses, and yet be no wiser. Most people look at past times, as princes look at foreign countries. More than one illustrious stranger has landed on our island amidst the shouts of a mob, has dined with the king, has hunted with the master of the stag-hounds, has seen the guards reviewed, and a Knight of the Garter installed; has cantered along Regent-street; has visited St. Paul's, and noted down its dimensions, and has then departed, thinking that he has seen England. He has, in fact, seen a few public buildings, public men, and public ceremonies. But of the vast and complex system of society, of the fine shades of national character, of the practical operation of government and laws, he knows nothing.--_Edin. Rev._

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CHARMS OF SAVAGE LIFE.

It is remarkable that whites or creoles do not always avail themselves of opportunities to return to civilized society. There seem to be pleasures in savage life, which those who have once tasted, seldom wish to exchange for the charms of more polished intercourse. For example, a creole boy was carried off at the age of 13; at 26 he returned to Buenos Ayres, on some speculation of barter. He said that whoever had lived upon horse-flesh would never eat beef, unless driven by necessity or hunger; he described the flesh of a colt to be the most deliciously flavoured of all viands. This man, having transacted the business which led him to Buenos Ayres, returned voluntarily to his native haunts, and is probably living amongst the Indians to this day.--_Mem. Gen. Miller_.

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PATRONS OF ASTRONOMY.

The Emperor of Russia has presented to the Observatory of Dorpat, a magnificent telescope by Franenhofer, with a focal length of 13 feet, and an aperture of 9 inches; the cost was L1,300. The king of Bavaria followed his example by ordering a still finer instrument for the same purpose; and the king of France, with a liberality still more patriotic, has had executed in his own capital, an achromatic telescope, surpassing them all in magnitude and power. What a misfortune it is to English science, that the name of the most accomplished prince who has as yet occupied the throne of Charles I. does not appear in the list of sovereigns, who have been thus rivalling each other in the patronage of astronomy! What a mortification to English feeling, that the subject of sidereal astronomy created by the munificence of George III. should thus

be transferred to the patronage of foreign monarchs. A slight exception must be made in the case of Edinburgh. During the King's visit, the observatory had permission to take the name of the _Royal Observatory of George IV._; and it has received from government £2,000. to purchase instruments.--_Quarterly Rev._

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS

DINNERS.

A Family Dinner! Pot-luck, as it is called, in Scotland--when the man's wife is in the sulks, the wife's man proportionably savage, the children blear-eyed from the recent blubber in the nursery--the governess afraid to lift her eyes from her plate--the aunt sourer than the vinegar cruet--and we--alas! the stranger, stepping in to take pot-luck--we, poor old Christopher North, thanklessly volunteering to help the cock-y-leekie, that otherwise would continue to smoke and steam unstirred in its truly classical utensil! What looking of inutterable things! As impossible to break the silence with your tongue, as to break pond-ice ten inches thick with your knuckle. In comes the cock that made the cock-y-leekie, boiled down in his tough antiquity to a tatter. He disappears among the progeny, and you are now tied to the steak. You find there employment sufficient to justify any silence; and hope during mastication that you have not committed any crime since Christmas, of an enormity too great to be expiated by condemnation to the sulks.

A Literary Dinner! apparently the remains of the Seven Young Men sprinkled along both sides of the table--with here and there "a three-times skimmed sky-blue" interposed; on each side of the Lord of the Mansion, a philosopher--on each hand of the lady, a poet--somewhere or other about the board, a Theatrical Star--a Strange Fiddler--an Outlandish Traveller--and a Spanish Refugee. As Mr. Wordsworth rather naughtily sayeth,

"All silent, and all damn'd!"

Still the roof does not fall, although the chandelier burns dim in sympathy,

"And all the air a solemn stillness holds."

Will not a single soul in all this wide world, as he hopes to be saved, utter so much as one solitary syllable? Oh! what would not the lady and the gentleman of the house give even for a remark on the weather from the mouth of poet, philosopher, sage, or hero! Hermetically sealed! Lo! the author of the very five-guinea quarto, that lay open, in complimentary exposure, at a plate, up stairs on the drawing-room table--with his round unmeaning face "breathing tranquillity"--sound asleep! With eyes fixed on the ceiling, sits at his side the profound Parent of a Treatise on the Sinking Fund. The absent gentleman, who has kept stroking his chin for the last half hour, as if considering how he is off for soap--would you believe it,--has just returned from abroad, and has long been justly celebrated for his conversational talents in all the coteries and courts of Europe. If that lank-and-leather-jawed gentleman, with complexion bespeaking a temperament dry and adust, and who has long been sedulously occupied in feeling the edge of his fruit-knife with the ball of his thumb--do not commit suicide before September,--Lavater must have been as great a goose as Gall. You might not only hear a mouse stirring--a pin dropping--but either event would rouse the whole company like a peal of thunder. You may have seen Madame

Toussaud's images,--Napoleon, Wellington, Scott, Canning, all sitting together, in full fig, with faces and figures in opposite directions, each looking as like himself as possible, so that you could almost believe you heard them speak. You get rather angry--you wonder that they don't speak. Even so with those living images. But the exhibition is over--the ladies leave the room--and after another hour of silence, more profound than that of the grave, all the images simultaneously rise up and--no wonder people believe in ghosts--disappear.

A Return Dinner! Thirty people of all sorts and sizes, jammed--glued together--shoulder to shoulder--knee to knee--all with their elbows in each other's stomachs--most faces as red as fire, in spite of all those floods of perspiration--two landed gentlemen from the Highlands--a professor--four officers, naval and military, in his Majesty's and in the Company's service--some advocates--two persons like ministers--abundance of W.S.'s of course--an accoucheur--old ladies with extraordinary things upon their heads, and grey hair dressed in a mode fashionable before the flood--a few fat mothers of promising families--some eldest daughters now nubile--a female of no particular age, with a beard--two widows, the one buxom and blooming, with man-fond eyes, the other pale and pensive, with long, dark eye-lashes, and lids closed as if to hide a tear--there they all sit steaming through three courses--well does the right hand of the one know what the left hand of the other is doing--there is much suffering, mingled with much enjoyment--for though hot, they are hungry--while all idea of speaking having been, from the commencement of the feast, unanimously abandoned--you might imagine yourself at an anniversary GAUDEAMUS of the Deaf and Dumb.--_Blackwood's Mag._

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THE SCOLD.

IMITATED FROM BERNI.

To dine on devils without drinking,
To want a seat when almost sinking,
To pay to-day--receive to-morrow,
To sit at feasts in silent sorrow,
To sweat in winter--in the boot
To feel the gravel cut one's foot,
Or a cursed flea within the stocking
Chase up and down--are very shocking:
With one hand dirty, one hand clean,
Or with one slipper to be seen:
To be detain'd when most in hurry,
Might put Griselda in a flurry;--
But these, and every other bore,
If to the list you add a score,
Are not so bad, upon my life,
As that one scourge--a scolding wife!

New Monthly Magazine.

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SELECT BIOGRAPHY

LEDYARD THE TRAVELLER.

Concluded from page 113.

Ledyard was one of the marines who were present at Cook's death, of which he gives an account (as appears from extracts of his journal already mentioned,) somewhat different from that in the authentic narrative of the voyage—and different, also, we must add, from his own private journal, which, at least the portion of it relating to that event, is still in the Admiralty. It must be mentioned in favour of Ledyard's sagacity, that the visit to Nootka Sound suggested to him the commercial advantages to be derived from a trade between the north-west coast of America and China; and the views which he took of this subject very much influenced the succeeding events of his life.

Towards the end of December, 1782, we find Ledyard serving on board a king's ship in Long Island Sound, from which he obtained leave of absence to visit his mother; but, either from a sense of duty and honour, which obliged him not to act with the enemies of his country, or from a dislike of the service, he never returned. He had conceived, and now began to endeavour to execute, the grand project of a trading voyage to Nootka; for this purpose he went to New York and Philadelphia, and, after addressing himself to various individuals, he prevailed at last on the Honourable Robert Morris to promise him a ship. The projected voyage, however, was ultimately abandoned.

Finding, nevertheless, that they all failed him, and heartily sick of the want of enterprise among his own countrymen, he resolved to try his fortune in Europe. He visited Cadiz, from thence took a passage to Brest, and from Brest to L'Orient, where he was successful in prevailing on some merchants to fit out a ship for his north-west adventure; but this project also failed, and Ledyard became once more the sport of accident.

He now proceeded to Paris, where he was received with great kindness by Mr. Jefferson, the American minister, who so highly approved of his favourite scheme of an expedition to the north-west coast, that, we are told by his biographer, the journey of Lewis and Clarke, twenty years afterwards, had its origin in the views which Jefferson received from Ledyard. Here, also, he met with the notorious Paul Jones, who was looking after the proceeds of the prizes which he had taken and carried into the ports of France. This adventurer entered warmly into his views, and undertook to fit out two vessels for the expedition. It was settled that Jones was to command the vessels, and carry the furs to the China market, while Ledyard was to remain behind and collect a fresh cargo ready for their return, after which he meant to perambulate the continent of America, and show his countrymen the path to unbounded wealth. Jones, it seems, was so much taken with the plausibility of a scheme, which presented at once the prospect of adventure, fame, and profit, that he advanced money to Ledyard to purchase a part of the cargo for the outfit; but, being suddenly called away to L'Orient, to look after his prize concerns, his zeal for this grand scheme began to cool, and, in a few months, the whole fabric fell to the ground.

Ledyard now felt himself a sort of wandering vagabond, without employment, motive, or means of support; the supplies he had received from Jones had ceased, and he was compelled to become a pensioner on the bounty of the American minister and a few friends. It would appear, however, from some lively letters written by him at Paris, that his flow of spirits did not forsake him.

"The two Fitzhughs," he says, "dine with me to-day in my chamber, together with our worthy consul, Barclay, and that lump of universality, colonel Franks. But such a set of moneyless rascals have never appeared, since the epoch of the happy villain Falstaff. I have but five French crowns in the world; Franks has not a sol; and the Fitzhughs cannot get their tobacco money. Every day of my life," he continues, "is a day of

expectation, and, consequently, a day of disappointment; whether I shall have a morsel of bread to eat at the end of two months, is as much an uncertainty as it was fourteen months ago, and not more so."

While in this state of penury he received a visit, the object of which was so creditable to a gentleman still living, and not unknown in the annals of science, that it gives us pleasure to print the story in Ledyard's own words:--

"Permit me to relate to you an incident. About a fortnight ago, Sir James Hall,[8] an English gentleman, on his way from Paris to Cherbourg, stopped his coach at our door, and came up to my chamber. I was in bed at six o'clock in the morning, but having flung on my *_robe de chambre_*, I met him at the door of the ante-chamber. I was glad to see him, but surprised. He observed, that he had endeavoured to make up his opinion of me, with as much exactness as possible, and concluded that no kind of visit whatever would surprise me. I could do no otherwise than remark, that his *_opinion_* surprised me at least, and the conversation took another turn. In walking across the chamber, he laughingly put his hand on a six livre piece, and a louis d'or that lay on my table, and with a half stifled blush, asked me how I was in the money way. Blushes commonly beget blushes, and I blushed partly because he did, and partly on other accounts. 'If fifteen guineas,' said he, interrupting the answer he had demanded, 'will be of any service to you, there they are,' and he put them on the table. 'I am a traveller myself, and though I have some fortune to support my travels, yet I have been so situated as to want money, which you ought not to do. You have my address in London.' He then wished me a good morning and left me. This gentleman was a total stranger to the situation of my finances, and one that I had, by mere accident, met at an ordinary in Paris."

Ledyard observes, that he had no more idea of receiving money from this gentleman than from Tippoo Saib. "However," he says, "I took it without any hesitation, and told him, I would be as complaisant to him if ever occasion offered."

His schemes for a north-west voyage, either for trade or discovery, being now wholly abandoned, he set about planning, as the only remaining expedient, a journey by land through the northern regions of Europe and Asia, then to cross Behring's Straits to the continent of America, to proceed down the coast to a more southern latitude, and to cross the whole of that continent from the western to the eastern shore. The empress of Russia was applied to for her permission and protection, but while waiting for her answer Ledyard received an invitation to London from his eccentric friend, Sir James Hall. He found, on his arrival there, that an English ship was in complete readiness to sail for the Pacific Ocean, in which Sir James had procured him a free passage, and to be put on shore at any spot he might choose on the north-west coast. The amiable baronet, moreover, presented him with twenty guineas, as Ledyard says, *_pro bono publico_*, and with which he tells us, "he bought two great dogs, an Indian pipe, and a hatchet." In a few days the vessel went down the Thames from Deptford, and Ledyard thought it the happiest moment of his life; but such is the uncertainty of human expectations, while he was indulging in day-dreams of the fame and honour which awaited him, he was once more doomed to suffer the agonies of a disappointment to his hopes, the more severe, as being so near their consummation--the vessel was seized by a custom-house officer, brought back, and exchequered.

This was undoubtedly the most severe blow he had yet received; but Ledyard never desponded--no sooner was one of his castles demolished, than he set about building another. "I shall make the tour of the globe," he says, "from London eastward, on foot." To aid him in this object, a subscription was raised by Sir Joseph Banks, Sir James Hall, and some others. By this means he arrived at Hamburgh; whence he writes

to colonel Smith:--"Here I am with ten guineas exactly, and in perfect health. One of my dogs is no more: I lost him in my passage up the river Elbe, in a snow storm: I was out in it forty hours in an open boat."

At the tavern he went to, he learnt that a Major Langhorn, an American officer, "a very good kind of a man," as his host described him, "and an odd kind of a man, one who had travelled much, and fond of travelling in his own way," had left his baggage behind, which was sent after him to Copenhagen, but that, by some accident, it had never reached him. He had left Hamburg, the host told him, with one spare shirt, and very few other articles of clothing, and added, that he must necessarily be in distress. This man, thought Ledyard to himself, is just suited to be the companion of my travels. The sympathy was irresistible; besides, he might be in want of money; this was an appeal to his generosity, which was equally irresistible to one who, like Ledyard, had ten guineas in his pocket. "I will fly to him and lay my little all at his feet: he is my countryman, a gentleman, and a traveller, and Copenhagen is not much out of my way to Petersburg," and, accordingly, in the month of January, 1787, after a long and tedious journey, in the middle of winter, through Sweden and Finland, we find him in Copenhagen, having discovered Langhorn shut up in his room, without being able to stir abroad for want of money and decent clothing. After remaining a fortnight, he made a proposal to the Major to accompany him to St. Petersburg. "No: I esteem you, but no man on earth shall travel with me the way I do," was the abrupt refusal to the man who had gone out of the way several hundred miles to relieve his wants, and given him his last shilling.

The visit being ended, and the amicable partnership dissolved, it became necessary for our traveller to think of raising the supplies for a journey round the Gulf of Bothnia, which was now rendered impassable, the distance being not less than twelve hundred miles, chiefly over trackless snows, in regions thinly peopled, the nights long, and the cold intense; and, after all, gaining only, in the direct route, about fifty miles. A Mr. Thompson accepted his bill on Colonel Smith, for a sum which, he says, "has saved me from perdition, and will enable me to reach Petersburg." This journey he accomplished within seven weeks; but he writes to Mr. Jefferson, "I cannot tell you by what means I came, and hardly know by what means I shall quit it." Through the influence of Professor Pallas, but more especially by the assistance of a Russian officer, he obtained the passport of the empress, then on her route to the Crimea, in fifteen days. His long and dreary journey having exhausted his money, and worn out his clothes, he drew on Sir Joseph Banks for twenty guineas, which that munificent patron of science and enterprise did not hesitate to pay.

Fortunately, a Scotch physician, of the name of Brown, was proceeding in the service of the empress as far as the province of Kolyvan, who offered him a seat in his kabitka, and thus assisted him on his journey for more than three thousand miles. Having reached Irkutsk, he remained there about ten days, and left it in company with lieutenant Laxman, a Swedish officer, to embark on the Lena, at a point one hundred and fifty miles distant from Irkutsk, with the intention of floating down its current to Yakutsk. On his arrival at this place, he waited on the commandant, told him he wished to press forward, with all expedition, to Okotsk before the winter should shut in, that he might secure an early passage in the spring to the American continent. The commandant assured him that such a journey was already impossible; that the governor-general, from whom he had brought letters, ordered him to show all possible kindness and service, "and the first and best service," said he, "is to beseech you not to attempt to reach Okotsk this winter." Ledyard still persisting to proceed, a trader was brought in, who, in like manner, declared the journey utterly impracticable.

While thus detained for the winter at Yakutsk, he drew up some very just

observations on the Tartars, which were afterwards published.

He had not remained long at Yakutsk, when Captain Billings returned from the Kolyma. This officer had attended the astronomer Bayley, as his assistant, on the last voyage of Cook, and was, of course, well known to Ledyard. Being on his journey to Irkutsk, he invited Ledyard to accompany him thither. They travelled in sledges up the Lena, and reached Irkutsk in seventeen days, being a distance of fifteen hundred miles. Scarcely, however, had he arrived at this place when he was put under arrest, by an order from the empress. He now experienced no more of that concern for his welfare on the part of the commandant, and even Billings kept away from him. All he could learn was, that he was considered as a French spy, which Billings could at once have contradicted. His state of suspense was very short, as, on the same day, he was sent off in a kabitka, with two guards, one on each side.

In this manner was our traveller conveyed to the frontiers of Poland, a distance of six thousand versts, in six weeks. "Thank heaven," says he, as he approached Poland, "petticoats appear, and the glimmerings of other features. Women are the sure harbingers of an alteration in manners, in approaching a country where their influence is felt." He has bestowed, indeed, a beautiful and touching tribute to the excellence of the female character, not more beautiful than just, which cannot be too often recorded in print.

On setting our traveller down in Poland, the soldiers who had guarded him, gave him to understand that he might then go where he pleased; but that, if he again returned to the dominions of the empress, he would certainly be hanged. It did not appear for some time what the real cause was of this proceeding; but there is every reason to believe it arose out of the jealousy of the North-west Russian Fur Company, whose head-quarters were at Irkutsk, and that their influence at Petersburg had procured from the empress the annulment of her previous order, together with the present inhuman mandate. Ledyard, however, knew nothing of this; and, having neither relish nor motive for making the experiment a second time, he took the shortest route to Königsberg, where he found himself destitute, without friends or means, his hopes blasted, and his health enfeebled. In this forlorn condition, he bethought himself once more of the benevolence of Sir Joseph Banks, and had the good luck to raise five guineas, by a draft on his old benefactor, with which he reached London. Here he was kindly received by Sir Joseph Banks, who gave him an introduction to Mr. Beaufoy, the secretary of a newly-formed association for promoting discoveries in Africa.

"Before," says Mr. Beaufoy, "I had learnt from the note the name and business of my visitor, I was struck with the manliness of his person, the breadth of his chest, the openness of his countenance and the inquietude of his eye. I spread the map of Africa before him, and tracing a line from Cairo to Sennaar, and from thence westward in the latitude and supposed direction of the Niger, I told him, that was the route, by which I was anxious that Africa might, if possible, be explored. He said, he should think himself singularly fortunate to be trusted with the adventure. I asked him when he would set out. 'To-morrow morning,' was his answer. I told him I was afraid that we should not be able, in so short a time, to prepare his instructions, and to procure for him the letters that were requisite; but that if the committee should approve of his proposal, all expedition should be used."

In a few weeks all was ready for his departure. The plan was, to proceed up the Nile as far as Sennaar or the Babr-el-Abiad, and from thence to strike across the African continent to the coast of the Atlantic.

His letters from Cairo are full of interest. Of the Nile itself he

speaks contemptuously, says it resembles the Connecticut in size, or may be compared with the Thames.

After some delay, the day is fixed on which the caravan is to leave Cairo. He writes to his friends and to the African Association in great spirits; talks of cutting the continent across, and raises the expectations of his employers to a high pitch;--the very next letters from Cairo brought the melancholy intelligence of his death. It seems he was seized with a bilious complaint, for which he administered a strong solution of vitriolic acid, so powerful as to produce violent and burning pains, that threatened to be fatal unless immediate relief could be procured, which was attempted to be got by a powerful dose of tartar emetic. His death happened about the end of December, 1788, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

Thus perished, in the vigour of manhood, the first victim, in modern times, to African discovery. Too many, alas! have since shared the same fate in pursuit of the same object; which, so far from deterring, seems only to stimulate others, and produce fresh candidates for fame to tread the same perilous path.--_Quarterly Review--Article "Ledyard's Travels."_

[8] Sir James Hall of Douglass, Bart., the father of Captain Basil Hall, R.N., and, till lately, President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

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THE GATHERER.

"A snapper-up of unconsidered trifles."

SHAKSPEARE.

* * * * *

LARGE BONNETS.

(_For the Mirror_)

The immense large bonnets which decorate the ladies of the present day are truly "_over the borders_" and seem to keep pace with the "_march of intellect_" A garden seems to bloom on their exterior, and roses and lilies vie with each other above and below, for underneath the living roses flourish on the cheeks of the fair. Perhaps in a few years small bonnets will usurp the day, for

"Extremes produce extremes, extremes avoid,
Extremes without extremes are not enjoyed."

Some years ago, when straw bonnets were all the rage, the following _pithy_ lines were composed by M. P. Andrewes, Esq.!--

"Some ladies' heads appear like stubble fields;
Who now of threaten'd famine dare complain,
When every female forehead teems with grain?
See how the _wheat-sheaves_ nod amid the plumes!
Our barns are now transferr'd to drawing-rooms,
And husbands who indulge in active lives,
To fill their _granaries_ may _thrash_ their wives_."

P.T.W.

Our facetious correspondent does not notice the _golden oats_; but doubtless he recollects the anecdote of the horse mistaking a lady's hat with a tuft of oats for a moving manger stocked with his natural provender.--ED.

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