

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction Volume 17, Number 490, Saturday, May 21, 1831

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Various

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

VOL. XVII, NO. 490.] SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1831. [PRICE 2d.

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[Illustration: OLD HOUSE IN SOUTHWARK.]

This crazy, but not unpicturesque building, was taken down in the autumn of last year, in forming an approach to the New London Bridge. It stood

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on the eastern side of the High-street, and is worthy of record among the pleasing relics of antiquity, which it has ever been the object of The Mirror to rescue from oblivion. Its style of architecture--that of the seventh Henry--is interesting: there is a florid picturesqueness in the carvings on the fronts of the first and second stories, and probably this ornament extended originally to the uppermost stories, which had subsequently been covered with plaster.

We remember the house for the last twenty years, but cannot trace this or any other alteration in its front. The windows, it will be seen, are of different periods, those on the right-hand second and the left-hand third floor being of the oldest date.

Apart from these attractions, and as a specimen of the olden domestic architecture of the metropolis, the annexed Cut bears an historic interest, in its having been the residence of the ill-starred Anne Boleyn, queen of Henry the Eighth. The interior was in palatial style, having been elaborately finished; and in one of the apartments, we learn that the royal arms were very conspicuous.

In early times, Southwark was one of the most celebrated of the metropolitan suburbs; and it is much to be regretted that the liberality of our times has not encouraged the production of its ancient history. Every one at all familiar with London is aware of the antiquity of St. Saviour's Church, the original foundation of which was from the profits of a ferry over the Thames, whence its original name, St. Mary Overy, or "over the ferry." This was some time before the Conquest; but the church was principally rebuilt in the fourteenth century. We have spoken of its ancient fame elsewhere.[1] Bankside, its name in spiritual and secular story, is likewise of some note. The early Bishops of Winchester had a palace and park here; remains of the former were laid open by a fire about seventeen years since. Then, who does not remember, in the love of sports and pastimes, the bull and bear-baiting theatres, and the uncouth glory of the Globe theatre, associated with the poet of all time--Shakspeare. Southwark was, therefore, a fitting site for a royal palace for occasional retirement, and its contiguity to the Thames must have enhanced its pleasantness.

Miss Benger, in her agreeable Memoirs of Anne Boleyn, does not mention the Queen's abode in Southwark; but the date of the architecture of the annexed house, and its closer identification with Queen Elizabeth, render the first mentioned circumstance by no means improbable. Previous to the marriage of Anne Boleyn, we learn that Henry passed not a few of his leisure hours "in the delightful society of Anne Boleyn." "Every day they met and spent many hours in riding or walking together." Her family at this time resided at Durham House, on the site of the Adelphi, and Anne frequently made excursions with Henry in the vicinity of London.

Of the antiquity of this district we could quote more proofs. The galleried inn-yards, and among them that at which the Pilgrims sojourned on their road to Canterbury, are among them. In our last volume too, at page 160, we engraved an ancient Vault in Tooley-street, the remains of the "great house, builded of stone, with arched gates, which pertained to the Prior of Lewis, in Sussex, and was his lodging when he came to London." Not far from this was "another great House of Stone and Timber," which, in the thirteenth century, was held of John, "Earl Warren, by the Abbot of St. Augustins, at Canterbury." Stowe says--"It was an ancient piece of worke, and seemeth to be one of the

first builded houses on that side of the river, over against the city: it was called the Abbot's Inne of St. Augustine in Southwark."

There was also another "Inne" near this spot, which belonged to the Abbey of Battle, in Sussex, and formed the town residence of its Abbots. This stood on the banks of the Thames, between the Bridge House and Battle Bridge, which was so called, "for that it standeth on the ground, and over a water-course (flowing out of Thames) pertayning to that Abbey, and was therefore both builded and repayed by the Abbots of that house, as being hard adjoyning to the Abbot's lodging." Its situation is known by the landing-place called Battle Stairs. On the opposite side of Tooley-street is a low neighbourhood of meanly-built streets and passages, still denominated the Maze, from the intricacies of a labyrinth in the gardens of the Abbot of Battle's Inn, and which fronted its entrance-gate.

With these few quotations of the ancient importance of Southwark, we can but repeat our regret that no regular history of this district has yet been published. There are three or four gentlemen resident there, whose antiquarian attainments highly qualify them for the task. The public would surely find them patronage.

The Engraving is from an original sketch by an ingenious Correspondent, M.P. of Upton, near Windsor, whom we thank for this specimen of good taste. We are always happy to receive antiquarian illustrations of our Metropolis, and in this instance the zeal of the artist, who resides twenty miles distant, deserves special mention.

[1] See *Mirror*, vol. xiii. p. 227. Gower is buried here, Fletcher and Messenger too; and not long since the bones of Bishop Andrews chapels for the New London Bridge approach.--See also *Mirror*, vol. xvi. p. 297.

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PARLIAMENT.

(*For the Mirror.*)

The following particulars, which have been gleaned from several sources, relating to the British Parliament, may be acceptable at the present time, when the English people are in hopes of a renovation of that Constitution which has been, and will still continue to be, the admiration of the civilized world:--The word Parliament was first used in 1265; and the Commons were admitted at this time, though not regularly represented. The parliament called at Shrewsbury, in 1283, by Edward I., was the first to which cities and towns were summoned to send representatives. It was also the first that granted aids towards the national defence of the three denominations of knights, citizens, and burgesses, as well as by the lords spiritual and temporal. In this parliament the representatives sat in a separate chamber from the barons and knights. The Commons consisted of two knights for each county, two representatives for the city of London, and two for each of the following twenty towns only:--

Winchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, York, Bristol, Exeter, Lincoln,

Canterbury, Carlisle, Norwich, Northampton, Nottingham, Scarborough, Grimsby, Lynn, Colchester, Yarmouth, Hereford, Chester, Shrewsbury, Worcester.

From this it appears that there were not representatives of any towns in the counties of

Westmoreland, Lancaster, Derby, Durham, Stafford, Warwick, Leicester, Rutland, Suffolk, Hertford, Bedford, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Buckingham, Berks, Oxford, Wilts, Somerset, Gloucester, Dorset, Sussex, Surrey.

In after times, burghs that were summoned frequently prayed the Crown to be excused from sending representatives, on the account of their being compelled to pay 3s. 4d. a day to each member for his maintenance, while attending in his place; yet the allowance was made on a plan so strictly economical, that the knights of Berkshire were only allowed for six days, those for Bedfordshire for only five days, and those for Cornwall for only eleven days, when called to a parliament at York. Sheriffs, in their writs for elections to parliament, sometimes omitted one or more burghs in a county, and at other times sent writs to the same burghs--and this, for aught known to the contrary, without instruction from the king or his council. Where burghs were poor, there were many such omissions, by favour of the sheriff, for a space of nearly three hundred years. Upon petition of the town of Torrington to Edward III., in 1366, he directed a letter to the bailiff and good men of the town, excusing them "from the burden of sending two representatives to parliament, as they had never been obliged so to do till the 24th of his reign, when," says the king, "the sheriffs of Devonshire maliciously summoned them to send two members to parliament."

Writs for the election of members to serve in the House of Commons are issued under different authorities upon a general election, and upon vacancies of particular seats during the continuance of a parliament. In the former case, the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, pursuant to the order in council, causes the writs of elections to be issued for all places in England and Scotland to which such writs are usually sent. By the Articles and Act of Union with Ireland, the Lord Chancellor then, pursuant to the said orders, &c., causes writs to be issued and directed by the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to the several counties, and such counties of cities and towns as send members to the united parliament.

It is generally supposed that the circumstance of bishops, or other ecclesiastics having seats in the legislature, is peculiar to England. This is a mistake;--it was characteristic of the Scottish constitution for centuries previous to their connexion with England: so far back, indeed, if not much farther, as the twelfth century. It is stated, in ancient documents connected with the history of the county of Elgin, the authenticity of which cannot be doubted, that the Abbey of Kinloss was founded by David I., in January, 1150, and that the abbot was mitred, and had a seat in parliament.

To the passing of a bill, the assent of the knights, citizens, and burgesses must be in person; but the lords may give their votes by proxy; and the reason is, that the barons always sat in parliament in their own right, as part of the *_pares curtis_* of the king; and therefore, as they were allowed to serve by proxy in the wars, so had they leave to make proxies in parliament; but the commons coming only

as representing the barones minores, and the soccage tenants in the country, and as representing the men of the cities, &c., they could not constitute proxies as representatives of others.

When it is the pleasure of the Crown to dissolve a parliament, it is the constant practice immediately to summon another, and to make the dissolution of the old and the calling of the new simultaneous acts. By the Act of 7 and 8 of William III., c. xxv. s. I, forty days should intervene between the teste and return of the writs for a new parliament; but a longer time is necessary, and fifty days now intervene.

Parliaments became triennial from the reigns of Edward III., but not until 1694 had any act passed to make such duration legal. In 1716 this was repealed, and the present act passed, making them septennial.

W.G.C.

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SIMPLE AMBITION.

(_To the Editor._)

The following anecdote was told me last summer, in the cabriolet of a diligence between Pau and Bayonne, and is very much at your service. EGOMET IPSE.

About twenty-three years ago, the vane of Strasbourg Cathedral was struck by lightning, so that it hung on one side, threatening by its fall to endanger the lives of the people below. The alarm was so great, that the authorities, after a special consultation, posted bills about the streets, offering any reward that should be required to any one that would venture to ascend and strike off the vane. While the good citizens were reading this announcement, a peasant from the department of the Landes passed by, and being unable to read, he inquired the purport of the advertisement. When informed, he immediately offered his services for that purpose, and was conducted to the mayor and the bishop, who happened to be both in the Hotel de Ville at the time. They questioned him, and fully acquainted him with the difficulties of the enterprise--such as the real height, and that the upper part of the spire could only be ascended by ladders on the outside. However, nothing daunted, he persisted in his resolution to perform the feat on the morrow. All Strasbourg was assembled in the open places of the city on the next day; and, although admiring his courage as they saw him ascend, they most prudently refrained from cheering him as he deserved. Few who were then shading their eyes from the sun, in order to gaze on the spire, but must have envied him the scene of surpassing loveliness that was spread below him, although it is probable that neither the green landscape fading into blue distance, the relics of ancient castles, nor the beautiful Rhine glittering in sunshine, detained his regards. He who at home, in his own barren and level sands, had been used to no greater elevations than his stilts, was now mounting like an eagle towards heaven, and admired by thousands. When he reached the summit, he deliberately seated himself on the highest stone, with one leg on each side of the vane; and while his clothes were visibly fluttered

in a strong breeze at such an eminence, he, with a hammer and chisel, displaced the cross that had caused such alarm, It flew spinning to the earth, and, borne away by the wind, fell in a neighbouring field, where it sank twenty inches into the soil. The air was now rent with acclamations towards him,

Cui robur et aes triplex
Circa pectus erat--

(for, be it remarked, he was the only person who had even proposed to effect its removal). On his descent, he was carried in triumph to the Hotel de Ville. Being thanked by the authorities then and there assembled, and assured of their intense anxiety for his life ever since he had quitted the earth, he was asked what was the recompense he demanded? He modestly replied, "that if they were pleased with what he had performed, he hoped they would not think him presumptuous, but he should so much like to walk through the Arsenal, and see all its wonderful stores and docks!"--and they could not prevail upon him to ask more.

A week afterwards he left Strasbourg, with twenty-five Napoleons in his pocket; and declared that he had never before spent his time so agreeably as he did in that city, for he had seen the Imperial Arsenal, the fortifications, and many other fine, as well as useful, sights, and had been continually feasted gratis by the rich and the great folks.

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RANSOMS.

(_Concluded from page_ 149.)

The queen of Edward III., after the battle of Durham, demanded of John Copland, David of Scotland; on his remonstrance that no one but the king had a right to his prisoner, Edward sent for him to Calais, and bestowed on him in return for his captive, L500, in land. The Scottish monarch paid, after an imprisonment of eleven years, 100,000 marks, and was dismissed. Charles de Blois, at the same period paid 700,000 crowns, and left his two sons as hostages. Michael de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, paid L20,000. sterling, when only a simple knight. Duc d'Alencon gave for his freedom 200,000 crowns, and actually sold part of his estate to the Duc de Bretagne to pay it. Caprice often caused the detention of men in captivity, from their inability to comply with the absurd demands of their captors. Louis XI. refused to part with Wolfgang Poulain, a Burgundian officer, unless he would purchase his redemption with some favourite hounds belonging to the Seigneur de Bossu. As Bossu did not feel sufficiently interested in his friend's welfare to comply with the king's wishes, and part with his dogs, some time elapsed before any treaty could be entered into, to restore Poulain to his country.

This practice, though it undoubtedly contributed to soften the horrors of war, often caused hostilities to be undertaken on the most absurd and frivolous pretences. The English are represented by Comines as rejoicing in a war with France, from a recollection of the prices they obtained from the lords and princes they captured. Another bad effect may be traced to it, in the violations of safe conduct, the seizure of individuals during times of peace, which the middle ages so constantly

exhibit. Oliver de Clisson, the Constable of France, on entering into a castle to examine its strength, at the request of the Duc de Bretagne, in 1387, was seized, and at first commanded to be thrown into the sea. The savage Breton afterwards being troubled in conscience, expressed his joy that his order had not been complied with, and released Clisson on the payment of 100,000 livres.

During the wars of Edward III. and Philip, many a soldier of fortune amassed considerable opulence by the ransoming of his prisoners. Croquart, a famous leader of these companies, is related to have become extremely rich by the money he received from the ransoms of castles and towns. In the fourteenth century several Knights of Suabia having associated themselves together for chivalrous engagements, endeavoured to seize a rich Count of Wirtenburg, as a _means of procuring a noble sum of money for the ransom of himself and his family_. For this purpose they attacked him in his castle at Wildbad, but were repulsed. At Poitiers, the King of France was nearly torn to pieces by the soldiers in disputing for their prize. At the Bridge of Luissac, Carlonnet, the French commander, fell into the hands of the enemy, who were about to end the quarrel respecting his possession by putting him to death, when the timely arrival of an English knight rescued him from their power. At Agincourt, eighteen French gentlemen entered into an agreement to direct all their attacks against King Henry, most probably with a view of acquiring a fortune by his capture; hence the contest was the hottest about his person. After the battle of Nanci, and the death of the Duke of Burgundy, by the sword of Charles de Beaumont, the latter is said to have died of regret, when he became aware whom it was he had slain, and the loss he had sustained of a ducal ransom.

Before quitting this subject, it may be observed that the value of a prisoner's liberty was a regularly transferable property. Coeur de Lion was sold to the emperor Henry; Philip Augustus bargained for him; and his ransom reduced England, from sea to sea, to the utmost distress. Louis XI. bought the bastard of Burgundy from Rene, Duc de Lorraine, for 10,000 crowns, and also William of Chalons, Prince of Orange, for 20,000, from Sieur de Groste. Joan of Arc was sold to the English for 10,000 livres, and a pension of 300. In the case of the Earl of Pembroke, who became the property of Du Guesclin, as part of the purchase-money for some estates in Spain, he had sold to Henry, King of Castile, the constable lost his expected 120,000 livres by the death of his prisoner; as this nobleman was in a bad state of health, his bankers at Bruges wisely declined paying the money until he became _sound and in good condition_. (_Quand il serait sain, et en bon point._) The earl dying before he left France, Du Guesclin lost both his estates and money. One of the family of the Blois was presented to his favourite, the Duke of Ireland, by Richard II., who disposed of his master's bounty to Oliver de Clisson for 120,000 livres. Zizim, the brother of Bajazet, Emperor of the Turks, after being defeated by his brother in an attempt to seize the throne, fled to the Knights of Rhodes for succour. They, fearing the vengeance of the Sultan, transferred him to Louis XI. who fulfilled his trust faithfully, and kept him for the knights, though offered all the relics that the east abounded with, and even the kingdom of Jerusalem, by Bajazet, for his prisoner. After being given into the custody of the Pope by Louis, and a six years' residence at Rome, he was sent back to France, as the king had found out that he might be of service in his engagements with Constantinople; he was, however, not restored to his brother in the condition which the Flemings had stipulated the Earl of Pembroke to be restored; for before his redelivery to the French, he is supposed to have been poisoned.

H.

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THE EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT.

(To the Editor.)

This stands upon a rock, which was found in a morass near Lachta, in Karelin, at a distance of eleven versts, or about 41,250 English feet. The dimensions of this stone were found to be 21 feet by 42 in length, and 34 in breadth; its weight is calculated at 3,200,000 lbs. or 1,600 tons. The mechanism for its conveyance was invented by Count Carbury, who went by the name of Chevalier Lascuri. A solid road was first made from the stone to the shore; then brass slips were inserted under the stone to go upon cannon balls of five inches diameter, in metal grooves, by windlasses worked by 400 men every day, 200 fathoms towards the place of destination. The water transport was performed by what are called camels in the dockyards of Petersburg and Amsterdam.

E.A.B

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SONNET TO HOPE.

(For The Mirror.)

As some lone pilgrim through Night's dreary scene,
With cautious steps scarce venturing on his way,
Views the chaste orb of Evening's soft-eyed Queen
Gild the blue east, and scare those mists away
Which from his sight each faithful light obscur'd,
And led him wildering, sinking pale with fear!
Not he more bless'd by Cynthia's light allur'd,
Onward his course with happier thoughts doth steer,
Than I, O Hope! blest cheerer of the soul!
Who, long in Sorrow's darkening clouds involv'd,
When black despair usurp'd mild Joy's control,
Saw thee, bright angel, fram'd of heavenly mould,
Dip thy gay pallet in the rainbow's hue,
And call each scene of Peace and Mirth to view.

—The Author of "A Tradesman's Lays."—

* * * * *

The income of a Russian metropolitan does not exceed 800l. a-year; that of an archbishop, 600l.; and of a bishop, 500l.; sums apparently as small as persons of their rank can possibly subsist on, even in Russia. They are, however, allowed a considerable sum annually for purposes of charity.

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THE SKETCH-BOOK.

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A SCENE FROM LIFE.

(_For the Mirror._)

Truth is strange--stranger than fiction.

LORD BYRON.

"And so the Fernlands is to be sold at last," I said, casually meeting Mr. Nibble, our under-sheriff--"Poor N----, I am grieved for him, he has struggled hard against oppression."

"It is quite true, sir," replied the man of the law, "a horning came down last night, but it will answer no end--for Messrs. Sharke and Scrapepen, have advertised the whole of the property for public roup on Tuesday next."

The Fernlands estate had been the family property of the N----s since the conquest for aught I know. The present representative, after having sent his sons out into the world, as all Scotchmen do, to fight their way, (one of whom by the by was accumulating a snug fortune in India) got involved in some commercial speculation, for which he was wholly unfitted, being anything but a business man. He was a worthy unsuspecting fellow, but at last saw his way clearer, and as he thought got out, though a very heavy loser. In consequence of this scrape he wrote to his son in India, to say, that unless he could remit him a large sum, which he named, it would be impossible to keep his ground at Fernlands.

Very soon afterwards his late partner, who was a good sort of fellow too, failed, and N---- was paralyzed on receiving a letter from the attorney to the assignees to say, that not having regularly gazetted his retirement from the concern, he had rendered himself legally liable to the creditors of the late firm of ---- and Co., and unless N---- paid the balance which remained due after the assets of the bankrupt's estate had been ascertained, that immediate steps would be resorted to, to compel him. The matter soon got abroad, and all N----'s other creditors also pressed forward to crush him--well, to make a disagreeable story short, the end is as I have previously related. Poor N---- is to be ruined to pay another man's debts, after a vast deal to do with law and lawyers, and much heat on both sides.

I had taken great interest in the matter from the first, and it was with deep feelings of sorrow that I saw this excellent family likely to be driven from the home of their forefathers, by the merciless and often unjust hand of the law. N---- was, I believe, generally liked, and no person in need, in the district where he resided, looked up to the Laird for advice or assistance in vain. You may judge therefore of the public sensation. While these matters were pending, N---- looked

with the deepest anxiety for the arrival of a letter from his son in India; and every day did he send his servant express to the little post-office at ----, but in vain.

At last the fatal day of sale arrived. N----, in the depth of his distress had early sent for me to consult whether even at the eleventh hour something could not be done to avert the calamity. A sinking man catches at a straw. It wanted less than three hours of the time of sale when I entered the grounds of Fernlands. The gate was half off its hinges, the posts plastered with advertisements of the sale; and people, as always happens in such cases, were already pouring towards the house more from a motive of curiosity than from an intention of purchasing anything. As I advanced towards the scene of action, I could observe that the shrubberies were injured, and the rare plants and flowers

which both N---- and his wife had valued so much--for they were fond of the study of nature--exhibited evident tokens of the mischief of the careless multitude thronging to the show. The day was clear and beautiful, the breeze played through the leafy wilderness with a joyous effect; the contrast between the peace and harmony of nature, and the discord and tumult of man and his deeds, was affecting. But such thoughts were soon chased away from my mind, as I advanced over a portion of the lawn towards the stables, I saw N----'s favourite mare, and the old pony, Jack, (whom I recollected as the companion of N----'s boys, and as tractable as a dog,) in the hands of a rascally sheriff's officer, who was showing them to a horse-dealer from a neighbouring town. The lawn in the front of the house was covered with straggling groups of people, either discussing the event of the day, or examining some of the furniture which was strewed there.

"Eh, sirs!" said an old man, brushing a tear from his eye, "I never thought to ha' seen the like o' this day's wark--and my forbears have had a bit o' farm under the laird's a hundred an' sixteen year, and better nor kinder folk to the puir man never lived."

Mr. Nibble, who was Messrs. Sharke's agent, was bustling about, and I found him engaged with a fat, pompous little fellow, the auctioneer, from a neighbouring town.

"Sad business this, Mr. ----," said he, "Fernlands is in a sad taking about it, I believe, but things of this kind will occur, you know; and I always say what can't be cured must be endured, eh."

I turned with an ill-concealed expression of disgust from this man, and entered the house in search of my friend, for N---- would not quit the old place to the last. There is something melancholy in viewing a sale at any time--the disarrangement of the furniture--the cheerless and chilling aspect of the rooms--the dirt, the bustle, and the heartless indifference one witnesses to the misfortunes of others--all come home forcibly to the feelings. After stumbling and striking my shins amongst piles of chairs, and furniture, and carpets, disposed in lots over the now comfortless apartments, I at last reached the study door where I had spent many a happy hour with N----. I entered; the room was stripped of part of its furniture, the books lying dispersed in heaps over the floor or on the massive table, at the side of which N---- was seated on the only chair left in the apartment. He was at first unconscious of my entrance.

"My dear sir, this is kind indeed," he said as I advanced, struggling

with his feelings, "but take a chair," and he glanced round the room with a bitter smile, as he observed there was none, "my friends are kind you see, they think chairs are useless things...."

The loss of his land affected him more than I can describe. He had been brought up upon it, and it had become as it were part and parcel of himself; it was not an ordinary loss. The noise and bustle in the house and sundry interruptions from inquisitive eyes, warned us, as N---- said, that "we must jog." As we were rising, I accidentally inquired whether he had received his letters that morning. "Good God!" he exclaimed, "I totally forgot, and poor Andrew I fancy is too much occupied in bemoaning the fate of the horses, to have thought of it; but we can get them when I return with you this afternoon."

"Delays are dangerous," I replied, "we will not throw a chance away."

We hastened to the stable, and I despatched the servant on my own horse, with the utmost expedition to the post-office at ----.

N---- sauntered through a private path in the shrubbery towards the entrance of the grounds, and I made my way through the careless throng, who had no thought what their own fate might be perhaps to-morrow--to Mr. Nibble, and urged him to delay the sale for an hour, but he said it was impossible, he would not hurry it for half an hour or so, but that they were already pressed for time. The landed property was first to be brought to the hammer. I mechanically followed the steps of N----, and when I overtook him, we saw through a break in the wood, from the increased density of the mob and the elevation of the auctioneer, that the sale was commencing.

We gave up all for lost. At this moment I fancied I heard the noise of a horse urged to full gallop. The blood rushed to our hearts; we sprung through the trees towards the road; in another moment Andrew was in sight, urging his horse to his utmost speed. The instant he saw us he waved his hat, "A packet from abroad, sir," he sung out as he approached, "from our young master, I'm sure."

"God be praised, you are saved," was all I could utter; poor N---- was faint with sudden joy and hope. We tore open the envelope, which contained bills from his son in India to a large amount. I saw N---- was unable to think, and without more ado, I squeezed his hand, seized the letter, and put spurs to my horse. The bidding had commenced when I reached the wondering crowd, who rapidly fell back as they saw me approach. But why should I tire you any longer; in a couple of hours Fernlands remained unpolled by one of the mob, or legal harpies who had invaded it. You may guess the rest....

A friend related the preceding incident to me; the reader may suppose him to be addressing myself. The leading circumstances are strictly true, the names and some trifling matters alone being altered. The story is invested with interest from its great similarity to a portion of the plot of the "Antiquary;" I have the strongest reason to believe, from the intimate acquaintance the great novelist possessed with the country, that he drew Sir Arthur Wardour's similar escape from ruin, from a recollection of the event briefly related above.

VYVYAN.

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SELECT BIOGRAPHY.

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PAGANINI, THE VIOLINIST.

By aid of the *_Foreign Quarterly Review_*, we are enabled to submit to our readers the following very interesting Memoirs of this eccentric genius.

By the way, we are happy to find that the above work is enabled to maintain the high character with which it started. It argues well for the literary taste of this country, by cherishing acquaintance with continental literature, and thus strengthening our resources at home.

Nicolo Paganini was born at Genoa, in February, 1784. We are not informed as to his father's profession, if indeed he had any: all that we are told is, that his chief pursuit was to improve his circumstances, which were not the best in the world, by speculating in the lottery, so that when his little son, Nicolo, began at an unusually early age to give strong indications of musical talent, it seemed to him as if the wheel of fortune had at last been propitious, and he accordingly lost no time in setting to work to make the most of his prize. Having some skill on the violin himself, he resolved to teach him that instrument; and as soon as he could hold it, put one into his hands, and made him sit beside him from morning to night, and practise it. The incessant drudgery which he compelled him to undergo, and the occasional starvation to which he subjected him, seriously impaired his health, and, as Paganini himself asserts, laid the foundation of that valetudinarian state which has ever since been his portion, and which his pale, sickly countenance, and his sunk and exhausted frame so strongly attest. As his enthusiasm was such as to require no artificial stimulus, this severe system could only have been a piece of cool and wanton barbarity. He already began to show much promise of excellence, when a circumstance occurred which not only served to confirm these early prognostications, but to rouse him to exert all his energies. This was no other than a dream of his mother, Theresa. An angel appeared to her; she besought him to make her Nicolo a great violin player; he gave her a token of consent;--and the effect which this dream had upon all concerned, we sober-minded people can have no idea of. Young Paganini redoubled his perseverance. In his eighth year, under the superintendence of his father, he had written a sonata, which, however, along with many other juvenile productions, he lately destroyed; and as he played about three times a week in the churches and at private musical parties, upon a fiddle nearly as large as himself, he soon began to make himself known among his townsmen. At this time he received much benefit from one Francesco Gnecco, who died in 1811, and whom he always speaks highly of.

In his ninth year, being applied to by a travelling singer to join him in a concert, he made his first public appearance in the great theatre at Genoa, and played the French air "La Carmagnole," with his own variations, with great applause.

His father now resolved to place him under the tuition of the well-known composer, Rolla, and for that purpose took him along with him to Parma. The particulars of their interview afford a striking proof of the proficiency which he had by this time acquired. As Rolla happened to be ill and lying in bed, the party were shown into the ante-chamber, when, observing upon the table one of the composer's newest concertos, the father beckoned to his son to take up his violin and play it, which he did at sight, in such a way that the sick man immediately started up, demanded who it was, and could scarcely be prevailed upon to believe that the sounds had proceeded from a little boy, and his intended pupil; but as soon as he had satisfied himself that that was really the case, he declined to receive him. "For God's sake," said he, "go to Paer, your time would be lost with me, I can do nothing for you."

To Paer accordingly they went, who received him kindly, and referred him to his own teacher, the old and experienced "Maestro di Capella" Giretti, from Naples, who gave him instructions for six months, three times a-week in counterpoint. During this period he wrote twenty-four Fugues for four hands, with pen, ink, and paper alone, and without any instrument, which his master did not allow him, and, assisted by his own inclination, made rapid progress. The great Paer also took much interest in him, giving him compositions to work out, which he himself revised: an interest for which Paganini ever afterwards showed himself deeply grateful.

The time was now come when Nicolo was destined, like other youthful prodigies, to be hawked about the country, to fill the pockets of his mercenary father, who managed to speculate upon him with considerable success in Milan, Bologna, Florence, Pisa, Leghorn, and most of the upper and central towns of Italy, where his concerts were always well attended. Young Paganini liked these excursions well enough, but being now about fifteen years of age, he began to be of opinion that they would be still more agreeable if he could only contrive to get rid of the old gentleman, whose spare diet and severe discipline had now become more irksome to him than ever. To accomplish this desirable object, an opportunity soon offered. It was the custom of Lucca, at the feast of St. Martin, to hold a great musical festival, to which strangers were invited from all quarters, and numerous travellers resorted of their own accord; and as the occasion drew near, Nicolo begged hard to be allowed to go there in company with his elder brother, and after much entreaty, succeeded in obtaining permission. He made his appearance as a solo player, and succeeded so well, that he resolved now to commence vagabondizing on his own account--a sort of life to which he soon became so partial, that, notwithstanding many handsome offers which he occasionally received to establish himself in several places, as a concerto player or director of the orchestra, he never could be persuaded to settle any where. At a later period, however, he lived for some time at the court of Lucca, but soon found it more pleasant and profitable to resume his itinerant habits. He visited all parts of Italy, but usually made Genoa his head-quarters, where, however, he preferred to play the part of the dilettante to that of the virtuoso, and performed in private circles without giving public concerts.

It was not long before he had amassed about 20,000 francs, part of which he proposed to devote to the maintenance of his parents. His father, however, was not to be put off with a few thousands, but insisted upon the whole.--Paganini then offered him the interest of the capital, but Signor Antonio very coolly threatened him with instant death unless he

agreed to consign the whole of the principal in his behalf; and in order to avert serious consequences, and to procure peace, he gave up the greater part of it.

It was early in 1828 when Paganini arrived at Vienna, where he gave a great many concerts with a success equal, if not superior, to any which had hitherto attended his exertions. His performance excited the admiration and astonishment of all the most distinguished professors and connoisseurs of this critical city. With any of the former all idea of competition was hopeless; and their greatest violinist, Mayseder, as soon as he had heard him, with an ingenuousness which did him honour, as we ourselves have reason to know, wrote to a friend in London, that he might now lock up his violin whenever he liked.

In estimating the labour which it must have cost a performer like Paganini to have arrived at such transcendent excellence, people are often apt to err in their calculations as to the actual extent of time and practice which has been devoted to its acquisition. That the perfect knowledge of the mechanique of the instrument which his performance exhibits, and his almost incredible skill and dexterity in its management must necessarily have been the result of severe discipline, is beyond all question; but more, much more, in every case of this kind, is to be ascribed to the system upon which that discipline has proceeded, and to the genius and enthusiasm of the artist. The miraculous powers of Paganini in the opinion of his auditors were not to be accounted for in the ordinary way. To them, it was plain that they must have sprung from a life of a much more settled and secluded cast than that of an itinerant Italian musical professor. It was equally clear, from his wild, haggard, and mysterious looks, that he was no ordinary personage, and had seen no common vicissitudes. The vaults of a dungeon accordingly were the local habitation which public rumour, in its love of the marvellous, seemed unanimously to assign to him, as the only place where "the mighty magic" of his bow could possibly have been acquired. Then, as to the delinquency which led to his incarceration, there were various accounts: some imputed it to his having been a captain of banditti; others, only a carbonaro; some to his having killed a man in a duel; but the more current and generally received story was, that he had stabbed or poisoned his wife, or, as some said, his mistress; although, as fame had ascribed to him no fewer than four mistresses, it was never very clearly made out which of his seraglio it was who had fallen the victim of his vengeance. The story not improbably might have arisen from his having been confounded with a contemporary violin-player of the name of Duranowski, a Pole, to whom in person he bore some resemblance, and who, for some offence or other having been imprisoned at Milan, during the leisure which his captivity afforded, had contrived greatly to improve himself in his art; and when once it was embodied into shape, the fiction naturally enough might have obtained the more credence, from the fact that two of his most distinguished predecessors, Tartini and Lolly, had attained to the great mastery which they possessed over their instrument during a period of solitude--the one within the walls of a cloister, the other in the privacy and retirement of a remote country village. At all events, the rumours were universally circulated and believed, and the innocent and much injured Paganini had for many years unconsciously stood forth in the eyes of the world as a violator of the laws, and even a convicted murderer--not improbably, to a certain extent, reaping the golden fruits of that "bad eminence;" for public performers, as we too often see, who have once lost their "good name," so far from finding themselves, in the words of Iago, "poor indeed," generally discover that they have only

become objects of greater interest and attraction. How long he had lived in the enjoyment of this supposed infamy, and all the benefits accruing from it, we really cannot pretend to say; but he seems never to have been made fully aware of the formidable position in which he stood until he had reached Vienna, when the Theatrical Gazette, in reviewing his first concert, dropped some pretty broad hints as to the rumoured misdeeds of his early life. Whereupon he resolved at once publicly to proclaim his innocence, and to put down the calumny; for which purpose, on the 10th of April, 1828, there was inserted in the leading Vienna journals a manifesto, in Italian as well as German, subscribed by him, declaring that all these widely-circulated rumours were false; that at no time, and under no government whatever, had he ever offended against the laws, or been put under coercion; and that he had always demeaned himself as became a peaceable and inoffensive member of society; for the truth of which he referred to the magistracies of the different states under whose protection he had till then lived in the public exercise of his profession.

The truth of this appeal (which it is obvious no delinquent would have dared to make) was never called in question, no one ever ventured to take up the gauntlet which Paganini had thrown down, and his character as a man thenceforward stood free from suspicion.

His whimsicalities, his love of fun, and many other points of his character, are sometimes curiously exemplified in his fantasias. He imitates in perfection the whistling and chirruping of birds, the tinkling and tolling of bells, and almost every variety of tone which admits of being produced; and in his performance of *Le Streghe* (The Witches) a favourite interlude of his, where the tremulous voices of the old women are given with a truly singular and laughable effect, his *vis comica* finds peculiar scope.

His command of the back-string of the instrument has always been an especial theme of wonder and admiration, and, in the opinion of some, could only be accounted for by resorting to the theory of the dungeon, and the supposition that his other strings being worn out, and not having it in his power to supply their places, he had been forced from necessity to take refuge in the string in question; a notion very like that of a person who would assert, that for an opera dancer to learn to stand on one leg, the true way would be--to have only one leg to stand upon. We shall give Paganini's explanation of this mystery in his own words:

"At Lucca, I had always to direct the opera when the reigning family visited the theatre; I played three times a week at the court, and every fortnight superintended the arrangement of a grand concert for the court parties, which, however, the reigning princess, Elisa Bacciochi Princess of Lucca and Piombino, Napoleon's favourite sister, was not always present at, or did not hear to the close, as the harmonic tones of my violin were apt to grate her nerves, but there never failed to be present another much esteemed lady, who, while I had long admired her, bore (at least so I imagined) a reciprocal feeling towards me. Our passion gradually increased; and as it was necessary to keep it concealed, the footing on which we stood with each other became in consequence the more interesting. One day I promised to surprise her with a musical *jeu d'esprit*, which should have a reference to our mutual attachment. I accordingly announced for performance a comic novelty, to which I gave the name of 'Love Scene.' All were curiously impatient to know what this should turn out to be, when at last I

appeared with my violin, from which I had taken off the two middle strings, leaving only the E and the G string. By the first of these I proposed to represent the lady, by the other the gentleman; and I proceeded to play a sort of dialogue, in which I attempted to delineate the capricious quarrels and reconciliations of lovers--at one time scolding each other, at another sighing and making tender advances, renewing their professions of love and esteem, and finally winding up the scene in the utmost good humour and delight. Having at last brought them into a state of the most perfect harmony, the united pair lead off a _pas de deux_, concluding with a brilliant finale. This musical scena went off with much eclat. The lady, who understood the whole perfectly, rewarded me with her gracious looks; the princess was all kindness, overwhelmed me with applause, and, after complimenting me upon what I had been able to effect upon the two strings, expressed a wish to hear what I could execute upon one string. I immediately assented--the idea caught my fancy; and as the emperor's birthday took place a few weeks afterwards, I composed my Sonata 'Napoleon' for the G. string, and performed it upon that day before the court with so much approbation that a cantata of Cimarosa, following immediately alter it upon the same evening, was completely extinguished, and produced no effect whatever. This is the first and true cause of my partiality for the G. string; and as they were always desiring to hear more of it, one day taught another, until at last my proficiency in this department was completely established."

We know no one who has been more cruelly misrepresented than the subject of this notice. In reality a person of the gentlest and most inoffensive habits, he is any thing rather than the desperate ruffian he has been described. In his demeanour he is modest and unassuming; in his disposition, liberal and generous to a fault. Like most artists, ardent and enthusiastic in his temperament, and in his actions very much a creature of impulse; he is full of that unaffected simplicity which we almost invariably find associated with true genius. He has an only son, by a Signora Antonia Bianchi, a singer from Palermo, with whom he lived for several years until the summer of 1828, when he was under the necessity of separating from her in consequence of the extreme violence of her temper; and in this little boy all his affections are concentrated. He is a very precocious child, and already indicates strong signs of musical talent. Being of a delicate frame of health, Paganini never can bear to trust him out of his sight. "If I were to lose him," says he, "I would be lost myself; it is quite impossible I can ever separate myself from him; when I awake in the night, he is my first thought."--Accordingly, ever since he parted from his mother, he has himself enacted the part of the child's nurse.

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Why is Mr. Whitbread in his brewery like the Jerusalem coffee-house?
Because _He-brews_ _drink therein.

W.G.C.

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THE NATURALIST.

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THE SUSTILLO.

A caterpillar, which the Indians name sustillo, and by which a paper is fabricated, very similar to that made in China, is bred in the pacaë, a tree well known in Peru. In proportion to the vigour and majestic growth of this tree, is the number of the insects it nourishes, and which are of the kind and size of the bombyx, or silk-worm. When they are completely satiated, they unite at the body of the tree, seeking the part which is best adapted to the extension they have to take. They then form, with the greatest symmetry and regularity, a web which is larger or smaller, according to the number of the operators; and more or less pliant, according to the quality of the leaf by which they have been nourished, the whole of them remaining beneath. This envelope, on which they bestow such a texture, consistency, and lustre, that it cannot be decomposed by any practicable expedient, having been finished, they all of them unite, and ranging themselves in vertical and even files, form in the centre a perfect square. Being thus disposed, each of them makes its cocoon, or pod, of a coarse and short silk, in which it is transformed from the grub into the chrysalis, and from the chrysalis into the papilio, or moth. In proportion as they afterwards quit their confinement, to take wing, they detach wherever it is most convenient to them, their envelope, or web, a portion of which remains suspended to the trunk of the tree, where it waves to and fro like a streamer, and which becomes more or less white, according as the air and humidity of the season and situation admit. This natural silk paper has been gathered measuring a yard and a half, of an elliptical shape, which is peculiar to all of it.

W.G.C.

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DESCRIPTION OF A BEAUTIFUL TREE.

By John F.M. Dovaston, Esq. A.M., of Westfelton, near Shrewsbury.

"_Hamlet._ Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see."

Hamlet.

"You cannot see the wood for trees."

Ray's Proverbs.

It was now the middle of May; the trees had fully put forth their bright, fresh leaves, and the green fields were luxuriant in a profusion of flowers. We had travelled through a fine country; when, descending the slope of a wooded valley, we were struck with delight and admiration at a tree of extraordinary appearance. There were several of the sort, dispersed singly, and in groups over the plains and grassy knolls. One we shall attempt to describe, though well aware how feeble is the most florid description to depict an idea of so magnificent an object. In height it exceeded 50 ft., the diameter of its shade was nearly 90 ft., and the circumference of the bole 15 ft.: it was in full leaf and

flower, and in appearance at once united the features of strength, majesty, and beauty; having the stateliness of the oak, in its trunk and arms; the density of the sycamore, in its dark, deep, massy foliage; and the graceful featheriness of the ash, in its waving branches, that dangled in rich tresses almost to the ground. Its general character as a tree was rich and varied, nor were its parts less attractive by their extreme beauty when separately considered. Each leaf was about 18 in. in length; but nature, always attentive to elegance, to obviate heaviness, had at the end of a very strong leaf-stalk divided it into five, and sometimes seven, leaflets, of unequal length, and very long oval shape, finely serrated. These leaflets were disposed in a circular form, radiating from the centre, like the leaves of the fan palm, though placed in a contrary plane to those of that magnificent ornament of the tropical forests. The central, or lower, leaflets were the largest, each of them being 10 in. in length, and 4 in. in breadth, and the whole exterior of the foliage being disposed in an imbricated form, having a beautifully light and palmated appearance. The flowers, in which the tree was profuse, demand our deep admiration and attention: each group of them rose perpendicularly from the end of the young shoot, and was in length 14 in., like a gigantic hyacinth, and quite as beautiful, spiked to a point, exhibiting a cone or pyramid of flowers, widely separate on all sides, and all expanded together, principally white, finely tinted with various colours, as red, pink, yellow, and buff, the stamina forming a most elegant fringe amid the modest tints of the large and copious petals. These feathery blossoms, lovely in colours and stately in shape, stood upright on every branch all over the tree, like flowery minarets on innumerable verdant turrets. We had thus the opportunity of ascertaining that it belonged to that class of Linnaeus consisting entirely of rare plants the Heptandria, and the order Monogynia; the natural order Trihilatae; and the *Acer* of Jussieu.

The natives informed us that the fruit ripens early in autumn, and consists of bunches of apples, thinly beset with sharp thorns, each when broken producing one or two large kernels, about 2 in. in circumference, of the finest bright mahogany colour without, and white within; that the tree is deciduous, and just before its fall changes to the finest tints of red, yellow, orange, and brown. When divested of its luxuriant foliage, the buds of the next year appear like little spears, which through the winter are covered with a fine glutinous gum, evidently designed to protect the embryo shoots within, as an hybernaculum, from the severe frosts of the climate, and which glisten in the cold sunshine like diamonds. It has the strange property of performing the whole of its vigorous shoot, nearly a yard long, in the short space of three weeks, employing all the rest of the year in converting it into wood, adding to its strength, and varying its beauty. The wood when sawn is of the finest snowy whiteness. The tree is easily raised; indifferent as to soil, climate, or situation; removed with safety, of quick growth, thrives to a vast age and size; subject to no blight or disease; in the earliest spring bursting its immense buds into that vigour, exuberance, and beauty, which we have here feebly attempted to describe. The natives said it was originally brought from the east of Asia, but grows freely in any climate, and in their tongue its name is designated by a combination of three words, signifying separately, a noble animal, an elegant game, and a luscious kernel. Had Linnaeus seen this tree, he would have assuredly contemplated it with delightful ecstasy, and named it the *Acer Hippocastanum*.--*Magazine of Natural History.*

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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CIGAR-SMOKING.

The Surgeon-General of the Forces has recently made public his belief, that never, till within the last twenty years, did he see so many young men with pale faces and emaciated figures, and he attributes the existence of the evil to the use of Cigars. The unreflecting servility with which men adopt new and foreign practices, is fully exemplified in the present case; for it is notorious that the practice of cigar-smoking, the modern foppery from Regent-street to Cheapside and Cornhill, was an importation of the Peninsular War; the imitation having been begun by the Spaniards, whose models are what are usually called the savages of America. The dietetic mischief, and consequent paleness of complexion and emaciation of muscle, which are attributable to the use of cigars, belong, no doubt, to an injury inflicted, perhaps,

in more ways than one upon the aids and organs of digestion; nor is that hypothesis at all inconsistent with what we hear from so many cigar-smokers, namely, that their cigar is their dependence for digestion! That, after having impaired the organ, or weakened its tone, or dried up the salival menstruum, they should need a stimulant, even in the very form of the bane which injures them, is only of a piece with all that has been said of drinking, and especially of dram-drinking, with which latter debauch, the debauch of cigar-smoking has the closest possible alliance. We never pass one of those stifling rendezvous in the metropolis--a cigar-shop, open till the latest hours--without mentally classing it with the gin-shops, its only compeers!

Exclusive of the low habit of imitation, a dulness and feebleness of understanding, an absence of intellectual resources, a vacuity of thought is the great inducement to the use of this, as of all other drugs, whether from the cigar-shop, or the snuff-shop, or the gin-shop, or the wine-cellar; a truth by no means the less certain, because it happens that men of the highest powers of mind are drawn into the vice, and made to reduce themselves, by their adoption and dependence upon it, to the lowest level of the vulgar; but, at the same time, it is not to be denied, that a great support in defence of cigar-smoking is found in the medical opinions sometimes advanced as to its salutary influence. Now, if we admit, broadly and at once, that there may be times and circumstances in which the inhaling the hot smoke of a powerful narcotic drug is useful to the human body, must it follow that the habitual resort to such a practice, and this under all circumstances, is useful also, and even free from the most serious inconveniences?

It is the admitted maxim, that if smoking is accompanied by spitting, injury results to the smoker; and the reason assigned is, that the salival fluid, which should assist digestion, is in this manner dissipated, and taken from its office. But may not the habitual application of the narcotic influence to the nervous system have its evils also? May it not weaken or deaden the nervous and muscular action which is needful to digestion? And may not even the excessive quantity

of the matter of heat, thus artificially conveyed into the body, tend to a desiccation of the system, as injurious under general circumstances, as it may be beneficial under particular ones?

Smoking invites thirst; and there is little risk in advancing, that whatever superinduces an unnatural indulgence in the use of liquids is itself, and without farther question, injurious, even if the liquids resorted to are of the most innocent description; but, in point of fact, the cigar-smoker will usually appease his thirst by means of liquors in themselves his enemies!

It is said, however, that the use of cigars is beneficial when we find ourselves in marshy situations, with a high temperature, and generally, whenever the atmosphere inclines to the introduction of putridity and fever into the system. We believe this; and perhaps a useful theory of the alternate benefit and mischief of cigar-smoking may be offered upon the basis of that proposition. When and wherever the body requires to be dried, cigar-smoking may be salutary; and when and wherever that drying, or desiccation, is injurious, then and there cigar-smoking may be to be shunned. We know that, while surrounded by an atmosphere overcharged, or even only saturated with moisture, moist bodies remain moist, or do not part with that excess of moisture from which a drier atmosphere would relieve them; and that living bodies, so circumstanced, are threatened with typhus and typhoid fever. It is highly probable, therefore, that narcotics, in such cases, may allay a morbid irritability of the nerves, or effect a salutary diminution of healthful sensibility; under such circumstances, the desiccating and sedative effects of tobacco-smoking may prove beneficial; while, in all ordinary states of the system and of the atmosphere, the same desiccative and sedative influences may produce immediate evil consequences, more or less readily perceptible, and undermine, however gradually, the strength of the constitution.-- United Service Journal.

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THE NEW COINAGE.

Why does not some man of public research enlighten the public on the proceedings at the Mint? The whole system is as little comprehensible by the uninitiated as the philosopher's stone. The cost of the Mint is prodigious--the machinery is all that machinery can be; yet we have one of the ugliest coinages of any nation of Europe. A new issue of coin is about to be commenced.

"It appears, from the king's proclamation, that the new coinage will consist of double sovereigns, to be each of the value of 40s.; sovereigns, each of 20s.; and half-sovereigns, 10s. silver crowns, half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences. The double-sovereigns have for the obverse the king's effigy, with the inscription, 'Gulielmus IIII. D.G. Britanniarum Rex. F.D.:' and for the reverse, the ensigns armorial of the United Kingdom contained in a shield, encircled by the collar of the Order of the Garter, and upon the edge of the piece the words 'Decus et Tutamen.' The crowns and half-crowns will be similar. The shilling has on the reverse the words 'One Shilling,' placed in the centre of the piece, within a wreath, having an olive-branch on one side, and an oak-branch on the other; and the sixpences have the same, except the word 'Sixpence' instead of the words 'One Shilling.' The coppers will

be nearly as at present."

Now we must observe, what the master of the Mint and the people about him ought to have observed before, that there is in the first instance a considerable expense incurred in the coinage of the double-sovereigns, without any possible object, except the expense itself may be an object, which is not impossible. We shall have in this coin one of the most clumsy and useless matters of circulation that could be devised. The present sovereign answers every purpose that this clumsy coin can be required for, and even the single sovereign would be a much more convenient coin for circulation if it were divided, as every one knows who knows the trouble of getting change. The half-sovereign is in fact a much more convenient coin. But on this clumsy coin we must have a Latin inscription, as if it were intended only for the society of antiquaries, or to be laid up in cabinets, which we acknowledge would be most likely its fate, except for the notorious bad taste of the British coinage. Of much use it is to an English public to have the classical phraseology of Gulielmus Britanniarum Rex, put in place of the national language. Then too we must have the collar of the Order of the Garter to encircle the national arms, of which this Order is nonsensically pronounced "Decus et Tutamen." The Glory and Protection. The Order of the Garter the glory and protection of England! We are content to let this absurdity stay in Latin or Sanscrit; English would be shamed by it. The Order of the Garter which goes round the knee of any man, who comes with the minister's fiat on the subject, and which has no more relation to British glory or British defence than the Order of the Blue Button or the Yellow frog of his majesty the Emperor of China; and this is to go forth on our national gold coin! and for fear that the folly would not be sufficiently spread, it is to be stamped on our crowns and half-crowns! The shillings and sixpences luckily escape: plain English will do for them. And all this goes on from year to year, while we have in the example of France a model of what a mint ought to be. Every foreigner makes purchases at the French mint; and the series of national medals executed there is a public honour and a public profit too. But whoever thinks of purchasing English mintage except for bullion?--With a history full of the most stirring events, we have not a single medallic series--we have scarcely a single medal. But we have in lieu of those vanities a master of the mint, who is tost new into the office on every change of party, who has probably in the whole course of his life never known the difference between gold and silver but by their value in sovereigns and shillings; but who, in the worst of times, shows his patriotism by receiving a salary of no less than five thousand pounds a year?

Monthly Magazine.

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SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

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HYDROSTATICS AND PNEUMATICS.

(Cabinet Cyclopaedia, vol. xvii.)

Easier to swim in the Sea than in a River.

Sea water has a greater buoyancy than fresh water, being relatively heavier; and hence it is commonly said to be much easier to swim in the sea than in a river: this effect, however, appears to be greatly exaggerated. A cubic foot of freshwater weighs about 1,000 ounces; and the same bulk of sea water weighs 1,028 ounces; the weight, therefore, of the latter exceeds the former by only 28 parts in 1,000. The force exerted by sea water to support the body exceeds that exerted by fresh water by about one thirty-sixth part of the whole force of the latter.--_By Dr. Lardner._

Ice lighter than Water.

It is known that in the process of congelation, water undergoes a considerable increase of bulk; thus a quantity of water, which at the temperature of 40 deg. measures a cubic inch, will have a greater magnitude when it assumes the form of ice at the temperature of 32 deg. Consequently ice is, bulk for bulk, lighter than water. Hence it is that ice is always observed to collect and float at the surface.--A remarkable effect produced by the buoyancy of ice in water is observable in some of the great rivers in America. Ice collects round stones at the bottom of the river, and it is sometimes formed in such a quantity that the upward pressure by its buoyancy exceeds the weight of the stone round which it is collected--consequently it raises the stone to the surface. Large masses of stone are thus observed floating down the river at considerable distances from the places of their formation.--_Ibid_.

Domestic Use of the Hydrometer.

The adulteration of milk by water may always be detected by the hydrometer, and in this respect it may be a useful appendage to household utensils. Pure milk has a greater specific gravity than water, being 103, that of water being 100. A very small proportion of water mixed with milk will produce a liquid specifically lighter than water.--Although the hydrometer is seldom applied to domestic uses, yet it might be used for many ordinary purposes which could scarcely be attained by any other means. The slightest adulteration of spirits, or any other liquid of known quality, may be instantly detected by it; and it is recommended by its cheapness, the great facility of its manipulation, and the simplicity of its results.--_Ibid._

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.
SHAKSPEARE.

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The late Lord Clonmel, who never thought of demanding more than a

shilling for an affidavit, used to be well satisfied provided it was a good one. In his time the Birmingham shillings were current, and he used the following extraordinary precaution to avoid being imposed upon by taking a bad one:--"You shall true answer make to such questions as shall be demanded of you touching this affidavit, so help you God. Is this a good shilling?"

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SCRAPS.

The Court Journal, describing a Study in Windsor Castle, says--"The first of a series in the plain English style. The ceiling is white, with a cornice of simple Grecian design!"

According to a recent traveller, fat sheep are so plentiful in the Brazils that they are used as fuel to feed their lime-kilns.

Supposing the productive power of wheat to be only six-fold, the produce of a single acre would cover the whole surface of the globe in fourteen years.

A Philadelphia Paper announces the arrival of the Siamese Twins in that city, in the following manner:--"One of the Siamese twins arrived here on Monday last, accompanied by his brother."

The term Husting, or Hustings, as applied to the scaffold erected at elections, from which candidates address the electors, is derived from the Court of Husting, of Saxon origin, and the most ancient in the kingdom. Its name is a compound of hers and ding; the former implying a house, and the latter a thing, cause, suit, or plea; whereby it is manifest that husding imports a house or hall, wherein causes are heard and determined; which is further evinced by the Saxon dingere, or thingere, an advocate, or lawyer. [Hus and thing (thong) a place enclosed, a building roped round.]--Atlas.

Segrais says, that when Louis XIV. was about seventeen years of age, he followed him and his brother, the Duke of Orleans, out of the playhouse, and that he heard the duke ask the king what he thought of the play they had just been seeing, and which had been well received by the audience: "Brother, (replied Louis,) do not you know that I never pretend to give my opinion on any thing that I do not perfectly understand."

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ELECTIONEERING ADVICE.

Among the curious Autograph Letters, at Sotheby's late sale, there was a curious one of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, dated August 16th, 1740, viz. A canvassing letter in favour of two Members for Reading; with the following electioneering advice:--"Nothing but a good Parliament can save England next Session; they are both very honest men, and will never give a vote to a Placeman or a Pensioner."

P.T.W.

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THE NATIONAL DEBT.

George the Third came to the throne in 1760, and found the national debt 120 millions; he reigned 59 years, and left the national debt 820 millions, 700 millions more than at his accession, increasing on the whole period about 36 thousand per day, or nearly 23 pounds per minute. At the beginning of his reign the taxes amounted annually to 6 millions; at the ending 60 millions.

* * * * *

PLURALITIES.

In the year 1238, it was agreed in an assembly of divines at Paris, that none could without forfeiture of eternal happiness, possess two benefices at the same time; one being worth fifteen livres Parisis, each about 2s. 6d. sterling.

N.B. There does not appear to be any such decision by any assembly of divines in England, at least not since the reformation.

G.K.

* * * * *

COMPUNCTIOUS VISITINGS.

It is said of a certain physician that he never passed the churchyard of the place where he resided, without pulling forth his handkerchief from his pocket, and hiding his face with it. Upon this circumstance being noticed by an acquaintance, he apologized for it by saying, "You will recollect, sir, what a number of people there are who have found their way hither under my directions. Now, I am always apprehensive lest some of them recognising my features should lay hold of me, and oblige me to take up my lodging along with them."

* * * * *

IMPROMPTU ON THE BURIAL OF SHUTER, THE ACTOR.

Alas! poor Ned!
He's now in bed,
Who seldom was before;
The revel rout,
The midnight shout,
Shall never know him more.

Entomb'd in clay,
Here let him lay,
And silence ev'ry jest;
For life's poor play
Has past away,
And here he sleeps in rest.

* * * * *

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