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TALES

OF

OUR GREAT FAMILIES.

VOL. II.

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TALES

OF

OUR GREAT FAMILIES.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"THE COUNTY FAMILIES,"

&c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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TALES

OF

OUR GREAT FAMILIES.

LORD LYTTELTON'S GHOST.

AMONG the many well-authenticated tales of supernatural events—or at any rate of events that cannot be explained by any merely natural laws—is one which for nearly a century has been current in the noble house of Lyttelton, being handed down with great minuteness "from sire to son," and referred to by Sir Walter Scott, Boswell, and Hugh Miller, as well as by other writers. It relates to the sudden end of Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton, which happened at a house at Epsom in Surrey—then a fashionable town—on the 27th of November, 1779, when his lordship was only six-and-thirty years of age.

The story is briefly but incidentally told by Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall, in his amusing and interesting "Memoirs of his own Time," and in a way which makes it clear that he, at all events, inclined to the belief that it was the result of some power more than human, though the chattering gossiper hesitates to express his faith on the subject in clear and unmistakable terms. We, like him, shall content ourselves with simply telling the tale, leaving to our readers the task of accounting for the occurrence in any way that they may think fit. So far as Lord Lyttelton's personal character stood, his secession from the supporters of Lord North, if we may judge from Sir Nathaniel's words, appears to have been a diminution of a strength and a loss of talent in the House of Peers which that unpopular Ministry could ill afford. If so, it is obvious to remark that a century ago high moral qualities were not so necessary as they are nowadays to secure influence to men in public situations.

The Lytteltons have held a foremost place among the untitled squirearchy of Worcestershire for at least 600 years, since the reign of Henry III. With only a single break, when the family hopes centred in an heiress—who induced her husband, however, to take her own name along with her broad acres—the line of male

descent is made out clearly by the Heralds' College from Thomas de Littleton or Lyttleton of Henry's reign, who married the heiress of Simon de Frankley, down to the present Lord Lyttelton, whom Burke and Lodge style Baron Lyttelton of Frankley, and who in his younger days was senior classic at Cambridge, the sixth holder of the title of Lyttelton, though only the fourth of the present creation.*

The Lytteltons gallantly supported the royal cause in the days of the Stuarts, both in purse and in person; and one of the squires of Frankley was within the walls of Colchester Castle when it was besieged by the Roundheads of the Parliamentary army. This gentleman's grandson, Sir George Lyttelton—who had been successively M.P. for Okehampton, secretary to George, Prince of Wales, and a Commissioner of the Treassury, and afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer—was raised to the honours of the Peerage in 1757. He is known both as an historian and a poet, and he commanded no less respect on account of his personal character and those domestic virtues which were rarer among great personages under George II. than under Victoria. His son, too, Thomas, the second lord, was a man of high political abilities, and one

* His lordship died suddenly in the Spring of 1876.

who, in spite of private vices of a most glaring character, might easily have occupied a high place in the then position of parties, if he had not been so suddenly cut off before attaining, or, at all events, passing the prime of life. So, at any rate, thought Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, who knew many of his friends personally, and who seldom formed an absurd estimate of other men's position in the age of which he writes so amusingly. And yet he confesses that by the profligacy of his conduct and the abuse of his high talents* he seemed to have emulated the Duke of Buckingham in Dryden or Pope's Duke of Wharton, both of whom he resembled alike in the superiority of his natural endowments and in the peculiarity of his end. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham—the "Zimri" of Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel"—after exhausting his health and squandering his immense fortune in every species of excess and riot, expired, as we all know, in a way-side inn, a wretched tenement, hard by his own estate in Yorkshire, abandoned by all his former admirers and boon companions. The Duke of Wharton, who had played under

* So great indeed were his abilities as a statesman and a writer, that he has been accused, both in the *Quarterly Review* and elsewhere of having been the author of the "Letters of Junius."

George I. a part not much less eccentric than that played by Villiers under the second Charles, ended his wild and mad career, exiled and attainted, in an obscure monastery of Catalonia, worn out, as we shall presently see, by his desperate efforts in pursuit of pleasure.

In the straggling town of Epsom, which at that time was one of the chief haunts of the gay world, not annually on a single race-day, but during half the year, there stands a country house, known as Pit Place, being so named, not after the "Great Commoner," as many persons suppose, but for the less poetical reason of having been built in one of those chalk pits which abound on the edge of the Surrey downs. The house still bears its old name, as it did a century ago; and it is occupied by a private family, by whom I was kindly and courteously allowed, last year, to see the bed room which was the scene of the events I am about to relate. It is a plain unpretending mansion, with pleasant lawns and gardens, and reminds one of a country rectory. Towards the close of November 1779, Lord Lyttelton had gone down from London to Pit Place, for the purpose of spending a week or two in field sports or other recreations, and he had taken with him a gay party of friends. On the 24th of that month he had retired to bed at

midnight, after spending the evening in playing at cards with his guests, when his attention was attracted by the fluttering of a bird,* apparently a dove or a pigeon, tapping at the window of his bed chamber. He started, for he had only just put out his light and was about to compose himself to rest, and sat up in bed to listen. He had gazed and listened for a minute or so, when he saw, or at all events fancied that he saw a female figure clothed in white enter—whether by the door or by the window we are not informed—and quietly approach the foot of his bed. He was somewhat surprised, and not agreeably surprised, when the figure opened its pale lips and told him that in three days from that very hour he should cease to live.

In whatever manner this intimation, real or

* In an interesting paper on "Old Superstitions." Cuthbert Bede, in the *Illustrated London Magazine* for 1855, refers to this story, and remarks: "There is a superstition which has gained credit in country parishes that a person about to die is often forewarned of his or her dissolution by the appearance of a dove or a pigeon; and this belief has been entertained by other than mere rustic minds. Lord Lyttelton's is a well-known instance. . . . . And springing from a similar belief was the Duchess of Kendal's fancy that George I. flew in at her window in the shape of a raven." To this he adds a touching story of a little child in a Kentish village, where the flight of a dove into the window of a schoolroom was recognised by a little child as the herald of her own death, which happened three weeks afterwards.

unreal, from the other world was conveyed to him, whether by sound of the voice or by any other mode of communication, one thing is certain, that Lord Lyttelton regarded it as a reality, and a message from the world of spirits. Next morning he mentioned it as such to the guests who were in the house; and during the next two or three days it preyed upon his mind, visibly affected his spirits, and threw a damp over the entire party who were assembled.

The third night came, and everything had gone on as usual. The guests had sat down to dinner, played their rubbers of whist, and retired; but none of them had dared to rally the young Lord Lyttelton on the depression of spirits under which he laboured. Eleven o'clock came; the party broke up and went to their several rooms, wishing each other good night, and heartily desiring that the night were past and gone, so restless, anxious, and uncomfortable did they feel without exception. Twelve o'clock came; and Lord Lyttelton was sitting up in bed, having given his servant orders to mix him a dose of rhubarb, though apparently in the best of health. The dose was poured out, and he was just about to take it, when he found that there was no teaspoon. A little out of patience with his valet for neglecting to have a spoon at hand, he

ordered him to go and fetch one from the pantry at the foot of the stairs. The man was not absent from the room for more than a minute, or possibly a minute and a half; but when he returned he found his master lying back at full length upon the bed, speechless and motionless. No efforts to restore animation were of any avail, and no symptom of consciousness showed itself. His lordship was dead, having died on the third day, as the spectre had foretold.

As the records of the Surrey coroner a century ago are no longer extant, we suppose that it is hopeless at this distance of time to attempt to find out whether a formal inquest was held upon the body, and if so, what the verdict may have been. Whether, therefore, Lord Lyttelton's death was occasioned by any sudden shock to his nervous system, or whether it was the result of a sudden apoplectic or other seizure, must remain a matter of uncertainty and conjecture to the end of time.

Sir Nathaniel Wraxall adds a reflection of his own to the effect that the Lyttelton family in the last century suffered from a certain constitutional irritability of the nerves, which appears to have predisposed its members to such shocks as that which produced, or at all events hastened on, the end of the young nobleman here related. This

may or may not have been the case; but it is only fair to state that Sir Nathaniel adds, in his own gossiping way, by way of confirmation of his theory, that the first lord, in spite of his great practical sense and political experience, "manifested great credulity on the subject of apparitions;" and that a cousin of the deceased some four years afterwards died in a somewhat similar way at Stourhead, Wiltshire, about two years after her marriage to Sir Richard Hoare, Bart, of that place. The fact, however, is that Lord Lyttelton's life had been of so licentious and abandoned a character as to subject him continually to the keenest reproaches of an accusing conscience; "*Nocte dieque suum gestare in pectore testem.*" This domestic spectre—for such it must ever be to a man of a sensitive mind—which accompanied him everywhere, was known to have given rise while he was on his travels, and particularly at Lyons, says Sir Nathaniel, to scenes greatly resembling the scene of his last moments at Epsom.

It is clear that the good-natured old chronicler on whom we have drawn so largely for the materials of this sketch did not speedily dismiss the subject from his memory. About five years afterwards, when dining at Pit Place, he had the curiosity to search out and visit the bedchamber

which was the scene of Lord Lyttelton's tragic end. He was shown the bedstead on which he died, and the casement of the window at which the bird had tapped with his beak so maliciously, and against which it had fluttered with its wings. Moreover, he was a constant visitor at the house of his Lordship's stepmother, the Dowager Lady Lyttelton, in Portugal-street, Grosvenor-square, who often talked to him on the subject, inclining to the supernatural, as he did to the natural, view of the case. "A woman of a very lively imagination, she gave an implicit faith," he says, "to all the supernatural occurrences which were supposed to have accompanied, or rather to have immediately preceded, Lord Lyttelton's end;" and it is well known that she immortalised the event by executing a painting of it, which is still in existence, and is preserved in the family as a memorial of the past. She was gifted with the painter's art, and she executed the painting in 1780, when the affair was fresh in the memory of her friends, and of the servant who attended him at Pit Place, from whom she drew her information. Every detail was given as told to her by the valet, who had it from his master's lips during that three days' interval between the warning and the fatal stroke. This picture," adds Sir Nathaniel, "used to hang in a conspicuous place

in her drawing-room in Portugal-street, and must be well remembered, there or elsewhere, by many friends of the family. It is not perhaps of any high value, as a work of art, and its intrinsic value may be small, but it is a precious heirloom in the house of Lyttelton. In it the bird at the window is represented as a dove; and the female figure habited in white is standing at the foot of the bed, announcing to Lord Lyttelton his speedy dissolution" It is only right to add here that the picture thus described is not known to the present members of the Lyttelton family; and, though there is somewhere or other to be seen a small print of the vision, the print is poor and intrisically worthless.

Lord Lyttelton, in spite of his wickedness, "honoured the memory of his mother with a Monody" which has become classical, and which was unfeelingly parodied by Smollet. Lord Lyttelton's death, as here recorded, not only deprived the existing Ministers of a former supporter, but caused the extinction of the peerage, as he was his father's only son, and his own marriage had brought him no issue. The family baronetcy, however, reverted to his uncle, William Lyttelton, some time British Minister at Lisbon, who had been created an Irish peer by the title of Lord Westcote, and in 1794 obtained in his own favour

a fresh peerage patent as Lord Lyttelton in the peerage of Great Britain. It is his descendant who now enjoys the title and estates as head and representative of the Lytteltons of Worcestershire.

It remains only now to add one or two versions of the story, either as a whole or in part, from original papers which have been kindly placed at my disposal by Lord Lyttelton himself.

The first of these papers is a memorandum in the handwriting of William Henry, the first Lord Lyttelton of the new creation, which is indorsed in his Lordship's handwriting. "Remarkable Dream and Circumstances attending the Death of Thomas Lord Lyttelton."

"On Thursday, the 25th of November, 1779, Thomas Lord Lyttelton, when he came to breakfast, declared to Mrs. Flood, wife of Frederick Flood, Esq., of the kingdom of Ireland, and to the three Misses Amphlett, who were lodged in his house in Hill-street, London (where he then also was), that he had had an extraordinary dream the night before: he said he thought he was in a room into which flew a bird, which apppearance was suddenly changed into that of a woman dressed in white, who bade him prepare to die; to which he answered, 'I hope not soon, not in two months.' She replied, 'Yes, in three days.'

He said he did not much regard it, because he could in some measure account for it; for that a few days before he had been with Mrs. Dawson, when a robin redbreast flew into her room. When he had dressed himself that day to go to the House of Lords, he said he thought he did not look as if he was likely to die. In the evening of the following day, being Friday, he told the eldest Miss Amphlett that she looked melancholy; 'but,' said he, 'you are foolish and fearful. I have lived two days, and, God willing, I will live out the third.' On the morning of Saturday he told the same ladies that he was very well, and believed he should 'bilk the ghost.' Some hours afterwards he went with them, Mr. Fortescue, and Captain Wolseley to Pit Place, at Epsom; withdrew to his bedchamber soon after eleven o'clock at night, talked cheerfully to his servant and particularly inquired of him what care had been taken to provide good roles *(sic)* for his breakfast next morning. He stepped into bed with his waistcoat on, and, as his servant was pulling it off, he put his hand to his side, sunk back, and immediately expired without a groan. He ate a good dinner after his arrival at Pit Place that day, and took an egg for his supper. It (he?) did not seem to be at all out of order, except that while he was eating his soup at

dinner he had a rising in his throat—a thing which had often happened to him before, and which obliged him to spit some of it out. His physician, Dr. Fothergill, told me that Lord Lyttelton in the summer preceding had a bad pain in his side, and he judged that some great vessel in the part where he felt the pain gave way, and to that he conjectured his death was owing. His declaration of his dream, and his expressions above-mentioned consequent thereunto, were upon a close inquiry asserted to me to have been so by Mrs. Flood, the eldest Miss Amphlett, Captain Wolseley, and his *valet de chambre* Faulkner, who dressed him on the Thursday; and the manner of his death was related to me by William Stuckey, in the presence of Mr. Fortescue and Captain Wolseley—Stuckey being the servant who attended him in his bedchamber, and in whose arms he died."

This narrative is signed "Westcote"—an Irish title which the writer bore before being raised to the English barony of Lyttelton in February, 1780.

The following is the narrative of the same event in the handwriting of the late Sir Digby Neave:

"Thomas Lord Lyttelton died in 1779, at his residence at Pit Place, Epsom. In 1828 Mr

Taylor, of Worcester Park, near Ewell, Surrey, who was then about eighty years of age, told me—then residing at Pit Place—that he was in the neighbourhood during the year 1779, and heard the particulars of the illness and death of Lord Lyttelton from an Italian painter visiting at Pit Place at the time of Lord Lyttelton's death. Lord Lyttelton had come to Pit Place in a very precarious state, and was ordered not to take any but the gentlest exercise. As he was walking in the conservatory with Lady Affleck and two Misses Affleck a robin perched on an orange tree close to them. Lord Lyttleton attempted to catch it, but failing, and being laughed at by the ladies, he said he would catch it even if it was the death of him. He succeeded, but he put himself in a great heat by the exertion. He gave the bird to Lady Affleck, who walked about with it in her hand. Lord Lyttelton became so ill and feverish that he went off to London for advice to a house in Bruton-street. In his delirium he imagined that a lady with a bird in her hand, drawing his curtains aside, told him that he would die. Dreams being the sequels of waking thoughts, it needed no ghost to fix such an impression on the mind of a sick man; and this may be said to clear away supernatural agency thus far. As to his death occurring at the moment indicated by

an apparition, and the putting on the clock by his friends, for the habits of his boon companions in the house at the time, and the report of the Italian painter, his informant (Mr. Taylor) was satisfied as to its being a fable, invented to mystify the public, as the actual circumstances attending his death were as follows: Being ill in bed opposite a chimney-piece with a mirror over it, he desired a valet to give him some medicine which was on the chimney-piece. Seeing him mixing it with a tooth-brush, Lord Lyttelton raised himself up in bed and rated him; but he was so weak that his head sank below the pillow on to his chest, and he gasped for breath Instead of relieving him, the valet in his fright left the room, and death ensued before assistance could be given. Mr. Taylor, of Worcester Park, told me the names of the party in the house at the time; but I recollect only that Michael Angelo Taylor, M.P, was one of them. He named to me also that Lord Lyttelton had become possessed of Pit Place in payment of a debt of honour.

"(Signed) DIGBY NEAVE."

Another narrative of the same circumstances is signed "S. L."—no doubt denoting the handwriting of Sarah, Dowager Lady Lyttelton. It runs as follows:

"Mr. George Fortescue one day called upon me in town, and in a conversation—the subject of an article in the *Quarterly*, which ascribed the authorship of 'Junius' to Thomas, Lord Lyttelton—he told me that he had often heard from his father, Lord Fortescue,* some details of the death of Thomas, Lord Lyttelton, which must be true and certainly are rather curious. He said that Lord (then Mr.) Fortescue was in London on the morning of a day in November, 1779, and went to see Lord Lyttelton—his first cousin—who was then also in town, and who on the day before had made a fine speech in the House of Lords. He found Lord Lttyelton in bed, though not ill; and on his rallying him for it, Lord Lyttelton said, 'Well, cousin, if you will wait in the next room a little while, I will get up and go out with you.' He did so, and the two young men walked out into the streets. In the course of their walk they crossed the churchyard of St. James's, Piccadilly. Lord Lyttelton, pointing to the grave-stones, said, 'Now look at all these vulgar fellows; they die in their youth at five and thirty; but you and I, who are gentlemen, shall live to a good old age.' The walk ended by their getting into a carriage and driving together to Lord Lyttelton's house at Epsom, where there

* Hugh, first Earl Fortescue, K.G. He died in 1842.

was a party of his friends. They dined and chatted cheerfully, and no allusion was made to any remarkable occurrence. In the evening Lord Lyttelton withdrew to his room earlier than Mr. Fortescue, who, so far from having any anxiety or curiosity upon his mind respecting his cousin, sat up before the fire in the drawing-room, with his feet on the fender, and quietly dropped asleep. He was roused, however, by Lord Lyttelton's servant rushing into the room and saying, 'Help, help! my lord is dying!' He ran upstairs and found that all was over. His servant said that his lordship had got into bed, and asked for his usual medicine—a dose of rhubarb, but that, finding it ill-mixed, he desired the servant to mix it again. No spoon being at hand, the man began to mix it with a toothpick that lay on the table. 'You dirty fellow!' said Lord Lyttelton; 'go down and fetch a spoon.' He obeyed, and on returning to the room, found his master speechless, fallen back on the pillow, and in his last agonies. Mr. Fortescue heard nothing either then, or for some days after, about the dream or the ghost, or the prediction of his death, which Mr. Fortescue, therefore, seemed inclined wholly to disbelieve."

Mr. R. Plumer Ward, in his "Illustrations of Human Life" (vol. i., p. 165), treats at consider-

able length of this strange occurrence. Giving to a friend an account of Lord Lyttelton's appearance to Mr. Miles Peter Andrews, formerly M.P. for Bewdley, in Worcestershire, he writes:

"I have often heard and read much about Lord Lyttelton's seeing a ghost before his death, and also of himself appearing as a ghost to Mr. Andrews; and so one evening, while sitting next to that gentleman during a pause in the debates of the House of Commons, I ventured to ask him what truth there was in the story so confidently related. Mr. Andrews, as perhaps I ought to have expected, did not much like the conversation; he looked quite grave and uneasy, and I asked his pardon for my impertinent curiosity. Upon this he said, very good-naturedly, 'It is not a subject that I am fond of, especially in such a place as this; but if you will come and dine with me I will tell you what of it is true and what false.' I gladly accepted the proposal; and I think that my recollection is perfect as to the following narrative.

"In his youth Mr. Andrews was the boon companion, not to say fellow rake, of Lord Lyttelton, who, as is well known, was a man distinguished at once for his abilities and for a profligacy of morals which few could equal.

With all this he was remarkable for what may be called unusual cowardice in one so determinately wicked. He never really repented, and yet he never could quite stifle his conscience. He never would allow, yet he never could deny, a world to come; and he contemplated with unceasing terror what would probably be his own state in such a world, if there was one. He was always either melancholy with fear or else mad with defiance; and probably his principal misery here lay in the fact that, with all his endeavours, he never could extinguish the dread of an hereafter. He came down to breakfast pale with the agony he suffered in a dream which at first he would not reveal. It turned out that he thought that for his sins he was enclosed in a globe of iron, of the dimension of the earth, and heated red-hot. At that time all the world was execrating Mrs. Brownrigg, who was hanged for whipping to death one of her apprentices, a little girl. Lord Lyttelton had the greatest hatred and horror of her name; and to aggravate his punishment, he thought that this wretch was shut up with himself in the globe of hot iron. An imagination so strong could not but be active, inquiring, and restless; and all this added to his fears made him harp incessantly on the question of a future life. He used often to discuss this point with his

friend Andrews, to whom he at last said, 'Well, if I die first, and am allowed, I will come and inform you." This was but a little before his death. That death was attended with so many mysterious reports of ghosts, warnings, and prophecies, and most of them such entire inventions, that I shall not trouble the company with them, but hasten on to Mr. Andrews' part of the story. 'But,' asked one of the ladies, 'when you say most of them, do you mean that any one of them was well founded?' I can only tell you what I learned from Mr. Andrews, who, I feel sure, is good authority. It *is* true that the night before Lord Lyttelton died a fluttering of a bird was heard, and perhaps a bird was seen on his window curtains. It is *not* true that Mrs. Humphreys, or any other departed lady whom he had seduced, appeared to him and warned him of his end. It *is* true that he himself thought that he was to die at a given hour, and that the clock was put on in order to deceive him into comfort. It *is* also true that he was found dead in bed with his watch in his hand, but a few minutes after the time which he had mentioned as destined to be his last. But it is equally true that on any great and sudden agitation he was subject to a swelling of the throat, which, without immediate assistance, might have killed him by strangula-

tion. However, the coincidence of the event with the prophecy was at any rate most remarkable. Andrews was at his house at Dartford, in Kent, when Lord Lyttelton died at Pit Place, Epsom, thirty miles off. Andrews' house was full of company, and he expected Lord Lyttelton, whom he had left in his usual health, to join them the next day, which was Sunday. Andrews himself, feeling somewhat indisposed on that Saturday evening, retired early to bed, requesting Mrs. Pigou, one of his guests, to do the honours of the supper table for him. When in bed he fell into a sound sleep, but was waked between eleven and twelve o'clock by somebody opening his curtains. It was Lord Lyttelton in a night-gown and cap which Andrews recognised. He also spoke plainly to him, saying, that he was come to tell him that 'all was over.' It was commonly reported that he informed him that there was another world, and bade him repent, &c.; but this was not true. I confine myself," he adds, "to the exact words of his narrative. It seems that Lord Lyttelton was fond of horse-play, or what the French call *mauvaise plaisanterie*; and, as he had often made Andrews the subject of it, the latter had threatened his Lordship with manual chastisement the very next time that it should occur. On the present

occasion, thinking that the annoyance was being renewed, he threw at Lord Lyttelton's head the first things that he could find, which were his slippers. The figure retreated towards a dressing-room, which had no ingress or egress except through the bed-chamber, and Andrews, very angry, leaped out of bed in order to follow it into the dressing-room. It was not there however. Surprised and amazed, he returned at once into the bed-room, which he strictly searched. The door was locked on the inside, yet no Lord Lyttelton was to be found. He was astonished, but not alarmed, so convinced was he that it was only a trick of Lord Lyttelton, who, he supposed, must have arrived, accordingly to his engagement, but after he (Mr. Andrews) was gone to bed. He therefore rang for his servant, and asked if Lord Lyttelton was not come. The man said, 'No, sir.' 'You may depend upon it,' he replied, out of humour, 'that he is somewhere in the house; he was here just now, and he is playing some trick or other.' But how he could have got into the bed-room with the door locked, fairly puzzled both master and man. Convinced, however, that he was still somewhere in the house, Mr. Andrews in his anger ordered that no bed should be given, saying to him that he might go to an inn or sleep in the stables. Be

this however, as it may, he never appeared again, and Mr. Andrews went off to sleep. It happened that Mrs. Pigou was engaged to go to town early the next morning. What was her astonishment—having heard the disturbance of the night before—to learn on her arrival about nine o'clock that Lord Lyttelton had died the very night that he was supposed to have been seen at Dartford. She immediately sent an express to Dartford with the news, upon the receipt of which Mr. Andrews, who was then quite well, swooned away. He could not understand the affair; but it had a most serious effect upon his health, so that, to use his own expression, he was not himself or a man again for three years. "Such," adds Mr. Plumer Ward, "is this celebrated story, stripped of its ornaments and exaggerations; and I for one own—if not convinced that this was a real message from heaven, which certainly I am not—that I at least think the hand of Providence was seen in it, working upon the imagination, if you please, and therefore suspending no law of nature—though after all, that is an ambiguous term—but still Providence in a character not to be mistaken."

Lord Brougham confesses in the first volume of his Autobiography that "there never was to all

appearance a better authenticated fact than the story of Lord Lyttelton's Ghost. I have heard," he adds, "my father tell the story, but coupled with his conviction that it was either a pure invention, or the accidental coincidence of a dream with the event. I believe that every such seeming miracle, like every ghost story, is capable of explanation. My father had heard the particulars from a lady, a Mrs. Affleck, during a visit which he made to London in 1780, not very long after the death of Lord Lyttelton. My father was convinced that the female tendency to believe in the marvellous naturally produced the statement that the moment of his death had exactly corresponded with the time as predicted in the dream. The story was told with corroborating circumstances, one of which was the attempt to cheat the ghost by altering the hour on the clock: and the tale obtained a surprising degree of credit considering the unsubstantial foundation on which it really rested."

THE WITTY DUKE OF WHARTON

MOST readers of modern anecdote Biography, and most students of English history in the reign of the first two Georges, have heard at all events of the name of the witty Duke of Wharton; and if they do not remember him in prose history, they will not forget the character of him drawn by Pope in one of his Moral Essays:

> "Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,
> Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise;
> Born with whate'er could win it from the wise.
> Women and fools must like him, or he dies
> Though wondering senates hung on all he spoke,
> The club must hail him master of the joke.
> Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
> He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too.
> Thus, with each gift of nature and of art,
> And wanting nothing but an honest heart;

Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt,
And most contemptible to show contempt;
His passion still, to covet general praise;
His life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;
A constant bounty, which no friend has made;
An angel tongue, which no man can persuade;
A fool with more of wit than half mankind;
Too rash for thought, for action too refined;
A tyrant to the wife his heart approves,
A rebel to the very king he loves;
He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,
And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.
Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule?
'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool."

Let me therefore bring before my readers a brief outline of his Grace's singular career, which will be found to justify the words of Horace Walpole, who thus describes him: "With attachment to no party, though with talents to govern any, this lively man changed the free air of Westminster for the gloom of the Escurial, the prospect of King George's Garter for the Pretender's; and, with utter indifference to all religion, the frolic lord, who had written a ballad on the Archbishop of Canterbury, died in the habit of a Capuchin." That this ontline is in the main correct, I shall proceed to show with the leave of my readers.

The Whartons, successively barons, earls, marquisses, and eventually for a brief space

dukes of Wharton, took their name from a certain "fair lordship" on the banks of the river Eden, and were of great antiquity in the county of Westmoreland. The first member of the house, however, of whom we have any detailed account, is Sir Thomas Wharton, governor of the town and castle of Carlisle in the reign of Henry VIII., who, by the aid of his neighbour Sir William Musgrave and a force of only 300 men, gallantly routed a large body of Scottish invaders, and took prisoners the Earl of Cassilis and the Lord of Glencairn. Two years later he marched into Scotland along with Lord Dacre "of the north," and was made a peer of England for his services at the taking of Dumfries. Under Philip and Mary he was Lord Warden of the Middle Marches, and afterwards General Warden of all the marches on the Scottish frontier. Of his son the second, and of his grandson the third Lord Wharton, there is little to record except that they succeeded in due course to the title so honourably gained by Sir Thomas, and married into the noble families of Devereux, Earl of Essex, and Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. The third Lord Wharton had the misfortune of losing both his sons in his own lifetime, the elder being killed in a duel with his friend James Stuart, the son of Lord Blantyre. In this unfor-

tunate conflict, like that of Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton, both of the combatants fell, and they were buried in one grave at Islington, or, as it was then called, Iseldon, or Iseldun, "by order of the King."

Of Philip, the fourth Lord Wharton, I have to record the fact that, though he was a violent Puritan and an active partisan of the Parliament during the Great Rebellion, he managed to keep his head safe on his shoulders under Charles II. and James II., and to leave by his first marriage an only daughter, from whom the present Lady Willoughby d'Eresby and Lord Cholmondeley are maternally descended; and also by his second marriage a son, Thomas, who in due course became fifth Lord Wharton. As his father had supported Puritanism when apparently triumphant, so now he, in his turn, gave his active support to the Revolution of 1688, and was raised to an earldom by Queen Anne, and subsequently, by George I., to the marquisate of Wharton, to say nothing of an Irish peerage as Earl of Rathfarnham and Marquis of Catherlogh—titles which at his death, in 1715, devolved upon his only son Philip, who thus became sixth Baron and second Earl and Marquis of Wharton whilst still a boy. It is of this youth, who was born in December, 1698, that I have now to speak

He seems to have been a tolerably precocious youth; for, although he had been carefully educated at home, under the eye of his father—whose ambition, we are told, was to make him "a great orator and patriot"—we hear of him, at the age of sixteen, getting secretly and privately married to a plain untitled girl, the daughter of a certain Major-General Holmes. Miss Lizzie Holmes, of course, was no equal match for the heir to two marquisates, two earldoms, a viscountcy, and a barony. The sad *mésalliance*, however, did not reach the ears of his parents for some little time; and luckily too, for the shock is said to have killed them both within the course of a year.

I cannot say that the fruits of this young gentleman's early training inspire me with any strong admiration for private as opposed to public school education. Papas are generally the very worst hands at training their youngsters —excepting mammas—and young Master Philip would have got better over his first steps in his "way through the world" if he had been sent to Eton, Westminster, or Winchester, and been taught by contact with his fellows that "manners makyth man." Probably his father's fussy supervision of his hopeful son's education was intended to make him not merely a strong

Whig in politics, but a Presbyterian in religion. His clandestine union with Miss Holmes, we are told, took place at the Fleet Prison, the union being celebrated by a "Fleet parson," and a ring of an old window curtain being used for the bride's wedding ring, as, we have already seen, was also the case with one of the "fair Miss Gunnings." The old Marquis died in April, 1715, and the marchioness followed her husband to the grave, as said above, in the course of the year. Yet it is admitted by Wharton's biographers, that although the match which the youth had made was "no ways suitable to his birth or fortune, and far less to the great views which his father had of disposing of him in such a marriage as would have been a considerable addition to the fortune and grandeur of so illustrious a family," there was no objection to be urged against the young lady personally, except that she had no money, or even a long pedigree. At all events, one thing is clear, and that is that she deserved a very great deal more of happiness than this "Fleet marriage" brought to her. Not a word, that I can find, was ever urged against her conduct as a wife even by the Whartons. She and her boy-husband parted within a few months after their ill-starred marriage; and at the beginning of 1716 the bridegroom was sent

(probably by the directions left by his father to his guardians) to travel abroad. The "dominie" to whom he was entrusted was a French Huguenot pastor.

The result was just what might have been expected. The young marquis kicked hard against the rigid system of his tutor. In passing through Germany his vanity was gratified by the bestowal of some petty order of knighthood—far inferior, of course, to the double coronet of a marquis, which he bore as a peer both of England and of Ireland. He played high of course, ran into debt like a gentleman, and after a brief space he cut all his entanglements, gave his tutor the slip, and set off post haste for the pleasant city of Lyons, where he managed to hide himself for a short time, the place of his retreat being unknown to the "dominie." His next proceeding was to write a letter to Prince James,—the elder "Pretender," as he was styled by the Hanoverian party,—who was then residing at Avignon, and to whom he sent the present of a fine racehorse or hunter. The Chevalier, in turn, resolved not to be outdone in civility, invited him to his *soi-disant* court, where he spent a few days in pleasure, and it is said received from him the title of Duke of Northumberland, which just at that time had ceased to belong to the Percies and had not yet been conferred on the Smithsons.

After this freak he suddenly appeared at Paris, where he played a double game, visiting the widowed Queen of James II. at St. Germain, and borrowing from her £2000, but at the same time not declining the attentions of the English ambassador at the Tuileries, Lord Stair, to whose table he was often invited as a guest. The story goes that, in order to get the money from the Queen—who is said even to have pledged her jewels in order to raise it for the young vagabond marquis—he engaged to lay the money out in promoting the interests of the exiled Stuarts in England, though in reality he spent it in play in the gambling houses of Paris. And he showed the depth of his cunning by telling a friend who remonstrated with him on his duplicity that, although till he could repay what he had borrowed he must remain a Jacobite and a nominal adherent of the Stuarts, he was really a Hanoverian at heart, but that as soon as the money obligation was discharged he would return to his allegiance to the Whigs and the friends of the reigning sovereign.*

* This was an amusing illustration of the story which Dr. Johnson, somewhat turning the tables, tells us of his own biographer:—"James Boswell in the year 1745 was a fine boy, who wore a white cockade and prayed for King James till one of his uncles gave him a shilling on condition that he

The stay of the young Duke in Paris having been marked by a series of extravagances, to which the only parallel in our own age is to be found in the achievements of the late Marquis of Waterford, his Grace returned to England in the December of the same year; but not being of age, was unable to take his seat in the House of Peers. In Ireland, however, where the officials were not so squeamish, or at all events not so careful, and possibly more open to a bribe in the way of a promise of future support, he was admitted to the Upper House as Marquis of Catherlogh. He at once took up the side of the Government, of which he proved himself at all events an able and eloquent supporter, though how far an honest* one, it would be hard to say. However, he so distinguished himself in debate, that, although still under age, he obtained from George I. the much-coveted strawberry leaves of a ducal coronet, being created in 1718 Duke of Wharton. "If," observes a writer in the English Cyclopedia, "we

should pray instead for King George, which he accordingly did: so you see that Whigs of all ages are made in the same way."

* A letter from the Duke to Mr. Walpole, just before his arrival in Paris to place himself in communication with James III., couched in the most insincere phrases, will be found in Cox's "Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole," vol. ii.

put aside those bestowed on members, legitimate or illegitimate, of the royal family, this certainly was the most extraordinary creation of an English dukedom on record; and perhaps it may be regarded also as the most singular passage even in Wharton's remarkable career. Notwithstanding the practice which then prevailed of conferring that dignity with much less reserve than at present, the attainment of it under such circumstances must be held to bear strong testimony to the impression which the talents of the young nobleman made at his first appearance upon the stage of politics." It may be added that, in the patent of his dukedom, it was specially stated that the title was conferred upon him on account of his own personal merits, as well as those of his father before him.

It was probably not until after he had attained his majority, early in the year 1720, that he took his seat in the English House of Peers. His name first appears in the records of the debates of April 5 in that year, when he joined warmly in the opposition to the great Government measure of the South Sea Bill, on the motion for its committal: but no record of his speech exists, for there were no Parliamentary reporters in the House of Lords at the time. He also spoke frequently on the same subject at the explosion of

that wild scheme; and it was during a reply to a bitter invective from his lips, on February 4, 1721, that Lord Stanhope, then Secretary of State, burst a blood-vessel, which occasioned his death the next day. The Duke's next prominent appearance was as an opponent of the bill of pains and penalties against Bishop Atterbury; and this is the last speech of the Duke of Wharton's that is noticed in the "Parliamentary History."

His Grace's estate, worth, it is said, some £16,000 a year when he came to it, had by this time become so involved that his property was placed in the hands of trustees for the benefit of his creditors, and he was allowed only £1200 per annum. He now, perhaps with the view of adding to his income, launched out in a literary speculation, by the publication of a political paper called *The True Briton.* This undertaking lasted about six months, the paper appearing twice in each week; and during this time he seems to have exerted all his influence in every way against the Ministry and the Court. He even had himself enrolled as a member of the Wax-Chandlers' Company in the City of London, in order that he might speak and vote at common-halls and other civic meetings. He, however, soon got tired of such unprofitable work, and.

giving out that his intention was to retrench for a few years, he went off to the Continent in the early part of 1724. Proceeding first to Vienna, he made a distinguished figure at that court for a short time; then he set out for Madrid, where he dazzled the Spanish hemisphere, and, as we are told by his original biographer, "his arrival alarmed the English Minister so much that an express was sent from Madrid to London, under an apprehension that the Duke was received there in the character of a Minister of the English King; upon which his Grace was served with an order under the Privy Seal to summon him home."

This order the Duke entirely disregarded; "for," says Salmon, in the "Chronological Historian," "his Grace, being in a coach when it was delivered to him, contemptuously threw it into the street without opening it, and soon after, it is said, declared himself a Roman Catholic." "He endeavoured," continues the writer of his life, "to stir up the Spanish Court not only against the person that delivered the warrant, but against the Court of Great Britain itself, for exercising an act of authority, as he was pleased to call it, within the jurisdiction of his Catholic Majesty's kingdom. After this he acted openly in the service of the Stuarts, and appeared at

their Court at St. Germain, where he was received with many great marks of favour."

The subsequent career of this "spoiled child of fortune," as he was called by one of his coroneted brethren, can be attributed only to madness. His wife, poor girl!—from whom he had been torn away by his father and his "dominie," and whom he had since neglected on account of her having, contrary to his orders, brought her infant son up to London, where he died of the small pox—was carried to her grave in April, 1726. He was at Madrid when he heard of her death, and immediately offered his hand to a Miss O'Beirne or O'Byrne, — the orphan daughter of an Irish gentleman, a colonel in the Spanish service,—who was one of the maids of honour to the Queen of Spain. It is said that her Majesty, who always had a tender regard for the ladies of her court, refused her consent to the union; but the Duke threatened to kill himself out right, or, at all events, to starve himself to death, if she would not relent. At length the Queen gave way, and the marriage took place. It does not, however, appear to have been a very happy one, for the Duchess figures but very little as her husband's companion in his subsequent adventures.

We next hear of this wandering star at Rome,

where, though he had taken a dukedom from the Hanoverian King of England, he accepted the Order of the Garter from the son of James II., and openly assumed the title of Duke of Northumberland, formerly bestowed upon him by that personage. But it seems to have been soon discovered that he was likely to be more detriment than service to the cause in which he had thus enlisted himself. "As he could not always keep himself within the bounds of the Italian gravity," says his first somewhat tender biographer, who has been substantially followed in all the later accounts, "and had no employment to divert and amuse his over-active temper, he ran into his usual excesses, which being taken amiss, without falling into actual disgrace, it was thought advisable for him to remove from that city for the present." His next appearance was in the spring of 1727 at the siege of Gibraltar, where, having offered his services as a volunteer to the King of Spain, he was appointed by the Conde de las Torres one of his aides-de-camp. Here, if we may believe the story told of him, he was constantly in the trenches, exposing himself to the hottest of the fire; and probably this was true, for his friends declared that his conduct savoured rather of reckless bravado than of sober English

bravery. "He went one evening," it is related, "close to the walls, near one of the posts of the town, and either called to, dared, or threatened the soldiers of the garrison. They asked who he was: he readily answered, 'The Duke of Wharton:' and, though his Grace appeared there as an enemy, they suffered him to return to the trenches without firing one shot at him; had they done otherwise he must inevitably have perished." The only injury he received at the siege was a slight wound in his foot from the bursting of a grenade; and as a reward for what he had done, the King of Spain gave him a commission as colonel, attaching him at the same time to one of the Irish regiments. But this was small compensation for all that his frantic conduct lost him at home, where soon after a bill of indictment was preferred against him for an act of high treason, committed by appearing in arms before, and firing off cannon against, his Majesty's town of Gibraltar; a conviction followed in due course; and he lost by attainder both his peerage and all else that he possessed in his native country. Before this had happened, however, he had written to the Pretender, proposing to come back to Rome, but received for answer a strong exhortation rather to make the best of his way to England, and try if he could

accommodate matters there. Upon this he set out for Paris, where he arrived with his Duchess in May, 1728, and coolly again began to play his double game by placing himself in communication with the English King's ambassador and also with his enemies, thus keeping up a most insincere political flirtation. He waited upon the English Minister, Mr. Walpole, who received him with abundance of civility; but was not a little surprised when, at parting, his Grace told him he was going to dine with the Bishop of Rochester, the exiled Atterbury. Walpole replied that, if he meant to dine with that prelate, there was no reason why he should tell him of his intention, which in reality was an insult to his royal master. From Paris he went to Rouen, and here, when he first heard of his indictment for high treason, it is affirmed that he was visited by two emissaries from the English Minister, Walpole, who endeavoured to persuade him to avert his fate by making some sort of submission to the Government; but he remained deaf to all they could urge. In fact, he refused not only to write, but even to allow his friends to write in his name and on his behalf, to the King, though it was known that on so doing a pardon was ready for him.

The rest of the Duke's history would seem to

indicate that he was either actually mad, or constantly drunk; probably both suppositions were partially true. He extorted some further pecuniary assistance from the Pretender, and also from other quarters; but, notwithstanding these occasional supplies and his military pay, he was commonly involved in all the embarrassments of the most extreme poverty; for whenever he received any money, if it escaped his clamorous rabble of creditors, it was spent as fast as his still untamed profusion and taste for luxury and dissipation could squander it. He now moved about as whim, or hope, or sometimes desperation drove him: first to Paris, then to Orleans, then to Nantes, whence he took ship for Bilbao, and, leaving his Duchess there, went to join his regiment, which appears to have been stationed at Madrid. Some time after he is stated to have been in garrison at Barcelona, where he got into a quarrel with the Marquis de Risbourg, governor of Catalonia, the end of which was that he received orders from the Spanish Court not again to enter Barcelona, but to repair to his quarters at Lerida. On this we are told that, giving way to melancholy, he fell into a deep consumption; so that by the beginning of the year 1731 he had lost the use of his limbs, and was not able to walk from his bed to the fireside without as-

sistance. After about two months he rallied somewhat, from drinking a mineral water in the mountains of Catalonia; but in May, having gone with his regiment to Tarragona, he became again as ill as ever; and, going back to the mineral spring, "he fell," says his biographer, "into one of those fainting fits to which he had for some time been subject, in a small village, and was utterly destitute of all necessaries, till some charitable fathers of a Bernardine convent, which happened to be near the place where he lay, hearing of his miserable condition, offered him what assistance their house afforded."

After languishing in the convent for a week, he died there on the 31st of May, 1731, and was buried the next day by the monks in the same manner in which one of themselves would have been interred. He appears, by all accounts, to have made a very penitent and Christian end. Horace Walpole says of the death of the Duke, that the only account of it which he had seen, and which he gave in his "Royal and Noble Authors," came to him from "a very good hand," Captain Willoughby, who saw a picture of him in the habit in the convent where he died. He adds, "If it was a Bernardine convent, the gentleman might confound them; but, considering that there is no life of the Duke but book-

sellers' trash, it is much more likely that they made a mistake." The idea, however, which has been entertained by some writers, that on his death-bed the Duke became a monk, is too absurd to need repetition; for he was not only married, but had a wife living, and that wife was his second wife; so that had he been inclined to adopt the cowl, like Charles V., a double dispensation from Rome would have been necessary, and there was certainly no time even to apply for one, much less to procure one.

It is clear from what I have written above that the Duke was a man of a high order of intellect, though he proved a sad example of wasted talents. In his speeches in the House of Peers he was witty and apposite, and it is said that he was always listened to with pleasure, because of the fun which he was sure to introduce into the debates of that grave assembly. Occasionally, however, he met with a "set down." For instance, one day, as we learn from that storehouse of amusement, "The Percy Anecdotes," having reminded his brother Peers that in the history of Rome he had read of a bad Minister of State, one Sejanus, who had first tried to wean the Emperor's affections from his son, and then to carry him abroad, and so paved the way for the ruin of Rome, he found more than his match in

Lord Stanhope, who replied that the Romans had a law forbidding young men to speak in their Senate till they had learned good manners and propriety of language, quoting from the earlier pages of Roman history an instance of a great man and a patriot who had a son so profligate that he tried to betray the liberties of the republic, on which account his father had him whipped to death.

I have said that the Duke was a clever and able man; this he showed not only by his speeches, but by his pen. His biographer tells us that "much of an orator as he was, owing to the debates not being reported, he could not talk to the whole nation, and therefore he wrote and printed his thoughts twice a week in a paper called the *True Briton*, several thousands of which being weekly dispersed, the Duke was pleased to find the whole kingdom giving attention to him and admiring his style and writing." The *True Briton* ran to about seventy or eighty numbers, and was not a bad imitation of the *Spectator* and *Tatler*, which preceded it. Some of the papers are racy and witty, and many of them show a command of the English tongue which, if we may judge from original letters of the time, even from the pens of English peers, was very uncommon in the reign of George I.

To his friend Bishop Atterbury, when in the Tower, he wrote a really noble letter, which begins thus happily and wittily:

"My Lord,—While I can yet write to you, I must and I will correspond with you, till the very moment that it is felony (to do so), and when I can no longer write *to* you I will write *of* you."

The Duke also published a masterly letter to "his friends in Great Britain and Ireland," explaining his reasons for leaving his native country and espousing the cause of his royal master, "James III." In this letter he says that he had seen all the Whiggish principles taught him by his father broken, arbitrary laws introduced, the Convocation silenced, and orthodoxy discouraged; and that, having seen at Avignon the prince whose face "beamed with hereditary right," and who promised to redress the wrongs of the English, he had chosen to tender to him his allegiance.

The Duke of Wharton must have been more than prolific with his pen, if it be true that a bookseller named Ritson, towards the end of the last century, collected the Duke's poetical works, and prepared a memoir of their author, with a view to publication. At the sale of Ritson's books in 1803, the MS. was purchased by Mr. John Nichols; but I cannot find that it was ever

actually published, either in or out of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, of which the latter was the editor and proprietor. The late Dr. Langhorne also at one time hinted his intention of writing a life of Wharton "from materials in his possession," as may be seen by reference to "Effusions of Friendship and Fancy,"* A few poetical pieces by the Duke, or said to be by him, are to be found in the first volume of the "New Foundling for Wit." One of the best of them is an ode on the "Banishment of Cicero." Two pieces of poetry by the duke are published in Mr. Nichols' Collections. Walpole says that "an ode by him on 'The Fear of Death,' was printed in folio in 1739, 'communicated to the public by a merchant lately arrived from Spain;'" but I cannot find a copy of it in the British Museum. He also wrote a parody of a song sung at the Opera House by Mrs. Tofts on her leaving the English stage and returning to Italy. This is to be seen in "Ralph's Miscellaneous Poems," page 131. That, however, he wrote very much more than these few pieces in verse which have come down to us† is probable from the fact that a

* Vol. I. p. 25.

† In one of his ballads the Duke of Wharton bantered himeslf on his own want of bravery. I refer to a song which he made on being seized by the guard in St. James's Park for singing

bookseller's miscellany published during his lifetime was styled *Whartoniana.* One of his facetious poems, published (at a penny) at Edinburgh, in 1728, is entitled "The Drinking Match;" it is a mock-heroic ballad, commemorating a drinking bout at Edenhall, near Carlisle, the seat of Sir C. Musgrave. It is an imitation of "Chevy Chase," and is not without merit. As it is not generally known, I take the liberty of reproducing it here from a Collection of old Ballads.

THE DRINKING MATCH AT EDEN HALL.

" God prosper long from being broke
The *Luck of Eden-Hall;
A doleful drinking-bout I sing,
There lately did befall.

" To chase the spleen with cup and can,
Duke Philip took his way,
Babes yet unborn shall never see
The like of such a day.

" The stout and ever-thirsty duke
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure within Cumberland
Three live-long nights to take.

---

the Jacobite air "The king shall have his ain again." This ballad is quoted by Horace Walpole in his "Royal and Noble Authors:"

" The duke he drew out half his sword,
The guard drew out the rest."

* A pint bumper at Sir Christopher Musgrave's.

" Sir Musgrave too, of Martindale.
A true and worthy knight,
Eftsoon with him a bargain made,
In drinking to delight.

" The bumpers swiftly pass about,
Six in a hand went round ;
And with their calling for more wine,
They made the hall resound.

" Now when these merry tidings reach'd
The earl of Harold's ears,
And am I (quoth he, with an oath)
Thus slighted by my peers ?

" Saddle my steed, bring forth my boots,
I'll be with them right quick ;
And, master sheriff, come you too,
We'll know this scurvy trick.

" Lo, yonder doth earl Harold come ;
(Did one at table say) ;
'Tis well, reply'd the mettled duke,
How will he get away ?

" When thus the earl began : Great duke,
I'll know how this did chance,
Without inviting me, sure this
You did not learn in France.

" One of us two for this offence,
Under the board shall lie ;
I know thee well, a duke thou art,
So some years hence shall I.

" But trust me, Wharton, pity 'twere
So much good wine to spill,
As these companions here may drink,
Ere they have had their fill.

" Let thou and I, in bumpers full,
  This grand affair decide.
Accurs'd be he, duke Wharton said,
  By whom it is deny'd.

" To Andrews, and to Hotham fair,
  Many a pint went round,
And many a gallant gentleman
  Lay sick upon the ground.

" When, at the last, the duke espy'd
  He had the earl secure,
He ply'd him with a full pint-glass,
  Which laid him on the floor.

" Who never spoke more words than these
  After he downwards sunk,
My worthy friends, revenge my fall,
  Duke Wharton sees me drunk.

" Then, with a groan, duke Philip held
  The sick man by the joint,
And said, Earl Harold, 'stead of thee,
  Would I had drank this pint.

" Alack! my very heart doth bleed,
  And doth within me sink;
For surely a more sober earl
  Did never swallow drink.

" With that the sheriff in a rage,
  To see the earl so smit,
Vow'd to revenge the dead-drunk peer
  Upon renown'd Sir Kit.

Then stepp'd a gallant 'squire forth,
  Of visage thin and pale,
Lloyd was his name, and of Gang-hall,
  Fast by the river Swale;

" Who said he would not have it told
Where Eden river ran,
That unconcern'd he should sit by;
So, sheriff, I'm your man.

" Now when these tidings reach'd the room,
Where the duke lay in bed,
How that the 'squire suddenly
Upon the floor was laid:

" O heavy tidings! (quoth the duke)
Cumberland witness be,
I have not any captain more
Of such account as he.

" Like tidings to earl Thanet came,
Within as short a space,
How that the under-sheriff too
Was fallen from his place.

" Now God be with him (said the earl)
Sith 'twill no better be,
I trust I have within my town,
As drunken knights as he.

" Of all the number that were there,
Sir Bains he scorn'd to yield;
But with a bumper in his hand,
He stagger'd o'er the field.

" Thus did this dire contention end,
And each man of the slain
Were quickly carried off to sleep—
Their senses to regain.

" God bless the king, the duchess fat,
And keep the land in peace,
And grant that drunkenness henceforth
'Mong noblemen may cease.

"And likewise bless our royal prince,
The nation's other hope,
And give us grace for to defy
The Devil and the Pope."

As might be expected, all sorts of stories—some true, and others perhaps false—have been fathered on the individual who has been used by authors for a century and a half "to point a moral or adorn a tale," as the "eccentric," the "witty," the "wanton," the "depraved," the "licentious," and the "profligate" Duke of Wharton. I will select a few, if only to show that in his Grace's character virtues and vices were blended in close proximity, and therefore in the strongest contrasts. Dr. Young published a poem entitled "The Love of Fame the Universal Passion." The Duke read it, and was so pleased with it that he sent the author a cheque for £2000—which his Grace's bankers duly honoured, his account at the time being satisfactory. On one of his brother peers crying out at this extravagance, the Duke coolly remarked that the poem would have been cheap at double the price, and that he only regretted that he could not send him a second cheque for the same amount on its reaching a second edition. Lord Stair, when ambassador at Paris, on receiving a visit from the Duke, began to lecture him on his eccentric

conduct, and to preach about the virtues of his father, the Marquis. The Duke, thinking this rather cool, even from one who was many years his senior, reminded his lordship that he too had a worthy and deserving parent, in whose steps he trusted that he also would follow. The wit of the reply lay in the fact that Lord Stair's father had done anything rather than distinguish himself by his honesty. On one occasion, when an industrious fit seized him, the Duke translated the first book of "Télémaque," and wrote to his friends that he had been "conversing with his friends Telemachus and Mentor, in order to persuade them to open a campaign against all enemies to common sense."

On the day before making his speech on behalf of Atterbury in the House of Lords, it is said that he went to Chelsea to see the Prime Minister, Sir R. Walpole, professing to be anxious to set himself right with the Court. The clever and crafty Minister was taken in for once, for he went through the whole case with him, pointing out the strong and weak points. The Duke walked quietly home, sat up drinking all night, and the next day spoke for the bishop in the most masterly manner. It should be mentioned that the Duke's father, in one of his fits of anger, had foretold that if his son learned his

faith and his politics from Atterbury, he would be sure to take to wrong courses, and would be ruined in the end. Pennant, writing in the latter part of last century, tells us that he found some persons who lived near the Duke's place. Wharton Hall, on the borders of Yorkshire and Westmoreland, and who spoke of his dissolute conduct as being still remembered in the neighbourhood, adding, "In all his acts he showed an equal resolve to defy the laws of God and man, especially by hunting on Sundays."

We have said that, although the Duke had nominally an income of between £15,000 and £20,000 a year before he was more than just of age, he was obliged to come to an arrangement with his creditors, and to live upon an allowance of £1200 annually. With a wife, and a variety of vices also, to support, it is not to be wondered at that he soon got into debt, and that he was hunted by "duns" in France, just as he was in England. On one occasion, while in the north of France, he found himself hard pressed by one of these gentlemen, but he was clever enough, though hampered by the presence of his Duchess, to take a small boat and drop quietly down the Loire, at the mouth of which river he took his passage by a ship to Bilbao, in Spain, where his enemies could not or dared not follow him.

That in his early years the Duke stood high in the opinion of the public may be inferred from the fact that in the dedication pages of two separate publications by different authors he is spoken of as being "above flattery and above praise, conspicuous for universal learning, steadfastness of soul, contempt of power and grandeur, love of his country, zeal for liberty, and the desire of doing good to mankind—in a word, as *non sibi sed patriæ natus*." And yet in a satirical poem on "The Duke of Wharton's Wens," in the Harleian MSS. (6933), a lover, after giving a list of other supposed impossibilities, speaks of forgetting his lady love,

> "When Wharton's just and learns to pay his debts."

Either, therefore, the praise of the writer of the dedication was most fulsome and venal, or else the Duke was cruelly maligned by the last named scribbler. In all probability the latter was really the case, for one of his contemporaries remarks that "money always seemed to him like a disease of which he could not too soon cure himself." This surely does not look as if the Duke was really dishonest or unjust, or even ungenerous.

"It is difficult," remarks Horace Walpole in his "Royal and Noble Authors," "to give an ac-

count of the works of so mercurial a man, whose library was a tavern, and women of pleasure his muses. A thousand sallies of his imagination may have been lost, for he wrote for fame no more than he acted for it." Perhaps Horace Walpole on this occasion, as on many others, "hit the right nail on the head." The Duke must have been indeed "mercurial." "Like Buckingham and Rochester, Philip, Duke of Wharton, comforted all the grave and dull," says Horace Walpole, by throwing away the brightest profusion of parts on witty fooleries, debaucheries, and scrapes, which may mix graces with a great character, but can never make one." Mr. Seward remarks that the character of Lovelace in "Clarissa" has always been supposed to be that of this nobleman; and the supposition is rendered the more probable as Richardson printed the *True Briton* in which the Duke wrote constantly.

The Duke lived for some years at Twickenham, at a place called Grove House, which after his death was occupied by the younger Craggs, the friend of Addison, Steele, and Tickell, and the opponent of Sir Robert Walpole in Parliament. The house, which was pulled down many years ago, is said to have been originally built by Inigo Jones for the Earl of Rochester. At Twickenham he was the neighbour and acquaintance of

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who wrote an epilogue for a tragedy which he began on "Mary Queen of Scots." This poem was never finished, and all of it that remains is a brace of couplets preserved in a "Miscellany" like "flies in amber." They run as follows :

> "Sure were I free, and Norfolk were a pris'ner,
> I'd fly with more impatience to his arms
> Than the poor Israelite on the serpent gaz'd
> When life was the reward of every look."

Well and wittily is it remarked by Bolton in his "Extinct Peerage" that "he succeeded his father, Thomas, in all his titles and abilities, but in none of his virtues." And it is indeed strange that the man who could give £2000 as a present to a poet, and administer a witty rebuff to an officious ambassador, could be guilty of such an unmeaning trick as knocking up his guardian in the middle of the night, in order to borrow a pin; or at another time in France serenading respectable persons at their country châteaux, one of whom very nearly killed him by a stray shot, mistaking him for a robber.

With regard to the authorities on which I have drawn for my materials in the above sketch, I should say that, besides Walpole's "Royal and Noble Authors," I have referred mainly to a scarce work, entitled "Memoirs of the Life of

his Grace Philip, late Duke of Wharton, by an Impartial Hand." It is prefixed to two octavo volumes published in 1732, entitled "The Life and Writings of Philip, late Duke of Wharton," but which contain only the seventy-four numbers of the *True Briton* and his speech on the bill of pains and penalties against Atterbury, the paging of which is a continuation of that of the *True Briton*, although it has a title-page of its own, dated 1724. There is another publication, in two volumes 8vo. without date, entitled "The Poetical Works of Philip, late Duke of Wharton, and others of the Wharton Family, and of the Duke's Intimate Acquaintance, particularly Lord Bolingbroke, Dean Swift, Lady Wharton, Doctor Delany, Lord Dorset, Major Pack, the Hon. Mrs. Wharton, &c." These two volumes, however, appear to have been all printed in 1727 (before the Duke's death), with the exception only of this general title-page and a life of the Duke, which is substantially the same with that noticed above, and is here stated to be "communicated by a person of quality, and one of his Grace's intimate friends." The first volume contains very little that is even attributed to the Duke; but in the second are some letters in prose, addressed to Lady Wharton, his father's first wife, and her

poetical paraphrase of the "Lamentations of Jeremiah."

The following vindication of the Duke of Wharton is to be found in a volume of scarce broadsides in the British Museum. It bears no printer's name, but only the date 1728; it was probably printed in Dublin. It will need no explanation or commentary to those who have read the story as I have told it above.

"Pray isn't queer
That a wild Peer
So known for rakish tricks
As Wharton, should
At last be good
And kiss the crucifix?

"I needs must call
It wondrous all
That he who spurned the Creed
Shall grow devout
And tack about
To penance at Madrid.

"What less could he
Than thus agree
With Chevalier Divino,
Who gave him two
Brave titles new
But could not make him dine, oh!

"This Duke is then
Duk'd o'er again

And glorious shines his garter;
What honours more
Has fate in store
Ere Tyburn dubs him martyr!

" Old Thomas, rise,
And if you've eyes
To light you through the shades,
See, see, your son
How he has run
From beggary to beads!

" 'Mong jilts and lasses
Of all classes,
When he was spent and gone,
Oh, then he mourned
Beseeched and turned
To her of Babylon.

" And have you not
Old gracious Trot,
One Donna right and bright,
That might solàce
In such a case
The conscience of your knight?

" Our Chevalier
Is now so bare
He hasn't to give alms:
Then, mother, take
For Jemmy's sake,
Some care of Wharton's qualms.

" No sooner sought
But out was brought

An Abigail of rank ;
  And so he played
  With this same maid
A second silly prank.

" He wed the lass
  He took to Mass
All in an errant whim,
  And did dispense
  With marriage pence
As she dispensed with him.

" Was nothing given ?
  Th' affair was even ;
He settled nothing on her :
  But he's a Peer
  Of honour rare,
And she's—a Dame of Honour."

It should be added, by way of conclusion, that although the Dukedom and Marquisate of Wharton have ceased to exist any longer by reason of the attainder passed upon the nobleman whose freaks I have here related ; there are still those who claim to be descended from the older barons of Wharton, from whom the Duke was sprung, but whose rights the attainder of their descendant could not affect. So far as I can learn, the Barony is not extinct, but dormant, or rather " in abeyance," out of which it may please Her Majesty at any moment to call it by a stroke of her pen in favour of any one of the rival claimants of

it, namely: Lady Willoughby de Eresby and Aveland, Mr. A. Baillie-Cochrane, as representative (through the Lockharts of Carmwarth) of Philadelphia, youngest daughter of the fourth Lord, and Mr. Charles K. Kemeys Tynte, of Halsewell, Somersetshire, in right of his descent from Mary her elder sister. Mr. Tynte's father preferred a claim for his peerage about thirty or forty years ago, but his claim has never been decided yet by the House of Lords.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF BUCKINGHAM.

IF I remember right, Sir Bernard Burke, in his work on the "Vicissitudes of Families," draws attention to the fact that a considerable number of our ducal houses are largely built up by the accumulation of a succession of wealthy heiresses. This is eminently the case, as we all know, of the Leveson-Gowers, the Bentincks, the Cavendishes, and the Pelham-Clintons; but it is especially true of the noble house which now holds the double coronet of Buckingham and Chandos, and whose male members, though paternally they are Grenvilles, can scarcely know by what surname to call themselves in the perplexity which must arise between "Temple" and "Nugent," "Brydges" and "Chandos"—all which names they have taken within the last century and a half, in addition to their own, quarter-

ing the respective arms of at least four other noble houses together with their own coat, that of "Grenville of Wootton."

The Grenvilles, as we learn from the visitations of the heralds and from the county histories, have been seated, as landed but untitled gentlemen, on their hereditary lands at Wootton, near Aylesbury, since the reign of Henry I. They were county magistrates and squires and Members of Parliament, and generation after generation served the office of high sheriff; but they rose no higher. They did not care for the venal honour of those baronetcies which were scattered far and wide among the owners of broad acres by our first Stuart king; and they lived, if not in retirement, at all events out of the way of such court honours as knighthood. The first member of the House of Grenville who appears to have mounted on the lowest step of that ladder which led ultimately to the dukedom was Mr. Richard Grenville, M.P. for Andover and Buckingham, who in the reign of Queen Anne, 1710, married Miss Hester Temple, the eldest daughter of Sir Richard Temple of Stowe, and ultimately her father's and her brother's heiress. Her father had been a leading Member of the House of Commons at the time of Charles II.; and her brother, who had served as lieutenant-general

under Marlborough in the Low Countries, was created Lord Cobham, with remainder to herself and the issue male of her marriage with Mr. Grenville. Like misfortunes, honours and coronets seldom or never come singly; and it was only a few months after carrying the Temple property, including the broad acres of Stowe, into her husband's family, that the lady was created in her own right Countess Temple.

Her son and successor, thus enriched and loaded with honours, became a leading statesman in the reign of George II., under whom he held the office of Lord Privy Seal. The King, however, could not endure him, probably on account of a certain active part which he took in public affairs at the time when John Wilkes and His Majesty were at variance. If, however, the King did not like him, he feared him; for Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells us that the King, unable to refuse him the Garter, behaved with positive rudeness at the moment when he ought to have fastened round his neck and knees the blue badge of the order, which he flung upon him before his Court with a reluctance which he took no pains to disguise, "muttering indistinctly some expression of aversion, and turning his back at the instant." On his death the Earldom of Temple passed to his nephew, George, the third Earl, who in turn

mounted another step on the ladder of promotion by his marriage with an heiress the Lady Mary Elizabeth Nugent, only child of Robert, Earl Nugent in the Peerage of Ireland, a cadet of the House of Westmeath, who, having sat for several years in the English House of Commons, became successively a Lord of the Treasury, one of the Vice-Treasurers of Ireland, and first Lord of Trade and Plantations.

This nobleman appears to have been a singular character. He was something of a courtier, and something also of a bad poet; and had abandoned the ancient faith of his forefathers, not to the improvement of his morals. Glover speaks of him as "a jovial Irishman, who had left Ireland and Popery for the Protestant religion, money, and a widow." His second wife appears to have combined in herself, at all events, the last two qualifications of wealth and widowhood. She was the sister and heiress of Craggs, the well-known Secretary of State in the reign of George I., who lies buried in Westminster Abbey. "She brought him, however, neither felicity nor issue," says Wraxall, "but she brought him the seat and estate of Gosfield Hall, in Essex, one of the finest properties in that county;" and he showed, we may add, his appreciation of the fact by taking the name of Craggs, and prefixing it to his signature as Lord Nugent. He had the further

good fortune to get rid of her speedily, and to marry another widow, the Countess of Berkeley, by whom he had a daughter, whom he endowed with the wealth of his second wife.

As a proof that Lord Nugent was a wit in his way, we may remind our readers of an old story told of him when a Member of the House of Commons. A bill being introduced for the purpose of securing the better watching of London at night, one of the clauses went to propose that the "Charleys" should be *compelled to sleep in the daytime*; whereon his lordship got up, and, with a spice of dry humour, suggested that he "should like to be personally included in the bill along with the Charleys, for that he was so constantly tormented with the gout that he could not sleep at night, and would be very thankful for a little rest by day." On another occasion, at a party at Lord Temple's house in Pall Mall, he made a bet that he would spit in Lord Bristol's hat. He won his bet, but received a challenge the next morning; and was forced to apologise rather than fight a duel in a cause which, however it ended, would have been sure to expose him to ridicule. The story will be found at full length in the pages of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall.

But we have not yet half done with the

heiresses who have jointly built up the House of Grenville. As we have said, George, Lord Temple, secured as his wife the only child of Earl Nugent, whose name he prefixed to his own; and on his father-in-law's death he inherited his peerage and his Irish estates, having already been created Earl of Clare, and raised by the favour of the King to the Marquisate of Buckingham.

His son, Richard, the second Marquis, followed the example set by his father and his great-grandfather, and acquired the estates of the ducal House of Chandos by his marriage with the heiress of that illustrious family. Thus Wootton, and Stowe, and Gosfield, and Canons—four magnificent estates, each of them enough, and more than enough, patrimony for a Continental prince—all met in one person, his son and successor, who was raised to the title of Duke of Buckingham and Chandos at the coronation of King George IV., the political influence which he exercised in virtue of his immense wealth and possessions, and his connection with the Pitts and Lord Grenville, being such as to empower him to dictate to the existing Ministry the terms on which he would give them his support in Parliament. Gosfield Hall, having afforded a home for royalty in exile—for it was

at one time the residence of Louis XVIII.—has passed into other hands, and is now owned by an Essex manufacturer; and, though it is still kept up pretty nearly in the same condition in which it stood a century ago, it is not likely at present to be the rendezvous of political parties, as it was in the good old days of George III., when dukes, earls, and marquises met there in troops to discuss politics, and drink the port wine stored up in Lord Nugent's cellars.

Canons too—that lordly house near Edgware, with all its glories and greatness—is gone, destroyed by fire. Stowe too—yes, even princely Stowe—in our own time suffered a temporary eclipse, its contents being disposed under George Robbins's hammer; while its owner died not at Stowe, but in apartments at a London hotel!

The present Duke, however, by careful and judicious management of the wreck of this princely property, has so far brought matters round, as to have taken up his residence at Stowe again, though he made for many years his home at the old family estate at Wootton. He, too, has married the only daughter of a Buckinghamshire gentleman of wealth and property; and although, owing to the fact that his Grace has no son to succeed him, the ducal title of Buckingham, with its usually fatality, seems likely again

to suffer eclipse—possibly at some distant day —yet he has a sister and daughters who under the fortunate provisions of the patent of creation, will inherit and transmit to their children for many generations to come the Earldom of Temple, which upwards of a century ago was first bestowed on his great-great-great-grandmother, Hester Temple of Stowe, whose name is recorded above.

On the last page I have alluded to the singular fatality which for many centuries has attended the title of Buckingham. If we may rely upon the authority of the "Historic Peerage" of Sir Harris Nicolas, it appears that in the year in which the battle of Hastings was fought, the Earldom of Buckingham was conferred by the Conqueror on Walter Gifford, with whose son and successor it ended before a century had passed. In the reign of Henry I. we find the Earldom vested in Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, but apparently only for a time, as it does not seem to have been claimed by any other member of that family. In 1377 we find Thomas Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, the youngest son of King Edward III., created Earl of Buckingham; but twenty years afterwards he was murdered, and in 1399 the title became extinct by his son's decease. Again, in 1444 we

find the title revived, this time however, as a dukedom, in the person of Humphrey Stafford, son of the Earl of Stafford, by Anne Plantagenet. sister and heiress of Humphrey, the last earl. As every reader of history is aware, he was made Lord High Constable of England, but he was killed at the Battle of Northampton; his grandson and heir, the second duke, like his predecessor, was High Constable of England, but in the year 1483 was beheaded for high treason, when the title was forfeited. Three years later, however, by royal favour the dukedom was revived in the person of his son, who also filled the office of High Constable; but he too was attainted and beheaded by Henry VIII., when all the honours of the Staffords were forfeited, never to be restored. They

> "Fell like Lucifer,
> Never to rise again."

A century passes by, and the first Stuart holds the throne on which the Tudors sat. George Villiers, the King's favourite, so familiar to the readers of English history and of Sir Walter Scott by his court nickname of "Steenie," is created Earl, and Marquis, and presently Duke, of Buckingham. But the same curse follows the honour, and dogs its holder to his death. Knight of the Garter and Lord High Admiral of England,

my Lord Duke, you may be; but for all that you cannot escape your destiny; and the visitor who walks round the streets of Portsmouth is still shown the house in which you met your sudden and cruel end more than a century and a half ago, by the hand of the assassin Felton, whose name is still held in execration, though your own character as an individual is none of the best and sweetest—if, at least, it is still true that

> "Only the memories of the just
> Smell sweet and blossom in their dust."

The ducal title was inherited by his son, George Villiers, but became extinct at his death without issue in 1687. His grandmother, who had received a patent of the title in duplicate, had already died, and her title too died with her.

I pass on. Another sovereign is on the throne, and in 1703 I find John Sheffield, Marquis of Normanby, created Duke of Buckingham; and we cannot help entertaining a hope that the title may be found in this new family to be exempt from its old fatality. But no; the story is the same. On the death of the first Duke, in 1720, the coronet and strawberry leaves devolve upon his only son Edmund, who dies under age and unmarried, and for the eighth time I am obliged to record the extinction of the honour.

The Marquisate of Buckingham, created by George III. in 1784, has now been held by four and the dukedom by three successive generations of the Grenvilles; but the present Duke has no male issue, and, as both his Grace and his father before him were only sons, there are no younger branches in remainder of succession. In all probablity, therefore, the title of Buckingham, on the decease of the present Duke, will have to be relegated to the Extinct Peerages of Messrs. Lodge and Burke.

THE NOBLE HOUSE OF STAFFORD.

THE Prince and Princess of Wales, living as they do in the same county with the head of the family of Jerningham, whose park of Costessy, or Cossey, is not above an hour's journey by railway from Sandringham, ought really to take a more than common interest in the fortunes of Lord Stafford. And if my readers ask me why and wherefore, I would answer, because, if we may trust the heralds and peerage makers, the paternal line of the Jerninghams is said to be of Danish origin. At all events, Weever writes as follows in his "Ancient Funeral Monuments:"

"This name has been of exemplarie note before the Conquest, if you will believe thus much that followeth, taken out of the pedigree of the Jerninghams by a judicious gentleman: Anno

MXXX., Canute, King of Denmarke and of England, after his return from Rome, brought divers captains and souldiers from Denmarke, whereof the greatest part were christened here in England, and began to settle themselves here, of whom Jernegan, or Jernegham, and Jernihings, now Jennings, were of the most esteeme with Canute, who gave unto the said Jerningham certaine manors in Norfolke, and to Jennings certain manors lying upon the seaside near Harwich, in regard of their former services done to his father, Swenus, or Swene, King of Denmarke."

Among our county historians few hold a higher position than Blomefield, the compiler of the history of Norfolk; and he confirms, or at all events follows, the statement of Weever, telling us that the Jerninghams derive their pedigree from one Jernagan, who was settled at Horham-Jernegan, in Suffolk, as far back as the reigns of Stephen, and whose grandson, Sir Hubert Fitz-Jernegan, took part in the rebellion of the Barons against King John, but submitted to Henry III., and obtained the royal pardon. His grandson, who married the heiress of the Fitzosberts and widow of a member of the House of Walpole, removed from Horam to Stonham-Jernegan, giving his name to the manor and parish in which he held his broad acres. His

son acquired property at Somerleyton and elsewhere along the borders of Suffolk and Norfolk, in right apparently of his mother, and became the owner of large estates in the last named county.

From him was descended in direct line Sir Henry Jernegan, or Jerningham, (as the name came in process of time to be spelt,) who is described by Sir Bernard Burke as "of Huntingfield and Wingfield in Suffolk, and of Costessy in Norfolk." His name is known to history as the first of the gallant knights and squires of the Eastern counties to declare openly for Queen Mary as the rightful heir to the throne on the death of Edward VI.; and the Queen no sooner found herself firmly established in St. James's than she appointed him her Master of the Horse, and commanded him to be sworn a member of her Privy Council. From Queen Mary he obtained also large grants of lands, not only in the Eastern districts, such as Wingfield and Costessy, but also in the West Country," in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. He, however, fixed his chief residence at Costessy, near Norwich, and founded the magnificent structure known as Costessy Hall, where his descendents have mostly resided from that time. He subsequently rebuilt Costessy in the style which marked his age, and so enlarged

it that he was able to entertain Queen Elizabeth there in one of her royal progresses. But the fact that he clung firmly to the ancient faith stood in the way of his obtaining any advancement at the Lady Elizabeth's hands.

The grandson of this gentleman, in spite of belonging to a proscribed religion, inheriting a property which had been increased by the fortunate marriages of his father and grandfather with members of the noble Houses of Dacre and Throgmorton, was created a baronet in 1621. Like many another country gentleman who was loyal to the Stuart cause, he suffered severely in purse and person during the civil wars; and we are told by Blomefield that during the time of Cromwell the park at Costessy was let to go to rack and ruin, the mansion and the domain being let to a "Roundhead" farmer, while the deer in the noble park were destroyed, just as was the case also at Wardour Castle.

After the Restoration the fortunes of the family were gradually retrieved by careful and judicious management, and Costessy once more took rank among the fine mansions of Norfolk. The Jerninghams, however, did not appear much at the Court of the Stuart or Brunswick sovereigns, living quietly and contentedly within their own park gates, and practising the old-fashioned habits of

hospitality and care for their tenantry. It is almost needless to add that they have been Roman Catholics without a break; and in the days of the penal laws their house was often searched for crucifixes, beads, and other proofs of "recusancy." In fact, I believe there is still to be seen the priest's hiding-place in the panelled walls of Costessy—now commonly called Cossey—just as is the case in so many other Roman Catholic mansions of the Tudor and Stuart times.

But if this be so, my readers will naturally wonder how the Jerninghams came to inherit the historic barony of Stafford. I will tell them, drawing for my materials on "Burke's Peerage." Sir George, the fifth baronet, married in 1733 Miss Mary Plowden, eldest daughter and eventual heiress of a Roman Catholic gentleman in Shropshire, Mr. Francis Plowden, Comptroller of the Household to King James II., and of his wife Mary, daughter of the Hon. John Stafford Howard, younger son of the unfortunate Sir William Howard, K.B., Viscount and Baron Stafford, who was beheaded and attainted in 1680. This nobleman was a staunch Roman Catholic, and had adhered to the royal cause in the great civil war. His services, however, had, as he considered, been very inadequately rewarded, and he frequently voted against the Court. He was first

accused by the infamous Titus Oates on the 23rd of October, 1678, as a party to the notorious Popish plot, and was committed to the Tower on the 30th of that month, along with several other Roman Catholic noblemen. His trial, however, was twice postponed in consequence of a dissolution of Parliament, so that it was not until the 30th of November, 1680, that he was brought to the bar of the House of Lords on a charge of high treason. The trial lasted seven days, and terminated in a verdict of guilty; four of the Howards, his own relations, to their disgrace, having voted for his condemnation. The old Viscount, then in his seventieth year, made an excellent defence, and, by himself and his witnesses, proved discrepancies, flat contradictions, and perjury in the evidence of his accusers; yet the Lords found him guilty by a majority of fifty-five to thirty-one. Charles, who had been present at the trial in Westminster Hall, and who was convinced that Lord Stafford was innocent of the imputed treason, yet signed his death-warrant, with no other mitigation than that he should be simply beheaded. Though a Roman Catholic, he employed Burnet "to comfort him by his instructions touching those points on which all Christians agree." His lordship was led forth to execution on Tower Hill on the 29th of December;

he suffered with great firmness, protesting his innocence with his last breath. As he left no son, the viscountcy became extinct at his death; but it so happened that both he and his wife had been created baron and baroness Stafford in 1640, with remainder to their children, male and female. This title was restored in 1824, by the reversal of the attainder on the petition of Sir George W. Jerningham, in accordance with a report of the Committee of Privileges in the House of Peers. Five years, however, even then had to pass away before Lord Stafford was enabled to take his seat on the Barons' Bench in the House of Peers, on account of his adherence to the Roman Catholic faith.

The day, however, came at last, on the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill; and in May, 1829, the Parliamentary oaths were subscribed by "the Right Hon. George William Stafford-Jerningham, Lord Stafford, Chevalier," along with the rest of the newly and emancipated Catholic Peers.

The family of Stafford, one of the most illustrious and powerful in England, has figured conspicuously in the annals of the country. Its founder was one of the Bagots, who were landowners in Staffordshire at the time of the Conquest. Its principal historical personages are Humphrey de Stafford, a zealous partisan of

Henry VI., who was created Duke of Buckingham in 1465, and who along with his eldest son fell in the Wars of the Roses; and Henry, his second son and successor in the title, the friend and accomplice, and afterwards victim, of Richard III., whose plots and tragic death have been immortalized by Shakespeare. The sad story of Edward Stafford, the third duke, Lord High Constable of England, may also be read in the pages of the great dramatist. He, as everybody knows, imprudently quarreled with Wolsey, who trumped up a charge of high treason against him, upon which the Duke was found guilty, and beheaded on Tower Hill. When the Emperor Charles V. heard of his execution, he is reported to have exclaimed, "A butcher's dog has killed the finest *buck* in England." The ducal title became extinct by its attainder; and on the death of Henry, thirteenth Baron Stafford, in 1637, the barony was presumed to have descended to Roger Stafford, who, though he was great-grandson of the third Duke of Buckingham, and also of Margaret Plantagenet, daughter and heiress of George, Duke of Clarence, and niece of Edward IV., had sunk to the lowest condition, and during much of an unhappy life bore the surname of Fludyer or Floyd. On his death, unmarried, in 1640, the male line of this great old family became extinct. His sister

married a joiner, of Newport, in Shropshire, and they had a son who followed the trade of a cobbler. Meanwhile the sister and sole heiress of Henry Stafford, the thirteenth and last Baron Stafford of the creation of 1299—had married Sir William Howard, K.B. son of the twentieth Earl of Arundel. On the death of Lord Stafford in 1637, the title was presumed to have devolved on Roger Stafford, as above mentioned; but with respect to this "claimant" a curious story is told by Sir Harris Nicolas in his "Historic Peerage." Though his father had been restored, yet on the son claiming it as his successor, he is said to have been unjustly denied the dignity on account of his poverty. Accordingly in 1640, by fine levied at Westminster, this Roger Stafford surrendered into the King's hands the barony of Stafford, in consideration of £800 to be paid to him by the Sovereign. The surrender, however, Sir H. Nicolas holds, was clearly illegal; but as he died unmarried the male line of this creation is presumed to have come to an end when the barony of 1547 became extinct. On Roger Stafford submitting his title to the barony to the decision of King Charles (we are told by another historian) His Majesty declared that this luckless scion of a great race, having no part in the family inheritance, "nor any lands or means whatsoever," should make a resignation of all

his claims to the title. A deed of surrender having been accordingly enrolled, in 1639 the King conferred anew the dignity on Sir William Howard, as above stated, and soon after elevated him to the rank of Viscount Stafford. The original barony of Stafford, it may be added, was created in 1299—thirty-five years after that of the premier baron, Lord De Ros.

Henry Stafford, the Duke's son and heir, was "restored in blood" by an Act of Parliament passed in the first year of Edward VI., by which it was enacted "that the said Henry, Lord Stafford, and the heirs male of his body, may be taken and reputed as Lords Stafford, and that the said Henry be restored in blood;" and accordingly his lordship was summoned to Parliament from 1548 to 1558. He married Ursula, daughter of Sir Richard Pole, K.G., and of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, niece of Edward IV. He was thus great-grandfather of the Mary Stafford above mentioned, who married Sir William Howard, Lord Stafford; and accordingly, in virtue of this descent, the present Lord Stafford claims or has a right to claim the revival in his favour of the original barony of 1299; in which case, if his lordship should be successful now or hereafter, the historic name of Stafford would stand fourth on the peerage roll of England.

A proof of the utter oblivion into which our Roman Catholic nobles had fallen during the continuation of the penal laws may be found in the title of Stafford, which was granted in 1786 as a marquisate to Earl Gower, one of the leading members of Lord Bute's Cabinet, and father of the first Duke of Sutherland. The fact, however, is that the title was not dead, but only dormant, and quite within the power of any holder of the crown to call back into life in favour of the Staffords or their descendants, even in the female line. Within forty years the title was actually revived, and since that time there have been two Lords Stafford; just as during the temporary eclipse of the Courtenays, Earls of Devonshire, that title was bestowed as a dukedom on the House of Cavendish.

We have heard so much of late about claimants and impostors, that I hardly know whether my readers will feel an interest in being informed or reminded, as the case may be, that for several years Sir George Jerningham, before attaining the peerage as Lord Stafford, was greatly annoyed by a Mr. Richard Stafford Cooke, who claimed to to be heir of the ancient barony, and accordingly instituted expensive lawsuits to eject him from the property. In this, however, he was defeated, though—like another Orton—he attempted to

proceed so far as to take a formal possession of the old baronial estates in Staffordshire and Shropshire, which happily still appertain to the family.

Sir Harris Nicolas, in order to put clearly the exact position of the several titles of Stafford which either exist or have existed in this family, thus sums up the matter: 1. The ancient barony created by writ of summons in 1298, and the earldom of 1351 were both forfeited by the attainder of Edward, Duke of Buckingham (ninth Baron and eighth Earl of Stafford), in 1522. 2. The barony of 1547 became extinct, as shown above, in or about 1640. 3. The barony of 1640 became forfeited by attainder in 1678, but is now vested in the present lord in consequence of the reversal of the attainder and the resolution of the House of Lords. 4. The viscountcy created in 1840 was forfeited by attainder, but also became extinct by the failure of issue male. 5. The dignities of Baroness and Countess of Stafford, created in 1640 in favour of Mary, Viscountess Stafford, did not descend to her issue in consequence of the attainder of her husband, and the higher title became extinct at her death. 6. The earldom of Stafford, created in 1688 in favour of Henry Stafford Howard, became extinct in 1762 on the failure of the male line of his brothers.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF RICHMOND.

IF any one of my readers will take the trouble to cast his eye over the list of dukedoms in Lodge's or Burke's "Peerage," he will see that for four of the existing coronets adorned with ducal strawberry leaves—in other words, for nearly a fifth of the entire body of our dukes—King Charles II. is responsible, inasmuch as the first possessors of the titles of Richmond, Grafton, St. Albans, and Buccleuch were the sons of that sovereign by one or other of his many alliances, which I fear that I must scarcely dignify by the name of even morganatic unions. For instance, the first Duke of Buccleuch, better known in history as James Duke of Monmouth, was born to Charles by Miss Lucy Walters; the first Duke of St. Albans, by "Nell Gwynne;" the first Duke of Grafton, by Barbara

Villiers; while the founder of the ducal house of Richmond was Charles Lennox, the son of His Majesty by Mademoiselle Louise de Querouaille, a French lady, who, having been maid of honour to his sister, the Duchess of Orleans, was sent over to England by Louis XIV. with the not very creditable mission of watching over French interests at the Court of St. James's—in other words, of making our worthless Sovereign a paid pensioner under "Le Grand Monarque."

Besides the above-named ducal titles so freely dispensed by the second Charles, it would seem that similar honours, which have since become extinct, were bestowed by him at various times on various favourites; and the names of the Duchess of Cleveland, the Duchess of Portsmouth, and Lady Castlemaine will readily occur to the student of the history of England under the Stuarts in the list of ennobled favourites who basked in the sunshine of royalty, and whose claim to such honours, to say the least, was not based on virtue.

"In 1670," says Burnet, "the King declared a new mistress, and made her Duchess of Portsmouth. She had been maid of honour to Madame, the King's sister, and had come over with her to Dover, where the King had expressed such a regard to her that the Duke of Buckingham,

who hated the Duchess of Cleveland, intended to put her on the King. He told him that it was a decent piece of tenderness for his sister to take care of some of her servants. So she was the person the King easily consented to invite over. That Duke assured the King of France that he could never reckon himself sure of the King but by giving him a mistress that should be true to his interests. It was soon agreed to. So the Duke of Buckingham sent her with a part of his equipage to Dieppe, and said he would presently follow. But he, who was the most inconstant and forgetful of all men, never thought of her more, but went to England by way of Calais. So Montague, then Ambassador at Paris, hearing of this, sent over for a yacht for her, and sent some of his servants to wait on her and to defray her charge till she was brought to Whitehall; and then Lord Arlington took care of her. So the Duke of Buckingham lost the merit he might have pretended to, and brought over a mistress whom his strange conduct threw into the hands of his enemies. The King was presently taken with her. She studied to please and observe him in everything; so that he passed away the rest of his life in a great fondness for her. He kept her at a vast charge; and she, by many fits of sickness, some believed real, and

others thought only pretended, gained of him everything she desired. She stuck firm to the French interest, and was its chief support. The King divided himself between her and Mistress Gwyn, and had no other avowed amour. But he was so entirely possessed by the Duchess of Portsmouth, and so engaged by her in the French interest, that this threw him into great difficulties, and exposed him to much contempt and distrust."

According to the records of the Herald's College, Charles Lennox was born on the 29th of July 1672, and "being of great hopes," when only three years old, was enrolled among the peers both of England and of Scotland as Duke of Richmond, and also Duke of Lennox. The King, who was present at his baptism, gave him the surname of Lennox, and his own Christian name, Charles.

At nine years old the precocious child was invested with the blue riband of the Order of the Garter, and while still in his minority, succeeded the Duke of Monmouth as Master of the Horse, the duty being performed by commissioners, while he of course drew his salary like the other courtiers around him. On the death of his father, however, he was removed from this post by James II., on account of the share which had

been taken by his mother in promoting the Bill of Exclusion.

Stuart as he was paternally, the Duke afterwards acted as aide-de-camp to King William in Flanders, and also held some appointments about the Hanoverian household of George I.; so that we cannot suppose that he was much troubled with scruples on the score of loyalty, or of royalty either, or put any very wide construction on the commandment which bids us "Honour our father." His mother, Louise de Querouaille, meantime had been created Duchess of Portsmouth for life, and also by Louis XIV. Duchess of Aubigny* in France, a title then recently extinct by the death of the last Duke of Richmond of the Stuart line in 1672.

Letters patent were passed in 1673 by the King of France, granting to the Duchess of Portsmouth the territory of Aubigny, in which it was set forth that, "considering the great extent of the said territories, consisting of the town of Aubigny, two considerable castles, two

* Aubigny is a town in Berry, in France, situate on the river Nere, given (according to Père Daniel) on March 24th, 1422, to John Stuart, the third Lord Darnley of that name, to whom the County and Earldom of Eureux was also granted in 1426, and who was killed at the Battle of Herrings, February 12th, 1428-9.

parishes and fiefs, extending eight leagues, with the privilege of resorting to the court and Parliament of Paris, she being likewise mistress of the waters, forests, fairs, markets, and all places in the said territories; therefore he unites, creates, and erects the said town, territory, castellany, and castle of Aubigny, fiefs, and lands, &c., into a Duchy and Peerdom of France," by the name, title, and dignity of Dukes of Aubigny and Peers of France.*

His Majesty King Charles, considering with what lustre and glory the House of Lennox had shone in former times, and that by the death of Charles Stuart, Duke of Richmond and Lennox, the dignity of the Duke of Lennox was merged in the Crown; therefore, that the honour might be again revived, His Majesty bestowed the estate of Lennox on his young son, whom he had just created Duke of Richmond; and by letters patent, passed in Scotland in the following month, he was created Duke of Lennox, Earl of Darnley, and Baron Methuen of Torbolton, in the peerage of that kingdom.

* The Dukedom of Aubigny in France still nominally belongs to His Grace the Duke of Richmond; but the first French Revolution swept away all his great grandfather's feudal rights over the territory of Aubigny, so that it is now a mere name and shadow.

It was, no doubt, King Charles's fondness for this boy that led him to enrich so lavishly his French mother, of whom we know little to her advantage, except—what possibly might atone in the eyes of some writers for many moral delinquencies—the fact that she was a "fascinating" woman, and that "her splendour and magnificence contributed in no small degree to many of the Court entertainments of the time." So lavish, indeed was the King's expenditure upon her, that Evelyn tells us in his Diary that the plate and furniture of even Charles's Queen were but those of a private lady in comparison with those of the Duchess of Portsmouth's establishment. He writes, under date, January 24th 1682:

"I was at the entertainment of the Morocco Ambassador at the Duchess of Portsmouth's glorious apartments at Whitehall, where was a great banquet of sweetmeats and music. Both the Ambassador and his retinue behaved themselves with extraordinary moderation and modesty, though placed about a long table, a lady between two Moors, and amongst these the King's natural children, viz., Lady Litchfield and Sussex, the Duchess of Portsmouth, Nelly Gwyn, &c. . . . . . as splendid as jewels and excess of bravery could make them. The Moors, neither admiring,

nor seeming to regard anything, furniture or the like, with any earnestness, but only decently tasting the banquet, drank a little milk and water, and also of a sorbet and jacolet, but not a drop of wine. They did not look about, or stare at the ladies, or express the least surprise, but with a courtly negligence in pace, countenance, and whole behaviour, answering only to such questions as were asked, with a great deal of wit and gallantry; and gravely took their leave with this compliment, that God would bless the Duchess of Portsmouth and the young Prince, her son, meaning the little Duke of Richmond."

The estimate of rank formed by the Moors, although erroneous in fact, was not uncountenanced by circumstances; the Duchess, according to Burnet, being urged by her party to join the movement for excluding the Duke of York from the throne, in expectation of a declaration in favour of her son. After the Stuart titles were, with a slight variation, all revived in the person of his Grace, his example was selected by the King to remodel in part the costume of the most noble Order of the Garter. In 1681, being nine years of age, he had been created a Knight Companion. "At that time and previously, as pictures show, the Knights of the Garter wore the ribbon round

the neck, with the 'George' appendant on the breast; but the Duke's mother having some time after his installation introduced him to the King with his ribbon over his left shoulder and the 'George' appendant on the right side, His Majesty was so pleased with the conceit that he commanded all the Knights Companions of the Order to wear it the same way." The first Duke, dying in 1723, was succeeded by his son Charles, second Duke of Richmond and Lennox, and ultimately, on his grandmother's death in 1734, Duke d'Aubigny in France. He was a lieutenant-general in the army, and also an aide-de-camp to the King, and at His Majesty's coronation, on October 11, 1727, was high constable of England for the day. His Grace held a command under George II. at the Battle of Dettingen. He had been declared one of the lords justices of the kingdom before His Majesty's departure, and was also in that most honourable trust in 1745, when the Pretender's eldest son Charles landing in Scotland, and advancing as far as Derby, his Grace attended the Duke of Cumberland in his expedition against the insurgents, and assisted in the reduction of Carlisle. It may be mentioned here that one of the daughters of this (second) Duke was the Lady Sarah Lennox, so celebrated in the history of the last century as

one of the early flames of King George III., who no doubt would have married her if it had not been a tradition of Hanoverian royalty—a tradition which he afterwards raised into a law—to maintain the family as a caste, and not to allow of marriages of its members with subjects of the crown. I can easily fancy what must have been Lady Sarah's feelings when, in September, 1761, as one of her bridesmaids, she supported the train of Queen Charlotte at her marriage with the King, whose consort she had been so nearly becoming only a few months previously. In all probability she was really in love with His Majesty; for, though in the following year she married Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, the marriage ended in a divorce, and she ultimately married one of the Napiers.

The third duke, who succeeded to these titles in 1750, was known as both a soldier and a statesman, being successively a Secretary of State, Master-General of the Ordnance, and a Field Marshal in the Army. His name also ought to be held in honour for certain lasting benefits which he conferred on art and artists in this country. He was one of the earliest members and one of the most active promoters of the society for the encouragement of the arts, when as yet such trivial subjects had not at-

tracted the attention of our Hanoverian kings; and he showed the reality of his goodwill towards artists in general by opening his house in Spring Gardens, and afterwards in Whitehall, in 1758—before the foundation of the Royal Academy—as a gallery for the display of paintings annually during the London season. In fact, it may be said with confidence that his town mansion was the cradle of the Royal Academy, his gallery being open to all students above the age of twelve, to whom he awarded premiums in money and other prizes for their best productions. It is strange, considering that the duke lived nearly six years into the present century, that his Grace's name is so thoroughly forgotten from among the roll of our public benefactors and philanthropists; and it will be a great pleasure to me if this present sketch should serve to remind only a few members of the artist world of his Grace's good deeds. If a Scotchman has good reason occasionally to cry out "God bless the Duke of Argyll," for reasons best known north of the Tweed, surely our R.A.'s and A.R.A.'s and students of the Academy in Trafalgar Square may now and then use a like exclamation in remembrance of Charles, third Duke of Richmond, Lennox, and Aubigny.

It was this duke whose great unpopularity as

a member of the Government is recorded by Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall. His enemies accused him of domestic parsimony, which they contrasted in no measured terms with his profusion of the public money as Master-General of the Ordnance. If his gallery was open to students, his kitchen, it was said, both at Goodwood and in Spring Gardens, was the coolest apartment in his house, and "his kitchen chimney never smoked"—a fact which is commemorated in the "Rolliad." His passion for spending money on fortifications and works which he projected to defend our great naval arsenals from invasion more than once excited the attention of Parliament, and in 1785 caused fierce attacks in the House, which it cost the young Pitt infinite trouble to parry. Pitt, however, gallantly stood by the Duke, declaring that his ability, experience, and systematic economy had been one of the principal causes which had secured for his own administration so large a share of the popular favour.

His Grace having left no issue, these titles passed at his death to his nephew, Charles, a general in the army, at one time Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and afterwards Governor-General of Canada, whose melancholy death at Montreal in 1819, from the bite of a tame fox, was universally

lamented both in Canada and in England, where his genial frankness and urbanity had made him a general favourite.

He married Lady Charlotte Gordon, sister and heiress of the last Duke of Gordon. By this alliance the magnificent estate of Gordon Castle, in Banffshire, with a rent-roll in Essex of £50,000 was added to the estates of the family.

This duke's eldest son and successor, the late duke, was an aide-de-camp to the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, and held office under Lord Grey as Postmaster-General in 1830-34, with a seat in the Cabinet. From this, however, he seceded, along with Lord Ripon, Lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham, on account of the measures of the Whig administration with respect to the Irish Church. His Grace was a zealous agriculturist, and was one of the founders of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, of which society he was a trustee. Both on his large domains in Sussex and in Scotland he was revered by his tenants as one of the best of landlords. The Duke was one of the princely supporters of the turf, the annual races at Goodwood Park affording scope for the display of his generous hospitality. By his honourable bearing and frank manners on all

occasions he had endeared himself to a large circle of friends, who will never fail to cherish his memory.

The present Duke of Richmond has also taken a prominent part in public affairs, and was President of the Poor Law Board, under Lord Derby's second administration. Subsequently his Grace held the office of President of the Board of Trade; and at present he is not only Lord President of the Council, but by the common consent of all sections of his party, the recognised leader of the Conservatives in the Upper House. It was, therefore, by no means surprising that he should have obtained a renewal in his favour of the title of Duke of Gordon, of Gordon Castle, Scotland, in January 1876.

Considering the close affinity which exists between the House of Lennox and royalty, and the existence of a Royal palace on the banks of the Thames at Richmond, it might naturally be supposed that it is the latter place from which his Grace derives his ducal title. Such, however, is not the case; the name, style and title by which his ancestor was raised to the peerage being Duke of Richmond, of Richmondshire, in the county of York, the castle of which, along with the surrounding lands, belonged to the Earls of Richmond of the line of De Dreux, until they fell

to the crown upon the accession of Henry, Earl of Richmond, to the throne as Henry VII. The ruins of the castle, as most of my readers who have visited Yorkshire know, rise proudly and majestically above the side of the river Swale, the bold Norman keep being still almost entire; and the castle, though untenanted, is still the property of the noble duke who derives from it the first of his many titles.

It may be added that Richmond in Surrey was originally called Shene, for its "bright" and pleasant situation; and that its modern name of Richmond was given to it out of compliment to Henry VII. when he built a palace there and made it a royal residence.

GEORGE HANGER, LORD COLERAINE.

"MARCH 31: died of a convulsive fit, at his residence, near the Regent's Park, aged 73, the Right Hon. George Hanger, fourth Lord Coleraine, of Coleraine, co. Londonderry, in the Peerage of Ireland, and a Major-General in the army; better known by the title of Colonel Hanger, or the familiar appellation of 'George Hanger.'" Such is the curt and brief manner in which Mr. "Sylvanus Urban" records in the column of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in 1824, the decease of a nobleman who had played in his day a conspicuous part among the early boon companions of George, Prince of Wales, of whom he was wittily said to be not the constant *Hanger*, but the constant "Hanger on." Like Lord Rochester and Lord Camelford before him, he lived a life not very creditable to a member of

"the upper ten thousand," and died lamented and regretted by none, or, at all events, by few of his contemporaries; and the extinction of his title, which was caused by his death, could scarcely be said to have created in the Irish peerage any gap or void which it was difficult to fill up.

The life of this *mauvais sujet*, however, though not such as to place him among the true aristocracy—the *viri optimè meriti*—may well entitle him to a place among the "Eccentric Characters" of the nineteenth century; and as such I fancy that a brief outline of his life may possibly amuse my readers, and serve as a beacon of warning to young (and possibly also middle-aged) noblemen with more money than brains.

The family from which the hero of the present paper sprang does not seem to be in any way illustrious in history. George Hanger expressly says that he could not trace it up beyond his grandfather, whom he styles Sir George, "though how he got the title he knew not, and cared less." All that is known about the family is that the name borne by its members was variously spelt at different times as Ainger, Aunger, Aungre, and Aungrier; and it is probable that the "h" was prefixed by some of the family whose

spelling and pronunciation were alike at fault.* But however the name was or ought to have been spelt, the "Extinct Peerage of Ireland" says that the Hangers came from Essex and Hertfordshire, but that they "disposed of their English estates towards the end of the fifteenth century." Francis Aunger or Ainger, one of the younger sons of the house, appears to have gone over to Ireland in the reign of Elizabeth, like many another English gentleman, to seek his fortune. He chose the profession of the law, became Master of the Rolls, and was raised to a peerage as Earl of Longford and Baron Aungier; these titles, however, became extinct in 1704. Another member of the same house, probably his brother, followed the trade of a Turkey merchant, either in London or in Dublin—it is not clear which; and, having got together a good round sum of

* The name of Hanger, however, is not qnite unknown to fame, for in the British Museum Library there is a book published in 1685, by one Philip Hanger, entitled "A True Relation how Eighteen Men were Cast Away at Sea, with the great hardships they underwent." It is therefore quite possible that the love of strange adventure was not original in my hero, George, but simply broke out afresh, as being already "in the blood." I may add that in the present day a West End firm of tailors, Messrs. Hanger and Sons, appear in the Museum Catalogue as the authors of "An Infallible Guide in Cutting Clothes." Can they be any relations of Lord Coleraine?

money, made up his mind to look out for an heiress, so as to consolidate and perpetuate at once his wealth and his name. He purchased the estate of Driffield in Gloucestershire, where the Hangers continued to live till the close of the last century. His son or grandson, George Hanger of Driffield, governor of the Bank of England in its earlier days, was the father of Sir George Hanger, mentioned above, who received the honour of knighthood from King William III. This gentleman had three sons, of whom the third, Gabriel by name, happening to go over to Ireland to visit his cousins, took a fancy to that island, where he contrived to marry a rich wife—Elizabeth, only daughter and heiress of one Richard Bond, "of Cowbury, in Herefordshire, and of the province of Ulster." In noticing his family in the account of his own eccentric "Life and Adventures" which he published in 1802, the son of this union, George Hanger, thus speaks of his father:—"His sister, Miss Anne Hanger, was married to Hare, Lord Coleraine; but my father was not in the most distant degree related to his lordship, or connected with him except by that marriage. Lord Coleraine, however, happening to die at the very nick of time without issue or heir to his coronet, my father claimed it, with just as

much right as the clerk or sexton of the parish." Unfortunately, however, for George Hanger's reputation as a family chronicler, the title was not revived in his father's favour till 1762, two years after the accession of George the Third.

The ex-Turkey merchant, however, was enjoying his gold-won honours, and living at his seat in Gloucestershire, when in 1751, his third and youngest son George—whose life chiefly concerns me—first saw the light of day. He had two elder brothers, both of whom held the title before it descended to himself. His first experience of school life was at Reading, but the school did not prove at all to his taste, for he describes his master as a "a brute, a tyrant, and a savage." Of the school to which he was next sent—kept by the Rev. Mr. Fountain at Marylebone Park—he had a different tale to tell, for he was treated with kindness and attention. His love of mischief, however, began to display itself here, for he violently kicked on the shins the dentist who attended the school, and caught his thumb between his teeth on his endeavouring to operate on him a second time. He was next sent to Eton, where, though he got on with Latin, he set himself entirely against Greek. On rising high in the school he gave

himself up to field sports. After leaving Eton he entered the army as an ensign in the foot guards, and devoted a year to the study of mathematics, fortification, and the German language at the University of Göttingen. The next two summers he spent desultorily in Hanover and Hesse Cassel, where he became acquainted with many "persons of distinction," from whom, however, he appears to have derived few or no good lessons in morals. Soon after his return to England he met with an adventure which narrowly escaped having a fatal issue. One fine Sunday evening he was walking with a friend and two ladies in a side path of the gardens close to Kensington Palace, where thick yew trees edged the walks, when a man approached the party in a menacing attitude. His approach was prevented by George Hanger: the fellow then put his hand on his sword, at the same time showing plainly that he knew well enough how to use that weapon; but George Hanger warned the stranger to retreat if he did not wish to be run through; so the man made off, and George and his friends brought their walk and talk to an end, without any further difficulty. He himself owns, in his account of the matter, that, though he had been placed in many disagreeable situations in life, he had never been so alarmed as on that occasion.

Mr. Hanger spent the next few years in gaiety and dissipation in town; and then, on account of a fancied wrong with regard to his promotion, he left the Guards in dudgeon, and threw up his commission. However, in spite of this silly and wayward act, as soon as the first flames of the war of revolution were kindled in America, he applied for and obtained an appointment in one of the Hessian corps, then being raised for the British service in America; and he took rank as a captain in the Landgrave of Hesse's corps of Jägers. But before his departure for America he had got into difficulties from his personal extravagance, and the shadows of a future day of reckoning were already crossing his path.

He saw some active service in his new post, and obtained the rank of major in the British legion; but, falling a victim to the yellow fever on his advance under Lord Cornwallis into North Carolina, for a long time he lay between life and death, being reduced almost to a skeleton. Death, however, was not allowed to claim him as a victim just yet.

He left America on the conclusion of peace, and was enabled to return to England by the help of a friend, Mr. Richard Tattersall, who offered him a home in his house, promising to make his

presence in London again possible by paying any debts that he was himself unable to meet.

In the antobiographical work already alluded to, Major Hanger has given an amusing description of the scenes at a contested election for Westminster which he witnessed at this time, and in which he took an active part; and he points out the many qualities of familiarity and condescension which a gentleman must needs have possessed under the system now replaced by the ballot, if he wished to be of any service to his party.

It was at this time that Major Hanger became one of the jovial associates of the then Prince of Wales, who made him one of his equerries, with a salary of £300 a year, an appointment which, together with employment which he undertook of raising recruits for the East India Company, afforded him the means of living for a time like a gentleman. His good fortune did not, however, last long, and the Major was soon on the high road to the King's Bench, which he entered in June, 1798. He spent about ten months in "those blessed regions of rural retirement;" as he jokingly styles his prison, possibly remembering the lines of Lovelace,

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and peaceful take
That for a hermitage;"

and he declares that he "lived there as a gentleman on three shillings a day." Released from prison, he now applied for employment on active service, but in vain; so he formed the resolution of taking to trade, and set up at one time as a coal merchant, and at another as a dealer in powder for the special purpose of setting razors. Specimens of this powder he carried about in his pocket to show to "persons of quality," whom he canvassed for their patronage! How far he flourished in the coal business we do not hear; but, as he mentions a kind friend who gave him a salary sufficient to keep the wolf from the door, in all probability he did not make one of those gigantic fortunes which the coal owners and coal merchants are in the habit of realising nowadays at the cost of the long-suffering British householder.

We read in the notice already referred to in the *Gentleman's Magazine* that the Colonel (for he had now attained that grade), "though free in his manners, was never inclined to give intentional offence, and the peculiarity of those manners precluded all idea of resentment, and laughter rather than anger was the result of his most extravagant sallies." This sounds strange indeed to those who know that he still enjoys by tradition the fame of a noted "bruiser," and that he was one

of the most constant and zealous patrons of the cockpit, and of all those places where the noble art of self-defence was practically illustrated. Though he spent so much time among low society and in not very choice amusements, we are told that he found time for reading, and was "never wanting in rational conversation on the topics of the day."

George Hanger was quite as averse to assume the title of "Lord Coleraine," which came to him on the death of his elder brother William at the close of 1814, as Horace Walpole was to call himself Earl of Orford. In fact he scarcely ever signed his name by his new designation.

George Hanger lived and died unmarried—at all events, no legal marriage stands scored against his name in the existing peerages. He seems, however, to have contracted in early life a quasi-matrimonial union with one of the gipsy tribe whom he met by chance in the southern suburbs of London, and whom he mentions in his "Autobiography" as "the lovely Egyptia." He writes, "I used to listen with raptures to the melody of her voice. . . . I thought her the 'Pamela' of Norwood, the paragon of her race, the Hester of the nineteenth century: but, alas! on my return after a short absence one day I found that she had gone off with a travelling tinker of a

neighbouring tribe, who wandered about the country mending pots and ketles."

According to the tell-tale catalogue of the British Museum library, Lord Coleraine was the author of several other works besides his own "Autobiography." Among these I may mention here an octavo pamphlet, published in 1795, entitled "Military Reflections on the Attack and Defence of the City of London; to which is (? are) added Reflections on the loss of Plymouth or Harwich," and including general remarks on the whole island. Returning to the same subject nine or ten years later, I find him issuing from the press another alarmist pamphlet: "Reflections on the Menaced Invasion, and the Means of Protecting the Capital; with a letter on the proposed fortifications round London, and a defence of the volunteer system." The volunteer movement, which has been so successfully revived in our own day, had no more zealous and active advocate than Col. Hanger at the commencement of the present century. And it was with reference to this subject that in 1808 he published "A Letter to Lord Castlereagh, proving how 15,000 men, well disciplined, may be acquired in the short space of two months; with instructions to the volunteers; to which is added a plan for the formation of a corps of consolidated marksmen."

It is clear from what I have said above that Lord Coleraine cared little or nothing about "blue blood" and pedigree, and that he valued a man rather by his skill with his fists or his rapier than by his descent from the Plantagenets. Thus he commences his autobiography with a portrait of himself swinging on a gallows, apparently at Tyburn, in allusion to his name; and it is said that this is the only authentic portrait of him now extant. Still, every now and then something of ancestral pride peeps out in spite of himself in what he writes, as for instance when he tells us that his father was "an honest M.P. in favour of the King and the constitution, and above a bribe"—even in the days of Sir Robert Walpole. His summary of his wide experience of life in every phase and in all grades tells us that he had lived with men and women of every rank, fróm the highest to the lowest—"from St. James's to St. Giles's"—from the drawing-room to the dust-cart—in palaces and in night cellars; and it is probable that few persons besides himself had seen and could describe from personal experience at once the gilded salons of Carlton House and the lowest purlieus of St. Giles-in-the-fields. His autobiography is full of drollery, much of which I could not possibly transfer to these columns: but I shall never forget his

sketches of the old tyrant at Reading School, with his "long rat-tan cane," and of the rebellion at Eton in the time of Dr. Foster, in which he bore a part. Here, however, his education appears to have been sadly neglected; for he tells us that at eighteen his only reading was "the newspaper and the Sporting Calendar," though here and there some traces of the scholar peep out in the Latin quotations that occur in his autobiographical sketch; and he has the grace to own that during his three years stay in Germany he felt the great want of the refining influence of ladies' society. He could not certainly be altogether a "rough," if it be true that while at Hanover he was much noticed by Prince Charles, the brother of our own Queen Charlotte, and that in consequence he grew to be on such terms with the Hanoverian Guards as to be allowed to take part with them in their millitary exercises on field days. Nor does he appear to have been well or kindly treated by his father in more ways than one. At all events, on one occasion, when he wished to join the army of Count Romanzoff, and to volunteer for service to fight against the Turks, old Lord Coleraine would not find the money for equipment, and he was obliged to stay in his Germany biting his thumbs and cursing his

adverse fate; and he complains that, through the niggardly parsimony of his parent and his elder brother, he was twice deprived of his earnings, and forced to begin the world over again.

I have mentioned already that at one time George Hanger tried to "make both ends meet" by recruiting for the East India Company, and at another by starting as a coal merchant. He tells us that he spent £500—"costs out of pocket," as the lawyers say—in establishing and organising agencies for recruits in all the large towns of England, but that an end was put to this work by a dispute among the directors in Leadenhall-street as to the best place for recruiting barracks. The decision wherever it placed the depôt, threw him out of employ, robbed him of his £500 and six years' labour, and lost him an income of £600 a year. The result was that he spent nearly a year in the King's Bench prison (June, 1798, to April, 1799), and had to start afresh with a capital of £40 in hand! No wonder that next year he thought of trade in earnest as a better chance than such precarious work. With reference to this subject he writes in May, 1800, to a friend, who told him that it was reported that he allowed himself to be paid by a commission on such coals as he could sell: "On my honour, the report is false, absolutely false! I am allowed an

annual salary, which will keep me from want. May the black diamond trade flourish with me!"

> "Carbones . . . . nigri
> Sunt mihi deliciæ; sint mihi divitiæ!"

It is astonishing to see how much of worldly wisdom and what the Americans call "cuteness" is to be found in George Hanger's Autobiography. He had no great respect for parsons, or indeed, I fear, it must be added, for religion in any shape; but scattered up and down his two volumes are to be found many useful hints as to the necessity of purging the theatres of vice and and the encouragement of street-preaching, if the morals of the populace are to be improved, mixed up with all sorts of droll suggestions as to the best way of putting down those very amusements in which he himself excelled, and those exhibitions of which he was the especial patron! Among other matters he showed his humour by proposing to levy a tax on the absentee landlords, not of Ireland, but of Scotland; and another on the superfluous luxuries of forks and spoons.

As might be expected, George Hanger, with all his electricity, made a capital soldier of fortune. Sir Henry Clinton, on meeting him in America,

seems to have felt this, and so not only gave him a command in the expedition for the reduction of the southern provinces, but made him his aide-de-camp at the siege of Charleston. He also distinguished himself in the operations at Savannah, and after the capture of Charleston he was appointed inspector of volunteers, as well as of cattle, horses, and stores, being promoted also to a majority in the British Legion. Whilst serving in Carolina, under Lord Cornwallis, the yellow fever reduced him so low that "his bones were coming through his skin;" but he escaped the jaws of death, and lived to meet Lord Cornwallis some years later at dinner in St. James's Square. His illness on this occasion stood him in good stead; for, being sent on a cruise to Bermuda, he escaped being taken prisoner along with his general. He subsequently sailed for New York with Sir Henry Clinton in the hope of relieving Lord Cornwallis, but arrived three days too late to effect that object.

That he used his eyes and "all his seven senses" whilst in America is shown by the fact that even in 1802 he prophesied that a day would come when the Northern and Southern States would be brought into conflict, and that the war, whenever it arose, would not be a "little war." He was right in this view; and probably he was

the first to hold it, or at all events to express it publicly.

Such a man with all his faults and failings, could not have been wholly bad; and therefore I am not surprised to find that when false charges were brought against his honour as a man and a soldier, not only Mr. Tattersall, but even the Prince of Wales, thought proper to come forward and stand as his friend. The same is the inference which I draw from a fact recorded by himself, that he visited in his cell in Newgate more than one highwayman whom he thought too severely punished, and even rode behind the tail of the cart which carried him up Holborn-hill and along Oxford Street to Tyburn. His goodness of heart, too, is proved by the following assertion which he made to a friend who wished to see him chosen a Member of Parliament: "I pledge myself, if ever I should have the honour of a seat in the House of Commons, to consult with some of the leading men in this country in order to bring in a bill for the better protection of women."

From first to last, it would seem, as if constant misfortune and disappointment had worked a change in his temper, and almost in his very nature. For instance, he tells us that he had expectations from the Duchess of St. Albans, who

had been a protégée of his father, but that he was baulked of these, being cut out of her will by a certain Mr. Roberts, who no doubt knew how to play his cards with greater skill than himself. Again, what little property he actually inherited was lost through the death of a surveyor whom he was employing; and the loss of this estate involved him in other difficulties which compelled him to sell out of the army just as the American war broke out, and in the long run to play the undignified *rôle* of a coal dealer! His father had gone in early life to India, with £500 in his pocket, and had returned to England with a realised fortune of £25,000, which was increased by inheriting his brothers' and sisters' fortunes; but, with all this, his lordship could not find the means to keep his son afloat in the service, and even allowed him to be robbed and ruined without putting forth a hand to aid him. Can it be a matter of wonder to anyone that such an individual, however good he might have been by natural disposition, was soured and embittered, and driven into irregular courses, and at last came to boast that "he cared not whether he was a nobleman or a gentleman, but one thing he knew, and that was that he was *a dead shot?*" In the days of duelling such words as these

meant a great deal. Holding such sentiments, it was fortunate for him that he did not meet with the fate of Lord Camelford, and fall a victim in an "affair of honour."

DE COURCY, LORD OF KINGSALE.

FIRST on the roll of the Irish peerage, occupying the same position as is held by Lord De Ros in England and Lord Forbes in Scotland, stands the proud name of John Fitzroy De Courcy, thirty-first Baron Kingsale. It is not everyone of whom it can be said that he can trace back his family to the roll of the battle field of Hastings, but the family of De Courcy can truly claim that honour; and even more than this, if we may believe the heralds and genealogists. The De Courcies can boast alliance in the paternal line through the Dukes of Lorraine, and in the maternal through the Dukes of Normandy, with several of the royal houses of Europe.

The head and representative of the De Courcy family moreover enjoys the hereditary and singular

privilege of standing with his head covered in the presence of royalty. The origin of this honour I shall now relate.

To revert to the early history of this family, it appears that Richard De Courcy, eldest son of Robert, Lord of Courcy in Normandy, accompanied his Sovereign William upon his invasion of England ; and, for his distinguished services at the battle of Hastings, was enriched with considerable grants of lands and lordships, among which was that of Stoke—thence called Stoke Courcy—in the county of Somerset. His immediate descendants were in high position at Court; and one Robert De Courcy was present at the battle of Northampton in the reign of King Stephen. The great-great-grandson of the first Baron was John, the founder of the chief honours of the family. This nobleman had gained much credit for himself in the wars of Henry II., both in England and Gascony; and at the instance of that monarch he was sent into Ireland in the year 1177 to assist William Fitz-Adelm in the government of that country. While there he put himself at the head of the few knights and esquires and about three hundred foot soldiers, with whose help he invaded, and after several efforts reduced to submission, the province of Ulster. For this achievement he was rewarded

in 1181 with the "Earldom of Ulster," being the first Englishman who received an Irish title of honour. In order to make his position more secure, he married a daughter of Godfrey, the King of the Isle of Man, and continued to bask in the sunshine of royal favour to the close of Henry II.'s reign, and during that of his successor, Richard I. But envy, as has so often been the case, would not allow him to hold his honours much longer in peace; for, on the accession of King John to the throne of England, Hugh de Lacie, governor of Ireland, caused the Earl to be treacherously seized while, alone and quite unarmed, he was doing penance in the churchyard of Downpatrick, on Good Friday of the year 1203, He was sent to England under a guard, and condemned by the King to perpetual imprisonment in the Tower, while his Earldom and estates were given over to his successful rival. He had been in confinement about a year, when a dispute which had arisen between King John of England and Philip Augustus of France, with regard to their several pretensions to the Duchy of Normandy, was by agreement referred to the decision of a single combat. King John had somewhat too hastily appointed a day for this contest to come off, and the King of France had his champion ready; while John, who could

find no one of his subjects willing to take up the gauntlet, was forced to appeal to his prisoner, the degraded Earl of Ulster, who accepted the challenge, though only on a third request, "for the honour of his country."

Such is the common story as told in the Peerages; but the records of the Tower affirm that the Earl had surrendered himself and given hostages for his appearance, and was kept by the King in the Tower to be in readiness for the day appointed for the combat. The contest, however, whichever way the matter stood, never came off, for the French champion showed flight instead of fight on the first appearance of his powerful antagonist; and on the trumpet sounding for the attack set spurs to his horse, broke through the lists, and gained the sea-shore, whence he reached the coast of France or Spain, and thus left the champion of England victor on the field. The French King, however, who had heard of the Earl's great strength, desired to see some proof of it; whereupon as the story goes, a massive coat of mail with a full-faced helmet on the top was placed on a block. With a single blow the Earl cleft asunder the armour and helmet; and it is said that the sword was fixed so deep into the wood that no one else present could draw it out, though he himself did so with

one hand. The armour and sword used on this remarkable occasion are still preserved in the Tower of London. King John was so astonished at this extraordinary exhibition of strength, that he restored De Courcy to his titles and estates, and in addition desired him to ask any favour at his hands which it was in his power to grant, and it should be given. The Earl replied that "he had titles and estates enough, but desired that he and his successors might have the privilege, as soon as their first obeisance had been paid, of being covered in the presence of him and his successors, Kings of England;" and the request was granted accordingly.

De Courcy, however, was disappointed in his endeavours to obtain the re-establishment of his Earldom and other rights in Ireland; for though he made, it is said fifteen attempts to cross the Channel, he never put foot on Irish soil again, and he eventually retired to France, where he died about the year 1210.

He was succeeded by his only son, Miles, who in vain endeavoured, in his turn, to secure his rights in Ireland, Hugh de Lacie maintaining that he had a right to the Earldom of Ulster. Earl John had never returned to make his claim in person; and so, considering that Hugh's power in Ireland and favour at Court was too

great to be resisted, Miles gave up his claim, and received from the king, in compensation, the Barony of Kingsale, in Ireland, in 1223. From him the family honours descended regularly for five centuries. The seventh Lord Miles de Courcy sat in Parliament in 1339 as premier Baron, and distinguished himself in a battle near Ringrone, when he overthrew Florence M'Carthy More, driving his soldiers into the river at Bandon.

William. the ninth baron, appears to have been the first to receive a confirmation of the honours of Kingsale and Ringrone at the hands of King Richard the Second; he, moreover, obtained a grant of £100 per annum out of the royal exchequer, with leave to purchase and own a ship, and to pass and repass between England and France whenever he pleased to travel.

Fortune, however, was again in some degree adverse in the lifetime of the eleventh Baron, Patrick, who was driven from his castle of Kilbriton by MacCarthy Reagh,—an exploit which, with others of the same kind, was rendered comparatively easy for the Irish on account of the absence of many English landowners from Ireland during the wars of the Houses of York and Lancaster.

Trouble again came upon James, the thirteenth Baron, who, after abetting the adventurer and

impostor, Lambert Simnel, in Ireland, refused to take the oath of allegiance before Sir Richard Edgecombe, the deputy of King Henry VII., while he was afloat in Kingsale Harbour. Sir Richard landed, and homage was then duly performed by Lord Kingsale with the rest of his townsmen in the chancel of Kingsale church. The recalcitrant Irish lords were afterwards summoned to appear before the King at Greenwich, where they were reproved, but pardoned. Lord Kingsale, however, was absent when the rest went with the King in a solemn procession to church; he was thereupon deprived of his rank as Premier Baron, which was bestowed by the royal pique on Lord Athenry, a strong Lancastrian—Lord Kingsale being a thorough Yorkist. In the Parliament which met at Dublin in 1427, he was placed on the roll after Lord Athenry; but since that peerage is now, if not extinct, at least in abeyance, Lord Kingsale again stands as I have said, the first among the Irish barons.

A fresh honour accrued to this noble House in the person of Gerald, seventeenth baron, who was made a "knight banneret" by King Henry VIII., under the royal standard, at Boulogne. His second cousin and successor, John, gained distinction in fighting against the Spaniards at the siege of Kinsale in 1601, and was in high favour

at the Court of King James I. During the time of this lord there was a contest regarding the title of Kingsale, which was bestowed as a Viscountcy on Sir Dominic Sarsfield, but was afterwards exchanged for that of Kilmallock, the Privy Council stating in their report in 1627 that Lord Kingsale was possessed by ancient evidences of the titles of Courcy, Kingsale, and Ringrone; and it may be added that De Courcy appears now for the first time as a Parliamentary title. Nothing remarkable seems to have occurred till during the lifetime of Almericus, the twenty-third baron, who was in high favour at the Court of King Charles II. and James II., and received a pension from both; he was, however, outlawed in 1690 for his military services under the banner of the latter, but was received back in the following year, when, as we read in Sharpe's Peerage, "he was enabled to repair to the presence chamber of King William with his hat on his head, to the great surprise of His Majesty. On being required by one of the lords of waiting to explain his conduct, he replied that he very well knew in whose presence he stood, and that the reason why he then wore his hat was because he stood before the King of England, and, approaching the throne, addressed the King, 'May it please your Majesty, my name is Courcy, and I am Lord of Kingsale, in your

kingdom of Ireland. The reason of my appearing covered in your Majesty's presence is to assert the ancient privilege of my family, granted to Sir John de Courcy, Earl of Ulster, and his heirs, by John, King of England, to him and his successors for ever.' The King said he recollected he had such a nobleman, recognized the privilege, and gave him his hand to kiss; his lordship thereupon paid his obeisance and remained covered.

His successor, Gerald, asserted the same family privilege before King George I., and again at the Court of George II.—most probably at a Drawing Room, for it is recorded that the good-natured King addressed him on that occasion in terms of reproof, saying, "My lord, although you have the privilege of wearing your hat before me, you have no such right to wear it in the presence of ladies." Lord Kingsale took the reproach kindly, as it was meant, and at once bared his head—so at least, the story goes, and I merely tell it as it was told to me.

It is reported that John, the twenty-fifth lord, in his turn asserted and exercised his privilege at St. James's or at Kensington Palace in the early part of George III., but I have never heard that the claim has been repeated within the last hundred years; and as to the present Lord

Kingsale I very much doubt whether he will attempt to act upon his privilege in the presence of a female Sovereign. All that I can say is that, if his lordship should ever do so while Queen Victoria is on the throne, he will prove himself far less of a good courtier than I take him to be. When Albert Edward I. holds his first levée in his own name at St. James's—at a day which I trust is far distant as yet—then will be the time for Lord Kingsale to reassert his hereditary right, and no doubt he will find it acknowledged.

A curious episode occurred about a hundred years ago at the time of the death of Gerald, the twenty fourth baron, and the affair seemed at one time likely to assume the form of a trial at law, which, if it had not equalled in length the Tichborne trial of the present day, would perhaps have rivalled the great Shrewsbury case, which will be fresh in the memory of many of my readers. The facts of the case may be found mentioned at length in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of June 1760. It appears that it was understood that the late Lord Kingsale died without leaving male issue, bequeathing his property to his three daughters; whereupon a paragraph appeared in *Faulkner's Journal*, signed "Charles Bernard," who stated that the title was not extinct, and

that the late lord had devised his ancient family estates in Ireland unto one John de Courcy, a native of America, and for many years a common boatman at Portsmouth, as his heir male. This strange announcement was contradicted by the sons-in-law and daughters of the late lord, who affirmed that he had for some years before his death laboured under "a constant and habitual indisposition of mind," of which advantage was taken by some evil-disposed adventurer in the neighbourhood to forward his own interests by putting forward an heir, whom he knew to have no right to the succession. This was again alleged to be false by the said Mr. John de Courcy, who took possession of the Baronetcy of Kingsale as twenty-fifth baron—apparently in the *veni, vidi, vici* style. His enemies, it appears, endeavoured to dispossess him, and resorted to force to accomplish their end; and though Lord Kingsale fled from his own house when, after the true Irish fashion, it was broken into by night, and his wife and children were turned out of doors for the time, still he regained possession by means of the sheriff. Ringrone Castle and the rest of the broad lands in the far south-west of Ireland, which once belonged to the title of Kingsale, have now passed away from the De Courcies, by sale or other transfer; but true to

his illustrious line of ancestors, the last holder of the title, thirtieth Lord of Kingsale, bought a small property in the south of Devon near Kingsbridge and Modbury, to which he gave the ancient name of Ringrone, no doubt believing in the words of Horace,

> "Ambiguam tellure nova Salamina futuram."

The present lord is a Benedick; but I sincerely hope that some future Lord will pick up a stray English heiress with plenty of money, who will reinstate the premier baron of Ireland in the Irish property of the ancient De Courcies.

I should add, for the benefit of such of my readers as have a taste for personal gossip and antiquarian smalltalk, that according to Sir Bernard Burke, Lord Forester enjoys in England the like privilege to that of Lord Kingsale, having in his possession at his seat in Shropshire the original grant of Henry VIII., conceding to his ancestor, John Forester, of Watling-street, in that county, the right of wearing his hat in the royal presence.

THE HEIRESS OF HADDON HALL.

HADDON HALL, viewed architecturally, is one of the most perfect specimens of the ancient baronial mansions of England, and it forms one of the chief attractions of the fair county of Derbyshire. But even Haddon in the olden time finds its interest enhanced by the well-authenticated tradition, which tells us how by a romantic attachment and elopement, its picturesque walls and terraces, and the broad lands which surround it, passed from the hands of the Vernons into those of the now ducal house of Manners.

It is well observed of Haddon by Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt, in his "Illustrated Guide" to that place, that, unlike many of our old baronial residences, its history has been uniformly one of peace and hospitality, not of war and feud and oppression;

for that, however much its owners may have been mixed up from time to time in the stirring events of the times in which they lived, Haddon Hall has never played a part in the turmoils. It has never stood a siege like Wardour Castle or Lathom House; and, though it has been a stronghold in its own way, it has been a stronghold of home and of peaceful domestic life, not of armed troops, and therefore, as it nestles in the woods that crown the banks of the Derwent, it claims an interest peculiarly its own.

We may pass by its early history in a very few lines. At a remote date it was held by the Avenels, by the tenure of knight's service, from whom, towards the close of the 12th century, it passed by the marriage of an heiress into the hands of Richard de Vernon, a nobleman of Norman extraction, as is implied by his name, which was derived from a lordship and town in Normandy on the banks of the Seine, between Rouen and Paris, of which the family were hereditary lords, bearing the titles of Counts and Barons de Reviers, or Redvers. The direct male descendant of this Richard Vernon, Sir Henry, was made governor to Prince Arthur by Henry VII., with whom he was a great favourite. He married a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, by whom he had a son, also Sir Henry, high steward

of the King's Forest of the Peak under King Henry VIII., whose son, Sir George, the owner of Haddon, was known far and wide through Derbyshire and the midland counties as "the King of the Peak."* It is said on good authority that he owned thirty manors in Derbyshire alone, to say nothing of properties in other counties; and by his first wife, a daughter of Sir Gilbert Taylebois or Talbot, he had two daughters, his coheiresses, the elder of whom married the second son of the then Earl of Derby; while the younger —whose story we are about to tell—became the ancestress of the Earls and Dukes of Rutland. Sir George Vernon was not styled "King of the Peak" without good cause; for he lived at Haddon in such a style of magnificence and hospitality as was right worthy of a prince, and would put to shame many a German potentate. It is said that he was at once the most generous and the most just of men, and that, although he was given perhaps to undue severity, and inclined to indulge occasionally in a "Lynch law" of his own throughout "the Peak," yet he lived

* It was Sir John Vernon, the younger brother of this worthy knight, that married the heiress of the Montgomeries, of Sudbury, in Derbyshire, and founded the family of the present Lord Vernon, who still owns landed estates in the neighbourhood of Haddon, which have passed from sire to son.

and died in the good esteem of his neighbours. Perhaps, too, his popularity was increased among his friends by the beauty of his two blooming daughters, the Lady Margaret and the Lady Dorothy.

A single tradition, briefly told by Mr. Jewitt in his pleasant pages, will serve to illustrate the firmness and decision of Sir George Vernon's character, and vindicate his title of "King," by showing the power which he excercised over the actions, and even over the lives and properties. of the people around him, with whom the good old feudal notions of the Laird being able to do pretty well as he pleased with his own dependants were not as yet extinct.

"A pedlar, who had been hawking his wares around the neighbourhood, was one day found murdered in a lonely spot on the estates of Haddon Hall. He had been seen the evening before to enter a cottage in the neighbourhood, and he was never afterwards seen or heard of alive. As soon as the 'King of the Peak' became aware of the fact that the crime had been committed so near at hand, he had the body of the pedlar removed to Haddon, laid in the hall, and covered with a sheet. He then sent for the cottager to come immediately, and, on his arrival, at once questioned him as to where the pedlar

was who was seen to enter his house the night before. The man denied having seen him, or knowing anything about him, when Sir George uncovered the body before him, ordering that all persons present should touch the body in succession, at the same time declaring their innocence of the murder. The suspected man when his turn came declined to touch the body, and instantly rushed out of the hall, and made his way, 'as fast as his legs could carry him,' through Bakewell towards Ashford. Sir George instantly ordered his men to mount and follow him. The murderer was caught in a field opposite the present toll-bar at Ashford, and at once hanged, and the field still bears the name of the 'gallows acre,' or 'galley acre.' Sir George is said to have been cited to London for this extraordinary piece of Lynch law, and when he appeared at Court he was summoned twice to surrender as 'King of the Peak.' To these he made no reply, but the third time he was called on as Sir George Vernon, when he stepped forward and acknowledged himself, 'Here am I.' Having been summoned as the 'King of the Peak,' the indictment fell through, and Sir George was admonished and discharged. Sir George Vernon is buried in Bakewell Church, where a remarkably fine and well-preserved altar-tomb bears

the recumbant effigies of himself and his two wives."

But it is time that I passed from Sir George and the dead pedlar to the lady in whom is concentrated the chief interest of my story, Miss Dorothy Vernon, the younger daughter of Sir George, and therefore, we may be sure, known all round Haddon, and Edensor, and Bakewell, and Chatsworth, as a "Princess of the Peak."

In or about the year 1567, when Queen Bess had been only nine years on the throne, and when England was still "merrie England," on a bright morning in May the Lady Margaret Vernon was escorted by a bevy of young bridesmaids to the altar of Bakewell Church, and there became the wife of Sir Thomas Stanley, of Winwick, in Lancashire, the second son of Edward, third Earl of Derby, and great-great-grandson of the noble and gallant Stanley who took so brave a part in the battle of Bosworth Field, where he placed the crown of Richard on the head of the victorious Richmond. Dorothy, who was one of the bridesmaids on that day, doubtless found life at Haddon rather lonely after her sister's departure for the north. It is said—but, as there are no cartes de visite of the young lady now in existence, it is impossible to verify the assertion—that, of all the beautiful young women of that

"period," she was the most beautiful; and, of course, as she had no brothers, she had the best of "prospects." The local tradition has it that, in addition to her beauty and wealth, she was blessed with so sweet a temper that she was the idol of all who knew her, far and near. If this, however, really was the case, her monument in Bakewell Church does her but scanty justice, for the sculptor who executed the effigy on her tomb has represented her as neither amiable nor attractive in outward appearance. The story of her life, as told to me by a Derbyshire friend, will have it that she found herself obliged to play the part of Cinderella; for, while her elder sister was congratulated on all sides for having made a conquest of one of the noble House of Stanley, and becoming his affianced bride was petted and made much of by her fond and indulgent "papa," the Lady Dorothy, though only a year or so younger, was kept in the background and treated as a child, when she had got far more than half-way through her "teens." This treatment, no doubt, was very unwise in her case, as in that of other young ladies of "sweet seventeen;" and the result of course ensued that she resolved to secure a follower for herself. She was fortunate in her choice—John Manners, a son of the Earl of Rutland; but as he was "only a younger son,"

and had no broad acres to boast of, the attachment was opposed by her father and her stepmother, and even, we are told, by her sister, who, we hope, was not actuated by any feelings of sisterly jealousy. Dorothy was therefore watched closely, and kept almost a prisoner, being entrusted to the care of a middle-aged *duenna,* who did not contrive to make Haddon Hall the happier by her presence.

Love, however, laughs at locksmiths; and, from the days of Jupiter and Danaë down to those of Mr. Law and Lady Adelaide Vane-Tempest, there has been a succession of "Young Lochinvars" in almost every family of high rank and birth.

Julius Cæsar "came, saw, and conquered," as we all know from the day when we begin our Delectus; but, unlike that emperor, plain John Manners "came, saw, and *was* conquered." It had been a case of love at first sight, and, in spite of the remonstrances of papa and mamma, the young lovers agreed that they would never abandon each other, or unsay the words of love that they had said. These words were destined to have an abiding influence over the proud estates of Haddon Hall—an influence which three centuries have not swept away, for Haddon is now one of the seats, not of the Vernons,

but of Dorothy's descendant in the direct line, the Duke of Rutland.

"All things," they say "are fair in love as in war;" and so John Manners is said to have disguised himself as a woodman, or forester, and to have remained in various hiding places in the woods around Haddon for several weeks, in order to obtain stolen glances of Miss Dorothy, and, no doubt, occasional meetings with her when the Duenna was not "on guard." At length on one festive night at Haddon, perhaps at one of the merry-makings consequent on her sister's marriage, when everybody was busy in amusing the guests from the neighbourhood, Miss Dorothy is said to have quietly stolen away, unobserved, in the midst of the merriment, and to have passed out of the door of the ante-room on to the garden terrace, which still forms one of the chief features of the hall. She crossed the terrace, ran swiftly down the steps and across the lawn, and so down to the foot bridge over the Derwent, where she was speedily locked in her lover's arms. Horses, of course, were in waiting with trusty attendants, one of whom was left behind, to put papa off the scent in case of a pursuit.

On and on they rode through the moonlight on that bright August night, and early next morn-

ing they were married at a church just across the borders of the county, in Leicestershire.

The door through which the heiress of Haddon eloped on that memorable night with "plain John Manners" is still always pointed out to all who visit Haddon as "Dorothy Vernon's door." It is not enriched with splendid carvings, nor is to be distinguished from many other doorways in our old baronial halls and moated granges; but I fancy that somehow or other his Grace of Rutland and Lord John Manners can hardly look without some feeling of personal interest on the gate through which, a little more than three hundred years ago, passed not only the lovely Lady Dorothy, but with her the fine manor and all its broad lands, into the hands of the noble family of Manners, who are, or ought to be, nearly as proud of Haddon as they are of princely Belvoir.

John and Dorothy Manners, it may be as well to add here, lived happily ever afterwards. Children were born to them, and their eldest son, Sir George Manners, added to the family fortunes by his marriage with Grace, daughter of Sir Henry Pierrepont, a near relative of the once ducal house of Kingston. The Lady Grace, as a monument in Bakewell Church informs us, "bore to her husband four sons and five

daughters, and lived with him in holy wedlock for upwards of thirty years." On her husband's death, she caused him to be buried with his forefathers, and then placed a monument to his memory at her own expense, as a perpetual memorial of their conjugal faith, and joined the figure of his body with hers, having vowed that their ashes and bones should be laid together.

Such of our readers as care for genealogical details may be glad to know that, although Dorothy Vernon herself never wore the strawberry leaves of the coronet of a duchess, yet in the long run she became the direct ancestress of the Dukes of Rutland. Her grandson John succeeded as the eighth Earl of Rutland on the death of his cousin, in 1641; and her great-grandson, John, the ninth earl, was created Marquis of Granby and Duke of Rutland in 1703. This Duke's grandson was the celebrated commander-in-chief of the British forces who served with Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick in Germany, and whose face as "the Marquis of Granby" is so familiar on our village signboards. The "Marquis" unhappily died before his father; but his son Charles, the fourth duke, a nobleman most popular as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the days of Pitt and Fox, was the grandfather of

the present Duke, who has inherited both Belvoir Castle, once the seat of the Lords de Roos, and Haddon Hall, the ancient home of the Vernons.

AN ECCENTRIC LADY.

THAT "Truth is stranger than fiction" is an axiom of which the justice is generally acknowledged, but so seldom realised that whenever we hear of some event rather out of the common course occurring to any of our friends, we find ourselves involuntarily describing it as being "like a romance!" And yet the wildest work of fiction ever penned has rarely contained incidents more extraordinarily improbable than those which have marked the career of the heroine of our present story, and which—little edifying in many respects although they be—may nevertheless serve

"To point a moral and adorn a tale."

Jane Elizabeth, Lady Ellenborough, if we may trust the matter-of-fact pages of *Lodge's Peerage*,

is the only sister of the present Lord Digby, being daughter of the late Admiral Sir Henry Digby, G.C.B., great-grandson of the fifth Lord Digby: Her mother was a daughter of Thomas William Coke, of Holkham, the veteran M.P. for Norfolk, and well-known agriculturist, afterwards created Earl of Leicester. She was born in April 1807, and when little more than seventeen, was married to the late Lord Ellenborough (the Governor-general of India); but the union was dissolved by Act of Parliament in 1830, "on account of her elopement with Prince Schwartzenberg." She took as her second husband, two years later, Charles Theodore Herbert, Baron Vennigen, of Bavaria.

It is probable that this alliance lasted but a short time, at least if any credence may be attached to the account of a correspondent of the Vienna *German Gazette*, who writes thus from Beyrout in 1872—3: "I met to-day an old acquaintance, the camel-driver, Sheikh Abdul, and he told me that his wife had died. Abdul spoke well of the woman. Her name was once known all through Africa. Sheikh Abdul is the ninth husband of Lady Ellenborough, whom I met for the first time about thirty years ago at Munich, just after she had eloped with Prince Schwartzenberg from the residence of her first hus-

band. She then went to Italy, where as she told me herself, she was married six times in succession. Each and all of these unions were dissolved after a short duration. In 1848 I met her at Athens, where she concluded an eighth marriage with the Greek colonel, Count Theodoki; this, however, also lasted only for a short time. Her affections were now bestowed on an old Palicar chieftain, for whom she built a beautiful house at Athens. When her latest marriage was again dissolved, she went to the Levant."

It would seem as if the old satirist Juvenal must have had Lady Ellenborough in the "prophetic eye" of his mind when he wrote of a Roman lady some eighteen hundred years ago—

> "Thus in autumns five
> Eight husbands doth she wed—a worthy thing
> To note upon her tomb!"

The paragraph from the *German Gazette* above quoted having gone the round of the daily papers, both abroad and at home, gave occasion for a variety of obituary notices of the ex-Lady Ellenborough, dwelling in not very complimentary terms upon certain parts of her singular career of adventure. It subsequently appeared that the news of her death was quite premature, and that the report had been originally put into circulation

by one of her ladyship's and her second husband's bitterest enemies in the neighbourhood of Damascus, which she had made for some years her headquarters, opening her Eastern home to all sorts of visitors from the West, as well as her oriental friends. The rumour of her death was effectually contradicted a few months later by a letter in her own handwriting addressed to an English lady, who was well acquainted with her in Damascus. This lady and her husband had mourned old Lady Ellenborough for two or three months as having died in the Desert, and had quite given up all hope of ever seeing her again, when one day they received from her a letter stating that she was alive and in the best of health, and asking them to contradict the rumour of her decease.

Lady Ellenborough was fortunate in the possession of at least one sincere friend, generously eager to defend her when attacked, and to make out the best case possible for her. Mrs. Isabel Burton, who had been intimately acquainted and in the habit of daily intercourse with this extraordinary woman during a residence of two years in Damascus, while her husband, Captain Burton, was the English consul at that city appears to have contracted a warm attachment for her, and speaks of her, in spite of all her faults, in terms of the

highest praise. To Mrs. Burton, Lady Ellenborough confided the task of writing her biography, and dictated it to her day by day until the task was accomplished. In a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, written in March 1873, when under the belief that Lady Ellenborough was dead, Mrs. Burton says, in allusion to this biography: 'She did not spare herself, dictating the bad with the same frankness as the good. I was pledged not to publish this until after her death and that of certain near relatives.'

Mrs. Burton subsequently adds: "I cannot meddle with the past without infringing on the biography confided to me; but I can say a few words concerning her life, dating from her arrival in the East, as told me by herself and by those now living there; and I can add my testimony as to what I saw, which I believe will interest every one in England, from the highest downwards, and be a gratification to those more nearly concerned. About sixteen years ago, tired of Europe, Lady Ellenborough conceived the idea of visiting the East, and of imitating Lady Hester Stanhope and Lady Mary Wortley Montague, not to mention a French lady, Mme. de la Tour d'Auvergne, who has built herself a temple on the top of Mount Olivet, and lives there still. Lady Ellenborough

arrived at Beyrout and went to Damascus, where she arranged to go to Bagdad across the Desert. A Bedouin escort for this journey was necessary; and as the Mezrab tribe occupied the ground, the duty of commanding the escort devolved upon Shaykh Mijwal, a younger brother of Shaykh Mohammad, chief of this tribe, which is a branch of the Great Anazeh tribe. On the journey the young Shaykh fell in love with this beautiful woman, who possessed all the qualities that could fire the Arab imagination. Even two years ago she was more attractive than half the young girls of our time. It ended by his proposing to divorce his Moslem wives and to marry her; to pass half the year in Damascus—which to him was like what London or Paris would be to us—for her pleasure, and half in the Desert in order still to lead his natural life. The romantic picture of becoming queen of the Desert and of the wild Bedouin tribes exactly suited the lady's wild fancies, and was at once accepted; and she was married in spite of all opposition made by her friends and the British Consulate. She was married according to Mohammedan law, changed her name to that of the Honourable Mrs. Digby El Mezrab, and was horrified when she found that she had lost her nationality by her marriage, and had become a Turkish subject. "For fifteen years," adds Mrs.

Burton, "she lived as she died,* the faithful and affectionate wife of the Shaykh, to whom she was devotedly attached. Half the year was passed by the couple in a very pretty house which *she* built at Damascus just without the gates of tho city; and the other six months were spent according to *his* nature in the Desert in the Bedouin tents of the tribe.

"In spite of this hard life, necessitated by accommodating herself to his habits—for they were never apart—she never lost anything of the English lady nor the softness of a woman. She was always the perfect lady in sentiment, voice, manners, and speech. She never said or did anything you could wish otherwise. She kept all her husband's respect, and was the mother and the queen of his tribe. In Damascus we were only nineteen Europeans, but we all flocked around her with affection and friendship. The natives did the same. As to strangers, she received only those who brought a letter of introduction from a friend or relative; but this did not hinder every ill-conditioned passer-by from boasting of his intimacy with the House of Mezrab and recounting the untruths which he invented, *pour*

* This was written at the time when the report of Lady Ellenborough's death was generally believed to be true.

se faire valoir, or to sell his book or newspaper at a better profit. She understood friendship in its best and fullest sense; and for those who enjoyed her confidence it was a treat to pass the hours with her. She spoke French, Italian, German, Slav, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and Greek, just as she spoke her native tongue. She had all the tastes of a country life, and occupied herself alternately with painting, sculpture, music, or with her garden flowers, or poultry, or with her thoroughbred Arab mares, or in carrying out some improvement. She was thoroughly a connoisseur in each of her amusements or occupations. To the last she was fresh and young; beautiful, brave, refined, and delicate. She hated all that was false. Her heart was noble; she was charitable to the poor. She regularly attended the Protestant church, and often twice on Sundays. She fulfilled all the duties of a good Christian lady and an English woman. She is dead. All those who knew her in her latter days will weep for her. She had but one fault (and who knows if it was hers?), washed out by fifteen years of goodness and repentance. Let us hide it, and shame those who seek to drag up the adventures of her wild youth to tarnish so good a memory. *Requiescat in pace.*"

But Lady Ellenborough was *not* dead. It will, of course, be obvious that along with Lord Brougham, she has been privileged to read the obituary notice of her own career; and she is probably destined to see many more summers and winters in her Arab home.

It is evident from the tenor of the last few sentences of the foregoing letter, that the "one fault" to which the writer alludes was the elopement of Lady Ellenborough with Prince Schwartzenberg, and that Mrs. Burton entirely disbelieves in the half-dozen or more of apocryphal husbands intervening between Lord Ellenborough and the Arab sheik. At any rate, the eccentric lady is entitled to the benefit of the doubt; and the public curiosity respecting this extraordinary woman must remain unsatisfied until the period shall arrive when her friend and confidante, Mrs. Burton, will feel herself at liberty to publish the autobiography committed to her charge.

It would be possible, without difficulty, to draw at once a parallel and a contrast between the eccentric Lady Ellenborough and the scarcely less eccentric niece of the younger Pitt, Lady Hester Stanhope, whom I have named above, and who, more than half a century ago, exchanged English life, habits, and sentiments,

and possibly also to some extent her faith as well, for those of the wild and romantic East. But this I leave for another opportunity.

SIR SIMON EYRE.

HOW A COBBLER'S APPRENTICE BECAME LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.

AMONG the worthies of former days who have sat in the chair of state in Guildhall, few bear to this day a higher name as patriots and philanthropists than Sir Simon Eyre, Lord Mayor of London a little more than four centuries ago. If in no other capacity, yet as the founder and builder of the Leadenhall, from which in later days has grown so important an offshoot as Leadenhall Market, the memory of Sir Simon Eyre deserves to be long held in honour in this great metropolis. Why and wherefore I will explain. Like Dick Whittington, he rose from mean parentage and humble birth to become, as the old chroniclers style him, "a right worthy man in the commonwealth." He was a native of one of the northern counties, and coming up as a

boy to London, was "bound 'prentice" to a shoemaker not many hundred yards from the Standard in Cornhill. A Chap-book entitled *The Delightful, Princely, and Entertaining History of the Gentle Craft*, published in 1825, gives us a picture of his 'prentice life in London, which will amuse our readers:—"His master being a man of reasonable wealth, set many journeymen and apprentices to work, who followed their business with great delight, which quite excluded all weariness; for when servants do sit at their work like dromedaries, than their minds are never lightly on their business, for it is an old proverb—

> "They, poor servants, kind and good,
> Do sing at their business like birds in the wood."

Such fellows had this young lad, who was not behind with many northern jigs to answer their southern songs."

Being the youngest 'prentice in the house, it so happened that when sent out to the conduit to fetch water for the rest, he fell in with other youths of his own age, who were despatched from their several abodes on the same business, for as yet there was no New River, and no supply of fresh water by underground pipes. The conduits and pumps were the sole sources

to which the citizens of London could at that time have recourse for the most necessary of all commodities.

"Now the custom was," continues the chronicle, "that every Sunday morning divers of these 'prentices used to go to a place near the Conduit in Cheapside to break their fast with pudding-pies, and often they would take Simon along with them; but upon a time it happened that when he should draw out money to pay the shot with the rest, he had none; whereupon he said to then, 'My faithful friends and conduit companions, treasurers of the water-tankard, and main pillars of the pudding-house, I may now compare my purse to a barren doe, that yields her keeper no more good than an empty carcase, or a bad nut, which, being opened, hath no kernel. Therefore, if it please you to excuse me this time from my part of the shot, I do here vow that if ever I come to be Lord Mayor of the City, I will give a breakfast to all the apprentices of London.' 'We do take you at your word,' quoth they, and so they departed."

Now, whenever a man either makes a fortune "or comes to grief," it is ten to one that "there is a lady in the case;" and Simon Eyre forms no exception to the general rule. It came to pass, we are told, that as soon as he was "out of his

time" the clever young 'prentice fell in love with a "maiden near neighbour unto him," and the banns having been put up, he got married, as many a City 'prentice had done before him and since his time has done also. The next thing that we hear about him, of course, is that he has got a shop and is working hard daily at his last under the penthouse eaves which frowned, like dark eye-brows, over his little stall. His young wife, too, was never idle, but when she had nothing else to do she sat by his side and spun.

Having worked in his stall for a year or so, and having laid by a little money, step the second was to "get him some 'prentices and a journeyman or two;" the next thing we hear is that he "could not make his wares so fast as he could have sold it," so that he could easily find employment for more hands.

The sequel of the story shall be told in the words of the Chap-book already quoted:—"At last one of his servants espying one go along the street with a fardel at his back, called to his master, saying, 'Sir, yonder goes a man that wants work I'll be bound for it.' 'Run presently' (quoth he), 'and fetch him hither.' The boy, running forth, called to the man, saying, 'Good fellow, come hither; here is one that would

speak with you.' The fellow, being a Frenchman that had not been long in England, turning about said, 'Hea! (eh) what you say? vill you speak vid me? Tell me, what you have, hea!' and with that coming to the stall, the good man asked him if he lacked work. 'Wee, *(oui)* par ma foy *(par ma foi)*,' quoth the Frenchman; hereupon Simon took the Frenchman in; and so well did the latter behave, that his master made a good account of him. . . . This man, John Denevale by name," adds the Chapbook, "was the first that wrought upon the low-cut shoe, with the square-toe and the latchet overthwart the instep; before which time, in England, they did wear a high shoe that reached above the ankles, right after the manner of our husbandmen's shoes at this day, save only that it was made very sharp at the toe, turning up like the tail of an Highland dog, or as you see a cock carrying his hind feathers."

How often in actual life has it happened that in the person of a stranger a man has unawares entertained an angel of good fortune! And, in the case of M. John Denevale, ere long Mr. and Mistress Eyre found the old saying true.

The next thing we read about this worthy couple and their French inmate is amusing, and

can scarcely fail to remind one of the story of Dick Whittington :—

"Now, while John Denevale dwelt with Simon Eyre, it chanced that a ship of the Isle of Candy was driven on our coast, laden with all kinds of lawns and cambrics, and other linen cloth, which commodities were at that time in London very scarce and exceeding dear; and by reason of a great leak that the ship had gotten at sea, being unable to sail any further, the captain would make what profit he could of his goods here. And being come to London, it was Denevale's chance to meet him in the street; of whom the merchant, in the Greek tongue, desired that he would get him a night's lodging, for he was one who had never been in England before, and being unacquainted, knew not whither to go. But while he spake Greek, John Devenale answered him in French, which tongue the merchant understood well."

Of course, the Greek captain told him the story of his loss, and how his "good ship" had suffered by storm, and how that he wished to dispose of such "commodities" as he had saved from the wreck.

In reply, the Frenchman tells him that he is himself but a stranger in this country, and unacquainted with the merchants. "But," adds he,

"I dwell with one in the City, a very honest man, who perhaps can help you to some that will deal with you for it." And so saying, he got the Greek captain a lodging hard by his master's stall, and they parted for the night, agreeing to meet again next day.

The next thing, naturally, was for John Denevale to "move the matter to his master," who, in the sequel, found the truth of the old saying, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody some good." Simon Eyre was sharp enough to know that there was at the time a great dearth of lawns, cambrics, and linen in London, and also, what was better, a demand for them; for the trade of the East India Company was not ther opened up. Accordingly we read:—

"When the master had heard such circumstance, he considered, as he stood cutting out his work, what was the best to be done in this case," and saying to his man John that he would think the matter over, and let him know next day what he would do, he "cast down his cutting knife, and went out of his shop into his chamber, where he walked up and down very sadly, ruminating thereon;" so deeply, indeed, that his wife at last came to him, and asked him why he did not come down to supper, for "his meat would get cold." And when she sent her maid upstairs a second

time to fetch him, he replies, "'Body of me, wife, I promise thee, I did not hear thee call.' 'No, faith, it seemeth so,' (quoth she). 'I marvel whereupon your mind runneth.' 'Believe me, wife' (quoth he in reply), 'I was studying how to make myself Lord Mayor of London, and thee a lady.' 'Now, God help you,' quoth she, 'I pray God make us able to pay every man his own, that we may live out of debt and danger, and drive the wolf from the door, and I desire no more.' 'But, wife,' said he, 'I pray thee now tell me, dost thou not think that thou could'st make shift to bear the name of a lady if it be put upon thee?' 'In truth, husband,' quoth she, 'I'll not dissemble with you; if your wealth were able to bear it, my mind would bear it well enough.' 'Well, wife,' replied he, 'I tell thee now in sadness, that, if I had a little money, there is a commodity now to be bought, the gains whereof would be able to make thee a gentlewoman for ever.' 'Alas! husband, that dignity your trade allows you already, being a squire of the gentle craft; then how can you be less than a gentleman, seing your son is a prince born?' 'Tush, wife,' quoth he, 'those titles do only rest in name, but not in nature; but of that sort I had rather be, whose lands are answerable to their virtues, and whose rents can maintain the

greatness of their mind.' 'Then, sweet husband, tell me,' said his wife, 'what commodity is that which you could get so much by? I am sure yourself hath got some money, and it shall go very hard but I will procure friends to borrow for thee forty shillings; and besides that, rather than you shall lose so good a bargain, I have a couple of crowns that never saw the sun since we were first married, and these also you shall have.' 'Alas! wife,' said Simon, 'and all this comes not near the matter. I confess it would do some good in buying some backs of leather; but in this thing 'tis as nothing, for this is merchandise that is precious at this time and rare to be had: and I fear that whoever will have it must lay down three thousand pounds of ready money; yea, wife, and yet thereby he might get three and four thousand pounds of profit.'"

"His wife hearing him say so," quaintly continues the story, "was inflamed with the desire thereof, as women are for the most part very covetous. The matter running in her mind, she could scarce find in her heart to spare him time to go to supper, for very eagerness to animate him on to take that bargain upon him; wherefore, so soon as they had supped and given thanks, she said to her husband, 'That man is not always to be blamed who sometimes takes

counsel of his wife; for though women's wits are not able to comprehend the greatest things, yet in doubtful matters they oft help on a sudden.'

"'Well, wife, and what mean you by this?' quoth her husband. 'In troth,' quoth she, 'I would have you pluck up a man's heart, and speedily chop up a bargain for those goods you speak of.' 'What, I?' quoth he, 'that am not able for three thousand pounds to lay down three thousand pence?' 'Tush, man,' quoth she; 'what of that? Every man that beholds a man in the face, knows not what he hath in his purse; and, whosoever he be that owns the goods, he will (no doubt) be content to stay a month for his money, or three weeks at least; and I promise you that to pay a thousand pounds a week is a pretty round payment, and, I may say to you, not much to be misliked of. Now, husband, I would in the morning you go with John the Frenchman to the Grecian merchant, and with good discretion make a sound bargain with him for the whole freight of the ship, and thereupon give him half a dozen marks in earnest, and, eight-and-twenty days after the delivery of the goods, condition to deliver him the rest of the money.' 'But, woman,' quoth he, 'dost thou imagine that he will take my word upon so weighty a sum of money, and deliver up his goods

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on no better security?' 'Good Lord,' quoth she, 'have you not wit in such a case to make a shift? I'll tell you what you shall do! Let it not be known to him that you bargain for yourself; but tell him that you do it on behalf of one of the chief Aldermen of the City; but beware that you leave not with him your name in writing. He being a Grecian cannot read English; and you have no need at all to show it to John the Frenchman; or, if you should, it were no matter, for you know that he can neither read nor write.'

"'I perceive, wife,' quoth he, 'thou wouldst fain be a lady, and worthy thou art to be one, that dost thus employ thy wits to bring thy husband profit; but tell me, if he should be desirous to see the Alderman, and to confer wlth him, how shall we do then?' 'God have mercy on me!' quoth she; 'you say women are fools, but to me it seemeth that men have need to be taught sometimes. Before you come away in the morning, let John the Frenchman tell him that the Alderman himself shall come to his lodging in the afternoon, and, receiving a note of all the goods that be in the ship, he shall deliver him a bill of his hand for the payment of his money according to that time. Now, sweetheart,' added she, 'this Alderman shall be thy own self; and

I'll go and borrow for thee all things that shall be necessary against that time.' 'Tush,' replied he, 'dost thou imagine that he seeing me in the morning will not know me again in the afternoon?' 'Go to, husband,' quoth she, 'I warrant thee he will not know thee; for in the morning thou shalt go to him with a grimy, smudged face, and thy apron before thee, thy thumb-leather and hand-leather buckled close to thy wrist, with a foul band about thy neck, and a greasy cap on thy head.' 'Why, woman,' quoth he, 'to go in such sort would be a discredit to me, and make the merchant doubtful of my dealing; for men of a simple attire, God wot, are but slenderly esteemed.'

"'Hold your peace, good husband,' quoth the lady; 'it shall not be so with you, for John the Frenchman shall give such a report to the merchant of your honest dealing, as, I praise God, I can do no less, that the Grecian will conceive the better of you than otherwise, judging you to be a discreet and prudent man, that will not make a show of what you are not, but go in your attire agreeable to your trade. And because none of our folks should be privy to our intent, to-morrow we will dine at my cousin John's, the barber's, in Clement's Lane, which is not far from the George, in Lombard Street, where the

merchant lies. Now, I'll be sure that all the things shall be ready at my cousin John's that you may put on in the afternoon. And there, husband, he shall first of all with his scissors snip off all the superfluous hairs, and fashion thy bushy beard after the Alderman's grave cut; then wash thee with sweet camphire ball, and then besprinkle thy head and face with the purest rose water; then shalt thou scour thy pitchy fingers in a basin of hot water with a washing ball; all which being done then strip thee from all these common weeds, and I'll put on thee a doublet of tawny satin, over which thou shalt have a cassock of branch'd damask, furred round the skirts bravely, thy breeches of black velvet, and shoes and stockings fit for such array, a band about thy neck as white as the driven snow, and for thy wrist a pretty pair of cuffs, and on thy head a cap of finest black; then thou shalt put on a fair gown welted about with velvet, and overthwart thy back it shall be laid with the richest foyns, with a pair of sweet gloves on thy hands, and on thy forefinger a great seal-ring of gold. Thou being thus attired, I will entreat my cousin John, the barber, because he is a very handsome young man, neat and fine in his apparel, as indeed all barbers are, that he will take the pains to wait on you to the merchant, as if

he were your man; which he will do at first word, because one of you cannot understand the other, so that it will be sufficient with outward courtesy one to greet the other, and to deliver to you his note, and you to give him your bill, and so to come home. It doth my heart good already, to see how trimly this apparel doth become you, husband; and in my mind I seem to see you in it already, how like an Alderman you look in this costly array. At your return from the merchant, you shall put off all these clothes at my cousin John's again, and come home as you went forth Then tell John the Frenchman that the Alderman was with the merchant this afternoon. You may send to him in the morning, and tell him to command that his ship may be brought down the river; while she is coming, you may give notice to the linendrapers of the commodities you have coming.'"

The counsel of his wife approved itself to the willing and eager ears of Simon Eyre, if it did not wholly to his conscience; and he at once agreed in this matter to be ruled by his "better half."

To make a long story short, good news sometimes will travel as rapidly as bad; and so, in the course of a few days it comes to be noised abroad in the city, that Simon Eyre, the cobbler, has

become worth so much money as to buy up the freight of a certain Greek merchant, and in fact has grown a man of substance. His character has always stood high for honesty and integrity; and as he happens to be known to some of the friends of the Lord Mayor, he and his wife are invited to the Mansion House, where they are received with all that deference and respect which is due to honest merit and is paid to it if successful. And when he and his wife are sitting at supper, the word goes round from his lordship that "Mister" Simon Eyre is no longer a mere cobbler, but a wealthy shoemaker, who has bought up all the goods of the good ship the "Black Swan"—"a perfect argosy," added the Lady Mayoress, though it is doubtful if she knew the meaning of the term. And back that night both husband and wife returned quite convinced that their fortune was made.

And so it was. The scheme succeeded, thanks to the aid of the subtle wife and her "cousin John," the barber. The goods bought were resold at a profit of cent. per cent., and Simon Eyre was a man of established fame; like John Gilpin of a later date,

> "A citizen of credit and renown."

He had now the game in his own hands; he

would indeed become Sheriff of London, and sit also in the chair of Whittington. And if he ever should do so, then he would not forget his promise made at the conduit some forty years before, a promise which he treasured in his own heart, and did not even tell to his wife. "Master" Eyre, for such was his description henceforth, now resolved to act up to the respectable position to which he had thus suddenly been raised; and so we are told that, with a view of retiring from the business of the gentle craft at which he had worked as a 'prentice, he committed the government of his shop to John, the Frenchman, and kept an eye henceforth open to the main chance.

The rest of Simon Eyre's story is soon told, and may possibly furnish another chapter to the next edition of Mr. Samuel Smiles's work on "Self-Help." In the course of a month or so, the story tells us, he found that he had sold so much of his merchandize as paid his debt to the Greek captain, but left him three times as much as he had sold. Accordingly he lent his profits out among the aldermen and other merchants, and soon himself became an "adventurer at sea," and a wealthy man. One day, on casting up his accounts, he found himself worth no less than a clear twelve or thirteen thousand pounds, and he

was uttering to his wife words of gratitude to God for all his mercies, when one of the Lord Mayor's officers knocked at his door, desiring to speak with him. On opening the door, the officer told him that the Aldermen and Commonalty of London had chosen him to be Sheriff, if he would accept the post. He talked the matter over with his wife, and next day, with some show of reluctance in the Guildhall, signified that he would willingly discharge the duties which his fellow-citizens had laid upon him.

His next step, says the Chap-book, was to "put-off" his cobbler's shop to one of his men, and to set up at the same time the sign of the Black Swan swimming upon the sea, in remembrance of that ship that did first bring him wealth; for before that time, the sign of the Black Swan was never seen or known in or about the City of London.

The last step in the course of civic promotion came about in due time. As the cobbler had become a Merchant Venturer, and the Merchant Venturer a Sheriff of London, so when one or two more Michaelmas days came round, the ex-Sheriff gained the wish of his youth, the day-dream of his 'prentice days, and was declared Lord Mayor elect. "Changing his copy," says the droll book that we have so often quoted,

"Simon Eyre now became one of the Worshipful Company of Drapers, and for this year kept a most bountiful house. And at this time," it continues, "it came into his mind what a promise he once made to the apprentices, being at breakfast with them on going to the conduit, and he spoke to his lady in this wise: 'Good Lord,' quoth he, 'what change have we had within these thirty years, and how greatly hath the Lord blessed us since that! Praised be his name for it! I do remember, wife, when I was a young apprentice, what a march I did make upon a Shrove Tuesday morning, being at the conduit among other of my companions; trust me, wife, it is worth hearing, and I'll tell thee how it fell out.'" And then he repeated to her the story which we have already told our readers, adding that he little thought at the time that his words would ever come true. The wife, of course, as in duty bound, resolved that she would fall in with his wishes, and when her good lord told her to see that on the next Shrove Tuesday the 'prentices of London wanted neither "pudding-pies" nor pancakes, she kissed him fondly and proudly, and promised that his word should be law, and his commands obeyed.

"Hereupon," we read, "great provision was made for the 'prentices' breakfast, and on the

morning of Shrove Tuesday there was such a gathering of young fellows at Sir Simon Eyre's house"—for Lord Mayors then lived in their own dwellings and not in a Mansion House—"as had never been seen before. The 'prentices being all assembled, my Lord Mayor's house was not able to contain them, they were so great a multitude; so that besides the great hall, the gardens were set with tables, and at the back of the house two tables were set, and every other place was furnished in like manner, so that they were all placed. And, while meat was brought in, to delight their ears as well as their bodies, drums and trumpets were pleasantly sounded; and that being ended, the waits of the City, with divers other sorts of music, played delicious tunes. And after the first service, were all the tables furnished with 'pudding-pies' and pancakes in very plentiful sort, and the rest that remained was given to the poor. Wine and ale, too, in very great measure they had put before them, so that they had no lack nor excess to cause them to be disordered. And in the midst of their merriment, the Lord Mayor, in his scarlet gown, and his lady, in like manner, went in among them freely, bidding them all welcome heartily, and saying to them, 'That, God be praised, his promise made so long ago he had now lived to perform.' At

that time, they, the 'prentices to wit, in token of thankfulness, flung up their caps in the air, and made a great shout, and all quietly and innocently departed.

"Then after this year," continues the story, "Sir Simon Eyre built Leaden Hall, appointing that in the midst thereof there should be a market-place every Monday for leather, where the shoemakers of London, for their greater ease, might buy of the tanners, without looking any further. And so in the end, this worthy man," being convinced that after all there was, is, and could be nothing like leather, "ended his life in the City of London with great honour."

That, in spite of some little embellishments in matters of detail, the substance of the story of Sir Simon Eyre, the cobbler's apprentice, is true, may be gathered from the authentic records of his life to be found in the chronicles of London antiquaries, and in the inscription still to be read upon his tomb.

We learn from Maitland's "History of London," and from honest John Stow, that in 1419 Sir Simon Eyre, some time Lord Mayor of London, built Leaden Hall "at his proper expense," and gave the same to the City to be employed as a public granary for laying up corn against a time of scarcity. In the east side of this structure

originally was a chapel, which not being endowed according to the design of the founder, we hear that three clerics, William Rouse, John Risby, and Thomas Ashby, by licence from Edward IV., in the seventh year of his reign, founded therein a Fraternity of the Trinity, consisting of sixty priests (besides other brethren and sisters), part of whom performed the divine office every market day for the benefit of such persons as frequented the market. "In this hall," says Maitland, "was afterwards kept the common beam for weighing of wool, and a public market for many foreign commodities, and since that it has been employed as an armoury or common repository for the military utensils belonging to the City; but at present (1739) it is converted into warehouses, and the area thereof into a meat and leather market."

Seymour, in the first volume of his "Survey of London and Westminster" (folio, 1735), explains further what Eyre's charities were. By his will he gave a sum of money "to be distributed to all the prisons in London, or within a mile of that city, for the relief of their inmates." He also gave 2,000 marks to the Drapers' Company on condition of their establishing within a year of his decease "A master or warden, five secular priests, six clerks, and two choristers to

sing daily divine service 'by note' for ever in his chapel of the Leaden Hall;" as also three school-masters, with an usher, to teach the choristers to sing; and in event of the Drapers' Company not carrying out this plan, the money was to revert to "the Prior and Convent of Christ's Church in London;" and if they, too, declined the duty, he left the three thousand marks to be disposed of by his executors as they best could devise in works of charity. Maitland adds, "Thus much for his testament, *not performed*, by establishing of divine service in his chapel or free school for scholars; neither how the stock of 3,000 marks were employed by his executors was ever known."

In Maitland's "London," under the notice of the church of St. Mary Woolnoth, is given a description of the monument of Sir Simon Eyre; it runs as follows:—

"Orate pro anima Simonis Eyre. . . . . Under this defaced monument Simon Eyre, the sonne of John Eyre, of Brandon in Suffolk, lieth interred. He was Lord Maior in the year 1445. He built Leaden Hall for a common granary for the Citie, and a fair large chappell on the east side of ye quadrant, over the porch whereof was painted, 'Dextra Domini exaltavit me;' and on the north wall, 'Honorandus famosus

Mercator, Symon Eyre, hujus operis Fundator.' He gave five thousand pounds and above to poor maids' marriages, and did many other works of charitie. He died the 18th day of September, 1459."

THE BARINGS.

THE Peerage of Great Britain has generally represented the landed as distinct from the commercial gentry; and, indeed, even at the present day, when money has in itself a far greater power than half a century ago, the names of those who have been raised to the Peerage from the ranks of commerce will be found to be considerably under a dozen; those that occur to me being Smith, now Lord Carington; Thellusson, Lord Rendlesham; Vanneck, Lord Huntingfield; Glyn, now Lord Wolverton; Jones-Loyd, Lord Overstone; and last, not least, the Barings, Lords Ashburton and Northbrook.

Mr. Robert Smith, who had been for some years one of the representatives in Parliament of his native town—Nottingham—and was always found on the Ministerial side of the House, was raised

by Pitt, in 1796, to the Irish peerage by the title of Lord Carington, In the course of the following year he was raised to the dignity of a peer of Great Britain by the same title. This step was not accomplished, however, by Pitt, as is remarked by Sir N. Wraxall, in his "Memoirs," without "his experiencing a long resistance on the part of the King. Throughout his whole reign, George the Third," he tells us, "adopted as a fixed principle that no individual engaged in trade, however ample might be his nominal fortune, should be created a British peer. Nor do I believe," he adds, "that in the course of fifty years, he infringed or violated this rule, except in the single instance before us." Up to the time of the Union of Ireland in 1800, an Irish peerage was looked upon in the case of one who was not possessed of landed property in that country as little more than an empty honour, "producing, indeed, rank and consideration in society, but conferring no personal privilege; neither securing his person from arrest in Great Britain, nor even enabling the individal to frank a letter." It was said by many at the time that Lord Carington owed his elevation to his wealth and the assistance which he offered to Pitt in his difficulties; but whether this be true or no, it is a fact that the precedent of raising to the Upper

House individuals who are or have been engaged in business has not been largely followed in the present century.

The Barings, however, form a marked exception to this rule; and, perhaps, no more striking instance of the rapid elevation of a family could well be brought forward than that of the House of Baring, a family which, within less than a century and a half, has established a great reputation in the field of commerce, and has given members to the House of Lords, and the House of Commons, and the Baronetage of the kingdom.

As in the case of their great rivals in later years, the Rothschilds, the home of the Barings was originally in Germany. The first member of the family of whom we know anything was one Henry Francis Baring, a Lutheran pastor at Bremen, who, late in life, came over to England. His son John managed, by close application to the business which he undertook—that of a cloth manufacturer at Larkbear, in Devonshire—to raise a considerable fortune, which he left among his four sons. Two of these, John and Francis, came up to London, and established a business as importers of wool and dye-stuffs, while, at the same time, they were agents to the Devonshire cloth factory. This business was given up on the retirement to Exeter of the elder brother John,

and Francis began to establish the fortune of the house by banking. His speculations were chiefly in Government loans, and he ingratiated himself with the then Premier, Lord Shelburne, by whom he was called the "prince of merchants." The dignity of a baronet was given to him in 1793, by William Pitt, who had succeeded Lord Shelburne as head of the Government. Sir Francis Baring, who married in 1766 a Miss Herring (cousin and co-heir of an Archbishop of Canterbury of that name), left by her five sons, the three eldest of whom were for a time partners in the great banking-house. Sir Thomas, not liking the notion of one bearing a title being intimately concerned with business, withdrew from the firm soon after the death of his father; and the younger of the three, Henry, spent so much of his time and fortune in gambling at the Palais Royal in Paris, and elsewhere on the Continent, where he excited the admiration of all who beheld his stores of wealth displayed on the tables, that he was persuaded to retire from the partnership, and thus the fortunes of the house became centred in the hands of the second son, Alexander. He had been brought up in the house of Messrs. Hope, of Amsterdam, who returned to England when Holland was occupied by France. Alexander then went to the United States of America, and there

married the eldest daughter of a Mr. William Bingham, considered at that time to be the richest man in that country; she brought him a fortune of a million or so, which he took back with him to London, and invested in the family concern in Bishopsgate Street.

The immense scale on which Mr. Alexander Baring carried on the business of the house gained for him in common talk the name of "Alexander the Great." To France, at the time of her occupation by Russian, Prussian, and Austrian armies, he granted a loan of about £1,000,000 at 5 per cent, by which that country freed herself from this terrible weight The Duc de Richelieu said, in reference to this great enterprise, that there were "six great powers in Europe: England, France, Russia, Austria. Prussia, and Baring, Brothers." This Alexander held office for a few months as President of the Board of Trade, and Master of the Mint, and was raised to the peerage as Baron Ashburton in April, 1835. He died at Longleat in 1848, and was succeeded in the title by his eldest son, William Bingham, who died a few years ago, when the second son Francis took the nominal direction of the business. In this capacity he engaged in some transactions which caused considerable astonishment, one of which

was the purchase of the land surrounding the Lake Tezcuco, on the island of which stands the city of Mexico—a purchase which was not long kept in the hands of the firm. Had it been otherwise, it would have been within the range of probabilities that when a sovereign was some years since chosen for the throne of Mexico, a Baring might have been chosen to sit upon it, instead of the unfortunate Maximilian of Austria!

Mr. Francis Baring married Clara Hortense, a daughter of the Duc de Bassano, First Secretary of State under Napoleon the Great, and he purchased one of the hotels on the Place Vendôme, Paris, for a large sum, and there took up his residence. On the death of his elder brother he succeeded to the family honours as Lord Ashburton, and retired from his connection with the great London house. He died about five years ago, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander Hugh, the fourth and present lord.

The great banking house of the Barings was represented till very recently by the late Mr. Thomas Baring, who sat for Huntingdon in Parliament for nearly thirty years before his death in the fall of last year, and who more than once had offered to his acceptance the Chancellorship of the Exchequer under Conservative ad-

ministrations. He was the next brother of the first Lord Northbrook, better known as Sir Francis Thornhill Baring, the third baronet, sometime Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards First Lord of the Admiralty, under Lord Melbourne's administration. The second and present Lord Northbrook is, as our readers need not be reminded, ex-Governor-General of India, where he won a high reputation as the successor of the lamented Lord Mayo, and was raised to an earldom on his return to England, his eldest son becoming Viscount Baring. Another member of the family, Dr. Charles Baring, brother of the late Lord Northbrook, holds a seat in the House of Lords as a Spiritual Peer, being Bishop of Durham.

The title of Baron Ashburton, of Ashburton, it may be added, had been conferred in 1872 on one John Dunning, a well-known lawyer of his day, who was married to Elizabeth, daughter of the Lutheran minister already mentioned as having come over to England, and being father of the founder of the fortunes of the House of Baring. His only son, the second lord, died without issue in 1823, and the title was extinct, till revived in the person of his maternal grandson, the above-mentioned Alexander Baring, in 1835.

SIR F. DASHWOOD AND THE FRANCISCANS.

I DO not know a pleasanter place on the banks of our noble Thames than the ruins of Medmenham Abbey, as they rise out of the green meadows on the Buckinghamshire side, hard by the silvery river, about half-way between Henley and Marlow. There they stand, far from the haunts of men and the busy hum of cities, breathing in their decay only of peace and its pursuits, and silently witnessing to the times of "the old religion," when the Angelus bell roused the villagers around three times a day to meditate on that doctrine which is the corner-stone of the Christian faith, and when Matins, Lauds, and Vespers formed only part of a long round of sacred exercises which kept men's minds and memories fixed on the things of the world

unseen, and weaned them from the pomps and vanities, the shadows and the unrealities of the present life.

The peaceful air of the country which surrounds Medmenham from Fawley to Bisham and Danesfield, and the delightful views of English river-side scenery, added to the *religio loci* by which they are haunted, make the ruins of Medmenham a favourite spot for picnics and other parties; while the stream of the Thames, which here runs clear and deep alternately, offers the very best of sport to the disciples of "honest" Isaak Walton.

I will not here weary my readers with a long antiquarian treatise on the foundation and early history of the Abbey of Medmenham. Sufficient to say that, if we may believe Dugdale, its founder was Hugh de Bolebec, evidently a Norman noble, who had previously endowed the abbey of Woburn, in Bedfordshire, and that as a religious house it dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century; Medmenham Abbey was in fact an offshoot of the Cistersian monastery at Woburn. The abbot was Epistolar of the Order of the Garter at Windsor, his office being to read the Epistle at the High Mass on the Feast of St. George. Through the poverty of the inhabitants, the abbey had fallen into a state of decay at a

very early period, and from a return made by the commissioners at the Dissolution the place appears to have been of very little importance, having only two monks, "the house wholly in ruins, and the value of the moveable goods only £1 3s. 8d." Its income was only a little over £20 a year. At the Reformation it need hardly be said that the Abbey of Medmenham shared the fate of other houses both lesser and greater than itself. Its monks were reduced to a single brother, and the house was annexed to the Abbey of Bisham. The site subsequently passed by sale into the hands of different owners, and is now the property of Mr. Scott Murray, of Danesfield. Mr. Langley, in his history of the "Hundred of Desborough," thus describes the appearance of the building, which has been artificially turned into a most attractive "ruin:" "The abbey house, with its ivy-mantled roof and walls, forms a very picturesque object. The late addition of a ruined tower, cloister, and other corresponding parts, is made with so much taste and propriety that when time shall have worn off all traces of the rule and blunted its sharp edges, when the ivy shall have continued its embraces and the mosses of various hues overspread its surface, some future writer will be disposed to class it with the more ancient pile. Within the

cloister a room has been fitted up with the same good taste, and the glare of light is judiciously excluded by the pleasing gloom of ancient stained glass, chiefly coronets, roses, and portcullises. The figure of the Virgin (the abbey seal) seated on a throne, and holding the infant Saviour in her arms, carved in marble, still remains, and is placed in a niche in the tower."

But it was reserved for the middle of the eighteenth century—for the days "when George the Third was king"—for Medmenham Abbey to receive its *coup de grâce* in the way of desecration; and the name of John Wilkes, the honest and plain-spoken politician, stands out in disgusting prominence along with that of a scion of the aristocracy of the time, for a piece of reckless and indecent blasphemy which could scarcely be beaten by the vile scum of Paris in the first Revolution. That such things should have been done by Frenchmen in the reaction from a hollow, courtly, and corrupt religionism to an equally absurd extreme in the opposite direction, is easily to be conceived, and we as Englishmen are not afraid or ashamed to see and acknowledge our neighbours' faults and failings; but that atheism of a like kind was practised openly and avowedly in the middle of the eighteenth century in England, by refined and educated Englishmen,

without a blush upon their foreheads, is probably new to many of my readers, and will at first be met by them with a smile of disbelief. For the sake of my countrymen, and especially those of the "upper ten thousand," I heartily wish that it could be proved that what I am about to tell is a fable of my own invention. I fear, however, that, in case of any question being raised, the grey old walls of Medmenham Abbey would tell out the tale in words unmistakable.

Sir Francis Dashwood, Bart., of West Wycombe, in the county of Buckingham, was the eldest son of one Francis Dashwood, who, having represented Winchilsea in four successive Parliaments, and having married four wives in succession—two of them the daughters of earls—was rewarded for his eight public services by a baronetcy. His family were respectable, but nothing more; an elder branch owned broad acres and a house on the borders of Dorset and Somerset; and his brother had been Lord Mayor of London, of which city his father was an alderman and Turkey merchant, according to Sir Bernard Burke. But the Baronet was fortunate in one of his marriages, as his wife, the Lady Mary Fane, eldest daughter of Vere, fourth Earl of Westmorland, by the death of her brothers inherited a barony in fee—that of Le Despencer.

In 1762 Lady Mary Dashwood died, and her son became in his father's lifetime Lord Le Despencer. It is about this nobleman and his friends and boon companions that I am about to speak.

Born in 1708, and early initiated into public and parliamentary life under the reign of the first and second George, we find Mr. Francis Dashwood, in his father's lifetime, member for Weymouth, Head of the War Office, and subsequently Treasurer of the Chambers and Master of the Wardrobe to the King, and eventually in 1762—63, Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the latter year, he made good his right to his mother's barony, and was summoned accordingly to the House of Lords; and after his accession to the peerage he acted for some years as joint Postmaster-General. That this gentleman found time to intersperse his public duties with amusements of a nature scarcely compatible with any real attachment to that religion with which the English Constitution is so closely allied, will be evident to anyone who reads what I tell of him on the authority of one of his own acquaintances, Horace Walpole. That inimitable gossip—who, however, can be well relied on for contemporary history, and especially for contemporary biography—speaking of one of George Selwyn's excesses when a youth at Oxford, for which he

was sent away from Christ Church, explains the reason of his expulsion: "It appears that Selwyn had obtained possession of a silver chalice used for the Communion Service, and that while at a tavern, surrounded by a jovial party of friends, he once filled it with wine and handed it round, exclaiming, with mock gravity, 'Drink this in remembrance of me.' Some of his companions had the good sense and sufficient self-respect to leave the room while this irreverent orgie was proceeding. But it soon got talked about all over Oxford, and at last reached the ears of the authorities, who lost no time in inflicting upon the offender the greatest disgrace which was in their power, to mark their sense of the insult which he had cast upon the University and its faith."

But, though this irreverent jest, once performed, and possibly without premeditation, by a youth at Oxford, was visited on George Selwyn with expulsion and the loss of all University prospects, it does not appear that one of Lord Bute's Ministers at all lost caste among his fellows, by repeating the same act coolly and deliberately, wantonly and habitually. What was an offence to be punished by expulsion on the banks of the Isis, was a fit, lawful, and proper

act at Medmenham, some sixty miles lower down the Thames.

"There is every reason," says the editor of Horace Walpole's Memoirs, "to believe that out of this single outrageous act of George Selwyn arose the infamous fraternity of the Franciscans, which made Medmenham Abbey the scene of its orgies." This society was founded by the Sir Francis Dashwood whom I have already introduced to my readers as a Minister of State under George III., and a member of Lord Bute's Cabinet. It appears that he made an association of twelve members, all gentlemen of course and boon companions of his own, whom he styled "Franciscans," after himself as their founder and high priest. The ruins of Medmenham Abbey were part of his property; and "why should not a man do as he likes with his own?" And what was there, I may also ask, to forbid a Minister of State to forget his public character, and in private to emulate the Regent Duke of Orleans across the water with his *Parc aux Cerfs?* Nothing in the world—not even public opinion; for there were no daily papers, or next to none, to note such deeds, and to hold up the doers of them to public execration. But to return to my subject.

John Wilkes was a member of this unholy

fraternity. So no doubt was the Duke of Queensberry, better known as "Old Q.;" so also was the too celebrated Paul Whitehead; and so probably was George Selwyn himself, in his earlier days. A list of the rest of the members is not to be obtained, as the Barony of Le Despencer has since passed into three other families by descent and marriage, and together with it the fair green meadows of Medmenham have also changed owners. And further, few persons now living, I think, would like to put in on their grandfathers' behalf a claim to membership. It is all very well to be able to say, "My grandfather, or my great-grandfather was a 'K.G.,' or even a humble 'M.P.;'" but the initials "M.F.O." or "M.O.F." a century ago conveyed little credit or honour to those who chose to add them to their names.

John Wilkes, however, shall describe the "Franciscans" in his own words. I quote from a letter still extant, addressed by him to Lord Temple (afterwards Marquis of Buckingham), from Bagshot, in September, 1762. Speaking of Medmenham Abbey he says:—"Rites were celebrated there of a nature subversive of all decency, and calculated, by an imitation of the ceremonies and mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church, to render not only that Church, but religion itself, an object of contumely—to such an

extent, I will own, that they cannot be reflected on without astonishment. Sir Francis Dashwood himself used to officiate as High Priest, habited in the dress of a Franciscan monk of the olden days, and engaged in pouring a libation from a communion cup to the mysterious object of the homage of himself and his associates."

Here we have the very best authority for a story which at first sounds almost incredible in connection with the fair, peaceful meadows that smile among the trees, and show their image in the glassy mirror of the Thames—a scene calculated rather to inspire feelings of piety and reverence than to suggest the idea of vile and unholy rites. It is said that it was in the intervals between one week's end and the beginning of the next that these orgies were held. Well may Sir Nathaniel Wraxall pass over the subject in as few words as possible, and sum up his opinion on the matter briefly by saying, that "the Chancellor of Lord Bute's Exchequer in 1792, far exceeded in licentiousness of conduct anything of the kind exhibited since the days of Charles II." The poet Churchill has described Sir Francis Dashwood in his "Franciscan" character, in his poem entitled "The Candidate."

Some idea of these Bacchanalian orgies, may

be gathered by a perusal of "Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea;" a work much admired at the time of its publication, when its allusions were better understood than is now the case.

The antiquary, Browne Willis, speaks of some parts of the old conventual building as still standing in his time, but only a portion of a single column is now to be seen. A clump of willows marks the former extent of the ancient buildings, the foundation walls being still discernible. The Abbey-house, as it now stands, with its "ivy-mantled" walls, is a very good imitation—but still only an imitation—of the antique; and its effect is heightened by the addition of a tower, cloisters, and other erections in the Strawberry Hill style of Gothic art.

And what in the long run became of Sir Francis Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Premier Baron in the Peerage of England? He "died and was buried, and slept with his fathers." He died issueless in the month of December, 1781. This is all I know. Strangely enough, not a line in the way of obituary notice about his lordship is to be found in that repository of biographical and personal history, the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He seems to have been

clean forgotten, and to have passed away out of remembrance before he died; while other statesmen and Cabinet Ministers are continually mentioned, not one in ten of my readers is aware that such a personage as Sir Francis Dashwood ever lived. Such at least would be the natural inference to be drawn from the ominous and eloquent silence of old "Sylvanus Urban." His baronetcy devolved on his next brother, who took the name of King, while his peerage passed to two female relatives, between whose descendants it fell into abeyance. This continued for seven or eight years, when the death of one of the rival claimants terminated that abeyance in favour of Sir Thomas Stapleton, Bart., whose grandmother was a sister of the lady who had carried the coronet of Le Despencer into the Dashwood family.

There is a portrait of Sir F. Dashwood as a Franciscan Monk among the pictures belonging to the Dilletanti Society, at Willis's Rooms. It represents him, however, devoutly worshipping, not a crucifix, but a veritable daughter of Eve.

It must be a matter of congratulatian to the present wearer of the coronet, now the wife of Viscount Falmouth, to reflect that she has not in her one drop of the blood which flowed in the veins

of the "High Priest of the Franciscans," and that consequently whatever curse may have rested on himself for his misdoings is not one which is more likely to affect her ladyship than anyone of the readers of these columns.

THE SACKVILLES OF DRAYTON.

IN the parish of Lowick, not many miles from the town of Thrapston, in Northamptonshire, in the middle of a well-timbered park and embowered in wood, stands the historic mansion of Drayton, now the residence of Mr. Sackville-Stopford. It has passed through the hands of several families as owners in the last and present centuries; and, as considerable interest attaches itself to the name of Sackville, so dear to English readers, I will here tell one chapter out of its past history.

The manor and park of Drayton, according to Baker's History of Northamptonshire, belonged in the reign of Henry VI. to a family named Green, and its owner served twice as high sheriff of his native country. From the Greens it passed into other hands, and thence to the Mordaunts,

who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were Earls of Peterborough. Lady Mary, the daughter and heiress of Henry the second Earl, and eventually in her own right Baroness Mordaunt, was one of the belles of the court in the reigns of the later Stuarts; and so successful was she in her angling for a husband that she contrived to hook and catch no less a suitor than Henry, Duke of Norfolk, the head and chief of "all the Howards."

Her marriage, however, did not turn out altogether a happy one; for, having been found by her husband to be rather more intimate than she should have been with a certain knight, Sir John Germaine, of Westminster, the Duke obtained a divorce from her Grace, and, as they had no children, Drayton reverted to the Duchess as her own property. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, who towards the end of the last century was a frequent visitor at Drayton, describes with great minuteness the bedchamber of the fair but frail Duchess, the room which Sir John Germaine occupied when a guest, and the "closet" with a high partition connecting the two apartments. The rooms still stand pretty much as they did a century ago; but it is not my intention in these sketches to pry too closely into the inner chambers of country houses, especially of those

where the walls and timbers, if endued with speech, could tell strange tales.

Freed from her marriage tie with his Grace of Norfolk, the Lady Mary thought that the wisest course she could pursue would be to marry the gentleman who had helped to bring about that severance; and accordingly, a few months afterwards, the ex-Duchess became Lady Mary Germaine, the marriage ceremony being performed in a somewhat private manner, on account of recent scandal.

But who and what was Sir John Germaine? In order to answer this question I will frankly avow that it would be a wholly vain and useless task to make a pilgrimage to the neighbourhood of Doctors' Commons, and to search the pedigrees and papers under the keeping of my good friend "Garter" at the Heralds' College. The fact is that Sir John Germaine's extraction, if not uncertain, was at all events variously reported, and gave rise at the time to much discussion. Every prude about the Court, and many a one in the country too, expressed her wonder and surprise that so fine a woman as her Grace of Norfolk should throw up so fine a match for an adventurer who could scarcely tell his father's name, though possibly he might know that of his mother! "Why, to think of such a thing! Who ever

would or could have dreamed it?" exclaimed the world of female society, for once united in its chorus of most disinterested outcries.

The chatty old chronicler to whom we have already referred, and who—as Lord Stanhope observes—is generally set down as a fabler, simply *because he told the truth too soon after it had happened*, shall be called on to explain the mystery. If we can trust his version of the matter, Sir John Germaine's father "bore arms as a private soldier in the Guards of William, Prince of Orange." He happened to be possessed of a wife who was blessed with great personal charms, and was even thought to have been that Prince's mistress; and accordingly her son was believed to have "stood in a very near degree of consanguinity to King William III." Other circumstances might be mentioned which confirm this supposition. For instance, though the Herald's Visitations were not then quite obsolete, yet Sir John Germaine inherited no paternal coat of arms, but assumed and used on his seal a plain red cross, "probaby meaning to imply thereby that his pretensions ascended higher than his ostensible birth." This supposition is strengthened by the fact that, on coming over to England with William the Dutchman in 1688, the new King was no sooner seated on the throne than he

signalled him out for special honours, which he had in no way earned like the Bentincks, the Keppels, the Nassaus, and the Schombergs. William treated him with great personal affection, and looked after his interests in more ways than one, procuring for him his election as a Member of Parliament, and conferring on him not only the honour of knighthood and a baronetcy (in the patent of which he is described as "of Westminster"), but a host of pecuniary grants and other donations besides. The result was that he was rich and "a rising man;" and the ladies all acknowledged that he was not less handsome in person than fond of "the sex."

His handsome face and bearing no doubt recommended him to the Lady Mary Mordaunt, who had no sooner doffed her ducal coronet than she bestowed, as we have said, upon the knight from beyond the seas her hand and heart, and with them the fine estate of Drayton.

Sir John and Lady Mary Germaine lived together for several years, but their marriage was not followed by any issue. On her ladyship's death, in 1705, the Earldom of Peterborough passed to a male cousin of her father, but her own broad Northamptonshire acres and mansion she devised by will to her husband, free from all terms and conditions. Sir John Germaine,

though at first he was (of course) somewhat inconsolable for her loss, gradually settled down into a serene and contented frame of mind, and no doubt found little difficulty in acquiescing in the arrangements of Providence in his own regard. Though he had been duly naturalised, and by his long residence in England had even become quite an Englishman in speech and habits, yet we are told that he preserved to the last some of the tastes and *penchants* of a native of the Low Countries. Among other things he was a firm and staunch friend of Sackville, Duke of Dorset, and still more so of his duchess. The latter was a daughter of Marshal Colyear, brother to the first Earl of Portmore, who had entered early into the service of the Dutch Sovereign. Perhaps, too, he was fond of duchesses as such. At all events, he always called her Grace of Dorset his countrywoman, and visited frequently at the house of her father and her husband, and (what is more), so far as we know, without compromising her good name. Accordingly, as he found himself after the death of his first wife in possession of a landed estate and childless, he grew desirous of transmitting Drayton to some descendants or adopted heirs. But first he thought that he would try the simpler and more natural plan of a second matrimonial union,

leaving it open to himself to fall back upon the *dernier procès* of legal adoption in default of success hereafter. Such being the case, he resolved to look around him for a young and blooming wife, who would be likely to give him the blessing of an heir. So, with this object in view, while staying at the Bristol Hot Wells he cast his eyes upon the fair Lady Betty Berkeley, a daughter of the Earl of Berkeley—a lady whose birth, beauty, and accomplishments made her every way worthy of his choice. Being many years younger than himself, and at the same time a woman of good sense and good abilities, she acquired great influence over him. Added to this, she was herself intimate with the Duchess of Dorset, so that the friendship between the two families became more strongly cemented than ever by the new alliance. By his blooming second wife Sir John Germaine had several children; but, unfortunately, they all died young; and since, in his declining years, when tortured with the gout, Lady Betty proved herself as kind and tender a nurse as she had been a good wife and mother, he resolved to make her his heir.

Accordingly, a short time before his death, in 1718, he called her to his bedside, and thus addressed her: "Lady Betty, I have made you a very indifferent husband, and particularly of late

years, when illness had made me a burden to myself; but I shall not be much longer a trouble to you. I advise you never again to marry an old man; but I exhort you and wish you, when I am gone, to marry again; and, as a proof that I mean what I say, I mean at all events to put it in your power to do so. You have been a good and excellent wife to me, and I have therefore by my will bequeathed to you this estate, which I received from my first wife, and which, as she gave it freely to me, so I as freely give to you. I hope you will marry, and that you will have children to inherit it. But, if events should happen otherwise, or if you marry, but have no surviving child, then it would give me pleasure to think that Drayton descended, after your decease, to a younger son of my old friends the Duke and Duchess of Dorset."

Lady Betty, though young when she was left a widow, survived her husband fifty years, and, as there happened just then to be a dearth of *soi-disant* "Dukes" of Roussillon about town, she never married a second time. She continued, however, her friendship with the Dorsets; and when she died, she willed the estate of Drayton, not to any of her own relations, but to the Duke's second son, Lord George Sackville, on condition that he took the name of Germaine in lieu of his

patronymic. Her will is still extant, and it is not a little curious; but a strong confirmation of the story told above may be found in the fact that when speaking of the *name* of Germaine she says nothing about the *arms* of that family—two points which the Heralds' College scarcely ever contemplate as separable, even in thought.

Lord George Sackville, as my readers will remember, in early life served in the army at Dettingen, Fontenoy, Minden, and several battles abroad, as well as subsequently in the Scottish campaign of 1745. He was a godson of King George I., and for many years a Member of the House of Commons and Secretary of State for Ireland, and also for America under Lord North's administration. It was he, too, who was sent by the Duke of Cumberland in 1748 to negotiate the peace with Marshal Saxe. He was severely blamed, and even censured by a court martial, for his conduct at Minden; but he afterwards rose, as I have said, to high ministerial employments at home.

In 1782, on retiring from office, he was created (not however without remonstrance on part of some noble lords) Viscount Sackville, and Baron of Bolebrooke, in Sussex—titles which passed to his son and successor, but were subsequently merged in the ducal title of Dorset, which that

son inherited in 1815 on the death of his cousin. These titles, however, all became extinct at the last Duke's death without issue in 1843. It so happened, however, that his uncle, John, third Duke of Dorset, the owner of princely Knole, and of Buckhurst in Sussex, though he had no son, yet left two daughters, married respectively to the Earl of Plymouth and Earl Delawarr. The estate of Knole, and eventually the representation of the historic house of Sackville, and of its honours—which had included the Viscomty of Sackville and the Baronies of Bolehurst and of Buckhurst—passed to the younger daughter, who in 1864 was created in her own right Baroness Buckhurst. This title, at her death in 1870, devolved, under a special remainder, on her second surviving son, Earl Delawarr, while a younger son inherited "princely" Knole and was created Lord Sackville.

The title of Buckhurst is one which all my readers will identify with the name of Thomas Sackville, first Earl of Dorset, Lord High Treasurer of England in the reign of Elizabeth, who is known as the author of some poems which have taken their place among English classics, and are read with delight whenever the English tongue is spoken.

It only remains to add that the mansion of

Drayton House is described in the "Beauties of England and Wales" as an antiquated and castellated structure, and that in an engraving of the house by Buck (1729) it is said that the house was formerly a castle; but if so, it must have been very much altered, though it still retains some of its castellated features in its embattled walls and entrance gateway, and the two square turrets at either end. It contains, *inter alia*, a fine collection of pictures and portraits by the most eminent masters. In Lowick Church, under the east window of the north aisle, is an altar tomb, on which is a recumbent female figure, representing the Lady Mary Mordaunt, whose marriages we have already recorded. On the north side, on a similar tomb, lies the effigy of a knight in armour, with an inscription stating that beneath it repose the remains of Sir John Germaine, knight and baronet, who figures in the Extinct Baronetage as "Sir John Germaine, of Westminster," and who there appears to have had neither father nor mother. At all events, his pedigree is "conspicuous by its absence" from the work of Sir Bernard Burke—an omission very significant, and a strong confirmation of the supposition which I have already recorded as to his real parentage. I have read, though I cannot now tell where, a statement to

the effect that Sir John Germaine was so illiterate a person that he could scarcely sign his name; but I cannot vouch for the truth of the assertion.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF SUTHERLAND.

IN an early chapter of this series of papers, while speaking of the Grenvilles, I took occasion to remark that many of our ducal houses are built up, so far as wealth is concerned. of a succession of heiresses. Of no family is my remark more true than it is in the noble House of Gower, which, rising steadily but slowly, at last, some forty years ago, reached its zenith of exaltation, when its head won his strawberry leaves from William IV. The Gowers, however, have been among the "noble and gentle men" of England for many a long age. According to the consent of all our best antiquaries, they can boast of a Saxon origin, and in all probability, like the Coplestones and two other Devonshire families, can boast that their ancestors were "at home"—seated, that is, on lands of their own—"when

the Conqueror came;" so that it mattered little to them, as they walked across their broad acres at Sittenham, in Yorkshire, noble though unentitled, and "monarchs of all they surveyed," whether Harold or William was doomed to win the battle of Hastings.

Be this, however, as it may, at all events towards the close of the thirteenth century, in the reign of Henry III. or Edward I., we find Sir John Gower, a Yorkshire knight, under orders to repair to Carlisle with horse and arms on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, and to march northwards with the King's army into Scotland: and it was probably his son, Lawrence Gower, who obtained pardon from Edward II., for having had a hand in the murder of the royal favourite, Piers Gaveston. His son, Sir Nicholas, took part in the council of the realm held at Northampton under Edward the Black Prince; and his son again, Sir John Gower, standard-bearer to Prince Edward, was taken prisoner at the battle of Tewkesbury, and afterwards beheaded. In the next century or two we find the heads of the family constantly honoured with knighthood, and allying themselves with ladies of gentle blood, such as the Constables, the Mauleverers, and the Fairfaxes.

But the chief pride of this family, if any weight

may be attached to the statement of Leland and others, is the fact, that from it sprang one of the first of our English poets ; I mean of course John Gower, who with Chaucer and Lydgate formed the "celebrated triumvirate" of early poets in this country, much as did Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch in Italy. Gower is supposed to have been born about the year 1325, but the exact place of his birth is unknown. It is recorded of him that he was certainly rich, and a Yorkshireman ; and it is conjectured that he was a knight, and even a judge. As well as being a man of letters, he was an accomplished jurist, and he did not neglect the practice of the law even while he attached himself ardently to literature. Gower enjoyed the friendship of the great men of his country, and was honoured with the recognition of royalty. Like Chaucer, he is stated to have had his strong political predilections, attaching himself to the House of Lancaster under Thomas Woodstock, as his friend did under John of Gaunt. But to return to my subject, the history of the family.

Passing on to the reign of Charles I., we come to Sir Thomas Gower, twice High Sheriff of Yorkshire, who suffered severely in pocket and in purse for his faithful allegiance to his king. His first wife, however, one of the Howards of Na-

worth, brought him a fair accession of fortune; and with his second wife, Frances, second daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Leveson, he obtained the estate of Lillieshall, in Shropshire. His son Sir William, being adopted by his mother's brother, Sir Richard Leveson, of Trentham, inherited those magnificent estates in that county, which eventually gave, or were thought to give, his descendants a fair claim to the Marquisate of Stafford, and caused the addition of the name and arms of Leveson to the surname and shield of the Gowers. He too was tolerably successful in his matrimonial adventures, as he obtained for a wife the Lady Jane Granville, eldest daughter and ultimately heiress of the Granvilles, Earls of Bath.

The mantle of good fortune which had been worn by his predecessors, descended on his son, Sir John Leveson-Gower, who married the daughter of the first Duke of Rutland, and was raised to the peerage as Lord Gower. His son, the second Lord Gower, was three times married, and each marriage helped to fill higher and higher its coffers, which were already very fairly supplied. His first wife was a daughter of the ducal House of Kingston; his second a rich widow, for whom and for whose cash the mouth of many a nobleman might have watered;

and his third spouse was the co-heiress of the Earl of Thanet.

Thus enriched and powerfully connected, it was almost a matter of course that in time he should have been advanced to an earldom, an honour which he obtained in 1746. But the cup of prosperity for the Gowers was not yet full. His son and successor, the second earl, having been left a widower at a most fortunate juncture, chose as his second wife the Lady Louisa Egerton—daughter, and eventually heiress of Scrope, first Duke of Bridgwater—a lady of royal descent, who traced her pedigree in the female and, what is more, in the legitimate, line from royalty; namely, from Mary, Queen Dowager of France, own sister of Henry VIII. She brought, however, to the Leveson-Gowers something better than mere royal blood; for through her the greater portion of the Lancashire property of the Dukes of Bridgwater passed to one of her husband's grandsons, as will be seen presently. Having sat in the Lower House of Parliament as M.P. for Westminster and Lichfield, and held several high offices of state in the earlier Ministries of the reign of George III., and having married for his third wife a daughter of the then all-powerful house of Stewart, Earl of Galloway, Lord Gower was raised in 1786 to the Marquisate

of Stafford—the ancient barony of Stafford, once vested in the Jerninghams, being then dormant, and supposed not very likely to be claimed by or restored to its Roman Catholic owners, as the penal laws had not then been repealed.

The first Marquis of Stafford died at the beginning of this century, but not until he had seen his younger son on the high road to a coronet, and his eldest son married to probably the greatest heiress in land and money, and the owner of the most illustrious title in the peerage of Scotland—I mean the Earldom of Sutherland, of which Sir Bernard Burke tells us that, "according to the traditionary details of some of the Scottish writers, it is the most ancient in North Britain; while Douglas says that "it gives way to few, if to any, in Europe"—words equivalent to those of Lord Hailes when he speaks in round terms of the origin of the Earldom of Mar as "lost in antiquity."

The heiress of Sutherland, however, did not gain her position without a fight, her claim to the coronet of her father and grandfather being stoutly contested by two Scotch gentlemen, Sir Robert Gordonstown, and George Sutherland of Force. The question resolved itself into a great "peerage case," which formed a *cause célèbre* a century ago, and the House of Lords adjudged

the coronet of Sutherland to the young lady, who a few years later added to the Staffordshire and Shropshire estates her own magnificent inheritance in Scotland, consisting of the best part of the two counties of Sutherland and Caithness, once the property of the Lords of Reay.

It might be thought that the tide of prosperity could flow no longer, could rise no higher; but such was not the case, for in 1833, a few months before the death of the fortunate marquis, he gained the much coveted strawberry leaves, being gazetted to the highest rank in the English peerage as Duke of Sutherland, a county over which he and his wife, the late duchess-countess, had long exercised the rights almost of petty sovereigns.

The second duke, by his marriage with a lady of the house of Howard, added rather to his political influence than to his broad acres or his banking account; but the third duke, having married the heiress of the Hay-Mackenzies of New Hall and Cromartie, N.B., has added on to his northern principality most of the lands which formerly belonged to the Earls of Cromartie, whose title has been renewed lately in favour of the Duchess, with remainder to her younger children.

The noble House of Gower, therefore, is in this

present condition. Its heads and chiefs, in little more than a century and a half, have won their way from plain gentlemen holding lands in Yorkshire to a barony, an earldom, a marquisate, and a dukedom. They have absorbed into them a whole Scottish earldom of venerable antiquity, and almost all the wealth of the Dukes of Bridgwater, to say nothing of heiresses in every generation; and, even reckoning the Scotch earldom, and the English dukedom of Sutherland as only one title in reality, members of the family now hold besides the Earldoms of Granville, Cromartie, and Ellesmere, the last-named title having been conferred about a quarter of a century since on the second duke's younger brother, Lord Francis Leveson-Gower, better known by his subsequent name of Lord Francis Egerton. In the same way, to go back to the previous generation, the first duke's younger brother was created Lord Granville.

In the entire range of the English, Scottish, and Irish peerage, so far as my researches have extended at present, I can find two and only two parallel to the good fortune which—if coronets are signs of success—has attended the House of Gower. The one instance is to be found in the House of Boyle, Earl of Cork, whose ancestor, Richard, the second earl, sat in the Irish House

of Peers in virtue of his hereditary title, and was also created Earl of Burlington, in England, while his brother Lewis was raised to the dignity of Viscount Boyle, his brother Roger to that of Earl of Orrery, and his brother Francis was created Viscount Shannon. The fifth and youngest brother, Robert Boyle, was the celebrated philosopher; ennobled sufficiently by his own transcendental abilities, he repeatedly refused the dignities which were offered to him. Had he accepted these, there would have been five brothers all in the enjoyment of the honours of the peerage at one and the same time. The second instance is of more recent date, and will readily occur to the minds of most of my readers; for from the year 1820 to 1840, or thereabouts, four brothers of the name of Wellesley held seats at the same time in the Upper House of the legislature, namely, Richard, Marquis Wellesley; Henry, Lord Cowley; William, Lord Maryborough; and last, not least, Arthur, Duke of Wellington.

It has been said over and over again by careless and superficial writers that the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland have not proved themselves benefactors to the cottars and poorer tenantry upon their large northern estates, and that their Graces are a standing example of the bad effects which follow on the formation of such

gigantic properties, and the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a single individual. I think that, before I ask my reader to form a judgment on the question, I may well be pardoned for craving his attention to a few facts and figures, which I have ascertained to be trustworthy. It has been often stated in the newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic that the greatest cruelty has been practised by the late and present Dukes of Sutherland, by "evicting" their tenantry in the north, and turning their homes into sheep walks. Now the real facts are these. To use the words of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, in her "Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands;"

"Soon after the union of the crowns of England and Scotland, the border chiefs found it profitable to adopt upon their estates that system of agriculture to which their hills were adapted, rather than to continue the maintenance of military retainers. Instead of keeping garrisons, with small armies, in a district, they decided to keep only so many as could profitably cultivate the land. The effect of this, of course, was like disbanding an army. It threw many people out of employ, and forced them to seek for a home elsewhere. Like many other movements which, in their final results, are beneficial to society, this was at first vehemently resisted, and had to be

carried into effect in some cases by force. As I have said, it began first in the southern counties of Scotland, soon after the union of the English and Scottish crowns, and gradually crept northward—one county after another yielding to the change. To a certain extent, as it progressed northward, the demand for labour in the great towns absorbed the surplus population; but when it came into the extreme Highlands, this refuge was wanting. Emigration to America now became the resource; and the surplus population were induced to this by means such as the Colonisation Society now recommends and approves for promoting emigration to Liberia."

The first farm so formed on the Sutherland estates dates from 1806. Further changes were made by the first Duke in 1811-12, and completed in 1819-20.

It was found necessary, in the interests of the cottars themselves, to remove them in large numbers from their inland homes, inaccessible and far away from roads, where they were often in danger of starving, down to the sea-coast, where they might support themselves by the fishery. New lots of land were therefore leased to them near the sea and the mouths of rivers, where they could maintain themselves by labour and industry. They had two years given them

to prepare for the change, without any payment of rent being exacted. Timber, too, was given for building their houses, and other facilities were afforded them.

The agent for the management of the Sutherland estates, the late Mr. James Loch, M.P., in a speech in the House of Commons on the Scotch Poor Law Bill in 1845, declared from his own knowledge that while not one sixpence of rent "was received by the Duke from the poor on his Sutherlandshire estates from 1811 to 1833, on the contrary, there had been spent among them for the benefit and improvement of the people no less than sixty thousand pounds." Formerly, he said, so great was the danger of the poor dying of starvation, that in the winter they were often forced to bleed their cattle and mix their blood with their meal; but since the establishment of them on the coast, they had formed a town (Helmsdale) which in 1811 did not exist, and that in 1844 they had exported upwards of 37,000 barrels of herrings; the fishery employing nearly 4,000 persons.

In former times it appears that the estates were in the hands of "middlemen," who sublet them to the poor at advanced rentals; an end, however, had been put to this state of things, and in many places the rents had been lowered

thirty-six per cent., while the Duke had granted his tenants timber and stone for their dwellings as a free gift.

The following is an extract from Mr. Loch's published statement on this subject:

"Since 1811 the people have become immediate tenants, at a greatly diminished rate of rent, and released from all these exactions. For instance, in two parishes in 1812, the rents were £1,593, and in 1823 they were only £972. In another parish the reduction of rents has amounted on an average to thirty-six per cent. Previous to 1811 the houses were turf huts of the poorest description, in many instances the cattle being kept under the same roof with the family. Since 1811 a large proportion of their houses have been rebuilt in a superior manner—the landlord having paid them for their old timber where it could not not be moved, and having also contributed the new timber, with lime.

"Before 1811 all the rents of the estates were used for the personal profit of the landlord; but since that time, both by the present duke and his father, all the rents have been expended on improvements in the county, besides £60,000 more which have been remitted from England for the purpose. This money has been spent on

churches, school-houses, harbours, public inns, roads, and bridges.

"In 1811 there was not a carriage road in the county, and only two bridges. Since that time 430 miles of road have been constructed on the estate at the expense of the proprietor and tenants. There is not a turnpike gate in the county, and yet the roads are kept perfect.

"Before 1811 the mail was conveyed entirely by a foot runner, and there was but one post office in the county; and there was no direct post across the county, but letters to the north and west were forwarded once a month. A mail coach has since been established, to which the late Duke of Sutherland contributed more than £2,600; and since 1834 mail-gigs have been established to convey letters to the north and west coast, towards which the Duke of Sutherland contributes £300 a year. There are sixteen post-offices and sub-offices in the county. Before 1811 there was no inn in the county fit for the reception of strangers. Since that time there have been fourteen inns either built or enlarged by the Duke."

Sixty years since, too, there was not a gig in the county, and scarcely a cart on the estate; no baker, and only two shops besides two smithies; no woodlands to supply firewood; hardly any

exports; no savings banks, no resident surgeon, and no schools. So great, however, was the progress of the district in civilisation, that in 1845 there were forty-one gigs, eleven hundred and thirty-one carts, eight bakers' and forty-six grocers' shops, many thousand acres of plantations for the supply of fuel, and that the exports amounted to 40,000 sheep and 80,000 fleeces of wool, besides 50,000 barrels of herrings. Savings banks, too, had been established in every large village, twelve boys' and girls' schools had been built and endowed with salaries for the teachers; and there were five medical gentlemen on the estate, three of whom received allowances from the Duke for their attendance on the poor in the districts where they severally reside.

Added to this there is, and has been for years, under the patronage of his Grace, a Farmers' Club, or other agricultural association, of which the leading gentry and tenantry are members; and that they are not indolent and unintelligent members may be guessed from the fact that not so very long ago Professor Johnston, at their invitation, paid a visit to Sutherlandshire in order to deliver a course of lectures on Agriculture and Agricultural Chemistry.

The population of the Sutherland estates was estimated by Mr. Loch, upwards of twenty years

ago, at nearly 22,000. I fancy that if poverty must ever be my lot, I should much prefer to be a pauper on the estate of his Grace of Sutherland than to carry on the struggle for bare existence in a garret in Soho, or Lambeth, or Clerkenwell.

A single anecdote of the late Duke of Sutherland will fully justify me in my preference, and explain the meaning of my last remark:

In 1827, when there was much suffering on account of bad seasons, the Duke of Sutherland sent down his chief agent to look into the condition of the people, who desired the ministers of the parishes to send in their lists of the poor. To his surprise it was found that there were located on the estate a number of people who had settled there without leave. They amounted to four hundred and eight families, or two thousand persons; and though they had no legal title to remain where they were, no hesitation was shown in supplying them with food in the same manner with those who were tenants, on the sole condition that on the first opportunity they should take cottages on the sea-shore, and become industrious people.

COLONEL CHARTRES.

IF my readers will turn to the pages of Burke, or Lodge, or the first "Peerage" which they may have at hand, they will find the surname of "Charteris" given as the present patronymic of the family of the Earl of Wemyss.

But our readers will not learn from the "Peerage" that the name of "Charteris" is usually pronounced as "Charters" or "Chartres," as indeed it was often written early in the last century, when we had no penny post or cheap newspapers, and a popular press to produce and circulate them; and perhaps it is quite as well for the honour and reputation of the Wemyss family that they should have changed for late years the orthography of their name, if it be only in order to escape the memory of the infamy

which attached to one of their ancestors a century and a half ago.

It is just possible that some of my readers may be among the number of those who take a delight —as I will own that I have done even from childhood—in Pope's noble "Essay on Man." If so, they will have no difficulty in calling to the memory a couplet in the Fourth Book, where the poet asks in an impassioned tone,

> "Shall some old temple nodding to its fall,
> For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?"

No doubt, too, they will have imagined that this "Chartres," whoever he may have been, was some contemporary low fellow of bad character, whose name was then a by-word and a proverb for roguery and villany, and has since passed out of remembrance. Indeed, even Dr. Croly in his annotated edition of the works of Pope, passes the line by with only two brief lines by way of footnote, stating that he was "an infamous profligate, who, after a long life of scandalous impunity, was at length hanged by a denial of justice."

Now I do not dispute the Rev. Doctor's assertion that Chartres was "an infamous profligate;" but I own that I am fairly puzzled as to what he really means by his concluding words; and as to

his being hanged, the real fact is that literally and truly he was never hanged at all, and that it was his escape from hanging, and not his execution, that arose from a "denial of justice." In fact, as my readers will easily see, he was screened by his high and noble relatives, aided by royal favour, from the fate to which he was most justly sentenced, and died quietly in his own bed.

Francis Chartres, or Charters, was a member of a respectable and worthy, not to say noble, Scottish house, whose members had lived for generations—it is stated in one account for no less than 400 years—on their own estate at Amisfield, in East Lothian or Haddingtonshire. He was born about the year 1668, in the licentious days of Charles II., from the members of whose court at an early age he had imbibed instructions in vicious ways, which he certainly carried out into practice as he passed from youth into manhood and to middle age. His mother was the daughter of a titled house; and both paternally and maternally he was related and connected with a host of the nobility of the northern kingdom. As a youth he was tall, elegant, and highly accomplished, and had received the best education that it was possible to procure in the northern metropolis; so that

when he came to the age of seventeen or eighteen, and made choice of the army as a profession, he had no difficulty in obtaining a commission as ensign in a foot regiment, with which he served under the great Duke of Marlborough in some of his earlier campaigns on the Continent. Here he showed so much promise that before long he was advanced to a cornetcy in a regiment of dragoons, where he speedily became a general favourite. At all events, as my readers will speedily see, he "played his cards" remarkably well, in one sense at the least; for, being a man of pleasure, a most expert gamester, and of a disposition which grew more and more avaricious in proportion as he needed cash for his pleasures, he made his knowledge of gambling subservient to his love of money. Accordingly, while the army was in winter quarters in the Low Countries, he stripped many of his brother officers of their property and "expectations" by his skill at cards and at dice. Ere long, however, his popularity came to be on the wane, for he had no sooner fleeced a fellow-officer of his gold than he would offer to lend him, to meet his liabilities, another sum at the very moderate interest of a hundred per cent., taking from him an assignment of his commission as a security for the repayment of the debt.

It happened that about this time John, Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Stair, and some few other younger members of noble Scottish houses, were in the army also, and, like wise and "canny" Scotchmen, resolved that they would not look on tamely and see their brother officers, less "canny" than themselves, ruined by the artifices of Charters, although he too was from "the Land o' Cakes." Accordingly, they applied to the then Earl of Orkney, who was a general officer, and who happened to be quartered at Brussels, and represented to him the ruin which would result to the younger officers in the mess-room if a stop were not put to his proceedings. Lord Orkney, anxious for the credit of the army in general, and for that of his own countrymen in particular, explained the state of the case to his Grace of Marlborough, who issued his orders that Charters should be put under arrest, and brought in due course to answer for his misdoings before a court-martial. In fact, it was clear that the young laird from Haddingtonshire had learned to "play his cards" even a little too well!

The court, as I learn from a military source of information, was composed of an equal number of Scottish and English officers, in order that Charters and his friends might have no pretence for saying that he had been treated in any way

unfairly or partially. After a candid hearing of both sides of the case, the court-martial resolved that the proofs of his villany were conclusive, and such as could not be ignored or passed over. He was found guilty of "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman;" was sentenced to be deprived of his commission and to be drummed out of his regiment, his sword having first been broken; and further, he was ordered to return to his victims the money of which he had robbed them by exacting usurious rates of interest.

Thus disgraced, he was forced of necessity to quit Brussels; but he soon showed that he had by no means lost his wits with his commission. The story is told, that on the road between that city and Malines he threw his breeches into a ditch, and then, buttoning his long cloak close around him, went into an inn, where he took up his quarters for the night. It is usual—or at all events it was usual at that time—for military men to be treated with all possible respect in places where the army may happen to be quartered. And this was the case with Charters, the news of whose recent punishment had not flown before him, as it would nowadays, on the wings of the post and the *Times*. No sooner, accordingly, had he entered the house, than mine host and hostess treated him with all honour placing

before him the best of such fare as they happened to have in the house. So, after ordering and dispatching an elegant supper—not, it may be imagined, without plenty of the best wine that the cellar could afford—he was shown upstairs by the servants, and left to take his repose. Early in the morning, however, he alarmed the house by ringing his bell violently. The landlord was frightened, and came rushing to his room, his head wrapped up in a nightcap and his clothes in disorder. Charters at once violently attacked him, swearing furiously, and vowing that either he or some of his rascally servants had found their way into his room and had robbed him of his breeches, which contained in their pocket a diamond ring, a gold watch, and money in notes and coin to a considerable amount; and, a pane of the window having been found conveniently broken, he intimated that the robber must have entered the room by that way, and that probably the culprit was the landlord himself. In vain did the landlord, and the landlady too—who now came to the scene of action—declare that they knew nothing of the matter, and that the maids, the waiter, and the ostler had each and all been in their respective beds all night; Charters threatened the landlord, in the tones that we may suppose to be those of an

irritated "officer and gentleman," that he should be sent off straight to Brussels, and be brought to trial for felony, or, at all events, as an accessory to a deed of felony. In vain did mine host kneel down and implore, if not forgiveness, at all events mercy; Charters was inexorable. At length, frightened out of his wits, and alarmed at the loss of custom and the disgrace which threatened to befall his house, which had hitherto borne an irreproachable character for honesty and integrity, he sent one of his servants to the friars of a convent hard by, to whom he explained the crisis and fix in which he found himself. The poor friars, good and simple souls that they were, believed his story, and generously supplied the poor man with a sum of money, sufficient to satisfy Captain Charters—to reimburse him, at all events, for the loss which he pretended to have sustained.

Having thus "fleeced" the poor monks and an honest landlord by his threats and lies, this worthy and high-principled youth went off pretty quickly from Mechlin, and found his way to some port in Holland, where it was easy to secure a passage back to Scotland. He did so, and as there were no newspapers to spread abroad the news of his disgrace, he put a bold front on the matter and returned to Haddingtonshire, giving

out that he was once more at home, having obtained leave of absence for his health, or on "urgent private affairs," or some other excuse equally valid.

Settled down as a respectable inhabitant at Amisfield, his native place, and attending the kirk regularly on the "Sabbath" day, he soon found that he had not lost caste in Haddingtonshire; and society in Edinburgh was either conveniently forgetful or extremely tolerant of his errors and indiscretions, because he was a young man of good family and estate, with plenty of money and still better prospects, and a widower to boot—a consideration which pleaded his cause most eloquently with the unmarried ladies of Edinburgh, both maids and widows, some of whom he began to wheedle out of their money, under the stale pretence of visiting them in the capacity of a suitor.

His money, however, stood him in even better service than this; for, backed up by the good offices of some of his influential and titled friends, and a judicious distribution of bank notes in certain quarters, he found himself one fine morning restored to his rank in the army, with a fresh commission in a horse regiment, in which before very long he was advanced to the rank of colonel. At this time one of his "Scotch cou-

sins," the Duke of Queensberry, happened to be acting as Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament, which was then sitting at Edinburgh, for the purpose of negotiating and carrying into effect the measure known subsequently to history as the "Union." Here he turned to good account at once his old abilities in the card-sharping line, and also his connection with the ducal house—the *entrée* to which, I may presume, gave admission to most of the many grand houses then inhabited by earls and marquises who lived in the streets and courts of "Auld Reekie." Being invited one evening to a card-party at the house of her Grace of Queensberry, he contrived to place the duchess in front of a large glass, in which he could see all the cards in her hand reflected. By this clever stratagem he won, it is said, no less than three thousand pounds, and at a single sitting. The great loss which his Duchess had sustained reached the ears of the Duke, who, however, I believe, lived on—happy man—and died, unconscious of the vile means which the gallant "colonel" had adopted; but he was so annoyed at the loss, that he absolutely introduced into Parliament a bill to prohibit gaming above a certain sum, and I have heard, though I do not know it for certain, that the bill passed into law. I dare say that, if such is the case, some of my

readers will be able to hunt it up in the Statute Book—a process for which I have neither the time nor the inclination.

The colonel meantime continued his depredations on the thoughtless, until he had acquired sufficient money to add largely to his estates in Scotland. He did not, however, reside at Amisfield, but took up his head-quarters at Edinburgh, where he thought he would find plenty of widows, equally rich and silly, to welcome him as a gay and rich man, looking out for a well-endowed partner. What a pity that he did not bring back with him from the Low Countries a high-sounding title of foreign nobility; for then possibly the sham strawberry leaves of a ducal coronet might have dazzled the eyes of some ambitious widow, and Roussillon himself have been out-Roussilloned! But, alas for his chances in the northern metropolis! a young officer, happening to come over at this juncture from Brussels, told the story of Charters' disgrace and fall in the old card-playing duchess's drawing-room. Her Grace saw quickly her opportunity, and took her revenge. The colonel was at once "tabooed" from society in Northern Athens, and his hunting-ground for rich widows was destroyed.

The colonel, however, was not to be so easily taken aback. He had resources of his own to fall

back upon. He would remove to London, as a place better suited than the northern capital for the doings of such a *chevalier d'industrie.* Here, though at that time London reckoned its population by thousands, and not by millions, he found a fresh field for his exertions in the humble service of Plutus. He became a noted lender of money on mortgages, for which he always took care to receive a large premium. In a few years he became so rich as to have purchased estates not only in Haddingtonshire, but also in more than one English county, and to set up for one of the "landed gentry" south as well as north of the Tweed. He contrived to flatter the vanity and excite the matrimonial hopes of half a score of middle-aged ladies, whom he took good care to compromise in such a variety of ways, that they could never bring the law to bear upon him, and were forced to sit brooding over their wrongs in solitary silence. One poor lady, indeed—a charming and accomplished widow, of good family and connections, who was living with her nine children in her father's house at Marylebone, and to whom he introduced himself as a French duke or a German count—he contrived so to compromise in her reputation, to entangle in his toils, and to plunder by such extortionate demands, that she ended her days in a madhouse.

And all this while, so mean and so grasping was the heartless usurer, that if coin or jewels were not readily and punctually supplied by his dupes and victims, he would cause threatening messages to reach them through their servants, and wait at the top of the area steps until the housemaid or kitchen-drudge appeared, with the expected amount of gold or silver in her hands to purchase his silence!

Happily, however, this work was not destined to go on for ever, and the accomplished villain tried his practised hand once too often on apparently helpless and friendless females. In 1729, having grievously insulted and assaulted a young person, named Anne Bond, whom he had engaged as a servant in his house, the poor girl had the courage to summon him before the magistrates, who, finding the case more serious than at first they thought, committed him to prison to stand his trial for a capital offence.

On the rest of the story I need not dwell at length. Enough to add that this shameless deceiver, who had compromised so many reputations, found himself at last imprisoned in Newgate among the felons, where, as we are told in a contemporary account, "he was loaded with heavy fetters." But even here he was able to make the influence of his money felt; for adds the

writer, "he soon purchased a lighter pair, and paid also for the use of a room in the prison, and for a man to attend on him."

The fact is that in early life, before he had entered on those deplorable courses which in the end led him on to ruin, he had been married to a lady of good family, the daughter of Sir John Swinton, a Berwickshire laird, who had made a large fortune as a merchant in Holland, having resided there during the Usurpation. By her, too, most fortunately for himself, he had an only child, a daughter, who, not long before the time of which I write, had become the wife of a most powerful Scotch nobleman, the Earl of Wemyss. This daughter's marriage, or rather I should say her husband, now saved his life. It is not creditable to the cause of even and fair-handed justice, which knows no distinction between a peer and a peasant; but the truth must be told without fear or favour. The Earl of Wemyss happening to be in London at the time, and having powerful friends at Court, contrived to intercede with some effect on behalf of his father-in-law, and procured on his behalf a writ of *habeas corpus.* The colonel, therefore, was admitted to bail, although, according to the strict letter of the law, bail was not admissible in a capital offence. "It must, therefore," says the

writer of an article in the "Book of Wonders" "reflect no small disgrace on those to whom the administration of the law was at that time entrusted, that power and family interest should thus triumph over justice."

But such, in the event, was the case. Although thirty years later, as I have already told my readers,* Lord Ferrers found that his peer's coronet, and the fact that he quartered on his shield the Royal Arms of England, were of no avail to save him from a felon's death at Tyburn; yet Colonel Charters on this occasion contrived in the end to elude the stern and rigorous grasp of the hand of justice.

The trial of Colonel Charters came on at the Old Bailey on the 25th of February, 1730, when every possible art and artifice were employed to injure the character of the poor girl who stood in the witness-box as prosecutrix, in order to destroy the value of her evidence; but happily her character was shown to be *pur et sans reproche.* She bore her cross-examination without being shaken in the smallest detail; and the result was that, after a long trial, the colonel was found guilty, and sentenced to be hung, drawn, and quartered, after the barbarous fashion of the day. Even now, however, when all hope of escape

* See "Laurence, Earl Ferrers, in Vol. I., p. 99.

seemed at an end, good fortune or wealth or high Scotch connections stood his friend. His son-in-law, Lord Wemyss, summoned up from Edinburgh one of the most eloquent advocates of the date, afterwards known as the Lord President Forbes, to plead his cause before the Privy Council, and an estate of £300 a year was settled on the President in reward of his services, which were so far successful as to induce the King to spare the life of the infamous wretch, whose only punishment in the end was that he was allowed to compromise the matter by settling an annuity on Anne Bond.

Soon after his conviction a fine mezzotint engraving of Colonel Charters was published, in which he is represented as standing at the bar of the Old Bailey, with his thumbs tied before him, and underneath the print is the following inscription:

> "Blood!—must a colonel with a lord's estate,
> Be thus obnoxious to a scoundrel's fate?
> Brought to the bar, and sentenced from the bench,
> Only for cozening a country wench?—
> Shall men of honour meet no more respect?
> Shall their diversions thus by laws be check'd?
> Shall they be accountable to saucy juries,
> For this or t'other pleasure?—death and furies!
> What man thro' villany would run a course,
> And ruin families without remorse,
> To heap up riches—if, when all is done,
> An ignominious death he cannot shun?"

But, though his life was spared at the Old Bailey, it was not destined to be for long. A few short months seem to have heen in mercy allowed him for repentance. At all events, he returned to Edinburgh, but so broken in health and appearance that his old friends and acquaintances scarcely knew him again; and I may be quite safe in adding my belief that they did not much care to recognise him. He was not only a villain—that might have been pardonable and even pardoned, especially as he was rich and had high connections; but he was also a found-out, detected, and convicted villain, and "society" therefore refused to whitewash him. He died in the following year, a vrctim, it is said, to his irregular course of life, but more probably to the clouds of grief and disappointment in which his days were drawing to their close. He ended his career of infamy in the year 1731, at the age of sixty-three.

He was buried in the family vault in the churchyard of the Grey Friars' Church at Edinburgh; but his vices had rendered him, in spite of his wealth and influence, so detested by the public at large, that it was only with great difficulty that he was laid in his grave, for the mob were hardly restrained from tearing his coffin in pieces, and vented in all sorts of irregularities and

insults their feelings of honest contempt for such an abandoned character.

I leave it for my readers to infer from this story whether Dr. Croly is accurate or not when he states that Charters "was hung by a denial of justice." My own idea—as I said at the commencement of this paper—is that the words "was hung" are nothing but a clerical error for "escaped hanging." It only remains to add that the Earl of Wemyss, who up to that time had borne the family name of Wemyss, on his marriage with the only child of this evil doer took the name of Charters, or, as they now write it, Charteris, which has ever since been borne by his descendants down to the present generation. Were I in their place, I would lose no time in applying to "Lyon King of Arms" for royal leave and licence to throw aside the appellation assumed by their great-great-grandfather, and to revert to the old local name by which they had been known in Scotland nearly six hundred years ago. A nobleman who can trace his descent, if Sir Bernard Burke is not telling fables, up to a younger son of "Macduff, Thane of Fife," first Lord of the Barony of Wemyss or Weems, and the vanquisher of the tyrant Macbeth, methinks should hold to his own *cognomen*, and not stoop to pick up and adopt a shield so tarnished by past

memories as that of Charters of Amisfield. For my own part, if the choice were given to me, I would rather be èven plain "Mr." Wemyss of Wemyss than wear the coronet of an earl coupled with the surname of "Charters" or Charteris."

AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF THE COURTENAYS.

BEYOND a question, the House of Courtenay enjoys a proud pre-eminence among the most noble and ancient of the historic families, both of England and of France. The chapter of his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" which Gibbon devotes to a brief outline of the achievements of the Courtenays on both sides of the Channel, is of course familiar to every student of history and of heraldry; but its eloquence may plead my pardon if I quote from it here one or two passages, which will serve to throw into more striking contrast the "episode" which I have now the pleasure of presenting to my readers.

Confessing that there is one line in France superior to the Courtenays in its origin, its

alliances, and all that is comprised in the wide spreading term of "achievements," namely, the royal House of Bourbon, the historian claims for the Courtenays the next place in rank and precedence. They are said to be sprung from the marriage of Elizabeth of Courtenay with Peter, son of the French king, Louis le Gros, in the twelfth century, according to the ancient registers of Ford Abbey in Devonshire, to which the Courtenays were frequent and liberal benefactors. But, whether this be true or not, at all events they claim descent from one of the noble Frenchmen who in times before the Norman conquest held the castle of Courtenai, in the district of Gatinois, some fifty or sixty miles to the south of Paris; and it is as certain as most matters in history that in the reign of our Henry II. one Reginald de Courtenay became distinguished in the camp and the councils of his sovereign. "The right of wardship," says Gibbon, "enabled a feudal lord to reward his vassal with the marriage and estate of a noble heiress; and so Reginald Courtenay acquired a fair establishment in Devonshire, where his posterity has been seated above six hundred years." In proof of this statement he brings forward the fact that the wife of Reginald "held the honour of Okehampton in that county by the service of ninety-three

knights," and that their son Robert married the sister of Rivers, or Redvers, Earl of Devon. At the end of a century, on the failure of the Redvers line, the great-grandson of Reginald, one Hugh Courtenay, succeeded to the title, which at that time was really a territorial dignity; and a dozen or more Earls of Devonshire of the name of Courtenay have since flourished in a period of four hundred years. Gibbon adds:

"The Courtenays ranked, even in the middle ages, among the chief of the barons of the realm; nor was it till after a strenuous dispute that they yielded to the fief of Arundel the first place in the Parliament of England. Their alliances were contracted with the noblest families—the Veres, Despensers, St. Johns, Talbots, Bohuns, and even the Plantagenets themselves; and in a contest with John of Lancaster, a Courtenay, Bishop of London and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, might be accused of profane confidence in the strength and number of his kindred. In peace, the Earls of Devon resided in their numerous castles and manors in the West; their ample revenue was appropriated to devotion and hospitality; and the epitaph of Edward, surnamed from his misfortunes the *blind*, from his virtues the *good* earl, inculcates with much ingenuity a moral sentence, which may, however,

be absurd by thoughtless generosity. After a grateful commemoration of the fifty-five years of union and happiness which he enjoyed with Mabel his wife, the good Earl thus speaks from the tomb :

> "'What we gave, we have ;
> What we spent, we had ;
> What we left, we lost.'*

"But their *losses* in this sense were far superior to their gifts and expenses, and their heirs not less than the poor were the objects of their paternal care. The sums which they paid for livery and seisin attest the greatness of their possessions, and several estates have remained in their family since the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In war, the Courtenays of England fulfilled the duties and deserved the honours of chivalry. They were often entrusted to levy and command the militia of Devonshire and Cornwall ; they often attended their supreme lord to the borders of Scotland ; and in foreign service for a stipulated price, they sometimes maintained four score men-at-arms, and as many archers. By sea and land, they fought under the standards of the

* Cleveland, p. 142. By some this epitaph is assigned to a Rivers, Earl of Devon ; but the English denotes the fifteenth rather than the thirteenth century.

Edwards and Henries; their names are conspicuous in battles, in tournaments, in the original list of the Order of the Garter. Three brothers shared the Spanish victory of the Black Prince, and in the lapse of six generations the English Courtenays had learned to despise the nation and country from which they derived their origin. In the quarrel of the Two Roses the Earls of Devon adhered to the House of Lancaster, and three brothers successively died either in the field or on the scaffold. Their honours and estates were restored by Henry VII.; a daughter of Edward IV. was not disgraced by the nuptials of a Courtenay; their son who was created Marquis of Exeter, enjoyed the favour of his cousin Henry VIII., and in the camp of Cloth of Gold he broke a lance against the French monarch. But the favour of Henry was the prelude of disgrace; his disgrace was the signal of death; and of the victims of the jealous tyrant the Marquis of Exeter is one of the most noble and guiltless. His son Edward lived a prisoner in the Tower, and died an exile at Padua; and the secret love of Queen Mary, whom he slighted, perhaps for the Princess Elizabeth, has shed a romantic colour on the story of this beautiful youth. The relics of his patrimony were conveyed into strange families by the marriages of his four

aunts; and his personal honours, as if they had been legally extinct, were revived by the patents of succeeding princes. But there still survived a lineal descendant of Hugh the first Earl of Devon, a younger branch of the Courtenays, who had been seated at Powderham Castle above four hundred years, from the reign of Edward III. to the present hour. Their estates have been increased by the grant and improvement of lands in Ireland, and they have been recently restored to the honours of the peerage. Yet the Courtenays still retain the plaintive motto which asserts the innocence and deplores the fall of their ancient House.* While they sigh for past greatness, they are doubtless sensible of present blessings. In the long series of the Courtenay annals, the most splendid era is likewise the most unfortunate; nor can an opulent peer of Britain be inclined to envy the emperors of Constantinople, who wandered over Europe to solicit arms for the support of their dignity and the defence of their capital."

But it is time for me to proceed to an account

* *Ubi lapsus? Quid feci?* a motto which was probably adopted by the Powderham branch after the loss of the Earldom of Devonshire, &c. The primitive arms of the Courtenays were *Or, three torteaux gules*, which seem to denote their affinity with Godfrey of Bouillon and the ancient Counts of Boulogne.

of the House of Courtenay in more recent days. It is well known that for no less than two hundred and seventy-five years, after the death of Edward Courtenay in 1556, the Earldom of Devon lay dormant, and indeed was supposed to have become extinct, but that in the March of 1831 it was revived by the Crown and the House of Lords in favour of William Courtenay, of Powderham Castle, Devon, whose grandfather had been raised in 1762 to the Viscountcy of Courtenay—a title which of course he would never have accepted from George III. if he had known that his family was legally entitled to the higher and more ancient dignity. Indeed, it may be mentioned as a proof of the apparently utter extinction of the hopes of the Courtenays that in the interim the Dukedom and Earldom of Devonshire had been conferred upon the courtier family of Cavendish—a measure which would never have been carried into effect had the inherent rights of the Courtenays been brought under the notice of royalty. However, since the year 1831 the Earldom of Devon has again adorned the roll of the House of Peers, and the present earl, who was many years a Member of Parliament for South Devonshire, and afterwards Secretary of the Poor Law Board, is a worthy

representative of the accumulated honours of, shall I say three, four, or eight centuries.

In the year 1832, however, not long after the revival of the title, and when the rightful holder of the Earldom of Devon was residing abroad, the county of Kent was suddenly astonished by the presence of a man of eccentric dress and appearance, who gave himself out as "Sir William Percy Honywood Courtenay, Knight of Malta, a son of Lord Courtenay and heir of Lord Mount Cashell," who took up his residence in the parish of Boughton-under-Blean, between Faversham and Canterbury. His real parentage, it was believed at the time, was somewhat more plebeian than the above designation would lead one to suppose; and, much as in our own days, a certain nameless individual *d'une famille tout à fait bourgeoise* at Perpignan suddenly blossomed into the "Duc de Roussillon," just so it was discovered that "Sir William Courtenay, Knight of Malta," was none other than a crackbrained fellow from the far West, one Mr. "John A. Tom," who had hitherto earned an honest livelihood as a small spirit merchant and maltster at Truro, in Cornwall. The first rumours of him in Kent date from the Michaelmas of 1832, when report said that an eccentric person, who had recently been known in London by the name of

Thompson, was staying at the Rose Inn at Canterbury, and passing at one time as "Count Rothschild," and at another as "Sir William Courtenay."

The countenance and costume of this personage were both such as gave the idea of his being of foreign extraction, though his language showed that he was too well acquainted with England and the English to be really a foreigner. However, partly by his fine figure and person, partly by his rich and eccentric dress, and partly by broad and boastful assertions of his intimacy with royal and noble personages, he succeeded in duping a large number even of the respectable portion of the citizens into a belief that, like "Theudas and Judas" of old, he was "somebody." Like most adventurers, he proclaimed that he was destined, or at all events desirous, to regenerate society, and issued a small periodical fly-sheet called *The Lion*, in which he gave vent to some very strange opinions, such as some would call of a Socialistic character, and which were in reality subversive of society in Church and State. He railed especially against the tithe system, as having been founded by the Pope, who was instigated to it by the devil. He was loud in his praises of "purity of election;" and, though the Reform Bill had only recently been

passed, he pretended to consider that the British Constitution in King, Lords, and Commons was in danger, and required the aid of all honest patriots in both Houses of Parliament. Giving loud utterance to these views in his fly-sheet and at pot-house meetings in Canterbury and the adjoining towns and villages, in the course of a little time he contrived to gull the credulous multitude, who were as ready to see in him a veritable "Courtenay" from the west country as the mob has shown itself nowadays to recognise in Arthur Orton the veritable Roger Tichborne, whom his own family and the Peerage writers believe to have been drowned in the Pacific some eighteen or nineteen years ago. However, be this as it may, the gaping multitude were so far awed into a belief of the talents and statesmanship of their newly-found "Knight of Malta," that when, at the general election of December 1832, there was a contest for the city of Canterbury, the "show of hands" was declared to be in his favour; and he actually polled no less than 375 against the 800 and odd votes which returned his opponents—Lord Fordwich and Mr. R. Watson—to Parliament. On this occasion, we are told by one of the Kentish papers that Sir William Courtenay presented himself to the citizens of Canterbury in a most extraordinary

guise, bounding over the heads of the people in front of him, and alighting on the table in the centre of the Hall in a theatrical attitude, quite *à la* Kean. His costume, too, added to the effect of the scene, being composed of crimson velvet and gold, with a cap and mantle to correspond, silk stockings of the same colour, and Turkish slippers. He is thus described in a letter written by a lady living at Canterbury at the time :

"A Sir William Courtenay has been haranguing the populace here almost daily with novel and ludicrous addresses. He is encased in a superb dress of crimson velvet, richly ornamented with gold lacings, tassels, and epaulettes ; and he goes about armed with a valuable sword and a dagger, which he occasionally threatens to use against any person who happens to interrupt him. It is given out publicly here, and the ladies believe it, that his dress cost him upwards of two hundred pounds, and that it was made for him by a West-end tailor while he was staying at the Clarendon Hotel."

It was added that, although he was considered handsome, his face was much disfigured by a superabundance of moustache and beard.

"It was impossible," writes one who was present, "to follow with anything like precision

the fluent, disjointed, yet occasionally brilliant sentences which fell from his lips. Suffice it to say that he promised his hearers all sorts of impossible things; he would reform the newly reformed House of Commons; he would abolish tithes; he would remove the burden of taxation from the shoulders of the poor and place it on those of the rich; he would sweep away Corporations, and render the choice of Aldermen and of Members of the House of Commons more agreeable to modern ideas; and finally, appealing to an argument which will always find ready listeners among the poorer classes, he promised them a speedy return to the good old times when bread was cheap, and when roast beef and plum pudding and nut-brown ale were constant visitors at every cottager's table."

The writer adds:—

"During the whole of the proceedings the utmost confusion prevailed, though less than the usual amount of political feeling was observable, the whole of the attention of the mob being concentrated on the 'Knight of Malta,' whose fine dress and still finer promises secured him the lion's share of the popular favour."

Indeed, it will scarcely be credited when I add that the popular enthusiasm in his favour on the nomination day rose to such a height that

crowds not only flocked round the wheels and doors of his chariot, but absolutely took out the horses from the traces and drew him in triumph to the "Rose Inn," where he again addressed the multitude from the balcony, repeating his promises of speedy and universal reform. On this occasion Sir William picked up an acquaintance with two young Kentish gentlemen, named Robinson and Denne. The latter, indeed (who proposed him at his contest for Canterbury), was a member of one of the oldest and most respectable families in East Kent, from whose pockets he contrived to extract considerable sums of money, which helped to supply him with horses and a carriage to ride and drive about the streets in the course of his canvass.

After the poll had been officially declared, and when the new members had returned their thanks to the constituency, "Sir Roger"—I beg pardon, "Sir William"—again addressed the mob from the table and from the steps of the hall, and then, after parading the town with fifes and drums, once more harangued them from the balcony of the "Rose," his head-quarters, promising to meet them on Barham Downs on the following Monday, when the unwashed herd of rural voters were again treated to a repetition of the same wild rhapsody. At Barham Downs he was pro-

posed as a candidate for the Eastern Division of the county; but his defeat here was far more decisive than it had been at Canterbury, as he polled scarcely ten or a dozen votes.

It was at a large political dinner given to the poorer class of reformers in a field near the Dane John in that city, that he first made himself conspicuous, or at all events betrayed the earliest symptoms of that violent and outrageous temper which ultimately led to his death.

However, early in the following year an event occurred, which must have opened the eyes of such of "Sir William's" followers as had any sense or reason in their pates. He had resolved that, as he could not take a borough town by storm in 1832, he would use every effort to captivate the affections of the lower orders, so as to stand a better chance at the next election. Accordingly he caused it to be made known that, great as was his rank, his condescension was much greater, and that he liked nothing so much as to sit down and eat and drink at the tables of the labouring peasants. He would join the lowest of gatherings in pot-houses, and though dressed in an eccentric garb, borrowed from the green-room of a theatre, he preferred the company of the poor Kentish cottager to that of his own relatives, the proud Courtenays of Devon.

and their aristocratic and haughty connections. So thick were his invitations, so numerous his engagements, and so great the calls upon his time, that, like Arthur Orton, he was obliged to ride or drive from house to house, picking up a crust here and a bit of bread and cheese there, and generally concluding the day by a supper in company with some of his new-made friends in a village club-room.

In the February following the general election of December, 1832, a brief but smart action took place near the Goodwin Sands, a few miles off the coast at Deal, between a revenue cruiser, the "Lively," and a smuggling boat called the "Admiral Hood." The crew of the latter were captured, and both crew and boat were taken to Rochester for adjudication in the regular course of law. On boarding the smuggler no contraband goods were found, but during the chase the crew were seen by the officers on board the "Lively" to throw overboard certain tubs, which were marked and picked up by the crew of the cruiser. On the examination of the prisoners before the magistrates at Rochester, "Sir William" made his appearance in the court, attired in a grotesque costume, and wearing a small sword or scymitar, hung from his neck by a massive gold chain. It strikes one as a sad pity that at this time the

photographic art was unknown to the public, and that the *Illustrated London News* was as yet unborn, or I should be able to treat my readers with a more life-like description of the scene in court. On one of the men being examined, the "Knight of Malta" stepped forward, and, with all the address of an artful and practised demagogue, declared that, as the man was undefended, he would become his advocate. But the knight was a better hustings orator than lawyer, and the fellow was convicted. A professional gentleman from London undertook the defence of the rest of the smugglers, when "Sir William" presented himself as a witness, and swore that he himself saw with his own eyes the whole transaction between the "Lively" and the "Admiral Hood," and was positive that the tubs said to have been thrown overboard from the latter vessel had been floating about hither and thither in the Downs all the morning, and that consequently the "Admiral Hood" and her crew were innocent of smuggling. The object of this assertion was evidently, of course, to prove that the men under accusation were entitled to be set at liberty, as free from all guilt in the matter. The solicitors for His Majesty's Customs, however, took a more serious view of the matter, and, having undoubted evidence that the testimony of the "Knight of

Malta" was false, they resolved to prosecute him for perjury.

They did so, and the trial came on at Maidstone before Mr. Justice Parke, on the 25th of July, 1833, when it was proved by the clergyman and other respectable witnesses of Boughton, that at the very day and hour of the action between the "Lively" and the "Admiral Hood" (Sunday, February 17), the madcap knight was comfortably seated in his pew at Boughton Church, listening to the parson's sermon. But the laws of time and space stand as little in the way of sham "Knights of Malta," as the laws of moral and social existence do in the way of sham marquises, *soi-disant* dukes, apocryphal princes, and would-be baronets.

The end of the trial was that Sir William Percy Honywood Courtenay, knight of Malta, alias "John Tom," disgraced the noble name which he had borrowed like a jackdaw, being convicted by a jury of twelve honest English citizens of perjury—not of that venial kind which is of frequent occurrence at elections, or in "testimonials to character," or in the buying and selling of horses, but of perjury "wilful and corrupt." The sentence passed upon him was that he should be imprisoned for three months, and after the expiration of that time should be

transported beyond the seas for seven years more. Before the term of his imprisonment, however, was over, it was found that "Sir William" was out of his senses, and he was accordingly transferred to the Kentish Lunatic Asylum at Barming, near Maidstone. Here he was confined for some years, until, his mental condition appearing gradually to improve, he was allowed to take up his residence at the house of a farmer at Boughton, near his former residence. While here he appeared more tranquil and calm; but early in the summer of 1838, while occupying rooms at a lonely farmhouse, kept by a man named Culver, on the left-hand top of Boughton Hill, about five miles from Canterbury, he was found to show symptoms of a return of his mental aberration. Among other matters, he would declaim in loud and unmeasured terms amongst the rustic villagers against the iniquities of the new Poor Law, and the grievances under which they laboured as a class; but in the end he would generally work round to his common-places about a "cheap loaf" and the abolition of tithes. At length his madness led him and some of his deluded followers into an act of open riot, and riot in its turn led to bloodshed, which put an end to the mad doings of this *soi-disant* scion of the noble House of Courtenay.

On Monday, May 28, 1838, having met some of his silly dupes at Boughton, he sallied out into the street at their head, and, having bought a loaf of bread, stuck it on the top of a pole, which the country bumpkins in his train paraded along the road to Fairbrook and Goodneston, with flags flying before them, bearing the cognizance of the Courtenay lion. The number of the mob speedily increased, and with their numbers their excitement also gathered strength. Like madmen as they were, they cried aloud that they had "bloody work" before them; so they endeavoured, though without success, to perform the heroic task of setting fire to a bean stack—a magnificent exploit for a "Courtenay." On this "Sir William" got into a passion, and vowed that he would himself "strike the bloody blow," though where and at what he did not condescend to say.

Passing on next to Herne Hill, with the number of his dupes continually increasing, and having taken some refreshments at a pot house, they made their way to Dargate Common, a straggling hamlet of labourers' cottages, where the leader divested himself of his shoes, knelt down among his followers, and prayed for half of an hour at the top of his voice, "lifting up his voice to heaven," and denouncing everybody and everything in unmeasured terms. At the end of

their devotions the bumpkins went off to Bossenden Farm, where they got some supper, several of them sleeping in the barn, and the rest under hedges. At daylight on the following morning (Tuesday), they mustered by the side of the high road, and walked in procession to Sittingbourne, nine miles dtstant, to breakfast, with the loaf on the pole and the flags carried in front as before. Breakfast over, they marched through the villages of Newnham, Eastling, Throwley, Seldwich, Lees, and Selling, occasionally stopping for refreshments, and from place to place adding to their numbers, their infatuated leader addressing his dupes from time to time, and urging them on to fresh acts of disorder and riot. At night they retreated into a chalk-pit, where the programme of the previous evening was repeated in respect of both prayers and threats of "bloody work." After parading through other villages on the following day, Wednesday, in the evening "Sir William" and his motley crowd came back to Calver's Farm at Bossenden. Here was destined to be the end of the "knight's" mad expedition. It appears that a farmer named Carling, who lived under the hill, went off to the magistrates with a complaint that Tom and his comrades in arms had seduced some of his labourers from their work, and

requesting that the rioters might be apprehended. A constable named Mears was sent with two others to arrest "Sir William," who no sooner saw the agent of the law and found out his mission than he shot him dead. The other two constables, seeing that it would be madness to wage war against such odds—for some of the country louts were armed with pistols and others with bludgeons—returned to the magistrates, who sent off to Maidstone and Canterbury for the help of the military. The whole neighbourhood was now fully alarmed, and great was the joy and relief of the respectable inhabitants of the place when a company of a hundred soldiers of the 45th Regiment arrived on the spot, under the command of an officer, Lieutenant Bennett.

On reaching the place where the rebels were mustered, the magistrate entreated the people to disperse quietly to their homes, and on their refusal ordered the Riot Act to be read. By this time "Sir William" and his followers had retreated to a deep part of the wood near Bossenden, known as the "osier bed," where they resolved to make a desperate stand. "Sir William"—who had already fired one shot, though happily without effect, at a magistrate, the Rev. Charles Handley, of Herne Hill, for attempting to take him into custody—now

exhorted his poor crazy dupes in Scriptural language to "quit themselves like men," and "not to count their lives dear" to them. Lieutenant Bennett at once rode up to him at the head of his men, and commanded him in the Queen's name to surrender; but "Sir William's" only answer was to draw out his pistol and shoot him through the heart. He had scarcely fallen to the ground when the military fired and closed with the rebels, several of whom, including the "Knight of Malta," were killed on the spot, while many others were more or less severely wounded. Some of the louts ran off across the fields as fast as their legs would carry them; but such of the ringleaders as were not killed were at all events secured, and before evening they were marched off to Canterbury and lodged in St. Augustine's jail. Thus, in only a few minutes, ten lives were lost, and several of the rustics were rendered cripples for the remainder of their days. It is to be hoped that such of the misguided band as were wounded, but may chance to be still surviving, have not yet forgotten the lesson which they learnt on that day, to stick to their home duties as peaceful citizens, or, if they must go to war, to fight under the standard of their Queen and country, and not under that of John Tom, or of any other spurious scion of the house of Courtenay.

It may be well to add that at the following assizes at Maidstone two of Tom's followers were found guilty of having had a hand in the murders of the constable and Lieutenant Bennett, and were sentenced to transportation for life; while others who had taken a less prominent part in the outbreak were dealt with according to their deserts. It will be long, however, I fancy, before the "bloody work" of "Sir William Percy Honywood Courtenay, Knight of Malta, son of Lord Courtenay, and heir of Lord Mount Cashell," will be forgotten in the neighbourhood of Faversham, Sittingbourne, and Canterbury; and many a year must elapse before even a genuine "Courtenay" will venture to come from Powderham Castle in the far west of England to contest a seat either for a division of the fair county of Kent, or for the first Christian city in the kingdom.

As a proof of the strong feeling which a popular delusion like that of the madman Tom will excite in the gullible British public, I may perhaps be allowed to bring this "episode" to an end with the following quotation from the last chapter of Dr. C. Mackay's most interesting work on "Popular Delusions." While treating of the subject of relics and relic-worship, he quotes the case of "Sir William Courtenay" as a remarkable

instance of the extent to which relic-hunting is occasionally carried, even in this Protestant country, and in the middle of this nineteenth century. He writes:

"When the maniac Thom or Courtenay was shot, in the Spring of 1838, the relic hunters were immediately in motion to obtain a memento of so extraordinary an individual. His long black beard and hair, which were cut off by the surgeons, fell into the hands of his disciples, by whom they were treasured with the utmost reverence. A lock of his hair commanded a great price, not only among his followers, but among the more wealthy inhabitants of Canterbury and its neighbourhood. The tree against which he fell when he was shot was stripped of all its bark by the curious, while a letter with his signature to it was paid for in gold coins, and his favourite horse became as celebrated as its master. Parties of ladies and gentlemen went to Boughton from a distance of a hundred and fifty miles, to visit the scene of that fatal affray, and stroke on the back the horse of the 'mad Knight of Malta.' If a strict watch had not been kept over his grave for months, the body would have been disinterred, and the bones carried away as memorials."

The whole affair, I may add, would have been

extremely amusing as an "episode," if it were not for its tragical ending, and also for the melancholy reflection that, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, nearly four hundred persons could be found, in one of the oldest cathedral cities in the kingdom, weak enough to put their trust and confidence in such a hair-brained madman. Verily the *soi-disant* "Knight of Malta" fairly outdoes in ludicrous absurdity the whole of our modern *soi-disant* adventurers, whether native or foreign, knights, counts, dukes, and princes, or butcher-baronets.

THE HOUSE OF BERKELEY.

THE noble House of Berkeley has disputed for three centuries, against the Somersets, Dukes of Beaufort, the position of the leaders and chief landowners in Gloucestershire. They descend, or claim descent, from Robert Fitz-Harding, whose father, or probably grandfather, was one of the comrades in arms of the Conqueror, and who himself in the twelfth century, in reward of his loyalty to the Empress Maud and her son Henry I., obtained the lordship of Berkeley, of which Roger de Berkeley, its previous owner, had been divested by the royal will. Sir Bernard Burke mentions of this Robert de Berkeley that he "entertained at Bristol in 1168 Dermot M'Murrough, King of Leinster, with sixty of his retinue, at the time when that prince came over from Ireland to solicit succour from Henry II."

His son Maurice was wise enough to secure his position, in case of a change in the dynasty or in the will of his royal master, by marrying Alice, the fair daughter of one of the old divested line; but, in spite of this sage precaution, the lands and castle of Berkeley were more than once in peril during the lifetime of his eldest son, through the vacillating and uncertain temper of King John, who first seized on his broad acres, and then assigned them to the burgesses of Bristol, in order to keep their castle in repair. In the long run, however, John's reign and Robert de Berkeley's life both came to an end, and the latter's brother, Thomas, obtained a fresh grant of Berkeley Castle in 1223.

From him the male descent of the house of Berkeley is as clear and direct as can be, down to the present century at least. Why I do not say "down to the present day" will be shown in the sequel.

Maurice, the eldest son and successor of Thomas de Berkeley, was summoned by Henry III. to London in order to aid him against his turbulent barons; but the Lord of Berkeley was either too little of a courtier or too strong a Liberal to stick by the King when the King was wrong, so he joined the standard of the barons, and saw his lands again seized by the Crown. His son

Thomas, however, regained the favour of royalty, and basked in its sunshine, attending his sovereign at Kenilworth and in his wars against the refractory Welsh. For these services Burke tells us that he had from Edward I. "liberty to hunt the fox, hare, badger, and wild cat, with his own dogs, within the King's forest of Mendip and in the chase of Kingswood." He was at the siege of Caerlaverock, and summoned to Parliament as a baron, as was also his son and successor Maurice, chief justice in South Wales, governor of the castles of Gloucester and Berwick, and steward of the Duchy of Aquitaine. He died, however, a prisoner in Wallingford Castle; and it was his son and successor Thomas, the third Baron, during whose ownership of Berkeley King Edward II. was murdered within his castle walls. The room where that black deed was done, high up in one of the towers, is still shown to the curious visitor; but it is only right to add that Lord Berkeley, though accused of complicity in the murder, was in the event honourably acquitted.

From him I pass over three generations, and come to William, the seventh Baron, who was created Marquis of Berkeley, but who, dying childless in 1492, made Henry VII. his heir; so that Berkeley Castle became an appanage of the

Tudor sovereigns, and reverted to the Berkeleys only on the death of Edward VI., when Henry, who was rightfully twelfth Baron of Berkeley, once more was installed in the castle of his ancestors—

> "And Berkeley's right and Berkeley's might
> Did meet on Berkeley's Castle height."

This nobleman's great grandson was created Earl of Berkeley in 1679, and the coronet came by regular descent to Frederick Augustus, fifth Earl, who held the title from 1755 down to his death in 1810. About him I have a good deal to say.

This Frederick Augustus, the father of the present race of Berkeleys, was Earl of Berkeley without dispute, and the owner of the proud Castle of Berkeley. At the commencement of the year 1810 the old Earl's eldest son, and who as such bore the courtesy title of Lord Dursley, held a seat in the House of Commons as one of the members for Gloucestershire. He had been born in September, 1786, and the date is important. On learning the news of his father's death in the following August, he presented to the Crown a petition for a writ of summons as Earl of Berkeley; but, as doubts were known to exist as to the validity of the

marriage on which the petitioner's right to the peerage rested, the Prince Regent ordered his claim to be referred to the consideration of the House of Peers. The next step was a formal "inquiry," and a regular "Peerage case" followed. The antecedents of the late Earl and his Countess were raked up, witnesses were examined at length "pro" and "con," and in the issue their lordships, having investigated the matter at length, came to the conclusion of passing a resolution that the petitioner had not made good his claim to the Earldom of Berkeley." His case, it must be owned, was extremely hard; for, as being the reputed eldest son and heir of the Earl his father, he was held to have vacated his seat in the Lower House of Parliament, while the Upper House quietly shut its doors in his face.

The cause of this decision as usual was an irregular marriage; in such matters of dispute there is always "sure to be a lady in the case." The facts, as they stand revealed to us in the pages of the "Berkeley Peerage Case," form quite a romance, and may possibly interest my readers, though I fear I must plead guilty to the charge of telling a "thrice-told tale."

It appears then that late in the Autumn of 1784, or at the beginning of the following year,

the Earl, happening to be on a visit at Gloucester, some twenty miles distant as the crow flies from his castle at Berkeley, was smitten with the charms of a certain Miss Mary Cole, the daughter of a butcher at Gloucester. He wooed her, not without success—an event not quite improbable considering that he was scarcely middle-aged, could boast a rent-roll of £50,000 a year, and had a countess's coronet at his disposal. But if he secured her heart, there is unfortunately no proof now extant that he gave her his hand with such an amount of formality as would establish a marriage in England, whatever it might do "north of the Tweed."

However, be this as it may, the Earl took the lady back with him to Berkeley, where she ruled for many years as mistress of the castle, styling herself and styled by others as "My Lady Berkeley." The lady herself who stood in this doubtful position always asserted, on behalf of her eldest son and of his three next brothers, that, though they were born previous to the public solemnisation of a marriage between the Earl and herself in May, 1796, she had been privately married to his lordship more than ten years previously; and the same fact, it is only fair to add, was affirmed under oath in her husband's last will and testament. But it does not

do to play at matrimony—it is too serious a matter for a game; and so Lady Berkeley and her children learned by the sad experience of a lesson which they have had taught to them for more than sixty years. In order to establish the assertion of Lady Berkeley and her husband's oath, it was necessary to bring forward the register of the parish church of Berkeley. The entry was accordingly produced before the House of Lords; but on inspection it was found that it was written, not on a page of the register, but on an inserted slip of paper or parchment, or on a leaf that had been for many years pasted down in the volume until it should be wanted. The question as to the genuineness or spuriousness of this most important document could not, or at all events did not, come formally before the House of Lords till after the death of the Earl. Unfortunately, at that time the clergyman who—as it was said—had solemnised the first marriage was dead; and, on being appealed to, his widow declared that she did not believe the entry to be in her husband's handwriting. A brother of the Countess deposed that he was present at the marriage as a witness; but he had of course an interest in his sister's good name and honour, and so his oath was not allowed to outweigh the strong evidence in the opposite direction. The

testimony of the Countess herself, too, was contradicted by that of her mother, who had married as her second husband a Mr. Glossop, of Osbournby, in Lincolnshire, and who, though born in a humble sphere of existence, lived to see her three daughters, one a countess, the second the wife of a general officer, and the third married to a nephew of the late Sir T. Baring.

Such was the state of the case as revealed upon the presentation of the petition of "William Fitzhardinge Berkeley, commonly called Viscount Dursley," claiming to be called to the House of Peers in his father's stead as sixth Earl of Berkeley. The inquiry, was therefore reopened ; for though mooted during the fifth Earl's lifetime, it had been abandoned on finding that no legal question could arise until after his decease. And then, as I have stated, the proof adduced of the legitimacy of the four eldest sons was not held by the collective wisdom of the House of Peers to be "at that time" sufficient to establish his claim.

The result was that, although no formal adverse decision was arrived at expressly negativing his claim, the matter was adjourned *sine die;* and, practically, "Lord Dursley" was obliged to drop his courtesy title. As a consequence he retired from public life, being neither a regular

"Peer" nor a regular "Commoner;" and became known in sporting and gaming circles, and generally in fashionable life, as Colonel Berkeley, being in command of the South Gloucestershire Militia.

I have in my autograph collection two specimens of his writing signed "Dursley" and "W. F. Berkeley;" and I have also seen a "frank" which he signed "Berkeley," no doubt in good faith, supposing himself to have succeeded to his father's earldom. I suppose that this signature is unique; at all events, I cannot persuade the friend who owns it to part with it to me at any price.*

But I must return to Colonel Berkeley. The family estate of Berkeley Castle did not happen to be entailed, as is usual in such cases, on the title; so Colonel Berkeley, though he could not take up the Earl's coronet, remained in undisputed possession of the Castle, which was bequeathed to him by his father. This, with its large rent-roll, gave him very extensive influence as a landowner in the West of England, as the only individual who could keep in check, in the Whig or Liberal interest, the power of the Tory Dukes of Beaufort in Gloucestershire and in

* Since writing the above, I have become possessed of another specimen.

Bristol, with both of which constituencies they had been connected for centuries. Though spending the greater part of his life in the hunting field and on the race-course, in the green-rooms of the London theatres, and in gambling rooms in St. James's, he was able to maintain his position in the West of England on the whole so well, that when in 1831 the Liberal party were on the look-out for eligible men among the large landowners to raise to the Peerage, in order to enable them the more easily to carry the first Reform Bill, Colonel Berkeley was offered and accepted a Baron's coronet from Lord Grey, and in September, 1831, at the time of the coronation of King William, entered as Lord Segrave the doors of the House of Lords, which had been for twenty years closed against him as Earl of Berkeley. The operation of the Reform Act of the following year, instead of at all limiting his territorial influence, went far towards doubling it, inasmuch as he was generally able to secure at least one of the two seats in Parliament, for the Eastern as well as for the Western Division of Gloucestershire—a seat which was generally held by one of his relatives—to say nothing of another for Cheltenham, another for Gloucester, and another for Bristol. Holding thus, in effect, no less than four if not five seats in the Lower House, and

one in the Upper, it was not a matter of wonder that in 1841, before Lord Melbourne and the Whigs retired from office, he secured his advancement to an Earl's coronet; not, however, by the adjudication of the ancient Earldom of Berkeley in his favour, but by the bestowal of a new patent as Earl Fitzhardinge.

Thus, being disappointed in early life, and, as he doubtless felt, being legally robbed of the coronet which was rightfully his own, he lived till old age unmarried, and, dying in 1857, bequeathed his castle and estates to his next brother, Admiral Sir Maurice Berkeley, who made an attempt, though without success, to get himself recognised by the House of Peers as Baron of Berkeley, in virtue of his actual tenure of Berkeley Castle, and quite apart from any creation by grant or patent. His brother's claim to the Earldom of Berkeley he never reopened; but shortly before his death he was created Baron Fitzhardinge, a title which now belongs to his son, along with the Castle of Berkeley. His next two brothers, Henry and Augustus, are both dead, so that, although no positive decision has been arrived at by the Peers in the great Berkeley Peerage case, there is no doubt that the fifth brother, Mr. Moreton Berkeley, is now virtually Earl of Berkeley, though he has steadily declined

to assume the title, not being able to do so except by allowing that the first marriage of his mother was a farce and imposture. As he is unmarried, the Earldom will naturally pass to his next brother, the Honourable Grantley F. Berkeley, formerly M.P. for West Gloucestershire, who, as he has repeatedly told the world through the public papers, will be deterred by no such scruples from taking up and wearing the coronet which his brother has refused to assume.

THE ROMANCE OF THE HOUSE OF ASHBROOK.

THE Flowers, who enjoy the honours of the Irish peerage as Viscounts and Barons Ashbrook, and who, in the present century, have become allied by marriage with one of the proudest and noblest ducal houses in the land, namely, that of Marlborough, are not, I have reason to believe, at all ashamed of a slight dash of plebeian blood which, about a century ago, came by an accident intermixed with their *sang azul.* Whether they are of Norman or of Saxon origin I will not undertake to say for certain, though I incline to the belief that there were "flowers" of many kind in England before the Norman Conquest; and the heralds tell us no more than that they were formerly seated near Oakham, in Rutlandshire, which county they represented in Parliament as

far back as the reign of Richard II., when one of the Flowers was not only M.P. for Rutland, but also the first Commoner in the land, being chosen to fill the Speaker's chair.

It appears that in the reign of Elizabeth one of these Rutlandshire Flowers went over to Ireland as a soldier of fortune, and distinguished himself in the wars against the natives, as also did his son, who became Governor of Dublin during the Irish Rebellion, in the reign of Charles I. His son and his grandson became the owner of Castle Durrow, in the county of Kilkenny, and the latter holding a seat in the Irish Parliament, won a Peer's coronet under George I.

This nobleman and his son were each born, married, and died, and "slept with their fathers," after the usual fashion: but about his grandson William, the third Baron and second Viscount Ashbrook, I have a little tale to tell which will interest such of your readers as are fond of romantic incident, and who have not forgotten the story of Mr. Cecil and his humble-born bride, who found herself one day Countess of Exeter and Mistress of Burleigh,

"Burleigh House, near Stamford Town."

This young nobleman, when scarcely out of his teens, or, at all events, when very young,

and residing as a student at Oxford, was struck with the beauty of a peasant girl, named Betty or Elizabeth Ridge, whose father was in the habit of punting a ferry boat across the Thames, or rather I should say the Isis, at Northmoor in the vicinity of Cumnor, near Oxford, the village made so famous by Sir Walter Scott in his Kenilworth, as the home of Amy Robsart. The love-sick youth took every opportudity of cultivating the society of his beloved water-nymph, but carefully concealed from his parents the impression which she had made upon his susceptible heart.

He was at that time an undergraduate of some college in the University, it is said of Magdalen College; but he was too young to think of matrimony, nor was the object of his affection either old enough or sufficiently educated to become his wife. She had been reared among the peasant class, and was wholly uninformed in matters of the world, though she could read and write pretty well, as is proved by her signature "Betty Rudge" in the Register Book of Marriages at Northmoor; but the young collegian fancied that, in spite of these disadvantages, he could perceive an aptitude of mind and soundness of intellect united with great amiableness of temper in addition to her personal perfections. Under

these circumstances he conceived the romantic idea of submitting her to the superintendence of some respectable lady capable of rendering her, through the influence of education, an associate suitable to his wishes and to his rank. The lovely ferry-girl was accordingly placed under the tuition of a lady, a few miles off, at whose house Ensign Flower occasionally visited her, and where he marked from time to time, with all the enthusiasm of a romantic lover, her progress in various polite accomplishments. Elizabeth Rudge remained in this situation for about three years, when the efflux of time, as well as some domestic occurrences, conspired in enabling Capt. Flower to reap the reward of his constancy and honourable conduct by a matimonial union; and so the knot was tied, the blessing was given, and the blushing daughter of the ferry-man became ultimately the Viscountess Ashbrook and Lady of the Castle of Durrow, on whose walls her early charms are still commemorated in an authentic portrait. By the Viscount she had several sons and daughters, among the former two who each in turn succeeded to the viscountcy in 1846; and the daughter of one of these sons, the peasant girl's grandchild, was married to George, fifth Duke of Marlborough, the lord of princely Blenheim.

The peasant girl, ennobled in the manner

related above, showed herself in after life well worthy of the promotion which she had gained, and died earlyin the present century at a good old age, honoured and loved by all her husband's family.

A friend of mine, who was for some years curate of the parish of Northmoor, has kindly sent me the following memoranda as a supplement to the story as told by myself:

"The living, as you know, belongs to St. John's College, Oxford, and when, as one of the Junior Fellows, I was appointed to it in 1839, I can well remember looking through the registers, and being much struck with the strangeness of a marriage, where the bridegroom signed himself 'Ashbrook' and the bride signed herself (not indeed by her mark, but in her own hand) 'Betty (not Elizabeth) Rudge.' On enquiring of the Nalders, who were an old family residing there and who were our College tenants, they told me they remembered her sister, who was married, and who lived to a good old age, and who always flattered herself that if Lord Ashbrook, or, as he then was, Mr. Flower, had seen her before her sister he would have chosen her in preference for his bride. From what I could learn by tradition, Mr. Flower was a gentleman-commoner of Magdalen College, and coming over there to fish occasionally, was brought into contact with the

ferryman's daughter, and this ended in their marriage. He afterwards erected in the parish, at the river side, a large quadrangular building, one portion of which existed in my time, and was let in cottages, the rest having been pulled down. I never heard anything to the contrary of Betty Rudge being a good and devoted wife, and it is very possible that the education mentioned by you might have been bestowed upon her to make her more suitable for the mistress of a gentleman's household. She was also, doubtless, the ancestress of the Duchess of Marlborough. I remember in my younger and more imaginative days, it always struck me as a romantic history, and as I used to wander along the banks of the Isis at Northmoor, on the summer evenings when I was in my parish, I used to picture to myself her waiting so anxiously to ferry Mr. Flower over on his way back to College, and thought it might form the basis of an interesting story for one of the Magazines; but I never got further, and am glad that you have placed the story on record permanently. I think she must be credited not only with superior personal attractions, but also with a high tone of moral principle, to have induced her *innamorato* to make her his wife. I do not know whether she lived long, or what was the place of her death or her burial."

I may add that I am told that in the parish of Shellingford, near Farringford, Berkshire, there is a tablet to Lady Ashbrook's daughter or grand-daughter, connecting her with the Marlborough family. There is a portrait of her to be seen at Castle Durrow.

ROMANCE OF THE TOWNSHENDS.

WE need not go very far afield, in dealing with the "great families," for proofs of the old adage which tells us that "truth is stranger that fiction." Facts have often proved it, and still continue to prove it, to be in reality "stranger;" as we shall show our readers by recalling to their memories some events which happened in the family of the Marquis Townshend early in the present century, and which were all brought before the eyes and ears of the public by proceedings in the Upper House of Parliament somewhat less than thirty years ago, when the titles and estates of an ancient and honourable house in Norfolk, Hertfordshire, and Staffordshire had a narrow escape from passing into the hands of the illegitimate issue of a Huntingdonshire brewer.

The Townshends, now Marquises and Viscounts Townshend,* Lords Raynham, &c., in the peerage of the United Kingdom, according to Collins, are an old family of genuine Norman extraction, being sprung from one Louis or Ludovic, a follower of the Conqueror, who soon after the Conquest married a Saxon maiden, Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Thomas Haywell. His great-grandson, Sir Thomas de Townshend, married a Norfolk heiress, and was buried in "the Chyrche of the White Friers of our Ladye of Mt. Carmel," between Fleet Street and the Thames. His son and heir, Sir Roger Townshend, following his example, found a wife in Norfolk, and lies buried, according to his last will and testament, in the parish church of Raynham in that county, "in the middle or body of the church, before the image of the crucifix of our Lord," He appears to have become possessed, either by marriage or by purchase, of the estate of Raynham, which has ever

* Beside the Marquisate of Townshend, a yonnger branch of the family now hold the Earldom of Sydney, and only a few years since they enjoyed also the Earldom of Leicester, and the Barony of Bayning, a title recently extinct through the failure of heirs male. The same fate apparently awaits Lord Sydney's title in the course of time.

since been the chief home of the family. He died in 1465.

The fortune of the house thus begun was completed by his son and successor, Sir Roger, who rose to eminence in the legal profession, becoming Reader in Law at Lincoln's Inn, M.P. for Calne, a Serjeant-at-law, and at length one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas. His daughters made what must have been the best matches of the time in their native county among the Bedingfelds, the Wodehouses, the Castells, and the Windhams. For several generations the Townshends,* as they had now

* It is possible that this name originally, like many others, was of purely local origin, being applied to a person living at the extreme "end" of a "town;" but there are not wanting those who affirm that the real orthography is Town*shend*, denoting military prowess in its founder as the "shender" or "destroyer" of cities—not unlike the epithet of *πτολίπορθος*, so constantly applied by Homer to Ulysses. I find the following in Webster's Dictionary of the English language:

"To Shend (Anglo-Saxon *scendan*, Dutch *schenden*, German *scänden*).

"1. To reproach, scold, or blame: 'I am *schent* for speaking to you' (Shakespeare).

"2. To injure or disgrace: 'That knight should knighthood ever so have *schent*' (Spenser).

"3. To punish or chastise: 'For which ere long himself was after *schent*' (Harrington).

"4. To destroy, ruin, or spoil: 'But we must yield whom hunger soon will *schend*' (Fairfax)."

begun to spell their name, lived as country squires on their Norfolk estates at Raynham and Brampton down to the reign of Elizabeth, when we find John Townshend, Esq., of Raynham, M.P. for Castle Rising, receiving the honour of knighthood in reward of the valour which he displayed at the capture of Cadiz under the Earl of Essex, his brother being shortly after knighted by King James I. at the Charter House. A baronetcy conferred by the same Sovereign on the head of the family in the next generation took the Townshends out of the untitled into the ranks of the titled nobility; and their connection with the Court was further confirmed by their election in successive Parliaments as representatives of Norfolk, or of Castle Rising and King's Lynn, in Parliament, to say nothing of the discharge of the duties of the shrievalty.

The third baronet, Sir Horatio, having borne an active part in the support of the royal cause, and afterwards in the recall of Charles II., was raised to the peerage as Viscount Townshend, and both he and his son* were suc-

* This Lord Townshend lived in a house in Cleveland Row, St. James's, which is identified by that old gossip Sir Nathaniel Wraxall as still standing in his day, as that which witnessed the memorable quarrel between its owner and Sir Robert Walpole, when the First Minister of the Crown and his Secre-

cessively Lords-Lieutenants of their native county. The latter, we are told, was a strong supporter of the "Protestant succession" at the time of the Revolution, and afterwards one of the Lords Justices of the Kingdom and Principal Secretary of State, and was constantly employed in diplomatic business. His marriage with the sister of Sir Robert Walpole—his neighbour at Houghton in Norfolk—added another stone to the rising fortunes of the family, and secured the Lord-Lieutenancy of his native county to a third and even a fourth generation.

One of his younger sons, Thomas Townshend, entering on a Parliamentary career, though a man of no great abilities, yet proved a fair speaker, was chosen member for the University of Cambridge, and appointed one of the Tellers of the Exchequer. He was a great friend of Lord North, and was known in St. Stephen's and among the wits of the day as "Tommy Townshend." Some of our readers will remember the lines in Goldsmith's poem, "Retaliation," where he describes Burke as,

> "Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
> To induce Tommy Townsend to lend him a vote."

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tary of State seized each other by the throat—a scene which Gay is supposed to have portrayed in the "Beggar's Opera," under the characters of Peachum and Lockitt.

His brother, the third lord, had besides his successor a son Charles, who became an eminent statesman and parliamentary orator; it is he to whom Gray alludes in the lines,

> "A post or a pension he did not desire,
> But left Church and State to Charles Townshend and Squire."

George Townshend, however, the eldest son, was a man of equal talents, and he completed the edifice which his ancestors had raised. He was a godson of King George I., and served under George II. at Dettingen. He also took part in the battles at Fontenoy and Culloden, and was commander-in-chief at the siege of Quebec, which city surrendered to him after the death of Wolfe. In the end he gained the bâton of a Field Marshal, and was not only Master-General of the Ordnance, but also Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk, as his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had been before him. He was also the most popular of all the noblemen who held the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the last century. He married a lady who owned a peerage in her own right, the Barony of Ferrars de Chartley, which has since passed into abeyance. His son and successor, celebrated in his day as an antiquary and man of

letters, left at his death in 1811 two sons, of whom the younger, Lord Charles Townshend, died without issue in 1853, while his elder brother, George, came to the marquisate, having contracted in his father's lifetime a marriage with Sarah, daughter of Mr. John Dunn Gardner, of Chatteris, in Cambridgeshire.

It appears that, owing to some irregularities in early life, the Marquis was forced to live abroad, and he resided in a state of seclusion for the best part of half a century at Genoa, where he had taken up his abode almost immediately after his marriage. From that day to the day of his death at the close of 1855, his family and friends heard nothing of him or from him; and the records extant at Doctors' Commons or in the House of Lords, will serve to show, that only a few days after her marriage his wife had instituted proceedings at law, in order to have her union with his lordship declared null and void *ab initio.*

Now it frequently happens, especially in matters hymeneal, that young ladies, and middle-aged ladies too, will act precipitately. The sex is as deserving now as it was in the days of Æschylus, of the epithet of "fast-going," and the wife of his Lordship (who at that time was known as Lord Chartley) formed no exception to the rule.

There are matters connected with the case before us, which render it undesirable, indeed scarcely possible, to go into minute details with respect to the relations of Lord and Lady Chartley. So I will use the words employed in Mr. Hardwicke's "Annual Biography" for 1856:—

"Our readers may possibly remember an event which took place in connection with the Townshend title a few years since. The late Marquis, it is well known, at that time Lord Chartley, separated from his wife shortly after his marriage, which she endeavoured to set aside by a suit in the Ecclesiastical Courts. These Courts, however, are proverbially slow in their proceedings, and while her suit was pending, she eloped from her father's house with the late Mr. John Margetts, a brewer of St. Ives, with whom she lived in Hunter Street and other places, down to his death in 1842, calling herself at one time Mrs. Margetts, and at other times the Marchioness Townshend. During this time she had by Mr. Margetts a family of sons and daughters, the former of whom were sent to Westminster School, first in the name of Margetts, and afterwards under the names of Lord A. and B. Townshend. The eldest son was actually returned to Parliament in 1841 as the Earl of Leicester by the

electors of Bodmin, who fondly imagined that they had secured as their Member the eldest son of a live Marquis, and one who would hereafter prove a powerful patron of their interests in the House of Lords.

"At this time Lord Charles Townshend, next brother of the late Marquis, and then heir presumptive to the title (but since deceased without issue), presented a petition to the Crown, and to the House of Lords, entreating that the children of Lady Townshend by Mr. Margetts might be declared illegitimate. The petition was referred to a Committee of Privilege, who, after hearing the evidence of a considerable number of witnesses, reported their opinion in favour of a Bill to that effect. A Bill accordingly was introduced, "for declaring the issue of Lady Townshend illegitimate," and it passed the House of Lords by a large majority in May, 1843. If it had not been for this procedure on the part of Lord Charles Townshend, which was rendered more difficult by the forced residence of the late marquis abroad (for he had never taken his seat in the House of Peers, nor had he been in England since his accession to the title, nor seen his wife since her elopement). the marquisate of Townshend, with the noble estates of Raynham, in Norfolk, and the castle at Tamworth, would have

passed to a spurious and supposititious race, the children of a brewer at St. Ives. By the death of Lord Charles Townshend in November, 1853, his nephew, the present (late) Marquis, became heir presumptive to the title; and his lordship, we believe, has every reason to feel grateful for the event of a trial but for which he might have found an irrevocable "slip between the cup and the lip" in the Townshend peerage.

"We may add that, the late Marquis having died near Genoa on the 31st of December, 1855, his late wife, mother of the children by Mr. Margetts, having remained a widow for nearly a fortnight, was married, by special licence, on the 12th of January following, to Mr. John Laidler, of whom report says that he was assistant to a linendraper at the West-end of London, until selected by her ladyship as her—shall we say second, or third—husband."

It is clear, from the above brief narrative, that it was a most fortunate thing for the Townshend family that Lord Charles Townshend's life was spared long enough to enable him to prosecute this suit, and to submit the Townshend Peerage case for the calm consideration of the House of Lords. Had he not chosen to do so, but preferred to let matters coolly and quietly take their own course, it is not easy to see how, during his

lifetime, the ultimate heirs of the reversion of the title could have mooted the question, and so secured the passing of an Act of Parliament to bastardise those who, even on their own showing, had no more right to the proud marquisate of Townshend and the halls of Raynham than the young of the cuckoo have to the nest of the thrush they have displaced. And a most useful lesson does the "Romance of the Townshends" afford to such noble lords as, being burdened with the possible succession of a spurious issue, are too indolent and easy-going to take action in the matter. They may depend on it, if any such there be, that in these affairs speedy action is the safest policy. and the best for their own interests. I can only add that I do not make this remark at random, but mean it to apply to at least one case within my own personal knowledge, where an ancient title is at the present moment risked on the turn of fortune's wheel in an almost similar manner.

THE DYMOKES OF SCRIVELSBY.

THE recent death at Naples* of the Rev. John Dymoke, of Scrivelsby Manor, Lincolnshire, "the Hon. Her Majesty's Champion," reminded the world through the daily newspapers that, even in the midst of the present prosaic and utilitarian age, one knightly office at least was in existence to contradict the assertion of Edmund Burke that "the age of chivalry is gone." The office of "Her Majesty's Champion" at all events has not passed away, in spite of the cheese-paring economy of the illiberal Liberals who happened to be in power at the Coronation of William IV. in 1831, and again at that of her present Majesty in June 1838. It lived till a few months since in the late Rev. John Dymoke, and, as "the King never dies," so also "never dies"

* This paper was written in March, 1874.

is true of the Championship. *Le roi est mort; vive le roi!* The late holder of the office was a clergyman, as indeed was his father before him; but the present Champion and squire of Scrivelsby is a layman, a Lincolnshire magistrate, and an officer in the local militia. One thing is certainly in favour of the Championship as an institution, and that is that it is an unpaid office. It has no salary attached to it; for, though the Dymoke family hold Scrivelsby on the feudal tenure of performing this duty, they have been owners of that manor for upwards of 500 years; and they obtained it, not by royal grant or out of the public purse, but by marriage with an heiress, the last of the proud line of Marmion, granddaughter of Philip de Marmion, a name which recalls to us memories of chivalry and of the poetry of Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott.

This office of "Champion"—if we may believe Homer—was not unknown five-and-twenty centuries ago; for very much the same duties as it entails were part of the knightly service which heralds and squires then paid to their royal masters. We read at all events in the Iliad of heralds who were engaged in the Homeric age to challenge the encounters of single knights, and to marshal the lists for the combat. We have no record of the office under the Saxon kings;

but according to Sir Bernard Burke its duties were appended by William I. as an honour to the old baronial house of Marmyon, or Marmion, the ancient owners of the manor of Scrivelsby. This manor, together with the castle of Tamworth, he tells us, had been conferred soon after the Norman Conquest on one Robert de Marmyon (Lord of Fontenoy, in Normandy), on condition of performing the office of Champion at the King's coronation.

The following is the more circumstantial account of the descent of the manor given by Sir Bernard Burke in his "Visitation of Seats :—"

"The Lord of Fontenoy, thus invested with these extensive possessions in the conquered country, fixed his residence therein and became a munificent benefactor to the Church, bestowing on the nuns of Oldbury the lordship of Polesworth, with a request that the donor and his friend Sir Walter de Somerville might be reputed their patrons, and have burial for themselves and their heirs in the abbey — the Marmyons in the Chapter House, the Somervilles in the Cloyster. The direct male line of the grantee expired with his great-great-grandson, Philip de Marmyon, a gallant soldier, who, in requital of his fidelity to Henry III. during the baronial war, was rewarded after the victory of Evesham with the

governorship of Kenilworth Castle. His death occurred 20 Edward I. (1292), and he was then found to have been seised of the manor of Scrivelsby and the castle of Tamworth. He left daughters only, and between them his extensive estates in Lincolnshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and elsewhere were divided. By this partition Scrivelsby fell to the share of Joan, the youngest co-heir, and was by her conveyed in marriage to Sir Thomas de Ludlow. The offspring of the alliance consisted of one son, John de Ludlow, who died issueless, and one daughter, Margaret, the Lady of Scrivelsby, who inherited from her brother that feudal manor, and wedding Sir John Dymoke, a knight of ancient Gloucestershire ancestry, invested him with the championship, which high office he executed at the Coronation of Richard II., despite the counter claim of Sir Baldwin Freville, Lord of Tamworth, who descended from Margery, the second daughter of Philip de Marmyon. From that period to the present, a space of nearly five hundred years, the Dymokes have uninterruptedly enjoyed this singular and important estate, and have continuously performed the duties its tenure enjoins. It falls not, however, within our province here to narrate the distinguished achievements of the successive Lords of Scrivelsby, to

tell how they maintained in splendour and dignity the ancient office they inherited, or to chronicle their gallant services on the battle fields of the Plantagenets in the Wars of the Roses and at the siege of Tournay."

It may sound a little strange when I tell my readers that the name of Dymoke is Welsh. Sir Bernard Burke tells us that the Dymokes or Dymocks—for the name is spelt both ways—claim a traditional descent from Tudor Trevor, Lord of Hereford and Whittington, and founder of the tribe of the Marches. The chief had three sons, the second of whom, marrying a daughter of the Prince of North Wales, half a century before the Norman Conquest, became the ancestor of one David ap Madoc, who in the Welsh tongue was styled colloquially Dai Madoc, the word Dai being the short form of David, just as we put "Will" for William, or "Jim" for James. His son and heir was David ap Dai Madoc, or David Dai Madoc; and by the usual abridgement "Dai Madoc" came in the course of time to be pronounced as Daimoc or Damoc, the transition from which to Dimoc or Dymoc, and again from that to Dimock or Dymoke, is easy and obvious. This certainly is the origin of the name of the Dymocks of Penley Hall, Flintshire; and most

probably the Dymokes of Lincolnshire were of the same original stock.

The first, then, of the Dymoke family who fulfilled his office as Champion was Sir John Dymoke, Knight, who married Margaret Ludlow in the reign of Edward III., and was present at the Coronation of Richard II. His claim, it appears, was disputed by Baldwin de Freville, the Lord of Tamworth Castle; but after deliberation it was found that the right belonged to the manor of Scrivelsby, as the *caput baroniæ*, or head of the barony of the Marmion family; and, as it appeared that the late King Edward III., and his son Edward, Prince of Wales, known as the Black Prince, had often been heard to say that the office was held by Sir John Dymoke, the question was settled in his favour.

From that time to the present the office has been discharged by members of the Dymoke family; at the Coronations of Henry IV. and V. by Sir Thomas, son of the last named, who was created a Knight of the Bath at the Coronation of Henry IV., along with forty-five other esquires, who "watched the night before the ceremony, and bathed themselves." His son, Sir Philip Dymoke, officiated at the Coronation of Henry VI.; and his grandson, Sir Thomas, at that of Edward IV. To mention each separate

name would be tedious; but it is noticeable that one of the family was three times "Champion" to Richard III., Henry VII., and Henry VIII., and another to the three sovereigns who succeeded in turn to Henry's throne. The son of the man who had challenged all gainsayers of the right of the unfortunate James II. came forward again on a change of dynasty to throw down the glove for William and Mary, and, again later for Queen Anne. His brother, Lewis Dymoke, was champion at the coronation ceremonies of the first two sovereigns of the House of Brunswick; while John Dymoke held the same office for George III., at whose coronation, tradition has it, the young Pretender, "Bonnie Prince Charlie" was present in disguise. Sir Henry Dymoke, a grandson, brother of the gentleman now deceased, was Champion at the Coronation of George IV., the hereditary Champion, a clergyman, being allowed to perform the office by proxy. This Sir Henry was offered a baronetcy in 1841, and accepted it—scandal said in payment for waiving his right in 1838—though it was generally thought that the office of "Her Majesty's Champion" was in itself a higher honour than a modern baronetcy, and it was remembered that one of the family had not so very long before laid claim, though unsuccess-

fully, to the ancient barony of Marmion. The "Champion," whose death I have mentioned above, was the brother of Sir Henry; he had held for some years the family living of Scrivelsby, and was a magistrate for Lincolnshire. His son, Henry Lionel, the present holder of the old chivalric title, was born in 1832.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1821 contains a picture of the Royal Champion Henry Dymoke in the act of riding on his white charger into Westminster Hall, and throwing down the gauntlet or glove of defiance, supported on either side by the Dnke of Wellington and the Marquis of Anglesey, also on horseback, while two heralds stand by on foot with tabards and plumes

The performance of the Champion on this occasion is thus described by Sir Walter Scott in a letter to one of his friends and correspondents:

"The Champion's duty was performed, as of right, by young Dymoke, a fine-looking youth, but bearing perhaps a little too much the appearance of a maiden knight to be the challenger of the world in the King's behalf. He threw down his gauntlet, however, with becoming manhood, and showed as much horsemanship as the crowd of knights and squires around him would permit to be exhibited. His armour was

in good taste; but his shield was out of all propriety—being a round *rondache*, or Highland target, a defensive weapon which it would be impossible to use on horseback, instead of being a three cornered or leather shield, which in the time of the tilt was suspended round the neck. Pardon this antiquarian scruple, which you may believe occurred to few but myself. On the whole, this striking part of the exhibition somewhat disappointed me, for I would have had the champion less embarrassed by his assistants, and at liberty to put his horse on the *grand pas*. And yet the young lord of Scrivelsby looked and behaved extremely well."

On the occasion of the Coronation of George III. the Champion was seated on the grey charger which the late King had ridden at the battle of Dettingen; and it appears that the fee received for carrying out the duties of the office was a large bowl and cover of silver, finely chased and gilt.

Those who wish to become acquainted with the look of the champion of three centuries back can, if they take the trouble to visit the College of arms, see a volume which contains a pedigree of the Dymoke family. There is a true representation of one painted in the margin opposite to the name, as he appeared accoutred on horse-

hack, glove in hand. The trappings of his horse are black, embroidered all over with little silver lions passant, the arms of the Dymoke family. The armour is of nearly the same fashion as the beautiful suit still preserved in the Tower of London, which was presented by the Emperor Charles V. to Henry VIII., on his marriage with Catharine of Arragon.

Standard English works contain several allusions to the Champion and his office. The passage in Shakespeare's "King Henry VI.," when Sir John Montgomery appears before the walls of York, at the head of the army in the cause of Edward IV., will be remembered by many readers, where this dialogue occurs:

> "*Mont.*—Ay now, my Sovereign speaketh like himself;
> And now will I be Edward's champion.
>
> "*Hast.*—Sound, trumpet; Edward shall be here proclaimed.
> Come, fellow-soldier, make thou proclamation."

And when the soldier has read aloud the name, style, and title of the King, Montgomery adds, as he throws down the gauntlet,

> "And whosoe'er gainsays King Edward's right,
> By this I challenge him to single fight."

On the occasion of the enthronement of Queen Mary, it was upon a roan destrier, trapped in

cloth of gold, that Sir Edward Dymoke appeared, with a mace in one hand, and a gauntlet in the other, to challenge "any manere of man, of whatsoever state, who impeacheth the Quene's title, as a faulse traytour." Nobody on that occasion "wanted to fight," so Sir Edward picked his own glove up and went away with a bow and a gold cup for his trouble.

It appears, according to Planché's "Royal Records," in which the portrait of the Champion is reproduced in facsimile, that the Champion came into the hall at the close of the second course of the banquet which succeeded the ceremony of the coronation. After his entrance, fully equipped, he was escorted to the upper end of the hall, and "after he had made obeisance to the Queen's Highness, in bowing his head, he turned him a little aside, and with a loud voice, declared" as follows: "'If there be any manner of man, of what estate, degree, or condition soever he be, that will say and maintain that our Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary the First, this day here present, is not the rightful and undoubted inheritrix to the imperial crown of this realm of England, and that of right she ought not to be crowned Queen, I say he lieth like a false traitor, and that I am ready the same to maintain with him whilst I have breath in my body, either

now at this time, or at any other time, whensoever it shall please the Queen's Highness to appoint, and thereupon the same, I cast him my gage.' And then he cast his gauntlet from him, the which no man would take up, till that a herald took it up and gave it to him again. Then he proceeded to another place, and did in this manner in three several places of the said hall. Then he came to the upper end, and the Queen's Majesty drank to him, and after sent him the cup, which he had for his fee, and likewise the harness and trappings, and all the harness which he did wear. Then he returned to the place from whence he came, and after that he was gone."

Elizabeth at her coronation, we are told, went first into St. Edward's Chapel "to shrift her," and came forth in "a riche mantle and surcoat of purple velvet, trimmed with ermines;" and at the banquet which followed, says Holinshed, "the hall (Westminster) was richly hung, and everything ordered in such a royal manner as appertained to such a regal and solemn feast. In the meantime, as her grace (the Queen) sat at dinner, Sir Edward Dimmocke, her Champion by office, in fair complete armour, mounted upon a beautiful courser, richly trapped in cloth of gold, entered the hall, and in the midst thereof cast down his gauntlet, with offer to right him in her quarrel that should deny her to be the righteous

and lawful Queen of this realm. The Queen, taking a cup of gold full of wine, drank to him thereof, and sent it to him for his fee, together with the cover."

The banquet at the Coronation of Queen Anne must have been very splendid. Her Majesty having washed and seated herself at table, with two of her women at her feet, the Lord Sewer, the Serjeant of the Silvery Scullery, called for a dish of meat, took assay of the dish, and carried it up, aided by the clerks of the green cloth. Then a dish of dilly-grout was set over against Her Majesty, and a bishop said grace before the dilly-grout, and in came the Queen's champion, on whose person many pounds avoirdupois of gold and silver glittered, and there nodded over his helmet a plume of feathers—white, blue, and red. The trumpets sounded, the steed snorted and slipped, and then and there having defied the hypothetical traitor, who never made an appearance, the steel glove was flung upon the pavement, and presently merely picked up again.

As my readers may be glad to know in what form the claim to the championship was made, the following is taken from the records in the "College of Arms" by the permission of my kind friend "Garter King of Arms." It is an extract from the petition of the Rev. John Dymoke to

the Lords Commissioners appointed to receive and determine the claims of those who by tenure of their lands or otherwise ought to "perform service at the coronation," from which we learn something of the duty the Champion is called upon to perform, and also gain some idea as to his personal appearance. After setting forth his right and title to the manor of Scrivelsby in consequence of the death of his relative, the petitioner proceeds to show that he holds the said manor by Grand Serjeantry, or, in other words, "That whensoever any King or Queen of England is to be crowned, the lord of the manor for the time being, or another person on his behalf, with his authority, if he shall be unable, shall come well armed for war on a good charger in the presence of the said lord the King on the day of his coronation," &c. And that "your petitioner and his ancestors, and all those whose estate your petitioner hath in the said manor or barony, from time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," have been champions of this realm, and that they have been used to have "one of the grand chargers of the King or Queen, with saddle, harness, and trappings of cloth of gold, and one of the best suits of armour of our said lord the King, with cloth of gold, and twenty yards of satin of the colour of crimson, with all

things which appertain to the body of the lord, the King, as entirely as he ought to have if he had to go to mortal combat." On the day of coronation, "being mounted on the said charger . . . and being accompanied by the Lord High Constable and the Earl Marshall, and the herald of the King, with a trumpet sonnded before him," the champion had to come on horseback into the hall where the King or Queen was seated at dinner; and there, in the presence of the King, and in the hearing of all the people, when the trumpet had been three times solemnly sounded, one of the heralds made proclamation with a loud voice to the effect that if any person should deny or say that the King ought not to enjoy the crown of these realms, "Here is his champion ready by his body to prove that he lies like a false traitor, and in that quarrel to adventure his life on any day that shall be assigned to him." On this the champion throws down his gauntlet, and in the event of no one gainsaying that the King or Queen has been crowned a sovereign, the King drinks to the champion during such service in a cup of gold having a cover. The cup is afterwards handed to the champion to drink from. This cup, together with the charger, saddle, harness, and all apparel and armour,

are then given to the champion for his fee.

The ancient baronial seat of the Dymoke family, Scrivelsby Court, is situated in a park about two miles south of Horncastle, on the road towards Revesby Abbey and Boston. The greater part of this fine old seat was unhappily destroyed by fire some hundred years since. In the portion consumed was a very large hall, ornamented with panels, exhibiting in heraldic emblazonment the various arms and alliances of the family through all its numerous and far-traced descents. The loss has been in some degree compensated by the addition which the late proprietors made to the remnant which escaped the ravages of the flames; but the grandeur of the original edifice can no longer be traced.

I make no excuse for putting before my readers the following quaint old ballad, which describes with perspicuity and truth the transmission of the lands of Scrivelsby:

"The Norman Barons Marmyon
At Norman Court held high degree;
Brave knights and Champions everyone,
To him who won brave Scrivelsby.

"Those Lincoln lands the Conqueror gave,
That England's glove they should convey,
To knight renowned amongst the brave,
The Baron bold of Fonteney.

"The royal grant, through sire to son,
Devolved direct *in capite*
Until deceased Phil Marmyon,
When rose fair Joan of Scrivelsby.

"Thro' midnight's gloom one sparkling star
Will seem to shine more brilliantly
Than all around, above, afar;
So shone the maid of Scrivelsby.

"From London city on the Thames,
To Berwick Town upon the Tweed,
Came gallants all of courtly names,
At feet of Joan their suit to plead.

"Yet *malgré* all this goodly band,
The maiden's smiles young Ludlow won,
Her heart and hand, her grant and land,
The sword and shield of Marmyon.

"Out upon Time, the scurvy knave,
Spoiler of youth, hard-hearted churl;
Fast hurrying to one common grave
Good wife and ladie, hind and earl.

"Out upon time—since world began,
No sabbath hath his greyhound limb,
In coursing man, devoted man,
To age and death—out, out on him!

"In Lincoln's chancel, side by side,
Their effigies from marble hewn,
The "anni" written when they died,
Repose De Ludlow and Dame Joan.

"One daughter fair survived alone,
One son deceased in infancy;
De Ludlow and De Marmyon
United thus in Margery.

"And she was woo'd as maids have been,
And won as maids are sure to be,
When gallant youths in Lincoln green
Do suit, like Dymoke, fervently.

"Sir John de Dymoke claimed of right
The Championship through Margery,
And 'gainst Sir Baldwin Freville, knight,
Prevailed as Lord of Scrivelsby.

"And ever since, when England's kings
Are diadem'd—no matter where—
The Champion Dymoke boldly flings
His glove, should treason venture there.

"On gallant steed in armour bright,
His vizor closed and couched his lance,
Proclaimeth he the monarch's right
To England, Ireland, Wales, and France.

"Then bravely cry, with Dymoke bold,
Long may the King triumphant reign!
And when fair hands the sceptre bold,
More bravely still—Long live the Queen!

Truly, as Mr. Pepys says in his Diary, "Good Lord! but the times doe change." Changed indeed they are from the times of our Edwards and Henries, and never again probably will the gallant spectacles which have so often graced Westminster Hall in days gone by be witnessed. These old-world glories fade like the gilding on tombstones, which wears away till the meaning becomes obscure, and is replaced by a new stone. Yet we may affirm that some fine fragment of antiquity

lies in the ceremony of which I have endeavoured to give my readers some idea. The gold-coated and feathered champion was the monument of the early rite of "ordeal by battle," whereby the sword and spear held the place of the modern tribunal of the law to which combatants now resort. It might have been awkward if we had now to trust the "peace and rightfulness" of this fair realm "to a single knight, worthy as he might be," and his charger, however imposing. The custom died out, for the condition of things had changed, and monarchs now trust to the attachment of loyal hearts, which, though they make little show, are a stronger defence than aught can ever be—even than the right hand of a champion like "Dymoke of Scrivelsby."

Since the above was written, death has again visited this ancient house, carrying off the son and successor of the above-mentioned Lord of Scrivelsby, Mr. Henry Lionel Dymoke, who has passed away, not in his own halls, but among strangers, and before attaining even middle age, leaving a widow, but no legitimate issue.

Family feuds and pecuniary difficulties have together done their best to level in the dust a once noble house, whose heads once ranked as equal to the proudest peers of the realm. There is therefore, I believe, no male Dymoke who at

this moment, if a Coronation were to occur, could put in a claim for the championship—at all events, without first establishing his descent in a court of law.

Such is the sad end of "The Dymokes of Scrivelsby." Had the second Marquis Townshend been still alive, in all probability he would have chosen this moment to prefer a claim to the honour on his own account. At all events, Horace Walpole wrote to Lady Ossory, under date, Oct. 1789:

"When he was but two and twenty, his Lordship called on me one morning and told me he proposed to claim the championcy of England, being descended from the *eldest* daughter of Ralph de Basset, who was Champion before the Flood—or before the Conquest, I forget which—whereas the Dymokes came only from the *second;* and he added, 'I did put in my claim at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth.' A gentleman who was with me, and who did not understand the heraldic tongue, hearing such a declaration from a young man, stared and thought he had gone raving mad; and I, who did understand him, am still not clear that the gentleman was in the wrong."

THE END.

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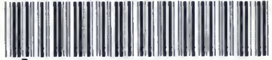
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