



Very good

LIBRARY

OF

DAVID F. WATKINS.

No. 212

W. C.





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

IN MEMORY OF

Lucius K. Chase
Maria Watkins Chase

PRESENTED BY

Ransome W. Chase
David P. Chase





A DESCRIPTION
OF THE
PART OF DEVONSHIRE
BORDERING ON
THE TAMAR AND THE TAVY;
ITS
NATURAL HISTORY,
MANNERS, CUSTOMS, SUPERSTITIONS, SCENERY, ANTIQUITIES,
BIOGRAPHY OF EMINENT PERSONS,
&c. &c.
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO
ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

BY MRS. BRAY,


AUTHOR OF 'TRAVELS IN NORMANDY,' 'FITZ OF FITZFORD,' 'THE
TALBA,' 'DE FOIX,' ETC.

" I own the power
Of local sympathy that o'er the fair
Throws more divine allurements, and o'er all
The great more grandeur, and my kindling muse,
Fired by the universal passion, pours
Haply a partial lay."

CARRINGTON'S *Dartmoor.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
MDCCCXXXVI.



LONDON:
Digitized by the Internet Archive
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,
in 2008 with funding from
General Station
Microsoft Corporation

DA

670

D5B7

1836

V. 1-3

P R E F A C E.

IN the following work, difficult as it may be to please all tastes, the writer has endeavoured to furnish something that may suit each class of readers. For the historian and the antiquary, she has laboured with no small diligence; so that they may not have to complain that her work is wanting in substantial matter. For the tourist, she has given descriptive sketches from observations made on the spot. For those who are fond of biography, she has selected subjects which she hopes may be found of interest; whilst the sketches of living characters are drawn from her own acquaintance with them. For the lovers of poetry and romance, she has given abundance of tales, stories, superstitions, old customs and traditions peculiar to this delightful county. All these matters she has endeavoured to introduce in a manner to give variety, and to relieve the more serious portions of the book: so that if, now and then, the mere general reader

should meet with a subject for which he has no relish, he has but to pass on a few pages, and he will then find that the volumes are not exclusively confined to subjects which, with the curious, or the historian, will probably be deemed of most import.

Mr. Southey suggested the plan with a view to originality;—namely, to make a local work possess, what it had hitherto been deemed little capable of possessing—a general interest.

Holding the opinions of the Laureate in that high respect to which they are entitled, the writer, therefore, has attempted to act on his plan, in the present instance. She has only to add, that wherever she may have fallen short of her object, it has not been for want of either labour or endeavour; and with this conviction, she hopes to meet with candour and indulgence on the part of both critic and reader.

A. E. B.

Vicarage, Tavistock, Devon,
Dec. 4th, 1835.

SUBJECTS
 OF
VOLUME THE FIRST*.

	Page
Letter I.	1
Letter II.	16
Letter III.	34
Letter IV.	58
Letter V.	69
Letter VI.	90
Letter VII.	109
Letter VIII.	139
Letter IX.	158
Letter X.	167
Letter XI.	193
Letter XII.	212
Letter XIII.	225
Letter XIV.	245
Letter XV.	256
Letter XVI.	274
Letter XVII.	294
Letter XVIII.	303
Letter XIX.	324
Letter XX.	345
Letter XXI.	359

* See end of Vol. III. for a complete Index to the Volumes.

LETTERS TO THE LAUREATE,

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Allusion to the original plan of the work being suggested by the Laureate—Sources to be employed in its progress—Climate, situation, and natural advantages of the Town—Anecdote of Charles II.—Dartmoor heights, rivers, and streams: their character—Weather: humorous lines on the same—Mildness of the climate; vegetation; laurels, &c.—Myrtles: account of some extraordinary ones at Warleigh—House Swallows, or Martens—Story of a deep snow: a gentleman imprisoned by it—Origin of the name of Moreton Hampstead—Frozen Swans—A Christening Anecdote of the last generation—Snow in the lap of May—Pulmonary consumption unknown on Dartmoor—Snow-drops; strawberry-plants; butterflies at unusual seasons—Blackbirds and Thrushes—Winter weather—Monumental stones of Romanized British Chiefs—Reasons given by the Writer for going at once to Dartmoor—Vestiges of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of that region.

Vicarage, Tavistock, Devon, Feb. 11, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

EVER since you so kindly suggested that, according to a plan you yourself pointed out, I should attempt giving an account of this place and neighbourhood, I have felt exceedingly desirous to begin the task, that, previous to your honouring Tavistock with the promised visit, you may know what objects, possessing any interest in themselves, or in relation to past times, may be found here worthy your atten-

tion; and though to do justice to such a work as you have suggested to me would require your own powers fully to execute it, and conscious as I am how inadequate I must be to the undertaking, yet I will attempt, as far as I am able, to meet your wishes—well knowing, by my own experience, that you are one of those who receive, with kindness and indulgence, any information that may be gleaned even from the humblest source.

Nor shall I forget that it is your wish I should give not only all the history and biography of this place, and gather up whatever of “tradition and manners can be saved from oblivion,” but also (again to quote your own words) state “every thing about a parish that can be made interesting”—“not omitting some of those ‘short and simple annals’ of domestic life which ought not to be forgotten.” Whilst I attempt, therefore, to give to subjects of historical import the serious attention they demand, I shall likewise endeavour to vary and lighten those more grave parts of my letters, by stating, sometimes, even trifling things, in the hope they may not be altogether void of interest or amusement; for a traveller, though he sets out on a serious pursuit, may be pardoned if he now and then stoops to pick up a wild flower to amuse his mind for a moment, as he journeys on his way. In the accounts which I purpose transmitting to Keswick, I shall not only give you such information as I have myself been able to collect, but I shall also, when I come to speak of Tavistock Abbey, derive some assistance by occasional references to a series of papers written by my brother,* respecting

* Alfred John Kempe, F.S.A.

that monastic foundation, which appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine about two years ago.

I have, I believe, before mentioned to you, that at a very early period of life, Mr. Bray entertained some thoughts of writing a history of his native town, including descriptive excursions in its vicinity—the latter more particularly embracing the western limits of Dartmoor. Though, from living retired, and not meeting with that encouragement which is so useful and so cheering to young authors, he never threw into a regular form his purposed work; yet he made for it a considerable body of notes, principally derived from his personal observations on the scenes and antiquities that excited his interest and attention. Some of these papers have now become exceedingly valuable, because, unfortunately, many of the memorials of past times, which they most minutely describe, have of late years been seriously injured, or entirely destroyed. In my letters, therefore, I propose, from time to time, to transmit to you very copious extracts from these papers, as it would be both needless and presumptuous in me to attempt giving my own account of those vestiges of antiquity and picturesque scenes, which have already been so carefully investigated and faithfully delineated by my husband.

Before I enter, therefore, upon any historical notices of Tavistock, I shall say something respecting the climate, situation, and natural advantages of our neighbourhood: since I am much disposed to think that the monks, who knew so well how to choose their ground, whenever an abbey was in question, were induced to fix on this spot on account of its many and most desirable localities for the erection of that

noble pile, whose existence gave celebrity to the place, and was as a refuge of honour and security to the learning, science, and piety of those times—which now, with more flippancy than truth, it is so much the fashion to rank under the name of the “dark ages,” though our own boasted light was caught from that flame which they had saved from extinction.

I have invariably found, with persons who rather choose to see the faults and deficiencies than to trace the advantages either of the natural or the moral world, that whenever I speak in praise of Devonshire, or of Tavistock in particular, they oppose to such commendation—the climate; and ask me how I can be partial to a place so constantly exposed to rain? The objection has received even the sanction of royalty, since it is traditionally averred that whilst Charles II. was in Tavistock (in his father’s lifetime, during the civil wars) he was so annoyed by wet weather, that if any body remarked it was a fine day, he was wont to declare ever after, “that, however fine it might be elsewhere, he felt quite sure it must be raining at Tavistock.”

That we have a more than due proportion of wet I will not deny; but it is, I believe, a fault common to mountainous countries; and if we have some discomforts arising from this circumstance, I am convinced that we owe to it many of our advantages also. I have never seen your majestic mountains and lakes; but, judging from a beautiful collection of drawings,* in my own possession, of Cumberland and Westmoreland, I am induced to believe that a very great resemblance may be traced between the

* By the late lamented C. A. Stothard, F.S.A.

valleys of those fine counties and our own; and I rather think that you also have no want of showers.

Our Dartmoor heights are frequently distinguished by bold and abrupt declivities of a mountainous character; our verdure is perpetual—and we owe to those watery clouds, which so much annoyed the lively young prince, not only our rich pastures, but the beauty of our numerous rivers and matchless mountain streams. Of these I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, since, go where we will, they meet us in our walks and rides at every turn—and always like pleasant friends, whose animation and cheerfulness give an additional delight to every surrounding object. So much, indeed, do I feel prejudiced in their favour, that, after having become for so long a time familiar with the tumult and the beauty of our mountain rivers, I thought even the Thames itself sluggish and dull, and very far inferior to the Tavy or the Tamar.

Tavistock owes much of its humidity to the neighbourhood of Dartmoor; for there the clouds, which, owing to the prevalence of the westerly winds in this quarter, pass onward from the Atlantic ocean, are attracted by the summits of its granite tors, and, spreading themselves in every direction, discharge their contents not only on the moor itself, but for many miles around its base. Some ingenious person (whose name I do not know, or it should find a record) has described our weather with much humour in the following lines:—

“ The west wind always brings wet weather,
The east wind wet and cold together,
The south wind surely brings us rain,
The north wind blows it back again.”

If the sun in red should set,
The next day surely will be wet;
If the sun should set in gray,
The next will be a rainy day."

Thus you see, my dear sir, poets will sometimes be libellers, and help to keep alive a popular prejudice; for let the weather-grumblers say what they will, I can aver that our climate (whose evil reputation is taken for granted, without sufficient inquiry into its truth), bad as it may be, has, nevertheless, its redeeming qualities; and, amongst others, assuredly it teaches us to know the value of a good thing when we have it, a virtue getting somewhat scarce in these times; for a real fine, dry, sun-shiny day in Tavistock can never pass unnoticed, all living things rejoice in it; and the rivers run and leap and sparkle with such brilliancy, and offer so much to delight the eye and cheer the spirits, that the clouds and the damp and the rain that helped to render them so full and flowing, are all forgotten in the gladness of the genial hour; and the animals, and the birds, with the insect tribe (which is here so numerous and varied) play, or sing, or flutter about with a vivacity that would almost make one believe they hailed a fine day as truly as would King Charles, could he have met with such a recreation on the banks of old Tavy.

The mildness of our climate is so well known, that it needs no eulogy of mine; our laurels and bays are the most beautiful evergreens in the world, and, like those of one who shall be nameless, never fade. Our myrtles, too, flourish in the open air; and we used to boast of some very fine ones that grew in our garden. In a hard frost, however, they should be carefully matted; for the severe weather of January, 1831,

killed ours, in consequence of their having been neglected in this particular. I cannot give a stronger proof of the mildness of our climate, than by mentioning the following circumstance, which I received from my esteemed friend, Mrs. Radcliffe, of Warleigh.

That lady says, in one of her letters to me, "Four myrtle trees grew in the open air, in the recesses of Warleigh House, from twenty-seven to thirty feet in height, the branches spreading nearly from the roots. One was a foot and a half in circumference at the base, and proportionably large to the top. The other three were nearly as high, and one of them was two feet in circumference near the root. Two of the four were of the broad-leaved kind, one small-leaved, and the other double-blossomed, the flowers of which might be gathered from the windows. They were cut down in 1782, from the apprehension of their causing the walls of the house to be damp. The late Mr. Radcliffe, who cut them down, remarks, in a memorandum, 'I have been the more particular in describing these myrtles, as I doubt not they were the largest in England. Four-and-twenty fagots, of the usual size, were made of the brushwood. The stem, main branches, and principal parts of the roots were in weight 452 lbs.' Tea-caddies, made from the wood, and a block of it, remain in our possession at Warleigh."

I here also may add (as another proof of the mildness of our air) the following particulars, which I have seen stated in Dr. Moore's Catalogue, lately published, of the birds of Devon. The Doctor says, "Of the house swallow, or marten, I have seen the old birds feeding their young on the 20th of September, 1828, at Warleigh; and have been assured,

by a good observer, that martens have frequently been seen flying during mild weather even in the *Christmas week*, at Plympton. These birds build in the hollows of the rocks under Wembury Cliffs, as well as about the houses in this neighbourhood."

Our winters are seldom severe; and when we have snow it does not lie long upon the ground. But Dartmoor, from its great elevation, is far more liable to snow storms and hard weather than we are, who live in a less elevated country. Mr. Bray recollects that, when he was a boy, returning from school at Christmas, three men with shovels went before the carriage as it crossed the moor, in order to remove the snow heaps that, in particular places, would otherwise have rendered it impassable.

The severest winter that I have heard of within the memory of persons now living, occurred about twenty years since, when my husband's father met with an adventure that was a good deal talked of at the time, and found its way into the public prints. Had you crossed the moor to visit us when you were last with your friend Mr. Lightfoot, it is not impossible you might have had a somewhat similar one, since I perfectly well recollect then hearing that, for several days, the road from Moreton to Tavistock was exceedingly difficult of access on account of the drifted snow. I here give you Mr. Bray's adventure.

That gentleman had been at Exeter to take the oaths as portreeve of the borough of Tavistock, and was returning by the nearest road through Moreton Hampstead, situated about twelve miles from Exeter and twenty from home. There was a hard frost on the ground, and the evening being exceedingly cold, Mr. Bray determined to pass the night at a little

comfortless inn (the only one, I believe, which could then boast such a title in the place), and to continue his journey across Dartmoor on the following morning.

He retired to a bed that was anything but one of down, and lay shivering all night, wishing for the hour that was to convey him to his own home, where warmth and comfort might be found at such a season. Morning came; but what was his amazement, when, on getting up, the first thing he beheld was the whole face of the surrounding country covered by such a fall of snow as he had never before witnessed in Devon, his native county. How to get home was the question; and, like many other puzzling queries, it was more easily started than answered.

With much eagerness Mr. Bray now consulted landlord and drivers, on the practicability of so desirable an object. After much deliberation, every possible expedient being suggested and discussed, the thing was found to be impossible, for the roads were literally choked up with snow, not one could be found passable, either on horseback or in a carriage; nothing less than a whole regiment of labourers, could they have been found, to dig out a passage for many miles, could have effected the object; and even then, so thickly did the skies continue to pour down their fleecy showers, such efforts might have been unavailing. To reach Tavistock was out of the question; and he next inquired if it might be practicable to get back to Exeter. But the road in that direction was equally choked up; and the drivers assured him, in their Devonshire phrase, that “not only so thick was the fall of snow, but so hard was the frost, that the *conchables*” (meaning icicles, probably derived from the conch shell, to which indeed

they bear some fanciful resemblance) “hung from the horses’ noses as they stood in the stables.”

There was nothing to be done; and as people must submit to mischances when they cannot run away from them, he was condemned to exercise Job’s virtue, as many others do, because he could not help it. Finding this to be the case, he now began to think how he should contrive to pass the time during his imprisonment, and the landlady was called up and consulted as to what recreations or comforts her house could afford to a distressed gentleman under such circumstances: the prospect was a dreary one, for neither books nor company were to be found. Mr. Bray’s situation, however, being communicated to the clergyman and squire of the place, he became indebted to both for the kind attentions with which they endeavoured to cheer the time of his detention at Moreton Hampstead, that lasted during the space of *three weeks*; and at length, when he did escape, he was obliged to reach his own home by travelling through a most circuitous road.

Thus, in regard to him, are verified all the constituents that are said to have given rise (but with what etymological accuracy I will not vouch) to the name of Moreton Hampstead; *i. e.* a town on the moor instead of home—for tradition says, that it was so denominated from the circumstance of persons returning after Exeter market being oftentimes compelled to pass the night in a few wretched hovels, on the spot where the town now stands, in lieu of home; these hovels having originally been colonized by certain vagabonds and thieves who broke out of Exeter gaol in days of old.*

* I speak here, of course, only of the country tradition; for the

I have heard, likewise, of one or two other instances of the effects of hard weather in this neighbourhood, which I deem worthy of record in the annals of our town, because they are rare. The first relates to some favourite swans of the above-named gentleman. These fine birds were in possession of a piece of water, which had formerly been part of the stew-ponds of the abbey. One morning, during a hard frost, the swans were seen, like the enchanted inhabitants described in one of the Arabian tales, who had become, all on a sudden, statues of marble. There the birds were—white, beautiful, but motionless. On approaching near them, they were found to be dead and frozen—killed during the night by a sudden and severe frost.

I add the following anecdote, not only as a very remarkable circumstance in this my letter on frost and snows, but also as forming the very first I can meet with in the life of my husband, whose claim to being ranked among the worthies of Tavistock I intend by and by to establish, when I come to my biographical department. But as I like my characters, whenever they can do so, to speak for themselves, I shall tell this story in Mr. Bray's own words. It may also afford a useful hint to those who are fond of observing the gradual changes in the manners and customs of polished society; since our modern fine ladies will be somewhat surprised at the politeness of the last generation, on occasions of emergency. Here is the extract from Mr. Bray's letter, addressed to myself when I was in London last year.

real etymology must be from the Saxon *ham stede*,—i. e., the place of the house, &c.

“You must allow this is a very cold May, though a dry one. Mrs. Sleeman, with whom I dined at Whitechurch the other day, told me that it was a common saying among her friends, when any one remarked that the weather was cold in *May*, ‘But not so cold as it was at Mr. Bray’s christening, when, on the *first of May*, so much snow fell in the evening, that the gentlemen who were of the party were obliged to carry home the ladies in their arms.’ I knew not that any thing remarkable had happened on the day of my *christening*; but, by tradition, I knew that on my *birth* day so great was the rejoicing, that after drinking some imperial Tokay, followed, perhaps, by wines less costly, if not even by common punch, the doctor threw his wig into the fire, and burnt it, whether as an offering to Bacchus or Lucina, I know not; but, as I understand the wig was full-bottomed, and well saturated with powder and pomatum, the incense could not have been very fragrant on the occasion.”

These instances of hard weather are not, however, common; for so celebrated is the mildness of the climate in this part of the west, that when the doctors can do no more with their consumptive patients, they often send them into Devon, and many have recovered, whose cases were considered hopeless. I have heard it repeatedly asserted, and from a careful inquiry believe the assertion to be true, that no person born and bred on Dartmoor was ever yet known to die of pulmonary consumption; a certain proof that, however bleak and rainy that place may be, it cannot be unhealthy. This, indeed, is easily accounted for, since the land is high, the air pure, and the waters are carried off by mountain-torrents and streams.

As additional proofs of the mildness of our climate, I may add, also, a few facts that have come under my own observation. I have seen in our garden (which is very sheltered) snow-drops as early as the first week in January. We have some strawberry plants, (I think called the Roseberry, but am not certain,) that grow under the windows of the parlour where I am now writing to you; and so late as the 14th of last November, did I pluck a few well-flavoured strawberries from these plants. The slugs devoured some others that were remaining before they were half ripe. The Rev. Dr. Jago, of Milton Abbot, who is a most intelligent observer of nature, informs me, that on the 18th of last December, he saw in his garden the yellow butterfly, an insect seldom seen in midland counties before the month of March.

I confess that, though a great admirer of birds, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the feathered tribes to understand critically their "life and conversation," a circumstance which renders White in his *Selborne*, and the author of the *Journal of a Naturalist*, so truly delightful; but I believe it is no wonder, though it may be as well to mention it, that our blackbirds and thrushes sang to us at Christmas their carols, so lightly and so sweetly, that I, who had the concert for nothing, was as well pleased with it as an amateur might be to pay the highest price to hear Signor Paganini play his violin.

And now what shall I add more in favour of our poor abused climate and its weather? Shall I tell you that I have often, in the "hanging and drowning" month of November, found lively spirits, sunshine, and beauty on the banks of the Tavy? and

that in December, when the good people of London are lost in fog, in "the dark days before Christmas," as they call them, and substitute gas lights for the sun's beams, I have often enjoyed a lovely walk to Crowndale, the birth-place of Sir Francis Drake, and have experienced that pleasure which I can describe in no language so well as you have done it, in your own winter excursion to Walla Crag; an excursion whose records will endure as long as the scenes it describes, and which will be read with delight so long as there are hearts alive to nature, truth, and feeling. "The soft calm weather has a charm of its own; a stillness and serenity unlike any other season, and scarcely less delightful than the most genial days of spring. The pleasure which it imparts is rather different in kind than inferior in degree: it accords as finely with the feelings of declining life, as the bursting foliage and opening flowers of May with the elastic spirits of youth and hope*."

I am aware that some of my worthy friends in this part of the world, who find consolation in charging all their infirmities to the score of the weather, would be apt to exclaim against me, and say that I have given too favourable an account of that at Tavistock; but I confess that I like, literally speaking, to be *weather-wise*, and to look on the cheerful side even of the most unpromising things; and if we have so much rain, and cannot help it, surely it is as well to consider the bounties which flow upon us from the skies, as to find nothing in them but sore throats and colds, and to fancy that our Devonshire showers fall, like the deluge, on no other errand than that of destruction.

* See Colloquies, vol. i., p. 116.

And now, my dear Sir, having commenced my letters, like a true native of England, with talking about nothing but the weather, I shall give you my reasons for proposing to take you, in the next, to Dartmoor, before I set you down amongst the ruins of our abbey. First, then, Tavistock owes not only many of its advantages, but its very name to its *river*, which rises on Dartmoor. And though the glory of our town, in after ages, was its stately abbey; yet as the river Tavy has associated its appellation with the place from times beyond human record, that fact is a sufficient presumption that it possessed, in the aboriginal age, a certain degree of importance.

This, indeed, we may consider as confirmed by the inscribed monumental stones of Romanized British chiefs that have been found in this neighbourhood, two of which are still preserved as obelisks in our garden. On Dartmoor, where this river rises, we find such abundant vestiges of the aboriginal inhabitants of this part of the west, that very imperfect would be any history of Tavistock which commenced in the Saxon era. I know there are those who have been sceptical about the Druidical remains on the moor; but no one should venture to deny the existence of what they have never seen, only because they have never heard of it. We will begin, therefore, upon Dartmoor in the next letter; and I trust you will find it not altogether unworthy your attention, as it has much engaged that of,

My dear Sir,
Your most gratefully obliged
and faithful servant,

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER II.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS :—Dartmoor—Origin of its name—made into a forest by King John—Henry III. gave it bounds—Edward III. bestowed it on the Black Prince—Its extent, &c.—Impression it is calculated to produce on the mind—Granite Tors—Sunshine unfavourable to the Moorland scenery; various effects produced by the clouds, times, and seasons—Rivers, their character, &c.—Variety and beauty of the mosses and lichens—Channels worn by the rivers—Craggs and cliffs—Tavy Cleave, its grandeur—Scenery of the Moor where combined with objects of veneration, their founders being the Druid priests and bards—The Moor barren of trees—Soil—Primary and secondary rock—Pasture for cattle—Peat—A hut; the crook of Devon; peasantry of the Moor, children, &c. described—Language of the people. Origin of the word ‘Logan’—Snow-storm on the Moor, and the adventures of a traveller, with a traveller’s tale.

Vicarage, Tavistock, Feb. 20, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

DARTMOOR, or the forest of Dartmoor, (as it is still called in all grants and deeds of the Duchy of Cornwall,) is situated in the western limits of the county of Devon. It is thirty miles in extent from north to south, and fourteen from east to west. Few places are really less known, and few are more deserving of attention. It is considered to derive its name from the river Dart, which rises on the moor, in the midst of a bog at Cranmere pool. This river, which is sometimes written Darant, is supposed to be called the Dart from the remarkable rapidity of its course. “Dartmoor was,” says Risdon, “made into a forest by King John, and not

only confirmed by King Henry III., but had bounds set out by him in a charter of perambulation." And Edward III. gave it to his son the Black Prince, when he invested him with the title of Duke of Cornwall.

This vast tract of land, which has been computed to contain 100,000 acres,* is distinguished by heights so lofty and rugged, that they may in some parts be termed mountainous; and though a large portion of the high road, over which the traveller passes in crossing it, presents an unvaried scene of solitariness and desolation, yet to those who pursue their investigation of the moor beyond the ordinary and beaten track, much will be found to delight the artist, the poet, and the antiquary.

By a mind alive to those strong impressions which the vast and the majestic never fail to create, Dartmoor will be viewed with a very different feeling to that experienced by the common observer who declares it is "all barren." To him, no doubt, it is so: since, in its bleak heights, he is sensible to nothing but the chilling air; in its lofty tors, still rude as they were created, he sees nothing but bare rocks; and in its circles of stones, its cairns and its fallen cromlechs, he finds no associations to give them an interest by connecting them with the history and manners of ages long past away.

The feelings inspired by visiting Dartmoor are of a very different order from those experienced on viewing our beautiful and cultivated scenery. The rich pastures, the green hills, the woodland declivi-

* There are said to be 20,000 acres in addition to this, distinguished by the name of the Commons.

ties of Devon; its valleys, alive with sparkling streams, and skirted by banks whose verdure never fails, studded as they are with cottages and farms, convey to the mind that sense of pleasure which renders the spirits cheerful and buoyant. There is nothing in such scenes to raise a thought allied to wonder or to fear; we know that we could dwell among them in security and peace; they delight and soften the mind, but they seldom raise in it those deep and impressive reflections, which scenes such as Dartmoor affords seldom fail to create.

The peculiar character of the moor is derived from its granite tors; these are mostly found on the summits of its numerous heights, and lie piled, mass on mass, in horizontal strata. Some portion of dark iron-stone is found amongst them. There are, also, rocks of secondary formation, and several that are considered by geologists to be of volcanic fusion.

No one who would wish to view the moor in all its grandeur should go there on a very fine or rather sunny day: for it then possesses none of those effects produced by that strong opposition of light and shadow, which mountain-scenery and rugged rocks absolutely require to display the bold character of their outline, and the picturesque combinations of their craggy tops. Indeed, most scenery derives its pictorial effect principally from the clouds, and even the most beautiful loses half its beauty when viewed in unbroken light. I have seen Dartmoor under most of the changes produced by sunshine, cloud, or storm. The first shows it to disadvantage; for the monotony of its barren heights then becomes predominant. A gathering storm

gives it a character of sublimity ; but a day such as artists call a "painter's day" is that which gives most interest to moorland scenery.

The pencil is more adapted than the pen to delineate such scenes as will then be found on the moor. I have often seen it when, as the clouds passed slowly on, their shadowy forms would fall upon the mountain's breast, and leave the summit glittering in the sun with a brilliancy that might bear comparison with the transparent hues of the richest stained glass. The purple tints of evening here convey to the mind visions of more than natural beauty ; so etherially do the distant heights mingle themselves with the clouds, and reflect all those delicate and subdued tints of sunset, that render the dying day like the departure of some beneficent prince, who leaves the world over which his course has cast the lustre of his own "long and lingering" glory.

And often have I seen the moor so chequered and broken with light and shade, that it required no stretch of the imagination to convert many a weather-beaten tor into the towers and ruined walls of a feudal castle. Nay, even human forms, gigantic in their dimensions, sometimes seemed to start wildly up as the lords and natural denizens of this rugged wilderness. But who shall picture the effects produced by a gathering tempest? when, as the poet of such scenes so truly describes—"The cloud of the desert comes on, varying in its form with every blast ; the valleys are sad around, and fear, by turns, the storm, as darkness is rolled above." In these moments, the distant heights are seen in colours of the deepest purple, whilst a solitary ray of the sun

will sometimes break through the dense masses of cloud and vapour, and send forth a stream of light that resembles in brilliancy, nor less in duration, the flash of "liquid fire."

The rivers, those veins of the earth that, in their circulation, give life, health, and vigour to its whole frame, here flow in their greatest purity. So constant is the humidity produced by the mists and vapours which gather on these lofty regions, that they are never dry. Sometimes they are found rising, like the Dart, in solitude and silence, or springing from so small a source that we can scarcely fancy such a little rill to be the fountain that sustains the expansive waters of the Tavy and the Teign. But all these rivers, as they pass on, receive the contributions of a thousand springs, till, gathering as they flow, they become strong, rapid, and powerful in their course. Sometimes, bounding over vast masses of rock, they exhibit sheets of foam of a dazzling whiteness: and frequently form numberless little cascades as they fall over the picturesque combinations of those broken slabs of granite which present, growing on their surface, the greatest variety of mosses and lichens to be found throughout the whole county of Devon.

Often do the waters play upon rocks literally covered with moss, that has in it the blackness and richness of the finest velvet. In others, the lichen is white as the purest marble, or varied with the gradations of greys, browns, and ochres of the deepest or the palest tints. There is also to be found, on the moor, a small and beautiful moss of the brightest scarlet; and nothing can be more delicate than the fibrous and filigree formation of various other species,

that can alone be compared to the most minute works in chased silver, which they so much resemble in colour and in form.

There are scenes on the moor, hereafter to be noticed more particularly, where the rivers rush through the narrow channels that they have torn asunder at the base of the finest eminences of overhanging crag and cliff. Such is Tavy Cleave, an object that fills the mind with a sense of surprise mingled with delight. There, after heavy showers or sudden storms, is heard the roar of the Tavy, with a power that renders the observer mute whilst he listens to it. There the waters flow wildly forward as their rush is reverberated amidst the clefts and caverns of the rocks; and, as they roll their dark and troubled course, they give to the surrounding scene that character of awe and sublimity which so strongly excites the feelings of an imaginative mind; for there the deepest solitude to be found in nature is broken by the incessant agitation of one of the most powerful of her elements. Such a contest of waters—of agitation amidst repose—might be compared, by a poet, to a sudden alarm of battle amidst a land of peace, and those struggling waves to numerous hosts, as they press on with eagerness and fury to the field of strife.

Indeed, the whole of the river-scenery of Dartmoor is full of interest, more especially where it becomes combined with those objects of veneration which claim as their founders that “deathless brotherhood” the Druid priests and bards of the most ancient inhabitants of the West. Except in a few instances, the moor is totally barren of trees; but they are not wanted; since its vastness,—its

granite masses,—its sweeping outlines of height or precipice, are best suited to that rugged and solemn character which is more allied to grandeur and sublimity than to the cheerfulness and placidity of a cultivated or woodland-landscape.

The soil of the moor is of a deep black colour, and in most parts it is merely a formation of decayed vegetable matter, covering a foundation principally of granite; for it is not altogether confined to this primary rock, as occasionally there are others of secondary formation. Though there are some bogs as well as marshes on the moor, yet the soil affords the finest pasture for cattle in summer, and produces a vast quantity of peat, that supplies fuel throughout the whole of the year; whilst the sod also is useful in another way, since a good deal of it is employed in the building of huts, generally composed of loose stones, peat, and mud, in which the few and scattered peasantry of the moor are content to make their dwelling. A hardy and inoffensive race, they, at no very remote period, were looked upon as being little better than a set of savages; and to this day they are assuredly a very rude and primitive people. A Dartmoor family and hut may be worth noticing; and a sketch of one will, generally speaking, afford a tolerable idea of all, though there are exceptions, a few comfortable cottages being scattered here and there upon the forest. Imagine a hut, low and irregular, composed of the materials above-named, and covered with a straw roof, or one not unfrequently formed with green rushes, so that at a little distance it cannot be distinguished from the ground on which it stands. Near the hut there is often seen an out-house, or shed, for domestic purposes, or as a shelter

for a cart, if the master of the tenement is rich enough to boast such a convenient relief to his labour in carrying home peat from the moor.

But this cart is a very rare possession ; since the moormen most commonly convey their peat, and all things else, on what is called a *crook*, on the back of a poor, patient, and shaggy-looking donkey. You will say, "What is this crook?" and I must answer, that I can really hardly tell you ; unless (as did Mr. Bray for the late King, when he was Prince of Wales, at the request of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt) I make a drawing of it, and send it in my letter. This I hope to do when I can find leisure, together with a few more sketches by way of illustrating any subject that may absolutely require the aid of the pencil. In the interval, try if you can understand such an account as the following, which I confess is an attempt to describe what is indescribable. Imagine the poor donkey, or a half-starved horse, laden first with a huge pack-saddle, never intended to bear anything else but a crook ; and across this saddle is placed that very machine, which is made of wood, and so constructed as to keep from falling to the ground any load of peat, firewood, &c., that is frequently piled up twice as high as the poor beast that bears it. At either side of this machine arise two *crooked* pieces of wood, turning outward like the inverted tusks of the walrus. These in themselves have a somewhat formidable appearance, but more so when, after they are unloaded, the thoughtless driver, as too frequently happens, places his pitchfork in an oblique direction from the saddle to one of the shafts of the crook : for thus, whilst the animals are advancing at a brisk pace and in no very regular

order, the prong of it may lacerate the leg of any unhappy horseman that meets them, and has not time or dexterity to avoid their onset. The crook is here known by the name of the Devil's Toothpick.

I may here perhaps be permitted to mention an anecdote of the late Mr. Bray, connected with the present subject. On ascending a hill in an open carriage near Moreton, he overtook a man on foot who had the care of several horses, laden with faggots on crooks. From the steepness of the acclivity, he was obliged to guide his horse in a somewhat sinuous direction, and he soon found that some or other of the crook horses invariably crossed him on the road, and considerably impeded his progress. This he was satisfied was owing to two words of the driver, namely, *gee* and *ree*, which he took a malicious pleasure in calling out contrary to what he ought,—making them go to the right when they should have gone to the left, and *vice versâ*. Mr. Bray remonstrated, but in vain. At length, when he reached the brow of the hill, he said to the churl, “You have had your frolic, and now I will have mine;” and, not only whipping his own horse but the others also, he put them into a full gallop. The consequence was that they all threw off their loads one after the other, the driver begging him in vain to stop, and receiving no other answer than “You have had your frolic, and now I have mine.”

The manners of the peasantry may in some measure be estimated by their dwellings. They are not overclean; and though they are surrounded on all sides by mountain-streams and rills of the purest water, I have generally found, close to their doors, as if they delighted in the odour it produced, a pool

into which are thrown old cabbage-leaves and every sort of decaying vegetable matter.

Out of these huts, as you pass along, you will see, running to gaze upon you, some half-dozen or more of children, not overburdened with clothes, and such as they have, like Joseph's coat, being often of many colours, from the industrious patching of their good mothers. The urchins, no doubt, are not bred up as Turks, since frequent ablution makes no part of their devotion. Now and then, however, you find a clean face, which is as rare as a dry day on Dartmoor; and when this is the case, it is generally found worth keeping so, as it discloses a fine, fat, round pair of cheeks, as red,—I must not say as roses though writing to a poet, for the simile would be much too delicate for my Dartmoor cupids,—but as red as a piece of beef, which is a great deal more like the cheeks in question. Legs and arms they have that would suit the infant Hercules: and if they had any mind to play off the earliest frolic of that renowned hero, the moor would supply the means, since snakes and adders it has in abundance, and a good thing it would be if they were all strangled.

The hair of these children, which, to borrow the language of Ossian, “plays in the mountain winds,” is generally the sole covering of their heads. This sometimes is bleached nearly white with the sun; and, as you pass along, there they stand and stare at you with all their eyes. One token of civilized life they invariably give, as they salute you with that sort of familiar bob of the head now become a refined mode of salutation in fashionable life, so widely differing from the bowing and bending of the days

of Sir Charles Grandison, when no gentleman could salute another as he ought to do without removing from his head a little three-cornered cocked-hat, and when the management of a lady's fan was an essential part of her good manners in the dropping of a courtesy.

But I am digressing: to return then to the subject. A peasant, born and bred on the moor, is generally found to be a simple character, void of guile, and, as Othello says of himself,—

———“ Rude in speech,
And little versed in the set phrase of peace;”

and to this may be added, very unintelligible to all who are not accustomed to the peculiar dialect of the moor. It is not English; it is not absolutely Devonshire, but a language compounded, I should fancy, from all the tongues,—Celtic, Saxon, Cornish,—and, in short, from any language that may have been spoken in these parts during the last 2000 years. I would attempt to give you a few specimens, but I cannot possibly guess how I am to *spell* their words so as to convey to you any idea of them. I have been assured that they retain some British words resembling the Welsh, and that now and then they use the form of the old Saxon plural, for they sometimes talk about their *housen* and their *shooen*; and I once heard a woman tell one of her daughters, in a Dartmoor cottage, “to log the child's cradle.” There, thought I, is a British word; log means to rock, hence logging, or logan stone. Borlase said he could never trace the origin of the word logan. What a pity he had not been driven by a shower of rain into a Dartmoor cottage, where there was a young child and a mother anxious to rock it asleep.

How the ears of a real antiquary would have tingled to have heard but that single expression from the mouth of a peasant, born and bred in the very heart of Druid antiquity.

Though it certainly is a great libel on the poor people of Dartmoor to consider them, as was the case about a hundred years ago, to be no better than savages, yet, no doubt, they are still of "manners rude," and somewhat peculiar to themselves; but as an instance, like a fact in law, carries more weight with it than a discussion, take therefore the following as an illustration. It was related to me but last night, by my husband, who had it from a gentleman who, I conclude, received it from the gentleman to whom the circumstance occurred; and as all these parties who related it were, as Glanville says of his relators when telling his tales about old witches, "of undoubted credit and reputation and not at all credulous," I do not know that you will receive it anything the worse for coming to you at the fourth hand. Well, then, once upon a time, as the old story-books say, there was a gentleman who, mounted on a horse, (at the breaking up of a very hard and long frost, when the roads were only just beginning to be passable,) set out in order to cross over Dartmoor. Now, though the thaw had commenced, yet it had not melted the snow-heaps so much as he expected: he got on but slowly, and towards the close of day it began to freeze again. The shades of night were drawing all around him, and the mighty tors, which seemed to grow larger and taller as he paced forward, gradually became enveloped in vapour and in mist, and the traveller with his horse did not know what to do.

To reach Tavistock that night would be impossible, as a fresh snow-storm was fast falling in every direction, and would add but another impediment to the difficulties or dangers of his way. To stay out all night on the cold moor, without shelter or food, must be certain death, and where shelter was to be found somewhat puzzled the brains of our bewildered traveller. In this dilemma he still paced on, and at length he saw at a distance a certain dark object but partially covered with snow. As he drew nearer, his heart revived; and his horse, which seemed to understand all the hopes and fears of his master, pricked up his ears and trotted, or rather slid, on a little faster. The discovery which had thus rejoiced the heart of man and beast was not only that of the dark object in question, but also a thick smoke, which rose like a stately column in the clear frosty air from its roof, and convinced him that what he now beheld must be a cottage.

He presently drew nigh and dismounted; and the rap that he gave with the butt-end of his whip upon the door was answered by an old woman opening that portal of hope to him and his distresses. He entered and beheld a sturdy peasant, that proved to be the old woman's son, and who sat smoking his pipe over a cheerful and blazing peat fire. The traveller's wants were soon made known. An old out-house with a litter of straw accommodated the horse, which, it is not unlikely, ate up his bed for the want of a better supper; but this is a point not sufficiently known to be asserted.

Of the affairs of the traveller I can speak with more certainty; and I can state, on the very best authority, that he felt very hungry and wanted a

bed. Though there was but one besides the old woman's in the house, the son, who seemed to be a surly fellow, promised to give up his own bed for the convenience of the gentleman; adding that he would himself sleep that night in the old settle by the chimney-corner. The good dame busied herself in preparing such food as the house could afford for the stranger's supper; and at length he retired to rest. Neither the room nor the bedding were such as promised much comfort to a person accustomed to the luxuries of polished life; but as most things derive their value from comparison, even so did these mean lodgings, for they appeared to him to be possessed of all that heart could desire, when he reflected how narrowly he had escaped being perhaps frozen to death that night on the bleak moor. Before going to rest, he had observed in the chamber a large oak-chest: it was somewhat curious in form and ornament, and had the appearance of being of very great antiquity. He noticed or made some remarks upon it to the old woman who had lighted him up stairs in order to see that all things in his chamber might be as comfortable as circumstances would admit for his repose. There was something, he thought, shy and odd about the manner of the woman when he observed the chest; and, after she was gone, he had half a mind to take a peep into it. Had he been a daughter instead of a son of Eve he would most likely have done so; but, as it was, he forbore, and went to bed as fast as he could.

He felt cold and miserable; and who that does so can ever hope for a sound or refreshing sleep? His was neither the one nor the other, for the woman and the chest haunted him in his dreams; and a

hollow sound, as if behind his bed's head, suddenly started him out of his first sleep, when a circumstance occurred which, like the ominous voice to Macbeth, forbade him to sleep more. As he started up in bed, the first thing he saw was the old chest that had troubled him in his dreams. There it lay in the silvery silence of the moonlight, looking cold and white, and, connected with his dream, a provoking and even alarming object of his curiosity. And then he thought of the hollow sound which seemed to call him from his repose, and the old woman's odd manner when he had talked to her about the chest, and the reserve of her sturdy son, and, in short, the traveller's own imagination supplied a thousand subjects of terror; indeed so active did it now become in these moments of alarm that it gave a tongue to the very silence of the night, and action even to the most inanimate things; for he looked and looked again, till he actually fancied the lid of the chest began to move slowly up before his eyes!

He could endure no more; but, starting from his bed, he rushed forward, grasped the lid with trembling hands, and raised it up at once. Who shall speak his feelings when he beheld what that fatal chest now disclosed?—a human corpse, stiff and cold, lay before his sight! So much was he overcome with the horror of his feelings, that it was with extreme difficulty he could once more reach the bed.

How he passed the rest of the night he scarcely remembered; but one thought, but one fear, possessed and agonized his whole soul. He was in the house of murderers! he was a devoted victim! there was no escape: for where, even if he left the chamber,

at such an hour, in such a night, where should he find shelter, on the vast, frozen, and desolate moor? He had no arms, he had no means of flight; for if plunder and murder might be designed, he would not be suffered to pass out, when the young man (now, in his apprehension a common trafficker in the blood of the helpless) slept in the only room below, and through which he must pass if he stirred from where he was.

To dwell on the thoughts and feelings of the traveller, during that night of terror, would be an endless task; rather let me hasten to say that it was with the utmost thankfulness, and not without some surprise, that he found himself alive and undisturbed by any midnight assassin, when the sun once more arose and threw the cheerful light of day over the monotonous desolation of the moor. Under any circumstances, and even in the midst of a desert, there is pleasure and animation in the morning; like hope in the young heart, it renders all things beautiful. If such are its effects under ordinary circumstances, what must it have been to our traveller, who hailed the renewed day as an assurance of renewed safety to his own life? He determined, however, to hasten away; to pay liberally, but to avoid doing or saying anything to awaken suspicion.

On descending to the kitchen he found the old woman and her son busily employed in preparing no other fate for him than that of a good breakfast; and the son, who the night before was probably tired out with labour, had now lost what the gentleman fancied to have been a very surly humour. He gave his guest a country salutation, and hoping "his honour" had found good rest, proceeded to recom-

mend the breakfast in the true spirit, though in a rough phrase, of honest hospitality; particularly praising the broiled bacon, as "Mother was reckoned to have a curious hand at salting un in."

Daylight, civility, and broiled bacon, the traveller now found to be most excellent remedies against the terrors, both real and otherwise, of his own imagination. The fright had disturbed his nerves, but the keen air of those high regions, and the savoury smell of a fine smoking rasher, were great restoratives. And as none but heroes of the old school of romance ever live without eating, I must say our gentleman gave convincing proofs that he understood very well the exercise of the knife and fork. Indeed so much did he feel re-assured and elevated by the total extinction of all his personal fears, that, just as the good woman was broiling him another rasher, he got out with the secret of the chest, and let them know that he had been somewhat surprised by its contents; venturing to ask, in a friendly tone, for an explanation of so remarkable a circumstance.

"Bless your heart, your honour, 'tis nothing at all," said the young man, "'tis only fayther!"

"Father! your father!" cried the traveller, "what do you mean?"

"Why you see, your honour," replied the peasant, "the snaw being so thick, and making the roads so cledgey-like, when old fayther died, two weeks agon, we couldn't carry un to Tavistock to bury un; and so mother put un in the old box, and salted un in: mother's a fine hand at salting un in."

Need a word more be said of the traveller and his breakfast; for so powerful was the association of ideas in a mind as imaginative as that of our gentle-

man, that he now looked with horror upon the smoking rasher, and fancied it nothing less than a slice of "old fayther." He got up, paid his lodging, saddled his horse; and quitting the house, where surprise, terror, joy, and disgust had, by turns, so powerfully possessed him, he made his way through every impediment of snow and storm. And never could he afterwards be prevailed upon to touch bacon, since it always brought to mind the painful feelings and recollections connected with the adventure of "salting un in."

LETTER III.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Wild animals in ancient times on the Moor—Old custom of Fenwell rights—Banditti once common—Road across the Moor; mode of travelling before it was made—Atmosphere, remarkable—Thunder and lightning, not common—Tradition of Conjuring Time noticed—Witchcraft, still a matter of belief—Extremes of heat and cold—Shepherd lost; his dog—Two boys lost in the snow—Hot vapour on the Moor, its appearance—Scepticism respecting the druidical remains, noticed; its being wholly unsupported by reason, knowledge, or enquiry—The Damnonii, their origin with the rest of the ancient Britens; their history, &c. &c.—Camden quoted—Aboriginal inhabitants of the Moor; their Druids, &c.—Orders of the Bards—Poetry—Regal power assumed by the Priesthood—Priests and Bards distinct orders—Sacred groves, &c.—Allegory of Lucian—Tacitus quoted, and other authorities respecting the Druids—Their customs, laws, &c., briefly noticed—Vestiges of British antiquity at Dartmoor—Spoliation there carried on—an assault made on the antiquities of the Moor a few years ago, related.

Vicarage, Tavistock, February 23rd, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE somewhere seen it asserted that, in former times, Dartmoor was infested by many wild animals; amongst them the wolf and the bear: for the latter I have found no authority that would justify me in saying such was the case; but Prince, I see, mentions in his 'Worthies of Devon,' that, in the reign of King John, the Lord Brewer of Tor Brewer received a licence from his sovereign to hunt the fox, the wild-cat, and the wolf throughout the whole of the county of Devon: Dartmoor, no doubt, afforded a fine field for such a chase. And I may

here notice that there is a tradition (mentioned also by Polwhele) amongst the people on the borders of the moor, which they state to have derived from their forefathers, "that the hill country was inhabited whilst the vallies were full of serpents and ravenous beasts."

There is, likewise, an old custom, commonly referred to as the "Fenwell rights," which supports the truth of the assertion respecting the *wolves*: since the "*Venwell rights*," as the peasantry call them, are nothing less than a right claimed by the inhabitants of a certain district of pasturage and turf from the fens free of all cost: a privilege handed down to them through many generations, as a reward for services done by their ancestors in destroying the wolves, which, in early times, so much infested the forest of Dartmoor. Many stories and traditions are, indeed, connected with these wild regions: some of which, in due season, I purpose giving you; and many remarkable customs, now falling fast into decay, were there practised; whose origin, as I shall endeavour to show, may be traced back even so far as the earliest times of which we have any authentic records, subsequent to the invasion of Britain under Cæsar.

It is nothing wonderful that such an extensive waste as the moor, so full of rocks, caverns, tors, and intricate recesses, should have been, in all ages, the chosen haunt of banditti; and in former days they did not fail to avail themselves of its facilities for conveying away plunder, or for personal security against detection; whilst the gentry of those times, unless in a numerous and armed company, feared to cross the moor, so dangerous as it was known to be

from lawless men, and so reputed to be haunted by the spirits and pixies of credulity and superstition.

There is now an excellent road across the moor; as I trust you will find when you next travel westward. This road was made between sixty and seventy years ago; and till that work was executed it was most perilous to the traveller: for if he missed his line of direction, or became entangled amidst rocks and marshy grounds, or was enveloped in one of those frequent mists, here so much to be dreaded, that prevented him even from seeing the course of the sun above his head, he had no alternative, but to follow, as well as the difficulty of the way would admit, the course of a river or stream; and if this last resource failed, he was likely to be lost on the moor, and, in the depth of winter, to be frozen to death, as many have there been.

The atmosphere of Dartmoor deserves particular notice; it is at all times humid. The rain, which frequently falls, almost without intermission, for many weeks together, is generally small; and resembles more a Scotch mist than a shower. Sometimes, however, it will pour down in torrents; but storms, attended with thunder and lightning, are not very common: and whenever they do occur, one would think that the peasantry still retained the superstitious awe of the aboriginal inhabitants of the moor, who worshipped thunder as a god under the name of Tiranis; for they call a storm of that description *conjuring time*, from the thorough persuasion that such effects are solely produced by the malice of some potent spirit or devils: though, mingling their Pagan superstitions with some ideas founded on Christianity, (just as their forefathers

did when, on their first conversion, they worshipped the sun and moon, as well as the cross,) they make a clergyman to have some concern in the business: for while "conjuring time" is going on, he, in their opinion, is as hard at work as the devils themselves, though in an opposite fashion; since, on all such occasions, they say, "that somewhere or other in the county there's a parson a laying of a spirit all in the Red Sea, by a talking of Latin to it; his clerk, after each word, ever saying Amen."

Indeed, our superstitions here are so numerous, and so rooted amongst the poor and the lower classes, that, I think, before I bring these letters to a close, I shall have it in my power not a little to divert you. Witchcraft is still devoutly believed in by most of the peasantry of Devon; and the distinctions (for they are nice ones) between a witch and a white witch, and being bewitched, or only *overlooked* by a witch, crave a very careful discrimination on the part of their historian.

The extremes of cold and heat are felt upon the moor with the utmost intensity. Many a poor creature has been there found frozen to death amidst its desolate ravines. I remember having heard of one instance, that happened many years ago, of a poor shepherd who so perished, and was not found till some weeks after his death: when his dog, nearly starved, (and no one could even conjecture how the faithful animal had sustained *his* life during the interval,) was discovered wistfully watching near the body of his unfortunate master.

I have also learnt that, a few years since, two lads, belonging to a farm in the neighbourhood, were sent out to look after some strayed sheep on the moor.

A heavy fall of snow came on, and the boys, not returning, the farmer grew uneasy, and a search after them was commenced without delay. They were both discovered, nearly covered with snow, benumbed, and in a profound sleep. With one of the poor lads, it was already the sleep of death; but the other was removed in this state of insensibility, and was at length, with much difficulty, restored to life.

On a sultry day, the heat of the moor is most oppressive; as shade or shelter are rarely to be found. At such a time, there is not, perhaps, a cloud in the sky: the air is perfectly clear and still; yet, even then, you have but to look steadily upon the heights and tors, and, to your surprise, they will appear in waving agitation. So thin, indeed, is the hot vapour which on such sultry days is constantly exhaled from the moor, that I can only compare it to the reeking of a lime-kiln. The atmosphere is never, perhaps, other than humid, except in such cases, or in a very severe frost. I have heard my husband say that the wine kept in the cellars of his father's cottage on Dartmoor (for the late Mr. Bray built one there, and made large plantations near the magnificent river-scenery of the Cowsic) acquired a flavour that was truly surprising; and which, in a great degree, was considered to arise from the bottles being constantly in a damp state. This perpetual moisture upon them was wont to be called "Dartmoor dew;" and all who tasted the wine declared it to be the finest flavoured of any they had ever drunk in England.

Before I enter upon a minute account of the British antiquities of Dartmoor, it will, perhaps, be

advisable to offer a few remarks, which, I trust, may assist in throwing some light upon a subject hitherto treated with slight notice, and not unfrequently with absolute scepticism; since some, who have never even investigated these remains upon the moor,—who have never even seen them,—have, notwithstanding, taken upon themselves to assert that there are none to be found. But assertion is no proof; and those who shun the labour, patience, and inquiry which are sometimes necessary in order to arrive at truth must not wonder if they often miss the path that leads to it; but they should at least leave it fairly open to others, who are willing to continue the search.

It is not my purpose in this letter to enter upon any discussion as to who were the first settlers in this part of Britain. Wishing to inform myself upon the subject, many and opposite opinions have I examined; and the only impression that I have received from these discussions was, that the writers themselves were too much puzzled in the mazes of controversy to convince their readers, however much they might have convinced themselves, that each, exclusively, entertained the right opinion.

It seems to me, therefore, the wisest way to rest satisfied that the Damnonii had one common origin with the rest of the ancient Britons; and without attempting to penetrate that obscurity which has defied for so many ages the ingenuity of the most patient investigators, to admit without scepticism the commonly-received opinion—namely, that the first settlers in this part of the west were, like the people of Gaul, descended from the Celtæ, a branch of the nations from the east. Devonshire, according

to Camden, was called Duffneunt, deep valleys, by the Welsh; and certainly a more appropriate name could never have been chosen for a country so peculiarly characterized by the beauty and richness of its valleys, watered as they are by pure and rapid rivers or mountain streams*.

The Damnonii, perhaps, were less warlike than the inhabitants of other kingdoms of the Britons; since they readily submitted to the Roman power, and joined in no revolts that were attempted against it: a circumstance which, according to some historians, was the cause that so little was said about them by the Roman writers. The Damnonii were distinguished for the numbers and excellence of their flocks and herds. It is possible that this very circumstance might have rendered them less warlike than their neighbours, since the occupations of a pastoral life naturally tend to nourish a spirit of peace; whereas, the toils, the tumult, and the dangers to which the hunters of those days were constantly exposed in the chase, which so justly has been called "an image of war," must, on the contrary, have excited and kept alive a bold and restless spirit, that delighted in nothing so much as hostile struggles and achievements in the field.

But still more probable, perhaps, is the conjecture that the Damnonii, from their long and frequent intercourse with the Phœnicians, who traded to their

* Camden says, "the hither country of the Damnonii is now called Denshire; by the Cornish Britons Dennan; by the Welsh Britons Duffneynt,—that is, deep valleys; because they live everywhere here in lowly bottoms; by the English Saxons, Deumerchine, from whence comes the Latin Devonia, and that contracted name, used by the vulgar, Denshire. It was certainly styled Dyfneint by the Welsh. See Richards *in voce*."

coast, as well as to that of Cornwall, for tin, had become more civilized than the inhabitants of the other kingdoms of Britain. Possibly, indeed, they had learnt to know the value of those arts of peace to which a warlike life is so great an enemy. Hence might have arisen their more willing submission to their Roman conquerors, who were likely to spread yet further amongst them the arts and advantages of civilized society. This is mere conjecture, but surely it is allowable—since there must have been some cause that operated powerfully on a whole kingdom to make it rest satisfied with being conquered; and we have no evidence, no hint even given by the earliest writers, to suspect the courage or manly spirit of the aboriginal inhabitants of Devon.

So celebrated were the British priesthood at the time of the invasion of the Romans under Cæsar, and so far had their fame extended into foreign lands, that we know, on the authority of his writings, “such of the Gauls as were desirous of being perfectly instructed in the mysteries of their religion (which was the same as that of the Britons), always made a journey into Britain for the express purpose of acquiring them.” And in these kingdoms, as in other nations of Celtic origin, it is most likely that those who preferred peace to tumult,—who had a thirst after the knowledge of their age,—or who liked better the ease secured to them by having their wants supplied by others than the labour of toiling for themselves, became the disciples of the Druids. Their groves and cells, appropriated to study and instruction, afforded security and shelter; and there, undisturbed by outward circumstances,

they could drink of that fountain of sacred knowledge which had originally poured forth a pure and undefiled stream from its spring in the Eastern world, but had become turbid and polluted as it rolled through the dark groves of druidical superstition.

In these groves, it is believed, they learnt the secret of the one true and only God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. But this was held too excellent for the people, who it was deemed required a grosser doctrine, one more obvious to the senses. To them, therefore, it was not fully disclosed; it was not to be shown in all its simple and natural lustre; the doctrines which "came of men" were added to it; and these being of the earth, like the vapours which arise from it, ascended towards Heaven only to obscure its light*.

The poetry of the ancient British priesthood has ever been a subject of the highest interest; and its origin, perhaps, may be referred to the most simple cause. Nothing of import was allowed to be written down; nor is there any possible means of knowing

* There can be little doubt that the Druids, Celts, and Cyclopes were all of the same origin. The Druids, in fact, were nothing more than the priesthood of that colony of the Celtic race established in Britain. There cannot be a stronger proof of the truth of this assertion, than that all Celtic works, in whatever kingdom they are found, are exactly similar. Dr. Clarke, in his delightful 'Travels,' mentions several antiquities of Celtic date in Sweden and elsewhere, the same in their construction as those found on Dartmoor. He tells us, that old Upsal was the place renowned for the worship of the primeval idolatry of Sweden; that a *circular range of stones* was the spot where its ancient kings went through the ceremony of inauguration. "This curious circle exists in the plains of Mora, hence it is called Morasteen, the word *mora* strictly answering to our word *moor*."—Clarke's Travels, vol. ix., p. 216.

when symbols, or written characters, were first introduced among them. To supply this defect, it became absolutely necessary that the laws, both civil and religious, should be placed in such a form as most readily to be committed to memory, and so transmitted to their posterity. For this purpose no means could be so effective as those of throwing them into the form of apophthegms in verse: the triads are an example.

In process of time, however, what at first was had recourse to as a matter of necessity, became a subject of delight and emulation; and poetry, in all probability, was cultivated for its own sake: for its capability of expressing the passions of the soul, for the beauty of its imagery, and the harmony of its numbers. Those who had most genius would become the best poets; and giving up their time and attention to the art in which they excelled, it is not improbable that they were left to the full exercise of their talent, and became a distinct, and at last a secondary, order of the Druids: those graver personages, who did not thus excel in verse, retaining and appropriating to themselves the higher order of the priesthood,—that of performing the rites and ceremonies of religion, sitting in judgment on the criminal, and acting the part both of priests and kings: for certain it is that though the regal title was still retained by the princes of the Celtæ, all real power was soon usurped by the priests; and it is not a little remarkable that, both in ancient and modern times, this tendency to encroachment on the part of the priesthood has always been observable in those who were followers of a false or corrupted religion. Where God, on the contrary, prevails in

all the purity of his worship, where he says to his chosen servants "these shall be my ministers," respect, submission, and a willing obedience to civil government, for conscience' sake, invariably accompanies the holy function and its order. But idolatry, in ancient times, among the heathen Celtæ,—in modern, under the popes,—constantly produced a tendency to a quite opposite spirit: kings there might be, so long as they were secondary; but the priesthood, we too often find, were struggling for power, and under the Roman pontiffs, as well as under the druids, were frequently found usurping and dispensing it with the most arbitrary rule.

To return from this digression to the bards: and as I am writing from the very land they once inhabited, and to the bard who, in our own times, so deservedly wears the laurel of England, I feel a more than ordinary interest in my subject, which I trust will plead my apology if I somewhat dwell upon it.

Supposing, then, that at first there was but *one* order of the Druidical priesthood, (and I have found nothing to contradict this supposition, which seems most natural,) and that in such order some of the members excelled others in the readiness of throwing into verse the laws and customs of their religion and government, and that this talent at length was their sole occupation, till they became, in some measure, secularized priests, it would naturally follow that in process of time the Druids absolutely divided and separated themselves into *two* orders, priests, and bards. And, amongst the latter, another division soon, perhaps, arose; for some of these excelled in composing the verses connected with the religion and rites of the sacred festivals, whilst others pro-

bably took more delight in celebrating the actions of chiefs and kings, and in singing the fame of their heroes who had fallen in battle. Hence came the *third* order. Those who celebrated the praises of the gods, of course, stood higher, in a land of superstition, than those who merely sung the praises of men. The former, therefore, were called hymn-makers, or vates; and the latter, bards. So great was the power of this priesthood, whether wholly or separately considered, that its members not only exercised all rites of a sacred nature, but determined upon and excited war,—interfered to command peace,—framed the laws and judged the criminal; and also held within their hands the most useful as well as the most delusive arts of life. They cured the sick,—foretold the events of futurity,—held commerce with invisible spirits,—exercised augury and divination,—knew all the stars of Heaven and the productions of the earth, and were supreme in all controversies of a public or of a private nature; whilst their wrath against those who displeased them vented itself in their terrific sentence of excommunication,—a religious sentence which has scarcely a parallel in history, if we except that of excommunication as it was once enforced by the tyrannic church of Rome.

In the sacred groves, the disciples learnt the fearful rites of human immolation to the deified objects of human craft; and, mingling in their study of poetry the beauty and innocence of fiction with some of its worst features, they also made hymns in praise of the seasons, of the birds and the plants, and celebrated the seed-time, and the “golden harvest,” in the numbers of their verse. Here, likewise, they

learnt to frame those war-songs of impassioned eloquence, which depicted the hero in such glowing colours, that they who listened caught the inspiration and rose to emulate his deeds; and their kings and chiefs were sent forth to the battle "with a soul returned from song more terrible to the war."

The refinements of polished life and education were not theirs; but their imagination, unfettered by rules, and impressed from infancy by the wild grandeur of the scenes in which they lived, was strong and bold as the martial spirit of their race. Those arts which teach men to subdue or to hide their feelings were unknown; and, following the impulse of nature, they became masters in the true eloquence of the heart. Hence arose the power of the bards, in whose very name there is so much of poetry, that, in our own language, we could find no other term so suited to express the feathered songsters of the air, and, therefore, were they called "the *bards* of the woods*."

The power of oratory was eminently displayed in all their compositions; and so highly was that art esteemed by the Druids of the Celtæ, that it gave birth to the beautiful allegory told by Lucian, who says that, whilst he was in Gaul, he saw Hercules represented as a little old man, who was called by the people "Ogmios;" and that this feeble and aged deity appeared in a temple dedicated to his worship, drawing towards him a multitude who were held by the slightest chain fastened to their ears and to his tongue. Lucian, wondering what so strange

* Most of the peasantry in Devonshire still pronounce this word (birds) *bards*.

a symbol was intended to denote, begged that it might be explained to him; when he was presently told, "that Hercules did not in Gaul, as in Greece, betoken strength of body, but, what was of far greater power, the force of eloquence; and thus, therefore, was he figured by the priests of Gaul." Lord Bacon possibly might have had this image in his mind when he so emphatically declared that "knowledge is power."

All the Celtic tribes appear to have studied these arts with extraordinary success. The Germans, as well as the Gauls and Britons, did so; for "they abound," says Tacitus, "with rude strains of verse, the reciters of which are called bards; and with this barbarous poetry they inflame their minds with ardour in the day of action, and prognosticate the event from the impression which it happens to make on the minds of the soldiers, who grow terrible to the enemy, or despair of success, as the war-song produces an animated or a feeble sound."

The genius for poetry evinced by their bards was one of the most remarkable qualities observable among the ancient priesthood of Britain: so simple, yet so forcible, was the imagery they employed,—so feeling the language of their productions,—that, even at this day, such of their poems as have come down to us can never be read with other than the deepest interest by those in whose bosom there is a responsive chord, true to nature and to feeling. The passions they expressed in these poems were rude but manly; their indignation was aimed against their foes,—against cowardice and treachery; whilst the virtues of courage,—of generosity,—of tenderness,—of the "liberal heart" and "open hand,"

were honoured and praised by the Sons of Song; and the brave man went forth to battle, strong in the assurance that, if he conquered or if he fell, his fame would be held sacred, and receive its honours from the harp of truth.

The learning of the British priesthood has been frequently spoken of by ancient authors in terms of commendation; and in this particular they have been ranked with the nations of the East. Pliny compares them to the magi of Persia, and says they were the physicians as well as the poets of the country. Cæsar observes that they had formed systems of astronomy and natural philosophy. Twenty years of study was the allotted time for rendering a novice competent to take upon him the sacred order; and, when initiated, the education of the sons of the British nobles and kings, the mysteries of religion, legislation, and the practice of the various arts that were exclusively theirs, must have afforded ample scope for the constant exercise of that learning which had been acquired with so much diligence and labour.

That they exercised their genius, also, on matters of speculative philosophy, cannot be doubted; since Strabo has recorded one of their remarkable opinions respecting the universe;—"that it was never to be destroyed, but to undergo various changes, sometimes by the power of fire, at others by that of water." And Cæsar mentions their disquisitions on the nature of the planets, "and of God, in the power he exercised in the works of his creation." Many opinions, purely speculative, have been broached to account for the choice of a circular figure in their temples. Some have supposed it was de-

signed to represent that eternity which has neither a beginning nor an end. But it is not improbable that, as they taught the multitude to worship visible objects, the form of their temples might have had a reference to those objects; and the planets they so much studied (the sun and moon, in particular, as the chief amongst their visible deities) might have suggested an imitation of their form in the circular shape of the temples dedicated to their worship.

The use of letters was not unknown to the Druids of Britain; for Cæsar states “that in all affairs and transactions, excepting those of religion and learning,” (both of which belonged to the mysteries of Druidism,) “they made use of letters, and that the letters which they used were those of the Greek alphabet*.” There was no want, therefore, of that learning which is requisite for the purposes of history, had they chosen to leave a written record of the public transactions of their country. But in these early times the poet was the only historian; and his verses were committed to memory, and were thus handed down from age to age. The laws were framed and preserved by the same means; so that,

* The Rev. Edward Davies, in his most interesting account of the Lots and the Sprig Alphabet of the Druids, has very satisfactorily shown that many antiquaries, by an inattentive reading of a particular passage in Cæsar, adopted the erroneous notion that the British priests allowed nothing to be written down; whereas, Cæsar only states that they allowed their *scholars* to commit nothing to writing. The symbols, or sprigs, chosen from different trees, gave rise to the sprig alphabet of Ireland; and Toland, in his very learned work on the Druids of that country, has established the fact of their having some permanent records, by a reference to the stone memorials of Ireland, which in his day, about a century ago, still bore the vestiges of Druidical inscriptions.

in those days, what are now the two most opposite things in the literature of modern nations,—law and poetry,—went hand in hand; and the lawyers of the ancient Britons were unquestionably the wearers of the long blue robes instead of the black ones*.

It was, indeed, a favourite practice with the nations of antiquity to transmit their laws from generation to generation merely by tradition. The ancient Greeks did so; and the Spartans, in particular, allowed none to be written down. The Celtæ observed the same custom; and Toland mentions that, in his time, there was a vestige of it still to be found in the Isle of Man, where many of the laws were traditionary, and were there known by the name of *Breast Laws*. When speaking of the jurisprudence of these primitive nations, Tacitus gives a very striking reason for the administration of the laws being confined to the priesthood. “The power of punishing,” says that delightful historian, “is in no other hands: when exercised by the priests, it has neither the air of vindictive justice nor of military execution;—it is rather a *religious sentence*.” * * “And all the people,” says Strabo, “entertain the highest opinion of the justice of the Druids: to them all judgment, in public and private—in civil and criminal cases, is committed.”

We learn, also, from the classical writers, that the Druids had schools or societies in which they taught

* In the ‘Triads,’ the bards are described as wearers of this particular dress, which no doubt was adopted to distinguish them from the white-robed Druids: “Whilst Menu lived, the memorial of bards was in request; whilst he lived the sovereign of the land of heroes, it was his custom to bestow benefits and honour and fleet coursers on the wearers of the *long blue robes*.”

their mysteries, both civil and religious, to their disciples;—that such seats of learning were situated in forests and groves remote from, or difficult of, general access; since secrecy and mystery were the first rules of their instructions. Had they taught only truth, neither the one nor the other would have been required; since it is only falsehood that seeks a veil, and when that is once lifted, she is sure to be detected. False religions, or those corrupted by the inventions of men, have always observed the same kind of mysticism, not only in rude but in polished ages also. No one was suffered to lift the sacred mantle of the goddess Hertha, except the priest: the people were charged to believe in her most terrific superstitions, but none could see her and live*. The popes insisted on the same kind of discipline: their own infallibility was the chief point of faith; but no layman was to open that sacred book in which it could not be found.

To enlarge on the frauds, the arts of magic, soothsaying and divination, practised by the Druids to blind and lead the multitude, would extend much beyond the proposed limits of this letter. Should it never go farther than Keswick, all that I have said respecting the ancient priesthood I know would be unnecessary. But should these papers so far meet your approval as to sanction their hereafter appearing in print, I must consider what might be useful to the mere general reader; and it is possible that some one of that class may not have troubled himself much about the early history of that extraordinary priesthood who once held a power so truly

* See 'Manners of the Germans.' Murphy's Tacitus, page 351.

regal in the islands of Great Britain. To such readers, this sketch, slight as it is, may not be unacceptable, should it only excite in them a wish to consult better authorities; and I trust, also, it may serve the chief purpose which I now have in view—namely, that of raising some degree of interest, by speaking of the Druids, to lead them, should they have the opportunity, to an examination of those ancient vestiges and structures that still remain on the wilds of Dartmoor. Of these I shall speak in the subsequent letters; and in doing so I shall endeavour to execute my task with fidelity, since not the least motive in prompting me to it is the wish I entertain to throw some light on a subject that has hitherto been involved in much obscurity; and even my labours, like those of the “little busy bee,” may bring something to the hive, though they are gathered from the simplest sources around me.

I may also add, that in pointing out to this neighbourhood in particular the connexion that really exists between the remains of British antiquity (so widely scattered on the moor) and the early history and manners of the first inhabitants of their country, it is to be hoped that a sufficient interest may be excited in favour of those vestiges, to check the unfeeling spoliation which has of late been so rapidly carried on. When we find on Dartmoor masses of granite, buried under the earth and resting upon its surface,—here lying close to the road, and there impeding the culture of its soil—surely it would be better to serve the purposes of commerce from sources like these, than to despoil (as they are now doing) the summits of its eminences,—of those very tors that give beauty and majesty to the desolation

of the moor. The cairns,—the obelisks,—the circles, and the poor remains of British huts, might be permitted to last out their day, and to suffer from no other assaults than those which are inevitable—time and tempest; and these are enemies that will not pass over them in vain.

Dartmoor has, indeed, been a field to the spoiler; and many of its most interesting memorials have been destroyed within the last twenty or thirty years: for during those periods, vast walls of stones, piled loosely together without cement, and extending, in every direction, for many miles, have been placed up as boundaries or enclosures for cattle. This great demand for stones caused the workmen to remove those which lay, as it were, ready to their hand; you may judge, therefore, what havoc it made with the circles, cairns, and cromlechs. Others—such as were straight and tall—have been carried off (so the people of the moor tell me) to make rubbing-posts for cattle, a rubbing-post being sometimes called “cows’ comfort” in Devon.

One assault on the antiquities of Dartmoor was so atrocious that it must not here be passed in silence. Many years ago, a young man of this place celebrated his freedom from his apprenticeship by leading out a parcel of young fellows, as wanton and as silly as himself, to Dartmoor, for no other purpose than that of giving themselves the trouble to do what they could in destroying its antiquities. As if, like the ancient inhabitants of the moor, they had been worshippers of the god Hu,—the Bacchus of the Druids,—they commenced the day with a libation, for they made punch in the rock-basins, and roared and sung as madly as any of the old devotees

might have done during the riots of a saturnalia in honour of Hu himself in the days of his pride. This rite accomplished, and what small remains of wit they might have had being fairly driven out by these potent libations, they were ungrateful enough to commence their havock by destroying the very punch-bowl which had served them, and soon set about the rest of their work. They were a strong and a willing band; so that logans were overturned, obelisks knocked down, and stones rooted from their circles, till, work as hard as they would, they found the Druids had been too good architects to have their labours shaken and upset in a day. They left off at last for very weariness, having accomplished just sufficient mischief to furnish the moralizing antiquary who wanders over Dartmoor with the reflection their wanton havoc suggests to his mind,—that wisdom builds not without time and labour; but that folly overturns in a day that which it could not have produced in an age—so much easier is it at all times to effect evil than to do good*.

Allow me the honour to remain,
My dear Sir,
Ever truly and faithfully yours,
A. E. BRAY.

* I am the more induced to dwell on this circumstance, since, even in our own day, a naval officer overturned the celebrated logan in Cornwall; and, much to the credit of government, was compelled to set it up again, which he effected with extreme difficulty.

LETTER IV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Subject continued—Dartmoor, a region fitted by nature for the rites of Druidism—Tors retain their British names—Hessory-tor, Bel-tor, Mis-tor, Ham-tor, noticed by Borlase—Bair (or Baird) Down—Wistman's Wood—Secrecy and mystery observed by the Druids in their societies—Solitary places and deep groves—Antique Forest; its only vestige—Trunks of trees found in bogs and below the surface—Birds sacred to British superstition still seen on the Moor—Black Eagle once found there—Story of the white-breasted Bird of Oxenham—Heath Polt, or Moor Blackbird—Birds in flocks—Dartmoor probably the largest station of Druidism in Britain—Reasons assigned as the probable causes wherefore the Druidical Remains on the Moor are of less magnitude than those of other and more celebrated stations—Circles on the Moor; memorials of consecration of the Tors—Architects of Egypt; level country—Vixen Tor compared to the Sphinx; rock-basins on its top—Lines from Carrington—Morning on the Moor—Herds of Cattle, &c.—Extraordinary Feat of a Dartmoor Pony—Insect world—Cuckoo lambs—Birds of the Moor, rare and common, briefly noticed.

Vicarage, Tavistock, Devon, Feb. 25, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE earliest records respecting the history of Dartmoor must be sought on the moor itself, and that with no small diligence and labour. And as I presume no reasonable person would deny that the Damnonii, as indeed all the other inhabitants of Britain, upheld the priesthood of Druidism, I shall proceed to show that, throughout the whole county, no place was so fitted to the august rites of their superstition, to the solemn courts of their judicature,

or to the mystery and retirement which they sought in the initiation of their disciples, as amid the rugged and rock-crowned hills of Dartmoor.

We know that the Druids not only held it unlawful to perform the rites of their religion within covered temples, but that they preferred, whenever they could be found, eminences and lofty heights for that purpose; as such situations gave them a more open and commanding view of those planets which they studied as philosophers and worshipped as idolaters.

Dartmoor abounds in heights that, in some instances, assume even a mountainous character; and when we find that many of these retain to the present hour the very names of those false gods (though corrupted in their pronunciation, as are the names of towns and villages, by the lapse of years and the changes in language) to whom altars were raised by the priesthood of Britain, surely this circumstance *alone* becomes a strong presumptive evidence that the moor itself was a chosen spot for the ancient and idolatrous worship of the Damnonii. I shall here give a few of the most prominent examples; and it is not unlikely that any one learned in the old British tongues—the Cornish or Welsh—would be able to find a significant meaning in the names of various other heights and tors on the moor, that now sound so strange and whimsical to unlearned ears like my own.

The Britons worshipped the Almighty, or, as he was not unfrequently called, the God of Battles, under the name of Hesus. On Dartmoor we find a height called *Hessory-tor*. The sun, that universal object of adoration even from the earliest times with

heathen nations, was also held sacred by the Druids, and the noblest altars and temples were dedicated to his honour. The sun was adored under various names, but none more commonly than that of Belus, or Bel*; and on Dartmoor we have *Bel-tor* to this day. The sun, and also the moon, were sometimes worshipped under the names of Mithra or *Misor*: on the moor we have *Mis-tor*, a height on whose consecrated rocks there is found so large and perfect a rock-basin as to be called by the peasantry *Mis-tor Pan*. Ham, or Ammon, was ranked amongst the British deities: on Dartmoor the heathen god still possesses his eminence, unchanged in name, as we there find *Ham-tor* to this day; and my venerable and learned friend, the Rev. Mr. Polwhele, in his 'History of Devon,' refers to the worship of that deity all the numerous *Hams* of this county †. We have also a spot which you as a poet must visit,—*Baird-down* (pronounced Bair-down), which Mr. Bray conjectures to mean the hill of bards; and, opposite to it, *Wistman's*, or (as he also conjectures) *Wiseman's Wood*, of which I shall presently speak in a very particular manner, as embracing some of the most remarkable points of Druid antiquity to be found throughout the whole range of the moor.

We learn from Cæsar, and other classical writers, that the Druids lived in societies and formed schools,

* Borlase notices these tors on Dartmoor as still bearing the names of Druid gods.

† According to Kennet's 'Glossary,' however, *Hamma* is from the Saxon *Ham*, a house; hence *Hamlet*, a collection of houses. It sometimes meant an enclosure; hence to *hem* or surround. This is the sense in which it seems chiefly used in Devonshire, as the South-hams, &c.

in which they taught the mysteries of their learning, their religion, and their arts. We find, also, that such seats of instruction were situated in forests and groves, remote from or difficult of general access; since secrecy and mystery accompanied all they taught. Where, therefore, could the priesthood of the Damnonii have found, throughout the whole of the west, a place more suited to these purposes than Dartmoor?

It was a region possessed of every natural advantage that could be desired in such an age and by such a people. It was surrounded and girded by barrier rocks, hills and eminences, mountainous in their character. No enemy could approach it with any hostile intent, without having to encounter difficulties of an almost insurmountable nature; and such an approach would have been announced by the flaming beacons of the hundred tors, that would have alarmed and called up the country to prepare for defence in every direction.

Though Dartmoor is now desolate, and where the oak once grew there is seen but the lonely thistle, and the "feebly-whistling grass," and its hills are the hills of storms, as the torrents rush down their sides, yet that it was once, in part at least, richly clothed with wood cannot be doubted. The very name, so ancient, which it still bears, speaks its original claim to a sylvan character—the *Forest of Dartmoor**; and though of this antique forest nothing now remains but the wasting remnant of its days, in the "lonely wood of Wistman," (as Car-

* *Foresta q. d. Feresta, hoc est ferarum statio. Vide Du Cange in voce, who defines it also Sallus, Silva, Nemus, evidently inclining to the opinion that it should be a woody tract.*

rington has designated it,) to show where the groves of the wise men, or Druids once stood, yet evidence is not wanting to prove what it has been: since in bogs and marshes on the moor, near the banks of rivers and streams, sometimes imbedded twenty feet below the surface of the earth, are found immense trunks of the oak and other trees*.

These rivers and streams, which everywhere abound on the moor, afforded the purest waters; and many a beautiful and bubbling fountain, which sprang from the bosom of that earth, once worshipped as a deity by the Celtic priesthood, (and to whom they ascribed the origin of man) became, no doubt, consecrated to the mysteries of her circle and her rites. It is not improbable that one or two springs of this nature, still held in high esteem on the moor, may owe their sacred character to the superstitions of the most remote ages: such, perhaps, may be the origin of that estimation in which Fice's well is still held; but of this more hereafter.

The groves of oak, whose "gloom," to use the language of Tacitus, "filled the mind with awe, and revered at a distance, might never be approached but with the eye of contemplation," were filled with the most varied tribes of feathered inhabitants. Some of these were of an order sacred in the estimation of Druid superstition. The raven was its tenant, whose ill-omened appearance is still considered as the harbinger of death, and still is as much dreaded by the peasantry as it was in the days of ancient augury and divination. The black eagle, that native

* A very large trunk of an oak tree so found on Dartmoor is now preserved in the vicarage gardens of Tavistock.

of the moor, long spread her sable wing, and made her dwelling amidst the heights and the crags of the rocky tors, when she had long been driven from the valleys and the more cultivated lands. She is still said to revisit the moor, like a spirit of other times, who may be supposed to linger around the scenes in which she once proudly held her sway; but her nest is nowhere to be found*. There also the "white-breasted bird of Oxenham†," so fatal to that house, still appears with her bosom pure and unsullied as the Druid's robes, and, like him, raises a cry of augury and evil. Her mission done, she is seen no more till she comes again as a virgin mourner complaining before death. There, too, may be found the heath poul, or moor black-bird, once held sacred: so large is it, and sable in colour, that it might, at a little distance, be mistaken for the black eagle. Her eye, with its lid of the brightest scarlet, still glances on the stranger who ventures on the recesses of the moor; and, like a watchful genius at the fountain, she is chiefly seen to make her haunt near the source of the river Dart.

* "I have been told," says Mr. Polwhele in his 'Devon,' "by a gentleman of Tavistock, that, shooting on Dartmoor, he hath several times seen the black eagle there, though he could never discover its nest."

† "There is a family" (says Prince, speaking of Oxenham, in his 'Worthies of Devon') "of considerable standing of this name at South Tawton, near Oakhampton in this county; of which is this strange and wonderful thing recorded, That at the deaths of any of them, a bird, with a white breast, is seen for a while fluttering about their beds, and then suddenly to vanish away. Mr. James Howell tells us that, in a lapidary's shop in London, he saw a large marble-stone, to be sent into Devonshire, with an inscription, 'That John Oxenham, Mary, his sister, James, his son, and Elizabeth, his mother, had each the appearance of such a bird fluttering about their beds as they were dying.'"

No place could have been better adapted for observing the flight of birds in Druid augury, than the woods and heights of Dartmoor. I have often there seen them in flocks winging their way, at a vast elevation across its hills. Sometimes they would congregate together, and with a sudden clamour that was startling, rush out from the crags and clefts of one of the granite tors, with the utmost velocity. At others, they would pause and rest for a moment among the rocks, or skim along the rivers and foaming streams, and dip their wings and rise again with restless rapidity.

The vast quantity of rock, the masses of granite that are everywhere strewn throughout the moor, the tors that crowned the summits of every hill, must have afforded such facilities for the purpose of their altars, circles, obelisks, cromlechs and logans, that no part of this kingdom had, perhaps, a more celebrated station of Druidism than Dartmoor: not even Mona, Classerness, nor the plains of Abury and Salisbury. But they who, like the Druids themselves, have been accustomed to pay an almost idolatrous worship to that primitive and most noble structure Stonehenge, may here exclaim,—“ If this be true, how is it that you have no such memorial of equal magnitude on Dartmoor?”

To this I answer, Stonehenge (like Carnac in Brittany, which I have cursorily visited and described*) stands on a plain: it required, therefore, such a structure to give to the ceremonies of druidical worship that awful and imposing effect which Tacitus so repeatedly implies to have formed the

* In ‘Letters written during a Tour through Normandy and Brittany in 1818.’

chief character of their religious mysteries. On the plains of Salisbury nature had done nothing for the grandeur of Druidism, and art did all. On Dartmoor the priests of the Britons appropriated the *tors themselves as temples*, erected by the hand of nature, and with such majesty, that their circles were only memorials of their consecration: so that what in level countries became the most imposing object, was here considered as a matter of comparative indifference. In such scenes a Stonehenge would have dwindled in comparison with the granite tors into perfect insignificance; it would have been as a pyramid at the foot of Snowdon. The architects of Egypt, like the Druids of Salisbury Plain, had a level country to contend with, and they gave to it the glory of mountains, as far as art may be said to imitate Nature in the effect of her most stupendous works.

Whoever attentively examines the tors and vestiges of antiquity on Dartmoor will soon be convinced that art was but very slightly employed in the masses of granite which crown the heights that were consecrated to the divinities of British idolatry. In Vixen-tor, that sphinx of the moor, the mass was so completely formed by nature to suit their desires, that three basins, chiselled on the very summit of this lofty and insulated rock, is the only mark left of its having been selected for any one of the numerous rites of Druidical superstition.

On Dartmoor, then, we may fairly conclude that whatever was most advantageous to the hierarchy of the ancient Britons was most amply to be found; and, in my next letter, I shall proceed to a more minute examination of what use was made of such

advantages, by describing what still remains to interest us as records of the being, the history, and the religious rites of the priests of the Damnonii. Nor can I conclude these remarks without observing that, on the moor, the Druid moved in the region of the vast and the sublime: the rocks, the winter torrent, the distant and expanded ocean, the works of the great God of nature, in their simplest and in their most imposing character, were all before his view; and often must he have witnessed, in the strife of elements, that scene so beautifully described by our poet, who has celebrated the moor with a feeling true to nature, and with a boldness and vigour suited to the grandeur of the subject he pourtrayed.

“ Fierce, frequent, sudden is the moorland storm ;
And oft, deep sheltered in the stream-fed vales,
The swain beholds upon the lessening tor
The heavens descend in gloom, till, mass on mass
Accumulated, all the mighty womb
Of vapour bursts tremendous. Loud resounds
The torrent rain, and down the guttered slopes
Rush the resistless waters. Then the leap
Of headlong cataract is heard, and roar
Of rivers struggling o’er their granite beds—
Nor these alone—the giant tempest passed,
A thousand brooks their liquid voices raise
Melodiously, and through the smiling land
Rejoicing roll.”

And here, ere I say farewell, let me pause a moment to express my regret for that indifference with which many persons, in this part of England, look on Dartmoor. Carrington found in it a subject for a poem that has ranked his lamented name amongst the first of our British bards. And though all are not poets, nor have the feelings that are allied to

poetry, yet all might find some pleasure, would they but learn to value it,—a pleasure pure as it is powerful,—in the heights and valleys of the lonely moor.

A morning's walk there, in the spring or the summer, is attended with a freshness, from the bracing temperature of the air, which gives cheerfulness to the mind and content to the heart. A thousand circumstances in Nature everywhere lie around to interest him who would but view her with a kindly and a feeling eye. The mists that hang about the tors are seen gradually dispersing; and the tors themselves, as we watch them, seem to put on a thousand forms, such as fancy suggests to delight the mind in which she dwells. The cattle are seen around, grazing on the verdant pastures, studded with myriad drops of dew. As we look on them, they call to mind some of the bronze works of antiquity that so nobly represented those creatures: for in symmetry of form and limb, as well as in richness of colour, the cattle of Devon are models of beauty in their kind. The wild horses and colts, with their unshorn and flowing tails and manes, recall also to our recollection the forms of antique sculpture. To observe them in action, as they bound, race, or play together, in the very joy of their freedom, affords a spectacle of animal delight that is replete with interest. The horse thus seen in his natural state, before he is ridden by man, becomes a perfect study for a painter, and gives a much finer view of that noble creature than can be witnessed by those who have only seen him trimmed and saddled from a stable*. And the

* The following circumstance, respecting a pony that was one of a

poor ass, that useful and patient drudge,—an animal, excepting the goat, the most picturesque in nature, —is seen quietly browsing on the grass, waiting the hour of labour in the service of his master.

The instinct of the lambs and the care of their mothers have often interested me, as I have observed the perseverance with which one of the latter would range around the flock till she found her own offspring, to give it the earliest meal of her living milk. And the bleating of some other poor little straggler, as it would stand still and call upon its dam, was so like the cry of infancy, that it could not fail to raise a feeling of pity for so helpless and harmless an animal*.

The rivers and streams, as they run in the morning light, have something so exhilarating that it glads the heart and the eye to look on their lively and sparkling waters as they flow,

“ Making sweet music with the enamelled stones.”

And then the fresh air of the moor, which renders the very step light as we inhale it, and the clear blue skies, and the varying and changing clouds,

very fine breed the late Mr. Bray had on the moor, is worth noticing here. It is also mentioned by Mr. Burt in Carrington's Poem. The late Capt. Cotgrave, who was engaged in some duty at the French prison, had seen a pony he wished to detach from the herd at Bairdown. In the endeavour to effect his object, the animal was driven on some blocks of granite by the side of a tor. A horseman instantly rode up in order to catch it, when, to the astonishment of all who witnessed the feat from below, the pony fairly and completely leapt over horse and rider, and escaped with a fleetness that set at defiance all further pursuit.

* Early lambs are never reared on Dartmoor, on account of the coldness of the air. Those that come late, however, are considered to do well there. These are called *cuckoo lambs*, as being contemporary with the appearance of that bird.

now white, now roscate, or opening and closing before the view, are all objects of the highest enjoyment. And the insect world, that starts at once, as it were, into its ephemeral being,—a world of which none in Nature presents a greater variety, —all useful, all governed by a beautiful economy in their order and their kind,—can never be seen with indifference by those who have once given such subjects even but a slight attention. We are pleased to see around us, reviving into life, even our most familiar acquaintance, the common house-fly; and the very insects that love rivers and haunt pools add some degree of animation to the hour. No place will afford a more interesting field for the entomologist than the hills and vales of Dartmoor. There, too, we meet in spring, upon a sunny day, the pale yellow butterfly, usually the tenant of the garden and the flower-bed; and it is often seen, like infancy by the side of age, sporting on the front of some old grey rock, or settling on the wild thyme,—or on the golden furze,—as its wings vibrate with a quickness that will sometimes dazzle the sight.

And how beautiful is “the song of earliest birds,” the thrush that never tires, or the lark that sings first and soars highest, like youth who thinks the world is a region of pleasure to be compassed on the wing of hope. Dartmoor is rich in birds, and those often of an uncommon kind*. The pretty little wheatear, or English ortolan, builds its nest amongst the old rocks, whose colour it so resembles in the black and grey of its wings, that you sometimes do not observe

* Dr. Moore, of Plymouth, has lately published a catalogue of all the birds that frequent the different parts of the county of Devon.

it perched upon the clefts till you hear its small cry. There too has been seen the goshawk, so rare in Devon; and the kite, that is now seldom found in its peaceful and inhabited valleys, still prowls, like a bandit, about the moor, as if he came to make his prey with impunity amidst its unfrequented wilds. And the honey-buzzard, rare as it is in this county, has there, nevertheless, been marked chasing the dragon-fly, as that beautiful insect endeavoured to evade its enemy, and would

“ Dart like a fairy javelin by.”

And the ring-ouzel finds its dwelling in the hollows and cavities of the rocks, and the poor little reed-wren makes them her home; and robin, that favourite of old and young, there need fear no pilfering youngster—since so much is this pretty bird the familiar friend of children in our neighbourhood, that the boys will pelt any one of their companions who may steal but an egg from “poor Cock Robin’s” nest. The snow-buzzard and the stormy petrel are sometimes found on these hills; and even the bittern will make her cry amidst its desolation. But these are birds of a melancholy season; since the first we know, by its name, comes in the dreary time, and the petrel, suffering from the storm that gives her a claim upon our commiseration, has been driven to land, and found dead upon the moor.

But in a spring or a summer morning no birds are seen but those which give delight. They are not vain monitors; for all their occupations are divided between rejoicing and industry. They sing in the gladness and thankfulness of their existence, or they labour to find food and shelter for their

young. To them nothing is indifferent within the range of their capacity. The straw or the fallen leaf,—the tuft of wool that hangs on the briar as it was torn from the sheep,—a very hair is treasured and placed to the account of what is useful in the internal structure exhibited by the little architect in its nest.

To watch the economy of birds,—to mark the enjoyment of the animal world,—to view with an eye of interest and contemplation the fields with “verdure clad,” and every opening blossom bursting into beauty and to life, are enjoyments that instruct and delight youth, middle and old age. They supply us with a source of innocent employment, to which none need be dead but those who wilfully become so by keeping their eyes closed before that book of Nature which is everywhere spread around, that we should read in it those characters of an Almighty hand that lead the mind to wonder at and adore his goodness, and the heart to acknowledge and to feel his power, as a Father, who in his “wisdom has created” and preserves them all.

Adieu, my dear Sir ;

And believe me,

With grateful esteem,

Ever most truly yours,

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER V.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Bair-down supposed to have been the Hill of Bards—
Inscriptions on the Rocks: how cut—House on the Eminence—
Beautiful Ravine: Bridge of a lofty single arch over the River
Cowsick—Trees planted in the ravine by the late Mr. Bray—
Remarks on the etymology of Bair-down—and Wistman's Wood
—Observations on the English Distich—Merlin's Cave in the
Rocks—Wand or rod—Rural Inscriptions on the Granite.

Vicarage, Tavistock, March 2, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING given you, in my former letters, a general account of Dartmoor, I shall now proceed to a more particular description of its localities, and in doing so I shall principally avail myself of the journals of my husband, written at different intervals so far back as the year 1802 down to the present period. I purpose beginning with Bair-down: first, because it was enclosed by the late worthy and respected Mr. Bray, who there built a house, and was fond of retiring to it during the summer and autumn; and secondly, because, as you will presently find, my husband considers Bair-down to have been the hill of bards. In addition to my former allusions on this subject, I may here state, that should it be thought he is incorrect in his view of the *original* claims of the hill to a bardic character, he has now at least fully established them,

by the *inscriptions* on the granite with which he has partly covered several of those enormous masses that arise, with so much magnificence, in the midst of the river Cowsick, that flows at the foot of the eminence on which the house was built by his father.

Some of these inscriptions are now so moss-grown, so hidden with lichen, or so worn with the weather and the winter torrents, that a stranger, unless he examined the rocks at a particular hour of the day when the sun is favourable, would not be very likely to discover them. Others, though composed by him for the same purpose, were never inscribed, on account of the time and labour it required to cut them in the granite. The mode he adopted with those which have been done was as follows: he used to paint the inscriptions himself, in large characters, upon the rocks, and then employ a labourer with what is here called a pick (pick-axe) to work them out. Some of these inscriptions were in triads, and engraved on the rocks in the bardic character of the sprig alphabet, as it is given by the Rev. Edward Davies in his 'Celtic Remains.'

As a further motive to the task, he wished to indulge his fancy by peopling, as it were, a wilderness, with his favourite authors to enliven its solitude: and when I shall presently tell you the number of poems he wrote at that early period of his life (which, a few only being ever printed, still remain in manuscript) as he delighted to cultivate the poetical visions of a youthful fancy on the moor, you will not wonder that he should have attempted, with somewhat the same sentiments as those so beautifully described by Shak-

speare, to give a tongue to the very rocks, so that there might be found, even in the midst of a desert,

———“ books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.”

The eminence of Bair-down, on which stands the cottage erected by his late father, is situated about eight miles from Tavistock, near the Moreton road. It is extensive, and to one approaching it from this quarter is seen surrounded on the north and east by lofty tors. In the latter direction it declines gently but deeply, where flows the Dart; whilst the descent is more sudden at the south, and on entering the grounds from the turnpike road, presents itself, most unexpectedly, as a ravine, its sides picturesquely clothed with wood, through which, amid innumerable rocks, rushes the foaming Cowsick. As you continue to advance, the path winds by the side of this ravine, which gradually opens and presents a scene of the most peculiar and romantic kind,—a scene so beautiful that, though I have often viewed it, it always affords me that delight which is generally supposed to be the result of novel impressions. The Cowsick rushes down this ravine, over the noblest masses of granite, broken into a thousand fantastic forms, and scattered in every direction. A picturesque bridge of a single, lofty arch, crosses the river at that spot where the fall is most striking and precipitous: after heavy rains, it there presents a combination of waterfalls that are of the greatest beauty. In the midst of the stream, at some short distance from the bridge, the river branches off in two rocky channels, as it is there interrupted by a little island, on which stands a thick grove of trees. On either side the banks of this

steep ravine are seen a number of trees of various kinds, all in the most flourishing state, on account of their being so sheltered from the bleak winds of the moor.

Such is Bair-down. All the trees were planted by my husband's father, who built the house and the bridge, and who raised the loose stone walls as enclosures for cattle for many miles in extent; and, in short, who literally expended a fortune on the improvements and enclosures on this estate. In the barn behind the cottage, for two years, divine service was performed every Sunday, by one of the Prince of Wales's chaplains, by a dispensation from the Bishop of Exeter. This estate is now let by Mr. Bray to a respectable farmer, named Hannaford (of whom you will hear more in these letters) for a very trifling rent. I now take my leave of you; for all that here follows is from the pen of my husband. The only share I have in it, is that of transcribing it, verbatim, from his old journals. Adieu, therefore, till we meet again.

REMARKS ON THE ETYMOLOGY OF BAIR-DOWN.

RURAL INSCRIPTIONS, &c.

By EDWARD A. BRAY, 1802.

THE most obvious idea as to the origin of this name is, that it either has a reference to Bear, the substantive, or Bare, the adjective. But though a vague rumour, which can hardly be styled tradition, states that it was so called because it was the spot where the *last bear* was destroyed on the moor; I should rather think that some recent poetical spirit has thus given, "to an airy nothing, a local habi-

tation and a name." And the second supposition can hardly be supported, when we come to consider that this part of the moor, so far from being *bare*, or void of vegetation, is perhaps nearly the best land in the whole of this extensive desert. Rejecting, therefore, those ideas as equally unfounded, we must derive our information from other sources; and fortunately these sources are immediately at hand. On the opposite side of the river Dart, which bounds my father's property, stands Wistman's wood—the only remaining vestige of the ancient forest. *Wist* is the preterit and participle of *Wis*, from *pirran*, Saxon, *wissen*, German, to know; and is not at present altogether obsolete, as it is still used in scripture in this sense. From the same etymon comes also *wise*: "sapient; judging rightly; having much knowledge"—(*Johnson's Dict.*) Thus Wistman's or Wistman's Wood signifies *Silva Sapientium**, the wood of wisemen. The Druids and Bards were unquestionably the philosophers or wisemen of the Britons. We may naturally conjecture, therefore, that this was their principal or their last place of assembly; and the many stone circles on Bairdown immediately opposite the wood confirm the opinion. I am not ignorant that Wistman's Wood is sometimes called also *Welchman's Wood*: the one name may easily be the corruption of the other; but if not, and they are distinct appellations, the conclusion will be pretty much the same.

* See Stuart's 'View of Society,' p. 337, to prove that the Wites were the same as Sapientes; and LL. Anglo-Saxon ap Wilkins there referred to. See also a curious supplication del County de Devonshire to Edward III. Coke's 4. Institute, p. 232. Barons and Autres *Sages*, &c.

When the ancient inhabitants of this country were subjugated by the Romans, some retired into Wales, and others into Cornwall. Cornwall was considered as part of Wales, and, from its form, was called Cornu Walliæ, the horn of Wales. Indeed it is frequently styled West Wales by the British writers. (See ‘Rees’s Cyclop.’) The inhabitants, therefore, of Cornwall, as well as Wales, might be called Welch. And in this supposition I am confirmed by Borlase, who states that the Saxons “imposed the name of *Weales* on the Britons, driven by them west of the rivers Severn and Dee, calling their country, in the Latin tongue, Wallia.” It is not improbable that, in the centre of Dartmoor, a colony might still be permitted to exist, either from their insignificance or their insulated situation; and that this colony might be called by the other inhabitants Welchmen, from their resemblance to the inhabitants of Cornwall and Wales.

No colony can be supposed to have existed among the ancient Britons without having their Druids or Wisemen, who, indeed, had the whole of the spiritual, and the greater part of the temporal, power in their hands. Bair-down, then, from its commanding situation, and its gently-ascending acclivities, on which were spread their sacred circles, must, without doubt, have been frequently resorted to by them.

Dun, now altered to down, signifies a hill. We may naturally imagine, therefore, that it was originally called Baird, or Bard-dun, Bardorum-mons, the hill of bards. And the etymology of the word bard will confirm this opinion: it is derived by changing *u* into *b*, which is by no means uncommon,

particularly as the German *w* is pronounced like our *v*, from *waird*, whence comes the modern English *word*. This, like the Greek *επος*, signified not only verbum, a word, but carmen, a song. The bards then were so called from being singers, or persons who celebrated in songs the achievements of warriors and great men. What, therefore, was originally pronounced Baird-down may easily be supposed, for the sake of euphony, to be reduced to Bair-down.

P.S. On further inquiry I find that some derive bard from *bar*, a fury. The analogy between this and the *furor poeticus* of the Romans must strike every one. The plural in Welch is beirdd. Taliesin is called Pen Beirdd, *i.e.* the Prince of *the Bards*. Thus Beirdd-dun is literally the hill of the Bards.

The Druids were divided into Vacerri, Beirdd, and Eubages. The second order, or Bards, subsisted for ages after the destruction of the others, and, indeed, were not totally extirpated by the bloody proscription of Edward.

RURAL INSCRIPTIONS ON THE ROCKS OF BAIR-DOWN.

A gentleman, for whose taste and learning I entertain the highest respect, on my submitting "the Inscriptions" to his criticism, communicated to me, in conversation, the following remarks. Not feeling myself sufficiently confident personally to discuss the subject, and convinced that his opinions are entitled to the most mature and serious reflection, I propose at present to state my reasons why I cannot implicitly submit to them. He objected to their being (as

most of them are) in the form of *distichs*, from an idea that it was impossible to condense any really characteristic or poetical thought into *two* lines in the *English* language. This, he said, might possibly be accomplished in *Latin*; but extracts and selections from the best authors of different ages and countries would, he thought, be still better.

Now, in stating the reasons by which I was actuated in the composition of these inscriptions, and in confining myself to their present form, it will be necessary to mention the ideas that suggested themselves to me upon the subject. At first the idea occurred to *me*, as well as to my friend, that nothing more would be required than to select passages from my favourite authors, and I actually laid some Latin and Italian poets under contribution for that very purpose; but I found that the long hexameter lines of Virgil could not easily be brought within the compass of a rude granite stone, where capitals only could be used, and those too of no small dimensions; that many of the most appropriate passages were of some length; and that, were I to have followed the example of Procrustes, however they might still be discovered to be *disjecti membra poëtae*, the sight would have given more disgust than satisfaction to the eye of the spectator. A consideration of no small importance likewise occurred; namely, that though I traced them myself beforehand upon the surface, it was not probable that the person I employed to cut them into the solid granite would be so attentive as not to commit blunders, especially as his labours were only proceeded in during my absence. It was obvious that fewer mistakes would probably occur in English, of which, at any rate, he

may be presumed not to be so entirely ignorant as he certainly is of the former, being only a common mason. In addition to which, inscriptions of this kind have been so frequently repeated that I could not hope to attract attention by any novelty of application. On further reflection, however, I made a great alteration in my original design, and, considering poetical inscriptions as of subordinate consequence, resolved to consecrate particular rocks to particular persons. As the name alone of Theocritus or of Virgil could not fail to communicate to a poetical mind a train of pleasing associations, I did nothing more, at first, than inscribe upon a few rocks "To Theocritus," "To Virgil," &c. This of itself, in so wild and solitary a scene as Dartmoor, was not without its effect: it seemed to people the desert; at any rate one might exclaim, "The hand of man has been here!" I then conceived that it would give more animation to the scene by adding something either addressed to, or supposed to be uttered by, these fancied genii or divinities of the rock; and accordingly, for the sake of conciseness as well as a trial of skill, composed them in couplets. I certainly should have found it much easier to have expanded them into quatrains, or any indefinite number of lines; but I chose to impose this task upon myself for other reasons as well as those above stated, which, however, I cannot help thinking are sufficient.

I entertain a higher opinion of the English language than to think it so deficient in conciseness as to be unable to adapt itself to the form of a distich. I am rather inclined to think that the moral distichs of Cato might be very adequately translated

in the same form. D'Avanzati's translation of Tacitus has acquired great reputation for its conciseness; but, for the sake of curiosity, I have proved that it may be more concisely translated into English than Italian. I may possibly have failed, however, in showing its superior excellence in this particular by my inscriptions, but these I have not the vanity to imagine as just criteria of its powers.

In the island, to which I would appropriate the name of the Isle of Mona, I propose to put none but Druidical inscriptions, principally in the form of triads. These shall be in bardic characters, as they are represented in Davies's 'Celtic Researches.' By way of amusement to those who may wish to decipher them, I shall mark this simple alphabet on a white rod, and call it the *virgula divinatoria*, or the diviner's wand, which is still so celebrated among the miners, so that literally few, if any, will be able to understand it without the assistance of this magic rod. It will add to the effect to call a recess, or kind of grotto, that is contiguous to this island, Merlin's Cave, and on a rock, which may be considered as his tomb, to inscribe—

These mystic letters would you know,
Take Merlin's wand that lies below.

It will be right, perhaps, to have two wands, of equal length; one to be a kind of key to the other; one to be marked with the Bardic letters, and the other at corresponding distances with the English alphabet, thus—

ΛΚΣΥΑϸΗΙΚΛΥΔΩΟΜΥΤΥΥΗΥΥ.

A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P R S T U V W Y

INSCRIPTION THE FIRST.—*To my Father.*

Still lived the Druids, who the oak revered,
 (For many an oak thy peaceful hands have rear'd,)
 The hill of Bards had echoed with thy name,
 Than warrior deeds more worthy songs of fame.

No. II.

To the Same.

Who gilds the earth with grain can bolder claim
 The highest guerdon from the hands of Fame,
 Than he who stains the martial field with blood,
 And calls from widow'd eyes the bitter flood.

No. III.

To the Same.

This tender sapling, planted now by thee,
 Oh! may it spread a fair umbrageous tree;
 Whilst seated at thy side I tune my lays,
 And sing beneath its shade a father's praise.

DRUIDICAL AND OTHER INSCRIPTIONS.

No. I.

Ye Druid train, these sacred rocks revere,
 These sacred rocks to minstrel spirits dear!
 If pure your lips, if void your breast of sin,
 They'll hear your prayers, and answer from within.

No. II.

Read only thou these artless rhymes
 Whom Fancy leads to other times;
 Nor think an hour mispent to trace
 The customs of a former race:
 For know, in every age, that man
 Fulfils great Nature's general plan.

No. III.

Oh! thou imbued with Celtic lore,
 Send back thy soul to days of yore,
 When kings descended from their thrones
 To bow before the sacred stones,
 And Druids from the aged oak
 The will of Heaven prophetic spoke.

INSCRIPTIONS ON THE ROCKS OF BAIR-DOWN, IN THE RIVER
COWSICK, &c.

To Merlin.

Born of no earthly sire, thy magic wand
Brought Sarum's hanging stones from Erin's land:
To me, weak mortal! no such power is known,
And yet to speak I teach the sacred stone*.

INSCRIPTIONS IN TRIADS, &c.

No. I.

Though worshipp'd oft by many a different name,
God is but one, and ever is the same,
To him at last we go, from whom at first we came.

No. II.

Know, though the body moulder in the tomb,
That body shall the living soul resume,
And share of bliss or woe the just eternal doom.

No. III.

Proud man! consider thou art nought but dust;
To Heaven resign thy will, be good, be just,
And for thy due reward to Heaven with patience trust.

No. IV.

Their earthly baseness to remove,
Souls must repeated changes prove,
Prepared for endless bliss above.

* It is pretended that Merlin was the son of an Incubus and a vestal. He is said, by the power of magic, to have brought from Ireland those immense masses of granite that form Stonehenge, which means, according to some antiquaries, *hanging-stones*; or stones hanged, hung, or connected together; or as the poet says, "poised by magic." The *hinge* of a door may probably be referred to the same origin. Merlin's original name was Ambrosius. It is thought that Amesbury, or Ambresbury, near Stonehenge, took its name from Ambrosius Aurelius, a British Prince. May not the credulous vulgar have confounded him with Merlinus Ambrosius, and thus ascribed this probably Druidical monument to the supernatural powers of this celebrated enchanter?

No. V.

Adore great Hu*, the god of peace ;
 Bid war and all its woes to cease ;
 So may our flocks and fruits increase.

No. VI.

To Odin† bow with trembling fear,
 The terrible, the God severe :
 Whose bolt, of desolating fire,
 Warns not, but wreaks his vengeful ire ;
 Who roars amid the bloody fight ;
 Recalls the foot that turns for flight ;
 Who bids the victor's banners fly ;
 And names the name of those to die.

INSCRIPTIONS TO THE BARDS ALLUDED TO BY GREY.

To Cadwallo.

Mute is thy magic strain,
 " That hush'd the stormy main."

To Hoel.

Thy harp in strains sublime express'd
 The dictates of thy " high-born " breast.

To Urien.

No more, awaken'd from thy " craggy bed,"
 Thy rage-inspiring songs the foe shall dread.

To Llewellyn.

Mid war's sad frowns were smiles oft wont to play
 Whilst pour'd thy harp the " soft," enamour'd " lay."

To Modred.

Thy " magic song," thine incantations dread,
 " Made huge Pinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head."

* Hu Gadran, the peaceful ploughman. One of the names of the deity among the Celtæ.

† Odin, the Deity of the Goths and other Northern nations.

ADDITIONAL TRIADS.

No. I.

From Mela.

Ut forent ad bella meliores ;
 Æternas esse animas,
 Vitamque alteram ad manes.

The soul 's immortal—then be brave,
 Nor seek thy coward life to save ;
 But hail the life beyond the grave.

ANOTHER FROM DIOGENES LAERTIUS.

Σέβειν Θεούς,
 καὶ μηδὲν κακὸν δρᾶν,
 καὶ ἀνδρείαν ἄσκειν.

Adore the Gods with daily prayer,
 Each deed of evil shun with care,
 And learn with fortitude to bear.

ALLUDING TO THE DRUIDS' BELIEF IN THE METEMPSYCHOSIS*.

Here all things change to all—what dies,
 Again with varied life shall rise :
 He sole unchanged who rules the skies.

ALLUDING TO THE DRUIDICAL SPRIG ALPHABET.

Hast thou the knowledge of the trees ?
 Press then this spot with votive knees,
 And join the sacred mysteries.

A TRIAD, FOUNDED ON THE MAXIMS OF THE DRUIDS IN RAPIN'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND, vol. i. p. 6, INTRODUCTION.

None must be taught but in the sacred grove :
 All things originate from Heaven above ;
 And man's immortal soul a future state shall prove.

* Cæsar speaking of the Druids (Lib. 6, Sec. 13) says,—*In primis hoc volunt persuadere, non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alias : atque hęc maximē ad virtutem excitari putant, metu mortis neglecto.*

TO MY FATHER. INSCRIBED ON A ROCK IN THE RIVER COWSICK,
THE BANKS OF WHICH HE HAD PLANTED.

Ye Naiads ! venerate the swain
Who join'd the Dryads to your train.

INSCRIPTION FOR AN ISLAND IN THE RIVER COWSICK, TO WHICH I
HAVE GIVEN THE NAME OF MONA.

Ye tuneful birds ! ye Druids of the grove !
Who sing not strains of blood, but lays of love,
To whom this Isle, a little Mona 's given—
Ne'er from the sacred spot shall *ye* be driven.

INSCRIPTION FOR A ROCK ON THE LOWER ISLAND.

Who love, though e'en through desert wilds they stray,
Find in their hearts companions of the way.

FOR THE SAME ISLAND.

To thee, O Solitude ! we owe
Man's greatest bliss—ourselves to know.

INSCRIPTION ON A ROCK IN THE WOODS NEAR THE COWSICK.

The wretch, to heal his wounded mind,
A friend in solitude will find ;
And when the Blest her influence tries,
He'll learn his blessings more to prize.

FOR A ROCK ON BAIR-DOWN.

Sweet Poesy ! fair Fancy's child !
Thy smiles imparadise the wild.

INSCRIPTION FOR AN ISLAND IN THE COWSICK, TO WHICH I HAVE
GIVEN THE NAME OF VECTIS.

When erst Phœnicians cross'd the trackless main
For Britain's secret shore, in quest of gain,
This desert wild supplied the valued ore,
And Vectis' isle received the treasured store.

FOR A ROCK IN WISTMAN'S WOOD.

The wreck of ages, these rude oaks revere ;
The Druid, Wisdom, sought a refuge here,
When Rome's fell eagles drench'd with blood the ground
And taught her sons her mystic rites profound.

FOR THE SAME.

These rugged rocks, last barrier to the skies,
Smoked with the Druids' secret sacrifice;
Alas! blind man, to hope with human blood
To please a God, all merciful, all good.

INSCRIPTION FOR A ROCK ON BAIR-DOWN.

Mute is the hill of Bards, where erst the choir,
In solemn cadence, struck the sacred wire:
Yet oft, methinks, in spells of fancy bound,
As swells the breeze, I hear their harps resound.

INSCRIPTION NEAR THE ISLAND.

Learning's proud sons! think not the Celtic race,
Once deem'd so rude, your origin disgrace:
Know that to them, who counted ages o'er,
The Greeks and Romans owe their learned lore.
(Celtic Res: passim.)

INSCRIPTION FOR A ROCK NEAR THE COWSICK.

Here, though now rest of trees, from many an oak
To Druid ears prophetic spirits spoke;
And, may I trust the muse's sacred strain,
Reviving groves shall speak of fate again.

NEAR THE SAME.

Ye minstrel spirits! when I strike the lyre,
Oh! hover round, and fill me with your fire!

To Boadicea.

Roused by the Druid's songs, mid fields of blood,
Thine arm the conquerors of the world withstood.

To Caractacus.

Imperial Rome, that ruled from pole to pole,
Could never tame, proud chief! thy mighty soul.

To Taliesin.

How boil'd his blood! how thrill'd the warrior's veins!
When roused to vengeance by thy patriot strains.

To Fingal and his Bards. See Ossian, passim.
 Spirit of Loda*! round their shadowy king,
 Here may the ghosts of song his deeds of glory sing.

To Carril †.

Mid flowing shells, thy harp of sprightly sound
 Awoke to mirth the festive warriors round.

To Ossian.

When sings the blast around this mossy stone,
 I see thy passing ghost, I hear thy harp's wild tone.

To Cronnan ‡.

Oft to the warrior's ghost, of mournful tone,
 Thy harp resounded near his mossy stone.

To Ryno §.

First of his sons of song, thy war-taught string
 Defiance spoke from woody Morven's king.

To Ullin.

Son of the harp of Fame! thy fateful power
 Could fill with joy the warrior's dying hour.

To Malvina.

Oft thy white hand the harp of Ossian strung,
 When, hapless sire! thine Oscar's fate he sung ||.

To Minona ¶.

Thy harp's soft sound, thou fair-hair'd maid. was dear,
 More dear thy voice to Selma's royal ear.

* The same as Odin.

† This name imports sprightly and harmonious sound.

‡ This name signifies mournful sound.

§ One of Fingal's principal Bards.

|| Oscar, the son of Ossian, and lover of Malvina, was slain in battle.

¶ This name signifies soft air. Fingal is styled King of Selma as well as of Morven.

To the Cowsick.

To thee, fair Naiad of the crystal flood,
 I offer not the costly victim's blood ;
 But as I quaff thy tide at sultry noon,
 I bless thee for the cool, reviving boon.

To Æsop.

E'en solitude has social charms for thee,
 Who talk'st with beast, or fish, or bird, or tree.

To Thomson.

To Nature's votaries shall thy name be dear,
 Long as the Seasons lead the changeful year.

To Shakspeare.

To thee, blest Bard ! man's veriest heart was known,
 Whate'er his lot—a cottage or a throne.

To Southey, for a rock in Wistman's Wood.

Free as thy Madoc mid the western waves,
 Here refuged Britons swore they'd ne'er be slaves.

To Savage.

What ! though thy mother could her son disown,
 The pitying Muses nursed thee as their own*.

To Spenser.

The shepherd, taught by thine instructive rhyme,
 Learns from thy calendar to husband time.

To Shenstone.

Nurtured by taste, thy lyre by Nature strung,
 Thy hands created what thy fancy sung.

To Browne.

I bless thee that our native Tavy's praise
 Thou'st woven mid Britannia's pastoral lays.

* See Johnson's 'Life of Savage,' and his poem of the 'Bastard.'

To Burns.

Long as the moon shall shed her sacred light,
Thy strains, sweet Bard! shall cheer the Cotter's night

To Collins.

In orient climes let lawless passions rove,
Blest be these plains with friendship and with love.

To Bacon.

Thy prayers induced Philosophy on earth
To call the sciences and arts to birth.

To Walton.

The angler's art who from thy converse learns,
Happier and better to his home returns.

To Falconer.

Oft shall the rustic shed a feeling tear,
The shipwreck'd sailor's piteous tale to hear.

To Dante.

To Faith, not Purgatory, know, 'tis given,
To shut the gates of hell, and ope the gates of Heaven.

To Rowe.

Oh turn, ye fair, from flattery's voice your ear,
Nor live to shed the penitential tear.

To Mathias.

On Thames' loved banks thou strik'st th' Ausonian lyre,
And call'st from Arno's waves the minstrel choir.

To Watts.

The pious rustic from thy sacred lays
May learn to sing the heavenly shepherd's praise.

To Rochester.

Dearer than self was *nothing* to thy breast—
Now, since thou'rt *nothing*, sure thou'rt doubly blest *.

To Aikin.

Nature's free gifts thou taught'st th' admiring swains †,
To calendar, and praise with grateful strains.

To Scott.

Cease not thy strains ; from dawn till close of day,
I'd list, sweet minstrel ! to thy latest lay.

To Wieland.

Thy magic wand, by *Oberon's* fairy power
Mid barren wilds can weave love's roseate bower.

To Varro.

Thy patriot virtue taught the happier son
To turn the soil his father's falchion won ‡.

To Chaucer.

Rude though thy verse, discordant though thy lyre,
Each British minstrel owns thee for his sire.

To La Fontaine.

He taught the beasts that roam the plains
To speak a moral to the swains.

To Cowley.

Oft mid such scenes the livelong day
"The melancholy Cowley" lay.

To Young.

Oh ! lead my thoughts to Him, the source of light,
Ere sleep enchains them in the cave of night.

* Dr. Johnson considers Rochester's poem on *Nothing* his best composition.

† See Dr. Aikin's 'Calendar of Nature.'

‡ Varro wrote on Husbandry.

To Parnell.

Oh! be it mine with men to dwell,
But oft to seek the hermit's cell.

To Gray.

The youthful swain, where his "forefathers sleep,"
Shall sing thine elegy, sweet Bard! and weep.

To Rogers.

To every swain grown grey with years
Memory his native vale endears.

To Akenside.*

Imagination's airy dream
Finds *Naiads* in each purling stream.

To Anne Radcliffe.

Nature, enthusiast nymph! a child
Found thee, and nursed thee in the wild.

I have now, my dear Sir, given you a very numerous collection of Mr. Bray's inscriptions for the rocks of Bair-down and the river Cowsick; yet, numerous as they are, there remain not less than 115 in distichs, which I have *not* sent, because they would have been too many for insertion in these letters. In the next, I purpose taking you to Wistman's Wood, where I trust you will find some objects worthy your attention; till then,

Allow me the honour to remain, &c.

A. E. B.

* Alluding to his 'Pleasures of Imagination,' and his 'Hymn to the Naiads.'

LETTER VI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Wistman's Wood—Considered as the posterity of a Druid grove—The antiquity of such groves, as places of resort of Eastern idolaters—Examples found in the Bible quoted—Customs of the ancient idolaters—Horses devoted by them to the Sun—Customs of the ancient Germans and Gauls in their Superstitions—Celtic priesthood—Record preserved in the Office of the Duchy of Cornwall respecting Wistman's Wood—The subject of its high antiquity further considered—Hill of Bards, and Wood of the Wisemen contiguous—Account of the Wood, and its localities in their present state—Progress towards it—Adders plentiful on the Moor—Superstition respecting them—How to charm them—Ashen wand—Serpent's egg—Diviner's rod—Pliny's notice of the magic of Britain—Taliesin's account of the wand—The Caduceus, its origin—Toland's account of ancient amulets—Custom of charming adders: a vestige of British superstition—Spring of water—Lucan's notice of Cæsar on entering a Druid grove—Lines on Wistman's Wood—The Farmer's legend about the old grove—The ascent to it—Masses of granite—The extraordinary oaks of Wistman's Wood described—Isabella de Fortibus by some said to have planted the Wood—Ages of trees, &c.—Silver coins found; and human hair in a kairn on the Moor—British monuments destroyed—Crockerton—Circles of stone numerous—Wistman's Wood probably the last retreat of the Druids and Bards of Damnonia.

Vicarage, Tavistock, March 6, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I NOW take up my pen to give you some account of Wistman's Wood, which, if you will allow the expression, we have always considered as the *posterity* of a Druid grove; and I cannot help thinking that when I shall have stated the various circumstances which induce us to come to this con-

clusion, you will admit it is not wholly without probability or reason.

Every one at all conversant with history is aware that no community of the British priesthood was without its sacred grove, a custom derived from the most remote countries and ages, for the Bible informs us that such groves were the resort of Eastern idolatry in its most fearful rites, and that such were generally found on eminences or "high places." We read in the Second Book of Kings, that when "the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, they built them high places in all their cities," they "set them up images and groves on every high hill and under every green tree, and there they burnt incense in all the high places." And again we find these corrupt Israelites "left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of Heaven, and served Baal."

The Druid priesthood did the same in after ages; and their groves, their altars and "high places," are still remaining, though in the last vestige of their decay, as witnesses of their idolatry, in the extensive wilderness of Dartmoor. How striking a resemblance does the following passage of scripture bear to the superstitions and practices of Celtic nations! Speaking of Ahab, it is recorded that "he reared altars for Baal, and made a grove; and worshipped all the host of Heaven and served them;" and that "he made his son pass through fire, and observed times and used enchantments with familiar spirits and wizards." And when Josiah conquered these infidels, it is written that he destroyed the "groves and vessels made for Baal,—for the sun, the moon,

and the planets, and put down the idolatrous priests who had burnt the incense to them on high places ;” and that “ he defiled Tophet, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Moloch.” And he “ took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun*.” How much does this superstition (of the horses given to Baal, or Bel, the God of the Sun,) agree with a passage in Tacitus, where, speaking of the manners of the ancient Germans, he says, “ a number of milk-white steeds, unprofaned by mortal labour, are constantly maintained at the public expense, and placed to pasture in the religious groves ! When occasion requires, they are harnessed to a sacred chariot ; and the priest, accompanied by the king, or chief of the state, attends to watch the motions and the neighings of the horses. No other mode of augury is received with such implicit faith by the people, the nobility, and the priesthood. The horses, upon these solemn occasions, are supposed to be the organs of the Gods, and the priests their favoured interpreters.”

Cæsar and Diodorus both speak of the Druid groves of superstition ; and Tacitus does the same in regard to the Germans, who, as well as the Gauls and Britons, were followers of the Celtic idolatry. “ Their deities,” says that admirable historian, “ are not immured in temples, nor represented under any kind of resemblance to the human form. To do either were, in their opinion, to derogate from the

* In the same chapter we read, that Josiah “ slew all the priests of the high places that were there, upon the altars, and burnt men’s bones upon them.”

majesty of supreme beings. Woods and groves are the sacred depositaries, and the spots consecrated to their pious uses : they give to that sacred recess the name of the divinity that fills the place." So numerous are the allusions of the classical writers to the groves of Druidism, that it is not necessary to recite examples ; since no fact is more clearly established than that no society of the Celtic priesthood was without its grove, for the purposes of instruction, retirement, augury, and numerous other religious rites. The custom of cutting the misletoe from the oaks of these sanctuaries is too generally known to need any particular notice ; since the commonly-received idea of a Druid, with those who scarcely read at all, presents itself to the mind under the figure of an old man with a long beard, who cuts misletoe from the oaks with a golden hook.

In order to ascertain how far the conjecture is founded on probability that Wistman's Wood, on Dartmoor, is the posterity of a Druid grove, we must consider its known antiquity*—its localities—the extraordinary appearance and actual state of the dwarf and venerable trees, that still flourish in decay amidst the rudest storms, and in one of the rudest spots throughout the whole of the moor ;—the probable age of these oaks, and how far one tree would be likely to succeed another ;—and though last, not

* In the office of the Duchy of Cornwall there is preserved a Perambulation of the Moor, of very high antiquity, by which it appears that Wistman's Wood was nearly in the same state as at present at the time of the Norman Conquest. This is a very curious fact, and it should be borne in mind by the reader, as it goes far to establish the opinion the writer has ventured to give on this most interesting vestige of the forest.

least, their relative situation with the other British antiquities, by which they are in fact surrounded, and that close at hand. Mr. Bray's derivation of the name of Wistman's Wood, given in the last letter, must also be borne in mind; since this most curious antiquity in the vegetable world is very near Bair-down: so that if he is right in his derivation in both instances, the hill of Bards, and the wood of the Wisemen, or Druids, were contiguous.

Wistman's Wood, then, lies on the side of a steep hill, opposite Bair-down; at its base runs the western branch of the river Dart. Let me fancy for a moment that you are with us—(a dream I one day hope to see realized)—join our excursion, and, whilst attempting to visit this eminence, are helping me along from Bair-down; a friendly arm being a very necessary support to a female who ventures on the expedition; which to one like myself, not overburdened with strength or health, is a task of no small labour, though replete with interest.

The farmer, Hannaford, is our guide; and after having passed up and down hill, and over one of the boundary-walls, or enclosures, some of the stones of which he removes (and builds up again) to afford us an easier way of clambering over it, we have managed, by jumping from rock to rock, in part to ford the river Dart, the waters not being so high as to prevent our doing so, till at length we come to one place so puzzling—so difficult—that our Herculean guide can see no other way of getting me over but that of taking me up, and putting me across with as much ease and good will as Gulliver would have displayed in assisting the Queen of Lilliput in crossing a puddle. At last we are landed on the

opposite bank, and there lies Wistman's Wood, rocks and all, before us;—an inviting object to curiosity and speculation with those who love to indulge in visions of the “olden time.”

The summit of the eminence cannot be seen, on account of its steep ascent; and huge piles, mass on mass of granite blocks seem to rise and grow before us as we pace upwards towards the wood. Every step requires wary walking, since to stumble amidst such rocks, holes, and hollows might be attended with an accident that would prevent all further investigation; and the farmer says, “’Tis a wisht old place, sure enough, and full of adders as can be.” This last communication somewhat cools my enthusiasm about Druid groves; but the farmer offers and supplies a speedy remedy,—one, too, of most mystical origin, and not a little heathenish, being derived from the very Druids upon whose haunts we are about to intrude; for he transfers to my hand the ashen bough or sprig that he was carrying in his own, and initiates me, on the spot, into the pagan rites of charming adders, to render them harmless as the poorest worm that crawls upon the earth. He tells me, that the moment I see an adder I have nothing to do but to draw a circle with an ash rod round it, and that the creature will never go out of it; nay, if a fire were kindled in the ring, it would rather go into the fire itself than pass the circle. He believed, also, that an animal bitten by this venomous reptile may be cured by having a kind of collar woven of ash-twigs suspended round his neck. He likewise mentions having, a year or two ago, killed a very large adder that had been

tamed by the above charm, when he took fifteen young ones from its belly.

To return to our expedition: these superstitions (as we pause a moment to take breath before we continue the rough ascent) become the subject of our conversation; and we cannot help remarking how appropriate they are to the place of Druid antiquity, since the one may be traced to the serpent's egg, and the other, very probably, to the *virga divinatoria*, or diviner's rod. Indeed all magicians and sorcerers are described, from the earliest ages, as being armed with a wand or rod: we read of this, too, in the Bible, where the rods of the magicians were turned into serpents, and the rod of Moses, so transformed, swallowed them up. That the Druids professed magical arts cannot be doubted, since Pliny calls that priesthood "the magi of the Gauls and Britons;" and of this island he says, "Magic is now so much practised in Britain, and with so many similar rites, that we cannot but come to the conclusion, that they immediately derived it from the magi of the Persians." The bard Taliesin thus speaks of the magic wand of the Druids: "Were I to compose the strain, were I to sing, magic spells would spring, like those produced by the circle and wand of Twrch Trwyth." I think I have somewhere read, that the sophists of India, also, pretended to possess the power of charming venomous reptiles; and there can be little doubt the art was long practised in Britain, since it has been supposed that the caduceus seen in the hand of Mercury had its origin in the British isles, where the Druids exercised the arts of charming serpents. And Toland, who, in his very learned work, has

brought to light so much curious information respecting Druidism, informs us that, in the Lowlands of Scotland, many glass amulets were found which the people of that country called adder stanes. The Druids, we know, carried magic amulets about their persons; and it may also be remarked, that the adder itself was held as a symbol of the Helio-arkite god, and, therefore, of his priest, who took his station on the sacred mount, or in the no less sacred Diluvian lake*.

Now, all these things considered induce me to believe that as Dartmoor must from the earliest times have been most prolific in vipers, the mode of charming them with an ashen wand, still retained by the peasantry of the moor, is nothing less than a vestige of the customs of Druid antiquity.

Having paused a moment to consider the origin of the ashen wand and the circles about the adders, we once more turn our attention to Wistman's Wood; and near its commencement, on the south side, we find a spring of the clearest and the purest water, which Hannaford, the farmer, tells us never fails. It bursts from beneath a rock, and, like most of the blessings of Providence (whether we avail ourselves of them or not), it still pours its limpid

* The serpent's egg, which the Druids pretended to catch in the air, in order to impose upon the multitude, was held as a mystery. They wore this egg round their necks; no one in Britain except themselves knew the secret of manufacturing this kind of glass. "The priests," says Davies, "carried about them certain trinkets of vitrified matter, and this custom had a view to Arkite mysteries." The great Druid temple at Carnac (which I visited in early life) is, I am informed, now ascertained to be in the form of a *serpent*. Might it not, therefore, have had reference to the mysteries of the Diluvian, Helio-arkite god? Carnac stands very near the sea shore.

fountain in fruitful abundance, amidst the wildness and desolation of the spot, and nourishes a thousand beautiful mosses and flowers, that render the moor, though a desert in one sense of the word, as a rich wilderness for Flora and her train.

We now view with surprise the oaks before us: and such is their singular appearance, that, without stopping to reason upon the subject, we are all disposed to think that they are really no other than the last remnant of a Druid grove; or rather the last vestige of its posterity. You, being a poet (for I must still be allowed to fancy you by my side), think of Lucan; and repeat the passage in his 'Pharsalia,' where he describes the impression made on the Roman soldiery under Cæsar, on their entering beneath the gloom and solemnity of a Druid grove; their horror, their silent dread to touch with the axe that old and honoured wood: till Cæsar snatching it from their trembling hands, aimed the first blow and violated the oaks so long held sacred to a dark and sanguinary superstition.

When you have finished your quotation from Lucan, I tell you that Rowe, who was his translator into English verse, is said to have been born in Lamerton, only three miles from Tavistock; of which pretty little village his father was the incumbent. And Mr. Bray, who has long been an enthusiast about Dartmoor and the Druids, is ready to follow your quotation by repeating the noble lines from Mason's 'Caractacus' descriptive of a Druid grove; whilst I, determined to have my share of poetical feeling, recite the sonnet, written by my husband, when very young, on Wistman's Wood; quite aware that, though I repeat it to the author of 'Madoe,' he

has that generous feeling, not always found in those who have reached the summit of their art, to listen with good nature and indulgence to the productions of others who may stand afar off:—

TO WISTMAN'S WOOD.

Sole relics of the wreath that crown'd the moor!
 A thousand tempests (bravely though withstood,
 Whilst, shelter'd in your caves, the wolf's dire brood
 Scared the wild echoes with their hideous roar,)
 Have bent your aged heads, now scathed and hoar
 And in Dart's wizard stream your leaves have strew'd,
 Since Druid priests your sacred rocks imbrued
 With victims offer'd to their gods of gore.
 In lonely grandeur, your firm looks recall
 What history teaches from her classic page;
 How Rome's proud senate on the hordes of Gaul
 Indignant frown'd, and stay'd their brutal rage.
 Yet Time's rude hand shall speed, like theirs, your fall,
 That selfsame hand so long that spared your age.

Whilst these poetical feelings prompt each to some suitable expression of them, the farmer, a matter-of-fact man, looks as if he thought us all “a little mazed,” as they say in Devonshire, “about the wisht, old trees;” and now it being his turn to say something, he gives us his own legend about them; which is, that according to tradition, or as he expresses it, “as the people do tell, that the giants once were masters of all the hill country, and had great forests, and set up their karns (he calls them by their right name), and their great stones and circles, and all they old, ancient things about the moor.”

As we advance we again contemplate with wonder and interest the extraordinary object before us. It is altogether unlike anything else. There is a steep height, to toil up which I compare to going up the

side of a pyramid; but you say it is a mole-hill compared to Skiddaw; and Mr. Bray talks about the grand mountains of North Wales; neither of which I have ever visited, though I have seen a real mountain in South Wales, and toiled up one, too.

The ascent to Wistman's Wood is strewn all over with immense masses of granite, that lie scattered in every direction. The soil about these rocks is very scanty, and appears, the same as in many other parts of the moor, to be composed of decayed vegetable matter. In the midst of these gigantic blocks, growing among them, or starting, as it were, from their interstices, arises wildly, and here and there widely scattered, *a grove of dwarf oak trees*. Their situation, exposed to the bleak winds, which rush past the side of the declivity on which they grow, and through the valley of the Dart at their base (a valley that acts like a tunnel to assist the fury of the gust), the diminutive height of the trees, their singular and antiquated appearance, all combine to raise feelings of mingled curiosity and wonder. The oaks are not above ten or twelve feet high, so stunted is their growth by the sweeping winds to which they stand exposed; but they spread far and wide at their tops, and their branches twist and wind in the most tortuous and fantastic manner; sometimes reminding one of those strange things called mandrakes; of which there is a superstition noticed by Shakspeare—

Like shrieking mandrakes, torn from out the earth.

In some places these branches are literally festooned with ivy and creeping plants; and their trunks are so thickly embedded in a covering of fine velvet

moss, that at first sight you would imagine them to be of enormous thickness in proportion to their height. But it is only their velvet coats that make them look so bulky; for on examination they are not found to be of any remarkable size. Their whole appearance conveys to you the idea of hoary age in the vegetable world of creation; and on visiting Wistman's Wood, it is impossible to do other than think of those "groves in stony places" so often mentioned in Scripture, as being dedicated to Baal and Ashtaroth. This ancient seat of idolatry seems to have undergone, also, a great part of the curse that was pronounced on the idolatrous cities and groves of old; for here, indeed, do "serpents hiss," and it shall never be inhabited, "neither doth the shepherd make his fold there;" "but the wild beasts of the desert and the owl dwell there," and "the bittern" still screams amidst its "desolation."

Many of the immense masses of granite around and under the trees are covered with a cushion of the thickest and the softest moss; but to sit down upon them would be rather too hazardous; since such a seat might chance to disturb from their comfortable bed a nest of adders that are very apt to shelter in such a covert; and few persons, now-a-days, would feel quite so confident as honest Hannaford in the power and efficacy of the ashen wand to render them innocuous. The oaks, though stunted and turning from the west winds to which they are most exposed, are by no means destitute of foliage; and the good-natured farmer cuts me down a branch to carry home in triumph, after having achieved the adventure of a visit to Wistman's Wood,—a visit by no means common with ladies. This branch has

upon it several acorns, the smallest I ever saw in all my life; but the leaves are of the usual size, and as vigorous as most other trees of the same kind.

I shall now give you a short extract from a very brief entry in Mr. Bray's journal of August 9th, 1827, concerning this wood. He says as follows:—“ Tradition relates that Wistman's Wood was planted by the celebrated Isabella de Fortibus, Countess of Devon*. But I do not hesitate to say, that, to any one who has visited the spot, it is evident no other hand has planted it than that of God. No one would or could have planted trees in the midst of such rocks.† They unquestionably can be no other than the remains of the original forest; which, though in its original acceptation—according to Du Cange in *V. Foresta*, it comes from *feris*, that is, *ferarum statio*, a station for wild beasts—it means but ‘ a wild uncultivated ground interspersed with wood,’‡ must yet have had some trees, at intervals, in every part of it. At present (except here, and in some modern plantations, of which those of my father are the finest) there are none, though the trunks of trees are occasionally found in the bogs. It is not improbable that these trees were first very

* Among the peers of Henry the Second, was William de Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle, created Earl of Devon in right of his wife Isabel, sister and heiress to Baldwin de Redvers, or Rivers, eighth Earl of Devonshire. The title thus created in 1262 became extinct in 1270.

† That Wistman's Wood was *not* planted by Isabella de Fortibus is proved by the fact before noticed, that the record of a perambulation of the moor (made immediately after the Norman conquest) is still preserved in the office of the Duchy of Cornwall, by which we find Wistman's Wood was even at that remote period much the same as it now appears.

‡ Todd's Johnson's Dict. See also there the *legal* sense of the word.

generally destroyed by fire, in order to extirpate the wolves. The few that remained were destroyed by cattle afterwards pastured there; and it is only, perhaps, owing to their being so surrounded and interspersed with rocks that those of the wood in question have been preserved from a similar depredation.

“At the late visitation at Tavistock, on the 31st of May, Archdeacon Froude, a gentleman possessed of considerable antiquarian information, told me that he had lately obtained part of a tree from this wood, with a view, if possible, to discover its age by the number of circles from its centre to the circumference; that, by the aid of a microscope, he had counted about seven hundred; but that at times the divisions were so minute as hardly to be distinguishable; that, different from any other trees he had ever seen, the circles were more contracted, and in a manner condensed, on one side than on any other; and that he supposed this was the side the most exposed to the beat of the weather. On consulting Evelyn's *Silva*, I found the following passages in his second volume, which may throw some light upon the subject:—

“‘The trunk or bough of a tree being cut transversely plain and smooth, sheweth several circles or rings more or less orbicular, according to the external figure, in some parallel proportion. one without the other, from the centre of the wood to the inside of the bark, dividing the whole into so many circular spaces by the largeness or smallness of the rings, the quickness or slowness of the growth of any tree may, perhaps, at certainty be estimated.”
—p. 201.

“‘The spaces are manifestly broader on the one

side than on the other, especially the more outer, to a double proportion, or more; the inner being near an equality.

“‘ It is asserted that the larger parts of these rings are on the south and sunny side of the tree (which is very rational and probable) insomuch, that by cutting a tree tranverse, and drawing a diameter through the broadest and narrowest parts of the ring, a meridian line may be described.

“‘ It is commonly and very probably asserted, that a tree gains a new ring every year. In the body of a great oak in the New-Forest cut *transversely even* (where many of the trees are accounted to be some hundreds of years old) three and four hundred have been distinguished.’ These and other remarks, he attributes (p. 204) to ‘that learned person, the late Dr. Goddard.’ For the age of trees, see Clarke’s Travels, vol. vii., p. 312. 4th Edit. Svo.

“My tenant, Hannaford, said that his uncle had found a few silver coins, about the size of a sixpence, in some of the cairns on the moor, and promised, if possible, to obtain for me a sight of them. He further informed me that he had lately destroyed what he called *a cave*,* which he described as composed of a large oblong stone supported, as a cover, by others set on edge at the head and foot, and on either side; and that, among the stones and earth within, he found some human hair clotted together, but no bones or other vestige of the body. Hair, it is said, will grow as long as there is any moisture in the body; but whether it will last longer than bones

* Or Kieve: which signifies, I believe, any large vessel, from a puncheon to a caldron. There is a waterfall in Cornwall called St. Nathan’s Kieve, probably from the basin into which it falls.

is a question that seems hardly yet decided. Might it not have been the scalp of an enemy, or hair offered up to the manes of the departed, or to some deity, of which this might be the altar? The remains of one of these British monuments still exist on Bair-down; but the ancient circular enclosures (of which there are so many near Wistman's Wood) that I myself remember there, were unfortunately destroyed when my father erected his ring-fence."

I have, my dear Sir, already given you Mr. Bray's conjectures as to the etymology of Wistman's Wood; and the opinion of its having been a grove sacred to the rites of Druidism, obtains no inconsiderable support from its immediate localities; since, notwithstanding the spoliation of successive ages, there still remain, close to it, many British antiquities. Such, for instance, as three cairns (and several others have been destroyed within the last twenty years to supply stones for the boundary walls, &c.), some hut rings, and the circles noticed by Mr. Bray in his Journal: these are all near the wood; whilst to the south of it lies Crockerntor, the undoubted seat of British jurisprudence on the moor, and of which I shall speak at large in my next letter. To the west, separated only by the narrow valley that is watered by the river Dart, is found Bair-down, or the hill of Bards. And Littleford tor is also not far distant from Wistman's Wood, contiguous to which is seen a group of above sixty hut circles. Thus then do we find that this venerable grove, situated in the very heart of the moor, is on all sides surrounded by vestiges of Druid antiquity.

Before I conclude this account of the wood (in which there is not one circumstance fictitious, excepting my having indulged in the fancy of your

being of the party when I visited it in 1827), I ought to mention that Mr. Bray conjectures that it was very probably one of the last retreats of the Druids of Damnonia, after they were exposed to the persecution of the Roman power. There appears to me nothing improbable in this conjecture; for we all know how long after that epoch the bards sought shelter, and existed in Caledonia, Armorica, Wales, and Cornwall. Dartmoor, so near the last named retreat, from its mountainous character, its want of roads, its deep recesses, its loneliness and general difficulty of access, must long have stood as an impenetrable barrier against persecution.*

On the moor, shelter and even safety might be found for those who, to the last, struggled to maintain their power; and who, rather than yield up the sacred privileges of that priesthood in which they had been trained from their earliest years, fled to rocks and deserts as their retreat; and there still preserved their sway, though reduced in numbers and confined within a comparatively small space for their dominion.

That such men were long welcome to, and upheld by the British people, is proved by the circumstance of the Bards having existed for so many generations in Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, and Wales, when they were extinct in all other parts of Great Britain. The natives of the soil, it cannot be doubted, long maintained a veneration for their ancient customs and superstitions; and their bards possessed that

* Mr. Polwhele considers that the Romans never penetrated into Dartmoor; and that this circumstance is the cause of no Roman-barrows or antiquities being there found; all that have hitherto been discovered being undoubtedly British.

feeling, that tenderness which is ever the companion of poetry; and without which real genius, in any branch of literature, surely cannot exist: for if Plato's definition of genius be really true, that, even in its highest order, it is nothing more than "extent of sympathy," the bards might claim it as their own. Hence arose their power, and hence was it that they kept alive, by their pathetic appeals to the hearts of the Britons, all the pity that their own persecuted state was likely to call forth. They were, it is true, "fallen from their high estate," and from their acknowledged power; they were seared and blighted—yet from that very cause were they become but the more cherished and honored; even as the ancients hallowed those spots of earth that had been blasted by the lightning and the thunder-bolt of Jove—misfortune had touched them, and they were sacred.

In their bards, also, the Britons heard the voice of "other times," the history of their forefathers, the legends and traditions of their country. Such recitals could elevate or soften the souls of their auditors, as they sat around with the glistening eye, the suppressed respiration, and the varying and accompanying feeling to each modulation of their song, that could nerve the arm to action, or melt the heart to pity, as the subject arose to energy, or, chord by chord, died away in low sounds as the melody of melancholy spoke with irresistible power in the cadence of their harp. And when he, too, should be no more, the hardy British chief looked to the genius of the bards as the bulwark of his fame. The mossy stone and the cairn might mark the spot where rested the mortal fabric of his body, but his more enduring monument was in immortal verse;

that spirit of poesy, which, given by the great Giver of all good, is as a ray of the divinity here on earth. Long, therefore, were the bards cherished, long did they survive, honored in their ruin and in their fall; and now, perhaps, in the lonely and melancholy wood of Wistman, we behold one of the last decaying vestiges of their retreat.

Allow me to remain, my dear Sir,

Yours, &c., &c..

A. E. B.

LETTER VII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHIEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Fabrics of unhewn stone of Eastern origin—Examples given—The Gorseddau or Court of Judicature; its high antiquity—The solemnity of trial—Druid judges in civil and religious causes—Courts of Judicature held in the open air with the nations of antiquity—Crockerntor or Dartmoor—Such a Court in the Cantred of Tamare—Since chosen for the Court of the Stannaries—Account of Crockerntor in ancient and modern times—Tin traffic—Stannaries, &c.—The Judge's chair—Parliament-rock, &c., described—Longaford Tor—Rock basin—Many barrows on Stennen Hill—A pot of money, according to tradition, found in one of them—Bair-down Man, or British obelisk—The Grey Wethers; stones so called—Causes for Crockerntor being chosen by the Stannaries for their Parliament—Probably the Wittenagemot of this district succeeded on the very spot where the Gorseddau was held in British times—Grimspound a vast circular wall; its antiquity—Account of similar structures by Strabo and Cæsar—Arthur's Stone, a British structure of great interest—Flocks and herds of the Britons—Tin traffic—The scarlet dye mentioned by Pliny, probably alluding to the scarlet moss, from which dyes are formed, on the Moor—Excursion in search of Dennabridge pound—Horses in their free state—The river at Dennabridge—Judge Buller exonerated from having removed the great stone, used as a table by the old Stannators at Parliament-rock—The stone found at last far from its original station—Dennabridge pound, its extent, &c., described—Trunk of an oak tree, found by Hannaford, in a bog—Oak bowls found in a bog on the Moor; their great antiquity—River Cowsick—Inscription to Shakspeare on the rock below the bridge.

Vicarage, Tavistock, March 9th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I PURPOSE in this letter giving you some account of a place on Dartmoor which, it is most probable, was used in the days of the Britons as a tribunal of

justice. Unhewn stones and circles of the same, it is generally admitted, were raised for courts of this description; and we have the most ancient and undoubted authority—the Bible, for considering that fabrics of unhewn stone derive their origin (like the more rational parts of the religion of the Druids) from those eastern nations of which the Celtæ were a branch.

We find that the custom of erecting, or of consecrating monuments of this nature as memorials of a covenant, in honour of the dead, as places of worship, &c., prevailed even from the earliest times. Jacob and Laban made a covenant in Gilead; and no sooner was this done, than “Jacob took a stone and set it up for a pillar.” Joshua in passing over Jordan with the ark caused a heap of stones to be raised, that they “should be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.” And certain tribes also “built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see.” And after Joshua had destroyed Achan, “they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day.” The Jewish conquerors did the same by the King of Ai; and on Absalom “did they heap stones:” and Rachel’s monument, the first we read of in the Bible, was of stone, for Jacob “set up a pillar upon her grave.”*

There cannot, I think, be a doubt that the courts, as well as the temples of unhewn stone, had their origin in the East. And as the laws of the British people were delivered to them by the Druids, not as secular ordinances, but as the commands of the gods whom they adored, this circumstance no doubt added

* Vide Herodotus for the stones set up by Sesostris.

to the solemnity of their administration : so that it is not improbable the spot appointed for the Gorseddau or Court of Judicature was chosen with a view to the most advantageous display of its august rites. Hence an elevated station, like the temples of their worship, became desirable; and there must have been a more than ordinary feeling of awe inspired in the mind of the criminal, by ascending heights covered, perhaps, with a multitude, to whose gaze he was exposed, as he drew nigh and looked upon those massive rocks, the seat of divine authority and judgment. How imposing must have been the sight of the priesthood and their numerous train, surrounded by all the outward pomps and insignia of their office; as he listened, may be, to the solemn hymns of the Vates, preparatory to the ceremonial of justice, or as he stepped within the sacred enclosure, there to receive condemnation or acquittal, to be referred to the ordeal of the logan, or the tolmen, according to the will of the presiding priest!—As he slowly advanced and thought upon these things, often must he have shuddered and trembled to meet the Druid's eye, when, to use the words of Ossian, he stood by “the stone of his power.”

The Druids not only adjudged, but with their own hands executed the terrific sentence they had decreed. The human victims which they immolated to appease, or to render propitious their deities, (particularly those offered to Hesus the God of Battles, and to Bel, or the Sun,) were generally chosen from criminals; unless when the numbers demanded by the sacrifice induced them to mingle the blood of the innocent with that of the guilty, to

supply their cruel rites. And as these sacrifices were not merely confined to the eve of a battle, or to make intercession for the calamities of a kingdom, but were frequently offered up at the prayer of any chief or noble afflicted by disease, it is not unlikely that the condemned criminal was hurried from the Gorseddau to suffer as a victim to the gods, against whose supreme will all crimes were held to be committed that were done upon the earth.

That these ancient courts of justice were kept in the open air seems to be the most probable opinion, since such was the custom with many of the nations of antiquity; the Areopagus of the Greeks is an instance. And in earlier ages we find it to have been much the same; as we read in the Bible of the elders pronouncing judgment "sitting in the gates." These gates were at the entrance of a town or city; a court that must have been in some measure held in the open air. With the Celtic nations it was unquestionably a practice that long prevailed amongst their posterity; since, in the ancient laws of Wales, the Judge was directed "to sit with his back to the sun or storm, that he might not be incommoded by either."*

One of these primitive courts, handed down as such by successive ages from the earliest times, through the various changes of government and

* Dr. Clarke when describing the Celtic remains at Morasteen, near old Upsal, says, "We shall not quit the subject of the Morasteen (the circle of stones) without noticing, that, in the *central stone* of such monuments, we may, perhaps, discern the origin of the Grecian (Βῆμα) *Bêma*, or *stone tribunal*, and of the 'set thrones of judgment' mentioned in Scripture and elsewhere, as the places on which kings and judges were elevated; for these were always of *stone*."

religion, is to this day found on Dartmoor: it is known by the name of Crockerntor,* the most curious and remarkable seat, perhaps, of Druidical judicature throughout the whole kingdom. It remained as the Court of the Stannaries till within the last century, and hence was it commonly called Parliament-rock. On this spot the chief miners of Devon were, by their charters, obliged to assemble. Sometimes a company of two or three hundred persons would there meet, but on account of the situation, after the necessary and preliminary forms had been gone through, they usually adjourned to Tavistock, or some other Stannary town, to settle their affairs. The Lord Warden, who was the Supreme Judge of the Stannary Courts, invariably issued his summons that the jurors should meet at Crockerntor on such a day; and by an accidental reference to an old magazine, I find a record of a meeting of this nature having been there held so late as the year 1749. If this was the last meeting or not, I cannot say, but I should think not, and that the custom died gradually away, till it was altogether abolished.

Some powerful motive, some deep veneration for ancient usages, or some old custom too well established to be easily set aside, must have operated to have caused these Stannary Courts, in comparatively modern times, to be held on such a spot as Crockerntor; whose rocks stand on the summit of a lofty

* Mr. Polwhele says, in his *Devon*, "For the Cantred of Tamare we may fix, I think, the seat of judicature at *Crockerntor* on Dartmoor; here, indeed, it seems already fixed at our hands, and I have scarce a doubt but the Stannary Parliaments at this place were a continuation even to our own times of the old British Courts, before the age of Julius Cæsar."

height open on all sides to the bleak winds and to the weather, affording no shelter from a storm, remote from the habitations of men, and, in short, presenting such a combination of difficulties, and so many discomforts to any persons assembling on matters of business, that nothing can be more improbable, I had almost said impossible, that such a place should have been chosen for the Stannary Courts, had it not been handed down as a spot consecrated to justice from the earliest ages.

Having offered these few introductory remarks on the subject of Crockerntor, I now give you the following extracts from Mr. Bray's journal of his survey of the western limits of Dartmoor, so long ago as the year 1802; when, though a very young man, he was the first person who really examined and brought into notice many of those curious Druidical antiquities in which it abounds. He spoke of them in various quarters; and some persons were induced, by what he said, cursorily to explore them. Of these a few, now and then, published some account, and though not unfrequently availing themselves of Mr. Bray's information, I do not know, excepting in one instance, that any person ever did him the justice to acknowledge the obligation, or even to mention his name as having been the first to lead the way to an investigation of what was still to be found on the moor:—

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL.

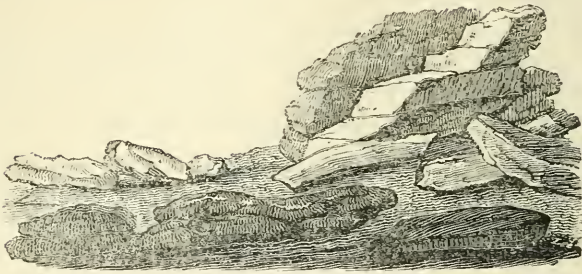
“September 20th, 1802. Crockerntor, or Parliament-rock, is situated on Dartmoor, near the turnpike-road leading from Moreton to Tavistock, at the distance of about eleven miles from the former, and nine from the latter. Prince, in his ‘Worthies of

Devon,' p. 168, in his account of the family of Crocker, after informing us that Crockernwell received its name from them, says—' There is another famous place in this province, which seems to derive its name also from this family, and that is Crockerntor; standing in the forest of Dartmoor, where the parliament is wont to be held for Stannary causes; unto which the four principal stannary towns, Tavistock, Plimton, Ashburton, and Chagford, send each twenty-four burgesses, who are summoned thither when the lord warden of the Stannaries sees occasion: where they enact statutes, laws, and ordinances, which, ratified by the lord warden aforesaid, are in full force in all matters between tinner and tinner, life and limb excepted. This memorable place is only a great rock of moorstone, out of which a table and seats are hewn, open to all the weather, storms and tempests, having neither house nor refuge near it, by divers miles. The borough of Tavestock is said to be the nearest, and yet that is distant ten miles off.'

"I am not inclined to agree with Prince about the origin of the name of this rock, nor, from the present appearance of it, do I think his a correct description. The first thing that struck me was a rock, with a fissure in the middle, with one half of it split, either by art or nature, *into four pretty regular steps*, each about a foot and a half high and two feet broad.* Whether these were used as seats of emi-

* Crockerntor is not entirely granite, it is partly, I believe, of trap formation. The following very curious passage from 'Clark's Travels,' vol. iv., will be found most interesting here:—"Along this route, particularly between Cana and Turan, we observed basaltic phenomena; the extremities of columns, prismatically formed, penetrated the sur-

nence at the assembly of the tanners, I cannot pretend to say.



“Before this mass, towards the north, is a short ledge of stones evidently piled up by art, which might have been a continued bench. On ascending higher, I arrived at a flat area, in which, though almost covered with rushes, I could plainly trace out four lines of stones forming an oblong square, twenty feet in length and six in breadth, pointing nearly east and west. The entrance seems to have been at the north-west corner. At the north side, four feet distant, is another imperfect

face of the soil, so as to render our journey rough and unpleasant. These marks of regular or of irregular crystallization generally denote the vicinity of a bed of water lying beneath their level. The traveller, passing over a series of successive plains, resembling, in their gradation, the order of a staircase, observes, as he descends to the inferior *stratum* upon which the water rests, that where rocks are disclosed, the appearance of *crystallization* has taken place; and then the *prismatic* configuration is vulgarly denominated *basaltic*. When this series of depressed surfaces occurs very frequently, and the *prismatic* form is very evident, the *Swedes*, from the resemblance such rocks have to an *artificial flight of steps*, call them *trap*; a word signifying, in their language, a *staircase*. In this state science remains at present concerning an appearance in nature which exhibits nothing more than the common process of *crystallization*, upon a larger scale than has hitherto excited attention.”—p. 191.

line, and ten feet on either side is a straight natural buttress of rock. Possibly the table might have stood in the centre of this area, and these lines may be vestiges of the seats around it. I can hardly suppose the stone was so large as to rest on these as its foundation, though there are no stones in the middle that might have answered that purpose. Whilst the Lord Warden and Stannators presided at this table, probably the rest of the assembly filled up the remainder of the area, or climbed the rocks on each side.

“As an instance of the powers of the Stannary Court, I have been informed that a member of the House of Commons having spoken in it of the Stannaries in a manner that displeased the Lord Warden, as soon as the offending member came within the jurisdiction of his court, he immediately issued his precept, arrested him, and kept him in prison on bread and water till he had acknowledged his error and begged pardon for his transgression.

“Tin, on being melted, is put into moulds, holding generally somewhat above three hundred weight (then denominated *block-tin*), where it is marked, as the smelters choose, with their house-mark [that brought to Tavistock bears, I have generally observed, an *Agnus Dei*, or lamb holding a pennon] by laying brass or iron stamps in the face of the blocks while the tin is in a fluid state, and cool enough to sustain the stamping iron. When the tin is brought to be coined, the assay-master's deputy assays it by cutting off with a chisel and hammer a piece of one of the lower corners of the block, about a pound weight, partly by cutting and partly by breaking, in order to prove the roughness

[query toughness?] and firmness of the metal. If it is a pure good tin, the face of the block is stamped with the duchy seal, which stamp is a permit for the owner to sell, and, at the same time, an assurance that the tin so marked has been examined and found merchantable. The stamping of this impression by a hammer is *coining* the tin, and the man who does it is called the *hammer-man*. The duchy seal is argent, a lion rampant, gules, crowned, or with a border garnished with bezants." See Rees' Ency.

The punishment for him who, in the days of old, brought bad tin to the market, was to have a certain quantity of it poured down his throat in a melted state.

Tin was the staple article of commerce with the Phœnicians, who used it in their celebrated dye of Tyrian purple, it being the only absorbent then known. This they procured from the Island of Britain. Its high value made the preservation of its purity a thing of the utmost consequence; any adulteration of the metal, therefore, was punished with barbarous severity. The Greeks were desirous of discovering the secret whence the Phœnicians derived their tin, and tracked one of their vessels accordingly. But the master of her steered his galley on shore, in the utmost peril of shipwreck, to avoid detection; and he was rewarded, it is said, by the State for having preserved the secret of so valued an article of national commerce.

The next extract I here send you is from Mr. Bray's Journal of June 7th, 1831.

"My wife, her nephew, and myself, set out from Bairdown, between twelve and one o'clock, for Crockerntor. In addition to the wish she had long felt of seeing it, her curiosity was not a little raised

by my tenant's telling her that he could show her the *Judge's Chair*. And I confess that my own was somewhat excited to find out whether his traditionary information corresponded with my own conjectures, made many years ago, as to this seat of the president of the Stannators. He took us to the rock (situated somewhat below the summit on the south side of the Tor) which bears the appearance of rude steps, the highest of which he supposed to be the seat. It seems to be but little, if at all, assisted by art, unless it were by clearing away a few rocks or stones. Below it is an oblong area, in which was the table, whilst around it (so says tradition) sat the court of Stannators: whence it is also known by the name of Parliament-rock. This stone, I had been informed, was removed by the late Judge Buller to Prince Hall; but my tenant told me that it was drawn by twelve yoke of oxen to Dennabridge, now occupied by farmer Tucket, on the Ashburton road, about ten miles from Tavistock. It is now used, he said, as a shoot-trough, in which they wash potatoes, &c.

“From this, as far as I can comprehend his meaning, I should conceive that it serves the purpose of a lip, or embouchure, to some little aqueduct that conveys the water into the farmer's yard. The Tor itself is of no great height, and is now much lower than it was, by large quantities of stone having been removed from its summit for erecting enclosures and other purposes. It could not be chosen, therefore, for its supereminent or imposing altitude; though possibly it might be so for its central situation; but I am disposed to think that it was thus honoured from being used as a judicial court from time immemorial. My reasons I shall mention hereafter. I

shall remark here, however, that it is the first tor of any consequence that presents itself on the east side of the Dart, upon the ridge that immediately overhangs its source.

“ We then proceeded along this ridge to Little Longaford, or Longford Tor. This, in Greenwood’s map, which is defective enough in regard to names, is thus distinguished from a larger one; whilst the tors that follow Crockerntor in succession are there called Littlebee tor, Long tor, Higher-white tor, and Lower-white tor. White tor, or Whitentor, as my tenant pronounced it, we did not visit; and as I have some doubts about the real names of the tors, I shall only say that the first (a small one) that we approached had something in its appearance which so much reminded me of Pewtor, that I asked the guide if there were any basins in it: at first he replied in the negative, but afterwards said he thought he had once observed a basin on one of these tors. This was enough to ensure a search, and we were not long in finding one. It was in the shape of a rude oval, terminating in a point or lip, about twenty inches long, eighteen wide, and six deep. A square aperture among the rocks here, somewhat like a window, suggested the idea of its possibly having been used as a tolmen, through which children, and sometimes, I believe, grown people, were drawn to cure them of certain diseases. The second tor was much less, but large enough to afford Mrs. Bray, who felt fatigued, sufficient shelter from the sun and wind whilst we proceeded; and there we left her busied with her sketch-book.

“ Between this and the great tor we found several pools of water, though it was the highest part of the

ridge, and though the season had been so free from rain (a circumstance not very common in Devonshire) as not only to render the swamps of Dartmoor passable, but almost to dry up the rivers. Longford Tor is more conical than most of the eminences of the forest, having very much the appearance of the keep of a castle. Unlike also the generality of tors, which mostly consist of bare blocks of granite, it has a great deal of soil covered with turf, and only interspersed with masses of rock, whilst the summit itself is crowned with verdure. Towards the north is White or Whiten Tor: for the Devonians soften, or, as some may think, harden, words by the introduction of a consonant, but more frequently of a vowel; and they are laughed at for saying Black-a-brook instead of Blackbrook, though we perceive nothing objectionable in Black-a-moor, which is precisely upon the same principle of euphony. On this tor, some years ago, were found some silver coins, and, I believe, human hair. And on Stennen hill, which lies below it, if I may trust my informant, are many barrows, in one of which was supposed to have been found 'a pot of money,' whilst two men of the name of Norrich and Clay were employed in taking stones from it. The former, it is said, discovered it without communicating it to his companion, but sent him to fetch a 'bar-ire,' or crow-bar, whilst he availed himself of the opportunity to appropriate the contents to himself. The inference seems principally to be drawn from the circumstance that he afterwards was known to lend considerable sums of money at interest.

“The greatest extent of view from Longford Tor is towards the east and south-east. In that direction,

as far as I could collect, you see Staple Tor (so that there seems to be two of this name on the moor), High, or Haytor, Bagtor, Hazeltor, &c. On Haytor (which is commonly called Haytor rocks), though at so great a distance, is visible a kind of white land or belt about its base, made by the removal of granite: so that we can more easily account for it than those of Jupiter. Of the tors that lie towards the south and south-west, Hessory is certainly higher than Longford (which my guide at first doubted), as also Mistor. Nearer are Bair-down and Sidford tors. Bair-down-man (which, however, we could not see) is a single stone erect, about ten feet high. To these succeeded, towards the north, Crow, or Crough-tor, and Little Crowtor. I learnt from my guide that at a place called Gidley there are circles much larger and far more numerous than near Merrivale. There are also two parallel lines about three feet apart, which stretch to a considerable distance. In order to see them, you must go to Newhouse, about twelve or thirteen miles on the Moreton road from Tavistock, and there turn off into the moor for about four or five miles. I also learnt that near the rabbit warren there is something that goes by the name of the King's Oven.

“ We again on this day visited Wissman, Wistman, or Welshman's Wood (concerning the etymology of which I have some remarks in my former papers): it is about half a mile in extent, and consists principally of oaks, but is here and there interspersed with what is called in Devonshire the quick-beam or mountain-ash. I conceive it to have been the wood of the Wise-men, and Bair-down, on the opposite side, the Hill of Bards. On the latter were

formerly many circles, which, I am sorry to say, were destroyed by the persons employed by my father in making his enclosures. Would they have given themselves but a little more trouble they might have found a sufficient supply among those stones or rocks which are thickly scattered on a spot opposite the wood, and to which they give the name of the Grey Wethers. I think that the same name has been given to some stones at Abury, with which is supposed to be erected Stonehenge. If so, the coincidence is not a little remarkable. They possibly may be so called from resembling at a distance a flock of sheep. The resemblance indeed had struck me before I heard the name.

“I shall now state the reasons why I think Crockern Tor was chosen by the miners as the chief station for holding their Stannary Courts. It is but little more than a mile from what I venture to consider as the Hill of Bards and the Wood of Wisemen, or Druids. On, or near each of these are numerous circles, which, whether they were appropriated to domestic or religious purposes (most probably to both), clearly indicate that it must have been a considerable station. This was not only supplied with water from the river, but two or three springs arise from the rocks at the bottom of the wood itself. Well sheltered and well watered (for not only had they trees to screen them from the storm, but they had also a comparatively snug valley, open only to the south), it is no wonder that the aborigines here fixed their habitation. The circles, the wood, the existing names, all seem to lead to the supposition that some of the high places in their immediate neighbourhood were originally those of superstition

and judicature, where priest, judge, and governor were generally combined. The tor that we may thus imagine was appropriated by the ancient Britons, might afterwards (from traditionary veneration for the spot) be used by the Saxons for assembling together their Wittenagemot, or meeting of Wisemen, and lastly, for a similar reason, by the miners for their Stannary Courts."

Before I give you Mr Bray's account of Dennabridge Pound, which will be the next extract from his Journal, it may not be amiss to observe that there is on Dartmoor another remarkable vestige, and one better known, of like antiquity, called Grimspound. Like that of Dennabridge, this truly cyclopean work is an enclosure, consisting of moor stone blocks, piled into a vast circular wall, extending round an area of nearly four acres of ground. Grimspound has two entrances, and a spring of water is found within, where the ruins of the stonering huts are so numerous as to suggest the idea of its having been a British town. It is well known that the foundations of all these primitive dwellings were of stone, though their superstructure, according to Diodorus and Strabo, was of wood. For they "live," says the former, "in miserable habitations, which are constructed of wood and covered with straw." And, when speaking of the Gauls, the latter says, "they make their dwellings of wood in the form of a *circle*, with lofty tapering roofs."

In some instances it is not improbable that the larger stone circles are vestiges of enclosures made for the protection of cattle. The Damnonii were celebrated for their flocks and herds; and the wolves, the wild cats, and the foxes, with which this country

once abounded, must have rendered such protection highly necessary for their preservation. I have often remarked on Dartmoor two or three small hut-rings, and near them a larger circle of stones; the latter I have always fancied to have been the shelter of the flocks, and the former the dwellings of their owners. There is nothing perhaps very improbable in this conjecture: since many tribes of the ancient Britons were, like the Arabs, a wandering and a pastoral people; and it is also worthy observation, that to this day the Devonians never fold their sheep; but, on Dartmoor in particular, still keep them within an enclosure of stone walls set up rudely together without cement. Where extensive stone circles are found near what may be called a *cursus*, or *via sacra* (of which I shall have much to say hereafter), or near cromlechs and decaying altars, we may fairly conclude such to have been erected not as the habitations of individuals, but as temples sacred to those Gods whose worship would have been considered as profaned within any covered place, and whose only appropriate canopy was held to be the Heavens in which they made their dwelling.

The circles within Grimspound are different from these; and that this vast enclosure (as well as Denabridge Pound) was really a British town, seems to be supported by the accounts given of such structures by Strabo and Cæsar. The latter describes them as being surrounded by a mound or ditch for the security of the inhabitants and their cattle. And Strabo says, "When they have enclosed a very large circuit with felled trees, they build within it houses for themselves and hovels for their cattle."*

* "The universality of Celtic manners, at a very remote period, is proved by the existence of conical thatched houses, as among the

That the people of Dartmoor should prefer granite to felled trees for such an enclosure is nothing wonderful, inasmuch as the moor abounds with it: in fact it must have been then, the same as in the present day, a much easier task to have piled together the blocks and pieces of stone, strewed all around them, than to have felled trees for the purpose of forming their walls; and how much greater was the security afforded by a granite fence, to one of mere timber! In other parts of Britain, such as Cæsar saw and described, rock or stone was not so easily or so plentifully to be found. The Britons, therefore, very naturally availed themselves of what the country would most readily afford; and the wild and vast forests supplied materials for their public walls as well as their private dwellings.

Stones, however, it is probable, were in all places considered as indispensable in the erection of those structures sacred to the rites of religion; and hence is it that we often see such enormous masses piled on places where it seems little less than miraculous to find them: for no stones of a similar nature being seen in their immediate neighbourhood, gives rise to the belief that they must have found their present stations by being moved from a distance, and not unfrequently to the summits of the loftiest hills and mountains: such, for instance, is that most extraordinary cromlech called Arthur's Stone on the eminence of Cevyn Bryn in South Wales*. That most of these structures were of a sacred nature can-

Britons, and rude stone obelisks, adjacent tumuli, and Druidical circles, in Morocco."—*Gentlemen's Magazine*, July, 1831. Dr. Clarke, the celebrated traveller, gives a very interesting account of vestiges similar to those found on Dartmoor in Sweden and other northern counties. See the ninth volume of his Travels.

* An account of this ancient British monument was laid before the

not well be doubted. No impulse either on the public or the private mind is so strong as that dictated by a feeling of religion, even when it is misdirected: no labours, therefore, have ever equalled those of man when he toils, in peace or in war, for the honour or the preservation of his altars.

That Grimspound and Dennabridge sheltered both the Britons and their cattle seems the more probable when we recollect the general customs of that people, and of the Damnonii in particular; since, in every way, their flocks must have been to them of the highest value. They were allowed to be the most excellent in Britain; the constant verdure of this county no doubt rendered them such. They were not merely useful at home, but an article of commerce abroad; and Cæsar says, that “the Britons in the interior parts of the country were clothed in skins.” It is not improbable, therefore, that the Damnonii found their account in the wool and skins of those flocks for which they were so famed, as a convenient clothing for their neighbours.

Their tin traffic with the Phœnicians had early initiated them into a knowledge of the advantages and benefits of commerce. And as I have long taken a pleasure in busying myself to trace out, in connexion with ancient times, whatever may be found in nature or in art on Dartmoor, I amuse myself with fancying that I have discovered an allusion in Pliny to the beautiful and scarlet moss still found on the moor, which, not many years ago, was used as a dye for cloth. Indeed, it is not improbable that, as such, it became an article of commerce even in the days of the ancient Britons; for

Society of Antiquaries by my brother, Alfred J. Kempe. It may be found in the twenty-third volume of the *Archæologia*.

Pliny says, when speaking of British dyes, that they were enriched by “wonderful discoveries, and that their purples and *scarlets* were produced only by certain wild herbs.”

How sadly have I rambled in these pages! It is a good thing that in letters there is no sin in being desultory, or how often should I have offended! But letters are something like the variations of an air of music; you may run from major to minor, and through a thousand changes, so long as you fall into the subject at last, and bring back the ear to the right key at the close. Once more, therefore, I fall back on Dennabridge Pound, and here follows the extract from Mr. Bray’s journal:—

“On the 25th of July, 1831, I set out in search of two objects on the moor; namely, the table, said to have been removed from Crockern Tor, and Dennabridge Pound, which (like all, or most others on the moor) I had understood was on the site of a Celtic circle. On going up the hill beyond Merri-vale bridge, some horses and colts, almost wild, that were in an inclosure near the road, came galloping towards us, and, either from curiosity or the instinctive feeling of sociability, kept parallel with the carriage as far as their limits would allow. One of them was of a light sorrel colour; whilst its mane, which was almost white, not only formed a fine contrast, but added considerably to the picturesque effect of the whole by its natural clusters waving and floating, now in the air, now adown its neck, and now over its forehead, between its eyes and ears. My attention, perhaps, was the more directed to it, from having previously asked my servant who drove us, why the manes of my ponies were turned in opposite directions, as I thought (though I pos-

sibly may be mistaken) that it was one, among many other cavalry regulations, that the mane of a horse should turn differently from that of a mare. He seemed to recognise the rule by his reply, which was, that he could not get the mane of one of them to lie on the proper side. I could not help thinking that we deformed our horses by cropping their manes and tails, besides cruelly depriving them of their natural defence against flies. And enthusiastically as I admire the taste of the Greeks, particularly in sculpture, I cannot but confess that, if I may be allowed to consult my own eyes for a standard, they seem to have violated true taste and rejected a rich embellishment, in representing, as on the Elgin marbles in the British Museum, all their horses with hogged manes. Having thus run from painting to sculpture, and from England to Greece, though it may still, perhaps, be traced to association of ideas, I must be allowed to return to those connected with our native soil, and somewhat, perhaps, with the objects of our present pursuit (which may account also, accumulatively, if more apologies be wanting, for these digressions), by stating that I had but a little before remarked, *en badinant*, to my wife, that she might fancy herself Boadicea hastening in her war-chariot to meet the Druids in their enchanted circles.

“Near a bridge, over which we had passed, I observed, on the right of the road, a circle, seven paces in diameter, with a raised bank around, and hollow in the centre. Having come about ten miles from Tavistock, which I had understood was the distance of Dennabridge Pound, I entered a cottage near, to make inquiries for the object of our pur-

suit, but could gain little or no information, finding only a girl at home who had not long resided there. I had observed on the map that there was not only Dennabridge Pound, but also a place called Denna-bridge, which I learnt from this girl was about a quarter of a mile distant. Seeing nothing at the former place that at all corresponded with the object of my search, I resolved on proceeding to the latter; not without hopes that I should meet with some kind of primitive bridge, consisting perhaps of immense flat stones, supported on rough piers, which was the ordinary construction of our ancient British bridges.

“ Seeing a person whom I considered one of the natives near a cottage, I pointed to a lane that seemed to lead towards the river, and asked if it was the way to Dennabridge. The answer I received was, ‘ This, Sir, is Dennabridge.’ My informant seemed as much surprised at my question, as I was at his reply, and we both smiled, though probably for different reasons. No signs of one being visible, I inquired (and I think naturally so) where was the bridge that gave name to the place? He said that he knew not why it was so called, but that there was no bridge near it. Observing, however, at some distance down the river, what seemed not unlike the piers of one, of which the incumbent stones or arches might have fallen, I asked if a bridge had ever stood there. He believed not, but said that they were rocks: situated, however, so near each other, that it was the way by which persons usually crossed the river. Understanding that the spot was difficult of access, particularly for a lady, we did not go to it; but I am rather disposed to think that the place is

not so called, as was *lucus a non lucendo*, but that these rocks were considered as a bridge, or at least *quasi* a bridge. And perhaps it deserved this name as much as that which is thus mentioned by Milton in his description of Satan's journey to the earth.

‘ Sin and Death amain,
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
Paved after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamefully endured a bridge of wond'rous length,
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world.’

“ On further conversation with this man, I learnt that he lived at Dennabridge Pound, where there was no stone of the kind I inquired for, but that at Dennabridge itself, hard by, was a large stone that possibly might be the one in question. I asked if he had ever heard that it had been brought thither by the late Judge Buller. He said that it must have been placed there long before the judge's time; that he knew the judge well, and had lived in that neighbourhood forty years or more. Perhaps I might have obtained the information I wanted long before, had I asked for what I was told to ask; namely, for a stone that was placed over a *shoot*. But, absurdly, I confess, I have always had an objection to the word; because, in one sense at least, it must be admitted to be a vulgarism even by provincialists themselves. The lower classes in Devonshire, almost invariably, say *shoot* the door, instead of *shut* the door. And when it is used by them to express a water-pipe, or the mouth of any channel from which is precipitated a stream of water, I have hitherto connected it with that vulgarity which arises from the above *abuse* of the word. But if we write

it, as perhaps we ought, *shute*, from the French *chute*, which signifies *fall*, we have an origin for it that may by some, perhaps, be considered the very reverse of vulgar, and have, at the same time, a definite and appropriate expression for what, otherwise, without a periphrasis, could hardly be made intelligible.

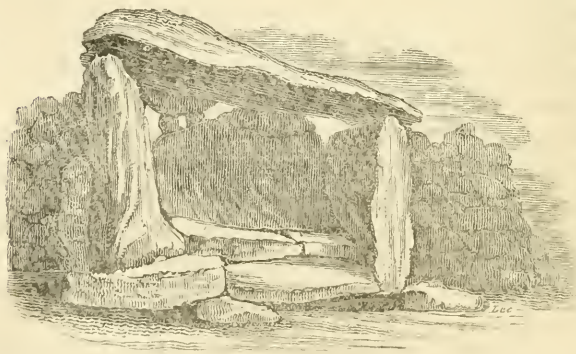
“ At the entrance of the farm-yard adjoining, is, I doubt not, the stone I had gone so far in search of, though I could not gain such satisfactory information as I anticipated. The farmer who lives on the spot exonerates the Judge, as did my first informant, from having committed the spoliation with which he has been charged. He says that it has been there, to his own knowledge, for fifty years; and that he has heard it was brought from Crockern Tor about eighty years ago. He further says that it was removed by the reeve of the manor. His wife, who is the daughter of this reeve (or his successor, I do not remember which), says that she, also, always heard that it had been brought from Crockern Tor, but she does not think that it could have been the table, as she remembers that her father used to take persons to the spot as a guide, and show them the table, chair, and other objects of curiosity on the tor. I thought I could perceive that the reeve of the manor was at any rate considered a great personage, and not the less so, perhaps, by being the Ciccone, or guide to the curiosities of the forest; for this is the word by which the inhabitants are fond of designating the treeless moor. I do not know whether the reeve, with the spirit of an antiquary, had any veneration for a cromlech, and therefore wished to imitate one; but, if such were his intention, he succeeded not badly: for the stone

(which is eight feet long by nearly six wide, and from four to six inches thick) is placed, as was the quoit in such British structures, as a cover, raised upon three rude walls, about six feet high, over a trough, into which, by a *shute*, runs a stream of water. And



probably the idea that the removal of this stone was by some one in authority, may have given rise to the report, that such person could be no less than Judge Buller, who possibly might be supposed to give sentence for such transportation (far enough certainly, but not beyond sea), in his judicial capacity: to which, perhaps, some happy confusion between him and the judge or president who sat in the Stannary Court may have contributed. Nay, possibly the reeve or steward may have considered himself to be the legal representative of the latter, and to have removed it to his own residence. We thence returned to Dennabridge Pound. On clam-bering over the gate, I was surprised to find close to it a rude stone seat. Had I any doubt before that the pound was erected on the base of an ancient

British, or rather Celtic circle, I could not entertain it now: for I have not the slightest doubt of the high antiquity of this massy chair. It is not improbable that it suggested the idea of the structure over the trough. And it is fortunate that the reeve had not recourse to this chair, instead of the stanary table, for the stone he wanted. It certainly was handier; but possibly it would have deprived him of showing his authority and station by occasionally sitting there himself. But I am fully convinced that it was originally designed for a much greater personage; no less perhaps than an Arch-Druid, or the President of some court of judicature. Two upright stones, about six feet high, serve as sides or elbows. These support another, eight feet long, that forms the covering overhead. The latter, being in a sloping direction, to give greater shelter both from wind and rain, extends to the back, which consists also of a single stone. In front of it are two others, that supply the immediate seat, whilst a kind of step may be considered as the foot-stool.



“The enclosure, pound, or circle, is about 460 paces in circumference on the inside. The wall of it has a double facing, the external part being a little higher than the inner. Though far beyond the memory of man, *this superstructure* is unquestionably modern, when compared with the *base or foundation*, which is ruder, and of larger stones. There are a few rocks scattered about in the area. I thought, however, that I could distinguish the vestige of a small circle near the centre, through which passed a diametrical line to the circumference, but somewhat bent in its southern direction towards the chair.

“On reaching Bair-down, I was told by my tenant Hannaford, that there could be no doubt but I had seen the right stone, and that he believed the report of its being removed by Judge Buller was wholly without foundation. On referring afterwards to Mr. Burt's notes to Carrington's poem on Dartmoor, I find he treats it as ‘a calumny.’ I believe that by our different conversations with Hannaford we have made him a bit of an antiquary, and I was no less surprised than delighted when he informed me that, only a few days before, he had brought home an oak that he had discovered in a bog, at a place called Broad-hole, on Bair-down. I have heard Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt say that he had found alders and willows in a bog near Tor Royal; but I do not remember to have heard of any oak being so found, at least of such dimensions. The tree thus discovered, which consists of the trunk, part of the root, and also of a branch, is ten feet long, and, at its lower extremity, is nearly five feet in girth. The whole of the trunk is perfectly sound, but not altogether so dark or solid as I should have expected:

for generally, I believe, and particularly when it has been deposited in a bog, it is as hard and as dark as ebony. A branch of it had for some time been visible in the bank of the river Cowsick, and this induced Hannaford to examine it, and finally to exhumate it from the depth of eight feet. It is not improbable that this is a vestige of the antediluvian forest of the moor. Distant from Wistman's Wood about two miles, and by the side of another river, it could never have formed part of it; indeed it is probably larger than any there: and we have no account for ages of any other oaks existing on the whole of this extensive desert. A day or two after he brought it to Tavistock, and it is now in my possession.

“ I learnt from him that some years since some oak bowls* were found in a bog, by a person called John Ash, between the Ashburton and Moreton roads.

“ On crossing the bridge which was erected by my father over the Cowsick. Mrs. Bray expressed a wish that I would point out to her some of my inscriptions on the rocks below, which, from some strange circumstance or other, she had never seen; and even now I thought that, without much search, we should not have found them; not recollecting, after so long a period, where I had placed them. But, on looking

* Bowls formed of oak were used by the ancient Britons. Mention is made of them in Ossian; and in the *Cad Godden*, or the *Battle of the Trees*, by Taliesin, the following passage occurs:—“ I have been a spotted adder on the mount” (alluding to the serpent's egg); “ I have been a viper in the lake. I have been stars among the supreme chiefs; I have been the weigher of the falling drops” (the water in the rock basins), “ drest in my priest's robe, and furnished with my bowl.”

over the parapet, she observed, on one of the rocks beneath, the name of her favourite Shakspeare. Perhaps, under other circumstances, it might have altogether escaped notice; but the sun was at that instant in such a direction as to assist her in decyphering it, as it did some of our English officers in Egypt, who thus were able to interpret the inscription on Pompey's Pillar, which the French savants had so long attempted in vain. Many an officer (for a large body of troops had guarded, for years, the French prison on the moor) no doubt had visited Bair-down, and probably fished on the river, and yet these inscriptions seem never to have attracted their notice, nor, indeed, that of other persons; or, if they have, it has never reached my ears. But I have long been taught to sympathise with Virgil, when he exclaims—

‘Rura mihi, et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes,
Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius.’—Geo. l. ii. 485.

“Had my name been so renowned as ‘virum volitare per oras,’ I doubt whether I should have experienced greater pleasure than I felt when my wife first discovered my inscription on the rock, and expressed the feelings it excited in her. I question whether, for the moment, she felt not as much enthusiasm as if she had been on the Rialto itself, and there had been reminded of the spirit-stirring scenes of our great dramatist in the ‘Merchant of Venice.’ I have somewhere read, that a philosopher having been shipwrecked on an island which he fancied might be uninhabited, or, what perhaps was worse, inhabited by savages, felt himself not only perfectly at ease, but delighted at seeing a mathe-

matical figure drawn upon the sand; because he instantly perceived that the island was not only the abode of man, but of man in an advanced stage of civilization and refinement. It certainly was a better omen than a footprint; for the impression of a human foot might have excited as much fear, if not surprise, as that which startled Crusoe in his desert island. Perhaps I fondly had anticipated that, long ere this, on seeing these inscriptions, some kindred being might have exclaimed, 'A poet has been here, or one, at least, who had the feelings of a poet.' I would have been content, however, to remain unknown still longer, thus to be noticed, as I was by one so fully competent to appreciate those feelings which, no doubt, to most would have appeared ridiculous, if not altogether contemptible."

As, since the days of Sir Charles Grandison, it is quite inadmissible for ladies to write to their friends the fine things that are said of them, I certainly should have stopt short before I came to this compliment about myself. But my husband, who was pleased to pay it, insisting that, if I took anything from his Journal, I should take all or none, I had no choice.

Adieu, my dear Sir,
And believe me ever most respectfully
and faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

LETTER VIII.

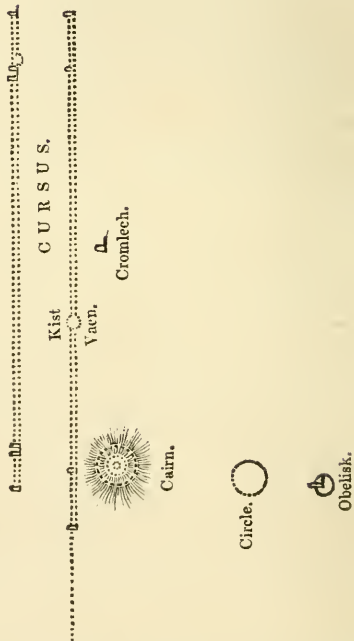
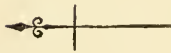
TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Account of the remains of the great Cursus near Merrivale Bridge—Plan of it—Fallen Cromlech; barrow; obelisk; large circle; foundation of circular British huts—Processions in the Cursus in ancient times—Their chariot races, &c.—The Welsh poem of Gododin; its great curiosity and interest as an historical record—its mention of a similar Cursus at Stonehenge—Remarks on Cromlechs—Various in their character and uses, examples given—Drewsteign-Tor, the finest Cromlech on Dartmoor—Cromlech near the Cursus of the Moor, probably a stone of sacrifice—Barrows on Dartmoor opened in 1790; urns found in them containing ashes, or the bones of human bodies, with coins and instruments of war—British monumental inscribed stones—Augury of birds common with the Druids—Great antiquity of the superstition—Remarks on the subject—Sacred springs and fountains—The Cauldron of Ceridwen—Casting lots; twigs, branches, and herbs used in sortilege—Water in rock basins, for what purpose collected—Recking or Logan Stones still found on the Moor—their uses—Ancient British bridges on Dartmoor described—Ancient trackways and leets of Mines seen on the Moor—Gold and silver found in Britain, mentioned by Tacitus—Silver found in Devon.

Ticarage, Tavistock, April 10th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

WE have on Dartmoor, at a short distance from Merrivale bridge, and nearly four miles from Wistman's Wood, some very remarkable vestiges of the Cursus, or Via Sacra, used for processions, chariot races, &c., in the Druidical ceremonies. This Cursus is about 36 paces in breadth, and 217 in length. It



Map of the great Cursus, Circles, &c., near Merrivale-bridge, Dartmoor.

is formed of pieces of granite that stand one, two, or sometimes three feet above the ground in which they are imbedded: a double line of them appears placed with great regularity on either side, as you will see in the drawing of the ground plan. A circle in the middle of the cursus breaks the uniformity of line in part of it. There are, near this extensive range of stones, many remains of Druidical antiquity; such as a fallen cromlech, a barrow, an obelisk, a large circle, and several foundations of the round huts, or houses of the Britons. A cursus of this nature is found near Stonehenge; *Boylase*, I believe, mentions one at *Classerniss* in the Isle of Lewis, another is seen in *Anglesea*, and we have this remarkable vestige on *Dartmoor*.

Processions formed a distinguished part of the ceremonies observed in Druidical festivals. According to *Davies*, the sacred ship of glass was borne along the cursus with the utmost pomp on the day of observing the mysteries of the *Helio-arkite God*. The procession of *Godo*, the *British Ceres*, was no less splendid: it took place in the evening, as that of the solar deity did in the morning. And the cursors at such moments must have presented scenes like those exhibited by the abominable priests of *Baal*, of whom we read in the Bible: for in the midst of their wild dances, they cut and lacerated their bodies in honour of her mystic rites. "Let the thigh be pierced with blood," says *Taliesin*. And *Aneurin* thus describes the ceremonies of the procession sacred to *Hu*, the *British Bacchus*. "In honour of the mighty king of the plains, the king of the open countenance, I saw dark gore arising on the stalks of plants, on the clasp of the chain, on the

bunches (alluding to the flowers on the necks of the oxen), on the king himself (the God Hu*), on the bush, on the spear. Ruddy was the sea-beach, whilst the circular revolution was performed by the attendants of the white bands (the Druids) in graceful extravagance." The bard thus continues: "The assembled train were dancing after their manner, and singing in cadence with garlands on their brows."†

Chariot races, as well as the above-noticed processions, were also common with our British ancestors: they were likewise performed in the *cursus*; and it is not improbable that they became a part of the religious ceremonies of the festivals. In Germany, we know they were so; as the sacred chariot of the goddess who ruled over the affairs of men, its procession, and race, is most strikingly described by Tacitus in his delightful book on the manners of the Germans. I forbear to transcribe the passage, as I wish to mention one less known, that occurs in the very curious and ancient Welsh poem of Gododin: a poem, which, like the chronicles of Froissart, affords the most lively picture of the manners of the times to which it relates. Gododin is a poetical narrative, or history, of the conduct of Hengist and Vortigern in the cruel slaughter of the ancient Britons.

This act of treachery, the poet tells us, took place in the *cursus* near the great temple of Stonehenge; which he calls "the area of the sons of harmony," no

* Hu was the great demon God of the British Druids. Has he not ever been the same? For what passions are more demoniacal than these excited by a devotion to the God of wine?

† From the Rev. E. Davies's translation of Aneurin's song.

doubt in allusion to the bards. In addition to the light which Gododin throws on ancient manners, its incidents would afford the finest subject for a poem in the style of your "Madoc:" it would not be unworthy even of your muse. The time, the place, the variety of character, the cold-hearted cunning of the wily Saxon, or of the "Sea-drifted Wolf," as Hengist is styled by the Welsh poet; the distracted state of the Druid, who, casting the lots just before the feast begins, and finding their presage fatal to the Britons, fears to warn them, as he meets the eye of Hengist fixed sternly upon him; the frankness and honest confidence of the betrayed British chiefs; the sudden and fearful catastrophe, as the bowl with the flowing mead is raised to the lip; the resolute conduct of the bards who perish in defending the temple; the magnanimity of Eidiol (the young hero of the tale), who escapes at last from a host of enemies; all these and many other circumstances are highly dramatic, and would afford materials for a poem or romance, of great power and interest. So minutely does the Welsh bard describe everything connected with his subject, that he mentions even the amber beads worn as a wreath on the brows of Hengist; a circumstance whose correctness is ascertained by the beads of many Saxon princes being seen thus adorned in sundry coins that have been found in England.

I mentioned, at the commencement of this letter, that there is, near the remains of the ancient cursus on Dartmoor, a fallen cromlech. I shall here, therefore, before I proceed to the account of it, venture to offer a few observations respecting the purposes to which cromlechs were devoted; since, though I have always delighted in pursuits connected with antiquity,

I never yet could find any amusement in looking upon an old stone, or any other rude vestige, unless I could in some measure trace out its history, or understand what relation it might bear to the manners and customs of former ages: for without this connexion to give it an interest, to admire any thing merely because it is old, seems to me as great an absurdity, as it would be in the most uneducated person to affect delight in looking on the pages of Homer, when he did not understand one word of Greek, and possibly had never heard of the Iliad.

I am well aware that antiquaries differ in their opinions respecting the purposes to which cromlechs were applied. Far be it from me to suppose that I could throw any additional light on the subject: but as I have attentively read many of those opinions, and some were wholly opposite, I have been led to conclude that each may be in the right, though not exclusively, and that cromlechs were applied to *more* than *one* purpose; that they were sometimes used as altars of sacrifice, at others as sepulchral monuments, and not unfrequently as a mark of covenant. Mr. Owen considers them in the latter view, as the Grair Gorsedd or altar of the bards, placed within the ring of federation. To them, therefore, may be applied those lines of the poet—

“ Within the stones of federation there,
 On the green turf, and under the blue sky,
 A noble band, the bards of Britain stood,
 Their heads in rev'rence bare, and bare of foot,
 A deathless brotherhood.”*

Those cromlechs under which are found urns and human bones, were most likely sepulchral. We learn

* Madoc.

from Ossian that deceased heroes were deified by the ancient inhabitants of these islands; since the British Homer thus speaks of the tomb of Loda in a poem whose sublimity would stir the coldest bosom, Carrië-Thura.

“A rock bends along the coast with all its echoing woods. On the top is the circle of Loda, the mossy stone of power !”

And again thus speaks the “spirit of dismal Loda,” in his emphatic address to Fingal—“The King of Sora is my son, he bends at the *stone of my power.*”

All cromlechs with wells or springs beneath them were most probably stones of federation;* since the forms of initiation with the bards invariably took place at a cromlech, where water might be found, as necessary to the mysteries. This initiation represented *death*, and a renovation from the dead: for the aspirant of Druidism was obliged to pass the river of death in the boat of Garan Hu, the Charon of Britain. Sometimes he was immersed in the water, or at others buried, as it were, beneath the cromlech; since, says Davies, “it was held requisite that he should have been mystically buried as well as mystically dead.” And cromlech, according to Logan, is a Punic word, and signifies the bed of death. The cells sometimes found under these antiquities no

* Arthur’s stone on Cevyn Bryn no doubt was such. It stood within a *ring* of smaller stones; and a spring of water called the *Lady’s well* was found beneath it. Hênwen, or old lady, was the goddess of the Arkite ceremonies. Arthur and his seven sons were said by the Druids to have been saved in the ark from the general deluge. The Helio-arkite rites celebrated their preservation. The ring of smaller stones around this vast Cromlech, the names of *Arthur’s stone*, and the *Lady well*, so directly refer to the structure, the goddess and the hero of the rites, that there can be, I think, no doubt the stone itself was that of *federation* for the bards of the Arkite ceremonies.

doubt were used as the temporary burial-places of the bards, previous to the ceremonies of initiation; ceremonies that might differ according to the particular attributes or character of the god to whose honour and worship the bard more immediately devoted his life. This act of burial in the cells was considered as a necessary trial of his patience and his fortitude; it was seldom, if ever, dispensed with, and as it took place the day or night previous to initiation, it reminds us, in some measure, of that ceremony of later times, the vigil of arms practised by the novitiate of chivalry, on the night before he paid the vows, and received the honours of knight-hood.

By far the finest cromlech on Dartmoor is near Drewsteignton*—the very name speaks its high claim to veneration; and on the noble pile of rocks in that neighbourhood may be seen some rock basins that remain entire even to this day.

The fallen cromlech on the moor, which I mentioned at the beginning of this letter, derives its chief value from its immediate vicinity to the Cursus, or Via Sacra of the Druidical processions. From its situation it is more likely to have been a place of sacrifice than a stone of federation, or a memorial

* Drew, in the Celtic, and drus, in the Greek, signified an oak. The oak was sacred to the great god of the Druids. From Drewester, priest of the oak, we have the word Druids. The oak god was sometimes styled Buanaur, the quickener, before whom heaven and earth trembled. "A dreadful foe, whose name in the table book is Drysawr, the deity of the door." This, says Davies, "must apply to the deified patriarch, who received his family into the ark, and his connected votaries into the Druidical sanctuary." Acorns were held as offerings from the bards. Taliesin speaks of the "proud, the magnificent circles round which the majestic oaks, the symbols of Taronuy, the God of thunder, spread their arms."

for the dead. And this conjecture, I think, will not be found far fetched, when we recollect that Godo, the British Ceres, on the day of her festival, not only had her procession in the cursus, but also her sacred fire kindled in her temple or on her stone, which was never to be extinguished for a year and a day. It was, in fact, like that of Vesta, (originally derived from the Magi,) a perpetual fire. I have found one reference that bears upon this point in the translation of the ancient poems of the bards by Davies. It occurs in Gododin, before noticed, where the sacred fire near the Cursus of Stonehenge is called "the perpetual fire."* This very circumstance, therefore, renders it still more probable that the fallen cromlech in question, near the Dartmoor cursus, was a stone of sacrifice, where offerings were made to the sacred fire of the British gods. And henceforth I shall never visit that spot without indulging one of those day-dreams of romance that are so truly delightful. I shall fancy white-robed Druids, and blue-robed bards, and the procession of Godo, with all its attendant rites and offerings made on that very stone, where the cattle of the moor now solace themselves with rubbing their noses and their backs: "to what base uses may we not return!" Yet if human victims were ever there offered up amid the barbarous rites of idolatry, who would regret such degradation, who would do other than rejoice to see the harmless use to which it is now applied!

I mentioned also, that the line of the great cursus on Dartmoor was in one part broken by a stone circle. On circles, in their general character, I have

* Stonehenge was a temple of the sun; and fire was invariably used in the worship of its deity.

before ventured some remarks in my former letters. But respecting *this* found on the *line* of stones which forms the *Via Sacra*, I have a few observations to offer, as I am inclined to think it was more immediately connected with the ceremonies of the Helio-arkite procession. The idea struck me, when I found that Davies, in his very learned work on the mythology of the British Druids, so clearly proves that the *Caer Sidi* was no other than a figure of the sacred vessel in which the mythological Arthur and his seven sons escaped the general deluge. The *Caer Sidi* was, in fact, the ark of Noah. But as, in process of time, the British priests, like most other idolaters, blended their worship of the planets with whatever vestiges they might retain of true religion, (derived to them through Gomer the son of Japhet, and the father of the Celtic nations,) even so did they transfer the name of the ark to that "great circle" in which those luminaries, "emblems of their gods, presided and expatiated. In British astronomy it was become the name of the Zodiac."* In the most ancient songs of the bards, this *Caer Sidi*, or sacred circle, is constantly alluded to, sometimes as a ship preserving what was left of the inhabitants of the old world; at others as a celestial circle; and often as the temple of Druidical worship; and the circle of the Helio-arkite god is spoken of when the procession of the sacred ship becomes the theme of song.†

Not far from the *cursus* there is seen a barrow, no

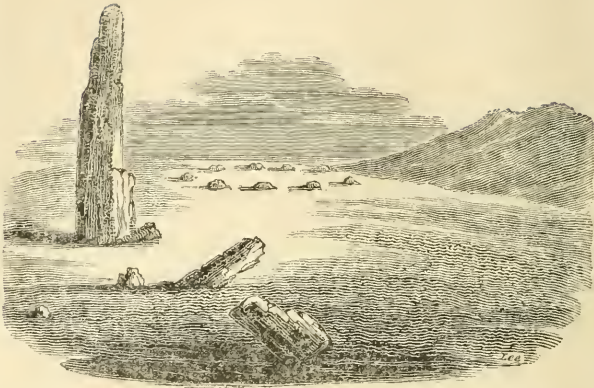
* Davies' Celtic Remains.

† "With the circle of ruddy gems on my shield do I not preside over the area of blood, which is guarded by a hundred chiefs?" So writes Taliesin in his poem of *Cad Godden*. "This shield," says Davies, "was of the Helio-arkite God, and of his priest, having the

doubt the grave of some chief or noble of the *Damnonii*; as it is well known that heaps of earth (sometimes containing a *kistvaen*, or stone chest for the body, and at others only an urn) or barrows were the burial-places of the ancient Britons. Of these tumuli, Mr. Polwhele (whose learning and talents entitle his opinions to be received with the utmost respect) says, *none are Roman*. That gentleman also tells us that in the year 1790, a friend with whom he held a literary correspondence opened some of the barrows on Dartmoor; and found in them "urns filled with ashes, or the bones of a human body, together with ancient coins and instruments, sometimes of war." This account reminds us of the manner in which the ancient inhabitants of Caledonia made their graves: for if a warrior became the tenant, they placed his sword by his side, and the heads of twelve arrows; and not unfrequently the horn of a deer, as a symbol of the deceased having been a hunter.

The Britons, also, sometimes erected a single stone in memory of the dead. Possibly the obelisk seen near the *cursus* (which has no inscription) may be a memorial of this nature, and if so, of very high antiquity: since, judging by two noble funeral obelisks of Romanized British chiefs (now preserved in our garden), I should imagine that, after the Romans had overrun Britain, and not before, the Britons inscribed their monumental stones and pillars. On this point, however, I shall have more to say when I come to the subject of inscribed stones

image of *Caer Sidi*, the *Zodiac*, or of the *Druidical temple*, formed of gems and set in gold." The device still may be seen upon old British coins. The hierarch presided in the *area of the altar*, which was guarded by the priests and drenched with human blood.



This Sketch represents the Obelisk, and a Circle near it, on Dartmoor.

found in this neighbourhood, both of the British and the Saxon period.

I have before noticed what a fine field Dartmoor must have afforded the Druids for the augury of birds; and as I do not wish to break in upon the extracts from Mr. Bray's Journals, that will supply matter for many of my letters, before I take my leave of the Druids, I wish to offer a few desultory remarks that will not, I trust, be found altogether misplaced. Certain it is that in this neighbourhood, and on the moor in particular, birds are still considered as ominous of good or evil, more especially of the latter; and no reasoning will operate with the people who have imbibed these prejudices from their infancy, to make them consider such opinions as an unhallowed credulity.

Augury, indeed, seems to have been a universal superstition even in the earliest ages; and I have always thought that, like most other heathenish

customs, it took its rise in truth; for surely it is not improbable that the dove of Noah bearing back to the ark the olive branch, in token of the flood having ceased, might have given birth to the confidence reposed in all auguries of the feathered tribes, a confidence which extended itself throughout the known world. The Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Gauls and Britons, and many other nations of antiquity, consulted the flight and appearance of birds. In Wales, the custom long held sway, and the bards sometimes celebrated these omens in their songs. Taliesin thus alludes to them, when he makes a priest say, "A cormorant approaches me with long wings. She assaults the *top stone* with her hoarse clamour: there is *wrath in the fates!* Let it burst through the stones! Contention is meet only amongst the grey wolves."

I have noticed, likewise, that there are certain springs on the moor which appear to have been considered with more than ordinary interest, such as Fitz's or Ficc's well. And where we find so many vestiges of Druidical antiquity, it is most natural to conclude that even these springs were held in veneration at a very remote period. Water, we know, was used for many sacred purposes by the Druids; it was in fact essential in many of their religious rites. The celebrated cauldron of Ceridwen (which, according to Davies, implied not a *single vessel* used for one simple purpose) was nothing more than water taken from a sacred fountain and impregnated with a decoction of certain potent herbs. The "cheerful and placid vervain" was chief amongst these; and this decoction was used, like the holy water of the Church of Rome, for

purification or sprinkling. The cauldron of Ceridwen was placed in two vessels within the circle, or temple, east and west, and the priests moved round them reciting hymns or prayers. Pliny bears testimony to the use of vervain: as he says it was used by the Druids in their sortilege or lots of divination. And Tacitus, also, gives a particular account of the manner in which the German priests practised this custom of casting lots. I cannot immediately find the passage; but, if I recollect right, he mentions branches or twigs, as well as *herbs*, being used in sortilege. Some of the latter it was likewise usual to gather near a sacred fountain.

The purposes to which the water secured in *rock basins*, as it fell from the clouds, might have been applied, has, I am aware, long been a subject of dispute with antiquaries. But it is not improbable that the water in the rock basins, like the disputed cromlechs, was applied to more purposes than merely that of lustration or sprinkling. My reason for thinking so is grounded on certain passages in the poems of the bards; and if we reject the writings of the bards as authorities, where shall we supply their place? We might surely with as much reason reject the authority of Froissart for the manners and customs of the middle ages. Taliesin speaks of the mystical water as being the fountain of his own inspiration; and Davies (whose profound learning in Celtic antiquity cannot be too highly appreciated) tells us that in a mythological tale, describing the initiation of that celebrated bard, the goddess Ceridwen prepared the water from the sacred rock, and placed in it her potent herbs that had been collected with due observance of the planetary hours.

Rocking or Logan stones are still found on Dartmoor, notwithstanding the havoc that has been made amongst them during so many ages. There can, I think, be no doubt that these stones were engines of cunning in the hands of the Druids; who most probably made the multitude believe that they possessed a power more than natural, and could alone be moved by miracle at the word of the priest. One of their tricks respecting the secret means of setting a logan in motion on Dartmoor was accidentally discovered by Mr. Bray, in a way so remarkable, that I shall forbear any other mention of it in this place, purposing, hereafter, to send you his own account of the circumstance. The logan was in all probability not only resorted to for the condemnation or acquittal of the accused, but the very threatening, the mere apprehension of its supernatural powers in the detection of guilt, might have led the criminal to a full confession of those offences with which he stood charged.

Amongst the British antiquities of the moor, I must not forget to mention the rude vestiges of its primitive bridges. They are indeed so remarkable, that any description must convey but a very imperfect idea of them; and if I could but enjoy health sufficient to allow me to execute the schemes I have in mind, these bridges would form one subject for the graphic illustrations I am desirous of attempting for my work; yet alas, I *fear* to say I *will* do anything, since I cannot depend upon myself even for one day's health.

The construction of these bridges is exceedingly simple, being nothing more than masses of granite piled horizontally, and thus forming the piers, on a

foundation of solid rock, that nature has planted in the midst of the stream. The piers being thus formed, the bridge is completed by huge slabs of moor stone laid across and supported from pier to pier. Some few of these picturesque and primitive bridges still remain entire; others are seen in ruins. It is not unlikely they are unique in their construction; at least I can say that though I have visited in England, South Wales, and Brittany, many places celebrated for Celtic remains, I have never yet seen anything like our ancient Dartmoor bridges. They appear to have been placed in those spots where, on ordinary occasions, stepping-stones would have answered the purpose: but the sudden and violent rains with which the moor is visited render stepping-stones very insufficient for the convenience or security of the passenger. No person but one who is accustomed to witness the sudden swell, the turmoil, rapidity and force of a river or torrent in a mountainous region, during heavy rains, can have the least idea of the violence with which a traveller, attempting to cross from rock to rock, would be carried off and overwhelmed by one false step or slip in his hazardous passage. So sudden, sometimes, is the rush and swell of our Dartmoor rivers in storms of rain, that immense masses of granite, generally standing aloft above the waters, will be in a moment covered with a sheet of foam that resembles those fearful breakers at sea which always indicate hidden and fatal reefs of rock.

On the moor, also, are several ancient trackways together with stream-works, of very high antiquity. Mr. Bray is disposed to consider them of the same date with the Druidical remains. The art of working

metals was known to the Britons; and the mines of Dartmoor, though now fallen into neglect, were for many successive ages worked with considerable profit. Leland mentions them; and Mr. Polwhele says, "we are informed from *records*, that all the old mines on Dartmoor are on its western side towards the Tamar; there are strong marks both of shode and stream works." Leland speaks of these, and adds that "they were wrought by violens of water." Mr. Polwhele is of opinion that the Damnonii carried on their tin-traffic with the Greeks of Marseilles, and that the port Ictis in all probability was the Isle of St. Nicholas in Plymouth Harbour.* I have heard (though I have never been fortunate enough to see any) that, in breaking into old mines in this neighbourhood, heads of axes and other antiquities made of flint have been found: flint indeed has been the primitive material for most implements, not only with the ancient Britons, but with uncivilized nations even to the present day.

Of any minute particulars respecting the commerce of the Damnonii, nothing, I believe, is known. Like that of the other kingdoms of Britain, it principally consisted in hides and tin. But as Tacitus expressly declares that Britain produced both gold and silver, as well as other metals, it is not improbable that, even so early as the Roman conquest, the silver mines of this neighbourhood were not unknown to the Britons. The silver of Devon, in later times, was held in high estimation. Edward III. derived from it such considerable benefit, that it assisted him to carry on his brilliant and chivalrous career in

* Pinkerton is of opinion that the Cassiterides did not mean exclusively the Scilly Isles, but also Great Britain.

France. These mines at one period were conducted by the Jews, who rendered them so flourishing, that the reigning monarch (if I remember right it was Edward II.) banished them the kingdom from motives of suspicion, as a reward for their skill, labour, and success. In the days of Elizabeth several veins were discovered; and that great princess, with her accustomed wisdom, pursued a very different policy to that of Edward II., for, finding her crown mines had fallen into neglect, and that foreigners understood the mining art better than the English, she invited and allured them from Germany and elsewhere, by liberal offers of reward, to pass over sea and teach their craft to the miners of Devon. A cup weighing 137 ounces was presented to the City of London by Sir Francis Bulmer; it was formed from the silver of the Coombe-Martin mines in the north of our county.

My letter has extended to such a length that I must forbear to add more, reserving for some future opportunity what I may have to say, not only about our Dartmoor minerals, but also concerning certain vestiges of ancient customs still found to linger, though in decay, amongst the peasantry of the moor; and, though last not least, a word or two respecting the life and adventures of those merry little pixies and fays, which, though never seen, are here still averred to have a local habitation as well as a name, and to do all those various petty acts of mischief, which, in a family, or amongst domestics, in other counties, have, whenever inquiry is made respecting them, "Nobody" for their author: not so is it in Devon; our "Somebody" is never wanting; and as it is a being who can slip through a keyhole, sail on

a moon-beam, and, quite independent of all locks and bolts, enter closets and cupboards at will. we are never at a loss to hear who it is that pilfers sweatmeats, or cracks cups and saucers, to the annoyance of staid old housekeepers, who may think that both should be held sacred, and that tea-cups, like hearts, were never made to be broken.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

And believe me ever most respectfully
and sincerely yours,

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER IX.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS :—Account of the Circles of Stone near Merrivale Bridge—Walls, or Stone Hedges, how formed on the Moor—Account of forty contiguous Circles of Stone—Traditionary account and vulgar error respecting the Circles near Merrivale Bridge—Plague at Tavistock in the year 1625—Temporary appropriation of the Circles at that period to a Market gave rise to the error—Borlase quoted; his opinion of the Circular Temples of the Britons—Further account of the Great Cursus near Merrivale Bridge—Barrow—Cromlech—Kistvaen, or Sepulchral Stone Cavity—Origin of the word Cromlech—Borlase again quoted—Obelisk near the Cursus—Hessery Tor—View from it—Curious Rock on the summit of the Tor answers in every respect to a Druidical Seat of Judgment—Rundle's Stone.

Ticarage, Tavistock, April 18th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

THIS evening, on looking over some notes made by my husband, at the time he first explored the western limits of Dartmoor, I find he notices, more particularly than I have done, the circles and cursus near Merrivale bridge. I think it will be better, therefore, before I enter on any other subject, to give you the following extract from his papers, as it will convey a more complete idea of those antiquities than you can have formed from my previous account of them.

“ October 7th, 1802.—This morning we paid a visit to the stone circles, which are about five miles from Tavistock, on the hill beyond Merrivale, or Merrivill, bridge, over the river Walkham. They

are on each side of the Moreton road, by which, indeed, two of them are intersected. The first (which, as well as many others, has been partly destroyed, in order to build a neighbouring stone hedge) is twenty feet in diameter. I here, perhaps, may be allowed to remark, that the hedges on Dartmoor are formed of stones piled on each other without any mortar, or even earth, to the height of about five feet. These walls are found better, in many respects, than any others; for, by admitting the winds through their interstices, they are not liable to be blown down by the storms which are here so tremendous; and, by being of so loose a texture, the cattle are afraid to come near, much more to break over them, for fear of their falling upon them.

“ Finding the circles were so numerous, I measured the remainder by the shorter method of pacing them. They consist in all of about forty: six being on the left side of the road, and the remainder on the other. The greater number of them are about eight paces in diameter, though one is sixty, in which are enclosed two or three small ones. This is about the centre of the whole. There are two or three of an oval form; many of them have two upright stones at the entrance, which is generally towards the south. The other stones are mostly placed on their edge, lengthways, and are frequently ranged in double rows. Within the largest circle is one of about eight paces, enclosing a much smaller, of which it forms a part. Close to it are some flat rocks, about a foot or two high. This was, perhaps, the central altar. Towards the north-east and south-west sides are two ill-defined circular lines of stone, which might probably be the circumvallation or boundary of the holy

precincts. Many of these circles have evidently been entirely destroyed for the sake of the stones. Foundations have been lately laid for two moor huts,* one of which will enclose a circle, and the other intersect one. Though they are generally about eight paces, a few are only three or four. Part of the spot chosen for these erections was a natural karn, or bed of stones; so that the greatest labour, perhaps, was clearing the ground. The areas of the circles are generally free from stones.

“The account given by tradition respecting these circles requires some notice here. I shall preface it with saying, that one of the four great plague years in London was 1625, in which about 35,000 of its inhabitants perished. And this is the year in which this fatal malady most raged at Tavistock. The burials in our register at that period amount to 522. On the following year they had decreased to 98; and on the preceding year (in the latter part of which it probably, in some degree, prevailed) they amounted but to 132; the very number, save one, that were buried in one month (namely September) in the year of this awful visitation. Of this, or a similar one, another memorial remains in these circles on Dartmoor, near Merrivale bridge (though they certainly are of far greater antiquity, and are either Druidical, or the vestiges of a Celtic town), for they are stated by tradition to be the enclosures in which, during the plague at Tavistock (that they might have no intercourse with its inhabitants), the country-people deposited the necessary supply of provisions, for which, within the same, the towns-people left their money.

* These, however, were never completed.

“That these circles may have been applied to this purpose is not improbable; particularly as the spot is still known (and, indeed, is so distinguished in some maps) by the name of the ‘Potato Market.’ Nor is it altogether improbable that it was during the plague in question. For the potato was first brought from Virginia by Sir Walter Raleigh (the contemporary, nay, fellow-soldier, of our great townsman, Sir Francis Drake, and himself also a native of Devonshire), ‘who, on his return homeward, in the year 1623, stopping at Ireland, distributed a number of potatoes in that kingdom. These having been planted multiplied accordingly; and in a few years the cultivation of them became general. It may be noticed that the discovery of this inestimable root has been of the greatest consequence to mankind, as it is now almost universally cultivated, though at first its introduction was very much opposed. It has been remarked that, with the greatest propriety, it may be denominated the *bread-root* of Great Britain and Ireland.’* Indeed by our neighbours, the French, it is called by a name, to which *earth-apple* would be synonymous in our own language.

“Nor is it, perhaps, to be wondered at, that the era of this cautious traffic should be no longer known, or almost as little remembered as the purposes to which these granite circles were originally applied. From our long immunity we have been induced to think that the plague was no more likely to return to us than the barbarous superstitions of our Celtic ancestors. But, of the sons of men, who shall say to the pestilence, ‘Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther?’

* Rees's Cyclopædia.

“It is absurd to imagine that any circles would be formed of such vast stones solely for the purpose of a market during the time of the plague, though, being on the spot, they might have been so applied. If they were designed only to be boundaries to distinguish the property of different persons, a circular line or trench, on some spot free from stones, might have been formed with greater ease. It has been suggested by some, that these enclosures were made to defend the flocks from the wolves. This idea, though more specious at first, is equally objectionable; for, if this were the case, they must have been built to some height, and, at least, parts of the walls must have remained in an erect position, or the ruins have been still found below. But this is not the case; not one stone, in most instances, being on the top of another.

“It is natural to conclude, then, that, like the other vestiges on the moor, they must have been the works of the Britons or the Druids; and this last conclusion will presently be supported by some other remains found near them, and which (after mentioning the purposes to which Druidical circles were applied) I shall endeavour to describe. They may be considered as temples or places set apart by the Druids for the purposes of religion. Borlase considers that ‘some might be employed for the sacrifice, and to prepare, kill, examine, and burn the victims.’ ‘Others,’ he conjectures, ‘might be allotted to prayer;’ for the station of those selected as the victims, and some for the feasting of the priests. Thus, whilst one Druid was preparing the victim in one circle, another might be engaged in his devotions, or in ‘describing the limits of his temple, and a third be

going his round at the extremity of another circle of stones. Nor is it unlikely that many other Druids were occupied in these mysterious evolutions. Some, perhaps, were busy in the rites of augury, and, at the same time, all employed, each in his proper place, in the ceremonials of idolatry, 'under the inspection of the high priests, who, by comparing and observing the indication of the whole, might judge of the will of the gods with the greater certainty.'

“The circles, above described, are on the slope of a hill. On the top of it, which spreads into a plain of some length, are two parallel double lines of stones, stretching south-west by north-east. The remains of a circle are at the commencement of one, where is also an erect stone. This line is 198 paces in length, at the end of which is a stone, now fallen, nine feet long. The stones that form the line are about two feet apart, and the same space exists between the two rows. From this to the opposite double line are thirty-six paces. The last is imperfectly extended to the length of seventy-four paces more; there are two stones, one erect, the other fallen. Returning from the point opposite the other, where is also a stone erect, after walking seventy-one paces, I came to a low circular mound which I conjecture is a barrow, with a kistvaen on the top of it. This I shall describe hereafter. From this circle, at the distance of forty-seven paces, I met with a large stone, which served as an index to a cromlech fourteen paces distant. Sixty-nine paces farther brought me to two large stones; and thirty paces from these I reached the end, where is a stone erect. Thus, including the additional line, this is 217 paces in length. To the other, which it here also somewhat

surpasses, are twenty-six paces; so that these lines of stone are ten paces nearer at the north-east end than they are at the other. But, considering the length, they may be looked upon as parallel. The area between, as well as the space without them, for some distance, is free from stones.

“ For what purpose this avenue, or *cursus*, was used it is now impossible to determine; though the several adjacent remains, known to have been frequently erected by the Druids, are a strong confirmation of the opinion, that it must have been the work of one and the same people and period. This avenue, which was probably subservient to religion, might possibly have been appropriated for the sacred processions of the priests. It might be used, also, to bear the funeral pomp of their departed brethren, as by the side of the south-west end of it is seen a circular heap of stones sixty-five paces round. This was probably a barrow, or place of burial. From the end of this line at the south-west, at the distance of seventy-one paces, we found another barrow, mentioned above. It is in the centre of the two lines, and is twelve feet in diameter. In the middle of it is a hollow in the form of a diamond, or lozenge, which is undoubtedly a *kistvaen*, or sepulchral stone cavity. It was almost concealed with moss, but, with some difficulty, we dug to the depth of three feet; and, discovering nothing, thought it useless to dig farther, as, in appearance, we had reached the natural stratum, which was of a clayey substance, below the black peat. It is probable that nothing was deposited there but ashes.

“ The cromlech which we afterwards visited is fallen, but bears evident signs of having been in an

erect position. This, also, is supposed to be a sepulchral monument. The word cromlech is derived from krum (crooked), and lèch (a flat stone); as it consists of a flat stone, generally of a gibbous or convex form, supported on other stones in an erect position.

“Many are the opinions respecting cromlechs. Borlase says, ‘that the use and intent of them was primarily to distinguish and do honour to the dead, and also to enclose the dead body, by placing the supporters and covering-stone, so as they should surround it on all sides.’ The quoit or covering-stone of this on the moor, one end of it being buried in the ground, is ten feet and a half long, six feet and a half wide, and one foot and a half thick. Under it are three or four stones now lying prostrate, but undoubtedly they formerly were in an erect position, as its supporters.

“At some distance, towards the south of the parallel lines, is a circle of nine low stones, twelve paces in diameter, rising from the smooth surface of the ground. Near it is an erect stone ten feet and a half high. From its connexion with the circle it was probably placed there by the Druids, and might have been one of their idols. At some distance from the other end of the parallel lines we perceived some stone posts about five or six feet high, stretching in a line to the south-east, but having no connexion with what has been described. On going up to them we found on one side the letter T, and on the other A. On inquiring afterwards, we learnt that they served as guide-posts from Tavistock to Ashburton, before the turnpike-road was made over the moor.

“We next visited two tors to the south, but saw nothing worthy remark, and then turning to the east ascended Hessory Tor, which is six miles from Tavistock, and is reckoned the highest part of the forest. There we had a most extensive view in every direction. The sea was visible over the summits of the lofty tors towards the south and south-west. Towards the north-west, also, we thought we could distinguish it, as we perceived an horizon evidently too straight to be land. On the top of this tor is a curious rock, which, from its shape, I should be inclined to think was not unknown to the Druids. Its front, towards the south-east, was thirty-two feet. At the height of eight feet from the ground are two canopies, projecting nine feet. At the distance of eight feet is a kind of buttress, twenty in length, and four in height. It answers in every respect to the idea we entertain of a Druidical seat of judgment. Descending to the road we reached it near a high stone post, which is commonly called Rundell’s stone. This is considered as the boundary of the forest, and the letter B on the south side of it may refer to the limits of the moor.”

Having given you this extract from Mr. Bray’s papers, I forbear to add more to this letter, than that

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

LETTER X.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Bogs on the Moor, called Dartmoor Stables—Mists on the Moor, their density—Popular belief among the Peasantry of being *Pixy-led*—Fairies and Pixies of the Moor—Lines from Drayton—Fairies of older date in Britain than the times of the Crusaders, Duergar or Dwarf—Their origin by some attributed to the Lamiaë—Fosbrook's Opinion quoted respecting their origin with the Nations of the North—Their peculiar Character—Druids supposed to worship Fairies—Derivation of the word *Pixy*—Pixies a distinct genus from Fairies—Said in Devon to be the Souls of Children who die unbaptized—The reputed Nature, Character, and Sports of Pixies—Traditional Tales respecting them—A Pixy bribed with fine clothes—Said to change Children in the Cradle—Story of a Changeling—Pixy Houses, where found—Lines from Drayton's *Nymphidia*—Conrade and Phœbe, a Fairy Tale in verse, by the Rev. E. A. Bray, quoted—The wild waste of Dartmoor haunted by Spirits and Pixies—Causes assigned by the Peasantry for these Spirits not being so common as in former days—Pixy-led folk—Their distresses—Turning Jackets and Petticoats, a practice to prevent the disaster—A Tale of an Old Woman and the Pixies, very faithfully recorded, as handed down by Tradition to modern times—Another Tale, not less wonderful, concerning two Damsels—Legend of the Old Woman, the Tulip-bed, and the gratitude of Pixies.

Ficarage, Tavistock, April 24th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I BELIEVE I have not yet said much about our bogs on the moor, which, from some luckless horse or other being now and then lost in them, have obtained, as their popular name, that of the Dartmoor Stables. These bogs in old times must have been exceedingly formidable and perilous; since, to borrow an expression from the poetaster

who celebrated the roads of General Wade in the Highlands, I may truly say of the moor, "had you travelled its roads before they were made," you would have blessed the good fortune that enabled you to cross such a wilderness without being lost. For even now that we have a passage through it, which displays all the happy results of Mr. Mac Adam's genius, yet, nevertheless, if a mist suddenly comes on, the stranger feels no small apprehension for his own safety.

Mr. Bray assures me that when he used, in early life, to follow up with enthusiasm his researches on the moor, not heeding the weather, he has frequently been suddenly surprised and enveloped in such a dense mist, or rather cloud, that he literally could scarcely see the ears of the animal on which he rode. Once or twice he was in some peril by getting on boggy ground, when his horse, more terrified than himself, would shake and tremble in every joint, and become covered with foam, from the extreme agony of fear. If such adventures have now and then happened, even in these latter days, how far more frequently must they have occurred, when there was no regular road whatever across the moor! How often a traveller, if he escaped with life, must have wandered about for hours in such a wilderness, before he could fall into any known or beaten track, to lead him from his perils towards the adjacent town of Tavistock, or the villages with which it is surrounded!

I mention this because I think there cannot be a doubt that similar distresses gave rise to the popular belief still existing, not only on the moor, but throughout all this neighbourhood, that whenever a person loses his way he is neither more nor less than

“*Pixy-led.*” And as I wish to give you in this letter some little variety of subject, suppose we leave for a while the old Druids and their mystic circles, and say something about the fairies or pixies of the moor; though, as I shall presently state, and give my reasons for so doing, I consider the latter to be a distinct race of genii from the former. You are a poet, and have, therefore, no doubt a very friendly feeling towards those little pleasant elves that have supplied you with many a wild and fanciful dream of fairy land. You will listen, then, with good will to one who proposes, in this letter, to become the faithful historian of sundry freaks and adventures they are said to have played off in our neighbourhood, the remembrance of which, without such record, might become lost to posterity; and as fairies or pixies often do as much mischief in their supreme career as greater personages, I do not see why they should not claim some celebrity as well as other spirits of evil, who may have exhibited their achievements on a larger and more important scale. To borrow an expression from Drayton, that exquisite poet of fairy land (who, perhaps, is not inferior even to Shakspeare for the frolics of his *Pigwiggin*, in the *Nymphidia*), I would say that, as no historian has here been found to record the acts of our pixies, I, unworthy as I may be to accomplish the task, will, nevertheless, adventure it—

“For since no muse hath been so bold,
 Or of the latter, or the old,
 Their elvish secrets to unfold,
 Which lie from other’s reading,
 My active muse to light shall bring
 The court of a proud fairy king,
 And tell there of the revelling;
 Jove prosper my proceeding.”

However, as I wish to model my historical records of the pixies on the very best examples, I shall bear in mind that it is usual in all grave histories, before reciting the heroic or other actions of individuals, to say something of the origin, rise and progress of the people to whom they belong. Thus, then, before I relate the frolics of

“ Hop and Mop, and Drop so clear,
Pip, and Trip, and Skip, that were
To Mab, their sovereign dear,
Her special maids of honour,”

it may not be amiss to tell what I have been able to glean about the accredited opinions and traditions concerning the fairy race in general, ere we come to particulars. And who knows but such a task may be more liberally rewarded than is usual with luckless authors, even by—

“ A bright silver tester fine
All dropt into my shoe.”

Dr. Percy gives it as his opinion that these “elves and demi-puppets” are of much older date in this country than the time of the crusaders, to whom some writers have referred their introduction on British ground. This opinion receives no small confirmation from the known credulity and numberless superstitions of the Anglo-Saxons. Amongst other wonders of the unseen world of spirits, they believed in the existence of a certain race of little devils, that were neither absolutely spirits nor men, called *Duergar*, or dwarfs; and to whose cunning and supernatural skill they attributed sundry petty acts of good or evil that far exceeded the power of man. They were considered so far to partake of

human nature, that their bodies were material, though so light and airy, that they could at will pass through any other created substance, and become indistinct and even invisible to the sight.

Some writers have affirmed that the fairies derive their origin from the lamiaë, whose province it was to steal and misuse new-born infants; and others class them with the fauns or sylvan deities of antiquity. And a very learned and meritorious author* considers that the superstition respecting fays is founded on the Abrunæ of the northern nations, *i.e.* their penates. Amongst the ancient Germans, he states, they were merely images made of the roots of the hardest plants, especially the mandragora. These little images were about six or seven inches or a foot high. They mostly represented females or Druidesses; and remind us of a child's doll of modern days. They were usually kept in a little box, and offered meat and drink by their possessors: occasionally they were taken out and consulted in the telling of fortunes; when, not improbably, being managed by some wire or machinery like the puppets that now delight childhood, they would bow their heads and raise their arms in answer to a question. These penates were considered as lucky for the household in which they had their abode; and they were held to have a marvellous power in the cure of diseases or pains.

The Druids are supposed to have worshipped fairies, amongst their many deities; and certain it is they are often mentioned by the most ancient Welsh

* The Rev. Thomas Dudley Fosbroke, in his excellent and laborious work, the "Encyclopædia of Antiquities," gives a very interesting account of the fairies of different nations.

bards, by whom they were called “the spirits of the hills.” There can be no doubt that these little beings were considered as a race of genii by the northern nations as the *Duergi* or *pigmies*. May not this have given origin to the word *pixies*, the name by which they are to this day known in the west of England? Brand’s derivation seems improbable.* The *pixies* are certainly a distinct race from the fairies; since, to this hour, the elders amongst the more knowing peasantry of Devon will invariably tell you (if you ask them what *pixies* really may be) that these native spirits are the souls of infants, who were so unhappy as to die before they had received the Christian rite of baptism.

These tiny elves are said to delight in solitary places, to love pleasant hills and pathless woods; or to disport themselves on the margins of rivers and mountain streams. Of all their amusements, dancing forms their chief delight; and this exercise they are said always to practise, like the Druids of old, in a circle or ring. Browne, our Tavistock poet, alludes to this custom, when he writes—

A pleasant mead,
Where fairies often did their measures tread,
Which in the meadows make such circles green.

These dainty beings, though represented as of exceeding beauty in their higher or aristocratic order, are nevertheless, in some instances, of strange, uncouth and fantastic figure and visage: though such natural deformity need give them very little

* He says, “I suspect *pixy* to be a corruption of *puckes*, which anciently signified little better than the devil, whence in Shakspeare the epithet of ‘sweet’ is given to Puck by way of qualification.” Surely *pixy* is more like *pigmy* than “*puckes*.”



uncasiness, since they are traditionally averred to possess the power of assuming various shapes at will; a power of which Ariel exhibits a specimen, who, as well as being able to "ride on the curled clouds," to "flame amazement," and to mock and mislead the drunken Trinculo and his companions, could transform himself into a harpy, and clean off a banquet with his wings. But whatever changes the outward figure of fairies may undergo, they are, amongst themselves, as constant in their fashions as a Turk; their dress never varies, it is always green.

Their love of dancing is not unaccompanied with that of music, though it is often of a nature somewhat different to those sounds which human ears are apt to consider harmonious. In Devonshire, that unlucky omen, the cricket's cry, is to them as animating and as well timed as the piercing notes of the fife, or the dulcet melody of rebec or flute, to mortals. The frogs sing their double bass, and the screech owl is to them like an aged and favoured minstrel piping in hall. The grasshopper, too, chirps with his merry note in the concert, and the humming bee plays "his hautbois" to their tripping on the green; as the small stream, on whose banks they hold their sports, seems to share their hilarity, and talks and dances as well as they in emulation of the revelry; whilst it shows through its crystal waters a gravelly bed as bright as burnished gold, the jewel-house of fairy land; or else the pretty stream lies sparkling in the moonbeam, for no hour is so dear to pixy revels as that in which man sleeps, and the queen of night, who loves not his mortal gaze, becomes a watcher.

It is under the cold and chaste light of her beams,

or amidst the silent shadows of the dark rocks, where that light never penetrates, that on the moor the elfin king of the pixy race holds his high court of sovereignty and council. There each pixy receives his especial charge: some are sent, like the spirit Gathon of Cornwall, to work the will of his master in the mines; to show by sure signs where lies the richest lode; or sometimes to delude the unfortunate miner, who may not be in favour, with false fires, and to mock his toils, by startling him with sounds within the bed of the rocks, that seem to repeat, stroke for stroke, the fall of the hammer which he wields, whilst his labours are repaid by the worst ore in the vein; and then the elfin will mock his disappointment with a wild laugh, and so leave him to the silence and solitude of his own sad thoughts, and to those fears of a power more than natural, not the less apprehended, because it takes no certain or distinct form, and is liable to be regulated by so much wanton caprice. Other pixies are commissioned on better errands than these; since, nice in their own persons, for they are the avowed enemies of all sluts or idlers, they sally forth to see if the maidens do their duty with mop and broom; and if these cares are neglected—

“ To pinch the maids as blue as bilberry,
For Mab, fair queen, hates sluts and sluttery.”

The good dames in this part of the world are very particular in sweeping their houses before they go to bed, and they will frequently place a basin of water by the chimney nook, to accommodate the pixies, who are great lovers of water; and sometimes they requite the good deed by dropping a piece of money into the

basin. A young woman of our town, who declared she had received the reward of sixpence for a like service, told the circumstance to her gossips; but no sixpence ever came again; and it was generally believed the pixies had taken offence by her chattering, as they like not to have their deeds, good or evil, talked over by mortal tongues.

Many a pixy is sent out on works of mischief, to deceive the old nurses and steal away young children, or to do them harm. This is noticed by Ben Jonson in his "Masque of Queens."

"Under a cradle I did creep
By day; and, when the childe was a-sleepe
At night, I suck'd the breath; and rose
And pluck'd the nodding nurse by the nose."

Many, also, bent solely on mischief, are sent forth to lead poor travellers astray, to deceive them with those false lights called Will-o'-the-wisp, or to guide them a fine dance in trudging home through woods and waters, through bogs and quagmires, and every peril; or, as Robin Goodfellow says, to

"Mislead night wanderers, laughing at their harms."

Others, who may be said to content themselves with a practical joke, and who love frolic more than mischief, will merely make sport by blowing out the candles on a sudden, or kissing the maids "with a smack," as they "shriek out who's this?" as the old poet writes, till their grandams come in, and lecture them for allowing unseemly freedoms with their bachelors. Some are dispatched to frolic or make noises in wells; and the more gentle and kindly of the race will spin flax and help their favourite damsels to do their work. I have heard a story about an old woman in this town,

who suspected she received assistance of the above nature, and one evening coming suddenly into the room, she spied a ragged little creature, who jumped out at the door. She thought she would try still further to win the services of her elfin friend; and so bought some smart new clothes, as big as those made for a doll. These pretty things she placed by the side of her wheel: the pixy returned and put them on; when clapping her tiny hands in joy, she was heard to exclaim these lines (for pixies are so poetical, they always talk in rhyme),—

Pixy fine, pixy gay,
Pixy now will run away.

And off she went; but the ungrateful little creature never spun for the poor old woman after.

The wicked and thievish elves, who are all said to be squint-eyed, are dispatched on the dreadful errand of changing children in the cradle. In such cases (so say our gossips in Devon) the pixies use the stolen child just as the mortal mother may happen to use the changeling dropped in its stead. I have been assured that mothers, who credited these idle tales, (and it must be allowed they are very poetical and amusing,) have been known sometimes to pin their children to their sides in order to secure them; though even this precaution has proved vain, so cunning are the elves. I heard a story not long ago, about a woman who lived and died in this town, and who most solemnly declared that her mother had a child that was changed by the pixies, whilst she, good dame, was busied in hanging out some linen to dry in her garden. She almost broke her heart on discovering the cheat, but took the greatest

care of the changeling; which so pleased the pixy mother, that some time after she returned the stolen child, who was ever after very lucky.

A pixy house (and presently I shall give an account of a grand one which Mr. Bray visited at Sheep's Tor) is often said to be in a rock: sometimes, however, a mole-hill is a palace for the elves; or a hollow nut, cracked by the "joiner squirrel," will contain the majesty of pixy land. And Drayton, who writes of these little poetical beings as if he were the chosen laureate of their race, thus describes their royal dwelling:

"The walls of spiders legs are made,
Well morticed and finely laid,
He was the master of his trade
It curiously that builded:
The windows of the eyes of cats,
And for a roof, instead of slats,
Is cover'd with the skins of bats,
With moonshine that are gilded."

And then for the royal equipage of fairy land we have the following beautiful description; which is so similar to that of Shakspeare's Queen Mab, that we are almost tempted to conclude, either that Drayton borrowed from Shakspeare, or our great dramatist from him: both, it will be recollected, wrote and died in the reign of James I.

"Her chariot ready straight is made,
Each thing therein is fitting laid,
That she by nothing might be staid,
For nought must be her letting:
Four nimble gnats the horses were,
Their harnesses of gossamere,
Fly Cranion, her charioteer,
Upon the coach-box getting."

Her chariot of a snail's fine shell,
 Which for the colours did excell,
 The fair Queen Mab becoming well,
 So lively was the linning ;
 The seat the soft wool of the bee,
 The cover (gallantly to see)
 The wing of a pied butterflee,
 I trow, 'twas simple trimming !
 The wheels composed of crickets' bones,
 And daintily made for the nonce,
 For fear of rattling on the stones,
 With thistle-down they shod it :
 For all her maidens much did fear
 If Oberon had chanced to hear
 That Mab his queen should have been there,
 He would not have abode it.'

Her attendants are thus mounted :—

“ Upon a grass-hopper they got,
 And what with amble and with trot,
 For hedge nor ditch they spared not,
 But after her they hie them ;
 A cobweb over them they throw,
 To shield the wind if it should blow,
 Themselves they wisely could bestow,
 Lest any should espy them.”

I know not how it is, but Drayton seems to have fallen into sad neglect ; yet, let any one but open his fairy tale of *Pigwiggin*, and if he can close the book before reading it to an end, that man must have but little poetry in his soul. In the legend of the Owl, also, though somewhat tedious, perhaps, at the commencement, the terse and animated manner in which, in a few lines, he paints the character of the various birds, is such as White, the immortal author of “*Selborne*,” would have fully appreciated, had he had the good luck to be acquainted with that poem.

Before I quit the subject of fairy verse, I cannot resist observing, that Mr. Bray, when a mere youth,

was so much delighted with the pixy lore of his native country, that he wrote some elfin tales; which, if I may be allowed to say so, would not have disgraced an older or more practised poet. He then had never seen the works of Drayton: but in one of the tales, called "Conrade and Phœbe" (which I would give here, but he says it is too long for my letter), I find the following description of a fairy car, that I think bears some resemblance to the *spirit* of Drayton, and, I feel assured, will not displease you. The elfin queen is about to transport Conrade, an unfortunate, but favoured mortal, to recover his lost mistress:—

“ Her iv’ry wand aloft she rears,
 And sudden from the sky appears
 A silver car in view;
 By dragons drawn, whose scales were gold;
 It lighten’d as their eyes they roll’d,
 And through the ether flew.

With Conrade in the car she springs,
 The dragons spread their radiant wings,
 And, when she slacks the reins,
 Swifter than lightning upward rise;
 Then dart along the yielding skies,
 And spurn the earthly plains.

Her train, as dew-drops of the morn,
 Suspended on the flow’ry thorn,
 Hang round the flying car;
 Young Conrade, though he soar’d on high,
 Still downward bent his wond’ring eye,
 And view’d the earth afar.

As oft the eagle, ’mid the skies,
 Below a timid dove espies,
 And darts to seize his prey,
 The dragons thus, at length, no more
 With heads to heaven directed soar,
 But earthward bend their way.”

However, I am digressing, and talking about Drayton and my husband, when I ought to be "telling about nothing but a real pisgic tale," as the children say here, when they sit round the fire and listen to the legends of their grandmothers. In collecting these anecdotes respecting the pixy race, I must acknowledge my obligations to Mary Colling, the amiable young woman whose little verses you so kindly noticed, and whose artless attempts have also been so favourably received by her friends and the public.* Mary, to oblige me, chatted with the village gossips, or listened to their long stories; and the information thus gained was no small addition to my own stock of traditions and tales "of the olden time." Some of these will be given in the course of my letters to Keswick, though a few I must hold back, because, having already commenced (though I know not if I shall ever find health sufficient to complete it) a series of tales of the west, *founded on tradition*, of which "Fitz of Fitzford" was the first, I must not spoil what little interest I may raise in any such works, by telling the leading point of the story beforehand; a custom which, though rendered popular by a great and successful example, injures, perhaps, the interest of what follows in the narrative. For this reason you will not have the legend of *Warleigh* in these letters, as I have finished my tale founded upon it, and hope when I get better to make some arrangements to enable me to send it to you in print; and I fear the legend of *Cotele* must be withheld for the same purpose. But as I presume not to encroach upon fairy land, all the pixy

* See *Fables and other Pieces in Verse*, by Mary Maria Colling; published by Longman and Co., London.

tales I can gather shall be at your service; and here follow some of them.

It is reported that in days of yore, as well as in the present time, the wild waste of Dartmoor was much haunted by spirits and pixies in every direction; and these frequently left their own especial domain to exercise their mischievous propensities and gambols even in the town of Tavistock itself, though it was then guarded by its stately abbey, well stocked with monks, who made war on the pixy race with "bell, book, and candle" on every opportunity. And it is also averred, that the devil (who, if not absolutely the father, is assuredly the ally of all mischief) gave the pixies his powerful aid in all matters of delusion; and would sometimes carry his audacity so far as to encroach even upon the venerable precincts of the abbey grounds, always, however, carefully avoiding the holy water; a thing which, like the touch of Ithuriel's spear to the toad in Paradise, would infallibly transform him from any outward seeming into his own proper shape and person. But of late years the good people here affirm (though I know not why they should do so, but as an historian I am bound to be faithful, and to give facts rather than comments), that, by means of the clergy being more learned than formerly, and the burial service being so much enlarged to what it was in other days, the spirits are more closely bound over to keep the peace, and the pixies are held tolerably fast, and conjured away to their own domains.

The pixies, however much they may have been deified by the Druids, or northern nations, were never, I believe, considered as saints in any Ca-

tholic calendar; though it is affirmed that they have so great a respect for a church that they never come near one. Some very good sort of people, calling themselves Christians, do the same even in these days: but whether it be from so respectful a motive, is perhaps somewhat questionable. Pixies, then, are said to congregate together, even by thousands, in some of those wild and desolate places where there is no church. Various are the stories told about these noted personages: amongst others, that in a field near Down-house, there is a pit which the pixies, not very long ago, appropriated for their ball-room. There, in the depth of night, the owl, who probably stood as watchman to the company, would hoot between whiles; and sounds, such as never came from mortal voice or touch, would float in the air, making "marvellous sweet music;" whilst the "elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves," would whirl in giddy round, making those "rings, whereof the ewe not bites," that have for ages puzzled the conjectures of the wisest and most grave philosophers, to account for them according to the natural order of things.

Whitchurch Down (a favourite ride with me and my pony; for it sometimes is a hard matter to get him into any other road,—but of his adventures and my own more hereafter) is said to be very famous for the peril there incurred, of being *pixy-led*: for there many an honest yeoman and stout farmer, especially if he should happen to take a cup too much, is very apt to lose his way; and whenever he does so, he will declare, and offer to take his Bible oath upon it, "That as sure as ever he's alive to tell it, whilst his head was running round like a mill-

wheel, he heard with his own ears they bits of pisgies, a laughing and a *tacking* their hands, all to see he led astray, and never able to find the right road, tho' he had travelled it scores of times long ago, by night or by day, as a body might tell." And many good old folks relate the same thing, and how pisgies delight to lead the aged a wandering about after dark.

But as most evils set men's wits to work to find out a remedy for them, even so have we found out ours in this part of the world against such provoking injuries. For whosoever finds himself or herself pixy-led, has nothing more to do than to turn jacket, petticoat, pocket, or apron inside out, and a pixy, who hates the sight of any impropriety in dress, cannot stand this; and off the imp goes, as if, according to the vulgar saying, he had been "sent packing with a flea in his ear." Now this turning of jackets, petticoats, &c., being found so good as a remedy, was, like a quack doctor's potion, held to be excellent as a preventive: and as some good mother may now and then be prevailed with to give her darling Doctor Such-a-one's panacea to keep off a disease before it makes its appearance, even so do our good old towns-folk practise this turning inside out, ere they venture on a walk after sun-down, near any suspected place, as a certain preventive against being led astray by a pixy. But pray listen to a tale that is as true (so at least I am assured), aye, as true as most tales that are told by gossips over the "yule clog," to make the neighbours merry or sad on a Christmas-eve.

Once upon a time there was, in this celebrated

town, a Dame Somebody, I do not know her name, and as she is a real character, I have no right to give her a fictitious one. All I with truth can say, is, that she was old, and nothing the worse for that; for age is, or ought to be, held in honour as the source of wisdom and experience. Now this good old woman lived not in vain, for she had passed her days in the useful capacity of a nurse; and as she approached the term of going out of the world herself, she was still useful in her generation, by helping others into it—she was, in fact, the *Sage-femme* of the village; for though I have the utmost dislike to mixing up French, or any foreign words, with the good, plain English of my native land, I here for once venture on a French expression, because it is, in certain particulars, considered as a refinement so much in fashion, that I must not venture to neglect it.

One night, about twelve o'clock in the morning, as the good folks say who tell this tale, Dame Somebody had just got comfortably into bed, when rap, rap, rap came on her cottage door, with such bold, loud, and continued noise, that there was a sound of authority in every individual knock. Startled and alarmed by the call, she arose from her bed, and soon learnt that the summons was a hasty one to bid her attend on a patient who needed her help. She opened her door; when the summoner appeared to be a strange, squint-eyed, little, ugly, old fellow, who had a look, as she said, very like a certain dark personage, who ought not at all times to be called by his proper name. Not at all prepossessed in favour of the errand by the visage of the messenger,

she nevertheless could not, or dared not resist the command to follow him straight, and attend upon "his wife."

"Thy wife!" thought the good dame: "Heaven forgive me; but as sure as I live I be going to the birth of a little divel." A large coal-black horse, with eyes like balls of fire, stood at the door. The ill-looking old fellow, without more ado, whisked her up on a high pillion in a minute, seated himself before her, and away went horse and riders, as if sailing through the air, rather than trotting on the ground. How Dame Somebody got to the place of her destination she could not tell; but it was a great relief to her fears when she found herself set down at the door of a neat cottage, saw a couple of tidy children, and remarked her patient to be a decent-looking woman, having all things about her fitting the time and the occasion.

A fine, bouncing babe soon made its appearance, who seemed very bold on its entry into life, for it gave the good dame a box on the ear, as, with the coaxing and cajolery of all good old nurses, she declared the "sweet little thing to be very like its father." The mother said nothing to this, but gave nurse a certain ointment with directions that she should "strike the child's eyes with it." Now you must know that this word *strike* in our Devonshire vocabulary, does not exactly mean to give a blow, but rather what is opposite, to rub, smooth down, or touch gently. The nurse performed her task, though she thought it an odd one: and as it is nothing new that old nurses are generally very curious, she wondered what it could be for; and thought that, as no doubt it was a good thing, she might just as

well try it upon her own eyes as well as those of the baby; so she made free to strike one of them by way of trial; when, O! ye powers of fairy land, what a change was there!

The neat, but homely cottage, and all who were in it, seemed all on a sudden to undergo a mighty transformation; some for the better, some for the worse. The new-made mother appeared as a beautiful lady attired in white; the babe was seen wrapped in swaddling clothes of a silvery gauze. It looked much prettier than before, but still maintained the elfish cast of the eye, like his redoubted father: whilst two or three children more had undergone a metamorphosis as uncouth as that recorded by Ovid when the Cercopians were transformed into apes. For there sat on either side the bed's head, a couple of little flat-nosed imps, who with "mops and mows," and with many a grimace and grin, were "busied to no end" in scratching their own polls, or in pulling the fairy lady's ears with their long and hairy paws.

The dame, who beheld all this, fearing she knew not what in the house of enchantment, got away as fast as she could, without saying one word about "striking" her own eye with the magic ointment, and what she had beheld in consequence of doing so.* The sour-looking old fellow once more handed her up on the coal-black horse, and sent her home in a *whip-sissa*. Now what a whip-sissa means is more than I can tell, though I consider myself to be tole-

* It has been the popular belief of all ages that no mortal can see a fairy without his eyes being rubbed with a magic ointment. Cornelius Agrippa, if I remember right, though it is long since I have seen his book, gives a very amusing receipt for compounding such a salve.

rably well acquainted with the tongues of this "West Countrie." It may mean, perhaps, "Whip, says he," in allusion to some gentle intimation being feelingly given by the rider to the horse's sides with a switch, that he should use the utmost dispatch; but my derivation of the word, like that of some better etymologists on difficult occasions, may be a little far fetched; I, therefore, leave the point to be settled by the learned. Certain it is, the old woman returned home much faster than she went. But mark the event.

On the next market-day, when she sallied forth to sell her eggs, who should she see but the same, wicked-looking old fellow, busied, like a rogue as he was, in pilfering sundry articles from stall to stall.

"O! ho!" thought the dame, "have I caught you, you old thief? But I'll let you see I could set master mayor and the two town constables on your back, if I chose to be telling." So up she went, and with that bold free sort of air, which persons, who have learnt secrets that ought not to be known, are apt to assume when they address any great rogue hitherto considered as a superior, she inquired carelessly after his wife and child, and hoped both were as well as could be expected.

"What!" exclaimed the old pixy thief, "do you see me to day?"

"See you! to be sure I do, as plain as I see the sun in the skies; and I see you are busy into the bargain."

"Do you so!" cried he: "Pray with which eye do you see all this?"

"With the right eye to be sure."

"The ointment! the ointment!" exclaimed the

old fellow: "take that for meddling with what did not belong to you—you shall see me no more."

He struck her eye as he spoke, and from that hour till the day of her death she was blind on the right side; thus dearly paying for having gratified an idle curiosity in the house of a pixy.

One or two stories more shall suffice for the present; for you know that queen of story-tellers, the great Scheherazade, always made it a point to hold something in reserve to disarm the wrath of the sultan in an hour of peril. And though I do not think there is so much danger of losing my head (and I certainly am not good enough to write without it), as there may be that you should lose your patience, yet I will even try once more which shall tire first, you in reading, or I in relating, in this letter, the very true and faithful history of all the wonders, both natural and supernatural, of our never-sufficiently-to-be-celebrated county and its pixies. And the following tale may somewhat remind you of a merry little rogue, who, if he was not immortal before, has certainly been rendered so by Shakespeare—Robin Goodfellow. It is not unlike one of his pranks.

Two serving damsels of this place declared, as an excuse, perhaps, for spending more money than they ought upon finery, that the pixies were very kind to them, and would often drop silver for their pleasure into a bucket of fair water, which they placed for the accommodation of those little beings every night, in the chimney corner, before they went to bed. Once, however, it was forgotten; and the pixies, finding themselves disappointed by an empty bucket, whisked up stairs to the maid's bed-room, popped through

the key-hole, and began in a very audible tone to exclaim against the laziness and neglect of the damsels.

One of them who lay awake, and heard all this, jogged her fellow-servant, and proposed getting up immediately to repair the fault of omission: but the lazy girl, who liked not being disturbed out of a comfortable nap, pettishly declared "that, for her part, she would not stir out of bed to please all the pixies in Devonshire." The good-humoured damsel, however, got up, filled the bucket, and was rewarded by a handful of silver pennies found in it the next morning. But, ere that time had arrived, what was her alarm, as she crept towards the bed, to hear all the elves in high and stern debate, consulting as to what punishment should be inflicted on the lazy lass who would not stir for their pleasure.

Some proposed "pinches, nips, and bobs," others to spoil her new cherry-coloured bonnet and ribands. One talked of sending her the tooth ache, another of giving her a red nose: but this last was voted a too severe and vindictive punishment for a pretty young woman. So, tempering mercy with justice, the pixies were kind enough to let her off with a lame leg, which was so to continue only for seven years, and was alone to be cured by a certain herb, growing on Dartmoor, whose long and learned and very difficult name the elfin judge pronounced in a high and audible voice. It was a name of seven syllables, seven being also the number of years decreed for the chastisement.

The good-natured maid, wishing to save her fellow damsel so long a suffering, tried with might and main to bear in mind the name of this potent herb. She

said it over and over again, tied a knot in her garter at every syllable, as a help to memory then very popular, and thought she had the word as sure as her own name; and very possibly felt much more anxious about retaining the one than the other. At length she dropt asleep, and did not wake till the morning. Now, whether her head might be like a sieve, that lets out as fast as it takes in, or if the over-exertion to remember might cause her to forget, cannot be determined; but certain it is, when she opened her eyes, she knew nothing at all about the matter, excepting that Molly was to go lame on her right leg for seven long years, unless a herb with a strange name could be got to cure her. And lame she went for nearly the whole of that period.

At length (it was about the end of the time), a merry, squint-eyed, queer-looking boy, started up one fine summer day, just as she went to pluck a mushroom, and came tumbling, head over heels, towards her. He insisted on striking her leg with a plant which he held in his hand. From that moment she got well; and lame Molly, as a reward for her patience in suffering, became the best dancer in the whole town at the celebrated festivities of May day on the green.

The following tale will be the last I shall send in this letter: it would afford, perhaps, a good subject for poetry.

Near a pixy field in this neighbourhood, there lived on a time an old woman who possessed a cottage and a very pretty garden, wherein she cultivated a most beautiful bed of tulips. The pixies, it is traditionally averred, so delighted in this spot, that they would carry their elfin babies thither, and sing them

to rest. Often, at the dead hour of the night, a sweet lullaby was heard, and strains of the most melodious music would float in the air, that seemed to owe their origin to no other musicians than the beautiful tulips themselves; and whilst these delicate flowers waved their heads to the evening breeze, it sometimes seemed as if they were marking time to their own singing. As soon as the elfin babies were lulled asleep by such melodies, the pixies would return to the neighbouring field, and there commence dancing, making those rings on the green, which showed, even to mortal eyes, what sort of gambols had occupied them during the night season.

At the first dawn of light, the watchful pixies once more sought the tulips, and, though still invisible, they could be heard kissing and caressing their babies. The tulips, thus favoured by a race of genii, retained their beauty much longer than any other flowers in the garden; whilst, though contrary to their nature, as the pixies breathed over them, they became as fragrant as roses; and so delighted at all this was the old woman who possessed the garden, that she never suffered a single tulip to be plucked from its stem.

At length, however, she died; and the heir who succeeded her destroyed the enchanted flowers, and converted the spot into a parsley bed, a circumstance which so disappointed and offended the pixies, that they caused it to wither away; and, indeed, for many years, nothing would grow in the beds of the whole garden. But these sprites, though eager in resenting an injury, were, like most warm spirits, equally capable of returning a benefit; and if they destroyed the product of the good old woman's garden, when it

had fallen into unworthy hands, they tended the bed that wrapped her clay with affectionate solicitude. For they were heard lamenting and singing sweet dirges around her grave; nor did they neglect to pay this mournful tribute to her memory every night before the moon was at the full; for then their high solemnity of dancing, singing, and rejoicing took place, to hail the queen of the night on completing her silver circle in the skies. No human hand ever tended the grave of the poor old woman, who had nurtured the tulip bed for the delight of these elfin creatures; but no rank weed was ever seen to grow upon it; the sod was ever green, and the prettiest flowers would spring up without sowing or planting, and so they continued to do till it was supposed the mortal body was reduced to its original dust.

And of pixy legends I now, methinks, have given you enough to prove that the people of this neighbourhood, in the lower ranks of life (from whose chit-chat all these were gleaned), possess, in no small degree, a poetical spirit for old tales. The upper, and more educated classes, hold such stories as unworthy notice; and many would laugh at me for having taken the trouble to collect and repeat them; but however wild and simple they may be, there is so much of poetry and imagination in them, that I feel convinced you will consider them worthy of being saved, by some written record, from that oblivion, to which, in a few years, they would otherwise be inevitably consigned.

I remain, my dear Sir,
very faithfully yours,
ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

LETTER XI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—The danger of the sudden mists on Dartmoor—A letter mentioned, written on the subject by the late Mr. Edward Smith, who was enveloped in one on Mistor—Mr. E. Smith, a man of talents, very unfortunate—His family of old standing in the county—Character of his father—A sketch of him given—His children distinguished for talent—Edward, the youngest, the most gifted and least prudent—Some account of him—His early career—At sea—Returns—Goes to Wadham College—The peculiar powers of his mind stated—Determines to turn author—His first projected Work—His merits and defects as a writer—Some mention of celebrated persons who have commenced their career at various ages of their lives—The character and misfortunes of Edward Smith—His marriage—His children—His distresses—The death of his wife—Of his infant—Of his youngest child—Affecting circumstance at the grave on his attending the funeral—His own death at the age of twenty-seven—His letter, with his interesting account of his visit to Mistor.

Vicarage, Tavistock, April 30th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I MENTIONED in my last letter the dense mists with which travellers were often in danger of being enveloped during their journey over Dartmoor, and that I had no doubt such mists occasioned those wanderings out of the right road, which gave rise to the popular belief of being *pixy led*. On looking over my husband's papers about the moor, I find a very interesting letter addressed to him, by the late Mr. Edward Smith of this town, a young man who

possessed considerable natural talents, and who once intended writing a history of his native place; for which (although I have never seen them) he made, as I am told, some interesting collections.

We well knew poor Smith, who died, I believe, of a broken heart; and whose sad sufferings and misfortunes were, in a great degree, the result of imprudence. But he is gone—there are many who have dwelt upon his errors and his faults, but let me, though I was not blind to these, rather here speak of his good qualities, for he had many. Ever since his death I have entertained a wish to pay some tribute of sympathy to his memory; and, now that he lies in an early grave, to ask for him, what he can no longer ask for himself, mercy from the world, for his errors, and that some charity be shown to one, who, in the midst of all his faults, had a heart capable of warm affections and sincere gratitude; feelings that never can exist where there is not at least a capability of virtue. Before I give you, therefore, a copy of Edward Smith's letter, (and it is the only one of his in our possession that would be likely to interest a third person,) I shall say something about him. His family, indeed, especially in two of its members, are deserving notice in the biography of this place; and though I mention him here, even if it be a little out of rule, it is not of much consequence, for you will read the letter with more interest when you know some few particulars respecting the deceased writer.

I have often heard him state that the Smiths of Tavistock were a very old family in the county of Devon, and, in some branch or other, related to the noble house of Edgecumbe. I also understood that

they had suffered the loss of property by espousing the cause of the unfortunate and injured Charles I. They sunk in the world, and became poor in consequence: but poverty from such a cause is as glorious to the descendants of an honourable family, as was the battered armour and ragged pennon to the knight banneret of old; who, when a certain new-made and new-cased votary of chivalry treated somewhat contemptuously the older knight's shabby appearance in the tournament at court, vouchsafed the silken aspirant no other answer than this:—"My arms and banner have seen the field of Agincourt!"

I do not know any minute particulars respecting this family at an early period: for little did I think when poor Smith told me, as we one day walked under the abbey walls in our garden, the few anecdotes here mentioned, that I should ever live to become his biographer! He was then not five and twenty years old, and full of health, spirit, and ambition. I remember well that he used to say his maternal grandfather had been the parish clerk of Tavistock. I believe it was one great object of his literary ambition (and who could blame him for it, had he lived to accomplish his views?) to show the world that he had still the spirit of his loyal ancestors within him, which had survived, in blood at least, their change of fortune.

So much had his family fallen, that his father for years was a barber of this place. I have heard he was a cheerful, sharp-witted man, sang an excellent comic song, and was both an amusing and original character: as, in fact, were many of the barbers of the old school. Barber Smith (for so was he called) by

all accounts was a clever, bustling fellow, who made a pleasant mode of telling news and collecting general intelligence a part of his business. His avocations brought him in contact with a vast variety of characters; and to entertain each customer, whilst he sat under the operation of having his chin lathered and shorne, or of his hair being curled, frizzed and powdered, was, with him, an important point: it enlarged his business—for he had a rival barber, whose name was Tristram or Trim Physic, who, as well as himself, was a very honest man—and his chit-chat made his little daily visits of necessity an agreeable occurrence with his various patrons; a thing nothing wonderful—as in the country, if gentlemen are not literary, they are apt sometimes to feel the hours hang on hand, especially when rainy weather interferes with their out-door amusements or sports.

The happy genius of Barber Smith made him, therefore, always welcome. The gouty old gentleman welcomed him as the man of news and information, who could give the current notions of the place in regard to the ministry and the affairs of the nation. The squire learnt from him the earliest report respecting what horses were to be entered to run for the cup at the next races. The doctor had the gratification to hear the generally received opinion of his own success and skill: and the clergyman heard how his Sunday's sermon went off, and what the dissenters were doing, as likely to raise themselves or oppose him in the parish. The justice had the satisfaction of hearing the last cause tried over again, as he submitted to the razor; and his own settlement of the case as confidently asserted,

as if confirmed by the twelve judges on the bench. The good mothers too had their share of the gossip, and heard all the chit-chat about their neighbours, as they seated their little boys on the high chair, and held a bowl-dish on their heads, that Barber Smith might snip round the brim, so as to leave not one stray hair longer or shorter than another.

In truth, the good man was welcome to all, the universal favourite. None thought him to be of consequence enough to eclipse themselves; and his wit and talents, being of the good-humoured sort, were admitted without envy. His presence brought cheerfulness, and inspired no restraint; and as the love of novelty is a very general passion, how could the folks do other than feel pleased with one who always carried with him a large stock of news? His vocal powers, too, made him very popular: I have often heard my husband say, that when a little boy, he was allowed to go into the long-room (at the great dinner of the court-leet given to the tenantry and freeholders by the Duke of Bedford) to hear with delight the comic songs of Barber Smith; who, in those days, was the very Mathews of Tavistock. This universal desire for his presence and conversation rendered the worthy man exceedingly good friends with himself; for, as it requires the very head of an ancient philosopher not to grow somewhat intoxicated with popular applause, I must say, from all I have heard, that Barber Smith was not a little vain and conceited. Yet I speak it of him in no disrespect; for he was, unquestionably, a person of worth in his station.

He died many years before I became an inhabitant of Tavistock; but I have no doubt of his merit:

for when I recollect that he had six sons—that the eldest of these so raised himself in the service of his country (he died a major of marines) as to receive the thanks of the House of Commons for his gallant and spirited conduct in quelling a mutiny; that Edward (the subject of this letter) struggled so far successfully through the world as to become a student at Wadham College, Oxford; that another brother, a dissenting minister, attempted and published a translation of some of the classics; that a fourth son, also a man of talent, became master of a grammar-school in Devon; that another has succeeded as a most respectable chemist; and the last brother is now, I believe, a thriving tradesman in London—I cannot help thinking the barber of a country town, whose children could thus raise themselves above the disadvantages of birth and station, must have been himself a man of more than ordinary merit; and that in his own person he set them the example of how much is to be done by industry and individual exertion. Edward, of all the brothers the most gifted, was the least prudent, and consequently the least fortunate. I regret I did not learn more minutely the particulars of his early life. I know he held some station in the navy; but as, when we first knew him, he was falling under that cloud which finally overshadowed all his prospects, we felt reluctance to make inquiries that would have occasioned, perhaps, much pain to satisfy them. All I can with truth say is, that his gallant brother, the major, (who dying suddenly at the inn here, chanced to pass the last evening of his mortal pilgrimage under our roof,) told me that poor Edward was, he believed, truly kind and feeling at heart,

but that he had been of a thoughtless, warm, and irritable temper; and, by some neglect of his minor duties, and those forms of discipline which are as necessary to be observed by the gifted as by the common mind, he had given offence to a superior, and had lost, in consequence, that golden opportunity which, when once forfeited by a young man in the outset of his career, seldom visits him again with the like prospect of success. The major spoke this with every charitable allowance for his brother; and regretted he had died before he could retrieve himself in the eye of the world.

He also told me that Edward Smith was for some short time at Wadham College. I conclude his finances did not suffer him to remain there long enough to profit much by his studies: He could hear of no situation; and as he had good talents, and was a respectable antiquary, he determined to turn author for his support. This determination made him seek the acquaintance and notice of Mr. Bray, who received him with every kindness, and did what he could to forward and assist his pursuits; and Edward Smith ever returned his kindness with the utmost gratitude and respect. He thought of making his first work a history of the antiquities of Tavistock: it was proposed to dedicate it to the Duke of Bedford, and to publish it by subscription. Many names were obtained in its support.

At that time he was frequently at the Vicarage; and we never saw him without having cause to remark the lively and acute powers of his mind. He was (what all authors ought to be) a great reader; and he read aloud with peculiar feeling and energy. He had a strong memory, reflected on

what he read, and possessed so clear an arrangement of the knowledge he thus gained, that he could always apply it with effect. He had been much abroad, and could give a very interesting account of what he had observed in his wanderings. The specimen I shall here send you of his writing is one of the best I have ever seen from his pen. Its merit, I am inclined to think, arises from its *not having been written for publication*; for Smith, as a young author, fell into a common error, which time and a good critic would have cured—he thought it necessary to write for the public press in a different manner to that he would have adopted if writing for a private or familiar reader; the consequence was, (at least in the little I ever heard him read of what he wrote,) that his style was somewhat inflated and affected, though he knew how to choose his matter well enough. I mention this in no disparagement of his merit. Many writers of talent, especially in the present day, have wilfully steered for the same rock instead of avoiding it; and many, calling themselves critics, have been too unskilful to point out the danger to those whom they think themselves fully competent to guide. To say whether the talents of Smith (which were most conspicuous in conversation) would, or would not, have produced any lasting fruits as an author, is now impossible to decide. He had certainly strong and original powers of thinking and expression; but he died before any work was completed or published. We see in the very highest order of writers, that excellence in composition shows itself at very different and unequal periods. Chatterton, that “marvellous boy,” produced his extraordinary works and died

before he was twenty. Young, on the contrary, did not produce his "Night Thoughts" till he was turned of sixty. Richardson (if my memory is faithful) was about that age when he wrote his first novel. Miss Fanny Kemble has written a powerful tragedy at eighteen; Swift never wrote at all till he was four and thirty; and Pope produced his best work (for so Johnson considers his "Essay on Criticism") when he was twenty. To say, therefore, what a person possessed of superior talents may or may not achieve, if he be cut off in his youth, is impossible.

Such were the misfortunes, perhaps I may add the imprudence of Smith, that the necessities of to-day interfered with the prospects of to-morrow. He was obliged to solicit some of his subscriptions before the work could be committed to the press; and living on what he received, he could never find means to set the engravers and printers upon their task, for his work was not of that nature to secure publication on the bookseller's risk. The Duke of Bedford, I know, kindly sent him thirty pounds in the hope to forward it; his brothers, especially the major, gave him frequent assistance; Mr. John Carpenter, of Mount Tavy, was, to the last, his generous benefactor; and he had other friends who did what they could to relieve him.

But to live entirely on soliciting and receiving the casual help of friends is neither wholesome for the moral nor the intellectual character; it blunts the best feelings of a man, by sinking in him the honest pride of independence, which is as the safeguard of honour; it sours and irritates the temper (especially in a mind conscious of superior talents), and makes

the dependent acutely alive to every petty pain, so that he is on the watch to take offence. A word is often misconstrued, and received as a reproach to his necessities, when it is only intended as a warning to his imprudence: whilst, fearful of losing one atom of that respect which is due to the powers of his mind, he is apt sometimes to lay claim to it with a high hand; and the world, like most givers, is inclined to withhold from a demand, what it would freely bestow, if left to itself, as a tribute paid to merit, but not on compulsion.

Poor Smith suffered in every way by his early imprudence; since, to add to his distresses, he married a young woman of this place, who, like himself, had nothing. And two children brought with them an accession to their father's anxieties, and such an additional call on the assistance of his relatives and friends, that none could sufficiently help him, so as to set him free from his accumulated necessities. His poverty, likewise, had compelled him at times to receive some trifling countenance or assistance from little and vulgar minds; and as to persons of this description superiority is an offence, they enjoyed the petty triumph of making the man of talent feel, in his distress, that it was *their* turn to be superior. I once heard poor Smith truly say (and I believe almost the same thing was spoken by Savage in his adversity), "that a guinea subscription to his book gave no man a right to insult him, or to force upon him dictation and advice when unsought for;" the advice, too, being often given more to show consequence in the adviser than to benefit the object of it. This led to warfare; and Smith was of a temper, like that seen in some wild creatures in the animal world,

where a blow will raise their fury, rather than tame their spirit; so that he retorted angrily, instead of attempting by mildness to turn away wrath.

Misery, also, had been to him like the hair shirt to the religionist of Rome; not a wound to kill, but a fretting and irritating suffering. It affected his temper, and made him take up imprudent arms in his own cause; for the slightest contempt he returned with bitterness. This bitter invective I believe was often deserved by his enemies: it was therefore the more keenly felt and resented; and those who triumphed over a superior mind because that mind was in misery, soon found they had nothing to fear; for the poor are generally the powerless. For my own part, I could never think of Smith, in his last struggles with the world, without being strongly reminded of the poet Savage, whose life, from the pen of Johnson, none but a heart of stone could read unmoved. Savage lived to raise a great name as an author; Smith died before his abilities produced any lasting memorial of *his* name: but both have left an example, the one in public, the other in private life, that (to use the words of the admirable biographer of the poet) "no superior capacity or attainments can supply the place of want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, render even knowledge itself useless, and genius contemptible."

So far truth, for the sake of others, obliged even the enlarged charity of Johnson—a charity, that, like his piety and life, did honour to human nature—to declare of Savage, whom he pitied and regarded in the midst of all his errors. But Johnson had that discrimination as well as goodness which could de-

tect the germ of virtuous feelings amidst the wildest growth that may be found in the sluggard's garden of folly and of vice. The naturalist, in the darkest night, will pause to look with pleasure on the solitary ray of light emitted by the little glow-worm as it lies on the lowly turf: the great moralist did the same—one spark of good never escaped his-searching eye. So may it be with all (however inferior their powers or their capacity) who attempt to record the character of the dead. For the example of the living, for the honour due to God, for the just demands of truth, no vice should be ever sophisticated into a virtue; for such is but “seeming.” But where human frailty (the consequence more of imprudence than a wicked heart) produces distress; where that frailty has been exposed to suffer increase by the manifold temptations of poverty and want, *there*, (in the name of Him who was all mercy, who took on himself the lowest estate to show an example of long suffering to the poor,) *there* let charity be extended in the most enlarged degree. May such a consideration (and it has truly guided me in this slight and imperfect sketch of the character of poor Edward Smith) weigh with all who judged him harshly in life, and have not spared him even in the grave. A few lines more will show what hastened him to where he indeed has wearily sunk to rest.

After having given birth to two children, Smith's wife, whose health was delicate, fell into a decline. During the early part of her illness, as she and her husband were one day playing with the elder infant, at the very moment it was in the father's arms, and smiling in his face, it suddenly and instantaneously expired. The shock increased Mrs. Smith's illness;

it was soon pronounced fatal; and I have heard distress of mind helped to bring on her first indisposition. Life became to her a long and lingering disease; for youth and nature struggled hard with her decay. And now the amiable part of poor Edward Smith's character showed itself in the most marked manner—he devoted himself to her comfort, with the zeal of the most ardent affection. All he had (so I have learned since his death), even to his books, (and what a sacrifice was that to him!) were sold one by one, to procure her every relief. He never left her by day, and at night he would watch by her sick-bed with all the tenderness of the most anxious care. So ill was she, yet so painfully did she linger on, that I have been assured, for some weeks before her death, he never enjoyed one night's undisturbed repose. I have also heard that he had drawn so continually on the bounty of his friends, that he concealed his extreme wants at the very hour when relief was most needed.

At length his wife died; and left him with the youngest helpless infant. It was affecting to hear how the poor father, on the day of her death, would take the child in his arms, endeavouring to recall the living image of its mother by looking in its face; unconscious as it was of the widowed grief and the desolation of that father's heart. He was relieved of this care; for, as the child was so very young, a relation of the mother took it home. I have again but this day heard, from one who was nearly connected with him, the account of the deep melancholy that settled on his mind from the hour of his wife's death. He frequently visited her grave, and gave himself up to such a state of despondency during those visits, that,

at length, a friend would watch him, and follow after to draw him from the spot. For some little time, however, he endeavoured to rally his spirits; and being universally pitied, he was not deserted in his misery; though he now shunned observation, and even kindness, as much as he could. But the earthly cup of sorrow, of whose bitterness he had tasted even at its brim, was not yet drained to the very dregs—there was yet a draught in store for him. His last child died; and that he followed to the grave. Well might he say of death, as did the melancholy poet of the night,

Insatiate archer ! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was slain !

It is the custom in this town, for young women clothed in white, with a handkerchief drawn through the coffin rings (underhand, as it is called), to act as bearers at a child's funeral. A young person, who assisted in performing this office at the burial of poor Smith's infant, gave me a very interesting account of his demeanour on that sad day. He attended the funeral, though all present were shocked to observe his altered appearance. His eye, that had, in other and happier days, possessed uncommon brightness and vivacity, was now sunk in his head—it was dim and downcast. He was very pale and thin; and all energy and spirit seemed dead within him. For some time he stood over the grave, after the ceremony was concluded, in silence, contemplating that earth which was about to close on all the nearest and dearest of his affections. The young person who gave me this account was his school-fellow in their infant days; and had been well known to his deceased wife. From long habits of acquaintance, she

ventured to speak to him, even in these moments, some words of sympathy. She held out her hand as she did so. He took it, grasped it, and looked at her with an expression of such heart-rending distress, as, she said, she should never forget; but tears rose in his eyes, and looking^g once more on the grave, he said—"It will yet hold another!"

Soon, indeed, was that other numbered with the dead already gone before; for the blow had been struck that to him, I doubt not, in the end, was one of mercy. Not long after, he was seized with a fever, the consequence of his recent sorrows and the long-continued anxiety of his distresses. At first, hopes were entertained of his recovery; but delirium came on, and all was soon over: for, on the 1st of January, 1827, he expired, in the 27th year of his age. He was buried in the churchyard of his native town of Tavistock. Since then, his amiable and gallant brother has been laid to rest in the same ground; and I, who, excepting my husband, was the last friend with whom he conversed but a few hours before his death, purpose, in some future letter, to give a brief account of his life, and to pay a tribute of respect to his memory.

I here give you the extract from Mr. Edward Smith's letter, addressed to my husband in 1823.

"On Tuesday, the 11th of August, about twelve o'clock, I set out on a fishing excursion, to the river Walkham, above Merrivale bridge. This part of that romantic river is situated entirely on Dartmoor. As soon as I reached the high lands under Coxtor, my walk became highly interesting, from the peculiar state of the weather: being one instant enveloped in a blaze of light from an unclouded August sun,

and almost in the next shrouded in an impervious fog.

“The weather, however, was favourable for fishing, and reaching Merrivale Hamlet about half after one, I commenced; the sport excellent—but having promised to meet some friends at Prince Town to dinner at five, I shut up my rod as soon as I had reached the western foot of that immense hill, called, I believe, Mistor, whose eastern base conjoins with Rundle stone. At this spot I was probably about a mile or mile and a half (following the rough and sinuous course of the river) above Merrivale bridge. An idea struck me that ere I could reach across the hill towards Prince Town, I might be caught in a fog, but with a carelessness which I subsequently lamented, I determined on risking it. Up the mountain, therefore, I stretched, but scarcely had I reached a quarter of a mile, ere a cloud, dense, and dark, and flaky, fell, as it were, instantly upon me. So sudden was the envelopment, that it startled me. On every side appeared whirling masses of mist, of so thick a consistency, that it affected my very respiration. I paused; but impelled by some of those ill-defined feelings which lead men to action, they know not why, I determined to proceed—indeed, I fancied it would be impossible I could err in describing a straight line over the summit of the hill; but in this I was sufficiently deceived.

“I stretched on, and the way seemed to lengthen before me. At last I descried a few of those immense fragments of granite with which the summit was strewed. Their appearance, through the illusive medium of the fog, was wonderfully grand, wavy, fantastic, and as if possessing life. Although all

plane with the surface, such was the optical deception, they appeared upright, each in succession perpendicular—until I should arrive so close, that it required almost the very touch to prove the deception. There were, also, some scattered sheep, one here and there. At the distance of twenty or thirty yards, for I am sure I could distinguish nothing farther, they had the appearance of a moving unshapen mass, infinitely larger than reality. Every now and then, too, one of these animals would start from the side of a block of granite close to my feet, affrighted—sometimes with a screaming bleat, as if, like myself, filled with surprise and awe.

“ Arrived now, as I considered, on the summit, I stood still and looked around—the scene was like one of those darkly remembered dreams which illness, produced by lassitude and grief, sometimes afflicts us with—an obscure sense of a scene where we have been darkly wandering on. There was above, beneath, and all around me, a mass, flaky, and at times even rushing, of white fog—there is no colour by which it could be named—a sombre whiteness—a darkness palpable and yet impalpable—that scriptural expression best suits it, ‘the very light was darkness.’

“ I bent my course onward: now amongst massy fragments of granite, the playthings of the deluge, and now amongst bogs and rushes. I became impatient to catch some object familiar to me. I quickened my pace; but the farther I proceeded, the more and more did the fog bewilder me. My eye-sight became affected, my very brain began to whirl, till at length I sat down from sheer incapability to walk on.

“My situation was now painful, the evening was rapidly approaching—the fog increased in murkiness, and all hopes that it would clear away had vanished. I looked around for some large fragment of stone, under shelter of which to take up my quarters for the night. I had from exertion been hot even to excess, I was now shivering and chilled. At length the idea of maternal anxiety relative to where I might be struck me, and I determined once more to advance. Reflecting, from the boggy nature of the ground I now trod, I had perhaps gone on towards the north, I turned directly to the left and went swiftly forward. The ground now began to incline, and I suddenly found myself descending a steep acclivity—presently I heard the distant rushing of water; I stopped to calculate where it could be. At length I concluded my former conjecture right, and that I had been all this while toiling in a northerly instead of an easterly direction from the mountain’s summit, and that I was approaching a stream called Blackabrook. The sound, however, enlivened me; it was like the voice of a conductor, a friend, and I pressed onward; the descent, however, was still steep, very steep, and this destroyed again the conjecture which I lately thought sure: still I pressed on—when suddenly, so instantaneously that I can compare it to nothing save the lifting of a veil, the fog rushed from me, and the scene which opened induced me almost to doubt my senses. At my feet the river Walkham brawled amongst the rocks scattered throughout its bed—at my left was just sufficient of Merrivale open to show the eastern arch of its picturesque bridge, whilst in the distance the fantastic rocks of Vixen Tor were still wreathed in mist. At my right, within two or

three hundred yards, was the very spot I had first quitted to ascend the mountain; and in my front that grand tor at the back of Merrivale Hamlet rose frowningly dark, its topmost ridges embosomed in clouds, whose summits were gilded by the broad sun, now rapidly descending behind them.

“The whole scene was like magic—even whilst looking on it, it appeared to me a dream. I doubted its reality—I could not imagine, toiling up, then across the summit, then down the sides of a rugged mountain, how it was possible I could have returned to a spot *from whence* I even then felt almost sure I had been continually receding. I had, moreover, been full two hours and a half in progress, but still the stubborn certainty was before me.

“I had actually walked up the mountain, taken a complete circuit of its summit, and almost retraced my steps down to the spot I first quitted.

“In an instant the fog enveloped me again—by this time I had purchased experience. I therefore quickly regained the banks of the river, traced its stream, reached Merrivale bridge, and on once more placing my foot on the beaten road, determined never again to try the experiment of finding my way across a trackless Dartmoor mountain when the clouds were low about it.”

So concludes poor Smith’s letter to Mr. Bray. I will not now add more than the assurance that

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever faithfully yours,

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER XII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Visit to Vixen Tor—The Tor formed of three contiguous lofty rocks—Different appearances of the rock in different situations—These and the Tor described—Difficult of ascent—Rock basins on its summit—Their probable uses—Borlase quoted—Logan stones—Second visit to Vixen Tor some years after the first—Further observations on that remarkable rock—Ascent made in 1831 by a friend of the writer.

Vicarage, Tavistock, May 2nd, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I SEND you in this Mr. Bray's account of a visit to Vixen Tor, extracted from his Journal of 1801.

“ On the 17th of September, accompanied by a friend, I left Tavistock early in the morning, with the intention of spending the day in viewing some of the neighbouring tors of Dartmoor. As we approached the first, Coxtor, we found its head covered with mist; but as the horizon was clear behind us, we concluded it was only a partial collection of vapours, so frequently attracted by the lofty eminences of the forest,* and expected that the wind, which was very high, would soon dissipate them. However, on proceeding, we found it was a wet mist,

* Though the whole of this uncultivated tract of country, from Coxtor, which is about three miles from Tavistock, is generally called Dartmoor, the forest itself does not begin till we arrive at the distance of six miles; the intermediate parts being considered as commons belonging to the different neighbouring parishes.

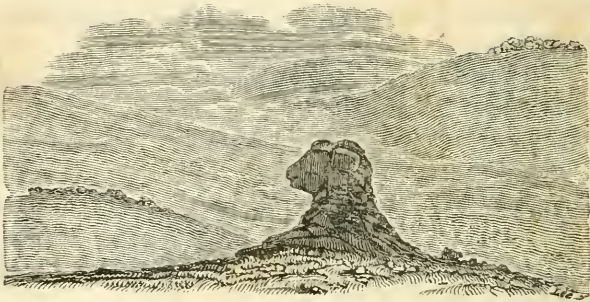
which soon spread over the country, and prevented us from seeing more than a few feet before us.

“ Before the turnpike road was made over the moor, those who acted even as guides frequently lost their way on this almost trackless desert, through the sudden diffusion of the mist. When this was the case, they generally wandered about in quest of some river, as, by following the course of it, they were sure at last of finding an exit to their inhospitable labyrinth.

“ Since Coxtor, we understood, was principally entitled to attention for the extensive prospect it afforded, we knew it would be fruitless now to ascend it, and having determined to relinquish the design of visiting the tors in regular succession, proceeded to Vixen Tor, for the purpose of climbing to the top of that lofty rock. My friend had formerly effected it; and the information he gave me of having found an excavation or circular hollow on its very summit, which coincided with the idea I had formed of a Druidical basin, powerfully excited my wish to accomplish it.

“ Vixen Tor presents itself to the eye from the road leading from Tavistock to Moreton in a picturesque and striking manner. Three contiguous lofty rocks raise themselves from the middle of a spacious plain, and, at different points of view, assume a vast variety of fantastic appearances. Sometimes you may fancy it bears a resemblance to a lion's head, at others to the bust of a man; and when seen from the Moreton road, it greatly resembles the Sphinx in the plains of Egypt,* whilst the mountains beyond may give no bad idea of the pyramids around it.

* Mr. Burt, in his Notes on Carrington's Dartmoor, published more



Vixen Tor, as seen from the Moreton road, in the view resembling the Sphinx.

Ridiculous as it may appear, I can never view it from one particular point, without thinking on the convenient but grotesque mode of riding on horseback, which is, I believe, more generally practised in the West of England than in any other part of the kingdom, called riding double. A horse that carries double is esteemed as valuable in this part of the world, as, in any other, may be one that serves in the two-fold capacity of a hackney and a draft horse. In addition to its convenience, no person will deny that it is a sociable method of riding, when he is informed, that the gallant may thus accommodate his fair one by taking her an airing *en croupe* on a pillion behind him. Some ladies, who are not afraid of singularity, will occasionally squire one another, when they are in want of a beau; and this is called riding jollifant.

“ From the sketch I have made of Vixen Tor in this whimsical view, an opinion may be formed whether I have any excuse for entertaining such a fancied resemblance. The gentleman, who has a cocked

than twenty years after this account was written, also compares Vixen Tor to the Sphinx of Egypt.

hat on his head, is rather short, but sufficiently prominent in front. The lady, too, is rather of a corpulent size, and proudly overlooks her husband; her cloak, however, may be supposed to be somewhat expanded by the wind; whilst her head is sheltered with a calash. Even the head of the horse and the handle of the pillion behind may be distinguished with no greater stretch of fancy.

“In addition to this, it cannot fail to attract the traveller’s eye as being the focus (if I may be allowed the expression) or principal object of a grand and beautifully varied view. Before it is the rugged foreground of the moor, rough with stones and heath; beside it is a deep valley, where flows the river Walkham; around it are a number of hills, all verging to, or meeting in, this point, whilst, on one of them, the tower of Walkhampton conspicuously elevates itself; and, behind the whole, is a distant view of Plymouth Sound with the woody eminence of Mount Edgumbe. On the south-west it is much increased in its appearance of height by the abrupt declivity of the ground. It here seems an immense ridge of rocks, on which stand three lofty piles in an almost perpendicular elevation. At the foot of this ridge are some curiously-shaped masses of rock, one of which projects for several feet in a horizontal direction.

“On the opposite side there is a perpendicular fissure, which we found large enough to admit us, and attempted to climb through it to the top of the loftiest pile; but the wind was so violent, and forced itself with such impetuosity up this narrow passage, that we at length gave up the attempt, but not till our eyes were filled with dust and moss. The roar occasioned by it was at times tremendous, but varied

with our change of situation, from the dashing of a cataract to the soft whispers of the breeze.

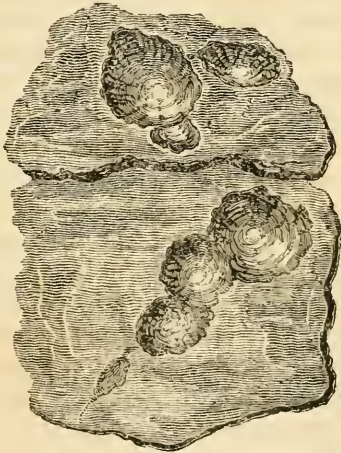
“A rock to the north-west afterwards attracted our attention, which, from its fancied resemblance to the form of that animal, we called the tortoise. At its northern end there is a projection of three feet, which forms the head of the Tortoise. Under it the green turf is enclosed with three stones; and this enclosure, from its wearing the appearance of art, first gave us the idea of its having been appropriated to the uses of Druidical superstition; probably as a hearth, or receptacle for burnt offering.

“Determining thoroughly to examine this rock, I climbed to the top, which is formed by a large flat stone, eleven feet from north to south, and nine from east to west, divided about the middle by a fissure. We discovered on the southern division the ill-defined vestiges of four basins, in which was some rain water, uniting with one another in a transverse direction. A little channel, or dipping-place, communicated with the southern extremity of the rock. On the other half, a thorn bush was growing on a tuft of mould, rising about three or four inches from the surface.

“By observing a little circular hollow at one end of it, I was induced to push in my stick, and though it met with resistance, I found it was not from stone. It occurred to us, therefore, that there might be a basin beneath, and we began with our sticks to dig into the mould, which was of as firm a texture, being the decomposition of decayed vegetable substances, as the ground below. Indeed, it was of the same black colour as the peaty soil of the whole moor, which shows evident signs of its vegetable

origin. On loosening the mould, we gradually discovered that our conjecture was well founded.

We were more than an hour engaged in this undertaking; and, for want of better instruments, my friend sat down and made use of his heels in kicking away the earth. Whilst thus employed, I was astonished to find that, with every blow, the half of the stone on which he sat, though it was of such large dimensions, shook, and was followed by a sound occasioned by its collision with the rock below. Having at length removed all the earth, we discovered two regularly shaped basins, communicating with each other, whilst a natural fissure served for the dripping place. The length of the largest was three feet, width two, and depth eight inches. The smallest was only two feet long.



I have no doubt but these basins have been

covered with earth for centuries ; as, in no shorter space of time, could moss or other vegetable substances be converted into so firm a mould. Indeed, from other rocks near it, we stript off the moss, though five or six inches thick, with perfect ease, and found it of a texture almost as tough as a mat, but without any particle of earth. That the earth could not be placed in this cavity by the hands of man, or deposited there by the wind, is, I think, pretty certain ; as, at the bottom of the whole, we found a thin coat of intertwisted fibres, which, though stained of a black colour above, by the earth, was white beneath, and kept the rock perfectly clean. The thorn bush likewise, which, in so exposed a situation, would not grow unless it had met with perfectly-formed earth, and then would not have attained any size till after a long period of years, indicates that the basin has not been exposed for ages to the eye of day.

It will not, I hope, be deemed a useless digression, to mention what is supposed to have been the use of these rock basins. Borlase, in his *Antiquities of Cornwall*, informs us, that they were designed to contain rain or snow water, which is allowed to be the purest. This the Druids probably used as holy-water for lustrations. They preferred the highest places for these receptacles, as the rain water is purer the farther it is removed from the ground. Its being nearer the heavens, also, may have contributed not a little to the sanctity in which it was held. The officiating Druid might have stood on these eminences and sanctified the congregation by this more than ordinary lustration before he prayed or gave forth his oracles. "The priest, too," says Borlase, "might judge by the quantity, colour, mo-

tion, and other appearances in the water of future events, and dubious cases, without contradiction from the people below." "By the motion of the logan stone the water might be so agitated, as to delude the inquirer by a pretended miracle, and might make the criminal confess, satisfy the credulous, bring forth the gold of the rich, and make the injured, rich as well as poor, acquiesce in what the Druids thought proper."

A logan signifies in Cornish a shaking rock. That the rock we visited is of this description, I hesitate not to affirm, as it was still capable of being moved, though the fissure was almost filled up with stones, some of which we with difficulty removed by means of a crooked stick. "It is probable the Druids made the people believe, that they only, by their miraculous powers, could move these logan rocks, and by this pretended miracle condemned or acquitted the accused, and often brought criminals to confess, what would in no other way be extorted from them." It is possible they encouraged the idea "that spirits inhabited them, and this motion they might insist on as a proof of it, and thus they became idols." The Druids by placing even a pebble in a particular direction might render unavailing the attempts of others to move the rock, and, by taking it away and moving the immense mass with apparent ease themselves, convince them of their superior powers.

On a rock at a little distance we discovered another basin, with a lip or dripping place to the south-west of a complete oval form, two feet and a half in length, and one foot nine inches in width. The depth of it was about six inches; we found in it some rain water that seemed remarkably cold to the touch.

On our return we visited several other rocks, but met with nothing worthy of remark, excepting some fine views of the vale through which flows the river Walkham, and some distant reaches of the river Tamar.

SECOND VISIT TO VIXEN TOR.

EXTRACTED ALSO FROM MR. BRAY'S JOURNAL.

“October the 3d.—We left Tavistock early in the morning with the intention of climbing to the top of Vixen tor, and afterwards inspecting Mistor.

“We ascended the former on the north-east side, through a fissure of about two feet in width, made by a division between two of the piles. We reached with difficulty (for it was like climbing up a chimney) the top of the lowest rock, where we sat for some time to rest ourselves. From this, with a wide stride, we got a footing on the other, and at length attained the summit.

“The uppermost rock is divided into two or three masses, on parts of which we found moss and green turf, which, though damp with the dew, afforded us a seat. Facing the east are three basins. One four feet long, three feet two inches wide, and eight inches deep. This has a lip at the edge. Of the two remaining basins, which communicate together, one is four feet in diameter, and fourteen inches deep. The other is one foot and a half in diameter, and nine inches deep. They were the most regularly circular basins we had yet seen. And from these, also, a lip discharged the water over the edge of the rock.

“Though in the vale below we had not perceived

it, yet here the wind was high. As the foundation of the rock is much lower on the south-west side, we wished to drop the line thence, in order to find its height. Having only a ball of thin packthread, to which was affixed a small lead bullet, we attempted to throw it over, as, owing to a projection, we could not drop it; but the wind blew the thread out of its proper direction, and we were unsuccessful in two or three attempts; at last we wound the thread round the bullet and secured it better; but could not tell, though the thread was all expended, whether it had reached the bottom. To satisfy ourselves as to this, though I stood in great need of the assistance of my companion, I resolved to get down by myself; in which, however, I succeeded better than I expected. My friend had intimated that he should be uneasy till he heard my voice at the bottom. Indeed it was no small satisfaction to myself when I was able to assure him of my safety by a loud shout, which was instantly returned by him.

“ On finding that the line did not reach the bottom, and that he had no more, I requested he would throw down the stick to which it was tied; but the wind carried it away, and on striking against the moss, the lead was not heavy enough to clear it. Though vexed that our labour was partly in vain, I took a sketch of the rock with my friend on the top of it, to show we had ascended it. Whilst thus employed, he startled me by throwing down one of his boots, and afterwards the other, in order to have a firmer footing in his descent. In his way down he was so fortunate as to recover the string, and, as I had marked how far it reached, I was in hopes, after all,

to know the elevation of the rock: as, in folding it over, he had entangled it, we had the greatest difficulty in unravelling it; and though two or three times we cut this gordian knot, we were afraid our hopes would prove vain. My vexation, which I confess was great, though about a thread, conduced not to mend the matter. However, by cutting, and tying, and making allowances for the entangled parts, we found the height of the central rock to be about 110 feet. We returned to the road on our way to Mistor, and arrived at Merrivale bridge. It here began to rain: and, as an inhabitant of the moor, who was working on the road, informed us that, if rain came on about half-past ten o'clock, which was then the hour, and did not clear up by eleven, it would prove a wet afternoon, we resolved to wait this eventful half hour, and sheltered our horses in a hovel near. But having waited till our patience was exhausted, we turned our horses towards Tavistock, whither we arrived, not in so dry a state as when we set out."

ADDITIONS BY MR. BRAY.

"In the Autumn of 1831, within a few weeks, or possibly a few days, of thirty years, since the above excursion, I took a young friend to Vixen tor. He had heard of my getting to the top of it, but that no one else, it was believed, had done so since. I said that I wondered at it; particularly as I had often mentioned that I had left a twopenny piece in one of the basins; which at least, I thought, might have induced some shepherd boy to attempt it. On his asking how I ascended, I told him that I climbed

through the fissure on the eastern side as up a chimney, by working my way with my arms, and knees and back.

“ He said he should like to try it himself, and would go to reconnoitre the spot. He instantly galloped up the hill amongst the rocks; and whilst I followed him on foot, not without some apprehension for his safety, he leapt his horse over a wall of loose stones, and, to my surprise, when I saw him again, it was on the summit of the rock. We had previously seen there a raven pacing to and fro; and I make no doubt it must equally have surprised the bird at any human being thus daring to ‘molest her ancient solitary reign.’ For, that she might see him, either from her ‘watch-tower in the skies,’ or from the top of some neighbouring tor, is probable; as, on a ledge of the rock, we saw signs of its being the settled habitation of this feathered biped.

“ He had thrown off his coat, and, being dressed in black—what with the contrastive whiteness of his sleeves, and his varied position as he sought for the basin and the coin deposited in it, formed an object as picturesque as it was singular. He said that the greatest part of the surface was covered with grass or moss upon earth or mould of some depth, and that, therefore, he could distinguish but few vestiges of the basins, and nothing of the twopenny piece. To see him descend was still more picturesque, as the attitudes were still more varied and unusual, rendered also more graphically striking by being foreshortened. To this must be added the play of the muscles, as sometimes he hung by his arm, and at other other times poised himself on his foot. Nor can I forget, on my part, the sense of his danger,

which gave it a yet greater interest; for I felt no little fear, (and fear, we know, is frequently the accompaniment of sublime emotions,) as, at length, he found some difficulty in fixing his feet, and indeed stopped about half way down to take off his boots, that he might secure a firmer footing. I may here, perhaps, be permitted to remark that we thus have some data as to the period of the formation of vegetable mould in basins, and on the tops of rocks."

So concludes Mr. Bray's observations on Vixen tor. My next letter will contain various particulars about the Moor: till then,

Allow me to remain, my dear Sir,

With every respect,

Most faithfully and truly yours,

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

LETTER XIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Pewtor Rock—Ascent to the eminence—Spacious area there found—Druidical Seat of Judgment; more perfect than the Judgment Seat at Karnbrê in Cornwall—Basins on the summit—Remarks on the Druids as legislators—Hindoos had recourse to aggeration in elevating stones—Note on the subject giving the opinion of Mr. Southey—Rock basins more particularly described—Objections to rock basins being a work of art refuted—Proofs of their being a work of art stated—Fastness or Stronghold of the ancient Britons—Small cavern at the bottom of the hill—Huckworthy Bridge—Walkhampton—Sheepstor—Visit to the Pixies' House—Return to the village—Second attempt to reach the object of curiosity—Little boy becomes a guide—The Palace of the Pixies at last discovered—Description of it—Dripping of water heard—Story of Elford hidden in the cave—Excursion to Cockstor—Roosetor and Stapletor—Mound of stones; circular form—Account of Cockstor—Roosetor remarkable—Pendent rocks—Two more Basins discovered—A most curious example of Druidical antiquity described—Stapletor—A most interesting combination of nature and art—Ascent to Stapletor—Rock Basins—Pile of rocks, pendent above, very remarkable—The companion of the writer determines to ascend the pile—Difficulty of so doing—He accomplishes the task—Discovery of a Logan Stone on the summit—The Logan shakes under the discoverer—Danger and difficulty of descent—The inquiry pursued further on this Tor—Interesting discovery of a remarkable Tolmen—This the only instance of a Tolmen found on Dartmoor—Uses of the Tolmen with the Druid priesthood of Britain—Ordeals, &c. &c.

Vicarage, Tavistock, May 6, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

FROM Mr. Bray's Journal of September, 1802,
I extract the following account of

PEWTOR ROCK.

“ We once more resumed our excursions on the

Moor, which, to my mortification, we were prevented from doing sooner by the unfavourable state of the weather. We proceeded over Whitchurch down to Pewtor, situated about two miles and a half from Tavistock.

“The ascent to this eminence is covered with rocks: among which are two that project in a pendent manner, several feet from the top of a buttress of the same material. On the summit of the tor is a spacious area, level, and pretty free from stones, and of a form approaching to an oblong square. At each corner, which is nearly facing one of the cardinal points, is an elevation of massy rocks, with their fissures or strata in a horizontal direction, that give them the appearance of rocks piled upon one another. From the opening at north-east to the corresponding one at south-west it measures 27, and from that at north-west to its opposite, 18 paces.

“The rock at the northern angle principally attracted our attention. From the form of it I could not hesitate to suppose that it was a Druidical seat of judgment. On the top is a large canopy stone, projecting about six feet, very like the sounding-board of a pulpit. Below it is a seat, projecting two feet and a half in the form of a wedge. A smooth stone supplies the back of this juridical chair; and a stone on each side may be considered as forming its elbow supporters. At its foot is a platform of rocks, somewhat resembling steps, elevated two or three feet from the ground, which is distant from the canopy about five feet.

“This curious rock is in every respect more perfect than the judgment-seat at Karnbrê, in Cornwall, described by Borlase, p. 115. The canopy is much

larger, and the seat more easy to be distinguished. Before that at Karnbrê there is an area, whose outer edge is fenced with a row of pillars, probably so placed for the purpose of keeping the profane at an awful distance. *Here* the elevated platform answers the same end in a grander manner.

“ That this rock was appropriated by the Druids to their religious uses is without doubt; as it not only possesses the singularities above described, but also several basins on its top. A gentleman, whose residence is situated almost at the foot of the hill, informed me he had often visited this romantic spot, and admired the extensive prospects it affords; but had never seen or heard of these rock-basins. On my pointing them out, he immediately assented to their being the work of art.

“ But before we proceed to their examination, I shall request permission to state my opinions respecting a Druidical seat of judgment. The Druids, we know, were possessed of almost sovereign sway; indeed, in some respects, of power superior even to their kings. For the monarch seldom dared to execute any thing without consulting the Druids; whose supposed intercourse with their deities afforded them the pretence of arrogating to themselves a preternatural knowledge of futurity. Criminals, especially those guilty of sacrilege or any impiety, or where the accusation was doubtful, may be naturally supposed to have been brought before the venerable Arch-Druid. The awe which his presence must have inspired, increased by the stupendous tribunal on which he sat, doubtless frequently occasioned a conscientious confession from the guilty breast.

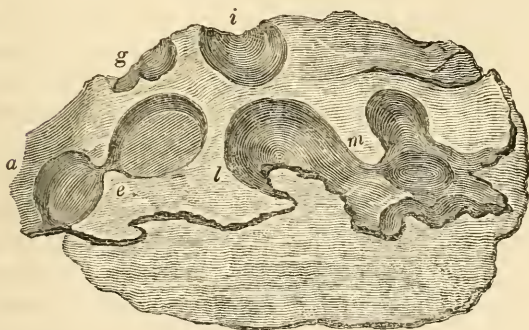
“ To say that the Druids erected these amazing

piles themselves, would be to grant them the powers which they made their superstitious votaries imagine they possessed. It is probable they selected those rocks that were naturally the best adapted to their purpose, and if they used art, carefully concealed every trace of it; in order to make their followers imagine that they were piled and arranged for them by the gods themselves.

“The Druids may be supposed to have occasioned those singular forms of rock of which they were so fond, by breaking off parts of them, or detaching one mass from another, rather than by placing or piling them together in these immense heaps: though were I even to assert the latter, I might be greatly supported by the astonishing structure of Stonehenge, and also by what the Hindoos, almost equally unskilled in arts, have been known to effect in India. On the tops of some of their pagodas are amazing masses of rock. To place them in such elevated situations, they had recourse to aggeration; they took the laborious method, by accumulated earth, of forming an easy ascent, or inclined plane, to the top; by means of levers rolled them to the summit; and then removed the mound*.

* In a letter, which I was honoured with receiving from Mr. Southey, after this had been sent to Keswick, the following observations occurred; and I here venture to transcribe them, as I doubt not they will be found of interest to the reader—“If such of your Tors as the drawings represent have not been formed simply by taking away parts of them (as within living memory was done in this immediate neighbourhood, to make the Bolder stone appear wonderful), I think the stones are more likely to have been raised by mechanical means, than by the rude process of aggeration. The largest stone at Stonehenge might have been raised by a three-inch cable; and we know that the mischievous Lientenant who threw down the rocking-stone at the Land’s End, succeeded in raising it again. The Druids themselves may not

“ On the top, then, of this rock, I had the pleasure of discovering the basins before alluded to, which confirmed the ideas I had already formed of the purposes to which this tor was applied. Of these, I counted four of a perfect, and five of an imperfect form. From north-west to south-east, the length of the rock is seventeen feet, and it is nine feet wide.



At *a* is an imperfect or shallow basin; into which communicates, at *e*, a larger one, in length three feet, width two, and depth ten inches. The bottom of this is flat and smooth. At *g* is a small imperfect one, the outward edge of which seems broken off. Near it, at *i*, is another, 2 feet in length, and eleven inches in depth. At *l m* is a basin, whose side is evidently broken off. This is three feet in length, and thirteen inches deep, and communicates with four others; two of which are perfect, and two imperfect.

have possessed either the skill or the means necessary for such operations; but the Phœnicians, with whom they traded, might have helped them; and both Dartmoor and Salisbury Plain are within easy reach of a sea-port.”

“It is probable there were many more basins; as the rock on which these excavations are made, being thin, is broken, and the line of separation runs through the basins. No vestiges remain of the other part; which probably fell to the ground, and may now be covered with soil. The workmen must have taken great pains not to perforate or split the rock; as at the bottom of these basins it is but little more than an inch in thickness.

“It seems almost needless to prove these basins are the work of art; but it may be proper to obviate some objections started by persons who have never seen, or never thoroughly examined them. They say these excavations are mere hollows in the rock, formed by time and weather. Setting aside the shape of them, which is far too regular to be ascribed to these causes, I would ask why they are confined to a few particular rocks? For as almost all the rocks on Dartmoor are of the same description, namely, granite, why should some yield to the effects of time sooner than others?

“Granite, I believe, is seldom found to be carious, and is more liable to be rendered smooth than perforated, by the above causes; as by being exposed to the weather, the sandy granulations of which it is composed are worn off, and the edges as well as top of the rock are moulded into a convex or gibbous form. How is it that moss and soil, formed of decayed vegetable substances, are found in these very hollows? surely if the rock cannot resist the impetuosity of the weather, much less can the tender vegetable.

“I allow that in rivers we frequently find rocks with considerable perforations; but these are made

by the whirlpools, or eddies of the torrent. It surely would be too absurd to think these basins were the effect of the deluge; for nothing but the deluge could cover the tops of such elevated mountains. Besides, if the weather produced these wonders, they would be continually increasing, and cease to be novelties. Can it be imagined, for an instant, that nature would select only those rocks that are singular and remarkable enough in other respects, to add to their peculiarities by forming basins on the tops of them? It is strange that men will have recourse to miracles to account for what may be explained by such simple means.

“By standing at the north-west opening, you have a perspective view of the four bastions, if I may be allowed the expression, and a distant prospect of Plymouth Sound. This curious tor here wears so regular an appearance, that one might almost as easily assent to its being a work of art as of nature: possibly it partakes of both. The area may be supposed to have been cleared, as there are only five or six stones within it; which probably served as altars. The four openings also seem to have been partly owing to art. But if the whole be the work of Nature, every one must allow that she has for once deviated from her accustomed plan.

“It is not improbable that this spot was used as a fastness, or stronghold, by the ancient Britons; and, with very little addition, it might now be rendered impregnable even to the improved system of warfare of the present day. A spot of this kind, whence is so extensive a view of the sea, and whence might be descried the approach of the enemy in every direction, could not surely have been entirely neglected;

and it is well known that one and the same place was frequently converted to the purposes both of religion and war.

“ We had been informed that at the bottom of the hill there was a curious cavern, which, however, by no means answered the expectations we had formed of it. The aperture, which is about four feet long and two wide, might be easily taken for the entrance of a rabbit burrow. With some difficulty we entered this narrow passage, and found an excavation about fourteen feet in length, eight in width and five in height. It terminated in a narrow hole; and was probably the adit to a mine, or part of a stream-work; as, in the same direction, there are several pits close to it, which seem to have been opened in search of metal. I apprehend it has not unfrequently been used by smugglers, as a secret deposit for their liquors.

“ In our way to Walkhampton, after descending a most precipitous road, we passed over Huckworthy bridge, around which are a few cottages partially concealed with trees. On ascending the opposite hill, we had a very picturesque view of this rural bridge, with its arches, partly covered with ivy, bestriding a rocky river, that owes its source to Dartmoor; one of whose lofty tors closed this romantic scene. At Walkhampton, which is a small village, we gained directions to Sheepstor, where we had heard there was an excavation called the ‘Pixies’ Grot,’* and to Stanlake, near which we were informed the Dock-leet† formed a fine cascade.

* Piesies, or pixies, are supposed to be invisible beings of the fairy tribe.

† Leet is used in Devonshire to signify a stream of water.

“After passing over some downs or commons of no great extent, we entered a road, at the bend of which we had a view of Sheepstor, with its rocky summit peering over a bridge almost covered with ivy. The banks of the rivulet beneath it were fringed with willows; whilst beyond the ivied arch, appeared the tops of some lofty trees that waved their branches over the roofs of the cottages that were visible between them. On reaching the little hamlet of Sheepstor, we were informed by the matron of it, whom from her age and appearance we denominated the Septuagenarian Sibyl, that we might easily find out the ‘pixies’ house,’ where we should be careful to leave a pin, or something of equal value, as an offering to these invisible beings; otherwise they would not fail to torment us in our sleep. After thanking the good dame for her advice and information, we proceeded in search of it.

“By making a circuit, we rode to the very summit of this lofty tor, on which is a spacious area of green turf. We searched for some time amid this labyrinth of rocks for the residence of the pixies, but in vain, and lamented we had not taken a guide. We determined, however, to make a complete survey of the tor on foot, thinking that at least we should be recompensed by the sight of the distant scenery, or the nearer picturesque formation of the rocks.

“In the vale below, the little tower of the village to which this eminence gives its name forms a pleasing object. To the west is an extensive horizon; the north is bounded by other equally lofty tors, one of which is almost in the form of a regular cone or

pyramid. Below strays a little winding rivulet, content to wash the foot of the haughty mountain.*

“At the north side of the tor we discovered a narrow fissure, amid some large and lofty rocks; and imagining we had at last found the object of our search, squeezed ourselves into it with no little difficulty. The fissure was equally narrow all the way; and as it took an angular direction, we got out with as much labour on the other side. We did not, however, follow the recommendation of our aged informant, as we agreed that Oberon and his Queen Titania never could condescend to honour this spot with their presence.

“On returning for our horses, we discovered near the top of the tor two stone ridges, almost covered with turf, that intersected each other at nearly right angles, and formed a cross. In the middle was a flat horizontal stone. Measuring from this central point, the ridge to the east was twelve paces, west six, north seven, and south eleven. We afterwards discovered a larger one below, at the south side of the tor. At first we conjectured they were sepulchral monuments; and afterwards thought they might have been folds for sheep; which at the same time was endeavouring to account for the name of the mountain. But after all, these conjectures are entitled to little attention; as nothing can be accurately decided without more minute examination than we were then capable of giving.

“We returned to the village, little satisfied with our excursion; but, on inquiry, found, notwithstand-

* The leet that supplies Plymouth with its waters begins not far distant from the base of this tor.

ing all our search, that we had failed in discovering the wonderful grotto. With a little boy for our guide, we again ascended the mountain. Leaving our horses below, we followed our conductor over some rugged rocks, till he came to one in which was a narrow fissure. On his telling us this was the entrance, we laughed, and said none but the pixies and himself could enter it; but, on his assuring us it was the spot, I resolved to make the attempt. With great difficulty I succeeded, and found a hollow about six feet long, four wide, and five feet high. It was formed by two rocks resting in a slanting position against another in a perpendicular direction. The cavity was certainly singularly regular, and had somewhat the form of a little hovel. A rock served for a seat, and the posture of sitting was the only one in which I could find myself at ease. A noise occasioned by the dripping of water is distinctly heard; and as the cause of it is out of sight, it produces at first a sensation somewhat approaching to surprise, till reflection tells us the occasion of it: which might possibly have prepared the mind to imagine it the resort of invisible beings.*

“We now returned about a mile and a half, and

* The Rev. Mr. Polwhele, in his *Devon*, notices it, and in a note gives the following extract from a correspondent.

“Here, I am informed, Elford used to hide himself from the search of Cromwell’s party, to whom he was obnoxious. Hence he could command the whole country; and having some talents for painting, he amused himself with that art on the walls of his cavern, which I have been told (says Mr. Yonge of Puslinch) by an elderly gentleman who had visited this place, was very fresh in his time. The country people have many superstitious notions respecting this hole.”

None of the paintings now remain on the sides of the rock.

turning to the right, went in search of the cascade; which, as well as the cave just mentioned, is beyond measure indebted to the exaggerating tongue of Fame. This is produced by the dock-leet, flowing from the side of a hill, across a little rivulet, over a bridge or aqueduct. The effect is not in the least picturesque, and by no means recompensed us for our trouble."

The following is extracted from Mr. Bray's Journal of the same year, written a few days after the above.

EXCURSION TO COCKSTOR.* ROOSETOR AND STAPLETOR.

"On ascending Cockstor, which is on the left of the Moreton road, we observed several ridges, some of which are of a circular form. They do not seem, however, to be of Druidical origin, as they are too irregular, and are principally formed of mounds of earth; whereas the circles of the Druids were generally constructed of stones alone. They possibly may be the remains of enclosures to defend the sheep from the wolves, which, at an early period, are said to have been very numerous on the forest.

"Towards the south of the tor is an inclosure of this description of an oblong form; at the end of which is a singular rock, with two lines or fissures on its side, in the form of a cross. Hence is a grand and extensive view of the sea, the blue hills of Cornwall, the town of Tavistock situated in a deep valley, the lofty eminence of Brentor and the distant

* Cockstor; possibly so called from the heath-cock, formerly very plentiful on Dartmoor.

horizon beyond it. The top of Cockstor spreads into a kind of plain; in the middle of which is a rocky prominence, that appears to have been a place of defence. Around it we traced the ruins of a circular wall. The foundations of a small building within it, eleven feet by eight, were plainly visible, as the walls were about four feet high. The entrance and fire-place could be clearly distinguished. By the side of it was a mound of stones, which is the loftiest point of the tor, and probably was used as a beacon or signal-post.

“The declivitous sides of this tor, to the north and east, are covered with either mole or ant-hills, as contiguous to one another as they can possibly be placed. We remarked, however, a few lines or belts without any, and on approaching these spots, found them wet and swampy. It is singular that this is the only tor we have yet seen that possesses these excrescences. They seem to indicate a depth, and consequently comparative richness of soil. Farther to the north is a mound of stones of a circular form, with a deep concavity in the middle. The circumference of this ridge measures twenty-nine paces. The stones of which it is composed are thickly covered with moss. At a little distance from it is a karn, or heap of stones, flat at the top.

“Descending this mountain, we crossed a narrow valley, and mounted the side of another tor, in a north-east direction. After passing near some pits or trenches, which we imagine are the vestiges of stream works, we met with an aged shepherd, who was collecting his flock, and informed us the hill we were ascending was

ROOSETOR.

“This name may possibly be derived from Rhôs or Rôo, signifying, in Welsh and Cornish, a heathy mountain. At present, however, there is no heath near it; and indeed scarcely any is to be seen on the whole forest, as it is constantly burnt almost as soon as it appears. By this means the heath polts, which were here numerous, are nearly extirpated, whilst the sheep are benefited by the rich pasture that succeeds. The south side of the tor has a grand and picturesque appearance. Two immense piles of rocks are of so pendent a form as to threaten every instant to fall upon the beholder. One of them is supported on its two extremities, about a couple of feet from the ground, by some low rocks, and seems as if it had been bent in the middle by its own weight. And this probably was the case, for a perpendicular fissure or hiatus, that extends from the convexity of the base into the body of the lower stratum, proves that rocks, on their formation, must have been of a soft, yielding nature.

“This first groupe of rocks showed no symptoms of art; but on another pile, which was fifteen feet high, we found two basins—one two feet by one and a half; the other one foot in diameter. The rock consisted of seven layers, or strata, and the basins were on the stone next to the top, which was small. Another pile, though much lower, we ascended with the greatest difficulty. On the top of it were a few imperfect basins. But a mass of rocks, near the latter, afforded us a very curious specimen of the works of the Druids.



“On the uppermost stone of the mass we discovered a basin, in depth a foot and a quarter, with smaller ones surrounding it, and little channels, communicating with others in a serpentine direction. On this tor we found a sheepfold between some rocks, which were serviceable in the formation of it; and were informed by another shepherd that it was still used. A tor, it seems, is generally appropriated to a particular flock. Hence we proceeded to

STAPLETOR,

probably corrupted from Steepletor, as it has two or three piles of rock of a considerable height. On asking the old shepherd whether he thought we could climb them, he laughed at the idea. However, we determined to ascend the lowest first, which we did with no great difficulty, and discovered on it a basin, a foot and a half in diameter and one foot deep. This, contrary to all we had hitherto seen, was full of dirty water, which was probably occasioned by decayed moss. Over it hung a loftier pile, which we resolved to ascend as high as we could, without much hope of reaching the top. My friend, however, got to the very summit of it, on which he informed me was a wide but shallow basin. I followed him till I reached the third stone from

the top, which I could feel with my hand, but was unable to summon resolution enough to ascend higher.

“ Whilst I was leaning with my breast against the stone, he *moved* from his position, and *I felt the rock shake under him*. On my mentioning this circumstance, he did not seem to give it credit; but I soon convinced him, by shaking it myself, till, with some degree of apprehension, he requested me to desist.



“ I begged he would continue on the top, till I had descended and taken a sketch of it, with himself on the summit; but first gave him a plumb-line to let down, and we found he was elevated thirty feet. Whilst sketching, I conversed with him, and could almost fancy I heard a voice from the clouds. He not only stood upright, but stretched out his hands and foot in the position of Mercury, and seemed rather like a statue on the top of a lofty column than a human being on the summit of a natural rock. Besides its elevation, it hangs considerably out of its perpendicular; which so blended the feelings of fear for my friend and surprise at his intrepid firmness, that I felt the most indescribable

sensations, and my fingers could scarcely hold the pencil.



“I again made an attempt to join him, but halted in my former situation ; and the more he endeavoured to encourage me, added to my own attempts to overcome it, the more the perturbation of my mind increased. Never had I experienced such a conflict in my breast ; and, unable to bear it longer, I again descended. On letting himself down, I was obliged to direct my companion where to place his feet. Had he missed his hold, it would have been instant destruction. As he was now on the same spot where I had stood, I requested he would move the rock, thinking he could do it with greater ease, as he is much stronger than myself. and the rock must have been rendered somewhat lighter by his having removed from it. But my astonishment was inconceivably great at his assuring me he could not move it in the least. This convinced us he must have acted as a poise ; which was confirmed afterwards by

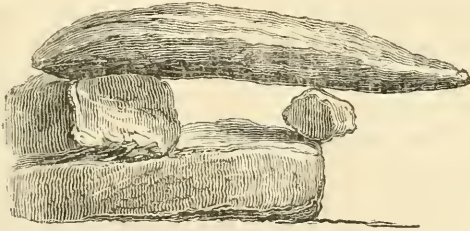
our examining the inclination of the rock, and the point on which he stood. As one part of the rock projected considerably, it required something on the opposite side to balance it, and when this was removed it destroyed the libration; so that there was less danger of its falling when he was on it than otherwise. When he was half way down, the shepherd again joined us, with the laugh of stupid wonder, and saying he had observed him on the top, asked how he could possibly get down.

“On the same groupe of rocks is a singular Druidical monument, or tolmen, for such I am convinced it is. The word is composed of Toll, a hole, and Mên, a rock, in the Cornish language. After a description of this, which is different from any mentioned by Borlase, we will consider the purposes to which works of this description were applied. On



the top of a rock, with a flat surface, a stone, nine feet long, and six wide, is supported by two other

stones. One of the supports is placed on the very edge of the rock. Neither point of bearing is an inch in thickness, so that, in all appearance, a slight effort would remove it. Through this aperture I crept, not without apprehension, and took especial care not to touch its supporter even in the slightest manner.



“The tolmen is denominated by Borlase a stone deity. By going under the rock, or through the passage formed by it, he thinks one acquired a degree of holiness; or that it was used to prepare for, and initiate into, the mysteries of Druidism, their future votaries. Some, too, he says, might be resorted to by people troubled with particular diseases, who, by going through these passages, left their complaints behind them.*

“After all, however, it is probable that *this* rock cannot come under such denomination, as tolmen in general are large orbicular rocks, supported from the ground by two small ones. And as nothing similar to it is to be found in Borlase’s account of Druidical remains in Cornwall, I may be allowed, perhaps, to indulge my own conjectures.

* “Creeping under tolmen for the cure of diseases is still practised in Ireland, and also in the East, as is shown by Mrs. Colonel Elwood in her travels.”—*Gentleman’s Magazine*, July, 1831.

“I am inclined, then, to think that *this* was designed as a kind of moral touchstone. The Druids might lead the accused to the spot, point out to him the apparently tottering rock, and by threatening to make him pass under it, when, if guilty, it would fall and crush him, extract from the delinquent the confessions of his fear. We know, though Borlase has unaccountably overlooked it, that ordeals of various kinds were used by the ancient inhabitants of this kingdom; and the rock ordeal may be supposed as effectual as any other. After examining some more rocks, where we found nothing remarkable, we returned, with the determination of soon visiting Mistor, which is the next to the north-east, and which our good shepherd informed us was the most curious on the moor, and that we should there meet with what was called *Mistor pan*: this we concluded must be a Druidical basin of a large size.

“I may here observe, that Vixen, or Vixen Tor, described in a former excursion, receives its name, as I am told, from Vixen, the female of a fox; these animals resorting there from a neighbouring wood, near the Walkham, to breed among the hollows of the rocks.”

In my next letter I propose giving you several other extracts from Mr. Bray's Journals. In the interval,

Allow me, my dear Sir,

The honour to remain,

Very faithfully and truly yours,

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER XIV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Mistor described—Tumuli and circles near Mistor—Ashes found in the circles—Barrows—Stream-work, &c.—Brentor—Beacon station with the ancient Britons—Account of this most conspicuous and remarkable tor—Church on the very top of it—Its commanding station—Legend respecting it—Another tale respecting its foundation—Most probable tradition concerning its erection—Brentor a striking object at a distance—Camden's notice of the Gubbins, a rude race of men inhabiting a neighbouring village—Wherefore called cramp-eaters—Longevity, instance of it in Elizabeth Williams—Geology of Brentor—Mr. Polwhele quoted.

Ticarage, Tavistock, May 10th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I SEND you in this Mr. Bray's account of an excursion, made in the same year as the former, to

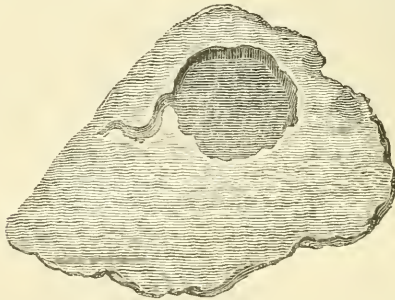
MISTOR ON DARTMOOR.

“This tor, which is situated about five miles from Tavistock, we visited to view the *pan* already mentioned.* It lies to the left of the Moreton road, near the river Walkham. A small rock, or tor, probably little Mistor, is near it: this we ascended: it had nothing but its natural, yet regular appearance, almost like that of masonry, to attract our notice.

“On continuing our ride hence, we found the

* The popular legend respecting Mistor pan is, that it was formed by the devil, and used by him as a frying-pan on particular occasions.

ground swampy, and before we reached Great Mistor, crossed a stream work of considerable extent. Here there are four or five masses of regularly piled rocks, on one of which, about the centre of the tor, is a basin, the largest we had yet seen, three feet in diameter, and six inches in depth. The bottom was flat and smooth. It had a lip, with a channel to the north-east. Near it, on the same ridge, is a singularly formed rock; from its appearance, we concluded



it was a logan stone, but tried in vain to move it. We examined every part of the tor, but could find no other work of art: if there ever had been any, it was probably destroyed some years ago by the lawless rout of idle young men, who sallied out and purposely overthrew every rock they were able to move in this neighbourhood. Whilst we were employed in these investigations, we sheltered ourselves from a shower of rain, by entering a chasm amid the rocks, and made them echo with the voice of song."

The next extract is from the same Journal, kept by Mr. Bray during his excursions on the moor.

TUMULI AND CIRCLES NEAR MISTOR.

"Having occasion to pass over Dartmoor, without

any intention of renewing my researches on it at that time, I thought I observed, as I ascended Merrivale hill, a mound or two, at the left hand, at some distance from the road. It was rather remarkable they had not before attracted my notice, particularly as, in our last excursion, I cast my eyes over it in doubt whether I should examine it more minutely or not.

“As I was not much straitened for time, I directed my course to the spot, which is an enclosure, and found the first barrow I came to was of an oblong square, thirty-five paces round the base, with shelving sides and flat at the top. It was covered with moss, rushes and grass, and had a broad but shallow trench around it. It stretched east and west, or rather north-east and south-west. Another near it was of the same dimensions. A little beyond this was one thirty-seven paces round. They all pointed to the same quarter of the heavens. At a distance I perceived several others, and determined to return to my horse, which I had fixed to the hedge, and ride to them. I was convinced, from their shape and situation, that they were barrows or tumuli, which were in remote ages receptacles of the dead.

“Owing to enclosures I was obliged to return to the turnpike road, and, near the circles above-mentioned, found a man employed in building a hut, the foundations of which I had before remarked. He informed me that he had a grant from Mr. Lopez” (the late Sir M. Lopez) “of several acres around, and intended to reside there with his family. On my asking him what he imagined the circles were designed for, he repeated the old story, that they

were used as a market during the plague at Tavistock, the account of which he traced back to his great grandfather. He told me he would show me the spot where the market-house stood, together with the *wraxelling* ring, or place appropriated for wrestling. The circles he conceived were *booths*; and, said he, 'To prove they were, I've found many of their fire-places with ashes in them.'

"This alone was wanting to corroborate my opinion of their being used by the Druids in their sacrifices, or as dwellings by the aboriginal inhabitants of the forest. He promised me he would let me know when he had discovered any more. On accusing him of having destroyed some of the circles, he said the stones were very *handy* for him, and he did not know what use they now were of. But, on my informing him, that I should endeavour to bring them into notice, which might possibly induce the curious to visit them, and if he acted as their guide he might meet with some remuneration, he promised he would restrain his destroying hand. On finding he had resided for most part of his life near Vixen Tor, I asked whether he had ever been on the top of it, to which he replied, it was impossible; and I could hardly persuade him I had myself accomplished that feat.

"I thence directed my route in pursuit of the remaining barrows towards Mistor, and leaving my horse near the stream-work mentioned in one of my former rambles, entered the enclosure, which reaches from the river Walkham half way up the rocky side of Mistor. The first barrow I arrived at was twenty-seven paces round, the next twenty-seven, another thirty-four. Near this was one thirty-eight, and

another twenty-five. They were in general about four and a half feet high. Not far distant was the largest I had yet seen; the circumference of which was forty-eight paces, and its height six feet. Near this were two more, one twenty-eight paces, the other thirty-two in circumference. It may possibly be said that they are nothing more than old peat stacks, as, where the turf has been removed, the earth is very black, but this is the natural colour of the soil on the moor. It would be absurd to imagine such pains would be taken to place them all in the same direction, or to make them all of nearly the same size. But the strongest proof, till one of them be opened, (which at some future time I hope to do,) is that the next I came to evidently had its sides faced with stone. This was twenty-four paces round. At the east end of it is a circle, ten paces in diameter; it was different from any other I had before seen. Stones were piled upon each other to the height of two feet, which was about the width of the wall. The entrance was to the south, whence you have a fine view of the sea, Maker heights, and Vixen Tor.

“Near this was another barrow, thirty-two paces round, more distinctly faced with stone. Thus in all there are thirteen tumuli within the space of less than half a mile; and since they are surrounded on all sides by such evident Druidical remains as basins and circles, we may surely attribute them to the same origin. Indeed, this spot seems to have been the sacred cemetery of the Druids.

“ I forgot to mention above, that an idea may be started, from their proximity to a stream-work, that these mounds were formed of the rubbish arising from them. This, however, could by no means be

the case, as they surely would not have carried it to such a distance from the work, nor was there any reason to form a trench around, or to make them in so artificial a shape. Near these tumuli are several lines of stones stretching in various directions, some straight, and others in a circular direction. To the north-east of them, I found very unexpectedly a great number of circles, of all sizes, from three or four paces to sixty or seventy in diameter. The largest united three or four small ones, and had lines of connexion with some at a distance. On the range of its circumferential line, a square is formed, on the inside, by three or four stones, which has an entrance from without. This I conjecture to have been the sacred hearth or altar for burnt sacrifice. And near one of the circles is a pit or cavity, which possibly might have been applied to the same purpose."

The next extract which I here send you from Mr. Bray's papers is an account of his excursion to

BRENT TOR.

"On my road, I passed Hurdwick, about a mile from the town; it was formerly the property of the Abbot of Tavistock. And the remains of a barn, of considerable extent, with bold projecting buttresses, built, probably, about the same period with the Abbey, prove it to have been a place of no mean consequence. Indeed, the Abbot was called to the House of Peers, in the time of Henry VIII. by the title of Baron Hurdwick.

"At the northern extremity of Heathfield, Brent Tor is a conspicuous object. In Gibson's edition of Camden's Britannia, we are informed that Brent Tor is a name signifying 'a high rocky place.' As

Tor alone can lay claim to the greater part, if not the whole of this definition, (for *tor*, tower, *turris*, are all of the same import, meaning something elevated; and *tor*, moreover, is generally, at least in Devonshire, confined to a rocky hill,) the *first* syllable, and thus the very name of the place itself, is totally omitted.

“ *Brent* is the participle of *brennen*, to burn. And little doubt can be entertained that Brent Tor was an ancient beacon, upon which wood, turf, or other rude articles of fuel, were *burnt* by way of signal; and we know that the church upon its summit is even at present ‘a famous sea mark.’ Four or five tumuli, about a mile distant, on Heathfield, are still called the Beacons. It was probably, in the time of the early Britons, a stronghold, or hill fort; as, on the northern side, may be traced two or three mounds, that seem to have been raised for the purpose of defence.

“ The summit of this lofty eminence is generally so damp and wet, that the very coffins are said to float in the vaults. This, no doubt, is greatly exaggerated: but most of the hills on Dartmoor are so wet and boggy, from being frequently covered with mist, that they justly might be designated as ‘cloud-capt tors.’ In addition to which, the western winds, being here the most prevalent, bring the clouds from the Atlantic ocean; and these, surcharged with vapour, from crossing such an immense expanse of water, are attracted and broken by the hills of Devonshire. This, in fact, is the principal cause of the humidity, but, at the same time, the perpetual verdure, for which this country is so remarkable.

“ The church on Brent Tor is dedicated to St. Mi-

chael. And there is a tradition among the vulgar that its foundation was originally laid at the foot of the hill; but that the enemy of all angels, the Prince of darkness, removed the stones by night from the base to the summit; probably to be nearer his own dominion, the air: but that, immediately on the church being dedicated to St. Michael, the patron of the edifice hurled upon the devil such an enormous mass of rock, that he never afterwards ventured to approach it. Others tell us that it was erected by a wealthy merchant, who vowed, in the midst of a tremendous storm at sea, (possibly addressing himself to his patron, St. Michael.) that if he escaped in safety, he would build a church on the first land he descried. If this was the case, he seems to have performed his vow with more worldly prudence than gratitude; as it is one of the smallest churches any where to be met with. Indeed, it frequently, and not inappropriately, has been compared to a cradle. The tower has but three small bells. It is a daughter church to Tavistock; and the Michaelmas fair, now held at the latter place, used formerly to be celebrated at Brent Tor, doubtless in honour of its tutelar saint. The stone still lies by the road side, on which the pole with a glove, the usual concomitant of a fair, was erected. Probably, however, it was originally the base of a cross.

“The church stands on the very summit of the rock, within a few feet of the declivity, on its most precipitous side. These words, inscribed on a tablet, are seen on the south wall—‘Upon this rock will I build my church.’ There are no monuments; but the following rude inscription is worthy notice:—
‘Heare under this stone lyeth the bodie of John

Cole, Jun. of Litton, who departed this life the 23d. of November, 1694, æta: 22. Also, Johan, his sister, who was buried the 1st of February, 1694, æta: 11.'

'If thou be serious (Friend) peruse this stone;
 If thou be not soe: pray: let it alone.
 Against death's poison, vertue's the best art;
 When good men seem to die, they but depart.
 Live well: then at the last with us thou'lt feele
 Bare dying makes not death, but dying ill.'

"Brent Tor is a pleasing object at a distance; here towering abruptly, there gently rising from the extensive plain of Heathfield; but when viewed near, it is too void of foreground; though a projecting rock, at the north-west end, under which is a little shed, or stable, gives it a prominent feature, and in some degree supplies the deficiency: for as one passes along the road beneath, the form of the hill is perpetually varying; and the effect is totally changed, as the tower is seen on the one side or on the other of this impending cliff.

"In Camden, the inhabitants of a neighbouring village, called the Gubbins, are stated to be 'by mistake represented by Fuller (in his English Worthies) as a lawless Scythian sort of people.' The writer contents himself with asserting that it is a mistake, though upon what authority does not appear; as even at the present day, the term Gubbins is well known in the vicinity, though it is applied to the people, and not the place. They still have the reputation of having been a wild and almost savage race; and not only this, but another name, that of *cramp-eaters*, is still applied to them by way of reproach.

"Instead of buns, which are usually eaten at country revels, in the West of England, the inhabi-

tants of Brent Tor could produce nothing but cramps, an inferior species of cake; probably owing to the badness of their corn, from the poverty of the soil. Thus they were called cramp-eaters, as the whiskered warrior in the *Batrachomyomachia*, or battle of the frogs and mice, of Homer, was denominated *Sitophagus*, or cake-eater. And if a *bad* pun may be allowed, they might be learnedly called *cacophagi*. We know that the gipsies are descended from the Egyptians; but, notwithstanding Fuller's credit is thus fully re-established, we must not venture to suppose that the modern inhabitants of Brent Tor aspire to carry back their genealogy to the ancient Scythians; particularly as history informs us that their country was not held in high esteem, even by its natives. For a certain petulant Greek objecting to the celebrated Anacharsis that he was a Scythian, 'True,' says Anacharsis, 'my country disgraces me, but you disgrace your country.'

"If, however, longevity be a characteristic of savage nations, the inhabitants of Brent Tor will not, perhaps, be displeased at being compared to them in this particular. There is now living among them a woman called Elizabeth Williams, of the age of one hundred and six, who still retains the full possession of her faculties. She says she was married at the age of twenty-four, at Lamerton. And by the parish register of that place, it appears that this occurred in April, 1736; so that, if this account be correct, she can be no more than ninety-eight years old. Her maiden name was Blatchford.

"It may not be uninteresting here to subjoin Mr. Polwhele's notice of Brent Tor rock, extracted from his *Devon*. 'The summits of these (the Dartmoor) Tors are found to be composed, in general,

partly of granite and partly of dark brown iron-stone, which in some places appears to have been in a state of fusion. Brent Tor, and several other tors on the west side of the river, are undoubtedly volcanic. Brent Tor is very curious; it being one mass of hill, rising to a great height from a perfect plane, and entirely divested of every thing of the kind besides itself, and differing from all other tors which we visited. We found it covered, between the rocks, with a fine verdure, and every indication of a very rich soil, far different from the heath which surrounds it. We brought away some bits of the rock, which, in general, is a deep rusty blue, inclining to black, hard and heavy, with pores here and there as if worm-eaten; some of the pores contain a little of a brownish red earth, but whether of the ochre kind we could not determine. Near the top of the tor some pieces were found more porous, even resembling a cinder, or piece of burnt bread, and very light; we supposed it to be a variety of tophus. Another observation was very striking, that this tor does not contain a single particle of granite, that we could discover. In this it differs from most of the other tors we visited, though we found some on the west side of the river Lid, which contained stones of a similar porosity. From the above observations, we were led to believe that this remarkable tor was the effect or remains of some long-ago extinguished volcano; as, in its appearance, situation, soil, strata, &c., it argues strongly for it. It bears, also, a great similarity to the description in Brydone's Tour through Sicily, &c., of the hills which he calls 'the offspring of Etna.'"

Allow me to remain yours, &c.

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER XV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Source of the Tavy on Dartmoor—North Crockern-tor—Account of some very curious circles found in this excursion—Longbetor—South Beetor—Bel-tor, or Belleter—Excursion to Tavy Head—A Farmer becomes guide—Upright stone marks the spot of the grave of a suicide—Cranmere Pool—Source of the river Tavy—The tracks of foxes seen—A hare chased by a fox—Superstition respecting the spirits condemned to the pool—The guide's credulity—His account of having been himself bewitched by an old woman—Extraordinary walking race mentioned by the Farmer—Head of the river Walkham—Crossing the fen—Peter Tor, a fortified stronghold—The romantic and melancholy story of George Stevens related.

Vicarage, Tavistock, May 13th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I PURPOSE sending you, in this letter, an account of the source of the river Tavy, which rises on Dartmoor, and flowing through the adjacent country, gives name to Tavistock, which is situated on its banks. But wishing to be as regular as I can, I shall continue my extracts from Mr. Bray's Journal in the order in which I find it written. The following brief notice of some Druidical vestiges comes before his account of the source of the Tavy. It is dated—

“ Sept. 20th, 1802. As the family had determined

on going to Bair-down this day, I was glad to be of the party, to continue my observations towards the north of Crockern-tor, which I had lately visited. After passing Merrivale bridge, we thought we saw a circle or two on the right of the road, in a valley where there are directing-posts from Tavistock to Ashburton. As I had not been exactly on that spot before, we proceeded to it; and the first circle we found was fifty-six paces in diameter; including a smaller one to the westward, another to the south-east and a third to the north-east. That to the westward had a diametrical line intersecting it. To the north and south were two or three large flat stones set on end; and in the circle were some rocks, which possibly might have served the purpose of altars.

“At a little distance from this is another circle, or rather three parts of one; for a portion is very rudely traced: it is one hundred and sixteen paces in circumference. Adjoining, but on the outside, is a smaller circle, with a diametrical line, and within it are two others, somewhat large, connected with the circumferential line. On the outside of this is a large flat rock, which serves as a back to what was once, I conjecture, an altar-hearth, as there are some stones, now partly thrown down, that form a square before it. Near this spot were three or four smaller ones, not deserving any particular notice.

“Continuing our route to the left, on the east we arrived at a small tor on the acclivity ascending to Hessory tor, on which is a basin two feet and a half long and six inches deep. My father, who had never before seen a rock basin, was convinced, though this was by no means a regular one, that it must have been a work of art. We fell into the road again at

Rundle's stone, on which, on the south side, is the letter R, in alto relievo. Hence I had often thought I perceived to the east-south-east a tower; and though every person who had heard me mention it considered it as supposititious, I, by means of a glass, now saw it very distinctly: from its direction as well as appearance, I think it must be Lord Courtenay's Belvidere.

“ My father left me at Bair-down; and I resolved to visit by myself the tors, four in number, to the east of the Dart. The first tor is just above Wistman's Wood: it is called Longbetor. On one stone I found three imperfect basins; on another a shallow one; and on a third, three more, also imperfect. This tor bears evident marks of having suffered from some concussion of the earth; for the strata lie in all directions, and some piles of rocks have fallen from their perpendicular, and, though falling against others, have not separated. At *South Beator*, on the same ridge, there is a basin two feet and a half in diameter: it is shallow. Waydown tor, though much the highest of the four, has nothing remarkable, excepting the view, which is very extensive. It is almost the only tor of such a height that is covered with grassy turf.

“ Belleter (or Bell tor)* has on its summit a circular mound of stones, hollow in the middle, with two little piles at the east and west. This is evidently artificial; as there are no loose stones near, excepting those fallen from the top. A rock or two to the north had nothing worthy notice. In many

* Supposed, as stated in a former letter, to derive its name from Bel, or Belus, the sun, worshipped by the Britons.

places the ground was boggy; I was obliged, when this was the case, to tie my horse to some rushes, not without some degree of fear that he would eat himself loose."

EXCURSION TO TAVY HEAD.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE SAME.

"Sept. 22. After taking an early breakfast, accompanied by my friend, I set out to visit Tavy-head. We went first to the village of Peter Tavy, where my father had recommended me to make inquiry of a farmer of the name of Mudge. We met two men driving sheep to Tavistock market, and, on applying to them for information, found it was the farmer and his son. On learning who we were, he insisted on accompanying us himself, and accordingly returned for a horse; and to be more expeditious, mounted him without any saddle.

"We soon found he was well acquainted with all the western parts of the moor. Indeed he was communicative in every respect; and informed us that he had a large family; which, at times, from misfortunes and losses, he should not have been able to have brought up, had it not been for the many kindnesses of his landlord, who, amongst others, permitted him to pay his rent only just when it was convenient to himself. My companion asked him who his landlord was, and I was not a little surprised to find he was my father. I was greatly affected at the good farmer's expressions of affectionate gratitude to his benefactor, and his attentions to myself.

"Near Peter Tavy is an upright stone, where was buried a man who, some years ago, poisoned

himself in consequence of the infidelity of his mistress. We first rode to Limebarrow, which is an immense heap of stones, with a little cavity on the top: in the centre is a large stone. It is eighty-five paces in circumference. The tor near it, a very low one, has nothing worth notice.

“About half a mile farther, we left our horses to the care of some persons who were employed in carrying away ‘*turves*’ (peat) and proceeded on foot towards Cranmere Pool, the source of the river Tavy. If we had not taken a guide it would have been impossible to have attempted it; for even as it was, we were half way up the leg every instant in crossing a bog, or morass, of two miles in extent, and another soon after of the same dimensions. At a spot where the verdure was entirely carried away by water, and where there was nothing but soft black peat, we ascended a circular mound, seemingly artificial, whence we had an extensive view: to the south Beltor, and Way-down tor, with the tors on Bair-down, and Hessory tor; to the west Gestor, Furtor, West Hantor, Sharpy-tor, and Sourton-tor; to the north, Amarecombe, West Miltor and East Miltor, Rowtor, and others, with I believe Sheperton, Wild and Watern tors.

“To the north-east we perceived a flag on a hill about a mile distant, to which we went, and conjectured it was affixed there by those employed in the trigonometrical survey of the county; though one would think, from its not being worn, that it had been but lately erected. The Dart rises at a little distance from it.

“We saw frequently the track of foxes; and our guide informed us that once he had seen a fox in

chase of a hare. This is a fact rather new, I believe, in natural history. About a mile farther, in the midst of a bog of a considerable extent, we found Cranmere Pool. It is not, as represented in the map, on the top of a hill, but in a low part of the bog; however, the bog itself is on high ground. The pool was dry, and through it we observed the foot-marks of a fox. I walked into it some little distance without sinking higher than my ancle. It does not appear to be more than a hundred feet in diameter; nor can the water itself be more than six or eight feet deep when it is full. I am inclined to think that its size must have been exaggerated by the fears of those who viewed it only at a distance; for in wet weather it cannot well be approached. Indeed, at present, we found many deep holes around it full of water, and partly covered with long grass, so thick that it required the utmost circumspection to wade along in safety.

“Our guide informed us that it is believed spirits are here condemned to suffer. Our guide, indeed, was not very sceptical; for he said that an ill-minded old woman, who is still alive and lives near him, had *bewitched himself*, so that for seventeen weeks he never slept an hour, nor ate more than a biscuit or two; that he never felt hungry nor sleepy; that always at twelve o’clock at night, precisely, such pains as of pricking of pins, would so torment him in his side, that he was obliged to be taken out of bed, and that then he would sit up till six o’clock in the morning, when these tortures regularly left him!

“The pool is about eight miles from Peter Tavy, and within three of Zeal, near Oakhampton. On

our remarking to our guide how lustily he walked, he informed us his age was sixty-five, but that he could never walk so well as his son, who, for the wager of a guinea, had run eleven miles in forty-five minutes, from Tavistock bridge to Nackersknoll.

“Returning from Cranmere Pool, we again crossed the Tavy, which is here a little rivulet. We also saw the head of the river Walkham. We mounted Furtor, on which is a basin two feet and a half in diameter, and eight inches deep. There, also, are two small contiguous basins, one of which has a perforation communicating with the side of the rock.

“Hence we again waded to our horses, after walking about ten miles across the fen. We were not a little heated and fatigued; but, had it not been for a pretty brisk wind, we should have been much more so. We rode about half a mile, and, coming to a clear stream, went to dinner on a venison pasty, which I had carried in my valise, and quenched our thirst with grog. Soon after we took leave of our good old guide, and went to Peterstone rock, the highest stone of which, about forty years ago, he said had been split in pieces by lightning.

“Peter Tor was evidently a fortified stronghold, as it is surrounded by a mound of stones, and, in the midst, three or four rocks are encompassed with the same. Hence is a distant view of the Sound, &c. The tor is composed of black granite, covered with moss. The strata are not, as usual, horizontal, but jagged, and generally perpendicular. Below it is a large oval ridge of stones, one hundred and thirty-three paces long, with seven small internal circles. From a tor near Peter Tavy is a very fine and ex-

tensive view—the winding river, Tavistock, Mount Edgcumbe, Kit Hill, Brentor, &c.”

In the first part of the above account, which I have extracted from his old Journal, Mr. Bray mentions the upright stone that marks the spot where a young man was buried who had poisoned himself, in consequence of the infidelity of his mistress. That spot is at the meeting of four cross-roads, now grass-grown; it is known by the name of Stevens's grave. The death of this unhappy suicide occurred many years ago; but I have endeavoured to learn such particulars of the melancholy story, as could be gleaned from the accounts given by a few old persons who had heard all about it in their youth.* The tale is not devoid of interest. It is indeed one of those tragedies in real life that are sometimes chosen as the foundation on which to build a work of fiction. As far as melancholy incident may be concerned, the following circumstances, I think you will say, need no addition.

The name by which the little lonely mound of earth, marked by its upright stone, is still known in this country, declares that of its unfortunate tenant; and ages will in all probability pass away before Stevens's grave will be forgotten, or before the superstitious dread is no more, which now makes the neighbouring peasantry shun the spot, after sundown, where the condemned spirit of the suicide is still believed to walk from midnight to cock-crowing;

* Had I commenced these letters before the death of the late Miss Mary Adams of Tavistock (who died at a great age), I could have obtained far more information on this, and all other traditional subjects, than I now possess. Miss Adams was the depository of every legend or story connected with this neighbourhood, that had been handed down for centuries, from generation to generation.

since, with us, in so just horror is the crime of self-murder held, that the poet's assertion, respecting all who leave the world by their own hand, would be here received without a doubt—

“The common damned shun their society.”

The Christian name of Stevens was, I believe, George, but this point I have not ascertained for a certainty. Yet we will, if you please, call him such here; for, though it may be erroneous, it is of no great consequence. George Stevens, then, was a country youth, who followed the occupation of his father, that of husbandry; though, from his having been to school, and possessing a quick capacity, he was more educated and less rude in his manners than were country lads in general, either in his day, or in our own. He was, it should seem, of a susceptible, thoughtful, and grave nature. In fact, he was exactly that sort of character where the deepest and the strongest feelings are ever found to exist, though wholly unsuspected by their common acquaintances, who look only on the surface of things, just as an idle observer looks on a still and quiet pool, and, because it neither rushes tumultuously forward, nor swells itself into billows and breakers, thinks not it can be of any real depth or force, but estimates its power only by its appearance. George, likewise, loved a book, whenever he could get one; and though at this distance of time I cannot possibly say what might have been the nature of his studies, I should conclude, as there were then no circulating libraries in the neighbouring town of Tavistock, that his books must have been such as he could borrow from the village schoolmaster, or

find, by chance, in any farm-house, where he had an acquaintance.

Whatever they were, no doubt they assisted to give a certain degree of refinement to his feelings: and George's love of reading, in a mind so serious, produced perhaps a habit of thoughtfulness and reflection, that was strengthened by his solitary and quiet occupations, amidst the wild scenes in which he led his master's sheep to graze amongst the hills and valleys in the romantic neighbourhood of Cudlip town and Dartmoor. I do not know whether George ever read poetry, but as he became the victim of a powerful and ill-requited passion, I should be tempted to fancy he had done so. For if it be true that the reading of *Robinson Crusoe* has made many boys run away, and become sailors, how can we doubt that the reading of poetry, (more especially love-poetry,) by filling the mind with images of beauty, tenderness, and perfection, has made many become lovers; their mistresses often being invested with the charms there ascribed to the heroines of such productions by the excited imagination of their admirers? Be this as it may, whatever books George read, or whether or not he indulged in romantic dreams, amidst romantic scenery, in his pastoral employment, certain it is he became deeply enamoured with a young girl, the fame of whose beauty is not even now totally extinct.

Her name was Mary. And though her station in society was much the same as his own, the child of a husbandman, yet her friends were poorer than his. Her father lived in a little cottage that stood near the path which George so frequently passed in driving his sheep to pasture. She was young and

beautiful, and left much to herself. And often, as he went along, would he pause to gaze on Mary, as she sat "spinning or knitting in the sun" at her cottage-door, and singing some rustic melody with a cheerfulness that spoke a careless heart, and a spirit as light as that which animated the feathered tribes around her, as they seemed with their little warbling notes to answer to her song.

Thus was it, almost in their childish days, that the acquaintance between these young persons began; and to them may be applied the lines of Wordsworth—

With but a step between their several homes,
Twins had they been in pleasure;

* * * * *

And strangers to content if long apart.

How soon this intimacy ripened into love, or how long it was before George received her troth, as he plighted to her his own, I cannot tell. But as, in the simplicity of rustic life, there are no forms of etiquette to be observed, and nothing that is factitious, I conclude there were no greater difficulties to be overcome, than a little shyness on the part of George (for true love is always modest) in telling Mary she had all his heart; and a downcast look, a blush, and a corresponding feeling of modesty, possibly revealed to him, even before her lips confirmed the truth, that she was nothing loth to find herself the chosen of his affections. There was, however, one obstacle to the happiness of the youthful pair, which even higher born and more polished lovers sometimes experience,—they had no money to begin the world with, and their friends thought them too young to marry without it. The usual counsels of time, patience,

and hope deferred no doubt were urged to make them pause before the knot was tied that never could be broken.

The lovers, perhaps, thought their case a hard one ; and it was now observed that Mary did not, as she used to do, sit for hours together spinning or working at her cottage-door, and only relieving her toil by her song, or by welcoming a casual acquaintance, who stopped to be "telling with her," as the common phrase of the county expresses a gossip between two friends. Mary now found some occasion or other to stray from home ; and she would be out on the down, as well as George, to look after the sheep, (for her father, by dint of frugality, had managed to add one or two to his little stock, in the attempt to do something in the farming way for himself,) or water was to be fetched from the rivulet, or there was an errand or a message, that none but Mary was so ready to carry out of doors. And on all these occasions, it chanced, such was the fortune of the affair, that George Stevens was always near at hand to help her. He would be seen on the hills, looking after Mary's scanty flock more carefully than his own ; or with delight plucking for her the wild honeysuckle, or any pretty flower that love taught him to select as an offering to beauty. And on a holiday, George and Mary were never parted : in the merry-making of the village he was her partner ; so likewise in the summer evening walk ; and never was he happy excepting by her side.

But alas !

"The course of true love never did run smooth :"

nor does the story of George's ill-fated attachment in the least contradict the assertion of the poet.

About this time there came into the neighbourhood a young man, who took a large farm that was to be let. It had a good house and plenty of land, and he had kine and all things fitting; and was, indeed, for one in his station, a very great man. In addition to the advantages of fortune, he was of a comely person, and wore a smart coat on a Sunday; and all the country girls admired him; and his father being dead, he had no one to control his actions, so that it was thought it would be the making of any young woman on whom he fixed his eyes for a wife. But those eyes, for some time, looked with indifference on all, till they beheld Mary, and then they looked no farther for a choice. Conscious of his own qualities, both personal and otherwise, the young farmer thought so little about being refused for the sake of a penniless clown, that I fear the sweet-hearting of Mary with George, a circumstance known well enough in the neighbourhood, never once entered his head as likely to be any serious obstacle to his wishes. Perhaps, too, he had not the most exalted notions of female constancy when exposed to temptation. His courtship was strongly advocated by Mary's friends. And as he possessed that power which worldly wealth confers, of being able to advance an inferior by his notice, or to depress him by withholding the employment he could afford to give him on his farm, it is not improbable the father of Mary found his own interest, and that of his other children, deeply concerned in the success of this new suitor for his daughter's hand.

The situation of George was now pitiable: he was discountenanced; and Mary kept as much as pos-

sible within doors, in order to put a stop to those country walks and pretty pastimes which had hitherto brought her and her old sweetheart so much together. Let me not be unjust, however, to her memory; since though common report averred that George died in consequence of her infidelity, there is no proof, that I could ever find, that she really was unfaithful. This part of the tale is involved in much obscurity. To hazard, therefore, even some conjectures, in attempting to unravel the cause that led to the catastrophe, may be admissible. It is not improbable that the vanity of Mary was flattered that a poor girl, like herself, could win the affections of a man who would have been considered a great match for any wealthy farmer's daughter all the country round. She was envied her supposed good fortune. And how apt is this very circumstance to pamper self-love, to raise airs of importance and of triumph, that injure, if they do not destroy, the most amiable feelings of the female heart! So that if she did not actually accept the farmer as a suitor, I should apprehend, by what followed, that she must have received him with complacency; and this, with a lover, was not the way to extinguish his hopes. For my own part, I am willing to consider her conduct in the most charitable view, and to think that *fear* might have had as large a share in her apparent infidelity as vanity itself. She fancied, perhaps, that she ought not altogether to risk the benefit her father received from her lover's notice and assistance, by a too rude or abrupt rejection of his suit. Poverty, indeed, has many ways of temptation to evil. Even her father himself *might* (I do not say he did) have appealed to her feelings of duty and

affection, and might have begged her not to deprive him of a friend so important to his welfare, who had become such solely on her account.

But be this as it may, certain it is poor George now felt all the misery of neglect and ill-requited affection. His deep and powerful feelings, which, to the common eye, had been concealed under a calm demeanour in happier days, now, like hidden fires, burst forth with fearful violence, and one rash act was but the prelude to another. Previous, however, to this storm of passion (which I am about to relate) he had struggled to forget one who, he feared, no longer deserved his affection. But the very effort to do so kept alive that fatal remembrance. He neglected his business; he grew melancholy, careless of himself, and took no interest in anything around him; often wandering out on the moor, and particularly haunting one spot where he had been accustomed to sit on a mound of earth, under a tree, to watch the coming of Mary, as she would steal away from home, and, with the foot of a fairy, would trip up the hill to meet him.

It was on *that* spot he had delighted to pay her his little services of love, to give her flowers, (they were all he had to give,) and to receive from her the often renewed assurance that she loved him more than all the world. There would George sit, hour after hour, and still, at intervals, bring flowers, as if he would cheat reality with some fond fancy of his own creation. But, alas! there was no Mary to receive the gift, no kind hand, no laughing and eager eye to meet his, and bid him welcome. Lonely and deserted, he would cast down his flowers, even as Mary had cast down all the hopes she had once

raised in his heart to make him happy. And now, may be, he thought, as he sat, of the story he had many times read, when a boy, of the bean which had been sown by Hope till it grew into a fair plant, towering to the skies; and then came the giant Disappointment, with a curtal axe, and in one moment the growth of months and seasons was no more.

At length his feelings changed their character, but not their force, a sense of injury surmounted every fear. A sense, also, too deeply cherished, that Mary, by whom he was once so fondly loved, would still hold him dear, did she but know the strength of his affection, made him resolve, reckless of all else, to secure her even by the sight of his very despair, if no other means might be left to awaken her feelings. In this tempest of passion, he set out for the cottage; but chancing to meet in his way the rival who had destroyed his peace, George attacked him with such frenzy, that he had just cause to fear he had laid himself open to the power of the law, which his antagonist threatened to use against him.

After this quarrel, it appears that George once more saw Mary. What passed at that interview I know not; but it is probable she entered into some explanation with him relative to her late conduct. She might also have promised to dismiss his rival for ever from her sight. It is likely something of this kind passed, as George, that night, returned to his home, in a more calm and tranquil state of mind than he had done for many weeks before. I am willing to hope that Mary did not intend to deceive him; for George, it was said, had betrayed to her his dreadful and wicked design on his own life, if he ever again saw his rival in her company. It is

not impossible that the desire she entertained to serve her father, the hope to soften her refusal, so as still to preserve her rich suitor as that father's friend, might have suggested to her the imprudent step she now took, a step so likely to be misapprehended by a jealous and impassioned mind. She sought, or consented to hold, an interview with the farmer, not under her father's roof, but in the open fields; and, as if fate had prepared the most bitter trial for the unfortunate George, whilst walking and earnestly conversing with the suitor, whom she had promised to dismiss for his sake, he saw her seat herself with him under the very tree where he had so often met her, when she was his own Mary, without a doubt of her fidelity.

Whether or not George met her after this, if he sought any explanation of her purpose in granting the meeting to his rival or no, I cannot tell; all that I can relate is, that, already labouring under the effects of a feverish and irritating state of mind, hurried away by passion and grief, and "*not having the fear of God before his eyes,*" George Stevens rushed home on the evening of the same day, and took the poison, which in a few hours proved fatal. The inquest brought in a verdict of self-murder. No funeral rite was performed; and his remains were buried, according to the law, then in full force, with a stake driven through the body, where four cross-roads meet. The spot, to this day, is called Stevens's Grave. Of the fate of the unhappy Mary, whose imprudence or infidelity produced these dreadful events, I know nothing, and all inquiry has hitherto proved vain. In the above tale (as stories seldom lose any part of their terrors

by transmission from one generation to another) there may be, and I dare say there is, some exaggeration: but certain it is the wretched man died in consequence of his ill-requited love.

Near Stevens's grave are two places that bear remarkable names, the one being called *Black Shields*, and the other, *Smitten-Hart Lane*. I heard these names with a glow of delight, because I felt certain that some old story or legend must be connected with places thus designated. But all inquiry was useless. One silver-headed elder, more than eighty years old, whom I questioned very closely at Cudlip town, said that he "did think he had heard his grandmother, when he was a boy, tell some story about *Smitten-Hart Lane*." But he shook his white locks, and added, he now knew nothing about "they old fancies."

Yet the very *names* of those places afford a hint for a tale of poetry or romance, to one who loves to indulge in the airy-castle building of the imagination, a very harmless occupation, and a very delightful one: and you will smile, perhaps, when I tell you that, not being able to find a tradition for either of those prettily named spots, I amused myself, as I rode home, in making one for both; such, however, being wholly fictitious, have, of course, no admission in these letters. Hoping that the little melancholy episode (for such, perhaps, it may be called) of George Stevens may have afforded you some interest in the relation,

Allow me to remain, my dear Sir,

Very respectfully and faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

LETTER XVI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Excursion to Tavy Cleave—Beautiful effects of light and shade on the lofty tors—Rocks above Tavy Cleave—Their singular character—Arthur's Seat—Tavy Cleave described—Approach to the river—Dry incrustation of foam—Bed of the river, &c.—Gertor—Sharpy Tor—Air Tor—Life of a Lamb saved—Fall from a horse—Return—Interesting excursion upon the rail-road—Names of the tors variously pronounced—spoliation among the tors—Curious process in working the granite described—The picturesque scenes around the rail-road—Architecture in which granite is used with most effect—Better for pillars than pilasters, &c.—The subject continued—Remarks on various styles of architecture—On that employed on the gateway of Dartmoor Prison—Picturesque appearance of a figure at work—Immense machinery—Blocks of granite, &c.—King Tor—Huts for labourers—Singular appearance of the men at work, clustered around, and almost hanging like bees, among the detached rocks—Destruction of these magnificent works of nature, the Tors, deplored—Granite enough to be found without destroying the Tors—Caves, or catacombs would be formed by under-ground excavations—Mines might also be discovered—Allusion to Columbus—Bark seen dropped in the road—Wistman's Wood probably in danger—Excursion resumed—Effects of a storm on the roads—Swell Tor—Difficulty of distinguishing the Tors—A vehicle observed near Merrivale bridge—Dartmoor prison near the rail-road—Dense fog—First spoliation of the Moor seventy years ago—The present, there going on, far greater and irreparable.

Vicarage, Tavistock, May 23d, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I SEND you, in this, some account, written by Mr. Bray, of our excursion to

TAVY CLEAVE, ON DARTMOOR.

“Sept. 8th, 1830. In our progress towards Tavy Cleave, whilst stood before us two of the summits

of those lofty tors that surround it, we saw between them, stretching to the remotest horizon, a number of intersecting hills, on which the light from the different distances was continually shifting, the tors themselves being in the deepest shadow. It instantly reminded me of the effects produced by the gently alternating light and shadow of the Diorama. It is seldom that such a scene is found in nature, where the fore-ground remains fixed in gloom, and light and shade seemed to chase each other over the varied landscape; because, in general, we see a continuation of extent, and the gradual, and therefore almost imperceptible changes that take place; whilst here the different points of distance were so happily combined, that the eye, as it glanced from one to the other, beheld one illuminated and the other obscured, now in succession and now in opposition, as the flitting clouds passed over them.

“The rocks above Tavy Cleave are not so much composed of the usual strata of granite as they are a conglomeration of small disjointed parts. Immediately below one of the walls (for such, therefore, we may call them) of the summit, the stones appear to have been thrown, by the hand of nature, into a circular direction. Indeed, one might almost fancy them to have been ejected from the crater of a volcano as in a whirlwind, and not to have lost their rotatory motion on their descent. Most of them being on their edge, they look like petrified waves, and may be compared, perhaps, to the Mer de Glace, not however in ice, but granite.

“Two of these broad masses of rocks are divided by an aperture, through which, with most advantage, may be viewed the scene below. Between a bold

declivity on the left, divided into two or three pointed eminences, and another less precipitate on the right, winds in a deep ravine or cleft (which probably gives name to the spot) the Tavy, at first over some shelving rocks, that give rise to long filaments of foam, and then to a broad white belt, in a transverse direction; till, meeting with a ridge, or perhaps a fissure (for the cause is invisible) it assumes, even amid its own dark waters, the appearance of a cascade, equally white with foam; and at last transforms itself, as it were, into a deep black pool.

“On descending the summit towards the south, we came to a spot which, as it reminded me of the sensations I experienced in reading the account that Sir Walter Scott, in one of his novels, gives us of the hills that overhang ‘auld Reekie,’ I ventured to call Arthur’s Seat; and near it, as if to keep up the illusion, there is a kind of cromlech, in the midst of a natural cairn. And, perhaps, from our nearer vicinity to Tintagel Castle in Cornwall, the traditional residence of this hero of the ‘olden time,’ we have as great a right as the Scotch to honour our crags with his name.

“When we approached the river, we were almost covered with what seemed showers of thistle-down. But on coming closer we saw no spot on which thistles by any possibility could grow. We soon discovered, however, that it was the efflorescence or dry incrustation of foam, which had collected between and upon the rocks beneath what I have described as the cascade. It is somewhat similar, perhaps, to the *écume de mer*, or petrified sea-foam, of which tobacco-pipes are sometimes made.

“The bed of the river here being, principally, a

horizontal stratum, seems part of the floor or original crust of the earth: and, if it have undergone any alteration, it is probably by a partial subsidence; whilst the tors around appear to have been elevated by a projectile force, and down their sides may still be seen what may be called, perhaps, cataracts of stones."

The next extract I shall here send will be an omitted passage from Mr. Bray's former Journal of the year 1814, beginning with a notice of

GERTOR.

"A conical hill of coarse granite. The sides of some of the strata appear as if pressed against one another and afterwards separated, being quite smooth as to the surface, and jagged as to the edges. Gertor affords a bold view of the winding ravine through which flows the Tavy. I next proceeded to

SHARPYTOR.

"It well deserves the name, for some of the points, almost in a perpendicular direction, appear as sharp as the head of a spear. There are four eminences at a short distance from one another overhanging the Tavy. Air Tor, or Hare Tor, to the north of the former, commands a very extensive view, looking down upon Lidford Castle. On the very summit is seen a kind of natural mound of earth, where appears also something like a circle. It is, however, hollow in the centre, and there was in it the burrow of a rabbit or other small animal. On the southwest side the granite is coarse, mingled with a square-shaped white spar. Here is a small oval basin. In going to this tor, I was obliged to leave

my horse at a distance, owing to the boggy nature of the soil. On returning, I heard the bleating of a sheep very near, but looking around, discovered no signs of one. I found, however, that it proceeded from nearly beneath me, and at length ascertained that it was a lamb which had got under the rocks. I at first, through the interstices of the rock, saw its nose only; but at last succeeded in dragging it out by its legs. Thus, my journey, long and fatiguing as it was, would have been amply recompensed had it only afforded me the opportunity of saving the life of this harmless animal. I next visited the lower part of Air Tor to the north; and observed some few projecting nodules of shining mundic in the granite. Between this and the next tor there is a small artificial karn with a concavity, and two sharp pointed heaps on its edge. On riding down the hill, my horse entangled his foot between the rocks, and by the violent effort he made in extricating himself, which was so great as to tear off his shoe, I was thrown over his head; but most providentially with no other hurt than slightly bruising my leg, and spraining my hand. This, of course, put an end to any further progress that day."

The next extract is from Mr. Bray's Journal of last year.

EXCURSION ON DARTMOOR RAIL-ROAD.

"May 17th, 1831.—Having, in the course of last year, entered upon the rail-road at Roborough Down, and pursued it till I came opposite Walkhampton, when I was obliged to return to Tavistock, this morning, soon after eleven o'clock, I mounted my horse to resume my exploration. Crossing Whitechurch

Down, and Tolch Moor, and passing that truly picturesque spot, Huckworthy Bridge, I rode through part of Walkhampton, and entered the lane, nearly in a line with the church, that brought me to the rail-road. The rail-road itself is naturally of a very monotonous character. It reminded me of a garden walk with an edging of iron instead of box. In some few places granite, or what is generally called moor-stone, had been substituted; but it does not seem to answer the purpose, as it is of a brittle nature, and therefore apt to chip. The tors on the right of the rail-road, as it winds towards the moor, are called by different names in Greenwood's map from those which I collected, as well as I could, from one of the workmen.

“The first which is marked on the map has no name attached to it*. The next is Leedon, or Leeden Tor; (then Fur Tor;) then Crip Tor; then another unnamed (Swill Tor); and then King Tor †. But, according to my informant, the first is called (no doubt a corruption of Inga Tor) Innator, (or, as he pronounced it, Innator Tar: indeed, I have frequently heard this reduplication of the final syllable, with the difference of only a broader accent: as Coxtor-tar, Pewtor-tar,) the second Yeast Tor, the third Swill Tor, the fourth and fifth King Tor and Little King Tor. From the second and third having so marked a reference to that recent nuisance, a beer-shop, I should have thought he meant to quiz me, had I not recollected that yeast is only known in


* From a plan attached to Sir T. Tyrwhitt's pamphlet on the Rail-road, I find it is called Inga Tor.

† According to Sir T. Tyrwhitt. Perhaps, however, after all, his plan may not have been exactly followed.

Devonshire under the name of barm. Till, therefore, I gain better information as to their names, I shall mention them numerically. On ascending towards the first tor, I could not but lament the spoliations which had been made in it by the hand of man. Indeed, it was principally with a view to see what havoc had been, and was still likely to be, made in these majestic masses of rock, that I now sought them; for I had observed, at a distance, patches, and sometimes long lines of a whitish hue, in the midst of these sombre eminences, which reminded me of streams of lava flowing down the sides of volcanic mountains; and I could almost fancy that some of these granitic turrets had lost their battlements, and perhaps even had fallen themselves as into a crater. On a nearer view, the opening occasioned by the deportation of some of these enormous blocks of granite seemed to me like a breach in some Cyclopean fortress; the outer part of the wall that still remained being blackened and worn with weather and with age, whilst the fragments thrown or fallen from it were white and sharp edged. Of the masses scattered below, some were squared, as if for tombs and sepulchres; others reminded me of the teeth of the mammoth, on one of which I think Buffon somewhere mentions that three Frenchmen could sit. These were such as had been split, and had a serrated appearance, by the holes made in them for the insertion of wedges, thus



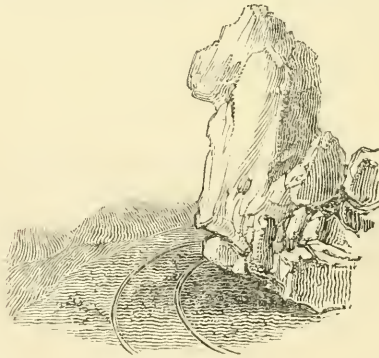
“This tor appears to have been for some time

abandoned by the stone-cutters. But I heard from another, not far distant, the 'dreadful notes of preparation,' occasioned by those who were employed in drilling such holes as I have just mentioned. The mode I had hitherto seen practised for splitting granite was by picking out short longitudinal incisions with a pickaxe, thus — — — — The method now adopted is to make perforations only, thus And this they do, not by an auger or borer, somewhat like a crow-bar, with which (by dropping it with a rotatory motion) they make holes for blasting, that require a larger calibre to contain the charge of powder, but with a lighter and more elegant instrument, being a light rod of iron between four and five feet in length, having a swell or grasp in the centre, thus . Indeed, it is not much unlike an ornament occasionally introduced in printing. It makes an acuter sound than that of the common borer; and when two or three are at work with it upon the same block, the sound may be said to be not altogether unmusical. It is astonishing with what precision, after they have lifted it up, that they again dart it into the hole they are deepening. I climbed to the top of the tor, which consisted of the usual blocks piled one upon another; and some of them being removed, I had a view of their internal structure. The horizontal strata, if so these blocks might be called, were intersected perpendicularly, and thus formed a kind of wall facing pretty nearly south. The resemblance was the greater, as there was a kind of incrustation which here and there had fallen off, and looked not a little like stucco.

“The second tor was in full work, nay, might

almost be compared to an ant-hill; to which, indeed, when they have removed all its picturesque asperities, it will bear a yet closer resemblance. To make mountains of mole-hills is a common proverb. This is to make mole-hills of mountains. On approaching this tor, the rail-road for once assumes a picturesque appearance, where it takes a sudden turn at the base of a lofty rock; which seemed, notwithstanding, almost a 'baseless fabric,' as the light was visible through an aperture between the smaller stones on which it was up-piled. The hills in the distance formed for it a good background.

"I made a slight sketch of it in a blank leaf of my pocket-book, which I have here affixed.



"Some huts, one a blacksmith's shop, now presented themselves. And before it stood a vehicle, not much unlike a rude kind of vis-à-vis, with an awning. This I had observed passing on with some degree of rapidity before us. I conclude that in these carriages with iron wheels, though as cumbrous and perhaps uneasy as the scythed cars of the Britons, many pleasure-parties make excursions from

Plymouth: for a man accosted me, and said that if I wished to see the works, Mr. Johnson, or Thompson, or a person of some such name, would show them to me. I was not so desirous of seeing what had been done as what had been left undone; and, finding that the man was deaf, had little conversation with him, or indeed with any other: possibly so much the better, as I was in a humour to give them more blame than praise for their industry. At some future period, I hope to visit the spot again, and to procure information, not only about the works, but on subjects of a more general nature, which men of any intelligence, from having been long upon the spot, cannot fail to have collected. In one respect their labour seems to me to be misapplied; namely, their cutting and squaring stones not much larger than bricks, which (as if to prove that they can be applied to that purpose) they have piled up in the form of low walls. But granite, at least that of Dartmoor, which is of a coarse and rather friable texture, cannot be worked with much sharpness; and, indeed, the beauty, or at least the natural character of granite structures, is their massiveness. In architecture, it cannot be disputed, that to different materials a different form and structure is most applicable and appropriate. *Rustic* may be classed as concave or hollowed architecture; *granitic*, as convex or rounded architecture; and *porphyritic*, as sharp, square, and angular architecture. A flight of granite steps, which may be had of almost any dimensions,—for I saw to-day slabs in their natural state, thirty or forty feet long, and a block that was wrought, more than twenty,—should have a kind of moulding at the edge like stairs in carpentry, thus



and not thus



For the same reason, granite is better for pillars than pilasters, and for round columns rather than square. The remaining arches of the gateways and windows of Tavistock Abbey, which consist of coarse Dartmoor granite, present little that can be called a sharp edge; for though they have many mouldings and ornaments, yet they are invariably rough and large. And the pinnacles, instead of having what are usually called crockets (quasi little crooks?) have, for want of a better name, what I will venture to call bosses. The granite employed in the diminutive but cathedral-like church of Buckland Monachorum, being of a closer grain, is enriched with sharper ornaments, and comes, as I have heard, from Roborough Down. The natural form of the tors themselves, which consists of stones piled one upon another, seems to suggest a style of architecture that would best suit it. If a single column were to be erected, it should not be in the Corinthian, or even in the Doric, or the Tuscan order; but somewhat like a candelabrum, or a minaret, or perhaps a vase thus



Indeed, the latter is not much unlike that natural mass of granite in Cornwall called the Cheese wring. The name, no doubt, was suggested by the stones bearing some resemblance to cheeses in a press. But the blocks of granite, at least on Dartmoor, are, I

think, more like loaves piled up in a baker's shop, thus



Inscriptions might be cut out, on the most prominent parts, in the incuse manner, and even some rough ornaments in basso relievo. A fine opportunity was lost, or rather, what is worse, abused, in regard to the gateway of Dartmoor prison. As well as I recollect, it is formed thus



which, if it resemble any architecture, is most like that of the Chinese. And what makes it more hideous is, that you see the cramps by which this mass of ugliness is joined together. The form that follows might possibly have been less objectionable, and at least more in character.



But, perhaps, after all, a trilithon like one of those at Stonehenge, would have been the best portal: thus



It was rather a curious, and, indeed, not unpicturesque sight, to observe how differently the workmen were employed. One man particularly struck me, who, with a pickaxe as ponderous as a sledge hammer, was standing on a very large square stone, and pick-

ing it into shape. He seemed like a statue upon its base, put in action; as that of Vulcan, for instance; and I know not whether a *spectacle* of this description is not as much worth seeing, as the scenic groups formed by our would-be classic neighbours the French. The drapery, however, is not quite so well disposed; but the muscular development far better. Passing under some machinery suspended over my head, which satisfied me that every recourse had been had to artificial as well as natural powers in this work of destruction, I ascended an inclined plane of great breadth, on which were massy chains running upon rollers, and extending to a considerable distance up the tor. This brought me to another huge mass of machinery equally elevated. This I did not venture to pass, as it was connected with two immense cranes, by which the workmen were then employed in poising and depositing on their unwieldy carriages the blocks of granite taken from what might here be called a regular quarry, for they seemed to have laid open the very centre of the tor, whose summit towered perhaps sixty or seventy feet perpendicularly above them. When, by taking a circuit, I got to the top of it and looked down, it was like looking into the bowels of the mountain.

“On proceeding to the third tor, I found that they had made a considerable opening in the side, but had not got so deep as in the other. Here, instead of an inclined plane, they removed the masses by the mere strength of horses.

“The fourth (or what I believe is King Tor) is at some distance; and, in going to it, I passed several huts that seemed to be constructed for the use of the labourers; some were little better than mere

cavities to shelter them from the heat of the weather. The workmen were principally clustered around, and almost hanging (like bees) from what, comparatively speaking, might be called detached rocks, thrown about in a wild and picturesque confusion, but which they will soon reduce to a mere heap of rubbish. The summit of this tor is rather of a bolder cast than the others, with a few recesses which might almost be denominated caves. Some of these masses are so perpendicular as to resemble walls; and indeed I could almost fancy myself looking out from embrasures and loop-holes. Perhaps I may be laughed at, if not censured, for lamenting what I consider the destruction of such magnificent structures erected by the hand of Nature; particularly as it is for the erection of habitations for the use of man, or for bridges, piers, wharfs, store-houses and other public edifices that are the consequence of, and continue to increase, his civilization and improvement. But there is granite enough to be found, where its removal would in every way be an improvement, without touching these hallowed vestiges of a former world. What would a mineralogist say if the bold and sharp crystallizations of his finest specimens were blunted and broken, and almost pounded into dust? How unsightly is a mine (especially after it has ceased working, and its machinery is removed) with its heaps of rubbish! These workers in stone would make Mist Tor (which, whether it be so called from *mist*—for it undoubtedly might have served for the habitation of the western ‘Children of the Mist’—or from its connexion with the *mysteries* of Druidical superstition, for it has the largest basin on the moor, hence designated by the aborigines

‘Mistor pan’—I will not pretend to decide) like Kit hill. And then, as did a neighbouring Baronet on Kit hill—some future admirer of the picturesque, instead of the majestic blocks of granite, ‘tier above tier,’ might erect a puny fortification, with round towers, which, when the turf that was used in filling it, is swollen by the next rain, will burst and show the ignorance of the engineer that constructed it.

“I have often heard my father say, that there were stones enough on Dartmoor to build all the cities of Europe. I am almost afraid to mention it, lest the suggestion might be adopted; but should the Macadamizing system, now so much the rage, be changed for the Roman mode of making roads, which was by paving them with large blocks of stone, (and these should seem particularly appropriate for railroads) Dartmoor would furnish an almost exhaustless supply. Should these *clearings* be thus fully realized, it is hoped that an opposite mode of doing so to that of America would be adopted; and that, in clearing it, not of wood but of stone, they will hide their devastations by clothing them with trees. It may be hoped, too, that, in the centre of the moor, (where they should have begun these spoliations, and not have thus injured the beautiful scenery on its outskirts, which *cannot* but be seen, and which is heightened by being contrasted with that of cultivation,) they will leave at least one tor in all its rude magnificence of nature. Indeed, I am not sure but that they might have added to, instead of diminishing from, the interest of the scene, by quarrying underground, and forming catacombs. I must confess that I have often wondered and lamented that there are no natural caves or caverns among the tors of

Dartmoor, nothing that deserved any other name than mere fissures. These might be thus supplied; and mines too might be thus discovered, and thus might they have also found a low level to unwater them. I certainly should not wish to form a colony of troglodytes, which would be worse than gipsies, from whom, till lately, we were pretty free: but these excavations might afford occasional shelter from the storms; and might enable men to work at all seasons, even in the depth of winter; for they would not be prevented by snow, provided they kept the entrance free from it. Nay, snow might even contribute to their warmth, as it is preservative of the vegetable world in the winter. Who knows but, in time, the catacombs of Dartmoor may be as famous as those of Egypt? We already may be said, by our tors, particularly Vixen Tor, to have her sphinx and her pyramids.

“The fifth tor (which I believe is Little Kingtor) I did not visit, though the rail-road wound around it: for, as my time was drawing short, I beckoned to my servant to bring on the horses, and returned by the circles near Merrivale.

“Tuesday, the 24th of May, 1831.—In the morning there was a thick fog, but, thinking it was only for heat, I resolved on resuming my excursions on the moor, though at the risk of being torrifed amid the tors. The day before, there had been a great deal of thunder, accompanied with rain, which more than usually attracted my observation from falling in very large drops. There were still some symptoms of a stormy atmosphere; but I ventured. The road immediately ascending to the moor was so cut up by the floods of rain that rushed from it as to resemble

the bed of a torrent. A geologist might have studied from it the mode of alluvial formation. At the bottom of the descent there was nothing but mud, then a layer of sand several inches thick, and above, large stones, and the very foundation of the road laid bare.

“I proceeded to that part of the rail-road which I had before quitted, and found this also had not altogether escaped the effects of the late storm. After tracing it for some distance up a kind of rising valley, I observed a tor, apparently of no great magnitude, at my right, and determined on visiting it. Meeting with some workmen, I inquired the name of it, and was surprised to learn it was *Swell* tor, which, of course, I concluded was the same I had been told before was *Swill* tor. I still, however, had my doubts, and inquired the name of the next, which they said was the Inclined, or Inclined Plane tor; by this I found that they made no scruple to vary, and even completely change the names of these tors. No wonder, then, among the South Sea islands, that some call it Otaheite, and others Tahiti. For, if not Polynesian, in these my Polyorean researches, I could seldom meet with two persons who gave me the same names. Nor do I wonder at navigators mistaking one island for another, when I made the mistake of ascending one tor for another, though I had been on it but a week before. Some allowance, however, may be made for me, when it is remembered that according to the side by which you ascend, most tors assume a very different appearance. And thus may we conceive the facility with which navigators have often mistaken an island for part of a continent, and *vice versâ*. I may here, perhaps, be allowed to

allude to the difficulty they are under when they sometimes see a strange sail at a distance, to decide whether it be a friend or an enemy; and at the absurd mistakes they often make in consequence.

“ On ascending the hill from Merrivale bridge, I observed some kind of vehicle taking a most unusual direction from the road, apparently among the Druidical circles, or rather the cursus. I certainly did not take it for an ancient British chariot, not only because it moved but slow, but also because it had a head, or awning. I almost fancied it a cargo of antiquaries, or at least a party of pleasure come to explore the antiquities of the spot, but, on approaching nearer, I found it was a cart laden with hay. On returning to the rail-road, I hesitated whether I would not pursue a branch of it that led to a quarry in the side of a hill under Hessory tor. I was somewhat desirous to discover whether it was worked open or excavated, particularly as it coincided with my theory that there was no necessity to demolish the tors themselves; but the fog was again coming on, and I thought it more prudent to curtail my excursion.

“ Near this branch road is a long shed, in which, from the sounds that came from it, I had reason to believe that many were employed in hewing into form the blocks that had been brought from this quarry. And indeed I could not but conclude that it afforded harder and larger masses than those I had visited on the summits of the tors, as I saw some immense columns lying near, which, I understood from one of the workmen, were to be employed in the construction of some market in London. About a mile farther on, I found some other parts of columns of the same dimensions. The distant tors on the right, towards

the south, seemed more closely clustered, and of a bolder and more abrupt form than what is generally met with on the moor. The new Plymouth road winds among them. The rail-road, which, at last, nearly joins it, brought me to the Prison.

“The fog had become more dense, and was carried by the wind in large flakes, so that on seeing them approach, I at first almost mechanically closed my eyes, as I should against flakes of snow or clouds of dust; but as they approached they vanished into thin air. I soon joined the Moreton road, and returned to Tavistock.

“The *first* spoliation (if I may so call it) of the moor, was, as I have heard from my father, about seventy or eighty years ago, when a young man of this place, on the expiration of his apprenticeship, gave a kind of fête champêtre on the moor, and they amused themselves with throwing down such rocks as were nicely poised, (some of which, perhaps, were a kind of logan rock,) and having drunk punch in some of the Druidical bowls, took a pleasure in afterwards breaking them. The *second* spoliation was that occasioned by removing from Crockerntor the rude table of granite, around which the members of the Stannary Court sat when they there held their parliaments. The spoliation that is *now* going on is on a far larger scale, and, alas! can never be replaced as was the logan rock in Cornwall.

“I could almost wish that Don Miguel were again in England, (though I would confine his tyranny to the tors,) as I cannot help thinking that these *free masons* deserve more punishment than those of Portugal. Perhaps, however, I am more severe upon this fraternity than they deserve, as I lost by them

an inscribed stone, and a few days ago was on the point of losing another, which they had marked out for a corner stone in the wall they are erecting in front of the Vicarage.”

So concludes this portion of Mr. Bray's journal. I will not now add more than the assurance that

I am, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

LETTER XVII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Excursion to the Warren in search of the King's Oven—Arrival at an old house called an Inn—Invitation to the traveller held out in verse—Romantic adventure—Derivation of the word Merrivale—A search after antiquities under a broiling sun—Ridges of stones—Circular barrow seventy-six paces in circumference—The King's Oven found—Probably a place used by the aboriginal inhabitants of the moor for their barbarous cookery—A circle—A stone cross—Curious remains of a British bridge examined and described, found near a circular enclosure like Dennabridge pound—Visit to Fitz's Well on the moor—The structure above the well proved not to be so old as, by mistake, it has been represented—Not older than the time of Elizabeth—Account of the well, with the tradition respecting its history as connected with the pixies and Sir John and Lady Fitz.

Vicarage, Tavistock, May 26th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

MY next extract from Mr. Bray's Journal will yet detain you on Dartmoor: it gives an account of our excursion to the

WARREN, &c.

“27th July, 1831.—Accompanied by my wife, I set out in search of the King's Oven, the name of which certainly excited more than ordinary expectations. On reaching New House, formerly an inn, I inquired of a female who was standing at the door, if there were any room in the stable for my horses. Her reply was that the stable was full of turf, by which she meant peat. We had come fourteen miles,

in an extremely hot day; but, anticipating no great accommodation for them, I had brought corn, and therefore directed my servant to lead them about, and to feed them in the best manner he could.

“Had the stable been empty, it could afford, I believe, but little accommodation at the best, and the house itself, even in its better days, though it held out an invitation far more magnificent than the usual one, ‘Entertainment for man and horse,’ would perhaps have little exceeded that which is celebrated in poetry as the death-scene of the profligate Lord Rochester, who is described as having died ‘In the worst inn’s worst room.’ The inscription, I am told, on the sign, which I think I must have seen myself when a boy, was, as well as I recollect,—though, as I doubt not it was ‘spelt by the unlettered muse,’ could give it *verbatim et literatim*—

“Here is cider and beer,
Your hearts for to cheer.
And if you want meat
To make up a treat,
There are rabbits to eat.”

“New House (which Hannaford, when he mentioned to me that the King’s Oven was at no great distance from it, seemed to consider a misnomer, for he said he believed it was one of the oldest houses on the moor) is surrounded by a warren, which thus afforded an easy opportunity of fulfilling at least the latter part of the above promise, and they probably were able to give a Welsh rabbit into the bargain. Having provided ourselves with sandwiches, in a kind of cartouche box, which originally, however, was made for botanizing, and a pocket pistol, vulgo a small bottle of brandy, (for I would not have my

readers expect any perilous adventures with banditti,) I made no lamentations on the absence or entire annihilation of most of these eatables and drinkables, but contented myself with inquiring of the representative of the *ci-devant* landlady, which was the way to the King's Oven. She hardly seemed at first to understand the question, and indeed was evidently altogether so uninformed, that I was satisfied she was not the person whom I thought I possibly might find there, and of whom I had heard the following story.

“A common pack-horse driver, or carrier, was in the habit of putting up at a public house on St. David's hill at Exeter, which, indeed, was a pretty general rendezvous for persons of this description. They there, over their beer, amused themselves with singing. Whether the person above alluded to sang the loudest or the sweetest, I know not, but his voice was so pre-eminently distinguishable from that of his companions, as to attract the attention of the daughter of a clergyman who resided near. I presume not to say who made the first advances: it is clear who made the first impressions. The result, however, was that she married him, and he took her as his bride to this same house in the very heart of the moor. I made no inquiry about her of its present inhabitant, as I thought she was as little likely to give any information on matters connected with romance as with those of antiquity.

“On asking, however, if she had never heard that there was anything curious to be seen in the neighbourhood, she said that she had lived there no more than two years, but that once a pedlar entered the house, and, remarking how much it was out of repair,

and that perhaps the wisest plan would be to pull it down, advised her, if such should be her resolution, to build it on a spot the other side of the road, where a foundation for a similar purpose had been already laid, or at least the ground dug out for it. He said it was in a line with the corner of their field near the *mire*, by which I afterwards found she meant the bog.

“And here, at the risk of being charged perhaps with digression, I must mention, that on previously passing Merrivale bridge, and, farther on, Higher Merripit and Lower Merripit, I had ventured to account for the name of these places, by supposing it derived from *miry*, corrupted into *merry*. They all, especially the two latter, are near a bog. And thus, if she were not the means of *giving* me information, she was, as not unfrequently happens, the means of my *gaining* it, or at least of confirming my own opinion, which, I believe, with most is considered *equivalent* to information. Though her curiosity had never led her there, she was good-natured enough, however, to assist in gratifying mine, and offered to accompany us to the spot which she thought was meant by the pedlar. When I arrived there, however, I was as wise as before, for I knew not whether I was to see a mound or a cavity, and of each of these there were many, as we were evidently surrounded by the ‘old workings’ (as they are called in Devonshire) of a tin mine, which had subsequently been converted into a warren. The day was extremely hot, and, as my companion was tired and almost fainting with the heat, I resolved (though to think of then looking for an oven seemed

somewhat a work of supererogation) to go in search of it alone.

“ Sometimes thinking of the burning fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, and sometimes of King Arthur's Oven, which I believe is a kind of cromlech in Scotland, I rambled about with an umbrella over my head in search of I knew not what. I thought also more than once of a wild-goose-chace, and was almost induced again and again to give it up; but tempted by the pleasure of exploring unknown regions, I persevered.

“ As I ascended the hill, I perceived some ridges of stone, which, whether they were the remains of inclosures or tracklines, I could not tell. I found on an elevated point of view what seemed like the King's broad arrow, which appeared to have been but recently made in the turf. And had it not been so long ago, I could have fancied it one of those marks made during the trigonometrical survey by direction of the Ordnance under Colonel Mudge. Soon after, I came to something like a small rude circle, with what might have been an erect stone or pillar, but now fallen, and, whether by lightning or otherwise, split, longitudinally and laterally, into four parts, in pretty nearly equal proportions. Advancing farther, I observed the outline of the summit of the hill somewhat rough with stones and rushes, and, hastening towards it, found, as I conclude, the object of my search.

“ It is a circular barrow composed of small stones, seventy-six paces in circumference. Its form approaches but little to conical, being, I should think, but three feet high. I saw on it no lichen or moss,

which is generally found on structures of this description that have remained in their original form, and I therefore should conclude that many of the stones have, at a comparatively late date, been carried away. It can boast of almost a panoramic view of considerable extent, particularly towards the north-east and south. Near it is a kind of trench, about six feet long, with a shorter, meeting it at right angles in the centre, the sides of which are lined with stone. And in the same direction are several pits, and one in particular of some extent in the shape of an inverted cone.*

“ On our way homeward, a little before we came to Merripit, I observed a circle on my right hand intersected by the road ; and a little farther on to the left, on the other side of the road, a stone cross, nine feet and three quarters long, now fallen, and lying near a circular pit. Its arms are very short, but the whole is of a more regular shape and better wrought than such crosses as are generally found on the moor.

“ At Post Bridge, I got out of the carriage to measure one of the flat stones of that structure, which I found to be fifteen feet by five and a half. These immense slabs are supported on four piers, at either extremity one, two having originally been in

* It is not improbable this was really the King's Oven, or used for the purpose of baking by some British chief—since it was a custom with the people of Britain as well as of Gaul, to dig a *deep pit, line it with stones*, and make the stones hot by burning heath or wood upon them. In similar pits, says the editor of Ossian, “ they laid venison at the bottom, with a stratum of stones above it, and thus did they alternately till the pit was full: the whole was covered with heath to confine the steam.” Near these holes or pits there was generally also found a “ heap of smooth flat stones of the flint kind,” used perhaps for baking bread.

the centre, of which one is fallen, and now lies in the bed of the river. It was probably erected by the aboriginal Britons, and might almost be taken for the work of the Cyclops themselves. On passing over the new bridge, near which is another cross, close to the road, I observed at some distance to the right a circular inclosure, somewhat similar to what I suppose was the foundation of Dennabridge pound."

The next extract from Mr. Bray's Journal is an account of a visit to

FITZ'S WELL, ON DARTMOOR.

"August 10th, 1831.—Having many years since attempted to find Fitz's, or, as it is generally called, Fice's well, by crossing the moor from Bair-down, when my horse, on getting into a bog, so trembled in every limb, that I gave up the search, and, from some circumstance or another, never resumed it; I determined, this day, to renew my investigations.

"I directed my course to the house on the moor, near Rundle stone, where a female offered to guide us to the well. We proceeded in a northerly direction, along the eastern bank of the leat that conveys the water to the prison. After we had gone about half a mile, we turned off at a right angle, following the direction of what appeared to be an old hedge or part of an inclosure, at no great distance to the left of which we reached the well, not, however, without some of the party getting wet in the feet, as it is nearly in the midst of a bog. It is situated on a gentle declivity, near Blackbrook, (over which, a little lower down, is an ancient foot bridge,) the edifice about the well consisting of flat slabs of granite; the cover being three feet ten inches, by

three feet three inches. The height of this rude structure is about three feet. The well, according to Carrington's work, 'measures three feet square by two feet and a half deep.' On the front edge of the cover is the inscription, which I hesitate not to say is given very incorrectly in the vignette of his book.

"I am willing, however, to make every allowance to the artist, as he possibly might labour under similar disadvantages to myself, if not even greater; for the whole was in shadow, whilst the sun shone bright behind it. Had it been at noon, or an hour or two previous, for it faces nearly east, it would have been partially illumined, and the shadow of the letters, which are in relief, would have assisted in decyphering them. But I am sufficiently convinced that the letters I F are *not* reversed, but in their natural order; and that instead of being 1168, it is 1568.

"I think it most likely that Fitz's well was constructed by John Fitz, the old lawyer and astrologer of Fitz-ford; whose traffic with the stars, in foretelling the fate of his only son, is still the theme of tradition.

"John Fitz, the elder, was, if I may so express myself, a water-fancier as well as an astrologer; for he built the conduit-house at Fitz-ford; and I have in my possession his autograph. It is thus written: John Fytz; and appears on the counterpart lease of a field, giving him liberty to convey water 'in pipes of timber, lead, or otherwise,' to his mansion-house at Fitz-ford. It is dated the 10th of Elizabeth. Now Elizabeth began to reign 1558, and the structure called Fitz's well on Dartmoor was, as we have seen, erected in 1568 "

Since Mr. Bray wrote the above notes in his Journal, I have learnt from Mary Colling, who is well acquainted with all the traditions of her native town, that the following is still told by the elders of Tavistock, respecting Fice's Well.

John Fitz, the astrologer, and his lady, were once *pixy-led*, whilst riding on Dartmoor. After long wandering in the vain effort to find the right path, they felt so fatigued and thirsty, that it was with extreme delight they discovered a spring of water, whose powers seemed to be miraculous; for no sooner had they satisfied their thirst, than they were enabled to find their way through the moor towards home, without the least difficulty. In gratitude for this deliverance, and the benefit they had received from the water, old John Fitz caused the stone memorial in question, bearing the date of the year, to be placed over the spring, for the advantage of all *pixy-led* travellers. It is still considered to possess many healing virtues.

I have the honor to remain,

My dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

LETTER XVIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Southern hills of Dartmoor eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea—Luminous evaporations there seen—Tin mines—Grey granite; of what composed—Manganese found near Moreton-Hampstead—Devonshire marbles beautiful; their formation—Slate remarkably beautiful—The various uses to which applied in this county—Extraordinary carved slab of slate—Slaters called Helliers—The earth often of a bright red—Crystals found in it—Black garnets—Spar, where found—Loadstone on Dartmoor—Prideaux' Geological Survey quoted respecting various parts of the Moor—Brentor, its curiosity and geology—Black-downs, a primæval mountain tract—Convulsions of nature have been great on the moor—Shock of an earthquake there felt—Full account of the storm and its awful effects, at Widdecomb, in the year 1638—Carrington's lines on it given—Low towers of the churches on the moor—Botany, wherefore here but slightly noticed—Value of some knowledge of drawing; easily attained—The golden blossom of the furze magnificent in Devon—Admired by Linnæus—May-blossoms—The digitalis, or foxglove grows in the greatest luxuriance—Whortle-berries—White clover—Wild flowers; some of the poetical names given to them by the peasantry—Provincial names for the birds, &c.—Mr. Polwhele's account of the entomology—The finny tribe—Trout excellent—Salmon plentiful—Reptiles—The long Cripple-Snake and Toad seen together—Story of a remarkable toad—Lizards—Adders common on the moor—The Bat abundant in the ruins of an old tower in the Vicarage garden.

Vicarage, Tavistock, June 1st, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

On looking over the notes I have made for these Letters, I find several respecting Dartmoor, that are of so miscellaneous a nature that I do not know very well how to throw them into any connected form; and yet I think they contain infor-

mation on some points that ought not to be passed in silence. Will you, therefore, admit a letter which must, I fear, be little better than a string of unconnected paragraphs: for in what other way can I give you such notes as the following?

I find that the southern hills of that immense waste called Dartmoor are about eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea; and that luminous mineral evaporations and ignes fatui are commonly seen in the valleys and hollows of the moor in dark nights: 'some of these,' says Polwhele, 'are like balls of light rising about five feet from the earth, then falling back and rebounding.' In former times the mines were numerous; at present very few are worked, though it is conjectured that this vast tract is rich in its subterranean product of metals and ores. Tin mines are amongst these, particularly in the parish of Sampford-Spiney; and some years ago the sexton, whilst digging a grave in the church of Whitchurch, near Tavistock, struck into a lode of tin. I have in these Letters repeatedly mentioned the grey granite which so much abounds on the moor. This consists of white felspar, black mica and quartz. It is remarkable that no sort of granite is more readily rough-hewn, and none with greater difficulty brought to receive a polish. Iron is found in it, and a large vein of that metal was discovered in the Sampford-Spiney mine. In the fissures of the granite there are seen, also, two varieties of tin, *Stannum crystallis columnaribus nigris*, and *Stannum amorphum ruforigricans*. Manganese is found in abundance near Moreton-Hampstead.*

* Polwhele's Devon, passim.

Our Devonshire marbles, of which the most beautiful chimney-pieces are wrought, are too celebrated to need much notice in this letter. The Drewsteignton marbles are chiefly black, or of the richest dark blues, and elegantly veined; they are capable of receiving the highest polish, and are sometimes found spotted with shells or other fossil remains, so hardened as to form a part of the marble. Our slate, too, is very celebrated: it is often of so deep a grey, as to approach almost to black. Chimney-pieces, highly polished, are made of it. The Rev. Mr. Evans, of Park Wood, has in his house one of this description, so exceedingly beautiful, that, on first seeing it, I took it for black marble. Some of the finest quarries are in our neighbourhood.

This slate is very valuable, and with us it is used not merely for a general covering against the weather, but for various other purposes. We have a hearth in our kitchen of one entire slab, that measures eight feet in length by four in breadth. In Devon it is often used for tombstones. When we visited the church of Launceston in Cornwall, about two years ago, we saw lying against the wall of the churchyard part of a memorial of this description, which ought to have been carefully preserved in the church itself, as one of the most curious and beautiful specimens of *carving in slate* perhaps in the whole kingdom. The arms and supporters of the deceased, the crest with many flourishing decorations, and the whole style of ornament, declared it to be a work of the time of Henry VIII. when simplicity was getting out of fashion. This broken slab of monumental slate, for the sharpness

and perfection of its execution, and the delicacy of its finish, was equal to any sculpture I have ever seen in marble; and when we consider the brittle nature of the material in which it is wrought, there cannot be a doubt that, as a work of art, it is one of great value and curiosity. From the situation in which it stood when we saw it, I should fear that, in a few years, it will be totally destroyed. Slaters with us still retain that antique name by which, if I remember correctly, they are distinguished by Chaucer; for here they are called *helliers*, and the slate roof of a house is termed the *helling*.

But our granite, marbles and slate, are not the only productions of the earth for which we are famous: the earth itself is deserving notice for the vast variety of its tints, and the richness they add to the landscape. I need not tell you, who have been at Exeter, how brilliant is the red earth of that neighbourhood, and that it is always considered the best and most productive*. Rougemont castle in that city derives its name from the colour of the soil on which it stands and the stone of which it is built. Mr. Polwhele mentions that crystals are found in it; and that the earth in which diamonds are discovered at Golconda is of the same nature.

Crystals, also, are sometimes seen on Dartmoor amongst the granite. In Sampford-Spiney above

* Even in Otaheite it is so; for there we learn, by the accounts of recent travellers, that the poor savages have a tradition that the first man was made out of the *red earth* of a certain mountain. On my mentioning having read this to Mr. Bray, he remarked how much this tradition of a savage nation accorded with the Mosaic account of the creation; since the word *Adam*, the name of the first man, in the Hebrew signifies *red earth*.

one thousand were discovered "being all of a short thick column, with tapering pyramidal ends." These are very rare in England. "They are always met with in parcels in the same place, generally detached and single, though sometimes a few of them cohere together; they are beautifully transparent, and of extreme brightness." Semipellucid columnar quartz crystals are frequently found in the fissures of the Dartmoor granite; and the black garnet is discovered at Moreton-Hampstead, like schorl crystals, and the amorphous minutely granulated black schorl. We have, also, on the moor, a compact species of spar that bears a fine polish and is capable of being worked the same as marble. I observed, a few days since, several rocks of this description rising two or three feet above the surface of the ground, near Holwell, on Whitchurch down. "In Devonshire," says Risdon, "is found the miraculous loadstone, not discovered in this island till the sixteenth century: the loadstone, though of an inferior kind, has been found on Dartmoor." According to Prideaux, some of the hills, or mountainous tracts of the moor, attain a height of nearly two thousand feet; the valleys, though they run in various directions, nevertheless have a tendency to the north and south. The hills are most elevated towards the borders, where the granite seems of a harder and closer texture. The colour here and there varies, though its general appearance is grey, yet is it found "from almost black with schorl, to pure shining white, and some occurs of a rich red, superior in beauty to any Egyptian granite, particularly where it contains tourmaline." It is metalliferous, tin being common; copper is sometimes found. The granite, though

rich in schorl, is poor in mica, consequently containing less magnesia, and the more subject to the operations of the weather from that cause. The line of granite from the town of Tavistock to Heytor may be pretty accurately traced by the copse, which clothing the declivities of the slate-rocks that abut against it, disappears suddenly on the gritty soil. Cocks-tor is a mountain of trap, which runs in a northerly direction to Whiter-tor and Brazen-tor, "it is almost pure horn blende, in different degrees of compactness, and consequently of specific gravity." At Cocks-tor and Whiter-tor it is seen in contact with clay slate, at Brazen-tor with granite. This slate is likewise observed on the western sides of the first-named tor, where it comes in contact with the trap. This preserves its laminar structure; it has assumed the aspect of flint, and gives fire on receiving a blow from the hammer. In some places it is become riband jasper, but finer as a mineral*.

Mr. Bray noticed in a former paper, that Brent-tor was considered by geologists to be a volcanic production; and as there is evidence of the action of fire on the moor, so likewise is there of water. Alluvial tracts are here and there displayed; and though the nature of the primary granite rocks cannot be doubted, yet it is the opinion of Polwhele that vast fragments of stone so widely scattered every where around, or piled in the rudest heaps, clearly indicate some terrible wreck of a former world. The eminence, for instance, which arises above the logan stone at Drewsteignton, displays the boldest and the most marked vestiges of the great flood. It is

* Prideaux's Geological Survey, *passim*.

the same in other parts, particularly near Heytor rock—there “the hills are broken up or strangely rounded. The rocks along the sides of the hills are smoothed by the waters, or shattered by the force of the torrent: whilst an infinite number of pebbles are dashed around these abrupt masses. The valleys have on one spot an even surface, but gravelly and sandy. On another, they are ploughed up into the wildest irregularities: all around, indeed, the very entrails of the earth are laid open. These were not common floods; they were such as might divulge the whole strata of the hills, wash away the substances that had been accumulating for ages, and bring others instantaneously into their place.*” An intelligent correspondent of the same author observes—“that the convulsion which produced the mountain tracts of Blackdown and Haldon, raising themselves, perhaps, partly, if not wholly, from the sea, was not enough to throw off all their superficial strata from the clay-stones and shells that remain on them; they may, therefore, be called alluvial mountain tracts. But the convulsion being stronger that formed the heights of Dartmoor, all superficial strata were thrown off, and the granite, which is considered as a primæval stratum, appeared. This stratum has nothing upon it but a thin vegetable mould that it has since collected. This, therefore, in the language of a geologist, may be called a primæval mountain tract.”

That Dartmoor has experienced, at different periods, many convulsions of nature cannot be doubted by those who have examined with attention the features of that most interesting waste. The

* Polwhele's Devon.

last convulsion of any extraordinary character occurred in the year 1752, when, on the 23d day of February, a smart shock of an earthquake was felt at many places on the moor, and in its immediate neighbourhood—Manaton, Moreton-Hampstead and Widdecombe. In the last-named village some houses were injured, and one of the pinnacles of the tower of the church was thrown down. Widdecombe, indeed, seemed destined to suffer by the convulsion of the elements. The most fearful of these sufferings was alluded to in an extract from Mr. Bray's old Journal, given in a former letter. It deserves, however, a more particular notice; and the following account, founded on the authority of Prince, will, I trust, be not altogether devoid of interest, though it relates to a most melancholy subject.

On Sunday the 21st of October, 1638, whilst the Rev. George Lyde was performing the evening service in his church of Widdecombe, he was suddenly surprised by such darkness that he could with difficulty proceed in his duty. This was followed by intermitted peals of thunder that sounded afar off like the discharge of artillery. The darkness so increased, as the tempest drew nearer, that the congregation could scarcely see each other; and whilst the hurricane raged without in fearful violence, the choristers sang one of the psalms in praise of Him "who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind, who hath His way in the whirlwind, and in the storm." At length the whole face of the heavens became covered by dense and black clouds, and all was dark as midnight. In a moment this was fearfully dispersed, and the

church appeared to be suddenly illumined by flames of forked fire. According to Prince, these terrific flames were accompanied with smoke, and "a loathsome smell like brimstone." A ball of fire also burst through one of the windows, and passed down the nave of the church, spreading consternation in its passage.

Many of the congregation thought it the final judgment of the world: some fell on their faces, and lay extended like dead men upon the ground; others beat their breasts, or cried aloud with terror; many wept and prayed. The reverend Pastor continued in his pulpit, amazed by this event, yet by Divine Providence unharmed himself, though a sad spectator of the dreadful sufferings around him. His wife was scorched by the lightning, but her child, seated by her in the same pew, received no injury. A woman, who attempted to rush out, was so miserably burnt, that she expired that night. Many other persons, likewise, in a few days after, died from the same cause. One unhappy man had his skull so horribly fractured, that the brains were found cast upon the pavement in an entire state. "But the hair of his head," says the chronicler of this event, "stuck fast to the pillar near him, where it remained a woful spectacle a long while after." Several seats were turned upside down, yet those who were on them received no injury. One man, on rushing out at the chancel, saw his dog, that ran before him, whirled towards the door, where the animal fell down dead. On seeing this, the master stepped back, and his life was preserved. A beam from the roof fell between the pastor and his clerk; neither was injured. So violently was the tower of the church shaken, that

vast stones were tost from it, as if from the destroying hands of "an hundred men." A pinnacle of the tower, in its fall, broke through the roof, wounded many, and killed a woman. The pillar against which the pulpit stood became black and sulphurous; yet, though thus surrounded by danger on every side, the undaunted minister of God never forsook his station; and, in reply to a proposal made by some one present, that all should venture from the church, he exclaimed, "Let us make an end of prayer, since it is better to die here than in another place!"

The affrighted congregation, however, seeing the building so fearfully shaken and tottering above their heads, dared not remain; and Mr. Lyde was left to finish the prayer, with the dead and the maimed around him; four persons being killed, and sixty-two grievously burnt by the lightning, or wounded by the falling of the stones. Carrington thus alludes to this awful visitation in his poem of "Dartmoor:"—*

* The wildest tales respecting this storm, so severely felt in Wid-decombe church, are still the theme of tradition with the peasantry of Dartmoor. One story is, that the devil, dressed in black, and mounted on a black horse, inquired his way to the church, of a woman who kept a little public-house on the moor. He offered her money to become his guide; but she distrusted him, on remarking that the liquor went hissing down his throat, and finally had her suspicions confirmed by discovering he had a cloven foot, which he could not conceal even by his boot. Another version of the story says, that the compact being out which the devil had made with some wicked youth, he had the power to seize him, even in the church, if he there found him sleeping. On his way through the churchyard, the Evil one overturned some boys he found playing at marbles upon the graves; and finding his victim sleeping in the pew as he expected, he caught him up by the hair, slew with him through one of the windows, and knocked down the pinnacle, that did so much mischief in his flight. There are many other adventures told concerning the devil in this exploit; but these are the principal. Bishop Hall, in his admirable

"Far o'er hill and dale
 Their summons glad the Sabbath-bells had flung ;—
 From hill and dale obedient they had sped
 Who heard the holy welcoming ; and now
 They stood above the venerable dead
 Of centuries, and bow'd where they had bow'd
 Who slept below. The simple touching tones
 Of England's psalmody upswell'd, and all,
 With lip and heart united, loudly sang
 The praises of the Highest. But anon,
 Harsh mingling with that minstrelsy, was heard
 The fitful blast ;—the pictured windows shook,—
 Around the aged tower the rising gale
 Shrill whistled ; and the ancient massive doors
 Swung on their jarring hinges. Then—at once—
 Fell an unnatural calm, and with it came
 A fearful gloom, deep'ning and deep'ning, till
 'Twas dark as night's meridian ; for the cloud,
 Descending, had within its bosom wrapt
 The fated dome. At first a herald flash
 Just chased the darkness, and the thunder spoke,
 Breaking the strange tranquillity. But soon
 Pale horror reign'd,—the mighty tempest burst
 In wrath appalling ;—forth the lightning sprang,
 And death came with it, and the living writhed
 In that dread flame-sheet.

"Clasp'd by liquid fire—
 Bereft of Hope, they madly said the hour
 Of final doom was nigh, and soul and sense
 Wild reel'd ; and, shrieking, on the sculptured floor
 Some helpless sank ; and others watch'd each flash
 With haggard look and frenzied eye, and cower'd
 At every thunder-stroke. Again a power
 Unseen dealt death around ! In speechless awe
 The boldest stood ; and when the sunny ray

sermon "Of the Invisible World," ascribes many storms to the agency of wicked spirits ; and mentions that of Widdecombe as an instance.

I have seen it mentioned in the Quarterly Review, that the Ettrick Shepherd, in one of his tales, makes the devil be discovered by the wine hissing down his throat whilst drinking. This is a very remarkable coincidence with our Dartmoor tradition ; which is not, I will venture to say, known beyond this neighbourhood.

Glancing again on river, field, and wood,
 Had chased the tempest, and they drank once more
 The balmy air, and saw the bow of God,
 His token to the nations, throwing wide
 Its arch of mercy o'er the freshen'd earth,
 How welcome was that light—that breeze—that bow!
 And oh how deep the feeling that awoke
 To Heaven the hymn of thankfulness and joy!"

Though storms attended with thunder and lightning are by no means common on the moor, yet, when they do occur, they are of a nature so terrific, that every one must acknowledge the mercy of Divine Providence in not suffering them to be more frequent. Were I to repeat to you the notices of such storms given by various writers, no spot of earth, of like extent, in this kingdom, could, perhaps claim so fearful a record as the forest of Dartmoor. The towers of the churches in this neighbourhood are by no means lofty, and spires are unknown. Possibly this circumstance may be the result of design; the wisdom of our ancestors might have suggested the necessity of erecting low towers in a region of high lands and mountainous tors, where any very elevated buildings perched upon them would have become as points of attraction to the clouds surcharged with the electric fluid. This, however, is a subject I leave to be discussed by those who are much better acquainted with it than myself.

It is not my intention in these letters to say any thing concerning the botany of the moor. I am too ignorant of the subject to write about it, and even if I possessed the knowledge that is requisite for such a task, it would be unnecessary; since Mr. Polwhele, in his 'Devon,' has given a most copious account of all its plants, both common and rare. Another con-

sideration, also, makes me less anxious on this point. It is that you have truly observed in your Colloquies, that botanical books are only of interest to botanists. You are not, I believe, particularly partial to that science; and few readers are so. Should these letters, therefore, ever go farther than Keswick—should they go into the hands of any one who might be curious on such a point, I have stated where that curiosity may be most amply satisfied. The few remarks I have to offer respecting the wild products of the soil are such as would strike any one who, in early life, like myself, has been fond of the pencil; and who consequently acquires a feeling for, or, as artists term it, an eye for the picturesque; an eye which becomes the inlet to one of the most innocent, delightful, and lasting pleasures of human life; a pleasure (and I speak it from experience) that renders the spirits, in hours of health and peace, as light as the air we breathe; that can cheer the mind, and revive the body after sickness; that has a power even to soothe grief, to tranquillize the vexations of worldly cares; and, above all, that fills the whole heart with the best and the most grateful feelings towards that Divine Providence, who has every where spread around us such a world of beauty and variety, for the solace, the delight, and the service of his creatures.

It is on this account, therefore, that even the slightest knowledge of drawing becomes so valuable; since it teaches the young student to see a thousand minute beauties of light, shadow, form, and colour that would escape an uncultivated observer. And this is the reason why I would have all young persons taught to draw, the same as they are taught to write; since, though it requires talent to make a good

artist, and genius to form a great one, yet I am persuaded that there are few, if any, so dull, but that they may be taught to imitate the forms they see before their eyes, even the same as they learn to write the alphabet; and when I add that on venturing to make this observation to Mr. Stothard, sen., the historical painter, he concurred in such opinion, it will be found not unsupported by a very high authority.

During the Spring in our neighbourhood, and, I believe, in most parts of Devon, nothing can exceed the gorgeous display made by the golden blossom of our furze. It is said that when Linnæus was in England he was more struck with the magnificent appearance of this wild furze than with any other of our native plants. It grows most abundantly on tracts of waste land, by the side of roads, and on certain portions of Dartmoor. Near Moreton-Hampstead it is seen so thick and splendid, that it might be compared to an embroidery of gold on velvet of the richest green. I have seen this furze, when skilfully managed by a tasteful artist, introduced with good effect in foregrounds; where, like the rich opposition of colour in the pictures of Titian, it contrasts finely with the deep and ultra-marine tints of the sky and the distant tors. Our May blossoms, too, growing on the thorns in the hedges, are exceedingly luxuriant, and beautifully clustered. And scarcely does the yellow blossom of the furze disappear, when there comes forth in such abundance as I have never seen in any other county, that most elegant of all wild flowers, and most delicately painted in its bell, the *Digitalis*, or Foxglove; or, as the peasantry here call it, the Flop-a-dock. The height

to which these plants grow in Devon is extraordinary. I have seen many hills so covered with them, that thus viewed in combination they have produced an effect truly magnificent; especially where some of our noble ferns interposed to add that variety of form and colour so essential to the picturesque. The white foxglove is an exceedingly rare plant even here, where I have always understood botanists find so choice a field for their pursuits: it is found on Dartmoor. In Somerset and Devon, the common people use a decoction of it as a most powerful emetic; too powerful, I should think, to be taken with safety.

Whortleberries are both fine and plentiful on some parts of the moor. They are delicious (somewhat resembling in flavour the American cranberry) when made into tarts and eaten with that luxury of all luxuries, the clouted, or, as we call it, scalded cream of our delightful county. The heath-polt principally feeds on the whortleberry that grows wild on the moors. Round the tors of the forest the finest white clover springs up spontaneously; and no doubt this in a great degree renders the moor so excellent in the pasture it affords the sheep.

Though I have confessed my entire ignorance of botanical subjects, which I regret, I can tell, nevertheless, many of our wild flowers by the names that are prevalent among the peasantry. Some of these it may be as well to mention, since they are of antique date. And who would do other than look with an eye of interest on the pretty flowers that were chosen by Ophelia to form her 'fantastic garlands,' as she strayed by the 'glassy stream' under the willow that grew 'ascaunt the brook?'

“There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook.”

We have here ‘crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long-purples,’ and many other plants whose names are as ancient, as poetical, or as fantastic ; for here, too, the ‘long-purples’ are called ‘dead-men’s fingers.’ And poor Ophelia herself might have sung snatches of old tunes, as she formed garlands from flowers so wildly called as ours. We have the *maiden-hair*, a pretty pendent plant for her ‘coronet ;’ and the *lost-love* that would have reminded her of Hamlet ; and the *shepherd’s calendar*, and the *one o’clock*, the very dial of poetry ; and the *cuckoo-flower*, that opens its little pink buds at the time the bird from which it borrows its name does his note. And we have, too, the *snap-dragon*, as varied and as beautiful as any garden flower. And the *thor-mantle*, excellent as a medicine in fevers ; and the *cat’s-eyes*, that are as blue as ether, with a little white pupil in the centre ; and *bright-eye*, with its glossy leaves ; and *mother of millions* with its numerous small drooping flowers ; and *honesty*, whose bells hang like open purses by the side of its stem. *Milk-maidens* are little white flowers that grow in the meadows, or on the banks of running streams. And Love supplies many with his name ; for we have a plant called *seven years’ love*, and *love entangled*, a wild picturesque flower that grows on the tops of old houses ; and *love in a puzzle*, a delicate plant with leaves resembling in colour the wings of an early butterfly. We have also the blue *hare-bell*. The harmless nettle is here called *archangels*. And indeed we have a vast

variety of others that speak in their very names the imaginative and poetic character of our forefathers in this lovely county.

As we have provincial names for the plants, so have we likewise for the birds. A grave naturalist would smile did he hear some of these. That beautifully-feathered bird, the yellow hammer, which I can never meet without delight, as he spreads his wings and mounts and flutters aloft, is here known by no other name than the one which so truly expresses his character—the *gladdy*; and it does, indeed, glad one's very eyes to see him. And then when I open the postern gate in the old Abbey walls at the end of the garden, and look out upon the foaming Tavy and its rocks, there I meet a pretty little fellow skimming over them, or dropping his wings and resting a moment, and constantly wagging his fan-tail of black and grey feathers over the old stones; an action which has procured for him the name of the *dish-washer*. And we have, too, the *mazed finch*, a truly Devonian appellative, given to one species of this tribe in consequence of its wild and incessant motion. We have, also, as the little boys here say,

“The robin red-breast and the wren,
God Almighty's cock and hen.”

And then we have birds called by as compound epithets as if the good folks who gave them had studied Homer. For we have the *ox-eyed tit-mouse*, a little bit of a bird not bigger than a wren, with a breast as white as snow. We have, likewise, the *heck-mall*, a busy bird, and fond of making himself comfortable: a hole in an old apple tree, or a snug cell in the Abbey wall that some loosened stone has

left for him, are to him as a palace ; and there he lives as happy as a more ambitious bird amongst the loftiest rocks, even as

“ The lordly eagle sitting in his chair.”

The *hoop* is a bird of the same family, who makes more noise than he does work ; and being somewhat choice in his dwelling, he selects an old hole that is well sheltered with ivy. The *furze chatterer*, it is probable, admires our golden bushes, from which he takes his name, as much as did Linnæus himself, since he regularly frequents them ; and there, if he is not to be seen, he is constantly to be heard ; and, like most great talkers, repeats the same note over and over again. We also have a bird called *black-headed Bob*, a merry fellow ; and well does he deserve his name ; for whilst his bill is not idle in picking up what he can, his head bobs about from side to side, with a motion as perpetual as that of a Chinese jos. Part of his family are aristocratic, for the *black-winged duke* is certainly of his kindred ; but whereas *Bob* carries all his sable colours, like a black-plumed warrior, upon his head, the *duke* displays his sables more like a mantle, about his back and wings. The *stone-knocker* is the very mason of his tribe : he is fond of rivers and mountain streams, and will peck, peck the very granite with his bill, till he finds a hole to his taste, and then he makes himself happy and brings home his love.

Knowing little about entomology, I have had recourse to Mr. Polwhele, to see what help he could give me ; and as common insects are not grand enough to be named after such a catalogue as *Bob* and his kindred have afforded in the feathered tribe,

I shall only say that Mr. Polwhele declares of insects, he is acquainted with none here which are not common to other counties, unless it be the stag beetle, and the mole cricket. He gives a very full and curious account of both these insects. And here I may observe that the cricket's cry, which, I believe, in all other counties is considered a cheerful and a welcome note, the harbinger of joy, is deemed by our peasantry ominous of sorrow and evil. The *Phalæna Pavonia*, or emperor moth, has been seen sporting and showing his magnificent wings on the boundary walls of the Abbey in our garden*.

I must not venture upon any account of the finny tribes; for so little did I know about them, that till I read 'Walton's Angler' (which almost made me long to go a fishing myself in our streams) I scarcely knew what kind of fish inhabit rivers only, and not the seas. And having no taste for fish, it is merely by the report of others that I can assure you our trout is as fine as trout can be; and that the rivers on the moor abound with them in such plenty, that good old Izaak, or your friend Sir Humphry Davy, would have delighted to throw a fly along its banks. We have, too, salmon in abundance; and we have, likewise, the old story, common to all salmon countries, namely, that the 'prentices' in former times used to make it a part of the bargain in their indentures not to be obliged to dine off salmon more than five times a week.

Our reptiles, saving one, are known by their general names, none having provincial ones, except-

* A beetle of the most rare kind has been lately discovered in the woods of Walreddon, about two miles from Tavistock. It is said to be the only specimen of this peculiar sort that has ever been found in England. I made a note of its name, &c., but have mislaid it.

ing the snake, and he is called the *long cripple**; but why or wherefore is more than I know. Toads we have in abundance; they principally frequent the pools in this county. I remember a fine fat one, that was long an inhabitant of a hole under the ancient still-house of the Abbey in our garden; and so fearless was he, that in my favourite walk to this spot, he would pop out of his hole, squat himself down in the middle of the path, and look at me as if he were a sentinel keeping watch before the old tower. He had very large bright eyes; and was, I can vouch from long acquaintance, as beautiful and as civil as a toad could be. Mr. Bray once observed one of these reptiles under a hedge with a monstrous snake coiled round him, but if to exert his powers of fascination upon the poor toad, or to do battle with him, he could not determine. Mr. Polwhele gives a curious account of a toad that inhabited a hole before the hall door of a Mr. Arscott of Tedcott, in this county, which, during the space of thirty years, was a familiar friend with that gentleman, and would feed from his hand.

We have several species of Lizards. The *eft* and the *long cripple* are also common here; and as to vipers, only take a ramble on Dartmoor on a very hot day, and you will see more of such reptiles than, I will venture to say, you have ever seen before, or would wish to see again. I never venture there without putting on a good pair of stout boots; and I would advise all my female friends, who may be enthusiastic in search of the picturesque, to follow my example; since the finest scenery of the moor is to be found amidst the wild and hidden valleys, and the broken rocks, where vipers most abound. To go

* Perhaps from *long creeper*.

among them as guarded as possible against being bitten will be found a necessary precaution*.

I now, I believe, have named our principal reptiles. Under what class the bat is to be ranked I do not know; for though it has wings it is not a bird; and as it does not crawl it can hardly be called reptile. But I mention it here because the remains of the Abbey, beautifully hung with ivy, abound with the finest bats I have ever seen. They sometimes come into our house; and one, with a noble pair of horns, (that reminded me of the horn-head dress worn by the ladies in the time of Henry IV., when they were obliged to heighten the doors at court to give them free passage,) we caught at night; and as I wished more particularly to examine it by daylight, I put my prisoner into the warming pan, to secure him for that purpose. Next morning, when I gently raised the lid, no bat was to be found; and as nobody knew any thing about the matter, it was settled by universal consent in our kitchen, that either a *pisgy* had 'let he out,' or that with his horns he had pushed up the lid and effected his own escape, or that, worst of all, a certain dark personage, whose nightly operations are still devoutly believed in by many of the Devonians, must have had some hand in the business.

And, now, having written you a very long letter, and much about trifles, allow me to conclude, with every respectful feeling,

My dear Sir, most truly and faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

* The labourers on the moor, particularly the peat-cutters, may be said to swathe their legs with ropes of straw, to guard against the vipers.

LETTER XIX.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Vestiges of ancient customs still found on the Moor—Sacred solemnities of the Druids to Bel, or the Sun—Bel Tor the scene of ancient rites—May-fires in Cornwall and Devon—Druidical or British custom respecting Cattle, formerly observed on the Moor—Vestige of the sacrificial rite to the God Bel—Cuckoo's note, an omen—Lines on the Cuckoo—May-day in the West of England—The Hobby-horse; its high antiquity—Conjecture respecting its being a vestige of the Sacred Horse, &c.—Horses, as sacred offerings, so considered by many nations of antiquity—a vestige of such offerings found in chivalrous times—Examples given—The Druidical Festivals of the West—That of Godo—The British Ceres—Harvest—The curious ceremony still observed by the Reapers, near Dartmoor, at the end of the Harvest, described as witnessed by the Writer—Conjectured to be the vestige of a British custom—Plants held sacred—Herbs—Charms—Old Women generally perform the rite—Two Charms in barbarous rhymes given—The Apple tree—Old custom of saluting it—The last of October, the great day with the British Priesthood—To beg fire, in former times, at the doors of the rich, on that day, once practised by the Peasantry of the West—Now extinct—Old Midsummer Day—Cattle pounded—Decay of ancient customs on the Moor—An interesting Letter from the Reverend Thomas Johnes on the Animals of the West, given at large.

Vicarage, Tavistock, June 9th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I purpose giving you, in this letter, some slight account of the few vestiges of those ancient customs which still linger in their decay, not only on Dartmoor, but throughout this neighbourhood. My

reason for introducing them here, is, that I consider they derive their origin from British times.

Many of the sacred solemnities of the Druids were observed on particular days. Amongst these was the festival of the god Belus, or Bel, on the first of May. I have before noticed that on the Moor we have *Bel-tor*, commonly pronounced by the peasantry *Belle-tor*; thus adding the vowel to the termination of the word, as they do in the name of the forest itself, which they often call Dartmoor: it is, perhaps, the ancient pronounciation, for we find Chaucer accents the E; when speaking of a native of a Devonshire town, he says

“For that I wot he was of Dartemouth.”

I have no doubt that on May-day, sacred to Bel, or the Sun, his *tor* on Dartmoor exhibited all the rites and ceremonies due to the worship of that god. There on its summit, in all probability, the cairn fires were kindled, as victims were immolated, and the earliest fruits and blossoms of the earth received the benediction of the priest. It is not improbable, that the spring season of the year was chosen for the high festival of the Sun, in order to celebrate his renewed power, since he might then be considered as beginning to dispense his warmer beams to raise the seeds of the ground in promise of the future harvest. Many august ceremonies were likewise observed on May Eve. Toland gives a very curious account of the *Beltan fires*, that in his time were still kindled on a heap of stones, called a *kairn*, in many parts of Ireland, whilst the peasantry danced and sang around the flames.

In the counties of Cornwall and Devon, “May

fires" were long numbered amongst the sports of May-day, though, I believe, in *our* county they are now fallen into total oblivion. So likewise is that very ancient custom with the peasantry of the Moor, to collect together a quantity of straw, to pile it up on one of the heaps of stone, and then setting fire to it, force their cows to pass over the expiring embers in order to make them fruitful in milk, and to preserve them from disease during the rest of the year. As nothing has been heard of this custom of late years, I conclude it is extinct: but can there be a doubt it was a vestige of the sacrificial rites to the god Bel? And this opinion is confirmed by the circumstance of the Druids sacrificing on May Eve a spotted cow. "It was the season in which British mythology commemorated the egress from the ark; the place where this cow was sacrificed afforded rest to the deified patriarch, who is here styled Ysadawn, the consumer*."

The cuckoo's note was hailed by the British priesthood as the harbinger of the sacrifices of May Eve. With the Devonians the cuckoo is still an ominous bird; since to hear him for the first time on the left hand—as I did this year—is considered a marvellous sign of ill luck. Some unlettered muse of our county has thus, truly enough, expressed his peculiarities in rhyme.

In the month of April,
 He opens his bill;
 In the month of May,
 He singeth all day;
 In the month of June,
 He alters his tune;
 In the month of July,
 Away he doth fly.

* Davies's British Mythology.

May-day is still celebrated in the West of England, though not so gaily as it used to be some years ago, when I have heard my husband say, the milkmaids of this place would borrow plate of the gentry to hang upon their milk-pails, intermixed with bunches of riband and crowns of flowers. It is, I believe, universally allowed that no custom has a higher claim to heathen antiquity, than the erection of a May-pole, garlanded with flowers, as the signal-post of mirth and rejoicing for the day. These May-poles have, I believe, of late years, experienced some change: in former times they were often stationary; now, we generally see only the verdant pyramid crowned with flowers. This pyramid joins the procession, and sometimes even the dance; it receives its motion from having concealed within it a good stout fellow; strong and tall enough to perform the part for the day. Jack in the Bush is his name; and he has existed (so am I told) as long as the May-pole itself.

Robin Hood, St. George and the Dragon, Maid Marian, the Hobby-horse and the Ladle, have long been forgotten with us, though once so famous in the West. Yet I cannot pass the mention of the Hobby, without venturing a conjecture of my own respecting his origin, which differs from the generally received opinion. The antique Hobby (like the present May-pole) was formed by a man being dressed up, so as to disguise his humanity, with a pasteboard head, resembling that of a horse, decorated with a real mane, and the performer could also boast a real tail. He was, in fact, made to look as much like a four-footed animal, as a biped could possibly be made to do. Ribands, gilt paper, and gaudy flowers were

disposed about him by way of decoration, and the ladle stuck in the mouth of the horse, received the donation pennies of the boys and girls, to be spent in keeping up the sports. This Hobby was very gay and gorgeous, and hence have we, in all probability, the common saying of "as fine as the horse," to express extravagant decoration in the dress of an individual. This is the grotesque figure to which Hamlet alludes when he exclaims "Heigho! the Hobby-horse is forgot," and well might he do so, for it was falling into neglect even in the days of Elizabeth, though it survived in the West longer than in any other part of the kingdom.

Now this May-day Hobby, with all submission to the learned, I cannot help thinking, has a claim to much higher antiquity in its origin than they are pleased to assign to it; and that it is nothing less than a vestige, or figure rather, of the *sacred horse*, dedicated to Bel, the god of the Sun, on the first of May, by the British Druids. The custom, no doubt, came from the East, as did most customs of the Celtic nations. Dedicating horses to the Sun is spoken of even in the Bible; where we are told that the good King Josiah, who destroyed the groves of the idolatrous priests, took away the *horses they had dedicated to the Sun*. Tacitus, also, in describing the manners of the ancient Germans, mentions the neighing of the *sacred horses*, as being consulted for the purposes of divination by priests and kings. The Saxons, before their conversion to Christianity, devoted horses to Odin, as a more noble offering than that of pigs, sacrificed to Frea his wife. And, however impatient the Roman Catholics may be at the mention of it, there is nothing more certain than that

many of the customs and ceremonies of their church were borrowed from the idolatrous rites of the ancient heathens. That custom, so frequent in the ages of chivalry, of offering at the altar the horse of the victor, in all probability derived its origin from pagan antiquity. Many instances of such offerings might be cited; one or two will here suffice.

Setting aside the mischievous tendency of the superstitions connected with the Church of Rome, its rites and ceremonies were often of an imposing character, though they stirred the imagination more than they affected the heart. There must have been something very noble in such sights as were presented by the offerings in question: when Philippe de Valois, for instance, after a great victory, entered the cathedral of Notre Dame fully armed and mounted on his war-horse, as he moved slowly on, surrounded by the solemn assembly of priests and warriors, whilst emblazoned banners waved above his head, and the flame of a thousand tapers glanced amidst column and fretted arch, to offer up his arms and his horse to "Our Lady of Victory." So likewise at the funeral of the valiant Gaston Phœbus Count de Foix, his horse and arms were solemnly offered at the altar of Orthes, and were afterwards redeemed for a large sum in gold.

To return to the Druidical festivals of the West. That we have still some vestiges of that sacred to Godo, the British Ceres (so frequently mentioned in the ancient poems of the bards), whose rites were observed at *the time of harvest*, cannot, I think, be doubted. And as I have myself witnessed these, I can speak with more confidence on the subject.

The following few particulars will be found not unworthy the notice of the antiquary.

One evening, about the end of harvest, I was riding out on my pony, attended by a servant who was born and bred a Devonian. We were passing near a field on the borders of Dartmoor, where the reapers were assembled. In a moment the pony started nearly from one side of the way to the other, so sudden came a shout from the field, which gave him this alarm. On my stopping to ask my servant what all that noise was about, he seemed surprised by the question, and said "It was only the people making their games as they always did, to the *spirit of the harvest*." Such a reply was quite sufficient to duce me to stop immediately; as I felt certain here was to be observed some curious vestige of a most ancient superstition; and I soon gained all the information I could wish to obtain upon the subject: The offering to the spirit of the harvest is thus made.

When the reaping is finished, toward evening the labourers select some of the best ears of corn from the sheaves; these they tie together, and it is called the *nack*. Sometimes, as it was when I witnessed the custom, this *nack* is decorated with flowers, twisted in with the reed, which gives it a gay and fantastic appearance. The reapers then proceed to a *high place* (such, in fact, was the field on the side of a steep hill where I saw them) and there they go, to use their own words, to "holla the *nack*." The man who bears this offering stands in the midst, elevates it, whilst all the other labourers form themselves into a *circle* about him; each holds aloft his hook, and in a moment they all shout, as loud as

they possibly can, these words, which I spell as I heard them pronounced, and I presume they are not to be found in any written record. ‘Arnack, arnack, *wehaven*, *wehaven*, *wehaven**.’—This is repeated three several times; and the firkin is handed round between each shout, by way, I conclude, of libation. When the weather is fine, different parties of reapers, each stationed on some height, may be heard for miles round, shouting, as it were, in answer to each other.

The evening I witnessed this ceremony, many women and children, some carrying boughs, and others having flowers in their caps, or in their hands, or in their bonnets, were seen, some dancing, others singing, whilst the men (whose exclamations so startled my pony) practised the above rites in a ring. When we recollect that in order to do so the reapers invariably assemble on some *high place*, that they form themselves into a *circle*, whilst one of their party holds the offering of the finest ears of corn in the middle of the ring, can we for a moment doubt this custom is a vestige of Druidism? The

* “*A knack*,” says Fosbroke, “is a curious kind of figure, hung up and kept till the next year.” Thus we have in Shakspeare—“*A knack*, a toy, a trick, a baby’s cap.” I venture, also, to consider that “*Wehaven*” is a corruption of *wee ane*, a little one, or child. See Johns. Dic., *wee*. For this note, and the following, I am indebted to Mr. Bray. He suggests that *Pixy* may be derived either from *pix* or *pax*, possibly both, as these words have been confounded by no less a lexicographer than Johnson. *Pix* signifies “a little chest or box, in which the consecrated host is kept in Roman Catholic countries;” and *Pax* “a sort of little image, a piece of bread, having the image of Christ upon the cross on it; which the people, before the Reformation, used to kiss after the service was ended, that ceremony being considered as a *kiss of peace*. ‘Kiss the *pax*, and be quiet with your neighbours.’ Chapman’s Comedy of May Day (1611).”

man so elevating the offering is, in all probability, no other than the successor of the priest, whose duty it was to offer up the first and best fruits of the harvest to the goddess who fostered its increase, as his brother priests formed about him that *circle* which was held sacred in the forms and offices of religion; and I cannot but conclude that we have not throughout the whole kingdom a more curious rite, derived from Pagan antiquity, than the one just mentioned that I witnessed on the borders of Dartmoor.

I do not here allude to the mode of charming adders with the ashen bough or wand, still practised on the moor; because I have before spoken at large on that subject. A few other customs, though less striking in their character, merit some attention, as they all help to throw light on that obscurity which involves the earliest ages in the history of this part of England.

We know from ancient writers that the British priesthood held sacred many plants, herbs, and trees. Their reverence for the all-heal, or miseltoe, is too universally known to require being noticed here. But it is not a little remarkable that the common people of Dartmoor, and, indeed, throughout all this neighbourhood, hold in great reverence many herbs, which they use to cure divers diseases, accompanying their applications, even as did the Druids, with sundry mystical charms in barbarous verse. Though I had attempted to get some of the old women to repeat to me these charms, I never could succeed with them; and never should, had it not been for Mary Colling. The reason was this: the lower orders entertain an idea that if once these charms get, as they say, 'into a printed book,' all their effi-

cacy will be for ever destroyed. The good old souls, therefore, when I questioned them (having previously taken it into their heads that all I heard would go into print) would not risk a charm in my hearing. With Mary they were less suspicious, and by her means many of their charms stand at this hour in jeopardy. Nothing can be more barbarous than the rhymes that compose them; and these are used over many of their decoctions from herbs that are really medicinal. The names by which such decoctions and herbs are known would puzzle a better botanist than I shall ever be; since who, for instance, would ever guess what was meant by *organ's tea*, an excellent potation for a cold, and here much in request. Other names equally strange could I repeat, if by any possibility I could guess what letters of the alphabet when put together would produce any word to express a similar pronunciation of uncouth sounds.

I have been charmed myself, though against my will, by the good-natured assiduity of an old servant, who, when I was suffering from inflammation in the eyes, determined to cure me by one of these heathenish rites. Mr. Courtenay, of Walreddon House, in this neighbourhood, was also charmed, for the same complaint, by an old woman who exercised her skill upon him without his permission; and as he has never since been troubled with his old disorder, the cure is duly ascribed to successful magic by the vulgar.

Divested of their superstitions, we have, indeed, in this town and neighbourhood many useful elderly women, who act not only as charmers, but as nurses; and who, with a little more instruction, might be-

come as servicable as that most praiseworthy and respectable of all the religious orders of the Church of Rome—the Nuns of Charity; an order so eminently useful, that every one will join with you in wishing that some lady, who had talents and influence sufficient to carry it into effect, would lead the way for a similar order being established in this country on a Protestant foundation. To return to our good old women. The charms which they hold in such estimation are carefully handed down from one generation to another. This is done by a woman communicating the secret of these mysteries to a man, or a man to a woman, as the most likely means of preserving them in their full efficacy; now and then, however, they tell the secret to one of their own sex. Here is a barbarous string of rhymes to stop an effusion of blood:

“Jesus was born in Bethlehem,
Baptized in river Jordan, when
The water was wild in the wood,
The person was just and good,
God spake, and the water stood
And so shall now thy blood—

“In the name of the Father, Son, &c.”

If a man, or woman has been injured by a scald or burn, then shall the charmer place her hand gently on the hurt, and in a soft voice shall say:

“Three angels came from the north, east, and west,
One brought fire, another brought ice,
And the third brought the Holy Ghost,
So out fire and in frost.

“In the name, &c.”

But these are Christian charms, grafted, no doubt, on heathenish superstitions. There are others, however, more decidedly of Pagan origin.

The apple-tree, brought into this country by the Romans, was soon held in almost sacred estimation by the Britons; it is frequently referred to as symbolical by the Welsh bards*. Probably the reverence that was paid to it might have arisen from the miseltoe being found to grow upon it, as well as upon the oak †. On Christmas-eve, the farmers and their men, in this part of the world, often take a large bowl of cider with a toast in it, and carrying it in state to the orchard, they salute the apple-trees with much ceremony, in order to make them bear well the next season. This salutation consists in throwing some of the cider about the roots of the trees, placing bits of the toast on the branches; and then forming themselves into a ring, they, like the bards of old, set up their voices, and sing a song, which may be found in Brand's Popular Antiquities ‡.

The last of October was, however, the principal, and, indeed, the most terrific day of all Druidical festivals: and truly may it also be called one of

* Hywell, the son of Owen, thus sings:—"I love in the summer season the prancing steeds of the placid-smiling chiefs; in the presence of the gallant Lord who rules the foam-covered nimbly-moving wave. But another has won the token of the *apple spray*, and Gwalchmai thus sings:—"The point of the *apple-tree* supporting blossoms, proud covering of the wood, declares—every one's desire tends to the place of his affections."—*Davies's Bards*.

† On reading this letter, Mr. Southey had the kindness to make the following note:

"Miseltoe is so rare upon the oak, that a reward was offered for discovering it there some five or six and thirty years ago, by the Society of the Adelpbi, I believe. It was found (and the prize obtained for it) at a place called the Boyse, in Gloucestershire, on the borders of Herefordshire, and there I saw it."

‡ Brand mentions the custom of saluting the apples as still practised in Cornwall and Devon. He gives two of the songs thus:—

craft; since on that day every person was compelled to extinguish all fire in his house, and come to the priest in order to obtain from him a consecrated brand, taken from the altar to renew it. But if any begged this, without having previously paid whatever might be due to the priest, it was denied to him, and the terrific sentence of excommunication pronounced. This sentence consigned the miserable defaulter to a lingering death from cold and hunger. His cattle were seized; he had no fire to cheer his home, or to dress food for his subsistence, or to warm him in the depth of winter, whilst surrounded by frosts and snows. No friend, kindred or neighbour, was allowed to supply him with fire, under pain of incurring the like cruel sentence. Never, surely, did an idolatrous priesthood invent a more certain or more cruel means of enforcing their extortions.

To beg fire at the doors of the rich on the last day of October, when the gift was generally accompanied by some trifling donation in money, I have somewhere read, was, with the poor, formerly a custom in the western parts of England, as well as in Wales. It is now, I believe, wholly extinct. But

“Here’s to thee, old apple-tree,
Whence thou may’st bud, and whence thou may’st blow!
And whence thou may’st bear apples enow!

Hats full! caps full!
Bushel—bushel—sacks full
And my pockets full too! Huzza!”

The other song runs thus:

“Health to thee, good apple-tree,
Well to bear, pocket-fulls, hat-fulls,
Peck-fulls, bushel-bag-fulls.”

This last is, I understand, the song of this neighbourhood on observing the custom.

on old Midsummer-day, the farmers of the moor ride about, and lay hands on all the stray cattle or sheep they can find; these are consigned to the Pound; and they receive so much per head for all thus found.

The decay of ancient customs on Dartmoor is mainly to be attributed to what are considered its improvements. The chief amongst these was the erection of the French prison. I have been told it was calculated to contain ten thousand prisoners; if this statement is correct or not I cannot say. The building, also, of Prince Town, Tor Royal, the mansion of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, and other habitations belonging to persons of property and influence, are all things that have helped to civilize the peasantry of the moor, and to root out, in a great degree, their ancient superstitions; though, I believe, in no part of England has the march of intellect marched at a slower pace than on the moor. Many of its inhabitants cannot read; they speak the broadest Devonshire; but are, in their general character, a simple and honest race, and as hardy as the aboriginal inhabitants of the soil.

Having now endeavoured to give you a general idea of a place so little known in an historical and topographical view as Dartmoor, I hope in my next letters to conduct you to Tavistock and its vicinity, where, I trust, I may find some subjects not altogether unworthy your attention. Sincerely thanking you for allowing both Mr. Bray and myself thus far to be your guides over the moor,

Permit me to remain, my dear Sir,

With much respect, very truly and faithfully yours,

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

P. S.—MY DEAR SIR,—Since writing the above, I have been favoured with some few particulars respecting our animals in this neighbourhood, from a friend who is well known amongst us on account of his talents and worth—the Rev. Thomas Johnes, Rector of Bradstone, Devon. This gentleman, for whom we entertain a very high regard, to the pursuits of a scholar unites those of a naturalist, and has a feeling command of his pencil in the delineation of our scenery. Whenever you honour us with a visit at Tavistock, we hope to take you to his house, that you may see his beautiful collection of birds. These he stuffed himself, and in a manner superior to any I ever yet saw elsewhere; for he has been most happy in giving such a position to each as best to convey an idea of the action of the bird. Many of them are very beautiful: one hawk I particularly remember, with its prey; it looks as if it had at the instant darted upon it and grasped it in its talons.

Mr. Johnes thus begins his letter to me:—“At last I have summoned resolution to send you the long-promised account of the animals of this country. I anxiously hope that you will not be disappointed; and I am sure you will treat me with all due consideration when you reflect how confined and hackneyed is the subject which I have handled. * * * * The different species of four-footed animals, natives of this country, are so few in number, and for the most part so familiar to the sight, that a particular description of each, or a lengthened detail of their habits and manners, would be superfluous.

“The effect of that variety of soil and climate, which is a striking peculiarity of the district you have undertaken to describe, is most conspicuous in the

breeds of domesticated quadrupeds: the wild sorts preserve their distinctions of size and form pretty constantly wherever they are found in this kingdom. Having first noticed the few varieties of domestic quadrupeds which are the produce of this district, I shall add such remarks on the others as are furnished by my own observations and the experience of credible friends.

“The Dartmoor pony is usually about twelve hands and a half in height, coarse in its form, but surprisingly spirited and hardy. The late Edward Bray, Esq., of Tavistock, reared great numbers of these horses, which were disposed of at an annual sale held on the moor. Since the death of that gentleman the breed is become almost extinct.

“The North Devon breed of oxen, in great purity, is the common neat stock of this country. Its excellence consists in the superiority of its fattening quality. Heifers or cows of three and four years old are preferred for feeding; and they are fit for the market in the short period of twenty weeks. They are not much esteemed for the dairy, yielding but a small quantity of milk, and not of the richest quality. There is great symmetry in their form, and an appearance of high breed, but they are apt to be too long in the legs, and too flat in the ribs.

“The Dartmoor sheep, which produces the well-known Oakhampton mutton, is a small breed weighing about fourteen pounds per quarter. They are kept on the moor during the summer, and the cheapness of their feed, which amounts to twenty pence a score for that season, and from seven to nine pence for the winter, makes it profitable to the farmer to keep large flocks of them principally for the sake of

their wool, which averages seven pounds a fleece. Their superior flavour may be ascribed principally to the nature of the animal, and partly to the circumstance of their being killed at a more mature age than is usual in other places:—by no means can it be attributed to the herbage of the moor, which is exceedingly coarse and deficient in nourishment.

“The red deer, called in Devonshire the forester, or forest deer, was once abundant in the extensive woods on the banks of the Tavy and the Tamar, and many packs of stag-hounds were kept in the neighbourhood*. The hall in the manor-house of Bradstone is still adorned with the trophies of this glorious chase, the skulls and horns of the forester forming an appropriate series of metopes round that ancient room. But it is long ago extinct. A solitary straggler now and then visits us from the north of Devon: one was seen in the woods of Hornacott Manor, on the banks of the Tamar, in the spring and summer of 1831.

“The otter is an inhabitant of all the rivers in this neighbourhood. The river Ottery, or Ottry, which rises in the parish of Otterham, and falls into the Tamar at Werrington, is supposed to derive its name from the numbers of these animals formerly found in it. The hunting of the otter is hereabouts a favourite and agreeable summer sport. It is necessary to

* So numerous were the red deer in this immediate neighbourhood, that the late Mr. Bray often mentioned that he could recollect, in the time of the present Duke of Bedford's grandfather, the farmers petitioned his grace to get rid of them, on account of the injury they did to the crops. The Duke sent down his stag-hounds from Woburn, the finest chases took place, and the deer were extirpated. So glutted was the town with venison at the time, that only the haunches were caved, and the rest given to the dogs.

commence at or before day-break, as the animal seldom moves in the day-time, and the heat of the sun quickly exhales the scent. It is a hardy and wary creature, very tenacious of life; and success in this sport can only be insured by men and dogs who have been long and well trained to it. Its couch is formed in the bank of a stream, and the access to it is under water: there is a vent-hole for air at some distance on the top of the bank; here it deposits its young, four or five in number. It weighs from eighteen to twenty pounds, though some have been killed weighing thirty pounds. The north Teign is at present the favourite resort of the otter, simply because it abounds in fish, which are not hindered from coming up from the sea by weirs, as is the case in most other of our rivers.

“The polecat, founart, or fitch, is found every where hereabouts, but particularly in the neighbourhood of the large marshes, or as they are very properly called, *mires of Dartmoor*: where, besides rabbits, rats, and birds, it preys on frogs and lizards; and even the remains of fish have been found in its lair. This was first noticed by Bewick, and it was confirmed by an old gamekeeper on the moor, who thought this curious circumstance was first remarked by himself. All the animals of this tribe, from the stear to the weasel, are fond of the neighbourhood of water; the sable is known to be amphibious, and a variety of this species, an inhabitant of North America, mentioned by Pennant, has obtained the name of *the fisher*.

“Since the preservation of game has been attended to in this neighbourhood, the martin cat and others of its kin have become scarce. This weasel is of a dark brown colour, and the throat and belly are

white, which distinguishes it from the pine weasel, whose breast is yellow. The latter animal, though rare in this kingdom, was not uncommon a few years ago in the plantations of Mr. Carpenter, in the parish of Milton Abbot.

“The stoat, vair, or vairy, is the commonest of the weasel tribe. The most remarkable circumstance concerning it is its winter change of garb from brown to white, when it is called the ermine. This change is not universal in our latitude, as brown stoats are found in the winter, and others with various degrees of white. The change commences at the lower part of the sides; and the last part which turns white is the forehead. It is singular enough that the males are most subject to this change, a female white stoat, or ermine, being considered a rarity by the warreners.

“There is a pretty variety of the squirrel found hereabouts, which differs from the common sort in having the tail or brush and the pencils of the ears of a yellowish white. I hear they are common about Kingston Hall, in Dorsetshire.

“Of the fox, there are two sorts natives of this country—the greyhound fox and the cur fox. The greyhound fox is found on Dartmoor, where it is known by the name of the wolf fox, and has sometimes been met with of an extraordinary size. One killed there a few years since, when stretched out, measured five feet from the middle claw of the fore foot, to the tip of the middle hind claw. A friend of mine, in this neighbourhood, had a tame vixen fox of the cur sort chained up about a hundred yards from his house. During the first spring of her confinement she was visited by a dog-fox, and in due season brought forth six cubs. The male appeared

fully sensible of the captivity of his mate, and with very substantial gallantry supplied her with abundance of food, as the items of her larder for one night will show.

One full-grown hare ;
Eight young rabbits ;
Six moles.

What a supper ! He seems never to have meddled with feathered game, though the neighbouring covers abounded in pheasants. The same thing was repeated in the following spring.

“The badger is common, and used here for the cruel sport of baiting. Its skin is exceedingly thick and tough. I once dissected a badger which had been baited for three days, during which it killed several dogs, and was at last itself killed by a large mastiff ; yet I could not detect a single perforation of the skin, though there was a great deal of extravasated blood, pointing out the parts which had suffered most from dogs. Its stomach contained only moles’ fur. The badger is the fox’s pioneer—the latter seldom, perhaps never, digging a hole for himself. When pressed for an habitation, he fixes on the hole of a badger, and ejects the owner by a certain nameless process, most offensive to the delicate senses and cleanly habits of the badger.

“A keen sportsman of this neighbourhood has made an ingenious use of the instincts of these two animals in order to stock his preserves with foxes. He tethers a badger to a suitable spot in his plantations where he soon digs a convenient domicile, the badger is then removed, and a young fox put in full possession of the kennel.

“We have two kind of rats, the water-rat and the brown Norway rat.

“It was remarked more than two hundred years ago by an historian of the adjoining county* that, ‘of all manner of vermine, Cornish houses are most pestered with rats; a brood very hurtfull for devouring of meat, clothes, and writings by day; and alike cumbersome through their crying and rattling while they daunce their gallop gallyards in the roofo at night.’ This was said of the black rat, which has been exterminated by the brown or Norway rat, of which we may truly say that it comes not a whit behind its predecessor either in daily rapine, or in the provoking cumbersomeness of its gallyarding by night.

“We have mice—the dormouse, house mouse, shrew, called here the *screw*, the field-mouse, and the short-tailed field-mouse.

“I have noticed three species of bats; the short-eared bat, which is greyish dun; the long-eared bat, and a small bat with black nose and legs, and the fur of a reddish cast.

“The hedgehog is common. It is the same calumniated and ill-used animal here as in other places. And thus much for the quadrupeds of this district. The birds are more in number, and of greater variety and rarity. They will form the subject of my next communication.”

So concludes Mr. Johnes; and as I have a short notice to add, from Mr. Bray’s Journal of this year, respecting a few vestiges, not hitherto mentioned, on the moor, I propose to send them with the copy of the bird letter, above promised, at some future opportunity. In the interval,

Allow me the honour to remain, &c. &c.,
A. E. BRAY.

* Carew’s Survey of Cornwall.

LETTER XX.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

 CONTENTS.—The Birds of Dartmoor, &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have great pleasure in now being able to convey to you the following interesting letter, which I have just received from the Rev. Mr. Johnes, on the birds of this district.

“TO MRS. BRAY.

“DEAR MADAM,

“The Tors of Dartmoor, lofty though they be and desolate, are yet too accessible to afford shelter to the eagle or its eyrie. Dr. E. Moore of Plymouth indeed mentions a pair, which built some years since on Dewerstone rock, in Bickleigh Vale, but he speaks from report only. The osprey, or bald-buzzard, is the only bird of this tribe known in Devonshire, where it is supposed by good ornithologists to be more frequently met with than in any other part of England. The common buzzard frequents the sea-coast in great numbers, where it breeds in the cliffs. The honey buzzard occurs but rarely; it has, however, been noticed on Dartmoor. The moor buzzard is not uncommon. About August they are frequently found hawking about the cultivated lands, and near farm-houses. It is affirmed that kites were common in this district forty or fifty years ago. At present they are so rare, that I have never seen one

alive; and but one, a very beautiful specimen, in the collection of the late W. Baron, Esq., at Tregear*. I was told that they were frequently found in that neighbourhood. The goshawk is admitted into the Fauna of Devon, on the authority of Dr. Tucker of Ashburton, who says it has been found on Dartmoor. The sparrow-hawk is one of the few hawks which do not migrate, but stay here all the year. I have not noticed the hen-harrier, or the ring-tail (its female), in the winter months. The country people call it the furze-kite.

“The kestrel, called here the wind-fanner and wind-hover, from its motion when hovering over the same spot in search of its quarry, comes in great numbers in the spring to breed in the lofty rocks of Morwell and Cartha Martha. In the latter place more than fifty have been shot during one summer. Some few remain all the year. I have dissected many, and have never found any thing in the stomach but a small green lizard, which I have not been able to find alive. The hobby, called in falconry the lady’s hawk, comes here in the spring, and builds in our woods on the tops of high trees, but is not common. This bird is a great destroyer of the lark, as noticed

* Mr. Bray, however, tells me that, about thirty years ago, a kite, having one of its wings clipped, was kept for several years in his father’s garden. It was fond of placing itself on the steps of the portico of the house, and not unfrequently, by pecking at their feet, alarmed such strangers as would enter it. The feathers of its wing having, through neglect, been suffered to grow, the bird was accustomed to mount the walls of the garden, and thence to dart at those who were in it: for some time, no greater injury had been effected. But at last, when Mr. Bray himself entered the garden, having perhaps become more daring from impunity, it took a lower flight, and would probably have struck him in the face had he not prevented it by knocking it down with his stick.

by Willughby. In the stomachs of two I found nothing but the remains of that bird. Hence it was called by Johnson *accipiter alaudarius*.

“The merlin is sometimes seen here in October, but rarely. It probably escapes our notice by its small size and quickness of motion.

“Of owls we have four sorts, one of which is migratory, namely, the short-eared owl; though I have found the long-eared owl only in the autumn and winter, and in the neighbourhood of moors. But Col. Montagu says they have been killed in summer.

“Of the short-eared owl I possess two specimens, a male and female. The male is smaller than the female. They are found, I believe invariably, on the ground in long grass, and young fir plantations. I believe they migrate to England only occasionally, and then in considerable numbers. I have neither seen nor heard of one for several years. It is called also the woodcock owl from the time of its appearance. The brown owl is found in woods and especially among rocks covered with ivy. It is common. The white owl, or barn owl: this beautiful bird is common, and a useful friend to the farmer, by whom it is usually protected. They fly in the day-time, and in the breeding season the quantity of mice they destroy is prodigious. They prey three hours in the morning, and three in the evening, during which time each bird brings to its young, at the very lowest calculation, twenty-four mice, making the sum of three hundred and thirty-six in the course of one week, besides what it destroys for its own food. This bird, as well as the brown owl, hoots. This fact is clearly ascertained.

“The ash-coloured shrike is so very seldom seen

in England, that it scarcely deserves to be called a British bird, but the red-backed shrike is common enough in the summer. It builds in hedges, frequently near a public road, and leaves us in autumn.

“Ravens, crows, daws, jays, magpies, and rooks are abundant in their several localities. The latter, though doubtless a useful bird to the farmer in general, yet in dry springs is quite a nuisance. Last year they almost destroyed the potato crops in the neighbourhood of a large rookery, by digging up the seed, which the looseness of the earth permitted them to do with ease. The Royston crow is found on the sea-coast in the winter.

“Starlings come here in September, and are found in company with the rooks in the beginning of the season. In December and January they are in vast numbers about the grass fields, but leave us in the latter end of January or the beginning of February. They do not breed hereabouts.

“The ring-owzel visits Dartmoor in April, where it breeds, and departs in the beginning of November. The cock is a very restless and wary bird. His spring call, which consists of two notes repeated four times with a short pause, is incessant; while the hen is sitting he sings mornings and evenings delightfully, and is then very daring. The nest is frequently found in the side of a turf tye, that is, a pit from which they dig turfs for fuel.

“The missel-thrush is common, and in August they are seen in flocks of from twenty to thirty in the fields where the beat (that is the slight layer of turf which is spaded off the land) is burnt, preparatory to ploughing for wheat. It is singular that so shy a bird should build its nest in such open and fre-

quented places. April 13, 1834, I found the nest of a missel thrush in the fork of a young apple-tree, about two feet from the ground, in an exposed situation near the road leading to the house. It was composed on the outside of the stems of couch and other grasses, a mixture of clay, a little moss of the apple-tree, and lined with hay. It then contained one egg. The bird continued to lay every day regularly between 9 and 10 in the morning until Friday the 18th, and immediately began to sit. On that day and the following it was restless, and easily frightened from the nest, but afterwards sat very close until that day fortnight, May 2, when four young birds were produced. I could not discover what became of the other two eggs, though I searched the nest and the ground round the tree very closely. On the 9th May they opened their eyes. The rapidity of their growth was amazing, the four quite filled the nest. Their feathers also grew so fast, that they were completely flushed on Sunday the 11th, a small space under the pinions excepted. On the following day they left the nest. Thus the number of days occupied from the commencement of laying to the perfecting the young amounted to only thirty.

“ I once saw a song-thrush, which had been taken from the nest and kept in a cage for sixteen years, it then died. It was very grey about the head and back, and apparently died of old age.

“ The wryneck is a rare bird here, but is found in sequestered spots near the Cornish moors, where there are large timber trees: this bird and the nuthatch are similar in their habits, but the latter does not migrate.

“ I have been able to detect but two species of

the woodpecker: the green and the greater spotted; the first is common, but the other very rare.

“The hooper is sometimes met with in the autumn, but may be considered as a very rare wanderer: yet I have heard a gentleman, of great respectability, and very observing, say that he many years ago saw the nest of this bird with four young ones, which was taken in the wood close to the house at Morwell, in the Parish of Tavistock.

“The cross-bill I believe to be very rare: for though we have many orchards, I have never heard of one in this neighbourhood; and yet in the eastern part of Cornwall, about Egloskerry, where orchards are scarce, it has been occasionally found in old fir plantations.

“The grosbeak is also rare: I have seen but one specimen, killed in November, 1828.

“The cirl-bunting is found, but always near the sea-coast; there it remains all the year, and changes its plumage in the autumn, so as to become more like the yellow-hammer: some, however, come over from the continent in the spring, as they are then found in greater numbers than in the winter.

“Linnets, buntings, and bulfinches are common, except the reed-sparrow; which is found on the reedy banks of the Tamar below Morwell rocks.

“The mountain-finch has been taken here, but only in severe winters. The rest of the tribe are common, except the siskin.

“The pied wagtail remains here during the winter. I have seen the grey wagtail on the Tamar in June; no doubt it breeds there.

“The redstart is uncommon; but there are certain spots where a pair is found every year. Some

specimens are almost black on the back: the country folks call them fire-tails.

“Sand-martins build on the Tamar in great numbers; I have seen them on the river Cary, in the early part of March. The latest swallow I have observed was on the first of December; it was apparently a young one, but very vigorous.

“The night-jar is not uncommon here; but I have nothing to record concerning it, except that I have never been able to find its nest.

“Ring-doves are very common. The turtle-dove is seen but rarely in the autumn, solitary. I have occasionally seen flocks of a middle-sized dark blue pigeon, amounting to many hundreds, flying about the valley of the Tamar, in the latter end of autumn, the weather mild, but have never been able to procure one of them. They appear to be always on the wing in the day-time, flying very high in the air.

“Domestic poultry of every sort are here most abundant, and very cheap; I have seen a goose, weighing nine pounds, sold in Launceston market for half-a-crown. Cart-loads are taken every week from Launceston to Devonport and Plymouth by the Regraters.

“The pheasant has been introduced of late years by the Duke of Bedford, and Sir W. P. Call. The ring-necked variety is the most common.

“We have some partridges, and the quail is sometimes met with in the summer.

“Of the black grouse, some few still remain on Dartmoor, where they breed in the turf tyes. All attempts to preserve this beautiful bird are unsuccessful. The great extent of the moor, while it is the sole protection of a few individuals, renders it impossible to

defend them from the depredations of the miners and turf-cutters, who frequent the moor.

“Of the great Norfolk plover (*edienemus*) a specimen was killed on Dartmoor, Oct. 5, 1831, by F. Scoble Willisford, Esq.: it weighed seventeen ounces. This bird was a female. In the stomach we found the elytra and legs of a small black beetle. It is seldom met with so far west, and was not known to the moormen. By the description given us, another had been shot a few days before at Widdecomb-in-the-Moor, probably the male of this.

“The lapwing and golden plover are common enough in the cultivated lands during the severity of winter: the former breeds in great numbers on all our moors; and the natives assured me that the golden plover bred in Fox Tor mire, which is a vast and dismal swamp on Dartmoor.

“Ring dotterals are found in large flocks, in company with stints, &c., on the sea-coast, and in the estuary of the Tamar.

“The sandpiper retires in pairs to the interior, in the latter end of April, and is found on all the rivers of this country during the breeding season.

“The oyster-catcher is rather a scarce bird; but a few pairs are found, especially on the north coast, in the summer and autumn.

“The water-crake I have never seen; but the water-rail is very common, as is also the water-owl, which is found on all our rocky streams.

“Dr. Turner, as quoted by Ray, says that the *rail* he never saw nor heard of but in Northumberland. Hereabout it is not uncommon, and in the neighbourhood of Ivy Bridge three couple have been shot in one day by a single sportsman.

“The kingfisher is found in greatest numbers near the sea; they are rather uncommon far inland.

“I once saw a specimen of the spoonbill, which was taken in one of the creeks which communicates with Hakeavre.

“The bittern is very rare, and only met with in severe winters, such as was that of 1831-32, when a great number was killed in this district.

“The curlew breeds on all our moors, and is found on our coast during the winter months. The whimbrel is not so common.

“I know but one heronry in this immediate neighbourhood, which is at Warleigh, the seat of the Rev. W. Radcliffe.

“In January, 1832, a waggoner passing over Whitchurch Down saw a large bird rise from the road-side close to him; he struck it down with his whip, and it was presented to me by C. Willesford, Esq. of Tavistock. The bird was evidently exhausted by fatigue and hunger. The following is the description of it:—Length two feet nine inches, breadth three feet six inches; bill six and a half inches, leg five and a half; middle toe, which is pectinated, five and a half; tail-feathers twelve; fore part of the head black; hind part of ditto rufous, the feathers forming a small crest. Back part of the neck rusty ash colour, front part of ditto white streaked with black, the streaks growing larger as they descend to the breast, where they are long and loose: these spots are formed by the feathers of the fore part of the neck having their inner webs black, the outer webs being white. The back is brown, each feather being edged with rust colour, as are also the greater and less wing-coverts. Quill feathers black, fading into rust colour on the inner

web. Two inside toes webbed to the first joint. I find no description of heron with which this agrees so well as the purple heron (*Ardea purpurea*, Lin.) of which Montagu says, ‘that not more than two of this species have been met with in this country.’ It may, therefore, be considered as one of our rarest stragglers.

“A woodcock, weighing only seven ounces, was shot at Trebartha, in the year 1833: it was in very perfect plumage, and excellent condition.

“The common snipe and the dunling breed on Dartmoor, but the jack snipe leaves us in the spring.

“Of what are usually called fen birds we have but few, and they are only met with occasionally, driven most probably out of their course, during their migration, by adverse winds.

“The water-hen is common on the Tamar; but the coot seldom visits us.

“The grey phalarope. This bird is very rare in the north of England, according to Bewick. Scarcely an autumn passes but I have a specimen or two sent me. Mr. Jackson, of East Looc, informs me that on the 27th and 28th Oct. 1831, heavy gale S.S.W., great numbers of the grey phalarope appeared on the coast, in flocks of about fifty each. They invariably alighted on the sea and swam with ease and elegance among the breakers, and darted to and fro after maggots and chrysalides. They were by no means shy, but appeared lean and fatigued.

“Baron-bills, called in Cornwall murrees, guillemots, and puffins, or naths, abound on the north coast of Cornwall about Boscastle and in the parish of St. Ginnys.

“The great northern diver. I saw a specimen of this bird alive, in full plumage, at Plymouth, in the

month of July, about twelve years ago. It was taken at sea by some fishermen, who were carrying it about as a curiosity. I do not recollect on what they fed it.

“The great imber is often seen on the coast in Whitsand Bay in the summer, and very high up the Tamar in winter.

“Teons are often found on the sea-coast, and they have been killed on the Tamar.

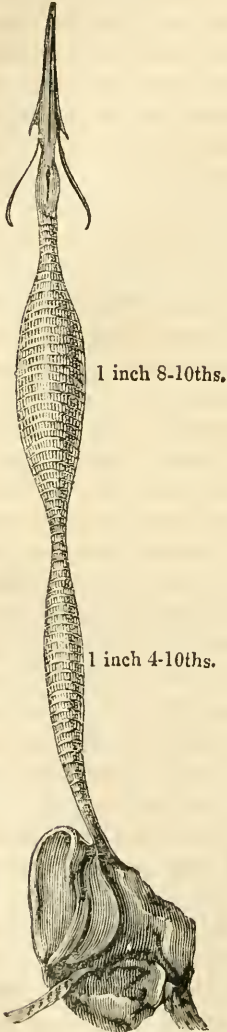
“Of gulls, the great gull is rare. Out of the stomach of one, answering to the description of the wagel, which Linnæus and Pennant treated as a distinct species, I took an entire redwing; an evidence of its indiscriminate voracity.

“*Larus canus*, the common gull. We have a curious emigration of these birds in the spring; they leave the sea-coast and appear in the grass lands in flocks of five, ten, or fifteen, in search of the caterpillars of beetles, which at that time are produced under the surface. The time of their appearance varies from February till March, and they disappear the beginning of May. It is to us the first harbinger of spring. It is called in some parts hereabouts the barley bird, from the time of its appearance, at barley sowing, I suppose, as I never observed them alight anywhere but in the pastures.

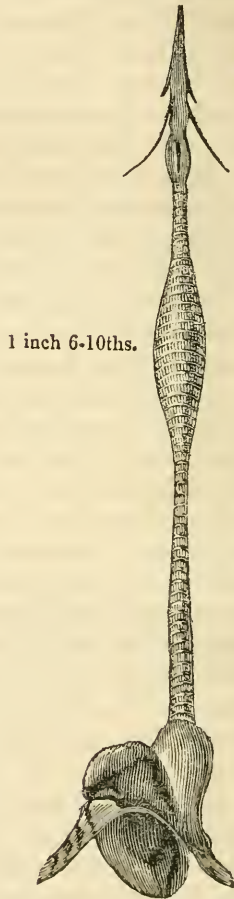
“The goosander. This is so rare a bird, that Montagu, during the long period which he devoted to the study of ornithology in this county, ‘never had the good fortune to dissect a single specimen.’ Feb. 5, 1830, I dissected a male goosander, shot on the Tamar. I have the trachea in my possession; it corresponds with the description given by Willughby. And on the 9th I dissected another, which

Trachea of the Goosander.

Trachea of the Dundiver.



Length, 1 foot 6 inches.



Length, 1 foot 2½ inches.

resembled the former in every respect. At the same time I dissected a dundiver: it was a female: there was nothing remarkable in the trachea, excepting perhaps that it was a little wider and flatter at the upper part than at the divarication of the bronchia. These two last were killed at one shot by Mr. Walter Wekes, of Bradstone, out of a flock of seven goosanders and dundivers.

“The dundiver is found here, a single specimen or so, every winter.

“There is still much obscurity concerning the history of these birds; some contending that the dundiver is the female of the goosander, others that they are of distinct species. In the year 1832 I dissected a bird in the plumage of the dundiver. The trachea (of which I have given a drawing) is so very different from that of the goosander, that I cannot believe this bird to be a young goosander in its immature plumage. Still, however, we want the female of the goosander. I am inclined to think, from the number of specimens I have examined, that there are two sorts of birds with the plumage of the dundiver, one very much larger than the other, and of which I possess a specimen: this may be the female of the goosander. The male of the smaller species may continue in the same plumage of the female, without changing when at maturity.

“Of the smew or white nun, and the red-headed smew or weasel-headed coot, I have seen specimens shot on the Tamar far inland.

“In January, 1830, many wild swans were killed in this district. In this severe season the common wild goose was seen only at the beginning of winter. When the frost set in severe, this bird, together

with the widgeon and others of the duck tribe, which usually remain with us during the winter, retired most probably further to the south, and were succeeded by the wild swan, the white-fronted or laughing goose, the scaup, goosander, and the dundiver, birds seldom seen in this latitude.

“The corvorant is not rare, but not so common as the shay, which is numerous on the north as well as the south coast.

“The gannet is sometimes taken by the fishermen during the summer. Ray calls it a Cornish bird.”

So concludes Mr. Johnes' account of our birds: I will not add more than the assurance that

I am, dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

LETTER XXI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Introductory to Mr. Bray's Letter, from the library to the drawing-room, addressed to his Wife—Inscribed Obelisk erected in the Vicarage garden—The biography of an old Stone—Search formerly made after it at Buckland Monachorum—Colloquy with the village Sexton—An Antiquary's discovery near the Blacksmith's shop—Sir Ralph Lopez presents this record of ancient days to the Writer—Account of the inscribed Stone—Polwhele's conjecture that it originally stood within a Pagan temple—Probably a memorial of a Romanized Briton—The inscription given—Various readings concerning the same—Roman and British names—The Stone bears reference to the period when the Celtic language pervaded the whole Island—Conjecture respecting its having been the Stone of an ancient barrier in the public games—Its original station—A similar Stone near Roborough Down—Inscription upon it—Various interpretations of the same—Allusion to the Dobuni—Henry and Camden quoted—The inscription on the Stone of British origin—Visit to this antiquity—Subject continued—Probable date of the erection—A third and similar Stone mentioned—Manner of its discovery—Its high antiquity—Its inscription, &c.—Removal of these relics to the Vicarage Garden—Other and curious inscribed Stones also preserved in Betsey Grimbal's Tower—An Antiquary robbed of part of his treasure—Some account of one of these antiquities—Possibly a memorial of Alfred the Great—Reasons assigned for the conjecture—Subject continued—Various readings of the inscription—Conclusion—Excursion to Over Torr-rock Basins—The Walkham—Peat carts—Bair-down opening a Kistvaen—Human bones found on the Moor—Obelisk near Bair-down.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE following letter, on a subject that I think you will find of considerable interest, was addressed

by Mr. Bray to myself; and as I deem it better to send it to you entire, instead of making any extracts from it, I now therefore enclose it in this packet, and I trust you will be as much pleased as I have been in the perusal of its contents.

“TO MRS. BRAY.

“*Vicarage, Tavistock, March 10, 1834.*

“MY DEAREST ELIZA,

“I have seen advertised, though I have never read the work, ‘Legends of the Library at Lilies, by the Lord and Lady there.’ The public, therefore, I hope will bear to be informed that, though we occasionally may assist, or at least encourage, one another by mutual advice and criticism, we do not study together; and that, though only a partition divides us, I address this from the library to you in the drawing-room.

“I fear that you almost suspected I should never fulfil my promise of giving you some account of the inscribed stones connected with this neighbourhood; and I fear yet more that the account will rather *suffer* than *improve* by the delay. But such as it is, I now present you with it, and leave you to present it to whom you may.

“Of the lettered obelisk I have lately erected in our garden, I have often heard you say, ‘I wish it would speak, and tell me all the things it has either seen or heard, that I might note them down.’ My reply has been, that were it to open its mouth, it would but frighten you, and not only make you more nervous than you frequently are in your *speech*, but also in your *writing*. It certainly has been the silent witness of many pleasant conversations I have shared

with you whilst walking in the garden; and thus much am I disposed to personify both it and its companions as to give some account (as far as I know) of their history, I had almost said of their biography.

“I will begin then with the stone last mentioned. And first, as I have transplanted it into my garden, and from no small distance, lest it should be thought indigenous to the soil, I will notice what I think I have heard botanists call its *habitat*, or place of its natural and possibly native abode; for as soon could I believe that Deucalion converted stones into men by throwing them behind him, as that any one previous to myself had incurred either the trouble or expense to convey such a cargo of stone-crop into his garden, without, too, the least prospect of being productive.

“Having learnt from Polwhele’s ‘History of Cornwall’ (for I had not then seen his History of Devon) that an inscribed stone existed at Buckland Monachorum, distant from Tavistock about four miles, I went thither on the 28th of September, 1804, with no other clue to its discovery than that it was ‘close to the church-yard.’ On my arrival at the village I inquired for the sexton, thinking that he was the most likely person to give me information. He could hardly, however, be convinced that the object of my search could be other than the monument then but lately erected in the church to the memory of the brave defender of Gibraltar, General Lord Heathfield; considered, by some, one of Bacon’s best productions. And on my correcting him in this particular, he still perversely conjectured, from my asking about an inscription, that I sought from

him a description of the church. But on using more familiar language, and describing it as a stone post with letters upon it, he smiled, and said, 'I suppose, Sir, that must be it behind your back.' I turned round, and perceived, within a few paces from me, the subject of my inquiry. It served as a coigne to a blacksmith's shop, adjoining the entrance to the church-yard.

"In the course of the year 1831, (for I have mislaid my memorandum of it.) on again visiting Buckland, I found that the blacksmith's shop had recently been taken down, and the stone in question was lying with its inscription exposed towards the street, with the possibility of its being worn, if not obliterated, by every passing wheel. On applying to Sir Ralph Lopez, as lord of the manor, (intimating that I had already in my possession a stone of probably the same era,) he most kindly made me a present of it. I sent, therefore, a waggon with three horses, together with what is here called a jack, an engine for lifting it. But I nearly ran the risk of sending them in vain; for the tenants then assembled at the Court Baron refused to let my servant touch it till, fortunately, the lord himself arrived, and removed the embargo. It was brought by a circuitous route of more than five miles to avoid some precipitous hills, and erected, as before noticed, in my garden.

"It is a rude and rough pillar of granite, but certainly more picturesque than were it a more regular column. Besides, it is not only the more interesting from its resemblance to the consecrated stones or idols of our pagan ancestors, but also from its resemblance, by rising in a gently-sweeping line from the ground, and somewhat tapering at the top, to the

trunk of a stately tree. The inscription also strengthens the similitude; as it may well be compared to those rustic letters carved, more with feeling than with art, on the bark of some venerable beech. Polwhele is of opinion that (as well as many others of the same description) it originally stood within the precincts of a pagan temple, where, in consequence of the reputed sanctity of the spot, was subsequently erected a Christian church. I hope, however, that I may not be accused of the guilt of sacrilege in removing it; for it certainly deserves a better fate than to be applied to such 'base uses' as to be a 'buttress,' or 'coigne of vantage' to the 'castle' of any modern Muleiber; nay, what is worse, than to be laid prostrate in the street. It might, even at best, have been appropriated to the purpose of a gate-post, as is actually the case with another inscribed stone in the neighbourhood; and, indeed (of which more hereafter), this, or something of a similar description, seems to have been its original destination: for even in the midst of the inscription is a cavity, in the form of an oblong square, which possibly may have been cut for the reception of a latch or bar. Its obelisk form is more apparent when viewed laterally; as, at the back, which is of a smoother and blacker surface (probably caused by the contact of a contiguous stratum), it is rather acutely gathered to a point; seemingly, however, more by nature than by art.

“Polwhele, even in his ‘History of Devon,’ presents us only with some few particulars as to the nature and dimensions of the stone, but not with the inscription. As he is not quite exact in the dimensions, I here give them. Its height, as it at present

stands, is seven feet two and a half inches. Its breadth at the bottom is seventeen, at the top four-



teen inches. From the top to the beginning of the inscription are two feet one and a half inch. And

the cavity is eight inches long and two and a half deep.

“This, and other similar monuments, he imagines to have been Romano-British, and to have been erected to the memory of ‘a Christianized Roman.’ I should rather consider it as the memorial of a Romanized Briton, previous perhaps to the introduction of Christianity into this island. There is no cross, nor any request to pray for the soul of the departed, which are so commonly found on the sepulchral monuments of the early, or rather Romanized, Christians.

“The inscription may be read (*sepulchrum, sive memoriae*) Sabini filii Maccodechetii. Of which the translation, I conceive, may be (the grave, the gravestone, or to the memory) of Sabinus the son of Maccodechetius. The Romans, we know, had usually three names—the *prænomen*, the *nomen*, and the *cognomen*. The *prænomen*, answering to our *Christian* or *proper* name, marked the *individual*; the *nomen* marked the *gens* or *clan*, consisting of several families; the *cognomen* marked the *familia* or immediate family. Thus in Publius Cornelius Scipio, Publius is the *prænomen*, Cornelius the *nomen*, and Scipio the *cognomen*. Sometimes there was also a fourth name, called the *agnomen*, added from some illustrious action or remarkable event. The Britons (as indeed the Romans themselves) originally had but one name. We may suppose, therefore, that this was erected at a very early stage of society, before the Britons, in imitating them, had entered into the more refined distinctions of their civilized invaders. At the same time it is evident that even these barbarians, previous to any intercourse with

the Romans, felt, in some degree, the pride of ancestry: for in this very inscription, though containing but three words, are noticed as many generations. Mac (as still in Scotch), signifying son, we have first Codechet, the grandsire, then Maccodechet his son, and lastly Sabinus his grandson. And from this, too, we may conclude that the period to which this stone has reference was when the Celtic language (of which the Gaelic or Erse is but a dialect, as also the Cornish) was not confined to Scotland, but pervaded the whole island. And, according to the opinion of antiquaries, the Celtic, at the time of the Roman invasion, was universally spoken all over the west of Europe.

“From the cavity or mortise, above alluded to, nearly in the centre of it, and calculated to receive a bar, I am inclined to think that this might be one of the stones of an ancient barrier; erected, not improbably, at a spot set apart for the celebration of public games. These, among the earliest nations, and even among the Greeks and Romans, were generally of a religious nature. And as the Celts are now, I believe, universally admitted to be more ancient than either of these nations, might not, I ask, the circus of the latter be taken from the Celtic circle, and their stadium or cursus from the Celtic avenue or parallelitha?

“We first hear of this stone, where, perhaps, it was originally placed, at Buckland Monachorum, or Monks’ Buckland, and close to the church-yard. Now we know that in the early ages of Christianity spots already sacred were generally chosen on which to erect a church, that the heathen might thus be the better conciliated to a change of religion.

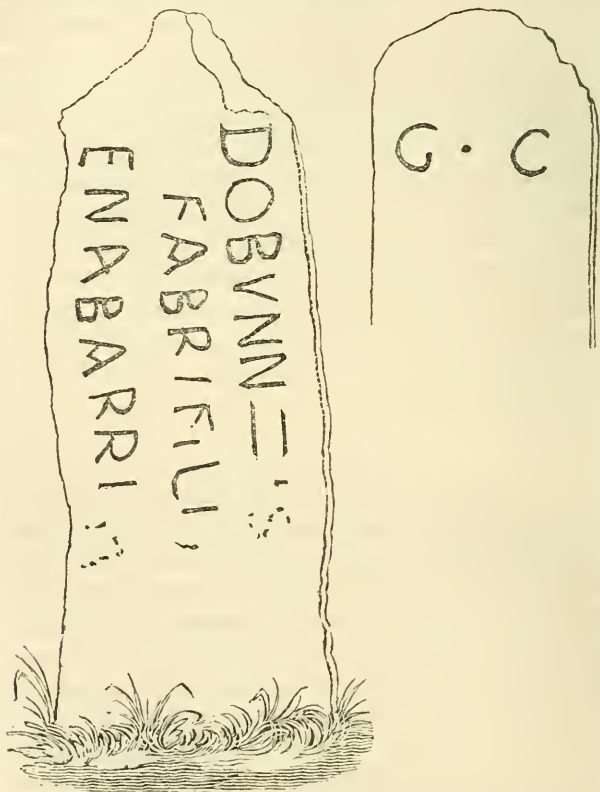
“Whether for the purpose of showing him greater honour, or because it was at hand, and on that account made use of, it is not unlikely that the Romanized Britons dedicated this stone, at his death, to the memory of one who was descended from those their Celtic ancestors by whom it had originally been erected. It is evident, I think, that it could not have been converted to the purpose of a gate-post (as is another stone in that neighbourhood) subsequent to the inscription; as the letters, by being lessened in size, have been made to accommodate themselves to the interruption occasioned by the cavity. Nor is it likely that so large and lofty a stone would originally have been selected for a common gate-post, whilst, on the other hand, its size and height would naturally have recommended it in constructing a grand barrier by which to regulate the public games.”

“There is a stone, probably of about the same era as the preceding, which may be found by following the lane leading from the rock on Roborough Down to Buckland Monachorum till you come to a turning on the right hand that will bring you to a field, of which it forms the gate-post. I am thus particular in my directions, as, in searching for it myself, I rambled without success for miles, and that too for several days, having received no other information than that it was a stone in a hedge near Roborough Down.

“The inscription contains three names; but it may be doubted whether they all are the names of indi-

vidual persons, or whether one may not be of a professional, and another of a national description.

“Various interpretations have suggested themselves. Some of these I shall mention, and leave the reader to determine for himself.



“The grave-stone—‘of Dobunnius Faber, the son of Enabarrus.’

—‘Of Dobunnius the smith,’ &c.

—‘Of Faber, one of the Dobuni,’ &c.

“Faber, in later ages, was no uncommon name. But I am not aware of any nearer approximation to it among the Romans themselves than Fabricius. A skilful workman in any art (and more particularly in metal, for Faber has more especial reference to a smith or worker of iron) would be of such paramount importance in barbarous ages, that his trade or occupation would naturally become not only an addition to, but in itself a proper name. And probably it is so in the present instance. Indeed there is still no name more common than Smith in our own language. And it is no less probable that the first name in the inscription is that of his people; as Dobunnius alone, without adding the smith, would be a sufficient designation, particularly as he is also stated to be the son of Enabarrus; and few persons, it may be supposed, unless they were chieftains themselves, or the sons of chieftains, would be honored with any monument at all. Nor is it likely that, were there two names, the first would have been British and the second Roman, but, *vice versâ*, out of compliment to their masters. And here I must be allowed to add—as possibly throwing some light on the date, and perhaps also connexion of these stones in point of time, as they certainly were in regard to place—that Sabinus, to whom the former was erected, might have been so called in compliment to a Roman officer of that name, the brother of Vespasian, who was afterwards emperor. These, with others under Aulus Plautius, commanded the army consisting of four complete legions, with their auxiliaries and cavalry, making about fifty thousand men, which was sent, A. D. 43, by Claudius into Britain. See Henry, vol. i. p. 30.

“If, instead of being a variety in spelling, the reduplication of N signifies the gen. pl., namely *Duboniorum*, the figure Ξ might purposely be used for two instead of II., lest the latter should be taken for the gen. sing. of a person. As there seems to be some trace of letters at the end of the first line, these might indicate that he was of the second cohort of the *Dobuni*. Cohort, we know, was often used indefinitely for a band or company of any number of men.

“Henry (p. 32) tells us that ‘a part of the *Dobuni* submitted to the Romans. These were probably the subjects of *Cogidunus*, who became so great a favourite of *Claudius*, and succeeding emperors, for his early submission and steady adherence to their interest.’ Also vol. ii. p. 459 App.: ‘The second legion, which was surnamed *Augusta*, or the *August*, came into Britain A. D. 43, in the reign of *Claudius*, under the command of *Vespasian* (who was afterwards emperor), and continued here near four hundred years to the final departure of the Romans. It was on this account that this legion was also called *Britannica*, or the *British*.’ Camden says that ‘The *Cassii* had conquered the *Dobuni* before the arrival of *Cæsar*, who made the prince of this country commander-in-chief of the forces of the whole island.’ Also—‘The *Dobuni* inhabited Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. Their name seems to be derived from *Duffen*, a British word signifying deep or low, because inhabiting for the most part a plain, and valleys encompassed with hills. And I am the more induced to be of this opinion, because I find that *Dion* calls these people by a word of the same signification, *Bodumni*, if there is not a transposition of the

letters. For *Bodo*, or *Bodun*, in the antient language of the Gauls, as Pliny informs us, doth signify *Deep*.’

“Whether, therefore, the name on this stone be that of an individual or of a nation, it certainly is of British origin. It is by no means improbable that the spot near which it stands (in the vicinity of *Roborough rock*) might have been a military station for the Romans or their auxiliaries and allies, as, from its elevation, it commands an extensive horizon, including the beacons of *Brent Tor*, and other tors on *Dartmoor*, and is also within a few miles of *Ta-merton*, probably the antient *Tamare*.

“The reader may possibly lament that he has wasted a few minutes in reading these observations; but let him know, for his comfort, that I have wasted many hours, not only in attempting to interpret, but even to decipher the inscription. In order to get what, I believe, is technically called ‘a rubbing,’ I have gone over and over again to the spot where the stone is situated, amply provided with silver paper (it ought, I am told, to have been tea-paper), black-lead, and brushes of various kinds. But, sometimes owing to the wind, and sometimes to the rain, I was never able to take any thing like an impression, and was forced, therefore, to content myself with different sketches in pencil, of which I have tried to select the best.

“With a hope of succeeding better at my leisure, and perhaps, also, with the assistance of the sun when, at a certain point in its course, it would illumine only the surface and throw the letters into shade (as the inscription on *Pompey’s Pillar*, in

Egypt, which had so puzzled the French *çavans*, was at last thus deciphered by some officers of our army), I set on foot a negociation for its transfer to my garden, as a companion to my two other stones. But though antiquarian covetousness was seconded by beauty, in the person of one of the daughters of Sir Anthony Buller, who resides near the spot, the farmer was inexorable, and it there remains as a gate-post to his field.

“ I must be allowed to state that on the reverse of the inscription may be seen G. C. It will add but little to the presumption of my former conjectures if I venture to suggest whether this may not stand for Galba Cæsare. Servius Sulpicius, the seventh of the twelve Cæsars, was surnamed Galba, from the smallness of his stature. The word signifies a mite or maggot; but, according to some, it implies, in the language of Gaul, fatness, for which the founder of the Sulpitian family was remarkable. Galba was next succeeding emperor but one to Claudius, who will be found mentioned in the following extract from Henry, vol. i. p. 260: ‘Cogidunus, who was at that time (as his name imports) prince of the Dobuni, recommended himself so effectually to the favour of the Emperor Claudius, by his ready submission, and other means, that he was not only continued in the government of his own territories, but had some other states put under his authority. This prince lived so long, and remained so steady a friend and ally to the Romans, that his subjects, being habituated to their obedience in his time, never revolted, nor stood in need of many forts or forces to keep them in subjection.’ Perhaps the reader

will good-naturedly admit, and be thankful for, the following lines of Shakspeare by way of apology for this whimsical digression :—

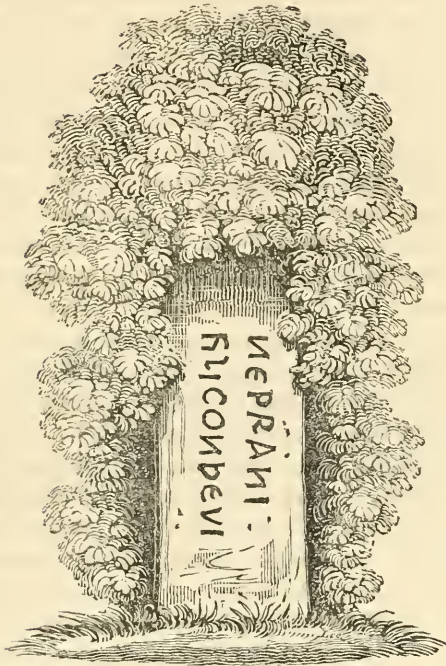
‘ Figures pedantical, these summer flies
Have blown me full of *maggot* ostentation :
I do forswear them.’

“ My mind being not a little occupied with the inscription I had seen at Buckland (not then even surmising that there was another near it, namely, the one last noticed), I asked my father, who was born and lived at Tavistock, if he had ever heard of any inscribed stone in our immediate neighbourhood. He said that, about twenty years ago, presentment was made, at the Court Leet of the Duke of Bedford, of a large stone forming part of the pavement of West Street, as a nuisance; it having become so worn and slippery as to be dangerous to horses. As his Grace’s agent, therefore, he had ordered it to be taken up, when, if his memory failed not, he thought he had seen letters on the under part of it. The stone, he added, had afterwards been placed as a bridge over the mill-leat near Head weir. This weir is about half a mile distant from Tavistock, and crosses the river Tavy for the purpose of conveying a stream of water, here called a leat, to the parish mills.

“ On visiting the spot, I found the stone. Its smooth surface was still uppermost, and the bottom of it so close to the stream, that I could only get my hand under it, and on doing so, fancied that I felt letters. On the strength of this I caused it to be taken up, and found I had conjectured rightly. The letters, fortunately, had been twice preserved;

first, from the friction of wheels and the tread of horses and passengers in the street; and secondly, from the slower but scarcely less certain erosion of the passing waves. I resolved, therefore, to bring it to a place of greater safety; and on the 22d of October, 1804, about a month after I first visited the stone at Buckland, had it removed, and placed by the side of the arch, then within the grounds of the Abbey-house, and now within the precincts of the churchyard. This I the more particularly notice, as an engraving of it in this situation, has, I believe, appeared in a little topographical work called the 'Antiquarian Cabinet.'

“On my quitting the Abbey-house for the Vicarage, I brought it hither and placed it where now it stands, near the drawing-room window. Some of my friends, perhaps thinking it out of place, compared it to a sentinel. In some degree to obviate this, and to hide a defect not much in character with a soldier, namely, what might be called a hunch back (for the wheels, I suppose, had worn it into this shape), I planted at its foot some Irish ivy. This has so wonderfully increased, particularly at the top, that, on cutting part of it away in front, to render the inscription legible, it has assumed, curiously enough, the form of a sentry box. I felt loth, I confess, to cut away more of the ivy than was absolutely necessary for this purpose, from the circumstance that, for many years, a couple of blackbirds have built their nest there, or frequented it; which is the more remarkable from their general shyness, and, seemingly at least, their aversion to the haunts of men.



“The inscription, as the first already noticed, contains the names of father and son ; viz., Nepranus, the son of Condevus. Some, perhaps, may be inclined to read Conbevus, as the fourth letter is more like our small b than D. The rudeness of the sculpture, however, may account for this. And indeed Mr. Samuel Lysons, in his ‘History of Devonshire,’ has not hesitated, on a wood-cut, to represent it completely formed as the latter. I am not much surprised at this inaccuracy, from the hasty sketch he made, in my presence, when I first directed his attention to the stone in question several years ago ;

and only mention it now that the reading proposed may be supported by the opinion of so great an antiquary. With respect to Condé, in Latin Condate (and to which perhaps we may trace Condevus), there are several towns of this name in France. It is an appellation in antient geography, probably of Celtic origin, bearing relation to the idea of *confluent*, and means a place built on the spot where two rivers meet. There was a Roman station, also, of the name of Condate, in this island, as appears from the second iter of Antoninus*. The person here commemorated, therefore, may have taken his name from one of these towns, as does one of the branches of the Bourbon family in France. At any rate the name is of British or Celtic origin.

“Of the stones which I now propose to notice, my earliest remembrance is, that when I was a boy they were lying in a little plot of garden-ground over the gateway of the Abbey commonly known by the name of Betsy Grimbal’s Tower. I thence, several years ago, removed and placed them as on a kind of shrine in front of the arch before mentioned.

“On exchanging my residence for the vicarage, I restored them pretty nearly to their former situation, by placing them beneath instead of on the top of the gateway. They were there more accessible, and, as I imagined, equally safe. In this respect, however, I was unfortunately mistaken: for, two or three years since, on going to show them to a friend, the stone marked 2 was no where to be found. I was the more provoked at the loss, as I am not without suspicion that I myself, though altogether unintentionally, was in some degree accessory to the theft: for,

* Rees’s Cyclo., and Henry’s Hist.

only a few weeks before, having but just mounted my horse, it shied at the noise or motion of a mason who was working near the gate, and I sent back my servant to tell him that it was a very improper place for him thus to be cutting a stone, and begged he would remove it. I have reason to think that it was the very stone in question, and that he had no other view in purloining it than to convert it into a pig's trough.

“The other stone I have placed, for shelter as well as security, beneath the trellised-shed before the door of my house. I am not without suspicion, however, that not only masons but antiquaries have little fear either of lares or penates; though at the feet of the former there should be the figure of a dog barking (with the words ‘cave canem’), and though the latter be placed in the inmost and most secret parts of the house. Indeed it may be apprehended that too many might be tempted to steal even the household gods themselves.

“Whether these stones were but parts of one and the same, it is difficult to determine. If they were, it is probable that there existed an intermediate portion. Certain it is that they were of the same description of freestone, were of the same thickness, and had upon them letters of precisely the same form and workmanship. By no greater stretch of imagination than antiquaries are sometimes known to indulge in, and perhaps with not much greater credulity than they frequently possess, one if not both these stones might plausibly enough be considered as commemorative of Alfred the Great. There are parts of two words, one immediately below the other, the former ending in *fridus*, the other in *nus*. May

they not, therefore, be Alfridus Magnus? The orthography, at least in early times, was far from being settled. ‘Anglo-Saxon writers, and among these the king himself, commonly write his name Ælfred, and this orthography is frequently followed on ancient coins : in some instances, however, as on a coin in the British Museum, the name is written Aelfred : in other writers, and indeed on some coins too, we find Elfred *.’ Nay, it was not only written Alfredus but also Aluredus †. But this respects only the beginning of the word. We may naturally infer, however, that there was some degree of uncertainty in regard to the termination also. In Smith, ‘De Republica Anglorum,’ we find our Alfred, the son of Ethelwolfe, written Alfredus; but Alfred, the son of Oswy, he spells Alfridus; whilst Rapin and Hume call them both Alfred.



“A pretty strong objection, however, to this hypothesis is, that Alfred died A. D. 901; and the Abbey was not begun till 961! I might say it

* Penny Cyclopædia.

† Ainsworth, &c.

was his cenotaph, or that it was removed from the place of his sepulture. However much disposed the monks might be to avail themselves of his name, either as a king on earth or as a saint in heaven, the expression *situs est hic* is too strong for a cenotaph, and would accord better with his relics, which we might easier believe they would pretend to have, rather than that they carried away his gravestone. It is not a little remarkable, however, that his remains were transported more than once from the place of their original interment. ‘His body,’ says Rapin, ‘was buried first at *Winchester*, next removed into the church of the *New Monastery*; and lastly, his body, monument, church and monastery were all removed (about two hundred years after) without the north gate of the city, since called the *Hide*.’ Nor indeed is it perhaps less remarkable that, *conditor a*, on the other stone, may mean conditor Angliæ legum, as well as conditor Abbatiaë. ‘And Alfred,’ says Blackstone*, ‘is generally styled by the same historians the *legum Anglicanarum conditor*, as Edward the Confessor is the *restitutor*.’ And possibly, after all, it will be considered not the least remarkable of these coincidences that there were no less than three monks of Winchester who became Abbots of Tavistock; namely, Livingus, who died in 1038; Aldred, his successor, who died in 1069; and Philip Trentheful, who was confirmed as Abbot in 1259. Is it altogether improbable that one of these, from the veneration he may naturally be supposed to feel for the name of Alfred, might have placed this memorial of him in a spot to which he had been himself translated, when he remembered

* Vol. i., p. 66.

that the removal of the very remains of this great monarch had taken place either for their greater safety or greater honour? Or the mere estimation in which he was held by the fraternity at large, which is sufficiently proved by his translation of ‘Boethius de Consolatione Philosophiæ’ being printed at their press, may account for their pretending to possess either his grave-stone or his relics, though each might be equally suppositious*.

“The monastery called the ‘Newen Mynstre,’ and afterwards Hyde Abbey, which was founded by Alfred, and completed by his son Edward, being in an unhealthy and inconvenient situation, ‘a new and magnificent church and monastery were erected just without the north wall of the city, on the spot called Hyde-meadow, to which the monks removed in 1110, carrying with them the remains of several illustrious personages who had been buried in the former Abbey, among which were those of Alfred himself, and some of his descendants. The church and monastery were soon afterwards demolished, and even the tombs of Alfred, and other eminent persons, were despoiled. Precisely on the space occupied by the Abbey-church, was some time ago erected a bridewell, or house of correction, on the plan of the benevolent Howard.’ And ‘between fifty and sixty

* I probably was led into this error of confounding together two separate works, from having somewhere seen it noticed that an Anglo-Saxon grammar was published here; and knowing that Alfred had translated Boethius into Anglo-Saxon. This translation, however was not printed, I believe, till 1698, at Oxford. But perhaps I may be indulged in the conjecture that the monks possessed this work in MS., and might attach such value to a more recent version as to commit it to the press, from knowing that the original had previously been translated by so renowned a prince.

years ago (I extract this from from Rees's Cyclopædia), among the remains of the buildings, was found a stone with this inscription in Saxon characters, "Alfred Rex DCCCLXXXI."

"This date is twenty years before his death. It might otherwise have been taken for his gravestone. Some mystery we find even here is connected with the memory of this illustrious personage.

"With respect to the stone marked No. 2 (if it be not connected with the preceding), many conjectures present themselves; but I shall offer only two, as requiring the least addition; namely,

Indolem
 Conditor (Abbatiae)
 Præstet amœnam :

which we may suppose a prayer that the founder (for *O Thou that hearest prayer* is not, be it remembered, confined by Romanists to God) might continue his favorable disposition to the Abbey; or, if we imagine the sentence to refer to the person to whose memory the stone was inscribed, we may complete the inscription in some such form as the following :

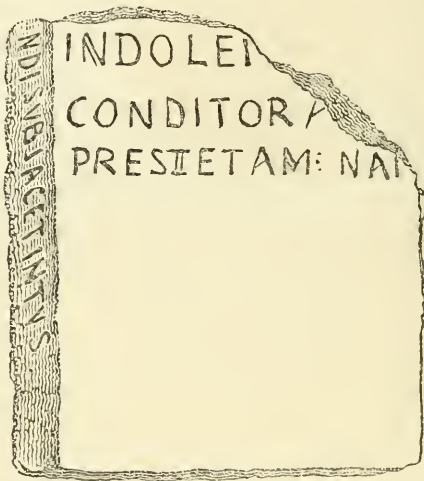
(Oramus ut ille)
 Indolem (eandem quam)
 Conditor (abbatiæ nostræ)
 Præstet. Amen. Amen.

"Let us pray that he may show the same disposition as did the founder of our Abbey. Amen. Amen."

"There can be no doubt, however, that the lateral sentence may be thus completed—(In spe resurge) ndi sub jacet intus. And from the word

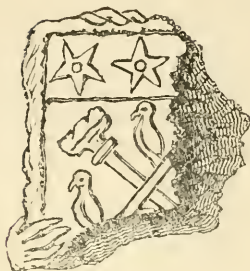
intus we may at once conclude that the stone formed the cover of the stone coffin or sarcophagus.

2



“Some years since, previous to placing the painted glass in the window of his dining-room at Endsleigh, the Duke of Bedford applied to me for a sketch of the arms of the Abbey of Tavistock; and I ventured to emblazon them from the description contained in Prince’s ‘Worthies of Devon.’

“I find, however, from a fragment of Beer stone sent to me in September, 1833, by Mr. Rundle, builder, who met with it among other pieces of sculpture in taking down part of the brewery here, that there is a want of correctness, not only in myself, but even in Prince. He describes the arms as ‘Gules, two crosiers saltireways between two martlets, or, in a chief argent three mullets sable.’



“I instantly recognized the mullets, but I was at a loss respecting the crozier; the martlets, also, must have been four instead of two. I was satisfied, however, that it is a fragment of the arms of the Abbey when I found croziers thus described in Fosbroke’s ‘Encyclopædia of Antiquities.’ ‘They were sometimes barely curled, sometimes like beadles’ staves,—more like maces than croziers.’

“From two hands that still remain at the top and side, it is evident that the shield was supported by two angels, one on the dexter, and the other on the sinister side.

“On the 30th October, 1833, Mr. Rundle sent me also another stone, with an inscription in black letter painted on a white fillet, being a kind of upper border to the same, the ground of which was vermilion. The words are *Regina celi (cæli) lætare (lætare) a*—probably Alleluia. Rejoice, O Queen of heaven—Hallelujah. Of course they are addressed to the Virgin Mary, and possibly were placed on her altar.

“In November, 1833, Mr. Rundle also sent me two other stones. One seemed to be a kind of

plinth, on which, in red characters, was painted what I take to be the contraction of *Jesu*,* which is followed by *fili dei miserere . . . o . . .* probably *nostri*. The other was the capital of a column or pilaster, having at the top gilt quatrefoils, whilst at the bottom are bunches of grapes painted red. Between them is the inscription (as far as I am able to decipher it) *Orate pro divo E* The latter word, perhaps, might have been Eustachio, to whom the parish church was dedicated; so that it is difficult to decide whether these sculptured remains were taken from the conventual or the parochial church, possibly from both, when the former was pulled down and the latter freed from its idolatries (for there stood in it the altar of St. Eustace) at the time of the Reformation. It is probable that they were not removed for preservation, but used, when wanted, as mere materials for other buildings.

“Thus, my dearest Eliza, have I endeavoured to fulfil my promise of contributing towards your work by giving some account of the inscribed stones, &c., connected with this neighbourhood, and remain,

“Your faithful and affectionate husband,

“E. A. BRAY.”

Before I make up this packet for Keswick I shall add the following extracts from Mr. Bray's Journal respecting an

* I am indebted to Mr. Kempe for the information that $\text{I}\eta\text{u}$ stands for *Jesu*: an adoption of the h for the great eta. “Jesus is written I. H. S. (in ancient MSS.) which is the Greek $\text{I}\text{H}\Sigma$, or $\text{I}\eta\text{S}$, an abbreviation of $\text{I}\eta\text{C}\text{H}\text{O}\text{U}\text{S}$.”—*Casley's Catalogue of the Royal Library*, pref., p. xxiii.

EXCURSION ON DARTMOOR TO OVER TOR.

“Sth August, 1832.—Having seen but the basins on Pew Tor, and from their elevation being unable to reach them, Mrs. Bray expressed a wish to wash her hands in one of those that were the most accessible on Dartmoor. The basin called Mistor pan being the largest, and, if I recollected rightly, not difficult of access, we got out of the carriage, near the Merri-vale circles, with the intention of paying it a visit. But it was at no small distance, with a considerable ascent all the way, principally amid rocks, the weather was extremely warm, and my companion very weak from illness. We gave up, therefore, our original design, and resolved to content ourselves with exploring a neighbouring tor, which we afterwards learnt was called Over Tor. I was the more induced to do so from never having visited it before; and probably for the same reason that, had it not been for what I have above stated, we should not have visited it now; namely, because it seemed but insignificant in itself, and because my mind was occupied with a far more important undertaking, that of reaching Mistor.

“But Over Tor, though of no great magnitude, most amply repaid us for the visit. Probably from not being so elevated, and therefore less exposed to ‘the pelting of the pitiless storm,’ it is less bare and denuded than most others. Indeed it is almost covered with lichen and pendant moss: so much so, that it forcibly reminded me of grotto-work; to which the cavities, that are here more numerous than usual, not a little contributed. Even some of the incumbent strata, possibly from being thin, and little else

than laminae, when I struck them with my umbrella sounded hollow. A flower, also, in the shape of a white pointed star, glittered amid the dark verdure of the moss, and might well be compared to the sparkling shells with which these artificial structures are generally decorated. That art, too, had been used even here, is evident; for Mrs. Bray had the pleasure of herself discovering a rock-basin. And as we have not only the classic, or at least far-fetched authority of Venus's Looking-glass, but the nearer one of Lady Lopez's hat, (being no other than the covering of an old lime-kiln,) I may be allowed, perhaps, to designate this as Mrs. Bray's wash-hand basin. It had water in it at the time; and though it was not enough for the purpose above stated, it was enough to enable us, in imitation of the ceremony to which, probably, it was formerly applied, to sprinkle each other. The basin, I should think, is about a foot in diameter at the bottom*. The exterior brim stands boldly prominent, thin, and somewhat curved (at least on its upper surface) like the cup of a convolulus. Standing, or, perhaps, seated beside it, the Druid might scatter his lustrations on his votaries below; whether they were the multitude generally at the base of the rock, or such select few as might be admitted nearer for initiation on a kind of natural platform, about five feet below, composed of the rock itself.

“Mrs. Bray was fortunate also in making two other discoveries, namely, a fallen rock on which were two basins; and a fallen tolmen. I already have alluded

* I subsequently found it by admeasurement fourteen inches; and one foot and a half above.

to some young men, who, on one of them coming of age, or rather on the expiration of his apprenticeship, which was probably simultaneous, celebrated this most important era by throwing down some rocks on Dartmoor. I never could learn the exact spot, but had reason to imagine that it was on or near Mistor. I now am satisfied that it could be no other than Over Tor; and except, perhaps, the overthrow of the Cromlech at the Cursus, they did no further mischief. This no doubt was enough, and more than enough; and well would they have deserved the same sentence, could it have been put in execution, that was passed on, and undergone, by that Lieutenant in the Navy who threw down the Logan rock in Cornwall, and was forced to put it up again. Were it not for this latter circumstance, I should hardly have attributed the violence so visible on this tor to human agency, but to an earthquake or some convulsion of nature. But the power of the wedge, though perhaps the simplest, is almost incalculable. The rock itself, I conceive, afforded materials for its own destruction.

“The basins are generally to be found on the upper lamina; between which and the next a stone may easily be inserted, and, being struck and forced inward by another, and that by a third, one end of this thin mass is elevated, till, by a corresponding depression, the other end preponderates, and the summit of this lofty structure which had defied a thousand storms not only falls below, but carries ruin and destruction far around. Indeed, I cannot but think that the very name of Over Tor is owing to this overthrow of the rocks, which, whether

natural or artificial, must strike the most inattentive observer. At any rate the etymology is not so far-fetched as St. Mary Overy, a name given to a church in Southwark, as I was informed by a learned antiquary, from the circumstance that near it people were accustomed to go over the ferry to the city. Certain it is that you can trace this cataract of rocks, as you might fancy a cataract of water suddenly arrested and fixed by ice.

“The rock on which this elevated pile was poised is still as horizontal as the base itself beneath it. The second rock has slid from it, but, finding a *point d'appui* on a kind of platform which is itself of considerable elevation, remains only in an oblique position. The third rock is completely pendant from the platform, but is prevented falling by the fourth, that has found a base on some rocks below, and thus completes this accidental bridge: for a chasm of no small dimensions is formed by it, and an ox we saw had retired to it for shade and shelter. The fifth, on which are the basins, is perpendicular. Contiguous to this, and thrown, I think, out of their position by its falling against them, are two rocks, which we ventured to consider were tolmen. They rest on a rock whose face is as smooth and perpendicular as a wall, thirteen feet and a half in length, and seven feet in height. There seems to have been a semicircular inclosure of stones in front of it; and, from the upper edge of this wall, one of the two rocks projects three feet and a half, like the sounding-board of a pulpit. Three or four stones, somewhat similar to that which supports the tolmen at Staple Tor, are lying under them, and were

probably applied to that purpose here. Were this the case, there is reason to conclude that these tombs, which seem to have been parallel, if not resting against one another, were overthrown by the shock occasioned by the fall of the rock on which are the basins; for it seems to have struck them near their point of conjunction, and, causing them to open to the right and left, deranged their supports and destroyed their equilibrium. The fallen basins are of an oblong shape, two feet by one, and about four inches and a half deep. The view from behind this tor (itself forming the foreground, rich in colour and every possible variety of outline) is truly magnificent. Its more elevated points afford a bold contrast both in shape and shadow to the faint and sweeping undulations of the distant horizon. Plymouth Sound, Mount Edgecombe and Hamoaze are conspicuous and attractive objects. Walkhampton tower (or possibly that of Sampford Spiney) glitters in the view, whilst the bold mass of Vixen Tor, and the crowned summit of Pew Tor beyond it, form a broad and sombre background for Merri-vale bridge, and the sparkling river Walkham that winds beneath.

“I here may mention that on approaching this tor we found several mounds of earth, from about five and twenty to thirty paces in circumference. They are not in the usual shape of barrows, being of an oblong square, whilst the latter are generally round or oval. From their proximity to the circles, the cursus, and the tor, which, from its basins, &c., we have thus connected with Druidism, one might be tempted to imagine that these were places of

sepulture for persons of that order; but on my afterwards asking Hannaford, the farmer, if he knew anything about them, he said they were rabbits' burrows; and I am inclined to think he is perfectly right.

“But should some antiquary be hereafter taken in, and describe the labours of Watts (for such was the name, I was told, of the builder of these warrens) as those of the Celts or Druids, it may be allowed to excite a smile but not a sneer. There are also heaps of stones, evidently the work of art, though now almost covered with moss. The stones are mostly placed edgeways, forming a kind of low flat arch, with hollows and interstices beneath. Indeed, they may be said to be built rather than thrown together. These, too, were probably applied to the purpose above stated, namely a shelter for rabbits. But where there are so many indisputable vestiges of the Druids, it is little to be wondered at that an antiquary should be thinking more of them than of a warren. Besides, many of the barrows, cairns, kistvaens, &c., of which traces still remain near the cursus, are in themselves of far less magnitude and importance. Watts, one would think, took an anticipated delight in puzzling the antiquaries. We might say of him in the words of Horace, *Diruit. edificat* (he pulls down, he builds up); but, instead of continuing the quotation, *mutat quadrata rotundis* (he changes square things into round), we might reverse it, and say, that he has achieved yet greater labours, namely, succeeded in squaring the circle: for, to make an inclosure near his cottage, of which the foundation still remains, he has converted what was probably a circle into an oblong square.

THE WALKHAM*.

Close to Merrivale bridge, I was shocked (for I can use no milder expression) to see in the bed of this truly romantic river some of the largest rocks split with wedges, and, instead of presenting their usual flowing outline and their dark natural colour enriched with moss and lichen, obtruding themselves on the eye, not only bare but in straight and angular deformity. It is to be hoped, however, that they will soon be removed. I am sorry to observe that they have begun to take stones for the roads from the bed of our own beautiful Tavy. But such is the march of intellect and improvement. As a further proof of its progressing even on the moor, I soon afterwards remarked a hand-bill pasted on one of the rocks near the side of the road. I could not help thinking that my inscriptions were more in character. But even these, I found, when I reached Bair-down, were beginning to be illegible. Indeed, when looking from the bridge for the name of a poet to which I had consecrated one of the rocks beneath, we could only see some faint traces of the letters when the sun shone out. It was about two o'clock, and perhaps (from the spot where we stood) it might be wholly undistinguishable at any other hour. This vanishing and reappearing excited some degree of interest, and reminded me of the effect of the Diorama. The loudest roar that then ascended from the Cowsick was occasioned by the rush of water over the rock that crosses the river, which I

* In our excursion of this day, I observed that among the various forms that Vixen Tor assumes, this lofty mass of rock has one which I have omitted when elsewhere describing them; but which now forcibly impressed itself on my fancy; namely, that of a lion sucking his paw.

learnt from Hannaford is fifty-nine feet in length—it is perfectly straight: this they once talked of converting into an obelisk.

“In the course of our journey hither, our attention had been attracted to some objects in the horizon which my companion said she could almost fancy were moving tors. They certainly appeared large objects and made but slow progress. I knew there was no road in that direction, yet they continued to follow one another in a line. At length they turned, and as they approached nearer to us, I could distinguish that they were not only dark from rising in contrast with the sky, but were black in themselves; and I almost could imagine they were a funeral procession; and, of course, that of some giant who was to lay his bones beneath some mighty kairn. But, at times, their tottering, nay, oscillating motion, like that of ships in a storm, did not exactly correspond with the solemn and steady pace observed on such occasions. And at last I found they were carts piled high with peat, working their way through the rocks, now turning and rolling to the right, and now to the left, under the guidance, now in front, now in rear, and now on either side, of men who exerted almost gigantic strength in preventing them from falling.”

EXCURSION ON DARTMOOR. KISTVAEN, &c., ON BAIRDOWN. 11th Sept. 1832.

“About two or three minutes walk from the house, in a north-east direction, are the remains of a kistvaen which we had long proposed to open. Three stones, about six or eight inches high, forming three sides of an oblong square, were all that

was visible. On removing some turf and rushes, we found a rough pavement around them to the extent of three or four feet. The stone at the western end (for they face pretty nearly the cardinal points) is two feet eight inches long. The northern stone is three feet ten inches; the southern about the same dimensions, and the eastern stone is wanting.

“We opened the centre, about two feet and a half; and there came to the natural substratum, a hard gravel. The stones of inclosure reached to the same depth. Hannaford, who is somewhat acquainted with what he calls these *caves*, in procuring stones for walls, &c., was of opinion that it had been opened before, and that the stone at the east, together with the covering stone, had been removed for similar purposes. I had reason afterwards fully to agree with him, for we found nothing amid the peat earth that filled the cavity but a small fragment of earthenware. It was of the very coarsest texture, somewhat smooth on one side, and extremely rough on the other. The surfaces were reddish, but the centre of a deep brown. It probably was the only remaining portion of an urn that had been broken and taken away with its contents, whatever they might be, by some previous and more fortunate explorer; though it is likely enough that the discovery gratified no other feeling than that of mere curiosity. An antiquary, perhaps, had he been present, might have decided, I will not say with what certainty, whether it was or was not the sepulchre of some chieftain or arch-Druid on the hill of Bards. About a quarter of a mile distant, immediately outside the present boundary of Bair-down, (for my father gave it up for the purpose, I believe, of building a chapel which

was never erected,) and nearly opposite the road that leads to Plymouth, I was informed by Hannaford that a person named John Kerton, among what he called 'burroughs and buildings,' found some human bones; and that he told him he could not rest till he buried them again.

"I learnt from the same authority, having previously requested him to measure it, that the erect stone or obelisk, called Bair-down Man, (probably corrupted from *men*, a stone,) is eleven feet high, and eight feet round."

The length of these extracts from Mr. Bray's Journal prevents my at present adding more than that

I am, my dear Sir,
Very sincerely and faithfully yours,
ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

END OF VOL. I.

BOOKS ON SCIENCE AND NATURAL PHILOSOPHY
PUBLISHED BY MR. MURRAY.

PRINCIPLES OF GEOLOGY : with a GLOSSARY, containing an Explanation of Scientific Terms, and a copious INDEX. By CHARLES LYELL, F.R.S., President of the Geological Society. Fourth Edition. Illustrated with 164 Woodcuts, and 15 Plates and Maps. Four Vols. 12mo., price only 24s.

THE JOURNAL OF A NATURALIST. Third Edition, crown 8vo. Plates and Woodcuts, 15s.

THIRD AND LAST SERIES OF GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY. By EDWARD JESSE, Esq., Surveyor of His Majesty's Parks and Palaces. In 1 vol. post 8vo., 10s. 6d.

Also—JESSE'S GLEANINGS, *Vol. I.*, a Third Edition, price 10s. 6d.

GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY, Second Series, *Second Edition*, post 8vo., 10s. 6d.

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY'S SALMONIA, or DAYS OF FLY-FISHING. Third Edition. Small 8vo., 12s.

CONSOLATIONS in TRAVEL. Third Edition. Small 8vo., 6s.

On the CONNEXION of the PHYSICAL SCIENCES. By MARY SOMERVILLE. A New Edition, most carefully revised, particularly with the view of simplifying the work, and rendering it intelligible to unscientific readers, with numerous illustrative woodcuts. Foolscap 8vo., 10s. 6d.

“The general reader, before he enters upon Sir John Herschell's Treatise on Astronomy, should prepare his thoughts for the tone of elevation which it requires, by reading Mrs. SOMERVILLE's delightful volume on the ‘Connexion of the Physical Sciences.’ The style of this astonishing production is so clear and unaffected, and conveys, with so much simplicity, so great a mass of profound knowledge, that it should be placed in the hands of every youth the moment he has mastered the general rudiments of education.”—*Quarterly Review*.

HOOKER'S BOTANICAL MISCELLANY. Complete in 3 vols. 8vo., 112 plates, 4l. 14s. 6d. Single Numbers, 10s. 6d. each.

JOHN MURRAY, Albemarle Street.





near

A DESCRIPTION
OF THE
PART OF DEVONSHIRE
BORDERING ON
THE TAMAR AND THE TAVY;

ITS
NATURAL HISTORY,
MANNERS, CUSTOMS, SUPERSTITIONS, SCENERY, ANTIQUITIES,
BIOGRAPHY OF EMINENT PERSONS,
&c. &c.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO
ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

BY MRS. BRAY,

AUTHOR OF 'TRAVELS IN NORMANDY,' 'FITZ OF FITZ-FORD,' 'THE
TALBA,' 'DE FOIX,' ETC.

" I own the power
Of local sympathy that o'er the fair
Throws more divine allurements, and o'er all
The great more grandeur, and my kindling muse,
Fired by the universal passion, pours
Haply a partial lay."

CARRINGTON'S Dartmoor.

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. III.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
MDCCCXXXVI.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,
Stamford Street.

SUBJECTS

OF

VOLUME THE THIRD.

	Page
Letter XXXII.	1
Letter XXXIII.	26
Letter XXXIV.	70
Letter XXXV.	113
Letter XXXVI.	135
Letter XXXVII.	165
Letter XXXVIII.	185
Letter XXXIX.	250
Letter XL.	261
Letter XLI.	303
Letter XLII.	329

LETTERS TO THE LAUREATE,

&c. &c.

LETTER XXXII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—The Walla Brook; a stream celebrated by Browne the poet—Old oaks destroyed—Few materials for a life of Browne—His death; little noticed at the time of its occurrence—Browne born at Tavistock—His family—His early life—Goes to Oxford—The influence of local scenery on the mind of a poet—Browne removes to the Inner Temple—Panegyrics the fashion of his day—First part of *Britannia's Pastorals*—Selden, Drayton, Glanville, &c., friends of the poet—He produces his poem of the *Shepherd's Pipe*—The second part of *Britannia's Pastorals* published—With what success he studied the law not certainly known—Returns to Exeter College, Oxford—Appointed tutor to Robert Dormer, Earl of Carnarvon—Browne takes his degree of Master of Arts—Clarendon's character of the young Earl, who died in the battle of Newberry—William Earl of Pembroke becomes the friend of the poet—The generous character of the Earl—Browne purchases an estate—Never marries—Little in his person—He dies—The place of his burial unknown—His poem of *Lydford Law*—Extract from Chapple—Judge Jeffries held sittings at Lydford—this judge did not give rise to the saying of *Lydford Law*—The poet wrote the verses whilst Sir Richard Grenville was governor of the Castle—Sir Egerton Brydges printed certain poems of Browne at the Priory press—Mr. Beloe's collection of poems addressed to Browne—The character of a true poet—*Britannia's Pastorals* brought once again into notice by Davis the bookseller in 1772—The merits of Browne as a poet—His *Masque of Circe*—His defects—His mention of the conduit-pipes; probably suggested by the once famous conduits of his native town—His episode of the *Loves of the Walla* and the *Tavy*—This poem probably suggested by one of Ovid—Extracts from his works.

Vicarage, Tavistock, February 5, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

THERE is a scene in this neighbourhood, situated about half a mile from Tavistock, that I always visit with the greatest interest, not only for the pleasing objects which are there found combined, but from the poetical associations with which they are connected. The scene I allude to is the *Walla Brook*, a little stream of unpretending character, that, over a rocky bed, comes murmuring down the gentle descent of some sloping grounds, and unites itself with the Tavy nearly opposite to Rowdon woods. The Walla was, till very lately, overhung by some vestiges of oak trees so old and decaying, that I never could look at them without fancying that in the days of Browne the poet he had often reclined under their picturesque branches on the margin of the stream; and there, perhaps, employed his imagination in composing the beautiful episode he introduced in his 'Britannia's Pastorals,' called the 'Loves of the Walla and the Tavy.' But the old oaks are now gone; somebody has cut them down, most probably for fire-wood, since as timber they could be of no value; and there now lies the stream, stripped of its overhanging branches, and looks melancholy, and seems to murmur for the loss of its old neighbours.

I conclude the person, whoever he might be, who committed this act of spoliation had never heard of the poet, else he could never thus have laid low the sylvan patriarchs so long the tenants of his favourite brook. The scene, too, is spoiled for the pencil, for the venerable appearance of these trees contrasted finely with the playful, the light and

animated character of the river. Before, however, saying anything more about the Walla Brook I shall pause to speak of the poet, who has given to it an interest which no other rivulet, so humble in itself, can claim. Such is the power of poetry; it raises into notice the most neglected things, and often places the wreath of honour on the most lowly head.

There are very few materials for a life of William Browne, and those few were principally collected (most likely from tradition) by Prince, who wrote the 'Worthies of Devon' more than a century ago. That Browne died during the civil wars is very probable; and if we consider how much the public mind was occupied with the eventful scenes in which every man then bore a part, we can scarcely wonder that a poet, who never lent his pen to the popular feeling, passed out of life little noticed; that his memory was not considered sufficiently important to demand any record of his actions; and that his poems, which cherished and taught the peaceful enjoyments of life and the tranquil beauties of the country, should have sunk into neglect, when the only books published or read, with any chance of success, were such as fostered the worst passions, anarchy and rebellion; or the perpetual disputations of sectaries, and the foulest libels on the Church and the King. Men of worth, when they have neither power nor opportunity to stir actively in evil times, to support a good but falling cause, are generally found in the obscurity of private life, suffering in mind, in fortune, or in both; and when they die less regret is shown for their loss, since, in a time of intense public excitement, the feelings are too much engrossed by the fate of a

kingdom to turn with their wonted kindness on the interests of individual benevolence and sympathy. Indeed rebellion and revolution seem to harden the heart, as well as to stir the fiercer passions; how else can we account for the ferocious and almost unnatural crimes accompanying civil war?

That Browne, therefore, who certainly lived in these times (as we learn by his own pen, and by poems addressed to him by his friends), and died long before the Restoration, should have left scarcely any other memorial than what his own genius has secured for him in his works, and that little should be known about him, can excite no wonder. The prominent characters of his day were the eminent in crime or in suffering. His name belongs not to the former class of these, nor have we any authority for saying he was numbered with the latter: it is, therefore, only as a poet that enough of him is known to be judged by posterity with anything like certainty; though it speaks well for his character as a man that many of the eminent and virtuous of his time were found amongst his associates and friends. Of this more hereafter.

William Browne, a poet contemporary with Shakspeare and Spenser, was born in the town of Tavistock about the year 1590. He was the son of a private gentleman, whose family were of ancient standing in the county of Devon,—Prince says, most likely of the “knightly family of Browne, of Brownes-Marsh near Great Torrington.” The uncle of our poet was no doubt a brave man, and in all probability followed the sea, as he was that favourite friend of Sir Francis Drake called Brute Browne, who was killed by the side of the great Admiral in

his own ship off Porto Rico, and whose death Drake so emphatically declared he would not unbend his spirit by lamenting it till he had requited the Spaniards for the deed. The family of Browne, in the male line, became extinct before Prince gathered the few remaining records concerning him; and the estates which had so long been theirs in this county, the worthy chronicler tells us, fell, therefore, "among distaffs,"—a mode of phraseology he often uses to express the weaker sex,—though some of the records of Devon would show that, in moments of trial where honour and loyalty were at stake, the distaffs were not in less worthy hands than the swords.

Thomas Browne, the father, finding William much addicted to books, very wisely determined to give him a liberal education. He was therefore sent to Oxford, and as his learning is spoken of prior to his removal to the university, it is not unlikely he had received the elements of classical knowledge at the grammar school at Tavistock; and that the first effusions of his infant muse were offered to the Tavy, the river he celebrates with so much fondness, and on whose banks, he more than once tells us in his poems, he first drew breath. That Browne should have attached himself to pastoral poetry was probably the result of early associations, since most feeling minds retain a lasting regard for their early local impressions, unless they are born in a populous city where man, more than natural scenery, engages the attention of their opening years. But it was the good fortune of Browne that he was born in the vicinity of a beautiful country; in a town venerable for its history and antiquity, and en-

riched with the then existing remains of monastic times. Near the regions, too, of the vast and fearful in the forest of Dartmoor, and the beautiful and the wild in the rocks and woods of Morwel; what subjects must these have been to the infant genius of a poet!—where every ramble of his boyhood presented objects such as were passed with indifference by the common eye, but to a mind like his could not fail to afford a full field for observation, reflection, and inquiry. That such was the case, and that he made himself familiarly acquainted with the feathered denizens of his native woods; the flowers and plants that grew on the margin of his beloved stream; and the trees that chequered it with light or shade as their branches waved above, we learn from his own poems; his lively descriptions every where bear witness to it; and the pastoral character of many of his most excellent productions show that his favourite theme was his best.

Subjects of this nature have so repeatedly been chosen for poetry, that critics sometimes object to their frequent recurrence; but surely this is an objection more nice than wise. The study of creation is inexhaustible; and, when treated by the feeling mind, never wearies. So impressive are all the works of the Divine hand; so greatly do the circumstances of nature vary, whilst their general character is the same; that the eye of a poet, as he looks abroad throughout the changing seasons of the year, in the fruitfulness of summer showers, or in the dreariness of winter days, continually finds some object, however familiar, present itself to him in a new aspect; there is something before unobserved, or unfelt: hence a fresh interest arises; a

new train of ideas spring up, and he receives those vivid impressions which render his compositions as original as they are pleasing; for all he does is in strict imitation of nature; like a skilful painter who, feeling every grace of the beautiful object that lies before his view, transfers it with ease upon the canvass, to which he gives an artificial life. Browne, Prince tells us, was removed to Oxford about the beginning of the reign of James I.: he could not then have been more than fifteen or sixteen years old; and as he made a rapid progress in his studies, his diligence must have kept pace with his opportunities and talents. At Oxford he cultivated his fondness for the muses; and on removing to the Inner Temple, to pursue the study of the law, he did not neglect that which was, in all probability, more congenial to his inclinations; as we find that, at the early age of twenty-three, he produced the first part of his celebrated work, 'Britannia's Pastorals.'

In his days reviews, friendly or adverse, were unknown: new works were not handed into the world, like our Devonshire ores, in the mass, stamped by royal authority to secure their reception. But though reviews were yet unknown, panegyrics, which preceded them, were not; and one author of established name gave a friendly introduction to an aspirant in the world of letters, by addressing him in a copy of verses, or an adulatory sonnet, that was prefixed to his book as a sanction of its merits. Browne's folio was not wanting in these; and it is honourable both to him and to his friends that it should have been so, since it is a clear proof he had not to encounter the heart-depressing feelings of coldness or neglect: his claim to poetical genius was

admitted, fostered, and rewarded by that highest of all rewards, the commendation of the wise and the good. Nor can we think other than well of the private character of the poet who, at so early a period, had won the friendship of Selden, of Drayton, of his fellow-townsmen, the great and good Sir John Glanville, of George Withers, and of many others whose praise alone was fame. Amongst the wits, too, who eulogized Browne was numbered Ben Jonson. In the year following the publication of this folio, encouraged no doubt by the favourable reception he had found with the learned and the tasteful of his day, he produced the 'Shepherd's Pipe,' in seven eclogues; a work that by some writers has been considered the model after which Milton wrote his 'Lycidas.'

His next publication was the second part of 'Britannia's Pastorals,' a work that established his reputation, and increased the number of his literary and noble friends. With what success he studied the law does not appear, as he is never spoken of by his contemporaries in the character of a lawyer; and by his attention having been so much directed to the poetical works he sent abroad, it is most likely he did not follow his profession with much zeal, and therefore with little success. Certain it is that neither law nor poetry were very profitable to him in a worldly sense, as his fortune was far from ample; and he finally abandoned the Inner Temple and returned to Exeter College, Oxford, as tutor to Robert Dormer, the young Earl of Carnarvon; a nobleman whose name is enrolled among the most gallant and amiable of the cavaliers who fell in the cause of their injured king.

Whilst engaged in directing the studies of his

pupil, Browne took his degree as Master of Arts in a way which did him honour. Nor can we doubt that he performed his duties as tutor in other than the most praiseworthy manner; and fostered all those high and generous principles of loyalty and courage in his pupil which none can better understand than a poetical mind regulated by a love of truth, and of that religion from whose source it springs, and supplies all the branches of knowledge which cultivate or form the moral character as healthful streams do the earth, and bring forth its richest fruits. How long Browne remained as tutor to this young nobleman is not known, nor is there any mention of his having accompanied him on his travels abroad—a thing, however, not impossible.

Clarendon gives a most lively sketch of Lord Carnarvon's character. He speaks of his education having been adorned and finished by travel in the countries of Spain, France, and Italy; and that he had subsequently spent some time in Turkey and the East. On his return home, Clarendon tells us that the young earl followed with considerable zeal the field sports of hawking and hunting, the favourite exercises of the quality and gentry. But the troubles commenced; the king's standard was set up in opposition to fanaticism and rebellion, and the bravest and noblest in the land hastened to its support. The Earl of Carnarvon was amongst these; he had a short but glorious career: in one fatal battle Charles lost friends such as no after time could replace, for Sunderland, Falkland, and Carnarvon fell in Newberry fight! Well, indeed, might Clarendon exclaim, that "on that day king and kingdom both were lost!"

It was after Browne had quitted the Earl of Carnarvon, that he found a gracious patron and friend in William Earl of Pembroke; a loyalist to whose character the immortal historian of the great rebellion pays the most ample tribute. He speaks of Pembroke as a nobleman of such severely just feelings, that he would contract a private friendship with no man unless his public principles were like his own. He describes him also as the generous patron of men of learning and talent. Under such auspices the fortunes of our poet improved; he became an inmate in the earl's family, and gained sufficient by whatever employment had been appointed him to purchase an estate. Where it was situated is not known; but who can doubt it was in his native county of Devon, for which he expresses so strong an attachment in all his works? It does not appear that he was ever married. Wood says of his person, that he had a little body, but with it a great mind. Prince tells us that it was not known when or where he died; "for I presume," says that biographer, "he was a different person from him of the same name who died at Ottery St. Mary, in the county of Devon, in the year of our Lord 1645." It is to the honour of Browne's memory that he was a royalist. This circumstance in his character is placed beyond all doubt, not merely by his friendship with the Earl of Pembroke, who would have no friends but such as felt as he did, but by Drayton having addressed to him a poem, now printed with his works, on the 'Evil Times,' in which he appeals to Browne as a friend who deploras them equally with himself.

The few particulars here related are all that have

come down to us respecting William Browne, our Tavistock poet; it now remains to mention successively his works. Besides his 'Britannia's Pastorals,' and the 'Shepherd's Pipe,' he wrote (though it was never published till the year 1772) 'a masque for the gentlemen of the Inner Temple.' On the death of Prince Henry, he produced an elegy, which possesses many conceits but no pathos. He wrote also some minor pieces; amongst them a humorous poem, in which he alludes to the old saying of 'Lydford Law.' This he composed after a visit to Lydford Castle; an ancient fortress, situated about seven miles from Tavistock. An imperfect copy of this was first printed in Prince's 'Worthies of Devon.' Respecting this poem, Mr. Chapple (the editor of Risdon) says—"I happen to be furnished with a true copy of the original very manuscript, by the transcriber, late Mr. Hals', of Cornwall, own hand; wherein are *three whole stanzas* which that of Mr. Prince has not.—Mr. Hals acquaints us also with the occasion of its having first been written. 'Mr. William Browne,' says he, 'A.D. 1644, coming to Lydford Castle to visit his friend Lieut. Col. James Hals (son of Sir Nicholas Hals, late of Fentongellan, Cornwall, Kt.), then and there a prisoner of war of the parliament party, under the custody of Sir Richard Grenville, Kt., King Charles the First's General in the West; and the said Mr. Browne (and his companions) having had a full view of this town and Castle of Lydford, soon after his return to Tavistock, sent Mr. Hals, under his own MS. those now (viz., by Mr. Prince) printed verses, with the MS. additions of verses 9, 10, 11, of which Mr. Prince absolutely wanted knowledge.'"

I have been induced to give the above long and quaint extract, because it serves to prove that the old saying of *Lydford Law*, to express an arbitrary procedure in judgment, was known in Browne's days; and could not therefore, as it is commonly said, have had its origin at the time Judge Jeffries held his sittings in the courts of Lydford Castle, for Browne's poem absolutely begins with the following allusion:—

“ I oft' have heard of *Lydford law*,
 How in the morn they hang and draw,
 And sit in judgment after;
 At first I wondered at it much,
 But since I find the matter such
 As it deserves no laughter.”

Convinced by reading this that Judge Jeffries could have had nothing to do with our old saying, I determined to try if I could not trace out in the history of this part of the West some circumstance, that was at least likely to give rise to it; and I think I have succeeded. However, you shall judge if I am right or wrong in my conjectures.

Browne, be it borne in mind, wrote these verses after his visit to his friend Col. Hals, then *Sir Richard Grenville's prisoner of war*, in Lydford Castle; and of Sir Richard's conduct whilst governor of that castle, we have a very formidable picture drawn by the pen of Clarendon. The commissioners of Devon applied to the prince (afterwards Charles II.) petitioning that he would regulate “the exorbitant power of Sir Richard Grenville, who raised what money he pleased, and committed what persons he pleased.” The commissioners for Cornwall likewise “presented a very sharp complaint against him, for the strange acts of tyranny

exercised by him.”—“That he had” (amongst other arbitrary deeds) “committed very many honest substantial men, and all the constables of the east part of the county, to *Lydford prison*” (it was in the Castle) “in Devonshire, for no offence, but to compel them to ransom themselves for money.” In another instance he hanged “one Brabant, an attorney-at-law” (he was employed by Grenville’s wife in conducting a suit against her husband for ill treatment), “and afterwards, before the council, said he did it because the man was a spy.” He was also charged with a vexatious practice of calling out the *Posse Comitatus* on a sudden, merely to avail himself of the fine and imprisonment of defaulters. One of the constables he hanged up *without trial*; and then stated he had executed the man for negligence in his duty. Putting together these acts, I think we need look no farther than the time of Sir Richard Grenville’s government in Lydford Castle, to find a very likely origin for the saying of Lydford Law referred to in the poem of Browne. Thus, then, Judge Jeffries—whose ghost, according to a tradition of this place, still visits the old court-room at Lydford, in the shape of a black pig—stands acquitted on this charge; having assuredly quite enough to answer for, without any additional matter.

You mentioned to me in a letter, and Mr. Bray had also drawn my attention to the same thing, that some years since Sir Egerton Brydges had printed at the Priory press, and published a volume of Browne’s original poems, that had never before been given to the world. This volume is now, I believe, very scarce; I have never had the good fortune to see it, nor can I obtain a copy of it. It

was spoken of by some writer in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' a few years ago, as containing many poems, principally lyric, equal, if not superior to the 'Britannia's Pastorals.'

Mr. Beloe, the author of the 'Anecdotes of Literature,' possessed a curious copy in manuscript, of a collection of complimentary poems addressed to William Browne, by his brethren of Exeter College, Oxford. These, in addition to being curious as compositions of that day, serve to show the high degree of estimation and regard in which the poet was held by his most intimate associates,—an undoubted evidence of his worth. Amongst the friends who so eulogised him, we find Edward Hall, who appears to have been one of the sons of the learned bishop of that name. His verses are far beyond the general run of complimentary poems; they possess some elegance, and a happy turn of thought and expression, that evince the writer himself must have been no indifferent poet. Beloe's collection was, excepting Sir E. Brydges', I believe, the last publication of any original matter connected with Browne.

With a true poet, the world of Nature will ever be his chief delight: with him nothing is viewed in vain; and all he acquires by study and observation, he devotes to the highest purposes. Whatever is glorious in the heavens, he sees with reference to God; and his contemplations become essentially religious: these inspire him with all noble thoughts; a generous contempt for riches; for all selfish ends are inconsistent with the fervour of his enthusiasm, and the solemn aspirations of his mind. His genius soars on a seraph's wing; and whatever is grand,

whatever is fearful, the beautiful and the wild are to him as familiar friends. Solitude with him is "sweet society;" and the view of Nature in her serenest hour conveys to him lessons of virtue and of peace. Every image he traces, every idea that presents itself to his imagination becomes as a treasure, whence he selects those varied illustrations which add force to moral truth, and clothe religion in a robe of purity and grace. The theatre of rising hills, the fountain of "many waters," "the gush" of song as the light of day plays on mountain, path, and wood, the bursting vegetation, and every opening bud bathed in dew, to him are objects of holy joy; and he learns from them that wisdom which delivers the soul from the thralldom of worldly cares, and fears and passions; whilst his affections become fixed on Him in whom there is neither change nor shadow of turning; the God of all creation is his father; heaven is his home, and eternity the measure of his hopes.

Such is a true poet; and such were the sacred poets of Jerusalem, ere they were led away captive to sing "the Lord's song in a strange land." Even in these latter times we have had some gifted with this sacred spirit of poesy, whose lamps have burnt bright before the altar. But we have also had others who have made the music of harmonious verse a snare to the ear, and a deeper snare to the soul, in the pollutions they have conveyed to it by beguiling the senses. But their verses deserve not the honoured name of poetry, since they do not contain its essence—truth; the form may be there, yet the spirit is wanting; for the muse will not rest on polluted ground.

To return from this digression. It is not my intention to attempt any minute criticism of the works of William Browne; a far more competent hand than mine is required for the task. The writings of our poet, though soon after his death they fell into neglect, were once again brought into notice by Mr. Davis the bookseller, in 1772. Posterity has awarded to Browne those honours which are sometimes by envy combining with untoward circumstances denied to the living, but seldom to the dead when they are truly deserved. Some few remarks I shall alone venture to offer, since an acquaintance with the local scenes from which he drew many of his lively pictures enable an admirer of his poetry more fully to appreciate the merit of his descriptions, and the delicacy of his colouring in its most varied shades. However much Browne may have been praised for the fertility of his invention, and the strength of his numbers, it seems to me that his chief excellence lies in the picturesque manner in which he imitated nature. His birds, his flowers, and his rural scenery have all the vivid fidelity of truth. Indeed, he tells us himself at the beginning of his first book, that he intended to copy after nature, as she was seen surrounding the place of his birth:

“My muse for lofty pitches shall not rome,
But homely pipen of my native home.”

With rural scenery he had also studied rural character, and whenever he touches on the feelings that are chiefly called into play in a country life, it is evident he had seen and participated in those feelings he describes. In the higher efforts of imagi-

nation he is far beneath Spenser, whose works he is considered to have studied with the diligence of a pupil in his school. This may be traced in his 'Shepherd's Pipe,' which though it possesses many beautiful passages, is not to be compared with the 'Shepherd's Calendar' of his master. There is nothing in it that approaches in excellence Spenser's inimitable fable of the bramble and the oak. Nor did Browne equal Drayton in those wild flights of fancy that make many poems of the latter (the 'Nymphidia' in particular) so attractive, that we grow familiar with the fairy ground over which he guides our willing feet. It has been said that Browne's 'Masque of Circe,' written for the gentlemen of the Inner Temple, gave to Milton the hint from which he borrowed his 'Masque of Comus;' but there seems little probability such was the case. The song of the syren in 'Circe' has been justly celebrated; and the poem possesses many striking passages; but as a whole it is greatly inferior to 'Comus' in graceful sentiment and elegant diction.

Browne's great fault, more or less seen in all his poems, was that he never knew where to stop; so that he often weakens an image, or renders tedious a description, by running it out to an unconscionable length. This, though a fault, is one often found where there is much vivacity of imagination, and copiousness of expression: the plants of a barren soil have no luxuriance that requires pruning to give greater strength to those branches that it would be desirable to cultivate with the utmost care. However Browne, as a poet, might excel in rural imagery, he was able to soar in the higher regions of his art, though he seldom ventured within their

confines: some few passages of this description in his 'Britannia's Pastorals' are such as our greatest epic poets would not have disowned, as of a spirit kindred with their own. His verse is peculiarly harmonious, and flows on with a smoothness that is seldom broken by any harsh turn or mean image and word; though these latter faults are not such as he is wholly free from; indeed they sometimes intrude in the midst of an elevated description, or noble figure, in his subject. Thus we find in the first song of the second book, he injures the solemnity with which he is conducting the approach of "all-drowsie night," in her car of jet from her secret caverns, by making the steeds of "iron grey" with which she is drawn send "moist drops" upon the earth, which they "*mainly sweat.*" Here the expression is coarse, and the image disagreeable: it offends the reader in the midst of a very striking picture. We would also wish (a few lines farther on) that the poet in describing the rivulets had omitted the "*conduit-pipes,*" and had rather called those rivulets by their simple and proper name, in their progress from the "many a crystall spring."

It is, however, but fair to surmise that these "*conduit-pipes*" were probably suggested to him by the upper and lower conduit in the main street of his native town; for though these might not be compared to the fountains of Rome, yet, in his day, and even till within a few years past, they were objects of peculiar attraction, and places of general resort with all the old and young women and children in the neighbourhood. There they gathered to fill their water-buckets; to chat or wash their clothes at these fountains. The groups of girls thus as-

sembled and employed might, in some degree, remind one of Nausicaa and her damsels, who, by the command of Pallas, washed the bridal robes of state in that limpid fountain where the virgins of Phæacia were wont to purify their vestments and pursue their sports, as their mantles lay outspread and drying on the grass around them. This is probably rather too fine a simile for the old Tavistock conduit and the pretty Devonians assembled around it washing their clothes; and as these ancient conduits no longer exist, I have never seen the picturesque groups they once afforded, though I am assured by Mr. Bray they were such as would have supplied the most admirable subjects for the pencil of an artist like Prout, whose fondness for washing figures is well known to all the admirers of his works.

Of all Browne's poems, that which is most likely to interest an inhabitant of Tavistock is the episode he introduces in the second book of 'Britannia's Pastorals,' the 'Loves of the Walla and the Tavy.' I may be wrong in the conjecture, but I cannot help fancying the idea of this episode was suggested to him by Ovid's Egeria transformed into a fountain. Walla, by her own prayer, like Egeria, is changed into a stream, and runs to meet her beloved Tavy. This episode is replete with the most beautiful imagery, and many of the scenes it describes with so much truth and feeling will be recognised by a lover of "sweet Ina's coombe," and "Walla's silver stream." Ere quitting the subject of Browne's works, I cannot help selecting a few of the many beautiful passages with which they abound, as the best comment upon the merit of our poet with

which I can conclude this long letter. How lively is the following description !

“ Looke as a lover with a ling'ring kisse,
 About to part with the best halfe that's his,
 Faine would he stay but that he fears to doe it,
 And curseth time for so fast hast'ning to it ;
 Now takes his leave, and yet begins anew
 To make lesse vows than are esteemed true,
 Then sayes he must be gone, and then doth finde
 Something he should have spoke that's out of minde,
 And whilst he stands to looke for't in her eyes,
 Their sad sweet glance so tyes his faculties,
 To think from what he parts, that he is now
 As farre from leaving her, or knowing how
 As when he came ; begins his former straine,
 To kisse, to vow, and take his leave againe,
 Then turns, comes backe, sighes, parts, and yet doth goe,
 Apt to retire, and loth to leave her soe.”

How animated is this picture of boys hunting the
 “ squirrel !”

“ Then as a nimble squirrel from the wood,
 Ranging the hedges for his filberd-food,
 Sits partly on a bough his browne nuts cracking,
 And from the shell the sweet white kernel taking,
 Till (with their crookes and bags) a sort of boyes
 (To share with him) come with so great a noyse
 That he is forc'd to leave a nut nigh broke,
 And for his life leape to a neighbour oake ;
 Thence to a beech, thence to a row of ashes,
 Whilst through the quagmires and red water plashes
 The boyes run dabbling through thicke and thin,
 One tears his hose, another breakes his shin ;
 This, torn and tatter'd, hath with much adoe
 Got by the bryers, and that hath lost his shoe :
 This drops his band ; that headlong falls for haste ;
 Another cryes behind for being last :
 With stickes and stoues, and many a sounding halloo,
 The little foole, with no small sport, they follow ;
 Whilst he, from tree to tree, from spray to spray,
 Gets to the wood and hides him in his dray ;

Such shift made riot ere he could get up,
 And so, from bough to bough, he wonne the toppe ;
 Though hind'rances, from ever coming there,
 Were often thrust upon him by despaire."

A stag in chase is thus introduced with great beauty :—

" More he had spoke, but that a bugle shrill
 Run through the valley from the higher hill ;
 And as they turn'd them towards the hart'ning sound,
 A gallant stag, as if he scorn'd the ground,
 Came running with the winde, and bore his head
 As he had been the king of forests bred ! .
 Not swifter comes the messenger of heaven,
 Nor winged vessel with a full gale driven,
 Nor the swift swallow flying neere the ground."

The industry of the house-marten, a common bird here, is thus prettily described :—

" So soone as can a marten from our towne
 Fly to the river underneath the downe,
 And backe returne with mortar in her bill
 Some little cranny in her nest to fill."

The following is a most lively description of a concert of birds :

" Two nights thus past: the lily-handed Morne
 Saw Phæbus stealing dewe from Ceres' corne.
 The mounting larke (daie's herald) got on wing,
 Bidding each bird choose out his bow and sing,
 The lofty treble sung the little wren ;
 Robin the meane, that best of all loves men ;
 The nightingale the tenor, and the thrush
 The counter-tenor sweetly in a bush :
 And that the music might be full in parts,
 Birds from the groves flew with right willing hearts :
 But (as it seem'd) they thought (as do the swaines,
 Which tune their pipes on sack'd Hibernia's plaines)
 There should some droaning part be, therefore will'd
 Some bird to flie into a neighb'ring field,
 In embassie unto the king of bees,

To aide his partners on the flowers and trees,
 Who condescending gladly flew along
 To heare the base to his well-tuned song.
 The crow was willing they should be beholden
 For his deep voice, but being hoarse with scolding,
 He thus lends aide : upon an oake doth climbe,
 And, nodding with his head, so keepeth time."

The Devonshire legend, that fairies and pixies steal honey from the hives of bees, is thus noticed by Browne :—

" For as I oft have heard the wood-nimphs say,
 The dancing fairies when they left to play,
 Then backe did pull them, and in holes of trees
 Stole the sweet honey from the painfull bees,
 Which in the flower to put they oft were seene,
 And for a banquet brought it to their queene."

Many an inhabitant of Tavistock will recognise the following scenes :—

" A little grove is seated on the marge
 Of Tavy's streame, not over thicke nor large,
 Where every morn a quire of Silvans sung,
 And leaves to chatt'ring windes serv'd as a tongue,
 By whom the water runs in many a ring,
 As if it fain would stay to heare them sing,
 And on the top a thousand young birds flye
 To be instructed in their harmony.
 Neere to the end of this all-joyous grove
 A dainty circled plot seem'd as it strove
 To keepe all bryers and bushes from invading
 Her pleasing compasse by their needlesse shading,
 Since it was not so large but that the store
 Of trees around could shade her best and more.
 In midst thereof a little swelling hill,
 Gently disburthen'd of a christall rill,
 Which from the green side of the flowry bancke
 Eat downe a channell—there the wood-nimphs drank."

Here are the lines alluding to Ina's Coombe, now more commonly called Inscoombe, situated about a mile and a half from Tavistock :—

" There lyes a vale extended to the north
 Of Tavy's streame, which prodigall, sends forth
 In autumnne more rare fruits than have been spent
 In any greater plot of fruitful Kent.
 Two high brow'd rocks on eyther side begin,
 As with an arch to close the valley in.
 Upon their rugged fronts short writhen oakes
 Untouch'd of any feller's banefull stroakes,
 The ivy, twisting round their barkes, hath fed
 Past time wyld geates which no man followed;
 Low in the valley some small herds of deere,
 For head and footmanship withouten peer.
 Fed undisturbed; the swains thare thereby thrived,
 By the tradition from their sires derived,
 Call'd it sweet *Ina's-coombe*: but whether she
 Were of the earth or greater progeny
 Judge by her deeds; once this is truly knowne,
 She many a time hath on a bugle blowne,
 And through the dale pursu'd the jolly chase,
 As she had bid the winged windes abase."

Another scene in our neighbourhood is thus beautifully described:—

" Betweene two hills, the highest Phœbus sees
 Gallantly crown'd with large skie-kissing trees,
 Under whose shade the humble valleys lay
 And wilde-bores from their dens their gamboles play,*
 There lay a gravel'd walke oregrowne with greene,
 Where neither tract of man nor beast was scene;
 And as the plow-man when the land he tills,
 Throwes up the fruitfull earth in ridged hils,
 Betweene whose chevron form he leaves a balke;
 So 'twixt those hils had nature fram'd this walke,
 Not over darke, nor light, in angles bending,
 And like the gliding of a snake descending:
 All husht and silent as the mid of night:
 No chatt'ring pie, nor crow appear'd in sight;
 But further in I heard the turtle-dove
 Singing sad dirges on her lifeless love;
 Birds that compassion from the rocks could bring
 Had only license in that place to sing:

* The "*wilde-bores*" as well as the "*nightingales*" of Browne, in *Devonshire*, I apprehend must have been poetical licenses.

Whose doleful notes the melancholy cat
 Close in a hollow tree sat wond'ring at.
 And trees that on the hill side comely grew,
 When any little blast of Æol blew
 Did nod their curled heads, as they would be
 The judges to approve their melody."

The poet thus describes himself, when about to relate his tale of 'Walla, Tavy's fairest love:—

"Among the rest a shepheard (though but young,
 Yet hart'ned to his pipe) with all the skill
 His few yeeres could, began to fit his quill,
 By Tavy's speedy streame he fed his focke,
 Where when he sate to sport him on a rocke,
 The water nymphs would often come unto him,
 And for a dance with many gay gifts woo him.
 Now posies of this flowre, and then of that;
 Now with fine shels, then with a rushy hat,
 With corall or red stones brought from the deepe
 To make him bracelets, or to marke his sheepe.
 Willie he hight. Who by the ocean's queene
 More cheer'd to sing than such young lads had beene,
 Tooke his best-framed pipe and thus gan move
 His voice of Walla, Tavy's fairest love."

The progress of the whole episode reminds the reader of Ovid. After the nymph Walla is transformed into a stream, the poem thus concludes:—

"To Tavy's christall streame her waters goe
 As if some secret power ordayned so;
 And as a maide she loved him, so a brooke
 To his imbracements onely her betooke.
 On Walla's brooke her sisters now bewayle
 For whom the rocks spend tears when others fail,
 And all the woods ring with their piteous moanes:
 Which Tavy hearing, as he chid the stones,
 That stopt his speedy course, raising his head
 Inquired the cause, and thus was answered:
 'Walla is now no more. Nor from the hill
 Will she more pluck for thee the daffadill,
 Nor make sweet anadems, to gird thy brow:
 Yet in the grove she runs, a river now.

Looke as the feeling plant, which learned swaines
Relate to grow on the East Indian plaines,
Shrinkes up his dainty leaves, if any hand
You throw thereon, or touch it with your hand:
So with the chance the heavy wood-nymphs told,
The river, inly touch'd, began to fold
His arms across, and, while the torrent raves,
Shrunke his grave head beneath his silver waves.
Since when he never on his bankes appears
But as one franticke: when the clouds spend teares,
He thinks they of his woes compassion take,
(And not a spring but weeps for Walla's sake;)
And then he often (to bemoane her lacke)
Like to a mourner goes, his waters blacke,
And every brooke attending in his way,
For that time meets him in the like array."

LETTER XXXIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

—

CONTENTS.—Period of the great rebellion—Commencement of the reign of Charles I.—Prosperous state of England—The amiable character of the king—Discontents—Factions—Arts practised by the leaders of rebellion—The Marquess of Hertford; Sir Ralph Hopton, &c., sent into the west—Various fortunes experienced by the royalists—Stratton Heights—State of Devon at this period—Sir Ralph Hopton at Launceston Castle—Tavistock a very disaffected place—Pym its member—Lewknor the Vicar—Sir Bevil Grenville, his gallantry and spirit—Sir Nicholas Slanning, governor of Pendennis Castle—Names and quality of gentlemen who rose in arms for the king—Muster-roll of Slanning—Earl of Stamford retires to Tavistock after Ruthen's defeat at Saltash—The royalists march to meet him at Tavistock—Stamford departs the town—The royalists in distress from the want of supplies—Terms of treaty entered upon whilst at Tavistock—The republicans not to be relied upon in their promises and protestations—Victory of Stratton Heights—Sir Ralph Hopton—Battle of Lansdown—Sir Bevil Grenville killed—Sir Nicholas Slanning killed—Prince Charles (afterwards Charles II.) comes to Tavistock, 1645—Appoints certain lords to meet him there—Receives letters from the king—The prince and his councillors deliberate—Answer returned to the king—Arrival of the Cornish trained bands—The lords again deliberate—The prince resolves to march to Totness—A detachment of the royalists surprised by the enemy who beat up their quarters—The retreat from Tavistock to Launceston left to the conduct of Sir Richard Grenville—His careless manner of performing that duty—In 1644, the house at Fitz-ford held out against the rebels—Taken by Lord Essex—One hundred and fifty persons in Fitz-ford made prisoners—Character of Lady Howard—An account of her life—Her numerous marriages—Her beauty, talents, and wealth—Buckingham procures her for the wife of Sir Richard Grenville—Sir Richard's character—His ill-treatment of his wife—His licentiousness and extravagance—Suit in chancery concerning her property—Disastrous consequences to the husband—

Walreddon another mansion and domain of Lady Howard—Sir Richard escapes his long imprisonment—Goes beyond sea—Decree of the Star Chamber—Sir Richard returns—Becomes a royalist, his wife takes part with the republicans—He settles in her house near Tavistock—Buckland Monachorum given to him also by the king—Sir Richard's abuse of prosperity and power—He waylays, catches, and hangs the attorney employed by his wife against him—Time of Lady Howard's death uncertain—Legend of Lady Howard and the goblin hound—Romantic and traditionary tale of Lady Howard and her daughter—Her will—Tradition respecting Charles II.'s flight to Tavistock—Old buildings considered the scene of Charles's concealment, pulled down—Said to have originally belonged to Orgar, Earl of Devon—The architecture of later date—Remarkable traditionary tale of the spirit and courage of a girl when the town of Tavistock was in the hands of the rebels—Singular letter from a mad woman—Painted glass and tombs destroyed—A very curious poem written by a schoolmaster, called 'Tavistock's Encomium'; given at full length.

Vicarage, Tavistock, April 13th, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE next remarkable period of which I have to speak in the history of our town, is that of the great rebellion; when it will be found this place was, more than once, a busy scene of action, of negotiation, of contest, and of all those varied movements of hope and fear that influenced the adherents of either party during so perilous a time.

That in the commencement of the reign of Charles I. abuses existed, that the prerogative of the crown was not sufficiently defined, and that in some instances an arbitrary power was exercised by the king, are truths not denied even by the warmest advocates of loyalty. But what were these grievances in comparison with the many blessings then enjoyed by the country at large? And is it not cruel and most unjust to condemn Charles for some

few arbitrary deeds, without taking into consideration the acts of his predecessors, and the almost more than mortal rule that was then held sacred and unalienable in princes? The acts of Henry VIII., of Mary, of Elizabeth, and even of James I., the way in which they commanded parliaments and tutored councils, were too often in the highest degree an exercise of the most arbitrary will; and could it be expected that Charles, educated in a court where the divine right of kings was never disputed,—where, from his cradle, he was taught that absolute obedience was due to the crown,—should at once forget the lessons and examples held up to him for years? Yet, as an attentive examination into all his acts will prove, he was far less arbitrary than his predecessors. Clarendon declares that he was doubtful of his own judgment, where that judgment was often the soundest and the best; and too much led, from this very want of confidence in himself, by the opinions of those around him. He had not, indeed, at all times about him a Falkland and a Hyde for his bosom counsellors and friends.

Yet if we consider the state of England, as the great historian of those days has depicted, at the commencement of Charles's reign, we shall wonder by what infatuation, if the chastising hand of God was not in it, a country could be led on to the scenes of outrage then committed, and to the murder of so amiable and virtuous a prince! The kingdom was at peace, and commerce so flourished, that Perin-chief tells us, even in return for the Spanish gold, then coined at an English mint, the merchants exported their own goods, mostly of native commodities. Husbandry was thriving, the land increasing

in value and cultivation. Over the wide seas the English name and character was respected. The laws were administered with care; and even the courts against which the greatest objections were raised, seldom punished other than notorious offenders. The arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture were cherished and encouraged by a king of the most refined taste; they were indeed rising to a degree of perfection, that had his life and throne been spared, would have made this kingdom rival in her schools those of foreign countries in their proudest days. Above all, the Church was graced by men of such eminence, piety, and learning, that the works of many of the prelates and divines of that day will exist as long as the language in which they are written endures. Yet these blessings were strangely overlooked by a thankless and indulged people; they thought most of what they still wanted, and undervalued what they had; for nothing could satisfy the wilful and discontented: to give happiness to such was useless. Like the calmest and most crystalline spring, if it pours forth its waters into the sea, they will become distasteful, and turbulent amidst angry waves; even so God's choicest blessings poured on a thankless people lose all there is in them of blessing, and presently change their nature; for every thing must be ill, where there is no disposition to think it well. The reign of Charles was, indeed, disastrous; that long train of prosperity had corrupted the nation, even as prosperity sometimes corrupts individuals in their fortunes. In his day there was the insolence of wealth, and a growing self-opinion founded on error, the certain forerunner of a sullen impa-

tience of authority: a love of change came with these opinions; and the vulgar, who are ever eager after novelty, and think the newest thing the wisest and the best, were fed with the hopes of a wild and fanatical liberty; were entertained with scoffs and libels against the Church, the King, and the Nobility. And who is there that has looked on human life and need be taught that ignorance and vulgarity delight in the censure of great persons, and give a ready credence to the worst that can be spoken of all who are above them in station, conduct, or education? A demagogue who will entertain a mob with declaiming against these (especially if they are of an order which is invested with reverence from its religious character) will ever be popular with the multitude. Rapidity, too, was another principle exerted as essential in the times of rebellion: a leader of faction did not pause; for there was nothing he feared so much as the calmness attending the leisure of reflection—when reason speaks more than passion.

Thus did the designing, the violent, and the disaffected, in Charles's days, eagerly unite with all who would but help the work of mischief. The hopes of the spoliation of the Church were a sufficient spur to raise the outcry against bishops; and the mob, who love action when pillage is likely to follow, were ready enough to assemble on the least sign from their leaders. No one was thought so inconsiderable but that his services were welcomed at such a time; for though to support the honour of a kingdom, to defend its institutions and preserve its sanity, requires courage, constancy, and sense, the meanest and vilest of their kind are fully competent to the work of

destruction, whilst men who are the most cowardly in situations where their actions are seen, as it were singly by all, so that they fall within cognizance of the laws, become bold and even brutal in a rabble, where, however great the injury may be that is effected, the blame is general more than particular.

Had the redress of real grievances been the only motive that stirred on the patriots, as they are called, of Charles's time, they would soon have been satisfied, for grievances were complained of and redressed; but every concession, as do all concessions made from fear, produced a yet higher, less reasonable, and more insulting demand. And when terms were proposed to the king, as in the negotiations at Carisbrook, during his captivity, his enemies first proposed something within the possibility of his consent; but no sooner did they find he was likely to grant it, than something else was added, repugnant to his feelings and his conscience, to which they knew he could not consent; and thence they took occasion to represent him as faithless, and not to be relied on in any terms proposed! Thus was his honour defamed, his principles impugned, and that reverence for his person which his virtues, as well as his station, so justly entitled him to command, was no longer entertained for him: it was but one of those sure modes to overturn the throne, by rendering him who fills it an object of contempt and distrust in the minds of men.

Yet, says a writer of the time, who was not too favourable to the royal prerogative, "many who took part against the king, thought they did it to defend him from dangerous counsellors; to maintain the privileges of parliament; to guard the protestant

faith from the insidious attacks of popery, and to preserve the ancient laws of the land." Such were the false pretences that led away the weak rather than the wicked. Others required pretexts less reasonable than these; and with such the desire of seeing a government that was to be a perfect one (in such measure of perfection as no mortal state ever yet attained, and can alone be found in heaven) was made the motive and spur for disaffection. These were evils enough, but not all. If it is fatal, as surely it is, to any state to have no established Church, it is scarcely less dangerous to have a country overrun with sectaries. This cause of misery, in the mixed disputes of civil and religious government, was, in the reign of Charles, the ever-burning torch that kept alive the fires of sedition and rebellion. When the popular faction, which judged all things by their own excited feelings, and nothing by truth, whose voice was drowned in the noise of numbers, had shaken or overthrown all the ancient institutions, all the ties of obedience and honour in Church and State, the Monarchy, hitherto upheld by them, fell like a noble cedar of the forest, whose lofty head was alone to be brought low by the whirlwind or the axe.

Such was the end of that general system of change and reformation which produced the civil wars in the times of Charles I.; a fearful example that it is dangerous to commence any system of reformation contrary to the known laws and ordinances of God—contrary to the wisdom and practice of ages. When the zealots and patriots of Charles's days stepped beyond the boundary of duty; when they ceased to honour the king; when

they forgot the written word, which forbids resistance to God's vicegerent here on earth, they were no longer patriots but rebels; then was it the pride of the heart, and not the love of freedom, which became the motive and the measure of their actions. They advocated the liberty of the subject, and became slaves to the tyranny of an armed force. Their House of Commons rose up against law, and submitted to those who made their own will a law. They aided in the murder of a king, and were driven from their seats by a dictator. They commenced their career by tampering with things that should have been held inviolate: they would taste the sweets of liberty (a wild liberty of their own choosing), but like the honey of Jonathan (in those scriptures they affected to follow to the letter) too many found death in the flavour, for the poison remained when the sweetness was no more found.

Good, it is true, at length arose out of evil; but that was God's doing, not theirs. They made the havoc of the tempest: He alone sent the calm which succeeded it, in the restoration of the Throne and the Church.

At the time that Charles, finding it necessary to strengthen his power in the several parts of England where he could hope to make a stand against the Parliament, sent into the west the Marquess of Hertford with many nobles devotedly attached to his cause; he sent there, likewise, Sir Ralph Hopton, Sir John Berkeley, and Sir Hugh Pollard; the latter gentleman being a native of Devon, and possessing considerable influence amongst all classes in the county. Many others of the best families in the shire, the most respected, and having large

estates emulously followed their example, and spared neither their property nor their lives in the service of the king. Various were the fortunes experienced by these brave men. They were sometimes raised to the highest hopes of ultimate success, as in the battle of Stratton Heights, and at others, as in the yielding of Exeter and Plymouth, they were reduced to the most melancholy prospects of the future. Yet, unsubdued in spirit, many were the plans, some recorded in history, others but the theme of tradition, concerted, even in the most hopeless extremities, to raise the men of the West in the cause of the king. So sharp were the contests in this county, that there is scarcely an old house belonging to a family of any consequence, during the period of rebellion, but it underwent a regular siege—was taken and retaken (like Ford House and Sydenham, and Great Fulford), battered and injured, with all the circumstances attending wars so bitter in their nature, where one townsman, or one friend, frequently found himself placed in opposition to another, without the kindly feelings of private intercourse having been previously broken.

Clarendon remarks that in Devon, “though there was a wonderful and superstitious reverence towards the name of a parliament, and a prejudice to the power of the court, yet was there a full submission and love of the established government of Church and State, especially to that part of the Church as concerned the liturgy, or book of common prayer, which was a most general object of veneration with the people.” So much, indeed, did this love of the liturgy prevail, that during those times when the ascendancy

of the parliament was greatest in the West, service was in many of the family mansions regularly observed by some secreted minister of the Church, who performed it often at the hazard of his liberty and his life. Walker, in his very curious book on the sequestered clergy, furnishes so many well-authenticated histories of the persecution and zeal of these good and learned men in our county, that a very interesting little volume on the subject might be collected from him and Prince.

It was about the time that Sir Ralph Hopton arrived at Launceston in Cornwall, when an order of the sessions was granted to the high sheriff, a gentleman loyal to the king, to raise the posse comitatus for the purpose of dispersing the unlawful assembly of committee men (Sir Alexander Carew and Sir Richard Buller being at their head) at Launceston, under whose authority Sir George Chudleigh, a gentleman of talents, courage, and fortune, was most actively employed at Tavistock, with five or six troops of horse, to raise men on the parliament side. Sir George intended to advance farther westward, but he paused on learning news of the hostile preparations being made by Sir Ralph Hopton, previous to the battle of Stratton Heights; Chudleigh, therefore, thought it prudent not to stir farther than necessary from his present quarters, and he merely drew off a part of his force to Lifton.

Tavistock, I fear, notwithstanding the brave manner in which the old house at Fitz-ford held out for the king, was a very disaffected place. Nor can we wonder at this, when we recollect that it was under the immediate influence of the Earl of Bedford, who

had taken part with the rebel parliament; that the notorious and artful Pym was its member, and that Stroude and his crew of evil spirits, making their haunt at Newnham, only a few miles from the town of Plymouth, kept up a constant intercourse with this neighbourhood, even whilst they were engaged in their duties elsewhere. There was likewise in Tavistock a certain Mr. Thomas Lewknor, then vicar of the town, and though of him I have been able to learn no particulars, yet as he was noted by the parliament committee in their report as "a preaching minister," and suffered to remain quiet in his cure, we may rest satisfied that he was more a prudent than a zealous servant of the Church, and did not harangue his flock on the sin of rebellion to the king. Lewknor enjoyed, according to the same report, a very good living; in proportion to the times much better than it is now, since it is there valued at two hundred and forty pounds per annum, and a glebe yearly valued at seven pounds; the whole making a large income in those days for a country clergyman, though in so populous a town.* No glebe now goes with the church.

After raising the posse comitatus of the West for the king, the loyal gentlemen next determined on raising voluntary regiments of foot among themselves, their followers, tenantry, and friends. Sir Bevil Grenville, that truly chivalrous leader in generosity, gallantry, and courage; and the noble and accomplished Sir Nicholas Slanning (son of the Slanning who was

* Eleven pounds per annum was, in the days of Henry VIII., the pension charged for the vicar, on the Russell family, by the original grant of the abbey lands.

killed in the duel by Sir John Fitz) exerted themselves resolutely and unremittingly in the royal cause. Sir Nicholas was at this time governor of Pendennis Castle, and a member of the House of Commons.* So likewise were John Arundel and Trevannion, both gentlemen of the greatest worth. These also undertook to raise a troop of horse, volunteers, for the king. Tremain, Trelawny,

* The muster-roll of Sir Nicholas Slanning is still in existence. In fact it is at this time in our house. My brother copied it, and inserted it, in his notices of Tavistock Abbey, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The following are curious items:—"Stannary of Tavistocke—A perfect muster-roll, containing the several hundreds, parishes, and hamlets, together with the officers and souldiers within the said stannary. Officers, Sir Nicholas Slanning, Lieutenant-Colonel; Joseph Drake, Esq., Captain-Lieutenant; John Jacob, Gent., Ensign." Names of four sergeants and eight corporals; then follow the names of the men from the different hundreds, making in all a force of 156, of which about two-thirds bear muskets, and the rest pikes. "Seen and confirmed by us under our hands and seales—(the first name effaced) Nicholas Slanning, Edw. Yarde, Joseph Drake."—At the back of the roll are the following notes respecting the arms of the company. They are very curious.

"Horse defensive armes, are a backe, brest, and pot, pistol prooffe; offensive, a sword and case of pistells, ther barrel not under 14 inches in length; horse furniture, a great saddle or pad with burrs and straps to affix the holster."

"Footman's armes: musquett barrell not under three foot; the gage of the bore for twelve bullets (new) but ye old way fourteen to ye pound; a collar of bandaliers; with a sworde."

"Pykeman's armes: a pyke of ashe not under 16 foote, head and foote included, with a backe, brest, head-piece, and sworde, ye old pyke fifteen (feet); musquetier, halfe pound poudder, and 3 yardes of matche, half a pound of bulletts."

"Horse, a q^r. a pound poudder and soe of bullets; 5s. for every day's omission" (of attendance). Clarendon tells us all the ammunition was supplied by Sir Nicholas Slanning from the store at Pendennis Castle; and that whilst at Tavistock he was distressed by the small supply that remained. The above scanty list shows the correctness of the historian.

Edgecumbe, and many other men of fortune and merit, hastened to show their zeal in the same cause at this eventful time; and Sir Richard Grenville (younger brother of Sir Bevil) was soon after sent into the West bearing the king's commission, which, notwithstanding some good services he rendered, was by him grievously disgraced and abused.

Not long after the gentlemen of the West had thus associated themselves in support of the royal standard, Sir Ralph Hopton obtained a victory (A. D. 1641) over the Parliament forces at Bradock Down, near Liskeard, in Cornwall, where Ruthen had led the rebels on. In this engagement the royalists were singularly fortunate; since, without the loss of one gentleman of any note, and very few men, they made twelve hundred of the enemy prisoners, seized their colours, ammunition, cannon, and stores, and set Ruthen flying, who speedily took shelter in Saltash, with a view to fortifying it against further assaults from his pursuers. The Earl of Stamford, hearing of his ill success, retired, in great disorder, into Tavistock, where he hoped to act as a check on the growing successes of the royal party.

The royalists no sooner heard of Stamford having taken his station in our town, than they determined to rout him out, and secure the place for the king. Sir Bevil Grenville, Sir Nicholas Slanning, Colonel Trevannion, and others, advanced, therefore, with all their forces, towards Tavistock. But the Earl not liking their visit, and probably thinking so many guests were more than he could entertain in a manner that would be satisfactory to the Parliament, fled before their arrival, and took refuge in Plymouth. The royalists, disappointed in their expected en-

counter with Stamford, dispersed their companies in various quarters, and actively employed themselves wherever they could fall in with an enemy; at the same time they succeeded in harassing Chudleigh, and prevented his raising any effectual body, so as to render him formidable in this part of Devon.

Wearied with their labours, and finding, from want of sufficient ammunition, that it was impossible they could stir the rebels in the strongholds of their retreat, they once more retired to Tavistock, where they refreshed their men, arranged their affairs, and laid plans for future action. Notwithstanding these ardent exertions, and their generously throwing their own means into the common stock, the want of supplies, especially of ammunition, grievously troubled them. Indeed, the successful manner in which they had hitherto kept the enemy at bay, and, in many instances, had routed him, was surprising; since all their warlike stores had amounted to nothing more than those furnished by Sir Nicholas Slanning from Pendennis Castle, and what they had fortunately taken in action.

So formidable an obstacle was this want of supplies to all their measures, that, whilst at Tavistock, they were induced to listen to certain proposals made by the rebel gentlemen of Cornwall, "that a treaty," says Clarendon, "might be entered into, whereby the peace of the two counties of Cornwall and Devon might be settled, and the war removed into other parts." Though such a treaty was not welcome to the royalists, yet, crippled in their means, without ammunition, and urged on by the popular cry around them for peace, they went so far as to consent to a truce, for the purpose of taking into consideration the terms of the treaty. The debates

were preceded by every one receiving the sacrament, with a most solemn oath made by either party, that it was for no individual interest, but for the general peace and welfare of the West, to maintain the Protestant faith established by law in the Church of England, and the just rights and prerogative of the King, with the privileges of Parliament, &c. ; that he who took the oath there acted without any equivocation, mental reservation, or evasion whatsoever. The royalists, judging the sincerity of their enemies by their own, in this matter, and not supposing it to be possible that they could cherish any motives of guile, after having so solemnly disavowed them, were induced to retire into Cornwall to consider further on the treaty. But they speedily found that no reliance was to be placed in the amicable terms proposed by their enemies; and soon after meeting with Captain Carteret, formerly the controller of the king's navy, who undertook to procure for them as much ammunition as they could desire to possess, in consequence of these circumstances the treaty commenced at Tavistock was never carried into effect. And so ready had the opposite party held themselves for hostilities, that on the very day after the cessation of preliminaries, Chudleigh marched on the town of Launceston, and took it whilst the inhabitants thought themselves secure, and were not provided for such a visit, in consequence of the late truce, and the hopes of its final adjustment. The royalists, however, were not long in retaliating; since, under the command of Sir Ralph Hopton, they speedily achieved that great victory at Stratton Heights, where the Earl of Stamford and Chudleigh were completely routed.

The battle of Lansdown, near Bath, soon after

followed; there the great and good Sir Bevil Grenville lost his life. Sir Nicholas Slanning was also in this action, and displayed an intrepidity that resembled the heroic spirit of a chivalrous age. He is recorded on that day* to have performed actions nothing less wonderful than daring: he led on his followers in the mouth of cannon and musketry, whilst the balls were flying around him in all directions, towards the thickest of the fight. In this perilous position he remained unhurt, so that he seemed to carry with him "a charmed life," and in the eyes of his devoted men appeared almost more than mortal; he had, indeed, raised in them a spirit of enthusiasm which resembled his own; and the names of Grenville and Slanning struck terror into the hearts of the enemy. His next action was his last. He accompanied Prince Rupert to the assault made on Bristol, a short time after Lansdown fight; and, to the dismay of the whole army, fell before the walls of that city, on the 26th of July, 1643. His friends, Godolphin and Trevannion, perished in the same encounter. Slanning was one of the four gentlemen, all of Cornwall or Devon in their birth, who were called the four wheels of Charles's wain. Our county biographer, Prince, mentions a monody, composed at the time, on the death of these heroes, of which he gives two lines,—

"The four wheels of Charles's wain,
Grenville, Godolphin, Trevannion, Slanning, slain."

Certainly such men deserved to be celebrated in better verse. The royalist and poet, the unfortunate Shirley, would have done justice to their memory,

* See Clarendon, Prince, and Fuller.

had he made their fall the subject of elegiac verse, as he afterwards did the fall of the king, in those immortal lines that would stir the coldest bosom with feelings of sympathy and pity*.

The visit of Prince Charles to our town, still the theme of tradition, is likewise recorded in history. It occurred in 1645, whilst the Parliament forces so closely invested the city of Exeter (on the east side by their works, and on the west by their men), that no relief could be conveyed to the citizens, who were in danger of suffering even from famine during the siege. The prince, seeing the peril in which his father's affairs stood in the West at such a crisis, determined on calling a meeting, for the purpose of consultation, at Tavistock, and thither he summoned to attend in council all the noblemen and gentlemen within reach, in whom he could repose any confidence in a business of such import. Some jealousies, however, on the part of Lord Wentworth, and the spirit of intrigue so natural to Sir Richard Grenville, unfortunately interfered with the schemes of Charles at the moment, and his council was little more than one in name, in consequence of the non-attendance of the principal persons who were expected. The prince, finding his presence would be absolutely necessary to compose discontents, remove jealousies, and bring things into better order, determined to advance into Devon with as many men as he could collect to reinforce

* The beautiful monody by Shirley, written after the death of Charles I., was introduced into one of his plays. It begins,—

“The glories of our mortal state
Are shadows, not substantial things, &c.”

Lord Wentworth's party, so that Wentworth might no longer have cause to complain his men were not strong enough to bring the enemy to battle.

The day after Christmas day, in the year 1645, Prince Charles quitted Truro, passed through Bodmin, and on the following morning entered Tavistock, where he found waiting for him the few persons who had obeyed his summons for the council. These were Brentford, Capel, Hopton, and Colepepper; and lastly came Sir Richard Grenville. Sir Richard sent on his three regiments of foot to Okehampton, under the command of General Molesworth, and the Cornish men were expected to come up in a body in less than a week. At this time the blockade of Plymouth was maintained by General Digby; so that a strong party of royalists, on every side, were assembled, or assembling, to forward those plans on which Charles and his friends should determine to proceed. There was, however, a cause of anxiety that could not at this moment be so easily set at rest—the want of sufficient supplies for such a body of men.

Scarcely had the prince reposed a few hours on his arrival at Tavistock, when he received a letter from the king (which is given at large by Clarendon), containing a command that, had he obeyed it, would at once have changed the whole aspect of the sovereign's affairs in the West. Charles informed his son that he was at Oxford, and had just dispatched a trumpet to London to demand a pass for his messengers, as he had resolved to propose a personal treaty with the rebels of that city. He believed they would be induced to entertain his proposals; and if so, his real security would rest in the

prince, his eldest son, being in another country ; a circumstance which would make the rebels hearken and yield to reason. The king, therefore, proceeded to command the prince to take the earliest opportunity of transporting himself into Denmark, France, or Holland, observing all security as to his passage, since nothing else was to be feared.

This epistle was written in the Lord Colepepper's ciphers: he was obliged, therefore, to be trusted with the letter, in order to decipher it ; and though at first the contents were held very secret, yet it was deemed better to lay them before the council, ere an answer was sent off to the king.

The lords, after fully considering the matter, deemed the prince's absence from the army in the West (to say nothing of the difficulty and hazard of getting him on ship-board) would be so discouraging, and produce such ill consequences at such a time, that the royal command could not be obeyed without doing a manifest injury to him who gave it. The Tavistock councillors therefore drew up a letter, to which each person signed his name, pointed out the dangers attending the plan for flight, &c. and dispatched it by the Oxford courier with all haste ; yet fearing miscarriage, on the next day another messenger, bearing a copy of the same letter, was sent forward by another road, that the king might not be held in ignorance of their opinions, and the true state of his affairs in the West.

Shortly after this subject had been discussed, the Cornish trained bands arrived in Tavistock ; they were above two thousand in number, and had marched up, many being taken from the mines, in good health and spirits, and willing to match their

enemies on the first summons to the field. The arrival of these men cheered the hopes of the royal party, and they were received with every welcome.

Again the council of Tavistock resumed their deliberations; when it was strongly urged by the majority, that the prince should forthwith lead the Cornish trained bands and his own guard (then stationed near the town) to Totness, where a magazine should be formed of all necessary provisions, and certain money and stores, collected in Cornwall, be forwarded by sea, and conveyed thence to this new treasury against a time of need, after relieving the present wants of the royalists. Totness, too, was considered a convenient town whence the prince might join his adherents at Exeter; and should the rebel army endeavour to intercept him, the distressed garrison of the city could then quit their stronghold, in which they had been literally held prisoners, and relieve themselves at such a juncture. The prince might retreat or engage, as his interests and the position of his affairs should render it most advisable. These deliberations, and the intelligence forwarded from various parts of the country to the councillors, occupied some days, and were not hastily dismissed. We have a tradition here, likely enough to be true, that it rained so incessantly all the time the prince was in our town, that he expressed his impatience at such abominable weather, and the recollection of it never forsook him; as, after his restoration to the throne, it was his custom to say, did any one observe the fineness of the weather—"Yes, the day is fair enough; but depend upon it it must be raining at Tavistock."

The council having determined on their measures,

a numerous force was about to march forward to Totness, when the news came that the enemy had advanced, and beaten up Lord Wentworth's quarters in two several places. Soon after this, Wentworth himself appeared, in great agitation, not knowing the circumstances of his loss in either quarter, for the accounts he had received were certainly exaggerated, though the truth was bad enough when fully ascertained. The prince proposed marching, with all his force, immediately to Totness; but those about him feared that it must have already fallen into the hands of the enemy; and that after the late disasters, he could not hope to rally his horse in any strength, till such of the troops as had been engaged in the late contests should have had two or three days' rest. In consequence of the disorderly retreat of the horse soldiery, it was also found absolutely necessary to draw off the blockade from Plymouth; so that Tavistock would no longer be a place of safety for Prince Charles. He was advised to hasten on to Launceston in Cornwall, and for his further security, to leave the horse in charge of the Devon side of the river. From Cornwall it was proposed he should advance to the relief of Exeter; that city still remaining besieged and in great distress, being in want of even the necessaries of life.

The conduct of the retreat to Launceston, and bringing the supplies of food from Tavistock, was intrusted to Sir Richard Grenville, who performed that duty in so careless and heedless a manner, that, "besides the disorders he suffered in Tavistock by the soldiers," says Clarendon, "a great part of the magazine of victuals, and three or four hundred pair of shoes were there left and so lost." And so

ill did Sir Richard conduct himself after this neglect of duty, that the Prince was obliged to commit him to prison in Launceston Castle. In a short time he was removed to the custody of the keeper of the mount in Cornwall, where he was held in durance, till the parliament forces gaining possession of that county, Charles gave him leave to go beyond seas, that he might not fall into the hands of his enemies; Sir Richard Grenville's licentious and violent courses having not less than his loyalty rendered him abhorrent to the godly, whilst his reckless, intriguing and tyrannical disposition had done the most irreparable injuries to the king's cause during the time he acted as general in the west.

During the rebellion in the year 1644, the house of Fitz-ford, in Tavistock, (then belonging to Sir Richard Grenville by his marriage with Lady Howard,) held out for the king. It was taken by Lord Essex, who seized, besides arms, stores and two pieces of cannon, one hundred and fifty persons within the house, whom he made prisoners. It does not appear Sir Richard was himself of the number. Lady Howard (I cannot help calling her by the name by which she is so universally known in this place) was the wife of four husbands. One more would have rendered her a fit rival for Chaucer's wife of Bath; but if all, or only half the stories told of her are true, she must have been a sort of female Blue Beard, not less formidable in her disposition than commanding in her person and her manners. She was born in Tavistock, nor will her fame be speedily forgotten; all the hobgoblin tales of later times are more or less connected with this remarkable woman, whom they represent as cruel, unfeeling, and wicked. I here purpose giving such

account of her life, as I have been able to collect it from authentic materials or tradition.

I do not know in what year she was born, but as she was the daughter of that unhappy young man, Sir John Fitz, who, in the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, killed the first Slanning of note, and soon after fell on his own sword, we are certain she must have been in existence previous to the reign of James I.; she was most probably an infant when her father died by his own hand: her mother was Gertrude, daughter of Sir William Courtenay, of Poderham Castle, Kt., early married to Sir John Fitz, and early left a widow with this one child, Mary, the heiress of immense wealth. Nature had been no less bountiful to this child than fortune; for she grew up remarkably handsome, was possessed of strong and masculine powers of mind, and had attained more than the ordinary accomplishments of her sex or her station. She had many suitors, and the first gentlemen of the West were anxious to win the beautiful and gifted heiress of Fitz-ford.

Her first husband was Sir Alan Percy, Kt., sixth son to Henry Earl of Northumberland; he did not long survive his marriage; and she next gave her hand to Thomas, son and heir of the powerful Thomas Lord Darcy, Earl of Rivers. On her again becoming a widow, her alliance was courted by the Earl of Suffolk, for his third son Sir Charles Howard, who won her, but soon died, and left her still in the pride of rank, fortune, and beauty, one of the stateliest dames that frequented the court of Henrietta Maria, where she cultivated the friendship of Buckingham; who, as we shall speedily find, exerted his influence with her so as to render her propitious to the addresses of one of his own dependents, Sir

Richard Grenville, whose fortunes he had undertaken to improve. The duke thought a rich wife no small advance towards the work, and thus did the heiress of Fitz give herself to her fourth, last, and worst husband. There is some mystery attached to the way in which she managed her own fortune in all these marriages; at one period, as we shall presently see, it afforded a rich harvest for lawyers in a regular chancery suit; when a third party stepped in between man and wife and claimed the bone of contest; yet his power could not have been absolute though he obtained an award; since her only child, a daughter, being dead, or supposed dead, before her, she bequeathed her estates (Walreddon and Fitz-ford amongst the rest) to her kinsman, the Hon. Sir William Courtenay, of Powderham Castle, Bart.; and though Fitz-ford was afterwards purchased by the Russell family, Walreddon is the property of a Courtenay to this day.

The most considerable notices that I have found respecting Lady Howard, occur in Clarendon; he does not mention her by name, but speaks of her, in the first instance, as the rich Devonshire widow who married Sir Richard Grenville; and lastly, he refers to the Suffolk family, with whom she was connected by her previous marriage with Sir Charles Howard. These are proofs sufficient that it must be our Lady Howard, and no other, who has been immortalized by the great historian. Clarendon says that Sir Richard Grenville contrived to insinuate himself into the favour of the famous Duke of Buckingham; and his credit every day increasing with his patron, the favourite, "out of the generosity of his nature, resolved to raise him in his fortunes:

towards the beginning whereof, by his countenance and solicitation, he prevailed with a rich widow to marry him, who had been a lady of extraordinary beauty, which she had not yet outlived, and though she had no great dower by her last husband, a younger brother of the Earl of Suffolk (Sir Charles Howard), yet she inherited a fair fortune of her own, near Plymouth; and was besides very rich in a personal estate, and was looked upon as the richest match of the West."

By the fair fortune of her own *near Plymouth*, Clarendon most likely means the house and estate of Walreddon; which, though distant but two miles from Tavistock, certainly is not so far from Plymouth, but that such an expression might be used to point out its situation in the neighbourhood of a large and well-known town. The historian thus continues:—

"This lady, by the duke's credit, Sir Richard Grenville, for he was now made a Knight and Baronet, obtained, and was thereby possessed of a plentiful estate upon the borders of his own county, where his own family had great credit and authority. The war being quickly at an end, and he deprived of his great patron, he had nothing now to depend upon but the fortune of his wife; which though ample enough to have supported the expense a person of his quality ought to have made, was not large enough to satisfy his vanity and ambition; nor so great as he, upon common reports, had promised himself by her. By not being enough pleased with her fortune, he grew less pleased with his wife; who being a woman of a haughty and imperious nature, and of a wit far superior to his, quickly resented

the disrespect she received from him; and in no degree studied to make herself easy to him. After some years spent together in these domestic, unsociable contestations, in which he possessed himself of all her estate, as the sole master of it, without allowing her out of her own any competency for herself, and indulging to himself all those licenses in her own house, which to women are most grievous, she found means to withdraw herself from him, and was with all kindness received into the family in which she had before married, and was always very much respected. Her absence was not ungrateful to him, till the tenants refused to pay him any more rent, and he found himself on a sudden deprived of her whole estate, which was all he had to live on: for it *now* appeared that she had, before her marriage with him, settled her entire fortune so absolutely upon the Earl of Suffolk, that the present right was in him, and he required the rents to be paid to him. This begat a suit in chancery between Sir Richard Grenville and the Earl of Suffolk, before the Lord Coventry, who found the conveyances in law to be so firm, that he could not only not relieve Sir Richard Grenville in equity, but that in justice he must decree the land to the earl, which he did. This very sensible mortification transported him so much, that being a man who used to speak bitterly of those he did not love, after all endeavours to engage the earl in a personal conflict, he revenged himself upon him in such opprobrious language as the government and justice of that time would not permit to pass unpunished; and the earl appealed for reparation to the court of the Star Chamber, where Sir Richard was decreed to pay three thousand pounds to the king, who gave the fine likewise to the earl: so that

Sir Richard was committed to the prison of the Fleet in execution for the whole six thousand pounds, which at that time was thought by all men to be a very severe and rigorous decree, and drew a general compassion towards the unhappy gentleman."

For some years Sir Richard endured this imprisonment, which made him the more bitter against his wife: he at length escaped his captivity and fled beyond seas. There he remained till the great changes in England having caused many decrees of the Star Chamber to be repealed, and the persons awarded to pay penalties absolved, he came home and petitioned to be heard in mitigation of his case. Before this came on, the rebellion broke out in Ireland, and Sir Richard Grenville was, on account of his military skill, sent thither as captain of a troop of horse. As what I have to say of him must be principally confined to circumstances connected with his quarrel with his wife, I shall not follow him in his career either in Ireland or England. When the civil wars distracted this country, and the Parliament became openly rebels, Sir Richard joined the royal cause, and was soon appointed to a considerable command in the West. His wife inclined to the Parliament, so that one of the first things granted to him by the king was the sequestration of her estates to his own uses. "Upon which title," says Clarendon, "he settled himself in her house near Tavistock, and took the stock, and compelled the tenants to pay him their rents." If the house in which Sir Richard now made his residence might be Walreddon or Fitz-ford, we are not told, but most probably the latter, as it was situated so very near the town. At one period, when the king's affairs prospered in the West, and the Earl of Essex's forces

were dissolved, so much was Grenville in favour with the royal party, that Charles granted him all the Earl of Bedford's estates (as well as Lady Howard's and those of the Drake family), by which the abbey lands of Tavistock, and of Buckland Monachorum became his; and during the blockade at Plymouth, he resided in the latter place, which had formerly been inhabited by the great Sir Francis Drake. But Sir Richard Grenville was not a man to possess prosperity with moderation; he speedily abused all these favours, and his conduct in a public as well as in a private capacity soon proved that power could not have been intrusted to worse hands than his own. Many of his acts were so notoriously disgraceful, tyrannical, and cruel, that they were at length formally brought as charges against him before the Council, where he was especially required to appear in person, and answer for his misdeeds whilst governor of Lidford Castle. One circumstance of his cruelty deserves here particular notice, as it shows the bitterness and malice with which he entertained any recollection of the past quarrels with his wife. During the time of her proceedings against him in Chancery, she had employed an attorney at law, whose name was Brabant; he bore the character of being an honest man, and loyal to the king. He lived somewhere in this part of Devonshire. Many years elapsed since the decision of that suit against him, before Sir Richard became a man of so much importance by his high military command in the West. No sooner did Brabant learn the news of his arrival, than, well knowing he was not of a disposition to forget or to forgive an old adversary, he judged it prudent to keep as much

as possible out of his way. Having occasion, however, to make a journey that would take him near Sir Richard's quarters, he disguised himself as well as he could, and put on a Montero cap. Sir Richard, who probably had been on the look-out to catch him, notwithstanding all these precautions, received intelligence of the movements of the man of law. He caused him to be intercepted on his road, made prisoner, and brought before him. In vain did Brabant protest that he was journeying on no errand but his own private affairs; for Sir Richard affecting, on account of his Montero cap, to believe him to be a spy, without a council of war, or any further inquiry, ordered the luckless lawyer to be hanged on the spot; and thus did he murder his wife's advocate, many years after he had committed the offence of managing her cause in the Chancery courts.

When Lady Howard (for she would now never be recognised by any other name in Tavistock) died I do not know, nor where she was buried; though I have heard a vague tradition that she ended her days in great mental agony, at some house she had near Oakhampton, where, also, according to a more common tradition, she now runs every night in the shape of a hound, to perform penance, according to the wild legend before noticed concerning her. There is a story, too, but I am not enough acquainted with its detail to repeat it, which says something about one of her husbands (I do not know which) being drowned, whilst riding in his coach on the day of his marriage, in the deep pool, still called Ficc's or Fitz's Pool, in the river Tavy. This tale I believe to be quite as true as that of the goblin hound, the coach of bones, &c.

The particulars of a story I have now to relate about her, from the careful way in which they have been most minutely handed down from generation to generation, in some of the most respectable families in the neighbourhood, and from the bad fame and ill character of Lady Howard, I should be much tempted to consider are, if not wholly true, at least grounded on fact. I have been in the room, indeed once slept in it (though I saw no ghost), where the catastrophe of this story is said to have occurred, at Walreddon House.

Lady Howard had an only daughter, (I do not know by which marriage,) whose history was involved in considerable mystery. She is said to have taken some strange dislike to the child from the very hour of its birth, so that she could not endure the infant in her sight. A lady of some station, who was a visitant at Walreddon and Fitz-ford (for Lady Howard resided occasionally at each dwelling,) observing the cruel treatment the child received from her unnatural mother, felt so much compassion for her (as she really feared for the little girl's life if she continued where she was), that she caused her to be secretly conveyed from Walreddon to a distant part of the country, where, with every care, but in as private a manner as possible, she brought her up as if she had been her own child. Lady Howard felt not at all displeas'd at the idea of her daughter having been stolen; and if she had committed no other crime than the cruelty with which she treated her, she deserved her nightly ride in the coach of bones for that offence alone. If the lady who had carried off the infant, spread a false report of her death or not, tradition has not informed us; but it

positively affirms that years rolled on, and no intelligence being received concerning her, Lady Howard believed that the wish she had often been heard to express was accomplished, and that her daughter was really dead.

In the interval the child grew up a beautiful young woman, and so opposite to her hard-hearted mother in disposition, that she was universally beloved for her kind and affectionate manners. The friend who had stolen her began now to reflect what a fine young woman she was grown, what an ornament she would be to her family, and, as there was no other child, what a pity it would be if Lady Howard died without knowing she had such a promising daughter alive, or without being reconciled to her; as it was not to be supposed she would obstinately shut her eyes to the young lady's merits, and refuse to give up a prejudice so unreasonable as that she had conceived against her whilst yet a child. Nevertheless, she knew enough of Lady Howard's character to feel she must be warily dealt with in the matter; and, after long deliberation, she fancied the most likely way to succeed would be to contrive to introduce the mother to the daughter in a manner that would afford her an opportunity of becoming well acquainted with her merits, without the danger of a favourable impression being prevented by any preconceived prejudices.

She took the opportunity, therefore, of introducing the young lady to her mother as the orphan of a particular friend; and so much was Lady Howard delighted with her, that she became fond of her, and expressed a wish for her society. The friend who had brought about the meeting felt so rejoiced at

the happy prospect it had opened for her adopted child, that she judged it best to let the truth be known; and on Lady Howard passing some high encomium on the girl, she told her "that it was her long-lost daughter of whom she had spoken in such warm terms, and that she merited all her affection."

The words were scarcely spoken, when a look of horror overspread the countenance of the undeceived mother; her passions rose to a degree of frenzy, and with many dreadful threats, and considerable violence, she turned her own child, who implored her to show her but the slightest mark of parental feeling, from her doors. Time again rolled on, and Lady Howard, being advanced in life, her daughter was persuaded to make another attempt to soften her obdurate heart ere she died.

Lady Howard was at this time living in her house of Walreddon, and thither went her daughter. At the moment of the meeting, her mother was descending an upper flight of large, old, oak stairs, that led to the state apartment on the second floor; the daughter was ascending the hall stairs from below, which led in the same direction. Seeing her mother thus suddenly appear, she threw herself on her knees on the landing place, and caught hold of her dress, scarcely knowing what she did in such moments of agitation. Lady Howard rushed towards the state room, her daughter still holding her clothes with a firm grasp, and passionately imploring her to look on her with pity. At this instant they were under where the folding doors stood partly open; Lady Howard seized them, and with a force so

sudden closed them on her child that her arm was broken between the leaves of the door. The unnatural mother turned her from the house, and never saw her more.

What became of the poor girl is not known ; tradition is silent respecting her fate ; but it should seem as if Lady Howard had felt some touch of remorse on her account before she died ; for after bequeathing Walreddon and Fitz-ford to the Courtenay family, there was a certain portion of her property reserved with a clause, that she gave it to any person who could prove herself to be the daughter of Mary, sole heiress of the late Sir John Fitz, and widow of Sir Richard Grenville. The legacy so strangely bequeathed was never claimed.

We have a tradition here, silly enough in itself ; but, as it is current, I mention it. The story goes that when Prince Charles halted on his route into the West, after the battle of Worcester, certain diminutive equestrian figures, formed of pottery, were placed on the house-tops of every dwelling where he sought shelter, in order to denote speed, and give a signal which was well understood by his friends. Tradition likewise asserts that, after Worcester fight, he was, for a short space of time, in Tavistock, and left the town to seek a refuge in Hayne House, the seat of the Harris family, whence he attempted to make his way to the coast. There may be some truth in the last part of this story ; as, till within a few years, when Hayne House underwent alteration, I am informed, by my intelligent friend Mr. Hughes, that a very secret chamber, of small dimensions, built apparently within the walls, and en-

tered by a softly-sliding panel, used to be shown as the hiding-place of the young prince, afterwards Charles the Second, in his distressing flight.

At no very distant period, some ancient and extensive premises were pulled down in Tavistock, in order to clear the way for the butter-market. There was an inn attached to them, and near a very old, picturesque archway, which gave entrance to a building whose roof was decorated with the little equestrian figures before noticed, which the elders here would have it were placed up as signals after the battle of Worcester, and that, of course, in the house so signalized, the prince himself lodged. If he really did lodge there, and very possibly he might, I have no doubt it was during the time he underwent the rainy penance, with the Lords of his Council, in the year 1645, before he fled to Launceston, when Sir Richard Grenville left to the town that legacy of old shoes to remember the royal visit, recorded by Clarendon. In the house just named there was a very large apartment, beautifully panelled with carved oak, and a coat of arms of the time of Elizabeth, having the crown between the letters "E. R.," and beneath, the words "Vivat Regina."

These premises were, in parts, much older than the days of good Queen Bess; they formed, indeed, a wing to those antique buildings said to have been the residence of Orgar, Duke, or Heratoge, of Devon, and of Ordulph, his son. They corresponded with another wing, terminating with the archway at the bottom of Kilworthy Lane; but that archway is of the Tudor age, and certainly not older than the reign of Henry the Seventh; though this is a fact

which no architect could ever persuade the good people of Tavistock to believe. They will have it that it is of Saxon date. One of the learned of this place once argued the point with me, and I very simply said, "But the archway has the *label* moulding—an ornament which the slightest acquaintance with Gothic architecture will show you (and there are numerous examples of it in this neighbourhood) was common during the Tudor age, nor indeed is it found to exist before that period."

My opponent stared on hearing the words *label ornament*, and said he had often looked at the gate, and could not see anything like a *label* upon it. I soon found he had been looking for what he would certainly never find—viz., an ornament that should resemble, in form and flourish, a label attached to an apothecary's phial! Gothic architecture assuredly had many whims and freaks, but none, that I know of, like this.

One of the most curious traditionary stories respecting the days of rebellion we received from a poor mad woman of this place, who, in consequence of being harmless, is suffered to go free; and as this story is also told by those who are in their right senses, I shall mention it, though the poor mazed woman has an undoubted privilege to claim it as her own tale, since it relates to one of her family in former days. The method she took to communicate it to Mr. Bray was not a little singular. She wrote him a letter, and dropped it in the post. This epistle, though it was wild and disordered in several parts, yet showed that she possessed some "method in her madness;" for whilst, among other things, she told him that several gentlemen had given her

half-a-crown a-piece, she very significantly added, "Go thou and do likewise." The story she told concerning her relative in the times of Charles the First, I had heard before from my husband's mother, the late Mrs. Bray, who was a great collector of old tales, of all ages and all kinds. Her version of the story enabled me to comprehend the poor woman's in the letter, which was somewhat confused. I now have that letter before me on my desk; it begins thus:—

"I, then Jenny C——s, but thirty-four years have been Jenny C——be, (meaning she was married thirty-four years ago,) was born in Crebar, in the parish of Tavistock. My mother's name was H——, and her great-grandfather's name was M——, the last that served South Sydenham four hundred years; and, on the other side of her ancestors, their name was S——, and he kept a wine-cellar at the King's Arms: it was his land in the time of the civil wars; and he had a daughter in a decline!" Jenny then proceeds to give, in this very curious epistle, the sum and substance of the tale concerning this "daughter in a decline;" but as her version really would require a running comment to make it understood, I beg leave to give the whole story in a more brief form.

The parliament forces, after they captured Fitzford House, made wild work in the town with whatever belonged to the royalist party, or had any connexion with the old-established order of things. To this troop of parliamentarians I have always attributed the injuries sustained by the monuments, &c. in our church. I consider them guilty of having rendered noseless Judge Glanville and his wife; of

having knocked out whatever might remain of the painted glass in the church-lights; and of doing the same in the vestry, where we know, by the church-warden's accounts, there was a new painted window set up in the days of Richard the Second, and nothing was more offensive to the puritans than such decorations: they made war, indeed, on all saints (as they stood in Gothic brilliancy, whenever the sun shone out), and showed them no quarter. In a very old and rare book of the doings of that period, which is in Mr. Bray's library, I once read the deposition of one of the godly, made before the sitting committee of county sequestrators, wherein he triumphantly relates how that very many church windows did he, with his own single hand, demolish, in doing "*the Lord's work*;" and, amongst other feats, mentions his having smashed in a whole row of devils, represented, with "papist idolatry," as stirring up the souls in their fiery furnaces of purgatory below, the "prime devil of all having a long tail behind, most shameful to behold in any Christian place of worship." But to Jenny's story; for, something like her poor wits, I have been wandering.

The parliament troopers, knowing that the honest vintner who kept the wine-cellar at the *King's Arms* was a royalist, determined that his wine should never more be drawn to pledge royal healths; and thinking that the safest way to remove the temptation would be to get rid of the cause, they very soon resolved to wash that down their own throats, and that not a drop of ungodly wine should be left in mine host's cellars after that day. They commenced proceedings, however, by clearing the way above stairs; and "the spoiling of the Egyptians" having

become a standard item in the divinity of troopers, all were considered by them as such who had anything worth spoliation. Concerning this part of the story, my chief authority, Jenny's letter, says, "it was havoc-work in the parlour." No doubt it was, and in the kitchen, too; for mine host was famous for beef and black-puddings; which reminds an historian, so circumstantial as myself, of those lines of Butler,—

" And fat black-puddings, proper food
For warriors who delight in blood."

The daughter of the vintner was, poor thing, in a consumption; but being a girl of spirit, and her mind remaining in firmer condition than her body, she bethought herself, when she heard what was going on, whether or not her wasted and ghastly appearance might not be made of service at this crisis. So she resolutely snatched up, neither dagger nor poniard, though she was about to play the heroine, but—a white table-cloth; and as all spirits, real or otherwise, never walk but in white robes, the table-cloth made a magnificent mantle for a ghost of the very first order. Thus attired, she stole down stairs, and took her post in the dingy confines of an old wine-cellar, situated at the extremity of a long, narrow, formidable, and very-ominous-dark passage. (By the way, I am aware compound adjectives are now much in vogue in subjects connected with grandeur and sublimity; pray, therefore, admire, as you are a critic, the construction of the above sentence; you will not meet with such every day.) Now the vintner's daughter, though she was no ghost, looked very like one, and placing herself against the cellar door, she stood, "like patience on a monument,"

smiling at her own device to cheat the troopers. These she speedily heard making their way down the steps; she groaned a groan, and stood still. The corporal, who headed the marauding party, started at the sound, and his eye caught the pale, thin, white, and shadowy figure that, in a motionless attitude, stood with upraised and menacing hand before the door. "What the devil is that?" said one of the fellows. "Swear not at all," said the corporal, "for maybe yonder is the devil's dam, who may take offence at thy familiar oaths." "Devil or no devil," said the first speaker, "I will send a shot at the white mark." He raised his pistol, and took a steady aim at the vintner's daughter. She neither moved nor spoke, such was her resolution. "Do not fire," said the corporal, "the figure mocks thy attempts, do not strive with spirit, for yonder thing is neither flesh nor blood; let us be gone from this place, or something may happen." "Now I look again," said another trooper, "I see it is a ghost; the Lord have mercy upon us! I will sing a psalm;" and with that he began to shake, and quavered out a few tremulous notes of some most godly stave. At the hearing of this the ghost was moved, and making as if she would advance upon the whole party, she sent every mother's son of them flying with fright; up the steps they ran, much faster than they had descended. The cellar escaped rifling; the house was instantly abandoned; nor did they even stay to carry off the booty they had collected above stairs. These are the particulars of the story of Jenny's grandmother's great grandfather's daughter, in the days of Charles I. She adds, in her letter, that "the young woman, who showed such

resolution, died"—I suppose she means of the consumption that so well fitted her to perform the part of a ghost in the presence of the troopers.

The following curious piece in verse I insert here, because, though I know not the author's name, I have heard it is considered to be the composition of a schoolmaster of this town, who held that office towards the latter part of the reign of Charles II. If this is true or false, I cannot determine; but of the poet we may venture to say, whoever he might be, the same as Fuller said of Scaliger, that he is one who writes "as if he rather snorted than slept on Parnassus, for his verses sound better to the brain than to the ear." A very rare old printed copy of them, on a large sheet of paper, like a bill stuck against a wall, has been lent me by Mr. Crapp, of this town. Here is the copy. Our chronicler in rhyme calls this production of his muse

"A PANEGYRICK POEM;

OR,

TAVESTOCK'S ENCOMIUM."

Within this countie's bowels lies a moor,
 Of old call'd Dart, down from whose mountains roar
 Combining fountains, which without delay
 Towards the ocean do their streams display;
 And (as if over-tired) make their graves
 Betwixt the northern and the southern waves.
 West, and beneath this dismall forest lies
 A fruitful vale, in form triangle-wise,
 Wherein stands TAVESTOCK, whose glorious state
 Hath much been dark'ned by the checks of Fate.
 But yet her Abbies and her moniments' story
 Are strong asseitors of her ancient glory;
 Trading (the life of places) here's to pull
 The finest locks of all the Cornish wool,
 This into yarn, her people doth convert,
 Which other tradesmen elsewhere impart,

To make those famous serges, which are hurled
 By ship from England through the boundless world :
 Yet not the meanest part of wool there brought,
 Is by herself into fine Kersies wrought,
 Whose noted goodness in the strength and wear
 Need not the passport of the Aulniger.
 Her suburbs or precincts six miles do stretch,
 Upon the east and westward four do reach,
 One mile towards the south she branches forth
 And claimeth two miles straight upon the north ;
 Abounds with tythings and fair villages,
 Woods, waters, pleasant groves and tillages ;
 Her grazing pasture, Carmel-like for feeding,
 Her mountain's top like Bashan hills for breeding.
 Her earth is fruitful, and her ground is free,
 To lend all sorts of grain to industry.
 So fam'd for leeks and onions in this isle,
 As if she suck'd her fat from Egypt's Nile,
 Her well-filled channels for the people's use
 Through every street their christal streams diffuse,
 Those (pallisadoed with revengeful power)
 The stony pavements do most neatly scour ;
 Nor are they barren, for her shallowest brook
 Affords rich matter for the angler's hook,
 Salmon, trout, peal, and other luscious fish,
 With her's no dainty, but an usual dish.
 Store likewise of all fennish fowl do swim
 In winter time upon sweet Tavy's brim ;
 And other kind of covies fly and hop
 From each valley to each mountain's top ;
 Her fields and woods yield likewise noblest game,
 With hound and hawk the hunters range the same,
 To start the hare, and rouse the fallow deer,
 Pursue the fox with ho ! see ho ! see here.
 Her air without is wholesome, and within
 Her bowels stored with choice copper and tin * ;
 But yet observe her more transcendent worth,
 Her happy soil hath nurtured and brought forth
 More noted men than all their bordering towns,
 Or any one place in Britannia's bounds,
 Whose names have been and are of such account
 They've triumph rode from Berwick to the Mount,

* One of the four stannaries of Devon.

Upon the wings of fame for poetry,
 Profoundest law, and school-divinity.
 Rhetorick, gosple preaching, and such parts
 As are most proper to the sons of arts.
 Go to the Inns of Court, and there demand
 Who most renowned amongst the gown-men stand ?
 Who could unfold the enigmas of the law,
 Resolve thy doubts, find or correct a flaw,
 Who most employ'd among the sages were,
 At Common Pleas, King's Bench, or Chancery bar,
 Whose chambers most the thronging clients ply'd,
 They'll name three men brought up by Tavy's side*.
 Go to our Oxford University,
 Ask who is best skilled in divinity,
 Who hath the fathers or the school-men read,
 They'll single out a man at Tav'stock bred †.
 Enquire agen in whom there may be found
 Galen and Paracelsus' virtues bound,
 Whose physick seldom due success did want,
 And thou'lt assigned be to a Tav'stock plant ‡.
 Thence walk into our great Metropolis,
 Demand for preaching who most noted is,
 Whose notions are most quaint, and whose great pains
 Are most enamelled with rhetoric strains,
 Ask who for those things hath the lawrell won,
 And they'll assure thee 'tis a Tav'stock man §.
 Go ask the famous poets of our times
 Who best could fancy in seraphick rhimes,
 Whose muse drank deepest at Font Hellicon,
 They'll tell Tav'stock Browne's profoundly done ||.

* The author of this piece has the following notes, printed on the side of the verses, explanatory of his allusions to the great men in question. Note 1. is—"John Glanville, Serjeant at Law, one of the judges of the Common Pleas. Sir John Glanville, Kt. his son, Serjeant at Law. Sir John Maynard, Kt. Serjeant at Law."

† "Dr. Joseph Maynard, late Rector of Exon Coll. Oxon."

‡ "The worthy Peter Elliot, Doctor of Physick, Oxon."

§ The author says in his note,—"The Rev. Dr. Calamy, London, hath enjoyed this man's labour more than 20 years." This would go far to prove that the poem was written in the time of William and Mary; as Benjamin Calamy (here alluded to) served long in London, and there died in their reign. Sherlock preached his funeral sermon. I have found no other authority than this poem for his being a Tavistock man. I have, therefore, not included Calamy in our biography.

|| "Thomas Browne, born in Tavestock."

Go coast Great Britain's Isle, and in each creek
 Among the noble sons of Neptune seek
 Who, has swam farthest in the liquid seas,
 Or who first ranged the world's antipodes :
 Who round about the world's vast globe did roll,
 Even from the arctick to the antarctick pole ;
 They will with one consent this verdict make,
 'Twas our IMMORTAL MORTAL, TAV'STOCK DRAKE*.
 Get also 'mongst great Mars his thundering crew,
 And all his warlike champions over view,
 Search whether can be found again the like
 For noble prowess to our TAV'STOCK PIKE †,—
 In whose renowned never-dying name
 Live England's honour, and the Spaniard's shame ;
 Advance then, Tav'stock, and no longer lye
 Enrolled in sheets of such obscurity.
 May generations on thyself insert
 Proportion'd honour to thy great desert ;
 And when that Envy dare to wound thy fame,
 Let her grow leaner by thy rising name.

Having now given you this very curious encomium on our town, I will not venture to add a word more in its praise. I am sorry I do not know the name of the ingenious author, who took so much pains to record the fame of his native place, as he really deserves to be remembered ; but all the efforts I have made to discover it have proved vain. He certainly might be styled our Laureate ; and but for his poem we should never have known that we had such a "Tav'stock plant" as the "worthy Peter Elliot, Doctor of Physic," nor that "Dr. Joseph Maynard, of Exon Coll., Oxford" was also "Tav'stock bred." I doubt the author's correctness about Calamy, and

* Note three says,—“ The renowned heroe, Sir Francis Drake, born at Crowndle in Tavestock.”

† Note four states,—“ Captain Richard Pike, who fought three Spaniards at once, chosen out of an army of six thousand, and *beat them.*” This must have been the famous Captain Pike, whose name so often occurs in the voyages of Drake.

though I have taken much pains to satisfy that doubt, hitherto I have been unsuccessful. Benjamin Calamy was the son of the nonconformist, and came into the Established Church; he is spoken of by Sherlock as eminent for his piety, learning, and eloquence; but where he was born is not stated.

I have the honour to remain,

My dear Sir,

Very respectfully and truly yours,

A. E. BRAY.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Maristow ; its ancient church—Saxon church and font—Tomb of Sir Thomas Wise ; mutilated in the civil wars—Country about Maristow very beautiful—Sydenham House ; it lies in a valley—The picturesque bridge—Delightful woods—The house—Interior courts—Arms of Wise—The gable injured by modern windows—The old gentleman who was the former proprietor of Sydenham—Large room—The Banquet-room ; injured by the carved oak being painted over—The hall small and low—Sydenham garrisoned for King Charles—Taken by Col. Holbourn in 1645—The left gable in a ruinous condition—The family injured by the fines, imprisonments, and sequestrations, the consequences of their loyalty to the unfortunate king—Great staircase—The upper rooms—The old pictures—Nine daughters of Sir Thomas Wise ; represented all beauties—Very curious and interesting portrait of the stately Lady Mary Cary—Pictures injured by cleaning—Portrait of the sister of the famous rebel, Mr. St. John—Portrait of the gallant Col. Arthur Tremaine—Portrait of Bridget Hatherleigh, heiress of Sydenham, and wife of the Colonel—A very clever picture, being the portrait of a lady, and probably painted by Sir Peter Lely—Splendid red bed, temp. Charles I.—Furniture curious—Cabinets—The chamber reminds the writer of a romantic traditional tale of the time of the civil wars—The tale told—Hangings, arras, &c.—Magnificent horse furniture for the sheriff's lady in the olden time—The shifting panel—The secret door—The concealed staircase ; to what it leads—Eccentricities of the old gentleman, the late Mr. Tremaine—An account of the discovery of some most curious and original letters of the great Sir Bevil Grenville at Stow House, Cornwall—Mr. D'Israeli written to concerning them—His answer—Report of their being destroyed—Amusing anecdotes of the old gentleman—Story of Fuseli's night-mare, &c.—Arms of Tremaine—Antiquity of the family—Twin brothers in the time of Elizabeth—Story of twin sisters of the present day—Lamerton church noticed—Collacombe House ; ancient seat of the Tremaines—Old monuments—Rowe, the poet, said to be born at Lamerton—A Tremaine founded an

hospital at the west end of Tavistock, temp. Richard II.—Thomas Tremaine, the father of sixteen children—Edmund, the second son, followed the fortunes of Edward, Earl of Devon—He suffers with his master; is racked in the tower to discover the secrets of Elizabeth in Mary's time—Rewarded for his zeal, patience, and courage on the maiden queen's accession to the throne—Romantic and interesting particulars respecting the twin brothers, Andrew and Nicholas Tremaine—Their habits, feelings, affections, and pursuits the same—They volunteer to join the English forces in France—Fall before Newhaven in 1563—Their epitaph—Excursion to Mevey—The church—The antique oak—Broken base of a cross—Old house—Ancient character of the houses and cottages around—Swarm of children—Set off for Sheep's-tor—Up-hill road—Autumnal effects—Beautiful scenery—Fagging walk—A striking scene—An attempt to give some idea of it in description—Arrive at the village of Sheep's-tor—Inquire the way for the palace of the Pixies—Visit the church; an ancient building—The school-house; a peep into it—Reflections suggested by a visit to the church-yard—A beautiful passage on the village church and church-yards extracted—Set off for the Pixies' house—The road to it presents scenes of great grandeur and beauty—Character of Sheep's-tor; its blocks of granite, &c.—A beautiful peasant girl becomes guide to the Pixies' house—Handsome women and children at Sheep's-tor—Women of Cornwall and Devon remarkable for beauty—The Pixies' house described—Difficult and dangerous of access—Attempt to climb to it amid the rocks—Obliged to give up the attempt on account of the difficulty—Return by a shorter road—Pass an old house—Reach Mevey—Melancholy and affecting circumstances attending the death of two persons, by cholera, at Sheep's-tor, in 1832.

—

Vicarage, Tavistock, March 5th, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

I PURPOSE in this letter giving you some account of an excursion we made in the autumn of 1831, to a very interesting old house in this neighbourhood; and one that deserves notice in an historical view, as, during the great rebellion, it was gallantly defended in support of the royal cause.

In our way to Sydenham, for so is the old house

called, we visited the church of Maristow, which is beautifully situated on a hill, with a range of fine and venerable lime-trees in front of the sacred edifice. There cannot be a doubt this building is of great antiquity, as we observed above the interior doorway, that leads from the porch into the body of the church, a Saxon arch. I have no doubt it was the remains of the original entrance. This curious arch was deeply buried in whitewash. The font is also Saxon, and of very rich and singular workmanship.

In the church we found an elaborate but heavy tomb of Sir Thomas Wise, Kt., and his lady (Sir Thomas was the builder of Sydenham), temp. Charles I. The effigy of the knight, the size of life, represents him in armour, lying under a canopy, with his wife by his side. The female head is very characteristic; and has that fleshy appearance considered by artists as forming so great a merit in the works of the chisel. What a pity her nose has been knocked off! I saw no inscriptions; but when I recollected this tomb had been erected in the days of the unfortunate Charles, and that the church was near Sydenham house, I felt quite certain that the violence evidently employed in its mutilation had been the handywork of the Covenanters; and I thought of Clarendon and Sir Walter Scott, who have immortalized the days of rebellion. The hands of both figures had been knocked off; and oh, monstrous misappropriation! some wise modern, wishing to repair the damage, had not only made the small mistake of placing the large rough hands of the good knight on the lady; but had also joined to, and decorated his stumps with her slender and

delicate fingers ! We saw the figures of the children round four sides of the tomb ; these were all statues placed on a deep ledge. They had also not been spared in the war made upon the church. At the back of the monument (for the faces of the two principal recumbent figures look to the east) there were seen kneeling, facing each other, a youth and a damsel praying at a desk. These effigies were likewise in the dresses of the time of Charles I. There were, also, on the ledge, two cradles in marble, with infants in them ; the babes being attired in the richest lace, which was most delicately carved ; and there was another little child represented sitting in a chair, and dressed in lace from head to foot. The cradles were square in shape, and not made to rock ; the children were all as chubby as young cherubs are usually represented.

On quitting the church, we continued our ride through a wild, hilly, and picturesque scene, till we arrived at Sydenham, the object of our journey. This most interesting old house was commenced in the time of Elizabeth, and finished in that of James I., by the knight whose effigy is above described. The plan of the house forms the letter E, a compliment often paid by builders to the maiden queen. Sydenham lies in a valley ; a clear stream runs in front of it, leaving space for the road. Over this stream there is a bridge, above which, arising from the banks, hang some fine old trees. On crossing, the road runs up a very steep hill, through a thick wood of such beauty, that nothing more delightful in its kind can be found in Devon. It is to be lamented that a portion of this noble wood was felled by the late possessor, who thus turned the pictur-

esque plantations of his forefathers into money; and truly he could have had no love of old trees, for he actually chose for his lopping the very spot that is seen from the house. This is now replanted; but years must pass away before it can regain anything like its original aspect. The high lands in the immediate vicinity of this princely domain are beautiful in their forms, and, for the most part, richly clothed with wood.

Before the house, which is surrounded by a wall, a pair of very high and open-worked iron gates give access to the interior of the court. There the entire front of the extensive range of buildings presents at one view a magnificent example of the domestic architecture of the age of Elizabeth. Above the centre doorway, to which you ascend by a flight of steps, is seen, within a niche, the arms of Wise, carved, painted, and gilt. The picturesque gables that project from the body of the mansion to make the shape of the letter E, the mullions that support the windows, the grey colour of the stone, the massive, but not inelegant, architecture, all strike the eye of the visitant, and excite so much admiration, that one cannot but regret the days are gone by when such a house as this was the distinguishing and necessary possession of every old English family in the country. I was not a little vexed to find that the gable, to the right hand as we entered, had been despoiled of its beautiful old windows, and common modern sashes substituted! Those removed (judging from what was left in the opposite and corresponding gable) had been very large and handsome, indeed beautiful in their construction, and must have been quite as warm; so that there was no

accounting for the change, excepting that it must have been a whim of a certain old Mr. Tremaine, the father of the late possessor of Sydenham, who was born in the year 1708, and died in 1808. He certainly entertained a particular dislike to everything in true taste, or as it originally stood; for this old gentleman it was who actually took the trouble not only to alter the windows, but to paint a magnificently carved oak staircase with the colours of pink and white! A large room, called the banquet-room, likewise carved in oak, in a way to excite admiration, and most tastefully gilt in various parts, so as to relieve the dark brown of the oak in the carving, he caused to be buried in common house-paint; and had the massive granite chimneypiece, in the great hall, painted likewise! I would have assigned to this worthy a paint pot for his arms, with two brushes proper, by way of supporters. Yet I ought to speak very reverently of him, for he was the father of my husband's godfather.

On entering, I was somewhat disappointed in the hall; it is built too low for such a mansion. Several coats of arms, painted and gilt, but not by the old gentleman, adorn its sides. This hall bears the date of 1658, the time the house underwent some repairs; no doubt they were needed after the civil wars. Sydenham was garrisoned for King Charles, and taken by the Parliament forces, commanded by Colonel Holbourn, in January, 1645. One gable of the house is in a very ruinous condition; we were told it had never been finished. This we considered a mistake; and that the ruinous state in which it is now seen was most probably the consequence of the siege it underwent in behalf of royalty. It is very

likely the family to whom it belonged could not afford such extensive repairs as were required to restore the building to its original condition ; since the Restoration found them poor, having suffered severely by fine, sequestration, and imprisonment ; favours which the liberty men of Cromwell's time were particularly free in conferring upon all those who feared God and honoured the King after the old fashion. I never can believe that a man so costly as Sir Thomas Wise should build this house, live to see it finished, and bequeath it to his son Edward, and leave one gable of it imperfect in the interior ; the very carved doors, which still hang decaying on their rusty hinges, contradict the assertion : it is far more likely that the Parliament troopers made wild work in the house ; or that this gable had been converted into guard-rooms, &c., for stores and ammunition ; no wonder, therefore, it was sacked and ruined.

I saw the place in too hurried a manner (not wishing to intrude upon the present proprietors, who most kindly indulged us with seeing it) to make very minute observations ; but I was particularly struck with the great staircase ; so noble in its proportions, so richly carved, and lighted by a window above eighteen feet in height. We ascended, and went from room to room above. The pictures were numerous, and of great interest. Nine daughters of Sir Thomas Wise, all beauties, and each painted on a separate canvass, still shone in the loveliness of youth, and in the graceful dresses of the time of Charles I., when ladies had not yet shut their eyes to the beauty of the antique statues, nor had fallen into the madness of fancying that a waist

resembling the body of a wasp (a fashion alike destructive of health and of true proportion) was a beauty to be purchased by the squeezing and torture of tight stays, till the very bones are forbidden to grow, and the frame becomes the prey of various and often fatal diseases *. These daughters of Sir Thomas Wise are represented with the hair low on the crown of the head, whilst only a few short, thin curls play over the forehead, and hang in full and thick clusters in the neck; through whose ringlets might be seen, in some of them, the double drop earring of pearl, so common at that period. Several of these heads were really very handsome, and, though not painted by a Vandyke, were far superior to the productions of the subsequent English painters (Sir Peter Lely and Kneller excepted) till the days of Reynolds and Romney, when the English school of portrait painting was, in great excellence, revived.

In another room we saw a picture, though much decayed and without a frame, of great interest.— This represented the stately daughter of the Viscount Carrickfergus, married first to Sir Thomas Wise (by whose side she rests in the church), secondly to Mr. T. Harris, and lastly to Sir Henry Carew (pronounced Cary.) In the picture there is the grand, self-satisfied, and studied air of a very fine lady (not very beautiful, but having on all the decorations of beauty she could possibly hang about her) whilst sitting for her picture. The dress is of

* The writer of this letter having herself known two cases of remarkably fine young women, who, it was proved by surgical examination after death, had endured the greatest tortures of their lengthened illness, and died from the effects of tight stays, takes this opportunity of adding one warning more to the folly, the madness, the sin of a practice which consigns so many to the grave.

the time of Charles I., but the most gay I ever saw of that period; and as a proof that she was determined to exhibit something out of the common mode, suspended by a chain and fastened to her bosom, she had, upon a rich lace collar, an enormous watch, that very much resembled a warming pan. This, in her day, was a more rare trinket than it is at present; but I never before recollect having seen a watch so placed in an old picture. She displays, also, a large ring on one of her fingers, on which, according to tradition, there was engraved this posy in allusion to her three husbands:—

“Thrice happy Mary
Harris, Wise and Cary.”

This portrait is altogether so curious, that it well deserves to be framed, very carefully cleaned, and engraved. Cleaning pictures no ignorant person should attempt; indeed, in this collection, I observed three clever flower and fruit pieces, that had been really beautifully painted, entirely spoilt by the delicate glazing of the transparent colours on an opaque body (the mode generally adopted by Venetian artists) having been entirely destroyed by some rude hand in cleaning their surface. I regret I had not time to note the names of all the different pictures that struck us as being of interest. Amongst others there was a very good one, in the school of Vandyke, probably by a pupil of that great master, which represented the sister of the famous Mr. St. John, who acted so much in concert with Hampden and Pym during the rebellion. This lady was, by marriage, connected with the family of Tremaine, hence we find her picture preserved at this house. Over the chimneypiece, in

the same lower apartment, we observed the portrait of the gallant Col. Arthur Tremaine, who lived to see the monarchy, for which he had fought and bled, restored; and to wed with fair Mistress Bridget Hatherleigh, who at that period had become, for want of male issue, the heiress of Sydenham. Bridget was granddaughter, in the female line, to Sir Thomas Wise (for his son Edward died unmarried), and by her marriage with the brave Colonel the house and lands of Sydenham came to the family of Tremaine. The very letter of introduction presented by the Colonel when he came wooing to the young heiress is still preserved in the house; and I am promised a copy of this very curious epistle. The writer, I understand, in introducing the lover, did not mince the matter; but tells the fair Bridget, that as Col. Arthur's lands and her own lie so near together, she earnestly recommends that both estates may be legally made "conjugal."

How far the lady relished this reference to her property instead of herself, I do not know; but as the Colonel's picture represents a fine soldier-like looking man, one that would speak frankly in love or in war, I dare say she was well pleased; and he probably thought more favourably of Bridget's beauty than I did of the record of it on the canvass that still hangs near his own. I fancied I could detect a scowl on the brow, and an air of firmness and authority, that told tales of a love of petticoat government. I saw many other old pictures, and heard the names of most of them. There were two or three gloomy-looking Roundheads: they had no business amidst so much loyalty. There was also

a very clever picture, about the time of Sir Peter Lely, of a lady remarkable for the grace and elegance of her form. The name of the painter was unknown; but from the style and beautiful colouring in the flesh tints, I could not help thinking this was a portrait by Sir Peter himself.

In one of the sleeping chambers there is a most splendid red bed, of the age of Charles I. It had three prince's feathers, as they are called, within the head of the bed, formed of the same stuff with the furniture. The whole was lofty and elegant, unlike any modern couch, and very low and comfortable for the sleeper. I saw, likewise, a great number of old chests; and felt, I confess, a good deal of woman's curiosity to be peeping into them; fancying that possibly might there be hidden some treasured narrative, some forgotten papers of the eventful times that every object in the house brought vividly before the mind. There were Indian chests too, and old chairs, and rich chased metal tables, and the most costly ancient cabinets, that again set me longing to be peeping—and I thought of the old names by which the little drawers and boxes in such were called,—the *shuttles*; and I thought too of an old story that I had once a mind to turn into a novel, about a lady who died of a broken heart, and would never tell the cause—but when on her death-bed, she pointed with her hand to the cabinet that stood near, and said, “Lift the second shuttle,” she paused;—and ere she could speak again, the hand of death was upon her. Her husband rushed from the bed; and scarcely had she breathed her last, when he found too truly the cause of her melancholy fate revealed by raising

“the shuttle.” Before her marriage she had been beloved by a gentleman of great worth, and, more in caprice than from any real displeasure, had slighted him. In a moment of wounded feeling, he mounted his horse, rushed to the battle, and after standing near Charles I. to the last, fell on Newberry field, covered with wounds. The lady had married an officer in the Parliament forces, and convinced, even on her bridal day, that she could neither forget her old love nor be happy with her new, to whom her father had given her hand, she wrote a letter revealing the secret of her soul, and begging to be buried near William. On the envelope were these words beneath a black seal:—

“When I am dead and cold,
Then let the truth be told.”

This apartment at Sydenham, its furniture, the bed, the cabinet (all of the time of Charles I.), so exactly suited as an appropriate scene for this melancholy tale, that imagination in a moment suggested the rest of the picture; and I fancied I could see the dying lady, and the husband, and all the painful circumstances of that remarkable event. What a subject would this tale afford for the masterly writer who so powerfully deals in such scenes—the author of the ‘*Passages from the Diary of a Physician!*’* In the chamber I am describing, a whole and complete specimen of the domestic furniture of the period might be found, even to the elegant toys for the ladies; such as letter-stands, pineushion, a box for needle-work, &c. The chairs were covered with what is called the cut and double-

* First published in ‘Blackwood’s Magazine.’

piled red velvet, in the most beautiful patterns. I saw also in this house, what I had now and then read of in old books, a chamber hung with "watchet hangings." These hangings were of damask, within a frame of oak, and were suspended in the compartments of the wainscot. It occurred to me that here might be seen the distinction between the "arras" and the "hangings." The hangings being, as above stated, hung like pictures on the walls; the arras (originally a rich stuff, manufactured at Arras, in France) being, on the contrary, a piece of long and loose tapestry hanging from the ceiling to the floor, so that any one could slip behind it, as did Polonius, when he paid so dear for hiding. There is still to be seen at Cotele House, in this neighbourhood, a fine specimen of a chamber hung with arras.

At Sydenham we saw too, what I am sure Sir Samuel Meyrick would gladly possess, to place in his superb collection of old armour, &c., at Goodrich Court. One of the Tremaine family having been, to use the old phrase, "pricked down for sheriff of the shire," his lady, who I suppose on some state occasion was to ride with her husband in his public capacity, had such a set of horse furniture for her palfrey, as exceeds in magnificence anything I ever fancied of the kind. It is of red velvet, so beautifully fine and closely woven, that not even the smallest root of a thread could be seen; and so carefully was it preserved, that it looked as if just new from the shop. These housings were made to slip over the saddle, and hang loose by the sides like a horse-cloth. They are most elegantly ornamented with the finest silver lace, that appears almost new; and

the crupper, &c., are decorated with a number of silver ornaments representing cockle-shells, chased in the most delicate manner. We saw also the holsters for the sheriff's pistols, and very splendid they were. The whole of these things did not appear to be older than the time of William and Mary: I judge of their age by their corresponding with the like decorations seen in the pictures of that period.

In the banquet-room, where there was such a magnificent carved oak panelling (painted white by the old gentleman), there was one panel contrived to open the same as a door, but not having the slightest appearance that it would do so when seen closed. This opens to a dark, stone closet, with a flight of winding stairs that leads up to the very top of the house, and is secretly connected with other chambers. For many years it has not been explored, owing to its ruinous condition. This is a pity, for the search might lead to the discovery of something hidden during the civil wars. How much I should like, assisted by the light of a torch, to explore these unknown holes and corners of Sydenham; and to disturb the owls and bats that, I dare say, have contrived through some aperture to take possession. I can well believe that the house might have been searched, even by Cromwell's troopers, and the dark closet and the winding stairs have never been detected.

Mr. Tremaine, the present worthy and respected proprietor, does not often reside in this princely but decaying mansion. He inherited it by will from the last old gentleman (he dying unmarried), who, though he had never seen him, left it on account of

his bearing the name, and being a younger branch of the family, with whom however he had kept up no connection.

The late Mr. Tremaine was a good man, kind, sociable, but eccentric. Being single, rich, and having much church patronage, he had many hangers-on; and his house and friendship were objects eagerly sought after by the poor clergy, who longed to find subsistence in the solid patronage of a living. One of those on whom he had bestowed the latter died before his friend, and he left Mr. Tremaine all he had in the world. Dr. Geach, an eminent physician, late of Plymouth, wrote on him the following epitaph, which is certainly somewhat equivocal; for one cannot but perceive that it may have been meant as a compliment to the deceased at the expense of his brethren:

“This was a grateful priest; his wealth, though small,
He to his patron gave, who gave him all.”

Whilst we were conversing with the present proprietor, that gentleman communicated to us the following most interesting circumstance:—

Some years since, Mr. Tremaine represented the county of Cornwall, and whilst canvassing for votes, he chanced to solicit the suffrage of a respectable farmer, who lived in an old house called Stow, in the county. Stow was once the residence of the great Sir Bevil Grenville, who lost his life in Landsdown fight, near Bath. The farmer had discovered in a lumber room of the house an old trunk; when, on examining its contents, he found it contained a mass of papers, all of the time of Charles I., and amongst them a variety of *original letters*: some

addressed to Sir Bevil Grenville; others, copies of letters written by him, in his own hand.

Mr. Tremaine told us, that the farmer was a man of a strong mind, naturally inquisitive after knowledge, and so well had he employed his evenings over these curious documents, that he had made himself familiar with their contents, and showed Mr. T. many of the most interesting. The subjects of one or two of these that gentleman repeated to us. There was a letter by a friend addressed to Sir Bevil, endeavouring to dissuade him from joining the king's cause; and pointing out the dangers to himself and family that must arise from his doing so. With this was found the copy of Sir Bevil's answer, giving, to use Mr. Tremaine's own words, "in manly language," his reasons, alike generous and disinterested, for the determination he had formed to join the injured king. Another admirable letter was addressed by Sir Bevil to the tutor of his son at Oxford, charging him to hold the lad prepared to follow in the steps of his father, as he was resolved not to withhold his son from doing his duty to God and to the king. Clarendon, if my memory serves me truly, speaks of this youth, and says he was but fifteen years old when he took the field.

I understood from Mr. Tremaine that all these letters, so curiously discovered, were highly honourable to Sir Bevil; and that they threw some additional light on the conduct of the royal cause in the West. I felt so deeply interested in the account thus given, that I begged to know if it were possible we might be suffered to examine the papers and to take copies. Mr. Tremaine told me he had copied

one or two sentences of one of the letters, which I should hereafter see, but the letters themselves were no longer within reach; for as he had talked a good deal about them after his interview with the farmer, the affair came at length to the knowledge of Lord Carteret, the proprietor of Stow, who sent for the whole collection, and removed them to his own house.

On our return from Sydenham, Sir Bevil Grenville and his letters still occupied my mind. I knew that Mr. D'Israeli was then employed in completing a work so valuable to English history, his Commentaries on the reign of Charles I. I knew how much that gentleman sought after and valued original papers; and I could not help thinking what a prize these would be to him. I was not acquainted with him; but I thought that circumstance ought not to be of sufficient consideration to prevent my doing what might prove a real service to literature; and, if the truth must be spoken, my enthusiastic veneration both for King Charles and Sir Bevil Grenville made me feel a wish that these papers, honourable no doubt to the memory of both, should be brought forward by one so able to do them justice. This consideration gave me courage; I procured, from my own publisher, the address of Mr. D'Israeli, and wrote him a letter informing him all I knew of the circumstance, and pointing out where the treasure might be found. I was soon gratified by the most handsome letter of thanks from Mr. D'Israeli, who had, even before he answered me, set on foot some inquiry, but had not then met with any friend who could give an introduction to Lord Carteret in order to see the papers.

Surely the name and pursuits of one who has done so much for English literature would have been sufficient.

On this subject I have only to add, that not long before I commenced my letter to you, I received a piece of information, which I most heartily hope may have arisen from some mistake, for doubtless it cannot be true—namely, that these curious papers have been destroyed. If they have *not* been destroyed, it is to be hoped they will one day see the light, as valuable documents of the times in which the writers flourished, and Sir Bevil perished, in so good a cause.

I have heard Mr. Bray relate many circumstances connected with Sydenham, that occurred whilst he visited there when a child. One or two of these are not a little amusing; I shall therefore endeavour to repeat them, as nearly as I can in his own words:—

“The old house, the stories connected with it, and the air of antiquity which every thing presented at Sydenham, made a deep impression on me when a boy; so that my visits there were not a little accompanied with a feeling of awe; and one of them was made in a manner that astonished others as much as it did myself. My godfather (who used at sixty to be styled *young* Mr. Tremaine, as his father, who was living at ninety, was called *old* Mr. Tremaine) one day brought me from school near Exeter. Our progress was slow, for though his carriage, in which he travelled, might be called light, yet the roads were heavy and so bad, that the shades of night surrounded us before we got to the end of our journey. My godfather, who always travelled with a servant mounted as an outrider,

commanded lights; when, to my inexpressible surprise on witnessing the preparation, a long pole (stowed somewhere about the carriage in readiness for the purpose) was produced, at the top of which was affixed a large globular lantern, that, on being lighted resembled a fire balloon, and made a most extraordinary appearance. Mounted and carrying aloft pole and lantern, the outrider went before the coach to the end of our journey, causing every "belated peasant" we chanced to meet on the road to fly before us, alarmed at so unusual a spectacle, and very possibly, when he saw it pursue its sinuous course, like a serpent, towards him, apprehending more than mortal danger in its approach.

"I remember two instances of terror that occurred to me, when a child, at Sydenham, which I connected at the moment with the marvellous and supernatural that filled my head whenever I visited that place.

"Young Mr. Tremaine had decorated the walls of an apartment, adjoining the ancient hall, with a print of Fuseli's Night Mare. It represented a horrid demon squatting on the bosom of a beautiful woman asleep upon a bed, and a mare's head was thrusting itself through the curtains.

"To a child the picture was sufficiently frightful of itself: but in addition to this, as, from the dim light burning in the room where I was left alone, I could only see its general outline, and stood gazing on it, and thinking of devils and witches, I heard a most ominous noise—stump, stump, on the floor of the hall, in slow and regular succession, with a slight soft step between each stump, without seeing

any living being (though the door stood open to the hall) to whom I could attribute such sounds. I was but a mere child, and I dared not venture forth to find out the cause; yet I well remember the chill of superstitious terror that ran through my veins, and the relief it was to my mind when, on communicating the circumstance to my father, as a great secret, he dispelled the mystery by telling me that one of the old footmen had a wooden leg, that he was noted for marching with it in a most solemn pace, and that no doubt his parading through an obscure part of the hall must have made itself audible in the apartment where I was viewing Fuseli's Night Mare with fear and wonder.

“On another evening the maids at Sydenham had left me, before putting me to bed, in the large old kitchen by myself. A hound, escaped from the kennel, ran in, when immediately I heard a loud exclamation of ‘Out, Sir, get out, to kennel with you, out I say!’ The dog looked about him, saw no one but myself, a little fellow for whom he felt no fear, and did not stir. But immediately after commenced, in smart strokes, the smacking of a whip, which so frightened the intruder, that he hung his tail between his legs, and ran howling off. I was now almost as frightened as the dog, well knowing there was nobody but myself in the old kitchen, and yet the sounds came from the lower end of it. I took courage to see what it could be that made the noise, when I found, to my surprise, that an animal, of the feathered tribe, was thus exercising an assumed power over one of the four-footed creation, for it was no other than a parrot in its cage, that had thus commanded the hound to turn out by a most dexterous imitation of word and whip.”

These, and many other little circumstances of my husband's childish days connected with Sydenham he has often told me; and I, being very fond of stories, anecdotes, &c., whether they concern adults, old people, or young children, have carefully treasured them up, in what I once heard a Turk, who spoke broken English, call his "knowledge box," meaning his head.

The family of Tremaine is of ancient standing; their arms, in some measure, form a rebus of their name; they consist of three united arms with clenched hands; and two hands above support a Saracen's head as the crest. I amuse myself with fancying the origin of these bearings must have been that three brothers fought gallantly in the Holy Land, and, having overcome, by their united efforts, some fierce Saracen chief, they brought his head in triumph to Richard of the lion heart. Hence he gave them their arms, and the surname of *Tremaine*, as the three hands that had united to do him such good service in the holy wars. I dare say the present Mr. Tremaine, if he ever sees this letter, will not be a little amused at my finding an origin for his family arms. But the Herald's College, I have heard, are never at a loss in these matters, when called on to satisfy a doubtful point, so I may plead a very high authority for a trifling exercise of the inventive faculty, or, as Butler says—

"For every why to have a wherefore."

However, I need not invent either honours or romance for the family of Tremaine; the first is theirs by a long line of brave and loyal ancestry, and is still worthily sustained in the present representative of their house. And for the last there is a real story of twin brothers, in past days, that has in it romance

enough for a novel, and proves that Shakspeare did not deal in the improbable when he wrote his play of the 'Comedy of Errors.' Indeed I once witnessed an instance of the kind myself, which, had I not seen it, I could scarcely have credited. I remember twin sisters, who used, when I lived in town, for years to sit near me at church, and I could never tell one from the other, if I met either alone; nor did their most intimate friends know any difference, so minutely, so exactly did they resemble each other in every point. Of these young ladies a pleasant story went abroad; but if true or not I cannot pretend to say, as I heard it only from the current report of the neighbourhood in which they lived. One of them had been on a visit to a friend in the country, and there captivated a young gentleman, who became her accepted lover. He followed her to town to obtain her friends' consent; was shown into a room on his arrival, where the other sister, whom he had never seen, was sitting alone, and instantly mistaking her for his betrothed, addressed her as such. The young lady, who had a mind to keep up the joke, let him go on for a few minutes, when the door opened, and in came the other twin. The lover, astonished to find two sweethearts where he expected but one, and not knowing which was the right, felt himself under the necessity of begging they would be kind enough to tell him to which lady he was engaged. This story may have its origin in truth, and been improved upon by the voice of common fame, which seldom lessens wonders; but its very circulation where the sisters lived proves how exactly they must have been alike, for such a tale to gain any ground at all.

The story of the twin Tremaines is not a whit less wonderful, as I am now about to show, on the authority of Prince.

There is, nearly three miles from Tavistock, a pretty sequestered village called Lamerton; of which Mr. Rowe was the rector, and where, it is said, in this part of the world (though Johnson says otherwise), his son, the celebrated dramatic poet, was born. A small stream waters this picturesque spot; many fine old trees, the surrounding hills and valleys, and several thatched cottages, render it altogether a scene of great variety and most pleasing in its character. The old church, too, has that interest which ever accompanies the Gothic and venerable monuments of past days, when the house of prayer was a house of beauty and repose, and the nobles and wealthy of the land thought it an honour to contribute to the building of the church. It is no longer so; well, indeed, might Espriella, the delightful Spanish traveller, say, "as we think more of ourselves, and less of religion, more of this world, and less of the next, we build better houses and worse churches." In those days, too, the clergy were held in that reverence which their sacred character and their high mission entitled them to receive from all orders and classes of men; when the world was wise enough to be taught the way to heaven by their appointed guides, and did not go about to lose themselves in wandering after every new sect, whose chief merit was a heresy in opposition to the Established Church.

In the parish of Lamerton is Collacombe*, an old house that for generations was the seat of the

* In the hall window of this house are 3545 small panes of glass.

Tremaines (in their origin a Cornish family) before the marriage of Col. Arthur with Bridget Hatherleigh induced them to remove their dwelling to the more splendid mansion of Sydenham. When we visited the church, we were much pleased with viewing the old monument there existing of the family of Tremaine. The figures, in high relief in front of the base, are executed in a very superior style of art, and deserve well to be drawn and engraved, before time shall have destroyed them altogether; for they have already suffered many injuries; and the following tale will serve to show how much a feeling of more than ordinary interest connects itself with this old tomb in the little sequestered church of Lamerton. If Rowe might be born here or not, he must often have visited it whilst his father was rector; and I can fancy his eye and heart must have frequently been engaged in contemplating the monument; for a poet could not look on this silent record of the dead, whose lives had been so marked with wonder from the very hour of their birth, and whose mortal career had closed under such melancholy circumstances, without feeling that generous sympathy, that tenderness and pity, the inseparable accompaniments of a poetic mind; feelings, unless sadly blunted and perverted, that add the charm of pure and natural affections to his verse.

But before I speak of the twin brothers, I must say a few words respecting their father and his family. One of his ancestors, in the reign of Richard II., founded an hospital at the west end of the town of Tavistock, and dedicated it to St. George. Thomas Tremaine, the parent of the celebrated

twins, had in all eight sons and as many daughters. Edmund, the second of this numerous issue, became the devoted follower of Edward Earl of Devon and Marquess of Exeter, and suffered severely by his unshaken attachment to that nobleman during his many troubles. Indeed, the fidelity and courage of Edmund were put to a hard trial, which he sustained with noble constancy and resolution; for the Marquess, having been committed to the Tower, as well as the Princess Elizabeth, on suspicion of being concerned in Wyatt's rebellion, Queen Mary, or her counsellors, thought that young Tremaine must have some knowledge of his master's affairs. They caused him, therefore, to be racked in the Tower of London, in the hope that he would reveal enough to prove the guilt of the Marquess and the Lady Elizabeth. But no tortures could compel him to accuse the innocent, or to betray the confidence of his friend. To the honour of the maiden Queen be it spoken, she did not forget the fidelity he had evinced under such a cruel test; as, on her accession to the throne, she rewarded Edmund by making him one of the clerks of her Privy Council.

Nicholas and Andrew, sons of the afore-named Thomas Tremaine, were twins; they were born, as well as Edmund, at Collacombe House, in Lamer-ton. Prince says of them—"They possessed, from very good testimony, so great a likeness of person and sympathy of affection, as can hardly be paralleled in history." They were of equal height, and exact form, had the same-coloured hair, and were of such close resemblance in feature and gesture, that they could not be known the one from the other, even by their own parents, brethren, or friends. To

distinguish them they would wear a knot of different-coloured ribands, and sometimes, in sport, they would change them and their clothes, which occasioned many playful mistakes, and produced, perhaps, with young men in an hour of frolic, scenes that might have rivalled, in their pleasantry, those in the comedies of the Roman and English dramatists.

So great, indeed, was the sympathy existing between them, in mind as well as body, that their very affections were the same, for they loved or disliked the same persons and things, followed the same pursuits, were lively or melancholy at the same season, and, more wonderful than all, if one was be sick, the other was so, though apart, and without any knowledge of his brother's illness. So much did they love each other, that they could not endure to be long separated, and they would eat, drink, sleep, wake, study, or play together, as if they had but one soul animating two bodies.

In the year 1563, these brothers bore arms among the English forces sent into France: the one as a captain of horse, the other as a volunteer. In one of the many engagements near the town of Newhaven (now Havre de Grace), Andrew and Nicholas stood side by side. Throughout their brief military career they had displayed the greatest courage, being ever foremost in the post of honour and of danger. On this day they acted with an energy that was not less exemplary to others than it was hazardous to themselves. At last one of the twins fell; the other instantly took his place, and seemed bent on sharing his beloved brother's fate: no entreaty could induce him to withdraw from so dangerous a station. For

some time he maintained it with unabated courage, and at length fell dead on the spot. The monument in Lamerton church is that of their family; most probably their remains were brought home, and there deposited, as the following epitaph on Nicholas and Andrew appears inscribed on a tablet of marble, with several rude rhymes to the memory of the same race:—

“These liken’d twins, in form and fancy one,
 Were like-affected, and like habit chose;
 Their valour at Newhaven siege was known,
 Where both encounter’d fiercely with their foes;
 There one of both sore wounded lost his breath,
 And t’other slain, revenging brother’s death.”

Before I conclude my letter, I purpose giving you some slight account of another excursion in our neighbourhood that much delighted us. It was to Meavy. The village thus called is situated in a beautiful valley, watered by a stream so clear, that every pebble may be seen in its bottom. The church, which has nothing remarkable in it, is of plain architecture: its date, I should think, was not earlier than the beginning of the fifteenth century.

The great curiosity of Meavy is the oak, which stands just without the churchyard; it is a most noble ruin of that king of forest trees. The top is quite bald with “dry antiquity;” but from the various branches about the centre still sprout leaves of a beautiful bright green, though when we saw them they were somewhat changed and crisped by the touch of autumn. The trunk of this mighty tree is immense in circumference, and so hollow, that it appears to be supported by scarcely anything more than the outward shell connected with the roots.

This noble piece of antiquity is still imposing ; it looks, indeed, an emblem of sinking majesty, and inspires feelings of veneration and awe, not unmixed with those which arise from reflecting on the vanity of years ; since Time, whatever be their strength or their continuance, will at last make them, even as this tree, fall before him. There is no tradition respecting the age of the great Meavy oak ; but I doubt not it witnessed the Saxon heptarchy, if not the Roman Conquest ; nor is there anything extravagant in the supposition, when we recollect that in the survey of Dartmoor (still preserved in the office of the Duchy of Cornwall), and made soon after the Norman Conquest, the oaks in Wistman's Wood are described very much the same as they appear at this day*.

Close to the oak stands the broken base of the cross that is usually found before the entrance to a country church. The school-house, as old as the days of Edward IV., is a most picturesque building, and stands near the churchyard †. There is, too, an ancient over-shot mill in the village that would form a sweet picture ; and the half of a house (the rest having been lately taken down) that I well remember when it presented the complete form of the letter E ; it was built in the days of Elizabeth, and was no doubt the manor-house. One remarkable circumstance seemed to distinguish both the village and neighbourhood of Meavy : it is that, excepting one new-built, we did not see a single

* I am indebted to Archdeacon Froude for this curious piece of information.

† I hear it is quite altered since we saw it.

house, barn, or cottage of a later period than the times of Henry VII. and VIII., and Elizabeth, and many of an earlier date.

The swarm of children in this village, all with cheeks as full, round, and red as an apple, that grouped together on every step of the broken cross, greatly amused us, and we seemed no less to amuse them. They watched our ponies with delight, laughed as they whisked their long tails, pulled each other as we passed by, and pushed a shy little boy forward to bob his head, by way of a bow; and, lastly, they admired our John's new buttons; but not so my straw bonnet, which I heard one little girl very audibly whisper to another was not so pretty as "Betsy's Sunday one." We left our carriage, John, ponies, and children, about the oak, whilst we walked down to the bridge: it is formed of one high arch that crosses a beautiful river, where we watched the trout playing about for some time, since, such was the perfect purity and clearness of the stream, we could see them as plainly as if they were gold and silver fish in a glass globe of water.

We next inquired our way to Sheep's Tor (or Shittistor, its real name, and as I saw it spelt in the old deeds at Mr. Radcliffe's at Warleigh), and, being directed to follow the road through the village, were told that a mile and half's walking would bring us to it. We set off, but soon found it was a Scotch mile and a half, with a *bittock*.

The whole of the road was so up-hill, that it was well we had such a succession of beautiful scenery, or I should have been tempted to give way to weariness,

and have lain down by the road side. The pencil, not the pen, must do justice to what we saw ; and my alternate complaints at the rough stones, the hill, the labour of the ascent, and exclamations of delight about the scenery, exceedingly amused my fellow-traveller. The land to the left (on the opposite side of the beautifully-wooded valley, with its river winding amidst it) presented the finest forms of bold, intersecting, abrupt hills, each with a granite crown or tor upon its head. Tired as I was, I could not resist pulling out my sketch-book to mark in their general outlines, as a memorandum. The mellow tints of autumn upon the woods, greens, browns (russet, or tawny), produced altogether a rich and varied combination of colour ; whilst in some places, the leaves being much fallen, we saw distinctly, yet not nakedly, the ramifications of the trees, their boles often seen hung with ivy or covered with moss. At length we came to a pretty ancient stone cottage ; near it there was an old and upright granite cross, about ten feet high. Here two roads branched off, both leading in the same direction (only the upper being much longer and roundabout than the lower), and unfortunately we took the most toilsome of the two, and so pursued our way up-hill, up-hill, still fagging through a road that was made to bid defiance to all things in this world but a broad-wheeled waggon, or a pair of Irish legs.

I thought we should never even get in sight of Sheep's Tor, and we talked of giving it up as hopeless, notwithstanding we admitted the scenery around us to be well worthy the trouble we had taken ; for we could now command one of the finest views in the

whole county of Devon. We saw before us the extensive range of the Dartmoor heights; the lovely vale of Meavy, Roborough Down, and the waters of the Hamoaze forming the middle distance; and we actually looked over Mount Edgumbe and the Cornish hills, and could see the ocean beyond like a sheet of silver, in one broad glitter, reflecting the sun; whilst the heights in that vicinity, so lofty in themselves, seemed to lie beneath, and, with the upper air, were of one deep ultra-marine hue. The effect was sublime; I lost all sense of fatigue as I looked upon it—so much will a strong feeling of the beautiful overcome even the weakness of the body; and I looked till I longed, with Ariel, “to sail on the curled cloud” over such a scene. But cold reality will at last drive away even the raptures of fancy: we had still a long and toilsome road to trudge through; and so, for lack of wings, I was obliged once more to move on my feet, though they ached sadly with the journey.

We hailed with hope a little ugly, modern, white cottage, that now appeared in sight. It was but a short distance from the road, yet I could not summon resolution enough to go out of the way one step to it; but Mr. Bray did, to ask if we were in the right track for Sheep's Tor, and was answered—“Yes, Sir, no great ways, only a mile and a half off!” “Oh, my poor feet,” said I; “but courage and Esperanza, we will go on!” So on we went again; still the same labour and the same beautiful scene varying at every step before our eyes; whilst in these elevated regions we breathed an air so pure and keen, that it would have made even the finest lady eat at least half a

pound of beef for her dinner; and I began to feel so hungry, that I regretted I had not had prudence enough to furnish my little basket with something else than a sketch-book.

At length, on a sudden turn round the hill, a scene presented itself which made even me, prepared as I had been by Mr. Bray's account to expect something magnificent, start and exclaim with admiration and wonder. No doubt, also, the glorious effects of the sky (for it was truly a painter's day) added tenfold beauty to all we saw. There is no describing scenery; one slight sketch with the pencil is worth a hundred pages of mere description. I again made a rude outline of what was before us: yet I must say something, as my sketch is not sufficiently filled up to be of any use as an illustration, though it is a memorandum to myself.

Below us lay the valley (through which we still had to pass): it was very close and narrow, and the road abruptly runs up the steep hill beyond: it is skirted by trees all the way to the little village of Sheep's Tor, decorated with its ancient church. This building, and the village itself, when their situation is compared with the mighty Tor towering above them in the background, look as if they were in a valley; yet the hill to be ascended before they can be reached is truly formidable. This we mastered; and came at length to a small space somewhat level, where a few broad flat stones formed a little bridge over a pretty, clear, and gurgling stream: near this stood some old cottages; and we soon found ourselves in the village. There we vainly endeavoured to procure a guide to what a good woman we talked with called "*Piskie House*," on the

side of Sheep's Tor. *Piskie House* is a natural fissure, or narrow cavern amongst the rocks, where Elford the royalist (and one of the characters of my tale in manuscript*) was said to take shelter for a considerable time, to avoid the pursuit of Cromwell's troopers. One little boy told me he was afraid to go there; and his mother truly said "That it was a critical place for children." We then went to the church, a pretty Gothic building, in some parts as old, I should think, as the fourteenth century; in others, windows and doors had been introduced, evidently the work of the sixteenth. Over the doorway, well carved in granite, and placed in a little square niche, was a death's head, with ears of corn sprouting out of the holes for the eyes, no doubt in allusion to the passage of St. Paul. Beneath were these words: "Mors janua vitæ." Above, "Anima resurgat," and "Hora pars vitæ." By looking through the church windows, which were very low, we could see perfectly well the interior. A finely carved, painted, and gilt Gothic screen still remains, though much injured by time. There was, too, a Gothic oak pulpit. The school-house stands near the sacred edifice; it is of great antiquity. No creature being in the house, I ventured to open the ponderous, nail-headed oak door, and walked into a little hall. I soon saw all within was quite in its old state, panelling of oak, &c.; but nobody being at home, and fearing I might be taken for a thief if any one suddenly returned, I walked out again, not having half satisfied my curiosity for peeping

* Now published under the title of "Warleigh," &c., a legend of Devon.

into such vestiges of past times; and just as I retreated, a low savage growl that met my ears from the interior made me understand that my visit had roused some Cerberus, who very probably would not have given me so civil a welcome as I might fancy one bent on antiquarian pursuits entitled to receive.

I returned to my husband (with whom I had not been able to prevail to get him to join me in trespassing on the school-house) as he stood talking to one of the villagers in the churchyard. We paused for some little while around the graves, reading the few tomb-stones before we continued our progress.

I never can visit a country churchyard without feelings of so mixed a character, that I should find it difficult to define them; there is so much of pleasure, so much of melancholy (the most refined of all pleasures) in the mood inspired by the scene. The hope of the living, the rest of the dead, then fill the mind: we think of the joy of the infant christening; of the marriage rite; the bells that summon us to the holy duty on the holy day; the blessing of prayer and praise to the Father of all good, and to the Son, the author and finisher of our faith and our salvation;—the rite of burial, that noblest service of a liturgy truly sublime; the sorrow of friends as they surround the grave, and hear those solemn words, “Ashes to ashes, dust to dust!” which strike with a chill like that of death on the mourning heart, as the poor remains of all that was once loved (better, may be, than life itself) are consigned to the dark and narrow house, where no sound shall strike on the “dull cold ear of death” till it comes

in that dread peal that proclaims the judgment of the earth.

What subjects are these to dwell upon—what awful thoughts, what deep feelings do they not inspire! And who can visit a country churchyard, surrounded by all the quiet sanctity of death, and remain insensible? If there are those who can do so, I would not envy them an indifference which shuts out the most salutary and ennobling feelings of the mind,—those that bring us nearer to God, and to the unseen things which are eternal. But why should I attempt to talk about the church and churchyards, when there is a passage of unequalled beauty on the subject that I cannot here resist giving? It is one I never yet could read without a tear.

“The peasant, however much his religious education may be neglected, cannot grow up without receiving some of the natural and softening impressions of religion. Sunday is to him a day of rest, not of dissipation; the Sabbath bells come to his ear with a sweet and tranquillizing sound; and though he may be inattentive to the service of the church, and uninstructed in its tenets, still the church and the churchyard are to him sacred places: there is the font in which he was baptized; the altar at which his parents became man and wife; the place where they and their fathers before them have listened to the word of God; the graves wherein they have been laid to rest in the Lord, and where he is one day to be laid beside them. Alas for him who cannot comprehend how these things act upon the human heart*!”

* ‘Essays Moral and Political;’ Essay the Fourth, ‘On the State of the Poor,’ &c. Vol. 1st, p. 112. Murray, 1832.

We quitted the churchyard and set off on our road, which wound up the hill crowned by the majestic Tor, the Tor itself producing the most beautiful and striking effect when seen in combination with the church. As we rose, so did this mighty object seem to rise with us, and to grow more and more imposing the nearer we drew to it. For some way up its ascent grass may be seen, springing from a light soil formed of decayed vegetable matter on a substratum of granite. When we reached within a short distance of what might be called the bosom of the Tor, which spread above us in a bold and shelving sweep of about two hundred feet, the granite was totally bare, saving where it was here and there covered by its coating of mosses and lichens. It lies tossed about in enormous masses in every possible direction; now appearing as if piled together mass on mass, tower above tower, whilst vast and innumerable fragments lay on their sides, presenting their acute angles in a manner that brought to mind a petrified sea of breakers. Of these there are thousands and thousands all the way up to the very summit, which is flat or table-formed, and very precipitous towards its southern extremity. On our way up we inquired at a cottage that stood by the side of the road if we could procure a guide to the Pixie-house; for so many years had elapsed since Mr. Bray visited the spot, that he did not immediately recollect its situation. A young woman who lived at this cottage came out with a fine child in her arms, and very good-naturedly offered to become our guide: she said she had been there once, but she did not think I could reach it, as it was a

rough, dangerous place; and I soon found she spoke the truth.

I never saw a peasant girl, for she scarcely appeared to be twenty years old, with whom I was more struck than with Jane Luscombe, for that was her name. She wore hob-nailed shoes, and nothing could be more homely and poor than the whole of her dress. She had no stays, so that her waist had its full size, and every movement of her noble figure was peculiarly graceful. Her head was a study for a painter; the features regular and delicate, with a deep blue eye that was radiant in its expression; and these beauties were rendered of the highest interest by the kind, modest, and good-natured character of her countenance. I would ask no other recommendation for the lovely Jane, as I am certain such a countenance could not deceive: I am sure she is simple, in the best sense of the word, and no less gentle and feeling. Her complexion was tanned a good deal by the sun; but where her neckkerchief had slipped aside I saw a throat finely formed of a dazzling whiteness. I was so delighted with Jane that I almost forgot the Pixie-house, as I enjoyed a pleasure, which has ever been to me one of a very high order, that of looking on a beautiful human face.

Jane and I soon became good friends, for I admired her fine baby, as did Mr. Bray, and that was the way to the mother's heart. She told us her husband was a labouring man; that, in the hope to do better, he was about to remove to Plymouth; she was very poor, and the child in her arms was the youngest of three. Thank God, she said, they

were healthy and happy, though she could seldom afford to buy meat, and she nursed the baby on milk and water. I shall never forget the goodnature with which she guided us over rocks and stones, all the while carrying the child, that was no light burthen, to find out the Pixie-house; yet such were her feelings, about the kindness due to the stranger and the traveller, that it was with extreme difficulty, and not, till urged and even entreated by me to do so, that she would take anything from Mr. Bray, as some trifling recompense for the trouble we had given her. Nor must I leave the subject of our fair guide without observing that the very air of Sheep's Tor seems to be friendly to beauty: the women and children in the village we had before remarked were very pretty, and had the finest complexions that could be seen; and Mr. Bray told me that when he asked his way at the cottage, where I felt too tired to go with him, a woman came out and spoke to him whose face was truly beautiful. Indeed many of the peasantry of Cornwall and Devon are distinguished by their personal attractions more perhaps than in any other county of England. I remember one evening when Mr. Bray, my mother, brother, and self were returning from Cotele, a woman, carrying a child and dressed literally in rags, crossed our path; and judge how striking she must have been when we each exclaimed, immediately on seeing her, "Did you ever see any thing so beautiful?" I regret I do not know who she was, as she realized all that even a poet could dream of female beauty in a human form.

To return to the Pixie-house. Aloft amidst the most confused masses of rock, that looked as if they

had been tossed about by the fiends in battle, in a place which seemed (so it appeared to me at least) as if inaccessible to any mortal creature, there was seen a somewhat projecting stone like a pent-house. Beneath was a cleft between two low rocks. This is the entrance to the palace of the Pixies, and the cavern where Elford is said to have found a retreat from persecution. I do not here describe it, having, in the Dartmoor letters, already given you Mr. Bray's account of it. How Elford could live there; how food could be conveyed to him, or how any living thing but a raven, a crow, or an eagle could make his home in such a spot, is to me, I confess, a puzzle; and had not the paintings on the interior sides of the rocks, executed by Elford, been really seen in these latter days to bear witness to the fact, I should have doubted the tradition altogether.

Thinking that if Elford got up thither (and I knew that Mr. Bray had done so many years before) I too could do the same, I ventured up a few of the rocks; but though I did not fear for my neck, I did for my shins, as the deepest holes (so hidden, too, by soft moss, that they became traps) lay between the masses of granite, in the steep and fearful ascent to the Pixie-house. What with stepping and jumping from rock to rock, Mr. Bray having, as a sailor would say; taken me in tow, and pulled me over one or two that were of formidable height and difficulty (rising one above the other, in their ponderous masses, like a flight of steps), I certainly got somewhat near the spot that had so much excited my curiosity; nay, having at last been compelled to go on all-fours, I crawled over a few rocks

more, but was forced to give it up, finding the attempt much too hazardous, and that an accident might be attended with serious consequences. Exhausted and almost worn out, I lay down whilst Mr. Bray continued the attempt; but not being quite so resolute in conquering these kind of difficulties as he was twenty years ago, at last he gave in too; and then came the labour of helping me down again, which he found not a whit less troublesome than pulling me up.

We had now to resume our weary way back again to Meavy; and I never was so tired in all my life as when we reached the village, though, thanks to Jane Luscombe, our road was shorter in returning than in going, as, by her direction, we crossed the fields instead of wandering round about them. In our way back we passed a beautiful place; it was a house bearing over the door the date 1610. It is called Knolle, and lies sheltered in a most sequestered and romantic dell. It was altogether a house and scene suited for romance: if Jane had lived there, and been unmarried, she might have become the heroine.

On our return to Meavy we found John, still surrounded by the children, ready to receive us. The ponies had long since eaten their provender, and stood ready harnessed to carry us home. John had been on the look-out and had grown uneasy, fearing we had met with some mischance amongst the rocks. Recollecting, after we were gone, that the basket with our luncheon had that day been forgotten, he had very good-naturedly saved for us the bread and cheese that he had provided for his own refreshment. We did not refuse a share, and

might have had the whole, and to this act of thoughtfulness on his part we were indebted for being rescued from the cravings of hunger. And moreover our John, who is a bit of a naturalist, and as kind and single-hearted a soul as ever breathed, had just seen some rare bird that he wanted to show to "mistress," but she came too late for the sight. The good-natured creature and the children had got so well acquainted during our absence, that I heard them ask him to come again soon and bring the ponies with him. They gave us a shout on leaving the village, and we drove home as fast as the road from Meavy to Roborough Down would let us. Once we had to pass over so bad a place, and received such a jolt, that we nearly had an upset, to complete the adventures of the day.

Before I conclude this letter I purpose mentioning a melancholy instance of two deaths, by cholera, that occurred in the little village of Sheep's Tor in the summer of 1832, when that fatal disease raged with such violence at Plymouth. The appearance of cholera in this remote village was deemed so extraordinary (as the deceased persons had held no communication with Plymouth, indeed had scarcely stirred from home, and lived with the utmost cleanliness in such a healthy, elevated spot), that the circumstance induced a very particular inquiry, when the following facts were ascertained:—

There lived at Plymouth a man and his wife named N——; they had two children, and pleaded such extreme poverty, that, whenever they chanced to see a friend or relative, they made it a rule to get out of them a sixpence or a shilling as a relief to their alleged necessities. The cholera came upon

them like a thief in the night, and N——, his wife, and both the children were in a few hours dead! The brothers of the deceased man now proceeded to the house to give orders for the interment of this fallen family, and to see what effects might be left in their dwelling of supposed poverty. They found fifty or sixty sovereigns, and a bill on a country bank for about seventy pounds! with clothes and other things. You will be shocked to read what next occurred.

Unawed by the fearful spectacle before their eyes, and as if they bore “a charmed life” that was incapable of sharing the danger so apparent, these two brothers quarrelled about the division of N——’s property, and actually *fought over the corpse!* This indecent scene of strife alarmed the neighbourhood; the constables were sent for, and the brothers decamped. One, the most violent, possessed himself of some of his *dead brother’s clothes*, and fearful of the consequences of having committed a breach of the peace, set off for Sheep’s Tor (about seven miles from Plymouth, and as many from Tavistock), and took refuge in the cottage of a man and his wife who there kept a little village shop, and to whom he was related. This ruffian, who had fought over the body and brought away the infected clothes, received no injury; but, alas, the poor honest couple who sheltered him caught the fatal disease, died, and were buried in the churchyard close to which they lived. On the morning of the wife’s death (only the day after her husband) a poor orphan boy, I am told, came into Tavistock to say to the doctor—“that father and mother both were gone, and he had been left alone with the dead!”

Is not this most melancholy story a proof (if proof were wanting) that the pestilence is contagious? and is it not also an example of one of those mysterious acts of Providence which we cannot fathom? since, in a mere human view of the subject, one would be tempted to say that the innocent had received the punishment due to the guilty. But who shall judge the ways of God; who shall scan the secrets of his hidden providence?

I have another melancholy story to tell about cholera, but as it occurred in Tavistock, I reserve it for some future letter; in the interval allow me the honour to remain,

My dear Sir,

Very respectfully and sincerely yours,

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

LETTER XXXV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—A visit to a friend—Miss Dinham—Her amiable character—Her family—Extraordinary dream—The story narrated—Thomas Henwood, his courage and promptitude, in what circumstances displayed, narrated—Receives the silver medal—The late Major Smith of the royal marine artillery—A sketch of his life; his gallantry in action, &c.—His illness and death—Is buried at Tavistock—Mr. John Hitchins—His great genius—The peculiar character of his talents—He neglects his own powers—He cannot copy—His great capabilities—Two brothers, the Robjohns—Their ingenuity—Self taught; they construct an organ—Mr. Peirce; his talents for mechanical inventions—Mary Colling; a notice of her—Her story not here fully repeated, because before narrated—How she taught her canary bird to talk—Her amiable conduct after the publication and success of her little volume.

Vicarage, Tavistock, April 17, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

THERE is in this town a lady for whom I entertain the highest respect and esteem; and knowing her to be very intelligent, I called on her this morning to ask her, as she has lived here many years, if she could afford me any additional information respecting Tavistock. She knew nothing more about our town than the historical circumstances relating to Orgar, &c., already detailed in these letters; but, in the course of conversation, she mentioned so remarkable a story concerning her own family, that I requested her to let me take down the particulars in writing, and asked her if she

would object to my naming them to you in the present correspondence. She said certainly not, and that I was at liberty likewise to mention her name as my authority for what was stated. I rejoice in this, as I should not like to mention these things without doing so; and a more respectable authority than Miss Dinham's can nowhere be found: she is a woman of such strict principles and worth, that whatever she says may be relied on, whether it concern the least or the most important matter. My friend is advanced in life; for years she has been a sufferer from almost constant illness of a very painful nature; and the patience, the resignation, even the cheerfulness with which she bears her afflictions have often excited my warmest sympathy and esteem. But all her trials throughout life, and they have been many, Miss Dinham considers as the dispensation of a wise Providence, and a murmur never escapes her. She is remarkably well read in the best authors of her own language, has strong good sense, and has written sometimes in the hours of sickness some feeling poetry. She is a member of one of the oldest families in Cornwall, that came into this country with the Conqueror, and settled in Cornwall. They took their name from Dinant, a castle of which they were the lords in Normandy. In process of time the name became corrupted into Dinan, or Dinham, and many brave and loyal men have, through several generations, maintained the honour of their ancient house.*

My friend's brother, the late Mr. Edmund Dinham, was the lineal descendant of the eldest branch:

* Oliver de Dinan of Cardinham, Cornwall, summoned to Parliament as a baron in the reign of Edward I.

the circumstances I have to relate concerning him occurred whilst Miss Dinham was a child. She was on a visit at her cousin's, Sir John Philipps of Boscastle, Cornwall; but she well remembers hearing the event much talked of at the time, and afterwards frequently repeated to her by her late mother. I am thus particular, because stories of such a nature as that I have to mention can seldom be traced to the parties so immediately concerned in them.

About fifty years ago Mrs. Dinham dreamed that her son Edmund, then a child, had fallen into the river Cam, in a deep pool called the Horse Pool, at Camelford, in Cornwall; and that she saw the boy floating on the surface of the water dressed in a little red tunic, which he commonly wore. She awoke soon after, got up and hastened down to the breakfast parlour, where her husband had been some time before she rose. She repeated the dream to him, and he laughed at her for indulging superstitious fears, and said dreams were never worth attention.

The dream however dwelt upon her mind, and when the maid brought in the boy dressed in the red tunic she did not like to see it, but nevertheless let the dress pass unnoticed, thinking her husband would laugh at her still more if she expressed any misgivings about the little fellow's frock. That day, however, she kept more than usually a careful eye over him; but on being called off for a short time, on her return she missed the child. He must have run out at the door during her short stay in another part of the house. She instantly took the alarm, and inquired amongst the neighbours if they

had seen the boy, thinking and hoping he might have strayed to play with other children at some house near her own. Not finding him, the recollection of the river Cam rushed across her with fearful forebodings, and she ran down to the spot that had been so deeply impressed on her by the dream, in an agony of mind no tongue could describe. Judge what were her feelings when, on drawing near the banks of the stream, she was met by several persons, bearing the poor boy, his little red tunic streaming with water, livid and senseless, and showing no other sign of life than that of bleeding violently at the nose. The mother exclaimed, in a distracted manner, "Good God! you have taken him out of the Horse Pool! Is he dead or alive?"

"He was taken out of the Horse Pool," replied one of the men who was carrying along the body, "but how could you know it? he is but this moment saved! We hope there is life."

The manner of his preservation from a watery grave was not a little remarkable. I shall give this also, as I wrote it down from his sister's lips. A woman who was the laundress of the family, but who on that day was working at another house in the neighbourhood, had occasion to wash her tubs. Something, she said, possessed her, she could not tell why, that she would go down to the river to do it, which she had never done before. She set off on her errand, and had not far to go, for the river was near the house. Whilst so employed, she thought she saw the dress of a child floating upon the water. She stopped a minute or two and looked, and it disappeared. This alarmed her, and she waded along the bank of the river towards the spot where she had

last seen the object that excited her surprise. It rose again to the surface of the waters, and she then saw it was a child. Anxious to save it, she waded on towards the deep part called the Horse Pool, but from the sandy and shelving nature of the ground she lost her footing at every step, and the stream was carrying her forward towards the fatal pool.

She screamed fearfully for assistance, and saw the red tunic, the skirt of which could now alone be seen, sink again. Her reiterated cries at length brought some hay-makers, who were working in a field near the banks of the river, to the spot, at the instant she was herself beginning to sink; but she had resolution and recollection sufficient, even in those moments, to call out—that a child had sunk in the deep part of the Horse Pool. They gave immediate assistance; the woman was brought safe to the banks; but the pool by this time had become so puddled that the poor boy could not be seen. One man, expert in swimming, plunged under water, and brought up Edmund Dinham, apparently lifeless.

On his being conveyed home, Mr. Marshall, at that time a surgeon of great eminence in Cornwall, was instantly sent for; fortunately he was on the spot, and without delay obeyed the summons. On his first arrival, he considered it a hopeless case. All those means usually taken to resuscitate the expiring spark of human life were applied, and at length with complete success. Edmund Dinham was saved, and lived to become a worthy and honourable member of society. He died about eighteen months ago, in Cornwall, where, after an active life, he had retired to end his days.

Amongst the remarkable characters in this town deserving particular notice is Thomas Henwood, a youth whose promptitude and intrepidity in saving the life of a fellow-creature merits the highest praise, and has been rewarded by a silver medal from the Humane Society of London, and, above all, by that self-satisfaction which the remembrance of the circumstance must afford him to the last hour of his existence. Thomas Henwood, the son of poor but respectable parents, was about fifteen years old when the event I have to detail occurred. He was a lad of a quiet disposition, modest in his address, and always steady and industrious in his calling.

On Tuesday, Oct. 31st, 1826, a child of three years old, the son of Mr. Long, of the town mills, whilst at play near the leat, fell into the stream. Providentially they were not working at the time. The child floated down the narrow channel towards another fulling-mill, but passed out at the sluice, and by the force of the current was carried across the river Tavy, towards the second arch of the Abbey, or Guile Bridge. The river was high in consequence of late rains. The body was rapidly approaching; had it passed under the arch all would have been over, since only a few yards beyond it there is a wear, or fall of water, partly over rocks, where no human means could have rescued the infant. At this fearful crisis, when nothing of the child could be seen but one of its little arms raised above the water, young Henwood, aware of the perilous condition of the infant, and that the moment it passed under the arch all chance to save

it would be over, without the pause of a moment, or a thought for his own safety, instantly leaped the parapet, and from the embankment plunged into the river. The waters reached above his shoulders: he struggled with them in extreme peril of his own life, but supported by the generous impulse of humanity, he felt no fear. Notwithstanding, therefore, the incumbrance of his clothes, he was enabled to swim to the deep part of the river near the arch; and amidst the cheerings and greetings of the crowd, which had by this time collected on the banks, he caught a firm hold of the poor child, and with a presence of mind, in such a situation truly admirable, brought it towards an accessible part of the river, in a position to preserve its powers of respiration; and thus soon afterwards had the satisfaction of delivering the boy to his friends, unharmed.

By the recommendation of Mr. Crapp, of this town, a narrative of the circumstances was drawn up, and signed by some of the most respectable inhabitants of Tavistock, who witnessed the intrepidity of Henwood. Mr. Bray, the portreeve, and many others, joined in recommending him to the notice of the Humane Society, and he was sent for by the committee, that he might be present at the next anniversary. Henwood received the silver medal, I believe, from the hand of the Duke of Sussex. On his return we sent for him, when he brought us his medal to look at it; and we were much interested with the modesty of his manners, and the feeling way in which he alluded to the preservation of the poor little boy.

Another remarkable native of our town was the late Major Smith, of the Royal Marine Artillery. He was the son of a barber of this place, before noticed in my former letters, and was brought up to his father's trade. The late Admiral Bedford, however, observing Smith to be a youth of more than ordinary promise, thought he was calculated to do well in a military or naval profession. The Admiral generously befriended him and brought him forward.

In what capacity Mr. Smith first went to sea I do not know; but shortly after he became an officer of marines. In this post he was soon noticed for his activity, courage, and good conduct during the war. He was engaged in many actions; but that by which he chiefly rose to distinction occurred in the year 1801, when he evinced so much promptitude, decision and intrepidity, in quelling a mutiny that broke out on board his Majesty's ship the *Castor*, in the West Indies, that honourable mention was made of his services on that occasion, in the record of the court martial held on the mutineers. Capt. Western, the president, also expressed to him the high sense the court entertained of his conduct on the 13th of December, and of the firmness and steady discipline displayed by the small party of marines under his command. To his spirited exertions, indeed, in the execution of Capt. Fanshaw's orders (under whom he was then lieutenant) the court attributed the quelling this very dangerous mutiny. I wish I was fully acquainted with all the circumstances concerning it, but I am not; though I well remember, after the major's death, hearing

one of his brothers say—that he had rushed on the mutineers at the very moment they had armed, and were about taking possession of the ship, with the intent to put to death the chief officers. Smith's intrepidity (for his men were, in numbers, comparatively nothing to the rebels) overawed them, and they yielded; when, had they not been taken by surprise, and dealt with by a master spirit, they could with ease have over-matched Lieut. Smith and his handful of men. For this truly gallant action he afterwards, so I am told, received the thanks of the House of Commons, and was, most deservedly, promoted to a company.

He married a lady of family, the sister of General Anderson Morshead, the late Governor of Malta. After a long and arduous service abroad, where his health suffered by his exertions in the career of duty, and by a tropical climate, he returned to England, and lived for some years near Portsmouth. He was universally esteemed by a numerous and respectable circle of friends, and greatly beloved in his corps.

I first saw him in the summer of the year 1830. We were sitting in the library, when a servant brought a card with the name of Captain Smith. Mr. Bray had not seen him since he was a boy, (though he had often heard the most honourable mention of him, in a private as well as public capacity) did not immediately recollect who it could be, but desired that he should be shown in. A gentleman about fifty years old entered the room, dressed in plain clothes, but whose military air was not to be mistaken; and never shall I forget the painful feelings he excited, as he sunk into a chair and attempted

to speak to us. The first impression that his appearance made on me, as he sat gasping for breath was that he would die on the spot. We offered assistance, but he waved his hand, and said he should be better in a minute.

From having had, for some years, very bad health myself, I had been addicted to the reading of medical books (a practice I would by no means recommend to my friends), and, singular enough, that very morning I had been engaged in reading an account of certain cases of water on the chest. I felt convinced, from what I saw of Captain Smith's sufferings, that he was the victim of that fatal disorder. As soon as he could speak, he told us, unasked, such was the case. That he had long been very ill; had a mind to try his native air, and visit his aged mother, who still lived in this town. Before he came to Tavistock, he had been at Exeter to see a brother who lived there, where he had consulted an eminent physician. He purposed staying here, he said, about two or three weeks, and then intended going on to Widey Court, near Plymouth, the seat of General Anderson Morshead, and where his lady then resided. There, too, he was to meet his wife, who, in a fortnight, had promised to join him in Devonshire.

After Captain Smith had somewhat recovered his breath, though he still seemed to draw it with great suffering, he entered into conversation with Mr. Bray, and expressed the pleasure he felt in seeing him again in his native town. He spoke of his deceased brother Edward (a brief sketch of whose melancholy career I have before stated) with the greatest feeling, and lamented his early death

and blighted hopes in the most affectionate manner. The conversation turned, also, on other subjects, and we soon remarked the ease and intelligence with which he touched on every topic that arose. We found he was a man who had seen much of the world with an attentive mind, and all his observations displayed that remarkable acuteness which, as well as the tone of his voice, and a peculiarly quick, animated expression of the eye, reminded us so much of his deceased brother Edward.

During the interview, he happened to say that he had always been fond of music. On hearing this I asked him, should he feel himself well enough, to join a little musical party we were to have on the evening of the 23rd of July; and he cheerfully accepted the invitation. He was one of the first who came on that evening; and as he seated himself on the sofa, it struck us that, within a few days, there was an alteration in him much for the worse. He gradually, however, revived, and became more animated than I should have supposed it possible one in such a state of health could have been. We had some young ladies present, who sang very delightfully; they gave us the beautiful Jubilate Hymn; and he remarked to me that he felt every note of that melody; he recollected having heard it abroad. In the course of the evening I showed him the beautiful etchings executed by Mr. Stothard, the historical painter, from his own masterly designs that decorated the shield presented by the merchants of London to the Duke of Wellington. The sight of these engravings, every subject of them depicting some striking event in the

career of the Duke, seemed to call up the spirit which had so long supported him in his arduous profession. I shall never forget the animated manner with which he made his observations, and told me many interesting little circumstances respecting the Peninsular war, with his customary acuteness and clearness of expression,

After this I was obliged to give my attention to the rest of the company, and Mr. Bray took his seat by the side of the captain, with whom he held a long and interesting conversation during the greater part of the evening. I again drew near him, and asked if he found the room too warm, as I felt the heat very oppressive, notwithstanding one of the windows was open. He said he did not, but that he should soon take leave; I must excuse his staying supper. Again and again did he express the pleasure it had afforded him in the long conversation he had held with Mr. Bray. He told me he felt thirsty; and had begged the servant to bring him a glass of cider. It struck me this might be improper for him, and I begged him not to take it, but to let me order him some wine and water. But he said it would not hurt him, and drank it eagerly, though Mr. Bray likewise attempted to persuade him not to touch it. I thought he seemed much worse after drinking this; and, on his rising to go, we so far prevailed with him that he consented to let our servant John walk with him to the inn where he was staying.

There was something in him, notwithstanding his cheerfulness, that persuaded me he was much worse than he had any idea of; and I followed him out of

the room to know if there was anything we could do for him, or if he would not call in medical assistance. He said "No, he was not worse than he had long been," shook me very cordially by the hand, thanked me for feeling an interest in his health, and said that kindness was always a balm to suffering.

I stayed till I saw John lead him out. Little did I think that he was at that moment on the verge of eternity! and that he would so soon leave the cheerfulness of society, the voice of song to which he had listened with so much delight, for the silence and the solitariness of the tomb. When all the company had left us, we talked of poor Captain Smith; and on my remarking to Mr. Bray that if he stayed here much longer I feared he might have the melancholy task of officiating at his funeral, we agreed to call on him the next morning, to advise him not to delay his removal to Widey Court, and to send for his wife to meet him there.

After breakfast, on the following day, however, John came suddenly in, and told his master that the landlord of the Bedford Arms had sent to inform him that Captain Smith was no more. That morning the post had brought him a letter, which the waiter, fearing to disturb him, had carried softly into his room, and laid on the table. He did not go near the bed. His bell not being rung at the usual hour and all remaining silent, it excited some uneasiness; when, on approaching the bed, he was found quite dead; and by the position in which the body lay, it seemed as if he had attempted to rise, probably finding himself in a state to require immediate assistance.

The letter lying with the seal unbroken on the table was official. It was found to be an announcement to the deceased that, two or three days before, in consideration of his long and meritorious services, he had been promoted to the rank of Major of his regiment. This new honour came but to add to those of his funeral, and he was buried in the churchyard of his native town as Major Smith.

As I purpose devoting this letter to give you some slight sketches of the remarkable characters of this place, (and if I omit any it will be from ignorance not intention, since, as far as I am able, I would wish to do justice to the merits of all,) I cannot pass in silence the mention of one who is still living, now, indeed, in the prime of life, and possessed of so much natural genius, that did but his perseverance keep pace with it, he might rank himself with the first British landscape painters. But, unfortunately, it too frequently happens, unless early and regular study have rendered industry habitual, we find application wanting where it could not fail to produce the most successful results.

Mr. John Hitchins, for that is the name of the subject of this sketch, notwithstanding his want of regular application, may be called a self-made artist, and that in a school entirely his own. When he studies at all, it is from nature; and all his drawings, so produced, are strictly true, and so characteristic, that on looking at them you say immediately,—“These are Devonshire scenes; such are the peculiarities of the rocks, the singular combination of the tors, the wild and picturesque features of the rivers, that render the glens and valleys of the county

so replete with beauty." These are in fact *portraits* of our scenery, and, like other portraits, when treated with a masterly hand, they possess that grace and feeling which constitute the poetry of the art.

Mr. Hitchins is a man possessed of strong powers of mind, and the most accurate taste. In books, or in the fine arts, he has a lively appreciation of what is excellent; and not the smallest beauty in nature, not a cloud, not a combination of form and colour, or the graceful bend of a tree, escapes his observant eye. So much is due to his merits; but the faults of a man endowed with so much genius must not be spared. He will, from mere want of resolution to begin, pass month after month, and never touch a pencil, though he has ample time for his art. Yet, when he once takes that pencil in hand, his application (whilst the fit lasts, and no longer) is of that order which defies difficulties and obstruction. I remember when he once sat on the rocks, near the river in Mary Tavy, drawing incessantly for three days, in the midst of continual rain, and obliged in one hand to hold an umbrella over his head, to finish a sketch he had commenced on the spot; and a beautiful picture it was. He regularly makes a journey to London, once a year, to look at the exhibitions, and returns to his native county the moment he has satisfied his desire. He will walk miles and miles along the banks of a river, to enjoy the scenery, with a fishing rod in his hand, come home, describe what he has seen with enthusiasm, form plans for the pictures he intends making of the most striking scenes in his late excursion, give hopes that at last he is about to do justice to his own capabi-

lities, and then—the lazy fit comes on again, and he does little or nothing to carry into effect the plans thus formed. I hesitate not to write these things of him, having often sketched to him his own character, which he has as often laughingly acknowledged to be true. I can only add that “Pity ’tis, ’tis true.”

One of the peculiarities of Mr. Hitchins is, that he cannot copy, even if he would do so; for whenever he attempts to copy any one of his own drawings, it is always a failure compared to the original sketch. This was the case in the copy he made of his view of Hill bridge for the Duchess of Bedford. It had not the ease and nature of the first effort; and if her Grace should show that drawing to any London artist, he can form, by seeing that alone, no idea of the genius of our Devonshire Ruysdael, as my brother truly named Mr. Hitchins, when he noticed his local sketches in the ‘Gentleman’s Magazine.’

In the hope that the opinion of some of the eminent painters of the day might stimulate our Ruysdael to exertion, I took his drawings to town three or four years ago, and submitted them to Mr. Stothard, and other artists of like authority. Their opinions of his genius, and the fruits it was capable of producing, if cultivated by application, were not less favourable than we had long before entertained concerning him; and I brought home my report with the greatest pleasure. I wish it had produced a more permanent effect in rousing the energies of our townsman, since it is lamentable to witness such an instance of superior natural talents thus unknown and buried by the neglect of their possessor. If

Mr. Hitchins had had the good fortune not to be worth a shilling, necessity would have driven him to application, and Devonshire would have numbered him with her Reynolds and her Prouts, as an honour to the county. But it is not too late to amend; and I heartily hope he may contradict all I say of him by the most vigorous exertions in time to come.

Mr. Scobel Willesford told me the other day, that we had here two brothers, who deserved to be noticed in these letters, on account of their remarkable genius for mechanics; the more remarkable, as they were entirely self-instructed in all they did; all their ingenious inventions being the result of their own unassisted perseverance. Their name is *Robjohns*. And Mr. Willesford tells me they have actually built an organ, which, he assures me, (and he is himself a good musician,) has excited the wonder of every professional person who has touched it. The instrument was entirely their own work, nor had they any knowledge of organ-building, but that which they managed to acquire for themselves, and principally by examining the organ in the church. I wish I knew more about these young men, who, I believe, are not at present resident in the town, though they were born in it.

We have here, too, another clever mechanical head, which has been employed in the invention of some most useful articles of a domestic nature, Mr. Peirce, an ironmonger, amongst many other ingenious contrivances, is the original inventor and sole maker of the most complete roasting apparatus that ever found its place in a kitchen. We constantly use this machine, which is principally formed of tin. It is not at all cumbrous, is complete in

itself, and is about two feet five inches in height, and the same in length. The cook has no trouble but that of putting the meat on the spit and basting it. The spring by which the roast turns is wound up like a watch. All air is excluded, except in front of the fire, and the heat thus confined is reflected by the bright tin plates at the top and on the sides of the machine. I do not know if this invention has yet found its way to London, but if there known, I doubt not it would be very successful.

Having in my former letters * presented you with so full an account of Mary Maria Colling, I do not here give any detailed sketch of her remarkable story, though she certainly claims a prominent place in the biography of Tavistock. She is the same modest, graceful, single-hearted creature that she was before she had the good fortune to be the object of so much kindness and notice both from yourself and other generous friends who felt interested in her little story, and the unassisted efforts she had made to form and cultivate her mind.

Since the publication of her little volume, she has devoted as much time as the duties of her service would admit to her improvement; and I rejoice to tell those who fancied I might do her an injury instead of a benefit by bringing her forward, that the success of her book (and for one in her station of life it was considerable), and the notice it procured for her from so many honourable quarters, have done

* Annexed to a little volume of "Fables, and other pieces in verse by Mary Maria Colling." Published by Longman and Co., London, in the year 1831. For an interesting account of Mary's volume, see the 92nd number of the 'Quarterly Review,'—March, 1832.

her no harm whatever; but, I trust, much good. There cannot be a more feeling, affectionate, or humble mind, or a more perfectly natural and engaging character. I am proud to call Mary my friend, and I shall never meet with one more constant or deserving.

I remember you wished to know how she taught her canary bird to talk. I have questioned her on the subject; but I conclude the talking canary must have been a genius, as the same pains she took with him she has lately bestowed on the successor of his cage, but without the same success. She tells me that the deceased bird was a great favourite, and she, being much alone, used to have him near her whilst engaged in her work. That she would talk to it, and give it bits of bread, sugar, or cake, which it always took very kindly, and would put its bill between the wires, and seem attentive to her. She generally addressed it with the words "Pretty Dick Canary," or "pretty little dear, give us a bit," &c. One day, after she had thus been fondling it, she left the kitchen, and on her return, whilst engaged in work, she distinctly heard the words—"Pretty little dear." Knowing that no person but herself was in the kitchen, she looked round with astonishment, and the canary again distinctly repeated the same words. She mentioned the circumstance to her worthy master, Mr. Hughes, who said it must be fancy; but he was convinced, by himself hearing the bird speak, that she had stated a fact; and Dick's talents for talking were soon celebrated amongst Mary's acquaintance and friends. So great was her care of the bird after this discovery, that she used to carry it up at night, and hang the cage not very far from

the bed. I have no doubt her care killed the poor canary, for it did not long survive her extreme attention to its comforts. I have somewhere read that the human breath, in a confined atmosphere, will very quickly destroy birds, and Mary's canary may be cited, perhaps, as an example.

To return to herself. After the publication of her volume, as soon as she had received from the subscribers sufficient funds for the purpose, she paid all the expenses incurred in printing, &c. She next erected an inscribed stone in our churchyard to the memory of her beloved grandmother Philp. She made many little presents to "Sister Anne" on her wedding; and, I know, did many other little acts of generosity and bounty that I do not name lest it should be painful to her feelings: all this was done out of the profits of her book; and lastly, as a mark of thankfulness to God, whose goodness she always acknowledges in raising up friends to serve her, she put down her name as a *yearly* subscriber of five shillings to the Church Missionary Society. After all these payments and donations, I believe her own share of what she had gained amounted only to about twenty pounds; since (unless the publishers may have recently received further payments for her) nearly one hundred of her subscribers had not paid for their copies of the work; distance of time and place very probably having made them delay or forget their little debt, which, though very small to each individual, becomes, in the aggregate, a serious loss to her.

So much interest did her work awaken for her, that she has had numerous presents of books, &c.; and one sent anonymously with a very handsome

letter. Mr. Davies Gilbert was so much pleased with her that he endeavoured to trace out her relations in Sussex. His Grace the Duke of Bedford presented her with ten pounds; and a nobleman, who would not even suffer me to let her or any one else know his name in doing the kind act, was so much interested by reading the account of her in the 'Quarterly Review,' that he wrote to me, enclosing for her a five pound note; and the bounty of ten rix dollars, presented by a Danish gentleman, who read her work at Copenhagen, you were kind enough to transmit to her. You were also pleased to express your wish to see a reprint of her little volume. I proposed it to Messrs. Longman and Co., and pointed out to them the probability that a second edition, sold as cheap as the first, or even at a lower price, if they wished it, would be certain to meet with a sale. But from pressure of business, I conclude, and having little time to devote to works on so small a scale, they declined it, though they handsomely admitted the merit of Mary's book, and the very favourable impression it had made wherever it was known. As Messrs. Longman had declined reprinting it, Mr. Hughes did the same; and Mary, with her small fund, could not herself venture upon the undertaking; and so, to this hour, the work has, I know, been frequently inquired for in London, and not a copy can be there procured; Mary had a few, however, reserved here, but even they are nearly exhausted*.

* Should this page meet the eye of a London bookseller, or a publisher elsewhere, who might feel disposed to reprint Mary Colling's little volume, I can only say I should be most happy to superintend the printing, &c., once more, and to add some few things of interest to

I must now for the present take my leave, assuring you how much

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever faithfully and respectfully yours,
ANNA E. BRAY.

the new edition. There would be no expense incurred for engraving the portrait again, as we have the plate in good condition. I have no doubt the reprint would sell; and such is the opinion of Mr. Southey, and of every literary person to whom I have yet spoken on the subject.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Remarks on the charities of Tavistock—Commutations—Ancient charities—Kenelm Digby, author of the ‘Broad Stone of Honour’—His great merit—Charity of a lady to the poor of Tavistock—Hospital of St. George founded and endowed temp. Edward III.—Hospital of the Lazar-house of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Theobald, called the Maudlin—Tolls of fairs, &c., appropriated to the schoolmaster—Annual donation of Robert Charles—St. John’s Chapel—Charles Grill’s charity—Donation to the parish church of St. Eustace and to the chaplain, or common priest—Glebe formerly attached to the living—Ejected minister—Mr. Lewknor, the vicar of Tavistock—Spared in the times of Charles I.—A tenement given for the benefit of the schoolmaster—Oliver Maynard, of Milton Abbot, his charitable bequest to the poor artificers—Serjeant Glanville’s charity—Sir William Courtenay’s bequest to the poor of Tavistock—Watts’s charity, the Gift-houses—Present charities—The Duke of Bedford their munificent patron—Dorcas Society—Lying-inn charity—Library for the poor—The Dispensary Work-house—Clubs; saving banks—School on the Lancasterian plan—The grammar-school much fallen into decay—Benefits of the old English grammar-school—The public library—Buildings erected to receive the books, on the model of the Propylæum—Proposed to be pulled down, on a mistaken principle of taste—Juxtaposition of a variety of architecture admired by artists and architects—Instances given in Venice, Rome, &c., and in Oxford—The Propylæum pulled down—New library—Institution—Lectures—Museum—New librarian in place of the deceased Mr. Knight—Remarkable circumstance respecting the preservation of Mr. Knight, in early life, related—Mr. John Rundle the builder; a remarkable person; born in a humble station; by his own desire brought up a carpenter; his early thirst after knowledge; self-taught; acquires some knowledge of drawing; his great perseverance; goes to Exeter and studies Gothic architecture; thrown from a horse; converts his sick room into a place of study; produces a model of the temple of Theseus

his beautiful drawing and design for a Gothic school-house ; his enthusiasm and modesty ; his worth and capabilities of becoming an honour to the arts of his country—Subject resumed—Public buildings—New ball-room—Concerts—Miss Elizabeth Greco—Her great talents as a vocalist—No regular theatre—Strolling players—Amusing letter written by the mistress of a strolling company, some years ago, relating her life and adventures—Amusements of a country town—A couple of cheats—French giant—Phantasmagoria—The show-man's proclamation—Beggars—Amusing instance of imposition—An Irish woman and her child—A large snake seen in Pixy Lane—Extravagant reports.

—
Vicarage, Tavistock, June 8th, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

THIS will be a letter of a very miscellaneous character ; as I propose, like Espriella, to notice even the least thing that is worthy of observation ; though I must not hope, like the ingenious Spaniard, to make old things new by the manner of giving my observations, or, as he does, to throw an interest on the most familiar of our local customs, and to awaken curiosity concerning them as much as if they were those of a foreign or unknown land.

Had Espriella visited this town he would have found subjects for many a letter, and would have told his correspondent that the English charity, he so much commends, was in no place more largely displayed, the size of the town being considered, than in Tavistock. Some of these public examples of charity he would, too, joyfully have traced to their Catholic origin, and would have lamented that others founded in those days when the blessed Mary and the blessed St. Rumon here held sway (and some, also, of later date) were now vanished, no man knows whither ; or neglected, or forgotten, or commuted for something else deemed

as good no doubt by those who managed the commutation; and possibly it may be so; nevertheless I hold it to be unfair to the first founders, as they thus have had their original designs, emanating from their own benevolence, changed or perverted; their names, which deserved reverence (and would have had it as long as those charities survived), forgotten; and a doubt still left for cavil or question, if a *quid pro quo* has really and virtually been given in lieu of those ancient charities, and to as good purpose.

In making these observations I can have no personal aim, since I am totally ignorant even of the names of those who managed these commutations; and all arrangements of this description were made so many years ago, that nothing but the fact in its general outline still survives. It is not impossible that the agent named Butcher, the "bashaw," whose character has been handed down to us by Baretti, and is yet the theme of tradition, might have had something to do with the matter; and, if so, I should be still more tempted to doubt the justice or wisdom of the act; for Baretti tells us "that the bashaw (of Tavistock) did right or wrong just as he pleased in this place, and deceived his superiors*."

I shall here speak of the ancient foundations before I come to the modern ones; and certainly no man can do other than agree with Kenelm Digby (that most amiable and least bigoted of all our writers in favour of the Church of Rome), that

* Baretti dates his first letter Aug. 13, 1760; and Lysons says, "In the year 1761 all the parish estates were vested in the Duke of Bedford, for the yearly sum of 120*l.*, excepting certain premises since converted into an alms-house for fifteen poor persons."

the ages of faith were those of charity to the poor, the old, the infirm, and the friendless.

It appears from the manuscript account of the charities of this parish (intrusted to my hands by Mr. Charles Crapp), that the "abstracts" which it contains were "taken out of ye new Feoffm^t Deeds on August 21st, 1738." The document is now before me; but did I copy the whole verbatim it would be tiresome, as the repetitions of law terms with which it abounds are about as amusing as the reading of a title deed or a conveyance at the present time. It will therefore be sufficient to notice them in general terms, excepting in two or three particulars.

The first on the list is that of a Lady Mary somebody (her name begins with a K, but the word is so illegible that I cannot make it out). This Lady Mary in the third year of the reign of James I. gives the yearly rents of certain lands, &c. (at the time of her death being worth 1*l.* 4*s.*) to the poor of the parish of Tavistock for *ever*. The trustees, &c., are also named; and in the MS. of 1738, beneath the above entry, are the words, in the same handwriting, "Rightly applyed." Thus we learn the charity was in existence at that date.

I have before noticed the hospital founded and endowed by one of the ancient house of Tremaine, and dedicated to St. George in the reign of Edward III. Of the extinction of that charity I know nothing, nor have I been able to learn any particulars concerning it. In the MS. there is a notice of the hospital or Lazar-house of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Theobald, commonly called the Maudlin. This house survived the destruction of the abbey; and in the twenty-seventh of Elizabeth, John Butte,

then prior, and the brothers and sisters of the same house, with one consent, by deed indented under seal, demised to John Fitz, Esq. and others, in trust, as dispensators of the same for the benefit of the poor lazars, or, wanting such, the poor, all the said lands, tenements, orchards, and parks, for the space of one thousand years. The Maudlin Chapel, of which not even a fragment now exists, was in use so late as the year 1672: this we learn from an entry in the churchwarden's account, which runs thus—“October 20th, 1672, then collected at the Maudlin Chappell, towards the reliefe of John Bazely, blacksmith, inhabitant in the saide towne of Tavis-tocke, the sum of thirty shillings and sixpence*.”

After the charity of the Maudlin or Lazars, comes a long entry about tolls, fairs, markets, market-house, court of pypowder, &c., originally granted by letters patent, under the great seal of Edward VI., to the Earl of Bedford in 1551. By which it appears that the “fairs” (tolls of them) were, so late

* St. John's Chapel, as I have before mentioned, was a hermitage on the south side of the Tavy. Amongst the parish documents there is preserved a petition to the then Earl of Bedford (which my brother thinks may be dated about 1677), praying—“That as there is a little cottage much ruyned, with two little garden plots to the same belonging, called by the name of St. John's Chappell, bought in the time of the late contagious sickness, and then converted to a pest-house,” that his lordship would be pleased to grant it the parish for ninety-nine years, determinable on three lives thereunder named, reserving to his lordship the ancient rent of one shilling yearly, to be converted “to the use of the poor of the saide parish, unless it should be again required as a pest-house.” And this was granted.

St. Margaret's was a small chapelry dependent on the abbey, which Mr. Bray thinks stood near Mount Tavy, and that it was used as a place of worship by the people of the hamlet of Cudlipptown.

as in 1738, "applied to ye schoolmaster, being at ye discretion of ye lessees."

The next entry states that Robert Charles, Esq., of Tavistock, did, by his last will and testament, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Elizabeth, give, in trust, to John Fitz, Esq., John Glanville, Esq., and others, the yearly rents (amounting at the time of the donor's death to 4*l.* per annum) for the relief "of ye poor people within ye two alms-houses adjoining to ye churchyarde of Tavistocke, for ever." This charity, at the date of the MS., was noted as "Rightly applied."

Next follows a long account of certain lands, tenements, reversions, and services, with "ye appurtenances, in ye borough and parish of Tavistocke," given by will of Charles Grills, Esq., in the 17th of Elizabeth, for charitable purposes. Beneath the entry appears this note:—

"N.B. The saide Premises were first vested in Feoffies by Jno. and Charles Grills, of Landrith, in Cornwall, according to a trust reposed in them by Charles Grills their father, by deed dated August 3rd, in ye 12th of King James ye 1st.

"N.B. No uses recited or mentioned."

Next comes the following entry in the MS. :—

"Seizen endorsed July 28th, 1739. Given to the Church of St. Eustace (that is, our parish church) for repairs, but particularly a piece called Parshill Piece, to a Chaplin, or common Priest, for ever."

If any "Chaplin or common Priest" in 1739 received this donation, I do not know; never having heard of the bounty so bestowed before I met with it in this document. Some great changes must have

been made in the church property here; as in the British Museum there is still preserved a register of all the church livings in several of the principal counties of England, made about the year 1645, for the use of the commissioners under an act "for ejecting scandalous and inefficient ministers*." In this register (at so distant a date) we find the living of Tavistock valued at 240*l.* per annum; the Earl of Bedford its patron. The *Glebe* is there mentioned and valued at 7*l.* per annum; and 50*l.* per annum lately added to the incumbent's pension by the Earl of Bedford, which before had been but 19*l.* per annum†. At the present time there is no glebe attached to the living; when it was taken away I do not know; but it was certainly spared in the times of Charles I., as Mr. Lewknor, being then pronounced and returned "a preaching minister," found favour with the Parliament party, and was not disturbed in his vicarage. Possibly his patron, the Earl of Bedford, who was opposed to the royalists, might have been a friend to him at this crisis; since the clergy were so persecuted on the most trivial or groundless charges, that Walker, who drew up his account from authentic documents, gives a statement respecting a loyal member of the Church who was ejected in Devonshire on pretences of so frivolous a nature, that one amongst the other

* From 'Notices of Tavistock and its Abbey,' by A. J. Kempe, in the 'Gent. Mag.'

† The pension, or free gift of his Grace the Duke of Bedford, is now 189*l.*, making it, with 11*l.*, the only sum which the vicar can claim, 200*l.* per annum. The present Duke has lately built a handsome house in which he allows the vicar to live rent-free.

charges brought against him was—that he ate custard pudding in a slovenly and unseemly manner for a minister.

To follow the manuscript :—next comes an account of a tenement given by one of the Fitz family, in the reign of Philip and Mary (under a chief rent of sixpence per ann. to the heirs of Fitz), the rent of which, says the document in question, has been annually received and appropriated to the schoolmaster.

Oliver Maynard, of Milton Abbot, clothier, by his deed on the 10th of January, 1602, “for the zeal and good will which he bore to the well disposed poor artificers, painfull handycraftsmen, labourers, and poor people” of the parish of Tavistock, gives them for *ever* a certain number of tenements (all specified and very minutely described) in Tavistock, one of which is more particularly mentioned, and said to be “sitate lying and being within the town, that is to say, between the tenements and lands of the Right Hon. then Earl of Bedford, on the east, and a tenement pertaining to the parish church of Tavistock, wherein Walter Burgess, deceased, then lately dwelt, on the west side of a street called ye Bouch Rowe on the south side, and the street or way leading from the parish church of Tavistock aforesaid, towards Rowden-hill on the north.” Then follows an entry which explains that by the deed of Oliver Maynard, it was not the rents but the tenements themselves he so liberally bequeathed to the use of the poor artificers, &c.

The next charity recorded, is that of Sir John Glanville, to put a “poor, but towardly boy, born of honest parents in Tavistocke, to college.” As

I have already mentioned this in the life of Glanville, I here omit the detail concerning it found in the MS.

The last record (and the document breaks off abruptly, as if not finished, leaving also many blank pages at the close) is that of a grant of certain yearly rents "to be goeing out of Pitscliffe," made on the 14th of May, 29th of Charles II., by Sir William Courtenay, to "ye use of ye poore of Tavistocke *," and this is, I apprehend, the same charity as that called the "Courtenay alms-house" mentioned in the 'Gent. Mag.,' as "one of the ancient and noble family of Courtenay gave 4*l.* per annum, to be divided, by way of pension, among four poor widows in an hospital or almshouse of Tavistock. This building was repaired by George Courtenay, Esq., of Walreddon, at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

I do not here pretend to enter on the subject of the commutations that might have been made for several of these defunct charities, *intended by their founders to last for ever*. Whatever may have been their fate, it is due to the memory of the benefactors that their names should be preserved in connexion with their original grants: here, therefore, (without entering upon the question of what has been done since their day) I record them. Watts's charity (of which more hereafter, as I am promised a copy of his very curious will†) is still in existence; so,

* No doubt this was the Sir William Courtenay, to whom Lady Howard bequeathed Walreddon and Fitz-ford.

† I have not been able, however, to see it.

also, is the almshouse for the poor women, now called the Gift-house, but it is not confined to widows.

I now proceed to mention our present charities, and in doing so I wish it were in my power to give the names of all those benevolent persons who have voluntarily united for their foundation and support. At the head of these stands the Duke of Bedford, who, on all occasions, has been a munificent contributor to the existing charities of this place. We have the Doreas Society, for giving garments to the poor on the recommendation of a subscriber, the number of garments distributed by each being regulated by the amount of the individual subscription. We have, also, the Lying-in Charity, regulated in the same manner.

We have a library to lend out, gratis, books to the poor. This charity is under the more immediate management of Miss Charlotte Bedford, who conducts it with praiseworthy care and attention. The books circulated are not merely of a religious nature, but likewise of an instructive and amusing class. The Dispensary lately established for relieving the sick was originally suggested by Mr. Charles Crapp: it met with some opposition, but Mr. Crapp never lost sight of his object till he gained support enough to ensure its success; and it has been found of the greatest benefit to the poor. Their feelings are in every way consulted in the regulations of the institution, as they are at liberty to choose their own medical man, who attends them, if necessary, at their own home, and both medicine and attendance are given, gratis, on the recommendation of a sub-

scriber*. The workhouse here, as in most other towns, of late years, has been very full, notwithstanding we have a savings bank, and clubs formed by artificers, labourers, servants, and even by women, to alleviate sickness or any other kind of distress. The subscribers to these clubs pay so much monthly, and receive an allowance according to the circumstances of their misfortunes, whenever they may befall them; and if they die something is likewise allowed to assist in giving the deceased member a decent funeral.

The school here is on the Lancasterian plan; or, as the name of Lancaster is now falling into disrepute, it is called the British Free School. To this my husband is a subscriber; but he, like yourself, is a strong advocate for schools on the plan of your lamented friend Dr. Bell, and is most anxious to see one on that truly wise and admirable system established in Tavistock. Many persons here, and amongst the most respectable classes, are equally desirous on the subject; but unfortunately the Lancasterian plan has been now some years followed, and it is considered that, as yet, the town could not support two schools; nevertheless we are not without hopes of one day seeing the fruits of Dr. Bell's system flourish in Tavistock. My husband's objections to the present plan prevent his taking any active share in the management of it.

It is much to be lamented that the grammar school which, if well encouraged and vigorously conducted, would be of essential benefit to the whole town, has fallen much into decay; but I have always

* Since the above was written, another society for visiting the sick and poor has been instituted.

entertained the hope one day to see it revived. The country grammar school deserves to be held in honour: it is, generally speaking, regulated by ancient and established maxims of prudence and true wisdom: it is content to follow in the old track, and to give to youth that education (founded on religion, the only solid basis of all education) which, in other times, was able to form such characters as our Hookers, our Fullers, our Taylors, and those many illustrious men whose names are engraved, and will for ever endure, on the solid pillar of true English glory. No rank, however humble, is excluded from these venerable institutions; and the "towardly boy," as good Sir John Glanville expressed it, of any honest parents, may receive the benefit (and to such a boy it would become the blessing) of a sound classical education.

The next institution I have to speak of here is not one of charity, but one of universal benefit: it is the public Library, of which the four founders deserve an honourable mention. These are (I copy their names as they stand in the record now before me) the Rev. E. A. Bray, Mr. John Commins, Mr. John Taylor (now resident in London), and the Rev. W. Evans of Park Wood. These gentlemen founded the public library amongst themselves in the year 1799. They soon entertained hopes of widely extending their plan, and the Duke of Bedford became the patron of this most useful institution. Numerous subscribers in a short space gave in their names, and a subscription was next proposed for the erection of a library to contain the books, which had greatly increased in number. A sum of 1000*l.* was, I believe, speedily raised, of

which 100*l.* was generously given by John Rundle, Esq., the banker *. A beautiful building, on the model of the Propylæum, was erected. This stood near a portion of the abbey buildings; and was not only an elegant object in itself, but, when seen from the hill leading towards Milton, presented so fine a feature both in form and colour, that our friend Mr. Harding, the landscape painter, called it a very gem in the picture; nor was it less admired by architects and many persons of cultivated taste. But this however was not the taste of some of the good people of Tavistock. The Propylæum stood near Gothic buildings; they argued, therefore, that the library ought to be Gothic for the sake of uniformity, quite forgetting (if they ever knew it) that some of the finest cities and towns of Italy, France, and even some in England, are rendered not only more picturesque, but are even admired on account of the juxtaposition of various styles of architecture.

True it is that nothing can be more barbarous than to place Grecian ornaments in a Gothic building; but where the building stands *alone*, and is *entire* and *uniform* in all its parts, how can it be injured by having another building of a different order in its vicinity? The streets of Venice form the most picturesque combinations; yet the buildings of Palladio often stand near those of Gothic date. In Rome the same diversity may be seen; and in France, Brittany, and the Netherlands numberless instances may be observed in their most admired towns: and who would ever wish to pull down the

* The gentleman here named is one of the present members for Tavistock. In all matters of public or private charity, he has been a most liberal benefactor to his native town.

Radcliffe Library at Oxford because it corresponds not with the early Gothic buildings of that most venerable and beautiful city? But this was not such reasoning as made any impression at Tavistock. The Library was not Gothic; and as all the world began to find that, whether they did so or not, they ought to admire the Gothic, the noble Propylæum was voted down at a general meeting, and down it came accordingly. The only good reason that I ever learned for its destruction (a destruction which I heard a very clever architect declare he considered a serious loss to the whole town) was that it was built, like some other modern buildings here, for anything rather than endurance; it was in a cracked and insecure condition. How far this statement might be correct I do not know, but I fully credit it; since there are those who will be obstinate enough to entertain the opinion, that when some of the builders here set to work on any new structure, they calculate how soon they may have to build it up again, as a thing that must happen of necessity. The edifices of the olden time in this neighbourhood, both in the remains of the Abbey and the seats of country gentlemen, ought to make some of these artificers ashamed of their own work.

After the demolition of the Library was accomplished, a portion of the Abbey, above the archway, that once formed the principal entrance, was fitted up by the Duke of Bedford to receive the books, and thither they were removed. The library is still supported by yearly subscriptions, and a librarian receives a regular salary from the sums thus collected. The books proposed are voted in at the general meetings; newspapers and periodicals are

kept on the table of the reading-room, and the subscribers may have any work, during the time allowed for its perusal, at their own houses.

About five years ago an institution was here founded for the purpose of giving lectures on any subjects connected with art, science, or literature—religion and politics being alone excluded, in order to prevent any disputes amongst the members of the society formed for its support. The room in which the lectures are held has been handsomely fitted up in the Gothic style. Mr. Bray has recommended that, as this neighbourhood is so rich in minerals, the society should add to their institution a Museum of native specimens of every kind. These could be easily collected at a small expense; and geological specimens, from Dartmoor and elsewhere, would likewise be useful and appropriate in such a selection. A herbal also might be formed, and this would stimulate young people to the pursuit of botany; since it is universally admitted that no county in England is more fertile than Devonshire in the variety and richness of its plants*.

Some new regulations have lately been introduced at our institutions, and a new librarian appointed in the place of Mr. Knight, recently deceased. I cannot here resist the opportunity afforded of mentioning a very remarkable circumstance connected with Mr. Knight, who was a most respectable man, which was first communicated to me soon after the publication of my letters, addressed to you, about Mary Colling.

* A museum has been commenced since this letter was written; and a Statistical Society is on the point of being established with every prospect of success.

You recollect the story of George Philp, who was lost, together with his young son, in the *Vestal*, off the coast of Newfoundland. Lieut. Edgcumbe* was on board the ship; and Mr. Knight, then a boy, being related to Edgcumbe, was persuaded by him to go to sea in the next voyage he was to make with his captain. Young Knight consented, and set off to join the *Vestal* at Plymouth at the appointed time. A trifling circumstance delayed him on the road, so that on his arrival he found himself too late, for the *Vestal* had weighed anchor, and he caught sight of her, under a favouring gale, far out at sea, making her way rapidly through the waves. To join her proved impossible, for though he made the effort, the boat into which he immediately leaped could not reach the ship; he was therefore obliged to put back. On landing, greatly disappointed in all his plans, young Knight found an old seaman standing alone on the beach, and still attentively observing the diminishing vessel, as she continued her course through the distant waters. "That ship will never return," said the old sailor, "she is overmasted." His prediction was, indeed, fulfilled; for the *Vestal* sunk in one of those sudden squalls so frequently met with on the banks of Newfoundland. Mr. Knight, when he related his narrow escape from joining a crew, every one of which met with a watery grave, acknowledged in the most feeling manner the merciful intervention of Providence in his preservation. He recollected very well seeing poor George Philp and his high-minded wife pass under

* Of the ancient family of Edgcumbe, who, for more than seven hundred years, have held certain lands near Milton Abbot, where the old mansion stands to this day.

the church-bow on the morning of their fatal parting. He remembered the peculiar expression of Mrs. Philp's countenance; not a tear was in her eye, she was perfectly composed, but she looked as if her heart was dead within her. She was, he added, a most remarkable woman: one so resolute or so patient in hard fortune he had never seen.

Mr. Knight died last year, and was interred in Tavistock churchyard. He was universally respected, and, as librarian, was a loss to the town.

In mentioning the remarkable persons of this place, I should be guilty of great injustice did I omit Mr. John Rundle, the builder. This ingenious man was born in a respectable but humble station of life; and on being threatened with an apprenticeship that was not congenial to his feelings, he declared that if his friends persisted, he would run away to sea; but if they would but bring him up as a carpenter, he felt in that business he could work his way to something better. His wishes were granted, and in the craft he had chosen he laboured for many years, and was for some time employed at Dock, now Devonport, in very close service; yet so great was his desire after knowledge, that, even at this period, he would read any book he could possibly get likely to be useful to him; his opportunities, however, were few, but he never neglected his Bible, which he studied incessantly, not only as a religious, but as an historical guide of the highest interest and importance.

His health at length obliged him to quit Dock, and on his return to Tavistock he was employed as one of the carpenters in building Endsleigh Cottage for his Grace the Duke of Bedford. It so chanced

that Mr. Wyatt, who made the design for that cottage, sent down a very clever joiner as a leading man in the management of the carpenters' work, where it required more than common skill. This was a happy circumstance for Mr. Rundle, for he found the joiner was so far master of the art of drawing that he could "plan out" staircase lines, &c. Rundle earnestly solicited that he would instruct him in this art, and very speedily acquired all that his new master had the power to teach him. Delighted with his pursuit, he determined to cultivate his taste; and having now, by good luck, access to more books than formerly, he not only read for improvement whenever he could steal an hour, but he would labour all day as a carpenter, and, after his return home, at six o'clock in the evening, would frequently fag hard at teaching himself to draw till one or two in the morning.

On being sent to Exeter to do some work, he immediately formed the design of making himself master of a practical knowledge of Gothic architecture. Hour after hour would he spend in the Cathedral of that ancient city, till there was not the minutest ornament within its walls but was familiar to him. He afterwards went to London to work in his trade. There he remained but eight months; but whilst on the spot sedulously studied, at every opportunity, the architectural wonders of the great metropolis.

Soon after his return, Mr. Rundle was thrown from a horse, and much hurt. He was confined to his chamber. The confinement was irksome to him at first, but he soon found a way to render it a pleasure instead of a penance, for a mind so active

as his could never rest, and he now determined, without knowing a single rule of the art, to commence modelling. The result was his very clever model of the Temple of Theseus, at Athens. When we saw the model we expressed our surprise, as we well might do, knowing how few had been the opportunities of the ingenious hand that produced it. But if this surprised us, judge of our astonishment when Mr. Rundle produced an architectural design of his own, beautifully drawn by himself (with the ground plan, sections, &c., on the same paper, beneath the elevation of the building), for a public school-house, which I do not scruple to say would have done credit to Sir Geoffrey Wyattville, or Mr. Blore, or any architect of the present day; and to add to all his merits, like every true child of genius, he is so perfectly modest and unassuming that he did not seem at all to fancy there was anything more than common in his performance. He talked of Gothic architecture, and Rome, and Athens, as if the enthusiasm of his whole soul was centred in the works of the mighty dead, and not in his own pretensions.

Mr. Rundle is a married man, the father of three children, and is universally respected. Most heartily do I hope that he may meet with a patron who will have the power to serve him as well as to appreciate his merits; for I am convinced he is one of those men who want but encouragement to become an honour to themselves and to their native country.

To return from this digression to the subject of our public buildings. We have an excellent inn here, the Bedford Arms, already mentioned. It was originally a private house, built by Sanders, formerly

named, and was called the Abbey House. The late Mr. Bray resided there till his death. After that event the house was altered and turned into an inn. The Duke of Bedford is the proprietor of the premises. The old Gothic room, fully described in an early letter, was, about three years ago, taken down, and a very handsome ball-room erected in its stead by the duke. I have been in it but twice: the first time was on a ball night, when from its size, and the comparatively small company assembled, it was dreadfully cold, and I sat shivering all the evening, wishing for the old room; the dancers, however, did not complain. Since then we have had one concert in it, in which there was one good vocal performer, Miss Elizabeth Greco, who sings indeed delightfully, possessing every qualification that nature can give a vocalist—power, sweetness, taste, feeling, and the most brilliant execution. From hearing our Miss Greco, I found the new room was admirably well adapted for music, and nothing could exceed the effect she produced on the feelings of all present when she accompanied her own voice with the simplest air on her harp. In London this lady's talents would acquire for her fortune and success; here they are buried in obscurity.

We have no theatre, the town not being large enough to support such a thing; but now and then a strolling company find their way here, and exhibit in the Market-House. They are always, however, the very humblest and poorest votaries of the sock and buskin, and generally beg their way out of the place. I had once, many years ago, a letter addressed to me by the mistress of a company of this description, requesting assistance, and if I had not

mislaide it I should have been tempted to give it (suppressing the writer's name) at full length, since a more curious and original epistle never yet reached my hands. The writer was an Irishwoman, as she told me in the first line. Her father, she said, had been a clergyman, and left her very young and very poor to make her way in the world; that a love of the fine arts (for she could not put up with a vulgar calling) and a particular love of Shakspeare induced her to go on the stage, and, finally, to collect a company, who used to play in the provincial towns of Ireland, where the strong sympathies of the people for some time rendered her very successful. But she had not always been wise, for she soon married for love, she said, a bit of an Irish boy, who had hardly a rag on him when she took him up for the sake of his genius; but he turned out a plague to her, till one day he died; but trouble did not die with him, for eight or nine children, God bless them, had been the sorrow and the joy of her life; and all that were alive she had brought up to be followers of the stage any way, and they could spout Shakspeare almost as soon as they could talk. But Shakspeare, she truly added, would not fill their bellies; and strolling was a poor trade, for all towns had not taste sufficient for play-going; and often she did not get enough to pay candles for lighting up the house. She was a widow, God help her, and at that time of writing the letter in great distress; and hearing, as she was pleased to say, I had a soul for the fine arts, she thought I should feel for one whose misfortunes came from loving them too well. And so for the sake of all that was generous, and for the love of the church, to which in a way, she added, we

both belonged, she begged a few shillings to help her clear of the town, where, she thought, the good people liked a show of wild beasts at a fair, or an organ grinder in their streets, more than they did the "bard of their land;" for though her own daughter's benefit was "billed" for Romeo and Juliet, and got up to show as pretty a Juliet as ever walked the boards, it had not brought more than a few shillings to the house that blessed night, let alone the free tickets sent in to help make up an audience, and nothing the better was she for them.

This, to the best of my recollection, was the sum and substance, and style of the letter. The unfortunate lover of the fine arts did not appeal in vain, and her thanks were expressed as warmly as the favour had been solicited. Poor woman! I pitied her with all my heart, as a day or two after, I saw her from my window, with her family, make her exit from the town in a cart, laden with the stock of the theatre; children, scenes, and all, piled up together, and the poor mother seated on the top, and calling out to Juliet, the biggest girl, who was walking in the mud, by the side of the vehicle, "To keep out of the mire, or her petticoats wouldn't they be as black as night?"

Strolling players are not our only occasional amusement here; we have shows from fairs, and other exhibitions. Wild beasts, as the letter writer observed, are great favourites here when they arrive among us; a troop of riders sometimes appear; and I remember once my pony being dreadfully startled at seeing, for the first time, a dromedary with a monkey on his back, dressed in a red jacket, walk into the town in slow and stately pace. At one time

we had a couple of cheats, who having acquired the arts of eating beef raw, daubing their faces with rose pink and lamp black, oiling their skins, and gibbering like apes, were exhibited as “the extraordinary male and female Esquimaux Indians, in their natural state, just arrived from the North Pole, to be seen, all alive and very tame, for sixpence a head—two-pence more feeding times:—Walk up ladies and gentlemen.” This precious pair of curiosities were, I have since learned, most deservedly committed to Bridewell and hard labour, for six months, as vagabonds and sharpers.

Our last sight was, I think, the French giant, Monsieur Louis, who was nearly eight feet high. I did not see him, being generally very well satisfied with hearing a full and particular account of our wonders. He was, I am informed, a gentlemanly man, and took the air by nights, in order that his exhibition should not suffer, by making himself familiar to the common eye by day. He was very much gratified in being sent for to Endsleigh, to amuse the children of the Duke of Bedford. The French giant was, in fact, the most respectable of all the wonderful persons ever exhibited in this town.

Not long ago we had the Phantasmagoria. A gentleman, sitting at his window, took down the proclamation of this wonder from the mouth of the showman. The following is a copy, verbatim, as he cried it through the streets:—

“Will be shown at the Town Hall, Tavistock, at the hours of seven, eight, and nine, to the nobility and gentry, what is called in the French language phantasmagory, in the English, magic lantern. All sorts of birds, beasts, reptiles, and pantomimes,

'specially the forked lightning seen in many parts of England, but chiefly in the East and West Indies; also what we are and what we is to be; namely, Death as large as any living being—six foot high, with an hour-glass in his hand; and everything instructing and amusing to all ages and societies, both the old and the juvenile. I hope you will all come. If you cannot all come as many as can come; and nobody can say it a'n't worth seeing, except he says it agin his conscience. Boys and girls for the sum of one penny. Their honest working parents for the sum of twopence. Gentlemen and ladies, sixpence each. God save us all!"

As we have occasionally impostors who visit this neighbourhood, so have we many in the character of beggars. I could relate, from my own experience, some tricks played by the latter class with daring success, but I shall content myself with mentioning the two most amusing instances of imposition that I have ever known here. One of these occurred in our own house, and both would have furnished a rich subject for Quevedo in his novel of the Spanish Sharper. The following happened some years ago; I suppress nothing but the name of the party cheated, having been particularly requested so to do, for it is not every one who can make up his mind to figure in the character of a dupe; a character, however, that guileless and single-hearted people are often forced to appear in, by the knavery of the selfish, the cunning, and the designing.

Without then being more particular, I shall merely state, that some years since there was a gentleman in this town, very charitably disposed, who entertained an especial good will and kind feeling towards

old sailors. Any old sailor, by calling at his door, received the donation of a shilling and a glass of grog. It was marvellous to see what a number of veteran blue jackets paid him a visit in the course of a year. At last the servant who opened the door observed that all these sons of the sea had a particular patch on one and the same place of one and the same arm. She began at length to fancy that the old patch must be some badge of honour in the service, and yet she thought it a very odd distinction in his Majesty's navy. She mentioned her observation of the circumstance. It awakened suspicion. The next old blue jacket that appeared, decorated with the order of the patch, was therefore watched and followed to his retreat. He was observed to retire to the house of a certain old woman, not of very good fame, and one who was grievously suspected of the crime here known by the name of *over-looking*; that is, casting an evil or witch's eye on another, to do him an injury, or to bewitch him, or sometimes to drive him mad. To the den of this Sycorax was the son of Neptune thus traced, and in a little while he was seen to come forth again, in his own natural character — that of a street beggar, clothed in rags. The cheat was apparent, and, suffice it to say, that on further examination it appeared that the old woman's house was one of friendly call to all the vagabonds and sharpers who paced the country round; and that amongst other masquerade attire for her friends, she kept by her a sailor's old jacket and trowsers for the purpose of playing off the imposition just detailed. No doubt she was paid for the loan of the dress.

My next story relates to ourselves. On a sum-

mer evening, last year, we were at tea, when one of our servants came in and said, "that a very poor woman, who was in great trouble, had brought a child to be baptized directly; for the infant was so bad with fits that the poor woman was afraid it would die before it could be made a christian."

Up jumped Mr. Bray—"Get a basin of water—where's the prayer book?"

"I will go too," said I, "and see the child; perhaps a little Dalby's Carminative, or something, may do it good"—and away we both went into the hall.

There stood a woman dressed in a large, old, grey cloak, like that of a horse-soldier. An old black bonnet was stuck on one side on her head, beneath which strayed a quantity of long hair, that seemed as if it had never felt a comb. She had a face that was as full and as red as the rising moon; and her eyes, that looked at you out of their corners, had in them the sly expression of low cunning. A rich Irish brogue was as good as any certificate to tell the land of her birth. She made us a curtsy, as she stood crying and talking Irish all in a breath; and under the large cloak she seemed to be alternately cuddling and shaking a bundle, which she said was a child, but the tip of whose nose even could not be seen, and I feared it would be smothered for want of air.

"Is the child very ill?" said I, "It does not cry."

"All the worse for that, my leddy; I'd be having some hope of her, if I could but hear her squeal. But it's no strength she has to cry; and them fits just killing her for forty-eight hours long, and no keeping 'em down—and I starving—starving! not

a morsel of bread, your honour, have I had in my lips since yesterday the morn."—Here she began to cry most bitterly.

"Have you been to the overseer?" said Mr. Bray, "If you are so distressed, he is obliged to give you immediate relief and a night's lodging."

"And is it the overseer, your honour's spaking of? I've been at his door morn and eve, and he's away, and far out, and they tells me he'll not be back till twelve o'clock the night, and that's a dark hour for asking help, and I with the sick babby; and nothing left to sell, or to give to get a lodging, or a crust to keep life and sowl together, and as naked, all but my auld cloak, as a new-born babe. Only see, your honour, and satisfy yourself."—And so saying, she rather unceremoniously threw back part of her cloak (but still kept the child muffled up) and by so doing, obliged Mr. Bray to look another way, for, truth to speak, she was not overburthened with clothes. He put his hand into his pocket and gave her a piece of silver.

"And is it a shilling? may God bless your honour, for copper's the best charity I ever had afore. And now we'll christen the child; and then the leddy there will be giving me an auld garment, that I may go away like a christian mudder from the door."

"What is the child's name to be?" inquired Mr. Bray, opening the book.

"Antonio, your honour."

"Antonio!" said I, "I thought you told us just now the child was a girl."

"Very like, my leddy, for I didn't know what I was saying by raison of my head being turned with

they fits—but a boy it is for sure; and his fader's a Portugee and a sogier; and he's away, over the water, and I and the babby left behind—Hush, hush, hush, my dear little darling."

"The child is not crying," said I, "it seems remarkably quiet."

"I do it to make him still while the minister's over the book, my leddy; for he'll squeal by and by, when the fits take him, with the sprinkle of the water—and may be you'll hear such a squealing as you never heard afore; for sometimes he's all black in the face along wid the disease. But there'll be comfort in seeing him a christian before he goes away dead."

Mr. Bray commenced the service, the mother still shaking the child, and keeping it closely muffled up in the "auld cloak;" but when it came to that part of the ceremony that the infant must be uncovered to receive the sprinkling—out she brought, in a moment, a fine bouncing child, as rosy as a rose, that could not have been very far from two years old at least, with stout limbs and firm flesh; and the little fellow looked up the very picture of health, smiling and well pleased to undergo the rite of baptism,—a ceremony to which, no doubt, he was pretty well accustomed. That was concluded; and fully convinced that the woman was a cheat, we speedily got rid of her, and though she made a resolute attempt, no "auld garment" did she get from me to pawn at the next town.

A day or two afterwards, we happened to dine at the house of a neighbouring clergyman. There we found that little Antonio had also been baptized in his fits; and it was very confidently believed he had

been carried round the country to as many of the clergy as were likely to be cheated into any sort of compassionate donation.

In speaking of the wonders of this neighbourhood, I quite forgot to mention one, which was here so exaggerated by rumour, that some of the good people at last came to the conclusion that the cause of alarm, a very large snake, was nothing less formidable in bulk than the great boa itself.

I think it was in the summer of 1828 that an application was made to a magistrate to issue an order, for the security of the neighbourhood, that a certain monstrous snake, first seen in Pixy Lane, and afterwards in our orchard, should be well looked after. If the magistrate was to issue this order to apprehend the snake, or to secure the attention of the constables, the applicants themselves did not very clearly define. I never heard such a story as speedily found its way amongst the lovers of the marvellous. No doubt, however, the snake that had been seen was an extraordinary one; and, as a matter of curiosity, I set to work to learn the most *credible* account of it that could be met with. One boy offered to take his "bible oath" that he was leading up (*i. e.* walking up) Pisgey Lane with another lad, and on going to the hedge to pick something, a great snake leapt out, over the little boy's shoulder, as he was standing beneath; crossed the road with great rapidity, and an old man who was near the spot, declared that the body of the *long cripple* (for so they here call a snake) was as thick as his thigh; and so long, that he would not say how long it could be.

I also heard an old woman, considered here a wise

one, declare, "the reptile was for all the world just such another snake as tempted Eve to eat the apple." In our orchard, however, it produced a very different effect; for the formidable monster, luckily for us, having been there last seen, proved as good a guard as any dragon to the fruits there found, so that we had fewer apples stolen that year than we ever had before. What became of the snake no one could tell; but not in the days of monkish superstition could more extravagant tales respecting a reptile have been circulated or believed. On hearing these, I no longer wondered at the credulity of the old chronicler, who recorded that marvellous story about the monstrous snake at Rouen in Normandy, which swallowed knights whole, armour, horse and all, and at last required a saint himself to kill it.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS.—Old survey of the town in 1726—A few brief items extracted, which any reader may pass over if he feels no interest in them—Little herb-garden given to the schoolmaster, &c.—Tavistock a borough town—Court Leet and Court Baron—Court of Record—Manor of Tavistock—Burgesses—Markets—Ancient Guildhall; still the court of justice—Remarkable feud between the towns of Tavistock and Oakhampton—Death of Carter Foote—Healthy state of the town—Longevity of the people—Rejoicing on the passing the Reform Bill—Procession—Population—Yearly deaths—The doctors—The country doctor; his useful and laborious calling—The plague of 1626—Assizes removed from Exeter to Tavistock in 1591 on account of the plague—An extraordinary instance of disease, believed to be the plague, in modern times—The cholera first appeared here in 1832; melancholy instance of its fatal effects—Humble life; examples of the most patient suffering frequently found in it—Accidents in mines—Affecting story of a widow and her son—A remarkable instance of patient submission to the will of God in continued and severe affliction, seen in a poor widow well known to the writer—The widow's tale.

Vicarage, Tavistock, June 21st, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE this morning been looking over some notes made from "a survey and valuation of the site of the Abbey of Tavistock, together with the demesnes and manor of Hurdwick, in the county of Devon, belonging to the most noble Wriothesley, Duke of Bedford," taken by Humphrey Smith in 1726.

I find in this *few* particulars of any import which I have not already noticed, excepting some *brief items*

that ought not to be omitted, as they form a portion of the history of the town, in its minor details.

William, the first Duke of Bedford, built a house for the schoolmaster, and gave him a "little herb-garden," rent free. Adjoining the same, and then situated within the churchyard, was the school-house belonging to the town: which John Earl of Bedford, by his deed poll, dated the 6th of Edw. VI., granted for two hundred years, with tolls and profits of three fairs, with a court of pypowder, and a weekly market on Fridays, as benefactions.

Since which the town has built, at its own cost, a market-house, where the cross formerly stood. "All which profits and liberties," says the survey, "are within the borough of Tavistock, and for the use of the schoolmaster, and may be worth comm^{bs} annis 22l., which lease expires Anno Dom., 1753.

"Tavistock," continues this document, "is a borough by prescription, and of great antiquity. It consists of a portreeve and about one hundred and ten freeholders *. The Duke of Bedford's steward holds a court leet and court baron twice a-year: viz. Michaelmas and Lady-day.

"At the first court, the jury returns four persons, out of which the steward nominates one for portreeve, and swears him in for the year. The members of Parliament are elected by the majority of the freeholders, and returned by the portreeve. The weekly market on Fridays is considerable. Five fairs are

* This was in 1796. The following statement I have been favoured with from our present Portreeve:—Number of voters (resident) before the passing the Reform Bill, 21; ditto minors, 2; non-resident freeholders, and thereby disfranchised before the passing the bill, but admitted by it, 8; non-resident, living at a greater distance than seven miles, 9. Number of votes under the Reform Act, 245.

held during the year, viz., St. Mark's, 23rd of April, and two days following; St. Andrew's, 28th of November, and three days following; St. John's, 29th of August, the eve, and two days following; twelfth fair, 6th of January, and the day following.

“This borough is governed (1726) by eight masters, the Duke of Bedford's steward at the head of them. There are lands belonging to the same, worth 60*l.* per annum, which these masters appropriate mostly to the repairs of the church. They have a magistratical power of committing offenders. The lord (continues the old survey) has a gaol in this his borough, and two serjeants at mace; one of which is keeper of the prison, and has a house to live in rent free, and a salary for attending the sessions and assizes. The lord has also a Hundred called Hurdwick; also Tavistock Hundred, with a Court of Pleas held every three weeks, power of granting replevins, breaking open with and returns thereof. There is likewise a weekly Court of Record held every Tuesday, at the Guildhall of the said borough.

“The manor of Tavistock was most likely held by Orgar, who kept his court here till the Abbey was erected; for we find by a charter of King Henry I., recited by Inspeximus, in a charter of confirmation made 21st of Edward III., that the king granted to the Abbey the Jurisdiction and Hundred of Tavistock, with market, fairs, &c., with the view of frank-pledge, gallows, pillory, assize of bread and beer, &c. All which privileges were challenged by the abbot in the reign of Edward I., and enjoyed by his successors till the dissolution of monasteries in 1539.

“The portreeve has possessed the privilege of

being returning officer of the burgesse elected to serve in Parliament ; for we find they made three returns in King Edward I., and King Edward II.'s reign ; and have constantly sent their representatives ever since the beginning of King Edward III.'s time. The list of the burgesses who have served in Parliament for this borough, begins the 23rd of Edward I. ; but is continued for no more than two other elections, till the beginning of King Edward III.'s reign, whence it is carried on entire (except in the four reigns before mentioned, when the rolls are lost) to the 12th of her late Majesty Queen Anne. The members of Parliament for this corporation now serving, in 1726, are

“ Sir John Cope, jun., Bart.

“ Francis Henry Drake, Esq.”

That this town was formerly of far greater note than at the present time cannot be doubted; the various historical records of its importance heretofore mentioned are sufficient proof of the fact. Tavistock is still considered to possess one of the finest markets in the West of England for corn ; and the woollen manufacture is still carried on ; but not with that success, nor with that superiority in the article produced when the “Tavistock kersey” sold in London was sure to procure the highest prices, and to be held unrivalled in the excellence of its manufacture. Indeed only the most common serges are now made here. And as to the market, though abundant in poultry and butter, it is by no means a cheap one ; and is more famous for tough, lean, and miserable beef, and hard mutton, than for anything else that I have ever been able to discover. Let

me, however, do justice to the pigs; since to them we owe bacon and hams equal to any produced from the Hampshire hogs. Our market is very large and crowded every Friday throughout the year. There is a smaller market on Fridays.

The Guildhall, mentioned in the survey above quoted, is still the court of justice. There Mr. Bray has performed the duties of a magistrate for nearly twenty years; but, considering himself entitled to the privilege of superannuation, he is now relieved by some gentlemen in the neighbourhood, and seldom makes his appearance in the hall. There is a good deal of business here for the magistrates, and formerly there must have been even more, since Mr. Bray's father could recollect barristers pleading in the Guildhall of Tavistock as in a court of assize.

Amongst other remarkable circumstances respecting this town, one is the extraordinary feud, still the theme of tradition, which for years existed between the Tavistock and the Oakhampton people. How this feud commenced I do not know; if it is to be traced back to the times when some Norman Baron was lord of the latter place, and lived with his retainers perched on the top of a high hill in the strong castle there situated, of which nothing but a heap of picturesque ruins now remains; if the monks of our abbey had any share in this quarrel; if they excommunicated the baron, or armed their yeomanry and tenantry against him, are all matters for amusing conjecture, and will do, as well as any other cause, to fancy as the beginning of so lasting and deadly a feud between two neighbouring towns; or possibly the wars of the red and white roses (and hot wars

were they in the West) might have occasioned it ; or even a less matter ;—rivalry in trade, or, in more modern times, rivalry of whig and tory principles ; since, with some individual exceptions, Tavistock is noted for espousing the former, and Oakhampton the latter in politics. Let the cause of hatred, however, be what it may, certain it is the two towns have hated each other with hearty good will from generation to generation ; and, as one proof of the fact, take the following story, for the truth of which I have many respectable living authorities.

There was some years ago a character of this borough, in humble life, whose name was Carter Foote. On returning from Oakhampton, whither he had journeyed on business, he remounted his horse, after having enjoyed himself at the public-house, and attempted to pass the river below the bridge, by fording it over. The day had been stormy, and one of those sudden swells of the river (that sometimes happen in hilly countries where the currents rush rapidly from the moors) taking place, he found himself in extreme danger. After long endeavouring to struggle with the current, he leapt from his horse upon a large portion of rock, which still kept its head above water ; and there the unfortunate man stood calling aloud for help, though his cries were scarcely audible, from the roaring of the wind and the water.

Some person going by ran and procured a rope, which he endeavoured to throw towards the rock ; but finding it impossible to do so without further assistance, he begged two men, belonging to Oakhampton, who drew near the spot, to give him help, and save the stranger, whose life was in so much

peril. One of them, however, very leisurely looked at the sufferer, and only saying "'Tis a Tav'stock man, let un go," walked off with his companion, and poor Carter Foote was drowned.

Our town is considered, and justly so, remarkably healthy; it has abundance of water, and the wind which sweeps across the valley, affords a constant change of air, whilst the river is rapid, and there are no stagnant pools. The parish register proves that the inhabitants live to be very old; many die beyond eighty, some beyond ninety. On looking over that record yesterday, I saw an entry of the burial of Elizabeth Gendal, who died very lately at the age of one hundred and two. Last year this poor woman with another, whose name is Jones, and who is nearly one hundred years old, sat together at tea, in the open streets, when there was a grand rejoicing for the passing of the Reform Bill; an event which was here celebrated by feasting and a procession.

I saw very little of these rejoicings, for I was at the time a great invalid; but I received full accounts of them from both parties; and the procession which passed our door was, I had been previously informed, *classically* got up. Now what the classics of Tavistock might be (if this were correct information) would puzzle a scholar or an antiquary to determine. St. George figured in the procession, dressed like one of Mr. Astley's riders. Moses walked carrying a wooden table of the ten commandments; what part he had to play in the rejoicings I do not know. Joseph, too, was there, in his coat of many colours; Bishop Blaze likewise joined the company in a woollen wig; and Jason appeared bearing the golden fleece, and dressed in a

cocked hat. Such was our *classical* Tavistock procession in honour of reform! To me the most gratifying circumstance of the day was to see the old and the poor eating a good dinner which cost them nothing.

I mentioned just now that Tavistock was a healthy place; but I did not therefore mean to say that the people never fell sick, or never died in it. For however good the air may be, or however great our advantages, sickness and death will come in various shapes among us, to claim their dues of poor mortality here the same as every where else. Yet considering that, according to the last census, we have in this parish a population of 5602, about one hundred deaths yearly are not many. If the doctors could keep off sickness, we have here no lack of them; and as they have one and all tendered their services with no other reward than the good deed will afford them, to administer their help to the poor, when the Dispensary in this town was lately established, they deserve a most honourable mention, and that I feel a pleasure in giving them. Indeed a country doctor, the most laborious, the least known, beyond his own immediate sphere, and the greatest slave of the public, is one of its most useful and meritorious servants. His life is harder than that of a miner; for though the miner may toil all day, he may sleep in his bed at night; but the country doctor, in hail, rain, snow, or storm, must turn out of a warm bed and ride, often to the dreary waste of Dartmoor, through rough roads and darkness, at the call of humanity, and frequently has, as his reward, to contend with the prejudices of obstinacy and ignorance, or is supplanted at last, as I have known instances,

by some old woman called in to charm the patient, as a more infallible mode of cure than all the learned experience of the faculty : whilst, if he deviates, in desperate cases, from the most ordinary practice, or wishes to open the body after death, he is looked upon as a monster and a brute, having no touch of human feeling in his nature. He is called in to give assistance in moments of suffering, fear, and doubt, when if his patient places confidence in his skill, he comes to him as an angel of hope ; and is trusted as an oracle, or as if he could set at defiance the course of mortality ; but let the patient be cured, and the country doctor no longer wanted, let his bill be delivered, and then comes the murmuring, and the medicine is considered and calculated by the shop-selling price ; whilst the doctor's time, his education, his long season of study in the hospitals and the dissecting-room, his broken sleep, his night rides, his wear and tear of constitution, and his anxiety of mind, go for nothing in the account ; and however great may have been his services, or inadequate their reward, he too often finds it difficult to convince his discontented patient that a thankless mind is in the worst state of moral disease.

By inquiring amongst our medical men here (and more particularly of our own esteemed and skilful surgeon) I find that disorders of an inflammatory nature are most common in this town and neighbourhood. Inflammations of the lungs, typhus fever, rheumatism, and that deadly foe to children, the croup, sometimes occur. There is, too, in Devonshire, a dangerous cholic, probably the consequence of drinking cider when heated with exercise.

I have before mentioned the ravages the plague made in this place in the year 1626, when the mar-

ket was held amongst the druidical circles on Dartmoor. We have still a tradition current here, that during the time the pestilence raged the town was so deserted, that the grass grew between the stones in the streets. It is also said that a very malignant fever visited Tavistock about a century ago, when the market was again removed to Hurdwick. In the year 1591, whilst the plague swept off the inhabitants of Exeter in such awful numbers, the summer assizes of that city were removed to our town; and thirteen persons, convicted of capital crimes, were executed on the Abbey green.

A medical man here, not long since, related to me a most curious instance of disease, which occurred in the lifetime of his father, who was also a professional gentleman. The case in question he confidently believed to have been a real instance of the plague. The circumstances alluded to occurred many years ago; they were as follows:—

A young man of Tavistock, named Strong, purchased a second-hand great coat at Plymouth; the coat came from abroad, and had been taken from a vessel just come into the harbour. If that vessel had previously performed quarantine or not I could not learn. Three or four days after Strong had worn the coat, he became ill, and complained of great pain in the arm. This increased, inflammation appeared in the limb, and he suffered from violent fever: at first it was entirely of an inflammatory character, but rapidly assumed that of typhus. Suppuration also took place in the arm, which soon became gangrenous; and on the fourth or fifth day he died. His father and another son were *very soon* taken ill in the same way, and also died. What part of the body was more particularly affected in these

persons the medical gentleman who related the case to me did not know; but he believes the disease was exactly of the same character as in the first victim, differing only in progress, being far more rapid in its changes and in death. Two men attended the funerals of these unfortunate persons, both of them were seized with the fatal contagion; one died, but the other, whose arm was also in a state of suppuration, was with extreme difficulty saved. These repeated instances proved, beyond a doubt, the contagious nature of the disease, whatever it might have been. The clothing, &c. belonging to the dead were destroyed, and no other cases occurred; little doubt was entertained but that the plague had been communicated to the first victim by the coat purchased from the vessel; it is not improbable it might have belonged to some one who died abroad of the pestilence.

The cholera first appeared in Tavistock on the 16th of July, in the year 1832, when a poor woman, who had come over from Plymouth to sell baskets at Lamerton fair, was suddenly taken so ill there, that she was placed in a cart and brought to this town, to the door of Mr. Harness, a surgeon of great skill, and of no less humanity. Her husband, and a child at the breast, were with her. The woman was removed to the poor-house in so dangerous a state, that most of the medical men who saw her pronounced she would not be living by twelve o'clock that night. To the honour of Mr. Harness be it spoken, he paid her the most unremitting attention; and God so far blessed the strenuous means he adopted, that she survived the shock. On the 21st, however, she appeared in such extreme danger, in consequence

of the child not having been allowed to relieve her in the manner nature points out, that in order to save her, and in the hope that the disorder would not be conveyed by the milk, as the worst symptoms of cholera had ceased, the baby was put to the breast. But alas! that which was designed to sustain life, became to the poor child a speedy and deadly poison. I will not dwell on the detail of circumstances so painful to every feeling mind. After sufferings the most terrific, the infant died of the pestilence in about twenty-four hours after it had first been seized. According to the order of council this innocent victim was interred, not in the churchyard, but in a spot chosen for a cholera burial ground, on the side of a hill near the town. It is a quiet and a pleasing spot; there repose the earthly remains of the poor child. Two other persons, who died of the same disease, were likewise there interred. In record of the melancholy event above detailed, Mr. Bray has written the following distich by way of epitaph:—

“Unconscious martyr! from a mother’s breast,
Thy death, her life, was drain’d:—and now thou’rt blest.”

On the day after the funeral I rode up the hill, and stopped to look upon the infant’s grave. It was a sunny and delightful evening, and as I drew near a bird rose fluttering and singing from the new-heaped mound of earth. This little circumstance brought to my mind those beautiful lines on the burial of Madelon, and I could not but feel their truth.

“A lark sprung up aloft,
And soar’d amid the sunshine carolling,
So full of joy, that to the mourner’s ear
More mournfully than dirge or passing bell
His joyful carol came.”

I have in these letters more than once followed your advice in collecting such short and simple annals of the poor as I could here find of any interest.

In collecting these how often have I thought that in humble life, especially in the country, how much, in the most aggravated trials of sickness, poverty, and suffering, there may be found of patience, of a quiet submission to the Divine will, that if witnessed in those known to the world would be celebrated as heroic examples of piety and virtue, "Few," says an eminent French writer, "can discover superior merit, either of talent or of virtue, unless it is pointed out to them by some one who possesses the power as well as the will to bring it into notice; but all will pay to both the most striking homage when consecrated by the voice of public fame."

This is true; and as examples of private worth are not less useful than those of the most public character, even when found amongst the poorest of the poor, it is a pleasing as well as a desirable task to give them a record; notwithstanding that record may itself become neglected: some solitary eye may glance on it, some heart which repines in secret under similar trials and difficulties may be touched and encouraged by seeing how much of consolation, of comfort, may be found in bearing with a christian's hope, and a christian's resignation, those strokes of fortune that are, more or less, the lot of all, though it is true many seem to have more than their share of "the ills that flesh is heir to."

In this neighbourhood accidents frequently occur in the mines: some are of a nature too appalling for repetition. One which I cannot even now recol-

lect without shuddering, will find its way to every heart, so deeply was the sufferer an object of general commiseration.

There is in this town a poor widow, who has several children, and earns her bread as a chare-woman, or in other daily labours. Her eldest son I well remember; he was a fair-headed, fresh-coloured youth, of a pleasing countenance; very fond of his mother, quiet and harmless, but considered rather weak in his intellects; and perhaps on this account he was her favourite child. The widow had taken great pains to rear him, and was so tender over him, that when I saw her with the poor lad, I used to think of a line by the unfortunate Neale,—

“The bird that we nurse is the bird that we love.”

She was very poor, and at last succeeded in getting some work for her son in the mines that he was equal to undertaking. I saw him with her not long after, when she one day brought him to our house, in the pride of her heart, to tell me that her “dear boy was like a man now, for he could honestly get his own bread,” and she repeated with a mother’s fondness the proofs of his good conduct, his attention to work, how regular he was in his hours of returning home to her, and that not a penny was idly spent; “She blessed God for him as a comfort to her, and the bits of children she had to bring up.”

For some time I saw no more of her, till one day I was in the kitchen giving some orders to the servants. The door was open—in rushed the poor widow, without any previous intimation of her being near the house—she threw herself into an old oak

chair that stood by the fire, clasped her hands together, and with a countenance livid as death, and wild in its expression, exclaimed, in a frantic manner, "He is killed, killed, my boy, my poor son! God have mercy on me, I have lived to see him brought home a corpse—my boy, my dear boy!"

Shocked at the intelligence, and alarmed for the poor mother, I stood for a moment unable to speak to her. When I did so, and endeavoured to learn some connected account, for all attempts to soothe her feelings must have been ineffectual at such a moment, she was in so distracted a state that she scarcely seemed to know me, and I could learn nothing more than that the lad was killed in the mines, and had been brought home a corpse to her door. It appeared, however, as I afterwards heard, that her son had quitted her that morning to go to his work: he parted from her with a kiss, and said, "Mother, God bless you." I could not repeat the horrid particulars of the accident by which he met his death: he was entangled in one of the wheels of the machinery in the mine; need more be said to intimate his dreadful fate? Happily he did not linger; he was instantly disengaged by the exertion of his fellow-labourers, but he was quite dead; and without giving his poor mother any notice, they carried home the body to her door. This, for the time, maddened her, as it well might do, and for some hours she was unconscious of every thing but the deep and overpowering calamity that had deprived her of her darling son. She had, I was told, seen the body laid out as if she did not see it, and then watched it with an eagerness that

seemed as if she looked for some slight sign of returning life.

Another incident connected with her melancholy tale must not remain unnoticed. The poor, the very poor, deeply as they feel, have not leisure to give their days exclusively to grief. The widow had other children, and for them she was obliged to do many little things even whilst the poor lad lay a corpse. If what I now have to mention occurred on the day of, or before, the funeral, I cannot tell, but I rather think the former; and though I have often seen her since, I never could be so unfeeling as to ask her any questions connected with that dreadful event.

She came again to our house after the accident; her manner was less frantic, but her expressions of sorrow were still wild and energetic. She was in tears; and she sobbed so much at first that she could scarcely tell me what new grief had added fresh bitterness to her heart-rending loss. "Something," she said, "had hurt her so—she could not have believed it possible that any body could have been so wicked, so cruel to one like her; a widow woman with her small children, and her dear boy just killed; it was cruel—it was so unfeeling." It was, indeed; for the poor creature told me that she had "washed out her own apron and her little children's frocks, that they might all be decent, and have on them a bit of black riband for poor" — she stopped, for she could not speak his name, her sobs would not let her. She continued—"For *his* funeral; and she hung them near her door, and somebody had stolen part of them, and carried them off;

and at such a time it was so cruel: it was a wicked, a miserable world; well might the clergyman thank the Lord, as he stood over the grave, for those he took out of it to himself."

I do not know if the mingled expression of her grief for the loss of her son, and her sense of such a want of human feeling in the person, whoever he might be, that had done her the little injury she sustained at such an hour, was not even more painful to witness than her first frantic burst of sorrow. In the former there was something appalling; but in the latter there was the expression of a mind broken down with misery, and even morbidly alive to the least thing that could add but a feather's weight to that affliction. The circumstances above related, connected with the melancholy death of her son, made an impression on me that I shall feel and remember as long as life endures.

There is another poor widow here who comes indeed every week to assist the servants in our house; and who, for the patience with which she endured the trials of many years, and her most honest character, deserves mention. She is more than seventy: her name is Jenny Dobson: a more single-hearted creature never lived. Her countenance, always placid, possesses such a marked character of honesty and benevolence, that it would excite a feeling of interest for her, even with a stranger. Poor Jenny's life was, for years, one of trials and calamities. Her husband was sickly; and in him she had to bear with the frequent consequences of long-continued sickness—a peevish temper. She had many children, and owing to his ailing state the burthen of bringing them up fell

chiefly on herself. Her second son, a good young man, married and became the father of a family: he was taken from them by a dreadful fate. He was killed by a fall of the earth from a sand-pit where he was at work, and was literally crushed to pieces.

Her eldest son, a labourer, after working in a turnip-field, loaded the cart he had been driving. Unfortunately he twisted the halter, by which he was to lead the horse home, round his arm. The animal took fright, and set off at full gallop. In vain did he endeavour to disentangle his arm; the unhappy young man was dragged across two fields, and so dreadfully was he injured, that instant death would have been a mercy: he lingered, however, from the Friday till the Monday, when he expired.

Another of Jenny's sons, whose sufferings and whose patience under them, all, who knew him here, well remember, was the victim of a fatal accident. He received a kick in the forehead from a horse: it turned to a cancer; and for nine years, such was the natural strength of his constitution, he lingered in the utmost misery. During this time his wife (for he had married early in life, and was the father of several children) and his mother nursed him with the greatest tenderness and care; and the wife, by her incessant labour in weaving serges, and with the help of individual charities, maintained them all with a decency and neatness that deserved the highest commendation. Distress and her sick husband were never pleaded as an excuse for the slightest neglect; and I am told by her mother-in-law that she would work cheerfully even in those hours when she really wanted rest from her incessant labour. At length, worn out by suffering,

the poor husband's constitution broke up altogether; and in a few months after he died of dropsy on the chest.

This morning, that I might make no mistakes in relating these melancholy particulars, our poor old Jenny answered a few questions I put to her; and before she quitted me, told me all the sad sufferings of her whole life. She said, "She could scarcely tell when her troubles first began; for she married very young, and her husband was but a labourer in the fields, and she had soon more children than she could find food to give them. And often had she been obliged to dine off the most common barley bread, and she used to run home from her own daily work and give the little things a meal of potatoes, and what struggles were hers to get them clothes enough to put on their backs!"

The latter days of poor Jenny's life promise more fairly for her comfort than the early or the middle part of it. In talking over her troubles with me this morning, though she very seldom says a word about them, she declared that God had supported her through them wonderfully. What her feeling of her trials had been God alone could know; but in them all she had never lost sight of Him, and that her prayer had been, in the worst of them, that He would give her strength to bear her burthen; and so he had, or how could she have suffered so, and yet been able to maintain herself and her family? And in the midst of all, there was one blessing he had never kept from her, and that was a mind contented with whatever he pleased to give her, and to do any labour.

How many talk of resignation, but how few practise it like this poor creature*!

Adieu, my dear Sir, and believe me ever, with respectful esteem,

Most truly and faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

* The poor woman, whose remarkable afflictions have here been noticed, died a few months since, after a lingering and most painful illness. She was resigned to death, and strong in the hope of a Christian. She was interred in Tavistock churchyard.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.



CONTENTS.—The writer states the claims of one near and dear to her, to hold a place in the Biography of Tavistock—Proposes to give not a regular life, but a sketch that may be amusing, and of some interest, she hopes, concerning him—Born in Tavistock—His father of the legal profession—His mother determines her son shall be named after Sir Edward Atkyns—Some account of the Atkynses, father and sons—Celebrated men in their day—Buried in Westminster Abbey—Christening of little Edward Atkyns—His godfathers—Eccentric characters—Anecdote of a presentation to Marie Antoinette—A sketch of the Brigadier—Anecdotes of childhood—Early talent for drawing—Edward's inclination for the church—Difficulty about his going to school—His mother will not let him go to Eton—An anecdote respecting an old fashion in dressing the head—The boy fond of a book—Shy and bashful—More anecdotes about early days—The lad discovers a taste for poetry—Mr. Tasker, the physiognomist, prophesies about him on observing his countenance at their first meeting—Edward's godfather, Mr. Tremaine, gives a friend a living to hold for his godson, till he might be old enough to take it—His father's determination to make him a lawyer prevents his benefiting by it—Edward is at last sent to school to Moreton Hampstead—Some account of the rector and his curate—The curate's system of education—Lord Chesterfield much studied at Moreton—The origin of the familiar expression of *Soce*, used by the Moreton cooks—Baldwin Fulford—A descendant of the ancient family of Fulford—A traditionary story of Richard I. in the Holy Land—Story of a knight and lady—Little Edward goes to Fulford—Melancholy circumstance relating to Sir John Collyton when a child—William Dacres Adam, another schoolfellow—Oddities amongst the characters of Moreton—The doctor a votary of Hoyle and Galen—Red Post Fynes and the punch-bowl tree—Little Edward's shyness not cured—His natural disposition renders him unfit for a lawyer—Mr. Cake, his master, re-

moves to Alphinton—Remarkable character of the master of the rival school—His history—The late Lord Gifford one of his pupils—Halloran's fate—Edward emancipated from school—Publishes a volume of poems in his eighteenth year—Commended by the critics—Park, in his edition of 'Ritson's Selection of Songs,' gives the only two in this volume—Edward forms a plan to write a history of his native town—Collects notes for it—Begins his excursions—He pursues also drawing and music—Composes several original melodies—Studies the modern languages—Becomes well versed in Italian literature—Forms an intimacy with some of the French officers, prisoners on parole—His admiration of Gesner induces him to attempt a series of English Idyls—The first part of these published in 1800—Edward becomes Captain-Lieutenant in the corps of the Royal Devon Miners—The king signs his commission—Edward has the honour to meet the Duke of Clarence, the present king, at a party in London—The Royal Devon Miners turned into an artillery corps—Edward their captain commandant—Anecdote of Doctor Hunt—In 1801 Edward removes to London; enters as a student at the Middle Temple—At his leisure follows his pursuits—Writes poetry in Italian—Studies the works of Bacon—Becomes acquainted with Dr. Shaw and several eminent persons—With Edwards the bookseller—with Matthias; an intimacy follows—Meets Sheridan and many celebrated persons at the house of Richardson the member—Has an interview with Walking Stuart—The philosopher's person, opinions, &c.—Browne, the traveller—Lady Hamilton—Anecdotes of Horne Tooke—Friends in London; fashionable society—Edward's studies, pursuits, and amusements—His *Vers de Société*—Selections from them given—Various pieces in verse—Sir Sydney Smith—Anecdotes of himself whilst a prisoner in the Temple at Paris—Edward goes the circuit for five years—Dislikes the law as a profession—His acquaintance with Sir Charles Manners Sutton—Anecdotes of Edward related by his bar friends—Three cases—His inclinations turned on the Church—Attends the lectures of Dr. Porteus—Studies the old divines—Becomes confirmed in his resolution to enter the Church—Meets Mr. Mathias and communicates his plan—Circumstances attending his ordination—Goes to Tavistock—The Duke of Bedford makes him Vicar of that town—Keeps a journal of his excursions in the neighbourhood—When Rural Dean, makes drawings of all the churches—The writer's apology for becoming, even thus briefly, the biographer of her husband—His clerical career, studies, and pursuits—Translates from the Greek and Latin Fathers—List of his

published works—Takes his degree as Bachelor of Divinity at Trinity College, Cambridge—Acts as a magistrate at Tavistock—His Hymns—A selection from them.

—
Vicarage, Tavistock, September 12th, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING mentioned, from Orgar and Elfrida, Drake and Browne, down to Mary Colling, all those personages who may be said to deserve a place in the Biography of Tavistock, I have now but one other to name; and to him I am largely indebted for the information he has afforded me in the progress of these letters.—Need I add that it is of my husband I would speak? His researches in this neighbourhood; his writings, both published and in manuscript; his various pursuits, and his labours, for more than twenty years, for the pulpit of our church, would *alone* entitle him to hold no mean station in the Biography of Devon. But when to these claims are added his discoveries, *and his were the first*, on the western limits of Dartmoor, connected, as they are, with the earliest periods of British history, it would not only be doing injustice to himself but to his native place, did I omit him. I feel, nevertheless, that the mention of Mr. Bray, under the head of Biography, is a delicate task for me to execute, so as to speak the truth, and yet avoid egotism; since to write of one so nearly and dearly connected, is very much like writing about one's self. I shall not sit down, therefore, to indite a regular life of him. I shall merely give you some slight account of his original destination; his change of profession (and the motives which induced it) from the bar to the church; his pur-

suits, &c., in brief succession. And here and there I shall add some few anecdotes respecting certain characters with whom he was brought in contact, which, as they amused me when I have heard them related, may possibly afford some little entertainment to you: if so, my end will be answered; and I am fully aware, from my own experience, that you have too much good nature to frown at trifles when they are harmless, or introduced with a wish to please.

My husband was born in the Abbey-house, at Tavistock. He was the only son (though not the only child, for he has a sister younger than himself) of the late Edward Bray, Esq., who, from an early period of life till the time of his death, in 1816, (for he was of the legal profession,) was employed in the management of the property of his Grace the Duke of Bedford in this part of England. Mr. Bray married Mary, widow of Arthur Turner, Esq.,* and daughter of Doctor Brandreth, of Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, a physician of eminence in his day; and not unknown as having, for many years, enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with Pope, Aken-side, Garrick, and many other distinguished persons of that age, who frequently assembled round his table. Of these, and of her ancestry (of which she was not a little proud, usually asserting that they were related to many of the most antient and noble families in England), Mrs. Bray used to tell several amusing anecdotes with great vivacity. She

* His daughter (by this first marriage) Dionysia, inherited the whole of Mr. Turner's large fortune; and married her cousin, Henry Brandreth, Esq., of Houghton House, Bedfordshire, where she still resides.

died at the age of eighty-eight, about four years ago.

It was Mrs. Bray who determined that her son should be named after the family of Atkyns, a branch of her own ancestry, who were remarkable for having a father and his two sons all judges in the times of the Charles's. All three were buried in Westminster Abbey, where their monument still exists; and the portrait of one of them still hangs in Guildhall; he, I believe, having obtained that honourable distinction in consequence of his being one of the commissioners for the allotment of the ground to the several claimants after the fire of London.

The portrait of Sir Robert Atkyns (son of Sir Edward) hangs in the library of our house, and bears so strong a resemblance to my husband, that if he were decorated with the same legal robes, wore his hair in the same fashion, and was as young as Sir Robert at the time he sat to the artist, it might pass for his picture, and would be commended for its fidelity both of feature and expression. This portrait was, by the Brandreth family, usually considered a Vandyke. It is certainly a very beautifully painted picture; but truth obliges me to lessen its value, by positively asserting that it is no Vandyke, but a production from the pencil of Dahl, who lived in the reign of Charles II., and who, though he left but few works, did enough to establish his reputation as an artist of more than ordinary merit, of which indeed this portrait alone is sufficient proof. One of the Atkynses was the author of the celebrated 'County History of Gloucester,' and a man of the most extensive learning and acquirements.

My husband, on once visiting Gloucester Cathedral, happened to mention that he was a descendant of the historian, and was treated with the greatest respect on that account.

Little Edward Atkyns received his name at a christening accompanied with all the liberal hospitality of those days when christenings were great events in the family history. Godfathers and godmothers were generally then chosen with a view to some future benefit to the new-made Christian, and Mrs. Bray determined not altogether to lose sight of the usual hope for her son, at least in one quarter; so she fixed on Arthur Tremaine, Esquire, of Sydenham House, an old bachelor, who, in consequence of his father being then alive, used, at the age of sixty, to go by the name of *young* Mr. Tremaine. On what account the other godfather might be chosen, if any particular motive existed for the choice, I do not know, but he was a curious character, and was invariably called *Brigadier* Herring.

The Brigadier was a very tall, stout man, who had served in the wars, and possessed also the additional importance attached to having been a great traveller, which in his day was more remarkable than in our own. Mr. Bray perfectly well remembers, though he was then a child, that whenever his godfather dined at the Abbey House, he was fond of appearing in the dress in which he had been presented to Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, being a blue coat with a red collar and cuffs. With this dress the Brigadier invariably put on a change of manners; for he became courtly and ceremonious, and delighted in repeating the circumstances of the honours he had enjoyed in his introduction to the

Majesty of France. And with this story, though fifty times told, the Brigadier as constantly regaled his friends as they did him whenever he came to dine with them.

The Brigadier's grandeur, however, was mostly on the outside, for (whether from extravagance or misfortune I do not know) his purse was not always well filled; and, at the christening of little Edward Atkyns, he did Mrs. Bray the honour of borrowing five guineas of her, to present the nurse with her fee and the baby with a spoon, but which he afterwards never happened to recollect. Tired however at length with single-blessedness and ill-fortune, the Brigadier tried matrimony as a relief to both, and married an old lady for her money, declaring that had Marie Antoinette but had her head left on her shoulders to attain the same age, she would have been just such another looking person. But the lady probably not being so confident in the power of her own charms, in which nearly seventy years had made some havoc, attempted to repair by dress what she wanted in beauty, decorating herself in flowers, frock, and sash, like a girl just escaped from school; and tormented her husband with a jealousy that allowed him no repose.

So much for the godfathers of little Edward Atkyns. He was, I am assured, a very good boy, only very much spoilt, and his mother's darling, consequently he became somewhat unruly; and when such was the case nothing would so soon quiet him as a pen or a pencil. His father often told him that so great was his propensity to imitation when a child, that he could write his own name very legibly before he knew a single letter of the alphabet.

Whilst yet a mere boy, he made a portrait of his father, and of two other gentlemen. Though these drawings, of course, possessed no knowledge of art, yet so good were the likenesses, that it was agreed to have them framed. I have also the portrait of an old servant of the family by the same hand, and about the same period, which is such a characteristic drawing of an old man's head, that I hesitate not in saying it would be worth engraving.

On Mr. Bray's taking the picture of himself to be framed at Exeter (where, indeed, with those of the other gentlemen, his son had just executed it, whilst they were together at the inn), it so chanced that the master of the shop possessed a considerable knowledge of the arts, and being requested to give his opinion of the portrait, replied, that he could not say much for the execution of the work, but that it was an admirable likeness. "But what," said Mr. Bray, "will you think when I tell you that this boy is the artist?" The other said it was impossible so very young a child could have produced it. "It is true, I do assure you," replied Mr. Bray, "the lad is my own son." It is perhaps a pity that this very strong natural propensity was never regularly cultivated, since, in after life, Edward never resorted to the pencil excepting as a relaxation from other studies. The principles of art he never acquired, yet his sketches, merely by eye and feeling, have been honoured with the praises of a Stothard and a Landseer, who both said nature had given Mr. Bray every quality requisite for an artist.

Little Edward's own inclinations, however, were always for the church; and one of his childish amusements, when he visited at the house of some

old ladies who were very fond of him, was to dress himself up in the maid's best white apron by way of surplice, and to bury two grotesque wooden figures that stood over the mantel-piece, representing Adam and Eve. I relate these childish anecdotes, because I think so much may be traced of natural characteristics in the very sports of children, whilst trifles that, were they repeated, might excite the contempt of the critic, may make a deeper impression than he would be disposed to admit on the feelings and fancy of youth. The great difficulty was about Edward's education. His father wished to send him to Eton, and to make a great man of him, but poor Mrs. Bray never would consent to let her darling loose from her apron string. Unluckily she had heard that a boy had been drowned at Eton, so nothing could prevail with her to let Edward go thither for fear anything should happen to her dear and only son, who represented in his name and (she flattered herself) in his person the great Sir Edward Atkins, the pride of her own ancestry. Too much doating affection was her only fault towards the boy; and this very fondness sometimes tormented him; for wishing that he should have what was then in fashion, (and has never been so since,) namely, a pair of fine *peaks*, as they were called, one being on either side the forehead, she caused the hair to be regularly shaved off, as if she were desirous that he might grow up like one of the portraits of Sir Walter Raleigh, in the days of Elizabeth; and so great was the dread entertained by the child for these shavings, that he would run and hide himself in a closet, and scream most heartily when the operation was about to begin.

So great was his love of a book, that he never was so happy as when he could get into a corner and sit down and read, hour after hour, alone ; and being a most bashful boy, even to shamefacedness, his mother's praises of him before company were always such a penalty that he was most glad to escape the hearing. He possessed a good voice, but was so shy that he could never be persuaded to sing unless he crept behind a curtain or under the table. The next inclination which this bashful boy discovered was for poetry ; and, at a very early age, writing verses became to him a source of almost constant delight. Nor must I here omit the mention of the following circumstance, which occurred while he was yet a boy. Mr. Tasker, a celebrated physiognomist, and, of his day, the greatest Greek scholar in the West, who had studied the art of reading the human countenance more from Theophrastus and other classic authorities than from Lavater, was a constant observer of every face he chanced to look upon which afforded any promise for his remarks. Tasker also was an adept in anatomy ; his principal work, indeed, was a dissertation on the wounds and death of the heroes described in the ' Iliad,' proving the scientific knowledge of the poet. He likewise wrote an ode on the warlike genius of Great Britain, which, though praised, was also censured by Dr. Johnson, for making the Genius of this country a woman. Mr. Bray, in company with his son, one day chanced to meet the physiognomist at Hatherleigh. Mr. Tasker had never before seen the boy, nor indeed knew of his existence ; but the latter, after dinner, having retired to ramble about the neighbouring fields, the former observed to Mr.

Bray, "I understand that young gentleman is your son. I do not think he has spoken one word during the whole of dinner time; but I will venture to say he is a poet."

"A poet!" exclaimed Mr. Bray, "I design him for a lawyer:—what makes you say so?" "I judge from his eyes," replied Mr. Tasker. Mr. Bray said that certainly the boy had a great love of poetry, and a habit, he believed, of writing verses, though he always hid or destroyed his productions; and that his pursuits, in general, were of a studious and solitary character.

That the physiognomist was not mistaken in his prediction, I shall endeavour to prove before I close this letter, by inserting several original compositions that have *never yet seen the light*, and which, I think, you will deem not unworthy being drawn from their present obscurity, and will likewise show that Browne is not the only poet to whom Tavistock has given birth. To continue the narrative:—I should have mentioned, when speaking of the godfathers of little Edward, that Mr. Tremaine, designing to confer on him a benefit, had, whilst yet a child, given to a clergyman who was related to him the living of Lew Trenchard, in Devon, to hold till his godson should be of sufficient age to take the duties of it upon himself. But this kind act of Mr. Tremaine was rendered useless by Mr. Bray's determination to make the boy a lawyer; so that his cousin held the living till about a year ago, when he died.

The difficulty of how to get the boy educated remained for some time in full force; since Eton and drowning having become synonymous in the mind of his mother, nothing could prevail with her to let

him go thither; and a strange prejudice existed in the family against any other public school. Indeed, it seemed very doubtful if he had any chance left of going to school at all, till his father so far mustered courage as to seize the occasion, in the absence of his wife for a few days, to smuggle little Edward off to school; and in order that his mother's heart might be set at ease, by having him near home, he carried him no farther than to Moreton Hampstead; where he was set down, with a thousand cautions and charges about his safety, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Cake, curate of the parish, the Rev. Mr. Clack being rector of the same.

The history of the worthy rector was not a little remarkable. One of the Lords Courtenay (the father of the present Viscount I believe) fell in love with a most beautiful and amiable girl, the daughter of an inn-keeper at one of the universities where he was a student. He married her; and extending his kindness towards her family, he brought her brother, Mr. Clack, up to the church, and gave him the living of Moreton. This gentleman was as well informed as he was deserving, and possessed a good library. His curate, Mr. Cake, though no great scholar, was as perfect a gentleman as Lord Chesterfield himself would desire to see, but without any of the objectionable parts of that nobleman's system of politeness. By him, little Edward Atkins was taken as much care of as if he had been made of china, and in danger of being broken. He learnt no more Latin and Greek than he pleased; but, as he loved learning, he took very aptly and eagerly as much as Mr. Cake had power to bestow, and a little more, which, in process of time, he gained for himself.

There was a book in the school, a very great favourite with the master, which the boys called the *fat book*, in ridicule of its being so very thin in bulk. This was an epitome of 'Lord Chesterfield's Letters,' the study of which (in the opinion of, and according to the example set by Mr. Cake) was of far more import than the classics. There is this to be said, however, in favour of Mr. Cake's system of education, that once a week he made the boys translate some of 'Pliny and Cicero's Letters' into their mother tongue; and afterwards caused them to compare their own performance with Melmoth's excellent translation. Thus, after all, Mr. Cake proved himself to be a lover of letters; and I have often heard Mr. Bray declare that by these means his attention was very early directed to style in composition. The master had also an English translation of every classic, which he kept in the sanctum sanctorum of his own bed-room; and thither would the boys enter by stealth, to consult what they called the *Blab Books*.

There was one thing in particular in which this gentleman displayed some antiquarian as well as classical knowledge—it was in a *conjecture*; and less happy ones have obtained for many a man the honour of being deemed worthy to become an F.S.A. The cooks of Moreton had a custom, which Molly at the school failed not to observe, of daily announcing to the boys the dinner hour, by saying—"Dinner's ready, *Socce*." Now Mr. Cake considered this to be a remnant of a Romanized British custom on the borders of Dartmoor; and that when the first invaders got a footing at Moreton Hampstead, they were in the habit of calling the native barbarians to feed at their general meal, by the familiar address of "*Socii*," or companions.

Amongst Edward's school-friends was Baldwin Fulford, a branch of one of the most ancient families in Devon, whose ancestors were distinguished in history from the times of the crusades down to those of the Stuarts. Baldwin Fulford, the first of that name, was so great a favourite with Cœur de Lion, that in the freedom of their friendship he ventured to say something which gave offence to the king. The courtiers, jealous of his influence, were in hopes it would be his ruin, and failed not to make the most of the offence. But Richard, either displeased at their malice, or too fond of his favourite to be long angry with him, merely said "Muzzle the bear." From that period a muzzle was added to the bear's head which was his crest. Another of this gallant race, or perhaps Baldwin himself, delivered a Christian lady, in the true chivalrous spirit of the day, from a Saracen who held her captive within the walls of his castle in Palestine; and, according to tradition, brought her home to England, where first he gave her liberty, and then offered her his hand, which she accepted, and lived with him the mistress of his feudal halls in Devon. And in commemoration of this victory two Saracens were granted as supporters to the arms of the family, which they still retain.

During the holidays, Edward was highly gratified by going home with his school-fellow to Great Fulford House; a noble mansion, very celebrated during the civil wars, and where Charles II. was at one time concealed.*

* When speaking of the Fulford family, I cannot resist mentioning (though it has certainly nothing to do with the subject of this sketch) a remarkable circumstance which happened to Miss La Roche, the sister of Mrs. Fulford: it will scarcely gain credit as being

Another of Edward's school companions was Sir John Collyton, whose father, whilst yet he was a babe in the cradle, took so strange a dislike to the poor boy, that he would not see him, and cut him off with a shilling, leaving all his property to his sister. William Dacre Adams, afterwards secretary to Mr. Pitt, was another of his school friends, together with his brother, now General Sir George Adams; and with these, and his other young companions, he was very happy: a circumstance which so mortified his mother, that when she tried to coax him home again from school, she left him in tears at her disappointment.

There were two or three very remarkable characters in the town of Moreton, who occasionally showed Edward some kind attention, and they deserve a mention amongst the oddities of their day. Fielding would have found in each a subject that might have furnished hints for character in his 'Tom Jones.' One of these was a physician, a Doctor Vial; whenever had a doctor a more happy name? He was a desperate lover of whist; Hoyle and Galen divided his nights and days: which was most studied, I presume not to say. But nobody amongst the ladies, old or young, was half so popular as the doctor. His morning visits soothed nervous affections, and his evening hand at cards was generally irresistible. Could Doctor Vial have played twenty rubbers a night, he might have found

true, yet it is so. Miss La Roche went with a party to see the Peak at Derbyshire. Being tired, she got up behind a clergyman who was riding. The horse fell when near the very summit of the peak. The clergyman and the animal were both killed; but Miss La Roche was providentially saved by her long hair getting entangled in one of the bushes.

partners for them all among the somewhat antiquated virgins of Moreton Hampstead. They even lost their money to him as willingly as they would their hearts. One evening, in the midst of a deal, horrible to relate, he fell off his chair in a fit! Consternation seized on all the company. Was he alive or dead? they inquired with the frantic energy of a Lady Randolph, when asking the fate of her son. What was to be done? All help was given; hartshorn was poured almost pure down his throat by one kind female friend, whilst another feelingly singed the end of his nose with burnt feathers: all were in the breathless agony of suspense for his safety. At length he showed signs of life, and retaining the last fond idea which had possessed him at the moment he fell into the fit, to the joy of the whole company, exclaimed "What is trumps?"

The other prominent character in the society of Moreton was a certain old Mr. Fynes, who, I believe, was a justice of the peace. Red-post Fynes was his name; for being the holder of a good deal of land, and considering himself a man of taste as well as of property, he loved to be distinguished for both; so he painted all the gates of his fields a bright vermilion. Red-post Fynes had a favourite relative whom he used to call his nevvv. His nevvv he brought up to the church, and he afterwards rose to the dignity of a dean. The old gentleman was remarkable for never having been able to learn to spell even the commonest words in his own language; so that on the birth of his daughter he wrote word to a friend, that he had the pleasure to inform him that his wife was brought to bed of a fine *gull*. The word *usage* this very ingenious gen-

tleman spelt without one letter belonging to it, and yet contrived to produce something like the word, at least in sound, for he wrote it thus—*youzitch*. The dean finding that his uncle's orthography became a subject of perpetual jokes all the country round, grew rather ashamed of it, and so made the old gentleman a present of an Entick. But it was of little use; for he could never hit on the two first letters of any word to turn it out in the dictionary. There was one spot in Moreton which Mr. Fynes considered elevated him, whilst he filled it, to a post as important as any occupied by any magistrate throughout the whole county; and that was his seat as president in the Punch-bowl tree: for it so happened there was in Moreton near his house a very old and very grotesque tree, cut and clipped into the form of a punch-bowl; whilst a table and seats were literally affixed within the green enclosure, to which they ascended by a little ladder, like the companion-ladder of a ship.

Here the worthies of the place, of the Squire Western school, would resort, and considered it a point of honour to drink till they could scarcely see each other across the table; and there would they often tarry till they 'roused the night owl in a catch;' whilst nothing could be more ludicrous than the picture presented by this nest of Bacchanals in the midst of the smooth-shaven verdure, receiving all the dust from the high-road beneath them, which mingled with the clouds of their own tobacco. The Punch-bowl tree still, I believe, exists at Moreton, though the oddities of the place, who at one period gave it notoriety, have for years been in their graves.

The shyness of little Edward was not conquered at Moreton; a public school perhaps might have done something towards a cure. So great was his bashfulness, that he could never find courage to ask any young lady to dance with him, till all the other boys had picked out the prettiest girls; and then some homely and neglected damsel, who had been left sitting alone, fell to his lot, as the last partner, perhaps, to be found in the room. This natural shyness argued very unfavourably for the profession which his father in his heart had destined for him, more especially as he was a boy who loved poetry and romance, had no aptitude for business, cared nothing for money, scarcely knew that two and two made four in his arithmetic, was so timid in company that he kept silence for fear of hearing his own voice, had a decided love of plain dealing, and thought the wrong side of a question should never be made to appear the right. Edward's father destined him for a lawyer: there never was a more mistaken choice.

At length Mr. Cake removed from Moreton to Alphington, near Exeter. In this village there was an opposition school, the success of which, considering the notorious adventures of the master, is not to be accounted for, unless it arose from his teaching the boys at a cheaper rate than the more aristocratic and respectable establishment of Mr. Cake. The name of the master was Halloran. I conclude by this that he must have derived his origin from the land of Erin. It is the more likely, as he was of a very warm and passionate temper,—one of those who act first and think afterwards; and this he once did in a way that caused him to be indicted for murder in a cri-

minal court. The deed took place whilst he was in the navy, before he set up the profession of training boys in the way they should go; a thing in which, it is to be hoped, his first maxim was "Do as I say, and not as I did." For he had stabbed a man in a passion on board of ship; and if his legal adviser had not stopped his mouth on the trial, by preventing his declaring he was drunk when he gave the blow, he would have criminated himself; and it is not unlikely that his own declaration, with this additional offence, would have turned the balance of justice, so as to make him kick the air if not the beam. Mr. Cake's boys used to look down with sovereign contempt on Mr. Halloran's boys; and jibes and jests about Jack Ketch, &c., were never wanting in the small fire of schoolboy wit, when there was any skirmishing between them. Halloran's lads, in fact, were generally the sons of petty tradesmen in Exeter, or of persons who got for their children a cramming of Latin and Greek as cheap as they could. Amongst them, however, there was one youth of uncommon talent; and who, in consequence of that talent, united to his own industry and the kindness of friends, gradually rose to high distinction in the profession of the law, and would, had he lived, in all probability have become Lord Chancellor. This youth was no less a person than the late Lord Gifford, who commenced his legal career as clerk to an attorney in Exeter. Many years after, he and Mr. Bray (during the time the latter was at the bar) went the same circuit, became friends, and often talked over their schoolboy days together. Halloran's finale must not be forgotten: though he had escaped hanging and drowning too, he was

nevertheless fated to pass through troubled waters ; for, in consequence of forging a frank in the name of Mr. Garrow, he was transported to Botany Bay.

Emancipated from school, Edward speedily verified the prediction of the physiognomist, for he gave himself up heart and soul to poetry ; and in his eighteenth year a neat little volume appeared of these juvenile productions, which were principally circulated amongst friends, yet not wanting the favourable notice of some of the critics of the day. And Park, in his edition of ‘Ritson’s Collection of Select English Songs,’ gave, with warm commendation, the only two songs that appeared in that early volume*.

But it was not poetry alone that engaged his attention ; for even at this early period he formed the scheme of writing a history of his native town, made his notes for it, and commenced those excursions which led the way to his subsequent investigations and discoveries on Dartmoor. His pencil was not idle ; and he relieved the hours of more severe application by the study of music. He had a fine ear, and in this pursuit took so much delight, that in a few years he composed an immense number of original melodies, a few of which have been very beautifully arranged (the words being likewise Mr. Bray’s) by a lady accomplished in that science. To these studies he added also those of the modern languages. I am induced more particularly to mention this, because the familiar acquaintance he formed with the Italian and its literature gained for him, a few years

* These songs I have introduced (at page 183 and page 227), together with his ballad of ‘Midsummer Eve,’ in the first volume of Fitz, of Fitz-ford ; a legend of Devon.

after, that intimate friendship with the celebrated Mr. Mathias, which proved one of the happiest circumstances of his life. He had a great aptitude for learning languages, and spoke the French like his native tongue; for Tavistock being at that period the chief depôt for French prisoners on parole, he formed an acquaintance with several French officers of great intelligence, particularly with a Monsieur Cayeux, who was taken prisoner during the early part of the war. German literature also attracted his attention; and his high estimation of Gesner induced him to attempt a series of English Idyls. The first part of these was published in 1800; and though like the former volume it was circulated principally amongst friends, and little advertised, yet was it most favourably noticed by some of the leading periodicals; more especially, I believe, by the 'British Critic.'

I must not omit to mention, that before Mr. Bray's going to London, the late Duke of Bedford came down to Tavistock for the purpose of raising a volunteer corps among his tenantry. That no appearance of favouritism might take place, the names of some of the most respectable of the sons of the neighbouring gentry (among them was Mr. Bray) were to be drawn for, to decide whether they were to serve as officers or privates. Mr. Bray's lot was to serve in the latter capacity. He, however, was never called upon to do so; as the Duke, on his return, gave, I believe, offence to the ministry by a speech in the House of Peers; and his offer to raise the corps was not accepted. But some time after, however, on a corps of miners being established as volunteers, under the name of the Royal Devon Miners, to be com-

manded by the Vice Warden, Warwick Heele Tonkin, Esq., Mr. Bray's father and Mr. Tonkin's son were appointed captains, and Edward was fixed on as captain-lieutenant. The ordinary commissions were signed by the Lord Warden, according to an act then recently passed; but as the grade of captain-lieutenant was not specified in such act, Mr. Bray's commission required the sign manual; and King George III., therefore, honoured him with the title of "His well-beloved Edward Atkyns Bray, Esq.," in a regular army commission, excepting such alteration as the name of the corps required. Mr. Bray still preserves this commission as a relic, as well of regard as of veneration for that most honoured sovereign*.

It was deemed by government that the services of the miners, as they were well acquainted with the management of machinery, would be more efficient as artillerymen; and into an artillery corps they were therefore turned. Mr. Bray became their cap-

* I cannot here omit the mention of a circumstance which brought Mr. Bray in contact with royalty. Some time after his arrival in London, he had the honour to meet the present king, then Duke of Clarence, at a party. As he had never before been in company with any of the royal family, a lady belonging to the house had scarcely given him the hint that he would find it was the custom for the whole of the company to rise on the entrance of the Duke, when His Royal Highness walked into the room. He soon after beckoned to her, when she joined him; and, to Mr. Bray's surprise, she speedily returned, and asked if he could guess wherefore His Royal Highness had beckoned to her. Of course Mr. Bray replied that he could not conjecture. She said it was for the purpose of asking who *he* was; at the same time intimating a hope that Mr. Bray bore His Majesty's commission. Certainly Mr. Bray was tall enough for a grenadier officer, being six feet in height, and very upright; but I believe he did not tell the story in what way he already bore a commission.

tain commandant till they were incorporated with the stannary artillery of Cornwall. In that capacity he was twice in barracks at Devonport, then Dock, previous to his being called to the bar, of which I shall soon have occasion to speak. And here I cannot omit an amusing anecdote respecting his various professions. At a visitation, soon after he had taken holy orders, the Rev. Dr. Hunt, a well-known clergyman in Devon, thus addressed him:—"Mr. Bray, I have had the pleasure of seeing you but three times in my life: the first was in your regimentals, at a dinner given by General England to the military; the second was in your wig and gown, as a lawyer, in the court at Exeter; and now I see you in gown and bands as Vicar of Tavistock."

In the year 1801 Mr. Bray removed to London, and was entered as a student at the Middle Temple: five years after he was called to the bar. During his residence in the Temple, though he devoted a considerable portion of his time to the study of the law, he did not fail to cultivate, and assiduously, his more favourite pursuits, and applied himself closely to Italian poetry. In this language he once ventured to write a sonnet, and addressed it to his friend Mr. Mathias. He likewise sedulously studied the works of Lord Bacon, and wrote copious marginal notes on the greater part of the writings of that eminent philosopher. These notes Dr. Shaw, of the British Museum, expressed a wish that Mr. Bray would publish, appended to a new edition of that author. I mention this as a proof of the good opinion that great naturalist entertained of my husband. The notes on Bacon, however, remain still in manuscript in this house. He had a great respect

for the Doctor, whose real worth was best appreciated by an intimate acquaintance, since his manners were somewhat fantastic, as he was fond, perhaps, by way of delassement, of conversing on ordinary subjects too much in the style of the fashionables of the day. So fond was the doctor of trifles, that he was never better pleased than when requested to repeat "Little Red Riding-Hood." And indeed it had been one of his amusements to decorate the walls of his favourite room at the British Museum, by sticking it all over with butterflies which he had cut out for that purpose from the work of a brother naturalist. Such were the trifles with which a man whose fame will be most enduring amused his leisure hours! His own brother, also a doctor (of divinity), used to call him Doctor Cockeshell.

In London Mr. Bray became acquainted with Mr. Edwards, the celebrated bookseller, whose library, besides being decorated by the finest Etruscan vases, was a treasure house for the most rare and valuable works; among others, the *Princeps* edition of Herodotus. It was by Mr. Edwards that he was introduced to Mr. Mathias; when their mutual love of Italian literature led the way to that bond of friendship which so long subsisted between them, and was only interrupted by the departure of the former for Italy. In London, also, Mr. Bray became known to Sheridan, at the house of Mr. Richardson, M. P., with whose family he was on the most intimate terms. Richardson was the author of the 'Heiress;' and, with some others, wrote the 'Rolliad.' The acquaintance of this last-named gentleman with Sheridan was a most unhappy circumstance for his family, as it induced him to embark

too much of his property in the losing speculation of Drury Lane Theatre; and helped on those embarrassments which left them at his death in such reduced circumstances, that a widow and four very amiable daughters had but very inadequate means of support*. At the time Mr. Bray knew Sheridan, he had so habituated himself to the pleasures of the bottle, that he had lost much of that vivacity which at one period brought into play his wit and talents, and rendered his society so bewitching. Sheridan, in fact, had sunk into a toper; and there was very little left of what he had been but an occasional burst of vivacious expression; when his eye, always remarkable, would become lighted up with a lustre that was almost more than natural. But he would soon sink again into an ordinary person; and to take two glasses to every other's one seemed with him the chief object of attention: so completely may the brightest talents be lost or obscured by the degrading love of drink.

At Richardson's, likewise, Mr. Bray used to meet that most amiable and excellent man, Mr. Shield the composer, of whose character and manners he always speaks in terms of the highest esteem. He frequently heard this delightful musician with his violin accompany Richardson's daughters, whilst they would sing to their piano some of the composer's songs. Shield was a man of the finest feelings, and so alive to harmony, that his tears were

* Only two of these daughters are now living. Miss Fanny Richardson, a woman of the most refined manners and accomplished mind, resides, on account of the smallness of her income, in Germany—a sad exile. She is the authoress of some elegant poetry, and a little novel of much merit, called 'Truth and Fashion.'

frequently the accompaniment of his most favourite melodies.

In Devonport Mr. Bray had become acquainted with Dr. Wolcott, better known as Peter Pindar; and in London with Barry the painter, with Dr. Coombe, Browne the celebrated traveller, Flaxman the sculptor, John Kemble, the good-natured and amiable John Taylor, editor of the Sun, with Sir Joseph Banks, Sir Francis Bourgeois, Lady Hamilton, and many other eminent or celebrated persons of the day. Concerning these, I have a few anecdotes which may not be altogether devoid of interest in the repetition. Mr. Bray was also slightly acquainted with Walking Stuart. On looking over some of the notes he made during his residence in the Middle Temple, I found a paper written after his having received a visit from the philosopher, paid to him in his chambers. I shall here copy it verbatim, as it is not a little curious.

“ Memorandums after an interview and conversation with Walking Stuart.

“ This philosopher, like his predecessor of antiquity who instituted the Peripatetic school, has acquired his name from his perambulations on foot. The difference between them is, however, that the former has visited almost every country in the world in search of knowledge, and the latter investigated and taught it within the narrow limits of the grove of Academus. Stuart has not only taken greater pains in the pursuit of intellectual wealth, but, besides rivalling the Athenian in his oral communications, has diffused it in his writings. To institute a comparison between them would lead me too far, and require greater talents than I possess. I will

content myself, therefore, with stating a few remarks I made during the short time I was in his company, and will first introduce him by a description of his person.

“Had I not, from his name, supposed him to be a Scotsman, his person alone would have suggested it. From his language, which is generally an infallible criterion, I should not have been able to form any conjecture; nor indeed do I mean to decide what countryman he is. Were I even to ask him, the answer I should receive would probably be—‘I am a native of the world;’ for in reply to a question, ‘Whether he had any children?’ he said, ‘Yes, the good and virtuous are all my children.’ Apparently between fifty and sixty years of age, he is rather tall and lusty. His face, with high cheek bones and Roman nose, is dark by nature or by his travels in hot countries. His forehead bears the wrinkles of reflection more than age. By his dress we may imagine Philosophy is not more liberal to her sons at present than she was of old. He wore a black coat, over which was thrown a spencer with half the arms cut off. Whether it were from economy or taste, I thought it had by no means an unpleasing effect. I understand that for some time after he returned from Asia he wore a Persian dress. His hair was powdered. I mention this as, in these days, the hair has expressed a great deal of meaning*.

“The word philanthropy is of too limited a signification to express the system upon which he acts: it is not benevolence to man alone, but to every animated being. He assumes, therefore, the name

* This was written soon after the days of the French Revolution.

of an Homœusiast, from *ὁμοουσιως*, ejusdem essentiaë, consubstantialis; compounded of *ὁμος* and *ουσια*, similis essentia.

“From a short conversation, or rather being present at a conversation which he held with another gentleman, I cannot be presumed to have formed a precise and correct idea of his opinions; but I am told that he professes himself an atheist. It has been denied that any human being could really disbelieve the existence of a Deity. Whoever has professed it has been held to do so from vanity and a wish for notoriety. But of this I am convinced, that, whatever are the opinions which Stuart professes, he sincerely believes them from a conviction in his own mind of their supposed truth. The conversation he held in my hearing was mostly of a moral nature, with only a few references to the subject of religion. However, as a proof that his opinions are peculiar on this head, I need only mention that, in quoting some passages from Pope’s *Essay on Man*, he said the following couplet he would have written thus:

‘ All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
| Whose body *matter* is, and *power* the soul;’

instead of—

‘ Whose body *Nature* is, and *God* the soul.’

“Of the philosophy of Epictetus he said the sum was no more than this:

‘ What can’t be cured
Must be endured.’

“Bolingbroke he considered one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived, though he had his prejudices.

“The mind, Stuart said, was constantly employed in *action* of thought, or *object* of thought. The first is where the mind thinks on things of its own creation, or embodies abstract ideas and gives action to non-existences, such as angels, devils, &c. The second is when it is busied in real things, and such as are objects of the senses. Men had considered mind as a *sack*, and stuffed it with all kinds of learning; but it should be considered as an instrument, and should be so managed as to bring all its own powers into action. If it be filled, let it be filled with its own ideas.

“A man of science is not always a man of sagacity: generally, indeed, otherwise. We have made great advances in science, but little in sagacity.

“Of Sir Isaac Newton, Stuart said that, though he disclaimed hypothesis, and professed to rest his philosophy on facts, he is yet guilty of an hypothesis by calling the *influence* which bodies have to adhere or to repulse *gravitation*, i. e. making the effects the cause.

“Of Horne Tooke, he said that he was no sound reasoner, and was too much tied down to the logic of the schools, with his ‘*grant this*, and his ‘*ergo*.’ He was also too fond of sarcasm, or a piece of mere wit. Tooke, in reply to the bishops who thought his doctrines might prejudice Christianity, said that was no concern of his, let them see to that. Adams, President of America, he considered had given the most correct account of popular governments; he in a manner prognosticated the dreadful effects of the French Revolution, by pointing out the dangers of investing a democratical government with too

much power. This he proved from history, and the French have given another example.

“Stuart said that ethics would not admit of mathematical truths, but analogical, viz.: sometimes it is virtue to kill a man. Some, he observed, called *doubt* the gate of knowledge; but he called it the very temple itself.

“His travels on foot, he told us, were principally designed to investigate moral truth, the progress of mind, and human happiness. China is the only country he has not visited. He formerly used a vegetable, but now an animal diet. He wants strength of a morning unless he eats his constant supper, fat ham. He never drinks wine, but malt liquors; smokes sometimes of an evening, and now and then goes to a royal theatre for relaxation. He likes the Serpentine River in Hyde Park for the air and *view*. He is rather deaf; speaks deliberately, yet in the most appropriately eloquent style. In a late publication he has attacked the critical reviewers. His philosophy is to teach man how best to promote his happiness; and his study is the *discipline* of the mind. His great conclusion is, that *virtue is happiness*.

“He goes every Sunday evening to Mr. Taylor’s.”

Of Browne, the traveller, I have not heard Mr. Bray relate many anecdotes, as he was so very silent and sedate a personage that he seldom entered into conversation of any length, and did not talk much about his travels. Of the surpassing beauty, the talents and vivacity of Lady Hamilton I have heard much from Mr. Bray’s account of her.

Her person, when he knew her, was the largest of the large ; but her face was still exquisitely beautiful both in feature and expression, with large eyes that seemed to speak her every thought and feeling. She had a peculiar grace in her vivacity, and sang delightfully. He once heard her sing, in an inimitable style, an Italian comic song, in which she performed both parts or characters engaged in the scene. The song represented a maestro di capella teaching a young nun to sing. Mr. Bray was informed by his friend, the late Admiral Bedford, who was intimately acquainted both with her and Nelson, that the hero's attachment to her commenced in a most romantic friendship ; nor would the old Admiral admit that Nelson had ever gone beyond what was strictly right in his devotion to this Circe. If this be true, it was a pity that any friendship for another should have caused Nelson to part from an unoffending wife, whose only fault was that of being her rival's inferior in talents and attractions.

In London Mr. Bray met Horne Tooke at a dinner party, where some dispute arose about the volunteer system. Tooke, who was surrounded by his admirers and friends (amongst whom was Sir Francis Burdett), reprobated the system just named in a very violent manner, which might have arisen, as Mr. Bray afterwards learned, in consequence of his own proffered services having been refused. This attack was levelled against the gentleman of the house, who, feeling himself hard pressed, turned round to my husband and said, that it was scarcely right that he, who was only a private, should bear the brunt of such an unmeasured attack when a captain was present.

Mr. Bray happened to be seated next Horne Tooke, who absolutely turned round in his chair, and immediately opened his fire upon him. Previous to this dinner, Mr. Bray had felt an extreme degree of curiosity to meet Horne Tooke, and entertained the highest opinion of the talents and acuteness he had shown in his first edition of the ‘*Diversions of Purley*.’ But Tooke’s conversation after dinner had been of so improper and even gross a nature, that, coupled with his political violence, it had effectually removed all the previous sense of respect which Mr. Bray entertained for him; and enabled him, notwithstanding his natural diffidence and his youth, to be cool and collected in his reply to arguments so absurd, that only one need be specified: for Tooke gravely asserted that give him but time, and he would collect together maid-servants who, with their mops and broom-sticks, would turn all the volunteers to the right-about.

Mr. Bray asked him if courage were not the characteristic of Englishmen; and begged to know if Englishmen ceased to be such by becoming volunteers? This turned the tide in his favour; though the decided admirers of Horne Tooke were not a little surprised to find that a young man, and a modest one too, would venture to contradict their oracle. And indeed Sir Francis Burdett took an opportunity afterwards of saying to Mr. Bray, “I knew not what you had said to my friend, as I did not hear the whole of the conversation; but you have done what no other person, to my knowledge, has ever done before—you have put Horne Tooke in a passion.”

Amongst Mr. Bray’s literary friends he had the

pleasure to number Mr. Merrivale, the Barrister, who is well known for his continuation of Beattie's 'Minstrel,' and his translations from the Greek Anthology, and was, I believe, in Gifford's time, an occasional contributor to the 'Quarterly Review.' Miss Taylor, now Mrs. Austin, Doctor Coombe, his son Taylor Coombe, of the British Museum, and many others, were also his friends; and he occasionally met Mrs. Opie, Repton, Dr. Parr, and Jerningham in the society of London; whilst at the houses of Mr. Peter Moore, Lady Metcalf, Lady Macdonald, and others, Mr. Bray mingled with the fashionable world of the day, and was present at most of their parties. But the gaieties of the last-named circles did not draw him off from an attention to his professional pursuits; for, as far as the study of the law on general principles was connected with the history of his country, he took great delight in it: the technical detail was his aversion. But even this he endeavoured to conquer as far as it might be necessary; whilst the muse of English and Italian poetry became his solace in the intervals of his more serious occupations. Many of Mr. Bray's poetical pieces were written under the inspiration of strong feelings, produced by the circumstances of the moment. Thus his 'Lines on the Battle of Maida' were composed whilst the Park and Tower guns were proclaiming the victory. The 'Ode on the Death of Nelson,' which was published and very favourably received, was written whilst he was waiting to receive a party of friends at his chambers in the Temple, who came thither to witness the procession of boats from Greenwich Hospital up the Thames,

bearing the body of the hero previous to its interment in St. Paul's.

By those friends who were intimately acquainted with Mr. Bray during his residence in town, I have been informed, that though in general company, from his silent and retiring manners, he did not always appear to enjoy it so much as a young man might be expected to do, yet he had always a high relish for that in which either superior intelligence or worth might be found.

He was never remarked, however, for deficiency in vivacity when *tête-à-tête* with a companion or friend; but if a third person joined in the chat, he invariably gave place to him, and generally relapsed into his usual taciturnity. Yet, like the silent gentleman in the 'Spectator,' he was an attentive observer of all that passed; and frequently made any little occurrence the subject of an almost spontaneous poem, or copy of verses; for which *we* have no definite name, but which our neighbours the *French* have happily denominated *Vers de Société*. Of these he has a very large collection; I doubt if any poet of the present time has ever produced so many. Of their merit I must not speak; and as I shall here give only some few as examples, I leave you, who are so far more capable of forming a right judgment than myself, to declare if these *Vers de Société* would not alone entitle my husband to an honourable place amongst the poets of Devon. You will also see by them that Mr. Bray was most susceptible in feeling the charm of female society. He may perhaps be accused of having been too universally so; but the ladies have no cause to complain; since the

least beauty of person, mind, or character in them never escaped his notice, and generally inspired him to celebrate either in the most enthusiastic or impassioned verse. It is due, however, to the gravity of his clerical character to state, that, with few exceptions, all these poems were written when a very young man, and whilst at the bar. I shall here introduce a few of them, and then conclude this sketch of their author.

TO A LADY.

On expressing her opinion that men could obtain the object of their love more easily than women.

Think not that men alone, my fair,
Have power their passion to declare ;
Or that your sex, whate'er they feel,
Must with a modest pride conceal.

If Love so partially is kind,
I'll doubt not if the God be blind.
But this, by Heaven ! can ne'er be true :
For if he's partial, 'tis to you.

Woman, with livelier feelings warm'd,
In nature's loveliest mould is form'd ;
Each trait that animates her face
Possesses such attractive grace,
That whoso looks, that self-same hour
Must own Love's all-subduing power.

Since youths there are whom trembling fear
Forbids the voice of Hope to hear,
(And who but Hope, 'mid powers above,
Can guide the half-fledged wings of Love ?)
If *such* a youth be e'er so blest
Unconsciously to fire her breast—
Is not a look, a look alone,
Enough to make her passion known ?
Nay—if she check the rising sigh,
And quench the lightning of her eye,
The dawn of passion still will break,
And kindle blushes in her cheek.

What if a veil those blushes hide ?
Has nature other aids denied ?

No—sympathy, with mystic spell,
 Can still th' impassioned secret tell ;
 Whilst every ear, by magic bound,
 Heeds not, save one, th' enchanting sound.

Mark, too, my fair, night's lovely queen
 Exerts her wondrous powers unseen ;
 And, through the heavens as slow she glides,
 Directs old Ocean's ample tides,
 That sink or swell at her command,
 To guard and bless our native land.

So, Beauty ! on its sea-girt shores,
 Such powers, such secret powers are yours.
 Your peerless charms with fond control,
 Direct each passion of the soul ;
 The dullest heart with transport fill,
 And wake it with Love's rapturous thrill.

Temple, 1805.

AN APOLOGY TO A LADY,

Who had been informed by another, to whom it was communicated in confidence, that the author had characterized her as one who possessed good natural sense, but could not boast of a cultivated understanding.

The painter, whose enthusiast breast
 With nature's beauties is impress'd,
 Seeks not the garden's narrow round
 Where art with studied step is found,
 Who leads you to the trim alcove,
 The marbled spring, and vista'd grove.

Ah ! no—He loves the rude-form'd bower,
 The shepherd's shelter from the shower,
 The weeping rill and wild cascade
 That pours its fury through the glade ;
 And through the forest's sylvan reign,
 Views the blue hills or spreading main.

So, to his mistress's rapturous praise,
 The poet, when he tunes his lays,
 Sings not the wisdom of her tongue,
 But how with feeling grace she sung ;
 Not that she conn'd the pedant's rules,
 Or own'd the logic of the schools,
 But how her artless lips impart
 Th' untutor'd dictates of her heart.

1806.

APOLOGY TO MY SISTER,

Who had informed another that I had not ventured to take my little niece in my arms, then about four months old.

When gemm'd by morn's refreshing dew,
The rose-bud opes its charms to view,
What hand profane in evil hour
Would dare to pluck the infant flower?
For sure it owns a sweeter bloom,
Breathes to the gale more rich perfume,
And blushes with a deeper red,
When ripening in its native bed.

When with a brother's joy I see
Thy lovely babe, so loved by thee,
Blushing with all her mother's charms,
I fear to take her to my arms;
For, in her smile her joy express'd,
She's lovelier on her mother's breast.

1806.

TO A LADY,

Who differed in opinion with the author, by preferring the violet to the rose.

Yes! more than every flower that blows,
Sweet maid! 'tis true, I love the rose:
For when its blushing charms I see,
I sigh, and fondly think of thee.

Thy cheek displays as soft a bloom,
Thy lips exhale as rich perfume;
And when it waves with graceful ease,
Fann'd by the pinions of the breeze,
Methinks I see thee, see thee move,
Attended by the train of love.

But thou—the flower that shrinks from view,—
Thou lov'st the violet's pallid hue.
If e'er this pale, this lowly flower,
Crush'd to the ground by some rude shower,
Sweet maid! thy pitying eye should see,
Oh! give one sigh, one thought to me!

1806.

TO A LADY,

On having accompanied her to Penshurst.

Doubtless, sweet maid ! in Penshurst groves,
 Where gallant Sydney sang his loves,
 And taught Arcadia's nymphs and swains
 To weave the dance on British plains ;
 Where Waller on the page of fame
 Inscribed his Sacharissa's name ;
 Ah, yes !—in these sweet scenes to rove,
 Must wake the youthful breast to love ;
 And teach it, in poetic strains,
 To breathe a lover's joys and pains.

But, to what spot soe'er, by Heaven,
 To roam with thee, the bliss is given ;
 Whether at morn in sunny glades ;
 At noon in solitary shades ;
 Or mid gay Pleasure's noisy train,
 Molesting midnight's silent reign ;
 My breast thy converse would inspire,
 And fill it with a poet's fire.
 1806.

TO THE SAME,

On having chosen for an inscription " L'Amitié est l'Amour sans aîles."

You say, sweet maid ! some poet truly sings
Friendship is Love—but Love without his wings.
 Since 'tis my hapless lot, with sorrowing heart,
 From thee, ere long, my lovely friend ! to part ;
 Too soon, I fear, that sorrowing heart will prove
 Friendship has wings as swift as those of Love.

Yet Love and Friendship are, 'tis true, the same,
 Or, if they differ, differ but in name.
 Friendship is Love, when Reason's hand unties
 The silken bands that blind his laughing eyes ;
 Friendship is Love, without his torch, whose fire
 Is kindled at the shrine of fond desire ;
 Friendship is Love, when blunted is his dart,
 That only *strikes*, but never *wounds* the heart.
 1806.

TO A LADY,

Playing on the Harp.

Fair as the fairest of the choir
 That hymn before th' Almighty Sire,
 And draw the rolling orbs above
 To listen to their harps of love ;
 When, light as Zephyr's sportive wings,
 Thy flying fingers sweep the strings,
 The chords, that twine my heart around,
 All vibrate to the rapturous sound.

Oh ! could they, at this happy hour,
Speak what they feel, with equal power ;
 These artless lines, that fail to move,
 Alas ! thy pity or thy love,
 Were worthy to be sung by thee,
 And married to thy minstrelsy.

1806.

TO A LADY,

On the opening of a rose-bud.

I wonder not the budding rose
 Whilst on your breast, to perfect bloom
 Its infant petals should disclose,
 And shed, fair maid ! more rich perfume.
 For there it found a warmer bed,
 Sunn'd by the radiaunce of your eyes ;
 Stole from your lips a deeper red,
 And drank more fragrance from your sighs.
 But when you mark with pitying eye
 No more its drooping head it rears ;
 Ah ! better far that it should die,
 Than e'er be water'd with your tears.

1809.

TO A LADY,

Who requested the author to burn her Letters.

The rose, thy short-lived gift, my fair !
 Long mid my secret tablets press'd,
 Though wither'd, still I guard with care—
 And why ?—It once adorn'd thy breast,

Then think not to the flames I'll give
 (Though to deny thee be a sin)
 Thy dearer written leaves, where live
 The feelings of the heart within.
 1809.

TO MRS. S.—.

Blest in a husband's mutual love,
 You bid me a like blessing prove ;
 And kindly promise to commend
 To some fair maid your grateful friend :
 But first you bid me to declare
 What charms I wish my bride to share.

Know then, her stature, high or low,
 Should grace in every motion show.
 Her forehead, be it fair or brown,
 Ne'er but at vice should wear a frown.
 Her eyes, or black, or blue, or grey,
 Should pour the intellectual ray.
 Her cheek, or pale, or rosy red,
 With modest blushes should be spread.
 With smiling lips she must impart
 Nought but the dictates of her heart.
 She must not, light or dark her hair,
 Refuse a lock for me to wear.
 In fine—if like *yourself* she prove,
 She'll crown the fondest wish of love.

THE KISS*.

When, tempted by the luscious prize,
 The boy with trembling finger tries
 To rob the hive ; with buzzing wing
 The bee inflicts the burning sting :
 But (such the will of Fate unkind)
 He leaves it, with his life, behind.

* I have selected this little poem from many written by Mr. Bray whilst very young (when he relieved his legal studies by poetical composition), on account of its being an example of that style of impassioned song for which the ancient poetess Sappho was so celebrated. I know but of one instance more at all like it ; that is found in the deeply-impassioned verses (first pointed out to me by Mr. Southey) of " Day, in melting purple dying," in Zophiel, by the matchless Maria del Occidente.

So, when enraptured with thy charms,
 Dear maid ! I caught thee in my arms,
 And rifled from thy ruby lips
 More sweets than e'er the insect sips
 From flow'rets of the brightest hue,
 Methought my latest breath I drew :
 My bosom thrilled with pleasing pain ;
 My boiling blood swell'd every vein ;
 I panted, trembled, shiver'd, sigh'd,
 And, fainting with the bliss, had died ;
 But thou, by pity moved, or love—
 (Oh ! grant that it the last may prove !)
 Breathed in a kiss such vital breath
 As woke me from the trance of death.

TO A LADY,

On a Rose dropping from her bosom.

Whilst 'twas my happy lot last eve,
 With you, my fair ! the dance to weave,
 The silver rose, with punish'd pride,
 (For vainly with your breast it vied,)
 Fell from that breast, its envied seat,
 A prostrate suppliant at my feet.
 Pitying, I raised it from the ground,
 But felt indignant when I found
 That all its charms to art were due ;
 From whom its very breath it drew.

Oh ! then, forgive, if I forbear
 Again, sweet maid ! to place it there—
 There, where no empire art should gain,
 Nor aught but native candour reign.

TO T. I. MATHIAS, Esq.

To share thy converse in this blest retreat,
 The Arts' loved temple, and the Muses' seat ;
 To view the Tuscan pencil's magic powers,
 That shows fair Venus in her secret bowers,*
 Or claiming from the Phrygian boy the prize,*
 Whilst envy flashes from her rival's eyes ;

* Alluding to two pictures by Italian masters in his possession.

I e'en could fancy that I trod the ground
 For arms, for arts, for poesy renown'd ;
 And that the Thames, as roll its waves along*
 Thy flow'ry banks, was Arno, famed in song ;
 Were not Augusta's boast a nobler tide
 Than all the streams that through Italia glide.

So, when with wond'ring rapture I peruse
 Thy verse, a homage to the Tuscan muse,
 I ne'er could deem it but the tuneful lays
 Of him, sweet bard ! who sang his Laura's praise,
 Did not thy strains a nobler rage command,
 Fired by thy native tongue, free as thy native land.

IMPROMPTU TO MRS. OPIE,

On her saying she had never, till that evening, heard the author's name.

Ah ! vain delusion—as a poet
 To think I shared some little fame,
 Yet find not e'en the *muses* know it,
 For Opie never heard my name.

TO A LADY,

On her presenting the author with a couple of purses; one of which she said might serve for a card-purse.

Since ne'er at cards, or luck, or skill,
 With others' wealth my purse shall fill ;
 And *one* might, to an envious spirit,
 Seem more than what I need or merit ;
 Know, lovely maid ! that *either* purse
 May prove a *blessing*, not a *curse*,
 (For justly is the wretch accused,
 By whom Heaven's gifts are wrongly used,)
One I'll to Industry consign ;
 For only what I *gain* is *mine* ;
 The *other* Charity shall hold ;
 To bless the poor, the sick, the old.
 And thus I'll think the donor fair
 Scorns not my honest toils to share,
 And joins me in such deeds of love
 As claim the aid of Heaven above.

* His house, in Scotland-yard, Westminster, had a most delightful view of the Thames.

SONG,

Composed whilst riding over Dartmoor, 1st Oct. 1810.

England, shielded by her laws,
True to freedom's righteous cause,
Now the sword, vindictive draws
For others.

On every shore that ocean laves,
To Britons, rulers of the waves,
They who scorn to rank as slaves
Are brothers.

Fired by valour's quenchless flame,
England, conscious that her name
Bright shall ever shine with fame
In story ;

Calls the trembling nations round,
Roused from apathy profound,
To share, through all the world renown'd,
Her glory.

England ! blest with liberty,
Nations, like thyself, to free—
This has been, and e'er shall be,
Thy charter.

Dangers ne'er thy breast appal ;
Should the foe the world enthral,
Thou the very last wilt fall—
A martyr.

But no !—His pride shall soon abate—
The tyrant's bloody thread, though late,
Th' impending shears of angry Fate
Shall sever.

Yes !—nor think my words are vain,
When joined by this prophetic strain—
England's freedom shall remain
For ever !

 LINES

On the Jubilee, 1809.

Whilst mid the night that shadows half the world,
From untrack'd orbits meteor stars are hurl'd ;

O'er hapless Gallia, haughty mid her woes,
 Whilst the fell comet, red with fury glows ;
 Thy planet, GEORGE ! with calm but steady force,
 Rolls through serener skies its lengthened course :
 And, by her guardian Genius firmly led,
 Shall long o'er Albion happiest influence shed.

Time, in his endless circle, where, for signs,
 Each solar zodiac, ranged as annals shines,
 Bends back, and points to seven sabbatic spheres,
 That mark the gradual lapse of grateful years
 Since a loved monarch graced a splendid throne,
 And ruled a people justly call'd his own.

Joy, too, descends from Heaven on seraph wing,
 And bids whole nations wake the choral string ;
 In grateful concert to resound his praise,
 As full of virtues, as he's full of days.
 Long may he reign ! kind Heaven's peculiar care ;
 A boon conceded to his country's prayer ;
 Till, deathless still to honour and renown,
 He quit an earthly for a heavenly crown.

TO A LADY,

*Who insisted that the author should give her his reasons for not playing
 at cards.*

First, then, I fear (I own 'tis true)
 When for my Sociate's *heart* I sue,
 Like Omphale* of old renown,
 She'll raise her *club*, and knock me down.
 Nor e'er my anger can I smother
 To see, perhaps, some worthless other
 That *heart* I hold above all price
 Win with a *diamond* in a trice.
 Rather than this, I'd yield my breath,
 And supplicate the *spate* of death,

* The Lydian queen dressed in her lover's lion's skin, and armed with his club, is said to have kept Hercules in due subjection to a government, now well known, but which then perhaps had not received a name.

Me from such torturing pangs to save
 As gamesters know, to dig my grave—
 Where *kings* and *queens* (for all must die)
 And *knaves* and fools together lie.

TO A LADY,

Who procured some wine for the author at a crowded supper, by requesting it for herself.

As with a bolder wing, the bird of Jove
 Bears the red lightning through the realms above,
 When seated with the rich nectareous tide,
 By Hebe, from the golden vase supplied.

So, when from thee, than Hebe's self more fair,
 'Tis mine the cup, thy lips have kiss'd, to share,
 Warm'd by the draught, my muse should wing her flight,
 And strive to win Parnassus' loftiest height,
 And thence, sweet maid! in never dying lays,
 Recount thy beauties, and resound thy praise:
 But no!—she dares not hope, with feeble wing,
 To brush the spray from famed Castalia's spring.

Since vain the contest with the bird of Jove,
 Oh! may she rival Cytherea's dove;
 Content to soar, though still with conscious dread,
 In giddy circles o'er thy rose-crown'd head;
 In hopes thy pitying lips will bid her rest
 With trembling pinions on thy downy breast.

Temple, 1806.

TO A LADY,

*Whom, on her telling the author that she had heard of the poetical effusions he had presented to the Hon. Anna * * *, he assured that they were principally written to remove an impression she had formed, from his silence and reserve, that he was little better than a fool. Her reply, that his looks alone should have satisfied her of the mistake, gave rise to the present Impromptu.*

Whene'er I join the social train,
 A young and inexperienced swain,
 My silence and embarrass'd air
 They think my ignorance declare.

But thou, who seest with partial eyes,
 Bidd'st me their envious taunts despise ;
 For, if my lips were ne'er to move,
 My looks their malice would disprove.

But though, my fair ! thy tongue makes known
 The dictates of thy heart alone,
 My breast, with gratitude inspired,
 Shall ne'er with vanity be fired.
 No—if each feature of my face
 Seem'd fraught with animated grace,
 And silently bespoke my mind
 By nature and by art refined ;
 'Twas that my eyes reflected *thine*,
 That bright as love's fair planet shine ;
 'Twas that, by sympathy possess'd,
 On mine *thy* features were impress'd ;
 And if like *thee* I look'd and moved,
 Oh ! tell me—could I be but loved ?
 1805.

TO A LADY,

On altering for the author a pair of legal into clerical bands.

The breast-plate that on Aaron shone
 Begemm'd with many a mystic stone,
 Could by its varying rays declare
 If God had heard the suppliant's prayer.

Now, when the law's high pomp is o'er,
 And all her splendours are no more ;
 The Gospel's humbler heart's express'd,
 By lowly bands and simple vest.

Since then, sweet maid ! thy skilful hands
 Have clipp'd the *lawyer's* ampler bands,
 To suit the *deacon's* humbler guise ;
 Oh ! may they prove to wondering eyes
 I've quenched ambition's meteor fire,
 Nor glow with fame or wealth's desire,

And, spurning all the pride of art,
 May soft persuasion from the heart
 Inspire my tongue, by praise or blame,
 To rouse devotion's purer flame !
 1811.

TO A LADY.

Sir Sydney Smith, who, together with the author, was on a visit with a friend at Hampton, in order to give us an idea of the oriental costume, bound a shawl round the head of the young lady to whom these lines are addressed, in the form of a turban ; and, saying that it only remained for him to apply a little rouge to her cheek, saluted her.

Blush not, sweet maid ! around thy head
 When Albion's boast and Gallia's dread,—
 Whose looks alone from Acre's wall
 Could e'en her proudest chief appal,—
 With conquering hand the fillet winds,
 Around thy brow the turban binds,
 And steals his fair reward—a kiss :
 For who would rob him of the bliss ?

No—greet him with thy country's vows,
 Weave laurel for the victor's brows,
 And if he smile upon thy charms,
 Blush not to clasp him in thine arms.
 For who so justly claims to prove
 The ardour of his country's love ?
 And who that ardour can declare
 So well, so warmly, as the fair ?*

* To the above little poem is attached the following note:—

“ I hope,” says Mr. Bray, “ I may be pardoned for mentioning the following circumstance, as it is intimately connected with the preceding verses:—Sir Sydney Smith, who was on the point of taking leave of the company, requested to have a copy of what he was pleased to call his *charter* ; and the lady, on my promising to give her another, presented him with the original. On fulfilling my promise, she put it in her bosom ; and afterwards we made a morning's excursion, in my friend's barouche, to Richmond. On our return, however, she lamented that she had lost it, and petitioned for another copy. I soon supplied her loss ; and, on speculating as to what might become of the Sibyl's leaf, I felt some consolation in reflecting, that

SONG.

Ah ! credit not the rival swain,
 Who whispers in thy jealous ear,
 That other maids my vows obtain,
 And calls my passion insincere.

I own, dear maid ! I love to seek
 The plain where sport the virgin choir ;
 And oft the form, the blushing cheek,
 The charms of many a fair, admire.

But, though each love-inspiring dame
 Mine eye with earnest gaze surveys,
 Ah ! cease, my love ! thy swain to blame,
 Because he gives each beauty praise.

By blending every virgin's grace,
 A something like thyself I see ;
 For all the charms of every face
 Are surely, Rosa ! seen in thee.

SONG.

Though, Delia, on the flow'ry mead,
 With thee the sportive dance I lead,
 View not the virgins with disdain
 Who for a partner sigh in vain.

Though oft with truth thou hear'st me swear
 Thine eyes are bright, thy face is fair ;
 Oh ! think not Love has thrown his dart,
 And pierced for thee my thrilling heart.

though the person who might find it would easily discover that it alluded to Sir Sydney, he would be unable to divine to whom it was addressed. Immediately on leaving Hampton, I set off with a friend on a tour through South Wales ; and was not a little surprised when he told me that a few days before he had dined with a party at Richmond ; and on the health of Sir Sydney, with that of other public characters, being drunk at table, a gentleman who was present said that his son, a little boy, whilst at play, had lately found a copy of verses respecting him, which he produced. My friend said he was convinced he knew the author ; and, taking one of my letters relative to our intended journey from his pocket, asked him if he did not recognise the writing."

For I from fair to fair resort,
And pay to each my amorous court,
In hopes at last a maid to find,
The best, the fairest of her kind.

Thus from the hive the insect flies,
And soars o'er flowers of thousand dyes:
But, when the sweetest strikes his view,
He shuts its wings, and sips its dew.

Sir Sydney Smith was a frequent visiter at the villa of Mr. Bray's friend at Hampton, on the banks of the Thames. During these visits Sir Sydney told many anecdotes of his being confined in the Temple at Paris.

Whilst a prisoner there, he carried on some secret communication with his friends, who were desirous of assisting his escape. Sometimes by blowing a particular air on the flute, they were given to understand that they were to work, or not to work, in a subterranean passage which they were forming for his liberation, as their labours demanded the utmost circumspection, lest they should be overheard by their enemies. Sir Sydney, when permitted to be in the court-yard of the prison for exercise, occasionally amused himself with a game of balls, somewhat similar to that of fives. His aim was to keep up as many as he could; and when the eye of the sentinel was elsewhere engaged, to glance one of the balls, in which was concealed a paper of instructions, over the wall to his friends. The governor, who was his keeper, had so firm a confidence in his honour that, when he was obliged to leave the Temple, he would most earnestly beseech Sir Sydney to be on his parole; and if he consented would, during his absence, give him full liberty to range within the walls of his prison. But if, through caprice or design, Sir

Sydney did not agree to pass his word, (and he not unfrequently refused it,) the governor seemed greatly disconcerted, and, he had reason to believe, now and then remained on purpose to watch, instead of following his intention of quitting guard for awhile.

Though for five years Mr. Bray went the western circuit, and bore a very fair reputation in his vocation. yet he never liked the law as a profession; and never could overcome his timidity as a barrister. This was put to a singular trial in the very first witness he had to examine in the Court at Exeter; for she proved to be one of his father's old servants; and he had a very painful duty to perform in his professional capacity, in preventing her from criminating her husband.

During the circuits he formed many pleasant acquaintances; and one of his legal companions and friends in these circuits, and who was once also a guest at his father's in Tavistock, was the late Speaker of the House of Commons, the Honourable Sir Charles Manners Sutton*. For the public principles and integrity of this gentleman, Mr. Bray always entertained the utmost respect and esteem; and the days he passed with him in their professional career he numbers now as amongst the most agreeable recollections of his youth.

I have been told by my husband's old legal friends, that among them he obtained the name of the *Castilian*, on account of the high feelings of honour he invariably observed in his profession. From mistrust in his own powers, he may be said to have avoided a brief as much as others sought one.

Nevertheless, it is but justice due to him to say

* Now Lord Canterbury.

that in three cases of more than ordinary import, though each differing in its nature from the other, he gave the fullest satisfaction ; these cases related, first, to an opinion on a will, in which the right to some very considerable property was involved ; secondly, to a consultation ; and thirdly, to an award. The consultation was held at Mr. Garrow's chambers, where my husband, as a young man, listened with great attention, but did not venture to offer any remarks ; but, on his return with one of the barristers, who was his most intimate friend, he said that he could not reconcile himself to the conclusion they had come to, as it was at variance with a case which he then mentioned ; and pointed out what he thought would be the right course. His friend naturally enough asked him why he did not mention it at the time : and said he should instantly, on reaching his chambers, write to Mr. Garrow on the subject, and tell him to whom he was indebted for the opinion, which would probably alter the whole aspect of the case ; as indeed it did.

My husband's opinion on the doubtful point of the will was confirmed by the highest authority ; and the award, very unusual in such cases, gave satisfaction to both parties.

But however much respected he might be as a barrister, yet such was his aversion to the courts of law, that I have heard him say he never put on a wig and gown to attend Westminster Hall without a painful disturbance of the nerves. And that extreme degree of timidity, which he could never overcome, frequently made him remain silent, or rendered his expressions confused, when he knew his own views to be right respecting the subject in dis-

cussion. Yet, when his feelings were strongly interested or excited, he was fully the master of himself; and in such moments, I have been assured by those who have heard him in court, he both commanded and fixed attention in a very remarkable degree.

His own inclinations, however, were always turned on the Church; and even whilst in the Temple he studied sedulously those old divines in whose works he so much delighted. In town he also attended the lectures of Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London; and gave the heads of every lecture, in a series of letters, to a friend in the country; who, not long since, assured me he had for many years carefully preserved them, till he lent them to some clergyman in Cornwall, who took so great an interest in their perusal as never to return them.

Mr. Bray was not altogether unskilled in points of controversy even at this period; for Dr. Disney, the Unitarian minister (who had originally held preferment in the Church), gave him the Unitarian and improved (as it is called) version of the New Testament, with a view to induce him to embrace his own sentiments; but so far was this from producing the effect, it confirmed him in his former opinions; and not content with refuting many of its principles in notes on the margin, he resolved more sedulously to study the scriptures themselves than he had ever done before; and by the blessing of God, he considers this was no small means of bringing him to the decision of entering the Church as a profession. The circumstance of his ordination was not a little remarkable: I shall here, therefore, relate it.

His fondness for Italian literature, as was before

noticed, procured for him the acquaintance and friendship of Mr. Mathias. When he resolved to quit the bar for the Church, previous to executing his intention of going to one of the universities, he secluded himself from the society of his friends, in order to apply closely to the more direct study of theology.

It was necessary, however, for his health, that he should occasionally take exercise ; and in one of his walks he accidentally met Mr. Mathias, who inquired what he had lately done with himself. Mr. Bray explained the object and motive of his seclusion.

On hearing this, Mr. Mathias was pleased to say, that it was a pity a man of his abilities and acquirements should lose so much time in the mere form of keeping terms at a university ; that he thought he could be of service to him ; for though he had never asked a favour for himself in his life, yet he considered his friend so peculiarly circumstanced, that he would do it for him in this instance. He was, he added, well acquainted with two or three of the Bishops ; he would mention Mr. Bray's case ; and if one would not ordain him perhaps another might ; as he knew, whatever might be the learning, or the general capabilities of the individual, that some had tied up their hands not to ordain any one who had not *previously* taken a degree.

Mr. Mathias, like a true friend, as he was, fulfilled his word ; and Mr. Bray soon received a letter from him, stating that he had held some communication with the Bishop of Norwich, who said, that if he (Mathias) would bring his friend to him, and he found him competent to fill the office of the ministry,

he was happy to say he had not tied up his hands, as some of his brother bishops had done, and that he should be willing to ordain him; for he had always considered that a person who entered the Church on choice, the result of mature reflection, would be more likely to be an honour to it than where he was destined to the sacred profession at an early age merely to take advantage of the interest of friends.

Mr. Bray, on a personal acquaintance, had the good fortune fully to satisfy the Bishop. He afterwards, also, was received with great kindness at Norwich; and, in consequence of the absence of the chaplain, was examined by the chancellor. He was ordained, in the ordinary course, in the cathedral of that city.

Soon after this event he proceeded to Tavistock, on a visit to his father and mother. He had scarcely been there a few weeks, when the Rev. Richard Sleeman, Vicar of Tavistock, and perpetual curate of Brent Tor, died. At this time Mr. Adam (now Baron Adam, and Lord High Commissioner of Scotland) was on a visit at the house of my husband's father. This gentleman very kindly seconded Mr. Bray, sen., in his application to his Grace the present Duke of Bedford, who immediately named the object of their solicitude to the vacant preferment, in the year 1811. Thus, after so many changes of fortune, Mr. Bray found himself at last in his native town, with his nearest and dearest friends, in the neighbourhood of his favourite Dartmoor; and established as a minister in that church on which he had always fixed his desires and his hopes: and most thankful has he ever felt for the blessing so peculiarly, though

so late, conferred on him in his choice of a profession. He was indeed most forcibly reminded of the vicissitudes of his life when, on going to Brent Tor, the first time he ever did duty, he met in his way thither one of his old artillery-men, who very cordially saluted him with "How do you do, *Captain?*" adding the old proverb, "Once a captain, always a captain."

Not unmindful of his former pursuits, even in a new profession, Mr. Bray still bore in mind his wish one day to give some account of his native town and its vicinity. For this purpose he kept a slight journal of his excursions, and made many pencil sketches during his walks and rides; whilst the first year that he was Rural Dean, he made a drawing of every church he visited; in some instances combining the landscape with the building. This series much interested Mr. Stothard, the historical painter, to whom they were shown in London; and who said, that if engraved, they would make a very good work, as picturesque examples of the architecture which chiefly prevailed in this part of England.

Of Mr. Bray's life as a clergyman, I must not speak; since, in giving him a place (which I could not omit without the greatest injustice) in the biography of his native town, it has been my aim to state a few facts connected with him as simply as possible, withholding all commendation of my own, that I might not even seem to name them with the slightest degree of favourable prejudice or partiality. The friends he has found and preserved through life, and the respect and affection of the worthy, both rich and poor, in his own parish, are all I ask to speak his praise; he does not need mine.

I must, however, add, that diffident of his own powers, and anxious that his flock should have the benefit of those old divines from whose stores he had himself derived so much knowledge and instruction, he determined to commence his career, not by giving them his own crude compositions, nor yet mere transcriptions from others, however excellent they might be: for some years, therefore, he compressed and modernized a vast number of those old and sterling writers whose works, though known but to students, will ever remain as monuments of honour to the Church, and to the country that gave them birth. Delighted with this pursuit, he determined to go still farther, and both studied and translated in a manner capable of being delivered from the pulpit, the most eloquent and orthodox portions of the Greek and Latin Fathers.

Of original sermons, Mr. Bray has a very considerable collection; though he did not venture on the composition of these till he had long studied in the school of those great examples above mentioned. He has published, besides the poems already alluded to, 'Sermons selected from the works of the most eminent Divines of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; abridged, and rendered in a modern and appropriate style.'

'Discourses adapted to the Pulpit, or to the use of Families, from Tracts and Treatises of eminent Divines.'

'Select Sermons of the Right Reverend Thomas Wilson, D.D., Bishop of Sodor and Man: abridged, and rendered in a familiar but less colloquial style.'

'Lyric Hymns,' published 1820.

The following songs printed (not published) in

1821 :—‘ Idyls,’ part the first ; ‘ Funeral Ode on the Death of Lord Nelson.’

‘ Look before you Leap ; or, Caution Recommended in deciding on the Claims of the Roman Catholics, by Anti-Romanus.’

‘ Discourses on Protestantism, as a Fundamental and Pervading Principle in Church and State.’

These last named sermons are original ; they were delivered by Mr. Bray in the church of Tavistock, in the year 1829, and published at the request of many of his most respectable parishioners.

‘ A Sermon, preached at the Visitation of the Ven. the Archdeacon of Totnes, in the Parish Church of Tavistock, on Thursday, June 20th, 1833, and printed at the request of some of the clergy present.’

I ought to have mentioned that Mr. Bray contributed to the ‘ Classical Journal’ some papers on the Classic Metres ; and to another periodical, whose name I have forgotten, some communications on the Italian Sonnet.

At the particular request of his Grace the Duke of Bedford!, my husband took on himself, though much against his own inclinations, the duties of a magistrate, in the year 1812. Thinking himself, therefore, entitled to something like superannuation, after serving his Majesty in this capacity for more than twenty years, he now avails himself of the assistance of some of his friends, and seldom takes his seat in the Guildhall of our town.

In 1822, after keeping the regular terms, &c., as a ten years’ man, Mr. Bray took his degree as *Bachelor of Divinity* of Trinity College, Cambridge.

I shall conclude this account of my husband with a slight mention of his ‘*Lyric Hymns*,’ “printed, but never in any way advertised, nor circulated, excepting amongst friends, in the year 1820. Of these poems (to which, from the greater variety of metre than is usual in such compositions, it is presumed that music might more easily be adapted.) those marked with an asterisk in the table of contents, were (he tells us in the preface) suggested by passages in the works of some old divines.” The following paragraph I also venture to extract from the preface to this my favourite little volume:—“He may be excused, perhaps, for adding, that the first three hymns are contained in a volume of poems published by the author in 1799; and that *the whole* were sent to a London bookseller in 1817, but, owing to certain circumstances, were not then printed. And this he more particularly mentions, lest he might be supposed to have borrowed the hymn entitled ‘*Life*,’ from a passage in ‘*Human Life*,’ a poem published by Mr. Rogers in 1819. He hopes, therefore, to be pardoned, in the present instance, by referring to Bossuet* for the *subject* of the hymn in question.”

As a proof, however, that when borrowing a subject from a prose writer, as a hint for verse, Mr. Bray is no servile translator, I shall give, at full length, his hymn of ‘*Life*.’

LYRIC HYMNS.

—
LIFE.

Life’s like a road whose farthest bound
Ends in a precipice profound,

* Abrégé d’un Sermon prêché à Meaux le jour de Pâques. Philip. iv. 4.

And, ere its unknown length we range,
 The danger we're forwarn'd to heed.
 But, such the law that knows no change,
 We may not pause, we *must* proceed.
 Fain would we backward turn with fear,
 But "Forward! Forward!" meets our ear.

Unseen, but not unfelt, a hand,
 Not all our efforts can withstand,
 Now drags us up some rocky steep,
 To gaze the dizzy scene below;
 Now, in some valley's shadowy deep,
 Urges the viewless path of woe.
 "Let rest our weary limbs restore!"
 No—"Forward!" thunders as before.

Yet, to console us, still remains
 Some short-lived pleasure 'mid our pains.
 Glittering with morning's orient beam,
 Here laugh the dew-besprinkled flowers;
 There winds, through groves, the murmuring stream,
 Whilst birds flit warbling 'mid their bowers.
 "Oh! sure we here awhile may stay!"
 Ah! no—'tis "Forward! haste! away!"

But see, behind, where'er we pass,
 Falls with dread crash the crumbling mass.
 And yet, because 'tis ours to wear
 A fading garland wove in haste,
 Because some tempting fruits we share,
 Short though their savour to the taste;
 In mirth a few charm'd hours we spend,
 Nor heed to what our footsteps tend.

Still hurried on, 'mid fancied bliss,
 Our steps approach the dread abyss.
 And now, alas! how changed the scene!
 The birds are mute within their bowers,
 The streams less clear, the meads less green,
 Less sweet the fruits, less fresh the flowers.
 Death hovers o'er the gulf, and Fear:
 And now we feel that we are near.

A step, and we are on the brink:
 "Forward!" Ah! yes, 'tis vain to shrink.

Horror thro' all our senses flies ;
 A dizzy vapour loads our head,
 And presses on our straining eyes.
 'Tis vain our backward path to tread ;
 The path itself is now no more—
 All fallen and vanish'd—all is o'er !

 HYMN.

The Sun.

Mark how the subject flowers obey
 The motions of the orb of day ;
 As tho' they could, or would, not flourish
 Without his beams their life to nourish :
 They shut, at eve, each dewy leaf,
 And hang their heads all pale with grief.

But, soon as orient morning glows,
 We see each leaf its folds unclose,
 Tho' still in part its charms disguising
 As tho' to hail its welcome rising.
 Whilst, for his noontide blessing shed,
 Those grateful charms are wide dispread.

Thus, Lord ! but turn thy face away,
 The heart to sorrow falls a prey ;
 Whilst, in thy presence, without measure
 Flows the full flood of heavenly pleasure.
 Oh ! be it mine the world to shun,
 Of every carnal heart the sun.

When *that* or gives or hides its beams,
 Its joys or sorrows are hut dreams :
 Yes, vain are *those* your heart to cherish,
 And yield to *these*, for aye you perish ;
 Whilst, Sun of Righteousness ! thy ray
 Guides us to Life's eternal day.

 HYMN.

Choice of Seasons.

When comes the stork from distant climes ?
 When, but at her appointed times ?

Unruled by compass or by chart,
 Borne on the pinions of the breeze,
 For foreign realms, o'er trackless seas,
 Swallows, at their fix'd hour, depart.
 And who the nightingale, sweet bird !
 E'er 'mid the heats of harvest heard ?
 Or screaming bittern call her brood,
 When wintry tempests scour the sky ?
 Close in their cells e'en silkworms lie
 Till burst the mulberry buds, their food.
 Thou, Lord ! appointed times hast given
 To every purpose under heaven.
 E'en acts indifferent, timely done,
 To good may by thy blessing turn :
 And e'en what's lawful we may mourn,
 If but untimely 'twas begun.
 But virtue, piety, and grace,
 Can ne'er be out of time or place.
 Oh ! whilst my heart is filled with Thee,
 Be mine on earth my voice to raise
 In loud hosannas to thy praise,
 Nor cease but with eternity.

 HYMN.

" Use this world as not abusing it."

Some from the world to wilds have flown,
 To fix their thoughts on God alone ;
 But, ah ! too late, *themselves*, they find,
 They left, e'en as the *world*, behind.
 What mortal eye, with constant gaze,
 Can dare the sun's meridian blaze ?
 If God were ever in our sight
 'Twould blind us with excess of light.
 From heavenly thoughts a timely rest
 Endears them with a double zest :
 Nay, earthly blessings, by thy care,
 'Tis ours, O God ! with joy to share.
 Yet earth's best joys I'd little prize,
 If long they took me from thine eyes :
 Oh ! be it mine, through them, to view,
 And, in them, to enjoy Thee too.

HYMN.

Growth in Grace.

We form our wishes, and fulfil
 (Such our vain boast!) the self-same hour :
 Whilst God, who needs but speak his will,
 Takes time to execute his power.

The gard'ner sows the rarest seed,
 That slow its tender leaves unfolds ;
 And, scarce distinguish'd from a weed,
 The eye the future flower beholds.

At length, matured by suns and showers,
 By spring's cold blasts and summer's heats,
 She peers above her rival flowers,
 Vanquish'd by her superior sweets.

Can I, then, hope the seeds of grace,
 That in my heart have fixed their root,
 (So poor the soil, so close the space,)
 With instant growth shall yield their fruit ?

Be as Thou wilt thy blessings given ;
 Gladly, O God! I wait thy leisure :
 So that Thou bring my soul to heaven,
 The way, the hour, be at thy pleasure.

HYMN.

The Condemned Criminal.

Just and righteous is my sentence ;
 Certain death awaits my crime :
 Gracious God ! be mine repentance
 Whilst I've still the gift of time.
 For, as man his life has ended,
 So is fixed his final doom :
 Justice, here with mercy blended,
 Flows unmixed beyond the tomb.

My body is my real prison ;
 My sins, Ah ! they're my real chains ;
 Thou that from the grave art risen,
 Thou alone canst ease my pains :

Thou, a sinful world redēeming,
 Oh! for me the ransom pay;
 And thy blood, in mercy streaming,
 Wash each deadly stain away.

But, thy fears, ah! why dissemble,
 Why, my soul! so near the grave,
 When the good, though aided, tremble
 'Mid their work themselves to save?
 Jesus! so I 'scape perdition,
 Let me thy full vengeance share;
 Tortured now with just contrition,
 Bid thy hand hereafter spare.

HYMN.

Uncertainty of Life.

Thro' eve's thick shades that veil the sky,
 No moon, no star can dart its rays:
 But still the Lord's all-seeing eye
 Our every thought and deed surveys.

Our limbs from labour to repose,
 We welcome the return of night;
 Tho' vain our hopes and fears, who knows
 If e'er we hail to-morrow's light?

To God, then, let us humbly pray,
 That we each fleeting hour may spend
 As if, with the decline of day,
 Our lives should likewise have an end.

HYMN.

Divine Power.

"Be light!"—Light was: no sooner heard
 Than done, O God, thy sovereign word.
 Chaos, 'mid his wild commotion,
 Hush'd to peace, thy will obey'd;
 Within his limits sunk the ocean,
 And earth her bulwarks round array'd.

Oh! by thy mighty power controul
 The raging tumults of my soul.

Let not doubts my passions darken,
 Plunged in sin's o'erwhelming night :
 But bid them to thy mandates hearken,
 And walk by Truth's supernal light.

Then (thy grace alone can save
 The prey of Death and of the Grave),
 Rescued from those dread dominions,
 Where the gnawing worm ne'er dies,
 Shall angels bear me on their pinions
 Before thy throne above the skies.

HYMN.

Interchange of Conditions.

Unchangeable Thyself, yet man
 (Though life, O God! is but a span)
 Thou'st subjected within its range
 To many a sad but gracious change.

Unmingled pleasure soon would cloy,
 Whilst suffering gives a zest to joy :
 The heart, too swoll'n with prosperous pride,
 Would wholly in itself confide.

If, in the hottest of the fight,
 We faint and almost turn for flight,
 Thy Spirit frees us from alarm,
 And prompts the vengeance of our arm.

And if, victorious in the field,
 Not, Lord, to Thee! our sword and shield,
 But to ourselves we think 'tis due ;
 In chains our insolence we rue.

Oh! be not then dismay'd, my soul!
 Beneath affliction's dread control ;
 Since, canst thou but the storm outride,
 Thy keel in calmest course shall glide.

Nor, if thou'rt blest with prosperous gales,
 Let vanity inflate thy sails ;
 Since sudden whirlwinds round may roar,
 And wreck thee on the wish'd-for shore.

HYMN.

For Good Friday.

See ! for sinful man's transgression
 Hell's dread triumph, Heaven's depression,
 Jesus, his great work now ended,
 (Oh, what love ! that our Creator
 Should assume our wretched nature !)
 Jesus on the cross extended.

Those hands, that Heaven's bright sceptre wielded,
 To weakest rebels calmly yielded :

Those brows, but late with glory beaming,
 Crown'd with sharp thorns now droop and languish ;
 And, furrow'd by his dying anguish,
 Adown his cheeks the blood is streaming.

See ! thro' those feet the nails are driven
 That trod the starry floor of heaven ;
 And hark ! how peals the rolling thunder !
 Earth trembles, whilst the skies o'erclouded,
 The sun's in pitchy darkness shrouded ;
 All nature shrinks with fear and wonder.

The sea lays bare her deepest fountains,
 The valleys swell, the sinking mountains
 E'en to their very base are shaken ;
 Whilst at Heaven's call, by holy sages,
 Who in the tomb have slept for ages,
 Is many a hallow'd grave forsaken.

And, is it man's last hopeless ruin ?
 Oh, no—it is his blest renewing ;
 For death 'tis Victory's now to swallow.
 Christ dies, but then is most victorious :
 His course to heaven is then more glorious,
 And we our Saviour's steps shall follow.

Having given you these few hymns, &c. from a very numerous collection of Mr. Bray's poetical compositions, I here conclude, for the present, assuring you how much

I am, my dear Sir,
 Very faithfully yours,
 ANNA E. BRAY.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Account of a remarkable boy, John Winter—His extraordinary genius for mechanics—His parents—Birth—Only seven years old when he made his first piece of mechanism—His second attempt at nine years of age—His anchor shop model—Its machinery—Brought to great perfection—Completed at thirteen—His last and most remarkable discovery, an improvement on the parallel motion of the steam-engine—His age, character, powers of mind, &c. described—Mr. Edmund Pearse, surgeon of Tavistock—His collection of minerals—Specimens resembling the pointed or Gothic arch—Unique—Letter from Mr. Pearse to Mrs. Bray on the mines, and anecdotes of mining in the neighbourhood.

Vicarage, Tavistock, October 5, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE recently become acquainted with a boy who is of this place, and so remarkable that I hasten to give you some account of him. He possesses an extraordinary genius for mechanics; a genius which, if brought forward and encouraged, would not fail to be rendered alike beneficial to himself and to society.

His name is John Winter. He is the son of a poor man, who was a wheelwright at Morwelham in this parish. Soon after his birth, his father becoming foreman to the iron foundery at Tavistock, the child was removed thither by his parents, and sent to a little school to learn to read and write. In

this he took no pleasure ; to use his own words, he is “no scholar,” and whilst pursuing these rudiments in his infant years, his hours hung so heavy on his hands, that he used to wish school over, that he might be at home to employ his leisure in making his machinery ; that was all his delight. The first piece of mechanism he made, which I have seen, was the model of a *shingle mill* for beating out scrap iron. When he executed this he was only *seven* years old. His father expressed himself pleased with this early attempt, and told him to go on to something of more consequence.

His next performance was the model of a *plating mill* for making shovels, which, as well as the former, he copied from the foundery. In the *plating mill* he succeeded in giving action to all the figures in a most remarkable manner. Two men are seen at the hammer making shovels, and two others rolling bars of iron. A man is introduced looking into a furnace to see if it is of a proper degree of heat, &c. He next shuts the door, and looks round to the men to ascertain if they are ready for the bar after it had been heated. Another workman is busied in paring the shovels with hand-shears. Each portion of this model performs its part by unseen machinery. John Winter was but *nine* years old when he completed it : a task truly wonderful for such a child ; the mechanism of the whole being entirely *his own invention*.

His next effort, which cost him three years' labour during his leisure hours, was a model on a yet more extensive scale. It represents what he calls an *anchor shop*. Every portion of this work seems to have attained an extraordinary degree of perfection. Four men are at work upon an anchor, which they

strike in every part ; and two others are engaged in making the stem of a second anchor. A party of strangers are arrived to see the works ; and a clerk comes out of his office, accosts them, and afterwards returns. A forge carpenter is very busily engaged, and a boy, with a begging cap in his hand, solicits contributions from the visitants. The figures thus briefly noticed are really good, and were both designed, modelled, and put in action by young Winter ; but he got his little sister to make their dresses, and the son of a barber in the town supplied the clerk with a wig. Not the least wonder of this work is seen by examining the machinery which is affixed to the under part of the top of the table on which the figures, forges, &c., are seen in due order and motion. Contrary to all clock work, there is no noise of wheels, &c., the noise heard being the hammering of the puppets on the anchors, in exact imitation of the sounds, in time and stroke, of those heard in an iron foundery. Winter finished this piece of mechanism when he was in his thirteenth year.

But his greatest, and from what I hear, his most useful work, is his improvement on the *steam engine*. He showed us the model of it. He considers that he has discovered a mode of regulating parallel motion in this engine. He first executed a model of his plan in wood, and finding it answer, he is now completing one in brass. He is at this time in his seventeenth year.

You may suppose the interest which the works of this remarkable youth have excited in us. We have had him with us at the vicarage, where he gave us a most modest account of himself and of his schemes. On inquiry, Mr. Bray found that he had seen but

few models of clock work, and in these he had never seen the machinery which set them in motion. He has often, he told us, laid awake in his bed thinking of his machinery; and in bed he generally invented all the complex movements of his works. But he could never follow up the train of his ideas after daylight appeared. We were greatly pleased with him: his countenance is open, agreeable, and strongly marked about the brows with the characteristics of genius. To see him without feeling an interest for him is impossible; and this is increased by his intelligence and his naturally good manners. He is altogether a very fine youth.

I must now turn to another subject of considerable interest, and one that I have great pleasure in introducing to your notice: the minerals, and anecdotes connected with mining of this neighbourhood. Mr. Edmund Pearse, surgeon of Tavistock, has been kind enough to indulge me with a sight of his beautiful museum (for such it may be called) of native and local minerals. Amongst these are specimens of a singular formation, resembling the pointed or Gothic arch, with mathematical exactness; these minerals have only been found in one mine that is in this neighbourhood. All mineralogists have pronounced them to be unique. The following letter, which I doubt not will interest you as much as it has ourselves, is from the pen of Mr. Pearse:—

“ TO MRS. BRAY.

“ *Tavistock, October 2, 1835.*

“ MADAM,

“ It would afford me pleasure to furnish you with a statement of such particulars as you require relative to the mines and miners of our neighbour-

hood ; but the very limited stock of information I possess on the subject, and the fact of my not being versed either in mineralogy or geological science, renders me rather an incompetent person to supply the required materials. However, I will furnish you with a brief sketch of some facts which I have been able to collect at different periods from my occasional intercourse with the miners and the mines in the immediate vicinity of Tavistock. Dartmoor, it is well known, abounds with lodes of iron and tin ; several of the latter have at all periods been very productive, and many more are now likely to be worked by the Plymouth and Dartmoor Company with spirit and success. In one of these mines, near Moreton Hampstead, manganese and calcareous spar have been found inclosed in masses of solid granite at the depth of sixty fathoms ; a fact which ill accords with most of our popular geological theories. I have several specimens of this manganese in my own museum. The same mine also has produced some elegant specimens of variegated quartz, needle tin, red, yellow, black, and rose quartz ; also some splendid octohedral, pseudomorphous crystals of a large size, sometimes inclosing a little water ; but no other vestige of the original formation, and no apparent outlet which might have given exit to the materials of the decomposed crystal, forming a beautiful subject for the speculations of the electro-chemical mineralogist.

“ The stream works, though less productive than the mines, are still, in many instances, a source of profit to the adventurer. Formerly some grains of gold were found in these streams, and it was not uncommon for the miner to carry in his pocket a quill

in which to deposit them. In and about the old stream works there are now to be seen several remains of the Phœnician smelting-houses, called by the miners Jews' Houses: from one of these, near the confluence of the east and west Dart, about three years since, there was taken tin ore, which was redressed and smelted at Crowndale, by the present Tavistock Smelting Company; and not far from this place there was found a block of Jew's tin, supposed to be the most ancient in existence, and now in the possession of a gentleman of this town. The surface of this block betrays marks of great antiquity, being much corroded by the influence of those external agents to which it has been exposed.

“I remember, about twelve years ago, to have seen a very old woodcut, which exhibited a whole pack of hounds harnessed and laden with little bags of tin, travelling over the mountains of Dartmoor; these animals being able to cross the deep bogs of the forest in situations where there were no roads, and where no other beasts of burden could pass. The old miners on the moor are rather more superstitious than those residing in towns. The horse-shoe is invariably affixed to some of the crections belonging to the mine to prevent witchcraft. The precise origin of this superstitious practice I am unable to learn; the only explanation I have heard given is, that the devil always travels in circles, and that he is consequently interrupted when he arrives at either of the heels of the shoe, and obliged to take a retrograde course.

“The miners have invariably a great horror and dread at whistling underground, believing it to be very unlucky; they regard it also as unlucky

to work either on Midsummer, or New-year's day, or on the eves of these days; and, formerly, all red-letter days were deemed sacred. On these occasions they also affix to the top of the principal engine, or building, a flag, or bush, which they call a *switch*—it is said that this was originally done to commemorate the opening of the tin trade with China.

“ It is not uncommon in deep mines, where there are what the miners term *vugs*—or where there are large pseudomorphous crystallizations—to hear loud and frequent explosions, and that on occasions and in situations where no miners are at work: these noises the men believe to be occasioned by the working of the fairies, or pixies, whom they call *small men*; but the true cause is the bursting open of some of these crystals, hollows, and *vugs*, where the air or gas had been confined under very high degrees of pressure.

“ A miner of this town very lately broke into one of those hollows of considerable size, of a grotto-like appearance, and richly studded with crystals of quartz and pyrites, which, by the light of his candle, had such a brilliant appearance as made the man say ‘he thought he was in heaven;’ and being asked in what respect he thought it resembled heaven’ he replied, ‘It was so beautiful, he could compare it to nothing else than to a Jew’s shop.’

“ Huel Friendship, in the parish of Mary Tavy, has been for years, and is now, the richest copper-mine in this district: there has been lately erected on the mine a magnificent steam-engine, which in power may be ranked as the third in England. This mine has furnished for the cabinet of the

mineralogist specimens of *chesel spar* beautifully coloured with amethystine tints, *tongstate of lime*, *slickensides*, *pavonites*, and crystals of pyrites of various forms from the cube to the ekosihedron. I have a crystal of the latter description, whose planes are equilateral triangles highly polished, with bevelled edges.

“In the parish of Calstock, on the Cornish banks of the Tamar, *Gunnis Lake Mine* has been lately re-opened by Capt. Thomas Teage and Co. A few years since, this mine, of all others was the most productive in specimens of *uranite*, *malachite*, *arsenates*, *carbonates*, *sulphates*, and *native coppers*; also *plush copper*, resembling the richest velvet, *crimson*, *green*, and *blue*. The Beer Mines are also again at work for silver and lead, and are likely to replenish the cabinets of the curious with *tabular quartz*, *galena*, *variegated and multiformed fluors*, containing water, particles of silver, iron, lead, titanium, pyrites and copper. A polyhedral crystal of fluor from this mine is described by Phillips in his ‘Introduction to Mineralogy,’ page 170, as bounded by 322 planes.

“The manganese Mines in the neighbourhood of Brent Tor have furnished specimens of singular form and beauty; some perfect letters and figures, leaves, leaflets, and embossed *arborescent forms*.

“*The Virtuous Lady Mine*, situated on Roborough Down, in the parish of Buckland, immediately below the junction of the Walkham and Tavy, is the most celebrated mine in Devonshire for the variety and singularity of its cabinet specimens.

“Besides the brilliant, well-defined crystals of titanium, fishscale iron, dodecahedral and cubic

crystals of pyrites, milk and cream quartz, pavonites and tetrahedral crystals of copper, red, blue, purple, yellow and violet, it has produced specimens of copper which, when turned about under the rays of the sun, assume, or rather reflect, a different colour from every different angle of incidence,—orange, gold, crimson, violet, green, &c., &c.

“The capped quartz from this mine are among the finest in the world. I have in my collection one specimen having upwards of thirty truncated crystals, every one of which will exhibit, when the cap is removed, corresponding apices to those of the caps. But the most modern, as well as the most inexplicable of the productions of this mine, are the Gothic arches of spathose iron, which were found in great abundance in the years 1832 and 1833. Some of these arches have been shown to different mineralogists, who have offered various hypotheses relative to their formation.

“By one they were said to be depositions of spathose iron upon some implements used by the miners of a very remote period.

“Another gave it as his opinion that they were formed in the same way by depositions on a vegetable production, such as the dock-leaf, &c., and were placed in their present situation by some great convulsion of nature.

“The theory of their formation advanced by the miners themselves, is just as good as either of the above, which is, that they were moulded by the soles of the shoes of the antediluvian miners, or the shoes and feet of the *small men*, that is, the fairies or pixies.

“Some of these arches are grooved round the edges; others are quite hollow, showing that they were moulded originally on some other substance of the arched form, which substance is, in most instances, entirely removed, but in others some calcareous matter has been found. These arches are frequently found standing on, and having their hollows communicating with, a sort of cavern, of a pseudomorphous cubic crystalline form, as if they once contained cubic crystals of fluor, or pyrites. In one of these caverns, in my possession, there is, as if precipitated at the bottom, a calcareous stalagmite, on which rests an isolated crystal of copper. About six fathoms from the situation of these arches and caverns, separated by solid rock, there was found a multitude of cubic crystals of pyrites of various magnitudes, well fitting the cubic hollows in the caverns above alluded to*.

“It is possible that at some distant period, in a great convulsion of nature, these cubes might have been shaken out of their shells, and removed six fathoms distant from them; but supposing this to have been the case, we still are as much as ever in the dark as to the formation of the Laneet Arch, which seems to have been produced with mathematical accuracy and precision.

“The truth is, we are not yet in possession of a sufficient number of facts to warrant our coming to any conclusion on the subject.

“When adverting above to the superstition of the miners, I had forgotten to relate a circumstance

* There was raised one of the arches without a base, and elongated, forming a double arch, with a smaller one lying transversely across its middle. This *specimen is unique*.

which occurred a few years since, near Roborough Rock. Three men were at work late on the Saturday night at the South Devon Wharf, when suddenly they saw issue from the rock a large ball of fire, which, with a rumbling noise, rolled on towards them, and in its approach assumed a variety of forms; sometimes that of a human figure, then of a church with arched windows, pillars, &c., &c. The men were dreadfully terrified, and calling to their recollection that the Sunday had commenced, they fully believed they saw, and were pursued by the devil; and this continues to be their firm conviction.

“The fact is, that it is not very uncommon for inflammable gas to issue from the back of lodes, which ignites as soon as it comes in contact with the oxygen of the atmosphere. The ground where these men were working is full of iron and tin lodes, and there can be no doubt but that their fears not only gave the name but also the form to the meteor.

“The superstition relative to the dowsing or divining rod, and the dowzers themselves, is too well known to be noticed here. The only instance that I know of its having been used in Devonshire, was at Stickelpath, near Oakhampton, about six years since, where a dowser was brought up, at a considerable expense, from the west of Cornwall, by a set of adventurers, who, notwithstanding the favourable predictions of the dowser, have found their speculation an unprofitable adventure.

“ I am, Madam,

“ With respect,

“ Your obedient Servant,

“ EDMUND PEARSE.”

LETTER XL.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS:—Some short account of the most striking scenes and remarkable places in the vicinity of the Town—Junction of the rivers Tavy and Walkham—Called the Double Water—Grenofen a beautiful place—Raven Rock—The Valley—The Virtuous Lady—Miniature Alpine Bridge—A girl lost whilst passing it—Superstition respecting the river Tamar—Walreddon House an ancient domain, fine woods and grounds—Mount Tavy—Rowdon Wood—Park Wood—Account of an extraordinary tempest, or whirlwind, in Rowdon Wood, in 1768—Admirably described by Mr. Gullett—His description given—Ride to Ward Bridge—Most delightful scenery—Wood Town—Spenser the poet—Lines quoted from his ‘Shepherd’s Calendar’—View of Vixen Tor from the field—Remarkable effect at sunset—Excursion continued—The Pass, or entrance to the Moor—The Cursus—Spirit of a horse—A runaway racehorse stopped by Sir Wm. Trelawny in a remarkable manner—Ride to New Bridge—Magnificent scenery—The public indebted to the Duke of Bedford for a new road over the summit of the rocks—Morwel Rocks; their beauty and grandeur—Endsleigh Cottage—Seat of the Duke of Bedford—Blanch-down Woods—Denham Bridge—Village of Peter Tavy; its beauty and interest—Children and peasantry—The Coombe—Valley of Waterfalls—Brent Tor—Cudlipp Town—Mr. Bray’s Manor stands in the parish of Tavistock—excluded from the benefit of franchise by the Reform Bill—Story of a Judge and Mary Tavy and Peter Tavy—Mary Tavy scenery—The Shellands—Story of a bandit who lived in a wood, and became the terror of the country round Dunterton—Some account of the Abbots of Tavistock, by the Rev. Mr. G. Oliver of Exeter—The Author takes leave of Mr. Southey—The Conclusion.

Ficarage, Tavistock, Sept. 24th, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM aware there ought to be in these letters some account of the most remarkable places in our

neighbourhood, in regard to the beauty of their scenery. But this is a subject on which I have little to say that would be new to you; having already, in 'Fitzford,' attempted incidentally to describe all that is most striking or worthy around us. I have there spoken at large respecting Morwel rocks, the vicinities of the Lumborne, the Tamar, and the Tavy, Lidford waterfall, the glen, and the castle, the cave and mine of the Virtuous Lady, with the enchanting scenery by which it is surrounded, &c. Nor can I help thinking, notwithstanding you have been accustomed to the grandeur of mountain and lake scenes, that you would be struck with the exceeding beauty of our rocky rivers and our valleys. I can well believe that our loftiest hills would look as mole-hills to you, when compared to those of Cumberland; but the forms of our tors, by which they are generally crowned, are of the most picturesque character, and so peculiar, that I question if any other county, excepting Cornwall, can boast similar granite pinnacles as the finish of their elevated points.

The junction of the rivers Tavy and Walkham, at a wild romantic spot called the *Double Water*, deserves notice. In its kind, it is one of the most beautiful scenes I ever beheld: so, indeed, is the whole of the valley leading to the Double Water. Near the entrance (from the Tavistock road) is situated Grenofen*, a house surrounded by delightful grounds, lawns, and trees. The Walkham winds in the most beautiful manner through the valley of Grenofen; here rushing over masses of rock, there clear as crystal, showing every pebble in

* Lately purchased by the Rev. J. P. Carpenter.

its bed, and forming at every turn little picturesque falls of water. Sometimes the stream is interrupted by larger masses, and is seen tumbling over them in a sheet of boiling foam; whilst near, in many a deep hollow, it lies still and clear, reflecting, like a mirror, every object around. The adjacent hills are lofty, often abrupt; here and there wooded or broken in their sides, presenting a surface of crag and cliff, partially covered with lichen and ivy. In these recesses the ravens make their nests; and the rocks are frequently found of the wildest forms, such as Salvator himself would have chosen as a suitable scene for the haunts of his banditti. The noblest of these piles is called the *Raven Rock*; no doubt from the many birds of that tribe which harbour in it. This, when seen at twilight, with the river rolling and foaming but a few yards from its base, has an effect that acts powerfully on the imagination. In the days of superstition I can well believe it might have been deemed the haunt of pixies and spirits, that make their rings in the greensward at dusk, and lead poor travellers astray, "laughing at their harms."

Passing the base of the Raven Rock, you still follow the windings of the Walkham till you arrive at the foot of a second acclivity, composed of rocks in forms the most picturesque and fantastic that can be imagined. These have of late been rendered peculiarly interesting in consequence of their having become the favourite haunt of a flock of goats. They make the scene alive; and to view them standing sometimes on the edges of the crags (where you would fancy the creatures could scarcely find footing), to see them gambol or climb from one mass to another, affords a most lively picture of animal enjoyment. The junction of the streams, which is not far

off, forming a thousand rushes of water foaming over a broken bed, the cliffs around, the trees, which in some places overhang the banks, and the opening of the magnificent vista of rock, height, river, and wood that constitute the valley, where the cave and mine of the Virtuous Lady are situated, present altogether such a scene as the pencil alone could attempt to portray, so as to give any distinct idea of its character.

When our friend Mr. Harding, the landscape artist, was here, Mr. Bray set off to guide him to the Virtuous Lady; but Harding, who, like most men of genius, is a great enthusiast, was so enchanted with the scenery through which he had to pass in his way thither, that he could never get to the place of destination; and he sat down near the Goat Rock (as we call it), took out his pencil, and I saw no more of Mr. Bray and his guest till they were driven home by the approach of evening*.

There is a miniature alpine bridge that crosses the Walkham at its junction with the Tavy, near the spot just named; this consists of a single plank, with a light piece of wood extended as a hand-rail to hold by in passing. In one part the plank is supported by a *clutter* of rocks beneath, as a Devonian would say in describing it. To stop on the middle of this plank and look around, will afford the greatest delight to the lover of the picturesque; but let him beware his head does not turn giddy, for though he would have but a very few feet to fall, such is the tre-

* That most worthy man and meritorious artist, Mr. Lewis, has made some beautiful drawings in this neighbourhood from nature. And one of the finest landscapes of modern times, a view on the Tavy, was painted by him in oil, from his own sketch, and purchased by the Duke of Bedford, who gave it to Mr. Wilson, the gentleman who manages his property at Tavistock.

mendous force of the current in this place, he would be instantly whirled down like a snow-flake, should the waters be at all full, as they always are after recent rains or sudden heavy showers. A poor girl was lost off this bridge not long ago, in crossing it to go to church. A farmer, also, who had been carried down the stream, was found drowned; and many thought he had fallen, perhaps, into the river from this plank; the railing is only on one side; it is altogether very dangerous.

The last time we visited this fairy scene was at noon-day; an hour that makes even cowards bold, especially when the sun is shining out cheerfully, and, like an alchymist, very liberally turning every thing into gold. Such at least was the effect I that day witnessed; every object, even the lightest cloud, wore a bright yellow hue. Not afraid of falling, as the plank was quite dry, I stopped half way in crossing to enjoy the scene around me. Such was the roar of the water, for the stream was very full, that I could not hear a word Mr. Bray said, as he stood calling to me from the bank only a few paces distant. After looking for two or three minutes on the rocks, the rush, the foam, and the whirl of the river, I felt my head beginning to whirl too, so that I delayed not a moment to get off as fast as I could from so dangerous a footing; and I could very well understand how it might be that from time to time so many persons lose their self-possession by a similar affection of the head, and fall into the stream below, whence they are hurried on to meet death in the first deep pool into which they are borne. These bridges are called *clams*, and they are never found any where excepting across our rocky and mountain

streams. Whilst touching on the subject of drowning in rivers, I cannot forbear mentioning the superstitious legend respecting the Tamar, which is by many believed to be as true as the gospel. It is averred, then, that the river Tamar demands, and will have, the sacrifice of a human life once every year; and that if one year passes without a person being drowned in its waters, the next the river is sure to take two lives in order to make up the number.

Walreddon House, before named, a very ancient dwelling, stands not far distant from the Tavy, in the direction of the Virtuous Lady valley and cave. This house was built in the time of Edward VI., but parts of it are of a much earlier date. The present possessor, Mr. Courtenay, is a great friend of ours, and one we most highly regard and esteem. That gentleman tells me there was formerly a chapel at Walreddon, and other interesting remains of antiquity, not the smallest vestige of which now exists. A portion of the old hall, now converted into a dining parlour, still retains the arms of Edward VI. as its most predominant ornament. There are, too, many windows, arch-headed doors, turnings, windings, and passages, that are truly of ancient date. The latter are somewhat puzzling; and when I was once visiting for a fortnight at the house, I used continually to make mistakes in finding my way to my own chamber. Though I have no absolute authority for saying so, yet I doubt not, whilst Walreddon was in the possession of Sir Richard Grenville (after his marriage with Lady Howard) it underwent a siege. There was a fine old entrance gate, near the house, which some time since fell

down, and I suspect its ruinous condition was not alone the effects of time, more likely of civil contest. The spot in which this aged mansion stands is well sheltered from the winds; but it does not command much view; comfort, more than the picturesque, having been consulted by our forefathers in the erection of their dwellings. The scenery, however, belonging to the domain of Walreddon is of exceeding beauty; the woods covering the whole of a steep range of hills down to the very edge of the river, being broken and interspersed with cliffs and rocks that are as delightful in their kind as anything to be found in the West. A ride through Walreddon woods is worth coming miles to enjoy; and Mr. Courtenay tells me he has lately cut a new path, which he thinks exceeds the old one in the variety and beauty of the scenes it unfolds. The house is seen to most advantage from the elevated road (cut on the side of a steep range of hills) leading towards Beer. That road is celebrated throughout the country for its scenery; nothing can be more wild and picturesque than it is in parts. Opposite Walreddon (on the other side of the Tavy) it is characterized by features so replete with grandeur, that they may truly be called majestic. I attempted to describe the scenery of this road, in Fitz-ford, in making young John Fitz pass it, after his escape from the cave of the Virtuous Lady. Here, therefore, I say no more about it; for a tale twice told, and a view twice described, would be tedious.

Mount Tavy is a very pretty place in itself; but not equal to Walreddon or Grenofen as a domain. It is the property of John Carpenter, Esq. Mount Tavy is situated about a mile from Tavistock. Row-

don Wood, now a portion of the estate, is delightful, it lies on the side of the hill, on whose summit the house was built some years ago. That wood overhangs in many places the river Tavy, and forms a beautiful feature in the landscape, (backed by the heights of Dartmoor,) as the traveller passes on towards Hertford Bridge, or Blackdown. On the other side the river, opposite to Rowdon, is Park Wood, the residence of Mr. Evans. When the plantations that gentleman has so carefully reared shall have attained their full growth, it will be a very sweet spot; it is now in the most promising state of improvement.

Near Park Wood, indeed, separated from it only by a few fields, is the Walla Brook, celebrated by Browne. The stream comes playing gently down the side of a hill, and passing under a bridge (over which runs the public road) it unites itself with the Tavy opposite the mount so named. Rowdon Wood many years ago was visited by so remarkable a storm, that it must not here be left unnoticed. The following account of it I extract from Mr. Polwhele's 'History of Devon.' "The most extraordinary marks of elemental violence in this neighbourhood are noticed by Mr. Gullett. On the 22nd August, 1768, about nine in the morning, the wind fresh at west-south-west, a very strange phenomenon happened at a place called *Rowdon Wood*, about a mile distant from the town of Tavistock. A passage, near forty yards wide, was made through this and an adjoining wood, according to the common opinion, by lightning. Whatever it was, it tore up vast oaks and flourishing ashes by the roots, lopped the largest limbs of some, twisted and shivered the

bodies of others, carried their tops to a considerable distance, and, in short, made such a devastation as a battery of cannon could scarcely have effected. Vivid flashes of lightning had been seen at Tavistock through the whole morning, and the thunder was loud and violent. Yet I have reason to think that this wreck of the woods was effected by a whirlwind. This whirlwind, whose direction was from about west-south-west to east-north-east, discovered itself in the parish of Beerferris, which borders on the Tamar, about six miles south-west of Tavistock. Here it destroyed an orchard by laying the apple trees level with the ground, and proceeded east-north-east without making its way by any visible traces till it arrived just opposite the town of Tavistock, when it shivered a few large trees upon a hill, and damaged a farm-house. Rowdon Wood was the next object of its vengeance, when it rolled up the vale of the Tavy, into the forest of Dartmoor, where it had full scope for exhausting itself. A person standing on an eminence in the town of Tavistock saw it, he says, moving over fields and hedges, about the size of a church, till, being intercepted by some houses and woods, he lost sight of it. After its devastation in Rowdon and the contiguous wood, it was seen by a farmer in its passage up the vale of Tavy towards Dartmoor. This man, says Mr. Gullett, whom I met upon the spot in Rowdon Wood, a few hours after the hurricane, informed me that he lived about two miles farther up the vale, in a house situated on the side of a hill. That there was no public road or travelling of any kind near his house; but that between nine and ten o'clock he and his family had been alarmed by the noise as if it were of half-a-dozen coaches rolling over the pavement;

that they ran out, and saw a large cloud, like a wool-pack, come tumbling up the vale (with a most frightful noise) and shaking all the hedges and trees over which it passed, as if it would have shivered them to atoms. The remote cause of this I conceive to have been lightning, by a very strong explosion of which the air in that spot was so considerably rarefied that the surrounding air rushed in like a torrent to fill up the vacuum, forming a body wonderfully condensed, and powerful by its violent agitation, and thus destroyed the equilibrium of the atmosphere. The equilibrium being destroyed, the whirlwind gained strength in proportion to its velocity, rushing on in the manner I have described. In order to ascertain the point whether the lightning had any immediate influence in this singular wreck, I then narrowly inspected the shivered trees, not one of which was in the least discoloured; nor could I perceive the smell of sulphur, or any other smell, indeed, than that of green wood. Some of the young saplings escaped uninjured amidst this ruinous scene; owing, as I imagine, to their pliability. But what more especially convinces me that this phenomenon was the effect of a whirlwind is, that trees at the distance of forty or fifty feet from each other were torn up by the roots, and thrown in quite opposite directions; so that their tops met and were entangled, which can only be accounted for from the whirling of the wind."

There are two or three rides, in particular, in our neighbourhood, that I would advise all persons who visit Tavistock for the purpose of viewing the scenery on no account to neglect. One of them is to Ward Bridge: in order to reach it the traveller must cross Whitchurch Down, pass by Sampford Spiney

Church, and continue along the road which leads to a house and grounds called Wood Town, the country residence of Mr. Cornish, a gentleman of this place; and a residence it is that might be termed dwelling in Paradise, so beautiful, so truly delightful is the scenery around it. Wood Town is very near Ward Bridge. and after winding down a road which resembles in steepness the slanting roof of a house, the stranger in search of the picturesque finds himself at the foot of the bridge. If he is as fond of wild and fairy-land scenery as I am, he will do as I did; which was to trespass on Mr. Cornish's grounds, by getting over a sort of rough wall of stones, briars, &c., that will at once bring him into a wood which sweeps down the hill side to the margin of the rocky stream: in this wood grow oaks that have seen centuries pass over their heads; and if the traveller who admires this spot should also happen to be acquainted with the poetry of Spenser, the scene before his eyes will forcibly remind him of many so exquisitely depicted in the 'Faerie Queene.' But I must not trust myself to talk about Spenser, or I shall never get out of the wood; Spenser, the first poet, excepting Shakspeare, that in my youthful days I ever read; who inspired me with a love of the beautiful and the wild, and made me live in a fairy world of fancy, the delight and remembrance of which can end but with life itself. The changes of time, the trials of calamity, and the many melancholy recollections which, more or less, await all in the maturity of life, cannot efface those momentary gleams of delight that break forth as we retrace in memory the strong impressions of our early days; and if these are connected with poetry and nature,

they awaken in the heart feelings which preserve in their character the freshness and vivacity of youth, though we should linger near the very portals of the tomb.

There is, too, at Ward Bridge, close to the river, a combination of rocks, moss-grown, and overhung with such aged oaks, that they must have seen the days of the Tudors; they form, in parts, many a sylvan cell, and these afford just such a recess as I can believe Una would have chosen for the place of her repose; and near one of the old oaks there grew, when I first saw the spot, a bramble that was not very young, but exceedingly flourishing; and I stood and fancied there was before my eyes the very oak and bramble celebrated in the 'Shepherd's Calendar.'

“ There grewe an aged tree on the greene,
 A goodly oake sometime it had bene,
 With armes full strong and largely displayed,
 But of their leaves they were disarayde :
 The bodie bigge, and mightily pight,
 Thoroughly rooted, and of wonderous hight ;
 Whilome had bene the king of the felde,
 And mochell mast to the husbande did yelde,
 And with his nuts larded many swine ;
 But now the grey mosse marred his rine ;
 His bared boughes were beaten with stormes,
 His toppe was bald, and wasted with wormes,
 His honour decayed, his branches sere.
 Hard by his side grewe a bragging brere,
 Which prowdly thrust into th' element,
 And seemed to threat the firmament :
 It was embellisht with blossoms fayre,
 And there to aye wanted to repayre
 The shepheards' daughters to gather flowers,
 To painte their girlonds with his colowres ;
 And in his small bushes used to shrowde
 The sweet nightingale singing so lowde ;

Which made this foolish brere wexe so hold,
 That on a time hee caste him to scold
 And snebbe the goode oake, for hee was old."

And now having visited Ward Bridge *, and trespassed on Mr. Cornish's grounds (a thing by no means to be omitted by any one who has a feeling for the beautiful), the picturesque traveller must mount again; and, as the common saying goes, follow his nose, up the rough, steep, and formidable road that lies before him; it will lead him on to Dartmoor, if he likes to go so far. Let him now give his pony his head, and he will pick his own way, in such a path, much better than the rider could do it for him with the bridle. My little shaggy Dobb carries me up this hill as quietly as a lamb; I let the rein hang loose on my arm, and, whilst he paces gently on, amuse myself sometimes in picking the sweet wild strawberry that grows in the hedges by the side of the narrow way. Mr. Bray rides on before, his pony often starting and frisking, and making a gallant show of spirit; but my Dobb's merit is of a more modest kind, and as he is beginning to grow old, he cares not one jot for appearances. Dobb knows my taste; for when we come to a certain gate, situated half way up the hill, with a *posty* on either side of it (as the good people call a post in Devonshire), he stops; because he remembers that I

* My brother thus speaks of Ward Bridge, in his 'Notices of Tavistock and its Abbey,' in the 'Gentleman's Magazine':—"To obtain an idea of a Devonshire stream in all its beauty, the traveller should visit the Walkham at Ward Bridge, about four miles from Tavistock. At this spot the stream makes its way between thickly-clustering fragments of dark moss-grown rocks, and on the banks contiguous is an enchanting little wood, where the oaks are seen flourishing amidst huge masses of granite, covered with moss and lichens."

always get off at that same gate in order to walk into the field, and enjoy one of the most striking scenes in all the county: yet, such is the peculiarity of this, that I allow no one, who is pleased to take me for a guide, to open that gate, or visit that spot, excepting at *sunset*. Seen in the broad glare of day, no one would believe it was the same magical view which, when contemplated at sunset, might almost be fancied into a scene raised by some wizard, with a wave of his wand, for our delight.

You stand near the gate in a field that runs along the side of a hill; this hill sweeps down to the river; and you see the stream winding in the most undulating manner, for a considerable distance, through a valley clothed with wood. Hills rise beyond hills; their forms are peculiarly striking: they are bold and acute, not too much rounded, so as to become *lumpy*, (a term of censure which has very falsely been applied to our Devonshire heights by one who knew little of them). Beyond these hills, which stand like the side slips of a scene in a theatre, opens a second, or back scene, and that crowns the whole. Part is distinct, part so aerial, so radiant in the glitter of sunshine, so blended with the ultramarine tints of evening, that you see it at one moment as if it were coming into regular forms and distinctness; and at another it seems to die away and lose itself in air. Fronting this extreme distance, however, arises what you would immediately conceive to be a magnificent feudal castle; towers, and turrets, and flanking walls stand in awful array before you; and you think of knights, and ladies, and sentinels on the watch post: and wonder who, in these days, can be the lord of such a stronghold as would have suited the

rebel barons in the time of King Stephen, or of King John, when they made him consent to sign Magna Charta. But the castle before you, on which the setting sun pours a flood of light, is much older than King John's days, older even than those of the Saxons; the last of the Princes of Dunhevid may have held his court there, or, in the worship of his false gods, have there poured forth the cruel libations of human blood, and have acted worse deeds than did the most ferocious of the old Saxons when they took possession, and made offerings to Frea or Odin in the very heart of the moor. It is Vixen Tor that rises with such majesty of aspect, and assumes, when seen from this particular spot, a form so completely castellated, that it would deceive the eye of any stranger who, for the first time, looks upon it at the hour of sunset; for if he goes there at noon-day he will spoil all, and spoil my description, the truth of which I would call on Dobb himself to witness, if he had but a tongue for the service of his mistress, for well does he know the scene. Indeed only the last time we visited the field, Dobb, getting loose from the gate-post to which he had been tied up, walked in after me, and very unceremoniously rubbed his nose on my shoulder, no doubt to let me know how much he admired the view. But Dobb (who has as quick an understanding for the road home as any christian, and is very fond of turning thither, if you feel disposed to let him take his own way) was not so soon to be indulged on this memorable evening.

Up we mounted again; I now led the van; Mr. Bray formed the main body, and our John, as usual, brought up the rear, though at a distance rather

more than customary: probably the distance was on this occasion chosen, not in order to take a nap, as he sometimes does when riding after his master, but to solace himself with a little harmony; for I soon heard John, in a truly sentimental style, singing, sotto voce, "O! no, we never mention her," in a most dolorous key, every note of which was out of tune; for, though our John is a cheerful honest soul, somehow or other, possibly from defect of ear, he always sings in the minor; and as he is exceedingly fond of music, it is the more remarkable.

As we advanced, we found the wild and romantic scenery which surrounded us on every side was scarcely English in its character, and far more like that described by Sir Walter Scott as peculiar to the Highlands.

I am very sorry that I have no adventures to record in our navigation among the rocks to enliven this letter as we journey on towards the moor; but, excepting a country lad, we really met nobody but a couple of old women; one of them, dressed in a red cloak, and carrying a bundle of sticks on her shoulder, reminded me of Otway's Hag, with "age grown double:" so fierce and ill-humoured an expression I never beheld in any one of the peasantry in Devonshire, old or young: had she lived in the days of witch-hunting, her face might have endangered her life; Lavater would have read a lecture on such a physiognomy. Presently we met a man driving that truly moorland burthen, a horse laden with a *crook* piled with peat. A *brood* of pigs (as our John, in the truly Devonian phrase, called them) we set flying, as they were grunting and enjoying themselves in a puddle in the middle of the

road ; and lastly, John killed an adder that was very large, as he was sunning himself in one of the narrow lanes, and which, by certain marks (red rings, I think,) about the head, he pronounced to be the most venomous of its kind.

At length we came to what Mr. Bray, who is very fond of naming every striking place in our excursions, has been pleased to call the *Pass*, at the entrance of the moor from this road. Certainly giving names is a part of his vocation, and some hundred years hence, I expect, many a rock designated by him, and possibly this of the *Pass*, may find its way into the maps ; for names, like everything else, must have a beginning. And, as I have some ambition to be immortalized myself, especially in this country, on which, I may say, I have bestowed some pains, I do hope that a certain druidical basin at Over Tor (or Overturned Tor) on the moor, in which I once washed my hands, may, out of respect to my memory, bear for ever and a day the very elegant name Mr. Bray bestowed upon it, that of “Mrs. Bray’s wash-hand basin.” I had also the honour of discovering it, being the only Druidical vestige, save one, I ever found out on the moor to add to the number of its antiquities. The *Pass*, towards which we are proceeding, is nothing more than what a pass ought to be ; there is space enough for the traveller to go through between two enormous and fantastic-looking rocks, that stand on either side the way, and were once, no doubt, joined together as closely as the Siamese twins, till the powers below gave the old earth a good shaking, and sent them asunder. Dobb clears the pass, and finding no temptation to loiter on the road, which he sometimes does, if a little

inviting grass catches his eye, we soon enter on the moor; and the road we are now upon leads us to what the Devonians call the *Back-see-fore-see* * side of Vixen Tor, where the mass of rocks (for this tor consists of three contiguous masses) rise one hundred and ten feet above the surface with an air of insulated grandeur, in the midst of an elevated space of ground, where all beyond its immediate vicinity is tors, or hills, or broken fragments of granite; but there is no object to interpose and lessen, by a too close opposition in magnitude, the imposing aspect of this sphinx of the moor. But I have so often talked of Vixen Tor, that I will here say no more about it, and one of these days I hope you may see it yourself.

You may now, if you please, ride thence to the grand Cursus, (grand in length, but diminutive in height,) and turning into the road near Merrivale bridge, all that remains may be left to the ponies; for no sooner do they once find that they are on the road home, than they prick up their ears, and set off, each emulous to be the foremost; and John, who rides the most spirited of all, has sometimes hard work to keep it from bolting; and, if it did so, he would not be very likely to meet with any one on the dreary moor who could succeed in stopping a runaway pony in the very remarkable manner I once saw Sir William Trelawny (the present member for Cornwall) stop a horse that bolted with the jockey. It carried him twice or thrice round the race-course, to the terror of all the spectators, who

* On inquiring of a Devonian gentleman, born and bred, what this term could possibly mean, he told me it meant "*the back part of the other front.*" Surely Ireland is not the only land of bulls.

expected the high-spirited animal would run till he dropped, and that the lad, who was calling out for help, and whose hands were dreadfully cut in pulling the bridle, would be killed. Sir William Trelawny saw the boy's danger, crossed the ground, rode up, and caught the flying racer by *the tail*: thus checked, and probably surprised by the novelty of such a check, the creature was instantly stopped, and the boy was safe. This circumstance occurred at the Tavistock races, on Whitchurch Down, in the summer of 1830.

Another of our beautiful rides is from this town to the Tamar, near New Bridge; and there, before you come to the bridge, turn off on the left hand and pass through a gate, this will lead you down towards a road which runs along (and partly through the most delightful woods) close to the banks of the Tamar. The rocks of Morwel, still on the left, tower above your head, and after passing under them and through a succession of scenery, of which I give no minute description, because it would fill pages to do it anything like justice, you wind up a steep ascent (near the wear-head) and pass under the shadow of some of the loftiest trees I ever saw, and meet on your way a beautiful silver stream that comes tumbling down and continues its course till it falls into the Tamar below; and you hear, also, the rush of unseen waters—a circumstance that always produces so much effect on the mind in the midst of a wood. On you go, through scenes that are really enchanting, till you turn into the *new road*. This was, but a very few years since, cut under the immediate direction and at the expense of the Duke of Bedford; and this act of munificence has afforded to the public

at large so much delight, and thrown open to them such a glorious ride through scenes of almost matchless grandeur and beauty in their kind, that it deserves the most honourable mention. The Duke's Road leads you over the summits of all the fearful rocks and precipices of Morwel; but they are only fearful in appearance, for the road itself is perfectly safe, and none but nervous or timid people think of getting off their horses as they pass it. After riding on for some distance, you come to a small wood of dwarf oaks; you enter it; pass along the little path on foot, and finally step out on what you have come all this way principally to see—Morwel Rock. This is all I shall say of it, having already described it at large; for it was this very rock which I chose on account of its beauty, and its extraordinary character, as the scene for the interview in my novel between old Sir Hugh Fitz and George Stanwich. I have only one observation to make here respecting it, that Morwel Rock, though truly it is a magnificent object, has no right alone to engross the name, since all the rocks around it are likewise those of Morwel, and several are quite as beautiful as this; but its having been considered the greatest lion of its neighbourhood for so many years, the good folks who are accustomed to go thither in the summer months to boil their tea-kettles, will not be prevailed with to think it can have a rival, far less an equal. The whole scene, from that rock to the end of the Duke's Road, affords a succession of the noblest objects that can be witnessed in this, or perhaps in any other county in England; always excepting the Lakes, which I have not seen, but which, from drawings and engravings, I know are on a more lofty scale of magnificence.

The Duke of Bedford has an elegant house, called a cottage, at Endsleigh. The ride thither, through Blanche-down Wood (though that is a far-about track) is indeed so delightful, that all persons who would wish to approach near the cottage with most advantage, to enjoy the scenery, ought to go that way. I do not attempt any minute description of Endsleigh; many of its most beautiful views have been more than once drawn and engraved; and strangers from all parts of the country come to see it. There is a dell, called the Dairy Dell, watered by a running stream, that is of a most pleasing character; the Swiss Cottage is very pretty, so is the view from the terrace, which at sun-set appears to the greatest perfection; and the house exhibits much of comfort, combined with good taste, in its decorations. I once heard the Duke of Bedford say, that he had cut rides to the extent of forty miles in his domain of Endsleigh. Those I have seen, especially through Blanche-down, merit the attention of the traveller, and will well repay him for the trouble of finding them out. I remember one spot in particular, not far from Newbridge, that might truly be called Switzerland on a miniature scale. You ride through a wood, where the birds are so little molested, that I saw pheasants, woodpeckers, and birds of every description, amusing themselves by flying from bough to bough, in a manner that showed them to be very tame, or fearless of the approach of a human being. Their haunts seem, indeed, to be undisturbed. Below, the Tamar ran with great rapidity, foaming over the blackest rocks;—on the opposite side the river, a

steep hill, covered with crags of granite of a greyish hue, had, starting from between them, a vast number of young firs, lately planted: altogether the river, the heights, the granite, and the firs, formed a scene of a character so peculiar, that I never recollect having seen one of a similar nature in England. Mr. Bray agreed with me in opinion that it might truly be called Swiss: but when the young firs shall have attained their full growth, the rocks will be hidden, and the peculiarity of the scene alas! destroyed.

Denham Bridge is another of our delightful rides, but the finest parts of its vicinity are difficult of access. My nephew went thither on a fishing excursion, up the river or down it, I do not know which: sometimes he waded ankle deep in the water; but he thought little of such difficulties in his progress, as he declared, on his return, that he had never witnessed any scenery that excelled what he had that day passed through in his excursion.

The village of Peter Tavy is another point of attraction in this neighbourhood. Close to it is a narrow glen or valley, called the *Coombe*, but which I have ventured to name the *Valley of Waterfalls*; on account of the vast number of small, but exquisitely beautiful falls there seen. All the artists who have hitherto visited Peter Tavy, and we have guided many thither, declare it to be an unrivalled village in the variety of beauties it affords as studies for the painter. A mill there, the property of Mr. Bray, has been drawn and painted over and over again, has been hung in Somerset House, and

the Water-colour Exhibition, and was never yet returned unsold on the hands of an artist*. The subject it affords is strikingly characteristic.—A rush of water turns the wheel, and forms a cascade that falls into a rapid mountain stream (which rises near, and comes down the Coombe) as clear as the brightest crystal; the thatched gable of the mill is covered with ivy; a little bridge crosses the stream opposite the cottage door, and as you stand on this you see the crystal waters come pouring down a shelving and rocky channel in a manner that the pencil alone could pourtray. Above your head wave the branches of some aged and picturesque firs, and if you turn towards the village, the cottages are seen in pretty clusters amidst the trees, and the beautiful tower, with its Gothic pinnacles, finishes a scene that is of such peculiar interest, the eye is never weary in looking on it though seen a thousand times before. Near the mill cottage the children assemble in groups: and ponies, donkies, pigs, and cocks and hens, are all found there, forming the most animated accompaniments that a Morland or a Wilkie would have desired to complete the picture of rustic life.

Mr. Harding made an oil painting of some cottages just above the entrance to the Coombe; he was rather unfortunate in his visit to the latter spot; for chancing to come hither during the long drought of 1826, there was so little water in the rivers and streams, that he lost the sight of them in all their

* The mill has been drawn by Mr. Lewis and his son more than once, by Mr. Harding, Miss Kempe, Mr. R. Stothard, Mr. Hitchins, Mr. Kempe, Mr. Bray, and lastly by Miss Taylor (now Mrs. Worsley), a lady whose talents are of so high an order, that she justly deserves to be ranked with the best water-colour artists of this age.

beauty. Miss Taylor was more fortunate; we carried her to the Coombe when it was exactly in the state to please an artist; she was indeed delighted with it, and thought it richly merited the name I had given to it of the Valley of Waterfalls. It is not only the wild and striking manner in which the stream rushes down over the thousand masses of rock, that forms the interest of this spot—the surrounding heights are rocky and broken, and afford and endless diversity of views, with Brent Tor rising from the midst of an elevated plain, as the finishing and prominent object in the distance. Had Claude composed the landscape (as he often did in his pictures, by putting together select portions sketched from nature), he would have put Brent Tor just where it stands and no where else.

Peter Tavy is amusing on account of the living groups with which it teems. Such a place it is for children, that it would alarm the admirers of Mr. Malthus's system, could they but see the infantine race who grow up in health, cheerfulness, and poverty, in absolute contradiction to the wisdom of that "eminent philosopher," and render Peter Tavy one of the most joyous villages under the sun. You may see the little things of a summer afternoon, not overburdened with clothes, sometimes ragged, and with neither bonnet nor cap to confine a profusion of flaxen hair, as fat and as rosy as young cupids, dabbling in the water like ducks; or tumbling over the rocks, and no harm done, and floating their tiny boats down the current of the stream, as careless and as happy, as if a political economist had never issued an edict against their existence. Here you may find a child of seven or eight years old nursing

a baby almost as big as herself, and deriving consequence from the occupation, playing the woman over the other children, or calling out to some one of them by the name of *little girl* (as one child is very fond of calling another), desiring her to keep out of the water, and not to dirt her pinafore in making mud pies. The elder boys are engaged with their kites, or their more active games, whilst a group of little fellows amuse themselves with piling up loose stones, and making baby walls in imitation of those of granite, called *hedges*, on the borders of Dartmoor. In Peter Tavy, too, may be seen "the spinners and knitters in the sun;" and the very old and the very young are often seen together side by side; and girls with their pitchers filling them with water from the little channels and rivulets that abound throughout the village. These present pictures that are of endless variety and interest to all who delight in the scenes of rural life.

The school-house displays, too, a large assembly of the rising generation; it stands near the church: the tower and pinnacles of the latter form a beautiful point in the surrounding landscape, from whatever direction it may be viewed. The churchyard is on all sides surrounded by a number of large old lime trees, that cast a sombre shadow around, quite in harmony with the spot consecrated to the repose of the dead. Near Peter Tavy is Cudlipp Town, of which Mr. Bray is lord of the manor. It is of a character similar to the scenery about Peter Tavy, and has plenty of water and rocks. Cudlipp Town is the place about which there were so many debates in parliament in the sessions of 1832, when it was thought proper to cut out that extensive manor

from the parish of Tavistock, so that the new franchise, under the Reform Bill then about to pass, should not be extended to the tenants there residing. This exclusion, though the debates it occasioned were known to all the kingdom, Mr. Bray, from circumstances not worth detailing, did not know till it was too late to petition to obtain for his Cudlipp Town tenantry the same privileges as the rest of the parishioners were about to receive.

The last time we visited Peter Tavy in company with some friends, we followed a lane that runs from the church towards Mary Tavy; and whilst going along, we remarked that these villages were so called from the virgin and saint to which the churches were dedicated. Mr. Bray told us a story about a judge, who, on a trial being held concerning some land in these parishes, confounded the names of the villages with those of the witnesses; and gave an order for Peter and Mary Tavy to be summoned into court. After following this long, narrow, and muddy lane, we at length came to a gate, which we opened, and stood on the brow of a hill. A beautiful sight here burst upon us. Below rolled the Tavy, under cliffs and crags, not of a very lofty but of a most pleasing character; and in the midst of the greensward, on this side the river from its banks, arose an insulated and enormous mass, called Mary Tavy Rock, covered with ivy, lichens, and every sort of rock plant that can, I believe, be found in Devon. Passing this mass *,

* Whilst this letter was passing through the press, Mr. Lewis, the elder, has again visited Tavistock, and made a beautiful sketch of this scene. He declares this vicinity to be unique in beauty and in subjects for an artist.

which, Mr. Harding said, would in itself furnish many subjects for a painter, we followed the river to one of those light wooden bridges, called clams. This, near Mary Tavy, is a great height above the stream, which, as usual, tumbles over vast portions of broken rock, and no where in greater beauty than near this clam. We continued our walk, still on the banks of the Tavy, but meeting it as it comes rapid and foaming from the moor. Sometimes the path, which was rough, led us close to the water; at others it carried us up the banks, and along rocks, till at length we had to scale one which intercepted our progress like a wall, and then we had to climb up a steep hill, very near the river, that was beautifully diversified with forest trees. We next perceived, on the opposite side, a line of cliffs that rose to a considerable height, partially grown with wood, where there was any soil on their surface, and the whole backed by elevated lands, and the never-failing crest of all the views in this quarter—Brent Tor, with its little church perched high in the air.

From this spot, as far as to Tavy Cleeve and Rattle Brook, the views are as varied as they are wild and beautiful; and I would recommend every traveller who comes hither to see our scenery, to find his road out to Peter Tavy, crossing Hertford bridge in his way, which is in itself worth seeing, thence to continue on as far as Mr. Bray's mill in Peter Tavy, to ramble to the Coombe, return back through the *Shellands* (a parcel of land near the mill whose name reminds one of the Scotch word *Sheeling*), and then if he can get any little boy to become his guide (and sixpence, I dare say, will procure him that advantage), he may go on to Mary Tavy Rock, the Clam, &c. ; and if he be a good walker, and has another

sixpence to spare his guide, he may proceed to Cudlipp town and Hill bridge; and so he will have seen all the sights in that quarter in one round. And when he gets to Cudlipp town, and asks where the *town* may be, let him understand that a Devonshire one is not made up of number, as it sometimes consists of a single house, or two or three cottages, for here we never rate quantity in such matters. I once was directed to a *town* which, when I arrived there, I found to consist of two pig-sties and a mud hut; yet town it was, and will be so called through successive generations.

And now, having pointed out many of the most interesting scenes in our neighbourhood, I shall conclude this letter with the relation of a remarkable circumstance or two connected with them; at least the first may be unquestionably considered under that head.

Our friend Mr. Evans, of Park Wood, the other day told me the particulars of a story about a ruffian who, some fifty years ago, concealed himself in a wood on the banks of the Tamar. His name was Nicholas Mason. What might have been his motive, as he was the son of respectable parents, to adopt the trade of a bandit I do not know. But he succeeded in terrifying and laying such heavy contributions on the neighbourhood by his nightly depredations, that the farmers and gentlemen at length combined to rout him out. This freebooter was as light of foot as he was of hand; and one of his practices was to get into farm-houses by descending, with the utmost care, the chimneys during the time the families were at rest. His spoils he placed in a bag, and managed to make his retreat in the same dark and strange manner. For some time his mode

of action was not suspected, as in the morning all the doors were found locked, just as they were on the previous night, and no signs of violence appeared. The good people, thus robbed, were puzzled what to think, and as a bad character is a very bad thing, the devil being the father of thieving as well as of lying, obtained the credit of achieving in his own person what were in fact but the acts of one of his sons. However, as the robber, grown bold by success, at length ventured on hen-roosts and the firstlings of the flock, human agency was suspected to have some concern in the matter.

The robber was at length discovered to have secreted himself in a cave, situated in a thick wood near the Tamar. The discovery was made by a hound quarrelling with a brother hound for some bones that were scattered near the entrance of Mason's den. The squire and huntsmen were led to suspect, from this circumstance, that they had found out the hiding place of the thief; and having dexterously concerted their measures, so as not to give him any previous alarm, they called in the assistance of some sturdy ploughmen who were working not very far from the spot. The attack commenced, and the robber, like a hare, got the start of his pursuers; for huntsmen, hounds, and peasants were all after him. Suddenly he was espied in a thicket of heath and furze, under the brow of a precipice, as he was seeking concealment among the adjacent rocks. From this strong hold he was speedily hurled by a bold peasant armed with a pitchfork, who managed to crawl up the cliff after him, though not without danger, as Mason snapped a pistol at him, which providentially missed fire.

He was at length taken, yet not till the huntsmen and dogs, that had unkennelled him, were again obliged to follow in chase, so fleet was he of foot, so quick in doubling, and so intimately acquainted with the place in all its nooks, windings, and ways of retreat. On being taken he displayed a temper of the most ferocious daring, told the two gentlemen who had been the principal hunters that he regretted they had escaped him, and assured them they owed their safety to their not having caught his eye in time to put his fire-arms in proper order to shoot them.

The party next examined the cave; the ruffian had there collected every sort of necessary for his own accommodation: there was a pan of milk (for he used to milk the farmers' cows long before daylight) scalding over the embers of a wood fire; a fat sheep that he had stolen, and was skinning at the moment of the discovery, hung on the side of the cave, and all sorts of stolen goods were there amassed in regular order. These were removed, as the whole party, with shouts of triumph, bore along their captive to undergo the examination of the magistrates in full assembly. His father and mother, poor but honest people (to whom he had always been a torment from his earliest days), showed the utmost sorrow for his miserable condition, and felt that shame for him which he did not feel for himself. Such was the terror this man had inspired, that though he was in custody, and about to stand his trial, many of the poor country people feared to swear to their own property found in the cave; one woman, however, deposed to a shirt as belonging to her husband; she swore to the work being her own, said she could not be mistaken, for she was left-

handed. Other witnesses at length came forward, and Mason was convicted and hanged. The wood in which he had secreted himself is situated near Cartha Martha rocks; it is called Dunterwood.

After gratefully thanking you for the honour you have conferred on me in allowing me, for so long a period, the pleasure of your correspondence, and of receiving, in the kindest manner, such information as I have been able to convey to you concerning the history, &c. of the vicinities of the Tavy and the Tamar, I was about to close these letters, and for the present to take my leave, when a volume I had never before seen was put into my hands. It was the ‘Historic Collections, relating to the Monasteries of Devon,’ by the Rev. George Oliver, of Exeter. Mr. Oliver is known as a learned antiquary, and a most worthy man, one universally respected. He is the minister of the Roman Catholic chapel in that city.

I found in his book some most curious matter relating to the Abbey of Tavistock, which he had principally collected from those unquestionable authorities, ‘*The Registers of the Bishops at Exeter.*’ To omit such notices as this historian’s work have placed within my reach would render these letters incomplete; to abridge them would be unjust to Mr. Oliver and to the subject: I venture, therefore, to give entire the following extracts respecting

“THE ABBOTS OF TAVISTOCK.

“1st. *Almer*, who is described in the Cartulary of the Abbey as a good scholar, and exemplary for his piety to God and charity to man. He was doomed to witness the utter destruction of his monastery by

the Danish invaders. How long he survived this catastrophe is uncertain.

“2nd. *Livingus*. He was originally a monk of St. Swithen’s Monastery at Winchester. His benefactions and services to Tavistock Abbey entitle him to the name of its second founder. ‘Per Ordgarum surgendi exordium, per Livingum Episcopum crescendi accepit auspiciam.—Wil. Malmes.’ In 1032 he was promoted to the Sec of *Crediton*. On the death of his uncle Brithwold, the Bishop of *Cornwall*, he succeeded in uniting that diocese in perpetuity to his own see. In 1038 King Harold appointed him to the Bishopric of Worcester, which he continued to hold, with *Crediton*, until his death, on Sunday, 23rd March, 1046. He was buried at Tavistock.

“3rd. *Aldred*, a monk of Winchester, succeeded Livingus, first as Abbot of Tavistock, and secondly as Bishop of Worcester. In 1060, he was translated to York, where he sat until his death, on 11th September, 1069.

“4th. *Sistricus*, who died in the Spring of 1082.

“5th. *Gaufred I.*, who died in 1088.

“6th. *Wymond*. He was deposed by St. Anselm for simony, in 1102.—See ‘Eadmeri Hist.’ fol. 67.

“7th. *Osbert* was abbot in 1109*.

“8th. *Gaufred II.* was the next abbot.

“9th. *Robert de Plympton*, who is supposed to have died in 1145.

“10th. *Robert Postett*, who was abbot nine years.

“11th. *Walter*, who is said to have died in 1174.

* We regret the very jejune and imperfect account of the following abbots until the accession of Philip Trentheful in 1259, when we take for our guide the Registers of the Exeter Bishops.

“12th. *Baldwin*.

“13th. *Stephen*.

“14th. *Herbert*. To this abbot Pope Celestine II. addressed a bull of privileges, on 29th May, (See ‘2 Regist. Vesey,’ fol. 41.) 1193.

“15th. *Jordan* was appointed, I believe, in 1204.

“16th. *William de Kernit*, Prior of Otterton, was elected Jordan’s successor in 1220. He held his dignity four years.

“17th. *John*.

“18th. *Aian de Cornwall*, who died in 1248.

“19th. *Robert de Kitecnol*.

“20th. *Thomas*, who died in 1257.

“21st. *John de Northampton*, who presided during two years.

“22nd. *Philip Trentheful*, a monk of St. Swithin’s Monastery, at Winchester, was confirmed the next abbot, in October, 1259. He made his profession to Bishop Bronescombe, in the following words:— Vid. Regist. fol. 8. ‘Ego frater Philippus, electus Abbas Ecclesie de Tavistock, promitto tibi, Pater Dne Waltere Exon Epe, tuisque successoribus canonicè intronizandis et Sancte Exoniensis Ecclesie, fidem et canonicam per omnia subjectionem.’

“23rd. *Alured*, confirmed abbot on the 29th Sept. 1260.

“N.B. Fecit professionem quam obtulit super principale Altare.—‘Regist. Bronescombe.’

“24th. *John Chubb* succeeded, but was deposed by Bishop Bronescombe, in crastino Sancti Edmundi Regis et Martyris, (21st Nov.) 1269.

“The bishop describes him as ‘Monasterii bonorum dilapidator intolerabilis et manifestus,’ repro-

bates his scandalous neglect of religious discipline, and enumerates instances of his savage violence and even sacrilege.

“25th. *Robert*, who was substituted in the place of *John Chubbe*, on Palm Sunday, 1270.

“26th. *Robert Champeaux, aliter Campbell*, succeeded in 1278.

“This abbot is highly commended for his tender piety and zeal for improvement. During his government several parts of the Abbey were rebuilt, but particularly the conventual church, which is said to have been three hundred and seventy-eight feet long without including the Lady’s Chapel. Bishop Stapledon dedicated this noble church, and two altars in the nave, on the 21st of Aug. 1318. It was finally taken down in 1670.

“On the 21st of May, the same year, the bishop had dedicated St. Eustachius’ parish church at Tavistock, which adjoined to the Abbey inclosure.

“This amiable and benevolent abbot, with the consent of his convent, A. D. 1291, appropriated for ever the whole profits arising from an estate called Westlydleton (granted two years before to his Abbey by Sir Odo Le Arcedeakne), to the providing of the poor with clothes and shoes; the annual distribution of which was made in the cloisters on the second of November, the commemoration of all the Faithful departed.

“In consequence of this abbot’s petition, Bishop Stapledon approved and confirmed a perpetual chantry to be erected in the parish church of Whitechurch, near Tavistock, for four priests, who should be bound to celebrate the daily and nightly office, together with the service of the dead: to say three,

or at least two requiem masses every day, besides one of our Lady. In their suffrages they were to pray for the prosperity of the said abbot and convent; for King Edward II. and his Queen Isabella; for the bishop, dean, and chapter of Exeter, and for the founders and benefactors of Tavistock Abbey. The superior of these priests was to be called the arch-priest; he was to live in common with them, and they were to be called his *socii* or fellows. He was also to be charged with the care of the parishioners: *vid.* Stapeldon's *Regist.* fol. 165.

“N.B. The famous charter, ‘*De Libertatibus Comitatus Devon,*’ granted by King John, and its confirmation by his son Henry III., were preserved in Tavistock Abbey. Bishop Stapeldon took copies of these originals, and has inserted them in fol. 152 of his register.

“22nd. *Robert Bonus*, inducted 13th June, on the recommendation of Pope John XXII. 1328.

“N.B. Bishop Grandison deposed this abbot for contumacy and intemperate behaviour, 24th of October, 1333.

“23rd. *John de Courtenay*, substituted for Robert, 24th of April, 1334.

“N.B. This abbot had very little of the spirit of a religious man. He was passionately fond of field sports, was very conceited and foppish in his dress, and a most incurable spendthrift. During his government discipline seems to have been banished from the convent. Frequently but two of the community were present at the regular meals in the refectory, whilst the rest were feasting sumptuously in their private chambers. From the neglect of repairs the

monastery was falling into a dilapidated state, and, moreover, was overcharged with debts. ‘*Monasterium quod solebat abundare divitiis et honore, erat et est oneribus debitorum usque at mccc. libras sterlingorum et aliorum multiplicium onerum sarcinâ pregravatum.*’ Vide 1st Regist., Grandison, fo. 134.

“29th. *Richard de Esse* succeeded in 1348.

“30th. *Stephen Langdon* succeeded in 1362.

“31st. *Thomas Cullyng*, confirmed as abbot on the 12th of February, 1380-1.

“I believe this abbot finished the campanile of the church, begun by his predecessor. He died June 11th.

“32nd. *John May*, confirmed as his successor, 30th July, 1402.

He died 7th February, 1421-2.

“33rd. *Thomas Mede*, elected 26th March, and confirmed by Bishop Lacy, 19th April, 1422.

“N.B. This abbot is accused of neglecting regular discipline, of enormous dilapidations, and of simony; but the charge appears to be exaggerated.

“34th. *Thomas Cryspyn*, elected 11th June, 1442. His death happened 5th April, 1447.

“35th. *William Pewe*, elected 2d May; confirmed abbot 23d of that month, and died 26th December, 1450.

“36th. *John Dynnynton* was elected to succeed William on the 17th of the following January, and was confirmed by Bishop Lacy 20th February.

“N.B. It appears from 2, ‘*Rymer’s Fœdera*,’ p. 408, that this abbot obtained a papal grant to use the

pontificals, and to give the episcopal benediction at mass and at table.

“ 37th. *Richard*, whose institution is not recorded in the ‘Register.’

“ 38th. *Richard Yerne*. I can find no date of his confirmation.

“ *Richard Banham*: the date of whose election or confirmation I have not succeeded in discovering. King Henry VIII. created him a mitred abbot 22d January, 1513. It may be observed here that these parliamentary abbots ranked among themselves in the upper house according to seniority of creation. The contest which this Abbot maintained with Bishop Oldham has been variously related; but the following facts, extracted from that bishop’s Register, may be depended upon:—

“ ‘This abbot was cited 15th April, 1513, to appear before Dr. Richard Collet, the bishop’s commissioner, to answer to the charge of contempt of episcopal authority. The abbot, instead of explaining the occasion of his conduct, or offering any apology, produced a written appeal to the Roman court. The appeal was declared by the commissioner to be frivolous and inadmissible. For his obstinacy the abbot was suspended that very day; and, on the 22d of the same month, was excommunicated ‘propter multiplicem contumaciam.’ On the 10th of May he appeared in person before Bishop Oldham at the palace in Exeter, and on his bended knees most humbly and most earnestly intreated to be absolved from his censures; and offered to submit himself unconditionally to the bishop’s correction. The bishop then tendered the oath of submission to the see of Exeter, and, after he

had taken it, absolved him from his censures, whereupon the abbot paid him down five pounds of gold.

“ ‘The repentance of the abbot seems to have been insincere; for, soon after, he appealed to the Primate, William Warham, and to Richard Fitz-James, Bishop of London. The question chiefly turned on the right of episcopal visitation. These prelates decided on the 8th of February following, that the abbot had not produced any indults, bulls, or vouchers authorizing any exemption from the jurisdiction of the ordinary; they therefore decreed that he and his convent should submit to this regularly constituted authority, as their predecessors had done from time immemorial: they recommended to the abbot to apply to the bishop for the benefit of absolution; and they directed the bishop to confer it without hesitation, and to treat the abbot with mildness and paternal affection.’ So far Oldham’s Register.

“ This abbot was not discouraged by defeat. From the primate he appealed to the Court of Rome; and at last succeeded in obtaining from Pope Leo X. a bull of such ample and extraordinary privileges as completely to indemnify him for his former expenses and trouble. This bull is dated 14th September, 1517 [it is copied in Mr. Oliver’s Appendix]. It expressly exempts the Abbey of Tavistock, with its several dependencies, from all archiepiscopal, and all episcopal jurisdiction, visitation, and superiority, and takes it and them under the sole and immediate protection of the Holy See. It declares that all suspensions, interdicts, and excommunications pronounced against them by any other autho-

rity than that of the See Apostolic are absolutely null and void: ‘Nulla, irrita et invalida, nulliusque roboris vel momenti.’ As an acknowledgment for such sweeping liberality, the abbot was annually to pay to the apostolic chamber, on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, half an ounce of gold (i. e.), twenty shillings of lawful money of Great Britain.

“40th. *John Peryn*, it is said, succeeded in December, 1523. But his confirmation is not recorded in Bishop Veysey’s Registers. In virtue of the bull of Pope Leo X., I observe that this abbot styles himself, in several leases before me, ‘*Abbas exempti monasterii Beate Marie et Sci Rumonis de Tavystock.*’ On the surrender of the monastery he was granted a pension of 100*l.* per annum. Nineteen of his religious obtained salaries at the same time. The grants of these pensions are dated 26th April, 31st Henry VIII.

“The revenues of this Abbey were rated at 902*l.* 5*s.* 7*d.* per annum. The site of this great Abbey and the principal of its estates were granted by King Henry VIII., on the 4th July, 31st year of his reign, to Lord John Russell.

“The abbot’s residence in Exeter occupied the site of those premises in South-street now in the possession of Mr. Russell. I have met with a lease (dated 7th of November, a few months before the dissolution of the Abbey) by which John, the last abbot, let the said dwelling-house to Edward Brydgeman, and Jane his wife, for the term of sixty years. ‘*Hospicii nostri vocati Le Inne de Bere cum omnibus suis pertinenciis in vico Australi Civitatis Exon.*’ Query, was this the house men-

tioned in 'Doomsday' as being mortgaged to the Abbey by a citizen of Exeter?

"After the suppression of the Abbey, a chapel was erected within its inclosure, and licensed for the celebration of divine worship, at the request of the noble Lady Dorothy Mountjoy, on the 10th March, 1541-2.—Vid. 'Regist. Veysey,' fol. 109.

"The registers mention a priory in St. Mary's, the principal of the Scilly Islands, as being dependent on Tavistock Abbey.

"Bishop Brantyngham, 26th Sept. 1374, granted an indulgence of twenty days to all persons within the diocese of Exeter, *Penitentibus et Confessis*, who should contribute to the support of the Lepers' House, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, at Tavistock.

"There was a chapel of St. Margaret near the town of Tavistock.—Vid. 3. 'Regist. Lacy,' fol. 53.

"Also, a chapel of St. John the Baptist, *Juxta aquam de Tavy in Parochiâ de Tavystock*.—Ibid. fol. 128."

"LICENSE FOR THE ABBAT OF TAVISTOCKE TO
WEAR THE PONTIFICALIA.*

"The King, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting. Be it known that we, of our especial grace, have granted and given permission for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, to John Denynton, Abbat of the house and church of the blessed St. Mary and St. Rumon, to solicit and have permission from the sovereign Pontiff, the present Pope, to use the mitre, amice (almucio), sandals, and other pontifical insignia, and of blessing in the

* From notices of Tavistock Abbey, by Mr. Kempe.

solemnity of masses, and pronouncing absolutions with the same authority, and in the same manner, as any Bishop uses.

“And that the said Abbat may likewise prosecute any other provisions concerning the above matter, and enjoy the benefit of them for himself and his successors for ever.

“And further, we, of our greater favour, have granted and given license to the said Abbat, that he may receive Apostolic Letters and Bulls for the aforesaid provisions, and all and singular therein contained, execute, read, and cause to be read, and them and every of them altogether, fully and wholly, quietly, peaceably, and without harm, according to the effect of the said Letters and Bulls, and each of them, may use and enjoy; forbidding that the said Abbat or his proctors, factors, counsellors, helpers, or adherents, or any other his solicitors, readers, or publishers of the said Letters and Bulls, shall be by us or our heirs impeded, disquieted, disturbed, molested or oppressed, the statutes for provisors, ordinations, provisions, enacted to the contrary, or other things, causes, matters whatever, which on our or any other part may be said or alleged, notwithstanding.

“In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made patent.

“Witness the King, at Westminster, the third day of February, (36 Hen VI., A.D. 1457.)”

And now having conveyed to you in these letters, all the information that I deem of interest, or could collect, respecting this most interesting portion of

my county, I must conclude with repeating the hope that it will not be very long before you fulfil your promise of allowing us the happiness of seeing you, and guiding you in person to the various scenes I have attempted to describe.

In the interval, allow me to assure you that should these letters appear before the public, whatever may be their fate, my debt of obligation to you can never be forgotten. To you I owe the first suggestion, and I may add, the plan of my most pleasing task, which has afforded me hours of delight in the composition. And to know that I have been so fortunate in any way to afford you entertainment, or to meet your approval in the attempt, will be, in the recollection of my labours, their highest and most valued reward.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

And believe me ever gratefully

And respectfully yours,

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

LETTER XLI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS :—Additional notes to a former letter ; wherefore here given—Walking Stewart and the Turks—Jerningham, the poet—His anecdotes of Pope, &c.—Sir Francis Bourgeois—Anecdotes of De Lille, the French poet—Memorabilia of the late celebrated Mr. Mathias—Some of his original letters, connected with the subject of a biographical sketch touched upon in this volume, given at large.

Vicarage, Tavistock, October 21, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,

SINCE I committed to the press the slight sketch I have given of my husband's pretensions that I should class his name in the biography of this place, I have found, in an old box of papers, hitherto most unfortunately neglected, a very large mass of journals, letters, &c., written by Mr. Bray ; and amongst them several letters from his lamented friend Mr. Mathias. Had I found these before, I should have been furnished with material for a more copious and interesting account than the one already printed that is addressed to you. It is now, alas ! too late to do much more than to state the circumstance, and regret the oversight. But as the recent death of Mr. Mathias must make any records connected with him of peculiar interest. I cannot altogether forbear adding a few letters of his to my husband, and some notes respecting the latter that refer to the subjects to which I have before alluded in my previous statements ; also an additional note

concerning Walking Stewart, Jerningham, and others, that should have been incorporated with the former extracts from Mr. Bray's papers. The interest of these neglected documents is the only apology I can offer to you for thus giving them out of place; having (as the former sheet is printed off) no other means of making them a part and parcel of my work. I begin with a continuation, for such it is, of Mr. Bray's notices of

WALKING STEWART.

“Mr. Taylor*, and Stewart, the philosopher, commonly called Walking Stewart, spent the evening with me. He is considered by some as mad; and one, in order to prove that he was so, said that none but a madman would have remained on board ship pent up in a hencoop for a fortnight.

“But the truth of the story is, that Stewart was in Persia when there was a bloody war between two nations; where, if he had remained, he would have been obliged to side with one party or the other. He took, therefore, the only method of getting out of the country, which was to solicit the crew of a Turkish vessel to take him on board. They refused it on the score of his being an infidel, and that it would endanger the ship. They contrived, however, a method to cheat the vengeance of their prophet in somewhat the same manner as our stage-coach drivers contrive to evade the act of Parliament limiting the number of passengers, by hanging the frame of a bed at the side of the vessel, in which he was obliged to remain, washed by the spray of the sea, for a week or ten days. This was certainly far

* Then the Editor of the *Sun* paper.

better than being murdered or made prisoner and confined for life or starved to death.

“His character has been attempted, but very unsuccessfully, to be introduced on the stage, in the after-piece of ‘Hartford Bridge,’ though it has been generally supposed to allude to Browne. This dramatic hero talks of having skipped over mountains, laments his having lost his *walking* travels, and that he would make no scruple to rob a church, &c.; also of his being fond of singing in different languages; which Stewart did once at a meeting of the Charter House.

“His most peculiar doctrine seems to be a transmigration not of souls but bodies; or a perpetual reciprocation of atoms. He says that the works of Bacon contain only the *seeds* of knowledge.”

In a paper, dated “July 1st, 1803,” Mr. Bray’s notes contain the following particulars respecting that celebrated wit and poet

MR. JERNINGHAM.

“I this day dined with my friend Mr. Taylor, at a restaurateur’s, where he introduced me to Mr. Jerningham, the poet. He is about sixty years of age; but his florid complexion makes him look some years younger. He mixes a good deal with the first circles, and indeed is almost every night to be found at the Opera. He has also a general acquaintance among the literary world, of which he is himself a distinguished ornament. His conversation is stored with anecdotes of men of letters, from which, indeed, the biography of each might be collected.

“Talking of Pope and of Martha Blount, the poet’s favourite, he said that she was his cousin; and agreed that she treated Pope with cruelty.

Mr. Jerningham was introduced to her on his return from abroad, at the time of the coronation, and recollects he was requested not to mention the name of Mr. Pope in her hearing. He has frequently been rowed by the waterman, who was accustomed to take Pope, almost every fine day, to Lady ——'s, whence he returned home in her chariot. He always dressed in black, with a bag wig, and when the weather was chilly, sat in a chair in the boat, with a covering similar to those used by the porters in their masters' halls. The poet at length became so irritable, that he gave a general order not to let a gentleman be admitted who frequently came to see him, because he talked too much for him. At last, however, the gentleman introduced himself among a party; but as Pope never spoke to him, he was obliged to give up his acquaintance. We formed the plan of paying a visit together to the poet's villa; and Mr. Taylor insisted that when it took place, we should each write some verses on the subject. And, in allusion to our present meeting, he made an extemporaneous parody on Dryden, beginning,

‘ Three poets in three distant counties born,’ &c.

“ Bishop Hurd and Potter, the translator of *Æschylus*, were tutors to the Prince of Wales. The latter only retains the prince's friendship, and whenever he comes to town is constantly welcomed at Carlton House. Potter, for the greatest part of his life, was in the most indigent circumstances; and as he was curate to Hurd, Mr. Jerningham, on a vacancy of the Laureateship, wrote to the latter, requesting he would recommend him to his Majesty for the situation. The Bishop said, when he had an opportunity, he would mention it at the levee, though

he might have had an audience on the subject. By this neglect, Warton was appointed, who, though in no good circumstances at that time himself, said that had he known of the application he would have waived the appointment in favour of Potter. The latter, now in his old age, is in the happiest circumstances, being (through the Prince) made Prebendary of Norwich Cathedral.

“ Whilst the Prince was under the tuition of Hurd, and lived at Kew, commenced his acquaintance with Mrs. Robinson, who took a house in the neighbourhood. When the evening fixed for a rendezvous was come, the Prince was sure, by some excuse or other, to send the bishop early to bed, well knowing that he would soon fall asleep; then, with a silk ladder, he climbed the garden wall, and was received on the other side by his mistress.”

The following notes from Mr. Bray's papers, dated January 15th, 1804, respecting Sir Francis Bourgeois, are curious; I therefore give them a place:—

“ Having more than once met Sir Francis Bourgeois, he the other day offered to show me Mr. Desenfant's pictures. I accordingly called by appointment this morning at No. 39, Charlotte Street, Portland Place, where he and Mr. Desenfant reside. Two or three gentlemen were there at the same time. One of them, a Mr. Howard, or Troward, (I do not know which,) a lawyer, was present. He was principally concerned in the management of Hastings's trial. So many MS. books were necessary on that occasion, that they were carried to Westminster in two carts. He kept twelve or fourteen clerks constantly reading, in order to mark passages, digest,

and give him an abstract of their contents. Burke was at his house for ten or twelve hours almost every day during that period, and has stayed in his house for a month together. I understand he has a small but highly valuable collection of pictures, some of which Bonaparte wished to purchase of him.

“To return to Mr. Desenfant’s collection. The first picture Sir Francis showed to me was a nymph, by Titian; for which, with some others, Le Brun, on the part of Bonaparte, offered him a *carte blanche*. Perhaps it may be worth six or eight thousand pounds. She is represented as asleep in a recumbent posture, and naked. Cupid bends over her pointing with his dart, by which we are to suppose that the painter would give us to understand that Love was the subject of her dream. It is the Venus de Medici in a different posture, and as remarkable for its colouring as for its correctness of drawing. It is kept covered with a silk curtain. On my remarking that, like the Venus de Medici, the face was not so perfect as the rest of the body, Sir Francis remarked that, for wise purposes, our tastes were very different. This Venus had dark hair; his taste was, he confessed, for very fair women with red, I suppose *auburn* hair, which he thought, with a little *powder*, possessed a most bewitching appearance. Women of this description were generally of a fair and delicate complexion; but I remarked that they were also commonly freckled and rather coarse. The latter, he said, might, and should in all women, be corrected by essences and perfumes. In this room is a Madonna and child, with a basket, in the corner, very small, which every one allows to be an undoubted Correggio. In the next are four by

Murillo, the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian by Guido Reni, &c.

“Talking of statues, Sir Francis said that Mr. Townley, of Westminster, had the finest private collection in the kingdom: of which what struck him the most was the bust of Minerva, with her helmet and breast-plate of bronze, that by a kind of contrast gave life and animation to the whole. He allowed, however, that this taste may be carried too far, as it was amongst the ancients, who occasionally painted or enamelled the eyes of their statues. This he considered as a false taste. I compared it to a wax doll, whose eyes are made to move by springs. A gentleman present, however, differed from him, and said that the idea from seeing statues with cavities in the eyes, of their being filled up with enamelled ones, was wrong, as they were filled with precious stones, generally sapphires; which produced an effect altogether astonishing. No one could look at it an instant without being so struck as to be obliged to recede some paces. It was not from its resemblance to nature, but from the dazzling effect of its appearance.

“Sir Francis said that there were, he understood, some of the finest pictures in the world at the Escorial in Spain. But the finest of them, consisting of about *twenty* Venuses by Titian, were seldom shown; and indeed some of them had been burnt by the priests from an over-scrupulousness, an idea of their evil tendency. On the whole, however, he agreed that it might affect the generality of persons, as might also statues; but that artists seldom or never experienced any injury from such subjects.

“ One room consisted of Poussins, containing about eight or nine ; a thing believed to be unparalleled.

“ In the drawing room is a *chef d'œuvre* of Cuyp ; but in another a cattle piece, by Potter, superior to anything of the former. Claude was born in the first year of the sixteenth century, so that his own proficiency in painting, and that of the age in which he lived, may be known together. Sir Francis, at sight, can tell to a year or two when his works were executed. Indeed I think that his own style resembles that of Claude, when he painted with a clear and not a glowing tint. The pictures are moved on hinges, and some even draw out into a good light by means of iron supports,—a most excellent plan !”

From some conversation with a literary gentleman in town, respecting the celebrated French poet, De Lille, Mr. Bray received much information. The following he noted down :—

“ The Abbé de Lille is not quite blind, as it is generally reported of him. His vivacity in company is very engaging, which is increased by his rich fund of anecdote. With respect to his writings he is impatient of criticism. His undertaking the translation of Milton was at the suggestion of some English gentlemen, who, about a dozen in number, agreed to give him, on its completion, one hundred pounds. One of them called on him soon after, and found him with a wretched little edition of Milton, the text of which was so small that, had he continued to read it, it would probably have soon rendered him quite blind. He had also a French prose translation. The gentleman made him a present

of Newton's edition and a Latin translation, from which he acknowledged he had derived great benefit. He was at first greatly at a loss to translate the allegory of Sin and Death, since the personification in French must have been entirely reversed; sin (*le péché*) being masculine; and death (*la mort*) feminine. However, he at length supplied those personages by *Le Trépas* and *La Révolte*. De Lille had not before sufficiently appreciated the genius of Milton; but soon found reason to consider him the greatest poet that ever existed. The translation, in parts, is remarkably fine, but in others equally censurable; and though those passages have been pointed out to him he would never correct or alter them. The French language labours under the disadvantage of not being able to express, in a concise or even elegant manner, the different positions of the body. How could the French translate—'She sat like Patience on a monument;' 'Stood like a tower;' 'Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm?' &c. In De Lille's translation of Virgil's Georgics, it was objected to him that he had omitted the name of Mæcenas in the opening of the first book. He confessed its impropriety, but did not alter it."

The following notes respecting Mr. Mathias I extract from Mr. Bray's notes, which he heads as

"MEMORABILIA.

"27th January, 1807.—In a conversation which I had with Mr. Mathias on Italian literature, he informed me that Gray, though so great a poet himself, and an admirer of the poets of Italy, was unacquainted with the works of Guidi, Menzini, Filicaja, &c., and indeed of almost all that are con-

tained in his 'Componimenti Lirici.' He had once in his possession the commonplace-book of Gray; and it contained very copious extracts from the 'Comentarj' of Crescimbeni. He told me he could gratify me with a sight of Gray's handwriting, and fetched from his library a fasciculus, being a kind of commentary in English on Pindar and Aristophanes. It was written remarkably neat and plain, but rather stiff, and bearing evident marks of being written slowly. It had a great resemblance to the Italian mode of writing; every part of the letters being nearly of an equal thickness. He wrote always with a crow quill.

“Observing no obliterations or erasures, and indeed only one or two interlineations, I remarked that it must have been a fair copy, and wondered how he could have taken so much pains, unless he had intended it for publication. But Mr. Mathias assured me that Gray was so averse to publication, that, had not a surreptitious copy of his 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard' appeared, he never would have published it; and, even when he did, it was without his name. The reason that he was so correct was that he never committed anything to paper till he had most maturely considered it beforehand.

“Mr. Mathias explained to me how he was so well acquainted with these particulars respecting Gray, by informing me that he was most intimate with Mr. Nichols, the familiar friend and executor of Gray, who had lent him the MSS. On my lamenting that they were never made public, he said that it was not for want of his most earnest solicitation; but that Mr. Nichols was an old man, and wished even to conceal that he was in possession of any such

precious reliques, lest he should be plagued with requests to have them copied, or at least to show them. He therefore in a manner enjoined me to secrecy, and I consequently commit the present memoranda to paper merely for my own satisfaction, that by an occasional inspection the pleasure I received from this conversation may be more forcibly brought to my recollection. For the same reason, and as those MSS. are never likely to be made public, I shall enter more at large upon the consideration of them ; at least as much as a cursory inspection during a morning call would permit.

“ As Gray always affixed the date to every thing he wrote, which, as Mr. Mathias informed me, was also the custom of Petrarch, it seems that he wrote his remarks on Pindar at rather an early age. I think the date was 1747. It is very closely written. The Greek characters are remarkably neat : he begins with the date of the composition, and takes into his consideration almost every thing connected with it, both chronologically and historically. The notes of the scholiasts do not escape him ; and he is so minute as to direct his attention to almost every expression. He appears to have reconciled many apparent incongruities, and to have elucidated many difficulties. I the more lament these valuable annotations remain unpublished, as they would prove that, in the opinion of so great a man, the English language is in every respect adequate to express every thing that criticism the most erudite can require. It presented to my eye a most gratifying novelty to see the union of Greek and English, and to find that they harmonized together as well as Greek and Latin.

“The remarks on the plays of Aristophanes were so minute, not only expressing when they were written and acted, but when they were revived, that, as Mr. Mathias justly observed, one would think he was reading an account of some modern comedy, instead of the dramatic composition of about two thousand years old. Gray also left behind him very copious remarks upon Plato, which had also formerly been in Mr. Mathias’s hands; likewise large collections respecting the customs of the ancients, &c. And so multifarious and minute were his investigations, that he directed his attention even to the supellex, or household furniture of the ancients, collecting together all the passages in the classics that had any reference to the subject.

“Mr. Mathias showed me likewise many sheets copied by Gray from some Italian author; also, I believe, an historical composition, and a great many genealogies, of which Gray was particularly fond. On my remarking that I wished Gray had written less genealogies and more poetry, he informed me that the reason he had written so little poetry was from the great exertion (which he made no reserve in confessing) that it cost him in the labour of composition. Mr. Mathias informed me that he had seen the original copy of Gray’s ‘Ode on the Progress of Poesy:’ that there were not so many alterations as he expected; which was evidently owing to his method of long previous meditation; and that some of the lines were written three or four times over; and then, what is not always the case with an author, the best was always adopted.

“He said there was nothing of which Gray had not the profoundest knowledge, at least of such

subjects as come under the denomination of learning, except mathematics; of which, as well as his friend Mason, he was as completely ignorant, and which he used frequently to lament. He was acquainted with botany, but hardly seems to have paid it the compliment it deserves, when he said he learnt it merely for the sake of sparing himself the trouble of thinking."

I shall here insert a few of the letters, already named, from Mr. Mathias, as they are so intimately connected with many points of import in the biographical sketch formerly communicated to you. Brief as are these letters, they nevertheless contain passages that show the mind of the man in private life whose genius enriched the literary world with the 'Pursuits of Literature,' and whose fine taste and profound knowledge of Italian poetry has conferred such essential benefit on all who would study or can appreciate the most beautiful productions of a foreign land.

The first is addressed to my husband soon after his appointment to the Vicarage of Tavistock.

"TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

"Middle Scotland Yard, Whitehall, Oct. 21, 1811.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"YOUR obliging letter of the 9th instant came to me a few days ago, but I am ignorant of the person who was so kind as to leave it at my house. It gives me the most sensible satisfaction and pleasure to hear that the Duke of Bedford has presented you to the vicarage of Tavistock, &c.; and I trust it is only an earnest of what his Grace may intend to do for you hereafter. At present it ap-

pears to me as desirable a situation as you could wish; but I should be glad if he could obtain for you hereafter a prebend in some cathedral, which is a piece of preferment of the most eligible kind, and tenable with any living. Pray bear this in mind, and let your friends solicit for it to him or any other powerful interest, and not to lose the chance or probability of success for want of application.

“ I am glad that you intend to avail yourself of the Bishop of Norwich’s offer to ordain you priest at Christmas, as it should not be delayed; and it can never be accomplished in a more pleasing manner than by that excellent and amiable man. I shall be most happy to see you when you come up to town. I had hopes of visiting Devonshire this summer; but if I should live and be able to come next year, I shall wish to avail myself of your kind invitation to pay you a visit. It would give me pleasure to meet Mr. and Mrs. Baskerfield at any time or place.

“ You talked of printing (hereafter) some of Bishop Taylor’s sermons, *modernized*: I should rather recommend to your consideration whether it might not be more expedient to call them *abridged*. He is a writer of such acknowledged eloquence and learning, that it might be rather thought unnecessary, at least, if not presumptuous, to modernize such compositions. The removal of a few quaint expressions and abridging the matter, which is too copious, would answer every valuable purpose. I have no doubt that your sacred profession will prove a source of comfort, satisfaction, and honour to yourself, and of utility to those whom you are to superintend and instruct. I have one more wish, and

a most material one for you, which I hope I may shortly hear, that you are *not single* :

‘ Sed lepidâ faveat conjuge castus Hymen.’

“ I shall entertain no doubts on this subject. If I had the pleasure of being acquainted with your relations, I should desire to be remembered to them.

“ Believe me always

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ T. J. MATHIAS.”

“ TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

“ *Middle Scotland Yard, Whitehall, Nov. 9, 1811.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ YOU are very obliging in your remembrance of me. I received the woodcocks and the golden plovers in good condition, and excellent birds they were. When I take my gun I fear shall not be able to offer you such admirable game; but I shall be happy if I could be of the least service to you in this part of the world in any other way.

“ I am glad you think of London in your way to Norwich, as I believe you cannot do better than by accepting the offer of the Bishop of Norwich and completing your ordination as priest. * * * *
* * I have nothing to reply to your explanation relating to Bishop Taylor; if your endeavours to adapt and compress them have been so successful in your congregation, *punctum omne tulisti*. The only danger, in point of composition, of being *too* conversant in writers of that age, arises from the quaintness of their style, and the peculiarities of

their metaphor, sometimes carried to a greater extent than could be wished. The vigour of their thoughts, and the strains of their eloquence are seldom attained by the moderns. I believe there was more real piety among them than among the generality of the moderns. It is very meritorious in you to have laboured with so much success, and to have newly made up the *ancient wardrobe*, as you term it.

“ I shall be very happy to see you when you come to London, and I have no doubt that you will pass a useful, and, consequently, a happy life. It was well said, ‘ nisi utile est quod facimus, stulta est gloria.’ With my best respects to your family, and the most sincere wishes for your constant and unceasing welfare, believe me

“ Yours always,

“ Most sincerely,

“ T. J. MATHIAS.”

The following letter from Mr. Mathias contains so feeling an allusion to a great private, as well as public calamity of the time, that there needs no apology for giving it here a place.

“ TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

“ *Middle Scotland Yard, Whitehall, May 25, 1812.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ I AM very much obliged to you for your kind attention to me, and I beg to make my best acknowledgments for the two letters which I received at different times from you. It gives me a particular pleasure to know that you feel such sincere

satisfaction in the change of your profession, and I am convinced that our good bishop was happy to admit so able and zealous a minister into the Church of England. I believe that if you do not force yourself into exertions rather beyond your strength, you will accomplish all the important objects which you have in view, and fulfil the great purpose of your life, the highest which any man can propose to himself, and, as I believe, the most satisfactory beyond all comparison.

“ I am sure that you have felt, in common with every good and reflecting man, the late great national and private loss, which has flung affliction, dismay, and consternation throughout the country, from the atrocious act which we abhor and deplore in the assassination of the most excellent, virtuous, and able man we had amongst us, and from whom, through Providence, we all looked for the preservation of the kingdom, and the direction of the public affairs to a happy issue. The loss of this great man is irreparable in the truest sense; and to those who knew him, as I have done nearly all his life, it is a loss which no words can describe. The noblest testimony to his merits, services, and virtues cannot be made too high; nor can the family of the truly great Spencer Perceval ever be esteemed, or dignified, or provided for in too ample and conspicuous a manner. It is a subject on which it is difficult to speak as we must feel. We know not yet the extent and full importance of his loss, nor can we ever express our abhorrence and dismay at ‘the deep damnation of his taking off,’ in words and terms too strong.

“ I have at last finished and printed the poem to which you alluded in your letter; and I have endea-

voured to introduce the *Lycidas* of Milton on the banks of the Arno, and hope he will be received as I wish. I trust you will accept the little volume which I send as a mark of my esteem and regard for you, and of my knowledge of your predilection for the British and the Tuscan muses. You must not relinquish your classical recreations in the intervals of your serious engagements. Above all, attend to your health, which is beyond any price, and by sparing yourself you will prolong your power of doing good.

“ I still flatter myself that I shall be able, in the course of the summer, to avail myself of your kind wish to see me in Devonshire; and when I can name the time, I will give you a line to know if it will be convenient to you. I beg my best compliments to all your family, and hope that I shall hear that you are quite recovered from your indisposition.

“ Believe me, my dear Sir,

“ Ever yours most truly,

“ T. J. MATHIAS.”

The next letter, here inserted, contains a Latin inscription by Mr. Mathias. It was written in consequence of the circumstance I am about to state. In the years 1812 and 1813 Mr. Bray had been in so deplorable a state of debility, that he was for some months unable to do any duty in his church. To a friend (afterwards his curate for many years), the late worthy and Rev. Richard Vyvyan Willesford, who did duty for him, Mr. Bray felt desirous of presenting a silver cup in token of gratitude.

The cup was made by Rundle and Bridge. Entertaining a high opinion of Mr. Mathias's critical judgment in Latin composition, Mr. Bray consulted him respecting the inscription for it, when the following letter was sent in reply to this application to his classical friend.

“TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

“ *Middle Scotland Yard, Whitehall, April 12, 1813.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ YOU are very kind to me, and I am most sensible of it, particularly so as I regret sincerely that I had mislaid your former letter, which I had intended to answer long since. Your goodness and attention however have relieved me, and I no longer delay acknowledging both your favours. It gives me great uneasiness to hear that you have been so indifferent, but I hope that you will henceforth remember that it is as great and essential a part of your duty to take care of your own health and spirits as to perform what is incumbent on you professionally. Too much zeal must not be suffered to destroy your constitution. Your life is most valuable, and the benefit of your labours should be extended and not abridged, which must be the case if you will not as religiously attend to your own welfare as to that of others. I am very glad that you have taken your assistant, and no real friend of yours will consider it as prudent, if you do not measure your exertions by your strength and natural capability to perform them. If they are too great, or if ever any part of them is too fatiguing, you should, for the time requisite *abstain wholly*

from the exercise of your function, however painful to yourself, as I am convinced that it would be. But it must be done, if you would live, and regain an *establishment* of health. ‘Unum corpus unamque vitam’ (the expression is from Tacitus) is all we have *here*, and they must be managed with discretion while Providence continues them to us. We must not shake the glass before the hour is run.

“I will flatter myself that I may be able, in the course of the year, to pay you a visit, and make a *pilgrimage* together to the *Saint of the Mount*, to whom I owe it*. But still, various circumstances do not permit me to be sanguine. If, however, I shall be able, I will let you know in time, if it should be convenient to you to increase my pleasure and satisfaction by your company.

“As to the cup which you destine for your friend in gratitude, if the following words should meet your own ideas, I would propose it, but entirely submit it to your judgment:—

‘Ob Salutem Propriam
Amicitiae Officiis
Recuperatam
Salutem Invicem
Sed Integram Sed Continuum
[here the name of your friend]
Gratissimo Animo Propinat
E. A. BRAY.’

“You must correct any fault you may discover in it with your usual candour. There should be no punctuation at all in the inscription, and every word should begin with a capital letter. With my sincerest wishes for the perfect re-establishment of

* St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall.

your health, to enable you to fulfil your ministry, and every other duty, with that satisfaction, and comfort, and honour, which you merit, believe me

“Yours always faithfully,

“T. J. MATHIAS.”

“TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

“*Middle Scotland Yard, Whitehall, Oct. 21, 1815.*

“MY DEAR SIR,

YOU are very kind in your remembrance of me, and I return you many thanks for your letter which I received a few days ago. I wish you could have given me a more perfect account of your health, as I am rather afraid, from what you hint, that your strength is not so firmly established, as I sincerely wish it were. I hope you do not exert yourself too much, as I am convinced that your zeal will always be equal to your ability, and that nothing would induce you to relax your sacred labours but the unavoidable interruptions of health and usual bodily complaints. You know it is sometimes advisable to draw back a little to *make advances* with greater alacrity. St. Paul is full of military allusions, and I wish that you would keep some of them in mind in your *personal* exertions in the great cause, that you may be enabled to proceed with caution and with consequent vigour in your course. I should conceive that you will perform an acceptable service by offering to the public what you intend; and I have no doubt that you have been careful to preserve those able expressions, and that ancient dignity of the style for which Bishop Taylor and some of our elder divines are so conspicuous. Prolixity was their chief defect, and perhaps repetition of the same ideas in *continuity* may be among their errors; but they are a glorious

company of primitive apostles, and an honour to the Church of England. Indeed you have great merit; and you will feel that testimony *within*, of which it may be said, ‘*Pluris est quam omnium Sermo.*’

“It is not my lot ever to be engaged in anything that is very important, but I am not at all times absolutely indolent. Last year I published a complete edition of Mr. Gray’s works in two large volumes in quarto; the second of which was entirely new, and from his original MSS., which I selected and arranged. Indeed it was the labour of some years. I lately, by the particular wish of some friends, published separately my observations on the character and writings of Mr. Gray, as they stood continued in the postscript to the whole work, and in some other parts of the publication. As it is but a small volume, I am inclined to hope that you will gratify me by accepting it, as a sincere mark of my esteem and regard for you.

“Believe me ever most sincerely yours,

“THOS. J. MATHIAS.

“P. S. It would make me very happy if I could hope that there were a probability of my seeing you a prebendary or canon of one of our principal cathedrals, as no one would deserve the dignity and distinction more than yourself. Remember the care of your health,—how important it is! Do less in order to do more, is not advice necessary to many people, but it is to you.”

“TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

“*Reading, Nov. 13th, 1815.*

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I HAVE received your letter with great pleasure, and particularly so as you speak favour-

ably of your health, and that you are convinced of the necessity of sparing yourself, and of taking that care of yourself which may have a tendency to strengthen your constitution. Too much fatigue of application is generally fatal in its consequences, and rather retards what it is so desirable to promote. I am glad the little volume I sent you came safe, as I know you are an admirer of the great poet, and I wished that you should have the delineation of his extensive and diversified erudition added to the exertions of his genius.

“ You are very good in offering me the sight of your alterations or adaptations of the sermons of some of our elder divines, but I really am not a sufficient judge of the propriety of such an undertaking, and would by no means take upon me such a decision, and therefore must leave it to your judgment. I said in my last letter what I thought, and that it was something hazardous to *amend* that nervous and antique eloquence which distinguishes Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, and their fellows; but to *abridge* their discourses, by omissions, where they are prolix and diffuse, might be done to advantage. I believe it is a most useful and improving exercise for you or any man of talents and ingenuity for their own private use or advantage, and occasionally to preach some of them contracted in *this* manner; but to publish them requires a pause or a consideration. Some expressions of Cicero may be applied to these great writers. Of either of them it may be said: ‘*Quis gravior in laudendo? in vituperando acerbior? in sententiis argutior? in docendo edisserendoque subtilior? quem florem aut quod lumen eloquentiæ non habet? Antiquior interdum est sermo, et quædam forsitan horridiora verba; ita enim tunc loquebantur.*’

“Single *words* here and there may be altered with effect, and perhaps very long sentences might (with great judgment and counsel of the *ear*, the aurium fastidium) be broken into more than one, and the effect not only preserved but heightened. It is the same with the *language* and style of the translation of the Bible, as it stands at present. I never yet saw any new version or alteration of it which (though it might more fully explain the meaning of the original in some few instances) did not detract from the majesty and the simplicity of our great translation, which is, and will be, with the the standard of the English in its original strength, energy, and dignity. But on this point there are diversities of opinion; but I never could change my own on this subject. What *you have* done has been of infinite use to yourself and to your hearers; but I am merely speaking in a critical point of view, and as to the general effect, when such writings are submitted to the public eye, and not as discourses delivered from the pulpit. But pray collect the judgment of your friends; I only have said my own private thoughts, with the sincerest approbation of your honourable and useful diligence, which cannot fail of its best reward.

“I shall always be happy to hear of your welfare, and cannot but cherish an expectation, as well as a hope, that you may soon obtain that promotion in your profession, to which your labours and the piety of your exertions justly entitle you.

“Believe me always, my dear Sir,

“Yours most faithfully,

“T. J. MATHIAS.

“P. S. I shall return to town in a few days.”

I find, with the above letter, the rough copy of an answer to it so connected with the subject, that I am sure you will agree with me that it ought not to be omitted:—

“ TO T. J. MATHIAS, Esq.

“ *Tavistock, Dec. 7th, 1815.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ I DELAYED writing in hopes of having an opportunity of saving you the expense, if not the trouble, of a letter. But, being disappointed, I can no longer refrain from thanking you for your friendly attention to my last. No one can feel greater admiration for the language of our Bible translation than myself. I am so sensible of its euphony that, in reading it, I try to give effect to every letter, not altering even a *doeth* into *doth*. My estimation of the book of Common Prayer is little less. And next to these every true churchman must venerate the Homilies. Now the Bishop of Lincoln, in his ‘Elements of Christian Theology,’ vol. ii. p. 537, recommends the select Homilies ‘rendered in a modern style,’ which have been published by Sir A. Gordon. Surely there is more presumption in this than in altering the language of any of our old divines. But as I have always considered you as an instrument in the hands of Providence that placed me in my present situation, so I still am willing to believe that I am to learn, through you, that my plan had better be laid aside, or at any rate for the present be postponed; and surely, whoever publishes *sermons* should be actuated, not by his own wishes, but the will of God.

“ I thank you for your kind opinion, that I am not undeserving cathedral preferment, but the interest of

the Duke of Bedford lies not in that direction ; and, indeed, when I consider his numerous family, I have reason to think that I have already experienced the extent of his Grace's patronage. I am convinced, also, that I have already more than I deserve ; but if anything would excite my ambition for such a situation, it would be that I should then have greater opportunities than I now enjoy of following your recommendation in applying for advice to my friends (by such I understand clerical brethren), who are generally pretty numerous, as indeed they ought to be, in the neighbourhood of a bishop's palace. But even this I shall be well content to forego, if you will permit me occasionally to consult yourself.

“ I remain, my dear Sir, &c. &c.

“ E. A. BRAY.”

LETTER XLII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

CONTENTS :—Some omitted notices, wherefore here added—Roborough Down—Anecdote of a sailor's good fortune—Story of one who was more cautious than wise—Kilworthy—Tiddebrook—Horrabridge—Huckworthy—Walkhampton—Morwel House ; all picturesque places—Hill Bridge—Kelly—Ancient stained glass—Saxon coffin—Ramsdown Common—Kairns—Sortridge—Judge Glanville and his lady—Their portraits discovered—An old chest—Holwell—Picturesque scenery—Conclusion.

Vicarage, Tavistock, Oct. 23d, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,

IN the multiplicity of papers, journals, &c., written by Mr. Bray, that I have had to consult in the progress of these letters, interrupted as were my pursuits by ill health and many pressing avocations, it is not wonderful that some things should have escaped me that ought to have been noticed in former communications. As my letters to you are now nearly printed, it is too late entirely to remedy these omissions. But a few brief extracts from Mr. Bray's journals, concerning places of interest in our more immediate vicinity, must not be left out. Here, then, I give them, relying on your kind consideration to excuse what has been an error of oversight, not of intention.

In the road from Tavistock to Plymouth the traveller passes over a high tract of land, commanding some most delightful views, called Roborough

Down, where is situated that remarkable insulated rock, of superstitious import, which I chose as the scene of an adventure in my tale before alluded to. Concerning this spot, Mr. Bray has recorded in one of his old journals some amusing particulars. "This rock being of a large size, and insulated in the midst of an extensive down, is in itself remarkable; but more so from the following circumstance that is said to have happened there not many years ago. A sailor going from Tavistock to join his ship at Plymouth, sat down to rest himself in one of the hollows of the rock, and insensibly fell asleep. On waking he continued his journey, but found he had left his purse behind him. He had not time, however, to return for it; and after having made a voyage to the East Indies, on again passing the spot, three years after, he had the curiosity to look for his purse; which to his surprise, as well as joy, he was so fortunate as to recover.

"Another singular circumstance is said to have happened on this down. A blacksmith of Tavistock, on taking home a jack that he had repaired, was benighted. Finding that his burden retarded his progress, and recollecting he had heard that if you set a watch over a thing it is perfectly safe, he was so ignorant as to give a wrong interpretation to it; and taking out his own watch, actually left it with the jack by the roadside. Early on the following morning, probably before any one had passed, he returned to the spot, and found that neither of them had been carried off, attributing it, no doubt, to the efficacy of the preventive."

Respecting Kilworthy, before slightly noticed, Mr. Bray makes the following observations in his

journal:—"It is about a mile and a half from Tavistock. Though somewhat modernized, it still retains features of the ancient structure. And there, too, may yet be found some vestiges of the old style of gardening, when uniformity was the sole object of attention, and when the straight, formal terrace was preferred to the more natural diversity of an undulating surface. A few walnut and beech trees, of great apparent antiquity, are seen about the house; and the rarity, if not total absence of the former in the neighbourhood renders them still more remarkable. There are also other trees, principally firs, which, from being so thick together, seem to have been planted more for shelter than effect. And though from its elevated situation it is certainly exposed, the hand of taste, by judiciously thinning them, might let in some of the distant scenery, particularly the bold rocky tors of Dartmoor, without much sacrifice of comfort. At the bottom of a descent from the house is some pleasing sylvan scenery, which requires no art to make additions to its beauties. The Walla Brook, immortalized by Browne, is here surmounted with a little foot bridge, and as the key-stone represents a laureated head, one might be allowed, perhaps, to fancy it was in honour of this too-much neglected bard, whose sweetness of numbers was truly remarkable in an age when harshness and discordancy seem to have been studiously affected. The episode of the 'Loves of the Walla and the Tavy' is the most pleasing of all his compositions; though it may be objected, perhaps, that it is too Ovidian.

"I may here also notice Tiddebrook, situated about a mile and a half from our town, on the old

Plymouth road. It is a curious ancient building, having its porch carried up in the form of a tower, embattled at the top. The rest of the structure has the appearance of little better than a farm house. It probably belonged to the abbey; but I have not been able to collect any information respecting it.

“About a mile farther is the village of Horrabridge, above mentioned, which receives its name from a bridge of three pointed arches of irregular size; it is picturesque when viewed from the road, where some fine old trees throw their feathery branches across the stream.

“The scenery at Huckworthy also well repays the trouble, not to say danger, of the descent that leads to it. A bridge of two arches crosses a rapid stream; but I was vexed to find that a great deal of the ivy that used to hang in festoons from the top of these arches had been stripped off. Above the bridge is a mill, the water from which, white with foam, falls into a pool, from its depth, of the blackest colour. Below it is the machinery of a mine, which crosses the river; and the wheel, in perpetual motion, is one of large diameter. The hill I had just descended, with some cottages interspersed amid wood, presented a striking object, and the varied outline of Dartmoor tors formed a pleasing horizon to complete the picture.

“Resolving to explore the river at another opportunity, I proceeded to the village of Walkhampton, and finding there nothing worthy attention, determined to pay a visit to the church. This is situated at some distance from the village, on an elevated spot; and being surrounded with fields

inclosed with stone hedges, I had great difficulty to find my way to it. The pinnacles of the tower are remarkably elegant, having a kind of corona or battlement, out of which they spring in a taper form, enriched with well-defined ornaments, and surmounted with a cross of the same material. The view from the churchyard is strikingly grand, commanding a great extent of country, of which the bold tors of Dartmoor form no inconsiderable part.

“Morwel House, in this neighbourhood, deserves some mention, as it was formerly the hunting-seat of the Abbot of Tavistock: it is a quadrangular building, in the Gothic style; the gateway very similar to those of the abbey: it has a groined ceiling of freestone, which appears to have been plastered over and washed with yellow.”

Of that most delightful scene, *Hill Bridge*, I find the following notice in Mr. Bray's Journal:—

“About a mile from Peter Tavy is Cudlipp Town. The road runs along the ridge of the steep that hangs over the Tavy, on the opposite banks of which, well covered with foliage, is a striking view of some bold rocks, projecting from a shelving wood. They are called Brimhill Tors. Cudlipp Town is a small scattered village, through which passes the road that leads to *Hill Bridge*, about a mile distant. The tors beyond it form the finest outline (being varied in point of size and distance, and rough with rocks on their summits) of any series of heights in Devonshire.

“*Hill Bridge* is well worthy attention from its singularity, being composed of four perfectly flat arches, if I may be allowed the expression, formed of long flat stones placed side by side, with their

ends resting on the piers. The parapet is but ten or twelve inches high, made merely by similar stones lying along upon the others. It is one of the simplest bridges I almost ever saw, and quite in harmony with the surrounding scene. Below it the water is dammed back by a weir, for the purpose of carrying a leet to Wheel Friendship Mine. At some distance higher up the stream, another leet is taken up for another mine adjoining."

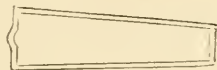
Notes on excursions in the neighbourhood of Tavistock:—

“ KELLY.

“ On the 3d of July, 1833, having lately visited it as Dean Rural. I took Mrs. Bray to see the painted glass in the church at Kelly: which, though much mutilated, is by far the best, and most in quantity of any in this vicinity. On mentioning it to Mr. Johnes, of Bradstone, he told me that some of my old friends, now no more, of the Kelly family, used to amuse themselves, when boys, with what they called shying at the heads of the Apostles. And certainly one of the windows gives proofs of it; for there are two, if not three figures, on which instead of heads, a modern glazier has inserted as many round pieces of plain glass: so that these young iconoclasts seem to have shown some skill in the decollation of these martyrs. And here, too, the glazier showed more skill, or at least more taste, than in other parts of these windows, where, probably, as the pieces best suited in point of size, he has not hesitated to join part of the limbs of one figure with that of another, arms and legs promiscuously sprouting from different parts of the body,

the former often resting on the ground, and the latter in the air. Some of the borders, consisting of flowers and foliage, are of the most tasteful patterns and delicate execution. Were the moss on the outside carefully removed, the colours would be the most brilliant within.

“Workmen were employed in taking down the south porch, in order to build a vestry. In removing the pavement, they found immediately under it a stone coffin, probably Saxon. It is rather remarkable that, on visiting it a few days before, as Dean Rural, I said to one of the workmen, who informed me that the porch was to be taken down, that the arch had somewhat the appearance of being Saxon, though certainly of a very rude description, and that possibly it might be as well to preserve the stones, and use them in the same form, for the entrance of the vestry. Over the inner arch was a small corbel or bracket, which the workmen told me Mr. Johnes, who had lately been there, seemed to think might have supported the figure of the person buried beneath, and that he might have been the founder of the church. However this may be, the coffin is certainly of great antiquity, having a recess for the head, and is of the following form:—



“It is of freestone, five feet eleven inches in length, seventeen inches across the shoulders, sixteen in the breast, and nine at the feet.

“On our return, we observed some heaps of stones and of earth in a field near the road, and, getting out of the carriage, went to examine them,

in order to decide whether they were only such, or cairns and barrows. Which of these they are I am still, however, unable to determine; but I am most inclined to believe that they are monuments of antiquity, and not burrows for rabbits, or heaps of stones accumulated from clearing the ground; for the field has been not many years since inclosed from Ram's Down Common; and stones instead of being there collected together since the inclosure, have probably been removed thence to make the adjoining road. Indeed many of the rocks are of too great dimensions to have thus been removed for the purposes of agriculture. The cairns or heaps of stones are two in number. Of the barrows there are eleven; one twenty-three paces in circumference. As far as I then had the opportunity of examining, they were principally, if not entirely composed of earth. It is not improbable, therefore, that a battle was fought on this common, and that these are the memorials of it: the cairns might have been for the chieftains, and the barrows for their followers who fell in the battle.

“SORTRIDGE.

“On the first of August, 1833, we went to Sortridge, having understood that the picture of Judge Glanville was there which formerly belonged to my father. The information was not correct; but we found there not only a picture of the judge, but also of his lady. The former bore on it

‘Ætatis suæ 55.’ The latter, ‘Ætatis suæ 54.’

1598

1598.

1727

1728.’

“Hence we collected that the pictures were originally painted in the former year, and retouched, or rather re-painted in the latter. Indeed, we were

informed that, not many years ago, a mere boy was suffered to show his skill in restoring them; and they certainly bear most decisive proofs of each of these operations. Dame Glanville could never have been handsome; but these disfigurements, by making allowance for them, may possibly make us think that she was handsomer than she was. She appears to have been fond of finery, and this perhaps she thought would be a substitute for beauty. She had many rings on her fingers, and, suspended under her ruff, an immense gold chain.

“In a passage near the entrance porch is a curious old chest, which, owing to its gloomy situation, we could not very minutely examine. We observed that there were many figures in armour, very similar to those that are represented in the triumphs of Maximilian. I am in doubt whether they are painted, or rather drawn, in outline, or burnt in. Though the surface is flat, they almost appear to be in relief, from the circumstance that the background, or rather sky, is cut away and reticulated. I at last distinguished a youth swinging a sword over his head; and, observing a king seated near, conjectured that it might be David essaying his armour. Of this I was afterwards convinced, when we found him, in a second compartment, with his sling in his hand; and in a third, with the head of Goliath.

“In one of my former excursions, I crossed Whitchurch Down, leaving Holwell at my left hand, and, passing near a couple of cottages, which I was informed by a friend were called East and West St. Martin’s, and probably belonged to the Abbey, proceeded towards Huckworthy bridge. My object was now to explore the upper part of the river; and I

accordingly, after passing the bridge, turned up the lane leading to the left, towards the moor. The scenery here is so strikingly wild and picturesque that I do not recollect having seen any more so in South Wales, which I visited about seven or eight years ago. The view is up a valley of considerable extent, through which flows in a rapid and winding course the river Walkham. The hills on each side are bold and steep, possessing every variety of rock and wood; with here and there tracts of cultivation, the hedges being so irregular as to add a pleasing intricacy to the scene. This is interspersed occasionally with patches of furze in blossom; and enlivened with the ascending smoke of a few scattered cottages in the most romantic situations.

“I had never seen the tors of Dartmoor to such advantage; as I had been mostly accustomed to behold them without any other foreground than the barren moor itself; where the eye, in going from one tor to another, must pass over the same unvaried blank, unrelieved even by a change of colour. But here, beyond the summit of a hill clothed with the finest wood, peered the still loftier heights of the rocky tors fading into aërial blue. At every step they seemed to lose themselves, or to burst abruptly to the sight where they were least expected. Indeed they appeared occasionally to change their situations, and sometimes to be nearer, at others at a greater distance, as the intervening objects were more or less numerous, or nearer or less diversified.

“There is this advantage, also, that as the valley may be said almost to run up between them, they nearly surround it, and are, therefore, more grouped together, or thrown more into perspective. Vixen

Tor, which I had always admired, even in its insulated situation, being a vast mass of rock standing on a narrow base, here shows itself with still more imposing grandeur, as it forms the principal object, where all around are striking. The flitting lights added considerably to the effect; a gleam of sunshine sometimes illuminating a rock or a cottage, that otherwise might have escaped attention.

“For about a mile and a half my eye was fixed upon this fascinating scene, though, from the intervening hedge, it seemed as if I was looking through a moving trellis. For a considerable distance the hedge is covered below with hollies, and above with the thick branches of ash and other trees; so that I am convinced a great deal of the scenery must be lost to the traveller in the summer; but then, in recompense, what he does see must be doubly gratifying, not only from its being clothed in superior beauty, but even from the abruptness with which it must occasionally burst upon him.

“There is one spot, near a deep ravine worn with the floods, which now, however, was perfectly dry, where the valley must always be seen to the greatest perfection, as there is nothing to obstruct the view, and yet enough may be found to form a foreground. Some neighbouring cottages also gave it additional animation. A little cluster of these, which I understood was called Furzeton, were most of them of a singularly grotesque form; raised amid large rocks, some of which not only served as foundations, but actually jutted out of the walls of which they formed a part. I was surprised to find so much wood immediately in the neighbourhood of the moor. One of these cottages had a kind of irregular avenue,

near which ran a little rocky stream, overhung with trees of the most fantastic shapes. One in particular drew my attention, that had apparently fallen across it, and whose lateral branches had formed themselves into young trees."

So conclude the extracts from Mr. Bray's journals, which it appeared to me desirable should be here added, in order to render complete former cursory notices of many places in our vicinity. Sincerely hoping that it may not be long ere I shall have the gratification of accompanying you to them, allow me to remain,

My dear Sir,

Ever most respectfully and faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

I N D E X.

THE VOLUMES ARE INDICATED BY ROMAN NUMERALS--THE
PAGES BY ARABIC FIGURES.

A.

- THE ABBEY of Tavistock, the glory of the town, i. 15. Imposing character of abbeys and monasteries, ii. 76; evil consequences of the dissolution of abbeys, 101; sites of particular offices in the ruins of abbeys, 115, *note*; romantic sites of abbeys, 144.
- Abbot of Tavistock, by what title called to the House of Lords, i. 250.
- Succession of the abbots of Tavistock down to the suppression, iii. 291.
- Aboriginal inhabitants of the West, vestiges of, i. 15.
- Absalom's memorial, ii. 152, *note*.
- Adam, its signification in Hebrew, i. 306, *note*.
- Adams, Mr., prognostication of the effects of the French revolution, iii. 213.
- Adams, Miss Mary, the great legendary depository, i. 263, *note*. Conduct of Saunders, ii. 109; her character and death, 316, *note*.
- Adders, mode of charming them, i. 95; the adder of what a symbol, 97.
- Adoration, universality of the sun as an object of, i. 56.
- Adventure, romantic, i. 296.
- Æschylus, beautiful allegory of, ii. 12.
- Affliction, tales of, iii. 177.
- Age, a tree's, discovered by its rings, i. 103.
- Aggeration, process of, in forming the tors, i. 228 and *note*.
- Ahab, grove made by, i. 91.
- Aikin, Dr., distich on, i. 88.
- Air Tor, i. 277.
- Akenside, allusion to his hymn to the Naiads, i. 89.
- Alfred the Great, reasons for considering an inscribed stone commemorative of, i. 377, *et seq.*; his translation of Boethius when printed, 350, *note*. Wisdom of, in his municipal polity, ii. 16.
- Alfred, son of Ethelred, commiseration for, at his death, ii. 89.
- Alfricus, his charge against Livingus, ii. 89; his artful conduct, 90.
- Algarus, account of, ii. 60, 63.
- Almer, first abbot of Tavistock, ii. 58.
- Almighty, under what name worshipped by the ancient Britons, i. 56.
- Alphabet, Greek, letters of, those used by the Druids, i. 49.
- Alpine bridge, miniature, described, iii. 264.
- Altars, Druidical, i. 25.

- Amber beads, worn as a wreath on the brows of Hengist, i. 143.
 Ambrosius, Merlin's original name, i. 80, *note*.
 Amesbury, or Ambresbury, its origin, i. 80, *note*.
 Amulets, glass, of Scotland, i. 97.
 Anacharsis. reply of, i. 254.
 Anecdote of Charles II., i. 4.
 Aneurin's description of the ceremonial procession sacred to the British Bacchus, i. 141.
 Angelic hierarchy, grades of, ii. 118.
 Anglo-Saxon monasteries, holiness and superstition of, ii. 97.
 Animals of Dartmoor, account of, i. 338.
 Antiquarians, credulity of, i. 377.
 Antiquities of Dartmoor, devastations of; i. 52, 53; British, of Wistman's Wood, 104, 105.
 Antiquity, reflections on a due reverence for, ii. 74; pleasures resulting from a contemplation of, 75.
 Antonio, curious story of the christening of a child by this name, iii. 161.
 Apple-tree, ceremony of saluting, i. 335.
 Arcedekne, Le, a benefactor of Tavistock Abbey, ii. 87; Odo, grant of Westly-down, 93.
 Arch, ruined, described, ii. 52.
 Arch-Druid, awe inspired by his presence, i. 227.
 Architecture, to what species granite best suited, i. 283.
 Arkite mysteries, traces of, i. 97; notices of the ceremonies, 145, *note*; mythological ark of Noah, 148.
 Arras and hangings discriminated, iii. 82.
 Arscof, Mr., i. 322.
 Arthur, mythological, i. 148. His character and mythological renown, ii. 84.
 Arthur's stone on Cevyn Bryn, i. 126; design of the stone, 145, *note*.
 Arthur's seat, i. 276; King Arthur's Oven, what, 298.
 Arts, noble employment of, by our forefathers, in the construction of ecclesiastical edifices, ii. 76.
 Ashen twig, pagan notion of its power, i. 95; origin of, 96, 97.
 Ashtaroth, groves dedicated to, i. 101.
 Athenians, judicious selection by, of romantic sites for temples, ii. 144.
 Atkynses, account of, iii. 189.
 Avenue, extensive Druidical, described, i. 164.
 Augury, Druidical, i. 59, 61; universality of the superstition of augury in the earliest ages, 150; probable origin of the confidence in auguries from the feathered tribes, 151.
 ———, probable origin of augury by the entrails of human beings and animals, ii. 12; abolished by the preaching of the gospel, *ib*.
 Augustine friars, their distinguishing habit, ii. 51; remark on their expulsion, 58; the Augustine order a favourite with the family of the Earl of Devon, 62, *note*.

B.

- Baal, or Beï, idolatrous worship of, i. 91; horses given to, 92.
 Bacchus of the Druids, i. 53; solemn procession to, 141.
 Back-see-fore-see, side of Vixen Tor, iii. 278, and *note*.

- Badger of Devon, notice of, i. 343.
- Bair-down, conjectural meaning of, i. 57; the hill of bards, 69; general description of the locality, 70, *et seq.*; inscriptions on the granite, 70. 391; beautiful ravine, 71; remarks on the etymology of Bair-down, rural inscriptions, &c., 72; Wistman's Wood, 73; British monument on Bair-down, 105; ancient sepulchre, 393; Bair-down Man, 394.
- Baking, ancient British, mode of, i. 299, *note*.
- Banham, John, the mitred abbot of Tavistock, ii. 97.
- Bard, derived from *bar*, a fury, i. 75.
- Bardic alphabet, specimen of, i. 78.
- Bards, ancient, of Britain, i. 44, *et seq.*; testimony of Tacitus to their eminence in eloquence and poetry, 47; last refuge of the British bards, 106; existence in places when extinct elsewhere, *ib.*; genius and character of the bards, 107; last vestige of them in the wood of Wistman, 108.
- Baretti, characterized, ii. 270; story of the old woman, 272. Character of Butcher, the 'bashaw' of Tavistock, iii. 137.
- Barrier, stones anciently used for, in the celebration of public games, i. 366.
- Barrows, on Stennen hill, i. 121; purposes and contents of barrows, 149; on Mis-tor, 247; description of a large circular one, 298; discovery of ancient barrows at Kelly, 335, 336.
- Basaltic phenomena between Cana and Turan, i. 115, 116, *note*.
- Basin, rock, on Dartmoor, i. 53; on the summit of Vixen-tor, 62; on Longford-tor, 120; account of the discovery of two on Vixen-tor, 217; account of others, and purposes to which applied by the Druids, 386, *et seq.*
- Bat, horned, story of, i. 323.
- Beacon, ancient, notice of, i. 251.
- Beauty, female, of the peasantry of Cornwall and Devon, iii. 107.
- Bedford Arms, notice of, iii. 153.
- Bedford, Duke of, extirpation of the deer by his stag-hounds, i. 340, *note*. Lands of the Abbey of Tavistock granted to his ancestors at the dissolution, ii. 97; notice of the grant, and of the Bedford family, 108; donation by the Duke of Bedford of a peel of bells and an organ, 127, and *note*. Donation to Mary Colling, iii. 133; yearly sum for which the parish estates of Tavistock were vested in the Duke of Bedford in 1761, 137, *note*; amount of pension or free gift, and handsome house for the vicar built by the present duke, 141, *note*; patron of the public library, 146; William, the first Duke of Bedford, built a house for the schoolmaster, 166; Duke of Bedford's road described, 279, 280.
- Beer-shop, recent nuisance of, i. 279.
- Beer-stone, fragment of, i. 382.
- Beetor, South, i. 258.
- Bel, the god of the sun, i. 92; immolation of human victims to, 111; high festival of the god on the first of May, 325.
- Bel-tor, of Dartmoor, i. 57; description of, 258; derivation of its name, *ib. note*.
- Bell, passing, ancient belief respecting, ii. 127.
- Beloe, Mr., his manuscript copy of complimentary poems addressed to William Browne, iii. 14.

- Benedict, account of, ii. 69; legendary tales of, 70, 71.
- Benedictines, always clad in black, ii. 51; remark on their incredible increase, 61; tribute to their learning, 65; remarks on the order, 69; story of a poor Benedictine at St. Omer's, 73; account of their attire and benevolence, 97, 99.
- Betsey Grimbal's tower, described, ii. 111; picturesque ruins of, 143; its situation, 151; story of Betsey Grimbal, 319.
- Beautiful and wild, durability of impressions from the, iii. 271.
- Bible, the preservation and revival of learning indebted to, ii. 68. Euphony of its language, iii. 327.
- Bible and the Key, custom of discovering a suspected thief by, ii. 294.
- Birds of Dartmoor, notice of, i. 59, 66; birds still considered as omens of good and evil, 150; various birds of Devon enumerated and described, 319; Mr. Johnes's account of the birds of Dartmoor, 345. Concert of birds poetically described, iii. 21.
- Bishoprics, plurality of, in Livingus, ii. 88.
- Bishops of Devonshire, succession of, ii. 14. Motives of the outcry against the bishops in Charles I.'s time, iii. 30.
- Blackbird, moor, described, i. 60.
- Blackbirds, anecdotes of, ii. 145.
- Blount, Martha, her treatment of Pope, iii. 305.
- Blue robes of the lawyers of the ancient Britons, i. 50.
- Boadicea, i. 129.
- Bob, black-headed, notice of, i. 320.
- Boëthius de Consolatione Philosophiæ, notice of the early edition of, ii. 133.
- Bogs on Dartmoor, i. 167.
- Bones, gigantic, discovered, ii. 113.
- Borlase, cited, his opinion of the probable uses of the rock-basins, i. 218; and of the purposes of the tolmen, 243.
- Botanical books, of interest only to botanists, i. 315; botany of Devon, 316, 317.
- Bourgeois, Sir Francis, notes concerning, iii. 307.
- Bowls, Druidical, devastation of, i. 53, 54, 292.
- Braddock Down, battle of, iii. 38.
- Bray, Mr., unexpected adventure of, i. 8; Bair-down enclosed by, 69. —, Rev. Mr., projected history of Tavistock, i. 3; collection of inscriptions from, 79—89; extracts from his journal, Crockern-tor, 114; Longford-tor, 120; Dennabridge Pound, 128; description of the stone-circles, 158; cromlechs, 164; poetical description of a fairy car by Mr. Bray, 179; account of a visit to Vixen-tor, &c., 212, 220, *et seq.*; to Sheeps-tor, 232; description of Elford's cavern, 235; source of the Tavy, 256; letter addressed to his wife concerning the inscribed obelisk, 359, *et seq.*; excursion on Dartmoor to Over-tor, 385.
- notice of his theological labours, ii. 106, *note*; his account of the remains of Tavistock Abbey, 108, *et seq.*; verandah and garden inscriptions, 149, *et seq.*
- biography of Mr. Bray, the authoress's husband, iii. 188, *et seq.*; anecdotes of his childhood, 192, 193; pronounced a poet by a physiognomist, 195; put to school at Moreton Hampstead, 196; his devotion to poetry, 204; his aptitude for learning languages, and pursuits in London, 205; his commission as captain-lieutenant

- in the Royal Devon Miners, 206; meets the king (then Duke of Clarence) at a party, *ib.*, *note*; enters as a student of the Middle Temple, 207; a contributor to the 'Classical Journal,' 217; eminent persons with whom he became acquainted, with their characters, and anecdotes, 208, *et seq*; his *Vers de Société*, 218; poems by Mr. Bray, 219—232; goes the western circuit, and his timidity as a barrister, 234; named the *Castilian*, *ib.*; legal opinion on the case of a will, 235; quits the bar, 236; his friendship with Mr. Mathias, 237; enters the church, and ordained by the Bishop of Norwich, 238; anecdote of the old artillery-man, 239; his love for the arts, *ib.*; his theological duties and works, 240; notice of his 'Lyric Hymns,' with extracts, 241, *et seq.*; remarks on his projected edition of Bishop Taylor's Sermons, 316, 324; letter to Mr. Mathias on the euphony of the Bible, and on the Homilies, &c., 327; additional extracts from h's journal, 329.
- Bray, Mrs., desire to wash her hands in one of the basins, i. 385; rock-basin discovered by, 386. Lines on the wood-dove, ii. 154.
- Brazen-tor, i. 308.
- Breast Laws of the Isle of Man, i. 50.
- Brent-tor, account of, i. 250; signification of Brent, 250, 251; volcanic, 308.
- Bridge, Alpine, in miniature, described, iii. 264, 265.
- Bridges, primitive, i. 153; ancient British Cyclopean bridge, 299.
- Britannia's Pastorals, of Browne, at what age published, iii. 7. See *Browne*.
- Britons, idolatrous worship of, i. 56.
- Broncombe, Bishop of Exeter, donations to the Abbey of Tavistock, ii. 94; notice of his tomb, *ib.*, *note*.
- Brooks, described, ii. 166.
- Browne, William, the poet, author of 'Britannia's Pastorals,' notice of, ii. 6; lines on his birth-place, 7; distich to, 151; his love of nature, and encomium on his native place, 310, 311.
- biographical sketch of, and notice of his works, iii. 3, *et seq.*; his birth-place, and contemporary with Shakspeare and Spenser, 4; reasons for his attachment to pastoral poetry, 5; his removal to Oxford at fifteen or sixteen, 7; age at which he produced the first part of 'Britannia's Pastorals,' *ib.*; becomes tutor to the young Earl of Carnarvon, 8; improvement in his fortunes, 10; his diminutive person, *ib.*; a royalist, *ib.*; enumeration of his various pieces, 11; allusion to Lydford law, 12; merits and defects of Browne, 16—18; specimens of his poetry, 20; his 'Loves of the Walla and the Tavy,' characterized, 331.
- Browne, the traveller, his silence in company, iii. 214.
- Brydges, Sir Egerton, iii. 13.
- Buckland Monachorum, inscribed stone at, i. 361.
- Bull, Bishop, his opinion on the agency of dreams, ii. 47, 48.
- Buller, Judge, removed the Stannators' stone, i. 119; stone at Denabridge, 131; probable reason for referring to him the removal of the Stannators' stone, 133; story of the Judge's removal of it without foundation, 135.
- Bulmer, Sir Francis, enormous silver cup presented by, to the city of London, i. 156.

- Burdett, Sir Francis, iii. 215; remark on Horne Tooke's being put into a passion, 216.
 Burial rites of the ancient Britons, i. 149.
 Butcher, arbitrary proceedings of, iii. 137.
 Butter of the ancient Britons, celebrity of, ii. 3.
 Butterfly, yellow, early appearance of, in Devon, i. 13; its sportive action described, 66; reflections on the butterfly, ii. 139.

C.

- Cacophagi, pun on, i. 254.
 Caduceus of Mercury, supposed origin of, in the British isles, i. 96.
 Caer Sidi, what, i. 148.
 Cæsar, testimony of, to the eminence of the ancient British priesthood, i. 48; letters of the Druids, 49; schools and societies of the Druids, 57, 58; cuts down the sacred oaks, 98.
 Cake, Rev. Mr., his care of little Edward Atkyns, iii. 196.
 Calamy, Benjamin, iii. 67, *note*.; son of the non-conformist, came into the Established Church, 69.
 Canary, talking, account of one, iii. 131.
 Canute, church preferment heaped by, on Livingus, ii. 88.
 Car, fairy, poetical description of, i. 179.
 Carnac, in Britany, similarity of its position to that of Stonehenge, i. 61; its position near the sea-shore, and Druidical temple at, in the form of a serpent, 97, *note*.
 Carnarvon, Earl of, his gallant death, iii. 8; his education and pursuits, 9.
 Carpenter, Rev. Mr., ii. 124.
 Carpenter, Mr. and Mrs., monuments to, in Tavistock church, ii. 130, and *note*.
 Carril, import of, i. 85, *note*.
 Carrington, 'lonely wood of Wistman,' i. 58; his sublime portraiture of Dartmoor, 63; tribute to, *ib.*; citation from, in allusion to the awful visitation at Widdecombe church, 313; encomium on Devonian, ii. 311.
 Carter Foot, story of, iii. 170.
 Carteret, Lord, iii. 84.
 Cascades, account of, ii. 345, 353.
 Cassiterides, what they meant, i. 155, *note*.
 Cat, favourite, anecdote of, ii. 147.
 Catacombs, suggestion for forming, on Dartmoor, i. 288.
 Catholic. See *Roman Catholic*.
 Cato's distichs, practical facility of adequately translating into English ones, i. 77.
 Cattle, enclosures for the protection of, i. 124, 127.
 Cave, a, described, i. 104.
 Cavern, singular, described, i. 235; deficiency of natural caverns on Dartmoor, 288.
 Cedar of Lebanon, elegant appearance of, ii. 143.
 Celtic origin of the British Druids, i. 42, *note*; similarity of construction between Celtic antiquities of Dartmoor and those of Sweden. *ib.*; comparative resemblance of the Celts and Druids in the art of eloquence, 46, 47; and in the custom of transmitting their

- laws by tradition, 50 ; similarity between Celtic and Jewish idolatry, 91 ; universality of Celtic manners, 125, *note*.
- Ceridwen, celebrated cauldron of, what, i. 151.
- Chaining of books, anciently for security, ii. 122, *note*.
- Chair, stone, described and figured, i. 133, 134.
- Chariot-races of our British ancestors, i. 142.
- Charity, English, commended by Espriella, iii. 136 ; remarks on ancient charities, and on the commutations of them, 136, 137 ; general review of the charities of Tavistock, 138, *et seq.*
- nuns of, advantage of the establishment of, on a Protestant foundation, i. 334.
- Charles, Prince, afterwards Charles II., proceedings of, in the West, during the great rebellion, iii. 42, *et seq.* ; tradition of the pottery equestrian figures, 58 ; and of his hiding-place, 59.
- Charles I., eminence of the reformed divines down to his days, ii. 104 ; political and religious state of England at the commencement of his reign, iii. 27 ; its flourishing condition, 28, 29 ; outcry against the Church, 30.
- Charles II., remark on the climate of Tavistock, i. 4.
- Charming adders, i. 95 ; serpents, exercised by the Druids, 96.
- Charms, mystical, for curing diseases, i. 332.
- Cheese wring, granitic, of Cornwall, figure of, i. 284.
- Childe, of Plymstock, his tomb, and story of his horse, ii. 53 ; distich by which he willed his land, 54 ; when he lived, 55.
- Children, fortunes of, regulated by the day of the week on which born, ii. 287.
- Chillingworth's remark on Raleigh, ii. 105.
- Cholera, melancholy instance of two deaths by, iii. 140 ; proof of its contagiousness, 111, 112 ; cholera at Tavistock, 175.
- Christianity in the West, remarks on the progress of, ii. 9 ; benefits of civilization conferred by Christianity, 11 ; barbarous rites extirpated by it, 12 ; general view of its establishment, 13 ; its self-subsiding spirit, and gentle virtues, 35 ; blessings conferred by it, 36.
- Chrysostom, beautiful remark of, on the operations of the Divine Spirit, ii. 138.
- Church, incalculable benefits of it, in the extirpation of paganism, ii. 11 ; remarks on the superstitions of the Romish Church, 37 ; on its poetic and imaginative character, 38 ; excellence and glory of the Reformed Church, 104 ; curious church-registers, 121.
- state of the Church previous to the Great Rebellion, iii. 29 ; object of the outcry against it, 30 ; dangers to a state that has no established church, 32 ; fall and restoration of the church, 32, 33 ; picturesque beauty of old churches, and liberality of the wealthy in the building of them, 92.
- Churchwarden's account, specimens of ancient, ii. 116, *note* ; 122, *note*.
- Churchyard, reflections on visiting, iii. 103.
- Cicero, censure on Homer, for his manner of treating the gods, ii. 37.
- Circle, magical, i. 95 ; Cyclopean stone-circles of the Damnonii, 124, 125 ; account of forty, 159 ; Druidical, described, 257.
- Civilization, its benefits depicted, ii. 10, 11.
- Clack, Rev. Mr., iii. 196.
- Clarence, Duke of, anecdote of Mr. Bray being in company with, iii. 206, *note*.

- Clarendon's sketch of Lord Carnarvon. iii. 9.
- Clarke, Dr., i. 42, *note*; singular basaltic crystallizations described in Clarke's Travels, 115, *note*.
- Cleopatra's Needle, described, ii. 151, 152.
- Clergy of the Reformation, remarks on, ii. 102; their degradation and impoverishment, 103.
- , ancient reverence for the, iii. 92.
- Clergyman's daughter, story of, i. 296.
- Climate of Tavistock, mildness of, i. 6.
- Clouted cream, account of, ii. 2.
- Coach of bones, ii. 299; anecdotes of, 320.
- Cockstor, account of, i. 238; a trap mountain, 308.
- Cole, John, epitaph on, i. 253.
- Collacombe, vast number of panes of glass in, iii. 92, *note*.
- Colling, Mary, notice of, and of her poetry, i. 180; charms of Devonshire, 333. Interesting story by, ii. 249; notices by, of rustic superstitions, 290, *et seq.*; letter to Mrs. Bray, 297. Her amiable character, and efforts at improvement, iii. 130; her continued humility and affection since the publication of her book, 131; account of her talking canary, *ib.*; her praiseworthy conduct after the publication of her work, 132; interest awakened by her work in England and Denmark, 132, 133; proposal by Mrs. Bray to superintend a reprint of her work, *ib.*, *note*.
- 'Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society,' ii. 42.
- Commerce of the ancient Britons, i. 155.
- 'Comus' of Milton, hint of, why not borrowed from Browne's 'Circe,' iii. 17.
- Conjuring time, on Dartmoor, i. 36, 37.
- Connexion between the remains of British antiquity and the early history of the country, i. 52.
- Consumption, pulmonary, rarity of, at Dartmoor, i. 12.
- Convent, remarks on the victims of, ii. 37.
- Convulsions, natural, i. 309.
- Coombe, beautiful valley of, iii. 282.
- Coombe-Martin, silver mine of, i. 156.
- Cornwall, why so called, and considered a part of Wales, i. 74.
- Cotele, legend of, i. 180.
- Cotgrave, Capt., anecdote of a pony, i. 65, *note*.
- Cottage, Devonshire, beautiful picture of, ii. 139.
- Courtenay, a Lord, marries an innkeeper's daughter, iii. 196.
- Courtenay, Sir William, iii. 143.
- Courtenay, Mr., i. 333.
- Courtney's, Lord, Belvidere, i. 258.
- Cowsick, inscriptions for a rock and island in the river, i. 83; bridge over the Cowsick, 136.
- Cramp-eaters. i. 253; cramps, what, 254.
- Craunere Pool, the source of the Tavy, i. 260; account of, 261.
- Crapp, Mr., iii. 119; procures the establishment of the Dispensary at Tavistock, 144.
- Cream, scalded, or clouted, its great celebrity in all ages, ii. 3.
- Creation, contemplation of, ii. 135. The study of, inexhaustible, iii. 6.
- Credulity, remarkable instance of, i. 261. Credulity the vice of former ages, ii. 46.

- Cricket's cry, considered ominous by the peasantry, i. 321.
- Criminals, immolation of, to the British gods, i. 111.
- Crocker, family of, i. 115.
- Crockerntor, the seat of British jurisprudence, i. 105; description of, 113; account of Crockerntor, from Mr. Bray's journal, 114, *et seq.*; Judge's chair, 118; Parliament-rock, 119; its site, and why chosen by the miners as the chief station for holding their Stannary courts, 123.
- Cromlech, extraordinary, i. 126; purposes to which cromlechs were devoted, 143; meaning of the word, 145; fallen cromlech described, 146; described by Mr. Bray, 164; derivation of the word, 165; intention and use of cromlechs, *ib.*
- Cronnan, import of, i. 85.
- Crook, explained, i. 23; the devil's toothpick, 24.
- Cross, ancient British, i. 299; reflections on the cross as an emblem of Christianity, ii. 73, 76.
- Crowndale, the birth-place of Sir F. Drake, i. 14; beautiful valley of, ii. 156; picturesque views in, 165, 166; derivation of the name, 169.
- Crystallization, extraordinary, i. 116, *note*.
- Crystals of Dartmoor, i. 306.
- Cuckoo lambs, i. 65, *note*; cuckoo's note, ominous, and rude rhymes on the cuckoo, 326.
- Cudlipp Town, notice of, iii. 285.
- Cursus, stone-circles found near, i. 125; Cursus, or Via Sacra, described, 139; map of that near Merrivale bridge, 140; notice of other cursus, 141; additional notice of the great cursus on Dartmoor, 147; account of the cursus by Mr. Bray, 64; exploit at, iii. 278.
- Custard. See *Ejection*.
- Cyclopean works of the ancient Britons, i. 124.

D.

- Damnonia, remarks on the introduction of Christianity in, ii. 9.
- Damnonii, their descent, origin, i. 39, and early civilization, 40, 41; upheld the priesthood of Druidism, 55; idolatrous worship of, 56; records of the history, and religious rites of their priests, 63; stone-circles for the protection of their cattle, 124; excellence of their flocks, 127; their tin-traffic with the Phœnicians, *ib.*; nature and extent of their traffic, 155.
- Danes, date of their arrival in England, and ravages committed by them, ii. 81; battle with Egbert, 82; burn the cathedral and palace of Launceston in Cornwall, 85; surprise Tavistock, 86; enter the Tamar, and burn the abbey of Tavistock, 87; Danish monarchs, 90, 92.
- Danes Combe, ii. 82, *note*.
- Dante, distich on, i. 87.
- Dartmoor, why probably the ancient spelling, i. 325.
- Dartmoor heights, their characteristics and effects, i. 5; no person born and bred on Dartmoor known to die of pulmonary consumption, 12; historic notice of Dartmoor, its extent, antiquities, scenery, &c., 16, *et seq.*; its wild animals, 34; Fenwell rights, 35; banditti, *ib.*; mists, 36; extremes in its weather, 37; the Druids, 42, *et seq.*; bards, 44; spoliations of its ancient structure, 52; devastations committed in a drunken frolic, 53, 54. 292; antiquities

- and history of Dartmoor, 55; fitness of the locality for the Druidical rites and ceremonies, 56; secrecy and mystery in the institutions of the Druids, 58; Forest of Dartmoor, 58, 59; vegetation, streams, and feathered races of Dartmoor, 59, 60; rocks, granite, and tors of the moor, 61; sublimity of its scenery, 63; regret at the indifference for Dartmoor, *ib.*; morning on the moor, 64; animals, &c., 65; entomology of the moor, 66; its birds described, 66, 67; reflections, 68; Bair-down, particular description of, 69; inscriptions of. 75, 79, 81; Dartmoor, the last impenetrable retreat of the bards, 106; tribunal of justice, 109; courts of justice described, 112, *et seq.*; Stannary-table, 117; Judge's chair, 118; rock-basin, and tolmén, 120; notices of various tors, 121, *et seq.*; Grimspound, 124; Cursus, or Via Sacra, 125; granitic enclosures, 126; the Damnonii, 127; Dennabridge Pound, 128, 133; Celtic circle, 134; fossil oak, 135; description of the locality and various vestiges of antiquity on the moor, 139, *et seq.*; circles, Cursus, &c. near Merrivale bridge, 140; Druidical processions, 141; chariot-races, 142; fallen cromlech, 143; stone of sacrifice, 147; mythological ark, and helio-arkite ceremonies, 148; barrows, 149; obelisks, 150; sacred wells, 151; rock-basins, 152; rocking or logan stones, and primitive bridges, 153; effects of storms of rain, 154; ancient trackways, 154; silver mines, 155; remnants of ancient customs, 156; circles and cromlechs, 159—165; bogs and mists, 167, 151; pixy freaks, 169; antiquity and origin of fairies, 170, *et seq.*; account and figure of Vixen Tor, 212; boundary of the forest, *ib.*, *note*; account of an excursion to Dartmoor rail-road, 278; sketch from the rail-road, 282, 283; remarks on the gateway of Dartmoor prison, 285; operations on the rail-road, 286, 287; sufficiency of the stone on Dartmoor to build all the cities of Europe, 288; excursion to the Warren in search of the King's Oven, 294; elevation of the southern hills, 304; minerals and ignes fatui, *ib.*; fossils, &c., 306; load-stone, 307; earthquake, 310; legendary story of the storm, 312, *note*; storms, 314; botany and vegetation, 316, 317; birds, 319; insects and fishes, 321; reptiles, 322; bats and vipers, 323, and *note*; vestiges of ancient customs, 324; rites, customs, &c., 325; May-fires, 326; May-day, 327; the hobby, 328; sacred offerings, 329; spirit of the harvest, 330; vestiges of Druidism, 331; sacred plants, 332; herbs, charms, 333; saluting the apple-tree, 335; the last of October, 336; animals of Dartmoor, 337; rudeness of the peasantry, *ib.*; quadrupeds, 338; game, 341; wild animals, 342; mice and bats, 344; birds of Dartmoor, 345; figure of the trachea of the gooseander and the dundiver, 356.
- Dartmoor, notice of the minerals of, by Mr. Pearse, iii. 253; position for seeing the tors to most advantage, 338.
- D'Avanzati's Tacitus, its reputation, i. 78; more concisely translated into English than Italian, *ib.*
- Davies, Rev. Edward, i. 49, *note*.
- Days, ominous, description of, ii. 286, 287.
- Dead, the stone-memorials of, i. 149; practice of erecting memorials for the, ii. 152.
- Dean, Rural, visit to, iii. 334.
- Decoction of sacred herbs, i. 151.

- Deer, red, of Devon, i. 340.
- De Foe, incident adopted by, ii. 187.
- Deities of the ancient Britons, i. 56.
- De Lille, Abbé, anecdotes of, iii. 310.
- Deluge, great, vestiges of, i. 308.
- Dennabridge Pound, i. 124, *et seq.*; general description of, 128, *et seq.*; stone at the Pound described, and opinions respecting it, 132. 133.
- Desenfant, Mr., account of his collection of pictures, iii. 308.
- Devil, legend of his riding into Widdecombe church, i. 312, *note*; stories of the devil, ii. 282, *et seq.*
- Devil's toothpick, i. 24.
- Devon, Earl of, the title, when created, i. 102, *note*.
- loyalty of the gentry of the county during the Great Rebellion, iii. 34.
- Devonians, custom of softening words, i. 121.
- Devonshire, climate of, i. 4; proofs of its great mildness, 12; etymology and origin of the word, 40; fossils, crystals, &c., 305; ecclesiastical history of Devonshire, ii. 10; general character of a Devonshire cottage, 139; present belief of the peasantry of, in witchcraft, 170.
- Dictionary, ancient, chaining of, in the school-house, ii. 122.
- Dinham, Miss, biographical notice of, iii. 114; story of an extraordinary dream, 115; drowning of Edmund Dinham, 116; his restoration to life, and subsequent death, 117.
- D'Israeli, Mr., communication to, respecting the Grenville Letters, iii. 86.
- Dissolution of monasteries, reflections on, ii. 101.
- Distaff, mode of expressing the weaker sex by the term, iii. 5.
- Distich, English, alleged impossibility of condensing any poetical thought into, i. 76; remarks on the above position, 77; specimens of, 83 to 89; various distichs on persons of eminence, ii. 150.
- Divination by the entrails of human beings, abolished by Christianity, ii. 12.
- Divines, great, of the Reformed and Established Church, enumeration of, ii. 105; characteristics of the writings of the old divines, iii. 317; prolixity their chief defect, 323.
- Divining rod, necessity for, in understanding the Bardic alphabet, i. 78; its inutility, iii. 259.
- Dobb, his merits and docility, iii. 273.
- Dobson, Jenny, story of, iii. 181.
- Dobuni, their locality, and derivation of the name, i. 370.
- Doctor, country, sketch of one, iii. 172.
- Doney. Mr., account of, ii. 158.
- Dormer, Robert, Earl of Carnarvon, iii. 8.
- Double Water, romantic spot of, iii. 262.
- Down-house, pixy pit at, i. 182.
- Dowser, futile superstition of, iii. 259.
- Drake, Sir Francis, his birth-place, i. 14. Distich on, ii. 150, and *note*; description of the place, 166, and of the cottage in which he was born, 168; traditions of Drake, 170; shooting the gulf, 171; biography and history of Drake, 178, *et seq.*
- Dramatizing any remarkable incident, former custom of, ii. 317.
- Drawing, advantages of a knowledge of, i. 315.

- Drayton, description by, of fairies and fairy houses, i. 177; his tales characterized, 178.
- Dreams, remarks on the spiritual agency of, ii. 47; dreams monitory, 48.
- , story of an extraordinary dream, iii. 115.
- Dress of the Druids, i. 50; comparative advantages of old and modern fashions, iii. 76.
- Drew, its signification, and derivation, i. 146, *note*.
- Drewsteignton, cromlech near, i. 146.
- Drinking, deep, rendered familiar in England by the Saxons and Danes, ii. 29.
- Druids, celebrity of the, at the time of Cæsar's invasion, i. 41; similarity of origin between the Druids, Celts, and Cyclops, 42, *note*; historic notice of the Druids and the Druidical system, 42, *et seq.*; Druidical learning, 49; schools, 50; superstitions, 51; adaptation of the locality of Dartmoor to the idolatrous rites and worship of the Druids, 56; Druidical groves, 58, 59; augury, 61; causes of the splendid remains of Druidical art on Salisbury plain, 62; sublimity in which the Druid moved in the Dartmoor scenery, 63; division of their order, 75; triad on the metempsychosis, and on Druidical maxims, 82; magic wands of, 96; Druidical groves, 105; courts of judicature, 110; administration of justice, and human sacrifices, 111; processions on Druidical festivals, 141; Druidical initiation, 145; rites and sacrifices, 147; sacred ships, 148; fitness of Dartmoor for Druidical augury, 150; Druidical circles described, 162; mysterious evolutions of the Druids, 163; lustrations, 218; miracles, pretended, with the logan stones, 219; Druidical seat of judgment, and extraordinary power arrogated by the Druids, 227; sacred cemetery, 249; notices of various Druidical ceremonies observed on particular days, 325; vestiges of Druidism, 331, 332; terrific Druidical rites, 336.
- , causes of the retention of Druidism in the West, ii. 9, 10.
- Dun, signifies a hill, i. 74.
- Dundiver, notice of, with a figure of its trachea, i. 357, 356.
- Dunstan, 1st, account of, ii. 60, *et seq.*
- Duties, little, advantages of an attention to, ii. 44.
- Dye, scarlet moss used for, i. 127.
- Dynington, John, notice of, ii. 95.

E.

- Eagle, black, of the forest of Dartmoor, i. 59; its nest never discovered, 60, *note*. High character of the Roman conquests depicted by, ii. 10.
- Earl, court, office, and duties of, ii. 15, *et seq.*
- Early days, permanence of the impressions of, iii. 271.
- Earth, red, brilliant, of Dartmoor, i. 306.
- Earthquake, account of, i. 310.
- Easter eve, custom of sending new gloves on, ii. 285.
- Eastern idolatry, seats of, i. 91; origin of temples of unhewn stone, 110.
- Ecclesiastical edifices, ancient, reflections on, ii. 76.
- Eden, poetical description of, ii. 141.
- Edgar and Elfrida, story of, ii. 18.

- Edgecumbe, Lieut., iii. 150.
 ———, Mount, ii. 86.
 ———, Wm., benefactions of, ii. 95.
 Edward, King, where slain, ii. 27; where buried, and whither transferred, 28, *note*.
 ——— II. banished the Jews, i. 156.
 ——— III., resources derived from the silver mines, i. 155.
 ——— VI., remarks on his early death, ii. 104.
 Edwards, the bookseller, notice of his library, iii. 203.
 Edwy Atheling, notice of, and of his death, ii. 92.
 Egbert, defeats the Danes and the men of Cornwall, ii. 82.
 Egg, serpent's, superstition traced to, i. 96; connexion of the Druidical egg with the Arkite mysteries, 97, *note*.
 Ejection of a minister for eating custard pudding in a slovenly manner, iii. 142.
 Elford, the royalist, account of his cavern, i. 235, and *note*. Further notice of the natural fissure, iii. 102, 108.
 Elfrida, beautiful, where born, ii. 9; story of Elfrida and Ethelwold, 17, *et seq.*; nunneries founded by, as an atonement for her crime, 27, *note*; remarks on Mason's Elfrida, 29, *et seq.*; Elfrida's dislike of Dunstan, 63, *note*.
 Elgin marbles, hogged manes of the horses of, 129.
 Elizabeth, Queen, enlightened policy pursued by, respecting the silver mines of Devon, i. 156; honorary monument to, in Tavistock church, ii. 129; the inscription given, 130.
 Ellwood, Mrs. Colonel, i. 243, *note*.
 Eloquence of the Druids, i. 46; how symbolized, 47.
 Enchantment, fairy, story of, i. 186.
 Enclosures, enormous granite, i. 126, 127.
 Endsleigh cottage, by whom designed and built, iii. 151, 152; description of the cottage and surrounding scenery, 281.
 England, state of, previous to the Great Rebellion, iii. 27, *et seq.*
 Episcopal see, the first in the city of Dorchester, ii. 13.
 Erasmus' Paraphrase, original cost of, ii. 122, *note*.
 Espriella, reflection on the decay of religious feeling in the increase of selfishness, iii. 92; remarks on his ingenuity as a narrator, 136.
 Established Church, eminence of its divines, ii. 105.
 Ethelred's charter, ii. 58.
 Ethelwold, story of, ii. 19; murdered, 23; historic doubts as to the scene of his murder, 25, 26.
 Etrick Shepherd, the devil how discovered, i. 313, *note*.
 Evans, Rev. Mr., beautiful slate in his house, i. 305.
 ——— Mr., estate and plantations of, iii. 268.
 Evelyn's Silva, cited, on the transverse section of the bough of a tree, i. 103; Evelyn the first Englishman who brought gardening into a regular art, ii. 141.
 Eustace, St., paintings in the church of, ii. 118.
 Eyes, magic ointment for the, i. 185.

F.

- Fabrics of unhewn stone of Eastern origin, i. 109.
 Fairies, account of, i. 169, *et seq.*; worshipped by the Druids, 171;

- fairy transformations, 173; fairy stories, 174; car, 179; magic ointment for seeing a fairy, 186.
 Farmer, eccentric, story of, ii. 255.
 Farrindon, remark on, ii. 105; neglect, and future revival of his works, 105, 106.
 Fathers of the Church, learning indebted to, ii. 67.
 Fays of Dartmoor, i. 156.
 Fenwell rights, i. 35.
 Feud, extraordinary, between the Tavistock and Oakhampton people, iii. 169.
 Fice's well, i. 59.
 Filial piety, remarks on, ii. 156.
 Fingal, lines on, i. 85.
 Fire, sacred to the British Ceres, i. 147; fire-begging, notice of, 336.
 Fits, superstitious cure for, ii. 291, and *note*.
 Fitz of Fitzford, tale of, i. 180. Monument and arms of John Fitz, ii. 128; distich to the family of, 151; account of John Fitz and Slanning, 322; oversight in Mrs. Bray's novel, accounted for, 325. Loyalty to Charles of the old house of Fitz-ford, iii. 35; capture of it by Lord Essex, 47, 61.
 Fitz, Sir John, suicide of, iii. 48.
 Fitz-ford, discovery of a subterraneous passage at, ii. 295.
 Fitz's well, account of a visit to, i. 300; biographical notice of the Fitzes, 301, 302.
 Flint, the primitive material for most implements, i. 155.
 Flowers, enchanted, i. 191; wild, enumeration of beautiful, 317, 318. Universal love of, ii. 140.
 Foam, incrustation of, i. 276.
 Fog, remarkable, i. 289, 292.
 Folly Orchard, the name why given, ii. 109.
 Forest, its real signification, i. 102, and *note*; the treeless moor designated by the word, 132.
 Foresta, definition of, i. 58.
 Forests, adaptation of, for purposes of mystery, i. 58.
 Fortescue of Buckland Filleigh, curious blunders on the monument of one of the, ii. 130.
 Fortibus, William de, Earl of Albemarle, i. 102. *note*.
 Fortibus, Isabella, tradition of her planting Wistman's Wood, i. 102; *not* planted by her, *ib.*, *note*.
 Fountains, sacred, i. 151.
 Fox, seen to chase a hare, i. 260. Reward for killing one in 1673, ii. 122, *note*.
 Foxglove, magnificent appearance of, in Devon, i. 316; white, decoction of, used as an emetic, 317.
 Friday, superstitions respecting, ii. 287.
 Froissart, error in locality by, ii. 28.
 Froude, Archdeacon, attempt to discover the age of a tree by the microscope, i. 103.
 Fulford, Baldwin, notice of, and of the Fulford family, iii. 198, and *note*.
 Fuller, pleasant remark on the increase of the Benedictines, ii. 61. His remark on Scaliger, iii. 65.

- Funeral memorials of the ancient Britons, i. 149. Superstitious notion of funeral walking, ii. 127.
 Furniture, curious ancient, described, iii. 80.
 Furtor, basin on, i. 262.
 Furze, wild, magnificent appearance of, i. 316.
 Furzestown, grotesque aspect of, iii. 339.
 Fuseli's Night Mare, effects of the print of, on the mind, iii. 88.
 Fynes, Red-post, his character and extraordinary ignorance, iii. 200.

G.

- Garan Hu, the Charon of Britain, i. 145.
 Garden, the love of it common with amiable persons, ii. 134, 135; general prevalence in England of a taste for gardening, 138; enumeration of great men who delighted in a garden, 140.
 Garland Day described, ii. 289.
 Gates, ancient administration of justice in, i. 112.
 Geach, Dr., epitaph on a faithful priest, iii. 84.
 Gentleman's Magazine quoted, ii. 115.
 Geology of Dartmoor, i. 305, *et seq.*
 Gertor, i. 277.
 Ghost story, ii. 298.
 Giants, once masters of the hill country of Devonshire, i. 99. Stature of the French giant, iii. 157.
 Gigantic bones discovered, and their dimensions, ii. 113.
 Glanville, Judge, monument of, ii. 129; distich to, 151; account of, 311, *et seq.* Mutilation of his statue by the parliamentary forces, iii. 61; picture of, and of his lady, at Sortridge, with dates when painted and retouched, 336.
 Glanville, Dame, effigy of, ii. 314. Her fondness for finery, iii. 357.
 Glanville, Joseph, where born, ii. 276; historical advantage derived by him in having seen the devil himself, 276, 277.
 Glanville, Sir J., notice of, ii. 329; and of Frank Glanville, 337; the Glanville family, and last of the Glanvilles, 343, 344.
 Glass ship, in the Helio-arkite mysteries, i. 141, 148.
 Gloves, new, custom of sending on Easter eve, ii. 285.
 Godly, havoc committed by the, iii. 62.
 Godo, the British Ceres, procession to, i. 141; fire consecrated to her worship, 147.
 Gododin, poem of, characterized, i. 142; enumeration of incidents in, for a poem in the style of Madoe, 143.
 Gods of barbarous nations, fierce and bloody, ii. 35; the gods how treated by Homer, 37.
 Godwin, Earl, treachery of, ii. 90.
 Good Friday, superstitious notions respecting, among the peasantry, ii. 286.
 Gooseander, dissection of, with a figure of its trachea, i. 355, 356.
 Gordon, Sir A., iii. 327.
 Gorseddau, spot of the, described, i. 111.
 Gospel, civilizing effects from the preaching of, ii. 12.
 Gothic and Grecian buildings, picturesque, combination produced when each structure is distinct, iii. 147.
 Granite, abundance of, on Dartmoor, i. 52; masses strewed on the moor,

- 61 ; causes of its taking the convex or gibbous form, 230 ; granite turrets, 280 ; account of granite boring, &c. 281 ; architecture to which granite is best adapted, 283 ; its abundance on Dartmoor, 288 ; composition of grey granite, 304.
- Gray, the poet, anecdotes of, iii. 311 ; his handwriting, 312 ; his averseness to publication, *ib.* ; his annotations on Pindar, 313 ; remarks on Plato, 314 ; slight alterations in his 'Ode on the Progress of Poesy,' arising from long previous meditation, 314 ; profundity of his knowledge, *ib.* ; his regret at his ignorance of mathematics, 315.
- Graves of the Caledonians and Britons, i. 149.
- Great Rebellion, notices of the, iii. 27.
- Greco, Miss Elizabeth, her eminence as a singer, ii. 282, *note*. Her powers and feeling as a vocalist, iii. 154.
- Grenofen, house and valley, iii. 262.
- Grenville, Sir Bevil, his chivalrous loyalty, iii. 36 ; his death, 41 ; original letters of, discovered, 85.
- Grenville, Sir Richard, arbitrary conduct of, iii. 12 ; the probable origin of Lydford law, 13 ; his careless conduct in the retreat to Launceston, 46 ; injury to the royal cause from his misconduct, 47 ; historic notice of Sir Richard, 50 ; his bitterness and malice, 53.
- Grey Wethers, name given to stone at Abury, i. 123.
- Grimbal, Betsey. See *Betsey*.
- Grimspound described, i. 124.
- Grot, Pixies', i. 232 ; described, 235.
- Groves, the seats of Druidical instruction, i. 58 ; universality of groves among the ancients as places of idolatry, 91 ; Groves in stony places, 101.
- Gubbins, the, notice of, i. 253.
- Guile-bridge, ii. 55.
- Gull, common, curious emigration, i. 355.

H.

- Hair of the dead body, its continued growth, i. 104.
- Hallerand, Mr., jealousy between his boys and Mr. Cake's, iii. 203.
- Hals, Lieut. Col. James, iii. 11.
- Ham, or Ammon, a British deity, i. 57 ; derivations from *Ham*, *ib. note*.
- Hamilton, Lady, her character and person depicted, iii. 215.
- Hampden, wily conduct of, ii. 331.
- Hampstead, etymology of, i. 10, 11, *note*.
- Hannaford, farmer, i. 94.
- Hard weather, effects of, i. 11.
- Hardicanute, preference for, by the English, ii. 89.
- Harding, Mr., enthusiasm of, iii. 264.
- Harewood forest, ii. 30.
- Harold, named heir to the crown by Canute, ii. 89.
- Harris, his fearlessness as a preacher, ii. 106.
- Harvest, spirit of the, i. 330.
- Haunted house, story of, ii. 298.
- Haytor, white laud at its base, i. 122.

- Heathfield, legendary tale of, ii. 279.
- Helio-arkite god, the adder a symbol of, i. 97.
- Helling, the name for a slate roof, i. 306.
- Hengist, how termed by the Welsh bard, i. 143.
- Hengist Down, on the origin of the name, ii. 82, and *note*.
- Henry VIII., reflections on his conduct and motives in the reformation, ii. 102; penalties enjoined by his Six Articles, 181, *note*.
- Henwen, old lady, who, i. 145, *note*.
- Henwood, Thomas, courage in saving a child from drowning, iii. 118; receives the silver medal from the Humane Society, 119.
- Herbal, proposed formation of one, iii. 149.
- Herbs, sacred, for charms, i. 332; decoction of, in sacred rites, 151.
- Hercules, in Gaul, betokened strength of body, i. 47.
- Heretoge, or Duke, his office, and derivation of the name, ii. 17, and *note*.
- Hermitage of St. John, account of, ii. 78.
- Heron, purple, account of one, i. 353.
- Herring, Brigadier, notice of, iii. 190.
- Hertha, goddess, superstitious reverence for, i. 51.
- Hessory-tor, i. 56; quarry in the side of, 291.
- Hesus, the God of Battles of the ancient Britons, i. 56; criminals sacrificed to, 111.
- Higher White Tor, i. 120.
- Hill Bridge, account of, iii. 333.
- Hinge of a door, probable origin of the word, i. 80, *note*.
- Historical blunders, specimens of, ii. 30; value of historical plays and novels when they adhere to truth, 31.
- Hitchins, Mr. John, the artist, the Devonshire Rysdale, ii. 309. account of, iii. 126.
- Hobby, its probable origin, and the notice of, i. 327.
- Hody, Judge, notice of, ii. 327.
- Holiday sports, notice of, ii. 286.
- Homer, Cicero's censure of, ii. 37.
- Honey buzzard of Devon, i. 67.
- Honey-stealing by fairies and pixies, iii. 22.
- Hopton, Sir Ralph, victory obtained by, iii. 38; at Stratton Heights, 40.
- Horrabridge, picturesque view of, iii. 332.
- Horse Bridge, conjecture concerning it, ii. 82; its beauty and situation, 83, *note*.
- Horse-furniture, magnificent set of, iii. 82.
- Horses, wild, of Dartmoor, picturesque beauty of, i. 64; the supposed organs of the gods, in ancient idolatry, 92; dedication of horses to the sun, and probable derivation of the hobby, 328.
- Hound starting at midnight, ii. 320.
- House-marten, industry of, described, iii. 21.
- Howard, Lady, the theme of modern tradition, ii. 123; stories of, 299, 320.
- , history of, iii. 47; her numerous marriages, beauty, and wealth, 48; married to Sir Richard Grenville, 49; time of her death uncertain, 54; the goblin hound, *ib.*; traditionary story of Lady Howard and her daughter, 55.

- Hu, god, the Bacchus of the Druids, i. 53; description of the ceremonies in procession to, 141.
 Hu Gadran, the peaceful ploughman, i. 81, *note*.
 Huckworthy, scenery at, iii. 332.
 Human victims, sacrificial immolation of, i. 111.
 Hurd, Bishop, tutor to the Prince of Wales, iii. 306.
 Hurdwick, Baron, i. 250. One of the titles of the Duke of Bedford, ii. 97.
 Hut-rings on Dartmoor, i. 125.

I & J.

- Jago, Rev. Dr., i. 13; stories related by, ii. 320.
 Ictis, port, what it was, i. 155.
 Idolatry, ancient groves the seat of, i. 91.
 Jeffries, Judge, not the originator of Lydford law, iii. 12; the courtroom at Lydford visited by his ghost in the shape of a black pig, 13.
 Jenny C.'s story, iii. 61.
 Jerningham, the poet, notice of, iii. 305.
 Jews, flourishing state of the silver-mines of Devon under their management, i. 156.
 Imagination, vigorous, of the Druids, i. 46.
 Ina's Coombe, poetical allusion to, iii. 22.
 Inclined Plane Tor, i. 290.
 Infidelity, the vice of the present age, ii. 46.
 Inga Tor and Innator Tor, i. 279.
 Initiation, Druidical, i. 145.
 Insanity, why less prevalent among women than among men, ii. 44.
 Inscribed stones, Mr. Bray's account of, i. 360, *et seq.*
 Inscriptions, rural, on the granite at Bair-down, i. 75; Druidical and other inscriptions, 79, 81; inscriptions on monumental stones and pillars, 149. Garden inscriptions, ii. 149.
 John, St., Mr., portrait of the sister of, iii. 78.
 John, St., Hermitage of, notice of, ii. 78; well of, 80.
 John, St., grant of the chapel by the Earl of Bedford, 1677, iii. 139, *note*.
 John's, St., romantic scenery of, ii. 144.
 Johnes, Rev. Thomas, letter from, containing an account of the animals, &c. of Dartmoor, i. 339; of its birds, 345.
 Johnson, Dr., Life of Savage, i. 86, *note*; remark on Rochester's 'Nothing,' 88, *note*. Causes of there being fewer women who lost their reason than men, ii. 44.
 Josiah, destruction by, of idolatrous practices, i. 91, 92.
 Ireland, stone-memorials of, vestiges of Druidical inscriptions on, i. 49, *note*; the masses of granite that form Stone-henge brought from Ireland, 80, *note*.
 Judge's Chair, on Crockern-tor, i. 118, 119.
 Judgment-seat, Druidical, i. 166, 226, 227.
 Judicature, ancient British, seats of, i. 110.
 Jurisprudence of primitive nations, i. 50; ancient British seat of, 105, 110.
 Justice of the Druids, testimony to, i. 50; courts of, described, 110, 111.

K.

- Karnbré, judgment seat at, i. 226.
 Karns, on Dartmoor, i. 99; artificial karn, 278.
 Kelly, curious repairs of the windows there, iii. 334; discovery of an ancient Saxon stone-coffin, 335.
 Kempe, Mrs. Anne, ii. 155, *note*.
 Kempe, A. John, i. 2, *note*; Mr. Kempe on the *ihu*, 384, *note*. Etymology of the name Tavistock, ii. 4.
 Kieve, its signification, i. 104.
 Kilworthy, account of, ii. 303, *et seq.* 331.
 King Tor, i. 279.
 King's Arms, story of the vintner of, iii. 62.
 King's Evil, charms for curing, ii. 293.
 King's Oven, excursion in search of, i. 294; discovery and description of the Oven, 299 and *note*.
 Kistvaen, Druidical, i. 164; account of that on Bair-down, 392.
 Kit Hill, i. 288.
 Kite, anecdote of one, i. 346, *note*.
 Kitt's Steps, notice of, ii. 353.
 Knight, Mr., the librarian, notice of, iii. 149.
 Knighthood, custom in Drake's time of making presents on receiving, ii. 242.

L.

- Label moulding, anecdote of, iii. 60.
 Lady, young, and the hounds, traditional tale of, ii. 280.
 Lambs, the life of one saved, i. 278.
 Lamb, instinct of, i. 65.
 Lamerton, picturesque sketch of, iii. 92.
 Lancaster, disrepute of the name in application to schools, iii. 145.
 Lansdown, battle of, iii. 40.
 La Roche, Miss, providential escape of, iii. 199, *note*.
 Launceston, disorderly retreat to, iii. 46.
 Law-courts of the Druids, i. 110.
 Laws, traditional, of ancient nations, i. 50.
 Learning, eminent, of the ancient British priesthood, i. 48. Of the Benedictine monks, ii. 65.
 Lebanon, picturesque appearance of the cedar of, ii. 143.
 Leet, its meaning in Devonshire, i. 232.
 Legend of the old trees of Dartmoor, i. 99.
 Legends, fairy. See *Fairies*, *Pixies*, and *Tales*.
 Lent-crooking, notice of the sport, ii. 286.
 Lewis, Mr., iii. 286, *note*.
 Lewknor, Mr. Thomas, a preaching minister, iii. 36; favour shown him by the parliament party, 141.
 Lidford burnt, ii. 86.
 Lidford Cascade, account of, ii. 345; bridge, 348; antiquities of Lidford, 350; castle, 352.
 Light and shade, beautiful effects of, on the lofty tors, i. 275.
 Lightfoot, Mr., i. 8.
 Lille, Abbé de, iii. 310.
 Limebarrow, i. 260.
 Linnæus, i. 316.

- Literature, how far indebted to the Benedictines, ii. 65 ; its humanizing influence, 66.
- Littlebee Tor, i. 120.
- Liturgies, earliest, composed in Greek and Latin, ii. 67.
- Livingus, account of, ii. 88, *et seq.* ; horrible storm at his death, 92 ; presageful thunders when about to expire, 150.
- Loadstone of Dartmoor, i. 307.
- Local scenery, its influence on the mind of a poet, iii. 5.
- Loda, same as Odin, i. 85.
- Logan stone, origin of the expression, i. 26 ; celebrated logan of Cornwall overthrown by a lieutenant in the navy, 54, *note*, 387 ; ordeal of the logan, 111 ; purposes for which used by the artful Druids, 153 ; signification of logan in Cornish, 219 ; pretended miracles with the logan stones in the hands of the Druids, *ib.*
- Long, Mr., his little son rescued from drowning, iii. 118.
- Longbetor, i. 258.
- Long creeper snake, i. 322.
- Longevity, instance of, i. 254 ; at Tavistock, iii. 171.
- Longford Tor, notice of, i. 120, 121.
- Lopez, Sir Ralph, i. 362 ; his handsome present, ii. 152.
- Lot and Sprig Alphabets of the Druids, i. 49, *note*.
- Lots of divination, i. 152.
- Love, inconstancy of friendship in, ii. 19.
- Love-plants, picturesque, i. 318.
- Louis, Monsieur, the French giant, iii. 157.
- Lower-white Tor, i. 120.
- Lucan, impression made on the Roman soldiery by the sacred oaks, i. 98.
- Lucian, beautiful allegory told by, i. 46.
- Luggars, brothers, melancholy effects of superstition on, ii. 127.
- Luminous mineral evaporations, i. 304.
- Luscombe, Jane, account of, iii. 106.
- Lustrations, Druidical, i. 152, 386.
- Lycidas of Milton, on what modelled, iii. 8.
- Lyde, Rev. George, his undaunted conduct during the earthquake, i. 312.
- Lydford Castle, its distance from Tavistock, iii. 11 ; Lydford Law, origin of, and poetical allusion to, 12.
- Lyric Hymns, notice of, with extracts, iii. 241.

M.

- Mad woman, traditionary story by, respecting the Great Rebelliou, iii. 60.
- Magic, pagan, i. 95 ; magic wands of the Druids, 96 ; ointment for the eyes, 185.
- Malmesbury, scene of Ethelwold's murder, ii. 25.
- Manatons, and the Manaton service, notice of, ii. 339.
- Manes, beautiful, i. 128 ; deformity caused by cropping the manes of horses, 129.
- Manganese of Dartmoor, i. 304.
- Marbles of Devonshire, i. 305.
- Maristow, account of the church of, iii. 72.

- Martens in Christmas week, at Plympton, i. 8.
 Martyrology, chaining of for security, ii. 122, *note*, 125.
 Mary Overy, St., far-fetched etymology of, i. 388.
 Mary Tavy Rock, beautiful appearance of, iii. 286.
 Mason, the freebooter, account of, iii. 288.
 Mason's Elfrida, ii. 29; destruction of historical truth in it, 30; its merits as a poem, *ib.* Lamented his ignorance of mathematics, iii. 315.
 Mathematical figure on the sand of a supposed uninhabited island, i. 137, 138.
 Mathematics, ignorance of, lamented by Gray and Mason, iii. 315.
 Mathias, Mr., distich on, i. 87.
 ———, iii. 207; origin of the friendship between him and Mr. Bray, 208; regret at his recent death, 303; conversations with and letters to Mr. Bray, 311, *et seq.*; Latin inscription for a silver cup, 322.
 Maury, Cardinal, his ignorant remarks on English divines, ii. 106.
 May, 28th of, holiday of, ii. 288.
 May-day, high festival to the sun on, i. 325; May-fires, 326; sacrifices on May-eve, *ib.*; celebration of May-day, 327.
 Maynard, Sir John, notice of, iii. 344.
 Meavy oak described, iii. 96; account of the village, 97, 98.
 Mechanical ingenuity, remarkable instances of, iii. 129.
 Medicine, school of, always attached to Benedictine monasteries, ii. 146, *note*.
 Mercury's caduceus, had its origin in Britain, i. 96.
 Merlin's cave, inscription for a rock near, i. 78; legend of his origin and magic powers, 80, *note*.
 Merrivale bridge, circles, &c. near, described, i. 140; further account of the circles of stone, 158; derivation of the word Merrivale, 297; fate of the rocks close to, 391.
 Metempsychosis, Druidical, i. 82.
 Midsummer-day, old, custom of the farmers on, i. 337. Rustic superstition practised on, ii. 287.
 Miguel, Don, i. 292.
 Milton's description of Satan's journey, i. 131; of Eden, ii. 141. His Lycidas, on what supposed to have been modelled, iii. 8; the 'Masque of Comus,' why not derived from the 'Masque of Circe,' 17.
 Mineralogy of Dartmoor, i. 304.
 Mining and mines of Dartmoor, account of, iii. 255; superstition of the miners, 258.
 Minona, distich on, and signification of, i. 85.
 Mistletoe, custom of cutting by the Druids, i. 93; rarity on the oak and where seen by Mr. Southey, 335, *note*.
 Mistor of Dartmoor, i. 57; described, 245; Mistor Pan, popular legend respecting, *ib. note*; origin of its name, 287.
 Mists of Dartmoor, i. 36, 64, 168; dangers from the sudden mists, 193.
 Mithra, or Misor, sun worshipped under the name of, i. 57.
 Mona, island in the river Cowsick, i. 83.
 Monasteries, reflections on the utility and abuse of, ii. 38; evils of monastic observances, 44; literary benefits accruing from monasteries, 68; reflections on the ruins of, 73; evils attendant on the dissolution of monasteries, 101, *et seq.*

- 184; bucket of fair water, 188; enchanted flowers, 191; Pixy grot, 232; distinguishing nature of *picsies*, *ib. note*; derivation of *pixy* by Mr. Bray, 331, *note*.
- Plague at Tavistock, i. 160. A case of plague, iii. 174.
- Planets, idolatrous notions of Indians respecting, ii. 222.
- Plympton, Prior of, benefactions to the Abbey of Tavistock, ii. 94.
- Plymstock, successful stratagem of the friars to obtain Childe's land, ii. 54, 55.
- Poet, character of the true one portrayed, iii. 14; contrasted view of good and debased poets, 15.
- Poetry, genius for, of the bards of Britain, i. 47.
- Polwhele, Mr., considers that the Romans never penetrated into Dartmoor, i. 106, *note*; description of Brent Tor, 255.
- Rev. Richard, remark on the falsehood respecting Judge Glanville, ii. 327.
- Pope, anecdotes of, iii. 305, 306.
- Popes and the Druids, resemblances between, i. 51.
- Portrait painting of the old and modern school, iii. 77.
- Post Bridge, its vast flat stones, i. 299.
- Potato, historic notice of, i. 161.
- Potter, the translator of Æschylus, his indigent circumstances, iii. 306; his subsequent preferment, 307.
- Prideaux quoted, i. 307.
- Priesthood, ancient, of Britain, their genius for poetry, i. 47; their learning and speculative philosophy, 48; imposing appearance of the Druidical priesthood preparatory to the ceremonial of justice, 111.
- Printing, date of its introduction into England, ii. 132; early printed books at Tavistock, 133.
- Procession, Druidical, i. 141.
- Propylæum of Tavistock, notice of, iii. 147.
- Providence, instances of its merciful order and government, ii. 136, 137.
- Prout, subject for his pencil, ii. 114.
- Punch made in the rock-basins of Dartmoor, i. 53.
- Punch-bowl tree, grotesque figure of, iii. 201.
- Pym, the notorious, member for Tavistock, iii. 36.

Q.

- Quarterly Review, interest excited by the paper on Mary Colling in the, iii. 133.

R.

- Rabbit burrows, singular, notice of, i. 389.
- Radcliffe, Mrs., of Warleigh, notice of extraordinary myrtles, i. 7.
- Rail-road, Dartmoor, excursion to, i. 278.
- Rains, heavy, formidable consequences of, on Dartmoor, i. 154.
- Raleigh (nephew of Sir Walter), notice of, and of his sermons, ii. 105.
- Raven, considered the harbinger of death, i. 59. The banner of the raven a figure of the destructive victories of the Danes, ii. 10.
- Raven Rock, romantic locality of, iii. 263.
- Real presence, penalty for denying, ii. 181, *note*.

- Rebellion, Great, historic notices of, in connexion with Tavistock, iii. 27.
- Red deer of Devonshire, i. 340.
- Red earth of Exeter, its brilliance and fertility, i. 306; Otaheitan tradition, *ib. note*.
- Refectory, Tavistock, notice of, ii. 112. *note*, 114.
- Reform procession at Tavistock, account of, iii. 171.
- Reformation, devastations committed at the, ii. 15; its general effects on human opinion, 37; reflections on the wicked spirit in which it was effected, 77; sins of the reformation particularized, 101, *et seq.*
- Register, church, notice of an early one, of 1539, ii. 124.
- Religion, natural and softening impressions of, on the peasant's mind, iii. 104.
- Religious influence on the affairs of nations, general reflections on, ii. 35.
- Religious warmth, its diminution with the increase of selfishness, iii. 92.
- Religious reflections on the works of nature, ii. 137.
- Repton, Mr., compliment by, to Mr. Bray, ii. 153.
- Retirement, religious, advantages of, ii. 42.
- Richardson, author of the 'Rolliad,' notice of, and of Miss Richardson, iii. 208, and *note*, 209.
- Risdon, his reputation as an antiquary, ii. 25.
- Roads, Roman mode of making, exhaustless supply of stones for on Dartmoor, i. 288.
- Roasting apparatus, ingenious, account of, iii. 129.
- Roasting the shoe, sport of, ii. 237.
- Robin, his tenderness and sympathy, ii. 290.
- Robinson, Mrs., anecdote of the Prince of Wales's rendezvous with, iii. 307.
- Robinson Crusoe, effects of reading, i. 265.
- Robjohns, brothers, account of, iii. 129.
- Roborough Down, account of, iii. 330.
- Rochester, distich on *Nothing*, i. 88.
- Rock-basins of Dartmoor, i. 53; mystical water in, 152; figure and account of rock-basins, 217; their probable use in Druidical superstition, 218; further accounts of rock-basins, 227, *et seq.* 257; rock-ordeal, 244.
- Rocking-stones, purposes of in the hands of the Druids, i. 153; how used, 219; rocking-stone at Land's End raised again, 228, *note*.
- Roman Catholics, heathen origin of many of the ceremonies of their church, i. 328; imposing character of its rites, 329. Superstitions engrafted by the inventors of Romish frauds and traditions, ii. 37.
- Romans, the, civilization attendant on their conquests, ii. 10.
- Romantic stories, ii. 256, 257.
- Rome, ignorant state of the people at the overthrow of the church of, ii. 103.
- Rosetor, derivation of, and account of, i. 238.
- Rose, full-blown, superstitious plucking of, on Midsummer-day, ii. 287
- Rougemont Castle, whence it derives its name, i. 306.

- Rowdon Wood, picturesque site of, iii. 267, 268 ; remarkable storm at, 268, 269.
- Rowe, the translator of Lucan, where born, i. 98.
- Rowe, Rev. Mr., rector of Lamerton, his son, the poet, where born, iii. 92 ; emotions of the poet in contemplating Mr. Tremain's monument, 93.
- Rumon, St., ii. 50, 55 ; his history, 56.
- Rundle, John, Esq. M.P., munificent donation by to the public library of Tavistock, iii. 147 ; his public and private character, *ib. note*.
- Rundle, Mr. John, the builder, account of, iii. 151.
- Rundle's stone. i. 258.
- Running, extraordinary instance of, i. 262.
- Russell Lord John, grant of the dissolved Abbey of Tavistock to, by letter's patent, ii. 107 ; titles and dignities conferred on him by Henry VIII., 107, 108 ; short notice of the house of Russell, 108.
- Russell family, pension on the vicar of Tavistock, iii. 36, *note*.
- Ryno, lines on, i. 85.

S.

- Sailors, old, impostors under the garb of, iii. 159.
- Saltash, defeat at, iii. 38.
- Salting un in, story of, i. 32.
- Sampford Spiney, tin mines of, i. 304 ; crystals, 306.
- Sarah, story of, ii. 257.
- Sarcophagus, ancient, notice of, ii. 112.
- Satanic school, remark on the followers of, ii. 282.
- Saunders, Mr., devastations on the remains of Tavistock committed by, ii. 109, and *note*, 110.
- Saxon school at Tavistock, notice of, ii. 131.
- Saxons, arrival of, and foundation of the West Saxon kingdom in England, ii. 84 ; contests between the Saxons and Britons, 85.
- Scarlet moss used for dye, i. 127.
- Scenery of Dartmoor, i. 58. Beautiful, iii. 98.
- Schools, Druidical, i. 50.
- Scott, Sir Walter, iii. 72.
- Scymerons, notices of the, ii. 201.
- Secrecy of the Druidical rites and religion, i. 58.
- Seneca, defines woman as an animal fond of dress, ii. 314.
- Serpents, charming, i. 96.
- Seward, Miss, her mistake respecting Gawthorpe Hall, ii. 30.
- Sexton, singular custom of, ii. 127.
- Sharpytor, account of, i. 277.
- Sheepstor described, i. 233. Sublime and beautiful scenery on the road to, iii. 98, 100 ; the valley, 101 ; the church, 102 ; the churchyard, 103 ; moral reflections, 104 ; the tor of granite, 105 ; visitation of cholera, 110.
- Shepherd's Calendar, cited, iii. 272.
- Sheridan, his character at the period of Mr. Bray's acquaintance with him, iii. 209.
- Sheriff, appointment and duties of, ii. 16.
- Shield, his amiability and sensitiveness, iii. 209.
- Ship, glass. See *Glass*.

- Shirley characterised, iii. 41; beautiful monody on the death of Charles I., 42, *note*.
- Shoe, roasting of the, ii. 287.
- Shoot for shut, used by the lower classes in Devonshire, i. 131.
- Shrove Tuesday, holiday sport on, ii. 286.
- Shute, etymology of, i. 132.
- Shuttle, melancholy anecdote of lifting the, iii. 80.
- Silver mines of the ancient Britons, i. 155; enormous silver cup presented to the City of London, 156; story of the pixy silver, 158.
- Sixteenth century, its corruption and immorality, ii. 102.
- Slanning, Sir Nicholas, iii. 36; extracts from his muster-roll, 37, *note*; his extraordinary gallantry and death, 41.
- Slate, valuable, of Dartmoor, i. 305; beautiful specimen of carving in slate, *ib*.
- Smith, Mr. Edward, biographical history of, i. 193; his letter addressed to Mr. Bray, 207; visit to Mistor, 208.
- Smith, the late Major. account of, iii. 120.
- Smitten-hart lane, i. 273.
- Snake, a monstrous one, iii. 163.
- Snow in May, i. 12; story of a deep fall of snow, 9.
- Snow-drops, early, in Devon, i. 13.
- Softening words, mode of, by the people of Devon, i. 121.
- Sonnet to Wistman's Wood, i. 99.
- Sortilege, substances used in, i. 152.
- Sortridge, excursion to, iii. 336.
- South Beeter, i. 258.
- Southey, Robert, Esq., Letters to, i. 1; plan of the work suggested by the Laureate, 1, 2; his opinion of the means by which the tors were formed, 228, *note*; not partial to botany, 315. Causes of the late establishment of Christianity in the West, ii. 10, *note*; on the story of the stone at Drake's marriage, 174, *note*; on Drake's dealings with the devil, 175; value of traditionary tales and nursery-songs, 276.
- Spenser, lines on a butterfly, ii. 139. His fable of the bramble and the oak inimitable, iii. 17.
- Sphinx of the moor, i. 62.
- Sphinx of Egypt, resemblance to of a tor on Dartmoor, i. 213, 214.
- Spires of churches, unknown in the neighbourhood of Tavistock, i. 314.
- Spiritual agency, remarks on, ii. 46, 47.
- Spoliations of the tors, i. 280, 287, 292.
- Sports, rustic, notice of, ii. 286.
- Spig alphabet of the Druids, i. 49, *note*; of Ireland, *ib*.; triad in allusion to, 82.
- Springs, sacred, of the Druids, i. 59.
- Squaring of the circle, i. 390.
- Squirrel, poetical description of boys hunting the, iii. 20.
- Stag in chase described, iii. 21.
- Stamford, Earl of, retires in disorder into Tavistock, iii. 38.
- Stannary courts, method of holding, i. 113; great antiquity of, *ib*. *note*; table of the court, and power of the warden, 117; seat of the president of the Stannators, 119.
- Stapletoe, account of, i. 239.

- Stays, tight, fatal effects of, instanced, iii. 77, *note*.
- Stennen hill, barrows on, i. 121.
- Stevens, George, melancholy story of, i. 263.
- Still-house, the, ii. 143, 151; described, 148, 154.
- Stone, fabrics of unhewn, of Eastern origin, i. 109; description of those of Dartmoor, and use of stone-memorials by nations of antiquity, 110, 111; stone-seats of judgment, 112, *note*; stone-table of the court of Stannators, 119; present state of, *ib.*; Cyclopean stone-enclosures, 124; ancient massy stone-chairs described and figured, 134; stone-circles, 150; account of those near Merrivale bridge, 153; stone-hedges, how formed, 159; account of inscribed stones, 360, 368; stones probably used as barriers in public games, 366.
- Stonehenge, reasons for its pre-eminence as a Druidical antiquity, i. 61; meaning of the term Stonehenge, 80, *note*; treacherous slaughter of the ancient Britons near, 142; a temple of the sun, 147, *note*.
- Stone-k rocker, notice of, i. 320.
- Storm, violent, account of, i. 310; terrific, of Dartmoor, 314. Remarkable, account of, iii. 268.
- Storm-thrush, notice of, ii. 148.
- Stothard, Mr., sen., i. 316.
- Stow, original letters found at, iii. 84.
- Stratton Heights, battle of, iii. 34, 35, 40.
- Strike, its signification in the Devonshire vocabulary, i. 185.
- Strolling company of players, story of the mistress of one, iii. 154.
- Strong, plague received from a great coat, iii. 174.
- Stuart, Waking, biographical sketch and anecdotes of, iii. 210; further characteristics and anecdotes of, 304.
- Sublime scenery, its effects on the mind, iii. 100.
- Subterranean passage, mysterious, discovered, ii. 295.
- Sun, a universal object of adoration, i. 56; traces of the worship of in Britain, 57; idolatrous worship of by the Jews and Celtic nations, 91, 92; human sacrifices to, 111; high festival of the sun in the spring season, why so chosen, 325.
- Sunday, a day of rest to the peasant, iii. 104.
- Superstitions, Druidical, i. 51; superstitious worship of Jews and Celts, 92; of the people of Devon, 332. Superstitions invented by the Roman Catholics, ii. 37; case of the melancholy effects of superstition, 127; rustic superstitions, 287; ancient superstitions described, 291.
- Swallows, house, particulars of, i. 7.
- Swell, or Swill Tor, i. 290.
- Swiss scenery, near Endsleigh, described, iii. 281, 282.
- Sydenham register, notice of, ii. 125.
- , in the neighbourhood of Tavistock, iii. 71; account of, 73; paintings at, 76; curious ancient furniture, 80; magnificent housings, 82; secret chambers, 83; Mr. Bray's recollections of Sydenham, 87.

T.

- Tacitus, gloom of the ancient groves of oak, i. 59; notices of the superstitious rites of the ancient Germans, 92.
- Tales of the West, projected series of, i. 180.

- Tales, Old, ii. 276; an old witch, 277; Heathfield, and the young lady and the hounds, 280.
 — of affliction, iii. 177, *et seq.*
- Taliessin, called Pen-Beirdd, i. 75; magic wands of the Druids, 96; mystical water, the fountain of his inspiration, 152.
- Tamar, red deer on its banks, i. 340; birds enumerated, 350, 355.
 The division between Cornwall and Devon, ii. 2; broad and deep, 26. Beautiful ride to the Tamar and surrounding scenery, iii. 279.
- Tamare, Cantred of, i. 117, *note*; Tamerton, probably the ancient Tamare, 371.
- Taronuy, the god of Thunder, i. 146, *note*.
- Tasker, Mr., his physiognomical prediction respecting Mr. Bray, iii. 194; notice of his ode, *ib.*
- Taylor, Mr., iii. 304.
- Tavistock, climate of, i. 3; causes of its humidity, 5; proofs of its extraordinary mildness, 7; plague at, 160; its abbot called to the House of Peers by the title of Baron Hurdwick, 250; inscribed stones at Tavistock, 374; monks of Winchester who became abbots of Tavistock, 379; arms of the abbey, 382, 383.
 — General description of the town, its site, antiquities, &c., ii. 2, *et seq.*; etymology of the name, 5, and *note*; the Vicarage, 6; rise, progress, and benefits of Christianity, 9; the abbey, by whom and when founded, 14; its present ruin, *ib.*; story of Elfrida, 17; reflections on the influence of religion on the character of nations, 34; spirit of the old catholic faith, 36; character of the Church of Rome, 37; advantages and evils of monachism, 38, *et seq.*; remarks on the spiritual agency of dreams, 46; the foundation of Tavistock Abbey ascribed to a dream, 48; the abbey when commenced, 49; general history of the abbey, its foundation, prosperity, and overthrow, 49, *et seq.*; curious story of Childe of Plymstock, 53, *et seq.*; the first abbot, 58; Dunstan, 60; Algarus, 62; the Augustines and Benedictines, 62, *et seq.*; 97; the bible, 68; St. Benedict and Totila, 71; reflections on the ruins of Tavistock Abbey, 73, 77; the Walk, 78; the Hermitage of St. John, 79; Well of St. John, 80; abbey burnt by the Danes, 81; portion of the boundary walls, fire-proof, the only part left of the original building, 87; rebuilding of the abbey, *ib.*; benefactors of the abbey, *ib.*; remarkable persons who ended their days in the abbey, 92; number of its abbots, 95; costly attire of Dynington, *ib.*; his repairs and additions to the abbey, 96; poverty of the parish priest, *ib.*; rank and revenues of the abbot, 97; dissolution of the abbey, 100; sins of the Reformation, 100, *et seq.*; circumstances attending its dissolution, and the grant of the abbey to whom made, 107; account of the vestiges of the ancient building, 108, 111; havoc committed to make way for Abbey House, 109; the south-west gateway, 110; Grimbal's Tower, 111; discovery of infant bones, and of the *giant's bones*, 112; historic notice of the parish church, 115; curious churchwarden's accounts of the 9th Richard II., 116; church of St. Eustace, 118; pictures and church registers, 119, 120; Mr. Bray's account of Tavistock church, 125; inclosure of the churchyard by an iron railing, 126, *note*; ancient monuments, 128, *et seq.*; Saxon school, 131; the printing press,

- and notice of early-printed books at Tavistock, 132, 133; the Vicarage garden, 142; romantic situation of Tavistock Abbey, 144; birds and animals, 145, *et seq.*; garden inscriptions, 149; the Stillhouse, 143, 151, 154; monuments of antiquity, 152; the battlements, 153; scenery, &c. 145, 148, 151, 156; Crowndale and the parish clerk, 156, 157; Sir Francis Drake, 166, 170, 178; popular legends, 249, *et seq.*; the eccentric farmer, 255; Baretti, 271; old tales and legends, 274, *et seq.*; ancient customs, &c. 285.
- Tavistock, scenery in its neighbourhood. notice of Walla Brook, and of Browne the poet, with specimens of his poetry, iii. 2, 20; history of the town during the Great Rebellion, 27, *et seq.*; disloyalty of Tavistock during this period, and causes of it, 35; traditionary stories, 55; premises pulled down to clear the way for the butter-market, 59; extract from 'Tavistock's Encomium,' 65; remarkable and conspicuous personages of Tavistock, 113, 149, 150; Mary Colling, 130; charities, 136; present charities, 144; schools, 145; public library, 146; pro pylæum, 147; museum, 149; a herbal proposed, *ib.*; strolling players, 155; amusements, 157; mendicant impostors, 153; monstrous snake, 163; survey and valuation, 165; municipal government and political state of the town, 166, 167; number of voters under the Reform Bill, 166, *note*; its ancient importance, 168; markets and guildhall, 169; extraordinary feud, *ib.*; Reform procession, 171; salubrity of Tavistock, 172; plague in 1626, 173; curious instance of disease, 174; cholera, 175; tales of affliction, 177; biographical notices of eminent personages of Tavistock,—Mr. Bray, 187; John Winter, 249; Mr. Pearse's letter on the mines near Tavistock, with anecdotes of mining, 253, *et seq.*; account of scenery in the neighbourhood, 261, 270; account of the abbots of Tavistock, from Almer down to the suppression, 291, *et seq.*; revenues of the Abbey, 299; license for the abbot to wear the pontificalia, 300.
- Tavy, river, its ancient importance, i. 15; Tavy Cleave, 21; account of the source of the Tavy, 256; excursion to Tavy-head, 259; to Tavy Cleave, 274. Its source, and account of the town which takes its name from it, ii. 2; its picturesque course, 78, 80; scenery on its banks described, 167.
- scenery of the locality of the junction of the Tavy and Walkham, iii. 262.
- views and scenery in the neighbourhood of Tavy Cleave, iii. 287.
- Taylor, Bishop, recommendation to print his sermons abridged, iii. 316; piety and eloquence of the old divines, 318; his dignity of style, 323.
- Tea-tree, planting of one, ii. 152.
- Teeth, early decay of among the young women, ii. 291.
- Temple-Bar, resemblance of the gate of Tavistock Abbey to, ii. 109.
- Thistle, holy, rustic notions of its efficacy, ii. 293.
- Thunder-storm, horrible, at the death of Livingus, ii. 92.
- Tiddebrook, curious ancient building at, iii. 330, 331.
- Tin melting, assaying and coining of, notice of, i. 117; punishment for bringing bad tin to market, 118; tin an ingredient in the celebrated Tyrian dye, procured from Britain by the Phœnicians, *ib.*; two varieties of tin in the fissures of grey granite, 304.
- Tiranes, a god of the aborigines of Dartmoor, i. 36.

- Toad, curious account of one, i. 322.
- Tolmen, ordeal of the, i. 111; use of in diseases, 120; diagrams, meaning of the word in Cornish, and account of tolmenes, 242. *et seq.*; creeping under to cure diseases practised in Ireland, 243, *note*; account of tolmenes on Over Tor, 388.
- Tooke, Home, his character as a reasoner, iii. 213; cause of his violence against the volunteer system, 215.
- Tooth-ache, superstitious cure for the, ii. 291, 292.
- Tors of Dartmoor, probable significance of their names, in Cornish or Welsh, i. 56: enumeration of various tors, 57; facilities afforded by the tors for Druidical structures, 61; appropriated as temples, 62; general aspect of the tors, 121; account of the several tors and their antiquities, 212. *et seq.* 257; the tors how formed, 228, and *note*; import of the word *tor*, 251; spoliations of the tors, 280, 287, 292; deficiency of natural causes, 288. Grandeur of the tors as seen from the neighbourhood of the Walkham, iii. 338.
- Totila, prophecy of his death, and its fulfilment, ii. 72.
- Towers of churches, why wisely constructed low, i. 314.
- Traditional laws of the ancient Greeks, i. 50.
- Transmigration of souls, Cæsar's testimony to the Druidical belief in, i. 82, *note*.
- Trap rock, why so called by the Swedes, i. 116, *note*.
- Traveller's tale, i. 28.
- Tree, attempt to discover the age of one by its circles, i. 103.
- Trelawny, Sir William, gallant exploit of, iii. 278, 279.
- Tremaine, Col. Arthur, 'conjugal' anecdote of, iii. 79.
- Mr. iii. 83; character of the late Mr. Tremaine, 84; epitaph on a grateful parish priest, *ib.*; discovery of Sir B. Grenville's original letters, by a farmer, 84, 85; origin of the arms and name of the Tremaine family, 90; monument and ancestry of the Tremaines, 93; fidelity of Edmund, 94; story of the twin brothers, *ib.*
- Triads, inscriptions in, i. 80; additional, 82.
- Tuckett, farmer, i. 119.
- Tulips, enchanted, i. 191.
- Tumuli, account of, i. 247.
- Turkish slaves, contributions for the redemption of, ii. 123.
- Turks, effects of their religion on them, ii. 36.
- Twin-brothers, story of, iii. 94.
- Twin-sisters, anecdote of, iii. 91.
- Tyrian dye, British tin an ingredient in, i. 118.
- Tyrwhitt, Sir Thomas, i. 135, 337.

V.

- Valentine, St. custom at the festival of, ii. 285.
- Venus de' Medici, of Mr. Desenfant's collection, iii. 308.
- Veranda, picturesque, described, ii. 148.
- Vervain, placid, used in the sacred decoction, i. 151; used in Druidical sortilege, 152.
- Vesta, loss of the, iii. 150.
- Vial, Dr., his popularity as a physician, iii. 199.
- Vintner's daughter, story of, iii. 63.
- Vipers, multiplicity of, on Dartmoor, i. 322.

- Virtuous Lady, cave and mine of, iii. 264.
 Vixen Tor, basins chiselled on its summit, i. 62; account of a visit to the tor, 212; figure of it as seen from the Moreton road, 214; second visit to the tor, 220; from what it receives its name, 244; singular form assumed by, 391, *note*.
 — its majestic aspect, iii. 275; its imposing grandeur near the Walkham, 339.
 Volcanic character of the tors, i. 255.
 Vortigern, base conduct of, ii. 83.

W.

- Wales, Prince of, tutors of, iii. 306; anecdote of, during his acquaintance with Mrs. Robinson, 307.
 Walk, the, under the walls of Tavistock Abbey, ii. 78.
 Walkham river, head of, i. 262; modern fate of some of its rocks, 391; its sublime and picturesque appearance, iii. 262.
 Walkhampton church and surrounding scenery, iii. 332, 333.
 Walking, extraordinary instance of, i. 262.
 Walla Brook described, iii. 2; poetical tale of Walla, 19, 24; its junction with the Tavy, 268; lamented head of the key-stone of the foot bridge, 331.
 Walreddon House, traditionary story of, iii. 55; account of, 266; surrounding scenery, 267.
 Walsinton, grant of, ii. 92, 93.
 Wands, magic, ancient, i. 95, 95.
 Ward Bridge, scenery in its neighbourhood, iii. 270, 271; picturesque grandeur at, 272.
 Warewelle, ii. 25; nunnery built at, 28.
 Warleigh, legend of, i. 180.
 Warren, excursion to the, i. 294.
 Waton, appointment of to the Laureateship, iii. 307.
 Watchet hangings, what, iii. 82.
 Water, use of, in sacred purposes, by the Druids, i. 151; mystical, 152.
 Waterfalls, picturesque, described, iii. 284, 285.
 Watts, singular structures of, i. 390.
 — distich on, i. 87.
 — charity at Tavistock, iii. 143.
 Waydown Tor, i. 258.
 Weales, name of, imposed on the Britons driven west of the Severn, i. 74.
 Well of St. John, reflections on, ii. 80.
 Welis, sacred, i. 151.
 Wessex, the best governed of the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms, ii. 10, *note*; date when Christianity was first propagated in, 13.
 Westlydton lands, 93; singular appropriation of its revenues, 96.
 Wetness of the climate of Tavistock, i. 4.
 Wheatear, or English ortolan, notice of, i. 66.
 Whip-sissa, i. 186.
 Whitchurch Down, pixy perils of, i. 182.
 White-breasted bird, legend of, i. 60, and *note*.
 Whitentor, i. 120, 121.
 Whortleberries, delicious, of Dartmoor, i. 317.

- Widdecombe church, dreadful earthquake at, i. 310, 312; traditional legend of the appearance of the devil, 312, *note*.
- Widow and her son, story of, ii. 249.
- Tales of poor widows, iii. 178, 181.
- Wild flowers of Devon enumerated, i. 318.
- Wilds of Dartmoor, abundance of the granite scattered about, i. 52.
- Willesford, C. Esq., i. 353.
- Mr. Scobel, iii. 129.
- Rev. Richard Vyvyan, iii. 320.
- William the Conqueror, prognostication of his invasion, ii. 92.
- Williams, Elizabeth, i. 254.
- Winchester cathedral, by whom commenced, ii. 13.
- Winter, John, a remarkable boy, account of, iii. 249.
- Wisdom of our Saxon ancestors, proof of, ii. 16, 17.
- of Providence illustrated, ii. 136.
- Wise, Sir Thomas, iii. 72; arms of, 74; pictures of his nine daughters, 76; family and descendants of, 77, 78.
- Wistman's, or Wiseman's Wood, Druidical antiquities of, i. 57; etymological explanation of the term, 73; inscription for a rock in, 83; general description of Wistman's Wood, 90; in the same state as at the time of the Norman conquest, 93, *note*; chorography of the wood, 94; spring at, 97; remnant of a Druid's grove, 98; Sonnet to Wistman's Wood, 99; legend of the old trees, *ib.*; granite and grove of dwarf oak-trees, 100; nests of adders among the granite masses, 101; by whom planted, 102; ancient trees, 103; silver coins, 104; the last retreat of the bards, and vestiges of them found in the wood, 107, 108; its extent, 122.
- Witch, tale of an old, ii. 277.
- Witchcraft of Dartmoor, i. 37; case of, 261; present belief in, among the peasantry of Devonshire, ii. 170.
- Wolcott, Dr., Peter Pindar, iii. 210.
- Wolves, extirpation of by firing the woods, i. 103; protections against, 124, 125.
- Women, cause of the comparative paucity of, who lose their reason, ii. 44.
- Wood-dove, lines on, ii. 154.
- Wood Town, notice of, iii. 271.
- Woods, ancient, seats of idolatrous worship, i. 91, 93, 105; selection of embowering woods as sites for abbeys, ii. 144.
- Wordsworth, lines cited from, i. 266.
- Wosen, a Devonshire word, ii. 289, *note*.
- Wren, golden-crested, notice of, ii. 146, *note*.
- Wyatt, Mr., iii. 152.

Y.

- Yeast Tor, i. 279, 280.
- Yellow-hammer, notice of, i. 319.

Z.

- Zig-zag ornament of churches of Saxon date, by what suggested, ii. 148.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,
Stamford Street.







UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

LD-URL
MAY 7 1968 LD-URL
QL JUN 7 1968
MAY 21 1968

MAY 19 1969

JUN 3 1969

RECHARGE-URL
URL

FEB 18 1982

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 393 460 1

