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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HAUNTED LONDON ***

HAUNTED LONDON

DR. JOHNSON'S OPINIONS OF LONDON.—"It is not in the showy evolution of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations, that the wonderful immensity of London consists.... The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will

venture to say there is more learning and science within the circumference of where we now sit than in all the rest of the kingdom.... A man stores his mind [in London] better than anywhere else.... No place cures a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London, for no man is either great or good, *per se*, but as compared with others, not so good or great, and he is sure to find in the metropolis many his equals and some his superiors.... No man of letters leaves London without regret.... By seeing London I have seen as much of life as the world can show.... When a man is tired of London he is tired of life, for there is in London all life can afford, and [London] is the fountain of intelligence and pleasure."—*Boswell's Life of Johnson.*

Boswell's Opinion of London.—"I have often amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They whose narrow minds are contracted to the consideration of some one particular pursuit, view it only through that medium, a politician thinks of it merely as the seat of government, etc.; but the intellectual man is struck with it *as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible*."—*Boswell's Life of Johnson* (Croker, 1848), p. 144.

HAUNTED LONDON

BY

WALTER THORNBURY

EDITED BY EDWARD WALFORD, M.A.

TEMPLE BAR, 1761.

ILLUSTRATED BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

London
CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY
1880

PREFACE.

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This book deals less with the London of the ghost-stories, the scratching impostor in Cock Lane, or the apparition of Parson Ford at the Hummums, than with the London consecrated by manifold traditions—a city every street and alley of which teems with interesting associations, every paving-stone of which marks, as it were, the abiding-place of some ancient legend or biographical story; in short, this London of the present haunted by the memories of the past.

The slow changes of time, the swifter destructions of improvement, and the inevitable necessities of modern civilisation, are rapidly remodelling London.

It took centuries to turn the bright, swift little rivulet of the Fleet into a fœtid sewer, years to transform the palace at Bridewell into a prison; but events now move faster: the alliance of money with enterprise, and the absence of any organised resistance to needful though sometimes reckless improvements, all combine to hurry forward modern changes.

If an alderman of the last century could arise from his sleep, he would shudder to see the scars and wounds from which London is now suffering. Viaducts stalk over our chief roads; great square tubes of iron lie heavy as nightmares on the breast of Ludgate Hill. In Finsbury and Blackfriars there are now to be seen yawning chasms as large and ghastly as any that breaching cannon ever effected in the walls of a besieged city. On every hand legendary [Pg vi] houses, great men's birthplaces, the haunts of poets, the scenes of martyrdoms, and the battle-fields of old factions, heave and totter around us. The tombs of great men, in the chinks of which the nettles have grown undisturbed ever since the Great Fire, are now being uprooted. Milton's house has become part of the *Punch* office. A printing machine clanks where Chatterton was buried. Almost every moment some building worthy of record is shattered by the pickaxes of ruthless labourers. The noise of falling houses and uprooted streets even now in my ears tells me how busily Time, the Destroyer and the Improver, is working; erasing tombstones, blotting out names on street-doors, battering down narrow thoroughfares, and effacing one by one the memories of the good, the bad, the illustrious, and the infamous.

A sincere love of the subject, and a strong conviction of the importance of the preservation of such facts as I have dredged up from the Sea of Oblivion, have given me heart for my work. The gradual changes of Old London, and the progress of civilisation westward, are worth noting by all students of the social history of England. It will be found that many traits of character, many anecdotes of interest, as illustrating biography, are essentially connected with the habitations of the great men who have either been born in London, or have resorted to it as the centre of progress, art, commerce, government, learning, and culture. The fact of the residence of a poet, a painter, a lawyer, or even a rogue, at any definite date, will often serve to point out the social status he either aimed at or had acquired. It helps also to show the exact relative distinctions in fashion and popularity of different parts of London at particular epochs, and contributes to form an illustrated history of London, proceeding not [Pg vii] by mere progression of time, and dealing with the abstract city—the whole entity of London —but marching through street after street, and detailing local history by districts at a time.

A century after the martyrs of the Covenant had shed their blood for the good old cause, an aged man, mounted on a little rough pony, used periodically to make the tour of their graves; with a humble and pious care he would scrape out the damp green moss that filled up the letters once so sharp and clear, cut away the thorny arches of the brambles, tread down the thick, prickly undergrowth of nettles, and leave the brave names of the dead men open to the sunlight. It is something like this that I have sought to do with London traditions.

I have especially avoided, in every case, mixing truth with fiction. I have never failed to give, where it was practicable, the actual words of my authorities, rather than run the risk of warping or distorting a quotation even by accident, or losing the flavour and charm of original testimony. Aware of the paramount value of sound and verified facts, I have not stopped to play with words and colours, nor to sketch imaginary groups and processions. Such pictures are often false and only mislead; but a fact proved, illustrated, and rendered accessible by index and heading, is, however unpretentious, a contribution to history, and has with certain inquirers a value that no time can lesson.

In a comprehensive work, dealing with so many thousand dates, and introducing on the stage so many human beings, it is almost impossible to have escaped errors. I can only plead for myself that I have spared no pains to discover the truth. I have had but one object in view, that of rendering a walk through London a journey of interest and of pilgrimage to many shrines.

In some cases I have intentionally passed over, or all but passed over, outlying streets that I [Pg viii] thought belonged more especially to districts alien to my present plan. Maiden Lane, for example, with its memories of Voltaire, Marvell, and Turner, belongs rather to a chapter on Covent Garden, of which it is a palpable appanage; and Chancery Lane I have left till I come to Fleet Street.

I should be ungrateful indeed if, in conclusion, I did not thank Mr. Fairholt warmly for his careful and valuable drawings on wood. To that accomplished antiquary I am indebted, as

my readers will see, for several original sketches of bygone places, and for many curious illustrations which I should certainly not have obtained without the aid of his learning and research.

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HAUNTED LONDON.

[Pg 1]

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

One day when Fuseli and Haydon were walking together, they reached the summit of a hill whence they could catch a glimpse of St. Paul's.

There was the grey dome looming out by fits through rolling drifts of murky smoke. The two little lion-like men stood watching "the sublime canopy that shrouds the city of the world."[1] Now it spread and seethed like the incense from Moloch's furnace; now it lifted and thinned into the purer blue, like the waft of some great sacrifice, or settled down to deeper and gloomier grandeur over "the vastness of modern Babylon." That brown cloud hid a huge ants' nest teeming with three millions of people. That dome, with its golden coronet and cross, rose like the globe in an emperor's hand—a type of the civilisation, and power, and Christianity of England.

The hearts of the two men beat faster at the great sight.

"Be George!" said Fuseli, shaking his white hair and stamping his little foot, "be George! sir, it's like the smoke of the Israelites making bricks for the Egyptians."

"It is grander, Fuseli," said Haydon, "for it is the smoke of a people who would *have made*

the Egyptians make bricks for them."

It is of the multitudinous streets of this more than Egyptian city, their traditions, and their past and present inhabitants, that I would now write. I shall not pass by many houses where any eminent men dwell or dwelt, without some biographical anecdote, some epigram, some illustration; yet I will not stop long at any door, because so many others await me. I have "set down," I hope, "nought in malice." Truth I trust has been, and truth alone shall be, my object. I shall stay at Charing Cross to point out the heroism of the dying regicides; I shall pause at Whitehall to narrate some redeeming traits even in the character of a wilful king. [Pg 2]

The growth of London, and its conquest of suburb after suburb, has roused the imagination of poets and essayists ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

When James I. forbade the building of fresh houses outside London walls, he little foresaw the time when the City would become almost impassable; when practical men would burrow roads under ground, or make subterranean railways to drain off the choking traffic; when cool-headed people would seriously propose to have flying bridges thrown over the chief thoroughfares; when new manners and customs, new diseases, new follies, new social complications would arise, from the fact of three millions of men silently agreeing to live together on only eleven square miles of land; when fish would cease to inhabit the poisoned river; when the roar of the traffic would render it almost impossible to converse; when, in fact, London would grow too large for comfort, safety, pleasure, or even social intercourse.

It is difficult to select from what centre to commence a pilgrimage. For old Roman London we might start from the Exchange or the Tower; for mediæval London from Chepe or Aldermanbury; for fashionable London from Charing Cross; for Shaksperean London from the Globe or Blackfriars. Even then our tours would be circuitous, and sometimes retrograde, and we should turn and double like hares before the hounds.

I have for several reasons, therefore, and after some consideration, decided to start from Temple Bar, and walk westward along the Strand to Charing Cross; then to turn up St. Martin's Lane, and return by Longacre and Drury Lane to Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. [Pg 3]

That walk embraces the long line of palaces which once adorned the Strand, or river-bank street, the countless haunts of artists in St. Martin's Lane, the legends of Longacre, the theatrical reminiscences of Drury Lane, and the old noblemen's houses in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. It comprises a period not so remote as East London, and not so modern as that of the West End. It brings us acquainted not only with many of the contemporaries of Shakspere and Dryden, but also with many celebrities of Garrick's time and of Dr. Johnson's age.

If this is not the best point of departure, it has at least much to be said in its favour, as the loop I have drawn includes nothing intramural, and comprises a part of London inhabited by persons who lived more within the times of memoir-writing than those in the farther East,—a district, too, more within the range of the antiquary than the newer region of the West.

I trust that in these remarks I have in some degree explained why I have spent so much time in pouring "old wine into new bottles."

A preface is too often a pillory made by an author, in which he exposes himself to a shower of the most unsavoury missiles. I trust that mine may be considered only as a wayside stone on which I stand to offer a fitting apology for what I trust is a venial fault.

It is the glory of my old foster-mother, London, I would celebrate; it is her virtues and her crimes I would record. Her miles of red-tiled roofs, her quiet green squares, her vast black mountain of a cathedral, her silver belt of a river, her acres and acres of stony terraces, her beautiful parks, her tributary fleets, seem to me as so many episodes in one great epic, the true delineation of which would form a new chapter in the HISTORY OF MANKIND.

[Pg 4]

SHIP YARD, TEMPLE BAR, 1761.

CHAPTER II.

TEMPLE BAR.

Temple Bar, that old dingy gateway of blackened Portland stone which separates the Strand from Fleet Street, the City from the Shire, and the Freedom of the City of London from the Liberty of the City of Westminster, was built by Sir Christopher Wren in the year 1670, four years after the Great Fire, and ten after the Restoration. [Pg 5]

In earlier days there were at this spot only posts, rails, and a chain, as at Holborn, Smithfield, and Whitechapel. In later times, however, a house of timber was erected, with a narrow gateway and one passage on the south side.[2]

The original Bar seems to have crossed Fleet Street, several yards farther to the east of its successor. In the time of James I. it consisted of an iron railing with a gate in the middle. A man sat on the spot for many years after the erection of the new gate, to take toll from all carts which had not the City arms painted on them.

Temple Bar, if described now in an architect’s catalogue, would be noted as pierced with two side posterns for foot passengers, and having a central flattened archway for carriages. In the upper story is an apartment with semicircular arched windows on the eastern and western sides, and the whole is crowned with a sweeping pediment.

On the western or Westminster side there are two niches, in which are placed mean statues of Charles I. and Charles II. in fluttering Roman robes, and on the east or Fleet Street side there are statues of James I. and Queen Elizabeth. They are all remarkable for their small feeble heads, their affected and crinkled drapery, and the piebald look produced by their projecting hands and feet being washed white by years of rain, while the rest of their bodies remains a sooty black.

The upper room is held of the City by the partners of the very ancient firm of Messrs. Child, bankers. There they store their books and records, as in an old muniment-chamber. The north side ground floor, next to Shire Lane, was occupied as a barber’s shop from the days of Steele and the *Tatler*.

The centre slab on the east side of Temple Bar once contained the following inscription, now all but obliterated:—“Erected in the year 1670, Sir Samuel Sterling, Mayor; continued in the year 1671, Sir Richard Ford, Lord Mayor; and finished in the year 1672, Sir George Waterman, Lord Mayor.” It is probable that the corresponding western slab, and also the smaller one over the postern, once bore inscriptions. [Pg 6]

Temple Bar was doomed to destruction by the City as early as 1790, through the exertions of Alderman Picket. “Threatened men live long,” says an old Italian proverb. Temple Bar still stands[3] a narrow neck to an immense decanter; an impeder of traffic, a venerable

nuisance, with nothing interesting but its associations and its dirt. But then let us remember that as Holborn Hill has tormented horses and drivers ever since the Conquest, and its steepness is not yet in any way mitigated,[4] we must not expect hasty reforms in London.

It does not enter into my purpose (unless I walked like a crab, backwards) to give the history of Child's bank. Suffice it for me to say that it stands on part of the site of the old Devil Tavern, kept by old Simon Wadloe, where Ben Jonson held his club. It was taken down in 1788, and Child's Place built in its stead.[5] Alderman Backwell, who was ruined by the shutting up of the Exchequer in the reign of Charles II., and became a partner in this, the oldest banking-house in London, was the agent for Government in the sale of Dunkirk to the French.

Pepys makes frequent allusions to his friend Child, probably one of the founders of this bank. The Duke of York opposed his interference in Admiralty matters, and had a quarrel with a gentleman who declared that whoever impugned Child's honesty must be a knave. Child wrote an enlightened work on Indian trade, supporting the interests of the East India Company.

Apollo Court, exactly opposite the bank, marks a passage that once faced the Apollo room, from whose windows Ben Jonson must have often glowered and Herrick laughed.

Archenholz says that in his day there were forty-eight bankers in London. "The Duke of Marlborough," writes the Prussian traveller, "had some years ago in the hands of Child the banker, a fund of ten, fifteen, or twenty thousand pounds. Drummond had often in his hands several hundred thousand pounds at one time belonging to the Government."[6] [Pg 7]

In the earliest London Directory (1677),[7] among "the goldsmiths that keep running cashes," we find "Richard Blanchard and Child, at the Marygold in Fleet Street." The huge marigold (really a sun in full shine), above four feet high, the original street-sign of the old goldsmiths at Temple Bar, is still preserved in one of the rooms of Child's bank.

John Bushnell, the sculptor who executed the statues on Temple Bar, being compelled by his master, Burman, of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, to marry a discarded servant-maid, went to Italy, and resided in Rome and Venice, and in the latter place executed a monument to a Procuratore, representing a naval engagement between the Venetians and the Turks. His best works are Cowley's monument, that of Sir Palmes Fairborne in Westminster Abbey, and Lord Mordaunt's statue in Fulham church. He also executed the statues of Charles I., Charles II., and Sir Thomas Gresham for the Royal Exchange. He had agreed to complete the set of kings, but Cibber being also engaged, Bushnell would not finish the six or seven he had begun. Being told by rival sculptors that he could carve only drapery, and not the naked figure, he produced a very despicable Alexander the Great.

The next whim of this vain, fantastic, and crazy man, was to prove that the Trojan Horse could really have been constructed.[8] He therefore had a wooden horse built with huge timbers, which he proposed to cover with stucco. The head held twelve men and a table; the eyes served as windows. Before it was half completed, however, it was demolished by a storm of wind, and no entreaties of the two vintners who had contracted to use the horse for a drinking booth could induce the mortified projector to rebuild the monster, which had already cost him £500. A wiser plan of his, that of bringing coal to London by sea, also miscarried; and the loss of an estate in Kent, through an unsuccessful lawsuit, completed the overthrow of Bushnell's never very well-balanced brain. He died in 1701, and was buried at Paddington. His two sons (to one of whom he left £100 a year, and to the other £60) became recluses, moping in an unfinished house of their father's, facing Hyde Park, in the lane leading from Piccadilly to Tyburn, now Park Lane. This strange abode had neither staircase nor doors, but there they brooded, sordid and impracticable, saying that the world had not been worthy of their father. Vertue, in 1728, describes a visit to the house, which was then choked with unfinished statues and pictures. There was a ruined cast of an intended brass equestrian statue of Charles II.: an Alexander and other unfinished kings completed the disconsolate brotherhood. Against the wall leant a great picture of a classic triumph, almost obliterated; and on the floor lay a bar of iron, as thick as a man's wrist, that had been broken by some forgotten invention of Bushnell's. [Pg 8]

After the discovery of the absurd Meal-Tub Plot, in 1679, the 17th of November, the anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth was kept, according to custom, as a high Protestant festival, and celebrated by an extraordinary procession, at the expense of the Green-Ribbon Club, a few citizens, and some gentlemen of the Temple. The bells began to ring out at three o'clock in the morning; at dusk the procession began at Moorgate, and passed through Cheapside and Fleet Street, where it ended with a huge bonfire, "just over against the Inner Temple gate."[9]

The stormy procession was thus constituted:—

1. Six whifflers, in pioneer caps and red waistcoats, who cleared the way. 2. A bellman, ringing his bell, and with a doleful voice crying, "Remember Justice Godfrey." 3. A dead body, representing the wood-merchant of Hartshorne Lane (Sir E. Godfrey), in a decent black habit, white gloves, and the cravat wherewith he was murdered about his neck, with spots of blood on his wrists, breast, and shirt. This figure was held on a white horse by a man representing one of the murderers. 4. A priest in a surplice and cope, embroidered with [Pg 9]

bones, skulls, and skeletons. He handed pardons to all who would meritoriously murder Protestants. 5. A priest, bearing a great silver cross. 6. Four Carmelite friars, in white and black robes. 7. Four Grey Friars. 8. Six Jesuits with bloody daggers. 9. The waits, playing all the way. 10. Four bishops in purple, with lawn sleeves, golden crosses on their breasts, and croziers in their hands. 11. Four other bishops, in full pontificals (copes and surplices), wearing gilt mitres. 12. Six cardinals, in scarlet robes and caps. 13. The Pope's chief physician, with Jesuits' powder and other still more grotesque badges of his office. 14. Two priests in surplices, bearing golden crosses. 15. Then came the centre of all this pageant, the Pope himself, sitting in a scarlet and gilt fringed chair of state. His feet were on a cushion, supported by two boys in surplices, with censers and white silk banners, painted with red crosses and bloody consecrated daggers. His Holiness wore a scarlet gown, lined with ermine and daubed with gold and silver lace. On his head he had the triple tiara, and round his neck a gilt collar, strung with precious stones, beads, Agnus Dei's, and St. Peter's keys. At the back of his chair climbed and whispered the devil, who hugged and caressed him, and sometimes urged him aloud to kill King Charles, or to forge a Protestant plot and to fire the city again, for which purpose he kept a torch ready lit.

The number of spectators in the balconies and windows was computed at two hundred thousand. A hundred and fifty flambeaux followed the procession by order, and as many more came as volunteers.

Roger North also describes a fellow with a stentorophonic tube (a speaking-trumpet), who kept bellowing out—"Abhorrers! abhorrers!"[10] [Pg 10]

Lastly came a complaisant, civil gentleman, who was meant to represent either Sir Roger l'Estrange, or the King of France, or the Duke of York. "Taking all in good part, he went on his way to the fire."

At Temple Bar some of the mob had crowned the statue of Elizabeth with gilt laurel, and placed in her hand a gilt shield with the motto, "The Protestant Religion and Magna Charta." A spear leant against her arm, and the niche was lit with candles and flambeaux, so that, as North said, she looked like the goddess Pallas, the object of some solemn worship and sacrifice.

All this time perpetual battles and skirmishes went on between the Whigs and Tories at the different windows, and thousands of volleys of squibs were discharged.

When the pope was at last toppled into the fire a prodigious shout was raised, that spread as far as Somerset House, where the queen then was, and, as a pamphleteer of the time says, before it ceased, reached Scotland, France, and even Rome.

From these processions the word MOB (*mobile vulgus*) became introduced into our language.[11] In 1682, Charles II. tried to prohibit this annual festival, but it continued nevertheless till the reign of Queen Anne, or even later.[12]

At Temple Bar, where the houses seemed turned into mountains of heads, and many fireworks were let off, a man representing the English cardinal (Philip Howard, brother of the Duke of Norfolk) sang a rude part-song with other men who personated the people of England. The cardinal first began:—

"From York to London town we come
  To talk of Popish ire,
To reconcile you all to Rome,
  And prevent Smithfield fire."

To which the people replied, valorously:— [Pg 11]

"Cease, cease, thou Norfolk cardinal,
  See! yonder stands Queen Bess,
Who saved our souls from Popish thrall:
  Oh, Bess! Queen Bess! Queen Bess!

"Your Popish plot, and Smithfield threat,
  We do not fear at all,
For, lo! beneath Queen Bess's feet,
  You fall! you fall! you fall!

"'Tis true our king's on t'other side,
  A looking t'wards Whitehall,
But could we bring him round about,
  He'd counterplot you all.

"Then down with James and up with Charles,
  On good Queen Bess's side,
That all true commons, lords, and earls
  May wish him a fruitful bride.

"Now God preserve great Charles our king,
  And eke all honest men,

And traitors all to justice bring:
Amen! Amen! Amen!”

It was formerly the barbarous and brutal custom to place the heads and quarters of traitors upon Temple Bar as scarecrows to all persons who did not consider William of Orange, or the Elector of Hanover, the rightful possessors of the English crown.

Sir Thomas Armstrong was the first to help to deck Wren’s new arch. When Shaftesbury fled in 1683, and the Court had partly discovered his intrigues with Monmouth and the Duke of Argyle, the more desperate men of the Exclusion Party plotted to stop the king’s coach as he returned from Newmarket to London, at the Rye House, a lonely mansion near Hoddesden. The plot was discovered, and Monmouth escaped to Holland. In the meantime the informers dragged Russell and Sydney into the scheme, for which they were falsely put to death. Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had been taken at Leyden and delivered up to the English Ambassador at the Hague, claimed a trial as a surrendered outlaw, according to the 6th [Pg 12] Edward VI. But Judge Jeffreys refused him his request, as he had not surrendered voluntarily, but had been brought by force. Armstrong still claiming the benefit of the law, the brutal judge replied:—“And the benefit of the law you shall have, by the grace of God. See that execution be done on Friday next, according to law.”

Armstrong had sinned deeply against the king. He had sold himself to the French ambassador, he had urged Monmouth on in his undutiful conduct to his father, and he had been an active agent in the Rye House Plot. Charles would listen to no voice in his favour. On the scaffold he denied any intention of assassinating the king or changing the form of government.[13]

Sir William Perkins and Sir John Friend were the next unfortunate gentlemen who lent their heads to crown the Bar. They were rash, hot-headed Jacobites, who, too eagerly adopting the “ultima ratio” of political partisans, had planned, in 1696, to stop King William’s coach in a deep lane between Brentford and Turnham Green, as he returned from hunting at Richmond. Sir John Friend was a person who had acquired wealth and credit from mean beginnings, but Perkins was a man of fortune, violently attached to King James, though as one of the six clerks of Chancery he had taken the oath to the new Government. Friend owned that he had been at a treasonable meeting at the King’s Head Tavern in Leadenhall Street, but denied connivance in the assassination-plot. Perkins made an artful and vigorous defence, but the judge acted as counsel for the Crown and guided the jury. They both suffered at Tyburn, three nonjuring clergymen absolving them, much to the indignation of the loyal bystanders.[14]

John Evelyn calls the sight of Temple Bar “a dismal sight.”[15] Thank God, this revolting spectacle of traitors’ heads will never be seen here again.

In 1716 Colonel Henry Oxburgh’s head was added to the quarters of Sir John Friend (a [Pg 13] brewer) and the skull of Sir William Perkins. Oxburgh was a Lancashire gentleman, who had served in the French army. General Foster (who escaped from Newgate, in 1716) had made him colonel directly he joined the Pretender’s army. To him, too, had been entrusted the humiliating task of proposing capitulation to the king’s troops at Preston, when the Highlanders, frenzied with despair, were eager to sally out and cut their way through the enemy’s dragoons. He met death with a serene temper. A fellow-prisoner described his words as coming “like a gleam from God. You received comfort,” he says, “from the man you came to comfort.” Oxburgh was executed at Tyburn, May 14; his body was buried at St. Giles’, all but his head, and that was placed on Temple Bar two days afterwards.

A curious print of 1746 represents Temple Bar with the three heads raised on tall poles or iron rods. The devil looks down in triumph and waves the rebel banner, on which are three crowns and a coffin, with the motto, “A crown or a grave.” Underneath are written these wretched verses:

“Observe the banner which would all enslave,
Which ruined traytors did so proudly wave.
The devil seems the project to despise;
A fiend confused from off the trophy flies.

“While trembling rebels at the fabrick gaze,
And dread their fate with horror and amaze,
Let Briton’s sons the *emblematick* view,
And plainly see what to rebellion’s due.”

A curious little book “by a member of the Inner Temple,” which has preserved this print, has also embalmed the following stupid and cold-blooded impromptu on the heads of Oxburgh, Townley, and Fletcher:—

“Three heads here I spy,
Which the glass did draw nigh,
The better to have a good sight;
Triangle they’re placed,
Old, bald, and barefaced,
Not one of them e’er was upright.”[16]

The heads of Fletcher and Townley were put up on Temple Bar August 2, 1746. On August 16, Walpole writes to Montague to say that he had “passed under the new heads at Temple Bar, where people made a trade of letting spying-glasses at a halfpenny a look.” [Pg 14]

Townley was a young officer about thirty-eight years of age, born at Wigan, and of a good family. His uncle had been out in 1715, but was acquitted on his trial. Townley had been fifteen years abroad in the French army, and was close to the Duke of Berwick when the duke’s head was shot off at the siege of Philipsburgh. When the Highlanders came into England he met them near Preston, and received from the young Pretender a commission to raise a regiment of foot. He had been also commandant at Carlisle, and directed the sallies from thence.

Fletcher, a young linen chapman at Salford, had been seen pulling off his hat and shouting when a sergeant and a drummer were beating up for volunteers at the Manchester Exchange. He had been seen also at Carlisle, dressed as an officer, with a white cockade in his hat and a plaid sash round his waist.[17]

Seven other Jacobites were executed on Kennington Common with Fletcher and Townley. They were unchained from the floor of their room in Southwark new gaol early in the morning, and having taken coffee, had their irons knocked off. They were then, at about ten o’clock, put into three sledges, each drawn by three horses. The executioner, with a drawn scimitar, sat in the first sledge with Townley; a party of dragoons and a detachment of foot-guards conducted him to the gallows, near which a pile of faggots and a block had been placed. While the prisoners were stepping from their sledges into a cart drawn up beneath a tree, the wood was set on fire, and the guards formed a circle round the place of execution. The prisoners had no clergyman, but Mr. Morgan, one of their number, put on his spectacles and read prayers to them, which they listened and responded to with devoutness. This lasted above an hour. Each one then threw his prayer-book and some written papers among the [Pg 15] spectators; they also delivered notes to the sheriff, and then flung their hats into the crowd. “Six of the hats,” says the quaint contemporary account, “were laced with gold,—all of these prisoners having been genteelly dressed.” Immediately after, the executioner took a white cap from each man’s pocket and drew it over his eyes; then they were turned off. When they had hung about three minutes, the executioner pulled off their shoes, white stockings, and breeches, a butcher removing their other clothes. The body of Mr. Townley was then cut down and laid upon a block, and the butcher seeing some signs of life remaining, struck it on the breast, then took out the bowels and the heart, and threw them into the fire. Afterwards, with a cleaver, they severed the head and placed it with the body in the coffin. When the last heart, which was Mr. Dawson’s, was tossed into the fire, the executioner cried, “God save King George!” and the immense multitude gave a great shout. The heads and bodies were then removed to Southwark gaol to await the king’s pleasure.

According to another account the bodies were cloven into quarters; and as the butcher held up each heart he cried, “Behold the heart of a traitor!”

Mr. James Dawson, one of the unhappy men thus cruelly punished, was a young Lancashire gentleman of fortune, just engaged to be married. The unhappy lady followed his sledge to the place of execution, and approached near enough to see the fire kindled and all the other dreadful preparations. She bore it well till she heard her lover was no more, but then drew her head back into the coach, and crying out, “My dear, I follow thee!—I follow thee! Sweet Jesus, receive our souls together!” fell on the neck of a companion and expired. Shenstone commemorated this occurrence in a plaintive ballad called “Jemmy Dawson.”

Mr. Dawson is described as “a mighty gay gentleman, who frequented much the company of the ladies, and was well respected by all his acquaintance of either sex for his genteel deportment. He was as strenuous for their vile cause as any one in the rebel army. When he [Pg 16] was condemned and double fettered, he said he did not care if they were to put a ton weight of iron on him; it would not in the least daunt his resolution.”[18]

On January 20 (between 2 and 3 A.M.), 1766, a man was taken up for discharging musket-bullets from a steel crossbow at the two remaining heads upon Temple Bar. On being examined he affected a disorder in his senses, and said his reason for doing so was “his strong attachment to the present Government, and that he thought it was not sufficient that a traitor should merely suffer death; that this provoked his indignation, and that it had been his constant practice for three nights past to amuse himself in the same manner. And it is much to be feared,” says the recorder of the event, “that he is a near relation to one of the unhappy sufferers.”[19] Upon searching this man, about fifty musket-bullets were found on him, wrapped up in a paper with a motto—“Eripuit ille vitam.”

“Yesterday,” says a news-writer of the 1st of April, 1772, “one of the rebel heads on Temple Bar fell down. There is only one head now remaining.”

The head that fell was probably that of Councillor Layer, executed for high treason in 1723. The blackened head was blown off the spike during a violent storm. It was picked up by Mr. John Pearce, an attorney, one of the Nonjurors of the neighbourhood, who showed it to some friends at a public-house, under the floor of which it was buried. In the meanwhile Dr. Rawlinson, a Jacobite antiquarian, having begged for the relic, was imposed on with another. In his will the doctor desired to be buried with this head in his right hand,[20] and the request was complied with.

This Dr. Rawlinson, one of the first promoters of the Society of Antiquaries, and son of a lord mayor of London, died in 1755. His body was buried in St. Giles' churchyard, Oxford, and his heart in St. John's College. The sale of his effects lasted several days, and produced £1164. He left upwards of 20,000 pamphlets; his coins he bequeathed to Oxford. [Pg 17]

The last of the iron poles or spikes on which the heads of the unfortunate Jacobite gentlemen were fixed, was removed only at the commencement of the present century.[21]

The above-named Christopher Layer was a barrister, living in Old Southampton Buildings, who had engaged in a plot to seize the Bank and the Tower, to arm the Minters in Southwark, to seize the king, Walpole, and Lord Cadogan, to place cannon on the terrace of Lincoln's-Inn-Fields gardens, and to draw a force of armed men together at the Exchange. The prisoner had received blank promissory-notes signed in the Pretender's own hand, and also treasonable letters full of cant words of the party in disguised names—such as Mr. Atkins for the Pretender, Mrs. Barbara Smith for the army, and Mr. Fountaine for himself.

It was proved that, at an audience in Rome, Layer had assured the Pretender that the South Sea losses had done good to his cause; and the Pretender and the Pretender's wife (through their proxies, Lord North and Grey, and the Duchess of Ormond) had stood as godfather and godmother to his (Layer's) daughter's child.

He was executed at Tyburn in May 1723, and avowed his principles even under the gallows. His head was taken to Newgate, and the next day fixed upon Temple Bar; but his quarters were delivered to his relations to be decently interred.

In April 1773 Boswell dined at Mr. Beauclerk's with Dr. Johnson, Lord Charlemont, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some other members of the Literary Club—it being the evening when Boswell was to be balloted for as candidate for admission into that distinguished society.[22] The conversation turned on Westminster Abbey, and on the new and commendable practice of erecting monuments to great men in St. Paul's; upon which the doctor observed—

"I remember once being with Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey. While we surveyed the [Pg 18] Poets' Corner, I said to him—

'Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur illis.'

When we got to Temple Bar he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it, and slily whispered —

'Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur *istis*.'"[23]

This walk must have taken place a year or two before 1773, for in 1772, as we have seen, the last head but one fell.

O'Keefe, the dramatist, who arrived in England on August 12, 1762, the day on which the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.) was born, describes the heads of poor Townley and Fletcher as stuck up on high poles, not over the central archway, but over the side posterns. Parenthetically he mentions that he had also seen the walls of Cork gaol garnished with heads, like the ramparts of the seraglio at Constantinople.[24]

O'Keefe tells us that he heard the unpopular peace of 1763 proclaimed at Temple Bar, and witnessed the heralds in the Strand knock at the city gate. The duke of Nivernois, the French ambassador on that occasion, was a very little man, who wore a coat of richly-embroidered blue velvet, and a small *chapeau*, which set the fashion of the Nivernois hat.[25]

At the proclamation of the short peace of Amiens, the king's marshal, with his officers, having ridden down the Strand from Westminster, stopped at Temple Bar, which was kept shut to show that there commenced the Lord Mayor's jurisdiction. The herald's trumpets were blown thrice; the junior officer then tapped at the gate with his cane, upon which the City marshal, in the most unconscious way possible, answered, "Who is there?" The herald replied, "The officers-of-arms, who seek entrance into the City to publish his majesty's proclamation of peace." On this the gates were flung open, and the herald alone was [Pg 19] admitted, and conducted to the Lord Mayor. The latter then read the royal warrant, and returning it to the bearer, ordered the City marshal to open the gate for the whole procession. The Lord Mayor and aldermen then joined it, and proceeded to the Royal Exchange, where the proclamation, that was to bid the cannon cease and chain up the dogs of war, was read for the last time.

THE LORD MAYOR’S SHOW. AFTER HOGARTH.

The timber work and doors of Temple Bar have been often renewed since 1672. New doors were hung for Nelson’s funeral, when the Bar was to be closed; and again at the funeral of Wellington, when the plumes and trophies had to be removed in order that the car might pass through the gate, which was covered with dull theatrical finery.[26]

The old, black, mud-splashed gates of Temple Bar are also shut whenever the sovereign has occasion to enter the City. This is an old custom, a tradition of the times when the city was proud of its privileges, and sometimes even jealous of royalty. When the cavalcade approaches, a herald, in his tabard of crimson and gold lace, sounds a trumpet before the portal of the City; another herald knocks; a parley ensues; the gates are then thrown open, and the Lord Mayor appearing, kneels and hands the sword of the city to his sovereign, who graciously returns it. [Pg 20]

Stow describes a scene like this in the old days of the “timber house,” when Queen Elizabeth was on her way to old St. Paul’s to return thanks to God for the discomfiture of the Armada. The City waits fluted, trumpeted, and fiddled from the roof of the gate; while below, the Lord Mayor and his brethren, in scarlet gowns, received and welcomed their brave queen, delivering up the sword which, after certain speeches, she re-delivered to the mayor, who, then taking horse, rode onward to St. Paul’s bearing it in its shining sheath before her.[27]

In the June after the execution of Charles I., when Cromwell had dispersed the mutinous regiments with his horse, and pistolled or hanged their leaders, a day of thanksgiving was appointed, and the Parliament, the Council of State, and the Council of the Army, after endless sermons, dined together at Grocers’ Hall; on that day Lenthall, the Speaker, received the sword of state from the mayor at the Bar, and assumed the functions of royalty.

The same ceremony took place when Queen Anne went to St. Paul’s to return thanks for the Duke of Marlborough’s victories, and again when George III. came to return thanks for a recovery from his fit of insanity, and when Queen Victoria passed on her way to Cornhill to open the Royal Exchange.

Temple Bar naturally does not figure much in the early City pageants, because, after proceeding to Westminster by water, the mayor and aldermen usually landed at St. Paul’s Stairs. [Pg 21]

It is, we believe, first mentioned in the great festivities when the City brought poor Anne Boleyn, in 1533, from Greenwich to the Tower, and on the second day after conducted her through the chief streets and honoured her with shows. On that day the Fleet Street conduit ran claret, and Temple Bar was newly painted and repaired; there also stood singing men and children, till the company rode on to Westminster Hall. The next day was the coronation.[28]

On the 19th of February 1546-7 the young King Edward VI. passed through London, the day before his coronation. At the Fleet Street conduit two hogsheads of wine were given to the people. The gate at Temple Bar was also painted and fashioned with varicoloured battlements and buttresses, richly hung with cloth of arras, and garnished with fourteen standards. There were eight French trumpeters blowing their best, besides a pair of “regals,” with children singing to the same.[29]

In September 1553 Queen Mary rode through London, the day before her coronation, in a chariot covered with cloth of tissue, and drawn by six horses draped with the same. Minstrels played at Ludgate, and the Temple Bar was newly painted and hung.[30]

But even a greater time came for the old City boundary in January 1558-9, when Queen Elizabeth went from the Tower to Westminster. Temple Bar was “finely dressed” up with the two giants—Gog and Magog (now in the Guildhall)—who held between them a poetical recapitulation of all the other pageantries, both in Latin and English. On the south side was a noise of singing children, one of whom, richly attired as a poet, gave the queen farewell in the name of the whole city.[31]

In 1603 King James, Queen Anne of Denmark, and Prince Henry Frederick passed through “the honourable City and Chamber” of London, and were welcomed with pageants. The last [Pg 22] arch, that of Temple Bar, represented a temple of Janus. The principal character was Peace, with War grovelling at her feet; by her stood Wealth; below sat the four handmaids of Peace, —Quiet treading on Tumult, Liberty on Servitude, Safety on Danger, and Felicity on Unhappiness. There was then recited a poetical dialogue by the Flamen Martialis and the Genius Urbis, written by Ben Jonson.

Here, hitherto, the pageantry had always ceased, but the Strand suburbs having now greatly increased, there was an additional pageant beyond Temple Bar, which had been thought of and perfected in only twelve days. The invention was a rainbow; and the moon, sun, and pleiades advanced between two magnificent pyramids seventy feet high, on which were drawn out the king’s pedigrees through both the English and the Scottish monarchs. A speech composed by Ben Jonson was delivered by Electra.[32]

When Charles II. came through London, according to custom, the day before his coronation, I suspect that “the fourth arch in Fleet Street” was close to Temple Bar. It was of the Doric and Ionic orders, and was dedicated to Plenty, who made a speech, surrounded by Bacchus, Ceres, Flora, Pomona, and the Winds; but whether the latter were alive or only dummies, I cannot say.

The *London Gazette* of February 8, 1665-6, announces the proclamation of war against France; and Pepys mentions this as also the day on which they went into mourning at court for the King of Spain. War was proclaimed by the herald-at-arms and two of his brethren, his majesty’s sergeants-at-arms, and trumpeters, with the other usual officers before Whitehall, and afterwards (the Lord Mayor and his brethren assisting) at Temple Bar, and in other usual parts of the City.

James II., in 1687, honoured Sir John Shorter as Lord Mayor with his presence at an inaugurative banquet at Guildhall. The king was accompanied by Prince George of Denmark, [Pg 23] and was met by the two sheriffs at Temple Bar.

TEMPLE BAR, 1746.

On Lord Mayor’s Day, 1689, when King William and Queen Mary came to the City to see the show, the City militia regiments lined the street as far as Temple Bar, and beyond came the

red and blue regiments of Middlesex and Westminster; the soldiers, at regulated distances, holding lighted flambeaux in their hands, and all the houses being illuminated.[33]

In 1697, when Macaulay's hero, William III., made a triumphant entry into London to celebrate the conclusion of the peace of Ryswick, the procession included fourscore state coaches, each with six horses; the three City regiments guarded Temple Bar, and beyond them came the liveries of the several companies, with their banners and ensigns displayed. [34] [Pg 24]

George III. in his day, and Queen Victoria in her and our own, passed through Temple Bar in state more than once, on their way into the City; the last occasion was on February 1872, when the Queen proceeded to St. Paul's to offer thanks for the recovery of her son the Prince of Wales. Through it also the bodies of Nelson and of Wellington were borne to their last resting place in St. Paul's.

On the auspicious entrance into London of the fair Princess Alexandra, the old gate was hung with tapestry of gold tissue, powdered with crimson hearts; and very mediæval and gorgeous it looked; but the real days of pageants are gone by. We shall never again see fountains running wine, nor maidens blowing gold-leaf into the air, as in the luxurious days of our Plantagenet kings.

There are many portals in the world loftier and more beautiful than our dull, black arch of Temple Bar. The Vatican has grander doorways, the Louvre more stately entrances, but through no gateway in the world have surely passed onwards to death so many millions of wise and brave men, or so many thinkers who have urged forward learning and civilisation, and carried the standard of struggling humanity farther into space.

[Pg 25]

ST. CLEMENT'S CHURCH IN THE STRAND, 1753.

CHAPTER III.

THE STRAND (SOUTH SIDE).

Essex Street was formerly part of the Outer Temple, the western wing of the Knight Templars' quarter. The outer district of these proud and wealthy Crusaders stretched as far as the present Devereux Court; those gentler spoilers, the mediæval lawyers, having extended their frontiers quite as far as their rooted-out predecessors. From the Prior and Canons of the Holy Sepulchre[35] it was transferred, in the reign of Edward II. to the Bishops of Exeter, who built a palace here and occupied it till the reign of Henry VII. or Henry VIII.

The first tenant of Exeter House was the ill-fated Walter Stapleton, Lord Treasurer of England, a firm adherent to the luckless Edward II., against his queen and the turbulent [Pg 26]

barons. In 1326, when Isabella landed from France to chase the Spensers from her husband's side, and advanced on London, the weak king and his evil counsellors fled to the Welsh frontier; but the bishop held out stoutly for his king, and, as custos of the City of London, demanded the keys from the Lord Mayor, Hammond Chickwell, to prevent the treachery of the disaffected city. The watchful populace, roused by Isabella's proclamation that had been hung on the new cross in Cheapside, rose in arms, seized the vacillating mayor, and took the keys. They next ran to Exeter House, then newly erected, fired the gates, and burnt all the plate, jewels, money, and goods. The bishop, at that time in the fields, being almost too proud to show fear, rode straight to the northern door of St. Paul's to take sanctuary. There the mob tore him from his horse, stripped him of his armour, and dragging him to Cheapside, proclaimed him a traitor, a seducer of the king, and an enemy of their liberties, and lopping off his head, set it on a pole. The corpse was buried without funeral service in an old churchyard of the Pied Friars.[36] His brother and some servants were also beheaded, and their bleeding and naked bodies thrown on a heap of rubbish by the river side.

Exeter Place was shortly afterwards rebuilt, but the new house seemed a doomed place, and brought no better fortune to its new owners. Lord Paget, who changed its name to Paget House, fought at Boulogne under the poet Earl of Surrey, was ambassador at the court of Charles V., and on his return obtained a peerage and the garter. He fell with the Protector Somerset, being accused of having planned the assassination of the Duke of Northumberland at Paget House. Released from the Tower, he was deprived of the garter upon the malicious pretence that he was not a gentleman by blood. Queen Mary, however, restored the fallen man to honour, made him Lord Privy Seal, and sent him on an embassy.

The next occupier of the unlucky house, Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and son of the poet Earl of Surrey, maintained in its chambers an almost royal magnificence. It was here he was arrested for conspiring, with the aid of Mary Queen of Scots, the Pope, and the King of Spain, to marry Mary and restore the Popish religion. [Pg 27]

The duke's ambition and treason were fully proved by his own intercepted letters; indeed, he himself confessed his guilt, though he had denounced Mary to Elizabeth as a "notorious adulteress and murderer." To crown his rashness, meanness, and treason, he wrote from the Tower the most abject letters to Elizabeth, imploring her clemency. He was privately beheaded in 1572, but his estates were restored to his children.[37] It was under the mat, hard by a window in the entry towards the duke's bedchamber, that the celebrated alphabet in cipher[38] was hidden, which the duke afterwards concealed under a roof tile, where it was found, unmasking all his plans.

In the Tower the unhappy plotter had written affecting letters to his son Philip, bidding him worship God, avoid courts, and beware of ambition.[39] The warning of the man whose eyes had been opened too late is touching. The writer, speaking of court life, remarks, "It hath no certainty. Either a man, by following thereof, hath too much worldly pomp, which in the end throws him down headlong, or else he liveth there unsatisfied, either that he cannot obtain to himself that he would, or else that he cannot do for his friends as his heart desireth."

Poor Philip did not benefit much by these lessons, but remained simple Earl of Arundel, was repeatedly committed to the Tower, as by necessity an ill-wisher to Elizabeth, and eventually died there after ten weary years of imprisonment. His initials are still to be found on the walls of one of the chambers in the Beauchamp Tower.

Fools never learn the lessons which Time tries so hard to beat into them. Plotter succeeds plotter, and the rough lesson of the headsman seldom teaches the conspirator's successor to cease from conspiring. [Pg 28]

To the Norfolks succeeded Dudley, the false Earl of Leicester, the black or gipsy earl, as he was called from his swarthy Italian complexion. Leicester, like the duke before him, plotted with Mary's Jesuits and assassins, and at the same time contrived to keep in favour with his own jealous queen, in spite of all his failures and schemings in Holland, and his suspected assassinations of his enemies in England. Leicester died of fever the year of the Armada (1588), on his return from the camp at Tilbury, leaving Leicester Place to Robert Devereux, his step-son, the Earl of Essex,[40] who succeeded to his favour at court, but was doomed to an untimely death.

It was to the great Lord of Kenilworth—that dark, mysterious man, who perhaps deserved more praise than historians usually give him—that Spenser dedicated his poem of "Virgil's Gnat." In his beautiful "Prothalamion" on the marriage of Lady Elizabeth and Lady Catherine Somerset, he speaks somewhat abjectly of Leicester, ingeniously contriving to remind Essex of his father-in-law's bounty. "Near to the Temple," the needy poet says,

> "Stands a stately place,
> *Where I gayned giftes* and the goodly grace
> Of that great lord who there was wont to dwell,
> Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
> But, ah! here fits not well
> Old woes."

Then the poet goes on to eulogise Essex, who, however, it is supposed, after all allowed him

to die in want. But there is a mystery about Spenser's death. He returned from Ireland, beggared and almost broken-hearted, in October or November 1599, and died in the January following, just as Essex was preparing to start to Ireland. In that whirl of ambition, the poor poet may perhaps have been rather overlooked than wilfully slighted. This at least is certain, that he was buried in Westminster Abbey, near Chaucer's tomb, the Earl of Essex defraying the expenses of his public funeral. [Pg 29]

It was in his prison-house near the Temple that the hair-brained Earl of Essex shut himself sulkily up, when Queen Elizabeth had given him a box on the ears, after a dispute about the new deputy for Ireland, in which the earl had shown a petulant violence unworthy of the pupil of Burleigh.

Far too much sympathy has been shown with this rash, imperious, and unbearable young noble. He was sent to Ireland, and there concluded a disgraceful, wilful, and traitorous treaty with one of England's most inveterate and dangerous enemies. He returned from that "cursedest of all islands," as he called it, against express command, and was with difficulty dissuaded from landing in open rebellion. Generous and frank he may have been, but his submission to the mild and well-deserved punishment of confinement to his own house was as base and abject as it was false and hypocritical.

Alarmed, mortified, and enraged at the duration of his banishment from court, and at the refusal of a renewed grant for the monopoly of sweet wines, Essex betook himself to open rebellion, urged on by ill-advisers and his own reckless impatient spirit. He invited the Puritan preachers to prayers and sermons; he plotted with the King of Scotland. It was arranged at secret meetings at Drury House (then Sir Charles Daver's) to seize Whitehall and compel the queen to dismiss Cecil and other ministers hostile to Essex.

Sir Christopher Blount was to seize the palace gates, Davies the hall, Davers the guard-room and presence-chamber, while Essex, rushing in from the Mews with some hundred and twenty adherents, was to compel the queen to assemble a parliament to dismiss his enemies, and to fix the succession. All these plans were proposed to Essex in writing—the arch-conspirator was never himself present.

The delay of letters from Scotland led to the premature outbreak of the plot. An order was at once sent summoning Essex to the council, and the palace guards were doubled. [Pg 30]

On Sunday, February 7, 1601, Essex, fearing instant arrest, assembled his friends, and determined to arm and sally forth to St. Paul's Cross, where the Lord Mayor and aldermen were hearing the sermon, and urge them to follow him to the palace. On the Lord Keeper and other noblemen coming to the house to know the cause of the assembly, Essex locked them into a back parlour, guarded by musketeers, and followed by two hundred gentlemen, drew his sword and rushed into the street like a madman "running a-muck."

Temple Bar was opened for him; but at St. Paul's Cross he found no meeting. The citizens crowded round him, but did not join his band. When he reached the house of Sheriff Smith, the crafty Sheriff had stolen away.

In the meantime Lord Burleigh and the Earl of Cumberland, with a herald, had entered the City and proclaimed Essex a traitor; a thousand pounds being offered for his apprehension. Despairing of success, the mad earl then turned towards his own house, and finding Ludgate barricaded by a strong party of citizens under Sir John Levison, attempted to force his way, killing two or three citizens, and losing Tracy, a young friend of his own. Then striking down to Queenhithe, the earl and some fifty followers who were left took boat for Essex Gardens.

On entering his house, he found that his treacherous confidant, Sir Ferdinand Gorges, had made terms with the court and released the hostages. Essex then, by the advice of Lord Sandys, resolved to fortify the place, hold out to the last extremity, and die sword in hand. In a few minutes, however, the Lord Admiral's troops surrounded the building. A parley ensued between Sir Robert Sidney in the garden, and Essex and his rash ally, Shakspere's patron, the Earl of Southampton, who were on the roof. The earl's demands were proudly refused, but a respite of two hours was given him, that the ladies and female servants might retire. [Pg 31] About six the battering train arrived from the Tower, and Essex then wisely surrendered at discretion.[41]

The night being very dark, and the tide not serving to pass the dangers of London Bridge, Essex and Southampton were taken by boat to Lambeth Palace, and the next morning to the Tower.

Essex had fully deserved death. He was executed privately, by his own request, at the Tower, February 25, 1601. Meyrick, his steward, and Cuffe, his secretary, were hanged and quartered at Tyburn. Sir Charles Davers and Sir Christopher Blount perished on Tower Hill. Other prisoners were fined and imprisoned, and the Earl of Southampton pined in durance till the accession of James I. (1603).

Among the even older tenants of Essex House, we must not forget that unhappy woman, the earl's mother, who, first as Lettice Knollys, then as Countess of Essex, afterwards as Lady Leicester, and next as wife of Sir Christopher Blount, was a barb in Elizabeth's side for thirty years. Married as a girl to a noble husband, she gave up her honour to a seducer, and there is reason to think that she consented to the taking of his life. While Devereux lived,

she deceived the queen by a scandalous amour, and, after his death, by a clandestine marriage with the Earl of Leicester. While Dudley lived, she wallowed in licentious love with Christopher Blount, his groom of the horse. When her second husband expired in agony at Cornbury, not an hour's gallop from the place in which Amy Robsart died, she again mortified the queen by a secret union with her last seducer, Blount. Her children rioted in the same vices. Essex himself, with his ring of favourites, was not more profligate than his sister Penelope, Lady Rich.[42]

This sister was the (Platonic?) mistress of Sydney, whose stolen love for her is pictured in his most voluptuous verse. On his death at Zütphen, she lived with Lord Montjoy, though her husband, Lord Rich, was still alive. Nor was her sister Dorothy one whit better. After [Pg 32] marrying one husband secretly and against the canon, she wedded Percy, the wizard Earl of Northumberland, whom she led the life of a dog, until he indignantly turned her out of doors.[43] It is not easy, observes Mr. Dixon, except in Italian story, to find a group of women so depraved and so detestable as the mother and sisters of the Earl of Essex.

Essex, the rash noble, who died at the untimely age of thirty-three, had a dangerous, ill-tempered face, if we may judge by More's portrait of him. He stooped in walking, danced badly, and was slovenly in his dress;[44] yet being a generous, frank friend, an impetuous and chivalrous if not wise soldier, and an enemy of Spain and the Cecils, he became a favourite of the people. The legend of the ring sent by Essex to the queen,[45] and maliciously detained by the Countess of Nottingham, we shall presently discuss. No applications for mercy by Essex (and he made many during his trial) affect the question of his deserving death. That the queen consented with regret to the death of Essex, on the other hand, needs no doubtful legend to serve as proof.

Elizabeth had forgiven the earl's joining the Cadiz fleet against her wish, she forgave his secret marriage, she forgave his shameful abandonment of his Irish command and even his dishonourable treaty with Tyrone, but she could not forgive an open and flagrant rebellion at a time when she was so surrounded by enemies.

An historical writer, gifted with an eminently analytical mind, Mr. Hepworth Dixon, has lately, with great ingenuity, endeavoured to refute the charges of ingratitude brought against Bacon for his time serving and (to say the least) undue eagerness in aggravating the crimes of his old and generous friend. There can be, however, no doubt that Bacon too soon abandoned the unfortunate Essex, and, moreover, threw the weight of much misapplied learning into the scale against the prisoner. No minimising of the favours received by him [Pg 33] from Essex can in my mind remove this stain from Bacon's reputation.

In Essex House was born a less brilliant but a happier and a more prudent man—Robert, Earl of Essex, afterwards the well-known Parliamentary general. A child when his father died on the scaffold, he was placed under the care of his grandmother, Lady Walsingham, and was afterwards at Eton under the severe Saville. A good, worthy, heavy lad, brought up a Presbyterian, he was betrothed when only fourteen to Lady Frances Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, who was herself only thirteen.

The earl travelled on the Continent for four years, and on his return was married at Essex House. It was for this inauspicious marriage that Ben Jonson wrote one of his most beautiful and gorgeous masques, Inigo Jones contributing the machinery, and Ferrabosco the music. The rough-grained poet seems to have been delighted with the success of the entertainment, for he says, "Nor was there wanting whatsoever might give to the furniture a complement, either in riches or strangeness of the habits, delicacy of dances, magnificence of the scene, or divine rapture of music."[46]

The countess was already, even at this time, the mistress of Robert Carr, the handsome minion of James I. She obtained a divorce from her husband in 1613, and espoused her infamous lover. The cruel poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury for opposing the new marriage followed; and the earl and countess, found guilty, but spared by the weak king, lingered out their lives in mutual reproaches and contempt, loathed and neglected by all. Fate often runs in sequences—the earl was unhappy with his second wife, from whom he also was divorced.

Essex emerged from a country retirement to turn general for the Parliament. Just, affable, and prudent, he was a popular man till he became marked as a moderatist desirous for peace, and was ousted by the artful "Self-denying Ordinance." If he had lived it is probable he would either have lost his head or have fled to France and turned cavalier. His death [Pg 34] during the time that Charles I. remained a prisoner with the Scotch army at Newcastle saved him from either fate. With him the Presbyterian moderatists and the House of Peers finally lost even their little remaining power.

When the earl resigned his commission, the House of Commons went to Essex House to return their ex-general thanks for his great services. A year later they followed him to the grave (1646), little perhaps thinking how bitterly the earl had reproached them for ingratitude, and what plans he had devised to reform the army and to check Cromwell and Fairfax.[47]

On the earl's death, his Royalist brother-in-law, the Marquis of Hertford, attempted to seize his ready money and papers, but was frustrated by the Parliament.[48]

Whether the next earl, who on being arrested for sharing in the Rye-House plot destroyed

himself at the Tower, lived in his father's house, I do not know, but the mansion, so unlucky to its owners, was occupied by families of rank for some time after the Restoration, and then falling into neglect and ruin, as fashion began to flow westward, was subdivided, and a street, called Essex Street, was built on part of its site.

Samuel Patterson, the bookseller and auctioneer, lived in Essex Street, in 1775, in rooms formerly the residence of Sir Orlando Bridgeman. He was originally a bag-maker. Afterwards Charles Dibdin commenced his entertainments in these rooms, and here his fine song of "Poor Jack" became famous.[49] Patterson's youngest child was Dr. Johnson's godson, and became a pupil of Ozias Humphrey.[50] Patterson wrote a book of travels in Sterne's manner, but claimed a priority to that strange writer.

George Fordyce, a celebrated epicurean doctor of the eighteenth century, lived in the same street. For twenty years he dined daily at Dolly's Chop-house, and at his solitary meal he [Pg 35] always took a tankard of strong ale, a quarter of a pint of brandy, and a bottle of port. After these potations, he walked to his house and gave a lecture to his pupils.[51]

Dr. Johnson, the year before he died, formed a club in Essex Street, at the Essex Head, a tavern kept by an old servant of his friend, Thrale, the brewer. It was less select than the Literary Club, but cheaper. Johnson, writing to Sir Joshua Reynolds to join it, says, "the terms are lax and the expences light—we meet thrice a week, and he who misses forfeits twopence."[52] Sir John Hawkins spitefully calls it "a low ale-house association;" but Windham, Daines Barrington, Horsley, Boswell, and Brocklesby were members of it; for rich men were less luxurious than they are now, and enjoyed the sociable freedom of a tavern. Sir Joshua refused to join, probably because Barry, who had insulted him, and was very pugnacious, had become a member.[53] It went on happily for many years, says Boswell, whom Johnson, when he proposed him for election, called "a clubable man." Towards the end of his life the great lexicographer grew more and more afraid of solitude, and a club so near his home was probably a great convenience to him.

Near Devereux Court are the premises of the well-known tea-dealers, Messrs. Twining. The graceful recumbent stone figures of Chinamen over the Strand front have much elegance, and must have come from some good hand. One of this family was a Colchester rector, and a translator of Aristotle's *Poetics*. He was an excellent man, a good linguist and musician, and a witty companion. He was contemporary with Gray and Mason, the poets, at Cambridge. In the back parlour is a portrait of the founder of the house. A century and a half ago ladies used to drive to the door of Twining's and drink tiny cups of the new and fashionable beverage as they sat in their coaches. There is an epigram extant, written either by Theodore Hook or one of the Smiths; the point of it is, that if you took away his T, Twining [Pg 36] would be Wining.

In 1652 Constantine, the Greek servant of a Levant merchant, opened in Devereux Court a coffee-house, which became known as "The Grecian." In 1664-5 advertised his Turkey "coffee bery," chocolate, "sherbet," and tea, as good and cheap, and announced his readiness to give gratuitous instructions in the art of preparing the said liquors.[54]

In the same year, a Greek named Pasqua Rosee had also established a house in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill, for the sale of "the coffee drink."[55]

John Evelyn describes a Greek fellow-student, afterwards Bishop of Smyrna, drinking coffee when he was at college in about 1637.[56]

In April 1709 Steele, in No. 1 of the *Tatler*, announces that he shall date all learned articles from the "Grecian," all gallantry from "White's," all poetry from "Wills's," all foreign and domestic news from "St. James's."

In 1710-11 Addison, starting the "*Spectator* along with Steele," tells us his own grave face was well known at the Grecian; and in No. 49 (April 1711), the *Spectator* describes the spleen and inward laughter with which he views at the Grecian the young Templars come in, about 8 A.M., either dressed for Westminster, and with the preoccupied air of assumed business, or in gay cap, slippers, and particoloured dressing-gowns, rising early to publish their laziness, and being displaced by busier men towards noon. Dr. King relates a story of two hot-blooded young gentlemen quarrelling one evening at this coffee-house about the accent of a Greek word. Stepping out into Devereux Court, they fought, and one of them being run through the body, died on the spot.[57] This Dr. King was principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, and a staunch Tory. It is he who relates the secret visit of the Pretender to London. He died in 1763.

Ralph Thoresby, the Leeds topographer, met Dr. Sloane, the secretary of the Royal Society, [Pg 37] by appointment at the Grecian in May 1712; and again in June he describes retiring to the Grecian after a meeting of the Royal Society, of which he was a fellow, with the president, Sir Isaac Newton,[58] Dr. Halley, who published the *Principia* for Newton, and Keill, who opposed Leibnitz about the invention of Fluxions, and defended Newton's doctrines against the Cartesians. (The Royal Society held its meetings at this time in Crane Court, Fleet Street.) Roger North, Attorney-General under James II., who died in 1733, describes in his *Examen* the Privy Council Board, as held at the Grecian coffee-house. The Grecian was closed in 1843, and has been since turned into the Grecian Chambers. On what was once the front of the coffee-house frequented by Steele and Addison, there is a bust of Essex, with the

date 1676.

In this court, at the house of one Kedder, in 1678, died Marchmont Needham, a vigorous but unprincipled turncoat and newspaper writer, who three times during the civil wars changed his principles to save his worthless neck. He was alternately the author of the *Mercurius Britannicus* for the Presbyterians, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* for the king, and *Mercurius Politicus* for the Independents. The great champion of the late usurper, as the Cavaliers called him, "whose pen, compared with others', was as a weaver's beam," latterly practised as a physician, but with small success.[59]

There is a letter of Pope addressed to Fortescue, his "counsel learned in the law," at Tom's coffee-house, in Devereux Court. Fortescue, the poet's kind, unpaid lawyer, was afterwards (in 1738) Master of the Rolls. Pope's imitation of the first satire of Horace, suggested by Bolingbroke, was addressed to Mr. Fortescue, and published in 1733. This lawyer was the author of the droll report in *Scriblerus* of "Stradling *versus* Styles," wherein Sir John Swale [Pg 38] leaves all his black and white horses to one Stradling, but the question is whether this bequest includes Swale's piebald horses. It is finally proved that the horses are all mares.[60]

Dr. Birch, the antiquary, the dull writer but good talker, frequented Tom's; and there Akenside—short, thin, pale, strumous, and lame, scrupulously neat, and somewhat petulant, vain, and irritable—spent his winter evenings, entangled in disputes and altercations, chiefly on subjects of literature and politics, that fixed on his character the stamp of haughtiness and self-conceit, and drew him into disagreeable situations.[61] Akenside was a contradictory man. By turns he was placid, irritable; simple, affected; gracious, haughty; magnanimous, mean; benevolent, yet harsh, and sometimes even brutal. At times he manifested a childlike docility, and at other times his vanity and arrogance made him seem almost a madman.[62]

Gay, in his *Trivia*, describes Milford Lane so faithfully that it might pass for a yesterday's sketch of the same place. He writes—

> "Where the fair columns of St. Clement stand,
> Whose straitened bounds incroach upon the Strand;
> Where the low pent-house bows the walker's head,
> And the rough pavement wounds the yielding tread;
> Where not a post protects the narrow space,
> And strung in twines combs dangle in thy face.
> Summon at once thy courage—rouse thy care;
> Stand firm, look back, be resolute, beware!
> Forth issuing from steep lanes, the collier's steeds
> Drag the black load; another cart succeeds;
> Team follows team, crowds heap'd on crowds appear."

Stow mentions Milford Lane, but gives no derivation for its name.[63] The coarse poem by Henry Savill, commonly attributed to the witty Earl of Dorset, beginning—

> "In Milford Lane, near to St. Clement's steeple."[64] [Pg 39]

gave the street for a time such a disagreeable notoriety as the pillory gives to a rogue.

Arundel House, in the Strand, was the old inn or town-house of the Bishops of Bath, stolen by force in the rough, greedy times of Edward VI., by the bad Lord Thomas Seymour, the admiral, and the brother of the Protector; from him it derived the name of Seymour Place, and must have been conveniently near to the ambitious kinsman who afterwards beheaded him. This Admiral had married Henry VIII.'s widow, Catherine Parr; and she dying in childbed, he began to woo, in his coarse boisterous way, the young Princess Elizabeth, who had been living under the protection of her mother-in-law, who was indeed generally supposed to have been poisoned by the admiral. His marriage with Elizabeth would have smoothed his way to the throne in spite of her father's cautious will. It was said that Elizabeth always blushed when she heard his name. He died on the scaffold. Old Bishop Latimer, in a sermon, declared "he was a wicked man, and the realm is well rid of him."[65] It is certain that, whatever were his plots, he had projected a marriage between Lady Jane Grey and the young king.

The admiral's house was bought, on its owner's fall, by Henry Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, for the nominal sum of £41: 6: 8, with several other messuages and lands adjoining.[66] The earl dying in 1579, was succeeded by his grandson, Philip Howard, son of the Duke of Norfolk, the owner of Essex House adjoining, who was beheaded for his intrigues with Mary of Scotland. He died in the Tower in 1598. The house then passed into the keeping of Robert Cary, Earl of Monmouth,[67] during the minority of Thomas Howard, Philip's son.

In Arundel Palace, in 1603, died the Countess of Nottingham, sister of Sir Robert Cary;[68] she was buried at Chelsea. It is of this countess that Lady Spelman, a granddaughter of Sir [Pg 40] Robert Cary, used to tell the doubtful legend of the ring[69] given by Queen Elizabeth to Lord Essex, which an acute writer of the present day believes to be a pure fabrication of the times of James I.

ARUNDEL HOUSE, 1646.

The story runs thus:—When the Countess Catherine was dying, she sent to the Queen to tell her that she had a secret to reveal, without disclosing which she could not die in peace. The Queen came, and the countess then told her that when Essex was in the Tower, under sentence of death, he one morning threw a ring from his window to a boy passing underneath, hiring him to carry it to his friend Lady Scrope, the countess's sister, and beg of her to present it in his name to the queen, who had promised to protect him whenever he sent her that keepsake, and who was then waiting for some such sign of his submission. The boy not clearly understanding the message, brought the ring to the countess, who showed it to her husband, and he insisted on her keeping it. The countess, having made this disclosure, begged her majesty's forgiveness; but the queen answered, "God may forgive you, but I never can!" and burst from the room in a paroxysm of rage and grief. From that time Elizabeth became perturbed in mind, refused to eat or sleep, and died a fortnight after the countess. Now this is absurd. The queen never repented the death of that wrongheaded traitor, and really died of a long-standing disease which had well-defined symptoms.[70]

[Pg 41]

At Arundel House lodged that grave, wise minister of Henry IV. of France, the Duc de Sully, then only the Marquis de Rosny. He describes the house with complacency as fine and commodious, and having a great number of apartments on the same floor. It was really a mean and low building, but commanding a fine prospect of the river and Westminster, so fine, indeed, that Hollar took a view of London from the roof. The first night of his arrival Sully slept at the French ambassador's house in Butcher Row adjoining, a poor house with low rooms, a well staircase lit by a skylight, and small casements.[71]

ARUNDEL HOUSE, 1646.

In the time of James I., in whose reign the earldom was restored to Thomas Howard, Arundel House became a treasury of art. The travelled earl's collection comprised thirty-seven statues, one hundred and twenty-eight busts, and two-hundred and fifty inscribed marbles, exclusive of sarcophagi, altars, medals, gems, and fragments. Some of his noblest relics, however, he was not allowed to remove from Rome. Of this proud and princely amateur of art Lord Clarendon speaks with too obvious prejudice. He describes him as living in a world of his own, surrounded by strangers, and though illiterate, willing to be thought a scholar because he was a collector of works of art. Yet the historian admits that he had an air of gravity and greatness in his face and bearing. He affected an ancient and grave dress; but Clarendon asserts that this was all outside, and that his real disposition was "one of levity,"

[Pg 42]

as he was fond of childish and despicable amusements. Vansomer's portraits of the earl and countess contain views of the statue and picture galleries.[72] This illustrious nobleman, whom the excellent Evelyn calls "my noble friend," died in 1646. At the Restoration his house and marbles were restored to his grandson, Mr. Henry Howard; the antiquities were then lying scattered about Arundel Gardens, and were neglected and corroding, blanching with rain, and green with damp, much to the horror of Evelyn and other antiquaries, who regarded their fate with alarm and pity.

The old Earl of Arundel (whom Clarendon disliked) had been a collector of art in a magnificent and princely way. He despatched artist-agents to Italy, and even to Asia Minor, to buy pictures, drawings, statues, votive slabs, and gems. William Petty collected sculpture for him at Paros and Delos, but the collections were lost off Samos in a storm. He collected Holbein's and Albert Dürer's drawings, discovered the genius of Inigo Jones, and brought Hollar from Prague. He left England just before the troubles, having received many affronts from Charles's ministers, who had neglected to restore his ancient titles, went to Padua, and there died. The marbles Mr. Evelyn induced Mr. Howard, in 1667, to send to the University of Oxford; the statues were also given to Oxford by a later descendant; and the earl's library [Pg 43] (originally part of that of the King of Hungary) Mr. Evelyn persuaded the Duke of Norfolk to bestow on the Royal Society.[73]

The old earl was, I suspect, a proud, soured, and a rather arrogant, formal person. In a certain dispute about a rectory, he once said to King Charles I.: "Sir, this rectory was an appendant and a manour of mine until my grandfather unfortunately lost both his life and seven lordships, for the love he bore to your grandmother."[74]

After the Great Fire of London, Mr. Howard lent the Royal Society rooms in his house. In 1678 the palace was taken down, and the present Arundel, Surrey, Howard, and Norfolk streets were erected in its stead. The few marbles that remained were removed to Tart Hall, Westminster, and to Cuper's Gardens across the river.[75] Tart Hall was the residence of the Countess of Arundel: Cuper's Gardens belonged to a gardener of the Earl of Arundel. The Duke of Norfolk originally intended to build a more magnificent house on the old site, and even obtained an act of Parliament for the purpose; but fashion was already setting westward, and the design was abandoned.[76]

In Arundel Street lived Rymer, the historical antiquary, who died here in 1715; John Anstis, the Garter king-at-arms, resided here in 1715-16;[77] also Mrs. Porter, the actress, "over against the Blue Ball."

Gay, in his delightful *Trivia* sketches the "long Strand," and pauses to mourn over the glories of Arundel House. His walk is from "the Temple's silent walls," and he stays to look down at the site of the earl's mansion—

> ——"That narrow street, which steep descends,
> Whose building to the shining shore extends;
> Here Arundel's famed structure rear'd its frame—
> The street alone retains an empty name; [Pg 44]
> Where Titian's glowing paint the canvas warm'd,
> And Raphael's fair design with judgment charm'd,
> Now hangs the bellman's song, and pasted here
> The coloured prints of Overton appear;
> Where statues breathed, the work of Phidias' hands,
> A wooden pump or lonely watch-house stands;
> There Essex' stately pile adorned the shore;
> There Cecil's, Bedford's, Villiers'—now no more."

In the Strand, between Arundel and Norfolk Streets, in the year 1698, lived Sir Thomas Lyttelton, Speaker of the House of Commons, and father of Pope's friend, and the author of the *History of Henry the Second*, a ponderous and pompous work.

Next door to him lived the father of Bishop Burnet—a remarkable person, for he was a poor but honest lawyer, born at Edinburgh in 1643. A bookseller of the same name—a collateral descendant of the bishop whom Swift hated so cordially—afterwards occupied the house.

At the south-west corner of Norfolk Street, near the river, in his wild days lodged the Quaker Penn, son of Cromwell's stout Bristol admiral. He had been twice beaten and turned out of doors by his father for his fondness for Nonconformist society and prayer-meetings, and for refusing to stand uncovered in the presence of Charles II. or of the Duke of York, of whom later he became the suspected favourite. We do not generally associate the grave and fanatic Penn with a gay and licentious court, nor do we portray him to ourselves as slinking away from hawk-eyed bailiffs; and yet the venerated founder of repudiating Pennsylvania chose this house when he was sued for debts, as being convenient for slipping unobserved into a boat. In the eastern entrance he had a peep-hole, through which he could reconnoitre any suspicious visitor. On one occasion a dun, having sent in his name and waited an unconscionable time, knocked again. "Will not thy master see me?" he said to the servant. The knave was at least candid, for he replied: "Friend, he *has* seen thee, and he does not like thee."[78]

In Norfolk Street, in Penn's old house, afterwards resided for thirty years that truly good [Pg 45]

man, Dr. Richard Brocklesby, who in early life, during the Seven Years' War, had practised as an army surgeon. He was a friend of Burke and Dr. Johnson. To the former he left, or rather gave, a thousand pounds, and to the latter he offered an annuity of a hundred pounds a year, to enable him to travel for his health, and also apartments in his own house for the sake of medical advice, which Johnson affectionately and gratefully declined. The doctor was one of the most generous and amiable of men; he attended the poor for nothing, and had many pensioners. He died the day after returning from a visit to Burke at Beaconsfield. He had been warned against the fatigue of this journey, but had replied with true Christian philosophy, "My good friend, where's the difference whether I die at a friend's house, at an inn, or in a post-chaise? I hope I am prepared for such an event, and perhaps it would be as well to elude the anticipation of it."

Dr. Brocklesby was ridiculed by Foote, but Foote attacked virtue quite as often as vice. He was the physician who had attended Lord Chatham when he was struck down by illness in the House of Lords, a short time before his death.

In January 1698 Peter the Great arrived from Holland, and went straight to a house prepared for him in Norfolk Street, near the water side. On the following day he was visited by King William and the principal nobility. Incommoded here by visitors, the Czar removed to Admiral Benbow's house at Deptford, where he could live more retired. This Deptford house was Sayes Place, afterwards the Victualling Office, and had once belonged to the celebrated John Evelyn.

The "Honest Shippen" of Pope—William Shippen, M.P.—lived also in Norfolk Street: a brave, honest man, in an age when nearly every politician had his price. It was of him Sir Robert Walpole remarked "that he would not say who was corrupted, but he would say who was not corruptible, and that was Shippen."

Mortimer, a rough, picturesque painter, who was called "the English Salvator Rosa," and imitated that unsatisfactory artist in a coarse, sketchy kind of way, dwelt in this street. [Pg 46]

At No. 21 lived Albany Wallis, a friend and executor of Garrick. In this street also Addison makes that delightful old country gentleman, Sir Roger de Coverley, put up before he goes to Soho Square.[79]

At No. 8, in 1795, lived Samuel Ireland, the father of the celebrated literary impostor; and here were shown to George Chalmers, John Kemble, and other Shaksperian scholars, the forged plays which the public ultimately scented out as ridiculous.

In 1796 Mr. W. H. Ireland published a full confession of his forgeries, fully exonerating his father from all connivance in his foolish fraud, claiming forgiveness for a boyish deception begun without evil intention and without any thought of danger. "I should never have gone so far," he says, "but that the world praised the papers too much, and thereby flattered my vanity."[80] After the failure of "Vortigern," the father, Mr. S. Ireland, still credulous, had written a pamphlet, accusing Malone, his son's chief assailant, of mean malice and unbearable arrogance.

The true story of the forgery is this. W. H. Ireland, then only eighteen, was articled to a solicitor in New Inn, where he practised Elizabethan handwriting for the sake of deceiving credulous antiquaries. A forged deed exciting the admiration of his father, who was a collector of old tracts and a worshipper of Shakspere, led him to continue his deceptions, and to pretend to have discovered a hoard of Shaksperian MSS. A fellow clerk, one Talbot, afterwards an actor, discovering the forgeries, Ireland made him an accomplice. They then produced a "Profession of Faith," signed by Shakspere, which Dr. Parr and Dr. Warton (brother of the poet) declared contained "finer things" than all the Church Service. This foolish praise set the secretive lawyer's clerk on writing original verse,—a poem to Anne Hathaway, and the play of "Vortigern," the most recklessly impudent of all his impostures. [Pg 47] Boswell was the first to propose a certificate to be signed by all believers in the productions. Dr. Parr, thinking Boswell's writing too feeble, drew up another, which was signed by twenty-one noblemen, authors, and "celebrated literary characters." Boswell, characteristically enough, previous to signing his name, fell on his knees, and, "in a tone of enthusiasm and exultation, thanked God that he had lived to witness this discovery, and exclaimed that he could now die in peace."[81] Lords Kinnaird, Somerset, and Lauderdale were the noblemen. There were also present Bindley, Valpy, Pinkerton, Pye the poet laureate, Matthew Wyatt, and the present author's grandfather, the Rev. Nathaniel Thornbury, an intimate friend of Jenner and of Dr. Johnson, who had at this time been twelve years dead. The elder Ireland, in his pamphlet, alludes to the solemn and awful manner in which, before crowds of eminent characters, his son attested the genuineness of his forgeries. "I could not," says the honest fellow, "suffer myself to cherish the slightest suspicion of his veracity."[82]

Singularly enough Mr. Albany Wallis—(a solicitor, I believe), of Norfolk Street,—who had given to Garrick a mortgage deed bearing Shakspere's signature, became the most ardent believer in the unprincipled young clerk's deceptions.

The terms agreed upon for Ireland's forgery of "Vortigern" was £300 down, and a division of the receipts, deducting charges, for sixty nights. The play, however, lived only one night, for which the Irelands received their half, £103. The commentators Malone and Steevens

remained sceptical, and Kemble was suspicious and cold in the cause, though he was to be the hero; but the gulls and quidnuncs were numerous enough to cram the house, and that most commonplace of poets, Sir James Bland Burges, wrote the prologue. The final damnation of the play was secured by a rhapsody of Vortigern's, a patch-work thing from "Richard II." and "Henry IV." The fatal line— [Pg 48]

"And when the solemn mockery is o'er,"

convulsed the house.[83] Mr. W. H. Ireland in later life was editor of the *York Herald*, and died in 1835.[84]

Another eminent historical antiquary, Dr. Birch, lived in Norfolk Street. The son of a Quaker tradesman at Clerkenwell, he became a London clergyman and an historian, famous for his Sunday evenings' conversaziones, and was killed by a fall from his horse in 1766. He seems to have been a most pleasant, generous, and honest man. He edited Bacon's *Letters and Speeches*, and Thurloe's *State Papers*, etc. His chief work was his *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*. He left books, manuscripts, and money to the British Museum, for which let all scholars bless the good man's memory. He appears to have been a student of boundless industry, as from the Lambeth Library alone he transcribed with his own hand sixteen quarto volumes. He was rector of St. Margaret Pattens in Fenchurch Street. Dr. Birch must have been a kind husband, for his wife on her deathbed wrote him the following tender letter:—

> "This day I return you, my dearest life, my sincere, hearty thanks for every favour bestowed on your most faithful and obedient wife,
>
> Hannah Birch."

We leave it to the watchful cynic to remark that the doctor had been married only one year. It was of this worthy book-worm that Johnson said—"Yes, sir, he is brisk in conversation, but when he takes up the pen it benumbs him like a torpedo."

Strype describes Surrey Street as replenished with good buildings, especially that of Nevison Fox, Esq., towards the Strand, "which is a fine, large, and curious house of his own building," and the two houses that front the Thames, that on the east side being the Hon. Charles Howard's, brother to the Duke of Norfolk. Both of these houses had pleasant though small gardens towards the Thames.[85] [Pg 49]

In 1736 died here George Sale, the useful translator of the Mohammedan Bible, the Koran, that strange compound of pure prayers and impure plagiarisms from the laws of Moses. Sale had published his Koran in 1734, and in the year of his death he joined Paul Whitehead, Dr. Birch, and Mr. Strutt, in founding a "Society for the Encouragement of Learning." He spent many years in writing for the *Universal History*, in which Bayle's ten folio volumes were included.

Edward Pierce, a sculptor, son of a painter of altar-pieces and church-ceilings, and a pupil of Vandyke, lived at the corner of Surrey Street, and was buried in the Savoy. He helped Sir Christopher Wren to build St. Clement's church, and carved the four guardian dragons on the Monument of London. The statue of Sir William Walworth at the fishmongers' Hall is from his hand, and so is the bust of Thomas Evans in the hall of the painters and stainers. He executed also busts of Cromwell, Wren, and Milton.[86]

The charming actress, Mrs. Bracegirdle, lived in Howard Street. She was the belle and toast of London; every young man of mode was, or pretended to be, in love with her; and the wits wrote verses upon her beauty, in imitation of Sedley and Waller. Congreve tells us that it was the fashion to avow a tenderness for her. Rowe, in an imitation of an ode of Horace, urges the Earl of Scarsdale to marry her (though he had a wife living) and set the town at defiance.

Among this crowd of admirers was a Captain Hill, a half-cracked man-about-town, a drunken, profligate bully, of low character, and a friend of the infamous duellist, Lord Mohun. One of Mrs. Bracegirdle's favourite parts was Statira, her lover Alexander being her friend and neighbour, the eminent actor Mountfort. Cibber describes him in this character as "great, tender, persistent, despairing, transported, amiable." Hill, "that dark-souled fellow in the pit," as Leigh Hunt calls him, mistook the frantic extravagance of stage-passion for real love, and in a fit of mad jealousy swore to be revenged on Mountfort, and to carry off the lady by force. Lord Mohun, always ready for any desperate mischief, agreed to help him in his design. On the night appointed the friends dined together, and having changed clothes, went to Drury Lane Theatre at six o'clock; but as Mrs. Bracegirdle did not act that night, they next took a coach and drove to her lodgings in Howard Street. They then, finding that she had gone to supper with a Mr. Page, in Princes Street, Drury Lane, went to his house and waited till she came out. She appeared at last at the door, with her mother and brother, Mr. Page lighting them out. [Pg 50]

Hill immediately seized her, and endeavoured, with the aid of some hired ruffians, to drag her into the coach, where Lord Mohun sat with a loaded pistol in each hand; but her brother and Mr. Page rushing to the rescue, and an angry crowd gathering, Hill was forced to let go his hold and decamp. Mrs. Bracegirdle and her escort then proceeded to her lodgings in Howard Street, followed by Captain Hill and Lord Mohun on foot. On knocking at the door,

as it was said, to beg Mrs. Bracegirdle's pardon, they were refused admittance; upon which they sent for a bottle of wine to a neighbouring tavern, which they drank in the street, and then began to patrol up and down with swords drawn, declaring they were waiting to be revenged on Mountfort the actor. Messengers were instantly despatched to warn Mountfort, both by Mrs. Bracegirdle's landlady and his own wife, but he could not be found. The watch were also sent for, and they begged the two ruffians to depart peaceably. Lord Mohun replied, "He was a peer of the realm, that he had been drinking a bottle of wine, but that he was ready to put up his sword if they particularly desired it: but as for his friend, he had lost his scabbard." The cautious watch then went away.

In the meantime the unlucky Mountfort, suspecting no evil, passed down the street on his way home, heedless of warnings. On coming up to the swordsmen, a female servant heard the following conversation:—

Lord Mohun embraced Mountfort, and said— [Pg 51]

"Mr. Mountfort, your humble servant. I am glad to see you."

"Who is this?—Lord Mohun?" said Mountfort.

"Yes, it is."

"What brings your lordship here at this time of night?"

Lord Mohun replied—

"I suppose you were sent for, Mr. Mountfort?"

"No, indeed, I came by chance."

"Have you not heard of the business of Mrs. Bracegirdle?"

"Pray, my lord," said Hill, breaking in, "hold your tongue. This is not a convenient time to discuss this business."

Hill seemed desirous to go away, and pulled Lord Mohun's sleeve; but Mountfort, taking no notice of Hill, continued to address Lord Mohun, saying he was sorry to see him assisting Captain Hill in such an evil action, and begging him to forbear.

Hill instantly gave the actor a box on the ear, and on Mountfort demanding what that was for, attacked him sword in hand, and ran him through before he had time to draw his weapon. Mountfort died the next day of the wound, declaring with his last breath that Lord Mohun had offered him no violence. Hill fled from justice, and Lord Mohun was tried for murder, but unfortunately acquitted for want of evidence.

That fortunate poet, Congreve, whom Pope declared to be one of the three most honest-hearted and really good men in the Kit-cat Club, lived for some time in Howard Street, where he was a neighbour and frequent guest of Mrs. Bracegirdle.

Congreve, on becoming acquainted with the Duchess of Marlborough, removed from Howard Street to a better house in Surrey Street, where he died, January 19, 1729. The career of this son of a Yorkshire officer had been one long undisturbed triumph. His first play had been revised by Dryden and praised by Southerne. Besides being commissioner of [Pg 52]
hackney-coach and wine licences, he also held a place in the Pipe Office, a post in the Custom House, and a secretaryship in Jamaica. He never quarrelled with the wits: both Addison and Steele admired and praised him, and Voltaire eulogises his comedies.

It was here that Voltaire, while lodging in Maiden Lane, visited the gouty and nearly blind dramatist, then infirm and on the verge of life. "Mr. Congreve," he says, "had one defect, which was his entertaining too mean an idea of his profession—that of a writer—though it was to this he owed his fame and fortune. He spoke of his works as of trifles that were beneath him, and hinted to me in our first conversation that I should visit him upon no other footing than that of a gentleman who led a life of plainness and simplicity. I answered, that *had he been so unfortunate as to be a mere gentleman* I should never have come to see him; and I was very much disgusted at so unseasonable a piece of vanity."

The body of Congreve lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was afterwards interred with great solemnity in Henry VII.'s Chapel. The Duke of Bridgewater and the Earl of Godolphin were amongst those who bore the pall. The monument was erected by the Duchess of Marlborough, to whom the favoured poet had left £10,000. Above his body—

> "The ancient pillars rear their marble heads
> To bear aloft the arch'd and pond'rous roof,
> By its own weight made steadfast and immoveable."[87]

Congreve's bequest to the duchess of all his property, except £1000, including £200 to Mrs. Bracegirdle (a legacy afterwards cancelled), created much scandal. The shameless bookseller, Curll, instantly launched forth a life of Congreve, professing to be written by one Charles Wilson, Esq., but generally attributed to Oldmixon. The duchess's friends were alarmed, and Arbuthnot interfered. Upon being told that some genuine letters and essays were to be published in the work, Mrs. Bracegirdle or the duchess[88] cried out with defiant [Pg 53]
affectation and a dramatic drawl, "Not one single sheet of paper, I dare to swear."

The duchess, who raised a monument in the Abbey to her brilliant but artificial friend, is said to have had a wax image of him made to place on her toilette table. “To this she would talk as to the living Mr. Congreve, with all the freedom of the most *polite* and unreserved conversation.”[89]

Strand Lane used formerly to lead to a small landing-pier for wherries, called Strand Bridge. In Stow’s time the lane passed under a bridge down to the landing-place.[90] A writer in the *Spectator* describes how he landed here on a summer morning, arriving with ten sail of apricot boats, consigned to Covent Garden,[91] after having first touched at Nine Elms for melons. In this lane there is a fine Roman bath which, if indeed Roman, is the most western relic of Roman London, the centre of which was on the east end of the Royal Exchange.

No. 165 has been long used as a warehouse for the sale of Dr. Anderson’s pills. Dr. Patrick Anderson was physician to Charles I., and as early as 1649 a man named Inglis sold these quack pills at the Golden Unicorn, over against the Maypole in the Strand. Tom Brown says, “There are at least a score of pretenders to Anderson’s Scotch pills, and the Lord knows who has the true preparation.” Brown died in 1704. Sir Walter Scott used to tell one of his best stories about these pills. It dwelt on the passion for them entertained by a certain hypochondriacal Lowland laird. Bland or rough, old or young, no visitor at his house escaped a dose—“joost ane leetle Anderson;” and his toady “the doer” used always to swallow a brace.[92]

The Turk’s Head Coffee-house stood on the site of No. 142 Strand. Dr. Johnson used to sup at this house to encourage the hostess, who was a good civil woman, and had not too much [Pg 54] business. July 28, 1763, Boswell mentions supping there with Dr. Johnson; and again, on August 3, in the same year, just before he set out for his wildgoose chase in Corsica.[93] No. 132 was the shop of a bookseller named Bathoe. The first circulating library in London was established here in 1740.

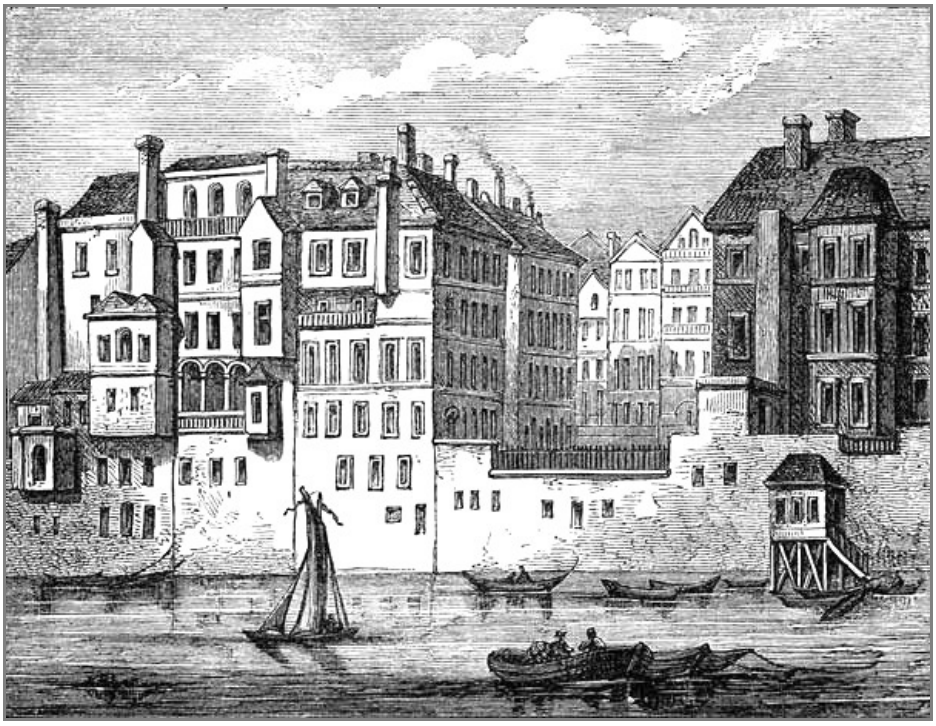
Jacob Tonson, Dryden’s grinding publisher and bookseller, lived at the Shakspere’s Head, over against Catherine Street, now No. 141 Strand, from about 1712 till he died, in 1735-6. Tonson seems to have been rough, hard, and penurious. The poet and publisher were perpetually squabbling, and Dryden was especially vexed at his trying to force him to dedicate his translation of Virgil to King William, and when he refused, making the engraver of the frontispiece aggravate the nose of Æneas till it became “a hooked promontory,” like that of the Protestant king. It was to Tonson’s shop at Gray’s Inn, however, that Dryden, on being refused money, probably sent that terrible triplet to the obdurate bibliopole:—

> “With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair,
> With two left legs, and Judas-colour’d hair,
> And frowsy pores that taint the ambient air.”[94]

“Tell the dog,” said Dryden to his messenger, “that he who wrote those can write more.” But Tonson was perfectly satisfied with this first shot, and surrendered at discretion. The irascible poet afterwards accused him of intercepting his letters to his sons at Rome, and he confessed to Bolingbroke on one occasion that he was afraid of Tonson’s tongue.[95]

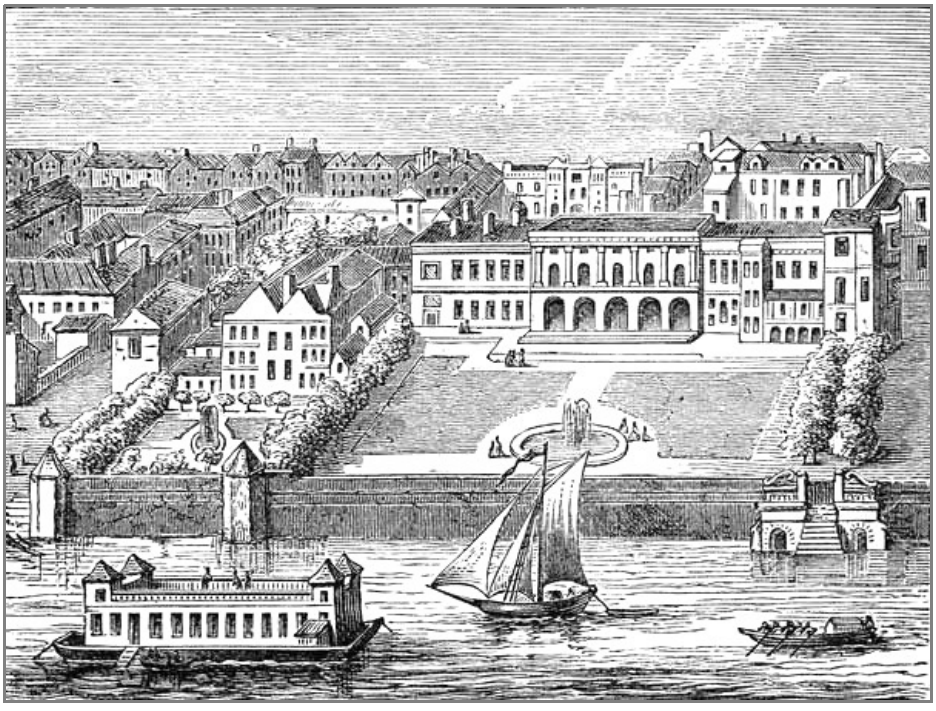
Tonson’s house, since rebuilt, was afterwards occupied by Andrew Millar, the publisher and friend of Thomson, Fielding, Hume, and Robertson, and after his death by Thomas Cadell, his apprentice, and the friend and publisher of Gibbon the historian. The *Seasons*, *Tom Jones*, and the Histories of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon were first published at this house. [Pg 55] Millar was a Scotchman, and distinguished his shop by the sign of Buchanan’s Head, afterwards the badge of Messrs. Blackwood.

The *Illustrated London News*, whose office is near Somerset House, was started in 1842 by Mr. Herbert Ingram, originally a humble newsvendor at Northampton; an industrious man, who would run five miles with a newspaper to oblige an old customer. In the first year he sold a million copies; in the second, two; and in 1848, three millions. Dr. Mackay, the song-writer, wrote leaders; Mr. Mark Lemon aided him; Mr. Peter Cunningham collected his column of weekly chat; Thomas Miller, the basket-maker poet, was also on his staff. Mr. Ingram obtained a seat in Parliament, and was eventually drowned in a steamboat collision on Lake Michigan.



PENN’S HOUSE, NORFOLK STREET, 1749.

[Pg 56]



SOMERSET HOUSE FROM THE RIVER, 1746.

CHAPTER IV.

SOMERSET HOUSE.

“And every day there passes by my side,
Up to its western reach, the London tide—
The spring tides of the term. My front looks down
On all the pride and business of the town;
My other fair and more majestic face
For ever gazes on itself below,
In the best mirror that the world can show.”

That ambitious and rapacious noble the Protector Somerset, brother of Queen Jane Seymour, and maternal uncle of Edward VI., the owner of more than two hundred manors, [96] and who boasted that his own friends and retainers made up an army of ten thousand [Pg 57] men, determined to build a palace in the Strand. For this purpose he demolished the parish church of St. Mary, and pulled down the houses of the Bishops of Worcester, Llandaff, and Lichfield. He also began to remove St. Margaret's, at Westminster, for building materials, till his masons were driven away by rioters. He destroyed a chapel in St. Paul's Churchyard, with a cloister containing the "Dance of Death," and a charnel-house, the bones of which he buried in unconsecrated ground,[97] and finally stole the stones of the church of St. John of Jerusalem, near Smithfield,[98] and those of Strand Inn (belonging to the Temple), where Occleve the poet, a contemporary of Gower and Chaucer, had studied law.

The unwise Protector determined in this building to rival Whitehall and Hampton Court. It was begun probably about 1549, and no doubt remained unfinished at his death. He had at that time lavished on it £50,000 of our present money.

The architect was John of Padua,[99] Henry VIII.'s architect, who built Longleat, in Wiltshire, the seat of the Marquis of Bath, a magnificent specimen of the Italian-Elizabethan style, and also the gates of Caius College, at Cambridge. The Protector is said to have spent at one time £100 a day in building, every stone he laid bringing him nearer to his own narrow home. A plan of the house is still preserved in the Soane Museum.[100]

After the attainder of the duke, when the new palace became the property of the crown, little was done to complete the building. The screen prepared for the hall was bought for St. Bride's, where it was probably destroyed in the Great Fire.[101] The Protector was a good friend to the people, but he was weak and ambitious, and the plotters of Ely House had no difficulty in dragging him to the scaffold. The minority of Edward brought many of the Strand noblemen to the axe, but the fate of the admiral and his brother did not deter their neighbours Northumberland, Raleigh, Norfolk, and Essex.

Elizabeth granted the keeping of Somerset House to her faithful cousin Lord Hunsdon, for [Pg 58] life,[102] and here she frequently would visit him, in a jewelled farthingale, with Raleigh and Essex in her train.

In 1616 that Scotch Solomon, James I., commanded the place to be called Denmark House; and his queen kept her gay and not very decent court here, so that Ben Jonson must have often seen his glorious masques acted in this palace, to which his coadjutor Inigo Jones built a chapel, and made other additions. Anne of Denmark and her maids-of-honour kept up here a continual masquerade,[103] appearing in various dresses, and transforming themselves to the delight of all whose interest it was to be delighted.

Here too that impetuous queen, Henrietta Maria, resided with her wilful and extravagant French household, whose insolence irritated and disgusted the people and offended Charles the First. The king at last, losing patience, summoned them together one evening and dismissed them all. They behaved like sutlers at the sack of a town. They claimed fictitious debts; they invented exorbitant bills; they greedily divided among each other the queen's wardrobe and jewels, scarcely leaving her a change of linen. The king paid nearly £50,000 to get rid of them; Madame St. George alone claiming several thousand pounds besides jewels. [104] They still delayed their departure; on which the king, at last roused, wrote the following imperative letter to Buckingham:—

> "Steenie—I have received your letter by Dick Greame. This is my answer. I command you to send all the French away to-morrow out of the town, if you can by fair means (but stick not long in disputing), otherways force them away —driving them away like so many wild beasts until ye have shipped them; and the devil go with them. Let me hear no answer, but of the performance of my command. So I rest
>
> "Your faithful, constant, loving friend,
> "C. R.
>
> "Oaking, the seventh of August, 1626."

As the French invented all sorts of vexatious delays, the yeomen of the guard at last jostled [Pg 59] them out, carting them off in nearly forty coaches. They arrived at Dover after four days' tedious travelling, wrangling, and bewailing. The squib did not burn out without one final detonation. As the vivacious Madame St. George stepped into the boat, with perhaps some insolent gesture of adieu, a man in the mob flung a stone at her French cap. A gallant Englishman who was escorting her instantly quitted his charge, ran the fellow through the body, and returned to the boat. The man died on the spot, but no notice, it appears, was taken of the murderer.

In Somerset House, at the Christmas masque of 1632-3, Charles's high-spirited queen took part for the last time in a masque. Unfortunately for Prynne, the next day out came his *Histriomastix*, with a scurrilous marginal note, "Women actors notorious whores!" for which the stubborn fanatic lost his ears.

Queen Henrietta had, in Somerset House, an ostentatiously magnificent Catholic chapel built by Inigo Jones, which became the scene of spectacles that were gall and wormwood to the Puritans, who were already couching for their spring.

Their time came in March 1643, when Roundheads, grimly rejoicing, burnt all the pictures, images, Jesuitical books, and tapestry.[105]

Five of the unhappy queen's French Roman Catholic servants are entombed in the cellars of the present building, under the great quiet square.[106]

Here, close to his own handiwork, that distinguished architect, Inigo Jones, who had lodgings in the palace, died in 1652.

About the same time the House of Peers permitted the Protestant service to be held in Somerset House instead of in Durham House. This drove out the Quakers and Anabaptists, and prevented the pulling down of the palace and the making of a street from the garden through the chapel and back-yard up into the Strand.[107] [Pg 60]

The Protector's palace was the scene of a great and sad event in November 1658; for the body of Cromwell, who had died at Whitehall, lay in state here for several days. He lay in effigy on a bed of royal crimson velvet, covered with a velvet gown, a sceptre in his hand, and a crown upon his head. The Cavaliers, whose spirits were recovering, were very angry at this foolish display,[108] forgetting that it was not poor Oliver's own doing; and the baser people, who follow any impulse of the day, threw dirt in the night upon the blazoned escutcheon that was displayed over the great gate of Somerset House.

The year after, an Act was passed to sell all royal property, and Somerset House was disposed of for £10,000. The Restoration soon stepped in and annulled the bargain. After the return of the son who so completely revenged upon us the death of his father, the luckless palace became the residence of its former inhabitant, now older and gentler—the queen-mother. She improved and beautified it. The old courtier, Waller, only fifty-seven at the time, wrote some fulsome verses on the occasion. He talks of her adorning the town as with a brave revenge, to show—

> "That glory came and went with you."

He mentions also the view from the palace:—

> "The fair view her window yields,
> The town, the river, and the fields."

Cowley, the son of a Fleet Street grocer, flew still higher, larded his flattery with perverted texts, like a Puritanised Cavalier time-server, and wrote—

> "On either side dwells Safety and Delight;
> Wealth on the left and Power sits on the right."

In May 1665, when the queen-mother, who had lived in Somerset House with her supposed husband, the Earl of St. Albans, took her farewell of England for a gayer court, Cowley wrote these verses to the setting sun, in hopes to propitiate the rising sun; for here, too, lived Catherine of Braganza, the unhappy wife of Charles II. [Pg 61]

There were strange scenes at Somerset House even during the queen-mother's residence, for the old court gossip Pepys describes being taken one day to the Presence-chamber.[109] He found the queen not very charming, but still modest and engaging. Lady Castlemaine was there, Mr. Crofts, a pretty young spark of fifteen (her illegitimate child), and many great ladies. By and by in came the king and the Duke and Duchess of York. The conversation was not a very decorous one; and the young queen said to Charles, "You lie!" which made good sport, as the chuckling and delighted Pepys remarks, those being the first English words he had heard her say; and the king then tried to make her reply, "Confess and be hanged."

In another place Pepys indignantly describes "a little proud, ugly, talkative lady crying up the queen-mother's court as more decorous than the king's;" yet the diary-keeper confesses that the former was the better attended, the old nobility dreading, I suppose, the scandal of Whitehall.[110]

In 1670 Monk, Duke of Albemarle, having died at his lodgings in the Cockpit, at Whitehall, lay in state in Somerset House, and was afterwards buried with almost regal pomp in Henry VII.'s Chapel.

In October 1678, the infamous devisers of the Popish plot connected Somerset House and the attendants in the Queen's Chapel with the murder of a City magistrate, the supposed Protestant martyr, Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, who was found murdered in a field near Primrose Hill, "between Kilburn and Hampstead," as it was then thought necessary to specify. The lying witnesses, Prance and Bedloe, swore that the justice had been inveigled into Somerset House under pretence of being wanted to keep the peace between two servants who were fighting in the yard; that he was then strangled, his neck broken, and his own sword run through his body. The corpse was kept four days, then carried in a sedan-chair to Soho, and afterwards on a horse to Primrose Hill, nearly three miles off. The secrecy and convenient neighbourhood of the river for hiding a murdered man seem never to have [Pg 62]

struck the rogues, who forgot even to “lie like truth,” so credulous and excited was the multitude.

Waller, says Aubrey, though usually very temperate, was once made drunk at Somerset House by some courtiers, and had a cruel fall when taking boat at the water stairs, “’Twas a pity to use such a sweet man so inhumanly.”[111] Saville used to say that “nobody should keep him company without drinking but Mr. Waller.”

In 1692 that poor ill-used woman and unhappy wife, Catherine of Braganza, left Somerset House, and returned thence to Portugal, the home of her happy childhood and happier youth.

The palace, never the home of very happy inmates, then became a lodging for foreign kings and ambassadors, and a home for a few noblemen and poor retainers of the court, much as Hampton Court is now. Lewis de Duras, Earl of Feversham, the incompetent commander at Sedgemoor, who lies buried at the Savoy, lived here in 1708; and so did Lady Arlington, the widow of Secretary Bennet, that butt of Killigrew and Rochester. In the reign of George III., Charlotte Lennox, the authoress of the *Female Quixote*, had apartments in Somerset House.

Houses, like men, run their allotted courses. In 1775 the old palace, which had been settled on the queen-consort in the event of her surviving the king, was exchanged for Buckingham House; and the Government instantly began to pull down the river-side palace, and erect new public offices designed by Sir William Chambers, a Scotch architect, who had given instruction in his art to George III., when Prince of Wales.

In 1630, a row of fishmongers’ stalls, in the middle of the street, over against Denmark House (Somerset House), was broken down by order of Government to prevent stalls from growing into sheds, and sheds into dwelling houses, as had been the case in Old Fish Street, Saint Nicholas Shambles, and other places.[112] [Pg 63]

On the 2d of February, 1659-60, Pepys tells us in his diary, that having £60 with him of his lord’s money, on his way from London Bridge, and hearing the noise of guns, he landed at Somerset House, and found the Strand full of soldiers. Going upstairs to a window, Pepys looked out and saw the foot face the horse and beat them back, all the while bawling for a free parliament and money. By and by a drum was heard to sound a march towards them, and they all got ready again, but the new comers proving of the same mind, they “made a great deal of joy to see one another.”[113] This was the beginning of Monk’s change, for the king returned in the following May. On the 18th of February two soldiers were hanged opposite Somerset House for a mutiny, of which Pepys was an eye-witness.

The prints of old Somerset House show a long line of battlemented wall facing the river, and a turreted and partially arcaded front. There is also a scarce view of the place by Hollar.[114] The river front has two porticos. The chapel is to the left, and near it are the cloisters of the Capuchins. The bowling-green seems to be to the right, between the two rows of trees. The garden is formal. The royal apartments were on the river side. The only memorial left of the outhouses of the old palace was the sign of a lion in the wall of a house in the Strand, that is mentioned in old records.[115]

Dryden describes his two friends, Eugenius and Neander, landing at Somerset Stairs, and gives us a pleasant picture of the summer evening, the water on which the moonbeams played looked like floating quicksilver, and some French people dancing merrily in the open air as the friends walk onwards to the Piazza.[116]

Of the old views of Somerset House, that of Moss is considered the best. There is also an early and curious one by Knyff. A picture in Dulwich Gallery (engraved by Wilkinson) represents the river front before Inigo Jones had added a chapel for the queen of Charles I. [117] [Pg 64]

Sir William Chambers built the present Somerset House. The old palace, when the clearance for the demolition began, presented a singular spectacle.[118] At the extremity of the royal apartments two large folding-doors joined Inigo Jones’s additions to John of Padua’s work. They opened into a long gallery on the first floor of the water garden wing, at the lower end of which was another gallery, making an angle which formed the original river front, and extended to Strand Lane. This old part had been long shut up, and was supposed to be haunted. The gallery was panelled and floored with oak. The chandelier chains still hung from the stucco ceilings. The furniture of the royal apartment was removed into lumber-rooms by the Royal Academy. There were relics of a throne and canopy; the crimson velvet curtains for the audience-chamber had faded to olive colour; and the fringe and lace were there, but a few threads and spangles had been peeled off them. There were also scattered about in disorder, broken chairs, stools, couches, screens, and fire-dogs.

In the older apartments much of Edward VI.’s furniture still remained. The silk hangings of the audience-chamber were in tatters, and so were the curtains, gilt-leather covers, and painted screens; one gilt chandelier also remained, and so did the sconces. A door beyond, with difficulty opened, led into a small tower on the first floor, built by Inigo Jones, and used as a breakfast-room or dressing-room by Queen Catherine. It was a beautiful octagonal domed apartment, with a tasteful cornice. The walls were frescoed, and there were pictures on the ceiling. A door from this place opened on the staircase and led to a bath-room, lined with marble, on the ground floor.

The painters of the day compared the ruined palace, characteristically enough, to the gloomy precincts of the dilapidated castles in Mrs. Radcliffe's wax-work romances.

Sir William Chambers completed his work in about five years, clearing two thousand a year. [Pg 65] It cost more than half a million of money. The Strand front is 135 feet long; the quadrangle 210 feet wide and 296 feet deep. The main buildings are 54 feet deep and six stories high. They are faced with Portland stone, now partly sooty black, partly blanched white with the weather. The basement is adorned with rustic work, Corinthian pilasters, balustrades, statues, masks, and medallions. The river terrace was intended in anticipation of the possible embankment of the Thames. Some critics think Chambers's great work heavy, others elegant but timid. There is too much rustic work, and the whole is rather "cut up." The vases and niches are unmeaning, and it was a great structural fault to make the portico columns of the fine river side stand on a brittle-looking arch.

It was to Somerset House that the Royal Academy came after the split in the St. Martin's Lane Society. Here West exhibited his respectable platitudes, Reynolds his grand portraits, and Lawrence his graceful, brilliant, but meretricious pictures. In the great room of the Academy, at the top of the building, Reynolds, Opie, Barrie, and Fuseli lectured. Through the doorway to the right of the vestibule, Reynolds, Wilkie, Turner, Flaxman, and Chantrey have often stepped. Under that bust of Michael Angelo almost all our great men from Johnson to Scott must have passed.

Carlini, an Italian friend of Cipriani, executed the two central statues on the Strand front of Somerset House, and also three of the nine colossal key-stone masks—the rivers Dee, Tyne, and Severn. Carlini was one of the unsuccessful candidates for the Beckford monument in Guildhall. When Carlini was keeper of the Academy, he used to walk from his house in Soho to Somerset Place, dressed in a deplorable greatcoat, and with a broken tobacco pipe in his mouth; but when he went to the great annual Academy dinner, he would make his way into a chair, full dressed in a purple silk coat, and scarlet gold-laced waistcoat, with point-lace [Pg 66] ruffles, and a sword and bag.[119] Wilton, the sculptor, executed the two outer figures.

Giuseppe Ceracchi, who carved some of the heads of the river gods for the key-stones of the windows of the Strand front of Somerset House, was an Italian, but it is uncertain whether he was born at Rome or in Corsica. He gave the accomplished Mrs. Damer (General Conway's daughter) her first lessons in sculpture, an art which she afterwards perfected in the studio of the elder Bacon. Ceracchi executed the only bust in marble that Reynolds ever sat for. A statue of Mrs. Damer, from a model by him, is now in the British Museum. This sculptor was guillotined in 1801, for a plot against Napoleon.[120] He is said to have lost his wits in prison, and to have mounted the scaffold dressed as a Roman emperor. It was to Mrs. Damer (the daughter of his old friend) that Horace Walpole, our most French of memoir-writers, bequeathed his fantastic villa at Strawberry Hill, and its incongruous but valuable curiosities. She is said to have sent a bust of Nelson to the Rajah of Tanjore, who wished to spread a taste for English art in India.

The rooms round the quadrangle are hives of red-tapists. There are about nine hundred Government clerks nestled away in them, and maintained at an annual cost to us of about £275,000. There is the office of the Duchy of Cornwall, and there are the Legacy Duty, the Stamps, Taxes, and Excise Offices, the Inland Revenue Office, the Registrar General's Office (created pursuant to 6 and 7 Will. IV., c. 86), part of the Admiralty and the Audit Office, and lastly the Will Office.

The east wing of Somerset House, used as King's College, was built in 1829. The bronze statue of George III., and the fine recumbent figure of Father Thames, in the chief court, were cast by John Bacon, R.A.

The office for auditing the public accounts existed, under the name of the Office of the Auditors of the Imprests, as far back as the time of Henry VIII. The present commission was [Pg 67] established in 1785, and the salaries formerly paid for the passing of accounts are now paid out of the Civil List, all fees being abolished. The average annual cost of the office for auditing some three hundred and fifty accounts is £50,000. There are six commissioners, a secretary, and upwards of a hundred clerks. Almost all the home and colonial expenditure is examined at this office. Edward Harley and Arthur Maynwaring (the wit of the Kit-Cat Club) were the two Auditors of the Imprests in the reign of Queen Anne. The Earl of Oxford, the collector of MSS., obtained many curious public documents from his brother. If he had taken the whole the nation would have been a gainer; for the Government bought his collection for the British Museum, and all that he left (except what Sir William Musgrave, a commissioner, scraped together and gave to the British Museum) were barbarously destroyed by Government, heedless of their historical value. Maynwaring's fees were about £2000 a year. The present salary of a commissioner is £1200; the chairman's salary is £500. In 1867 the western front of Somerset House was added; it is from the designs of Pennethorne, to accommodate the clerks of the Inland Revenue Department.

The Astronomical Society, Geographical Society, and Geological Society, were for many years sheltered in Somerset House, before removing westwards.

Hither, in 1782, from Crane Court, came the Royal Society. The entrance door to the society's rooms, to the left of the vestibule, is marked out by the bust of Sir Isaac Newton; Herschel, Davy, and Wollaston, as well as Walpole and Hallam, must have passed here, for

the same door leads to the apartments of the Society of Antiquaries.

This society, when burnt out of Aldersgate Street by the Great Fire, held its meetings for a time in Arundel House. At first its doings were trifling and sometimes absurd. Enthusiasts and pedants often made the society ludicrous by their aberrations. Charles II. pretended to admire their Baconic inductions, but must have laughed at Boyle's essays and platitudes, [Pg 68] and the hope of Wilkins, the Bishop of Chester, of flying to the moon. Evelyn's suggestions were unpractical and dilettantish, and Pepys's ramblings not over wise. We may be sure that there was food for laughter, when Butler could thus sketch the occupations of these philosophers:—

> "To measure wind and weigh the air,
> To turn a circle to a square,
> And in the braying of an ass
> Find out the treble and the bass,
> If mares neigh *alto*, and a cow
> In double diapason low."

Yet how can we wonder that in the vast gold mines of the new philosophy our wise men hesitated where first to sink their shafts? Cowley chivalrously sprang forward to ward off from them the laughter and scorn of the Rochesters and the Killigrews of the day, and to prove that these initiative studies were not "impertinent and vain and small," nothing in nature being worthless. He ends his fine, rambling ode with the following noble simile:—

> "Lo! when by various turns of the celestial dance,
> In many thousand years,
> A star so long unknown appears,
> Though Heaven itself more beauteous by it grow,
> It troubles and alarms the world below;
> Does to the wise a star, to fools a meteor show."[121]

The Royal Society's traditions belong more to Gresham College than to Somerset House, the later home of our wise men. It originated in 1645, in meetings held in Wood Street and Gresham College, suggested by Theodore Hank, a German of the Palatinate. During the Civil War its discussions were continued at Oxford. The present entrance-money is £10, and the annual subscription is £4. The society consists at present of between 700 and 800 fellows, and the anniversary is held every 30th of November, being St. Andrew's Day. The Transactions of the society fill upwards of 150 quarto volumes. The first president was [Pg 69] Viscount Brouncker, and the second Sir Joseph Williamson. Mr. William Spottiswoode is the present president. The society possesses some valuable pictures, including three portraits of Sir Isaac Newton—one by C. Jervas, presented by the great philosopher himself, and hung over the president's chair; a second by D. C. Marchand, and a third by Vanderbank; two portraits of Halley, by Thomas Murray and Dahl; two of Hobbes, the great advocate of despotism—one taken in 1663 (three years after the Restoration), and the other by Gaspars, presented by Aubrey; Sir Christopher Wren, by Kneller; Wallis, by West; Flamstead, by Gibson; Robert Boyle, by F. Kerseboom (a good likeness, says Boyle); Pepys, the cruel expositor of his own weaknesses, by Kneller; Sir A. Southwell, by the same portrait-painter; Dr. Birch, the great historical compiler, by Wills (the original of the mezzotint done by Faber in 1741, and bequeathed by Dr. Birch); Martin Folkes, the great antiquarian, by Hogarth; Dr. Wollaston, the eccentric discoverer, by Jackson; and Sir Humphrey Davy, by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

Amongst the curiosities of the society are the silver-gilt mace presented to the society by Charles II. in 1662—(long supposed to be the bauble which Cromwell treated with such contempt); a solar dial, made by Sir Isaac Newton himself when a boy; a reflecting telescope, made by Newton in 1671; the precious MS. of the *Principia* in Newton's handwriting; a silvery lock of Newton's hair; the MS. of the *Parentalia, or Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens*, written by young Wren; the charter-book of the society, bound in crimson velvet, and containing the signatures of the founder and fellows; a Rumford fireplace, one of the earliest in use; and a marble bust of Mrs. Somerville, the great mathematician and philosopher, by Chantrey. The society gives annually two gold medals—one the Rumford, the other the Copley medal, called by Sir Humphrey Davy "the ancient olive crown of the Royal Society."

The Geological Society has a museum of specimens and fossils from all quarters of the globe. The number of its fellows is about 875, and the time of meeting alternate Wednesday [Pg 70] evenings from November till June. It also publishes a quarterly journal. The entrance-money is six guineas, the annual subscription two.

The Society of Antiquaries was fairly started in 1707, by Wanley, Bagford, and Talman, who agreed to meet together every Friday under penalty of sixpence. It had originated about 1580, when it held its first sittings in the Heralds' College; but it did not obtain a charter till 1751, both Elizabeth and James being afraid of its meddling with royal prerogatives and illustrious genealogies, and the Civil War having interrupted its proceedings. Its first meeting was at the Bear Tavern, in the Strand. In 1739 the members were limited to one hundred, and the terms were one guinea entrance and twelve shillings annually. The society agreed to discuss antiquarian subjects, and chiefly those relating to English history prior to James I. In 1751 George II. granted its members a charter, and in 1777 George III. gave

them apartments in Somerset House, where they continued till their recent removal to Burlington House. The terms now are eight guineas admission, and four guineas annually. The *Archæologia*, a journal of the society's proceedings, commenced in 1770. The meetings are every Thursday evening from November to June, and the anniversary meeting is the 23d of April.

The museum of this society contains, among other treasures, the *Household Book* of the Duke of Norfolk; a large and valuable collection of early proclamations and ballads; T. Porter's unique map of London (Charles I.); a folding picture in panel, of the "Preaching at Old St. Paul's in 1616;" early portraits of Edward IV. and Richard III., engraved for the third series of *Ellis's Letters*; a three-quarter portrait of Mary I. with the monogram of Lucas de Heere, and the date 1546; a curious portrait of the Marquis of Winchester (who died 1571); the portrait by Sir Antonio More, of Schorel, a Dutch painter; portraits of antiquaries—Burton, the Leicestershire antiquary, Peter le Neve, Humphrey Wanley Baker, of St. John's College, William Stukeley, George Vertue, and Edward, Earl of Oxford, presented by Vertue; [Pg 71]
a Bohemian astronomical clock of gilt brass, made in 1525 for Sigismund, King of Poland, and bought at the sale of the effects of James Ferguson, the astronomer; and a spur of gilt brass, found on Towton field, the scene of the bloody conflict between Edward IV. and the Lancastrian forces. Upon the shank is engraved the following posey—"En loial amour tout mon coer."[122]

The Astronomical Society was instituted in 1820, and received the royal charter in 1st William IV. The entrance-money is two guineas, and the annual subscription the same amount. The annual general meeting is the second Friday in February. A medal is awarded every year. The society has a small but good mathematical library, and a few astronomical instruments.

A little above the entrance door to "the Stamps and Taxes" there is a white watch-face let into the wall. Local tradition declares it was left there in votive gratitude by a labourer who fell from a scaffolding and was saved by the ribbon of his watch catching in some ornament. It was really placed there by the Royal Society as a meridian mark for a portable transit instrument in a window of an ante-room.[123]

A tradition of Nelson belongs to this quiet square. An old clerk at Somerset House used to describe seeing the hero of the Nile pass on his way to the Admiralty. Thin and frail, with only one arm, he would enter the vestibule at a smart pace, and make direct for his goal, pushing across the rough round stones of the quadrangle, instead of taking, like others, the smooth pavement. Nelson always took the nearest way to the object he wished to attain.[124]

The Royal Academy soon found a home in Somerset House. Germs of this institution are to be found as early as the reign of Charles I., when Sir Francis Kynaston, a translator of Chaucer into Latin (*circa* 1636), was chosen regent of an academy in Covent Garden.[125]

In 1643 that shifty adventurer, Sir Balthazar Gerbier, who had been fellow ambassador with [Pg 72]
Rubens in Spain, started some quack establishment of the same kind at Bethnal Green. He afterwards went to Surinam, was turned out by the Dutch, came back, designed an ugly house at Hampstead Marshal, in Berks, and died in 1667.

In 1711 Sir Godfrey Kneller instituted a private art academy, of which he became president. Hogarth, writing about 1760, says, that sixty years before some artists had started an academy, but their leaders assuming too much pomposity, a caricature procession was drawn on the walls of the studio, upon which the society broke up in dudgeon. Sir James Thornhill, in 1724, then set up an academy at his own house in Covent Garden, while others, under Vanderbank, turned a neighbouring meeting-house into a studio; but these rival confederations broke up at Sir James's death in 1734.

Hogarth, his son-in-law, opened an academy, under the direction of Mr. Moser, at the house of a painter named Peter Hyde, in Greyhound Court, Arundel Street. In 1739 these artists removed to a more commodious house in Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, where they continued till 1767, when they removed to Pall Mall.

In 1738 the Duke of Richmond threw open to art-students his gallery at Whitehall, closed it again when his absence in the German war prevented the paying of the premiums, was laughed at, and then re-opened it again. It lasted some years, and Edwards, author of the *Anecdotes*, studied there.

In 1753 some artists meeting at the Turk's Head, Gerrard Street, Soho, tried ineffectually to organise an academy; but in 1765 they obtained a charter, and appointed Mr. Lambert president.

In 1760 their first exhibition of pictures was held in the rooms of the Society of Arts, and in 1761 there were two exhibitions, one at Spring Gardens: for the latter Hogarth illustrated a catalogue, with a compliment to the young king and a caricature of rich connoisseurs.

In 1768 eight of the directors of the Spring Gardens Society, indignant at Mr. Kirby being [Pg 73]
made president of the society in the place of Mr. Hayman, resigned; and, co-operating with sixteen others who had been ejected, secretly founded a new society. Wilton, Chambers, West, Cotes, and Moser, were the leaders in this scheme, and Reynolds soon joined them, tempted, it is supposed, by a promise of knighthood.

West was the chief mover in this intrigue. The Archbishop of York, who had tried to raise £3000 to enable the American artist to abandon portrait-painting, had gained the royal ear, and West was painting the "Departure of Regulus" for the king, who was even persuaded and flattered into drawing up several of the laws of the new society with his own hand.[126] The king, in the meantime, with unworthy dissimulation, affected outwardly a complete neutrality between the two camps, presented the Spring Gardens Society with £100, and even attended their exhibition.

The king's patronage of the new society was disclosed to honest Mr. Kirby (father of Mrs. Trimmer, and the artist who had taught the king perspective) in a very malicious and mortifying manner, and the story was related to Mr. Galt by West, with a quiet, cold spite, peculiarly his own. Mr. Kirby came to the palace just as West was submitting his sketch for "Regulus" to the king. West was a true courtier, and knew well how to make a patron suggest his own subject. Kirby praised the picture, and hoped Mr. West intended to exhibit it. The Quaker slily replied that that depended on his majesty's pleasure. The king, like a true confederate, immediately said, "Assuredly I shall be happy to let the work be shown to the public." "Then, Mr. West," said the perhaps too arrogant president, "you will send it to my exhibition?" "No!" said the king, and the words must have been thunderbolts to poor Kirby; "it must go to *my* exhibition."[127] "Poor Kirby," says West, "only two nights before, had declared that the design of forming such an institution was not contemplated. His colour [Pg 74] forsook him—his countenance became yellow with mortification—he bowed with profound humility, and instantly retired, *nor did he long survive the shock*!"

Mr. West is wrong, however, in the last statement, for his rival did not die till 1774. Mr. Kirby, a most estimable man, was originally a house-painter at Ipswich. He became acquainted with Gainsborough, was introduced by Lord Bute to the king, and wrote and edited some valuable works on perspective, to one of which Hogarth contributed an inimitable frontispiece.

Sir Robert Strange says that much of this intrigue was carried out by Mr. Dalton,[128] a print seller in Pall Mall, and the king's librarian, in whose rooms the exhibition was held in 1767 and 1768.

Thus an American Quaker, a Swiss, and a Swede—(a gold-chaser, a coach-painter, an architect, and a third-rate painter, West)—ignobly established the Royal Academy. Many eminent men refused to join the new society. Allan Ramsay, Hudson, Scott the marine-painter, and Romney were opposed to it. Engravers (much to the disgrace of the Academy) were excluded; and worst of all, one of the new laws forbade any artist to be eligible to academic honours who did not exhibit his works in the Academy's rooms: thus depriving for ever every English artist of the right to earn money by exhibiting his own works.[129]

The proportion of foreigners in the Academy was very large. The two ladies who became members (Angelica Kauffmann and Mrs. Moser) were both Swiss.[130]

The other unlucky society, deprived of its share of the St. Martin's Lane casts, etc., and shut [Pg 75] out from the Academy, furnished a studio over the Cyder Cellars in Maiden Lane, struggled on till 1807, and then ceased to exist.[131]

The Academy, with all its tyranny and injustice, has still been useful to English art in perpetuating annual exhibitions which attract purchasers. But what did more good to English art than twenty academies was the king's patronage of West, the spread of engraving, and the rise of middle-class purchasers, who rendered it no longer necessary for artists to depend on the caprice and folly of rich aristocratic patrons.

One word more about the art oligarchy. The first officers of the new society were—Reynolds, president; Moser, keeper; Newton, secretary; Penny, professor of painting; Sandby, professor of architecture; Wale, professor of perspective; W. Hunter, professor of anatomy; Chambers, treasurer; and Wilson, librarian. Goldsmith was chosen professor of history at a later period.

The catalogue of the first exhibition of the Royal Academy contains the names of only one hundred and thirty pictures: Hayman exhibited scenes from *Don Quixote*; Rooker some Liverpool views; Reynolds some allegorised portraits; Miss Kauffmann some of her tame Homeric figures; West his "Regulus" (that killed Kirby), and a Venus and Adonis; Zuccarelli two landscapes.

In 1838, the first year after the opening of the National Gallery, 1382 works of art, including busts and architectural designs, were exhibited. Among the pictures then shown were— [Pg 76] Stanfield's "Chasse Marée off the Gulf-stream Light," "The Privy Council," by Wilkie; portraits of men and dogs, by Landseer; "The Pifferari," "Phryne," and "Banishment of Ovid," by Turner; "A Bacchante," by Etty; "Gaston de Foix," by Eastlake; Allan's "Slave Market," Leslie's "Dinner Scene from the Merry Wives of Windsor;" "A View on the Rhine," by Callcott; Shee's portrait of Sir Francis Burdett; portraits by Pickersgill; Maclise's "Christmas in the Olden Time," and "Olivia and Sophia fitting out Moses for the Fair;" "The Massacre of the Innocents," by Hilton; and a picture by Uwins.[132]

Angelica Kauffmann and Biaggio Rebecca helped to decorate the Academy's old council-chamber at Somerset House. The paintings still exist. Rebecca was an eccentric, conceited Italian artist, who decorated several rooms at Windsor, and offended the worthy precise old

king by his practical jokes. On one occasion, knowing he would meet the king on his way to Windsor with West, he stuck a paper star on his coat. The next time West came, the king was curious to know who the foreign nobleman was he had seen—"Person of distinction, eh? eh?"—and was doubtless vexed at the joke.

Rebecca's favourite trick was to draw a half-crown on paper, and place it on the floor of one of the ante-rooms at Windsor, laughing immoderately at the eagerness with which some fat courtier in full dress, sword and bag, would run and scuffle to pick it up.[133]

Fuseli took his place as Keeper of the Academy in 1805. Smirke had been elected, but George III., hearing that he was a democrat, refused to confirm the appointment. Haydon, who called on Fuseli in Berners Street in 1805, when he had left his father the bookseller at Plymouth, describes him as "a little white-headed, lion-faced man, in an old flannel dressing-gown tied round his waist with a piece of rope, and upon his head the bottom of Mrs. Fuseli's work-basket." His gallery was full of galvanised devils, malicious witches brewing [Pg 77] incantations, Satan bridging chaos or springing upwards like a pyramid of fire, Lady Macbeth, Paolo and Francesca, Falstaff and Mrs. Quickly.

Elsewhere the impetuous Haydon sketches him vigorously. Fuseli was about five feet five inches high, had a compact little form, stood firmly at his easel, painted with his left hand, never held his palette upon his thumb, but kept it upon his stone slab, and being very near-sighted and too vain to wear glasses, used to dab his beastly brush into the oil, and sweeping round the palette in the dark, take up a great lump of white, red, or blue, and plaster it over a shoulder or a face; then prying close in, he would turn round and say, "By Gode! dat's a fine purple! it's very like Correggio, by Gode!" and then all of a sudden burst out with a quotation from Homer, Tasso, Dante, Ovid, Virgil, or the Niebelungen, and say, "Paint dat!" "I found him," says Haydon, "a most grotesque mixture of literature, art, scepticism, indelicacy, profanity, and kindness. He put me in mind of Archimago in Spenser."[134]

When Haydon came first to town from Plymouth, he lodged at 342 Strand,[135] near Charing Cross, and close to his fellow-student, the good-natured, indolent, clever Jackson. The very morning he arrived he hurried off to the Exhibition, and mistaking the new church in the Strand for Somerset House, ran up the steps and offered his shilling to a beadle. When he at last found the right house, Opie's *Gil Blas* and Westall's *Shipwrecked Sailor Boy* were all the historical pictures he could find.

Sir Joshua read his first discourse before the Academy in 1769. Barry commenced his lectures in 1784, ended them in 1798, and was expelled the Academy in 1799. Opie delivered his lectures in 1807, the year in which he died. Fuseli began in 1801, and delivered but twelve lectures in all.

It was on St. George's Day, 1771, that Sir Joshua Reynolds took the chair at the first annual dinner of the Royal Academy. Dr. Johnson was there, with Goldsmith and Horace Walpole. [Pg 78] Goldsmith got the ear of the company, but was laughed at by Johnson for professing his enthusiastic belief in Chatterton's discovery of ancient poems. Walpole, who had believed in the poet of Bristol till he was laughed at by Mason and Gray, began to banter Goldsmith on his opinions, when, as he says, to his surprise and concern, and the dashing of his mirth, he first heard that the poor lad had been to London and had destroyed himself. Goldsmith had afterwards a quarrel with Dr. Percy on the same subject.

One day, while Reynolds was lecturing at Somerset House, the floor suddenly began to give way. Turner, then a boy, was standing near the lecturer. Reynolds remained calm, and said afterwards that his only thought was what a loss to English art the death of that roomful would have been.

On the death of Mr. Wale, the Professor of Perspective, Sir Joshua was anxious to have Mr. Bonomi elected to the post, but he was treated with great disrespect by Mr. Copley and others, who refused to look at Bonomi's drawings, which Sir Joshua (as some maintained, contrary to rule) had produced at Fuseli's election as Academician. Reynolds at first threatened to resign the presidency; but thought better of it afterwards.

In the catalogues in 1808 Turner's name first appeared with the title of Professor of Perspective attached to it. His lectures were bad, from his utter want of language, but he took great pains with his diagrams, and his ideas were often original. On one celebrated occasion Turner arrived in the lecture-room late, and much perturbed. He dived first into one pocket, and then into another; at last he ejaculated these memorable words: "Gentlemen, I've been and left my lecture in the hackney-coach!"[136]

In 1779 O'Keefe describes a visit paid to Somerset House to hear Dr. William Hunter lecture on anatomy. He describes him as a jocose little man, in "a handsome modest" wig. A skeleton hung on a pivot by his side, and on his other hand stood a young man half stripped. Every now and then he paused, to turn to the dead or the living example.[137] [Pg 79]

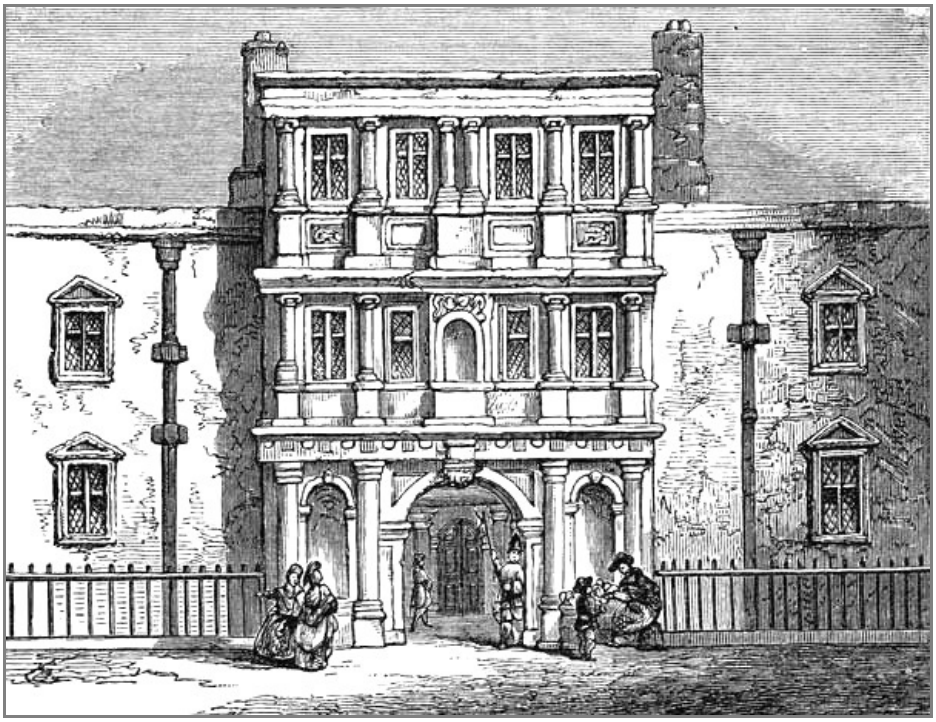
In 1765, when Fuseli was living humbly in Cranbourn Alley, and translating Winckelmann, he used to visit Smollett, whose *Peregrine Pickle* he was then illustrating; and also Falconer, the author of *The Shipwreck*, who, being poor, was allowed to occupy apartments in Somerset House.[138] The poet was a mild, inoffensive man, the son of an Edinburgh barber. He had been apprenticed on board a merchant vessel, after which he entered the royal navy.

In 1762 he published his well-known poem. He went out to India in 1769, in the *Aurora*, which is supposed to have foundered in the Mozambique Channel.[139] Falconer was a short thin man, with a hard-featured, weather-beaten face and a forbidding manner; but he was cheerful and generous, and much liked by his messmates. That hearty sea-song, “Cease, rude Boreas,” has been attributed to him.

Fuseli succeeded Barry as Lecturer on Painting in 1799, and became Keeper on the death of Wilton, the sculptor, in 1803. He died in 1825, aged eighty-four, and was buried in St. Paul’s, between Reynolds and Opie. Lawrence, Beechey, Reinagle, Chalon, Jones, and Mulready followed him to his stately grave. The body had previously been laid in state in Somerset House, his pictures of “The Lazar House” and “The Bridging of Chaos” being hung over the coffin.

When Sir Joshua died, in 1792, his body lay in state in a velvet coffin, in a room hung with sable, in Somerset House. Burke and Barry, Boswell and Langton, Kemble and John Hunter, Towneley and Angerstein came to witness the ceremony.

Where events are so interwoven as they are in topographical history, I hope to be pardoned if I am not always chronological in my arrangement, for it must be remembered that I have anecdotes to attend to as well as dates. Let me here, then, dilate on a cruel instance of misused academic power. My story relates to a young genius as unfortunate as Chatterton, [Pg 80] yet guiltless of his lies and forgeries, who died heart-broken by neglect more than half a century ago.



SOMERSET HOUSE FROM THE STRAND, 1777.

Procter, a young Yorkshire clerk, came up to London in 1777, and became a student of the Royal Academy. In 1783 he carried off a silver medal, and the next year won the gold medal for an historical picture. When Procter gained this last prize, his fellow-students, raising him on their shoulders, bore him downstairs, and then round the quadrangle of Somerset House, shouting out, “Procter! Procter!” Barry was delighted at this, and exclaimed with an oath, “Bedad! the lads have caught the true spirit of the ould Greeks.” Sir Abraham Hume bought Procter’s “Ixion,” which was praised by Reynolds. His colossal “Diomede” the poor fellow [Pg 81] had to break up, as he had no place to keep it in, and no one would buy it. In 1794 Mr. West, wishing that Procter should go to Rome as the travelling student, discovered him, after much inquiry, in poor lodgings in Maiden Lane. A day or two afterwards he was found dead in his bed. The Academicians had been, perhaps, just a little too late with their patronage. [140]

And now, when through grey twilight glooms I steal a glance as I pass by at that grave black figure of the river god, presiding solemn as Rhadamanthus over the central quadrangle of Somerset House, I sometimes dream I see little leonine Fuseli, stormy Barry, and courtly Reynolds pacing together the dim quadrangle that on these autumnal evenings, when the rifle drills are over, wears so lonely and purgatorial an aspect; and far away from them, in murky corners, I fancy I hear muttering the ghosts of Portuguese monks, while scowling at them, stalks by pale Sir Edmondbury, with a sword run through his shadowy body.

[Pg 82]

JACOB TONSON'S BOOK-SHOP, 1742.

CHAPTER V.

THE STRAND (SOUTH SIDE, CONTINUED).

On the Thames, off Somerset House, was a timber shed built on a strong barge, and called "the Folly." In William III.'s reign it was anchored higher up the stream, near the Savoy. Tom Brown calls it "a musical summer-house." Its real name was "The Royal Diversion." [Pg 83] Queen Mary honoured it with her presence.[141] It was at first frequented by "persons of quality," but latterly it became disreputable, and its orchestra and refreshment alcoves were haunted by thieves, gamesters, and courtesans.

Near the Savoy stood the palace of the bishops of Carlisle, which was obtained by exchange with Henry VIII. for Rochester Place at Lambeth. The English sultan gave it to his lucky favourite, Bedford, who took it as his residence. In the reign of James I. the Earl of Worcester bought it; and in 1627 the Duke of Beaufort let it to Lord Clarendon, while his ill-fated house was building in Piccadilly. It was then rebuilt on a smaller scale by the duke, and eventually burnt down in 1695.[142] The present Beaufort Buildings were then erected. Beaufort House, which occupies the site of one in which Cardinal Beaufort died, is now a printing-office.

Blake, the mystical painter, died in 1828, at No. 3 Fountain Court, after five years' residence there. In these dim rooms he believed he saw the ghost of a flea, Satan himself looking through the bars of the staircase window, to say nothing of hosts of saints, angels, evil spirits, and fairies. Here also he wrote verse passionate as Shelley's and pure and simple-hearted as Wordsworth's. Here he engraved, tinted, railed at Woollett, and raved over his Dante illustrations; for though poor and unknown, he was yet regal in his exulting self-confidence. Here, just before his death, the old man sat up in bed, painting, singing, and rejoicing. He died without a struggle.[143]

The office of the *Sun* is on this side the Strand. This paper was established in 1792. Mr. Jerdan left the *Sun* in 1816, selling his share for £300. He had quarrelled with the co-proprietor, Mr. John Taylor, who aspired to a control over him. In 1817 he set up the *Literary Gazette*, the first exclusive organ of literary men.[144] The first editor of the *Sun* got [Pg 84] an appointment in the West Indies. The paper was then edited by Robert Clark, printer of the *London Gazette*, and afterwards by Jerdan, assisted by Fladgate the facetious lawyer, Mulloch, and John Taylor. After getting his sop in the pan of £300 a year from Government, that low-principled satirist, Dr. Wolcot (Peter Pindar), wrote epigrams for it.

Fountain Court was in Strype's time famous for an adjacent tavern from which it derived its name. It was well paved, and its houses were respectably inhabited.[145] The Fountain Tavern was renowned for its good rooms, excellent vaults, "curious kitchen," and old wine. The Fountain Club, of which Pulteney was a member (circa 1737), held its meetings in this tavern, to oppose that fine old Whig gentleman Sir Robert Walpole.[146] Sir Charles Hanbury Williams thus mentions it in one of his lampoons:—

"Then enlarge on his cunning and wit,
  Say how he harangued at the Fountain,
Say how the old patriots were bit,
  And a mouse was produced by a mountain."

Here Pulteney may have planned the *Craftsman* with Bolingbroke, and perhaps have arranged his duel with Lord Hervey, the "Sporus" of Pope.

Dennis, the critic, mentions in his *Letters* dining here with Loggen, the painter, and Wilson, a writer praised by poor Otway in Tonson's first *Miscellany*. "After supper," he says, "we drank Mr. Wycherly's health by the name of Captain Wycherly."[147] This was the dramatist, the celebrated author of *The Plain Dealer* and *The Country Wife*.

The great room of the Fountain Tavern was afterwards Akermann's well-known picture shop; and is now Simpson's cigar divan.

Charles Lillie, the perfumer recommended by Steele in the *Tatler* (Nos. 92, 94), lived next door to the Fountain Tavern. He was burnt out and went to the east corner of Beaufort [Pg 85] Buildings in 1709. Good-natured Steele, pitying him probably for his losses, praised his Barcelona snuff, and his orange-flower water prepared according to the Royal Society's receipt.

The Coal Hole, in this court, was so named by Rhodes, its first landlord, from its having been originally the resort of coal-heavers. In his and Edmund Kean's time it was respectably frequented. It was once the "Evans's" of London, famous for steaks and ale; afterwards it sank to a low den with *poses plastiques* and ribald sham trials, that used to be conducted by "Baron" Nicholson, a fat gross man, but not without a certain unctuous humour, who is now dead.

Edmund Kean, always low in his tastes, used to fly the society of men like Lord Byron to come hither and smoke and drink. The dress, the ceremony, and the compulsory good behaviour of respectable society made him silent and melancholy.[148] He used to say that noblemen talked such nonsense about the stage, and that only literary men understood the subject.

The Kit-Cat Club was instituted in 1700, and died away about the year 1720. There were originally thirty-nine members, and they increased gradually to the forty-eight whose portraits Kneller painted for their secretary, Jacob Tonson, Dryden's bookseller. Their earliest rendezvous was at the house of a pastry-cook, one Christopher Cat, in Shire Lane, near Temple Bar. When he grew wealthier, the club removed with him to the Fountain Tavern in the Strand. The club derived its name from the celebrated mutton pie,[149] which had been christened after its maker.[150] The first members were those Whig patriots who brought about the Revolution and drove out King James. Their object was the encouragement of literature and the fine arts, and the diffusion of loyalty to the House of Hanover. They elected their "toast" for the year by ballot. The lady's name, when chosen, was written on the club drinking-glasses with a diamond. Among the more celebrated of the [Pg 86] members of this club were Kneller, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Addison, Garth, Steele, Lord Mohun, the Duke of Wharton, Sir Robert Walpole, the Earl of Burlington, the Earl of Bath, the Earl of Dorset, the Earl of Halifax, the proud Duke of Somerset, and the Duke of Newcastle.

In summer the Club met at Tonson's house at Barn Elms in Surrey, or at the Upper Flask Tavern at Hampstead.[151] There seems to have been always some doubt about the derivation of the name of the club; for an epigram still extant, written either by Pope or Arbuthnot, attributes the name to the fact of the members toasting "old Cats and young kits." Mr. Defoe mentions the landlord's name as Christopher Catt,[152] while Ned Ward says that though his name was Christopher, he lived at the sign of the Cat and Fiddle.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was once brought by her father to this club when a child, and made the toast for the year. "Petted, praised, fondled, and fed with sweetmeats," she used to say in her old age that it was the happiest day of her life![153]

No. 59 is Coutts's Bank. It was built for Mr. Coutts, in 1768, by the Adam brothers—to whom we are indebted for the Adelphi. The old house of the firm, of the date of Queen Anne, was situated in St. Martin's Lane. The present house contains some fine marble chimney-pieces of the Cipriani and Bacon school. The dining-room is hung with quaint Chinese subjects on paper, sent to Mr. Coutts by Lord Macartney, while on his embassy to China, in 1792-95. In another room hang portraits of some early friends of this son of Mammon, including Dr. Armstrong, the poet and physician, Fuseli's friend, by Reynolds. The strong rooms consist of cloistered vaults, wherein the noblemen and rich commoners who bank in the house deposit patents, title-deeds, and plate of fabulous value.

Mr. Coutts was the son of a Dundee merchant. His first wife was a servant, a Lancashire labourer's offspring. He had three daughters, one of whom became the wife of Sir Francis Burdett, a second Countess of Guilford, and a third Marchioness of Bute. On becoming acquainted with Miss Mellon, and inducing her to leave the stage to avoid perpetual insults, Mr. Coutts bought for her of Sir W. Vane Tempest, a small villa called Holly Lodge, at the foot of Highgate Hill, for which he gave £25,000. His banking-house strong rooms alone cost £10,000 building. The first deposit in the enlarged house was the diamond aigrette that the Grand Signor had placed in Nelson's hat. Mr. Coutts, though very charitable, was precise and exact. On one occasion, there being a deficit of 2s. 10d. in the day's accounts, the clerks were detained for hours, or, as is said, all night. One of Coutts's clerks, who took the western walk, was discovered to be missing with £17,000.[154] Rewards were offered, and the town placarded, but all in vain. The next day, however, the note-case arrived from Southampton. The clerk's story was, that on his way through Piccadilly, being seized with a stupor, he had got into a coach in order to secure the money. He had remained insensible the whole journey, and had awoke at Southampton. Mr. Coutts gave him a handsome sum from his private purse, but dismissed him. [Pg 87]

Coutts's Bank stands on nearly the centre of the site of the "New Exchange." When the Adelphi was built in Durham Gardens, Mr. Coutts purchased a vista to prevent his view being interrupted, stipulating that the new street leading to the entrance should face this opening; and on this space, up to the level of the Strand, he built his strong rooms. Some years after, wishing to enlarge them, he erected over the office a counting-house and a set of offices extending from William Street to Robert Street, and threw a stone bridge over William Street to connect the front and back premises.

Mr. Coutts, late in life, married Harriet Mellon, who, after his death, became the wife of the Duke of St. Albans, a descendant of Nell Gwynn, that light-hearted wanton, whom nobody could hate. "Miss Mellon," says Leigh Hunt, "was arch and agreeable on the stage; she had no genius; but then she had fine eyes and a good-humoured mouth." The same gay writer describes her when young as bustling about at sea-ports, selling tickets for her benefit-night; but then, says the kindly apologist for everybody, she had been left with a mother to support.[155] [Pg 88]

Edmund Kean, the great tragedian, was lodging at 21 Cecil Street when, poor and unknown, he made his first great triumph as Shylock, at Drury Lane; a few days after, his mantelpiece was strewn with bank-notes, and his son Charles was seen sitting on the floor playing with a heap of guineas.[156] This great actor brought the theatre, in sixty-eight nights of 1814, no less than twenty thousand pounds.

The last house on the west side of Cecil Street was inhabited in 1706 by Lord Gray, and in 1721-4 by the Archbishop of York. In the opposite house lived for many years Major-General Sir William Congreve, the inventor of the rockets which bear his name, and a great friend and companion of George IV., to whom he is said to have borne a striking personal resemblance. Sir William was a descendant of Congreve the dramatist; and he was the inventor of a number of successful projects and contrivances, among which may be mentioned the engines employed in dredging the Thames. The east side of Cecil Street is in the Savoy precinct, the west in the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

Dr. Wollaston was living in Cecil Street (No. 28) in the year 1800. This eccentric philosopher, originally a physician, was born in 1766, and died of brain disease in 1828. He discovered two new metals—palladium and rhodium—and acquired more than £30,000, by inventing a plan to make platinum malleable. He improved and invented the camera lucida, and was the first to demonstrate the identity of galvanism and common electricity. He carried on his experiments with the simplest instruments, and never allowed even his most intimate friends to enter his laboratory. When a foreign philosopher once called on him and asked to see his study, he instantly produced, in his strange way, a small tray, on which were some glass tubes and a twopenny blow-pipe. Once, shortly after inspecting a grand galvanic battery, on meeting a brother philosopher in the street he led him by the button into a mysterious corner, took from his pocket a tailor's thimble, poured into it some liquid from a small phial, and instantly heated a platinum wire to a white heat.[157] [Pg 89]

Salisbury Street, in the Strand, was originally built about 1678, but was extensively rebuilt by Payne in the early part of the reign of George III.

Old Salisbury House stood on the sites of Salisbury and Cecil Streets, between Worcester House, now Beaufort Buildings, and Durham House, now the Adelphi. It was so called after Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, and Lord High Treasurer to James I., who died 1612. Queen Elizabeth was present at the house-warming. This Cecil was the bad minister of a bad king. He was Raleigh's enemy and Bacon's; he was the foe of reform, and the friend of Spain, from whom he received bribes, and the slave of vice. Bacon painted this vicious hunchback in his *Essay on Deformity*. The house was divided subsequently into Great and Little Salisbury House—the latter being let to persons of quality. About 1678 it was pulled down, and Salisbury Street built; but it proved too steep and narrow, and was not a successful speculation.[158] The other part, next to Great Salisbury House and over the Long Gallery, was turned into the "Middle Exchange." This eventually gave way to Cecil Street,—a fair street, with very good houses, fit for persons of repute.[159]

On the death of Sackville the poet, Cecil took the white staff, being already Premier-

Secretary. His ambition stretched into every department of the State. “He built a new palace at Hatfield, and a new Exchange in the Strand. Countesses intrigued for him. His son married a Howard, his daughter a Clifford. Ambassadors started for Italy, less to see Doges and Grand Dukes than to pick up pictures and statues, and bronzes and hangings, for his vast establishment at Hatfield Chase. His gardeners travelled through France to buy up mulberries and vines. Salisbury House, on the Thames, almost rivalled the luxurious villas of the Roman cardinals; yet, under this blaze of worldly success, Cecil was the most miserable of men. Friends grudged his rise; his health was broken; the reins which his ambition drew into his hands were beyond the powers of a single man to grasp; and the vigour of his frame, wasted by years of voluptuous licence, failed him at the moment when the strain on his faculties was at the full.”[160] [Pg 90]

In Little Salisbury House lived William Cavendish, third Earl of Devonshire, and father of the first Duke of Devonshire, one of the leaders of the great revolution that drove out the Stuarts. Two or three days after the Restoration, King Charles, passing in his coach through the Strand, espied Hobbes, that mischievous writer in favour of absolute power, standing at the door of his patron the earl. The king took off his hat very kindly to the old man, gave him his hand to kiss, asked after his health, ordered Cooper to take his portrait, and settled on him a pension of £100 a year. Hobbes had been an assistant of Bacon, and a friend of Ben Jonson and of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He had taught Charles II. mathematics, and corresponded with Descartes.

In the street standing on the site of Sir Robert Cecil’s house was the residence of the famous Partridge, the cobbler, impudent sham-almanac maker, and predecessor of our own Moore and Zadkiel, who had foretold the death of the French king. To expose this noisy charlatan and upset his ridiculous hap-hazard predictions, Swift with cruel and trenchant malice reported and lamented his decease in the *Tatler* (1708), to which he contributed under the name of Bickerstaff. The article raised a laugh that has not even quite died away in the present day. Partridge, furious at his losses and the extinguishing of his ill-earned fame, knocked down a hawker who passed his stall crying an account of his death. This happening just as the joke was fading, revived it again, and finally ruined the almanac of poor Partridge.[161] “The villain,” says the poor outwitted astrologer, “told the world I was dead, and how I died, and that he was with me at the time of my death. I thank God, by whose mercy I have my being, that I am still alive, and, excepting my age, as well as ever I was in my life.” He actually died in 1715. [Pg 91]

A little beyond Cecil Street formerly stood Ivy Bridge, under which there was a narrow passage to the Thames, once forming a boundary line between the Duchy of Lancaster and the City of Westminster. Near Ivy Bridge stood the mansion of the Earls of Rutland. Opposite this spot Old Parr had lodgings when he came to court to be shown to Charles I., and died of the visit. Parr was a Shropshire labourer. He was born in 1483, and died aged 152. His grandson lived to 120, and in the year of his death had married a widow. Parr’s London lodging became afterwards the Queen’s Head public-house.[162]

Mrs. Siddons was living at 149 Strand, during the time of her earlier successes. Probably she returned there on that glorious October night of 1782, when she achieved her first great triumph in Southerne’s tragedy of *Isabella*, when her younger son, who acted with her, burst into tears, overcome by the reality of the dying scene. “I never heard,” she says, “such peals of applause in all my life.” She returned home solemnly and calmly, and sat down to a frugal, neat supper with her father and husband, in silence uninterrupted, except by exclamations of gladness from Mr. Siddons.

Durham Street marks the site of old Durham House, built by Hatfield, Bishop of Durham, in 1345. In Henry IV.’s time wild Prince Hal lodged there for some nights. [Pg 92]

In the reign of Henry VIII. Bishop Tunstall exchanged the house with the king for one in Thames Street. Here, in 1550, lodged the French ambassador, M. de Chastillon, and his colleagues.

Edward VI. granted the house to his sister Elizabeth for life, and here that princess bore the scorn and persecution of Bonner and his spies. On Mary coming to the throne and finding Tunstall driven from the Strand and without a shelter, she restored to him Durham House. This Tunstall led a life of great vicissitudes. Henry VIII. had moved him from London to Durham; Edward VI. had dissolved his bishopric altogether; Mary had restored it; and Elizabeth again stripped him in 1559, the year in which he died.

The virgin queen kept the house some time in her own tenacious hands, but in 1583 granted it to Raleigh, whom she had loaded with favours, and who, in 1591, was Captain of the Guard, Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and Lieutenant of Cornwall.

On the death of Queen Elizabeth Raleigh’s sun of fortune set for ever, and that sly time-server Toby Matthew, Bishop of Durham, claimed the old town house of the see, relying on Cecil’s help and King James’s dislike to the great enemy of Spain. Sir Walter opposed him, but the king in council, 1603, recognised the claim, and stripped Raleigh of his possession. The aggrieved man, in a letter of remonstrance to the Lord Keeper Egerton, states that he had occupied the house about twenty years, and had expended on it £2000 out of his own purse.[163] Raleigh did not die at Tower Hill till 1618; but Durham House was never occupied again either by bishop or noble, and five years after the stables of the house came

down to make way for the New Exchange.

In Charles I.'s reign the Earl of Pembroke bought Durham Yard from the Bishop of Durham for £200 a year, and built a handsome street leading to the river.[164] The river front and the [Pg 93]
stables remained in ruins till the Messrs. Adam built the Adelphi on the site of Raleigh's old turret study. Ivy Street had been the eastward boundary of the bishop's domain.[165]

The New Exchange was opened April 11, 1609, in the presence of King James and his Danish queen. It was built principally through the intervention of Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, who lived close by. It was called by the king "Britain's Bourse," but it could not at first compete with the Royal Exchange. At the Restoration, however, when Covent Garden grew into a fashionable quarter, the New Exchange became more frequented than Gresham's building in the city.

In the year 1653 (Cromwell), the New Exchange was the scene of a tragedy. Don Pantaleon de Saa, brother of the Portuguese ambassador, quarrelled with a gentleman named Giraud, who was flirting with the milliners, and who had used some contemptuous expression. The Portuguese, bent on revenge, hired some bravos, who the next day stabbed to death a gentleman whom they mistook for Mr. Giraud. They were instantly seized, and Don Pantaleon was found guilty and executed. Singularly enough, the intended victim perished on the same day on the same scaffold, having in the meantime been condemned for a plot against the Protector.

There are many legends existing about the New Exchange. Thomas Duffet, an actor of Charles II.'s time, kept originally a milliner's shop here. At the Eagle and Child, in Britain's Bourse, the first edition of *Othello* was sold in 1622. At the sign of the "Three Spanish Gypsies" lived Thomas Radford, who sold wash-balls, powder, and gloves, and taught sempstresses. His wife, the daughter of John Clarges, a farrier in the Savoy before or after Radford's death, married General Monk, became the vulgar Duchess of Albemarle, and was eventually buried in Westminster Abbey. At the sign of the Fop's Head lived, in 1674, Will Cademan, a player and play-publisher.[166] Henry Herringham, the chief London publisher [Pg 94]
before Dryden's petty tyrant, Tonson, had his shop at the Blue Anchor in the Lower Walk. Mr. and Mrs. Pepys frequented the New Exchange. Here the Admiralty clerk's wife had "a mind to" a petticoat of sarcenet bordered with black lace, and probably purchased it. Here also, in April, 1664, Pepys and his friend Creed partook of "a most delicate dish of curds and cream."[167] Both Wycherly and Etherege have laid scenes of their comedies at the New Exchange; and here, too, Dryden's intriguing Mrs. Brainsick pretends to visit her "tailor" to try on her new stays.

This Strand Bazaar, in the time of William and Mary, was the scene of the pretty story of the "White Widow." For several weeks a sempstress appeared at one of the stalls, clothed in white, and wearing a white mask. She excited great curiosity, and all the fashionable world thronged her stall. This mysterious milliner was at last discovered to be no less a person than the Duchess of Tyrconnel, widow of Talbot, the Lord Deputy of Ireland under James II. Unable to obtain a secret access to her family, and almost starving, she had been compelled to turn shopwoman. Her relatives provided for her directly the story became known.[168] This duchess was the Frances Jennings mentioned by Grammont, and sister to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough.

This long arcade, leading from the Strand to the water stairs, was divided into four parts—the outward walk below stairs, the inner walk below stairs, the outward walk above stairs, and the inner walk above stairs. The lower walk was a place of assignations. In the upper walk the air rang with cries of "Gloves or ribands, sir?" "Very good gloves or ribands." "Choice of fine essences."[169] Here Addison used to pace, watching the fops and fools with a kindly malice.[170] The houses in the Strand, over against the Exchange door, were often let to rich country families, who glared from the balconies and stared from the windows.[171]

Soon after the death of Queen Anne the New Exchange became disreputable. No one would [Pg 95]
take stalls, so it was pulled down in 1737, and a frontage of dwelling-houses and shops made to the Strand, facing what is now the Adelphi Theatre. But we must return for a moment to old Durham House and a few more of its earlier tenants.

In Henry VIII.'s time Durham House had been the scene of great banquets given by the challengers after the six days' tournament that celebrated the butcher king's ill-omened marriage with that "Flemish mare," as he used ungallantly to call Anne of Cleves. To these sumptuous feasts the bruised and battered champions, together with all the House of Commons and Corporation of London, were invited. To reward the challengers, among whom was Oliver Cromwell's ancestor, Dick o' the Diamond, the burly king gave them each a yearly pension of one hundred marks out of the plundered revenues of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

Later a mint was established at Durham House by Sir William Sherrington, to aid the Lord Admiral Seymour in his treasonable efforts against his brother, the Protector, who finally offered him up a victim to his ambition. Sherrington, however, escaped, and worked the mint for the equally unfortunate Protector.

But no loss of heads could warn the Strand noblemen. It was here that the ambitious Duke of Northumberland married his son, Lord Guildford Dudley, to poor meek-hearted Lady Jane

Grey, who, the luckless queen of an hour, longed only for her Greek books, her good old tutor Ascham, and the quiet country house where she had been so happy. On that great day for the duke, Lady Jane's sister also married Lord Herbert, and Lord Hastings espoused Lady Catherine Dudley. It was from Durham House that the poor martyr of ambition, Lady Jane, was escorted in pomp to the Tower, which was so soon to be her grave.

In 1560 Jean Nicot, a French ambassador, had carried tobacco from Lisbon to Paris. In 1586[172] Drake brought tobacco from Raleigh's colony in Virginia. Raleigh was fond of [Pg 96] smoking over his books. His tobacco-box still existed in 1715; it was of gilt leather, as large as a muff-case, and contained cases for sixteen pipes.[173] There is a doubtful legend about Raleigh's first pipe, the scene of which may be not unfairly laid at Durham House, where Raleigh then lived.

One day his servant, bringing in a tankard of spiced ale as usual into the turret study, found Raleigh (it is said) smoking a pipe over his folios. The clown, seeing smoke issue in clouds from his master's mouth, dropped the tankard in a fright, and ran downstairs to shout to the family that "master was on fire, and that he would be burnt to ashes if they did not run directly to his help."[174]

The stalwart, sour-faced Raleigh disported himself at Durham House in a suit of clothes beset with jewels and valued at sixty thousand pounds,[175] and in diamond court-shoes valued at six thousand six hundred pieces of gold. Here he lived with his wife Elizabeth, and his two unlucky sons Walter and Carew. Here, as he sat in his study in the little turret that looked over the Thames,[176] he must have written against the Spaniards, told his adventures in Virginia, and described his discovery of the gold country of Guiana, his quarrel with Essex at Fayal, and the capture of the rich caracks laden with gold, pearls, and cochineal.

The estate of Durham Place was purchased from the Earl of Pembroke, about 1760, by four brothers of the name of Adam, sons of an architect at Kirkaldy, who were patronised by the handsome and much-abused Earl of Bute, and who built Caen Wood House, near Hampstead, afterwards the wise Lord Mansfield's. Robert, the ablest of the brothers, had visited Palmyra, and was supposed from those gigantic ruins to have borrowed his grand spirit of construction, as well as much of that trivial ornament which he might surely have found nearer home. When the brothers Adam began their work, Durham Yard (the court-yard of Raleigh's old house) was a tangle of small sheds, coal-stores, wine-vaults, and lay- [Pg 97] stalls. They resolved to leave the wharves, throw some huge arches over the declivity, connect the river with the Strand, and over these vaults erect a series of well-built streets, a noble river terrace, and lofty rooms for the newly-established Society of Arts.

In July 1768,[177] when the Adelphi Buildings were commenced, the Court and City were at war, and the citizens, wishing to vex Bute, applied to Parliament to prevent the brothers encroaching on the river, of which sable stream the Lord Mayor of London is the conservator, but not the purifier; but they lost their cause, and the worthy Scotchmen triumphed.[178]

The Scotch are a patriotic people, and stand bravely by their own folk. The Adams sent to Scotland for workmen, whose labours they stimulated by countless bagpipes; but the canny men, finding the bagpipes played their tunes rather too quick, threw up the work, and Irishmen were then employed. The joke of the day was, that the Scotchmen took their bagpipes away with them, but left their *fiddles*![179]

The Adelphi at once became fashionable. Garrick, then getting old, left his house in Southampton Street to occupy No. 5, the centre building of the terrace, and lived there till his death in 1779. Singularly enough, this great and versatile actor had, on first coming to London with his friend Johnson, started as a wine merchant below in Durham Yard. Here he must have raved in "Richard," and wheedled as Abel Drugger; and in the rooms at No. 5 half the celebrities of his century must have met. He died in the "first floor back," and his widow died in the same house as long after as 1822. The ceiling in the front drawing-room was painted by Antonio Zucchi. A white marble chimney-piece in the same room is said to have cost £300.[180] Garrick died after only nine years' residence in the new terrace; but his [Pg 98] sprightly widow, a theatrical critic to the last, lived till she was past ninety, still an enthusiast about her husband's genius. The first time she re-opened the house after Davy's death, Dr. Johnson, Boswell, Sir Joshua, Mrs. Carter, and Mrs. Boscawen were present. "She looked well," says Boswell; "and while she cast her eyes on her husband's portrait, which was hung over the chimney-piece, said, that death was now the most agreeable object to her." Worthy woman! and so she honestly thought at the time; but she lived exactly forty-three years longer in the same house.

If there is a spot in London which Johnson's ghost might be expected to revisit, it is that quiet and lonely Adelphi Terrace. At night no sound comes to you but a shout from some passing barge, or the creak of a ship's windlass. Here Johnson and Boswell once leant over, looking at the Thames. The latter said, "I was thinking of two friends we had lost, who once lived in the buildings behind us, Beauclerk and Garrick." "Ay, sir," replied Johnson, seriously, "and two *such* friends as cannot be supplied." This is a recollection that should for ever hallow the Adelphi Terrace to us.

The Beauclerk above mentioned was one of the few rakes whom Johnson loved. He was a

friend of Langton, and as such had become intimate with the great doctor. Topham Beauclerk was a man of acute mind and elegant manners, and ardently fond of literature. He was of the St. Albans family, and had a resemblance to swarthy Charles II., a point which pleased his elder friend. The doctor liked his gay, young manner, and flattered himself much as women do who marry rakes, that he should reform him in time.

"What a coalition!" said Garrick, when he heard of the friendship; "why, I shall have my old friend to bail out of the Round House." Beauclerk, says Boswell, "could take more liberties with Johnson than any one I ever saw him with;"[181] but, on the other hand, Beauclerk was not spared. On one occasion Johnson said to him, "You never open your mouth, sir, without an intention to give pain, and you have often given me pain—not from the power of what you said, but from seeing your intention." At another time he said, "Thy body is all vice, and thy mind all virtue." [Pg 99]

When the Adelphi was building, Garrick applied for the corner house of Adam Street for his friend Andrew Beckett, the bookseller in the Strand, and he obtained it. In this letter he calls the architects "the dear Adelphi," and the western house "the corner blessing." Garrick's house was for some years occupied by the Royal Literary Fund, but is now a Club.

Garrick promised the brothers, if the request was granted, to make the shop, as old Jacob Tonson's once was, the rendezvous of the first people in England. "I have," he says, "a little selfishness in this request. I never go to coffee-houses, seldom to taverns, and should constantly (if this scheme takes place), be at Beckett's at one at noon and six at night."[182]

Garrick was a frequent visitor at the house of Mr. Thomas Beckett, the bookseller, in Pall Mall, and he obtained the appointment of sub-librarian at Carlton Palace for the son Andrew, who had written a comedy on the *Emile* of Rousseau at the age of fourteen, and produced a poem called *Theodosius and Constantia*. For nearly ten years he wrote for the British and Monthly Reviews. He was born in 1749, and died in 1843. His most useful work is called *Shakspere Himself Again*, in which he released the original text from much muddy nonsense of commentators. He complained bitterly of Griffiths, of the *Monthly Review*, having given him only £45 for four or five years' work—280 articles, produced after reading and condensing 590 volumes; Mr. Griffiths' annual profit by the *Monthly* being no less than £2000.

Into a house in John Street the Society of Arts, established in 1753 by Mr. Shipley, an artist, moved, about 1772. This society still give lectures and rewards, and does about as much good as ever it did. Art must grow wild—it will not thrive in hot-houses. The great room is still adorned with the six large pictures illustrating the "Progress of Society," painted by poor, half-crazed Barry, the ill-educated artist, who, too proud to paint cabinet pictures, could yet paint nothing larger sound or well. [Pg 100]

Shipley, who established the society of Arts in imitation of one already established at Dublin, was originally a drawing-master at Northampton. From its commencement in 1753-4 to 1778 the society distributed in premiums and bounties £24,616. A year after its foundation Josiah Wedgwood began to infuse a classical and purer taste among the proprietors of the Staffordshire potteries,[183] and employed Flaxman to draw some of his designs, and was the first to improve the shape and character of our simplest articles of use.

Mr. Shipley was a brother of the Bishop of St. Asaph, and had studied under a portrait-painter named Phillips. In 1738 the Society of Arts voted their founder a gold medal for his public spirit. His school was continued by a Mr. Pars. He died, aged upwards of ninety, in 1784.[184]

Nollekens, the sculptor, learned drawing there, and Cosway, afterwards the fashionable miniature-painter, was the errand-boy. The house was subsequently inhabited by Rawle, the antiquary, a friend of fat, coarse, clever Captain Grose.[185]

Dr. Ward, the inventor of "Friar's Balsam," a celebrated quack doctor ridiculed by Hogarth, left his statue by Carlini to the Society of Arts. The doctor allowed Carlini £100 a year, so that he should work at this statue for life.[186]

This Joshua Ward, celebrated for his drop and pill, by which and his balsam he made a fortune, was the son of a drysalter in Thames Street. Praised by General Churchill and Lord Chief Baron Reynolds, he was called in to prescribe for King George. The king recovering in spite of the quack, "Spot" Ward was rewarded by a solemn vote of a credulous House of Commons, and he obtained the privilege of being allowed to drive his carriage through St. James's Park. Ward is conspicuous in one of Hogarth's caricatures by a claret mark covering half his brazen face. [Pg 101]

The housekeeper at the Society of Arts in Haydon's time (1842) remembered Barry at work on the frescoes that are so deficient in colour and taste, but show such a fine grasp of mind. She said his violence was dreadful, his oaths horrid, and his temper like insanity. In summer he came at five and worked till dark; he then lit his lamp and went on etching till eleven at night. He was seven years at his task. Burke and Johnson called once; but no artist came to see him. He would have almost shot any painter who dared to do so. He had his tea boiled in a quart pot, dined in Porridge Island, and took milk for supper.[187]

Years after Barry lay in state in the great room which his own genius had adorned, and was

buried in the Abbey; but few of the Academicians attended his funeral. The Adelphi pictures have been recently lined and restored.

Barry having vainly attempted to decorate St. Paul's, executed the paintings now at the Society of Arts for his mere expenses, but eventually, one way and another, cleared a considerable sum by them. He painted them, as he said, to prove that Englishmen had a genius for high art, music, and other refinements of life. They are fairly drawn, often elegantly and reasonably well grouped, but bad in colour. The heterogeneous dresses are jumbled together with bad taste—Dr. Burney in a toupee floats among water-nymphs, and William Penn's wig and hat are ludicrously obtrusive. The perspective is often "out," and the attitudes are stiff; still, historically speaking, the pictures are large-minded and interesting; and, in spite of his faults, one likes to think of the brave Irishman busy on his scaffold, railing at Reynolds and defying everybody. Barry was really a self-deceiver, like Haydon, and aimed far beyond his powers.

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At Osborne's Hotel, in John Street, the King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands resided while on a visit to England in the reign of George IV. A comic song written on their arrival was once popular, though now forgotten; and Theodore Hook produced a quaint epigram on their death by small-pox, the point of which was, that one day Death, being hungry, called for "two Sandwiches." The epigram was not without the unfeeling wit peculiar to that heartless lounger at the clubs, who spent his life amusing the great people, and who died at last a worn-out spendthrift, *sans* character, *sans* everything.

Of all London's charlatans, perhaps the most impudent was Dr. Graham, a Scotchman, whose brother married Catherine Macaulay, the author of a forgotten History of England, much vaunted by Horace Walpole. In or about 1780 this plausible cheat opened what he called a "Temple of Health," in a central house in the Adelphi Terrace. His rooms were stuffed with glass globes, marble statues, medico-electric apparatus, figures of dragons, stained glass, and other theatrical properties. The air was drugged with incense and strains of music. The priestess of this temple was said to be no less a person than Emma Lyons, afterwards Lady Hamilton, the fatal Cleopatra of Lord Nelson. She had been first a housemaid and afterwards a painter's model. She was as beautiful as she was vulgar and abandoned. The house was hung with crutches, ear-trumpets, and other trophies.[188] For one night in the celestial bed, that secured a beautiful progeny, this impostor obtained £100; for a supply of his elixir of life £1000 in advance, and for his earth-baths a guinea each. Yet this arrant knave and hypocrite was patronised by half the English nobility. Archenholz, a German traveller, writing about 1784, describes Dr. Graham and his £60,000 celestial bed. He dilates on the vari-coloured transparent glasses, and the rich vases of perfume that filled the impudent quack's temple, the half-guinea treatises on health, the *moonshine* admitted into the rooms, and the divine balm at a guinea a bottle.

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A magneto-electric bed, to be slept in for the small sum of £50 a night, was on the second floor, on the right hand of the orchestra, and near the hermitage. Electricity and perfumes were laid on in glass tubes from adjoining reservoirs. The beds (there were two or three at least) rested on six massy transparent columns. The perfumed curtains were of purple and celestial blue, like those of the Grand Turk. Graham was blasphemous enough to call this chamber his "Holy of Holies." His chief customers were captains of privateers, nabobs, spendthrifts, and old noblemen. The farce concluded in March 1784, when the rooms were shut for ever, and the temple of Apollo, the immense electrical machine, the self-playing organ, and the celestial bed, were sold in open daylight by a ruthless auctioneer.[189]

Bannister "took off" Graham in a farce called *The Genius of Nonsense*, produced at the Haymarket in 1780. His satin sofas on glass legs, his celestial bed, his two porters in long tawdry greatcoats and immense gold-laced cocked hats, distributing handbills at the door, while his goddess of health was dying of a sore-throat from squalling songs at the top of the staircase, were all hit off by a speaking harlequin, who also caricatured the doctor's sliding walk and bobbing bows. The younger Colman and Bannister had been to the Temple of Health on purpose to take the quack's portrait.[190]

Mr. Thomas Hill, the fussy, good-natured Hull of Theodore Hook's *Gilbert Gurney*, lived for many years and finally died in the second floor of No. 1 James Street, Adelphi. He was the supposed prototype of the obtrusive Paul Pry. It was Hill's boast always to have what you wanted. "Cards, sir? Pooh! pooh! Nonsense! thousands of packs in the house." Liston made the name of Paul Pry proverbial and world-wide.

The names of the four Scotch brothers, John, Robert, James, and William Adam, are preserved by the existing Adelphi Streets. When will any of our streets be named after great thinkers? It is a disgrace to us to allow new districts to be christened, without Government supervision, by worthless, ignoble, and ridiculous names, confusing in their vulgar repetition. Indifferent kings, and nobles not much better, give their names to half the suburbs of London, while Shakespere is unremembered by the builders, and Spenser and Byron have as yet no brick-and-mortar godchildren.

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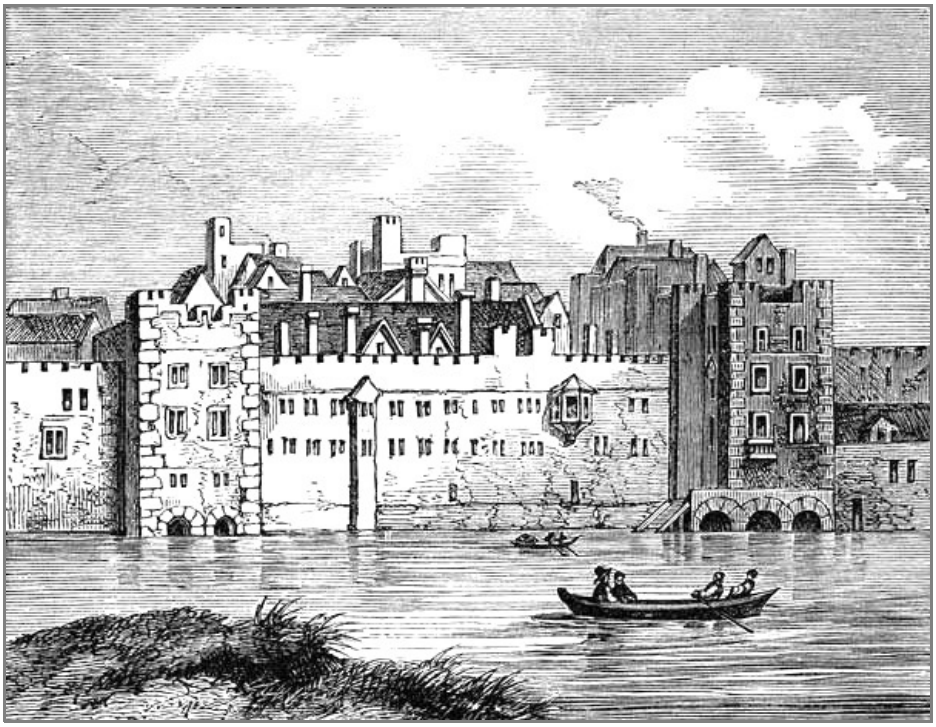
OLD HOUSES ON THE SITE OF WELLINGTON STREET, 1742.

The eldest of the brothers, Robert Adam, died in 1792, and was buried in the south aisle of Westminster Abbey. His pall was supported by the Duke of Buccleuch, the Earl of Coventry, the Earl of Lauderdale, Lord Stormont, Lord Frederick Campbell, and Mr. Pulteney.

It was told as a joke invented against that fat butt, Sir William Curtis, that at a public dinner some lover of royalty and Terence proposed the healths of George IV. and the Duke of York as “the Adelphi,” upon which the alderman, who followed with the next toast, determining that the East should not be far behind the West, rose and said that “as they were now on the subject of streets, he would beg to propose Finsbury Square.” But, after all, why should we laugh at the poor alderman because he did not happen to know Greek? That surely is a venial sin. [Pg 105]

And here, retracing our steps, we must make an episode and turn back down the Savoy.

[Pg 106]



THE SAVOY FROM THE THAMES, 1650.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SAVOY.

> "Their leaders, John Ball, Jack Straw, and Wat Tyler, then marched through London, attended by more than twenty thousand men, to the PALACE OF THE SAVOY, which is a handsome building on the road to Westminster, situated on the banks of the Thames, and belonging to the Duke of Lancaster. They immediately killed the porters, pressed into the house, and set it on fire."—*Froissart's Chronicles.*

A minute's walk down a turning on the south side of the Strand, and we are in the precinct of an old palace, and standing on royal property.

In a ramble by moonlight one cannot fail to meet under the churchyard trees in the Savoy, John of Gaunt, who once lived there; John, King of France, who died there; George Wither, [Pg 107] the poet, and sweet Mistress Anne Killigrew, who are buried there, and Chaucer, who was married there.

Down that steep, dray-traversed street, now so dull and lonely, kings and bishops, knights and ladies, have paced, and mobs have hurried with sword and fire. Now it is a congeries of pickle warehouses, printing offices, and glass manufactories.

Simon de Montfort, that ambitious Earl of Leicester who married the sister of Henry III., and whose father persecuted the Albigenses, dwelt in the Savoy. Here he must have first won the barons, the people, and the humbler clergy by his opposition to the extortions of the king and the bishops. Here for a time he must have all but reigned, till that fatal August day when he fell at Evesham. Simon was a friend of the monks, and after his death endless miracles were said to have been wrought at his grave,[191] as might have been expected.

The Savoy derives its foreign name from a certain Peter, Earl of Savoy, uncle of Eleanor, the daughter of Raymond, Count of Provence, and queen of that good man, but weak monarch, Henry III. This earl was the leader of that rapacious and insolent train of Frenchmen and Savoyards which followed Queen Eleanor to England, and drove Simon de Montfort and his impetuous barons to rebellion by their hunger for titles, lands, and benefices. In 30 Henry III. the king granted to Peter, Earl of Richmond and Savoy, all those houses in the Strand, adjoining the river, formerly belonging to Brian de Lisle, upon paying yearly to the king's exchequer, at the Feast of St. Michael, three barbed arrows for all services.

In 1322 an Earl of Lancaster, then master of the Savoy, on the return of the Spensers, formed an alliance with the Scots, and broke out into open rebellion against Edward II. He was taken at Boroughbridge, led to Pontefract, and there beheaded. As he was led to execution on a bridleless pony, the mob pelted him with mud, taunting him as King Arthur— [Pg 108] the royal name he had assumed in his treasonable letters to the Scots.[192]

Earl Peter, in due time growing weary of stormy England, and sighing for his cool Savoy mountains, transferred his mansion to the provost and chapter of Montjoy (Fratres de Monte Jovis) at Havering-atte-Bower, a small village in Essex. At the death of the foolish king, his widow purchased the palace of the Savoy of the Montjoy chapter, as a residence for her son Edmund, afterwards Earl of Lancaster, to whom had been given the chief estates of the defeated Montfort.

His son Henry, Duke of Lancaster, repaired and partly rebuilt the palace, at an expense of upwards of 50,000 marks. From this potent lord it descended to Edward III.'s son, John of Gaunt (Ghent), who lived here in the splendour befitting the son of Edward III., the uncle of Richard II., and the father of a prince hereafter to become Henry IV.

It was in the chapel of this river-side palace (about 1360, Edward III.) that our great poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, married Philippa, daughter of a knight of Hainault and sister to a mistress of the Duke's. He mentions his marriage in his poem of *The Dream*.[193] He says harmoniously—

> "On the morrow,
> When every thought and every sorrow
> Dislodg'd was out of mine heart,
> With every woe and every smart,
> Unto a tent prince and princess
> Methought brought me and my mistress.
> * * * *
> With ladies, knighten, and squiers,
> And a great host of ministers,
> Which tent was church parochial."

Those marriage bells have long since rung, the smoke of that incense has long since risen to heaven, yet we seldom pass the Savoy without thinking how the poet and his fair Philippa went

"To holy church's ordinance,
And after that to dine and dance,
... and divers plays."

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It was to his great patron—"time-honoured" Lancaster, claimant, through his wife, of the throne of Castile—that Chaucer owed all his court favours, his Genoese embassy, his daily pitcher of wine, his wardship, his controllership, and his annuity of twenty marks. It was in this palace he must have imbibed his attachment to Wickliffe, and his hatred of all proud and hypocritical priests.

Buildings seem, like men, to be born under special stars. It was the fate of the Savoy to enjoy a hundred and forty years of splendour, and then to sink into changeless poverty and desolation. It was also its ill fate to be once sacked and once burnt. In 1378, under Richard II., its first punishment overtook it. John Wickliffe, a Yorkshireman, had been appointed rector of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, by the favour of John of Ghent, who was delighted with a speech of Wickliffe in Parliament denying that King John's tribute to the Pope necessarily bound King Edward III. The Papal bull for Wickliffe's prosecution did not reach England till the king's death, but Wickliffe was cited on the 19th of February, 1378, to appear before the Bishop of London at St. Paul's. In the interval before his appearance he had promised the Parliament, at their request, to prove the legality of its refusal to pay tribute to the Pope.

On the day appointed Wickliffe appeared in Our Lady's Chapel, accompanied by the Earl Marshall, Percy, and the Duke of Lancaster, who openly encouraged him, to the horror of the populace and the bitter rage of the priests. A quarrel instantly began by Courtenay, the Bishop of London, opposing a motion of the Earl Marshall that Wickliffe should be allowed a seat. The proud duke, pale with anger, whispered fiercely to the bishop that, "rather than take such language from him, he would drag him out of the church by the hair of his head." The threat was heard by an unfriendly bystander, and it passed round the church in whispers. Rumour, with her thousand babbling tongues, was soon busy in the churchyard, [Pg 110] where the people had assembled, eager for the reformer's condemnation. They instantly broke forth like hounds which have recovered a scent. It was at once proposed to break into the church and pull the duke from the judgment-seat. When he appeared at the door, he was received with ominous yells, and was chased and pelted by the mob. Furious and beside himself with rage, he instantly proceeded to Westminster, where the Parliament was sitting, and moved that from that day forth all the privileges of the citizens of London should be annulled, that they should no longer elect a mayor or sheriff, and that Lord Percy should possess the entire jurisdiction over them—a severe penalty, it must be owned, for pelting a duke with mud.

The following day, the citizens, hearing of this insolent proposal, snatched up their arms, and swore to take the proud duke's life. After pillaging the Marshalsea, where Lord Percy resided, they poured down on the Savoy and killed a priest whom they took to be Percy in disguise. They then broke all the furniture and threw it into the Thames, leaving only the bare walls standing. While the mob were shouting at the windows, feeding the river with torrents of spoiled wealth, or cutting the beds and tapestry to pieces, the duke and Lord Percy, who had been dining with John of Ypres, a merchant in the City, escaped in disguise by rowing up the river to Kingston in an open boat. Eventually, at the entreaties of the Bishop of London, who pleaded the sanctity of Lent, the rioters dispersed, having first hung up the duke's arms in a public place as those of a traitor. The Londoners finally appeased their opponent by carrying to St. Paul's a huge taper of wax, blazoned with the duke's arms, which was to burn continually before the image of Our Lady in token of reconciliation.

This John of Gaunt, fourth son[194] of Edward III., married Blanche, daughter of Henry, Duke of Lancaster, who died of the plague in 1360, John succeeding to the title in right of his wife. He married his daughter Philippa to the King of Portugal, and his daughter Catharine to the Infant of Spain. From Henry Plantagenet, fourth Earl and first Duke of Lancaster, the Savoy [Pg 111] descended to this John of Ghent, who married that amiable princess, Blanche Plantagenet, daughter and co-heir of Earl Henry.

Into this same king-haunted precinct John of France, after the slaughter at Poitiers, was brought with chivalrous and almost ostentatious humility by the Black Prince. One thousand nine hundred English lances had routed with great slaughter eight thousand French. The lanes and moors of Maupertuis were choked with dead knights; the French king had been wounded, beaten to the ground, and taken prisoner, together with his son Philip, by a gentleman of Artois.[195] Sailing from Bordeaux, the Black Prince arrived at Sandwich with his prisoner, and was received at Southwark by the citizens of London on May 5, 1357. Triumphal arches were erected, and tapestry hung from every window. The King of France rode like a conqueror on a richly trapped cream-coloured horse, while by his side sat the young prince on a small black palfrey. Some hours elapsed before the procession could reach Westminster Hall, where King Edward was surrounded by his prelates, knights, and barons. When John entered, our king arose, embraced him, and led him to a splendid banquet prepared for him. The palace of the Savoy was allotted to King John and his son, till his removal to Windsor.

Here the royal Frenchman may have been when he heard the tidings of the ferocity of the Jacquerie, and of the dreadful riots in his capital. To the Savoy he returned when his son, the

Duke of Anjou, broke his parole and fled to Paris, desirous to exculpate himself of this dishonour, and to arrange for a crusade to recover Cyprus from the Turk.[196] To his council, dissuading him from returning, like a second Regulus, to captivity and perhaps death, the king addressed these memorable words—"If honour were banished from every other place, it should at least find an asylum in the breast of kings."

John was affectionately received by the chivalrous Edward, and again returned to his old quarters in the Savoy, with his hostages of the blood royal—"the three lords of the fleur-de-lys." Here he spent several weeks in giving and receiving entertainments; but before he could proceed to business, he was attacked with a dangerous illness, and expired in 1364. His obsequies were performed with regal magnificence, and his corpse was sent with a splendid retinue to be interred at St. Denis. [Pg 112]

When treaties are broken by statesmen, or unjust wars declared, let the reader go to the Savoy, and think of that brave promise-keeper, King John of France.

During the latter years of King Edward III., John of Gaunt became very unpopular. "The good Parliament" (1376) remonstrated against the expense of his unsuccessful wars in Spain, Scotland, and France, and against the excessive taxation. The duke imprisoned the Speaker, and banished wise William of Wyckeham from the king's person, but in vain attempted to alter the law of succession.

In Wat Tyler's rebellion the duke's palace was the first to be destroyed. A refusal to pay oppressive poll-tax led to a riot at Fobbing, a village in Essex; from this place the flame spread like wildfire through the whole county, and the people rose, led by a priest named Jack Straw. At Dartford, a tiler bravely beat out the brains of a tax-collector who had insulted his daughter. Kent instantly rose, took Rochester Castle, and massed together at Maidstone, under Wat, a tiler, and Ball, a preacher. In a few days a hundred thousand men, rudely armed with clubs, bills, and bows, poured over Blackheath and hurried on to London.[197] In Southwark they demolished the Marshalsea and the King's Bench; then they sacked Lambeth Palace, destroyed Newgate, fired the house of the Knights Hospitallers at Clerkenwell, and that of the Knights of St. John at Highbury, and seizing the Tower, beheaded an archbishop and several knights. All Flemings hidden in churches were dragged out and put to death. Yet, with all this intoxication of new liberty, the claims of these Kentish men were simple and just. They demanded—The abolition of slavery; the reduction of rent to fourpence an acre; the free liberty of buying and selling in all fairs and markets; and lastly a general pardon. [Pg 113]

At the great bivouacs at Mile End and on Tower Hill, Wat Tyler's men required all recruits to swear to be true to King Richard and the Commons, and to admit no monarch of the name of John.[198] This last clause of the oath was aimed at John of Gaunt, to whom the people attributed all their misery. On June 13, 1381, a deluge of billmen, bowmen, artisans, and ploughmen rolled down on the Savoy. The duke was at the time negotiating with the Scots on the Borders, while his castles of Leicester and Tutbury were being plundered. The attack was sudden, and there was no defence. A proclamation had previously been made by Wat Tyler, that, as the common object was justice and not plunder, any one found stealing would be put to death.

For beauty and stateliness of building, as well as all manner of princely furniture, there was, says Holinshed, no palace in the realm comparable to the duke's house that the Kentish and Essex men burnt and marred. They tore the silken and velvet hangings; they beat up the gold and silver plate, and threw it into the Thames; they crushed the jewels and mortars, and poured the dust into the river. One of the men—unfortunate rogue!—being seen to slip a silver cup into the breast of his doublet, was tossed into the fire and burnt to death, amid shouts and "fell cries."[199] The cellars were ruthlessly plundered, probably in spite of Wat Tyler, and thirty-two of the poor wretches, buried under beams and stones, were either starved or suffocated. In the wildest of the storm, some barrels were at last found which were supposed to contain money. They were flung into the huge bonfire; in an instant they exploded, blew up the great hall, shook down several houses, killed many men, and reduced the palace to ruins. That was on the 13th; on the 15th, the Essex men had dispersed; and Wat Tyler, the impetuous reformer, during a conference with the king in Smithfield, was slain by a sudden blow from the sword of Lord Mayor Walworth. [Pg 114]

John of Gaunt died at the Bishop of Ely's palace in Holborn, at Christmas 1398—his old home being now a ruin—and he was buried on the north side of the high altar of Saint Paul's, beside the Lady Blanche, his first wife. Instantly on his death, the wilful young king, to the rage of the people, seized on all his uncle's lands, rents, and revenues, and banished the duke's attorney, who resisted his shameless theft. Amongst this pile of plunder the Savoy must have also passed.

The Savoy had bloomed, and after the bloom came in its due time the "sere and yellow leaf." The precinct must have remained a waste during the Wars of the Roses;[200] but its blackened ruins preached their silent lesson in vain to the turbulent and tormented Londoners.

In the reign of that dark and wily king, Henry VII., sunshine again fell on the Savoy. That prince, who was fond of erecting convents, founded on the old site a hospital, intended to shelter one hundred poor almsmen. It was not, however, finished when he died, nor was it

completed till the fifteenth year of his son's reign (1524), the year in which the French were driven out of Italy.

The hospital, which was dedicated to John the Baptist, was in the form of a cross, and over the entrance-gate, facing the Strand, was the following insipid inscription:—

"*Hospitium hoc inopi turba Savoia vocatum,*
Septimus Henricus solo fundavit ab imo."

The master and four brethren were to be priests and to officiate in turns, standing day and night at the gate to invite in and feed any poor or distressed persons who passed down the river-side road. If those so received were pilgrims or travellers, they were to be dismissed the next morning with a letter of recommendation to the next hospital, and with money to [Pg 115] defray their expenses on the journey.

In the reign of Edward VI., part of the revenues of the new hospital, to the value of six hundred pounds, was transferred to Bridewell prison and Christ's Hospital school for poor orphan children; for already abuses had crept in, and indiscriminate charity had led to its usual melancholy results. The old palace had become no mere shelter for the deserving poor, but a den of loiterers, sham cripples, and vagabonds of either sex, who begged all day in the fields and came to the Savoy to sleep and sup.[201]

Queen Mary, whose Spanish blood made her a friend to all monastic institutions, re-endowed the unlucky place with fresh lands; but it went on in its old courses till the twelfth year of Elizabeth, who suddenly pounced in her own stern way on the nest of rogues, and, to the terror of sinecurists, deprived Thomas Thurland, then master, of his office, for corruption and embezzlement of the hospital estates.

We hear nothing more of the unlucky and neglected Hospital of St. John till the Restoration, when Dr. Henry Killigrew was appointed master, much to the chagrin and disappointment of the poet Cowley, to whom the sinecure had been promised by Charles I. and Charles II.

Cowley, the clever son of a London stationer, had been secretary to the queen-mother, but returning as a spy to England, was apprehended, and upon that made his peace with Cromwell. This latter fact the Royalists never forgave, and considering his play of *The Cutter of Colman Street* as caricaturing the old roystering Cavalier officers, they damned his comedy, lampooned him, and gave the Savoy to Killigrew, father of the court wit. Upon this the mortified poet wrote his poem of "The Complaint,"[202] wherein he calls the Savoy the Rachel he had served with "faith and labour for twice seven years and more," and querulously describes himself as left alone gasping on the naked beach, while all his fellow voyagers had marched up to possess the promised land. The poem, though ludicrously querulous, contains some lines, such as the following, which are truly beautiful. The muse is [Pg 116] reproaching the truant poet.

"Art thou returned at last," said she,
"To this forsaken place and me,
Thou prodigal who didst so loosely waste,
Of all thy youthful years, the good estate?
Art thou return'd here to repent too late,
And gather husks of learning up at last,
Now the rich harvest-time of life is past,
And winter marches on so fast?"

With this farewell lament Cowley withdrew "from the tumult and business of the world," to his long-coveted retirement[203] at pleasant, green Chertsey, where, seven years after, he died.

The Savoy, always an abused sinecure, that made the master a rogue and its inmates professional beggars, was finally suppressed in the reign of Queen Anne.[204] It was then used as a barrack for five hundred soldiers, and as a deserters' prison, till the approaches to Waterloo Bridge rendered its removal necessary.

Savoy Street occupies the site of the old central Henry VII.'s Tudor gate. Coal wharves cover the site of the ancient front of the hospital, and the houses in Lancaster Place, leading to Waterloo Bridge, another part of its area.

In 1661, the year after the restoration of Charles II., a celebrated conference between the Church of England bishops and the Presbyterian divines took place, with very small result, in the Bishop of London's lodgings in the Savoy. Among the twelve bishops were Sheldon and Gauden, the author of *Ikon Basilike*: among the Presbyterians Baxter, Calamy, and Reynolds. They were to revise the Liturgy, and to discuss rules and forms of prayer; but there was so much distrust and reserve on both sides, that at the end of two months the conference came to an untimely end.[205] It was the bishops' hour of triumph, and no [Pg 117] concessions could be expected from them after their many mortifications. In the same year Charles II. established a French church in the Savoy, and Dr. Durel preached the first sermon to the foreign residents in London, July 14, 1661.[206]

In Queen Anne's time, after its suppression, the Savoy became, like the Clink and Whitefriars, a sanctuary for fraudulent debtors. On one occasion, in 1696, a creditor

entering that nest of thieves to demand a debt, was tarred and feathered, carried in a wheelbarrow into the Strand, and there bound to the May-pole; but some constables coming up dispersed the rabble and rescued the tormented man from his persecutors.[207]

Strype, writing about 1720 (George I.), describes the Savoy as a great ruinous building, divided into several apartments. In one a cooper stored his hoops and butts; in another there were rooms for deserters, pressed men, Dutch recruits, and military prisoners. Within the precinct there was the king's printing-press, where gazettes, proclamations, and Acts of Parliament were printed; and also a German Lutheran church, a French Protestant church, and a Dissenting chapel; besides "harbours for refugees and poor people."[208] The worthy writer thus describes the hall of the old hospital:—

"In the midst of its buildings is a very spacious hall, the walls three foot broad, of stone without and brick and stone inward. The ceiling is very curiously built with wood, having knobs in one place hanging down, and images of angels holding before their breasts coats of arms, but hardly discoverable. One is a cross gules between four stars, or else mullets. It is covered with lead, but in divers places open to the weather. Towards the east end of the hall is a fair cupola with glass windows, but all broken, which makes it probable the hall was as long again, since cupolas are wont to be built about the middle of great halls."

In 1754 (George II.) clandestine marriages were performed at the Savoy church; and the advantages of secrecy, privacy, and access by water were boldly advertised in the papers of the day. The *Public Advertiser* of January 2, 1754, contains the following impudent and touting advertisement:— [Pg 118]

"By Authority.—Marriages performed with the utmost privacy, secrecy, and regularity, at the ancient royal chapel of St. John the Baptist in the Savoy, where regular and authentic registers have been kept from the time of the Reformation (being two hundred years and upwards) to this day. The expense not more than one guinea, the five shilling stamp included. There are five private ways by land to this chapel, and two by water."

At this time the Savoy was still a large cruciform building, with two rows of mullioned windows facing the Thames; a court to the north of it was called the Friary. The north front, the most ornamented, had large pointed windows and embattled parapets, lozenged with flint.

At the west end, in 1816, stood the guard-house, or military prison, its gateway secured by a strong buttress, and embellished with Henry VII.'s arms and the badges of the rose and the portcullis: above these were two hexagonal oriel windows.

In 1816, when the ruins were to be removed, crowds thronged to see the remains of John of Gaunt's old palace.[209] The workmen found it difficult to destroy the mossy and ivy-covered walls and the large north window; the masses of flint, stone, and brick being eight or ten feet thick. The screw-jack was powerless to destroy the work of Chaucer's time. The masons had to dig, pickaxe holes, and loosen the foundations, then to drive crowbars into the windows and fasten ropes to them, so as to pull the stones inwards. The outer buttresses would in any other way have defied armies.

Some of the stone was soft and white. This, according to tradition, was that brought from Caen by Queen Mary. The industrious costermongers discovered this, and cut it into blocks to sell as hearthstones. A fire about 1777 had thrown down much of the hospital, so that the old level was fifteen or twenty feet deeper. The vaults and subterranean passages were unexplored. The wells were filled up. The workmen then pulled down the German chapel, which stood next Somerset House, and the red-brick house in the Savoy Square that was used for barracks. "The entrance," says a writer of 1816, "to the Strand or Waterloo Bridge will be spacious, and the houses in the Strand now only stop the opening."[210] [Pg 119]

The Chapel of St. Mary, Savoy, is a late and plain Perpendicular structure, with a fine coloured ceiling. This small, quiet chapel holds a silent congregation of illustrious dead.

THE SAVOY CHAPEL.

Here are interred Sir Robert and Lady Douglas (temp. James I.); the Countess of Dalhousie, daughter of Sir Allen Apsley, Lieutenant of the Tower, and sister to that admirable wife, Mrs. Hutchinson, who died in 1663; William Chaworth, who died in 1582, a member of that Nottinghamshire family, one of whom, Lord Byron's predecessor, killed in a tavern duel; and Mrs. Anne Killigrew, who died in 1685, the paintress and poetess on whom Dryden wrote an extravagant but glorious ode, beginning— [Pg 120]

> "That youngest virgin daughter of the skies,
> Made in the last promotion of the blest."[211]

This accomplished young lady was daughter of Dr. Henry Killigrew, and niece of Thomas Killigrew the wit, of whom Denham, the poet, bitterly said—

> "Had Cowley ne'er spoke, Killigrew ne'er writ,
> Combined in one they'd made a matchless wit."

The father of Mistress Killigrew was author of a tragedy called *The Conspiracy*, which both Ben Jonson and Lord Falkland eulogised. Even old Anthony Wood says, in his own quaint way, that this lady "was a Grace for beauty, and a Muse for wit."[212]

We must add to this list Sir Richard and Lady Rokeby, who died in 1523, and Gawin Douglas, that good Bishop of Dunkeld who first translated Virgil into Lowland Scotch. He was pensioned by Henry VIII., was a friend of Polydore Virgil, and died of the plague in London in 1521. The brass is on the floor, about three feet south of the stove in the centre of the chapel.[213]

Dr. Cameron, the last victim executed for the daring rebellion of 1745, lies here also in good company among knights and bishops. His monument, by M. L. Watson, was not erected till 1846. Here, too, is that great admiral of Elizabeth—George, third Earl of Cumberland, who used to wear the glove which his queen had given him, set in diamonds, in his tilting helmet. He died in the Duchy House in the Savoy, October 3, 1605; but his bowels alone were buried here, the rest of his body lies at Skipton. He was the father of the brave, proud Countess, who, when Charles II.'s secretary pressed on her notice a candidate for Appleby, wrote that celebrated cannon-shot of a letter:—

> "I have been bullied by an usurper; I have been neglected by a court, but I will not be dictated to by a subject. Your man shan't stand. [Pg 121]
>
> "Anne, Dorset, Pembroke, and Montgomery."

Here also there is a tablet to the memory of Richard Lander, the traveller, originally a servant of that energetic discoverer Captain Clapperton, who was the first to cross Africa from Tripoli and Benin. Lander had the honour also of first discovering the course of the Niger. He died in February 1834, from a gunshot-wound, at Fernando Po, aged only thirty-one. Such are the lion-men who extend the frontiers of English commerce.

In the Savoy reposes a true poet, but an unhappy man—George Wither, the satirist and idyllist, who died in 1667, and lies here between the east door and the south end of the

chapel.[214] He was one of Cromwell's major-generals, and had a hard time of it after the Restoration. It was to save Wither's life that Denham used that humorous petition—"As long as Wither lives I should not be considered the worst poet in England."

Wither anticipated Wordsworth in simple earnestness and a regard for the humblest subjects. The soldier-poet himself says—

> "In my former days of bliss,
> Her divine skill taught me this:
> That from everything I saw
> I could some invention draw,
> And raise pleasure to her height
> Through the meanest object's sight,
> By the murmur of a spring,
> By the least bough's rustling."[215]

These charming lines were written when Wither lay in the Marshalsea, imprisoned for writing a satire—*Abuses stripped and whipped*.

In the same church lies one of the smallest of military heroes—Lewis de Duras, Earl of Feversham, who died in the reign of Queen Anne. He was nephew of the great Turenne, and was one of the few persons present when Charles II. received extreme unction. He [Pg 122] commanded, or rather followed, King James II.'s troops at Sedgemoor, in 1685, and at that momentous crisis "thought only of eating and sleeping."[216] Upon this shambling general the Duke of Buckingham wrote one of his latest lampoons.[217]

In 1552 the first manufactory of glass in England was established at the old Savoy House. It was here that, in 1658, the Independents met and drew up their famous Declaration of Faith. In 1671 the Royal Society's publications were printed here. In Dryden's time, the wounded English sailors who had been mangled by Van Tromp's and De Ruyter's shot were nursed here. The good and witty Fuller, who wrote the *Worthies* lectured here. Half-crazed Alexander Cruden, who compiled the laborious Concordance to the Bible, lived here; and here grinding Jacob Tonson had a warehouse.

In 1843 the Queen repaired the Savoy Chapel, in virtue of her being the patron of it. The duty, indeed, fell upon the Crown, for the chapel stood in the Liberty of the Duchy of Lancaster, and the office of the Duchy is in Lancaster Place, to the right as you approach Waterloo Bridge.

In July 1864 the Savoy Chapel was unfortunately destroyed by a fire occasioned by an explosion of gas. The coloured ceiling, the altar window, containing a figure of St. John the Baptist, and a solitary niche with some tabernacle work at the east end, all perished. It was shortly afterwards restored and decorated afresh throughout, at the cost of Her Majesty.

Mr. George Augustus Sala has admirably sketched the present condition of the Precinct,—its almost solemn silence and its gravity,—its loneliness, as of Juan Fernandez, Norfolk Island, or Key West,[218] although on the very verge of the roaring world of London, and but five minutes' walk from Temple Bar.

The royal property is chiefly covered now by shops, public-houses, and printing-offices. The [Pg 123] Precinct still retains traditions of the vagabond squatters who, till about the middle of the last century, assumed possession of the ruinous tenements in the Savoy, till the Footguards turned them out, and the houses were pulled down, rebuilt, and let to respectable tenants.

The old churchyard has long since been sealed up by the Board of Health, but the trees and grass still flourish round the old stones. Clean-shaved, nattily dressed actors come to this quiet purlieu to study their parts. Musicians of theatrical orchestras, penny-a-liners, and printers haunt the bar of the Savoy tavern. Those quiet houses with the white door-steps, shining brass plates and green blinds, are inhabited by accountants' clerks, retired and retiring small tradesmen, and commission agents interested in pale ale, pickles, and Wallsend coals.

"So," says Mr. Sala, "run the sands of life through this quiet hour-glass; so glides the life away in the old Precinct. At its base a river runs for all the world; at its summit is the brawling, raging Strand; on either side are darkness and poverty and vice, the gloomy Adelphi arches, the Bridge of Sighs that men call Waterloo. But the Precinct troubles itself little with the noise and tumult; it sleeps well through life without its fitful fever."

Wearied of its old grandeur, pondering, as old men ponder, over its dead kings—for Wat Tyler and his Kentish men need no Riot Act to quiet them now—the Savoy and its crowned ghosts drift on with our methodical planet, meekly awaiting the death-blow that time must some day inflict.

Tait Wilkinson's father was a minister of the Savoy. Garrick helped to transport him by informing against him for illegally performing the marriage ceremony. In return, Garrick helped forward the son—"an exotic," as he called him, rather than an actor—but a wonderful mimic, not only of voice and manner, but even of features. He used to reproduce Foote's imitations of the older actors—as Mathews afterward imitated Wilkinson, who in his time had imitated Foote, to that impudent buffoon's great vexation.

The *Examiner*, whose office is near Waterloo Bridge, was started by Leigh Hunt and his brother John in 1808. It began by boldly asserting the necessity for reform, lampooning the Regent, and attacking the cant and excesses of Methodism. In 1812 both the Hunts were found guilty of having called the Prince Regent “the Prince of Whales” and “a fat Adonis of fifty,” and were sentenced to two years’ imprisonment in Horsemonger Lane gaol, and to pay a fine of £500. At a later period, Hazlitt joined the paper, and wrote for it the essays reprinted (in 1817) under the title of *The Round Table*.[219] Close to it is the office of the *Spectator*, another paper of the same calibre and class, and more important than the *Examiner* now, though its early history is not so interesting. [Pg 124]

Waterloo Bridge, one of those marvels built by the industrious simple-hearted John Rennie, was opened by the Prince Regent in 1817. Dupin declared it was a colossal monument worthy of Sesostris or the Cæsars; and what most struck Canova in England was that the foolish Chinese Bridge then in St. James’s Park should be the production of the Government, while Waterloo Bridge was the result of mere private enterprise.[220] The bridge did not settle more than a few inches after the centres were struck.

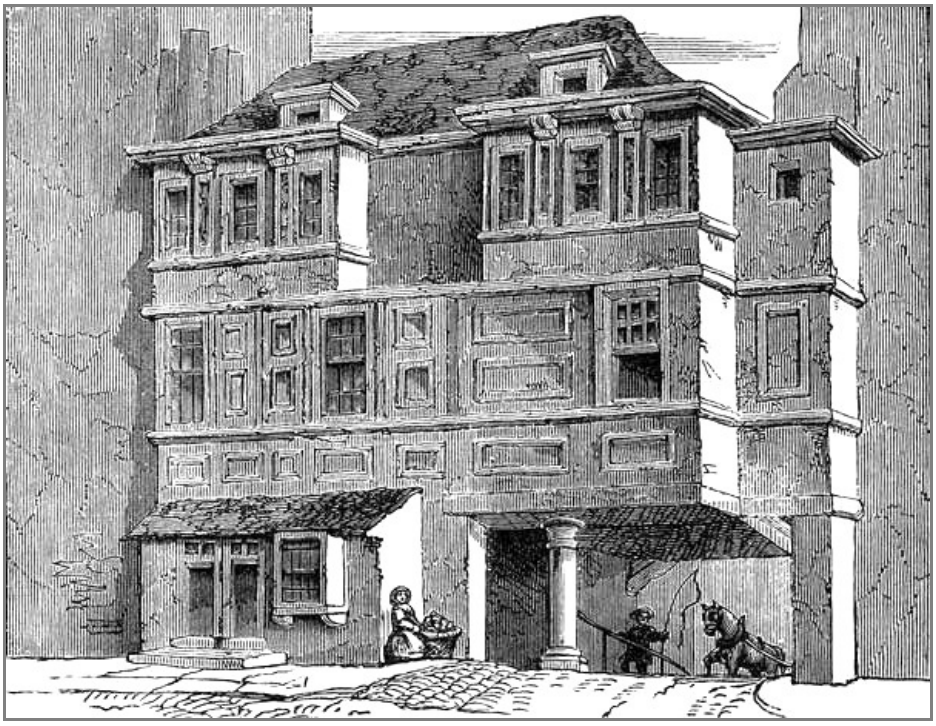
The project of erecting the Strand Bridge, as it was first called, was started by a company in 1809, a joint-stock-fever year. Rennie received £1000 a year for himself and assistants, or £7: 7s. a day, and expenses. The bridge consists of nine arches, of 120 feet span, with piers 20 feet thick, the arches being plain semi-ellipses, with their crowns 30 feet above high water. Over the points of each pier are placed Doric column pilasters, after a design taken from the Temple of Segesta in Sicily. In the construction of the bridge the chief features of Rennie’s management were the following:—The employment of coffer-dams in founding the piers; new methods of constructing, floating, and fixing the centres; the introduction and working of Aberdeen granite to an extent before unknown; and the adoption of elliptical stone arches of an unusual width. [Pg 125]

Nearly all the bur stone was brought to the bridge by one horse, called “Old Jack.” On one occasion the driver, a steady man, but too fond of his morning dram, kept “Old Jack” waiting a longer time than usual at the public-house, upon which he poked his head in at the open door, and gently drew out his master by the coat collar.[221]

Rennie, the architect of the three great London bridges, the engineer of the Plymouth Breakwater and of the London and East India Docks, and a drainer of the Fens, was the son of a small farmer in East Lothian, and was born in 1761.[222]

THE SAVOY PRISON, 1793.

[Pg 126]



DURHAM HOUSE, 1790.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE SAVOY TO CHARING CROSS.

Old York House stood on the site of Buckingham and Villiers Streets. In ancient times, York House had been the inn of the Bishops of Norwich. Abandoned to the crown, King Henry VIII. gave the place to that gay knight Charles Brandon, the husband of his beautiful sister Mary, the Queen of France. When the Church rose again and resumed its scarlet pomp, the house was given to Queen Mary's Lord Chancellor, Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York, in exchange for Suffolk House in Southwark, which was presented by Queen Mary to the see of York in recompense for York House, Whitehall, taken from Wolsey by her father. On the fall of that minister, once more a change took place, and the house passed to the Lord Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon, who rented it of the see of York. [Pg 127]

In this house the great Francis Bacon was born, on the 22d of January, 1561. York House stood near the royal palace, from which it was parted by lanes and fields. Its courtyard and great gates opened to the street. The main front, with its turrets and water stair, faced the river. The garden, falling by an easy slope to the Thames, commanded a view as far south as the Lollards' Tower at Lambeth, as far east as London Bridge. "All the gay river life[223] swept past the lawn, the salmon-fishers spreading their nets, the watermen paddling gallants to Bankside, and Shakspere's theatre, the city barges rowing past in procession, and the queen herself, with her train of lords and ladies, shooting by in her journeys from the Tower to Whitehall Stairs. From the lattice out of which he gazed, the child could see over the palace roof the pinnacles and crosses of the old abbey."

The Lord Keeper Pickering died at York House in 1596, and Lord Chancellor Egerton in 1616 or 1617. In 1588 it is supposed the Earl of Essex tried to obtain the house, as Archbishop Sandys wrote to Burghley begging him to resist some such demand. Essex was in ward here for six months, fretting under the care of Lord Keeper Egerton.

"York House was the scene," says a clever pleader for a great man's good fame, "of Bacon's gayest hours, and of his sharpest griefs—of his highest magnificence, and of his profoundest prostration. In it his studious childhood passed away. In it his father died. On going into France, to the court of Henry IV., he left it a lively, splendid home; on his return from that country, he found it a house of misery and death. From its gates he wandered forth with his widowed mother into the world. Though it passed into other hands, his connection with it never ceased. Under Egerton its gates again opened to him. It was the scene of that inquiry into the Irish treason when he was the queen's historian. During his courtship of Alice Barnham, York House was his second home. In one of its chambers he watched by the sick-bed of Ellesmere, and on Ellesmere's surrender of the Seals, presented the dying Chancellor with the coronet of Brackley. It became his own during his reign as Keeper and Chancellor. From it he dated his great Instauration; in its banqueting-hall he feasted poets and scholars; from one of its bed-rooms he wrote his Submission and Confession; in the same room he received the Earls of Arundel, Pembroke, and Southampton, as messengers from the House [Pg 128]

of Lords; there he surrendered the Great Seal. To regain York House, when it had passed into other hands, was one of the warmest passions of his heart, and the resolution to retain it against the eager desires of Buckingham was one of the secret causes of his fall."

"No," said the fallen great man; "York House is the house wherein my father died and wherein I first breathed, and there will I yield my last breath, if it so please God, and the king will give me leave."[224]

Some of the saddest and some of the happiest events of Bacon's life must have happened in the Strand. From thence he rode, sumptuous in purple velvet from cap to shoe, along the lanes to Marylebone Chapel, to wed his bride Alice Barnham.

York House was famous for its aviary, on which Bacon had expended £300. It was in the garden here that we are told the Chancellor once stood looking at the fishers below throwing their nets. Bacon offered them so much for a draught, but they refused. Up came the net with only two or three little fish; upon which his lordship told them that "hope was a good breakfast, but an ill supper."[225]

It was on the death of his friend, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, and on his own installation, [Pg 129] that Bacon bought the lease of York House from the former's son, the first Earl of Bridgewater. He found the rooms vast and naked. His friends and votaries furnished the house, giving him books and drawings, stands of arms, cabinets, jewels, rings, and boxes of money. Lady Cæsar contributed a massive gold chain, and Prince Charles a diamond ring.

Bacon, when young, had been often taken to court by his father; and the queen, delighting in the gravity and wisdom of the boy, used to call him her "young Lord Keeper." Even then his mind was philosophically observant; and it is said that he used to leave his playmates in St. James's Fields to try and discover the cause of the echo in a certain brick conduit.[226]

At Durham House, on January 22, 1620, the year in which he published his *magnum opus*, the *Novum Organon*, and a twelvemonth before his disgrace, Bacon gave a grand banquet to his friends. Ben Jonson was one of the guests, and is supposed to have himself recited a set of verses, in which he says—

> "Hail th' happy genius of the ancient pile!
> How comes it that all things so about thee smile,—
> The fire, the wine, the men?—and in the midst
> Thou stand'st as if some mystery thou didst.
>
> "England's High Chancellor, the destined heir,
> In his soft cradle to his father's chair,
> Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full,
> Out of their choicest and their richest wool.
> 'Tis a brave cause of joy. * *
> Give me a deep-crowned bowl, that I may sing,
> In raising him, the wisdom of my king."

Who till he dies can boast of having been happy? The year after, the king's anger fell like an axe upon the great courtier. Solitary and comfortless at Gorhambury, Bacon petitioned the Lords in almost abject terms to be allowed to return to York House, where he could advance his studies and consult his physicians, creditors, and friends, so that "out of the carcass of dead and rotten greatness, as out of Samson's lion, there may be honey gathered for future [Pg 130] times." Sir Edward Sackville prayed him in vain to remove his straitest shackles by surrendering York House to the king's favourite; and so did his creditor, Mr. Meautys, who, says Bacon, used him "coarsely," and meant "to saw him asunder." "The great lords," says Meautys, "long to be in York House. I know your lordship cannot forget they have such a savage word among them as *fleecing*." This word has grown tame in modern times, but it had a terrible significance in those days, when it hinted at flaying.

An episode about Bacon's younger days may be pardoned here. The Gray's Inn Chambers occupied by Bacon were in Coney Court, looking over the gardens and past St. Pancras Church to Hampstead Hill. They are no longer standing. The site of them was No. 1 Gray's Inn Square. Bacon began to keep his terms at the age of eighteen, in June 1579. His uncle Burleigh was bencher in this inn, and his cousins, Robert, Cecil, and Nicholas Trott, students. In his latter days, when Attorney-General, and even when Lord Chancellor, he retained a lease of his old rooms in Coney Court. He was called to the bar when he was twenty-one, in 1582; and as soon as he was called he appeared in Fleet Street in his serge and bands, as a sign that he was going to practise for his bread. At the close of his first session, however, he was raised to the bench. Bacon always remained attached to Gray's Inn; he laid out the gardens, planted the elm-trees, raised the terrace, pulled down and rebuilt the chambers, dressed the dumb show, led off the dances, and invented the masques.[227]

After Lord Bacon's disgrace, the first Duke of Buckingham of the Villiers family borrowed the house from Toby Mathew, the courtly archbishop of York, in hopes of a final exchange, which did eventually take place.[228] In 1624, two years before Bacon's death, a bill was passed to enable the king to exchange some lands for York House, so coveted by his proud favourite. Buckingham soon partially pulled down the old mansion, and lined the walls of his [Pg 131]

temporary structure with huge mirrors. Here he entertained the foreign ambassadors. Of all his splendour, the only relic left is the water gate usually ascribed to Inigo Jones.

This Duke of Buckingham, the “Steenie” of King James, and of Scott’s *Fortunes of Nigel*, was the younger son of a poor knight, who won James I. by his personal beauty, vivacity, and accomplishments—by his dancing, jousting, leaping, and masquerading. At first page, cupbearer, and gentleman of the bedchamber, he rose to power on the disgrace of Carr.

It was at York House—“Yorschaux,” as he calls it, with the usual insolence and carelessness of his nation—that Bassompierre visited the duke in 1626. He praises the mansion as more richly fitted up than any other he had ever seen.[229] Yet the duke did not live here, but at Wallingford House, on the site of the Admiralty, keeping York House for pageants and levees, till Felton’s knife severed his evil soul from his body, August 23, 1628. His son, the Zimri of Dryden, was born at Wallingford House.

The “superstitious pictures” at York House were sold in 1645,[230] and the house given by Cromwell to General Fairfax, whose daughter married the second and last Duke of Buckingham, of the Villiers line, the favourite of Charles II., the rival of Rochester, the plotter with Shaftesbury, the selfish profligate who drove Lee into Bedlam and starved Samuel Butler.

In 1661 the galleries of York House were famous for the antique busts and statues that had belonged to Rubens on his visit to this country, when he painted James I. in jackboots being hauled heavenward by a flock of angels. In the riverside gardens—not far, I presume, from the water gate—stood John of Bologna’s “Cain and Abel,” which the King of Spain had given to Prince Charles on his luckless visit to Madrid, and which Charles had bestowed on his dangerous favourite.[231]

The great rooms, even then emblazoned with the lions and peacocks of the Villiers and Manners families, were traversed by Evelyn, who describes the house and gardens as much ruined through neglect. Pepys also, who thrust his nose into every show-place, went to York House when the Russian ambassador was there, and rapturously and poetically vows he saw “the remains of the noble soul of the late Duke of Buckingham appearing in the house in every place, in the door-cases and the windows,”[232]—odd places for a noble soul to make its abode! [Pg 132]

The Duke of Buckingham, in King Charles’s days, had turned York House into a treasury of art. He bought Rubens’s private collection of pictures for £10,000, Sir Henry Wotten having purchased them for him at Venice. He had seventeen Tintorets, and thirteen works of Paul Veronese. For an “Ecce Homo” by Titian, containing nineteen figures as large as life, he refused £7000 from the Earl of Arundel. During the Civil Wars the pictures were removed by his son to Antwerp, and there sold by auction.

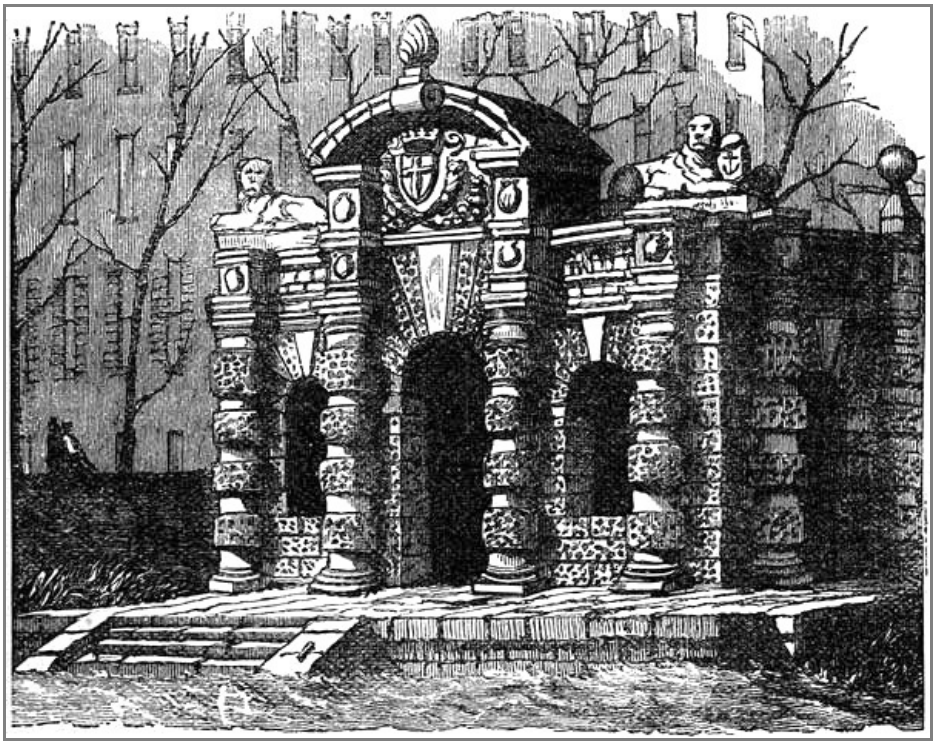
Who can look down Buckingham Street in the twilight, and see the pediment of the old water gate of the duke’s house, without repeating to himself the scourging lines of Dryden when he drew Buckingham as Zimri?—

> “A man so various that he seem’d to be
> Not one but all mankind’s epitome;
> Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
> Was everything by turns, and nothing long;
> But, in the course of one revolving moon,
> Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.”[233]

In vain Settle eulogised the mercurial and licentious spendthrift. Settle’s verse is forgotten, but we all remember Pope’s ghastly but exaggerated picture of the rake’s death in “the worst inn’s worst room”—

> “No wit to flatter left of all his store,
> No fool to laugh at, which he valued more,
> There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
> And fame, this lord of useless thousand ends.”

The first Duke of Buckingham, to judge by Clarendon, who was the friend of all friends of absolutism, must have been a man of magnificent generosity and “flowing courtesy,” a staunch friend, and a desperate and unrelenting hater; but he was an enemy of the people; and had he survived the knife of Felton he must have been the first of a faithless king’s bad counsellors to perish on the scaffold. [Pg 133]



THE WATER GATE, 1860.

The second duke was a base-tempered, shameless profligate, a fickle, dishonest intriguer, who perished at last, a poor worn-out man, in a farmer's house in Yorkshire, from a cold caught while hunting. He was the author of several obscene lampoons, from which Swift took some hints; and he was the godfather of a mock tragedy, *The Rehearsal*, in which he was helped by Martin Clifford and Butler, the author of *Hudibras*, the latter of whom he left to starve. Baxter, it is true, drops a redeeming word or two on behalf of the gay scoundrel; but then Buckingham had intrigued with the Puritans. [Pg 134]

York Stairs, the only monument of Zimri's splendour left, stand now in the middle of the gardens of the new Embankment. Till the Embankment was made, the gate was approached by a small enclosed terrace planted with lime trees. The water gate consists of a central archway and two side windows. Four rusticated columns support an arched pediment and two couchant lions holding shields. On a scroll are the Villiers arms. On the street side rise three arches, flanked by pilasters and an entablature, on which are four stone globes. Above the keystone of the arches are shields and anchors. In the centre are the arms of Villiers impaling those of Manners. The Villiers' motto, *Fidei coticula crux*, "The cross is the whetstone of faith," is inscribed on the frieze. The gate, as it now stands, is ridiculous, and is almost buried in the soil. It would be a charity to remove it to a water-side position.

In 1661, on the day of the great affray at the Tower Wharf between the retinues of the French and Spanish ambassadors, arising out of a dispute for precedence, Pepys saw the latter return to York House in triumph, guarded with fifty drawn swords, having killed several Frenchmen. "It is strange," says the amusing quidnunc, "to see how all the city did rejoice, and, indeed, we do naturally all love the Spanish and hate the French." Worthy man! the fact was, all time-servers were then agog about the queen who was expected from Portugal. From York House Pepys went peering about the French ambassador's, and found his retainers all like dead men and shaking their heads. "There are no men in the world," he says, "of a more insolent spirit when they do well, and more abject if they miscarry, than these people are."[234]

In 1683 the learned and amiable John Evelyn, being then on the Board of Trade, took a house in Villiers Street for the winter, partly for business purposes, partly to educate his daughters.[235] Evelyn's works gave a valuable impetus to art and agriculture. [Pg 135]

Addison's jovial friend, that delightful writer, Sir Richard Steele, lived in Villiers Street from 1721 to 1724, after the death of his wife, the jealous "Prue." Here he wrote his *Conscious Lovers*. The big, swarthy-faced ex-trooper, so contrasting with his grave and colder friend Addison, is a salient personage in the English Temple of Fame.

Duke Street, built circa 1675,[236] was named from the last Duke of Buckingham. Humphrey Wanley, the great Harleian librarian, lived here, and the son of Shadwell, the poet and Dryden's enemy, who was an eminent physician, and inherited much of his father's excellent sense.

In 1672 the "chemyst, statesman, and buffoon" Duke of Buckingham sold York House and gardens for £30,000 to a brewer and woodmonger, who pulled it down and laid out the present streets, naming them, with due respect to rank and wealth, even in a rascal, George Street, Villiers Street, Duke Street, and Buckingham Street. In 1668 their rental was £1359:

10s.[237]

In Charles II.’s time waterworks were started at York Buildings by a company chartered to supply the West end with water, but they failed, being in advance of the time. The company, however, did not concentrate its energies on waterworks; it gave concerts, bought up forfeited estates in Scotland, and started many wild and eccentric projects, in some of which Steele figured prominently. The company has long been forgotten, though kept in memory by a tall water tower, which was standing in the reign of George III.

In Buckingham Street, built in 1675, Samuel Pepys, the diarist, came to live in 1684. The house, since rebuilt, was the last on the west side, and looked on the Thames. It had been his friend Hewer’s before him. A view of the library shows us the tall plain book-cases, and a central window looking on the river. Pepys, the son of an army tailor, and as fond of dress and great people as might be expected of a tailor’s son, was for a long time Secretary of the Admiralty under Charles II. He was President of the Royal Society; and it is largely to his five folio books of ballads that we owe Dr. Percy’s useful compilation, *The Relics of Ancient Poetry*. Pepys died in 1703, at the house of his friend Hewer, at Clapham. [Pg 136]

Pepys’s house (No. 14) became afterwards, in the summer of 1824, the home of Etty, the painter, and remained so till within a few months of his death in 1849. Etty first took the ground floor (afterwards occupied by Mr. Stanfield), then the top floor; the special object of his ambition being to watch sunsets over the river, which he loved as much as Turner did, who frequently said, “There is finer scenery on its banks than on those of any river in Italy.” Its ebb and flow, Etty used to declare, was like life, and “the view from Lambeth to the Abbey not unlike Venice.” In those river-side rooms the artists of two generations have assembled—Fuseli, Flaxman, Holland, Constable, and Hilton—then Turner, Maclise, Dyce, Herbert, and all the younger race. Etty’s rooms looked on to a terrace, with a small cottage at one end; the keeper once was a man named Hewson, supposed to be the original Strap of *Roderick Random*.[238] An amiable, dreamy genius was the son of the miller and gingerbread-maker of York.

The witty Earl of Dorset lived in this street in 1681.

Opposite Pepys’s house, and on the east side (left-hand corner), was a house where Peter the Great lodged when in England. Here, after rowing about the Thames, watching the boat-building, or pulling to Deptford and back, this brave half-savage used to return and spend his rough evenings with Lord Caermarthen, drinking a pint of hot brandy and pepper, after endless flasks of wine. It was certainly “brandy for heroes” in this case.

Lord Caermarthen was at this time Lord President of the Council, and had been appointed Peter’s cicerone by King William. The Russian czar was a hard drinker, and on one occasion is said to have drunk a pint of brandy, a bottle of sherry, and eight flasks of sack, after which he calmly went to the play. While in York Buildings, the rough czar was so annoyed with the vulgar curiosity of intrusive citizens, that he would sometimes rise from his dinner and leave the room in a rage. Here the Quakers forced themselves upon him, and presented him with *Barclay’s Apology*, after which the czar attended their meeting in Gracechurch Street. He once asked them of what use they were in any kingdom, since they would not bear arms. On taking his farewell of King William, Peter drew a rough ruby, valued at £10,000, from his waistcoat pocket, and presented it to him screwed up in brown paper.[239] He went back just in time to crush the Strelitzes, imprison his sister Sophia, and wage war on Charles XII. The great reformer was only twenty-six years old when he visited England. [Pg 137]

In 1706 Robert Harley, Esq., afterwards Swift’s great patron and Earl of Oxford, lived here;[240] and (1785) John Henderson, the actor, died in this street.

Walter, Lord Hungerford, of Farleigh Castle, Somerset, took the Duke of Orleans prisoner at Agincourt. He was Lord High Steward of Henry V. and one of the executors to his will, and Lord High Treasurer in the reign of Henry VI. This illustrious noble was the son of Sir Thomas de Hungerforde, who in 51 Edward III. was the first to take the chair as Speaker of the House of Commons.

Hungerford Market covered the site of the seat of the Hungerford family. Pepys mentions a fire at the house of old Lady Hungerford in Charles II.’s time.

Sir Edward (her husband), created a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Charles II., pulled down the old mansion and divided it in 1680 into several houses, enclosing also a market-place. On the north side of the market-house was a bust of one of the family in a full-bottomed wig.[241] It grew a disused and ill-favoured place before 1833. When a new market (Fowler, architect) was opened, it was intended to put an end to the monopoly of Billingsgate. The old market had at first answered well for fruit and vegetables, as there was no need of porters from the water side; but by 1720 Covent Garden had beaten it off.[242] It attempted too much in rivalling at once Leadenhall and Billingsgate, and failed—only a few fishmongers lingering on to the last. [Pg 138]

In 1845 a suspension bridge, crossing from Hungerford to Lambeth (built under Mr. I. K. Brunel’s supervision), was opened. It consisted of three spans, and two brick towers in the Italian style; the main span, at the time of its erection, was larger than that of any other in the country, and only second to that of the bridge at Fribourg. It cost £110,000, and consumed more than 10,000 tons of iron.[243]

In the same year the bridge was sold to the original proprietors for £226,000, but the purchase was never carried out. It was replaced in 1864 by a railway bridge, and the market itself was filled up by an enormous railway station. The market had sunk to zero years before. In 1850 some rogue of a speculator had opened in it a pretended exhibition of the surplus articles rejected for want of room from the glass palace in Hyde Park. It proved a total failure, and swallowed up a vast sum of money and a fine northern estate or two. Latterly it had become a gratuitous music-hall, a billiard-room, and a penny-ice house, conducted by an Italian.

The railway station, built by Mr. Barry, the son of the architect of the New Houses of Parliament, faces the Strand. It is of a most creditable design, and the high Mansard roofs, which surmounted the hotel which forms its front, are of a freer and grander character than those of any modern London building. A model of the Eleanor Cross has been erected in the courtyard in front of it. This building is one of the first omens of better things that we have yet seen in our still terribly mean and ugly city.

Craven Street was called Spur Alley till 1742.[244] Grinling Gibbons, the great wood-carver, [Pg 139] born at Rotterdam, and whose genius John Evelyn discovered, lived here after leaving the Belle Sauvage Yard. Here he must have fashioned those fragile strings of birds and fruit and flowers that adorn so many city churches, and the houses of so many English noblemen. At No. 7, in 1775, lodged the great Benjamin Franklin, then no longer a poor printer, but the envoy of the American colonies. Here Lords Howe and Stanhope visited him to propose terms from Lords Camden and Chatham, but unfortunately only in vain.[245] That weak and unfortunate man, the Rev. Mr. Hackman, who shot Miss Ray, the actress and the mistress of Lord Sandwich, who had encouraged his suit, lived in this street.

James Smith, one of the authors of the *Rejected Addresses*,—a series of parodies rivalled only by those of *Bon Gaultier*, lived at No. 27. It was on his own street that he wrote the well-known epigram—[246]

> “In Craven Street, Strand, the attorneys find place,
> And ten dark coal barges are moor’d at its base.
> Fly, Honesty, fly! seek some safer retreat:
> There’s *craft* in the river and *craft* in the street.”

But Sir George Rose capped this in return, retorting in extemporaneous lines, written after dinner:—

> “Why should Honesty fly to some safer retreat,
> From attorneys and barges?—’od rot ’em!
> For the lawyers are *just* at the top of the street,
> And the barges are *just* at the bottom.”

James Smith, the intellectual hero of this street, the son of a solicitor to the Ordnance, was born in 1775. In 1802 he joined the staff of the *Pic-Nic* newspaper, with Combe, Croker, Cumberland, and that mediocre poet, Sir James Bland Burgess. It changed its name to the *Cabinet*, and died in 1803. From 1807 to 1817 James Smith contributed to the *Monthly* [Pg 140] *Mirror* his “Horace in London.” In 1812 came out the *Rejected Addresses*, inimitable parodies by himself and his brother, not merely of the manner but of the very mode of thought of Wordsworth, Cobbett, Southey, Coleridge, Crabbe, Lord Byron, Scott, etc. The copyright, originally offered to Mr. Murray for £20, but declined, was purchased by him in 1819, after the sixteenth edition, for £131; so much for the foresight of publishers. The book has since deservedly gone through endless editions, and has not been approached even by the talented parody writers of *Punch*. Those who wish to see the story of this publication in detail, must hunt it up in the edition of the *Addresses* illustrated by George Cruickshank.

Mr. Smith was the chief deviser of the substance of the *Entertainments* of the elder Charles Mathews. He wrote the *Country Cousins* in 1820, and in the two succeeding years the *Trip to France* and the *Trip to America*. For these last two works the author received a thousand pounds. “A thousand pounds!” he used to ejaculate, shrugging his shoulders, “and all for nonsense.”[247]

James Smith was just the man for Mathews, with his slight frameworks of stories filled up with songs, jokes, puns, wild farcical fancies, and merry conceits, and here and there among the motley, with true touches of wit, pathos, and comedy, and faithful traits of life and character, such as only a close observer of society and a sound thinker could pen.

He was lucky enough to obtain a legacy of £300 for a complimentary epigram on Mr. Strahan, the king’s printer. Being patted on the head when a boy by Chief-Justice Mansfield, in Highgate churchyard, and once seeing Horace Walpole on his lawn at Twickenham, were the two chief historical events of Mr. Smith’s quiet life. The four reasons that kept so clever a man employed on mere amateur trifling were these—an indolent disinclination to sustained work, a fear of failure, a dislike to risk a well-earned fame, and a foreboding that literary success might injure his practice as a lawyer. His favourite visits were to Lord Mulgrave’s, Mr. Croker’s, Lord Abinger’s, Lady Blessington’s, and Lord Harrington’s. [Pg 141]

Pretty Lady Blessington used to say of him, that “James Smith, if he had not been a *witty* man, must have been a *great* man.” He died in his house in Craven Street, with the calmness of a philosopher, on the 24th of December 1839, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.[248] Fond

of society, witty without giving pain, a bachelor, and therefore glad to escape from a solitary home, James Smith seems to have been the model of a diner-out.

Caleb Whitefoord, a wine merchant in Craven Street, and an excellent connoisseur in old pictures, was one of the legacy-hunters who infested the studio of Nollekens, the miserly sculptor of Mortimer Street. He was a foppish dresser, and was remarkable for a dashing three-cornered hat, with a sparkling black button and a loop upon a rosette. He wore a wig with five tiers of curls, of the Garrick cut, and he was one of the last to wear such a monstrosity. This crafty wine merchant used to distribute privately the most whimsical of his *Cross Readings*, *Ship News*, and *Mistakes of the Press*—things in their day very popular, though now surpassed in every number of *Punch*. Some of the best were the following:—"Yesterday Dr. Pretyman preached at St. James's,—and performed it with ease in less than sixteen minutes." "Several changes are talked of at Court,—consisting of 9050 triple bob-majors." "Dr. Solander will, by Her Majesty's command, undertake a voyage—round the head-dress of the present month." "Sunday night.—Many noble families were alarmed—by the constable of the ward, who apprehended them at cards." A simple-hearted age could laugh heartily at these things: would that we could!

It has often been asserted that Goldsmith's epitaph on Whitefoord was written by the wine merchant himself, and sent to the editor of the fifth edition of the Poems by a convenient common friend. It is not very pointed, and the length of the epitaph is certainly singular, considering that the poet dismissed Burke and Reynolds in less than eighteen lines. [Pg 142]

Adam built an octagon room in Whitefoord's house in order to give his pictures an equal light; and Mr. Christie adopted the idea when he fitted up his large room in King Street, St. James's.[249]

Goldsmith is said to have been intimate with witty, punning Caleb Whitefoord, and certain it is his name is found in the postscript to the poem of *Retaliation*, written by Oliver on some of his friends at the St. James's Coffee-house. These were the Burkes, fretful Cumberland, Reynolds, Garrick, and Canon Douglas. In this poem Goldsmith laments that Whitefoord should have confined himself to newspaper essays, and contented himself with the praise of the printer of the *Public Advertiser*; he thus sums him up:—

> "Rare compound of oddity, frolic, and fun,
> Who relish'd a joke and rejoiced in a pun;
> Whose temper was generous, open, sincere;
> A stranger to flattery, a stranger to fear.
> * * * * * *
> "Merry Whitefoord, farewell! for thy sake I admit
> That a Scot may have humour—I'd almost said wit;
> This debt to thy memory I cannot refuse,
> Thou best-humour'd man with the worst-humour'd Muse."

Whitefoord became Vice-President of the Society of Arts.

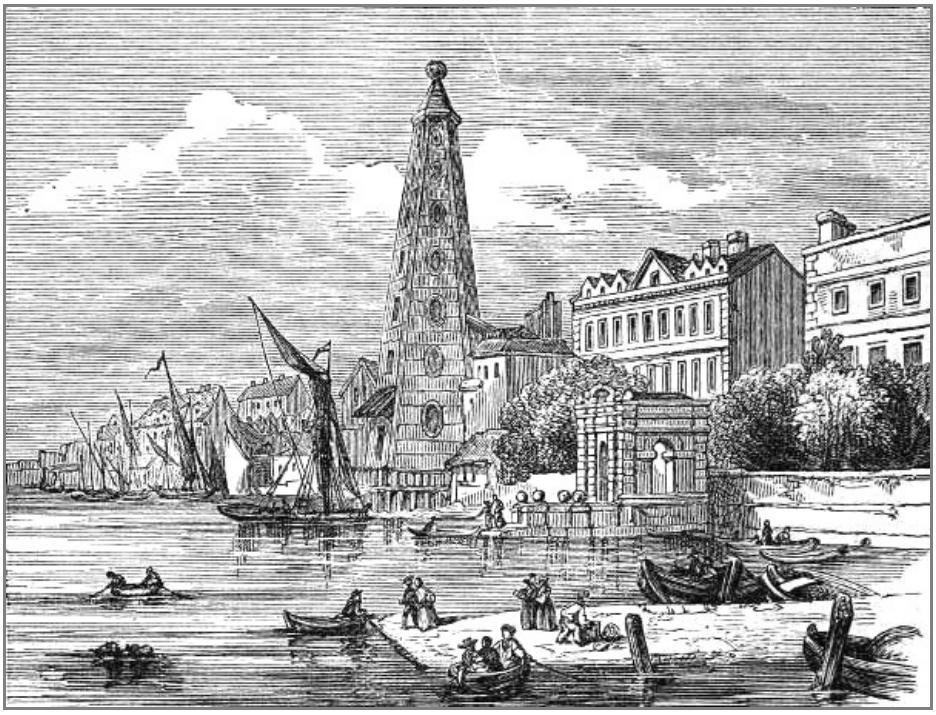
Anthony Pasquin (Williams), a celebrated art critic and satirist of Dr. Johnson's time, was articled to Matt Darley, the famous caricaturist of the Strand, to learn engraving.[250]

The old name of Northumberland Street was Hartshorne Lane or Christopher Alley.[251] Here Ben Jonson lived when he was a child, and after his mother had taken a bricklayer for her second husband.

At the bottom of this lane Sir Edmondbury Godfrey had his wood wharf. This fact shows how much history is illustrated by topography, for the residence of the unfortunate justice explains why it should have been supposed that he had been inveigled into Somerset House. [Pg 143]

In 1829 Mr. Wood, who kept a coal wharf, resided in Sir Edmondbury's old premises at the bottom of Northumberland Street. It was here the court justice's wood-wharf was, but his house was in Green's Lane, near Hungerford Market.[252] During the Great Plague Sir Edmondbury had been very active; on one occasion, when his men refused to act, he entered a pest-house alone to apprehend a wretch who had stolen at least a thousand winding-sheets. Four medals were struck on his death. There is also a portrait of the unlucky woodmonger in the waiting-room adjoining the Vestry of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.[253] He wore, it seems, a full black wig, like Charles II.

Three men were tried for his murder—the cushion-man at the Queen's Chapel, the servant of the treasurer of the chapel, and the porter of Somerset House. The truculent Scroggs tried the accused, and those infamous men, Oates, Prance, and Bedloe, were the false witnesses who murdered them. The prisoners were all executed. Sir Edmondbury's corpse was embalmed and borne to its funeral at St. Martin's from Bridewell. The pall was supported by eight knights, all justices of the peace, and the aldermen of London followed the coffin. Twenty-two ministers marched before the body, and a great Protestant mob followed. Dr. William Lloyd preached the funeral sermon from the text 2 Sam. iii. 24. The preacher was guarded in the pulpit by two clergymen armed with "Protestant flails."

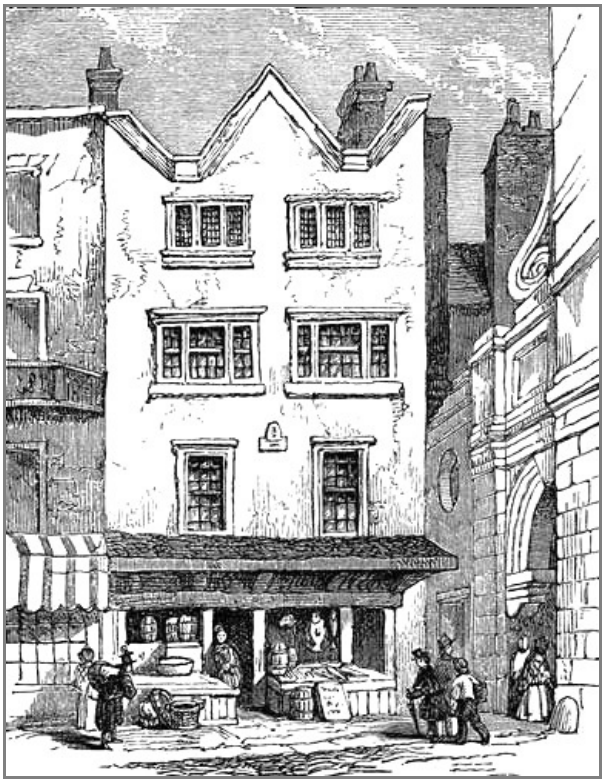


YORK STAIRS, WITH THE HOUSES OF PEPYS AND PETER THE GREAT, AFTER CANALETTI (CIRCA 1745).

In July 1861, No. 16 Northumberland Street, then an old-fashioned, dingy-looking house, with narrow windows, which had been divided into chambers, was the scene of a fight for life and death between Major Murray and Mr. Roberts, a solicitor and bill-discounter; the latter attempted the life of the former for the sake of getting possession of his mistress, to whom he had lent money. Under pretext of advancing a loan to the Grosvenor Hotel Company, of which the major was a promoter, he decoyed him into a back room on the first [Pg 144] floor of No. 16, then shot him in the back of the neck, and immediately after in the right temple. The major, feigning to be dead, waited till Roberts's back was turned, then springing to his feet attacked him with a pair of tongs, which he broke to pieces over his assailant's head. He then knocked him down with a bottle which lay near, and escaped through the window, and from thence by a water-pipe to the ground. Roberts died soon afterwards, but Major Murray recovered, and the jury returning a verdict of "Justifiable Homicide," he was released. The papers described Roberts's rooms as crowded with dusty Buhl cabinets, inlaid tables, statuettes, and drawings. These were smeared with blood and wine, while on the glass shades of the ornaments a rain of blood seemed to have fallen. [Pg 145]

The embankment, which here is very wide, and includes several acres of garden on the spot where the Thames once flowed, has largely altered the character of the streets below the Strand and the river, destroying the picturesque wharves and spoiling the appearance of the Water Gate, which is half buried in gravel and flowers, like the Sphynx in Egypt. Between it and the Thames now stands Cleopatra's Needle, brought over to England at great cost of money and life, and set up here in 1878.

[Pg 146]



CROCKFORD’S FISH SHOP.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NORTH SIDE OF THE STRAND, FROM TEMPLE BAR TO CHARING CROSS, WITH DIGRESSIONS ON THE SOUTH.

The upper stratum of the Strand soil is composed of a reddish yellow earth, containing coprolites. Below this runs a seam of leaden-coloured clay, mixed with a few martial pyrites, calcined-looking lumps of iron and sulphur with a bright silvery fracture. [Pg 147]

A petition of the inhabitants of the vicinity of the King’s Palace at Westminster (8 Edward II.) represents the footway from Temple Bar to their neighbourhood as so bad that both rich and poor men received constant damage, especially in the rainy season, the footway being interrupted by *bushes and thickets*. A tax was accordingly levied for the purpose, and the mayor and sheriffs of London and the bailiff of Westminster were appointed overseers of the repairs.

In the 27th of Edward III. the Knights Templars were called upon to repair[254] “the bridge of the new Temple,” where the lords who attended Parliament took water on their way from the City. Workmen constructing a new sewer in the Strand, in 1802, discovered, eastward of St. Clement’s,[255] a small, one-arched stone bridge, supposed to be the one above alluded to, unless it was an arch thrown over some gully when the Strand was a mere bridle-road.

In James I.’s time, Middleton, the dramatist, describes a lawyer as embracing a young spendthrift, and urging him to riot and excess, telling him to make acquaintance with the Inns of Court gallants, and keep rank with those that spent most; to be lofty and liberal; to lodge in the Strand; in any case, to be remote from the handicraft scent of the City.[256]

It is but right to remind the reader that within the last few years the whole of that part of the north side of the Strand lying between Temple Bar and St. Clement’s Inn, including what was once known as Pickett Street, and extending backward almost as far as Lincoln’s Inn, has been demolished, in order to make room for the new Law Courts, which are now fast rising towards completion.

The house which immediately adjoined Temple Bar on the north side, to the last a bookseller’s, stood on the site of a small pent-house of lath and plaster, occupied for many years by Crockford as a shell-fish shop. Here this man made a large sum of money, with which he established a gambling club, called by his name, on the west side of St. James’s Street. It was shut up at Crockford’s death in 1844, and, having passed through sundry phases, is now the Devonshire Club. Crockford would never alter his shop in his lifetime; but at his death the quaint pent-house and James I. gable[257] were removed, and a yellow brick front erected. [Pg 148]

That great engraver, William Faithorne, after being taken prisoner as a Royalist at Basing in the Civil Wars, went to France, where he was patronised by the Abbé de Marolles. He returned about 1650, and set up a shop—where he sold Italian, Dutch, and English prints, and worked for booksellers—without Temple Bar, at the sign of the Ship, next the Drake and opposite the Palsgrave Head Tavern. He lived here till after 1680. Grief for his son's misfortunes induced consumption, of which he died in 1691. Flatman wrote verses to his memory. *Lady Paston* is thought his *chef d'œuvre*.[258]

Ship Yard, now swept away, had been granted to Sir Christopher Hatton in 1571. Wilkinson gives a fine sketch of an old gable-ended house in Ship Yard, supposed to have been the residence of Elias Ashmole, the celebrated antiquarian. Here, probably, he stored his alchemic books and those treasures of the Tradescants which he gave to Oxford.

In 1813 sundry improvements projected by Alderman Pickett led to the removal of one of the greatest eye-sores in London—Butcher Row. This street of ragged lazar-houses extended in a line from Wych Street to Temple Bar. They were overhanging, drunken-looking, tottering tenements,[259] receptacles of filth, and invitations to the cholera. In Dr. Johnson's time they were mostly eating-houses. [Pg 149]

This stack of buildings on the west side of Temple Bar was in the form of an acute-angled triangle; the eastern point, nearest the Bar, was formed latterly by a shoemaker's and a fishmonger's shop, with wide fronts; its western point being blunted by the intersection of St. Clement's vestry-room and almshouse. On both sides of it resided bakers, dyers, smiths, combmakers, and tinplate-workers.

The decayed street had been a flesh-market since Queen Elizabeth's time, when it flourished. A scalemaker's, a fine-drawer's, and Betty's chophouse, were all to be found there.[260] The whole stack was built of wood, and was probably of about the age of Edward VI. The ceilings were low, traversed by huge unwrought beams, and dimly lit by small casement windows. The upper stories overhung the lower, according to the old London plan of widening the footway.

It was at Clifton's Eating-house, in Butcher Row, in 1763, that that admirable gossip and useful parasite, Boswell, with a tremor of foolish horror, heard Dr. Johnson disputing with a petulant Irishman about the cause of negroes being black.

"Why, sir," said Johnson, with judicial grandeur, "it has been accounted for in three ways—either by supposing that they were the posterity of Ham, who was cursed; or that God first created two kinds of men, one black and the other white; or that by the heat of the sun the skin is scorched, and so acquires a sooty hue. This matter has been much canvassed among naturalists, but has never been brought to any certain issue."[261]

What the Irishman's arguments were, Boswell of course forgot, but as his antagonist became warm and intemperate, Johnson rose and quietly walked away. When he had retired, the Irishman said—"He has a most ungainly figure, and an affectation of pomposity unworthy of a man of genius." (This very same evening Boswell and his deity first supped together at the Mitre.) It was here, many years later, that Johnson spent pleasant evenings with his old college friend Edwards,[262] whom he had not seen since the golden days of youth. Edwards, a good, dull, simple-hearted fellow, talked of their age. "Don't let us discourage one another," said Johnson, with quiet reproof. It was this same worthy fellow who amused Burke at the club by saying—"You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson. I have tried in my time to be a philosopher too, but I don't know how it was, cheerfulness was always breaking in." This was a wise blunder, worthy of Goldsmith, the prince of wise blunderers. [Pg 150]

It was in staggering home from the Bear and Harrow in Butcher Row, through Clare Market, that Lee, the poet, lay down or fell on a bulk, and was stifled in the snow (1692).

Nat Lee was the son of a Hertfordshire rector; a pupil of Dr. Busby, a coadjutor of Dryden, and an unsuccessful actor. He drank himself into Bedlam, where, says Oldys, he wrote a play in twenty-five acts.[263] Two of his maddest lines were—

> "I've seen an unscrewed spider spin a thought
> And walk away upon the wings of angels."

The Duke of Buckingham, who brought Lee up to town,[264] neglected him, and his extreme poverty no doubt drove him faster to Moorfields. Poor fellow! he was only thirty-five when he died. He is described as stout,[265] handsome, and red faced. The Earl of Pembroke, whose daughter married a son of the brutal Judge Jefferies, was Lee's chief patron. The poet, when visiting him at Wilton, drank so hard that the butler is said to have been afraid he would empty the cellar. Lee's poetry, though noisy and ranting, is full of true poetic fire,[266] and in tenderness and passion the critics of his time compared him to Ovid and Otway.

Thanks to the alderman, whose name is forgotten, though it well deserved to live,—the streets, lanes, and alleys which once blocked up St. Clement's Church, like so many beggars crowding round a rich man's door, were swept away, and the present oval railing erected. The enlightened Corporation at the same time built the big, dingy gateway of Clement's Inn—people at the time called it "stupendous;"[267] and to it were added the restored vestry-room and almshouse. The south side of the Strand was also rebuilt, with loftier and more spacious shops. In the reign of Edward VI. this beginning of the Strand had been a mere [Pg 151]

loosely-built suburban street, the southern houses, then well inhabited, boasting large gardens.

There is a fatality attending some parts of London. In spite of Alderman Pickett and his stupendous arch of stucco, the new houses on the north side did not take well. They were found to be too large and expensive; they became under-let,[268] and began by degrees to relapse into their old Butcher Row squalor; the tide of humanity setting in towards Westminster flowing away from them to the left. As in some rivers the current, for no obvious reason, sometimes bends away to the one side, leaving on the other a broad bare reach of grey pebble, so the human tide in the Strand has always, in order to avoid the detour of the twin streets (Holywell and Wych), borne away to the left.

It is probable that Palsgrave Place, on the south side, just beyond Child's bank, in Temple Bar without, marks the site of the Old Palsgrave's Head Tavern. The Palsgrave was that German prince who was afterwards King of Bohemia, and who married the daughter of James I.

No. 217 Strand, on the south side, was Snow's, the goldsmith. Gay has preserved his memory in some pleasant verses. It was, a few years ago, the bank of those most decent of defrauders, Strachan, Paul, and Bates, and through them proved the grave of many a fortune. Next to it, westwards, is Messrs. Twinings bank, and their still more ancient tea shop. [Pg 152]

The Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand (south side), afterwards the Whittington Club, and now the Temple Club, is described by Strype as a "large and curious house," with good rooms and other conveniences for entertainments.[269] Here Dr. Johnson occasionally supped with Boswell, and bartered his wisdom for the flattering Scotchman's inanity. In this same tavern the sultan of literature quarrelled with amiable but high-spirited Percy about old Dr. Mounsey; and here, when Sir Joshua Reynolds was gravely and calmly upholding the advantages of wine in stimulating and inspiring conversation, Johnson said, with good-natured irony, "I have heard none of these drunken—nay, drunken is a coarse word—none of these *vinous flights*!"[270]

St. Clement's is one of Wren's fifty churches, and it was built by Edward Pierce, under Wren's superintendence.[271] It took the place of an old church mentioned by Stow, that had become old and ruinous, and was taken down circa 1682, during the epidemic for church-building after the Great Fire.

This church has many enemies and few friends. One of its bitterest haters calls it a "disgusting fabric," obtruded dangerously and inconveniently upon the street. A second opponent describes the steeple as fantastic, the portico clumsy and heavy, and the whole pile poor and unmeaning. Even Leigh Hunt abuses it as "incongruous and ungainly."[272]

There have been great antiquarian discussions as to why the church is called St. Clement's "Danes." Some think there was once a massacre of the Danes in this part of the road to Westminster; others declare that Harold Harefoot was buried in the old church; some assert that the Danes, driven out of London by Alfred, were allowed to settle between Thorney Island (Westminster) and Ludgate, and built a church in the Strand; so, at least, we learn, Recorder Fleetwood told Treasurer Burleigh. The name of Saint Clement was taken from the patron saint of Pope Clement III., the friend of the Templars, who dwelt on the frontier line of the City. [Pg 153]

In 1725 there was a great ferment in the parish of St. Clement's, in consequence of an order from Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, to remove at once an expensive new altar-piece painted by Kent, a fashionable architectural quack of that day; who, however, with "Capability Brown," had helped to wean us from the taste for yew trees cut into shapes, Dutch canals, formal avenues, and geometric flower-beds.

Kent was originally a coach-painter in Yorkshire, and was patronised by the Queen, the Duke of Newcastle, and Lord Burlington. He helped to adorn Stowe, Holkham, and Houghton. He was at once architect, painter, and landscape gardener. In the altar-piece, the vile drawing of which even Hogarth found it hard to caricature, the painter was said to have introduced portraits of the Pretender's wife and children. The "blue print," published in 1725, was followed by another representing Kent painting Burlington Gate. The altar-piece was removed, but the nobility patronised Kent till he died, twenty years or so afterwards. We owe him, however, some gratitude, if, according to Walpole, he was the father of modern gardening.

The long-limbed picture caricatured by Hogarth was for some years one of the ornaments of the coffee-room of the Crown and Anchor in the Strand. Thence it was removed to the vestry-room of the church, over the old almshouses in the churchyard. After 1803 it was transported to the new vestry-room on the north side of the churchyard.[273]

In the old church Sir Robert Cecil, the first Earl of Salisbury, was baptized, 1563; as were Sir Charles Sedley, the delightful song-writer and the oracle of the licentious wits of his day, 1638-9; and the Earl of Shaftesbury, the son of that troublous spirit "Little Sincerity," and himself the author of the *Characteristics*. [Pg 154]

The church holds some hallowed earth: in St. Clement's was buried Sir John Roe, who was a

friend of Ben Jonson, and died of the plague in the sturdy poet's arms.

Dr. Donne's wife, the daughter of Sir George More, and who died in childbed during her husband's absence at the court of Henri Quatre, was buried here. Her tomb, by Nicholas Stone, was destroyed when the church was rebuilt. Donne, on his return, preached a sermon here on her death, taking the text—"Lo! I am the man that has seen affliction." John Lowin, the great Shaksperean actor, lies here. He died in 1653. He acted in Ben Jonson's "Sejanus" in 1605, with Burbage and Shakspere. Tradition reports him to have been the favourite Falstaff, Hamlet, and Henry VIII. of his day.[274] Burbage was the greatest of the Shaksperean tragedians, and Tarleton the drollest of the comedians; but Lowin must have been as versatile as Garrick if he could represent Hamlet's vacillations, and also convey a sense of Falstaff's unctuous humour. Poor mad Nat Lee, who died on a bulk in Clare Market close by, was buried at St. Clement's, 1692; and here also lies poor beggared Otway, who died in 1685. In the same year as Lee, Mountfort, the actor, whom Captain Hill stabbed in a fit of jealousy in Howard Street adjoining, was interred here.

In 1713 Thomas Rymer, the historiographer of William III. and the compiler of the *Fœdera* and fifty-eight manuscript volumes now in the British Museum, was interred here. He had lived in Arundel Street. In 1729 James Spiller, the comedian of Hogarth's time, was buried at St. Clement's. A butcher in Clare Market wrote his epitaph, which was never used. Spiller was the original Mat of the Mint in the "Beggars' Opera." His portrait, by Laguerre, was the sign of a public-house in Clare Market.[275]

In this church was probably buried, at the time of the Plague, Thomas Simon, Cromwell's [Pg 155]
celebrated medallist. His name, however, is not on the register.[276]

Mr. Needham, who was buried at St. Clement's with far better men, was an attorney's clerk in Gray's Inn, who, in 1643, commenced a weekly paper. He seems to have been a mischievous, unprincipled hireling, always ready to sell his pen to the best bidder.

It is not for us in these later days to praise a church of the Corinthian order, even though its southern portico be crowned by a dome and propped up with Ionic pillars. Its steeple of the three orders, in spite of its vases and pilasters, does not move me; nor can I, as writers thought it necessary to do thirty years ago,[277] waste a churchwarden's unreasoning admiration on the wooden cherubim, palm-branches, and shields of the chancel; nor can even the veneered pulpit and cumbrous galleries, or the Tuscan carved wainscot of the altar draw any praise from my reluctant lips.

The arms of the Dukes of Norfolk and the Earls of Arundel and Salisbury, in the south gallery, are worthy of notice, because they show that these noblemen were once inhabitants of the parish.

Among the eminent rectors of St. Clement's was Dr. George Berkeley, son of the Platonist bishop, the friend of Swift, to whom Pope attributed "every virtue under heaven." He died in 1798. It was of his father that Atterbury said, he did not think that so much knowledge and so much humility existed in any but the angels and Berkeley.[278]

Dr. Johnson, the great and good, often attended service at St. Clement's Church. They still point out his seat in the north gallery, near the pulpit. On Good Friday, 1773, Boswell tells us he breakfasted with his tremendous friend (Dr. Levett making tea), and was then taken to church by him. "Dr. Johnson's behaviour," he says, "was solemnly devout. I never shall forget the tremulous earnestness with which he pronounced the awful petition in the Litany, [Pg 156]
'In the hour of death and in the day of judgment, good Lord, deliver us.'"[279]

Eleven years later the doctor writes to Mrs. Thrale, "after a confinement of 129 days, more than the third part of a year, and no inconsiderable part of human life, I this day returned thanks to God in St. Clement's Church for my recovery—a recovery, in my 75th year, from a distemper which few in the vigour of youth are known to surmount."

Clement's Inn (of Chancery), a vassal of the Inner Temple, derives its name from the neighbouring church, and the "fair fountain called Clement's Well,"[280] the Holy Well of the neighbouring street pump.

Over the gate is graven in stone an anchor without a stock and a capital C couchant upon it.[281] This device has reference to the martyrdom of the guardian saint of the inn, who was tied to an anchor and thrown into the sea by order of the emperor Trajan. Dugdale states that there was an inn here in the reign of Edward II.

There is, indeed, a tradition among antiquaries, that as far back as the Saxon kings there was an inn here for the reception of penitents who came to the Holy Well of St. Clement's; that a religious house was first established, and finally a church. The Holy Lamb, an inn at the west end of the lane, was perhaps the old Pilgrims' Inn. In the Tudor times the Clare family, who had a mansion in Clare Market, appears to have occupied the site. From their hands it reverted to the lawyers. As for the well, a pump now enshrines it, and a low dirty street leads up to it. This is mentioned in Henry II.'s time[282] as one of the excellent springs at a small distance from London, whose waters are "sweet, healthful, and clear, and whose runnels murmur over the shining pebbles: they are much frequented," says the friend of [Pg 157]
Archbishop Becket, "both by the scholars from the school (Westminster) and the youth from the City, when on a summer's evening they are disposed to take an airing." It was seven

centuries ago that the hooded boys used to play round this spring, and at this very moment their descendants are drinking from the ladle or splashing each other with the water, as they fill their great brown pitchers. The spring still feeds the Roman Bath in the Strand already mentioned.

"For men may come, and men may go,
But I flow on for ever."[283]

The hall of St. Clement's Inn is situated on the south side of a neat small quadrangle. It is a small Tuscan building, with a large florid Corinthian door and arched windows, and was built in 1715. In the second irregular area there is a garden, with a statue of a kneeling black figure supporting a sun-dial on the east side.[284] It was given to the inn by an Earl of Clare, but when is unknown. It was brought from Italy, and is said to be of bronze, but ingenious persons having determined on making it a blackamoor, it has been painted black. A stupid, ill-rhymed, cumbrous old epigram sneers at the sable son of woe flying from cannibals and seeking mercy in a lawyers' inn. The first would not have eaten him till they had slain him; but lawyers, it is well known, will eat any man alive.[285]

Poor Hollar, the great German engraver, lived in 1661 just outside the back door of St. Clement's, "as soon as you come off the steps, and out of that house and dore at your left hand, two payre of stairs, into a little passage right before you." He was known for "reasons' sake" to the people of the house only as "the Frenchman limner." Such was the direction he sent to that gossiping Wiltshire gentleman, John Aubrey.

The inn has very probably reared up a great many clever men; but it is chiefly renowned for having fostered that inimitable old bragging twaddler and country magistrate, the immortal Justice Shallow. Those chimes that "in a ghostly way by moonlight still bungle through Handel's psalm tunes, hoarse with age and long vigils"[286] as they are, must surely be the same that Shallow heard. How deliciously the old fellow vapours about his wild times! [Pg 158]

"Ha, Cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen!—Ha, Sir John, said I well?"

Falstaff—"We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow."

Shal.—"That we have, that we have, that we have; in faith, Sir John, we have; our watchword was—Hem, boys!—Come, let's to dinner; come, let's to dinner. Oh, the days that we have seen!—Come, come."[287]

And before that, how he glories in the impossibility of being detected after bragging fifty-five years! This man, as Falstaff says, "lean as a man cut after supper out of a cheese-paring," was once mad Shallow, lusty Shallow, as Cousin Silence, his toady, reminds him.

"By the mass," says again the old country gentleman, "I was called anything, and I would have done anything, indeed, and roundly too. There was I and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Barnes of Staffordshire, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man: you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the inns of court again."

And thus he goes maundering on with dull vivacity about how he played Sir Dagonet in Arthur's Show at Mile End, and once remained all night revelling in a windmill in St. George's Fields.

A curious record of Shakspere's times serves admirably to illustrate Shallow's boast. In Elizabeth's time the eastern end of the Strand was the scene of frequent disturbances occasioned by the riotous and unruly students of the inns of court, who paraded the streets at night to the danger of peaceable passengers. One night in 1582, the Recorder himself, with six of the honest inhabitants, stood by St. Clement's Church to see the lanterns hung out, and to try and meet some of the brawlers, the Shallows of that time. About seven at night they saw young Mr. Robert Cecil, the Treasurer's son, pass by the church and salute them civilly, on which they said, "Lo, you may see how a nobleman's son can use himself, and how he pulleth off his cap to poor men—our Lord bless him!" Upon which the Recorder wrote to his father, like a true courtier, making capital of everything, and said, "Your lordship hath cause to thank God for so virtuous a child." [Pg 159]

Through the gateway in Pickett Street, a narrow street led to New Court, where stood the Independent Meeting House in which the witty Daniel Burgess once preached. The celebrated Lord Bolingbroke was his pupil, and the Earl of Orrery his patron. He died 1712, after being much ridiculed by Swift and Steele for his sermon of *The Golden Snuffers*, and for his pulpit puns in the manner followed by Rowland Hill and Whitfield. This chapel was gutted during the Sacheverell riots, and repaired by the Government. Two examples of Burgess's grotesque style will suffice. On one occasion, when he had taken his text from Job, and discoursed on the "Robe of Righteousness," he said—

"If any of you would have a good and cheap suit, you will go to Monmouth Street; if you want a suit for life, you will go to the Court of Chancery; but if you wish for a suit that will last to eternity, you must go to the Lord Jesus Christ and put on His robe of righteousness."[288] On another occasion, in the reign of King William, he assigned as a motive for the descendants of Jacob being called Israelites, that God did not choose that His

people should be called *Jacobites*.

Daniel Burgess was succeeded in his chapel by Winter and Bradbury, both celebrated Nonconformists. The latter of these was also a comic preacher, or rather a "buffoon," as one of Dr. Doddridge's correspondents called him. It was said of his sermons that he seemed to consider the Bible to be written only to prove the right of William III. to the throne. He used to deride Dr. Watts's hymns from the pulpit, and when he gave them out always said— [Pg 160]

"Let us sing one of Watts's whims."

Bat Pidgeon, the celebrated barber of Addison's time, lived nearly opposite Norfolk Street. His house bore the sign of the Three Pigeons. This was the corner house of St. Clement's churchyard, and there Bat, in 1740, cut the boyish locks of Pennant[289]. In those days of wigs there were very few hair-cutters in London.

The father of Miss Ray, the singer, and mistress of old Lord Sandwich, is said to have been a well-known staymaker in Holywell Street, now Booksellers' Row. His daughter was apprenticed in Clerkenwell, from whence the musical lord took her to load her with a splendid shame. On the day she went to sing at Covent Garden in "Love in a Village," Hackman, who had left the army for the church, waited for her carriage at the Cannon Coffee-house in Cockspur Street. At the door of the theatre, by the side of the Bedford Coffee-house, Hackman rushed out, and as Miss Ray was being handed from her carriage he shot her through the head, and then attempted his own life[290]. Hackman was hanged at Tyburn, and he died declaring that shooting Miss Ray was the result of a sudden burst of frenzy, for he had planned only suicide in her presence.

The Strand Maypole stood on the site of the present church of St. Mary le Strand, or a little northward towards Maypole Alley, behind the Olympic Theatre. In the thirteenth century a cross had stood on this spot, and there the itinerant justices had sat to administer justice outside the walls. A Maypole stood here as early as 1634[291]. Tradition says it was set up by John Clarges, the Drury Lane blacksmith, and father of General Monk's vulgar wife.

The Maypole was Satan's flag-staff in the eyes of the stern Puritans, who dreaded Christmas pies, cards, and dances. Down it came when Cromwell went up. The Strand Maypole was reared again with exulting ceremony the first May day after the Restoration. The parishioners bought a pole 134 feet high, and the Duke of York, the Lord High Admiral, lent them twelve seamen to help to raise it. It was brought from Scotland Yard with drums, music, and the shouts of the multitude; flags flying, and three men bare-headed carrying crowns.[292] The two halves being joined together with iron bands, and the gilt crown and vane and king's arms placed on the top, it was raised in about four hours by means of tackle and pulleys. The Strand rang with the people's shouts, for to them the Maypole was an emblem of the good old times. Then there was a morris dance, with tabor and pipe, the dancers wearing purple scarfs and "half-shirts." The children laughed, and the old people clapped their hands, for there was not a taller Maypole in Europe. From its summit floated a royal purple streamer; and half way down was a sort of cross-trees or balcony adorned with four crowns and the king's arms. It bore also a garland of vari-coloured favours, and beneath three great lanterns in honour of the three admirals and all seamen, to give light in dark nights. On this spot, a year before, the butchers of Clare Market had rung a peal with their knives as they burnt an emblematical Rump.[293] [Pg 161]

In the year 1677 a fatal duel was fought under the Maypole, which had been snapped by a tempest in 1672.[294] One daybreak Mr. Robert Percival, a notorious duellist, only nineteen years of age, was found dead under the Maypole, with a deep wound in his left breast. His drawn and bloody sword lay beside him. His antagonist was never discovered, though great rewards were offered. The only clue was a hat with a bunch of ribbons in it, suspected to belong to the celebrated Beau Fielding, but it was never traced home to him. The elder brother, Sir Philip Percival, long after, violently attacked a total stranger whom he met in the streets of Dublin. The spectators parted them. Sir Philip could account for his conduct only by saying he felt urged on by an irresistible conviction that the man he struck at was his brother's murderer.[295] [Pg 162]

The Maypole, disused and decaying, was pulled down in 1713, when a new one, adorned with two gilt balls and a vane, was erected in its stead. In 1718 the pole, being found in the way of the new church, was given to Sir Isaac Newton as a stand for a large French telescope that belonged to his friend Mr. Pound, the rector of Wanstead.

Saint Mary-le-Strand was begun in 1714, and consecrated in 1723-4.[296] It was one of the fifty ordered to be built in Queen Anne's reign. The old church, pulled down by that Ahab, the Protector Somerset, to make room for his ill-omened new palace, stood considerably nearer to the river.

Gibbs, the shrewd Aberdeen architect, who succeeded to Wren and Vanbrugh, and became famous by building St. Martin's Church, reared also St. Mary's. Gibbs, according to Walpole, was a mere plodding mechanic. He certainly wanted originality, simplicity, and grace. St. Mary's is broken up by unmeaning ornament; the pagoda-like steeple is too high,[297] and crushes the church, instead of as it were blossoming from it. One critic (Mr. Malton) alone is found to call St. Mary's pleasant and picturesque; but I confess to having looked on it so long that I begin almost to forget its ugliness.

Gibbs himself tells us how he set to work upon this church. It was his first commission after his return from Rome. As the site was a very public one, he was desired to spare no cost in the ornamentation, so he framed it of two orders, making the lower walls (but for the absurd niches to hold nothing) solid, so as to keep out the noises of the street. There was at first no [Pg 163] steeple intended, only a small western campanile, or bell-turret; but, eighty feet from the west front, there was to be erected a column 250 feet high, crowned by a statue of Queen Anne. This absurdity was forgotten at the death of that rather insipid queen, and the stone still lying there, the thrifty parish authorities, unwilling to waste the materials, resolved to build a steeple. The church being already twenty feet from the ground, it was necessary to spread it north and south, and so the church, originally square, became oblong.

Pope calls St. Mary's Church bitterly the church that—

> Collects "the *saints* of Drury Lane."[298]

Addison describes his Tory fox-hunter's horror on seeing a church apparently being demolished, and his agreeable surprise when he found it was really a church being built.[299]

St. Mary's was the scene of a tragedy during the proclamation of the short peace in 1802. Just as the heralds came abreast of Somerset House, a man on the roof of the church pressed forward too strongly against one of the stone urns, which gave way and fell into the street, striking down three persons: one of these died on the spot; the second, on his way to the hospital; and the third, two days afterwards. A young woman and several others were also seriously injured. The urn, which weighed two hundred pounds, carried away part of the cornice, broke a flag-stone below, and buried itself a foot deep in the earth. The unhappy cause of this mischief fell back on the roof and fainted when he saw the urn fall. He was discharged, no blame being attached to him. It was found that the urn had been fastened by a wooden spike, instead of being clamped with iron.[300]

The church has been lately refitted in an ecclesiastical style, and filled with painted windows. There are no galleries in its interior. The ceiling is encrusted with ornament. It contains a tablet to the memory of James Bindley, who died in 1818. He was the father of the [Pg 164] Society of Antiquaries, and was a great collector of books, prints, and medals.

New Inn, in Wych Street, is an inn of Chancery, appertaining to the Middle Temple. It was originally a public inn, bearing the sign of Our Lady the Virgin, and was bought by Sir John Fineux, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, in the reign of King Edward IV., to place therein the students of the law then lodged in St. George's Inn, in the little Old Bailey, which was reputed to have been the most ancient of all the inns of Chancery.[301]

Sir Thomas More, the luckless minister of Henry VIII., was a member of this inn till he removed to Lincoln's Inn. When the Great Seal was taken from this wise man, he talked of descending to "New Inn fare, wherewith many an honest man is well contented."[302] Addison makes the second best man of his band of friends (after Sir Roger de Coverley) a bachelor Templar; an excellent critic, with whom the time of the play is an hour of business. "Exactly at five he passes through New Inn, crosses through Russell Court, and takes a turn at Wills's till the play begins. He has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose."[303]

Wych Street derives its name from the old name for Drury Lane—*via de Aldewych*. Till some recent improvements were effected in its tenants, it bore an infamous character, and was one of the disgraces of London.

The Olympic Theatre, in Wych Street, was built in 1805 by Philip Astley, a light horseman, who founded the first amphitheatre in London on the garden ground of old Craven House. It was opened September 18, 1806, as the Olympic Pavilion, and burnt to the ground March 29, 1849. It was built out of the timbers of the captured French man-of-war, *La Ville de Paris*, in which William IV. went out as midshipman. The masts of the vessel formed the flies, [Pg 165] and were seen still standing amidst the fire after the roof fell in. In 1813 it was leased by Elliston, and called the Little Drury Lane Theatre. Its great days were under the rule of Madame Vestris,[304] who, both as a singer and an actress, contributed to its success. More recently it was under the able and successful management of the late Mr. Frederick Robson. Born at Margate in 1821, he was early in life apprenticed to a copperplate engraver in Bedfordbury. He appeared first, unsuccessfully, at a private theatre in Catherine Street, and played at the Grecian Saloon as a comic singer and low comedian from 1846 to 1849. In 1853 he joined Mr. Farren at the Olympic. He there acquired a great reputation in various pieces—"The Yellow Dwarf," "To oblige Benson," "The Lottery Ticket," and "The Wandering Minstrel,"—the last being an old farce originally written to ridicule the vagaries of Mr. Cochrane.

Lyon's Inn, an inn of Chancery belonging to the Inner Temple, was originally a hostelry with the sign of the Lion. It was purchased by gentlemen students in Henry VIII.'s time, and converted into an inn of Chancery.[305]

It degenerated into a haunt of bill-discounters and Bohemians of all kinds, good and bad, clever and rascally, and remained a dim, mouldy place till 1861, when it was pulled down. Its site is now occupied by the Globe Theatre. Just before the demolition of the inn, when I visited it, a washerwoman was hanging out wet and flopping clothes on the site of Mr. William Weare's chambers.

On Friday, 24th of October 1823, Mr. William Weare, of No. 2 Lyon's Inn, was murdered in Gill's Hill Lane, Hertfordshire, between Edgware and St. Alban's. His murderer was Mr. John Thurtell, son of the Mayor of Norwich, and a well-known gambler, betting man, and colleague of prize-fighters. Under pretence of driving him down for a shooting excursion, Thurtell shot Weare with a pistol, and when he leaped out of the chaise, pursued him and [Pg 166] cut his throat. He then sank the body in a pond in the garden of his friend and probable accomplice, Probert, a spirit merchant, and afterwards removed it to a slough on the St. Alban's road. His confederate, Hunt, a public singer, turned king's evidence, and was transported for life. Thurtell was hanged at Hertford. He pleaded that Weare had robbed him of £300 with false cards at Blind Hookey, and he had sworn revenge; but it appeared that he had planned several other murders, and all for money. Probert was afterwards hanged in Gloucestershire for horse-stealing.

At the sale of the building materials some Jews were observed to be very eager to acquire the figure of the lion that adorned one of the walls. There were various causes assigned for this eagerness. Some said that a Jew named Lyons had originally founded the inn; others declared that the lion was considered to be an emblem of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Directly the auctioneer knocked it down the Jewish purchaser drew a knife, mounted the ladder, and struck his weapon into the lion. "S'help me, Bob!" said he, in a tone of disgust, "if they didn't tell me it was lead, and it's only stone arter all!"

Gay, who speaks of the dangers of "mazy Drury Lane," gives Catherine Street a very bad character. He describes the courtesans, with their new-scoured manteaus and riding-hoods or muffled pinners, standing near the tavern doors, or carrying empty bandboxes, and feigning errands to the Change.[306] The street is now almost entirely occupied by newspaper publishers. The *Morning Herald*, the *Court Journal*, the *Naval and Military Gazette*, the *Gardener's Gazette*, the *Builder*, the *Weekly Register*, and the *Court Gazette*, all either are or have been published in Catherine Street. Scott's Sanspareil Theatre was opened here about 1810 for the performance of operettas, dancing, and pantomimes.[307] In September 1741 a man named James Hall was executed at the end of Catherine Street.

The Maypole close to St. Mary's Church is said to have been the first place in London where hackney coaches were allowed to stand. Coaches were first introduced into England from [Pg 167] Hungary in 1580 by Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel; but for a time they were thought effeminate. The Thames watermen especially railed against them, as might be expected. In the year 1634, a Captain Baily who had accompanied Raleigh in his famous expedition to Guiana, started four hackney coaches, with drivers in liveries, at the Maypole; but as, in the year 1613, sixty hackney coaches from London[308] plied at Stourbridge fair, perhaps there had been coach-stands in the streets before Baily's time. In 1625 there were only twenty coaches in London; in 1666, under Charles II., the number had so increased that the king issued a proclamation complaining of the coaches blocking up the narrow streets and breaking up the pavement, and forbade coach-stands altogether.

Peter Molyn Tempest, the engraver of "The Cries of London," published at the end of King William's reign, lived in the Strand opposite Somerset House. "The Cries" were designed by Marcellus Laroon, a Dutch painter (1653-1702), who painted draperies for Kneller.[309] He was celebrated for his conversation pieces and his knack of imitating the old masters. Tempest's quaint advertisement of the "Cries" in the *London Gazette*, May 28 and 31, 1688, runs thus:—

"There is now published the Cryes and Habits of London, lately drawn after the life in great variety of actions, curiously engraved upon fifty copper-plates, fit for the ingenious and lovers of art. Printed and sold by P. Tempest, over against Somerset House, in the Strand."

The *Morning Chronicle*, whose office was opposite Somerset House, was started in 1770. It was to Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*, that Coleridge, when penniless and about to enlist in a cavalry regiment, sent a poem and a request for a guinea, which he got. Hazlitt was theatrical critic to this paper, succeeding Lord Campbell in the post. In 1810 David Ricardo began his letters on the depreciation of the currency in the *Chronicle*. James Perry, whose [Pg 168] career we have no room to follow, lived in great style at Tavistock House, the house afterwards occupied for many years by Mr. Charles Dickens. *The Sketches by Boz* of Charles Dickens first appeared in the columns of the *Chronicle*. The last *Morning Chronicle* appeared on Wednesday, March 19, 1862. Latterly the paper was said to have been in the pay of the Emperor of France.

No. 346, at the east corner of Wellington Street, now the office of the *Law Times*, the *Queen*, and the *Field*, was Doyley's celebrated warehouse for woollen articles. Dryden, in his *Kind Keeper*, speaks of "Doyley" petticoats; Steele, in his *Guardian*,[310] of his "Doyley" suit; while Gay, in the *Trivia*, describes a "Doyley" as a poor defence against the cold.

Doyley's warehouse stood on the ancient site of Wimbledon House, built by Sir Edward Cecil, son to the first Earl of Exeter, and created Viscount Wimbledon by Charles I. The house was burnt to the ground in 1628, and the day before the viscount had had part of his house at Wimbledon accidentally blown up by gunpowder. Pennant, when a boy, was brought by his mother to a large glass shop, a little beyond Wimbledon House; the old man who kept it remembered Nell Gwynne coming to the shop when he was an apprentice; her footman, a country lad, got fighting in the street with some men who had abused his mistress.[311]

Mr. Doyley was a much respected warehouseman of Dr. Johnson's time, whose family had resided in their great old house, next to Hodsall the banker's, at the corner of Wellington Street, ever since Queen Anne's time. The dessert napkins called Doyleys derived their name from this firm. Mr. Doyley's house was built by Inigo Jones, and forms a prominent feature in old engravings of the Strand, as it had a covered entrance that ran out like a promontory into the carriage-way. It was pulled down about 1782.[312] Mr. Doyley, a man of humour and a friend of Garrick and Sterne, was a frequenter of the Precinct Club, held at the Turk's Head, opposite his own house. The rector of St. Mary's attended the same club, and enjoyed the seat of honour next the fire. [Pg 169]

THE OLD ROMAN BATH, STRAND.

Not far from this stood the Strand Bridge, which crossed the street, and received the streams flowing from the higher grounds down Catharine Street to the Thames. Strand Lane, hard by on the south, famous still for its old Roman bath, passed under the arch, and led to a water stair or landing pier. Addison, in his bright pleasant way, describes landing there one morning with ten sail of apricot boats, after having put in at Nine Elms for melons, consigned by Mr. Cuffe of that place to Sarah Sewell and Company at their stall in Covent Garden.[313]

The *Morning Post*, whose office is in Wellington Street, was started in 1772; when almost defunct it was bought in 1796 by Daniel Stuart, and Christie the auctioneer, who gave only £600 for copyright, house, and plant. Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, Wordsworth, and Mackintosh all wrote for Stuart's paper. Coleridge commenced his political papers in 1797, and on his return from Germany (November 1799) joined the badly-paid staff, but refused to become a parliamentary reporter. Fox declared in the House of Commons that Coleridge's essays had led to the rupture of the peace of Amiens, an announcement which led to a pursuit by a French frigate, when the poet left Rome, where he then was, and sailed from Leghorn. Lamb wrote facetious paragraphs at sixpence a-piece.[314] The *Morning Post* soon became second only to the *Chronicle*, and the great paper for booksellers' advertisements. It is mentioned by Byron as the organ of the aristocracy and of West End society, and it has maintained that position to the present time with little change. [Pg 170]

The *Athenæum*, whose office is in Wellington Street, is identified with the name of Mr. (afterwards) Sir C. Wentworth Dilke. He was born in 1789, and was originally in the Navy Pay Office. He bought the paper, which had been unsuccessful since 1828 under its originator, that shifty adventurer, Mr. J. S. Buckingham, and also under Mr. John Sterling. Under his care it gradually grew into a sound property, and became what it now is, the *Times* of weekly papers. Its editor, Mr. Hervey, the author of many well-known poems, was replaced in 1853 by Mr. Hepworth Dixon, under whom it steadily throve, till his retirement in 1871.

A little farther up the street is the office of *All the Year Round*, a weekly periodical which, in 1859, took the place of *Household Words*, started by Mr. Charles Dickens in 1850. It contains essays by the best writers of the day, graphic descriptions of current events, and continuous stories. Mrs. Gaskell, Mr. Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, Lord Lytton, Mr. Sala, [Pg 171]

and Mr. Dickens himself, are among those who have published novels in its pages.

The original Lyceum was built in 1765 as an exhibition-room for the Society of Arts, by Mr. James Payne, an architect, on ground once belonging to Exeter House. The society splitting, and the Royal Academy being founded at Somerset House in 1768, the Lyceum Society became insolvent. Mr. Lingham, a breeches-maker, then purchased the room, and let it out to Flockton for his Puppet-show and other amusements. About 1794 Dr. Arnold partly rebuilt it as a theatre, but could not obtain a licence through the opposition of the winter houses. [315] It was next door to the shop of Millar the publisher.

The Lyceum in 1789-94 was the arena of all experimenters—of Charles Dibdin and his “Sans Souci,” of the ex-soldier Astley’s feats of horsemanship, of Cartwright’s “Musical Glasses,” of Philipstal’s successful “Phantasmagoria.” Lonsdale’s “Egyptiana” (paintings of Egyptian scenes, by Porter, Mulready, Pugh, and Cristall), with a lecture, was a failure. Here Ker Porter exhibited his large pictures of Lodi, Acre, and the siege of Seringapatam. Then came Palmer with his “Portraits,” Collins with his “Evening Brush,” Incledon with his “Voyage to India,” Bologna with his “Phantascopia,” and Lloyd with his “Astronomical Exhibition.” Subscription concerts, amateur theatricals, debating societies, and schools of defence were also tried here. One day it was a Roman Catholic chapel; next day the “Panther Mare and Colt,” the “White Negro Girl,” or the “Porcupine Man” held their levee of dupes and gapers in its changeful rooms.[316]

In 1809 Dr. Arnold’s son obtained a licence for an English opera-house. Shortly afterwards the Drury Lane company commenced performing here, their own theatre having been burnt. Mr. T. Sheridan was then manager. In 1815 Mr. Arnold erected the predecessor of the present theatre, on an enlarged scale, at an expense of nearly £80,000, and it was opened in 1816. In 1817 the experiment of two short performances on the same evening was unsuccessfully tried. On April 1, 1818, Mr. Mathews, the great comedian, began here his entertainment called “Mail-coach Adventures,” which ran forty nights. [Pg 172]

The Beef-steak Club was established in the reign of Queen Anne (before 1709).[317] The *Spectator* mentions it, 1710-11. The club met in a noble room at the top of Covent Garden Theatre, and never partook of any dish but beef-steaks. Their Providore was their president and wore their badge, a small gold gridiron, hung round his neck by a green silk riband.[318] Estcourt had been a tavern-keeper, and is mentioned in a poem of Parnell’s, who was himself too fond of wine. He died in 1712. Steele gives a delightful sketch of him. He had an excellent judgment, he was a great mimic, and he told an anecdote perfectly well. His well-turned compliments were as fine as his smart repartees. “It is to Estcourt’s exquisite talent more than to philosophy,” says Steele, “that I owe the fact that my person is very little of my care, and it is indifferent to me what is said of my shape, my air, my manner, my speech, or my address. It is to poor Estcourt I chiefly owe that I am arrived at the happiness of thinking nothing a diminution of myself but what argues a depravity of my will.”

The kindly essay ends beautifully. “None of those,” says the true-hearted man, “will read this without giving him some sorrow for their abundant mirth, and one gush of tears for so many bursts of laughter. I wish it were any honour to the pleasant creature’s memory that my eyes are too much suffused to let me go on.”

Later, Churchill and Wilkes, those partners in dissoluteness and satire, were members of this social club. After Estcourt, that jolly companion, Beard the singer, became president of this jovial and agreeable company.

It was an old custom at theatres to have a Beef-steak Club that met every Saturday, and to which authors and wits were invited. In 1749 Mr. Sheridan, the manager, founded one at Dublin. There were fifty or sixty members, chiefly noblemen and members of Parliament, and no performer was admitted but witty Peg Woffington, who wore man’s dress, and was president for a whole season.[319] [Pg 173]

A Beef-steak Society was founded in 1735 by John Rich, the great harlequin, and manager of Covent Garden Theatre, and George Lambert, the scene-painter.[320] Lambert, being much visited by authors, wits, and noblemen, whilst painting, and being too hurried to go to a tavern, used to have a steak cooked in the room, inviting his guests to share his snug and savoury but hurried meal. The fun of these accidental and impromptu dinners led to a club being started, which afterwards moved to a more convenient room in the theatre. After many years the place of meeting was changed to the Shakspere Tavern, where Mr. Lambert’s portrait, painted by Hudson, Reynolds’s pompous master, was one of the decorations of the club-room.[321] They then returned to the theatre, but being burned out in 1812, adjourned to the Bedford. Lambert was the merriest of fellows, yet without buffoonery or coarseness. His manners were most engaging, he was social with his equals, and perfectly easy with richer men.[322] He was also a great leader of fun at old Slaughter’s artist-club.

The club throve down to about 1869, when it was dissolved; steaks were perennial as a dish, whatever the wit may have been, to the last. Twenty-four noblemen and gentlemen, each of whom might bring a friend, partook of a five o’clock dinner of steaks in a room of their own behind the scenes at the Lyceum Theatre every Saturday from November till June. They called themselves “The Steaks,” disclaimed the name of “Club,” and dedicated their hours to “Beef and Liberty,” as their ancestors did in the anti-Walpole days.[323]

Their room was a little typical Escurial. The doors, wainscot, and floor, were of stout oak, emblazoned with gridirons, like a chapel of St. Laurence. The cook was seen at his office [Pg 174] through the bars of a vast gridiron, and the original gridiron of the society (the survivor of two terrific fires) held a conspicuous position in the centre of the ceiling. This club descended lineally from Wilkes's and from Lambert's. To the end there was Attic salt enough to sprinkle over "the Steaks," and to justify the old epicure's lines to the club:—

> "He that of honour, wit, and mirth partakes,
> May be a fit companion o'er beef-steaks;
> His name may be to future times enrolled
> In Estcourt's book, whose gridiron's framed of gold."[324]

Its gridiron and other treasures were sold by auction, and fetched fabulous prices.

Dr. William King, the author of the above quoted verses, was an indolent, wrong-headed genius. Some three years after the Restoration he took part against the irascible Bentley in the dispute about the Epistles of Phalaris, satirised Sir Hans Sloane, and supported Sacheverell. He wrote *The Art of Cookery*, *Dialogues of the Dead*, *The Art of Love*, and *Greek Mythology for Schools*. Recklessly throwing up his Irish Government appointment, he came to London. There Swift got him appointed manager of the *Gazette*; but being idle, and fond of the bottle, he resigned his office in six months, and went to live at a friend's house in the garden grounds between Lambeth and Vauxhall. He died in 1712, in lodgings opposite Somerset House, procured for him by his relation, Lord Clarendon. He was buried in the north cloisters of Westminster Abbey, close to his master, Dr. Knipe, to whom he had dedicated his *School Mythology*.

Mr. T. P. Cooke obtained some of his early triumphs at the Lyceum as Frankenstein, and at the Adelphi as Long Tom Coffin. His serious pantomime in the fantastic monster of Mrs. Shelley's novel is said to have been highly poetical. He made his début in 1804, at the Royalty Theatre, and soon afterwards left Astley's to join Laurent, the manager of the [Pg 175] Lyceum. This best of stage seamen since Bannister's time was born in 1780, and died only recently.

Madame Lucia Elizabeth Vestris had the Lyceum in 1847. This fascinating actress was the daughter of Francesco Bartolozzi, the engraver, and was born in 1797. She married the celebrated dancer, Vestris, in 1813, and in 1813 appeared at the King's Theatre, in Winter's opera of "Proserpina." In 1820, after a wild and disgraceful life in Paris, she appeared at Drury Lane as Lilla, Adela, and Artaxerxes, and exhibited the archness, and vivacity of Storace without her grossness. In a burlesque of "Don Giovanni," as "Paul" and as "Apollo," she was much abused by the critics for her wantonness of manner and dress, but she still won her audiences by her sweet and powerful contralto, and by her songs, "The Light Guitar" and "Rise, gentle Moon." Harley played Leporello to her under Mr. Elliston's management. After this she took to "first light comedy" and melodrama, and married Mr. Charles Mathews. The theatre was burnt down in 1830, and rebuilt soon afterwards. Madame Vestris herself died in 1856.

"That little crowded nest" of shops and wild beasts,[325] Exeter Change, stood where Burleigh Street now stands, but extended into the main road, so that the footpath of the north side of the Strand ran directly through it.[326] It was built about 1681,[327] and contained two walks below and two walks above stairs, with shops on each side for sempsters, milliners, hosiers, etc. The builders were very sanguine, but the fame of the New Exchange (now the Adelphi) blighted it from the beginning;[328] the shops next the street alone could be let; the rest lay unoccupied. The Land Bank had rooms here. The body of the poet Gay lay in state in an upper room, afterwards used for auctions. In 1721 a Mr. Normand Corry exhibited here a damask bed, with curtains woven by himself; admission two shillings and sixpence. About 1780 Lord Baltimore's body lay here in state, preparatory to its [Pg 176] interment at Epsom.

This infamous lord, of unsavoury reputation, had married a daughter of the Duke of Bridgewater: he lived on the east side of Russell Square, and was notorious for an unscrupulous profligacy, rivalling even that of the detestable Colonel Charteris. In 1767 his agents decoyed to his house a young woman named Woodcock, a milliner on Tower Hill. After suffering all the cruelty which Lovelace showed to Clarissa, the poor girl was taken to Lord Baltimore's house at Epsom, where her disgrace was consummated. The rascal and his accomplices were tried at Kingston in 1768, but unfortunately acquitted through an informality in Miss Woodcock's deposition. The disgraced title has since become extinct.

The last tenants of the upper rooms were Mr. Cross and his wild beasts. The Royal Menagerie was a great show in our fathers' days. Leigh Hunt mentions that one day at feeding time, passing by the Change, he saw a fine horse pawing the ground, startled at the roar of Cross's lions and tigers.[329] The vast skeleton of Chunee, the famous elephant, brought to England in 1810, and exhibited here, is to be seen at the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. In 1826, after a return of an annual paroxysm, aggravated by inflammation of the large pulp of one of his tusks, Chunee became dangerous, and it was necessary to kill him. His keeper first threw him buns steeped in prussic acid, but these produced no effect. A company of soldiers was then sent for, and the monster died after upwards of a hundred bullets had pierced him. In the midst of the shower of lead, the poor docile animal knelt down at the well-known voice of his keeper, to turn a vulnerable point to

the soldiers. At the College of Surgeons the base of his tusk is still shown, with a spicula of ivory pressing into the pulp.

De Loutherbourg, after Garrick's retirement, left Covent Garden and exhibited his *Eidophusikon* in a room over Exeter Change. The stage was about six feet wide and eight [Pg 177] feet deep. The first scene was the view from One-tree Hill in Greenwich Park. The lamps were above the proscenium, and had screens of coloured glass which could be rapidly changed. His best scenes were the loss of the *Halsewell* East Indiaman and the rising of Pandemonium. A real thunder-storm once breaking out when the shipwreck scene was going on, some of the audience left the room, saying that "the exhibition was presumptuous." Gainsborough was such a passionate admirer of the *Eidophusikon* that for a time he spent every evening at Loutherbourg's exhibition.[330]

Mr. William Clarke, a seller of hardware (steel buttons, buckles, and cutlery), was proprietor of Exeter Change for nearly half a century. He was an honest and kind man, much beloved by his friends, and known to everybody in Johnson's time. When he became infirm he was allowed by King George the special privilege of riding across St. James's Park to Buckingham Gate, his house being in Pimlico. He died rich.

Another character of Clarke's age was old Thomson, a music-seller, and a good-natured humourist. He was deputy organist at St. Michael's, Cornhill, and had been a pupil of Boyce. His shop was a mere sloping stall, with a little platform behind it for a desk, rows of shelves for old pamphlets and plays, and a chair or two for a crony. Thomson furnished Burney and Hawkins with materials for their histories of music. It was said that there was not an air from the time of Bird that he could not sing. Poor soured Wilson used to be fond of sitting with Thomson and railing at the times. Garrick and Dr. Arne also frequented the shop.[331]

The nine o'clock drum at old Somerset House and the bell rung as a signal for closing Exeter Change were once familiar sounds to old Strand residents: but alas! times are changed; and they are heard no more.

It was in Thomson's shop that the elder Dibdin (Charles), together with Hubert Stoppelaer, an actor, singer, and painter, planned the Patagonian Theatre, which was opened in the [Pg 178] rooms above. The stage was six feet wide, the puppet actors only ten inches high. Dibdin wrote the pieces, composed the music, helped in the recitations, and accompanied the singers on a small organ. His partner spoke for the puppets and painted the scenes. They brought out "The Padlock" here. The miniature theatre held about 200 people.[332]

Exeter Hall was built by Mr. Deering, in 1831, for various charitable and religious societies that had scruples about holding their meetings in taverns or theatres. It stands a little west of the site of the "old Change." The front, with its two massy plain Greek pillars, is a good instance of making the most of space, though it still looks as if it were riding "bodkin" between the larger houses. The building contains two halls—one that will hold eight hundred persons, and another, on the upper floor, able to hold three thousand. The latter is a noble room, 131 feet long by 76 wide, and contains the Sacred Harmonic Society's gigantic organ. There are also nests of offices and committee-rooms. In May the white neckcloths pour into Exeter Hall in perfect regiments.

In the Strand, near Exeter House, lived the beautiful Countess of Carlisle, a beauty of Charles I.'s court, immortalised by Vandyke, Suckling, and Carew. She paid £150 a year rent, equal to £600 of our current money.[333]

Exeter Street had no western outlet when first built; for where the street ends was the back wall of old Bedford House. Dr. Johnson, after his arrival with Garrick from Lichfield, lodged here, in a garret, at the house of Norris, a staymaker. In this garret Johnson wrote part at least of that sonorous tragedy, "Irene." He used to say he dined well and with good company for eightpence, at the Pine Apple in the street close by. Several of the guests had travelled. They met every day, but did not know each other's names. The others paid a shilling, and had wine. Johnson paid sixpence for a cut of meat (a penny for bread, a penny to the waiter), [Pg 179] and was served better than the rest, for the waiter that is forgotten is apt also to forget.

In Cecil's time Bedford House became known as Exeter House. From hence, in 1651, Cromwell, the Council of State, and the House of Commons followed General Popham's body to its resting-place at Westminster.[334] It was while receiving the sacrament on Christmas Day at the chapel of Exeter House that that excellent gentleman, Evelyn, and his wife were seized by soldiers, warned not to observe any longer the "superstitious time of the Nativity," and dismissed with pity.

In Exeter House lived that shifty and unscrupulous turncoat, Antony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, the great tormentor of Charles II., and the father of the author of the *Characteristics*, who was born here 1670-1, and educated by the amiable philosopher Locke. "The wickedest fellow in my dominions," as Charles II. once called "Little Sincerity," afterwards removed hence about the time of the Great Fire to Aldersgate Street, in order to be near his City intriguers. After the Great Fire, till new offices could be built, the Court of Arches, the Admiralty Court, etc., were held in Exeter House. The property still belongs to the Cecil family.

That great statesman, Burleigh, Bacon's uncle, lived on the site of the present Burleigh Street. He was of birth so humble that his father could only be entitled a gentleman by

courtesy. Slow but sure of judgment, silent, distrustful of brilliant men, such as Essex and Raleigh, he made himself, by unremitting skill, assiduity, and fidelity, the most trusted and powerful person in Queen Elizabeth's privy council. Here, fresh from his frets with the rash Essex, the old wily statesman pondered over the fate of Mary of Scotland, or strove for means to foil Philip of Spain and his Armada. Here also lived his eldest son, Sir Thomas Cecil, subsequently the second Lord Burleigh and Earl of Exeter, who died 1622, whose daughter married the heir of Lord Chancellor Hatton, the dancing chancellor. Burleigh Street replaced the old house in 1678, when Salisbury Street was built. [Pg 180]

The "Little Adelphi" Theatre was opened in 1806 under the name of the "Sans Souci" by Mr. John Scott, a celebrated colour-maker, famous for a certain fashionable blue dye. The entertainments (optical and mechanical) were varied by songs, recitations, and dances, the proprietor's daughter being a clever amateur actress. Its real success did not begin till 1821, when Pierce Egan's dull and rather vulgar book of London low life, *Tom and Jerry*, was dramatised—Wrench as Tom, Reeve as Jerry. Subsequently Power, the best Irishman that trod the boards in London, appeared here in melodrama. In 1826 Terry and Yates became joint lessees and managers. Ballantyne and Scott backed up Terry, Sir Walter being always eager for money. Scott eventually had to pay £1750 for the speculative printer; he seems from the outset to have entertained fears of Terry's failure.[335] Here Keely too made his first hit as Jemmy Green.

In 1839 Mr. Rice, "the original Jim Crow," was playing at the Adelphi.[336] This Mr. Rice was an American actor who had studied the drolleries of the Negro singers and dancers, especially those of one Jim Crow, an old boatman who hung about the wharfs of Vicksburg, the same town on the Mississippi that has lately stood so severe a siege. He initiated among us negro tunes and negro dances. This was the fatal beginning of those "negro entertainments," falsely so called.

In 1808 Mr. Mathews gave his first entertainment, "The Mail-coach Adventures," at Hull. Mr. James Smith had strung together some sketches of character, and written for him those two celebrated comic songs, "The Mail Coach" and "Bartholomew Fair." In 1818 Mr. Mathews, unfortunately for his peace of mind, sold himself for seven years to a very sharp practiser, Mr. Arnold, of the Lyceum, for £1000 a year, liable to the deduction of £200 fine for any non-appearance. This becoming unbearable, Mr. Arnold made a new agreement, by [Pg 181] which he took to himself £40 every night, and shared the rest with Mr. Mathews, who also paid half the expenses.[337] The shrewd manager made £30,000 by this first speculation. Rivalling Mr. Dibdin, the wonderful mimic appeared in plain evening dress with no other apparent preparation than a drawing-room scene, a small table covered with a green cloth, and two lamps. His first entertainment included "Fond Barney, the Yorkshire Idiot" and the "Song of the Royal Visitors," full of droll Russian names. In 1819 he produced "The Trip to Paris." In 1820 he brought out "The Country Cousins," with the two celebrated comic songs, "The White Horse Cellar," and "O, what a Town!—what a Wonderful Metropolis!" both full of the most honest and boisterous fun. In 1821 Peake wrote for him the "Polly Packet," introducing a caricature of Major Thornton, the great sportsman, as Major Longbow. The entertainment was called "Earth, Air, and Water," and contained the song of "The Steam-Boat."

In 1824 Mr. Mathews gave his "Trip to America," with Yankee songs, negro imitations, and that fine bit of pathos, "M. Mallet at the Post-Office." In 1825 appeared his "memorandum Book," and in 1826 his "Invitations," with the "Ruined Yorkshire Gambler (Harry Ardourly)," and "A Civic Water Party."

In 1828 he opened the Adelphi Theatre in partnership with Mr. Yates, playing the drunken Tinker in Mr. Buckstone's "May Queen," and singing that prince of comic songs, "The Humours of a Country Fair," written for him by his son Charles. Mr. Moncrief wrote his "Spring Meeting for 1829," and Mr. Peake his "Comic Annual for 1830." In 1831 his son Charles aided Mr. Peake in producing an entertainment, and again in 1832. In 1833 his health began to fail; he lost much money in bubble companies, and had an action brought against him for £30,000. In 1833 Mr. Peake and Mr. Charles Mathews wrote the "At Home." [Pg 182] Subsequently the great mimic went to America, whence he returned in 1838, only to die a few months after.[338]

Leigh Hunt praises Mr. Mathews's valets and old men, but condemns his nervous restlessness and redundance of bodily action. While Munden, Liston, and Fawcett could not conceal their voices, Mathews rivalled Bannister in his powers of mimicry. His delineation of old age was remarkable for its truthfulness and variety. Leigh Hunt confesses that till Mathews acted Sir Fretful Plagiary, he had ranked him as an actor of habits and not of passions, and far inferior to Bannister and Dowton; but the extraordinary blending of vexation and conceit in Sheridan's caricature of Cumberland proved Mathews, Mr. Hunt allowed, to be an actor who knew the human heart.[339]

In 1820 Hazlitt criticised Mathews's third entertainment, "The Country Cousins," a mélange of songs, narrative, ventriloquism, imitations, and character stories. He had left Covent Garden on the ground that he had not sufficiently frequent opportunities for appearing in legitimate comedy. The severe critic says, "Mr. Mathews shines particularly neither as an actor nor a mimic of actors; but his forte is a certain general tact and versatility of comic power. You would say he is a clever performer—you would guess he is a cleverer man. His

talents are not pure, but mixed. He is best when he is his own prompter, manager, performer, orchestra, and scene-shifter."[340]

Hazlitt then goes on to accuse his "subject" of a want of taste, of his gross and often superficial surprises, and of his too restless disquietude to please. "Take from him," says Hazlitt, "his odd shuffle in the gait, a restless volubility of speech and motion, a sudden suppression of features, or the continued repetition of a cant phrase with unabated vigour, and you reduce him to almost total insignificance." It should be said that his "shuffle" was rather a "limp."

As a mimic of other actors, the same writer says Mathews often failed. He gabbled like Incledon, entangled himself like Tait Wilkinson, croaked like Suett, lisped like Young, but he could make nothing of John Kemble's "expressive, silver-tongued cadences." He blames him more especially for turning nature into pantomime and grimace, and dealing too much with worn-out topics, like Cockneyisms, French blunders, or the ignorance of country people in stage-coaches, Margate hoys, and Dover packet-boats. In another place the severe critic, who could be ill-tempered if he chose, blames Mathews for many of his songs, for his meagre jokes, dry as scrapings of "Shabsuger cheese," and for his immature ventriloquism. "His best imitations," says Hazlitt, "were founded on his own observation, and on the absurd characteristics of chattering footmen, drunken coachmen, surly travellers, and garrulous old men. His old Scotchwoman, with her pointless story, was a portrait equal to Wilkie or Teniers, as faithful, as simple, as delicately humorous, with a slight dash of pathos, but without one particle of caricature, vulgarity, or ill-nature." His best broad jokes were these: the abrupt proposal of a mutton-chop to a man who was sea-sick, and the convulsive marks of abhorrence with which he received it; and the tavern beau who was about to swallow a lighted candle for a glass of brandy-and-water as he was going drunk to bed. Poor Wiggins, the fat, hen-pecked husband, who, unwieldy and helpless, is pursued by a rabble of boys, was one of his best characters. Hazlitt mentions also as a stroke of true genius his imitation of a German family, the wife grumbling at her husband returning drunk, and the little child's paddling across the room to its own bed at its father's approach.[341] [Pg 183]

Terry, who in 1825 joined partnership with Yates, and died in 1829, was a quiet, sensible actor, praised in his Mephistopheles, and even in King Lear. His Peter Teazle was inferior to Farren's, and his Dr. Cantwell came after Dowton's.

Yates was born in 1797. He made his début at Covent Garden as Iago in 1818. He was very versatile, and triumphed alternately in tragedy, comedy, farce, and melodrama. A critic of 1834 says, "Mr. Yates is occasionally capital, and always respectable. In burlesque he is excellent, but a little too broad, and given to an exaggeration which is sometimes vulgar. He is a better buck than fop, and a better rake than either, were he more refined." [Pg 184]

John Reeve was another of the Adelphi celebrities. He was born in 1799, and was originally a clerk at a Fleet Street banking-house. He appeared first at Drury Lane in 1819 as Sylvester Daggerwood. His imitations were pronounced perfect, and he soon rose to great celebrity in broad farce, burlesque, and the comic parts of melodrama. Lord Grizzle, Bombastes, and Pedrillo, were favourite early characters of his. He was considered too heavy for Caleb Quotem, and not quiet enough for Paul Pry. Liston excelled him in the one, and Harley in the other.

Benjamin Webster was born at Bath in 1800. He took the management of the Haymarket in 1837, and built the New Adelphi Theatre in 1858. In melodrama Mr. Webster excels. His best parts are—Lavater, Tartuffe, Belphegor, Triplet, and Pierre Leroux in "The Poor Stroller." He is excellent in poor authors and strolling players, and achieved a great triumph in Mr. Watts Philips's play of "The Dead Heart." He is energetic and forcible, but he has a bad hoarse voice, and he protracts and details his part so elaborately as often to become tedious.

In 1844 Madame Celeste, who in 1837 had appeared at Drury Lane on her return from America, was directress of the Adelphi. She then left and took the Lyceum, which she held until the close of 1860-1.

The old Adelphi closed in June 1858. Although a small and incommodious house, it had long earned a special fame of its own. It began its career with "True Blue Scott," and went on with Rodwell and Jones during the "Tom and Jerry" mania, when young men about town wrenched off knockers, knocked down old men who were paid to apprehend thieves, and attended beggars' suppers. Under Terry and Yates, Buckstone and Fitzball produced pieces in which T. P. Cooke, O. Smith, Wilkinson, and Tyrone Power shone (this actor was drowned in 1841). There also flourished Wright, Paul Bedford, Mrs. Yates, and Mrs. Keeley, in "The Pilot," "The Flying Dutchman," "The Wreck Ashore," "Victorine," "Rory O'More," and "Jack Sheppard,"[342]—the last of these a play to be branded as a demoralising apotheosis of a clever thief. [Pg 185]

In 1844 Mr. Webster became proprietor of the Adelphi, and Madame Celeste, a good melodramatic actress, became the directress. Then was brought out that crowning triumph of the theatre, "The Green Bushes," by Mr. Buckstone—a tremendous success.

Among the greatest "hits" at the Adelphi have been of later years Mr. Watts Philips's "Dead Heart," a powerful melodrama of the French Revolution period, Miss Bateman's "Leah," an

American-German play of the old school, and “The Colleen Bawn,” Mr. Boucicault’s clever dramatic version of poor Gerald Griffin’s novel, full of fine melodramatic situations.

The old town house of the Earls of Bedford stood on the site of the present Southampton Street, and was taken down in 1704, in Queen Anne’s reign. It was a large house with a courtyard before it, and a spacious garden with a terrace walk.[343] Before this house was built the Bedford family lived at the opposite side of the Strand, in the Bishop of Carlisle’s inn, which, in 1598, was called Russell or Bedford House.[344] In 1704 the family removed to Bloomsbury. The neighbouring streets were christened by this family. Russell Street bears their family name, and Tavistock Street their second title.

Garrick lived at No. 36 Southampton Street before he went to the Adelphi. In 1755, to give himself some rest, he brought out a magnificent ballet pantomime, called “The Chinese Festival,” composed by “the great Noverre.” Unfortunately for Garrick, war had just broken out between England and France, and the pit and gallery condemned the Popish dancers in [Pg 186] spite of King George II. and the quality. Gentlemen in the boxes drew their swords, leaped down into the pit, and were bruised and beaten. The galleries looked on and pelted both sides. The ladies urged fresh recruits against the pit, and each fresh levy was mauled. The pit broke up benches, tore down hangings, smashed mirrors, split the harpsichords, and storming the stage, cut and slashed the scenery.[345] The rioters then sallied out to Mr. Garrick’s house (now Eastey’s Hotel) in Southampton Street, and broke every window from basement to garret.

Mrs. Oldfield, who lived in Southampton Street, was the daughter of an officer, and so reduced as to be obliged to live with a relation who kept the Mitre Tavern in St. James’s Market. She was overheard by Mr. Farquhar reading a comedy, and recommended by him to Sir John Vanbrugh. She was excellent as Lady Brute and also as Lady Townley. She died in 1730; her body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was afterwards buried in the Abbey. Lord Hervey and Bubb Doddington supported her pall. Her corpse, by her own request, was richly adorned with lace—a vanity which Pope ridiculed in those bitter lines—

> “One would not sure be ugly when one’s dead;
> And, Betty, give this cheek a little red.”

In 1712 Arthur Maynwaring, in his will, describes this street as New Southampton Street.

Bedford Street was first so named in 1766 by the Paving Commissioners. The lower part of the street was called Half-Moon Street; after the fire of London it became fashionable with mercers, lacemen, and drapers.[346] The lower part of the street is in the parish of St. Martin’s in the Fields, the upper in that of St. Paul’s, Covent Garden. In the overseers’ accounts of St. Martin’s mention is made of the names of persons who were fined in 1665 for drinking on the Lord’s Day at the Half-Moon Tavern in this street, also for carrying linen, for shaving customers, for carrying home venison or a pair of shoes, and for swearing. Sir [Pg 187] Charles Sedley and the Duke of Buckingham were fined by the Puritans in 1657-58 for riding in their coaches on that day.[347] Ned Ward, the witty publican, in his *London Spy*, mentions the Half-Moon Tavern in this street.

On the eastern side of the same street, in 1645, lived Remigius van Limput, a Dutch painter, who, at the sale of King Charles’s pictures, bought Vandyke’s florid masterpiece, now at Windsor, of the king on horseback. After the Restoration he was compelled to disgorge it. Had this grand picture been the portrait of any better king, Cromwell would not have parted with it.

The witty bulky Quin lived here from 1749 to 1752. It was in 1749 that this great tragedian, reappearing after a retirement, performed in his friend Thomson’s posthumous play of “Coriolanus.” Good-natured Quin had once rescued the fat lazy poet from a sponging-house. It was about this time that the great elocutionist was instructing Prince George in recitation. When, afterwards, as king, he delivered his first speech successfully in Parliament, the actor exclaimed triumphantly, “Sir, it was I taught the boy.”

On the west side, at No. 15, lived Chief “Justice” Richardson, the humourist. He died in 1635. The interior of the house is ancient. Sir Francis Kynaston, an esquire of the body to Charles I., and author of *Leoline and Sydanis*, lived in this street in 1637. He died in 1642. The Earl of Chesterfield, one of Grammont’s gay and heartless gallants, lived in Bedford Street in 1656. In the same street, in his old age, at the house of his son, a rich silk-mercer, dwelt Kynaston, the great actor of Charles II.’s time, so well known for his female characters. Thomas Sheridan, the lecturer on elocution, the son of Swift’s friend, and the father of the wit and orator, lived in Bedford Street, facing Henrietta Street and the south side of Covent Garden. Here Dr. Johnson often visited him. “One day,” says Mr. Whyte, “we were standing together at the drawing-room window expecting Johnson, who was to dine with us.[348] Mr. Sheridan asked me could I see the length of the garden. ‘No, sir.’ ‘Take out [Pg 188] your opera-glass then: Johnson is coming, you may know him by his gait.’ I perceived him at a good distance, walking along with a peculiar solemnity of deportment, and an awkward, measured sort of step. At that time the broad flagging at each side of the streets was not universally adopted, and stone posts were in fashion to prevent the annoyance of carriages. Upon every post, as he passed along, I could observe he deliberately laid his hand; but missing one of them, when he had got to some distance he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and immediately returning back, carefully performed the accustomed ceremony,

and resumed his former course, not omitting one, till he gained the crossing. This, Mr. Sheridan assured me, however odd it might appear, was his constant practice, but why or wherefore he could not inform me.” This eccentric habit of Johnson, the result of hypochondriacal nervousness, is also mentioned by Boswell. [Pg 189]

EXETER CHANGE, 1821.

Richard Wilson, the great landscape-painter—“Red-nosed Dick,” as he was familiarly called—was a great ally of Mortimer, “the English Salvator.” They used to meet over a pot of porter at the Constitution, Bedford Street. Mortimer, who was a coarse joker, used to make Dr. Arne, the composer of “Rule Britannia,” who had a red face and staring eyes, very angry by telling him that his eyes looked like two oysters just opened for sauce, and put on an oval side dish of beetroot.

Close to the Lowther Arcade there is one of those large cafés that are becoming features in modern London. It was started by an Italian named Carlo Gatti. There you may see refugees of all countries, playing at dominoes, sipping coffee, or groaning over the wrongs of their native land and their own exile. No music is allowed in this large hall, because it might interfere with the week-day services at St. Martin’s Church.

[Pg 190]

TITUS OATES IN THE PILLORY.

CHAPTER IX.

CHARING CROSS.

On July 20, 1864, was laid the first stone of the great Thames Embankment, which now forms the wall of our river from Blackfriars to Westminster. A couple of flags fluttered lazily over the stone as a straggling procession of the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works moved down to the wooden causeway leading to the river. For two years about a [Pg 191] thousand men were at work on it night and day. Iron caissons were sunk below the mud, deep in the gravel, and within ten feet of the clay which is the real foundation of London, and the Victoria Embankment rose gradually into being. It was opened by Royalty in the summer of 1870. This scheme, originally sketched out by Wren, was designed by Colonel Trench, M.P., and also by Martin the painter; but it was never carried out until the days of Lord Palmerston and the Metropolitan Board of Works. Its piers, its flights of steps, its broad highway covering a railway, its gardens, its terraces, are complete; and when the buildings along it are finished London may for the first time claim to compare itself in architectural grandeur with Nineveh, Rome, or modern Paris.

Northumberland House, which faced Charing Cross, covering the site of Northumberland Avenue, was a good but dull specimen of Jacobean architecture; it was built by Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, son of the poet Earl of Surrey, about 1605.[349] Walpole attributes the building to Bernard Jansen, a Fleming, and an imitator of Dieterling, and to Gerard Christmas, the designer of Aldersgate. Jansen probably built the house, which was of brick, and Christmas added the stone frontispiece, which was profusely ornamented with rich carved scrolls, and an open parapet worked into letters and other devices. John Thorpe is also supposed to have been associated in the work; and plans of both the quadrangles of this enormous palace are preserved among the *Soane MSS.*[350] Jansen was the architect of Audley End, in Essex, one of the wonders of the age. Thorpe built Burghley. The front was originally 162 feet long, the court 82 feet square; as Inigo Jones has noted in a copy of *Palladio* preserved at Worcester College, Oxford.

The Earl of Northampton left the house by his will, in 1614, to his nephew, Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, who died in 1626. This was the father of the memorable Frances, Countess [Pg 192] of Essex and Somerset; and from him the house took the name of Suffolk House, till the marriage in 1642 of Elizabeth, daughter of Theophilus, second Earl of Suffolk, with Algernon Percy, tenth Earl of Northumberland, when it changed its name accordingly.

Dorothy, sister of the rash and ungrateful Earl of Essex, whose violence and follies nothing less than the executioner’s axe could cure, married the “wizard” Earl of Northumberland, as he was called, whom “she led the life of a dog, till he indignantly turned her out of doors.” He was afterwards engaged in the Gunpowder Plot, being angry with the Government that had overlooked him. “His name was used and his money spent by the conspirators; one of

his servants hired the vault, and procured the lease of Vineyard House. Thomas Percy, his kinsman and steward, supped with him on the very night of the plot. His servant, Sir Dudley Carleton, who hired the house, was thrust into the Tower, and the earl joined him there not long after; but Cecil was either unable or unwilling to touch his life."[351] Northumberland, with Cobham and Raleigh, had before this engaged in schemes with the French against the Government. Thomas Percy had been beheaded for plotting with Mary. Henry Percy had shot himself while in the Tower, on account of the Throckmorton Conspiracy. Compounding for a fine of £11,000, the earl devoted himself in the Tower to scientific and literary pursuits, and gave annuities to six or seven eminent mathematicians, who ate at his table. In 1611 he was again examined, and finally released in 1617. The king's favourite, Hay, afterwards Earl of Carlisle, had married the earl's daughter Lucy against his will, which so irritated him that he was with difficulty persuaded to accept his own release, because it was obtained through the intercession of Hay.

Joceline Percy, son of Algernon, dying in 1670, without issue male, Northumberland House became the property of his only daughter Elizabeth Percy, the heiress of the Percy estates. Her first husband was Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle; her second, Thomas Thynne, of [Pg 193] Longleat, in Wilts, who was shot in his coach in Pall Mall, on Sunday, February 12, 1681-2; her third husband was Charles Seymour, the *proud* Duke of Somerset, who married her in 1682. This lady was twice a widow and three times a wife before the age of seventeen.

The "proud" duke and duchess lived in great state and magnificence at Northumberland House. The duchess died in 1722, and the duke followed in 1748. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Algernon, Earl of Hertford, and the seventh Duke of Somerset, who was created Earl of Northumberland in 1749, with remainder, failing issue male, to his son-in-law, Sir Hugh Smithson, who in 1766 was raised to the dukedom. The lion which country cousins for two centuries remember to have crowned the central gateway of the duke's house, represented the Percy crest. It is of this stiff-tailed animal, for the exact angle of the tail is treated by heralds as a matter of the most vital importance, that the old story imputed to Sheridan is told. Probably some audacious wit did once collect a London crowd by declaring that its tail wagged—but certainly it was not Sheridan.

Tom Thynne, or, as he was called, "Tom of Ten Thousand," was shot at the east end of Pall Mall, opposite the Opera Arcade, by Borosky, a Polish soldier urged on by Count Königsmark, a Swedish adventurer, son of one of Gustavus's old generals, and who was enraged with Thynne for having just married the youthful widow of the Earl of Ogle, Lady Elizabeth Percy. Thynne was a favourite of the Duke of Monmouth. Shaftesbury had been lately released from the Tower, in spite of Dryden's onslaught on him as "Achitophel," on the foolish duke as "Absalom," and on Thynne as "Issachar," his wealthy western friend. The three murderers were hanged in Pall Mall, but their master strangely escaped, partly owing to the influence of Charles II. The count, who had shown great courage at Tangier against the Moors, and had boarded a Turkish galley at his eminent peril, died in 1686, at the battle of Argos in the Morea. His younger brother was assassinated at Hanover, on suspicion of an [Pg 194] intrigue with Sophia of Zell, the young and beautiful wife of the Elector, afterwards George I. of England.[352]

The Earl of Northampton, Surrey's son, who built Northumberland House (as Osborne, who loved scandal, says with Spanish gold), seems to have been an unscrupulous time-server, flatterer, and parasite. In 1596 he wrote to Burleigh, and spoke of his reverend awe at his lordship's "piercing judgment;" yet a year after he writes a plotting letter to Burleigh's great enemy, Essex, and says: "Your lordship by your last purchase hath almost enraged the dromedary that would have won the Queen of Sheba's favour by bringing pearls. If you could once be so fortunate in dragging old Leviathan (Burghley) and his rich tortuosum colubrum (Sir Robert Cecil), as the prophet termeth them, out of their den of mischievous device, the better part of the world would prefer your virtue to that of Hercules." The earl became a toady and creature of the infamous Carr, Earl of Somerset, and is thought to have died just in time to escape prosecution for the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower.[353]

It was shortly before Suffolk House changed its name that it became the scene of one of Lord Herbert of Cherbury's mad Quixotic quarrels. His chivalrous lordship had had sundry ague fits, which had made him so lean and yellow that scarce any man could recognise him. Walking towards Whitehall he one day met a Mr. Emerson, who had spoken very disgraceful words of Lord Herbert's friend, Sir Robert Harley. Lord Herbert therefore, sensible of the dishonour, took Emerson by his long beard, and then, stepping aside, drew his sword; Captain Thomas Scriven being with Lord Herbert, and divers friends with Mr. Emerson. All who saw the quarrel wondered at the Welsh nobleman, weak and "consumed" as he was, offering to fight; however, Emerson ran and took shelter in Suffolk House, and afterwards complained to the Lords in Council, who sent for Lord Herbert, the lean, yellow Welsh [Pg 195] Quixote, but did not so much reprehend him for defending the honour of his friend as for adventuring to fight, being at the same time in such weak health.[354]

Algernon, the tenth Earl of Northumberland, is called by Clarendon "the proudest man alive." He had been Lord High Admiral to King Charles I., and was appointed general against the Scotch Covenanters, but, being unable to take the command from ill health, gave up his commission. He gradually fell away from the king's cause, but nevertheless refused to continue High Admiral against the king's wish. He treated the Dukes of York and Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth with "such consideration" that they were removed from his care,

and from that time he turned Royalist again.

Sir John Suckling refers to Suffolk House in his exquisite little poem on the wedding of Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill, with Lady Margaret Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk. The well known poem begins—

> "At Charing-cross, hard by the way
> Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
> There is a house with stairs."

And then the gay and graceful poet goes on to sketch Lady Margaret—

> "Her lips were red, and one was thin,
> Compared with that was next her chin.
> Some bee had stung it newly."

And then follows that delightful, fantastic simile, comparing her feet to little mice creeping in and out her petticoat.[355] Sir John was born in 1609.

The oldest part of Northumberland House was the Strand entrance. This was crowned, as stated above, by a frieze or balustrade of large stone letters, probably including the name and titles of the earl and the glorified name of the architect. At the funeral of Anne of Denmark, 1619, a young man, named Appleyard, was killed by the fall of the letter S[356] [Pg 196] from the house, which was then occupied by the Earl of Strafford, Lord Treasurer. The house was originally only three sides of a quadrangle, the river side remaining open to the gardens; but traffic and noise increasing, the quadrangle was completed along the river side and the principal apartments. There is a drawing by Hollar of the house in his time, and another, a century later, by Canaletti. The new front towards the gardens was spoiled by a clumsy stone staircase, which was attributed to Inigo Jones, but probably incorrectly.

The date, 1746, on the façade referred to the repairs made in that year, and the letters "A. S. P. N." stood for Algernon Somerset, Princeps Northumbriæ. The lion over the gateway was said to be a copy of one by Michael Angelo; it is now at Sion House, Isleworth. The gateway was covered with ornaments and trophies. Double ranges of grotesque pilasters enclosed eight niches on the sides, and there was a bow window and an open arch above the chief gate. Between each of the fourteen niches in the front there were trophies of crossed weapons, and the upper stories had twenty-four windows, in two ranges, and pierced battlements. Each wing terminated in a little cupola, and the angles had rustic quoins. The quadrangle within the gate was simpler and in better taste, and the house was screened from the river by elm trees.[357]

There used to be a schoolboy tradition, prevalent at King's College in the author's time, that one of the niches in the front of Northumberland House was of copper and movable. So far the story was true; but the tradition went on to relate how, once upon a time, a certain enemy of the house of Percy obtained secret admission by this niche and murdered one of the dukes, his enemy. History is, however, fortunately, quite silent on this subject.

In February 1762 Horace Walpole and a party of quality set out from Northumberland House to hear the ghost in Cock Lane that Dr. Johnson exposed, and that Hogarth and Churchill ridiculed with pen and pencil. The Duke of York, Lady Northumberland, Lady Mary [Pg 197] Coke, and Lord Hertford, all returned from the Opera with Horace Walpole, then changed their dress, and set out in a hackney coach. It rained hard, and the lane and house were "full of mob." The room of the haunted house, small and miserable, was stuffed with eighty persons, and there was no light but one tallow candle. As clothes-lines hung from the ceiling, Walpole asked drily if there was going to be rope-dancing between the acts. They said the ghost would not come till 7 A.M., when only 'prentices and old women remained. The party stayed till half-past one. The Methodists had promised contributions, provisions were sent in like forage, and the neighbouring taverns and ale-houses were making their fortunes.[358]

On May 14, 1770, poor Chatterton, who suffered so terribly for the deceptions of his ambitious boyhood, writes from the King's Bench (for the present) that a gentleman who knew him at the Chapter coffee-house, in Paternoster Row—frequented by authors and publishers—would have introduced him to the young Duke of Northumberland as a companion in his intended general tour, "but, alas! I spake no tongue but my own."[359] But this is taken from a most questionable work, full of fictions and forgeries. Its author was a Bristol man, who afterwards fled to America. He also wrote a series of Conversations with the poets of the Lake school, many of which are too obviously imaginary.

On March 18, 1780, the Strand front of Northumberland House was totally destroyed by fire. The apartments of Dr. Percy, the Duke's kinsman and chaplain, afterwards Bishop of Dromore and editor of the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* were consumed; but great part of his library escaped.

Goldsmith's simple-hearted ballad of *Edwin and Angelina* was originally "printed for the amusement of the Countess of Northumberland." Two years after, Kenrick accused him in the papers of plagiarising it from Percy's pasticcio from Shakspere in the *Reliques*, which [Pg 198] was probably written in 1765.[360]

It is probable that Goldsmith often visited Percy, when acting as chaplain at

Northumberland House. Sir John Hawkins, indeed, describes meeting the poet waiting for an audience in an outer room. At his own audience Hawkins mentioned that the doctor was waiting. On their way home together, Goldsmith told Hawkins that his lordship said that he had read the *Traveller* with delight, that he was going as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, and should be glad, as Goldsmith was an Irishman, to do him any kindness. Hawkins was enraptured at the rich man's graciousness. But Goldsmith had mentioned only his brother, a clergyman there, who needed help. "As for myself," he added, bitterly, "I have no dependence on the promises of great men. I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others." "Thus," says Hawkins, "did this idiot in the affairs of the world trifle with his fortunes and put back the hand that was held out to assist him." The earl told Percy, after Goldsmith's death, that had he known how to help the poet he would have done so, or he would have procured him a salary on the Irish establishment that would have allowed him to travel. Let men of the world remember that the poet a few days before had been forced to borrow 15s. 6d. to meet his own wants.

This conversation took place in 1765. In 1771, when Goldsmith was stopping at Bath with his good-natured friend Lord Clare, he blundered by mistake at breakfast time into the next door on the same Parade, where the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland were staying. As he took no notice of them, but threw himself carelessly on a sofa, they supposed there was some mistake, and therefore entered into conversation with him, and when breakfast was served up, invited him to stay and partake of it. The poet, hot, stammering, and irrecoverably confused, withdrew with profuse apologies for his mistake, but not till he had accepted an invitation to dinner. This story, a parallel to the laughable blunder in *She Stoops to Conquer*, was told by the duchess herself to Dr. Percy. [Pg 199]

It was probably of the first of these interviews that Goldsmith used to give the following account:—

"I dressed myself in the best manner I could, and, after studying some compliments I thought necessary on such an occasion, proceeded to Northumberland House, and acquainted the servants that I had particular business with the duke. They showed me into an ante-chamber, where, after waiting some time, a gentleman, very elegantly dressed, made his appearance. Taking him for the duke, I delivered all the fine things I had composed, in order to compliment him on the honour he had done me; when to my fear and astonishment, he told me I had mistaken him for his master, who would see me immediately. At that instant the duke came into the apartment, and I was so confounded on the occasion that I wanted words barely sufficient to express the sense I entertained of the duke's politeness, and went away exceedingly chagrined at the blunder I had committed."[361]

Dr. Waagen, the picture critic, seems to have been rather dazzled at the splendour of Northumberland House. He praises the magnificent staircase, lighted from above and reaching up through three stories, the white marble floors, the balustrades and chandeliers of gilt bronze, the cabinets of Florentine mosaic, and the arabesques of the drawing-room. [362] The great picture of the duke's collection was the Cornaro family, by Titian; I believe from the Duke of Buckingham's collection. It is a splendid specimen of the painter's middle period and golden tone. The faces of the kneeling Cornari are grand, simple, senatorial, and devout. There was also a Saint Sebastian, by Guercino, "clear and careful," and large as life; a fine Snyders and Vandyke; many copies by Mengs (particularly "The School of Athens"); and a good Schalcken, with his usual candlelight effect. The gem of all the English pictures was one by Dobson, Vandyke's noble pupil. It contained the portrait of the painter and those of Sir Balthasar Gerbier, the architect, and Sir Charles Cotterell. The colour is as rich and juicy as Titian's, the drapery learned and graceful, the faces are full of fire and spirit. Dobson died at the age of thirty-six. Sir Charles was his patron.[363] Vandyke is said to have disinterred Dobson from a garret, and recommended him to the king. Gerbier was a native of Antwerp, a painter, architect, and ambassador. This picture of Dobson was bought at Betterton's sale for £44.[364] The gallery of the Duke of Northumberland was removed in 1875, when the house was demolished, to Sion House. [Pg 200]

Northumberland House was connected with, at all events, one period of English history. In the year 1660, when General Monk was in quarters at Whitehall, the Earl of Northumberland, in the name of the nobility and gentry of England, invited him here to the first conference in which the restoration of the Stuarts was publicly talked of. Algernon Percy, the tenth earl, had been Lord High Admiral under Charles I.

That staunch, brave, crotchety man, Sir Harry Vane the younger (the son of Lord Strafford's enemy), lived next door to Northumberland House, eastwards, in the Strand. The house in Charles II.'s time became the official residence of the Secretary of State, and Mr. Secretary Nicholas dwelt there, when meetings were held to found a commonwealth and put down that foolish, good-natured, incompetent Richard Cromwell. To the great Protector, Vane was a thorn in the flesh, for he wanted a republic when the nation required a stronger and more compact government. Oliver's exclamation, "Oh, Sir Harry Vane! Sir Harry Vane!—The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" expresses infinite vexation with an impracticable person. Vane was a "Fifth-monarchy man," and believed in universal salvation. He must have been a good man, or Milton would never have addressed the sonnet to him in which he says—

"Therefore, on thy firm hand Religion leans [Pg 201]
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son."

Sir Harry left behind him some very tough and dark treatises on prophecy, and other profound matters that few but angels or fools dare to meddle with.

There is a foolish tradition that Charing Cross was so named originally by Edward I. in memory of his *chère reine*. Peele, one of the glorious band of Elizabethan dramatists, helped to spread this tradition. He makes King Edward say—

> "Erect a rich and stately carved cross,
> Whereon her statue shall with glory shine;
> And henceforth see you call it Charing Cross.
> For why?—the *chariest* and the choicest queen
> That ever did delight my royal eyes
> There dwells in darkness."[365]

The inconsolable widower, however, in spite of his costly grief, soon married again.

The truth is, there are in England one or two Charings; one of them is a village thirteen miles from Maidstone. "*Ing*" means meadow in Saxon.[366] The meaning of "*Char*" is uncertain; it may be the contraction of the name of some long-forgotten landowner, "rich in the possession of dirt."[367] The Anglo-Saxon word *cerre*—a turn (says Mr. Robert Ferguson, an excellent authority), is retained in the name given in Carlisle and other northern towns to the chares, or *wynds*—small streets. In King Edward's time Charing was bounded by fields, both north and west. There has been a good deal of nonsense, however, written about "the pleasant village of Charing." In Aggas's map, published under Elizabeth, Hedge Lane (now Whitcombe Street) is a country lane bordered with fields; so is the Haymarket, and all behind the Mews up to St. Martin's Lane is equally rural.

Horne Tooke[368] derives the word Charing from the Saxon verb *charan*—to turn; but the etymology is still doubtful, however much the river may bend on its way to Westminster. However, doubtless, the place was named Charing as far back as the Saxon times. [Pg 202]

It was Peele also who kept alive the old tradition of Queen Eleanor sinking at Charing Cross and rising again at Queenhithe. When falsely accused of *her crimes*, his heroine replies in the words of a rude old ballad well known in Elizabeth's time—

> "If that upon so vile a thing
> Her heart did ever think,
> She wished the ground might open wide,
> And therein she might sink.
>
> With that at Charing Cross she sank
> Into the ground alive,
> And after rose with life again,
> In London at Queenhithe."[369]

The Eleanor crosses were erected at Lincoln, Geddington, Northampton, Stony Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Albans, Waltham, Cheap, and Charing. Three only now remain,—Northampton, Geddington, and Waltham. Charing Cross was probably the most costly; it was octagonal, and was adorned with statues in tiers of niches, which were crowned with pinnacles. It was begun by Master Richard de Crundale, "cementarius," but he died about 1293, before it was finished, and the work went on under the supervision of Roger de Crundale. Richard received about £500 for his work, exclusive of materials furnished him, and Roger £90: 7: 5. The stone was brought from Caen, and the marble steps from Corfe in Dorsetshire. Only one foreigner was employed on all the crosses, and he was a Frenchman. The Abbot Ware brought mosaics, porphyry, and perhaps designs from Italy, but there is no proof that he brought over Cavallini. A replica of the original cross, designed by Mr. Barry, has been erected at the west end of the Strand, opposite the Charing Cross Railway Station and Hotel.

The cluster of houses at Charing acquired the name of Cross from the monument set up by Edward I. to the memory of his gentle, pious, and brave wife Eleanor, the sister of Alphonso, King of Castille. This good woman was the daughter of Ferdinand III., and after the death of her mother, heiress of Ponthieu. She bore to her fond husband four sons and eleven daughters, of whom only three are supposed to have survived their father. [Pg 203]

Queen Eleanor died at Hardley, near Lincoln, in 1290. The king followed the funeral to Westminster, and afterwards erected a cross to his wife's memory at every place where the corpse rested for the night. In the circular which the king sent on the occasion to his prelates and nobles, he trusts that prayers may be offered for her soul at these crosses, so that any stains not purged from her, either from forgetfulness or other causes, may through the plenitude of the Divine grace be removed.[370] It was Queen Eleanor who, when Edward was stabbed at Acre, by an emissary of the Emir of Joppa, according to a Spanish historian, [371] sucked the poison from the wounds at the risk of her own life.

This warlike king, who subdued Wales and Scotland, who expelled the Jews from England, who hunted Bruce, hanged Wallace, and who finally died on his march to crush Scotland, had a deep affection for his wife, and strove by all that art could do to preserve her memory.

Old Charing Cross was long supposed to have been built from the designs of Pietro Cavallini,

a contemporary of Giotto. He is said to have assisted that painter in the great mosaic picture over the chief entrance of St. Peter's. But there is little ground for accepting the tradition as true, though asserted by Vertue, as we learn from Horace Walpole's 'Anecdotes.' Cavallini was born in 1279, and died in 1364. The monument to Henry III. at the Abbey, and the old paintings round the chapel of St. Edward are also attributed to this patriarch of art by Vertue.[372]

Queen Eleanor had three tombs—one in Lincoln Cathedral, over her viscera; another in the church of the Blackfriars in London, over her heart; a third in Westminster Abbey, over the rest of her body. The first was destroyed by the Parliamentarians; the second probably perished at the dissolution of the monasteries; the third has escaped. It is a valuable example of the thirteenth century beau-ideal. The tomb was the work of William Torel, a London goldsmith. The statue is not a portrait statue any more than the statue of Henry III. by the same artist. Torel seems to have received for his whole work about £1700 of our money.[373] [Pg 204]

The beautiful cross, with its pinnacles and statues, was demolished in 1647 under an order of the House of Commons, which had remained dormant for three years; and at the same time fell its brother cross in Cheapside.

The Royalist ballad-mongers, eager to catch the Puritans tripping, produced a lively street song on the occasion, beginning—

"Undone, undone the lawyers are,
They wander about the town,
Nor can find the way to Westminster,
Now Charing Cross is down.
At the end of the Strand they make a stand,
Swearing they are at a loss,
And chaffing say that's not the way,
They must go by Charing Cross."

The ballad-writer goes on to deny that the Cross ever spoke a word against the Parliament, though he confesses it might have inclined to Popery; for certain it was that it "never went to church."

The workmen were engaged for three months in pulling down the Cross.[374] Some of the stones went to form the pavement before Whitehall; others were polished to look like marble, and were sold to antiquaries for knife-handles. The site remained vacant for thirty-one years.

After the Restoration Charing Cross was turned into a place of execution. Here Hugh Peters, Cromwell's chaplain, and Major-General Harrison, the sturdy Anabaptist, Colonel Jones, and Colonel Scrope were executed. They all died bravely, without a doubt or a fear. [Pg 205]

Harrison was the son of a Staffordshire farmer, and had fought bravely at the siege of Basing; he had been major-general in Scotland; had helped Cromwell at the disbanding of the Rump; had served in the Council of State; and finally having expressed honest Anabaptist scruples about the Protectorate, had been imprisoned to prevent rebellion. Cromwell's son Oliver had been captain in Harrison's regiment.[375] As he was led to the scaffold some base scullion called out to the brave old Ironside, "Where is your good *old* cause now?" Harrison replied with a cheerful smile, clapping his hand on his breast, "Here it is, and I am going to seal it with my blood." When he came in sight of the gallows he was transported with joy; his servant asked him how he did? He answered, "Never better in my life." His servant told him, "Sir, there is a crown of glory prepared for you."[376] "Yes," replied he, "I see." When he was taken off the sledge, the hangman desired him to forgive him. "I do forgive thee," said he, "with all my heart, as it is a sin against me," and told him he wished him all happiness; and further said, "Alas, poor man, thou dost it ignorantly; the Lord grant that this sin may not be laid to thy charge!" and putting his hand into his pocket he gave him all the money he had; and so parting with his servant, hugging him in his arms, he went up the ladder with an undaunted countenance. The cruel rabble observing him tremble in his hands and legs, he took notice of it, and said, "Gentlemen, by reason of some scoffing that I do hear, I judge that some do think I am afraid to die by the shaking I have in my hands and knees. I tell you *No*; but it is by reason of much blood I have lost in the wars, and many wounds I have received in my body, which caused this shaking and weakness in my nerves. I have had it this twelve years. I speak this to the praise and glory of God. He hath carried me above the fear of death, and I value not my life, because I go to my Father, and I am assured I shall take it again. Gentlemen, take notice, that for being an instrument in that cause (an instrument of the Son of God) which hath been pleaded amongst us, and which God hath witnessed to by many appeals and wonderful victories, I am brought to this place to suffer death this day, and if I had ten thousand lives I could freely and cheerfully lay them down all to witness to this matter." [Pg 206]

Then he prayed to himself with tears, and having ended, the hangman pulled down his cap, but he thrust it up and said, "I have one word more to the Lord's people. Let them not think hardly of any of the good ways of God for all this, for I have found the way of God to be a perfect way, and He hath covered my head many times in the day of battle. By my God I have leaped over a wall, by my God I have run through a troop, and by my God I will go

through this death, and He will make it easy to me. Now, into thy hands, O Lord Jesus, I commit my spirit."

After he was hanged they cut down this true martyr, and stripping him, slashed him open in order to disembowel him. In the last rigour of his agony this staunch soldier is said to have risen up and struck the executioner.

Three days after, Carew and Cook were hanged at the same place, rejoicing and praying cheerfully to the last. As Cook parted from his wife he said to her, "I am going to be married in glory this day. Why weepest thou?—let them weep who part and shall never meet again."

On the 17th, Thomas Scot perished at the same place. His last words were—"God engaged me in a cause not to be repented of—I say, in a cause not to be repented of."

Jones and Scrope (both old men) were drawn in one sledge. Their grave yet cheerful and courageous countenances caused great admiration and compassion among the crowd. Observing one of his friend's children weeping at Newgate, Colonel Jones took her by the hand. He said, "Suppose your father were to-morrow to be King of France, and you were to tarry a little behind, would you weep so? Why, he is going to reign with the King of kings." [Pg 207] When he saw the sledge, he said, "It is like Elijah's fiery chariot, only it goes through Fleet Street." The night before he suffered, he told a friend the only temptation he had was lest he should be too much transported, and so neglect and slight his life, so greatly was he satisfied to die in such a cause. Another friend he grasped in his arms and said, "Farewell! I could wish thee in the same condition as myself, that our souls might mount up to heaven together and share in eternal joys." To another friend he said, "Ah, dear heart! if we had perished together in that storm going to Ireland, we had been in heaven to welcome honest Harrison and Carew; but we will be content to go after them—we will go after." It is added that "the executioner, having done his part upon three others that day, was so surfeited with blood and sick, that he sent his boy to finish the tragedy on Colonel Jones."

Hugh Peters was much afraid while in Newgate lest his spirits should fail him when he saw the gibbet and the fire, but his courage did not fail him in that hour of great need. On his way to execution he looked about and espied a man to whom he gave a piece of gold, having bowed it first, and desired him to carry that as a token to his daughter, and to let her know that her father's heart was as full of comfort as it could be, and that before the piece should come into her hands he should be with God in glory.

While Cook was being hanged they made Peters sit within the rails to behold his death. While sitting thus, one came to him and upbraided the old preacher with the king's death, and bade him repent. Peters replied, "Friend, you do not well to trample upon a dying man: you are greatly mistaken—I had nothing to do in the death of the king."

When Mr. Cook was cut down and about to be quartered, Colonel Turner told the sheriff's men to bring Mr. Peters nearer to see the body. By and by the hangman came to him, rubbing his bloody hands, and tauntingly asked him, "Come, how do you like this—how do you like this work?" To whom Mr. Peters calmly replied, "I am not, I thank God, terrified at it—you may do your worst." [Pg 208]

Being upon the ladder, he spoke to the sheriff and said, "Sir, you have here slain one of the servants of God before mine eyes, and have made me to behold it on purpose to terrify and discourage me, but God hath made it an ordinance to me for my strengthening and encouragement."

When he was going to die, he said, "What, flesh! art thou unwilling to go to God through the fire and jaws of death? Oh! this is a good day. He is come that I have long looked for, and I shall soon be with Him in glory." And he smiled when he went away. "What Mr. Peters said further it could not be taken, in regard his voice was low at the time and the people uncivil."

In May 1685 that consummate scoundrel Titus Oates came to the pillory at Charing Cross. He had been condemned to pay a thousand marks fine, to be stripped of his gown, to be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn, from Aldgate to Newgate, and to stand in the pillory at the Royal Exchange and before Westminster Hall. He was also condemned to stand one hour in the pillory at Charing Cross every 10th of August, and there an eye-witness describes seeing him in 1688.[377]

In 1666 and 1667 an Italian puppet-player set up his booth at Charing Cross, and there and then probably introduced "Punch and Judy" into England. He paid a small rent to the overseers of St. Martin's parish, and is called in their books "Punchinello." In 1668 we learn that a Mr. Devone erected a small playhouse in the same place.[378]

There is still extant a song written to ridicule the long delay in setting up the king's statue, and it contains an allusion to "Punch"—

> "What can the mistry be, why Charing Cross
> These five months continues still blinded with board?
> Dear Wheeler, impart—wee are all att a loss,
> Unless Punchinello is to be restored."[379]

The royal statue at Charing Cross is the work of Hubert Le Sœur, a Frenchman and a pupil of the famous John of Bologna, the sculptor of the "Rape of the Sabines" in the Loggia at [Pg 209]

Florence. Le Sœur's copy of the "Fighting Gladiator," which is praised by Peacham in his "Compleat Gentleman," once at the head of the canal in St. James's Park, is now at Hampton Court. Le Sœur also executed the monuments of Sir George Villiers, and Sir Thomas Richardson the judge, in Westminster Abbey.

The original contract for the brazen equestrian statue, a foot larger than life, is dated 1630. The sculptor was to receive £600. The agreement was drawn up by Sir Balthasar Gerbier for the purchaser, the Lord High Treasurer Weston. Yet the existing statue was not cast till 1633, and the above-mentioned agreement speaks of it as to be erected in the Lord Treasurer's garden at Roehampton; so that the agreement may not refer to the same work, although it certainly specifies that the sculptor shall "take advice of his Maj. riders of greate horses, as well for the shape of the horse and action as for the graceful shape and action of his Maj. figure on the same."[380]

The present statue was cast in 1633, on a piece of ground near the church in Covent Garden, and not being actually erected when the Civil War broke out, it was sold by the Parliament to John Rivet, a brazier, living at "the Dial, near Holburn Conduit," with strict orders to break it up. But the man, being a shrewd Royalist, produced some fragments of old brass, and hid the statue underground till the Restoration. Rivet refusing to deliver up the statue after Charles's return, a replevin was served upon him to compel its surrender. The dispute, however, lasted many years, and he probably pleaded compensation. The statue was erected in its present position about 1674, by an order from the Earl of Danby, afterwards Duke of Leeds. Le Sœur died, it is supposed, before the statue was erected.

Horace Walpole, who praises the "commanding grace of the figure," and the "exquisite form of the horse,"[381] incorrectly says, "The statue was made at the expense of the family of Howard, Lord Arundel, who have still the receipt to show by whom and for whom it was cast." [Pg 210]

There is still extant a very rare large sheet print of the statue, engraved in the manner and time of Faithorne, but without name or date. The inscription beneath it describes the statue as almost ten feet high, and as "preserved underground," with great hazard, charge, and care, by John Rivet, a brazier.[382]

John Rivet may have been a patriot, but he was certainly a shrewd one. To secure his concealed treasure he had manufactured a large quantity of brass handles for knives and forks, and advertised them as being forged from the destroyed statue. They sold well; the Royalists bought them as sad and precious relics; the Puritans as mementos of their triumph. He doubled his prices, and still his shop was crowded with eager customers, so that in a short time he realised a considerable fortune.[383]

The brazier, or the brazier's family, probably sold the statue to Charles II. at his restoration. The Parliament voted £70,000 for solemnising the funeral of Charles I., and for erecting a monument to his memory.[384] Part of this sum went for the pedestal, but whether the brazier or his kin were rewarded is not known. Charles II. probably spent most of the money on his pleasures.

There is a fatality attending the verses of most time-serving poets. Waller never wrote a court poem well but when he lauded that great man, the Protector. When the statue of "the Martyr" was set up, *fourteen years* after the Restoration—so tardy was filial affection—Waller wrote the following dull and unworthy lines about the statue of a faithless king:—

"That the first Charles does here in triumph ride, [Pg 211]
See his son reign where he a martyr died,
And people pay that reverence as they pass
(Which then he wanted) to the sacred brass
Is not th' effect of gratitude alone,
To which we owe the statue and the stone;
But Heaven this lasting monument has wrought,
That mortals may eternally be taught
Rebellion, though successful, is but vain,
And kings so kill'd rise conquerors again.
This truth the royal image does proclaim
Loud as the trumpet of surviving fame."

Andrew Marvell, one of the most powerful of lampoon writers, and the very Gillray of political satirists, wrote some bitter lines on the statue of the so-called Martyr at Charing Cross, lines which in an earlier reign would have cost the honest daring poet his ears, if not his head.

There was an equestrian stone statue of Charles II. at Woolchurch (Woolwich?), and the poet imagines the two horses, the one of stone and the other of brass, talking together one evening, when the two riders, weary of sitting all day, had stolen away together for a chat.

"Woolchurch.—To see Dei gratia writ on the throne,
And the king's wicked life says God there is none.

Charing.—That he should be styled Defender of the Faith
Who believes not a word what the Word of God saith.

WOOLCHURCH.—That the Duke should turn Papist and that church defy
For which his own father a martyr did die.

CHARING.—Tho' he changed his religion, I hope he's so civil
Not to think his own father has gone to the devil."

Upon the brazen horse being asked his opinion of the Duke of York, it replies with terrible truth and force:—

"The same that the frogs had of Jupiter's stork.
With the Turk in his head and the Pope in his heart,
Father Patrick's disciple will make England smart.
If e'er he be king, I know Britain's doom:
We must all to the stake or be converts to Rome.
Ah! Tudor! ah! Tudor! of Stuarts enough. [Pg 212]
None ever reigned like old Bess in her ruff.
* * * * * *
WOOLCHURCH.—But can'st thou devise when kings will be mended?

CHARING.—When the reign of the line of the Stuarts is ended."

In April 1810 the sword, buckles, and straps fell from the statue.[385] The king's sword was stolen on the day on which Queen Victoria went to open the Royal Exchange.

London has its local traditions as well as the smallest village. There is a foolish story that the sculptor of Charles I. and his steed committed suicide in vexation at having forgotten to put a girth to the horse. The myth has arisen from the supposition of there being no girth, and retailers of such stories, Mr. Leigh Hunt included, did not take the trouble to ascertain whether there was or was not a girth. Unfortunately for the story there is a girth, and it is clearly visible.

The pedestal, by some assigned to Marshal, by others to Grinling Gibbons, the great wood-carver, and a Dutchman by birth, is seventeen feet high, and is enriched with the arms of England, trophies of armour, cupids, and palm-branches. It is erected in the centre of a circular area, thirty feet in diameter, raised one step from the roadway, and enclosed with iron rails. The lion and unicorn are much mutilated, and the trophies are honeycombed and corroded by the weather. It has not been generally observed that on the south side of the pedestal two weeping children support a crown of thorns, and that the same emblem is repeated on the opposite side, below the royal arms.

In 1727 (1st George II.) that infamous rogue, Edmund Curll, the publisher of all the filth and slander of his age, stood in the pillory at Charing Cross for printing a vile work called *Venus in a Cloyster*. He was not, however, pelted or ill-used; for, with the usual lying and cunning of his reptile nature, he had circulated printed papers telling the people that he stood there for daring to vindicate the memory of Queen Anne. The mob allowed no one to touch him; [Pg 213] and when he was taken down they carried him off in triumph to a neighbouring tavern.[386]

Archenholz, an observant Prussian officer who was in England in 1784, tells a curious anecdote of the statue at Charing Cross. During the war in which General Braddock was defeated by the French in America, about the time when Minorca was in the enemy's hands, and poor Byng had just fallen a victim to popular fury, an unhappy Spaniard, who did not know a word of English, and had just arrived in England, was surrounded by a mob near Whitehall, who took him by his dress for a French spy. One of the rabble instantly proposed to mount him on the king's horse. The idea was adopted. A ladder was brought, and the miserable Spaniard was forced upon its back, to be loaded with insults and pelted with mud. Luckily for the stranger, at that moment a cabinet minister happening to pass by, stopped to inquire the cause of the crowd. On addressing the man in French he discovered the mistake, and informed the mob. They instantly helped the man down, and the minister, taking him in his coach to the Spanish ambassador, apologised in the name of the nation for a mistake that might have been fatal.[387]

In June 1731 Japhet Crook, *alias* Sir Peter Stranger, who had been found guilty of forging the writings to an estate, was sentenced to imprisonment for life.[388] He was condemned to stand for one hour in the pillory at Charing Cross. He was then seated in an elbow-chair; the common hangman cut off both his ears with an incision knife, and then delivered them to Mr. Watson, a sheriff's officer. He also slit both Crook's nostrils with a pair of scissors, and seared them with a hot iron, pursuant to the sentence. A surgeon attended on the pillory and instantly applied styptics to prevent the effusion of blood. The man bore the operations with undaunted courage. He laughed on the pillory, and denied the fact to the last. He was then removed to the Ship Tavern at Charing Cross, and thence taken back to the King's Bench [Pg 214] prison, to be confined there for life.[389]

This Crook had forged the conveyance, to himself, of an estate, upon which he took up several thousand pounds. He was at the same time sued in Chancery for having fraudulently obtained a will and wrongfully gained an estate. In spite of losing his ears, he enjoyed the ill-gained money in prison till the day of his death, and then quietly left it to his executor. He is mentioned by Pope in his 3d epistle, written in 1732. Talking of riches, he says—

"What can they give?—to dying Hopkins heirs?
To Chartres vigour? Japhet nose and ears?"[390]

It was in this essay that, having been accused of attacking the Duke of Chandos, Pope first began to attack vices instead of follies, and, in order to prevent mistakes, boldly to publish the names of the malefactors whom he gibbeted.

Crook had been a brewer on Tower Hill. The 2d George II., c. 25, made forgery a felony; and the first sufferer under the new law was Richard Cooper, a Stepney victualler, who was hanged at Tyburn, in June 1731, six days only after the older and luckier thief had stood in the pillory.

In 1763 Parsons, the parish-clerk of St. Sepulchre's, and the impudent contriver of the "Cock Lane ghost" deception, mounted here to the same bad eminence. Parsons's child, a cunning little girl of twelve years, had contrived to tap on her bed in a way that served to convey what were supposed to be supernatural messages. It proved to be a plot devised by Parsons out of malice against a gentleman of Norfolk who had sued him for a debt. This gentleman was a widower, who had taken his wife's sister as his mistress—a marriage with her being forbidden by law—and had brought her to lodge with Parsons, from whence he had removed her to other lodgings, where she had died suddenly of small-pox. The object of Parsons was to obtain the ghost's declaration that she had been poisoned by Parsons's creditor. The rascal was set three times in the pillory and imprisoned for a year in the King's Bench. The people, however, singularly enough, did not pelt the impudent rogue, but actually collected money for him. [Pg 215]

There is a rare sheet-print of Charing Cross by Sutton Nicholls, in the reign of Queen Anne. It shows about forty small square stone posts surrounding the pedestal of the statue. The spot seems to have been a favourite standing-place for hackney coaches and sedan chairs. Every house has a long stepping-stone for horsemen at a regulated distance from the front.

In 1737 Hogarth published his four prints of the "Times of the Day."[391] The scene of *Night* is laid at Charing Cross; it is an illumination-night. Some drunken Freemasons and the Salisbury "High-flyer" coach upset over a street bonfire near the Rummer Tavern, fill up the picture, which is curious as showing the roadway much narrower than it is now, and impeded with projecting signs above and bulkheads below.

The place is still further immortalised in the old song—

"I cry my matches by Charing Cross,
Where sits a black man on a black horse."

In a sixpenny book for children, published about 1756, the absurd figure of King George impaled on the top of Bloomsbury Church is contrasted with that of King Charles at the Cross.

"No longer stand staring,
My friend, at Cross Charing,
Amidst such a number of people;
For a man on a horse
Is a matter of course,
But look! here's a king on a steeple."[392]

It was at Robinson's coffee-house, at Charing Cross, that that clever scamp, vigorous versifier, and, as I think, great impostor, Richard Savage, stabbed to death a Mr. Sinclair in a drunken brawl. Savage had come up from Richmond to settle a claim for lodgings, when, meeting two friends, he spent the night in drinking, till it was too late to get a bed. As the three revellers passed Robinson's, a place of no very good name, they saw a light, knocked at the door, and were admitted. It was a cold, raw, November night; and hearing that the company in the parlour were about to leave, and that there was a fire there, they pushed in and kicked down the table. A quarrel ensued, swords were drawn, and Mr. Sinclair received a mortal wound. The three brawlers then fled, and were discovered lurking in a back-court by the soldiers who came to stop the fray. The three men were taken to the Gate House at Westminster, and the next morning to Newgate. That cruel and bullying judge, Page, hounded on the jury at the trial in the following violent summing up:—"Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consider that Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he wears very fine clothes, much finer than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance of money in his pocket, much more money than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; but, gentlemen of the jury, is it not a very hard case, gentlemen of the jury, that Mr. Savage should therefore kill you or me, gentlemen of the jury?" [Pg 216]

The verdict was of course "Guilty," for these homicides during tavern brawls had become frightfully common, and quiet citizens were never sure of their lives. Sentence of death was recorded against him. Eventually a lady at court interceded for the poet, who escaped with six months' imprisonment in Newgate, which he certainly well deserved.

There is every reason to suppose from the researches of Mr. W. Moy Thomas, that Savage was an impostor. He claimed to be the illegitimate son of the Countess of Macclesfield by Lord Rivers. The lady had an illegitimate child born in Fox Court, Gray's Inn Lane in 1697;

but this child, there is reason to think, died in 1698.[393] Savage imposed on Dr. Johnson and other friends with stories of being placed at school and apprenticed to a shoemaker in Holborn by his countess mother, until among his nurse's old letters he one day accidentally discovered the secret of his birth. There is no proof at all of his being persecuted by the countess, whose life he rendered miserable by insults, lampoons, abuse, slander, and begging letters. [Pg 217]

Pope has embalmed Page in the *Dunciad* just as a scorpion is preserved in a spirit-bottle:—

> "Morality by her false guardians drawn,
> Chicane in furs, and Casuistry in lawn,
> Gasps as they straighten at each end the cord,
> And dies when Dulness gives her *Page* the word."[394]

And again, with equal bitterness and truth, in his *Imitations of Horace*:—

> "Slander or poison dread from Delia's rage,
> Hard words or hanging if your judge be Page."

This "hanging judge," who enjoyed his ermine and his infamy till he was eighty, first obtained preferment by writing political pamphlets. He was made a Baron of the Exchequer in 1718, a Justice of the Common Pleas in 1726, and in 1727 transferred to the Court of King's Bench. Page was so illiterate that he commenced one of his charges to the grand jury of Middlesex with this remarkable statement: "I dare venture to affirm, gentlemen, on my own knowledge, that England never was so happy, both *at home and abroad*, as it now is." Horace Walpole mentions that when Crowle, the punning lawyer, was once entering an assize court, some one asked him if Judge Page was not "just behind." Crowle replied, "I don't know, but I am sure he never was just before."[395]

The various mews, now stables, about London, derive their name from the enclosure where falcons in the Middle Ages were kept to mew (*mutare*, Minshew) their feathers. The King's Mews stood on the site of the present Trafalgar Square. In the 13th Edward II. John de la Becke had the custody of the Mews "apud Charing, juxta Westminster." In the 10th Edward III. John de St. Albans succeeded Becke. In Richard II.'s time the office of king's falconer, a post of importance, was held by Sir Simon Burley, who was constable of the castles of Windsor, Wigmore, and Guilford, and also of the royal manor of Kennington. This Sir Simon had been selected by the Black Prince as guardian of Richard II., and he also negotiated his marriage. One of the complaints of Wat Tyler and his party was that he had thrown a burgher of Gravesend into Rochester Castle. The Duke of Gloucester had him executed in 1388, in spite of Richard's queen praying upon her knees for his life. At the end of this reign or in the first year of Henry IV., the poet Chaucer was clerk of the king's works and also of the Mews at Charing; and here, from his fluttering, angry little feathered subjects, he must have drawn many of those allusions to the brave sport of hawking to be found in the immortal *Canterbury Tales*. [Pg 218]

The falconry continued at Charing till 1534 (26th Henry VIII.), when the king's fine stabling, with many horses and a great store of hay, being destroyed by fire, the Mews was rebuilt and turned into royal stables, in the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary.[396]

M. St. Antoine, the riding-master, whose portrait Vandyke painted, performed his caracoles and demi-tours at the Mews. Here Cromwell imprisoned Lieut.-Colonel George Joyce, who, when plain cornet, had arrested the king at Holmby. An angry little Puritan pamphlet of four pages, published in 1659, gives an account of Cromwell's troubles with the fractious Joyce, and how he had resolved to cashier him and destroy his estate.

The colonel was carried by musqueteers to the common Dutch prison at the Mews, and seems to have been much tormented by Cavalier vermin. There he remained ten days, and was then removed to another close room, where he fell sick from the "evil smells," and remained so for ten weeks, refusing all the time to lay down his commission, declaring that he had been unworthily dealt with, and that all that had been sworn against him was false. [Pg 219]

There was at the Mews gate a celebrated old book shop, opened in 1750 by Mr. Thomas Payne, who kept it alive for forty years. It was the rendezvous of all noblemen and scholars who sought rare books. It may be remarked, by the way, that booksellers' shops have always been the haunts of wits and poets. Dodsley, the ex-footman, gathered round him the wisest men of his age, as Tonson had also done before him; while, as for John Murray's back parlour, it was in Byron's and Moore's days a very temple of the Muses.

In Charles II.'s time the famous but ugly horse Rowley lived at the Mews, and gave a nickname to his swarthy royal master.

In 1732 that impudent charlatan, Kent, rebuilt the Mews, which was only remarkable after that for sheltering for a time Mr. Cross's menagerie, when first removed from Exeter Change in 1829.

The National Gallery, one of the poorest buildings in London (which is saying a good deal), was built between 1832 and 1838, from the designs of a certain unfortunate Mr. Wilkins, R.A. It is not often that Fortune is so malicious as to give an inferior artist such ample room to show his inability. The vote for founding the Gallery passed in Parliament in April 1824.

The columns of the portico were part of the screen of Carlton House—interesting memorials of a debasing regency, and, if possible, of a worse reign. The site has been called “the finest in Europe:” it is, however, a fine site, which is more than can be said of the building that covers it. The front is 500 feet long. In the centre is a portico, on stilts, with eight Corinthian columns approached by a double flight of steps; a low squat dome not much larger than a washing basin; and two pepper-castor turrets that crown the eyesore of London. Though on [Pg 220] high ground—very high ground for a rather flat city—the architect, pinched for money, contrived to make the building lower than the grand portico of St. Martin’s Church, and even than the houses of Suffolk Place.

One of the last occasions on which William IV. appeared in public was in 1837, before the opening of the first Academy Exhibition here in May. The good-natured king is said to have suggested calling the square “Trafalgar,” and erecting a Nelson monument. A subscription was opened, and the Duke of Buccleuch was appointed chairman.

The square was commenced in 1829, but was not completed till after 1849. The Nelson column was begun in 1837, and the statue set up in November 1843. Three premiums were offered for the three best designs, and Mr. Railton carried off the palm. Upwards of £20,480 were subscribed, and, £12,000 it was thought would be required to complete the monument. [397] It was originally intended to expend only £30,000 upon the whole.[398] Alas for estimates so sanguine, so fallacious! the granite work alone cost upwards of £10,000.

Mr. Railton chose a column, after mature reflection; although triumphal columns are bad art, and the invention of a barbarous people and a corrupt age.[399] He rejected a temple, as too expensive and too much in the way; a group of figures he condemned as not visible at a distance; he finally chose a Corinthian column as new, as harmonious, and as uniting the labours of sculptor and architect.

The column, with its base and pedestal, measures 193 feet. The fluted shaft has a torus of oak leaves. The capital is copied from the fine example of Mars Ultor at Rome; from it rises a circular pedestal wreathed with laurel, and surmounted by a statue of Nelson, eighteen feet high, and formed of two blocks of stone from the Granton quarry. The great pedestal is adorned with four bassi-relievi, eighteen feet square each, representing four of Nelson’s great victories. It is difficult to say which is tamest of the four. That of “Trafalgar” is by Mr. [Pg 221] Carew; the “Nile,” by Mr. Woodington; “St. Vincent,” by Mr. Watson; and “Copenhagen,” by Mr. Ternouth.

The pedestal is raised on a flight of fifteen steps, at the angles of which are placed couchant lions from the designs of Sir Edwin Landseer. They are forged out of French cannon. The capital is of the same costly material, which, considering the brave English blood it has cost, should have been painted crimson. Many years passed by after the commission was given to Sir Edwin Landseer before they were placed *in situ*.

The cocked hat on Mr. Baily’s statue has been somewhat unjustly ridiculed, and so has the coil of rope or pigtail supporting the hero.

The bronze equestrian statue of George IV., at the north-east end of the square, is by Chantrey. It was ordered by the king in 1829. The price was to be 9000 guineas, but the worthy monarch never paid the sculptor more than a third of that sum; the rest was given by the Woods and Forests out of the national taxes, and the third instalment in 1843, after Chantrey’s death, by the Lords of the Treasury. It is a sprightly and clever statue, but of no great merit. It should have been paid for by William IV., just as the Nelson statue should have been erected by Parliament, the honour being one due to Nelson from an ungrateful nation. This statue of George IV. was originally intended to crown the arch in front of Buckingham Palace—an arch that cost £80,000, and that was hung with gates that cost 3000 guineas. The so-called Chartist riots of 1848 were commenced by boys destroying the hoarding round the base of the Nelson monument.

The fountains in the centre of the Square are of Peterhead granite, and were made at Aberdeen. They are mean, despicable, and unworthy of the noble position which they occupy. Some years ago there was a fuss about an Artesian well that was to feed these stone punch-bowls with inexhaustible gushes of silvery water. This supply has dwindled down to a [Pg 222] sort of overflow of a ginger-beer bottle once a day. I blush when I take a foreigner to see Trafalgar Square, with its squat domes, its mean statues, its tame bassi-relievi, and its disgraceful fountains.

I will not trust myself to criticise the statues of Napier and Havelock. The figures are poor, and unworthy of the fiery soldier and the Christian hero they misrepresent. They should be in the Abbey. Why has the Abbey grown, like the Court, less receptive than ever? What passport is there into the Abbey, where such strange people sleep, if the conquest of Scinde and the relief of Lucknow will not take a body there.

But to return to the National Gallery. Mr. G. Agar-Ellis, afterwards Lord Dover, first proposed a National Gallery in Parliament in 1824; Government having previously purchased thirty-eight pictures from Mr. Angerstein for £57,000. This collection included “The Raising of Lazarus,” by Del Piombo. It is supposed that Michael Angelo, jealous of Raphael’s “Transfiguration,” helped Sebastian in the drawing of his cartoon, which was to be a companion picture for Narbonne Cathedral. It was purchased from the Orleans Gallery

for 3500 guineas.[400]

In 1825 some pictures were purchased for the Gallery from Mr. Hamlet. These included the "Bacchus and Ariadne" of Titian, for £5000. This golden picture (extolled by Vasari) was painted about 1514 for the Duke of Ferrara. Titian was then in the full vigour of his thirty-seventh year.[401]

In the same year "La Vierge au Panier" of Correggio was purchased from Mr. Nieuwenhuy, a picture-dealer, for £3800. It is a late picture, and hurt in cleaning. It was one of the gems of the Madrid Gallery.

In 1826, Sir George Beaumont presented sixteen pictures, valued at 7500 guineas. These included one of the finest landscapes of Rubens, "The Chateau," which originally cost £1500, and Wilkie's *chef-d'œuvre*, that fine Raphaelesque composition, "The Blind Fiddler."

In 1834 the Rev. William Holwell Carr left the nation thirty-five pictures, including fine specimens of the Caracci, Titian, Luini, Garofalo, Claude, Poussin, and Rubens. [Pg 223]

Another important donation was that of the great "Peace and War," bought for £3000 by the Marquis of Stafford, and given to the nation. It was originally presented to Charles I., by Rubens, who gave unto the king not as a painter but as almost a king.

The British Institution also gave three esteemed pictures by Reynolds, Gainsborough, and West, and a fine Parmigiano.

But the greatest addition to the collection was made in 1834, when £11,500[402] were given for the two great Correggios, the "Ecce Homo" and the "Education of Cupid," from the Marquis of Londonderry's collection. To the "Ecce Homo" Pungileoni assigns the date 1520, when the great master was only twenty-six. It once belonged to Murat. The "Education of Cupid," which once belonged to Charles I., has been a good deal retouched.[403]

In 1836 King William IV. presented to the gallery six pictures; in 1837 Colonel Harvey Ollney gave seventeen; in 1838 Lord Farnborough bequeathed fifteen, and R. Simmons, Esq., fourteen. The last pictures were chiefly of the Netherlands school. In 1854 the nation possessed two hundred and sixteen pictures, and of these seventy only had been purchased.

In 1857 that greatest of all landscape-painters, Joseph M. W. Turner, left the nation 362 oil-paintings, and about 19,000 sketches (including 1757 water-colour drawings of value). In his will this eccentric man particularly desired that two of his pictures—a Dutch coast-scene and "Dido Building Carthage"—should be hung between Claude's "Sea-Port" and "Mill."

The will was disputed, and the engravings and the money, all but £20,000, went to the next of kin.

The diploma pictures (that formerly were annually exhibited to the public) are of great interest. They were given by various members of the Royal Academy at their elections. That of the parsimonious Wilkie—"Boys digging for Rats" (fine as Teniers)—is remarkably small. There is a very fine graceful portrait of Sir William Chambers, the architect, by Reynolds, and one still more robust and glowing of Sir Joshua by himself. He is in his doctor's robes. There is a splendid but rather pale Etty—"A Satyr surprising a Nymph;" and a fine vigorous picture by Briggs, of "Blood stealing the Crown." [Pg 224]

In 1849, Robert Vernon, Esq., nobly left the nation one hundred and sixty-two fine examples of the English school. These are now removed to the Kensington Museum.

Of the pictures given by Turner to the nation, the masterpieces are the "Téméraire" and the "Escape of Ulysses,"—both triumphs of colour and imagination. The one is a scene from the *Odyssey*; the other represents an old man-of-war being towed to its last berth—a scene witnessed by the artist himself while boating near Greenwich. The works of Turner may be divided very fairly into three eras: those in which he imitated the Dutch landscape-painters, the period when he copied idealised Nature, and the time when he resorted from eccentricity or indifference to reckless experiments in colour and effect—most of them quite unworthy of his genius. Not in drawing the figure, but in aërial perspective, did Turner excel. The great portfolios of drawings that he left the nation show with what untiring and laborious industry he toiled. In habits sordid and mean, in tastes low and debased, this great genius, the son of a humble hairdresser in Maiden Lane, succeeded in attaining an excellence in landscape, fitful and unequal it is true, but often rising to poetic regions unknown to Claude, Ruysdael, Vandervelde, Salvator, or Backhuysen.

Ever since the modern pictures were removed to South Kensington, there has been a constant effort to transfer the ancient pictures and to abandon the National Gallery to the Royal Academy—a rich society, making £5000 or £6000 a year, which its members cannot spend, and which tenants the national building only by permission. To remove the pictures from the centre of London is to remove them from those who cannot go far to see them, to the neighbourhood of rich people who do not need their teaching, and who have picture-galleries of their own. [Pg 225]

In 1859, twenty pictures were bequeathed to the gallery by Mr. Jacob Bell, and a few years later twenty-two others were added as a gift by Her Majesty. The last great addition is the presentation of ninety-four pictures by Mr. Wynn Ellis. But in spite of all these treasures,

acquired by purchase or by bequest, the nation cannot boast that its gallery does justice to our taste or national wealth. It is still lamentably deficient in more than one department; and there are not wanting those who assert that the Royal Academy stifles art rather than promotes it. It is regarded by the outside world as a close-borough, in which the interests of the public and of students are postponed to those of its Associates and Members, the A.R.A.'s and R.A.'s of the age.

The building in which the collection is deposited was erected at the national expense, from the designs of Mr. William Wilkins, R.A., and opened to the public in 1838. It was considerably altered and enlarged in 1860, and in 1869 five other rooms were added by the surrender to the Trustees of those hitherto appropriated by the Royal Academy. In 1876 a new wing was added, after a design by Mr. E. M. Barry, R.A., and the whole collection is now under one roof.

The Royal College of Physicians is a large classic building at the north-west corner of Trafalgar Square. It was built in 1823 from the designs of Sir Robert Smirke. The college was founded in 1518 by Dr. Linacre, the successor to Shakspeare's Dr. Butts, and physician to Henry VII. From Knightrider Street the doctors moved to Amen Corner, and thence to Warwick Lane, between Newgate Street and Paternoster Row. The number of fellows, originally thirty, is now as unlimited as the "dira cohors" of diseases that the college has to encounter.

In the gallery above the library there are seven preparations made by the celebrated Harvey when at Padua—"learned Padua." There are also some excellent portraits—Harvey, by Jansen; Sir Thomas Browne, the author of *Religio Medici*; Sir Theodore Mayerne, the physician of James I.; Sir Edmund King, who, on his own responsibility, bled Charles II. during a fit; Dr. Sydenham, by Mary Beale; Doctor Radcliffe, William III.'s doctor, by Kneller; Sir Hans Sloane, the founder of the British Museum, by Richardson, whom Hogarth rather unjustly ridiculed; honest Garth (of the "Dispensary"), by Kneller; Dr. Freind, Dr. Mead, Dr. Warren (by Gainsborough); William Hunter, and Dr. Heberden. [Pg 226]

There are also some valuable and interesting busts—George IV., by Chantrey (a *chef-d'œuvre*); Dr. Mead, by the vivacious Roubilliac; Dr. Sydenham, by Wilton; Harvey, by Scheemakers; Dr. Baillie, by Chantrey, from a model by Nollekens; Dr. Babington, by poor Behnes. One of the treasures of the place is Dr. Radcliffe's gold-headed cane, which was successively carried by Drs. Mead, Askew, Pitcairn, and Baillie. There is also a portrait-picture by Zoffany of Hunter delivering a lecture on anatomy to the Royal Academy. Any fellow can give an order to see this hoarded collection, which should be thrown open to the public on certain days. It is selfish and utterly wanting in public spirit to keep such treasures in the dark.

The wits buzzed about Charing Cross between 1680 and 1730 as thick as bees round May flowers. In this district, between those years, stood "The Elephant," "The Sugarloaf," "The Old Man's Coffee-house," "The Old Vine," "The Three Flower de Luces," "The British Coffee-house," "The Young Man's Coffee-house," and "The Three Queens."

There is an erroneous tradition that Cromwell had a house on the site of Drummond's bank. He really lived farther south, in King Street. When the bank was built, the houses were set back full forty yards more to the west, upon an open square place called "Cromwell's Yard."[405]

Drummond's is said to have gained its fame by advancing money secretly to the Pretender. Upon this being known, the Court withdrew all their deposits. The result was that the Scotch Tory noblemen rallied round the house and brought in so much money that the firm soon became leading bankers, dividing the West End custom with Messrs. Coutts. [Pg 227]

Craig's Court, on the east side of Charing Cross, was built in 1702. It is generally supposed to have been named after the father of Mr. Secretary Craggs, the friend of Pope and Addison: Mr. Cunningham, an excellent and reliable authority, says that as early as the year 1658 there was a James Cragg living on the "water side," in the Charing Cross division of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The Sun Fire-office was established in this court in 1726; and here is Cox and Greenwood's, the largest army agency office in Great Britain.

Locket's, the famous ordinary, so called from Adam Locket, the landlord in 1674, stood on the site of Drummond's bank. An Edward Locket succeeded to him in 1688, and remained till 1702.[406] In 1693 the second Locket took the Bowling-green House at Putney Heath. That fair, slender, genteel Sir George Etherege, whom Rochester praises for "fancy, sense, judgment, and wit," frequented Locket's, and displayed there his courtly foppery, which served as a model for his own Dorimant, and that prince and patriarch of fops Sir Fopling Flutter. Sir George was always gentle and courtly, and was compared in this to Sedley.

He once got into a violent passion at the ordinary, and abused the "drawers" for some neglect. This brought in Mrs. Locket, hot and fuming. "We are so provoked," said Sir George, "that even I could find it in my heart to pull the nosegay out of your bosom, and fling the flowers in your face." This mild and courteous threat turned his friends' anger into a general laugh.

Sir George having run up a long score at Locket's, added to the injury by ceasing to frequent the house. Mrs. Locket began to dun and threaten him. He sent word back by the messenger [Pg 228]

that he would kiss her if she stirred a step in it. When Mrs. Locket heard this, she bridled up, called for her hood and scarf, and told her anxious husband that she'd see if there was any fellow alive who had the impudence! "Prythee, my dear, don't be so rash," said her milder husband; "you don't know what a man may do in his passion."[407]

Wycherly, that favourite of Charles II. till he married his titled wife, writes in one of his plays (1675), "Why, thou art as shy of my kindness as a Lombard Street alderman of a courtier's civility at Locket's."[408] Shadwell too, Dryden's surly and clever foe, says (1691), "I'll answer you in a couple of brimmers of claret at Locket's at dinner, where I have bespoke an admirable good one."[409]

A poet of 1697 describes the sparks, dressed by noon hurrying to the Mall, and from thence to Locket's.[410] Prior proposes to dine at a crown a head on ragouts washed down with champagne; then to go to court; and lastly he says[411]—

> "With evening wheels we'll drive about the Park,
> Finish at Locket's, and reel home i' the dark."

In 1708, Vanbrugh makes Lord Foppington doubtful whether he shall return to dinner, as the noble peer says—"As Gad shall judge me I can't tell, for 'tis possible I may dine with some of our House at Lacket's."[412]

And in the same play the very energetic nobleman remarks—"From thence (the Park) I go to dinner at Lacket's, where you are so nicely and delicately served that, stap my vitals! they shall compose you a dish no bigger than a saucer shall come to fifty shillings. Between eating my dinner and washing my mouth, ladies, I spend my time till I go to the play."

In 1709 the epicurean and ill-fated Dr. King, talking of the changes in St. James's Park, says —

[Pg 229]

> "For Locket's stands where gardens once did spring,
> And wild ducks quack where grasshoppers did sing."[413]

Tom Brown also mentions Locket's, for he writes—"We as naturally went from Mann's Coffee-house to the Parade as a coachman drives from Locket's to the play-house."

Prior, the poet, when his father the joiner died, was taken care of by his uncle, who kept the Rummer Tavern at the back of No. 14 Charing Cross, two doors from Locket's. It was a well-frequented house, and in 1685 the annual feast of the nobility and gentry of St. Martin's parish was held there. Prior was sent by the honest vintner to study under the great Dr. Busby at Westminster: and in a window-seat at the Rummer the future poet and diplomatist was found reading Horace, according to Bishop Burnet, by the witty Earl of Dorset, who is said to have educated him. Prior, in the dedication of his poems to the earl's son, proves his patron to have been a paragon. Waller and Sprat consulted Dorset about their writings. Dryden, Congreve, and Addison praised him. He made the court read *Hudibras*, the town praise Wycherly's "Plain Dealer," and Buckingham delay his "Rehearsal" till he knew his opinion. Pope imitated his "Dorinda," and King Charles took his advice upon Lely's portraits.

One of Prior's gayest and pleasantest poems seems to prove, however, that Fleetwood Shepherd was a more essential patron than even the earl. The poet writes—

> "Now, as you took me up when little,
> Gave me my learning and my vittle,
> Asked for me from my lord things fitting,
> Kind as I'd been your own begetting,
> Confirm what formerly you've given,
> Nor leave me now at six and seven,
> As Sunderland has left Mun Stephen."

And again, still more gaily—

[Pg 230]

> "My uncle, rest his soul! when living,
> Might have contrived me ways of thriving,
> Taught me with cider to replenish
> My vats or ebbing tide of Rhenish;
> So when for hock I drew pricked white-wine,
> Swear't had the flavour, and was right wine;
> Or sent me with ten pounds to Furni-
> val's Inn, to some good rogue attorney,
> Where now, by forging deeds and cheating,
> I'd found some handsome ways of getting.
> All this you made me quit to follow
> That sneaking, whey-faced god, Apollo;
> Sent me among a fiddling crew
> Of folks I'd neither seen nor knew,
> Calliope and God knows who,
> I add no more invectives to it:
> You spoiled the youth to make a poet."

That rascally housebreaker, Jack Sheppard, made his first step towards the gallows by the

robbery of two silver spoons at the Rummer Tavern. This young rogue, whose deeds Mr. Ainsworth has so mischievously recorded, was born in 1701, and ended his short career at Tyburn in 1724.[414] The Rummer Tavern is introduced by Hogarth into his engraving of "Night." The business was removed to the water side of Charing Cross in 1710, and the new house burnt down in 1750. In 1688, Samuel Prior offered ten guineas reward for the discovery of some persons who had accused him of clipping coin.[415]

Mrs. Centlivre, whom Pope pilloried in the *Dunciad*[416] was the daughter of a Lincolnshire gentleman, who, being a Nonconformist, fled to Ireland at the Restoration to escape persecution. Being left an orphan at the age of twelve, she travelled to London on foot to seek her fortune. In her sixteenth year she married a nephew of Sir Stephen Fox, who, however, did not live more than a twelvemonth after. She afterwards wedded an officer named Carrol, who was killed in a duel soon after their marriage. Left a second time a [Pg 231] widow, she then took to dramatic writing for a subsistence, and from 1700 to 1705 produced six comedies, to one of which—"The Gamester"—the poet Rowe contributed a prologue. She next tried the stage; and while performing Alexander the Great, at Windsor, won the heart of Mr. Centlivre, "a Yeoman of the Mouth," or principal cook to Queen Anne, who married her. She lived happily with her husband for eighteen years, and wrote some good, bustling, but licentious plays. "The Busybody," and "Wonder; a Woman keeps a Secret," act well.

In May, 1716, Mrs. Centlivre visited her native town of Holbeach for her health, and on King George's birthday[417] invited all the pauper widows of the place to a tavern supper. The windows were illuminated, the church-bells were set ringing, there were musicians playing in the room, the old women danced, and most probably got drunk, the enthusiastic loyalist making them all fall on their knees and drink the healths of the royal family, the Duke of Marlborough, Mr. Walpole, the Duke of Argyle, General Cadogan, etc. etc. She ended the feast by sending the ringers a copy of stirring verses denouncing the Jacobites;—

"Disdain the artifice they use
To bring in mass and wooden shoes
  With transubstantiation:
Remember James the Second's reign,
When glorious William broke the chain
  Rome had put on this nation."

This clever but not too virtuous woman died at her house in Buckingham Court, Spring Gardens, December 1, 1723.[418]

Pope's dislike to Mrs. Centlivre is best explained by one of his own notes to the *Dunciad*:—"She (Mrs. C.) wrote many plays and a song before she was seven years old: she also wrote a ballad against Mr. Pope's *Homer* before he began it." And why should not an authoress have expressed her opinion of Mr. Pope's inability to translate Homer? [Pg 232]

Mrs. Centlivre is rather bitterly treated by Leigh Hunt, who says that she, "without doubt, wrote the most entertaining dramas of intrigue, with a genius infinitely greater, and a modesty infinitely less, than that of her sex in general; and she delighted, whenever she could not be obscene, to be improbable."[419]

Milton lodged at one Thomson's, next door to the Bull-head Tavern at Charing Cross, close to the opening to the Spring Gardens, during the time he was writing his book *Joannis Philippi Angli Defensio*.[420]

The Golden Cross ran up beside the King's Mews a little east of its present site; it was the "Bull and Mouth" of the West End till railways drew travellers from the old roads; it then became a railway parcel office. Poor reckless Dr. Maginn wrote a ballad lamenting the change, in which he mourned the Mews Gate public-house, Tom Bish and his lotteries, and the barrack-yard. He curses Nash and Wyatville, and then bursts forth—

"No more I'll eat the juicy steak
  Within its boxes pent,
When in the mail my place I take,
  For Bath or Brighton bent.

"No more the coaches I shall see
  Come trundling from the yard,
Nor hear the horn blown cheerily
  By brandy-sipping guard.
King Charles, I think, must sorrow sore,
  E'en were he made of stone,
When left by all his friends of yore
  (Like Tom Moore's rose) alone.

"No wonder the triumphant Turk
  O'er Missolonghi treads,
Roasts bishops, and in bloody work
  Snips off some thousand heads!
No wonder that the Crescent gains, [Pg 233]
  When we the fact can't gloss,

That we ourselves are at such pains
To trample down the Cross!

"Oh! London won't be London long,
For 'twill be all pulled down,
And I shall sing a funeral song
O'er that time-honoured town.
One parting curse I here shall make,
And then lay down my quill,
Hoping Old Nick himself may take
Both Nash and Wyatville."[421]

Till late in the last century a lofty straddling sign-post and a long water-trough, just such as still adorn country towns, stood before this inn.[422]

Charing Cross Hospital, one of those great charities that atone for so many of the sins of London, relieved, in the year 1878, 15,854 necessitous persons, including more than 1000 cases of severe accident, while above 1500 persons were admitted on the recommendation of governors and subscribers.[423] Surely, if anything can redeem our national vices, our selfishness, our commercial dishonesty, our unjust wars, and our unrighteous conquests, it must be such vast charities as these.

One authority represents that great scholar and divine, Dr. Isaac Barrow, the friend of Newton, as having died "in mean lodgings at a saddler's near Charing Cross, an old, low, ill-built house, which he had used for many years." Barrow was then Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. Roger North, however, says that he died of an overdose of opium, and "ended his days in London in a prebendary's house that had a little stair to it out of the cloisters, which made him call it a *man's nest*."[424] Barrow died in 1677, and was buried in the Abbey. Rhodes, the bookseller and actor, lived at the Ship at Charing Cross. He had been wardrobe-keeper at the Blackfriars Theatre; and in 1659 he reopened the Cockpit Theatre in Drury Lane.

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On September 7, 1650, as that dull, learned man, Bulstrode Whitelock, one of the Commissioners for the Great Seal, was going in his coach towards Chelsea, a messenger from Scotland stopped him about Charing Cross, and cried, "Oh, my lord, God hath appeared gloriously to us in Scotland; a glorious day, my lord, at Dunbar in Scotland." "I asked him," says Whitelock, "how it was. He said that the General had routed all the Scots army, but that he could not stay to tell me the particulars, being in haste to go to the House."[425]

Lord Dartmouth relates a story in Burnet of Sir Edward Seymour the Speaker's coach breaking down at Charing Cross, in Charles II.'s time. He instantly, with proud coolness, ordered the beadles to stop the next gentleman's coach that passed and bring it to him. The expelled gentleman was naturally both surprised and angry; but Sir Edward gravely assured him that it was far more proper for him than for the Speaker of the House of Commons to walk the streets, and accordingly left him to do so without any further apology.[426]

Horace Walpole was a diligent attender at the State Trials of 1746. The day "poor brave old" Balmerino retracted his plea, asked pardon, and desired the Peers to intercede for mercy, Walpole tells us that his lordship stopped the coach at Charing Cross as he returned to the Tower, carelessly to buy "honey-blobs," as the Scotch call gooseberries.

But we must not leave Charing Cross without specially remembering that when Boswell dared to praise Fleet Street as crowded and cheerful, Dr. Johnson replied in a voice of thunder, "Why, sir, Fleet Street *has* a very animated appearance; but I think the full tide of existence is at Charing Cross."[427]

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Nearly where the Post Office at Charing Cross now stands, there was once (of all things in the world) a hermitage. Even Prince George of Denmark might have been pardoned by James II., his sour father-in-law, for making his invariable reply, "Est-il possible?" to this statement. Yet the patent rolls of the 47th Henry III. grant permission to William de Radnor, Bishop of Llandaff, to lodge, with all his retainers, within the precinct of the Hermitage at Charing, whenever he came to London.[428]

Opposite this stood the ancient Hospital of St. Mary Roncevalles. It was founded by William Marechal, Earl of Pembroke, a son, I believe, of the early English conqueror of Ireland. It was suppressed by Henry V. as an alien priory, restored by Edward IV., and finally suppressed by Edward VI., who granted it to Sir Thomas Carwarden, to be held in free soccage of the honour of Westminster.

The mesh and labyrinth of obscure alleys and lanes running between the bottom of St. Martin's Lane and Bedford Street, towards Bedfordbury, with old Round Court, so called in mockery, for its centre, were swept away by the besom of improvement in 1829, when Trafalgar Square was begun, never to be finished. In Elizabeth's or James's time, gallants who had cruised in search of Spanish galleons wittily nicknamed these Straits "the Bermudas," from their narrow and intricate channels. Here the valorous Captain Bobadill must have lived in Barmecidal splendour, and have taught his dupes the true conduct of the weapon. Justice Overdo mentions the Bermudas with a righteous indignation. "Look," says

that great legal functionary, “into any angle of the town, the Streights or the Bermudas, where the quarrelling lesson is read, and how do they entertain the time but with bottled ale and tobacco?”[429] How natural for Drake’s men to give such a name to a labyrinth of devious alleys! At a subsequent period the cluster of avenues exchanged the title of *Bermudas* for that of the *C’ribbee Islands*, the learned possessors corrupting the name into a happy allusion to the arts cultivated there.[430]

Gay, writing in 1715, describes the small streets branching from Charing Cross as [Pg 236] resounding with the shoeblacks’ cry, “Clean your honour’s shoes?” Great improvements were made in 1829-30, when the present arcade leading from West Strand to St. Martin’s Church, and inhabited chiefly by German toymen, was built and named after Lord Lowther then Chief Commissioner of the Woods and Forests.[431] The Strand was also widened, and many old tottering houses were removed.

Porridge Island was the cant name for a paved alley near St. Martin’s Church, originally a congeries of cookshops erected for the workmen at the new church, and destroyed when the great rookery there was pulled down in 1829. It was a part of Bedfordbury, and derived its name from being full of cookshops, or “slap-bangs,” as street boys called such odorous places. A writer in *The World*, in 1753, describes a man like Beau Tibbs, who had his dinner in a pewter plate from a cookshop in Porridge Island, and with only £100 a year was foolish enough to wear a laced suit, go every evening in a chair to a rout, and return to his bedroom on foot, shivering and supperless, vain enough to glory in having rubbed elbows with the quality of Brentford.[432]

It was in Round Court, in the centre of the key shops, herb shops, and furniture warehouses of Bedfordbury that, in 1836, Robson the actor was apprenticed to a Mr. Smellie, a copperplate engraver, and the printer of the humorous caricatures of Mr. George Cruikshank.[433]

The Swan at Charing Cross, over against the Mews, flourished in 1665, when Marke Rider was the landlord. The token of the house bore the figure of a swan holding a sprig in its mouth. Its memory is embalmed in a curious extempore grace once said by Ben Jonson before King James. These are the verses:—

> “Our king and queen the Lord God bless,
> The Palsgrave and the Lady Besse;
> And God bless every living thing
> That lives and breathes, and loves the king;
> God bless the Council of Estate, [Pg 237]
> And Buckingham the fortunate;
> God bless them all, and keep them safe,
> And God bless me, and God bless Ralph.”

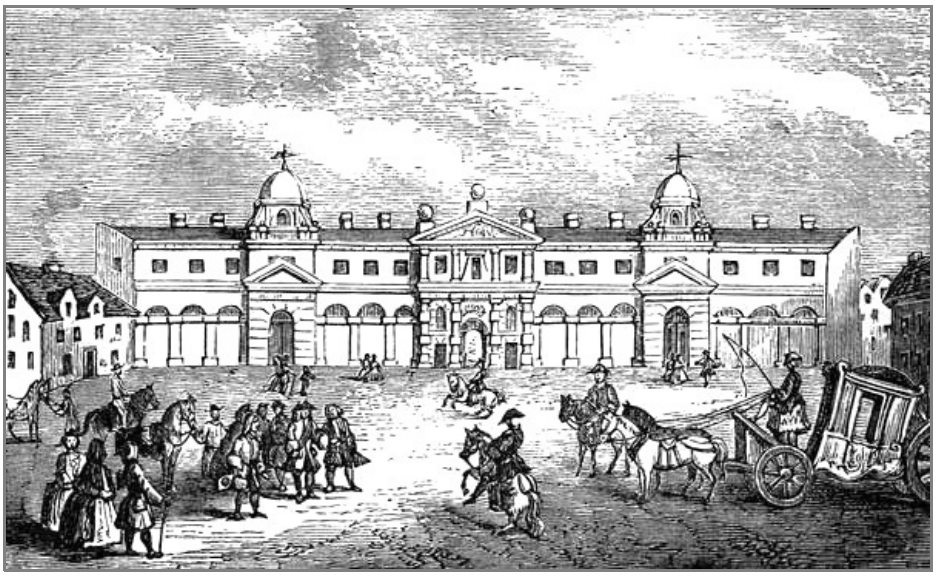
The schoolmaster king being mighty inquisitive to know who this Ralph was, Ben told him it was the drawer at the Swan Tavern, who drew him good canary. For this drollery the king gave Ben a hundred pounds.[434] The story is probably true, for it is confirmed by Powell the actor.[435]

The street signs of London were condemned in the second year of George III.’s reign; but the sweeping Act for their final removal was not passed till nine years later. In 1762, Bonnel Thornton (aided by Hogarth) opened an exhibition of street signs in Bow Street[436] in ridicule of the Spring Gardens exhibition. But as early as 1761 the street signs seem to have been partially removed as dangerous obstructions. A writer in a contemporary paper says,[437] “My master yesterday sent me to take a place in the Canterbury stage; he said that when I came to Charing Cross I should see which was the proper inn by the words on the sign. I rambled about, but could see no sign at all. At last I was told that there used to be such a sign under a little golden cross which I saw at a two pair of stairs window. I entered and found the waiter swearing about innovations. He said that the members of Parliament were unaccountable enemies to signs which used to show trades; that, for his master’s part, he might put on sackcloth, for nobody came to buy sack. ‘If,’ said he, ‘any of the signs were too large, could they not have limited their size without pulling down the sign-posts and destroying the painted ornaments of the Strand?’ On my return I saw some men pulling with ropes at a curious sign-iron, which seemed to have cost some pounds: along with the iron down came the leaden cover to the pent-house, which will cost at least some pounds to repair.”

This was written the year of the first Act (2d George III.), and was probably a groan from [Pg 238] some one interested in the existence of the abuse. The inferior artists gained much money from this source. Mr. Wale, one of the first Academicians, painted a Shakspere five feet high[438] for a public-house at the north-west corner of Little Russell Street, Covent Garden. The picture was enclosed in a sumptuous carved gilt frame, and was suspended by rich foliated ironwork. A London street a hundred years ago must have been one long grotesque picture-gallery.

When the meat is all good it is difficult to know where to insert the knife. In travelling, how hard it is to turn back almost in sight of some Promised Land of which one has often dreamed! Like that traveller I feel, when I find it necessary in this chapter to confine myself strictly to the legends, traditions, and history of Charing Cross proper, leaving for other

opportunities Spring Gardens, the story of the greater part of which belongs more to St. James's Park, Whitehall, and Scotland Yard.



THE KING'S MEWS, 1750.

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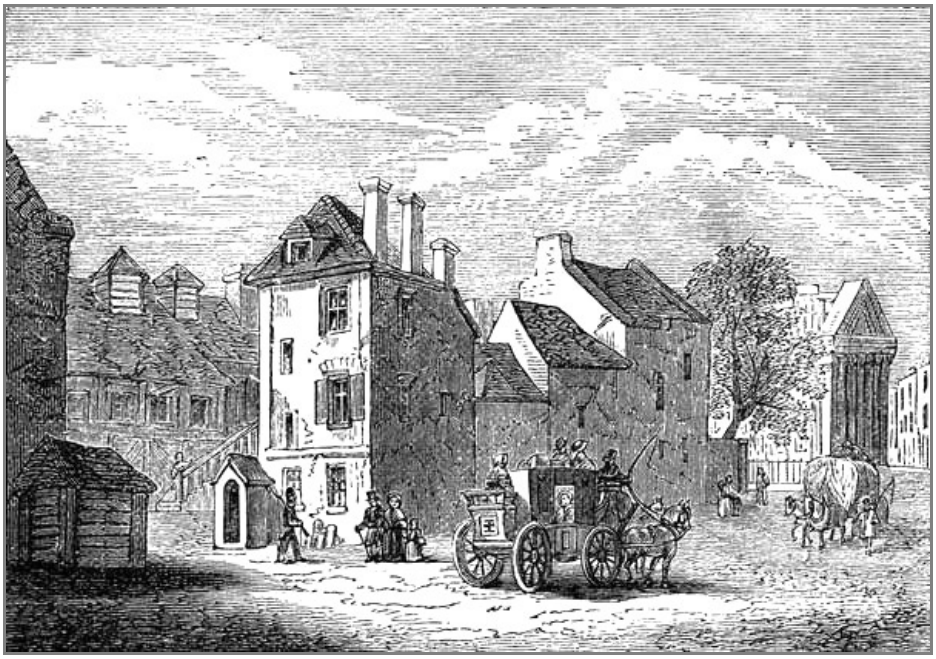


BARRACK AND OLD HOUSES ON SITE OF TRAFALGAR SQUARE, 1826.

CHAPTER X.

ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

Saint Martin's Lane, extending from Long Acre to Charing Cross, was built before 1613, and then called the West Church Lane. The first church was built here by Henry VIII. The district was first called St. Martin's Lane about 1617-18.[439]

Sir Theodore Mayerne, physician to James I., lived on the west side of this lane. Mayerne was the godson of Beza, the great Calvinist reformer, and one of Henry IV.'s physicians. He came to England after that king's death. He then became James I.'s doctor, and was blamed for his treatment of Prince Henry, whom many thought to have been poisoned. He was [Pg 240] afterwards physician to Charles I., and nominally to Charles II.; but he died in 1655, five years before the Restoration. He gave his library to the College of Physicians, and is said to

have disclosed some of his chemical secrets to the great enameller, Petitot.[440] Mayerne died of drinking bad wine at a Strand tavern, and foretold the time of his death.

A good story is told of Sir Theodore, which is the more curious because it records the fashionable fee of those days. A friend consulting Mayerne, and expecting to have the fee refused, ostentatiously placed on the table two gold broad pieces (value six-and-thirty shillings each). Looking rather mortified when Mayerne swept them into his pouch, "Sir." said Sir Theodore, gravely, "I made my will this morning, and if it should become known that I refused a fee the same afternoon I might be deemed *non compos*."[441]

Near this fortunate doctor, honoured by kings, lived Sir John Finett, a wit and a song-writer, of Italian extraction. He became Master of the Ceremonies to Charles I., and wrote a pedantic book on the treatment of ambassadors, and other questions of precedency, of the gravest importance to courtiers, but to no one else. He died in 1641.

Two doors from Mayerne and five from Finett, from 1622 to 1634, lived Daniel Mytens, the Dutch painter. On Vandyke's arrival Mytens grew jealous and asked leave to return to the Hague. But the king persuaded him to stay, and he became friendly with his rival, who painted his portrait. There are pictures by this artist at Hampton Court. Prince Charles gave him his house in the lane for twelve years at the peppercorn rent of 6d. a year.

Next to Sir John Finett lived Sir Benjamin Rudyer, and on the same side Abraham Vanderoort, keeper of the pictures to Charles I., and necessarily an acquaintance of Mytens and Vandyke.

Carew Raleigh, son of the great enemy of Spain, and born in the Tower, lived in this lane, on the west side, from 1636 to 1638, and again in 1664. This unfortunate man spent all his life in writing to vindicate his father's memory, and in efforts to recover his Sherborne estate. In 1659, by the influence of General Monk, he was made Governor of Jersey. [Pg 241]

The chivalrous wit, Sir John Suckling, dwelt in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in 1641, the year in which he joined in a rash plot to rescue Strafford from the Tower. He fled to France, and died there in poverty the same year, in the thirty-second year of his age. Suckling had served in the army of Gustavus Adolphus, and was famous for his sparkling repartee. There is an exquisite quaint grace about his poem of "The Wedding," which has its scene at Charing Cross.

Dr. Thomas Willis, a great physician of his day, who died here in 1678, was grandfather of Browne Willis, the antiquary. Dr. Willis was a friend of Wren, and a great anatomist and chemist. He mapped out the nerves very industriously, and in his *Cerebri Anatome* forestalled many future phrenological discoveries.[442]

In the same year that eccentric charlatan, Sir Kenelm Digby, was living in the lane. The son of one of the gunpowder conspirators, and the "Mirandola" of his age, he was one of Ben Jonson's adopted sons.[443] He was generous to the poets; he understood ten or twelve languages; he shattered the Venetian galleys at Scanderoon; he studied chemistry, and professed to cure wounds with sympathetic powder. He held offices of honour under Charles I., in France became a friend of Descartes, and after the Restoration was an active member of the Royal Society. He was born, won his naval victory, and died on the same day of the month. Ben Jonson, in a poem on him, calls him "prudent, valiant, just, and temperate," and adds quaintly—

> "His breast is a brave palace, a broad street,
> Where all heroic ample thoughts do meet,
> Where Nature such a large survey hath ta'en,
> As others' souls to *his dwelt in a lane*."

I cannot here help observing that the ridiculous story about Ben Jonson in his old age refusing money from Charles I., and rudely sending back word "that the king's soul dwelt in a lane," must have originated in some careless or malicious perversion of this line of the rough old poet's. [Pg 242]

"Immortal Ben" wrote ten poems on the death of Sir Kenelm's wife, who was the daughter of Sir Edward Stanley, and, it is supposed, the mistress of the Earl of Dorset. Randolph, Habington, and Feltham also wrote elegies on this beautiful woman, who was found dead in her bed, accidentally poisoned, it is supposed, by viper wine, or some philtre or cosmetic given her by her experimentalising husband in order to heighten her beauty.[444] In one of Ben Jonson's poems there are the following incomparable verses about Lady Venetia:—

> "Draw first a cloud, all save her neck,
> And out of that make day to break,
> Till like her face it do appear,
> And men may think all light rose there."

And again—

> "Not swelling like the ocean proud,
> But stooping gently as a cloud,
> As smooth as oil pour'd forth, and calm
> As showers, and sweet as drops of balm."

Sir Kenelm, when imprisoned in Winchester House, in Southwark, wrote an attack on Sir Thomas Browne's sceptical work *Religio Medici*. He also produced a book on cookery, and a commentary on the *Faerie Queen*. This strange being was buried in Christ Church, Newgate Street.

St. Martin's-in-the-Fields is an ancient parish, but it was first made independent of St. Margaret's, Westminster, in 1535, by that tyrant Henry VIII., who, justly afraid of death, disliked the ceaseless black funeral processions of the outlying people of St. Martin's passing the courtly gate of Whitehall, and who therefore erected a church near Charing [Pg 243] Cross, and constituted its neighbourhood into a parish.[445] In 1607, that unfortunate youth of promise, Henry Prince of Wales, added a chancel to the very small church, which soon proved insufficient for the growing and populous suburb. But though so modern, this parish formerly included in its vast circle St. Paul's Covent Garden, St. James's Piccadilly, St. Anne's Soho, and St. George's Hanover Square. It extended its princely circle as far north as Marylebone, as far south as Whitehall, as far east as the Savoy, and as far west as Chelsea and Kensington. When first rated to the poor in Queen Elizabeth's time it contained less than a hundred rateable persons. The chief inhabitants lived by the river side or close to the church. Pall Mall and Piccadilly were then unnamed, and beyond the church westward were St. James's Fields, Hay-hill Farm, Ebury Farm, and the Neat houses about Chelsea.[446]

In 1638 this overgrown parish, had carved out of it the district of St. Paul's, Covent Garden; in 1684, St. James's, Westminster; and in 1686, St. Anne's, Soho. But even in 1680, Richard Baxter, with brave fervour, denounced what he called "the greatest cure in England,"[447] with its population of forty thousand more persons than the church could hold—people who "lived like Americans, without hearing a sermon for many years." From such parishes of course crept forth Dissenters of all creeds and colours. In 1826 the churchyard was removed to Camden Town, and the street widened, pursuant to 7 George IV. c. 77.

That shrewd native of Aberdeen, Gibbs—a not unworthy successor of Wren—came to London at a fortunate time. Wren was fast dying; Vanbrugh was neglected; there was room for a new architect, and no fear of competition. His first church, St. Martin's, was a great success. Though its steeple was heavy and misplaced, and the exterior flat and without light or shade,[448] the portico was foolishly compared to that of the Parthenon, and was considered [Pg 244] unique for dignity and unity of combination. The interior was so constructed as to render the introduction of further ornaments or of monuments impossible. Savage did but express the general opinion when he wrote with fine pathos—

> "O Gibbs! whose art the solemn fanes can raise,
> Where God delights to dwell and man to praise."

The church was commenced in 1721 and finished in 1726, at a cost of £36,891: 10: 4, including £1500 for an organ.

With all its faults, it is certainly one of the finest buildings in London, next to St. Paul's and the British Museum; but its cardinal fault is the unnatural union of the Gothic steeple and the Grecian portico. The one style is Pagan, the other Christian; the one expresses a sensuous contentment with this earth, the other mounts towards heaven with an eternal aspiration. The steeple leaps like a fountain from among lesser pinnacles that all point upwards. The Grecian portico is a cave of level shadow and of philosophic content.

St. Martin's Church enshrines the dust of some illustrious persons. Here lies Nicholas Hilliard, the miniature-painter to Queen Elizabeth, and who died in 1619. He was a very careful painter, in the manner of Holbein. The great Isaac Oliver was his pupil. He must have had some trouble with the manly queen when she began to turn into a hag and to object to any shadow in her portraits. Near him, in 1621, was buried Paul Vansomer, a Flemish painter, celebrated for his portraits of James I. and his Danish queen. And here rests, too, a third and greater painter, William Dobson, Vandyke's protégé, who, born in an unlucky age, and forgotten amid the tumult of the Civil War, died in 1646, in poverty, in his house in St. Martin's Lane. Dobson had been apprenticed to a picture-dealer, and was discovered in his obscurity by Vandyke, whose style he imitated, giving it, however, a richer colour and more solidity. Charles I. and Prince Rupert both sat to him for their portraits. In this church reposes Sir Theodore Mayerne, an old court physician. His conserve of bats and [Pg 245] scrapings of human skulls could not keep him from the earthy bed it seems. Nicholas Stone, the sculptor, who died 1647, sleeps here (Stone's son was Cibber's master), all unknown to the learned Thomas Stanley, who died in 1678, and was known for his *History of Philosophy* and translation of Æschylus. Here, also, is John Lacey—first a dancing-master, afterwards a trooper, lastly a comedian. He died in 1681. Charles II. was a great admirer of Lacey, but unfortunately more so of Nell Gwynn, who also came to sleep here in 1687. Poor Nell! with her good-nature and simple frankness, she stands out, wanton and extravagant as she was, in pleasant contrast with the proud painted wantons of that infamous court.

If the dead could shudder, Secretary Coventry, who was buried here the year before Nell, must have shuddered at the neighbourhood in which he found himself; for he was the son of Lord Keeper Coventry, who died at Durham House in 1639-40. He had been Commissioner to the Treasury, and had given his name to Coventry Street. This great person became a precedent of burial to the Hon. Robert Boyle. This wise and good man, whom Swift ridiculed, was the inventor of the air-pump, and one of the great promoters of the Royal Society and of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. He died in 1691, and his funeral sermon was

preached by Swift's *bête noir*, that fussy time-server, Bishop Burnet.

In the churchyard lies a far inferior man, Sir John Birkenhead, who died in 1679. He was a great pamphlet-writer for the Royalists, and Lawes set some of his verses to music.[449] He left directions that he should not be buried within the church, as coffins were often removed. In or out of the church was buried Rose, Charles II.'s gardener, the first man to grow a pine-apple in England—a slice of which the king graciously handed to Mr. Evelyn.

Worst of all—a scoundrel, and fool among sensible men—here lies the bully and murderer, Lord Mohun, who fell in a duel in Hyde Park with the Duke of Hamilton, immortalised in Mr. Thackeray's *Esmond*. Mohun died in 1712. Here also, in 1721, came that vile and pretentious French painter, Louis Laguerre, whom Pope justly satirised. He was brought over by Verrio, and painted the "sprawling" "Labours of Hercules" at Hampton Court. He died of apoplexy at Drury Lane Theatre. That clever and determined burglar, Jack Sheppard, is said to have been buried in St. Martin's in 1724. Farquhar, the Irish dramatist, author of "The Beaux' Stratagem," was interred here in 1707. Roubilliac, the French sculptor, who lived close by, was also buried in this spot, and Hogarth attended his funeral. [Pg 246]

Mr. J. T. Smith, author of the *Life of Nollekens*, speaking of his own visits to the vaults of St. Martin's Church, says, "It is a curious fact that Mrs. Rudd requested to be placed near the coffins of the Perreaus. Melancholy as my visits to this vault have been, I frankly own that pleasant recollections have almost invited me to sing, 'Did you ne'er hear of a jolly young waterman?' when passing by the coffin of my father's old friend, Charles Bannister."[450]

Mr. F. Buckland that delightful writer on natural history, who visited the same charnel-house in his search for the body of the great John Hunter, describes the vaults as piled with heaps of leaden coffins, horrible to every sense; but as I write from memory, I will not give the ghastly details.

That indefatigable and too restless exposer of abuses, Daniel Defoe, wrote a pamphlet in 1720 entitled "Parochial Tyranny; or, the Housekeeper's Complaint against the Exactions of Select Vestries." In this pamphlet he published one of the bills of the vestry of St. Martin's in 1713, which contains the following impudent items:—

"Spent at May meetings or visitation	£65	0	4
Ditto at taverns, with ministers, justices, overseers, &c.	72	19	7
Sacrament bread and wine	88	10	0
Paid towards a robbery	21	14	0
Spent for dinner at the Mulberry Gardens	49	13	4"

In 1818 the churchwardens' dinner cost £56: 18s. Archdeacon Potts' sermon on the death of Queen Charlotte not selling, the parish paid the loss, £48: 12: 9. In 1813 the vestry charged the parish £5 for petitioning against the Roman Catholics. [Pg 247]

The Thames watermen have a plot set apart for themselves in St. Martin's Churchyard. These amphibious and pugnacious beings were formerly notorious for their powers of sarcasm, though Dr. Johnson on a celebrated occasion put one of them out of countenance. In spite of coaches and sedan chairs—their horror in the times of the "Water Poet," who must often have ferried Shakspere over to the Globe Theatre at the Bankside—they continued till the days of omnibuses and cheap cabs, rowing and singing, rejoicing in their scarlet tunics, and skimming to and fro over the Thames like swallows.

There is a Westminster tradition of a waterman who pretended to be deaf, and who was much employed by lovers, barristers who wished to air their eloquence, and young M.P.s who wanted to recite their speeches undisturbed.

In 1821 died Copper Holms, a well-known character on the river. He lived, with his wife and children, somewhere along the shore in an ark, which he had artfully framed from a West-country vessel, and which, coppers and all, cost him £150. The City brought an action to compel him to remove the obstruction. The honest fellow was buried in "The Waterman's Churchyard," on the south side of St. Martin's Church.[451]

In 1683 Dr. Thomas Tenison, vicar of the parish, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, lived in this street; he died at Lambeth in 1715. He founded in this parish a school and library. Though Swift did say he was "hot and heavy as a tailor's iron," he seems to have been one of the best and most tolerant of men, notwithstanding he attacked Hobbes and Bellarmine with his pen. He worked bravely during the plague, and was princely in his charities during the dreadful winter of 1683. It was he who prepared Monmouth for death, and smoothed Queen Mary's dying pillow. He was a steady friend of William of Orange. [Pg 248]

Two doors from Slaughter's, on the west side, but lower down, lived Ambrose Philips, from 1720 to 1724. Pope laughed at his "Pastorals," which had been overpraised by Tickell. Though a friend of Addison and Steele, his sprightly but effeminate copies of verses procured him from Henry Carey the name of "Namby Pamby." His "Winter Scene," a sketch of a Danish winter, is, however, admirable.

Ambrose Philips was laughed at for advertising in the *London Gazette*, of January 1714, for

contributions to a *Poetical Miscellany*. He was a Leicestershire man, and chiefly remarkable for translating Racine's "Distressed Mother." When the Whigs came into power under George I. he was put into the commission of the peace, and made a Commissioner of the Lottery. He afterwards became Registrar of the Prerogative Court at Dublin, wrote in the *Free Thinker*, and died in 1749. Pope laughed at the small poet as—

> "The bard whom pilfered Pastorals renown,
> Who turns a Persian tale for half-a-crown,
> Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
> And strains from hide-bound brains eight lines a year."[452]

It was always one of Pope's keenest strokes to call a man poor. Philips, in 1714, had industriously translated the *Thousand and One Days*, a series of Persian tales, and gained very honourably earned money. The wasp of Twickenham, whose malice never grew old, sketched Philips again as "Macer," a simple, harmless fellow, who borrowed ends of verse, and whose highest ambition was "to wear red stockings and to dine with Steele." Ambrose, naturally indignant to hear himself accused of stealing the little fame he had, very spiritedly hung up a birch at the bar of Button's Coffee-house, with which he threatened to chastise the Æsop of the age if he dared show himself, but Pope wisely stayed at home.[453]

The first house from the corner of Newport Street, on the right hand going to Charing Cross, [Pg 249] was occupied by Beard, the celebrated public singer, who in 1738-9 married Lady Henrietta Herbert, the only daughter of the Earl Waldegrave. After her death the widower married the daughter of Mr. John Rich, the inventor of English pantomime, the best harlequin that probably ever lived, and the patentee of Covent Garden Theatre from 1732 to 1762. The parlour of the house had two windows facing the south towards Charing Cross. Here Mr. J. T. Smith describes his father smoking a pipe with Beard and George Lambert, the latter the founder of the Beef-steak Club and the clever scene-painter of Covent Garden Theatre. The fire of 1808 destroyed most of Lambert's work with the theatre.[454]

Next to this house stood "Old Slaughter's" Coffee-house, the great haunt of artists from Hogarth to Wilkie. Towards the end of its existence it was the head-quarters of naval and military officers before the establishment of West End Clubs. It was pulled down in 1844 to make way for the new street between Long Acre and Leicester Square. The original landlord, John Slaughter, started it in 1692, and died about 1740.[455] It first became known as "Old Slaughter's" in 1760, when an opposition set up in the street under the name of "Young" or "New Slaughter's."

There is a foolish tradition that the coffee-house derived its name from being frequented by the butchers of Newport Market. Mr. Smith gives a charming chapter on the frequenters of this old haunt of Dryden and afterwards of Pope. The first he mentions was Mr. Ware, the architect, who published a folio edition of Palladio, the great Italian architect of Elizabeth's time. Ware was originally a chimney-sweeper's boy in Charles Court, Strand; but being one day seen chalking houses on the front of Whitehall, a gentleman passing became his patron, educated him, and sent him to Italy. His bust was one of Roubilliac's best works. His skin is [Pg 250] said to have retained the stain of soot to the day of his death.[456]

Gravelot, who kept a drawing-school in the Strand, nearly opposite Southampton Street, was another frequenter of Old Slaughter's. Henri François Bourignon Gravelot was born in Paris in 1699, and died in that city in 1773. His drawings were always minutely finished, and his designs tasteful, particularly those which he etched himself for Sir John Hanmer's small edition of Shakspere. He found an excellent engraver in poor Charles Grignon, Le Bas' pupil, who in his old age was driven off the field, fell into poverty, and so remained till he died in 1810, aged 94.

John Gwynn, the architect, who lived in Little Court, Castle Street, Leicester Fields, also frequented this house. He built the bridge at Shrewsbury, and wrote a work on London improvements, which his friend Dr. Johnson revised and prefaced. The doctor also wrote strongly in favour of Gwynn's talent and integrity when he was unsuccessfully competing with Mylne for the erection of old Blackfriars Bridge.

Hogarth, too, "used" Slaughter's, and came there to rail at the "black old masters," the follies of patrons, and the knavery of dealers. Here he would banter and brag, and sketch odd faces on his thumb-nail. Perhaps the "Midnight Conversation" was partly derived from convivial scenes in St. Martin's Lane.

Roubilliac, the eccentric French sculptor, was another habitué of the place. His house and studio were opposite on the east side of the lane, and were approached by a long passage and gateway. Here his friends must have listened to his rhapsodies in broken English about his great statues of Handel, Sir Isaac Newton, and that of Shakspere now at the British Museum, which cost Garrick, who left it to the nation, three hundred guineas.[457]

That pompous and wretched portrait-painter, Hudson, Reynolds's master and Richardson's pupil, used also to frequent Slaughter's. Hudson was the most ignorant of painters, yet he [Pg 251] was for a time the fashion. He painted the portraits of the members of the Dilettanti Society, and was a great and ignorant collector of Rembrandt etchings. Hogarth used to call him, in his brusque way, "a fat-headed fellow."

Here Hogarth would meet his own engraver, M'Ardell, who lived in Henrietta Street. One of

the finest English mezzotints in respect of brilliancy is Hogarth's portrait of Captain Coram, the brave old originator of the Foundling Hospital, by M'Ardell. His engravings after Reynolds are superb. That painter himself said that they would immortalise him.[458]

Here, also, came Luke Sullivan, another of Hogarth's engravers, from the White Bear, Piccadilly. His etching of "The March to Finchley" is considered exquisite.[459] Sullivan was also an exquisite miniature-painter, particularly of female heads. He was a handsome, lively, reckless fellow, and died in miserable poverty.

At Slaughter's, too, Hogarth must have met the unhappy Theodore Gardelle, the miniature-painter, who afterwards murdered his landlady in the Haymarket and burnt her body. Hogarth is said to have sketched him in his ghostly white cap on the day of his execution. Gardelle, like Greenacre, pleaded that he killed the woman by an accidental blow, and then destroyed the body in fear. Foote notices his gibbet in *The Mayor of Garratt*.

Old Moser, keeper of the drawing academy in Peter's Court—Roubilliac's old rooms—was often to be seen at the same haunt. Moser was a German Swiss, a gold-chaser and enameller; he became keeper of the Royal Academy in 1768. His daughter painted flowers.

That great painter, poor old Richard Wilson, neglected and almost starved by the senseless art-patrons of his day, occasionally came to Slaughter's, probably to meet his countryman, blind Parry, the Welsh harper and great draught-player.

And, last of all, we must mention Nathanael Smith, the engraver, and Mr. Rawle, the accoutrement maker in the Strand, and the inseparable companion of Captain Grose, the great antiquary, on whom Burns wrote poems—a learned, fat, jovial Falstaff of a man, who compiled an indecorous but clever slang dictionary. It was at Rawle's sale that Dickey Suett bought Charles II.'s black wig, which he wore for years in "Tom Thumb." [Pg 252]

Nos. 76 and 77 St. Martin's Lane were originally one house, built by Payne, the architect of Salisbury Street and the original Lyceum. He built two small houses in his garden for his friends Gwynn, the competitor for Blackfriars Bridge, and Wale, the Royal Academy lecturer on perspective, and well-known book-illustrator. The entrances were in Little Court, Castle Street. In old times the street on this side, from Beard's Court, to St. Martin's Court, was called the Pavement; but the road has since been heightened three feet.

Below Payne's, in Hogarth's time, lived a bookseller named Harding, a seller of old prints, and author of a little book on the *Monograms of Old Engravers*. It was to this shop that Wilson, the sergeant painter, took an etching of his own, which was sold to Hudson as a genuine Rembrandt. That same night, by agreement, Wilson invited Hogarth and Hudson to supper. When the cold sirloin came in, Scott, the marine-painter, called out, "A sail, a sail!" for the beef was stuck with skewers bearing impressions of the new Rembrandt, of which Hudson was so proud.[460]

Nos. 88 and 89 were built on the site of a large mansion, the staircase of which was adorned with allegorical figures. It was here that Hogarth's particular friend, John Pine, lived. Pine was the engraver and publisher of the scenes from the Armada tapestry in the House of Lords, now destroyed. He was a round, fat, oily man; and Hogarth drew him, much to his annoyance, as the fat friar eyeing the beef at the "Gate of Calais." His son Robert, who painted one of the best portraits of Garrick, and carried off the hundred guinea prize of the Society of Arts for his picture of the "Siege of Calais," also lived here, and, after him, Dr. Gartshore. [Pg 253]

The house No. 96, on the west side, was Powell the colourman's in 1828; it had then a Queen Anne door-frame, with spread-eagle and carved foliage and flowers, like the houses in Carey Street and Great Ormond Street, and a shutter sliding in grooves in the old-fashioned way. Mr. Powell's mother made for many years annually a pipe of wine from the produce of a vine nearly a hundred feet long.[461] This house had a large staircase, painted with figures in procession, by a French artist named Clermont, who claimed one thousand guineas for his work, and received five hundred. Behind the house was the room which Hogarth has painted in "Marriage à la Mode." The quack is Dr. Misaubin, whose vile portrait the satirist has given. The savage fat woman is his Irish wife. Dr. Misaubin, who lived in this house, was the son of a pastor of the Spitalfields French Church. The quack realised a great fortune by a famous pill. His son was murdered; his grandson squandered his money, and died in St. Martin's Workhouse.

No. 104 was at one time the residence of Sir James Thornhill, Hogarth's august father-in-law, a poor yet pretentious painter, who decorated St. Paul's. He painted the staircase wall with allegories that were existing some years since in good condition. The junior Van Nost, the sculptor, afterwards lived here—the same artist who took that mask of Garrick's face which afterwards belonged to the elder Mathews. After him, before 1768, came Hogarth's convivial artist-friend, Francis Hayman, who decorated Vauxhall and illustrated countless books. Perhaps it was here that the Marquis of Granby, before sitting to the painter, had a round or two of sparring. Sir Joshua Reynolds, too, a graver and colder man, came to live here before he went to Great Newport Street.

New Slaughter's, at No. 82 in 1828, was established about 1760, and was demolished in 1843-44, when the new avenue of Garrick Street was made between Long Acre and Leicester Square. It was much frequented by artists who wished cheap fare and good [Pg 254]

society. Roubilliac was often to be found here. Wilkie long after enjoyed his frugal dinners here at a small cost. He was always the last dropper-in, and was never seen to dine in the house before dark. The fact is, the patient young Scotchman always slaved at his art till the last glimpse of daylight had disappeared below the red roofs.

Upon the site of the present Quakers' Meeting-house in St. Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, stood Roubilliac's first studio after he left Cheere. Here he executed, with ecstatic raptures at his own genius, his great statue of Handel for Vauxhall. Here afterwards a drawing academy was started, Mr. Michael Moser being chosen the keeper. Reynolds, Mortimer, Nollekens, and M'Ardell were among the earliest members. Hogarth presented to it some of his father-in-law's casts, but opposed the principle of cheap education to young artists, declaring that every foolish father would send his boy there to keep him out of the streets, and so the profession would be overstocked. In this academy the students sat to each other for drapery, and had also male and female models—sometimes in groups.

Amongst the early members of the St. Martin's Lane Academy were the following:—Moser, afterwards keeper of the Academy; Hayman, Hogarth's friend; Wale, the book-illustrator; Cipriani, famous for his book-prints; Allan Ramsay, Reynolds's rival; F. M. Newton; Charles Catton, the prince of coach-painters; Zoffany, the dramatic portrait-painter; Collins, the sculptor, who modelled Hayman's "Don Quixote;" Jeremy Meyer; William Woollett, the great engraver; Anthony Walker, also an engraver; Linnel, a carver in wood; John Mortimer, the Salvator Rosa of that day; Rubinstein, a drapery-painter and drudge to the portrait-painters; James Paine, son of the architect of the Lyceum; Tilly Kettle, who went to the East, painted several rajahs, and then died near Aleppo; William Pars, who was sent to Greece by the Dilettanti Society; Vandergutch, a painter who turned picture-dealer; Charles Grignon, the [Pg 255] engraver; C. Norton, Charles Sherlock, and Charles Bibb, also engravers; Richmond, Keeble, Evans, Roper, Parsons, and Black, now forgotten; Russell, the crayon-painter; Richmond Cosway, the miniature-painter, a fop and a mystic; W. Marlowe, a landscape-painter; Messrs. Griggs, Rowe, Dubourg, Taylor, Dance, and Ratcliffe, pupils of gay Frank Hayman; Richard Earlom, engraver of the "Liber Veritatis" of Claude for the Duke of Richmond; J. A. Gresse, a fat artist who taught the queen and princesses drawing; Giuseppe Marchi, an assistant of Reynolds; Thomas Beech; Lambert, a sculptor, and pupil of Roubilliac; Reed, another pupil of the same great artist, who aided in executing the skeleton on Mrs. Nightingale's monument, and was famous for his pancake clouds; Biaggio Rebecca, the decorator; Richard Wilson, the great landscape-painter; Terry, Lewis Lattifere, John Seton, David Martin, Burgess; Burch, the medallist; John Collett, an imitator of Hogarth; Nollekens, the sculptor; Reynolds, and, of course, Hogarth himself, the *primum mobile*.[462]

No. 112 was in old times one of those apothecaries' shops with bottled snakes in the windows. It was kept by Leake, the inventor of a "diet-drink" once as famous as Lockyer's pill.

Frank Hayman, one of these St. Martin's Lane worthies, was originally a scene-painter at Drury Lane. He was with Hogarth at Moll King's when Hogarth drew the girl squirting brandy at the other for his picture in the *Rake's Progress*. Hayman was a Devonshire man, and a pupil of Brown. When he buried his wife, a friend asked him why he spent so much money on the funeral. "Oh, sir," replied the droll, revelling fellow, "she would have done as much or more for me with pleasure."

Quin and Hayman were inseparable boon companions. One night, after "beating the rounds," they both fell into the kennel. Presently Hayman, sprawling out his shambling legs, [Pg 256] kicked his bedfellow Quin. "Hallo! what are you at now?" growled the Welsh actor. "At? why, endeavouring to get up, to be sure, for this don't suit my palate." "Pooh!" replied Quin, "remain where you are; the watchman will come by shortly, and he will *take us both up*!"[463]

No. 113 was occupied by Thomas Major, a die-engraver to the Stamp Office, a pupil of Le Bas, and an excellent reproducer of subjects from Teniers. He was also an engraver of landscapes after pictures by Ferg, one of the artists employed with Sir James Thornhill at the Chelsea china manufactory.

The old watch-house or round-house used to stand exactly opposite the centre of the portico of Gibbs's church.[464] There is a rare etching which represents its front during a riot. Stocks, elaborately carved with vigorous figures of a man being whipped by the hangman, stood near the wall of the watch-house. The carving, much mutilated, was preserved in the vaults under the church.

Near the stocks, with an entrance from the King's Mews, stood "the Barn," afterwards called "the Canteen," which was a great resort of the chess, draught, and whist players of the City.

At the south-west corner of St. Martin's Lane was the shop of Jefferys, the geographer to King George III.

No. 20 was a public-house, latterly the Portobello, with Admiral Vernon's ship, well painted by Monamy, for its sign. The date, 1638, was on the front of this house, now removed.

No. 114 stands on the site of the old house of the Earls of Salisbury. Before the alterations of 1827 there were vestiges of the old building remaining. It has been a constant tradition in the lane, that in this house, in James II.'s reign, the seven bishops were lodged before they

were conveyed to the Tower.

Opposite old Salisbury House stood a turnpike, and the tradition in the lane is that the Earl of Salisbury obtained its removal as a nuisance. At that time the church was literally in the fields. The turnpike-house stood (circa 1760) on the site of No. 28, afterwards (in 1828) Pullen's wine-vaults. The Westminster Fire Office was first established in St. Martin's Lane, between Chandos Street and May's Buildings. [Pg 257]

The White Horse livery-stables were originally tea-gardens,[465] and south of these was a hop-garden. The oldest house in the lane overhung the White Horse stables, and was standing in 1828.

No. 60 was formerly Chippendale's, the great upholsterer and cabinet-maker, whose folio work was the great authority in the trade before Mr. Hope's classic style overthrew for a time that of Louis Quatorze.

No. 63 formerly led to Roubilliac's studio. Here, in 1828, the Sunday paper *The Watchman*, was printed.

It must have been here, in the sculptor's time, that Garrick, coming to see how his Shakspere statue progressed, drew out a two-foot rule, and put on a tragic and threatening face to frighten a great red-headed Yorkshireman, who was sawing marble for Roubilliac; but who, to his surprise, merely rolled his quid, and coolly said, "What trick are you after next, my little master?" Upon the honest sculptor's death, Read, one of his pupils, a conceited pretender, took the premises in 1762, and advertised himself as "Mr. Roubilliac's successor."

Read executed the poor monuments of the Duchess of Northumberland and of Admiral Tyrrell, now in Westminster Abbey. His master used to say to Read when he was bragging, "Ven you do de monument, den de varld vill see vot von d— ting you vill make." Nollekens used to say of the admiral's monument, "That figure going to heaven out of the sea looks for all the world as if it were hanging from a gallows with a rope round its neck."[466]

No. 70 was formerly the house where Mr. Hone held his exhibition when his picture of "The Conjuror," intended to ridicule Sir Joshua Reynolds as a plagiarist, and to insult Miss Angelica Kaufmann, was refused admittance at Somerset House. Mr. Nathanael Hone was a miniature-painter on enamel, who attempted oil pictures and grew envious of Reynolds. Hone was a tall, pompous, big, erect man, who wore a broad brimmed hat and a lapelled coat, punctiliously buttoned up to his chin. He walked with a measured, stately step, and spoke with an air of great self-importance—in this sort of way: "Joseph Nollekens, Esq., R.A., how—do—you—do?"[467] [Pg 258]

The corner house of Long Acre, now 72, formed part of the extensive premises of Mr. Cobb, George III.'s upholsterer—a proud, pompous man, who always strutted about his workshops in full dress. It was Dance's portrait of Mr. Cobb, given in exchange for a table, that led to Dance's acquaintance with Garrick. One day in the library at Buckingham House, old King George asked Cobb to hand him a certain book. Instead of doing so, mistaken Cobb called to a man who was at work on a ladder, and said, "Fellow, give me that book." The king instantly rose and asked the man's name. "Jenkins," replied the astonished upholsterer. "Then," observed the good old king, "Jenkins shall hand me the book."[468]

Alderman Boydell, the great encourager of art, when he first began with half a shop, used to etch small plates of landscapes in sets of six for sixpence. As there were few print-shops then in London, he prevailed upon the proprietors of toy-shops to put them in their windows for sale. Every Saturday he went the round of the shops to see what had been done, or to take more. His most successful shop was "The Cricket-Bat," in Duke's Court, St. Martin's Lane.[469]

Abraham Raimbach, the engraver, was born in Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, in 1776. Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his early period, lived nearly opposite May's Buildings. He afterwards went to Great Newport Street, where he first met Dr. Johnson.

O'Keefe describes being in a coffee-house in St. Martin's Lane on the very morning when the famous No. 45 came out. The unconscious newsman came in, and, as a matter of course, laid the paper on the table before him. About the year 1777 O'Keefe was standing talking with his brother at Charing Cross, when a slender figure in a scarlet coat with a large bag, and fierce three-cocked hat, crossed the way, carefully choosing his steps, the weather being wet —it was John Wilkes.[470] [Pg 259]

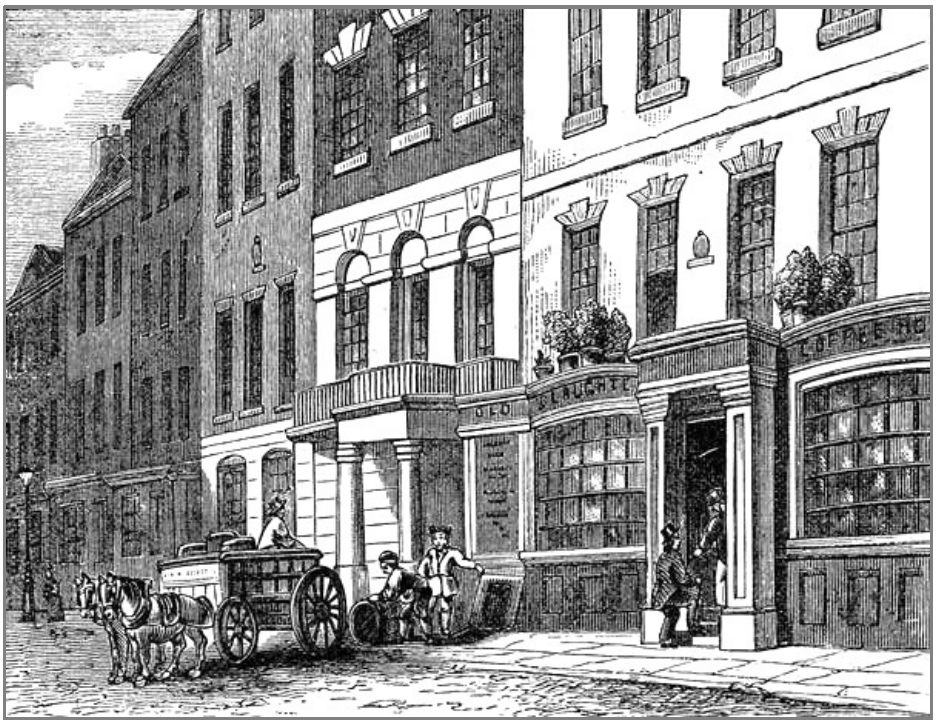
When Fuseli returned to London in 1779, after his foreign tour, he resided with a portrait painter named Cartwright, at No. 100 St. Martin's Lane,[471] and he remained there till his marriage with Miss Rawlins in 1788, when he removed to Foley Street. Here he commenced his acquaintance with Professor Bonnycastle, and produced his popular picture of "The Nightmare" (1781), by which the publisher of the print realised £500. Here also he revised Cowper's version of the *Iliad*, and became acquainted with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Moore, the author of *Zeluco*.

May's Buildings bear the date of 1739. Mr. May, who built them, lived at No. 43, which he ornamented with pilasters and a cornice. This house used to be thought a good specimen of

architectural brickwork.

The club of “The Eccentrics,” in May’s Buildings, was, in 1812, much frequented by the eloquent Richard Lalor Sheil, by William Mudford, the editor of the *Courier*, a man of logical and sarcastic power,—and by “Pope Davis,” an artist, in later years a great friend of the unfortunate Haydon. “Pope Davis” was so called from having painted, when in Rome, a large picture of the “Presentation of the Shrewsbury Family to the Pope.”[472]

The Royal Society of Literature, at 4 St. Martin’s Place, Charing Cross, was founded in 1823, “for the advancement of literature,” on which at present it has certainly had no very perceptible influence. It was incorporated by royal charter Sept. 13, 1826. George IV. gave 1000 guineas a year to this body, which rescued the last years of Coleridge’s wasted life [Pg 260] from utter dependence, and placed Dr. Jamieson above want. William IV. discontinued the lavish grant of a king who was generous only with other people’s money, and was always in debt; and since that the somewhat effete society has sunk into a Transaction Publishing Society, or rather a club with an improving library. Sir Walter Scott’s opposition to the society was as determined as Hogarth’s against the Royal Academy. “The immediate and direct favour of the sovereign,” said Scott, who had a superstitious respect for any monarch, “is worth the patronage of ten thousand societies.” Literature wants no patronage now, thank God, but only intelligent purchasers; and whether a king does or does not read an author’s work, is of small consequence to any writer.

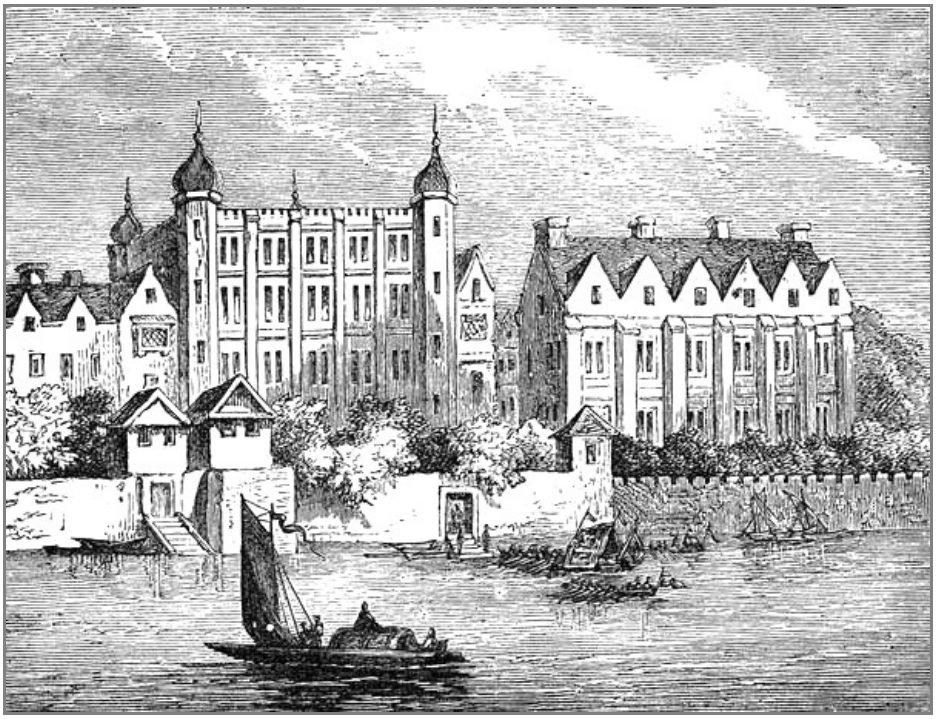


OLD SLAUGHTER’S COFFEE-HOUSE.

Admission to the Royal Society of Literature is obtained by a certificate, signed by three [Pg 261] members, and an election by ballot. Ordinary members pay three guineas on admission, and two guineas annually, or compound by a payment of twenty guineas. The society devotes itself for the most part to the study of Greek and Latin inscriptions and Egyptian literature.[473] This learned body also professes to fix the standard of the English language; to read papers on history, poetry, philosophy, and philology; to correspond with learned men in foreign countries; to reward literary merit; and to publish unedited remains of ancient literature.

St. Martin’s Lane has seen many changes. Cranbourne Alley is gone with all its bonnet-shops, and the Mews and C’ribbee Islands are no more, but there still remain a few old houses, with brick pilasters and semi-Grecian pediments, to remind us of the days of Fuseli and Reynolds, Hayman and Old Slaughter’s, Hogarth and Roubilliac. I can assure my readers that a most respectable class of ghosts haunts the artist quarter in St. Martin’s Lane.

[Pg 262]



SALISBURY AND WORCESTER HOUSES, 1630.

CHAPTER XI.

LONG ACRE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.

At the latter end of 1664, says Defoe, two men, said to be Frenchmen, died of the plague at the Drury Lane end of Long Acre. Dr. Hodges, however, a greater authority than Defoe, who wrote fifty-seven years after the event, says merely that the pestilence broke out in Westminster, and that two or three persons dying, the frightened neighbours removed into the City, and there carried the contagion. He, however, distinctly states that the pest came to us from Holland, and most probably in a parcel of infected goods from Smyrna.[474] [Pg 263]

According to Defoe, the family with which the Frenchmen had lodged endeavoured to conceal the deaths; but the rumour growing, the Secretary of State heard of it, and sent two physicians and a surgeon to inspect the bodies. They certifying that the men had really died of the plague, the parish clerk returned the deaths to “the Hall,” and they were printed in the weekly bill of mortality. “The people showed a great concern at this, and began to be alarmed all over the town.”[475] At Christmas Dr. Hodges attended a case of plague, and shortly afterwards a proclamation was issued for placing watchmen day and night at the doors of infected houses, which were to be marked with a red St. Andrew cross and the subscription “Lord have mercy upon us!”[476] By the next September the terrible disease had risen to its height, and the deaths ranged as high as 12,000 a week, and in the worst night after the bonfires had been burned in the street, to 4000 in the twelve hours.[477]

Great Queen Street, so called after Henrietta Maria, the imprudent but brave wife of Charles I., was built about 1629, before the troubles. Howes (editor of Stow) speaks in 1631, of “the new fair buildings leading into Drury Lane.”[478] Many of the houses were built by Webb, one of Inigo Jones’s scholars. The south was the fashionable side, looking towards the Pancras fields; most of the north side houses must, therefore, be of a later date. According to one authority Inigo Jones himself built Queen Street, at the cost of the Jesuits, designing it for a square, and leaving in the middle a niche for the statue of Queen Henrietta. “The stately and magnificent houses,” begun on the other side near Little Queen Street, were not continued. There were fleurs-de-luce placed on the walls in honour of the queen.[479]

George Digby, the second Earl of Bristol, lived in Great Queen Street, in a large house with seven rooms on a floor, a long gallery, and gardens. Evelyn describes going to see him (probably there), to consult about the site of Greenwich Hospital, with Denham the poet and surveyor, and one of Inigo Jones’s clerks. Digby was a Knight of the Garter, who first wrote against Popery and then converted himself. He persecuted Lord Strafford, yet then turning courtier, lived long enough to persecute Lord Clarendon. Grammont, Bussy, and Clarendon all decry the earl; and Horace Walpole writes wittily of him—“With great parts, he always hurt himself and his friends; with romantic bravery, he was always an unsuccessful commander. He spoke for the Test Act, though a Roman Catholic, and addicted himself to astrology on the birthday of true philosophy.”[480] [Pg 264]

In 1671 Evelyn describes the earl’s house as taken by the Commissioners of Trade and

Plantations, of which he was one, and furnished with tapestry “of the king’s.” The Duke of Buckingham, the earl of Sandwich (Pepys’s patron), the Earl of Lauderdale, Sir John Finch, Waller the poet, and saturnine Colonel Titus (the author of the terrible pamphlet against Cromwell, *Killing no Murder*) were the new occupants.

They sat, says Evelyn, at the board in the council chamber, a very large room furnished with atlases, maps, charts, and globes. The first day’s debate was an ominous one: it related to the condition of New England, which had grown rich, strong, and “very independent as to their regard to Old England or his majesty. The colony was able to contest with all the other plantations,[481] and there was fear of her breaking from her dependence. Some of the council were for sending a menacing letter, but others who better understood the peevish and touchy humour of that colony were utterly against it.” A few weeks afterwards Evelyn was at the council, when a letter was read from Jamaica, describing how Morgan, the Welsh buccaneer, had sacked and burned Panama; the bravest thing of the kind done since Drake. [Pg 265] Morgan, who cheated his companions and stole their spoil, afterwards came to England, and was, like detestable Blood, received at court.

Lord Chancellor Finch, Earl of Nottingham, who lived in Great Queen Street, presided as Lord High Steward at Lord Strafford’s trial, at which Evelyn was present, noticing the ill-bred impudence of Titus Oates.[482] Finch was the son of a recorder of London, and died in 1681. He was living here when that impudent thief, Sadler, stole the mace and purse, and carried them off in procession.

The choleric and Quixotic Lord Herbert of Cherbury lived in Great Queen Street, in a house on the south side, a few doors east of Great Wyld Street. Here he began his wild Deistic work, *De Veritate*, published in Paris in 1624, and in London three years before his death. He says that he finished this rhapsody in France, where it was praised by Tilenus, an Arminian professor at Sedan, and an opponent of the Calvinists, which procured him a pension from James I., and also from the learned Grotius when he came to Paris, after his escape in a linen-chest from the Calvinist fortress of Louvestein. Urged to publish by friends, Lord Herbert, afraid of the censure his book might receive, was relieved from his doubts by what his vanity and heated imagination pleased to consider a vision from heaven.

This Welsh Quixote says, “Being thus doubtful in my chamber one fair day in the summer, my casement being open towards the south, the sun shining clear and no wind stirring, I took my book, *De Veritate*, in my hand, and kneeling on my knees, devoutly said these words: ‘Oh, thou eternal God, author of the light which now shines upon me, and giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech thee of thy infinite goodness to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make. I am not satisfied enough whether I shall publish this book, *De Veritate*. If it be for thy glory, I beseech thee to give me some sign from heaven; if not, I [Pg 266] shall suppress it!’ I had no sooner spoken these words, but a *loud though gentle noise*[483] came from the heavens (for it was like nothing on earth), which did so comfort and cheer me that I took my petition as granted. And this (however strange it may seem) I protest before the eternal God is true. Neither am I in any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only hear the noise, but in the serenest sky that ever I saw—being without *all* cloud—did, to my thinking, see the place from whence it came.”

The noise was probably some child falling from a chair overhead, or a chest of drawers being moved in an upper room; and if it *had* been thunder in a clear sky, it was no more than Horace once heard. Heaven does not often express its approval of Deistical books. Lord Herbert, doubted of general, and yet believed in individual revelation. What crazy vanity, to think the work of an amateur philosopher of sufficient importance for a special revelation, [484] that (in his own opinion) had been denied to a neglected world! Lord Herbert, though refused the sacrament by Usher, bore it very serenely, asked what o’clock it was, then said, “An hour hence I shall depart,” turned his head to the other side, and expired.[485] He had moved to this quarter from King Street. Lord Herbert, though he wrote a Life to vindicate that brutal tyrant Henry VIII., was inconsistent enough to join the Parliament against a less wise but more illegal king, Charles I. When I pass down Queen Street, wondering whether that southern window of the Welsh knight’s vision was on the front of the south side, or on the back of the southern side of the street, I sometimes think of those soft lines of his upon the question “whether love should continue for ever?”

> “Having interr’d her infant birth,
> The watery ground that late did mourn
> Was strew’d with flowers for the return
> Of the wish’d bridegroom of the earth.
>
> [Pg 267]
>
> “The well-accorded birds did sing
> Their hymns unto the pleasant time,
> And in a sweet consorted chime,
> Did welcome in the cheerful spring.”

And then on my return home, I get out brave old Ben Jonson, and read his lines addressed to this last of the knights:—

> “... and on whose every part
> Truth might spend all her voice, Fame all her art.
> Whether thy learning they would take, or wit,

Or valour, or thy judgment seasoning it,
Thy standing upright to thyself, thy ends
Like straight, thy piety to God and friends."

Sir Thomas Fairfax, general of the Parliament, probably lived here, as he dated from this street a printed proclamation of the 12th of February 1648.

Sir Godfrey Kneller, the great portrait painter of William and Mary's reign, but more especially of Queen Anne's time, once lived in a house in this street. Sir Godfrey, though a humorist, was the vainest of men, and was made rather a butt by his friends Pope and Gay. Kneller was the son of a surveyor at Lübeck, and intended for the army. King George I., who created him a baronet, was the last of the sovereigns who sat to him. Sir Godfrey was the successor of Sir Peter Lely in England, but was still more slight and careless in manner. His portraits may be often known by the curls being thrown behind the back, while in Lely's portraits they fall over the shoulders and chest. Kneller was a humorist, but very vain, as a man might well be whom Dryden, Pope, Addison, Prior, Tickell, and Steele had eulogised in verse. On one occasion, when Pope was sitting watching Kneller paint, he determined to fool him "to the top of his bent." "Do you not think, Sir Godfrey," said the little poet, slily, "that, if God had had your advice at the creation, he would have made a much better world?" The painter turned round sharply from his easel, fixed his eyes on Pope, and laying one hand on his deformed shoulder, replied, "Fore Gott, Mister Pope, I theenk I shoode."

There was wit in all Kneller's banter, and even when his quaint sayings told against himself, [Pg 268] they seemed to reflect the humour of a man conscious of the ludicrous side of his own vanity. To his tailor who brought him his son to offer him as an apprentice emulative of Annibale Caracci, whose father had also sat cross-legged, Sir Godfrey said, grandly, "Dost thou think, man, I can make thy son a painter? No; God Almighty only makes painters." To a low fellow whom he overheard cursing himself he said, "God damn you? No, God may damn the Duke of Marlborough, and perhaps Sir Godfrey Kneller; but do you think he will take the trouble of damning such a scoundrel as you?"[486]

Gay on one occasion read some verses to Sir Godfrey (probably those describing Pope's imaginary welcome from Greece) in which these outrageous lines occur—

"What can the extent of his vast soul confine—
A painter, critic, engineer, divine?"

Upon which Kneller, remembering that he had been intended for a soldier, and perhaps scenting out the joke, said, "Ay, Mr. Gay, all vot you 'ave said is very faine and very true, but you 'ave forgot von theeng, my good friend. Egad, I should have been a general of an army, for ven I vos in Venice there vos a *girandole*, and all the Place of St. Mark vos in a smoke of gunpowder, and I did like the smell, Mr. Gay—should have been a great general, Mr. Gay."[487]

His dream, too, was related by Pope to Spence as a good story of the German's droll vanity. Kneller thought he had ascended by a very high hill to heaven, and there found St. Peter at the gate, dealing with a vast crowd of applicants. To one he said, "Of what sect was you?" "I was a Papist." "Go you there." "What was you?" "A Protestant." "Go you there." "And you?" "A Turk." "Go you there." In the meantime St. Luke had descried the painter, and asking if he was not the famous Sir Godfrey Kneller, entered into conversation with him about his [Pg 269] beloved art, so that Sir Godfrey quite forgot about St. Peter till he heard a voice behind him —St. Peter's—call out, "Come in, Sir Godfrey, and take whatever place you like."[488]

Pope is said to have ridiculed his friend under the name of Helluo.[489] He certainly laughed at his justice in dismissing a soldier who had stolen a joint of meat, and blaming the butcher who had put it in the rogue's way. Whenever he saw a constable, followed by a mob, coming up to his house at Whitton, he would call out to him, "Mr. Constable, you see that turning; go that way; you will find an ale-house, the sign of the King's Head: go and make it up."[490]

Jacob Tonson got pictures out of Kneller, covetous as he was, by praising him extravagantly, and sending him haunches of fat venison and dozens of cool claret. Sir Godfrey used to say to Vandergucht, "Oh, my goot man, this old Jacob loves me. He is a very goot man, for you see he loves me, he sends me goot things. The venison vos fat." Old Geckie, the surgeon, however, got a picture or two even cheaper, for he sent no present, but then his praises were as fat as Jacob's venison.[491]

Sir Godfrey used to get very angry if any doubt was expressed as to the legitimacy of the Pretender. "His father and mother have sat to me about thirty-six times a-piece, and I know every line and bit of their faces. Mine Gott, I could paint King James *now* by memory. I say the child is so like both, that there is not a feature in his face but what belongs to either father or mother—nay, the nails of his fingers are his mother's—the queen that was. Doctor, you may be out in your letters, but I cannot be out in my lines."[492]

Kneller had intended Hogarth's father-in-law, Sir James Thornhill, to paint his staircase at Whitton, but hearing that Newton was sitting to him, he was in dudgeon, declared that no [Pg 270] portrait-painter should paint his house, and employed "sprawling" Laguerre instead.

Kneller's prices were fifteen guineas for a head, twenty if with only one hand, thirty for a half, and sixty for a whole length. He painted much too fast and flimsily, and far too much by

the help of foreign assistants—in fact, avowedly to fill his kitchen. In thirty years he made a large fortune, in spite of losing £20,000 in the South Sea Bubble. His wigs, drapery, and backgrounds were all painted for him. He is said to have left at his death 500 unfinished portraits.[493] His favourite work, the portrait of a Chinese converted and brought over by Couplet, a Jesuit, is at Windsor. But Walpole preferred his Grinling Gibbons at Houghton.

Kneller left his house in Great Queen Street to his wife, and after her decease to his godson Godfrey Huckle, who took the name of Kneller. Amongst the celebrated persons painted by Kneller in his best manner were Bolingbroke, Wren, Lady Wortley Montague, Pope, Locke, Burnet, Addison, Evelyn, and the Earl of Peterborough. The brittleness of this man's fame is another proof that he who paints merely for his time must perish with his time.

Conway House was in Great Queen Street. Lord Conway, an able soldier, brought up by Lord Vere, his uncle, was an epicure, who by his agreeable conversation was very acceptable at the court of Charles I.[494] He had the misfortune to be utterly routed by the Scotch at Newburn—a defeat which gave them Newcastle. The previous Lord Conway was that Secretary of State of whom James I. said, "Steenie has given me two proper servants—a secretary (Conway) who can neither write nor read, and a groom of the bedchamber (Mr. Clarke, a one-handed man) who cannot truss my points."[495] It had been well for England if this sottish pedant had had no worse servants than Conway and Clarke. Raleigh might then have been spared, and Overbuy would not have been poisoned.

Lord Conway, whose son, General Conway, was such an idol of Horace Walpole, lived in the family house in Great Queen Street. [Pg 271]

Winchester House was not far off. Lord Pawlet figures in all the early scenes of the Civil War. He was one of the first nobles to raise forces in the West for the wrong-headed king. On one occasion Basing House was all but lost by a plot hatched between Waller and the Marquis of Winchester's brother, but it was detected in time to save that important place. Basing, after three months' siege by a conjunction of Parliament troops from Hampshire and Essex, was gallantly succoured by Colonel Gage. The Marchioness, a lady of great honour and alliance, being sister to the Earl of Essex and to the lady Marchioness of Hertford, enlisted all the Roman Catholics in Oxford in this dashing adventure.[496] Basing was, however, eventually stormed and taken by Cromwell, who put most of the garrison to the sword. William, the fourth marquis, died 1628, and was succeeded by his son, who was the father of Charles, created in 1689 Duke of Bolton, a title that became extinct in 1794.

John Greenhill, a Long Acre celebrity, was one of the most promising of Lely's scholars. He painted portraits, among others, of Locke, Shaftesbury, and Davenant. He also drew in crayons, and engraved. It is said that Lely was jealous of him, and would not let his pupil see him paint, till Greenhill's handsome wife was sent to Sir Peter to sit for her portrait, which cost twelve broad pieces or £15. Greenhill, at first industrious, became acquainted with the players, and fell into debauched courses. Coming home drunk late one night from the Vine Tavern, he fell into the kennel in Long Acre, and was carried to Perrey Walton's, the royal picture-cleaner, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he had been lodging, and died in his bed that night (1676), in the flower of his age. He was buried at St. Giles's, and shameless Mrs. Aphra Behn, who admired his person and his paintings, wrote a long elegy on his death. Sir Peter is said to have settled £40 a year on Greenhill's widow and children, but she died mad soon after her husband.[497]

In June 1718 Ryan, an actor of Lincoln's Inn Theatre, was supping at the Sun in Long Acre, and had placed his sword quietly in the window, when a bully named Kelly came up and made passes at him, provoking him to a duel. The young actor took his sword, drew it, and passed it through the rascal's body. The act being one of obvious self-defence, he was not called to serious account for it. This Ryan had acted with Betterton. Addison especially selected him as Marcus in his "Cato," and Garrick confessed he took Ryan's Richard as his model.[498] [Pg 272]

Some years after, Ryan, by this time the Orestes, Macduff, Iago, Cassio, and Captain Plume of the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, in passing down Great Queen Street, after playing Scipio in "Sophonisba," was fired at by a footpad, and had his jaw shattered. "Friend," moaned the wounded man, "you have killed me, but I forgive you." The actor, however, recovered to resume his place upon the boards, and generous Quin gave him £1000 in advance that he had put him down for in his will. He died in 1760.

Hudson, a wretched portrait-painter, although the master of Sir Joshua Reynolds, lived in a house now divided into two, Nos. 55 and 56. Portrait-painting, being unable to sink lower than Hudson, turned and began to rise again. When Reynolds in later years took a villa on Richmond Hill, somewhat above that of Hudson, he said, "I never thought I should live to look down on my old master." Hudson's house was afterwards occupied by that insipid poet, Hoole, the translator of Tasso and of Ariosto.

The old West End entrance of this street, a narrow passage known as the "Devil's Gap," was taken down in 1765.

Martin Folkes, an eminent scholar and antiquarian, was born in Great Queen Street in 1690. He was made vice-president of the Royal Society by Newton in 1723, and in 1727, on Sir Isaac's death, disputed the presidentship with Sir Hans Sloane,—a post which he eventually

obtained in 1741, on the resignation of Sir Hans. Folkes was a great numismatist, and seems to have been a generous, pleasant man. He died in 1784. The sale of his library, prints, and coins lasted fifty-six days. He was, as Leigh Hunt remarks, one of "the earliest persons among the gentry to marry an actress,"[499] setting by that means an excellent example. His wife's name was Lucretia Bradshaw. [Pg 273]

Miss Pope, of Queen Street, had a face grave and unpromising, but her humour was dry and racy as old sherry. Churchill, in the "Rosciad," mentions her as vivaciously advancing in a jig to perform as Cherry and Polly Honeycomb. Later she grew into an excellent Mrs. Malaprop.[500]

This good woman, well-bred lady, and finished actress, lived for forty years in Queen Street, two doors east of Freemasons' Tavern; there, the Miss Prue, and Cherry, and Jacinta, and Miss Biddy of years before, the friend of Garrick and the praised of Churchill, sat, surrounded by portraits of Lord Nuneham, General Churchill, Garrick, and Holland, and told the story of her first love to Horace Smith.

An attachment had sprung up between her and Holland, but Garrick had warned her of the man's waywardness and instability. Miss Pope would not believe the accusations till one day, on her way to see Mrs. Clive at Twickenham, she beheld the unfaithful Holland in a boat with Mrs. Baddeley, near the Eel-pie Island. She accused him at the next rehearsal, he would confess no wrong, and she never spoke to him again but on the stage. "But I have reason to know," said the old lady, shedding tears as she looked up at her cruel lover's portrait, "that he never was really happy."

Miss Pope left Queen Street at last, finding the Freemasons too noisy neighbours, especially after dinner. "Miss Pope," says Hazlitt, "was the very picture of a duenna or an antiquated dowager in the latter spring of beauty—the second childhood of vanity; more quaint, fantastic, and old-fashioned, more pert, frothy, and light-headed than can be imagined."[501]

It was not very easy to please poor soured Hazlitt, whose opinion of women had not been improved by his having been jilted by a servant girl. This good woman, Miss Pope, died at Hadley in 1801, her latter life having been embittered by the loss of her brother and favourite niece. [Pg 274]

The Freemasons' Hall, built by T. Sandby, architect, was opened in 1776, by Lord Petre, a Roman Catholic nobleman, with the usual mysterious ceremonials of the order. The annual assemblies of the lodges had previously been held in the halls of the City's companies. The tavern was built in 1786, by William Tyler, and has since been enlarged. In the tavern public meetings and dinners take place, chiefly in May and June. Here a farewell banquet was given to John Philip Kemble, and a public dinner on his birthday, to James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. All the waiters in this tavern are Masons. The house has been lately enlarged. Its new great Hall was inaugurated by the dinner given to Charles Dickens by his friends on his departure for America in November 1857.

Isaac Sparkes, a famous Irish comedian about 1774, was an old, fat, unwieldy man, with a vast double chin, and large, bushy, prominent eyebrows. When in London, he established in Long Acre a Club, which was frequented by Lord Townshend, Lord Effingham, Lord Lindore, Captain Mulcaster, Mr. Crewe of Cheshire, and "other nobles and fashionables." Sparkes, who dressed well and had a commanding presence, probably presided over it, as he did at Dublin clubs, dressed in robes as Lord Chief Justice Joker.[502]

In one of the grand old houses in Great Queen Street, on the right hand as one goes towards Lincoln's Inn Fields, occupied before 1830 by Messrs. Allman the booksellers, died Lewis the comedian, famous to the last, as Leigh Hunt tells us, for his invincible airiness and juvenility. "Mr. Lewis," says the same veteran play-goer, "displayed a combination rarely to be found in acting—that of the fop and the real gentleman. With a voice, a manner, and a person all equally graceful and light, with features at once whimsical and genteel, he played on the top of his profession like a plume. He was the Mercutio of the age, in every sense of the word mercurial. His airy, breathless voice, thrown to the audience before he appeared, was the signal of his winged animal spirits; and when he gave a glance of his eye or touched with his finger another man's ribs, it was the very *punctum saliens* of playfulness and innuendo. We saw him take leave of the public, a man of sixty-five, looking not more than half the age, in the character of the Copper Captain; and heard him say, in a voice broken with emotion, that for the space of thirty years he had not once incurred their displeasure."[503] [Pg 275]

Benjamin Franklin, when first in England, worked at the printing-office of Mr. Watts, in Little Wild Street, after being employed for twelve months at one Palmer's, in Bartholomew Close. He lodged close by in Duke Street, opposite the Roman Catholic Chapel, with a widow, to whom he paid three-and-sixpence weekly. His landlady was a clergyman's daughter, who had married a Catholic, and abjured Protestantism. She and Franklin were much together, as he kept good hours and she was lame and almost confined to her room. Their frugal supper often consisted of nothing but half an anchovy, a small slice of bread and butter each, and half a pint of ale between them. On Franklin proposing to leave for cheaper lodgings, she consented to let him retain his room at two shillings a week. In the attic of the house lived a voluntary nun. She was a lady who early in life had been sent to the Continent for her health, but unable to bear the climate, had returned home to live in seclusion on £12 a year, devoting the rest of her income to charity, and subsisting, healthy and cheerful, on

nothing but water-gruel. Her presence was thought a blessing to the house, and several tenants in succession had charged her no rent. She permitted the occasional visits of Franklin and his landlady; and the brave American lad, while he pitied her superstition, felt confirmed in his frugality by her example.

During his first weeks with Mr. Watts, Franklin worked as a pressman, drinking only water while his companions had their five pints of porter daily. The "Water American," as he was called, was, however, stronger than his colleagues, and tried to persuade some of them that strong beer was not necessary for strong work. His argument was that bread contained more materials of strength than beer, and that it was only corn in the beer that produced the strength in the liquid. [Pg 276]

Born to be a reformer, Franklin persuaded the *chapel* to alter some of their laws; he resisted impositions, and conciliated the respect of his fellows. He worked as a pressman, as he had done in America, for the sake of the exercise. He used, he tells us, to carry up and down stairs with one hand a large *form* of type, while the other fifty men required both hands to do the same work.

Franklin's fellow pressman drank every day a pint of beer before breakfast, a pint with bread and cheese for breakfast, a pint between breakfast and dinner, one at dinner, one again at six in the afternoon, and another after his day's work; and all this he declared to be necessary to give him strength for the press. "This custom," said the King of Common Sense, "seemed to me abominable." Franklin, however, failed to make a convert of this man, and he went on paying his four or five shillings a week for the "cursed beverage," destined probably, poor devil, to remain all his life in a state of voluntary wretchedness, serfdom, and poverty.

A few of the men consented to follow Franklin's example, and renouncing beer and cheese, to take for breakfast a basin of warm gruel, with butter, toast, and nutmeg. This did not cost more than a pint of beer—"namely, three halfpence"—and at the same time was more nourishing and kept the head clearer. Those who gorged themselves with beer would sometimes run up a score and come to the Water American for credit, "their light being out." Franklin attended at the great stone table every Saturday evening to take up the little debts, which sometimes amounted to thirty shillings a week. "This circumstance," says Franklin in his autobiography, "added to the reputation of my being a tolerable *gabber*—or, in other words, skilful in the art of burlesque—kept up my importance in the 'chapel.' I had, besides, recommended myself to the esteem of my master by my assiduous application to business, never observing 'Saint' Monday. My extraordinary quickness in composing always procured me such work as was most urgent, and which is commonly best paid; and thus my time passed away in a very pleasant manner."[504] [Pg 277]

Franklin, like a truly great man, was quietly proud of the humble origin from which he had risen; and when he came to England as the agent and ambassador of Massachusetts, he paid a visit to his work-room in Wild Street, and going to his old friend the press, said to the two workmen busy at it, "Come, my friends, we will drink together; it is now forty years since I worked like you at this very press as a journeyman printer."

Wild House stood on the site of Little Wild Street. The Duchess of Ormond was living there in 1655.[505]

On the day when King James II. escaped from London the mob grew unruly, and assembled in great force to pull down houses where either mass was said or priests lodged. Don Pietro Ronguillo, the Spanish ambassador, who lived at Wild House, and whom Evelyn mentions as having received him with "extraordinary civility" (March 26, 1681), had not thought it necessary to ask for soldiers, though the rich Roman Catholics had sent him their money and plate as to a sanctuary, and the plate of the Chapel Royal was also in his care. But the house was sacked without mercy; his noble library perished in the flames; the chapel was demolished; the pictures, rich beds, and furniture were destroyed,—the poor Spaniard making his escape by a back door.[506] His only comfort was that the sacred Host in his chapel was rescued.[507]

In 1780 another savage and thievish Protestant mob, under Lord George Gordon, assembled in St. George's Fields to petition Parliament against the Test Act, which relieved Roman Catholics from many vexatious penalties and unjust disabilities on condition of their taking their oaths of allegiance and disbelief in the infamous doctrines of the Jesuits. The mob assembled on the 2d of June, and jostled and insulted the Peers going to the House of Lords. The same evening the people demolished the greater part of the Roman Catholic Chapel in Duke Street. On Monday they stripped the house and shop of Mr. Maberly, of Little Queen Street, who had been a witness at the trial of some rioters. On Tuesday they passed through Long Acre and burnt Newgate, releasing three hundred prisoners, and the same day destroyed the house of Justice Cox in Great Queen Street.[508] In these street riots seventy-two private houses and four public gaols were burnt, and more than four hundred rioters perished. [Pg 278]

At the above-named chapel Nollekens, the eminent sculptor, was baptized in 1737. The present chapel is much resorted to on Sundays by the Irish poor and foreigners, who live about Drury Lane.

Nicholas Stone, the great monumental sculptor, lived in Long Acre. In 1619 Inigo Jones began the new Banqueting House at Whitehall, and replaced the one destroyed by fire six months before. This master mason was Nicholas Stone,[509] the sculptor of the fine monument to Sir Francis Vere in Westminster Abbey. His pay was 4s. 10d. a day. Stone also designed Dr. Donne's splendid monument in St. Paul's. Roubilliac was a great admirer of the kneeling knight at the north-west corner of Vere's tomb. He used to stand and watch it, and say, "Hush! hush! he vill speak presently." Mr. J. T. Smith seems to think that the Shakspere monument at Stratford is in this sculptor's manner.[510] Inigo Jones, who had been fined for having borne arms at the siege of Basing House, joined with Nicholas Stone in burying their [Pg 279] money near Inigo's house in Scotland Yard; but as the Parliament encouraged servants to betray such hidden treasures, the partners removed their money and hid it again with their own hands in Lambeth Marsh.

Oliver Cromwell, when member for Cambridge, lived from 1637 to 1643, on the south side of Long Acre, two doors from Nicholas Stone the sculptor.

John Taylor, the "Water-Poet" an eccentric poetaster, kept a public-house in Phœnix Alley, now Hanover Court, near Long Acre. He was a Thames waterman, who had fought at the taking of Cadiz, and afterwards travelled to Germany and Scotland as a servant to Sir William Waade. He was then made collector of the wine-dues for the lieutenant of the Tower, and wrote a life of Old Parr, and sixty-three volumes of satire and jingling doggerel, not altogether without vivacity and vigour. He called himself "the King's Water Poet" and "the Queen's Waterman;" and in 1623 wrote a tract called "The World runs on Wheels"—a violent attack on the use of coaches. "I dare truly affirm," says the writer, "that every day in any term (especially if the court be at Whitehall) they do rob us of our livings and carry five hundred and sixty fares daily from us." In this quaint pamphlet Taylor gives a humorous account of his once riding in his master's coach from Whitehall to the Tower. "Before I had been drawn twenty yards," he says, "such a timpany of pride puft me up that I was ready to burst with the wind-cholic of vaine glory." He complains particularly of the streets and lanes being blocked with carriages, especially Blackfriars and Fleet Street or the Strand after a masque or play at court; the noise deafening every one and souring the beer, to the injury of the public health. It is Taylor who mentions that William Boonen, a Dutchman, first introduced coaches into England in 1564, and became Queen Elizabeth's coachman. "It is," he says, "a doubtful question whether the devil brought tobacco into England in a coach, or brought a coach in a fog or mist of tobacco." Nor did Taylor rest there, for he presented a [Pg 280] petition to James I., which was submitted to Sir Francis Bacon and other commissioners, to compel all play-houses to stand on the Bankside, so as to give more work to watermen. In the Civil War, Taylor went to Oxford and wrote ballads for the king. On his return to London, he settled in Long Acre with a mourning crown for a sign;[511] but the Puritans resenting this emblem, he had his own portrait painted instead with this motto—

> "There's many a head stands for a sign:
> Then, gentle reader, why not mine?"

Taylor was born in 1580, and died in 1654; and the following epitaph was written on the vain, honest fellow, who was buried at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields:—

> "Here lies the Water-poet, honest John,
> Who rowed on the streams of Helicon;
> Where having many rocks and dangers past,
> He at the haven of Heaven arrived at last."[512]

From 1682 to 1686 John Dryden lived in Long Acre, on the north side, in a house facing what formerly was Rose Street. His name appears in the rate-books as "John Dryden, Esq."—an unusual distinction—and the sum he paid to the poor varied from 18s. to £1.[513] It was here he resided when he was beaten, one December evening in 1679, by three ruffians hired by the Earl of Rochester and the Duchess of Portsmouth. Sir Walter Scott makes the poet live at the time in Gerard Street; but no part of Gerard Street was built in 1679. Rochester had the year before ridiculed Dryden as "Poet Squab," and believed that Dryden had helped Mulgrave in ridiculing him in his clumsy "Essay on Satire." The best lines of this dull poem are these:—

> "Of fighting sparks Fame may her pleasure say,
> But 'tis a bolder thing to run away.
> The world may well forgive him all his ill,
> For every fault does prove his penance still;
> Falsely he falls into some dangerous noose,
> And then as meanly labours to get loose."

A letter from Rochester to a friend, dated November 21, in the above year, is still extant, in [Pg 281] which he names Dryden as the author of the satire, and concludes with the following threat:—"If he (Dryden) falls on me at the blunt, which is his very good weapon in wit, I will forgive him, if you please, and *leave the repartee to Black Will with a cudgel*."[514]

Dryden offered a reward of fifty pounds for the discovery of the men who cudgelled him, depositing the money in the hands of "Mr. Blanchard, goldsmith, next door to Temple Bar," but all in vain. The Rose Alley satire, the Rose Alley ambuscade, and the Dryden salutation, became established jokes with Dryden's countless enemies. Even Mulgrave himself, in his

Art of Poetry said of Dryden coldly—

> "Though praised and punished for another's rhymes,
> His own deserve as great applause sometimes."

And, in a conceited note, the amateur poet described the libel as one for which Dryden had been unjustly "*applauded and wounded*." But these lines and this note Mulgrave afterwards suppressed.

Poor Otway, whom Rochester had satirised, and who had accused Dryden of saying of his *Don Carlos* that, "Egad, there was not a line in it he would be author of," stood up bravely for Dryden as an honest satirist in these vigorous verses:—

> "Poets in honour of the truth should write,
> With the same spirit brave men for it fight.
> * * * * *
> From any private cause where malice reigns,
> Or general pique all blockheads have to brains."

Dryden never took any poetical revenge on Rochester, and in the prefatory essay to his *Juvenal* he takes credit for that forbearance.[515]

Edward (more generally known as Ned) Ward was the landlord of public-houses alternately in Moorfields, Clerkenwell, Fulwood's Rents, and Long Acre. He was born in 1667, and died 1731. He was a High Tory, and fond of the society of poets and authors.[516] Attacked in the [Pg 282] *Dunciad*, he turned *Don Quixote* into Hudibrastic verse, and wrote endless songs, lampoons, coarse clever satires, and *Dialogues on Matrimony* (1710).

The father of Pepys's long-suffering wife lived in Long Acre; and the bustling official describes, with a stultifying exactitude, his horror at a visit which he found himself forced to pay to a house surrounded by taverns.

Dr. Arbuthnot, in a letter to Mr. Watkins, gives Bessy Cox—a woman in Long Acre whom Prior would have married when her husband died—a detestable character. The infatuated poet left his estate between his old servant Jonathan Drift, and this woman, who boasted that she was the poet's Emma,—another virago, Flanders Jane, being his Chloe.[517]

It is said of this careless, pleasant poet, that after spending an intellectual evening with Oxford, Bolingbroke, Pope, and Swift, in order to unbend, he would smoke a pipe and drink a bottle of ale with a common soldier and his wife in Long Acre. Cibber calls the man a butcher;[518] other writers make him a cobbler or a tavern-keeper, which is more likely. The shameless husband is said to have been proud of the poet's preference for his wife. Pope, who was remorseless at the failings of friends, calls the woman a wretch, and said to Spence, "Prior was not a right good man; he used to bury himself for whole days and nights together with this poor mean creature, and often drank hard." This person, who perhaps is misrepresented—and where there is a doubt the prisoner at the bar should always have the benefit of it—was the Venus of the poet's verse. To her Prior wrote, after Walpole tried to impeach him:—

> "From public noise and faction's strife,
> From all the busy ills of life,
> Take me, my Chloe, to thy breast,
> And lull my wearied soul to rest.
>
> [Pg 283]
>
> "For ever in this humble cell [ale-house]
> Let thee and I [me], my fair one, dwell;
> None enter else but Love, and he
> Shall bar the door and keep the key."

Prior was the son of a joiner,[519] and was brought up, as before mentioned, by his uncle, a tavern-keeper at Charing Cross, where the clever waiter's knowledge of Horace led to his being sent to college by the Earl of Dorset. Abandoning literature, he finally became our ambassador to France. He died in retirement in 1721.

It was in a poor shoemaker's small window in Long Acre,—half of it devoted to boots, half to pictures—that poor starving Wilson's fine classical landscapes were exposed, often vainly, for sale. Here, from his miserable garret in Tottenham Court Road, the great painter, peevish and soured by neglect, would come swearing at his rivals Barret and Smith of Chichester. I can imagine him, with his tall, burly figure, his red face, and his enormous nose, striding out of the shop, thirsting for porter, and muttering that, if the pictures of Wright of Derby had fire, his had air. Yet this great painter, whose works are so majestic and glowing, so fresh, airy, broad, and harmonious, was all but starved. The king refused to purchase his "Kew Gardens," and the very pawnbrokers grew weary of taking his Tivolis and Niobes as pledges, far preferring violins, flat-irons, or telescopes.

It was in Long Acre that that delightful idyllic painter, Stothard, was born in 1755. His father, a Yorkshireman, kept an inn in the street.[520] Sent for his health into Yorkshire, and placed with an old lady who had some choice engravings, he began to draw. The first subject that he ever painted was executed with an oyster-shell full of black paint, borrowed from the

village plumber and glazier. This little man was the father of many a Watteau lover and tripping Boccaccio nymph. That genial and graceful artist, who illustrated Chaucer, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, had the road to fame pointed out to him first by that little black man. [Pg 284]

On the accession of King George I. the Tories had such sway over the London mobs, that the friends of the Protestant succession resolved to found cheap tavern clubs in various parts of the City in order that well-affected tradesmen might meet to keep up their spirit of loyalty, and serve as focus-points of resistance in case of Tory tumults.

Defoe, a staunch Whig, describes one of these assemblies in Long Acre, which probably suggested the rest. At the Mughouse Club in Long Acre, about a hundred gentlemen, lawyers, and tradesmen met in a large room, at seven o'clock on Wednesday and Saturday evenings in the winter, and broke up soon after ten. A grave old gentleman, "in his own grey hairs,"[521] and within a few months of ninety, was the president, and sat in an "armed" chair, raised some steps above the rest of the company, to keep the room in order. A harp was played all the time at the lower end of the room, and every now and then one of the company rose and entertained the rest with a song. Nothing was drunk but ale, and every one chalked his score on the table beside him. What with the songs and drinking healths from one table to another, there was no room for politics or anything that could sour conversation. The members of these clubs retired when they pleased, as from a coffee-house.

Old Sir Hans Sloane's coach, made by John Aubrey, Queen Anne's coachmaker, in Long Acre, and given to him by her for curing her of a fit of the gout, was given by Sir Hans to his old butler, who set up the White Horse Inn behind Chelsea Church, where it remained for half a century.[522]

Charles Catton, one of the early Academicians, was originally a coach and sign painter. He painted a lion as a sign for his friend, a celebrated coachmaker, at that time living in Long Acre.[523] A sign painted by Clarkson, that hung at the north-east corner of Little Russell Street about 1780, was said to have cost £500, and crowds used to collect to look at it. [Pg 285]

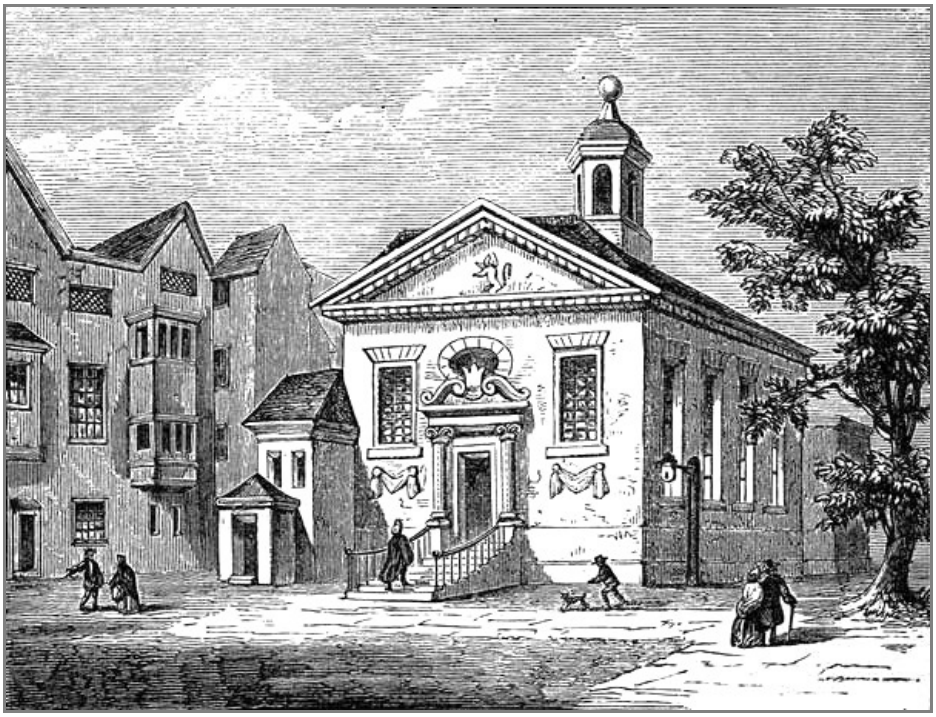
Lord William Russell was led from Holborn into Little Queen Street on his way to the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields. As the coach turned into this street, Lord Russell said to Tillotson, "I have often turned to the other hand with great comfort, but I now turn to this with greater." He referred to Southampton House, on the opposite side of Holborn, which he inherited through his brave and good wife, the grand-daughter of Shakspere's early patron.

In the year 1796 Charles Lamb resided with his father, mother, aunt, and sister in lodgings at No. 7 Little Queen Street, a house, I believe, removed to make way for the church. Southey describes a call which he made on them there in 1794-5. The father had once published a small quarto volume of poetry, of which "The Sparrow's Wedding" was his favourite, and Charles used to delight him by reading this to him when he was in his dotage. In 1797 Lamb published his first verses. His father, the ex-servant and companion of an old Bencher in the Temple, was sinking into the grave; his mother had lost the use of her limbs, and his sister was employed by day in needlework, and by night in watching her mother. Lamb, just twenty-one years old, was a clerk in the India House. On the 22d of September[524] Miss Lamb, who had been deranged some years before by nervous fatigue, seized a case-knife while dinner was preparing, chased a little girl, her apprentice, round the room, and on her mother calling to her to forbear, stabbed her to the heart. Lamb arrived only in time to snatch the knife from his sister's hand. He had that morning been to consult a doctor, but had not found him at home. The verdict at the inquest was "Insanity," and Mary Lamb was sent to a mad-house, where she soon recovered her reason. Poor Lamb's father and aunt did not long survive. Not long after, Lamb himself was for six weeks confined in an asylum. There is extant a terrible letter in which he describes rushing from a party of friends who were supping with him soon after the horrible catastrophe, and in an agony of regret falling on his knees by his mother's coffin, asking forgiveness of Heaven for forgetting her so soon.[525] [Pg 286]

There is no doubt that poor Lamb played the sot over his nightly grog; but he had a noble soul, and let us be lenient with such a man—

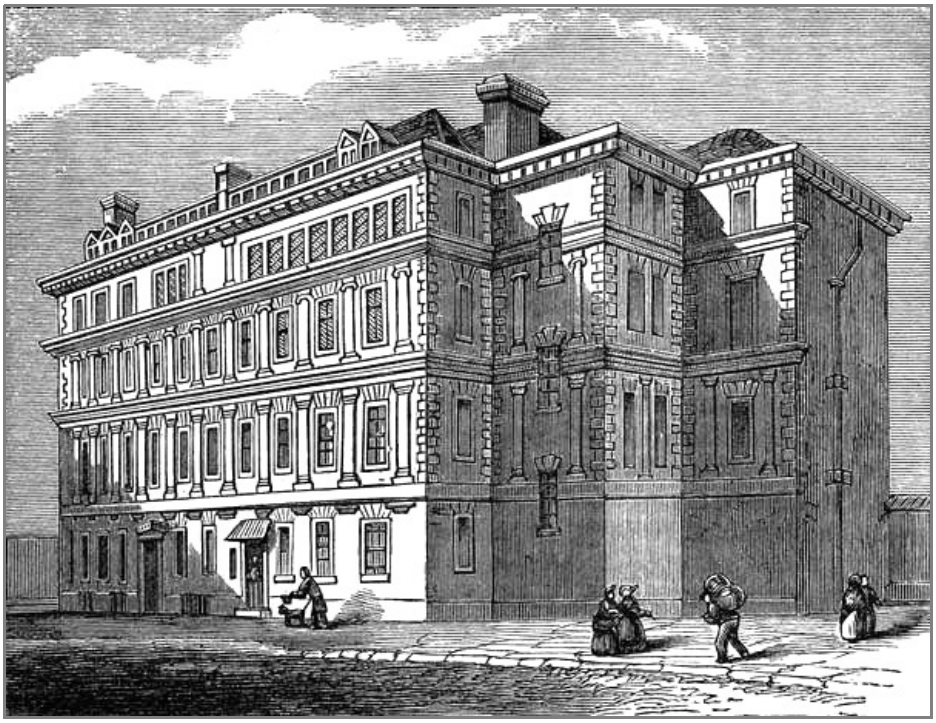
> "Be to his faults a little blind,
> And to his virtues very kind."

He abandoned her whom he loved, together with all meaner ambitions, and drudged his years away as a poor, ignoble clerk, in order to maintain his half-crazed sister; for this purpose—true knight that he was, though he never drew sword—he gave all that he had—HIS LIFE! Peace, then! peace be to his ashes!



LYON’S INN, 1804.

[Pg 287]



CRAVEN HOUSE, 1790.

CHAPTER XII.

DRURY LANE.

The Roll of Battle Abbey tells us that the founder of the Drury family came into England with that brave Norman robber, the Conqueror, and settled in Suffolk.[526]

From this house branched off the Druries of Hawstead, in the same county, who built Drury House in the time of Elizabeth. It stood a little behind the site of the present Olympic Theatre. Of another branch of the same family was that Sir Drue Drury, who, together with Sir Amias Powlett, had at one time the custody of Mary, Queen of Scots.

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Drury Lane takes its name from a house probably built by Sir William Drury, a Knight of the Garter, and a most able commander in the desultory Irish wars during the reign of Elizabeth, who fell in a duel with John Burroughs, fought to settle a foolish quarrel about some punctilio of precedency.[527] In this house, in 1600, the imprudent friends of rash Essex resolved on the fatal outbreak that ended so lamentably at Ludgate. The Earl of Southampton then resided there.[528] The plots of Blount, Davis, Davers, etc., were communicated to Essex by letter. It was noticed that at his trial the earl betrayed agitation at the mention of Drury House, though he had carefully destroyed all suspicious papers.

Sir William's son Robert was a patron of Dr. Donne, the religious poet and satirist, who in 1611 had apartments assigned to him and his wife in Drury House. Donne, though the son of a man of some fortune, was foolish enough to squander his money when young, and in advanced life was so wanting in self-respect as to live about in other men's houses, paying for his food and lodging by his wit and conversation. He lived first with Lord Chancellor Egerton, Bacon's predecessor, afterwards at Drury House and with Sir Francis Wooley at Pitford, in Surrey. After his clandestine marriage with Lady Ellesmere's niece, Donne's life was for some time a hard and troublesome one.

"Sir Robert Drury," says Isaac Walton, "a gentleman of a very noble estate and a more liberal mind, assigned Donne and his wife a useful apartment in his own large house in Drury Lane, and rent free; he was also a cherisher of his studies, and such a friend as sympathised with him and his in all their joys and sorrows."[529]

Sir Robert, wishing to attend Lord Hay as King James's ambassador at his audiences in Paris with Henry IV., begged Donne to accompany him. But the poet refused, his wife being at the [Pg 289] time near her confinement and in poor health, and saying that "her divining soul boded some ill in his absence." But Sir Robert growing more urgent, and Donne unwilling to refuse his generous friend a request, at last obtained from his wife a faint consent for a two months' absence. On the twelfth day the party reached Paris. Two days afterwards Donne was left alone in the room where Sir Robert and other friends had dined. Half an hour afterwards Sir Robert returned, and found Mr. Donne still alone, "but in such an ecstasy, and so altered in his looks," as amazed him. After a long and perplexed pause, Donne said, "I have had a dreadful vision since I saw you; I have seen my dear wife pass by me twice in this room with her hair hanging about her shoulders and a dead child in her arms;" to which Sir Robert replied, "Sure, sir, you have slept since I saw you, and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake." Donne assured his friend that he had not been asleep, and that on the second appearance his wife stopped, looked him in the face, and then vanished.

The next day, however, neither rest nor sleep had altered Mr. Donne's opinion, and he repeated the story with only a more deliberate and confirmed confidence. All this inclining Sir Robert to some faint belief, he instantly sent off a servant to Drury House to bring him word in what condition Mrs. Donne was. The messenger returned in due time, saying that he had found Mrs. Donne very sad and sick in bed, and that after a long and dangerous labour she had been delivered of a dead child; and upon examination, the delivery proved to have been at the very day and hour in which Donne had seen the vision. Walton is proud of this late miracle, so easily explainable by natural causes; and illustrates the sympathy of souls by the story of two lutes, one of which, if both are tuned to the same pitch, will, though untouched, echo the other when it is played.

Far be it from me to wish to ridicule any man's belief in the supernatural; but still, as a lover of truth, wishing to believe what *is*, whether natural or supernatural, without confusing the [Pg 290] former with the latter, let me analyse this pictured presentiment. An imaginative man, against his sick wife's wish, undertakes a perilous journey. Absent from her—alone—after wine and friendly revel feeling still more lonely—in the twilight he thinks of home and the wife he loves so much. Dreaming, though awake, his fears resolve themselves into a vision, seen by the mind, and to the eye apparently vivid as reality. The day and hour happen to correspond, or he persuades himself afterwards that they do correspond with the result, and the day-dream is henceforward ranked among supernatural visions. Who is there candid enough to write down the presentiments that do not come true? And after all, the vision, to be consistent, should have been followed by the death of Mrs. Donne as well as the child.

Some verses are pointed out by Isaac Walton as those written by Donne on parting from her for this journey. But there is internal evidence in them to the contrary; for they refer to Italy, not to Paris, and to a lady who would accompany him as a page, which a lady in Mrs. Donne's condition could scarcely have done. I have myself no doubt that the verses cited were written to his wife long before, when their marriage was as yet concealed. With what a fine vigour the poem commences!—

"By our first strange and fatal interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long-striving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words' masculine persuasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts which spies and rivals threaten me!"
* * * * *

And how full of true feeling and passionate tenderness is the dramatic close!—

"When I am gone dream me some happiness,
Nor let thy looks our long-hid love confess;
Nor praise nor dispraise me; nor bless nor curse
Openly love's force; nor in bed fright thy nurse
With midnight startings, crying out, 'Oh! oh!
Nurse! oh, my love is slain! I saw him go [Pg 291]
O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,
Assailed, taken, fight, stabbed, bleed, and die.'"

The verses really written on Donne's leaving for Paris begin with four exquisite lines—

"As virtuous men pass mild away,
  And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
  'The breath goes now,' and some say 'No!'"

A later verse contains a strange conceit, beaten out into pin-wire a page long by a modern poet—[530]

"If we be two, we are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show
To move, but does if t'other do."

Donne was the chief of what Dr. Johnson unwisely called "the metaphysical school of poetry." Dryden accuses Donne of perplexing the fair sex with nice speculations.[531] His poems, often pious and beautiful, are sometimes distorted with strange conceits. He has a poem on a flea; and in his lines on Good Friday he thus whimsically expresses himself:—

"Who sees God's face—that is, self-life—must die:
What a death were it then to see God die!
It made his own lieutenant, Nature, shrink;
It made his footstool crack and the sun wink.
Could I behold those hands, which span the Poles,
And tune all sphears at once, pierced with those holes!"[532]

This imitator of the worst faults of Marini was made Dean of St. Paul's by King James I., who delighted to converse with him. The king used to say, "I always rejoice when I think that by my means Donne became a divine." He gave the poet the deanery one day as he sat at dinner, saying "that he would carve to him of a dish he loved well, and that he might take the dish (the deanery) home to his study and say grace there to himself, and much good might it do him."

Shortly before his death Donne dressed himself in his shroud, and standing there, with his [Pg 292] eyes shut and the sheet opened, "To discover his thin, pale, and death-like face," he caused a curious painter to take his picture. This picture he kept near his bed as a ghostly remembrance, and from this Nicholas Stone, the sculptor, carved his effigy, which still exists in St. Paul's, having survived the Great Fire, though the rest of his tomb and monument has perished.

Drury House took the name of Craven House when rebuilt by Lord Craven. There is a tradition in Yorkshire, where the deanery of Craven is situated, that this chivalrous nobleman's father was sent up to London by the carrier, and there became a mercer or draper. His son was not unworthy of the staunch old Yorkshire stock. He fought under Gustavus Adolphus against Wallenstein and Tilly, and afterwards attached himself to the service of the unfortunate King and Queen of Bohemia, and won wealth and a title for his family, which the Wars of the Roses had first reduced to indigence.

The Queen of Bohemia had been married in 1613 to Frederic, Count Palatine of the Rhine, only a few months after the death of Prince Henry her brother. The young King of Spain had been her suitor, and the Pope had opposed her match with a Protestant. She was married on St. Valentine's Day; and Donne, from his study in Drury Lane, celebrated the occasion by a most extravagant epithalamion in which is to be found this outrageous line—

"Here lies a She sun, and a He moon there."

The poem opens prettily enough with these lines—

"Hail, Bishop Valentine, whose day this is!
All the air is thy diocese;
And all the chirping choristers
And other birds are thy parishioners.
  Thou marry'st every year
The lyrique lark and the grave whispering dove."

At seventeen Sir William Craven had entered the service of the Prince of Orange. On the [Pg 293] accession of Charles I. he was ennobled. At the storming of Creuzenach he was the first of the English Cavaliers to mount the breach and plant the flag. It was then that Gustavus said smilingly to him, "I perceive, sir, you are willing to give a younger brother a chance of

coming to your title and estate." At Donauwert the young Englishman again distinguished himself. In the same month that Gustavus fell at Lutzen, the Elector Palatine died at Mentz. While Grotius interceded for the Queen of Bohemia, Lord Craven fought for her in the vineyards of the Palatinate.[533] In consequence, perhaps, of Richelieu's intrigues, four years elapsed before Charles I. took compassion on the children of his widowed sister, whose cause the Puritans had loudly advocated. When Charles and Rupert did go to England, they went under the care of the trusty Lord Craven, who was to try to recover the arrears of the widow's pension. On their return to Germany, to campaign in Westphalia, Rupert and Lord Craven were taken prisoners and thrown into the castle at Vienna—a confinement that lasted three years, a long time for brave young soldiers who, like the Douglas, "preferred the lark's song to the mouse's squeak."

Later in the Civil War we find this same generous nobleman giving £50,000 to King Charles, at a time when he was a beggar and a fugitive. Cromwell, enraged at the aid thus ministered to an enemy, accused the Cavalier of enlisting volunteers for the Stuart, and instantly, with stern promptitude, sequestered all his English estates except Combe Abbey. In the meantime Lord Craven served the State and his queen bravely, and waited for better times. It was this faithful servant who consoled the royal widow for her son's ill-treatment, the slander heaped upon her daughter, and the incessant vexations of importunate creditors.

The Restoration brought no good news for the unfortunate queen. Charles, afraid of her claims for a pension, delayed her return to England, till the Earl of Craven generously [Pg 294] offered her a house next his own in Drury Lane. She found there a pleasant and commodious mansion, surrounded by a delightful garden.[534] It does not appear that she went publicly to court, or joined in the royal revelries; but she visited the theatres with her nephew Charles and her good old friend and host, and she was reunited to her son Rupert.

In the autumn of 1661, the year after the Restoration, she removed to Leicester House, then the property of Sir Robert Sydney, Earl of Leicester, and in the next February she died.[535] Evelyn mentions a violent tempestuous wind that followed her death, as a sign from Heaven to show that the troubles and calamities of this princess and of the royal family in general had now all blown over, and were, like the ex-queen, to rest in repose.

She left all her books, pictures, and papers to her incomparable old friend and benefactor. The Earl of Leicester wrote to the Earl of Northumberland a cold and flippant letter to announce the departure of "his royal tenant;" and adds, "It seems the Fates did not think it fit I should have the honour, which indeed I never much desired, to be the landlord of a queen." Charles, who had grudged the dethroned queen even her subsistence, gave her a royal funeral in Westminster Abbey.

At the very time when she died Lord Craven was building a miniature Heidelberg for her at Hampstead Marshall, in Berkshire, under the advice of that eminent architect and charlatan, Sir Balthasar Gerbier. But the palace was ill-fated, like the poor queen, for it was consumed by an accidental fire before it could be tenanted. The arrival of the Portuguese Infanta, a princess scarcely less unfortunate than the queen just dead, soon erased all recollections of King James's ill-starred daughter.

The biographers of the Queen of Bohemia do not claim for her beauty, wit, learning, or accomplishments; but she seems to have been an affectionate, romantic girl, full of vivacity [Pg 295] and ambition, who was ripened by sorrow and disappointment into an amiable and high-souled woman.

It was always supposed that the Queen of Bohemia was secretly married to Lord Craven, as Bassompierre was to a princess of Lorraine. A base and abandoned court could not otherwise account for a friendship so unchangeable and so unselfish. There is also a story that when Craven House was pulled down, a subterranean passage was discovered joining the eastern and western sides. Similar passages have been found joining convents to monasteries; but, unfortunately for the scandalmongers, they are generally proved to have been either sewers or conduits. The "Queen of Hearts," as she was called—the princess to whose cause the chivalrous Christian of Brunswick, the knight with the silver arm, had solemnly devoted his life and fortunes—the "royal mistress" to whom shifty Sir Henry Wotton had written those beautiful lines—

> "You meaner beauties of the night,
> That poorly entertain our eyes
> More by your number than your light,
> What are ye when the moon doth rise?"

was at "last gone to dust." Her faithful servant, the old soldier of Gustavus, survived her thirty-five years, and lived to follow to the grave his foster-child in arms, Prince Rupert, whose daughter Ruperta was left to his trusty guardianship.

In 1670, on the death of the stolid and drunken Duke of Albemarle, Charles II. constituted Lord Craven colonel of the Coldstreams. Energetic, simple-hearted, benevolent, this good servant of a bad race became a member of the Royal Society, lived in familiar intimacy with Evelyn and Ray, improved his property, and employed himself in gardening.

Although he had many estates, Lord Craven always showed the most predilection for Combe Abbey, the residence of the Queen of Bohemia in her youth. To judge by the numerous

dedications to which his name is prefixed, he would appear to have been a munificent patron of letters, especially of those authors who had been favourites of Elizabeth of Bohemia.[536] [Pg 296]

On the accession of James, Lord Craven, true as ever, was sworn of the Privy Council; but soon after, on some mean suspicion of the king, was threatened with the loss of his regiment. “If they take away my regiment,” said the staunch old soldier, “they had as good take away my life, since I have nothing else to divert myself with.” In the hurry of the Popish catastrophe it was not taken away. But King William proved Craven’s loyalty to the Stuarts by giving his regiment to General Talmash.

The unemployed officer now expended his activity in attending riots and fires. Long before, when the Puritan prentices had pulled down the houses of ill-fame in Whettone Park and in Moorfields, Pepys had described the colonel as riding up and down like a madman, giving orders to his men. Later Lord Dorset had spoken of the old soldier’s energy in a gay ballad on his mistress—

> “The people’s hearts leap wherever she comes,
> And beat day and night like my Lord Craven’s drums.”

In King William’s reign the veteran was so prompt in attending fires that it used to be said his horse smelt a fire as soon as it broke out.

Lord Craven died unmarried in 1697, aged 88, and was buried at Binley, near Coventry. The grandson of a Wharfdale peasant had ended a well-spent life. His biographer, Miss Benger, well remarks:—“If his claims to disinterestedness be contemned of men, let his cause be (left) to female judges,—to whose honour be it averred, examples of nobleness, generosity and magnanimity are ever delightful, because to their purer and more susceptible souls they are (never) incredible.”[537]

Drury House was rebuilt by Lord Craven after the Queen’s death. It occupied the site of Craven Buildings and the Olympic Theatre. Pennant, ever curious and energetic, went to find it, and describes it in his pleasant way as a “large brick pile,” then turned into a public-house bearing the sign of the Queen of Bohemia, faithful still to the worship of its old master. [Pg 297]

The house was taken down in 1809, when the Olympic Pavilion was built on part of its gardens. The cellars, once stored with good Rhenish from the Palatinate, and sack from Cadiz, still exist, but have been blocked up. Palsgrave Place, near Temple Bar, perpetuates the memory of the unlucky husband of the brave princess.

It was Lord Craven who generously founded pest-houses in Carnaby Street, soon after the Great Plague. There were thirty-six small houses and a cemetery. They were sold in 1772 to William, third Earl of Craven, for £1200. It may be remembered that in the *Memoirs of Scriblerus* a room is hired for the dissection of the purchased body of a malefactor, near the St. Giles’s pest-fields, and not far from Tyburn Road, Oxford Street. The Earl was their founder.

On the end wall at the bottom of Craven Buildings there was formerly a large fresco-painting of the Earl of Craven, who was represented in armour, mounted on a charger, and with a truncheon in his hand. This portrait had been twice or thrice repainted in oil, but in Brayley’s time was entirely obliterated.[538] This fresco is said to have been the work of Paul Vansomer, a painter who came to England from Antwerp about 1606, and died in 1621. He painted the Earl and Countess of Arundel, and there are pictures by him at Hampton Court. He also executed the pleasant and quaint hunting scene, with portraits of Prince Henry and the young Earl of Essex, now at St. James’s Palace.[539]

Mr. Moser, keeper of the Royal Academy, a chaser of plate, cane-heads, and watch-cases, afterwards an enameller of watch-trinkets, necklaces, and bracelets, lived in Craven Buildings, which were built in 1723 on part of the site of Craven House. He died in his apartments in Somerset House in 1783.

It was in Short’s Gardens, Drury Lane, “in a hole,” that Charles Mathews the elder made one of his first attempts as an actor. [Pg 298]

Clare House Court, on the left hand going up Drury Lane, derived its name from John Holles, second Earl of Clare, whose town house stood at the end of this court. His son Gilbert, the third Earl, died in 1689, and was succeeded by his son, John Holles, created Marquis of Clare and Duke of Newcastle in 1694. He died in 1711, when all his honours became extinct. The corner house has upon it the date 1693.[540]

In the reign of James I., when Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, lived at Ely House, in Holborn, he used to pass through Drury Lane in his litter on his way to Whitehall, Covent Garden being then an enclosed field, and this district and the Strand the chief resorts of the gentry. The ladies, knowing his hours, would appear in their balconies or windows to present their civilities to the old man, who would bend himself as well as he could to the humblest posture of respect. One day, as he passed by the house of Lady Jacob in Drury Lane, she presented herself: he bowed to her, but she only gaped at him. Curious to see if this yawning was intentional or accidental, he passed the next day at the same hour, and with the same result. Upon which he sent a gentleman to her to let her know that the ladies

of England were usually more gracious to him than to encounter his respects with such affronts. She answered that she had a mouth to be stopped as well as others. Gondomar, finding the cause of her distemper, sent her a present, an antidote which soon cured her of her strange complaint.[541] This Lady Jacob became the wife of the poet Brooke.

That credulous gossip, the Wiltshire gentleman, Aubrey, tells a quaint story of a duel in Drury Lane, in probably Charles II.'s time, which is a good picture of such rencontres amongst the hot-blooded bravos of that wild period.

"Captain Carlo Fantom, a Croatian," he says, "who spoke thirteen languages, was a captain under the Earl of Essex. He had a world of cuts about his body with swords, and was very [Pg 299] quarrelsome. He met, coming late at night out of the Horseshoe Tavern in Drury Lane, with a lieutenant of Colonel Rossiter, who had great jingling spurs on. Said he, 'The noise of your spurs doe offend me; you must come over the kennel and give me satisfaction.' They drew and passed at each other, and the lieutenant was runne through, and died in an hour or two, and 'twas not known who killed him."[542]

About this time John Lacy, Charles II.'s favourite comedian, the Falstaff of Dryden's time, lived in Drury Lane from 1665 till his death in 1681. The ex-dancing-master and lieutenant dwelt near Cradle Alley and only two doors from Lord Anglesey.

Drury Lane, though it soon began to deteriorate, had fashionable inhabitants in Charles II.'s time. Evelyn, that delightful type of the English gentleman, mentions in his *Diary* the marriage of his niece to the eldest son of Mr. Attorney Montague at Southampton Chapel, and talks of a magnificent entertainment at his sister's "lodgings" in Drury Lane. Steele, however, branded its disreputable districts; Gay[543] warned us against "Drury's mazy courts and dark abodes;" and Pope laughed at building a church for "the saints of Drury Lane," and derided its proud and paltry "drabs." The little sour poet, snugly off and well housed, delighted to sneer, with a cruel and ungenerous contempt, at the poverty of the poor Drury Lane poet who wrote for instant bread:—

> "'Nine years!' cries he, who, high in Drury Lane,
> Lull'd by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,
> Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,
> Obliged by hunger and request of friends."

To ridicule poverty, and to treat misfortune as a punishable crime, is the special opprobrium of too many of the heroes of English literature.

Hogarth has shown us the poor poet of Drury Lane; Goldsmith has painted for us the poor author, but in a kindlier way, for he must have remembered how poor he himself and Dr. [Pg 300] Johnson, Savage, Otway, and Lee had been. Pope, in his notes to the *Dunciad*, expressly says that the poverty of his enemies is the cause of all their slander. Poverty with him is another name for vice and all uncleanness. Goldsmith only laughs as he describes the poor poet in Drury Lane in a garret, snug from the Bailiff, and opposite a public-house famous for Calvert's beer and Parsons's "black champagne." The windows are dim and patched; the floor is sanded. The damp walls are hung with the royal game of goose, the twelve rules of King Charles, and a black profile of the Duke of Cumberland. The rusty grate has no fire. The mantelpiece is chalked with long unpaid scores of beer and milk. There are five cracked teacups on the chimney-board; and the poet meditates over his epics and his finances with a stocking round his brows "instead of bay."

Early in the reign of William III. Drury Lane finally lost all traces of its aristocratic character.

Vinegar Yard, in Drury Lane, was originally called Vine Garden Yard. Vine Street, Piccadilly, Vine Street, Westminster, and Vine Street, Saffron Hill, all derived their names from the vineyards they displaced; but there is great reason to suppose that in the Middle Ages orchards and herb-gardens were often classified carelessly as "vineyards." English grapes might produce a sour, thin wine, but there was never a time when home-made wine superseded the produce of Montvoisin, Bordeaux, or Gascony. Vinegar Yard was built about 1621.[544] In St Martin's Burial Register there is an entry, "1624, Feb. 4: Buried Blind John out of Vinagre Yard." Clayrender's letter in Smollett's *Roderick Random* is written to her "dear kreetur" from "Winegar Yard, Droory Lane." This fair charmer must surely have lived not far from Mr. Dickens's inimitable Mrs. Megby. The nearness of Vinegar Yard to the theatre is alluded to by James Smith in his parody on Sir Walter Scott in the *Rejected Addresses*.

General Monk's gross and violent wife was the daughter of his servant, John Clarges, a [Pg 301] farrier in the Savoy. Her mother, says Aubrey, was one of the five women-barbers[545] that lived in Drury Lane. She kept a glove-shop in the New Exchange before her marriage, and as a seamstress used to carry the general's linen to him when he was in the Tower.

Pepys hated her, because she was jealous of his patron, Lord Sandwich, and called him a coward. He calls her "ill-looking" and "a plain, homely dowdy," and says that one day, when Monk was drunk, and sitting with Troutbeck, a disreputable fellow, the duke was wondering that Nan Hyde, a brewer's daughter, should ever have come to be Duchess of York. "Nay," said Troutbeck, "ne'er wonder at that, for if you will give me another bottle of wine I will tell you as great if not a greater miracle, and that was that our Dirty Bess should come to be

Duchess of Albemarle."[546]

Nell Gwynn was born in Coal Yard, on the east side of Drury Lane,[547] the next turning to the infamous Lewknor Lane, which used to be inhabited by the orange-girls who attended the theatres in Charles II.'s reign. It was in this same lane that Jonathan Wild, the thief-taker, whom Fielding immortalises, afterwards lived. In a coarse and ruthless satire written by Sir George Etherege after Nell's death, the poet calls her a "scoundrel lass," raised from a dunghill, born in a cellar, and brought up as a cinder-wench in a coalyard.[548]

Nelly was the vagabond daughter of a poor Cavalier captain and fruiterer, who is said to have died in prison at Oxford. She began life by selling fish in the street, then turned orange-girl at the theatres, was promoted to be an actress, and finally became a mistress of Charles II. Though not as savage-tempered as the infamous Lady Castlemaine, Nelly was almost as mischievous, and quite as shameless. She obtained from the king £60,000 in four [Pg 302]
years.[549] She bought a pearl necklace at Prince Rupert's sale for £4000. She drank, swore, gambled, and squandered money as wildly as her rivals. Nelly was small, with a good-humoured face, and "eyes that winked when she laughed."[550] She was witty, reckless, and good-natured. The portrait of her by Lely, with the lamb under her arm, shows us a very arch, pretty, dimply little actress. The present Duke of St. Alban's is descended from her.[551]

In 1667 Nell Gwynn was living in Drury Lane, for on May day of that year Pepys says—"To Westminster, in the way meeting many milkmaids with garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddler between them; and saw pretty Nelly standing at her lodging's door in Drury Lane, in her smock-sleeves and boddice, looking upon one. She seemed a mighty pretty creature." Nelly had not then been long on the stage, and Pepys had hissed her a few months before being introduced to her by dangerous Mrs. Knipp. In 1671 Evelyn saw Nelly, then living in Pall Mall, "looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall," and talking too familiarly to the king, who stood on the green walk in the park below.[552]

Poor Nell was not "allowed to starve," but ended an ill life by dying of apoplexy. There is no authority for the name of "Nell Gwynn's Dairy" given to a house near the Adelphi.

That infamous and perjured scoundrel, and the murderer of so many innocent men, Titus Oates, was the son of a popular Baptist preacher in Ratcliffe Highway, and was educated at Merchant Taylor's. Dismissed from the Fleet, of which he was chaplain, for infamous practices, he became a Jesuit at St. Omer's, and came back to disclose the sham Popish plot, for which atrocious lie he received of the Roman Catholic king, Charles II., £1200 a year, an [Pg 303]
escort of guards, and a lodging in Whitehall. Oates died in 1705. He lodged for some time in Cockpit Alley, now called Pitt Place.

It was in the Crown Tavern, next the Whistling Oyster, and close to the south side of Drury Lane Theatre, that *Punch* was first projected by Mr. Mark Lemon and Mr. Henry Mayhew in 1841; and its first number was "prepared for press" in a back room in Newcastle Street, Strand. Great rivers often have their sources in swampy and obscure places, and our good-natured satirist has not much to boast of in its birthplace. To *Punch* Tom Hood contributed his immortal "Song of the Shirt," and Tennyson his scorching satire against Bulwer and his "New Timon;" almost from the first, Leech devoted to it his humorous pencil, and Albert Smith his perennial store of good humour and drollery. Amongst its other early contributors should be mentioned Mr. Gilbert A. à Beckett, Mr. W. H. Wills, and Douglas Jerrold.

Zoffany, the artist, lived for some time in poverty in Drury Lane. Mr. Audinet, father of Philip Audinet the engraver, served his time with the celebrated clockmaker, Rimbault, who lived in Great St. Andrew's Street, Seven Dials. This worthy excelled in the construction of the clocks called at that time "Twelve-tuned Dutchmen," which were contrived with moving figures, engaged in a variety of employments. The pricking of the barrels of those clocks was performed by Bellodi, an Italian, who lived hard by, in Short's Gardens, Drury Lane. This person solicited Rimbault in favour of a starving artist who dwelt in a garret in his house. "Let him come to me," said Rimbault. Accordingly Zoffany waited upon the clockmaker, and produced some specimens of his art, which were so satisfactory that he was immediately set to work to embellish clock-faces, and paint appropriate backgrounds to the puppets upon them. From clock-faces the young painter proceeded to the human face divine, and at last resolved to try his hand upon the visage of the worthy clockmaker himself. He hit off the [Pg 304]
likeness of the patron so successfully, that Rimbault exerted himself to serve and promote him. Benjamin Wilson, the portrait-painter, who at that time lived at 56 Great Russell Street, a house afterwards inhabited by Philip Audinet, being desirous of procuring an assistant who could draw the figure well, and being, like Lawrence, deficient in all but the head, found out the ingenious painter of clock-faces, and engaged him at the moderate salary of forty pounds a year, with an especial injunction to secrecy. In this capacity he worked upon a picture of Garrick and Miss Bellamy in "Romeo and Juliet," which was exhibited under the name of Wilson. Garrick's keen eye satisfied him that another hand was in the work; so he resolved to discover the unknown painter. This discovery he effected by perseverance: he made the acquaintance of Zoffany and became his patron, employing him himself and introducing him to his friends; and in this way his bias to theatrical portraiture became established. Garrick's favour met with an ample return in the admirable portraits of himself and contemporaries, which have rendered their personal appearance so speakingly familiar to posterity both in his pictures and the admirable mezzotinto scrapings of Earlom. Zoffany

was elected among the first members of the Royal Academy in 1768.

The old Cockpit, or Phœnix Theatre, stood on the site of what is now called Pitt Place. Early in James I.'s reign it had been turned into a playhouse, and probably rebuilt.[553]

On Shrove Tuesday 1616-17 the London prentices, roused to their annual zeal by a love of mischief and probably a Puritan fervour, sacked the building, to the discomfiture of the harmless players. Bitter, narrow-headed Prynne, who notes with horror and anger the forty thousand plays printed in two years for the five Devil's chapels in London,[554] describes the Cockpit as demoralising Drury Lane, then no doubt wealthy, and therefore supposed to be respectable. In 1647 the Cockpit Theatre was turned into a schoolroom; in 1649 Puritan soldiers broke into the house, which had again become a theatre, captured the actors, [Pg 305] dispersed the audience, broke up the seats and stage, and carried off the dramatic criminals in open day, in all their stage finery, to the Gate House at Westminster.

Rhodes, the old prompter at Blackfriars, who had turned bookseller, reopened the Cockpit on the Restoration. The new Theatre in Drury Lane opened in 1663 with the "Humorous Lieutenant" of Beaumont and Fletcher. This was the King's Company under Killigrew. Davenant and the Duke of York's company found a home first in the Cockpit, and afterwards in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street.

The first Drury Lane Theatre was burnt down in 1672. Wren built the new house, which opened in 1674 with a prologue by Dryden. Cibber gives a careful account of Wren's Drury Lane, the chief entrance to which was down Playhouse Passage. Pepys blamed it for the distance of the stage from the boxes, and for the narrowness of the pit entrances.[555] The platform of the stage projected very forward, and the lower doors of entrance for the actors were in the place of the stage-boxes.[556]

In 1681 the two companies united, leaving Portugal Street to the lithe tennis-players and Dorset Gardens to the brawny wrestlers. Wren's theatre was taken down in 1791; its successor, built by Holland, was opened in 1794, and destroyed in 1809. The present edifice, the fourth in succession, is the work of Wyatt, and was opened in 1812.[557]

Hart, Mohun, Burt, and Clun were all actors in Killigrew's company. Hart, who had been a captain in the army, was dignified as Alexander, incomparable as Catiline, and excellent as Othello. He died in 1683. Mohun, whom Nat Lee wrote parts for, and who had been a major in the Civil War, was much applauded in heroic parts, and was a favourite of Rochester's. Burt played Cicero in Ben Jonson's "Catiline;" and poor Clun, who was murdered by footpads in Kentish Town, was great as Iago, and as Subtle in "The Alchymist."

From Pepys's memoranda of visits to Drury Lane we gather a few facts about the licentious [Pg 306] theatre-goers of his day. After the Plague, when Drury Lane had been deserted, the old gossip went there, half-ashamed to be seen, and with his cloak thrown up round his face. [558] The king flaunts about with his mistresses, and Pepys goes into an upper box to chat with the actresses and see a rehearsal, which seems then to have followed and not preceded the daily performance.[559] He describes Sir Charles Sedley, in the pit, exchanging banter with a lady in a mask. Three o'clock seems to have been about the time for theatres opening. [560] The king was angry, he says, with Ned Howard for writing a play called "The Change of Crowns," in which Lacy acted a country gentleman who is astonished at the corruption of the court. For this Lacy was committed to the porter's lodge; on being released, he called the author a fool, and having a glove thrown in his face, returned the compliment with a blow on Howard's pate with a cane; upon which the pit wondered that Howard did not run the mean fellow through; and the king closed the house, which the gentry thought had grown too insolent.

August 15, 1667, Pepys goes to see the "Merry Wives of Windsor," which pleased our great Admiralty official "in no part of it." Two days after he weeps at the troubles of Queen Elizabeth, but revives when that dangerous Mrs. Knipp dances among the milkmaids, and comes out in her nightgown to sing a song. Another day he goes at three o'clock to see Beaumont and Fletcher's "Scornful Lady," but does not remain, as there is no one in the pit. In September of the same year he finds his wife and servant in an eighteenpenny seat. In October 1667 he ventures into the tiring-room where Nell was dressing, and then had fruit in the scene-room, and heard Mrs. Knipp read her part in "Flora's Vagaries," Nell cursing because there were so few people in the pit. A fortnight after he contrives to see a new play, "The Black Prince," by Lord Orrery; and though he goes at two, finds no room in the pit, and has for the first time in his life to take an upper four-shilling-box. November 1, he proclaims [Pg 307] the "Taming of the Shrew" "a silly old play." November 2, the house was full of Parliament men, the House being up. One of them choking himself while eating some fruit, Orange Moll thrust her finger down his throat and brought him to life again.

Pepys condemns Nell Gwynn as unbearable in serious parts, but considers her beyond imitation as a madwoman. In December 1667 he describes a poor woman who had lent her child to the actors, but hearing him cry, forced her way on to the stage and bore it off from Hart.

It would seem from subsequent notes in the *Diary*, that to a man who stopped only for one act at a theatre, and took no seat, no charge was made.

In February 1668 Pepys sees at Drury Lane "The Virgin Martyr," by Massinger, which he

pronounces not to be worth much but for Becky Marshall's acting; yet the wind music when the angel descended "wrapped up" his soul so, that, remarkably enough, it made him as sick as when he was first in love, and he determined to go home and make his wife learn wind music. May 1, 1668, he mentions that the pit was thrown into disorder by the rain coming in at the cupola. May 7 of the same year, he calls for Knipp when the play is over, and sees "Nell in her boy's clothes, mighty pretty." "But, Lord!" he says, "their confidence! and how many men do hover about them as soon as they come off the stage! and how confident they are in their talk!"

On May 18, 1668, Pepys goes as early as twelve o'clock to see the first performance of that poor play, Sir Charles Sedley's "Mulberry Garden," at which the king, queen, and court did not laugh. While waiting for the curtain to pull up, Pepys hires a boy to keep his place, slips out to the Rose Tavern in Russell Street, and dines off a breast of mutton from the spit.

On September 15, 1668, there is a play—"The Ladies à la Mode"—so bad that the actor who announced the piece to be repeated fell a-laughing, as did the pit. Four days after Pepys sits [Pg 308] next Shadwell, the poet, admiring Ben Jonson's extravagant comedy, "The Silent Woman."

In January 1669 he sat in a box near "that merry jade Nell," who, with a comrade from the Duke's House, "lay there laughing upon people."

"Les Horaces" of Corneille he found "a silly tragedy." February 1669 Beetson, one of the actors, read his part, Kynaston having been beaten and disabled by order of Sir Charles Sedley, whom he had ridiculed. The same month Pepys went to the King's House to see "The Faithful Shepherdess," and found not more than £10 in the house.

A great leader in the Drury Lane troop was Lacy, the Falstaff of his day. He was a handsome, audacious fellow, who delighted the town as "Frenchman, Scot, or Irishman, fine gentleman or fool, honest simpleton or rogue, Tartuffe or Drench, old man or loquacious woman." He was King Charles's favourite actor as Teague in "The Committee," or mimicking Dryden as Bayes in "The Rehearsal."

The greatest rascal in the company was Goodman—"Scum Goodman," as he was called—admirable as Alexander and Julius Cæsar. He was a dashing, shameless, impudent rogue, who used to boast that he had once taken "an airing" on the road to recruit his purse. He was expelled Cambridge for slashing a picture of the Duke of Monmouth. He hired an Italian quack to poison two children of his mistress, the infamous Duchess of Cleveland, joined in the Fenwick plot to kill King William, and would have turned traitor against his fellow conspirators had he not been bought off for £500 a year, and sent to Paris, where he disappeared.

Haines, one of Killigrew's band, was an impudent but clever low comedian. In Sparkish, in "The Country Wife," he was the very model of airy gentlemen. His great successes were as Captain Bluff in Congreve's "Old Bachelor," Roger in "Æsop," and "the lively, impudent, and irresistible Tom Errand" in Farquhar's "Constant Couple," "that most triumphant comedy of a whole century."[561]

The stories told of Joe Haines are good. He once engaged a simple-minded clergyman as [Pg 309] "chaplain to the Theatre Royal," and sent him behind the scenes ringing a big bell to call the actors to prayers. "Count" Haines was once arrested by two bailiffs on Holborn Hill at the very moment that the Bishop of Ely passed in his carriage. "Here comes my cousin, he will satisfy you," said the ready-witted actor, who instantly stepped to the carriage window and whispered Bishop Patrick—"Here are two Romanists, my lord, inclined to become Protestants, but yet with some scruples of conscience." The anxious bishop instantly beckoned to the bailiffs to follow him to Ely Place, and Joe escaped; the mortified bishop paying the money out of sheer shame. Haines died in 1701.

Amongst the actresses at this house were pretty but frail Mrs. Hughes, the mistress of Prince Rupert, and Mrs. Knipp, Pepys's dangerous friend, who acted rakish fine ladies and rattling ladies'-maids, and came on to sing as priestess, nun, or milkmaid. Anne Marshall, the daughter of a Presbyterian divine, acquired a reputation as Dorothea in "The Virgin Martyr," and as the Queen of Sicily in Dryden's "Secret Love."

But Nell Gwynn was the chief "toast" of the town. Little, pretty, impudent, and witty, she danced well, and was a good actress in comedy and in characters where "natural emotion bordering on insanity" was to be represented.[562] Her last original part was that of Almahide in Dryden's "Conquest of Granada," where she spoke the prologue in a straw hat as large as a waggon-wheel.

Leigh Hunt says that "Nineteen out of twenty of Dryden's plays were produced at Drury Lane, and seven out of Lee's eleven; all the good plays of Wycherly, except 'The Gentleman Dancing Master;' two of Congreve's—'The Old Bachelor' and 'The Double Dealer;' and all Farquhar's, except 'The Beau's Stratagem.'"[563] Dryden's impurity and daring bombast were the attractions to Drury Lane, as Otway's sentimentalism and real pathos were to the [Pg 310] rival house. Lee's splendid bombast was succeeded by Farquhar's gay rakes and not too virtuous women.

Doggett, who was before the public from 1691 to 1713, was a little lively Irishman, for whom Congreve wrote the characters of Fondlewife, Sir Paul Pliant, and Ben. He was partner in

the theatre with Cibber and Wilkes from 1709 to 1712, but left when Booth was taken into the firm. He was a staunch Whig, and left an orange livery and a badge to be rowed for yearly by six London watermen.

The queen of comedy, Mrs. Oldfield, flashed upon the town first as Lady Betty Modish in Cibber's "Careless Husband," in 1704-5. When quite a girl she was overheard by Farquhar reading "The Scornful Lady" of Beaumont and Fletcher to her aunt, who kept the Mitre Tavern in St. James's Market. Farquhar introduced her to Vanbrugh, and Vanbrugh to Rich. "She excelled all actresses," says Davies, "in sprightliness of wit and elegance of manner, and was greatly superior in the clear, sonorous, and harmonious tones of her voice." Her eyes were large and speaking, and when intended to give special archness to some brilliant or gay thought, she kept them mischievously half shut. Cibber praises Mrs. Oldfield for her unpresuming modesty, and her good sense in not rejecting advice—"A mark of good sense," says the shrewd old manager, "rarely known in any actor of either sex but herself. Yet it was a hard matter to give her any hint that she was not able to take or improve."[564] With all this merit, she was tractable and less presuming in her station than several that had not half her pretensions to be troublesome. This excellent actress was not fond of tragedy, but she still played Marcia in "Cato;" Swift, who attended the rehearsals with Addison, railed at her for her good-humoured carelessness and indifference; and Pope sneered at her vanity in her last moments. It is true that she was buried in kid gloves, tucker, and ruffles of best lace. Mrs. Oldfield lived first with a Mr. Maynwaring, a rough, hard-drinking Whig writer, to whom Addison dedicated one of the volumes of the *Spectator*; and after his death with [Pg 311]
General Churchill, one of the Marlborough family. Nevertheless, she went to court and habitually associated with ladies of the highest rank. Society is cruel and inconsistent in these matters. Open scandal it detests, but to secret vice it is indifferent.

Mrs. Oldfield died in 1730, lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and when she was borne to her grave in the Abbey, Lord Hervey (Pope's "Sporus"), Lord Delawarr, and that toady Bubb Doddington, supported her pall. The late Earl of Cadogan was the great-grandson of Anne Oldfield.[565] This actress, so majestic in tragedy, so irresistible in comedy, was generous enough to give an annuity to poor, hopeless, scampish Savage.

Robert Wilkes, a young Irish Government clerk, obtained great successes as Farquhar's heroes, Sir Harry Wildair, Mirabel, Captain Plume, and Archer. He played equally well the light gentlemen of Cibber's comedies. Genest describes him as buoyant and graceful on the stage, irreproachable in dress, his every movement marked by "an ease of breeding and manner." This actor also excelled in plaintive and tender parts. Cibber hints, however, at his professional conceit and overbearing temper. Wilkes on one occasion read "George Barnwell" to Queen Anne at the Court at St. James's. He died in 1732.

Barton Booth, who was at Westminster School with Rowe the poet, identified himself with Addison's Cato. His dignity, pathos, and energy as that lover of liberty led Bolingbroke to present him on the first night with a purse of fifty guineas. The play was translated into four languages; Pope gave it a prologue; Garth decked it with an epilogue; while Denis proved it, to his own satisfaction, to be worthless. Aaron Hill tells us that statistics proved that Booth could always obtain from eighteen to twenty rounds of applause during the evening. When playing the Ghost to Betterton's Hamlet, Booth is said to have been once so horror-stricken as to be unable to proceed with his part. He often took inferior Shaksperean parts, and was [Pg 312]
frequently indolent; but if he saw a man whose opinion he valued among the audience he fired up and played to him. This petted actor and manager died in 1733.

Colley Cibber, to judge from Steele's criticisms, must have been admirable as a beau, whether rallying pleasantly, scorning artfully, ridiculing, or neglecting.[566] Wilkes surpassed him in beseeching gracefully, approaching respectfully, pitying, mourning, and loving. In the part of Sir Fopling Flutter in "The Fool of Fashion," played in 1695, Cibber wore a fair, full-bottomed periwig which was so much admired that it used to be brought on the stage in a sedan and put on publicly. To this wonder of the town Colonel Brett, who married Savage's mother, took a special fancy. "The beaux of those days," says Cibber, "had more of the stateliness of the peacock than the pert of the lapwing." The colonel came behind the scenes, first praised the wig, and then offered to purchase it. On Cibber's bantering him about his anxiety for such a trifle, the gay colonel began to rally himself with such humour that he fairly won Cibber, and they sat down at once, laughing, to finish their bargain over a bottle.

Quin's career began at Dublin in 1714, and ended at Bath in 1753. From 1736 to 1741 he was at Drury Lane. From Booth's retirement till the coming of Garrick, Quin had no rival as Cato, Brutus, Volpone, Falstaff, Zanga, etc. His Macbeth, Othello, and Lear were inferior. Davies says, the tender and the violent were beyond his reach, but he gave words weight and dignity by his sensible elocution and well-regulated voice. His movements were ponderous and his action languid. Quin was generous, witty, a great epicure, and a careless dresser. It was his hard fate, though a warm-hearted man, to be equally warm in temper, and to kill two adversaries in duels that were forced upon him. Quin was a friend of Garrick and of Thomson the poet, and a frequent visitor at Allen's house at Prior Park, near Bath, where Pope, Warburton, and Fielding visited.

Some of Quin's jests were perfect. When Warburton said, "By what law can the execution of [Pg 313]
Charles I. be justified?" Quin replied, "By all the laws he had left them." No wonder Walpole

applauded him. The bishop bade the player remember that the regicides came to violent ends, but Quin gave him a worse blow. “That, your lordship,” he said, “if I am not mistaken, was also the case with the twelve apostles.” Quin could overthrow even Foote. They had at one time had a quarrel, and were reconciled, but Foote was still a little sore. “Jemmy,” said he, “you should not have said that I had but one shirt, and that I lay in bed while it was washed.” “Sammy,” replied the actor, “I never *could* have said so, for I never knew that you had a shirt to wash.” Quin died in 1766, and Garrick wrote an epitaph on his tomb in Bath Abbey, ending with the line—

“To this complexion we must come at last.”

Garrick appeared first at Goodman’s Fields Theatre, in 1741, as King Richard. In eight days the west flocked eastward, and, as Davies tells us, “the coaches of the nobility filled up the space from Temple Bar to Whitechapel.” Pope came up from Twickenham to see if the young man was equal to Betterton. Garrick revolutionised the stage. Tragedians had fallen into a pompous “rhythmical, mechanical sing-song,”[567] fit only for dull orators. Their style was overlaboured with art—it was mere declamation. The actor had long ceased to imitate nature. Garrick’s first appearance at Drury Lane was in 1742. Cumberland, then at Westminster School, describes his sight of Quin and Garrick, and the first impressions they produced on him. Garrick was Lothario, Mrs. Cibber Calista, Quin Horatio, and Mrs. Pritchard Lavinia. Quin, when the curtain drew up, presented himself in a green velvet coat, embroidered down the seams, an enormous full-bottomed periwig, rolled stockings, and high-heeled square shoes.[568] “With very little variation of cadence, and in a deep full tone, accompanied by a sawing kind of action which had more of the senate than the stage in it, [Pg 314] he rolled out his heroics with an air of dignified indifference that seemed to disdain the plaudits that were bestowed upon him. Mrs. Cibber, in a key high-pitched but sweet withal, sang or rather recitatived Rowe’s harmonious strains. But when, after long and anxious expectation, I first beheld little Garrick, then young and light and alive in every muscle and every feature, come bounding on the stage and pointing at the wittol Altamont and heavy-paced Horatio, heavens! what a transition!—it seemed as if a whole century had been swept over in the passage of a single scene.” And yet, according to fretful Cumberland, “the show of hands” was for Quin, though, according to Davies, the best judges were for Garrick. And when Quin was slow in answering the challenge, somebody in the gallery called out, “Why don’t you tell the gentleman whether you will meet him or not?” Garrick’s repertory extended to one hundred characters, of which he was the original representative of thirty-six. Of his comic characters, Ranger and Abel Drugger were the best—one was irresistibly vivacious, the other comically stupid.

Garrick, who mutilated Shakespere and wrote clever verses and useful theatrical adaptations, was a vain, sprightly man, who got the reputation of reforming stage costume, although it was Macklin, pugnacious and courageous, who first dared to act Macbeth dressed as a Highland chief, and felt proud of his own anachronism. Garrick had, in fact, a dislike to really truthful costume. He dared to play Hotspur in laced frock and Ramillies wig.[569] In truth, it was neither Garrick nor Macklin who originated this reform, but the change of public opinion and the widening of education. West, in spite of ridicule and condemnation, dared to dress the soldiers in his “Death of Wolfe” in English uniform, instead of in the armour of stage Romans. Burke said of Garrick that he was the most acute observer of nature he had ever known. Garrick could assume any passion at the moment, and could act off-hand Scrub or Richard, Brute or Macbeth. He oscillated between tragedy and comedy; he [Pg 315] danced to perfection; he was laborious at rehearsals, and yet all that he did seemed spontaneous. In Fribble he imitated no fewer than eleven men of fashion so that every one recognised them. Garrick died in 1779, and was buried in *the* Abbey. “Chatham,” says Dr. Doran, the actor’s admirable biographer, “had addressed him living in verse, and peers sought for the honour of supporting the pall at his funeral.”[570] That he was vain and over-sensitive there can be no doubt; but there can be also no doubt that he was generous, often charitable, delightful in society, and never, like Foote, eager to give pain by the exercise of his talent. As an actor, Garrick has not since been equalled in versatility and equal balance of power; nor has any subsequent actor attained so high a rank among the intellect of his age.

Kitty Clive, born in 1711, took leave of the stage in 1769. She was one of the best-natured, wittiest, happiest, and most versatile of actresses, whether as “roguish chambermaid, fierce virago, chuckling hoyden, brazen romp, stolid country girl, affected fine lady, or thoroughly natural old woman.”[571] Fielding, Garrick, and Walpole delighted in Kitty Clive. After years of quadrille at Purcell’s, and cards and music at the villa at Teddington which Horace Walpole lent her, Kitty Clive died suddenly, without a groan, in 1785.

Woodward was excellent in fops, rascals, simpletons, and Shakesperean light characters. His Bobadil, Marplot, and Touchstone were beyond approach. Shuter, originally a billiard-marker, came on the stage in 1744, and quitted it in 1776. His grimace and impromptu were much praised.

Samuel Foote, born at Truro in 1720, having failed in tragedy, and not been very successful in comedy, started his entertainments at the Haymarket in 1747. He died in 1777. His history belongs to the records of another theatre.

Spanger Barry in 1748-9 acted Hamlet and Macbeth alternately with Garrick. Davies says

that Barry could not perform such characters as Richard and Macbeth, but he made a capital Alexander. “He charmed the ladies by the soft melody of his love complaints and the noble ardour of his courtship.” Only Mrs. Cibber excelled him in the expression of love, grief, tenderness, and jealous rage. Tall, handsome, and dignified, Barry undoubtedly ran Garrick close in the part of Romeo, artificial as Churchill in the *Rosciad* declares him to have been. A lady once said, “that had she been Juliet she should have expected Garrick to have stormed the balcony, he was so impassioned; but that Barry was so eloquent, tender, and seductive, that she should have come down to him.”[572] In Lear, the town said that Barry “was every inch a king” but Garrick “every inch King Lear.” Barry was amorous and extravagant. He delighted in giving magnificent entertainments, and treated Mr. Pelham in so princely a style that that minister (with not the finest taste) rebuked him for his lavish hospitality. [Pg 316]

The brilliant and witching Peg Woffington was the daughter of a small huckster in Dublin, and became a pupil of Madame Violante, a rope-dancer. In 1740 she came out at Covent Garden, and soon won the town as Sir Harry Wildair. She played Lady Townley and Lady Betty Modish with “happy ease and gaiety.”[573] She rendered the most audacious absurdities pleasing by her beautiful bright face and her vivacity of expression. Peg quarrelled with Kitty Clive and Mrs. Cibber, and detested that reckless woman George Anne Bellamy. This witty and enchanting actress, as generous and charitable as Nell Gwynn with all her faults, was struck by paralysis while acting Rosalind at Covent Garden, and died in 1760.

During his career from 1691 to his retirement in 1733, clever, careless Colley Cibber originated nearly eighty characters, chiefly grand old fops, inane old men, dashing soldiers, and impudent lacqueys. His Fondlewife, Sir Courtly Nice, and Shallow were his best parts. “Of all English managers,” says Dr. Doran, “Cibber was the most successful. Of the English actors, he is the only one who was ever promoted to the laureateship or elected a member of White’s Club.” Even Pope, who hated him and got some hard blows from him, praised “The Careless Husband;” Walpole, who despised players, praised Colley; and Dr. Johnson approved of his admirably written *Apology*. [Pg 317]

Cibber’s daughter, Mrs. Clarke, led a wild and disreputable life, became a waitress at Marylebone, and died in poverty in 1760. Colley’s son Theophilus, the best Pistol ever seen on the stage, and the original George Barnwell, was drowned in crossing the Irish Sea.

His wife was a sister of Dr. Arne, the composer. In tragedy she was remarkable for her artless sensibility and exquisite variety of expression. As Ophelia she moved even Tate Wilkinson. She was one of the first actresses to make the woes of the grand tragedy queen natural. She died in 1766, and was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.

Mrs. Pritchard, that “inspired idiot,” as Dr. Johnson called her in his contempt for her ignorance, seems to have been a virtuous woman. She left the stage in 1768. Though plain, and in later years very stout, Mrs. Pritchard was admired in tragedy for her perfect pronunciation and her force and dignity as the Queen in “Hamlet,” and as Lady Macbeth. She was also a good comedian in playful and witty parts. She was, however, not very graceful, and inclined to rant.

When Mrs. Cibber died in 1765, Mrs. Yates succeeded to her fame, with Mrs. Barry for a rival, till Mrs. Siddons came from Bath and unseated both. Mrs. Yates was wanting in pathos, but in pride and scorn as Medea, or in hopeless grief as Constance, she was unapproachable. She died in 1787.

George Anne Bellamy, the reckless and the unfortunate, was the daughter of a Quakeress, with whom Lord Tyrawley ran away from school. Dr. Doran says, “What with the loves, caprices, charms, extravagances, and sufferings of Mrs. Bellamy, she excited the wonder, admiration, pity, and contempt of the town for thirty years.”[574] Now she was squandering money like a Cleopatra; now she was crouching on the wet steps of Westminster Bridge, brooding over suicide. “The Bellamy,” says the critic, was only equal to “the Cibber” in expressing the ecstasy of love. This follower of the old school of intoners was the original Volumnia of Thomson, the Erixene of Dr. Young, and the Cleone of the honest footman poet and publisher Dodsley. She took her farewell benefit in 1784. [Pg 318]

In 1778 Miss Farren appeared at Drury Lane. She was the daughter of a poor vagabond strolling player. Walpole says she was the most perfect actress he had ever seen; and he spoke well of her fine ladies, of whom he was a judge. Adolphus, not easily appeased, praised her irresistible graces and “all the indescribable little charms which give fascination to the women of birth and fashion.” She was gay as Lady Betty Modish, sentimental as Cecilia or Indiana, and playful as Rosara in the “Barber of Seville.” In 1797 the little girl who had been helped over the ice to the lock-up at Salisbury, to hand up a bowl of milk to her father when a prisoner there,[575] took leave of the stage in the part of Lady Teazle, and married the Earl of Derby, who had buried his wife just six weeks before.

In 1798 Mrs. Abington, “the best affected fine lady of her time,” retired from the stage of Drury Lane. She was the daughter of a common soldier, and as a girl was known as “Nosegay Fan,” and had sold flowers in St. James’s Park. She first appeared at Drury Lane in 1756-7.

Poor Mrs. Robinson, the “Perdita” so heartlessly betrayed by the Prince of Wales, was driven on to the stage in 1776 by her husband, a handsome scapegrace who had run through his fortune. She passed from the stage in 1780, and died, forgotten, poor, and paralytic, in 1800.

In 1767 Samuel Reddish, Canning’s stepfather, first appeared at Drury Lane as Lord Townley. He was a reasonably good Edgar and Posthumus, but failed in parts of passion. He went mad in 1779. In this group of minor actors we may include Gentleman Smith, a good Charles Surface, who retired from the stage in 1786; Yates, whose forte was old men and [Pg 319] Shakspere’s fools (1736-1780); Dodd, who, from 1765 to 1796, was the prince of fops and old men (Master Slender and Master Stephen were said to die with him); and lastly, that great comic actor, John Palmer, who died on the stage in 1798, as he was playing the Stranger. He was the original representative of plausible Joseph Surface. “Plausible,” he used to say, “am I? You rate me too highly. The utmost I ever did in that way was that I once persuaded a bailiff who had arrested me to bail me.” Once when making friends with Sheridan after a quarrel, Palmer said to the author, “If you could but see my heart, Mr. Sheridan!” to which Sheridan replied, “Why, Jack, you forgot I wrote it.” “Jack Palmer,” says Lamb, “was a gentleman with a slight infusion of the footman.”[576] He had two voices, both plausible, hypocritical, and insinuating.

Henderson was engaged by Sheridan for Drury Lane in 1777. As Falstaff this humorous friend of Gainsborough was seldom equalled. His defects were a woolly voice and a habit of sawing the air. Dr. Doran says, “he was the first actor who, with Sheridan, gave public readings” at Freemasons’ Hall; and his recitation of “John Gilpin” gave impetus to the sale of the narrative of that adventurous ride.[577] Henderson died in 1785, aged only thirty-eight, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Mrs. Siddons, the daughter of an itinerant actor, was born in 1755. After strolling and becoming a lady’s-maid, she married a poor second-rate actor of Birmingham. She appeared first at Drury Lane in 1775 as Portia. Her first real triumph was in 1780, as Isabella in Southerne’s tragedy. The management gave her Garrick’s dressing-room, and some legal admirers presented her with a purse of a hundred guineas. Soon afterwards, as Jane Shore, she sent many ladies in the audience into fainting fits. This great actress closed her career in 1812 with Lady Macbeth, her greatest triumph. She is said to have made King George III. shed tears. He admired her especially for her repose. “Garrick,” he used to say, “could never [Pg 320] stand still. He was a great fidget.” No actress received more homage in her time than Mrs. Siddons. Reynolds painted his name on the hem of her garment in his portrait of her as the Tragic Muse. Dr. Johnson kissed her hand and admired her genius. In comedy Mrs. Siddons failed; her rigorous Grecian face was not arch. “In comedy” says Colman, “she was only a frisking grig.” “Those who knew her best,” says Dr. Doran, “have recorded her grace, her noble carriage, divine elocution and solemn earnestness, her grandeur, her pathos, her correct judgment.” Erskine studied her cadences and tones. According to Campbell, she increased the heart’s capacity for tender, intense, and lofty feelings. This lofty-minded actress, as Young calls her, died in 1831.

Her elder brother, John Kemble, first appeared at Drury Lane, in 1783, as Hamlet. In 1788-9 he succeeded King as manager of the theatre, and continued so till 1801. In Coriolanus and Cato, Kemble was pre-eminent, but his Richard and Sir Giles were inferior to Cook’s and Kean’s. In comedy he failed, except in snatches of dignity or pathos. As an actor Kemble was sometimes heavy and monotonous. He had not the fire or versatility of Garrick, or the wild passion of Edmund Kean. As Hamlet he was romantic, dignified, and philosophic. In his Rolla he delighted Sheridan and Pitt; in Octavian he drew tears from all eyes. He excelled also in Cœur de Lion, Penruddock, and the Stranger. In private life he was always majestic and gravely convivial. When Covent Garden was burnt down in 1808, he bore the loss bravely, and on the night of the opening the generous Duke of Northumberland sent him back his bond for £10,000 to be committed to the flames. Walpole, who saw Kemble, preferred him to Garrick in Benedick, and to Quin in Maskwell. Kemble took his solemn farewell of the stage in 1817 as Coriolanus, and died at Lausanne in 1823. Leigh Hunt, an excellent dramatic critic, paints the following picture of Kemble: “A figure of melancholy dignity, dealing out a most measured speech in sepulchral tones and a pedantic pronunciation, and injuring what [Pg 321] he has made you feel by the want of feeling it himself.”[578] John Kemble’s brother Charles acted well in Mercutio, Young Mirabel, and Benedick. He remained on the stage till 1836.

George Frederick Cooke, whose life was one perpetual debauch, and whose career on the stage extended from 1801 to 1812, when he died at Boston, did not, I think, appear at Drury Lane. His laurels were won chiefly at Covent Garden.

Master Betty, born in 1791 at Shrewsbury, elegant, and quick of memory, appeared at Drury Lane in 1804, fretted his little hour upon the stage, and earned a fortune with which he prudently retired in 1808. He lived till 1876.

King, the original representative of Sir Peter Teazle, Lord Ogleby, Puff, and Dr. Cantwell, began his London career at Drury Lane in 1748. He left the stage in 1802. His best characters were Touchstone and Ranger, and in these parts he was always arch, rapid, and versatile. Hazlitt discourses on King’s old, hard, rough face, and his shrewd hints and tart replies.

Dickey Suett was a favourite low comedian from 1780 to 1805, when he died. He was a tall,

thin, ungainly man, too much addicted to grimace, interpolations, and practical jokes. He drank hard, and suffered from mental depression. Hazlitt calls him “the delightful old croaker, the everlasting Dickey Gossip of the stage.”[579] Lamb describes his “Oh, la!” as irresistible; “he drolled upon the stock of those two syllables richer than the cuckoo.” Shakspere’s jesters “have all the true Suett stamp—a loose and shambling gait, and a slippery tongue.”[580]

Miss Pope, who left the stage in 1808, had played with Garrick and Mrs. Clive. She was the original Polly Honeycomb, Miss Sterling, Mrs. Candour, and Tilburina. In youth she played hoydens, chambermaids, and half-bred ladies, with a dash and good-humour free from all vulgarity, and in old age she took to duennas and Mrs. Heidelburg. In 1761 Churchill [Pg 322] mentions her as “lively Pope,” and in 1807 Horace Smith describes her as “a bulky person with a duplicity of chin.”

In 1741 the theatre, which had been rebuilt by Wren in 1674, in a cheap and plain manner, became ruinous, and was enlarged and almost rebuilt by the Adams. In 1747 Garrick became the manager, and Dr. Johnson, as a friend, wrote the celebrated address beginning with the often-quoted lines—

> “When Learning’s triumph o’er her barbarous foes
> First reared the stage, immortal Shakspere rose.
> * * * * * *
> Each change of many-coloured life he drew,
> Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new;
> Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
> And panting Time toiled after him in vain.”

In 1775, the year in which “The Duenna” was brought out at Covent Garden, Garrick made known his wish to sell a moiety of the patent of this theatre. In June 1776 a contract was signed, Mr. Sheridan taking two-fourteenths of the whole for £10,000, Mr. Linley the same, and Dr. Ford three-fourteenths at £15,000.[581] How Sheridan raised the money no one ever knew.

Sheridan’s first contribution to this new stage was an alteration of Vanbrugh’s licentious comedy of “The Relapse,” which he called “A Trip to Scarborough,” and brought out in 1777. The same year the brilliant manager, then only six-and-twenty, produced the finest and most popular comedy in the English language, “The School for Scandal.” On the last slip of this miracle of wit and dramatic construction Sheridan wrote—“Finished at last, thank God!—R. B. Sheridan.” Below this the prompter added his devout response—“Amen.—W. Hopkins.”[582] Garrick was proud of the new manager, and boasted of his budding genius.[583]

In 1778 Sheridan bought out Mr. Lacy for more than £45,000, and Dr. Ford for £77,000. In [Pg 323] 1779 Garrick died, and Sheridan wrote a monody to his memory, which was delivered by Mrs. Yates after the play of “The West Indian.” Slander attributed the finest passage in this monody to Tickell, just as it had before attributed Tickell’s bad farce to Sheridan.

Dowton, who appeared in 1796 as Sheva, was felicitous in good-natured testy old men, and also in crabbed and degraded old villains. His Dr. Cantwell and Sir Anthony Absolute were in the true spirit of old comedy. Leigh Hunt praises Dowton’s changes from the irritable to the yielding, and from the angry to the tender.

Willy Blanchard was natural and unaffected, but mannered.

Mathews first appeared in London in 1803. He excelled in valets and old men, and drew tears as M. Mallet, the poor emigré who is disappointed about a letter.

Liston made his début at the Haymarket in 1805 as Sheepface. Leigh Hunt praises his ignorant rustics, and condemns his old men. He sets him down as a painter of emotions, and therefore more intellectual than Fawcett and less farcical than Munden. Liston was a hypochondriac; below his fun there was always an under-current of melancholy, “as though,” says Dr. Doran, mysteriously, “he had killed a boy when, under the name of Williams, he was usher at the Rev. Dr. Burney’s at Gosport.”[584]

In 1807 Jones and Young made their first appearances, but not at Drury Lane. Young originated Rienzi, and played Hamlet, Falstaff, and Captain Macheath. Jones was a stage rake of great excellence.

Among the actresses before Kean, we may mention Miss Brunton, afterwards Countess of Craven, and Mrs. Davison, a good Lady Teazle.

Lewis, who left the stage in 1809, was a draper’s son. He died in 1813, and out of part of his fortune the new church at Ealing was erected. He played Young Rapid and Jeremy Diddler, [Pg 324] and created the Hon. Tom Shuffleton in “John Bull.” His restless style suited Morton and Reynolds’s comedies, and he succeeded in “all that was frolic, gay, humorous, whimsical, eccentric, and yet elegant.” He was manager of Covent Garden for twenty-one years, and made everyone do his duty by kindness and good treatment. Leigh Hunt sketches Lewis admirably, with his “easy flutter,”[585] short knowing respiration, and complacent liveliness. Lewis played the gentleman with more heart than Elliston. He seemed polite, not from vanity, but rather from a natural irresistible wish to please. He had all the laborious

carelessness of action, important indifference of voice, and natural vacuity of look that are requisite for the lounger.[586] His defects were a habit of shaking his head and drawing in of the breath. His “flippant airiness,” “vivacious importance,” and “French flutter” must have been in their way perfect. “Gay, fluttering, hair-brained Lewis!” says Hazlitt; “nobody could break open a door, or jump over a table, or scale a ladder, or twirl a cocked hat, or dangle a cane, or play a jockey-nobleman or a nobleman’s jockey like him.”[587]

Here a moment’s pause for an anecdote. When a riot took place at Drury Lane in 1740 about the non-appearance of a French dancer, the first symptoms of the outbreak were the ushering of ladies out of the pit. A noble marquis gallantly proposed to fire the house. The proposal was considered, but not adopted. The bucks and bloods then proceeded to destroy the musical instruments and fittings, to break the panels and partitions, and pull down the royal arms. The offence was finally condoned by the ringleading marquis sending £100 to the manager.

Charles Lamb describes Drury Lane in his own delightful way. The first play he ever saw was in 1781-2, when he was six years old. “A portal, now the entrance,” he writes, “to a printing-office, at the north end of Cross Court was the pit entrance to old Drury; and I never pass it without shaking some forty years from off my shoulders, recurring to the [Pg 325] evening when I passed through it to see my first play. The afternoon was wet: with what a beating heart did I watch from the window the puddles!

“It was the custom then to cry, ‘’Chase some oranges, ’chase some nonpareils, ’chase a bill of the play?’ But when we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled a heaven to my imagination, the breathless anticipations I endured! The boxes, full of well-dressed women of quality, projected over the pit. The orchestra lights arose—the bell sounded once—it rang the second time—the curtain drew up, and the play was ‘Artaxerxes;’ ‘Harlequin’s Invasion’ followed.”

The next play Lamb went to was “The Lady of the Manor,” followed by a pantomime called “Lunn’s Ghost.” Rich was not long dead. His third play was “The Way of the World” and “Robinson Crusoe.” Six or seven years after he went (with what changed feelings!) to see Mrs. Siddons in Isabella. “Comparison and retrospection,” he says, “soon yielded to the present attraction of the scene, and the theatre became to me, upon a new stock, the most delightful of all recreations.”[588]

Handsome Jack Bannister, who played in youth with Garrick, and in later years with Edmund Kean, was the model for the Uncle Toby in Leslie’s picture. Natural, honest, as Hamlet, he was also good as Walter in “The Children of the Wood.” Inimitable “in depicting heartiness,” says Dr. Doran, “ludicrous distress, grave or affected indifference, honest bravery, insurmountable cowardice, a spirited young or an enfeebled yet impatient old fellow, mischievous boyishness, good-humoured vulgarity, there was no one of his time who could equal him.”[589] Bannister left the stage with a handsome fortune. Hazlitt says finely of him that his “gaiety, good-humour, cordial feeling, and natural spirits shone through his characters and lighted them up like a transparency.”[590] His kind heart and honest face [Pg 326] were as well known as his good-humoured smile and buoyant activity. “Jack,” says Lamb, “was beloved for his sweet, good-natured moral pretensions.” He gave us “a downright concretion of a Wapping sailor, a jolly warm-hearted Jack Tar.”

Mrs. Jordan’s mother was the daughter of a Welsh clergyman who had eloped with an officer. The débutante came out at Drury Lane in 1785 as the heroine of “The Country Girl.” In 1789 she became the mistress of the Duke of Clarence. Good-natured, and endowed with a sweet clear voice, she played rakes with the airiest grace, and excelled in representing arch, buoyant girls, spirited, buxom, lovable women, and handsome hoydens. The critics complained of her as vulgar. Late in life she retired to France, and died in 1815. “Her wealth,” says Dr. Doran, “was lavished on the Duke of Clarence, who left her to die untended; but when he became king he ennobled all her children, the eldest being made Earl of Munster.” Hazlitt, speaking of Mrs. Jordan, says eloquently, her voice “was a cordial to the heart, because it came from it full, like the luscious juice of the rich grape. To hear her laugh was to drink nectar. Her smile was sunshine; her talking far above singing; her singing was like the twanging of Cupid’s bow. Her body was large, soft, and generous like the rose. Miss Kelly, if we may accept the judgment of Hazlitt, was in comparison a mere dexterous, knowing chambermaid. Jordan was all exuberance and grace. It was her capacity for enjoyment, and the contrast she presented to everything sharp, angular, and peevish, that delighted the spectator. She was Cleopatra turned into an oyster wench.”[591] Charles Lamb praises Mrs. Jordan for her tenderness in such parts as Ophelia, Helena, and Viola, and for her “steady, melting eye.”[592]

Robert William Elliston was the son of a Bloomsbury watchmaker, and was born in 1774. He appeared in London first in 1797, and obtained a triumph as Sir Edward Mortimer, a part in which Kemble had failed. He is praised by Dr. Doran as one of the best of stage gentlemen, not being so reserved and languid as Charles Kemble. All the qualities that go to the making [Pg 327] of a gallant were conspicuous in his Duke Aranza—self-command, kindness, dignity, good-humour, a dash of satire, and true amatory fire; but then his voice was too pompously deep in soliloquy, and he was too genteel in low comedy. As a stage lover he was impassioned, tender, and courteous, yet he would persist in one uniform dress—blue coat, white waistcoat, and white knee-breeches. Yet, though a self-deceiving and pompous humbug,

Charles Lamb reverenced him and Leigh Hunt admired his acting. In turn proprietor of the Olympic, the Surrey, and Drury Lane theatres, Elliston outlived his fame and fortune. When acting George IV. in a sham coronation procession, having taken too much preliminary wine, he became so affected at the delight of the audience that he gave them his grandest benediction in these affecting words, “Bless you, my people!” When Douglas Jerrold saved the Surrey Theatre by his “Black-eyed Susan,” Elliston declared such services should be acknowledged by a presentation of plate—not by himself, however, but by Jerrold’s own friends. Elliston’s last appearance was in 1826, and he died in 1831.

Hull, a heavy, useful, and intelligent actor, left the stage in 1807. Holman, an exaggerating actor, had a career that lasted from 1784 to 1800. Munden, the broadest of farceurs and drollest of grimacers, appeared first in 1790 as Sir Francis Gripe, and last, in 1823, as Sir Robert Bramble and Dozey. His Crack in “The Turnpike Gate” was one of his greatest parts; but I am afraid he would be now thought too much of the buffoon. Charles Lamb devotes a whole essay to the subject of Munden’s acting as Cockletop, Sir Christopher Curry, Old Dornton, and the Cobbler of Preston. He says of him: “When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks in unaccountable warfare with your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of features, like Hydra. He, and he alone, makes faces. In the grand grotesque of farce, Munden stands out as single and unaccompanied as Hogarth. Can any man wonder like him, any man see ghosts like him, or fight with his own shadow?”[593] [Pg 328]

Lamb praises Dodd for a face formally flat in Foppington, frothily pert in Fattle, and blankly expressive of no meaning in Acres and Fribble.[594]

In 1792 Sheridan’s affairs began to get entangled. The surveyors reported the theatre unsafe and incapable of repair, and it was therefore resolved to build a new one at a cost of £150,000 by means of 300 shares at £500 each. In the meantime, while Sheridan was paying interest for his loan, the company was playing at an enormous expense on borrowed stages; and the careless and profuse manager, his prudent wife now dead, was maintaining three establishments—one at Wanstead, one at Isleworth, and one in Jermyn Street. In 1794 a new Theatre was built by Henry Holland.

In 1798 that masterpiece of false, hysterical German sentiment, “The Stranger” (translated from Kotzebue), was rewritten by Sheridan, and brought out at his own theatre. This was one of the earliest importations of the Germanism that Canning afterwards, for political purposes, so pungently denounced in the *Anti-Jacobin*. The great success of “The Stranger,” and the false taste it had implanted, induced Sheridan, in 1799, to bring out the play of “Pizarro.” He wrote scarcely anything in it but the speech of Rolla, which is itself an amplification of a few lines of the original.

The new theatre was to have cost £75,000, and the £150,000 subscribed for was to have paid the architect and defrayed the mortgage debts. The theatre, however, cost more than £150,000; only part of the debt was paid off, and a claim of £70,000 remained upon the property.[595]

On the 24th of February 1809, while the House of Commons was occupied with Mr. Ponsonby’s motion on the conduct of the war in Spain, the debate was interrupted by a great glare of light through the windows. When the cause was ascertained, so much sympathy was felt for Sheridan that it was proposed to adjourn; but Sheridan calmly rose and said, “that [Pg 329] whatever might be the extent of his private calamity, he hoped it would not interfere with the public business of the country.” He then left the house, and is said to have reached Drury Lane just in time to find all hope of saving his property abandoned. According to one story he coolly proceeded to the Piazza Coffee-house and discussed a bottle of wine, replying to a friend who praised his philosophic calmness, “Why, a man may surely be allowed to take a glass of wine *at his own fireside*.”[596] He is said to have been most grieved at the loss of a harpsichord that had belonged to his wife.

Encouraged by the opening presented, and at the tardiness of shareholders to rebuild, speculators now proposed to erect a third theatre; but this design Sheridan and his friends defeated, and Mr. Whitbread, the great brewer of Chiswell Street, Finsbury, who afterwards destroyed himself, exerted his energies in the rebuilding of it.

By the new agreement of 1811, Sheridan was to receive for his moiety £24,000, and an additional sum of £4000 for the property of the fruit-offices and the reversion of boxes and shares; his son also receiving his quarter of the patent property. Out of this sum the claims of the Linley family and other creditors were to be satisfied.

Overwhelmed with debt, dogged by bailiffs, hurried to and from sponging-houses, Sheridan, now a broken-down man, died in 1816, reproaching the committee with his last breath for refusing to lend him more money.

The new theatre, built by Mr. B. Wyatt, had been opened in October 1812, the performances consisting of “Hamlet” and “The Devil to Pay.” The house held 800 persons less than its predecessor. The proprietors being anxious to have an opening address equal to that of Dr. Johnson, advertised for a suitable poem, and professed a desire for an open and free competition. The verses were, like Oxford competition poems, to be marked with a word, number, or motto, and the appended sealed paper containing the name of the writer was not [Pg 330] to be opened unless the poem was successful. They offered twenty guineas as the prize, and

extended the time for sending in the poems. The result was an avalanche of mediocrity, till the secretary's desk and the treasury-office ran over with poems. The proprietors were in despair, when Lord Holland prevailed on Lord Byron to write an address, at the risk, as the poet feared, "of offending a hundred rival scribblers and a discerning public." The poem was written and accepted, and delivered on the special night by Mr. Elliston, who performed the part of Hamlet. The address was voted tame by the newspapers, with the exception of the following passage—

> "As soars this fane to emulate the last,
> Oh, might we draw our omens from the past?
> Some hour propitious to our prayers, may boast
> Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
> On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
> O'erwhelmed the gentlest, stormed the sternest heart;
> On Drury Garrick's latest laurels grew;
> Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
> Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu."

The brothers Smith eagerly seized this fine opportunity for parody, and the "Rejected Addresses" made all London shake with laughter.

The leaden statue of Shakspere over the entrance of old Drury Lane was executed by Cheere of Hyde Park Corner—"the leaden figure man" formerly so celebrated—from a design by Scheemakers, a native of Antwerp and the master of Nollekens. When this sculptor first went to Rome to study, he travelled on foot, and had to sell his shirts by the way in order to procure funds. Mr. Whitbread, one of Sheridan's creditors, gave the figure to the theatre. [597]

Mr. Whitbread and a committee had erected the house and purchased the old patent rights by means of a subscription of £400,000. Of this £20,000 was paid to Sheridan, and a like sum to the other holders of the patent. The creditors of the old house took a quarter of what they claimed in full payment, and the Duke of Bedford abandoned a claim of £12,000. The [Pg 331] company consisted of Elliston, Dowton, Bannister, Rae, Wallack, Wewitzer, Miss Smith, Mrs. Davison, Mrs. Glover, Miss Kelly, and Miss Mellon. Mr. C. Kemble and Grimaldi were at the other house, that the next season boasted a strong company—John and Charles Kemble, Conway, Terry, and Matthews. At Drury Lane no new piece was brought out except Coleridge's "Remorse." At Covent Garden there was played "Aladdin, or the Wonderful Lamp."

At Drury Lane, says Dr. Doran, neither new pieces nor new players succeeded, till on the 20th of January 1814, the play-bills announced the first appearance of an actor from Exeter, whose coming changed the evil fortunes of the house, scared the old correct, dignified, and classical school of actors, and brought again to the memories of those who could look back as far as Garrick the fire, nature, impulse, and terrible earnestness—all, in short, but the versatility, of that great master in his art. This player was Edmund Kean.

Kean was born in 1787. He was the son of a low and worthless actress, whose father, George Saville Carey, a poor singer, reciter, and mimic, hanged himself. The father of Carey was a dramatist and song-writer, the natural son of the great Lord Halifax, who died in 1695. Kean's father is unknown: he may have been Aaron Kean the tailor, or Moses Kean the builder. In early life the genius was cabin-boy, strolling player, dancer on the tight-rope, and elocutionist at country fairs. His first appearance, as Shylock, in 1814, was a triumph. That night he came home and promised his wife a carriage, and his son Charles (then in his cradle) an education at Eton. In Richard III. he soon attained great triumphs. He was audacious, sneering, devilish, almost supernatural in his cruelty and hypocrisy. His Hamlet, though graceful and earnest, was inferior to his Othello; but Kemble thought that the latter was a mistake, Othello being palpably "a slow man." When Southey saw Kean and Young, he said, "It is the arch-fiend himself." When Kean played Sir Giles Overreach, and removed it [Pg 332] from Kemble's repertory, his wife received him on his return from the theatre with the anxious question, "What did Lord Essex think of it?" The triumphant reply is well known: "D —— Lord Essex, Mary! the pit rose at me."

In 1822, after a visit to America, Kean appeared with his rival Young in a series of characters, though he never liked "the Jesuit," as he used to call Young. In 1827, Kean's son Charles appeared as Norval at Drury Lane, while his father, now sinking fast, was acting at Covent Garden. In 1833 Kean, shattered and exhausted, played Othello to his son's Iago, and died two months after.

Hazlitt has a fine comparison between Kean and Mrs. Siddons. Mrs. Siddons never seemed to task her powers to the utmost. Her least word seemed to float to the end of the stage; the least motion of her hand commanded obedience. "Mr. Kean," he says, "is all effort, all violence, all extreme passion; he is possessed with a fury and demon that leaves him no repose, no time for thought, nor room for imagination.[598] Mr. Kean's imagination appears not to have the principles of joy or hope or love in it. He seems chiefly sensible to pain and to the passion that springs from it, and to the terrible energies of mind or body which are necessary to grapple with or to avert it."[599]

The new theatre had small success under its committee of proprietors, and soon became

involved in debt and unable to pay the performers. In 1814 it was let to the highest bidder, Elliston, who took it at the yearly rental of £10,300, and expended £15,000 on repairs. Captain Polhill afterwards became the lessee, and sunk in it large sums of money. The two next lessees, Messrs. Bunn and Hammond, became bankrupts. Towards the middle of 1840 the house was reopened, after a closing of some months, for the then new entertainments of promenade concerts.

Grimaldi, the son of Queen Charlotte's dentist, was born in 1779. He made his début at Drury lane in a "Robinson Crusoe" pantomime in 1781, and retired from the stage in 1828. [Pg 333] His first part of any importance was Orson. He remained at Drury Lane for nearly five-and-twenty years, and then played alternately at Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells every night. "He was the very beau-ideal of thieves," says a critic of the time: "robbery became a science in his hand; you forgave the larceny from the humour with which Joe indulged his irresistible weakness."[600] He was famous for his rich ringing laugh, his complacent chuckle, the roll of his eyes, the drop of his chin, and his elongated respiration. But we must go back to the singers.

Mrs. Crouch, the great singer, and the daughter of a Gray's Inn Lane attorney, was articled to Mr. Linley, patentee of Drury Lane, in 1779, and in 1780 made her début as Mandane. In 1785 she married a lieutenant in the navy, but returned to the stage in 1786, to be eclipsed by Mrs. Billington. In 1787 she acted with Kelly at Drury Lane in the opera of "Richard Cœur de Lion," and in the same year, in the character of Selima, sang the once popular song of "No Flower that blows is like the Rose." In 1788 she played Lady Elinor in "The Haunted Tower" at Drury Lane. She died in 1804.

Mrs. Billington, the daughter of a German musician, was born in London in 1765. In 1801-2 she sang alternately at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. She died in 1818. Bianchi wrote for this lady the opera of "Inez de Castro." She is said to have played and sung at sight Mozart's "Clemenza di Tito;" her voice ranged from D to G in altissimo. She indulged too much in ornament, but was especially celebrated for her "Soldier tired of War's Alarms."

John Braham, a Jew pencil-boy—so the musical *on dit* goes—was brought up by a singer at the Duke's Place Synagogue. He made his début in 1787. He appeared first, in 1796, in Storace's opera of "Mahmoud," at Drury Lane. The compass of his song, "Let Glory's Clarion," extended over seventeen notes. He died in 1856.

Storace, born in 1763, died in 1796. He was the son of an Italian double-bass player, was [Pg 334] engaged by Linley to compose for Drury Lane, and for that theatre wrote the following operas:—"The Siege of Belgrade," 1792: "Lodoiska," 1794; and "The Iron Chest," 1796. This brilliant young man wrote chiefly for Braham and Kelly.

Madame Storace made her début at Drury Lane, in 1789, in her brother's comic opera of "The Haunted Tower."

Bishop, who was born about 1780, produced his opera of "The Mysterious Bride" at Drury Lane in 1808. In 1809, the night preceding the fire, Bishop produced his first great success, "The Circassian Bride," the score of which was burnt. After being long at Covent Garden, Bishop, in 1826, produced his "Aladdin" at Drury Lane to compete with Weber's "Oberon" at Covent Garden. In 1827 he adapted Rossini's "Turco in Italia;" and in 1830, for Drury Lane, he adapted Rossini's "William Tell."

Michael Kelly, born in 1762, made his first appearance at Drury Lane in 1787. In his jovial career Kelly composed "The Castle Spectre," "Blue Beard" (the march in which is very pompously oriental and fine), "Of Age To-morrow," "Deaf and Dumb," etc. He also wrote many Italian, English, and French songs, and had a good tenor voice. He became superintendent of music at the Drury Lane Theatre, and died in 1826. He was an agreeable man, and much esteemed by George IV. Parkes accuses him of a want of knowledge of harmony, and of stealing from the Italians.

In May 1836 Madame Malibran (de Beriot) appeared at Drury Lane as Isolina in Balfe's "Maid of Artois," which was a great success. At the close of the season she went abroad. Returned in September, she sang at the Manchester Festival, and after a duet with Madame Caradori Allen, was taken ill, and died a few days after. This gifted woman, the daughter of a Spanish Jew (an opera-singer), was born in 1808.

To return to our last batch of actors. James Wallack, born in 1792, began to be known about 1816, and in 1820 was principal tragedian at Drury Lane. His Hamlet, Rolla, and Romeo [Pg 335] were very manly and bearable. He afterwards became stage-manager at Drury Lane, and was praised for his light comedy.

Charles Young, who played with Kean at Drury Lane, was a dignified but rather cold actor. Booth appeared also with Kean in 1817, and again in 1820 with Wallack and Cooper.

Mrs. Mardyn (the supposed mistress of Lord Byron) appeared on the Drury Lane stage in 1815. She was boisterous, but so full of girlish gaiety and reckless wildness that she became for a short time the favourite of the town. She failed, however, when she reappeared in 1833 in a tragic part.

Charming Mrs. Nisbett, "that peach of a woman," as Douglas Jerrold used to call her, died in

1858, aged forty-five. The daughter of a drunken Irish officer who took to the stage, she married an officer in the Life Guards in 1831; but on the death of her husband by an accident, she returned to her first love in 1832, and reappeared at Drury Lane. Her great triumph was “The Love Chase,” which was produced at the Haymarket in 1837, and ran for nearly one hundred nights. It was worth going a hundred miles to hear Mrs. Nisbett’s merry, ringing, silvery laugh.

Irish Johnstone, who died in 1828, is described by Hazlitt as acting at Drury Lane, “with his supple knees, his hat twisted round in his hand, his good-humoured laugh, his arched eyebrows, his insinuating leer, and his lubricated brogue curling round the ear like a well-oiled moustachio.”[601]

Oxberry quitted Drury Lane with Elliston in 1820. In 1821 he took the Craven’s Head Chop-house in Drury Lane, where he used to say to his guests, “We vocalise on a Friday, conversationalise on a Sunday, and chopise every day.” His best characters were Leo Luminati, Slender, and Abel Day. Emery surpassed him in Tyke, Little Knight, and Robin Roughhead.

Farren, who was born about 1787, made his début at Covent Garden in 1818. He was for some time at Drury Lane, and latterly manager of the Olympic. In old men he took the place of Dowton. His finest performance was Lord Ogleby, but in his prime he excelled also in Sir Peter Teazle, Sir Anthony Absolute, Sir Fretful Plagiary, and the Bailie Nicol Jarvie. [Pg 336]

John Pritt Harley was the son of a silk-mercer, and originally a clerk in Chancery Lane. He was born in 1786 or 1790. He made his début at the Lyceum in 1815, in “The Devil’s Bridge.” His first appearance at Drury Lane was in 1815, as Lissardo in “The Wonder.” In farce he was good-humoured, bustling, and droll; and he excelled in Caleb Quotem, Peter Fidget, Bottom, and many Shaksperean characters. He died only a year or two ago, repeating, it is said, this line of one of his old parts: “I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.”

Miss Kelly, born in 1790, was at the Lyceum in 1808, and went from thence to Drury Lane. She sang in operas, and was admirable in genteel comedy and domestic tragedy. Her romps were scarcely inferior to Mrs. Jordan’s; her waiting-maids were equal to Mrs. Orger’s. Charles Lamb, writing in 1818, says of her—

> “Your tears have passion in them, and a grace,
> A genuine freshness which our hearts avow;
> Your smiles are winds whose ways we cannot trace,
> That vanish and return we know not how.”

Miss Kelly was twice shot at while acting. In both cases the cruel assailants were rejected admirers.

In 1850 Mrs. Glover took her farewell benefit at Drury Lane; Farren and Madame Vestris taking parts in the performance—Mrs. Glover playing Mrs. Malaprop. She was born in 1779, and had made her first appearance as Elvina in good Hannah More’s dull tragedy, at Covent Garden, in 1797. Beautiful in youth, Mrs. Glover had gracefully passed from sighing Juliets and maundering Elvinas into Mrs. Heidelbergs, Mrs. Candours, and the Nurse in “Romeo and Juliet.”

Robert Keeley, who was brought up a compositor, was born in Grange Court, Carey Street, in 1794. He acted at Drury Lane as early as 1819, and at the Adelphi as early as 1826 as Jemmy Green in “Tom and Jerry.” In 1834 we find the critics ranking him below Liston and Reeve, but he was very popular in his representations of cowardly fear and stupid chuckling astonishment. He left the stage for several years before his death. Miss Helen Faucit, born in 1816, was the original heroine of Sir Bulwer Lytton’s and Mr. Browning’s plays. Her Beatrice, Imogen, and Rosalind were admirable, and her Antigone was a great success. She retired from the stage in 1851, when she married Mr. Theodore Martin, the accomplished translator of Horace and Catullus, and the joint author with Professor Aytoun of those admirable burlesque ballads of “Bon Gaultier.” [Pg 337]

William Charles Macready, the son of a Dublin upholsterer, appeared in London first in 1816. Kean approved his Orestes, and he soon advanced to Rob Roy, Virginius, and Coriolanus. He then removed to Drury Lane, and distinguished himself as Caius Gracchus and William Tell, in two of Mr. Sheridan Knowles’s plays. He reappeared at Drury Lane in 1826. The critics said that he failed in Rolla and Hamlet, but excelled in Rob Roy, Coriolanus, and Richard. He himself preferred his own Hamlet. They complained that he had a burr in his enunciation, and a catching of the breath—that he was too fond of declamation and violent transitions; others thought him too heavy and colloquial. In 1826 he went to America, where the fatal riot of Forrest’s partisans occurred, and twenty-two men were killed. His season closed at Drury Lane in 1843. His benefit took place in 1851, and he then retired from the stage to live the life of a quiet, useful country gentleman in the west of England. He died in 1873, and lies buried at Kensal Green.

Mr. Charles Kean, struggling with a bad voice and a mean figure, had a hard fight for success, and won it only by the most dauntless perseverance. Born in 1811, he appeared for the first time upon the boards as Norval, in 1827. After repeated failures in London and much success in the provinces and America, Mr. Kean accepted an engagement at Drury [Pg 338]

Lane in 1838—Mr. Bunn offering him £50 a night. He succeeded in Hamlet, and was presented with a silver vase of the value of £200. In Richard and Sir Giles Overreach he also triumphed. In 1843 Mr. Kean renewed his engagement with Mr. Bunn. Before retiring from the stage and starting for Australia, Mr. and Mrs. Kean performed for many nights at Drury Lane. Charles Kean died in 1868.

Miss Ellen Tree first performed at Drury Lane as Violante in "The Wonder." She married Mr. C. Kean in 1842, and aided him in those antiquarianly-correct spectacles that for a time rendered a scholarly, careful, but scarcely first-rate actor popular in the metropolis.

We have room in this brief and imperfect *résumé* of theatrical history for only two pictures of Drury Lane. One is in 1800, when George III. was fired at by Hatfield as he entered the house to witness Cribber's comedy of "She Would and She Would Not." When the Marquis of Salisbury would have drawn him away, the brave, obstinate king said—"Sir, you discompose me as well as yourself: I shall not stir one step." The queen and princesses were in tears all the evening, but George III. sat calm and collected, staring through his single-barrel opera-glass. In 1783 the king, queen, and Prince of Wales went to Drury Lane to see Mrs. Siddons play Isabella. They sat under a dome of crimson velvet and gold. The king wore a Quaker-coloured dress with gold buttons, while the handsome scapegrace prince was adorned in blue Genoa velvet.

Mr. Planché, the accomplished writer of extravaganzas and the *Somerset Herald*, brought out his burlesque of "Amoroso, King of Little Britain," at Drury Lane in 1818. He afterwards wrote the libretto of "Maid Marian" for Mr. Bishop, and that of "Oberon" for Weber. In 1828 his "Charles XII." was produced at Drury Lane.

On Mr. Falconer's clever imitative experiments we have no room to dilate. The "Peep o' Day," a piece which reproduced all the "Colleen Bawn" effects, was the best.

And now leaving the theatres for meaner places, we pass on to the district of the butchers. [Pg 339]
Clare Market stands on a spot formerly called Clement's Inn Fields, and was built by the Earl of Clare, who lived close by, in 1657. The family names, Denzil, Holles, etc., are retained in the neighbouring streets.

This market became notorious in Pope's time for the buffoonery, noisy impudence, and extravagances of Orator Henley, a sort of ecclesiastical outlaw of a not very religious age, who tried to make his impudence and conceit pass for genius. This street-orator, the son of a Leicestershire vicar, was born in 1692. After going to St. John's College, Cambridge, he returned home, kept a school, wrote a poem called "Esther," and began a Universal Grammar in ten languages. Heated by an itch for reforming, and tired of the country, or driven away, as some say, by a scandalous embarrassment, he hurried to London, and for a short time did duty at a chapel in Bedford Row. During this time, under the Earl of Macclesfield's patronage, he translated Pliny's epistles, Vertot's works, and Montfaucon's Italian travels. He then competed for a lecturership in Bloomsbury, but failed, the parishioners not disliking his language or his doctrine, but complaining that he threw himself about too much in the pulpit.

Now, "regular action" was one of Henley's peculiar prides. The rejection hurt his vanity and nearly drove him crazy. Losing his temper, he rushed into the vestry-room. "Blockheads!" he roared, "are *you* qualified to judge of the degree of action necessary for a preacher of God's Word? Were you able to read, or had got sufficient sense, you sorry knaves, to understand the renowned orator of antiquity, he would tell you almost the only requisite of a public speaker was ACTION, ACTION, ACTION. But I despise and defy you: *provoco ad populum*; the public shall decide between us." He then hurried from the room, soon afterwards published his probationary discourse, and taking a room in Newport Market, started as quack divine and public lecturer.

But he first consulted the eccentric and heretical Whiston, whom Swift bantered so [Pg 340]
ruthlessly—Whiston being, like Henley, a Leicestershire man—as to whether he should incur any legal penalties by officiating as a separatist from the Church of England. Whiston, himself an expelled professor, tried to dissuade the Orator from his wild project. Disagreement and abuse followed, and the correspondence ended with the following final bomb-shell from the violent demagogue:—

> "To Mr. WILLIAM WHISTON,
>
> "Take notice that I give you warning not to enter my room in Newport Market, at your peril.
>
> "JOHN HENLEY."[602]

The Orator patronised divinity on Sundays, and secular subjects on Wednesdays and Fridays. The admittance was one shilling. He also published outrageous pamphlets and a weekly farrago called The *Hyp-Doctor*, intended to antidote *The Craftsman*, and for which pompous nonsense Sir Robert Walpole is said to have given him £100 a year. He also attacked eminent persons, even Pope, from his pulpit. Every Saturday an advertisement of the subject of his next week's oration appeared in the *Daily Advertiser*, preceded by a sarcastic or libellous motto, and sometimes an offer that if any one at home or abroad could be found to surpass him, he would surrender his Oratory at once to his conqueror.

In 1729 Henley, growing perhaps more popular, removed to Clare Market, where the butchers became his warm partisans and served as his body-guard. The following are two of his shameless advertisements:—

"At the Oratory in Newport Market, to-morrow, at half an hour after ten, the sermon will be on the Witch of Endor. At half an hour after five, the theological lecture will be on the conversion and original of the Scottish nation and of the Picts and Caledonians, St. Andrew's relics and panegyric, and the character and mission of the Apostles.

"On Wednesday, at six or near the matter, take your chance, will be a medley oration on the history, merits, and praise of confusion and of confounders, in the road and out of the way. [Pg 341]

"On Friday will be that on Dr. Faustus and Fortunatus and conjuration. After each the Chimes of the Times, Nos. 23 and 24."

Very shortly afterwards he advertised from Clare Market:—

1. "The postil will be on the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. 2. The sermon will be on the necessary power and attractive force which religion gives the spirit of a man with God and good spirits.

2. "At five—1. The postil will be on this point:—In what language our Saviour will speak the last sentence to mankind.

3. "The lecture will be on Jesus Christ's sitting at the right hand of God; where that is; the honours and lustre of his inauguration; the learning, criticism, and piety of that glorious article.

"The Monday's orations will shortly be resumed. On Wednesday the oration will be on the skits of the fashions, or a live gallery of family pictures in all ages; ruffs, muffs, puffs manifold; shoes, wedding-shoes, two-shoes, slip-shoes, heels, clocks, pantofles, buskins, pantaloons, garters, shoulder-knots, periwigs, head-dresses, modesties, tuckers, farthingales, corkins, minnikins, slammakins, ruffles, round-robins, fans, patches; dame, forsooth, madam, my lady, the wit and beauty of my granmum; Winnifred, Joan, Bridget, compared with our Winny, Jenny, and Biddy: fine ladies and pretty gentlewomen; being a general view of the *beau monde* from before Noah's flood to the year '29. On Friday will be something better than last Tuesday. After each a bob at the times."

This very year, 1729, the *Dunciad* was published, and in it this Rabelais of the pulpit had, of course, his niche. Pope had been accused of taking the bread out of people's mouths. He denies this, and asks if "Colley (Cibber) has not still his lord, and Henley his butchers;" and [Pg 342] ends with these lines, which, however, had no effect, for Henley went on ranting for eighteen years longer—

> "But where each science lifts its modern type,
> History her pot, Divinity his pipe;
> While proud Philosophy repines to show,
> Dishonest sight! his breeches rent below,—
> Imbrown'd with native bronze, lo! Henley stands,
> Tuning his voice and balancing his hands.
> How fluent nonsense trickles from his tongue!
> How sweet the periods, neither said nor sung!
> Still break the benches, Henley, with thy strain,
> While Sherlock, Hare, and Gibson preach in vain.
> O great restorer of the good old stage,
> Preacher at once and zany of the age!
> O worthy thou of Egypt's wise abodes!
> A decent priest when monkeys were the gods.
> But Fate with butchers placed thy priestly stall,
> Meek modern faith to murder, hack, and maul,
> And bade thee live to crown Britannia's praise
> In Toland's, Tindal's, and in Woolston's days."[603]

In another place he says—

> "Henley lay inspired beside a sink,
> And to mere mortals seemed a priest in drink."

Pope often attacked Henley in the *Grub Street Journal*, and the Orator retaliated. A year or two after the *Essay on Man* was published, Henley (Dec. 1737) announced a lecture, "Whether Mr. Pope be a man of sense, in one argument—'Whatever is is right.'" If whatever is is right, Henley thought that nothing could be wrong; ergo, he himself was not a proper object of satire.

Henley's pulpit was covered with velvet and gold lace, and over his altar was written, "The PRIMITIVE Eucharist." A contemporary journalist describes him entering his pulpit suddenly, like a harlequin, through a sort of trap-door at the back, and "at one large leap jumping into it and falling to work," beating his notions into the butcher-audience simultaneously with his hands, arms, legs, and head.

In one of his arrogant puffs, he boasts that he has singly executed what "would sprain a dozen of modern doctors of the tribe of Issachar;" that no one dares to answer his challenges; that he can write, read, and study twelve hours a day and not feel the yoke; and write three dissertations a week without help, and put the Church in danger. He struck medals for his tickets, with a star rising to the meridian upon them, and the vain superscription "Ad summa" ("To the heights"), and below, "Inveniam viam aut faciam" ("I will find a way or make one"). [Pg 343]

When the Orator's funds grew low, his audacity and impudence rose to their climax. He once filled his chapel with shoemakers, whom he had attracted by advertising that he could teach a method of making shoes with wonderful celerity. His secret consisted in cutting the tops off old boots. His motto to this advertisement was "Omne majus continet in se minus" ("The greater includes the less").

In 1745 Henley was cited before the Privy Council for having used seditious expressions in one of his lectures. Herring, then Archbishop of York, had been arming his clergy, and urging every one to volunteer against the Pretender. The Earl of Chesterfield, then Secretary of State, urged on Henley the impropriety of ridiculing such honest exertions at a time when rebellion actually raged in the very heart of the kingdom. "I thought, my lord," said Henley, "that there was no harm in cracking a joke on a *red herring*."

During his examination, the restorer of ancient eloquence requested permission to sit, on account of a rheumatism that was generally supposed to be imaginary. The earl tried to turn the outlaw divine into ridicule; but Henley's eccentric answers, odd gestures, hearty laughs, strong voice, magisterial air, and self-possessed face were a match for his somewhat heartless lordship.

Being cautioned about his disrespectful remarks on certain ministers, Henley answered gravely, "My lords, I must live." Lord Chesterfield replied, "I don't see the necessity," and the council laughed. Upon this Henley, remembering that the joke was Voltaire's, was somewhat irritated. "That is a good thing, my lord," he exclaimed, "but it has been said before." A few days after the Orator, being reprimanded and cautioned, was dismissed as an impudent but entertaining fellow.[604] [Pg 344]

Dr. Herring whom the rogue ridiculed was a worthy man, who in 1747, on the death of Potter, became Archbishop of Canterbury, and died in 1757. Swift hated Herring for condemning the "Beggars' Opera" in a sermon at Lincoln's Inn, and wrote accordingly: "The 'Beggars' Opera' will probably do more good than a thousand sermons of so stupid, so injudicious, and so prostitute a divine."[605]

In 1748 Dr. Cobden, the Court chaplain, an odd but worthy man, incurred the resentment of King George II. by preaching before him a sermon entitled "A Persuasive to Chastity"—a virtue not popular then at St. James's. He resigned his post in 1752. The text of this obnoxious sermon was, "Take away the wicked from before the king." Henley's next Saturday's motto was—

> "Away with the wicked before the king,
> Away with the wicked behind him;
> His throne it will bless
> With righteousness,
> And we shall know where to find him."

If any of the Orator's old Bloomsbury friends ever caught his eye among the audience, he would gratify his vanity and rankling resentment by a pause. He would then say, "You see, sir, all mankind are not exactly of your opinion; there are, you perceive, a few sensible persons in the world who consider me as not totally unqualified for the office I have undertaken." His abashed adversaries, hot and confused, and with all eyes turned on them, would retreat precipitately, and sometimes were pushed out of the room by Henley's violent butchers.

The Orator figures in two caricatures, attributed, as Mr. Steevens thinks, wrongly to Hogarth. In one he is christening a child; in another he is on a scaffold with a monkey by his side. A parson takes the money at the door, while a butcher is porter. Modesty is in a cloud, Folly in a coach, and there is a gibbet prepared for poor Merit. [Pg 345]

Henley, who latterly grew coarse, brutal, and drunken, died October 14, 1756. The *Gentleman's Magazine* merely announces his death thus:—"Rev. Orator Henley, aged 64." "Nollekens" Smith says that he died mad.

It is somewhat uncertain where his Oratory stood: some say in Duke Street; others, in the market. It was probably in Davenant's old theatre, at the Tennis Court in Vere Street.[606]

The beginning of one of this buffoon's ribald sermons has been preserved, and is worth quoting to prove the miserable claptrap with which he amused his rude audience. The text is taken from Jeremiah xvi. 16, "I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after that I will send many hunters, and they shall hunt."

"The former part of the text seems, as Scripture is written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come (an end of all we have in the world), to relate to the *Dutch*, who

are to be fished by us according to Act of Parliament; for the word ‘herrings’ in the Act has a figurative as well as a literal sense, and by a metaphor means Dutchmen, who are the greatest stealers of herrings in the world; so that the drift of the statute is, that we are to fish for Dutchmen, and catch them, either by nets or fishing-rods in return for their repeated catching of Englishmen, then transport them in some of Jonathan Forward’s close lighters and sell them in the West Indies, to repair the loss which our South Sea Company endure by the Spaniards denying them the assiento, or sale of negroes.”[607]

Among other wild sermons of Henley, we find discourses on “The Tears of Magdalen,” “St. Paul’s Cloak,” and “The Last Wills of the Patriarchs.” He left behind him 600 MSS., which he valued at one guinea a-piece, and 150 volumes of commonplaces and other scholarly memoranda. They were sold for less than £100. They had been written with great care. When Henley was once accused that he *did all* for lucre, he retorted “that some do nothing for it.” He once filled his room by advertising an oration on marriage. When he got into his pulpit he shook his head at the ladies, and said “he was afraid they oftener came to church to get husbands than to hear the preacher.” On one occasion two Oxonians whom he challenged came followed by such a strong party that the butchers were overawed, and Henley silently slunk away by a door behind the rostrum.[608]

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There are still popular preachers in London as greedy of praise and as basely eager for applause as Orator Henley. Equally great buffoons, and men equally low in moral tone, still fill some pulpits, and point the way to a path they may never themselves take. To such unhappy self-deceivers we can advise no better cure than a moonlight walk in Clare Market in search of the ghost of Orator Henley.

There was in Hogarth’s time an artists’ club at the Bull’s Head, Clare Market. Boitard etched some of the characters. Hogarth, Jack Laguerre, Colley Cibber, Denis the critic (?), Boitard, Spiller the comedian, and George Lambert, were members. Laguerre gave Spiller’s portrait to the landlord, and drew a caricature procession of his “chums.” The inn was afterwards called the “Spiller’s Head.” One of the wags of the club wrote an epitaph on Spiller, beginning—

> “The butchers’ wives fall in hysteric fits,
> For sure as they’re alive, poor Spiller’s dead;
> But, thanks to Jack Laguerre, we’ve got his head.
> * * * * * *
> He was an inoffensive, merry fellow,
> When sober hipped, blithe as a bird when mellow.”[609]

The Bull’s Head Tavern in Clare Market, the same place in which Hogarth’s club was held, had previously been the favourite resort of that illustrious Jacobite, Dr. Radcliffe, who is said to have killed two queens. Swift did not like this overbearing, ignorant, and surly humorist, who, however, rejoiced in doing good, and left a vast sum of money to the University of Oxford. When Bathurst, the head of Trinity College, asked Radcliffe where his library was, he pointed to a few vials, a skeleton, and a herbal, and replied, “There is Radcliffe’s library.”[610]

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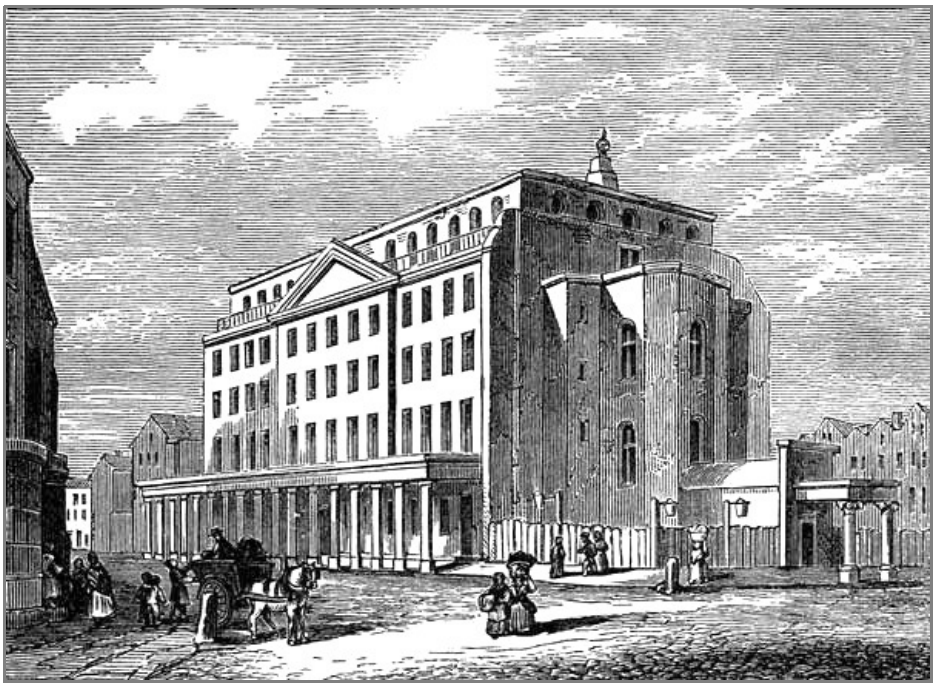

DRURY LANE THEATRE, 1806.

Mrs. Bracegirdle, that excellent and virtuous actress, used to be in the habit (says Tony

Ashton) of frequently going into Clare market and giving money to the poor unemployed basketwomen, insomuch that she could not pass that neighbourhood without thankful acclamations from people of all degrees.

In 1846 there were in and about Clare Market, about 26 butchers who slaughtered from 350 to 400 sheep weekly in the stalls and cellars. The number killed was from 50 to 60 weekly—but in winter sometimes as many as 200. But the butchers' market has now become almost a thing of the past. [Pg 348]

Joe Miller formerly lay buried in a graveyard on the south side of Portugal Street, but the graveyard is now turned to other purposes. At the corner of Portugal Street and Lincoln's Inn Fields is the "Black Jack" Inn, a hostelry whose name is connected with some of Jack Sheppard's feats.

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OLD ST. GILES'S—CHURCH LANE AND DYOT STREET, 1869.

CHAPTER XIII.

ST. GILES'S.

That ancient Roman military road (the Watling Street) came from Edgeware, and passing over Hyde Park and through St. James's Park by Old Palace Yard, once the Wool Staple, it reached the Thames. Thence it was continued to Canterbury and the three great seaports.

Another Roman road, the *Via Trinobantica*, which began at Southampton and ended at Aldborough, ran through London, crossed the Watling Street at Tyburn, and passed along Oxford Street. In latter times, says Dr. Stukeley, the road was changed to a more southerly direction, and Holborn was formed, leading to Newgate or the Chamberlain's Gate. [Pg 350]

One of the earliest tolls ever imposed in England is said to have had its origin in St. Giles's. [611] In 1346 Edward III. granted to the Master of the Hospital of St. Giles and to John de Holborne, a commission empowering them to levy tolls for two years (one penny in the pound on their value) on all cattle and merchandise passing along the public highways leading from the old Temple, *i.e.* Holborn Bars, to the Hospital of St. Giles's, and also along the Charing Road and another highway called Portpool, now Gray's Inn Lane. The money was to be used in repairing the roads, which, by the frequent passing of carts, wains, horses, and cattle, had become so miry and deep as to be nearly impassable. The only persons exempted were to be lords, ladies, and persons belonging to religious establishments.[612]

Henry V. ascended the throne in 1413, and astonished his subjects by suddenly casting off his slough of vice, and becoming a self-restrained, virtuous, and high-spirited king. His first care was to forget party distinctions, and to put down the Lollards, or disciples of Wickliffe,

whom the clergy denounced as dangerous to the civil power. As a good general secures the rear of his army before he advances, so the young king was probably desirous to guard himself against this growing danger before he invaded Normandy and made a clutch at the French crown.

Arundel, the primate, urged him to indict Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, the head of the Lollard sect. The king was averse to a prosecution, and suggested milder means. At a conference, therefore, appointed before the bishops and doctors in 1414, the following articles were handed Oldcastle as tests, and the unorthodox lord was allowed two days to retract his heresies. He was required to confess that at the sacrament the material bread and wine are turned into Christ's very body and Christ's very blood; that every Christian [Pg 351] man ought to confess to an ordained priest; that Christ ordained St. Peter and his successors as his vicars on earth; that Christian men ought to obey the priest; and that it is profitable to go on pilgrimages and to worship the relics and images of saints. "This is determination of Holy Church. *How feel ye this article?*" With these stern words ended every dogma proposed by the primate.

Lord Cobham, who was much esteemed by the king, and had been a good soldier under his father, repeatedly refused to profess his belief in these tenets. The archbishop then delivered the heretic to the secular arm, to be put to death, according to the usage of the times. The night previous to his execution, however, Lord Cobham escaped from the Tower and fled to Wales, where he lay hid for four years while Agincourt was being fought, and where he must have longed to have been present with his true sword.

Soon after his escape, the frightened clergy spread a report that he was in St. Giles's Fields, at the head of twenty thousand Lollards, who were resolved to seize the king and his two brothers, the Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester. For this imaginary plot thirty-six persons were hanged or burnt; but the names of only three are recorded, and of these Sir Roger Acton is the only person of distinction.

A reward of a thousand marks was offered for Lord Cobham, and other inducements were held out by Chicheley, the Primate Arundel's successor. Four years, however, elapsed before the premature Protestant was discovered and taken by Lord Powis in Wales.[613] After some blows and blood a country-woman in the fray breaking Cobham's leg with a stool, he was secured and sent up to London in a horse-litter. He was sentenced to be drawn on a hurdle to the gallows in St. Giles's Fields, and to be hanged over a fire, in order to inflict on him the utmost pain.

He was brought from the Tower on the 25th of December 1418, and his arms bound behind him. He kept a very cheerful countenance as he was drawn to the field where his assumed [Pg 352] treason had been committed. When he reached the gallows, he fell devoutly on his knees and piously prayed God to forgive his enemies. The cruel preparations for his torment struck no terror in him, nor shook the constancy of the martyr. He bore everything bravely as a soldier, and with the resignation of a Christian. Then he was hung by the middle with chains and consumed alive in the fire, praising God's name as long as his life lasted.

He was accused by his enemies of holding that there was no such thing as free will; that all sin was inevitable; and that God could not have prevented Adam's sin, nor have pardoned it without the satisfaction of Christ.[614]

Fuller says of him: "Stage-poets have themselves been very bold with, and others very merry at, the memory of Sir John Oldcastle (Lord Cobham), whom they have fancied a boon companion or jovial roysterer, and yet a coward to boot, contrary to the credit of the chronicles, owning him to be a martial man of merit. Sir John Falstaff hath derided the memory of Sir John Oldcastle, and of late is substituted buffoon in his place; but it matters us little what petulant priests or what malicious poets have written against him."

The gallows had been removed from the Elms at Smithfield in 1413, the first year of Henry V.; but Tyburn was a place of execution as early as 1388.[615] The St. Giles's gallows was set up at the north corner of the hospital wall, between the termination of High Street and Crown Street, opposite to where the Pound stood.

The manor of St. Giles was anciently divided from Bloomsbury by a great fosse called Blemund's Ditch. The Doomsday Book contains no mention of this district, nor indeed of London at all, except of ten acres of land nigh Bishopsgate, belonging to St. Paul's, and a vineyard in Holborn, belonging to the Crown. This yard is supposed to have stood on the site of the Vine Tavern (now destroyed), a little to the east of Kingsgate Street.[616]

Blemund's Ditch was a line of defence running nearly parallel with the north side of [Pg 353] Holborn, and connecting itself to the east with the Fleet brook. It was probably of British origin.[617] On the north-west of London, in the Roman times, there were marshes and forests, and even as late as Elizabeth, Marylebone and St. John's Wood were almost all chase.

The manor was crown property in the Norman times, for Matilda, daughter of Malcolm king of Scotland and the queen of Henry I., built a leper hospital there, and dedicated it to St. Giles. The same good woman erected a hospital at Cripplegate, and another at St. Katharine's, near the Tower, and founded a priory within Aldgate. The hospital of St. Giles sheltered forty lepers, one clerk, a messenger, the master, and several matrons; the queen

gave 60s. a year to each leper. The inmates of lazar hospitals were in the habit of begging in the market-places.

The patron saint, St. Giles, was an Athenian of the seventh century, who lived as a hermit in a forest near Nismes. One day some hunters, pursuing a hind that he had tamed, struck the Greek with an arrow as he protected it, but the good man still went on praying, and refused all recompense for the injury. The French king in vain attempted to entice the saint from his cell, which in time, however, grew first into a monastery, and then into a town.[618]

This hospital was built on the site of the old parish church, and it occupied eight acres. It stood a little to the west of the present church, where Lloyd's Court stands or stood; and its gardens reached between High Street and Hog Lane, now Crown Street, to the Pound, which used to stand nearly opposite to the west end of Meux's Brewhouse. It was surrounded by a triangular wall, running in a line with Crown Street to somewhere near the Cock and Pye Fields (afterwards the Seven Dials), in a line with Monmouth Street, and thence east and west up High Street, joining near the Pound.

Unwholesome diet and the absence of linen seem to have encouraged leprosy, which was [Pg 354] probably a disease of Eastern origin. In 1179 the Lateran Council decreed that lepers should keep apart, and have churches and churchyards of their own. It was therefore natural to build hospitals for lepers outside large towns. King Henry II., for the health of the souls of his grandfather and grandmother, granted the poor lepers a second 60s. each to be paid yearly at the feast of St. Michael, and 30s. more out of his Surrey rents to buy them lights. He also confirmed to them the grant of a church at Feltham, near Hounslow. In Henry III.'s reign, Pope Alexander IV. issued a bull to confirm these privileges. Edward I. granted the hospital two charters in 1300 and 1303; and in Edward II.'s reign so many estates were granted to it that it became very rich. Edward III. made St. Giles a cell of Burton St. Lazar in Leicestershire. This annexation led to quarrels, and to armed resistance against the visitations of Robert Archbishop of Canterbury. In this reign the great plague broke out, and the king commanded the wards of the city to issue proclamations and remove all lepers. It is strange that St. Giles's should have been the resort of pariahs from the very beginning.

Burton St. Lazar (a manor sold in 1828 for £30,000) is still celebrated for its cheeses. It remained a flourishing hospital from the reign of Stephen till Henry VIII. suppressed it. St. Giles's sank in importance after this absorption, and finally fell in 1537 with its larger brother. By a deed of exchange the greedy king obtained forty-eight acres of land, some marshes, and two inns. Six years after the king gave St. Giles's to John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, High Admiral of England, who fitted up the principal part of the hospital for his own residence. Two years after Lord Lisle sold the manor to Wymond Carew, Esq. The mansion was situated westward of the church and facing it. It was afterwards occupied by the celebrated Alice, Duchess of Dudley, who died there in the reign of Charles II., aged ninety. This house was subsequently the residence of Lord Wharton. It divided Lloyd's Court from Denmark Street.

The master's house, "The White House," stood on the site of Dudley Court, and was given by [Pg 355] the duchess to the parish as a rectory-house. The wall which surrounded the hospital gardens and orchards was not entirely removed till 1639.

Early in the fourteenth century the parish of St. Giles, including the hospital inmates, numbered only one hundred inhabitants. In King John's reign it was laid out in garden plots and cottages. In Henry III.'s reign it was a scattered country village, with a few shops and a stone cross, where the High Street now is. As far back as 1225 a blacksmith's shop stood at the north-west end of Drury Lane, and remained there till its removal in 1575.

In Queen Elizabeth's reign the Holborn houses did not run farther than Red Lion Street; the road was then open as far as the present Hart Street, where a garden wall commenced near Broad Street, St. Giles's, and the end of Drury Lane, where a cluster of houses on the right formed the chief part of the village, the rest being scattered houses. The hospital precincts were at this time surrounded by trees. Beyond this, north and south, all was country; and avenues of trees marked out the Oxford and other roads. There was no house from Broad Street, St. Giles's, to Drury House at the top of Wych Street.[619]

The lower part of Holborn was paved in the reign of Henry VI., in 1417; and in 1542 (33d Henry VIII.) it was completed as far as St. Giles's, being very full of pits and sloughs, and perilous and noisome to all on foot or horseback. The first increase of buildings in this district was on the north side of Broad Street. Three edicts of 1582, 1593, and 1602 evince the alarm of Government at the increase of inhabitants and prohibit further building under severe penalties. The first proclamation, dated from Nonsuch Palace, in Surrey, assigns the reason of these prohibitions:—1. The difficulty of governing more people without new officers and fresh jurisdictions. 2. The difficulty of supplying them with food and fuel at reasonable rates. 3. The danger of plague and the injury to agriculture. Regulations were [Pg 356] also issued to prevent the further resort of country people to town, and the lord mayor took oaths to enforce these proclamations. But London burst through these foolish and petty restraints as Samson burst the green withs. In 1580 the resident foreigners in the capital had increased from 3762 to 6462 persons, the majority being Dutch who had fled from the Spaniards, and Huguenots who had escaped from France after the massacre of St. Bartholomew. St. Giles's grew, especially to the east and west, round the hospital. The girdle wall was mostly demolished soon after 1595. Holborn, stretching westward, with its

fair houses, lodgings for gentlemen, and inns for travellers,[620] had nearly reached it. In Aggas's map, cattle graze amid intersecting footpaths, where Great Queen Street now is. There were then only two or three houses in Covent Garden, but in 1606 the east side of Drury Lane was built; in the assessment of 1623 upwards of twenty courtyards and alleys are mentioned; and 100 houses were added on the north side of St. Giles's Street, 136 in Bloomsbury, 56 on the west side of Drury Lane, and 71 on the south side of Holborn.[621] The south and east sides of the hospital site had been the slowest in their growth. After the Great Fire, these still remained gardens, but the north side, nearer Oxford Road, was already occupied. The first inhabitants of importance were Mr. Abraham Speckart and Mr. Breads, in the reigns of James I. and Charles I., and afterwards Sir William Stiddolph. New Compton Street was originally called Stiddolph Street, but afterwards changed its name when Charles II. gave the adjoining marsh-land to Mr. Francis Compton, who built on the old hospital land a continuation of Old Compton Street. Monmouth Street, probably named after the foolish and unfortunate duke, was also built in this reign.

In 1694, in the reign of William III., a Mr. Neale, a lottery promoter, took on lease the Cock and Pye Fields—then the resort of gambling boys, thieves, and beggars, and a sink of filth and cesspools—and built the neighbouring streets, placing in the centre a Doric pillar with [Pg 357] seven dials on it; afterwards a clock was added.[622] This same Mr. Thomas Neale took a large piece of ground on the north side of Piccadilly from Sir Thomas Clarges, agreeing to lay out £10,000 in building; but he failed to carry out his design, and Sir Walter Clarges, after great trouble, got the lease out of his hands, and Clarges Street was then built.[623]

In 1697 many hundreds of the 14,000 French refugees who fled from Louis XIV.'s dragoons after the cruel revocation of the Edict of Nantes settled about Long Acre, the Seven Dials, and Soho. In Strype's time (Queen Anne's reign), Stacie Street, Kendrick Yard, Vinegar Yard, and Phoenix Street, were mostly occupied by poor French people; indigent marquises and starving countesses.

In the reign of Queen Anne, St. Giles's increased with great rapidity—St. Giles's Street and Broad Street from the Pound to Drury Lane, the south-east side of Tottenham Court Road, Crown Street, the Seven Dials, and Castle Street were completed; the south side of Holborn was also finished from Broad Street to a little east of Great Turnstile, and, on the north side, the street spread to two doors east of the Vine Tavern.[624] The Irish had already begun to debase St. Giles's; the French refugees completed the degradation and hopelessness, and spread like a mud deluge towards Soho.

In 1640 there are in the parish books several entries of money paid to soldiers and distressed men who had lost everything they had in Ireland:—

Paid to a poor Irishman, and to a prisoner come over from Dunkirk	£0 1 0
Paid for a shroud for an Irishman that died at Brickils	0 2 6

In 1640, 1642, and 1647, there constantly occur donations to poor Irish ministers and plundered Irish. Clothes were sent by the parish into Ireland. There is one entry—

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Paid to a poor gentleman undone by the burning of a city in Ireland; having licence from the lords to collect	£0 3 0

The following entries are also curious and characteristic:—

1642.—	To Mrs. Mabb, a poet's wife, her husband being dead	£0 1 0
	Paid to Goody Parish, to buy her boys two shirts; and Charles, their father, a waterman at Chiswick, to keep him at £20 a year from Christmas	0 3 0
1648.—	Gave to the Lady Pigot, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, poor and deserving relief	0 2 6
1670.—	Given to the Lady Thornbury, being poor and indigent	0 10 0
1641.—	To old Goodman Street and old Goody Malthus, very poor	———
1645.—	To Mother Cole and Mother Johnson, xiid. a-piece	0 2 0
1646.—	To William Burnett, in a cellar in Raggedstaff Yard, being poor and very sick	0 1 6
	To Goody Sherlock, in Maidenhead-fields Lane, one linen-wheel, and gave her money to buy flax	0 1 0

There are also some interesting entries showing what a sink for the poverty of all the world the St. Giles's cellars had become, even before the Restoration.

1640.—	Gave to Signor Lifecatha, a distressed Grecian	———
1642.—	To Laylish Milchitaire, of Chimaica, in Armenia, to pass him to his own country, and to redeem his sons in slavery under the Turks	£0 5 0

1654.—	Paid towards the relief of the mariners, maimed soldiers, widows and orphans of such as have died in the service of Parliament	4 11 0

These were for Cromwell’s soldiers; and this year Oliver himself gave £40 to the parish to buy coals for the poor.

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1666.—	Collected at several times towards the relief of the poor sufferers burnt out by the late dreadful fire of London	£25 8 4

In 1670 nearly £185 was collected in this parish towards the redemption of slaves.

After 1648 the Irish are seldom mentioned by name. They had grown by this time part and parcel of the district, and dragged all round them down to poverty. In 1653 an assistant beadle was appointed specially to search out and report all new arrivals of chargeable persons. In 1659 a monthly vestry-meeting was instituted to receive the constable’s report as to new vagrants.

In 1675 French refugees began to increase, and in 1679-1680, 1690 and 1692 fresh efforts were made to search out and investigate the cases of all new-comers. In 1710 the churchwardens reported to the commissioners for building new churches, that “a great number of French Protestants were inhabitants of the parish.”

Well-known beggars of the day are frequently mentioned in the parish accounts, as for instance—

1640.—	Gave to Tottenham Court Meg, being very sick	£0 1 0
1642.—	Gave to the ballad-singing cobbler	0 1 0
1646.—	Gave to old Friz-wig	1 6 0
1657.—	Paid the collectors for a shroud for old Guy, the poet	0 2 6
1658.—	Paid a year’s rent for Mad Bess	1 4 6
1642.—	Paid to one Thomas, a traveller	0 0 6
	To a poor woman and her children, almost starved	0 5 6
1645.—	For a shroud for Hunter’s child, the blind beggar-man	0 1 6
1646.—	Paid and given to a poor wretch, name forgot	0 1 0
	Given to old Osborn, a troublesome fellow	0 1 3
	Paid to Rotton, the lame glazier, to carry him towards Bath	0 3 0
1647.—	To old Osborne and his blind wife	0 0 6
	To the old mud-wall maker	0 0 6

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In 1665 the plague fell heavily on St. Giles’s, already dirty and overcrowded. The pest had already broken out five times within the eighty years beginning in 1592; but no outbreak of this Oriental pest in London had carried off more than 36,000 persons. The disease in 1665, however, slew no fewer than 97,306 in ten months.[625] In St. Giles’s the plague of 1592 carried off 894 persons; in 1625 there died of the plague about 1333; but in 1665 there were swept off from this parish alone 3216. The plague of 1625 seemed to have alarmed London quite as much as its successor, for we find that in St. Giles’s no assessment could be made, as the richer people had all fled into the country. A pest-house was fitted up in Bloomsbury for the nine adjoining parishes, and this was afterwards taken by St. Giles’s for itself. The vestry appointed two examiners to inspect infected houses. Mr. Pratt, the churchwarden, who advanced money to succour the poor when the rich deserted them, was afterwards paid forty pounds for the sums he had generously disbursed at his own risk. In 1642 the entries in the parish books show that the disease had again become virulent and threatening. The bodies were collected in carts by torchlight, and thrown without burial service into large pits. Infected houses were padlocked up, and watchmen placed to admit doctors or persons bringing food to the searchers, who at night brought out the dead.

The following entries (for 1642) in the parish books seem to me even more terrible than Defoe’s romance written fifty years after the events:—

Paid for the two padlocks and hasps for visited houses	£0 2 6
Paid Mr. Hyde for candles for the bearers	0 10 0
" to the same for the night-cart and cover	7 9 0
" to Mr. Mann for links and candles for the night-bearers	0 10 0

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The next year the plague still raged, and the same precautions seem to have been taken as afterwards in 1665, showing that the terrible details of that punishment of filth and neglect were not new to London citizens.

The entries go on:—

To the bearers for carrying out of Crown Court a woman that died of the plague	£0 1 6
Sent to a poor man shut up in Crown Yard of the plague	0 1 6

Then follow sums paid for padlocks and staples, graves and links:—

Paid and given Mr. Lyn, the beadle, for a piece of good service to the parish in conveying away of a visited household to Lord's Pest House, forth of Mr. Higgins's house at Bloomsbury	£0 1 6
Received of Mr. Hearle (Dr. Temple's gift) to be given to Mrs. Hockey, a minister's widow, shut up in the Crache Yard of the plague	0 10 0

But now came the awful pestilence of 1665; the streets were so deserted that grass grew in them, and nothing was to be seen but coffins, pest-carts, link-men, and red-crossed doors. The air resounded with the tolling of bells, the screams of distracted mourners crying from the windows, "Pray for us!" and the dismal call of the searchers, "Bring out your dead!"[626]

The plague broke out in its most malignant form among the poor of St. Giles's;[627] and Dr. Hodges and Sir Richard Manningham, both first-rate authorities on this subject, agree in this assertion.

In August 1665 an additional rate to the amount of £600 was levied. Independent of this, very large sums were subscribed by persons resident in, or interested in, the parish. The following are a few of the items:—

Mr. Williams, from the Earl of Clare	£10 0 0
Mr. Justice (Sir Edmondbury) Godfrey, from the Lord Treasurer	50 0 0
Earl Craven and the rest of the justices, towards the visited poor, at various times	449 16 10
Earl Craven towards the visited poor	40 3 0

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There are also these ominous entries:—

August.—	Paid the searchers for viewing the corpse of Goodwife Phillips, who died of the plague	£0 0 6
	Laid out for Goodman Phillips and his children, being shut up and visited	0 5 0
	Laid out for Lylla Lewis, 3 Crane Court, being shut up of the plague; and laid out for the nurse, and for the nurse and burial	0 18 6

In July 1666 the constables, etc. were ordered to make an account of all new inmates coming to the parish, and to take security that they would not become burdensome. They were also directed to be careful to prevent the infection spreading for the future by a timely guard of all "that are or hereafter may happen to be visited."

"During the plague time," says an eye-witness, "nobody put on black or formal mourning, yet London was all in tears. The shrieks of women and children at the doors and windows of their houses where their dearest relations were dying, or perhaps dead, were enough to pierce the stoutest hearts. At the west end of the town it was a surprising thing to see those streets which were usually thronged now grown desolate; so that I have sometimes gone the length of a whole street (I mean bye streets), and have seen nobody to direct me but watchmen[628] sitting at the doors of such houses as were shut up; and one day I particularly observed that even in Holborn the people walked in the middle of the street, and not at the sides—not to mingle, as I supposed, with anybody that came out of infected houses, or meet with smells and scents from them."

Dr. Hodges, a great physician, who shunned no danger, describes even more vividly the horrors of that period. "In the streets," he says, "might be seen persons seized with the sickness, staggering like drunken men; here lay some dozing and almost dead; there others were met fatigued with excessive vomiting, as if they had drunk poison; in the midst of the market, persons in full health fell suddenly down as if the contagion was there exposed to sale. It was not uncommon to see an inheritance pass to three heirs within the space of four days. The bearers were not sufficient to inter the dead."[629]

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It is supposed that till the Leper Hospital was suppressed, the St. Giles's people used the oratory there as their parish church. Leland does not mention any other church, although he lived and wrote about the time of the suppression, and even made an effort to save the monastic MSS. by proposing to have them placed in the king's library. The oratory had probably a screen walling off the lepers from the rest of the congregation. It boasted several chantry chapels, and a high altar at the east end, dedicated to St. Giles, before which burnt

a great taper called “St. Giles’s light,” and towards which, about A.D. 1200, one William Christemas bequeathed an annual sum of twelvepence. There was also a Chapel of St. Michael, appropriated to the infirm, and which had its own special priest.

In the reign of Charles I. the south aisle of the hospital church was full of rubbish, lumber, and coffin-boards; and Lady Dudley put up a screen to divide the nave from the chancel. In 1623 the church became so ruinous that it had to be rebuilt at an expense of £2068: 7: 2. Among the subscribers appear the names of the Duchess of Lennox, Sir Anthony Ashleye, Sir John Cotton, and the players at “the Cockpit playhouse.” The 415 householders of the parish subscribed £1065: 9s., the donations ranging from the £250 of the Duchess of Dudley to Mother Parker’s twopence.

Nearly five years elapsed before the new church was consecrated. On the 9th of June 1628 Pym brought a charge against the rector, Dr. Mainwaring, for having preached two obnoxious sermons, entitled “Religion” and “Allegiance,” and accused the imprudent time-server of persuading citizens to obey illegal commands on pain of damnation, and framing, like Guy Faux, a mischievous plot to alter and subvert the Government.[630] The third sermon in which Mainwaring defended his two first, the stern Commons found upon inquiry[631] had been printed by special command of the king. It was as full of mischief as a bomb-shell. It held that on any exigency all property was transferred to the sovereign; that the consent of Parliament was not necessary for the imposition of taxes; and that the divine laws required compliance with every demand which a prince should make upon his subjects. For these doctrines the Commons impeached Mainwaring; the sentence pronounced on him was, that he should be imprisoned during the pleasure of the House, that he should be fined £1000, to the king, make submission of his offence, be suspended from lay and ecclesiastical office for three years, and that his sermons be called in and burnt. [Pg 364]

On June 20 the courtly preacher came to the House, and on his knees submitted himself in sorrow and repentance for the errors and indiscretions he had been guilty of in preaching the sermons “rashly, scandalously, and unadvisedly.” He further acknowledged the three sermons to be full of dangerous passages and aspersions, and craved pardon for them of God and the king. No sooner was the session over than the wilful king pardoned him, promoted him to the deanery of Winchester, and some years after to the bishopric of St. David’s.[632]

The new church was consecrated on the 26th of January 1630. Bishop Laud performed the ceremony, and was entertained at the house of a Mr. Speckart, near the church. There were two tables sufficient to seat thirty-two persons. The broken churchyard wall was fenced up with boards, the altar hung with green velvet, a rail made to keep the mob from the west door, and a train of constables, armed with bills and halberts, appointed to maintain order if the Puritans became threatening. The new rector, Dr. Heywood, had been chaplain to Laud, and was probably of the High Church party. Like his expelled predecessor, he had been chaplain to one of the most arbitrary of kings. In 1640 the Puritans, gaining strength, petitioned Parliament against him, stating that he had set up crucifixes and images of saints, likewise organs, “with other confused music, etc., hindering devotion and maintained at the great and needless charge of the parish.” They described the carved screen as particularly obnoxious, and they objected to the altar rail, the chancel carpet, the purple velvet in the desk, the needlework covers of the books, the tapestry, the lawn cloth, the bone lace of the altar cloths, and the taffeta curtains on the walls. These “popish and superstitious” ornaments were sold by order of Parliament, all but the plate and the great bell. The surplices were given away. The twelve apostles were washed off the organ-loft, and the painted glass was taken down from the windows. The screen was sold for forty shillings, and the money given to the poor. The Covenant was framed and hung up in the church, and five shillings given to a pewterer for a new basin cut square on one side for baptisms. The blue velvet carpet, embroidered cushions, and blue curtains were sold, and so were the communion rails. In 1647 Lady Dudley’s pew was lined with green baize and supplied with two straw mats. In 1650 the king’s arms were taken out of the windows, and a sun-dial was substituted. The organ-loft was let as a pew. [Pg 365]

The Restoration soon followed on these paltry excesses of a low-bred fanaticism. The ringers of St. Giles’s rang a peal for three days running. The king’s arms in the vestry and the windows were restored. Galleries were erected for the nobility. In 1670 a brass chandelier of sixteen branches was bought for the church, and an hour-glass for the pulpit.

In 1718 the old hospital church had become damp and unwholesome. The grave-ground had risen eight feet, so that the church lay in a pit. Parliament was therefore petitioned that St. Giles’s should be one of the fifty new churches. It was urged that a good church facing the High Street, the chief thoroughfare for all persons who travelled the Oxford or Hampstead roads, would be a great ornament. The petitioners also contended that St. Giles’s already spent £5300 a year on the poor, and that a new rate would impoverish many industrious persons. The Duke of Newcastle, the Lord Chancellor, and other eminent parishioners strenuously supported the petition, which, on the other hand, was warmly opposed by the Archbishop of York, five bishops, and eleven temporal peers. The opposition contended that the parish was well able to repair the present church; that the fund given for building new churches was never meant to be devoted to rebuilding old ones; and that so far from the parish not requiring church accommodation, St. Giles’s contained 40,000 persons, a number for which three new churches would be barely sufficient.[633] Eleven years longer the church [Pg 366]

remained a ruin, when in 1729 the commissioners granted £8000 for a new church, provided that the parish would settle £350 a year on the rector of the new parish of Bloomsbury.

The architect of the new church, opened in 1734, was Henry Flitcroft. The roof is supported by Ionic pillars of Portland stone. The steeple is 160 feet high, and consists of a rustic pedestal supporting Doric pilasters; over the clock is an octangular tower, with three-quarter Ionic columns supporting a balustrade with vases. The spire is octangular and belled. This hideous production of Greek rules was much praised by the critics of 1736. They called it “simple and elegant.” They considered the east end as “pleasing and majestic,” and found nothing in the west to object to but the smallness and poverty of the doors. The steeple they described as “light, airy, and genteel.”[634] whether taken with the body of the church or considered as a *separate building*.

In 1827 the clock of St. Giles’s Church was illuminated with gas, and the novelty and utility of the plan “attracted crowds to visit it from the remotest parts of the metropolis.”[635]

St. Giles’s Churchyard was enlarged in 1628, and again soon after the Restoration. The [Pg 367]
garden plot from which the new part was divided was called Brown’s Gardens. In 1670 we find the sexton agreeing, on condition of certain windows he had been allowed to introduce into the side of his house, facing the churchyard, to furnish the rector and churchwardens, every Tuesday se’nnight after Easter, with two fat capons ready dressed.

In 1687 the Resurrection Gate, or Lich Gate, as it was called, and which still exists, was erected at a cost of £185: 14: 6. It stood for many years farther to the west than the old gate, and contains a heap of dully-carved figures in relievo, abridged from Michael Angelo’s “Last Judgment,” and crowded under a large “compass pediment.” It has lately, however, been replaced in its old position. This work was much admired and celebrated, but “Nollekens” Smith says that it is poor stuff.

Pennant, always shrewd and vivacious, was one of the first writers who exposed the disgraceful and dangerous condition of the London churchyards. He describes seeing at St Giles’s a great square pit with rows of coffins piled one upon the other, exposed to sight and smell, awaiting the mortality of the night. “I turned away,” he says, “disgusted at the scene, and scandalised at the want of police which so little regards the health of the living as to permit so many putrid corpses, packed between some slight boards, dispersing their dangerous effluvia over the capital.”[636]

In 1808 a new burial-ground for St. Giles’s parish was consecrated in St. Pancras’s. It stands in grim loneliness between the Hampstead Road and College Street, Camden Town.

The graves of John Flaxman, the sculptor, and his wife and sister, are marked by an altar tomb of brick, surmounted by a thick slab of Portland stone. Near it is the ruinous tomb of ingenious, faddling Sir John Soane, the architect to the Bank of England. It is a work of great pretension, “but cut up into toy-shop prettiness, with all the peculiar defects of his style and [Pg 368]
manner.” Two black cypresses mark the grave.[637]

A few eminent persons are buried in the old St. Giles’s Churchyard. Amongst these, the most illustrious is George Chapman, who produced a fine though rugged translation of the *Iliad* which is to Pope’s what heart of oak is to veneer, and who died in 1634 aged seventy-seven, and lies buried here. Inigo Jones generously erected an altar tomb to his memory at his own expense; it is still to be seen in the external southern wall of the church. The monument is old; but the inscription is only a copy of all that remained visible of the old writing. That chivalrous visionary, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was also buried here, and so was James Shirley, the dramatist, who died in 1666. The latter was the last of the great ante-Restoration play-writers, and of a thinner fibre than any of the rest, except melancholy Ford.

Richard Pendrell, the Staffordshire farmer, “the preserver and conductor of King Charles II. after his escape from Worcester Fight,” has an altar tomb to his memory raised in this churchyard. After the Restoration, Richard came to town, to be in the way, I suppose, of the good things then falling into Cavaliers’ mouths, and probably settled in St. Giles’s to be near the Court. The story of the Boscobel oak was one with which the swarthy king delighted to buttonhole his courtiers. Pendrell died in 1671, and had a monument erected to his memory on the south-east side of the church. The black marble slab of the old tomb forms the base of the present one. The epitaph is in a strain of fulsome bombast, considering the king who was preserved showed his gratitude to Heaven only by a long career of unblushing vice, and by impoverishing and disgracing the foolish country that called him home. It begins thus:—

> “Hold, passenger! here’s shrouded in this hearse
> Unparalleled Pendrell thro’ the universe.
> Like when the eastern star from heaven gave light
> To three lost kings, so he in such dark night
> To Britain’s monarch, lost by adverse war, [Pg 369]
> On earth appeared a second eastern star.”

The dismal poet ends by assuring the world that Pendrell, the king’s pilot, had gone to heaven to be rewarded for his good steering. In 1702 a Pendrell was overseer in this parish. About 1827 a granddaughter of this Richard lived near Covent Garden, and still enjoyed part of the family pension. In 1827 Mr. John Pendrell, another descendant of Richard, died at Eastbourne.[638] His son kept an inn at Lewes, and was afterwards clerk at a Brighton hotel.

The only monument at present of interest in the church is a recumbent figure of the Duchess Dudley, the great benefactor of the parish, created a duchess in her own right by Charles I. She died 1669. The monument was preserved by parochial gratitude when the church was rebuilt, in consideration of the duchess's numerous bequests to the parish. She was buried at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire. This pious and charitable lady was the daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh of Stoneleigh, and she married Sir Robert Dudley, son of the great Earl of Leicester, who deserted her and his five daughters, and went and settled in Florence, where he became chamberlain to the Grand Duchess. Clever and unprincipled as his father, Sir Robert devised plans for draining the country round Pisa, and improving the port of Leghorn. He was outlawed, and his estates at Kenilworth, etc. were confiscated and sold for a small sum to Prince Henry; but Charles I. generously gave them back to the duchess.

In her funeral sermon, Dr. Boreman says of this good woman: "She was a magazine of experience.... I have often said she was a living chronicle bound up with the thread of a long-spun age. And in divers incidents and things relating to our parish, I have often appealed to her stupendous memory as to an ancient record.... In short, I would say to any desirous to attain some degree of perfection, 'Vade ad Sancti Egidii oppidum, et disce Ducinam Dudleyam'—('Come to St. Giles, and inquire the character of Lady Dudley')."[639]

The oldest monument remaining in the churchyard in 1708 was dated 1611. It was a [Pg 370] tombstone, "close to the wall on the south side, and near the west end," and was to the memory of a Mrs. Thornton.[640] Her husband was the builder of Thornton Alley, which was probably his estate. The following painful lines were round the margin of the stone:—

> "Full south this stone four foot doth lie
> His father John and grandsire Henry
> Thornton, of Thornton, in Yorkshire bred,
> Where lives the fame of Thornton's being dead."

Against the east end of the north aisle of the church was the tombstone of Eleanor Steward, who died 1725, aged 123 years and five months.

That good and inflexible patriot, Andrew Marvell, the most poignant satirist of King Charles II., died in 1678, and is buried in St. Giles's. Marvell was Latin secretary to Milton, and in the school of that good man's house learnt how a true patriot should live. It is recorded that one day when he was dining in Maiden Lane, one of Charles II.'s courtiers came to offer him £1000 as a bribe for his silence. Marvell refused the gift, took off the dish-cover, and showed his visitor the humble half-picked mutton-bone on which he was about to dine. He was member for Kingston-upon-Hull for nearly twenty years, and was buried at last at the expense of his constituents. They also voted a sum of money to erect a monument to him with a harmless epitaph; to this, however, the rector of the time, to his own disgrace, refused admittance. Thompson, the editor of Marvell's works, searched in vain in 1774 for the patriot's coffin. He could find no plate earlier than 1722.

In the same church with this fixed star rests that comet, Sir Roger l'Estrange. His monument was said to be the grandest in the church. Sir Roger died in 1704, aged eighty-eight.

In 1721, after an ineffectual treaty for Dudley Court, where the parsonage-house had once stood, a piece of ground called Vinegar Yard was purchased for the sum of £2252: 10s. as a [Pg 371] burial-ground, hospital, and workhouse for the parish of St. Giles's. At that time St. Giles's relieved about 840 persons, at the cost of £4000 a year. Of this number there were 162 over seventy years of age, 126 parents overburthened with children, 183 deserted children and orphans, 70 sick at parish nurses', and 300 men lame, blind, and mad.

The Earl of Southampton granted land for five almshouses in St. Giles's in 1656.[641] The site was in Broad Street, nearly at the north end of Monmouth and King Streets, where they stood until 1782, at which period they were pulled down to widen the road. The new almshouses were erected in a close, low, and unhealthy spot in Lewknor's Lane.

In the year 1661 Mr. William Shelton left lands for a school for fifty children in Parker's Lane, between Drury Lane and Little Queen Street. The tenements, before he bought them, had been in the occupation of the Dutch ambassador. The premises were poor houses, and a coach-house and stables in the occupation of Lord Halifax. In 1687, the funds proving inadequate, the school was discontinued; but in 1815, after being in abeyance for fifty-three years, it was re-opened in Lloyd's Court.[642]

The select vestry of St. Giles's was much badgered in 1828 by the excluded parishioners. There were endless errors in the accounts, and items amounting to £90,000 were found entered only in pencil. The special pleas put in by the attorneys of the vestry covered 175 folios of writing.

Hog Lane, built in 1680, was rechristened in 1762 Crown Street, as an inscription on a stone let into the wall of a house at the corner of Rose Street intimates.[643] Strype calls it a "place not over well built or inhabited." The Greeks had a church here, afterwards a French refugee place of worship, and subsequently an Independent chapel. It stood on the west side [Pg 372] of the lane, a few doors from Compton Street; and its site is now occupied by St. Mary's Church and clergy-house. Hogarth laid the scene of his "Noon" in Hog Lane, at the door of this chapel; but the houses being reversed in the engraving, the truth of the picture is destroyed. The background contains a view of St. Giles's Church. The painter delighted in

ridiculing the fantastic airs of the poor French gentry, and showed no kindly sympathy with their honest poverty and their sufferings. It was to St. Giles's that Hogarth came to study poverty and also vice. A scene of his "Harlot's Progress" is in Drury Lane, close by. Tom Nero, in the "Four Stages of Cruelty," is a St. Giles's charity-boy, and we see him in the first stage tormenting a dog near the church. Hogarth's "Gin Street" is situated in St. Giles's. The scenes of all the most hideous and painful of his works are in this district.

"Nollekens" Smith, writing of St. Giles's, says: "I recollect the building of most of the houses at the north end of New Compton Street—so named in compliment to Bishop Compton, Dean of St. Paul's. I also remember a row of six small almshouses, surrounded by a dwarf brick wall, standing in the middle of High Street. On the left hand of High Street, passing into Tottenham Court Road, there were four handsome brick houses, probably of Queen Anne's time, with grotesque masks as keystones to the first-floor windows. Nearly on the site of the new "Resurrection Gate," in which the basso-relievo is, stood a very small old house towards Denmark Street, which used to totter, to the terror of passers by, whenever a heavy carriage rolled through the street."[644]

Exactly where Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road meet in a right angle, a large circular boundary-stone was let into the pavement. Here when the charity-boys of St. Giles's walked the boundaries, those who deserved flogging were whipped, in order to impress the parish frontier on their memories.

The Pound originally stood in the middle of the High Street, whence it was removed in 1656 [Pg 373] to make way for the almshouses. It had stood there when the village really required a place to imprison straying cattle. The latest pound stood in the broad space where the High Street, Tottenham Court Road, and Oxford Street meet; it occupied a space of about thirty-feet, and was removed in 1768. It must have faced Meux's Brewery. An old song that celebrates this locality begins—

> "At Newgate steps Jack Chance was found,
> And bred up near St. Giles's Pound."

Criminals on their way to Tyburn used to "halt at the great gate of St. Giles's Hospital, where a bowl of ale was provided as their last refreshment in this life."[645] A similar custom prevailed at York, which gave rise to the proverb, "The saddler of Bawtry was hung for leaving his liquor," meaning that if the impatient man had stopped to drink, his reprieve would have arrived in time.[646]

Bowl Yard was built about 1623, and was then surrounded by gardens. It is a narrow court on the south side of High Street, over against Dyot Street, now George Street. There was probably here a public-house, the Bowl, at which in later time ale was handed to the passing thieves.

Swift, in a spirited ballad describes "clever Tom Clinch," who rode "stately through Holborn to die in his calling," stopping at the George for a bottle of sack, and promising to pay for it "*when he came back*." No one has sketched the highwayman more perfectly than the Irish prelate. Tom Clinch wears waistcoat, stockings, and breeches of white, and his cap is tied with cherry ribbon. He bows like a beau at the theatre to the ladies in the doors and to the maids in the balconies, who cry, "Lackaday, he's a proper young man." He swears at the hawkers crying his last speech, kicks the hangman when he kneels to ask his pardon, makes a short speech exhorting his comrades to ply their calling, and so carelessly and defiantly [Pg 374] takes his leave of an ungrateful world.

"Rainy Day" Smith describes,[647] when a boy of eight years old, being taken by Nollekens, the sculptor, to see that notorious highwayman John Rann, alias "Sixteen-string Jack," on his way to execution at Tyburn, for robbing Dr. Bell, chaplain to the Princess Amelia, in Gunnersbury Lane, near Brentford, in 1774. Rann was a smart fellow, and had been a coachman to Lord Sandwich, who then lived at the south-east corner of Bedford Row, Covent Garden. The undaunted malefactor wore a bright pea-green coat, and carried an immense nosegay, which some mistress of the highwayman had handed him, according to custom, as a last token, from the steps of St. Sepulchre's Church. The sixteen strings worn by this freebooter at his knees were reported to be in ironical allusion to the number of times he had been acquitted. On their return home, Nollekens, stooping to the boy's ear, assured him that had his father-in-law, Mr. Justice Welch, been then High Constable, they could have walked all the way to Tyburn beside the cart.[648]

Holborn used to be called "the Heavy Hill" because it led thieves from Newgate to Tyburn. Old fat Ursula, the roast-pig seller in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* talks of ambling afoot to hear Knockhem the footpad groan out of a cart up the Heavy Hill. This was in James I.'s time. Dryden alludes to it in the same way in 1678,[649] and in 1695 Congreve's Sir Sampson[650] mentions the same doleful procession. In 1709 (Queen Anne) Tom Browne mentions a wily old counsellor in Holborn who used to turn out his clerks every execution day for a profitable holiday, saying, "Go, you young rogues, go to school and improve."

St. Giles's was always famous for its inns.[651] One of the oldest of these was the Croche House, or Croche Hose (Cross Hose), so called from its sign—the Crossed Stockings. The [Pg 375] sign, still used by hosiers, was a red and white stocking forming a St. Andrew's Cross. This inn belonged to the hospital cook in 1300, and was given by him to the hospital. It stood at

the north of the present entrance to Compton Street, and was probably destroyed before the reign of Henry VIII.

The Swan on the Hop was an inn of Edward III.'s time; it stood eastward of Drury Lane and on the south side of Holborn.[652]

The White Hart is described in Henry VIII.'s time as possessing eighteen acres of pasture. It stood near the Holborn end of Drury Lane, and existed till 1720. In Aggas's Plan it appears surrounded on three sides by a wall. It was bounded on the east by Little Queen Street, and was divided from Holborn by an embankment. A court afterwards stood on its site.

The Rose is mentioned as early as Edward III.'s reign. It was near Lewknor's Lane, and stood not far from the White Hart.

The Vine was an inn till 1816. It was on the north side of Holborn, a little to the east of Kingsgate Street. It is supposed to have stood on the site of a vineyard mentioned in Doomsday Book. It was originally a country roadside inn, with fields at the back. It became an infamous nuisance. The house that replaced it was first occupied by a timber-merchant, and afterwards by Probert, the accomplice of Thurtell, who, escaping death for the murder of Mr. Weare, was soon after hanged for horse-stealing in Gloucestershire. It was at this trial that the prisoner's keeping a gig was adduced as an incontestible proof of his respectability—a fact immortalised, almost to the weariness of a degenerate age, by Mr. Thomas Carlyle. The inn was once called the Kingsgate Tavern, from its having stood near the king's gate or turnpike in the adjoining street.

The Cock and Pye Inn stood at the west corner of what was once a mere or marshland. The fields surrounding it, now Seven Dials, were called from it the Cock and Pye Fields. [Pg 376]

The Maidenhead Inn stood in Dyot Street, and formed part of Lord Mountjoy's estates in Elizabeth's time. It was the house for parish meetings in Charles II.'s reign. It then became a resort for mealmen and farmers, and latterly a brandy-shop and beggars' haunt of the vilest sort. It was finally turned into a stoneyard. Dyot Street, so called after Sir John Dyot, who left it by wish to the poor, though it was afterwards a poor and even dangerous locality, must have been respectable in 1662, when a Presbyterian chapel was built there for Joseph Read, Baxter's friend, an ejected minister from Worcestershire. Read was taken up under the Conventicles Act in 1677, and endured much persecution, but was restored to his congregation on the accession of James II. From 1684 to 1708 the building was used as a chapel of ease to St. Giles's Church. At the close of the last century men would hurry along Dyot Street as through a dangerous defile. There was a legend current of a banker's clerk who, returning from his round, with his book of notes and bills fastened by the usual chain, as he passed down Dyot Street felt a cellar door sinking under him. Conscious of his danger, he made a spring forward, dashed down the street, and escaped the trap set for him by the thieves. It may be added that Dyot Street gave the name to a song sung by Liston in the admirable burlesque of "Bombastes Furioso."

Irish mendicants—the poorest, dirtiest, and most unimprovable of all beggars—began to crowd into St. Giles's about the time of Queen Elizabeth.[653]

The increase of London soon attracted country artisans and country beggars. The closing of the monasteries had filled England with herds of sturdy and dangerous vagrants not willing to work, and by no means inclined to starve. The new-comers resorting to the suburbs of London to escape the penalties of infringing the City jurisdiction, the stout-hearted queen ordered all persons within three miles of London gates to forbear from allowing any house to be occupied by more than one family. [Pg 377]

A proclamation of 1583 alludes to the very poor and the beggars, who lived "heaped up" in small tenements and let lodgings. A subsequent warning orders the suppression of the great multitude of Irish vagrants, many of whom haunted the courts under pretence of suits; by day they mixed with disbanded soldiers from the Low Countries and other impostors and beggars, and at night committed robberies and outrages. St. Giles's was then one of the great harbours for these "misdemeaned persons." On one occasion a mob of these rogues surrounded the queen as she was riding out in the evening to Islington to take the air. That same night Fleetwood, the Recorder, issued warrants, and in the morning went out himself and took seventy-four rogues, including some blind rich usurers, who were all sent to Bridewell for speedy punishment.

James I. pursued the same crusade against vagrants, forbidding new buildings in the suburbs, and ordering all newly raised structures to be pulled down. The beadles had to attend every Sunday at the vestry to report all new inmates, and who lodged them, and to take up all idlers; the constables in 1630 were also required to give notice of such persons to the churchwardens every month. In an entry in St. Giles's parish books in 1637 "families in cellars" are first mentioned.[654] The locality afterwards became noted for these dens, and "a cellar in St. Giles's" became a proverbial phrase to signify the lowest poverty.

In 1640 Irishmen are first mentioned by name, and money was paid to take them back again to their native land.

Sir John Fielding, brother of the great novelist, who was an active Westminster magistrate in his time and a great hunter down of highwaymen, in a pamphlet on the increase of crime in

London, lays special stress on the vicious poverty of St. Giles's. He gives a statement on the authority of Mr. Welch, the High Constable of Holborn, of the overcrowding of the miserable lodgings where idle persons and vagabonds were sheltered for twopence a night. One [Pg 378] woman alone owned seven of these houses, which were crowded with twopenny beds from cellar to garret. In these beds both sexes, strangers or not, lay promiscuously, the double bed being a halfpenny cheaper. To still more wed vice to poverty, these lodging-house keepers sold gin at a penny a quartern, so that no beggar was so poor that he could not get drunk. No fewer than seventy of these vile houses were found open at all hours, and in one alone, and not the largest, there were counted fifty-eight persons sleeping in an atmosphere loathsome if not actually poisonous.

This Judge Welch was the father of Mrs. Nollekens, and a brave and benevolent man. He was a friend of Dr. Johnson and of Fielding, whom he succeeded in his justiceship, Mr. Welch having on one occasion heard that a notorious highwayman who infested the Marylebone lanes was sleeping in the first floor of a house in Rose Street, Long Acre, he hired the tallest hackney-coach he could find, drove under the thief's window, ascended the roof, threw up the sash, entered the room, actually dragged the fellow naked out of bed on to the roof of the coach, and in that way carried him down New Street and up St. Martin's Lane, amidst the huzzas of an immense throng which followed him, to Litchfield Street, Soho.[655]

Archenholz, the German traveller, writing circa 1784, describes the streets of London as crowded with beggars. "These idle people," says this curious observer, "receive in alms three, four, and even five shillings a day. They have their clubs in the parish of St. Giles's, where they meet, drink and feed well, read the papers, and talk politics. One of my friends put on one day a ragged coat, and promised a handsome reward to a beggar to introduce him to his club. He found the beggars gay and familiar, and poor only in their rags. One threw down his crutch, another untied a wooden leg, a third took off a grey wig or removed a plaister from a sound eye; then they related their adventures, and planned fresh schemes. The female beggars hire children for sixpence and sometimes even two shillings a day: a [Pg 379] very deformed child is worth four shillings." In the same parish the pickpockets met to dine and exchange or sell snuff-boxes, handkerchiefs, and other stolen property.

About fifty years before, says Archenholz, there had been a pickpockets' club in St. Giles's, where the knives and forks were chained to the table and the cloth was nailed on. Rules were, however, decorously observed, and chairmen chosen at their meetings. Not far from this house was a celebrated gin-shop, on the sign-post of which was written, "Here you may get drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, and straw for nothing." The cellars of this public-spirited man were never empty.

Archenholz also sketches the conjurors who told fortunes for a shilling. They wore black gowns and false beards, advertised in the newspapers, and painted their houses with magical figures and planetary emblems.[656]

In 1783 Mr. J. T. Smith describes how he made for Mr. Crowle, the illustrator of Pennant, a sketch of Old Simon, a well-known character, who took his station daily under one of the gate piers of the old red and brown brick gateway at the northern end of St. Giles's Churchyard, which then faced Mr. Remnent's timber-yard. This man wore several hats, and was remarkable for a long, dirty, yellowish white beard. His chapped fingers were adorned with brass rings. He had several coats and waistcoats—the upper wrap-rascle covering bundles of rags, parcels of books, canisters of bread and cheese, matches, a tinder-box, meat for his dog, scraps from *Fox's Book of Martyrs*, and three or four dog's-eared, thumbed, and greasy numbers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. From these random leaves he gathered much information, which he retailed to persons who stopped to look at him. Simon and his dog lodged under a staircase in an old shattered building in Dyot Street, known as "Rat's Castle." It was in this beggars' rendezvous that Nollekens the sculptor used to seek models for his Grecian Venuses. Rowlandson etched Simon several times in his usual gross but droll [Pg 380] manner.[657] There was also a whole-length print of him published by John Seago, with this monumental inscription—"Simon Edy, born at Woodford, near Thrapston, Northamptonshire, in 1709. Died May 18th, 1783."

Simon had had several dogs, which, one after the other, were stolen, and sent for sale at Islington, or killed for their teeth by men employed by the dentists. The following anecdote is told of his last and most faithful dog:—Rover had been a shepherd's dog at Harrow, and having its left eye struck out by a bullock's horn, was left with Simon by its master, a Smithfield drover. The beggar tied him to his arm with a long string, cured him, and then restored him to the drover. After that, the dog would stop at St. Giles's porch every market-day on its way after the drover to the slaughter-house in Union Street, and receive caresses from the hand which had bathed its wound. Rover would then yelp for joy and gratitude, and scamper off to get up with the erring bullocks. At last poor Simon missed the dog for several weeks; at the end of that time it appeared one morning at his feet, and with its one sorrowful and uplifted eye implored Simon's protection by licking his tawny beard. His master the drover was dead. Simon was only too glad to adopt Rover, who eventually followed him to his last home.

There was an elegy printed for good-natured, inoffensive old Simon, with a woodcut portrait attached. The Hon. Daines Barrington is said to have never passed the old mendicant

without giving him sixpence.

Mr. J. T. Smith, himself afterwards Curator of the Prints at the British Museum, published some curious etchings of beggars and street characters in 1815. Amongst them are ragged men carrying placards of “The Grand Golden Lottery;” strange old-clothesmen in cocked hats and two-tier wigs; itinerant wood-merchants; sellers of toys, such as “young lambs” or live haddock; flying piemen in pig tails and shorts; women in gipsy hats; door-mat sellers; vendors of hot peas, pickled cucumbers, lemons, windmills (toys); and, last and least, Sir Harry Dimsdale, the dwarf Mayor of Garratt. [Pg 381]

The condition of the beggars of St. Giles in 1815 we gather pretty accurately from the evidence given by Mr. Sampson Stevenson, overseer of the parish, and by trade an ironmonger at No. 11 King Street, Seven Dials, before a committee of the House of Commons, the Right Honourable George Rose in the chair.

Mr. Stevenson’s shop was not more than a few yards from one of the beggars’ chief rendezvous, and he had therefore been enabled to closely study their habits. The inn had lost its licence, as the landlord encouraged thieves; and he had made inquiries of petition-writers, the highest class of mendicants. He had gone frequently into the bar of the Fountain in King Street, another of their haunts, to watch their goings-on. The pretended sailors never carried anything on their backs, as they only begged or extorted money; but the other rogues, who made it their practice to ask for food and clothing, always carried a knapsack to put it in. They returned laden with shoes and clothes, which they would sell in Monmouth Street. They had been heard to say that they had made three or four shillings a day by begging shoes alone.[658] Their mode of obtaining charity was to go barefoot and scarify their heels so that the blood might show. They went out two or three together, or more, and invariably changed their routes each day. Mr. Stevenson had seen them pull out their money and share it. Victuals, he believed, they threw away; but everything else they sold. They would stop at the Fountain till the house closed, or till they got drunk, began to fight, and were turned out by the publican, who feared the losing his licence. They probably went to even lower places to finish their revel.

“They teach other,” he said, “different modes of extortion. They are of the worst character, and overwhelm you with cursing and abuse if you refuse them money. There is one special rascal, Gannee Manos, who is scarcely three months in the year out of gaol. He always goes barefoot, and scratches his ankles to make them bleed. He is the greatest collector of shoes and clothes, as he goes the most naked to excite compassion.” Another man had been known in the streets for fifteen or twenty years. He generally limped or passed as a cripple; but Mr. Stevenson has seen him fencing and jumping about like a pugilist. He went without a hat, with bare arms, and a canvas bag on his back. He generally began by singing a song, and he carried primroses or something in his hand. He pretended to be scarcely able to move one foot before the other; but if a Bow Street officer or a beadle came in sight, he was off as quick as any one. There was another man, an Irishman who had had a good education, and had been in the medical line; he wrote a beautiful hand, and drew up petitions for beggars at sixpence or a shilling each. [Pg 382]

“These men come out by twenties and thirties from the bottom of Dyot Street, and then branch off five or six together. The one who has still some money left starts them with a pint or half a pint of gin. They have all their divisions, and they quarter the town into sections. Some of them collect three, four, or five children, paying sixpence a day for each, and then they go begging in gangs, setting the children crying to excite people’s sympathies. The Irish sometimes have the impudence to bring these children to the board and claim relief, and swear the children are their own. In a short time they are found out; but till the discovery their landlords will swear their story is true. Sometimes, by giving their own country people something, the landlords help to detect them. But even in cases where the children are their own, they will not work when they have once got into the habit of begging. If they will not come into the workhouse, their relief is instantly stopped.

“They spend their evenings drinking, after dining at an eating-house. Deserving people never beg: they are ashamed of it. They do not eat broken victuals. They have seldom any lodgings. There are houses where forty or fifty of them sleep. A porter stands at the door and takes the money. In the morning there is a general muster to see they have stolen nothing, and then the doors are unlocked. For threepence they have clean straw, for fourpence something more decent, and for sixpence a bed. These are all professional beggars; they beg every day, even Sundays. They will not work; they get more money by begging. Sometimes during hard frosts they pretend to beg for work; but their children are sent out early by their parents to certain prescribed stations to beg, sometimes with a broom. If they do not bring home more or less according to their size, they are beaten. A large family of children is a revenue to these people.” [Pg 383]

When beggars did not get enough for their subsistence, Mr. Stevenson believed that they had a fund amongst themselves, as they so seldom applied for relief. The Irish were generally afraid to apply, for fear of being returned to their own country. Beggars had been heard to brag of getting six, seven, and eight shillings a day, or more; and if one got more than the others, he divided it with the rest. Mr. Stevenson concluded his evidence by saying that there were so many low Irish in St. Giles’s, that out of £30,000 a year collected in that parish by poor-rate, £20,000 went to this low and shifting population, that decreased in

summer and increased in winter.

From one or two specimens culled from the London newspapers in 1829 we do not augur much improvement in the character and habits of the St. Giles's beggars. On the 12th of July 1829 John Driscoll, an old professional mendicant, was brought up at the Marylebone Police-office, charged with begging, annoying respectable persons, and even following fashionably dressed ladies into shops. In his pockets were found a small sum of money, some ham sandwiches, and an invitation ticket signed "Car Durre, chairman." It requested the favour of Mr. Driscoll's company on Monday evening next, at seven o'clock, at the Robin Hood, Church Street, St. Giles's, for the purpose of taking supper with others in his line of calling or profession. Mr. Rawlinson said he supposed that an alderman in chains would grace the [Pg 384] beggars' festive board, but he would at least prevent the prisoner forming one of the party on Monday, and sent him to the House of Correction for fourteen days.[659]

The same day one of those men who chalk "I am starving" on the pavement was also sent to the treadmill for fourteen days. Francis Fisher, the prisoner in question, was one of a gang of forty pavement chalkers. In the evening, "after work," these men changed their dress, and with their ladies enjoyed themselves over a good supper, brandy and water, and cigars. In the winter time, when they excited more compassion, their average earnings were ten shillings a day. This would make £20 a day for the gang, and no less than £7300 a year.

Monmouth Street is generally supposed to have derived its name from the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II.'s natural son, whose town house stood close by in Soho Square. It was perhaps named from Carey, Earl of Monmouth, who died in 1626, and his son, who died in 1661: they were both parishioners of St. Giles's.[660] It was early known as the great mart for old clothes, but was superseded in later times by Holy Well Street, which in its turn was displaced by the Minories. Lady Mary Wortley alludes to the lace coats hung up for sale in Monmouth Street like Irish patents. Even Prior, in his pleasant metaphysical poem of "Alma," says—

> "This looks, friend Dick, as Nature had
> But exercised the salesman's trade,
> As if she haply had sat down
> And cut out clothes for all the town,
> Then sent them out to Monmouth Street,
> To try what persons they would fit."

Gay also alludes to this Jewish street in the following distich in his "Trivia"—

> "Thames Street gives cheeses, Covent Garden fruits,
> Moorfields old books, and Monmouth Street old suits."

Most of the shops in Monmouth Street were occupied by Jew dealers in 1849, and horse-shoes were then to be seen nailed under the door-steps of the cellars to scare away witches. [661] [Pg 385]

Mr. Charles Dickens in his *Sketches by Boz*, published in 1836-7, describes Seven Dials and Monmouth Street as they then appeared. The maze of streets, the unwholesome atmosphere, the men in fustian spotted with brickdust or whitewash, and chronically leaning against posts, are all painted by this great artist with the accuracy of a Dutch painter. The writer boldly plunges into the region of "first effusions and last dying speeches, hallowed by the names of Catnach and of Pitts," and carries us at once into a fight between two half-drunk Irish termagants outside a gin-shop. He then takes us to the dirty straggling houses, the dark chandler's shop, the rag and bone stores, the broker's den, the bird-fancier's room as full as Noah's ark, and completes the picture with a background of dirty men, filthy women, squalid children, fluttering shuttlecocks, noisy battledores, reeking pipes, bad fruit, more than doubtful oysters, attenuated cats, depressed dogs, and anatomised fowls. Every house has, he says, at least a dozen tenants. The man in the shop is in the "baked jemmy" line, or deals in firewood and hearthstones. An Irish labourer and his family occupy the back kitchen, while a jobbing carpet-beater is in the front. In the front one pair there's another family, and in the back one pair a young woman who takes in tambour-work. In the back attic is a mysterious man who never buys anything but coffee, penny loaves, and ink, and is supposed to write poems for Mr. Warren.[662]

The Monmouth Street inhabitants Mr. Dickens describes as a peaceable, thoughtful, and dirty race, who immure themselves in deep cellars or small back parlours, and seldom come forth till the dusk and cool of the evening, when, seated in chairs on the pavement, smoking their pipes, they watch the gambols of their children as they revel in the gutter, a happy troop of infantine scavengers.

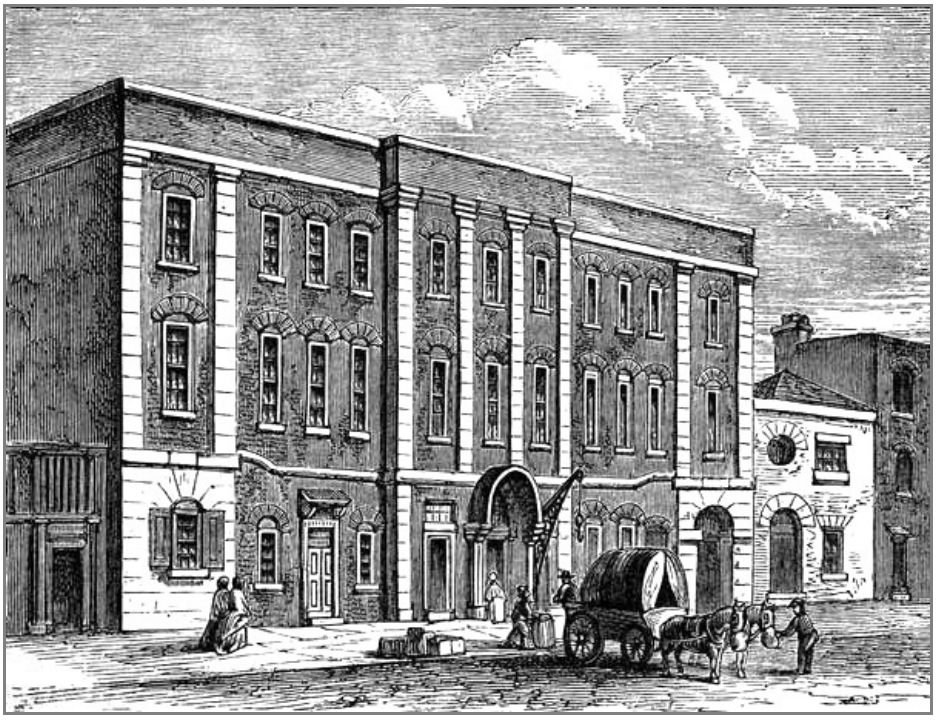
"A Monmouth Street laced coat" was a byword a century ago, but still we find Monmouth Street the same. Pilot coats, double-breasted check waistcoats, low broad-brimmed coachmen's hats, and skeleton suits, have usurped the place of the old attire; but Monmouth Street, said Charles Dickens, is still "the burial-place of the fashions, and we love to walk among these extensive groves of the illustrious dead, and indulge in the speculations to which they give rise."[663] [Pg 386]

In 1816 there were said to be 2348 Irish people resident in St. Giles's; but an Irish witness before a committee of the House declared there were 6000 Irish, and 3000 children in the

neighbourhood of George Street alone. In 1815 there were 14,164 Irish in the whole of London.[664] The Irish portion of the parish of St. Giles's was known by the name of the Holy Land in 1829.

THE SEVEN DIALS.

[Pg 387]



LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS THEATRE, 1821.

CHAPTER XIV.

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

Lincoln's Inn, originally belonging to the Black Friars before they removed Thames-ward, derives its name from Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, to whom it was given by Edward I.,

and whose town house or inn stood on the same site in the reign of Edward I. Earl Henry died in 1312, the year in which Gaveston was killed, and his monument was one of the stateliest in the old church. His arms are still those of the inn and of its tributaries, Furnival's and Thavies inns. There is yet extant an old account of the earl's bailiff, relating to the sale of the fruit of his master's garden. The noble's table was supplied and the residue [Pg 388] sold. The apples, pears, large nuts, and cherries, the beans, onions, garlic, and leeks, produced a profit of £9: 2: 3 (about £135 in modern money). The only flowers were roses. The bailiff, it appears, expended 8s. a year in purchasing small fry, frogs, and eels, to feed the pike in the pond or vivary.[665]

Part of the Chancery Lane side of Lincoln's Inn was in 1217 and 1272 "the mansion house" of William de Haverhill, treasurer to King Henry III. He was attainted for treason, and his house and lands were confiscated to the king, who then gave his house to Ralph Neville, Chancellor of England and Bishop of Chichester, who built there "a fair house;" and the Bishops of Chichester inhabited it there till Henry VII.'s time, when they let it to law students, reserving lodgings for themselves, and it fell into the hands of Judge Sulyard and other feoffees. This family held it till Elizabeth's time, when Sir Edward Sulyard, of Essex, sold the estate to the Benchers,[666] who then began enlarging their frontier and building.

The plain Tudor gateway with the two side towers soaked with black smoke, the oldest part of the existing structure, was built in 1518 by Sir Thomas Lovell, a member of this inn and treasurer of the household to Henry VII., when great alterations took place in the inn. What thousands of wise men and rogues have passed under its murky shadow! None of the original building is left. The Black Friars' House fronted the Holborn end of the Bishop's Palace.[667] The chambers adjoining the Gate House are of a later date and it was at these that Mr. Cunningham thinks Ben Jonson worked.[668]

The chapel, of debased Perpendicular Gothic, was built by Inigo Jones, and consecrated in 1623, Dr. Donne the poet preaching the consecration sermon. The stained glass was the work of a Mr. Hale of Fetter Lane. The twelve apostles, Moses, and the prophets still glow like immortal flowers, bright as when Donne, or Ussher, watched the light they shed. One of [Pg 389] the windows bears the name of Bernard van Linge, the same man probably who executed the windows at Wadham College, Oxford.[669] Noy, the Attorney-General and creature of Charles I., a friend of Laud, and the proposer of the writ for ship-money, put up the window representing John the Baptist, rather an ominous saint, surely, in Charles's time. Noy died in 1634, before the storm which would certainly have carried his head off. He left his money to a prodigal son, who was afterwards killed in a duel,—"Left to be squandered, and I hope no better from him," says the dying man, bitterly. It was Noy who decided the curious case of the three graziers who left their money with their hostess. One of them afterwards returned and ran off with the money; upon which the other two sued the woman, denying their consent. Mr. Noy pleaded that the money was ready to be given up directly the three men came together and claimed it.[670] Rogers tells this story in his poem of "Italy," and gives it a romantic turn.

Laud, always restless for novelties that could look like Rome, and yet not be Rome, referred to the Lincoln's Inn windows at his trial. He wondered at a Mr. Brown objecting to such things, considering he was not of Lincoln's Inn, "where Mr. Prynne's zeal had not yet beaten down the images of the apostles in the fair windows of that chapel, which windows were set up new long since the statute of Edward VI.; and it is well known," says that enemy of the Puritans, "that I was once resolved to have returned this upon Mr. Brown in the House of Commons, but changed my mind, lest thereby I might have set some furious spirit at work to destroy those harmless goodly windows, to the just dislike of that worthy society."[671]

The crypt under the chapel rests on many pillars and strong-backed arches, and, like the cloisters in the Temple, was intended as a place for student-lawyers to walk in and exchange learning. Butler describes witnesses of the straw-bail species waiting here for customers, [Pg 390] [672] just as half a century ago they used to haunt the doors of Chancery Lane gin-shops. On a June day in 1663 Pepys came to walk under the chapel by appointment, after pacing up and down and admiring the new garden then constructing.

The great Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England in Henry VIII.'s time, had chambers at Lincoln's Inn when he was living in Bucklersbury after his marriage. This was about 1506. He wrote his *Utopia* in 1516. King Henry grew so fond of More's learned and witty conversation, that he used to constantly send for him to supper, and would walk in the garden at Chelsea with his arm round his neck. More was beheaded in 1535 for refusing to take the oath of succession and acknowledge the legality of the king's divorce from Catherine of Arragon. Erasmus, who knew More well, inscribed the "Nux" of Ovid to his son. More's skull is still preserved, it is said, in the vault of St. Dunstan's Church at Canterbury. [673] More's daughter, Margaret Roper, was buried with it in her arms.

Dr. Donne, the divine and poet, whose mother was distantly related to Sir Thomas More and to Heywood the epigrammatist, was a student at Lincoln's Inn in his seventeenth year, but left it to squander his father's fortune. He was a friend of Bacon, with whom he lived for five years, and also of Ben Jonson, who corresponded with him. When young, Donne had written a thesis to prove that suicide is no sin. "That," he used to say in later years, "was written by Jack Donne, not by Dr. Donne."

This same poet was for two years preacher at Lincoln's Inn; so was the charitable and

amiable Tillotson in 1663. The latter, after preaching the doctrine of non-resistance before King Charles II., was nicknamed “Hobbes in the pulpit;” he and Dr. Burnet both tried in vain to force the same doctrine on Lord William Russell when he was preparing for death. Tillotson, who was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1691 by King William, was a valued friend of Locke. Addison considered Tillotson’s three folio volumes of sermons to be the [Pg 391] standard of English, and meant to make them the ground-work of a dictionary which he had projected. Warburton, a sterner critic, denies that the sermons are oratorical like Jeremy Taylor’s, or thoughtful like Barrow’s, but yet confesses them to be clear, rational, equable, [674] and certainly not without a noble simplicity.

Among the most eminent students of Lincoln’s Inn we must remember Sir Matthew Hale. After a wild and vain youth, Hale suddenly commenced studying sixteen hours a day,[675] and became so careless of dress that he was once seized by a pressgang. The sight of a friend who fell down in a fit from excessive drinking led to this honest man’s renouncing all revelry and becoming unchangeably religious. Noy directed him in his studies; he became a friend of Selden, and was one of the counsel for Strafford, Laud, and the king himself. Nevertheless, he obtained the esteem of Cromwell, who was tolerant of all shades of goodness. He died 1675-6. When a nobleman once complained to Charles II. that Hale would not discuss with him the arguments in his cause then before him, Charles replied, “Ods fish, man! he would have treated me just the same.”

Lord Chancellor Egerton, afterwards Lord Ellesmere, was of Lincoln’s Inn. His son became Earl of Bridgewater. He was a friend of Lord Bacon, and had a celebrated dispute with Chief Justice Coke as to whether “the Chancery can relieve by subpœna after a judgment at law in the same cause.” Prudent, discreet, and honest, Ellesmere was esteemed by both Elizabeth and James, and died at York House in 1617. Bishop Hacket says of him that “He neither did, spoke, nor thought anything in his life but what deserved praise.”[676] It is said that many persons used to go to the Chancery Court only to see and admire his venerable presence.

Sir Henry Spelman was admitted of Lincoln’s Inn. He was a friend of Dugdale, and one of our earliest students of Anglo-Saxon. He wrote much on civil law, sacrilege, and tithes. [Pg 392] Aubrey tells us that he was thought a dunce at school, and did not seriously sit down to hard study till he was about forty. This eminent scholar died in 1641, and was interred with great solemnity in Westminster Abbey.

Shaftesbury, the subtle and dangerous, and one of the restorers of the king he afterwards worked so hard to depose, was of Lincoln’s Inn.

Ashmole, the great herald, antiquary, and numismatist, originally a London attorney, was married in Lincoln’s Inn Chapel, in 1668, to the daughter of his great colleague in topography and heraldry, Sir William Dugdale, the part compiler of the *Monasticon*.

In the chapel was buried Alexander Brome, a Royalist attorney, a translator of Horace, and a great writer of sharp songs against “The Rump,” who died in 1666. Here also—in loving companionship with him only because dead—rests that irritable Puritan lawyer, William Prynne. He twice lost an ear in the pillory, besides being branded on the cheek. He ultimately opposed Cromwell and aided the return of Charles, for which he was made Keeper of the Tower Records. His works amount to forty folio and quarto volumes. He left copies of them to the Lincoln’s Inn library. Needham calls him “the greatest paper-worm that ever crept into a library.” He died in his Lincoln’s Inn chambers in 1669. Wood computes that Prynne wrote as much as would amount to a sheet for every day of his life. His epitaph had been erased when Wood wrote the *Athenæ Oxonienses* in 1691.

In the same chapel lies Secretary Thurloe, the son of an Essex rector and the faithful servant of Cromwell. He was admitted of Lincoln’s Inn in 1647, and in 1654 was chosen one of the masters of the upper bench. He died suddenly in his chambers in Lincoln’s Inn in 1668. Dr. Birch published several folio volumes of his *State Papers*. He seems to have been an honest, dull, plodding man. Thurloe’s chambers were at No. 24 in the south angle of the great court leading out of Chancery Lane, formerly called the Gatehouse Court, but now Old Buildings— [Pg 393] the rooms on the left hand of the ground-floor. Here Thurloe had chambers from 1645 to 1659. Cromwell must have often come here to discuss dissolutions of Parliament and Dutch treaties. State papers sufficient to fill sixty-seven folio volumes were discovered in a false ceiling in the garret by a clergyman who had borrowed the chambers of a friend during the long vacation. He disposed of them to Lord Chancellor Somers.[677] Cautious old Thurloe had perhaps sown these papers, hoping to reap the harvest under some new Cromwellian dynasty that never came.

Rushworth the historian was a barrister of Lincoln’s Inn. During the Civil Wars he was assistant clerk to the House of Commons. After the Restoration he became secretary to the Lord Keeper, but falling into distress, died in the King’s Bench in 1690. His eight folio volumes of *Historical Collections* are specially valuable.[678]

Sir John Denham also studied in this pasturing-ground of English genius; and here, after squandering all his money in gaming, he wrote an essay upon the vice that brings its own punishment. In 1641, when his tragedy of “The Sophy” appeared, Waller said that Denham had broken out like the Irish rebellion, threescore thousand strong. In 1643 appeared his “Cooper’s Hill” which the lampooners declared the author had bought of a vicar for forty pounds.[679] He became mad for a short time at the close of life, and was then ridiculed by

Butler, so says Dr. Johnson. He died in 1668, and was interred in Westminster Abbey. Denham and Waller smoothed the way for Dryden,[680] and founded the Pope school of highly polished artificial verse. Denham's noble apostrophe to the river Thames is all but perfect.

George Wither, one of our fine old poets of a true school, rougher but more natural than Denham's, the son of a Hampshire farmer, entered at Lincoln's Inn. Sent to the Marshalsea for his just but indiscreet satires, he turned soldier, fought against the Royalists, and became one of Cromwell's dreaded major-generals. He was in Newgate for a long time after [Pg 394] the Restoration, and died in 1667. When taken prisoner by Charles, Sir John Denham obtained his release on the humorous pretext that, while Wither lived, he (Denham) would not be the worst poet in England.[681]

In No. 1 New Square, Arthur Murphy, the friend of Dr. Johnson, resided for twenty-three years. He became a member of the inn in 1757. In 1788 he sold his chambers, and retired from the bar. As a journalist he was ridiculed by Wilkes and Churchill. His plays, "The Grecian Daughter" and "Three Weeks after Marriage," were successful. He also translated Tacitus and Sallust. He died in 1805.[682]

Judge Fortescue, a great English lawyer of the time of Henry VI., was a student of this inn. He wrote his great work, *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ* to educate Prince Edward when in banishment in Lorraine. This pious, loyal, and learned man, after being nominal Chancellor, returned to retirement in England, and acknowledged Edward IV.

The Earl of Mansfield belonged to the same illustrious inn. For elegance of mind, for honesty and industry, and for eloquence, he stands unrivalled. The proceedings against Wilkes, and the destruction of his house in Bloomsbury by the fanatical mob of 1780, were the chief events of his useful life.

Spencer Perceval was of Lincoln's Inn. A son of the Earl of Egmont, he became a student here in 1782. In Parliament he supported Pitt and the war against Napoleon. In 1801, under the Addington ministry, he became Attorney-General, and persecuted Peltier for a libel on Bonaparte during the peace of Amiens. On the death of the Duke of Portland he was raised to the head of the Treasury, where he continued till May 1812, when he was shot through the heart in the lobby of the House of Commons by Bellingham, a bankrupt merchant of Archangel, who considered himself aggrieved because ministers had not taken his part and claimed redress for his losses from the Russian Government. Perceval was a shrewd, even- [Pg 395] tempered lawyer, fluent and industrious, who, had time been permitted him, might possibly have proved more completely than he did his incapacity for high ministerial command.

George Canning became a student at Lincoln's Inn in 1781. His father was a bankrupt wine-merchant who died of a broken heart. His mother was a provincial actress. His relation, Sheridan, introduced him to Fox, Grey, and Burke, the latter of whom, it is said, induced him to make politics his profession. He made his maiden speech, attacking Fox and supporting Pitt, in 1794. Late in life he gradually began to support some liberal measures. In 1827 he became First Lord of the Treasury, and died a few months afterwards in the zenith of his power.

Lord Lyndhurst was also one of the glories of this inn. The trial of Dr. Watson for treason, in 1817, first gained for this son of an American painter a reputation which, joined with his prudent conduct in the trial of Cashman the rioter led to his being appointed Solicitor-General in 1818. From that he rose in rapid succession, to the posts of Attorney-General, Master of the Rolls, Lord Chancellor, and Lord Lyndhurst. Old, eccentric, "irrepressible" Sir Charles Wetherell was Copley's fellow-advocate in Watson's case, that ended in the prisoner's acquittal.[683] In 1827, when Abbott became Lord Tenterden, Copley accepted the Great Seal, displacing Lord Eldon, and joined Canning's cabinet, becoming Lord Lyndhurst. In 1830 he became Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

Charles Pepys, Lord Cottenham, born 1781, was called to the bar by the Society of Lincoln's Inn in 1804. He was appointed King's Counsel in 1826, was made Solicitor-General in 1834, succeeded Sir John Leach as Master of the Rolls in the same year, and was elevated to the woolsack in 1836. This Chancellor, who was a very excellent lawyer, was descended from a branch of the family of Samuel Pepys, author of the celebrated *Diary*.

Sir E. Sugden was a member of Lincoln's Inn. He was born in the year 1781. He was the son [Pg 396] of a Westminster hairdresser who became rich by inventing a substitute for hair-powder. He was created Lord St. Leonards on the formation of a Conservative ministry in 1852, when he accepted the Great Seal.

Lord Brougham also studied in Lincoln's Inn. He was born in 1778, and started the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802. In 1820 he defended Queen Caroline; but it would take a volume to follow the career of this impetuous and versatile genius. His struggles for law-reform, for Catholic emancipation, for abolition of slavery, for the education of the people, and for Parliamentary reform, are matters of history. In his old age, though still vigorous, Lord Brougham grew tamer, and condemned the armed emancipation of slaves practised by the Northern States in the present American war. He died at his residence at Cannes in the South of France in 1868.

Cottenham and Campbell were students in Lincoln's Inn; so was that eccentric reformer

Jeremy Bentham, who was called to the bar in 1722, and was the son of a Houndsditch attorney; and so was Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania.

That "luminary of the Irish Church,"[684] Archbishop Ussher, was preacher at Lincoln's Inn in 1647, the society giving the good man handsome rooms ready furnished. He continued to preach there for eight years, till his eyesight began to fail. He died in 1655, and was buried, by Cromwell's permission, with great magnificence, in Erasmus's chapel in Westminster Abbey. His library of 10,000 volumes, bought of him by Cromwell's officers, was given by Charles II. to Dublin College. Ussher, when only eighteen, was the David who discomfited in public dispute the learned Jesuit Fitz-Simons. He saw Charles beheaded from the roof of a house on the site of the Admiralty.

Dr. Langhorne, the joint translator with his brother of the *Lives of Plutarch*, was assistant preacher at Lincoln's Inn. An imitator of Sterne, and a writer in Griffiths's *Monthly Review*, [Pg 397] he was praised by Smollett and abused by Churchill. Langhorne's amiable poem, *The Country Justice*, was praised by Scott. He died in 1779.

That fiery controversialist Warburton was preacher at Lincoln's Inn in 1746, and the same year preached and published a sermon on the Highland rebellion. He was the son of an attorney at Newark-upon-Trent. His *Divine Legation* was an effort to show that the absence of allusions in the writings of Moses to a system of rewards and punishments was a proof of their divine origin. The book is full of perverse digressions. His edition of Shakspere is, perhaps, to use a fine expression of Burke, "one of the poorest maggots that ever crept from the great man's carcase." Pope left half his library to Warburton, who had suggested to him the conclusion of the *Dunciad*. Wilkes, Bolingbroke, Dr. Louth, and Churchill were all by turns attacked by this arrogant knight-errant. Warburton died in 1779.

Reginald Heber, afterwards the excellent Bishop of Calcutta, was appointed preacher at Lincoln's Inn in 1822, the year before he sailed for India. In 1826 this good man was found dead in his bath at Trichinopoly. The sudden death of this energetic missionary was a great loss to East Indian Christianity. In the "company of the preachers" we must not forget the excellent Dr. Van Mildert, afterwards Bishop of Durham, and Dr. Thomson the present Archbishop of York.

In the old times the Lord Chancellor held his sittings in the great hall of Lincoln's Inn. Here, too, at the Christmas revels, the King of the Cockneys administered *his* laws. Jack Straw, a sort of rebellious rival, was put down, with all his adherents, as a bad precedent for the Essexes and Norfolks of the inn, by wary Queen Elizabeth, who always kept a firm grip on her prerogative. In the same reign absurd sumptuary laws, vainly trying to fix the quicksilver of fashion, forbade the students to wear long hair, long beards, large ruffs, huge cloaks, or big spurs. The fine for wearing a beard of more than a fortnight's growth was [Pg 398] three shillings and fourpence.[685] In her father's time beards had been prohibited under pain of double commons.

In the old hall, replaced by the new Tudor building, stood one of Hogarth's most pretentious but worst pictures, "Paul preaching before Felix," an ill-drawn and ludicrous caricature of epic work. The society paid for it. It is now rolled up and hid away with as much contumely as Kent's absurdity at St. Clement's when Hogarth parodied it.

The new hall of Lincoln's Inn was built by Mr. P. Hardwick, the architect of the St. Katherine Docks, and was opened by the Queen in person in 1845. It is a fine Tudor building of red brick, with stone dressings. The hall is 120 feet, the library 80 feet long. The contract was taken for £55,000, but its cost exceeded that sum. The library contains the unique fourth volume of Prynne's *Records*, which the society bought for £335 at the Stow sale in 1849, and all Sir Matthew Hale's bequests of books and MSS.: "a treasure," says that "excellent good man," as Evelyn calls him[686] in his will, "that is not fit for every man's view." The hall contains a fresco representing the "Lawgivers of the World," by Watts. The gardens were much curtailed by the erection of the hall, and their quietude destroyed. Ben Jonson talks of the walks under the elms.[687] Steele seems to have been fond of this garden when he felt meditative. In May 1709, he says much hurry and business having perplexed him into a mood too thoughtful for company, instead of the tavern "I went into Lincoln's Inn Walk, and having taken a round or two, I sat down, according to the allowed familiarity of these places, on a bench." In a more thoughtful month (November) of the same year he goes again for a solitary walk in the garden, "a favour that is indulged me by several of the benchers, who are very intimate friends, and grown old in the neighbourhood." It was this bright frosty night, when the whole body of air had been purified into "bright transparent æther," that [Pg 399] Steele imagined his vision of "The Return of the Golden Age."

Brave old Ben Jonson was the son of a Scotch gentleman in Henry VIII.'s service, who, impoverished by the persecutions of Queen Mary, took orders late in life. His mother married for the second time a small builder or master bricklayer. He went to Westminster school, where Camden, the great antiquary, was his master. A kind patron sent him to Cambridge.[688] He seems to have left college prematurely, and have come back to London to work with his father-in-law.[689]

There is an old tradition that he worked at the garden-wall of Lincoln's Inn next to Chancery Lane, and that a knight or bencher (Sutton, or Camden), walking by, hearing him repeat a passage of Homer, entered into conversation with him, and finding him to have

extraordinary wit, sent him back to college; or, as Fuller quaintly puts it, “some gentlemen pitying that his parts should be buried under the rubbish of so mean a calling, did by their bounty manumise him freely to follow his own ingenious inclinations.”[690]

Gifford sneers at the story, for the poet’s own words to Drummond of Hawthornden were simply these:—“He could not endure the occupation of a bricklayer,” and therefore joined Vere in Flanders, probably going with reinforcements to Ostend in 1591-2.[691] He there fought and slew an enemy, and stripped him in sight of both armies. On his return, he became an actor at a Shoreditch theatre. His enemies, the rival satirists, frequently sneer at the quondam profession of Ben Jonson, and describe him stamping on the stage as if he were treading mortar. For myself, I admire brave, truculent old Ben, and delight even in his most crabbed and pedantic verse, and therefore never pass Lincoln’s Inn garden without thinking of Shakspere’s honest but rugged friend—“a bear only in the coat.”

On June 27, 1752, there was a dreadful fire in New Square, which destroyed countless historical treasures, including Lord Somers’s original letters and papers. [Pg 400]

At No. 2 and afterwards at No. 6 New Square, Lincoln’s Inn, which is built on Little Lincoln’s Inn Fields, and forms no part of the Inn of court, lived Sir Samuel Romilly. This “great and amiable man,” as Tom Moore calls him, killed himself in a fit of melancholy produced by overwork joined to the loss of his wife, “a simple, gay, unlearned woman.” Sir Samuel was a stern, reserved man, and she was the only person in the world to whom he could unbosom himself. When he lost her, he said, “the very vent of his heart was stopped up.”[692]

It was in Old Square, Lincoln’s Inn, that Benjamin Disraeli, born in December 1805, much too erratic for Plowden and Coke, used to come to study conveyancing at the chambers of Mr. Bassevi. He is described as often arriving with Spenser’s *Faerie Queen* under his arm, stopping an hour or two to read, and then leaving. This led, as might be expected, not to the woolsack but to the authorship of *Coningsby*. His Premiership and his Patent of Peerage as Lord Beaconsfield, are due to other causes.

Whetstone Park, now a small quiet passage, full of printing-offices and stables, between Great Turnstile and Gate Street, derived its name from a vestryman of the time of Charles I. It is now chiefly occupied by mews, but was once filled by infamous houses and low brandy-shops.

In 1671, the Duke of Monmouth, the Duke of Grafton, and the Duke of St. Alban’s, three of King Charles II.’s illegitimate sons, killed here a beadle in a drunken brawl. A street-ballad was written on the occasion, more full of spite against the corrupt court than of sympathy with the slain man. In poor doggerel the Catnach of 1671 describes the watch coming in, disturbed from sleep, to appease their graces—

> “Straight rose mortal jars,
> ’Twixt the night blackguard and (the) silver stars;
> Then fell the beadle by a ducal hand,
> For daring to pronounce the saucy ‘Stand!’”

Sadly enough, the silly fellow’s death led to a dance at Whitehall being put off,— [Pg 401]

> “Disappoints the queen, ‘poor little chuck!’”[693]

and all the brisk courtiers in their gay coats bought with the nation’s subsidies.

The last two lines are vigorous, sarcastic, and worthy of a humble imitator of Dryden. The poet sums up—

> “Yet shall Whitehall, the innocent and good,
> See these men dance, all daubed with lace and blood.”

In 1682 the misnamed “Park” grew so infamous, that a countryman, having been decoyed into one of the houses and robbed, went into Smithfield and collected an angry mob of about 500 apprentices, who marched on Whetstone Park, broke open the houses, and destroyed the furniture. The constables and watchmen, being outnumbered, sent for the king’s guard, who dispersed them and took eleven of them. Nevertheless, the next night another mob stormed the place, again broke in the doors, smashed the windows, and cut the feather-beds to pieces.

Lincoln’s Inn Fields formed part of the ancient Fickett’s Fields, a plot of ground of about ten acres, extending formerly from Bell Yard to Portugal Street and Carey Street. It seems to have been used in the Middle Ages for jousts and tournaments by the Templars and Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, to the priory of which last order it belonged till Henry VIII. dissolved the monasteries, when it was granted to Anthony Stringer. In an inquest of the time of James I. it is described as having two gates for horses and carriages at the east end —one gate leading into Chancery Lane, the other gate at the western end.[694]

Queen Elizabeth, afraid that London was growing unwieldly, issued several proclamations against further building. James I., still more timid and conservative, and not thoroughly acquainted with his own capital, issued a like absurd ukase in 1612, by the desire of the benchers and students of Lincoln’s Inn, forbidding the erection of new houses in these fields. [Pg 402] But no royal edict can prevent a demand for creating a supply, and as the building still went

on, a commission was appointed in 1618 to lay out the square in a regular plan. Bacon, then Lord Chancellor, and many noblemen, judges, and masters in Chancery, were on this commission, and Inigo Jones, the king's Surveyor-General, drew up the scheme. The report of this body, given by Rymer, sets out that in the last sixteen years there had been more building near and about the City of London than in ages before, and that as these fields were much surrounded by the dwellings and lodgings of noblemen and gentlemen of quality, "all small cottages and closes shall be paid for and removed, and the square shall be reduced," both for sweetness, uniformity, and comeliness, as an ornament to the City, and for the health and recreation of the inhabitants, into walks and partitions, as Mr. Inigo Jones should in his map devise.[695]

There is a tradition that the area of the square, according to Inigo Jones's plan, was to have been made the exact dimensions of the base of the great pyramid of Geezeh. The tradition is probably true, for the area of the pyramid is 535,824 square feet, and that of Lincoln's Inn Fields 550,000.[696] The height of the pyramid was 756 feet.

The plan proved too costly, and the subscriptions began probably to fail; but in the course of time noblemen and others began to build for themselves, but without much regard to uniformity.

The elevation of Inigo's plan for the Fields, painted in oil colours, is still preserved at Wilton House, near Salisbury. The view is taken from the south, and the principal feature in the elevation is Lindsey House in the centre of the west side, whose stone façade, still existing, stands boldly out from the brick houses which support it on either side. The internal accommodation of Lindsey House was never good.[697]

These fields in Charles I.'s time became the haunt of wrestlers, bowlers, beggars, and idle boys; and here, in 1624, Lilly the astrologer, then servant to a mantua-maker in the Strand, spent his time in bowling with Wat the cobbler, Dick the blacksmith, and such idle apprentices. Hither, after the Restoration, came every sort of villain—the Rufflers, or maimed soldiers, who told lies of Edgehill and Naseby, and who surrounded the coaches of charitable lords; "Dommerers," or sham dumb men; "Mumpers," or sham broken gentlemen; "Whipjacks," or sham seamen with bound-up legs; "Abram-men," or sham idiots; "Fraters," or rogues with forged patents; "Anglers," wild rogues, "Clapper-dudgeons,"[698] and men with gambling wheels of fortune. [Pg 403]

In Queen Anne's reign Gay sketches the dangers of night in these fields; he warns his readers to avoid the lurking thief, by day a beggar, or else—

> "The crutch, which late compassion moved, shall wound
> Thy bleeding head, and fell thee to the ground.

Nor trust the linkman," he adds, "along the lonely wall, or he'll put out his light and rob you, but—

> "Still keep the public streets where oily rays
> That from the crystal lamp o'erspread the ways."

The south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields was built and named three years before the Restoration, by Sir William Cowper, James Cowper, and Robert Henley. In 1668 Portugal Row, as it was called, but not from Charles's queen,[699] was extremely fashionable. There were then living here such noble and noted persons as Lady Arden, William Perpoint, Esq., Sir Charles Waldegrave, Lady Fitzharding, Lady Diana Curzon, Serjeant Maynard, Lord Cardigan, Mrs. Anne Heron, Lady Mordant, Richard Adams, Esq., Lady Carr, Lady Wentworth, Mr. Attorney Montagu, Lady Coventry, Judge Welch, and Lady Davenant.[700]

Mr. Serjeant Maynard was the brave old Presbyterian lawyer, then eighty-seven, who replied to the Prince of Orange, when he said that he must have outlived all the men of law of his time—"Sir, I should have outlived the law itself had not your highness come over." [Pg 404]

Lady Davenant was the widow of Sir William Davenant, the Oxford innkeeper's son, the poet and manager, who, aided by Whitlocke and Maynard, was allowed in Cromwell's time to perform operas at a theatre in Charterhouse Square. After the Restoration he had the theatre in Portugal Street. He died in 1668, insolvent. His poems were published by his widow, and dedicated to the Duke of York in 1673.

Lord Cardigan was the father of the infamous Countess of Shrewsbury, who is said, disguised as a page, to have held her lover the Duke of Buckingham's horse while he killed her husband in a duel near Barn Elms. The Earl of Rochester lived in the house next the Duke's Theatre,[701] which stood behind the present College of Surgeons, as Davenant says in one of his epilogues—

> "The prospect of the sea cannot be shown,
> Therefore be pleased to think that you are all
> Behind the row which men call Portugal."

In September 1586 Ballard, Babington, and other conspirators against the life of Queen Elizabeth were put to death in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Babington was a young man of good family, who had been a page to the Earl of Shrewsbury, and had plotted to rescue Mary and assassinate Elizabeth. His plot discovered, he had fled to St. John's Wood for concealment.

Seven of these plotters were hanged on the first day, and seven on the second. The last seven were allowed to die, by special grace, before being disembowelled by the executioner.

It was through these fields that, one spring night in 1676-7, Thomas Sadler, an impudent and well-known thief, rivalling the audacity of Blood, having with some confederates stolen the mace and purse of Lord Chancellor Finch from his house in Great Queen Street, bore them in mock procession on their way to their lodgings in Knightrider Street, Doctors' Commons. Sadler was hanged at Tyburn for this theft. [Pg 405]

Lord William Russell was son of William, Earl of Bedford, by Lady Ann Carr, daughter of Carr, Earl of Somerset. He was beheaded in the centre of Lincoln's Inn Fields, July 21, 1683, the last year but two of the reign of King Charles II., for being, as it was alleged, engaged in a plot to attack the guards and kill the king, on his return from Newmarket races, at the Rye House Farm, in a by-road near Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, about seventeen miles north-east of London.

The Whig party, in their eagerness to restrain the Papists and exclude the Duke of York from the throne, had gone too far, and their zeal for the Dissenters had produced a violent reaction in the High Church party. Charles and the Duke, taking advantage of the return tide, began to persecute the Dissenters, denounce Shaftesbury, assail the liberties of the City, and finally dissolved the Parliament. Soon after this, that subtle politician, Shaftesbury, finding it impossible to rouse the Duke of Monmouth, Essex, or Lord Russell, denounced them all as sold and deceived, and fled to Holland.

After his flight, meetings of his creatures were held at the chambers of one West, an active talking man. Keeling, a vintner of decaying business, betrayed the plot, as also did Lord Howard, a man so infamous that Charles himself said "he would not hang the worst dog he had upon his evidence." Keeling and his brother swore that forty men were hired to intercept the king, but that a fire at Newmarket, which had hastened Charles's return, had defeated their plans. Goodenough, an ex-sheriff, had told them that the Duke of Monmouth and other great men were to raise 4000 soldiers and £20,000. The brothers also swore that Goodenough had told them that Lord Russell had joined in the design of killing the king and the duke.

Lord Russell acted with great composure. He would not fly, refused to let his friends surrender themselves to share his fortunes, and told an acquaintance that "he was very sensible he should fall a sacrifice."[702] When he appeared at the council, the king himself said that "nobody suspected Lord Russell of any design against his own person, but that he had good evidence of his being in designs against his government." The prisoner denied all knowledge of the intended insurrection, or of the attempt to surprise the guards. [Pg 406]

The infamous Jeffries was one of the counsel for his prosecution. Lord Russell argued at his trial, that, allowing he had compassed the king's death, which he denied, he had been guilty only of a conspiracy to levy war, which was not treason except by a recent statute of Charles II., the prosecutions upon which were limited to a certain time, which had elapsed,[703] so that both law and justice were in this case violated.

The truth seems to be that Lord Russell was a true patriot, of a slow and sober judgment, a taciturn, good man, of not the quickest intelligence, who had allowed himself to listen to dangerous and random talk for the sake of political purposes. He wished to debar the duke from the throne, but he had never dreamt of accomplishing his purpose by murder. It has since been discovered that Sidney, doing evil that good might come, had accepted secret-service money from France, and that Russell himself had interviews with French agents. Lord John Russell explains away this charge very well. Charles was degraded enough to take money from France. The patriots, told that Louis XIV. wished to avoid a war, intrigued with the French king to maintain peace, fearing that if Charles once raised an army under any pretence, he would first employ it to obtain absolute power at home, which it is most probable he would have done.[704] On the whole, these disingenuous interviews must be lamented; they could not and they did not lead to good. It has been justly regretted also that Lord Russell on his trial did not boldly denounce the tyranny of the court, and show the necessity that had existed for active opposition. [Pg 407]

After sentence the condemned man wrote petitions to the king and duke, which were unjustly sneered at as abject. They really, however, contain no promise but that of living beyond sea and meddling no more in English affairs. Of one of them at least, Burnet says it was written at the earnest solicitation of Lady Rachel; and Lord Russell himself said, with regret, "This will be printed and sold about the streets as my submission when I am led out to be hanged." He lamented to Burnet that his wife beat every bush and ran about so for his preservation; but he acquiesced in what she did when he thought it would be afterwards a mitigation of her sorrow.

When his brave and excellent wife, the daughter of Charles I.'s loyal servant, Southampton, who was the son of Shakspere's friend, begged for her husband's life, the king replied, "How can I grant that man six weeks, who would not have granted me six hours?"[705]

There is no scene in history that "goes more directly to the heart," says Fox, "than the story of the last days of this excellent man." The night before his death it rained hard, and he said, "Such a rain to-morrow will spoil a great show," which was a dull thing on a rainy day. He

thought a violent death only the pain of a minute, not equal to that of drawing a tooth; and he was still of opinion *that the king was limited by law, and that when he broke through those limits, his subjects might defend themselves and restrain him*.[706] He then received the sacrament from Tillotson with much devotion, and parted from his wife with a composed silence; as soon as she was gone he exclaimed, "The bitterness of death is past," saying what a blessing she had been to him, and what a misery it had been if she had tried to induce him to turn an informer. He slept soundly that night and rose in a few hours, but would take no care in dressing. He prayed six or seven times by himself, and drank a little tea and some [Pg 408] sherry. He then wound up his watch, and said, "Now I have done with time and shall go into eternity." When told that he should give the executioner ten guineas, he said, with a smile, that it was a pretty thing to give a fee to have his head cut off. When the sheriffs came at ten o'clock, Lord Russell embraced Lord Cavendish, who had offered to change clothes with him and stay in his place in prison, or to attack the coach with a troop of horse and carry off his friend; but the noble man would not listen to either proposal.

In the street some in the crowd wept, while others insulted him. He said, "I hope I shall quickly see a better assembly." He then sang, half to himself, the beginning of the 149th Psalm. As the coach turned into Little Queen Street, he said, looking at his own house, "I have often turned to the one hand with great comfort, but now I turn to this with greater," and then a tear or two fell from his eyes. As they entered Lincoln's Inn Fields he said, "This has been to me a place of sinning, and God now makes it the place of my punishment." When he came to the scaffold, he walked about it four or five times: then he prayed by himself, and also with Tillotson; then he partly undressed himself, laid his head down without any change of countenance, and it was cut off in two strokes. Lord William's walking-stick and a cotemporary account of his death are kept at Woburn Abbey.

Lady Rachel Russell, the excellent wife of this patriot, had been his secretary during the trial. She spent her after-life, not in unwisely lamenting the inevitable past, but in doing good works, and in educating her children. Writing two months after the execution to Dr. Fritzwilliams, this noble woman says:[707] "*Secretly*, my heart mourns and cannot be comforted, because I have not the dear companion and sharer of all my joys and sorrows. I want him to talk with, to walk with, to eat and sleep with. All these things are irksome to me now; all company and meals I could avoid, if it might be.... When I see my children before [Pg 409] me, I remember the pleasure he took in them: this makes my heart shrink."

In 1692 Lady Russell appears to have regained her composure. But she had other trials in store: for in 1711 she lost her only son, the Duke of Bedford, in the flower of his age, and six months afterwards one of her daughters died in childbed.

It is said that, in his hour of need, James II. was mean enough to say to the Duke of Bedford, "My lord, you are an honest man, have great credit, and can do me signal service." "Ah, sir," replied the duke, with a grave severity, "I am old and feeble now, but I once had a *son*."

The Sacheverell riots culminated in these now quiet Fields. In 1710 Daniel Dommaree, a queen's waterman, Francis Willis, a footman, and George Purchase, were tried at the Old Bailey for heading a riot during the Sacheverell trial and pulling down meeting-houses. This Sacheverell was an ignorant, impudent incendiary, the adopted son of a Marlborough apothecary, and was impeached by the House of Commons for preaching at St. Andrew's, Holborn, sermons denouncing the Revolution of 1688. His sermons were ordered to be burnt, and he was sentenced to be suspended for three years. Atterbury helped the mischievous firebrand in his ineffectual defence, and Swift wrote a most scurrilous letter to Bishop Fleetwood, who had lamented the excesses of the mob. Sacheverell had been at Oxford with Addison, who inscribed a poem to him. During the trial, a mob marched from the Temple, whither they had escorted Sacheverell, pulled down Dr. Burgess's meeting-house, and threw the pulpit, sconces, and gallery pews into a fire in Lincoln's Inn Fields, some waving curtains on poles, shouting, "High Church standard!" "Huzza! High Church and Sacheverell!" "We will have them all down!" They also burnt other meeting-houses in Leather Lane, Drury Lane, and Fetter Lane, and made bonfires of the woodwork in the streets. They were eventually dispersed by the horse-grenadiers and horse-guards and foot. Dommaree was sentenced to death, but pardoned; Willis was acquitted; and Purchase was [Pg 410] pardoned.[708]

Wooden posts and rails stood round the Fields till 1735, when an Act was passed to enable the inhabitants to make improvements, to put an iron gate at each corner, and to erect dwarf walls and iron palisades.[709] Before this time grooms used to break in horses on this spot. One day while looking at these centaurs, Sir Joseph Jekyll, who had brought a very obnoxious bill into Parliament in 1736 in order to raise the price of gin, was mobbed, thrown down, and dangerously trampled on. His initials, "J. J.," figure under a gibbet chalked on a wall in one of Hogarth's prints.[710] Macaulay's *History* contains a very highly coloured picture of these Fields. A comparison of the passage with the facts from which it is drawn would be a useful lesson to all historical students who love truth in its severity.[711]

Newcastle House stands at the north-west angle of the Fields, at the south-eastern corner of Great Queen Street. It derived its name from John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, a relative of the noble families of Vere, Cavendish, and Holles. This duke bought the house before 1708, but died in 1711 without issue, and was succeeded in the house by his nephew, the leader of the Pelham administration under George II.

The house had been bought by Lord Powis about 1686. It was built for him by Captain William Winde, a scholar of Webbe's, the pupil and executor of Inigo Jones.[712] William Herbert, first Marquis of Powis, was outlawed and fled to St. Germain's to James II., who made him Duke of Powis. Government had thought of buying the house when it was inhabited by the Lord Keeper, Sir Nathan Wright,[713] and to have settled it officially on the Great Seal. It was once the residence of Sir John Somers, the Lord Chancellor.

In 1739 Lady Henrietta Herbert, widow of Lord William Herbert, second son of the Marquis of Powis, and daughter of James, first Earl of Waldegrave, was married to Mr. John Beard, [714] who seems to have been a fine singer and a most charitable, estimable man. Lady Henrietta's grandmother was the daughter of James II. by the sister of the great Duke of Marlborough. Dr. Burner speaks of Beard's great knowledge of music and of his intelligence as an actor.[715] In an epitaph on him, still extant, the writer says— [Pg 411]

> "Whence had that voice such magic to control?
> 'Twas but the echo of a well-tuned soul;
> Through life his morals and his music ran
> In symphony, and spoke the virtuous man.
> ... Go, gentle harmonist! our hopes approve,
> To meet and hear thy sacred songs above;
> When taught by thee, the stage of life well trod,
> We rise to raptures round the throne of God."

Beard, excellent both in oratorios and serious and comic operas, became part proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, and died in 1791.

The Duke of Newcastle's crowded levées were his pleasure and his triumph. He generally made people of business wait two or three hours in the ante-chamber while he trifled with insignificant favourites in his closet. When at last he entered the levée room, he accosted, hugged, embraced, and promised everything to everybody with an assumed cordiality and a degrading familiarity.[716]

"Long" Sir Thomas Robertson was a great intruder on the duke's time; if told that he was out, he would come in to look at the clock or play with the monkey, in hopes of the great man relenting. The servants, at last tired out with Sir Thomas, concocted a formula of repulses, and the next time he came the porter, without waiting for his question, began —"Sir, his grace is gone out, the fire has gone out, the clock stands, and the monkey is dead."[717]

Sir Timothy Waldo, on his way from the duke's dinner-table to his own carriage, once gave the cook, who was waiting in the hall, a crown. The rogue returned it, saying he did not take silver. "Oh, don't you, indeed?" said Sir Timothy, coolly replacing it in his pocket; "then I don't give gold." Jonas Hanway, the great opponent of tea-drinking, published eight letters to the duke on this subject,[718] and the custom began from that time to decline. But Hogarth had already condemned the exaction. [Pg 412]

The duke was very profuse in his promises, and a good story is told of the result of his insincerity. At a Cornish election, the duke had obtained the turning vote for his candidate by his usual assurances. The elector, wishing to secure something definite, had asked for a supervisorship of excise for his son-in-law on the present holder's death. "The moment he dies," said the premier, "set out post-haste for London; drive directly to my house in the Fields: night or day, sleeping or waking, dead or alive, thunder at the door; the porter will show you upstairs directly; and the place is yours." A few months after the old supervisor died, and up to London rushed the Cornish elector.

Now that very night the duke had been expecting news of the death of the King of Spain, and had left orders before he went to bed to have the courier sent up directly he arrived. The Cornish man, mistaken for this important messenger, was instantly, to his great delight, shown up to the duke's bedroom. "Is he dead?—is he dead?" cried the duke. "Yes, my lord, yes," answered the aspirant, promptly. "When did he die?" "The day before yesterday, at half-past one o'clock, after three weeks in his bed, and taking a power of doctor's stuff; and I hope your grace will be as good as your word, and let my son-in-law succeed him." "*Succeed him!*" shouted the duke; "is the man drunk or mad? Where are your despatches?" he exclaimed, tearing back the bed-curtains; and there, to his vexation, stood the blundering elector, hat in hand, his stupid red face beaming with smiles as he kept bowing like a joss. [Pg 413] The duke sank back in a violent fit of laughter, which, like the electric fluid, was in a moment communicated to his attendants.[719] It is not stated whether the Cornish man obtained his petition.

There is an agreement in all the stories of the duke, who was thirty years Secretary of State, and nearly ten years First Lord of the Treasury, "whether told," says Macaulay, "by people who were perpetually seeing him in Parliament and attending his levées in Lincoln's Inn Fields, or by Grub Street writers, who had never more than a glimpse of his star through the windows of his gilded coach."[720] Smollett and Walpole mixed in different society, yet they both sketch the duke with the same colours. Smollett's Newcastle runs out of his dressing-room with his face covered with soapsuds to embrace the Moorish envoy. Walpole's Newcastle pushes his way into the Duke of Grafton's sick-room to kiss the old nobleman's plaisters. "He was a living, moving, talking caricature. His gait was a shuffling trot, his

utterance a rapid stutter. He was always in a hurry—he was never in time; he abounded in fulsome caresses and in hysterical tears. His oratory resembled that of Justice Shallow—it was nonsense effervescent with animal spirits and impertinence. 'Oh yes, yes, to be sure—Annapolis must be defended; troops must be sent to Annapolis. Pray, where is Annapolis?'—'Cape Breton an island! Wonderful! Show it me on the map. So it is, sure enough. My dear sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the king that Cape Breton is an island.' His success is a proof of what may be done by a man who devotes his whole heart and soul to one object. His love of power was so intense a passion, that it almost supplied the place of talent. He was jealous even of his own brother. Under the guise of levity, he was false beyond all example." "All the able men of his time ridiculed him as a dunce, a driveller, a child, who never knew his own mind for an hour together, and yet he overreached them all round." If the country had remained at peace, this man might have [Pg 414] been at the head of affairs till a new king came with fresh favourites and a strong will; "but the inauspicious commencement of the Seven Years' War brought on a crisis to which Newcastle was altogether unequal. After a calm of fifteen years, the spirit of the nation was again stirred to its inmost depths."

This is strongly etched, but Macaulay was too fond of caricature for a real lover of truth. Walpole, recounting this greedy imbecile's disgrace, reviews his career much more forcibly, for in a few words he shows us how great had been the power which this chatterer's fixed purpose had attained. The memoir-writer describes the duke as the man "who had begun the world by heading mobs against the ministers of Queen Anne; who had braved the heir-apparent, afterwards George I., and forced himself upon him as godfather to his son; who had recovered that prince's favour, and preserved power under him, at the expense of every minister whom that prince preferred; who had been a rival of another Prince of Wales for the chancellorship of Cambridge; and who was now buffeted from a fourth court by a very suitable competitor (Lord Bute), and reduced in his tottery old age to have recourse to those mobs and that popularity which had raised him fifty years before."

Lord Bute was mean enough to compliment the old duke on his retirement. The duke replied, with a spirit that showed the vitality of his ambition: "Yes, yes, my lord, I am an old man, but yesterday was my birthday, and I recollected that Cardinal Fleury *began* to be prime-minister of France just at my age."[721]

Newcastle House, now occupied by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, was, for forty years or more, inhabited by Sir Alan Chambre, one of King George III.'s judges. The society, then lodged in Bartlett's Buildings, in Holborn, derived its first name from that place, and at Sir Alan's death they purchased the house and site.

About the centre of the west side of the square, in Sir Alan's time, lived the Earl and Countess of Portsmouth. The earl was half-witted, but was always well-conducted and quite [Pg 415] producible in society under the guidance of his countess, a daughter of Lord Grantley.

Near Surgeons' Hall, at the same epoch, lived the first Lord Wynford, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, better known as Serjeant Best. A quarrel between this irritable lawyer and Serjeant Wilde, afterwards Lord Chancellor Truro, one of the most stalwart gladiators who ever won a name and title in the legal arena, gave rise to an epigram, the point of which was—"That Best was wild, and Wilde was best."

In 1774, when Lord Clive had rewarded Wedderburn, his defender, with lacs of rupees and a villa at Mitcham, the lawyer had an elegant house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, not far from the Duke of Newcastle's,—"a quarter," says Lord Campbell, "which I recollect still the envied resort of legal magnates."

Wedderburn, afterwards better known as Lord Chancellor Loughborough, had a special hatred for Franklin, and loaded him with abuse before a committee of the Privy Council, for having sent to America letters from the Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts, urging the Government to employ military force to suppress the discontents in New England.[722] The effect of Wedderburn's brilliant oratory in Parliament was ruined, says Lord Campbell, by "his character for insincerity."[723] When George III. heard of his death, he is reported to have said, "He has not left a greater knave behind him in my dominions;" upon which Lord Thurlow savagely said, with his usual oath, "I perceive that his majesty is quite sane at present." Wedderburn was a friend of David Hume; his humanity was eulogised by Dr. Parr, but he was satirised by Churchill in the *Rosciad*.

Montague, Earl of Sandwich, the great patron of Pepys, lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields, paying £250 a year rent.[724] Pepys calls it "a fine house, but deadly dear."[725] He visits him, [Pg 416] February 10, 1663-4, and finds my lord very high and strange and stately, although Pepys had been bound for £1000 with him, and the shrewd cit naturally enough did not like my lord being angry with him and in debt to him at the same time. The earl was a distant cousin of Pepys, and on his marriage received him and his wife into his house, and took Pepys with him when he went to bring home Charles II., when he was elected one of the Council of State and General at Sea. He brought the queen-mother to England and took her back again. He also brought the ill-fated queen from Portugal, and became a privy-councillor, and was sent as ambassador to Spain. He seems to have been not untainted with the vices of the age. He was in the great battle where Van Tromp was killed, and in 1668 he took forty-five sail from the Dutch at sea, and that is the best thing known of him. He died in 1672, and was buried in great state.

Inigo Jones built only the west side of the square. No. 55 was the residence of Robert Bertie, Earl of Lindsey, a general of King Charles. It is described in 1708 as a handsome building of the Ionic order, with a beautiful and strong Court Gate, formed of six spacious brick piers, with curious ironwork between them, and on the piers large and beautiful vases.[726] The open balustrade at the top bore six urns.

The Earl of Lindsey was shot at Edgehill in 1642, when a reckless and intemperate charge of Rupert had led to the total defeat of the unsupported foot. His son, Lord Willoughby, was taken in endeavouring to rescue his father. Clarendon describes the earl as a lavish, generous, yet punctilious man, of great honour and experience in foreign war. He was surrounded by Lincolnshire gentlemen, who served in his regiment out of personal regard for him. He was jealous of Prince Rupert's interference, and had made up his mind to die. As he lay bleeding to death he reproved the officers of the Earl of Essex, many of them his old friends, for their ingratitude and "foul rebellion."[727]

The fourth Earl of Lindsey was created Duke of Ancaster, and the house henceforward bore [Pg 417]
that now forgotten name. It was subsequently sold to the proud Duke of Somerset, the same who married the widow of the Mr. Thynne whom Count Königsmarck murdered.

In the early part of George III.'s reign Lindsey House became a sort of lodging-house for foreign members of the Moravian persuasion. The staircase, about 1772, was painted with scenes from the history of the Herrnhuthers. The most conspicuous figures were those of a negro catechumen in a white shirt, and a missionary who went over to Algiers to preach to the galley-slaves, and died in Africa of the plague. There was also a painting of a Moravian clergyman being saved from a desert rock on which he had been cast.[728]

Repeated mention of the Berties is made in Horace Walpole's pleasant *Letters*. Lord Robert Bertie was third son of Robert the first Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven. He was a general in the army, a colonel in the Guards, and a lord of the bedchamber. He married Lady Raymond in 1762, and died in 1782.

The proud Duke of Somerset, in 1748, left to his eldest daughter, Lady Frances, married to the Marquis of Granby, three thousand a year, and the fine house built by Inigo Jones in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which he had bought of the Duke of Ancaster for the Duchess, hoping that his daughter would let her mother live with her.[729] In July 1779 the Duke of Ancaster, dying of drinking and rioting at two-and-twenty, recalls much scandal to Walpole's mind. He had been in love with Lady Honoria, Walpole's niece; but Horace does not regret the match dropping through, for he says the duke was of a turbulent nature, and, though of a fine figure, not noble in manners. Lady Priscilla Elizabeth Bertie, eldest sister of the duke, married the grandson of Peter Burrell, a merchant, who became husband of the Lady Great Chamberlain of England, and inherited a barony and half the Ancaster estate.[730] "The [Pg 418]
three last duchesses," goes on the cruel gossip, "were never sober." "The present duchess-dowager," he adds, "was natural daughter of Panton, a disreputable horse-jockey of Newmarket. The other duchess was some lady's woman, or young lady's governess." Mr. Burrell's daughters married Lord Percy and the Duke of Hamilton.

In 1791 Walpole writes to Miss Berry to describe the marriage of Lord Cholmondeley with Lady Georgiana Charlotte Bertie: "The men were in frocks and white waistcoats. The endowing purse, I believe, has been left off ever since broad pieces were called in and melted down. We were but eighteen persons in all.... The poor duchess-mother wept excessively; she is now left quite alone,—her two daughters married, and her other children dead. She herself, I fear, is in a very dangerous way. She goes directly to Spa, where the new married pair are to meet her. We all separated in an hour and a half."[731]

Alfred Tennyson in early life had fourth-floor chambers at No. 55, and there probably his friend Hallam, whose early death he laments in his *In Memoriam* spent many an hour with him. There, in the airy regions of Attica, in a low-roofed room, the single window of which is darkened by a huge stone balustrade—a gloomy relic of past grandeur—the young poet may have recited the majestic lines of his "King Arthur," or the exquisite lament of "Mariana," and there he may have immortalised the "plump head-waiter of the Cock," in Fleet Street. Mr. John Foster, the author of many sound and delightful historical biographies, had also chambers in this house.

No. 68, on the west side, stands on the site of the approach to the stables of old Newcastle House. Here Judge Le Blanc lived, and at his death the house was occupied by Mr. Thomas Le Blanc, Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

At No. 33, on the same side as the Insolvent Debtors' Court, dwelt Judge Park, a man much beloved by his friends; in his early days, as a young and poor Scotch barrister, he had lived [Pg 419]
in Carey Street till his house there was burnt down. He used to say that his great ambition in youth had been to one day live at No. 33 in the Fields, at that time occupied by Chief Justice Willis; but in later days, as a judge, leaving the former goal of his ambition, he migrated to Bedford Square, where he died.

Nos. 40 and 42, on the south side, form the Museum of the College of Surgeons, incorporated in 1800. The Grecian front is a most clever contrivance by Sir John Soane. The building contains the incomparable anatomical collection of the eminent John Hunter, bought by the Government for £15,000 and given to the College of Surgeons on condition of

its being opened to the public. John Hunter died in 1793; and the first courses of lectures in the new building were delivered by Sir Everard Home and Sir William Blizard, in 1810. The Museum was built by Barry in 1835, and cost about £40,000.[732] It is divided into two rooms, the normal and abnormal. The total number of specimens is upwards of 23,000. The collection is unequalled in many respects; every article is authentic and in perfect preservation. The largest human skeleton is that of Charles O'Brien, the Irish giant, who died in Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, in 1783, aged twenty-two. It measures eight feet four inches. By its side, in ghastly contrast, is the bony sketch of Caroline Crachami, a Sicilian dwarf who died in 1824, aged ten years. There is also a cast of the hand of Patrick Cotter, another Irish giant, who measured eight feet seven and a half inches. Nor must we overlook the vast framework of Chunee, the elephant that went mad with toothache at Exeter Change, and was shot by a company of riflemen in 1826. The sawn base of the inflamed tusk shows a spicula of ivory pressing into the nervous pulp. Toothache is always terrible, but only imagine a square foot of it!

Very curious too, are the jaw of the extinct sabre-toothed tiger, and the skeleton of a gigantic extinct Irish deer found under a bed of shell-marl in a peat bog near Limerick. The [Pg 420] antlers are seven feet long, eight feet across, and weigh seventy-six pounds. The height of the animal (measured from his skull) was seven feet six inches. Amongst other horrors, there is a cast of the fleshy band that united the Siamese twins, and one of a woman with a long curved horn growing from her forehead. There are also many skulls of soldiers perforated and torn with bullets, the lead still adhering to some of the bony plates of the crania. But the wonder of wonders is the iron pivot of a trysail-mast that was driven clean through the chest of a Scarborough lad. The boy recovered in five months, and not long after went to work again. It is a tough race that rules the sea.

There are also fragments of the skeleton of a rhinoceros discovered in a limestone cavern at Oreston during the formation of the Plymouth Breakwater. In a recess from the gallery stands the embalmed body of the wife of Martin Van Butchell, an impudent Dutch quack doctor. It is coarsely preserved, and is very loathsome to look at. It was prepared in 1775 by Dr. W. Hunter and Mr. Cruikshank, the vascular system being injected with oil of turpentine and camphorated spirits of wine, and powdered nitre and camphor being introduced into the cavities. On the case containing the body is an advertisement cut from an old newspaper, stating the conditions which Dr. Van Butchell required of those who came to see the body of his wife. At the feet of Mrs. Van Butchell is the shrunken mummy of her pet parrot.

The pictures include the portrait of John Hunter by Reynolds, which Sharp engraved: it has much faded. There is also a posthumous bust of Hunter by Flaxman, and one of Clive by Chantrey. Any Fellow of the College can introduce a visitor, either personally or by written order, the first four days of the week. In September the Museum is closed. It would be much more convenient for students if some small sum were charged for admission. It is now visited but by two or three people a day, when it should be inspected by hundreds.

That great surgeon, John Hunter, was the son of a small farmer in Lanarkshire. He was born [Pg 421] in 1728, and died in 1793. In early life he went abroad as an army-surgeon to study gunshot-wounds; and in 1786 he was appointed deputy surgeon-general to the army. In 1772 he made discoveries as to the property of the gastric juice. He was the first to use cutting as a cure for hydrophobia, and to distinguish the various species of cancer. He kept at his house at Brompton a variety of wild animals for the purposes of comparative anatomy, was often in danger from their violence, and as often saved by his own intrepidity. Sir Joseph Banks divided his collection between Hunter and the British Museum. Unequalled in the dissecting-room, Hunter was a bad lecturer. He was an irritable man, and died suddenly during a disputation at St. George's Hospital which vexed him. His death is said to have been hastened by fear of death from hydrophobia, he having cut his hand while dissecting a man who had died of that mysterious disease. Hunter used to call an operation "opprobrium medici."

In Portugal Row, as the southern side of the square used to be called, lived Sir Richard Fanshawe, the translator of the *Lusiad* of Camoens, and of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*. Sir Richard was our ambassador in Spain; but Charles, wishing to get rid of Lord Sandwich from the navy, recalled Fanshawe, on the plea that he had ventured to sign a treaty without authority. He died in 1666, on the intended day of his return, of a violent fever, probably caused by vexation at his unmerited disgrace. Sir Richard appears to have been a religious, faithful man and a good scholar, but born in unhappy times and to an ill fate. Charles I. had very justly a great respect for him. His wife was a brave, determined woman, full of affection, good sense, and equally full of hatred and contempt for Lord Sandwich, Pepys's friend, who had supplanted her husband in the embassy.

On one occasion, on their way to Malaga, the Dutch trading vessel in which she and her husband were was threatened by a Turkish galley which bore down on them in full sail. The [Pg 422] captain, who had rendered his sixty guns useless by lumbering them up with cargo, resolved to fight for his £30,000 worth of goods, and therefore armed his two hundred men and plied them with brandy. The decks were partially cleared, and the women ordered below for fear the Turks might think the vessel a merchant-ship and board it. Sir Richard, taking his gun, bandolier, and sword, stood with the ship's company waiting for the Turks.[733] But we must quote the brave wife's own simple words:—"The beast the captain had locked me up in the cabin. I knocked and called long to no purpose, until at length the cabin-boy came and

opened the door. I, all in tears, desired him to be so good as to give me the blue thrum cap he wore and his tarred coat, which he did, and I gave him half-a-crown; and putting them on, and flinging away my night-clothes, I crept up softly and stood upon the deck by my husband's side, as free from fear as, I confess, from discretion; but it was the effect of that passion which I could never master. By this time the two vessels were engaged in parley, and so well satisfied with speech and sight of each other's forces, that the Turks' man-of-war tacked about and we continued our course. But when your father saw me retreat, looking upon me, he blessed himself and snatched me up in his arms, saying, 'Good God! that love can make this change!' and though he seemingly chid me, he would laugh at it as often as he remembered that journey." This same vessel, a short time after, was blown up in the harbour with the loss of more than a hundred men and all the lading.[734]

This brave, good woman showed still greater fortitude when her husband died and left her almost penniless in a strange country. She had only twenty-eight doubloons with which to bring home her children, and sixty servants, and the dead body of her husband. She, however, instantly sold her carriages and a thousand pounds' worth of plate, and setting apart the queen's present of two thousand doubloons for travelling expenses, started for England. "God," she says, in her brave, pious way, "did hear, and see, and help me, and brought my soul out of trouble." [Pg 423]

In 1677 Lady Fanshawe took a house in Holborn Row, the north side of the square, and spent a year lamenting "the dear remembrances of her past happiness and fortune; and though she had great graces and favours from the king and queen and whole court, yet she found at the present no remedy."[735]

Lord Kenyon lived at No. 35 in 1805. Jekyll was fond of joking about Kenyon's stinginess, and used to say he died of eating apple-pie crust at breakfast to save the expense of muffins; and that Lord Ellenborough, who succeeded on Kenyon's death to the Chief Justiceship, always used to bow to apple-pie ever afterwards which Jekyll called his "apple-pie-ety." The princesses Augusta and Sophia once told Tom Moore, at Lady Donegall's that the king used to play tricks on Kenyon and send the despatch-box to him at a quarter past seven, when it was known the learned lord was in bed to save candlelight.[736] Lord Ellenborough used to say that the final word in "Mors janua vitæ" was mis-spelled *vita* on Kenyon's tomb to save the extra cost of the diphthong.[737] George III. used to say to Kenyon, "My Lord, let us have a little more of your good law, and less of your bad Latin."

Lord Campbell, who gives a very pleasant sketch of Chief Justice Kenyon, with his bad temper and bad Latin, his hatred of newspaper writers and gamblers, and his wrath against pettifoggers, describes his being taken in by Horne Tooke, and laughs at his ignorantly-mixed metaphors. He seems to have been a respectable second-rate lawyer, conscientious and upright. "He occupied," says Lord Campbell, "a large gloomy house, in which I have seen merry doings when it was afterwards transferred to the Verulam Club." The tradition of this house was that "it was always Lent in the kitchen and Passion Week in the parlour." On some one mentioning the spits in Lord Kenyon's kitchen, Jekyll said, "It is irrelevant to talk about the spits, for nothing *turns* upon them." The judge's ignorance was profound. It is reported that in a trial for blasphemy the Chief Justice, after citing the names of several remarkable early Christians, said, "Above all, gentlemen, need I name to you the Emperor Julian, who was so celebrated for the practice of every Christian virtue that he was called Julian the Apostle?"[738] On another occasion, talking of a false witness, he is supposed to have said, "The allegation is as far from truth as 'old Boterium from the northern main'—a line I have heard or met with, God knows where."[739] [Pg 424]

Lord Erskine lived at No. 36, in 1805, the year before he rose at once to the peerage and the woolsack, and presided at Lord Melville's trial. He did not hold the seals many months, and died in 1823. This great Whig orator was the youngest son of the Earl of Buchan. He was a midshipman and an ensign before he became a student at Lincoln's Inn. He began to be known in 1778; in 1781 he defended Lord George Gordon, in 1794 Horne Tooke, Hardy, Thelwall, and afterwards Tom Paine.

The house that contains the Soane Museum, No. 13 on the north side, was built in 1812, and, consisting of twenty-four small apartments crammed with curiosities, is in itself a marvel of fantastic ingenuity. Every inch of space is turned to account. On one side of the picture-room are cabinets, and on the other movable shutters or screens, on which pictures are also hung; so that a small area, only thirteen feet long and twelve broad, contains as much as a gallery forty-five feet long and twenty feet broad. A Roman altar once stood in the outer court.

It is a disgrace to the trustees that this curious museum is kept so private, and that such impediments are thrown in the way of visitors. It is open only two days a week in April, May, and June, but at certain seasons a third day is granted to foreigners, artists, and people from the country. To obtain tickets, you are obliged to get, some days before you visit, a letter from a trustee, or to write to the curator, enter your name in a book, and leave your card. All this vexatious hindrance and fuss has the desired effect of preventing many persons from visiting a museum left, not to the trustees or the curator, but to the nation—to every Englishman. In order to read the books, copy the pictures, or examine the plans and drawings, the same tedious and humiliating form must be gone through. [Pg 425]

The gem of all the Soane treasures is an enormous transparent alabaster sarcophagus,

discovered by Belzoni in 1816 in a tomb in the valley of Beban el Molook, near Thebes. It is nine feet four inches long, three feet eight inches wide, two feet eight inches deep, and is covered without and within with beautifully-cut hieroglyphics. It was the greatest discovery of the runaway Paduan Monk, and was undoubtedly the cenotaph or sarcophagus of a Pharaoh or Ptolemy. It was discovered in an enormous tomb of endless chambers, which the Arabs still call "Belzoni's tomb." On the bottom of the case is a full-length figure in relief, of Isis, the guardian of the dead. Sir John Soane gave £2000 for this sarcophagus to Mr. Salt, Consul General of Egypt and Belzoni's employer. The raised lid is broken into nineteen pieces. The late Sir Gardner Wilkinson considered this to be the cenotaph of Osirei, the father of Rameses the Great. But the forgotten king for whom the Soane sarcophagus was really executed was Seti, surnamed Meni-en-Ptah, the father of Rameses the Great; he is called by Manetho Séthos.[740] Dr. Lepsius dates the commencement of his reign B.C. 1439. Dr. Brugsch places it twenty years earlier. Mr. Sharpe, with that delightful uncertainty characteristic of Egyptian antiquaries, drags the epoch down two hundred years later. Seti was the father of the Pharaoh who persecuted the Israelites, and he made war against Syria. His son was the famous Rameses. All three kings were descended from the Shepherd Chiefs. The most beautiful fragment in Karnak represents this monarch, Seti, in his chariot, with a sword like a fish-slice in one hand, while in the other he clutches the topknots of a group of [Pg 426] conquered enemies, Nubian, Syrian, and Jewish. The work is full of an almost Raphaelesque grace.

After this come some of Flaxman's and Banks's sketches and models, a cast of the shield of Achilles by the former, and one of the Boothby monument by the latter. There is also a fine collection of ancient gems and intaglios, pure in taste and exquisitely cut, and a set of the Napoleon medals, selected by Denon for the Empress Josephine, and in the finest possible state. We may also mention Sir Christopher Wren's watch, some ivory chairs, and a table from Tippoo Saib's devastated palace at Seringapatam, and a richly-mounted pistol taken by Peter the Great from a Turkish general at Azof in 1696. The latter was given to Napoleon by the Russian emperor at the treaty of Tilsit in 1807, and was presented by him to a French officer at St. Helena. The books, too, are of great interest. Here is the original MS. copy of the *Gierusalemme Liberata*, published at Ferrara in 1581, and in Tasso's own handwriting; the first four folio editions of Shakspere, once the property of that great actor and Shaksperean student John Philip Kemble; a folio of designs for Elizabethan and Jacobean houses by the celebrated architect John Thorpe; Fauntleroy the forger's illustrated copy of Pennant's *London*, purchased for six hundred and fifty guineas; a Commentary on Paul's Epistles, illuminated by the laborious Croatian, Giulio Clovio (who died in 1578), for Cardinal Grimani. Vasari raves about the minute finish of this painter.

The pictures, too, are good. There are three Canalettis full of that Dutch Venetian's clear common sense; the finest, a view on the Grand Canal—his favourite subject—and "The Snake in the Grass," better known as "Love unloosing the Zone of Beauty," by Reynolds. There is a sadly faded replica of this in the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg. This one was purchased at the Marchioness of Thomond's sale for £500. The "Rake's Progress," by Hogarth, in eight pictures, was purchased by Sir John in 1802 for £598. These inimitable pictures are incomparable, and display the fine, pure, sober colour of the great artist, and [Pg 427] his broad touch so like that of Jan Steen.

The Soane collection also boasts of Hogarth's four "Election" pictures, purchased at Garrick's sale for £1732 10s. They are rather dark in tone. There is also a fine but curious Turner, "Van Tromp's Barge entering the Texel;" a portrait by Goma of Napoleon in 1797, when emaciated and haggard, and a fine miniature of him in 1814, when fat and already on the decline, both physically and mentally, by Isabey the great miniature-painter, taken at Elba in 1814. In the dining-room is a portrait of Soane by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and in the gallery under the dome a bust of him by Chantrey.

Sir John Soane was the son of a humble Reading bricklayer, and brought up in Mr. Dance's office. Carrying off a gold and silver medal at the Academy, he was sent as travelling student to Rome. In 1791 he obtained a Government employment, in 1800 enlarged the Bank of England, and in 1806 became Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy. He built the Dulwich Gallery, and in 1826 the Masonic Hall in Great Queen Street. In 1827 he gave £1000 to the Duke of York's monument. At the close of his life he left his collection of works of art, valued at £50,000, to the nation, and died in 1837,[741] leaving his son penniless. In 1835 the English architects presented Sir John with a splendid medal in token of their approbation of his conduct and talents.

The Literary Fund Society, instituted in 1790, and incorporated in 1818, had formerly rooms at No. 4 Lincoln's Inn Fields. The society was established in order to aid authors of merit and good character who might be reduced to poverty by unavoidable circumstances, or be deprived of the power of exertion by enfeebled faculties or old age. George IV. and William IV. both contributed one hundred guineas a year to its funds, and this subscription is continued by our present Queen. The society distributed £1407 in 1846. The average annual amount of subscriptions and donations is about £1100. The Literary Fund Society moved [Pg 428] afterwards to 73 Great Russell Street. Some years ago a split occurred in this society. Charles Dickens and Mr. C. W. Dilke, the proprietor of the *Athenæum*, objecting to the wasteful expense of the management, seceded from it; the result of this secession was the founding of the Guild of Literature, and the collection of £4000 by means of private

theatricals—a sum which, unfortunately, still lies partly dormant. The Fund is now domiciled in Bloomsbury.

Both Pepys and Evelyn praise the house of Mr. Povey in Lincoln's Inn Fields as a prodigy of elegant comfort and ingenuity. The marqueterie floors, "the perspective picture in the little closet," the grotto cellars, with a well for the wine, the fountains and imitation porphyry vases, his pictures and the bath at the top of the house, seem to have been the abstract of all luxurious ease.

Names were first put on doors in London in 1760, some years before the street-signs were removed. In 1764 houses were first numbered; the numbering commenced in New Burlington Street, and Lincoln's Inn Fields was the second place numbered.

In Carey Street lived that excellent woman Mrs. Hester Chapone, who afterwards removed to Arundel Street. She was a friend of Mrs. Carter, who translated Epictetus, and of Mrs. Montagu, the Queen of the Blue Stockings. She was one of the female admirers who thronged round Richardson the novelist, and she married a young Templar whom he had introduced to her. It was a love match, and she had the misfortune of losing him in less than ten months after their marriage. Her celebrated letters on *The Improvement of the Mind*, published in 1773, were written for a favourite niece, who married a Westminster Clergyman and died in childbed. Though Mrs. Chapone's letters are now rather dry and old-fashioned, reminding us of the backboards of a too punctilious age, they contain some sensible and well-expressed thoughts. Here is a sound passage:—"Those ladies who pique themselves on the particular excellence of neatness are very apt to forget that the decent order of the house should be designed to promote the convenience and pleasure of those who are to be in it; and that if it is converted into a cause of trouble and constraint, their husbands' guests would be happier without it."[742] [Pg 429]

Gibbons's Tennis Court stood in Vere Street, Clare Market; it was turned into a theatre by Thomas Killigrew. Ogilby the poet, started a lottery of books at "the old theatre" in June 1668. He describes the books in his advertisements as "all of his own designment and composure."

"The Duke's Theatre" stood in Portugal Street, at the back of Portugal Row. It was pulled down in 1835 to make room for the enlargement of the Museum of the College of Surgeons. Before that it had been the china warehouse of Messrs. Spode and Copeland.[743] There had been, however, frailer things than china in the house in Pepys's time. Here, the year of the Restoration, came Killigrew with the actors from the Red Bull, Clerkenwell, and took the name of the King's Company. Three years later they moved to Drury Lane. Davenant's company then came to Portugal Street in 1662, deserting their theatre, once a granary, in Salisbury Court. They played here till 1671, when they returned to their old theatre, then renovated under the management of Charles Davenant and the celebrated Betterton, the great tragedian. They afterwards united in Drury Lane, and again fell apart. In 1695 a company, headed by Betterton, with Congreve for a partner, re-opened the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. It then became celebrated for pantomimes under Rich, the excellent harlequin. On his removal to Covent Garden it was deserted, re-opened by Gifford from Goodman's Fields, and finally ceased to be a theatre about 1737, so that its whole life did not extend to more than one generation.

Actresses first appeared in London in Prynne's time. Soon after the Restoration a lady of Killigrew's company took the part of Desdemona. In January 1661 Pepys saw women on the stage at the Cockpit Theatre: the play was Beaumont and Fletcher's "Beggars' Bush." The prologue to "Othello" in 1660 contains the following line:[744]— [Pg 430]

> "Our women are defective and so sized,
> You'd think they were some of the guard disguised;
> For, to speak truth, men act that are between
> Forty and fifty, wenches of fifteen,
> With bone so large, and nerve so uncompliant,
> That, when you call Desdemona, enter giant."

The Puritans were now happily in the minority, and so the attempt succeeded. Davenant did not bring forward his actresses till June 1661, when he produced his "Siege of Rhodes." Kynaston, Hart, Burt, and Clun, famous actors of Charles II.'s time, were all excellent representatives of female characters.

It was at the Duke's Theatre, in 1680, that Nell Gwynn who was present, being reviled by one of the audience, and William Herbert, who had married a sister of one of the king's mistresses, taking up Nell's quarrel—a sword fight took place between the two factions in the house. This hot-blooded young gallant Herbert grew up to be Earl of Pembroke and first plenipotentiary at Ryswick.

The chief ladies at the Duke's House were Mrs. Davenport, Mrs. Davies, and Mrs. Saunderson. The first of these ladies, generally known as "Roxalana," from a character of that name in the "Siege of Rhodes," resisted for a long time the addresses of Aubrey de Vere, the last Earl of Oxford, a wicked brawling roysterer, and a disgrace to his name, who at last obtained her hand by the cruel deception of a sham marriage. The pretended priest was a trumpeter, the witness a kettle-drummer in the king's regiment. The poor creature

threw herself in vain at the king's feet and demanded justice, but gradually grew more composed upon an annuity of a thousand crowns a year.[745]

As for Mrs. Davies, who danced well and played ill, she won the susceptible heart of Charles II. by her singing the song, "My lodging is on the cold, cold ground." "Through the marriage [Pg 431] of the daughter of Lord Derwentwater with the eighth Lord Petre," says Dr. Doran, "the blood of the Stuarts and of Moll Davies still runs in their lineal descendant, the present and twelfth lord."[746]

Mrs. Saunderson became the excellent wife of the great actor Betterton. For about thirty years she played the chief female characters, especially in Shakspere's plays, with great success. She taught Queen Anne and her sister Mary elocution, and after her husband's death received a pension of £500 a year from her royal pupil.

In 1664 Pepys went to Portugal Street to see that clever but impudent impostor, the German Princess, appear after her acquittal at the Old Bailey for inveigling a young citizen into a marriage, acting her own character in a comedy immortalising her exploit.

In February 1666-7 Pepys goes again to the Duke's Playhouse, and observes there Rochester the wit and Mrs. Stewart, afterwards Duchess of Richmond, the same lady whose portrait we retain as Britannia on the old halfpennies. "It was pleasant," says the tuft-hunting gossip, "to see how everybody rose up when my Lord John Butler, the Duke of Ormond's son, came into the pit, towards the end of the play, who was a servant to Mrs. Mallett, and now smiled upon her and she on him."[747]

The same month, 1667-8, Pepys revisits the Duke's House to see Etherege's new play, "She Would if She Could." He was there by two o'clock, and yet already a thousand people had been refused at the pit. The fussy public-office man, not being able to find his wife, who was there, got into an eighteenpenny box, and could hardly see or hear. The play done, it being dark and rainy, Pepys stays in the pit looking for his wife and waiting for the weather to clear up. And there for an hour and a half sat also the Duke of Buckingham, Sedley, and Etherege talking; all abusing the play as silly, dull, and insipid, except the author, who complained of the actors for not knowing their parts.

In May 1668 Pepys is again at this theatre in the balcony box, where sit the shameless Lady [Pg 432] Castlemaine and her ladies and women; on another occasion he sits below the same group, and sees the proud lady look like fire when Moll Davies ogles the king her lover. In another place he observes how full the pit is, though the seats are two shillings and sixpence a piece, whereas in his youth he had never gone higher than twelvepence or eighteenpence.[748]

Kynaston, the greatest of the "boy-actresses," was chiefly on this stage from 1659 to 1699. Evadne was his favourite female part. Later in life he took to heroic characters. Cibber says of him: "He had something of a formal gravity in his mien, which was attributed to the stately step he had been so early confined to. But even that in characters of superiority had its proper graces; it misbecame him not in the part of Leon in Fletcher's 'Rule a Wife,' which he executed with a determined manliness and honest authority. He had a piercing eye, and in characters of heroic life a quick imperious vivacity in his tone of voice that painted the tyrant truly terrible. There were two plays of Dryden in which he shone with uncommon lustre; in 'Arungzebe,' he played Morat, and in 'Don Sebastian' Muley Moloch. In both these parts he had a fierce lion-like majesty in his port and utterance that gave the spectator a kind of trembling admiration."[749] Kynaston died in 1712, and left a fortune to his son, a mercer in Covent Garden, whose son became rector of Aldgate.

James Nokes was Kynaston's contemporary in Portugal Street. Leigh Hunt calls him something between Liston and Munden. Dryden mentions him, in a political epistle to Southerne, as indispensable to a play. Cibber says, "The ridiculous solemnity of his features was enough to have set the whole bench of Bishops into a titter." In his ludicrous distresses he sank into such piteous pusilanimity that one almost pitied him. "When he debated any matter by himself he would shut up his mouth with a dumb, studious pout, and roll his full eye into a vacant amazement."[750] He died in 1692, leaving a fortune and an estate near [Pg 433] Barnet.

But the great star of Portugal Street was Betterton, the Garrick of his age. His most admired part was Hamlet; but Steele especially dilates on his Othello. He acted his Hamlet from traditions handed down by Davenant of Taylor, whom Shakspere himself is said to have instructed. Cibber says that there was such enchantment in his voice alone that no one cared for the sense of the words; and he adds, "I never heard a line in tragedy come from Betterton wherein my judgment, my ear, and my imagination, were not fully satisfied." This great man, who created no fewer than 130 characters, was a friend of Dryden, Pope, and Tillotson. Kneller's portrait of him is at Knowle;[751] A copy of it by Pope is preserved in Lord Mansfield's gallery at Caen Wood. When he died, in 1710, Steele wrote a "Tatler" upon him, in which he says "he laboured incessantly, and lived irreproachably. He was the jewel of the English stage." He killed himself by driving back the gout in order to perform on his benefit night, and his widow went mad from grief. Betterton acted as Colonel Jolly in Colman's "Cutter of Coleman Street," as Jaffier in Otway's *chef d'œuvre*, as fine gentlemen in Congreve's vicious but gay comedies, as a hero in Rowe's flatulent plays, and as Sir John Brute in Vanbrugh's great comedy.

Mrs. Barry was one of the best actresses in Portugal Street. She was the daughter of an old Cavalier colonel, and was instructed for the stage by Rochester, whose mistress she became. Dryden pronounced her the best actress he had ever seen. Her face and colour varied with each passion, whether heroic or tender. “Her mien and motion,” says Cibber, “were superb and gracefully majestic, her voice full, clear, and strong.” In scenes of anger, defiance, or resentment, while she was impetuous and terrible, she poured out the sentiment with an enchanting harmony. She was so versatile that she played Lady Brute as well as Zara or Belvidera. For her King James II. originated the custom of actors’ benefits. After a career of [Pg 434] thirty-eight years on the boards, she died at Acton in 1713. Kneller’s picture represents her with beautiful eyes, fine hair drawn back from her forehead, “the face full, fair, and rippling with intellect,”[752] but her mouth a little awry.[753]

Mrs. Mountfort also appeared in Portugal Street before the two companies united at Drury Lane in 1682. She was the best of male coxcombs, stage coquettes, and country dowdies, a vivacious mimic, and of the most versatile humour. Cibber sketches her admirably as Melantha in “Marriage à la Mode:”—“She is a fluttering, finished impertinent, with a whole artillery of airs, eyes, and motions. When the gallant recommended by her father brings his letter of introduction, down goes her dainty diving body to the ground, as if she were sinking under the conscious load of her own attractions; then she launches into a flood of fine language and compliment, still playing her chest forward in fifty falls, and rising like a swan upon waving water; and to complete her impertinence, she is so rapidly fond of her own wit that she will not give her lover leave to praise it;[754] and at last she swims from him with a promise to return in a twinkling.”

The virtuous, good, and discreet Mrs. Bracegirdle was another favourite in Portugal Street. For her Congreve, who affected to be her lover, wrote his Araminta and Cynthia, his Angelica, his Almeria, and his Millamant in “The way of the world.” All the town was in love with her youth, cheerful gaiety, musical voice, the happy graces of her manner, her dark eyes, brown hair, and expressive, rosy-brown face. Her Statira justified Nat Lee’s frantic Alexander for all his rant; and “when she acted Millamant, all the faults, follies, and affectation of that agreeable tyrant were venially melted down into so many charms and attractions of a conscious beauty.” Mrs. Bracegirdle was on the stage from 1680 to 1707. She lived long enough to warn Cibber against envy of Garrick, and died in 1748.

Three of Congreve’s plays, “Love for Love,” “The Mourning Bride,” and “The Way of the [Pg 435] World,” came out in Portugal Street. Steele, in the *Tatler*, No. 1, mentions “Love for Love” as being acted for Betterton’s benefit—Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Doggett taking parts. He describes the stage as covered with gentlemen and ladies, “so that when the curtain was drawn it discovered even there a very splendid audience.” “In Dryden’s time,” says Steele, “You used to see songs, epigrams, and satires in the hands of every person you met [at the theatre]; now you have only a pack of cards, and instead of the cavils about the turn of the expression, the elegance of style and the like, the learned now dispute only about the truth of the game.”

Poor Mountfort, the most handsome, graceful, and ardent of stage lovers, the most admirable of courtly fops, and the best dancer and singer of the day, strutted his little hour in Portugal Street till run through the body by Lord Mohun’s infamous boon companion. His career extended from 1682 to 1695. He was only thirty-three when he died.

The last proprietor of the theatre was Rich, an actor who, failing in tragedy, turned harlequin and manager, and became celebrated for producing spectacles, ballets, and pantomimes. Under the name of Lun he revelled as harlequin, and was admirable in a scene where he was hatched from an egg.

Pope, always sore about theatrical matters, describes this manager’s pompousness in the *Dunciad* (book iii.):—

> “At ease
> ’Midst storm of paper fierce hail of pease,
> And proud his mistress’ order to perform,
> Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.”

Rich’s great success was the production of Gay’s *Beggars’ Opera* in 1727-8. This piece brought £2000 to the author, and for a time drove the Italian Opera into the shade. It ran sixty-three nights the first season, and then spread to all the great towns in Great Britain. Ladies carried about the favourite songs engraved on their fan-mounts, and they were also [Pg 436] printed on fire-screens and other furniture. Miss Lavinia Fenton, who acted Polly, became the idol of the town; engravings of her were sold by thousands: her life was written, and collections were made of her jests.[755] Eventually she married the Duke of Bolton. Sir Robert Walpole laughed at the satire against himself, and “Gay grew rich, and Rich gay,” as the popular epigram went. Hogarth drew the chief scene with Walker as Macheath, and Spiller as Mat o’ the Mint. Swift was vexed to find his Gulliver for the time forgotten.

The custom of allowing young men of fashion to have chairs upon the stage was an intolerable nuisance to the actors before Garrick. In 1721 it led to a desperate riot at the Lincoln’s Inn Fields Theatre. Half-a-dozen beaux, headed by a tipsy earl, were gathered round the wings, when the earl reeled across the stage where Macbeth and his lady were then acting, to speak to a boon companion at the opposite side. Rich the manager, vexed at

the interruption, forbade the earl the house, upon which the earl struck Rich and Rich the earl. Half-a-dozen swords at once sprang out and decreed that Rich must die; but Quin and his brother actors rushed to the rescue with bare blades, charged the coxcombs, and drove them through the stage-door into the kennel. The beaux returning to the front, rushed into the boxes, broke the sconces, slashed the hangings, and threatened to burn the house; upon which doughty Quin and a party of constables and watchmen flung themselves on the rioters and haled them to prison. The actors, intimidated, refused to re-open the house till the king granted them a guard of soldiers, a custom that has not long been discontinued. It was not till 1780 that the habit of admitting the vulgar, noisy, and turbulent footmen gratis was abandoned.[756]

Macklin, afterwards the inimitable Shylock and Sir Pertinax, played small parts at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre till 1731, when a short speech as Brazencourt, in Fielding's "Coffee-house Politicians," betrayed the true actor. He lived till over a hundred, so long that he did not leave Covent Garden till after Braham's appearance, and Braham many of our elder readers have seen.[757] [Pg 437]

Macklin, an Irishman, and in early life a Dragoon officer, was irritable, restless, and pugnacious; he obtained his first triumph at Drury Lane, as Shylock in 1741. In stern malignity, no one has surpassed Macklin. His acting was hard, but manly and weighty, though his features were rather rigid. He naturally condemned Garrick's action and gesture as superabundant. His Sir Pertinax was excellent in its sly and deadly suppleness. He was also admirable in Lovegold, Scrub, Peachem, Polonius, and many Irish characters.

Quin was at Portugal Street as early as 1718-19. There he first "delighted the town by his chivalry as Hotspur, his bluntness as Clytus, his fieriness as Bajazet, his grandeur as Macbeth, his calm dignity as Brutus, his unctuousness as Falstaff, his duplicity as Maskwell, and his coarse drollery as Sir John Brute."[758] It was just before this, that locked in a room and compelled to fight, he had killed Bowen, who was jealous of his acting as Bajazet. When Rich refused to give Quin more than £300 a year, he joined the Drury Lane company, where he instantly got £500 per annum.

When Rich grew wealthy enough to hire a new theatre in Covent Garden, he left Portugal Street. Almost the last play acted there was "The Anatomist," by Ravenscroft, a second-rate author of Dryden's time.

The mob attributed the flight of Rich from the old theatre to the appearance of a devil during the performance of the pantomime of "Harlequin and Dr. Faustus," a play in which demons abound. The supernumerary spirit ascending by the roof instead of leaving by the door with his paid companions, was believed to have so frightened manager Rich that, taking the warning against theatrical profanity to heart, he never had the courage to open the theatre again.[759] The legend is curious, as it proves that even in 1732 the old Puritan horror of theatricals had not quite died out, and that at that period the poorer part of the audience was still ignorant enough to attribute mechanical tricks to supernatural interference. [Pg 438]

Garrick, in one of his prologues, speaks of Rich, under the name of Lun—

> "When Lun appeared with matchless art and whim,
> He gave the power of speech to every limb;
> Though masked and mute, convey'd his quick intent,
> And told in frolic gestures all he meant;
> But now the motley coat and sword of wood
> Require a tongue to make them understood."

Every motion of Rich meant something. His "statue scene" and "catching the butterfly" were moving pictures. His "harlequin hatched from an egg by sun-heat" is highly spoken of; Jackson calls it "a masterpiece of dumb show." From the first chipping of the egg, his receiving of motion, his feeling the ground, his standing upright, to his quick harlequin trip round the broken egg, every limb had its tongue. Walpole says, "His pantomimes were full of wit, and coherent, and carried on a story." Yet Rich was so ignorant that he called a 'turban' a 'turbot,' and an 'adjective' an 'adjutant.'

Spiller, who died of apoplexy in Portugal Street, in 1729-30 as he was playing in the "Rape of Proserpine," was inimitable in old men. This was the year that Quin played Macheath for his benefit, and Fielding brought out his inimitable "Tom Thumb" at the Haymarket, to ridicule the bombast of Thomson and Young.

King's College Hospital, which occupies a large portion of the southern side of Carey Street, is connected with the medical school of King's College, and is supported by voluntary contributions. For each guinea a year a subscriber may recommend one in and two out patients. Contributors acquire the same right for every donation of ten guineas. Annual subscribers of three guineas, or donors of thirty guineas, are governors of the hospital. The house is surrounded by a population of nearly 400,000 persons, of whom about 20,000 annually receive relief. In one year 363 poor married women have been attended in confinements at their own houses. [Pg 439]

The last memorial of a gay generation, passed like last year's swallows, was a headstone that used to stand in the burial-ground belonging to St. Clement's, now the site of King's

College Hospital. The slab rose from rank green grass that was sprinkled with dead cats, worn-out shoes, and fragments of tramps' bonnets; in summer it was half hid by a clump of sunflowers.[760] It kept dimly alive the memory of Joe Miller, a taciturn actor, in whose mouth Mottley, the poet put his volume of jokes that had been raked from every corner of the town. Mottley was a place-seeker and a writer of stilted tragedies and a bad comedy, for whose benefit night Queen Caroline, wife of George II., condescended to sell tickets at her own drawing-room.[761] Miller appears to have been an honest, and stupid fellow, but some good sayings are embalmed in the rather coarse book which bears his name. His portrait represents Joe as a broad-nosed man with large saucer eyes, a big absurd mouth, and a look of comic stolid surprise. He died in 1738, and the Jest Book was published the year after, price one shilling.

Joe Miller made his first appearance on the stage in 1715, at Drury Lane, in Farquhar's comedy of "A trip to the Jubilee." He also played Clodpole in Betterton's "Amorous Widow," Sir H. Gubbin in Steele's "Tender Husband," La Foole in Ben Jonson's "Epicene," and above all Sir Joseph Whittol in Congreve's "Old Bachelor." Hogarth designed a benefit ticket for this play. As Ben in "Love for Love," Cibber cut out Joe Miller. In 1721 Joe opened a booth at Bartholomew Fair with Pinkethman. His last great success was as the Miller in Dodsley's farce of "The King and the Miller of Mansfield." Stephen Duck, the Wiltshire thresher, afterwards a popular preacher, wrote his epitaph. Joe Miller's monument is still carefully preserved in one of the rooms in King's College Hospital. John Mottley, his editor, was the son of a Colonel Mottley, a Jacobite who followed James into France. His son was placed in [Pg 440] the Excise Office, and grew up a place-hunter. He wrote a bad tragedy called "The Imperial Captives," and was promised a commissionership of wine licenses by Lord Halifax, and a place in the Exchequer by Sir Robert Walpole, but received nothing from either. He compiled the Jest-Book, it is said partly from the recollection of the comedian's conversations,[762] but it is doubtful if this is true. The compilation (once so useful to diners-out) went through three editions in 1739, and at about the thirteenth edition was reprinted, after thirty years, by Barker, of Russell Street, Covent Garden.[763]

The Grange public-house close by, with its picturesque old courtyard, is mentioned by Davenant, in his "Playhouse to Let," as an inn patronised by poets and actors.

The Black Jack public-house in Portsmouth Street was Joe Miller's favourite haunt. Some paintings on its walls still testify to the occasional presence of artists of the last century. This inn used to be called "The Jump," from that adroit young scoundrel Jack Sheppard having once jumped from one of its first-floor windows to escape the armed emissaries of that still greater thief, the thief-taker, Mr. Jonathan Wild.

When paviours dig deep under the Strand they find the fossil remains of antediluvian monsters. A church in the street bears a name that carries us back to the times of the Saxons and the Danes. In one lane there is a Roman bath, in another there are the nodding gable-ends of houses at which Beaumont and Fletcher may have looked, and which Shakspere and Ben Jonson must have visited. So the Present is built out of the Past. The Strand teems with associations of every period of history. The story of St. Giles's parish alone should embrace the whole records of London vagrancy. The chronicle of Lincoln's Inn Fields embraces reminiscences of half our great lawyers. In the chapter on St. Martin's Lane I have been glad to note down some interesting incidents in the careers of many of our [Pg 441] greatest painters. Long Acre leads us to Dryden, Cromwell, Wilson, and Stothard. At Charing Cross we have stopped to see how brave men can die for a good cause.

A thorough history of our great city, considered in every aspect, would almost be a condensed history of the world. I offer these pages to my readers only as a humble contribution to the history of London.

THE BLACK JACK, PORTSMOUTH STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

Our commercial wealth and the vastness of our maritime enterprise is shown in nothing more than by the distance from which we fetch our commonest articles of consumption—tea from China, sugar from the West Indies, coffee from Ceylon, oil from the farthest nooks of Italy, chocolate from Mexico. An Englishman need not be very rich in order to consume samples of all these productions of different hemispheres at a single meal. [Pg 442]

In the same manner many books of far-divided ages have gone to form the patchwork of the present volume; I am like the merchant who sends his ships to collect in different harbours, and across wide and adverse seas, the materials that he needs. In this busy and overworked age there are many persons who have no time themselves to make such voyages, no patience to traverse such seas, even if they possessed the charts: it is for them I have written, and it is from them I hope for some kind approval.

APPENDIX. [Pg 443]

"The West End seems to me one vast cemetery. Hardly a street but has in it a house once occupied by dear friends with whom I had daily intercourse: if I stopped and knocked now, who would know or take interest in me? *The streets to me are peopled with shadows: the city is as a city of the dead.*"—SAMUEL ROGERS.

THE STRAND (SOUTH SIDE).—p. 25.

"I often shed tears in the motley Strand for fulness of joy at such multitude of life."—CHARLES LAMB'S *Letters*, vol. i.

The Strand is three-quarters of a mile long. Van de Wyngerede's view, 1543, shows straggling houses on the south side, but on the north side all is open to Covent Garden. There were three water-courses, crossed by bridges. Haycock's Ordinary, near Palsgrave Place, was much frequented in the seventeenth century by Parliament men and town gallants. No. 217 was the shop of Snow, a wealthy goldsmith who withstood the South Sea Bubble without injury. Gay describes him during the panic with black pen behind his ear. He says to Snow—

> "Thou stoodst (an Indian king in size and hue);
> Thy unexhausted shop was our Peru."

The Robin Hood Debating Society held its meetings in Essex Street. Burke spoke here, and Goldsmith was a member. The great Cottonian Library was kept in Essex House from 1712 to 1730, on the site of the Unitarian Chapel, built about 1774. Mr. Lindsey, Dr. Disney, Mr. Belsham (Priestley's successor) preached here, and after Mr. Belsham the Rev. Thomas

Madge. At George's Coffee-house, now 213 Strand, Foote describes the town wits meeting in 1751. Shenstone was a frequenter of this house, and came here to read pamphlets—the subscription being one shilling. The Grecian Coffee-house was used by Goldsmith and the Irish and Lancashire Templars. Milford Lane was so named from an adjacent ford over the [Pg 444] Thames. A windmill stood near St. Mary's Church, temp. James I. Sir Richard Baker, the worthy old chronicler whom Sir Roger de Coverley so admired, lived in this lane in 1632-9. The old houses were taken down in 1852. No. 191 was the shop of William Godwin, bookseller, the author of *Caleb Williams*, and the friend of Lamb and Shelley.—Strype mentions the Crown and Anchor Tavern. Here, in 1710, was instituted the Academy of Ancient Music. Here, on Fox's birthday, in 1798, 2000 guests were feasted. Johnson and Boswell occasionally supped here, and here the Royal Societies were held. In Surrey Street, in a large garden-house at the east end fronting the river, lived the Hon. Charles Howard, the eminent chemist who discovered the process of sugar-refining *in vacuo*.

At No. 169, now the Strand Theatre, Barker, an artist, exhibited the panorama—his own invention—suggested to him when sketching under an umbrella on the Calton Hill. No. 217, now a branch of the London and Westminster Bank, was formerly Paul, Strahan, and Bates's,[764] who in 1858 disposed of their customers' securities to the amount of £113,625, [Pg 445] and were sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. The drinking fountain opposite St. Mary's Church is a product of a most useful association. The first fountain erected under its auspices was opened in April 1859, by Lord John Russell, Lord Carlisle, and Mr. Gurney.—At No. 147 was published the *Sphinx*, and Jan. 2, 1828, No. 1 of the *Athenæum*. No. 149 is the shop once belonging to Mr. Mawe, the mineralogist, who was succeeded by James Tennant, Professor of Mineralogy at King's College. At No. 132 Strand (site of Wellington Street), the first circulating library in London was started by a Mr. Wright, in 1740. Opposite Southampton Street, from 1686 to late in the last century, lived Vaillant, the eminent foreign bookseller. No. 143 was the site of the first office of the *Morning Chronicle* (Perry succeeding Woodfall in 1789). Lord Campbell and Hazlitt were theatrical critics to this paper. Mr. Dickens was a parliamentary reporter, Mr. Serjeant Spankie an editor, Campbell the poet a contributor. On Perry's death, in 1821, it was purchased by Mr. Clement for £42,000. The *Mirror*, the first cheap illustrated periodical was also published at this office. At No. 1 lived Rudolph Ackermann, the German printseller, who introduced lithography and annuals. He illuminated his gallery when gas was a novelty. Aaron Hill was born in a dwelling on the site of the present Beaufort House; Lord Clarendon lived here while his unlucky western house was building; and here, in 1660, the Duke of York married the chancellor's daughter.

The York Buildings Water Company failed in 1731. Hungerford Hall and its panoramic pictures were burnt in 1854. At No. 18 Strand, in 1776, the elder Mathews the comedian was born; Dr. Adam Clarke and Rowland Hill used to visit his father, who was a religious bookseller. No. 7 Craven Street (Franklin's old house) was long occupied by the Society for the Relief of Persons imprisoned for Small Debts. In Northumberland Court, once known as "Lieutenants' Lodgings," Nelson once lodged.

Norfolk Street.—p. 44.

Mr. Dickens has sketched Norfolk Street in his own inimitable way. "Norfolk is a delightful street to lodge in, provided you don't go lower down (Mrs. Lirriper dates from No. 81); but [Pg 446] of a summer evening, when the dust and waste paper lie in it, and stray children play in it, and a kind of gritty calm and bake settles on it, and a peal of church-bells is practising in the neighbourhood, it is a trifle dull; and never have I seen it since at such a time, and never shall I see it ever more at such a time, without seeing the dull June evening when that forlorn young creature sat at her open corner window on the second, and me at my open corner window (the other corner) on the third."[765]

The Strand Theatre.—p. 53.

The Strand Theatre, No. 169, formerly called Punch's Playhouse, was altered in 1831 for Rayner, the low comedian, and Mrs. Waylett, the singer. Here were produced many of Douglas Jerrold's early plays. Under Miss Swanborough's management, Miss Marie Wilton, arch and witty as Shakspere's Maria, delighted the town. Here poor Rogers, now dead, was inimitable in burlesque female characters.

The Somerset Coffee-house.—p. 56.

The bold and redoubtable Junius (now pretty well ascertained, after much inkshed, to be Sir Philip Francis) occasionally left his letters for Woodfall at the bar of the Somerset Coffee-house at the east corner of the entrance to King's College. His other houses of call were the bar of the New Exchange, and now and then Munday's in Maiden Lane.

Somerset House.—p. 56.

The School of Design, formerly located in Somerset House, was established in 1857, under the superintendence of the Board of Trade, for the improvement of ornamental art, with regard more especially to our staple English manufactures. The school is now incorporated with the Science and Art Schools at South Kensington, which have been established, under Government, in connection with South Kensington Museum.

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King's College.—p. 56.

King's College and School (to the latter of which the author owes some gratitude for a portion of his education) form a proprietary institution that occupies an east wing of Somerset House which was built to receive it. The college was founded in 1828; its fundamental principle is, that instruction in religion is an indispensable part of instruction, without which knowledge "will be conducive neither to the happiness of the individual nor the welfare of the State." The college education is divided into five departments:—1. Theology. 2. General Literature and Science. 3. Applied Sciences. 4. Medicine. 5. The School. A certificate of good conduct, signed by his last instructor, is required of each pupil on entry. The age for admission is from nine to sixteen years. A limited number of matriculated students can live within the walls. Each proprietor can nominate two pupils—one to the school, and one to the college. The museum once contained the celebrated calculating machine of the late Mr. Charles Babbage. This scientific toy was given by the Commissioners of the Woods and Forests. It is now at South Kensington. The collection of mechanical models and philosophical instruments was formed by George III. and presented to the college by Queen Victoria.

Helmet Court.—p. 56.

Helmet Court-so called from the Helmet Inn-is over against Somerset House. The inn is enumerated in a list of houses and taverns made in the reign of James I.[766] When the King of Denmark came to see his daughter, he was lodged in Somerset House, and new kitchen-ranges were set up at the Helmet and the Swan at the expense of the Crown. Henry Condell, a fellow-actor with Shakspere, left his houses in Helmet Court to "Elizabeth, his well-beloved wife."[767]

Beaufort Buildings.—p. 83.

Charles Dibdin, born 1745, the author of 1300 songs, gave his musical entertainments at the Lyceum, and at Scott and Idle's premises in the Strand. Latterly, assisted by his pupils, he conducted public musical soirees at Beaufort Buildings.

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Coutts's Bank.—p. 86.

Mr. Coutts died in 1822. He was a pallid, sickly, thin old gentleman, who wore a shabby coat and a brown scratch-wig.[768] He was once stopped in the street by a good-natured man, who insisted on giving him a guinea. The banker, however, declined the present with thanks, saying he was in no "immediate want." Miss Harriet Mellon first appeared at Drury Lane in 1795, as Lydia Languish. Mr. Coutts married Miss Mellon in 1815. She made her last appearance at Drury Lane, early in the same year, as Audrey. She left the bulk of her fortune to Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts, whose gold the *Morning Herald* once computed at 13 tons, or 107 flour-sacks full. The sum, £1,800,000, was the exact sum also left by old Jemmy Wood of Gloucester. Counting a sovereign a minute, it would take ten weeks to count; and placed sovereign to sovereign, it would reach 24 miles 260 yards.

Coutts's Bank was founded by George Middleton. Till Coutts's time it stood near St. Martin's Church. Good-natured Gay banked there, and afterwards Dr. Johnson, Sir Walter Scott, and the Duke of Wellington. The Royal Family have banked at Coutts's ever since the reign of Queen Anne.

The Dark Arches.—p. 97.

"The Adelphi arches, many of which are used for cellars and coal-wharfs, remind one in their grim vastness," says Mr. Timbs, "of the Etruscan Cloaca of old Rome." Beneath the "dry arches" the most abandoned characters used to lurk; outcasts and vagrants came there to sleep, and many a street thief escaped from his pursuers in those subterranean haunts before the introduction of gas-light and a vigilant police. Mr. Egg, that tragic painter, placed the scene of one of his most pathetic pictures by this part of what was once the river-bank.

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Society of Arts.—p. 99.

Lord Folkestone and Mr. Shipley founded the Society of Arts, at a meeting at Rawthmell's Coffee-house, in Catharine Street, in March 1754. It was proposed to give rewards for the

discovery of cobalt and the cultivation of madder in England. Premiums were also to be given for the best drawings to a certain number of boys and girls under the age of sixteen. The first prize, £15, was adjudged by the society to Cosway, then a boy of fifteen. The society was initiated in Crane Court; from thence it removed to Craig's Court, Charing Cross; from there to the Strand, opposite Beaufort Buildings; and from thence, in 1774, to the Adelphi.

The subjects of Barry's six pictures in the Council Room are the following (beginning on the left as you enter):—1. "Orpheus." The figure of Orpheus and the heads of the two reclining women are thought fine. 2. "A Grecian Harvest Home" (the best of the series). 3. "Crowning the Victors at Olympia." 4. "Commerce, or the Triumph of the Thames." (Dr. Burney, the composer, is composedly floating among tritons and sea-nymphs in his grand tie-wig and queue.) 5. "The Distribution of Premiums by the Society of Arts." (This picture contains a portrait of Dr. Johnson, for which he sat.) 6. "Elysium, or the State of Final Retribution."

Barry did pretty well with this work, which occupied him from 1777 to 1783. The society gave him £300 and a gold medal, and also £500, the profit of two exhibitions-total, £800.

In 1776 the society had proposed to the Academy to decorate the Council Room, and be reimbursed by the exhibition of the works. Reynolds and the rest refused, but Barry soon afterwards obtained permission to execute the whole, stipulating to be paid for his colours and models. Barry at the time had only sixteen shillings in his pocket. During the progress of the work the painter, being in want, applied for a small subscription through Sir George Savile, but in vain. An insolent secretary even objected to his charge for colours and models. The society afterwards relented and advanced £100. Barry died poor, neglected, and half crazy, in 1806, aged sixty-five.

The Adelphi Rooms contain three poor statues (Mars, Venus, and Narcissus) by Bacon, R.A., a portrait of Lord Romney by Reynolds, and a full-length portrait of Jacob, Lord Folkestone, [Pg 450] the first president, by Gainsborough. In the ante-room, in a bad light, hangs a characteristic likeness of poor, wrongheaded Barry. The pictures are to be seen between ten and four any day but Wednesday and Saturday. The society meets every Wednesday at eight from October 31 to July 31.

In the Council Room, that parade-ground of learned men, Goldsmith once made an attempt at a speech, but was obliged to sit down in confusion. Dr. Johnson once spoke there on "Mechanics," "with a propriety, perspicuity, and energy which excited general admiration."[769]

Jonas Hanway, that worthy old Russian merchant, when he came to see Barry's pictures, insisted on leaving a guinea instead of the customary shilling. The Prince of Wales gave Barry sittings. Timothy Hollis left him £100. Lord Aldborough declared that the painter had surpassed Raphael. Lord Romney gave him 100 guineas for a copy of one of the heads, and Dr. Johnson praised the "grasping mind" in the six pictures.[770]

Duchy of Lancaster.—p. 110.

The Duchy of Lancaster is a liberty (whatever that means) in the Strand. It belongs to the Crown, the Queen being "Duchess of Lancaster." It begins without Temple Bar and runs as far as Cecil Street. The annual revenue of the duchy is about £75,000.

Waterloo Bridge.—p. 124.

Hood's exquisite poem, "The Bridge of Sighs," appeared in "Hood's Magazine" in May 1844. The poet's son informs me that he believes that the poem was not suggested by any special incident, but that a great many suicides had been reported in the papers about that time.

> "The bleak wind of *March*
> Made her tremble and shiver"

marks the date of the writing,

> "But not the dark arch [Pg 451]
> Of the black flowing river."

The dark arch is that of Waterloo Bridge, a spot frequently selected by unfortunate women who meditate suicide, on account of its solitude and privacy.

York House.—p. 135.

After the death of Buckingham, York House was entrusted to the guardianship of that Flemish adventurer and quack in art, Sir Balthasar Gerbier, who here quarrelled and would have fought with Gentilleschi, a Pisan artist who had been invited over by Charles I., and of whom he was intolerably jealous. Some of Gentilleschi's work is still preserved at Marlborough House. The York Buildings Waterworks Company was started in the 27th year of Charles II. In 1688 there were forty-eight shares. After the Scotch rebellion in 1715, the

company invested large sums in purchasing forfeited estates, which no Scotchman would buy. The concern became bankrupt. The residue of the Scotch estates was sold in 1783 for £102,537.[771]

Buckingham Street.—p. 135.

It is always pleasant to recall any scenes on which the light of Mr. Dickens's fancy has even momentarily rested. It was to Buckingham Street that Mr. David Copperfield went with his aunt to take chambers commanding a view of the river. They were at the top of the house, very near the fire-escape, with a half-blind entry and a stone-blind pantry.[772]

Hungerford Bridge.—p. 138.

The Hungerford Suspension Bridge was purchased in 1860 by a company of gentlemen, and used in the construction of the bridge across the Avon at Clifton. This aerial roadway has a span of 703 feet, and is built at the height of 245 feet. It cost little short of £100,000. A bridge at Clifton was first suggested in 1753 by Alderman Vick of Bristol, who left a nest-egg of £1000. The bridge was completed and opened in 1864. [Pg 452]

The Gaiety Theatre, Strand (North Side).—p. 147.

This elegant and well-appointed theatre, near the corner of Wellington Street, was built in 1868, from the designs of Mr. C. J. Phillips. It occupies the site of the Strand Music Hall, a large building which had been erected in the place of an arcade which the late Lord Exeter had built here in order to resuscitate the glories of old Exeter 'Change. Both the arcade and music hall proved disastrous failures, whilst the Gaiety Theatre, on the other hand, has turned out immensely successful, under the management of Mr. John Hollingshead.

The Strand (North Side).—p. 147.

Sir John Denham, the poet, when a student at Lincoln's Inn, in 1638, in a drunken frolic blotted out with ink all the Strand signs from Temple Bar to Charing Cross.

In a house in Butcher Row, Winter, Catesby, Wright, and Guy Fawkes met and took the sacrament together. Raleigh's widow lived in Boswell Court, and also Lord Chief Justice Lyttelton and Sir Richard and Lady Fanshawe; and in Clement's Lane resided Sir John Trevor, cousin to Judge Jeffries and Speaker to the House of Commons. Dr. Johnson's pew at St. Clement's is No. 18 in the north gallery; Dr. Croly put up a tablet to his memory. The *Tatler*, 1710, announces a stage-coach from the One Bell in the Strand (No. 313) to Dorchester.

No. 317 was the forge kept by the Duchess of Albemarle's father, and it faced the Maypole; Aubrey describes it as the corner shop, the first turning to the right as you come out of the Strand into Drury Lane. Dr. King died at No. 332, once the *Morning Chronicle* office. The New Exeter Change—the site of which is now covered by the Gaiety Theatre and Restaurant—was designed by Sydney Smirke, with Jacobean frontage. East of Exeter Change stood the Canary House, mentioned by Dryden as famous for its sack with the "abricot" flavour. Pepys mentions Cary House, probably the same place. At No. 352 was born, in 1798, Henry Neale the poet, son of the map and heraldic engraver. In Exeter Change No. 1 of the *Literary Gazette* was published, January 25, 1817. Old Parr lodged at No. 405, the Queen's Head public-house. No. 429, built for an insurance office by Mr. Cockerell, has a fine façade. At No. 448 is the Electric Telegraph Office; the time signal-ball, liberated by a galvanic current sent from Greenwich, falls exactly at one, and drops ten feet. The old Golden Cross Hotel stood farther west than the present. The Lowther Arcade, designed by Witherden Young, is 245 feet long and 20 feet broad. Here the electric eel and Perkin's steam-gun were exhibited about 1838. In 1832 a Society for the Exhibition of Models had been formed here. In 1831 the skeleton of a whale was exhibited in a tent in Trafalgar Square; it was 98 feet long, and Cuvier had estimated it to be nearly a thousand years old. [Pg 453]

It should be added that for most of the facts in this note the author is indebted to that treasure-house of topographical anecdote, *Curiosities of London*, by J. Timbs, Esq., F.S.A., a book displaying an almost boundless industry.

The Crown and Anchor Tavern.—p. 152.

The Crown and Anchor Tavern, at the corner of Arundel Street, was for some years the Whittington Club. Before the alterations it had an entrance from the Strand, which is now closed, its door being now in Arundel Street. Douglas Jerrold was one of the earliest promoters of this club, which was much used by young men of business. In 1873, after having been closed for some time, it was re-opened as the Temple Club. The King of Clubs was started about 1801 by Mr. Robert (Bobus) Smith, brother of Sydney, a friend of

Canning's, and Advocate-General of Calcutta. It sat every Saturday at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, at that time famous for its dinners and wine, and a great resort for clubs. Politics were excluded. One of the chief members was Mr. Richard Sharpe, a partner in a West India house, and a Parliamentary speaker during Addington's and Perceval's administrations. Mackintosh, Scarlett, Rogers the poetical banker, John Allen, and M. Dumont, an emigré and friend of the Abbé de Lisle, were also members. Erskine, too, often dropped in to spend an hour stolen from his immense and overflowing business. He there told his story of Lord [Pg 454] Loughborough trying to persuade him not to take Tom Paine's brief. He once met Curran there. A member of the club describes the ape's face of the Irish orator, with the sunken and diminutive eyes that flashed lightning as he compared poor wronged Ireland to "Niobe palsied with sorrow and despair over her freedom, and her prosperity struck dead before her."[773]

Wych Street.—p. 164.

"In a horrible little court, branching northward from Wych Street," writes Mr. Sala, in an essay written in America, "good old George Cruikshank once showed me the house where Jack Sheppard, the robber and prison-breaker, served his apprenticeship to Mr. Wood, the carpenter; and on a beam in the loft of this house Jack is said to have carved his name. * * * Theodore Hook used to say that "he never passed through Wych Street in a hackney-coach without being blocked up by a hearse and a coal waggon in the van, and a mud-cart and the Lord Mayor's carriage in the rear."

Newspaper Offices.—p. 167.

It is almost impossible to enumerate all the Strand newspaper offices, present and past. It is, perhaps, sufficient to mention *The Spectator* (a very able paper,—office in Waterloo Place); *The London Journal* (a cheap, well-conducted paper with an enormous circulation); *The Family Herald* (the house formerly of Mr. Leigh, bookseller, a relation of the elder Mathews, and the first introducer of the *Guides* that Mr. Murray has now rendered so complete); *The Illustrated Times*, *The Morning Post*, *Notes and Queries*, *The Queen*, *Law Times*, *Athenæum*, and *Field* (in Wellington Street); *Bell's Life*, *The Globe*, *Bell's Messenger*, *The Observer*, and lastly, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and *The Saturday Review*.

The Beef-Steak Club.—p. 172.

Bubb Doddington, Aaron Hill, "Leonidas" Glover, Sir Peere Williams (a youth of promise, shot at the siege of Belleisle), Hoadly, and the elder Colman (the author of *The Suspicious* [Pg 455] *Husband*), were either guests or members of this illustrious club, whose origin dates back to Rich's days in 1735. Then came the days of Lord Sandwich, Wilkes, Bonnell Thornton, Arthur Murphy, Churchill, and Tickell. In 1785 the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.) became the twenty-fifth member.

Churchill resigned when the club began to receive him coldly after his desertion of his wife. Wilkes never visited the club after the contemptuous rejection of his infamous poem, the *Essay on Woman*. Garrick was a great ornament of the club; he once dined there dressed in the character of Ranger. Little Serjeant Prime was another club celebrity of that period. An anonymous writer describes a meeting of the club in or about 1799. There were present John Kemble, Cobb of the India House, the Duke of Clarence, Sir John Cox Hippisley, Charles Morris (the writer of our best convivial songs), Ferguson of Aberdeen, Mingay, and the Duke of Norfolk. As the clock struck five, a curtain drew up, discovering the kitchen through a gridiron grating, over which was inscribed this motto—

> "If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly."

The Duke of Norfolk ate at least three steaks, and then when the cloth was removed, took the chair on a dais, elevated some steps above the table, and above which hung the small cocked-hat in which Garrick played Ranger, and other insignia of the society. He was also invested with an orange ribbon, to which a silver gridiron was appended. The sound motto "Beef and Liberty" is inscribed on the buttons of the members. It is the duty of the junior member at this club to bring up the wine. The writer before quoted describes seeing Lord Brougham and the Duke of Leinster performing this subordinate duty. Sir John Hippisley was the man who Windham used to say was very *nearly* a clever fellow. Cobb was the author of "First Floor" (a farce) and of three comic operas—"The Haunted Tower," "The Siege of Belgrade," and "Ramah Drûg." To the two former Storace set his finest music.

"Captain" Morris, the author of those delightful songs, "The Town and Country Life" and "When the Fancy-stirring Bowl wakes the Soul to Pleasure," used to brew punch and "out- [Pg 456] watch the Bear" at this club till after his seventy-eighth year. The Duke of Norfolk, at Kemble's solicitation, gave the veteran bard a pleasant little Sabine retreat near Dorking. Jack Richards, the presbyter of the club, was famous for inflicting long verbal harangues on condemned social culprits.

Another much respected member was old William Linley, Sheridan's brother-in-law; nor must we forget Richard Wilson, Lord Eldon's secretary, and Mr. Walsh, who had been in early life valet to Lord Chesterfield. The club secretary, in 1828, was Mr. Henry Stephenson, comptroller to the Duke of Sussex; and about this time also flourished, either as guests or members, Lord Viscount Kirkwall, Rowland Stephenson the banker, and Mr. Denison, then M.P. for Surrey.[774]

A literary friend tells me that the last time he saw Mr. Thackeray was one evening in Exeter Street. The eminent satirist of snobs was peering about for the stage door of the Lyceum Theatre, or some other means of entrance to the Beef-steak Club, with whose members he had been invited to dine.

Exeter Change.—p. 175.

Thomas Clark, "the King of Exeter Change," took a cutler's stall here in 1765 with £100 lent him by a stranger. By trade and thrift he grew so rich that he once returned his income at £6000 a year, and before his death in 1816 he rented the whole ground-floor of the Change. He left nearly half a million of money, and one of his daughters married Mr. Hamlet, the celebrated jeweller. Some of the old materials of Exeter House, including a pair of large Corinthian columns at the east end, were used in building the Change, which was the speculation of a Dr. Barbon, in the reign of William and Mary.

Trafalgar Square.—p. 221.

The fountains were constructed in 1845, after designs from Sir Charles Barry.

Morley's Hotel (1 to 3 at the south-east corner) is much frequented by American travellers, who may be seen on summer evenings calmly smoking their cigars outside the chief entrance. The late proprietor, who died a few years since, left nearly a hundred thousand pounds to the Foundling and other charities. [Pg 457]

The Union Club.—p. 226.

The Union Club House, which stands on the south-west of Trafalgar Square and faces Cockspur Street, was built by Sir Robert Smirke, R.A. The club, consisting of 1000 members, has been in existence forty-four years; its expenditure is about £10,000 a year. Its trustees are the Earl of Lonsdale, Viscount Gage, Lord Trimleston, and Sir John Henry Lowther, Bart. The entrance money is thirty guineas, the annual subscription six guineas. Mr. Peter Cunningham, writing in 1849, describes the club as "the resort chiefly of mercantile men of eminence;" but its present members are of all the professions.

Drummond's Bank.—p. 227.

This bank is older than Coutts's. Pope banked there. The Duke of Sutherland and many of the Scottish nobility bank there.

St. Martin's Lane.—p. 252.

Roger Payne was a celebrated bookbinder in Duke's Court, St. Martin's Lane, London. This ingenious artist, a native of Windsor Forest, was born in 1739, and first became initiated into the rudiments of his business under the auspices of Mr. Pote, bookseller to Eton College. On settling in the metropolis, about the year 1766, he worked for a short time for Thomas Osborne, bookseller in Holborn, but principally for *honest* Thomas Payne, of the Mews Gate, who, although of the same name, was not related to him. His talents as an artist, particularly in the finishing department, were of the first order, and such as, up to his time, had not been developed by any other of his countrymen. "Roger Payne," says Dr. Dibdin, "rose like a star, diffusing lustre on all sides, and rejoicing the hearts of all true sons of bibliomania." He succeeded in executing binding with such artistic taste as to command the admiration and patronage of many noblemen. His *chef-d'œuvre* is a large paper copy of Æschylus, translated by the Rev. Robert Potter, the ornaments and decorations of which are most splendid and classical. The binding of this book cost Earl Spencer fifteen guineas. [Pg 458]

It was by his artistic talents alone that Roger Payne became so celebrated in his day; for, owing to his excessive indulgence in strong ale, he was in person a deplorable specimen of humanity. As evidence of this propensity, his account-book contains the following memorandum of one day's expenditure: "For bacon, one halfpenny; for liquor, one shilling." Even his trade bills are literary curiosities in their way, and frequently illustrate his unfortunate propensity. On one delivered to Mr. Evans for binding Barry's work on *The Wines of the Ancients*, he wrote:—

> "Homer the bard, who sung in highest strains,
> Had, festive gift, a goblet for his pains:

Falernian gave Horace, Virgil fire,
And barley-wine my British muse inspire;
Barley-wine, first from Egypt's learned shore,
Be this the gift to me from Calvert's store!"

During the latter part of his life, as might have been expected, Roger Payne was the victim of poverty and disease. He closed his earthly career at his residence in Duke's Court on Nov. 20, 1787, and was interred in the burial-ground of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, at the expense of his worthy patron, Mr. Thomas Payne. This excellent man had also a portrait taken and engraved of his namesake at his work in his miserable den, under which Mr. Bindley wrote the following lines:—

"Rogerus Payne: Natus Vindesor. MDCCXXXIX.; denatus Londin. MDCCLXXXVII. Effigiem hanc graphicam solertis Bibliopegi Μνημόσυνον meritis Bibliopola dedit. Sumptibus Thomæ Payne. [Etch'd and published by S. Harding, No. 127 Pall Mall, March 1, 1800."][775]

Hemings' Row.—p. 252.

Hemings' Row, St. Martin's Lane, was originally called Dirty Lane.[776] The place probably derived its name from John Hemings, an apothecary living there in 1679. Peter Cunningham writes in 1849: "Upon an old wooden house at the west end of this street, near the second-floor window, is the name given above, and the date 1680."[777]

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Bedfordbury.—p. 261.

Mr. James Payne, a bookseller of Bedfordbury (perhaps the son of Thomas Payne), died in Paris in 1809. Mr. Burnet describes him as remarkable for amenity as for probity and learning. Repeated journeys to Italy, France, and Germany had enabled him to collect a great number of precious MSS. and rare first editions, most of which went to enrich Lord Spencer's library—the most splendid collection ever made by a private person.[778]

Earl of Bristol.—p. 264.

Digby, Earl of Bristol, whom Pepys accuses of losing King Charles his head by breaking off the treaty of Uxbridge, lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields. His second daughter, Lady Ann, married the evil Earl of Sutherland. It was Bristol who was base enough to impeach Lord Clarendon for selling Dunkirk and making Charles marry a barren queen. Burnet describes the earl as having become a Roman Catholic in order to be qualified for serving under Don John in Flanders. He was an astrologer,[779] and had the impudence to tell the king he was in danger from his brother. He renounced his new religion openly at Wimbledon,[780] and then fled to France.

Wild House.—p. 277.

Wild House, Drury Lane, was formerly the town mansion of the Welds of Lulworth Castle. Short's Gardens were so called from Dudley Short, Esq., who had a mansion here with fine gardens in the reign of Charles II. In Parker Street, Philip Parker, Esq., had a mansion in 1623.

Craven House, Drury Lane.—p. 292.

Pepys frequently mentions Lord Craven as attending the meetings at the Trinity House upon Admiralty business. The old veteran, whom he irreverently calls "a coxcomb," complimented him on several occasions upon his popularity with the Duke of York. Pennant says that Lord [Pg 460]
Craven and the Duke of Albemarle "heroically stayed in town during the dreadful pestilence, and, at the hazard of their lives, preserved order in the midst of the terrors of the time."[781] This fine old Don Quixote happened to be on duty at St. James's when William's Dutch troops were coming across the park to take possession. Lord Craven would have opposed their entrance, but his timid master forbidding him to resist, he marched away "with sullen dignity." The date of the sale of the pest-houses should be 1722, not 1772.

Drury Lane.—p. 299.

In the Regency time, and before, Drury Lane was what the Haymarket is now. Oyster shops, low taverns, and singing-rooms of the worst description surrounded the theatre. One of the worst of these, even down to our own times, was "Jessop's" ("The Finish")—a great resort of low prize-fighters, gamblers, sporting men, swindlers, spendthrifts, and drunkards. "*H.'s*" (I veil the infamous name), described in a MS. of Horace Walpole, is now a small, dingy theatrical tailor's, and in the besmirched back-shop shreds of gilding and smears of colour still show where Colonel Hanger knocked off the heads of champagne bottles, and

afterwards, Lord Waterford and such “bloods” squandered their money and their health.

The Savage Club.—p. 303.

The Savage Club, which was started at the Crown Tavern in Drury Lane, and then removed to rooms next the Lyceum, and said to have been those once occupied by the Beef-steak Club, is now moored at Evans’s Hotel, Covent Garden. The name of the club has a duplex signification; it refers to Richard Savage the poet, and also to the Bohemian freedom of its members. It includes in its number no small share of the literary talent of the London newspaper and dramatic world.

Clare Market.—p. 339.

Denzil Street was so called by the Earl of Clare in 1682, in memory of his uncle Denzil, Lord Holles, who died 1679-80. He was one of the five members of Parliament whom Charles I. so [Pg 461] despotically and so unwisely attempted to seize. The inscription on the south-west wall of the street was renewed in 1796.

Street Characters.—p. 381.

It would be impossible to recapitulate the street celebrities from Hogarth’s time to the present day which St. Giles’s has harboured. A writer in *Notes and Queries* mentions a man who used to sell dolls’ bedsteads, and who was always said to have been the king’s evidence against the Cato Street conspirators. Charles Lamb describes, in his own inimitable way, an old sailor without legs who used to propel his mutilated body about the streets on a wooden framework supported on wheels. He was said to have been maimed during the Gordon riots. But I have now myself to add to the list the most remarkable relic of all. There is (1868?) to be seen any day in the London streets a gaunt grey-haired old blind beggar, with hard strongly-marked features and bushy eyebrows. This is no less a person than Hare the murderer, who years ago aided Burke in murdering poor mendicants and houseless people in Edinburgh, and selling their bodies to the surgeons for dissection. Hare, a young man then, turned king’s evidence and received a pardon. He came to London with his blood money, and entered himself as a labourer under an assumed name at a tannery in the suburbs. The men discovering him, threw the wretch into a steeping-pit, from which he escaped, but with loss of both eyes.

The Seven Dials.—p. 385.

Evelyn describes going (Oct. 5, 1694) to see the seven new streets in St. Giles’s, then building by Mr. Neale, who had introduced lotteries in imitation of those of Venice. The Doric column was removed in July 1773, in the hope of finding a sum of money supposed to be concealed under the base. The search was ineffectual; the pillar now ornaments the common at Weybridge. Gay describes Seven Dials, in his own pleasant, inimitable way (circa 1712).

> “Where fam’d St. Giles’s ancient limits spread,
> An inrailed column rears its lofty head,
> Here to seven streets seven dials count the day, [Pg 462]
> And from each other catch the circling ray;
> Here oft the peasant, with inquiring face,
> Bewildered trudges on from place to place;
> He dwells on every sign with stupid gaze,
> Enters the narrow alley’s doubtful maze,
> Tries every winding court and street in vain,
> And doubles o’er his weary steps again.”[782]

Martinus Scriblerus is supposed to have been born in Seven Dials. Horace Walpole describes the progress of family portraits from the drawing-room to the parlour, from the parlour to the counting-house, from the housekeeper’s room to the garret, and from thence to flutter in rags before a broker’s shop in the Seven Dials.[783] Here Taylor laid the scene of “Monsieur Tonson.”

> “Be gar! there’s Monsieur Tonson come again!”

The celebrated Mr. Catnach, the printer of street ballads, lived in Seven Dials. He died about 1847.

Streets in St. Giles’s.—p. 385.

In Dyot Street lived Curll’s “Corinna,” Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, and her mother.[784] At the Black Horse and Turk’s Head public-houses in this street, those wretches Haggerty and Holloway, in November 1802, planned the murder of Mr. Steele on Hounslow Heath, and

here they returned after the perpetration of the crime. At the execution of these murderers at the Old Bailey, in 1807, twenty-eight persons were trampled to death. The street was immortalised by a song in *Bombastes Furioso*, an excellent and boisterous burlesque tragic opera, written by William Barnes Rhodes, a clerk in the Bank of England. Bainbridge and Breckridge Streets, St. Giles's, now no more, were built prior to 1672, and derived their names from the owners, eminent parishioners in the reign of Charles II. Dyot Street was inhabited as late as 1803 by Philip Dyot, Esq., a descendant of Richard Dyot, from whom it derived its name. In 1710 there was a "Mendicants' Convivial Club" held at the Welsh's Head in this street. The club was founded in 1660, when its meetings were held at the Three [Pg 463] Crowns in the Poultry. Denmark Street was probably built in 1689. Zoffany lived at No. 9. Bunbury, the caricaturist, laid the scene of his "Sunday Evening Conversation" in this street. In July 1771 Sir John Murray, the Pretender's secretary, was carried off in a coach from his house near St. Giles's Church by armed men.[785]

Saint Giles.—p. 385.

This saint has some scurvy worshippers. Pierce Egan, in his *Life in London* (1820), afterwards dramatised, describes the thieves' kitchens and beggars' revels, which men about town in those days thought it "the correct thing," as the slang goes, to see and share. "The Rookery" was a triangular mass of buildings, bounded by Bainbridge, George, and High Streets. It was swept away by New Oxford Street. The lodgings were threepence a night. Sir Henry Ellis, in 1813, counted seventeen horse-shoes nailed to thresholds in Monmouth Street as antidotes against witches. Jews preponderate in this unsavoury street. Mr. Henry Mayhew describes a conversation with a St. Giles's poet who wrote Newgate ballads, Courvousier's Lamentation, and elegies. He was paid one shilling each for them. A parliamentary report of 1848 describes Seven Dials as in a degraded state. "Vagrants, thieves, sharpers, scavengers, basket-women, charwomen, army seamstresses, and prostitutes, compose its mass. Infidels, chartists, socialists, and blasphemers have their head-quarters there. There are a hundred and fifty shops open on the Sunday. The ragged-school there is badly situated and uninviting." Mr. Albert Smith says gin shops are the only guides in "the dirty labyrinth" of the Seven Dials. The author once accompanied a Scripture-reader to some of the lowest and poorest courts and alleys of St. Giles's. In one bare room, he remembers, on an earth floor, sat a blind beggar waiting for the return of his boy, a sweeper, who had been sent out to a street-crossing to try and earn some bread. In another room there was a poor old lonely woman who had made a pet of an immense ram. We ended our tour by visiting an Irishwoman who had been converted from "Popery." While we were there, some Irish boys surrounded the house and shouted in at the key-hole, threatening to [Pg 464] denounce her to the priest. When we emerged from this den we were received with a shower of peculiarly hard small potatoes, a penance which the author bore somewhat impatiently, while the Scripture-reader, who seemed accustomed to such rough compliments, took the blows like an early Christian martyr.

Lincoln's Inn Hall.—p. 398.

In 1800 or 1801 Mackintosh delivered lectures in the old Lincoln's Inn Hall on the "Laws of Nature and Nations." They were attended by Canning, Lord Liverpool, and a brilliant audience. They contained a panegyric on Grotius. In style Mackintosh was measured and monotonous—of the school of Robertson and Gilbert Stuart. He made one mistake in imputing the doctrine of the association of ideas to Hobbes, which Coleridge corrected. He refuted the theories of Godwin in a masterly way.[786]

Serle Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.—p. 401.

This street derived its name from a Mr. Henry Serle, who died intestate circa 1690, much in debt, and with lands heavily mortgaged. He purchased the property from the executors of Sir John Birkenhead, the conductor of the Royalist paper, *Mercurius Aulicus*, during the Civil War, a writer whose poetry Lawes set to music, and who died in 1679. New Square was formerly called Serle's Court, and the arms of Serle are over the Carey Street gateway. The second edition of *Barnaby's Journal* was printed in 1716, for one Illidge, under Serle's Gate, Lincoln's Inn, New Square.[787] Addison seems to have visited Serle's Coffee-house, to study from some quiet nook the "humours" of the young barristers. There is a letter extant from Akenside, the poet, addressed to Jeremiah Dyson, that excellent friend and patron who defended him from the attacks of Warburton at Serle's Coffee-house.

Christian Knowledge Society.—p. 414.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, now at 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields, had apartments in 1714 at No. 6 Serle's Court. This society was founded by Dr. Bray and four [Pg 465] friends on the 8th of March 1699, and it celebrated its third jubilee, or 150th anniversary, in 1849. The society assists schools and colonial churches, and is said to have distributed more than a hundred millions of Bibles and Prayer-books since its foundation.

The following squib is said to have been placed under the plates at an Academic dinner:—

"THE MODERN GOTH.

"Glory to thee, great artist soul of taste
For mending pigsties where a plank's displaced,
Whose towering genius plans from deep research
Houses and temples fit for Master Birch
To grace his shop on that important day
When huge twelfth-cakes are raised in bright array.
Each pastry pillar shows thy vast design;
Hail! then, to thee, and all great works of thine.
Come, let me place thee in the foremost rank
With him whose dulness discomposed the Bank."

The writer then, apostrophising Wren, adds—

"Oh, had he lived to see thy blessed work,
To see pilasters scored like loins of pork,
To see the orders in confusion move,
Scrolls fixed below and pedestals above,
To see defiance hurled at Rome and Greece,
Old Wren had never left the world in peace.
Look where I will—above, below is shown
A pure disordered order of thy own;
Where lines and circles curiously unite
A base compounded, compound composite,
A thing from which in turn it may be said,
Each lab'ring mason turns abash'd his head;
Which Holland reprobates and Dance derides,
While tasteful Wyatt holds his aching sides."[788]

Soane foolishly brought an action against the bitter writer; but Lord Kenyon directed the jury to find for the defendant on the ground that the satire was not personal.

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Footnotes:

[1] Tom Taylor's *Life of Haydon*, vol. i. p. 49.

[2] Strype, B. iii. p. 278.

[3] It was pulled down in January 1878.

[4] The steepness of Holborn Hill was abolished by the new viaduct in 1869.

[5] Cunningham's *London*, vol. i. p. 260.

[6] Archenholz, p. 227.

[7] Beautifully reprinted in 1863 by Mr. J. C. Hotten.

[8] Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. iii. p. 274.

[9] Pamphlet "The Burning of the Pope," quoted in Brayley's *Londiniana*, vol. iv. p. 74.

[10] Roger North's *Examen*, p. 574.

[11] *Ibid.* p. 574.

[12] For a further account of these Anti-Papal proceedings the reader may refer to *Sir Roger de Coverly*, with notes by W. H. Wills.

[13] *State Trials*, x. pp. 105-124; Burnet, ii. p. 407.

[14] Hume, vol. vii. p. 220.

[15] Evelyn, vol. ii. p. 341.

[16] *Temple Bar, the City Golgotha* (1853), p. 33.

[17] Cobbett's *State Trials*, vol. xviii.

[18] *State Trials*, vol. xviii. p. 375.

[19] *Annual Register* (1766), p. 52.

[20] Nichol's *Literary Anecdotes*.

[21] Brayley.

[22] Boswell, p. 258.

[23] Ovid, *de Art. Amand.*, B. v. 339.

[24] *Recollections of the Life of John O'Keefe*, vol. i. p. 81.

[25] *O'Keefe's Life*, vol. i. p. 101.

[26] *London Scenes*, by Aleph (1863), p. 75.

[27] Stow's *Annals*.

[28] Hall's *Chronicle* (condensed in Nichols' *London Pageants*).

[29] Leland's *Collectanea*, vol. iv. pp. 310 *et seq.*

[30] Holinshed.

[31] Nichols' *Progresses*, vol. i. p. 58.

[32] Nichols' *London Pageants*, p. 63.

[33] *London Gazette.*

[34] Nichols p. 83.

[35] Dugdale.

[36] Holinshed's *Chronicles*, vol. iii. p. 338.

[37] Sharon Turner's *Hist. of England*, vol. xii. p. 276.

[38] Hygford's *Exam. Murd.*, 57.

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] Pennant.

[41] Camden, p. 632.

[42] Hepworth Dixon's *Story of Lord Bacon's Life* (1862), p. 120.

[43] Hepworth Dixon's *Story of Lord Bacon's Life* (1862), p. 121.

[44] Wotton, *Reliquiæ*, p. 160.

[45] Dr. Birch's *Memoirs of the Reign of James I.*

[46] Ben Jonson's *Works* (Gifford), vol. vii. p. 75.

[47] Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, x. 80.

[48] MS. Journal of the House of Commons.

[49] Smith's *Nollekens*.

[50] Boswell's *Johnson* (1860), p. 751.

[51] Jeaffreson's *Book about Doctors*, p. 97.

[52] Boswell, vol. iv. p. 276.

[53] J. T. Smith's *Streets of London* (1846), vol. i. p. 412.

[54] *The Intelligencer*, Jan. 23, 1664-5.

[55] Disraeli's *Curios. of Lit.*, p. 289.

[56] Evelyn, vol. i. p. 10.

[57] Dr. King's *Anecdotes*, p. 117.

[58] Thoresby's *Diary*, ii. 111-117.

[59] *British Bibliographer*, vol. i. p. 574.

[60] Pope's *Works* (Carruthers), vol. ii. p. 379.

[61] Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, pp. 207-244.

[62] Jeaffreson's *Book about Doctors* (2d edit.) pp. 207, 208.

[63] Stow, p. 161.

[64] Dryden's *Misc. Poems*, iv. 275, ed. 1727 (Cunningham).

[65] Latimer's Fourth Sermon, 1st ed.

[66] Strype, B. iv. p. 105.

[67] *Earl of Monmouth's Mem.*, ed. 1759, p. 77.

[68] Lysons.

[69] Dr. Birch's *Mems. of the Peers of England*.

[70] Lingard's *History of England*.

[71] Hughson.

[72] Cunningham (1846), vol. i. p. 38.

[73] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, vol. i. p. 292.

[74] Lilly *On the Life and Death of King Charles I.*, p. 224.

[75] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, ii. 153.

[76] Smith's *Streets*, vol. i. p. 385.

[77] Thoresby's *Letters*, ii. 329.

[78] Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, p. 208.

[79] *Spectator*, 329-335.

[80] Ireland's *Authentic Account*, etc. (1796), i. p. 42.

[81] W. H. Ireland's *Vindication*, p. 21.

[82] Ireland's *Vindication*, p. 19.

[83] Boaden's *Life of Kemble*, vol. ii. p. 172.

[84] Andrews's *History of British Journalism*, vol. ii. p. 285.

[85] Strype, B. iv. p. 118.

[86] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, vol. ii. p. 391.

[87] *The Mourning Bride.*

[88] It is doubtful whether it was not the duchess. (Wilson's *Life of Congreve*, 8vo, 1730, i. p. 1 of Preface.)

[89] Cibber's *Lives of the Poets* (1753).

[90] Stow, p. 165.

[91] *Spectator*, No. 454.

[92] Malachi Malagrowther's *Letters*.

[93] Croker's *Boswell*, vol. i. p. 475.

[94] Scott's *Dryden*, vol. i. p. 388.

[95] Johnson's *Life of Dryden*.

[96] Strype, B. ii. p. 508.

[97] Hume.

[98] Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 363.

[99] Mitford, v. 201.

[100] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 756.

[101] Stow, p. 149.

[102] Burleigh's *Diary in Munden*, p. 811.

[103] Wilson's *Life of James I.*

[104] L'Estrange's *Life of Charles I.*

[105] *Certain Information*, etc., No. 11, p. 87.

[106] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 755.

[107] Essay by John D'Espagne.

[108] Ludlow's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 615.

[109] Pepys, 2d. edit. vol. i. p. 309.

[110] Pepys, vol. i. p. 357.

[111] Aubrey's *Lives and Letters*.

[112] Stow, p. 1045, ed. 1631.

[113] Pepys's *Diary*, vol. i. p. 16.

[114] Leigh Hunt's *Town*, p. 166.

[115] *Ibid.* p. 168.

[116] Dryden's *Essay on Dramatick Poesy*, 1668.

[117] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 756.

[118] *European Magazine* (Mr. Moser).

[119] Smith's *Life of Nollekens*, vol. ii. p. 205.

[120] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, vol. i. p. 22 (Notes by Northcote and Mr. Wornum).

[121] Chalmers's *British Poets*, vol. vii. p. 101 (Ode to the Royal Society).

[122] Cunningham, vol. i. p. 26.

[123] *Ibid.* p. 757.

[124] *Ibid.*

[125] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, vol. i. p. 282.

[126] Galt's *Life of West*, pt. ii. p. 25.

[127] *Ibid.* pp. 36-38.

[128] Strange's *Enquiry into the Rise and Establishment of the Royal Academy* (1775).

[129] Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, p. 134.

[130] The original thirty-six Academicians were—Benjamin West, Francesco Zuccarelli, Nathaniel Dance, Richard Wilson, George Michael Moser, Samuel Wale (a sign-painter), J. Baptist Cipriani, Jeremiah Meyer, Angelica Kauffmann, Charles Catton (a coach and sign painter), Francesco Bartolozzi, Francis Cotes, Edward Penny, George Barrett (Wilson's rival), Paul Sandby, Richard Yeo, Mary Moser, Agostino Carlini, William Chambers (the architect of Somerset House), Joseph Wilton (the sculptor), Francis Milner Newton, Francis Hayman, John Baker, Mason Chamberlin, John Gwynn, Thomas Gainsborough, Dominick Serres, Peter Toms (a drapery painter for Reynolds, who finally committed suicide), Nathaniel Hone (who for his libel on Reynolds was expelled the Academy), Joshua Reynolds, John Richards, Thomas Sandby, George Dance, J. Tyler, William Hoare of Bath, and Johann Zoffani. In 1772 Edward Burch, Richard Cosway, Joseph Nollekens, and James Barry (expelled in 1797), made up the forty.—Wornum's Preface to the *Lectures on Painting*.

[131] Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, 1845, p. 136.

[132] Royal Academy *Catalogues*, Brit. Mus.

[133] Smith's *Nollekens*, vol. i. p. 381.

[134] *Life of Haydon*, by Tom Taylor, vol. i. p. 30.

[135] *Ibid.* p. 20.

[136] Thornbury's *Life of Turner*.

[137] O'Keefe's *Life* vol. i. p. 386.

[138] Knowles's *Life of Fuseli*, vol. i. p. 32.

[139] Irvine's *Life of Falconer*.

[140] Smith's *Life of Nollekens*, vol. ii. p. 129.

[141] Hatton, p. 785.

[142] *Postman*, No. 80.

[143] *Life of Blake*, by Gilchrist.

[144] Andrews's *History of Journalism*, vol. ii. p. 85.

[145] Strype, B. iii. p. 196.

[146] Glover's *Life*, p. 6.

[147] Dennis's *Letters*, p. 196.

[148] Procter's *Life of Kean*, vol. ii. p. 140.

[149] Dr. King's *Art of Cookery*.

[150] *Spectator*, No. 9.

[151] *Memoirs of the Kit-Cat Club*, p. 6.

[152] Defoe's *Journal*, vol. i. p. 287.

[153] *Letters of Lady M. W. Montagu*, edited by W. M. Thomas, Esq.

[154] *Annual Obituary*, vol. vii.

[155] *Monthly Repository*, by Leigh Hunt, 1836.

[156] Procter's *Life of Kean*.

[157] *The Temple Anecdotes* (Groombridge), p. 50.

[158] Strype, B. iv. p. 120.

[159] *Ibid.*

[160] Dixon's *Bacon*, p. 227.

[161] Appendix to the *Tatler*, vol. iv. p. 615.

[162] Smith's *Streets of London*, vol. iv. p. 244.

[163] *Egerton Papers*, by Collier, p. 376.

[164] Strype, B. vi. p. 76.

[165] Cunningham, vol. i. p. 283.

[166] *London Gazette*, No. 897.

[167] Pepys, vol. i. p. 137, 4to ed.

[168] Horace Walpole.

[169] Otway.

[170] *Spectator*, No. 155.

[171] *Tatler*, No. 26.

[172] *Nouvelle Biographie Univ.*, vol. xxxviii. p. 19.

[173] *Ducatus Leodiensis*, fol. 1715, p. 485.

[174] *British Apollo* (1740), ii. p. 376.

[175] Oldys's *Life of Raleigh*, p. 145.

[176] Aubrey, vol. iii. p. 513.

[177] Gough's *British Topography*, vol. i. p. 743.

[178] Walpole's *Mems. of George III.*, vol. iv. p. 173.

[179] Elmes's *Anecdotes*, vol. iii.

[180] Cunningham, vol. i. p. 83.

[181] Boswell, vol. i. p. 225.

[182] Hone's *Everyday Book*, vol. i. p. 237.

[183] Pye's *Patronage of British Art* (1845), pp. 61, 62.

[184] *Wine and Walnuts*, vol. i. p. 161.

[185] Smith's *Nollekens*, vol. i. p. 3.

[186] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 203.

[187] *Haydon's Life*, vol. iii. p. 182.

[188] *Book about Doctors*, by J. C. Jeaffreson, p. 221.

[189] Archenholz, p. 109.

[190] Colman's *Random Records*.

[191] See the Percy Society's Publications.

[192] Rymer, iii. 926.

[193] Chaucer's *Works*.

[194] Dugdale's *Baronetage*, vol. 1. p. 789.

[195] *Scala Chron.*, p. 175; Froissart, c. 161.

[196] Rymer, vi. 452.

[197] Froissart, lix.

[198] Walsingham, p. 248.

[199] Holinshed, vol. ii. p. 431.

[200] Shakspere incorrectly makes Jack Cade burn the Savoy. He has attributed to that Irish impostor the act of Wat Tyler, a far more patriotic man.

[201] Stow.

[202] Cowley's *Works*, 10th edit. (Tonson), 1707, vol. ii. p. 587.

[203] Letter to Evelyn. Cowley's *Works* (1707), vol. ii. p. 731.

[204] J. T. Smith's *Antiquarian Ramble in the Streets of London* (1846), vol. i. p. 255.

[205] Baker's *Chronicle* (1730), p. 625.

[206] Cunningham's *London* (1849), vol. ii. p. 728.

[207] *The Postman* (1696), No. 180.

[208] Strype, B. iv. p. 107, ed. 1720.

[209] Hughson's *Walks through London*, p. 207.

[210] Hughson's *Walks through London*, p. 209.

[211] Dryden's *Works* (1821 ed.), vol. ii. p. 105.

[212] *Athenæ Ox.* vol. ii. p. 1036.

[213] Cunningham (1849), vol. ii. p. 537.

[214] Wood's *Athen. Ox.* ii. 396, ed. 1721.

[215] *The Shepherd's Hunting* (1633).

[216] Macaulay's *History of England*, vol. ii. chap. v.

[217] Buckingham's *Works* (1704), p. 15.

[218] *All the Year Round*, May 12, 1860 (*The Precinct*).

[219] Andrews's *History of British Journalism*, vol. ii. p. 83.

[220] Smiles's *Lives of the Engineers*, vol. ii. p. 187.

[221] Smiles's *Lives of the Engineers*, vol. ii. p. 186.

[222] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 93.

[223] Hepworth Dixon's *Story of Lord Bacon's Life* (1862), p. 14.

[224] Montagu, xii. 420, 432.

[225] Aubrey's *Lives*, vol. ii. p. 224; Dixon's *Bacon*, p. 315.

[226] *Character of Lord Bacon.*

[227] Dixon's *Story of Lord Bacon's Life*, p. 33 (1862). Pearce's *Inns of Court*.

[228] Sir B. Gerbier.

[229] Bassompierre's *Embassy to England*.

[230] Whitelocke, p. 167.

[231] Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman*, ed. 1661, p. 108.

[232] Pepys, 6th June 1663.

[233] Dryden (Scott), vol. ix. p. 233.

[234] Pepys's *Diary*. vol. i. p. 223.

[235] Evelyn's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 530.

[236] Rate Books of St. Martin's.

[237] Cole's *MSS.*, vol. xx. folio 220.

[238] Gilchrist's *Life of Etty*, vol. i. p. 221.

[239] Barrow's *Life of Peter the Great*, p. 90.

[240] Ballard's Collection, Bodleian.

[241] Pennant.

[242] Strype, B. vi. p. 76.

[243] Cunningham, vol. i. pp. 402, 403.

[244] Rate-books of St. Martin's.

[245] *Memorials of Franklin*, vol. i. p. 261.

[246] Smith's *Comic Misc.* vol. ii. p. 186.

[247] *Memoirs of James Smith*, by Horace Smith, vol. i. p. 32.

[248] *Memoirs of James Smith*, by Horace Smith, vol. i. p. 54.

[249] Smith's *Nollekens*, vol. i. p. 340.

[250] *Ibid.* vol. i. pt 302.

[251] Harl. MSS. 6850.

[252] Rate-books of St. Martin's.

[253] Smith's *Book for a Rainy Day*, pp. 281, 282.

[254] Cal. Rot. Patentium.

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[256] *Father Hubbard's Tale*, 4to, 1604.—Middleton's *Works*, vol. v. p. 573.

[257] Archer's *Vestiges of Old London* (View of Crockford's shop).

[258] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, vol. iii. p. 911.

[259] Malcolm's *Londinum Rediviv.* vol. iii. p. 397.

[260] Hughson's *Walks* (1829).

[261] Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. i. p. 383.

[262] Boswell, vol. iii. p. 331.

[263] *Censura Literaria*, vol. i. p. 176.

[264] Spence's *Anecdotes*.

[265] *State Poems*, vol. ii. p. 143 ("A Satyr on the Poets.")

[266] Leigh Hunt's *Town* (1857), p. 135.

[267] Hughson's *Walks*, p. 184.

[268] Leigh Hunt's *Town* (1859 ed.), p. 134.

[269] Strype, B. iv. p. 117.

[270] Boswell.

[271] Walpole's *Anecdotes* (ed. Dallaway), vol. ii. p. 315.

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[273] Brayley's *Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. x. part iv. p. 166.

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[276] Cunningham (1849), vol. i. p. 210.

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[280] Stow, p. 166.

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[283] Tennyson.

[284] Malcolm's *London*, vol. ii.

[285] Knox's *Elegant Extracts*.

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[288] *Prot. Dissenters' Magazine*, vol. vi.

[289] Smith's *Life of Nollekens*, vol. i. 365.

[290] Cradock's *Memoirs*, vol. iv. p. 166.

[291] *Garrard to the Earl of Strafford*, vol. i. p. 227.

[292] *Citie's Loyaltie Displayed*, 4to, 1661.

[293] Pepys.

[294] Aubrey's *Anecdotes*, vol. iii. p. 457.

[295] Malcolm's *Streets of London* (1846), vol. i. p. 363.

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[299] Addison's *Freeholder*, No. 4.

[300] J. T. Smith's *Streets of London* (1846), vol. i. pp. 366, 367.

[301] Sir G. Buc (Stow by Howes), p. 1075, ed. 1631.

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[303] *Spectator* No. 2, March 2, 1710-11.

[304] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 606.

[305] Sir G. Buc, in Howes, p. 1076, ed. 1631.

[306] *Trivia.*

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[309] Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. ii. p. 612.

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[330] *Wine and Walnuts*, vol. i. p. 281.

[331] *Ibid.* p. 269.

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[609] *Wine and Walnuts*, vol. ii. p. 150.

[610] Jeaffreson's *Book about Doctors* (2d ed.), p. 85.

[611] The very earliest was granted to Philip the Hermit, for gravelling the road at Highgate.

[612] Rymer's *Fœdera*.

[613] Fuller's *Church History*.

[614] Vaughan's *Life of Wickliffe*.

[615] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, p. 11.

[616] *Ibid.* (1829), p. 2.

[617] Pennant (4th ed.), p. 3.

[618] Butler's *Lives of the Saints*.

[619] Aggas's Map, published in 1578 or 1560.

[620] Stow's *Survey*, 1595.

[621] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, p. 46.

[622] Evelyn's *Diary*.

[623] Brayley's *Londiniana*.

[624] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, pp. 58, 59.

[625] Defoe's *History of the Plague*.

[626] Maitland's *History of London*.

[627] Dr. Sydenham.

[628] Dr. Hodgson's *Journal of the Plague*.

[629] Dr. Hodges on the Plague.

[630] Fuller's *Church History*.

[631] Hume.

[632] Fuller.

[633] Parliamentary Report.

[634] Ralph.

[635] Rowland Dobie's *History of St. Giles's*, p. 119.

[636] Pennant's *London*, p. 159.

[637] Cunningham's *London*, vol. i. p. 339.

[638] *Annual Register*, 1827.

[639] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, p. 367.

[640] Strype.

[641] Strype.

[642] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, p. 225.

[643] Cunningham's *London*, vol. i. p. 384.

[644] Smith's *Book for a Rainy Day*, p. 21.

[645] Stow, p. 164.

[646] Pennant.

[647] Smith's *Book for a Rainy Day*, p. 29, date 1774.

[648] Smith's *Book for a Rainy Day* is one of the best works of a clever London antiquarian, to whose industry, as well as to Mr. Peter Cunningham's, the author is much indebted, as his foot-notes pretty well show.

[649] Dryden's *Limberham*.

[650] *Love for Love.*

[651] Stow.

[652] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, p. 66.

[653] Parton's account of St. Giles's.

[654] Parton.

[655] Smith's *Nollekens*, vol. i. p. 130.

[656] Archenholz, p. 117.

[657] Smith's *Book for a Rainy Day*, p. 74.

[658] Dobie's *History of St. Giles's*, p. 204.

[659] *Bell's Life in London*, July 12, 1829.

[660] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 565.

[661] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 566.

[662] *Sketches by Boz*, p. 44.

[663] *Sketches by Boz*, p. 45.

[664] Dobie's *St. Giles's*, p. 362.

[665] T. Hudson Turner, *Archæological Journal*, Dec. 1848.

[666] Sir G. Buc in Stow, by Howes, p. 1072 (ed. 1631).

[667] Pennant, p. 176.

[668] Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 480.

[669] *Walpole*, by Dallaway, vol. ii. p. 37.

[670] Lloyd's *State Worthies*.

[671] *State Trials*, iv. 445, fol. ed.

[672] *Hudibras*, part iii. c. 3.

[673] Granger's *Biography* in art. "Margaret Roper."

[674] Dr. Birch's *Life of Tillotson*.

[675] *Hale's Life*, by Burnet.

[676] *Biog. Brit.*, by the Hon. and Rev. F. Egerton.

[677] Preface to Thurloe's *State Papers*, 1742.

[678] *Biog. Brit.*

[679] *Session of the Poets.*

[680] Johnson's *Lives*.

[681] *Ath. Ox.* vol. ii.

[682] Foote's *Life of Murphy*.

[683] Campbell's *Lives of the Chief Justices*, vol. iii. p. 221.

[684] Dr. Johnson.

[685] Pennant, p. 176.

[686] Evelyn's *Diary*, vol. ii. p. 60 (1850).

[687] *The Devil is an Ass.*

[688] Aubrey.

[689] Gifford's *Ben Jonson*, vol. i. p. 9.

[690] Fuller's *Worthies*, vol. ii. p. 112.

[691] Gifford, vol. i. p. 14.

[692] Moore's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 211.

[693] *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. i. p. 147.

[694] Cunningham.

[695] Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xvii. p. 120.

[696] Wilkinson's *Handbook for Egypt*, p. 185.

[697] Cunningham's *Life of Inigo Jones*, p. 23 (Shakspere Society).

[698] *Canting Academy*, 1674 (Malcolm).

[699] Cunningham.

[700] Rate-books of St. Clement's Danes (Cunningham).

[701] Wharton's *Works*.

[702] *Life of Lord W. Russell*, by Lord John Russell, 3d ed. vol. ii. p. 18.

[703] Fox's *History of the Reign of James II.* (Introduction).

[704] Lord John Russell, vol. i. p. 121.

[705] Raplin, vol. xiv. p. 333.

[706] Burnet's *History of his own Times* (1725), vol. ii.

[707] *Letters of Lady Russell*, 7th ed. 1819.

[708] *State Trials*, vol. xviii. p. 522.

[709] *Daily Journal*, July 9, 1735.

[710] Ireland *Inns of Court*, p. 129.

[711] Macaulay's *History of England*, vol. i. p. 353.

[712] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, vol. iii. p. 167.

[713] Pennant, p. 238.

[714] *Lady M. W. Montague's Letters.*

[715] Burney's *Hist. of Music*, vol. iv. p. 667.

[716] Lord Chesterfield (Mahon), vol. ii. p. 264.

[717] Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, p. 192.

[718] Pugh's *Life of Jonas Hanway* (1787), p. 184.

[719] *Lounger's Commonplace Book*, vol. i. p. 361.

[720] Macaulay's *Essay on Walpole's Letters*.

[721] Walpole's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 169.

[722] Campbell's *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, vol. vi. p. 105.

[723] Campbell's *Chief Justices*, vol. ii. p. 563.

[724] Pepys, vol. ii. p. 272.

[725] *Ibid.* p. 282.

[726] Hatton's *New View of London* (1708), p. 627.

[727] Clarendon, vol. vi. pp. 89, 90.

[728] Grosley's *Tour to London*, vol. ii. p. 309.

[729] Walpole's *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 137.

[730] Walpole's *Letters*, vol. vii. p. 223.

[731] *Ibid.* vol. ix. p. 307.

[732] Cunningham, vol. i. p. 228.

[733] *Lady Fanshawe's Memoirs*, p. 92.

[734] *Ibid.* p. 94.

[735] *Lady Fanshawe's Memoirs*, pp. 300, 301.

[736] Moore's *Diary*, vol. iv. p. 193.

[737] *Ibid.* p. 35.

[738] Coleridge's *Table Talk*.

[739] Townsend, vol. i. p. 91.

[740] "The Alabaster sarcophagus of Oimeneptah I., King of Egypt, now in Sir John Soane's Museum. Drawn by Joseph Bonomi, and described by Samuel Sharpe." London: Longmans and Co. 1864.

[741] *Annual Register* (1837).

[742] Chapone's *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 68.

[743] Leigh Hunt's *Town*, p. 237.

[744] Malone, pp. 135, 136.

[745] Grammont's *Mems.* (1811), vol. ii. p. 142.

[746] Doran's *Her Majesty's Servants*, vol. i. p. 80.

[747] Pepys, vol. iii. p. 136.

[748] Pepys, vol. iv. p. 2.

[749] Cibber's *Apology*, chap. v.

[750] *Ibid.*

[751] *Doran*, vol. i. p. 119.

[752] Doran, vol. i. p. 149.

[753] Leigh Hunt's *Town*, p. 245.

[754] Cibber's *Apology*, 2d. ed. p. 138.

[755] Baker's *Biog. Dram.*, vol. i. p. 270.

[756] Doran, vol. i. p. 542.

[757] Doran, vol. i. p. 424.

[758] *Ibid.* p. 446.

[759] Leigh Hunt's *Town*, p. 427.

[760] Cunningham (1850), p. 406.

[761] Doran, vol. i. p. 327.

[762] Whincop's *Scanderberg*, p. 80 (1747).

[763] *Fly Leaves*, by John Miller, p. 20.

[764] The name of Strahan, Paul, and Bates's firm was originally Snow and Walton. It was one of the oldest banking-houses in London, second only to Child's. At the period of the Commonwealth Snow and Co. carried on the business of pawnbrokers, under the sign of the "Golden Anchor." The firm suspended payment about 1679 (as did many other banks), owing to the tyranny of Charles II. Strahan (the partner at the time of the last failure) had changed his name from Snow; his uncle, named Strahan (Queen's printer?) having left him £180,000, making change of name a condition. It is curious that on examining Strahan and Co.'s books, it was found by those of 1672 that a decimal system had been then employed. Strahan was known to all religious people. Bates had for many years been managing clerk. The firm had also a navy agency in Norfolk Street. They had encumbered themselves with the Mostyn Collieries to the amount of £139,940, and backed up Gandells, contractors who were making railways in France and Italy and draining Lake Capestang, lending £300,000 or £400,000. They finally pledged securities (£22,000) to the Rev. Dr. Griffiths, Prebendary of Rochester. Sir John Dean Paul got into a second-class carriage at Reigate, the functionaries trying to get in after him; the porter pulled them back, the train being in motion! Paul went to London alone, and in spite of telegraph got off, but at eight o'clock next night surrendered. The three men were tried October 26 and 27, 1858.

[765] *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings* (1863), pp. 6, 7.

[766] *Harleian MS.*, 6850.

[767] *Cunningham*, vol. i. p. 378. I may here, as well as anywhere else, express my thanks to this careful and most industrious antiquary.

[768] Mrs. Cornwall Baron Wilson's *Memoirs of the Duchess of St. Albans* (1840), vol. i. p. 331.

[769] Kippis, *Bio. Brit.* iv. p. 266.

[770] Thornbury's *British Artists*, vol. i. p. 171.

[771] *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1783, p. 709.

[772] *David Copperfield* (1864), p. 208.

[773] *The Clubs of London*, vol. ii. p. 150.

[774] *The Clubs of London* (1828), vol. ii.

[775] *Notes and Queries*, vol. vi. 2d series, p. 131.

[776] Hatten, p. 24.

[777] Cunningham, vol. i. p. 378.

[778] *Notes and Queries* (Bolton Corney), vol. viii. 2d series, p. 122.

[779] Burnet, vol. i. p. 338.

[780] Pepys, vol. v. p. 436.

[781] Pennant, p. 215.

[782] *Trivia.*

[783] *Anecdotes of Painting*, iv. 22.

[784] Malone's *Dryden*, ii. 97.

[785] Mr. Rimbault in *Notes and Queries*, Feb. 1850.

[786] *Clubs of London*, vol. ii. p. 263.

[787] All from Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 731, and how much else.

[788] *Notes and Queries*, 2d series, vol. xi. p. 289.

Transcriber's Note:

Footnote 404 appears on page 224 of the text, but there is no corresponding marker on the page.

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