

VARIOUS

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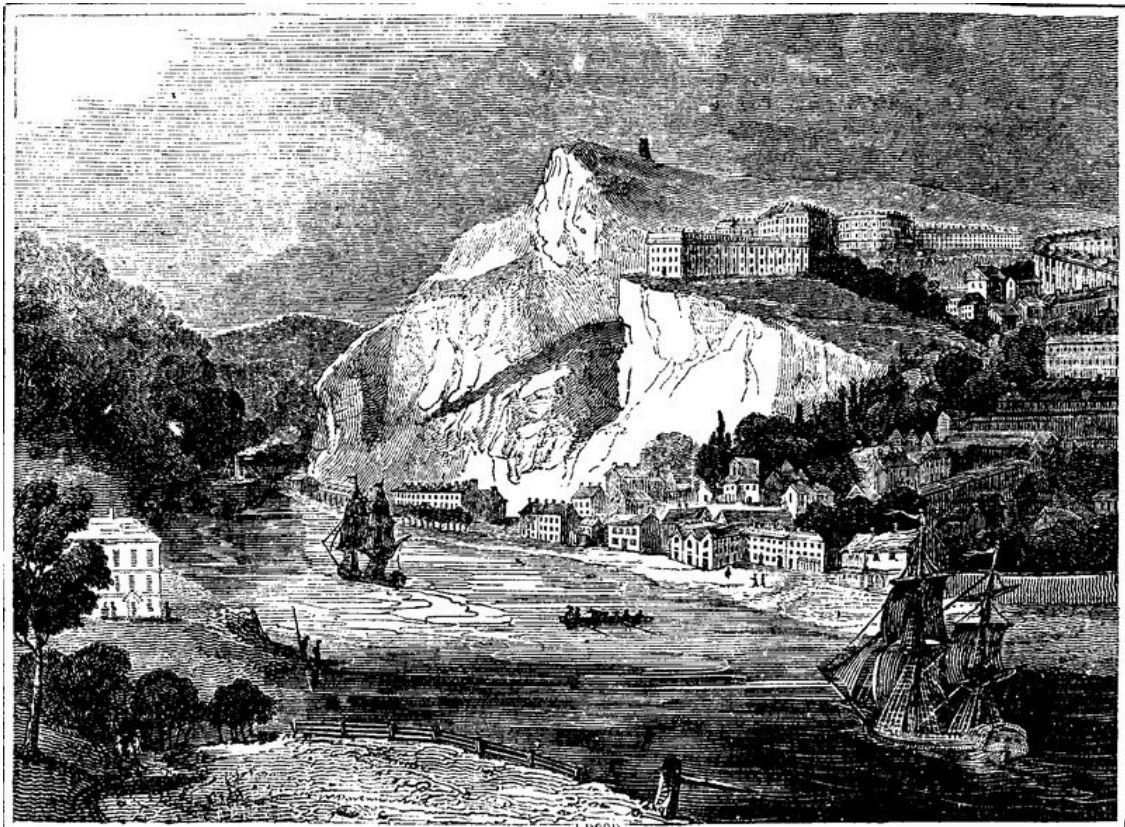
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CLIFTON



Clifton is the Montpellier of England, and is associated with all that is delightful in nature: of this, the Engraving before us is a true picture, whether we contemplate the winding Avon; the sublime beauty of its rocks—

Clifton's airy rocks,

(as Mr. Bowles poetically calls them), the picturesque scenery of the opposite shore; or the abodes of cottage comforts which cluster into a rural village beside the cliff till the eye reaches a splendid range of crescents and terraces which art has reared on the stupendous brow above.

Clifton is situated on the south and west of the cliff, or hill, (whence its name), one mile westward of the city of Bristol, over great part of which it commands a very pleasing prospect, as also of the ships that, on the flood and ebb tides, sail up and down the Avon. From the opposite shore the richly cultivated lands of Somersetshire present themselves in a very beautiful landscape, rising gradually four or five miles from the verge of the river to the top of Dundry Hill, whereon is a high tower, esteemed the Proteus of the weather, as being commonly enveloped with mist, so as

scarcely to be visible, against rain; but, on the contrary, if it be seen clear and distinct in the morning, it denotes the approach of a fine day.

The salubrious situation of Clifton has long since attracted the wealthy. Hence, the hill is nearly covered with superb buildings, (for which the freestone of the country affords peculiar facilities), till the village has almost become an elegant city. The Downs are covered with verdure all the year, and the turf abounds with aromatic plants, growing wild, which are not to be met with elsewhere in England. Here are also discernible ancient fortifications and intrenchments; and coins of the later Roman emperors have frequently been found about the camp; there are other military works opposite, on the Somersetshire side of the Avon. Besides the above remains, on Clifton Downs, is an old tower with a brick floor, but without any roof. (*See the Engraving.*) From three open spaces, formerly doors, are exquisite views: in front an extensive prospect of Gloucestershire; on the right, part of Clifton, and in the background Dundry Hill; and on the left, King's Road, with the ships at anchor, the Bristol Channel, and the mountains of South Wales. At the end of the Downs stands the mansion of Sir William Draper, once so conspicuous in the public mind from the severe chastisement he received from Junius. To the left is an expensive monument erected by Sir William, who was colonel of the 79th regiment, to the memory of his soldiers who fell in the East Indies, in 1768; and to the right is a pillared tribute to the patriotic Earl of Chatham, with a brief Latin inscription by Sir William Draper.

Our view of Clifton is from the Ferry, and is from an effective lithograph, of very recent date.

Added to the charms of the romantic scenery of Clifton are the attractions of the Bristol Hot Wells, in the vicinity; upon which fashion has conferred too great celebrity to render description needful. The richness and grandeur of the scenery of the Hot Wells are almost inconceivable; in some places the rocks, venerably majestic, rise perpendicularly, or overhanging, craggy and bare; and in others they are clothed with luxuriant shrubs and stately trees. From the bottom of these cliffs, on the east bank of the river, issues the Bristol Hot Well water. The spring rises out of an aperture in the solid rocks and is computed to discharge about forty gallons in a minute.

The author of the *History and Beauties of Clifton Hot Wells*, in describing this scenery, says, "One of the sublimest and most beautiful scenes in nature is exhibited by those bold and rugged eminences behind the crescent, known by the name of *St. Vincent's Rocks*, which appear to have been rent asunder by some violent convulsion of nature." They are misshapen and massy projections, nearly 300 feet in height. Pieces of this rock, when broken, have much the appearance of a dark, red marble; and when struck by a substance of corresponding hardness, emit a strong sulphureous smell. It is sometimes used as a substitute for foreign marble for chimney-pieces; but principally for making lime. In the fissures of these rocks are found those fine crystals usually called Bristol stones, which are so hard as to cut glass, and sustain the action of fire and of *aquafortis*; this, however, is only the case with such as are tinged. The imperfect ones, in which there appears something like small hairs, white specks, or bubbles of air and water, turn white when calcined.

On these rocks, the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles has the following lines:—

How beauteous the pale rocks above the shore
Uplift their bleak and furrow'd aspect high!
How proudly desolate their foreheads, hoar,
That meet the earliest sunbeam of the sky!

Bound to yon dusky mart, with pennants gay,
The tall bark on the winding water's line,
Between the river cliffs plies her hard way,
And peering on the sight the white sails shine.

LITERARY PROBLEM

(For the Mirror.)

It is not perhaps generally known, that in the writings of Sodates, a poet of Thrace, many of the verses may be turned and read different ways, without either losing the measure or sense; for instance the following, which may be read backwards:—

"Roma tibi stibito motibus ibit amor
Si bene te, tua laus taxat, sua laute tenebis
Sole medere pede, ede perede, melos."

His writings are nearly extinct, and are for the most part of a very immoral kind. He wrote some verses against Philadelphus Ptolemy, and was, in consequence, put into a cage of lead and thrown into the sea.

K.K.

MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS

THE GENOESE. ¹

(For the Mirror.)

The Genoese women, are almost without exception *beautiful*, and many of them retain their loveliness for a longer period than is usual in warm climates; I have seen very handsome females turned of forty. They are excessively fond of adorning themselves on Sundays and all festive occasions, with a profusion of rich and expensive gold ornaments; indeed the married women cannot be seen without them, for they are an essential part of their hymeneal dower. A young woman, upon the occasion of her nuptials, is obliged to purchase a set of gold trinkets, should the existence of her mother prevent her inheriting those which are already in the family; and in order to make this important purchase, no small property is required, since as much as three or four hundred francs are often given for a pair of ear-rings, seven or eight hundred for a necklace, chain, bracelets, or other articles individually; a few more trifling ornaments complete the set, with a curious kind of gold filagree cap, or net, for the head. These trinkets are in fact *necessary* adjuncts to Genoese domestic economy, since, though as heir-looms they are never sold, except three or four sets should, from family casualties, become the property of an individual, yet there is neither law nor prejudice against pawning them; and, in pawn they generally are, from the week's commencement to its end, being redeemed on the Saturday night, only to be worn on Sunday, and pledged again on the Monday morning. There are shops in Genoa expressly for the sale of these bridal ornaments, which are worn there, exclusively by the inferior classes; for the higher orders of society if seen in such, would forfeit, whether foreigners or citizens, all pretensions to rank and fashion; however, the Genoese gold trinkets, may be, and are, much worn by the *Hidalgos* of many a place afar from that of their manufacture. These ornaments are not wrought into more than four fashions, which never vary. The Genoese women marry at fifteen or sixteen years of age, and it is impossible to imagine a creature more innocent, childish-looking, and perfectly beautiful, than a young bride in her nuptial attire.

The female children of genteel parentage are, in Genoa, allowed to visit amongst themselves in balls and fêtes, until they have attained the age of fourteen; when, being considered marriageable, instead of "*coming out*" as in England, they are kept strictly at home; allowed indeed to see a little company there, but there only, except when taken *per favour*, once or twice to the opera, to which they go purposely in an undress, sit at the back of the box, so as not to be seen, or if accidentally beheld, they are not to be recognised. When a girl reaches the appointed years of discretion, the sole consideration of her parents is, to *marry* her, and in this matter *she*, poor thing, has no voice, as I shall proceed to prove. Negotiating matches, making proposals, and arranging marriages, are affairs confided to the prudence and mediation of certain busy old ladies, who find their account in bringing about weddings, since they receive a regular *per centage* upon them. One of these emissaries of Hymen will call on a parent who has a son, reported to be an eligible match, and open the business by talking of the young man, until an opportunity occurs of inquiring whether he is not soon to be settled, and how much will be allowed him? These queries being answered to the good lady's satisfaction, she proceeds a step further, and enumerates the principal families of her acquaintance, who have

¹ The intelligent friend from whose conversation the writer gleaned the following account, has resided three years in Genoa, and therefore is fully competent to speak of the customs of its inhabitants. This paper is derived from the same source as that entitled "*A Recent Visit to Pompeii*."—Vide MIRROR, vol xiii p. 276.

daughters to *dispose* of, adding an accurate description of each Signorina's person, connexions, property, expectancies, and other advantages. A lady having been selected as an eligible match for the youth, the parents on both sides being agreed, and the young gentleman duly informed of their arrangements for his happiness, he is allowed to commence paying his addresses to the fair one, by sending her a large, and peculiarly constructed bouquet, the acceptance of which, is in fact an acceptance of himself, and the girl is immediately considered a *Sposina*, or betrothed one. The bouquet, and herself, in full dress, are forthwith carried to the opera, where the former is laid, and the latter seated, immediately in front of the box; when, numerous are the eyes and glasses levelled at the new *Sposina*, upon this her first appearance in public. On this interesting and trying occasion, her accepted lover stands during the performance behind her chair, and is assiduous in his attentions. The next amusement at which, according to etiquette the *Sposina* appears, is a ball, to which she goes attended by her lover, and one or both of her parents. The bouquet, the emblem of her engagement goes with her, which never quits her hand, except when she dances, and is then laid on her seat, until her return. She is not allowed to dance with any one but her brother, intended husband, or his most intimate friend to whom perhaps as a *favour*, he may choose to introduce her. The duty of the engaged man is, to present his *Sposina* every morning up to the period of their union, with a fresh bouquet, the size of which intimates the degree of affection and respect that he entertains for her. But should the lover's finances be slender, and his nuptials long delayed, he must find this elegant custom a very ruinous one, since the price of the best of these bouquets (and who durst for his own credit's sake present an inferior one?) is five or six francs. The *Sposina* appears everywhere and everyday with a bouquet in her hand, closely attended by her lover, and either or both of her parents; and a female, a stranger in Genoa, commits a breach of etiquette by walking through the streets carrying a nosegay, besides subjecting herself to the impertinence of a thousand eyes, that ask, "*Are you a Sposina?*" The wedding is celebrated with splendour, the fortune of the bride being sometimes expended in purchasing a magnificent dress, which is then deemed essential. Amongst the highest classes, the English custom of the bride and bridegroom quitting the wedding party immediately after the performance of the marriage-ceremony, for a tour, has commenced; but this innovation upon their established national manners, has not yet obtained a very general footing. The *match-maker* is, upon the wedding-day, presented with a sum of money adequate to the trouble she has taken to effect the alliance; for a lack of beauty, or fortune on the lady's side, mars her matrimonial prospects, and causes as great difficulties respecting her settlement in life, at Genoa, as in some other places I could mention rather nearer home. Once, being in company with an ancient dame, who had brought about a marriage that astonished all Genoa, she informed me, that she received as her *douceur* upon the occasion, 50*l.* This, I am to conclude, was a liberal recompense; for the *Sposina*, in that instance, was so plain, (a circumstance unusual with the Genoese women,) and afflicted with so bad a breath, as to be an object of disgust with all the men who heard of her. The *bouquets* which I have mentioned, are peculiar in structure, and beautiful in appearance: they are composed of the most brilliantly coloured flowers, disposed round a large central flower, in tiers, or rows, of the same colour; as, first perhaps, a row of red, then white, then purple, then yellow, then blue, &c. &c.; the stalks are cut short, curiously attached to wire by fine silk or thread, and being bound compactly together, so that the stalks and wires brought into a point, form a convenient handle, the petals of the flowers stand out in lines of the most vivid hues, making a kind of smooth, expanded, circular, and convex, surface. The manufacture of these bouquets, one of which takes a considerable time to complete, is a distinct occupation, and the sale of them, quite a trade; and though made elsewhere than at Genoa, those of that town are most esteemed, and sent over all parts of Italy. The flowers composing these bouquets, will keep for at least a fortnight as fresh and beautiful as when first gathered, and are capable of bearing long journeys, for they are constantly forwarded in boxes made expressly for them, to Turin, which is about a hundred miles from Genoa, where they arrive fresh and uninjured. An English nobleman indeed, not long since, having a quick conveyance, dispatched a Genoese bouquet to his family in England,

who received it in its pristine beauty. Besides being presented by lovers to their affianced brides, they are the gifts of friend to friend on most festive occasions, such as weddings, christenings, birthdays, Saint's days, and holidays; and always upon New Year's day, which is as great an occasion for the transfer of gifts in Italy, as it is in France. The freshness and beauty of these bouquets, of which several were sent to me during my residence in Genoa, are to be thus preserved: at night put your flowers into a glass or vase, *without water*, since the stalks bound together in the manner described have lost the power of suction and could not be benefitted by it; then, lightly sprinkle, or water (with a watering-pot, the rose of which is finely bored,) the flowery head of the bouquet, and carefully cover it with a fine, light handkerchief, also moistened. This attention paid every night will preserve these beautiful nosegays, fresh and fair for many weeks.

M.L.B.

THE NAUTILUS. WRITTEN FOR MUSIC

(For the Mirror.)

Hark! 'tis the song of the sailor shell,
Sweet on the breezes swelling:
Rearing its arms to the breathing gale,
Over the billows sailing.
Calm is the eve,
The wavelets heave
Their crests to the setting sun,
Glitter awhile
In his golden smile,
And their brilliant course is run.
Hasten, my brothers, our boat along,
Off to our sea side dwelling:
Haste; while the Nautilus' evening song
Sweet on the breeze is swelling.

Up with the sail! for the earliest boat
Lies 'neath the world of waters
Ceased is the wild harmonious note
That melody's soul first taught us.²
Over the sea
The wind blows free,
The spray in the air is hurl'd:
Clouds in the wave
Their bosoms lave;
Then quick be our sail unfurl'd,
Haste ye, my brothers, ere night comes on,
Over the world of waters:
Sing to high heaven, the mellow song
The Nautilus' note first taught us.

W. PEARCE.

² The Nautilus, or Sailor-shell, is said to be the origin of Music and Navigation.

PARAPHRASE ON BISHOP HEBER'S PICTURE OF HUMAN LIFE

(For the Mirror.)

Life, like a mighty river, bears us on
A rapid tide, we ne'er can rest upon,
Adown the narrow stream, at first, we glide
Thro' fruits and flowers that fringe the grassy side.
The playful murmurings of its windings seem
Soft, as the far-off music of a dream,
Over our heads the trees their blossoms shed,
Flowers on the brink their mingled odours shed.
Beauty around, above us, Hope within;
Eager we grasp each dazzling charm to win.
But hurried on and on, we ne'er can stay
Our little bark to anchor or delay.
For now, how full, how deep, how vast the river
On which we glide, that stays its journey never!
As rolling years bring with them joy and woe,
Dark, and more various, seems our voyage to grow.
Buoyant we ride on waves of hope and joy,
Down, down, we sink, when earthly cares annoy!
Futile and vain, alike each hope or fear
On, on, we glide, there is no resting here.
For far behind is left each joy and woe,
The mighty river ne'er will cease to flow!
And, rough and smooth, it hastens to its home,
Glides by each futile hope and pleasure gone.
Until within our ears the ocean roars,
And the bleak billows break upon the shores;
Beneath our keel the bounding waves arise,
And the land lessens from our aching eyes.
The floods of "Time's wide ocean" round us swell,
Earth take of us thy long and last farewell!
For witness of our *future voyage* there's none
But *He*, the Infinite, Eternal One!

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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