

VARIOUS

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MONKEY ISLAND



This picturesque spot is situate in the middle of the river Thames, near Cliefden, Bucks,¹ and about three-quarters of a mile from the village of Bray.² It was purchased and decorated for the enjoyment of fishing parties by the third Duke of Marlborough. Upon its fine sward he erected a small rustic building called Monkey Hall, from the embellishments of the interior being in part fancifully painted with a number of monkeys dressed in human apparel, and imitating human actions. Some are represented diverting themselves with fishing, others

¹ For a View and Description of Cliefden, see *Mirror*, vol. xv. p. 97.

² For a View of Bray Church, see *Mirror*, vol. xvii. p 209.

with hunting, &c. One is drawn gravely sitting in a boat, smoking, while a female "waterman" is labouring at the oar, rowing him across a river. The ceiling and cornices are ornamented with aquatic plants and flowers. In another building, raised at the expense of the Duke, on this island, and named the Temple, is an elegant saloon, painted with green and gold, and enriched with figures in stucco-work superbly gilt, representing mermaids, sea-lions, fish, shells, and other objects. The place altogether might be called *Marlborough's Folly*.

The perfection of the monkey embellishments would delight the admirers of Mr. Landseer's famed *Monkeyana*.

Monkey Island has had several owners since the Duke of Marlborough disposed of it: the lease of the place at £25*l.* a-year was, in 1787, purchased for 240 guineas, by Henry Townley Ward, Esq. who bequeathed it to P.C. Bruce, Esq., of Taplow. Its vicinity to "Cliefden's hanging woods" and picturesque home scenery must render it a delightful retreat.

Its establishment is stated to have cost the Duke of Marlborough ten thousand guineas.

SONG,

From the French of Béranger

LE ROI D'YVETOT

(For the Mirror.)

There once was a King, as they say,
Though history says naught about it,
Who slept sound by night and by day,
And for glory—who just did without it;
A night cap his diadem was,
Which his maid used to air at the fire,
And then put it on him, (that's poz:)
Such was his Coronation attire.

CHORUS.

"Lack-a-day, well-a-day!" then let us sing,
And mourn for the loss of this good little King.

In a cottage his banquets were given,
He lived upon four meals a-day, sir,
On which diet he seems to have thriven:
And an ass was his charger they say, sir,
A dog was his life-guard, we're told,
And many a peregrination
Thus attended, he must have been bold,
He made step and step through the nation.

CHORUS.

"Lack-a-day, well-a-day!" then let us sing,
And mourn for the loss of this good little King.

His taste, for a monarch, was queer,
But his motto was "live and let live, sir,"
He was thirsty, and fond of good beer,
Which his subjects were happy to give, sir;
He levied his taxes himself,
A quart or a pint for his dinner,
No exciseman went snacks in the pelf,
No clerks had this jolly old sinner.

CHORUS.

"Lack-a-day, well-a-day!" then let us sing,
And mourn for the loss of this good little King.

Except just by way of a lark,

His militia he never would call out,
He then made them shoot at a mark
Till they had shot all their powder and ball out.

CHORUS.

"Lack-a-day, well-a-day!" then let us sing,
And mourn for the loss of this good little King.

To his neighbours he always was kind,
He never extended his boundaries,
For disputes and contentions, I find,
He never saw any just ground arise:
Pleasure's code being his statute law
He ne'er caused a tear to be shed, sir,
Though I swear not a dry eye I saw,
When his subjects first heard he was dead, sir.

CHORUS.

"Lack-a-day, well-a-day!" well might they sing,
When they mourned the sad loss of their good little King.

His portrait you must have observed,
In remarkably good preservation,
For his eminent virtues deserved
You'll allow, a conspicuous station:
"The King's Head" still continues his name,
Where full often the people on holidays

As they tipple, still talk of his name,
In lamenting the end of his jolly days.

CHORUS.

"Lack a-day, well-a-day!" thus do they sing.
And mourn for the loss of their good little King.

H.

TO A LADY WHO SAID SHE WAS THE SAME AGE AS HIMSELF

FROM THE FRENCH OF BERANGER

(For the Mirror.)

Our ages are the same, you say,
But know that love believes it not;
The Fates, a wager I would lay,
Our tangled threads shared out by lot;
What part to each they did assign
The world, fair dame, can plainly see;
The Spring and Summer days were thine,
Autumn and Winter came to me.

H.

ENGLISH BALLAD SINGING

(For the Mirror.)

The minstrels were once a great and flourishing body in England; but their dignity being interwoven with the illusory splendour of feudal institutions, declined on the advance of moral cultivation: they became in time vulgar mountebanks and jugglers, and in the reign of Elizabeth were *suppressed* as rogues and vagabonds. Banished from the highways they betook themselves to alehouses—followed the trade of pipers and fiddlers—and minstrelsy was no longer known in England.

The suppression of "the order" of minstrels, gave rise to that of the Ballad-singers, who relied upon the quality of their voices for success. The subjects of many of the songs handed down by the minstrels were still held in honour by the ballad-singers. The feats of "Elym of the Clough," "Randle of Chester," and "Sir Topaz," which had faded under the kind keeping of the minstrels, were now refreshed and brought more boldly in the new version before the sense. Robin Hood and Friar Tuck had their honours enlarged by the new dynasty; more maidens and heroes were inspired by their misfortunes. Drayton's allusions to the propagation of Robin's fame may give an idea of the diffusion of the ballad-singers:

"In this our spacious isle I think there is not one,
But he hath heard some talk of him and Little John;
But to the end of time the tales shall ne'er be done,
Of Scarlock, George-a-Green and Much the Miller's son."

The new race started in the field with the full tide of popularity; they had the glory of being opposed to and triumphing over the votaries of the muses. The poets of the first class confessed their uneasiness at the success of the innovators. Of this fact we have abundant instances in Spencer's "Tears of the Muses," and the mighty Shakspeare would bring the calling into contempt.

The ballad-singers did not enjoy *empty popularity*, as may be understood from the number of candidates who yearly sought refuge in their camp. One of the most popular singers of this early time was a boy, distinguished from the nature of his voice "Outroaring Dick," as honestly bestowed as any hero of "jaw-breaking" memory in Greek or Latin history. His earnings, according to Mr. Warton, averaged ten shillings a day; he was a well-known character in Essex, and was not missed for many a day from Braintree fair; and in the decline of life spent his days like an amateur. But Cheetre, for such was his real name, was haunted amidst his glory by a rival. Will Wimbars had a voice of as much flexibility as Dick. Dick was the most popular, for he sang every thing he could, but Will had a select list he never departed from. The former was sought as a companion; the latter

pleased best in the public exercise of his talents.

The most universally esteemed singer of his age was Mat. Nash, who had a vehement style; his "Hunts-up," a song which obtained him "much favor," was one of his most celebrated efforts. However, it happened that the great Secretary Cecil was so captivated with his singing, that he soon enabled him to retire from his profession.

The accident that led to this fortunate reconnoitre is not impertinent to our subject: in a time of dearth, which was severely felt in the city, the famous ballad-maker Delone composed a song reflecting on her Majesty. The ballad-maker and singer were both committed to the compter, but the poet defied government even while in the lion's den. In a letter to the Lord Mayor, he avowed the ballad, and justified it. Nash, in the meantime, in an interview with the Secretary, established his innocence, and laid the foundation of his future prosperity.

The Gipsies furnished a number of singers about this time. The laws and *prejudices* of society concurred in denouncing this race; but, nevertheless, the best received ballad-singers of their time were of this bronzed tribe.

In the reigns of James the First and his successor, the taste of the people for nature and simplicity kept up the profession of ballad-singing. We are to look upon ballad-singers from this time as a corporation. Custom had established yearly festivals for them in the *classic regions* of St. Giles's, which were frequented by the wits of the day—Swift, Gay, Bolingbroke, Steele, &c. From

these high followers of the muses, yearly contingents of ballads were expected. Swift contracted for the humourous songs: Gay who had, as Goldsmith says, "a happy strain of ballad-thinking," was set down for the pathetic ones; and those of a miscellaneous character were divided amongst a number of amateur bards. No importunities, even of his friends, could induce Pope to attend any of these assemblies. He was prevailed on to write an epitaph for a young creature whom he had seen, and who was known by the name of Clarinda: favoured by the great, if she had not been attached to the life of a ballad-singer, she might, with her accomplishments, have risen to distinction and fortune.

Gay and Swift had naturally a relish for low society, and were hailed by the fraternity as the most precious sources of profit. Amongst other songs which Swift sent into the world through the medium of ballad-singers, was a severe satire upon the Duke of Marlborough, beginning "Our Johnny is come from the wars:" it drew much attention, and excited the strongest resentment against the author in the breast of the Duchess, who remained implacable until the publication of Gulliver, when she offered her friendship to Swift, through his friend Gay.

There was a young creature among the ballad-singers known to the world by no other title than Clara, who drew much attention at this time by the sweetness and pathos of her tones. She was the original singer of "Black-eyed Susan," and one or two songs which were afterwards introduced into the "Beggar's Opera;" but her recommendation to particular notice

was the circumstance of her being for many years the object of Bolingbroke's enthusiastic affection. The poor girl strayed for some time, during which his Lordship had not seen her: it was after this interval, that, meeting her, he addressed to her the tender lines, beginning,

"Dear, thoughtless Clara, to my verse attend,
Believe for once the lover and the friend,"

And concluding thus:

"To virtue thus, and to thyself restored,
By all admired, by one alone adored:
Be to thy Harry ever kind and true,
And live for him who more than died for you."

A series of calamities totally ruined her vocal powers, and she afterwards subsisted by the sale of oranges at the Court of Requests.

The profession did not continue to maintain its rank. The disappointed author in "Roderick Random," who set about writing for ballad-singers, was introduced into one of their assemblies, and his testimony establishes their degeneracy.

In fact, the history of ballad-singing, during the remainder of last century, affords but an unsatisfactory subject of reflection to lovers of song; whether they have regenerated in the present age, we leave the reader to judge.

E.J.H.

LOVE AT COURT AND LOVE IN THE COUNTRY

Loving 'mongst the aristocracy
Is reckon'd positive hypocrisy;
The noble votaries of fashion
Are ignorant of the tender passion.
A shepherd, if his nymph doth alter,
Killeth woe by means of halter:
But in high life, if ladies prove
Indifferent to an ardent love,
What does the enamour'd title do,
But set about and alter too.

Translated from the French of Madame Deshoulieres.

NOTES OF A READER

CORRUPT STATE OF THE WESTERN CHURCH IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

From the following facts an inference may be drawn of the tendency of the Western church to a system of externals, applying itself solely to continual discipline and fasting, instead of the improvement of the heart. For the perusal of the sacred writings and spiritual lessons of the ancient fathers of the church, was substituted that of legends and decretals, and the Book of Canons, by which the whole Western church was governed. Images and relics of the saints acquired an excessive adoration; and continual discoveries were being made of the bodies of miracle-working saints. Impostors were to be found, appearing every day under new names and with fresh miracles, imposing on the credulity of the public, and amassing wealth by defrauding the pious multitude. Some of these impostors, too insolent in their practices, were discovered and punished, whilst others derived from them their whole fortune and subsistence. It went to such a pass, that an arm of St. Augustine was found and sold to William, Duke of Aquitaine, for 100 talents. The head of St.

John the Baptist was dug up, and attracted an immense multitude of spectators, amongst whom was Robert, King of France.³

The principal supporters of this religious mania were the Crusaders; that is to say, those persons who went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. These persons, on their return to their own country, finding all their substance exhausted, exerted their utmost cunning to regain it; pretending that they had found some relics of the ancient martyrs or apostles, or some object relative to the life or death of our Saviour. By these means an immense number of persons, excited by religious curiosity, repaired to the places where these objects were exposed, and the churches and the provinces of which became enriched by them. With the same motive, in the year 1008, a portion of the rod of Moses was discovered in France, which attracted a vast number of visitors, both from that country and Italy. In 1014, some monks, on their return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, brought with them a part of the napkin with which our Saviour wiped the feet of the apostles at the Last Supper; and, in order to prove its authenticity, they passed it uninjured through the flames. This kind of miracles, which were in such favour with the ignorant multitude in those days, produces no effect, since chemical science has enabled us to penetrate into the hidden secrets of nature; and if history is diligently examined, we shall

³ "One head of St. John the Baptist (for there are many, and John was at last [Greek: ekaton ta kephalas],) was found at the monastery of St. John of Angeli, at Saintange."—*Jortin's Remarks on Eccles. Hist.* ann. 1010.

perceive that the human mind was occupied in the discovery of that science at this period. The alchemists perhaps, although persecuted as the followers of the devil, were not altogether extinct, and still read some books which laid open the discoveries of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The commercial cities of Italy, in communication with the East, acquired extraordinary knowledge, of which they availed themselves disadvantageously to the morality and piety of the Christian church. About this time, too (the year 1000), the epoch at which, according to prediction, the world was to be at an end, men began to make fresh researches, and to build new churches, to repair the old ones, and to invent novelties. The prophecy of Daniel, which says, "Tempus, tempora, dimidium temporis," proving by experience to be inapplicable to the interpretation which the monks and ecclesiastics had generally given it, produced a new energy in the human mind: and if at first, the wealth of the churches were aggrandized by profuse largesses, we shall hereafter see them struggling to preserve it. A disposition also to study was now induced: and a certain Guido, a monk of Pomposa, being called to Rome as a music-master, whilst very young, invented the scale or gamut of C notes, which was then esteemed miraculous.⁴ Happily for him the matter took this turn; for otherwise he would have suffered death. The religious superstition was so strong, that any unusual effects of human nature were attributed to

⁴ Erycius Puteanus (Vander Putten,) added the seventh note to complete the octave, in the sixteenth century.

diabolical operations; and, in such instances, the reputed authors were either beheaded or burnt. Such was the fate of an unhappy wretch who had discovered the secret of making glass malleable. This sublime genius made a goblet of this glass; and, being conducted into the presence of Henry, in 1022, he threw it on the ground, when, instead of breaking, it bent, and suddenly resumed its original shape. The ignorant emperor, believing him to be possessed with the devil, ordered him to be beheaded.—*Life of Gregory VII. By Sir Roger Greisley, Bart.*

ODD DISPUTE

During the coronation of Conrad II., Emperor of Germany, in 1204, a dispute arose between a Roman and a German for a vile ox's hide. It began with blows, proceeded with stones, and ended by an appeal to arms; and, after a stout resistance on the part of the Roman people against the German army, the former were obliged to fly, and were almost totally massacred. The remainder, although humbled, and in a wretched condition, were constrained the next day to pass barefooted before the emperor,—the freemen with their swords unsheathed, the slaves with a knot round their necks,—declaring themselves ready to obey him, and asking pardon. What a beautiful contrast between the guardians and defenders of the Roman people in their frocks and mitres, with these brave men in their helmets and togas! Such was the triumph over a nation overcome more by its prejudices than by force, and under such solemn circumstances.

Ibid.

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