

VARIOUS

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Voltaire's Chateau, at Ferney

Voltaire is the bronze and plaster poet of France. Cheek by jowl with Rousseau, (their squabbles are forgotten in the roll of fame), you see him perched on mantel, bracket, *ecritoire*, and bookcase: in short, their effigies are as common as the plaster figures of Shakspeare and Milton are in England. How far the rising generation of France may profit by their household memorials—or the sardonic and satanic smile of their great poet—we will not pretend to determine; neither do we invite any comparison; although Voltaire, with all his trickseyings and panting after fame, never inculcated so sublime a lesson as is conveyed in

"The cloud-capp'd towers," &c.

which are inscribed beneath the bust of our immortal bard.

But we turn from Voltaire and his stormy times to the seat of his retirement—Ferney, about six miles from Geneva; where he lived for twenty years; but in his eighty-fourth year actually quitted this scene of delightful repose for the city of Paris—there to enjoy a short triumph, and die. The latter event took place in 1778. At pages 62 and 69 of vol. xii. of *THE MIRROR*, we have given a brief description of Ferney, with many interesting anecdotes, carefully compiled from a variety of authorities. Here Voltaire lived in princely style, as Condorcet says, "removed from illusion, and whatever could excite momentary, or personal passion." According to M. Simond, a recent tourist, the *château* is still visited by travellers, and Voltaire's bed-room is shown in the state he left it. The date of our view is about the year 1800, since which the residence has been much neglected: and during the late war, it was frequently the quarters of the Austrian soldiers. The gardens are laid out in the formal, geometrical style, and they command a view of the town and lake of Geneva. The apartments of the ground-floor of the house are in the same state as during Voltaire's lifetime. In the dining-hall is a picture, representing demons horsewhipping Fréron:¹ such was Voltaire's mode of perpetuating his antagonists.

Of the purchase of Ferney, Voltaire thus speaks in his

¹ Fréron was an eminent journalist of the last century: his criticisms procured him many powerful enemies, among whom was Voltaire.

memoirs:—

"I bought, by a very singular kind of contract, of which there was no example in that country, a small estate of about sixty acres, which they sold me for about twice as much as it would have cost me at Paris; but pleasure is never too dear. The house was pretty and commodious, and the prospect charming; it astonishes without tiring: on one side is the lake of Geneva, and the city on the other. The Rhone rushes from the former with vast impetuosity, forming a canal at the bottom of my garden, whence is seen the Arve descending from the Savoy mountains, and precipitating itself into the Rhone, and farther still another river. A hundred country seats, a hundred delightful gardens, ornament the borders of the lakes and rivers. The Alps at a great distance rise and terminate the horizon, and among their prodigious precipices, twenty leagues extent of mountain are beheld covered with eternal snows."

Upon Voltaire's settlement at Ferney, the country was almost a savage desert. The village contained but fifty inhabitants, but became by the poet's means the residence of 1,200 persons, among which were a great number of artists, principally watch makers, who established their manufacture under his auspices, and exported their labours throughout the continent. Voltaire also invited to Ferney, and afforded protection to, the young niece of the celebrated Corneille; here she was educated, and Voltaire even carried his delicacy so far as not to suffer the establishment of Madlle. Corneille to appear as his benefaction. The family of

Calas, likewise, came to reside in the neighbourhood, and to this circumstance may be attributed the zeal which Voltaire evinced in their ill fate.

DURHAM HOUSE, STRAND:

MARRIAGE OF LADY JANE GREY

(For the Mirror.)

Why did ye me dysseyve,
With faynyng fantzye agenst all equitie and right,
The regall powers onjustly to receyve,
To serve your tornes, I do right well perceyve;
For I was your instrument to worke your purpose by;
All was but falshed to bleere withall myn eye.

Cavendish's Metrical Visions

The short but eventful period between the death of the last Henry, and the succession of his bigoted and intolerant daughter Mary, presents a wide and fertile field for the inquiring mind

both of the historian and philosopher. The interest attached to the memory of the beautiful but unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, renders the slightest event of her life acceptable to every lover of English history; while her youth and intellectual acquirements, her brief reign of nine days, and finally her expiation for her *innocent* crime on the scaffold, combine to rouse the feelings and excite the sympathy of every sensitive heart.

The marriage of lady Jane Grey, which may be regarded as the principal cause of her sufferings, was brought about by the ambitious Earl of Northumberland, a nobleman, the most powerful and wealthy at that period, in the kingdom. By the marriage of Lord Guilford Dudley with the Lady Jane, he formed the daring project of placing the crown of England on the head of his son, in order to consolidate that preeminence, which, during the reign of the youthful Edward, he had so craftily attained to, and which he foresaw, would, on the accession of Mary, from whom he had little to expect, either on the side of friendship or protection, be wrested from him. By the will of Henry VIII., as well also as by an Act of Parliament, the ladies Mary and Elizabeth had been pronounced as heirs to the crown; this claim, however, he hoped to overrule, as the statutes passed by Henry, in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, declaring their illegitimacy, had never been repealed. By the will of Henry, the lady Jane had also been placed next in succession after the Princess Elizabeth, in total exclusion of the Scottish line, the offspring of his sister Margaret, who had married James IV. of Scotland.

The day on which this important event took place is not exactly known; but it is generally supposed to have been towards the close of the month of May, in the year 1553, before the lady Jane had attained her seventeenth year. The nuptials were solemnized with great magnificence at Durham House, the then princely residence of the Earl of Northumberland, who appears to have been particularly earnest in their conclusion, as they were celebrated but two months previous to the death of Edward VI., who at that time "lay dangerously sicke,"² and being unable to attend, sent costly presents as marks of his approval. Three other marriages, also, appear to have taken place at the same time, as recorded by the chronicler Stow.³

Durham House, which formerly occupied that extensive space of ground on the southern side of the Strand, now covered by the stately pile of buildings called the Adelphi, was erected, according to Stow,⁴ in the reign of Edward III., by Thomas de Hatfield, created Bishop of Durham in 1345. Pennant,⁵ however,

² Stow's *Summarie of the Chronicles of England*, p. 245.

³ Lord Gilford, the Duke of Northumberland's fourth son, married Lady Jane, the Duke of Suffolk's daughter, whose mother being then alive, was daughter to Mary, King Henrie's sister, which was then married to the French king, and after to Charles, Duke of Suffolke. Also the Earle of Pembroke's eldest son married Lady Katharine, the said duke's second daughter. And Martin Keie's gentleman porter married Mary, the third daughter of the Duke of Suffolke. And the Earle of Huntington's son, called Lord Hastings, married Katharine, youngest daughter to the Duke of Northumberland.—Stow's *Chronicle*, p. 1029, edit. 1600.

⁴ Strype's *Stow*, vol. ii. p. 576.

⁵ Pennant's *London*, p. 120, 4to. edit.

but upon what authority does not appear, traces its foundation to a period prior to the abovementioned, that of Edward I., when he says it was erected by Anthony de Beck, patriarch of Jerusalem and Bishop of Durham, but was afterwards rebuilt by Bishop Hatfield. In 1534, Tonsal, the then bishop, exchanged Durham House with Henry VIII. for a mansion in Thames Street, called "Cold Harborough," when it was converted by that monarch into a royal palace. During the same reign, in the year 1540, a grand tournament, commencing on "Maie daie," and continuing on the five following days, was held at Westminster; after which, says Stow, "the challengers rode to Durham Place, where they kept open household, and feasted the king and queene (Anne of Cleves) with her ladies, and all the court."⁶ In the reign of Edward VI., a mint was established at Durham House by the ambitious Thomas Seymour, Lord Admiral, under the direction of Sir William Sharington.

This mansion was bestowed on the princess Elizabeth, during the term of her life, by her brother Edward VI., when it became the residence of the Earl of Northumberland, and the scene of those important transactions we have just endeavoured to relate. On the death of Elizabeth, Sir Walter Raleigh, to whom the mansion had been given by that queen, was obliged to surrender it to Toby Matthew, the then Bishop of Durham, in consequence of the reversion having been granted to that see by queen Mary, whose bigoted and narrow mind regarded the previous exchange

⁶ Stow's *Chronicle*, p. 975.

as a sacrilege.

In 1608, the stables of Durham House, which fronted the Strand, and which, says Strype,⁷ "were old, ruinous, and ready to fall, and very unsightly in so public a passage to the Court of Westminster," were pulled down and a building called the New Exchange erected on their site, by the Earl of Salisbury. It was built partly on the plan of the Royal Exchange; the shops or stalls being principally occupied by miliners and sempstresses. It was opened with great state by James I., and his queen, who named it the "Burse of Britain."⁸

In 1640, the estate of Durham House was purchased of the see, by Philip, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, for the annual sum of 200*l.*, when the mansion was pulled down, and numerous houses erected on its site; and in 1737, the New Exchange was also demolished to make room for further improvements.

Towards the close of the last century the whole estate was purchased of the Earl of Pembroke, by four brothers of the name of Adam, who erected the present buildings, named by them the *Adelphi*, from the Greek word ἀδελφοί [Greek: adelphoi], brothers.

⁷ Strype's *Stow*, vol. ii. p. 576.

⁸ Howel's *Londinopolis*, p. 349.

S.I.B

THE DEATH OF MURAT

(For the Mirror.)

"Where the broken line enlarging
Fell or fled along the plain,
There be sure was Murat charging:
There he ne'er shall charge again."

BYRON.

Perhaps the features of romance were never more fully developed than in the last days and death of Murat, King of Naples. To speak panegyrically of his prowess, is supererogatory; as his bravery has been the theme of history and of song. But a pathetic paper in *Blackwood's Magazine*, affectingly describes his fall from splendour and popularity to servile degradation and unmerited military death. He has many claims on our interest and pity; whether we view him as the enthusiastic leader of Napoleon's chosen, against the wily Russians, in the romantic array of "a theatrical king," bearing down all impediment; or

the plumeless and proscribed monarch of "shreds and patches," hiding from his enemies amidst the withered spoils of the forest. The writer of the paper referred to, in describing his arrival at Ajaccio, says, "I was sitting at my door, when I beheld a man approach me, *with the gaiters and shoes of a common soldier*. Looking up, I beheld before me Joachim II. the splendid King of Naples! I uttered a cry, and fell upon my knees!"

Escap'd from wreck and storm of fickle seas,
Degraded, plunder'd, sought for by his foes,
Brave Murat went, a weary, exil'd king,
Unto the land that gave Napoleon life;
And he who was the head of armies, when
His sabre slew opposing multitudes;
Whose dauntless spirit knew no other words
In fiercest strife, but "Soldiers, follow me!"
Came a poor, drooping, broken, lonely man,
To meet reproach, and harsh vicissitude,
Base persecution, and destroying hope;
To drain the cup of human suffering dry,
From which his fever'd lips had scarce refrain'd;
When in the tangled wood he trembling lay,
Weary and worn, expos'd to sun and storm,
Hunger and cold, and nature's helplessness.
And when Ajaccio's walls rung with the shouts
For Naples' ruler, he of warlike fame,
It wrung his spirit to remember when
That city hail'd him as her only star,

Worthy to reign where Masaniello rul'd.
Dejected chief! the tears forsook his eyes,
When on his vision rush'd the bygone love
Applauding thousands bore him, as he rode
In pride imperial 'midst the bending throng.

The gathering crowds along Ajaccio's streets
Felt Freedom's fervor kindle in their souls;
And Murat's banner fann'd the glorious flame.
"Tis past," he cried, "and now I proudly come,
O, shameless Naples! in thy arms to die,
Or nobly live."

"Now blood for tears! my sword, my sword!
Be thou unsheath'd in Naples' cause,
I'll meet again the battle horde,
And beard the bravest of my foes!

"Proud Austria! I will drive thee back,
Deem not that Naples' throne is thine;
For soon shall Murat's bivouac
Keep watch upon thy tented line.

"Nor taunt of enemy shall move,
Nor bitterest suffering shall degrade,
My heart—for with my people's love
My daring will be richly paid.

"Hearts like my own! that hem me now,

The ground we tread is sacred earth,
Prove not the soil from which ye sprang
Unworthy of Napoleon's birth.

"On to the struggle! we shall gain
Adherents to our patriot cause;
Shake off the exile's hated name,
And abrogate the despot's laws.

"Insulted, wrong'd, and robb'd of all,
My feelings scarce could brook my fate;
But I will gain my crown or fall
Before degraded Naples' gate!"

Midnight descended on Calabria's coast,
And Murat's little fleet wore sailing there;
No peering moon lit up the lonely sea,
But all was sable as his wayward fate.
A storm dispers'd them, and Sardinia's isle
Receiv'd the bark that held the hapless king,
And morn beheld it on the main again;
But far apart his faithful followers.
Calabria's beach was gain'd; where Murat stood
Amidst the dastard throng that hemm'd him round,
With heart of adamant, and eye of fire.
There is a majesty in kingly hearts
Which changing time nor fickle fate can quell:
He stood—reveal'd from his own lips, "The King
Of fallen Naples." At those stirring words

A hundred swords unsheath'd; for on his head
A princely price was set, and flight he scorn'd;
For grasp'd his hand the well-accustom'd blade;
And *vainly* fought—

His hour is come! behold the dauntless man
Baring his bosom to the stern platoon:
And parted friends, and pardon'd enemies,
Relinquish'd glory, and forgotten scorn,
Are naught to him—but o'er his war-worn face
A momentary gleam of passion flits—
To think *that he who wore that diadem*
The second Caesar placed upon his brows,
(No cold inheritance of legal right,
But truly bought by bravery and blood.)
Should die with traitor branded on, his fame.
His hand enfolds a small cornelian seal,
A portrait of his queen,—on which his eyes
Are fondly fix'd. The final word is given,
And Murat falls: ah! who would be a king!

* * H

COAST BLOCKADE MEN

(For the Mirror.)

Maturin in his fearful romance of *Melmoth*, has well exemplified the change of character and frequent subversion of intellect occasioned by untoward circumstances. The human mind, like a woody fibre, when submitted to the action of a petrifying stream, gradually assimilates the qualities of its associates. This truth is strikingly verified in the persons of the men on our blockade stations, for the prevention of smuggling. They are a numerous race, and inhabit little fortalices on the coasts of our sea-girt isle, which to an imaginative mind would give it the appearance of a beleagured citadel. The powerful, but still ineffective means resorted to by government for the suppression of illicit traffic, sadly demonstrates the degeneracy of our nature, and may be seen in full operation on the coast between Margate, Dover, and Hastings. For this purpose, the stranger on his arrival at Margate, must take the path leading to the cliff's, eastward of the town, and after walking a little way

with the sea on his left hand, he will pass, at intervals, certain neat, though gloomy looking cottages, chiefly remarkable for an odd, military aspect, strongly reminding one of a red jacket turned up with white. These, perched like the eagle's eyry on the very edge and summit of those crested heights that "breast the billows foam," are the *preventive stations*, inhabited by the *dumb* and isolated members of the blockade. These men will now be seen for the rest of the journey, mounted on the jutting crags, straining their weary eyes over the monotonous expanse of waters which for ever splash beneath them—a sullen accompaniment to their gloomy avocations.

On a first sight of these men, you are ready to exclaim with Mercutio, "Oh, flesh! how art thou fishified;" and begin to think that Shakspeare might have had a living original for his horrid Caliban: for they are mostly selected from amongst fishermen, on account of their excellent knowledge of the coast, and most perfectly retain their amphibious characteristics. The good humoured Dutch looking face is, however, wanting; they have a savage angularity of feature, the effect of their antisocial trade; one feels a sort of creeping horror on approaching a fellow creature, armed at all points, in a lone and solemn place, the haunts of desperate men, and on whose tongue an embargo is laid to speak to no one, pacing the surly rocks, his hands on his arms, ready to deal forth death on the first legal opportunity. Beings such as these an amiable and delicate mind shudders to contemplate, and always finds it difficult to

conceive; yet, such are the preventive men who line our coast—melancholy examples of the truth stated at the outset of this paper. Occasionally, however, the good traveller will, much to his joy, meet with an exception to this sad rule, in the person of an old tar, whom necessity has pressed into the service, and who from long acquaintance with the pleasures of traversing the mighty ocean, feels little pleasure in staring at it like an inactive land-lubber, a character which he holds in hearty contempt; besides, to fire at a fellow Briton is against his nature; thief or no thief it crosses his grain, and he looks at his pistols and hates himself. His situation is miserable; he is truly a fish out of water; he loves motion, but is obliged to stand still; his glory is a social "bit of jaw," but he dares not speak; he rolls his disconsolate quid over his silent tongue, and is as wretched as a caged monkey. Poor fellow! how happy would a companion make you, to whom you could relate your battles, bouts, and courtships; but mum is the order, and Jack is used to an implicit obedience of head-quarter orders. The sight of an outward bound vessel drives him mad.

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