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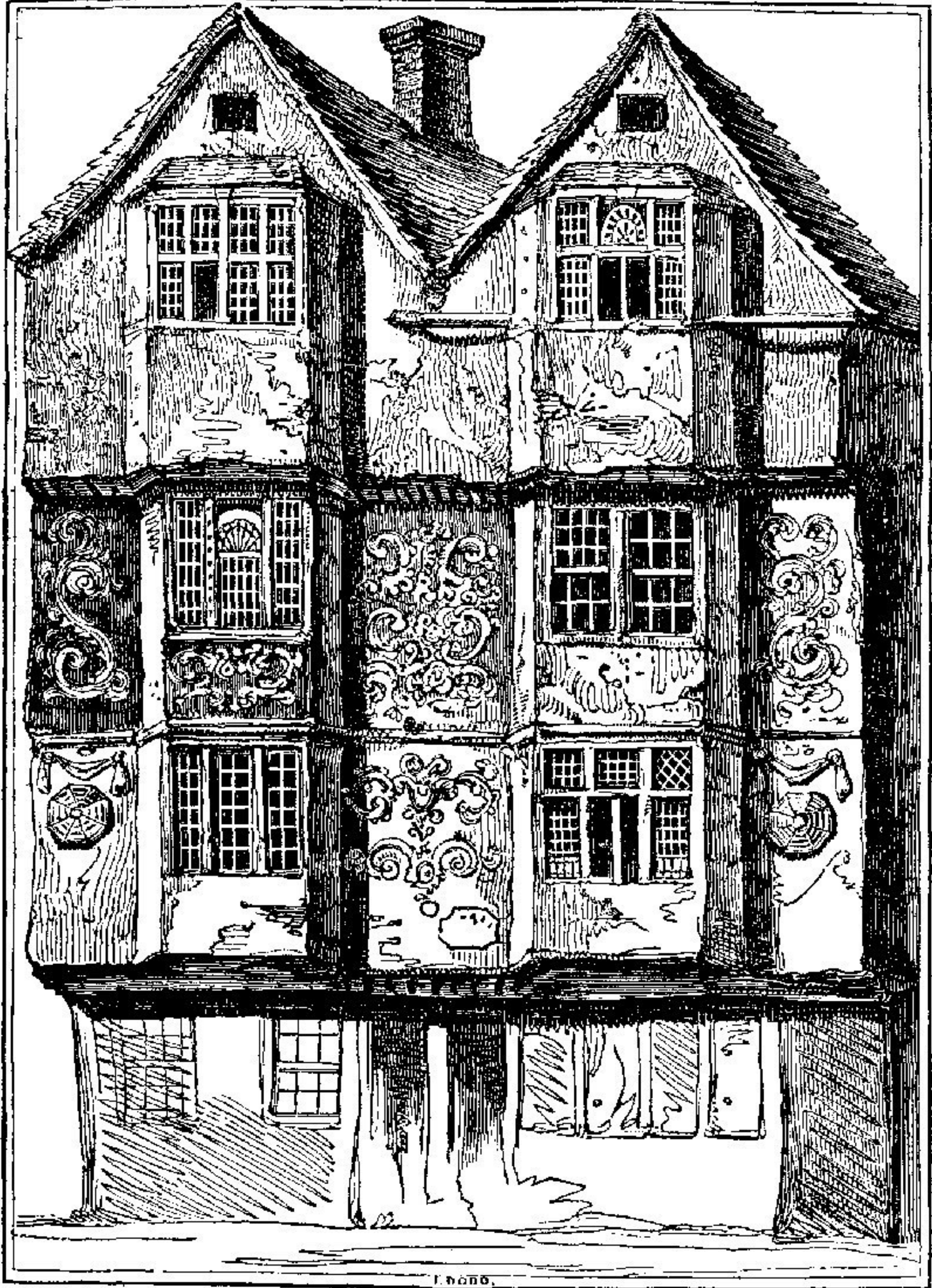

OLD HOUSE IN SOUTHWARK.

This crazy, but not unpicturesque building, was taken down in the autumn of last year, in forming an approach to the New London Bridge. It stood on the eastern side of the High-street, and is worthy of record among the pleasing relics of antiquity, which it has ever been the object of *The Mirror* to rescue from oblivion. Its style of architecture—that of the seventh Henry—is interesting: there is a florid picturesqueness in the carvings on the fronts of the first and second stories, and probably this ornament extended originally to the uppermost stories, which had subsequently been covered with plaster.

We remember the house for the last twenty years, but cannot trace this or any other alteration in its front. The windows, it will be seen, are of different periods, those on the right-hand second and the left-hand third floor being of the oldest date.

Apart from these attractions, and as a specimen of the olden domestic architecture of the metropolis, the annexed Cut bears an historic interest, in its having been the residence of the ill-starred Anne Boleyn, queen of Henry the Eighth. The interior was in palatial style, having been elaborately finished; and in one of the apartments, we learn that the royal arms were very conspicuous.

In early times, Southwark was one of the most celebrated of the metropolitan suburbs; and it is much to be regretted that the liberality of our times has not encouraged the production of its ancient history. Every one at all familiar with London is aware of the antiquity of St. Saviour's Church, the original foundation of which was from the profits of a ferry over the Thames, whence its original name, St. Mary Overy, or "over the ferry." This was some time before the Conquest; but the church was principally rebuilt in the fourteenth century. We have spoken of its ancient fame elsewhere.[1] Bankside, its name in spiritual and secular story, is likewise of some note. The early Bishops of Winchester had a palace and *park* here; remains of the former were laid open by a fire about seventeen years since. Then, who does not remember, in the love of sports and pastimes, the bull and bear-baiting theatres, and the uncouth glory of the Globe theatre, associated with the poet of all time—Shakspeare. Southwark was, therefore, a fitting site for a royal palace for occasional retirement, and its contiguity to the Thames must have enhanced its pleasantness.

Miss Benger, in her agreeable *Memoirs of Anne Boleyn*, does not mention the Queen's abode in Southwark; but the date of the architecture of the annexed house, and its closer identification with Queen Elizabeth, render the first mentioned circumstance by no means improbable. Previous to the marriage of Anne Boleyn, we learn that Henry passed not a few of his leisure hours "in the delightful society of Anne Boleyn." "Every day they met and spent many hours in riding or walking together." Her family at this time resided at Durham House, on the site of the Adelphi, and Anne frequently made excursions with Henry in the vicinity of London.

Of the antiquity of this district we could quote more proofs. The *galleried* inn-yards, and among them that at which the Pilgrims sojourned on their road to Canterbury, are among them. In our last volume too, at page 160, we engraved an ancient Vault in Tooley-street, the remains of the "great house, builded of stone, with arched gates, which pertained to the Prior of Lewis, in Sussex, and was his lodging when he came to London." Not far from this was "another great House of Stone and Timber," which, in the thirteenth century, was held of John, "Earl Warren, by the Abbot of St. Augustins, at Canterbury." Stowe says—"It was an ancient piece of worke, and seemeth to be one of the first builded houses on that side of the river, over against the city: it was called the Abbot's Inne of St. Augustine in Southwark."

There was also another "Inne" near this spot, which belonged to the Abbey of Battle, in Sussex, and formed the town residence of its Abbots. This stood on the banks of the Thames, between the Bridge House and Battle Bridge, which was so called, "for that it standeth on the ground, and over a water-course (flowing out of Thames) pertayning to that Abbey, and was therefore both builded and

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[1] See *Mirror*, vol. xiii. p. 227. Gower is buried here, Fletcher and Messenger too; and not long since the bones of Bishop Andrews chapels for the New London Bridge approach.—See also *Mirror*, vol. xvi. p. 297.

repayred by the Abbots of that house, as being hard adjoyning to the Abbot's lodging." Its situation is known by the landing-place called Battle Stairs. On the opposite side of Tooley-street is a low neighbourhood of meanly-built streets and passages, still denominated the Maze, from the intricacies of a labyrinth in the gardens of the Abbot of Battle's Inn, and which fronted its entrance-gate.

With these few quotations of the ancient importance of Southwark, we can but repeat our regret that no regular history of this district has yet been published. There are three or four gentlemen resident there, whose antiquarian attainments highly qualify them for the task. The public would surely find them patronage.

The Engraving is from an original sketch by an ingenious Correspondent, M.P. of Upton, near Windsor, whom we thank for this specimen of good taste. We are always happy to receive antiquarian illustrations of our Metropolis, and in this instance the zeal of the artist, who resides twenty miles distant, deserves special mention.

PARLIAMENT

(For the Mirror.)

The following particulars, which have been gleaned from several sources, relating to the British Parliament, may be acceptable at the present time, when the English people are in hopes of a renovation of that Constitution which has been, and will still continue to be, the admiration of the civilized world:—The word Parliament was first used in 1265; and the Commons were admitted at this time, though not regularly represented. The parliament called at Shrewsbury, in 1283, by Edward I., was the first to which cities and towns were summoned to send representatives. It was also the first that granted aids towards the national defence of the three denominations of knights, citizens, and burgesses, as well as by the lords spiritual and temporal. In this parliament the representatives sat in a separate chamber from the barons and knights. The Commons consisted of two knights for each county, two representatives for the city of London, and two for each of the following twenty towns only:—

Winchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, York, Bristol, Exeter, Lincoln, Canterbury, Carlisle, Norwich, Northampton, Nottingham, Scarborough, Grimsby, Lynn, Colchester, Yarmouth, Hereford, Chester, Shrewsbury, Worcester.

From this it appears that there were not representatives of any towns in the counties of

Westmoreland, Lancaster, Derby, Durham, Stafford, Warwick, Leicester, Rutland, Suffolk, Hertford, Bedford, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Buckingham, Berks, Oxford, Wilts, Somerset, Gloucester, Dorset, Sussex, Surrey.

In after times, burghs that were summoned frequently prayed the Crown to be excused from sending representatives, on the account of their being compelled to pay 3s. 4d. a day to each member for his maintenance, while attending in his place; yet the allowance was made on a plan so strictly economical, that the knights of Berkshire were only allowed for six days, those for Bedfordshire for only five days, and those for Cornwall for only eleven days, when called to a parliament at York. Sheriffs, in their write for elections to parliament, sometimes omitted one or more burghs in a county, and at other times sent writs to the same burghs—and this, for aught known to the contrary, without instruction from the king or his council. Where burghs were poor, there were many such omissions, by favour of the sheriff, for a space of nearly three hundred years. Upon petition of the town of Torrington to Edward III., in 1366, he directed a letter to the bailiff and good men of the town, excusing them "from the burden of sending two representatives to parliament, as they had never been obliged so to do till the 24th of his reign, when," says the king, "the sheriffs of Devonshire maliciously summoned them to send two members to parliament."

Writs for the election of members to serve in the House of Commons are issued under different authorities upon a general election, and upon vacancies of particular seats during the continuance of a parliament. In the former case, the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, pursuant to the order in council, causes the writs of elections to be issued for all places in England and Scotland to which such writs are usually sent. By the Articles and Act of Union with Ireland, the Lord Chancellor then, pursuant to the said orders, &c., causes writs to be issued and directed by the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to the several counties, and such counties of cities and towns as send members to the united parliament.

It is generally supposed that the circumstance of bishops, or other ecclesiastics having seats in the legislature, is peculiar to England. This is a mistake;—it was characteristic of the Scottish constitution for centuries previous to their connexion with England: so far back, indeed, if not much farther, as the twelfth century. It is stated, in ancient documents connected with the history of the

county of Elgin, the authenticity of which cannot be doubted, that the Abbey of Kinloss was founded by David I., in January, 1150, and that the abbot was mitred, and had a seat in parliament.

To the passing of a bill, the assent of the knights, citizens, and burgesses must be in person; but the lords may give their votes by proxy; and the reason is, that the barons always sat in parliament in their own right, as part of the *pares curtis* of the king; and therefore, as they were allowed to serve by proxy in the wars, so had they leave to make proxies in parliament; but the commons coming only as representing the barones minores, and the soccage tenants in the country, and as representing the men of the cities, &c., they could not constitute proxies as representatives of others.

When it is the pleasure of the Crown to dissolve a parliament, it is the constant practice immediately to summon another, and to make the dissolution of the old and the calling of the new simultaneous acts. By the Act of 7 and 8 of William III., c. xxv. s. I, forty days should intervene between the teste and return of the writs for a new parliament; but a longer time is necessary, and fifty days now intervene.

Parliaments became triennial from the reigns of Edward III., but not until 1694 had any act passed to make such duration legal. In 1716 this was repealed, and the present act passed, making them septennial.

W.G.C

SIMPLE AMBITION

(To the Editor.)

The following anecdote was told me last summer, in the cabriolet of a diligence between Pau and Bayonne, and is very much at your service.

EGOMET IPSE.

About twenty-three years ago, the vane of Strasbourg Cathedral was struck by lightning, so that it hung on one side, threatening by its fall to endanger the lives of the people below. The alarm was so great, that the authorities, after a special consultation, posted bills about the streets, offering any reward that should be required to any one that would venture to ascend and strike off the vane. While the good citizens were reading this announcement, a peasant from the department of the Landes passed by, and being unable to read, he inquired the purport of the advertisement. When informed, he immediately offered his services for that purpose, and was conducted to the mayor and the bishop, who happened to be both in the Hôtel de Ville at the time. They questioned him, and fully acquainted him with the difficulties of the enterprise—such as the real height, and that the upper part of the spire could only be ascended by ladders on the outside. However, nothing daunted, he persisted in his resolution to perform the feat on the morrow. All Strasbourg was assembled in the open places of the city on the next day; and, although admiring his courage as they saw him ascend, they most prudently refrained from cheering him as he deserved. Few who were then shading their eyes from the sun, in order to gaze on the spire, but must have envied him the scene of surpassing loveliness that was spread below him, although it is probable that neither the green landscape fading into blue distance, the relics of ancient castles, nor the beautiful Rhine glittering in sunshine, detained his regards. He who at home, in his own barren and level sands, had been used to no greater elevations than his stilts, was now mounting like an eagle towards heaven, and admired by thousands. When he reached the summit, he deliberately seated himself on the highest stone, with one leg on each side of the vane; and while his clothes were visibly fluttered in a strong breeze at such an eminence, he, with a hammer and chisel, displaced the cross that had caused such alarm, It flew spinning to the earth, and, borne away by the wind, fell in a neighbouring field, where it sank twenty inches into the soil. The air was now rent with acclamations towards him,

Cui robur et aes triplex
Circa pectus erat—

(for, be it remarked, he was the only person who had even proposed to effect its removal). On his descent, he was carried in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville. Being thanked by the authorities then and there assembled, and assured of their intense anxiety for his life ever since he had quitted the earth, he was asked what was the recompense he demanded? He modestly replied, "that if they were pleased with what he had performed, he hoped they would not think him presumptuous, but he should so much like to walk through the Arsenal, and see all its wonderful stores and docks!"—and they could not prevail upon him to ask more.

A week afterwards he left Strasbourg, with twenty-five Napoleons in his pocket; and declared that he had never before spent his time so agreeably as he did in that city, for he had seen the Imperial Arsenal, the fortifications, and many other fine, as well as useful, sights, and had been continually feasted gratis by the rich and the great folks.

RANSOMS

(*Concluded from page* **149.**)

The queen of Edward III., after the battle of Durham, demanded of John Copland, David of Scotland; on his remonstrance that no one but the king had a right to his prisoner, Edward sent for him to Calais, and bestowed on him in return for his captive, £500, in land. The Scottish monarch paid, after an imprisonment of eleven years, 100,000 marks, and was dismissed. Charles de Blois, at the same period paid 700,000 crowns, and left his two sons as hostages. Michael de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, paid £20,000. sterling, when only a simple knight. Duc d'Alençon gave for his freedom 200,000 crowns, and actually sold part of his estate to the Duc de Bretagne to pay it. Caprice often caused the detention of men in captivity, from their inability to comply with the absurd demands of their captors. Louis XI. refused to part with Wolfang Poulain, a Burgundian officer, unless he would purchase his redemption with some favourite hounds belonging to the Seigneur de Bossu. As Bossu did not feel sufficiently interested in his friend's welfare to comply with the king's wishes, and part with his dogs, some time elapsed before any treaty could be entered into, to restore Poulain to his country.

This practice, though it undoubtedly contributed to soften the horrors of war, often caused hostilities to be undertaken on the most absurd and frivolous pretences. The English are represented by Comines as rejoicing in a war with France, from a recollection of the prices they obtained from the lords and princes they captured. Another bad effect may be traced to it, in the violations of safe conduct, the seizure of individuals during times of peace, which the middle ages so constantly exhibit. Oliver de Clisson, the Constable of France, on entering into a castle to examine its strength, at the request of the Duc de Bretagne, in 1387, was seized, and at first commanded to be thrown into the sea. The savage Breton afterwards being troubled in conscience, expressed his joy that his order had not been complied with, and released Clisson on the payment of 100,000 livres.

During the wars of Edward III. and Philip, many a soldier of fortune amassed considerable opulence by the ransoming of his prisoners. Croquart, a famous leader of these companies, is related to have become extremely rich by the money he received from the ransoms of castles and towns. In the fourteenth century several Knights of Suabia having associated themselves together for chivalrous engagements, endeavoured to seize a rich Count of Wirtenburg, as a *means of procuring a noble sum of money for the ransom of himself and his family*. For this purpose they attacked him in his castle at Wildbad, but were repulsed. At Poictiers, the King of France was nearly torn to pieces by the soldiers in disputing for their prize. At the Bridge of Luissac, Carlonnet, the French commander, fell into the hands of the enemy, who were about to end the quarrel respecting his possession by putting him to death, when the timely arrival of an English knight rescued him from their power. At Agincourt, eighteen French gentlemen entered into an agreement to direct all their attacks against King Henry, most probably with a view of acquiring a fortune by his capture; hence the contest was the hottest about his person. After the battle of Nanci, and the death of the Duke of Burgundy, by the sword of Charles de Beaumont, the latter is said to have died of regret, when he became aware whom it was he had slain, and the loss he had sustained of a ducal ransom.

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