VARIOUS

THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION. VOLUME 20, NO. 559, JULY 28, 1832

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The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction. Volume 20, No. 559, July 28, 1832

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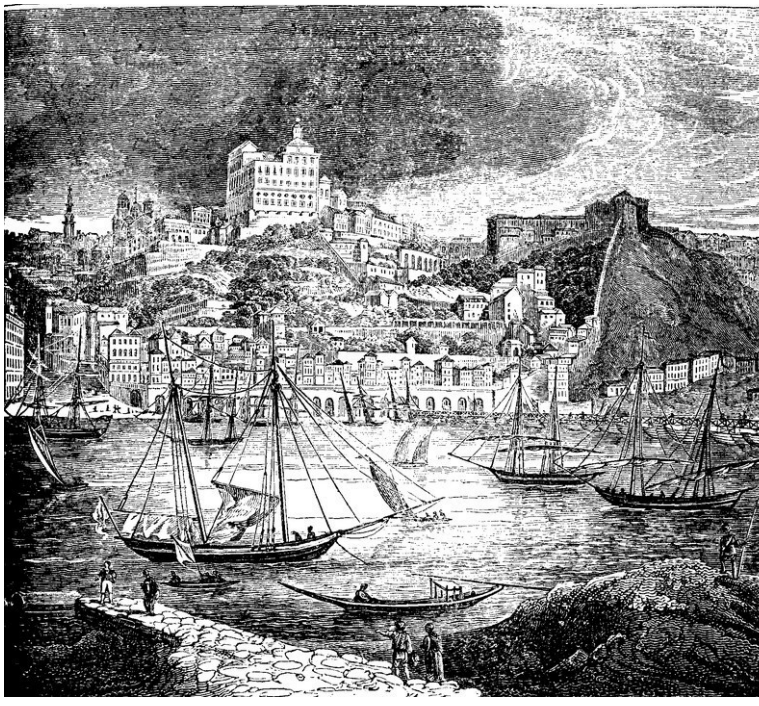
OPORTO



OPORTO.

Persons who are looking for "news from the seat of war" will probably hail the timely appearance of this Engraving, and regard it as folks sitting at a play do a drop-scene between the acts. The reader knows our pacific politics: we are of the pen, not of the sword; but we cannot be indifferent to a great political result, when

Old men, and beldams, in the streets
Do prophesy upon it.

Oporto is a place of great commercial as well as political consideration. Thousands of Englishmen have a grateful recollection of the former importance upon their very lips. Its situation is one of great natural beauty. It is the largest city in Portugal, Lisbon excepted. It has been commonly said to owe its origin to the Romans;[1] but it appears, from the best authors, to have been founded about A.D. 417 by the Suevi, who had established themselves in Braga and other parts of ancient Galicia, but who were driven by the Alani to the banks of the Douro, where they fortified themselves on the steep hill now occupied by the cathedral and the bishop's palace, and which is still distinguished by the appellation of the Cidade de Antiga.

The city occupies the north bank of the Douro, (anciently *Durius*,) about five miles from the mouth of the river, and the Atlantic Ocean. The approach from thence to Oporto is remarkably beautiful. The dangers of the bar, across the mouth of the river, once passed,[2] a succession of interesting objects

[1] At Coimbra, about two days' journey from Oporto, is a Roman bridge and aqueduct, nearly entire.

[2] The dangerous passage across the bar of the Douro, and its shifting sands, are well known. The care and skill required to navigate a vessel with safety into the Douro, even during the summer, may give an idea of what the perils of this dangerous bar must be during the winter months; when the coast is exposed to the unbridled fury of the westerly winds, and to the full force of the Atlantic waves.—*Portugal Illustrated, by the Rev. W. Kinsey, B.D.*

present themselves on both sides, as we ascend towards the city. The little town of St. Joao da Foz stands on the north bank, close to the sea, and is the favourite resort of the wealthier inhabitants of Oporto during the violent heat of the summer. The river, immediately within the bar, expands into the appearance of a lake. A little higher up it is narrowed by two abrupt hills. That on the right terminates in a precipice of bright hard sandstone, descending so steeply to the water's edge, that but lately a road has been made from Oporto along the bank of the river, to St. Joao da Foz, by blasting and hewing down a sufficient portion of the rock. This height, from its precipitous sides, is called the Monte d'Arabida, and forms the western boundary of a lovely valley, opening upon the Douro, covered with the Quintas, or villas, of the wealthier inhabitants of the adjoining city. Most of the Quintas at the mouth of the river command delightful prospects of the Atlantic Ocean, and the splendid effects produced on these scenes at sunset, in this glowing climate, are almost indescribable. Some idea of its beauty may be formed by reference to Colonel Batty's view from this point.[3] The appearance of the Douro, with its numerous shipping, and the variety of interesting objects scattered on its cheerful banks, render this one of the most pleasing scenes in the circle of Oporto.

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[3] See Select Views of Oporto. By Lieut. Col. Batty, F.R.S., the accuracy of which may be said to extend as far as pictorial art can succeed in conveying foreign objects to our firesides. We are indebted for our Engraving to this valuable work.

To economize time and space we must quit this enchanting spot. Gondolas, like those at Venice, are used on the river, but will not suffice for our celerity. We must reach at once the point of our Engraving. The view is taken from Villa Nova, an important suburb of Oporto, on the opposite bank of the river. The city may be divided into the high and the low town. It contains, in a civil sense, five wards, or *bairros*, of which the Sé, or cathedral hill, and the Vittoria, or height opposite to the Sé, (and crowned by a church, which was founded in commemoration of a celebrated battle fought on the spot with the Moors, which terminated in their defeat and expulsion from the place,) form the town properly called Oporto; and it is possible still to trace the remains of the old wall, which formerly surrounded and defended the place. The three other quarters, San Idelfonso, Miragaya, and Villa Nova, are open. The latter is connected with the principal town by a bridge of boats, which is so badly constructed as to be scarcely able to sustain the violent power of the river when swelled by winter torrents. The Douro, like the Rhine and the Rhone, and all other rivers which flow through a rocky and often confined channel, commits at certain seasons the greatest ravages; and property to a considerable amount is annually lost at Oporto, by the irresistible force with which the river pours down and carries every thing before it. A bridge of granite has been long talked of to connect Villa Nova and Oporto, but the funds are not yet forthcoming, and the expense will be considerable.

The Engraving represents the most ancient part of the city of Oporto. We are here directly fronting the bishop's palace, which, with the Sé, or Cathedral,[4] and buildings, to the left, occupy the crest of the hill. Further left is the steeple of the church dos Clerigos, said to be the loftiest in Portugal after that of Mafra. This tower is visible from the sea at a distance of ten leagues, and serves as an important landmark for ships steering to the mouth of the Douro. It was erected in the year 1748, and is built entirely of the finest masonry, an art in which the Portuguese are almost unrivalled. On the summit of the hill to the right, touching the old walls and towers, is the convent of Santa Clara. Immediately below the Cathedral, the rocky steep has been cut into terraces, and laid out in gardens. The river is bordered by the old city wall. A noble street, the Rua Nova de St. Joao, is seen opening upon the quay on the left. Part of the bridge of boats appears on the right: it was first constructed in the year 1806, destroyed in 1809, but re-established in 1815. It was the scene of dreadful slaughter at the time the city was given up to pillage by the French. Some of the boats forming it had been destroyed, and many of the wretched inhabitants crowding to the bridge, in hopes of escaping from the enemy's sword were urged on by the affrighted multitude into the rapid stream, and thus perished. On the river, to the right and left, is seen a Portuguese coasting vessel, called Hyate; in the centre is a wine-boat of the Douro,

[4] Here is the altar of wrought silver, which was fortunately rescued from the hands of the French, when in possession of Oporto.

with a raised platform for the steersman. The foreground of the view is the shore of Villa Nova, adjoining the quay. The chief article of export is wine;[5] and here is the grand depôt for this commodity, which is stowed in long, low buildings, called lodges.

"On the quays," says Mr. Kinsey, "are seen fine blocks of granite, already converted into form, having their edges cased with wood, ready to be shipped off for buildings in Brazil, where it appears that no good stone, or, at least, so durable as this, can be procured;—pipe-staves from Memel,—flax and iron,—and occasionally coals from the north of England. There are generally at anchor in the river between Villa Nova and Oporto, Russian, Brazilian, English, American, Dutch, Danish, and some French vessels; but many of the latter nation are not to be found in the Portuguese ports. Two thirds of the shipping to be seen in the Douro, are British, Brazilian, or Portuguese."

The gardens of the city are luxuriantly stored. Brazilian plants, easily distinguished by their gaudy colours, vines on trellis, superb lemon-trees, lime and orange-trees, pear, apple, and plum-trees, and Alpine strawberries are in abundance. The Indian cane, with its splendid blossom, whose colour resembles that of the Guernsey, or rather the Chinese lily, is a gay addition to the ornaments of this earthly paradise. Mr. Kinsey says "The *ulmis adjungere vitem* is well known in

[5] The annual average quantity of wine exported from Oporto to Great Britain, was in the ten years, 1813-1822, 24,364 pipes, and to all other parts of the world only 1,094 pipes per annum. The quantity since 1822 has not materially altered.—*See a Communication to vol. xv. of the Mirror*, p. 118.

poetical description, but in Portugal, besides overshadowing their artificial supporters, the vines are seen attaching themselves to, or hanging down in luxuriant festoons from forest-trees, such as the oak, chestnut, and cork, in all the wildness of nature, and not unfrequently insinuating themselves among the branches of myrtle-trees, which attain a considerable size in the hedge-rows, and contrasting their large, purple bunches with the snow-white blossom. The union is truly poetical, and its novelty is charming to the eye of a northern traveller. A vine is often purposely planted by the farmer under an oak-tree, whose boughs it soon over-runs, repaying the little labour expended in its cultivation by its fruit, and the lop of its branches. Ten pipes of green wine, *vinho verde*, expressed from these grapes, will yield one pipe of excellent brandy. Being light and sharp, the vinho verde is preferred by the generality of Portuguese in the summer, to wines of superior strength and quality."

The population of Oporto and Villa Nova was stated by Colonel Batty in 1830, to amount to about 80,000 inhabitants.

POETS, MINOR AND MAJOR

Perhaps no branch of literary reputation is so difficult to establish as that of first-rate poetic excellence. During the last fifty years, many meritorious competitors for bardic renown have successively aspired to public favour, and have each in their turns exhibited their fancy-woven *bouquets*, as containing a more beautiful assemblage of "flowers of all hue," as Milton divinely sings, than those which their equally emulative and praiseworthy compeers have, in their best attempts, laid out upon the *parterre* of the public. In the poetic foreground of the above period, are to be seen the names of Pye, Ogilvie, Whitehead, Tasker, Mason, Cowper, Merry, Jerningham, Woty, Hurdis, Pratt, Fitzgerald, &c. over whose metrical effusions, with the exception of the fifth and sixth, the clouds of obscurity have long since cast a darkening hue. Even the "Elegaic Sonnets" of Charlotte Smith, which first appeared in 1784, and formed a sort of poetical era in point of popularity, have long since "fallen into the sere and yellow leaf," as it was discriminately hinted by Burns would be the case with his soul-breathing Letters; the Sonnets by the Rev. W.L. Bowles, although emanating from a beautiful fountain-spring of thought and feeling, which should have screened their writer from the venomous shaft of Byron, have already sunk beneath the meridian of their popularity; and the loaded ornamental rhymes of Darwin; the prettily embroidered couplets

of Miss Seward, together with the Della Cruscan Rhymes of Mary Robinson, Mrs. Cowley, &c. are left like daisies, plucked from the greensward, to perish beneath unfeeling neglect. Who now reads the verses of Ann Yearsley, the poetic milkwoman, who was so lauded beyond her deserts, by Mrs. H. More?—few or none. Why is this revolution in public taste? Because those master-spirits which guide the present age, have given birth to a species of poetry more legitimate and useful in its design, and more valuable in its tendencies and characteristics. Instead of the "namby pamby" verses of the period I have alluded to, and the coarse scurrility of style which runs with a discolouring vein through the satirical pages of Dr. Wolcot, we have now the heart-stirring metres of a Campbell, as in that beautiful rainbow of poetic loveliness and imagination, his "Pleasures of Hope." We have now a series of pictures bearing an impress as pleasant as the gleams of warm autumn in the "Pleasures of Memory," by Rogers; the wildness of Loutherbourgh, the grandeur of Salvator Rosa, the terror-striking forms of Fuseli, embodied with increased energy in the immortal Lays of Byron: the every-day incidents of life, copied with the graphic fidelity of a Sharp, and bearing the faithful stamp of cottage grouping, which distinguished the pencil of a Morland,—in the natural paintings of Crabbe. We have Catullus stealing from his couch, to breathe a new intonation into the harp of Moore; and last of all, we have the votaress of virtue and moral feeling, the Cambrian minstrel, Mrs. Hemans, making melancholy appear as delightful

as love.

The Author of a Tradesman's Lays.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

Though the waves of old Time are darkly advancing,
There still is one spot where the sunbeams are glancing,
There glow the gay visions of youth's sunny morn,
Safe from the ocean-wave, safe from the storm:
For Memory keeps the spot fresh and green ever,
The dark tides of Time, shall sweep over it never!

There Fancy, her mirror holds up to the eye,
And lovely the forms that come wandering by,
Like music come softly the sounds that have fled,
The voices of lov'd ones, the tones of the dead:
Oh Memory! keep that spot fresh and green ever,
And the dark tides of Time, sweep over it never.

For beautiful Hope, wanders oft to the Isle,
With her wreath of bright flowers, and radiant smile.
She stands with her finger upraised to the sky,
And she dries the sad tear-drop in Memory's eye:
An emerald green, be that Island for ever,
May the dark tides of Time, sweep over it never!

Kirton, Lindsey. ANNE R.

ANECDOTE GALLERY

CARDING A TITHE PROCTOR

In Ireland, carding the tithe proctors was occasionally resorted to by the White Boys, and was performed in the following manner:–

The tithe proctor was generally waked out of his first sleep by his door being smashed in; and the *boys* in white shirts desired him "never to fear," as they only intended to *card* him this bout for taking a quarter instead of a tenth from every poor man in the parish. They then turned him on his face upon the bed; and taking a lively ram cat out of a bag which they brought with them, they set the cat between the proctor's shoulders. The beast, being nearly as much terrified as the proctor, would endeavour to get off; but being held fast by the tail, he intrenched every claw deep in the proctor's back, in order to keep up a firm resistance to the White Boys. The more the tail was pulled *back*, the more the ram cat tried to go *forward*; at length, when he had, as he conceived, made his possession quite secure, main force convinced him to the contrary, and that if he kept his hold he must lose his tail. So, he was dragged backward to the proctor's loins, grappling at every pull, and bringing away here and there strips of the proctor's skin, to prove the pertinacity of his defence.

When the ram cat had got down to the loins he was once more placed at the shoulders, and again *carded* the proctor (*toties quoties*) according to his sentence.

WALKING GALLOWS

(From Sir Jonah Barrington's Sketches.)

Among the extraordinary characters that turned up in the fatal "ninety-eight," there were few more extraordinary than Lieutenant H–, then denominated the "walking gallows;"—and such he certainly was, literally and practically.

Lieutenant H– was an officer of the line on half pay. His brother was one of the solicitors to the Crown—a quiet, tremulous, *vino deditus* sort of man, and a leading Orangeman;—his widow who afterwards married and survived a learned doctor, was a clever, positive, good-looking Englishwoman, and, I think, fixed the doctor's avowed *creed*: as to his genuine *faith*, that was of little consequence.

Lieutenant H– was about six feet two inches high;—strong, and broad in proportion. His strength was great, but of the dead kind unaccompanied by activity. He could lift a ton, but could not leap a rivulet; he looked mild, and his address was civil—neither assuming nor at all ferocious. I knew him well, and from his countenance should never have suspected him of cruelty; but so cold-blooded and so eccentric an executioner of the human race

I believe never yet existed, save among the American Indians.[6]

His inducement to the strange barbarity he practised I can scarcely conceive; unless it proceeded from that natural taint of cruelty which so often distinguishes man above all other animals when his power becomes uncontrolled. The propensity was probably strengthened in him from the indemnities of martial law, and by those visions of promotion whereby violent partizans are perpetually urged, and so frequently disappointed.

At the period alluded to, law being suspended, and the courts of justice closed, the "question" by torture was revived and largely practised. The commercial exchange of Dublin formed a place of execution; even *suspected* rebels were every day immolated as if *convicted* on the clearest evidence; and Lieutenant H–'s *pastime* of hanging *on his own back* persons whose physiognomies he thought characteristic of rebellion was (I am ashamed to say) the subject of jocularity instead of punishment. What in other times he would himself have died for, as a murderer, was laughed at as the manifestation of loyalty: never yet was martial law so abused, or its enormities so hushed up as in Ireland. Being a military officer, the lieutenant conceived he had a right to do just what he thought proper, and to make the most of his time while martial law was flourishing.

Once, when high in blood, he happened to meet *a suspicious-looking* peasant from County Kildare, who could not

[6] His mode of execution being perfectly novel, and at the same time *ingenious*, Curran said, "The lieutenant should have got a patent for cheap strangulation."

satisfactorily account for himself according to the lieutenant's notion of evidence; and having nobody at hand to vouch for him, the lieutenant of course immediately took for granted that he *must* be a rebel strolling about, and imagining the death of his Most Gracious Majesty.[7] He therefore, no other *court of justice* being at hand, considered that he had a right to try the man by his *own opinion*; accordingly, after a brief interrogation, he condemned him to die, and without further ceremony proceeded to put his own sentence into immediate execution.

However, to do the lieutenant justice, his *mode* was not near so tedious or painful as that practised by the grand signior, who sometimes causes the ceremony to be divided into three acts, giving the culprit a drink of spring water to *refresh* him between the two first; nor was it so severe as the burning old women formerly for witchcraft. In fact, the "walking gallows" was both on a new and simple plan; and after some kicking and plunging during the operation, never failed to be completely effectual. The

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[7] The lieutenant's brother being a Crown solicitor, had now and then got the lieutenant to copy the high treason indictments: and he, seeing there that *imagining* the death of a *king* was punished capitally, very naturally conceived that *wishing* it was twice as bad as *supposing* it: having therefore no doubt that *all* rebels wished it, he consequently decided in the tribunal of his own mind to hang every man who hypothetically and traitorously wished his majesty's dissolution, which wish he also conceived was very easily ascertained by the wisher's countenance.A cabinet-maker, at Charing Cross, some years ago, put on his board "patent coffin-maker to his majesty:" it was considered that though this was not an *ill-intentioned*, yet it was a very improper mode of *imagining* the king's death, and the board was taken down accordingly. Lieutenant H. would surely have hanged him in Ireland.

lieutenant being, as before mentioned, of lofty stature, with broad and strong shoulders, saw no reason why they might not answer his majesty's service, upon a pinch, as well as two posts and a crossbar (the more legitimate instrument upon such occasions): and he also considered that, when a rope was not at hand, there was no good reason why his own silk cravat (being softer than an ordinary halter, and of course less calculated to *hurt* a man) should not be a more merciful choke-band than that employed by any *Jack Ketch* in the three kingdoms.

In pursuance of these benevolent intentions, the lieutenant, as a preliminary step, first knocked down the suspected rebel from County Kildare, which the weight of mettle in his fist rendered no difficult achievement. His garters then did duty as handcuffs: and with the aid of a brawny aide-de-camp (one such always attended him), he pinioned his victim hand and foot, and then most considerately advised him to pray for King George, observing that any prayers for his *own* d—d *popish soul* would be only time lost, as his fate in every world (should there be even a thousand) was decided to all eternity for having imagined the death of so good a monarch.

During this exhortation, the lieutenant twisted up his long cravat so as to make a firm, handsome rope, and then expertly sliding it over the rebel's neck, secured it there by a double knot, drew the cravat over his own shoulders, and the aide-de-camp holding up the rebel's heels, till he felt him *pretty easy*, the lieutenant with a powerful chuck drew up the poor devil's head as

high as his own (cheek by jowl), and began to trot about with his burden like a jolting cart-horse,—the rebel choking and gulping meanwhile, until he had no further solicitude about sublunary affairs—when the lieutenant, giving him a parting chuck, just to make sure that his neck was broken, threw down his load—the personal assets about which the aide-de-camp made a *present* of to *himself*.

Now all this proceeding was very painstaking and ingenious: and yet the ungrateful government (as Secretary Cook assured me) would have been better pleased had the execution taken place on timber and with hemp, according to old formalities.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.