

VARIOUS

THE MIRROR OF
LITERATURE,
AMUSEMENT, AND
INSTRUCTION. VOLUME
20, NO. 566, SEPTEMBER
15, 1832

Various

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Amusement, and Instruction. Volume
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BOLSOVER CASTLE

Bolsover is a populous village on the eastern verge of Derbyshire upon the adjacent county of Nottingham; and but a short distance from the town of Chesterfield. The Castle occupies the plain of a rocky hill that rises abruptly from the meadows. The building is of great extent, and, from its elevated situation, it is a landmark for the surrounding country.

Bolsover has been the site of a castle from the Norman Conquest to the present time; but, of the first fabric of this description not a single vestige now remains. At the Domesday survey it belonged to William Peveril, lord of Derbyshire, in whose family it remained for three generations. King John, when Earl of Moreton, became the possessor of Bolsover; but, during his continuation with Longchamp, bishop of Ely, it became the property of that prelate. Subsequently it again reverted to John, who, in the eighteenth year of his reign, issued a mandate to Bryan de L'Isle, the then governor of Bolsover, to fortify the castle and hold it against the rebellious barons; or, if he could not make it tenable, to demolish it. This no doubt was the period when the fortifications, which are yet visible about Bolsover, were established.

In the long and tumultuous reign of Henry III., this castle still retained its consequence. William, Earl Ferrars, had the government of it for six years: afterwards it had eleven different governors in twice that term. It is not necessary to trace the place through all its possessors. In the reign of Henry VIII. it was the property of Thomas Howard, the first Duke of Norfolk. On the attainder of his son, the castle escheated to the crown. Shortly afterwards it was granted to Sir John Byron for fifty years. In the reign of James I., Gilbert Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, was the owner of Bolsover. In the year 1613, he sold it to Sir Charles Cavendish, whose eldest son William, was the first Duke of Newcastle, a personage of great eminence among the nobility of his time, and in high favour at court.¹ He was sincerely attached to his royal master, Charles I., whom he entertained at Bolsover Castle, on three different occasions, in a style of princely magnificence. On the king's second visit here, where he was

¹ The duke was an important personage in the hostilities between his sovereign and the parliament. In 1642, he was appointed general of all his majesty's forces, raised north of Trent, with very full powers. He levied a considerable army at his own expense, with which he for some time maintained the king's cause in the north. He, however, possessed little of the skill of a general, though he was a splendid soldier of fortune. He gained a signal victory over Lord Fairfax, near Bradford, and some others of less importance; but he was utterly defeated at Marston Moor, after which he left the country in despair of the royal cause. He resided for some time at Antwerp with his lady, where they were frequently in much distress. On his return to England, at the Restoration, he was received with the respect due to his unshaken fidelity, and in 1664, was created Earl of Ogle and Duke of Newcastle. He passed the remainder of his life in retirement, devoting himself to literature, to which he was much attached, and attending to the repair of his fortune. He died in 1676, aged 84, and was buried with his duchess in Westminster Abbey. His literary labours are now almost forgotten, if we except his principal production, "A new method and extraordinary invention to dress Horses," &c., which has obtained much praise from judges in the art. Grainger quaintly remarks, that "the Duke of Newcastle was so attached to the Muses, that he could not leave them behind him, but carried them to the camp, and made Davenant the poet-laureate, his lieutenant-general of the ordnance." His second wife was Margaret, the imaginative Duchess of Newcastle, who never revised what she had written, lest it "should disturb her following conceptions," by which means she composed plays, poems, letters, philosophical discourses, orations, &c.; of these she left enough to fill thirteen folio volumes, ten of which have actually been printed. Lord Orford has drawn a curious picture of the literary characters both of this lady and her husband. They were panegyriced and flattered by learned contemporaries; for, in those days flattery was well paid. It is, however, gratifying to learn that the duchess derives infinitely more honour from her fine character as a wife and mistress of a family, than from either her literary productions or these panegyrics.

accompanied by his queen, upwards of 15,000*l.* were expended. The Duchess of Newcastle, in her *Life of the Duke*, her husband, says, "The Earl employed Ben Jonson in fitting up such scenes and speeches as he could devise; and sent for all the country to come and wait on their Majesties; and, in short, did all that even he could imagine to render it great and worthy of their royal acceptance." It was this nobleman who erected the edifice which is now in ruins. Mr. Bray, in his *Tour in Derbyshire*, observes: "This place was seized by the Parliament after the Duke went abroad, and was sold and begun to be pulled down, but was then bought by Sir Charles, the Duke's youngest brother, and so restored to the family."²

The present castle was built at different periods. The north-east end, which was erected by Sir Charles Cavendish, about the year 1613, is the oldest. The interior of this portion is uncomfortably arranged. The rooms are small, and the walls are wainscoted, and fancifully inlaid and painted. The ceilings of the best apartments are carved and gilt, and nearly the whole of the floors are coated with plaster. There is a small hall, the roof of which is supported by pillars; and a star-chamber, richly carved and gilt. The only comfortable apartment, according to Mr. Rhodes, is now called the drawing room, but was formerly the *pillar-parlour*, from its having in the centre a stone column, from which springs an arched ceiling, while round the lower part of the shaft is a plain dinner-table, in the right chivalric fashion. From the roof of this building, to which the ascent is by winding stairs, the view extends "till all the stretching landscape into mist decays." The garden beneath is surrounded with a wall about three yards thick, and contains an old fountain of curious and expensive workmanship, which Dr. Pegge, (who was a native of Chesterfield, and wrote a history of Beauchief Abbey,) has laboured to prove very beautiful.

Hitherto we have spoken but of that part of Bolsover Castle which was formerly denominated the Little House, to distinguish it from the more magnificent structure adjoining. This immense fabric, whose walls are now roofless and rent into fissures, was built by William, the first Duke of Newcastle, in the course of the reign of Charles II., but is said never to have been entirely finished. The interior walls are but bare stones; the door and window cases, and the different apartments, are of unusually large dimensions, the principal remaining apartment being 220ft. by 28: the entire western part, including the *Little House* at the northern extremity, extends about 150 yards. The designs for the whole castle are said to have been furnished by Huntingdon Smithson, (an architect noticed by Walpole,) but he did not live to witness its erection. He collected his materials from Italy, where he was sent by the Duke of Newcastle for the purpose. Smithson died at Bolsover, in 1648, and was buried in the chancel of the church, where there is a poetical inscription to his memory, in which his skill in architecture is commemorated.

The whole pile is now wearing away. Trees grow in some of the deserted apartments, and ivy creeps along the walls; though the ruins have little of the picturesqueness of decay. The best point of view, or north-west, is represented in the Engraving; a short distance hence lies the village of Bolsover.

² Rhode's Excursions, Part iv.

WITCHCRAFT AND SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

(To the Editor.)

As your journal is open to the elucidation of any facts or traditions connected with history, perhaps you will not consider the following attempt at the elucidation of a singular subject, unworthy of your pages. There is something pleasing in every successful attempt at tracing tradition to a rational and philosophical cause, an origin to which many of the most absurd and incredible may be referred.

It was well known that to witchcraft was ascribed only the power of effecting the destruction of certain parts of the human body, and that some of the members could be protected against the effects of incantation. The spells of contra-incantation were often successfully exerted in the destruction of the human body, except in those parts previously rendered invulnerable. Jezebel was destroyed except her hands and feet, and the same fate is recorded of many other witches, or of those who suffered under the influence of malevolent spells.

Might not the vulgar, in search of a cause for so singular a phenomenon, which has often occurred, as spontaneous combustion of the human body, find in the powers of witchcraft an easy solution? Grace Pitt who was burnt in this manner in Suffolk (recorded in the *Philosophical Transactions*,) was a reputed witch, and her death was assigned by the country people to the effects of contra-incantation; that her hands and feet (generally left untouched by this phenomenon) were not consumed, was attributed to the influence of her spell. Indeed, we may suppose that these *old ladies*, who were distinguished by the respectable appellation of witches, gained that title by their excessive devotion to spirituous liquors, which, in every case that has occurred, have been found to predispose to spontaneous combustion, of the human body.

Colchester.

A. BOOTH

THE COSMOPOLITE

ANCIENTS AND MODERNS, OR THE TOILETTE OF MADAME DE POMPADOUR

(From the French of Voltaire.)

Mad. de Pomp.—Who may this lady be with aquiline nose and large black eyes; with such height and noble bearing; with mien so proud, yet so coquettish, who enters my chamber without being announced, and makes her obeisance in a religious fashion?

Tullia.—I am Tullia, born at Rome, about eighteen hundred years ago; I make the Roman obeisance, not the French, and have come, I scarce know from whence, to see your country, yourself, and your toilette.

Mad. de P.—Ah, madam, do me the honour of seating yourself. An arm-chair for the Lady Tullia.

Tullia.—For whom? me, madam? and am I to sit on that little incommodious sort of throne, so that my legs must hang down and become quite red?

Mad. de P.—Upon what then would you sit?

Tullia.—Madam, upon a couch.

Mad. de P.—Ay, I understand—you would say upon a sofa; there stands one, upon which you may recline at your ease.

Tullia.—I am charmed to see that the French have furniture as convenient as ours.

Mad. de P.—Hah, hah, madam, you've no stockings! your legs are naked, but ornamented, however, with a very pretty ribbon, after the fashion of a sandal.

Tullia.—We knew nothing about stockings, which, as a useful and agreeable invention, I certainly prefer to our sandals.

Mad. de P.—Good heavens, madam, I believe you've no *chemise*!

Tullia.—No, madam, in my time nobody wore one.

Mad. de P.—And in what time did you live?

Tullia.—In the time of Sylla, Pompey, Caesar, Cato, Cataline; and Cicero, to whom I have the honour of being daughter: of that Cicero, of whom one of your *protégés* has made mention in barbarous verse.³ I went yesterday to the theatre, where Cataline was represented with all the celebrated people of my time, but I did not recognise one of them; and when my father exhorted me to make advances to Cataline, I was astonished! But, madam, you seem to have some beautiful mirrors; your chamber is full of them; our mirrors were not a sixteenth part so large as yours; are they of steel?

Mad. de P.—No, madam, they are made with sand, and nothing is more common amongst us.

Tullia.—What an admirable art! I confess we had none such! And oh! what a beautiful painting too you have there!

Mad. de P.—It is not a painting, but a print, done merely with lamp-black; a hundred copies of the same design may be struck off in a day, and this secret immortalizes pictures, which time would otherwise destroy.

Tullia.—It is indeed an astonishing secret! we Romans had nothing like it!

³ Crébillon, author of Catalina.

Un Savant.—(A literary man there present, taking up the discourse, and producing a book from his pocket, says to Tullia:) You will be astonished, madam, to learn, that this book is not written by hand, but that it is printed almost in a manner similar to engravings; and that this invention also immortalizes works of the mind.

(The *Savant* presents his book, a collection of verses dedicated to the Marchioness, to Tullia, who reads a page, admires the type, and says to the author:)

Tullia.—Truly, sir, printing is a fine thing; and if it can immortalize such verses as these, it appears to me to be the noblest effort of art. But do you not at least employ this invention in printing the works of my father?

The *Savant.*—Yes, madam, but nobody reads them; I am truly concerned for your father, but in these days, little is known of him save his name.

(Here are brought in chocolate, tea, coffee, and ices. Tullia is astonished to see, in summer, cream and strawberries⁴ iced. She is informed that such congealed beverages are obtained in five minutes, by means of the salt-petre with which they are surrounded, and that by continual motion, is produced their firmness and icy coldness. She is speechless with astonishment. The dark colour of the chocolate and coffee, somewhat disgust her, and she asks whether these liquids are extracted from the plants of the country?—A duke who is present, replies:)

Duke.—The fruits of which these beverages are composed, come from another world, and from the Gulf of Arabia.

Tullia.—Arabia I remember; but never heard mention made of what you call coffee; and as for another world, I know only of that from whence I came, and do assure you, we have no chocolate there.

Duke.—The world of which we tell you, madam, is a continent, called America, almost as large as Europe, Asia, and Africa, put together; and of which we have a knowledge less vague, than of the world from whence you came.

Tullia.—What! Did we then, who styled ourselves masters of the world, possess only half of it? The reflection is truly humiliating!

The *Savant.*—(piqued that Tullia had pronounced his verses bad, replies dryly:) Yes, your countrymen who boasted of having made themselves masters of the world, had scarce conquered the twentieth part of it. We have at this moment, at the further end of Europe, an empire larger in itself than the Roman:⁵ it is governed, too, by a woman, who excels you in intellect and beauty, and who wears *chemises*; had she read my verses, I am certain she would have thought them good.

(The Marchioness commands silence on the part of the author, who has treated a Roman lady, the daughter of Cicero, with disrespect. The duke explains the discovery of America, and taking out his watch, to which is appended, by way of trinket, a small mariner's compass, shows her how, by means of a needle, another hemisphere is reached. The amazement of the fair Roman redoubles at every word which she hears, and every thing she beholds; and she at length exclaims:)

Tullia.—I begin to fear that the moderns really do surpass the ancients; on this point I came to satisfy myself, and doubt not I shall have to carry back a melancholy report to my father.

Duke.—Console yourself, madam, no man amongst us equals your illustrious sire; neither does any come near Caesar, with whom you were contemporary, nor the Scipios who preceded him. Nature, it is true creates, even at this day, powerful intellects, but they resemble rare seeds, which cannot arrive at maturity in an uncongenial soil. The simile does not hold good respecting arts and sciences; time, and fortunate chances, have perfected them. It would, for example, be easier for us to produce a Sophocles, or an Euripides, than such individuals as your father, because, theatres we have,

⁴ Groseilles, literally; gooseberries or currants; but we have taken the liberty here, and elsewhere, slightly to deviate from the original text, in compliment to English customs, tastes, idioms, &c.

⁵ Russia: whose Empress, Catherine II, is intended by the succeeding sentence.

but no tribunals for public harangues.⁶ You have hissed the tragedy of Cataline; when you shall see Phaedrus played, you will probably agree that the part of Phaedrus, in Racine, is infinitely superior to the model you have known in Euripides. I hope, also, that you will agree our Molière surpasses your Terence. By your permission, I shall have the honour of escorting you to the opera, where you will be astonished to hear song in parts; that again is an art unknown to you.⁷ Here, madam, is a small telescope, have the goodness to apply your eye to this glass, and look at that house which is a league off.

Tullia.—Immortal gods! the house is now at the end of the telescope, and appears much larger than before.

Duke.—Well, madam, it is by means of such a toy that we have discovered new heavens, even as by means of a needle, we have become acquainted with a new earth. Do you see this other varnished instrument, in which is inserted a small glass tube? by this trifle, we are enabled to discover the just proportion of the weight of the atmosphere. After much error and uncertainty, there arose a man who discovered the first principle of nature, the cause of weight, and who has demonstrated that the stars weigh upon the earth, and the earth upon the stars. He has also unthreaded the light of the sun, as ladies unthread a tissue of gold.

Tullia.—What, sir, is it to unthread?

Duke.—Madam, the equivalent of this term will scarcely be found in the orations of Cicero. It is to unweave a stuff, to draw out thread by thread, so as to separate the gold. Thus has Newton done by the rays of the sun, the stars also have submitted to him; and one Locke has accomplished as much by the Human Understanding.

Tullia.—You know a great deal for a duke and a peer of the realm; you seem to me more learned than that literary man who wished me to think his verses good, and you are far more polite.

Duke.—Madam, I have been better brought up; but as to my knowledge it is merely commonplace. Young people now, when they quit school, know much more than all the philosophers of antiquity. It is only a pity that we have, in Europe, substituted half-a-dozen imperfect jargons, for the fine Latin language, of which your father made so noble a use; but with such rude implements we have produced, even in the *belles lettres*, some very fair works.

Tullia.—The nations who succeeded the Romans must needs have lived in a state of profound peace, and have enjoyed a constant succession of great men, from my father's time until now, to have invented so many new arts, and to have become acquainted so intimately with heaven and earth.

Duke.—By no means, madam, we are ourselves, some of those barbarians, who almost all came from Scythia, and destroyed your empire, and the arts and sciences. We lived for seven or eight centuries like savages, and to complete our barbarism, were inundated with a race of men termed monks, who brutified, in Europe, that human species which you had conquered and enlightened. But what will most astonish you is, that in the latter ages of ignorance amongst these very monks, these very enemies to civilization, nature nurtured some useful men. Some invented the art of assisting the feeble sight of age; and others, by pounding together nitre and charcoal, have furnished us with implements of war, with which we might have exterminated the Scipios, Alexander, Caesar, the Macedonian phalanxes, and all your legions; it is not that we possess warriors more formidable than the Scipios, Alexander, and Caesar, but that we have superior arms.⁸

⁶ The well-known poetic vanity of Voltaire must be taken into full account, when he thus talks of the easiness of producing a (modern) Sophocles, or an Euripides; perhaps he thought his own tragedies equal, or superior to theirs; and for what follows, the French national prejudice in favour of their own dramatic writers, and which is far more laudable than the English indifference to the interests of the drama, should be recollected.

⁷ To "astonished" the author might almost have added alarmed, or disgusted. The conversant in music, know that song in parts, i.e. harmonized, is peculiarly distasteful to the ear unaccustomed to it; song, in unison, is the natural music of savage man; harmony is art; to be pleased with it therefore, implies a mind and ear cultivated and refined. The same remark hold good with instrumental music.

⁸ We apologize to our zealous correspondent for omitting the ingenious defence of War, contained in the Note to this passage. Its insertion would involve ourselves in a war—we mean of words, words, words." As a private opinion, we admit the argument of the

Tullia.—In you, I perceive united, the high breeding of a nobleman, and the erudition of a man of (literary) consideration; you would have been worthy of becoming a Roman senator.

Duke.—Ah, madam, far more worthy are you of being at the head of our court.

Mad. de P.—In which case, this lady would prove a formidable rival to me.

Tullia.—Consult your beautiful mirrors made of sand, and you will perceive you have nothing to fear from me. Well, sir, in the gentlest manner in the world, you have informed me that your knowledge (infinitely) transcends our own.

Duke.—I said, madam, that the latter ages are better informed than those which preceded them; at least no general revolution has utterly destroyed all the monuments of antiquity: we have had horrible, but temporary convulsions, and amid these storms, have been fortunate enough to preserve the works of your father, and of some other great men: thus, the sacred fire has never been utterly extinguished, and has in the end produced an almost universal illumination. We despise the barbarous scholastic systems, which have long had some influence among us, but revere Cicero and all the ancients who have taught us to think. If we possess other laws of physics than those of your times, we have no other rules of eloquence, and this perhaps may settle the dispute between the ancients and moderns.

(Every one agreed with the duke. Finally they went to the opera of Castor and Pollux, with the words and music of which, Tullia was much gratified, and she acknowledged such a spectacle to be extremely superior to that of a combat of gladiators.⁹)

Great Marlow, Bucks.

M.L.B

defence; though it militates so strongly with passion and prejudice that its insertion would be the war-hoop for a whole community of peace-makers to break in upon our literary *otium*. We wish to be the last in the world to feed a popular fallacy on any subject; but in some respects the argument employed in the journal quoted by M.L.B. is of too general a description to controvert the error in the present case. We must be courteous—though not of the court: ours is a system of non-intervention in politics; ever, in matters of literary dispute we do little more than "bite our thumb." It is hoped our correspondent will rightly understand us; and so now, like Mr. Peake's bashful man in the farce, we offer our apology for having apologized. By the way, in the newspapers is advertised a pamphlet, containing an apology for its publication.—ED, M.

⁹ It is a pity that when Voltaire wrote this clever paper, Gas and Steam were not in vogue to add to the "astonishments" of Tullia. This would also most miraculously have assisted Madame de Genlis, in that no less clever exposition of the wonders of nature and art, the story of Alphonso and Thelismou.

NEW BOOKS

THE YEAR OF WATERLOO

[In continuation of our extracts from the very amusing *Private Correspondence of a Woman of Fashion* are the following incidents of this memorable era.]

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