CHARLES BARDSLEY

THE ROMANCE OF THE LONDON DIRECTORY

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The Romance of the London Directory:

Содержание

Charles W. Bardsley
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BY CHARLES W. BARDSLEY, M.A., Vicar of Ulverston, AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH SURNAMES," ETC

"This Booke containes the names of mortall men;
But thear's a Booke with characters of golde,
Not writ with incke, with pensill, or with pen,
Wheare Gode's elect for ever are inrolde,
The Booke of Life; wheare labor thou to bee,
Beefore this Booke hath once re-gistred thee."

From a Church Register.

PREFACE

When the enterprising and energetic editor of *The Fireside* wrote suggesting that he should print my articles on the London Directory, published at various intervals during the last two years in that magazine, I was somewhat taken aback. I will candidly confess that half of them, or thereabouts, were written with some degree of care: I will as honestly admit that the rest were indited amid the press of heavy ministerial labours, and had to take their chance, as regards manner, method, and matter. Nevertheless, I may add that, however wanting in order and sequence several chapters appeared on paper, I was not afraid for the accuracy of their contents. My only credit for this, supposing my lack of fear to be well founded, is that which attaches to diligent research. The only true means of discovering the origin of our surnames is to find the earliest form of entry. Light upon that, and half the difficulty vanishes. This is a means which is as open to any of my readers as myself – more so in the case of those who dwell in the metropolis.

I take this opportunity of apologising to many readers of *The Fireside*, who have written to me asking for information in respect of their own, or some other name they were interested in. A few I have been able to answer; the rest have had to lie by, for I have not had the time or health to attend to them. I only wish there was the possibility of this preface meeting the

eye of my American cousins. I have a large batch of letters of inquiry, from the other side of the Atlantic, to scarcely one of which have I been able to make reply. I feel truly sorry, for I would not seem to be wanting in courtesy to one of them. These more distant inquiries have resulted rather from the publication of "English Surnames" (issued by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, Piccadilly), than the articles in *The Fireside*. And I would take this opportunity of recommending such of my readers as have become interested in the science of nomenclature, through a perusal of these elementary papers, to study that work. I can do this the more readily as I have no pecuniary interest in the sale thereof!

Not the least of the pleasures attending the writing of these papers has been the opportunity it gave me of making personal acquaintance with the Editor. I trust God will bless him in his most useful enterprise.

St. Mary's Vicarage, Ulverston.

CHAPTER I.
INDIVIDUALIZATION AND LOCALIZATION

All proverbs are not necessarily true, but that which asserts that "every man has his hobby" few will gainsay. Nothing in a house so well betrays this hobby as the owner's bookcase. It may be large, or it may be small, but there the secret lies. One man's hobby is angling, and his shelf begins with quaint Isaac Walton, and ends with the *Field* newspaper of last week. Another has a liking for natural science, and his library is a *vade mecum* of its mysteries. A third – oftentimes a lady – loves ferns, and her study is a little compendium of that curious literature that has all but wholly sprung up within the present generation. Even the young lady's shelf of poems, or novels, or histories, betrays, if not the bent of her mind, the bias of her education.

My hobby is Nomenclature, and my library betrays my weakness in – what class of books, do you think? – directories! You would think I was a postal official. I have London Directories, Provincial Town Directories, and County Directories. I have even a Paris and a New York Directory. But herein lies a strange truth. I find as much pleasure in perusing these directories as any schoolgirl over her first and most sensational novel. The grand finale of murders, suicides from

third-storey windows, and runaway weddings, all so thrillingly blended, cannot be half so absorbing to her – not that I recommend her to read such things – as the last chapter of the London Post Office Directory, from Y to Z, is to me. It is the conclusion of one of the grandest and most highly wrought romances ever put together by the ingenuity of man. Oftentimes in the evening I take it down from my shelf, and I never feel tempted to skip the pages. Nay, when I have at last got to Z, I can begin at A again with but freshened interest; for the Directory will bear reading twice.

The London Directory, to every one who has the key that unlocks its treasures, is at once an epitome of all antiquarian knowledge. In it I can trace the lives of my countrymen backwards for many a century. In it is furnished a full and detailed account of the habits and the customs of my ancestry – the dress they wore, the food they ate, six hundred years ago; though that it is not so far back as the Welshman's pedigree, which hung from his sitting-room ceiling to the floor, and half-way up had a note to the effect that "about this time Adam was born." No, I can but pretend to go up some eighteen or twenty steps of the ladder of my family nomenclature. Nevertheless, by one glance at your name I can tell you – unless its spelling be hopelessly corrupted – whether the progenitor of your race was Scotch, Irish, English, Norman, French, German, or even Oriental. I can tell you what was his peculiar weakness, or his particular vocation in life. I can declare the complexion of his

hair; whether he was long or short, straight or crooked, weak or strong. I can whisper to you what his neighbours thought of him; whether they deemed him generous or miserly, churlish or courteous. Yes, sometimes I must tell you unpleasant truths about your great, great, great (*ad infinitum*) grandfather. For the Directory is remarkably truthful; it won't spare anybody, high or low, rich or poor. I have heard people telling of the greatness of their ancestral name, and the said name on their visiting card was laughing at them all the time "behind its back." I have seen men dwelling in back slums contented with their sphere, and yet ignorant of the fact that they bore a sobriquet which six centuries ago would have brought them respect from the king on his throne down to the humblest cottager in the land. Oh, the ups and downs of life, as related in this big romance, put to paper by prosaic clerks, who never smiled at the fun, nor dropped a tear at the distress, simply because they lacked the manual that should explain its merriment and interpret its pathos! Hieroglyphics, believe me, are not confined to Egyptian obelisks or Oriental slabs.

But some reader, perchance, will say, "What do you mean? Is there anything more in a surname than the individuality it gives to the present bearer? In itself is it not purely accidental?" Of course it is accidental. A fossil shell is accidental; but place it in the hand of a geologist, and he will talk for five days upon it, barring the time he will want for eating and sleeping. And a surname is a fossil – not millions of years old, may be, like the

shell; only six hundred – still a fossil, and therefore stereotyping the state and condition of human life at the period when it came into being. A surname not only gives individuality to the present bearer, but is a distinct statement of some condition or capacity enjoyed or endured by the first possessor. An instance will prove this. Take the name of "Cruikshank." There must have been some particular ancestor so designated because he had a "crooked leg." That is a fact to start with. Do you want to know where he lived, and when? Well, there is no great difficulty in the matter. The very spelling "cruik," and not "crook," proves that he was a north countryman. Is that all? No. The word "shank" shows that he received this nickname before "leg" had come into ordinary use. *Leg* is always used for *shank* now, yet it is first found in England about the year 1250. It is comparatively modern. Hence there is no surname that I know of with "leg" as an ingredient. [1] In later days he would have been called "Bow-leg." Once more, nickname-surnames are scarcely ever found to be *hereditary* before the year 1200. Here then I glean four facts about "Cruikshank": —

(1) The first Mr. Cruikshank was bow-legged.

(2) He came from the borders of Scotland, or still more north.

(3) He lived previous to the year 1400.

(4) And not earlier than the year 1200.

I have taken this instance hap-hazard. I might have selected

[1] Legge or Leg is Leigh, a meadow, and therefore *local*. John de Leg is found in the *Hundred Rolls*.

an exacter illustration, but this will answer my purpose. It is possible my reader will now say, "But there must be a good substructure of primary knowledge laid before I can take up the London Directory, and pretend to be immensely interested in it, and tell my friends what capital reading it is." Of course, every true pleasure must be bought, and study will purchase infinitely higher delights than money can ever do. It is partly that you may learn how to acquire that necessary elementary knowledge that I am about to write these short chapters upon the London Directory.

Before I begin, let me say a few words about *personality* and *locality*. We should always begin at the beginning. The preacher never starts at fourthly; soup by some mysterious law ever precedes fish. Remember, the necessity for individuality has given us our Names. The need of an address has originated our Directories.

(1) *Individualization*. The word *sur*name means an *added* name —*i. e.*, a sobriquet added to the personal or baptismal name. Why? Because one was not sufficient to give individuality to the bearer. Adam and Eve, and Seth, and Abel, and Joseph, and Moses, all were enough while population was small; but manifestly such simplicity could not last. In the wilderness there were, say, 2,500,000 Israelites. How could one suffice there, especially if "Caleb" or "Joshua" had become so popular that there were, say, 50 or 100 of each in the closely-packed community? It was not enough: therefore we find a surname

adopted, that is, an added name. "Joshua, the son of Nun" – "Caleb, the son of Jephunneh" – are amongst the world's first surnames. In Directory language this is simply "Joshua Nunson," or "Caleb Jephunneh." Simon Barjonas is nothing more than Simon Johnson. Remember, however, these were not *hereditary*. They died with their owner, and the child, if there was one, got a surname of his own. Surnames did not become hereditary in Europe even till the beginning of the twelfth century, and among the lower classes not till the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Imagine London with, say, 3,000,000 souls, each possessing but one name. Picture to yourself to-morrow's post bringing 1000 letters to "Mr. John," or "John, Esquire." We can't conceive it. No, a surname became an imperative necessity when population increased, when men herded together, and communities began to be formed. It is curious to note that some of these surnames have become so common that they have failed of their object, and ceased to give individuality. There are 270,000 "Smiths" in England and Wales, and as many "Joneses." They would together form a town as large as Manchester, or separately as big as Leeds. William Smith scarcely individualizes the bearer now; so he either gets three names or four names at the font, or his identity is eked out by a remarkable single name, perchance "Plantagenet," or "Kerenhappuck," or "Napoleon," or "Sidney." The worst of it is that "Sidney" was so greedily fixed upon after it became famous that there are now hundreds of "Sidney Smiths," and thus it has ceased to give proper

individuality. It is the same with "John Jones." The Registrar-General says that if "John Jones" were called out at a market in Wales, either everybody would come, or nobody: either everybody, thinking that you meant each, or nobody, because you had not added some description which should distinguish the particular John Jones you wanted. I remember at college two John Joneses went in for examination for the "little go." Both belonged to the same college; one passed, the other did not. The one who got first to the schools bore away his certificate in triumph. The one who came last always declared that his *confrère* had robbed him of his "testamur," and I have no doubt will die assured of the same! I believe a day will come when, either by compulsory enactment or by voluntary arrangement, there will be a redistribution of surnames in Wales; the sooner the better.

(2) *Localization*. So much for the personality; now for locality. It is one thing to know the name of the man you want; it is another thing to know where you can find him. In a word, where does he live? "Go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus," says the Divine Book. This would not be enough in the nineteenth century. There are streets a mile long now. There are restaurants above the shops, and offices above the restaurants, and the old woman who cleans the building above them all. How is Mrs. Betsy Pipps to be found of her friends? Yet a letter from her daughter in the country about the cows and the turnips has as much right to find its way to that top room in the murky city as a

posted document about Turkey and Russia to Lord Derby in that big place a little further on.

One of the greatest transformations the streets of London ever saw was when the signboards were taken down. These were at first adopted purely to localize the inhabitant of the house pendent from whose wall the signboard swung. Until the reign of Queen Anne, the streets could scarcely be seen further than a few yards because of these innumerable obstructions. They darkened the streets, obscured the view, and threatened the very lives of the horsemen who rode along. The personal discomfort to wayfarers was great, for not only did the rain drip unpleasantly from them, but the wooden spouts, which frequently shot forward from the roof in order that the signboard might swing from them, poured their little cataracts upon the devoted heads of the passers-by. This infliction was patiently endured for several centuries; but the British ratepayer at last made his voice heard, as in the end he always does. This time, too, he had right on his side, as he invariably thinks he has, and an alteration took place. The ruling powers ordered the obnoxious signs to be placed flat against the walls. The idea of removing them entirely was reserved for a more brilliant intellect a few years later on. I have not yet seen the printed regulation for the metropolis, but no doubt the Manchester document was but a copy of it. The declaration issued for that town runs as follows: “With the approbation and concurrence of the magistrates, we, the borough reeve and constables, request the shopkeepers and innholders of

this town, who have not already taken down their signs, to do the same as soon as possible, and place them against the walls of their houses, as they have been long and justly complained of as nuisances. They obstruct the free passage of the air, annoy the passengers in wet weather, darken the streets, etc., – all which inconvenience will be prevented by a compliance with our request, and be manifestly productive both of elegance and utility."

Of the utility there could be no doubt. In wet weather, as already hinted, everybody who had a coat collar had to turn it up to prevent each swinging sign from dripping the rain-water down the back of the neck. Umbrellas were still rare, costly, and curious luxuries. In a word, the swinging sign was voted an intolerable nuisance, was found guilty, and condemned – not to the gallows, of course, for the charge against it was that it had been hanging there to the public detriment all its days – but to oblivion. I daresay London had made away with many of its cumbersome signboards many years before the provincial towns. It is curious to note that in a hundred different nooks and corners of old London there still linger some of the tradesmen's signs, either flattened against the wall, or carved upon the now crumbling stonework.

There are endless allusions to the signs of old London in the comic or semi-comic rhymes of the period. Thomas Heywood, early in the seventeenth century, says: —

"The gintry to the *King's Head*,
The nobles to the *Crown*,
The knights unto the *Golden Fleece*,
And to the *Plough* the clowne.
The Churchman to the *Mitre*,
The shepherd to the *Star*,
The gardener hies him to the *Rose*,
To the *Drum* the man of war."

There is a capital collection of these names in a ballad of the Restoration, which is far too long to quote in full, but of which the following is a specimen: —

"Through the Royal Exchange as I walked,
Where gallants in sattin doe shine,
At midst of the day they parted away,
To seaverall places to dine.
The ladyes will dine at the *Feathers*,
The *Globe* no captaine will scorne,
The huntsman will goe to the *Greyhound* below,
And some will hie to the *Horne*.
The farriers will to the *Horse*,
The blacksmith unto the *Locke*,
The butchers unto the *Bull* will goe,
And the carmen to Bridewell *Clocke*.
The pewterers to the *Quarte Pot*,
The coopers will dine at the *Hoope*,
The coblers to the *Last* will goe,
And the bargemen to the *Sloope*.

The goldsmith will to the *Three Cups*,
For money they hold it as drosse;
Your Puritan to the *Pewter-canne*,
And your Papists to the *Crosse*.
Thus every man in his humour,
That comes from the northe or the southe;
But he that has no money in his purse
May dine at the signe of the *Mouth*."

Again, Pasquin, in his "Night-cap," says: —

"First there is Maister Peter at the *Bell*,
A linen draper, and a wealthy man;
Then Maister Thomas that doth stockings sell,
And George the grocer at the *Frying Pan*.
And Maister Miles the mercer at the *Harrow*,
And Maister Mike the silkman at the *Plow*,
And Maister Nicke the Salter at the *Sparrow*,
And Maister Dicke the vintner at the *Cow*."

Another jingling rhyme began: —

"I'm amused at the signs
As I pass through the town,
To see the odd mixture, —
A 'Magpie and Crown,'
The 'Whale and the Crow,'
The 'Razor and Hen,'
The 'Leg and Seven Stars,'

The 'Scissors and Pen,'
The 'Axe and the Bottle,'
The 'Tun and the Lute,'
The 'Eagle and Child,'
The 'Shovel and Boot.'"

These double signs were very common, and are easily explained. Now-a-days a man who has taken the goodwill of a well-established shop paints over the door "Snooks, late Jopson, Chemist." The apprentice in old days added his own badge to that of his late master, and the signboard displayed perhaps the "Mermaid and Gridiron," or the "Leg and Crow," the old sign being linked to the new.

The reader may think I have dwelt somewhat long upon this matter; but I am writing about localization, and these signboards in their day were the only means of identifying the London tradesman. Names and numbers were practically useless. How small a proportion of the London population could read even two hundred years ago! Mr. Baxter might have "Baxter" in the largest gilt characters over his front; he might further add that he made and sold that newly-discovered luxury tobacco on the counter within, – but how many of the passers-by would be any the wiser! But if he had a large swinging board at the end of a pole, facing the wayfarers, with a huge Turk's head with a pipe in its mouth, there was none but could tell his occupation. Sometimes the real article was exhibited. The hosier would dangle a pair of stockings from his pole. Thus it was that every shopkeeper was known by

his sign. The housewife would send little Tom to the "Cock," or the "Three Cranes," or the "Ark," or the "Hand-in-hand" for her little domestic wants, where now she would bid him run to "Tomkins'," or "Sawyer's," or "Robinson's." In course of time the sign did not always harmonize with the articles sold within, but it was quite enough for the neighbours dwelling around. What an array of creaking posts and grotesque frames must there not have been along the leading thoroughfares, such as Cheapside, and old London Bridge! and leaving out the question of discomfort, and the perils of a broken head if you drove on a coach, what a picturesque scene it must have been!

I dare not say what a large proportion of names in the London Directory that look like nicknames must be set down as the result of this old-fashioned custom. The fourteenth century saw London streets looking as if hung with bannerets, so crowded were they with signs. That was a period when half of the lower middle class were still without an hereditary surname. The consequence is, we find such entries as "Hugh atte Cokke," or "Thomas atte Ram," or "Thomas del Hat," or "Margery de Styrop." The reader must see at a glance that we have here the origination of half our "Cocks" and "Coxes," "Rams," "Roebucks," "Tubbs," "Bells," "Crows." There are three "Hatts" to forty-one "Heads," three "Pates" and two "Crowns" in the London Directory, not to mention three "Harrows," two "Plows," four "Boots," and ten "Pattens." All these, and a hundred other names that appear difficult of origination, are easily explained

when we recall this faded custom of a few centuries ago.

The plan of having numbered doors came into use but very recently. The signboards were disused in many parts of London before numerals were instituted. The addresses on letters appeared very strange as a consequence.

John Byrom, the great epigrammatist, writing to his wife from Cambridge in 1727, addresses his letter to "Mistress Eliz. Byrom, near the old Church, in Manchester." That was the ordinary method, to choose some big well-known building, and state your friends' position to it by the compass. The first Directory ever published, of any pretensions, was Kent's, in 1736. "The Directory," it is called, "sold by Henry Kent, in Finch Lane, near the Royal Exchange." It contains about 1200 names, all the tradesmen and merchants of London. There are such entries as "Samuel Wilson, hardwareman, in Cannon Street, the corner of Crooked Lane," or "John Bradshaw, opposite the Monument, at a barber's."

Manifestly this could not go on. In the edition for 1770 occurs the following: "The Directory.. with the numbers as they are affixed to their houses, agreeable to the late Acts of Parliament." The Legislature had had to take the matter into hand. London was getting far too big for indistinct addresses such as these. The first street in the metropolis to possess numbered doors was New Burlington Street. This was accomplished in June 1764. Other important throughfares followed suit, and before ten years had gone by, we find the Directory particularizing

as follows: “John Trelawney, haberdasher, No. 22, Nightingale Lane,” or “Hamnett Townley, hop merchant, No. 69, Great Tower Street.” Occasionally a “Vincent Trehearn, hatmaker, behind St. Thomas’s,” comes, but rarely; and by-and-by such entries disappear altogether. Manchester began the same practice in 1772, at the request of the borough reeve and constable, and was the second town in the kingdom to adopt the practice.

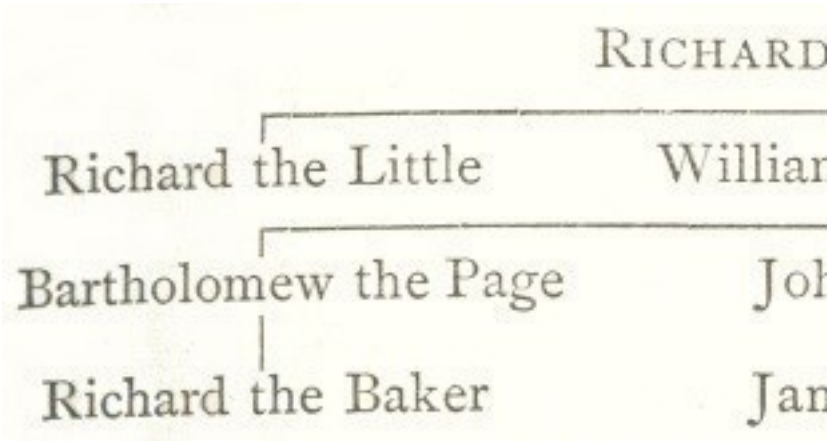
It was reserved for the year 1877 to put a climax, I think, to ingenuity of this kind. In Manchester, probably in London also, there are lamp-post Directories. You cannot always have a Directory at your elbow. Even this difficulty is remedied by the lamp-post Directory. The names of all shopkeepers in that particular street wherein the lamp-post stands are printed alphabetically on a circular tablet, which revolves round the post. You turn it round till you find the name you want.

What ingenious creatures we are! Well might our great poet say, “What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties!” Well might one greater than William Shakespear declare, “Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels”! The ingenuity of man has created the surprises of history.

CHAPTER II.
THE DIVISIONS OF LONDON SURNAMES

We have explained the origin of surnames as an institution. We have shown that as the population of the earth increased, and mankind began to form themselves into closely-packed communities, a demand arose for a more distinct individuality. As a consequence, men took an additional sobriquet; or rather, it was fixed on them by their neighbours, for in nine cases out of ten the bearer had no voice in the matter.

The peculiar feature of our earlier surnames is that they were *not hereditary*– father, mother, daughters, sons, and even the grandchildren, might all be living at the same time, in the same hamlet, even under the same roof, and yet possess each a distinct sobriquet, which was the mark of their identity. Let us first draw out an imaginary pedigree, and then quote from a real one.



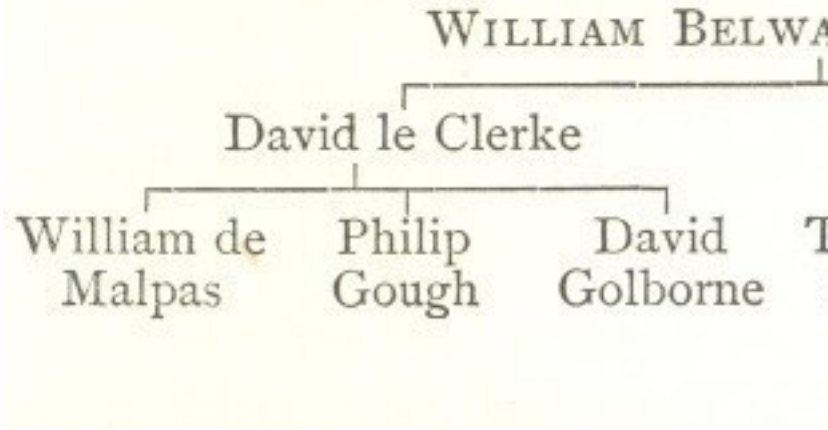
2

This would have to be the kind of family tree drawn out among our country yeomen and town merchants, from say 1200 to 1450, after which date we may begin to look for hereditary surnames. The great-grandfather, Richard, is known by the village in which his house is situate. Of three sons the eldest, Richard, is distinguished from Richard his father by his small stature. He becomes therefore Richard Little in the common parlance of his neighbours. The second son, William, has taken charge of the village pound for strayed cattle. He is known as

[2] The pedigree is shown in graphical format in the book. In text it is: Starting at Richard of Colton there are three descendents: Richard the Little, William atte Pound and Henry Whitehead. From William atte Pound there are two descendents: Bartholomew the Page and John Williamson. From Bartholomew the Page is descended Richard the Baker. From Henry Whitehead is descended Adam Hawkins and from him James Bentham and Alice Adams. – DP.

William atte Pound (*i. e.* at the Pound). The third son, Henry, has very light hair, almost white, although he is still but a youth. This being somewhat remarkable, causes him to be distinguished from all other Henrys in the same community by the sobriquet of Henry Whitehead. Of the third generation, William atte Pound has two sons, one of whom, Bartholomew, becomes a servitor of more menial rank in the great baron's castle hard by. Of course he becomes Bartholomew Page. The other John stays at home to help his father. Naturally he is better recognised by his filial relationship than his brother, and becomes John William's son, and by-and-by John Williamson. But Henry Whitehead has a son also, and as Hawkin or Halkin was then the pet form of Henry, Adam, the son, becomes Adam Hawkins. The fourth generation will now be beyond the need of explanation.

Take now a real pedigree from Camden: —



There is nothing that needs explanation in this pedigree except Philip's surname of Gough. The family residence was at Malpas, as seen above. This was on the Welsh frontier. Gough is the Welsh for "red," so that Philip had evidently got his surname or nickname amongst the Cambrian population from his ruddy complexion.

We are now well on the way to survey the groups or classes into which the surnames in the London Directory can be divided. Nothing can simplify the study of nomenclature so readily as a consideration of the classes into which surnames may be placed. If the reader will turn to the imaginary pedigree of the Colton family, he will see that the ten surnames therein contained may be set under five heads. Richard of Colton, William atte Pound, and James Bentham, are known by a *place-name*; John Williamson, Adam Hawkins and Alice Adams by the *father's Christian name*; Richard the Baker by his daily *occupation*; Bartholomew the Page by his *official capacity*; and Richard the Little and Henry Whitehead by a sobriquet having reference to their *personal appearance*. Here, then, are five distinct classes. There is not a surname in the London Directory, nor in England, nor in Europe, nor in the whole known or unknown world, that cannot be placed,

[3] Again, the pedigree is shown in the book in graphical format. In text it starts at William Belward of Malpas with descendents David le Clerke and Richard de Belward. From David le Clerke are descended William de Malpas, Philip Gough and David Golborne. From Richard de Belward are descended Thomas de Cotgrave, William de Overton and Richard Little. From Richard Little is descended John Richardson. – DP.

and placed correctly, under one of the five heads that I have thus foreshadowed: – (1) Local names. (2) Baptismal names. (3) Names of occupation. (4) Official names. (5) Nicknames. The first of these to become *hereditary* were the Norman local names. Many of the Conqueror's followers took or received as a surname the title of the place they left in Normandy. He who left the chapelry of St. Clair across "the silver streak" settled in England as "William, or Robert de St. Clair." In course of time this became "Sinclair" and "Sinkler;" just as "St. Denis" became "Sidney;" "St. Pierre," "Spier" and "Spiers;" or "St. Leger," "Selinger." "Sinkler" is as vile a corruption of "Sinclair" as "Boil" from "Boyle." Some folk say, "What's in a name?" One thing is clear: there is a good deal in the spelling of it. These local names, however, were the first hereditary names in England. But the Normans introduced representatives of all five classes. Take a single instance of each.

		Norman-English.	Saxon-English.
I.	Local	Sidney	Burton.
II.	Baptismal	Fitz-Hamon	Jenkinson.
III.	Occupative	Taylor	Baker.
IV.	Official	Chamberlain	Steward.
V.	Nicknames	Fortescue	Sheepshanks.

"Fortescue" means "brave" or "strong shield." Hence the family motto has a punning allusion: "*Forte Scutum*, salus ducum," —*i. e.*, "A strong shield is the safety of leaders." If

we take a glimpse at any village roll four hundred years ago, representatives of all these classes will invariably be found, although the *baptismal* and *local* will largely predominate. Look at the "Custom Roll and Rental of the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, 1422" (Chetham Society Publications).

I.	Local	Robert of Chadwick	Thomlyn of the Leghes.
II.	Baptismal	Tomlyn Diconson	Robyn Robynson.
III.	Occupative	Roger the Baxter (Baker)	Richard the Smith.
IV.	Official	Jak the Spenser	William Somaster (Summaster).
V.	Nicknames	Elyn the Rose	Hobbe the Kynge.

Every secluded village in England at this moment, every churchyard with its simple epitaphs, every vestry register with its recorded births and marriages and deaths, contains representatives of these several divisions. When we come to such a big place as the metropolis, a little world of itself, we expect to find these classes largely exhibited. I have taken the trouble to analyse the first five letters of the alphabet in the London Directory. Curious are the results. We may premise that there are about 120,000 names in the *Commercial* list. My analysis concerns about 30,000 of these – that is, exactly one-fourth.

	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	Total
Local	915	5093	3259	1377	716	11,360
Baptismal	1763	1647	1535	1935	1323	8203
Occupative	37	899	1546	169	—	2651
Official	139	575	949	48	26	1737
Nicknames	45	2089	685	210	67	3096
(Foreign)	184	569	293	419	119	1584
(Doubtful)	120	850	476	193	56	1694
Total	3203	11,722	8743	4351	2307	30,326

Without some further explanation, these figures will seem utterly incongruous. I make no apology for the somewhat large number of doubtful instances. Those who have studied this subject will consider it small.

Notice under "A," the *baptismal* names are double all other classes added together; while under "B," the *local* names, excluding doubtful instances (a large proportion of which must be local), are also double the rest. This is easily explained. Five hundred years ago some Christian names were enormously popular. Andrew was one. Under the forms of Andrews and Anderson, etc., we have a total of 290 names. Allen was another. There are 250 "Allens" [4] in London, without adding other forms of the name. There is no *local* name under "A" to compare with these. Under "B" this position is reversed. Of *local* names there are about 142 Barnes, 56 Bartons, 37 Becks, 85 Berrys,

[4] I say there are 250 Aliens in London. But the Directory only gives the name of the head of the family. Hence in the aggregate there may be 2,000 Aliens dwelling in the metropolis.

55 Boltons, 44 Booths, 58 Bradleys, 120 Brooks, besides a large list of lesser but fairly proportionate names. *Baptismal* names under "B" are not so fortunate. 'Tis true there are 70 Barnards, 66 Balls (Baldwin), 83 Bartletts (Bartholomew), 52 Bates (Bartholomew), 199 Bennetts (Benedict and Benjamin), and 40 Batemans (an old English baptismal name), but with these the list is well-nigh exhausted. Under "C" the *occupative* class is larger than the baptismal. This would be unaccountable did we not remember that there are no less than 283 Cooks and Cookes, 265 Coopers, 221 Carters, 64 Chandlers, 51 Carpenters, and 35 Cartwrights in the Directory. Under "C," too, the *official* class is very strongly represented. There are about 52 °Clerks, Clarks, and Clarkes, not to mention 12 °Cohens and Cohns (*i. e.*, priest), which, though of Jewish origin, are not set down in the foreign list, inasmuch as the vast majority of them have sprung from Cohens settled in England for centuries; indeed, a large number of them pass for pure English blood. *Nicknames* are best exhibited under "B," for there are no less than 650 forms of Brown in the London Directory alone, not to mention 160 Bells and 120 Bishops – one hundred and twenty Bishops in London! This beats all the episcopal conferences of modern times hollow. By-and-by I shall explain why "Bishop," and such names as "Pope," "Cardinal," "Prince," and "King," must be set in the nickname class. I now may note the fact, and pass on. With respect also to the 160 Bells, we must not forget that they have three distinct origins. The following registered forms

are found five hundred years ago: – "Peter le Bel" (*i. e.*, the handsome), "Richard fil. Bell" (*i. e.*, the son of Bell, *i. e.* Isabella), and "John atte Bell" (*i. e.*, at the Bell, the sign-name at some country hostel). Our friends the Bells may choose which they like. I should select the first, I think, but tastes may differ. Again, notice under "*E*" that the *baptismal* names far outnumber the aggregate of all other classes, the *occupative* being without a representative at all! The popularity of Edward and Elias (always called Ellis) has done this. There are about 330 Edwards in London; and adding together the different forms of Ellis, such as Elliot (the pet name of Ellis), Eliot, Elliotson, Ellice, Ellicot (the pet form of Ellice), Ellison, Elkins, Elkinson, Elcock, Ell, Else, Elson, and a dozen other dresses in which the name is arrayed, all of which I shall explain hereafter, we have no less than 370 representatives of Elias. That the Crusades brought "John" and "Elias" into favour in England is easily proved, and I shall have a word to say about the matter in another chapter. There are a hundred interesting remarks to make about such names as these, if one allowed oneself to be tempted out of the beaten track, but I control myself. Notice lastly, that under "D" one-tenth of the names are foreign – that is, of recent importation from the Continent. The explanation of such a large proportion is that very many foreign local surnames preserve the "de," or "del," or "de la," as a prefix. "De Jersey," "De Grelle," "Delattre," "Delcroix," "Delavanti;"so they run.

In concluding this chapter, the question may be asked – and

a very important one it is – how many differently spelled names, counting a single spelling as one, are there in each class? The answer to this will show the vast predominance of local names in our Directories. If we exclude foreign (nearly all local) and doubtful (of which three-fifths must be looked upon as local), then the local class under A, B, C, D, and E, is double all the rest. We may prejudge that this ratio applies to the whole alphabet.

	Local.	Baptismal.	Occupation.	Official.	Nickname.	Foreign.	Doubtful.	Total.
A	153	120	9	8	4	101	41	436
B	917	158	86	43	120	307	176	1807
C	952	168	100	48	122	231	173	1794
D	310	174	17	6	40	336	75	958
E	255	149	0	2	13	92	29	540
Total	2587	769	212	107	299	1067	494	5535

Thus the total number of distinct surnames in the London Directory under the first five letters is 5535. Omitting foreign and doubtful, the local class are double the rest. Therefore the rhyme quoted by Camden is true, that

> "In 'ford,' in 'ham,' in 'ley,' and 'ton,'
> The most of English surnames run."

All names with this termination are local, and comprise a large proportion of our national nomenclature.

One word about the doubtful class, and I have done. A

hundred years ago even, as our registers show, there was no established orthography for surnames in the highest ranks of society. How much less so, then, among the illiterate orders! I find a clergyman's name, Bann, spelled Bann, Ban, Banne, and Band between 1712 and 1736. He was Rector of St. Ann's, Manchester, during that period. The spelling of Shakespear's name at this moment is the subject of almost bitter conflict. Being clearly of the nickname class, my view is that it must be written "Shakespear." Illiterate clerks have done much to obscure the meaning and origin of names. I know a register where the clerk has written "Pickering" as "Pikrin," and on the next page informs the reader that several names have been "rong placeed." "Pamela" he inscribes as "Permelea." Butcher is found in the London Directory in the following forms: – "Boucher," "Bowcher," "Bowker," "Bosher," "Bowsher," "Bowser," "Boutcher," and "Botcher." The Norman "Chesney" (equivalent to English "Oakes") is found as "Cheney," "Chaney," "Cheyney," "Chesney;" and "Chesnil" as "Chisnall," "Chisnell," and "Channell." Thus, too, "Solomon" becomes "Slowman" and "Sloman." Sir William Dugdale found the Cheshire "Mainwarings" in no less than 131 forms; but this will not seem so strange when we consider that they include "Mainwayringe," "Meinilwarin," and "Mensilwaren"!

I could furnish endless instances of names that have undergone corruptions of this kind through defective spelling, and the lack of a standard orthography. Few people would recognise Oursley

as Ursula, but that is a common form in the seventeenth century, when that was one of our commonest girl names. In Hokington Church, under date 1611, occurs the following entry: —

"George, sonne of Fenson Benet, and Jane, baptised."

A previous Rector had been one Vincent Goodwin, and being popular, many of his parishioners had had children christened after him. The form entered is invariably Fenson, and I dare say after a generation or two none of the less educated would know what the original name had been. In the Calendar of Pleadings we find that one Quintin Snaneton, of Gringley Manor, made three several suits within ten years – all in the reign of Good Queen Bess. He is thus entered on each occasion: —

1. (15th Eliz.) Quyntine Sneydon of Gringley Manor.
2. (20th Eliz.) Quintin Snaneton of Grinley Manor.
3. (25th Eliz.) Quyntin Sneyton of Grynley Manor.

Thus there are three distinct variations of Christian name, surname, and place of residence, – nine in all, when only nine were possible! This, too, in a formal legal document. Take another instance given to me by J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A. In Edward the Third's reign lived one Henry le Machun by name. His son was Adam le Machoun. Passing downwards, his descendants are found as Macound, Macount, Macont, till in 1584 they are Macon, a year later Maconde. In 1592 they are Makant, and Makont, in 1609 Macante, in 1610 Makin, in 1620 Macond, in 1624 Meacon, in 1626 Meakin, in 1644 Macant, in

1650 Meakyn. We are in a perfect wilderness by the time the last entry is reached, – and thus some of our present Makins, instead of deriving their surname from Makin, the once pet name of Matthew, may be descended from Mason, which, belonging to a totally different class, owes its existence to the occupation of its first bearer. Thus, as we turn over the pages of the London Directory, we are being ever struck by the many guises under which one single name may appear. It is palpable to the most uninitiated that Langwith, Langworth, and Langworthy are all the same, and that all *may have* had the same common ancestor. The merest tyro in nomenclatural knowledge must recognise at a glance that Gibbins, Gibbings, and Gibbons are one and the same name, and that Smithers, Smithies, and Smithyes may have boasted a common progenitor. There is no Raleigh in the London Directory. Has, then, Sir Walter no representative? Yes, for there are three Rawleys, who have learnt to spell their name as it was *pronounced* three centuries ago. But how do we know Sir Walter's name was pronounced like Rawley? The following skit was written at the poet's expense by a contemporary critic, who attacked his supposed atheistic notions. We may premise that *Walter* was always pronounced *Water* then.

"*Water* thy plants with grace divine,

And hope to live for aye:
Then to thy Saviour Christ incline,
In Him make stedfast stay.
Raw is the reason that doth *lie*

Within an atheist's head,
Which saith the soul of man doth die,
When that the body's dead.
Now may you see the sudden fall
Of him that thought to climb full high;
A man well known unto you all,
Whose state, you see, doth stand *Rawly*."

The last word is supposed to mean "rarely," and thus a double pun is attempted, both proving the name to have been pronounced in a fashion not common now.

But while these names can be traced to their true source and meaning, it is not so with others. Take the following from the London Directory: – "Six," "Seven," "Nine," "Spon," "Spitty," "Kiss," "Slape," "Im," "Ey," "Tattoo," "Tubby," "Yewd," "Zox," "Toop," "Kitcat," "Sass," "Knags," "Neeb," "Siggs," "Saks," "Toy," "Stidd," "Stap," and "Shum," – what do they mean? Whence came they? Ask the bearers, and they will say, no doubt, that they came over with William the Conqueror. They are not the only people who have tried to come William the Conqueror over us.

In this last list we have mentioned "Kiss." This reminds me that there is one instance in the same tome much more demonstrative than that – namely, "Popkiss"! But there is no difficulty in deciphering this, as it is a manifest corruption of Popkins, and that of Hopkins. The Directory teems with examples of the termination *kins* being turned into *kiss* and again

into *ks*. Thus we have not merely Perkins, but Perkiss and Perks – not only Hodgkins, but Hotchkiss – not alone Wilkins, but Wilks; and so oh with many others.

While some surnames are hopelessly corrupted, and therefore incapable of interpretation, others are a stumbling-block because they seem so easily explainable. Such are names like "Coward," "Craven," and "Charley." The "Coward," or Cowherd, was a tender of kine; "Craven" is local; and "Charley" is the same. "Deadman" and "Dedman" are, like "Debnam," but corruptions of "Debenham," and therefore local also. "Tiddyman" looks as if its first bearer had been tidy in his habits; but it was once a Christian name, and therefore is a patronymic. "Massinger" has been not uncommonly explained as Mass-singer. Of course it is the early form of "Messenger." "Diamond" is a form of "Dumont," and "Doggrell" of "Duckerell" – that is, little duck, a manifest nickname. "Eatwell" and "Early" are also both of local origin. "Portwine" is first found as "Poitevin," the old name for an inhabitant of Poictiers; and "Coleman," though apparently connected with the black diamond, is an early baptismal name. There is a peculiar tendency to skip the natural solution, and go to the Continent, especially Normandy, for the origin. Thus "Twopenny," a palpable relic of the twopenny piece, and twopenny ale, is represented as hailing from Tupigny in Flanders. "Death" is said to be from D'Aeth in the same; "Bridges" from Bruges; and "Morley" from Morlaix, where lived St. Bernard – regardless of the fact that there are a dozen hamlets

styled "Morley" in England; indeed, wherever there is a moorland reach there is a village or farm styled "Morley."

A lady wrote to me the other day to inform me that I had made a mistake in ascribing the name "Mason" to the craftsman of that name, for she was sure she was sprung from Mnason in the Acts of the Apostles, and that the family had worked its way through Phrygia, and Italy, and Germany, into England. If she can prove her pedigree, she may boast a genealogy which the proudest monarch in Europe might envy. The fact is, it is as true of a hundred reputed foreign names as of the rhyme of the three Devonshire families, which asserts that

> "'Croker,' 'Crewys,' and 'Coplestone,'
> When the Conqueror came were at home."

What a pleasant book to look upon would our Directory be if we had all had the selection of our own surnames! There would have been no "Pennyfathers." This was an old English nickname for a miser. An old couplet says, —

> "The liberall doth spend his pelfe,
> The pennyfather wastes himself."

That such a disposition need not be hereditary is proved in the case of one of the most generous, earnest Christian ministers who ever worked for Christ in London. Mr. Pennefather is dead; but who would think of connecting him with the characteristic

his name implies? Again, there would have been no "Piggs," no "Rakestraws" (an old nickname for a dust-heap searcher), no "Milksops," no "Buggs," no "Rascals." But the fact is, the man who had most interest in the matter had least to do with it. All he could do was to accept his sobriquet, if not with thanks, with such grace as he could muster. If his children could shuffle it off, so much the better. Our Directory proves that this was not always possible. 'Tis true, we have got rid of "Alan Swet-in-bedde's" *nominal* descendants, not to mention such cognomens as "Cheese-and-bread," "Scutel-mouth" (what a great eater he must have been!) "Red-herring," "Drink-dregs," "Cat's-nose," "Pigg's-flesh," "Spickfat" (*i. e.* bacon-fat), "Burgulion" (a braggart), and "Rattlebag." But many of these names made a hard fight for it, and contrived to hold out till the seventeenth, or even eighteenth, century. "Piggs-flesh," I say, is gone; but "Hog's-flesh" has been a name familiar to Brighton and its neighbourhood for six hundred years, and still lives. Charles Lamb's little comedy, called "Mr. H. – " (*i. e.*, Hog's-flesh), had for its hero's sobriquet no fanciful title. No doubt Mr. Lamb had seen the name in a Sussex Directory. The story is a relation of Mr. H.'s troubles in polite society through the attempt to hide his name under the mere initial. When it is discovered, everybody deserts him. As he quits his hotel, his landlord says: —

> "Hope your honour does not intend to quit the 'Blue *Boar*.' Sorry anything has happened."
>
> *Mr. H.* (to himself): "He has heard it all."

Land.: "Your honour has had some mortification, to be sure, as a man may say. You have brought your pigs to a fine market."

Mr. H.: "Pigs!"

Land.: "What then? Take old Pry's advice, and never mind it. Don't scorch your crackling for 'em, sir."

Mr. H.: "Scorch my crackling! A queer phrase; but I suppose he don't mean to affront me."

Land.: "What is done can't be undone; you can't make a silken purse out of a sow's ear."

Mr. H.: "As you say, landlord, thinking of a thing does but augment it."

Land.: "Does but *hogment* it, indeed, sir."

Mr. H.: "*Hogment* it! I said *augment* it."

Land.: "Ah, sir, 'tis not everybody has such gift of fine phrases as your honour, that can lard his discourse."

Mr. H.: "Lard!"

Land.: "Suppose they do smoke you – "

Mr. H.: "Smoke me!"

Land.: "Anon, anon."

Mr. H.: "Oh, I wish I were anonymous!"

It is curious to notice that many objectionable names still exist, simply because the words themselves have become obsolete, and the meaning forgotten. We will leave them in their obscurity.

CHAPTER III.
IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION

I said in my last chapter that nearly half of the names in the London Directory are of local origin, and I proved my statement by an appeal to certain figures. We have not all the brand of Cain on our brow, but certainly man has ever been "a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth." History, sacred and profane, teems with the records of the flights of nations from one land to another. From the days of the Israelites' escape from Egypt to the flight of the Huguenots from France, there have been emigrations which have been the direct results of persecution. From the year that saw Babel erected and the language confounded, the races of mankind have struck out a path for themselves in one direction or another of the earth's vast continent. The curious feature is this, – It is to the *dictionary* we must go to discover whence each several horde set forth. The *language* of every nation clearly tells where lies the cradle of its birth.

But emigration and immigration lie not alone with nationalities. The world has not always been a vagabond *en masse*. From the day that Jacob started for the East to find his uncle, from the morn that saw Ruth clinging to Naomi, while she said, "Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest

I will lodge," there has ever been going on a wondrous silent efflux or influx of *individual* wanderers. Just as the mother-bird at the proper time, with seeming stern but true maternal instinct, pushes out her fledgling brood to seek a home and sustenance for themselves, so it has ever been with man. To go forth and replenish the earth has been a Divine fiat which none could forego. And what the *dictionary* is to the nation, the *directory* is to the individual. In the name of each we know the land, the city, the hamlet, whence each set forward to battle with the world. At any rate, this is strictly true of all local surnames.

In the course of the last six hundred years there has not been a single village or town in England that has not found its representative in London. "All roads lead to the capital," says an old proverb. How true this is, the London Directory shows; for at this moment it would be hard to mention a place, big or small, from John o' Groats to Land's End, – the Dan and Beersheba of England, – whose name is not found therein as the title of some individual whose ancestor, long generations ago, left his native home to settle in what was, even then, the big city. I was struck the other day by seeing two shops adjacent, the shopkeepers' names on the doors being "Dearnally" and "Dennerley." Dearnally and Dennerley! What a curious circumstance! My mind went back six centuries, and I wove a little story. Six hundred years ago, two brothers, or schoolfellows, or playmates, leave the little secluded hamlet of Dearnley. [5] One

[5] Dearn means secluded. Chaucer speaks of "derne love," *i. e.* hidden, secret love.

is John, the other William. John goes to Bristol. "Whence come you?" say his Bristol associates. "From Dearnley," he replies. Henceforward he is John o' Dearnley, by-and-by to become simple John Dearnley. "Whence come you?" says a Norwich artisan to William, who has turned his steps eastwards. "From Dearnley: I wonder shall I see it again," responds William, sadly, who is already home-sick, – for homes were homes then as well as now. Henceforth he is William o' Dearnley, or Will Dearnley. Each marries, has children, dies. His descendants, bearing his name, are scattered hither and thither over the broad land, like leaves before the cold keen blast of an October wind. Corruptions of the name of course ensue. The descendants of John are "Dearnally"; of William "Dennerley." Centuries after this, in the year of grace 1877, one of John's generation, who has found his way to a big city, sees a new house, takes it, is a grocer, and inscribes his name Dearnally above. In the meantime another stranger is eyeing a contiguous shop in the same block of buildings. "Fine opening for a butcher here," says he to himself: "I will take these premises." He does so. Up goes his name. What is it? Dennerley! Thus, after long years, nay, centuries, two descendants of the two playfellows, probably brothers, are to be seen dwelling together, each ignorant that when he wishes his neighbour good morning, he is rejoining links in a chain snapped, oh, so long ago! The invisible destinies of God have recovered the lost associations of twenty generations! Said I not, the London Directory is a romance?

I have selected this story for a purpose. It explains the origin of every local surname in existence. A man, in a new community to which he had joined himself, might go by the name of his occupation, as "Tinker," or father's Christian name, as "Peterson," or by a nickname from his social habits, as "Good-fellow"; but in five cases out of ten he bore the title of the spot whence he issued forth. Take a few instances of the mode and manner in which these local surnames were formed. All my illustrations shall be from the London Directory. For perspicuity's sake I will separate them into classes.

(*a*) *Local names terminating in* "*er*" *and* "*man*." "Churchman" would seem to bespeak the original possessor an Episcopalian. But there was no dissent in the twelfth or thirteenth century. It could give no individuality as such. It was a local name, implying that John or Peter Churchman dwelt by the church. Hence also "Churcher." In the north, "Church" was pronounced "Kirk." Therefore, in the north these two names are found as "Kirkman" and "Kirker," – exactly as we find "Thacker" in Yorkshire to be "Thatcher" in Surrey. Of this same class are Crosser and Crossman, reminding us that there was a time in pre-Reformation days when every village had its cross, which was as much a landmark as it was an object of reverence. Bridger and Bridgman lived beside the wooden or stone structure that spanned the stream.

(*b*) *Some local names still preserve the affix or suffix* corresponding to the French "del," "de," "du," and "de la," as

Atwood, Atwater, and Atwell, once William *at the* wood, or *at the* water, or *at the* well. *By* is found in Bywater, and Bythesea. Sometimes the letter "n" got in for euphony's sake, as in "Nash," which is sprung from "atten-ash." "Thomas atte-n-ash" thus became Thomas Nash. Hence Nolt for atte-n-holt (*i. e.* wood), or Nalder for "Alder." Townsend is from Town's-end. Thus Peter at the Town's-end becomes Peter Townsend, or Townshend. "Tash" is from "at the Ash"; and Thynne, a name belonging to one of our ennobled families, is said to be from one "John at the Inne."

(*c*) *Most of these generic names have dropped all suffixes and affixes*. Here a hundred surnames present themselves to our eye. Who does not know a Hill or Dale, a Field or Croft? Who has not a friend called Craig or Cliff, or Dean or Hope? Who has not met with a Grange or Moor, or Wood or Shaw? Our "Streets" are as thick as Our "Lanes," and in the busiest thoroughfares of London you may descry Barnes and Marshes and Parks and Forests and Warrens without end. The village spring has given us our "Wells," the village road our "Crosses," and the village common has given us our "Greens." The following was addressed to a Miss Green on her fortieth birthday: —

> "That evergreen thy graces show;
> Some men say 'Yes,' and some say 'No.'
> Alas! that one and all agree
> That ever-Green thy name shall be!"

Greener is common, being formed after the fashion of

Knowler and Knowlman, and Streeter and Streetman, (*vide* under "*a*"). A Mr. Greener being devoted admirer of a Miss Green, wrote as follows: —

"One dearest wish I fondly cherish,
My ever-Green so fair, yet lonely:
To make thee mine, and thus thou'lt flourish

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.