VARIOUS

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Содержание

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CHARLECOTE HALL, NEAR STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

"One of the most delightful things in the world is going a journey." Now if there be one of our million of friends who, like the fop in the play, thinks all beyond Hyde Park a desert, let him forthwith proceed on a pilgrimage to *Stratford-upon-Avon*, the birthplace of SHAKSPEARE; and though he be the veriest Londoner that ever sung of the "sweet shady side of Pall Mall," we venture to predict his reform. If such be not the result, then we envy him not a jot of his terrestrial enjoyment. Let him but think of the countless hours of delight, the "full houses," the lighted dome and deeping circles, of the past season; when

> Dread o'er the scene the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
> Othello rages, &c.

and then will he not enjoy a visit to the place where—

> ——Sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
> Warbled his native wood-notes wild.

Sterne, the prince of sentimental tourists, says, "Let me have a companion of my way, were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines;" but, for our part, we should prefer a visit to Stratford, *alone*, unless it were with some garrulous old guide to entertain us with his or her reminiscences.

This brings us to *Charlecote Hall*, one of the Shakspearean relics. It consists of a venerable mansion, situated on the banks of the Avon, about four miles from Stratford, and built in the first year of the reign of Elizabeth, by Sir Thomas Lucy;

> "A parliamente member, and justice of peace.
> At home a poor scare-crow, at London an asse,"

and so well known as the prosecutor of Shakspeare. [1]

The principal front, here represented, assumes, in its ground plan, the form of the letter E—said to have been intended as a compliment to the queen, who, as appears from the Black Book of Warwick, visited this place in 1572.

The above is copied from one of a Series of Views illustrative of the Life of Shakspeare, drawn and etched by Mr. W. Rider, of Leamington. These engravings are five in number, but the artist

[1] At Stratford, the family maintain that Shakspeare stole Sir Thomas Lucy's buck, to celebrate his wedding-day, and for that purpose only. But, in that age, when half the country was covered with forests, deer-stealing was a venial offence, and equivalent to snaring a hare in our days.

explains that he has selected such subjects only, "as from tradition, or more certain record, might fairly be presumed to bear direct relation to the life of the poet. But while he regrets that the number of authenticated subjects are so few, he feels that from innovation or decay, they are almost hourly becoming fewer; and is, therefore, prompted to secure the few remnants left, while they are yet within his reach."

There is no doubt that the grounds around Charlecote Hall, were the early haunts of SHAKSPEARE; and that in the house itself sat the magisterial authority, before which he was doomed to meet the charges, to which his youthful indiscretions had rendered him liable; and, as it remains, to the present time, for the most part, unaltered, and *presents to the spectator of the present day the same image that was often, and under such peculiar circumstances, impressed on the eye of our* SHAKSPEARE, it cannot but be regarded with the most intense interest by all his admirers.

In conclusion, we would recommend the illustrators of Shakspeare to possess themselves of a set of Mr. Rider's "Views;" whilst the visiter of Stratford-upon-Avon would do well to lay a copy in his portmanteau—for they are in truth so many faithful memorials of the great poet of nature.

ON NATIONAL VARIETIES

(For the Mirror.)

There are few more familiar subjects than that of the varieties of national character, and the resemblances and differences that exist between ourselves and the inhabitants of other countries. Few conversations occur upon circumstances which may have happened abroad, in which some one has not an anecdote to relate to illustrate the known peculiarities of the nation in question; and the greater part of the travels and tours which now issue in such formidable numbers from the press, are naturally filled with stories and incidents, either to show the correctness of our ideas of the manners and opinions of our neighbours, or (perhaps more frequently) to prove that the public were in error in that respect, up to the time when the traveller in question had discovered the truth, or a clue to it. The daily accounts of the outrages perpetrated in Ireland, and the alarms that are sounded ever and anon, touching the state of that unhappy country, are continually exciting surprise, that the natives of the sister island should be so unaccountably deficient in that sense of order and sobriety which prevails in Great Britain. We associate with a Scotchman the ideas of shrewdness and prudence; with a Frenchman, gaiety and frivolity; with a Spaniard, gravity and pride; with an Italian, strong passions of love and revenge: with a German, plodding industry and habits of deep thinking; and with the northern nations, an honest sincerity and persevering courage. We sometimes judge with tolerable correctness; at others are wholly mistaken, and not unfrequently run into such extremes, that having established a principle, that a particular people are knavish, or cowardly, or stupid, we are unwilling to admit any exceptions, but include the whole race in our sweeping censure. We are prejudiced at first sight against a Portuguese or Italian, and are careful of our communications with him, even though we meet him on the high road, or by mere accident in a public place. There can, however, be no mistake in the common notion, that each nation has a peculiar collection of qualities and habits, distinguishing it in a greater or less degree from its neighbours, and the rest of the world; and it is, therefore, at all events, an interesting, if not an useful topic, to reflect a little how these differences arise. Not that we intend here to give even any particular description of the various races of mankind, or to enter into any inquiry upon the degrees of their mental and bodily capacities; such would be foreign to our purpose, and would exceed our limits. We shall merely hazard a few observations upon the several causes to which the diversities in men have been referred, not pretending to any decided opinion on so nice a point, as whether these causes are wholly of a physical or of a moral kind, or whether they are compounded of both. The question is, perhaps, one of the most difficult in the whole range of philosophical experience; we say experience, because it is obvious that all theory on the subject must be the result of observation and analysis; and that no general principles can be laid down in the first instance, as the ground work of any hypothesis we might be inclined to frame.

The scientific men to whom we are chiefly indebted for the facts accumulated on this subject, are Dr. Blumenbach, of Göttingen, Dr. Pritchard, of Edinburgh, and the eminent surgeon, Mr. Lawrence. It has been a favourite matter of speculation with Lord Monboddo, as well as with Voltaire, Rousseau, and the philosophers of the French school, who have endeavoured to show that men and other animals are endowed with reason or instinct of the same kind, but of different degrees. According to these fanciful writers, the monkey is but another species of the human race, and has been termed by them *Homo Sylvestris*. They made the most diligent researches into all accounts concerning men in a savage state, and were delighted beyond measure with the discovery alleged to have been made in the island of Sumatra, of men with tails regularly protruding from their hinder parts, who, according to Buffon, walked and talked in the woods like other gentlemen:—

And backwards and forwards they switched their long tails,
Like a gentleman switching his cane.

The appearance of Peter the Wild Boy, who was found in the woods of Hamela, in Hanover, living on the bark of trees, leaves, berries, &c. threw Voltaire into transports of joy. He declared the event to be the most wonderful and important that ages had recorded in the annals of science, as it demonstrated the fact of man living after the fashion of beasts, without the least spark of civilization, and without speech; thereby forming a species of a nature having more in common with monkeys than with men, and presenting the regular degree, or intermediate class, between the *homo civilis* and the *homo sylvestris*. The circumstance, however, which afterwards transpired, of Peter's having been found with the remains of a shirt-collar about his neck, threw considerable discredit on the whole story; and the young savage, on being brought to England by order of Queen Caroline, lived in Hertfordshire for many years, perfectly harmless and tractable, and behaving pretty much the same as other idiots. The idea, therefore, of a race of men, in a healthy, natural condition, having ever existed without the possession of reason, is now deemed wholly fallacious. It is even maintained by Schlegel, and other authorities of great weight, that the civilized state is the primitive one, and that savage life is a degeneracy from it, rather than civilized society being a graft upon barbarity. By Schlegel's theory, the East, especially India, was the earliest seat of arts and sciences; from the Sanscrit, or Indian language, now extinct, are the Hebrew, the Chaldaic, the Greek, and many others of the most ancient tongues, derived; and from the wisdom and learning of the East "was the whole earth overspread." Undoubtedly it is difficult to imagine by what gradation language could have proceeded, from the howl of savages, and the cries of nature, till it reached the eloquent music, the heart-stirring oratory of the Greek; and besides this, and other considerations, Schlegel is supported by the opinions of Adelung, the learned author of "Mithridates, oder Allgemeine Sprachenkunde," upon the probable habitation of the first family of the human race. Adelung says, that civilization began in Asia, as is, indeed, universally admitted to have been the case; and that when the waters of the flood subsided, the highest ground, we may naturally conclude, must have been the earliest inhabited. We may also reasonably presume that a beneficent Providence would place the first family in a situation where their wants could be easily satisfied; in a garden, as it were, stocked with all herbs and fruits, fit and agreeable to their use and taste. Now such a country is actually to be found in Central Asia, between the degrees of 30 and 50 North lat. and 90 and 110 long. E. of Ferro; a spot as high as the Plains of Quito, or 9,500 feet above the level of the sea. It contains the sources of most of the great rivers of Asia; the Seleuga, the Ob, the Lena, the Irtisch, and the Jenisey flow from hence to the North; the Jaik, the Jihon, and the Jemba to the West; the Amur and the Hoang Ho to the East; and the Indus, Ganges, and Burrampooter to the South. The valleys within this space, which our readers, by referring to a map, will find to be correctly delineated, abound with nutritive fruits and vegetables, and with all animals capable of being tamed. There is evidently, therefore, some plausibility in the notion that mankind sprung originally from the East, and that from that quarter civilization is derived; but what portion of knowledge was allotted to the primitive people, or how far their descendants have surpassed or fallen short of these olden times, must, we fear, be for ever beyond the reach of our investigation.

If we call to mind a summary of the general divisions of human beings throughout the world, we shall find little room to doubt of the identity of their genus, and shall, without much trouble of reflection, class them as different species of that genus:—

——Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa, tamen.

Such seems to be the result of Mr. Lawrence's judgment; and though we are aware that the descent of mankind from one common stock has been much questioned and controverted, particularly in Germany, we prefer resting upon the received opinion at present, to running the risk of shocking established notions, by entering into the merits of the contrary theory.

Men are classed by Dr. Blumenbach under five great divisions, viz. the Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malay. The Caucasian family may be asserted, though by its own members, to have been always pre-eminent above the rest in moral feelings and intellectual powers, and is remarkable for the large size of their heads. It need not be more minutely described, than by saying it includes all the ancient and modern Europeans, (except the Laplanders and Fins;) the former and present inhabitants of Western Asia as far as the Ob, the Caspian Sea, and the Ganges, viz. the Assyrians, Medes, Chaldeans, Sarmatians, Scythians, Parthians, Philistines, Phoenicians, Jews, and Syrians; the Tartars on the Caucasus, Georgians, Circassians, Mingrelians, Armenians, Turks, Persians, Arabs, Hindoos of high caste, Northern Africans, Egyptians, Abyssinians, and Guanches. They are supposed to have originally had brown hair and dark eyes.

The Mongolian family is of an olive colour and black eyes, flat nose and face, small stature, black hair, no beard, and thick lips. It comprises the people of Central and Northern Asia, Thibet, Ava, Pegu, Cambodia, Laos, and Siam; the Chinese, Japanese, Fins, and Esquimaux.

The Ethiopian family is black, with black and woolly hair, compressed skull, low forehead, flat nose, and thick lips. It includes all Africans not comprehended in the Caucasian family.

The American family has a dark skin, a red tint, straight hair, a small beard, low forehead, and broad face. It includes all the American tribes, except the Esquimaux.

The Malay family is brown, varying from a light tint to black. Their hair is black and curled, head narrow, bones of the face prominent, nose broad, and mouth large. They inhabit Malacca, Sumatra, Java, and the adjacent islands; Molucca, the Ladrones, New Holland, Van Dieman's Land, New Guinea, New Zealand, and the South Sea Islands. They speak generally the Malay language.

The difference of character and disposition of these five families is familiar to every one; they are as well known as is the superiority of the Caucasian to the other races, and as the outward distinctions of their bodies and complexions. The reasons of this difference have been variously assigned, some ascribing it to natural, others altogether to moral causes. By natural causes we understand either that the constitutions of the races are such, that their capabilities of informing their minds, and raising their intellectual powers, are essentially not the same; or that the climate has an influence over both their bodies and minds. By moral causes, we mean artificial or accidental ones arising out of the state of society; such as the nature of the government, the plenty or poverty in which people live, a period of war or peace, the power of public opinion, and such circumstances.

The effect of climate cannot of itself be sufficient to change the manners and habits of a people. The instances of migratory nations seem to show this; the Jews are as cunning and fond of money in Asia or Africa as they are in Poland or England; that extraordinary race, the Gipsies, (which are now ascertained to be a Hindoo tribe, driven from their country in the fifteenth century,) are not less thievish in Transylvania than in Scotland. The Armenians of Constantinople, and other parts of the Levant, are represented to be of the same mild and persevering temper, of the same honesty and skilfulness in their dealings, and the same kindness and civility of manners, as before they were driven from their country by Sha-Abbas the Great. The changes, however, in the habits and character of this people seem to mark the influence of their several domestic situations. They were originally the most warlike of the Asiatic tribes; after their subjection by the Persians, they engaged themselves entirely in the patient cultivation of the soil; and since the period of the depopulation of Armenia, and their migrations into Persia, Russia, Turkey, and other countries, they have been celebrated for their industry in commercial concerns. They are bankers, money-brokers, merchants, surgeons, bakers, builders, chintz-printers, and of all trades that can be imagined, and are represented as the most useful subjects in the Ottoman empire, retaining at the same time an almost patriarchal simplicity in their

domestic manners. The English in the East and West Indies, in New South Wales, and in Canada, seldom lose a relish for the habits and enjoyments they have been bred up in, whether they migrate to the extremes of heat or of cold. John Bull is an Englishman in heart, and will remain so under whatever sun his lot of life may be cast; for,

Coelum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt.

We rarely find the Spaniards or Italians, or the natives of the South of Europe, lose their ideality of character and their warm passions when settled permanently in England; the only alteration in them seems to be such as the forms of society and intercourse with others has led them to. Still the man is the same, though he may have adopted a new regime in the fashion of his clothes, or the dishes of his dinner.

(*To be continued*.)

FAIR ROSAMOND

(To the Editor of the Mirror.)

In a late Number of the MIRROR, in which you have given a view of the Labyrinth at Woodstock, and several particulars respecting Fair Rosamond, many doubts are stated relative to her death, viz. *how* and what time. I therefore send you the following account from *Collins's Peerage of England*:—

"Rosamond de Clifford was the eldest of the two daughters of Walter de Clifford, by Margaret his wife, daughter and heir of Ralph de Toeny, Lord of Clifford Castle, in Herefordshire, (and had with her the said castle and lands about it as an inheritance.) This Rosamond was the unfortunate concubine of Henry II., for whom the king built that famous Labyrinth[2] at Woodstock, where she lived so retired, as not easily to be found by his jealous queen. The king gave her a cabinet of such elegant workmanship,[3] as showed the fighting of champions, moving of cattle, flying of birds, and swimming of fish, which were so artfully represented, as if they had been alive. *She died 23rd Henry II. anno 1176*

[2] Chron. Joreval, 1151.

[3] Ibid.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.