

VARIOUS

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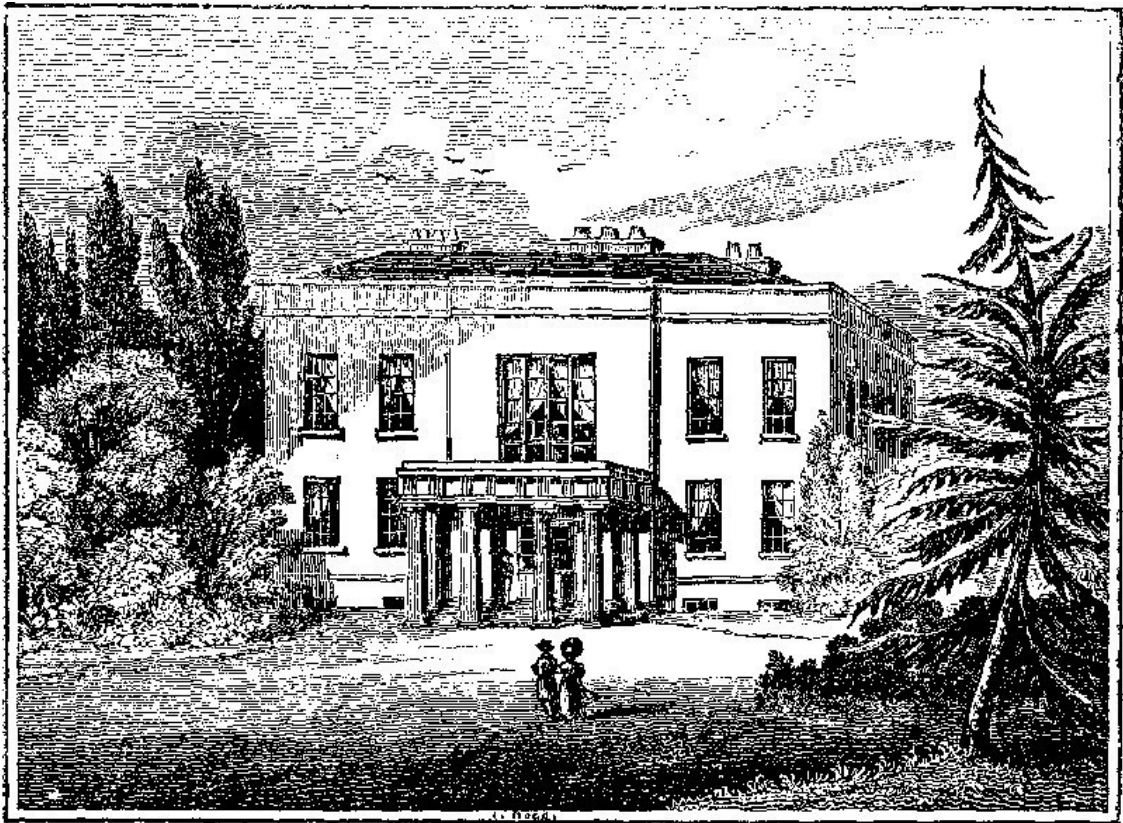
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LALEHAM PARK:



Circumstances, in themselves trivial, often confer celebrity upon places hitherto of unlettered note. Thus, a beautiful villa at Laleham, a village in Middlesex, eighteen and a half miles south west of London, has acquired frequent passing notice from its having lately become the temporary residence of the young "*Queen of Portugal*," whose removal to England appears to have been a prudent measure to keep her *petite* Majesty "out of harm's way."

Laleham is delightfully situate on the banks of the Thames, between Shepperton and Staines, and is famed for the entertainment it affords to the lovers of angling. The river narrows considerably here; and about the shallows, or gulls, the water is beautifully transparent. The above temporary royal residence is built in an elegant villa style; and the grounds have been very tastefully laid out under the immediate direction of the present proprietor, the Earl of Lucan. They comprise 40 acres, with some very fine elm timber.

The "Young Queen" is described as an interesting and lively child, and is within a month of the same age as the Princess Victoria, and Prince George of Cumberland, both of whom were born in May, 1819. She has not the slightest tinge of a tropical complexion; her hair is extremely light, her face pale, her eyes light blue and very sparkling. She is not tall of her age, but remarkably well formed. Her Majesty arrived in London in October last, and for some time resided at Grillon's Hotel,

Albemarle Street; but her health requiring change of air, Laleham was engaged for a short period; although, in allusion to the situation, it was said to be very *low*—a flat joke indeed.

In this delightful retreat, the young Queen and her suite at present reside; and so pacific is our taste, that to enjoy the tranquil scenery of Laleham, and the sports of the stream that waters its park, we would willingly forego all the cares of state, and leave its plots and counterplots to more ambitious minds. We could sit by the waters of Laleham, and sing with the muse of Grongar:

Be full ye courts, be great who will;
Search for peace with all your skill;
Open wide the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor;
In vain you search, she is not there;
In vain you search the domes of care!
Grass and flowers Quiet treads,
On the meads and mountain-heads.
Along with Pleasure close ally'd,
Ever by each other's side.

But great as may be our content, we hope to see her Majesty speedily restored to the bosom of her family, provided she be secure from the perils of her distracted country.

There are some allusions to an interesting part of ancient story connected with Laleham, Dr. Stukely notices the remains of a Roman encampment on Greenfield Common, within the parish of Laleham, which he supposes to have been the camp in which Caesar halted after passing the Thames.

LINES WRITTEN ON VISITING THE ISLAND OF IONA

(For the Mirror.)

Wild, sad, and solitary, amid the wave,
Iona mourns her pious founder's grave;
Still o'er his tomb these fretted columns pay
Their crumbling dust, a tribute to his clay.
Frail wreck of time! so crippled with the blast,
Recorder Of the present and the past,
Enough can tell. These Gothic arches show
The height of glory and of human woe;
Alas, 'tis all which occupies the brain,
The lust of power dyes the despot's chain,
Here Learning cast her magic beam around
Light of fair Science, whence our freedom's found,
Resistless spells, attractive power, for long
Brought princes here, and Minstrel's sung their song,
To pay a tribute to the holy sage
Their history told, it formed his faithful page;
Historic power Supreme! within this wall
Gave Bruce the crown, or Baliol the fall,
From proud Edward's grasp in a bark they bore
All Scotland's archives to a distant shore,
Manned by a hardy and a faithful crew,
For Gallia's coast the well skilled pilot drew,
But ere the orphan's eyes had lost the sail
Portending danger, screeching sea gulls wail,
In wild confusion left the angry wave
For distant Staffa's high basaltic cave,
Big heaved the flood, and loud the billows roar
In blackening heaps screened Morvem's distant shore;
High blew the winds, and quick the lightning's flash
And gilded hailstones fell with many a crash.
The story ran from sire to sire.
That Heaven itself was filled with living fire;
Of them no more is told, no more is known,
That widows' tears had scooped this hollow stone.
Here all is silent, save the murmuring sound
Of crystal spray which bathes this sacred ground,
In tuneful sorrow, sheds her friendly tear
To learned virtues, long forgotten here.
When conscience was the punisher of crime,
And blood stained ruffians of Ossian's line
Had taught redemption at the tear-worn shrine,
And barbarous tribes in thousands flocked around
To ask forgiveness on this holy ground.

R

LIGHT AND DARK GENII

(For the Mirror.)

LIGHT

In fields of light, I ride, I ride,
Upon the gust-winds back,
And, when I mark the eventide,
Or gathering of the rack;
Like spirit of a pleasant dream,
I mount upon a sunset beam,
And hie me in a flashing stride,
The dark to dash aside,

DARK

In caverns 'neath the vasty deep,
Where sea-snakes in the wreck may creep,
And feed upon man's bone;
Or in the ruins of the past.
Where thoughts that are not used are cast,
And whirlwind, and the earthquake groan
In pity, there, there, am I—
A withered thought—that cannot die.

LIGHT

But I was born within a light
That kindled in the womb.
And I can never feel the night
When all around is gloom;
For joy looked pleased upon my birth,
And cast a ray e'en on the earth;
And fairies spun it in a ring,
With a feather from their wing,
And called it hope—a charm for tears,
And chained it to their silken ears.

DARK

And I was formed within a light
That kindled in the womb of night,
Of loathsome withered weeds—
And fate looked on and fanned the flame,
But freed me from the touch of blame,
Of all my evil deeds.
Enchantress waited on my birth,
And bade the hypochondriac walk the earth.

BOTH, RECITATIVE

Together, together, yet, O yet we dwell,
A glimpse of heaven in hell
A glimpse of heaven in hell
Which plays, which plays, like lightning on the tempest gloom,
Or life within a catacomb,
Or life within a catacomb,
Pointing the many passions' mood
To strange but universal good.

DR. JOHNSON

(To the Editor of the Mirror.)

The correspondent who furnished you with the article on "Dr. Johnson's Residence in Bolt Court," has fallen into several anachronisms, to which, I beg leave to call your attention.

He says, "here the unfortunate Savage has held his intellectual *noctes*, and enlivened the *old moralist* with his mad philosophy." If you refer to any biographical account of Johnson, you will find, his residence in Bolt Court did not commence till nearly twenty years after the death of Savage. Johnson had no settled habitation till after that event, and they were both frequently obliged to perambulate the streets, for whole nights, for want of money to pay for a lodging; and instead of Johnson being an old moralist at this time, he was but thirty-three when his friend died, Savage being about forty-four.

Your correspondent has given a graphic description of our great lexicographer and his two associates, Savage and Boswell, all three of whom, he says, met at Johnson's house in Bolt Court, and discussed subjects of polite literature; whereas his acquaintance with Boswell began only in 1763, and Savage died in Bristol, in 1742. The work Johnson wrote, at the time of compiling the Dictionary, was the "Rambler," and not the "Guardian," as your correspondent asserts. The latter was the joint production of Addison and Steele.

The principal events of the Doctor's life are well known; and it is interesting and not uninteresting to contemplate this master-spirit struggling with the vicissitudes of fortune, and depending frequently for his next meal, on the resources of his genius, till his merit became known. View him and his cotemporary, Garrick, travelling to London together, mere adventurers, with many plans in their heads, and very little money in their pockets; we see them both rising to the pinnacle of fame; one the majestic teacher of moral virtue, and the other delighting by the versatility of his histrionic powers. Go one step further. They are consigned to the tomb, and these men, whom friendship had united whilst living, death has not divided. Near Shakspeare's monument, in Westminster Abbey, they lie interred side by side. Of Garrick it has been said, "that the gaiety of nations was eclipsed at his death," and of Johnson we may truly say he has given "ardour to virtue and confidence to truth."

HEN. B

ON GOOD AND EVIL DAYS

(*For the Mirror.*)

Notwithstanding the ridicule which in later ages has been deservedly thrown on the idea of *good and evil days*, it is certain, that from time immemorial, the most celebrated nations of antiquity, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans, adopted, and placed implicit faith in this superstitious notion, which is still prevalent in all parts of the east. According to Plutarch, the kings of Egypt never transacted business on the third day of the week, and abstained even from food till the evening; because on that day, Typhon, who was considered by them the cause of every evil, was born. The seventeenth day of the month was also deemed unfortunate, as on that day Osiris died. The Greeks, too, had their unlucky days, which they denominated *αποφρασεις* [Greek: *apophrases*]. The Thursday was generally considered by the Athenians of so unlucky an import, that the assemblies of the people, which happened to fall on that day, were always deferred. Hesiod enumerated the days when it might be proper to commence certain undertakings, and those when it was necessary to abstain from every employment; among the latter, he mentions the fifth of every month, when the Infernal Furies were supposed to bestride the earth. Virgil has the same idea:—

Quintam fuge—pallidus Orcus
Eumenidesque satae: tum partu terra nefando,
Coelumque, lapetumque creat, saevumque Typhaea,
Et conjuratos coelum rescindere fratres.

1 GEOR. 279

The Romans also demonstrated in their calendar, the implicit faith they placed in this distinction of days. The fortunate days were marked in white, and the unfortunate in black; of these were the days immediately after the *Calendae*, the *Nones*, and the *Ides*; the reason was this: in the 363rd year from the building of Rome, the military tribunes, perceiving the republic unsuccessful in war, directed that its cause should be inquired into. The senate having applied to L. Aquinius, he answered, "That when the Romans had fought against the Gauls, near the river *Allia*, and had experienced so dreadful a defeat, sacrifices had been offered to the gods the day after the *ides* of July, and that the *Fabii* having fought on the same day at *Cremera*, were all destroyed." On receiving this answer, the senate, by the advice of the pontiffs, ordered, that for the future no military enterprise should be formed on the days of the *calends*, the *nones*, or the *ides*. *Vitellius* having taken possession of the sovereign authority on the 15th of August, and on the same day promulgated some new laws, they were ill received by the people, because on that day had happened the disastrous battles of the *Allia* and *Cremera*. There were other days esteemed unhappy by the Romans, such as the day of sacrifices to the dead; of the *Lemuria*; and of the *Saturnalia*, the 4th before the *nones* of October; the 6th of the *ides* of November; the *nones* of July, called *Caprotinae*; the 4th before the *nones* of August, on account of the defeat at *Cannae*; and the *ides* of March, esteemed unlucky by the creatures of Caesar.

In addition to these, were days which every individual considered fortunate or unfortunate for himself. Augustus never undertook any thing of importance on the day of the *nones*. Many historical observations have contributed to favour these superstitious notions. *Josephus* remarks, that the temple of Solomon was burnt by the Babylonians on the 8th of September, and was a second time destroyed on the same day by *Titus*. *Emilius Protus* also observes, that *Timoleon*, the Corinthian, gained most of his victories on the anniversary of his birth. To these facts, drawn from ancient history, many from more modern times may be added. It is said, that most of the successes of Charles V. occurred on

the festival of St. Matthew. Henry III. was elected king of Poland, and became king of France on Whitsunday, which was also his birthday. Pope Sextus V. preferred Wednesday to every other in the week, because it was the day of his birth, of his promotion to the cardinalate, of his election to the papal throne, and of his coronation. Louis XIII. asserted, that Friday was always a favourable day to him. Henry VII., of England, was partial to Saturday, on which most of the happy events of his life had taken place. Oliver Cromwell always considered the 3rd of September, 1650, when he defeated the Scotch at Dunbar; on that day, in the following year, he gained the battle of Worcester, but on the 3rd of September, 1658, he expired. Though this distinction of good and evil days, be in reality as absurd as it appears to be, I much doubt if it be yet entirely eradicated. When it is considered how many things concur to keep up an error of this kind, and that among the great as well as with the vulgar, opinions as puerile are not only received, but even made a rule of action, it may be inferred, that in every age and in every country, however civilized, superstition always maintains its influence, though it may occasionally vary in its object or name. The human mind alternately wise and weak, indiscriminately adopts error and truth.

Romford.

H.B.A

THE NOVELIST

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN

[The *Literary Gazette* of Saturday last enables us to present our readers, (almost entire) the following Legend respecting the house and ancestry of the heroine of Sir Walter Scott's forthcoming Novel—*Anne of Geierstein*. The tale is entitled Donnerhugel's Narrative, and was told by a remarkable Swiss to the English hero of the Romance.]

"I told you, (said Rudolf) that the lords of Arnheim, though from father to son they were notoriously addicted to secret studies, were, nevertheless, like the other German nobles, followers of war and the chase. This was peculiarly the case with Anne's maternal grandfather, Herman of Arnheim, who prided himself on possessing a splendid stud of horses, and one steed in particular, the noblest ever known in these circles in Germany. I should make wild work were I to attempt the description of such an animal, so I will content myself with saying his colour was jet black, without a hair of white, either on his face or feet. For this reason, and the wildness of his disposition, his master had termed him Apollyon; a circumstance which was secretly considered as tending to sanction the evil reports which touched the house of Arnheim, being, it was said, the naming of a favourite animal after a foul fiend.

"It chanced, one November day, that the baron had been hunting in the forest, and did not reach home till night-fall. There were no guests with him, for, as I hinted to you before, the castle of Arnheim seldom received any other than those from whom its inhabitants hoped to gain augmentation of knowledge. The baron was seated alone in his hall, illuminated with cressets and torches. His one hand held a volume covered with characters unintelligible to all save himself. The other rested on the marble table, on which was placed a flask of Tokay wine. A page stood in respectful attendance near the bottom of the large and dim apartment, and no sound was heard save that of the night wind, when it sighed mournfully through the rusty coats of mail, and waved the tattered banners which were the tapestry of the feudal hall. At once the footstep of a person was heard ascending the stairs in haste and trepidation; the door of the hall was thrown violently open, and, terrified to a degree of ecstasy, Caspar, the head of the baron's stable, or his master of horse, stumbled up almost to the foot of the table at which his lord was seated, with the exclamation in his mouth—'My lord, my lord, a fiend is in the stable!' 'What means this folly?' said the baron, arising, surprised and displeased at an interruption so unusual. 'Let me endure your displeasure,' said Caspar, 'if I speak not truth! Apollyon—' Here he paused. 'Speak out, thou frightened fool,' said the baron; 'is my horse sick, or injured?' The master of the stalls again gasped forth the word 'Apollyon!' 'Say on,' said the baron; 'were Apollyon in presence personally, it were nothing to shake a brave man's mind.' 'The devil,' answered the master of the horse, 'is in Apollyon's stall!' 'Fool!' exclaimed the nobleman, snatching a torch from the wall; 'what is it that could have turned thy brain in such silly fashion?'

"As he spoke, he crossed the courtyard of the castle, to visit the stately range of stables, where fifty gallant steeds stood in rows, on each side of the ample hall. At the side of each stall hung the weapons of offence and defence of a man-at-arms, as bright as constant attention could make them, together with the buff-coat which formed the trooper's under garment. The baron, followed by one or two of the domestics, who had assembled full of astonishment at the unusual alarm, hastened up betwixt the rows of steeds. As he approached the stall of his favourite horse, which was the uppermost of the right-hand row, the good steed neither neighed, nor shook his head, nor stamped with his foot, nor gave the usual signs of joy at his lord's approach; a faint moaning, as if he implored assistance, was the only acknowledgment of the baron's presence. Sir Herman held up the torch, and discovered that there was indeed a tall, dark figure standing in the stall, resting his hand on the horse's shoulder.

'Who art thou?' said the baron, 'and what dost thou here?' 'I seek refuge and hospitality,' replied the stranger; 'and I conjure thee to grant it me, by the shoulder of thy horse, and by the edge of thy sword, and so as they may never fail thee when thy need is at the utmost.' 'Thou art, then, a brother of the Sacred Fire,' said Baron Herman of Arnheim; 'and I may not refuse thee the refuge which thou requirest of me, after the ritual of the Persian Magi. From whom, and for what length of time, dost thou crave my protection?' 'From those,' replied the stranger, 'who shall arrive in quest of me before the morning cock shall crow, and for the full space of a year and a day from this period.' 'I may not refuse thee,' said the baron, 'consistently with my oath and my honour. For a year and a day I will be thy pledge, and thou shall share with me roof and chamber, wine and food. But thou, too, must obey the law of Zoroaster, which, as it says, Let the stronger protect the weaker brother, says also, Let the wiser instruct the brother who hath less knowledge. I am the stronger, and thou shalt be safe under my protection; but thou art the wiser, and must instruct me in the more secret mysteries.' 'You mock your servant,' said the strange visiter; 'but if aught is known to Dannischemend which can avail Herman, his instructions shall be as those of a father to a son.' 'Come forth, then, from thy place of refuge,' said the Baron of Arnheim: 'I swear to thee by the sacred fire which lives without terrestrial fuel, and by the fraternity which is betwixt us, and by the shoulder of my horse, and the edge of my good sword, I will be thy warrant for a year and a day, if so far my power shall extend.'

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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