

VARIOUS

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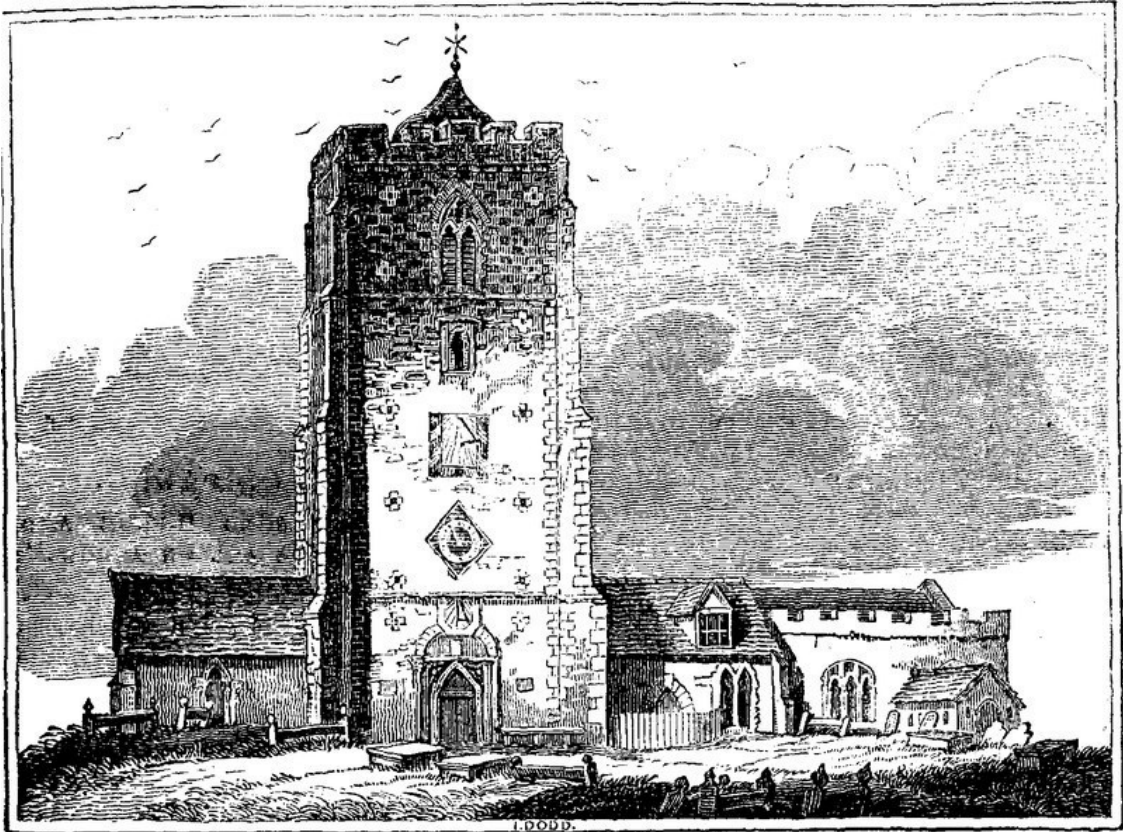
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BRAY CHURCH.

BRAY CHURCH

Who has not heard of the *Vicar of Bray*, and his turning, turning, and turning again? Here is his church, and a goodly tower withal, which we, in our turn, have endeavoured to turn to the illustration of our pages. There is no sinister motive in the selection; but if we have hit the white, or rather the black, of such variableness, "let the galled jade wince," and pay *the Mirror* the stale compliment of *veluti in speculum*.

Bray is a small village about one mile from Maidenhead, and its name would have remained "unsaid, unsung," had it not been for its never-enough-to-be-ridiculed Vicar. Camden supposes Bray to have been occupied by the *Bibroci*, who submitted to Caesar, and obtained his protection, and with it a secure possession of one of the most beautiful spots in this county; so that submissiveness seems to have been the very air of the place in all times. Philippa, the queen of Edward III., had rents assigned to her from this and the adjoining manor of Cookham. It is now considered as part of the royal domain, being attached to the liberties of Windsor Castle, and retaining some peculiar privileges, among which is an exemption from tolls in the adjacent market-towns. In default of male heirs, lands are not divided here among females of the same degree of kindred, but descend solely to the eldest. The church is "a *spacious* structure," says the *Windsor Guide*, and "composed of various materials, and exhibiting a mixture of almost every style of architecture," says the "*Beauties of England and Wales*;" but we leave the reader to his own conclusion from our Engraving, sketched in the summer of last year. We take for granted the church does not change in appearance every year, if its Vicar once did in creed.

The story of the *Vicar of Bray* is told with some variations, but the fact is not questioned. In the *Beauties of England and Wales* we read that his name was Simon Symonds, that he possessed the benefice in the reign of Henry VIII. and the three succeeding monarchs, and that he died in the forty-first year of Elizabeth. "This man was twice a Protestant and twice a Papist; and when reproached for the unsteadiness of his principles, which could thus suffer him to veer with every change of administration, replied, 'that he had always governed himself by what he thought a very laudable principle, which was, never on any terms, if he could avoid it, to part with his vicarage.'" This creed has been amplified into a song, which we shall quote presently, more for its being a good conceit than for its scarceness.

The author just quoted from the *Beauties* observes, in a note—"Several late writers, particularly Ireland and Ferrar, who have mentioned the above circumstances, describe them as happening in the reign of Charles the Second, James the Second, &c. This mistake throws the imputation of apostacy on the worthy person who held the vicarage towards the conclusion of the 17th century. It should be remarked, that the story was first published by Fuller, in his *Church History*; and as the author died in the year 1661, it is evident that it must have been circulated previous to that event."

We have not the *Church History* at hand, but Fuller, in his *Worthies*, says, "Bray is a village well known in Barkshire, the vivacious Vicar whereof, living under King Henry the Eighth, King Edward the Sixth, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, was first a Papist, then a Protestant, then a Papist, then a Protestant again. This Vicar being tax't by one for being a turncoat, not so (said he) for I always kept my principles, which is this, to live and die Vicar of Bray."

Lastly, here is the song:—

THE VICAR OF BRAY

In good King Charles's golden days,

When loyalty had no harm in't,
A zealous high-churchman I was,
And so I got preferment.
To teach my flock I never miss'd:
Kings are by God appointed;
And those are damn'd that do resist,
And touch the Lord's anointed:
And this is law, I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
I will be Vicar of Bray, sir.

When royal James obtain'd the throne,
And Popery came in fashion,
The penal laws I booted down,
And read the declaration:
The Church of Rome I found would fit
Full well my constitution;
And had become a Jesuit,
But for the Revolution,
And this is law, &c.

When William was our king declared,
To ease the nation's grievance,
With his new wind about I steer'd,
And swore to him allegiance:
Old principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance;
Passive obedience was a joke,
And pish for non-resistance.
And this is law, &c.

When gracious Anne ascends the throne.
The Church of England's glory,
Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory:
Occasional conformists base,
I damn'd their moderation,
And thought the church in danger was
By such prevarication,
And this is law, &c.

When George in pudding-time came o'er,
And moderate men look'd big, sir,
I turn'd a cat-in-pan once more,
And then became a Whig, sir:
And so preferment I procured
By our new faith's defender,
And always every day abjured

The Pope and the pretender.
And this is law, &c.

The illustrious house of Hanover,
And Protestant succession,
To these I do allegiance swear
While they can keep possession:
For by my faith and loyalty
I never more will falter,
And George my lawful king shall be
Until the time shall alter.
And this is law, &c.

ANOTHER OLD SONG

ORIGIN OF THE SONG "FOUR AND TWENTY FIDDLERS ALL ON A ROW."

The fiddle was not allowed to be a concert instrument till the reign of Charles the Second, who, in imitation of Louis the Fourteenth, established a band of twenty-four violins, alias fiddles, which gave birth to Tom Durfey's song of "*Four and Twenty Fiddlers all on a Row*," &c.: a humorous production, in which there is a mockery of every instrument, and almost every trade, and which used to be performed between the acts, or between the play and farce, by some man of humour at benefits.

The author of the Guardian, in No. 67, gives an account of Tom Durfey, with a view to recommend him to the public notice for a benefit play, and says, that he remembered King Charles the Second leaning on Tom Durfey's shoulder more than once, and humming over a song with him.

Roi des Violons, or King of the Fiddlers, was anciently a title in France. It became defunct, in 1685, owing to anarchy—thus *harmony and discord cannot agree*.

P.T.W

ROSEDALE ABBEY

(For the Mirror.)

"A churchyard!—'tis a homely word, yet full
Of feeling; and a sound that o'er the heart
Might shed religion."

R. MONTGOMERY.

Ruins! so dark and lone,
The pride of other years,
On which the stars have shone,
To light the mourners' tears;
The ivy clings to ye,
And softly hums the bee
Where violets blue are blooming,
The liquid dews perfuming,
Beneath each withered tree.

Tombs! o'er your nameless stone
What gentle hearts have wept,
And there, at midnight lone,
Their silent vigils kept;
There Beauty laid her wreath,
And Love seem'd "strong as death,"
Around the pale shrines sighing,
While plaintive winds were dying
With music in their breath.

But childhood loves to stray
Whene'er the sward is green,
Round your mementos grey,
And haunts the mouldering scene;
And lovely in repose,
At sunset's gorgeous close,
Your holy walls seem blending
With purple light descending
Upon the beauteous rose.

Tombs of the past unknown!
Ye are fringed with violets blue,
And clouds have laved your stone
With sweetest tears of dew;
But when, by angels given,
The last dread peal of heaven

Shall rend ye all asunder
With its immortal thunder,
Your dead shall claim their heaven.

Deal.

G.R.C

PORTRAIT OF STERNE

(To the Editor.)

As many of the pages of your extensively-circulated little work have preserved memorials of *Laurence Sterne*, I hope you can spare room for the underwritten extract, from a letter of his to Mr. Garrick, dated Paris, March, 1762, and which may be seen in Vol I. of Mrs. Medalle's "Letters of the late L. Sterne."

My object in thus troubling you is, in the hope (perhaps you will say an almost forlorn, or distant one) that *possibly* some one of your readers, either here or abroad, maybe able to suggest where it is likely the under-mentioned *whole-length* portrait may now be of that once very distinguished man.

A CONSTANT READER

"I shandy it away fifty times more than I was ever wont, talk more nonsense than ever you heard me talk in your days—and to all sorts of people. *Qui le diable est cet homme là* ... said Choiseul, t'other day. You'll think me as vain as a devil, was I to tell you the rest of the dialogue.... The Duke of Orleans has suffered my portrait to be added to the number of some odd men in his collection; and a gentleman who lives with him has taken it *most expressively*, at full length. I purpose to obtain an etching of it, and to send it to you."

EPITOME OF THE ANCIENT KINGDOM OF POLAND

(For the Mirror.)

Poland was once the country of the Vandals, who left it to invade the Roman Empire. The kingdom began, by favour of Otho III., Emperor of Germany, under Boleslaus, 999; Red Russia was added to it in 1059; Pomerania, that had been separated 180 years, again united with it, 1465; embraced Christianity, 965; the order of the White Eagle instituted in 1705. The peasants in Poland were serfs or slaves, and the value of an estate was not estimated from its extent, but from the number of the peasants who were transferred, like cattle, from one master to another. The first person who granted freedom to his peasants was Zamoiski, formerly grand chancellor, who in 1760 enfranchised six villages. The Jews were first introduced into Poland about the time of Casimir the Great; they were indulged with great privileges, and became so numerous that Poland was styled the Paradise of the Jews. So late as the thirteenth century, the Poles retained the custom of killing old men when past their labour, and such children as were born imperfect. "The natural strength of Poland, if properly exerted, (says a modern writer) would have formed a more certain bulwark against the ambition of her neighbours than the faith of treaties;" and it is worthy of remark, that of the three partitioning powers, Prussia was formerly in a state of vassalage to the republic; Russia once saw her capital and throne possessed by the Poles, under Sigismund III. whose troops got possession of Moscow, and whose son, Ladislaus, was chosen Great Duke of Muscovy, by a party of the Russian nobles; and Austria was indebted to John Sobieski, King of Poland, who, in 1683, compelled the Turks to raise the siege of Vienna, and delivered the house of Austria from the greatest dangers it ever experienced.

"The partition of Poland (says Mr. Coxe,) was first projected by the King of Prussia."

In 1794, Suwarof laid siege to Praga, a fortified suburb of Warsaw, and carried it by assault, with a tremendous carnage. The king was compelled to abdicate, and the whole country was incorporated in the dominion of Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

Early in 1797 Stanislaus arrived at Petersburg, and, according to the appointment of the sovereign, fixed his residence in the Marble Palace, on the banks of the Neva; but his death, which happened on the 12th of February, 1798, terminated the series of Polish sovereigns:

"Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
And Freedom shriek'd as Kosciusko fell."

Queen Elizabeth so highly prized the merit and abilities of Sir Philip Sydney, that she sent him ambassador to Vienna, and to several courts in Germany; and when the fame of his valour became so extensive that he was put in election for the crown of Poland, she refused to further his advancement, lest (says Baker) she should lose the brightest jewel of her crown. This Marcellus of the English nation was killed at the battle of Zutphen, in 1585, while he was mounting the third horse, having before had two killed under him.

P.T.W

THE HOUR OF PHANTASY

"The atmosphere that circleth gifted minds
Is from a deep intensity derived,
An element of thought, where feelings shape
Themselves to fancies,—an electric world
Too exquisitely toned for common life,
Which they of coarser metal cannot dream."

R. MONTGOMERY.

There is an hour when Memory lends
To Thought her intellectual part,
When visions of departed friends
Restore their beauty to the heart;
And like the sunset's crimson light
To fading scenes of Nature given,
They make our meditations bright
With hopes inspired by heaven.

The vivid glance of those blue eyes
Which haunted us with early love,
Like stars that seem'd in cloudless skies
Transferr'd from earth to shine above,—
And voices whispering from the dead,
Or where the violets' lips enclose,
Around our languid spirits shed
Their halo of repose.

It is the hour of thought profound,
When Memory's heart, depress'd with gloom,
Laments upon the sculptured mound,
And dreams beside the visioned tomb;
When voices from the dead arise,
Like music o'er the starlit sea,
And holiest commune sanctifies
The Hour of Phantasy.

Deal.

G.R.C

MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS

APPLICANTS FOR THE FLITCH OF DUNMOW

(For the Mirror.)

Aubry de Falstaff, son of Sir John Falstaff, Knight, with Dame Maude, his wife, were the first that demanded the bacon, he having bribed twain of his father's companions to swear falsely in his behoof, whereby he gained the flitch; but he and his said wife falling immediately into a dispute how the bacon should be dressed, it was, by order of the judges, taken from him, and hung up again in the Hall.

Alison, the wife of Stephen Freckle, brought her said husband along with her, and set forth the good conditions and behaviour of her consort, adding withal that she doubted not but he was ready to attest the like of her, his wife; whereupon he, the said Stephen, shaking his head, she turned short upon him, and gave him a box on the ear. Philip de Waverland having laid his hand up the book, when the clause, "were I sole and she sole" was rehearsed, found a secret compunction rising in his mind, and stole it off again.

Richard de Loveless, who was a courtier, and a very well bred man, being observed to hesitate at the words "after our marriage," was thereupon desired to explain himself. He replied by talking very largely of his exact complaisance while he was a lover, and alleged that he had not in the least disobliged his wife for a year and a day before marriage, which he hoped was the same thing. (Rejected.)

Joceline Jolly, Esq. making it appear, by unquestionable testimony, that he and his wife had preserved full and entire affection for the space of the first month, commonly called the Honey Moon, he had, in consideration thereof, one rasher bestowed upon him.

After this (says the record) many years passed over before any demandant appeared at Wichenvre Hall,—insomuch, that one would have thought that the whole country had turned Jews, so little was their affection to the flitch of bacon.

The next couple enrolled had like to have carried it, if one of the witnesses had not deposed, that dining on a Sunday with the demandant, whose wife had sat below the squire's lady at church, she, the said wife, dropped some expressions, as if she thought her husband deserved to be knighted, to which he returned a passionate "pish!" The judges taking the premises into consideration, declared the aforesaid behaviour to imply an unwarrantable ambition in the wife, and anger in the husband.

It is recorded as a sufficient disqualification of a certain wife, that, speaking of her husband, she said, "God forgive him."

It is likewise remarkable, that a couple were rejected upon the deposition of one of their neighbours, that the lady had once told her husband that it was her duty to obey; to which he replied, "Oh, my dear, you are never in the wrong."

The violent passion of one lady for her lap-dog, the turning away of her old housemaid by another; a tavern bill torn by the wife, and a tailor's by the husband; a quarrel about the kissing crust, spoiling of dinners, and coming home late of nights, are so many several articles which occasioned the reprobation of some scores of demandants, whose names are recorded in the aforesaid register.

Without enumerating other particular persons, I shall content myself with observing that the sentence pronounced against one Gervase Poacher is, that he might have had bacon to his eggs, if he had not heretofore scolded his wife when they were over-boiled. And the deposition against Dorothy

Doolittle runs in these words—That if she had so far usurped the dominion of the coal fire (the stirring whereof her husband claimed to himself) that by her good will she never would suffer the poker out of her hand.

I find but two couples in the first century that were successful. The first was a sea captain and his wife, who, since the day of their marriage, had not seen one another till the day of the claim; the second was an honest pair in the neighbourhood—the husband was a man of plain good sense and a peaceable temper, and the woman was dumb.

THOS. HY. PRS

THE BORROWING DAYS

(For the Mirror.)

Proverbs relating to the weather are of uncertain origin. The Glossary explains the *Borrowing Days* the three last of March, and adds concerning the origin of this term, the following popular rhyme is often repeated:—

"March borrow it fra Averill
Three days and they were ill,
Also March said to Aprill

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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