

VARIOUS

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THE MIRROR
OF
LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Cheese Wring

(To the Editor of the Mirror.)

In presenting your readers with a representation of the Wring Cheese, I offer a few prefatory remarks connected with the early importance of the county in which it stands, venerable in its age, amid the storms of elements, and the changes of religions. Its pristine glory has sunk on the horizon of Time; but its legend, like a soft twilight of its former day, still hallows it in the memories of the surrounding peasantry.

Cornwall is allowed by antiquaries to be the Capiterides; and the Abbé de Fontenu, in the *Memoires de Literature*, tom. vii. p. 126, proves, according to Vallancey, that the Phoenicians traded here for tin before the Trojan war. Homer frequently mentions this metal; and even in Scripture we have allusions to this land under the name of Tarshish (Ezekiel, c. xxvii., v. 12-25), being the place whence the Tyrians procured various metals, and among the rest, the English metal tin. It appears that the primitive Greeks had a clearer knowledge of these shores than those in after years; and although Homer, in his shield of Achilles, describes the earth surrounded by water, yet Herodotus, notwithstanding his learning and research, candidly states his ignorance in the following words:—"Neither am I better acquainted with the islands called Capiterides, from whence *we are said* to have our tin." The knowledge of these shores existed in periods so remote, that it faded. We dwindled away into a visionary land—we lived almost in fable. The Phoenician left us, and the link of our history was severed. Hyde de Religione Vet. Persarum, c. iv. p. 121, supposes Solomon to have traded with the Peruvians; and the analogies between the Pyramids in Mexico and Egypt confirm the opinion, and sanction the belief that the ancients had a more extended knowledge of, and a greater traffic over, the earth than history records. In the most early ages, worship was paid to stone idols; and the Pagan introduction of statues into temples was of a recenter date. The ancient Etruscans, as well as the ancient Egyptians, revered the obeliscal stone, (the reason why to the obeliscal stone is given by Payne Knight, in his extraordinary work;) nor was it, according to Plutarch, till 170 years after the founding of the city that the Romans had statues in their temples, their deities being considered invisible. Many stone pillars exist in this country, especially in Cornwall; and it is a fair inference that the Phoenician imported his religious rites in return for his metallic exports—since we find mention made of stone pillars in Genesis, xxviii. v. 20; Deuteronomy, xxvii. v. 4.; Joshua, xxiv.; 2 Samuel, xx. v. 8.; Judges, ix. v. 6., &c. &c. Many are the conjectures as to what purport these stones were used: sometimes they were sepulchral, as Jacob's pillar over Rachel, Gen. xxxv. 20. Ilus, son of Dardanus, king of Troy, was buried in the plain before that city beneath a column, Iliad, xi. 317. Sometimes they were erected as trophies, as the one set up by Samuel between Mizpeh and Shen, in commemoration of the defeat of the Philistines; one was also erected at Murray, in Scotland, as a monument of the fight between Malcolm, son of Keneth, and Sueno the Dane. We also find them as witnesses to covenants, like that of Jacob and Laban, which, though originally an emblem of a civil pact, became afterwards the place of worship of the whole twelve tribes of Israel. All these relics, to say nothing of the cromlechs in Malabar, bear a silent and solemn testimony of some by-gone people, whose religious and civil customs had extended wide over the earth. Their monuments remain, but their history has perished, and the dust of their bodies has been scattered in the wind. The Druids availed themselves of those places most likely to give an effect to their vaticinations; and not only obtained, but supported by terror the influence they held over the superstitious feelings of our earliest forefathers. Where nature presented a *bizarre* mass of rocks, the Druid worked, and peopled it with his gods, the most remarkable of which is the subject of our engraving, called the

Wring Cheese, or Cheese Wring, in the parish of St. Clare, near Liskeard, in Cornwall. This singular mass of rocks is 32 feet high. The large stone at the top was a logan, or rocking-stone. Geologists are inclined to consider it as a natural production, which is probably the case in part, the Druids taking advantage of favourable circumstances to convert these crags to objects of superstitious reverence. On its summit are two rock basins; and it is a well-known fact, that baptism was a Pagan rite of the highest antiquity, (vide the Etruscan vases by Gorius.) Here, probably, the rude ancestor of our glorious land was initiated amidst the mystic ceremonies of the white-robed Druid and his blood-stained sacrifices. A similar mass exists at Brimham, York; and in the "History of Waterford," p. 70, mention is made of St. Declan's stone, which, not liking its situation, miraculously *swam* from Rome, conveying on it St. Declan's bell and vestment.

J. SILVESTER

CURIOUS ANCIENT LEGEND

(For the Mirror.)

In ancienne tyme, and in a goodly towne, neare to Canterbury, sojourned a ladie faire. She one nighte, in the absence of her lorde, leaned her lovely arme upon a gentleman's, and walked in the fylde. When journeying far, she became afraide, and begged to returne. The gentleman, with kyndest sayings and greate courtesey, retraced their steps; when in this saide momente, this strayne occurrence came to pass—ye raine descended, though the moone and millions of starres were shyneing bryght. In journeying home, another strayne occurrence came to pass; her coral lippes the gentleman's did meete in sweetest kyss. Thys was not strayne at all; but that the moone, that still shone bryghte, did in the momente hide herself behynde a cloude: this was strayne, most passing strayne indeede. The ladie faire, who prayed to the blessed Virgin, did to her confesseur this confession mayk, and her confesseur with charitye impromptu wrote:—

"Whence came the rayne, when first with guileless heart
Further to walk she's lothe, and yet more lothe to part?
It was not rayne, but angels' pearly teares,
In pity dropt to soothe Eliza's feares.
Whence came the cloude that veil'd the orb of nighte,
When first her lippes she yielded to delyght?
It was not cloude, but whylst the world was hush,
Mercy put forthe her hande to hide Eliza's blush."

W.G.C

PICTON'S MONUMENT, CARMARTHEN

(For the Mirror.)

This interesting national tribute stands at the west end of the town of Carmarthen, rising ground, and is erected in memory of the gallant Sir Thomas Picton, who terminated his career in the ever-to-be-remembered battle of Waterloo. The structure stands about 30 feet high, and is, particularly the shaft and architrave, similar to Trajan's pillar in Rome; and being built of a very durable material, (black marble,) will no doubt stand as many ages as that noble, though now mouldering relic. The pillar stands on a square pedestal, with a small door on the east side, which fronts the town, where the monument is ascended by a flight of steps. Over the door, in large characters, is the hero's name, PICTON; and above this, in basso relievo, is represented part of the field of battle, with the hero falling from his horse, from the mortal wound which he received. Over this, in large letters, is inscribed WATERLOO. On the west end is represented the siege of Badajos, Picton scaling the walls with a few men, and attacked by the besieged. Above this is the word BADAJOS. On the south side of the pedestal is the following inscription:—

Sir THOMAS PICTON,
Knight Grand Cross of the Military Order of the
Bath,
Of the Portuguese Order of the Tower and Sword,
and of other foreign Orders;
Lieutenant-General in the British Army, and
Member of Parliament for the Borough of
Pembroke,
Born at Poyston, in Pembrokeshire, in August,
1758;
Died at Waterloo on the 18th of June, 1815,
Gloriously fighting for his country and the
liberties of Europe.
Having honourably fulfilled, on behalf of the
public, various duties in various climates:
And having achieved the highest military renown
in the Spanish Peninsula,
He thrice received the unanimous thanks of
Parliament,
And a Monument erected by the British nation
in St. Paul's Cathedral
Commemorates his death and services,
His grateful countrymen, to perpetuate past and
incite to future exertions,
Have raised this column, under the auspices of
his Majesty, King George the Fourth,

To the memory of a hero and a Welshman.
The plan and design of this Monument was given
by our countryman, John Nash, Esq. F.R.S.
Architect to the King.
The ornaments were executed by
E.H. Bailey, Esq. R.A.
And the whole was erected by Mr. Daniel
Mainwaring, of the town of Carmarthen,
In the year 1826 and 1827.

On the north side is the translation of the above in Welsh; and on the top of the pedestal, on each side of the square, are trophies. The top of the column is also square, and on each side are imitative cannons. The statue of the hero surmounts the whole. He is wrapped in a cloak, and is supported by a baluster, round which are emblems of spears.

W.H

THE SKETCH BOOK

AN HOUR TOO MANY

Hail, land of the kangaroo!—paradise of the bushranger!—purgatory of England!—happy scene, where the sheep-stealer is metamorphosed into the shepherd; the highwayman is the guardian of the road; the dandy is delicate no more, and earns his daily bread; and the Court of Chancery is unknown—hail to thee, soil of larceny and love! of pickpockets and principle! of every fraud under heaven, and primeval virtue! daughter of jails, and mother of empires!—hail to thee, New South Wales! In all my years—and I am now no boy—and in all my travels—and I am now at the antipodes—I have never heard any maxim so often as, that time is short; yet no maxim that ever dropt from human lips is further from the truth. I appeal to the experience of mankind—to the three hundred heirs of the British peerage, whom their gouty fathers keep out of their honours and estates—to the six hundred and sixty-eight candidates for seats in parliament, which they must wait for till the present sitters die; or turn rebellious to their noble patrons, or their borough patrons, or their Jew patrons; or plunge into joint-stock ruin, and expatriate themselves, for the astonishment of all other countries, and the benefit of their own;—to the six thousand five hundred heroes of the half-pay, longing for tardy war;—to the hundred thousand promissory excisemen lying on the soul of the chancellor of the ex-chequer, and pining for the mortality of every gauger from the Lizard to the Orkneys;—and, to club the whole discomfort into one, to the entire race of the fine and superfine, who breathe the vital air, from five thousand a year to twenty times the rental, the unhappy population of the realms of indolence included in Bond Street, St. James's, and the squares.

For my own part, in all my experience of European deficiencies, I have never found any deficiency of time. Money went like the wind; champagne grew scanty; the trust of tailors ran down to the dregs; the smiles of my fair flirts grew rare as diamonds—every thing became as dry, dull, and stagnant as the Serpentine in summer; but time never failed me. I had a perpetual abundance of a commodity which the philosophers told me was beyond price. I had not merely enough for myself, but enough to give to others; until I discovered the fact, that it was as little a favourite with others as myself, and that, whatever the plausible might say, there was nothing on earth for which they would not be more obliged to me than a donation of my superfluous time. But now let me give a sketch of my story. A single fact is worth a hundred reflections. The first consciousness that I remember, was that of having a superabundance of time; and my first ingenuity was demanded for getting rid of the encumbrance. I had always an hour that perplexed my skill to know what to do with this treasure. A schoolboy turn for long excursions in any direction but that of my pedagogue, indicative of a future general officer; a naturalist-taste for bird-nesting, which, in maturer years, would have made me one of the wonders of the Linnaean Society; a passion for investigating the inside of every thing, from a Catherine-wheel to a China-closet, which would yet have entitled me to the honours of an F.R.S.; and an original vigour in the plunder of orchards, which undoubtedly might have laid the foundation of a first lord of the treasury; were nature's helps to get rid of this oppressive bounty. But though I fought the enemy with perpetual vigour and perpetual variety, he was not to be put to flight by a stripling; and I went to the university as far from being a conqueror as ever. At Oxford I found the superabundance of this great gift acknowledged with an openness worthy of English candour, and combated with the dexterity of an experience five hundred years old. Port-drinking, flirtation, lounging, the invention of new ties to cravats, and new tricks on proctors; billiards, boxing, and barmaids; seventeen ways of mulling sherry, and as many dozen ways of raising "the supplies," were adopted with an adroitness

that must have baffled all but the invincible. Yet Time was master at last; and he always indulged me with a liberality that would have driven a less resolute spirit to the bottom of the Isis.

At length I gave way; left the university with my blessing and my debts; and rushed up to London, as the grand *place d'armes*, the central spot from which the enemy was excluded by the united strength, wit, and wisdom of a million and a half of men. I might as well have staid bird-nesting in Berkshire. I found the happiest contrivances against the universal invader fail. Pigeon-matches; public dinners; coffee-houses; bluestocking *reunions*; private morning quadrille practice, with public evening exhibitions of their fruits; dilettanti breakfasts, with a bronze Hercules standing among the bread and butter, or a reposing cast of Venus, fresh from Pompeii, as black and nude as a negress disporting on the banks of the Senegal, but dear and delicate to the eyes of taste; Sunday mornings at Tattersal's, jockeying till the churches let out their population, and the time for visits was come; and Sunday evening routs at *the duchess's*, with a cotillon by the *vraies danseuses* of the opera, followed by a concert, a round game, and a *select* supper for the initiated;—the whole failed. I had always an hour too much—sixty mortal minutes, and every one of them an hour in itself, that I could never squeeze down.

"Ye gods, annihilate both space and time,
And make two lovers happy,"

may have been called a not over-modest request; but I can vouch for at least one half of it being the daily prayer of some thousands of the best-dressed people that the sun ever summoned to a day of twenty-four hours long. On feeling the symptoms of this horary visitation, I regularly rushed into the streets, on the principle that some alleviation of misery is always to be found in fellow-suffering. This maxim I invariably found false, like every other piece of the boasted wisdom of mankind. I found the suffering infinitely increased by the association with my fellow-fashionables. A man might as well have fled from his chamber to enjoy comfort in the wards of an hospital. In one of my marches up and down the *pavé* of St. James's Street, that treadmill of gentlemen convicted in the penalty of having nothing to do, I lounged into the little hotel of the Guards, that stands beside the great hotel of the gamblers, like a babe under its mamma's wing—the likeness admirable, though the scale diminutive. That "hour too many," cost me three games of billiards, my bachelor's house, and one thousand pounds. This price of sixty minutes startled me a little; and, for a week, I meditated with some seriousness on the superior gaiety of a life spent in paving the streets, driving a wagon, or answering the knocker of a door. But the "hour" again overflowed me. I was walking it off in Regent Street, when an old fellow-victim met me, and prescribed a trot to Newmarket. The prescription was taken, and the hour was certainly got rid of. But the remedy was costly; for my betting-book left me minus ten thousand pounds. I returned to town like a patient from a watering-place; relieved of every thing but the disease that took me there. My last shilling remained among the noble blacklegs; but nothing could rob me of a fragment of my superfluous time, and I brought even a tenfold allowance of it back. But every disease has a crisis; and when a lounge through the streets became at once useless and inconvenient—when the novelty of being cut by all my noble friends, and of being seduously followed by that generation who, unlike the fickle world, reserve their tipstaff attentions for the day of adversity, had lost its zest, and I was thinking whether time was to be better fought off by a plunge to the bottom of the Thames, or by the muzzle of one of Manton's hair-triggers—I was saved by a plunge into the King's Bench. There life was new, friendship was undisguised, my coat was not an object of scorn, my exploits were fashion, my duns were inadmissible, and my very captors were turned into my humble servants. There, too, my nature, always social, had its full indulgence; for there I found, rather to my surprise, nine-tenths of my most accomplished acquaintance. But the enemy still made his way; and I had learned to yawn, in spite of billiards and ball-playing, when *the Act* let me loose into the great world again. Good-luck, too, had prepared a surprise for my *debut*. I had scarcely

exhibited myself in the streets, when I discovered that every man of my *set* was grown utterly blind whenever I happened to walk on the same side of the way, and that I might as well have been buried a century. I was absurd enough to be indignant; for nothing can be more childish than any delicacy when a man cannot bet on the rubber. But one morning a knock came to my attic-door which startled me by its professional vigour. An attorney entered. I had now nothing to fear, for the man whom no one will trust cannot well be in debt; and for once I faced an attorney without a palpitation. His intelligence was flattering. An old uncle of mine, who had worn out all that was human about him in amassing fifty thousand pounds, and finally died of starving himself, had expired with the pen in his hand, in the very act of leaving his thousands to pay the national debt. But fate, propitious to me, had dried up his ink-bottle; the expense of replenishing it would have broken his heart of itself; and the attorney's announcement to me was, that the will, after blinding the solicitor to the treasury and three of his clerks, was pronounced to be altogether illegible.

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