

VARIOUS

NOTES AND QUERIES,
NUMBER 26, APRIL 27,
1850

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Содержание

NOTES	5
NICHOLAS BRETON	5
NOTES UPON CUNNINGHAM'S HANDBOOK FOR LONDON	7
NOTES ON THE DODO	8
DERIVATION OF "STERLING" AND "PENNY"	9
HANNO'S PERIPLUS	11
FOLK LORE	13
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	14

Various Notes and Queries, Number 26, April 27, 1850

NOTES

NICHOLAS BRETON

Like Mr. COLLIER (No. 23. p. 364.), I have for many years felt "a peculiar interest about Nicholas Breton," and an anxious desire to learn something more of him, not only from being a sincere lover of many of his beautiful lyrical and pastoral poems, as exhibited in *England's Helicon*, *Davison's Poetical Rhapsodie*, and other numerous works of his own, and from possessing several pieces of his which are not generally known, but also from my intimate connection with the parish in which he is supposed to have lived and died. From this latter circumstance, especially, I had been most anxious to connect his name with Norton, and have frequently cast a reverential and thoughtful eye on the simple monument which has been supposed to record his name; hoping, yet not without doubts, that some evidence would still be found which would prove it to be really that of the poet. It was therefore with the utmost pleasure that I read Mr. Collier's concluding paragraph, that he is "in possession of undoubted proof that he was the Nicholas Breton whose epitaph is on the chancel-wall of the church of Norton in Northamptonshire."

It seems strange that, notwithstanding the number and variety of his writings, the length of time he was before the public, and the estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries, so little should be known concerning Breton, and the circumstances of his life be still involved in such great obscurity. In looking over his various publications, it is remarkable how little is to be gleaned in the preliminary prefixes which relate to his own personal history, and how very rarely he touches on any thing referring to himself. There is a plaintive and melancholy strain running through many of his works, and I am inclined to the opinion entertained by Sir Egerton Bridges and others, that cares, and misfortunes, and continued disappointments had brought on melancholy and despair, and that the plaintive and touching nature of his writings were occasioned by real sorrows and sufferings. This seems at variance with his being the purchaser of the manor and lordship of Norton, and in the possession and enjoyment of this world's goods. Thus in his *Auspicante Jehova Maries Exercise*, 8vo. 1597, one of the rarest of his works, in the dedication to Mary, Countess of Pembroke, speaking of his temporal condition, he remarks, "I have soncke my fortune in the worlde, hauing only the light of vertue to leade my hope unto Heauen:" and signs himself "Your La. sometime unworthy Poet, and now, and ever poore Beadman, Nich. Breton." And the "Address" after it is signed, "Your poore friend or servant N.B." I am aware that these phrases are sometimes used in a figurative sense, but am disposed to think that here they are intended for something real. And I am at a loss how to reconcile these expressions of poverty with his being the purchaser and enjoyer of such an estate. I shall wait, therefore, with considerable anxiety till it may suit the pleasure or convenience of Mr. Collier to communicate to the world the proofs he has obtained of the poet's identification with the Norton monument. I would, however, further add, that so late as 1606, the Dedication to *the Praise of Vertuous Ladies* is dated "From my Chamber in the Blacke-Fryers," and that not one of his later productions is dated from Norton, which probably would have been the case had he been resident there.

I regret that I am unable to afford Mr. Collier any information respecting the "Crossing of Proverbs," beyond the fact of the late Mr. Rodd being the purchaser of Mr. Heber's fragment, but

whether on commission or not, I cannot say, nor where it now is. The same kind of proverbs are given in *Wit's Private Wealth*, 1603, and in some other of his works.

Nicholas Breton, besides being a pleasing and polished writer of lyric and pastoral poetry, appears to have been a close and attentive observer of nature and manners,—abounding in wit and humour,—and a pious and religious man. He was also a soldier, a good fisherman, and a warm admirer of Queen Elizabeth, of whom he gives a beautiful character in "*A Dialogue full of pithe and pleasure, upon the Dignitie or Indignitie of Man*," 4to., 1603, on the reverse of Sig. c. iii.

As it is sometimes desirable to know where copies of the rarer productions of a writer are to be met with, I may state, that among some five or six-and-twenty of this author's pieces, besides the *Auspicante Jehova Maries Exercise*, 8vo. 1597, already mentioned, of which I know of no other copy than my own, I possess also the only one of *A small handfull of Fragrant Flowers*, 8vo. 1575, and *A Floorish upon Fancie*, 4to. 1582, both reprinted in the *Heliconia*; *Marie Magdalen's Loue*, with *A Solemne Passion of the Soules Loue*, 8vo. 1595, the first part in prose, the latter in six-line stanzas, and very rare; *Fantastics: seruing for a Perpetual Prognostication*, 4to. 1626; and *Wit's Trenchmour, In a conference had betwixt a Scholler and an Angler. Written by Nich. Breton, Gentleman*, 4to. bl. lett. 1597, the only copy known and not included in Lowndes's list, which, from the style of its composition and the similarity of some of the remarks, is supposed to have been the original work from which Izaak Walton first took the idea of his *Complete Angler*.

THOMAS CORSER.

Stand Rectory, April 16. 1850.

NOTES UPON CUNNINGHAM'S HANDBOOK FOR LONDON

Baldwin's Gardens.—A passage upon the east side of Gray's Inn Lane, leading into Leather Lane. Tom Brown dates some introductory verses, prefixed to Playford's *Pleasant Musical Companion*, 1698, "from Mr. Steward's, at the Hole-in-the-Wall, in *Baldwin's Gardens*." There is extant a single sheet with an engraved head, published by J. Applebee, 1707, and called,—

"The English and French Prophets mad, or bewicht, at their assemblies in *Baldwin's Gardens*."

A Letter of Anthony Wood's, in the writer's collection, is thus addressed:—

"For John Aubrey, Esq. To be left at Mr. Caley's house, in *Baldwin's Gardens*, neare Gray's Inne Lane, London."

The White Hart, Bishopsgate Street.—A tavern said to be of very ancient date. In front of the present building, the writer of the present notice observed (in 1838) the date cut in stone, 1480.

The Nag's Head, Cheapside.—A view of this tavern is preserved in a print of the entry of Mary de Medici, when she paid a visit to her son-in-law and daughter, the unfortunate Charles I. and his queen.

St. Paul's Alley.—

"Whereas, the yearly meeting of the name of Adam hath of late, through the deficiency of the last stewards, been neglected, these are to give notice to all gentlemen, and others that are of that name, that, at William Adams', commonly called 'The Northern Alehouse,' in *St. Paul's Alley*, in St. Paul's Church Yard, there will be a weekly meeting, every Monday night, of our namesakes, between the hours of 6 and 8 of the clock in the evening, in order to choose stewards to revive our antient and annual feast."—*Domestic Intelligence*, 1681.

St. Paul's Churchyard.—

"In St. Paul's Church Yard were formerly many shops where music and musical instruments were sold, for which, at this time, no better reason can be given than that the service at that Cathedral drew together, twice a day, all the lovers of music in London; not to mention that the chairmen were wont to assemble there, where they were met by their friends and acquaintance."—*Sir John Hawkins' History of Music*, vol. v. p. 108.

The French Change, Soho.—A place so called in the reign of Queen Anne. Gough, in a MS. note, now before us, thought it stood on the site of the present bazaar.

EDWARD F. RIMBAULT.

NOTES ON THE DODO

I have to thank "Mr. S.W. SINGER" (No. 22. p. 353.) for giving some interesting replies to my "Dodo Queries" (No. 17. p. 261.). I trust that Mr. S. will be induced to pursue the inquiry further, and especially to seek for some *Portuguese* account of the Mascarene Islands, prior to the Dutch expedition of 1598. I am now able to state that the supposed proof of the discovery of Bourbon by the Portuguese in 1545, on the authority of a stone pillar, the figure of which Leguat has copied from Du Qesne, who copied it from Flacourt, turns out to be inaccurate. On referring to Flacourt's *Histoire de la Grande Isle Madagascar*, 4to., Paris, 1658, p. 344, where the original figure of this monument is given, I find that the stone was not found in Bourbon at all, but in "l'Islet des Portugais," a small island at the mouth of the river Fanshere (see Flacourt, p. 32.), near the S.E. extremity of Madagascar. From this place Flacourt removed it to the neighbouring settlement of Fort Dauphin in 1653, and engraved the arms of France on the opposite side to those of Portugal. We are therefore still without any historical record of the first discovery of Bourbon and Mauritius, though, from the unanimous consent of later compilers, we may fairly presume that the Portuguese were the discoverers.

The references which Mr. Singer has given to two works which mention the *Oiseau bleu* of Bourbon, are very important, as the only other known authority for this extinct bird is the MS. Journal of Sieur D.B., which thus receives full confirmation. May I ask Mr. Singer whether either of these writers mentions the *Solitaire* as inhabiting Bourbon?

The "Oiseaux appelez *Flamands*" quoted by Mr. S., are merely *Flamingos*, and are devoid of interest as regards the present question.

The history of the Dodo's head at Copenhagen, referred to by Mr. Singer, is fully recorded in the *Dodo and its Kindred*, pp. 25. 33.

The name *Dodo* seems to have been first applied to the bird by Sir Thomas Herbert, in 1634, who adds, in his edition of 1638, "a Portuguese name it is, and has reference to her simpleness." Before that time the Dutch were in the habit of calling it *Dodars*, *Dodaers*, *Toters*, and *Dronte*. I had already made the same guesses at the etymology of these words as those which Mr. Singer has suggested, but not feeling fully satisfied with them, I put forth my Query VII. for the chance of obtaining some further elucidation.

Mr. Singer's reasonings on the improbability of Tradescant's specimen of the Dodo having been a fabrication are superfluous, seeing that the head and foot of this individual are, as is well known, still in existence, and form the subjects of six plates in the *Dodo and its Kindred*.

In regard to my Query IX. as to the local habitation of the family of *Dronte*, who bore a Dodo on their shield, it has been suggested to me by the Rev. Richard Hooper (who first drew my attention to this armorial bearing), that the family was probably foreign to Britain. It appears that there was a family named *Dodo*, in Friesland, a member of which (Augustin Dodo, deceased in 1501) was the first editor of St. Augustine's works. Mr. Hooper suggests that possibly this family may have subsequently adopted the Dodo as their arms, and that Randle Holme may, by a natural mistake, have changed the name of the family, in his *Academy of Armory*, from *Dodo* to the synonymous word *Dronte*. Can none of your genealogical readers clear up this point?

H.E. Strickland.

DERIVATION OF "STERLING" AND "PENNY"

Your correspondent suggests (No. 24. p. 384.) an ingenious derivation for the word *Sterling*; but one which perhaps he has been too ready to adopt, inasmuch as it helped his other derivation of *peny*, from *pecunia* or *pecus*. I quote the following from *A short Treatise touching Sheriff's Accompts*, by Sir Matthew Hale: London, 1683:

"Concerning the second, *viz.* the matter or species whereof the current coin of this kingdom hath been made, it is gold or silver, but not altogether pure, but with an allay of copper, at least from the time of King H. I. and H. II., though possibly in ancients times the species whereof the coin was made might be pure gold or silver; and this allay was that which gave the denomination of Sterling to that coin, *viz.* Sterling Gold, or Sterling Silver. Wherein there will be inquirable,

"1. Whence that denomination came?

"2. How ancient that denomination was?

"3. What was the allay that gave silver that denomination?

"For the former of these there are various conjectures, and nothing of certainty.

"*Spelman* supposeth it to take that denomination from the Esterlings, who, as he supposeth, came over and reformed our coin to that allay. Of this opinion was *Camden*. *A Germanis, quos Angli Esterlings, aborientali situ, vocarunt, facta est appellatio; quos Johannes Rex, ad argentum in suam puritatem redigendam, primus evocavit; et ejus modi nummi Esterlingi, in antiquis scripturis semper reperiuntur.* Some suppose that it might be taken up from the *Starre Judæorum*, who, being the great brokers for money, accepted and allowed money of that allay for current payment of their stars or obligations; others from the impression of a starling, or an asterisk upon the coin. *Pur ceo que le form d'un Stare, dont le diminutive est Sterling, fuit impressit on stamp sur ceo. Auters pur ceo que le primer de cest Standard fuit coyn en le Castle de Sterlin in Scotland pur le Roy Edw. I.* And possibly as the proper name of the fourth part of a Penny was called a Farthing, ordinarily a Ferling; so in truth the proper name of a Penny in those times was called a Sterling, without any other reason of it than the use of the times and arbitrary imposition, as other names usually grow. For the old Act of 51 H. III., called *Compositio Mensurarum*, tells us that *Denarius Anglice Sterlingus dicitur*; and because this was the root of the measure, especially of Silver Coin, therefore all our Coin of the same allay was also called Sterling, as five Shillings Sterling, five Pounds Sterling.

"When this name of Sterling came first in is uncertain, only we are certain it was a denomination in use in the time of H. III. or Ed. I. and after ages. But it was not in use at the time of the compiling of *Doomsday*, for if it were we should have found it there where there is so great occasion of mention of Firmes, Rents, and Payments. Hovended in *Rich. I fol. 377. b.* *Nummus a Numa, que fuit le primer Roy que fesoit moneies en Rome. Issint Sterlings, alias Esterlings, queux primes fesoient le money de cest Standard en Engleterre.*"—*Sheriffs' Accompts*, p. 5-9.

So much for the derivation of *Sterling*, which evidently applied originally to the metal rather than to a coin. May I be allowed to hazard a suggestion as to the origin of *peny*, its synonym? They were each equivalent to the *Denarius*.

"*Denarius Angliæ, qui nominatur Sterlingus, rotundus sine tonsura, ponderabit 32 grana in medio spicæ. Sterlingus et Denarius sont tout un. Le Shilling consistoit de*

12 sterlings. Le substance de cest denier ou sterling peny al primes fuit vicessima pars unica."—*Indentures of the Mint*, Ed. I and VI.

May we not derive it from Denarius by means of either a typographical or clerical error in the initial letter. This would at once give a new name—the very thing they were in want of—and we may very easily understand its being shortened into Penny.

G.

Milford, April 15.

HANNO'S PERIPLUS

"Mr. Hampson" has served the cause of truth in defending Hanno and the Carthaginians from the charge of cruelty, brought against them by Mr. Attorney-General Bannister. A very slender investigation of the bearings of the narration would have prevented it. I know not how Dr. Falconer deals with it, not having his little volume at hand; but in so common a book as the *History of Maritime Discovery*, which forms part of Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, it is stated that these *Gorillæ* were probably some species of *ourang-outang*. Purchas says they might be the *baboons* or *Pongos* of those parts.

The amusing, and always interesting, Italian, Hakluyt, in the middle of the sixteenth century, gives a very good version of the [Greek: ANNONOS PERIPLUS], with a preliminary discourse, which would also have undeceived Mr. Bannister, had he been acquainted with it, and prevented Mr. Hampson's pleasant exposure of his error.

Ramusio says, "Seeing that in the Voyage of Hanno there are many parts worthy of considerate attention, I have judged that it would be highly gratifying to the studious if I were here to write down a few extracts from certain memoranda which I formerly noted on hearing a respectable Portugese pilot, in frequent conversations with the Count Raimondo della Torre, at Venice, illustrate this Voyage of Hanno, when read to him, from his own experience." There are, of course, some erroneous notions in the information of the pilot, and in the deductions made from it by Ramusio; but the former had the sagacity to see the truth respecting this *Gorgon Island full of hairy men and women*. I will not spoil the *naïveté* of the narration by attempting a translation; merely premising that he judged the Island to be that of Fernando Po.

"E tutta la descrizione de questo Capitano era simile a quella per alcun Scrittore Greci, quale parlante dell' isola delle Gorgone, dicono quella esser un isola in mezzo d'una palude. E conciacosa che havea inteso che li poeti dicevan le Gorgone esser femine terribili, però scrisse che le erano pelose.... Ma a detto pilotto pareva più verisimile di pensare, che havendo Hannone inteso ne' libri de' poeti come Perseo era stato per ære a questa isola, e di quivi reportata la testa di Medusa, essendo egli ambizioso di far creder al mondo che lui vi fosse audato per mare; e dar riputation a questo suo viaggio, di esser penetrato fuio dove era stato Perseo; volesse portar due pelli di Gorgone, e dedicarla nel tempio di Ginnone. Il che li fu facil cosa da fare, conciosia cosa che IN TUTTA QUELLA COSTA SI TRUOVINO INFINITE DI QUELLE SIMIE GRANDE, CHE FARENO PERSONE HUMANE, DELLE BABUINE, le pelle delle quali poteva far egli credere ad ogniuno che fussero state di femine."

Gopelin, also, in his *Recherches sur la Géographie des Anciens*, speaking of this part of Hanno's voyage, says:

"Hanno encountered a troop of *Ourang-outangs*, which he took for savages, because these animals walk erect, often having a staff in their hands to support themselves, as well as for attack or defence; and they throw stones when they are pursued. They are the Satyrs and the Argipani with which Pliny says Atlas was peopled. It would be useless to say more on this subject, as it is avowed *by all the modern commentators of the Periplus*."

The relation we have is evidently only an abridgment or summary made by some Greek, studious of Carthaginian affairs, long subsequent to the time of Hanno; and judging from a passage in Pliny (I. ii. c. 67.), it appears that the ancients were acquainted with other extracts from the original, yet, though its authenticity has been doubted by Strabo and others, there seems to be little reason to

question that it is a correct *outline* of the voyage. That the Carthaginians were oppressors of the people they subjugated may be probable; yet we must not, on such slender grounds as this narration affords, presume that they would wantonly kill and flay *human beings* to possess themselves of their skins!

S. W. Singer

April 10. 1850.

FOLK LORE

Cook-eels.—Forby derives this from *coquille*, in allusion to their being fashioned like an escallop, in which sense he is borne out by Cotgrave, who has "*Pain coquillé*, a fashion of an hard-crusted loafe, somewhat like our stillyard bunne." I have always taken the word to be "coquerells," from the vending of such buns at the barbarous sport of "throwing at the cock" on Shrove Tuesday. The cock is still commonly called a cockerell in E. Anglia. Perhaps Mr. Wodderspoon will say whether the buns of the present day are fashioned in any particular manner, or whether any "the oldest inhabitant" has any recollection of their being differently fashioned or at all impressed. What, too, are the "*stillyard buns*"

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