

VARIOUS

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THE YORK COLUMN

Five years have now elapsed since the improvements in St. James's Park were commenced, by order of Government, for the gratification of the people. We were early in our congratulation, as well as illustration, of the prospective advantages of these plans for the public enjoyment, as will be seen on reference to our tenth volume; and, with respect to the re-disposal of St. James's Park, we believe the feeling of satisfaction has been nearly universal.

At the period to which we have just alluded, the removal of Carlton House, (for it scarcely deserved the name of Palace,) had been decided on. The walls were dismantled of their decorative finery, and their demolition commenced; the grounds were, to use a somewhat grandiloquent phrase, dis-afforested; and the upper end of "the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall" marked out for public instead of Royal occupation. Thus, within a century has risen and disappeared from this spot the splendid abode and its appurtenances; for, it was in the year 1732 that Frederic, Prince of Wales, first purchased the property from the Earl of Burlington; though it was not until 1788 that the erection of Carlton House was commenced for the late King, then Prince of Wales; so that the existence of the Palace must be restricted within forty years—a term reminding us of the duration of a pavilion, rather than of a kingly mansion.

Upon the precise site of the courtyard and part of Carlton House have been erected two mansions, of splendid character, appropriated to the United Service and Athenaeum Clubs: the first built from the designs of Mr. Nash, and the latter from those of Mr. Decimus Burton. They front Pall Mall West, or may be considered to terminate Waterloo Place.

The site of Carlton House Gardens is now occupied by palatial houses, which are disposed in two ranges, and front St. James's Park. The substructure, containing the kitchens and domestic offices, forms a terrace about 50 feet wide, adorned with pillars of the Paestum Doric Order, surmounted with a balustrade. The superstructure consists of three stories, ornamented with Corinthian columns. The houses at each extremity have elevated attics. Only small portions of these superb elevations are shown in the Engraving, with the Athenaeum Club House in the distance.

In the space between the two ranges, it was proposed to erect a fountain, formed of the eight column's of the portico of Carlton House, (which was in elaborate imitation of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, at Rome,¹) to which eight on the same model were to be added. The balustraded terrace had been continued fronting the Park with a view to this embellishment. It however occurred to some guardian of the public weal, that the above space presented an eligible opportunity for a grand public entrance from Pall Mall into the Park. The idea was mooted in Parliament; but some difficulties arose, from the leases already granted to the builders of the houses on the terrace, who had calculated on the *exclusive* appropriation of the latter. The anxiety of the public for the improvement at length reached the present King; and it was the first popular act of his patriotic reign to command a grand

¹ The above columns, with those of the handsome Ionic calonnade which screened the Palace from Pall Mall, are, we believe, the only remains of the building.

triumphal² entrance to be formed, with all possible speed; the difficulties being then easily removed. The necessary portion of the terrace was accordingly removed, and the magnificent approach formed, as shown in the Engraving.

While these improvements were in progress, a monumental memorial had been projected by the British Army to their late commander-in-chief, the Duke of York; an expression of grateful sympathy which must be recorded to the honour of truly British hearts. The funds for this tribute were augmented by each individual of the above branch of the service contributing one day's pay. The design was furnished by Mr. Benjamin Wyatt, the architect of the superb mansion built for the Duke of York; and, after the execution was somewhat advanced, it was resolved to set up the tribute in the place it now occupies.

The monument consists of a plain Doric column, surmounted with a colossal statue of the Duke of York. The pedestal and shaft are of fine granite. The plinth, or base of the pedestal, is 22 feet square, and the pedestal 18 feet; the circumference of the shaft is 11 feet 6 inches, decreasing to 10 feet 2 inches at the top; the abacus is 13 feet 6 inches square. The interior of the column may be ascended by a winding staircase of 169 steps, lit by narrow loop-holes.

From the top stair a doorway opens to the exterior of the abacus, which will be enclosed with a massive iron railing, so as to form a prospect gallery. The iron-work is not yet completed; but, as we have enjoyed the view from two sides of the square, we can vouch for its commanding a fine *coup d'oeil* of the whole metropolis, and certainly the finest view of its most embellished quarter. From this spot alone can the magnificence of Regent-street be duly appreciated, and above all the skill of the architect in effecting the junction of the lines by the classical introduction of the Quadrant.

That part of the structure which is, strictly speaking, upon the abacus of the column, has a domed roof, upon which will be placed the colossal statue, executed in bronze, by Mr. Westmacott. The Duke is represented in a flowing robe, with a sword in his right hand, and in the left, one of the insignia of the Order of the Garter. The height of the figure is 13 feet 6 inches. The total height of the column, exclusive of the statue, is 124 feet. The masonry, (executed by Mr. Nowell, of Pimlico,) deserves especial notice. Its neatness and finish are truly astonishing, and the solidity and massiveness of the material appear calculated "for all time."

We should mention that the embellishment about the upper part of the pedestal (as seen in the cut,) has not yet been placed on the original; nor has the statue yet been raised to the summit of the column.

² The entrance deserves this epithet on more than one account.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

ANCIENT AND MODERN CHRISTMAS

"Anciently there was in the king's house," says Stow, "wheresoever he lodged, at the feast of Christmas, a 'Lord of Misrule, or Master of Merry Disports;' and the like also was there in the house of every nobleman of honour or good worship, whether spiritual or temporal. Among these, the Mayor and Sheriffs of London had their several Lords of Misrule, ever contending, without quarrel or offence, who should make the rarest pastime to divert the beholders. These Lords began their rule, or rather misrule, on All Hallow's-eve, and continued the same until Candlemas-day, in which space there were fine and subtle disguisings, masques, and mummeries, with playing at cards for counters, nails, and points, in every house, more for pastime than for gain. Against this feast, the parish churches and every man's house were decked with holm, ivy, bay, and whatsoever the season of the year afforded that was green; and the conduits and standards in the streets were likewise garnished."

W.G.C

Kent

At Ramsgate they commence their Christmas festivities by the following ceremony:—A party of the youthful portion of the community having procured the head of a horse, it is affixed to a pole, about four feet in length; a string is attached to the lower jaw, a horse-cloth is tied round the extreme part of the head, beneath which one of the party is concealed, who, by repeated pulling and loosening the string, causes the jaw to rise and fall, and thus produces, by bringing the teeth in contact, a snapping noise, as he moves along; the rest of the party following in procession, grotesquely habited, and ringing hand-bells! In this order they proceed from house to house, singing carols and ringing their bells, and are generally remunerated for the amusement they occasion by a largess of money, or beer and cake. This ceremony is called "a hoodening." The figure which we have described is designated "a hooden," or wooden horse. The ceremony prevails in many parts of the Isle of Thanet, and may probably be traced as the relic of some religious ceremony practised in the early ages by our Saxon ancestors.

Norfolk

The following account of a pageant which took place at Christmas, 1440, is from the records of Norwich:—"John Hadman, a wealthy citizen, made disport with his neighbours and friends, and was crowned King of Christmas. He rode in state through the city, dressed forth in silks and tinsel, and preceded by twelve persons habited as the twelve months of the year, their costumes varying to represent the different seasons of the year. Alter King Christmas followed Lent, clothed in white garments trimmed with herring skins, on horseback, the horse being decorated with trappings of oyster-shells, being indicative that sadness and a holy time should follow Christmas revelling. In this way they rode through the city, accompanied by numbers in various grotesque dresses, making disport and merriment,—some clothed in armour, carrying staves, and occasionally engaging in martial combat; others, dressed as devils, chased the people, and sorely affrighted the women and children; others, wearing skin-dresses, and counterfeiting bears, wolves, lions, and other animals, and

endeavouring to imitate the animals they represented, in roaring and raving, alarming the cowardly and appalling the stoutest hearts."

Dalmatia

At Selenico, in Dalmatia, according to Fortis; they elect a king at Christmas, whose reign lasts only a fortnight; but notwithstanding the short duration of his authority, he enjoys several prerogatives of sovereignty: such, for example, as that of keeping the keys of the town, of having a distinguished place in the cathedral, and of deciding upon all the difficulties or disputes which arise among those who compose his court. The town is obliged to provide him with a house suitable to the dignity of his elevated situation. When he leaves his house, he is always compelled to wear a crown of wheat-ears, and he cannot appear in public without a robe of purple or scarlet cloth, and surrounded by a great number of officers. The governor, the bishops, and other dignitaries, are obliged to give him a feast; and all who meet him must salute him with respect. When the fortnight is at an end, the king quits his palace, strips off his crown and purple, dismisses his court, and returns to his hovel. For a length of time this pantomimical king was chosen from amongst the nobles, but at present it has devolved on the lowest of the people.

NEW BOOKS

THE LITERARY SOUVENIR, FOR 1833,

[Is, in our estimation, a splendid failure. It lacks the variety which the *Annual* should possess for a family of readers; and its sameness is, moreover, of the saddest character in the whole region of romance. The stories are long, and lazily told; and they overflow with the most lugubrious monotony. There is scarcely a relief throughout the volume, from Wordsworth's "majestic sonnet" on Sir Walter Scott, to Autumn Flowers, by Agnes Strickland; we travel from one end to the other, and all is lead and leaden—dull, heavy, and sad, as old Burton could wish; and full of moping melancholy, unenlivened by quaintness, or humour of any cast. Not that we mean to condemn the pieces individually; but, collectively, they are too much in the same vein: the Editor has studied too closely his text-motto:

"Fairy tale to lull the heir,
Goblin grim the maids to scare."

It is all shade, without a gleam of sunshine, if we except two or three of the most trifling of the papers. The best tale in the volume is the Marsh Maiden, by Leigh Ritchie; next is the Jacobite Exile and his Hound: Retrospections of Secundus Parnell, are an infliction upon the reader; and these, with two *mediocre* tales, and a sketch or two, make up the prose contents. The poetry has greater merit, though almost in one unvaried strain. Mr. Watts has contributed but one lyric, and Mrs. Watts a stirring ballad of Spanish revenge; Mary Howitt has contributed a fairy ballad, pretty enough; and the Sin of Earl Walter, a tale of olden popish times in England, of some 60 or 70 verses. We quote two specimens from the poetry:]

SONNET ON SIR WALTER SCOTT'S QUITTING ABBOTSFORD FOR NAPLES

By William Wordsworth

A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildun's triple height:
Spirits of Power assembled there complain
For kindred Power departing from their sight;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the might
Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true
Ye winds of ocean and the midland sea,
Wafting your charge to soft Parthenope!

THE SKELETON DANCE

After the German of Goethe

The warder looked out at the mid-hour of night,
Where the grave-hills all silently lay;
The moon-beams above gave so brilliant a light,
That the churchyard was clear as by day:
First one, then another, to open began;
Here came out a woman—there came out a man,—
Each clad in a shroud long and white.

And then for amusement—perchance it was cold—
In a circle they seemed to advance;
The poor and the rich, and the young and the old,—
But the grave-clothes impeded the dance:
And as no person thought about modesty there,
They flung off their garments, and stripped themselves bare,
And a shroud lay on each heap of mould.

They kicked up their heels, and they rattled their bones,
And the horrible din that they made
Went clickety-clackety—just like the tones
Of a castanet noisily played.
And the warder he laughed as he witnessed the cheer,
And he heard the Betrayer speak soft in his ear,
"Go and steal away one of their shrouds."

Swift as thought it was done—in an instant he fled
Behind the church portal to hide;
And brighter and brighter the moon-beam was shed,
As the dance they still shudderingly plied;—
But at last they began to grow tired of their fun,
And they put on their shrouds, and slipped off, one by one,
Beneath, to the homes of the dead.

But tapping at every grave-hill, there staid
One skeleton, tripping behind;
Though not by his comrades the trick had been played—
Now its odour he snuffed in the wind:
He rushed to the door—but fell back with a shock;
For well for the wight of the bell and the clock,
The sign of the cross it displayed.

But the shroud he must have—not a moment he stays;
Ere a man had begun but to think,

On the Gothic-work his fingers quickly he lays,
And climbs up its chain, link by link.
Now woe to the warder—for sure he must die—
To see, like a long-legged spider, draw nigh
The skeleton's clattering form:

And pale was his visage, and thick came his breath;
The garb, alas! why did he touch?
How sick grew his soul as the garment of death
The skeleton caught in his clutch—
The moon disappeared, and the skies changed to dun,
And louder than thunder the church-bell tolled one—
The spectre fell tumbling to bits!

[and one of the prose tales, abridged:]

BEATRICE ADONY AND JULIUS ALVINZI

There is not in all Germany a more pleasant station for a regiment of horse than the city of Salzburch, capital of the province of that name, in the dominions of the House of Austria. Here, during the summer and autumn of 1795, lay the third regiment of Hungarian hussars. This corps had sustained a heavy loss during the campaign of the year previous in Flanders, and was sent into garrison to be recruited and organized anew. Count Zichy, who commanded it, was a noble of the highest rank, of princely fortune, and of lavish expenditure; and being of a cheerful and social turn of mind, he promoted all the amusements of the place, and encouraged the gaiety of his officers.

The scenery around is grand and alpine. The narrow defiles and picturesque valleys are watered by mountain rivers; and, at an easy distance from the city, is the lone lake of Berchtolsgaden, lying beneath a lofty, inaccessible alp, of the most stern and majestic aspect. Need it be told how sweet upon that placid lake sounded the mellow horns of the Hungarian band; and may it not be left to fancy to image out, how these parties, these scenes, and these sensations, gave birth to some abiding, and to very many passing loves.

Among the fair women of Salzburch, the palm of beauty was yielded readily by all to Beatrice Adony, the only daughter of a respected statesman, long favoured at court, and then resident upon a private estate in the neighbourhood. He had retired from public affairs a few years before, when under deep affliction from the loss of a beloved wife; and lived a life of fond parental devotion with this lovely Beatrice, who was the image of her departed mother. He had directed all her studies; and with such judgment, that he had imparted to her character a masculine strength, which elevated her above all the common dangers of that season of life when woman passes forth into society.

The Count Zichy was a relation of Count Adony, and a constant and welcome guest at his mansion; and Beatrice, therefore, attended many and most of the entertainments which the Count and his officers gave to the society of Salzburch during their stay. As she smiled no encouragement upon the attentions which the Count seemed at first disposed to pay her, and as he was a cheerful, manly-hearted creature, and though made of penetrable stuff, by no means a person to lose either appetite, society, or life, for love, he bestowed his gallantries elsewhere. She liked him for this all the better; and gave him, in return, that free-hearted, sisterly friendship, which might be innocently suffered to grow out of their connexion and intimacy.

All the regular, conceited male coquettes were abashed and perplexed by manners so natural, that they could make nothing of her; while those more dangerous, but much to be blamed admirers, who stand apart with sighs and gazes, were baffled and made sad by the silent dignity of eyes serenely bright, that never looked upon their flattering worship with one ray of favour. Such was Beatrice Adony; all the fair girls were fond of her, and proud of her—because she was no one's rival. They looked on her as a being of a higher order; one whose thoughts were chaste as the unsunned Alps. She was admired by them, meditated upon—but never envied.

Most true it was, Beatrice was of another and a higher order. She was "among them, not of them." She took part in those amusements which belong to the customs of her country; and filled that place, and performed those customs, which her station in society demanded, with unaffected ease and grace. But while the trifles and pleasures of the passing day were to her companions everything, they were to her little and unsatisfying. For the last few years of her mother's life, whose habits were meditative and devotional, she had daily listened to the gracious lessons of divine truth, and the closet of Beatrice Adony was hallowed by the Eye that seeth in secret, and that often saw her there upon her knees.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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