VARIOUS

NOTES AND QUERIES, NUMBER 210, NOVEMBER 5, 1853

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Notes and Queries, Number 210, November 5, 1853 / A Medium of Inter-communication for Literary Men, Artists, Antiquaries, Genealogists, etc.:

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Notes

LORD HALIFAX AND MRS. CATHERINE BARTON

Those who have written on the life of Newton have touched with the utmost reserve upon the connexion which existed between his half-niece Catherine Barton, and his friend Charles Montague, who died Earl of Halifax. They seem as if they were afraid that, by going fairly into the matter, they should find

something they would rather not tell. The consequence is, that when a writer at home or abroad, Voltaire or another, hints with a sneer that a pretty niece had more to do with Newton's appointment to the Mint than the theory of gravitation, those who would like to know as much as can be known of the whole truth find nothing in any attainable biography except either total silence or a very awkward and hesitating account of half something.

On looking again into the matter, the juxtaposition of all the circumstances induced in my mind a strong suspicion that Mrs. C. Barton was *privately married* to Lord Halifax, probably before his elevation to the peerage, and that the marriage was no very great secret among their friends. As yet I can but say that the hypothesis of a private marriage is, to me, the most probable of those among which a choice must be made: farther information may be obtained by publication of the case in "N. & Q.," the most appropriate place of deposit for the provisional result of unfinished inquiries.

Charles Montague (born April, 1661, died May 19, 1715) made acquaintance with Newton when both were at Trinity College in 1680 and 1681. Newton was nineteen years older than Montague, and had been twelve years Lucasian professor. At the beginning of their friendship, the Lucasian professor must be called the patron of the young undergraduate, who was looking for a fellowship with the intention of taking orders, a design which he did not find sufficient encouragement to abandon until

after he had sat in the Convention. By 1690, the rising politician had become the patron of the author of the *Principia*, who in that year or the next became an aspirant for public employment. The friendship of Newton and Montague lasted until the death of the latter, interrupted only by a coolness (on Newton's side at least) in 1691, arising out of a suspicion in Newton's mind that Montague was not sincere in his intentions towards his friend.

Catherine Barton (born 1680, died 1739) was the daughter of Robert Barton and Newton's half-sister, Hannah Smith (Baily's *Flamsteed, Supplement*, p. 750.). Lieut.-Col. Barton, usually called her husband, was her brother. The pedigrees published by Turnor recognise this fact: Swift distinctly states it, and Rigaud proves it in various ways in letters to Baily, which lately passed through my hands on their way to the Observatory at Greenwich. The mistake ought never to have been made, for *Mrs. C. Barton* (as she was usually denominated) must, according to usage, have been reputed single so long as her Christian name was introduced.

Mrs. C. Barton married Mr. Conduitt, then or afterwards Newton's assistant, and his successor: this marriage probably took place in 1718, the year in which Newton introduced Conduitt into the Royal Society. Among the Turnor memorials of Newton, now in possession of the Royal Society, is a watch leaving the inscription "Mrs. C. Conduitt to Sir Isaac Newton, January, 1708." This date cannot be correct, for Swift in 1710, Halifax in 1712, Flamsteed in 1715, and Monmort in 1716, call

her Barton: all but Flamsteed were intimate acquaintances. Any one who looks at the inscription will see that it is not as old as the watch: it is neither ornamented nor placed in a shield or other envelope, while the case is beautifully chased, and has an elaborate design, representing Fame and Britannia examining the portrait of Newton. Moreover, "Mrs. Conduitt" would never have described herself as "Mrs. C. Conduitt."

Montague was not, so far as usual accounts state, what even in our day would be called a libertine. He married the Countess of Manchester (the widow of a relative) before his entry into public life, and was deeply occupied in party politics and fiscal administration. I am told that Davenant impugns his morals: this may be the exception which proves the rule; some of the lampoons directed against the Whig minister are preserved, and these do not attack his private character in the matter under allusion, so far as I can learn.

All the cotemporary evidence yet adduced as to the relation between Lord Halifax and Catherine Barton, is contained in one sentence in the *Life* of the former, two codicils of his will, and one allusion of Flamsteed's. The *Life*, with the will attached, was appended to two different publications of the works of Halifax, in 1715 and 1716. The passage from the *Life* is as follows (p. 195.):

> "I am likewise to account for another Omission in the Course of this History, which is that of the Death of the Lord *Halifax's* Lady; upon whose Decease his Lordship

> took a Resolution of living single thence forward, and cast his Eye upon the Widow of one Colonel *Barton*, and Neice to the famous Sir *Isaac Newton*, to be Super-intendent of his domestick Affairs. But as this Lady was young, beautiful, and gay, so those that were given to censure, pass'd a Judgment upon her which she no Ways merited, since she was a Woman of strict Honour and Virtue; and tho' she might be agreeable to his Lordship in every Particular, that noble Peer's Complaisance to her, proceeded wholly from the great Esteem he had for her Wit and most exquisite Understanding, as will appear from what relates to her in his Will at the Close of these Memoirs."

This sentence is an insertion (the *first* omission is as far back as p. 64.). It speaks of Mrs. C. Barton as if she were dead: and it is worthy of note that this lady, who lived to communicate to Fontenelle materials for his *éloge* of Newton, had excellent opportunity, had it pleased her, to have contradicted or varied any part of the account given by Halifax's biographer; and this without appearing. The actual communication made to Fontenelle by her husband, Mr. Conduitt, is in existence, and was printed by Mr. Turnor; it contains no allusion to the subject. Farther, it appears by the biographer's account that she had passed as a widow, which is not to be wondered at: the *Colonel* Barton who was the son of circumstances, must have been created before her brother (who died in 1711) attained such rank, perhaps before he entered the army at all.

The will gives very different evidence from that for which it is

subpœnaed: it is dated April 10, 1706. In the first codicil (dated April 12, 1706) Lord Halifax leaves Mrs. Barton all his jewels and 3000*l.* "as a small token," he says, "of the great love and affection I have long had for her." In a second codicil (dated February 1, 1712) the first codicil is revoked, and the bequest is augmented to 5000*l.*, the rangership, lodge, and household furniture of Bushey Park, and the manor of Apscourt, for her life. These are given, says Lord Halifax, "as a token of the sincere love, affection, and esteem, I have long had for her person, and as a small recompense for the pleasure and happiness I have had in her conversation." In this same codicil "Mrs. Catherine Barton" is described as Newton's niece, and 100*l.* is left to Newton "as a mark of the great honour and esteem I have for so great a man." The concluding sentence of the codicil is as follows:

> "And I strictly charge and command my executor to give all aid, help, and assistance to her in possessing and enjoying what I have hereby given her; and also in doing any act or acts necessary to transfer her an annuity of two hundred pounds *per annum*, purchased in Sir Isaac Newton's name, which I hold for her in trust, as appears by a declaration of trust in that behalf."

This codicil immediately became the subject of remark, and the terms of it seem to have been understood as they would be now. Flamsteed, writing in July, 1715 (Halifax died in May), says:

> "If common fame be true, he died worth 150,000*l.*; out

> of which he gave Mrs. Barton, Sir I. Newton's niece, for her *excellent conversation* [the Italics are Baily's, the original, I suppose, underlined], a curious house, 5000*l.* with lands, jewels, plate, money, and household furniture, to the value of 20,000*l.* or more."

I pay no attention to the statement that (*Biogr. Brit.*, Montague, note BB.) Lord Halifax was disappointed in a second marriage. It amounts only to this, that Lord Shaftsbury, having a certain lady in his heart and in his eye, was afraid he had a rival, and described the person talked of in terms which make it pretty certain that Halifax was intended. But it by no means follows that because a certain person is "talked of" for a lady, and a lover put in fear by the rumour, the person is really a rival: and not even a biographer would have shown himself so unfit for a novelist as to have drawn such a conclusion, unless he had been biassed by the wish to show that Halifax was attached to another than Mrs. Barton.

It must of course be supposed that the introduction of Montague to Newton's niece was a consequence of his acquaintance with Newton, and took place in or near 1696, when Newton came to London, where his niece soon began to reside with him. And since, in 1706, the connexion, whatever it was, had been of long standing, we may infer that it had probably commenced in 1700. The case is then as follows. Montague received into his house, as "superintendent of his domestic affairs" after the death of his wife, the niece of his old and revered friend Newton, a conspicuous officer of the crown,

a member of Parliament, and otherwise one of the most famous men living. This niece had been partly educated by Newton; she had lived in his house; we know of no other protector that she could have had, in London; and the supposition that she left any roof except Newton's to take shelter under that of Montague, would be purely gratuitous. She was unmarried, beautiful, and gay; and probably not so much as, certainly not much more then, twenty years old. A handsome annuity was bought for her in Newton's name, and held in trust by Halifax: if it had been bought *by Newton*, Conduitt would have mentioned it in his list of the benefactions which Newton's relatives received from him, especially after the publicity which it had obtained from Halifax's will. That she did not tenant the housekeeper's room while the friends of Halifax were round his table, may be inferred from the epigrams, poor as they are, which were made in her honour as a celebrated beauty and wit, in a collection of verses (reprinted in Dryden's *Miscellanies*) on the best known toasts of the day. Halifax bequeathed her a provision which might have suited his widow, in terms which must have been intended to show that she had been either his wife or his mistress; while in the same document he brought prominently forward his respect for Newton, the fact of her being Newton's niece, and the annuity which he had bought for her in Newton's name. An uncontradicted paragraph in the life of Halifax, published immediately after the will, and evidently not intended to bring forward any fact not perfectly well known, records her residence

in the house of that nobleman and the consequent rumours concerning her character, affirms that she was a virtuous woman, and refers to the will to prove it: though the will denies it in the plainest English, on any supposition except that of a private marriage. Finally, the lady married a respectable man after the death of Lord Halifax, and lived with him in the house of her illustrious uncle.

That she was either the wife or the mistress of Halifax, I take to be established; it is the natural conclusion from the facts above stated, all made public during her life, all left uncontradicted by herself, by her husband, by her daughter, by Lord Lymington her son-in-law, and by the uncle who had stood to her in the place of a father. It is impossible that Newton could have been ignorant that his niece was living in Montague's house, enjoyed an annuity bought in his own name, and was regarded by the world as the mistress of his friend and political patron. The language of the codicil shows that, be the nature of the connexion what it might, Halifax meant to tell the world that it might be proclaimed in all its relation to the name of Newton. To those who cannot, under all the circumstances, believe the connexion to have been what is called platonic, the probability that there was a private marriage is precisely the probability that Newton would not have sanctioned the dishonour of his own niece: and even if the connexion were only that of friendship, Newton must have sanctioned the appearance and the forms of a dishonourable intimacy: the co-habitation, the settlement, and the defiance of

opinion. Now there is no reason to suppose of Newton that he would be a party to either proceeding, which would not apply as well to any man then alive: to Locke, for instance. Looking at the morals of the day, we are by no means justified in throwing off at once, with disgust, the bare idea of the possibility of a distinguished philosopher consenting to an illicit intercourse between his friend and his niece: we are bound, in discussing probabilities, to distinguish 1850 from 1700. But, even putting out of view the purity of Newton's private life, and of the lives of his most intimate friends, there is that in the weaker part of his character which is of itself almost conclusive. Right or wrong, Newton never faced opinion. As soon as he found that publication involved opposition, from that time forward he published only with the utmost reluctance, and under the strongest persuasions; except when, as in the case of some of his theological writings, he confided the manuscript to a friend, to be anonymously published abroad. The *Principia* was extorted from him by the Royal Society; the first publication on fluxions was under the name of Wallis; the *Optics* were delayed until the death of Hooke; the first appearance against Leibnitz was anonymous; the second originated in a hint from the King. This morbid fear, which is often represented as modesty, would have made him, had he acted a part with regard to his niece which he could not avow, conduct it with the utmost reserve. The philosopher who would have let the theory of gravitation die in silence rather than encounter the opposition which a discovery almost always

creates, would not have allowed his *name* to be connected with the annuity which was the price of his niece's honour, or which carried all the appearance of it, even supposing him base enough to have connived at the purchase. And in such a case, Halifax would have taken care to respect the secrecy which he would have known to have been essential to Newton's comfort: he would not have published to the world that his mistress was Newton's niece, and that Newton was a party to a settlement upon her. There seems to me, about the codicil as it stands, a declaration that the connexion with Newton's niece was such as, if people knew all, Newton might have sanctioned. And the supposition of a private marriage, generally understood among the friends of the parties, seems to me to make all the circumstances take an air of likelihood which no other hypothesis will give them: and this is all my conclusion.

If there were a marriage, the most probable reason for the concealment was, that it was contracted at a time when the birth and station of Mrs. Barton would have rendered her production at court as the wife of Montague an impediment to his career. He was raised to the peerage in 1700, and as the connexion was of long standing in 1706, it may well be supposed that it commenced at the time when (in his own opinion at least) his prospects of such elevation might have been compromised by a decided misalliance. The lower the tone of morals, the greater the ridicule which attaches to unequal *marriages*. Montague, though of noble family, was the younger son of a younger son,

and not rich: it was common among the Tories to sneer at him as a *parvenu*. He had made his first appearance in the great world as the husband of a countess-dowager, and it may be that the *parvenu* was weak enough to shrink from producing, as his second wife, a woman of very much lower rank, the granddaughter of a country clergyman, and the daughter of a man of no pretension to station. That Mr. Macaulay has not underrated the position of the country clergy, is known to all who have dipped into the writings of the seventeenth century. It is not, however, necessary to explain why the supposed marriage should have been private. As the world is constituted, no rules of inference can be laid down in reference to the irregular relations of the sexes.

With reference to the insinuation that Newton owed his official position rather to his niece than to his ability, it can be completely shown that, on the worst possible supposition, the office in the Mint could have had nothing to do with Mrs. C. Barton. Newton was appointed to the lower office (the *Wardenship*) in March, 1695-96, when the young lady was not sixteen years old, and before she could have been a resident under her uncle's roof. The state of the coinage had caused much uneasiness; it was one of the difficulties, and its restoration was one of the successes, of the day. The best scientific advice was taken: Locke, Newton, and Halley were consulted, and all were placed in office nearly at the same time; Newton in the London Mint, Halley in the Chester Mint, Locke in the

Council of Trade. Neither Locke nor Halley had any nieces. Before Newton's appointment there was some negociation of a public character: the Wardenship was not vacant, and the government seems to have tried to induce Newton to take something subordinate. March 14, Newton wrote to Halley, in reference to a current rumour,—"I neither put in for any place in the Mint, nor would meddle with Mr. Hoar's [the comptroller's] place, were it offered me." On the 19th, Montague informs Newton that he is to have the *Wardenship*, vacant by the removal of Mr. Overton to the Customs. Four years afterwards, when the great operation on the coinage, by many declared impracticable, had completely succeeded, Newton, a principal adviser and the principal administrator, obtained the Mastership in the course of promotion. Montague was raised to the peerage in the following year, and mainly, as the patent states, for the same service. So that, though Montague was the patron as to the Wardenship, yet scientific assistance was then so sorely needed, that no hypothesis relative to any niece would be necessary to explain the phenomenon of Newton's appointment: while, as to the Mastership it may almost be said that Montague was more indebted to Newton for his peerage, than Newton to Montague for that promotion which any minister must, under the circumstances, have granted.

In no account of Newton that I ever read is it stated that Mrs. Barton was an intimate friend of Swift, probably through Halifax. Having been told that there is frequent mention of her in

Swift's *Journal to Stella*, I examined that series and the rest of the correspondence, in which her name occurs about twenty times. One letter from herself, under the name of Conduitt (November 29, 1733), is indorsed by the Dean, "My old friend Mrs. Barton, now Mrs. Conduitt," and establishes the identity of Swift's friend with Newton's niece: otherwise, it proves nothing here. The other points to be noticed are as follows.

1710, September 28, November 30, March 7; 1711, April 3, July 18, October 14 and 25, Swift visited or dined with Mrs. Barton at her *lodgings*. He was also at this time on good terms with Halifax, and dined with him November 28, 1710, and with Mrs. Barton on November 30. According to the idiom of the day, *lodgings* was a name for every kind of residence, and even for the apartments of a guest in the house of his host. For anything to the contrary in the mere word, the lodgings might have been in the house of Lord Halifax, or of Newton himself. But, on the other hand, the future Dean, much as he writes to Stella of every kind of small talk, never mentions Halifax and Mrs. Barton together, never makes the slightest allusion to either in connexion with the other, though in one and the same letter he minutes his having dined with Halifax on the 28th, and with Mrs. Barton on the 30th. There must have been intentional suppression in this. All the world knew that there was some *liaison* between the two; yet when Swift (1711, Nov. 20) records his having been "teased with whiggish discourse" by Mrs. Barton, he does not even drop a sarcasm about her politics having been learnt

from Halifax. This is the more remarkable as the two seem to have been almost the only persons who are mentioned as talking whiggery to him. To this list, however, may be added Lady Betty Germain, well known to the readers of Swift's poetry, who joined Mrs. Barton in inflicting the vexation, and at whose house the conversation took place. It thus appears that Mrs. Barton was received in a manner which shows that she was regarded as a respectable woman. The suppression on the part of Swift may indicate respect for his two friends (that he highly respected Mrs. Barton appears clear), and observance of a convention established in their circle. But perhaps it is rather to be attributed to his own position with respect to Stella, which was certainly peculiar, though no one can say what their understanding was at the date of the journal. This journal came again into Swift's hands before it was published; so that we can only treat it as containing what he finally chose to preserve. Allusions may have been struck out.

There is another point which our modern manners will not allow to be very closely handled in print, but on which I am disposed to lay some stress. On September 28, 1710, and April 3, 1711, Swift visited Mrs. Barton at her lodgings. On each of these occasions she regaled him with a good story, which there is no need to repeat: there is no harm in either, and they are far from being the most singular communications which he made to Stella; but they go beyond what, even in that day, will be considered as the probable conversation of a maiden lady of thirty-one, with a

bachelor man of the world of forty-three. But they by no means exceed what we know to be the license then taken by married women; and Swift's tone with respect to the stories, combined with his obvious respect for Mrs. Barton, may make any one lean to the supposition that he believed himself to be talking to a married woman.

The reserve of Swift puts us quite at fault as to the locality of Mrs. Barton's *lodgings*. They may have been in Lord Halifax's house; but if not, it requires some supposition to explain why they were not in that of Newton, with whom she had lived, and with whom she certainly lived after the death of Halifax. Perhaps, when farther research is made in such directions as may be indicated by the only unreserved statement of the existing case which has ever been printed, the conclusion I arrive at, as to me the *most probable*, may either be reinforced, or another substituted for it. Be this as it may, such points as I have discussed, relating to such men as Newton, will not remain in abeyance for ever, let biographers be as timid as they will.

A. De Morgan.

DR. PARR ON MILTON

Amongst my autographs I find the inclosed letter frown Dr. Parr. It is written upon a half-sheet of paper, and in a very cramp and illegible hand. To whom it is addressed, or when written, I am unable to say. As it relates to the opinions held by Milton, perhaps you may think it worth insertion in your work, particularly as Milton has been the subject of some papers in "N. & Q." lately.

W. M. F.

Copy of Letter from Dr. Parr, without date or address

Dear Sir,

I send you Johnson's *Life of Milton*. My former feelings again return upon me, that Johnson did not mean to affirm that Milton prayed not upon any occasion or in any manner; but that he was engaged in no visible worship; that he prayed at no stated time; that he had not what we may call any regular return of family or private devotion. Pray read the sequel. That he lived without prayer can hardly be affirmed, this surely is decided in my favour: it may wear the appearance of contradiction to the former passage, that omitting public prayer he omitted all; in truth, the

expression just quoted is too peremptory and too general. But the sense of Johnson cannot be mistaken, if you attend to the different views he had in each sentence; and I repeat my former assertion, that Johnson did not think Milton destitute of a devout spirit, or totally negligent of prayer in some form or other.

Yours, very truly and respectfully,

J. Parr.

PARTS OF MSS

As an instance of the unfortunate dispersion of the parts of valuable MSS. through different countries, occasioned probably, in the case now to be mentioned, by public convulsions and the wild fury of revolutionary mobs in France, will you afford me space to quote an interesting description of a MS. from the catalogue of a library to be sold at Paris in December next? The MSS. and printed books in this library belonged to the eminent bookseller J. J. De Bure, whose ancestor was the distinguished and well-known bibliographer Guillaume de Bure. The publicity given to descriptions like the present through the medium of "N. & Q." may ultimately lead, on some occasions, to the scattered volumes being brought together again, either by way of purchase, or in exchange for other works.

John Macray.

Oxford.

"Catalogue des Livres rares et précieux, manuscrits et imprimés, de la Bibliothèque de feu M. J. J. De Bure, ancien libraire du Roi et de la Bibliothèque Royale, etc.

"No. 1395. Le Second Livre des Commentaires de la Guerre Gallèque, par Caius Julius Cæsar, traduict en françois. In-8, mar. noir, avec des fermoirs en argent.

"Manuscrit sur vélin.

"L'ouvrage ne porte pas de titre; on lit seulement sur

le plat du volume, Tomus Secundus, et au verso du 21 feuillet; c'y commence le Second livre des Commentaires de la Guerre Gallèque.

"Ce manuscrit a été fait pour François I^{er}; le chiffre de ce Prince se trouve au premier feuillet. Le Vol. se compose de 94 feuillets de texte, et de 4 feuillets de table. L'Ecriture est très-belle, et paraît être de l'un des meilleurs calligraphes de l'époque de Francois I^{er}; beaucoup de mots sont en or et en azur.

"On remarque 22 miniatures, 15 médaillons d'Empereurs et d'autres personnages Romains, 12 figures d'engins ou machines de guerre, et 2 fleurons; en tout 58 peintures.

"Ce n'est point, à proprement parler, une traduction des Commentaires. L'auteur suppose, dans le préambule de cette partie de l'ouvrage, que Francis I^{er} au *Commencement du Moys d'Auguste, l'an 1519, allant courir le cerf en la fourest de Byevre, y fait la rencontre de César*.

"De là, il établit un dialogue entre les deux personnages. François I^{er} s'enquiert des circonstances de la guerre des Gaules, et César lui en donne les détails tels qu'ils out été écrits par lui-même.

"On ne présente malheureusement ici qu'un Tome ii. Le Tome i. est au Musée Britannique: on le trouve indiqué sous le No. 6205. dans le *Catalogue of the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum*, London, 1808, Tome iii. in folio. Ce Tome i. est décrit dans l'ouvrage de M. Waagen, *Kunstwerke and Künstler in England und Paris*, Berlin, 1837, Tome i. p. 148.

"Le Tome iii. était à vendre dans ces dernières années, au prix de 3000 francs, chez M. Techener (*Bulletin du Bibliophile*, année 1850, No. 1222. et p. 910.); nous ne savons où il est actuellement.

"Notre volume est le plus précieux des trois. Il l'emporte sur les deux autres par le nombre des peintures (le Tome i. n'en a que 14, et le Tome iii. seulement 12) et par l'intérêt qu'offrent ces peintures elles-mêmes.

"La première, charmante miniature en camaïeu gris et or, représente François I^{er} à cheval, courant le cerf; la dernière montre la prise du cerf.

"Parmi les autres sujets, également traités en grisaille, on remarque plusieurs batailles entre les Romains et les Gaulois, rendues dans leurs divers détails avec une finesse admirable d'exécution. Mais ce qui, par-dessus tout, donne un prix infini à ce manuscrit, ce sont sept portraits, en médaillons, qui reproduisent les traits de quelques hommes de guerre du temps de François I^{er}. Ils sont peints avec une vérité et une délicatesse vraiment merveilleuses; des noms Romains, qui figurent dans les Commentaries de César, sont écrits à côté des portraits; les noms véritables ont été tracées au-dessous, mais un peu plus tard, et par une main différente. Voici ces noms:—

"1^{o}. *Quintus Pedius*, le grand-maistre de Boisy, âgé de 41 ans; 2^{o}. *le Fiable Divitiacus d'Autun*, l'Amiral de Boisy, Seigneur de Bonivet, âgé de 34 ans; 3^{o}. *Quintus Titurius Sabinus*, Odet de Fones (Foix), Sieur de Lautrec, âgé de 41 ans; 4^{o}. *Iccius*, le Mareschal de Chabanes,

Seigneur de la Palice, âgé de 57 ans; 5°. *Lucius Arunculeius Cotta*, Anne de Montmorency, âgé de 22 ans, et depuis Connestable de France; 6°. *Publ. Sextius Baculus*, le Mareschal de Fleuranges, Seigneur de la Marche (Mark), premier Seigneur de Sédan, âgé de 24 ans; 7°. *Publius Crassus*, le Sieur de Tournon, qui fust tué à la bataille de Pavie, âgé de 36 ans.

"La plupart des miniatures du volume sont signées G., 1519. La perfection qui les distingue les avait d'abord fait attribuer au célèbre miniaturiste *Guilo Clovio*; maintenant on croit pouvoir affirmer qu'elles appartiennent à un peintre nommé Godefroy. Il se trouve à la bibliothèque de l'Arsenal une traduction française des Triomphes de Pétrarque, avec des miniatures qui sont incontestablement de la même main et de la même époque. Or, l'une de ces miniatures est signée *Godefroy*.

"On peut voir le rapprochement que fait entre les deux manuscrits M. Waagen, dans l'ouvrage cité ci-dessus, Tome iii. p. 395. Il ne saurait, du reste, y avoir aucun doute sur le nom de l'artiste, lorsqu'on lit dans le *Bulletin du Bibliophile* (pages déjà citées) que plusieurs des miniatures du Tome iii. sont signées *Godofredi pictoris*, 1520.

"Ce précieux manuscrit ne sera pas vendu; il a été légué par M. de Bure au département des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale."

WILLIAM BLAKE

(*Continued from* **p. 71.**)

I venture to send you another Note regarding William Blake, claiming for that humble individual the honour of being the pioneer in the establishment of charity-schools in Britain, from which department of our social system who can calculate the benefits accrued, and constantly accruing, to this country!

We look in vain through the *Silver Drops* of William Blake for any record of an existing institution, such as he would have his "noble ladies" rear at Highgate. Among the many incentives he uses to prompt the charitable, we do not find him holding up for their example any model (unless it be "Old Sutton's brave hospital"); in all his amusing "Charity-school Sticks," his tone is that of a man trying to persuade people that the thing he proposes is feasible. "Some of them," says the sanguine Blake, "have scarce faith enough to believe in the success of this great and good design. Nay, your brother Cornish himself," continues he, in addressing one of his ladies, although full of good works, "would have persuaded me to lay it down" upon the ground of its impracticability. The language of Blake is everywhere advocating this "*new* way of charity." "If it be *new*," says he to an objector, "the more's the pity;" and, with reference to the

possibility of failure, he would thus shame them into liberality. Speaking of his "fine, handsome, and well cloathed boys; not too fine, because they are the ladies'!" our enthusiast adds to this *soft sawdur*:

> "But now, if a year or two hence they should be grown, which God forbid! poor ragged, half-starved, and no cloaths, country folks would say, who ride or go that way, Were there not good ladies enough in and about London to maintain *one* little school?"

Here then is *primâ facie* evidence, I think, that my subject, poor crazy William Blake, was the originator of one of the greatest social improvements of modern times.

The charity-school movement had obtained a strong hold upon the public mind early in the past century; but although I have sought for the name of Blake through many books professing to give an account of the early history of such institutions, I have not yet met with the slightest allusion to him, his school, or his *Silver Drops*.

The superficial inquirer into the history of English charity-schools will be told that the honour of the first erecting such, and caring for destitute children, is popularly considered due to the parishes of St. Botulph, Aldgate, and St. Margaret's, Westminster: and if he would farther satisfy himself upon that point, he will see it claimed by the first named; a slab in front of their schools, adjoining the Royal Mint, bearing an inscription to the purport that it was the first Protestant charity-school, erected

by voluntary contributions in 1693.

If it comes to the earliest London school for poor children, perhaps the Catholics take the lead; for we find that it was part of the tactics of the Jesuits, in the reign of James II., to promote their design of subverting the Protestant religion by infusing their Romish tenets into the minds of the children of the poor by providing schools for them in the Savoy and Westminster.

Blake says, with reference to this movement:

> "That the scheme he was engaged upon was a good work, because it will in some measure stop the mouths of Papists, who are prone to say, Where are your works, and how few are your hospitals, and how small is your charity, notwithstanding your great preaching?"

A remarkable little book, and a very fit companion for the *Silver Drops* of William Blake, to which it bears a striking similarity, is the *Pietas Hallensis* of Dr. Franck. In this, the German divine relates, in a style which bears more than an accidental resemblance to the work of the Covent Garden Philanthropist, how, little by little, by importunity and perseverance, he nursed his own charitable plans, of a like kind, into full life and vigour; and both Drs. Woodward and Kennett endorse and command the "miraculous footsteps of Divine Providence" in the labours of Dr. Franck. "Could we," says Dr. Kennett, "trace the obscurer footsteps of our own charity-schools, the finger of God would be as evidently in them." Why the Bishop of Peterborough should be ignorant of these

earlier efforts to the same end in his own country, is somewhat marvellous. Franck began his charitable work at Glaucha in 1698; while Blake was labouring to establish his Highgate School in 1685. That Franck should know nothing about our pioneer in charitable education, is probable enough; but that the English divines I have mentioned, with Wodrow, Gillies, and a host of others, should be unaware that the proceedings at Halle were only the counterpart of those done fourteen years before by Blake in their own land, is certainly surprising, and affords another proof of the proneness of Britons to extol everything foreign to the neglect of what is native and at their own doors.

Perhaps some of your readers will think I over-estimate the importance of the question, whether the charity-school movement is of British or foreign growth; or whether the honour of its application to the poor (for all *charity*-schools are not for such) belongs to my subject William Blake, or some other philanthropic individual; if such there be, let them repair to our Metropolitan Cathedral on the day of the annual assemblage of the London charity children: and if, on contemplating the spectacle which will there meet their eye, they do not think it an object of interest to discover who, as Dr. Kennett says, "first cast in the *salt* at the fountain-head to heal the *waters*, and broke the ground that was before barren," I pity them.

In concocting this Note, I have had before me the following:

1. Lysons's *Environs of London*, 1795, where will be found a short notice of Blake. The author, following Gough, makes my

subject a madman, and says his scheme "failed after laying out 5000*l.* upon it."

2. *Sermon preached for Charity-schools*, by Dr. Kennett, 1706.

3. *Sermons of Dr. Smalridge and T. Yulden*, 1710 and 1728. These divines give the precedence to Westminster School, "erected 1688."

4. *Wodrow's Letters*, edited by Dr. M^{c}Crie, 3 vols., Edin. 1843.

5. *Pietas Hallensis*: or an Abstract of the Marvellous Footsteps of Divine Providence, in the building of a very large Hospital, or rather a Spacious College, for Charitable and Excellent Uses; and in the maintaining of many Orphans, and other Poor People therein at Glaucha, near Halle in Prussia, related by the Rev. A. H. Franck, 3 parts, 12mo., London, 1707-16. Let the curious reader compare this with Blake's book.

J. O.

FOLK LORE

Legends of the County Clare.—About nine miles westward from the town of Ennis, in the midst of some of the wildest scenery in Ireland, lies the small but very beautiful Lake of Inchiquin, famous throughout the neighbouring country for its red trout, and for being in winter the haunt of almost all the various kinds of waterfowl, including the wild swan, that are to be found in Ireland, while the woods that border one of its sides are amply stocked with woodcocks. At one extremity of the lake are the ruins of the Castle of Inchiquin, part of which is built on a rock projecting into the lake, there about one hundred feet deep, and this legend is related of the old castle:—Once upon a time, the chieftain of the Quins, whose stronghold it was, found in one of the caves (many of which are in the limestone hills that surround the lake) a lady of great beauty, fast asleep. While gazing on her in rapt admiration she awoke, and, according to the customs of the Heroic Age, soon consented to become his bride, merely stipulating that no one bearing the name of O'Brien should be allowed to enter the castle gate: this being agreed to, the wedding was celebrated with all due pomp, and in process of time one lovely boy blessed their union. Among the other rejoicings at the birth of an heir to the chief of the clan, a grand hunting-match took place, and the chase having terminated near the castle, the chieftain, as in duty bound,

requested the assembled nobles to partake of his hospitality. To this a ready assent was given, and the chiefs were ushered into the great hall with all becoming state; and then for the first time did their host discover that one bearing the forbidden name was among them The banquet was served, and now the absence of the lady of the castle alone delayed the onslaught on the good things spread before them. Surprised and half afraid at her absence, her husband sought her chamber: on entering, he saw her sitting pensively with her child at the window which overlooked the lake; raising her head as he approached, he saw she was weeping, and as he advanced towards her with words of apology for having broken his promise, she sprang through the window with her child into the lake. The wretched man rushed forward with a cry of horror: for one moment he saw her gliding over the waters, now fearfully disturbed, chanting a wild dirge, and then, with a mingled look of grief and reproach, she disappeared for ever! And the castle and the lordship, with many a broad acre besides, passed from the Quins, and are now the property of the O'Briens to this day; and while the rest of the castle is little better than a heap of ruins, the fatal window still remains nearly as perfect as when the lady sprang through it, an irrefragable proof of the truth of the legend in the eyes of the peasantry.

Francis Robert Davies.

The Seven Whisperers.—I have been informed by an old and trustworthy servant that about twenty years ago, as he was walking one clear starlight night with two other persons, they

heard, for the space of several minutes, high up in the air, beautiful sounds like music, which gradually died away towards the north. He spoke of it as an occurrence not very uncommon, and said it was always called "The Seven Whisperers." On inquiry I found the name well known amongst the poorer classes.

Is it not an electrical phenomenon?

Metaouo.

Essex.

ITALIAN-ENGLISH, GERMAN-ENGLISH, AND THE REFUGEE STYLE

(Vol. vii., p. 149.)

Every one has admired the odd bits of Italian-English which "N. & Q." lately published, a true philological curiosity. Such queer medleys have been the result whenever two opposite idioms have been thrown together and unskilfully stirred up. Very few foreigners indeed, Sclavonic nations being excepted, and particularly the Russians, write French tolerably well. The present Lord Mahon and Lady Montaigne, in an excellent *Essay on Marriage*, are exceptions to the rule. Voltaire used to say,—

> "Faites tous vos vers à Paris;
> Et n'allez pas en Allemagne!"

And very right he was. His kingly disciple committed more than once such Irish rhymes as these:

> "Je vais cueillir dans leurs sentiers (des Muses)
> De fraîches et charmantes roses;
> Et je dédaigne les lauriers,

En exceptant les lauriers *sauces*."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.