

**Biography of the blind: including the lives of all who have distinguished themselves as poets, philosophers, artists &c; / By James Wilson.**

**Contributors**

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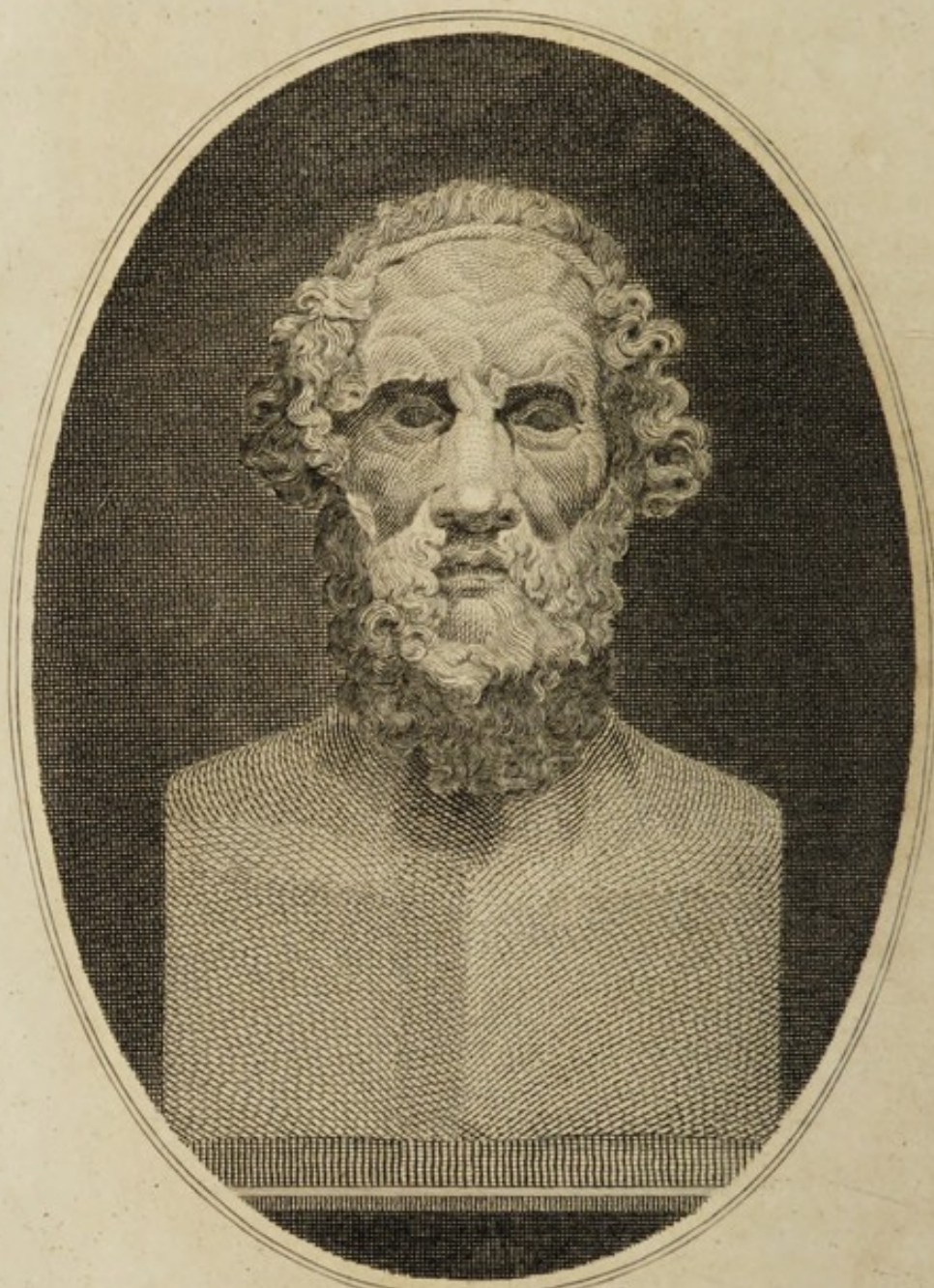
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*W. Radclyffe, sc. Birmingham*

HOMER.

BIOGRAPHY  
OF  
THE BLIND:  
INCLUDING THE  
LIVES OF ALL WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED  
THEMSELVES AS  
POETS, PHILOSOPHERS, ARTISTS,  
&c. &c.

BY JAMES WILSON,  
WHO HAS BEEN BLIND FROM HIS INFANCY.

SECOND EDITION.

---

“ But not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of ev’n or morn;  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer’s rose;  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
Presented with an universal blank.”

---

BIRMINGHAM:  
PRINTED BY J. W. SHOWELL, 46, NEW-STREET,  
AND SOLD ONLY BY THE AUTHOR.

1833.







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## TO THE READER.

WHEN perusing the productions of the Philosopher, the Divine, or the Biographer, there is no inquiry more natural to the human mind, whether ignorant, or intelligent, than, "who is the Author of this production." If, therefore, a memoir of the writer accompanies a pleasing, or interesting work, the account is read with avidity; and although, there be nothing extraordinary in the narrative,—nothing in which the individual is peculiarly distinguished from his contemporaries, yet, the outlines of his life, are calculated to gratify the curiosity which his works have excited.

I have not the vanity, however, to suppose, that any of my readers will have their curiosity so strongly excited in relation to the Author, or rather compiler, of the succeeding articles, neither do I vainly imagine that they would sustain an irreparable loss, by remaining ignorant of the particulars that are to follow. No, but as it is pleasing to a rational mind, to contemplate the footsteps of an all-directing Providence, to trace the progress of the human mind, in various relations, and to get acquainted with the actions of individuals, who have laboured under great difficulties, so the present memoir is presented to the reader, as distinguished by these features, as



a simple unvarnished tale, and as calculated to awaken those sentiments which are common to the peasant, and to the philosopher.

Persuaded from the kind encouragement I have experienced, that this narrative will fall into the hands of many of my most distinguished and disinterested friends, I would consider myself ungrateful, should I not declare, that no length of time, no change of circumstances, shall ever be able to efface from my memory, those pleasing recollections of unmerited kindness, so long experienced; recollections which are stamped in indelible characters upon my heart.

JAMES WILSON.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE branch of Biography which the following pages contain, has not until now been entered on as a distinct subject. In all preceding works, the lives of the blind have been classed and confounded with those of others; and though individuals have been pointed out as objects of admiration and astonishment, yet, no work has appeared in which they have been considered, in a proper point of view, as a class of men seemingly separated from society, cut off, as it were, from the whole visible world, deprived of the most perceptive powers that man can possess; yet, in whom perseverance, industry, and reflection, have, in many instances, overcome all those difficulties which would have been thought insurmountable had not experience proved the contrary.

In the pursuit of knowledge, the blind have been very successful, and many of them have acquired the first literary honours, that their own, or foreign universities could confer. In the different branches of philosophy, if they have not excelled, they have been equal to many of their contemporaries; but more particularly in the science of mathematics, many of them having been able to solve the most abstruse problems in algebra. In poetry, they have been equally distinguished. Two of the greatest men that ever



courted the muses, laboured under the deprivation of sight—Homer, the venerable father of epic poetry, and the inimitable author of *Paradise Lost*. These two illustrious bards will live in the minds of every true lover of poetry, as long as learning and learned men shall have a place in the page of history. In philosophy, Saunderson and Euler appear in the most conspicuous point of view;—the former lost his sight when only twelve months old, but was enabled by the strength of his comprehensive genius to delineate the phenomena of the rainbow, with all the variegated beauty of colours, and to clear up several dark and mysterious passages, which appeared in Newton's *Principia*; and though the latter did not lose his sight until he arrived at the years of manhood, yet, from that period, he was able to astonish the world by his labours in the rich fields of science where he earned those laurels which still continue to flourish in unfaded bloom. He had the honour of settling that dispute which had so long divided the opinions of the philosophers of Europe, respecting the Newtonian and Cartesian systems, by deciding in favour of Newton, to the satisfaction of all parties. The treasures of his fertile genius still enrich the academies of Paris, Basle, Berlin, and St. Petersburg.

In mechanics, the blind have gone to a considerable length, almost to surpass the bounds of probability, were the facts not supported by evidence of unquestionable authority. Here we find architects building bridges, drawing plans of new roads, and executing them to the satisfaction of the commissioners. These roads are still to be seen through the counties of York



and Lancaster, where they have been carried through the most difficult parts of the country, over bogs and mountains. Indeed, there are few branches of mechanics in which the blind have not borne a part.

It was of trifling importance to me, at what time of life, or by what cause, the subjects of these memoirs lost their sight, provided they distinguished themselves after they became blind. My principal object was to exemplify the powers of the human mind, under one of the greatest privations to which man is exposed in this life. It was partly with a view of rescuing my fellow sufferers from the neglect and obscurity in which many of them were involved, that induced me to undertake the present work,—an undertaking attended with immense toil and laborious research. This will readily be allowed when it is considered I had often to depend on the kindness of strangers for the loan of such books as were requisite for my purpose, and even to supply the place of a reader or amanuensis. However, after surmounting the various difficulties with which I had to contend,—in 1820, the work made its appearance in one volume, 12mo.—The reception it met with from the public, was gratifying to my feelings, and far exceeded my expectations.

The present edition is very much improved, and enlarged; many new and interesting subjects being added, which I hope will meet with the approbation of my kind friends, and generous subscribers.

JAMES WILSON.



and Lancaster, where they have been carried through the most difficult parts of the country, over bogs and mountains. Indeed, there are few branches of the system in which the blind have not borne a part.

It was of rising importance to me, at what time of life, or by what cause, the subjects of these memoirs lost their sight, provided they distinguished themselves after they became blind. My principal object was to examine the powers of the human mind, under one of the greatest privations to which man is exposed in this life. It was partly with a view of procuring any information from the history and obscurity in which many of them were involved, that induced me to undertake the present work, — an undertaking attended with immense toil and laborious research. This will readily be allowed when it is considered I had often to depend on the kindness of strangers for the loan of such books as were requisite for my purpose, and even to supply the place of a reader or amanuensis. However, after extracting the various difficulties with which I had to contend, — in 1830, the work made its appearance in one volume, 12mo. — The reception it met with from the public, was gratifying to my feelings, and far exceeded my expectations.

The present edition is very much improved, and enlarged; many new and interesting subjects being added, which I hope will meet with the approbation of my kind friends, and generous subscribers.

JAMES WILSON, Printer, 10, St. Paul's Church-yard, London.

A FEW PARTICULARS  
OF THE  
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

---

I WAS born, May the twenty-fourth, 1779, in Richmond, State of Virginia, North America. My father, John Wilson, was a native of Scotland. His family was originally of Queen's-ferry, a small village in Fifeshire, about eleven miles from Edinburgh; he had an uncle who emigrated to America when a young man, as a mechanic, where, by honest industry and prudent economy, he soon amassed a considerable property. He wrote for my father, who was then about eighteen years of age, and promised to make him his heir in case he would come to America. My grandfather hesitated for some time, but at length consented, and preparations were accordingly made for my father's departure, who sailed from Greenock, and arrived safe at Norfolk; from whence he was forwarded by a merchant of that place, and soon reached Richmond, where he was gladly received by his uncle. This man, being in the decline of life, without a family, and bowed down by infirmities, now looked upon his nephew as the comfort of his life, and the support of his declining years; and therefore entrusted him with the entire management of his



affairs, which he had the happiness of conducting to the old man's satisfaction. Thus he continued to act till the death of his uncle, in 1775, when he found himself in possession of £3,000 value, in money and landed property.

Prior to this event, my father, on a visit to Baltimore, got acquainted with my mother, Elizabeth Johnson. To her he was introduced by an intimate friend, a Mr. Freeman, whom I may have occasion to mention hereafter. His uncle, on hearing this, could not bear the idea of a matrimonial connection during his life, and so stood as a grand barrier to the completion of his wishes; but at the decease of the old man, being left to think and act for himself, as soon as his affairs were settled, he hastened to Baltimore, where the long-wished-for union took place.

Shortly after his marriage, he returned again to Virginia. His whole mind was now bent to the improvement of his plantation, and the acquiring of a paternal inheritance for his offspring. Flushed with the hope of spending the eve of life on a fertile estate that amply rewarded the hand of industry, of spending it in the bosom of his family, and of tasting the pleasures which domestic retirement affords, he followed his avocation with alacrity, and could say in the midst of his enjoyments,—

“The winter's night and summer's day,

“Glide imperceptibly away.”

But, alas, how uncertain are human prospects and worldly possessions! How often do they wither in the bud! or bloom like the rose, to be blasted when



full blown ! How repeatedly do they sicken, even in enjoyment, and what appears at a distance like a beautiful verdant hill, degenerates on a closer survey into a rugged, barren rock !—This moment the sky is bright, the air is serene, and the sun of our prosperity beams forth in unclouded splendour ; and in the next, blackness and darkness envelop us around, the cloud of adversity bursts upon our devoted heads, and we are overwhelmed by the storm. It was so with my father, and, of course, the misfortune was entailed on me.

The disturbance which took place at Boston, was at first considered only a riot ; but it shortly began to assume a more formidable aspect.—The insurgents were soon embodied throughout all the Colonies, and the insurrection became general. Between them and the loyal party, no neutrality was allowed, and every man was finally under the necessity of joining one side or the other. For some time, indeed, my father strove to avoid taking an active part, but he was soon convinced that this was totally impossible. Many of his early friends had embraced the cause of the Revolutionists, and were very anxious that he should join their party. To excite him to this, several advantageous offers were made to him, and when this expedient failed, threats were resorted to. Exercising the right which belongs to every man, in politics, as well as in religion, I mean the right of private judgment, he, in conjunction with a number of his neighbours, enrolled himself in a corps of volunteers, for the joint purpose of defending private property, and supporting the royal cause. It would indeed be painful to me to enter minutely into the sufferings of my parents at



this eventful period. Suffice it to say, they were stript of their all, and were left destitute and forlorn.

Down to the period of which I am now speaking, no political question had ever given rise to more controversy than the American war. It is not my business to enter into a discussion of the subject; all that remains necessary for me to say, is a word or two in relation to my father's political conduct. That man who would not rejoice in being able to speak well of a departed parent, is not entitled to the name of man, and cannot be characterised by the feelings common to our nature. It affords me, then, a degree of pleasure to reflect, that my father must have acted throughout from principle. On this point I am perfectly satisfied, when I consider him rejecting emolument, despising threats, volunteering in the royal cause, forsaking his own home, and thereby leaving his family and property exposed, braving every danger, serving during five campaigns, and continuing active in the cause he had espoused, as long as he could be useful to it.

Being attached to that part of the army under the immediate command of Lord Cornwallis, he was taken prisoner when that gallant General was compelled to surrender to a superior force. His health, during these disasters, was much impaired, and on being liberated, he now thought of returning to Europe, in hopes that the air of his native country would restore him to his wonted state of health and vigour.

My mother was now residing near New-York, in the house of a friend, and thither he directed his steps. There he abode for a year, and found his health so much improved, that he determined to lose no more



time in America, and so prepared to re-cross the Atlantic,—

“And anxious to review his native shore,

“Upon the roaring waves embarked once more.”

Bound for Liverpool, under the guidance of Capt. Smith, the vessel set sail, and my parents bade a final adieu to the shores of Colombia.—What his feelings were at this crisis, it would be difficult to describe. Separated from that country in which his best hopes centered—cut off from the enjoyment of his legal possessions, without a probability of ever regaining them—impaired in his constitution, and crossed in all his former prospects,—we may view him mourning over his misfortunes, and devising plans for his future exertions. It is true, he might have consoled himself with the pleasing reflection, that he was now about to revisit his native land, to meet with his nearest relations, and best friends, and to spend the remainder of his days in the place of his nativity, in peace and safety; but how vain and transient are the hopes of mortal man! All his joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, anxious cares and premature plans, were shortly to terminate with him, and I was to be left, at four years of age, destitute of a father. They had scarcely lost sight of land, when his disease returned with increased violence, and twelve days after the vessel left New-York, he expired. The reader will not consider my situation as deplorable, while he thinks that still I had a mother to take care of me, and to assist me in my childish years. True, I had a mother, and a mother who survived my father; but it was only for twenty



minutes!—for she being in the last stage of pregnancy, the alarm occasioned by his death brought on premature labour, and terminated her existence. Thus, on a sudden, I lost both father and mother,—saw them sewed up in the same hammock, and committed to a watery grave.

Here my misfortunes did not end. I was seized by the small pox, and for want of a mother's care, and proper medical aid, this most loathsome disease deprived me of my sight. After a long and dangerous voyage, it being a hurricane almost all the time, the Captain was obliged to put into Belfast Harbour, as the ship had suffered much in her masts, rigging, &c. and as the crew were nearly exhausted.

When we arrived there, I had not recovered from the effects of my late illness, the symptoms of which were at one period so violent as to threaten instant dissolution. To make me the more comfortable, I was sent immediately to Belfast.

There was no time lost by Captain Smith in applying to the church-warden in my behalf, and in order to prevent me from becoming a charge to the parish, he deposited in his hands a sum of money sufficient to pay the expense of supporting me for five years. I was soon provided with a nurse.

The ship being now completely repaired, the benevolent Captain and kind-hearted crew left me in Belfast, a total stranger. No one knew me, nor had ever heard any thing of my family. My situation at this time was truly pitiable, as I was deprived of my parents at the time I most required their care. Still, however, I was under the protection of a mer-



ciful Providence, "who can temper the wind to the shorn lamb." In his word, he has promised to be a father to the fatherless, and to me this gracious saying has certainly been fulfilled. Many of the first families in the kingdom I can rank among my kindest friends ; and to nothing can I attribute this but to the influence of his Providence, who inclines the hearts of men to that which is pleasing in his sight.

My nurse was a good natured old woman, and the anxiety which she shewed for my recovery was much greater than could be expected from a stranger ; night after night she sat by me, attended to my calls, and administered to my wants, with all that maternal tenderness which a fond mother manifests to the child of her bosom. The prayers which she offered up in my behalf, and the tears of sympathy which stole down her aged cheek, bespoke a heart that could feel for the miseries of a fellow creature. Contrary to all expectation, I recovered, and in the course of a few months I was able to grope my way through the house, alone. Shortly after this, my right eye was couched by the late Surgeon Wilson, and in consequence of this operation, I could soon discern the surrounding objects and their various colours. This was certainly a great mercy, for though the enjoyment did not continue long, yet the recollection of it affords me pleasure even to the present day.

One day, when about seven years of age, as I crossed the street, I was attacked and dreadfully mangled by an ill-natured cow. This accident nearly cost me my life, and deprived me of that sight which



was in a great degree restored, and which I have never since enjoyed. Thus it was the will of Providence to baffle the efforts of human ingenuity, and to doom me to perpetual blindness; and this reflection enables me to bear my misfortune without repining.

A few years after this event, my foster-mother died, and again I was left forlorn and without a friend. In this precarious state, the only means I had of obtaining subsistence were apparently ill-suited to my situation. The reader may, perhaps, smile when I inform him, that at this time I was considered by many as a man of letters, and that I earned my bread in consequence of my practical engagements in relation to them. This, indeed, was the case; for I was employed to carry letters to and from the offices of the different merchants in the town and neighbourhood. My punctuality and despatch in this respect were much in my favour, so that I was generally employed in preference to those who enjoyed the use of all their senses. In the course of time, my sphere was enlarged, and often, on important business, I have borne despatches to the distance of thirty or forty miles. This was certainly not a little extraordinary in a place where the confusion and bustle of business subjected me to many dangers.

Being advised to attempt the study of music, I made an almost fruitless effort, as I had no person to instruct me; but although I could only scrape a few tunes which I had learned by ear, this did not prevent me from being called on occasionally to officiate at dances. For no matter how despicable the musician, or insignificant his instrument, the sound ope-



rates like an invisible charm—elevates the passions of the lower orders—makes them shake their grief and their cares off at their heels, and moving on the light “fantastic toe,” causes them to forget the bitterness of the past, and prevents them from brooding over the prospect of future evils.

“And happy, though my harsh touch, falt’ring still,

“But mock’d all time and marr’d the dancer’s skill;

“Yet, would the village praise my wondrous power,

“And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.”

I soon found, in consequence of this avocation, that I was exposed to numerous vices. I was obliged to associate with the dregs of society, to witness many scenes of folly and great wickedness, to stay out late at nights, and thus expose myself to dangers of different kinds.—As my feelings were continually at variance with this occupation, which I adopted more from necessity than choice, I soon gave it up, and composed a farewell address to my fiddle.

The family in which I lived, was both poor and illiterate—not one among them could spell their own name; and hence I was a considerable time before I acquired any taste for knowledge.

It was painful, indeed, both in towns and villages, to behold the ignorance and wickedness which prevailed among children of both sexes—swearing, lying, and throwing stones. And the feelings of the passengers, while walking along, were not only hurt by the profane language of these culprits, but their personal safety was also in danger, from the stones which were carelessly and mischievously flung around them. But, thanks be to God, this evil is at length disappearing—the remedy applied has been



successful, and that remedy is the Sunday schools. In the districts where these institutions are established, the children, both in their appearance and manners, have undergone a great change for the better. Instead of injuring their neighbours, and breaking the Lord's day, they are now taught to read the Scriptures, which, under the Divine blessing, qualifies them to fill the various situations in society. They are also taught to honour their parents, "that they may obtain the blessing which God has promised unto the children of obedience, and that their days may be long in the land, which the Lord their God giveth them." These doctrines may be lightly looked upon by some, but it is in a breach of these laws, a disregard for these truths, that originate all the crimes which disgrace the character of man, and degrade him below the brutes of the field.

I present these circumstances to the reader, that he may know the kind of society in which I mingled during the first fifteen years of my life. It cannot be imagined that much information could be derived from such a source as this.

About this time, I began to pay some attention to books; but my first course of reading was, indeed, of a very indifferent description. I was obliged to listen to what was most convenient; however, I made the best of what I heard, and in a short time, in conjunction with a boy of my own age who read to me, I was master of the principal circumstances in *Jack the Giant Killer*, *Valentine and Orson*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Gulliver's Travels*. The subject-matter of these formed my taste, was swallowed with avidity,



and inspired me with a degree of enthusiasm which awakes even at the present day, on hearing a new and interesting work read. These, however, were soon laid aside for novels and romances, several hundred volumes of which I procured and got read in the course of three years; but although there are few passages out of all I heard then which I think worth a place in my recollection now, yet, at that time, I was well acquainted with the most interesting characters and events contained in these works. My present dislike to this kind of reading I do not entertain without reason. For, first, a great deal of precious time is thereby spent that might be more usefully employed; second, the judgment is left without exercise, while the passions are inflamed; and, third, those who are much in the habit of novel reading, seldom have a taste for books of any other kind; and hence their judgments of men and things must differ as far from his who has seen the world, as the most of novels differ from real life. I am well aware that some of them are well written, and display ability in the author, have the circumstances well disposed, the characters ably delineated, and the effect preserved till the final close of the last scene, which generally proves interesting and affecting. But to what does all this tend? (except in recording the customs and manners of the times which they represent,) only to mislead the imagination, to foster a morbid sensibility to fictitious woe, and a romantic admiration of ideal and unattainable perfection, without strengthening the judgment, cultivating active benevolence, or a just appreciation of



real worth. In contrasting the characters of Tom Jones and Sir Charles Grandison, with those of the Duke of Sully and Lord Clarendon, we observe a striking difference between the real and fictitious personages; yet, the mere novel reader is neither improved nor amused in reading the lives of these illustrious characters, while the tear of sympathy steals down his cheek as he pores over the imaginary sufferings of his heroes and heroines. There are, I know, many novels to which the above observations do not apply, particularly some of modern date, which are very superior to those above mentioned; but still the best, even of these, present overcharged pictures of real life, and in proportion as they are fascinating, they indispose the mind to more serious reading.

At this time, the French Revolution gave a sudden turn to the posture of affairs in Europe, and every mail which arrived, brought an account of some important change in the political state of that unhappy country. All the powers on the Continent now armed against France, and she, on her part, received them with a firmness which reflected honour upon her arms. The public mind, at this period, was much agitated, and the wisest politicians of the day were filled with alarm, and dreaded the consequences which were likely to result from a revolution that threatened every government in Europe with a total overthrow. For my part, I had little to lose as an individual, and the only concern I felt was for the safety of my country. Politics, therefore, became my favourite study, and I soon got acquainted with the passing news of the day.



A late writer, in speaking of memory, calls it "the warehouse of the mind." But it has often been compared to a well-constructed arch, on which the more weight is laid, the stronger it becomes. This I found to be the case with mine, for the more I committed to it, the more I found it was capable of receiving and retaining. In what manner ideas of extrinsic objects, and notions of certain relations, can be preserved in the mind, it is impossible to determine; but of this we are sure, that the thing is so, though the manner be unknown to us. As ideas and recollections are merely immaterial things, which can in no wise partake of the known properties of matter, so the receptacle in which they lodge, must be of a similar nature. That matter and spirit are united, we have no reason to doubt; for the pleasures of sensations which arise from memory in the moment of reflection, are evidently operative on the body, inasmuch as its motions and gestures are expressive of the inward feelings of the mind. As the memory, therefore, is more or less capacious, and as the store of ideas laid up there is great or little, and as they are pleasing or unpleasing in themselves, so the sensations derived from memory are either powerful or weak, either pleasing or painful. As my taste always inclined to literature, and the knowledge of things valuable in themselves, consequently the remembrance of them is a neverfailing source of amusement to me, whether I be found "in the void waste, or in the city full."

It was now, indeed, that I was able to appreciate the pleasures of memory in a superior degree. I



knew the names, stations, and Admirals of almost all the ships in the navy, and was also acquainted with the number, facing and name of every regiment in the army, according to the respective towns, cities or shires, from which they were raised. I served, of course, as an army and navy list for the poor in the neighbourhood, who had relations in either of these departments, and was capable of informing them of all the general news.

The following anecdote shews the powers of my memory at that period. Being invited by a friend to spend an evening at his house, I had scarcely sat down when three gentlemen entered.

The conversation turned on the news of the day; I was requested by my friend to repeat the names of as many of the ships of the British navy as I could recollect, telling me that he had a particular reason for making the request. I commenced, and my friend marked them down as I went along, until I repeated 620, when he stopped me, saying I had gone far enough. The cause of the request was then explained. One of the gentlemen had wagered a supper that I could not mention 500; he, however, expressed himself much pleased at his loss, having been, as he acknowledged, highly entertained by the experiment.

Although at this time, I had little relish for any other kind of reading but newspapers and novels, yet I was not wholly insensible to the charms of poetry. I amused myself with making verses at intervals, but I could never produce any thing in that way which pleased myself. My acquaintances, particularly the young people, gave me sufficient employment in



composing Epigrams, Love Songs, Epistles, and Acrostics in praise of their sweet-hearts. Many of those juvenile productions are still extant, and though miserable in themselves, continue to find admirers among the classes for whom they were composed.

The first of my productions which met the public eye was, "An Elegy on the Death of an unfortunate Female." This poor maniac was known for more than twenty years in the neighbourhood of Belfast, by the appellation of Mad Mary. She was found dead in the ruins of an old house, where she had taken refuge during a stormy winter night. This little piece being much noticed on account of the subject having excited a general interest, I was advised to collect my best productions, and give them to the public. Encouraged by the patronage of a few generous individuals, I set about the work, which in a few months made its appearance.

In the early part of life, I prided myself much on my activity as a pedestrian. I have frequently travelled through a part of the country with which I was totally unacquainted, at the rate of thirty miles in a day; but this was only in a case of emergency, for my usual rate was from fifteen to twenty miles. This, however, is too much for a person in my situation, for supposing a blind man sets out to travel on foot alone, to a distance of twenty miles, he will experience much more fatigue, and go over more ground, than he who has his sight will do in a journey twice that length. This is evident from the zig-zag manner in which he traverses the road, and as Hammond says, in his description of the drunken



man staggering home, "from the serpentine manner in which he goes, he makes as much of a mile as possible." In the summer time, the blind man is subject to shock his whole frame by trampling in the cart ruts that are dried upon the road; and in winter he travels through thick and thin; it is impossible for him to choose his steps; and at this season of the year, the water is collected into puddles on the road which he cannot avoid; and hence, in walking to a distance, he is sure to wet both his feet and legs, which is not only disagreeable, but frequently injurious to his health; at one time, he bruises his foot against a stone; at another, he sprains his ankle; and frequently when stepping out quickly, his foot comes in contact with something unexpectedly, by which he is thrown on his face; thus in travelling on foot, he labours under various disadvantages unknown to those who are blest with sense of sight.

The above accidents, however, are not the only misfortunes connected with the state of the blind; in walking alone, he often wanders out of his direct way, sometimes into fields, and sometimes into by-paths, so that the greater part of the day may be spent before he can rectify his mistake. Often have I been in this predicament myself; and frequently have I sat a considerable part of the day, listening by the way side for a passing foot, or the joyful sound of the human voice; and sometimes have I been obliged in the evening, to retrace the ground I had gone over in the morning, and thus endured much fatigue of body and mind before I could regain the road from which I had wandered;—how different then



is my situation from the person who is possessed of sight! From the impediments which cause me so much pain, he is happily exempt; while he pursues his journey, he can trace the various beauties of the surrounding scenery; the picturesque landscape, the spreading oak, the flowing brook, the towering mountain that hides its blue summit in the clouds, the majestic ocean dashing on the "shelly shore," and the vast expansive arch of heaven bespangled with innumerable stars, have all for him their respective beauties, and fail not to awaken pleasing and agreeable sensations; but to the blind, these pleasures are unknown, the charms of nature are concealed under an impenetrable veil, and the God of light has placed between him and silent but animated nature an insuperable barrier!

A blind person always inclines to the hand in which his staff is carried, and this often has a tendency to lead him astray, when he travels on a road with which he is unacquainted. But were there no danger arising from this, still from his situation, he is liable to imminent dangers on his way, from which nothing can preserve him but an all-directing Providence, and this I have frequently experienced.

In a cold winter's evening, as I travelled to Lisburn, I happened to wander from the direct road into a lane which led immediately to the canal. Unconscious of the danger to which I was exposed, I was stepping on pretty freely, when my attention was suddenly arrested by a cry of "stop, stop!" Of the first or second call I took no notice, as I judged some other person was addressed; but at the third warning I stopped,



when a woman came running up, almost breathless, and asked me where I was going ; I replied, " to Lisburn." " No," said she, " you are going directly to the canal, and three or four steps more would have plunged you into it." My heart glowed with thankfulness to the all-wise Disposer of events, and to the female who was made the instrument of my preservation. She said, " she happened to come to the door to throw out some slops, when she saw me posting on, and, thinking from my manner of walking, that I was intoxicated, she became alarmed for my safety, as a person had been drowned in the very same place, not many days before."

About three miles from Strabane, at the little village of Clady, there is a bridge across the Finn. I had just passed along it on my way to Strabane, when a man enquired if I had been conducted over by any person. I replied in the negative. " It was a fortunate circumstance, then indeed," said he, " that you kept the left side, for the range wall is broken down on the right side, just above the centre arch, and the river is there very rapid, and the bank on each side steep. Had you fallen in, you must have been inevitably lost."

The following instance of providential preservation is still more singular than either of the preceding. From Ballymena, I was one day going out to the Rev. Robert Stewart's. At the end of the town, the road divides, and one branch leads to Ballymena, and the other to Broughshane. In the forks, an old well was opened for the purpose of sinking a pump. It being one o'clock in the day, the workmen were all at din-



ner. I was groping about with my staff, to ascertain the turn of the road, when a man bawled out to me to stand still, and not move a single step. I did so, when he came forward and told me, that two steps more would have hurried me into a well eighty feet deep, and half full of water. He held me by the arm, and made me put forth my staff to feel, and be convinced of my danger; and when I found that I was actually not more than one yard from the edge, the blood ran cold in my veins.

These are but a few of the numerous instances of hair-breadth escapes which I have experienced in my peregrinations through life.

In the year 1800, there was an institution established in Belfast for the purpose of instructing those who are deprived of sight in such employments as were suited to their unfortunate situation: this was styled, "The Asylum for the Blind." I entered on the books of the institution as an apprentice, and continued until within a few months of its dissolution.—When I left the Asylum, I proposed working on my own account, and having acquired a partial knowledge of the upholstering business, I was soon employed. My friends exerted themselves on this occasion to promote my interest, and though there were several individuals who had learned the business in the same Asylum, and who could work better than I, yet I generally got the preference. Many of my friends went so far as even to contrive work for me, for which they had not immediate use, merely to keep me employed. Although my pecuniary circumstances were not much



improved, yet I now experienced a greater share of mental happiness than I had ever enjoyed before. I was in a situation that afforded me better opportunities of acquiring knowledge than I had ever possessed previous to this time.

In 1803, a number of young men formed a reading society in Belfast, and although they were all mechanics, yet were they also men of taste, and some of them were possessed of considerable talents. Into this society I was admitted a member, at the same time I was kindly exempted from the expense attending its regulations. One of the members was a man of the most extraordinary character I had ever known, and therefore I attached myself to him. To good nature, he united an original genius, a good taste, and extreme sensibility; and had an early education been his lot, or had his mind been sufficiently expanded by study, he would have become an ornament to society. This man proposed to read to me, if I would procure books: our stated hour for this employment was from nine o'clock in the evening until one in the morning, in the winter season, and from seven until eleven in the summer. When I was not particularly engaged, I frequently attended him at other intervals: at breakfast he had half an hour allotted to him, at dinner a whole hour. Every minute of this was filled up, for he generally read to me between every cup of tea, and by this means, I committed to memory a vast collection of pieces, both in prose and verse, which I still retain, and which has been, until the present hour, a never-failing source of amusement to me. 'The more



I heard read, the more my desire for knowledge increased, while I learned at the same time that

“The more a man knows, he finds he knows the less.”

So ardent and steady was my desire for knowledge at that time, that I could never bear to be absent a single night from my friend, and often when working in the country, where I could have been comfortably accommodated, I have travelled three or four miles in a severe winter's night to be at my post in time. Pinched with cold, and drenched with rain, I have many a time sat down and listened for several hours together, to the writings of Plutarch, Rollin or Clarendon. For seven or eight years we continued this course of reading; but to give a catalogue of the authors we perused in that time, would be foreign to my present purpose; suffice it to say, that every book in the English language which we could procure, was read with avidity. Ancient and Modern History, Poetry, Biography, Essays, Magazines, Voyages, Travels, &c. were among our studies.

The persons to whom I had entrusted the management of my little domestic concerns, did not hesitate to take advantage of my ignorance of such affairs, as well as of my situation. Many of my friends felt for me, and advised me strongly to marry, as I should be more comfortable, and out of the power of these unprincipled people. They said that, could I meet with a sober, steady woman, who would be likely to make a good wife, the change would be advantageous to me in more respects than one. I objected to this proposal, on the grounds of my inability to provide for a family. The precarious manner I had of earning my



subsistence, put such an idea beyond my expectations—it was enough for me to suffer alone—I could not think of entailing misery upon others. This they could not deny, but then they put the question in this way:—they thought no one required the kind assistance of an affectionate wife more than a blind man. They said I had not one friend, one relative to look after me—what would become of me in my old age?—I should be helpless in the extreme. These, and many other arguments, were used to induce me to assent to a measure which they thought would finally conduce to my happiness. Their ideas have been fully justified—I am happy. I had the pleasure of being known for some time to a young woman who lived in the neighbourhood; I had met her occasionally at the house of a friend, where I used to visit. Her plain and unassuming manners, recommended her to my notice; but what endeared her to me most, was her filial piety. She lived with her aged mother, and they were respected by all who knew them. Without any other dependence than the work of her own hands, she supported herself and her parent. I thought that she, who was such an attentive and feeling daughter, must necessarily make an affectionate wife—and in this opinion I was not dissatisfied. Filial affection is so endearing a virtue, that whenever we meet with an instance of it, whether in an exalted or humble station, the exercise of it must, to the benevolent mind, be a source of the highest gratification. It is a duty which our gracious and kind Creator has enjoined us to fulfil, commanding in his holy word, to “honour our father and mother;” as an inducement or mo-



tive, to the performance of which, he has promised that our "days shall be long in the land;" and he who has promised this, is able and willing to perform.

I addressed a copy of verses to her, who had now become the object of my affection, which were printed in the first collection of my Poems. They had the desired effect—they produced an impression which never has been, and I may venture to say, never will be, effaced. After the expiration of two years, our correspondence happily terminated; and we were married on the twenty-seventh of November, 1802,—and though she could boast of no high descent, no personal accomplishments, nor of having brought me any fortune, yet she was possessed of such qualities as every virtuous mind will admire—she was sober, chaste and unassuming; and though her education was not according to the rules laid down by Mrs. Hamilton, yet, she understood, in her own way, the principles of domestic economy, prudence, and frugality. Well has the wise man described a virtuous woman, when he says—"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."

We have now lived twenty-three years together, happy in each other's society, and though we have had many trials in the course of that time, such as the loss of children, bad health, and distressed circumstances, a murmur never escaped her lips. In our pilgrimage here below, these little crosses are necessary—they teach us to know ourselves. Were we to pass the little time which is allotted to us in this world, without trials and afflictions, we should soon



forget that we are dependent creatures. But a merciful Providence has wisely guarded us against these dangers, by letting us know our infirmities, and how little we can do for ourselves. We are assured, in the word of God, that he never afflicts his creatures but for their good; and when these visitations are sanctified by his Holy Spirit, they then become profitable to us—they wean us, as it were, from the world, and we become sick of its flimsy joys and imaginary pleasures. We learn from them, “that here we have no abiding city, but we seek one to come.” We have had eleven children, six of whom are still alive; and, with the exception of those diseases which are common to infants, they are all healthy and stout. It is certainly one of the greatest blessings which parents can enjoy, to see a vigorous offspring rise around them, and listen to their innocent prattle. How often have I been struck with the force and beauty of that passage in holy writ, where Jesus, in order to teach humility unto his disciples, “called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them.” To descend from the Divine Author of our religion, to creatures like ourselves, we read in Cox’s life of that pious reformer, Melancthon, that he was particularly fond of his children; and notwithstanding the multiplicity of his engagements, the discharge of which, in those perilous times, was attended with difficulties and danger, yet would he often descend from that lofty station where genius and public opinion had enthroned him, to the more endearing scenes of domestic retirement. A Frenchman, one day found him holding a book in one hand, and with the other rocking his child’s cradle. Upon his mani-

festing considerable surprise, Melancthon took occasion from this incident to converse with his visitor on the duties of parents, and on the regard of Heaven for little children, in such a pious and affectionate manner, that his astonishment was quickly transformed into admiration.

HOMER

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AN  
ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF  
HOMER.

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“ High on the first the mighty HOMER shone ;  
“ Eternal adamant composed his throne ;  
“ Father of verse in holy fillets drest,  
“ His silvery beard waved gently o’er his breast :  
“ Tho’ blind, a boldness in his looks appears ;  
“ In years he seemed, but not impaired by years.

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THE Man, an account of whose life and writings is given in these pages, was the most extraordinary genius that any age or country has ever yet produced. Whether we view him as a Poet, a Philosopher, or an Historian, he excites our astonishment, and he claims our admiration. Whoever has read his truly sublime compositions will join with me in regretting that so little is now known of his history ; and we have to lament, that the few particulars of his life which have been handed down to us, are in such a mutilated and imperfect state, that they can afford but little pleasure to the admirers of ancient literature. As many of his early biographers have substituted fiction for facts, it is no easy task to unravel their irregular accounts, and form a connected story. I have consulted the best writers who mention him, and have endeavoured to select such parts, as tend to illustrate both the man



and his writings : but alas ! after all my inquiries, how little have I been able to procure ! The veil of time is now thrown over both the author and the scene which called forth the gigantic powers of his mind.

“ And now by Time’s deep plough-share harrow’d o’er,

“ The seat of sacred Troy is found no more :

“ No trace of all her glories now remains,

“ But corn and vines enrich her cultured plains—

“ Silver Scamander leaves the verdant shore ;

“ Scamander oft o’erflowed with hostile gore.”

This venerable father of Epic Poetry, as he has been justly called, flourished, according to some accounts, 340 years after the siege of Troy, and according to others, 907 years before the Christian era. The place of his nativity is not known, but such was the veneration the Greeks had for his memory, that no less than seven illustrious cities contended for the honour of his birth, as is well expressed in the following lines—‘SMYRNA, CHIOS, COLOPHON, SALAMIS, RHODOS, ARGOS, ATHENÆ.—Orbis de patria certat, Homere tua.’

The opinion, however, which appears to have the best foundation, is, that he was born at Smyrna. We have not on record any thing that is certain respecting the particulars of his birth ; but the following is the only account that I have seen, which can be relied upon. A man of Magnesia, named Menalippus, went to settle at Cuma, where he married the daughter of a citizen called Homynes, and had by her a daughter called Critheis. Her parents dying, Critheis was left to the care of one Cleonus, her father’s friend ; but she being deluded, proved with



child ; her guardian, finding his care had not prevented this misfortune, was, however, anxious to conceal it ; and therefore sent her to Smyrna, which was then building. Critheis being near her time, went one day to a festival, which the inhabitants were celebrating on the banks of the river Meles,\* where the pains of labour coming upon her, she was delivered of the immortal HOMER ; whom from that circumstance she called MELESIGENES. Critheis having no other means of subsistence, was forced to spin ; but a man named Phemius,† who taught literature and music in Smyrna, having often seen Critheis, and being pleased with her good house-wifery and behaviour, took her into his house to spin the wool which he received from his scholars for their schooling. In this situation she behaved so modestly and agreeably that Phemius married her, and adopted her son, in whom he discovered early marks of an extraordinary genius, enriched by an excellent natural disposition. After the death of Phemius and Critheis, Homer succeeded his father in his school ; and was admired, not only by the inhabitants of Smyrna, but also by strangers, who resorted from all parts to that place of trade. A person called Mentès, who traded thither, being a

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\* A river of Asia Minor, in Ionia, near Smyrna. The Ancients supported this opinion of Homer's being born on its banks, and said that he thence got the name of Melesigenes, and his compositions, Melitæa Charta. They even say that he composed his poems in a cave near the source of that river.

† A man introduced by Homer as a musician among Penelope's suitors. Some say he taught Homer, for which the grateful Poet immortalized his name.



man of learning and a lover of poetry, admired him so much, that he requested him to accompany him in his voyages. Homer, who had then begun his *Iliad*, thought it of great consequence to see the places he should have occasion to mention; and therefore embraced this opportunity, and embarked with Mentès. During these voyages, he passed through all Greece, Asia-minor, and many other places, where he never failed carefully to note down, all that he thought worthy of notice. He travelled into Egypt, whence he brought into Greece all the names of their gods, the chief ceremonies of their religion, and a more improved knowledge of the arts. He next visited Africa, and Spain, returning thence, he touched at Ithaca where he was seized with a complaint in his eyes. Mentès being desirous of returning to Leucas, his native country, left Homer well recommended to the care and protection of Mentor, one of the chief men of the island, who took great care of him. There Homer was informed of many things relating to Ulysses, which he afterwards made use of in composing his *Odyssey*. On his return to Ithaca, Mentès found Homer cured; they embarked together, and after much time spent in visiting the coasts of Peloponnesus, and the islands, they arrived at Colophon, where he was again seized with a disease in his eyes, which proved so fatal, that it is said to have been the occasion of his blindness. This misfortune obliged him to return to Smyrna, where he finished his *Iliad*. Some time after, the bad state of his affairs, forced him to visit Cuma, where he hoped to have found relief. Here his poems were highly applauded, and



He was received with great joy ; but when he proposed to immortalize their city, if they would allow him a salary out of the public treasury, he was told there would be no end of maintaining the ‘ Homeroi or blind men,’ and it was from this he got the name of Homer or a blind man. On this being refused, he left that city uttering this imprecation, ‘ may no Poets ever be born in Cuma, to celebrate it by their poems ;’ and came to Phocæa. He afterwards wandered through several places, and arrived at Chios, where he married, and composed his *Odyssey*. Some time after, having added many verses to his Poems, in praise of some cities of Greece, especially Athens and Argos, he went to Samos, where he spent the winter singing at the houses of the great, with a crowd of boys after him. From Samos, he went to one of the Sporades, intending to prosecute his voyage to Athens. Where he died, or where he was buried is altogether uncertain; however the inhabitants of Cos, one of the Sporades, claimed that honour, which was also contended for by the Cyprians.

It has been doubted by some of Homer’s Commentators, whether he was blind or not; but thus, the ancients generally represented him, as appears from all the portraits, busts, and medals, which have been preserved.

I have already observed that he had composed some part of his *Iliad* before his sight began to fail him, but that he laboured under this privation when he composed his *Odyssey*, has never been questioned. In the eighth book of that poem, in the person of



Demodocus, he has described his own helpless situation in the most tender and pathetic language.

“Dear to the Muse, who gave his days to flow,  
“With mighty blessings, mixed with mighty woe;  
“With clouds of darkness quenched his visual ray,  
“But gave him power to raise the lofty lay.”

Neither the virtues nor the talents of Homer could procure him a single patron in the country, which at that time was the seat of literature and science! Shame to Greece that suffered a man who reflected more honour upon her, than all the warriors or statesmen she ever produced, thus to live in poverty, and die in obscurity! The only incontestable works which Homer has left behind him, are the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; both of which, for masterly invention, grandeur of sentiment, nobleness of character, and richness of colouring, excel any thing of the kind, in that or any other language. Nothing is equal to the clearness and majesty of Homer's style, to the sublimity of his thoughts, to the strength and sweetness of his verses; or to that easy, natural simplicity of manner, which is the crowning ornament of composition; which gives lustre to every other beauty, and is justly called “the dress of Nature.” All his images are striking, his descriptions lively and exact, the passions so well expressed, and nature so justly and finely painted, that he seems to give to every thing motion, life, and action. In a word, the more he is read by a person of taste, the more he is admired. Nor are his works to be esteemed merely as interesting poems, nor as the monuments of a sublime and varied genius; no, he was in general so accurate with respect to costumes,



that he seldom mentions persons or things, that we may not conclude to have been well known during the time in which he wrote. It is Pope's opinion, that his account of people, princes, and nations, is purely historical, founded on the real transactions of that age, and is by far the most valuable piece of history and geography extant, concerning the state of Greece in that early period of the world. His geographical divisions of that country were thought so exact, that we are told of many controversies concerning the boundaries of Grecian cities being determined by the authority of his poems. Alcibiades once gave a rhetorician a sound box on the ear for not having the writings of Homer in his school. Alexander the Great was so charmed with them, that he commonly placed them under his pillow beside his sword; he enclosed the *Iliad* in the most precious box of Darius, "in order," said he to his courtiers, "that the most perfect production of the human mind may be enclosed in the richest casket in the world;" and one day seeing the tomb of Achilles in Sigæ, "fortunate hero," said he, "thou hast had an Homer to sing thy victories."

Longinus, the most refined of critics, beautifully compares the *Iliad* to the mid-day, and the *Odyssey* to the setting sun; and observes, "that though the *Iliad* claims an uncontested superiority over the *Odyssey*, yet in the latter, the same force, the same sublimity and elegance prevail, though divested of their most powerful fire, and it still preserves its original splendour and majesty, though deprived of its meridian heat." Lycurgus, Solon, and the kings and



princes of Greece set such a value on Homer's works, that they took the utmost pains in procuring correct editions of them, the most esteemed of which was that of Aristarchus.\* Didymus† was the first who wrote notes on Homer, and Eustathius,‡ archbishop of Thessalonica, in the twelfth century, is the most celebrated of his commentators. Homer composed several other works besides the Iliad and the Odyssey. There are ascribed to him the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, thirty-two Hymns, and several other pieces, most of which are Epigrams; but the most probable opinion is, that there are none of Homer's works now extant, except the Iliad and the Odyssey. Pope has given us an elegant translation of the Iliad, adorned with all the harmony of poetic numbers; this inimitable poem is so much read and so generally admired, that I will not attempt to describe its many

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\* A celebrated grammarian of Samos, disciple of Aristophanes; he lived the greatest part of his life at Alexandria, and Ptolemy Philometer entrusted him with the education of his sons. He was famous for his critical powers, and revised Homer's poems with such severity, that ever after, all severe critics were called Aristarchi: he wrote above eight hundred commentaries on different authors, much esteemed in his day. In his old age he became dropsical, upon which he starved himself to death in the seventy-second year of his age, B. C. 157.

† A Scholiast on Homer, surnamed Chalkenteras, flourished, B. C. 40.

‡ A Greek commentator on the works of Homer. It is to be lamented that the design of Alexander Politus, begun at Florence, in 1735, and published in the first five books of the Iliad, is not executed, as a Latin translation of these excellent commentaries is among the desiderata of the present day.



beauties: the Moonlight Scene, in the eighth book, I here give as a specimen of Pope's translation:—

“As when the Moon, refulgent lamp of night!  
 “O'er Heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light;  
 “When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,  
 “And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene:  
 “Around her throne, the vivid planets roll,  
 “And stars unnumbered gild the glowing pole;  
 “O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,  
 “And tip with silver every mountain head;  
 “Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospects rise—  
 “A flood of glory bursts from all the skies!  
 “The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,  
 “Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.”

Madame Dacier translated both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into French prose, of which there is an English version by Broome. Cowper has also translated the works of Homer into blank verse.

I here insert, for the information of my readers, Cowper's translation of the above passage; and though at first sight they may not be able to judge which is the more literal, they will easily perceive which is the more poetical.

“As when around the clear bright Moon, the stars  
 “Shine in full splendour, and the winds are hushed,  
 “The groves, the mountain-tops, the headland heights  
 “Stand all apparent, not a vapour streaks  
 “The boundless blue, but æther opened wide—  
 “All glitters, and the shepherd's heart is cheered.”

But those who wish to know the several editions of Homer, and the writers who have employed themselves on the works of that great poet, may consult Fabricius, in the first volume of his *Bibliotheca Græca*.



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THE LIFE  
OF  
JOHN MILTON.

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“BUT MILTON next, with high and haughty stalks,  
“Unfettered in majestic numbers walks;  
“No vulgar Hero, can his Muse engage,  
“Nor earth’s wide scene, confine his hallowed rage.”

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WITH the name of Milton, must ever associate in a British mind, the highest sentiments of veneration. He who makes the least pretensions to liberal knowledge and taste, and who, notwithstanding, feels no wish to learn the circumstances of the life of such a writer, may justly be suspected of some dislike, not only to the Muse, but to Goodness itself; and to that greatness of mind which procures distinguished honours.

“Paradise Lost” however, has established an imperishable fame. Human nature must suffer an awful wreck before that work can cease to interest the numerous thousands of its readers! No wonder, then, that memoirs of the life of its Author have long followed one another, with increasing success, till the subject through all its authorities, is now nearly ex-



hausted: the substance of the whole I shall endeavour faithfully and briefly to comprise in the following sketch.

This great Poet was descended of a respectable family in Milton, in Oxfordshire. His grandfather was a bigotted Papist, and disinherited his son for embracing the Protestant religion; upon which he came to London and settled there as a scrivener; where the subject of this narrative was born, on the 9th of Dec. 1608. He received the first rudiments of his education from a private tutor, who was brought into the family for that purpose: from his father's house he went to St. Paul's School, and entered a student of Christ's College, Cambridge; during his residence there, he composed most of his Latin poems, in a style exquisitely imitative of the best models of antiquity. Milton is said to have been the first Englishman who wrote Latin verse with classical elegance. On leaving the university, after having taken out his degree of A. M. in 1632, he returned to his father, then residing at Horton, in Buckinghamshire; where he pursued his studies with unparalleled assiduity and success. They did not, however, so entirely absorb his attention, as not to afford him time to produce the *Mask of Comus*, a work adorned with all the ornaments of diction!—where allusions, images, and beautiful epithets embellished every period with lavish decoration: for though, it is a drama, too much in the epic style to please on the stage, yet, in whatever light it is viewed, whether as a series of lines, a masque, or a poem, it can be considered as inferior only to *Paradise Lost*. His



next production was *Lycidas*, a poem no less beautiful of its kind, than the last; being a *Monody* on the Death of his friend Edward King, son of Sir John King, secretary for Ireland, and who was lost on his passage to that country. Milton, having now remained with his father about five years, obtained on the death of his mother, the liberty which he so ardently desired, to travel; he left England in 1638; first, went to Paris, where he visited the celebrated Grotius, and thence hasted into Italy, whose language and literature he studied with uncommon diligence. There he was received with marked attention by the learned and great; for, notwithstanding the undissembled openness of his political and religious opinions, he was introduced to a musical entertainment by Cardinal Barberini, (afterwards Pope Urban the 8th,) in person, who waited for him at the door, and led him by the hand into the assembly. From Rome he went to Naples; where he was received with no less respect by Manso, Marquis of Villa, who had been before the patron of Tasso: after which, he visited the rest of Italy, caressed and honoured by every one, conspicuous for high rank or distinguished abilities. Among the last was the great Galileo, whom he did not omit to visit, although, at that time, a prisoner in the Inquisition, for having taught the annual and diurnal motions of the earth! After having spent two years in his travels, which were designed to extend to Sicily and Greece, on hearing of the troubles in his native country, he hasted home, judging it criminal, to remain indifferent, or to indulge in amusements while his countrymen were contending



for their liberties. On his return, he took a house in Aldersgate-street, where he superintended the education of his nephews, by his sister; and also received other young gentlemen to be boarded and instructed. In his 35th year, he married Mary, the daughter of Richard Powel, Esq. of Forrest-hill, Oxfordshire; but a separation, or rather a desertion on the wife's part, took place in a month after the ceremony; on her refusing to return in compliance with repeated requisitions, he was so provoked, that he was induced to publish several treatises on the doctrine of divorce, and also to pay his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty. A reconciliation was the consequence, for his wife, in an unexpected interview, throwing herself at his feet, implored his forgiveness; impressed with this event, he is said to have conceived the pathetic scene in *Paradise Lost*, in which Eve addressed herself to Adam, for pardon and peace.

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Her lowly plight  
 Immoveable, till peace obtained from fault  
 Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought  
 Commiseration; soon his heart relented  
 Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,  
 Now at his feet submissive in distress!  
 Creature so fair, his reconcilment seeking,  
 His counsel whom she had displeased, his aid:  
 As one disarmed, his anger all he lost.

From this period till the Restoration, our author was so deeply engaged in the controversies of the times, that he found no leisure for polite literature. The *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, however, appeared in a collection of Latin and English poems, published in 1645. These delightful pieces are, undoubtedly, the two best descriptive poems that ever were written;



had he left no other monuments but *Comus*, *Lycidas*, and the *Matchless Pair*, yet they alone, would be sufficient to render his name immortal. They were, however, little noticed on their publication, and remained for near a century disregarded, or at least scarcely known; while his polemical tracts, (now only in their titles remembered,) made their author's fortune, and spread his fame over Europe: of these the most celebrated, is, his "*Defensio Populi Anglicani*," or "*Defence of the English People*," in answer to *Salmasius*, professor of polite literature at *Leyden*; who was employed by *Charles the 2nd* when in exile, to write the "*Defensio Regis*," or "*Defence of the King*." Milton's piece was so severe, and so much admired, that it is said to have killed his antagonist with vexation.\* For this tract, he was rewarded

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\* This celebrated controversy was of that magnitude, that all Europe took a part in the paper-war of these great men. *Salmasius* was a man of vast erudition, but no taste. His writings are learned, but sometimes ridiculous. The opening of his *Defensio Regis*, provokes a laugh:—

"Englishmen, who toss the heads of Kings as so many tennis balls; who play with crowns as if they were bowls; who look upon sceptres as so many crooks!" He reproaches *Milton*, as being but a puny piece of Man; an homunculus; a dwarf deprived of the human figure; a bloodless being, composed of nothing but skin and bone; a contemptible pedagogue, fit only to flog his boys; and sometimes, elevating his mind into a poetic frenzy, he applies to him the words of *Virgil*, '*Monstrum, horrendum, informe ingens, cui lumen ademptum*,' 'A monster, horrid, hideous, huge and blind.'

To this senseless declamation, our great Poet made a spirited reply, and concluded with these words; 'Even my eyes, blind as they are, are unblemished in their appearance,—in this alone, and much against my inclination, I am a deceiver!'



with £1000, a sum 20 times greater than he made by all his Poetical works put together! and was also promoted to be Latin secretary to the Protector. On the second of May, 1652, his family was increased by the birth of his fourth child, Deborah; and the mother dying in child-bed, he was left with three orphan daughters in domestic solitude, and in a state rapidly advancing to blindness.

The prediction of his Physicians was now hastening to its fatal accomplishment; his sight naturally weak, and impaired by incessant study, from the earliest periods of his life, had for several years been sensibly declining; and when he engaged in his last great work, had discovered symptoms of approaching extinction. In the course of that honourable labour, he entirely lost the vision of one eye, and that of the other closing soon afterwards, he was resigned to total darkness.

The fortitude with which he supported himself under this afflicting privation, is admirably discovered in that Sonnet to his friend Cyriac Skinner, the grandson of the great Lord Coke, which I shall now transcribe. I could never read it without paying to its author the profound homage of my respect.

Cyriac, this three-years day, these eyes, though clear  
To outward view, of blemish, or of spot,  
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;  
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear  
Of sun, or moon, or star throughout the year!  
Or man, or woman!—yet I argue not  
Against Heaven's hand, nor will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart, or hope, but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?—



The conscience, friend, to have lost them, overplied  
 In liberty's defence, my noble task,  
 Of which all Europe rings from side to side :  
 This thought might lead me through the world's vain  
                   mask,  
 Content, though blind, had I no other guide.

Of the completion of this misfortune, the date is by no means accurately settled. All his biographers, with the exception of Todd, place it in 1654 ; but it unquestionably happened in some antecedent period, as appears by his letter to Phalaris, written in the autumn of that year ;\* and we know, that when

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\* Known to you only by my writings, and widely separated in our abodes, I was first honoured by your kind correspondence ; and afterwards, when an unexpected occasion brought you to London, with the same kindness you came to see me, who could see no-body. One labouring under an affliction which can entitle him to little observation, and may perhaps expose him to much disregard. As, however, you entreat me not to abandon all hopes of recovering my sight, and state that you have a Medical friend at Paris, (M. Thevenot,) particularly eminent as an oculist, whom you could consult upon the subject, if I would transmit to you the causes, and the symptoms of my disease ; that I may not seem to neglect any means, perhaps divinely suggested, of relief, I will hasten to comply with your requisition. It is now, I think, about ten years since I first perceived my sight to grow weak and dim, and at the same time my spleen and other viscera heavy and flatulent. When I sate down to read, as usual, in the morning, my eyes gave me considerable pain, and refused their office till fortified by moderate exercise of body. If I looked at a candle it appeared surrounded with an iris. In a little time a darkness covering the left side of the left eye, which was partially clouded some years before the other, intercepted the



he was visited by his Athenian friends, at a time not greatly posterior to the publication of his defence, he was totally blind. Todd has noticed in Thurloe's state papers, a letter from the Hague, dated June 20, 1653, in which Milton is mentioned as blind. We must conclude, therefore, that his total loss of sight, soon followed the publication of his answer to Salmasius, and happened early in 1652. He was forewarned

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view of all things in that direction. Objects, also in front, seemed to dwindle in size, whenever I closed my right eye.

This eye, too, for three years gradually failing; a few months previous to my total blindness, while I was perfectly stationary, every thing seemed to swim backward and forward; and now thick vapours appear to settle on my forehead and temples, which weigh down my eye-lids, with an oppressive sense of drowsiness.

I ought not, however, to omit mentioning, that, before I wholly lost my sight, as soon as I lay down in bed, and turned on either side, brilliant flashes of light used to issue from my closed eyes, and afterwards on the gradual failure of my powers of vision, colours proportionably dim and faint, seemed to rush out with a degree of vehemence, and a kind of noise. These have now faded into uniform blackness, such as ensues on the extinction of a candle; or blackness only varied, and intermingled with dunnish grey. The constant darkness, however, in which I live day and night, inclines more to a whitish than to a blackish tinge; and the eye turning round, admits as through a narrow chink, a very small portion of light. But this, though perhaps it may offer a similar glimpse of hope to the Physician, does not prevent me from making up my mind to my case, as one evidently beyond the hope of cure; and I often reflect, that as many days of darkness, according to the wise man, are allotted to us all, mine, (which by the favour of the Deity, are divided between leisure and study,) are recreated by the conversation and intercourse of my friends, and



by his physicians of the contingent calamity, and in the alternative of evils, preferred the loss of sight to the dereliction of his duty.

Milton, however, did not long remain a widower; he shortly after married Catherine, daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney: she seems to have been the object of her husband's fondest affection; and like her predecessor, dying in child-bed, within a year after her marriage, she was lamented by him in a pleasing and pathetic Sonnet, which will be felt by every sensible bosom; it may not be irrelevant to remark, that the thought in its concluding line, which on a cursory view may be branded as a conceit, is strictly correct and just. In his dreams, a blind man may expatiate in the full blaze of the sun, and the morning, in which he awakes, unquestionably restores him to his darkness. The fault is in the expression alone—"I waked, she fled, and I replunged in night;" would perhaps be sufficiently unexceptionable.

Methought I saw my late espoused saint,  
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,

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far more agreeable than those deadly shades of which Solomon is speaking: but if, as it is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God:' why should not each of us likewise acquiesce in the reflection, that he derives the benefit of sight, not from his eyes alone, but from the guidance, and providence of the same Supreme Being, whilst he looks out and provides for me as he does, and leads me about, as it were with his hand, through the paths of life, I willingly surrender my own faculty of vision, in conformity to his good pleasure, and with a heart as strong and steadfast as if I were a Lynceus, I bid you my Phalaris farewell.



Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave;  
Rescued from death, by force, though pale and faint  
Mine was, whom washed from spot of child-bed taint  
Purification in the old law did save,  
And such, as yet once more I trust to have  
Full sight of her in heaven without restraint;  
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind;  
Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight,  
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined,  
So clear as in no face with more delight:  
But oh! as to embrace me she inclined—  
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night!

The daughter whom she bore him, soon followed her to the tomb. On the Restoration, he was obliged to quit his house, together with his employment, and to secret himself in an obscure abode, in Bartholomew Close: his friends had some difficulty to prevent him being excepted in the act of oblivion; to lull research, and to gain time, they had recourse to the expedient of a mock funeral. By the act of oblivion he was at last freed from danger, but his polemical writings were burnt by the common hangman. From Bartholomew Close he removed to Jewry street, and married for his third wife, Elizabeth Minstur, daughter to a gentleman in Cheshire. He was now in his 52d year, blind, infirm, and comparatively poor, for he had lost by the civil wars his paternal estate, and by the Restoration his acquired property; but neither his infirmities, nor the vicissitudes of fortune, could depress the vigour of his mind, or prevent him from executing a design he had long conceived, of writing an heroic poem. The great work of *Paradise Lost*, was finished in 1665, at Chalfont, in Bucks, where the author had taken refuge from the plague; and



published in 1667, when he returned to London. He sold the copy to Samuel Simmons for five pounds in hand, and five pounds more when 1300 copies should be sold, and the same sum, on the publication of the second and third editions, for each edition. Of this agreement, Milton received £15, and his widow afterwards sold her claims for £8. Such was the first reception of a work, which constitutes the glory and boast of English literature; a work which, notwithstanding the severity of criticism, may be ranked among the noblest efforts of human genius; for though in variety of character and choice of subject, it may yield to some; yet in grandeur and sublimity it is confessedly superior to all. The measure of this divine poem is blank verse, between which and rhyme there are endless disputes for pre-eminence—but surely the essential qualities of poetry can no more depend on either, than those of a man on the fashion of his clothes. Dr. Johnson, who could not endure blank verse, yet confesses, that “he could not prevail on himself to wish that Milton had been a rhymers.” *Paradise Lost* is not however without faults; perfection in this life is unattainable. The attempt of the author to give language and sentiment to the Deity, is where he seems to have failed most in the execution; but in such an attempt, what mortal could have succeeded? Other exceptions it has endured in passing the fiery ordeal of Doctor Johnson’s criticism; yet, every reader capable of relishing true poetry, will agree with him in concluding, that “this is not the greatest of heroic poems,” only because it is not the first.



Three years after the publication of *Paradise Lost*, he published *Sampson Agonistes*, a tragedy in the purest style of the Greek Drama, and *Paradise Regained*; which he is said to have preferred to his great work, but in which preference, he remains alone. *Paradise Regained* has suffered much in the comparison. It is said the following circumstance gave rise to this poem: Elwood, the quaker, who had been introduced to him for the purpose of improving himself by the perusal of the classical writers, suggested the idea of such a work just before he came to Chalfont, and the Poet presented him with it on his return to London. Milton had indeed given him the perusal of *Paradise Lost* in manuscript, who, having read it, upon returning the copy put this quaint interrogation,—“What hast thou to say to *Paradise found*?” This simple, yet natural question gave rise to *Paradise Regained*; a work as much obscured by the splendour of *Paradise Lost*, as the lustre of the morning star by the sun’s meridian blaze; but if any other than Milton had been the author, it would have justly claimed, and received universal praise. Our great Poet, at last worn out by the gout, paid the debt of nature on the 10th of November, 1674, in his 66th year, at his house in Bunhill-fields, and was buried in St. Giles’s, Cripplegate; his funeral was splendidly and numerously attended. On the Restoration, Milton’s friends were greatly alarmed for his safety, lest he should be proceeded against as a regicide: they therefore used all their influence to procure him a pardon, in which, I am happy to say, they succeeded. The Government contented themselves with calling



him before the house, as may be seen by the following extract from the journal of the House of Commons.\*

Milton seems to have been saved principally by the earnest and grateful interposition of Sir William Davenant, who had been captured by the fleet of the Commonwealth, on his passage from France to America, and had been ordered, by the Parliament in 1651, on his trial before the High Court of Justice: the mediation of Milton, had essentially contributed to snatch him from danger; and urged by that generous benevolence which shone conspicuously in his character, he was now eager to requite, with a gift of equal value, the life which he had received. For the existence of Davenant's obligation to Milton, we have the testimony of Wood, and for the subsequent part of the story, so interesting in itself, and so honourable to human nature, the evidence is directly to be traced from Richardson to Pope, and from Pope to Betterton, the immediate client and intimate of Davenant.

His nuncupative Will, which has lately been discovered in the Prerogative Registry, and published by Mr. Warton, opens a glimpse into the interior of Milton's House, and shows him to have been amiable

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\* *Saturday, 15th December, 1660.*—"Ordered, that Mr. Milton now in custody of the Sergeant attending this house, be forthwith released, paying his fees." A complaint made, that the sergeant at arms had demanded excessive fees for the imprisonment of Mr. Milton, the House again

"Ordered—that it be referred to a committee of privileges, to examine this business, and to call Mr. Milton and the sergeant before them, and to determine what is fit to be given to the sergeant for his fees in this case."



and injured in that private scene, in which alone he has generally been considered as liable to censure, or perhaps, rather not entitled to our affection. In this Will, and in the paper connected with it, we find the venerable father complaining of his "unkind children," for leaving and neglecting him, because he is blind; and we see him compelled, as it were, by their injurious conduct, to appeal against them, even to his servants. We are assured also, by the deposition on oath, of one of these servants, that his complaints were not extorted by slight wrongs, or uttered by capricious passion on slight provocations; that his children, (with the exception probably of Deborah, who, at the time immediately in question, was not more than nine years old,) would occasionally sell his books to the dunghill-women, as the witness calls them; that these were capable of combining with the maid-servant, and advising her to cheat her master and their father in her marketings; and that one of them, Mary, on being told that her father was to be married, replied, "that is no news, but if I could hear of his death, that were something."

Much has been said on the unequal flow of our Poet's genius; and by some it has been represented as under the influence of particular seasons, while by others it has been regarded as the effect of immediate and positive inspiration. Phillips declares, that his uncle's poetic faculty was vivid only in the winter, and Toland assigns the spring, as the season of its peculiar activity; while Richardson, with a proper respect to the ardent character of the author's mind, expresses a doubt whether such a work could be suffered for any



considerable period to stand absolutely still. Phillips, to whom his relation was accustomed to shew the poem in its progress, informs us, that not having seen any verses for some time; on the approach of summer, he requested to know the cause of what appeared to him to be extraordinary; and that he received as a reply from the poet, that "his vein never flowed happily, but from the autumnal equinox till the vernal, and that what he attempted at other times was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy ever so much." In opposition to this, and in support of his own opinion, Teland adduces the information given to him by a friend of Milton's, and the testimony of the bard himself, who, in his beautiful elegy on the arrival of Spring, speaks of that delightful season, as renovating and invigorating his genius:—while the former part of this evidence cannot be poised against that of the author's confidential friend and nephew, the latter must be considered as too weak and uncertain, to be entitled to any great regard. Mrs. Milton, who survived her husband, says that he composed principally in the winter, and on his waking in the mornings, would make her write down sometimes twenty or thirty verses. On being asked whether he did not frequently read Homer and Virgil, she replied, "that, he stole from nobody but the Muse who inspired him." To a lady who inquired who that Muse was, she said, "it was God's grace, and the Holy Spirit that visited him nightly."

A small monument, with his bust, has been erected not long since, to his memory, in Westminster Abbey. Milton, in stature, did not exceed the middle size,



but was formed with perfect symmetry, and was moreover in his youth, eminently beautiful; of which many portraits yet to be seen, and the following epigram of the Marquess of Villa, are incontestible proofs.

“So perfect thou, in mind, in form, in face;

“Thou ’rt not of English, but Angelic race.”

In his habits, he was abstemious in his diet, and naturally disliked all strong liquors. In his youth he studied late, but afterwards reversed his hours. His amusements consisted in the conversation of his friends, and in music, in which he was a great proficient: after he became blind, he was assisted in his studies by his daughters, whom he taught to read Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, without their understanding any of them; and for transcribing, he employed any casual acquaintance. His literature was great; he was a perfect master of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French and Spanish; of the English Poets, he preferred Spencer, Shakespeare and Cowley: his deportment was erect, open, and affable: his conversation easy, cheerful, and instructive; his wit, on all occasions, at command, facetious, grave, or satirical, as the subject required; his judgement just and penetrating; his apprehension quick; his memory tenacious of what he read; his reading only, not so extensive as his genius, for that was universal. With so many accomplishments, not to have faults and misfortunes to be laid in the balance, with the fame and felicity of writing *Paradise Lost*, would have been too great a portion for humanity.

As Milton equalled Homer in his genius, so he equalled him in his misfortunes. Homer had reached the years of manhood before he lost his sight, so had

Milton. Homer's great work was his *Iliad*; Milton's, his *Paradise Lost*. Homer's second great work was his *Odyssey*; Milton's, his *Paradise Regained*. The *Odyssey* is as much inferior to the *Iliad*, as *Paradise Regained* is to *Paradise Lost*. Homer had Zoilius for an enemy, and Milton had Lauder. These two great Epic poets, like Saturn and Jupiter in the planetary system, shine bright stars of excellence, round which, inferior orbs for ever move in dull succession. Homer and Milton have long held the first rank among poets: the vigour of their minds; the brilliancy of their imaginations; the flights of their genius, like those of inspiration, extended to the very boundaries of time and space.

I will close these remarks with the following panegyric on Milton, by the author of the *Seasons*.

“Is not each great, each amiable muse  
 “Of classic ages in thy Milton met?  
 “A genius universal as his theme;  
 “Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom  
 “Of blowing Eden fair, as Heaven sublime.”

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#### AUTHORITIES.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
THOMAS BLACKLOCK, D. D.

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“IN manners gentle, in affection mild,  
“In wit a man, simplicity a child.”

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THE life of BLACKLOCK has a claim to notice beyond that of most of the Poets of our nation, with whom he is now associated. He who reads his Poems with that interest which their intrinsic merit deserves, will feel that interest very much increased, when he shall be told the various difficulties which their author overcame in their production; the obstacles which nature and fortune had placed in his way to the possession of those ideas which his mind acquired, to the communication of those which his Poetry unfolds.

The facts stated in the present account, are chiefly taken from the learned and ingenious Dr. Anderson's narrative, which is written with such copiousness of intelligence, as leaves little to be supplied, and such felicity of performance as precludes the most distant hope of improvement. Among the few additional particulars detailed here, the present compiler has

endeavoured to give a complete account of his writings.

Dr. Thomas Blacklock was born at Annan, in the county of Dumfries, November 10, 1721. His parents were natives of the county of Cumberland, his father was by trade a bricklayer, his mother, the daughter of a considerable dealer in cattle ; both respectable in their characters, and it would appear possessed of considerable knowledge and urbanity ; which, in a country where education was cheap, and property a good deal subdivided, was often the case with persons of their station. Before he was six months old, he was totally deprived of his sight by the small pox, and reduced to that forlorn situation, so feelingly described by himself in his soliloquy. This rendered him incapable of any of those mechanical trades, to which his father might naturally have been inclined to breed him, and his circumstances prevented his aspiring to the higher professions. The good man, therefore, kept his son in the house, and with the assistance of some of his friends, fostered that inclination which he early showed for books, by reading to amuse him ; first the simple sort of publications which are commonly put into the hands of children, and then several passages out of some of our Poets. His companions (whom his early gentleness, and kindness of disposition, as well as their compassion for his misfortune, strongly attached to him,) were very assiduous in their good offices, in reading to instruct and amuse him. By their assistance, he acquired some knowledge of the Latin tongue ; but he never was at a grammar school till at a more advanced



period of life. Poetry was even then his favourite reading, and he found an enthusiastic delight in the works of Milton, Spencer, Prior, Pope, and Addison, and in those of his countryman, Ramsay; from loving and admiring them so much, he soon was led to endeavour to imitate them, and when scarcely twelve years of age, he began to write verses. Among these early Essays of his genius, there was one addressed to a little girl whom he had offended, which is preserved in his works, and is not perhaps inferior to any of the premature compositions of boys, assisted by the best education, which are only recalled into notice by the future fame of their authors.

He had attained the age of nineteen, when his father was killed by the accidental fall of a malt-kiln belonging to his son-in-law. This loss, heavy to any one at that early age, would have been, however, to a young man possessing the ordinary advantages of education comparatively light; but to him, thus suddenly deprived of the support on which his youth had leaned, destitute almost of any resource which industry affords to those who have the blessings of sight, with a body feeble and delicate from nature, and a mind congenially susceptible, it was not surprising that this blow was doubly severe, and threw on his spirits that despondent gloom to which he then gave way, and which sometimes overclouded them in the subsequent period of his life.

Though dependent, however, he was not destitute of friends, and heaven rewarded the pious confidence which he expressed in its care, by providing for him protectors and patrons, by whose assistance he ob-



tained advantages, which had his father lived, might perhaps never have opened to him.

He lived with his mother about a year after his father's death, and began to be distinguished as a young man of uncommon parts and genius. These were at that time unassisted by learning; the circumstances of his family affording him no better education than the smattering of Latin which his companions had taught him, and the perusal and recollections of the few English authors, which they or his father, in the intervals of his professional labours had read to him.

Poetry, however, though it attains its highest perfection in a cultivated soil, grows perhaps as luxuriantly in a wild one. To Poetry he was devoted from his earliest days, and about this time several of his poetical productions began to be handed about, which considerably enlarged the circle of his friends and acquaintances.

Some of his compositions being shown to Dr. Stephenson, an eminent physician in Edinburgh, who was accidentally at Dumfries, on a professional visit, he formed the benevolent design of carrying him to the metropolis, and giving to his natural endowments, the assistance of classical education.

"He came to Edinburgh in 1741, and was enrolled," says Mr. Mackenzie, "a Student of Divinity in the University there, though at that time without any particular view of entering into the Church." But this account may be reasonably doubted; for in the University of Edinburgh, no student is admitted into the theological class, till he has completed a



course of languages and philosophy. Besides, it appears by the following letter from the Rev. Richard Batty of Kirk Andrews, (whose wife was Blacklock's cousin,) to Sir James Johnston, Bart. of Westerhall, dated January 21, 1744, and printed in the Scottish Register, 1794, that he continued at the grammar school in Edinburgh, till the beginning of 1745.

“I had a letter some time ago from Mr. Hoggan at Comlongan, signifying that Lady Annandale had spoke to you about a bursary for one Thomas Blacklock, a blind boy, who is now at the grammar school in Edinburgh. He is endued with the most surprising genius, and has been the author of a great many excellent Poems. He has been hitherto supported by the bounty of Dr. Stephenson, a gentleman in Edinburgh. I understand that there will be a bursary vacant against Candlemas; if, therefore, you would please to favour him with your interest, it will be a great charity done to a poor lad, who may do a great deal of good in his generation.”

The effect of this application is not known; but he seems to have continued his studies under the patronage of Dr. Stephenson, till the year 1745.

Of the kindness of Dr. Stephenson, he always spoke with the greatest warmth of gratitude and affection, and addressed to him his “Imitation of the first Ode of Horace.”

After he had followed his studies at Edinburgh, for four years, on the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1745, he returned to Dumfries, where he resided with Mr. M'Murdo, his brother-in law, in whose house he was treated with kindness and affection; and had



an opportunity from the society which it afforded, of considerably increasing the store of his ideas. In 1746, he published a small collection of his Poems, in octavo, at Glasgow.

After the close of the Rebellion, and complete restoration of the peace of the country, he returned to Edinburgh, and pursued his studies there for six years longer.

In 1754, he published at Edinburgh a second edition of his poems, very much improved and enlarged, in Octavo, to which was prefixed, "an account of his life in a letter to the publisher," from Mr. Gordon of Dumfries. On the title page he is designated "student of philosophy in the university of Edinburgh;" so that he was not then, as Mr. Mackenzie supposes, "enrolled a student of Divinity."

This publication attracted the attention of Mr. Spence, the patron of Dodsley, Duck, and Richardson, and other persons of indigent and uncultivated genius; who conceived a great regard for Blacklock, and formed the benevolent design of recommending him to the patronage of persons in affluence or power, by writing a very elaborate and ingenious "Account of his life, character, and poems," which he published in London, in 8vo. 1754.

During his last residence in Edinburgh, among other literary acquaintance, he obtained that of the celebrated David Hume, who, with that humanity and benevolence, for which he was distinguished, attached himself warmly to Blacklock's interests. He wrote a letter to Dodsley, March 12, 1754, containing a very favourable representation of the "goodness of



his disposition, and the beauty of his genius," which contributed to promote the subscription for an edition of his poems, in 4to, which was published at London, 1756, under the superintendence of Mr. Spence, with his "Account of the Life, Character, and Poems of Mr. Blacklock," which had been printed separately in 1754. He testified his obligations to Mr. Spence, to whom he was personally unknown, in an epistle written at Dumfries, 1759.

In the course of his education at Edinburgh, he acquired a proficiency in the learned languages, and became more a master of the French tongue than was common there, from the social intercourse, to which he had the good fortune to be admitted in the house of Provost Alexander, who had married a native of France.

At the university, he obtained a knowledge of the various branches of philosophy and theology, to which his course of study naturally led, and acquired at the same time a considerable fund of learning and information in those departments of science, and belles lettres, from which his loss of sight did not absolutely preclude him. In 1756, he published at Edinburgh, "an Essay towards Universal Etymology, or the analysis of a sentence," in octavo.

In this pamphlet, the general principles of grammar, and the definitions of the several parts of speech are given in verse; and illustrations in the form of notes, constituting the greatest part of it, are added in prose. The notes and illustrations are concise, but judicious; the verses are not remarkable for learning or poetical embellishment; the subject did not



allow it; the concluding lines however, on the advantages of grammar, are in a style more worthy of Blacklock.

In 1757, he began a course of study, with a view to give lectures on Oratory, to young gentlemen intended for the bar or the pulpit. On this occasion, he wrote to Mr. Hume, informed him of his plan, and requested his assistance in the prosecution of it. But Mr. Hume doubting the probability of its success, he abandoned the project, and then adopted the decided intention of going into the church.

After applying closely for a considerable time to the study of theology, he passed the usual trials in the presbytery of Dumfries, and was by that presbytery licensed a preacher of the Gospel in 1759.

As a preacher, he obtained high reputation, and was fond of composing Sermons. In 1760, when the nation was alarmed by a threatened invasion from the French, he published "The Right Improvement of Time, a Sermon, octavo." He seems to have imbibed pretty deeply the apprehensions of his countrymen. The sentiments it contains are just and solid, and the advices are calculated to be useful at all times, particularly in the prospect of national danger or distress.

The same year he contributed several poetical pieces to the first volume of Donaldson's "Collection of Original Poems, by Scotch gentlemen," 12mo.

Mrs. Blacklock ascribes the "Epistle on Taste," printed in this volume, as Mr. Gordon's, to Blacklock, excepting the lines relating to himself.

In 1761, he published "Faith, Hope, and Charity compared," a Sermon, octavo. Though this cannot be



called a first rate performance, it abounds with just and elegant remarks, and his favourite topic of Charity, is agreeably and forcibly illustrated.

In 1762, he married Miss Sarah Johnston, daughter of Mr. Joseph Johnston, Surgeon in Dumfries, a man of eminence in his profession, and of a character highly respected; a connection which formed the great solace and blessing of his future life, and gave him with all the tenderness of a wife, all the zealous care of a guide and a friend. This event took place a few days before his being ordained minister of Kirkcudbright, in consequence of a presentation from the crown, obtained for him by the Earl of Selkirk, a benevolent nobleman, whom Blacklock's situation and geuius had interested in his behalf. But the inhabitants of the parish, whether from an aversion to patronage, so prevalent among the lower ranks in North Britain, or from some political disputes which at that time subsisted between them and Lord Selkirk, or from those prejudices, which some of them might naturally entertain against a person deprived of sight, or perhaps from all those causes united, were so extremely disinclined to receive him as their minister, that, after a legal dispute of nearly two years, it was thought expedient by his friends, as it had always been wished by himself to compromise the matter, by resigning his right to the living, and accepting a moderate annuity in its stead.

The following anecdote of Blacklock, mentioned in Dr. Cleghorn's "*Thesis de Somno*," happened at the inn in Kirkcudbright, on the day of his ordination, and is authenticated by the testimony of Mrs. Black-



lock, who was present with Mr. Gordon and a numerous company of his friends, who dined with him on the occasion. It merits notice, both as a curious fact relative to the state of the mind in sleep, and on account of the just and elegant compliment with which it concludes.

“Dr Blacklock, one day harrassed by the censures of the populace, whereby not only his reputation, but his very existence was endangered, and fatigued with mental exertion, fell asleep after dinner. Some hours after he was called upon by a friend, answered his salutation, rose and went with him into the dining room, where some of his companions were met. He joined with two of them in a concert, singing, as usual, with taste and elegance, without missing a note, or forgetting a word; he then went to supper, and drank a glass or two of wine. His friends, however, observed him to be a little absent and inattentive; by and by he began to speak to himself, but in so low and confused a manner as to be unintelligible. At last being pretty forcibly roused, he awoke with a sudden start, unconcious of all that had happened, as till then he had continued fast asleep.” Dr. Cleghorn adds with great truth, after relating this fact:

“No one will suspect either the judgment or the veracity of Dr. Blacklock. All who knew him bear testimony to his judgment; his fame rests on a better foundation than fictitious narratives; no man delights in, or more strictly adheres, on all points, to the truth.”

With this slender provision, he removed in 1764 to Edinburgh, and to make up by his industry, a more comfortable and decent subsistence, he adopted the



plan of receiving a certain number of young gentlemen as boarders into his house, whose studies in languages and philosophy, he might, if necessary, assist. In this situation he continued till 1787; when he found his time of life and state of health required a degree of repose, which induced him to discontinue the receiving of boarders.

In the occupation which he thus exercised for so many years of his life, no teacher was, perhaps, ever more agreeable to his pupils, nor master of a family to its inmates, than Blacklock. The gentleness of his manners, the benignity of his disposition, and that warm interest in the happiness of others, which led him so constantly to promote it, were qualities that could not fail to procure him the love and regard of the young gentlemen committed to his charge; while the society, which esteem and respect for his character and genius, often assembled at his house, afforded them an advantage rarely to be found in establishments of a similar kind. In the circle of his friends, he appeared entirely to forget the privation of sight, and the melancholy, which at other times it might produce.

He entered, with the cheerful playfulness of a young man, into all the sprightly narrative, the sportful fancy, and the humorous jest that rose around him. It was a sight highly gratifying to philanthropy, to see how much a mind endowed with knowledge, kindled by genius, and above all lighted up with innocence and piety, like Blacklock's, could overcome the weight of its own calamity, and enjoy the content, the happiness and the gaiety of others. Several of those inmates of his house were students of physic, from



England, Ireland, and America; who retained in future life, all the warmth of that impression, which his friendship at this early period had made upon them; and in various quarters of the world he had friends and correspondents, from whom no length of time nor distance of place, had ever estranged him. Among his favourite correspondents may be reckoned Dr. Tucker, Author of "The Bermudian," a poem, and "The Anchoret," and Dr Downman, author of "Infancy," a poem, and other ingenious performances.

In 1766, upon the unsolicited recommendation of his friend, Dr. Beattie, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by the University of Aberdeen.

In 1767, he published "Paraclesis, or Consolation deduced from Natural and Revealed Religion;" in two dissertations. The first supposed to have been composed by Cicero, now rendered into English; the last originally written by Thomas Blacklock, D.D. 8vo.

His motive, (he tells, in a letter to a friend, prefixed to this work,) for translating the first, and writing the last treatise on Consolation, was to alleviate the pressure of repeated dissappointments, to sooth his anguish for the loss of departed friends, to elude the rage of implacable and unprovoked enemies, and to support his own mind, which, for a number of years, besides its literary difficulties, and its natural disadvantages, had maintained an incessant struggle with fortune. Of the Dissertation ascribed to Cicero, he endeavours to prove the authenticity; but his arguments are by no means satisfactory. The generality of critics have questioned its authenticity. Dr.



Middleton, in his *Life of Cicero*, says it is undoubtedly spurious. The translation is well executed; it is both faithful and elegant. The second Dissertation is mostly taken up with a clear and succinct view of the evidences of Christianity, the professed subject of it; the consolation derived from revealed religion, is touched upon towards the conclusion, though at no great length.

In 1768, he published, without his name, two Discourses on the Spirit and Evidences of Christianity. The former preached at the Hague, the 8th Sep. 1762; the latter delivered in the French Church at Hanau, on the occasion of the late peace, to a congregation composed of Catholics and Protestants; translated from the original French of the Rev. Mr. James Armand, Minister of the Walloon Church in Hanau, and dedicated by the translator to the Rev. Moderator of the General Assembly, 8vo. The Dedication, which is a long one, is chiefly intended for the perusal of the Clergy of the church of Scotland, but deserves the attentive consideration of all who are intended for, or engaged in the work of the ministry. The observations it contains are judicious and pertinent; the style is sprightly and animated; and the spirit it breathes, though sometimes remote from that charity which on other occasions he so eloquently enforced and so generally practised, is the spirit of benevolence and love to mankind. The discourses themselves are lively and animated, and the style of the translations clear, nervous, and spirited.

In 1773, he published at Edinburgh, a poem entitled, "A Panegyric on Great Britain," 8vo. This



poem, which is a kind of satire on the age, exhibits shrewdness of observation, and a sarcastic vein, which might have fitted him for satirical composition, had he chosen to employ his pen more frequently on that branch of poetry.

In music, both as a judge and a performer, his skill was considerable ; nor was he unacquainted with its principles as a science. Whether he composed much is uncertain, but there is published in the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, for 1774, "Absence," a Pastoral, set to Music, by Dr. Blacklock ; and those who have heard him sing will, upon perusal of this little piece, have the idea of his manner and taste, strikingly recalled to their recollection.

The same year he published the "Graham," an heroic ballad, in four Cantos, 4to. It was begun, he tells us in the advertisement prefixed to it, and pursued by its author to divert wakeful and melancholy hours, which the recollection of past misfortunes, and the sense of present inconveniences, would otherwise have severely embittered.

The professed intention of his "Graham," is to cherish and encourage a mutual harmony between the inhabitants of South and North Britain. To this end he has exhibited, in strong colours, some parts of those miseries which their ancient animosities had occasioned. His "Graham" is an affecting story, in which love and jealousy have a principal share ; the narration is animated and agreeable ; the fable is beautifully fancied, and sufficiently perspicuous ; the characters are boldly marked ; the manners he paints suit the times to which he refers, and the moral is



momentous ; and we perceive scattered through the whole piece, those secret graces, and those bewitching beauties, which the critic would in vain attempt to describe ; but it is perhaps too far spun out, and the stanza in which it is written is not the best chosen nor the most agreeable to the ear.

This was the last publication which he gave to the world with his name : from this time the state of his health, which had always been infirm and delicate, began visibly to decline. He frequently complained of a lowness of spirits, and was occasionally subject to deafness, which, though he seldom felt in any great degree, was sufficient in his situation, to whom the sense of hearing was almost the only channel of communication with the external world, to cause very lively uneasiness. Amidst the indispositions of body, however, and disquietudes of mind, the gentleness of his temper never forsook him, and he felt all that resignation and confidence in the Supreme Being, which his earliest and latest life equally acknowledged. In summer, 1791, he was seized with a feverish disorder, which at first seemed of a slight, and never rose to a very violent kind ; but a frame so little robust as his was not able to resist ; and after about a week's illness it carried him off on the 7th of July, 1791, in the 70th year of his age. He was interred in the burying-ground of the Chapel of Ease, in the parish of St. Cuthbert, where a decent monument was erected to his memory by his widow, who survived him several years. There is something in the character of this great man, which the good will value above every other consideration ; that was, his deep and un-



affected piety, and his resignation to the divine will ; which was evinced through his long and useful life, and shone conspicuously in the man and in the christian, and added an additional lustre to his other virtues.

In the article Blind, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, published at Edinburgh in the year 1783, which was written by him, in this little treatise, (which I will venture to recommend, not only on account of its peculiarity, as being the production of a blind man, but of its intrinsic merit,) there are no marks of any extraordinary conception of visible objects, nor any allusion to those mental images which ingenuity might suppose deducible from the descriptive passages with which his poetry abounds. It contains chiefly reflections on the distresses and disadvantages of blindness, and the best means of alleviating them ; directions for the education of the blind, and a description of various inventions for enabling them to attain and to practise several arts and sciences, from which their situation might seem to exclude them. The sympathy and active benevolence of Blacklock prompted him to this composition, as well as to a translation of M. Haüy's Account of the Charitable Institution for the Blind at Paris. "To the blind," (says this article in the *Encyclopædia*) "the visible world is totally annihilated ; he is perfectly conscious of no space but that in which he stands, or to which his extremities can reach. All the various modes of delicate proportion, all the beautiful varieties of light and colours, whether exhibited in the works of nature or art, are to the blind irretrievably lost ! Dependent for every



thing, but mere existence, on the good offices of others; obnoxious to injury from every point, which they are neither capacitated to perceive, nor qualified to resist; they are, during the present state of being, rather to be considered as prisoners at large, than citizens of nature." In that part which relates to the education of the blind, one direction is rather singular, though it seems extremely proper.

The author strongly recommends to their parents and relations to accustom them to an early exertion of their own active powers, though at the risk of their personal safety. "Parents and relations ought never to be too ready in offering their assistance to the blind in any office which they can perform, or in any acquisition which they can procure for themselves, whether they are prompted by amusement or necessity. Let a blind boy be permitted to walk through the neighbourhood without a guide, not only, though he should run some hazard, but even though he should suffer some pain. If he has a mechanical turn, let him not be denied the use of edged tools; for it is better that he should lose a little blood, or even break a bone, than be perpetually confined to the same place, debilitated in his frame, and depressed in his mind. Such a being can have no enjoyment but to feel his own weakness, and become his own tormentor; or to transfer to others all the malignity and peevishness arising from the natural, adventitious, or imaginary evils which he feels. Scars, fractures, and dislocations in his body, are trivial misfortunes compared with imbecility, timidity or fretfulness of mind. Besides the sensible and dreadful effects which inactivity



must have in relaxing the nerves, and consequently in depressing the spirits, nothing can be more productive of jealousy, envy, peevishness and every passion that corrodes the soul to agony, than a painful impression of dependence on others, and of our insufficiency to our own happiness. This impression, which even in its most improved state, will be too deeply felt by every blind man, is redoubled by that utter incapacity of action, which must result from the officious humanity of those who would anticipate or supply all his wants, who would prevent all his motions, who would do or procure every thing for him without his own interposition."

This direction was probably suggested from the author's own feeling of the want of that boldness and independence, which the means it recommends are calculated to produce.\*

"If you talk to a blind boy of invisible beings, let benevolence be an inseparable ingredient in their character. You may, if you please, tell him of departed spirits, anxious for the welfare of their surviving friends; of ministering angels, who descend with pleasure from Heaven to execute the purposes of their Maker's benignity; you may even regale his imagination with the sport of gambols and innocent

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\*"If the limbs of your blind child or pupil, be tremulous; if he is apt to start, and is easily susceptible of surprise; if he finds it difficult to sleep; if his slumbers, when commenced, are frequently interrupted, and attended with perturbation; if his ordinary exercise appear to him more terrible and more insuperable than usual; if his appetite become languid, and his digestion slow; if agreeable occurrences give him less pleasure, and adverse events more pain than they ought to inspire; this is the crisis of vigorous interposition."



frolics of fairies ; but let him hear as seldom as possible, even in stories which he knows to be fabulous, of vindictive ghosts, vindictive fiends, or avenging furies. They seize and pre-occupy every avenue of terror which is open in the soul, nor are they easily dispossessed. Sooner should we hope to exorcise a ghost, or appease a fury, than to obliterate their images in a warm and susceptible imagination, where they have been habitually impressed, and where those feelings cannot be dissipated by external phenomena. If horrors of this kind should agitate the heart of a blind boy, (which may happen, notwithstanding the most strenuous endeavours to prevent it,) the stories which he has heard will be most effectually discredited by ridicule. This, however, must be cautiously applied, by gentle and delicate gradations."

The following descriptive strokes, most of which, with a great many others, Mr. Spence has collected, are as finely drawn, and as justly coloured as sight could have made them.

"Mild gleams the purple evening o'er the plain."

"Ye vales, which to the raptured eye,  
Disclosed the flowery pride of May ;  
Ye circling hills, whose summits high,  
Blushed with the morning's earliest ray."

"Let long-lived pansies, here their scents bestow ;  
The violets languish, and the roses glow ;  
In yellow glory let the crocus shine—  
Narcissus here his love-sick head recline ;  
Here hyacinths in purple sweetness rise,  
And tulips tinged with beauty's fairest dyes."

"On rising ground, the prospect to command,  
Untinged with smoke, where vernal breezes blow,

In rural neatness let thy cottage stand ;  
Here wave a wood, and there a river flow."

"Oft on the glassy stream, with raptured eyes,  
Surveys her form in mimic sweetness rise ;  
Oft as the waters pleased reflect her face,  
Adjusts her locks, and heightens every grace."

—————"Oft while the Sun  
Darts boundless glory through the expanse of  
Heaven,

A gloom of congregated vapours rise ;  
Than night more dreadful in his blackest shroud,  
And o'er the face of things incumbent hang,  
Portending tempest ; till the source of day  
Again asserts the empire of the sky,  
And o'er the blotted scene of nature throws  
A keener splendour."

In producing such passages as the above, the genius of the author must be acknowledged. Whatever idea or impression those objects of sight produced in his mind, how imperfect soever that idea, or how different soever from the true, still the impression would be felt by a mind susceptible and warm like Blacklock's, that could not have been so felt by one of a coarser and more sluggish mould. Even the memory that could treasure up the poetical attributes and expressions of such objects, must have been assisted and prompted by poetical feeling ; and the very catalogue of words which was thus ready at command, was an indication of that ardour of soul, which, from his infancy led him,—

—————"Where the Muses haunt—  
Smit with the love of sacred song."

As the unmeaning syllables which compose a name



give to the lover or the friend emotions, which in others it were impossible they should excite, it was not on the whole surprising, that a learned foreigner, on considering Blacklock's Poems relatively to his situation, should have broke out into the following panegyric, with which I shall not be much accused of partiality if I close this account.

“Blacklock will appear to posterity a fable, as to us he is a prodigy. It will be thought a fiction, a paradox, that a man blind from his infancy, besides having made himself so much a master of various foreign languages, should be a great Poet in his own ; and without having hardly ever seen the light, should be so remarkably happy in description.”

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#### AUTHORITIES.

ANDERSON'S Lives of the Poets—MACKENZIE'S Life of BLACKLOCK—SPENCE'S Life of BLACKLOCK.

THE LIFE  
OF  
NICHOLAS SAUNDERSON,

L.L.D. F.R.S.

*And Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge.*

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“Here Nature opens all her secret springs,  
And Heaven-born Science plumes her eagle wings.”

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THERE is no department of human knowledge, in which the blind have not distinguished themselves; many of them have attained the highest academical honours, that their own, or foreign Universities could confer upon them. It is certainly a spectacle highly gratifying to the benevolent mind, to contemplate such men, eliciting light from darkness; and to learn by what progressive steps they have been enabled to make their way through life in despite of the most discouraging obstacles, with no other guide but industry and genius, even to the very summit of science. Dr. Saunderson, the subject of the present essay, was a striking proof of the justness of the above remarks.

This great man was born at Thurlston, in Yorkshire, in 1682; when he was but 12 months old, he lost not only his eye-sight, but even his very eyeballs, by the small pox, so that he could retain no



more ideas of vision, than if he had been born blind. At an early age, however, being of very promising parts, he was sent to the free School at Penniston, and there laid the foundation of that knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, which he afterwards improved so far by his own application to the Classic Authors, as to hear the works of Euclid, Archimedes and Diophantes, read in the original Greek.

Having acquired a grammatical education, his father, who was in the Excise, instructed him in the common rules of arithmetic ; and here it was that his excellent mathematical genius first appeared ; for he very soon became able to work the common questions ; to make very long calculations by the strength of memory, and to form new rules for himself, for the better resolving of such questions as are often proposed to learners as trials of skill. At the age of 18, our author was introduced to Richard West, Esq. of Underbank, who being a great lover of mathematics, and observing Saunderson's uncommon capacity, took the trouble of instructing him in the principles of Algebra and Geometry, and gave him every encouragement in his power to the prosecution of these studies. Soon after this, he became acquainted also with Dr. Nettleton, who took the same pains with him ; and it was to these two gentlemen that Saunderson owed his first instruction in the mathematical science ; they furnished him with books, and often read and explained them to him. But he soon surpassed his masters, and became fitter to teach, than to learn from them. He was now sent to a private academy at Attercliff, near Sheffield, where logic and



metaphysics were chiefly taught; but these sciences not suiting his turn of mind, he soon left the academy. He lived for some time in the country without any instructor; but such was the vigour of his own mind that few instructions were necessary; he only required books and a reader. His father, besides the place he had in the Excise, possessed also a small property; but being burdened with a numerous family, and finding a difficulty in supporting him, his friends began to think of providing both for his education and maintenance; and having remarked his clear and perspicuous manner of communicating his ideas, suggested the propriety of his attending the University of Cambridge as a teacher of mathematics, whither his own inclination strongly led him. Accordingly he went to Cambridge in 1707, being then 25 years of age, accompanied by Joshua Dunn, Fellow Commoner of Christ's College, and his fame in a short time filled the University. Though he was not acknowledged a member of the College, yet he was treated with great attention and respect. He was allowed a chamber and had free access to the library. Mr. Whiston was at that time professor of mathematics; and as he read lectures in the way that Saunderson intended, it was to be expected that he would view his project as an invasion of his office. But being a good-natured man, and a lover of learning, instead of meditating any opposition, the plan was no sooner mentioned to him than he freely gave his consent in behalf of so uncommon a genius. While thus employed in explaining the principles of the Newtonian Philosophy, he became acquainted with its



illustrious author. He was also known to Halley, Cotes, Dr. Moore, and many other eminent mathematicians.

Upon the removal of Mr. Whiston from his professorship, Saunderson's merit was thought so much superior to that of any other competitor, that an extraordinary step was taken in his favour, to qualify him as the statutes require. The heads of the University applied to their Chancellor, the Duke of Somerset, who procured the Royal Mandate to confer on him the degree of A. M. in consequence of which he was elected Lucasian professor of mathematics, in Nov. 1711. Sir Isaac Newton interesting himself much on the occasion. His inauguration speech was composed in Classical Latin, and in the style of Cicero, with whose works he had been much conversant. From this time he applied himself closely to the reading of lectures, and gave up his whole time to his pupils. He continued to reside among the gentlemen of Christ's College, till the year 1723; when he took a house in Cambridge, and shortly afterwards married the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Dickens, Rector of Boxworth, in Cambridgeshire, by whom he had a son and a daughter. When George the II. in 1728, visited the University, he requested to see Professor Saunderson. In compliance with this desire, he waited on his Majesty in the Senate House, and was then by the King's command created Dr. of Laws. He was admitted a member of the Royal Society, in 1736.

Dr. Saunderson was naturally of a vigorous and healthy constitution; but having confined himself to a sedentary life, he at length became scorbutic; and in the spring of 1739, he complained of a numbness



in his limbs, which ended in a mortification in his foot; and unfortunately his blood was so vitiated by the scurvy, that assistance from medicine was not to be expected. When informed that his death was approaching, he remained for a short time calm and silent; but he soon recovered his former vivacity, and conversed with his accustomed ease. He died on the 19th April, 1739, aged 57 years, and was buried at his own request in the Chancel of Boxworth.

Dr. Reid, who was an intimate friend of Saunderson, in speaking of his scientific acquirements, observes, "one who never saw the light, may be learned and knowing in every science, even in optics; and may make discoveries in every branch of philosophy. He may understand as much as another man, not only of the order, distances, and motions of the heavenly bodies; but of the nature of light, and of the laws of the reflexion and refraction of its rays. He may understand distinctly how those laws produce the phenomena of the rainbow, the prism, the camera obscura, and the magic lantern, and all the powers of the microscope and telescope." This is a fact sufficiently attested by experience.

"Dr. Saunderson understood the projection of the sphere, and the common rules of perspective; and if he did, he must have understood all that I have mentioned. If there were any doubt of Dr. Saunderson's understanding these things, I could mention having heard him say in conversation, that he found great difficulty in understanding Dr. Halley's demonstration of that proposition—that the angles made by the circles of the sphere, are equal to the angles made by



their representatives in the stereographic projection ! but, said he, when I laid aside that demonstration, and considered the proposition in my own way, I saw clearly that it must be true. Another gentleman, of undoubted credit and judgment in these matters, who had part in this conversation, remembers it distinctly."

Saunderson, we are told, though blind, could lecture on the prismatic spectrum, and on the theory of the rainbow. It is even conceivable, that by long habits of poetical reading, he might have become capable of producing such a description of their order, in the spectrum, as is contained in the following lines of Thomson.\*

There was scarcely any part of the science on which he had not composed something ; but he discovered no intention of publishing any thing till by the persuasion of his friends, he prepared his elements of Algebra for the press ; which was published by subscription in two volumes, quarto, 1740.

He left many other writings, though none perhaps prepared for the press ; among these were some valuable comments on Newton's Principia, which not only

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\* ————— "First, the flaming red,  
Sprung vivid forth ; the tawny orange next,  
And next delicious yellow, by whose side  
Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing green ;  
Then the pure blue, that swells autumnal skies,  
Etherial played, and then of sadder hue,  
Emerg'd and deepened indigo, as when  
The heavy-skirted evening droops with frost,  
While the last gleamings of refracted light,  
Died in the fainting violet away."

explain the more difficult parts, but often improve upon the doctrines. These are published in Latin, at the end of his posthumous Treatise on Fluxions; a valuable work, published in octavo, 1756.

His manuscript Lectures, too, on most parts of natural philosophy, might make a considerable volume, and prove an acceptable present to the public if printed.

Dr. Saunderson, as to his character, was a man of much wit and vivacity in conversation, and esteemed an excellent companion. He was endued with a great regard to truth, and was such an enemy to disguise, that he thought it his duty to speak his thoughts at all times with unrestrained freedom. Hence his sentiments on men and opinions; his friendship, or disregard, were expressed without reserve;—a sincerity which raised him many enemies. A blind man moving in the sphere of a mathematician, seems to be a phenomenon difficult to be accounted for, and has excited the admiration of every age in which it has appeared. Tully mentions it as a thing scarcely credible in his own master in philosophy, Diodotus, that he exercised himself in it with more assiduity after he became blind; and, what he thought next to impossible, to be done without sight, that he professed geometry, describing his diagrams so exactly to his scholars, that they could draw every line in its proper direction. But if we consider that the ideas of extended quantity, which are the chief objects of mathematics, may as well be acquired by the sense of touch, as by that of sight, that a fixed and steady attention is the principal qualification for this study,



and that the blind are, by necessity, more abstracted than others, (for which reason it is said, that Democritus put out his eyes that he might think more intensely) we shall perhaps find reason to suppose that there is no branch of science so much adapted to their circumstances. At first Dr. Saunderson acquired most of his ideas by the sense of touch; and this, as is commonly the case with the blind, he enjoyed in great perfection. Yet he could not, as some are said to have done, distinguish colours by that sense; for after having made repeated trials, he used to say, it was pretending to impossibilities. But he could with great nicety and exactness observe the smallest degree of roughness, or defect of polish, in a surface. Thus, in a set of Roman medals, he distinguished the genuine from the false, though they had been counterfeited with such exactness as to deceive a connoisseur who had judged from the eye. By the sense of touch also, he distinguished the least variation; and he has been seen in a garden, when observations were making on the sun, to take notice of every cloud that interrupted the observation, almost as justly as they could see it. He could also tell when any thing was held near his face, or when he passed by a tree at no great distance, merely by the different impulse of the air on his face. His ear was also equally exact; he could readily distinguish the fifth part of a note by the quickness of this sense; he could judge of the size of a room, and of his distance from the wall. And if he ever walked over a pavement in courts or piazzas which reflected sound, and was afterwards conducted thither again, he could tell in what part of the walk he



had stood, merely by the note it sounded. Dr. Saunderson had a peculiar method of performing arithmetical calculations, by an ingenious machine and method which has been called his "Palpable Arithmetic," and is particularly described in a piece prefixed to the first volume of his *Algebra*. That he was able to make long and intricate calculations, both arithmetical and algebraical, is a thing as certain as it is wonderful. He had contrived for his own use, a commodious notation for any large numbers which he could express on his abacus, or calculating table, and with which he could readily perform any arithmetical operation by the sense of touch only, for which reason it was called his palpable arithmetic.

His calculating table was a thin smooth board, a little more than a foot square, raised upon a small frame, so as to lie hollow, which board was divided into a great number of little squares, by lines intersecting one another perpendicularly, and parallel to the sides of the table, and the parallel lines only one tenth of an inch from each other, so that every square inch of the table was thus divided into one hundred little squares.

At every point of intersection, the board was perforated by small holes, capable of receiving a pin; for it was by the help of pins stuck up to the head through these holes, that he expressed his numbers. He used two sorts of pins, a large and a smaller sort, at least their heads were different, and might easily be distinguished by touch. Of these pins he had a large quantity in two boxes, with their points cut off, which always stood ready before him when he calcu-



lated. The writer of that account describes particularly the whole process of using the machine, and concludes—"He could place and displace his pins with incredible nimbleness and facility, much to the pleasure and surprise of all the beholders. He could even break off in the middle of a calculation, and resume it when he pleased, and could presently know the condition of it, by only drawing his fingers gently over the table."

Saunderson's method of calculation deserves particular notice, not merely because it is the production of a blind man, but because it is calculated to be useful to such of the blind as may make mathematics their study.

Many blind philosophers of great eminence have derived advantages from Saunderson's invention. It has enabled them to make out their long and difficult calculations, which they perhaps never would have been able to accomplish without its assistance. Among those I may mention the names of Grenville, Moyes, and Ward. For a more particular description of this curious contrivance, the reader is referred to the following letter, from M. Diderot to a lady :—

"This Saunderson, madam, is an author deprived of sight, with whom it may not be foreign to our purpose to amuse you. They relate prodigies of him ; and of these prodigies there is not one, which his progress in the Belles Lettres and his mathematical attainments do not render credible. The same instrument served him for algebraical calculations, and for the construction of rectilineal figures. You would not perhaps be sorry that I should give you an ex-

plication of it, if you thought your mind previously qualified to understand it, and you shall soon perceive that it pre-supposes no intellectual preparations, of which you are not already mistress; and that it would be extremely useful to you if you should ever be seized with the inclination of making long calculations by touch." (*See Transactions of the French Academy.*)

Mr. Saunderson, in mathematical learning, was equal to any of his time, and in the address of a teacher, perhaps superior to all. Whatever pieces, therefore, the world may be favoured with from so excellent a master, cannot fail of meeting with a kind reception; and his work on the method of fluxions, though far from being a complete system of the fluxionary calculus, will prove of the utmost advantage to students in this branch of science. That perspicuity—that simple analysis and elegant construction, for which Dr. Saunderson was so remarkable, and so justly celebrated, appear through this whole treatise. The consummate master, and finished teacher, are here fully displayed in a judicious choice of examples, and the perspicuous method of solving and applying them.

What the Doctor has given us, (says a learned writer very justly) upon Mr. Cotes' Logometria, is particularly valuable, as by his intimate acquaintance with that extraordinary person, he may be presumed to have understood his writings better than any one at that time living, (Dr. Smith only excepted) to whose superior genius and faithful care, the world is so much indebted for the improvement, as well as the preser-



vation of Mr. Cotes' Works. But we are much mistaken if the latter part of this treatise, we mean his explanation of the chief propositions of Sir Isaac Newton's Principia, does not prove as valuable as what he has given us on the writings of Mr. Cotes. Every person who has attempted the arduous study of Sir Isaac's Principia, must be sufficiently acquainted with the difficulties of fully comprehending the demonstrations in that illustrious author. Dr. Saunderson has removed many of these difficulties, and thereby rendered the study of the Principia much pleasanter and easier, than it was before.

We have already observed, that this treatise is not a complete system of the Fluxionary Calculus; its readers must, therefore, be previously acquainted with the elementary parts of Fluxions, or assisted *viva voce*, by a master. With either of these helps, he will find it one of the most useful treatises that has hitherto appeared on the subject.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
LEONARD EULER,

*Professor of Mathematics in the Royal Academy of St. Petersburg, and Member of the Royal Societies of London, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and Stockholm.*

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“To him the motion of each orb was known,  
That wheels around the Sun’s refulgent throne;  
He saw the Moon thro’ Heav’n’s blue concave glide,  
And into motion charm the expanding tide,  
While earth impetuous round her axis rolls—  
Exalts her watery zone and sinks the poles.”

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AMONG those eminent Philosophers who, by their lives and writings, have rendered so much service to mankind, is Leonard Euler—a man whose cultivated mind and high intellectual attainments, and above all his deep and unaffected piety, have rendered him the ornament of his country, and will transmit his name to posterity, not only as one of the greatest men, but also as one of the best the world has ever yet produced.

LEONARD EULER was the son of a Clergyman in the neighbourhood of Basil, and was born on the 15th



of April, 1707. His natural turn for mathematics soon appeared from the eagerness and facility with which he became master of the elements under the instruction of his father, by whom he was sent to the University of Basil at an early age. There, his abilities and his application were so distinguished, that he attracted the particular notice of John Bernoulli. That excellent mathematician seemed to look forward to the youth's future achievements in science, while his own kind care strengthened the powers by which they were to be accomplished. In order to superintend his studies, which far outstripped the usual routine of the public lectures, he gave him a private lesson regularly once a week, when they conversed together on the acquisitions which the pupil had been making since their last interview, considered whatever difficulties might have occurred in his progress, and arranged the reading and exercises for the ensuing week. Under such eminent advantages, the capacity of Euler did not fail to make rapid improvements; and in his seventeenth year, the degree of Master of Arts was conferred on him. On this occasion, he received high applause for his probationary discourse, the subject of which was a comparison between the Cartesian and Newtonian systems.

His father having all along intended him for his successor, enjoined him now to relinquish his mathematical studies, and to prepare himself by those of theology and general erudition, for the ministerial functions;—after some time, however, had been consumed, this plan was given up. His father, a man of



learning and liberality, abandoned his own views, for those to which the inclination and talents of his son were so powerfully directed; persuaded that in thwarting the propensities of genius there is a sort of impiety against nature, and that there would be real injustice to mankind, in smothering those abilities which were evidently destined to extend the boundaries of science. Leonard was permitted, therefore, to resume his favourite pursuits; and at the age of nineteen, transmitting two Dissertations to the Academy of Sciences at Paris—one on the masting of ships, and the other on the velocity of sound; he commenced that splendid career which continued for so long a period the admiration and glory of Europe.

About the same time he stood candidate for a vacant professorship in the University of Basil; but having lost the election, he resolved, in consequence of this disappointment, to leave his native country; and in 1727, he set out for Petersburg, where his friends, the young Bernoullis, had settled about two years before, and he flattered himself with prospects of literary preferment, under the patronage of Catharine the 1st. Those prospects, however, were not immediately realised, nor was it till after he had been frequently and long disappointed, that he obtained any settlement. His first appointment appears to have been the chair of natural philosophy; and when Daniel Bernoulli removed from Petersburg, Euler succeeded him as professor of the mathematics. In this situation he remained many years, engaged in the most laborious researches, enriching the academical collections of the continent with papers of the highest value, and



producing almost daily improvements in the various branches of physical, and more particularly analytical science. In 1741, he complied with a pressing invitation from Frederic the great, and resided at Berlin till 1766. Throughout this period he continued the same literary labours, directed by the same wonderful sagacity and comprehension of intellect. As he advanced with his own discoveries and inventions, the field of knowledge seemed to widen before his view, and new subjects still multiplied on him for farther speculation. The toils of intense study only seemed to invigorate his future exertions. Nor did the energy of Euler's powers give way, even when the organs of the body were overpowered; for in the year 1765, having completed in three days certain astronomical calculations, which the academy called for in haste, but which several mathematicians of eminence had declared could not be performed within a shorter period than some months; the intense application threw him into a fever, in which he lost the sight of one eye. Shortly after his return to Petersburg, he became totally blind. It was in this situation that he dictated to his servant, a tailor's apprentice, (who was absolutely devoid of mathematical knowledge,) his Elements of algebra; which, by their intrinsic merit, in point of perspicuity and method, and the unhappy circumstances under which they were composed, have equally excited applause and astonishment. This work, though purely elementary, discovers the palpable characteristics of an inventive genius;—and it is here alone we meet with a complete theory of the analysis of Diophantus. About



this time, Euler was honoured by the Academy of Sciences at Paris, with the place of one of the foreign members of that learned body; and after this, the academical prize was adjudged to three of his memoirs, concerning the inequalities in the motions of the planets. The two prize questions proposed by the same Academy for 1770 and 1772, were designed to obtain from the labours of Astronomers a more perfect theory of the Moon. Euler, assisted by his eldest son, was a competitor for these prizes, and obtained them both. In this last memoir, he reserved for farther consideration several inequalities of the moon's motion, which he could not determine in his first theory, on account of the complicated calculations in which the method he then employed had engaged him. He had the courage afterwards to review his whole theory, with the assistance of his son, and Messrs. Krafft and Lexell, and pursue his researches until he had constituted the new tables, which appeared, together with the great work in 1772. Instead of confining himself, as before, to the fruitless integration of three differential equations of the second degree, which are furnished by mathematical principles, he reduced, them to the three ordinates which determine the place of the Moon: he divided into classes all the inequalities of that planet, as far as they depend, either on the elongation of the Sun and Moon, or upon the eccentricity or the parallax, or the inclination of the lunar orbit. All these means of investigation, employed with such art and dexterity as could only be expected from an analytical genius of the first order, were attended with



the greatest success ; and it is impossible to observe, without admiration, such immense calculations on the one hand, and on the other the ingenious methods employed by this great man to abridge them, and to facilitate their application to the real motion of the Moon. But this admiration will become astonishment when we consider at what period, and under what circumstances all this was effected by Euler. It was when he was totally blind, and consequently obliged to arrange all his computations by the sole powers of his memory and his genius. It was when he was embarrassed in his domestic circumstances by a dreadful fire, that had consumed a great part of his substance, and forced him to quit a ruined house, of which every corner was known to him by habit, which in some measure supplied the place of sight. It was in these circumstances that Euler composed a work which, alone, was sufficient to render his name immortal. The heroic patience and tranquillity of mind which he displayed here, needs no description ; and he derived them, not only from the love of science, but from the power of religion. His philosophy was too genuine and sublime to stop its analysis at mechanical causes ; it led him to that divine philosophy of religion which ennobles human nature, and can alone form a habit of true magnanimity and patience in suffering.

Some time after this, the famous Wentzell, by couching the cataract, restored Euler's sight ; but the satisfaction and joy that this successful operation produced, were of short duration. Some instances of negligence on the part of his surgeons, and his own



impatience to use an organ, whose cure was not completely finished, deprived him of his sight a second time; and this relapse was accompanied with tormenting pain. He, however, with the assistance of his sons, and of Messrs. Krafft and Lexell, continued his labours; neither the loss of his sight nor the infirmities of an advanced age, could damp the ardour of his genius. He had engaged to furnish the academy of Petersburg with as many memoirs as would be sufficient to complete its acts for 20 years after his death. For the space of 7 years he transmitted to the academy, by Mr. Golswin, above 270 memoirs, which were revised and completed by his son. Such of these memoirs as were of ancient date were separated from the rest, and form a collection that was published in the year 1783, under the title of *Analytical Works*. Euler's knowledge was more universal than could be well expected in one, who had pursued with such unremitting ardour mathematics and astronomy as his favourite studies. He had made a very considerable progress in medical, botanical and chemical science. What was still more extraordinary, he was an excellent scholar, and possessed what is generally called erudition, in a very high degree. He had read with attention and taste, the most eminent writers of ancient Rome; the civil and literary history of all ages and all nations was familiar to him; and foreigners who were only acquainted with his works, were astonished to find in the conversation of a man, whose long life seemed solely occupied in mathematical and physical discoveries, such an extensive acquaintance with the most interesting branches of literature. In this re-



spect, no doubt, he was much indebted to a very uncommon memory, which seemed to retain every idea that was conveyed to it, either from reading or from meditation. He could repeat the *Æneid* of Virgil from the beginning to the end, without hesitation, and indicate the first and last line of every page of the edition he used. Several attacks of a vertigo, in the beginning of September, 1783, which did not prevent his calculating the motions of the ærostatical globes, were, nevertheless, the forerunners of his mild and happy passage from this scene to a better. While he was amusing himself at tea with one of his grandchildren, he was struck with an apoplexy, which terminated his illustrious career at the age of 76. His constitution was uncommonly strong and vigorous; his health was good, and the evening of his long life was calm and serene, sweetened by the fame that follows genius, the public esteem and respect that are never withheld from exemplary virtue, and several domestic comforts which he was capable of feeling, and therefore deserved to enjoy.

In men devoted to study, we are not to look for those strong complicated passions, which are contracted amidst the vicissitudes and tumult of public life. To delineate the character of Euler, requires no contrasts of colouring. Sweetness of disposition, moderation in the passions, simplicity of manners, were his leading features. Susceptible of domestic affections, he was open to all their amiable impressions, and was remarkably fond of children. His manners were simple, without being singular, and seemed to flow naturally from a heart that could dispense with those



habits, by which many must be trained to artificial mildness, and with the forms that are often necessary for concealment. Nor did the equability and calmness of his temper indicate a defect of energy, but the serenity of a soul that overlooked the frivolous provocations, the petulant caprices, and jarring humours of ordinary mortals.

Possessing a mind of such wonderful comprehension, and dispositions so admirably formed to virtue and to happiness, Euler found no difficulty in being a Christian; accordingly "his faith was unfeigned," and his love "was that of a pure and undefiled heart." The advocates for the truth of revealed religion, therefore, may rejoice to add to the bright catalogue which already claims a Bacon, a Newton, a Locke, a Boyle, and a Hale, the illustrious name of Euler. These early lessons of religion and virtue, which had been instilled into his infant mind, by his pious father, were never departed from. Amidst his academic studies, he embraced every opportunity of improving, both by reading and meditation. It was gratifying indeed, says one of his Biographers, to see the good man surrounded by his amiable family in their devotional exercises.—There the Philosopher gave way to the Christian, and prayer and praise generally concluded the day. When no longer able to peruse the sacred volumes, on account of his loss of sight, one of his children read the chapter and he explained it to them, and made such remarks as the nature of the subject required. On these occasions he would, by the most persuasive eloquence, impress on their minds the Divine Precepts which are contained in the



Inspired Writings.—Such was the life of Euler. But on this subject we must permit one of his learned and grateful pupils (M. Fuss, in his Eulogy of his Preceptor) to sum up the character of his venerable master. “His piety was rational and sincere; his devotion was fervent; he was fully persuaded of the truths of Christianity; felt its importance to the dignity and happiness of human nature, and looked upon its detractors and opposers as the most pernicious enemies of man.”

Euler was beloved and admired by every person of rank or talents, in the different countries in which he resided. Prince William of Prussia, while on a visit at St. Petersburg, usually spent two or three hours every day in conversation with him. Catharine the First, with that munificence for which she was so justly distinguished, settled a pension on Euler, as a reward for the services he had rendered to the Russian Academy; and be it told to her honour, when Euler resigned the situation in the St. Petersburg Academy, and left Russia in order to settle at Berlin, it was regularly paid, although the two countries were then in open hostilities. Frederic the great, was no less generous in rewarding his merit, for on this occasion, besides a genteel salary which he allowed this Philosopher, he made a present to him of a rich farm in Brandenburg.

The following anecdote, (taken from M. Fuss's life of Euler,) which took place about this period, it is presumed will not be intrusive here; it shows the high respect, that not only the first Princess in Europe entertained for the virtues and talents of this great



man; but of the soldier also, amidst the havoc of war, who, when he found he had set his unhallowed foot on the lands of Euler, which he deemed sacred, restrained his war-dogs, and like Alexander, who, when he entered Thebes, amidst the general conflagration of the city, called to his soldiers to spare the house of Pindar. "The Russian forces having, in 1760, penetrated into the marshes of Brandenburg, plundered a farm of Euler's near Charlottenburg; but General Tottleben had not come to make war on the sciences. Being informed of the loss which Euler sustained, he hastened to repair it, by ordering payment beyond the real value of the property, and having communicated to the Empress Elizabeth an account of this involuntary disrespect, she was pleased to add a gratuity of four thousand florins to an indemnification already more than sufficient."

His death was considered as a public loss, even in the country which he inhabited. The Academy of Petersburg went into deep mourning for him, and voted a marble bust of him, at their own expence, to be placed in their Assembly Hall. An honour still more distinguished had already been conferred on him, by that learned body, in his life-time. In an allegorical painting, a figure of Geometry is represented leaning on a table, exhibiting mathematical calculations, and the characters inscribed by order of the Academy, are the formulas of his new theory of the Moon. Thus, a country which at the beginning of the 17th century, was considered as scarcely emerged out of barbarism, is become the instructor of the most enlightened nations of Europe, in doing honour to



the lives of great men, embalming their memories, and setting those nations an example, which some of them may blush to reflect, that they have had neither the virtue to propose, nor to imitate.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
JOHN GOUGH.

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“On him fair science dawn’d in happier hours,  
And waken’d into bloom, young fancy’s flowers.”

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OF all the surprising phenomena that have, in different ages, appeared among the human species, there is not one more difficult to be accounted for, than that of a blind man’s excelling in the most difficult and sublime parts of the mathematics. It seems, indeed, almost impossible, had we not the illustrious example before us, of Professor Saunderson. We might, perhaps, have looked upon the instances of this kind, related by authors as fiction, or, at least, that they had greatly magnified the truth. The most remarkable of these instances, mentioned by historians, is that of Didymus, of Alexandria. The case of this extraordinary person, is similar to that of our author, who, when twelve months old, was deprived of his sight by the small pox. He retained no more idea of light and colours, than if he had been born blind. But to proceed,—

John Gough was born on the 17th of January, in the year 1757, and was the oldest child of Nathan



Gough, of Kendal, shearman-dyer, and Susannah his wife.

His father was the only child, by a first marriage, of Thomas Gough,\* skinner and glover, of Wyersdale in Lancashire; his mother was the oldest daughter of Mr. John Wilson, a respectable yeoman, who had a good estate on the west bank of Windermere lake. Of the subject of this biographical sketch, much might be said, even respecting the actions and pastimes of infancy; but this would be stepping beyond the necessary limits of these Annals, and an improper interference with a work from the pen of Mr. Gough himself, which, it is hoped, will not long be withheld from the public.† To all enquirers into the culture and enlargement of the human mind, such a work would be peculiarly acceptable, as unfolding the means by which he obtained a rich store of scientific knowledge, under difficulties and privations, apparently rendering such acquisitions nearly unattainable, if not impossible. All that is competent for us here to remark, is, that at a very early age an event befel him, which, in his opinion, gave

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\* Thomas Gough was the son of James Gough, who was not a native of Wyersdale, but the son of William Gough, a general in the Parliament army, and one of King Charles's judges. At the time of the Restoration he escaped the halter and axe of the executioner, by an early flight; after which he remained concealed with his friends, and father-in-law, Colonel Whaley, many years in New England, who not only faithfully secreted, but kindly supported him in this turn of fortune.

† The Prospectus of the Posthumous Works of John Gough was printed in 1826.



birth to the peculiarities of his character through life. Before the completion of his third year, he was attacked with the small pox. This happened in December, 1759; and the virulence of the malady, joined to the injudicious treatment then in fashion, deprived him of his sight before the commencement of the next year. The loss indeed was not so total as to render him incapable of distinguishing day from night; but the slender ray of light which fell on the verge of the retina, was insufficient to afford him the least idea of colours, and the visible images of external objects, which faculties, properly speaking, constitute vision.

Thus was wisdom at one entrance quite shut out;\* this proved the cause of opening others, which, under different circumstances, might never have been explored. Into a detail of the exertions and contrivances by which he surmounted this great obstacle to mental improvement, we are precluded from entering for the reason stated above. It must suffice, therefore, to notice briefly the progress of his early education, and the evidences of that distinction, as a man of science, which he attained in maturer life.†

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\* Milton.

† Gough is the friend alluded to in the following extract from Thomas Wilkinson's "Tours to the British Mountains."

Ardent energies are not always crowned with wise achievements. I was once spending a few days at the foot of Blencathra. A party of six of us, on a midsummer morning, set off at four o'clock. To two of these individuals the ascent of such a high and rugged mountain might have seemed impracticable. The lame and the blind, without extraordi-



At the age of six years he was placed under the care of Mr. Rebanks, at that time master of the school belonging to the society of friends, in Kendal. With this gentleman he began to study the principles of the English language, prior to engaging with the Latin : but, as ought to have been expected at that early age, much time was consumed to little or no advantage. His subsequent attempts, however, to conquer the difficulties of the Latin grammar, were more successful, and under the tuition of Mr. George Bewly, who was appointed master of the school when Mr. Gough was about twelve years old, he made a rapid progress in the acquisition of that language. Mr. Bewly, it appears, was well prepared for his occupation, not only by his classical knowledge, but also, by his attainments in the differ-

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nary minds, would not have hazarded the attempt amid the rocky steeps of this mountain ; but the company of genius and science was courted, and not withheld on the occasion : and the first that was seen standing on the summit of the mountain, was the lame leaning on his crutch and staff. To the blind I attempted a description of the fearful precipices beneath us ; but it was the first thing I repented of that day, —when I saw him fall on the ground with dizziness, and cling to the earth, and scream out, with the apprehension of tumbling down the rocks into the abyss below. Till then I thought the idea of giddiness must be received at the eye ; certainly it was as vivid in the mind of our learned and accomplished companion, from what he heard, as if he had seen the terrors around him. But we now moderated our descriptions, and only talked of extent and the appearance of distant objects.



ent branches of natural philosophy ; and great were the advantages which Mr. Gough derived from the latter qualification. From a very early period of infancy he had shewed a taste for zoology, and he now began to enlarge his knowledge of organic bodies, by extending his researches from the animal to the vegetable kingdom. To botanical pursuits, all his spare time from the necessary studies of the school was assiduously devoted ; and as his ardour in cultivating this science was never relaxed, he soon conquered the difficulties opposed to the gratification of his taste by the want of sight, and became enabled to discriminate and arrange, with great accuracy, the plants which came under his notice. Mr. Gough, indeed, possessed a power of discrimination and retention of memory, really astonishing.\* His usual method of examining a plant, when particular accuracy was required, was by applying to its several parts the tip of his tongue. Ordinary plants he could easily and readily recognise with the touch of his fingers. These pursuits, however, were not permitted to interfere with his classical studies ; for it appears, that, under the able instructions of Mr. Bewly, he not only gained a competent knowledge of the languages, but also a taste for the compositions of the ancients.

In the year 1772, Mr. Gough's attention was first

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\* A circumstance occurred about four or five years before his death, which serves to illustrate this remark. A rare plant was at that time put into his hands, which he very soon called by its name ; observing, also, that he had never met with more than one specimen of it, and that was fifty years ago.



turned to experimental philosophy, and by perusing, with characteristic assiduity, the works of Mr. Boyle, he soon learned the nature of the phenomena arising from the difference in the specific gravity in fluids, and acquired correct notions respecting the doctrine of hydrostatics, including pneumatics. He soon afterwards, but at what precise period is not clearly ascertained, entered upon the study of mathematics, under the tuition of Mr. John Slee, at that time residing at Mungrisdale, a sequestered part of Cumberland. As a teacher of mathematics, this gentleman's reputation stood deservedly high, and perhaps a more judicious choice of a tutor for such a pupil could not have been made. Whatever were the previous acquirements of the latter, still his deficiencies and disadvantages must have been many : much therefore was to be done—and by the united skill and industry of both, much was accomplished. Of the particular mode of instruction adopted, a very particular and interesting account has been given by Mr. Slee himself, which, being intended for the work before referred to, cannot be here inserted. All that it is necessary in this brief memoir to state, is, that the mode was so successful, as not only to give Mr. Gough a taste for mathematical knowledge, but to lay a foundation for those high attainments which subsequently entitled him to rank amongst the most distinguished mathematicians of the age. In after life he was eminent as a teacher in that science, and out of the limited number of his pupils, some became senior wranglers at Cambridge, one of the highest honors to which the stu-



dents in that University are encouraged to aspire.\* But to trace the subject of this brief memoir minutely, through the early exercise and gradual expansion of his mental powers, would lead us beyond our prescribed limits. To ascertain the extent of his acquirements, our readers must be referred to the essays published in the "Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester," and in "Nicholson's Journal," of which a catalogue is subjoined. They have been highly valued by the most competent judges; and they certainly contain decisive evidence of the acuteness of his mind, and of the accuracy of his knowledge in various departments of science.

We have now only to add, that Mr. Gough was fully occupied in the duties of his employment as an instructor of youth, and in his usual philosophical investigations, to the close of the year 1823, when indications of declining powers began to be visible to his friends. Repeated attacks of epilepsy, after inconsiderable intervals, though not materially injuring

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\* Mr. Whewell, now tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge, was second wrangler in his year. Mr. Dawes, tutor of Downing College, Cambridge, was fourth wrangler. Mr. King, now tutor of Queen's College, Cambridge, (esteemed one of the first mathematicians of the age,) was senior wrangler in his year. Mr. Gaskin, tutor of Jesus' College, Cambridge, was second wrangler in his year. These gentlemen were all pupils of Mr. Gough. Mr. John Dalton, the eminent philosopher, and President of the Manchester Philosophical Society, was four or five years under Mr. Gough's instructions in mathematics and natural philosophy.



his mental faculties, yet gradually undermining his bodily health, clearly pointed out the approaching termination of his earthly course. He died July 27th, 1825, in the sixty-eighth year of his age; and his remains were interred in the church yard of Kendal, on the Sunday morning succeeding his decease, attended by his family, and a few select friends.

List of Essays, from the pen of Mr. Gough, communicated to the Manchester Philosophical Society.

1. (1790.) Reasons for supposing that Lakes have been more numerous than they are at present, with an attempt to assign the causes whereby they have been effaced.

2. The Laws of Motion of a Cylinder, compelled by the repeated strokes of a falling block to penetrate an obstacle, the resistance of which is an invariable force.

3. 4. Experiments and observations on the vegetation of Seeds.

5. (1796.) On the variety of voices.

6. (1801.) An investigation of the method whereby men judge by the ear of the position of sonorous bodies relative to their own persons.

7. The Theory of compound sounds.

8. (1803.) A description of a property of Coautchouc, or Indian Rubber, with some reflections on the cause of the elasticity of this substance.

9. An Essay on the Theory of mixed Gases, and the state of Water in the Atmosphere.

10. (1804.) A reply to Mr. Dalton's objections to a late theory of mixed Gases.

11. Theorems and Problems intended to elucidate the mechanical principle called Vis Viva.

12. (1811.) Observations on the Ebbing and Flowing Well at Giggleswick, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, with a theory of reciprocating fountains.

13. (1812.) Remarks on the Summer Birds of Passage and on Migration in general.

14. The Laws of Statical Equilibrium analytically investigated.

List of Mr. Gough's communications, published in Nicholson's Journal.

1. On the supposed revival of Insects after long immersion in Wine or other intoxicating Liquor. Vol. iii.

2. A Statical Inquiry into the source of nutrition in succulent vegetables. Ibid.

3. Instances of suspended animation in vegetables. Ibid.

4. On the exhibition of a series of Primes, and the resolution of a compound number into all its Factors. Ibid.

5. Facts and observations to explain the curious phenomenon of Ventriloquism. Ibid.

6. Reply to Dr. Young's Letter on the Theory of Compound Sounds. Vol. iv.

7. On the nature of Grave Harmonics. Ibid.

8. On the nature of Musical Sounds, in reply to Dr. Young. Ibid.

9. The Theory of Compound Sounds. Vol. v.

10. Experiments and observations in support of that Theory of Ventriloquism which is founded on the reflection of sound. Vol. vii.

11. Scoteography, or the art of Writing in the dark. Vol. viii.

12. On the Solution of Water in the Atmosphere; and on the Nature of Atmospherical Air. Vol. ix.

13. Narrative of some less common effects of Lightning, by the Rev. Jonathan Wilson; with remarks by Mr. Gough. Ibid.

14. Strictures on Mr. Dalton's doctrine of Mixed Gases, and an answer to Mr. Henry's defence of the same. Ibid.

15. Atmospherical Air not a mechanical mixture of the oxygen and azotic Gases, demonstrated from the specific gravities of these fluids. Ibid.



16. Experiments proving the necessity of atmospherical oxygen in the process of vegetation. Vol. x.

17. Farther observation, on the constitution of Mixed Gases. Ibid.

18. Experiments and remarks on the augmentation of sounds. Ibid.

19. A mathematical Theory of the speaking trumpet. Ibid.

20. Theorems respecting the properties of the sides of triangles intersected by right lines drawn from the three angles so as to meet in one point. Vol. xi.

21. Investigation of the properties of the lines drawn in a circle, by Mr. Boswell. Vol. xii.

22. On the division of an arch of a circle into two such parts that their sines, or co-sines, or versed-sines shall have a given relation. Vol. xiii.

23. On the cause of Fairy Rings. Ibid.

24. Experiments on the magnetism of slender iron wire. Ibid.

25. Experiments on the temperature of water surrounded by freezing mixtures. Ibid.

26. Observations and experiments to shew that the effects ascribed by Mr. Dispan to the perpendicular descent of Hoar Frost, are not so general as to support his theory. Vol. xvi.

27. Remarks on torpidity in animals. In two letters. Vol. xviii.

28. Description of a correct chamber barometer. Vol. xx.

29. An essay on Polygonal numbers, containing the demonstration of a proposition respecting whole numbers in general. Vol. xxi.

30. A mathematical problem, with the investigation. Ibid.

31. Answer to Mr. Barlow's remarks on the essay on Polygonal numbers. Vol. xxii.

32. An abstract of a meteorological journal for the year 1807, and 1808, kept at Middleshaw, near Kendal. Vol. xxv.

33. Experiments on the expansion of moist air raised to the boiling temperature. Ibid.

34. An inquiry, geometrical and arithmetical, into certain properties of solids in general ; and of the five regular bodies in particular. Vol. xxx.

35. On the place of a sound produced by a musical string. Vol. xxxii.

36. Remarks on the perforations made in paper by electrical batteries. Vol. xxxv.

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AUTHORITIES.

WILKINSON'S Mountain Rambles.—NICHOLSON'S Annals of Kendal.



THE LIFE  
OF  
JOHN METCALF.

*Commonly called "Blind Jack" of Knaresborough.*

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"The fell disease deprived him of his sight,  
And left him to grope his way in endless night."

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WE almost invariably find that Nature, in withholding from man the benefit of one sense, compensates the deficiency by the superior perfection in which she bestows others. The extraordinary particulars related in the following pages strikingly exemplify this observation, and shew to what a degree the power of habit, and a good understanding are capable of overcoming impediments apparently insurmountable. For instance, who would expect to find a man totally blind from his infancy, superintending the building of bridges and the construction of high roads; an occupation for which his defect would seem to have wholly disqualified him. These, however, were undertakings that Metcalf successfully executed; and that, together with many singular adventures in which he was engaged, cannot fail to excite no small degree of astonishment and admiration.

JOHN METCALF was born in 1717, at Knaresborough, in Yorkshire. At the age of four years, his parents, who were labouring people, put him to school, where he continued two years, when he was seized with the small pox, which deprived him of his sight in spite of all the means that were employed for its preservation. About six months after his recovery, he was able to go from his father's house to the end of the street, and to return without a guide; and in about three years he could find his way alone to any part of Knaresborough. About this period he began to associate with boys of his own age, among whom he acted a distinguished part in the juvenile pranks of taking birds' nests, and robbing orchards. As his father kept horses, he learned to ride, and soon became a good horseman—a gallop being his favourite pace. At the age of thirteen he was taught Music, in which he made great proficiency, though the cry of a hound or a harrier was more congenial to his taste than the sound of an instrument. He kept hounds of his own, and frequently hunted with Mr. Woodburn\* of Knares-

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\* Metcalf, with some other young men, expressed a great desire for a day's sport; and knowing that Mr. Woodburn, the master of the Knaresborough pack of hounds, had often lent them to Metcalf for the same purpose, they doubted not of the success of his application; in the evening before the appointed day, Metcalf went, flushed with hope, to Mr. Woodburn, requesting him to lend the pack for the next day. This was a favour out of his power to grant, having engaged to meet Squire Trapps with the hounds, next morning upon Scoton Moor, for the purpose of entering some young fox hounds. Chagrined at this, Metcalf debated with himself whether the disappointment should fall to Mr. Woodburn's



borough, who kept a pack, and was always very desirous of Metcalf's company in the chase. When about fourteen years old, his activity and the success with which his enterprizes were usually attended, led him to imagine that he might undertake any thing without danger, and greatly consoled him for the want of sight; but he was taught to regret that defect by a severe wound he received in consequence of a fall into a gravel-pit, while making his retreat from a plum-tree, in which he had been surprised by the owner.

About this period he learned to swim, and soon

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friends, or his own: determining that it should not be the lot of the latter, he arose the next morning before day break, and crossed the high bridge, near which he had the advantage of the joint echoes of the old castle and Belmont wood. He had brought with him an extraordinary good hound of his own, and taking him by the ears, made him give mouth very loudly, himself giving some halloos at the same time. This device had so good an effect, that in a few minutes he had nine couple about him, as the hounds were kept by various people about the shambles, and were suffered to lye unkennelled. Mounting his horse, away he rode with the dogs to Harrowgate, where he met his friends ready mounted and in high spirits. Some of them proposed going to Bilton wood, near Knaresborough; but this was opposed by Metcalf, who preferred the Moor; in fact, he was apprehensive of being followed by Mr. Woodburn, and wished to be farther from Knaresborough on that account. Pursuant to his advice, they drew the Moor, at the distance of five miles, when they started a hare, killed her after a fine chase, and immediately put up another: just at this moment came up Mr. Woodburn, very angry, and threatening to send Metcalf to the house of correction; and his passion rising to the utmost, rode up with an intention to



became so very expert, that his companions did not chuse to come near him in the water, it being his custom to seize, plunge them to the bottom, and swim over them by way of diversion. In this year, two men being drowned in the deeps of the river Nedd, Metcalf was employed to seek for their bodies, and succeeded in bringing up one of them.

A friend of his named Barker, having carried two packs of yarn to wash at that river, they were swept away by a sudden swelling of the current, and carried through the arches of the bridge which stands on a rock. A little below there is a piece of still water, supposed to be about twenty one feet in depth; as

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horse-whip him, which Metcalf prevented by galloping out of his reach. Mr. Woodburn then endeavoured to call off the hounds, but Metcalf, knowing the fleetness of his own horse, ventured within speaking, though not within whipping distance of him, and begged that he would not spoil them by taking them off; and that he was sure they would (as they actually did) kill in a very short time. Metcalf soon found that Mr. Woodburn's anger had begun to abate; and going nearer to him, pleaded in excuse a misunderstanding of his plan, which he said he thought had been fixed for the day after. The apology succeeded with this good natured gentleman, who, giving the hare to Metcalf, desired he would accompany him to Scoton Moor whither, though late, he would go, rather than wholly dissappoint Mr. Trapps. Metcalf proposed to his friend to cross the river Midd at Holm bottom; and Mr. Woodburn not being acquainted with the ford, he again undertook the office of guide, and, leading the way, they soon arrived at Scoton Moor, where Mr. Trapps and his company had waited for them several hours. Mr. Woodburn explained the cause of the delay, and, being now able to participate the joke, the affair ended very agreeably.



soon as the yarn came to this place it sunk. Metcalf promised his friend to recover the yarn, but the latter smiled at the supposed absurdity of the attempt. He however, procured some long cart ropes, fixed a hook at one end, and leaving the other to be held by some persons on the high bridge, he descended, and by degrees recovered the whole of the yarn.

He continued to practise on the violin, till he was able to play country dances. During the winter, season he performed as a waiter at Knaresborough, with three others; he likewise attended the assemblies which were held every fortnight, and frequented many other places where there was public dancing. Notwithstanding this application, he found opportunity for playing his neighbours a number of mischievous tricks, and for a long time escaped suspicion. At length, however, his expertness became known, and when any arch trick had been played, it was always the first inquiry where Metcalf had been at that time.

Though he was fully engaged, he still retained his fondness for hunting, and also began to keep game cocks. Whenever he went to a cock-pit, it was his custom to place himself on the lowest seat, near some friend who was a good judge, and who, by certain motions, enabled him to bet, hedge, &c.

In 1732, he was invited to Harrowgate, to play at the assembly, as successor to a poor old man, who, borne down by the weight of one hundred years, began to play too slow for country dances. Here he was well received by the visiting nobility and gentry. In this employment he passed his evenings, and the mornings he spent in cocking, hunting, and coursing.



About this period also he bought a horse and often ran him for small plates; and his engagements increasing, he took a partner who was likewise a good performer.

In summer he often played at bowls, and singular as it may seem, was frequently the winner; cards likewise began to engage his attention, and he generally won the majority of the games. But these achievements were far from being the limits of his ambition or capacity, for he now began to attend the races at York, and other places. At the race ground he commonly rode in among the crowd, and was often successful in his bets, in which he was, however, assisted by several gentlemen to whom he was known.

Having once matched one of his horses to run three miles for a considerable wager, and the parties agreeing each to ride his own horse, they set up posts at certain distances on the Forest Moor, describing a circle of one mile, having consequently to go three times round the course; under the idea that Metcalf would be unable to keep the course, great odds were laid against him. His ingenuity furnished him with an expedient in this dilemma. He procured some bells, and placing a man with one of them at each post, was enabled by the ringing to judge when to turn. By this contrivance, and the superior speed of his horse, he came in winner, amidst the applause of all present, except those who had betted against him. At different times he bought horses to sell again, which he often did with a large profit, so accurate was his judgment.

In 1738, Metcalf attained the age of twenty-one;



he was extremely robust, and six feet one inch and a half in height. He, about this time, acquired considerable celebrity as a pugilist, from the following circumstance. A friend of his being insulted in a public-house, by a man who, from his ferocious temper and great strength, was the general dread of the neighbourhood, Metcalf bestowed on him such discipline as soon extorted a cry of mercy.

Returning one day on foot from Harrowgate, he had proceeded about a mile, when he was overtaken by a Knaresborough man on horseback, who proposed for two shillings' worth of punch to let him ride in turn, dividing the distances equally. Metcalf agreed, on condition that he should have the first ride, to which his townsman assented on these terms; that he should ride a little beyond Poppleton field, where, on his right hand he would see a gate, to which he should fasten the horse. Metcalf however, rode forward to Knaresborough, which was seventeen miles from the place where he left his fellow traveller. The latter was greatly enraged at being obliged to walk so far, but Metcalf pleading in excuse that he never saw the gate, the man found it his interest to join in the laugh.

He was now in the prime of life, and possessed a peculiar archness of disposition, with an uncommon flow of spirits and an unparalleled contempt of danger; and though his conduct was long marked by a variety of mischievous tricks, yet, he afterwards planned and brought to perfection several schemes, both of private and public utility.

When the Harrowgate season was over, Metcalf



always remained a few days, and passed his evenings at one or other of the different Inns. At the Royal Oak, now the Granby, he attracted the notice of Miss Benson, the landlady's daughter, whose constant attention and kindness soon inspired him with a reciprocal affection. Knowing, however, that her mother would oppose their union, various successful devices were employed to conceal their mutual partiality, and frequent meetings. An event, however, occurred, which obliged Metcalf to quit, not only the object of his attachment, but likewise that part of the country.

During his absence, a Mr. Dickenson had paid his addresses to Miss Benson, and now urged his suit with such ardour, that the banns were published, and the wedding-day appointed, to the no small mortification of Metcalf, who thought himself secure of her affection. Though he loved her tenderly, his pride prevented him from manifesting his feelings, or attempting to prevent the match.

On the day preceeding that on which the nuptials were to be celebrated, Metcalf riding past the Royal Oak, was accosted with, "one wants to speak with you." He immediately turned towards the stables of the Oak, and there to his joy and surprise, he found the object of his love, who had sent her mother's servant to call him. After some explanation, an elopement was resolved upon, which Metcalf, with the assistance of a friend, effected that night, and the next morning they were united. The confusion of his rival who had provided an entertainment for two hundred people, may easily be conceived.



Mrs. Benson being much enraged at her daughter's conduct, refused either to see her or give up her clothes; nor was she reconciled to her till she was delivered of her second child, on which occasion she stood sponsor for it, and presented Metcalf with his wife's fortune. It now became a matter of wonder that she should have preferred a blind man to Dickinson, she being as handsome a woman as any in the country. A lady having asked her why she refused so many good offers for Blind Jack; she answered, "because I could not be happy without him." And being more particularly questioned, she replied, "his actions are so singular, and his spirit so manly and enterprising, that I could not help liking him."

He now purchased a house at Knaresborough, and continued to play at Harrowgate in the season; and set up a four wheeled chaise, and a one horse chair for public accommodation, there having been nothing of the kind there before. He kept these vehicles two summers, when the inn-keepers beginning to run chaises, he gave them up; as he also did racing and hunting; but still wanting employment, he bought horses, and went to the coast for fish, which he took to Leeds and Manchester, and so indefatigable was he, that he frequently walked for two nights and a day, with little or no rest; for, as a family was coming on, he was as eager for business as he had been for diversion; still keeping up his spirits, as Providence endowed him with good health. Going from Knaresbrough to Leeds in a snow storm, and crossing a brook, the ice gave way under one of his horses, and he was under the necessity of unloading to get him out; but the



horse, as soon as free, ran back to Knaresborough, leaving him with two panniers of fish, and three other loaded horses, which together with the badness of the night, greatly perplexed him;—after much difficulty, however, he divided the weight amongst the other three, and pursuing his rout, he arrived at Leeds by break of day. But the profits of this business being but small, and the fatigue excessive, he soon abandoned that likewise.

At the commencement of the rebellion, in 1745, he exchanged his situation as violin player at Harrogate, for the profession of arms. This singular event was brought about in the following manner:—William Thornton, Esq. of Thornville, having resolved to raise a company at his own expence, asked Metcalf, who was well known to him, whether he would join the company about to be raised, and whether he knew of any spirited fellows likely to make good soldiers. Upon his replying in the affirmative, he was appointed assistant to a sergeant; and in two days raised 144 men, out of which the Captain drafted 64, the number of privates he wanted.

With this company, among whom was Metcalf as musician, Captain Thornton joined the army under General Wade. In the first battle in which they were engaged, twenty of the men, the Lieutenant and Ensign were made prisoners, and the Captain himself very narrowly escaped.

Metcalf, after a variety of adventures, rejoined his patron, and was always in the field during the different engagements which succeeded. After the battle of Culloden, he returned to his family at Knaresborough,



and had the happiness to find his faithful partner and children in good health : and his wife confessed that she had entertained many fears for her poor blind adventurer, yet knowing that a spirit of enterprise made a part of his nature, she was often comforted by the hope, that he would, in some degree, signalize himself, notwithstanding the misfortune under which he laboured. This declaration, following a most cordial reception, gave full confirmation to an opinion which Metcalf had ever held, viz. that the caresses and approbation of the softer sex are the highest reward that a man can receive.

Being again at liberty to choose his occupation, he attended Harrowgate as usual. During his Scotch expedition, he had become acquainted with various articles manufactured in that country, and judging that he might dispose of some of them to advantage in England, he repaired in the spring to Scotland, and furnished himself with a variety of cotton and worsted articles, for which he found a ready sale in his native country. Among a thousand articles, he knew what each cost him, from a particular mode of marking them. He also dealt in horses, directing his choice by feeling the animal.\* He also engaged pretty deeply

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\* The Queen's Bays at this time were quartered at Durham : four horses were to be sold from each troop, Metcalf had notice sent him of the sale, but did not receive the letter until the day before it commenced. He set off, however, that afternoon, for Durham, and riding all night, got there by day break. His first business was to become acquainted with the farriers ; he began to question them as to the horses which were to be sold. Amongst the number to be disposed of was a grey



in contraband trade, the profits of which were at that time much more considerable than the risk. One time in particular, having received a pressing letter from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, requiring his speedy attendance, he set out on horseback at three in the morning, and got into Newcastle in the evening about six o'clock, the distance being nearly seventy-four miles, and did not feel the least fatigue. Having received some packages, he employed a few soldiers to convey them to a carrier, supposing that men of their description were least liable to suspicion. After sending off his goods, he staid two nights with some relations he had

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one, belonging to one of the drums; the man who had the charge of him not having been sufficiently careful in trimming him, had burnt him severely, which caused a prodigious swelling,—had this careless conduct been known to his superiors, he would have been punished for it; upon that account the matter was hushed up. Metcalf, however, apprised of the real cause, in the course of his conversation with the farriers, determined to purchase him, supposing that they would be desirous to part with him at any price: and in this supposition he was not mistaken. The sale began by bringing out seven bay horses; six of which a gentleman bought for a carriage, and Metcalf purchased the seventh. They then brought forward the grey horse, which our chapman bought also, at the very low price of three pounds fifteen shillings, which was first affixed by the auctioneer, but which however, the people said was very much beyond the value. Having used such applications as he thought efficacious for his recovery,—by the time he had got him home, he had the satisfaction to find him perfectly recovered; and within a week afterwards refused fifteen guineas for him, he kept him many years as a draught horse; and the other horse also was sold to a profit, by which he thought himself very well paid for his trip to Durham.



there, and then set out for home. He had with him about an hundred weight of tea, cased over with tow, and tightly corded up; this he put into a wallett which he laid across his saddle. Coming to Chester-le-Street, about half way between Newcastle and Durham, he met at the inn an exciseman, who knew him as soon as he had dismounted, and asked him what he had got there. Metcalf answered, "It is some tow and line for my aunt, who lives a few miles distant; I wish she was far enough for giving me the trouble to fetch it." The officer asked him to bring it in, he replied, "For the time I shall stay, it may as well remain on the horsing stone." By this seeming indifference about his package, he removed suspicion from the mind of the exciseman, who assisted in replacing it across the saddle; when he pursued his journey and got home in safety. Once, having disposed of a string of horses, he bought, with the produce, a quantity of rum, brandy, and tea, to the amount of £200, put them on board a vessel for Leith, and travelled over land, on foot, to meet the vessel there. He had about thirty miles to walk, and carried near five stone weight of goods which he did not choose to put on shipboard. At Leith he had the mortification to wait six weeks, without receiving any tidings of the vessel, which many supposed to have been lost, there having been a storm in the interval. The distress of mind resulting from this, induced him once to say, "if she is lost, I wish I had been in her; for she had all my property on board:" Soon after, however, the ship got into Leith harbour. He there went on board, and set sail for Newcastle, but another



storm arising, the mate was washed overboard, the mainsail carried away, and the ship was driven near the coast of Norway. Despair now became general, the prospect of going to the bottom seeming almost certain. He now reflected on the impiety of his wish respecting the former storm, and so effectually was his way of thinking changed, that had he had all the current coin in the universe, he would have given it to have been on shore. It now appeared to him a dreadful thing to leave the world in the midst of health and vigour; but the wind changing, hope began to return and the Captain put about for the Scotch coast, intending to make Arbrothie. A signal of distress was put up, but the sea ran so high, that no boat could venture out with a pilot. He then stood in for the harbour, but struck against the pier end, owing to the unmanageable state of the vessel, from the loss of her mainsail: she narrowly escaped being bilged; but having got to the back of the pier, was towed round into the harbour, with near five feet water in the hold. Her escape from the merciless elements, however, did not seem to terminate her dangers, the country people shewing a disposition to seize the ship as wreck, and plunder her, but fortunately there was at hand a party, consisting of an officer and twenty men, of Pulteney's regiment, who had been in pursuit of some smugglers, and Metcalf knowing them well, Captain Thornton's company being attached to that regiment, the officer sent three files of men to protect the vessel, while the crew were removing the goods to a warehouse. As this vessel stood in need of repairs, Metcalf put his goods on



board another, and in her he reached Newcastle. There he met with an acquaintance; and from the seeming cordiality at the meeting, he thought he might have trusted his life in the hands of this man. With this impression, Metcalf opened to him the state of his affairs; informing him that he had got four hundred gallons of gin and brandy, for which he had a permit, and about thirty gallons for which he had none, and which he wanted to land; telling him, at the same time, of the harassing voyage he had just finished. But it seems his misfortunes were only about to commence; for in a quarter of an hour, he found that the man whom he had taken for a friend, had gone down to the quay side, and, giving information of what he knew, had all the goods seized, and brought on shore. Metcalf imagined that none were seizable but the small part for which he had not obtained a permit; but was soon undeceived, the whole being liable to seizure as not agreeing with the specified quantity. He then repaired to the Custom-House, and applied to Mr. Sunderland, the collector. This gentleman knew Metcalf, being in the habit of visiting Harrowgate, and received him very kindly; but informed him that it was not in his power to serve him, the captors being the excise people, and not of his department.—He, however, suggested, that some good might result from an application to Alderman Peireth, with whom Metcalf was acquainted, and who was particularly intimate with the collector of the excise. The good alderman gave him a letter to the collector, representing, as instructed by Metcalf, that the bearer had bought 400 gallons of spirits at



the Custom-house at Aberdeen; and that the extra quantity was for the purpose of treating the sailors and other friends, as well as for sea stock for himself. At first the collector told him that he could do nothing for him, until he should write up to the board, and receive an answer; but Metcalf remonstrating on the inconvenience of the delay, and the other re-considering the letter, he agreed to come down to the quay, at four o'clock in afternoon, which he accordingly did, and released every thing without expense.

In 1751, he commenced a new employment—he set up a stage waggon, betwixt York and Knaresborough, being the first on that road and drove it himself, twice a week in summer, and once in winter. This business, with the occasional conveyance of army baggage,\* employed his attention till the

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\* A short time after the regiment called the Queen's Bays was raised, they were quartered at Knaresborough and the adjacent towns; but after a short stay, they were ordered to the North. The country people seemed extremely unwilling to supply carriages for conveying the baggage; the King's allowance being but nine pence a mile per ton; that of the county, one shilling in the West-riding, and fifteen pence in the North-riding. Metcalf having two waggons, (one of them covered) had a mind to try this business; and, to make sure of a journey, got the soldiers to press his two carriages, which were accordingly loaded, himself attending them to Durham. Previous to loading, however, the country people, who knew the advantage of carrying for the army, and who had kept back in hopes of an advance in the price, came forward with their waggons, in opposition to Metcalf; but the soldiers would have no other.—Arriving at Durham, he met Bland's Dragoons, on their march from the North to York; they loaded his waggons again for Northallerton, and would



period of his first contracting for the making of roads, which suiting him better, he relinquished every other pursuit. During his leisure hours, he had studied mensuration in a way peculiar to himself, and when certain of the girth and length of any piece of timber, he was able accurately to reduce its contents to feet and inches, and could bring the dimensions of any building into yards or feet. The first piece of road he made was about three miles of that between Fearnaby and Minskip; the materials for the whole were to be procured from one gravel-pit: he therefore provided deal-boards, and erected a temporary house at the pit; took a dozen horses to the place; fixed racks and mangers, and hired a house for his men at Minskip. He often walked from Knaresborough in the morning, with four or five stones of meal on his shoulders, and joined his men by six o'clock. He completed the road much sooner than was expected, to the entire satisfaction of the surveyor and trustees.†

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willingly have engaged them to York; but this he was obliged to decline, having promised to bring twenty three wool-packs to Knaresborough. He was just six days in performing this journey: and cleared, with eight horses, and the one he rode, no less a sum than twenty pounds; though many people were afraid to travel with soldiers.

† The blind projector of roads could reply to me, when I expressed myself surprised at the accuracy of his discriminations, "that there was nothing surprising in the matter; you, sir," says he, "can have recourse to your eye sight whenever you want to see or examine any thing; whereas I have only my memory to trust to." There is one advantage, however, he remarked, that he possessed, the readiness with which you view an object at pleasure, prevents the necessity of fixing

Soon after this, he contracted for building a bridge at Boroughbridge, which he completed with credit to his abilities. The business of making roads, and building and repairing bridges, in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, he continued with great success, until the year 1792, when he returned to his native county. In the summer of 1788, he lost his wife, in the 61st year of her age, and the 40th of their union, leaving four children. She was interred in the church-yard of Stockport, in Cheshire, where she resided.

After some unsuccessful speculations in the cotton trade, Metcalf returned to Yorkshire, and for want of other engagements, he bought hay to sell again—measuring the stacks with his arms, and having learned the height, he could readily tell what number of square yards, were contained in a stack of any value, between one and five hundred pounds. Sometimes he bought a little wood, standing, and if he could get the girth and height, would calculate the solid contents. In addition to this brief history of

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the ideas of it deeply in your mind, and the impressions, in general, become quickly obliterated. On the contrary, the information I possess, being acquired with greater difficulty, is, on that very account so firmly fixed on the memory, as to be almost indelible. I made some enquiries respecting this new road that he was now making; it was really astonishing to hear with what accuracy he described the courses and nature of the different soils, through which it was conducted. Having mentioned to him a boggy piece of ground it passed through, he observed that “that was the only place he had doubts concerning; and that he was apprehensive they had, contrary to his direction, been too sparing of their materials. *From Dr. Bew’s account.*



the life of this singular character, the reader will not be displeased to find the following anecdotes, which are of a nature too extraordinary to be omitted.

“Metcalf had learned to walk and ride very readily through all the streets of York; and being once in that city, as he was passing the George-inn, the landlord called to him, and informed him that a gentleman in the house wanted a guide to Harrowgate, adding, ‘I know you can do as well as any one.’ To this proposal Metcalf agreed, upon condition that his situation should be kept secret from the gentleman, who might otherwise be afraid to trust him. The stranger was soon ready and they set off on horse-back, Metcalf taking the lead. When they came to Allerton, the gentleman inquired whose large house that was on the right, to which Metcalf replied without the least hesitation. A little further, the road is crossed by that from Wetherby to Boroughbridge, and runs along by the lofty brick wall of Allerton Park. A road led out of the Park opposite to the gate upon the Knaresborough road, which Metcalf was afraid of missing; but perceiving the current of wind that came through the Park gate, he readily turned his horse towards the opposite one; here he found some difficulty in opening the gate, in consequence, as he imagined of some alteration that had been made in the hanging of it, as he had not been that way for several months. Therefore, backing his horse he exclaimed, ‘confound thee, thou always goest to the heel of the gate instead of the head.’ The gentleman observed then, his horse was rather awkward, but that his own mare was good at coming up

to a gate, on which Metcalf cheerfully permitted him to perform that office. Passing through Knaresborough they entered the forest, which was then unclosed, nor was there yet any turnpike road upon it. Having proceeded a little way, the gentleman observed a light, and asked what it was. Metcalf took it for granted that his companion had seen what is called a *Will o' the Wisp*, which frequently appears in a low and swampy spot, near the road; but fearful of betraying himself, he did not ask in what direction the light lay—to divert his attention from this object, he asked him if he did not see two lights, one to the right, and one to the left. The stranger replied that he saw but one to the right—‘well then sir,’ says Metcalf, ‘that is Harrowgate.’ Having arrived at their journey’s end, they stopped at the house, now called the Granby, where Metcalf, being well acquainted with the place, led both the horses into the stable and then went into the house, where he found his fellow traveller comfortably seated over a tankard of negus, in which he pledged his guide. Metcalf took it very readily from him the first time, but the second he was rather wide of his mark. He therefore withdrew, leaving the landlord to explain what his companion was yet ignorant of. The latter hinted to the landlord his suspicion, that his guide must have taken a great quantity of spirits since their arrival, upon which the landlord inquired his reason for entertaining such an opinion, ‘I judged so,’ replied the traveller, ‘from the appearance of his eyes.’—‘eyes! bless you sir!’ do you not know that he is blind? What do you mean by that?—‘I mean sir, that he



cannot see'—'Blind ! gracious God !'—'yes sir, as blind as a stone,———' The stranger desired Metcalf to be called, and upon his confirming the landlord's account,—'Had I known that, said he, I would not have ventured with you for a hundred pounds.'—'And I sir,' said Metcalf 'would not have lost my way for a thousand.' The services of the evening were rewarded with two guineas, and a plentiful entertainment the next day by the gentleman, who considered this circumstance as the most extraordinary he had ever met with."

"Metcalf happened once to be at Scriven, at the house of one Green, an Inn-keeper, where two persons had a dispute concerning some sheep, which one of them had put into the penfold. The owner of the sheep, a townsman of Metcalf's, appeared to be ill-treated by the other parties, who wished to take an unfair advantage. Metcalf perceiving that they were not likely to agree about the damages, departed. It being about midnight, he resolved to perform a good turn for his friend before he went home. The penfold being walled round, he climbed over, and laying hold of the sheep one after the other, he threw them over the wall. The difficulty of the undertaking increased as the number diminished, as they were not so easily caught; but not deterred by that circumstance, he completed the business. On the return of day, when the penfold was found untenanted, though the door was fast locked, a considerable degree of surprise was excited, and various conjectures were formed relative to the rogues who had liberated the sheep; but Metcalf passed unsuspected, and enjoyed the joke in silence."

“Passing once through Halifax, he stopped at an inn called the Broad Stone. The landlord’s son and some others, who frequented Harrowgate, having heard of Metcalf’s exploits, expressed a wish to play at cards with him—he consented, and a pack was sent for, which he requested permission to examine, but as the landlord was his friend, he could rely on him to prevent any deception. They began, and Metcalf beat four of them in turn, playing for liquor only—not satisfied with this, some of the company proposed playing for money, and at shilling whist, Metcalf won fifteen shillings. The losing party then proposed playing double or quit, but he declined playing more than half guinea points. At length, yielding to their importunity, he engaged for guineas, and being favoured by fortune, he won ten, and a shilling for liquor each game. The loser taking up the cards went out, and soon returned with eight guineas more, which soon followed the other ten.”

“Among the numerous roads which Metcalf contracted to make was part of the Manchester road, from Blackmoor to Standish foot. As it was not marked out, the surveyor, contrary to expectation, took it over deep marshes, out of which, it was the opinion of the trustess, that it would be necessary to dig the earth till they came to a solid bottom. This plan appeared to Metcalf extremely tedious and expensive, and liable to other disadvantages. He therefore argued the point privately with the surveyor, and several other gentlemen; but they were all immovable in their former opinion. At their next meeting Metcalf attended, and addressed them in the following



manner. 'Gentlemen' I propose to make the road over the marshes after my own plan, and if it does not answer I will be at the expense of making it over again after yours.' To this proposal they assented—having engaged to complete nine miles in ten months, he began in six different parts, having nearly four hundred men employed. One of the paces was peat, and Standish Common, which was a deep bog, and over which it was thought impracticable to make any road. Here he cast it fourteen yards wide, and raised it in a circular form. The water, which in many places ran across the road, he carried off by drains; but found the greatest difficulty in conveying stones to the spot on account of the softness of the ground, Those who passed that way to Huddersfield market were not sparing of their censure of the undertaking, and even doubted whether it would ever be completed.—having however, levelled the piece to the end, he ordered his men to collect heather or ling, and bind it in round bundles which they could span with their hands. These bundles were placed close together, and another row laid over them, upon which they were well pressed down, and covered with stone and gravel. This piece being about half a mile in length when completed, was so remarkably fine, that any person might have gone over in winter unshod without being wet; and though other parts of the road soon wanted repairing, this needed none for twelve years."

"Dr. Bew, speaking of Metcalf, says, with the assistance only of a long staff, I have several times met this man traversing the road, ascending precipices, exploring valleys, and investigating their several ex-

tents, forms, and situations, so as to answer his designs in the best manner. The plans which he designs, and the estimates he makes, are done in a method peculiar to himself; and which he cannot well convey the meaning of to others. His abilities in this respect are nevertheless, so great, that he finds constant employment. Most of the roads over the Peak in Derbyshire, have been altered by his directions; particularly those in the vicinity of Buxton, and he is at this time constructing a new one betwixt Wilmslow and Congleton, with a view to open a communication to the great London road, without being obliged to pass over the mountains."

These particulars, concerning this extraordinary man and useful member of society, are taken from a narrative published by himself, since his return to his native county. He there fixed his residence at Stopport, near Wetherby, with a daughter and son-in-law who kept his house, happy in the enjoyment of the fruits of his industry, as his advanced age prevented him from engaging in the more active occupations to which he had been accustomed. He died in the year 1802.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
DR. HENRY MOYES.

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"When but a stripling, with fond alarms  
His bosom danced to Nature's boundless charms."

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AMONG the many illustrious characters, whose names adorn the pages of British Biography, Dr. Henry Moyes claims our particular attention. His virtues, his genius, and his scientific acquirements, have been the admiration of every country which he has visited. This distinguished individual, was born at Kirkaldy, in Fifeshire, and lost his sight by the small-pox,\* before he was three years old, so that he

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\* Every operation of the mind is greatly facilitated by the employment of sensible symbols, especially the process of acquiring, apprehending, and recollecting knowledge, as well as of pursuing long and intricate calculations or deductions. Our faculties receive such important assistance from these lines, figures, letters, and other marks, which may be made to present the record of every thought faithfully to the eye, that we are justified in quoting any remarkable case of progress, even in abstract science, attained without the aid of this invaluable organ, as a noble example of what perseverance may accomplish in the face of the most formidable difficulties.

scarcely retained in after life, any recollection of having ever seen, yet he used to say, that he remembered having once observed a water-mill in motion; and it is characteristic of the tendencies of his mind, that even at that early age, his attention was attracted by the circumstance of the water flowing in one direction, while the wheel turned round in the opposite, a mystery on which he reflected for some time before he could comprehend it. Blind as he was, he distinguished himself when a boy, by his proficiency in all the usual branches of a literary education, but "mechanical exercises," were the favorite employments of his infant years. We have no information respecting him from this period, till the time of his leaving College. He commenced, at Edinburgh, a series of lectures on the theory and practice of music, but not meeting with that encouragement which he expected, he relinquished this design. He next turned his attention to a subject which was more congenial to his feelings—natural and experimental philosophy presented an extensive field for the exercise of his talents. He was the first blind man who had proposed to lecture on chemistry; as a lecturer he acquired great reputation; his address was easy and pleasing, his language correct, and he performed his experiments in a manner which always gave great pleasure to his auditors. He left Scotland in 1779, and travelled into England, where he was well received. His audience was generally composed of the most respectable people of the towns through which he passed; but being of a restless disposition and fond of travelling, he in 1785, visited America. In the summer of that year



he made a tour of the Union, and conversed with such men as were distinguished, either for their learning or love of science. The following paragraph respecting him, appeared in one of the American newspapers of that day. "The celebrated Dr. Moyes, though blind, delivered a lecture upon optics,\* delineated the properties of light and shade, and gave an astonishing illustration of the power of touch. A highly polished plane of steel was presented to him, with a stroke of an etching tool so minutely engraved

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\* In no part of the human fabric, or even throughout the whole of nature, with which we are acquainted, are there more evident marks of exquisite perfection and wisdom, than in what relates to the sense of seeing; whether we direct our attention to the wonderful regularity, order, minuteness, and velocity of the rays of light, which minister to this sense, or to the structure and formation of the little organ, in which this faculty is destined to reside. With a ball and socket, (as a learned and elegant philosopher beautifully observes) of an inch diameter, we are enabled, in an instant of time, without changing our place, to perceive the disposition of an army, the figure of a palace, and the variety of a landscape; and not only, as he further remarks, to find our way through the pathless ocean, traverse the globe of the earth, determine its figure and dimensions, and delineate every region of it; but,

"Breaking hence, we take our ardent flight  
Thro' the blue infinite,"

ascertain the order, revolutions, and distances of the planetary orbs, and even form probable conjectures on

".....every star,  
Which the clear concave of a winter's night,  
Pours on the eye or astronomic tube,  
Far stretching, snatches from the dark abyss."

*Thompson.*



on it, that it was invisible to the naked eye, and only discoverable with a powerful magnifying glass—with his fingers he discovered the extent, and measured the length of the line. This gentleman informed me, that being overturned in a stage coach, one dark rainy evening, in England, and the carriage and four horses thrown into a ditch, the passengers and driver with two eyes a-piece, were obliged to apply to him, who had no eyes, for assistance, in extricating the horses. As for me, said he, after I had recovered from the astonishment of the fall, and discovered that I had escaped unhurt, I was quite at home in the dark ditch. The inversion of the order of things was amusing, I, that was obliged to be led about like a child in the glaring sun, was now directing eight persons to pull here and haul there, with all the dexterity and activity of a man-of-war's boatswain."

On his return from America, he took a house in Edinburgh, where he resided for some time, beloved and admired, not only by his countrymen, but also by strangers, who resorted to that ancient metropolis. But he had not yet finished his travels. Before his American expedition he had formed the design of coming over to Ireland, and when he had now returned, he determined to carry his favourite project into execution, and accordingly in 1790, he crossed the channel, and arrived in Belfast. He visited all the principal towns in the island; he was every where received with that respect which was due to his great merit. He remained a few months in Dublin, where he was visited by some of the most respectable individuals in that metropolis. Among



his Irish friends was the ingenious Mr. Kirwan of Dublin, a name well known in the scientific world. Between these two great men a friendship commenced which only ended with their lives. Dr. Moyes was highly gratified with his journey through Ireland; the hospitable manner in which he was every where received, and the friendship he experienced, were the theme of his eulogiums on that people. He now took up his residence at Manchester, and there determined to spend the remainder of his life. He was here in his native element, or to use his own words, "quite at home." In one of the most enlightened neighbourhoods in the empire, surrounded by a circle of chosen friends—distinguished by their taste, their talents, and their love of science; and with access to the numerous and well selected libraries, it was no wonder that these advantages induced Dr. Moyes to prefer Manchester to any other place he had been in. He was elected a member of the Manchester Philosophical Society, and enriched its collection by several valuable papers on chemistry, as well as the other branches of physical science. The following particulars of our philosopher's character, come from the classic pen of Dr. Bew.

"Dr. Henry Moyes, who occasionally read lectures on philosophical chemistry at Manchester, lost his sight by the small-pox in early infancy. He never recollected to have seen; but the first traces of memory, I have, (says he) are in some confused ideas of the solar system. He had the good fortune to be born in a country where learning of every kind is highly cultivated, and to be brought up in a family



devoted to learning. Possessed of native genius, and ardent in his applications, he made rapid advances in various departments of erudition, and not only acquired the fundamental principles of mechanics, music, and the languages, but likewise entered deeply into the investigation of the profounder sciences, and displayed an acute and general knowledge of geometry, optics, algebra, astronomy, chemistry, and in short, of most of the branches of the Newtonian Philosophy :\* At a very early age, he made himself acquainted with the use of edged tools so perfectly, that notwithstanding his entire blindness, he was able to make little wind-mills; and even constructed a loom with his own hands, which still show the marks of wounds he received in the execution of these juvenile exploits. By a most agreeable intimacy and frequent intercourse, which I enjoyed with this accomplished blind gentleman, whilst he resided at Manchester, I had an opportunity of repeatedly observing the peculiar manner in which he arranged his ideas, and acquired his

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\* "Moyes possessed all that extreme delicacy in the senses of touch and hearing, for which the blind have usually been remarkable, we have been told that having been one day accosted in the street by a young friend, whom he had not met with for a good many years, his instant remark, on hearing his voice, was, how much taller you have grown since we last met! He contrived for himself, a system of palpable arithmetic, on a different principle from that of Saunderson, and possessing the advantage in point of neatness and simplicity. Dr. Moyes, must have been a person of extraordinary mental endowments, and affords us certainly, next to Saunderson, the most striking example on record, of attainments in the mathematics, made without any assistance from the eye.



information. Whenever he was introduced into company, I remarked that he continued some time silent. The sound directed him to judge of the dimensions of the room, and the different voices, of the number of persons that were present; his distinctions in these respects were very accurate, and his memory so retentive, that he was seldom mistaken. I have known him instantly to recognize a person on first hearing him speak, though more than two years had elapsed since the time of their last meeting. He determined pretty nearly the stature of those he was speaking with, by the direction of their voices; and he made tolerable conjectures respecting their temper and dispositions, by the manner in which they conducted their conversation. It must be observed that this gentleman's eyes were not totally insensible to intense light. The rays refracted through a prism, when sufficiently vivid, produced certain distinguishable effects on them. The red gave him a disagreeable sensation, which he compared to the touch of a saw; as the colours declined in violence, the harshness lessened, until the green afforded a sensation that was highly pleasing to him, and which he described as conveying an idea similar to what he felt in running his hand over polished surfaces. Polished surfaces, meandering streams, and gentle declivities, were the figures by which he expressed his ideas of beauty; rugged rocks, irregular points, and boisterous elements, furnished him with expressions for terror and disgust. He excelled in the charms of conversation; was happy in his allusions to visual objects; and discoursed on the nature, composition, and beauty of colours, with pertinence and precision.

“Dr. Moyes was a striking instance of the power the human soul possesses, of finding resources of satisfaction, even under the most rigorous calamities. Though involved in ever-during darkness, and excluded from the charming views of silent, or animated nature; though dependent upon an undertaking for the means of his subsistence, the success of which was very precarious; in short, though destitute of other support than his genius, still Dr. Moyes was generally cheerful and apparently happy. Indeed, it must afford much pleasure to the feeling heart, to observe this hilarity of temper prevail almost universally with the blind. Though cut off from the cheerful ways of men and the contemplation of the human face divine, they have this consolation—they are exempt from the discernment, and contagious influence of those painful emotions of the soul; that are visible on the countenance, and which hypocrisy itself cannot conceal. This disposition likewise, may be considered as an internal evidence of the native worth of the human mind, that thus supports its dignity and cheerfulness under one of the severest calamities that can possibly befall us.”

This good man, after a life of 57 years, spent in learned labours and inglorious ease, paid the debt of nature, August 10th, 1807. As he never had entered into the married state, he was enabled by prudence and œconomy to amass a considerable sum, which he bequeathed to his brother. In his manner of living he was abstemious. He was entirely unacquainted with the use of ardent spirits, or fermented liquors. He had a natural dislike to animal food of



every description ; consequently his meals were plain and simple. He was very partial to a sea-weed, well known by the name of dulse, this he would boil, and dress up with a little butter, which, with a crust of bread, and a draught of spring-water, was the only luxury in which he indulged. Well might Dr. Moyes say with Goldsmith's hermit—

“ No flocks that range the valley free,  
To slaughter I condemn,  
Taught by that power which pities me,  
I learn to pity them ;  
But from the mountain's grassy side,  
A guiltless feast I bring ;  
A scrip with herbs and fruit supplied,  
And water from the spring.”

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THE LIFE  
OF  
JOHN STANLEY, B. M.

INCLUDING  
A FEW PARTICULARS OF THE LAST YEARS OF  
HANDEL'S LIFE.

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"For music's voice the icy bosom warms,  
Strings the lax nerve, and fires the weak to arms."

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THE English (it is said) have no national music ; but yet, they are by no means unacquainted with the principles of that delightful science. Many of her composers, as well as performers, have been men of acknowledged talents ; and their compositions would bear comparison with some of the productions of the first masters of either the German or Italian schools. John Stanley, whose life we are next to consider, was a prodigy in his day : as a composer, few could equal him, and as a performer, he had perhaps no superior. Such was the opinion of two most distinguished foreigners, at that time in England, (Handel and Gazzini) men, whose profound knowledge of the art, qualified them to judge of the merits of Mr. Stanley's performances.



John Stanley was born in 1713. At two years old, he totally lost his sight, by falling on a marble hearth, with a china bason in his hand. At the age of seven, he first began to learn music, as an art that was likely to amuse him, but without his friends supposing it possible for him, circumstanced as he was, to make it his profession. His first master was Reading, a scholar of Dr. Blow's, and organist of Hackney, but his father finding that he not only received great pleasure from music, but had made a rapid progress, placed him with Dr. Green, under whom he studied with great diligence, and a success that was astonishing.\* At eleven years of age, he

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\* The influence of music is still more generally to be observed than that of poetry. Music almost, without exception, appears to be the favourite amusement of the blind. There is no other employment of the mind, religious contemplation excepted, that seems so well adapted to soothe the soul, and dissipate the melancholy ideas which, it may naturally be expected, will sometimes pervade the dispositions of those who are utterly bereft of sight; this, together with the beneficial influence that results from the practice of this delightful art, by quickening and perfecting the sense of hearing, is a matter that deserves the most serious attention. The celebrated professor, just now mentioned, excelled in performing on the flute, in his youth, and the refinement of his ear, has been very justly attributed to his early attention to music. It is not, therefore, surprising that so many blind people have distinguished themselves in this science. Stanley and Parry were deprived of their sight in early infancy; yet, both these gentlemen have displayed extraordinary proofs of their abilities, not only as composers and performers of music, but likewise in matters that, at a first view, we might be apt to consider as peculiar to those who are fully possessed of the faculty of vision.



obtained the place of organist of All-Hallows', Breadstreet; and in 1726, at the age of thirteen, was elected organist of St. Andrews', Holborn, in preference to a great number of candidates. In 1734, the Benchers of the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple, elected him one of their organists. These two places he retained till the time of his death. Few professors have spent a more active life in every branch of his art, than this extraordinary musician, having been not only a most neat, pleasing, and accurate performer, but a natural and agreeable composer, and an intelligent instructor. He was the conductor and soul of the Swan and Castle concerts in the City, as long as they existed. Upon the death of Handel, he and Mr. Smith undertook to superintend the performance of Oratorios during Lent; and after Mr. Smith retired, he carried them on in conjunction with Mr. Linley, till within two years of his death, in 1786, which took place on the 19th of May. His remains were interred on the evening of the 27th, in the new burial ground of St. Andrew's, on the following Sunday. Instead of the usual voluntary, a solemn dirge, and after service, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth,*" were with great

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Their separate reputations, as musicians, are sufficiently known and acknowledged. The style of Stanley is truly his own; and his execution on the organ, equal, if not superior, to any of his cotemporary performers on that grand instrument. Parry may be revered as the British bard of modern times. The halls of the Cambrian chief resound with the melodious vibration of his harp, and he has united the refinements of taste and elegance to the rude, but expressive modulation of antiquity.



propriety given upon that organ at which Mr. Stanley had for so many years presided. He married the daughter of Edward Arland, Esq. a captain in the East India Company's service, but never had any children. This ingenious and worthy professor, whose blindness excited the pity,\* and his performance, the admiration of the public for so many years, was long lamented by his surviving friends, for they lost in him, exclusive of his musical talents, a most intelligent and agreeable companion, who contributed to the pleasures of society, as much by his conversation in private, as by his professional merit in public.

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\* Amongst the various calamities to which the human species are subjected, there are none that excite compassion, or call forth our benevolent aid more powerfully than blindness. The blind man, in all ages and countries, has ever been allowed an indisputable claim on the good offices of his fellow creatures; his necessities have generally been supplied with sacred care, and his genius, if it approached to excellence, has been respected with a degree of reverence superior to what is usually bestowed on such as are possessed of the faculty of sight. We not only find our gratitude warmed and elevated to piety and devotion, but are likewise conscious of an involuntary impulse, that urges us to exert our endeavours towards the assistance of such as are unfortunately deprived of this noble faculty, whenever they are presented to our notice. And here, again, we have every motive to inspire us with admiration of the providential wisdom and benevolence displayed by the divine author of our existence: for, notwithstanding the great and comprehensive powers of sight, there is little of the actual knowledge acquired by this faculty, that may not, by attentive and patient perseverance, be communicated to the man who has been doomed to darkness from his birth.



He was succeeded in his office, as master of the King's Band, by Sir William Parsons.

Besides various compositions for the organ, he was the author of two oratorios, *Jephtha*, which was written in 1757, and *Zimri*, which was performed at Covent Garden, during the first season of Mr. Stanley's management of the oratorios there. He likewise wrote the music to an *Ode*, performed at Drury Lane, in the year 1760, and intended at the same time, as an Elegy on the death of King George the Second, and as a compliment to his successor; and also to a dramatic pastoral, entitled, *Arcadia, or the Shepherd's Wedding*, performed at the same theatre in the ensuing year, immediately after the marriage of their late Majesties, George III. and Charlotte.

In proof of his masterly management of the organ, it is well known, that when, at the performance of one of Handel's Te Deums, he found the organ was half a note too sharp for the other instruments, he, without the least premeditation, transposed the whole piece; and this with as much facility and address as any other person could have done by the help of sight. This was the more remarkable, since the key into which it was transposed, (that of C sharp major,) from having *seven sharps* in the clef, is so exceedingly difficult, that it is never made use of. It is probable, that there was not then in the kingdom one performer beside himself, who would have attempted it, even though he had previously taken the trouble of writing out the whole of the part.

This gentleman had two very favourite violins, one of them made by the famous Stanier, which he al-



ways used in concert, and the other a Cremona, on which he played his solos. Both these instruments were esteemed to be as excellent as any in England; but unfortunately they were both burnt in the fire which happened at the Swan Tavern, in Cornhill.

The following additional particulars of this great man's life were given to the public a few years after his death, by a gentleman, on whose veracity the reader may place implicit confidence.

Dr. Alcock, who had been a pupil of Stanley's, speaks of his scientific knowledge in the most exalted terms, and adds, that most of the musicians contrived methods to get acquainted with him, as they found their advantage in it: it was common, just as the service at St. Andrew's church, or the Temple was ended, to see 40 or 50 organists at the altar, waiting to hear his last voluntary, and even Mr. Handel himself, I have frequently seen at both of those places. In short, it must be confessed, that his extempore voluntaries were inimitable, and his taste in composition wonderful. I was his apprentice, (continues the Doctor) and I remember the first year I went to him, his occasionally playing (for his amusement only,) at billiards, mississipie, shuffle-board, and skittles, at which games he constantly beat his competitors. To avoid prolixity, I shall only mention, his shewing me the way through the private streets of Westminster, the intricate passages of the city, and the adjacent villages, both on horseback and on foot, places at which I had never been before; his playing very neatly and correctly all Corelli's and Geminiani's, twelve solos, on the violin. He had so correct an ear,

that he never forgot the voice of any person he had once heard speak ; I myself, have divers times been a witness of it ; and in April 1779, as he and I were going to Pall Mall, to the late Dr. Boyce's auction, a gentleman met us who had been in Jamaica twenty years, and in a feigned voice, said, " how do you do Mr. Stanley ? "—when he, pausing a little, said " God bless me, Mr. Smith, how long have you been in England ? "—If twenty people were seated at a table near him, he would address them all in regular order, without their situations being previously announced to him. Riding on horseback was one of his favourite exercises, and towards the conclusion of his life, when he lived at Epping Forest, and wished to give his friends an airing, he would often take them the pleasantest road, and point out the most agreeable prospects. He played at whist, with great readiness and judgment ; each card was marked at the corner with the point of the needle ; but those marks were so delicately fine, as scarcely to be seen by any person, not previously apprised of them. His hand was generally the first arranged, and it was not uncommon for him to complain to the party, that they were tedious in sorting the cards. He could also tell the precise time by a watch ; tell the number of persons in a room upon his entering it ; direct his voice to each person in particular, even to strangers, after they had once spoken ; miss any person absent, and tell who that person was : in a word, his conceptions of youth, beauty, symmetry, and shape, were, in a person of his condition, truly wonderful attainments. So delicate and susceptible was his ear, that he was able to accom-



pany any lesson with a thorough bass, though he had never heard it before ; thus anticipating the harmony before the chords were sounded, and accompanying it in a manner suitable to its nature.

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### THE LAST DAYS OF HANDEL.

In the beginning of the year 1751, Handel was alarmed by a disorder in his eyes, which, upon consulting the surgeons, he was told was a cataract. From this moment his usual flow of spirits forsook him, and scarcely left him patience for that crisis of his disorder in which he might hope for relief. He had been prepared to expect a total privation of sight ; yet, to entertain hopes that this might only prove temporary, and that by an operation, it might be restored. When, therefore, the total loss of sight was confirmed, he submitted himself to Mr. Samuel Sharp, of Guy's Hospital. The repeated attempts, that were made to relieve him, were however fruitless ; and he was at length told, that for the remainder of his days, a relief from pain in his visual organs, was all that could be hoped. In this forlorn and dejected state, reflecting on his inability any longer to conduct his entertainments, he called to his aid Mr. Smith, the son of his faithful copyist and friend ; and with his assistance, oratorios continued to be performed even till that Lent season in which he died. These took place with no other omission in his own perform-

ance than the accompaniment by the harpsichord; the rich flow of his fancy ever supplying him with subjects for extempore voluntaries on the organ, and his hand still retaining the power of executing whatever his invention suggested.

It was a most affecting spectacle to see the venerable musician, whose efforts had so long claimed the ear of a discerning multitude, led to the front of the stage, in order to make an obeisance of acknowledgment to his enraptured audience. When Smith played the organ during the first year of Handel's blindness, "Samson" was performed, and Beard sang with great feeling,

"Total eclipse—no sun, no moon;  
All dark amid the blaze of noon!"

The recollection that Handel had set these words to music, with the view of the blind composer then sitting by the organ, affected the audience so forcibly, that many persons present were moved even to tears.

The loss of his sight, and the prospect of his approaching dissolution, made a great change in the temper and general behaviour of Handel. He was a man of blameless morals, and throughout his whole life manifested a deep sense of religion. In conversation he would frequently speak of the pleasure that he experienced in setting the scriptures to music, and how much some of the sublime passages of the Psalms had contributed to his comfort and satisfaction. And now, when he found himself drawing near the close of his mortal state, these sentiments were improved into solid and rational piety, attended by a calm and undisturbed mind.



Towards the beginning of the year 1758, he found himself fast declining ; and the general debility which had seized him, was rendered still more alarming by an almost total loss of appetite. When the latter symptom took place, he considered his recovery as entirely hopeless. And resigning himself to his fate, he expired on the 14th of April, 1759, in the 76th year of his age.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
EDWARD RUSHTON.

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“ Tho’ train’d in boisterous elements, his mind  
Was yet by soft humanity refin’d;—  
Brave, liberal, just, the calm domestic scene  
Had o’er his temper breath’d a gay serene.”

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THERE is no history so useful *to* man, as the history *of* man; hence it is that Biography is considered not only one of the most pleasing sources of amusement that we can turn to, but it contains one of the best lessons of moral instruction that the human mind can possibly contemplate. In perusing the pages of Plutarch, how are we struck with the rich fund of intellectual knowledge, contained in the volumes of that inimitable Author?—but why confine ourselves to the pages of antiquity? The histories of all ages, and of every country, particularly that of our own, furnish many bright examples worthy our closest imitation. It is peculiarly pleasing to observe how many individuals in the middle and lower ranks of life, without the advantages of education, have raised themselves to a distinguished place in society, by the cultivation of their literary talents; and among these



was Edward Rushton of Liverpool, who, though he did not attain to the higher departments of literature, was remarkable for the clearness and perspicuity of his style, and for employing his pen in the cause of humanity and of truth.

EDWARD RUSHTON was born on the 11th of Nov. 1756, in John-street, Liverpool. His education, which he received at a free school, terminated with his ninth year. At ten, he read Anson's Voyage, resolved to be a sailor, was bound apprentice to Watt and Gregson, and before he entered his eleventh year, he was "a sea-boy on the high and giddy mast." He performed the various duties of his station with skill and credit, as was evinced by the following fact. When he reached his sixteenth year, he received the thanks of the Captain and crew of the vessel, for his seaman-like conduct during a storm—having seized the helm, and extricated the ship, when the Captain and crew were wandering about in despair.

Before seventeen, whilst yet in his apprenticeship, he signed articles as second mate of the vessel, in which, a short time before, he entered as cabin boy. When in this situation, in the West Indies, a circumstance occurred which is worthy of preservation. He was dispatched from the ship with a boat's crew to the shore, from which the vessel was then lying some miles distant. When within about three miles of Jamaica, the boat from some unknown cause upset, and five or six individuals were consequently left to struggle for life, depending only on their bodily strength and skill for their preservation. The boat in a short time presented itself keel upwards, upon



which they all speedily mounted; but no sooner had they seated themselves, and congratulated each other on their escape, than the boat slipped from under them, and they were again left to the mercy of the waves. In the boat among others was a negro, whose name was Quamina; between this individual and Rushton a friendship had for some time subsisted, for Rushton had taught Quamina to read. When the boat disappeared, Rushton beheld at some distance a small cask, which he knew contained fresh water; for this cask he made, but before he could reach it, it was seized by the negro, who, on seeing Rushton almost exhausted, thrust the cask towards him, turned away his head, bidding him good bye, and never more was seen. This cask saved Rushton's life. He has often told this story with tears in his eyes.

As second mate of the vessel he continued until the term of his apprenticeship was expired. At this period, the offer of a superior situation induced him to proceed to the coast of Africa on a slaving voyage. When he beheld the horrors of this disgraceful traffic he expressed his sentiments of it in strong and pointed language, with that boldness and integrity which characterized his every action, and, though in a subordinate situation, he went so far in that respect that it was thought necessary to threaten him with irons if he did not desist.

On this fatal voyage, whilst he was at Dominica, he was attacked by a violent inflammation of the eyes, which in three weeks left him with the left eye totally destroyed, and the right eye entirely covered by an opacity of the cornea. This misfortune was occa-



sioned by his exertions in assisting to relieve the necessities of his brethren of the sable race, among whom an infectious fever had broken out.

Thus, in his nineteenth year, was he deprived of one of the greatest blessings of nature. How much he felt this privation, he has beautifully expressed in the following little Poem.

#### ODE TO BLINDNESS.

Ah ! think if June's delicious rays,  
The eye of sorrow can illumine—  
Or wild December's beamless days,  
Can fling o'er all a transient gloom ;  
Ah ! think if skies obscure or bright,  
Can thus depress or cheer the mind :  
Ah ! think 'midst clouds of utter night,  
What mournful moments wait the blind !

And who shall tell his cause for woe,  
To love the wife he ne'er must see,  
To be a sire, yet not to know  
The silent babe that climbs his knee !  
To have his feelings daily torn,  
With pain, the passing meal to find—  
To live distressed, and die forlorn,  
Are ills that oft await the blind !

When to the breezy upland led,  
At noon, or blushing eve, or morn,  
He bears the red-breast o'er his head,  
While round him breathes the scented thorn ;  
But Oh ! instead of Nature's face,  
Hills, dales, and woods, and streams combin'd,  
Instead of tints, and forms, and grace,  
Night's blackest mantle shrouds the blind.

If rosy youth bereft of sight,  
'Midst countless thousands pines unblest—  
As the gay flower withdrawn from light,  
Bows to the earth where all must rest;  
Ah! think, when life's declining hours  
To chilling penury are consign'd,  
And pain has palsied all his powers;  
Ah! think what woes await the blind.

In 1776, attended by his father, he visited London, and amongst other eminent men consulted the celebrated Baron Wentzell, oculist to the King, who declared him incurable. In this hopeless situation, poor Rushton returned to Liverpool, and resided with his father, with whom he continued but a short period, as the violent temper of his step-mother compelled him to leave the house and maintain himself on four shillings per week. An old aunt gave him lodgings, and for seven years he existed on this miserable, and considering the circumstances of his father, this shameful allowance. Whilst subsisting on this sum, he managed to pay a boy two pence or three pence per week, for reading to him an hour or two in the evening. He had a brooch, to which, as he has frequently been heard to declare he was often indebted for a dinner: nor was this brooch confined to himself; it was frequently lent to a friend for the self-same purpose.

From this state he was removed to one much more comfortable. His father placed one of his daughters with Rushton in a tavern, where he lived for about two years, and while in this situation he married. Finding, however, his pecuniary circumstances rather diminishing than increasing, he gave up the business.



He now entered into an engagement as editor of a newspaper called the "Herald," which for some time he pursued with much pleasure and little profit, until finding it impossible to express himself in that independent and liberal manner, which his reason and his conscience dictated, he threw up his situation and had to begin the world once more.

With an increasing family and very limited means, Rushton hesitated before he fixed on any particular course of life. He thought of several plans, but none seemed more agreeable to his taste than the business of a bookseller; his habits and his pursuits combined to render it more eligible than any other which presented itself to his thoughts. With thirty guineas, five children, and a wife to whose exertions he was greatly indebted, he commenced bookselling. This excellent wife laboured incessantly, and with attention and frugality the business succeeded, and Rushton felt himself more easy. At this time politics ran very high in Liverpool. Rushton had published several of his pieces, all in favour of the *Rights of Man*. He became a noted character, was marked and shot at; the lead passed very close to the eyebrow, but did not do him the smallest injury. His timid friends, by whom he had been constantly visited while all was serene, now began to desert him;—they were afraid of being seen near the house of a man who was looked upon as disaffected, because he boldly stepped forward in what he considered to be the cause of liberty and truth. Such are the prejudices with which a man has to struggle, whose determination it is to speak and act as his heart shall dictate. Diffe-



rence of opinion respecting the best means of promoting a virtuous end, the good of mankind, is frequently the cause of disuniting friends who have long been warmly attached, and whose motives are, perhaps, equally pure.

Rushton, however, experienced the satisfaction of enjoying the steady attachment, and unremitting attention of a few tried and true friends, who with him had rejoiced in the triumphs of liberty in whatever land they were achieved. Whilst in business as a bookseller, the purses of the late Mr. W. Rathbone, and of Mr. W. Roscoe, were offered to him; he was invited to take what sum he might want, he refused them both, and he has often declared his feelings to have been those of satisfaction, when he reflected on this refusal. He was in poverty, nay, at the very moment he was struggling hard to gain a scanty pittance; yet he maintained his independence. His life for some years was but little varied, he continued successively to produce poetical pieces.

The premature death of the unfortunate Thomas Chatterton, or as Doctor Anderson has emphatically styled him the "Boy of Bristol," excited in every mind the deepest sorrow for his misfortunes. This poor neglected child of genius,\* had scarcely reached his 18th year when he terminated his existence by

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\* TO THE MEMORY OF CHATTERTON.

Oh thou! who many a silent hour,  
Satt'st brooding o'er thy plans profound;  
Oh Chatterton! thou fairest flower,  
That ever graced poetic ground.



poison. He had eaten nothing for three or four days before he committed this rash act; having no friend or patron to whom he could look up for encouragement, and being too proud to appeal to the charity of strangers, he adopted the dreadful alternative of quitting a world where he had met with nothing but poverty, disappointment, and neglect. 'This melancholy catastrophe could not be overlooked by the

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'Twas thine, in lyrics sweet and strong,  
To bear th' enraptured soul along—  
'Twas thine to paint domestic woe,  
And bid the drops of pity flow!—  
'Twas thine in Homer's glowing strain,  
To sing contention's bloody reign;  
And oh! 'twas thine, with unfledged wings to soar,  
Upborne by native fire, to heights untried before.

In lonely paths, and church-yards drear,  
When shrouded, pale-eyed ghosts are seen;  
When many a wild note strikes the ear,  
From fairies rev'lling on the green.

Then didst thou oft with daring fire,  
Sweep o'er the solemn gothic lyre;  
Then, whilst the broad moon lent her aid,  
To times long past thy fancy stray'd;  
Then Hastings' field was heap'd with dead,  
And Birtha mourn'd, and Baldwin bled;  
Yet, what to thee did poesy produce?  
Why—when on earth, neglect, when in the grave,  
abuse.

Ah penury! thou chilling sprite,  
Thou pale depressor of the mind,  
That with a cloud opaque as night,  
Veil'st many a genius from mankind.

humane-hearted Rushton. He has done justice to his memory in a copy of verses, which seem to be the effusion of a mind deeply imbued with the mournful subject. After speaking of his fine poetic genius, he proceeds to paint the horrid scene which preceded his death, in the most affecting language.

But it was not on this occasion alone, that Rushton's humanity was shewn;—his feelings were ever alive to the sufferings of his fellow-creatures; it was the same to him by what name they went, or to what country they belonged; whether they were burned by an Indian, or by an African sun! If he conceived they were injured or oppressed, he was ready at all times to vindicate their wrongs, with all that zeal and ability which Providence endued him with. It was this love for mankind, that induced him, in 1797, to write a letter to Washington, the then President of the United States on the subject of Negro Slavery, to whom it was transmitted in July, and a few weeks afterwards was returned under cover without one syllable in reply. As children who are crammed with sweetmeats have no relish for plain and wholesome food, so men in power who are seldom addressed but in the sweet tone of adulation, are apt to be disgusted with the plain and salutary language of truth; to offend was not the intention of the writer, yet the President was evidently irritated. To those who are acquainted with the philanthropic exertions of Rushton, which may be said to have characterized him from his youth, no apology for the subjoined extracts from that letter is necessary, and to those who have read thus far of his history, every demonstration of the amiable feelings



which he retained to the last period of his existence, will I trust be acceptable. It must be farther observed, in favour of Rushton, that the letter now in question was not the result of any party feeling towards the American people. His political principle was that of a staunch republican; he venerated the name of Washington; he not only considered him one of the greatest, but one of the best men that ever appeared in the world! He also knew, at the same time, that he was but a human being, like himself, liable to err;—and that Washington did err, is a truth that none of his friends can deny; all his biographers acknowledged that he kept three hundred poor Africans in chains;—it was this inconsistency that called forth Rushton's remarks.

Sometime afterwards he wrote to Thomas Paine on the same subject, but that pretended friend to mankind lent a deaf ear to his remonstrance. Among his poetical productions which appeared about this time, was that beautiful poem of "*Mary le More*," with several others on the same subject. The most particular occurrence in the latter years of his life, was a partial recovery of his sight; an event, which tended to make those years much more comfortable than any he had experienced since his youth. In the summer of 1805, hearing of the repeated successes of Dr. Gibson of Manchester, as an oculist, he was induced to obtain his opinion; that opinion was favourable, and after enduring, with his accustomed fortitude, five dreadful operations, he was, in the summer of 1807, ushered into that world from which, for more than thirty years, he had been excluded. His feelings on



this occasion are truly recorded in the lines addressed to Gibson on this happy event.

During the last years of his life, Rushton did not write much, but those poems which he did produce, are excellent. "The Fire of English Liberty"—"Jemmy Armstrong," Stanzas addressed to Robert Southey, are all strongly in favour of those principles which, with fire unabated, he preserved till the last moment of his mental existence. For the few last years of his life, he was occasionally troubled with the gout, and his health visibly declined; but under all his afflictions he preserved his usual cheerfulness and gaiety till the last, and died on the 22d Nov. 1814, aged 58. The following view of his character was given by one of his intimate friends.

Edward Rushton was a public character, eminently distinguished by his actions, and by none more honourably than by his abhorrence of the doctrine of expediency, when opposed to the straight forward path of duty and principle. He thus put to shame many of "the puny dangles after wealth," and a false fame. Let it not be thought that this is the language of mere declamatory panegyric, as in many common-place encomiums of the dead, where, to bestow indiscriminate praise is the sole object. Such fulsome praise disgusts. The truth of the present attempt to describe worth, is felt by the writer, yet, he would not be thought to hold up Edward Rushton or any other man as the model of perfection. Every human being has his portion of alloy. But he wishes to prove by an eminent example, how much man may, by exercise of his faculties and moral capacities, advance himself



in the practice and course of virtue. Examples of this kind, selected out of the middle walks of life, are cheering and animating, and may very materially assist by an honourable emulation, to incite to virtuous deeds, and tend to promote a closer attention to the dictates of unbending principle, a thing much wanting in the present day; and therefore, essentially necessary to be more strongly inculcated.

Edward Rushton is praised, and justly praised, for the good qualities which he possessed; but the great aim in penning the foregoing sketch is to advocate the cause of virtue, by exhibiting a bright example. The Roman poet exclaimed, *Amicus Socrates! Amicus Plato! sed magis, Amicus veritas.* So Edward Rushton was my friend, and I am proud to have enjoyed a share of his friendship, but the cause of virtue is dearer to me than any man, how much soever, like the subject of this memorial, he may have been distinguished by talents, and dignified by the proper employment of them.

The works of Rushton are not numerous, but they are truly valuable for their moral excellence. I have already observed that Rushton was not a first-rate genius, but as a man, he did honour to the age and country in which he lived.

Rushton's poetical pieces were not originally intended for publication, but being read and admired by his friends, they appeared first in the periodical journals of the day, and were afterwards collected together, and published in a small duodecimo volume, in London, in 1804; these, with his letters to General Washington, and Thomas Paine, are the only productions of his which were given to the public.



EXTRACTS FROM  
RUSHTON'S LETTER TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

*The following extracts from Rushton's letter to General Washington, will, I trust, be acceptable to my readers, as they will shew in what light he held this disgraceful traffic.*

After paying some well-merited compliments to Washington's military talents, and patriotic exertions in the service of his country, during the Revolutionary war, he proceeds to animadvert on his conduct as a slave-holder, in the following terms.

“ But it is not to the commander-in-chief of the American forces, nor to the President of the United States, that I have aught to address; my business is with George Washington of Mount-Vernon, in Virginia—a man, who, notwithstanding his hatred to oppression, and his ardent love of liberty, holds at this moment, hundreds of his fellow-beings in a state of abject bondage; yes, you, who conquered under the banners of freedom; you, who are now the first magistrate of a free people, are (strange to relate) a slave-holder. That a Liverpool merchant should endeavour to enrich himself by such a business, is not a matter of surprise, but that you, an enlightened character, strongly enamoured of your own freedom, you, who, if the British forces had succeeded in the Eastern states, would have retired with a few congenial spirits, to the rude fastnesses of the western wilds, there to have enjoyed that blessing, without which, a paradise would be disgusting, and with which the most savage region is not without its charms; that you, I say, should continue to be a slave-holder, a



proprietor of human flesh and blood, creates in many of your British friends, both astonishment and regret; you, who are a republican, an advocate for the dissemination of knowledge, and for universal justice. Where then are the arguments by which this shameful dereliction of principle can be supported? your friend Jefferson has endeavoured to shew that the Negroes are of an inferior order of beings, but surely you will not have recourse to this subterfuge. Your slaves, it may be urged, are well treated—that I deny, man never can be well treated who is deprived of his rights. They are well clothed, well fed, well lodged, &c. Feed me with ambrosia, and wash it down with nectar; yet, what are these if liberty be wanting? you took arms in defence of the *Rights of Man*;—your Negroes are men:—Where then are the rights of your Negroes?

It has been said by your apologists, that your feelings are inimical to slavery, and that you are induced to acquiesce in it at present, merely from motives of policy; the only true policy is justice, and he who regards the consequences of an act, rather than the justice of it, gives no very exalted proof of the greatness of his character. But if your feelings be actually repugnant to slavery, then are you more culpable than the callous-hearted planter, who laughs at what he calls the pitiful whinings of the abolitionists, because he believes slavery to be justifiable! while you persevere in a system which your conscience tells you to be wrong. If we call the man obdurate, who cannot perceive the atrociousness of slavery, what epithet does he deserve, who, while he does perceive

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its atrociousness, continues to be a proprietor of slaves ? Nor is it likely that your own unfortunate Negroes are the only sufferers, by your adhering to this nefarious business ; consider the force of an example like yours ; consider how many of the sable race may now be pining in bondage, merely, forsooth, because the President of the United States, who has the character of a wise and good man, does not see cause to discontinue the long established practice. Of all the slave-holders under Heaven, those of the United States, appear to me the most reprehensible ; for man never is so truly odious as when he inflicts upon others that which he himself abominates. When the cup of slavery was presented to your countrymen, they rejected it with disdain, and appealed to the world, in justification of their conduct—yet, such is the inconsistency of man, that thousands upon thousands of those very people, with yourself amongst the number, are now sedulously employed in holding the self-same bitter draught to the lips of their sable brethren. From men who are strongly attached to their own rights, and have suffered much in their defence ;—one might have expected scrupulous attention to the rights of others ; did not experience show, that when we ourselves are oppressed, we perceive it with a lynx's eye ; but when we become the oppressors, no noon-tide bats are blinder ; you are boastful of your own rights ; you are violators of the rights of others, and you are stimulated by an insatiable rapacity, to cruel and relentless oppression. In defending your own liberties, you undoubtedly suffered much, but if your Negroes, emulating the spirited example of their masters, were



to throw off the galling yoke, and retiring peaceably to some uninhabited part of the Western region, were to resolve on liberty or death, what would be the conduct of the Southern planters on such an occasion? Nay; what would be your own conduct? you, who were "born in a land of liberty," who "early learned its value;" you, who "engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it;" you, who "in a word, devoted the best years of your life to secure its permanent establishment in your own country, and whose anxious recollection, whose sympathetic feelings, and whose best wishes are irresistibly excited; whensoever in any country you see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom."—Possessed of these energetic sentiments, what would be your conduct? would you have the virtue to applaud so just and animating a movement, as the revolt of your Southern Negroes? No; I fear both you and your countrymen, to gratify your own sordid views would scatter among an unoffending people, terror, desolation, and death. Harsh as this conclusion may appear, yet it is warranted by your present practice; for the man who can boast of his own rights, and hold two or three hundred of his fellow-beings in slavery, would not hesitate, in case of a revolt, to employ the most sanguinary means in his power, rather than forego that which the *truly* republican laws of his country are *pleased* to call his property. Shame! shame! that man should be deemed the property of man, or that the name of Washington should be found among the lists of such proprietors!

Should these strictures be deemed severe or un-



merited on your part, how comes it, that while in the Northern or Middle states, the exertions of the Quakers, and other philanthropists, have produced such regulations as must speedily eradicate every trace of slavery in that quarter; how comes it, that from you, these humane efforts have never received the least countenance? If your mind have not sufficient firmness to do away that which is wrong, the moment you perceive it to be such, one might have expected that a plan for ameliorating the evil would have met with your warmest support; but no such thing. The just example of a majority of the states, has had no visible effect upon you; and as to the men of Maryland, of Virginia, of the two Carolinas, of Georgia, and of Kentucky, they smile contemptuously at the idea of Negro Emancipation, and with the States-constitution in one hand, and the cow-skin in the other, exhibit to the world such a spectacle, as every real friend to liberty must from his soul abominate.

“Then what is man, and what man seeing this, and having human feelings, does not blush and hang his head to think himself a man.” Man does not readily perceive defects in that which he has been accustomed to venerate; hence it is, that you have escaped those animadversions, which your slave proprietorship has so long merited. For seven years you bravely fought the battles of your country, and contributed greatly to the establishment of her liberties; yet, you are a slave-holder. A majority of your countrymen have recently discovered, that slavery is an injustice, and are gradually abolishing the wrong; yet, you continue to be a slave-holder. You are a firm believer



too, and your letters and speeches are replete with pious reflections on the Divine Being, Providence, &c. Yet you are a slave-holder! Oh Washington! ages to come will read with astonishment, that the man who was foremost to wrench the rights of America from the grasp of Britain, was the last to relinquish his own oppressive hold of poor and unoffending Negroes.

In the name of justice, what can induce you thus to tarnish your own well-earned celebrity, and to impair the fair features of American liberty with so foul and indelible a blot? Avarice is said to be the vice of age. Your slaves, old and young, male and female, father and mother, and child, might in the estimation of a Virginia planter, be worth from fifteen to twenty thousand pounds. Now, sir, are you sure that the unwillingness which you have shewn to liberate your Negroes, does not proceed from lurking pecuniary considerations? If this be the case, (and there are those who firmly believe it is) then there is no flesh left in your heart; and present reputation, future fame, and all that is estimable among the virtuous, are, for a few thousand pieces of paltry yellow dirt, irremediably renounced."

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THE LIFE  
OF  
TURLAGH CAROLAN,

THE CELEBRATED  
IRISH POET AND MUSICIAN.

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“Then happy bard! awake thy fire—  
Awake the heart-string of thy lyre:—  
Invoke thy muse. Thy muse appears;  
But robed in sorrow, bathed in tears.  
No blithesome tale, alas! she tells;—  
No glories of the ‘hall of shells:’  
No joy she whispers to the lays—  
No note of love, no note of praise.”

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CAROLAN was one of the last, and most celebrated of the Irish Bards, whose compositions have been as much admired for their extraordinary variety, as for their exquisite melody; he is said to have composed upwards of four hundred pieces. This account, however, is perhaps exaggerated, but be this as it may, the Irish national music has been greatly enriched by his productions: but it was not only in the composition of music that he distinguished himself; his poetry is also fine, for he wrote according to nature, and to use the language of an ingenious author, “His composi-



tions are like the dreams of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul." I am sorry to say that we know but little of the history of this extraordinary genius. It appears that he spent his life as an itinerant musician, and was made welcome at the houses of the great ; and there, with the tales of other days, enlivened the convivial hours. It reflects no great credit on the times in which Carolan lived, that he was suffered to live in poverty, and die in obscurity ; but it has too frequently been the lot of great geniuses to meet with neglect while living, and when dead to be lamented, and admired ; as if mankind knew not their value until they were gone, and posterity were willing to compensate for the injuries they had experienced through life, by erecting to their memories splendid monuments. A trifle bestowed on them while living, and starving in an empty garret, would have rendered them more essential service than all the sums lavished on the decorations of Westminster Abbey, to which they are insensible.

This celebrated poet and musician, was born in the year 1670, in the village of Nobber, in the county of Westmeath, on the lands of Carolan's town, which were wrested from his ancestors by the family of the Nugents, on their arrival in that kingdom. His father was a poor farmer, the humble proprietor of a few acres, which yielded him a scanty subsistence. Of his mother, nothing is known. The cabin, in which our bard was born, is still pointed out to the inquisitive traveller. As it is in a ruinous state, it must soon become a prey to all-devouring time ; yet the spot on which it stands may perhaps be visited at a future



day, with as much true devotion, by the lovers of national music, as are Stratford and Binfield, by the admirers of Shakespeare and Pope.

The small-pox deprived him of his sight, at so early a period of his life, that he retained no recollection of colours. Thus was "knowledge at one entrance quite shut out," before he had taken even a cursory view of nature. From this misfortune he felt no uneasiness; "my eyes," he used to say, "are transplanted to my ears." His musical talents were soon discovered, and his friends determined to cultivate them. About the age of twelve, a proper master was engaged to instruct him in the practice of the harp; but though fond of that instrument, he never struck it with a master's hand. Genius and diligence are seldom united, and it is practice alone which can perfect us in any art. Yet his harp was rarely unstrung, but in general he used it only to assist himself in composition; his fingers wandered through the strings in quest of melody. When young Carolan became enamoured of Miss Bridget Cruise, of Cruisetown, in the county of Longford, his harp now, like the lute of Anacreon, would only sound of love. Though this lady did not give him her hand, yet it is supposed she did not deny him her heart, or perhaps, as a brother poet says:—

"Like Phœbus thus acquiring unsought praise,

"He snatched at love, and filled his arms with bays."

The song which bears her name is considered his master-piece, it came warm from his heart while his genius was in full vigour. A very extraordinary instance of the effects of Carolan's passion for this lady



is related by Mr. O'Connor. He went once on a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory, a cave in an island in Loughderg, in the county of Donegall. On his return to shore, he met several pilgrims waiting the arrival of the boat that conveyed him. In assisting some of these devout travellers to get on board, he chanced to take a lady's hand, and instantly exclaimed, "by the head of my gossip, this is the hand of Bridget Cruise." His sense of feeling had not deceived him. It was the hand of her whom he had once adored. "I had this anecdote from his own mouth," says the person by whom it is recorded, "and in terms which gave me a strong impression of the emotions which he felt on meeting the object of his early affections. Carolan at this time was about the middle of his earthly career."

Our bard solaced himself for the loss of Miss Cruise in the arms of Mary Maguire, a young lady of good family in the county of Fermanagh. Miss Maguire proved a proud and extravagant dame; but she was the wife of his choice; he loved her tenderly, and lived harmoniously with her. It is probable that on his marriage, he fixed his residence on a small farm near Moss-hill, in the county of Leitrim. Here he built a neat little house, where he gave every friend a kind and hearty welcome. Hospitality consumed the produce of his little farm; he ate, drank, and was merry, and improvidently left to-morrow to provide for itself. This sometimes occasioned embarrassments in his domestic affairs, but he had no friend to remind him, that nothing can supply the want of prudence, and that negligence and irregularity, long continued,



will make knowledge and wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

At what period of his life Carolan became an itinerant musician, is not known, nor is it consistently told whether he was urged to this change in his manner of living by want, or induced by his fondness for music. By some of his biographers it has been imputed to an early disappointment in love: however this may be, he continued during the remainder of his life, to travel through the country in this character, mounted on a good horse, attended by a domestic on another, who carried his harp. Wherever he went, the gates of the nobility and gentry were thrown open to him; he was received with respect, and a distinguished place assigned him at the table.

On his return from one of those excursions, he was asked by one of his friends whether he had visited Colonel Archdall? "No," replied the bard emphatically, "but I visited a prince;" thus intimating the hospitable reception this gentleman had given him. But he had not more reason to extol the hospitality of Colonel Archdall, than that of Mr. Jones of Moneyglass, in the county of Antrim; nor was he deficient in gratitude for the civilities he received during his stay in that mansion: he has enshrined his hospitable character in one of his best Planxties. Of this, the air alone is now to be had; the words are forgotten since the well known English version, written by Arthur Dawson, Esq., admirably adapted to the original air of Carolan. It is in every body's hand, and therefore needless to be quoted here.



It was during his peregrinations that Carolan composed all those airs, which are still the delight of his countrymen. He thought the tribute of a song due to every house in which he was entertained, and he never failed to pay it, choosing for his subject either the head of the family, or one of the loveliest of its branches.

The subject of one of his favourite and most admired compositions, was a sister of a Mr. Nugent. She lived with one of her sisters, near Bellangar, in the county of Roscommon, at the time she inspired the bard, and he endeavoured to do justice to her merits, in the song now well known by the name of Gracey Nugent. As it may gratify some of my readers, I shall here insert a translation.

SONG.—GRACEY NUGENT.

With delight I will sing of the maid,  
Who, in beauty and wit doth excel;  
My Gracey the fairest shall lead,  
And from beauties shall bear off the bell.

Beside her, by day and by night,  
No care and no sorrow I'll know;  
But I'll think on her form with delight,  
And her ringlets that beauteously flow.

Her neck to the swan's I'll compare,  
Her face to the brightness of day;  
And is he not blest who shall share  
In the beauties her bosom display.

'Tis thus the fair maid I commend,  
Whose words are than music more sweet;

No bliss can on woman attend,  
But with thee dearest Gracey we meet.

Your beauties should still be my song,  
But my glass I devote now to thee ;  
May the health that I wish thee, be long,  
And if sick, be it love-sick for me.

The following incident gave birth to the piece called Carolan's Devotion. A Miss Fetherston, of the county of Longford, on her way to church, in Granard, one Sunday accidentally met with the bard, when the following conversation, as related by a friend of both parties, took place :—

MISS FETHERSTON.—Your servant, Mr. Carolan.

CAROLAN.—I thank you. Who speaks to me ?

MISS F.—It is I, sir, one Miss Fetherston.

CAR.—I have heard of you, madam : a young lady of great beauty and much wit. The loss of one sense prevents me from beholding your beauty, and I believe it is a happy circumstance for me, as it has made many captives. But your wit, madam, I dread it.

MISS F.—Had I wit, Mr. Carolan, this is not a day for displaying any ; it should give place to the duty of prayer. I apprehend that in complying with this duty, you go one way and I go another. I wish I could prevail on you to quit your way for mine.

CAR.—Should I go your way, madam, I dread you yourself would be the chief object of my devotion.

MISS F.—And what if I should go your way, Carolan ?

CAR.—I have already declared the sense of my danger in being near you. I well know that the power



which some men have of making female converts to their religion, can have no effect in regard to you, madam. Your own inherent powers would conquer every thing. In a church, or in a mass-house, you would draw all the devotion to yourself; and so madam, in my own defence I must now take my flight.

MISS F.—Hold, Carolan, we must not part so abruptly; as I have been long charmed with your compositions in music, I could wish to see you in our house, and that your visit would be as speedy as possible.

CAR.—Could you, madam, suspend the music of your wit, I should obey your commands cheerfully.

MISS F.—Away with your mockery of wit and danger. In listening to your notes, the danger will be on my side. Come speedily, however.

CAR.—To please you, madam, is the utmost I can expect; and on the terms I proposed, I will wait on you.

MISS F.—You will assuredly be welcome; but pray for me where you are going.

CAR.—Could I withdraw my devotion from yourself, I would obey; but I will make the best effort I can. Adieu.

The event justified his fears; instead of praying for Miss Fetherston, he neglected his religious duties to compose a song on her. In it he complains with more gallantry, than piety, that the mass is no longer his devotion, but that now his devotion is she. The air of this song is reckoned among one of the best of his musical compositions.

It is remarkable that in his gayest mood, and even

when his genius was the most inspired, he never could compose a Planxty for a Miss Brett, in the county of Sligo, whose father's house he frequented, and where he always met with a reception due to his taste and endowments. One day, after an unsuccessful attempt to compose something in a sprightly strain for this lady, he threw aside his harp in a mixture of rage and grief, and addressing himself in Irish to her mother: "madam," said he, "I have often, from my great respect to your family, attempted a Planxty in order to celebrate your daughter's perfections, but to no purpose. Some evil genius hovers over me. There is not a string in my harp that does not vibrate a melancholy sound, when I set about this task. I fear she is not doomed to remain long amongst us; "may be," added he, emphatically, "she will not survive twelve months." The event verified his melancholy prediction. The truth of this anecdote has been attested by several of the family.

From a neglect in his education, Carolan at an early period of life, contracted a fondness for spirituous liquors, which in after life he relinquished; but inordinate gratifications carry their punishment with them, nor was Carolan exempt from this general imposition: his physicians assured him that unless he corrected this habit, a scurvy, which was the consequence of his intemperance, would soon put an end to his mortal career. He obeyed, though with reluctance, and seriously resolved upon never again tasting the forbidden cup.

The fame of Carolan as a musician having reached the ears of an eminent Italian music master, in Dub-



lin, he put his abilities to a severe test, the result of which convinced him how well founded had been the report of his musical talents. The method he made use of was as follows :—He singled out an elegant piece of music in the Italian stile ; but here, and there, he either altered or mutilated the piece, in such a manner, however, that no one but a real judge could detect the alterations.

Carolan bestowed the deepest attention on the performer while he was playing it, not knowing it was intended as a trial of his skill ; and that the critical moment was now at hand, which was to determine his reputation for ever. He declared it to be an excellent piece of music ; but, to the astonishment of all present, said very humourously in his own language, “ here and there, it limps and stumbles.”

He was requested to rectify the errors, which he accordingly did. In this state the piece was sent from Connaught to Dublin, and the Italian no sooner saw the amendment, than he pronounced Carolan to be a true musical genius.

Another anecdote of the kind is also recorded of him. In the beginning of the 18th century, Lord Mayo brought from Dublin a celebrated Italian performer, to spend some time with him at his seat in the country. Carolan, who at that time was on a visit at his Lordship's, found himself greatly neglected, and complained of it one day in the presence of the foreigner. “ When you play in as masterly a manner as he does,” replied his Lordship, “ you shall not be overlooked.” Carolan wagered with the musician, who is said to have been the famous Gemi-



niani, that though he was a total stranger to Italian music; yet, he would follow him in any piece he played, and that he himself would play a voluntary, in which the Italian could not follow him. The proposal was acceded to, and Carolan was victorious.

But Carolan's muse was not always employed in extolling the great, in praising beauty, or in heightening the mirth of a convivial hour; it was sometimes devoted to the services of his God. He has frequently assisted with his voice and his harp, at the elevation of the host; and has composed several pieces of church music, which are deemed excellent. "On Easter day," says a person who resided all his life in that part of the country, "I heard him play a piece of his sacred music at mass;" he called it "Gloria in Excelsis," and he sung that hymn in Irish. While he played at the Lord's prayer he stopped, and after the priest ended it he sung again, and played a piece which he denominated the "Resurrection."

The enthusiasm of his devotion affected the whole congregation. This enthusiasm was very much increased by an idea he had conceived, that he was inspired during the composition of these devotional pieces.

The period was now approaching when Carolan's feelings were to receive a violent shock. In the year 1733, the wife of his bosom was torn from him by the hand of death. This melancholy event threw a gloom over his mind, that was never after entirely dissipated. As soon as the transports of his grief had a little subsided, he composed a Monody to her memory, now known by the name of Mary Maguire, of which I subjoin a translation.



## MONODY

ON THE DEATH OF MARY MAGUIRE.  

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Were mine the choice of intellectual fame,  
Of skilful song and eloquence divine,  
Painting's sweet power, philosophy's pure flame,  
And Homer's lyre, and Ossian's harp were mine,  
The splendid arts of Erin, Greece and Rome,  
In Mary lost would lose their wonted grace—  
All would I give to snatch her from the tomb,  
Again to fold her in my fond embrace.

Desponding, sick, exhausted with my grief,  
Awhile the founts of sorrow cease to flow—  
In vain I rest, and sleep brings no relief—  
Cheerless, companionless, I wake to woe!  
Nor birth nor beauty shall again allure,  
Nor fortune win me to another bride;  
Alone I'll wander, and alone endure,  
Till death restore me to my dear one's side.

Once every thought and every scene was gay,  
Friends, mirth, and music, all my soul employ'd;  
Now doomed to mourn my last sad years away;  
My life a solitude, my heart a void—  
Alas, the change! to change again no more,  
For every comfort is with Mary fled,  
And ceaseless anguish shall her loss deplore,  
Till age and sorrow join me with the dead.

Adieu! each gift of Nature and of Art,  
That erst adorned me in life's earliest prime,  
The cloudless temper and the social heart—  
The soul ethereal, and the flight sublime;  
Thy loss, my Mary chased them from my breast!  
Thy sweetness cheers, thy judgment aids no more;  
The Muse deserts a heart with grief oppress—  
And lost is every joy that charmed before.

Carolan did not long continue in this vale of sorrow after the death of his beloved wife. While on a visit at the house of Mrs. Mc Dermott, of Alderford in the County of Roscommon, he died in March 1738, in the 68th year of his age. He was interred in the parish church of Kilronan, in the diocese of Ardagh; but no memorial exists of the spot in which he was laid. His grave was, and perhaps is, still known to a few of his admirers, and some of the neighbouring peasants; and his skull was long distinguished from those of others, which were promiscuously scattered through the church-yard, by a perforation in the forehead, through which a small piece of ribbon is drawn.

He had seven children by his wife—six daughters and one son. His son, who had studied music, went to London, where he taught the Irish harp; before his departure, he published in the year 1747, a collection of his father's music, omitting, through mercenary motives, some of his best pieces. It was republished in Dublin, by John Lee, in 1780.

It is much to be wished that a complete collection of the musical compositions of this interesting character, had been given to the public. Many, it is to be feared, are now irrecoverably lost. Many others are in danger of experiencing the same fate, unless preserved by the *National Spirit*. To this wish might also be added another, of having a more complete and authentic history of his life, than can at present be collected from the imperfect and sometimes contradictory accounts, that have been handed down



mostly by oral tradition. I shall here subjoin a character of the bard, from the pen of Mr. O'Connor.

“Very few have I known who had a more vigorous mind, but a mind undisciplined, through the defect, or rather the absence of cultivation. Absolutely the child of nature, he was governed by the indulgencies, and at times, by the caprices of that mother. His imagination, ever on the wing, was eccentric in its Poetic flight; yet, as far as that faculty can be employed in the harmonic art, it was steady and collected. In the variety of his musical numbers, he knew how to make a selection, and was seldom content with mediocrity—so happy, so elevated was he in some of his compositions, that he excited the wonder, and obtained the approbation of a great master who never saw him; I mean Geminiani.

“He outstripped his predecessors in the three species of composition used among the Irish; but he never omitted giving due praise to several of his countrymen, who before excelled him in his art. The Italian compositions he preferred to all others; Vivaldi charmed him; and with Corelli he was enraptured. He spoke elegantly in his maternal language; but advanced in years before he learned English, he delivered himself but indifferently in that language, and yet he did not like to be corrected in his solecisms.

“Constitutionally pious, he never omitted daily prayer, and fondly imagined himself inspired, when he composed some pieces of church music. This idea contributed to his devotion and thanksgiving; and, in this respect, his enthusiasm was harmless, and



perhaps useful. Gay by nature, and cheerful from habit, he was a pleasing member of society; and his habits, and his morality, procured him esteem and friends every where."

Carolan seems to have been born to render the termination of his Order memorable and brilliant. If we reflect on the disadvantages under which he laboured; born blind, with slender opportunities of acquiring ideas; the inhabitant of a country desolated by a civil war; the flames of which had scarcely subsided, and add to this, his own propensity to idleness, we cannot but be astonished at the prodigious powers of his mind. He has occasionally tried almost every style in music;—the elegiac, the festive, the amorous, and sacred; and has so much excelled in each, that we scarcely know to which of them his genius is best adapted. His first composition was amorous and plaintive—called, "Bridget Cruise," addressed to a lady, to whom he was tenderly attached without the hope of success. He is said to have dedicated fifteen pieces to her—the first was originally imperfect, or the copy procured of it so corrupt, that a Bass could not be adapted to it.

His last tune was inscribed to his physician, Dr. Stafford. He composed the Fairy Queen, Rose Dillon, and other of his serious pieces, early in life; but after having established a reputation, and addicted himself too much to festive company, he dedicated his time to the composition of his Planxties, which required no labour or assiduity. We may form some idea of the fertility of his genius, from this circumstance, that one harper who attended the Belfast



meeting, and who had never seen him, or was taught directly by any person who had an opportunity of copying from him, had acquired upwards of an hundred of his tunes, which he said constituted but a very inconsiderable part of the real number.

As Carolan never taught any itinerant pupils, except his own son, (who had no musical genius) and as we have never heard that any of his pieces were committed to writing, until several years after his death, when young Carolan, under the patronage of Dr. Delany, edited a small volume, we need not wonder if nine tenths of the whole be irreparably lost.

In Carolan's Concerto, and in his Madame Cole, the practitioner will perceive evident imitations of Corelli, in which the exuberant fancy of that admired composer, is happily copied. As an additional proof of his poetic talents, I give the following song, translated by Miss Brooke.

### SONG—MABLE KELLY.

(BY CAROLAN.)

To thee harmonious powers belong,  
That add to verse the charms of song;  
Soft melody with numbers join,  
And make the poet half divine.

As when the softly blushing rose,  
Close by some neighbouring lily grows;  
Such is the glow thy cheeks diffuse,  
And such their bright and blended hues!

The timid lustre of thine eye,  
With nature's purest tints can vie;

With the sweet blue-bell's azure gem,  
That droops upon its modest stem !

The poets of Ierni's plains,  
To thee devote their choicest strains ;  
And oft their harps for thee are strung,  
And oft thy matchless charms are sung.

Since the famed Fair of antient days,  
Whom bards and worlds conspired to praise ;  
Not one like thee has since appeared,  
Like thee, to every heart endeared.

How blest the bard, O lovely maid !  
To find thee in thy charms arrayed !—  
Thy pearly teeth, thy flowing hair,  
Thy neck, beyond the cygnet, fair.

Even he whose hapless eyes no ray  
Admit from beauty's cheering day ;  
Yet, though he cannot see the light,  
He feels it warm, and knows it bright.

In beauty, talents, taste refined,  
And all the graces of the mind,  
In all, unmatched thy charms remain,  
Nor meet a rival on the plain.

Carolan, says " Mr. Ritson, seems from the description we have of him, to be a genuine representative of the antient bards."

Miss Brooke, in speaking of his descriptive poetry, makes the following remark : " It is generally believed that Carolan, (as his biographer tells us) remembered no impression of colours ; but I cannot acquiesce in this opinion ; I think it must have been formed without sufficient grounds, for how was it possible that his description could be thus glowing, with-



out the clearest recollection, and the most animated ideas of every beauty that sight can convey to the mind.

“Even he, whose hapless eyes no ray  
Admit from beauty’s cheering day ;  
Yet, though he cannot see the light,  
He feels it warm, and knows it bright.”

Every reader of taste or feeling, she proceeds to observe, must surely be struck with the beauty of this passage. Can any thing be more elegant, or more pathetic, than the manner in which Carolan alludes to his want of sight ! but indeed, his little pieces abound in all the riches of natural genius.

I have, in another part of this essay, given Mr. Walker’s translation of the beautiful song of Gracey Nugent. I shall here, for the amusement of my readers, subjoin a literal translation of the same, by the ingenious Miss Brooke, to whom the Irish nation is much indebted, for her elegant translations of original Irish poetry.

#### GRACEY NUGENT.

A LITERAL TRANSLATION BY MISS BROOKE.

“I will sing with rapture of the blossom of whiteness, Gracey, the young and beautiful woman, who bore away the palm of excellence in sweet manners and accomplishments, from all the fair ones of the provinces.

Whoever enjoys her constant society, no apprehension of any ill can assail him. The queen of soft and winning mind, and manners, with her fair branching tresses flowing in ringlets.

Her side like alabaster, and her neck like the swan, and her countenance like the sun in summer ; how blest is it for him, who is promised, as riches, to be united to her, the branch of fair curling tendrils.

Sweet and pleasant is your lovely conversation; bright and sparkling your blue eyes! and every day do I hear all tongues declare your praises, and how gracefully your bright tresses wave down your neck.

I say to the maid of youthful mildness, that her voice and her converse are sweeter than the songs of birds! there is no delight or charm that imagination can conceive, but what is ever attendant on Gracey.

Her teeth arranged in beautiful order, and her locks flowing in soft waving curls! but though it delights me to sing of thy charms, I must quit my theme; with a sincere heart I fill to thy health."

Though Carolan died universally lamented, he would have died unsung, had not the humble muse of M'Cabe poured a few elegiac strains over his cold remains. This faithful friend composed the following short elegy on his death, which is evidently the effusion of unfeigned grief, unadorned with meretricious ornaments; it is the picture of a mind torn with anguish; with which I shall conclude his memoirs.

#### ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF CAROLAN.

I came with friendship's face to glad my heart,  
But sad and sorrowful my steps depart;  
In my friend's stead, a spot of earth is shown,  
And on his grave my woe-struck eyes are thrown!  
No more to their distracted sight remained,  
But the cold clay that all they loved contained;—  
And there his last and narrow bed was made,  
And the drear tomb-stone for its covering laid.  
Alas! for this my aged heart is wrung,  
Grief choaks my voice, and trembles on my tongue;  
Lonely and desolate I mourn the dead,  
The friend with whom my every comfort fled!  
There is no anguish can with this compare;  
No pains, diseases, suffering, or despair



Like that I feel, while such a loss I mourn,  
My heart's companion from its fondness torn!  
Oh! insupportable, distracting grief,  
Woe that through life, can never hope relief.  
Sweet singing harp, thy melody is o'er,  
Sweet friendship's voice, I hear thy sound no more;  
My bliss—my wealth of poetry is fled,  
And every joy, with him I loved is dead:—  
Alas! what wonder, (while my heart drops blood  
Upon the woes that drain its vital flood)—  
If maddening grief no longer can be borne,  
And frenzy fill the breast with anguish torn.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
ADAM MOND,

A BLIND MISER.

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“ ’Tis true as witty poets sing,  
That avarice is a monstrous thing;  
By antient bards and modern rhymes,  
’Tis painted as the worst of crimes.

Old Plautus, in his comic scene,  
Seizes the miser by his chin,  
Holds up his face to public view,  
For laughter and for hatred too.  
Philosophers have all agreed  
No vice has less excuse to plead.

Not all the labours of the pen  
Can cure this plague in aged men;  
Like aged trees, the deeper shoot,  
In grossest earth their worthless root;—  
Then where such characters are found,  
Let ridicule and mirth go round;  
By jeers and pointing fingers tell,  
Where such detested monsters dwell.

The avaricious will not spare,  
To rob the orphan—cheat the heir—  
Nor honesty, nor honor rests  
Within such sordid culprit’s breasts;  
This truth to view in clearest light,  
Attend while I my tale recite.”

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Some men have had their names handed down to posterity, on account of their vast skill in military



tactics, their dauntless courage in the field of battle, and their extensive knowledge of political science. Others have been famed for their great learning, their deep researches into the hidden recesses of nature, and the good which their useful discoveries have produced to mankind. Some have left a lasting memorial behind them, by their superior piety and useful labours in the church; while not a few have been recorded in the pages of history, merely on account of some enormous vice, or vices, to which they were obstinately addicted. From this it appears, that mankind are willing to allow any one a place in their records, who is particularly distinguished from his fellow men. Among the various vices to which human nature is subject, none is more detestable than avarice. It petrifies the finer feelings of the soul, fastens the affections to this world "by strong and endless ties," blinds the understanding in relation to that which is to come, and leaves the wretched individual who is overcome by it, without any other God to trust in for happiness or help, but the mammon of pelf. The principle is the same in the nobleman and the peasant, in him who dotes on countless thousands, and him whose soul is engrossed by a few paltry pence. It debases its miserable captive, not only below the dignity of his nature, but reduces him to the meanest shifts and artifices, strains his every nerve, and racks his ingenuity in accumulating wealth, which it dooms never to be enjoyed by its owner, and very often leaves to be squandered by a prodigal heir. These remarks are illustrated by the following singular and well attested relation.



Adam Mond, (the subject of this memoir) was a native of the county of Antrim, in Ireland. His mother was left a widow when he was very young, with a number of children besides, and a very small property, in the neighbourhood of Ballycastle. A horse and two ewe sheep constituted their live stock, and as much pasturage as served them for grazing, with a little arable ground, was their entire landed estate.

The mother being destitute of that energy of mind which her circumstances required, her family gradually became insubordinate, and regardless of her authority. The consequences were soon visible, and severely felt. The little farm was ill laboured, the cattle neglected, and every thing managed so badly, that by the time Mond came to man's estate, they were ejected from their house and farm, by a sheriff's order for non-payment of rent.

The time in which this disaster happened, was very unfortunate; for young Mond, as there was then in the north of Ireland, a lawless banditti, who, to express the soundness of their principles, and inspire their adherents with confidence, termed themselves *Hearts of Steel*. Their professed object was not only to redress wrongs, remove grievances, and administer justice, but also to renovate the government of the country. Mond, finding himself now destitute of those means whereby he formerly indulged his slothful inclinations and lazy habits, and being still strongly possessed of those associations which attach man to his natal spot, instead of reflecting on the justice and legality of the decree, had recourse to the *Hearts of*



*Steel.* His case being peculiarly adapted for a display of their self-constituted authority and nightly depredations, they espoused it with all that enthusiasm which is common to those who are led by their bewildered imaginations, to form themselves into secret associations for illicit purposes. A paper was accordingly written and signed by their chief, in behalf of the whole body; warning the person who succeeded Mond, in the occupation of the farm, to resign it immediately in his favour, or *Captain Firebrand* would pay him an unexpected visit, and consign him, his family, and effects, to the flames.

The person thus addressed was not intimidated, and, instead of obeying the unlawful mandate of this midnight cabal, he had recourse immediately to a neighbouring magistrate, swore against Mond, had him apprehended, and conveyed to the county gaol, for serving him with such an unlawful paper. At the ensuing assizes he was tried, convicted, and in fact sentenced to death, and delivered into the hands of the sheriff to be executed on a certain day. The unexpected sentence of the law, the fear of death, and the love of life, now operated so sensibly on his mind, that he resigned himself up to despair and extreme grief.—Every degree of fortitude forsook him, and he wept without intermission. The gentleman who was his landlord, knowing that he had acted through ignorance and the impetuosity of youth, made immediate and personal application to the executive government, and obtained a full pardon; but before it arrived, he had actually wept out his eyes. He now returned to his own neighbourhood completely blind,

which no doubt was the leading cause of his afterwards becoming one of the most wretched misers that ever lived.

The peculiar circumstances leading to, and flowing from Mond's trial and sentence, rendered him an object of charity. Losing his sight, which he had so long enjoyed, made him extremely awkward, until he became acquainted with, and inured to his new situation. He had therefore no other resource left but to live on the bounty of others. Incapable of any manual labour, he was led from house to house to seek a supply of bread, generally abiding with some of his more liberal neighbours, so long as a disposition remained to entertain him. Getting acquainted, however, with the art, and no doubt with the profits of begging, he became in a short time a complete proficient, and made active application to all who came in his way:—perhaps in this respect, he has been outdone by few; his industry, perseverance, and ingenuity, became proverbial; although he had no heartfelt affection for religion, he has often attended the church, the Presbyterian meeting-house, and the Catholic chapel, in the same day, which were all at a considerable distance from each other, that he might receive from the liberality of their congregations.

The gentleman who obtained his liberation, after some time taking compassion on him, gave him a little house, rent free, and employed him as a bailiff. In this department he acted occasionally for more than forty years. When he travelled at any considerable distance from home, the compassionate ear was distressed in listening to his lamentable tale, concerning



some disaster which had happened to his house or property. When he begged in the immediate neighbourhood, he was always in need of, and in the way of getting, some article of dress. Part of the price of a pair of shoes, a shirt, &c. he had always in possession, and was now making application for the remainder, that he might be somewhat comfortable.

The promised hour of comfort and indulgence, however, he never suffered to arrive; for that sun never rose for more than forty years after his blindness, that ever saw him in possession of shoe, shirt, or stocking. His whole wardrobe he continually carried on his back, which consisted generally of an old tattered coat and waistcoat, a woollen cap, which served him at least twenty years, and a pair of small clothes, which he was very careful to keep whole for a reason to be explained in the sequel. The reader may be ready to imagine he is in possession of the reason at once, when he is informed, that for more than twenty years, Mond appeared to be severely afflicted by a well-known disease in the abdomen; but, in this he is mistaken, as well as Mond's most intimate observers were for the above period.

Although apparent disease, added to his blindness, excited the compassion of the beholders, there was no primary intention of deception in this respect. There is no doubt, however, that he congratulated himself on the adoption of a lucky project, which served the double purpose of securing and increasing his unsuspected treasure at the same time. His art in hiding and retaining what he once got in possession, was fully equal to his industry in acquiring.



At one time he had almost raised suspicions by keeping a dram shop without license, but he soon gave this up, exclaiming ever after that it broke him, and that he never was master of a penny since. In short, his asseverations concerning his distress, and his continual applications, completely blinded all who knew him, while his house and person presented one of the most wretched pictures of abject poverty ever displayed to the human eye.

In this miserable state, the winter of 1817 overtook him, the inclemency of which was severely felt in Ireland. In his despicable hovel he had neither clothing, food, nor fire. Still, he would not accept the friendly invitation of a neighbour, who offered him a good fire and lodging, free of any expense, during the cold. This offer he declined on pretence of not being troublesome, but the real cause arose from a fear of losing his money, or having it discovered. Finding the cold extreme, he resided by day in his own hut, receiving whatever food was sent to him, and retired at night to a corn kiln in the neighbourhood, where he slept snugly at the fire left by the last occupier. Had he accepted the benevolent proposal now mentioned, perhaps he might have concealed what was dearer to him than life itself, and dragged on his miserable existence a few years longer; whereas, by his niggardly caution, his purposes were defeated in the following singular manner, and his misery so increased as to render life a burden.

Whatever occupies the mind intensely, and captivates the affections by day, is likely to become the subject of our dreams at night. It was so with Mond.



Money was his favourite object, whether awake or asleep. Hence, in the presence of a person who was occupying the kiln, Mond, while asleep, made mention of the spot where he had concealed a part of his treasure. The curious individual resolved upon a trial, and so repaired quietly to the secret place; here there was no disappointment. Ten pounds sterling, in silver, were found concealed;—and, the conscience of the person being as fast asleep as Mond was at the time, it was deemed a virtue to pocket it, since its wretched owner was not disposed to use it. When Mond awoke in the morning, he speedily directed his steps to pay his morning devotions to his only deity; but how great was his grief and disappointment when he found the beloved of his soul was gone! he could by no means contain himself. He vociferated a most hideous yell, that alarmed his neighbours to a considerable distance. On their arrival, so poignant was his grief, that he could not conceal the cause. He informed them of his loss. The report soon circulated, and strong suspicions were now entertained that he was still in possession of more.

To ascertain this fact was now the prevailing desire of those who had long known him. A few of his neighbours therefore one day entered his hut suddenly, and found him busily employed in counting money on the cover of a chest which had served him for the different purposes of table, chair, and treasure-desk. Perceiving he was caught, he threw himself immediately over his money, and although he knew his visitors were his best friends, he could not be con-

strained to rise but by violence. They now reckoned it over for him, and found the amount only £12 in silver.

On their leaving the house, imagining from the bustle that they were about to look for more, he bawled out vehemently not to meddle with some old bottles which stood in a wall-cove, as they belonged to one of his neighbours. A contrary effect was produced. They returned, and examined the bottles, finding silver in each of them. This induced a general search; when, to their great astonishment, they found better than £100, all in silver, concealed in different parts of the house. Mond now became the subject of conversation in all places where he was known, and though the sum in itself is comparatively small, yet, considering the means used by him to gather it, and the impression relative to his poverty, which had been left on the minds of the people, it did not fail to astonish all on their coming to a knowledge of it.

Application was now made to the gentleman already mentioned, as he had previously interested himself in behalf of Mond. He advised the applicants not to return the money again to Mond, but to put it to interest, and have him comfortably clothed out of the principal. About twenty-six shillings were laid out for this purpose, certainly contrary to Mond's inclination: for on hearing the decision given, which robbed him of the pleasure of counting his coin, and involved the loss of so much, (for so he deemed it) it threw him into one of the most dreadful paroxysms of grief that language can describe. He continued three days and three nights without either food or sleep.



No argument whatever could prevail with him. Those who were most attentive to him, and interested themselves most in his behalf, he deemed his greatest enemies. His grief was only equalled at the time he laboured under sentence of death, and there is little doubt, that had he possessed another pair of eyes, he would now have wept them out at the irretrievable loss which he conceived he had sustained. On the fourth day, however, his grief was assuaged. He summoned up a little courage, and appeared to feel a temporary repose. It was indeed but temporary, for on the arrival of his new clothes it was renewed in the most pungent and sensible manner.

Being requested to strip, that he might be washed and dressed, he complied only in part, for he peremptorily refused a change of small clothes. His tattered coat and waistcoat, on examination, were found to contain none of the sacred treasure; but it was imagined that he refused a change in the other parts of his dress from motives of delicacy. It may here be observed, that a few days previous to the discovery of his wealth, his neighbours had subscribed and bought a flannel shirt or frock, for the making of which, he paid the tailor with one shilling instead of eighteen pence, asserting, with horrid imprecations, that he was not master of a single penny more. On removing this article, how was every feeling shocked on beholding a hard cord (suspended round the neck, and supposed to be attached to his truss-band,) which had sunk into his flesh in a most miserable manner! His attendants now attempted to remove the cord, but he declared in the most solemn and violent language, that he would die before it should be disturbed.

Prompted however by their humanity, they paid no attention to his denunciation, and forcibly took it away; when, to their utter astonishment, instead of its being attached to a truss-belt, they found a pewter pint measure (no doubt, the one he had used in his dram-shop,) fastened to the end of it, hammered closely together at the mouth and so weighty, that it sufficiently indicated that it was not barren in contents. This singular depository contained no less than one hundred and seven guineas, in gold. For better than twenty years he had carried it in this manner, with the utmost patience and composure. It was the appearance of this, which caused all who saw him to imagine he was diseased.

When we consider that this affection for money was so strong, that he endured, for a long series of time, without any apparent uneasiness, the laceration of his flesh, which must have produced considerable pain continually; we need not wonder that the removal of his idol proved the cap-stone of his woes; grief now preyed upon his vitals like a vulture; wasted his strength, and sunk him shortly into a kind of stupor, from which he never recovered. He lived only seven months after this event, died unexpectedly, and went into a world of spirits, grieved on no other account but because he could not carry a portion of his treasure along with him.

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AUTHORITY.

Imperial Magazine. Vol. 2.



THE LIFE  
OF  
ZISCA,  
THE BOHEMIAN REFORMER.

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"Huss, mild and firm, next dares the tyrant's fires;  
And sweet tongu'd Jerome, skilful to persuade;  
And Zisca, whom fair liberty inspires,  
Blind Chieftain ! waves around his burnish'd blade,  
Unwearied pastor, with unabating zeal."

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THIS distinguished patriot was a native of Bohemia: his real name was John de Trocznow; but in course of his military services he lost his left eye, from which circumstance he was called Zisca, that word, in the Bohemian language, signifying one-eyed; but he was shortly to undergo a still severer trial in the loss of his remaining eye. He had served for some time in the Danish and Polish armies; but on the conclusion of the war, he had returned to his native country. Bohemia was, at this time, greatly agitated by the crusade which the Pope was then carrying on against, what were called, the new opinions. The council of Constance which met in the year 1414, for the pur-

pose of rooting heresy out of the church, cited John Huss and Jerome of Prague before them; they were found guilty of heresy, and both were burned at the stake. This cruel and unjust sentence filled the public mind with horror and indignation. Their blameless lives, their peaceful spirits, and the opinions or which they suffered, endeared them to their countrymen; so much so, that July 5th, the day of their martyrdom, was observed throughout Bohemia as a day of great solemnity, fasting and prayer. The persecution against their followers still continued with great severity; the dungeon, the gibbet, and the stake were daily employed. The people, at last, became exceedingly exasperated against the Pope and the Emperor for their cruelties; they were obliged to take up arms in defence of their lives, and chose Zisca as their general, who soon found himself at the head of forty thousand patriots. He had laid siege to the town of Ruby, which he had almost reduced to extremities. As he was viewing a part of the works where he intended an assault, an arrow, shot from the wall, struck him in the eye: the wound being thought dangerous, the surgeons of the army proposed his being carried to Prague, where he might have the best advice: in reality, they were afraid of being cut in pieces by the troops, if he should die under their hands. When his removal to the capital was resolved on, it was difficult to check the contest among the soldiers who strove for the honor of carrying their wounded general. At Prague the arrow was extracted, which, being barbed, tore out the eye with it, and it was feared the fever which succeeded might



prove fatal to him. His life, however, though with difficulty, was saved. By this severe stroke he was consigned to total darkness for the remainder of his life; but, like Sampson of old, he was more dreaded by the enemies of his country after he became blind, than he had been before that accident occurred; his friends, therefore, were surprised to hear him talk, after his recovery, of setting out for the army, and did what was in their power to dissuade him from it; but he continued resolute; "I have yet," said he, "my blood to shed for the liberties of Bohemia; she is enslaved; her sons are deprived of their natural rights, and are the victims of a system of a spiritual tyranny as degrading to the character of man as it is destructive of every moral principle; therefore, Bohemia must and shall be free." Zisca was so beloved by the army that the soldiers cried that they would throw down their arms unless their general were restored. In the mean time, the emperor Sigismond had been making preparations during the summer, at Nuremburgh. He convened the states of the empire here in full convention, for it seems no prince except the Elector of Treves was absent; he opened to them his embarrassed circumstances, and intreated them, for the sake of their sovereign, for the honor of the empire, and in the cause of their religion, to put themselves in arms: his harangue had its effect; proper measures were concerted, and the assembly broke up with an unanimous resolution to make this audacious rebel feel the full weight of the empire; and that the blow might fall the more unexpected, it was resolved to defer it till the end of the year, when it was hoped that Zisca



might the more easily be surprised, as great part of his troops left him in the winter and returned again in spring. The campaign, as that chief imagined, was now over, when he was suddenly alarmed with the report of these vast preparations, and soon after, with the march of two powerful armies against him, one of which was composed of confederate Germans, under the Marquis of Brandenburgh, the Archbishop of Mentz, the Count Palatine of the Rhine, and other princes of the empire; the other, of Hungarians and Silesians, under the emperor himself; the former were to invade Bohemia on the west, the latter on the east; they were to meet in the middle, and, as they affected to give out, would crush this handful of vexatious sectaries between them: at the head of such a force the emperor could not avoid being sanguine. They who are acquainted with the nature of armies intended to march in concert, know the difficulty of making such unwieldy bodies observe those exact laws of motion, which prudent generals trace out in councils of war. Some unforeseen events generally create some unavoidable difficulty; it happened thus on the present occasion. Sigismond, disappointed in a contract for forage, was obliged to defer his march; he was retarded, too, by the Austrian and Hungarian nobility, who, entering as volunteers into his service, and being suddenly called upon, had not prepared their equipages and dependents, (without which, their dignity could not take the field,) in such readiness as it was thought they might have had them. The confederate princes in the mean time began their march, and were already advanced a considerable way in Bohemia,



before they heard of the emperor's disappointment. Sigismond gave them hopes that he would presently join them, and advised them to form the siege of Soisin. They intrenched themselves accordingly, and began an attack, for which they were not in the best manner provided against what was esteemed one of the strongest fortresses in Bohemia. The besieged laughed at their vain efforts, and kept their usual guard; while wet trenches, an hungry camp, the severities of an inclement winter, and, above all, the emperor's delay, introduced mutiny into the tents of the besiegers, and dissention into their councils. In this situation were they ready to catch any alarm, when Zisca approached with his army: the very sight of his banners floating at a distance was sufficient: they struck their tents, and retreated with precipitation; burning the country as they fled; and cursing the emperor's breach of faith. About the end of December, a full month after his appointed time, the emperor began his march: as he entered Bohemia, he received the first account of the retreat of the confederates. He determined, however, to proceed: he was at the head of the army, the flower of which were 15,000 Hungarian horse, esteemed at that time the best cavalry in Europe, led by a Florentine officer of great experience; the infantry, which consisted of 25,000 men, were provided, as well as the cavalry, with every thing proper for a winter's campaign. This army spread terror throughout all the east of Bohemia: Zisca being still in the west, pursuing the Germans; wherever Sigismond marched, the magistrates laid their keys at his feet, and were



treated with severity or favour, according to their merits in his cause. His career, however, was presently checked. Zisca, with speedy march, approached, and threw a damp upon him in the midst of his success. He chose his ground, however, as well as he was able; and resolved to try his fortune, once more, with that invincible Chief. No General paid less regard to the circumstances of times and place than Zisca; he seldom desired more than to come up with his adversary; the enthusiastic fury of his soldiers supplied the rest; there was not a man in his army who did not meet the enemy with that same invincible spirit with which the martyr meets death; who did not, in a manner, press to be the foremost in that glorious band of heroes, whom the Almighty should destine to the noble act of dying for their religion. Such were the troops which the ill fate of Sigismond had now to encounter. On the thirteenth of January, 1422, the two armies met on a spacious plain near Kamnitz. Zisca appeared in the centre of his front line; guarded, or rather conducted, by a horseman on each side, armed with a pole-axe. His troops, having sung an hymn, with a determined coolness drew their swords, and waited for the signal. Zisca stood not long in view of the enemy, when his officers had informed him that the ranks were all well closed, he waved his sabre round his head, which was the signal of battle. Historians speak of the onset of Zisca's troops, as a shock beyond credibility; and it appears to have been such on this occasion. The imperial infantry hardly made a stand. In the space of a few minutes they were disordered



beyond possibility of being rallied. The cavalry made a feeble effort, but seeing themselves unsupported, they wheeled round and fled upon the spur. Thus suddenly was the extent of the plain, as far as the eye could reach, spread with disorder; the pursuers and the pursued mixed together, the whole one indistinct mass of waving confusion. Here and there might be seen interspersed, a few parties endeavouring to unite, but they were broken as soon as formed. The routed army fled towards the confines of Moravia; the Patriots, without intermission, galling their rear. The river Igla, which was then frozen, opposed their flight. Here new disasters befel them. The bridge being immediately choked, and the enemy pressing furiously on, many of the infantry, and in a manner the whole body of the cavalry, attempted the river. The ice gave way, and not fewer than two thousand were swallowed up in the water. Here Zisca sheathed his sword, and returned in triumph to Tabore, laden with all the trophies which the most complete victory could give. The battle of Kamnitz having put Zisca in peaceable possession of the whole kingdom of Bohemia, he had now leisure to pay a little more attention to his designed establishment of a church. He began now to abolish in all places the ceremonies of the Romish worship. The Pope's name, he erased from all public instruments, and denied his supremacy. "Merit, alone," he said, "should give distinction among the clergy of Bohemia; and they should gain the reverence of the people by the sanctity of their lives, not by their luxurious manner of living." From these things we may judge how much farther



Huss would, in all probability, have carried reformation, if he had it in his power; for we may consider Zisca, as acting by his authority, and doing nothing but what was consonant to his express doctrine, or might by fair inference be deduced from it. We have no reason to suppose this military reformer had any bigotry in his temper: he seems not to have shewn any inclination to force the consciences of any differing sect, but to have left men at liberty to like or dislike; to unite with him, or leave him, as they thought best: nor was he by any means arbitrary in his impositions, but consulted his friends, and fixed on nothing but what met, at least, with their general concurrence. At this time Zisca was in full credit with his party, and was earnestly requested to assume the crown of Bohemia himself, as a reward for the eminent services he had rendered his country. No one in the kingdom, they assured him, had the power, if he had the inclination, to make the least opposition; and as for the emperor, they hoped he would soon be induced to drop his claim. But Zisca, whom even his enemies neither tax with avarice nor ambition, steadily refused. "While you find me of service to your designs," said the disinterested chief, "you may freely command both my counsels and my sword, but I will never accept any established authority; on the contrary, my most earnest advice to you is, when the perverseness of your enemies allows you peace, to trust yourselves no longer in the hands of kings, but to form yourselves into a republic, which species of government only can secure your liberties." Sigismond had made, as usual, great preparation, and intend-



ed once more to enter Bohemia with two separate armies. With this view, he set the Marquis Misnia at the head of a considerable body of Saxons, which were to penetrate by the way of Upper Saxony; while himself, at the head of another army, should enter Moravia, on the side of Hungary. This was the last effort of Sigismond: in the mean time Zisca made the necessary preparation for opening the campaign. He had sent Procop, an excellent young officer, to command in Moravia, in whom he had entire confidence; and to whose management he wholly intrusted the military affairs of that country, recommending to him particularly a cautious behaviour, and measures merely defensive. Zisca was in little pain about Moravia, at least he hoped that Procop would be able to keep the Emperor employed till he himself should return from the frontiers of Saxony, whither he marched with all his force upon the first notice of the enemy's preparations. The Marquis had not yet taken the field. Zisca, to strike a terror into his troops, ravaged his borders, and boldly, in the face of his army, sat down before Ausig, a strong town situated upon the Elbe, nearly where that river leaves Bohemia. This place had always shewn a particular attachment to the emperor, and was recommended by him in strong terms, together with the bridge in its neighbourhood, to the protection of the Marquis: it was a sensible mortification, therefore, to that General to see an enemy already at his gates, and he determined to risk all, rather than leave it a prey. Zisca, who carried on his works with his usual vigour, had brought the siege to its last stage, when the Marquis



appeared at the head of a great army, and offered him battle. Zisca, whose maxim it was never to decline fighting, accepted the challenge, though he had many difficulties to encounter. The Marquis had a superior army, and Zisca was obliged still more to thin his troops by leaving a large detachment to observe the town. The Saxons, besides, were advantageously posted, having taken possession of a rising ground, which secured their flanks: a strong wind also blew in the faces of the Reformers, which greatly weakened the flight of their arrows; while it added new force to those of the enemy. But Zisca had little confidence in missive weapons; his whole line, with their pole-axes and sabres, in their accustomed manner, made an impetuous attack upon the enemy: the Saxons receiving them in good order, stood firm, and gave them a very severe check. This was a reception wholly unknown to the Reformers, who had ever been used to bear down all before them, and in these new circumstances were at a loss how to act; they retreated some paces, as if astonished at the novelty of the things. This critical moment the Saxons should have seized, while the blast, yet fluttering in the sail, seemed to hesitate on which side to give the swell. Had they moved forward at this instant, it is probable the patriots had never recovered from their surprize; but instead of a general charge, they stood motionless, looking upon the enemy as if they had done enough by not suffering themselves to be beaten. Zisca, little less than inspired, had a complete idea of the whole affair, and being conducted to the front line, which stood yet unbroken;



he cried out as he rode along, "I thank you, my fellow soldiers, for all your past services; if you have now done your utmost, let us retire." This noble rebuke stung them to the soul; every veteran gnashed his teeth with indignation, grasped his sword, and pressed forward, closing hand to hand with the enemy, in the true temper of determined courage. The combat, thus renewed, became soon unequal; for some time the Saxons still maintained a feeble fight; four of their principal officers, endeavouring to restore the battle, were cut in pieces at the head of their dismayed battalions: the whole army soon after, in every part, gave ground, and retreated. A rout—a massacre, succeeded—the carnage of the field was terrible—not fewer than nine thousand Saxons were left dead upon the spot. From this scene of blood he recalled his troops to new fields of glory. "We must sleep to night," cried he, "within the walls of Ausig." Thither the triumphant army carried the news of their victory. Zisca would grant no conditions; the governor was allowed half an hour to deliberate whether he would surrender at discretion, or take the consequence; he chose the safer measure, and the Reformers were quietly in their quarters in Ausig before the close of the evening. These two great events consecrated the 22d of April, for many years, in Bohemia. The next day Zisca ordered the town to be dismantled, that it might no longer be a receptacle for his enemies: he broke down likewise the stately bridge over the Elbe, to cut off as much as possible all communication with Saxony. Having thus settled every thing in the east of Bohemia where he had



been kept longer than he expected, and having freed that country even from the apprehension of danger, he returned with his victorious army to the assistance of Procop. The news of Sigismond's retreat met Zisca near Prague. As the troops, having made forced marches from Ausig, had been harassed with intolerable fatigue, he thought it proper to give them a few days' rest. He encamped, therefore, within three leagues of Prague. Sigismond was now reduced to the greatest extremities; the battle of Ausig had greatly shaken that constancy which had thus far supported him; six times, in three campaigns, he had been vanquished in the open field, his towns had been ravished from him, and his provinces laid waste. He acknowledged the superior talents of his adversary, and was quelled by that noble and unconquered spirit which animates the cause of liberty, and every ray of hope therefore being now excluded, he submitted to his hard fate, and resolving on any terms, to give peace to his bleeding country, sent deputies to Zisca requesting him to sheath his sword and name his conditions, offering him at the same time, for himself, what might have satisfied the most grasping ambition. Zisca was equally desirous of a reconciliation; he had taken up arms with a view only to obtain peace, and was heartily glad of an occasion to lay them down: he returned a message to the Emperor, full of that respectful language with which the great can easily cover enmity, though at the same time breathing that spirit, which became a chief in the cause of liberty. After a few couriers had had passed, a place of congress was appointed, and



Zisca set out to meet the Emperor, attended by the principal officers of his army. It gave Europe a subject for various conjectures, when this great man, whom one unfortunate battle would have reduced to the condition of a rebel, was seen passing through the midst of Bohemia, to treat with his sovereign, like a sovereign, upon equal terms. But Zisca lived not to put a finishing hand to this treaty; his affairs obliged him to take his route through a part of the country, at which the plague at that time raged. At the castle of Priscow, where he had engaged to hold an assembly of the states of that district, the fated contagion seized him, and put at end to his life, on the sixth of October, 1424; at a time, when all his labours were ended, and his great purposes almost completed. Such was the course of providence: he had only to enjoy those liberties, and that tranquillity, which his virtues had so nobly purchased. The remains of this great man were deposited in the church at Craslow, in Bohemia; where a monument was erected to his memory, with an inscription to this purpose, Here lies John Zisca, who, having defended his country against the encroachments of Papal tyranny, rests in this hallowed place, in despite of the Pope.—His capacity was vast; his plans of action, extensive; and the vigour of his mind, in executing those plans, astonishing. Difficulties with him were motives that roused up latent powers, proportioned to the emergency. Even blindness could not check the ardour of his soul: his military abilities were equal to what any age hath produced, and as such they are acknowledged by all historians; nor do we admire him less as a politician.

If the great man was seen in the conduct, and courage which he discovered in the field, he was equally seen in governing, by his own native authority, a land of anarchy, and in drawing to one point, the force of a divided nation. Nor was the end, which he proposed, unworthy of his great actions. Utterly devoid both of ambition and avarice, he had no aim but to establish, upon the ruins of ecclesiastical tyranny, the civil and religious liberties of his country.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
THE REV. JOHN TROUGHTON.

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“Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour.”

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This eminent divine lived in the seventeenth century. He was what was then called a Puritan, a poor, despised, persecuted class of men, of whom the world was not worthy. Wood speaks very favourably of Troughton, and he is also mentioned by Calamy and Palmer, as a man of great learning, talents, and much moderation. I prefer Wood to either of the other two, for this reason, that he was greatly opposed to puritanical cant, as it was then called: but I will let Wood tell his own story.

“John Troughton, son of Nathan Troughton, a clothier, was born in the city of Coventry, educated in the free-school there under Samuel Frankland, became scholar of St. John's College, in the year 1655, afterwards Fellow and Bachelor of Arts; but upon the restoration of King Charles II. being ejected to make room for one who had been expelled by the visitors

in 1648, he retired to a market town in Oxfordshire, commonly called Bicester; where living a moderate nonconformist, he read academical learning to young men, and sometimes preached in private, whereby he got a comfortable subsistence. Upon the issuing out of his Majesty's declaration for the toleration of religion, dated 15th of March, 1671, this Mr. Troughton was one of those four (Dr. Henry Langley, and Thomas Gilbert, and Henry Cornish, Bachelors of Divinity, being the other three) who were appointed by the principal heads of the brethren to carry on the work of preaching within the city of Oxford. The place where they held their meetings was in Thame-street, without the north gate, in a house which had been built, a little before the civil war began, by Thomas Pun, alias Thomas Aires; where each person endeavouring to show his parts, this our author Troughton was by the auditory of scholars (who came among them merely out of novelty) held the best, and was by them most applauded. The truth is, though the man had been blind, occasioned by the small-pox, ever since he was four years old, yet he was a good school divine and metaphysician, and was much commended while he was in the University for his disputations. He was not of so busy, turbulent and furious a spirit as those of his persuasion commonly are, but very moderate. And although he often preached, as occasions offered themselves, in prohibited assemblies, yet he did not make it his business by employing all the little tricks and artifices, too frequently practised by other hot-headed zealots of his fraternity, viz., by vilifying and railing at the



established ordinances of the church, libelling the conformable ministry, by keeping their meetings at the very time when the services and administration of the church are regularly performing, &c. He did not, I say, by these and such like most unwarrantable contrivances, endeavour to withdraw weaker persons from the sacred bosom of the church, in order to fix and herd them in associated defying conventicles. He was respected by, and maintained an amicable correspondence with some of the conformable clergy, because of his great knowledge and moderation. He hath written and published, as follows :—

Lutherus Redivivus: or, the Protestant Doctrine of Justification by Faith only, vindicated: and the plausible opinion of justification by faith and obedience, proved to be Arminian, Popish, and to lead unavoidably to Socinianism. part I. London, 1667, October. This is reflected on by Thomas Hotchkis in his preface to the second part of “A Discourse concerning Imputed Righteousness, &c.” London, 1678, October.

Luther. Rediv. or, the Protestant Doctrine of Justification by Christ's Righteousness imputed to Believers, explained and vindicated. part II. London, 1678, October.

Letter to a Friend touching God's Providence about sinful actions; in answer to a Letter, entitled, “The Reconcilableness of God's Presence, &c. and to a Postscript of that letter.” London, 1678, October.

Popery the Grand Apostasy. Being the substance of certain Sermons preached on 2. Thess. ii. from verse 1 to 12, on occasion of the desperate plot of the



Papists against the King, kingdom and Protestant Religion. To which is added a Sermon on Rev. xviii. 4. preached on the 5th of Nov. 1678. London, 1680, October.

An Apology for the Nonconformists, shewing their reasons, both for their not conforming and for their preaching publicly, though forbidden by law. London, 1681, quarto.

An Answer to Dr. Stillingfleet's Sermon and his Defence of it; so much as concerneth the Nonconformists preaching. Printed with the Apology.

This learned and religious person Mr. John Troughton, died in a house of one of the brethren, situate and being in Allsaint's parish within the city of Oxford, on the 20th of August, 1681, aged 44 years; whereupon his body was carried to Bicester before mentioned, alias Burchester, and buried in the church there. At which time Abraham James, a blind man, master of the free-school at Woodstock, (sometime of Magdalen Hall), preaching his funeral sermon, did take occasion not only to be lavish in the commendations of the defunct, but to make several glances on the government established by law. So that an auditor there named Samuel Blackwell, M.A. and vicar of Bicester, (a zealous man for the Church of England) complaining to the diocesan of him, James was glad to retract what he had said before him, to prevent an ejection from his school, which otherwise would inevitably have come to pass.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
**DENIS HAMPSON,**  
THE BLIND BARD OF MAGILLIGAN.

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“The rolls of fame I will not now explore,  
Nor need I here describe in learned lay  
How forth the minstrel fared in days of yore,  
Right glad of heart, though homely in array,  
His waving beard and locks all hoary grey;  
While from his bending shoulders decent hung  
His harp; the sole companion of his way;  
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung,  
And ever, as he went, some merry lay he sung.”

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THE following account of the blind bard of Magilligan was taken from his own lips, July 3, 1805, by the Rev. Mr. Sampson, at the request of Miss Owenson, now Lady Morgan.

Denis Hampson, or the man with two heads, is a native of Derry: his father, Bryan Darrogher Hampson, held the whole town-land of Tyrcrevan; his mother's relations were in possession of the Wood-town, (both considerable farms in Magilligan.) He lost his sight at the age of three years by

the small-pox ; at twelve years he began to learn the harp under Bridget O'Cahan ; " for," as he said, " in those old times, women as well as men were taught the Irish harp, in the best families, and every old Irish family had harps in plenty." His next master was John C. Garragher, a blind travelling harper, whom he followed to Buncranagh, where his master used to play to Colonel Vaughan ; he had afterwards Laughlin Hanning and Pat Connor in succession, as masters. " All these were from Connaught, which was," as he added, " the best part of the kingdom for music and for harpers." At eighteen years of age he began to play for himself, and was taken into the house of Counsellor Canning at Garvagh, for half a year ; his host, with Squire Gage and Doctor Bacon bought and presented him a harp. He travelled nine or ten years through Ireland and Scotland, and tells facetious stories of gentlemen in both countries : among others, that, in passing near the place of Sir J. Campbell, at Aghanbrack, he learned, that this gentleman had spent a great deal, and was living on an allowance so much per week. Hampson through delicacy would not call, but some of the domestics were sent after him ; on coming into the castle, Sir J. asked him why he had not called, adding, " sir, there was never a harper but yourself that passed the door of my father's house ;" to which Hampson answered, that " he had heard in the neighbourhood that his honour was not often at home ;" with which delicate evasion Sir J. was satisfied : " he adds, " that this was the highest-bred and stateliest man he ever knew ; if he were putting on a new pair of gloves, and one of



them dropped on the floor, (though ever so clean,) he would order the servant to bring him another pair." He says that, in that time he never met but one laird that had a harp, and that was a very small one, played on formerly by the laird's father; that when he had tuned it with new strings, the laird and his lady were both so pleased with his music, that they invited him back in these words: "Hampson, as soon as you think this child of ours (a boy of three years of age,) is fit to learn on his grandfather's harp, come back to teach him, and you shall not repent it;" but this he never accomplished.

He told me a story of the laird of Stone, with a great deal of comic relish. When he was playing at the house, a message came that a large party of gentlemen were coming to grouse, and would spend some days with him (the laird;) the lady being in great distress, turned to her husband, saying, "what shall we do my dear, for so many, in the way of beds." "Give yourself no vexation," replied the laird; "give us enough to eat, and I will supply the rest; and as to beds, believe me, every man shall find one for himself, (meaning that his guests would fall under the table.) In his second trip to Scotland, in the year 1745, being at Edinburgh, when Charles the Pretender was there, he was called into the great hall to play; at first he was alone, afterwards four fiddlers joined:—the tune called for was, "The king shall enjoy his own again." He sung here part of the words following:—

"I hope to see the day

When the Whigs shall run away,

And the king shall enjoy his own again."



I asked him if he heard the Pretender speak ; he replied, " I only heard him ask, ' Is Sylvan there ? ' on which some one answered, ' he is not here, please your Royal Highness, but he shall be sent for. ' He meant to say Sullivan," continued Hampson, " but that was the way he called the name." He says that Capt. M'Donnel, when in Ireland, came to see him, and that he told the Captain, that Charley's cockade was in his father's house.

Hampson was brought into the Pretender's presence by Colonel Kelly, of Roscommon, and Sir Thomas Sheridan ; and he ( Hampson ) was then above fifty years old. He played in many Irish houses ; among others, those of Lord De Courcey, Mr. Fortescue, Sir P. Bellew, Squire Roche ; and in the great towns of Dublin, Cork, &c. &c.—respecting all which he interspersed pleasant anecdotes with surprising gaiety and correctness. As to correctness, he mentioned many anecdotes of my grand-father and grand-aunt, at whose houses he used to be frequently. In fact, in this identical harper, whom you sent me to survey, I recognized an acquaintance, who, as soon as he found me out, seemed exhilarated at having an old friend of ( what he called ) " the old stock," in his poor cabin. He even mentioned many anecdotes of my own boyhood, which, though by me long forgotten, were accurately true. These things shew the surprising power of recollection at the age of an hundred and eight years. Since I saw him last, which was in 1787, the wen on the back of his head is greatly increased ; it is now hanging over his neck and shoulders, nearly as large as his head, from which circumstance he de-



rives his appellative, "the man with two heads." General Hart, who is an admirer of music, sent a limner lately to take a drawing of him, which cannot fail to be interesting, if it were only for the venerable expression of his meagre, blind countenance, and the symmetry of his tall, thin, but not debilitated, person. I found him lying on his back in bed, near the fire of his cabin; his family employed in the usual way; his harp under the bed-clothes, by which his face was covered also. When he heard my name, he started up, (being already dressed,) and seemed rejoiced to hear the sound of my voice, which, he said, he began to recollect. He asked for my children, whom I brought to see him, and he felt them over and over;—then with tones of great affection, he blessed God that he had *seen* four generations of the name, and ended, by giving the children his blessing. He then tuned his old time-beaten harp, his solace and bedfellow, and played with astonishing justness and good taste.

The tunes which he played were his favorites; and he, with an elegance of manner, said, at the same time, I remember you have a fondness for music, and the tunes you used to ask for I have not forgotten, which were Cualin, the dawning of the day, Ellen Aroon, Ceandubhdilis, &c. These, except the third, were the first tunes, which, according to regulation, he played at the famous meeting of Harpers at Belfast, under the patronage of some amateurs of Irish music. Mr. Bunting, the celebrated musician of that town, was here the year before, at Hampson's, noting his tunes, and his manner of playing, which is



in the best old style. He said, with the honest feeling of self-love, "when I played the old tunes, not another of the Harpers would play after me." He came to Magilligan many years ago, and at the age of eighty-six, married a woman of Innishowen, whom he found living in the house of a friend. "I can't tell," quoth Hampson, "if it was not the d—l buckled us together; she being lame, and I blind." By this wife he had one daughter, married to a cooper, who has several children, and maintains them all, though Hampson (in this alone seeming to dote) says, that his son-in-law is a spendthrift, and that he maintains them;—the family humour is whim, and the old man is quieted. He is pleased when they tell him, as he thinks is the case, that people of character for musical taste, send letters to invite him; and he, though incapable now of leaving the house, is planning expeditions never to be attempted, much less realized; these are the only traces of mental debility; as to his body, he has no inconvenience but that arising from a chronic disorder; his habits have ever been sober; his favourite drink, once beer, now milk and water; his diet chiefly potatoes. I asked him to teach my daughter, but he declined; adding, however, that it was too hard for a young girl, but nothing would give him greater pleasure, if he thought it could be done.

Lord Bristol, when lodging at the bathing house of Mount Salut, near Magilligan, gave three guineas and ground rent free, to build the house where Hampson now lives. At the house-warming, his Lordship with his Lady and family came, and the children



danced to his harp ; the Bishop gave three crowns to the family, and in the dear year, his Lordship called in his coach and six—stopped at the door, and gave a guinea to buy meal.

## ADDENDA.

“In the time of Noah I was green,  
After his flood I have not been seen,  
Until seventeen hundred and two.—I was found,  
By Corman Kelly under ground ;  
He raised me up to that degree ;  
Queen of Music they call me.”

The above lines are sculptured on the old Harp, the sides and front of which is white sally, the back of fir, patched with copper and iron plates.

His daughter, now attending him, is only thirty-three years old.

I have now given you an account of my visit, and even thank you (though my fingers are tired,) for the pleasure you procured to me by this interesting commission.

Ever yours,

G. V. SAMPSON.

Hampson died at the advanced age of an hundred and ten years. A few hours before his death, he tuned his harp, that it might be in readiness to entertain some company who were expected to pass that way shortly after ; however, he felt the approach of death, and calling his family around him, he resigned his breath without a struggle, being in perfect possession of his faculties until the last moment of his existence.

The foregoing account of Hampson does not mention whether he had been married more than once, but

this seems probable from the age of his daughter attending him at the time it was written, who if thirty-three years old then, she must have been born when he was seventy five.

LINES WRITTEN ON HIS DEATH.

*The following lines on his death appeared in the Belfast Magazine, January, 1808.*

“The fame of the brave shall no longer be sounded,  
The last of our bards, now sleeps cold in the grave,  
Magilligan’s rocks, where his lays have resounded,  
Frown dark at the ocean, and spurn at the wave.  
For Hampson, no more shall thy soul-touching finger  
Steal sweet o’er the strings, and wild melody pour,  
No more near thy hut, shall the villagers linger,  
While strains from thy harp, warble soft round the shore.  
No more thy harp swells with enraptured emotion,  
Thy wild gleams of fancy for ever are fled—  
No longer thy minstrelsy charms the rude ocean  
That rolls near the green turf that pillows thy head.  
Yet vigour and youth with bright visions had fired thee,  
And rosebuds of health have blown bright on thy cheek,  
The songs of the sweet bards of Erin inspired thee,  
And urged thee to wander, bright laurels to seek.  
Yes, oft hast thou sung of our kings’ crowned with glory,  
Or sighing repeated the lovers’ fond lay,  
And oft hast thou sung of the bards famed in story,  
Whose wild notes of rapture have long passed away.  
Thy grave shall be screened from the blast and the billow,  
Around it a fence shall posterity raise;  
Erin’s children shall wet with tears thy cold pillow,  
Her youth shall lament thee, and carol thy praise.”

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THE LIFE  
OF  
FRANCISCUS SALINAS.

A CELEBRATED MUSICIAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SALAMANCA.

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“ From what blest spring did he derive his art  
To soothe our cares, and thus command the heart!  
How did the seeds lie quickening in his brain?  
How were they born without a parent's pain?—  
He did but think and music did arise,  
Dilating joy, as light o'erspreads the skies;  
From an immortal source, like that it came;  
But light we know—this wonder wants a name!  
What art thou? From what causes dost thou spring,  
O music! thou divine mysterious thing!”

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Franciscus Salinas was the son of the quæstor or treasurer of Burgos, and born about the year of 1513. Although, from the day of his birth, he laboured under the misfortune of an incurable blindness, he was the author of one of the most valuable books on music, now extant in any language. He began very early to devote himself to the study of music. During his youth, nearly the whole of his time was employed in singing to and playing on the organ. While he was a boy, a young female, who was about

to take the veil, happened to come to the place where he resided. She had expressed a desire of learning to play on the organ, and for that purpose became an inmate in his father's house. She was taught music by Salinas, while he in return received a knowledge of Latin.

His parents afterwards sent him to Salamanca, where, for some years, he assiduously applied himself to the study of the Greek language; and also to the study of philosophy, and the arts. The narrowness of his circumstances, however, soon compelled him to leave that university: after which he was taken into the king's palace, where he was patronized by Petrus Sarmentus, Archbishop of Compostella. When the Archbishop was made a Cardinal, Salinas accompanied him to Rome, where he spent thirty years in studying the works of Boëtius, and the writings of the antient Greek harmonicans. He afterwards returned to Spain, hoping to spend the remainder of his days in his native country; but at the end of three years, he was recalled into Italy, and afterwards invited to Salamanca, as professor of music, on a liberal salary. He was an excellent composer for the organ and other instruments, and was much esteemed by persons of rank, but in particular by Pope Paul the Fourth, through whose favour he was created Abbot of St. Pauciatio della Rocca Salegna, in the kingdom of Naples. He died in the month of February, 1590, at the advanced age of seventy-seven years.

He wrote a treatise "*De Musicâ*," which is divided into seven books. In the *first*, he treats only of the



different methods of calculating the ratios of sound. In the eighth and ninth chapters of the *second* book, he contends against the musicians of his time, that the diatesseron or fourth is a concordant interval. The ditone and semiditone he ranks among the consonances. The author then proceeds to explain how the lesser intervals are produced. In the nineteenth chapter of the second book, is contained the description of an instrument, invented by Salinas, for demonstrating the ratios of the consonances, and also of the lesser intervals. In the *third* book, he treats of the genera of the antients, and with so much learning and sagacity, that Dr. Pepusch has declared that the true enharmonic, which for many ages had been supposed lost, was in this work accurately determined. Salinas, in another part of his work, shews the method of constructing what he calls the type of the diatonic. He next treats of the temperament of the organ and other instruments, and makes some interesting observations on the powers of the human voice. He then speaks of the lute and the viol, and of the temperaments best adapted to each. In the tenth chapter of the *fourth* book, there is a diagram, representing in a collateral view, the tetrachords of the antients, conjoined with the hexachords of Guido, and shewing how the latter spring out of the former. The antient division of the genera into the species is afterwards noticed. In a subsequent chapter, he exposes the errors of Aristoxenus, in a manner very different both from Ptolemy and Bœtius. The last subject treated by him, is, the Rhythmus of the antients; and he enters into a copious dissec-

tation on the various kinds of metre used by the Greek, the Roman, and the Spanish poets.

Of this work it may be sufficient to say, that a greater degree of credit is due to it, than to almost any other production of modern writers of the same kind. The author was a practical, as well as a theoretical musician; and throughout the whole of his book, he manifests a disposition, the farthest removed that can possibly be imagined, from that credulity which betrayed Glareanus and others into error. This disposition led him to inquire accurately and minutely into the doctrines of the Greek writers; and from the confidence with which he sometimes blames them, we are led into the persuasion that the truth was on his side.

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## HENRY, THE MINSTREL,

COMMONLY CALLED "BLIND HARRY."

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"What time in God, and freedom's holy cause,  
Wallace and Bruce opposed a tyrant's laws."

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HENRY, the Minstrel, commonly called "Blind Harry," was an antient Scottish author, distinguished by no particular sir-name, but well known as the composer of an historical poem, reciting the achievements of Sir William Wallace. This poem, continued for several centuries to be in great repute, but afterwards sunk into neglect, until very lately, that it has been released from its obscurity, by a very neat and correct edition published at Perth, under the inspection and patronage of the Earl of Buchan. It is difficult to ascertain the precise time in which this poet lived, or when he wrote his history, as the two authors who mention him, speak somewhat differently. Dempster, who wrote in the beginning of the sixteenth century, says, that he lived in the year 1361; but Major, who was born in the year 1446, says, that he composed his book during the time of his infancy, which we must suppose to have been a few years posterior to 1446; for if it had been composed that very year, the circumstance would pro-

bably have been mentioned. As little can we suppose from Mr. Dempster's words, that Harry was born in 1361; for though he says, that he lived in that year, we must naturally imagine, rather, that he was come to the years of maturity, or began to distinguish himself in the world, than that he was only born at that time. The author of the Dissertation on his life, prefixed to the new edition of the poem, endeavours to reconcile matters in the following manner. "It is not, indeed, impossible that he might be born in or about that year, (1361.) In the time of Major's infancy, he might be about 83 years of age—in that case, it may be supposed that it was the work of his old age, to collect and put in order the detached pieces of his history of Wallace, which he had probably composed in those parts of the country where the incidents were said to have happened."

We are entirely ignorant of the family, from which Harry was descended; though, from his writings, we should be led to suppose that he had received a liberal education. In these, he discovers some knowledge in divinity, classical history, and astronomy, as well as of the languages. In one place, he boasts of his celibacy, which seems to indicate his having engaged himself in some of the religious orders of that age. From what Major says further of him, we may suppose his profession to have been that of a travelling bard; though it does not appear that he was skilled in music, or had any other profession than that just mentioned. His being blind from his birth, indeed, makes this not improbable; though, even this cir-



cumstance is not inconsistent with the supposition of his being a religious mendicant. "The particulars, (says Major) which he heard related by the vulgar, he wrote in the vulgar verse, in which he excelled. By reciting his histories before princes and great men, he gained his food and raiment, of which he was worthy." It is thus probable that he would be a frequent visitor at the Scottish court; and would be made welcome by those great families, who would boast of any alliance with the hero himself, or took pleasure in hearing his exploits, or those of his companions.

With regard to the authenticity of his histories, Major informs us only, that "he does not believe every thing he finds in such writings;" but from other testimonies, it appears, that he consulted the very best authorities which could at that time he had. Though, according to the most early account of Harry, it appears to have been at least 56 years after the death of Wallace, that Harry was born; yet, he is said to have consulted with several of the descendants of those who had been the companions of that hero, while he achieved his most celebrated exploits, and who were still capable of ascertaining the veracity of what he published. The principal of these were Wallace of Craigie, and Liddie of that Ilk; who, he says, persuaded him to omit in his history, a circumstance which he ought to have inserted. Besides these, he consulted with the principal people of the kingdom; and he utterly disclaims the idea of having adhered entirely to any un-written tradition, or having been promised any reward for what he wrote.



His chief authority, according to his own account, was a Latin history of the exploits of Sir William, written partly by John Blair, and partly by Thomas Gray, who had been the companions of the hero himself. Harry's account of these two authors is to the following purpose. "They became acquainted with Wallace, when the latter was only about sixteen years of age, and at that time a student in the school of Dundee; and their acquaintance continued till his death, which happened in his 29th year. John Blair went from the schools in Scotland, to Paris, where he studied for some time, and received Priest's orders. He returned to Scotland in 1296, where he joined William Wallace, who was bravely defending the liberties of his country. Thomas Gray, who was a parson of Libberton, joined Wallace, at the same time. They were men of great wisdom and integrity, zealous for the freedom of Scotland, and were present with Wallace, and assistants to him, in most of his military enterprises. They were also his spiritual counsellors, and administered to him godly comfort. The history written by these two clergymen was attested by William Sinclair Bishop of Dunkeld, who had himself been witness to many of Wallace's actions. The Bishop, (if he had lived longer) was to have sent these books to Rome, for the purpose of obtaining the sanction of the Pope's authority."

The book which Harry thus appeals to, as his principal authority, is now lost, so that we have no opportunity of comparing it with what he has written. The character given by Dempster of Harry, however, is more favourable, than that by Major. He tells us



that " he was blind from his birth ; a man of singular and happy genius, he was indeed another Homer. He did great honour to his native country, and raised it above what was common to it in his age. He wrote in the vernacular verse, an elaborate and grand work, in ten books, of the deeds of William Wallace." In this account there is a mistake, for the poem contains eleven or twelve books ; but Dempster, who wrote in a foreign country, and had not a printed copy of Harry's works by him when he wrote his eulogium, is excusable in a mistake of this kind.

With regard to his poetical merit, it must undoubtedly rank very far below that of Homer ; whom indeed, he scarcely resembles in any other respect than that he went about as Homer is said to have done, reciting the exploits of the heroes of his country, and that he was blind. In this last circumstance, however, he was still worse off than Homer ; for Harry was born blind, but Homer became blind after he was advanced in years. The reader will be able to judge how far Harry is entitled to a comparison with Homer, from the poem I refer to. (See the end of this article.) It is a description of the last mournful interview between Wallace and his wife, which bears some resemblance to the parting of Hector and Andromache, in the Iliad of Homer. Hence, Harry, even supposing his genius to have been equal to that of Homer, must have lain under great disadvantages, and these are very evident in his works. The descriptive parts are evidently deficient. However, I think the following description of a winter-day, from the Earl of Buchan's version, has some claim to poetic merit.

“ Cold Winter now his hoary aspect shews,  
 Frost-bound the glebe, whilst Boreas fiercely blows ;  
 Sweeping the snow along the rising hills,  
 Which every glen and slanting hollow fills :  
 Cold grew the beams of the far distant sun,  
 And day was finish'd ere 'twas well begun—  
 Long, dark, and hateful, was the gloomy night,  
 Uncomfortable to each banished wight,  
 Who durst not trust a roof to hide his head,  
 But sculks from hill to hill with cautions dread.”

This passage is followed by another of equal merit.

—————Valiant Wallace stood,  
 In shining arms, few were his men, but good ;  
 Not one to seven—now past their power to fly,  
 Resolved to cut their way, or bravely die :  
 The hardy chief unsheathed his conquering sword,  
 Besought the aid of heaven, then gave the word :  
 Fiercely he met his bold attacking foes,  
 And quick as light'ning dealt his fatal blows ;  
 With horrid din the tempered edges clash,  
 On coats of steel whence hasty sparkles flash ;  
 But massy armour and defensive shield,  
 Must to the nervous arm of Wallace yield,  
 Like a swoln current rushing from a hill,  
 Which does with wreck the lower vallies fill :  
 Thus, through the martial press he made a lane,  
 Who durst oppose—no sooner did, than slain :  
 Forty of which, unfortunately bold,  
 With gaping wounds upon the earth lay cold ;  
 Thrice five there fell, of Scotsmen, brave and true,  
 For great the loss, when good men were so few !

The allusions are taken principally from the way in which nature affects those senses, of which he was possessed. Thus speaking of the month of March,



he calls it the month of right digestion, from the supposed fermentation then begun in the earth. Of April, he says that the earth is then able, or has obtained the power of producing its different vegetables; and of this productive power, he appears to have been more sensible, than of the effects which commonly strike us most sensibly. "By the working of nature," (says he) "the fields are again clothed, and the woods acquire their worthy weed of green. May brings along with it great celestial gladness. The heavenly hues appear upon the tender green." In another place he describes the deity of some river, whom he calls, Nymphæus, "building his bower with oil and balm, filled with sweet odours." By reason of these disadvantages, he seldom makes use of similes, with which Homer abounds so much; and few miraculous interpositions are to be found in his poems; though, the prophecies of Thomas Lermont, commonly called the Rhymer; and a prophetic dream of Wallace himself, are introduced, as well as the ghost of Faudon, a traitor, who had joined Wallace, and whom the latter, in a fit of passion, killed. The circumstances were these; Wallace, with a few brave followers, was pursued from St. John's town, by the English, who had sent out their blood-hounds to scour the country in quest of the flying patriots.

They at last reached Gaskall, where they determined to stop for the night; after partaking of some refreshment, their attention is awakened by the sound of a horn. Wallace sends one of his men to inquire into the cause of the alarm, but he not returning, he sends another upon the same errand, his lengthened



absence increases the agitation of Wallace's mind, and he dispatches all his followers successively in search of their fellows.

The same inextinguishable thirst of blood, which Homer ascribes to his hero, Achilles, is ascribed to Wallace; though, in all probability, the mind of Wallace was too much enlightened to admit of such sentiments. A vast degree of courage and personal strength is ascribed to him, by means of which, the exploits of the whole army are in effect transferred to a single person. As long as he is invested with the command, the Scots are victorious and irresistible; when deprived of it, they are enslaved and undone. Among the many lively descriptions which we meet with in this poem, of Wallace's heroism, and *amor patriæ*, the battle of Biggar affords one of the happiest examples of the kind.

After struggling for some time against an inveterate and powerful faction; disdaining to feign submission, he is taken by treachery, and dies a martyr to the freedom of his country. The poem, on the whole, is valuable, on account of our being able to trace, by its means, the progress which the English language had made at that time in Scotland; the manners of the Scots in that age, as the *green* colour of their dress, which at that time, was the taste of the inhabitants of Scotland, &c. With regard to the authenticity of his relations, it is impossible to suppose any other thing, than that they are partly true, and partly false. The general thread of the story, may, undoubtedly be looked upon to be genuine, though embellished with poetical fictions and exaggerations; and



his constant appeals to the book already mentioned, though it is now lost, must be looked upon as a strong testimony in his favour: for we cannot suppose that at the time he lived, when we may say that the transactions which he relates, were recent, he would have had the confidence to appeal to a book which had not been generally known to have an existence—and its being now lost can never be any argument against it, when we consider the difficulty there was of preserving books before the invention of printing; the confusions in which Scotland was frequently involved, and that the exploits of Wallace, who must be supposed to have been a kind of rival to the great Bruce, could not be so agreeable to the court as those of the more successful hero; and therefore the history of them might be suffered to fall into oblivion, though written in elegant Latin, while a most ridiculous poem in that language, on the battle of Bannockburn, has been preserved to this day.

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#### THE PARTING OF WALLACE AND HIS WIFE.

'Twas now the time when all to rest repair,  
And weary wretches laid aside each care,  
When with fond arms the fair Fidelia prest,  
Her panting hero to her snowy breast;  
With grief she found the rising tears bedew  
His manly face, and heard the sighs he drew:  
With frequent sobs, her heaving bosom rose,  
And caught the dear infection of his woes.  
On her pale cheeks does livid paleness rise,  
And sorrow speaks in silence from her eyes!  
Then with a groan, thus he, "long I've suppress'd  
The struggling passion in my labouring breast,

But now all sad restraints at last give way—  
 Fierce sorrow bids me speak, and I obey;  
 Behold our native country drowned in tears,  
 Around, one general face of woe appears:  
 In vain, we're blest with kind indulgent skies,  
 And suns in vain with genial ardour rise.  
 In vain, a yellow harvest crowns the plain,  
 And nodding boughs their golden load sustain.—  
 The peasant comfortless repining stands,  
 And sees his harvest reaped by others' hands.  
 See the fierce soldier rages o'er the land,  
 The flames wide spreading from the hostile hand;  
 Those shining spires which lately pierc'd the sky, }  
 Now equal with the ground in ruins lie— }  
 Oh! dire and curst effects of slavery!  
 Yet, once I nobly durst assert her right,  
 Bold in her cause, and dauntless in each fight;  
 But now the useless sword is laid aside,  
 And my once faithful helm long been untried:  
 But now the tyrant's power we dare restrain,  
 And liberty shall rear her head again—  
 With fell revenge another war prepare;  
 Bend the long unstrung bow, and launch the rusty spear.  
 But various cares sollicitate my breast,  
 Invade my heart, and rob my soul of rest;  
 While to my drooping mind's prophetic eyes,  
 A thousand griefs in fatal prospect rise;—  
 Methinks I view the cruel raging foes  
 End that dear life to finish all my woes.  
 Methinks I see that sacred blood now spilt,  
 To fill up Hesilrig's black scene of guilt;  
 And now to save thee from the coming blow,  
 And shield thee from the malice of the foe,  
 I have prepared, of youth a chosen band,  
 Ready to march where'er thou shalt command.  
 Some well built tower, a hospitable seat,  
 Shall prove from war's alarms, a safe retreat;  
 There, nor the battle's voice shall wound thine ear,



Nor the fierce spoiler, black with guilt appear—  
 There may thy constant prayers bless my sword,  
 And waft thy kindest wishes to thy lord;  
 Till circling time bring back the happy day,  
 When Scotland shall be free from English sway;  
 Till her extended plains be called her own,  
 And yet a Scottish king ascend a Scottish throne.”  
 He said, and ceas’d, nor groan’d, but deep suppress,  
 Each rising passion, in his manly breast;  
 But fiercer grief, her tender heart assailed,  
 She wept, and the frail woman all at once prevail’d.  
 “And wilt thou then,” she said, “and wilt thou go, }  
 Where thunders call thee, and where battle’s glow, }  
 And leave me here exposed to every foe?  
 See Hesilrig with lustful rage appears,  
 Derides my passion, and insults my fears—  
 With hasty steps he comes to be possessed,  
 Or stab his poinard in my hated breast;  
 In vain, with piteous shrieks I fill the air, }  
 And stung with sorrow my bare bosom tear, }  
 When he that should revenge me is not near.  
 Hast thou forgotten how his ruthless sword,  
 In my dear brother’s blood has deep been gored?—  
 Fired with bright glory’s charms both met the foe,  
 And sunk beneath the mighty warrior’s blow;  
 ’Tis true that fighting for their country’s right,  
 They glorious died, nor recreant left the fight.  
 But say, in vain, is all this flow of tears,  
 Fantastic passion, a weak woman’s fears;  
 No Hesilrig untainted with my kindred’s stain,  
 No friends destroyed, and no brother’s slain;  
 Yet, with her Wallace, let his consort go,  
 Join with his ills sad partnership of woe!  
 Or if propitious heaven shall deign to smile,  
 With faithful love reward my hero’s toil.  
 What though, my tender nerves refuse to bend,  
 The twanging yew, and the fleet dart to send;  
 Round thy distinguished tent, yet will I stay,  
 And wait impatient, the decisive day,

When freedom on thy helm shall crested stand,  
Nor fortune linger with her doubtful hand.  
But canst thou, thou wilt say, endure alarms,  
Hear war's rough voice and the hoarse sound of arms,  
When the big drum and sprightly pipe prepare,  
In dreadful harmony to speak the war?  
Then shall thy breast with trembling heaving rise,  
And female sorrow gather in thine eyes:  
But let the war's rude shock assault my ears—  
The woman, Wallace, shall throw off her fears.  
On this weak breast shall love new force impress,  
Nor let that doubt repel my happiness.  
But whither can I go, or where retreat,  
From following vengeance and impending fate?  
Even should I go where dreary caves forlorn;  
Horrid with night exclude the joyous morn,  
And lonely hermits never cease to mourn;  
Yet would keen Hesilrig find out the place,  
And in my ruin finish all my race;  
What tho' the bounding vessel waft me o'er,  
To lands remote, and some far distant shore;  
What tho' extended tracts of land and sea,  
Divide the war, and my dear Lord from me;  
The wife of Wallace can't be long concealed,  
But soon by babbling fame shall stand revealed;  
Then take me with thee whate'er chance betide,  
Firm to thy cause, and honest I'll abide:  
Nor let me mourn alone, when I am left,  
Of thee, and every joy with thee bereft!  
She said, and wept, nor yet his sorrows rise,  
But awful grief sits decent in his eyes:  
"Cease, cease!" he cried, "nor urge a vain relief,  
Nor by thy ling'ring doubts increase my grief.  
Now if kind heaven shall bless my enterprise,  
Nor fate look on me with her envious eyes;  
In flowing ease shall end her hated strife,  
And joy conduct us to the verge of life;



But if just heaven shall otherwise ordain,  
 'Tis heav'n that wills it, why should we complain?"  
 Thus while the faithful pair their grief exprest,  
 And sooth'd the passions in each other's breast ;  
 The beauteous morn disclosed its early ray,  
 And the grey east shone with the future day.  
 The hero rose, and with becoming art,  
 Feigns a false joy, at the same time his heart  
 Was filled with grief which touched each tender part :  
 Then to the fields he went with sorrow fraught,  
 While thousand woes surcharg'd each rising thought ;  
 With patriot groans he fills the morning air,  
 And spreading both his hands to heaven, this was his prayer—  
 Hear me, kind heaven ! if still my feet have trod,  
 In virtuous paths, nor devious from my God :  
 Since first with floods of tears and constant prayer,  
 My weeping parents gave me to thy care :  
 When round my head the guardian angels flew,  
 And conscious heaven approved my little vow ;  
 That if propitious fate increased my span,  
 And lengthened tender child-hood out to man ;  
 My country's foes should always feel my might,  
 Nor my sword sparkle in another's fight ;  
 Thence soon commenced my woes and hateful strife,  
 With war embroiled my tender years of life—  
 Oft has the soldier, under my command,  
 From slavery base redeemed his native land ;  
 But now oppressed with foes we droop again,  
 And panting liberty forsakes the reign ;—  
 Yet, bold in virtue's cause, we nobly dare,  
 To raise the sleeping embers of the war :  
 No impious itch of empire fires our mind,  
 Nor are our hearts to these base thoughts inclined :  
 But our fierce breasts glow with a holy rage,  
 Thine are the fields we fight and thine the war we wage :  
 But if alas ! some unforeseen offence,  
 Lies latent in the book of providence,

For which the trembling Scots shall shameful fly,  
 And leave the field to the fierce enemy ;  
 Then let me die, preventing all my foes,  
 And close these eyes, nor see my country's woes.

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## WILLIAM TALBOT,

THE CELEBRATED PERFORMER ON THE IMPROVED IRISH PIPES.

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“ Erin from her green throne surveys  
 The progress of her tuneful son ;  
 Exulting as the minstrel plays,  
 At the applause his pipes have won.

Then grieve not for the loss that shades  
 Fair nature's landscape from your view—  
 The genius, that no gloom invades,  
 She gave in recompense to you.”

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It is humiliating to the pride of man to trace the helplessness of his nature, but gratifying to consider the goodness of providence in the provision it makes for his wants and infirmities. In no situation, perhaps, is this better exemplified, than in the case of those who, condemned to perpetual darkness, are left to grapple with the difficulties of life, and to make their way through its mazy windings, under a privation, which, of all others, is the most appalling. The sub-



ject of the present memoir is of this class. He was born near Roscrea, in the county of Tipperary, in the year 1781, and lost his sight in the small-pox, when only four years of age ; about that time, Talbot's mother being in a delicate state of health, was advised to remove to a situation more suited to her constitution, near the sea coast ; and soon after, the family settled in the village of Tramore, within six miles of Waterford. There young Talbot soon discovered considerable mechanical taste, in the construction of miniature wind and water-mills, and in the fitting up of small ships and boats, with every rope and appendage as exactly formed, as those found in vessels on a larger scale. Being an only child, he was much indulged by his parents, who afforded him a greater facility in cultivating his favourite pursuits ; and it is not a little remarkable, that at the several periods of the year, when boys amuse themselves with kites, tops, hoops, marbles, bows and arrows, this youthful adventurer was observed to be one of the most expert at those juvenile recreations ; he has been known to gain the ring at castle-top, and to hit the mark with an arrow at thirty yards distance, when others, who were considered adepts, and blessed with the advantages of sight, found themselves far outstripped in this respect, by his adroitness and ingenuity.

At the age of thirteen, his performance on the Irish pipes obtained him considerable celebrity, particularly in country-dance playing ; and such was the fascination of his music, that no violin would be employed for that purpose, when he could be procured ; his habits in this respect had been so confirmed, and his



practice so extensive, that he has been known to continue playing a tune at a ball although fast asleep, and was only roused from his slumbers, by the reiterated calls of the party, for a change in the air. While travelling through the country in this way, he went, on one occasion with a few companions to a ball, about six miles distant, to amuse himself, and to hear a piper who had been engaged for the night. During the evening this man was continually boasting of his pipes, and of his own judgment, taste, and execution. Talbot, who had listened to his vaunts in silence, at length proposed, by way of quietus, to get a man who would produce better music out of an old stocking. Bets were immediately made, judges appointed, and the hour having arrived for the decision, Talbot actually drew from an old stocking, a set of small pipes, on which, he himself commenced playing, to the utter astonishment and confusion of his competitor, and to the conviction of his audience, of his entire superiority. At his leisure hours he frequently amused himself in fishing, at which he was generally very successful, as well as in playing cards and dominos, when occasion afforded him an opportunity of exercising his ingenuity in that way. Sometimes in his rambles through the country, he would indulge himself and his friends with a laugh at the expence of some blind companion, whom he would purposely lead out of the way, and there leave him, until the entreaties of the bewildered person would bring him again to his relief.

About the seventeenth year of his age, he got accidentally acquainted with a captain in the navy, for whom he had formed such a friendship, that he was



induced to go with him to sea, where he continued about four years, during which he was in various parts of the world, and received much civility, attention, and kindness, from the inhabitants of the respective ports at which he touched.

Mr. Talbot had become so accustomed to the ship, that, he has been often seen going from rope to rope to the mast head, with all the agility and skill of an experienced seaman. However, he grew tired of this kind of life, as it possessed too little variety, and became again a landsman in 1803. At this period he formed a matrimonial connexion with a young woman, for whom he had long cherished an ardent attachment, and for their mutual support had recourse to the exercise of his musical talents. He shortly after settled with his wife in Limerick, where he met with much encouragement, and commenced there, his first attempt at building an organ. In this, although having no person to give him any instruction, he succeeded surprisingly. From Limerick, after a residence of nearly three years, he removed to Cork. Here he purchased an organ for the purpose of making himself better acquainted with its mechanism; his perfect knowledge in which, was soon evinced, by the ingenious and melodious organs which he afterwards constructed. Mr. Talbot's acquaintance with this branch of mechanical music, first led him to conceive the application of a deeper scale to the Irish pipes and by that means he has now brought the instrument to a state of perfection hitherto unparalleled in the annals of music. He has enabled it to descend a whole additional octave on the musical scale, even to



G, on the first line in the bass ; this instrument being at first only four notes under concert pitch. Independent of this, he has increased its power of forming and combining harmonious sounds, by various additional keys, and by other very elegant and original improvements. Of his execution on the pipes, the Irish nation have had long experience, and it must be admitted, that his taste, if equalled, has seldom been surpassed, in the performance of almost all those favourite airs which have given such deserved celebrity to our native bards.

In the city of Dublin, where he resided for many years, he was sought after, and his performance much admired, as was evident by the numerous resort of company to the houses where he played. While there, from the nature of his profession, he was often kept to a late hour in the evening, yet such was his knowledge of the city, that he would return alone to his own house, which was situate outside the grand canal, without making the least mistake ; and has often been known, during these solitary perambulations, to serve as a guide and a guardian to many an unfortunate votary of the social board.

During his residence in Dublin, he was induced at one time to go with some friends on a boating party of pleasure in the bay ; the day, however, becoming tempestuous, they were driven to sea, and obliged to take shelter in the Isle of Man. Here his music, had he not been previously engaged, might have proved of much advantage to him, as a young woman at the inn where he stopped, was so captivated by it, that she proposed him her hand in marriage,



with a mass of wealth, which she had been for some years accumulating. This treasure, by way of temptation, she discovered to him as a great secret, which consisted of a large barrel of Isle of Man penny-pieces. This offer, however, he was obliged respectfully to reject, to the great mortification of the fair damsel.

The writer of this article has known Mr. Talbot for some time, and thinks it but justice to his character to state, that he has much merit, in supporting himself and a large family, so respectably as he does, on the income derived alone from his musical abilities. The loss of sight, and want of the comforts depending upon it, although it may be deplored, seem not to be felt as a calamity by Mr. Talbot; for, notwithstanding that the great book of nature is for ever closed to him, he appears perfectly resigned to the will of providence, full of contentment and cheerfulness, and possesses at all times that independence of feeling, which renders life supportable under every misfortune.

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF  
JOHN, THE BLIND KING OF BOHEMIA,

*Who was slain in the memorable Battle of Cressy, August 26, 1346.*

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“The Prince succeeds, and on her brazen prow,  
The noble Edward raised his princely brow ;  
In sable arms he marched, while o’er his head,  
Bohemia’s triple plume its glories shed ;—  
Soft as the new-formed wreath of Alpine snow,  
White as the feath’ry surge that foamed below ;  
The sword that widowed France on Cressy’s day,  
Again to conquest cuts its wonted way.”

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SWIFT says, that “blindness is an inducement to courage, because it hides from us the danger which is before us.” How far the Dean may be right in his opinion, I shall not pretend to judge, but that blind men now possess this virtue, (if a virtue it may be called) as much as any of their predecessors, may be easily seen from the following anecdotes.

Many of them have braved all the dangers of the field, in some of the greatest battles that ever were fought in Europe, viz. the siege of Constantinople, by the Venetians, the battle of Falkirk, and the memorable battle of Cressy. This engagement commenced at three o’clock in the afternoon, and continued till night put an end to the carnage. The greater part of the nobility of France and Germany, fell in the contest. Among the slain were two kings, James of Majorca, and John of Bohemia. The death of the latter was attended by some remarkable circumstances.



He had for a long time been blind. Anxious to know how the battle went, he commanded his attendants to lead him forward; for this purpose, he was placed between two of them, and their bridles were tied to his, so that in the heat of the action they might not be separated, and next morning they were all three found dead together. Barnes, in his life of Edward the III. gives a more particular account than any other historian I have met with: I will give it in his own words.

“Marquess Charles, elect emperor, resisted the prince with great courage; but his banner being beaten to the ground, his men slain about him, and himself wounded in three places of his body; though not without much difficulty, he turned his horse and rode out of the field, having cast away his coat-armour, that he might not be known. Meanwhile, his father, John, King of Bohemia, who was son to the noble emperor, Henry of Luxemburgh, although blind with age, when he understood how the day was like to go, asked of his captains, ‘what was become of the lord Charles, his son;’ they told him, ‘they knew not, but that they supposed him somewhere in the heat of action.’ Then the good old king, resolving by no means to disgrace his former victories, and cancel the glory of his youth by a degenerate old age, said unto them:—‘gentlemen, you are my men, my companions and friends in this expedition; I only now desire this last piece of service from you, that you would bring me forward so near to these Englishmen, that I may deal among them one good stroke with my sword.’ They all said, they would obey him to the death, and

lest by any extremity they should be separated from him, they all with one consent, tied the reins of their horses one to another, and so attended their royal master into battle."

"There this valiant old hero had his desire, and came boldly up to the Prince of Wales, and gave more than one, or four, or five good strokes, and fought courageously, as also did all his lords, and others about him; but they engaged themselves so far, that there they were all slain, and next day found dead about the body of their king, and their horses' bridles tied together. Then were the arms of that noble king, (being the ostrich feathers, with the motto, "Ich dien," signifying, I serve,) taken and worn by the Prince of Wales, in whose memory they have been ever since called the Prince's arms, being also from that time worn by his successors, the Princes of Wales, eldest sons of the Kings of England."

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JOSEPH STRONG.

THE propensity of persons, who have had the misfortune to be denied the blessing of sight, to cultivate the science of music, is notorious to every person of the least observation. With this propensity is often combined an extraordinary genius for mechanics, but few have possessed both in a greater degree than Mr. Joseph Strong.



He was a native of Carlisle, and was blind from his birth; notwithstanding this disadvantage, he displayed even in his infancy, astonishing skill in mechanics. He attached himself to the study of music, and was a good performer on the organ. The following circumstances afford a striking instance of his ingenuity and perseverance, by means of which he contrived to produce every thing he thought worth possessing. At the age of fifteen, he one afternoon concealed himself in the cathedral of Carlisle, during the time of divine service. When the congregation had retired, and the gates were shut, he proceeded to the organ loft, and examined every part of the instrument. He was thus occupied till about midnight, when, having satisfied himself respecting the general construction, he began to try the tone of the different stops, and the proportion they bore to each other. This experiment, however, could not be concluded in so silent a manner as the business which had before engaged his attention. The neighbourhood was alarmed; various were the conjectures, as to the cause of the nocturnal music; at length some persons mustered courage sufficient to go and see what was the matter, and Joseph was found playing the organ. Next day he was sent for by the Dean, who, after reprimanding him for the method he had taken to gratify his curiosity, gave him permission to play whenever he pleased.

He now set about making himself a chamber organ, which he completed without any assistance whatever. This instrument he sold to a merchant, and it is now in the possession of a gentleman in Dublin, who preserves it as a curiosity. Soon afterwards he made



another, on which he used to play both for amusement and devotion.

At the age of twenty, he could make himself almost every article of wearing-apparel, and all his household furniture (with but few exceptions) was of his own manufacture; besides these, he constructed various pieces of machinery, and among the rest a model of a loom, with a figure representing a man working on it. The first pair of shoes he made was for the purpose of walking from Carlisle to London, to visit Mr. Stanley, the celebrated blind organist of the Temple church. This visit he actually paid, and was highly gratified with the jaunt.

Though he indulged his fancy in the manner above stated, yet these amusements did not prevent him from following with great assiduity the business of a diaper weaver, at which he was accounted a good workman.

Till within a few months of his death, he was a constant attendant at the cathedral, but not being able to accompany the choir in chaunting the psalms, he composed several hymns which corresponded with the music, and which he substituted as an act of private devotion during the performance of that part of the public service. It is not known whether any person was ever attentive enough to copy these pious effusions, which were certainly respectable, from the motive by which they were dictated, and for the obtaining of which, he afforded ample opportunity, as they generally made a part of his musical performance before strangers, and indeed, that part in which he seemed to take the greatest pleasure. Mr. Strong was married



at the age of twenty-five, and had several children. He died at Carlisle, in March, 1798, in his sixty-sixth year.

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WILLIAM KENNEDY,

THE FAMOUS BLIND MECHANIC OF TANDERAGEE.

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“ Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear ;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

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THE privation of sight is perhaps more easily endured, and less prejudicial, than that of most of the other senses. Poets, the foremost in renown, have been incapable of the perception of external objects. The two finest heroic poems, (the Iliad, and Paradise Lost) are the immortal productions of the blind. The eyes of Homer and Milton “rolled in vain, and found no dawn :” yet, in the forceful expression of the latter, were their minds “inly irradiated, and they have sung of things invisible to mortal sight.” The contemplation, however, of abstract ideas by the blind, which depend not on vision, is by no means extraordinary, nor of those objects that relate to the other senses ; for the privation of one sense quickens the perception of the rest, while sensibility of intel-

lect and strength of natural reason, appertain to the blind, as well as to those who are blest in the full perfection of the senses. It remains for me to record the powers of another of the blind, who, though he has no claim to the genius of poesy, nor has ever expatiated in the regions of philosophy ; yet, has he, by the delicacy of touch, arrived at a most unexampled perfection in the execution of various pieces of mechanism, which, in others, would require all the aid of sight.

The subject of this short narrative, is Wm. Kennedy, of Tanderagee, in the county of Armagh, who has been blind from his infancy. The best account of his extraordinary progress in mechanics, is to be found in his own simple narrative, which the author of this article procured from his dictation. "I was born near Banbridge, in the county of Down, in the year 1768, and lost my sight at the age of four years. Having no other amusement, (being deprived of such as children generally have,) my mind turned itself to mechanical pursuits ; and I shortly became projector and workman for all the children in the neighbourhood. As I increased in years, my desire for some kind of employment that might render me not burthensome, though blind, induced me to think of music ; at the age of thirteen, I was sent to Armagh, to learn to play the fiddle ; my lodging happened to be at the house of a cabinet maker ; this was a fortunate circumstance for me, as I there got such a knowledge of the tools, and manner of working, as has been useful to me ever since : though these things engaged my mind, and occupied a great part of my



time ; yet, I made as decent a progress in music as any other of Mr. Moorehead's scholars, except one. After living a year and a quarter there, I returned home, where I made, and got tools, so as to enable me to construct different pieces of household furniture.

“ Not being satisfied with the occupation of cabinet maker, I purchased an old set of Irish bagpipes, and without instruction, it was with difficulty that I put them into playing order. I soon, however, became so well acquainted with the mechanical part of them, that instruments were brought to me from every part of the neighbourhood, to be repaired. I found so many defects in this instrument, that I began to consider whether there might not be a better plan of it than any I had yet met with ; and from my early instruction in music, and continual study of the instrument, (for indeed I slept but little,) in nine months time, (having my tools to make,) I produced the first new set. I then began with clock and watch-making,\* and soon found out a clock-maker in Banbridge, who had a desire to play on the pipes, and we mutually instructed each other. From this time, I increased in musical and mechanical knowledge,

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\* William Huntley was born blind ; or, at least, never had he recollection of seeing. He was bred by his father, who was a clock and watch maker, to that business ; in which employment he carried on a successful trade at Barnstaple. He was considered by the inhabitants as very superior in his profession, particularly in repairing musical clocks and watches, and seldom met with any difficulty, even in the most complicated cases : in fact, it often occurred, when others failed in repairing a watch or clock, that Huntley discovered the defects.



but made no more pipes, though I repaired many until the year 1793, when I married, and my necessities induced me to use all my industry for the maintenance of my wife and increasing family; my employment for twelve years, was making and repairing wind and stringed instruments of music. I also constructed clocks, both common and musical, and sometimes recurred to my first employment of a cabinet maker. I also made linen looms, with their different tackling. My principal employment, however, is the construction of the Irish bagpipes, of which I have made thirty sets in the little town I live in, within these eight years past." Thus ends the simple sketch of the life of William Kennedy, in his own unadorned style. His modesty, however, has induced him to suppress several particulars, very much to his credit, as one of the most ingenious improvers of the Irish bagpipes. This imperfect national instrument, (as it is a national one,) deserves, together with the harp, the peculiar cultivation of those who feel the musical strains of their own island; whether melancholy or gay; whether amorous or martial, its modulation is, in general, delightful. We are all acquainted with the sympathetic effect of national music on the Swiss, when engaged in foreign warfare, far from his native mountains; one air, in particular, has been known to occasion an incurable desire to return to his country.

The effect of the bagpipes in rallying Frazer's regiment at Quebec, and the victory gained by general Wolfe, over the French, has been recorded in the anecdotes of that battle. The inspiring airs of the



wounded piper in the glorious victory of Vimiera, is a fact too recent to require repetition ;—would, that the Scotch General, Dalrymple, had felt the electric inspiration of the Highland piper, and his pibroch.

Pennant derives the Irish pipes from a period of very remote antiquity ; and the observation of that most indefatigable antiquary, is confirmed by the early testimony of Aristides Quintilianus. The compass of the Highland bagpipes, is confined to nine notes, while that of the Irish extends to more than two octaves. The modesty of our blind mechanic, as I have said before, has prevented him from enlarging on several points, which I shall here beg leave to notice, illustrative of his ingenuity as an improver of this instrument. In this respect, indeed, he deserves the character of a discoverer, as his additions to the Irish pipes will do away many of their imperfections ; and he has the great merit of adapting them with simplicity ; for the management of the instrument is nearly as easy as formerly : to the chaunter he has added keys, by which some flats and sharps, not capable of being before expressed on the instrument, are now produced with ease. He has also added E in alt. being one note above the original compass of the instrument. Two additional notes are given by him to the organ stop, and some of its notes are now capable of being varied from naturals to sharps, according to the key on which the tune is played.

The basses or drones, as they are commonly called, were formerly only in correct tune when playing on some particular keys, are now constructed, so that



their notes can be varied as the key varies on which the tune is played. There is also another alteration worthy of notice; by the addition of two large keys, managed with the wrist, a part of the basses, or all of them, can be stopped or opened at pleasure. The particulars of these most ingenious alterations would require terms too technical to be introduced here. In short, this blind mechanic, at the time this account was written, was unequalled, in elegance of workmanship, and perfection of scale, in one of our favourite national instruments. From a rude block of ebony, a fragment of an elephant's tooth, and a piece of silver; having first formed his lathe and his tools, he shapes and bores the complicated tubes, graduates the ventage, adapts the keys, and forms the instrument of perfect external finish and beauty, "that discourses most eloquent music," capable of expressing the finest movements in melody, and by no means deficient in harmony; and all this by the exquisite sensibility of touch, for he is stone blind, and quite incapable of distinguishing the black colours of ebony from the white of ivory. Under poverty, therefore, and physical privation of the most overwhelming kind, he has gradually brought his mechanical powers to this pitch of comparative perfection! What an incentive to perseverance under difficulties, much less insuperable! It is hoped that the readers of this article, will be induced to inquire into the actual authenticity of the statement, and be led to encourage such extraordinary application and ingenuity.



## DR. NICHOLAS BACON.

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“Men by whom impartial laws were given.”

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Dr. NICHOLAS BACON, a blind gentleman, descended from the same family with the celebrated Lord Verulam, was created Doctor of Laws, in the city of Brussels with high approbation.

He was deprived of sight at nine years of age, by an arrow from a cross-bow, whilst he was attempting to shoot it. When he had recovered his health, which had suffered by the shock, he pursued the same plan of education, in which he had been engaged; and having heard that one *Nicasius de Vourde*, born blind, who lived towards the end of the 15th century, after having distinguished himself by his studies at the University of Louvain, took his degree as D.D. in that of Cologne, he resolved to make the same attempt; but the public, cursed with prejudices for which the meanest sensitive nature might blush, prejudices equally beneath the brutality and ignorance of the lowest animal instinct, treated his intention with ridicule; even the professors themselves were not far from being of the same sentiment; for they admitted him into their schools, rather from an impression that it might amuse him, than become of any use to him. He had the good fortune, however, contrary to their expectations, to obtain the first places among his condisciples. It was then said that such rapid advances might be made in the preliminary branches of

his education, but they would soon be effectually checked in studies of a more profound nature. This, it seems, was repeated from school to school, through the whole climax of his pursuits; and when, in the course of academical learning, it became necessary to study poetry, it was the general voice that all was over, and that at length he had reached his *Ne plus ultra*.

But here he likewise disproved their prejudices, and taught them the immense difference between blindness of soul, and blindness of body. After continuing his studies in learning and philosophy for two years more, he applied himself to law, took his degree in that science, commenced pleading counsellor, or advocate, in the council of Brabant, and had the pleasure of terminating almost every suit in which he engaged, to the satisfaction of his clients.

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AUTHORITY.

Encyclopædia Britannica.

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NATHANIEL PRICE,

THE BLIND BOOKBINDER.

NATHANIEL PRICE, late bookseller of Norwich, on quitting business in that city, exported goods to a considerable amount from London to America, and on his voyage thither, lost his sight in consequence of a severe cold. After much distress and fatigue, he at length arrived in his native country, after an absence of nearly five years.



This remarkable man makes every part of his dress, from the shoes on his feet, to the hat on his head. He has since his loss of sight followed the employment of a bookbinder, and bound several books in the first style : and is indeed, the first instance of a blind man being capable of binding books, that I have ever heard of. As a proof of his abilities, there is a quarto Bible elegantly bound by him, which is now in the Marquis of Blandford's library, Sion-hill, in Oxfordshire. Strange as this may appear to those unacquainted with the extraordinary genius possessed by many of the blind, this account had been credited by several respectable people, with whom the author is acquainted, and on whose veracity the reader may place implicit confidence.

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A SKETCH OF

DR. CLANCY,

A CONSIDERABLE DRAMATIC POET, AND COTEMPORARY OF DEAN SWIFT.

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“ His Comic vein had every charm to please—  
 ’Twas nature’s dictates, charm’d with nature’s ease.”

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IN 1737, DOCTOR CLANCY lost his sight by a cold, which rendered him incapable of attending to his profession, as a Physician. As the Doctor had paid his addresses to the muses in his earlier days, he was advised by some friends to launch out amongst the adventurous rovers of the pen ; and, as he thought the theatre at this time was open to all, and influenced by

none, his first attempt was in the dramatic line. Flushed with the hope of immediate fame, as well as gain, he composed a comedy in a short time, and thought, good easy man, when he had wound up the plot of his piece, that all his labour was at an end: he found to his cost, however, that every avenue to the theatre in those days, as well as in our own, was blocked up by a set of dramatic undertakers, who were ready at any price, to work by the pound, perch, or yard; and that it was as difficult to get a sight of the manager, as it would be to get a sight of the grand Lama. The Doctor having detailed a number of the difficulties he was doomed to encounter in his efforts to get his piece upon the stage, relates the following circumstance, which I shall give in his own words. "On my return to Dublin, I brought the play to Doctor Helsham, and conscious of his insufficiency in matters so foreign to his way of life, I requested him, as he was very familiar with Dean Swift, to put the comedy in his hands, as I judged that his approbation, or dislike, after reading, would at once determine the fate of the performance. 'Not I, indeed,' said Dr. Helsham; 'have you a mind that I should go faster down his stairs than I went up? shall I subject myself to be laughed at, or perhaps ill-treated? Not I, indeed; I do not care to bring his tongue upon me. Go to Dr. Grattan, the Dean will probably hear from him what he would not from me.' I went to Dr. Grattan, and solicited his assistance the same way. 'Who, I?' said Dr. Grattan. 'Not I, by any means.' What have I to do with Plays? I know nothing of writing books; I should have a fine time



of it, to bring such a piece of stuff before the Dean, and have it thrown in my face, or be called a block-head for my pains ; I should be glad to serve you, but you must find somebody else to befriend you on this occasion.' Dr. Grattan's brother, minister of St. Andrew's, who happened to be present, was pleased to say, that he would find an opportunity of laying the book on the Dean's table ; and, if it was good, he would be apt to inquire how it came there. The gentleman accordingly did so, and there it lay for some time, without the author's hearing one word about it. Swift read it, and not knowing how the play came there, asked all his friends which of them had brought it ; and none of those to whom it was known would venture to tell, as he had not declared his opinion of it. One day, as Dr. Helsham saw it on his table, he took it up to look at it, and asked the Dean what it was. The Dean smiled, and told him, it was a villain well painted ; and that whoever had written the piece, conveyed a good moral. Dr. Helsham, who saw that he had nothing to fear, told him the author, and what he knew of him. 'Tell him,' said the Dean, 'that in a few days, I will pay him a visit.' He then went into his closet, and wrote the following letter, which Dr. Helsham brought with the packet, mentioned in the postscript.

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TO DR. LANCY.

" SIR,

" Some friend of mine lent me a comedy, which I was told was written by you : I read it carefully, and

with much pleasure, on account, both of the characters and the moral. I have no interest with the people of the play-house, else I would gladly recommend it to them. I send you a small present, in such gold as will not give you trouble to change; for I much pity your loss of sight, which, if it pleased God to let you enjoy, your other talents might have been your honest support, and have eased you of your present confinement.

“I am Sir, your well-wishing friend  
and humble servant,

“JONATHAN SWIFT.

“*Deanery-house, Christmas-day, 1737.*”

P. S. I know not who lent me the play; if it came from you, I will send it back to-morrow. This letter and the packet, are sealed with the head of Socrates. The packet contained five pounds, in small pieces of gold of different kinds, of which the largest did not exceed five shillings. “A little time after,” says Dr. Clancy, “I sent him a parcel of tickets—he kept but one, which he said he had paid for; and afterwards sent me two four pound pieces for more.” Thus ends the correspondence between the Dean and this Poet. I have not been able to collect any further information concerning the life of Dr. Clancy; and therefore conclude with the above particulars.

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AUTHORITY.

Swift's Miscellaneous Works, vol. 1st.



## JOHN GONELLI,

THE BLIND SCULPTOR.

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“ From theme to theme my wandering muse retire,  
And the dumb shew of breathing rocks admire!  
Where the smooth chisel all its force has shewn,  
And softened into flesh the rugged stone.”

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The following anecdote respecting JOHN GONELLI, surnamed the Blind of Cambassi, from the place of his birth in Tuscany, is taken from the article Blind, in the Edinburgh Encyclopædia. “ He was a scholar of Pietro Iacca, and discovered genius, but lost his sight at the age of twenty. The statue of Cosmo, 1st grand Duke of Tuscany, was performed by him after he became blind, and he had equal success in various other works of the same nature.

He died at Rome under the Pontificate of Urban the VIII. We read also of a celebrated blind sculptor, who took the likeness of the Duke of Bracciano, in a dark cellar, by means of moulding the face with wax; and made a marble statue of King Charles the 1st of England, with great elegance and justness.”

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AUTHORITY.Edinburgh Encyclopædia.

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## CASPAR CRUMBHORN,

A CELEBRATED MUSICIAN OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

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"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast;  
Rend the rough rocks, and bend the knotted oak."

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If we look into former periods, we shall find illustrious and pregnant examples, how amply nature has capacitated the blind to excel both in the scientific and practical departments of music. In the sixteenth century, when the progress, both in melody and harmony, was rapid and conspicuous in almost every country in Europe, flourished CASPAR CRUMBHORN, blind from the third year of his age; yet, he composed several pieces in many parts, with so much success, and performed both upon the flute and violin, so exquisitely, that he was distinguished by Augustus, elector of Saxony. But preferring his native Silesia to every other country, he returned thither, and was appointed organist of the church of St. Peter and Paul, in the city of Lignitz, where he likewise had often the direction of the Musical College, and died the 11th of June, 1621.

The writer of the article Blind in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, speaking of our musician, and the blind in general, makes the following remark; which though, it may be considered somewhat severe, is not altogether out of character.

"To these might be added Martini Pesenti, of Venice, a composer of vocal and instrumental music, almost of all kinds, though blind from his nativity; with other examples equally worthy of public atten-



tion. But if vulgar prejudice is capable of blushing at its own contemptible character, or of yielding to conviction, those already quoted are more than sufficient to show the musical jugglers of our time, who are generally as absolute strangers to learning and taste, as to virtue, that their art is no monopoly, with which those alone who see are invested by the irreversible decree of Heaven."

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AUTHORITIES.

SIR JOHN HAWKINS'S *History of Music*, vol. 4—DR. BURNEY'S *History of Music*, vol. 3.

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## THE BLIND TAILOR.

It has often been contended that the dumb are less happy than the blind. However this may be, certain it is, that privation of sight does not cramp the mental powers. The following instance of the mechanical genius of Blind Macguire, is no less wonderful than true. "The late family tailor of Mr. M'Donald of Clanronald, in Invernesshire, lost his sight fifteen years before his death, yet, he still continued to work for the family as before, not indeed with the same expedition, but with equal correctness. It is well known how difficult it is to make a Tartan dress, because every stripe and colour, (of which there are many) must fit each other with mathematical exactness; hence it is, that very few tailors, who enjoy their sight, are capable of executing that task. Blind Macguire having received orders to make for Mr. M'Donald, (his master's brother, who was lately returned

from India,) a complete suit of Tartan, within a given time, proceeded to work without delay. It so happened, that this gentleman passed at a late hour, at night, through the room where the blind tailor was working, and hearing some low singing, he asked, 'Who's there?' to which the poor blind tailor answered, 'I am here, working at your honour's hose!!' 'How,' said he, forgetting that Macguire was blind, 'Can you work without a candle?' 'O! please your honour,' rejoined the tailor, 'midnight darkness is the same to me as noon-day.'" It was said that Macguire could, by the sense of touch, distinguish all the colours of the Tartan.

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AUTHORITY.

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society.

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THE BITER BIT.

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"Gold too oft with magic art  
Subdues each nobler impulse of the heart!"

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Blind persons being less subject to distractions from the number of objects which the sense of seeing presents to us at one, and the same time, must have the senses of hearing, smelling, and feeling, more fine and exquisite. This we find confirmed by several facts, and we may add that the habit of exercising one sense in default of another, makes the former in some sort more intelligent.

It is said of a person born blind at Puiseaux, in the province of Gatinois, in France, that he judged



of the proximity of fire by the degree of heat; the fulness of vessels by the noise of decanted liquors, as they fell; and the nearness of bodies by the action of the air on his face. He had made very exact balances of his arms, and almost infallible compasses of his fingers. The varieties in the polish of bodies were distinguished by him with greater facility, and a greater degree of accuracy than the sound of the voice, the variations of which, he was also very expert in defining. He judged of beauty by feeling, and made pronunciation and the tone of voice a part of this judgment. He was very sure of the exact spot where a voice or noise came from. It is reported that he once had a quarrel with his brother, whose eye-sight was of no advantage to him in avoiding his blows -- vexed at his taunts, and at some thing he took to be ill usage, he laid hold of the first object at hand, threw it at him, struck him in the middle of the forehead, and knocked him down. This adventure and some others caused him to be cited before the Lieutenant of the police, at Paris, where he then lived. The external signs of power that affect others in so sensible a manner, make no impression on the blind. He appeared before the magistrate, as before his equal; his menaces did not in the least intimidate him. "What will you do to me?" said he, to the magistrate. "I will cast you," answered the magistrate, "into a dungeon." "Ah! good sir," said the blind man, "I have been in one these five and twenty years past!" It may be perhaps thought that one born blind has no idea of vision. Of this we may judge by the answer of the same blind person, when asked, What



are eyes? "Eyes," said he, "are an organ on which the air has the effect my stick has on my hand. This is so true," added he, "that, when I place my hand between your eyes and an object, my hand is present, but the object is absent to you. The same thing happens to me when I seek for a thing with my stick, and meet with another thing." He defined a looking-glass to be a machine that gives things a relief, far from themselves, if placed conveniently, relatively to them. "Just as my hand," added he, "which I need not place near an object in order to feel it." "How many renowned Philosophers," says a modern author, "have shewn less subtilty in endeavouring to prove the truth of notions, which have been equally false?"

Some blind men are signal for a peculiar sagacity. One of this sort, who was possessed of two hundred guineas, hid them in a corner of his garden; but a neighbour, who had taken notice of what he was about, dug them up and took them away with him. The blind man, not finding his money, suspected who the thief might be. What should he do to have his money again? He went to his neighbour, and said that he came to him for advice; that he had four hundred guineas, the half of which he had hidden in a safe place, and that he was thinking with himself, whether he should deposit the rest in the same place. The neighbour advised him to do so, and conveyed back in all haste the two hundred guineas, in hopes of being soon master of four hundred. But the blind man having found his money, secured it effectually; and calling upon his neighbour, told him, "that the blind saw clearer than he did who had two eyes."



Tho' darkness still attends me,  
It aids internal sight ;  
And from such scenes defends me,  
As blush to see the light.

No weeping objects grieve me ;  
No glittering fop offends ;  
No fawning smiles deceive me ;  
Kind darkness me befriends.

Then, cease your useless wailings,  
I know no reason why,  
Mankind to their own failings,  
Are all as blind as I.

On a very dark night, a blind man was seen walking the streets with a light in his hand, and a large bottle-full of some liquor on his back. Some one going along, knowing him, and surprised at the light, "What a simpleton thou art," said he. "What want hast thou for a light ? are not day and night the same to thee ?" "It is not for myself that I carry the light," answered the blind man ; "It is rather that such boobies as you should not jostle against, me, and break my bottle."

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AUTHORITY.

The Universal Magazine for 1768.

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### THE BLIND ENGINEER.

To these instances we may add that of the Count de Pagan, who was born in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Having entered the army at the early age of twelve years, he lost his left eye

before he was seventeen, at the siege of Montauban. He still, however, pursued his profession with unabated ardour, and distinguished himself by many acts of brilliant courage. At last, when about to be sent into Portugal with the rank of Field Marshal, he was seized with an illness which deprived him of his remaining eye. He was yet only in his thirty-eighth year, and he determined that the misfortunes he had already sustained in the service of his country should not prevent him from recommencing his public career in a new character. He had always been attached to mathematics, and he now devoted himself assiduously to the prosecution of his favourite study, with a view, principally, to the improvement of the science of fortification, for which his great experience in the field particularly fitted him. During the twenty years after this, which he passed in a state of total blindness, he gave a variety of publications to the world; among which may be mentioned, besides his well-known and rarest work, on fortification, his "Geometrical Theorems," and his "Astronomical Tables." He is also the author of a rare book, called "An Historical and Geographical Account of the River of the Amazons;" which is remarkable as containing a chart asserted to have been made by himself after he was blind. It is said not to be very correct, although a wonderful production for such an artist.



## JOHN GOWER,

*One of our most ancient English Poets, cotemporary with  
Chaucer, and his intimate friend.*

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“ But age has rusted what the Poet writ;  
Worn out his language, and obscured his wit  
In vain he jests in his unpolished strain,  
And tries to make his readers laugh in vain.

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Of what family, or in what county this poet was born, is uncertain. He studied the law, and was sometime a member of the Society of Lincoln's Inn, where his acquaintance with Chaucer began. Some have asserted that he was a Judge, but this is by no means certain. In the first year of Henry the 4th he became blind, a misfortune which he laments in one of his Latin Poems. He died in the year 1402, and was buried in Saint Mary Overie; which church he had rebuilt chiefly at his own expense, so that he must have lived in affluent circumstances. His tomb was magnificently and curiously ornamented. It still remains, but hath been repaired in latter times: from the collar of S. S. round the neck of his effigies, which lies upon the tomb, it is conjectured that he had been knighted. As to his character as a man, it is impossible, at this distance of time, to say any thing with certainty. With regard to his poetical talents, he was certainly admired at the time when he wrote, though a modern reader may find it difficult to discover much harmony or genius in any of his compositions. He wrote first *Speculum Meditantis*, in French, in ten books. There are two copies of this in the Bodleian Library—2 *Vox Clamantis*, in Latin

verse, in seven books, preserved also in the Bodleian Library, and in that of All-souls. It is a chronicle of the insurrection of the Commons in the reign of Richard the 2nd. The first edition of *Confessio Amantis*, was printed at Westminster, by Caxton, in 1493; and the second and third edition was printed in London, in the years 1532, and 1554. It is a sort of practical system of morality, interspersed with a variety of moral tales, 4to. There are likewise several historical tracts, in M S. written by our author, which are to be found in different libraries; also some short poems printed in Chaucer's Works.

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AUTHORITIES.

Encyclopædia Britannica—Warton's History of the English Poetry.

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A SHORT ACCOUNT OF

DIDYMUS,

OF ALEXANDRIA, WHO FLOURISHED IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.

HE is known only as a theological writer, but we are informed by St. Jerome, who was his pupil, that although he lost his sight at five years of age, he distinguished himself at the school of Alexandria by his proficiency, not merely in grammar, rhetoric, logic, music, and arithmetic, but in the remaining two of the seven departments then conceived to constitute the whole field of human learning, geometry and astronomy; sciences of which, remarks the narrator, it is



scarcely conceivable how any knowledge should be obtained without the assistance of the eye. Didymus, like Saunderson, pursued his studies by employing persons to read for him. One of his disciples, Palladius, remarks, that blindness, which is to others so terrible a misfortune, was the greatest of blessings to Didymus, inasmuch as, by removing from him all objects that would have distracted his attention, it left his faculties at much greater liberty than they otherwise would have been for the study of the sciences. Didymus, however, does not seem to have been himself altogether of this opinion, since we find it recorded, that when St. Anthony, who attracted by the report of his wonderful learning and sanctity, had come from the desert to pay him a visit, put to him the question, "are you grieved that you are blind?" Although it was repeated several times, Didymus could not be prevailed upon to return any other answer than that he "certainly was," greatly to the mortification of the Saint, who was astonished that a wise man should lament the loss of a faculty which we only possess, as he chose to express it, in common with the gnats and ants. The learned and pious Joseph Milner, in speaking of Didymus as a Christian philosopher, has made the following remarks:—"as far as appears, he continued always sound, and I hope, humble and holy, in Christian doctrine; his treatise, on the Holy Spirit, the Latin translation of which, by Jerome, has only come down to us, is perhaps the best the Christian world ever saw on the subject; and, whatever has been said since that time in defence of the divinity and personality of the

Holy Ghost, seems, in substance, to be found in that Book. He was particularly attached to the study of the Scriptures, and was chosen as the proper person to fill the chair in the famous divinity school at Alexandria. His high reputation drew a great number of scholars to him, among the principal of whom, were Jerome, Rufinus, Palladius, and Isidore. He read lectures with wonderful facility, answered upon the spot all questions and difficulties relating to the holy Scriptures, and refuted the objections which cavillers raised against the orthodox faith. He was the author of a great number of works, which Jerome has preserved the titles of, in his catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers; his commentaries upon the Scriptures, which were very large, are lost. He died in 398, aged eighty five years.

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AUTHORITIES.

Milner's Church History vol. 2nd.—The Library of Entertaining Knowledge, vol. 1.

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THE BLIND CLERGYMAN.

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“The service past, around the pious man,  
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;  
E'en children followed, with endearing wile,  
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.”

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IN my rambles (says the writer) last summer, on the borders of Wales, I found myself one morning on the banks of the beautiful river Wye alone, without a servant or guide. I had to ford the river at a



place where, according to the instructions given me at the nearest hamlet, if I diverged ever so little from the marks which the rippling of the current made as it passed over a ledge rock, I should sink twice the depth of myself and horse. While I stood hesitating on the margin, viewing attentively the course of the ford, a person passed me on the canter, and the next instant I saw him plunge into the river. Presuming on his acquaintance with the passage, I immediately and closely followed his steps. As soon as we had gained the opposite bank, I accosted him with thanks for the benefit of his guidance ; but what was my astonishment, when, bursting into a hearty laugh, he observed “ that my confidence would have been less, had I known that I had been following a blind guide.” The manner of the man, as well as the fact, attracted my curiosity. To my expressions of surprise at his venturing to cross the river alone, he answered, that he and the horse he rode had done the same every Sunday morning for the last five years ; but that, in reality, this was not the most perilous part of his weekly peregrination, as I should be convinced, if my way led over the mountain before us. My way had no object but pleasure ; I therefore resolved to attach myself to my extraordinary companion, and soon learned in our chat, as we wound up the steep mountain’s side, that he was a clergyman, and of that class which is the disgrace of our ecclesiastical establishment ; I mean the country curates, who exist upon the *liberal* stipend of thirty, twenty, and sometimes fifteen pounds a year ! This gentleman, of the age of sixty, had



about thirty years before been engaged in the curacy to which he was now travelling; and, though at the distance of eight long Welch miles from the place of his residence, such was the respect of his Sunday flock towards him, that at the commencement of his calamity, rather than part with him, they sent regularly every Sunday morning a deputation to guide their old Pastor along a road, which, besides the river we had just passed, led over a craggy mountain, on whose top innumerable and uncertain bogs were constantly forming, and which, nevertheless, by the instinct of his Welch poney, this blind man has actually crossed alone for the last five years, having so long dismissed the assistance of guides. While our talk beguiled our road, we insensibly arrived within sight of his village church; it was seated in a deep and narrow vale. As I looked down upon it, the bright verdure of the meadows, which were here and there chequered with patches of yellow corn, the moving herds of cattle, the rich foliage of the groves of oak, hanging irregularly over its sides, the white houses of the inhabitants, which sprinkled every corner of this peaceful retreat; and above all, the inhabitants themselves, assembled in their best attire, round their place of weekly worship. All this gay scene rushing at once on the view, struck my senses and imagination more forcibly than I can express. As we entered the church yard, the respectful "how do you do?" of the young, the hearty shakes by the hand of the old, and the familiar gambols of the children, shewed how their old pastor reigned in the hearts of all. After some refreshment at the



nearest house, we went to church, in which my veteran priest read the prayers, the psalms, and chapters of the day, and then preached a sermon in a manner that would have made no one advert to his defect of sight.\* At dinner, which it seems four of our most substantial farmers of the vale provided in turn, he related the progress of his memory. For the first year he attempted only the prayers and sermons, the best readers of the parish making it a pride to officiate for him in the psalms and chapters. He next endured the labour of getting these by heart; and at present, by continual repetition, there is not a psalm or chapter of the more than two hundred appointed for the Sunday service, that he is not perfect in. He told me also, that having in his little school two sons of his own, intended for the university, he has, by hearing them continually, committed the greatest part of Homer and Virgil to his memory.

\* The late Dr. Guyse lost his eye-sight in the pulpit, while he was in his prayer, before the sermon. Having finished his prayer, he was, consequently, forced to make no use of his written papers, but to preach without notes.—As he was led out of the meeting after service was over, he could not help lamenting his sudden and total blindness. A good old gentlewoman, who heard him deplore his loss, answered him, “God be praised that your sight is gone. I think I never heard you preach so powerful a sermon in my life. Now we shall have no more notes. I wish, for my own part, that the Lord had took away your eye-sight twenty years ago, for your ministry would have been more useful by twenty degrees.”

*Toplady's Works*, vol. 4, page 166.

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AUTHORITY.

Morning Chronicle of January 21, 1791.

## MR. JAMES HOLMAN, R. N.

## THE WONDERFUL BLIND TRAVELLER.

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“Hither he wandered, anxious to explore  
Antiquities of nations now no more :  
To penetrate each distant realm unknown,  
And range excursive o’er the untravell’d zone.”

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THIS sightless and enterprising individual is a native of Exeter, and was a lieutenant in the royal navy, when he lost his sight, at the age of twenty-five years, whilst on service on the coast of Africa, in the year 1811, and was subsequently appointed one of the Naval Knights of Windsor. In 1820, strange as it may appear, he travelled through France, Italy, &c. and, in 1822, favoured the public with an account of his interesting travels; which work was favourably received. In the same year, he undertook an arduous journey through Russia, Siberia, Poland, Austria, Saxony, Prussia, Hanover, &c. These travels he published in 1825, in 2 vols. 8vo. His proposed objects in travelling were of so stupendous a character, as to startle us in the outset—especially when we recollect his blindness. He was unfortunately prevented in the execution of his plan, after travelling some thousands of miles, and spending some months in the midst of Siberia, by his being apprehended as a spy, and conducted from thence a state prisoner to the frontiers of Austria. Indeed, in Russia, Mr. Holman was called the “blind spy;” rather a whimsical and paradoxical appellation for a person totally deprived of the use of his visual organs. The object which Mr. Holman had for undertaking



this arduous journey, is developed by himself in the following words : " On the 19th of July, 1822, I embarked in the Saunders Hill schooner, commanded by Captain Courtney, then lying in the London docks, and bound for St. Petersburg, with the ostensible motive of visiting the Russian empire ; but the real one, should circumstances prove propitious, of making a circuit of the whole world : my motives for concealing so important a part of these views, it will not be difficult to explain ; they are attributable to the opposition my kind friends have always been inclined to make against what, under my peculiar deprivation, they are disposed to regard as quixotic feelings, a feeling on their parts which I am desirous to express, since, on various occasions, I have to charge it with the disappointments of my most anxious wishes. Alas ! how little are they able to appreciate my true sentiments and powers, as developing themselves in an intense desire to occupy the mind, to acquire solid information, and triumph over those difficulties which others might deem insurmountable. That my views are not chimerical, may be inferred from the success which, as far as any innate powers are concerned, has hitherto attended my exertions."\*

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\* (The following brief notice of this extraordinary genius appeared in one of the St. Petersburg newspapers during his stay in that city.)

\* Mr. Holman, a blind gentleman, about thirty-five years of age, and possessed of an agreeable countenance, arrived in this city, (Petersburgh,) in July last ; and, we understand, that he intends to visit a great part of the world. He enquires into every thing, and examines most bodies by the touch ;



Mr. Holman gives a most interesting account of the manners and customs of the Russians; their buildings, shipping, commerce, &c. Mr. Holman being obliged to leave Moscow, his mind was soon seriously occupied with various reflections: "my situation," says he "was now one of extreme novelty, and my feeling corresponded with its peculiarity. I was engaged under circumstances of unusual occurrences, in a solitary journey of several thousand miles, through a country, perhaps the wildest on the face of the earth, and whose inhabitants were scarcely yet accounted within the pale of civilization, with no other attendant than a rude Tartar postilion, to whose language my ear was wholly unaccustomed; and yet I was supported by a feeling of happy confidence, with a calm resignation to all the inconveniences and risks of my arduous undertaking: nay, I even derived a real inward gratification in the prospect of retirement from the eternal round of pleasure and social enjoyments of which I had been participating to a degree of

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which astonished us so much, that we could not have believed it, had we not seen it with our own eyes. When he visited my cabinet, without saying a word, I took him to the bust of the Emperor, made by Orlovskii: after feeling which a short time, he exclaimed, "This is the bust of the Emperor Alexander." It ought to be observed, that he had previously examined a bust of his imperial majesty, in which, as Mr. Holman remarked, the forehead was more covered with hair. He also very justly observed, that the right ear was more perfect than the left in the bust by Orlovskii.

Mr. Holman also recognized the busts of Peter the Great, Catherine II. Suvarof, &c.

*Soinin's Russian Journal.*



satiety that began to be oppressive; again and again I interested myself by contrasting my voluntary exile, with the constrained banishment of the numerous unfortunate wretches, who have been known to languish away in the inhospitable wilds I was about to traverse, the remnant of a protracted existence, aggravated by an eternal separation from all the blessings that they have deemed most dear to them in life." Having passed through Poland, Prussia, Hanover, &c. our author ultimately landed at Hull, on the 24th of June, 1824, after an absence of two years and one day from his native country. In January, 1827, Mr. Holman visited Lichfield, and seemed greatly interested with the various objects which that antient city presented to his notice; but more particularly with the beautiful monument by Chantry, so deservedly deemed one of the brightest ornaments of the cathedral, which he examined with great attention. His accurate taste and critical judgment respecting the delicacies of sculpture excited general admiration and surprise.

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Holman's Travels, London, 1825.

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## M. HUBER,

## THE BLIND PHILOSOPHER OF GENEVA.

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“Of all the race of animals alone,  
The bees have common cities of their own ;  
And common sons, beneath one law they live,  
And with one common stock their traffic drive.  
Each has a certain home, a sev’ral stall :  
All is the state’s, the state provides for all.  
Mindful of coming cold, they share the pain,  
And hoard, for winter’s use, the summer’s gain.  
Some o’er the public magazines preside ;  
And some are sent new forage to provide.  
Their toil is common ; common is their sleep ;  
They shake their wings when morn begins to peep,  
Rush through the city gates without delay :  
Nor ends their work but with declining day.  
Then having spent the last remains of light,  
They give their bodies due repose at night ;  
When hollow murmurs of their ev’ning bells  
Dismiss the sleepy swains, and toll them to their cells.”

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THE following brief notice of this ingenious and very interesting character I have taken from the *Memoirs of the Empress Josephine*. The author of that work, in speaking of this ingenious individual, says : “we frequently visited an interesting and remarkable man, M. Huber, nephew of the friend of Voltaire. He had been blind ever since the age of seventeen ; at that period he fell in love with a rich young lady who returned his affection ; but their parents opposed their union, and they were separated. A few months afterwards, he was afflicted with gutta serena, which deprived him entirely of sight, a loss which he felt the more severely, because he was no longer able to see the object of his affection. He was sent to Paris, in the hope that a cure might be



effected by couching, but he obtained no relief, and returned in despair to Geneva. Mademoiselle Lullin having been made acquainted with his misfortune, declared to her relations, that she would readily submit to their will if the man of her choice could have done without her: 'but,' said she, 'now that he requires a guide to be every moment with him, nothing shall prevent me from being united to him.' Her family became more obstinate than ever in withholding their consent; but, when she was of age, she respectfully addressed to them the citations required by law. Mademoiselle Lullin refused several brilliant offers, always saying, 'he is so unhappy, I should be base to forsake him.' At last she married the object of her disinterested affection, and their mutual good conduct soon obtained for them pardon for their disobedience. Madame Huber always preserved the character of a most respectable and irreproachable wife. This excellent woman soon discovered a thousand means of supplying the wants which her husband's unfortunate calamity occasioned. During the war, she formed whole armies with pins of various sizes, and thus enabled him to distinguish the positions of the different corps; she stuck the pins in a map, and thus gave her unfortunate husband a correct idea of the movement of the troops. A method by which he was enabled to write was invented for him, and his wife formed plans in relief of the places they inhabited. In a word, she had but one occupation, that of making the life of her husband happy. To such a point did this amiable woman carry her attentions, that M. Huber asserted, that he would

be miserable were he to cease to be blind. 'I should not know,' said he, 'to what extent a person in my situation could be beloved; besides, to me, my wife is always young, fresh, and pretty, and that is no light matter.' M. Huber, like most of the Genevese, was so well educated at seventeen, that his studies might be regarded as finished. He had a great taste for natural history, he made his wife read to him a number of works on that subject, and particularly relative to bees,\* of which he was very fond; but he discovered that all the works which treated of these insects were very imperfect. He requested Madame Huber to provide herself with a magnifying glass, and to examine carefully the different parts of the bee; with her assistance he made several discoveries, which he published under the title of "*Recherches sur les Abeilles*," a work which is very highly esteemed. To extensive knowledge, M. Huber joined an extraordinary memory. He related, in a most graceful style, a great variety of interesting anecdotes. He was a good musician, and nothing could be more af-

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\* This excellent naturalist is author of the best history of bees and ants. On reading the descriptions which this learned man has given of those insects, one would suppose them to be the composition of a clear sighted man, very well versed in this branch of natural history—Huber, however, had no other assistant in this great work, but his wife, who told him the colour of the insects, whose form and size he afterwards perceived by the touch, with the same ease as he knew them by their buzzing when they flew in the air. This laborious writer has also published a work on education, very much esteemed.



fecting than to hear him sing the scene between Œdipus and his daughter."

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## AUTHORITY.

Memoirs of the Empress Josephine, vol. 1.

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## NELSON,

## THE BLIND PROFESSOR.

In the remains of the late Reverend D. Edmund Griffin, of New York, there is a very interesting account of a blind gentleman, of the name of Nelson. This accomplished scholar was the classical professor in Rutger's College, New Jersey. The learned editor of Griffin's Memoirs proceeds as follows.

"At the age of fourteen, Master Griffin was placed at a school just then rising into great celebrity. This was kept by Mr. Nelson, distinguished at that time as *the Blind Teacher*, in the city of New York, and afterwards more widely known as the learned classical professor in Rutger's College, New Jersey. The mention of this name recalls to the writer, who was his college class-mate, the merits of a singular man; and as death has now turned his misfortune into an instructive lesson, it may be permitted to dwell for a moment upon his eventful story. The life of Mr. Nelson was a striking exemplification of that resolution which conquers fortune. Total blindness, after a long, gradual advance, came upon him about his twentieth year, when terminating his college course. It found him poor, and left him to all appearance

both penniless and wretched, with two sisters to maintain, without money, without friends, without a profession, and without sight. Under such an accumulation of griefs most minds would have sunk, but with him it was otherwise. At all times proud and resolute, his spirit rose at once into what might well be termed a fierceness of independence. He resolved within himself to be indebted for support to no hand but his own. His classical education, which, from his feeble vision, had been necessarily imperfect, he now determined to complete, and immediately entered upon the apparently hopeless task, with a view to fit himself as a teacher of youth. He instructed his sisters in the pronunciation of Greek and Latin, and employed one or other constantly in the task of reading aloud to him the classics usually taught in the schools. A naturally faithful memory, spurred on by such strong excitement, performed its oft-repeated miracles; and in a space of time incredibly short, he became master of their contents, even to the minutest points of critical reading. In illustration of this, the author remembers on one occasion, that a dispute having arisen between Mr. N. and the Classical Professor of the College, as to the construction of a passage in Virgil, from which his students were reciting, the Professor appealed to the circumstance of a comma in the sentence as conclusive of the question. 'True,' said Mr. N. colouring with strong emotion; 'but permit me to observe,' said he, turning his sightless eyeballs towards the book he held in his hand, 'that in my *Heyne* edition it is a colon, and not a com-



ma.\* At this period, a gentleman, who incidently became acquainted with his history, in a feeling somewhere between pity and confidence, placed his two sons under his charge, with a view to enable him to try the experiment. A few months' trial was sufficient; he then fearlessly appeared before the public, and at once challenged a comparison with the best established classical schools of the city. The novelty and boldness of the attempt attracted general attention; the lofty confidence he displayed in himself excited respect; and soon his untiring assiduity, his real knowledge, and a burning zeal, which, knowing no bounds in his own devotion to his scholars, awakened somewhat of a corresponding spirit in their minds,

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\* Sir Kenelm Digby mentions a blind man who lived in his house, and was preceptor to his sons, the loss of whose sight seemed to be overpaid by his other abilities. He could beat the cleverest chess players, and would play at cards and tables, as well as most men, and likewise at bowls, shuttle-board, and other games, wherein one would imagine a clear sight to be absolutely requisite. When he taught his scholars to declaim, to represent a tragedy, or the like, he knew, by their voice, whether they stood up or sat down, and all the different gestures and situations of their bodies; so that they behaved themselves before him with the same decency as if he had seen them perfectly. He could feel in his body, and chiefly in his brain (as he himself affirmed), a certain effect, whereby he knew when the sun was up, and could discern a clear from a cloudy day. This he has frequently told without being mistaken, when, for trial sake, he has been lodged in a close chamber, into which the sunshine had no admittance, nor any body could come to him to give notice of the state of the weather.



completed the conquest. His reputation spread daily; scholars flocked to him in crowds; competition sunk before him; and in the course of a few years he found himself in the enjoyment of an income superior to that of any college patronage in the United States,—with, to him, the infinitely higher gratification of having risen above the pity of the world, and fought his own blind way to honourable independence. Nor was this all; he had succeeded in placing classical education on higher ground than any of his predecessors or contemporaries had done; and he felt proud to think that he was in some measure a benefactor to that college which, a few years before, he had entered in poverty and quitted in blindness.”

The examination of candidates for admission into Columbia College, was at that time long and rigid, continued for several days, and terminated in an arrangement of their names in the order of merit. The older schools were not willing to yield pre-eminence to a blind competitor, their choice scholars were therefore studiously drilled for the occasion; and most of the teachers, and many anxious fathers, were in close attendance, to encourage their sons or pupils by their presence, or perhaps to become judges of the impartiality of the decision. Among these, says Professor Mc. Vickar, Mr. Nelson might always be distinguished the first to come, the last to go; the most anxious, and yet the most confident; his blind steps, as he entered the hall, being followed, rather than directed, by the youth who attended him, so singularly resolute was he in all his motions. His beloved pupil, Edmund Griffin, on this occasion triumphed over all com-



petitors, though some of them were by much his seniors, and of more than ordinary talents and attainments.

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Blackwood's Magazine for July, 1832.

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THOMAS WILSON,

THE BLIND RINGER OF DUMFRIES.

THOMAS WILSON, better known as Blind Tom, the Bell-Ringer of Dumfries, was born on the 6th of May, 1750, old style, and nearly completed his seventy-fifth year. Dr. Jenner's invention came too late for him : when a mere child, he lost his eye sight by the natural small-pox, and had no recollection of ever having gazed on the external world. Like other boys, he was very fond of visiting the venerable mid-steeple of Dumfries ; and, at the age of twelve, was promoted to the office of chief ringer. Being of industrious habits, he, after much labour and perseverance, succeeded in gaining a pretty correct notion of the trade of a turner ; such as, without becoming a burden to any one, enabled him to support himself : and honest Thomas's *beetles* and *spurtles* are still held in high repute by the good wives of both town and country. Although this business requires a considerable number of tools, he had them so arranged, that he could, without the least difficulty, take from his shelf the particular one he might be in want of, and even sharpened them when necessary. He ex-

celled in the culinary art, cooking up his victuals with the greatest nicety, and priding himself on the architectural knowledge he displayed in erecting a good *ingle* or fire. In his domestic economy, he neither had nor required an assistant. He fetched his own water, made his own bed, cooked his own victuals, planted and raised his own potatoes, and, what is more strange still, cast his own peats, and was allowed by all to keep as clean a house as the most particular spinster in the town. Among a hundred rows of potatoes, he easily found his way to his own; and, when turning peats, walked as fearfully among the hags of lochar moss, as those who are in possession of all their faculties. At raising potatoes, or any other odd job, he was ever ready to bear a hand; and, when a neighbour got groggy on a Saturday night, it was by no means an uncommon spectacle to see Tom conducting him home to his wife and children.

As a mechanic, he was more than ordinarily ingenious, and made a lathe with his own hands, with which he was long in the habit of turning various articles, both of ornament and for general utility. In making cocks, and pails for brewing-dishes, potatoe-beetles, tin-smiths' mallets, and hucksters' stands, for all the country round, Blind Tom was quite unrivalled; and many a time and oft he has been seen purchasing a plank on the sands, raising it on his shoulders, though ten feet long, and carrying it to his house, without coming in contact with a single object. He also constructed a portable *break* for scutching lint, which he farther mounted on a nice little carriage, and in this way readily transported



both himself and his carriage to any farm-house where his services were required. His sense of touch was exceedingly acute, and he took great pleasure in visiting the workshops of ingenious tradesmen, and handling any curious article they had formed. At the time the Scotch regalia were recovered, the good old man seemed quite beside himself with joy ; and never, to the last, did he cease to regret that circumstances prevented him from visiting Edinburgh, and *feeling* the ancient crown of Scotland.

After his appointment as chief ringer in the mid-steeple of Dumfries, *Blind Tom's* first visit every morning was to the bell-house, and he tripped up stairs with as much agility and confidence as if he possessed the clearest vision, generally inserting the key into the proper place at the first thrust. Never was bellman more punctual ; for more than half a century Tom was at his post three times a day, at the very minute required, whether the clock pointed right or no, and without, we believe, a single omission. In the coldest morning or the darkest night of winter, foul or fair, sunshine or storm, it was all one to Tom ; and, though sluggards might excuse themselves on the score of the weather, his noisy clapper never failed to remind them that there was, at least, one man in the town, up and at his duty. Indeed, such was his punctuality, that he was never known to commit a mistake but once, by ringing the bell at eleven instead of ten at night. A friend calculated that he had rang the bell more than one hundred thousand times. The lapse of sixty years produces many changes on men and things ; and it may be mentioned



as a curious proof of the progressive rise of the wages of labour, that his salary, at first, was only thirty shillings yearly. It was then advanced to two pounds; from two to three, three to five, five to ten, and so on, till at last he received, what to him was a little independency, the high salary of twenty pounds per annum.

About fifteen years before his death, the mid-steeple was thoroughly repaired, and a splendid new cock substituted in the place of the previous old, and clumsy weather-vane; and this, again, was a great event to Blind Tom. The steeple was, in a great measure, his domicile; and he who had so much to do with the base, could not be inattentive to the capital. Up, therefore, he would go to the top; and, though repeatedly warned against the danger he would run, he actually accomplished the perilous enterprise, threw his arms round the bonny bird, and bestowed on him a benediction to this effect: that he might, long, long continue to indicate as truly the four winds as he himself indicated the time of day. On rejoicing days, during the war, the bellman was ever forward to evince his loyalty by mounting to the bastion of the steeple, and discharging an old rusty fowling-piece, which he kept at home to guard himself. During the lifetime of George III., Tom was a most loyal subject; every returning 4th of June, he made it his constant practice to ascend to what are called the high leads of the steeple, and there fired several rounds in honour of his majesty's natal day; performing the operations of priming and loading with admirable precision. A few years before his death, while some repairs were



making on the vane of the steeple, *Blind Tom* mounted by a ladder to the very summit, when, embracing the weathercock, he proclaimed his achievement to the astonished and almost horror-struck spectators, by giving three hearty huzzas. The knowledge he possessed of every part of the town and neighbourhood of Dumfries was truly wonderful. He could walk to any quarter of the town without ever deviating in the least from his route; and, indeed, has been known to take strangers to places they were in quest of with the utmost exactness. Being much in the streets, he was often employed as a guide, and many laughable stories are told of the astonishment of persons whom he has conducted to the very extremities of the town, or even a good way into the country, on discovering that they had been led by a blind man. His local knowledge was very extensive, and his memory retentive to an uncommon degree. Once he had occasion to call at a shop, and, in crossing the threshold, it was remarked that he paused and lifted his foot very high. On this he was told there was no step; but the old man's memory was quite faithful, and he immediately remarked, "Just four and twenty years ago I was in this shop, and I am *gye* sure there was a step then."

At another time, returning home one evening, a little after ten o'clock, he heard a gentleman, who had just alighted from the mail, inquiring the way to Colin, when Tom instantly offered to conduct him thither. His services were gladly accepted, and he acted his part so well, that, although Colin is three



miles from Dumfries, the stranger did not discover his guide was blind, until they reached the end of their journey.

*Blind Tom* was as well acquainted with persons as with places; if he heard any one speak, and although he might not have met the individual for some time, yet he soon recognised him by his voice, when his usual remark was, "Eh! mon, 'tis lang sin I've seen ye." If he was asked the hour, such was his fine sense of feeling, that, on touching the hands of his watch, he could inform himself in a moment.

Tom Wilson and another blind man in Dumfries, in order to beguile their leisure hours, contrived to invent a game somewhat similar to draughts, with which they very often amused themselves; and it was quite a treat to hear them in a dark corner, discussing the probable issue of the game, and sometimes detecting each other in a false move.

*Blind Tom* had a taste for music, and was particularly fond of attending concerts; for many years he was a member of a musical institution, where the innocent cheerfulness of his manners, and the hearty laugh he would raise when any thing arose to please him, rendered his presence always acceptable.

A melancholy event attached to the death of this honest and really ingenious man, on the 12th of March, 1825; on which night, being in the belfry, he was struck with something like an apoplectic fit; he staggered, as it is supposed, against an old chest, cut his head slightly, sunk on the floor, and remained all night in this forlorn and pitiable situation, without a friend to help him. For some time past, a person



had assisted him in ringing the bells on Sundays, and when this individual visited the steeple, at seven o'clock in the morning, he had to force the inner door of the belfry, before the fate of the deceased could be ascertained. Though he still breathed, he was unable to speak, and was immediately carried to his home, in a state of utter insensibility. Thus died poor Thomas Wilson, the oldest bell-ringer, we believe, in Scotland, and who, for the long period of sixty-three years, summoned the lieges to labour and repose, with all the regularity of the clock itself.

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## JOHN KAY,

THE BLIND MECHANIC OF GLASGOW.

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“The chamber, where the good man meets his fate,  
Is privileged beyond the common walk  
Of virtuous life.—Quite on the verge of Heaven.”

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THE subject of this memoir, was a native of Carriden near Borrowstounness. He spent his early years, like most children, in the keen pursuit of amusements, while at the same time he got acquainted with the elementary parts of education. He was generally the leader of his companions at their various diversions; but, an unfortunate accident happened which drew him away from his heart's delight. It was in the tenth year of his age, when one day, a loaded musket had been carelessly put down where he and his companions were amusing themselves; one of them inconsiderately took it up, not knowing it was

loaded, and fired off the contents. John Kay being close by, was in a moment deprived of his sight. It was not long after this melancholy event, when his relations left their native parish, and came to reside in Glasgow. He accompanied them. Confined now to more sedentary employments, he often amused himself by making various articles of wood, which he executed with great ingenuity. For several years before his death, he assisted his brothers, who were carpenters by trade; he wrought constantly at this profession, and finished his work so well as to astonish those who saw him. He wrought in mahogany and other sorts of fine wood, and made various kinds of furniture.

When going about the town, he needed no person to guide him, as he could find his way himself; and, what was very remarkable, if taken to any particular house, though in a close, or up stairs, he could easily return again, if necessary, without any person conducting him. He has taken his friends sometimes to places in an evening, which they could scarcely find out when they had occasion to call again, even with day-light. It was not unusual for him to take a journey to Paisley, and other neighbouring towns, and to be the guide of any stranger who might be along with him. Walking one day in the streets of this city with a friend, who warned him of their being near a horse—he said there was no need for that, as he could perceive it himself; being asked how? he replied, he found a difference of air on his face, when near any particular object, and that from this feeling, he could avoid a lamp-post when he approached it;—



as a confirmation of this assertion he has been frequently observed to pass by one, when walking alone.

I am not able, from any information which I have received, to point out the exact time when he began to pay serious attention to religion. The accounts which were read to him of the progress of missionaries, among heathen nations, gave him the most unfeigned pleasure.

His heart was much engaged in the religious instruction of youth. He was one of the teachers of a Sabbath evening school. A great number of the scholars were considerably beyond the age of those who usually attend such schools; they highly respected him, and derived much improvement from his instructions. Many of them are remarkably well instructed in the word of God, considering their years: their conduct, also, in general, is very regular and becoming, which it is to be fondly hoped, are the fore-runners of their giving more decided evidence of a saving change begun in their hearts. Besides being so useful in his own school, he was a great promoter of other schools; he was grieved when any of them fell away, and used all his endeavours to keep the scholars together, and collect them again. Those whom he thought qualified for instructing youth, he urged to come forward to take a part in this good work.

He perceived with regret, that the business of the schools, both in this city and neighbourhood with which he was connected, was not going forward for some time with that activity which he could have



wished. This led him, and one or two more to inquire into the causes, and, if possible, to apply a remedy. They were induced, in consequence, to propose another plan for conducting those schools, which was universally approved, and has since been acted upon, with the best effect. His zeal in this important work did not fall away, after the commencement of his last illness. He went to meet with his dear young friends, even when he was scarcely able to address them; and had them frequently calling upon him in his sick chamber, to receive his pious instruction. A little while before his death, the words which he spoke, and the prayers which he offered up in behalf of scholars, and the teachers of his school, will not soon be forgotten. I beg leave, in connexion with this, to mention a little incident related to me by a friend who was present, which happened upon a Wednesday evening, when he was accustomed to meet his more advanced pupils for religious instruction. One of them had been idling, and disturbing some of the rest, when he was calling upon them in the most affectionate manner, "to persevere in the ways of *truth* and *godliness*." He quickly perceived it, and naming the scholar, said, "I cannot see you, but remember God sees you, and will not forget what you do;" and when concluding the exercise with prayer, he prayed for her in the most fervent and affectionate manner. Indeed, on whatever occasion he spoke on religious subjects, it was with a pathos peculiar to himself.

He was a zealous friend to the Religious Tract Society. He aided its funds as far as his ability reached,



and at the same time, used his utmost endeavours with those who were rich, for the same purpose. He took every opportunity of distributing tracts both in town and country, and has been known to convey them into families, where he thought they might be useful; and, when he dared not put them into their hands, to leave them below their doors. It was usual for him, when on a journey from home, to have a parcel of these always in his pocket, that he might bestow them in the places he visited, or give them away to persons whom he might meet with on the road; such was his zeal for the propagation of the Gospel, and so indefatigable was he for the good of his fellow creatures. When engaged in his daily work, he was seldom to be found without tracts. He was accustomed to distribute them among the servants where he was working. Upon an occasion of this kind, he had been employed for several days in a gentleman's house, where he had frequent opportunities of conversing with the servants. One of them appeared particularly foolish—quite unwilling to enter upon any serious conversation. He one day put into her hands some suitable tracts, and requested her to read them, which she promised to do. It was not long before he saw a considerable change in her behaviour. She listened with more attention when he spoke to her upon religious subjects; she enquired what church he attended, and expressed her astonishment, how he who was blind could know so much about the Bible.

The deceased will live long in the remembrance of those who were benefited by his salutary counsels.



Many who were in perplexity concerning the path of duty, betook themselves to his advice. Thus did he frequently restore peace to the troubled mind. He entered into all their feelings, in the most sympathising manner; he wept with those who wept, and rejoiced with those who rejoiced; frequently pointed out the path of duty, and removed difficulties which appeared to the dejected mind wholly insurmountable. He was particularly affectionate in waiting on the sick; and sat frequently at their bed-sides, speaking to them the words of consolation, and praying with them. He was very faithful in the case of any of his brethren, who had forgotten their duty to God and his people. It is much to be lamented, that this duty is too much neglected by brethren in church-fellowship. They see others fall, and are not careful to help them, and point out the evil of their conduct. The deceased, however, was an eminent pattern of faithfulness to his brethren. He set the evil of their conduct, in so prudent, but at the same time, in such a forcible manner, before them, that he had often the comfort of reclaiming them from the error of their ways, while at the same time, he cleared himself of the blood of those who would obstinately go on in a course of sin. We would not, however, be considered as holding up the subject of this memoir as faultless;—far from it. None was readier than he to confess sin; but notwithstanding, it may with truth be affirmed, that his faults, so far as they were known to man, were few;—his virtues many.

But I hasten forward to the period when he was near the end of his earthly career, and at the very



termination of it, and to speak of the wondrous love of God manifested towards him. He had now been nearly six months afflicted with a distemper, which was supposed to be *bile* in the *stomach*, and was quickly wasting away. During a great part of that time he was confined to his room. I should have mentioned, that in the prayers which I have already referred to, he was particularly mindful of his own school. He afterwards expressed a particular desire to the Christian friend whom he had procured to teach in his place, that he would continue with the school; desired his sister to collect what tracts he had, and give them to Mr. A——, and requested that he would distribute them among the scholars, as a token of his affection, and mention his situation particularly to them. The tracts were given to the scholars, according to his desire, and many of them were bathed in tears, when they heard that their faithful and affectionate teacher was now no more. Our dying friend encouraged Mr. A——, to go on with the school, and to hope for the divine blessing, as the Lord would certainly countenance his own ordinances, though, perhaps, not immediately.

It may surprise some, in the course of reading this narrative, to be informed of the deceased speaking so much when he was so weak, and so near his dissolution. All his friends who visited him that day, were astonished at it; they had formerly seen him when he could scarcely reply to them, but now, when, in reality, he was on the verge of eternity, he spoke as he was accustomed to do when in health. Sure we must see in this the hand of God; surely he spoke



truly, when he himself said, the Lord hath opened my mouth, that I might speak to his praise. His great change took place about seven o'clock in the morning, and he was enabled to speak a great part of that day : but on the 16th of December 1809, he breathed out his last—aged thirty-two years.

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## AUTHORITY.

Kay's Life—Glasgow edition of 1816.

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## MISS ANNA WILLIAMS,

THE BLIND POETESS.

THIS lady came to London in 1730, when only twenty-four years of age, with her father, a Welsh surgeon, who had given up his profession in consequence of imagining that he had discovered a method of finding the longitude at sea, which would make his fortune. After many efforts, however, to obtain the patronage of Government for his scheme, and having exhausted his resources, he was obliged to take refuge in the Charter-house. His daughter, who had been liberally educated, and had at first mixed in all the gaieties of the metropolis, was now obliged to support both him and herself by working at her needle. But after struggling in this way for some years, she lost her sight by a cataract. Her situation, it might be imagined, was now both helpless and hopeless in the extreme ; but a strong mind enabled her to rise above her calamity. She not only continued the exercise



of her needle, we are told, with as much activity and skill as ever, but never suffering her spirits to droop, distinguished herself just as she had been used to do, by the neatness of her dress, and preserved all her old attachment to literature. In the year 1746, after she had been six years blind, she published a translation from the French of Le Bleterie's "Life of the Emperor Julian." Her father having some time after this, met with Dr. Johnson, told him his story, and in mentioning his daughter, gave so interesting an account of her, that the Doctor expressed himself desirous of making her acquaintance, and eventually invited her to reside in his house as a companion to his wife. Mrs. Johnson died soon after: but Miss Williams continued to reside with the Doctor till her death, in 1783, at the age of 77. In 1752, an attempt was made to restore her sight by the operation of couching, but without success. We find her father publishing, three years later, an account of his method for discovering the longitude; and about the same time, Garrick gave the daughter a benefit at Drury Lane, which produced her two hundred pounds. Miss Williams also appeared again as an authoress, in 1766, when she published a volume, entitled, "Miscellanies in Prose and Verse," written partly by herself, and partly by several of her friends.

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AUTHORITY.

The Library of Entertaining Knowledge, vol. 1.



## THERESA PARADIS,

THE

BLIND PIANO-FORTE PLAYER.

MADemoiselle THERESA PARADIS, equally distinguished by her talents and misfortunes, was the daughter of M. Paradis, Conseilleur Aulique in the imperial service. At the age of two years and eight months, she was suddenly blinded during the night, as it should seem, by excessive fear: for there being a dreadful outcry in her father's house of fire! thieves! murder! he quitted the child and her mother, with whom he was in bed, in the utmost trepidation, calling out for his sword and fire-arms, which so terrified the infant, as instantly and totally to deprive her of sight.

At seven years old, she began to listen with great attention to the music which she heard in the church, which suggested to her parents to have her taught to play on the piano-forte, and soon after to sing. In three or four year's time, she was able to accompany herself on the organ in the *Stabat Mater* of Pergolesi, of which she sung a part at St. Augustin's church in the presence of the late Empress Queen, who was so touched with her performance and misfortune, that she settled a pension on her for life.

After learning music of several masters at Vienna, she was placed under the care of Kozeluch, an eminent musician, who has composed many admirable lessons and concertos on purpose for her use, which she played with the utmost neatness and expression.

At the age of eighteen, she was placed under the



care of the celebrated empyric Dr. Mesmer, who undertook to cure every species of disease by *animal magnetism*. He called her disorder a perfect *gutta serena*, and pretended, after she had been placed in his house as a boarder for several months, that she was perfectly cured; yet refusing to let her parents take her away or visit her, till, by the advice of Dr. Ingenhouze, the Barons Stoeck and Wenzel, and Professor Barth, the celebrated anatomist, and the assistance of the magistrates, she was withdrawn from his hands by force; when it was found that she could see no more than when she was first admitted as Mesmer's patient. However, he had the diabolical malignity to assert that she could see very well, and only pretended blindness, to preserve the pension granted to her by the Empress Queen, in consequence of her loss of sight; and after the death of her imperial patroness, this cruel assertion was made an excuse for withdrawing the pension.

In the year 1780, Madame Paradis quitted Vienna, in order to travel, accompanied by her mother, who treated her with extreme tenderness, and bore a very amiable and interesting character. After visiting the principal courts and cities of Germany, where her talents and misfortunes procured her great attention and patronage, she arrived at Paris early in the summer, and remained there five or six months, and likewise received every mark of approbation and regard in that capital, both for her musical abilities and her innocent and amiable disposition.

When she arrived in England, about a month or six weeks afterwards, she brought letters from persons of



the first rank to her Majesty, Queen Charlotte, the Imperial Minister, and other powerful patrons, as well as to the principal musical professors in London. Messrs. Cramer, Abel, Salomon, and other eminent German musicians interested themselves very much in her welfare; not only as their country-woman bereaved of sight, but as an admirable performer.

She went to Windsor to present her letters to the Queen, (Charlotte,) and had the honour of playing there to their Majesties, who were extremely satisfied with her performance, and treated her with that condescension and kindness which all who were so happy as to be admitted to the presence of their Majesties, in moments of domestic privacy, experience, even when less entitled to it by merit and misfortunes than Madame Paradis.

She afterwards performed before his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, (the late King,) at a grand concert at Carlton-house, to the entire satisfaction and wonder of all who heard her; and also had a benefit-night, which was extremely well attended.

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AUTHORITY.—European Magazine, 1781.

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#### EXTRAORDINARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

MADemoiselle SALIGNAC, of Xaintonge, lost her sight when only two years old; her mother having been advised to lay pigeons' blood on her eyes, to preserve them in the small-pox; whereas, so far from answering the end, it inflamed them: nature, however,



may be said to have compensated for that unhappy mistake, by beauty of person, sweetness of temper, vivacity of genius, quickness of conception, and many talents which certainly softened her misfortune. She played at *revertis* without any direction, and often faster than others of the party : she first prepared the two packs allotted to her, pricking them in several parts, yet so imperceptibly that the closest inspection could scarcely discover her indexes ; at every party she altered them, and they were known only to her : she sorted the suits, and arranged the cards in their proper sequence, with the same precision, and nearly the same facility, as they who have their sight. All she required of those who played with her, was to name every card as it was played ; and these she retained so exactly, that she performed some notable strokes at *revertis*, such as showed a great combination and strong memory. A very wonderful circumstance was, that she learned to read and write ; for she regularly corresponded with her elder brother, whom some mercantile affairs had called to Bourdeaux ; from her hand he received an exact account of every thing that concerned them.\* The mode adopted by her friends

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\* Dr. Fry, of Type Street, London, with his usual zeal for ameliorating the calamities of his fellow-creatures, has invented an alphabet, by which the blind may easily learn to read with their fingers : it is decidedly preferable to the mode in use at the Blind Institution at Paris ; where the pupils have to learn two alphabets (one of capitals, and one of small letters,) and many of the letters very figurative. Dr. Fry's is one distinct, plain alphabet, which renders the task of learning much easier, as being far less complicated.



in writing to her, was, to use no ink, but the letters were pricked down on the paper; and by the delicacy of her touch, feeling each letter, she followed them successively, and read every word with her fingers' ends. A person scratched, with a scissor's point, on a card, "*Mademoiselle de Salignac est fort amiable;*" she fluently read it, yet the writing was small, and the letters very ill-shaped. In writing, she made use of a pencil, as she could not know when her pen was dry; her guide on the paper was a small thin ruler, of the breadth of her writing. On finishing a letter, she wetted it, which fixed the traces of the pencil, so that they were not obscured or effaced; then she proceeded to fold and seal it, and write the direction; all by her own address, and without the assistance of any

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The important art of printing for the blind, has, we are happy to perceive, been practically carried into effect in Scotland. Practically, we say, for, though it has been introduced both in Vienna and Paris, yet from the faulty nature of the alphabet employed in those places, it has been found of very little utility. At a meeting of the managers of the Edinburgh Blind Asylum, on the twenty-sixth of January, 1828, after some routine business, they proceeded specially to examine the nature and efficiency of the books lately printed for the use of the blind. Some of the boys belonging to the asylum were introduced, who, though the books had been in their possession only a few weeks, and had no regular teaching, were able readily to distinguish all the letters, and easily discriminated those which were likeliest to each other. They were then, by Dr. Gordon and others of the directors, made to take isolated words in different pages of the book, which they at once knew, and they afterwards read slowly, but correctly, the different parts. By repeated trials, and by varying the exercises, the directors were of opinion that the art promised to be of



other person. Her writing was very straight, well cut, and the spelling no less correct. To teach this singular mechanism, required such a subject, and the indefatigable care of her affectionate mother, who, accustoming her daughter to feel letters cut out on cards or pasteboard, brought her to distinguish an A from a B, and thus the whole alphabet, and afterwards to spell words; then, by the remembrance of the shape of the letters, to delineate them on paper; and lastly, to arrange them, so as to form words and sentences. She learnt, and almost by herself, to play on the guitar, sufficiently for her little companions to dance to, and had even contrived a way of pricking down her tunes, as an assistance to her memory; but, being at Paris with her father and mother, a music-master

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the greatest practical utility to the blind; who, it evidently appeared, would be able to use these books with increasing facility. Mr. Gall also stated, that the apparatus for writing to and by the blind, was in a state of considerable forwardness. The principles had been completely settled, and found efficient. The letters were easily formed upon common post letter paper, by one motion of the hand; and being submitted, one after another, were correctly and invariably distinguished by the blind boys present."—*Scotsman*.

The benevolent Rev. Mr. Taylor, vicar of Bishop Burton, whose surprising success in cultivating the faculties of the blind, is well known, has published "The Diagrams of Euclid's Elements of Geometry, in an embossed [or tangible form, for the use of blind persons who wish to enter upon the study of that noble science." It is a very happy idea, and admirably calculated to add to the higher enjoyments of those afflicted with the loss of sight; by opening for them, in their dark state, a new and interesting source of employment and mental gratification. The plan is as simple as it is effectual.



taught her in the common method, observing the way used in writing to the young lady by pricking; and to distinguish the whites, they were made larger. She learnt to sing, and, so acute were her organs, that in singing a tune, though new to her, she was able to name the notes, for them to be pricked down, whilst singing; she even told the movement of them. In figured dances, she acquitted herself extremely well; and, in a minuet, with inimitable ease and gracefulness. She was very clever in the works of her sex, having made a silk and silver purse, wrought in knotted points on a wooden mould. She sewed perfectly well; and in her work she threaded her needles for herself, however small. She never failed telling, by the touch, the exact hour and minute by her watch.

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AUTHORITIES.

Encyclopædia Britannica.

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### THE BLIND LADY OF GENEVA.

THIS lady lost her sight when she was but a year old, by being too near a stove that was too hot; there remained on the upper part of her eye, so much sight, that she distinguished day from night; and, when any person stood between her and the light, she could distinguish, by the head dress, a man from a woman; but, when she turned down her eyes, she could not see. She played well on the organ and on the violin, and wrote legibly; in order to her learning to write, her father furnished her with masters, who ordered letters to be carved in wood,



and by feeling the characters, she formed such an idea of them, that she wrote them very legibly; she had a machine that held her papers, and kept her writing always in line.

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AUTHORITIES.

Travels through France and Switzerland.

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THE BLIND SCOTCH WOMAN.

A poor woman, the wife of a weaver, at Cambusbarron, in Scotland, died in 1822, who had lost the use of her eyes many years before; but who, notwithstanding, employed herself, during her blindness, in winding the woof of her husband's web, as well as that of others; but, what was more singular with her, was, that she was able to discriminate the different colours used in the worsted which went through her hands, so that the loss of vision seemed to give her but little inconvenience.

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AUTHORITY.—Scotch Paper.

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JOAN WAST,

THE BLIND MARTYR.

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“Superstition, still to reason blind,  
With iron sceptre rules the darken'd mind.”

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I am now about to introduce to my readers a female, and though she was not distinguished for rank, talents, or education, she deserves particular notice, as be-

ing one of that noble army of the reformation who counted not their lives dear unto themselves. Thousands and tens of thousands of these worthies finished their course with joy, at the stake, on the scaffold, and in the field. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white, in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. vii. 14.

Among many who glorified God, by suffering martyrdom, in the reign of Queen Mary, of bloody memory, Joan Wast, a poor woman, deserves never to be forgotten. Though blind from her birth, she learned, at an early age, to knit stockings and sleeves, and to assist her father in the business of rope making; and always discovered the utmost aversion to idleness or sloth. After the death of her parents, she lived with her brother; and by daily attendance at church, and hearing divine service read in the vulgar tongue, during the reign of King Edward, became deeply impressed with religious principles. This rendered her desirous of possessing the word of God; so that at length, having, by her labour, earned and saved as much money as would purchase a New Testament, she procured one,\* and as she could not read it her-

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\* In the reign of Edward I. the price of a Bible was £30., a most enormous sum; for, in 1272, the pay of a labouring man was only three half-pence a day;—so that such a work would have cost him more than fifteen years' labour. In the reign of Edward III. the New Testament of Wickliffe's version, sold for four marks and forty pence, (or £2. 16s. 8d.) From 1461 to 1483, just at the time when the art of printing was discovered, Faust (or Faustus) sold his printed



self, got others to read it to her, especially an old man, seventy years of age, a prisoner for debt in the Common-hall at Derby, and clerk of the parish, who read a chapter to her almost every day. She would also sometimes give a penny or two (as she could spare) to those who would not read to her without pay. By these means she became well acquainted with the New Testament, and could repeat many chapters without book; and daily increasing in sacred knowledge, exhibited its influence in her life, till, when she was about twenty-two years of age, she was condemned for not believing the doctrine of transubstantiation, and burned at Derby, August 1, 1553. During the reign of this gloomy bigot, one Thomas Edwards, a blind boy of seventeen years of age, was burnt alive in Smithfield, for an assertion that the Scriptures were the only authority we ought to acknowledge. From the above facts, the reader will see the

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copies at Paris for sixty crowns, while the scribes demanded five hundred; but in the latter end of Richard III.'s reign, the price was reduced to thirty crowns; in the reign of Henry VIII. says the good old Martyrologist, such was the desire that the people had for knowledge, as may appear by their sitting up all night in reading or hearing; also, by their expenses and charges in buying of books in English, of whom some gave five marks, some more, some less, for a book, and some gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. James, or of St. Paul, in English. In 1543, an act of Parliament was obtained by the enemies of truth; it was thereby enacted, "that no artificers, prentices, journeymen, servingmen, husbandmen, or labourers," were to read the Bible or New Testament in English, to himself or to any others, privately, or openly, on pain of death.



honourable share the blind had in that glorious struggle betwixt light and darkness, liberty and slavery, which in the end produced that great moral revolution that took place in the 16th century, to which, under God, we owe all the civil and religious liberties which we now enjoy.

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AUTHORITY.—Townley, page 193.

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### G. E. RUMPH, OR RUMPFIOUS,

THE BLIND PHYSICIAN OF HANAU.

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“If one sense be suppressed,  
But retires to the rest.”

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The phenomena of mind are at all times interesting, and many curious theories have been started on the value of the different senses. In the mental powers of the Blind, of which our anecdotes give such extraordinary proof, we see the loss of one sense compensated by the superior intensity and perfection of the remaining ones; and, as nature ever designs well, if she chance in some respects to fail in her good intentions, she generally takes care in others to atone for such deficiencies. Where the mind is properly constituted, says Lieut. Holman, “the diminution of one faculty naturally calls others into more extensive action: in short, there are very few obstacles which man’s perseverance may not enable him to overcome, if he will but rightly exercise those faculties with which the beneficence of his Creator has endowed him.”



G. E. RUMPH, OR RUMPFIIUS, Doctor of physic in the University of Hanau, and a member of the Academy of Naturalists, was born at Hanau, 1637. He went to Amboyna, and became consul and senior merchant there, which did not prevent his employing his time in collecting the plants of the country. Although he lost his sight at the age of forty-three, he could discover the nature and shape of a plant, by his taste and feeling. He comprised the history of all the plants which he had collected in the country where he settled, in twelve books: they were not, however, printed then; but John Burman published them, betwixt 1740 and 1750, in 7 vols. fol., under the title of "*Herbarium Amboinense*," 1755. Burman has added an *Auctuarium*, with the table usually bound at the end of vol. vi. The work has some faults, or rather misfortunes, of a posthumous publication; but it must be observed, that the figures, far inferior to those of the "*Hortus Malabaricus*," are generally not more than half the size of nature. The original drawings, still in existence, are said to be very fine. Rumph also left "*Imagines Piscium Testaceorum*," Leyden, 1751, fol., reprinted 1769; the former is much valued for the plates. He wrote, besides, "*The Political History of Amboyna*," which has never been printed; but a copy is deposited in the India Company's chest at Amsterdam, and another at Amboyna.

Ireland, in the *Chalcographimania* (most probably on the authority of Tommy Coram), says, that Rumphius, although quite blind, gave £1000 for a shell; and that there is a print of him handling the



shell. The only known portrait of Rumpfius, is one before he lost his sight; it is a small oval, with an inscription.

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AUTHORITY.

General Biographical Dictionary.

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SIR JOHN FIELDING,

THE BLIND THIEF CATCHER.

Sir John Fielding, was brother to the celebrated Henry Fielding, and his successor in the office of Justice for Westminster, in which, although blind from his youth, he acted with great activity and sagacity for many years. He kept in his mind the description of many hundred thieves, and was never mistaken when they were brought before him. On receiving information of the place where any stolen property was concealed, so unwearied was he in his exertions, that he was never known to give up the scent till he recovered all or part of the property that he was in pursuit of; in short, the name of Blind Fielding was a terror to evil doers. His death was not only a loss to the city of Westminster, but to the country in general. He was knighted in 1761, and died at Brompton, in 1780. He published various tracts on the penal code, and a miscellaneous publication, entitled the "Universal Mentor." He was also an active and benevolent promoter of the Marine Society. Sir John had a pipe fixed from the carriage to the coach box, through which he could converse with the coachman without being heard by others. When his



chariot was stopped by any obstruction in the streets, he inquired of the coachman what kind of carriage, &c. occasioned it, and it was his humour then to put out his head, and shout out in his usual peremptory tone, "take that cart out of the way;" or, "you, sir, in that chaise, drive on!" this occasioned great astonishment that he who was blind could perceive the cause of the stoppage, and was a source of much amusement to Sir John.

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AUTHORITY.

The Gentleman's Magazine, for 1781.

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## THE REV. EDWARD STOKES,

### THE BENEVOLENT BLIND CLERGYMAN.

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" His house was known to all the vagrant train,  
 He chid their wanderings, but reliev'd their pain;  
 The long remember'd beggar was his guest,  
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;  
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
 Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away;  
 Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,  
 Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.  
 Pleased with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,  
 And quite forgot their vices in their woe;  
 Careless their merits or their faults to scan,  
 His pity gave ere charity began."

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THE Rev. Edward Stokes was born in 1705. When nine years old, he and his elder brother were sent to school; an accident occurred about this time, which almost proved fatal to him. As his brother was amusing himself with a loaded pistol, it suddenly went off, and a portion of its contents was lodged in

Edward's face: in consequence of this accident, he lost his sight. As soon as his health was sufficiently established, he returned to school, where he pursued his studies with great success. From school he went to the University, at which place he remained till he took his degree of Master of Arts; he was admitted into orders, and shortly afterwards he was appointed to a living in Leicestershire, as a parish minister. He was beloved by the people that he lived among; his benevolence knew no difference betwixt one sect or another, but his bounty was experienced by all. Notwithstanding his blindness, he performed the service of his church for many years, with only the assistance of a person to read the lessons. The poor of his parish had to lament in him a most liberal benefactor, among whom he lived to expend nearly the whole of a very handsome private fortune. He died at the Rectory House, at Blaby, in Leicestershire, June, 1796, in the 93d year of his age, and the 50th of his incumbency.

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AUTHORITY.—Biographical Anecdotes, vol. 2.

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### MR. JAMES WATSON,

THE INVENTOR OF A METHOD OF PLAYING ON THE VIOLIN  
AND VIOLONCELLO AT THE SAME TIME.

THIS individual invented a method by which he can play upon these two instruments at once, with the greatest facility and correctness. He plays on the violin in the usual manner, and on the violoncello by means of his feet. His right foot goes into a sort of shoe at the end of the bow, and in consequence of



his right thigh being supported by a spring attached to the chair on which he sits, he has the whole command of the foot, without suffering any fatigue. By means of his left foot, he acts upon a set of levers, by which he shortens the strings with great facility.

Mr. Watson has frequently played thirteen and fourteen hours in one day, without any extraordinary fatigue.

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AUTHORITY.

Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, vol. 3.

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MR. JOHN AXE,

WAS organist of Whiston, near Rotherham : although blind from his birth, his abilities were of a very surprising kind, having a correct and superior knowledge, particularly of mechanics, music, &c. of which his works will remain a lasting memorial—such as the chimes in the borough church of Hedon, in Holderness, and his improvements on a great number of organs and other musical instruments. He died 1823, at Sprotborough, Yorkshire, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

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HENRY HATSFIELD,

IN 1825, resided in Pott's Grove, Pennsylvania, who had been blind from his youth, caused by the small-pox. He was a respectable citizen, and kept a public-house; was married, and had several children. Besides attending the public-house, he made baskets of all sizes and descriptions, of a superior quality.



What was most singular in him, he would go alone, as far as six miles from his home, with his axe, into a wood, where he would single out saplings of small trees, such as answered his purpose of making splits, &c.; he would cut them down to such lengths as suited him; he would then hide his axe in the leaves or branches of trees, and start off to a neighbouring farmer; employ his waggon and horses to carry his wood home; and then return and take his axe from the place where he had hid it: and this he would do without any living soul near him. He has been seen repeatedly a considerable way from home, travelling on the public road, and if he was asked where he was, or where he was going to, he always answered correctly. He was the best player on the violin in those parts, and could keep the instrument in as good repair as any person. He was a subscriber to the Pottsgrove Paper, and often called at the office for it.

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MR. FRANCIS LINLEY,

THOUGH blind from his birth, became a most excellent performer on the organ. Nor were his abilities confined merely to the science of music, he was a charming companion, acute reasoner, and well acquainted with the works of the most eminent authors, antient and modern. Having completed his musical studies under Dr. Miller, of Doncaster, he went to London, and was the successful candidate, among seventeen competitors, for the place of organist of Pentonville Chapel, Clerkenwell. He was soon after married to a blind lady of large fortune; but, having



sustained great losses by the treachery of a friend, he made a voyage to America, where his performance and his compositions soon brought him into notice; but returning to England, he died shortly after, at his mother's house at Doncaster, on September 13th, 1800, at the age of twenty-nine. Being a freemason, he was attended to the grave (at his own request) by the master and brethren of St. George's lodge, at that place.

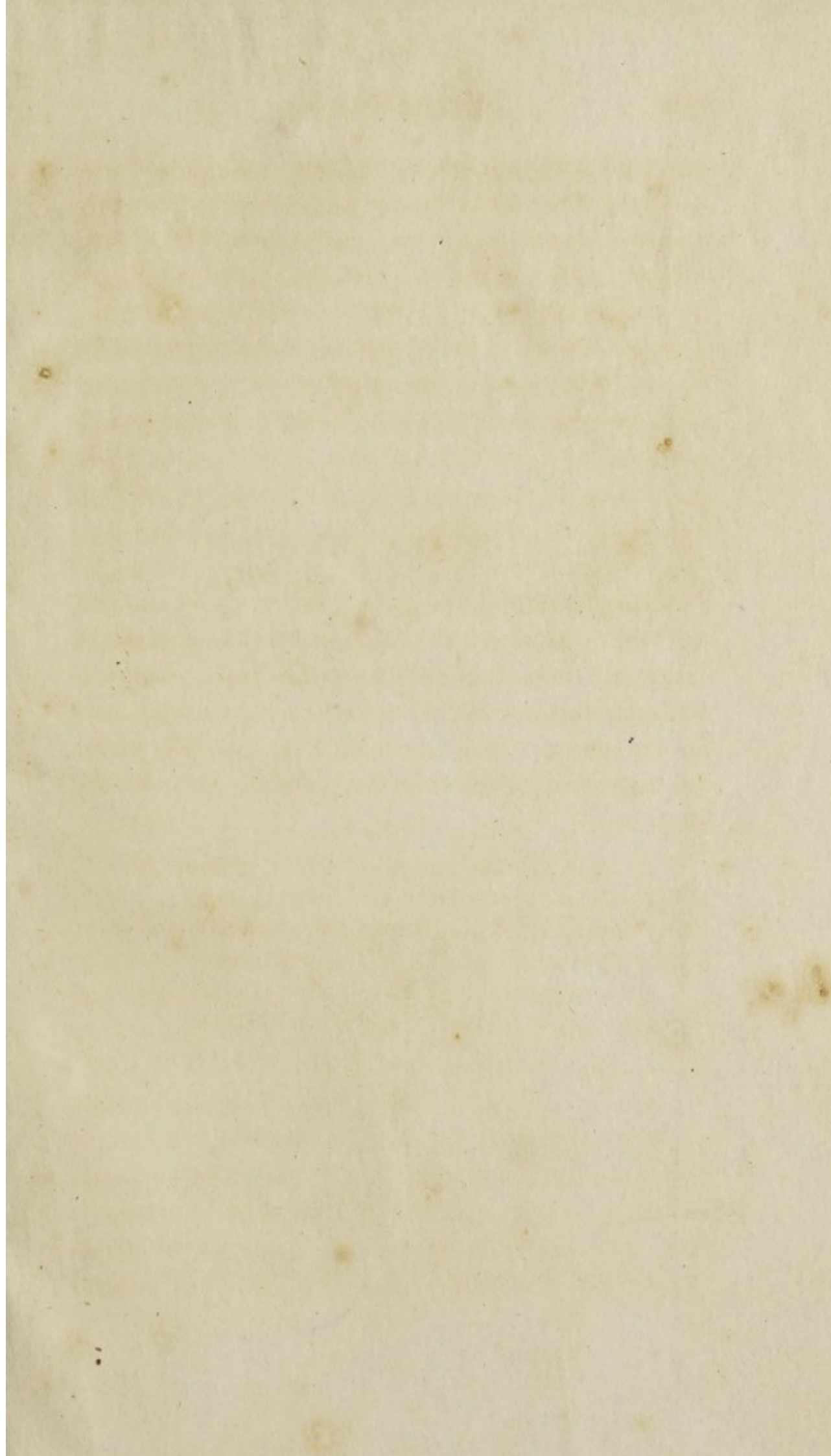
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### WILLIAM CLEMENTSHAW,

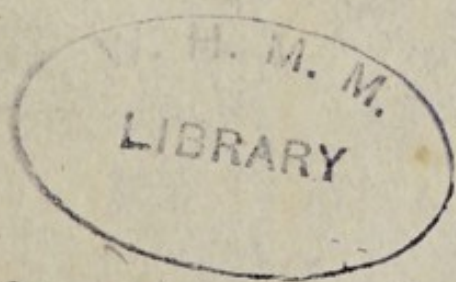
WAS organist of the parish church of Wakefield, in Yorkshire, which situation he held for upwards of forty years. He was blind from his youth. He died in 1822, and was buried in the above church; and, at his own request, the following epitaph, which was composed by himself, was inscribed on his tombstone :

Now, like an organ robbed of pipes and breath,  
His keys and stops all useless made my death;  
Though mute and motionless, in ruins laid;  
Yet, when rebuilt by more than mortal aid,  
This instrument, new voic'd and tun'd, shall raise  
To God, its builder, hymns of endless praise.









*Pring*



