

marriage is hence impracticable; promiscuous intercourse is a crime impossible to prevent, and illegitimate children are growing an enormous burden to the state; while, on the other hand, it has been satisfactorily ascertained, that by far the greatest number of reformed criminals have consisted of those who have intermarried, or whose wives have been able to purchase their passage over. The encouragements to honesty and industry in the colony are indeed very great; and none who shew a disposition of this kind continue long without having their sentence remitted, and like other free settlers being allowed a grant of land to a certain extent. Government has not yet acceded to the proposal respecting the convicts' wives, though it is at this time under consideration: to the two former it yielded most readily, in consequence of which the wives of the officers and soldiers that have accompanied the regiment, which is now on its passage, amount to not less than three hundred.

In connection with these regulations it was further proposed, that three additional clerical men should be provided, and three schoolmasters with small salaries from government, one for each of the settlements of Sydney, Parramatta, and Hawkesbury. From the increasing population of the colony, as well as the consequence of numerous flocks of free-settlers from all parts of the world, as from internal increase, and frequent importations from the mother country, it was absolutely impossible for one, two, or even for three clergymen to perform the whole of the very important duties demanded in such a station, with due punctuality. For nearly fourteen years, Mr. Marsden had officiated with a zeal, an industry, and a constancy that are scarcely perhaps to be paralleled; but it had long been at the hazard of a most robust constitution, which at last, excellent as it was, proved altogether incompetent to one half of the services required. Two public free schools, a boys' and a girls', this most excellent man had already established and provided for, without any expense to government: but a growing population, and a population of the very worst kind, of illegitimate children, demanded three times the number: a population which, if early instructed in habits of industry and principles of virtue by a judicious and pious education, may indeed be rendered of inestimable value to the rising colony, but, if neglected and abandoned by the state, must assuredly work its speedy and absolute destruction. To both these propositions, also, administration readily assented; and his grace the Arch-bishop of Canterbury, to whom three persons were chiefly referred, wisely and liberally lent it to the able founder of the plan in

selected such persons as he thought most likely to promote his benevolent object.

It is well known, that most of the criminals, sentenced to transportation, are men of talents though of talents perverted; of those that are transported, moreover, the greater number are fully initiated into some branch of mechanics or manufactures. With a view of turning these talents to proper use, of making the criminals contribute to their own support, and above all, of taking them off from habits of idleness and dissipation, he next proposed to the minister that the colony should be allowed one or two practical mechanics,—with very small salaries, such as should be a recompense to them, but not sufficient to support them without their own exertions—and one or two general manufacturers. To the last proposal an objection was urged, that it would interfere with the staple trade of the mother country; but the objection was overcome by an engagement, on the part of the proposer, that if government would accede to it, the enormous expense, which the state at present assumes for clothing the convicts at Botany Bay, should entirely cease within a certain period; he observed, that the wool belonging to the government flocks, which, in conjunction with its wild herds, are now sufficiently numerous to provide food for the convicts, without any expense to the parent state, was now sufficient in quantity to provide them with a proper clothing, and that they might hereby be rendered their own manufacturers. Both these requests were in consequence acceded to; the benevolent petitioner was, as in the former case, authorized to provide himself with four such persons as he thought would best answer his purpose.

In quitting Port Jackson, he had been solicited to become the agent of almost every poor person in the colony, and especially of great numbers of the convicts. As though the common father of all, he undertook this voluminous concern; and the writer of these observations has known him, in consequence, burdened with letters from Ireland and other remote parts, the postage of which for a single day has often amounted to a guinea, which he cheerfully paid, from the feelings, that, although many of these letters were altogether irrelevant and of no use whatever, they were written with a good intention, and under a belief that they were of real value. It will please the reader to learn, however, that at this same period Mr. Marsden had also the pleasure to receive dispatches of the most satisfactory kind from his head bailiff, (who was himself formerly a convict, but is now a free settler, and has proved a faithful servant to the gentleman for nearly fourteen years) commended by collateral testimony, announce that his agricultural concerns, which he had now quitted for about three years, were in the most flourishing state, that his live stock had, upon an average, been doubled in number and value since he had left Parramatta. He had also found, from actual experiment at Leeds, that the wool of his own growth, taken in the grass, unrimmed and unselected, produced a cloth at least equal, and in the opinion of the manufacturer superior, to that of the best French looms.

From New South Wales, or Novaia, as it is called by modern geographers, his eye often glanced at New Zealand. Tippi-Hee, who may be regarded as the sovereign of the island, though it has several subordinate chiefs, had twice made a voyage to Port Jackson in pursuit of European knowledge; and, like M. Péron, had been affectionately entertained at Parramatta: he had acquired a tolerable knowledge of the English language, had learnt some few of its arts, especially that of writing, and was very anxious to learn more. To New Zealand, therefore, our philanthropist earnestly directed the attention of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East; and succeeded in obtaining a practical artisan well versed in carpentry and building, and at the same time of sound Christian principles and a devout turn of mind. This man and his wife he has taken over with himself, and we believe, he will be found of incalculable service. He is also accompanied, we believe, by another well-qualified person, skilled in flax-dressing, wine-spinning, and rope-making.

One of the last public acts, to which his heart was directed before he relinquished his native country, was that of procuring, by public contributions and donations of books, what he called a *reading library*, to consist of the most valuable and useful publications in religion, morals, mechanics, agriculture, commerce, general history, and geography; to be lent out under his own control, and that of his clerical colleagues, to soldiers, free settlers, convicts, and all others who may have time to read, so as to prevent idleness, and occupy the mind in the best and most rational manner. In this desire, too, he succeeded under the favour of Providence; and it is with no small gratification we add, that, by the gift of books and subscriptions, he was enabled to take over with him a library of not less than between three and four hundred pounds' value; which he intends annually to augment, on a plan he has already devised.

We ought not to close this imperfect sketch, without stating that, on its being communicated to His Majesty that Mr. M. was extremely desirous of obtaining the royal assent to purchase and take over with him a couple of Merion sheep, His Majesty,

with his accustomed generosity, not only freely gave such consent, but requested Sir Joseph Banks, with whom Mr. Marsden had the honour of being acquainted, to select for him, as a royal present, five Merion ewes with young: Sir Joseph had much pleasure in obeying, and hastened to Portsmouth for this purpose with all speed, where he arrived just in time to put his present on board before the ship sailed.

ON ENGLISH SONNETTERS.

From Dr. Symonds' *Life of Milton*.

The sonnet, as is generally known, is altogether of Italian origin; and its structure is ascertained with so much rigid precision, as to be insusceptible of any, or only of the most trifling variation. Of the fourteen lines, of which it is to consist, the first eight are to admit one change only of rhyme for their termination; and are to be distributed into two stanzas, of which the first verse chimes with the last, and the two intermediate ones with each other. The six concluding lines may either be confined within terminations of two similar sounds alternately arranged, or may be disposed, with two additional rhymes, into a quatrains and a couplet. Like every short poem, the sonnet requires strict unity of subject; but it solicits ornament from variety of thought, on the indispensable condition of a perfect subordination. The sentence may overflow the verse, but must not transgress the stanza. This little poem is impracticable with various characters; and, while with Petrarch it is tender and pathetic, with Dante, in equal consistency with its nature, it is elevated and forcible. Peculiarly adapted to the language and the taste of its native Italy, it has been considered, though, in my opinion, without sufficient reason, as imperially unaccommodated to those of Britain. When happily constructed, it will be found to gratify every English ear attuned to the harmony of verses, and the idea, which is suggested, of difficulty encountered and overcome, must contribute, as has been more than once remarked, to heighten the power of its effect.

During the prevalence of our Italian school of poetry, this short and pregnant composition was much in favour with our bards; and in the childhood, as it may be called, of the English Muse, it was made the vehicle of its love by the tender, the gallant, the accomplished, and the ill-fated Surrey. In the succeeding generation, the

From the notoriety of the fact, it can scarcely be necessary to inform the reader, that this ornament of the English nobility

non English Sonnetters; Literary Panorama,

7 (Dec. 1809) 503-07.

sonnet was constructed, though not with rigid accuracy, by Sidney, Spenser, Shagran, and still more happily by Drummond, the peculiar object, as it would seem, of Milton's applause and imitation. By Milton this minute poem has frequently been animated with a great and mighty soul. That which he wrote, "when the assault was intended to the city," and those which he addressed to Cyrae Skinner, to Fairfax, to Vane, and to Cromwell, are eminent for their vigour and loftiness. Some greater accuracy, perhaps, might be required in the finishing of these short poems, but they are conceived and executed in a grand and broad style. Like the small statue from the pencil of Lyppus, or a miniature from the pencil of Angelo, they demonstrate that the idea of greatness may be excited independently of the magnitude of size.

The distinguishing qualities of our author's genius are generally known to be elevation and power; and he is certainly never more in his proper employment and station than when he is sporting in the tempest, and hovering in infinite space.

(Henry Howard, eldest son of Thomas duke of Norfolk), fell a victim, in the flower of his age, to the jealousy of that capricious and remorseless tyrant, Henry VIII.

When I speak of Surrey as a sonnetier, I either take the fact on the credit of others, or I adopt the vague language of writers, who call every short poem, composed within fourteen lines, a sonnet. Surrey has justly been honoured by Mr. Warton with the title of our first English classic; but I am not acquainted with one regular sonnet, which he has constructed. I am far from being profoundly conversant with our old English poets; and, therefore, the reader will be the less surprised when I tell him, that Drummond is the earliest writer of the true sonnet, whom I can properly be said to know. One of the sonnets of this admirable genius, addressed to the Nightingale, is so beautiful, that I must be allowed to gratify myself by transcribing it.

To the Nightingale.

Better thing, that sing'st away the early hours
Of winter, just or coming, void of care,
Than those, that with delightful notes do fill
Your seasons, budding up, in sweetened air:
To me, to sprightly, in rills, from bowery bowers,
Thou sing'st thy lover's goodness from thy throat,
And what dear gifts to give he did not spare;
A strain to human ears, in quiet that thou art,
Which would be so soft, which by the winds
Attended in sweet airs, to give and to remove,
Gone to forget what's yours, in quiet and in dreams,
And in a reverend sleep, and thought in heaven,
Sweetest, art thou not singing? I thought I had lost
To sleep of sleepers,—yes, and to sing! by day.

Descending, however, into the regions of tenderness and grace, he can contract his giant hands to the wringing of a wreath, or to the fashioning of a gem. If this were not sufficiently attested by his *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and parts of his *Canzon* and of his great *Epic*, we might rest our proof of it on the testimony of those little pieces which are now under our notice. His sonnet to the Nightingale is sweet; that on his deceased wife is pathetic, and that to Mr. Lawrence is elegant and pleasing. "These short sonnets of Milton's poetic power are not all, indeed, equally successful; and a few of them may be acknowledged even to have failed. If we except, however, the eleventh, written evidently as a sportive struggle to bend knotty words into rhyme, we shall not find one of these minor poems not ornamented with beautiful, or not dignified with strong, or not elevated with sublime thoughts. The lines in many of them are careless and inharmonious; and the merit of some of the finest among them is diminished by the injury of an inadequate or defective close. If the sonnet to Cromwell had been finished with the same spirit and taste with which it was begun, it would have been of unrivalled excellence; it would, indeed, have been a precious stone, with its worth infinitely enhanced by the exquisite sculpture, on its surface, of an Olympian Jove. On the subject of this fine sonnet, it has been justly remarked by bishop Hurd that the beautiful hemistich in the ninth line is vitiated by an impropriety of metaphor.

And Danbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laurest wreath.

Though we have noticed in this place all the sonnets of Milton, it may be proper to mention, that only ten of them were included in the publication of which we are now speaking, the rest having been composed at a subsequent period. Five of them indeed, viz. those to Fairfax, to Cromwell, to Vane, and to Cyrae Skinner, who was honoured with one of three poetical addresses, were withdrawn, for a considerable period, from the public. They were annexed by Phillips to his life of his uncle, and, about four years afterwards, four of them were transcribed by Toland into his work on the same biographical subject; but they were again omitted in some of the following editions, and seemed to be in danger of falling under the proscription of the execrable spirit of party. Fortunately, however, has not been able to add this injury to the many which it has inflicted on us; and, in this remnant age, we are not diverted, by the political offence of these sonnets, from the admiration of their poetical excellence. In the record of the two addressed to Cyrae Skinner is exhibited such

a sublime picture of the author's resignation, fortitude, loftiness of soul, and ardent zeal for the great interests of his species, as must necessarily conciliate our reverence and regard, even if it should fail of exciting the stronger feeling of our wonder.

Though the regular sonnet has not been a favourite with the present times, and has seen its name, without its power, usurped by a poem of fourteen lines in the elegant stanza, it has been constructed with eminent success by more than one of those ladies, whose poetic talents have formed a distinguishing feature in the character of our immediate age. It will be obvious that I allude, more particularly to a few exquisite sonnets from the pen of Mrs. Charlotte Smith, and to a greater number of them from that of Miss Seward, the merit of which has been acknowledged and ratified by the taste of an applauding public. But I wish to explain, that I allude, also, to another female Muse, whose name is yet unknown to the world, who can no longer warble her incels upon earth, and who is now in that place, to which human praise, in its highest elevation, can never ascend. When the reader has perused the following sonnet, chosen from others in my possession solely for the melancholy, I had

"The sonnet seems to have been considered by our modern poets as peculiarly dedicated to melancholy, and the following is an instance how far it may be used for the purpose of even despair and horror. It surpasses the 'ever friendly to despair' *Ode to the Poppy*, which will be found in page 517.—*Edit.*

Written on a Blank Leaf in Rogers's Remains of Memory.

Precursors of Memory! O supremely blest,
And justly proud beyond a poet's praise,
If the pure confessions of thy tranquil breast
Constrain indeed the subject of thy lays!
By me how envied, far to me!
The herald still of misery.
Memory makes her influence known
By sighs and tears and grief alone!
I greet her as the fiend to whom belong
The vulgar's rawling back, the raven's funeral song!
She tells of time's moment, of comforts lost;
Of fond illusions gone for ever by;
Of hopes too fondly nursed, too rudely crossed;
Of many a career to wish, yet fear to die.
For what but the instinctive fear
Lest she survive detain me here,
When all the life of life is fled?
What but the deep inherent dread
Lest she beyond the world assure her reign
And relapse the hell which guesst and bedlams
teign?

almost said the prophetic, peculiarity of its subject, let him know that the writer of it was only in the middle of her twelfth year, and that, when she had just completed her fourteenth, she closed a life as amiable for piety and sweetness as it was remarkable for genius. Let him know, also, that this sonnet, which was once read by me with exquisite delight, not unmingled, perhaps, with pride, is now transcribed by me with tears, which can never cease to flow when the idea obtrudes itself of the daughter whom I lately had, and have no more!

On a Blighted Rose Bud.

Scarcely had thy velvet lips imbibed the dew,
And nature lured thee infant Queen of May,
Before thou wast laid low, and in the dust
Lies thy sweet form, and in the dust thy crown;
And to the air its tender fragrance given,
When the month wind murmured of thy grave;
And by his cold, rustle thou thy charms decay:
Now droops thy head, now fades thy blushing cheek—
No more the Queen of Flowers, no longer gay—
No more the maid, her garden's health and joy—
Her smile array'd in innocence's veil—
Why so unduly implicit to decay,
Droops down the rights to his iron breast,
The faded petals, sister, friend, deplore
The charms and budding virtues now no more!
Nov. 27, 1805.
CAROLINE SYMONDS.

FOREST HILL.

Of the farm-house on Forest-hill, where Milton occasionally resided, and whose surrounding scenery was said to have furnished that bard with prospects for the *Allegro*, (and which was noticed in *Panorama*, Vol. V. p. 329, under the title of "Comparison of Part of the Original Scenery in Milton's *Allegro*, with the Poetical Ideas that he drew from it.") Dr. Symonds thus remarks:

In Lord Teignmouth's elegant biography, a work which ought to be placed in the hands of every young man of talents and ambition, we find a letter, addressed by the great and amiable Sir William Jones to the Countess Dowager Spencer, in which the writer speaks of Forest-hill near Oxford, as of a place in which Milton "spent some part of his life;" which he chose for his retirement soon after the event of his first marriage; where he wrote *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*;—and where tradition still preserves the memory of the poet's residence, and points to the ruins of his chamber." To those, who have perused the preceding volume, it will be superfluous to remark, that this relation is founded altogether upon error. No biographical circumstances can be ascertained with more precision than are the various residences of Milton. By Edward Phillips, who must have been acquainted with the facts which he assumes to relate, for he was then an inmate with his uncle,

7] are informed that Milton, about Whit-

side, (in 1643,) after a month's absence in his house in Aldersgate Street, returned with his wife, Mary Powell; that the night when she had cohabited for a month with her husband, deserted him, and did not see him till the memorable period of their reconciliation, about the middle of 1645; at she was then lodged, in the first instance, the house of a female relation, and was afterwards settled with her husband in a new mansion in Barbican, that, under a protecting roof, her parents and their only, almost immediately, sought an asylum, which they continued to enjoy till 1647; and that the Powells then, returned Forest-hill, unaccompanied (as is evident from the negative testimony of the biographer) by Milton; whose numerous and highly occupied, indeed, must necessarily have excluded his presence in town. We may be certain, therefore, that Milton never saw Forest-hill after his departure from it on his marriage; nor ever resided there longer than during the month of his courtship. In his interval, indeed, it is possible, though I think, not probable, that he wrote "Allegro and Il Penseroso, and, if to the impression of Forest-hill and its scenery we are indebted for the production of these exquisite pieces, we may forgive it for its influence on the poet, and, perhaps, the birthplace, of the poet, and the poet's Powell. The letter to which I refer, is so admirably written, and offers so much pleasure to the imagination, that every reader must lament with me the circumstance of its being detached from the requisite ground of fact. As no doubt can be entertained of the truth of the story, as far as Sir W. Jones's immediate responsibility in it extends, we must account for the tradition, of which he speaks, by supposing that Milton's subsequent reticence attached so much consequence to the event, which he had casually inhale for a moment, as to consecrate it, in the neighbourhood of Forest-hill, to Milton's own hand, "as mentioned by Sir W. Jones only as a report; but, allowing the existence of papers in a place, in which the writer had certainly resided, and in which he belonged to his immediate connexion, which could be connected without the necessity of drawing from it any more extensive inference. In spite of it to that direct and avowed testimony, on which the leading events, in the preceding narrative, are recorded, would be idle and unjustifiable in the extreme.

• • • This article may stand as an instance of the necessity of being acquainted with time, place and circumstances, with more than ordinary correctness, before any asserted or traditional fact be accepted as true history.

MERMAIDS.

Letter from Mr. William Maure, Schoolmaster, of Tharua, to Dr. Torrence, regarding a Mermaid seen by him some Years ago.

Thurso, June 9, 1809.

"Dear Sir, — Your queries respecting the mermaid are before me. From the general scepticism which prevails among the learned and intelligent about the existence of such a phenomenon, had not your character and real desire for investigation induced by a known to me, for supposing that you wished to have a fertile imagination indulged by a subject of merit, I would have been disposed to have concluded, that in this instance you aimed at being ranked among the laughing philosophers, at my expense. Sensible, however, that this is not the case, and taking it for granted that you are sincere, I shall endeavour to answer your queries, though there is little probability that any testimony which I can give respecting the mermaid, will operate towards convincing those who have not hitherto been convinced by the repeated testimonies adduced in support of the existence of such an appearance. About twelve years ago, when I was parsonical vicar-master at Key, in the county of my walking on the shore of Sandale Bay, being a fine warm day in summer, I was induced to extend my walk towards Sandale Head, when my attention was arrested by the appearance of a figure, resembling an undulating human female, sitting upon a rock extending into the sea, and apparently in action of combing its hair, which showed around its shoulders, and of a light brown colour. The resemblance which the figure bore to its prototype, in all its visible parts, was so striking, that had not the rock on which it was sitting been dangerous for bathing, I would have been constrained to have regarded it as really a human form, and in any eye unacquainted to the situation, it must have undoubtedly appeared as such. The head was covered with hair of the colour above mentioned, and slanted on the forehead round, the face plump, the cheeks ruddy, the eyes blue, the mouth of a man; the teeth I could not discover, as the mouth was shut; the breasts and abdomen, the arms and fingers, of the size of a full grown lady of the human species; the fingers, from the action in which the hands were employed, did not appear to be withered, but as to this I am not positive. It remained but as to this I am not positive. It remained on the rock three or four minutes after I observed it, and was exerted during that period in combing its hair, which was long and thick, and of which it appeared proud, and then dropping into the sea, which was

level with the abdomen, from whence it did not reappear to me. I had a distinct view of its features, being at no great distance on an eminence above the rock on which it was sitting, and the sun brightly shining. Immediately before its getting into its natural element, it seemed to have observed me, as the eyes were directed towards the eminence on which I stood. It may be necessary to remark, that, previous to the period I beheld this object, I had heard it frequently reported by several persons, and some of them persons whose veracity I never heard disputed, that they had seen such a phenomenon as I have described, though then, like many others, I was not disposed to credit their testimony on this subject. I can say of a truth, that it was only by seeing the phenomenon, I was perfectly convinced of its existence.

"If the above narrative can in any degree be subservient towards establishing the existence of a phenomenon, hitherto almost incredible to naturalists, or to remove the scepticism of others who are ready to dispute every thing which they cannot fully comprehend, you are welcome to it, from, dear Sir, your most obliged, and most humble servant, WILLIAM MAURE.

"To Dr. Torrence, Thurso."

• • • For another letter on this obscure and uncommon subject, vide Panorama, Vol. VII. p. 118.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PACHALIK OF BAGDAD, AND OF THE CITY OF THAT NAME.

[Translated from the French.]

The Pachalik of Bagdad, situated at the extremity of the Ottoman empire, in Asia, contains an extent of country of about 8000 miles in length, by 600 in breadth; and is consequently much more considerable in respect to its late usurpations. It includes the southern part of ancient Mesopotamia, the southern part of ancient Assyria, which was west of the Euphrates as far as Bassora. Bagdad, the capital of this Pachalik, and from which it derives its name, is not built on the ruins of ancient Babylon, as some travellers have too credulously asserted; since it is universally acknowledged that Babylon was situated on the banks of the Euphrates, whereas Bagdad is situated on the Tigris. This town was founded by the Caliph Mansour, who, in the year 763, transferred thither the seat of the Saracenic empire. While that empire lasted, this city enjoyed the most eminent degree of prosperity and splendour; but great has been its decline under the Ottoman domination. It is still, however, the bulwark of Asiatic Turkey against Persia; its

fortifications are not very formidable even for eastern warfare; but it is surrounded by a broad and deep moat, which, in case of a siege, may be filled from the stream of the Tigris. A great precaution was resorted to in the last wars with the Persians. The castle, the palace, and the other remarkable buildings, are situated on the eastern bank of the river. On the opposite side we find only some ill-built houses, Arabian huts, and plantations of date-trees, as far as the eye can reach. The communication between the two parts of the town, is maintained only by a sorry bridge of boats, which is frequently broken; and by small canoes, which are used to cross the river in. The Seraglio contains many fine apartments furnished in the true style of oriental luxury. The khans, the mosques, and other public buildings, although numerous and well built, cannot be compared to those of Constantinople, Aleppo or Damascus. The streets, which are not paved, are narrow and dirty. There are, however, some spacious bazars (markets) vaulted, or covered by platforns, under which the merchants, and artizans are sheltered from the inclemency of the weather. The houses in the west part of the town are built of brick, and are only one story high; they are convenient, and rendered agreeable by the intermixture of numerous gardens. In those belonging to great men, or even in those of rich individuals, are seen paintings and carvings which afford no unfavourable specimens of Persian industry.

The climate of Bagdad is very salubrious, and free from endemic disorders, notwithstanding the very great heat of summer, which is such, that, to avoid it, the inhabitants pass a great part of the day in their cellars, and sleep at night in the terraces on the tops of their houses, without exposing the smallest inconvenience from the heat. The summer wind, blowing from the south-west, which wets a sulphurous smell, from its having passed over the vituminous shores of the Euphrates and of the Tigris, and which prevails over the whole surface of Mesopotamia, is attended with dangerous effects in the open desert only; there, to guard against it, the Arabians have no other resource but to lie flat on the ground; or to wrap themselves in their mantle; if they neglected those precautions, they might run the risk of being inflamed; but such accidents never happen in towns. From want of industry, the territory of Bagdad is not very fruitful; its produce, in wheat, wine, barley, and cotton, is not considerable; but it abounds in dates, in several other kinds of fruits, natives of Persia; in cattle, and in game.

The population of Bagdad is not very S 4