

INTRODUCTORY.

THE complaint has sometimes been made, and not without reason, against the situation of our University, that it is placed in the most open and desolate part of one of our least interesting counties. Whether this circumstance is accidental, or whether it is to be accounted as one of the standing monuments of the “wisdom of our forefathers,” we are not prepared to determine: but certain it is, that the desolate appearance of the surrounding country has a marvellous influence in chaining the flighty spirits of our students to the spot intended for their study; and they become more than ordinarily attached to the “brown o’er arching groves” of the Colleges, for lack of other and greater attractions in the neighbourhood.

The same argument is equally applicable, in the case of our University, to its position and appearance in regard to the Town of Cambridge. For if the vicinity to a lately uninclosed dull and unplanted champaign give additional beauty to the walks and wood at the backs of our Colleges, most assuredly their fronts are not less indebted to the foil afforded them by one of the most irregular ill-arranged and ill-built towns in the land. We do not in these remarks mean to disparage our town or towns-people, or to blame them for a fault which is due rather to their ancestors: but would they wish to escape from the invidious comparison which is invariably drawn between themselves and the Town of Oxford, they will henceforth lose no opportunity that may offer of emulating the spirit of the University, by improving their streets and adorning their public buildings in a manner worthy of the advantages they possess. They must remember they are occupants of a city placed on an eminence

of repute, so that it cannot be hid; and though they may not succeed in producing a rival to the far famed High Street on the banks of the Isis, they may at least redeem their Cam from the odious reproach, of visiting in its course one of the plainest and most incommodious towns in the United Kingdom.

Being ourselves too liable to be prejudiced by first impressions, we have on this account considerably preferred introducing our visitor to the University at some little distance from the place; and, begging him to dismiss from his mind all previously formed opinions, we hope by a judicious selection of the objects of interest to engage his attention, and prevent his eye from roving where it will not only meet with no satisfaction, but with certain offence.

On first approaching a city, whether of earlier or more recent celebrity, we are unavoidably led into a train of ideas suggested by the scene around us, and the very ground on which we tread. The principle of association gets full possession of our soul, and we should strive in vain, even if we were desirous to do so, to banish from our thoughts the visions and phantoms of the past. These, which were confused and bewildered at a distance, grow more and more vivid as we advance nearer to the spot that gives them birth, till they begin at last to assume a certain locality, and the mind, which was before amazed with their number, is now able to fix each in its proper sphere, and indulge in the contemplation of their several distinctive features.

Such, at least, have been our own feelings as we journeyed along the road which conducts the modern traveller to a Mantua or a Florence, a Venice or a Rome. A wild romantic picture of the Augustan age of poetry;—the glories of the Medici;—a long array of sceptred Doges, triumphs of the ocean, pomp and pageantry;—names consecrated to fame, bold deeds of war, noble works of peace, achievements of the spear and the toga, with all that constitutes the “Seven-hilled city’s pride;”—visions like these have floated before our swimming eyes; nor have we been able to thread our way through the maze that encompassed us, till

INTRODUCTORY.

7

the mists which made objects loom in the distance, had dispersed on our approach to scenes of real existence, and the sensible images of sight and touch. It was then, when the winding Mincio stole silently before us, marking out in melancholy loneliness fields tilled by the hand of its favoured bard;—or when the proud Lion of St. Mark greeted us as we contemplated his marble palaces, the monuments not less of former grandeur than of present desolation;—when the minished Arno, shaming its winter course, arrested our ear as it struggled to force a passage along its stony bed;—or lastly, the proud majestic Coliseum hailed from afar the pilgrim, the one among millions who have come from the north and the south to admire, to all but adore, its stupendous proportions, telling as it does of a people once the lords of the earth;—it was then, I say, that we singled out from the throng of humbler spirits a Virgil and a Dante, a Shylock and the Moor; or heard Tully's voice alone in the forum, or stood with great Cæsar in the Senate house.

Interesting would be the volume which should embody but a faint record of the impressions which have thus for a time tenanted the brain, till they have given way to the realities, sad or joyous as it may be, of the scene into which the traveller has been ushered. Such a document, it is true, would furnish little for the edification or entertainment of the well read and imaginative classic; nay, he would even repudiate with contempt the borrowed ideas, and prefer, with justice, the random but ecstatic revellings of his own enraptured fancy. To the untutored mind, however, the many thousands of those of our roaming sight-seeking wonder-loving countrymen, who travel abroad to *learn* what they did not know before, such a page, we are of opinion, would form a mine whence to extract no few hints (if we may use the expression) for thought; something, at any rate, to remind them of what they have long enough forgotten, if they ever knew it, amidst the bustle and din of our money-making cities, the laborious idleness of our fashionable circles, or the more praiseworthy, though not less monotonous and soul-engrossing pursuits of the senate, the church, medicine, or the bar. Such a plan, therefore, we strongly recommend some daring spirit to adopt;—for ourselves, we do not feel equal to undertake the task: we boast not the

ample pinion which would be capable of bearing us in safety over the stern and rugged barrier that nature herself has interposed between our northern regions and the azure deep of an Italian sky.

But we design setting an example for loftier minds to improve upon, and have the courage to attempt that at home which we shrink from venturing on abroad. Thus it is with the world :

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread ;

It will, however, be our satisfaction if we have at least the merit of being quoted as pioneers in a new road of literature ;—and if the present be, as most first attempts are, a failure, we shall have the consolation, melancholy indeed, but not without its charm, of having fairly escaped the reproach of him, who

Sedit, quod timuit ne non succederet.

One word more and we will dismiss our reader to the consideration of the several subjects we propose offering to his notice. As various, doubtless, will be the tastes of those to whose favourable acceptance our pages are recommended, so will it be found, on the perusal, that a considerable dissimilarity of style will pervade the work. We do not even profess to claim for our articles that family resemblance of feature which the Poet has elegantly attributed to the Sister Nymphs of Ocean ;—our literary contributions have not the fortune to possess a common parent, and the volume which is the result of such promiscuous workmanship must naturally labour under the disadvantages of a “child whom many fathers share.” It acknowledges however one anxious guardian, who looking upon the University itself as a beautiful combination of discordant elements, would fain aspire to imitate it at a respectful distance ; and begs of his well-wishers, as they would not condemn their University *as a whole* for any particular part that may chance to be defective, so not to prejudge hastily the present undertaking, but kindly extend their indulgence till such time as they shall have the opportunity of surveying and criticizing it en masse.

Φ.



W. F. D. Christian, Del.

M. B. Cooke, Sculpt.

London, Published Aug. 1, 1838, by W. Parker, West Strand.

THE FIRST MILESTONE FROM CAMBRIDGE.

It cannot fail to have been often remarked, that our two Universities, the only two strictly classic towns of our most unclassic land, are rarely if ever contemplated in that spirit of enthusiasm and poetic admiration, which is naturally due to the nursing mothers of so many of our saints and sages, our philosophers and bards divine,

The few whom genius gave to shine
 Through every unborn age and undiscovered clime.

The feelings, on the contrary, with which our Alma Mater is generally approached, are either, on the part of her existing sons, those of careless indifference to the past, while all their thoughts are centred in their own immediate engagements or troubles, trials of strength physical or intellectual, the feats of the quill or the rifle, the whip or the oar: or, on the part of the strangers, who resort occasionally to the sequestered retreats of our academic bowers, the ideas, we apprehend, if closely analysed, would be found too often to flow in a far more confined and unintellectual channel; being limited for the most part to the probable amount of tradesmen's bills, the expense of furnishing apartments, the relative cost of lodgings in town or rooms in college, with all the other paraphernalia and wretched solitudes of a mind,

de lodice paranda
 Attonitæ.

Certainly, such are not the sentiments which are most genial to the place, if estimated according to its just pretensions; and it would have been not more difficult for the distracted poet of the Roman satirist's imagination to conceive

The steeds, the chariots, and the forms of gods;
 And the fierce Fury, as her snakes she shook,
 And withered the Rutulian with a look,

than for one occupied with thoughts like these to imbibe the inspiration which impregnates the atmosphere breathed once by a Bacon and a Newton, a Milton, and a Gray.

Or, if haply the subject of our present remarks be the father of some hopeful youth about now to make his debut on our crowded arena, it is just possible that he may soar so high as to picture to his mind (and perhaps even dress his thoughts in appropriate and stilted language, for the encouragement of his young Iulus following the flights of the paternal fancy with unequal steps,) visions of prizes and scholarships and medals, senior wrangler's honours tutorships and professorships, and pointing to the well-filled and well-fed Fellows' table, as he slyly opens the green-baize door in passing through the screens at Hall time,

“Cernas

Te quoque principibus permixtum !”—

he may sigh aloud in trembling hope to his attendant charge, and then perhaps relapse instantaneously into the melancholy reveries suggested by the grinning Nemesis, as she whispers in his ear, “But if we fail!—” “aye, there's the rub!”

The mind of such a one we conceive is even in a less fair way than that of the frugal economist, to enter into the spirit of the scene we are about to open to his view. In attempting accordingly, in the following pages, to give body and utterance to loftier themes of contemplation, we have principally at heart the hope of rescuing many of our visitors from tormenting phantoms like the above. And as we would not wish to crowd too much upon his aching senses at once, we would suppose that he has studied our pages as he whirled along in his carriage by the dull Stamford road from the north, the bleak and flinty Newmarket from the east, the cheerless Bedford level from the West, or the unlevel but more cheerless Royston from the south. Which last, being beyond all comparison, the most stupid and uninteresting of the four, we have taken our view of THE FIRST MILESTONE FROM CAMBRIDGE on that road, presuming that by the time the traveller has reached it, he will be heartily tired of his journey, and in the best possible condition for enjoying the relief we promise him from a review of the scenes past present and even future, upon which, under

THE FIRST MILESTONE.

11

our guidance, he is now about to enter. He will thus realise the picture which in our Introductory article we described as occupying, or likely to occupy, the mind of every rational being on his first approach to a stage ennobled by recollections of the great and good.

The objects which in fancy's fairy forms had multiplied themselves to distraction before his mind's eye, now first begin to receive a character a shape and a place; he will inspect the several localities *seriatim*, and in doing so, the great names attached to each will singly and separately call for their undivided tribute of admiration. Each object we will endeavour, as far as lies in our power, to associate with its befitting thoughts and recollections: and should the mind of our reader furnish from its own fertile resources better and nobler ideas, we have only to regret that he did not volunteer the contribution of his pen to our work, and beg meanwhile to inform him that it is not yet too late to do so.

SONNET ON NEWTON.

THOU giant! not akin to those who trod
 The earth of old to spoil and to oppress:
 Gigantic thou to range the skies, and bless
 The nations of this puny terrene clod!
 Immortal Newton! with enchanter's rod
 Thou call'dst up truth from its profound recess,
 And calmly bad'st invaded space confess,
 How worlds are link'd to worlds, and all to God!
 Man long before thy coming, had assign'd
 A fabulous music to the crystal spheres;
 But, taught by thee, notes through all space combin'd,
 Star answ'ring star, in symphony he hears.
 Thou grand in thought! the voice of all mankind
 Shall ring thy peaceful fame through future years!

S.

2—2

THE APPROACH AND PRINCIPAL AVENUE.

BEHOLD the mark is gained, which announces to the traveller that the measure of his journey is run out, and a peculiar train of feeling is kindled at the sight. Should the traveller be a son of the University, returning after a long absence from this home of his student's affections, with him anticipation is distinctly modified by experience and recollection. The bridge at Trumpington Ford is the critical scene of a well known legend¹: the pathway before him was the line for promenaders—of those who sought recreation in seeing others, and were pleased to purchase it at the price of being seen; of the student confined by a zeal impatient of cessation to limited time and space, and delicately desirous of dry footing. He remembers when first, with the deference of a freshman, he learnt that here was the Senior Wrangler's walk. Imagination peoples the scene with its proper characters. That stone² is not the rude monument of barbarian calculation, standing on some wide void plain, such as doubtless once was here, a landmark to the way-worn and way-lost passenger; it bears traces of the hand of art and of the design of science, and declares the march of civilization.

¹ The story of Dick Neck-or-Nought, was well sung about twelve years since.

² April 25, 1728, the day on which George II. visited the University, the first milestone, being above eight feet high, was set up in place of the small one erected in 1725 (when the road was first measured); the sixteenth milestone, at Barkway, on May 29, 1728, the anniversary of the birth and restoration of Charles II. The first cost 5*l.* 8*s.*; both were paid for out of Dr. Mouse's and Mr. Hare's Causey Money; the arms of the former are on the first stone, impaled with those of Trinity Hall. Mr. Hare's on the sixteenth stone, next to those of Trinity Hall.—WARREN'S *MS. Trin. Hall.*

The miles are measured from Great St. Mary's Church; the mark indicating which, is a quartered circle, on the south buttress of the tower. The figure may be intended for a compass.

On the right hand he recognises the common, 'empty' as ever, though once mentioned, in a proposal for supplying the town with water, for the site of a reservoir—one of the few remaining traces of the open field of Cambridge, and continually threatened by the conduit-stream above. The building mania has invaded this district, but in a gentle and not unamiable form; yet stayed by the taste of private owners, and a public, a University design. For the corn that has long grown at the very mouth of this large town, ere long, the wand of a Lappage will metamorphose into a paradise of exotics. That stream, in its course before the Addenbrooke Hospital, apparently secured with iron fence, reminds him of feats of activity³ that defied the difficulty of space, and the danger of the defence. Change he sees, complete and progressing; and rumours of changes we may imagine his curiosity to have elicited from a ready informant companion on the journey, well read in the reports of Syndicates, and the deliberations of the Paving Board. Give our traveller for his arrival a fine June evening, and the 'Rocket' for his travelling carriage. He rolls rapidly along the broad well watered road, and begins to be proud of the entrance to the old place. But the humble Conduit-house is still standing, and he sighs to hear that the spirited effort to produce architectural beauty at this point has failed. His roaming eye soon lights upon the roof and chimnies of a group⁴ of buildings, that stand like a squatter's interloping establishment or the temporary settlement of some booth or wandering caravan. The eye-sore is too well remembered; and with surprise he contemplates the toleration of custom here exercised, and regrets that the late formed idea of removing the offence is likely to be lost in the contention about a less pressing, though in itself a desirable improvement⁵. New houses, rising and to rise, promise a diffusion of architectural elegance; the plain street is broken into masses of well-built mansions; the simple dignity of Trumpington Street is subdivided into terrace and place, whose titles proclaim their position, or their designer. The future

³ Once the leap was made; another undergraduate offered to accomplish the same feat, but was prevented by his friends.

⁴ The Spital-houses.

⁵ Removal of houses in Union Street.