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S C O T L A N D,  
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VOYAGE TO THE HEBRIDES.  
MDCCLXXII.

**O**N *Monday* the 18th of *May*, for a second time, take my departure for the North, from CHESTER, a city without parallel for the singular structure of the four principal streets, which are as if excavated out of the earth, and sunk many feet beneath the surface; the carriages drive far below the level of the kitchens, on a line with ranges of shops; and over them, on each side the street, passengers walk from end to end, Its rows, secure from wet or heat, in galleries purloined from the first floor of each house, open and balustrated in front. The back courts of all these houses are level with the ground, but to go into any of the four streets it is necessary to descend a flight of several steps.

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The streets were once considerably deeper, as is apparent from the shops, whose floors lie far below the present pavement. The lesser streets and allies, that run into the greater streets, were sloped to the level of the bottoms of the latter, as is particularly visible in *Bridge-street*. It is difficult to assign a reason for these hollowed ways: I can only suppose them to have been the void left after the destruction of the ancient vaults mentioned by an ancient historian: *In this cyte, says the POLYCHRONICON\**, *ben ways under erthe with vowtes and stone-werke wonderly wrought thre chambred werkes: I grave with olde mennes names therein. There is also JULIUS CEZARS name wonderly in stones grave, and other noble mennes also with the wrytynge about: meaning the altar and monumental inscriptions of the Romans.*

Cathedral.

The cathedral ('till the reformation the church of the rich monastery of St. *Werburch*) is an ancient structure, very ragged on the outside, from the nature of the friable red stone \*\* with which it is built; but it still may boast of a most elegant Western front; and the tabernacle work in the choir is very neat: St. *Werburch's* shrine is now the bishop's throne, decorated with the figures of *Mercian* monarchs and saints; to whom the fair patroness was a bright example, living immaculate with her husband *Ceolredus*, copying her aunt the great *Ethelreda*, who lived for three years, with not less purity, with her good man *Tonbertus*, and for twelve with her second husband, the pious Prince *Egfrid*. History relates, that this religious house was originally a nunnery, founded A. D. 660, by *Wulperus*, king of the *Mercians*, in

\* *Higden's Polychronicon*, or rather that by *Roger Cestrensis*, a *Benedictine* monk of St. *Werburch's*; from whom *Higden* is said to have stolen the whole work. This *Roger* was cotemporary with *Trivet*, who died A. D. 1328.

\*\* *Vale-Royal*, 19.

favor

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favor of his daughter's indisposition. The nuns, in process of time, gave way to canons secular; and they again were displaced by *Hugh Lupus*, nephew to the conqueror, in 1095, and their room supplied by *Benedictines*.

The beauty and elegant simplicity of a very antique gothic chapter-house, and its fine vestibule, merits a visit from every traveller. The date of the foundation is uncertain, but it seems, from the similitude of roof and pilasters in a chapel in the square tower in the castle, to have been the work of cotemporary architects, and these architects were probably *Norman*; for the mode of square towers, with squared angles, was introduced immediately on the conquest.

Chapter-house.

The cloisters, the great refectory, now the free-school, and a gateway of most singular structure, are at present the sole remains of this monastery. The ruins near St. *John's* church are fine reliques of the piety of the times; and the massy columns, and round arches within the church, most curious specimens of the clumsy strength of *Saxon* architecture. The former are probably the remains of the monastery of St. *Mary*, founded by *Randal*, second E. of *Chester*, for *Benedictine* nuns. The church was founded by King *Ethelred*, in 689: an uncouth inscription on the walls informs us, that 'King *Ethelred* minding more the  
' blisse of heaven, edified a colledge church notable and famous  
' in the suburbs of *Chester* pleasant and beauteous in the honour  
' of GOD and the *Baptist* St. *John* with the help of bishop  
' *Wulfrice* and good *Excillion*\*.' It was rebuilt in 906, by *Ethelred*, E. of *Mercia*, after he had expelled the *Danes* out of

\* So translated from *bono auxilio*.

the city. This was also the cathedral, until supplanted, in 1551, by the church of the abbey of St. *Werbungb*.

Castle and walls.

The castle is a decaying pile, rebuilt by one of the *Norman* earls, on the site of the more ancient fortrefs. The walls of the city (the only complete specimen of old fortifications) are one mile three quarters and a hundred and one yards in circumference, and, being the principal walk of the inhabitants, are kept in excellent order. The views from the several parts are very fine: the mountains of *Flintshire*, the hills of *Broxton*, and the insulated rock of *Beefton*, form the ruder part of the scenery; a rich flat gives us a softer view, and the prospect up the river towards *Boughton*, recalls in some degree the idea of the *Thames* and *Richmond* hill.

Antiquities.

The *Hypocaust*, near the *Feathers* inn, is one of the remains of the *Romans*, it being well known that this place was a principal station. Among many antiquities found here, none is more singular than the rude sculpture of the *Dea Armigera Minerva*, with her bird and altar, on the face of a rock in a small field near the *Welch* end of the bridge.

Trade.

CHESTER has been, at different times, a *place d'armes*, a great thorough-fare between the two kingdoms, and the residence of a numerous and polished gentry. Trade, 'till of late years, was but little attended to, but at present efforts are making to enter into that of *Guinea*, the plantations, and the *Baltic*; and from the *Phoenix* tower is a good *Pisgah* view of an internal commerce by means of a canal now cutting beneath the walls.

Since the year 1736, and not before, great quantities of linen-cloth have been imported from *Ireland* to each of the annual fairs: in that year 449654 yards; and at present about a million of yards are brought to each fair. Hops are another  
great

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great article of trade, for above ten thousand pockets are sold here annually, much of which is forwarded to the neighboring island. But the only staple trade of the city is in skins, multitudes of which are imported, dressed here, but sent out again to be manufactured. Here is a well-regulated poor-house, and an infirmary; the last supported by contributions from the city, its county, and the adjacent counties of *North-Wales*. The first has happily the best use of this pious foundation; for, whether Healthiness. from the dryness of the situation, the clearness of the air, or the purity of the water, the proportion of deaths to the inhabitants has been only as 1 to 31; whereas in *London* 1 in 20, and 3-4ths; in *Leeds* 1 in 21, and 3-5ths; and in *Northampton* and *Shrewsbury*, 1 in 26, and 2-5ths, annually pay the great tribute of nature\*. Might I be permitted to moralize, I should call this the reward of the benevolent and charitable disposition that is the characteristic of this city; for such is the sacrifice that is pleasing to the Almighty.

About two miles from *Chester* pass over *Hoole* heath, noted for Hoole heath. having been one of the places of reception for strangers, established by *Hugh Lupus*, in order to people his new dominions. This in particular was the *asylum* allotted for the fugitives of *Wales*, and the consequences exceeded the warmest expectations of this politic earl. Numbers of the discontented noblesse of my antient country resorted there, made alliances with the victorious *Normans* and conquered *Saxons*, sublimed the rare into that degree of valour, that in after-times gave to the *Cheeshire* the distinguishing title of CHIEF of MEN, and made its land the very SEED PLOT of GENTILITY.

\* *Vide* the observations on this subject of that humane physician, my worthy friend, Doctor *Haygarth*.

Ride

Ride thro' the small town of *Trafford*: this, with the lordship of *Newton*, was, as *Daniel King* observes, one of the sweet morsels that the abbot of *St. Werburgh* and his convent kept for their own wholesome provision. Get into a tract of sandy country, and pass beneath *Helleby-Tor*, a high and bluff termination of *Delamere* forest, composed of the same friable stone as that near *Chester*, but veined with yellow. Hence, a view of the junction of the *Weever* and the *Mersey*, and an extensive tract of marshy meadow, with some good and much rushy grass; and beyond is the beginning of the wide estuary that flows by *Liverpool*.

*Frodesham*. Cross a little brook, called *Llewyn*, and reach *Frodesham*; a town of one long street, which, with its castle, was allotted by *Edward I.* to *David*, brother to *Lewelyn*, last Prince of *Wales*, as a retainer in his double perfidy against his own blood, and his own country. Not a vestige is left of the castle, which stood at the West end of the town; was latterly used as a house by the *Savages*, and was burnt down in 1652, when one of that name, an Earl *Rivers*, lay dead in it.

This, as well as most other towns and villages in *Cheshire*, stands on an eminence of sand-stone, and by that means enjoys a situation dry, wholesome and beautiful.

The church stands at a vast height above the town. In the register are these two remarkable instances of longevity: *March* the 13th, 1592, was buried, *Thomas Hough*, aged 141; and the very next day was committed to the earth, *Randle Wall*, aged 103. I observed also, that in the Winter of 1574, the pestilence reached this sequestered place for four are then recorded to have died of it. In early times that avenging angel spread destruction thro' all parts of the land; but her power is now ceased by the providential cessation of the natural causes that gave rise to that most dreadful of calamities.

Above

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Above the church is *Beacon* hill, with a beautiful walk cut along its side. At the foot are four butts (archery being still practised here) for an exercise in which the warriors of this county were of old eminent. The butts, lie at four, eight, twelve, and sixteen roods distance from each other; but in these degenerate days the last exceeds the strength of the nerves of even, a man of *Cheeshire* to reach. Archery.

Cross the *Weever*, on a good stone bridge: from a neighboring warehouse much cheese is shipped off, brought down the river in boats from the rich grazing grounds, that extend as far as *Nantwich*. The river, by means of locks, is navigable for barges as high as *Winslow* bridge; but below this admits vessels of sixty tons. The channel above and below is deep and clayey, and at low water very disagreeable.

On the North banks are the ruins of *Rock savage*,<sup>6</sup> suffered, within memory, to fall to decay; once the seat of a family of the same name; and not far remote, on the same range, is *Aston*, a good house, finely situated, but rendered too naked, thro' the rage of modern taste. Rock-savage.

About two miles farther, on the right, is *Dutton-Lodge*, once the seat of the *Duttons*; a family in possession of a singular grant, having the sole power\* over *omnium Leccatorum et meretricum totius Cestreshire*. This privilege came originally from *Randal*, 6th Earl of *Chester*, to *Roger Lacy*, constable of that city, who, when the Earl was closely besieged by the *Welch* in *Rudland* castle, collected hastily for his relief a band of minstrels, and other idle people, and with them succeeded in the attempt; after which his son *John* assigned it to the *Duttons*, one of that name being assitant in the affair. DuttonLodge

\* *Magisterium*.

Reach

Halton castle. Reach *Halton* castle, seated on an eminence, and given by *Hugh Lupus* to *Nigellus*, one of his officers, and founded by one of the two. It became afterwards the property of the house of *Lancaster*, and was a favourite hunting seat of *John of Gaunt*. The castle is a ruin, except a part kept as a prison. It belongs to the duchy of *Lancaster*, and has still a court of record, and other privileges.

From the castle is the most beautiful view in *Cheshire*; a rich prospect of the meanders of the *Mersey*, thro' a fertile bottom; a pretty wooded peninsula jutting into it opposite to *Runcorn*; the great county of *Lancashire*, filled with hedge-row trees; and beyond soar the hills of *Yorkshire* and *Lancashire*; and on the other side appears *Cheshire*, and the still loftier *Cambrian* mountains; but close beneath, near the church, is still a more pleasing view; that of a row of neat alms-houses, for the reception of the superannuated servants of the house of *Norton*, founded by the late *Pusey Brook*, Esq; my friend, and the friend of mankind.

Norton. Descend the hill, and pass by *Norton*, a good modern house, on the site of a priory of canons regular of *St. Augustine*, founded by *William*, son of *Nigellus*, A. D. 1135, who did not live to complete his design; for *Eustace de Burgaville* granted to *Hugh de Catherik* pasture for a hundred sheep. in case he finished the church in all respects conformable to the intent of the founder. It was granted at the dissolution to *Richard Brook*, Esquire.

Continue my way along a flat dull country, reach the banks of the *Mersey*, ride over a long causeway, having before me a perfect wood of lofty poplar, that speaks the soil; and *Warrington* as if in the midst of it. Enter

L A N C A S H I R E.

After crossing a handsome stone bridge of four arches, which leads into the town, and was built by the first Earl of *Derby*,



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*Derby*, to accommodate *Henry VII*, then on his road on a visit to his lordship, probably to soothe the Earl after the ungrateful execution of his brother, Sir *William Stanly*. It was at first a toll-bridge, but his lordship generously released the country from that tax, at a loss of as many marks as was equivalent to the portion of one of his daughters.

The priory of the hermit friars of *Augustine*, founded before 1379, stood near the bridge, but not a relique exists. *Warrington.* The entrance into the town is unpromising, the streets long, narrow, ill built, and crowded with carts and passengers; but farther on are airy, and of a good width, but afford a striking mixture of mean buildings and handsome houses, as is the case with most trading towns that experience a sudden rise: not that this place wants antiquity, for *Iceland* speaks of its having a better market than *Manchester* upwards of 200 years ago. At that time the principal part of the town was near the church, remote from the bridge, and was accessible only by a ford, but the conveniency of a safer transit soon drew the buildings to that end.

The church has of late undergone much alteration, but two *Church.* of the antient side chapels still remain: one belonging to the *Masseys* contains nothing but a small mural monument, with a very amiable character of *Francis Massey*, Esq; Lord of the manours of *Rixton* and *Glasbrock*, last of the antient family, which was extinct with him in 1748; but in an opposite chapel is a magnificent tomb of Sir *Thomas Boteler* and his lady, in alabaster: their effigies lie at top, hand in hand, he in armour, she in a remarkable mitre-shap'd cap; round the sides are various figures, such as *St. Christopher*, *St. George*, and other superstitious sculptures. The *Botelers* were of great antiquity in this place; the first took his name from being *Butler* to *Ranulf de Gernons*, or *Meschines*, Earl of *Chester*; and his posterity obtained great pos-  
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feffions in this county\*, and one of them obtained the charters for markets and fairs at *Warrington*, from his Prince *Edward I*. Tradition says, that this Sir *Thomas*, then resident at *Beauly* house, near this town, was, with his lady; murdered in the night by assassins, who crossed the moat in leathern boats to perpetrate their villainy.

Beneath an arch in the wall near this tomb is another, containing a figure in a long robe, muffled up to the chin; a ghastly figure: the head wrapped in a sort of cap, and bound with a neat fillet.

Besides this church is a neat chapel of ease, lately rebuilt, and many places of worship for Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, Methodists and *Roman* Catholics: for in manufacturing places it often falls out that the common people happily have a disposition to seek the LORD, but as unhappily disagree in the means of rendering themselves acceptable to him.

Here is a frèe-school, very considerably endowed, and made very respectable by the merits of the present master. An academy has of late years been established in this town; with a view of giving an education to their youth on the plan of an university.

Manufactures

The manufactures of this place are very considerable; formerly a great quantity of checks and coarse linnens were made here, but of late years these have given way to that of *Poll-davies*, or sail-cloth, now carried on with such spirit (in the town and country) as to supply near one half of the navy of *Great-Britain*. The late war gave a great rise to this branch, and a sudden improvement to the town.

The making of pins is another considerable article of commerce; locks, hinges, cast-iron, and other branches of hardware, are fabricated here to a great amount: very large works for the

\* *Dugdale's Baronage* I. 653.

refining