



A Sketch
of the EXCURSION between
LONDON & INVERARY.

London. Published by J. Mawman Foultry June 1836



W. Chapman.

AN
EXCURSION
TO THE
HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND
AND THE
ENGLISH LAKES,
WITH
RECOLLECTIONS, DESCRIPTIONS,
AND REFERENCES TO
HISTORICAL FACTS.

"SEEK FOR WISDOM IN THE WIDE VARIETY OF THE RICH
STOREHOUSE OF NATURE."

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN, POULTRY.

1805.

By T. Gillet, Salisbury-square.

TO

WILLIAM SALTE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

IN sending you this hasty sketch of our short but agreeable excursion, I merely fulfil my engagement.

Should your friends derive any amusement from the perusal, to you only their thanks are due, for without your injunction I should not have committed my remarks to writing.

Whatever is erroneous, or frivolous, must be wholly attributed to me: but among my foibles include not the vanity of my supposing, that the following pages can aspire to the rank of a regular composition. My chief purpose in the publication is attained, in thus expressing the value that I set on your friendship, and the respect which I feel for your character.

Believe me, dear sir,

Most sincerely yours,

POULTRY,
4th April, 1805.

J. MAWMAN.

Low Sept. 29, 1805

TO THE READER.

AN ancient writer is said to have given us a true criterion to judge of a good book, "when the author has said all he ought, nothing but what he ought, and every thing as he ought."

If you expect so much excellence from the following pages, composed almost wholly from hasty memoranda, written during the rapid motion of a chaise on a journey more of business than of pleasure, you will be disappointed: should you find, joined to it's other imperfections, a want of interest (for it aspires no higher, than to amuse) you are here furnished with a hint to prevent it's being tiresome.

A great talker, flattering himself that he displayed much wisdom to a Grecian philosopher, said, "Are you not astonished?" "Yes," replied the sage; "but what astonishes me is, that any man should use his ears to listen to you, who can employ his legs to escape from you."

AN
EXCURSION
TO THE
HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND,
AND THE
ENGLISH LAKES.

CHAP. I.

Departure from London—Tottenham—Waltham-Cross
—Queen Eleanor—Ware—Arrington—Rising-sun—
Royston crow—The advantages of an university-edu-
cation—Huntingdon—Cromwell and Buonaparte com-
pared—Vandals—Carausius—Caxton—Matthew Paris
—Caxton the printer—Stilton-cheese—Burleigh—Geof-
fry Hudson the dwarf—Anecdote of the late Marquis
of Exeter.

ON the 10th day of July, 1804, two
citizens, designing to take a journey into
Scotland, quitted their habitations in the
heart of that metropolis, whose merchants,
from it's extensive commerce, are more im-

portant and more honourable than those of any other in the world.

They left without sorrow to it's anxious inhabitants the ceaseless noise of carriages, the continual movement of busy feet and of feverish tongues, and those harassing tumults of the breast, which produce great wealth and splendour, but neither contentment nor gratification; for how can there be comfort without, when strife is always raging within?



We intended to leave London, on Monday the 9th, to visit Liverpool and the Lakes in our way to Glasgow, and to return through Edinburgh and York; but finding Sir William Milner had resolved to set off for his seat in Yorkshire the day following, and that he was disposed to honour us with his company, we determined to reverse our route.

On Tuesday afternoon, in a chaise hired

for the journey, we quickly left behind us the Mansion-house, the Bank, the Exchange, streets teeming with wealth, noble churches and extensive structures erected by public and individual charity;

Fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romæ :

all impressive proofs of the splendour and magnificence of the capital, and of the refinement and benevolence of a great commercial people.

At Tottenham High-cross we noticed a pillar of brick, and at Waltham one of stone, both erected by Edward the First to the memory of his beloved Eleanor: the former possesses little to excite admiration, but the latter, being in high preservation and enriched with gothic ornaments, is very beautiful. Fourteen crosses were erected as monuments of affection and of respect to this queen, from Herdley in Nottinghamshire where she died, to London the place of her interment, at the seve-

ral places where the body rested on the road.

In our progress to Waltham-cross we did not observe a single corn-field, the land being almost wholly appropriated to the grazing of cattle. The number of cows kept for the use of the inhabitants of the metropolis, in the small county of Middlesex, is believed to be upwards of forty thousand.

Passing through Ware at the head of the navigation of the river Lea, which renders it a considerable town, principally by enabling it to supply London with flour and malt, prepared here and in the neighbourhood from the produce of the adjacent fertile country, we reached the Hardwick Arms, at Arrington about eleven o'clock, where we slept.

Next morning being fine, the Swiss-box became the most interesting seat of our carriage. Commanding a view on every side, the body placed at ease and the mind

kept in agreeable vivacity by the rapid succession of objects, it was found to be the best adapted for observation, for reflection, and for pleasure.

The broad expanse uninterruptedly spread around afforded an unlimited liberty of prospect, and exhilarated us with the consciousness of emancipation. Our eyes were delighted with the change from straight lines of streets, constantly terminated by houses, to an immeasurable amphitheatre closed only by the mellow softness of clouds. To add to the impressiveness of this (to us) novel scene, we beheld the sun rise in splendour, "coming forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a giant to run his course:" and we sighed at the recollection of the many glorious days that pass over the inhabitant of London, unconscious that there is a bright sun and a clear atmosphere, a grateful verdure and a refreshing breeze "with day-spring born."

In the neighbourhood of Royston, we saw a species of crow (supposed to breed in Scandinavia) which is little known except here and in the eastern parts of England: its head, neck, and wings are black, glossed over with a fine blue; the breast, belly, and back pale ash colour; the toes broad and flat, to enable it to tread upon marshy ground.

Our road did not carry us through Cambridge; but it was impossible to pass so near it, without recollecting and revering those illustrious characters of past ages, Bacon, Milton, Newton, and others; and many too of our own times, who received their education at this university, and who have been and still are ornaments to the state, to the church, and to general literature. Notwithstanding the late attempts to cast a shade over the utility of this and the other universities of the United Kingdom, we felt the fullest conviction of the advantages derived to society from drawing together young men of rank, of affluence, and of

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genius; where enlightened emulation must be communicated from breast to breast, arising, not only from a regard to character amongst their coevals, but from a desire to be ranked amongst their illustrious predecessors, the glories of the senate, the pulpit, and the bar. We were persuaded that the advantages of public instruction do not stop here; the dispersion of generous youth, who have received a liberal education, who have formed exalted friendships, and who possess a superiour elegance of manners, must have a tendency to diffuse useful knowledge and social habits, the great preservatives from immorality and superstition. We could not recollect any protestant institution in the world, the members of which are required to remain in celibacy, excepting the universities of England and Ireland.

We breakfasted at Huntingdon, saw the house in which Cromwell was born, and were naturally led to compare him with

Buonaparté. Both, with minds insatiably ambitious, rose from subordinate situations in the army to supreme authority: both seized every opportunity of employing their abilities most advantageously to themselves, and to the state: both became a terrour to the surrounding nations: and Buonaparté probably, like Cromwell, will be tormented with an unquiet conscience, and die with the character of being the worst and the greatest man of his age. We lamented that the tendency to decay inherent in all human affairs, joined to the selfishness and ambition of men, should produce more years of desolation than of tranquillity, and thus cause the necessity of revolutions. It was remarked, that the lust of sovereign power is a temptation hardly to be resisted; and that, though revolutions are more frequent in barbarous than in polished ages, yet in the latter, they are not less subversive or less bloody.

It is supposed that a considerable body of

Vandals, which the Roman emperor Probus sent into Britain, settled in this district; and, in the subsequent troubles in the country, approved themselves the most faithful servants of the state. A few years afterwards, this island was wrested from Rome by Carausius, a Welshman of the meanest origin, but a skilful pilot and a brave soldier. The mention of this British emperor might be thought of small importance, but for the remarkable fact that, so early as A.D. 289, the fleets under his direction rode triumphant in the channel, commanding the mouths of the Seine and of the Rhine, ravaged the coasts of the ocean, and he diffused the terrour of his name along the shores of the Mediterranean.

The insular situation of Britain, and the barbarism of the Anglo-Saxons, seem to have made them neglect the arts of navigation, and renounce commercial advantages; but probably, from the æra of Carausius to the reigns of Alfred and Edgar

(for the dark ages were not so destitute of light, as is commonly supposed) some penetrating minds have at all times perceived, that in the navy is the natural and only true strength of our country.

Caxton, which we passed through, is said to have been the place of nativity of Matthew Paris, an historian of the thirteenth century, who defended his country from the encroachments of the pope. It is also supposed to have given birth to William Caxton, whose name will be handed down to the latest posterity, as the first printer of books in England. The earliest specimen of his art (it is believed) printed during his residence on the continent, in the year 1471, was entitled *The Recuyell of the Histories of Troyes*; but the first book, which he produced in his own country, was his *Game of Chesse*, printed in 1474. The former may be regarded as the first printed English book; the latter, as the first book printed in England.

It is impossible to pass through Stilton without thinking of its cheese, the produce however, chiefly of Leicestershire. We smiled at the sneer of the editor of the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, who states "that this place is famous for what is called English Parmesan, which is brought to the English tables full of mites and maggots:" and suspected this gentleman had not travelled so far south as to have either seen or tasted this excellent produce of the dairy which he affects to describe.

Before we reached Stamford we observed, upon an eminence on our right, Burleigh, a mansion highly celebrated for its pictures, which we much regretted we had not time to inspect. Our proximity to it, however, produced many agreeable impressions: and amongst other interesting recollections the celebrated dwarf, Geoffry Hudson, became the subject of conversation—his introduction on the table (at an entertainment given at this place) in a cold pye, and

his being presented, "when the pye was opened," to the royal guest, Henrietta queen of Charles the First: his being drawn by the king's gigantic porter out of his pocket at a masque at court, as if to devour him: his appointment during the civil wars to the rank of captain: his duel with a Mr. Crofts, who at first came into the field armed only with a squirt, whom he killed at the first shot, on their second meeting: his banishment from court for this offence: his commencing sailor, capture by a Turkish rover, slavery in Barbary, release, and subsequent appointment to the command of a ship in the royal navy: his attending queen Henrietta, on her final retreat into France: his return to England after the Restoration, and death in prison in 1682, aged 63 years, from a suspicion of his having been concerned in the Rye-house Plot. A minute detail of the eventful life of this little hero, who never attained four feet in

stature, may be found in Lord Orford's Works.

There are some circumstances in the life of the late noble possessour of Burleigh, which deserve commemoration. In his youth, while Mr. Cecil (his uncle being then earl of Exeter) he married a lady of very large fortune. In a few years, having suffered two of the deepest wounds which the severity of fortune can inflict, the loss of his property by gaming and of his wife by divorce, he determined to abandon the fashionable world, and retired under the name of Jones to a village in Shropshire. There he at first occupied a lodging, but soon built a small cottage; and continued for some years in such profound obscurity, that hardly a trace of him could be discovered by his friends: while the inhabitants of the village formed the wildest conjectures concerning the solitary stranger. His agreeable manners, however, soon rendered him an acceptable

neighbour. One evening, at the table of the rector of the parish, he displayed so much knowledge of the world and such a degree of classical information, that his host told him, his education and manners were too conspicuously superiour to those of the character he assumed (viz. that of a servant who had gained a small independence in the family of a nobleman) not to excite considerable doubts, both of the name which he bore and the account which he gave of himself. This remark induced Mr. Cecil, after the strictest injunction of secrecy, to disclose his real history.

Amongst the farmers, whom he occasionally visited, was one of the name of Hoggins. This person had a daughter about eighteen years of age, so beautiful and amiable, that Mr. Cecil made her an offer of his hand. She referred him to her father, who, on account of the mystery involving his character, objected to

the match. To this he replied, that the offer was much more advantageous than either the father or the daughter could reasonably expect. The farmer then consulted the clergyman, who told him he was not at liberty to give him the desired information: but he probably expressed himself upon the occasion, so as to convince the inquirer that he ought not to withhold his consent; for the marriage was soon after solemnized (in the year 1791) and Mr. and Mrs. Jones retired to their cottage.

Lord Exeter being at the point of death, the steward was dispatched in search of the heir, whom he found at Bolas with a wife and two children. Mr. Cecil, having contrived still to remain unknown, proposed to his lady a journey to Stamford in the stage-coach. Before their arrival, the uncle was no more. To Burleigh they were conveyed in a chaise; and, as they proceeded through the park, Mr. Cecil

(now earl of Exeter) repeatedly asked his fair companion, how she liked the grounds and the situation of the mansion: he then proposed, that they should "see the house;" and, while the cottager was gazing with astonishment at the novel scene of so much magnificence, told her that these objects of her admiration, together with many which he would afterwards show her, were her own, and that she was the countess of Exeter. The sudden communication of this unexpected grandeur was too powerful for her to sustain, and she was carried motionless into her apartment.

The remark however, that great and sudden elevations seldom contribute much to happiness, was here fully exemplified. Admired for her beauty and early attainment of elegant manners, beloved for her humility and amiable conduct, amidst those scenes of splendour lady Exeter appeared unhappy. Her perpetual

solicitude to acquire those accomplishments, which she thought requisite for her new station, probably preyed upon her spirits and accelerated her death. She died in the bloom of life (at the age of 24) in January, 1797, leaving two sons and a daughter, the present marquis, lord Thomas, and lady Sophia Cecil.