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**THE PERSONALITIES OF
THE FOREST OF DEAN.**

THE
PERSONALITIES
OF THE
FOREST OF DEAN;

BEING A
RELATION OF ITS SUCCESSIVE OFFICIALS,
GENTRY, AND COMMONALTY,
DRAWN FROM NUMEROUS SOURCES, BUT CHIEFLY FROM
UNPUBLISHED DATA AND LOCAL INFORMATION,

*Forming an Appendix to "An Historical and Descriptive
Account of the Forest of Dean."*

BY THE
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DEAN FOREST.

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PREFACE.

SHORTLY after the publication of the Author's former Work on the Forest of Dean, it was intimated to him that some specific account of the Foresters themselves, including the various Constables of St. Briavel's Castle, their Deputies, Verderers, and Gentlemen of the District, would be acceptable to the reading public.

Acting on this suggestion, the task of collecting as much information about them as possible was immediately commenced, and continued until every source of intelligence was believed to be exhausted, the result being comprised in the present volume.

Whatever completeness it possesses, is due to the unreserved assistance afforded to the Writer by the existing Gentry, who are still, as Mr. Rudder described them, eighty years ago,—“courteous, hospitable, and generous.” Its defects are his own, and will, he trusts, be tenderly excused in consideration of the other and higher claims on his time as a Parochial Clergyman.

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THE PERSONALITIES OF THE FOREST OF DEAN.

ST. BRIAVEL—HIS SUPPOSED ORIGIN—THE CASTLE (SO CALLED), AND ITS SUCCESSIVE CONSTABLES, ETC.

AN appellation so evidently personal as that of St. "Briavell," with its Christian prefix, possesses peculiar interest. It has consequently been a subject of much archæological research, but with no more definite result than the elucidation of its distant and perhaps foreign origin. If the latter be its source, then the absence of all local tradition is explained.

The conclusion that St. Briavel resided in this neighbourhood, has been made to depend upon the circumstance that "Stowe Grange," only a mile distant from St. Briavel's Castle, is called "the Hermitage of St. Briavel," in the charter of Henry III. (1227), granting it to the Abbey of Gratia Dei, Monmouthshire. Such appellation is, however, not decisive evidence that he himself occupied the cell, any more than that the adjoining Hermitage of St. Margaret was her residence. A stone slab, 5 feet by 2 feet, rudely carved in the Runic manner, with a crossed circle and some human figures, much mutilated, has also been regarded as another vestige of the Saint. It formed a step in the existing Grange, built apparently during the Commonwealth, in accordance with the date 1655, on a cast iron fire back. Report says, the stone was brought from an ancient burial ground, in the "Castle Orchard." This is a very early fort, or ring-fence,

formed in the Celtic mode. Mr. Fryer, the ingenious ethnologist of Coleford, has been the first to notice the antiquities above named, and to investigate the subject with which he considers them to be connected. The name does not occur in any other part of the kingdom, nor in our oldest writings, chronicles, or calendars, so far at least as they have been examined.*

No earlier mention of this Patron Saint of the Forest has been met with than the instance detected by Mr. Ormerod, in the *Pipe Roll* of 31 Henry I. (1131). It is to the effect that certain expenses accruing from the services of one knight, sergeant, porter, and watch, at the "Castellum de Sco Briavel," were rendered by Milo de Gloucestria. This officer was doubtless that Milo Fitz Walter whom Holinshed says was Constable of St. Briavel's Castle, and the Forest of Dean, previous to the death of Henry I., and during the first year of Stephen, but who soon deprived him of them; siding, however, with the Empress Maud, Countess of Anjou, she reinstated him, A. D. 1141.

Although, according to Henry of Huntingdon, the whole Shire, of which Milo was Constable, was unlawfully oppressed by him, yet such was his valour that, A. D. 1136, he rescued the wife of Richard Fitz Gilbert from a concourse of robbers, "tracking his way through the enemy's posts, among the gloomy recesses of the woods and over mountain tops." The same chronicler records, "that he was so faithful and constant to the family of King Henry, that he was not only their abettor, but entertained the Countess of Anjou and her retinue, filling the place of a father to her both in council and action." His death occurred in 1142, being "pierced through the breast with an arrow, shot by a soldier at a stag,

* Mr. Rees's suggestion that the Gloucestershire St. Briavel may be the same as St. Brychen Brychenorm, of Rochfield, Monmouthshire, does not profess to be more than a supposition.—*Lives of the Cambro British Saints*, page 607.

while the Earl was hunting deer on Christmas Eve," at which time he was under an interdict, pronounced on him and his followers by the Bishop of Hereford, for seizing the goods and lands of the See.

The intercourse thus opened with the North of France seems to explain how it happened that shortly afterwards the Benefice of Lydney, with the Chapels of Hewelsfield and Lydney-parva, i. e. St. Briavel, including the tithes of each, were given to Lire Abbey, in Normandy, and to that of Saumur, in Anjou.* This alienation appears to have led to the enlargement and re-consecration of the chapel of Lydney-parva as "Capella S. Briavelli,"† not later than 1166, by the Bishop of Worcester, the See of Hereford being vacant. It is interesting to find, in the South Aisle of the Nave of the existing church, work belonging to this early period.

Consonant with the above facts, the name of Briavel sounds of Norman origin, with a trace of the Breton, resembling the St. Brieux of Brittany—"ville" being appended. Then dropping the x, according to French pronunciation, St. Brieuxville would be called St. Brieuville, or, in short, St. Briavel. Legend ‡ tells that St. Brioc or Brienc was of British origin, and a pupil of one of the St. Germans. Driven from this country by the Saxons, he landed on the opposite coast, where Rigwal, his cousin and Lord of the District, relinquished his house to him. This was situated in a forest called "The Double Valley," where at length the saint built a monastery, christianized the neighbourhood, and became its first bishop. Other instances may be mentioned in which Breton names occur in our own counties, especially in Cornwall, where there is a St. Columb, St. Breac, or Breage, St. Tregony, St. Breoch, or Breoh, etc. St. Breulais, which is the other

* Dugdale's *Mon. Ang.* vol. II. 985.

† Ormerod's *Itrigulensia*, page 109.

‡ Jephson's *Tour in Brittany*, p. 31.

document given to the Saint, is not
confuses the Castle of St. Briavel nothing is
Forest of Dean. Camden is the first to
except the *Norman* Castle of Giraldu, or Bynl
being a few indestructible by
ago. It formed the old keep masses of thick wa
constituting the existing ruin, and was doubtl
parts of the crown, and preserve the
the devastations of the Welsh.
Occupation in the reign of
man usage—for so he was
the neighbourhood of a place
attended to the
at "Roll

usage—as a place for the Welsh. Evidence of the neighbourhood, from receiving also its sup-
A.D. 1130. “Hugh, son of William, son of Norman-
Dean, and the hais of £13. for the rent of the Forest
A.D. 1155-6. “Nigel, son of Arthur, rendered
rent of £10. for the King’s writ. And to Wi-
Treasury, there was £7. 10s. And to Wi-
ss 30s.; by his writ. And to Wi-
57. “Nigel, son of Arthur, rendered
Forest of Dean.” And to Wi-
rent of the Forest of Dean.” And to Wi-

place was of Henry II. by
Evidence of the neighbourhood
of the Forest of Dean.
A.D. 1155-6. "Nigel, son of
the Treasury, there was £7.
business 30s., by his writ.
for 20s., by the King's writ.
A.D. 1157. "Nigel, son of
D. 1158. "Nigel, son of
the Forest of Dean." And
for the rent of the Forest of
the King's writ, the same
Forest of Dean, and the
writ of the King, the

Nigel, son of Arthur, rendered account
 of the Forest of Dene. In
 A.D. 1157. "Nigel, son of
 the King's writ, the same Nigel,
 rendered account of £10. and
 Roger Powis rendered account
 of the Forest of Dean, and the
 Hais (Hais) the same
 Nigel, son of Arthur, owes £10. for the
 Forest of Dene. And for William
 the King's writ, Hadewin,
 rendered account of £13. and
 Roger Powis rendered account
 of the Forest of Dean, and the
 Hais (Hais) the same

Similar information, from the same source, dated 1 Richard I. (1189), next ensues.

"Of the King's amercements for the Forest.—Robert de Albermara owes £4. 3s. 10d. by the King's amercement for the Forest. Lawrence Mallore rendered account of 8s. 4d. by the King's amercement for the Forest. In the Treasury there was 4s. 4d. And he owes 4s. Richard Bule owes 6s. 8d. for bad custody of the Forest."

"Of the pleas of Robert de Broc and his colleagues of the Forest.—The vill of Hoppa Hunald, owes 2s. for waste of wood. Suñ. de Curumba, owes 17s. 8d. for chattels of a certain fugitive, for the Forest. The same Sheriff (William Fitz Stephen) rendered account in £4. 7s. 6d. for new ploughed lands in Gloucestershire. In pardon by liberty of the King's charter to the Bishop of Worcester 60s. And he owes 27s. 6d."

"Of the pleas of the Forest of Gloucestershire, by Robert de Broc and his associates.—Richard, son of Ordwi, owes 6d. for the King's amercement for the Forest. Robert Porcarius owes 6d. for the same. Richard, son of Garwi, owes 12d. for the same. Barnard de Crumhale rendered account by 3s. for the same. In the Treasury there are 2s. And he owes 12d. Robert, son of Humphrey, rendered account of 3s. for the same. In the Treasury there are 2s. And he owes 12d. Robert Achard rendered account of 3 marks for having his imparlance in the King's Court concerning his reasonable part, of three parts of one knight's fee, against Hardwin de Truham. In the Treasury there were 6s. And he owes 34s. Robert de Broc, and Robert de Haselea, rendered account of £11. 12s. for pannage in the Forest of Dene, this year (1189). They paid it into the Treasury, and are quit."

The same *Rolls*, of 3 John, (1201), supply these further particulars. William Marescall, rendered account of £10. for the rent of the Forest of Dene. He paid it into the Treasury. And is quit."

"Of the promises made by Hugo de Nevill.—The same Sheriff rendered account of 12s. for Nigel de Saint Briavel. And in two marks for Robert de Albemara. And in 10s. for Galfrid de Dene. And in one mark for Radulf Avenel. And in two marks for William Yugan. And in three marks for Walter Croc. And in three marks for Walter de Torinton. And in two marks and 40d. for Radulf Avenel. And in half a mark for Walter de Huntley. And in 27s. 10d. for the vill of Puklecherch. And in 25s. 4d., for the vill of Horton, and for causes which are contained in the preceding Roll. He paid it into the Treasury, in 11 tallys. And is quit."

"Henry de Stanton owes 4 marks for bad custody of his Bailiwick. The same Sheriff owes £10. 17s. 9d. as is contained in the first Roll. Arnald the Reeve owes 9 marks for great assarts, as is contained in the same. Peter Lawerre, in 100s. for transgressions of the vert. Robert de Stokes owes 20s. which he took of assart. Galfrid, son of Adam, owes one mark for having a writ, as is contained in the first Roll. The same Sheriff rendered account of 6s. of Robert Ball, and Nigel de St. Briavel, and John Blunt, and Eli de Rudehali, of rent of the many acres, as is contained in the preceding Roll. He paid it into the Treasury in 4 tallys. And he is quit."

The Itinerary of this King shews that he honoured St. Briavel's Castle with a succession of visits, viz.:—

In A.D. 1200 on November 12.

" 1207 " " 15, 16, 17.

" 1209 " December 4.

" 1212 " November 10, 11, 12.

" 1213 " " 28, 29, 30.

Their being made late in the Autumn indicates that the sports of the chase attracted him hither, combined, perhaps, with the expediency of examining the condition of his forestal exchequer. He paid them mostly "*en*

route," and only for short periods, owing, it may have been to the limited accommodation which the single tower, that then constituted the Castle, afforded. Its stock of wine, amounting to a couple of tuns, was generally bespoken previous to his coming, with the proviso that it was to be of prime quality, for his own use; but "*de vino dispensabile*," for common purposes. Such was his Majesty's interest in the place, and so considerable its local importance, from the resort to it of all persons having business with the Crown Officer, that in 1208* the King commanded a market to be held here every Sunday, of which the Sheriff was ordered to make proclamation throughout his Bailiwick.

At this period, Hugh de Nevill had custody of the Castle, and keeping of the Forest, having received his appointment 13 April, 1207.† In this capacity he is found charged with the duty of allowing certain persons to take deer. One of them, John de Monmouth, who succeeded him in 1216, was similarly authorized, being further required to assign pieces of land to specified parties; to "agist the Forest in the skirts of it and not in the midst where wild boars congregate and love to come;" to control the iron forges, *i. e.* where and to whom they should be granted or refused; to allow wood fuel in certain cases, and timber, particularly to the Monks of Flaxley and Lanthony, and to the Parson of Wilton for repairing his church, as also § "posts, planks, and other timber to make the bridge of Gloucester Castle, by view of the Verderers;" of whom and of their duties this is the earliest mention. One of John de Monmouth's last commissions was "to cause to come to Muntgumeri, twenty good miners of the Forest of Dean, to do the works of the Castle which is being built there," who are to have *liberationes suas* from the

* *Rot. Litt. Claus.* † *Patent*, 8 John.

§ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*

day they leave those parts to come hither, for fifteen days, and it shall be accounted him at the Exchequer.

It is recorded by Matt. Paris, that this Lord had in his service a strong and bold man, named Robert Chandos, who, having left his master in anger, engaged himself with others in robberies and murder; but being taken, and kept closely fettered by the gaolers, who were afraid of him, died a miserable death.

John de Monmouth's functions expired on 22nd February, 1224, when he was commanded to deliver the Castle of St. Briavel's and Bailiwick of the Forest to Roger de Clifford,* "to keep as long as pleases the King," by whom he was intrusted with the usual commissions, including one to repair the towers of the Castle.†

He continued in charge for sixteen years, rendering for the last twelve months, £166. 13s. 4d. to the Exchequer. Of this personage, Matt. Paris relates that he, like many others, blinded by presents, withdrew from the Baron's party, for joining which he seems to have been deprived of his Constablership. Afterwards he attended the King at Oxford, as well as at Northampton. He likewise assisted Prince Edward in escaping from Hereford Castle.

From 1249 to 1256, Peter Chacepore held office, paying £170. a year to the Crown. Matt. Paris says that he was one of the clerks whom the King sent, in 1250, to Winchester, to obtain the election to that See of Ailmar Lusignan, his half brother; but without success. A like failure attended his mission, two years later, to Queen Blanche, for leave to pass through her kingdom. He died at Boulogne in 1255, whilst waiting on Henry as favourite Clerk and Counsellor, and the Queen's Treasurer. "There," adds the chronicler, "he was honourably buried, and a solemn funeral service performed over his body. This same Peter had made a

* *Rot. Litt. Claus.* † *Rot. Litt. Claus.*

noble will and testament three days before Christmas, by which (amongst other legacies) he bequeathed six hundred marks to purchase land in England, where land and revenues could be more easily procured, and to build on it a church of Regular Canons, that there the Lord might be worthily served for ever, and that daily sacrifices might be offered up to God for his soul, and for the souls of all Christians. He departed on the eve of our Lord's Nativity."

James Freysil, his Assistant being Hubert de Winterburn, next acted as Deputy for Henry III., but only for the year 1256-7, rendering account, of £162. 6s. 1d. received on the King's account, or rather on that of his son Edward, to whom he now conceded it, "*ita quod non separantur a corona.*" (*Cal. Rot. Pat.*) As follows:—

	£.	s.	d.
By Rent of Assize of St. Briavel, Newland, and Forest of Dean	44	11	10
Rent of Fisheries on the Severn	18	0	0
Rent of the King's great Forge	22	10	0
Rent of the Forges of Strangers	8	4	6
Rent of one ditto	4	9	0
Coal and Iron Mines	23	1	4
Sale of Herbage	21	0	0
Rent of Land	5	0	0
Sale of small nuts	0	7	3
Pleas and Perquisites of Court	15	2	2
	£162	6	1

Thus it seems that whilst some of the Constables held office under a fixed annual payment, others farmed their appointments, rendering all their receipts into the Exchequer. The last item in the above estimate affords the earliest intimation met with of the existence of St. Briavel's Court of Record. Soon after we find an Inquisition, 45 Henry III. (1261), held "in Curia

Forestæ de Dene." It was held in the Castle until late years, under the Constable, or his Deputies, acting for the Manor, or Hundred.

The *Hundred Rolls*, of 2 Edward I. (1274), where that of St. Briavel's is mentioned for the first time, shew that it was now being consolidated of such vills and manors as then existed in the Forest district, with their Tenures and Revenues. The same Rolls, unaccountably specify the vill of St. Briavell with the Castle, and Forest of Dene, as included in Burnetre Hundred, now incorporated with that of Slaughter, on the other side of the County. Not as "a Hundred" in itself, but only under the head of "St. Briavell," are included, as held of the King, the manors of St. Briavell and Newland, rendering him annually £33; that of Newnham paying £10. and the Forest yielding £37. from the Mines, Pannage, Herbage and other appurtenances.

Since the last reign, (Henry III.) the Manor of Graenhull, yielding annually 30s. 5d., had passed from the Crown to Roger de Knovile. Likewise Rodeleye, yielding 42s. to Richard Talebot, and Ministreworth, rendering £22. to Edmund, the King's son, having been previously granted for life to Simon de Montfort. Hualdersfield, formerly a royal manor, now belonged to the Earl Marshal of Strugoil, (Chepstow) in behalf of the Abbot of Tintern. The vill of Longhope, had become alienated to Richard Talebot, and that of Aure to William de Valence and the Countess of Gloucester. Such were the extensive inroads made of late upon this regal estate.

Under the title of "Fees," the Hundredors returned the vill and Bailiwick of Staunton, paying 26s. 8d., annually. That of Habeal, (Abbenhall) with the Manor, principally belonged to the Abbot of Flaxeley. Penyard Bailiwick, formerly held by John de Monemuta, as Keeper of the Forest of Dene, now belonged by purchase to John de Knovile. Bleygh Bailiwick was held

by John Bleygh, but chiefly by the Abbot of Flaxeley. Thomas de Blakeney formerly held the Bailiwick of that name, although the Abbot of Flaxeley held it afterwards.

The Hundred of Blitheslawe, had been given by the late King, to William, the Earl Marshall, and is worth £5. yearly.

Returns of writs and assize of bread, and beer, and pleas of "*namium vititum*," and gallows were likewise claimed from the crown.

The wrecks on sea at Tudenham and Alfordeston, formerly the King's, were now demanded by the Earl Marshall, who, of old, held the chase reaching from the bridge of Strugull, to the plain of Alumton, (Alvington) and in the time of the late King had exceeded the bounds as far as the field of Hualdesfeld. So too the chase of Hodenac, (Hudnells) once in the Crown, was now claimed by Roger de Clifford. Numerous purprestures had likewise been committed, to the injury of the King's Demensne, curtailing the jurisdiction of the Constable of St. Briavel's Castle and Wardenship of the Forest, to the limits of the existing Hundred. The Earl Marshall gave, in the time of Henry III., five carucates of land, in the chase of Chepstow, to the monks of Tinterne, in alms.

Robert Walerand, who succeeded Ralph de Sandwich, was in office during this period, his farm rental being fixed at £140. a year, under Edward, the King's eldest son, who held it as aforesaid. Robert Walerand's Deputy was Robert le Walays (*Placita Forestæ*, 54 Henry III.) After Robert Walerand, Roger Mortimer had the custody, and under him was Richard de Liketon. He was succeeded by Roger Mortimer, with John Giffard Richard de Heveneburg, as Deputy. Then followed Thomas de Clare, for two years, with Galf. de Doynton. In the time of Robert le Walays, damage was done to the King in the Forest to the amount of £307. 13s. 4d., and even in John Giffard's

time, to £1320. 0s. 0d., and in Thomas de Clare's time, £1048. 12s. 0d. (*Placita Forestæ*, 54 Hen. III.) In 54 Hen. III. Adam the Reeve of St. Briavell and several others were imprisoned for stealing a great part of the timbers prepared for the repairs of the Castle.

In 1276, Ralph de Sandwico, having Walter de Snape for Sub-constable, succeeded as Lieutenant to the King, receiving £252. 6s. 5½d. for the first year, in the following manner.—

	£.	s.	d.
By Rent of Assize of St. Briavel's Manor ..	42	0	6
Issues of the water of Severn	26	16	3
Great and little mines of Iron and Coal	23	16	9½
Rent of forges	11	16	0
Sale of firewood	6	1	10
Sale of cinders	5	15	0
Sale of pannage	0	8	5½
Toll on horses and carts	3	0	0
By herbage	6	10	1½
Timber and underwood sold by order of patent	102	0	0
By corn bought and sold	3	16	8
By pleas and perquisites	21	3	10

The next year (1277) the receipts under the same officer increased to £690. 0s. 9½d., owing to the large sum of £515. 4s. 9d. being paid in for timber.

Fellings of this amount are found generally connected with some heavy charge which the authorities had to meet. On this occasion, the architectural features of the Castle, exhibited in what is left, so nearly correspond with the style of the period, as to suggest that the cost of its erection had something to do with this wholesale fall. Several of the peculiarities to be observed in the angular headed windows of Chepstow, Goodrich, Hereford Cathedral, and Tintern, with their triangular buttresses, may be detected here, indicating a common origin.

For the four years ensuing the Constable's accounts were:—

								£.	s.	d.
In 1278	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	390	1	6
In 1279	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	166	19	7
In 1280	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	301	2	5
In 1281	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	147	11	8

A deed exists, dated June 3rd, 1282, giving and granting Ralph de Sandwico 200 acres of Noxton Park, at a rental of 50s. 6d.

In 10 Edward I. Will. de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, held the Castle, with Will. le Bland as Deputy. Will. Bland was in office 46 Henry III., 57 Henry III., 1 Edward I. In 2 Edward I., Phil. Wyther was Constable. In 5 to 8 Edward I. Walter Snappe.

Grimbald Pauncefot next took office, holding it for five years, and paying £140. per annum as his farm rent.

During his time, one Philip Fitz-Walter de Blakeneye, an accustomed transgressor of venery in the Forest, who had often been caught and imprisoned, broke out of the Castle, and continued to rob on. Richard le Vener, forester, John le Butillier, Roger Fitz Mather, Fitz Petre de Ruwardyn, and others, raising hue and cry, caught and beheaded him; but the King pardoned them, the suit of his peace. A similar pardon was granted to Richard le Vener for beheading William Gommy, another robber. (*Pat. R.*)

In 1287, William de Hathewy had the Castle and Forest, paying a rent of £160. at which rental the farm of the Castle and Forest remained fixed until the time of Robert de Sapy, who had an allowance of 20s. yearly for the value of the weir of Wytheskeswere, which had passed into the hands of the Abbot of Tyntern. Besides the farm rent, the King received from 1306 to 15 Edward III., £37 a year for rent of waste lands which did not belong to the Castle of St. Briavell. After the Constable last named succeeded—

John Botetourle, A.D. 1291, during whose period of office perambulations of the Forest appear to have been particularly frequent; John de Haulo followed in A.D. 1307, who, in 1310, was directed to choose a hundred archers, and a dozen miners from the Forest and send them to Berwick-on-Tweed. (*Rot. Scot.*) In 1309, (2 Edward II.), the market and fair appear to have been revived at St. Briavels, for we find an entry in the *Close Roll* of that year, commanding the Sheriff of Gloucestershire to proclaim a market there on Tuesday, and a fair there of three days, viz:—on the vigil day, and morrow of St. Michael each year. John de Wysham, who succeeded in 1311, received orders for 200 men to be brought to Northallerton. (*Rot. Scot.*) John de Annesleye was made Constable in 1312; Simon de Dryby in 1322; John de Myners in 1325; John de Hardredeshull in 1327; Gilbert Talbot, ditto; Robert de Sapy in 1331; Guido Brian in 1336; to whom a call for 50 forest bowmen was sent in 1337.

The above Robert de Sapy was commanded in 1333, to buy 500 pieces of iron, 5000 "*ferri pro equis cum clavis ad eos pertinentibus*" and to send them to Bristoll, to be forwarded to Ireland, against the passage of the King (Edward III.) who was going to repel his Irish enemies. (*Abb. Rot. Orig.*)

A writ occurs amongst the Exchequer Records, dated 12 Jan., 1341, addressed to Rob. Bouycheer, the Chancellor, which recites "that Guy de Brian, who is Custos of the Castle of St. Briavel's and Forest of Dean, at a rent of £160. per annum, finds that the revenues of the Castle, etc., are so diminished by grants of land, etc., that he prays to be removed to another office, or reparation to be made him. The King, (Ed. III.) therefore, the May following, appoints Gilbert Talbot, John Gogh, clerk, to inquire what are the yearly revenues thereof," by these jurors, Reginald de Abbenhale, Philip Joce, Knight, John Wycher, Will. Hathenye de Rodemore,

Osebert Malmemort, Will. Lumbard, John de Bykenore, John Rolf, Richard Billyng, John de Haydon, John de Blydeslowe, and Will. Hathewy. They found as follows :—

	£.	s.	d.
Rent of assize of St. Briavel's, Newland, and Forest of Dean	42	14	11½
Three mills, worth yearly.. .. .	7	16	6
Herbage, with Wyght medne by the year	6	13	4
Mines and Forges, yearly	34	0	0
Abbot of Grace Dieu, for land.. .. .	0	9	0
Other lands let to the same	1	6	8
Timber, for the mines, repairs, and stolen, &c.	5	0	0
Pleas and perquisites of St. Briavel's Court	18	4	0
	<hr/>		
	£116	4	5½

Not until 1350 did Guy de Brian learn the result of his petition to the Crown.* It was to the effect that,—“on account of the present pestilence, and for divers other causes, the issues and profits of the Castle of St. Briavell being much diminished, the King remits to Guy de Brian £40. of his annual farm, and grants that he may hold the said custody for life, rending therefore £80.†” The profits and emoluments of the market and fair held in the town were likewise given him.

A specification,† dated the last year of Edward III, (1376-7), describes, in the ensuing terms, certain receipts and charges connected with the Castle. It is headed thus—“The particulars of the account of Roger Pylond, janitor of the same, of receipts, costs, and expenses made by him about the

* *Abb. Bot. Orig.* † *Dugdale's Bar.*, p. 151.

‡ *Exchequer Records.*

reparation of the said Castle, to wit, from Jan. 6, to Oct. 24, 49 Edward III.

"*Receipts*.—The same renders account of £20 by him received, of John Joce and his fellows, late vendors of underwood in the Forest of Dene, about the reparation of the said Castle. And of 25s., by him received, of ashes and old lead remaining after the building of a certain house of the great gate of the Castle.* Total of Receipts, £21. 5s.

"*Expenses*.—The same is accounted in 49 fotinells and 24 pounds of lead, bought at Worcester for the covering of the said house; price of the fotinell, 5s., and of the 24 lbs. of lead, 20d.—£12. 6s. 8d. And for the carriage of said lead from Worcester to Bristoll, and thence to St. Briavels, 12s. 6d. And in 44 lbs. of tin, bought for the same, price 3d. a pound, 11s. And in four cart loads of free stone, bought for the entablement of the said gate, 6s. 8d. And in wages of two masons and one servant for twenty days, for heightening the walls of the said gate. And for making the entablement for a Porte-colis, to each mason taking 3d., and the said servant 3d. per diem,—18s. 4d. And in the conduct of 22 carts, for 22 loads of timber from the wood called Wynholt, to the said Castle, as he has allowance by the particulars of the supervisor, 10s. 8d. And in the conduct of 3 carpenters for 26 days, for carpentering the same timber, one taking 5d. and the other 4d. a day,—18s. 2d. And in 400 bordnailles bought, 2s. And in the conduct of one plumber for covering the said gate with lead, 60s. 1d. And in 10 quarters of lime, (bought price of the quarter 13d.) 6s. 8d. And in stoves bought for founding the said

* From *Abb. Rot. Ori.*, it appears that John Joce and Rob. Cole were empowered by the King (Edward III.) to sell 60 acres of underwood, in the Forest of Dean, and deliver the money to Walter de Aust, "for the new making of the Bridge of the Castle of St. Briavel, and repairing the small tower there."

lead, 7s. 2d. And in 4 locks and keys bought for the doors of the said gate, 2s. 2d. And in clay pans for the timber for catching rains, 2s. 4d. And in expenses of the said Rogere, going and returning for the aforesaid carriage, and staying there for 40 days to superintend the works and artifices, 20s. Total of Expenses, £21. 2s. 7d."

Although the condition of the existing remains of St. Briavel's Castle is such as to shew exactly the position of the repairs thus executed, yet the identical work has been superseded long since, probably at the Restoration, when the last alterations were effected for the better accommodation of the several Courts of Forest Law that came to be held there.

Previous to 1390, Richard II. had included the Castle of St. Briavel and Forest of Dean amongst the numerous gifts bestowed by him on his aspiring uncle, the Duke of Gloucester.* In that year, Parliament assented to the King's wish† "to do greater favour to his very dear uncle," that "he and his heirs male do have and hold for ever the said Forest of Dean as a forest." Shortly after the Duke's mysterious death at Calais, in 1396, John of Gloucester, Richard's natural son, was made his successor. He, too, was soon superseded, A.D. 1399, by John, afterwards the great Duke of Bedford,‡ but then only ten years old, (*Close Roll*, I Henry IV., m. 27.) In the mean time the custody of the Castle of St. Briavel with the Forest of Dene is committed to Hugh Waterton Chevalier, to hold at the King's pleasure.

There is preserved amongst the Exchequer Records, (*Roll. P. G.* 2806.) the account of Hugh Cromehale, Receiver of the Forest Rents for John, Duke of Bedford, Constable of the Castle and Manor of St. Briavel, lately

* *Rot. Pat.* 14 Richard II.

† *Rolls of Parliament*, vol. III., 278.

‡ *Cal. Rot. Pat.*

dead, during the year commencing Michaelmas, 13 Hen. VI. 1435. It specifies as follows.—

	£.	s.	d.
<i>Arrears</i> had accumulated to	184	5	8
<i>Rent of Assize</i> for the Duke, 41s. 10d. for the King, £14. 17s. 4½d. to tax. In- cluding rent of Newnham, £11. 15s. 8¾d. Stowe, 9s. 1½d. Collesford, 3d. Henry de Putte's messuage and lands in Magna Dean, 17s. John Perpond's lands and tenements in the same, 40s. Wm. Greyes field called Wylderane, at Michaildean, 10s. Wm. Cole's parcel of assarted land at Lie, in Wodeneswalle. Wm. Wode- house of Netherles, parcel of old assart land at Gredenwalle. Robert and Agnes Jordon's parcel of waste land, and water- mill, at Ludbrok, 3s. 4d. John Mason's Quarry of Haneway, near Ruardyn, 3s. 4d.			
	17	19	2½
<i>Issues of the Forest and Manor of St. Briavell</i> , for the Duke, £17. 16s. For the King 53s. 4d. Total.	20	9	4
(That is, on Charcoal, £14. 6s. 8d. On Bees in Wallemore, 14s. Pannage of stranger's pigs, &c., 29s. 6d. Toll on St. Briavell's Fair, 2s. On Cinders, 20s. Fines on Pigs during the fence month, 43s. 2d. Tax on Animals, 26s. 8d. Tax on Beasts of the Forest, 23s. 4d.)			
<i>By sale of Herbage, with the rent of the Forest lands in demesne.</i> For the Duke, £8. 14s. 9d. For the King, 26s. 8d. Total.	10	1	5
Viz. — Agistment of the Averies of divers villages of the Forest, 108s. 2d. Herbage and Pasture in the Park of Whightmede, 40s. Rent of demesne			

Land demised for seven years, to William Herthull, 53s. 4d.

Receipts of the Forest, for the Duke, £64. 13s. 0½d. For the King, £35. 5s. 3d. Total, including the rent of Niewland Manor, demised to John Eyton for £20. 3s. 4d. Rent of Mines beneath the Wood, demised for ten years to Henry Deane and John Cromehale for £22. Due from John Hawkyns, reaper of St. Briavell, £8. 14s. 7d. Due from John Braysyer, beadle there, £12. 10. 8½d. 99 18 3½

Wards and Lands.—For the Duke, £277. 11s. 3¼d.; for the King, £54. 6s. 7¼d. Total, 331 12 3

Then ensues these outgoings:—

Tithes of Rent.—For the Duke 46s.; for the King, 33s. 9d. Total, 0 79 9

Fees and Wages.—To Rd. Layland, Esq., Constable, £10.; to Hugh Cromehale, Receiver, £6. 13s. 4d.; to the Clerk* of the Court, 26s. 8d. To Henry Wyrecestre, Janitor, 2s. a day, or 58s. 2d. To Wm. Repyngton, Auditor, at 3s. 4d. a day, or 40s. in all. Total, 23 4 10

Annuities. To John Russell Esq. retainer, 20 marks, but not paid.

* Amongst the Wyrhall Deeds there is a Roll of this Court, dated 20 Jan., 1437-8, setting forth that John Walker, Fuller, of Churchende, in the parish of Nulande, came and surrendered into the hands of the King a certain Watercourse, running in Asherudgeslad to a mill of the said John, which course he held of the King. And Thomas Elly came and took of the Lord the King the said Course, with full Easement of a Pool lying in the highway near the said water, to a Mill of the said Thomas, to be there built new, upon his own land to hold the said course with easement of the said pool to him and his heirs for ever paying to the King at Michaelmas, yearly, 6s. And the said Thomas paid to the King as a fine for his entrance, 12d.

Expenses of the bridge of the Castle.

"And in the carriage of 28 cart loads of timber of the wood of the Lord, to the Castle of St. Briavell, to make one new bridge there; the cart load at 16d. 37s. 4d. And in the pay of one carpenter doing and working the whole work of the carpentry of the said bridge, by agreement made with him in gross.

4 4 8

"And in the pay of certain men emptying water and breaking stones for the foundation of the said bridge, taking by agreement made.

0 6 8

"And in keys and iron fastenings bought for the said work.

0 8 0

"Divers costs and expenses made and appointed about the reparation of certain houses, windows and doors within the Castle."

0 9 11

Money Payments, made to Robert Whitynham, the Receiver General, by Thomas Devenysh, £40. By John Chestayne, £20. John Jamesson, Deputy of Wm. Wortley, Merchant of London, £83. 6s. 8d.

Total, 143 6 8

"Total of all expenses and payments, and he (H. Crome hale) owes, (less 9s. 11d. allowed).

167 8 2

164 4 1

And is owing £163. 14s. 1½d., whereof, of the time of the late Duke, £111. 6s. 10¾d., and of the Lord the King, £52. 8s. 10¼d."

Such pecuniary results to the Crown, even after due allowance is made for the altered value of money, were small indeed, although the accounts shew much official care.

Death had removed the Duke, in Sept. 1435, from his tenure of the Forest and Castle of St. Briavel, which his absorbing continental engagements debarred him, doubtless, from ever visiting. They were next held for a short period by his widow, Jaqueline de Luxemburg, (*Cal. Inq. P. Mort.*) who by her second marriage with Sir Richard Woodville, became the mother of Elizabeth, the future wife of Edward IV. These circumstances may account for her flight hither with her father and brother, after the defeat at Edgecote.

After a few years, Henry VI. granted them (A.D. 1440) to Ralph Botiller and John Beauchamp, Esqs. for life, at an annual farm rent of £60.* Six years later and they were given to Henry, Duke of Warwick, for a yearly payment of £100.† being at the time Premier Earl of England; but he died shortly afterwards. In 6 Ed. IV. (1467), the King granted a third part of the Castle of St. Briavel to William, Lord Herbert, in tail to heirs male, together with certain other manors in Wales. Richard Nevil, the fourteenth Earl of Warwick, was next appointed, holding the offices until he was killed at the Battle of Barnet, in 1471.‡ The office of the Constable of St. Briavel was next granted to James Hyet, and Roger, his son, for the term of their lives, and the longer life of either. Anne de Beauchamp, his widow, eventually received them, when restored to her estates after the accession of Henry VII. In 1498-9, (14 Henry VII.) the King granted the custody of the Demesne and Castle of St. Briavels and the Forest of Dene to Thos. Baynham, Esq., and Cristofer Baynham, Esq., for thirty years, at £50. per annum.

It will have been observed that the various duties with which the Forestal Representatives of the Crown were charged, had, in course of years, come to be assigned to different officials, and often fulfilled by

* *Cal. Rot. Pat.* † *Cal. Rot. Pat.*

‡ *Pat. 14, Ed. IV., p. 2, m. 5, (1473-4).*

one or more Deputies. Thus, whilst some marked nobleman was nominally Chief Constable of St. Briavel's, another person, of little more than local fame, acted for him on the spot, having round him a number of Assistants, such as Receivers, Auditors, Clerks, Janitors, Gavellers, Aleconners, &c. A Letter Patent, dated at Westminster, the 27 Hen. VI. (1448-9), and preserved by the late Mr. Wyrhall, seems to be an instance of such sub-appointment. It granted to John Esshehurst ("in consideration of the good and daily service which he pays to us daily, and desires to pay in future,) the Office of Constableness of the Castle of St. Briavel, in the Forest of Dene, in the County of Gloucester;—To hold by himself, or sufficient Deputies for life, with the Sureties, Fees, Profits, and Commodities to the same office due as accustomed."

A similar Patent, dated 21 July, 1509, conferred on Philip Cachiman the appointment of "Riding Forester of Dean Forest, Taster of Newland Ale within the said Forest, with the Gavellership of one side of the wood towards Newland." So too, in 1510, Richard Catchmayde, Page of the Chamber, was made a Ranger, in place of John Pike, deceased, with the usual fees out of the issues of the Lordship and Castle of St. Briavel.* And again,† the King grants to John de Monmouth license to enfeof John Stevenes, of Nasse, and his heirs, in 10 acres of land, and eight solidates of rent in St. Briavel's, and the Bailiwick of keeping the Forest of Dene and Park of St. Briavell. Henry Breane is described as having custody of Le Gawle Wood in 1537.‡

The Kingstons, father and son, to whom Henry VIII. granted the monastic estates of Flaxley, further obtained the chief forestal appointments, under the Crown, in farm.

In 1557, William, Earl of Pembroke, known as General of the Forces sent by Mary I. to her husband,

* *Pat.* 1 and 2, Henry VIII. † *Rot. Orig.* 22 Ed. III.

‡ *Memoranda Rolls, Jones' Index.*

Philip, against the town of St. Quintin, is found Constable of St. Briavel's, having Richard Brayn, Esq., for his Deputy. A copy of the Roll of the Court held there, gives this information, as also of the following suit:—

“Wm. Werall, Gent., came in person, and complained that Christ^r Hall, of Heymedow, unjustly turned a watercourse running from Asherudgeslade to a water mill of the said W. Werall, called Kingsmylle, out of its right course, to the great loss and hurt of the said William—and he prayed a View, etc., according to the custom, etc. Whereupon it was ordered that four suitors named, being sworn upon their oath, take a view of the said watercourse, and examine whether, etc., and certify thereof at the next Court.”

At which next Court, held 25th October following, those suitors appeared, and being sworn to speak the truth in the premises, stated that, “from time immemorial, the said watercourse used to run from a place called the Nyne Walls, in Asherudge Slade, in the highway there, under a hedge of the said Christ^r Hall, adjoining to his lands there, and so on to the said mill of the said W. Werall; and that lately the said Christ^r Hall hath altered and turned the said watercourse out of its right course, and the same put in his own land, there to serve a certain new mill of him the said C. Hall, by him there lately erected, to the great detriment of the said Wm. Werall.

Seneschal, JOHN WATERS.”

From further investigation of Mr. Wyrhall's other documents, it appears that, in 1585, the late Earl's son, Henry, styled “Lord Herbert of Cardiff, Lord Mar- myan of St. Quyntayn, Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter,” held the office of Constable of the Queen's Manor of St. Briavel, having Thos. Brayne, Esq., for Deputy.

After him, followed Sir Edward Winter, son of the Sir William Winter renowned for his eminent services

against the Spanish Armada, and father of Sir John, the gallant Royalist. But his tenure of office was prematurely shortened by his courteously surrendering it in favour of William, Earl of Pembroke, who was made Constable of St. Briavel's Castle, &c., in 1611. This accomplished nobleman, the friend of Shakespeare, and Lord Chamberlain to James I., was further connected with the Forest from becoming one of its Iron Manufacturers, hoping, perhaps, by such means to reduce his debts. Charles I., in recognition of the Earl's services to the court, made him a grant of such of the Forest Iron Works as belonged to the Crown; but his death, in 1630, long preceded the expiration of the lease. He was further favoured by a diminution of £21. per annum on his farm rental of £87. 5s., due to the King for the Lordship and Castle of St. Briavel. Sir Walter Montague acted as his Deputy Constable, and also Sir William Throgmorton.

Referring to another period of the Earl's Constableship, a document of corresponding date records thus:—
“William Winter and Roger Myners, Esqs., or one of them, is Deputie Constable to the said Earle, and they keepe Courtes every three weeks at St. Breuilles, and allso every six weekes at the Speach House, or Court of Attachment, within the same Fforest. William Carpenter is Steward of St. Breuill's Courtes and the said Speach Court or Attachmentes Courtes. Robert Bridgeman is Bailiff for all the said Courtes, and allso in all the liberties in the said Fforest, and James Yennys is his Deputie Bayliff.”*

Charles I. continued the office in the Pembroke family by appointing Philip Herbert, the fourth Earl and brother of the former, to it, in 1635. His fondness for hunting seems to have been his ruling passion, rather than political pursuits, for, although made Lord Chamberlain, he allowed himself to drift into parliamen-

* *Lansdowne MSS.*

tarianism.* So that on the King's return he was excluded the House of Lords, &c., surviving, however, until 1669.†

Immediately on the Restoration, the office of Constable of St. Briavel's, subject to a fee of £40. a year, was granted ‡ (June 1660) to Henry, Lord Herbert of Ragland, who but a few weeks before had formed one of the Deputation of the Commons to the King at the Hague. During his long term of office, lasting till his death in 1699, he intrusted Deputyships to the following gentlemen, viz.: Sir Baynham Throgmorton, Sir George Probert, Henry Melborne, Esq., William Wolseley, Esq., Tracy Catchmay, Esq., John Higford, Esq., George Bond, Esq., &c.¶ In 1682, he was created Duke of Beaufort, and in 1685, defended Bristol against the Duke of Monmouth. § He lies buried in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

The offices of the Constablership of St. Briavel with the Forest of Dene and Manor of Newland was granted, on the disgrace of the Duke of Beaufort, to Charles, Viscount Dursley, to hold in the same manner as Sir Edward Wintour, deceased; Henry, Earl of Pembroke, deceased; Sir George Baynham, deceased; William, Earl of Pembroke, deceased; or Henry, Duke of Beaufort, held them, 18th June. (*Original*. 9. Will. and Mary, *Rot.* 59.)

Charles, Earl of Berkeley, became the next Constable of the Castle of St. Briavel, and Warden of the Forest of Dean, in 1702, holding these offices till his death in 1710. His deputies were Sergeant Powlett, Roynon Jones, Esq., besides some of the gentlemen previously mentioned. Being an ardent supporter of the Revolution, he was called by writ to the house of Peers, whilst his father was yet alive.

* Clarendon † Pepy's *Diary*.

‡ *State Papers*. || *Records of Mine Law Court*.

§ *Atkyns*, p. 127.

James, second son of the above, succeeded his father, as Warden of the Forest of Dean, and Constable of the Castle of St. Briavel, both of which appointments he filled till his decease, at Aubigny, in France, in 1736, aged 54 years. His naval prowess was eminent under Sir George Rooke and Sir Cloudesley Shovel, so that he was made in the first instance Vice-Admiral of the Blue, then of the White, and eventually First Lord of the Admiralty, as well as Vice-Admiral of Great Britain,* &c. Richard Machen, Esq., William James, Esq., Maynard Colchester, Esq., acted as his Deputy Constables, &c.

His son, Augustus, the fourth Earl, follows next in the roll of Constables, &c., holding office from 1736 until 1755, when he died. Besides the Deputies last named, he was represented by William Jones Esq., and Thomas James Esq. In 1745 he was appointed Colonel of one of the regiments raised to defend the country against the troops of the Pretender.

Matthew, Earl Ducie, succeeded to his appointments in this neighbourhood, retaining the same until his resignation of them in 1751,† when they were conferred on John Thynne How, Second Lord Chedworth; but were soon vacated again at his death, in 1762.‡

Norborne Berkeley Esq., son of John Simes Berkeley, Esq., of Stoke Giffard, by his second wife Elizabeth, Viscountess Hereford, had the Constableship of St. Briavel's conferred on him on the death of the last Lord. In addition to his ancient and noble ancestry, recognised in the Barony of Botetourt being restored to him, he was made a Groom of the Bedchamber, by George III. He served as a Knight of the Shire in four successive Parliaments with honour and popularity, and manifested such liberal interest in the establishment of the Gloucester Infirmary as to be regarded one of its principal

* *Rudder*, p. 278.

† *Rudder*, p. 843.

‡ *Rudder*, p. 708.

founders Owing to the Colonial Government of Virginia being committed to him, he was superseded in his Forestal Offices by Frederick Augustus, Fifth Earl of Berkeley, in 1766, by whom the following answer was returned to the Commissioners of Land Revenue, in 1787.

“Lord Berkeley holds the Office of Lord Warden of the Forest of Dean and Constable of the Castle of St. Briavel’s, by Patent, during His Majesty’s pleasure; he appoints the Keepers of the said Forest, and is to take care that they do their duty, in regard to the Deer only. He receives no salary, fees, or emoluments whatever, for his own use, as Lord Warden or Constable, but an annual sum of £210. is issued to him from the Treasury, for paying the wages of the Conservator and Keepers of the Forest; and he is authorized, by a clause in his lease from the Crown of the Manor and Hundred of St. Briavel’s, to retain out of the rent reserved by that lease a sum of £40. per annum for wages of the Keepers; and out of those two sums his Agent pays the salaries or wages of the Conservator and Keepers, after deducting the fees and taxes charged thereon. He has nothing to do with the timber or woods, the Keepers receiving their orders on that head from the Deputy Surveyor; and as to intrusions or encroachments, the Keepers report those matters to the Conservator and to the Surveyor.”

Earl Berkeley died in 1810, when the extensive plantings and improvements, since carried out in the Forest, were only just begun. His successor was Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, who held his twofold forestal office of Constable of St. Briavel’s Castle, and Keeper of the Forest of Dean, until, by the Act of 1838, they were absorbed in the Chief Commissioner of the Office of Woods for the time being.

Of several of these gentlemen, Mr. Machen has preserved the following reminiscences:—“Lord Glenbervie began

life in the medical profession. Afterwards he became a very diligent barrister. In 1805, he was made Surveyor General of Woods and Forests, and was ultimately raised to the Scotch Peerage. His Lordship was a truly hard working man. The disordered state of the Forest was such, that he found encroachments of all kinds yearly increasing; but by vigorous measures he succeeded in enclosing and planting a great proportion of it, so that it may be truly said the Crown has gotten the lion's share. Lady Glenbervie, a very clever and amiable woman, was a daughter of Lord North, whose life his son-in-law was said to be writing. A translation of *Ricciardello* was from his pen; but I am not acquainted with any work worthy of his abilities. He was an agreeable man, but sometimes rather impatient in his temper. I remember an old Swiss servant, who had lived many years with him. One day, when the carriage was brought to the door, so many things were put inside, that Lord G. exclaimed, 'I cannot go in that carriage.' The servant said, 'Very well, my Lord,' and shut the door. However, his Lordship soon recovered his temper, and took his seat.

"Lord Glenbervie was the senior of the three Commissioners who, about 1812, were entrusted with Forestal affairs. The next was Mr. Huskisson. He was a sensible, well-judging man; but had little taste for the picturesque, and was for clearing everything out of the enclosures before they were planted. Not even a holly was to be left. He held, I think, some other office at the same time, and was impatient at so much business coming upon him when he was in the Forest, which he had looked upon rather as a time of recreation. I recollect, on one occasion, when he was obliged to answer some letters in the evening, his saying, 'There will be no comfort in England, until doing anything after dinner is made a capital felony.' Mrs. Huskisson used to accompany Mr. H., and was very friendly and agreeable.

“Mr. Arbuthnot succeeded Mr. Huskisson. He was quite a different sort of man; very polished and a courtier, and fancying he did a great deal. He used to put down the extent of enclosures he had viewed, and inquired with great earnestness the size of each, so that if we rode into one of 500 acres and out again directly, that stood for 500 acres in his report of the day’s work.—The Duke of Wellington was a great friend of his, and happening to be drinking the Cheltenham waters when Mr. Arbuthnot was at Whitemead, rode over to breakfast, the distance being 25 miles, and remained till the following day. A dinner party was proposed, but it was thought that the Duke would perhaps be tired, and prefer a quiet evening. Mrs. Arbuthnot was supposed to have great influence with the Duke, and we thought she liked to shew it, for Milne and I had only been introduced a few minutes, when she said to the Duke, ‘Arthur, will you go and ask my maid to give you my cloak?’ This appeared to us meant to shew that she was *vainqueur du vainqueur du monde*. We were about starting for Tintern, eight miles off, on horseback. The road thither, over St. Briavel’s Common, is execrable; but the Duke managed to carry an umbrella over the lady.*

“The housemaid was in a great bustle about the Duke’s room; but his servant set her at ease by saying, ‘do not trouble yourself, give him a little clean straw, and he will be quite satisfied.’ The Duke left at five o’clock the next morning, so as to be at Cheltenham in time to drink the waters.

“Lord Lowther was not very demonstrative, but Milne said he expressed more approbation of the Forest

* The closest friendship existed between the Arbuthnots and the Duke. Mrs. A. was a superior and highly accomplished woman, and after her death Mr. A. resided for many years entirely with the Duke. They had been boys together, and maintained their early friendship to the last.

than he ever heard from him on any subject before. He was quick and shrewd, but rather in the New-market style.

"Lord Duncannon was twice First Commissioner. He had a pedometer for recording the distances he walked. Lady Duncannon was a very elegant and accomplished person, but in delicate health. She used to enjoy going slowly about the Forest in a little pony carriage, with George Hughes as her attendant.

"Lord Lincoln, now Duke of Newcastle, was several times in the Forest, and ever cheerful, obliging, and pleasant.

"Lord Carlisle, then Lord Morpeth, one of the most agreeable and kindest of men, was all good nature and liberality. He was fond of poetry, and very ready in quoting it.

"Lord Seymour, although cold and reserved in manner, was very business-like, and a man of honour. He liked riding about the Forest.

"Mr. Kennedy was an agreeable man in company; but difficult to please in office, whilst actuated with the best intentions.

"Mr. Howard, the present Commissioner, is quite a man of the right sort, a good man of business as well as kind, considerate, and agreeable.

"The first Lord Carlisle, Mr. Agar Ellis, Sir John Hobhouse, Lord Granville Somerset, and Lord Canning, were all, at different times, First Commissioners, but were never in Dean Forest."

BLUNT.

Mr. THOMAS BLUNT, originally of St. Briavel's, was appointed Deputy Surveyor of the Forest in 1780, and remained in office until the beginning of this century. Hence it was his lot to have his proceedings tested by the sifting commission of 1788, before which his examination was taken upon oath, on the 29th of March in that year. It was clearly considered an important feature in the investigation, and so much information was elicited, as to cause it to be published entire in the report that followed. An open and fearless character pervades the whole, whether as respects the delicate matter of perquisites, or as to instances of official neglect, and consequent spoliation and encroachment. He noticed, with real concern, the many and growing depredations that were being committed upon the rights of the Crown, and had done his best to stop them. Thus he stated—"He hath pulled down and destroyed many cottages, fences, and inclosures, which have been made, or attempted to be made, during the time he hath acted as Deputy Surveyor, and continued so to do until within these three years last past, or thereabouts, when his life and property were endangered by the repeated threats and insults of the encroachers and their party, which at length compelled him to desist therefrom."

Mr. Blunt saw the necessity of upholding the authority and responsibility of the Verderers. An instance of this occurred in 1799, when 300 loads of small beech timber, for framing, were bespoke from this Forest for Milford

Dockyard. Mr. Thomas Harrison, as Purveyor to the Navy, was directed to aid the local officers in selecting it. This he omitted to do, discourteously condemning the choice which the Verderers had allowed, and indicated that a much better one might have been adopted. Valuable time was spent in the sort of struggle for power that ensued. Possibly, Mr. Harrison knew best what kind of timber was needed at Milford; yet Mr. Blunt, acting in concert with John Robinson, Esq., the Surveyor General, felt it his duty to recognize the ancient and necessary power of the Verderers to say what trees should be felled for the navy.

A daughter of this Mr. Blunt died lately at Mitcheldean, where she was much beloved, at an advanced age.

BOEVEY AND CRAWLEY.

BOEVEY, WILLIAM, Esq., is the earliest of the Flaxley family named on the Roll of Forest Officers.* This was in 1692, the date of the first Commission of Inquiry touching the Crown Lands of these parts. The Flaxley Woods were included in the Forest Perambulations until quite lately, and are still continuous with them. Mr. Boevey's signature, appearing at the foot of the Official Return† made shortly afterwards by the above named Board, shews that he attended its meetings, and acted with the five other gentlemen appointed under that Commission. He died in 1697, aged only 35, according to the inscription on his monument, at Flaxley, where he was buried. He left a young widow, Catharina, the daughter of an affluent London merchant, John Riches, Esq., a native of Amsterdam, living in Surrey in 1692, and naturalized by Act of Parliament, 19 George II. Mrs. Boevey's mother was a daughter of Sir Bernard de Gomme, the eminent Military Engineer of the Crown during the Civil Wars.

Although only twenty-two at Mr. Boevey's death, she resolutely remained a widow, and died on the 21st of January, 1726, in her fifty-seventh year, leaving a name for benevolence and ability which the neighbourhood venerates to this day.‡

* *Report of 1788*, p. 66.

† *Report, 1788*, p. 68.

‡ The particulars here related of this excellent lady are mainly taken from what is told of her in the Author's account of Flaxley Abbey.

Dr. George Hickee calls her, in the preface to his *Thesaurus*, published in 1702-3, "*præstantissima et honestissima matrona Catharina Bovey*," and was most probably one of her personal friends, agreeably to a traditionary account in the family, that "she was very friendly to the non-juring clergy, and that she had frequently received and protected them." There are several pictures of clergymen at Flaxley, which have always been believed to be portraits of her, non-juring friends. Amongst these, are two in episcopal habits, one of which is ascertained to be the portrait of the deprived Dr. Frampton, Bishop of this Diocese, since a similar painting exists in the Palace at Gloucester.

Flaxley is mentioned as her residence by Sir R. Atkyns in 1712, where, he tells us, "she hath an handsome house and pleasant gardens, and a great estate, a furnace for casting of iron, and three forges," as also appears by Kip's view of it.

In 1714, Steele dedicated to her the second volume of *The Ladies' Library*, the frontispiece to which Mr. Kerslake describes as "representing a young lady, dressed in widow's weeds, opening a book upon a table, on which also lies a skull; her admirers, in long wigs and swords, are thronging round the door." In one of his letters to Lady Steele, dated the 17th January, 1717, he writes — "I have yours in a leaf of the widow's." Such incidents seem to prove that this highly-gifted lady was the original of the character so graphically delineated by Steele in his description of "the perverse widow." The numbers of the *Spectator* in which she is introduced generally bear his name, and she probably was more intimate with him than with Addison (although both are said to have visited the Abbey), since he would naturally pass near Flaxley whenever he travelled between London and his house at Llangunnor, near Caermarthen. Nothing less than

such a familiar acquaintance could have enabled him to give so exact and real a description of her as occurs in No. 113.

In Ballard's *Ladies*, first printed in 1752, and on her monument in Westminster Abbey and in Flaxley Church, her more public virtues are displayed ; but her home life, the value of which many of the poor Foresters had experienced in her bounties, is best related in the words of her faithful attendant, Mrs. Rachel Vergo, " who always waited particularly on her mistress, and was the only servant who sat up, as she spent an hour or two every night in her closet. She did the same in the morning, and was a very early riser. Mrs. Vergo had the care of the family under Mrs. Mary Pope, a relation of Mrs. Bovey, who came for a visit of a month, and stayed nearly forty years. The regularity and economy in the family was great. The maids were kept to work till eight o'clock at night, and the rest was their own time. Mrs. Bovey frequently called for her charity account book to see if it kept pace with her expenses in dress, which was always very handsome. Mrs. Vergo was often sent to Ross and Mitcheldean to buy materials to make garments for the poor. The old table-linen and sheets were made into child-bed linen, which, together with shirts and shifts of all sizes, were kept in a closet. It was Mrs. Vergo's business to give them out as her lady ordered.

"Two ladies came to visit Mrs. Pope at the time the epidemic fever reigned in Gloucestershire, in 1719. One of them, Mrs. Cowling, died of it at the Abbey. The other, Mrs. Grace Butler, agreed with Mrs. Bovey and Mrs. Pope all to lie in the same vault with the deceased. The vault was built accordingly in Flaxley churchyard. Mrs. Bovey died first at the Abbey, and was laid by her friend. Mrs. Pope was brought from Twickenham in Surrey, and Mrs. Grace Butler, twenty years afterwards, from Worminghurst in Sussex.

“Every afternoon during her lady’s life Mrs. Vergo was ordered to wear a silk gown. Six of the poor children who were kept at school at Flaxley dined by turns regularly every Sunday at the Abbey, when Mrs. Bovey heard them say their Catechism. She was very often in the habit of lending money to poor clergymen, which was frequently repaid to her in small sums, but more often given to them. She did the same, too, by other distressed people whom she believed to be honest and industrious. During the Christmas holidays before Mrs. Bovey died, she had the thirty children who were taught at her expense to dine at the Abbey upon beef and pudding. Mrs. Vergo sat at the head of the table, and two of the housemaids waited upon them. After dinner Mrs. Bovey had them all into the parlour, where she was sitting dressed in white and silver. She showed them her clothes and her jewels, talked pleasantly and with great good nature to them, and having given to each of them sixpence she dismissed them. When they left her they had a harp and fiddle playing in the great hall, where they danced two hours and went away in good time. When Mrs. Bovey was dressing before dinner she said to Mrs. Vergo, ‘Rachel, you will be surprised that I put such fine clothes on to-day; but I think that these poor children will remember me the longer for it.’ She was then to all appearance very well, but she died that very day month of a bowel complaint.”—“Upon Wednesday morning,” wrote Mr. MacBarrow, “she was as well at breakfast as usual; between eleven and twelve she was seized with a most violent colic. We sent to Gloucester for Greville, as the nearest at hand; that night for Lane, but he was not to be met with. The extremity of pain continued, and, notwithstanding all means that could be used, nothing would pass. She apprehended death approaching the first day, and said what her illness was: we sent to Oxford and Hereford, but no physician until it was too

late. Upon Friday morning she had a little ease, which gave us great hopes; but very soon the exquisite pain returned, and never left her until death had performed its great office, betwixt eleven and twelve on Saturday morning. She was sensible all along, and expressed great satisfaction in being here, where she said she always wished to die. She was buried in the same vault with Mrs. Cowling, on 23rd January, 1726."

"Of her personal beauty," observes the Rev. C. Crawley, "although highly extolled, it really appears that very little can be said or seen, if we may form our opinions from the three portraits of her at Flaxley Abbey. They all represent a broad surface of a benevolent and good natured countenance; and though they were evidently painted at different periods of her life, yet they bear so great a resemblance to each other that we may reasonably infer they were all good likenesses—in each of them the mole on the cheek has been defined with all due minuteness."

The incidents contained in the biographical notices just given, shew the kind interest taken by Mrs. Boevey in the children of the surrounding poor, including several families of neglected Foresters. Her motive to such exertions for their welfare was doubtless a religious one, directed and confirmed by her excellent neighbour, Colonel Maynard Colchester, who was co-operating with Dr. Bray, and others, in establishing catechetical schools in London and other places, under the auspices of The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. It was he, probably, who led her to aid "the charity schools round about the country," and in the same spirit to bequeath, "towards founding a College in the Island of Bermudas, £500; to the Grey Coat Hospital, in St. Margaret's, Westminster, £500; to the Blue Coat Hospital, in Westminster, £500; and to the Charity School of Christ Church, Parish of Southwark, £400."*

* Her monument at Flaxley.

Her other humane acts, viz., frequent distributions to the needy; putting out poor apprentices from a fund which she rendered perpetual by endowment; entertaining her friends and neighbours with a most agreeable hospitality; granting seasonable loans or gifts to those that wanted; and causing the little chapel at Flaxley to be rebuilt, seem to connect her with her near contemporary,—

“Who taught that heav’n directed spire to rise?
 ‘The Man of Ross,’ each lisping babe replies.
 Behold the market-place with poor o’erspread!
 ‘The Man of Ross’ divides the weekly bread:
 He feeds yon alms-house, neat, but void of state,
 Where age and want sit smiling at the gate:
 Him portioned maids, apprenticed orphans blest,
 The young who labour, and the old who rest.”

Mr. Boevey must have known him, as an associate in the Dean Forest Commission of 1692. Her housekeeper, Mrs. Vergo, would convey from Ross the edifying report of Mr. Kyrle’s “good works and almsdeeds which he did,” that said to her “go and do likewise.”*

Upon Mrs. Boevey’s death the Flaxley estate passed, by will, in tail male, upon the condition of adding the name of Boevey to that of Crawley, to Thomas Crawley, Esq., a wealthy merchant, of London. Sir Francis Crawley, an ancestor, was the Judge afterwards deposed for a decision in favour of the King on the question of ship-money, or something of a like nature. This was about the year 1642-3. The family possess one of Charles I. rings as a memento of such judgment. One Thomas Crawley occurs as a witness to Izaak Walton’s will, made in 1683.

The first gentleman who took the name of Thomas Crawley Boevey was elected a Verderer of the Forest in 1756, which office he held until his death in 1770. The Mine Law Court had elected him a “Free Miner”

* Very probably Pope himself made the Abbey a halting place on his frequent journeys between Bath and Herefordshire.

as early as 1737. His son, Thomas, then came into the property, and was the rebuilder of the Abbey Hall, with extensive additions, in 1777, consequent on the fire that proved destructive to the eastern part of the old structure. Although the loss of any part of the earlier fabric is to be regretted, yet the present house is a favourable specimen of the taste of that period. He, too, bore a part in the management of the Forest, as a Deputy Warden, and Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle. His answer to the precept of the Commissioners, in 1787, is terse and vigorous. This head of the family was the first to enjoy the baronetage that devolved upon him by the death of Sir Charles Barrow, under limitation of the Patent.

Thomas, eldest son of the above, succeeded to the Boevey Estates on his father's decease, in 1811, and held office as one of the Forest Verderers whilst the process of re-planting was going forward. Dying in 1847, the family property devolved on his son, the late Sir Martin Hyde Crawley Boevey, Bart. This popular gentleman had some time previously become initiated in the management of the Crown Woods, as a Commissioner for regulating the treatment of the newly-formed inclosures, and determining the time proper for throwing them open. The Verderership, rendered vacant by his father's death, was conferred on him, and served to cement more closely than ever the mutual feeling of kindness subsisting between himself and the inhabitants of the Forest. He took especial interest in the Volunteer Movement. His death occurred in 1862, when he was interred in the Boevey vault at Flaxley. Thomas, his eldest son, has succeeded to the baronetcy and family property.

BOND.

BOND, GEORGE, Esq., of Redbrook, in the Parish of Newland, merits notice amongst the former Worthies of the Forest, from the frequency with which he presided at the especial Courts of Mine Law, before Juries of forty-eight Free Miners. He did so in the years 1692, 1694, 1701, and 1707, by virtue of his office as a Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle. But his first essay as a Jurist in Forest Law occurred as early as 1663, when he aided in adjusting the Rules and Orders of St. Briavel's Court. He, together with his namesake of Coleford, both being "Regarders" of the Forest, took part in the Perambulations of 1680. It would seem, therefore, that his services were acceptable to the public, and discharged with conscientious satisfaction to himself. His bequest of £5. yearly, for keeping the parish clock in repair and aiding eight poor persons in the almshouse, manifests a generous disposition. Mr. Christopher Bond, his father, had already done the same, in accordance with the tenor of the following lines, composed most likely by the son, as they may be read on the wall above his grave in Newland Church :—

"Vnder this stone interr'd doth lie
 The mirrour of true charitie :
 To God his Friends & Country dear
 The poor's supporter far and near.
 His days hee spent in peace and Quiet
 He never gave himself to riot
 A Vertue Strange in those his days
 When it was scorn'd, & Vice had praise
 Hee lived long, and did Survive
 Fully the years of Seventy Five
 And at the last expir'd his date
 April the 8th (16) 68. Christopher Bond,
 Gent.

It appears from the terms of the claims put in by his father George, at the Justice Seat held in 1635, to wood and timber from the Forest, and pasturage and pannage there, that he possessed several houses, gardens, and some 120 acres of land in Newland Parish.

By means of the Wyrhall Documents, the family of the Bonds may be traced back to 1430, as resident in this part of the County.

Mr. George Bond survived to 1731, dying in that year at the advanced age of 89. Ere then, namely in 1717, his son, Christopher, had been elected a Free Miner by the suffrages of the Foresters. His son was similarly honoured in 1737. This latter gentleman,* bearing office as "Conservator and Supervisor of the Forest of Dean," was the first to represent to the Treasury the spoliation that had commenced of the Crown Woods. He traced it boldly to its true source, namely the neglect, and connivance, if not participation in the spoil, by the officers. The remedy was, he considered, in the revival of the Swanimote Court, and giving the Verderers the power to fine persons convicted before them of stealing timber. But Mr. Bond seems to have failed in rousing the Government to a prevention of the evils of which he complained, nor is he again mentioned in any of the Forest Papers.

* *Report of 1788, p. 23.*

CATCHMAY.

CATCHMAY, TRACY, Esq., of Bigswear-on-the-Wye, was one of the Deputies of Henry, Duke of Beaufort, Constable of St. Briavel's Castle and Warden of the Forest. In this capacity he presided over the local Court of Mine Law, when its eighth Order was passed in 1692.

Sir R. Atkyns mentions him as having an ancient seat in St. Briavel's Parish and a large estate. "This family," he adds, "has been of great reputation in this County." An elaborate altar-tomb, bearing the effigies of a lady and gentleman in a semi-reclining posture, beneath a portico, in the later Elizabethan style, was formerly attached to the north wall of the chancel. In the absence of an inscription, it had been assigned for many years to the memory of William Warren and Mariana Catchmay, his wife. A shield bearing the Warren arms appeared in the upper part of the structure, and certainly warranted such conclusion. The tomb was paneled below, and sculptured with the figures of three children kneeling, and that of an infant curiously swathed. When the church was lately repaired, it was found necessary to remove this memorial.

At the last Justice Seat held by Lord Holland, in 1635, Wm. Catchmay, Gent., claimed the usual Forest perquisites and privileges, as holding a dwelling-house with 100 acres of land in Newland. Richard Catchmay, of St. Briavel's, put in a similar plea. There was a Privy Seal for Philip Catchmay "to be Riding Forester

of Dean Forest, and Taster of Newland Ale within the said Forest, with the Gavelership of one side of the wood towards Newland, dated 1, Henry VIII., 1509, at Greenwich." And others to "Richard Cachemaide, Page of the Chamber, of two tenements with a piece of waste land in Flete Street, called the sign of the Walshman, and one in the Old Baillye, London," as well as of a Rangership, during pleasure, in the Forest of Dean, with the usual fees out of the issues of the Lordship and Castle of St. Briavel's, bearing date 1510, at Richmond. The name occurs at St. Briavel's as early as 1390, in Mr. Wyrhall's Deeds.

Mr. Tracy Catchmay died in 1708, and was succeeded in the property by his eldest son, William, who deceased in 1743. His sister, Jane, or Joan, married James Rooke, Esq., son of Major General Rooke, whose first wife, by her second marriage with the second Earl of Derwentwater, became the mother of the disastrous peer who was executed in 1716.* Mr. James Rooke seems to have resided for many years in the neighbourhood, since as early as 1737 he was elected a Forest Free Miner. In 1755, he took down the old Bigswear House, and in its stead built the existing mansion. He died in 1773, and then the family property passed to his son, General James Rooke, who sat in the House of Commons for Monmouthshire. The name has long since disappeared from the list of Forest Officials.

* *Rudder*, p. 308.

COLCHESTER.

COLCHESTER, DUNCOMB, Knight, a gentleman of good position and influence in this neighbourhood during the latter half of the seventeenth century. He was born in 1629, probably at Westbury-on-Severn, where his father, Richard Colchester, Esq., was Lord of the Manor, and owner of considerable property. The Perambulations of the Forest then included those parts. Three of its Bailiwicks, viz., Abbenhall, the Lea, and Mitcheldean, also belonged to him.

His son's prospects were therefore good, and a suitable education was given him, to be completed, as it would seem, in London, whither he was sent, and entered at one of the Inns of Court.

Ere leaving home, however, and still a youth, he was made sensible of the perils of the times. His father's "strong house," at Westbury, having been first garrisoned by Parliamentarians, and lost, was recovered by Massey, their Colonel, who, on the 7th of April, 1644, commenced hostilities by attacking the church that stood near.* Having secured it, he next "possessed himself of Mr. Colchester's house, where he took about four score prisoners, slaying twenty others, without the loss of a man."

The young man, early removed from under his father's eye to scenes of frolicsome excess, with which the society of his fellow students in the law were sure to abound, his ultimate participation in them was certain. The

* See Corbet's *Historical Relation*, &c.

Restoration soon following, it became "Merrie England" indeed, and the metropolis the gayest of the gay. Intemperance was mistaken for loyalty, and sobriety for disaffection to the King. All good subjects adopted a freedom of living and a social license that can hardly be realized now. The joyous vortex absorbed young Colchester, and retained him for some time after, to his deep regret when languishing on a dying bed.

Whilst in town he became an intimate visitant at the house of the eminent Sergeant Maynard, in Portugal Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields, whose daughter, Elizabeth, he married not later than 1663. Lord Campbell, in his *Life of the Lord Commissioner*, states that "he left behind him no posterity from any of his three marriages;" but his Lordship is certainly mistaken, for, besides the above, there was another daughter, who married Sir Charles Morgan, of Tredegar, in Monmouthshire.

Soon afterwards, Mr. Colchester returned to Westbury, and speedily acquired influence in the country round.* This appears from his signature, coupled with those of three other able gentlemen of the district, being appended to the important *Proposal*, presented to Parliament in 1667, in the name of the Freeholders of the Forest, for preserving and improving the growth of timber therein. Much difficulty was found in prevailing with those persons having right of common and other privileges to agree to the design; but it was of too much consequence to be relinquished. Soon afterwards the *Proposal* became particularly marked, from being made the basis of the often quoted Act of 20 Charles II. passed in the ensuing year. In this form he was called upon to carry out its provisions, by being elected one of the four Verderers, or chief local officials in the administration of Forest Laws.

* See *Third Report of Commissioners of 1788*, p. 15.

The honour of knighthood was now conferred on him, by which title he is designated in Andrew Garranton's *Book of Original Hints for the Improvement of England by Sea and Land*, printed in 1677, where he is appealed to as an authority in these parts.

The death of his wife, 19th September, 1681, who left him with two sons and three daughters, has next to be noticed. The following lines on her monument in West-bury Church, whilst relating her virtues, give proof of his conjugal affection :—

“ Vitæ Sanctimoniâ,
Morum Suavitate et Candore,
In rebus Oeconomicis Peritiâ,
Charitate erga Pauperes,
Medicamentis erga Infirmos,
Præceptis erga Errantes,
Clementia erga Ignorantes,
In se Omnium benevolentiam Conciliantis.”

And thus tenderly concludes—

“ Sed Eheu ! per multos annos
Variis morbis et cruciantibus conflictata
Tandem Animam immaculatam
Deo reddidit
Optimæ Conjuji Amantissimus Maritus
Hoc posuit Monumentum.”

In 1692, Sir Duncomb was put on a Commission of “Inquiry and Examination touching the Forest of Dean.”* The appointment was a wise one, recollecting the good service he had rendered years before on a similar occasion. It also shews that his conduct as a Verderer was appreciated. The Return which the Commissioners rendered is so full and judicious that it may be safely concluded that he was by no means inactive in the matter. But we look in vain for his name amongst the signatures at the end of the Report.† We find, however, a melancholy explanation of its absence

* See 3rd. Report of Commission of 1788, p. 66.

† See 3rd. Report of Commission of 1788, pp. 69 and 71.

in the fact that a severe and protracted sickness not only disabled him from leaving home, but was bringing him to a somewhat premature end. He felt its approach and devoutly prepared to meet it, by subjecting his past life to a searching examination. Self-condemnation ensued, as it must do with all who heartily devote themselves to the same process. At this point most men stop. Not so with Sir Duncomb Colchester. With an heroic courage and unquestionable sincerity, he determined to avow his convictions to the world. His reasons for doing so are thus inscribed on his tomb:—

“Nec sufficere sibi ratus *Privatum Poenitentiam*,
Omnibus, quotquot *Exemple* suo nocuisse videri poterat,
Poenitentiam, etiam suam Notam esse voluit.

Non metuens de *Fama*, nec moratus
Dicacem Improborum hominum stultitiam
Rem etiam in *Templis Publicari* curavit ipse

Novo et Singulari Exemplo

Se Vivum præstans Omnibus

Maxime Dierum Vanitatis suæ sociis

Illustrissimum Generosæ Poenitentiae Monumentum.”

The precise terms of the declaration he so made are preserved in Dr. Josiah Woodward's work, entitled, *Fair Warnings to a Careless World, or the Serious Practice of Religion recommended by the Admonitions of Dying Men*, published in 1758; by whom it is prefaced with the following remarks:—

Page 116, Ex. 39.—“Sir Duncomb Colchester, late of the County of Gloucester, was a gentleman of excellent parts, a generous spirit, and undaunted courage; who, after many years too loosely spent in sundry extravagancies, was by a long and painful sickness brought to a very serious sense of the excellence of religion, and of his great sin and folly in the neglect and contempt of it; of all which the reader will have a more distinct view in his own penitential declaration, which is as follows:—

“Gentlemen and friends,—Since it has pleased Almighty God, of his great and undeserved mercy and goodness, to bring me, one of the chiefest of sinners, by a long and sharp visitation, to a sense of my sins, I adore and praise him.

“It is a duty, I know, incumbent on me, as ever I hope for his pardon and forgiveness, to do what in me lies to bring honour

to his holy name, and to make reparation for the mischiefs I have done by my former vicious life, and antidote, so far as I can, the poison which my example has shed round about me. In order whereunto, I do hereby declare, that I am heartily sorry for all the sins of my past life; the remembrance whereof, however pleasant they formerly seemed to be, is now grief and bitterness to my soul. More particularly, that I may take shame to myself, as I do, with the deepest sorrow, lament my rioting and drunkenness, my chambering and wantonness, those daring and presumptuous sins which had so long dominion over me. I do also most heartily lament that great sin I was so frequently guilty of, of encouraging, and drawing others to excess, which has made me partaker (O sad thought,) of other men's sins, and liable to answer for more than mine own. I am sensible, that as it has been my practice, so it is still of too many gentlemen, and that they, as I did, reckon excessive drinking so far from a fault, as to be rather one of the best indications of a hearty respect and true affection to the persons they entertain. But, O false love! O treacherous friendship! To receive their friends, men, and send them out of their houses, beasts. I wish from the bottom of my soul, that anything that I could say, would make all those, whose consciences accuse them of guilt in this particular, to loathe and abhor this wicked practice, as I do. And I do also heartily lament my great neglect of putting the laws in execution against common drunkards, swearers, and such like scandalous sinners. And do earnestly beseech all such as are in authority, and whose business it is to see the laws executed, if any such come to hear this paper read, that they will be more careful in that particular, and consider their power is a talent intrusted them, whereof they must give a strict account to their heavenly Lord: so by their being duly conscientious in the discharge of their duty herein, we may hope for a reformation among us, and then with confidence we may expect God's blessing to rest upon us. And as I do abhor myself for my neglect in this particular now mentioned, and all my great sins and provocations against an Infinite Majesty: so I do hereby further declare my full purpose and resolution, if it shall please Almighty God, with whom all things are possible, to restore me health, or to prolong my days, by his special grace and assistance, without which I shall be able to do nothing, to lead a new life in all holy obedience to his commands: and desire that this declaration of mine, if I fail to do so, may be produced as a testimony against me, to my shame and reproach. But since my recovery is very uncertain, and what I have the least reason in the world to hope, being heartily desirous to do what good I can in the circumstances I am in: I do hereby warn and beseech all

sinners, especially those whom my example has at any time encouraged; the remembrance whereof still fills me with shame and sorrow, to repent of all their sins and provocations, lest God's vengeance overtake them in their security, and there be no remedy.

"And I beseech them further to take notice, that if this warning be slighted, the wilful neglect and refusal thereof will at last be charged upon them, as a hainous aggravation of all their sins they shall hereafter commit; will increase their condemnation, and make their doom more dreadful and terrible. But that it may have a contrary effect, and be a means to reduce them from their sins to a holy and religious life, that so their souls may be saved in the great day of the Lord, is the earnest prayer of their

"Languishing and sorrowful friend,

"DUNCOMB COLCHESTER."

"Who desires this may be read in the parish churches of Micheldean and Westbury, and shewn to such gentlemen and friends and others, as may bring God most glory."

"November, 1694. Sign'd and delivered in the presence of several of his friends."

What makes this pious declaration yet more noble, is that Sir Duncomb Colchester lived a year and a half afterwards, not dying until the 10th of May, 1696.

His eldest son, Maynard, between whom and himself there evidently existed strong mutual attachment, deserves notice. First, because in the words engraved upon his tomb, alluding to the sacred change that took place in his father's habits and views, he is described as "an instrument of spiritual life to him, from whom he had only received that which was natural." And further, he ought to be mentioned, as being one of that interesting group of laymen who then adorned the English Church, and to which John Evelyn and Robert Nelson belonged. This appears from his epitaph, which says that he was "a principal founder & Supporter of the Societies for Reformation of Manners, & Promoting Christian Knowledge by Charity Schools, of which he set up and maintained several at his own charges. And likewise one of y^e first Members of y^e Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, and A generous Encourager of that & many other good Designs."

E

In accordance with these statements, the contemporary Minutes of The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for the examination of which every facility has been most courteously given, it appears that "Collonell Maynard Colchester" was one of the five gentlemen, who on Wednesday, the 8th of March, 1698-9, inaugurated that admirable Institution. Some steps had been previously taken to recover persons from Quakerism by sending one George Keith amongst them. At this first meeting it was resolved "That Collonell Colchester and Doctor Bray go and discourse George Keith, in order to be satisfied what progress he has hitherto made towards the instruction and conversion of Quakers, and to know what he designs further to attempt under the conduct of God's providence and assistance, in order to redeem that misguided people to the Knowledge and belief of Christ, and that they report the same to the Society to-morrow morning." A second Resolution was also agreed to,— "That we consider to-morrow morning how to further and Promote that Good Design of Erecting Catechetical Schools in each Parish in and about London, and that Collonell Colchester and Doctor Bray give their thoughts how it may be done."

On the following Friday, Doctor Bray and "Collonell Colchester reported that they had discours'd George Keith and were pleas'd with the Account of his management of his design hitherto." Their Report being considered, it was resolved "That this society will endeavour to procure for Master Keith some certificate, or recommendation, which may protect him in his travells, and procure him some encouragement from the Justices of the Peace." They met again on the 12th, which was Sunday, and "Resolved that Collonell Colchester be desir'd to find out three persons to begin and endeavour of setting up Schools in three Parishes."

Three other meetings closely followed, and on Monday the 20th, the Members resolved to print Mr. Keith's

"larger and lesser Catechisms," and also his "Narrative," towards which £12 was voted from their common fund, Colonel Colchester and Mr. Justice Hook subscribing the remainder. The former had already given £10. to the Society.

The Minutes shew that Colonel Colchester, whenever his Parliamentary duties called him to town, constantly attended the meetings, held, every other Monday or Thursday, either at Zion College or Bartlets Buildings.

When the Society met, on the 16th December, 1700, to consider Mr. Barclay's Paper relative to "The promotion of Christian Knowledge amongst the Indians & Barbarians," Colonel Colchester was placed on the Committee to which it was referred. He was also included in another committee, formed February 10th, for considering Mr. Adamson's letter respecting a society of Clergymen and others, formed in Lincolnshire, on the same plan, apparently, as the Christian Knowledge Society. On the following Monday he reported that "the committee had appointed Mr. Chandler to draw up an answer to Mr. Adamson's letter. This reply Mr. Chandler produced and read, which, after some amendments, was approved."

Coll. Colchester likewise reported that it was the opinion of the committee that "if a convenient number of the Books called the *Sea Man's Monitor*, and of the *Papers against Profane Swearing* and the *Persuasive towards the Observation of the Lord's Day*, were dispersed amongst the seamen, it would much conduce towards their Christian instruction and reformation."

"Ordered—That one thousand copies of each of the said Books and Papers be bought and dispersed accordingly."

He also delivered a letter from "Mr. Cox (a lay correspondent, of whom there were already several in different parts of the kingdom,) relating to a charity school in Gloucester, and addressed to the Lord Bishop

of Worcester (Dr. Lloyd), who will make a report thereof at the next Meeting."

As a member of the committee for determining what publications should receive the approval of the society, "Coll. Colchester Reported to the Meeting of 3rd March, 1700, that they had drawn up a list of books which, as they did conceive, were necessary to be sent to the correspondents. Upon which the said list was read, and with some additions, agreed unto by the society, and ordered to be sent accordingly."

On 5th January, 1701-2, he belonged to the committee for "settling the form of subscription for the trustees of Mr. Matthew's Charity." Upon this occasion, it was "Ordered, that Mr. Francis Windham, of Clouerwall, near Covert, be an additional lay correspondent for Gloucestershire, being recommended by Coll. Colchester."

In 1701-2, March 5th, Coll. Colchester reported "that the small printed papers of this society against swearing, etc., had done a great deal of good in Gloucestershire," and stated "that if the society would send some more of them thither, in all probability they would have the same good effect."

"Ordered that the Treasurer do send thither one hundred of each of the said papers according to the Colonel's directions." At a meeting of the Society, 14th October, 1703, it was agreed that Coll. Colchester be desired to move His Grace of Canterbury (Dr. Tenison), to permit his *Letter to the Archdeacons and Clergy of St. David's* to be inserted in the Society's ordinary packetts." On the 28th, Colonel Colchester stated that "the Archbishop left his letter to their disposal."

In 1703, the Society took into consideration the formation of lending libraries in Wales, and on November 18th, Colonel Colchester, with other gentlemen, were constituted the committee for giving effect to the good design. On the 6th January, 1703-4, he was in the

chair. Upon the 2nd March following, he moved the Society for books and papers to distribute in three charity schools in the country. The treasurer was ordered "to furnish him with a parcel, the value not exceeding twenty shillings."

The last time Colonel Colchester seems to have been present at any of the Society's meetings was on 23rd January, 1706-7, having attended at least seventy-eight of them.

Details of similar character to the above, kindly communicated as follows, by Rev. E. Hawkins, also occur in the Minutes of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Thus, on 20th March, 1702, it was "ordered that a committee be appointed to prepare an address to the Queen (Anne, upon her accession on the 8th instant), and to lay it before the Society at the next meeting."

"Ordered, that the Lords, the Bishops of Peterborough (Dr. Cumberland), and Oxford (Dr. Talbot), the Lord Guildford, Sir William Hustler, Col. Colchester, and the rest of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and the members of the House of Commons that are members of this Society, or any three of them, be the said committee."

Mr. Hodges, the secretary, reports on the same day, that "he had received a benefaction of £20. from Colonel Colchester."

On 28th February, 1705, — "The secretary also acquainted the Board that the Treasurer, by a letter, had signified that Colonel Colchester had paid into his hands a donation of £20.— Ordered that the said Colonel be thanked." The last mention of him is found on the 5th January, 1710, when "The Treasurer reported a benefaction of Thirty Pounds from Colonel Colchester to the Society; agreed that the thanks of this Board be returned to the Colonel for his said kind benefaction."

and for sports generally, including those of the chase. That this might be conveniently gratified, Mr. Colchester selected a spot on the summit of the Forest hills, above Mitcheldean, and within easy distance of the retreats of the deer. There, in 1710, he built a good house, calling it "The Wilderness," from the nature of its site as compared with Westbury, which is seen in the distant vale below. "Maynard Colchester, of Westbury, Esq.," states Sir R. Atkyns, in 1712, "has a neat new-built house in Abbenhall parish, called the Wilderness, which is situated upon an high hill, and has a large prospect over the vale, and a great part of the hill-country."* The spot retains its name, but not its character. The trees planted a century and a half ago now appear in full majesty, almost embowering, as they certainly defend, the house, which, from its elevated situation, would be otherwise much exposed. Several of the sycamores have attained to noble dimensions, and "the Beech Walk" has long been a shady avenue. The wrought iron gates through which the Wilderness House was originally approached are preserved as the chief entrance to the adjacent Church-yard of Holy Trinity, to which they were liberally given.

The first Maynard Colchester, Esq. died the 25th of June, 1715, in the fifty-first year of his age, and was interred, near his father, in the chancel of Westbury Church. His widow and three daughters survived him, the family estates passing to his nephew, Colonel Maynard Colchester.

In this gentleman the neighbourhood found a valuable director of its affairs. On two occasions, namely in 1728, and again in 1754, he presided at the Court of Mine Law, when it passed its fourteenth and seventeenth "Orders." At the former he was elected a Free Miner. In 1735, he accepted office as one of the Forest Verderers.

* *History of Gloucestershire*, p. 103.

His character is given in the following terms on his monument in Westbury Church:—

“He retained thro’ Life with his own Choice and Judgment an hereditary Affection for the Laws, the Religion, and civil Rights of Englishmen, as established by the Revolution. From this Principle he ever manifested a firm Attachment to the illustrious House of Hanover and the Protestant Succession, particularly during the Rebellion in 1746; and approved himself by his Conduct at all times a vigilant, active, and prudent Magistrate, and a Friend to Society.”

He died 25th May, 1756, aged 53 years, when his son, Maynard, succeeded to the Colchester property. This gentleman was esteemed equally with his father in the County round, the Foresters electing him a “Free Miner” two years previous to his father’s death.

Under date of 5th of October, 1761, the *Gloucester Journal* thus instances his loyalty:—

“At Mitcheldean, in this County, on account of their Majesties’ Coronation, the inhabitants expressed their joy in a very distinguished manner. The principal inhabitants met at the White Horse, and went in procession from thence to the Church, preceded by a band of musick, when an excellent sermon was preached and two grand anthems were performed.

“The company afterwards returned to the White Horse to dinner, where a fine buck was given by Maynard Colchester, Esq. who regaled the populace with a hogshead of liquor; and the day was spent in giving every proof of loyalty and joy which could become good subjects upon so happy an occasion.”

In 1768 he was chosen a Verderer, holding the office of Deputy Warden as well. His answer, written 7th June, 1787, to the Commissioners appointed to examine the Land Revenue of the Crown, shews ability and judgment, when he thus admirably defined the duties of his Verderership:—“It is to preserve the vert (or green browse) and venison of the Forest; to preside as Judge of the Courts of Attachment and Swanimote (the former being held once every forty days, at the Speech House, for determining what offenders shall be presented at the next Justice seat; the latter thrice a year, at the same

place, in order to convict the accused); to receive Presentments from the keepers and other officers of all offences committed respecting the timber and deer in the Forest; to inquire into encroachments, and inspect the conduct of the Keepers and other officers of the Forest; but have no power to punish abuses therein." The session of the justice seats becoming rare, without which the Forest Courts were of no avail, they suffered in importance and were less regularly held. He died hardly two months after he had received the office, aged 57. The family property then came to John, his fourth and only surviving son, by whom it was held until 1801, in which year he died at the age of 59. His son, the late Maynard Colchester, Esq., being then a minor, the estates of the family were administered by the widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Colchester, until 1827, when she died. During her life the family mansion at Westbury was taken down, and the Wilderness House rebuilt on a scale that adapted it for becoming the permanent residence of her descendants. It is less lofty than the former one, having two stories instead of three. The site is, however, the same, and the motto is retained over the front door as originally placed there and at Westbury by Colonel Colchester, namely,—

D

O. M.

N M — M H E P — N C

Deo

Optimo Maximo

Nunc Meis, Mox Hujus, Et Postea Nescio Cujus.

The removal of the picturesque old structure delineated by Kip, in Sir R. Atkyns' work may be regretted, but its damp situation had evidently shortened the lives of its occupiers, none of whom lived to old age.

Mrs. Colchester secured for her son the educational advantages of a good private school and then of Oxford, both being augmented by his good natural abilities and

sound sense. He was thus rendered fully equal to the leading position he so long occupied in the neighbourhood. As a large landed proprietor he was most liberal, not only in money matters, but in the political freedom he allowed his tenants. Perhaps his influence was chiefly felt as a Magistrate and a Verderer, to which post he was elected as early as 1817. He also acted as one of the Commissioners for superintending the new plantations formed in the Forest about this period. In each of these offices, but especially in the former, he fulfilled his duties with impartial integrity and calm discrimination. Peculiarly indifferent to notoriety and applause, it was not until he was called hence in the spring of 1860, that the force of his presence was adequately felt. Shortly after his decease most of the family property passed into the hands of Mrs. Henrietta Davies, his widowed sister, by whom the estates are most generously administered, and who has become much endeared in the neighbourhood by her numerous bounties and acts of public munificence.

COOKE, GUISE, AND GAMBIER PARRY.

COOKE, WILLIAM, Esq., of Highnam Court, with his second son, Edward, in their day a family well connected and affluent, held office together, as two of the four Verderers of the Forest, A.D. 1668.*

Sir Robert Cooke, the father of William, was, in 1639, named by the Crown one of seven Commissioners to survey the Forest,† and was returned for the County, on the popular side, in the eventful year of 1640.‡ He espoused that interest so strongly as, at length, to act for the Commons under Colonel Massey, for whom he held Cirencester and Tewkesbury.§ His house at Highnam became in consequence an object of attack with the Royalists. But it was ill suited to resist them, since it comprised several portions of the old building constructed by the monks of the Abbey in Gloucester as a place of safe retirement should the plague appear in the town. Failing to keep his house against the enemy, Sir Robert removed with his wife and family into the city, where he died about the time of the siege in 1643. His widow, the virtuous relict of the accomplished and devout George Herbert,|| who had been safe amongst the adherents of the king, now that she was surrounded by Parliamentarians, found it necessary to withdraw to some other place of abode unknown.¶

* *Petty Bag Office.* † *Report of 1788*, p. 60.

‡ *Rudder's Gloucestershire*, p. 67.

§ *Washbourne's Bib. Glou.* xxxix, pp. 16, 172.

|| *Walton's Life.* ¶ *Washbourne's Bib. Glou.*, p. lxxx.

In the first instance, William, her step-son, professed her political principles. Seeing, however, the disasters that attended them, Charles I. having failed in taking Gloucester, he went over to Cromwell's party, using for his motto—" *muto quadrata rotundis*."*

The civil war being ended and quietness restored to the neighbourhood, Mr. Cooke began rebuilding his house at Highnam. Fire and shot had demolished the previous one, in which were consumed those many private writings of the heavenly minded Herbert, which Lady Cooke had intended for publication,†

His plans were designed by Inigo Jones, or by his pupil, Francis Carter, a favourite of the Protector, and Surveyor of his Public Works.‡ The house then erected stands unaltered and in excellent repair, as a fine example of the correct taste of its builders.

In 1663, Mr. William Cooke served as High Sheriff.§ The Lady Cooke died the same year, and was interred in the family burying place attached to the adjoining chapel, a structure having a small spire, and built fifty years before by the first Sir William Cooke.¶ A distant view of it is given in Rudder's plate of Highnam, shewing that it had a nave, chancel, and western tower and spire, but all on a small scale, and situated near the south-west corner of the Court. This edifice, being situated too close to the house, was wholly removed about the beginning of the present century, and totally forgotten until 1848, when its former existence was brought to light by the discovery of human bones, dug up in making some improvements in the grounds. Thomas Gambier Parry, Esq., who had become the owner of the estate, investigated the circumstance, and determined to raise a church in token of the former chapel, but more particularly for

* Washbourne's *Bib. Glou.* p. clxxviii. † Walton's *Life*.

‡ Bigland's *Gloucestershire*, p. 335.

§ Atkyns' *Gloucestershire*, p. 176.

the benefit of the neighbourhood. Highnam is consequently indebted to him for, perhaps, the most beautiful country church in the kingdom.

Both father and son, viz. the William and Edward Cooke first mentioned, held their respective offices as Verderers for many years. Each was put on the Royal Commission of 1692,* (3rd William and Mary,) "touching the Forest of Dean," although the signature of the former only appears at the foot of the returns made the next year to Sir Robert Atkyns, Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

The name of Cooke does not occur again on the roll of Forest authorities. That of Sir John Guise, Baronet, to whom the Highnam Estates eventually came, is found, as elected a Verderer under date 1770.† In this capacity, as well as in that of Deputy Warden of the Forest, and Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle, he received the "Precept" of the Commissioners of the Land Revenue, in 1787,‡ and replied to it in judicious terms. His son, Sir Berkeley William Guise, received the same appointment in 1801,|| and as such was placed in the responsible Commission of 1808, for replanting the Forest. As he continued in office until his death, in 1834, by which date most of the new enclosures had been formed, he must be included in the commendation justly due to those gentlemen who, under Mr. Machen's suggestions, succeeded so well in re-stocking these Crown lands.

* *Commissioners' Report of 1788*, p. 66.

† *Petty Bag*.

‡ *Commissioners' Report of 1788*, p. 77.

|| *Petty Bag*.

FOLEY.

FOLEY, "THOMAS, y^e elder, of Stoke Eddy, in the Shire of Hereford, Esq., and Thomas Foley, the younger, of the same, Esq.," were selected by the Miner's Jury for receiving "the Freedom of the Mine," at their Court that met in 1754.

The meaning of their choice is obvious. More Forest ore was bought by the Foleys than by any one besides, since the Iron Works at Lydbrook, Blakeney, Bishop's Wood, Guns Mills, and Newent were in their hands; having engaged in such undertakings since 1668, in which year they purchased large quantities of wood from the Forest for their furnaces. Those at the latter place became theirs when its Manor and the Woods of Yarkleton were purchased by Mr. Thomas Foley from Sir John Winter. Paul, his son, the noted opponent of the Ministry, and Speaker of the House of Commons in 1695, inherited them.

"Thomas Foley, the elder," first named, was raised to the Peerage in 1776, by the advice of Lord North. "Thomas Foley, the younger," had, in the meantime, married Lady Henrietta Stanhope. The father died in 1777, and the son in 1793, after which the family discontinued the making of Iron, and do not appear to have taken any further part in Forestal matters, their influence being more especially felt in the Newent District.

HALL.

HALL, HENRY BENEDICT, Esq., of "High Meadow," near Newland, with which estate his ancestry had been identified since 1443,* appears to have been the first of the family that took part in Forest matters. This was as one of the four Gentlemen who succeeded in inducing its Freeholders, Inhabitants and Commoners to consent to the memorable Proposal, presented to the Government in 1667, for the preservation and improvement of the growth of Timber there. Considerable influence was needed to bring men of such a class to one mind, and in this case we are told it was not effected without peculiar difficulty.

His father, Mr. Benedict Hall, aided him probably by the experience he himself had acquired in dealing with the public mind, during the civil wars with which this neighbourhood was so much agitated. The marriage of his father with "Anne, daughter of Sir Edward Winter, Kt., of Lidnie, and the Lady Anne Somerset, third daughter of Edward, Earl of Worcester,"† wholly involved him with the supporters of the Crown. High Meadow House was consequently garrisoned, in the first instance, by a company of Royalists. It does not appear, however, that they held it with much strength, since at different times, it was made to serve the purposes of the Parliamentary Forces, especially towards the end of the struggle. Corbet records an instance when, on one mid-

* *Wyrhall MS.*

† Monument in Newland Church.

night in September, 1644, all being dark, still, and rainy, Governor Massey drew off from before Monmouth towards Gloucester, as though he had received tidings that his presence was wanted there. Marching three miles towards a "thicket of the forest," which would be the woods near Mr. Hall's residence, within, or adjoining, which, he seemed to surprise Lieutenant Colonel Kyrle, and his troop of thirty horse, they being in the Governor's confidence, all quietly return and retake the town. It is interesting to find, in the older parts of what is now the High Meadow farm homestead, considerable remains of the same age as the occurrence just related, and built probably by the elder Mr. Hall. Other portions are still earlier, shewing quite a mediæval origin.

This Mr. Hall died 16th April, 1668, aged 78, and was buried in Newland, where a costly monument was erected by his son to his "Pious Memorie." In the terms of Corbet's partial account, the father was "a grand papist." Certainly his marrying into the Worcester and Winter families, each of his wives being strong Romanists, supports the statement. The latter survived him until the 10th March, 1675, then dying at Cambray in Artois.* The circumstance of her death taking place away from home, in a Roman Catholic country, seems to imply that the younger Mr. Hall did not profess that faith. Had he done so, he would hardly have been united with the other gentlemen of the Forest in superintending its management. To him may be attributed the erection of the later High Meadow House, described by Sir R. Atkyns as "very large" and "handsome," and very justly so, though unfortunately it was not engraved by Kip. There is a good print of it in Mr. Phelps's collection, where its very excellent architectural character, in the French style, is fully brought out. The family gallery in Newland Church displayed equal skill in its way.

* Monument in Newland Church.

The following description of the house and its environs, as they appeared in Mr. Rudder's time, (1779,) is valuable:—"The house is large and handsome, built in the form of the letter H, and from its elevated situation commands a bird's eye view of the village (Newland) and of the beautiful lawns and groves on the other side of the valley at a very agreeable distance. Were his lordship (Lord Gage) possessed of the whole landscape he could not wish to misplace a single object; yet the prospect might be improved by the addition of water, which it wants to make it compleat."

Here Mr. Benedict Hall departed this life in 1684, and was interred at Newland. His only daughter and heiress, Beata Maria Theresa, married Sir Thomas Gage, created Viscount Gage, of Castle Island, in the county of Kerry, and Baron Gage, of Castlebar, in the county of Mayo, 14th September, 1720. Their two sons, William Hall Gage, and the Hon. Thomas Gage, were made "Free Miners" by the Court of Mine Law, in 1728 and 1737 respectively. William, the elder, being then Lord Viscount Gage, was a Woodward in 1787, by which date it may be supposed the suit of 1744* was mutually forgotten. It was occasioned by his lordship presuming to cut Hangerbury Wood, on the ground that it belonged to his Manor and Parish of English Bicknor. But the Verderer, Conservator, and Chief Forester, succeeded in convincing the Attorney General that the said Wood belonged to the Crown. The letter reporting such decision thus concluded:—"I hope you will pay my compliments to the Gentlemen of your Division, who by their Unwearied Endeavours have so Effectually defeated Encroachments both on the rights of the Crown and publick. I drink all their Healths now, wth well wishes to the old Whigish Interest, &c," such was the preference in the Forest for the House of Hanover at that critical period, the sympathy of the Gages being the other way.

* *Report of 1788*, p. 76.

Lady Viscountess Gage died in 1749, and Lord Viscount Gage in 1754. He was buried with his ancestors at Tirlé, in Sussex, and since that period the family have rarely visited High Meadow. The *Gloucester Journal* of Dec. 26th, 1748, announces that Lord Viscount Gage intended to keep this Christmas at "High Meadow," indicating that such was an unusual event. In 1817, the property, containing 4257 acres, was sold to the Crown for £155,863. 3s. 2d., and the materials of the fine old house disposed of, being greatly dilapidated and past reparation.

HIGFORD.

HIGFORD, JOHN, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Alvington, in which church he lies interred, together with previous members of the family, held office under the Duke of Beaufort, as one of the Deputy Constables of the Forest of Dean and Castle of St. Briavel.

It was in this capacity that he presided over the Court of Mine Law, in the years 1692 and 1694, on which occasions the Miners' Jury agreed to their eighth and ninth "Orders." He "departed this life 9 April, A.D. 1706."* William Higford, Esq., succeeded to the property, where, writes Sir R. Atkyns, "he hath a pleasant seat and a good estate." The Rev. Henry Higford was the next possessor. On his death in 1795, they passed to the Parsons's and Davis's.

* *Bigland*, p. 54.

JAMES.

JAMES, WILLIAM, Esq., of Sully, or Soilwell, on the south-east side of the Forest, and a Deputy Constable and Keeper of the same, under James, Earl of Berkeley, during the reign of George I. By virtue of such appointment, he presided at three different times over the Miners' Court of Law, namely, in the years 1717, 1719, and 1728. At the first of them, he was chosen a Free Miner. On the second, he was entrusted with the keeping of the Records belonging to the Court. Whilst, upon the last occasion, the franchises of the Mine were conferred on his son Robert. These marks of respect accord with what Sir R. Atkyns notices of him—"In this place (Sully) William James, Esq., has a good seat and estate." Here the family had property as early as 1629, when Edward James was seized of it.* Stroat, in the parish of Tidenham, had likewise been a long time in their possession. Selwyn James, Esq., held it during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Thomas, another son of the Mr. William James first mentioned, acted for many years as Steward or Recorder of St. Briavel's Court. He, in concert with Mr. M. Colchester and Mr. W. Jones, were selected as Arbitrators in a Mine Law suit that arose in 1751, respecting a coal level called "The Windmill." The case was rendered peculiarly embarrassing by the position of the parties at issue. Their "Award," of which the following is a copy, sufficiently shews this:—

* *Rudder*, p. 529.

"Whereas, upon the Evidence of the Plaintiffs, Will^m Philips and his Vearnes & Edward Tomkins Machen, Esq., Defendant, in an Action brought here by the Parties the last Court & agreed to be refer'd to us.—We do think and are of opinion that the Plaintiffs by Ancient Custom have an undoubted right to the Worke in question there being no Gale or Worke prior theirs. But in as much as the Defendant, some time before this Worke was Galed to the Plaintiffs, demanded the Gale of it to himself, w^{ch} the Gaveller neglect^d to do & at the same time gave Assurances to the Dependant y^t he w^{ld} Gale the same to no other Person or Persons. We are of opinion his Gavelling it to others afterwards is a hardship on the owner & appears to be done by surprise since the Gaveller has a share & is interest^d in these worke, had not y^t been the fact the Award must have been in favor of the Plaintiff but We apprehend the Defendant w^{ld} have had it Gale^d to him had it not been through the omission of the Gaveller, We see no reason he should suffer by such neglect, We do therefore Award in & for the Defendant,—Provided always if the s^d Defendant does not make use of the Worke or carry the same into Execution then the Miners at large are at Liberty to have the same Galed to im & worke the same. Given under our hands this 17th of December,

MAYND. COLCHESTER.

WM. JONES.

THOS. JAMES."

Of course this Award was not satisfactory to Phillips, etc. What further steps were taken, if any, do not appear.

This Mr. Thos. James sat on the last chief Court of Mine Law held, viz. in 1754, when the seventeenth "Order" was issued. He was elected a Free Miner at the same time.

The late Mr. John James, a Deputy Constable, and for a long period Steward or Recorder of St. Briavel's Court, may be regarded as the latest direct representative of this old Forest family.

JONES.

JONES—Esq., well known in this part of Gloucestershire as of good position and long residence on the Severn side of the Forest, with which the family has been connected for many generations.

Their location here can be traced back, says Sir Robert Atkyns, to the reign of Elizabeth, when they appear to have been partially engaged, in common with other gentlemen of the neighbourhood, in Wire making, drawn by power of hand.

In the time of James the First, Brecknock Court was claimed from the Crown as belonging to them, by Thomas and Hugh Jones.* Nass, where General Massey had an outpost of Parliamentary troops, during the Civil War, likewise appertained to the family, who held the Manor along with that of Newnham.

Roynon Jones, Esq.† who married Anne, the eldest daughter of Edward Cook, of Highnam Court, in 1706, was one of the former heads of the house. He was a Deputy Constable and Keeper of the Forest, so that when the Miners' Court issued its Eleventh Order in 1707, he presided thereat. His death occurred in 1732, in his 70th year, and he was buried at Lydney. William, his son, first married Cholmley, daughter of Sir John D'Oley, Baronet, of Chesel Hampton, in Oxfordshire. This lady's mother was remarkably beautiful. Her full length portrait by Sir Peter Lely shews

* *State Papers, Domestic Series, vol. 190.*

† Tombstone, in Lydney Church

this. He was a friend of the family, and painted most of its members. Their likenesses constitute an heirloom of much interest.

The last named Mr. Jones acted as Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle, and Forest of Dean, early in the last century, and as such, superintended the Court of Mine Law that sat at the Speech House when the fifteenth Order of the forty-eight Jurors was passed, 6th December, 1737, having been elected a Free Miner nine years before. The identical parchment, on which this proceeding was engrossed, exists in the family archives, and runs thus—

“Forest of Deane, &c. Att a Court of Mine and Miners of our Sovereigne Lord the King within the said fforest of Deane in the County of Gloucester holden by adjournment att the Speech House within the said fforest on Tuesday the Twelfth day of November in the Second Year of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Lord George the second by the Grace of God of Great Britaine ffrence and Ireland King defender of the ffaith, &c., ano Dom. 1728. BEFORE Maynard Colchester Esq. & William James Gent. deputies to the Right honble. James Earle of Berkeley &c., &c. Lord Warden of his Maties fforest of Deane, Constable of St. Briavell's Castle within the same fforest &c. and William Lane Deputy Clerke of the Castle aforesaid. And George James Deputy Gaveller of the Mines within the said fforest. The JURY there Impannelled and sworne consisting of ffourty eight Miners Do make and ordaine as followeth viz. :—

THAT the said Jury of ffourty eight Miners out of a due Respect which they have and bear unto WILLIAM JONES gent son and Heir apparent unto Roynon Jones of Nass Esq. one of the deputy Constables of the said Castle of St. Briavells doe humbly pray him the said William Jones to do the said Miners the honour of being one of their Society. AND they do accordingly Order, Ordaine and establish hereby that the said William Jones be constituted and made a Free Miner within the said fforest as fully and effectually to all intents and purposes as any other ffree Miner within the said fforest is can or ought to be. IN WITNESS whereof the said deputy Constable, Gaveller and Castle Clerke. And also the said ffourty eight Miners have hereunto sett their hands and seals in open Court holden at the time and place above mentioned.

(Here follow their signatures, forty-eight in number.)

In 1752, being already Conservator of the Woods, he was chosen one of the Forest Verderers, which responsible office he held till his death, in 1776. It was this gentleman whose daughter forms the subject of the catastrophe, related in the ensuing terms of the contemporary number of the *Gloucester Journal*:—

July 22nd, 1771.—“The most shocking instance of savage barbarity ever heard of in these countries was perpetrated on Thursday evening last, near Lidney in this County. Miss Mary Jones, youngest daughter of William Jones, Esq. of Nass, and Miss Gough, a young lady of Monmouth, who was upon a visit at Nass, were most inhumanly murdered in a meadow near Lidney Church as they were returning from Lidney to Nass. The young ladies after tea took a walk to Lidney, as they frequently did, when they were detained by the rain till near ten o'clock, at which time they set out for Nass, which is about two miles distant, without any attendant. The family at Nass, surprised the ladies did not return, sent a servant with a lanthorn to meet them, who found Miss Jones lying dead across the path in the meadow, with the back part of her skull beat to pieces, and Miss Gough in a ditch near the same place, most shockingly bruised. It is impossible to describe the distraction into which y^r family was thrown. The whole county being soon alarmed, every man was summoned to go in pursuit of the murderer.

“William Morgan, a young man of Lidney, a sawyer by trade, was the only person absent. He was in bed when one of his neighbours called him up and told him what had passed. As soon as he came down, some blood being observed upon the knee of his breeches, he was directly charged with the fact, which he without hesitation confessed.

“On Saturday evening, he was brought to our castle, and gives this account of the horrid deed.—He says he had been playing at Fives on Thursday evening and had lost all his money; but had engaged to play for sixpence the next night. Whilst he was thinking how to get the money, he had engaged to play for, these two young ladies passed him, and it came into his mind that he might easily rob them of their money as they went home. He accordingly followed them, and it being nearly dark, passed by them. Miss Jones said—“Good night to you, Will.” Finding that he was known, he determined to murder them, and taking a circuit in the meadow, came behind them, and with a stick struck Miss Jones upon the head, which brought her to the ground; he then gave her another blow and left her dead on the spot. Miss Gough who had run a few yards, he followed, and struck in the

same manner. She screamed out, upon which he repeated his blows till she was to all appearance lifeless. He supposed in struggling she had fallen into the ditch, as he did not throw her there. He then knelt down and took off Miss Jones's pockets, but left her watch, and in kneeling down his breeches were stained with the blood. Just as he had taken off the pockets, he saw the servant coming up with a lanthorn, and ran off. He says as he passed through the Church Yard, he heard a terrible noise in the Church.

"Miss Gough, upon being carried to a house shewed some signs of life; and is so far revived as to speak some incoherent words, and was not dead yesterday but lies past recovery.

"July 29th.—Miss Gough is in a fair way of recovery. The principal wounds she received were on the top, back part, and side of her head, from which her face and one eye have been much swelled. Her hat was almost cut to pieces, and her wrists much bruised in defending herself from the ruffian. The death of her amiable friend, after whom she often enquires, has not yet been made known to her."

The pockets which Morgan took off from Miss Jones's dress contained a half guinea, 5s. in silver, 2d. in copper, and a two bladed knife. With these he made off to his father's house, where most of them were found, and produced against him, with condemnatory effect, at his trial before Sir G. Nares, on the 11th of March following, at the Gloucester Assizes. The fatal spot in the "East Marsh," is yet shewn, as also the knife, which the family have preserved.

Roydon Jones, her brother, succeeded to the family estates, having been elected as early as 1754, "a free miner," at the Court that proved the last full one ever held, whilst in 1766, higher forestal honours were paid him, in the terms of the ensuing deed.

"Frederick Augustus, Earl of Berkeley, etc., Keeper of the forest of Dean, and Constable of the Castle of Saint Briavells.—

To ROYDON JONES, Esq.

"Whereas His most Excellent Majesty by his Letters Patents hath constituted and appointed me Constable of his Majesty's Castle of Saint Briavells and Keeper of his Majesty's Forest of Dean in the County of Gloucester to Hold and Exercise the said Offices of Constable and Keeper by myself or my sufficient Deputy or Deputies in that behalf. These PRESENTS therefore witness

that I the said Frederick Augustus Earl of Berkeley of the Trust and Confidence I have in you the said Roynon Jones, Esq. do nominate and appoint you to be one of my Deputies in the said Offices of Constable and Keeper and to do and exercise all and every thing and things belonging to the said Forest for and during my will and pleasure. GIVEN under my Hand and Seal this 2nd day of August—in the sixth year of the reign of our sovereign Lord GEORGE the third by the grace of God, etc.—and in the year of our Lord 1766.

BERKELEY.

“By Command of his Lordship, THOS. JAMES.”

Another local dignity, namely, that of a Verderer, awaited him, as the following certificate points out:—

“I do hereby certify that a Writt directed to the Sheriff of Gloucestershire bearing date at Westminster the seventeenth day of June in the fifteenth year of the Reign of his present Majesty King George the third for Choosing another Verderer for the fforest of Dean in the place of William Jones Esquire deceased late one of the Verderers there together with the return of Sir George Smith Baronet Sheriff of the County of Gloucester thereon indorsed (thereby certifying that on the third day of July in the year above mentioned in his full County held by adjournment at the Bear Inn in the Town of Newnham in the said County by assent of same County He had caused Roynon Jones of Hay Hill in the Parish of Newnham aforesaid Esquire to be chosen Verderer of the fforest of Deane above mentioned in the place of the above named William Jones deceased) is returned into the Office of Petty Bagg in his Majesty’s High Court of Chancery and there remains ffiled amongst the Records of the said Court. Dated this Sixth day of Nov. 1776.

THOS. MENDHAM.

One of the Clerks of the Petty Bagg.”

He held likewise the appointment of “Conservator of the Forest,” in which capacity he had to take care of the Waste Lands enclosed as Plantations. Hence he received the usual “Precept” from the Commissioners of 1786.* This is the gentleman of whom Mr. Rudder, in 1778, writes—“he hath lately built a handsome house, very pleasantly situated at Hayhill, in Ruddle.”† The house is duly engraved by Taylor, in his County Map of 1777. Of the considerate manner in which his Verderer’s duties were fulfilled, the following incident is a proof.

* *Report of 1788, App.* p. 80.

† *History*, p. 573.

A letter dated 18th April, 1793, records that—"On Saturday last, Hartland (Assistant to the Deputy Surveyor of the Forest), brought a person before the Justices at Gloucester, who had been detected in cutting underwood in Dean Forest, when Mr. Phillip Robinson, a Maltster in Little Dean, appeared in his favour and produced a Certificate of leave to cut hedge-wood in the Forest from Mr. John Brett, one of the Keepers. Whereupon the Bench wrote to the Forest Authorities, 'we conceive if the Keepers are permitted to give leave to their friends and favourites to commit depredations in the Forest, it will not be in their power to convict any offenders in future, except such who unfortunately labour under the displeasure of those gentlemen.'"

Brett's tenure of office was evidently in jeopardy, as his conduct was reported in censurable terms to the Lords of the Treasury. My Lords wrote in a similar strain to Earl Berkeley, Constable of the Forest "submitting to him the propriety of dismissing Brett." His Lordship sends a like missive to Mr. Jones, as a Verderer, who, without betraying his office, preserves the unfortunate Keeper from degradation, by replying in these words:—

"MY LORD,

In answer to your Lordship's Letter, I beg leave to observe, that the Freeholders belonging to the Forest of Dean, have time out of mind been allowed Hedge-wood for the use of their respective Farms by applying first to the Keeper of that walk where the Hedgewood is cut from—and *He* ought to attend himself or his Deputy, to see that nothing detrimental to his Majesty's Forest is carried away. But I fear the Keepers have all been too negligent in attending to this material part of their office, and have often allowed people to cut underwood when they have not been present. Brett informs me he was there part of the time Mr. Robinson's man was cutting the hedge-wood. I am, &c. ROYNON JONES."

At his death, his son, Edward, came into the Hay Hill property, and was a participator in the responsible work of setting out the new inclosures formed by the Crown Mission of 1808,* of which he was a member.

* *Petty Bag Office.*

His son, Edward Owen Jones, Esq., to whom the family estates next passed, has manifested the same interest in the Forest which so many of the previous generations of his family have done. In proof of such feeling, he continued to take part in the transactions of the Commissioners of the present century for planting and managing the inclosures of young trees. Some of these were thrown open and others formed in their stead in 1842. By the kind courtesy of this gentleman many of the foregoing particulars have been communicated.

KEMBLE.

KEMBLE, MR. ROGER, the father of the great tragedians, John and Sarah, (Mrs. Siddons) is understood, on the testimony of the oldest and best informed inhabitants, to have resided, like his fathers before him, at Lydbrook. A picturesque stone and timber house, near the brook, a quarter of a mile above its union with the Wye, is shewn as his identical abode. It seems to be fully two hundred years old, and coupled with the romantic character of the adjacent scenery, may have tended to foster the latent dramatic genius of the family. Such pleasing results are not likely to occur again, since clouds of smoke from the adjoining iron works mostly obliterate the otherwise charming scenery.

The pretty church yard and exquisitely restored church of Welsh Bicknor, on the other side of the Wye, indicate where the elder Kembles sleep. Here, an altar tomb, much defaced and but partly legible, from the weather of two centuries, reads thus :—

“In hope of a joyful Resurrection, there lieth interred the Body of Ann wife of George Kemble, Gent. who departed this life y^e _____”

On another altar-tomb, inscribed with the sacred monogram, I. H. S., the following epitaph occurs :—

“In Memory of
Elizabeth the Wife
of John Kemble Gent,
who departed this life
August the 4th
Anno 1712.
Aged 80 years.”

Although the Rev. John Temple, who has charge of the Parish, has kindly examined the register with all care, the name of Kemble does not occur. A full explanation of its absence is supplied by the fact that the family, in common with several others in the neighbourhood, were hereditary Romanists. It is also to be remembered that Mr. Roger Kemble left home early in life, and does not appear to have returned to it again.

The name is quite understood by the old Foresters, by whom every Campbell is sure to be designated a Kemble. Yet none of the family survive in the district. Fragments of the Plays of Shakspeare have been found committed to memory by some of the neighbouring cottagers.

KYRLE.

KYRLE, JOHN, Esq. better known as "the Man of Ross," became officially connected with the Forest of Dean, in consequence of the Crown selecting him as a Commissioner to carry out its weighty instructions for investigating the condition of the same and reporting thereon.* This was in 1692, when in his fifty-ninth year.

His residence at Ross, and his estate at Walford, to both of which places, in early times, the Perambulations extended, would unite him with this locality. One of his ancestors, James Kyrle, Esq., of Walford, etc., was a Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle,† and a Commissioner for surveying the Forest in 1638.‡

The whole neighbourhood revered his virtues, and almost adored the man. He was also a Justice of the Peace, but did not act. Hence his local position fully justified the above named appointment. Its duties well accorded with his tastes. Planting trees was his well known hobby. They were frequently set with his own hands, and watered too, for besides his spade and cider bottle, he often carried a watering pot.§ Pope's interrogatories—

"Who hung with woods yon mountains sultry brow?
Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?"

* *Report of 1788*, p. 68.

† *Wyrhall MS.* ‡ *Report of 1788*, p. 60.

§ Fosbroke's *Wye Tour*, p. 6.

point to the same pursuit. In the first, the poet alludes to the hanging groves with which he clad his lands facing Wilton, on the Cleave-field bank. The other line alludes to the elms that bordered the raised road across the meadows to Wilton bridge.

"The Man of Ross" was sure, therefore, to be found as ready and experienced as any of the gentlemen commissioned by Government to view the Forest Woods for the purpose of reporting their condition and advising how they had best be dealt with. His name being appended to the account sent up is an earnest that he, with them, "had repaired to the said Forest, and carefully viewed and perambulated the several parts and Places thereof."* In such expeditions Mr. Kyrle would be as though at home and in his element, practically acquainted with the duties entrusted to him, and conscientious in the discharge of them.

* *Report of 1788*, p. 68.

MACHEN.

MACHEN, EDWARD, Esq., whose long and most efficient attention to the interests of the Crown secured such universal respect, as to entitle him to the epithet—"the Man of the Forest."

An ingenious Paper by the Rev. S. Lysons,* traces a branch of the family back to Robert Machin, of Bristol, said to have discovered Madeira, *circa* 1346. In later times his ancestors appear to have been Henry and Thomas Machen, who, in the memorable year of Bishop Hooper's death, 1555, were the Sheriffs of the City of Gloucester. To them may be added Thomas Machen, Esq., Alderman, and thrice Mayor, who died there, the 18th of October, 1614, and lies in the Cathedral, near the west door of the Nave, beneath a costly monument.

About the middle of that century, the family settled at Eastbach Court, in the parish of English Bicknor, Mr. Richard Machen, the elder, dying there in 1673. Parts of the house are at least fifty years earlier than that date, whilst the locality is named in deeds dated in 1402.† At the time of his decease, and for a hundred and fifty years after, the Bounds of the Forest included Bicknor Bailiwick. A Perambulation was made about that period,‡ when Mr. Machen's son, Edward, rode it as a "Regarder," with seventeen other gentlemen.

* *Gloucestershire Illustrations*, No. 1. by the Rev. S. Lysons, M.A., F.S.A., price 6d.—Lea, Gloucester.

† *Wyrhall Deeds*.

‡ *Records of St. Briavel's Court*.

The honourable office of "Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle," and "Sub-Warden of the Forest of Dean," was held by several of the Mr. Machens of the last century. In this responsible capacity they were required to preside over the Court of Free Miners, and were duly enfranchised with all the immunities of Free Minership. In 1717, and again in 1719, Mr. Richard Machen thus officiated.* Mr. Tomkins Machen did the same in 1741. The former was likewise elected a Verderer in 1716, the latter in 1724.† It was an appointment for life, and involved the chief local management of the Forest.

Hence the subject of this notice possessed a complete forestal ancestry. His father was "Deputy Surveyor" and "Deputy Gaveller" before him. To these posts Mr. Machen succeeded in 1805, and held them for upwards of fifty years.

When he thus undertook the agency of this Crown Estate, its condition was unsatisfactory and perplexing in every way. The inhabitants—though they had imperceptibly increased to several thousands—were still left to live and die as they pleased, having become exceedingly demoralized by habits of spoliation and encroachment.

Totally unenlightened as respected morality and religion, but naturally intelligent, all their faculties seemed directed to the defence of their avowed privileges. Ignorant, and therefore unreasonable, suspicious because apprehensive, they were "up" in an instant and eager to contend for their rights with a kind of savage impetuosity.

But no one understood their temperament or how to deal with it better than Mr. Machen. His good will towards them was so frequently proved, either as a "friend at court," or as a "friend at home," that none

* See *Orders of Court of Mine Law*.

† *Petty Bag Office*.

could call it in question. They saw, too, that he acted upon principle, and from a conscientious desire to fulfil the duties of his office.

As a constant resident in the Forest and holding such frequent intercourse with the people, every body felt he knew them and their affairs. Only such was the excellent propriety of what he did, and of the way in which it was done, that so far from this intimacy reducing his influence, it tended to its increase. Nothing unbecoming a Christian gentleman was ever heard from him. His deportment was always perfectly correct and composed, whilst a marked seriousness and regularity ever appeared in his observance of the Lord's Day. He constantly worshipped at his own church, St. Paul's, Park End, communicating on every occasion, attending Divine Service whenever it was offered, and even teaching a class of boys in the Sunday School.* The same consistency was shewn by all the members of his family, and more or less by each individual of his household. A good tone and example were thus given to the staff of Keepers and Woodmen who served under him.

He was instrumental in the erection of most of the Forest Churches and Schools, and a liberal benefactor towards every design that the clergy of the district recommended to his notice.

In his later years, he enjoyed the pleasing reflection of the good success that had attended his life-long efforts to benefit the property and people of the District. He saw the Forest parochialised, and provision made for the destitute poor. He witnessed a due adjustment of Mining Regulations. He found a wasted crop of Timber partially covering the ground, but lived to behold

* One day that he was teaching them about being "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven" he asked—"And how, my boys, are you to get it for your own?" "I takes it in," was the reply, in allusion to the mode of possession commonly practised by Foresters when anxious to augment their territory.

nine-tenths of the soil clad with thriving Plantations. The improvements here adverted to are indisputable, and were substantially recognised by the Commissioners in London.

Mr. Machen finally retired from office in November, 1854, relinquishing to his popular yet vigilant successor, Sir James Campbell, Bart., ground of encouragement from the past, and scope for further progress.

On the above named occasion a handsome service of plate was presented to their old friend, by the chief capitalists of the Forest, at a public dinner in the Speech House.

Not until the autumn of 1862, did Mr. Machen's health yield to the pressure of protracted service, continuing to take, as long as he was able, a large share of the magisterial business of the Coleford District, besides keeping up his intercourse with the Forest, as a Verderer, succeeding Mr. Colchester in that office, after his decease in 1860. He died at Eastbach Court, aged 81, and was interred in the church yard of English Bicknor, the resting place of so many of his ancestors. The Rev. Edward Machen, Rector of Staunton, his eldest and only surviving son, is the highly esteemed successor to the family estates.

MELBOURNE.

MELBOURNE, HENRY, Esq., a gentleman of the neighbourhood and a Deputy Constable of St. Briavel's Castle, for the Marquis of Worcester, towards the end of the reign of Charles II. In 1682, he presided, in consort with Mr. William Wolseley, at the fifth session of the Free Miner's Court.

The only additional circumstance that has been discovered regarding him consists in his having been the subject of complaint to the Marquis that, if not himself a Papist, he permitted Roman Catholic priests to resort to his house. His lordship very wisely referred the accusation to the Justices of the Peace with whom "Mr. Millborne" sat. In their reply, "he does the King good service," they said, "although his sisters, Mrs. Katherine and Mrs. Christian Millbourne, being Romanists, harboured the priests of their own faith." A certificate of his attendance at Lanrothall Church, of which he was a parishioner, was also furnished by the Rev. Thomas Evens, the minister.

There is a tradition in the parish, writes the Rev. J. D. Watherston, that old Parson Burry, who died some fifty years ago, aged a hundred, *laid* Squire Melbourne in the Munnow. He was said to have *walked*, having broken his neck down Mill Hill, (a hill leading down from Skenchill to Tregate Mill,) when returning probably to Tregate Castle.

PINDAR.

PINDAR, REGINALD, Esq., a gentleman of wealth, resident at Kempley, which Manor he held at the commencement of the last century. Here, according to Sir R. Atkyns, "he hath a large house, and a great estate." Kempley would be then accounted part of the district of the Forest, according to the oldest Perambulations, and the description of its limits that continued in use long after those bounds were curtailed. This circumstance explains Mr. Pindar's being placed on the Commission of 1692, to make "Enquiry and Examination concerning the Forest of Dean."* The Report of the year following proves that it was drawn up after a searching investigation, in which Mr. Pindar is shewn to have taken part by his name being put to it.

Neither he nor his descendants are again mentioned, and the family have long since disappeared from the neighbourhood.

* *Report of 1788*, p. 68.

PROBYN.

PROBYN, Sir EDMUND, Knight, the eminent ancestor of an ancient and still leading family resident near the Forest and much attached to it. Newland, where he was born, in or about 1678, then came within its Perambulations. His father, William Probyn, Gent., and mother, Elizabeth, after a long residence in the parish, there died and were buried, early in the last century. He took a prominent share in the efforts made at the Restoration to re-plant the Crown Lands, and was one of the four gentlemen who signed the Memorial of 1667. His name is likewise appended to "The Rules and Orders of the Court of St. Briavell," compiled in 1663. Their monument in Newland Church states him to have been "Grand-Son & heir of John Probyn of Newland Gent., by Mary his Wife one of y^e Daughters of Christ^r Hall of High Meadow Esq. She was the Eldest Daughter of Edmund Bond of Walford in the County of Hereford Gent."

They had five daughters and two sons, of whom Sir Edmund was the elder. He received his legal education at the Middle Temple, acting as a Barrister there about A.D. 1714. His professional progress was rapid, as in 1721 he was made a Welsh Judge, and a Serjeant in 1724, whilst in the ensuing year, the Lord Chancellor Macclesfield selected him for his leading counsel, together with Dr. Sayer

and Mr. Strange, when tried for high crimes and misdemeanours at the bar of the House of Peers. That he acquitted himself with honour and ability on that difficult occasion is proved by his being made a Judge of the King's Bench in November, 1726, and knighted. After sitting there fourteen years, he succeeded Sir John Comyns, as Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, in November, 1740.*

Well painted likenesses of him in earlier life, as well as at this latter period, robed in official costume, are in the possession of John Probyn, Esq., of the Manor House, Longhope,—by whom this fact and several of the following ones were courteously furnished—and exhibit an aspect of ability and decision. An interesting portrait of his Lady, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Blencowe, Knight, and one of the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas, is also preserved. Several note-books, mostly in the form of interleaved almanacks, elaborately bound in red and gold, and filled with domestic and private memoranda, beautifully penned, are likewise in existence.

Although no doubt mostly resident in London, Sir Edmund seems to have paid yearly visits to Newland. When there, local and family traditions tell how the poor Foresters used to benefit in every way by his counsel and assistance. He was evidently attached to this neighbourhood, and at his death, on the 17th of May, 1742, was buried at Newland. His widow survived until the 22nd of October, 1749, when she was buried "at her particular desire," near his remains. Leaving no issue, he devised his estates, which were considerable, to his nephew, Edmund Probyn, of Newland.

About this date, the Records of the Court of Mine Law shew that at its seventeenth and last meeting, on the 22nd of October, 1754, four members of the Probyn

* Several of these particulars were kindly communicated by E. Foss, Esq.

family were elected "Free Miners," namely John Probyn and his son, Edmund, as well as William, a younger brother, and Edmund, his son.

The decease of the above named brother, in 1761, was noticed, as follows, in the *Gloucester Journal* of that date:—

"Last Week died at Newland, in this County, William Probyn, esq., a Gentleman whose distinguished abilities, uncommon Humility, and Christian Piety procured him the love and veneration of all who knew him; and in whose Decease, society in general will find the loss of an excellent Member, and his acquaintance in particular an inestimable Friend."

In 1767, Mr. Edmund Probyn served as High Sheriff, and upon his father's death, in 1773, succeeded him as one of the Verderers of the Forest, and therefore was called upon for information concerning the Forest by the Commissioners of 1786*. His perspicuous reply was dated the 7th of June, 1787. The country round called him "The Father of the Forest," from the constancy with which he attended the Forest Court, and invariably endeavoured to further its best interests. Thus, in 1800, when the Severn and Wye Tramway was contemplated, he opposed it, because, said he, "it may be a good thing for some of the richer colliers—but as for the poor ones, it will deprive them of getting the scanty bread they now do—till this matter is cleared up, I cannot, for one, join in any act that is likely to take the bread out of the mouths of the lower class of colliers, who are by much the most numerous." He died in 1819, after having been a Verderer for more than fifty years.

More recently, John Probyn, Esq., of Longhope, acted as one of the Commissioners for re-planting the Forest, and likewise as representative of the Free Miners in the administration of the important Mining Act of 1838. By such services he was enabled to cement those kindly feelings that existed for several generations between his family and the Foresters.

* *Commissioners' Report of 1788. App. p. 79,*

PYRKE.

PYRKE, RICHARD, the earliest known member of a family whose existence in the eastern precincts of the Forest has been perpetuated through a remarkable number of generations. So much so, that it is recorded on Mr. Nath. Pyrke's monument, put up in Abbenhall Church, A. D. 1715, that the race have "had their chiefe seat of residence in this neighbourhood ever since the Conquest." Certainly the family archives are particularly numerous and ancient, reaching back to the Plantagenet period.

The above named Mr. Richard Pyrke, who was interred at Abbenhall in 1609, seems to have been the builder of the family hall, near Littledean, judging by its architectural character. Two sons, Thomas and Robert, survived him. The latter died possessed of property in Abbenhall Parish, in 1634. The elder son Thomas, was resident, probably, in Littledean Hall, at the time of its attack by a party of Massey's Horse, on the 7th of May, 1644. In any case the house was occupied for the King by Lieutenant Colonel Congreve, Governor of the Royalist Garrison at Newnham, and Captain Wigmore, supported by a few private soldiers. They yielded, however, to Massey's superior force, and had accepted quarter, "ready, says Corbet, to render themselves, when one of their company from the house kills a trooper, which so enraged the rest that they broke in upon them and put them all to the sword: in which accident this passage was not to be forgotten that expressed in one place an extreame contrariety in the spirits of men under

the stroke of death : Congreve died with these words, Lord receive my soule ; and Wigmore cried nothing but Dam me more, dam me more ; desperately requiring the last stroke, as enraged at divine revenge."

The dining room at the hall has been long known as the apartment where this frightful scene occurred, the particular spot where the men fell, being the left hand corner of the room near the fire place.

Thomas, a son of this Mr. Thomas Pyrke, succeeded to the family property, and was appointed a Regarder of the Forest, A.D. 1670, in which capacity he rode the Perambulation made at the close of the reign of Charles II. His first wife, Deborah, "a pious good christian" died the 9th of February, 1662, and was buried at Abbenhall. His second wife, Elizabeth, died October 12th, 1679, and was interred at Littledean, where he also was buried.

Their son Nathaniel married Mary, daughter of Sir Duncomb Colchester, and granddaughter of the eminent Sergeant Maynard. Not unnaturally therefore his political principles were favourable to the Revolution of 1689. In fact, a contemporary volume attributes to him the release of Lord Lovelace out of Gloucester Castle, in which he is mentioned as "a young gentleman of that County who took up arms for the Prince, and drove out all the Popish crew that were settled in that city." In commemoration of this exploit the following singular lines used to be sung by the hay-makers on the estate at their harvest supper.*

A health to Captain Pyrke, who in Littledean was bred,
And of a thousand men he was the head ;
He fought for the truth and the protestant faith ;
We drink his good health, and so do rejoice.
He down in the west King William did meet,
And to him he sent both oxen and sheep,
Till he had an order which from him did come,
And with honour to Gloucester he brought him along.

* This copy is a correction of the one given in the author's other work.

When he came to Gloucester he had but forty men,
 The City of Gloucester all barred unto him ;
 The City was guarded with soldiers about,
 But he brought Lord Lovelace from his prison quite out.

With sword in his hand he before them did go ;
 He was not ashamed his face for to show :
 " They who have anything to say to Lord Lovelace," said he
 " O then, if they have, let them speak to me."

Then up to the Mayor away he did get,
 And * his wooden god to pieces did beat ;
 And the big golden chair where King James sate
 He threw in the fire, which made a brave heat.

Then up into Oxfordshire away he did ride,
 To bring Lord Lovelace safe home ;
 He plundered the Papists along as he goes,
 He could not endure to see us abused.

" I am ready," writes the present esteemed head of the family, in allusion to the aforesaid poem, " to vouch for the authenticity of this narrative, and on the strongest and most undeniable grounds. For, I have it in the handwriting of my late father, in addition to his having often told me the same, by word of mouth, that the late Lord Berkeley had several times assured him that he had in the Record Room, at Berkeley Castle, a copy of the despatch or official account of the transaction which was sent to Government, and that the young gentleman who released Lord Lovelace out of Gloucester Castle was Pyrke of Littledean. The rude lines themselves have on the face of them the stamp of genuineness, indeed, it is not likely that such a thing would be invented. They are only a fragment. I believe originally there was a long ditty."†

* On the occasion of the visit of James II. to Gloucester, in 1685, the Rev. T. D. Fosbrooke relates—" The chamber over the Sheriff's Court was made into a chapel, where the King attended divine service according to the Romish Church ; sitting upon a throne created for him at the expense of the city."

† Similar revolutionary feelings were manifested by the Rev. Thomas Jekyll, Vicar of Newland, who on the 22nd Dec., 1680, preached a sermon on 2 Thess. ii. 7, strongly reflecting on Jacobite principles.

In 1695, this Mr. Nathaniel Pyrke was elected a Verderer of the Forest. He died the 28th of October, 1715, aged 59, and was buried at Abbenhall. His widow erected a costly mural monument near his grave, setting forth that—"He was a faithful subject to his prince, a good father to his children, charitable to the poor, and just in his dealings, and a tender and loving husband."

His father, Thomas, died in 1702, in the seventy-second year of his age. The Latin inscription on his monument in Littledean Church is plainly from the pen of his daughter-in-law's brother, Maynard Colchester, Esq.

Thomas, the grandson of the above, was connected with the Forest as a Verderer, to which he was chosen in 1715, and also as an honorary Free Miner, to which he was elected by the Court of Mine Law that sat 12th November, 1728, at the Speech House. Being of a serious disposition, he became an early ally of the Christian Knowledge Society, to which he was introduced as a "Residing Member," by Mr. Francis Wyndham, of Clearwell, on the 31st March, 1709, and took an active part in its proceedings for some time afterwards.

Joseph, son of the last mentioned Thomas Pyrke, Esq. bore his part as a Deputy Warden in regulating Forest matters, and was one of the gentlemen appealed to by the Commissioners of 1786. His answer to their interrogatories, as expressed in the following straightforward terms, is evidently characteristic.

"GENTLEMEN,

"In compliance with your Request, in the First Place I inform you that the Place of Deputy Constable of the Forest of Dean was, in the First Institution, to hold Courts, in order to settle Disputes between the Miners; but no Act of Parliament having ever passed to render the Decisions valid, they are seldom adhered to; and of late years the Courts have been discontinued. The Place has no Perquisite, Fee, or

Salary, no Tenement belonging to it, or any Walk; it is held at Pleasure under Lord Berkeley. The Bucks that ever came to my Share, have been Three or Four, by warrant under Lord Berkeley's hand; for each of which I paid the Keeper One Guinea as his Fee. Hay or Corn being purchased for the Deer, is what never came to my Knowledge; and I may safely say never was. The Number of Deer it is impossible to ascertain, they are every year diminished: great Quantities of Timber are felled Annually for the Navy, immense used and abused for the Coal Works. As to the specific Number of Trees felled for the Navy, I must refer you to the Deputy Surveyor; those used for the Coal Works to the Clerk of the Swanmote Encroachments numberless, by building small Tenements, inclosing Gardens to the same, One, Two, or Three Acres, by the idle Poor; and many large Inclosures by People in good Circumstances. Destructions shameful, of the Wood and Timber, in a great Measure owing to the Inattention of the Keepers in general. I wish it lay in my Power to render you any Information, tending to the Preservation of the Timber remaining, nothing short of a Capital Offence would (I believe) ever preserve it.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Little Dean, June 30th, 1787.

J. PYRKE.

This Mr. Joseph Pyrke was also one of the Justices of the Peace for the neighbourhood, in which capacity he acted with admirable decision and courage at the time of "the Corn Riots" of 1795.* They were occasioned by the difficulty experienced in the Forest, of obtaining flour, owing to an unfavourable harvest; but more particularly to the corn of the district being sent to Bristol for Government use. The poor colliers were starving, and with the violence that results from extreme want, helped themselves, wherever they could find bread. The *Gloucester Journal* of the time, gave the ensuing relation of what happened on the banks of the Severn and of Mr. Pyrke's bravery.

"Upon the evening of November 10th, many persons assembled at Hamstalls in the parish of Awre in this County, where a vessel belonging to Evesham, and bound to Bristol with a cargo of pease, oil, flour, leather, and wheat, was waiting for the tide. About

* The author's former work contains a somewhat similar but less accurate account of these disturbances.

twenty men boarded her, examined the lading, and, upon discovering the flour, gave loud huzzas, when the bank was instantly covered with their comrades, who had many horses in waiting, with which they proceeded to carry off the flour, though the throwmen (unable to defend the vessel, and menaced with instant destruction) had offered to sell it to them at a reasonable price. About seven o'clock one of the throwmen contrived to slip ashore, ran to Newnham, and sent off an express to Gloucester for immediate military aid; but fortunately that assistance was nearer at hand. In consequence of some apprehension of a disturbance at Mitcheldean, an officer with a serjeant and ten file of the Essex Fencibles Cavalry, had marched into the place early in the morning, and upon the arrival of the express from Newnham instantly set forth for the scene of depredation, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Sewell and Lieutenant Wood, and headed by Mr. Pyrke, a magistrate of Little Dean. The freebooters fled in every direction, but five men, named Thomas Yemm, Thomas Rosser, Richard Brain, George Marfell, and John Meek, being the most active ringleaders were apprehended, some in the act of conveying away the flour upon packhorses, some had sacks of it upon their shoulders, some were just landed from the vessel; and many were busied on the bank, which was strewed with flour, dividing the sacks into smaller quantities to render it more portable, for even women and children were of the number."

The five men, evidently Foresters by their names, were fully committed on the following Tuesday to Gloucester Castle, there to be tried at the Spring Assizes, being guarded thither by one hundred of the Surrey Fencibles, who had arrived in Newnham at three o'clock previously. Shortly afterwards, the serjeant of the military called out on this occasion, was severely bruised by a stone thrown at him by some desperadoes as he was riding near Mitcheldean, and on a subsequent Thursday, some villains fired a piece loaded with slugs, into the bed chamber of Mr. Pyrke.

In confirmation of these lawless acts, the surviving and much respected grandson, Duncomb Pyrke, Esq, states, "I have often heard my Father relate that he accompanied my Grandfather on the occasion when he headed the party of Horse who pursued the rioters, and I perfectly remember his narration of the slugs being

picked out of the window shutter in my Grandfather's bed room." At this period the road to Newnham from Littledean, passed much nearer to "the Hall" than at present, in fact so near, that slugs might have easily been discharged so as to penetrate the window shutter in the manner described.

At the ensuing Assizes, Thomas Yemm and Thomas Rosser were left for execution. From the excellent character they previously bore, some gentlemen of the Forest, and of the Grand Jury, interceded, but unsuccessfully with His Majesty George III., on their behalf. They were hung on the 11th of April 1796, acknowledging the justice of their sentence.

The present Mr. Duncombe Pyrke, like his father before him, holds office as a Verderer over the Forest. Mr. Joseph Pyrke, his father, was elected to it in 1804, whilst he himself was chosen in 1851, and feeling happy to be considered a Forester, still fills the appointment. Death has, however, removed his three colleagues, nor have their places been supplied.

The Verderers' meetings at the Speech House were often attended with odd incidents. On one occasion, two of these gentlemen, as they returned home, overtook an aged Foresteress whose case they had that day adjudicated. Outdone with her exertions, and apparently unwell, she sat by the wayside, telling them in reply to their sympathetic inquiries that her fits had come upon her, and that, unless they pleased to help her up, she should never get "wum." With the greatest good nature, each officer did his best on either side to put her upon her feet, but with unequal success, for to the one the old dame complained "you be o'r no manner o'r use," whilst to the other she said—"You be a gentleman." At length it became evident that the poor thing had imbibed too freely and had best be left alone.

THROCKMORTON.

THROCKMORTON, WILLIAM, Knight, originally of Tortworth, but by marrying Cecily, daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Baynham, of Clearwell, became allied to all the ancient and wealthy families of this neighbourhood. Nearly all the adjoining manors were held by the Baynhams, and their ancestry included the Walwyns, Greynours, and others, up to John Tiptot, Earl of Worcester, A.D. 1431. The martyred James Baynham, extolled by Fox and Fuller, was likewise one of the lineage. This devoted gentleman's first acquaintance with the principles of the reformed faith seems to have arisen from his intimacy with Simon Fish, whose widow he married. Residing in London, at the Temple, his views soon became known, and occasioned his being seized and detained by Sir Thomas Moore in his house at Chelsea. The Chancellor, finding his arguments of no avail, resorted to the harsh alternative of imprisonment and scourging. These likewise failed. He was then urged to give up his books and to name his associates. This also he refused to do, although racked in the Tower under the inflexible gaze of Sir Thomas himself. In the next place he was handed over to Bishop Bonner, and confined in the Lollard's Tower. At length, fair words, threats, articles and interrogatories prevailed. Mr. Baynham recanted, and so, doing penance at St. Paul's Cross, was suffered to depart. Ere a month had elapsed, owing to the bitter accusations of his troubled conscience, he again avowed his protestant opinions, stating in St. Austine's Church and elsewhere that he had denied his

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God. Soon after this he was brought to the stake, in Smithfield, dying with the greatest magnanimity, 30th April, 1531.

The Sir Edward Baynham who, in September, 1605, was admitted, at least in some measure, to the mysteries of the Gunpowder Plot, belonged also to the same lineage, and was distantly connected with the conspirators Robert and Thomas Winter. His mission to the Court of Rome, for support in executing the after part of the design, was the means of preserving his life.*

Sir William was knighted by James I. in 1612, and, in consideration of his honourable antecedents, took of course, a leading place in this district. Ere 1618, the "assarted" lands he held in the Forest had become so considerable that on the 17th of February in this year, an "Inquisition" was made of them.† He seems at this date also to have received a check from the authorities for using the King's Timber, to judge by the following memorandum, endorsed "Wastes committed in the Forest, 23rd of February, 1618 :"—‡

"That sithence the Restraint & Sir Will^m Throgmorton's vndertaking, that no Tymber or green would should be felled, many of these trees haue bynn felled by his allowance, & some good tymber trees cutt out for fyerwood, to serve his own house, as will be proved."

In short, Sir William had become unpopular, or had made strong enemies in the neighbourhood, owing, it may be, to the Interrogatories with which he had furnished the Commissioners who were appointed "to survey and examine into the wastes made by the Parties carrying on their Iron Works therein."§ The ensuing complaint, so characteristic as to merit insertion entire, was thus presented against him to the Crown :—||

* Fosbrooke's *History of Gloucestershire*, vol. ii., p. 42.

† *State Papers, Domestic Series*, vol. cci., No. 4.

‡ *Lansdowne MSS.* (British Museum), No. 166, folio 361.

§ *State Papers, Domestic Series.*

|| *Lansdowne MSS.* (British Museum), No. 166, folio 363.

"Exceptions against the proceedings & demeanour of S^r Will^m Throckmorton as well in his Compt. as in the busynes in the fforest of Dean.

"That S^r Will^m Throckmorton hath euer from the begininge bynn a maynteyner of the vniust tytle of himselfe & of the Countreye against the Kinge.

"1. At his beinge at Coleford 1612, he publicklye declared himselfe, speakinge then for the Countreyes right, where nowe vppon experience by Law it is found that they haue not any at all.

"2. Beinge an officer till verye latelye, he never seemed to restrayne any man.

"To Justifie the Tytle of the Countreye, he for his owne vse, 1611, or thereabouts did cause to be fetched out of the fforest 40 loades of wood beinge redye cutt at his M^{ties} chardge, for w^{ch} as yet he never answered anythinge, but justified the same as his right, and soe contyneweth fetching wood, cuttinge out tymber trees for fyewood to this daye.

"4. Sithence he came to be Deputye Counstable, he hath bynn soe free as everye one demaunding warrants at the Speeche courte, & presuminge vppon authoritye w^{ch} he hath not, hath given out his warrants to those that haue noe manner of right, whereby his M^{ties} hath bynn damnyfyed aboue 1000^{li} within these 2 yeares, as shalbe proved.

"5. That S^r Will^m Throckmorton, vnder couller of beinge Deputye Counstable, hath and doeth vniustlye clayme all wyndefall trees & otherwise casually fallen, by the Countreye digginge Cynders, & notwithstandinge he was forewarned by the Commissioners to meddle therein, hath latelye sold diuers of them both tymber and fyewood to the Countreye, to the valeu & loss to his M^{ties} 1000^{li} at leaste, beinge a matter whereof himselfe hath formerlye complayned, *ut patet*.

"To maynteyne the said vniuste tytle, he hath caused some of the Tymber, felled for the Navye, to be converted by his warrant for buyldinge vpp of his neighbours houses w^{ch} have no mannor of interest in the fforest.

"That he hath no interest in the sayd fforest either in himselfe as an Inhabitant or otherwise as an officer; nether thereby any power to dispose of his M^{ties} woodes.

"All the land he hath in the fforest is ancyent Assartt land, w^{ch} vppon the first allowance, as appeareth vppon his owne hath this Char . . . Ita 9^d rationterr. predict. mill. Comon habebit extra ter itt.

"This Woodwardship is the Baylewick of the Buse within w^{ch} [he] is confined for his reliefe to gather Mortuum et siccum boscum, as all other woodwards are, as appeareth by their Claymes;

without w^{ch} by vertue of his woodwardship, he hath nothinge to doe in the fforest; and w^{ch} woodwardshipp is by negligence of his ancestors, nowe soe wasted, that there is not lefte any wood at all therein, except what he hath in severall, soe that nothinge beinge lefte, the Kinge hath lost his right w^{ch} his father Mr. Bayneham was fyned for in the Exchequer.

"To his fforestershipp belongeth noe manno^r of Estouers.

"The Counstable hath noe power to fetch wood out of the fforest not for repayringe the Kinges Castle of St. Brevylles for soe yt appeareth by Record, that ever the Kynges privye Seale did passe yf but for 4 trees to repaire the Castle of St. Brevylles as appeareth, much lesse to dispose of the Kynges woodes at his pleasure as he doth to himselfe & others that haue noe right, 23 February 1618."

We may infer that what made these Iron Masters more inveterate against Sir William was that he had embarked in the same manufacture.* A Grant to that effect was made him in company with Sir Sackville Crow, Bart., John Taylor, and John Greening, of His Majesty's Iron Works, for which he might take 12,000 cords of wood annually. They appear to have been carried on for a number of years, with very doubtful success, like an adventure that buoys up to continued effort, only to involve the experimentalist in deeper ruin. About the year 1633,† more money was unexpectedly wanted, and bills had to be taken up in the names of Sir Horace and Lady Vere. The Crown was applied to, but consented only to a Grant of wood and that to be paid for. A catastrophe was imminent. In the midst of his troubles Sir William commends his case to Secretary Conway by stating that he had done much service in preserving the Woods in Dean Forest, thereby weakening his own estate so as to endanger himself and his sureties, and requesting that "he and they may be spared from arrest till after Candlemas Term next." Hence it is not surprising that the name of Sir William Throckmorton does not again occur; but Major Throckmorton was

* *State Papers, Domestic Series.*

† *State Papers, Domestic Series.*

Parliamentary Governor of Monmouth at the time of its sudden recovery by the King's forces in December, 1644.

In the year of the Restoration,* Sir Baynham, son, probably, of the above, and who had been returned a member of the Commonwealth Parliaments of 1656 and 1658, obtained the grant of the three-fold offices of Keeper or Gaveller of the Gawle, Riding Forester, and Aleconner in the Forest of Dean, whilst in the one following, namely, 1661, his father applied for a renewal of the Patent granted Sir William in 1618 of the Wood and Iron work in the Forest of Dean.† They seem, however, to have been awarded to Sir John Winter.

At this period Sir Baynham Throckmorton, junior, took an active part in all legal transactions occurring within the Forest. As Deputy Constable for Lord Herbert he presided at all sessions of St. Briavel's Court, and at those of the Mine Law, both of which he seems to have been the first to revive soon after the Restoration, neither of them having sat for a long period previously. The Book of "Rules and Orders" of the former, dated the 16th of November, 1663, bears his signature, and to him is attributed the introduction of the practice of examining witnesses upon oath.‡ He sat as Judge at three of the Courts of Mine Law by which the First, Third, and Fourth "Orders" were determined, in 1668, 1676, and 1680. These were all held at Clearwell, and perhaps in his own Court House there, except the last, which assembled at the Speech House, then just finished.

Considerable popularity amongst the rude miners and colliers of the district seems to have crowned his mode of presiding on these somewhat trying occasions. By

* *State Papers, Domestic Series.*

† *State Paper Office, Domestic Series.*

‡ Rudder's *History of Gloucestershire*, p. 33.

one of their Orders* they voted him "their thankfull acknowledgment of the many favours received by them from him." In return for the same they agreed that when he "should send his own horses or waynes to any of the colepitts for cole, the miners shall presently seame and load them before any other person whatever. Indeed they were so anxious to preserve Sir Baynham's good will, that upon understanding their First "Order" of 1668, forbidding any "Foreigner" to convey or deliver minerals, had proved prejudicial to him and his friends and tenants, they now revoked the same, allowing all Foreigners to carry fire or lime coal for their own use. At the same Court Sir Baynham, together with the Marquis of Worcester, were elected "Free Miners to all intents and purposes." On the other hand, he failed to obtain for some gentleman of Newland Sir Charles Harbord's sanction, as Surveyor General, to make a Coal Level through an enclosure of young wood. Indeed, he got an implied reprimand, in the terms that † "all such encroachments ought to be totally suppressed, and would be so by a good officer, as Colonel Wade was in the time of the Usurpation."

After this date no further particulars are recoverable of the Baynham Throgmorton family, only it may be added that many of its members lie in the Chapel on the south side of the Chancel in Newland Church.

The Clearwell estate next became the property of Francis Wyndham, Esq., who, in 1703, is identified with the Forest as a Verderer. To his care, the Court of Mine Law, under its Tenth "Order" of July, 1707, agreed to consign all Documents thereto belonging. Such proofs of trust well accord with the part he took in the management of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, joining it as early as the 5th of January, 1702. The *Minutes* of the 7th of December, 1704,

* Second Order.

† W. M. Pitt's *Papers, Report of* 1788, p. 18.

record "Mr. Wyndham relating that the parcel of Mr. Dean of Lincoln's *Sermons*, which was sent to him in the country have had a very good effect, and he desiring some more of them to send likewise into the country: the Society ordered one hundred of them to be delivered to him for this purpose." Few of the members attended the meetings of the Society more frequently than Mr. Wyndham, who was often called to the chair, and evidently exercised considerable weight in its deliberations. This continued for several years.

Next in succession came his son, Thomas, on whom, together with his father, a "Free Minership" was conferred in 1728. This occurrence was thus prospectively announced in the *Gloucester Journal* of the 2nd of November, 1728:—

"They Write from Coleford of the first Instant That at a Mine Law Court holden at the Speech House in the Forest of Dean, on Tuesday last, it was unanimously resolved by a Jury of 48 Free Miners, that at their next meeting which will be the 12th Instant, they will Complement the following Gentlemen with their Freedom, viz., The Hon. Thos. Wyndham, Esq., and his son, Maynard Colchester, Esq., the eldest son of Roynon Jones, Esq., and Mr. William James, Clerk of the Peace: which piece of Honour is to be granted to them in Consideration of the manifold Services which these Gentlemen's Predecessors have done for the Fraternity of Free Miners. And its not to be doubted, but the Parliament of Free Miners will be all Gentlemen on this Occasion."

By this Mr. Thomas Wyndham the picturesque old "Clower-Wall" Court, as engraved by Kip in Sir R. Atkyns' work and erected apparently by Sir W. Throckmorton a hundred years before, was taken down; and in its stead the present large and substantial house was built, about the time and in the style of "Strawberry Hill." On his death, Charles, his son, came to the estate, and took the name of Edwin on succeeding to the Hannishangel estate, in Glamorganshire, in right of his mother. An instance of his humane disposition is afforded by his bounty to the poor inhabitants round his seat at Clearwell, during the severe winter of 1783-4,

when he had two oxen of beef distributed amongst them. This gentleman, in 1787, was Chief Forester in Fee, Bowbearer, and one of the Woodward of the Forest. As Bowbearer, it was his duty to attend His Majesty with a bow and arrow and six men clothed in green, whenever His Majesty shall be pleased to hunt within the said Forest. In 1756, he served as Sheriff for the County. Dying in 1801, his son, Thomas, succeeded him.

Caroline, his daughter, having married Wyndham Henry, the second Earl of Dunraven, in 1810, is now the Countess Dowager, and the noble owner of the Clearwell property. She is further revered in the neighbourhood for her many virtues and bounties, more particularly for endowing the adjoining Church, and supplying other parochial requisites tending to the welfare of the population round. By her Ladyship's munificence the Tithing of Clearwell, formerly attached to Newland, in union with a portion of the Forest, have been formed into one new Parish for ecclesiastical purposes, and endowed. She has also built a Parsonage House and Schools with the assistance of £200. from the Office of Woods and Forests, and £100. from Queen Anne's Bounty Board and the Committee of Council on Education.

VINEY.

VINEY, JOHN, Esq., was another of the landed gentry of the Forest district, understood in its most comprehensive sense, whom the Court of Exchequer put on the responsible Commission of 1692, concerning matters touching the Crown property of the neighbourhood.* His signature is found at the foot of the Report ultimately sent in to Government. He took an active part therefore in its proceedings. Sir R. Atkyns names him as Lord of the Manor of Little Tainton. Mr. Rudder adds that it remained in the family for the next seventy years.

* *Report of 1788*, p. 68.

WINTER.

WINTER, a family that possessed for several generations considerable property and influence on the south side of the Forest. Sir William Winter, Knight, extolled by Camden, and afterwards by Fuller, for his naval exploits, was the first of the race who, leaving Worcestershire, transferred his residence to Lydney, that Manor having been granted him by Queen Elizabeth in recognition of his sea services, particularly, for his valorous attack, in conjunction with Lord Henry Seymour, upon the Spanish Armada off Dunkirk. Respecting this combination Fuller relates that—"One wondering how the English durst be so bold as to put to sea in all weather, it was returned, that they were provided to sail in all seasons, having both Winters and Summers on their side."

From the occurrence of the name of Winter in deeds relating to Property at Lydney and St. Briavel's of an earlier date than the above event, there was probably some previous family connexion with the Forest, such as to suggest Sir William's establishment here. Honoured with knighthood, and provided with the goodly estate of Lydney, he built upon it a substantial house, to which he gave the name of "White Cross," derived from his appointment of Admiral of the White, in the late armament. From this date, viz., 1588, his name is not again met with. Here he seems to have been content to live in retirement, and so to have died, in quiet pos-

session of his portion of those noble woods of the Forest which were to have been destroyed by the fleet from Spain. This widely current tradition,* Evelyn thus mentions in his *Sylva*—"I have heard that in the great expedition of 1588, it was expressly enjoined the Armada that if when landed they should not be able to subdue our nation and make good their conquest, they should yet be sure not to leave a tree standing in the Forest of Dean." Were it not that he particularly states that he had "heard" the report, we should conclude that he obtained his information from Fuller's *Worthies*, published two years previously, who mentioned it with this deviation, that "a Spanish Ambassador was to get it done by private practices and cunning contrivances." Fuller had probably read this account in "Samuel Hartlib, *his Legacy of Husbandry*" published in 1655, where speaking of the Dean Forest timber, he states—"The common people did use to say that in Queen Elizabeth's days the Spaniards sent an ambassador purposely to get this wood destroyed." As Mr. Evelyn writes that he "heard" what he declares of the matter, Mr. Secretary Pepys was probably his informant, he being told it by his friend Sir John Winter, who, in common with other gentlemen dwelling near, heard the tradition from his grandfather, Sir William Winter aforesaid, kinsman to Thomas Winter, of Huddington, who at the close of this reign was constantly aiding the Spanish Romanists in their intrigues against the English Crown, and eventually took a prominent part in the Gunpowder Plot. "The more the pity says Fuller that this worthy family of the Winters did ever leave the element of *waters* to tamper with *fire*, especially in a destructive way to their King and Country."

The Vice-Admiral's son Edward, and apparently his only one, succeeded to the Lydney property, and also to

* Noticed in the Author's *History of the Forest*.

his father's seat in Parliament as a Knight of the Shire during 1588-1592. In 1598, he served as High Sheriff.* He was also Constable of St. Briavel's Castle and Warden of the Forest, until he surrendered them on 10th Jan., 1608, in favour of William Earl of Pembroke; but his connection with the Forest was soon resumed, though in a less dignified capacity. Being of a mechanical turn, he had observed with interest how successfully in other places iron was extracted from its ores by means of large furnaces urged with huge bellows. He knew how eminent the neighbourhood used to be for its iron. Wood fuel, much of which was his own, was still abundant, and two navigable rivers flowing near, afforded easy communication with Gloucester, Bristol, Worcester, and Hereford. He determined, therefore, to attempt iron making, several other gentlemen soon following his example.

Water-power being indispensable for working the bellows, he built his furnaces near the stream that traverses the Lydney vale, assuming that his own coppices would suffice for fuel. Finding himself mistaken, and seeing that his only remedy lay in obtaining leave from the Crown to cut some of the woods in the Forest, he made application to Sir Julius Cæsar, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 10th February, 1610. Instructions were promptly sent down to Robert Treswell, J. Norden, and T. Morgan, three of the Verderers seemingly, directing them to supply all needful information touching Sir Edward's petition. On the 13th of March they† report:—

“ Right Honourable,

“ According unto your Lordship's warrant, Wee repaired unto and haue veiued and duellie considered the severall woodes, knowne by the names of Great Bradley, Little Bradley, Stonegrove, Pigslade, Buckholde, Moore, and the Coppes, All lying

* *State Paper Office. Domestic Series. Vol. 31.*

† *Lansdowne, MSS., No. 166, folio 340.*

together and conteyning by the measure of $16\frac{1}{2}$ foote the pole, 520 acres. In w^{ch} grounds we thinke there maie be raised the number of 15,600 cordes of woode.

"Upon conference with diueis in the contrie wee finde that such a quantitie of woode is not suddainly to be vented in anie other sorte then to the iron works w^{ch} causeth either the cheapnes or dearnes of the same; the contrie not vallewing the said woodes vpon the stem aboue xiiiiid. the coard. Although to the iron workes it may be vallued at iis. vid. the courd."

The expediency of complying with Sir Edward's application was therefore made evident, provided his terms were sufficiently liberal. His anxiety to obtain the Grant is proved by the journey he made for it to London, and appearing in person before the Court of Exchequer, with a paper in hand,* entitled—"Reasons to move his M^{ty} to make vse and profit of the woodes within the fforest of Deane." Herein he was careful to shew that no better use could be made of the Woods in question than to lease them to him. His Majesty would never care for them, they were "of soe ill condicōn for hunting." For it to remain as before would be its swift destruction, so rapidly was the adjoining population, and even the Forest Officers, together with their servants, wasting its 15,000 acres of Wood.

This 13th of March, 1610, was an anxious day to our enterprising Knight of the Iron Works; but no matter, he obtained his purpose, as the following Memorandum shews:—

"A Remembrance of that w^{ch} past betwene the right hon^{ble} Sir Julius Cæsar, Kn^t, Sir Walter Cope, Kn^t, Sir Edward Wintour, Kn^t concerninge the bargaine of wood heretofore compounded for by Sir Edward Wintour.

"After mushe arguing and debate, concerning that busines, It was concluded, That whereas S^r Edward Wintour had formerlie compounded for those woodes, for a lease for 21 yeres at 500^{li} fyne and 20^{li} yerely rent, and he to have the profit of the next cuttinge vpon the expiration of the lease. Because S^r Edward Wintour is willing to offer those condicions w^{ch} to such hon^{ble} personages should vpon due consideracon seeme reasonable.

* *Landedowne MSS.*, No. 166 folio 346.

"He hath voluntarily and willinglie yielded to relinquishe the first contract and to paie besides the 500^{li} w^{ch} he hathe disbursed alredie, 300^{li} more w^{ch} is 800^{li} in the whole.

"So as he maie haue a bargaine and sale of the woodes nowe growing vpon those coppices, And libertie of ingresse egresse, and regresse, to cutt, cole, and carry awaie those woodes, so converted into cole, for the space of ffyve yeres, viz, The terms to begin at o^r Ladie daie next 1611, and to expire at o^r Ladie daie, w^{ch} shalbe in the yere of our Lrd 1616.

"And in consideration that the said Sr Edward Wintour shalbe freed of the 20^{li} yerely rent, And likewise of the charge of ffencing and mounding of those coppices he is likewise willing to relinquishe the benefit w^{ch} maie acrow vnto him by the next cutting, To th' ende his M^{tie} maie reape so great a benefit thereof himself as is pretended

"The 300^{li} to be paid as followeth viz 100^{li} at Midsomer next, 100^{li} in Hillarie terme following 100^{li} at Midsomer following.

"I doe agree to this bargaine, 14 Martii 1610.

ED. WYNTOUR."

Thus signed Sir Edward, the next day. But, though his purpose appeared to be accomplished, adverse charges were sent up to the Lord Treasurer shortly afterwards. To these, on the 21st of November, 1610, he returned*—

"A true Answer to the objections made against my late bargaine for some of his M^{ties} Coppices or Colletts adioyninge to the fforest of Deane." Herein he denied having felled a single tree, or that the survey made for his lease was done under his interests. That he should "gaine a 1000^{li} per annum by his bargaine, was a vayne and ympossible a thing." On the contrary, any man "shall purchase his interest for a tenth part." Indeed, he was "redie to yealde vpp this bargaine rather than by reteyning thereof the L. Trēr harbour in his noblest thoughts the least ill conceipt of him or his proceedinges." "Howe profitable a bargaine" it was for "the Kinge" was plain, since "these 25 years last past not one pennye rent or proffitt otherwise hath bene made out of the six Coppices whereas his L^{pp} had nowe made 500^{li} ffyne, and 20^{li} rent."

* *Landedowne MSS.*, No. 166, folio 344.

After this, no more complaints seem to have been made—none at least are recorded—and Sir Edward worked on with his iron furnaces unmolested. Nevertheless another trouble occurred to him the next year, respecting his title to the Woods and Lands of the purlieus of Purton.* These he had probably been thinning, when he found the Crown questioning his right to do so. The fact was, so many gentlemen had commenced iron making within the Forest, that every coppice had become valuable, and the Crown was naturally eager to turn the occasion to the best purpose.

Ere very long, namely, on the 15th of March, 1627, indication occurs that Sir Edward Winter was relinquishing the management of his works to his son, John, or in the absence of any information to the contrary, the father died about that time. In either case, a grant was then made to the son, of 4000 cords of wood, for which, however, £1266. 13s. 4d. was to be paid.†

But this transaction was trifling in amount compared to the Grant of the 20th of February, 1640, by which Sir John Winter came into possession‡ of “all the coppices, wood ground, and waste soil of the said Forest, (except the Lea Bailly) with the Wood and Timber, and all the Mines of Iron and Coal, Tin and Lead, and Quarries of Millstones, and Grindstones, and Cinders, within the Perambulation of the said Forest, in consideration of £106,000., to be paid by Installments, and a Fee Farm Rent of £1,950. 12s. 8d. for ever.” The magnitude of this Indenture shews that great success had attended Sir John’s operations at Lydney, which he was anxious to develop, and that he felt very sanguine as to the future.

Considering how many other persons of position had become involved in similar undertakings near, whose

* *State Paper Office, Domestic Series*, vol. 194, No. 12.

† *State Paper Office, Domestic Series*, vol. 57, No. 3.

‡ *Commissioners’ Report of 1788*, p. 13,

appliances would be certainly reduced by the above Grant, it is somewhat difficult to account for Sir John Winter's success in obtaining it. The solution is to be found, probably, in the fact that whilst conducting the rough process of iron making, he was, as we learn from Sanderson, Secretary to Queen Henrietta Maria. How he became qualified for such a delicate post or how he procured it does not appear. Perhaps it was through his mother, Anne, daughter of Edward, Earl of Worcester, the wealthy and loyal Romanist, to which faith the Winter family was strongly bent. Sir John's influence in high places was at this time notorious, and so offensive to Parliamentarians that his removal "from the King's Person and the Queen's and from both their Courts" was publicly petitioned for.*

Never, in short, was a King's favour in the bestowal of a Grant more unpopular than in this case. As a money-making scheme it utterly failed, both ways. The instant Sir John attempted to act upon it, the population round rose up and threw down his enclosure fences. The Foresters, from being favourable to Charles's authority, after this went over to the Parliament Party, nor could Sir John persuade them to return.

Acting in the first instance merely on the defensive, he contented himself with secretly strengthening his house of "White Cross," near Lydney, against attack, storing it with arms and ammunition, and collecting soldiers. "His house in the forrest of Deane" writes the implacable Corbet, "was at first neglected, when it was in the power of the Garrison at Gloucester to ruine his designe. But under hand he prepared for defence, suddenly clapt in his owne confidents, and with a little labour made it inaccessible, but with apparent great losse, and maintained his den as the plague of the forest, and a goad in the sides of this garrison." According to

* Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*.

the same narrator he was "a subtle wit, that pretended innocency till his houre was come, and had almost persuaded the world that he durst deny himself, and commit an unpardonable sinne against the catholike cause." Not until the siege of Gloucester was raised, on the 5th of September, 1643, did he think fit openly to declare himself. Within a week of that telling event, he took occasion to send out a small party of horse to the river-side at Newnham, to defend a bark from Bristol laden with two tons of match as well as wine and merchandise, intended for the King's forces. It was seized, however, without opposition by a superior company of Parliamentary troops from Gloucester, whither all that the vessel contained was conveyed.

During the following winter, Sir John succeeded in reducing the adjoining small Parliamentary garrisons of Huntley and Westbury. The exploit is thus chronicled in the *Mercurius Aulicus* of Feb. 3-10, 1643-4 :—

"Lieutenant Colonel Wintour with a part of his brother's regiment marched secretly out of Newnham (a place which the noble owner hath for a long time fortified at his own charges for his Majesties use) and surprised a garrison of the rebells called Huntley house, 4 miles from Gloucester, not a rebell escaping, but all taken prisoners with their armes and ammunition. This attempt succeeding so happily, he drew instantly downe to Westbury (another garrison of the rebells) whereof also after small opposition he became master, they within being strangely disheartened with the suddenesse of his approach. In these two garrisons he tooke 129 rebells prisoners, with a great surplusage of armes and some ammunition."

Corbet's conflicting narration of the same event, if perplexing is yet instructive. He states :—

"We lost two small garrisons at Westbury and Huntley, by the treachery of Captaine Thomas Davis, who sold them at a rate to Sir John Winter. This Davis commanded the guard at Huntley, where himselfe by night some distance from the house attended the enemies' comming, went in before them as friends from Gloucester, gave them possession, and having accomplit that piece of treason, immediately marched to Wesbury where he was received for a friend, and led in his traine of cavaleers, that both

places were surprised in two hours, and above eighty men and armes lost in that great exigence. This villaine was posted on the gallows in Gloucester, and the lord generall was desired that his name might stand upon the gibbet in all the parliament garrisons."

Massey, the Governor of Gloucester, shortly afterwards retook both these posts, and likewise Littledean, but not until Sir John Winter had used them as points of approach on the City, his horse coming within three miles of it, and driving away "store of the countrey cattle." Upon which Corbet remarks,—“At that time there was no lofty stage of action, because the present enemy did yield no gallant opportunity. Sir John Winter was wise for himself, nimble in inferiour businesses, delighted rather in petty and cunning contrivance than open gallantry, referred all his industry to his own house, or the limits of the Forest, vexed his neighbours more than weakened his enemy, and advanced the catholike cause no other way than by the plague and ruine of the countrey.”

Newnham also changed hands at the same time, (8th May, 1644). Here “a strong party of Sir John Winter’s forces kept garrison in the church, and the fort adjoining of considerable strength.” Massey led up his men in person, and succeeded in dislodging the defenders, of whom twenty were slain and a hundred or more captured, he not losing a man.

So untoward a loss arose, partly, from the fatal disasters of the previous day at Littledean and Westbury having dispirited the Royalists. Congreve, their Lieutenant-Colonel, and Wigmore, a Captain, both killed, they stood in double need of a leader; Sir John Winter was likewise absent at Coleford.

On the contrary, Massey with his men were as much elated, and readily attempted to extend their success by marching against Lydney House, about six miles off. He did not attack it, however, so well was it fortified,

provided, and courageously defended by Lady Winter, who upon being pressed to deliver, answered :—

“ Sir,—Mr. Winter’s unalterable allegiance to his King and Sovereign, and his particular interest to this place, hath by his Majesty’s commission put it into this condition, which cannot be pernicious to any, but to such as oppose the one and invade the other ; wherefore rest assured that in these relations we are, by God’s assistance, resolved to maintain it, all extremities notwithstanding. Thus much in Mr. Winter’s absence you shall receive from
MARY WINTER.”

The Colonel’s gallantry could not suffer him to inconvenience so daring a Lady, and he drew off to the adjoining hills towards the Forest, the better to meet Sir John Winter and Colonel Mysene, who were reported to be returning with a considerable strength of horse, assisted by the Lord Herbert’s forces.* But the Royalists not appearing, Massey contented himself with setting fire to Sir John’s iron mills and furnaces, and in the evening marched his wearied men back to Gloucester.

The last strongholds of the Royalists in the County of Gloucester were Lydney House and Berkeley Castle. The restless proprietor of the former was perpetually engaged in attempts to restore the King’s declining cause, and in particular to reduce the inhabitants of the Forest. Accordingly, his name is rarely absent from the accounts, given by contemporary writers, of efforts made in this neighbourhood for the Crown.

Probably he assisted Prince Rupert in his first attempt, made in the month of September, 1644, to fortify and establish a permanent guard on the promontory at Beachley, but they were quickly dislodged by Massey. We know he was present when the effort was renewed a month later, and had a second time to be relinquished, Sir John Winter only effecting his escape by hard riding and making a desperate descent upon the river Wye, by which he was only just enabled to reach the Prince’s ships lying at its mouth.

* These and a few other particulars have already appeared in the Author’s *History of the Forest*.

This defeat and flight gave too favourable an opportunity for the capture of Lydney House to be lost, and it was invested forthwith. Timely aid was, however, rendered about the 2nd of April, 1645, by the arrival of Prince Maurice with a force of 2000 horse and 1500 foot. In the course of the month of May the Royalists retired, and Sir John Winter, resolving that his house should never harbour his enemies, burnt it to the ground. "Sir John Winter's house" reports the *Perfect Declaration* of April 22nd, 1645, "some say, is to be pulled down; they have taken the lead off the house and goods on the way. Others say, Prince Rupert sent word to Lieutenant-Colonel Winter to keep it." He then joined the King, by whom he was presently despatched with letters to the Queen, in France, and mentioning him in these terms:—"This bearer, Sir John Winter, as thy knowledge of him makes it needlesse to recommend him to thee, soe I should injure him if I did not beare him the true witnessse of having served me with as much fidelity and courage as any, not without much good successe; though some crosse accydents of late hath made him (not without reason,) desire to waite upon thee, it being needful that I should give him this testimony, least his journey to thee be misinterpreted."

The estate which Sir John Winter thus vacated in this neighbourhood was soon after assigned to his opponent by the House of Commons, who ordered, on the 29th of September, 1645, that "Major-General Massey, in consideration of his good and faithful service which he hath done for the kingdom, shall have allowed him the estate of Sir John Winter (who is a delinquent to the Parliament) in the Forest of Dean; all his iron-mills, and the woods, (timber trees only excepted not to be felled,) with all the profits belonging to them; and ordered that an order at once should be brought into the House to that purpose." This decision was tantamount to an endorsement of the

former sale of the Forest to Sir John, against which the Parliamentary Party had only five years before cried out so loudly.

At length, however, Sir John Winter recovered his property, through the influence, probably, of the Lords in the House, who appear to have favoured him. On his return to this country, he was committed to prison; for on the 7th of September, 1652, we find him liberated from the Tower, upon bail, for three months, on account of sickness; a term of liberty which was enlarged upon the 7th of December, on the same security, to three months longer; with permission to go where he pleased within twenty miles of London. On the 17th of the same month he was remanded back to the Tower.

Evelyn tells us that about this time Sir John Winter amused himself with a project for charring coal. July 11th, 1656:—"Came home by Greenwich Ferry, where I saw Sir John Winter's new project of charring seacoale, to burne out the sulphure and render it sweete. He did it by burning the coals in such earthen pots as the glassemen mealt their mettall, so firing them without consuming them, using a barr of yron in each crucible or pot, which barr has a hook at one end, that so the coales being mealted in a furnace wth other crude sea-coales under them, may be drawn out of the potts sticking to the yron, whence they are beaten off in greate halfe exhausted cinders, which being rekindled make a cleare pleasant chamber fire, deprived of their sulphur and arsenic malignity. What successe it may have, time will discover." In 1661, the King granted him a License for carrying on this process in the Forest.*

The return of Charles at once restored Sir John Winter to liberty, and to the benefits of the Patent granted him by the late King, but which had been formally annulled under the Commonwealth, in 1656. It is true he found his right to them disputed for a time by Sir

* *State Papers, Domestic Series*, vol. xxx., 57:

Baynham Throckmorton, who hoped to procure a part.* He was also reinstated as Secretary and Chancellor to the Queen Dowager.

Acting at once upon the former, Sir John commenced repairing his enclosures, in spite of determined opposition from the neighbouring inhabitants, who strongly represented to the Government that the continuance of that Grant would injure both it and the public. A Commission of Inquiry into the State and Condition of the Forest was consequently issued, and resulted in a new Treaty with Sir John Winter, who, on receiving £30,000. compensation money, surrendered his former Patent, reserving the Woods called Snead and Kidnalls, and nominating Francis Finch and Robert Clayton to receive a new grant of all such Trees as were not fit for shipping, "together with the Use and Occupation of the King's Iron Works, and Liberty to dig for and use Iron Ore and Cinders in the said Forest."

Touching the drawing up of this agreement the tenor of which shews that Sir John was as fond of Iron-making as ever, Mr. Pepy's *Diary*, under date the 20th of June, 1662, supplies the following particulars:—"Up by four or five o'clock, and to the Office and there drew up the agreement between the King and Sir John Winter about the Forest of Deane; and having done it he come himself, whom I observed to be a man of fine parts; and we read it, and both liked it well. That done, I turned to the Forest of Deane, in Speede's Mapps, and there he shewed me how it lies; and the Lea-bayly with the great charge of carrying it to Lydney, and many other things worth knowing."

It is evident they enjoyed each others society, since in the month of August following they again met at the "Mitre," in Fenchurch Street, "to a venison pasty," whither Mr. Pepys was brought "in Sir John Winter's coach, where I found," he remarks, "a very worthy

* *State Papers, Domestic Series*, vol. xlviii., 94.

man, and good discourse, most of which was concerning the Forest of Deane, and the timber there, and iron workes with their great antiquity, and the vast heaps of cinders which they find, and are now of great value, being necessary for the making of iron at this day; and without which they cannot work."

Sir John Winter lost no time in acting upon the privileges conferred on him by the late agreement; but, as on the former occasion, it gave extreme dissatisfaction to the neighbourhood, whose complaints reached the House of Commons, and forthwith a Committee was appointed to investigate the whole matter; from which Committee Sir Charles Harbord, the Surveyor General, reported to the House, that "Sir John Winter had 500 cutters of wood employed in Dean Forest, and that all the Timber would be destroyed if care should not be speedily taken to prevent it."

Some idea may be formed of the strength of public feeling against Sir John Winter, on account of his wholesale felling of the Forest timber, by the decision which Mr. Pepys records his "cousin Roger" to have given upon him, namely, that "he deserves to be hanged." In order that the mischief might be put an end to as soon as possible, late though it was in the Session, a Bill was brought into the House for settling the Forest, and preserving and improving the wood and timber. Parliament was prorogued, however, before the Bill could pass, and its promoters had to be content with the House "recomending the Lord Treasurer and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take care for the preservation and improvement of the Forest." This recommendation appears to have had no influence on Sir John Winter, for on a new survey made in 1667, it was reported to Government that out of the 30,233 trees sold to him, only about 200 remained standing, and that from 7,000 to 8,000 tons of timber, fit for his Majesty's Navy, was found wanting. He would seem

to have felt some alarm at this report, for twice about this time he resorted to Mr. Pepys, who writes, 15th March 1667, "This morning I was called up by Sir John Winter, poor man, come in a sedan from the other end of the town, about helping the King on the business of bringing down his timber to the sea side in the Forest of Deane;" and again, 30th of April, "Sir John Winter to discourse with me about the Forest of Deane." Nevertheless, the important Enactment of 1668, for "The Increase and Preservation of Timber in the Forest of Dean,"* contained the Proviso, "This Act not to make void certain Letters Patent granted to Sir John Winter, Knight, Francis Finch, and Robert Clayton, Esqs. 30th July, 14th Charles II. of certain Woods and Iron Works in the said Forrest, for a term not then expired." Such a retention of privilege, after all that had taken place, seems unaccountable. But there were the Queen Dowager and several powerful supporters, especially in the Worcester family, with him, all of whom had strong claims on the Crown.

The date of Sir John Winter's death does not appear. On that event the Lydney Manor passed to his son Charles, who married a daughter of — Napper, Esq. In 1685, he served as High Sheriff for the County, and seems to have died about the end of the century, his widow possessing the estate in the time of Sir Robert Atkyns, A. D. 1712. The property next passed by purchase to Benjamin Bathurst, Esq., younger brother of Allen, first Earl Bathurst, and a Member for the County in 1734, being already a Verderer, as appears from the following notice in the *Gloucester Journal* of September 4th, 1734.—

Last Thursday, Benjamin Bathurst, Esq. accompanied by a great number of gentlemen and freeholders, came to Mitcheldean, where he was elected Verderer of His Majesty's Forest of Dean, in the room of Roynon Jones, Esq. deceased; after which he entertained the company at dinner in a very elegant manner."

* *Commissioners' Report 1788, App. p. 65.*

Thomas, his eldest son, succeeded to the property, and, dying in 1791, relinquished it to his brother, Pool Bathurst. On his decease in 1792, the family estate and manor passed to his widow, for her life. At her death at Lydney, in May, 1804, they devolved on Charles Bragge, Esq., M. P. for Bristol, who assumed the name of Bathurst.

His son Charles succeeded him and long continued the benevolent and highly gifted possessor of the property. This gentleman was connected with the Forest in many ways. In 1808, he acted as one of the Commissioners for re-planting it, and also assisted in the very necessary but complex Government investigations of 1831. He manifested particular interest in its Geological character, with which he was well acquainted, and readily communicated his observations, collected during the progress of the Ordnance survey in 1830, to Mr. Maclauchlan. On the 10th of September, 1833, he rode the important Perambulations by which the bounds of these Crown lands were settled, and in 1835 he was chosen a Verderer. Besides these services to the neighbourhood, he was a most generous contributor to the funds that were raised for promoting the spiritual and educational condition of the people. For some time previous to his decease in 1863, sickness disabled him from taking further part in forestal affairs. Charles Bathurst, Esq., his nephew, has succeeded to the estates, and to the high respect in which his uncle was so deservedly held.

WYRHALL.

WYRHALL, GEORGE, Esq., formerly of English Bicknor, may be justly designated the original antiquarian of this district, especially as regards its ancient iron mines, old cinder beds, and iron mills, all of which he examined with particular care. Few of the early heaps of scoria escaped his search, and in consequence many Roman coins, etc., were brought to light. So familiar was he with the mode of making iron, that he drew up an inventory of the different parts of a furnace, a bloomery, and a forge. He also composed in the year 1786, an able essay on the old iron works of the Forest, for Dr. Nash's *History of Worcestershire*; but unfortunately it was not introduced into that work. It exhibits such practical acquaintance with the subject, as to confirm the tradition that he could give at sight the relative age of any cinder heap, whether British, Roman, Saxon, or Mediæval. For the larger portion of his life, he resided at Bicknor Court, dying there in 1808, at the age of 86.

Here he lived in comparative seclusion, owing in part to his religious tenets as an hereditary Romanist. He died, however, in the principles of the Reformed Faith; for he was a thoughtful reader of the Bible, and of our best English Divines, as is proved by the numerous judicious notes made by his pen in those volumes. In this quietude, he devoted much of his time to arranging and transcribing an extensive series of 250 family docu-

ments, commencing in the reign of Henry III. These he abridged and tabulated with much skill and care, laboriously arranging in alphabetical order the name of every person and place mentioned in them. He seems also to have cherished the society of well informed men, amongst whom the Rev. Thomas Rudge, author of the compressed *History of Gloucestershire*, may be included.

Mr. Wyrhall was able to trace back his ancestry through sixteen generations to Matthew, High Sheriff of the County in 1259.* It likewise appears that John Wyrhall, "Forester of Fee," in 1457,† whose unique altar tomb may still be seen in Newland Church Yard, was another of his forefathers. At this date, the family homestead was at Whiteleve in that parish. The house remained standing to about 1750, when it was superseded by farm buildings.‡

* Rudge's *History of Gloucestershire*, vol ii. p. 389.

† And not Jenkin, as Sir R. Atkyns states; no ancestor of that name occurring in the family documents.

‡ Rudge's *History of Gloucestershire*, vol ii. p. 89.

LIFE OF THE REV. HENRY BERKIN.

BERKIN, Rev. HENRY, with whose name and character the north-east portion of the Forest seems to be inseparably connected. He was introduced to the neighbourhood by Archdeacon Probyn, an old family friend, who gave him a title to the curacy of Abbenhall, on which he was ordained Deacon, by Bishop Huntingford, in 1808.

His father and mother, Mr. William and Mrs. Mary Berkin, who resided in St. Michael's Parish, Bristol, were possessed of ample means, and known for the pious regulation of their household. Henry, their thirteenth child, was born there, A.D. 1778.

Mrs. Berkin was a clever woman, full of vivacity and character, tempered by the religious influence of the Rev. W. Romaine and others, her kind and valued friends. Henry partook largely of his mother's disposition, as well as of the earnest spirit with which she had been imbued, though, owing to his lively nature, the fruits were not very apparent at the time.

In youth, he had a strong wish for the navy, but was dissuaded from it by his parents. Looking to family circumstances, business seemed most likely to be his line of life. Indeed, two such openings occurred; only, the first not answering, the second, though very promising, was more readily declined, as a desire had been formed in him to live to higher purposes. Reading had always

given him pleasure, and now he longed to be a perpetual student. At this critical period he became an attendant at St. James's Church, where, under the Rev. Mr. Bidulph's impressive ministry, he embraced the wish to procure Holy Orders; these his friends thought might be obtained without going to college. Ultimately, however, he went up to Oxford, and kept his terms at St. Edmund's Hall, leaving his young and delicate wife, whom he had married in 1803, at Clifton, under his mother's care, although from the frequent severity of her attacks his attendance was often needed as well. Such considerable absence from his studies threw him behind, and compelled him to crowd the work of four years into as many months, rising very early and retiring to rest very late.

He passed his degree examination better than he expected, and soon after, having reached the age of thirty, commenced his sacred duties amongst the people for whom he was destined to labour heart and soul throughout the remaining forty years of his life.

Bishop Huntingford was so satisfied with Mr. Berkin's qualifications for Deacon's Orders that, when writing to him previous to the next Ordination, his Lordship remarked, "I wish all candidates would come as well qualified as you were last year. For Priest's Orders you will not be examined. Exemption is always a compliment to the Preacher, and I request you to be the Preacher in August."

These kind words encouraged and nerved him for an ordeal which most clergymen would shrink from, and so the young divine worked away at his MS. When the day came, its events afforded him incident for many a subsequent narration, related in his own pleasant way.

It was the Assize week, and, judicial business not being concluded, the Judges were detained over the Sunday, and attended the Cathedral in state, so that it was more than usually crowded.

In the middle of the service, the Bishop's servant was observed slowly making his way to Mr. Berkin. He brought a small note in which was written,— "If you have said any thing in your sermon against the Dissenters, would you omit or at least soften it? I will tell you the reason at dinner." To have altered the sermon there and then would have been awkward and perplexing in the extreme; but, happily, there was no occasion to do so, since it contained nothing likely to offend even the Judge, who was a Congregationalist, and the cause of Dr. Huntingford's anxiety. The pulpit was moveable, and so unsteady as to be apt, it was said, to upset the composure, at least, of the preacher, who had, in ascending, to bow first to his Diocesan and then to their Lordships. Mr. Berkin succeeded, however, in overcoming all embarrassments, and delivered a valuable discourse so effectively as to elicit the compliments of the Bishop, the Dean, one of the Judges, and other gentlemen.

And now, his services, hitherto bestowed on Abbenhall, being required in the adjoining and important parish of Mitcheldean, he took charge of it in 1809, upon a stipend hardly more than nominal.* He found his new flock in a lamentable condition. Rarely more than twenty people appeared in the spacious old Church, whilst a corresponding spirit of irreligion pervaded the whole place. But it was not long ere the real earnestness with which he discharged his ministry produced favourable results. The house of God began to fill to such an extent that obtaining a seat was contingent on early attendance. Even the poor untended Foresters commenced flocking down to his services from their wild hills, by the worst of roads and in all weathers.

* The perpetual curacies of Kilgurrwy and Pentney were conferred upon him, soon after, residence being excused, as there was no parsonage house. They were of trifling value, yet he held them all his life, since he could thus secure their being well filled.

Noticing, with much concern, the uninstructed and untrained condition of their children, he determined to provide them with Sunday School teaching, much on Mr. Raikes's plan. A suitable room was speedily erected, chiefly at his own cost, but aided by various contributions, including a grant of £50. from the newly formed National Society. Its popularity was so great that 500 children entered it the first year, which was in 1812, whilst in the next it rose to 558. The school opened at eight o'clock, a. m., although many of the young Foresters lived miles away. With the view of checking truancy, each scholar held a card, on which his attendance was recorded. A suitable appeal addressed "To the Parents of the Children in the Sunday School at Mitcheldean," was sent out yearly. It usually concluded thus:—"You are earnestly advised to send your children to school *regularly* and *early*. If they are kept at home by sickness or any other just cause let their neighbours bring word; and if put out to service, etc., it is expected they will give notice and return thanks."

From these directions it may be inferred, that Mr. Berkin felt that more intercourse was needed than then existed between himself and the fathers and mothers of his pupils out of the Forest. His annual addresses were mostly pointed to them, showing how they might aid or frustrate his efforts according as their example directed. But this was not sufficient. He saw he must become their missionary, and take them in hand, even as he had done their children, although he was assured that to do this might expose him to personal danger; for such was the lawless and excitable character of the inhabitants, that they gave the Rev. Charles Wesley so rude a reception at St. Briavels, that he judged it prudent to retire. The result proved the contrary, at least in Mr. Berkin's case, since, sooner than harm him, his flock in the Forest would at any time have suffered loss themselves.

In October, 1814, he relinquished the charge of Mitcheldean, with its admirable Sunday School; and accepted that of Weston-under-Penyard, that he might be still near his poor but beloved flock of Foresters. A change attended with such a lamentable consequence as closing that truly useful institution appeared most inexpedient. Perhaps it proved so, but only for a time, for no doubt it impelled Mr. Berkin to expedite those plans that terminated in the erection of Holy Trinity Church, in the Forest. To this end he sent out the following Circular, given in full, not only for the sake of the information it contains, but also as an example of its author's style of composition and good judgment.

"The following statement is respectfully submitted for consideration, on behalf of a numerous class of People, whose peculiar circumstances will, it is hoped, excite such a degree of interest as to render successful the object of this public appeal.—

"The Royal Forest of Dean, in the County of Gloucester, a waste tract of upwards of 20,000 Acres, has no Church in it, nor any means of religious instruction expressly provided for the use of its inhabitants. These, consisting chiefly of Miners and Colliers, partly from their secluded situation between the Rivers Severn and Wye, partly from the nature of their employments, and partly from the distance of great numbers of them from the Parish Churches adjoining the Forest, have hitherto been too generally living in the neglect of moral and religious duties. Few have been used to observe the Sabbath, still fewer to attend the Churches on the borders; and the ignorance naturally accompanying such a state has not failed to produce a corresponding effect on the life and conduct. Seven years have nearly elapsed since I became Stipendiary Curate of the parish of Mitcheldean, on the north-east side of the Forest, next Herefordshire; and finding that part of the Forest adjoining me in the above state, I considered it a duty to attempt its improvement. Anxious to ameliorate, at least, the rising generation, I opened a Sunday School for the Foresters' Children, several hundreds of whom, at length, came to receive education and religious instruction in a building erected for this sole purpose. For further particulars on this head, I beg to refer to the First Report of the National Society for the Education of the Poor—though fully conscious how unworthy I am

of the commendation they have been pleased to bestow.* My next attempt was with the Parents. Finding that few, by comparison, attended Public Worship, I visited them in their cottages, to read and explain the Bible; and I was led to adopt this plan from the particular situation of the Foresters, destitute of Churches or Ministers whom they could properly call their own. In these pastoral visits, made on different evenings in different places, and in which I have usually spent two hours in reading and practically explaining the Holy Scriptures, I have sometimes had 200 persons present at one time, and calculate, on the whole, that 800, at different times, have thus come under instruction. Many instances might be produced, certainly not less than twenty families, of reformation in both sexes, which has evinced itself in their desire to possess the Bible and Common Prayer Book, and by a total change in their moral character. At one of the places which I am accustomed to visit, where the heat and crowd have at times been almost insufferable, the Colliers, aided by two or three neighbouring Farmers, offered to build a large room for the better accommodation of greater numbers. This, for obvious reasons,

* It is thus expressed:—“Mr. Berkin’s success appears to have been very great, not only in the teaching the children to read, but also in improving their morals, and impressing their minds with proper notions of their religious duties. The effect, too, upon the parents, has been something wonderful, many of whom have expressed their acknowledgments to Mr. Berkin with the tears in their eyes, and it seems that they exert themselves to the utmost to enable their children to be constant in their attendance at School and Church, in spite of the numerous difficulties with which they have to struggle. The chief of these difficulties are the distance they have to walk, and the extreme poverty of the people, which makes it a hard matter for them to clothe their children properly, and to furnish them with a slice of bread for their dinners. It should be observed also, that many of the parents themselves, who are Foresters, now come to Church in the most regular and orderly manner, the zeal of the children in the pursuit of their learning having carried the desire of it into their families at home. Thus may this gentleman congratulate himself as being the instrument, under Providence, of laying the foundation of a vast improvement in the manners and morals of this hitherto much neglected people; and it must be mentioned, to his honour, that in order to effect these great objects, he has relinquished a neighbouring Curacy (Abbenhall), and confined himself to that of Mitcheldean, for which he receives only £25. per annum with the parsonage house.”

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was declined ; but it led me earnestly to wish that the Foresters might be more immediately brought within the pale of the Established Church, and by regular attendance on a Church appropriated to themselves, be made habitually acquainted with that admirable Liturgy to which too many of them are now utter strangers. With the concurrence of the Honourable and Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, a Memorial and Plan has been laid before Government, with an offer, on my part, that, if the needful fund for building a Church and Parsonage-house could be provided, I would give up my present Curacy, and serve the new Church without any further emolument than the endowment necessary for its consecration. It may, perhaps, be proper here to remark, that private circumstances obliged me last year to leave Mitcheldean for an adjoining Curacy. The Sunday School, has, in consequence, been discontinued ; but, in the event of a Church being built, would be resumed in the Forest with a prospect of increased success. I am now authorized to state, that the measure has the full approbation of Government, who will grant five acres of land in the Forest for this purpose, being all that is allowed by Act of Parliament ; and will also give such other aid as circumstances may allow. For the completion of the plan, I am encouraged to apply to the liberality of the Public ; in confidence that, when the case is known, the application will not be in vain. An accurate survey has been made, and from 250 to 300 cottages, containing from 1200 to 1600 souls, found on extra-parochial ground, all within a reasonable distance of the intended spot. The sum requisite for building the Church and Parsonage-house, will not exceed £2,500., the situation being very favourable for materials, and economy consulted in the plan as far as consistent with the dignity of the Episcopal Consecration.—It should be mentioned, to the credit of these people, that I have had various offers of assistance. One man, owner of a quarry, will give all the stone, with no other expense than that of raising it ; while another, who labours with his own hands for a large family, has offered to contribute £20. I trust this zeal in so good a cause will be encouraged by the completion of the work ; and that, by means of it, true Religion and pure Morality may be the ornaments of the surrounding country. The important effect may already be perceived, which this measure would have in making good Christians and peaceable subjects ; nor does any other plan appear more likely to add strength in this quarter to our excellent establishment both in Church and State. I must here mention, that on the other extremity of the Forest, near Monmouthshire, the Rev. P. M. Procter, Vicar of Newland, has been unwearied in his endeavours to benefit the inhabitants of the Forest on that side.

By the kind assistance of Government and others, a Chapel has been built in that part of the Forest, for the double purpose of a School-room for the Children, and a place of Divine Worship for those whom age or infirmities might hinder from attending Newland Church; for which latter purpose it was licensed by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese. The distance, however, being about eight miles, no advantage can be derived from it to the population on this side, who are equally, if not more numerous, and stand in like need of instruction.—I therefore beg leave to solicit subscriptions, however small, in aid of this work, that the building may be commenced as early as circumstances will permit. I have only to add my hopes, that this intrusion of an humble individual on the Public will be overlooked in the importance of the Cause which he pleads; and my wishes, that the kind Contributors will feel rewarded in the reflection, that thousands yet unborn may have cause to bless them, for thus providing for their spiritual wants, and giving them the knowledge of those principles which alone can make them worthy members of society here, or lead them to provide well for their eternal welfare hereafter.

“HENRY BERKIN, A.M.

“Weston, Gloucester, April 30, 1816.”

Amongst the vast number of similar statements circulated in the present day, not many equal this of Mr. Berkin, for cogency and good tone. He gave as much publicity to it as possible, and in return obtained about £1,000., contributed in sums varying from £1. to £30. With such he laid the foundation of Holy Trinity Church, and went on building in faith, according to plans mainly his own. Acting as “Clerk of the Works,” which his early experience in business, and methodical habits enabled him to do, he was on the spot most days at the hour his men began their operations, and often visited it ere they left off at night. As the Parsonage and School Room were also in progress, his energy and strength became heavily taxed, and at last gave way, leaving, from exposure to the sun, a permanent enlargement of the under lip. To add to his anxieties, he found his endeavours condemned as unnecessary and mischievous. It was said, “let the Foresters attend the churches existing in the neighbouring parishes, which

are large enough and sufficiently near; fill them first and then consider about building more, else you will drain the people from their proper places of worship; besides, how is the new Church to be supported and endowed, without which it cannot be kept up?" So strongly had these objections been pleaded before the late Bishop Huntingford, that his Lordship had in some degree accepted them. Happily his successor, Dr. Ryder, saw the necessity of Mr. Berkin's scheme and liberally supported it.

In the short space of six months the Church was ready for use, and early in 1817 a printed notice, addressed "To the Persons living near the New Free Church, in the Forest of Dean," announced its intended opening on Wednesday, the 5th of February, as well as the inauguration of "the large room built in the Church Yard for a Sunday School." His former pastor and revered friend, the Rev. Mr. Biddulph, came over from Bristol to preach the first sermon, having already advocated the cause in his own pulpit. It was consecrated in the following June, with due solemnity, being more completely furnished with every ecclesiastical requisite than was usual at that time, including a fine toned bell, an organ, rich hangings of Bishop's purple, a marble slab, and communion plate for the holy table, with open sittings throughout. From the first he conducted Divine Service with more rubrical correctness than was then general. The Commandments were declared from the Chancel, and the sacred rite of Baptism was invariably administered after the Second Lesson in the face of the congregation.

A memorandum, in Mr. Berkin's handwriting, states:—

"The Church of Holy Trinity, Forest of Dean, was endowed (when consecrated in June, 1817,) with £2,200. out of the Parliamentary Grant, producing, at four per cent., £88. per annum. I afterwards advanced £100. to meet another £100. from the Pyncombe Charity, and the Governor of Queen Anne's Bounty added £300. making in the whole an endowment of £2,700., and

producing an income of £108. per annum. But in 1829, the Governor thought fit to invest the above in three per cent. Reduced Stock. From the extraordinary high price of the Funds, the £2,700. produced only £3,055. 3s. 2d., Stock, and the Income was reduced from £108. to £91. 13s., at which it still remains.

"My Parsonage House was built out of the General Fund raised for building purposes. The Church, including a wall round nearly an acre of ground, a large Sunday School Room in the Church Yard, the various fittings up, and Organ, Communion Plate, &c., may be said in round numbers to have cost £3,000., and the Parsonage House about £2,000., making in all £5,000. Of this sum, Lord Bexley, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, contributed £500. on behalf of Government. The remaining £1,500. I raised from public subscriptions, from various private funds, and from my own personal resources."

In 1819, from not finding the attendance of the young Foresters at the Sunday School adequate to their satisfactory training, Mr. Berkin determined to open a free Day School. This plan he signified to the parents in the following words:—"You are hereby informed that a daily school, for the benefit of your children, will be opened on Monday, May 17th instant. Those children who wish to make use of it are desired to meet in the School Room, on that morning, at ten o'clock; and it is absolutely necessary, either that one of the parents in each family, or some friend, should attend with them on that day, to receive directions for their conduct. After that day, new scholars can only be received on the first Monday in each Month, when one of their friends must bring them, as mentioned above. They must always come with clean hands and faces, and their hair cut short, and neat. Observe also, that I shall fully expect to see them all on Sundays; that so they may be brought up to reverence and keep holy the Sabbath, and duly to attend the public worship of the Church."

Whether these rules were too stringent for the untrained Foresters, or that the school being "free" was not sufficiently valued, it failed to justify the cost of keeping up, and so after a continuance of five years it was closed;

nor was it re-opened until 1835. By an announcement thereupon addressed to the parents, and well calculated to impress them with the importance of useful learning, a 2s. quarterly fee, to be paid in advance, was charged. The School has gone on ever since, with the assistance of Government, and all the improved appliances of the Education Board.

In the meantime, several of the inhabitants of the Lydbrook Valley, on the west side of Mr. Berkin's district, having become attendants at his Church, felt desirous of securing for themselves and their neighbours the benefit of some kind of Lecture Service nearer home on the Lord's Day. They expressed their wishes to Mr. Berkin, who assured them of his willingness to comply with their views whenever it was possible for him to do so. His strength was then taxed to the utmost in fulfilling his Sunday engagements. He had no curate, and his health was much impaired. At this juncture "a friend indeed" promised him £50. a year towards obtaining clerical aid. With such help he instantly proceeded to meet the desire of the Lydbrook people, in preference to making any diminution in his own labours, by sending the curate, with which he was soon provided, over to them, the second Sunday after his arrival. A growing attendance at this religious meeting suggested larger and more permanent accommodation. In short, the erection of a good-sized room was named. Bishop Ryder visited the spot, and agreed to license the proposed building for public worship according to the liturgy of the Church of England, with the proviso that it was to be placed under Mr. Berkin's control. After an outlay of more than £300., chiefly from his own resources, the room was finished and opened by his Lordship's express sanction with Divine Worship. On this occasion he officiated himself, though, for the future, his curate generally came over, the duties of his own Church being all that he was equal to after so much exertion.

Yet at this time he was acting as a Deputation from the Bible Society and Religious Tract Society in consort with C. S. Dudley, Esq. That of the Church Missionary was also especially interesting to him. From this date until 1830, when he returned home thoroughly outdone, it was usual for him to be absent, about the country, speaking and preaching for these Institutions during six weeks in the year, regarding his efforts more as a recreation than a toil. His pleasing manners, cheerful spirits, and fluent address made him well fitted for the work. He seemed ever ready to take any part, to accept any resolution, and to speak, for five hours or five minutes as occasion required, with point and copiousness; in fact, such was his success in this direction that the Gloucestershire branch of the Church Missionary Society was largely indebted to him for its being and progress. His own Branch, namely the North East Forest of Dean Association contributed more than any other to its funds.

Of his life at this period, a pleasing account has been rendered in the ensuing terms, by the Rev. John Chell, then his esteemed curate.

"On the 16th of December, 1827, I was ordained Deacon, and licensed as Assistant Curate of Holy Trinity, Forest of Dean, and continued in that curacy upwards of 17 years. Before my ordination, Mr. Berkin requested an interview, and I staid at his house a day and a night. Just as I was departing on the morrow morning, he asked me to step with him into his study, when he kneeled down with me and most devoutly implored God to prepare me for my work, to give me favour amongst the people, and to bless my labours with success. The solemn and devout manner in which this was done, free from ostentation and partaking as it were of the single simplicity of a little child, made a deep impression on my mind. I immediately discovered I was coming to be under no ordinary man.

"At that time he was Curate of Hope Mansel, a small village about three or four miles from his house. He took the duty there every alternate Sunday, and so did I, whilst each of us was once every Sunday at Trinity and Lydbrook, making a walk of eight miles for him and twelve for me—but this did not continue more than about two years.

"Being with him, then, so many years, I certainly had special opportunities of knowing his manner of life and labours of love.

"In his deportment he was particularly engaging, and highly instructive and amusing in conversation. His knowledge of eminent men was extensive, and from having observed their peculiarities he was enabled to entertain you with striking anecdotes of their lives. Hardly any subject appeared new to him, for he seemed able to talk on any, without effort or dulness.

"And what he was in the drawing room he was the same in the cottage—or perhaps his greater charm was displayed and felt then. He could adapt himself to the very poorest, the most ignorant, the wildest, the most uncultivated, the almost semi-savage. Let not these terms be thought too harsh. The Forest of Dean has passed through a glorious renovation since the days I am depicting and the person I am describing. He laboured and others have entered into his labours. I have frequently heard him speak of himself as doing nothing but digging out the foundation and filling it in with strong rough stone ready for the more favoured architect upon which to rear the beautiful structure. And at this rough work he toiled almost night and day. His habit was to start on his visiting excursions about nine in the morning, with a bit of bread in his pocket, and to return home about four or five in the afternoon, and this as a constant, unchanged, and unvaried practice through the day, the week, the month, the year, the life. Consequently, there was not a cabin, a cottage, or a house, but its inmates were well known to him; not only their moral condition but their pecuniary and physical. Many a time, upon his return home I have heard him give orders to his servants to bestow medicine to some and food to others whom he had found out on his rounds, whilst his pockets had been drained of their very last mite.

"I believe no man's life more literally exhibited the 'spent and being spent.' Take the boundary ring of the work of this servant of God. Walk from Mitcheldean to Ruardean, through Lydbrook to English Bicknor—then round by Berry Hill, striking down upon Cinderford—coming up on Littledean hill side and bearing down on the woodside to Mitcheldean again. In this area existed Henry Berkin's family—many loved him as a parent, and those who did not love him would come to his house, or meet him on the road, or call him into their homes, and pour into his ear their tale of distress, which seldom failed to touch a heart that throbbed with kindness. Indeed, human philanthropy shone as brightly as any other feature in his character, and was a most beautiful and powerful weapon in his hand, with which he lovingly subdued his most inveterate foes and made his enemies friends.

"His house was more like a public Poor House than the house of a clergyman. The bell in the outside door was ringing from morning till night. Print, flannel, calico, broth, bread, meat, potatoes, ale, wine, brandy, rum, gin, money, did the iron tongue of that bell clamorously demand, according to their respective wants, for men, women, beggars, and children.

"So, also, in a certain sense, Mrs. Berkin was a Mother in Israel. And although an invalid, and at times suffering intolerable agony, yet this did not deprive but rather stimulated her sympathy in the wants, and woes, and sufferings of others. Medicine for the sick, food for the hungry, and clothing for the naked did this kind, benevolent, and inestimable woman provide. The case she knew not, her husband searched out, and she relieved it. Her bill for medicine generally amounted to £70. a year, and on one particular year, when sickness was more than usually prevalent, it amounted to £100. ; and one of the rooms in which the drapery was kept did literally look as if it were the store room of a person in that business, rather than that of a private person. Immense rolls of flannel, calicos, prints, blankets, sheeting, materials for men's trousers, boy's waistcoats, etc. And all this was gratuitously dispersed in the Forest and the adjoining parishes wherever there was need.

"Their fortunes must have been liberal and handsome. I never knew what their incomes were, but this I know, not one farthing was ever invested for their own personal benefit, but all was spent in the cause of God and the good of mankind.

"In the pulpit he was sound, plain, practical, faithful,—'declaring the whole counsel of God,'—solemn and earnest in warning the wicked. His mode of preaching was not wholly extempore but nearly so. He used very bare outlines and filled them up as he went on—sometimes never using them at all. Neither had he need. His mind was well stored and his language flowed from his lips like a running stream. He was not energetic—not that kind of preacher so much as would command attention as that kind to whom if attention was given would be most amply and richly repaid. He was very happy in illustration, seizing upon little incidents and occurrences of life or of nature and applying them to his subject, shewing them in Gospel light and dressing them in Gospel clothing. And yet the great success of his ministerial labours lay not so much in the pulpit as the cottage visiting—taking religion and leaving it in the miner's cabin—using every effort to make it part and parcel of the poor man's family. And God blessed his labours. The last time, just before I left, I had the pleasure of assisting him at the Holy Communion, when, I think, there were nearly ninety communicants.

"Had he not been a man of strong physical ability he never could have endured the fatigue of his daily life. He opened the Sabbath services in the school room exactly at eight in the morning, and employed the hour to nine in singing, prayer, and lecture to the neighbours, who came from the nearest cottages around. Then full Church Service at half-past ten, and at half-past two in the afternoon. Three or four cottage lectures in the week and a lecture in his own kitchen constituted the remainder of his work, which was never curtailed till a year or two before I left in 1844, when his usual strength began to fail.

"Among his clerical brethren no one was esteemed with more honour and respect. Of an old and wealthy parentage, possessing family livings, and with good prospects of Church preferment, sacrificing all for little more than a crust of bread (Trinity for many years was but £70.)—such splendid self-denial shed a lustre upon his path, and won the admiration of every one who had an eye to admire and a heart to appreciate such noble conduct.

"Nature had endowed him with a fine, flexible, and melodious voice, strong and powerful to fill with it, when he chose, any place he either preached or spoke in. His personal appearance was also striking. A fine open forehead and features regularly moulded. On one occasion when some Government Commissioners came into the Forest, I think it was Sir George Grey who attended the Forest Church, said after service—"Mr. Berkin, I could do nothing during your sermon as you preached but study the contour of your countenance.

"He delighted in his garden—'who loves a garden loves a greenhouse too.' He spent a deal of money every year in the purchase of rare flower roots and choice plants. His greenhouse exhibited, in their season, the finest display of geraniums of any private gentleman for many miles round. He attended to them himself, taking cuttings, labelling, and potting them with his own hands. A good deal of this was accomplished early in the morning or after his return home at night. But all was held secondary and subordinate. When obliged to devote a day to this loved employment, I have heard him murmuringly begrudge it, because it prevented his visiting some locality which was its turn to see him—so universally was his heart absorbed in his Master's work."

In these hearty terms of admiration, written five and twenty years afterwards, did the Rev. Mr. Chell (since gone to his reward) express his long recollections of Mr. Berkin. Other sources of information afford further corroborative particulars. By dint of fixedness of purpose and long practice, he had acquired the valuable faculty of

rising habitually at half-past five o'clock. The time he thus gained was devoted to theological reading, commencing invariably with his Greek Testament, and progressing through the works of such writers as Owen and Leighton, without which his mind must have subsided to the level of the poor cottagers amongst whom so much of his time was passed. It included, however, the leading periodicals of the day. His fondness for books was manifested by a circumstance that occurred in 1835. Some neighbouring gentlemen wished to present him with a piece of plate, when he requested that books might be selected instead.

Indeed, all his tastes and habits manifested a refined mind. His aspect was equally elevated, and contrasted strongly with the character of his parish and the appearance of his congregation, such as every stranger never failed to notice. In the society of ladies his manners were particularly delicate. It was the same at home, although no one might be staying with them, for he was equally neat in his person, and always dressed for dinner.

Adverting to his abundant ministrations for many years on the Lord's Day, he was often heard to say, "One sabbath more I have *enjoyed*," affirming that he was neither weary of his work nor *in* his work, since he felt no sense of fatigue at the close of it. Indeed, many of his pastoral letters were written on the Sunday evening. Then, too, he chose the texts for his next sermons, availing himself of the intervening days for thought and reading upon them. In their delivery he was somewhat rapid, yet they frequently were an hour in duration, and might have been more, so copious were his notes. Owing to an injury in the back, accidentally received on his way to a Visitation, he was obliged to adopt a half standing posture in the pulpit, though not visibly so, for the last fifteen years of his life.

It perfectly accords with Mr. Berkin's invariable acts of devotion to the highest interests of the poor Foresters to find that once and again he declined preferment else-

where. Previous to 1833, the Living of Sheepshed, in Leicestershire, was offered him by C. March Phillipps, his cousin, whilst in the summer of that year, Dr. Ryder, then Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, presented him with the Vicarage of High Offley. This he accepted in the first instance, and actually "read himself in;" afterwards, however, although his Lordship pressed him to take it, suggesting that he might keep up his connexion with his old flock by residing in the Forest half his time, yet, when the period for his departure arrived, he declined, preferring to end his work amongst those whose shepherd he had been from the first. His motive was of the most elevated kind, and merits veneration in proportion.

No doubt this tender attachment grew from his long intimacy with these people. With his usual exactitude, he recorded his daily visits to their cottages the last thing at night. According to these entries, happily preserved, in one week 77 calls are noted as having taken up 21 hours. In another, he paid 108 visits during 24 hours; but this was in summer. In winter they were as follows:—

38	calls	per	week	consuming	13	hours
34	"	"	"	"	11	"
24	"	"	"	"	9	"
69	"	"	"	"	27	"

Then there were his individual calls on the communicants, every alternate month, ere the Lord's Supper was administered. This was a work of time, owing to their considerable number, and scattered, and sometimes distant, residences. In 1840, the following table of their attendances appears:—

Date.	Numbers present.
February 23rd	65
April 19th, Easter Sunday..	76
June 7th, Whit Sunday ..	61
August 9th	69
October 11th	74
December 27th	61

Whilst the Dean Forest Commissioners were sitting, many whole days did Mr. Berkin attend them, offering his intimate experiences of the character and habits of the native population. At these interviews his remarks were particularly judicious and trustworthy, and had considerable influence with the Board. The Foresters also felt that their real interests were safe in his hands.

In 1845, Mr. Berkin, and the necessitous Foresters too, sustained a heavy loss, in the death of his beloved and afflicted wife. Her manners and appearance were pleasing, and her disposition frank and generous. She bore her long sufferings with remarkable endurance and cheerfulness, in which spirit she expired. He felt her removal and the loneliness of his position terribly, and at length married the lady by whose courtesy most of the particulars of this memoir have been kindly supplied. She tended him in his declining years with the greatest solicitude.

The growing infirmities of the last four years of his life necessitated a gradual narrowing of his work. One of his final efforts was to teach the little class of monitors in the Girls' Sunday School, ending, as he began his ministry, with the young. The last time he addressed his people took place in this same room, at his eight o'clock lecture, when he expounded from the words of Psalm xlv. 10.—“Be still and know that I am God.”

During the May of 1847, he was visited with a severe attack of paralysis, accompanied by much suffering from heart disease. Several fits followed; the first injured his speech, and the subsequent ones still more so, in which condition, varied with pain, weakness, and discomfort of many kinds, he patiently lingered to the 19th of October. He lies in his own Church Yard, surrounded by the deceased members of his dear flock, whilst he lives in the fond recollection of such as remain.

LIFE OF THE REV. THOMAS ROCK GARNSEY.

GARNSEY, The REV. THOMAS ROCK, was the Clergyman selected by the seven Trustees of Christ Church, Berry Hill, to succeed the Rev. P. M. Procter, its founder.

The archives of the Church Missionary Society, kindly searched by the Rev. W. Knight, record that Mr. Garnsey, when in his twenty-seventh year, was recommended to its Committee as a missionary candidate, by the Rev. T. T. Biddulph, Incumbent of St. James's, Bristol. This was in 1819, ere which date that devoted pastor had been unconsciously instrumental in preparing the Rev. H. Berkin and the Rev. H. Poole for the work in which they were so heartily engaged, of ministering to the spiritual necessities of the hitherto neglected natives of Dean Forest.

Mr. Garnsey was born at North Curry, in Somersetshire, in which place his father acted as a physician. At the time of his offering himself to the Society, he had directed his attention to missionary enterprise for about six months, though he had been under the influence of religion during several years.

The Committee first designed him for the Indian mission field ; but the post of second chaplain at Sierra Leone having become vacant, he was appointed to it by Lord Bathurst, receiving Deacon's Orders on the 11th of April, 1819, and Priest's the following Trinity Sunday, from the Bishop of London.

Whilst thus not entering into formal connexion with the Church Missionary Society, he diligently devoted himself to the same blessed cause to which its Sierra Leone station was consecrated, namely the Christianizing of the African race.

Ere long he was promoted to the first chaplaincy there, and arrived in the colony with his wife on the 30th of January, 1820. But considerations of health compelled him to give up his place, necessitating his return to England in about twelve months time. During the three following years, he rendered good service to the Society by attending its larger Associations as Deputation. He would then have gone out to the East Indies, not being able to stand an African climate, sooner than give up the work, but he failed to obtain a chaplaincy there. The future shewed him that he was to be a missionary still, but at home, in the Forest of Dean.

Nor could the Trustees of Christ Church, Berry Hill, have made a more suitable choice. His previous career tended to fit him for this second and corresponding field of mission work. The native population of Western Africa was scarcely more wild and unenlightened than the uncultivated and lawless Foresters of that day. Mr. Procter had begun the good work of evangelizing them, and Mr. Garnsey had to carry it on.

He entered upon his pastoral charge in June, 1824, when thirty-two years old, and rapidly won upon the people by his affectionate earnestness. They saw he desired to promote their highest interests, irrespective of himself, and so they gathered round him, continuing an attached flock, and he their good shepherd, until death separated them. The fact that he found them living in hardly less error than his former Negro acquaintances, whose black exterior re-appeared before him in the grimy faces of his collier people, excited his pity and stimulated him to greater efforts for their welfare. He found but one remedy for each of their cases, namely,

the inculcation of Christian principles with corresponding life.

Years passed away, during which he was seldom absent from his post, each Lord's Day giving the usual Morning and Afternoon Services himself, and in the evening frequently officiating a third time, for the Rev. H. Berkin, in the Lydbrook School Room, three miles off.

Mr. Garnsey's sermons are said to have been more of the plain and practical, than of the striking or aspiring character. Generally they were written, although at times he allowed himself to dispense with the MS. On very rare occasions, he took his subject with reference to instances of criminal life, revealed by the Monmouth Assizes. The crowds that flocked to hear him at such seasons were observed to have been impressed by his words. Probably his deep concern for the poor wretch, John Harris, alias "Poicefoot," induced him, in the first instance, to take such a step, in the hope that others of like character might become reformed.

Most evenings of the week were employed in giving expositions of Holy Scripture in the cottages at Coleford-Lane-End, Joyford, etc. whilst each Thursday night, the original service, out of which the Church arose, was still continued. By day he was engaged going about from house to house, visiting the sick, and relieving the needy to so bountiful an extent as often to inconvenience himself. In this manner his life and strength were more than occupied. His health had been failing for some time, until at length, whilst engaged in preaching, he sank down in the pulpit.

Such was the touching circumstance under which he bade his flock farewell. He died eventually at Bristol, awaiting his change with extraordinary calmness, and lies in the Arnos Vale Cemetery. But although not permitted to end his days in the Forest, many were his affectionate messages to his poor people. "Tell them" preached the Rev. H Poole, in his pathetic Funeral

Sermon of 14th of March, 1847, "that I loved them as much as a minister could love his flock, and that I felt assured they loved me."

What more could the good man desire than that the same spirit should abide in and towards his successors. Most happily it has been so. Suitable pastoral care continues to be given to the lambs as well as to the sheep who assemble in the fold as numerous and as willingly as ever, under the assiduous ministrations of the Rev. W. H. Taylor, the Incumbent, and contributor of several of the above particulars.

A Monument, inscribed as follows, appears on the north wall of Christ Church, Berry Hill.

This Tablet

is erected to the memory of
the Reverend Thomas Rock Garnsey,
by his Parishioners and Neighbours,
in token of their esteem and regret.

He was born at North Curry in Somersetshire,
on the 18th day of December, 1792.

He died at Bristol, on the 7th day of March, 1847.

His first Work

after being admitted into Holy Orders
was that of Government Chaplain at Sierra Leone
in Western Africa ;

thence, by God's blessing, returning, he devoted
the remainder of his life to the care of Christ's flock
in this place ;

And to them, who for upwards of 20 years
saw his earnest endeavours

to set forth and adorn the doctrine of
God his Saviour

both by his preaching and living

he still seems to say :

" Being affectionately desirous of you, we
were willing to have imparted unto you,
not the Gospel of God only, but also our
own souls, because ye were dear unto us."

1 Thess. ii. 8.

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LIFE OF THE REV. HENRY POOLE.

POOLE, THE REV. HENRY, in common with his zealous contemporaries, deserves to be had in remembrance by all Foresters of the south and west, for his work's sake amongst them for forty years.

He, like the Rev. Henry Berkin, received his first serious impressions whilst attending the ministry of the Rev. T.T. Biddulph, in whose parish of St. James's, Bristol, his father resided. A desire to aid in training the young, induced Mr. Poole to become a teacher in the Sunday School. In fact, the boys' department was mainly conducted by him for several years, other members of Mr. Biddulph's congregation assisting in the good work, of whom several eventually entered the ministry.

The following letter addressed to a former fellow teacher, who had views towards the sacred office, and wrote to him asking advice on the subject, gives Mr. Poole's statement of the circumstances which led to his own ordination, with the prospects and sentiments by which he was himself actuated :—

“ Ossett, January, 22nd, 1813.

“ My dear Friend,

“ Your truly welcome letter I received with much pleasure, and now attempt to answer it without delay.

“ The importance of your subject and a consciousness of my inability to afford you the needful advice induced me to lay the matter before the Lord, and to implore direction from Him; that I might give you such counsel as may be agreeable to His heavenly will.

I always secretly thought that the Lord would employ you in his Church, yet I was prevented from speaking to you on the subject, lest I should speak what I wished, rather than what might be the purpose of God.

"I can easily sympathise with you in all your feelings of anxiety on this subject, having passed through the same. My mind was, for several years, conflicting with doubts and fears respecting my call to the ministry; on the one hand, dreading the sin of obtrusion into the sacred function, and on the other hand, the sin of rebellion in disobeying the call. I was ever unhappy and unsettled, seeking rest for my burdened mind but finding none, though I sought it carefully with tears and many prayers.

"At last, I opened my mind to my dear and valuable friend, Mr. Biddulph. He stated to me (in his usual concise and judicious manner) his mode of judging of the mind and purpose of God in most cases of doubt and perplexity, namely, that when the *Word* of God in the Scriptures, the *Spirit* of God influencing the mind, and the *Providence* of God in the world all concur and agree in pointing out any particular circumstance or event, we may then conclude in considering the call and purpose of God as clear and decisive; and in many cases, if the two former testimonies strongly declare the same thing, we may even then determine what is the will of God and the path of duty.

"Mr. Biddulph, understanding my views and sentiments and all the circumstances of my situation, informed me that he decidedly considered the *Word* and *Spirit* of God in favour of my object, but that Providence seemed against me, as my father and friends were very much opposed to my inclinations.

"I waited a considerable time before their permission could be obtained, though their objections are not to this day removed. Having obtained the reluctant consent of my father, I ventured to pursue my favourite object, though with much trepidation and fear, lest, after all, I should be acting contrary to the will of God.

"Since my ordination the Lord has favoured me with the most unquestionable evidences of my call to the work, by using me as the instrument of conversion to many souls, particularly among the young of the congregation. Glory be to God for all his mercies; but chiefly that he hath committed unto me this office of the ministry—'To me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach' among my fellow gentiles 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' The advantages I anticipated from my change of occupation and pursuits were purely, I trust, of a spiritual nature, and those I have fully realized in the satisfaction of knowing that I am now employed *as* and where the Lord would have me—in a settled peace of mind and in the

pleasing reflection of serving my generation in the most important manner and to the most valuable ends. These are the only personal advantages I aspired after, and in the enjoyment of which I feel satisfied.

"I have thus, my dear friend, given you an epitome of my experience at the period of my history your letter refers to, leaving you to make your own inferences relative to your determination and conduct. Having attentively perused your remarks, and from thence seriously considered your views and motives in connexion with what I know of your general character, I cannot withhold from you my firm persuasion of your *call* to the sacred office. The *Word*, the *Spirit*, and the *Providence* of God all appear to harmonize in selecting you out to minister in the sanctuary. Be not therefore disobedient to the heavenly vision, lest haply you be found to fight against God. It always appeared to me and to many of my friends who have obtained an university education, a waste of time and expense for a young man who is old enough for ordination to graduate through a college. The *North Porch*, as you call it,* seems to be opened by a remarkable interference of Providence for the purpose of replenishing our National Church with Gospel Ministers. The Archbishop and Examining Chaplain are both favourable to serious characters and are anxious to obtain them. Titles for Orders may daily be had. The harvest truly is great but the labourers comparatively few. Let me advise you to lose no time in opening your mind to Mr. Biddulph. You will then obtain counsel from an experienced Father in God, which may be depended upon. Should you think proper to favour me with further communications, I can only assure you that they will be highly gratifying to me, and believe me in subscribing myself,

Your faithful friend and servant,

HENRY POOLE.

It was in 1811 that Mr. Poole was ordained to the Curacy of Ossett, near Wakefield, thus taking the place of an elder brother, who dying shortly before ordination, most earnestly pressed an entrance into ministerial life upon Henry. Here he resided for three years, "as a son with a father," in the house of his kind rector, the Rev. Mr. Kilvington. At the end of that period, finding the climate of Yorkshire too cold, he moved south, into Wiltshire, sharing the sole charge of Corsham with the

* Alluding to the facilities at that time afforded in some northern dioceses for the admission of Literates.

Rev. John Whish, brother of the late Rev. M. R. Whish, of St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, until the intended Incumbent should become qualified to hold the living. When this occurred, Mr. Poole returned for a time to Bristol.

Early in January, 1818, he happened to be spending an evening at the house of his friend, Mr. Wood, a non-resident in St. James's Parish, but, with himself, a constant attendant on Mr. Biddulph's ministry, and there met the Rev. T. F. Jennings. This gentleman, formerly one of his coadjutors in St. James's School, had been ordained to the Curacy of Newland, on the borders of the Forest of Dean, and had, for a year and a half, assisted that devoted servant of Christ and friend of the poor Foresters, the Rev. P. M. Procter. He had done so, not only at the Parish Church, but also at Christ Church, Berry Hill, in the Forest, which having been originally a school room, reared by the persevering efforts of Mr. Procter, had recently been enlarged by him, and consecrated by Bishop Ryder.

In the course of conversation at Mrs. Wood's, on the occasion above referred to, Mr. Poole said he had long wished to build a Church, adding that his knowledge of business and the taste he had acquired in early life for architectural drawing might, he thought, be usefully employed. To this, Mr. Jennings, who had just left his curacy at Newland, replied, "I think I can put you in the way of realizing your wishes, for I happen to know that the Bishop of Gloucester is anxious to have another Church built in the Forest of Dean." In consequence of this conversation, Mr. Poole called, a day or two after, on Mr. Jennings, now become Curate of St. Thomas, Bristol, and asked him whether he seriously meant that he could assist him in his views respecting Church building. Mr. Jennings replied in the affirmative, and added that he was ready to write either to Bishop Ryder or to his Chaplain, the Rev. John Kempthorne, and

mention his (Mr. Poole's) desires and qualifications. The result was that Mr. Jennings wrote to Mr. Kempthorne on the subject.

Whilst the correspondence arising out of this communication was going on, the Chapelry of Bream, in the Parish of Newland, became vacant, and Mr. Jennings received from his friend and late Vicar, the Rev. P. M. Procter, an offer of the appointment, which he declined to accept, but mentioned Mr. Poole's name to Mr. Procter. An interview speedily ensued, and as promptly terminated in Mr. Poole's services being secured for Coleford and Bream, the spiritual interests of the adjacent Foresters being particularly commended to his charge. This was in August, 1818. His "Appeal" for contributions towards building the Church and Schools of St. Paul, Park End, appeared the following July. He concluded it in these unassuming terms:—"The Clergyman who presumes to offer these suggestions to the public, being Perpetual Curate of the Chapelries of Coleford and Bream, contiguous to that part of the Forest here described, is enabled to make this statement from an actual survey and personal knowledge; and being encouraged by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese to undertake the superintendence of the proposed building, the application of the funds to be raised, and the subsequent instruction of the people, he ventures to offer himself as the Forester's Advocate, and earnestly solicits the friends of Religion in general, and those of the Established Church in particular, to supply the pecuniary means requisite for this important undertaking, which, from the extreme poverty of the people for whom the benefit is designed, must be wholly derived from public bounty."

In the mean while, Mr. Poole attended with marked assiduity to his ministerial duties at Coleford and Bream. The Episcopal Chapels at both these places were mean, out of repair, and too small, especially that of Coleford,

when compared with the extent and character of the Town.* It was soon determined to rebuild it, and Mr. Poole was requested to conduct the work. He complied, and found the knowledge of architecture which he had acquired in early life most useful. The design, planned by himself, made provision for eight hundred persons. For its execution, between £2,700. and £3,000. was considered to be wanted, and for this large sum he found it necessary to become answerable. Had each and every contribution been paid according to promise, all expenses would have been met without difficulty. But, ere the Church was finished, some friends had died or left the town, others were no longer able to assist, or had changed their minds, occasioning him much grievous perplexity.

Simultaneously with these heavy anxieties, he had the building of the Church at Park End to overlook and provide for. As a structure, it was hardly less important than that at Coleford, yet it was completed by May, 1822.

The Tower of Christ Church, Berry Hill, was also built by his designs and supervision. His eye and hand were likewise in requisition for improving the little Chapel at Bream, for rebuilding which the first load of stone was hauled the same day that his Church

* "The first Chapel for Coleford," writes the Rev. Dr. Sisson, the Incumbent, "was supposed to have been a Roman Catholic place of worship, and consisted of only one small aisle. It had no regular minister; but the neighbouring Clergy officiated in it gratuitously and at uncertain times. It was not pewed, and the inhabitants, when they attended Divine Service, brought chairs or other seats with them, and placed them in the open area. In the reign of Queen Anne it was beneficed by a part of her 'Bounty,' when the Bishop of Gloucester took it into his care and appointed a Minister, and his successors have appointed the Perpetual Curate ever since. In the time of George II. the one aisle was found too small, and the inhabitants petitioned the Government of that day to aid them with money and timber out of the Forest of Dean to build another aisle. This was done, and those persons who were willing and able erected themselves pews in the new aisle, and so the building stood up to the reign of George IV."

at Park End was consecrated. The former structure had windows of the Stuart period, and a chancel arch of a much earlier date. The interior arrangements were very primitive. The Schools were erected in 1830, for 65 children. Both buildings have since been remodelled, and adapted to the growing wants of an important district by the able exertions of the Incumbent, the Rev. C. Witherby, and the considerable gifts of Miss Davies. Yet, in the midst of all these secular toils, Mr. Poole's ministerial labours seem to have been as abundant as ever. Thus, his devoted sister and companion through life, writes: "During the first ten or fifteen years of his Forest life, nothing could exceed his unwearied activity in the discharge of his sacred and secular duties. Little time was allowed for rest or food, nor any for recreation. As to the latter, his heart was so entirely in his work that he needed none. Notwithstanding the constant claims made on his time and attention, by his building engagements, he never relaxed one iota of his parochial labour in promoting the spiritual welfare of his numerous but scattered flock. In addition to three full services, and sometimes four every sabbath, he had some engagement for every evening in the week; either it was a lecture in the Church at Coleford, or a cottage gathering, not even Saturdays excepted; for on that evening our family worship was in fact a public service, to which many gladly came to the number of 50 or 60 as the weather permitted."

Manifold as were the calls on Mr. Poole's time and strength, he retained his early care for the young, so that they had a School Room provided at Park End, at the same time the Church was erected. Difficulty occurred in raising funds sufficient to remunerate the teachers. Anniversary services, in which the scholars took part, were consequently given, which with the invariable aid rendered to every good work in the district by Mr. Machen, and his estimable sister Miss Alice Davies, who resided at Whitmead, sufficed to carry on

the school for the future. Further steps for teaching the children of this wide district, with its augmenting population, were made in 1850 and 1851, by Mr. Poole's efforts with the help of Mr. Machen, and of Mr. Bathurst, of Lydney Park. In the former year, the Viney Hill School was completed, and in the latter, that in the Blakeney valley. These were the last structures he lived to raise.

Mr. Poole's residence continued for several years at Eden Wall, near Coleford; but on relinquishing the spiritual charge of that town and devoting himself to his newly-gathered flock at Park End, he found the distance so inconvenient, and the payment of house rent out of his limited income so burdensome, as to suggest the building of a Parsonage near his Church. This was effected, at least in part, ere the year 1829, although under grave pecuniary difficulty, as the following letter shows:—"It is indeed a great relief to unburden the mind to a beloved friend. My difficulties are chiefly of a pecuniary nature. Before I began the building of my Parsonage my own means were entirely exhausted, having expended full £1000. of my own in the erection of three Churches, two School Houses, and cottages to each, consequently the Parsonage (which it was expedient not to delay building) was begun in hope of the contributions of the benevolent coming in from time to time to my aid,—some subscriptions *being promised*.

"I have resided in the house with my sister for the last year, but it is far from being finished. Now, in winding up my building debts, I find I am full £300. minus. This I am peremptorily required to pay without delay, which I am not able to do without the most formidable sacrifices and privations. I dare not apply to my own family for aid, for they are greatly displeased at my sinking my own property—not being able to enter into my motives for so doing," etc.

The perplexities here so feelingly related formed, in fact, the heaviest trial of his life, only qualified by the

reflection that none of them were incurred on his own account. In their removal he sacrificed literally all he possessed, and his poor sister did the same. Under these circumstances, Miss Poole's temporal welfare (should she be the survivor) preyed much upon his mind. Indeed, he mentioned it to a relative with deep concern, only a few months before his death. With the view of making some provision for her, he had determined, years previously, to dispense with a Curate, although by so doing his Sunday labours were unduly augmented. Even after he gave up the Coleford Incumbency, there devolved upon him two full services at Park End, besides a third at Bream. The Curate, whose stipend was eventually made up by the Curates Aid Society, assisted by Mr. Machen and Mr. Bathurst, attended exclusively to the Blakeney and Viney Hill side of the District, officiating in the licensed School Rooms there.

Still, he was enabled to labour on, surviving both the Rev. T. R. Garnsey and the Rev. H. Berkin, each of whose funeral sermons he was found equal to the touching duty of preaching, with marked effect upon densely crowded congregations.

His discourses, mostly given from the MS., were persuasively delivered, earnest in character, and composed in an engaging style. Latterly, his voice lost tone, and was in fact worn out.

A few days illness, augmented by a severe cold that brought on some old complaints, led to a painless and unconscious dissolution, the 22nd of December, 1857. Gathered to his people, at the age of seventy-two, he sleeps in his Church Yard at Park End, a spot that he had long endeavoured to render as attractive as possible, by regulating the character of the tomb-stones erected in it. Nor was he unsuccessful, considering that so little taste was then shewn in such things elsewhere.

A head stone has been erected by his parishioners "in grateful remembrance of his faithful services as their Pastor for almost forty years."

LIFE OF THE REV. P. M. PROCTER.

PROCTER, The Rev. PAYLER MATTHEW, stands marked as the first Vicar of Newland, or indeed Clergyman of any of the parishes adjoining the Forest, who shewed concern at the demoralized habits of its people and attempted to reform them.

The tithes of that living, from having a forestal origin in the cultivated lands and mineral productions of the Crown, rendered its Incumbents chargeable with the spiritual care of the Foresters. At a former period, such responsibility had been met by supplying the increasing population with the Chapels of Bream, Clearwell, and Coleford. Since then, although the inhabitants continued to multiply, nothing more was done for them until Mr. Procter arrived. He, too, might have been induced to leave matters as he found them, or to give up his endeavours in despair, had he been less ardent and energetic. Possessing these qualities in an unusual degree, he persevered, and succeeded so well that others were animated with corresponding desires.

It was by an "exchange" that he obtained his pastorate in the Forest, subject to the sanction of Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff and patron of the living, who required an interview. Accordingly, Mr. and Mrs. Procter journeyed as far as Calgarth, in Westmoreland, and were invited to breakfast. His Lordship was courteous, but reserved; asking questions, but saying nothing to indicate compliance with their wishes. Not until the meal was concluded, and they rose in despair to leave, did he re-

move their fears, when turning to Mrs. Procter he said, "Madam, I wish you your health at Newland." "Thank you, my Lord," she sprightly replied, and with a low curtesy retired in unconcealed joy. This took place in 1803, Mr. Procter having attained his thirty-fourth year.

Although Newland afforded the attractions of fine scenery, a noble old Church, and several high class residents, it had the drawback of being environed by hundreds of forlorn and uncivilized Foresters. Report soon informed him of their immoralities and violences, but he would not suffer these to hinder him from visiting the sick or baptizing the children; though what he then noticed was most unfavourable. No other intercourse passed between them for months, as they did not observe the Sunday. Still, these poor outcasts were only partially insensible to the light of Christian truth, nor were Mr. Procter's visits thrown away, on the contrary, they created a feeling in his favour. For on learning that he was expected to officiate at Coleford, their little market town, the following Sunday afternoon, some of them came to hear. Interested with what was spoken, they induced others to attend. Amongst the number was one Thomas Morgan, who had been, as he afterwards described it, to the Bishop (Byder), on his Lordship's first visit to inquire into Mr. Procter's doings and object,—“a keeper of the devil's tools,” in allusion to the lead he had so long taken in conducting the profane pastimes with which the Lord's day was desecrated in the Forest. He came, he said, to the Coleford Chapel, “to hear and see what was the matter,” and returned to his home at Berry Hill strong with the desire of opening his mind to Mr. Procter; so much so, that he could not rest until word was sent him begging a ministerial call. It was a bold request for a Forester to make, considering the distance at which he was kept by the upper classes of the neigh-

bourhood ; but it was just like Morgan, in the earnest simplicity of his character.

No doubt Mr. Procter's awakening and pathetic appeals from the pulpit found an echo in this poor collier's heart. A graphic and candid delineation of the character of his preaching, from the pen of the Rev. J. Allport, his Curate for six years, relates that "On the first aspect, it stood out animated, earnest, attractive, and impressive. His mode of composing his sermons was singular, his filling up romantic. I use these two remarks mainly from the knowledge acquired by my almost daily intercourse with him."

Another gentleman, who was his Curate for some years, recollects that "Mr. Procter spent a great deal of time in preparation for the pulpit. His mode of composing, consisted chiefly in collecting together the texts of scripture bearing upon his subject, and arranging them under their appropriate heads. He framed skeletons of sermons, but to write one at full length was a matter of extreme labour to him. The consequence was that when he thought it necessary to produce a written sermon, the result was disappointing. A striking instance of this occurred on the occasion of his being appointed, in 1816, by Bishop Ryder, to preach a Visitation Sermon at Newnham. He took for his text, Eccles. xii. 9., "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge, yea, he gave good heed and sought out, and set in order many proverbs." The object of this discourse was to excite the Clergy to care and diligence in their preparations for the pulpit, and to that end to search out the words of truth and set them in order before the people. All who knew the man could enter into his meaning ; and especially those who knew how descriptive the concluding words of the text were of the process by which, in the privacy of his study, he was himself wont to search out and set in order many of the sententious instructions of the Book

of God—but as a public discourse on such an important occasion it was a failure.”

The Rev. J. Allport further remarks that Mr. Procter generally fixed upon some passage seeming to bear upon a passing occurrence or remarkable incident, or on some passage in the Lessons, the Psalms, or Epistle and Gospel for the coming Sabbath. He would seize upon the main feature at once, and present it by a striking introduction, calculated to rivet the attention, then proceed to some consideration of the subject, which he would expand and illustrate under a few heads, or in explanation of the clauses in his text, and after dilating half an hour upon these, often in unconnected but very impressive remarks and observations, would draw towards a conclusion. Such a style of preaching, in a vivid, earnest, and affectionate manner of delivery was rendered very touching, especially to the bulk of the class of hearers constituting his congregations, who would be deeply affected by his sensations of apparent delight, adoring gratitude, devout love of his God and Saviour, often expressed in ebullitions of tears or impassioned appeals.”

It is not surprising that addresses of this nature penetrated Thomas Morgan's inner man, so that when Mr. Procter called, “his eyes, his voice, and humble gesture strongly marking the agitated feelings of his soul,” whilst he remarked, “If what you say from the pulpit is (and I believe it to be,) the truth, should it please God to bring me to death in the state I now am, I must be lost. I want to know, if I can, and what I must do to be saved?”

A very interesting conversation of two hours ensued, and concluded with a promise to call again that day week, at seven o'clock in the evening, when a few relatives and neighbours would be returned from the pits. At the time fixed Mr. Procter arrived at the house, but not to meet, as he expected, merely a handful of people, for so many were assembled that it was

difficult to enter. In doubt, for the moment, how to render the occasion most profitable, he was led to read and expound the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah.

Before going away, such earnest entreaties were made him to come again that he determined to continue his attendance. He found "people flocked to see and to hear; every part of the cottage, the stairs, the upper rooms, the pantry, and the windows were all occupied; an attention, a silence which spake to the heart frequently prevailed; and it is very singular that not one instance of light or improper behaviour ever happened." These journeys into the Forest were not altogether free from danger. The old party did not like their sports to be interrupted. Until all fear of violence from them ceased, some portion of the congregation used to attend Mr. Procter over the bounds of the Forest, after his Evening Lecture.

"My mode of conducting these assemblies was," he says, "to read a portion of Scripture on some important point, connecting purity of heart and holiness of life with doctrine; after explaining, I left it for private consideration. On our next meeting, a kind of examining conversation commenced, which always afforded opportunities of affectionately impressing the subject."

And now, for the first time, some of the Forest Colliers might be observed on the Sunday morning directing their steps to Newland Church, and occupying its aisles. Their pastor was inspirited by the view, so that more frequent visits to their homes and a cordial feeling of union ensued.

The long period of fifty years has not effaced from the Rev. J. Allport's mind the impressions made upon it by all he saw of Mr. Procter's ministry at this time, for he writes,—“Of his pastoral character and labours; of his zeal and devotedness in his office, his untiring exertions and persevering efforts to benefit those poor outcasts, the Foresters, and to bring them within the

pale of the Church by his week evening lectures in different parts among them, as well as in the discharge of his more immediate parochial duties on the Lord's Day, it is impossible to speak too highly. His energy and example kindled a flame in my bosom which has never abated to the present day; and I look back with wonder and gratitude on the stimulus he gave me, and the profit I derived from such a pattern of indefatigable ardour, and the comfort derived during my connexion with him."

As time passed away, neither Mr. Procter's activity, nor the people's interest in the Thursday Evening Lecture at Morgan's house abated. On the contrary, there appeared a growing and mutual desire to give it more effect by building a room for the purpose, large enough to seat 200 persons, and also to serve as a School for the many untaught children around.

It was thought that a site and building materials might be obtained in the Forest. A Petition to that effect, signed by some hundreds of miners and colliers, was presented by Dr. Huntingford, then Lord Bishop of Gloucester, to the Government, in 1807. But, after a legal investigation of the matter, it was found that no power, other than that of Parliament, could grant away any Crown land.

The subject was mooted afresh under Mr. Perceval's administration, before whom Mr. Procter appeared in person. "What did you want, sir?" was the ready interrogation of that Prime Minister, as he directed the Country Parson to be seated. The question was answered in such a way as to induce Mr. Perceval to desire that he might be immediately furnished with a plan and estimate of the contemplated building, adding that he hoped Mr. Procter would not remit his visits to the Foresters. In fact, their advocate's appearance and demeanour pleased, as Mr. Allport recollects they were likely to do, "from his prepossessing aspect and address. His manner

and voice were gentlemanly and engaging. Singularly neat and courteous, a stranger would be at once prepossessed in his favour from his outer bearing, especially if drawn into conversation on any agreeable topic."

Yet, when after many months Mr. Perceval's answer was received, its official import amounted to the same thing as the one formerly given, suggesting a public appeal, and kindly promising his name and aid. In the meanwhile, his assassination occurred, so that all seemed at an end. However, another opening appeared, since Thos. Morgan now offered his field, and £20. from himself and neighbours as a beginning, to be added to, if necessary, another year. Encouraged by such liberality, Mr. Procter at once published an appeal for aid. It met with a liberal reception, and on the 6th of January, 1813, being the suitable season of the Epiphany, the Liturgy of England's Church was publicly used for the first time in Dean Forest, thus crowning the anxious desires of seven years. A Schoolmaster began at the same time to teach the children, of whom 300 were received the first week. They were invariably catechized at the Thursday Evening Service, with the best effect on all.

In the first instance, the Church ritual, from want of Prayer Books, failed to interest the Foresters, yet the congregation increased to such a degree that the room again became overcrowded, occasioning painful inconvenience to the people and injury to the health of the officiating Minister. Enlargement was all the more necessary, since no room remained for the young. Without loss of time it was increased to twice the size, with a gallery rising from the floor for the children. "I do not know a more interesting sight," says a contemporary Author,* "than to see our Vicar at his Forest Chapel, surrounded by his own people—the spiritual father of every soul among them. 'No one,' said an old collier, 'ever thought us worthy of coming

* Mrs. Wayland, in her volume entitled *Dependence*, p. 188.

to look after before.'—'The desert shall blossom as the rose'—a prophecy that is fully accomplished here."

One further endeavour remained unattempted, to give full and lasting effect to all that Mr. Procter had done for the Berry Hill people. This was to secure the consecration of his licensed School Room, and an adequate Endowment for supporting a resident Clergyman. To accomplish all this by raising a sum adequate to the purpose, required uncommon ardour and fixedness of purpose. The necessity of having any Churches in the Forest was disputed. "Enlarge those on each side of it, for the free use of the Foresters dwelling near them," said some.

Public aid was again sought, in June, 1813, by means of an Appeal for "assistance to place amongst these people a Clergyman who would not only publicly preach, but reside, privately visit their cottages, disseminate the Scriptures, and assist the master of the National School in impressing upon the minds of the children the principles of the Christian religion." It received so generous a response that Mr. Procter was enabled to purchase a contiguous Freehold Estate as the first step towards an endowment, besides building a Day School for Boys and Girls, chiefly with the view of relieving the original structure from an impediment to its consecration. This interesting event took place on the 7th of July, 1816, by Bishop Ryder, about six months after the faithful collier, Thomas Morgan, breathed his last. The poor man felt his end approaching for some time; yet he shewed undiminished concern for the spiritual welfare of his neighbours, aiding in planning out the enlargement last made of their place of worship, and anxiously hoping he might live to see it consecrated.

It was whilst in this state of expectancy that the Lord Bishop, whose devotion to his high calling was so conspicuous, happening to be in the neighbourhood, was led, almost by accident, up into the mean apartment

where the worn out man sat by the fire. Condescending to take his hand and to address him in suitable terms, tears of joy fell freely from his cheeks, whilst Mr. Procter stood by, a silent admirer of both. On descending the stairs, his Lordship remarked in feeling terms how highly impressed he was with the interview—"I shall never forget it. What an interesting character! I shall ever remember Thomas Morgan."

Though the Berry Hill School Room had become a Church by consecration, Mr. Procter found to his dismay that he had been premature in making over the whole of the endowment property, which had thereby become unfitted for being met by any Parliamentary grant. For a time, the consequent liability of £950. pressed anxiously upon him. Ere 1819, however, when he published his brief and authentic statement* of all that he had done for the Foresters, the weight was removed.

Infirmities, resulting from twenty years of over exertion, were beginning to make themselves felt, especially upon his nerves, so that, being naturally excitable, he suffered at times from painful fits of restless irritability. Yet he continued to discharge a large portion of his public duties; mostly giving the Berry Hill Sunday Afternoon Services as well as the Thursday Evening Catechism and Lecture, besides the Morning Service at Newland every Sunday. The second Service at Newland was a matter over which the Vicar was considered to have no control, since that devolved on a Lecturer, as Chaplain to the Almshouses there. The well known Rev. William Nunn, afterwards of St. Clement's, Manchester, held this Lectureship at one time, and was much followed.

* A Pamphlet of sixty 8vo. pages, entitled *A Brief and Authentic Statement of the Origin of an Established Church and National Day School in His Majesty's Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Connected with an authentic and interesting Memoir of the late Thomas Morgan, Collier, of the Forest, who was eminently useful in promoting the above design.*

His home life appeared in a very pleasing aspect to the view of Mr. Allport, when, at the opening and the close of the day, he assembled his household for domestic worship. That friend "always regarded it as a privilege and really edifying repast. Mr. Procter read, or asked some one else to read, a portion of Scripture; sometimes a portion from Bishop Horne *On the Psalms*, sometimes from Hawker's *Morning and Evening Portion*. His extemporaneous prayers were very scriptural, very spiritual, with great devotional fervour, and affecting avowals of sin, and dependence on the atonement and righteousness of Christ, with earnest petitions for the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit."

He was not seriously ill for any length of time. But at the very last, the restlessness caused by the disease under which he laboured was excessive, and he determined to go to the Spa, near Gloucester, for medical advice. A lodging was taken there for him by Mrs. Stephens, a most kind and attached friend. "Mammy Stephens," for so he called her, used to open her house at Clearwell for his fortnightly lectures, regarding it as his head quarters for that part.

The conclusion of his earthly career is soon told. In the paroxysm of the last fit, on May 7th, 1822, the dying man, at his own urgent desire, was taken in a post-chaise to Mitcheldean, and there put to bed for a couple of hours. Then he was carried further towards Gloucester; but some miles short of the bridge the chaise was obliged to be stopped for a while, as he was thought to be dying. He did reach the lodgings at the Spa, and survived the night, but died the following afternoon; Mrs. Procter being with him and also Mrs. Stephens. Bishop Ryder called shortly afterwards and knelt in prayer with the widow.

He lies interred at Newland, beneath a spot which the idlers of the Parish long desecrated with fives playing. "Bury me there," said he, "and their games

will cease." A Tablet attached to the north side of his Church at Berry Hill bears the following inscription :—

“ Sacred
to the Memory
of
the Rev. P. M. Procter, M.A.,
late Vicar of Newland;
by whose zealous exertions
this Church,
being the first Church erected in the Forest of Dean,
was founded and endowed.
His affectionate solicitude
for the spiritual welfare
of the poor Foresters
was manifested
by a faithful discharge of
Pastoral duties amongst them
for many years;
and even in his dying moments
he evinced
the most anxious concern
for their welfare.
He rested from his labours,
May the 8th, 1822,
in the 53rd year of his age.”

His widow survived for many years, in comfortable but limited circumstances, owing to Mr. Procter's means having been absorbed in meeting the wants of his people. A pension was very properly assigned her, in recognition of his merits, out of which she always subscribed £1. annually to the Christ Church School. After her decease, an envelope containing a £5. note was found, addressed to the Rev. W. H. Taylor, the Incumbent, for the same object. She died at Lancaster, in 1854, aged 70 years.

THE FORESTERS IN GENERAL, AS RESPECTS THEIR PAST AND PRESENT CHARACTER.

THE Forest District is rendered so isolated by the Severn on the south-east, and the Wye on the west, that taken in connection with its special mineralogical character, the conclusion seems inevitable that its inhabitants must ever have been a peculiar people.

On the other hand, its having adjoined the southern termination of the boundary line between England and Wales, across which hordes of marauders or else bands of organized troops would be apt to pass, if indeed they did not make it their battle field, may have tended to qualify this exclusive status. The Danes, in particular, so often resorted to it that Giraldus, writing two hundred years afterwards, affirmed that the District was called *Sylva Danica* after them.

Unfavourable as such transactions must be to the preservation of antiquities, the neighbourhood affords the rare interest of possessing several druidical remains, as tokens of an age too remote to admit of clear identification by any other means, though, perhaps, such words as Scowles, *i. e.* crowll, (caves), Penyard (hill-top), Gatcomb, Glowres, Blaze, Awre, Glow, Wygpool, etc., may belong to this period.

Of the Forest Cromlechs that of "The Buck Stone," weighing probably a hundred tons, and perched on the point of a hill a thousand feet high, is one of which the

District may be justly proud. As it will also sway, it surpasses every other Logging Rock in the kingdom. Then, a mile to the east, is an upright monolith, about six feet high, called "The Long Stone," whilst another of similar character and size, named "Cradock Stone," stands near the road leading to Bream from St. Briavels. Each of these masses may have grouped with others, supporting an impost at top, so as to resemble the three stones at Tullech, on the opposite side of the Wye.

Ancient, it may be, as the above, are the oldest of the mine holes that environ the Forest Basin. These Mr. Wyrhall determined to belong to the time of the Romans, whose location in these parts seems to have been particularly complete, to judge by the numerous coins, roads, stations, villas, and baths, that have been discovered near.

Offa's Dike, made in A.D. 766, traceable in places above the Wye, and other earthworks not perhaps much older, particularly that called "Dean's Castle" near Littledean, with the successive Saxon and Danish influences preserved in such local names as Slade, Meen, Lydbrook, Lydney, Nasse, Purton, Staunton, etc., afford all the information we have of what was then going on here.

The date, A.D. 1086, being that of the first volume of the *Domesday Register*, in which this part of the country is noticed, marks the period when, according to its authority, the Forest Peninsular comprised forty-one Manors, consisting of about 444 farm-holdings, and apparently 418 persons to cultivate them. There were twelve corn mills, and upwards of seventy fisheries, either on the Wye or Severn, mostly at Tidenham. But the Survey names neither foresters, swineherds, miners, nor iron mines—omissions that occur throughout its pages. It only mentions two churches, viz., Tidenham and Dimock, and one Priest at Awre. Yet, there certainly was a mining and iron-working population in the

District,—since Gloucester was supplied with iron from it,—a class against whose depredations the timber, deer, and the Forestal Rights of the Crown would need protection, thus necessitating a considerable staff of officials charged with various duties. As the former occupants multiplied, so too would the calls of the latter, under the appointment of our Norman and Plantagenet Kings of whose ascendancy traces existed in the places still called the Kymin (Chemin), Beau Lieu, Coleford (Covert), Lea Bailey (Lê Bailey), Loquiers, Ruerdean, etc., and in the family names of Chivers, Baldwin, Waldwin, that are yet preserved.

By the 10 Edward I. (1282), the number of Iron Forges in the Forest had increased to sixty, viz. at Littledean five, at Blakeney three, at Lydney two, at St. Briavel's thirteen, at Staunton ten, at Bicknor two, at Hope Mansel two, at Ruardean eight, at Mitcheldean fourteen; the Mines being numerous in proportion. Each of them, by employing half a dozen pair of hands, rendered support to not less than 3,000 individuals. These operatives had acquired such a name for skill and courage in prosecuting their underground operations that their services were required at several distant sieges for the purpose of undermining city walls. Archers from the Forest of Dean are likewise specified. Indeed, as late as in 1759, the Gloucestershire notices inviting volunteers to come in, expressly name the "divers good marksmen in the Forest of Dean." Similar summonses were frequently issued during the reigns of Edward II. and III. Tradition ascribes such success to these primitive sappers and miners, that the Foresters universally regard them as having won their Free Miners' Rights. The following lines, written by Kitty Drew, a thoroughly satisfactory sister of her class, find a hearty response in every Forester's breast.—

"But I am told that many ages back,
A foreign army did our land invade,
And blood and carnage then was all the trade ;

They pitched their tents, and then without delay
They waited anxious for the bloody fray;
But our bold miners underneath did get
And many a ton of powder there did set;
So up they blew the unsuspecting foe
Their shattered limbs came rattling down below.
Our land thus cleared, our liberty thus saved,
Our noble miners dug the caitiff's grave.
The King with honour did them so regard,
Made them Free Miners as a just reward;
The Forest Charter to them granted was
And firm and sure were made the Forest Laws.*

As regards the antiquity of this legend, it is a fact that, in 1752, it was related as "immemorially" connected with Edward I. and the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed. But the most important particular coupled with this tradition is that the book called "*Dennis*," being a rude description of "The Customes and Franchises" of the Mine, or the "Magna Charta" of the miners and colliers of the Forest, is considered the written instrument for preserving the liberties and privileges then awarded, or rather *confirmed*; since the document declares that they had been granted previously, "time out of mind." Indeed, the learned Judge of the Stannaries of Cornwall, Mr. George Smirke, sees in its different provisions—such as the Free Miner's demand to mine in what ground he pleased, subject only to the King's Gaveller, who claimed a third of the profits, and the Orders of the Court of Mine Law—so near a resemblance to the old usages of other mining districts, instancing Somersetshire and Derbyshire at home, and Bohemia, Saxony, and the Hartz abroad, that he concludes them in one common origin.

In the case of the Dean Forest Free Miner, his avocations and immunities were so peculiar and absorbing, that nearly all his personal characteristics seem to have resulted from them. Being one of a brotherhood, or

* The author's *History of the Forest* contains a larger portion of this poem than is here given.—See pp. 146 and 147.

"fellowship of the mine," to which he and his "verns" exclusively belonged; engaged in an occupation that from its particular skill they used to call "the mystery of mining," into which no foreigner was permitted to pry; having a tribunal and a code of laws administered by themselves, with power to dig for ore in any man's land, and take whatever timber was judged fitting for their works,—it was no wonder that such latitude induced many plunderings and encroachings, besides rendering the people very impatient of control. These evils reached so intolerable a head, that early in the reign of Henry VI. (A.D. 1430), bands of Foresters crowded down to the Severn, and with savage violence captured several barges, casting their crews overboard and ransacking their contents. At length Parliamentary aid had to be invoked. A lively remembrance of these outrages survived to the times of Michael Drayton, by whom they are romanced in his *Poly Olbion*. What is now recollected by aged Foresters is the somewhat similar ruffianly assault, perpetrated at the same spot, and on property of the like kind, during the Corn Riots of 1795, at a season when bread had become exceedingly scarce amongst the poor colliers, else doubtless such plunderings would not have occurred. In proof of which it may be mentioned that when, in 1785, a fine trow, containing £40,000 worth of Birmingham and Manchester goods, was lost in the Severn off Lydney, the country people, to their honour, brought in great quantities of goods left by the tide.

The other ebullitions of excitement that appear on the Forest records, arose from the apprehension that the ancient claims of the inhabitants were being curtailed.

Of such lawless proceedings, the first dates in the year 1612, and was caused by the extensive cuttings of wood that the Earl of Pembroke was permitted to make for the large iron works he had started. These fellings the people feared would leave them too little for meeting

their own wants; whereas they thought the Earl was rich enough, if he knew how to expend his wealth.

The disturbances that broke out each time that Sir John Winter endeavoured to form a stock of cord-wood for his iron furnaces, or to enclose parts of the Forest so as to grow plantations for the same purpose, were created by a corresponding spirit of alarm lest the inhabitants should come short, or have their pasturage diminished. Previous to this, the people had been generally well affected to the Crown. Afterwards, however, they certainly went more with the Parliamentary party, of which Clarendon records an instance when, in the year 1643, the forces of the Marquis of Worcester, under Lord John Somerset and Colonel Lawly, on their way to Gloucester through the Forest, were stopped at Coleford by "a rabble of country people." A cause for such aversion is to be found in the following document, endorsed "The Case of the Towne of Collford, in the Fforest of Deane, in the County of Gloucester."—

"That in the yeare 1642, the Towne of Collford being a Garison for the Parliament (Monmouth the nearest markett thereunto being then garisoned for the King) the Governor of Coleford made proclamation that the Countrey adjacent should bring in their provisions thither & should keepe their markett there, as well for the supplie of the Garison there, as for the Conveniencie of the whole Countrey, who being a people well affected & generallie in armes for the Parliam^t could not goe to Monmouth, the sayd Towne and Countrey being wholie engaged for the King's partye.

"That the sayd Countrie did accordingly to the sayd proclamation bring in their provisions & kept markett everie Wednesday & fryday at Coleford, & fynding it to be much for the advantage of the Countrey have ever since kept their Marketts there, vntill about two years since the towne of Monmouth caused many of the sayd inhabitants to be sued and have presented them wth a quo warranto for keeping the same markett.

"That therevppon not onelie the Towne of Collford but many of the Inhabitants of Qualitie of the Countrie petitioned his late highnes concerning the same, And that his highness would be pleased to graunt them a markett at Collford by Charter under the greate seale.

"Wherevpon his Highnes ordered a writt of quod dampnum to be directed to the Sheriffs of the Countye of Gloucester, to enquire what Damages it might be to his said highnes or the neighbouring marketts if such markett should be graunted to Collford.

"That the Sheriffs enquired vpon the same writt by the Oathes of substantiall men who found that there would be noe Damage to the Towne of Monmouth being almost syxt miles distant and in another Countye, and on the other side the River of Wye w^{ch} made the passage there by reason of violent overflowings of the water in the Wye sill verie dangerous.

"That his highnes vpon return of the sayd writt was pleased to order the Attorney Generall to make readye a Bill for his Highnes to syne for the graunting the sayd markett & three fayres yearlie at Collford w^{ch} the Attorney Generall prepared. And the same Bill beeing presented accordinglie, the sayd Towne of Monmouth to obstruct the same at the time presented a petition to his highnes ag^t it; p^ttending that Collford was a small and misuferable place; and divers other suggestions were in the sayd petition conteyned of the same nature; whereas indeede the sayd Towne is a place of for the whole Countrie, being in the parish of Newland which is the greatest parish in Gloucestershire, And the sayd Markett would be of much advantage to the workmen w^h at this time are ymployed in the Forest of Deane of the cutting of wood and tymber for the making of Iron and shott for the use of the navye and the building of shipping there.

"But his Highnes was pleased to order vpon the petition of Monmouth; That they shold send forth another writt of Quod Dampnum to find what Damage it might be attending to the first writt; But the said Town have never to this day send forth any such writt; having atteyned theire end in obstructing soe good a business which would soe much tend to the benefitt and likeing of a Countrie w^{ch} hath always been themselves as well affected to the publike interest, whereof many of them lost theire Lyves, their armes & estates.

"Note; it is now a yeare and an half; since the order for theire saying forth the said writt of Ad quod Dampnum."

Sir John Winter failing to reduce the Foresters to allegiance, they suffered severely from his men. Yet when Colonel White, under the Protector Richard, attempted to replant the Forest, the people broke down his fences, carried off the gates, turned in their cattle, and set fire to several parts. Owing to the judicious way in which the

replanting was renewed after the Restoration, the afore-said violences were not repeated, not even when the plantations were extended in 1680, although in doing so, some thirty cabins, sheltering about 100 poor cottagers, were demolished. The injuries done by the mob to the Speech House and to two of the Lodges in 1688, must be attributed to the unsettled political state of the country, yet they seem to account for the contemporary remark of Dr. Parsons, that "the inhabitants are, some of them, a sort of robustic wild people, that must be civilized by good discipline and government." It should be understood, however, that these persons did not live in the woods and wastes of the forests—for at this period its sole occupants were the six keepers and their families—but in the adjacent villages and hamlets, which were thus inhabited (according to Atkyns, Rudder, and Rudge,) in the years specified :—

	1712	1779	1801
Awre, with Blakeney	700	755	952
Abbenhall	88	158	185
St. Briavel	400	766	670
Bicknor	300	500	465
Flaxley	200	196	135
Hewelsfield	200	253	298
Mitcheldean	600	590	563
Littledean	320	423	541
Newnham	400	400	821
Newland, including Bream, Clearwell, Le Bailey, and Coleford..	2700	2997	2543
Lydney, with Ailberton	700	661	1032
Ruerdean	500	758	845
Staunton	220	220	159
Total population	7328	8677	9209

Each of these places, especially Mitcheldean, Littledean, Ruerdean, Blakeney, Bream, Clearwell, and Coleford, had a quota of miners and colliers resident in them,

toiling by day in the Forest, and returning at night with their money it is true, but coupled with that which their more peaceful neighbours would have preferred to have been without, namely, their uncouth and troublesome manners.

Arising probably from the frequent sessions of their Court of Mine Law, as well as of that of St. Briavel, a litigious spirit has long been manifested by the Foresters, attended at times with much hard swearing and sharp practice. Early in the last century they commenced a suit in the Court of Exchequer for the vindication of their claims. They also met an action with success, brought against them by the Copper Miners' Company, in 1754, nor has their relish for legal proceedings since diminished.

The last instance of their excitability happened in 1831, in which year Warren James,* John Harris, and others succeeded in working them up to the folly of destroying the fences that protected the young plantations, on the ground that they had been standing too long already. The consequence was that for three days the Forest was in the hands of the rioters, during which time one third of the enclosures were violently thrown open.

Of course their Mine Law Court was always busy, and often in an uproar. At length, the Deputy Constables declined to preside, and could never be induced to sit again, ultimately, therefore, the Court was relinquished. Not so with the Court of St. Briavel. This continued to meet until 1839.

In the meanwhile, upwards of 589 dwellings, containing nearly 3,000 individuals, had ere 1803, made their appearance on the Forest Wastes and Woods. Their mean and makeshift aspect, for many of them looked too miserable for human occupation, and were

* It may be remarked that a Forester of the same name was convicted of stealing timber in 1783.

occasionally run up in a night, pleaded in their favour as not being worth the trouble of destroying. Built of loose stones, and covered with turf, the whole not exceeding ten feet high, mostly situated in remote situations, and beyond parochial oversight, their growth was scarcely observed. Yet such was the germ of the 20,000 souls that exclusively constitute the existing Forest population. Having regard to so very unfavourable an origin, the wonder is, not that the people are no better, but rather that they are no worse.

The rude cabins in which fifty years ago they were content to live, in a way that accorded but too well with such habitations, belong happily to the past, along with many of the lawless practices, rude habits, and ignorant prejudices, that linger in the memories of a few of the most aged Foresters.

Their strong antipathy to "foreigners," as strangers were called, was such that few of them ventured into the Forest, except to buy coal; even then they were not allowed to enter further than certain stations, yet known as "the stinders," "short standing," &c. For the same reason, a Forester was rarely seen beyond his domain, nor would he have been welcomed. His kinder feelings and better nature were directed towards his brother collier, for whom there was ever a helping hand, particularly when any accident occurred. Then the injured sufferer was sure to be carried home with the tenderest care, whilst some would speed to his cottage, that they might break the news to his wife and family, and do all they could towards preparing a bed for him by the time he was brought in. Others would run for the doctor, the rest remaining together to carry their poor comrade by turns. The whole neighbourhood became excited, and where the accident was fatal, the scene at home was a harrowing one. Large funerals were general, under such circumstances, the men appearing in their white or blue frocks, as on Sundays at Church, rare though it was

for them to be seen there; since, whenever the day was fine, some sort of pastime became the absorbing attraction. Wakes, including morris dancing, games with sticks and cudgels, and "romancings," were very popular, especially at Whitsuntide, etc. These sports attained perfection when a combat came off between one or other of the Parishes round, or with bargemen from the Severn or Wye, or amongst two sets of Foresters.

Better opportunities of meeting their more civilized neighbours were afforded the inhabitants of the Forest at the markets held in the adjoining villages, such as the following, advertised in the *Gloucester Journal*;—

April 23rd, 1722.—"Thos. Webley of Gloucester, intends to continue the Fairs for the Forest of Dean, and Blakeney as heretofore, viz., at Mitcheldean upon Easter Monday, Michaelmas Day, and the Monday next after Allhallows Day. And at Blakeney the 1st of May and the 1st of November, when attendance will be given at each place 4 or 5 Days. When Chapmen may buy: sell; or change all sorts of Brass: Copper: Pewter: or Tin Ware, at reasonable Rates either Wholesale or Retail."

May 11th, 1724.—"These are to give Notice, That there will be kept Yearly, Two Fairs, at Little Dean, near the Forest of Dean, and within a mile of Newnham Passage, the first on Whitsun Monday next, and the latter on the 15th of Nov. following: when will be brought to be Sold all sorts of Cows, Beasts, Horses, Wooll, Sheep, Swine, Brass and Cutler's Ware, Gloves, Shoemaker's and Tayler's Goods, with Pedlers and all other Comodities. *All persons shall be kindly received and well entertained by the People of the Town.*"

These notices were widely circulated in the district, since the *Journal* had agents at Newnham, Lydney, Littledean, the Speech House, Coleford, High Meadow, Newland, Redbrook, and Mitcheldean.

Poaching was another Forest propensity, and was boldly and ingeniously followed. It partook of a more ambitious character than usual, as the deer formed its staple, until they were done away with, when it degenerated into horse and sheep stealing.

Deeds of blood are almost unknown in the Forest. The few that have been committed caused much excitement at the time and are long remembered, as may be

instanced in the following circumstance, thus related in the *Gloucester Journal* of May 6th, 1732 :—

"They wrote from Mitcheldeane, that on Friday the 28th of April last, between the Hours of seven and eight in the evening (as is supposed) one Thomas Twiberville of that Town, Carpenter, was in a most barbarous and inhuman manner murder'd in his own Shop, by having his Brains dash'd out, and afterwards his Skull chopped and beat all to Pieces with a broad Axe : The Deceased being a Widower and having no Child liv'd alone, and was not found till Saturday Evening, when the Axe was lying by him all over Gore blood. The Person who is justly suspected to have committed this villanous and bloody Fact, is one Ely Hatton, a Weaver, son of Thomas Hatton of Ruerdean, Victualler ; who was seen between the Hours above mentioned, to follow the said Twiberville into his house ; and the Deceased was never seen afterwards till found dead in the Manner aforesaid. There are a great many other Circumstances which induce People to believe he was the Person that committed the Fact ; one in particular was, That a Shirt and pair of Stockings of the Deceased were found on his Back and Legs, when he was under Examination before the Jury at the Inquest. He is now confined in our Castle, and 'tis to be hoped at the next Assizes will meet with as just a punishment as so desperate and bloody minded a Wretch deserves, in order to deter others from committing the like Offence."

Sept. 4th, 1732.—"About 7 o'clock this Morning, Ely Hatton, attended by the proper officers, and a prodigious concourse of People was carry'd to Mitchel Deane, in order to be executed near that place, for the barbarous murder of Thomas Twiberville late of the said Town, Carpenter."

Sept. 9th, 1732.—"On Monday last, Ely Hatton was executed and afterwards hung in chains on Meane Hill near Mitcheldean for the barbarous Murder of Thomas Tuberville late of that Town, Carpenter. At the Tree he was in a very moving and tender Manner exhorted to confess to his Crime, but persisted in the Denial of it to the very Moment that he was turned off the Ladder, declaring as he hoped for Salvation he was entirely innocent thereof. He own'd that he had been a great Sabbath Breaker, saying, 'twas usual for young People thereabouts to work all the Week, and on the Sunday to go and steal Deer ; also that he had been very much addicted to . . . which he said gave his conscience the greatest Uneasiness. There were near 10,000 Spectators present."

Specific as this contemporary account is, existing traditions of the event are nearly as complete. Thus the

old Foresters, relating what was told them in childhood, say that Hatton was seen on the evening of the murder going home over the Stenders, carrying something weighty in his hat; and that not until he was informed that the crowd on the Pingry Tump, which became visible to him as he was carted up the Stenders Hill, had assembled there to see him die, did he manifest any concern at his awful condition, or become convinced of his approaching fate. The stump of the gibbet remained for many years to mark the spot, which all persons avoided if alone or after dark. Hatton's body was at length taken away by night, owing, it is said, to the strange fancy that the flies it bred and fed tainted the meat in the market at Mitcheldean.

In common with all races where the Celtic element predominates, the vivacity and sensitiveness of the Forester has rendered him very susceptible of impression, if addressed in pungent and exciting terms. The Rev. Rowland Hill suited them exactly, though a graver style of preaching would have produced, probably, more abiding fruits. Generally speaking, they needed precept upon precept, line upon line, in order to obtain a lasting result.

Before right views could be planted in them, many strange ideas had to be displaced. Superstitious through ignorance, fatalism, apparitions, witchcraft, the evil eye, and charms were each accredited. Thus, in a case of severe hemorrhage, the sufferer, visited by the possessor of the mystic spell, would listen greedily to the words—"Sweet Jesus! baptized in the river Jordan. The Lord commanded the water to stand and it stood. So stand the blood of . . . in the name of the Father, etc." Or, supposing the patient to have a broken bone, the following form was solemnly uttered:—"In the name of God, Amen. In the name of His Son, Amen! In the name of the Holy Ghost, Amen! Joint to joint. Bone to

bone. Sinew to sinew. Blood and flesh and altogether in its proper place." Again, if a child's mouth was affected, the Charmer said—"Cancer, Cancer, Cancer! I have sent for thee. Thou art not in the place thou ought to be, and if thou dost not return from . . . then I shall take another course with thee, this day of the month and year." Should a burn be the cause of pain, then these lines were repeated:—"Three angels came from the east; the one brought fire, the other frost, and the third said frost. Out fire from . . . into frost, in the name of the Father, etc." Another form was sometimes spoken, namely—"Mary mild, she burnt her child, all with the spark of fire. Out fire from . . . in frost, in the name, etc." And lastly, if an adder had bitten the person, it was enough if the enchanter said,—"**A** hunting went I, and lost my wand, there came an adder and stung my man. 'Adder,' quoth he, 'Why stingest thou my man?' I wish it had not been thy man. Take salt and smear where went my spear. I have no hurt to no man. That say as can. In the name of the Father, etc."

In all these forms, the authoritative and strongly positive character is remarkable.

Although careful inquiry has been made on the subject, the colliers and miners of the Forest of Dean do not seem to attach any mysterious importance to sounds heard whilst at work. "The old men," for so the former operatives are called, are never considered audible, as in Cornwall. No objection is made to whispering or singing, as in some mining districts, nor yet to profane language, which is grievously prevalent. Friday is objected to, should any new work be then commenced. The old fashioned country people of these parts would, on no account, go a journey upon that day, or begin any thing fresh, much less marry, and consider it unfavourable to recovery, should they fall sick. It is unlucky with them to give, or allow another person to take, burning embers

out of a house at Christmas time; or for a female to be the first to come into a house on New Year's Day, or the day previous. At the midnight of old Christmas Eve, they are convinced the oxen do obeisance to the new born King, and that the rosemary bursts into bloom in his honour. A dying person is, they think, sure to appear to the individual uppermost in his mind at the time. So, too, they are persuaded that property stolen and concealed by one since dead, may be recovered if the deceased be invoked "in the name of the Lord." In their view, a sick child scratching itself is said to be scratching its own grave. That the Foresters continue in their belief of the marvellous, the ensuing narrative shews:—

Sometwenty years ago, a mason dwelling on Ruardean Hill and surnamed, in the nomenclature of the district, "Get-it-to-go," was suddenly and unaccountably missed. Several months elapsed and still nothing was heard of him.

At length, strange stories were circulated that a certain deserted coal-pit, near the summit of the same hill, was heard to emit curious noises, resembling those made by a collier when at work. The inmates of an adjoining cottage were the first to hear them. A man's head passing the window, or his face peering round the curtain, or his headless body moving about, were suddenly seen, and quickly disappeared, much to the terror of the wife of the collier living there, who at last became so alarmed that when her husband worked at night, she used to go with him and stop in the pit-cabin until he had done.

Although the pit from whence the mysterious sounds issued was out of the way, and it was usually evening before anything was heard, yet people came from considerable distances, and from all sides and parts of the Forest, to listen to the strange tapping, the number of knocks running in threes at a time.

Many a collier contrived to return home that way, and paused to listen as he looked down the pit, in the hope of hearing with his own ears, and was rarely disappointed.

No wonder that the talk of it filled the country round. At length the Parish Authorities of Ruardean, close by, very properly took the matter up, and determined that the pit should be examined, not of course on account of the noises, but because it might tend to reveal poor Get-it-to-go's fate.

The necessary winding apparatus was soon fixed, and down went a party of the more courageous colliers; but nothing particular was found, except a large quantity of loose stone that had been thrown in and filled the bottom. No time was lost in effecting its removal, when it was observed that so long as the men continued working the noises ceased, but when they stopped the sounds recommenced.

The pit being sufficiently cleared, an exploring party descended, when behold! shockingly discoloured and decomposed, but otherwise uninjured and undisturbed, lay the corpse of the unfortunate Get-it-to-go, as was proved by his easily recognized red neckcloth, bright as new, an invariable article of his apparel. The body was speedily placed in a coffin, brought to the surface, and after an inquest had decided that the cause of the poor fellow's death remained a mystery, directed its interment, to the permanent cessation of the apparitions and noises, for which many no doubt were sorry.

The above narrative is made the basis of the following dialogue, held, it is supposed, between two or three colliers on their way home from work, and introduced here for the purpose of illustrating the dialect spoken in the Forest of Dean.

First Collier.—"Well,!— and how be you?"

Second Collier.—"Mortal tired my boy. We got the warter all up in our pit, shocking bad, and are pretty near drownded out. I dont know as I shall be able to stand it much longer. Our Butty too is driving a yeading, and we can't get on with it no ow!"

First Collier.—"Bless your heart! We've all our tifficulties and must bear them as best us can, and be

thankful they be no more and no worsen. But here's Nine-Eyes, and what a pace he's walking at!—sure summut's up.

“Stop! Stop! friend. Pull up a little, and blow off your steam, else you'll over wind or be a bursting. We want your company may be, and aint our roads handy like?”

Nine Eyes.—“I dont know as I've got any objections to your company, but I isn't agoing straight wum neither, for I've a mind to step up over Ruardean's ill by ——— Pit to hear this comical pounding. It's mostly about six o'clock that it starts. So they tells me.”

First Collier.—“To be sure! and lets come too, not as I thinks there's much in it. May be its only warter droppin a few yards or so, down the pit which is wettish. Ah! I should't wonder if there aint an old pan or kettle at the bottom that's been throwed in by the Folks as live on the bank.”

Nine Eyes.—“Not a bit of it! Why there's bound to be a meaning to it. Who knows but Get-it-to-go's ghost is a working of it round to let us know that he aint been sarved aright, and that it wants to be looked into. I dare say his body is down below and needs to be brought up and buried in Christian ground.”

Second Collier.—“May be you be right; yet I'd like to see more into it first. Can't ye sense me into it?”

Nine Eyes.—“There now! I'll tell thee ow it is. Thee be't a downright unbeliever. Why, don't the Bible say as there be such things? Didn't . . . shew himself to . . . a month after he was dead and buried, right against the fur end of his cabin, just as he said he would. And surely the old Gentleman as was ere afore our young Parson come into this country, met im in the vestry when e was a pulling down the gallelies, which put im into a terrible maze so as e went off to the Bishop about it.”

First Collier.—“Ah well! I suppose when we ears this comical pounding, which we are like to do presently,

for ere we be at Ruardean Hill Inclosure, we shall be like to get a little more light upon the matter. Bless me! I scarce ever walk through this Inclosure without thinking of that knowing chap . . . and his gun."

Nine Eyes.—"And what about them?"

First Collier.—"Why, one day when he was a prowling hereabouts, looking to get a shot or two at some of the rabbits, he found the kippers were close at his back. So he springs forrod, flings his gun into a bush and makes off. They soon met with his gun, and carries it up to the Lodge. However, he quickly bethought him how to get it back, and a day or two after, there being at that time a deal of talk about mad dogs, he set his pig with a bloody ear arunning past the Lodge with the cry of 'a mad dog! a mad dog! fetch me a gun.' Upon hearing which, out runs the kipper's misses with the very gun off the cratch, and gave it to him. After this, nothing more was heard about the mad dog."

Second Collier.—"Well! he was a sprachted chap."

First Collier.—"Another time, he served such a trick upon the Squire's gamekeeper who caught him setting a trap. 'Now I've got thee,' said the kipper. 'Oh! is it you?' says . . . looking up quite simple like into his face, 'I wonder what this machine affair is? I've been a trying to pick it out for the last few minutes, but can't. May be master you can tell me?' Says the kipper to him, . . . 'you need not think to get over me in that sort of way, my buck.' 'Upon my word,' answered . . . 'I dont know what this affair is.' 'You dont mean to say that?' said the kipper. 'I do though,' he replied. 'Well, then,' answered the kipper 'its a trap for game.' 'Oh, indeed, and how do you set it?' asked . . . 'Why, in this manner.' Would you credit it; but no sooner had the kipper put the trap up, than . . . claps him on the back, and said, 'now, sure enough Mr. . . . I've catched you, and I'll bring you on the carpet afore your maister. And so he did, and got the kipper into no end of trouble."

Nine Eyes.—"Upon my life I never heard the like of such feller; I hope he's catched ere this. But see, ere we be at the pit, and what a sight of people there are about it, and so quiet too."

Second Collier.—"Sure they are a listening."

Rap, rap, rap. Rap, rap, rap.

First Collier.—"Ah! there it be, that's sartin sure."

Rap, rap, rap. Rap, rap, rap.

Second Collier.—"I eerd it too—there him is. To my thinking it sounds from yonder side, anunt where we be standing."

Rap, rap, rap. Rap, rap, rap.

First Collier.—"It sounds sharpish like. One u'd think e was at work with is pick. Bawl to him Jack."

Nine Eyes.—"What's the use on't. Listen, mon, listen."

Second Collier.—"Well I declare, I never eard the like of this in all my born days. I'm fair duthered like."

This mode of speaking and the sentiments here uttered belong somewhat to the past. Yet they apply to such parts of the Forest as lie out of the way, and where old families remain. Otherwise, few districts have improved more rapidly in social civilization than this neighbourhood has done, since the beginning of this century.—May its future course be equally favourable.

In the furtherance of this good end, whilst much depends upon the way in which the Foresters are dealt with by the Crown and by the owners of the different works, the utmost importance attaches to the sort of Clergymen who may be appointed to minister to them. Should these pastors be judiciously chosen, and multiplied in accordance with the growth of the population, there need be no fear of the result. But if these points are not sufficiently attended to, the people will fall back into the barbarous state in which they were living at the beginning of this century—the consequences of neglect during the previous hundred years. What the

measure of this negligence was, is shown by such an advertisement as the following, published in the *Gloucester Journal* of the 17th of April, 1759 :—"Wanted, a Curate, of good character, to serve *two* Churches in the Forest of Dean. The Salary will be £30. per annum." Also by a notice, dated August 4th, 1783, to the effect that the Rev. C. Morgan had been instituted to the Vicarages of Lidney, with the Chapels of Aylburton, Hewelsfield, and St. Briavels. A Brief, issued for the sufferers at the Honiton Fire of 1748, elicited only 7s. at Ruardean, and but 17s. 6d. at Newland.

One or other of the Chapelries of Coleford, Clearwell, Bream, Blakeney, etc., appear to have been established not later than the Reformation, for the purpose of meeting the spiritual requirements of the times. The position of the Church in the Forest district immediately preceding that event, and yet earlier in the reign of Edward I., is best shewn by the table here inserted, based on the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Pope Nicholas, and that of the 26 Henry VIII.

	A.D. 1291.			A.D. 1635.		
ROSS RURAL DEANERY.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Church of Staunton	6	13	4	0	0	0
Newland*	26	13	4	46	6	8
Hope Mansel	4	8	0	0	0	0
FOREST DEANERY.						
Church of Kempley†	8	10	0	7	6	7
Bromsborow	10	0	0	7	15	0
Dymock	26	13	4	9	13	8
Newent	30	13	4	28	15	4
Oxenhall	0	0	0	9	12	4
Tainton	10	4	8	8	5	9
Tibberton	8	0	0	7	3	8
Rudford	8	0	0	9	2	8
Upleaden	2	0	0	0	0	0
Churcham‡	20	0	0	20	4	5
Chapel of Bully	5	6	8	0	0	0
Church of Westbury, with the Chapels of Minsterworth and Newnham ..	60	0	0	38	11	3

* Including Coleford and Staunton.

† Including Rodley, Minsterworth, and Highnam.

‡ Including Bully. || Newnham being £10.

Church of Awre	40	0	0	..	10	4	7
Lydney, with its Chapel*	66	13	4	..	33	11	8
Woolaston	24	0	0	..	13	11	5
Tidenham	24	6	8	..	7	14	0
Lancaut	2	4	0	..	0	0	0
Mitcheldean	6	15	4	..	19	14	0
Abbenhall	4	2	0	..	4	5	5
Longhope	7	6	8	..	9	7	11
Blaisdon	4	0	0	..	0	0	0
Huntley	4	0	0	..	7	5	10
Little Dean	0	0	0	..	10	17	2
Flaxley	0	0	0	..	9	3	3
				<hr/>			
				£410	10	8	£317 19 7

The two hundred and thirty four years that elapsed between the first and second of these estimates, give sufficient scope for the diminished value of ecclesiastical property in certain parishes, namely Dymock, Awre, Newnham, Woolaston, and Tidenham; as well as for its increase in those of Newland and Mitcheldean. In all these instances, the changes may be attributed to variations in the extent of the Forest iron works; especially in Newland, since by 10 Edward II. it took tithes to the sum of £10. from the neighbouring iron mines. The Bishop of Llandaff, on the confines of whose diocese this parish is situated, was instrumental in obtaining that bounty, he being also patron of the living. Owing, however, to the Forest peninsula being under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Hereford, strong opposition ensued. How completely the whole district was penetrated with the services of the Church, is shewn from the direction contained in the *Book of Dennis*, that "The Gaveller come to visitt the Mine betweene *Mattens* and *Masse*."

The Reformation having restored the Holy Scriptures to their just supremacy, it is inexcusable if full obedience be not rendered to the duty they so plainly inculcated of feeding the flock of Christ, by making the doctrines of the Saviour as fully and widely known as possible amongst the people.

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