

From: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45103>

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Publication - [Old and New London: Volume 2](#)

Author - Walter Thornbury

Year published - 1878

Supporting documents

'Clerkenwell: (part 1 of 2)', *Old and New London: Volume 2* (1878), pp. 309-328. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45103> Date accessed: 20

CHAPTER XL.

CLERKENWELL.

House of Detention—Explosion and Attempted Rescue of Fenian Prisoners—St. John's Gate—Knights Hospitallers and Knights Templars— Rules and Privileges of the Knights of St. John—Revival of the Order—Change of Dress—The Priors of Clerkenwell and the Priory Church—Its Destruction—Henry II.'s Council—Royal Visitors at the Priory—The Present Church—The Cock Lane Ghost—St. John's Gate—The Jerusalem Tavern—Cave and the *Gentleman's Magazine*—Relics of Johnson—The Urban Club—Hicks's Hall—Red Lion Street and its Associations—St. John's Square and its Noble Inhabitants—Wilkes's Birthplace—Modern Industries in Clerkenwell—Burnet House and its Inmates—Bishop Burnet—Clarke the Commentator—An Unjust Judge—Poole of the *Synopsis*—Jesuits' College Discovered.

The House of Detention, Clerkenwell, a place of imprisonment as old as 1775, was rebuilt in 1818, and also in 1845. This prison was the scene, in December, 1867, of that daring attempt to rescue the Fenian prisoners, Burke and Casey, which for a day or two scared London.

"In the course of the day," says a writer in the *Annual Register*, "a policeman on duty outside the prison had his suspicions so strongly aroused, by seeing a woman named Justice and a man frequently conversing together, that he communicated with one of the prison authorities, who, in consequence, made arrangements for giving an alarm, if it should become necessary. During the day, a warder on duty inside had his attention directed to a man at a window in the upper part of a house in Woodbridge Street, overlooking the prison-yard. He went to bring another warder, and on their return the man had vanished, but was shortly afterwards seen talking to the woman Justice near the entrance to the prison, and to the man who had been seen loitering with her. Later in the day, the warder had his attention called to the same window in the opposite house in Woodbridge Street, overlooking the prison-yard; and there he saw a woman leaning out, and several men inside the room. He distinctly counted five men; but there seemed to him to be more, and they were all looking anxiously in the direction of the place where the explosion occurred almost immediately afterwards.

"The explosion, which sounded like a discharge of artillery, occurred at exactly a quarter to four o'clock in the afternoon, when there was still some daylight, and was heard for miles round. In the

immediate neighbourhood it produced the greatest consternation; for it blew down houses, and shattered the windows of others in all directions. A considerable length of the outer wall of the prison was levelled with the ground. The windows of the prison, of coarse glass more than a quarter of an inch thick, were, to a large extent, broken, and the side of the building immediately facing the outer wall in which the breach was made, and about 150 feet from it, showed the marks of the bricks which were hurled against it by the explosion. The wall surrounding the prison was about twentyfive feet high, two feet three inches thick at the bottom, and about fourteen inches thick at the top.

"The result of the explosion upon the unfortunate inmates of the houses in Corporation Lane and other adjoining buildings was most disastrous. Upwards of forty innocent people—men, women, and children of all ages, some of whom happened to be passing at the time—were injured more or less severely; one was killed on the spot, and three more died shortly afterwards."

Several persons were arrested as having been implicated in the crime, and tried at the Central Criminal Court. At their trial a boy, who was the only eye-witness of the attempt, deposed that about a quarter to four o'clock he was standing at Mr. Young's door, No. 5, when he saw a large barrel close to the wall of the prison, and a man leave the barrel and cross the road. Shortly afterwards the man returned with a long squib in each hand. One of these he gave to some boys who were playing in the street, and the other he thrust into the barrel. One of the boys was smoking, and he handed the man a light, which the man applied to the squib. The man stayed a short time, until he saw the squib begin to burn, and then he ran away. A policeman ran after him; and when he arrived opposite No. 5 "the thing went off." The boy saw no more after that, as he himself was covered with bricks and mortar. There was a white cloth over the barrel, which was black; and when the man returned with the squib he partly uncovered the barrel, but did not wholly remove the cloth. There were several men and women in the street at the time, and children playing. Three little boys were standing near the barrel all the time. Some of the people ran after the man who lighted the squib.

The legends and traditions of this most ancient and interesting district of London all cluster round St. John's Gate (the old south gate of the priory of St. John of Jerusalem), and the old crypt of St. John's Church, relics of old religion and of ancient glory.

For upwards of four hundred years the Knights Hospitallers flourished in Clerkenwell, and a brief note of their origin here becomes indispensable. The order seems to have had its rise in the middle of the eleventh century, when some pious merchants of Amalfi obtained leave of the Mohammedans to build a refuge for sick and needy Christian pilgrims, near the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The hospital was dedicated to St. John the Cypriote, Patriarch of Alexandria, a good man, who, in the seventh century, when the Saracens first took Jerusalem, had generously sent money and food to the afflicted Christians of Syria. Subsequently the order renounced John the Patriarch, and took up with the more agreeable patronage of St. John the Baptist.

In the first crusade, when the overwhelming forces of Christian Europe forced their way into the Holy City, and the streets which Christ had trodden, scattering blessings, floated in infidel blood, the hospital of St. John was filled with wounded Crusaders, many of whom, on their recovery, doffed their mail and put on the robes of the holy and charitable brotherhood. The real founder of the order was Gerard, who, when Godfrey de Bouillon was chosen King of Jerusalem, in 1099, proposed to the brethren a regular costume, and became the first rector or master of the order. The dress formally adopted, in 1104, was a black robe and white cross. Raymond de Pay, who succeeded Gerard, took a bolder step. Tired of merely feeding and nursing sick and hungry pilgrims, he proposed to his brethren to make the order a military one. By 1130 this section of the church militant had whipped off hundreds of shaven heads, and covered themselves with glory.

In 1187, when Saladin retook Jerusalem, he was gracious to the Hospitallers, who had been kind to the wounded and the prisoners, and he allowed ten of the order to remain and complete their cures. Still indefatigable against the unbelievers, the men of the black robe and white cross fought bravely at the taking of Ptolemais, in 1191, and from them this strong seaport town, which they held for nearly two centuries, derived its new name of St. Jean d'Acre.

Siege and battle, desert march and hill fights, had, however, now thinned the black mantles, and more men had to be sent out to recruit the little army of muscular Christians. The departure of the

reinforcement from Clerkenwell Priory is thus picturesquely described by the old monkish chronicler, Matthew Paris:—"In 1237 the Hospitallers sent their prior, Theodoric, a German by birth, and a most clever knight, with a body of other knights and stipendiary attendants, and a large sum of money, to the assistance of the Holy Land. They having made all arrangements, set out from their house at Clerkenwell, and proceeded in good order, with about thirty shields uncovered, with spears raised, and preceded by their banner, through the midst of the City, towards the bridge, that they might obtain the blessings of the spectators, and, bowing their heads with their cowls lowered, commended themselves to the prayers of all."

"It is said," says one writer, "that on the return of the English Crusaders to their native country, the Knights Hospitallers and Knights Templars, on the 3rd of October, 1247, presented King Henry III. with a beautiful crystalline vase, containing a portion of the blood of our Saviour that he had shed on the cross for the salvation of mankind, the genuineness of the relic being attested by the seals of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other prelates of the Holy Land."

In 1292, at the desperate siege of Acre, the fighting of straight sword against sabre was so hot and such were the falls from roof and battlement, that only seven of the Syrian detachment escaped to Cyprus. In 1310 the Hospitallers conquered Rhodes and seven other islands from the Infidel, and commenced privateering against all Mohammedan vessels. In 1344 these stalwart Christians took Smyrna, which post they held for fifty-six years, till they were forced out of the stronghold by Tamerlane. Rhodes becoming an unbearable thorn in the flesh to turbaned mariners, in 1444, an army of 18,000 Turks besieged the island for forty days, but in vain. In 1492 Mahomet II. was repulsed, after a siege of eighty-nine days, leaving 9,000 shaven Infidels dead around the ramparts. In 1502 cautious Henry VII. of England was chosen Protector of the order, and promised men and money against the scornors of Christianity, but supplied neither. But the end came at last; in 1522 Solyman the Magnificent besieged Rhodes with 300,000 men, and eventually, after a stubborn four months' siege, and the loss of 80,000 men by violence, and as many by disease, the brave grand master, L'Isle Adam, after his honourable capitulation, came to England to appeal to Henry VIII., whose fat, greedy hand was already stretched out towards the Clerkenwell Priory. The order had done its duty, and Henry was touched by the venerable old warrior's appeal: he confirmed the privileges of the knights, and gave L'Isle Adam a golden basin and ewer, set with jewels, and artillery to the value of 20,000 crowns. The recovery of Rhodes was not, however, attempted by the Hospitallers, as the Emperor Charles V. ceded Malta to them on the annual payment of a falcon to the reigning King of Spain.

The generous concessions of Henry VIII. lasted only as long as the tyrant's purse was full. Having little to say against the Clerkenwell knights, he suppressed the order because it "maliciously and traitorously upheld the 'Bishop of Rome' to be Supreme Head of Christ's Church," intending thereby to subvert "the good and godly laws and statutes of this realm." William Weston, the last prior, and other officers of the order, were bought off by small annuities. Fuller particularly mentions that the Knights Hospitallers, "being gentlemen and soldiers of ancient families and high spirits," would not present the king with puling petitions, but stood bravely on their rights. They judged it best, however, to submit. Some of the knights retired to Malta. Two who remained were beheaded as traitors to King Henry, and a third was hanged and quartered. Queen Mary restored the order to their possessions, but Elizabeth again drove off the knights to Malta.

"The rules and privileges of the order of the Knights of St. John," says Mr. Pinks, "were as follows. Raymond de Pay made the following rules, which were confirmed by Pope Boniface, in the sixth year of his pontificate:—Poverty, chastity, and obedience; to expect but bread and water and a coarse garment. The clerks to serve in white surplices at the altar. The priests in their surplices to convey the Host to the sick, with a deacon or clerk preceding them bearing a lantern, and a sponge filled with holy water. The brethren to go abroad by the appointment of the master, but never singly; and, to avoid giving offence, no females to be employed for or about their persons. When soliciting alms, to visit churches, or people of reputation, and ask their food for charity; if they received none, to buy enough for subsistence. To account for all their receipts to the master, and he to give them to the poor, retaining only one-third part for provisions, the overplus to the poor. The brethren to go soliciting only by permission, to carry candles with them, to wear no skins of wild beasts, or clothes degrading to the order. To eat but twice a day on Wednesday and Saturday, and no flesh from Septuagesima until Easter, except when aged or indisposed. To sleep covered. If incontinent in private, to repent in privacy, and do penance. If the brother was discovered, he was to be deprived of his robe in the church

of the town after mass, severely whipped, and expelled from the order, but if truly penitent, he might be again received, but not without penance, and a year's expulsion. If two of the brethren quarrelled, they were to eat only bread and water on Wednesday and Friday, and off the bare ground for seven days. If blows passed, and to those who went abroad without permission, this discipline was extended to forty days. No conversation when eating, or after retiring to the dormitory, and nothing to be drunk after the ringing of the compline. If a brother offended, and did not amend after the third admonition, he was compelled to walk to the master for correction. No brother was to strike a servant. The twenty-second rule of this monastic code was both revolting and disgraceful to any community. It ordered that if a brother died without revealing what he possessed, his money should be tied about the body's neck, and it was to be severely whipped in the presence of the members of the house. Masses were sung thirty days for deceased brethren and alms given in the house. In all decisions they were to give just judgment. They sung the epistle and gospel on Sundays, made a procession, and sprinkled holy water. If a brother embezzled money appropriated to the poor, or excited opposition to the master, he was expelled. When a brother's conduct was found to be too bad, another was to reprove him, but not to publish his faults. If amendment did not follow, the reprover was to call the assistance of others, and ultimately report his crimes to the master in writing; but those accusations were to be supported by proof. The brothers were universally to wear the cross on their breasts.

"The order was that of St. Augustine. He who wished for admission came before the Chapter on Sunday, and humbly expressed his hope that he might be received. If no objection was made, a brother informed him that numbers of men of consequence had preceded him, but that he would be entirely deceived in supposing that he should live luxuriously; for that instead of sleeping he would be required to wake, and fast when desirous to eat, to visit places he would rather have avoided, and, in short, have no will of his own. The exordium concluded with a demand whether he was willing to do these things. Upon answering in the affirmative, an oath was administered, by which he bound himself never to enter any other order, declared himself a bachelor without having promised marriage, that he was free from debt, and a freeman, that he would live and die under the superior whom God should place over him, to be chaste and poor, and a servant to the sick. He who received the new brother then promised him bread and water, and coarse garments, and a participation in all the good works of the order.



THE ORIGINAL PRIORY CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, CLERKENWELL.

"Whoever wished to be received into the brotherhood was required to prove his nobility for four descents, on his mother's as well as his father's side; to be of legitimate birth (an exception being made only in favour of the natural sons of kings and princes); to be not less than twenty years of age, and of blameless life and character.

"The following ceremonies were performed at the creation of a knight:—' 1. A sword was given to the novice, in order to show that he must be valiant. 2. A cross hilt, as his valour must defend religion. 3. He was struck three times over the shoulder with the sword, to teach him patiently to suffer for Christ. 4. He had to wipe the sword, as his life must be undefiled. 5. Gilt spurs were put on, because he was to spurn wealth at his heels. 6. He took a taper in his hand, as it was his duty to enlighten others by his exemplary conduct. 7. He had to go and hear mass, where we will leave him.'

"In the season of its prosperity this renowned order included in its fraternity men of eight different nations, of which the English were the sixth in rank. The languages were those of Provence, Auvergne, France, Italy, Arragon, England, and Germany. The Anglo-Bavarian was afterwards substituted for that of England, and that of Castile was added to the number. Cowardice on the battle-field involved the severest of all penalties— degradation and expulsion from the order. We place this cross on your breast, my brother, says the ritual of admission, that you may love it with all your heart; and may your right hand ever fight in its defence and for its preservation. Should it ever happen that, in combating against the enemies of the faith, you should retreat and desert the standard of the cross, and take flight, you will be stripped of the truly holy sign, according to the customs and statutes of the order, and you will be cut off from our body as an unsound and corrupt member. A knight, when degraded, had his habit torn from off him, and the spurs which he received at his investiture were hacked off."



COFFEE-ROOM AT ST JOHN S GATE. (See page 318.)

Between the years 1826 and 1831 says Mr. Pinks, there was an attempt in London to revive "the Language of England," as an independent corporation existing under the royal letters patent of Philip and Mary, but it proved hard to galvanise the corpse of chivalry. In 1831 Sir Robert Peat was installed into the office of grand prior; and in 1834, by proceedings in the Court of King's Bench, the corporation of the sixth Language was formally revived. Sir Robert Peat was succeeded in 1837 by Sir Henry Dymoke, seventeenth hereditary champion of the Crown, and in 1847 the Hon. Sir Charles Montolieu Lamb, Bart., accepted the office. The object of the order is the promotion of charity and the knights are chiefly Protestants. The heads of the order at Rome still refuse to recognise the English Language as an integral branch of the ancient order of St. John.

About 1278 the knights adopted a red cassock, and a white cross as their military dress, reserving the black mantle worn in imitation of the Baptist's garment in the wilderness for hospital use. Their standard was red, with a white cross. The Hospitallers' churches were all sanctuaries, and lights were kept perpetually burning in them. The knights had the right of burying even felons who had given them alms during life.

The Hospitallers had also the privilege of administering the sacrament to interdicted persons, and even in interdicted towns; and they were also allowed to bury the interdicted in the churchyards of any of their commanderies.

The order began, like the Templars, in poverty, and ended in luxury and corruption. The governor was entitled, at first, "The Servant to the Poor Serviteurs of the Hospital of Jerusalem." The knights ended by growing so rich, that about the year of our Lord 1240, says Weever, they held in Christendom 19,000 lordships and manors. They are known to have lent Edward III. money. In 1211 Lady Joan Grey of Hampton, left her manor and manor-house of Hampton (several thousand acres) to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, an estate of which Cardinal Wolsey procured a lease for ninety-nine years from Sir Thomas Docwra, the last prior, who lost the election for the grand mastership by only three votes, when contesting it with his kinsman, L'Isle Adam.

Brave as the Hospitallers of Clerkenwell always remained, they soon, we fear, grew proud, avaricious, and selfish. Edward III. had to reprove the brotherhood for its proud insolence. When Henry III.

threatened to take away their charter, the prior told him that a king who was unjust did not deserve the name of monarch. In 1338 the English prior, Thomas l'Archer, raised £1,000 by cutting down woods round all the commanderies; he also sold leases and pensions for any terms of ready money, and by bribes to the judges, he procured for the order forfeited lands of the Templars.

Every preceptory of the Hospitallers paid its own expenses, except that of Clerkenwell, where the grand prior resided, and had many pensioners to support, and many courtly and noble guests to entertain. In the year 1337 this priory spent more than its entire revenue, which was at least £8,000.

"The consumption," says Mr. Pinks, "of the good things of the earth in the preceptory of Clerkenwell by the brotherhood, the pensioners, guests, and servitors was enormous. In one year, besides fish and fowl from its demesnes, it expended 430 quarters of wheat, 413 quarters of barley, 60 quarters of mixed corn (draget), 225 quarters of oats for brewing, 300 quarters of oats for horse-feed. They used eight quarters of oats and four quarters of peas for pottage, and laid out *in expensis coquinæ* (in the expenses of the kitchen) £121 6s. 8d. The next item shows that in the midst of all their excesses they had not forgotten to be hospitable. 'For twenty quarters of beans distributed among the poor on St. John the Baptist's Day, according to custom, at 3s. per quarter, 60s.'"

The prior of St. John of Jerusalem ranked as the first baron of England, "a kind of otter," says Selden, "a knight half-spiritual, half-temporal." His proud motto was "Sane Baro"—a baron indeed.

Sir William Weston, the last prior but one of St. John, distinguished himself during the siege of Rhodes. His father's two brothers were also knights of the order, and one of them had been Lord Prior of England and General of the Galleys. At the dissolution King Henry awarded Sir William a pension of £1,000 a year; but the suppression of the order in England broke his brave heart soon after. Sir Thomas Tresham, the last prior, died a year or two after his investiture. A Sir William Tresham was residing at Clerkenwell Green in 1619. He was of the same family as Sir Francis Tresham, whose mysterious letter to his friend Lord Monteagle led to the fortunate discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. It will not be forgotten by our readers that a Protestant band of the Knights Hospitallers still exists in Prussia, rich and numerous.

The Priory of St. John of Jerusalem, at Clerkenwell, was founded by Lord Jordan Briset, in the reign of Henry I. He founded also the Nuns' house at Clerkenwell. In 1185 the church was consecrated by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. In the reign of Edward I. further additions were made to the priory; the preceptory was burned by Wat Tyler's rabble, and it was not till 1504 that the hospital was restored to its full grandeur, and the grand south gate erected by Sir Thomas Docwra. Camden says of the second building, admiringly, that it resembled a palace, and had in it a very fair church, and a tower-steeple raised to a great height, with so fine workmanship that it was a singular beauty and ornament to the city.

At the dissolution Henry VIII. gave the priory church to John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, Lord High Admiral of England for £1,000; and the church and priory were used by that bloated Ahab, Henry, as a storehouse for his toils and hunting-tents. Edward VI., as careless of confiscating sacred things as his tyrannical father, gave away the remaining land.

"But in the third year of Edward VI.," says Stow, "the church for the most part, to wit, the body and side aisles, with the great bell-tower (a most curious piece of workmanship, graven, gilt, and inameled, to the great beautifying of the city, and passing all other that I have seen), was under mined and blown up with gunpowder; the stone thereof was employed in building of the Lord Protector's house in the Strand (old Somerset House)."

The curse of sacrilege, in Spelman's opinion, fell on the Protector. He never finished his Strand house, nor did his son inherit it, and he himself perished on the scaffold. The stones of St. John's Priory went to build the porch of the church of Allhallows, in Gracechurch Street. The choir, in Fuller's time, was in "a pitiful plight," the walls having been shattered by the Protector's gunpowder.

On Mary's succession, Cardinal Pole, on the revival of the order, built a west front to the priory church, and repaired the side chapels. We find on the day of the decollation of St. John the Baptist, that the

Merchant Taylors came to celebrate mass at the priory church, when the choir was hung with arras, and every one made offerings at the altar.

Many remarkable historical scenes took place at the priory of Clerkenwell. One of the most remarkable of these was the aulic council held by Henry II. and his barons, when the patriarch Heraclius and the grand master of the Hospitallers, came to England to urge Henry to a new crusade. Heraclius brought with him the keys of David's Tower and the Holy Sepulchre, and an offer of the crown of Jerusalem. When the barons agreed that the king should not lead the crusaders in person, the patriarch flew into an inappeasable rage. "Here is my head," he cried; "here is my head; treat me, if you like, as you did my brother Thomas (meaning A'Becket). It is a matter of indifference to me whether I die by your orders or in Syria by the hands of the infidels; for you are worse than a Saracen." The master of the Hospitallers was extremely hurt at the behaviour of the patriarch Heraclius, but the king took no notice of his insolence.

In 1212 King John, that dark and malign usurper, spent a whole month at the Priory of St. John, feasted by the prior, and on Easter Sunday, at table, he knighted Alexander, the son of the King of Scotland, a ceremony which cost young Sandy £14 4s. 8d. In 1265 Prince Edward and his loving wife, Eleanor of Castile, were entertained here. The prince had married his wife when she was only ten years of age, and on claiming her, at twenty, came to St. John's Priory for their honeymoon. In 1399 we find Henry IV., not yet crowned, coming down Chepe to St. Paul's, and, after lodging with the bishop for five or six days, staying a fortnight at the priory. In 1413 King Henry V., that chivalrous king, says the Grey Friars' chronicler, was "lyvinge at Sent Jones."

In the year 1485 a royal council was held at St. John's. Public indignation was aroused by a well-founded rumour of the intended espousal by Richard III. of Elizabeth of York, his niece, his queen, Anne, being then lately dead. "Richard, perceiving the public disgast, gave up the idea of marrying Elizabeth, and immediately after the funeral of his wife was over, called a meeting of the civic authorities in the great hall of St. John's, Clerkenwell, just before Easter, and in their presence distinctly disavowed any intention of espousing his niece, and forbade the circulation of the report, as false and scandalous in a high degree." The chronicler relates that a convocation of twelve doctors of divinity had sat on a case of marriage of uncle and niece, and declared that the kindred was too near for the Pope's bull to sanction.

The Princess Mary lived at the priory in much pomp, sometimes visiting her brother, Edward VI., in great state. Machyn, in his curious diary, describes her riding from St. John's to Westminster, attended by Catholic lords, knights, and gentlemen, in coats of velvet and chains of gold, and on another day returning to St. John's, followed by fourscore Catholic gentlemen and ladies, each with an ostentatious pair of black beads, "to make a profession of their devotion to the mass." In 1540 ten newly-made serjeants-at-law gave a great banquet at St. John's, to all the Lords and Commons, and the mayor and aldermen. Rings were given to the guests, and, according to Stow, at one of these feasts, in 1531, thirty-four great beeves were consumed, besides thirty-seven dozen pigeons and fourteen dozen swans.

In Elizabeth's reign, when sacred things were roughly handled, Tylney, the queen's Master of the Revels, resided at St. John's, with all his tailors, embroiderers, painters, and carpenters, and all artificers required to arrange court plays and masques. In this reign Master Tylney licensed all plays, regulated the stage for thirty-one years, and passed no less than thirty of Shakespeare's dramas, commencing with *Henry IV.* and ending with *Anthony and Cleopatra*; he might have told us one or two things about the "great unknown," but he died in 1610, and left no diary or autobiography. The court revels were all rehearsed in the great hall at St. John's. In 1612 James I. gave the priory to Lord Aubigny, and the Revels Office was removed to St. Peter's Hill. The house afterwards came into the possession of Sir William Cecil, grandson of the famous Lord Treasurer Burleigh. The repaired choir was reopened in 1623, by Dr. Joseph Hall, afterwards Bishop of Exeter and Norwich. In the reign of Charles I. the church served as private chapel to the Earl of Elgin, who occupied the house, and it was called Aylesbury Chapel. It became a Presbyterian meeting-house till 1710.

During the absurd Sacheverell riots, when a High Church mob turned out to destroy Dissenting chapels, St. John's Chapel happening to be near the house of the obnoxious Bishop Burnet, the fanatics gutted the building, and burnt the pews, &c., before Burnet's door. Sacheverell was a High Church clergyman, who, in a public sermon at St. Paul's, had proclaimed the doctrine of passive obedience, and

was, in consequence, sent for trial to Westminster Hall, where the Tories triumphantly acquitted him. The chapel was enlarged in 1721, and in 1723 was bought for £3,000 by the commissioners for building fifty new churches.

In the present church, which was restored and improved by Mr. Griffith, in 1845, one of the large painted windows at the east end remains in its old state. In the south and east walls are remains of Prior Docwra's perpendicular work, and the pews stand upon capitals and rib mouldings of the former church. There are some few traces of early English architecture. An old gabled wooden building near the south side of the church, as seen in Hollar's view of the priory (1661), is still standing, says Mr. Pinks, and is occupied by St. John's Sunday Schools. Stones of the old church were discovered in 1862, forming sides of the main sewer through St. John's Square. The arms of Prior Botyler (1439–1469), a chevron between three combs, are still to be seen in the central east window. The head of the beadle's staff, a Knight Hospitaller in silver, was in use in the time of James II., and belonged to the old church of St. James. The portable baptismal bowl is antique, and once supplied the place of a font. Langhorne, the poet, was curate and lecturer at St. John's, Clerkenwell, in 1764. He defended the Scotch against Churchill's satire, and helped his brother to translate Plutarch's "Lives." A poem of Langhorne's moved Burns to tears, the only night Sir Walter Scott, then a child, ever saw him.

In the vaults of this church the celebrated "Cock Lane Ghost" promised to manifest itself to credulous Dr. Johnson and others. The great bibliopole and his friends were thus ridiculed by Churchill for their visit to St. John's:—

"Through the dull deep surrounding gloom,
In close array, t'wards Fanny's tomb
Adventured forth; Caution before,
With heedful step, a lanthorn bore,
Pointing at graves; and in the rear,
Trembling and talking loud, went Fear.
* * * * *

At length they reach the place of death.
A vault it was, long time apply'd
To hold the last remains of pride.
* * * * *

Thrice each the pond'rous key apply'd,
And thrice to turn it vainly try'd,
'Till, taught by Prudence to unite,
And straining with collected might,
The stubborn wards resist no more,
But open flies the growling door.
Three paces back they fell, amazed,
Like statues stood, like madmen gazed.
* * * * *

How would the wicked ones rejoice,
And infidels exalt their voice,
If M—e and Plausible were found,
By shadows aw'd, to quit their ground?
How would fools laugh should it appear
Pomposo was the slave of fear?
* * * * *

Silent all three went in; about
All three turn'd silent, and came out."

The church is, in fact, chiefly remarkable for its crypt, the descent to which is at the north-east angle, under the vestry. It seems originally, by Hollar's view of the east end of the church, in 1661, to have been then above ground. Though 700 years old, the crypt of St. John's is in good preservation. The chief portion consists of four bays, two semi-Norman and two early English, the ribs of the latter bays springing from triple clustered columns, with moulded capitals and bases. From each keystone hangs an iron ring. On each side of the two western bays are pointed window openings, now blocked up. The central avenue of the crypt is sixteen feet wide, and twelve feet high, and there are corresponding side-aisles. At the entrance of the vault is a place where the gardener used to keep his tools, and where, for many years, stood a coffin said to have been arrested for debt. The coffins used to stand in rows, four

or five deep, covered with dust, and shreds of black cloth. The ends of some had fallen out, and the bony feet had protruded. In 1800 a committee of gentlemen reporting on repairs found a sheet of cobweb hanging from the upper coffins ten to fifteen feet long, and in parts nearly as broad. In 1862 the coffins were piled up in the aisles, that of "Scratching Fanny," the Cock Lane Ghost, among them, and all the side passages bricked up.

Many years ago workmen making a sewer beneath the square, nearly in a line with Jerusalem Passage, came on a chalk and flint wall seven feet thick, and Mr. Cromwell decided that this was part of the foundation of the stately tower described by Stow. It is supposed that the church was 300 feet long, and that its transepts stood in a direct line with St. John's Gate. The enclosure walls can still partially be traced, and the modern buildings in St. John's Square, says Mr. Griffiths, are mostly built on the old rubble walls of the hospital. The foundations of the cellars under No. 19, and the basements of Nos. 21 and 22 on the north side of St. John's Square, formed the foundations of the old priory walls. Between No. 19 and No. 20 a wall was found seven feet thick: some of the stones had been used for windows, and showed the action of fire. The north postern of the priory was taken down in 1780: here were then sixty-seven feet of old wall westward of St. John's Gate. There were also remains of the priory in Ledbury Place, which formed the west garden-wall of Bishop Burnet's house, and also in the west garden-wall of Dr. Adam Clarke's house, which adjoined Burnet's house.

That fine specimen of Sir Thomas Docwra's perpendicular, St. John's Gate, is built of brick and freestone. The walls are about three feet thick, and are built of brick, faced with Ryegate stone, the same as used for Henry VII.'s Chapel. The famous gate and its flanking towers, formerly much higher than they are now since the soil has risen around them, are pierced with numerous windows, the principal one being a wide Tudor arch, with three mullions and many coats of arms. Beneath this window are several shields, set in Gothic niches. In the centre are the arms of France and England, surmounted by a crown; on each side are the arms of the priory. Outside these are two shields, one bearing the founders' arms impaling the arms of England, the other emblazoning the insignia of Sir Thomas Docwra. Underneath these last shields were formerly the initials "T. D.," separated by a Maltese cross and the word "Prior." On the north side of the gate, facing the square, are three other shields, and, in low relief, the words "Ano.-Dni., 1504."

The entrance to the west tower, says Mr. Pinks, from the north side of the gate, now no longer used, once led to a staircase, the entrance to Cave's printing-office. The carvings on the spandrels of the doorcase, now decayed, are described in 1788 as representing a hawk and a cock, a hen and a lion, supporting the shield of the priory, and that of Sir Thomas Docwra. The old stone floor is three feet below the present surface. The round tower internally contains remains of the old well staircase (half stone, half oak) which led to the top of the gateway. The upper part was made of blocks of oak six inches thick. The east tower had probably a similar staircase. The stone staircase in the north-west tower was removed in 1814. The entrance to the east tower, on the north side the gate, has been long ago blocked up.

In 1661 Hollar draws the gate as blocked up with a wooden structure, beneath which were two distinct passages. This was removed in 1771. The roof of the now dwarfed archway is, says an able historian of Clerkenwell, "a beautiful example of the groining of the fifteenth century, adorned with shields, bosses, and moulded ribs, springing from angular columns with moulded capitals." On the keystone is carved the paschal lamb, kneeling on a clasped copy of the Gospels, and supporting a flag. In a line with the lamb are coloured shields of the priory, and of Docwra.

On the east side of the archway Mr. Foster, the keeper of the "Jerusalem" Tavern, and a great lover of ancient architecture, placed a large oilpainting, by Mr. John Wright, representing the Knights of St. John starting for a joust. For the "Jerusalem" Tavern, on the east basement, a south side-entrance was ruthlessly cut through the angle of the projecting gate-tower.

The basement on the west side was, in 1813, converted into a watch-house, and was afterwards turned into a dispensary hospital by the modern Knights of St. John, which in its first year benefited 2,062 persons. It then became a coal-shed, and after that a book-store. In many of the gate-house rooms there are still oak - panelled ceilings. The "grand hall," the memorable room over the arch, is approached by an Elizabethan staircase, and in the hall are two dull figures in armour, supposed, by courtesy, to represent Prior Weston and Prior Docwra; and a handsome bust of Mr. Till, the numismatist, adorns the

mantelpiece. It was this Mr. Till who cast from old Greek and Roman coins the bronze armorial bearings of the priory and of Docwra, which adorn the parlour and hall.

It was here Dr. Johnson toiled for Cave, the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and here Garrick made his first theatrical *debüt* in London.

Between 1737—1741, says Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, in his "Life of Garrick," Garrick's friend Johnson — "now working out a miserable 'per-sheetage' from the very humblest hack-work, and almost depending for his crust on some little article that he could now and again get into the *Gentleman's Magazine*—was by this time intimate with Mr. Cave, of St. John's Gate, the publisher of that journal. Johnson mentioned his companion, and speaking of his gay dramatic talents, inspired this plain and practical bookseller with some curiosity, and it was agreed that an amateur performance should take place in a room over the archway, with Mr. Garrick in a leading comic character. It was duly arranged; the piece fixed on was Fielding's *Mock Doctor*. Several of the printers were called in, parts were given to them to read, and there is an epilogue to the *Mock Doctor*, by Garrick, which, as it was inserted shortly afterwards in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, would seem to have been spoken on this occasion. This shows how absorbing was his taste for the stage, sure to break out when there was the slightest promise of an opening. The performance gave great amusement, and satisfied the sober Cave; and presently, perhaps as a mark of the publisher's satisfaction, some of Mr. Garrick's short love verses were admitted into the poetical department of the magazine."

The delightful traditions that encrust, as with many-coloured lichens, the old gate, cluster thickest around the old room over the arch, for there Johnson, Garrick, and Goldsmith spent many pleasant hours, and it is good to sit there among the club, and muse over the great men's memories.



ST. JOHN'S GATE, CLERKENWELL.

In the coffee-room on the basement floor is an old-fashioned wide wooden chair, which, tradition asserts, was the favourite chair of Dr. Johnson. On the top rail is boldly painted the date of the doctor's birth and death. The chair was, however, it is hinted, merely an old chair found in an upper room by Mr. Benjamin Foster, when he took the tavern, and labelled "Dr. Johnson's," as an attraction to the gullible public. The stone Tudor mantelpiece in the coffee-room is an old one discovered on the pulling down of a modern fireplace. In the wall (three feet four inches thick) in the side of this fireplace was found the entrance to a secret passage opening at the archway of the gate. It is doubtful whether this tavern was opened before or after Cave's death, but it is supposed that it was first called the "Jerusalem" Tavern; this name being assumed from the "Jerusalem" Tavern in Red Lion Street. In 1845 the terms of the Metropolitan Building Act compelled the parish to see to the gate, when the Freemasons of the Church, a useful architectural society, at once generously undertook its restoration, and saved it from being daubed up with cement. The upper portions of the towers were then re-cased with rough stone, the windows new mullioned, at a cost of £108, the Society of Antiquaries refusing to assist. The original gate was no doubt burned by Wat Tyler's men, but Mr. Griffith, F.S.A., during

these restorations, discovered a fragment of the first gate, carved with scallop-shells and foliage, in a ceiling in Berkeley Street, Clerkenwell, on the site of the residence of Sir Maurice Berkeley, standard-bearer to Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth. He also, in 1855, discovered near the gate a stone boss, sculptured with foliage, and a carved stone windowhead, from the old priory, with the priory arms in the spandril of the arch. Both interesting fragments are preserved at the South Kensington Museum. In the reign of James I. this great south gate was given to Sir Roger Wilbraham, who resided here.



HICKS'S HALL. (About 1750.)

In 1731 the gate became dignified by its connection with literature. Cave, the printer, careful, shrewd, and industrious, set up his presses in the hall over the gateway, and started the *Gentleman's Magazine*, January, 1731, displaying the gate in a rude woodcut on the exterior of the periodical, and very soon drew public attention to his magazine.

With St. John's Gate is connected Dr. Johnson's first struggles towards the daylight. Here, after hungry walks with Savage round St. James's Square, and long controversies in Grub Street cookshops, he came to toil for Cave, who employed him to edit the contributions, and to translate from Latin, French, and Italian. About the year 1738 he produced his "London," a grand imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. In 1740, like a loyal vassal of his editor, Johnson gratified an insatiable public curiosity, by giving himself a monthly sketch of the debates in both Houses of Parliament, a scheme projected by a man named Guthrie. "These productions were characterised by remarkable vigour, for they were written at those seasons, says Hawkins, when Johnson was able to raise his imagination to such a pitch of fervour as bordered upon enthusiasm. We can almost picture the doctor in his lone room in the gate, declaiming aloud on some public grievance. For the session of 1740–41 he undertook to write the debates entirely himself, and did so for the whole of three sessions. He began with a debate in the House of Commons on the bill for prohibiting exportation of corn, on the 19th November, 1740, and ended with one in the Lords, on the bill for restraining the sale of spirituous liquors, on the 23rd February, 1742–3. Such was the goodness of Johnson's heart, that a few days before his death he solemnly declared to Mr. Nichols, whom he had requested to visit him, "that the only part of his writings which then gave him any compunction was his account of the debates in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, but that at the time he wrote them he did not think he was imposing on the world. The mode of preparing them which he adopted, he said, was to fix upon a speaker's name, then to make an argument for him, and to conjure up an answer." He wrote these debates with more velocity than any of his other productions; he sometimes produced three columns of the magazine within an hour. He once wrote ten pages in one day, and that not a long one, beginning, perhaps, at noon, and ending early in the evening. Of the "Life of Savage" he wrote forty-eight octavo pages in one day, but that day included the night, for he sat up all night to do it.

"The memoranda for the debates," continues Mr. Pinks, "which were published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* were obtained sometimes by stealth, and at others from members of the House who were

favourable to their publication, and who furnished Cave with notes of what they had themselves said or heard, through the medium of the post, and frequently by *vivâ voce* communication. Cave, when examined at the bar of the House of Lords on the charge of printing an account of the trial of Lord Lovat, in 1747, being asked, says Nichols, in his 'Literary Anecdotes,' how he came by the speeches which he printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, replied that he got into the House and heard them, and made use of black-lead pencil, and took notes of only some remarkable passages, and from his memory he put them together himself. He also observed that sometimes he had speeches sent him by very eminent persons, as well as from the members themselves."

When working for Cave, at St. John's Gate, Johnson was still dependent. "We are told," remarks Mr. Pinks, "by Boswell that soon after his 'Life of Richard Savage' was anonymously published, Walter Harte, author of the 'Life of Gustavus Adolphus,' dined with Cave at the gate, and in the course of conversation highly commended Johnson's book. Soon after this Cave met him, and told him that he had made a man very happy the other day at his (Cave's) house. 'How could that be?' said Harte; 'nobody was there but ourselves.' Cave answered by reminding him that a plate of victuals had been sent behind a screen at the dinner-time, and informed him that Johnson, who was dressed so shabbily that he did not choose to appear, had emptied that plate, and had heard with great delight Harte's encomiums on his book.

"From that spoilt child of genius, Richard Savage, Cave had many communications before he knew Johnson. The misfortunes and misconduct of this darling of the Muses reduced him to the lowest state of wretchedness as a writer for bread; and his occasional visits to St. John's Gate brought him and Johnson together, poverty and genius making them akin.

"The amiable and accomplished authoress, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, whom Johnson, from an appreciation of her talents, highly esteemed, and who was a frequent contributor to the *Magazine*, under the name of Eliza, during the interval of her occasional visits to London, lodged at St. John's Gate. Hither also came Richard Lauder, Milton's detractor; Dr. Hawkesworth, the author of 'Belisarius;' and a shoal of the small-fry of literature, who shared the patronage of Cave.

"Jedediah Buxton, a mental calculator of extraordinary powers, resided for several weeks in 1754 at St. John's Gate. This man, although he was the son of a schoolmaster (William Buxton), and the grandson of a vicar of his native parish (John Buxton), Elmeton, in Derbyshire, had never learned to write, but he could conduct the most intricate calculations by his memory alone; and such was his power of abstraction, that no noise could disturb him. One who had heard of his astonishing ability as a calculator, proposed to him for solution the following question:—In a body whose three sides measure 23,145,789 yards, 5,642,732 yards, and 54,965 yards, how many cubical eighths of an inch are there? This obtuse reckoning he made in a comparatively short time, although pursuing the while, with many others, his labours in the fields."

In 1746 some small cannon were mounted on the battlements of St. John's Gate, but for what purpose is not known. About 1750 one of the lightning-conductors recommended by Dr. Franklin was erected on one of the eastern towers of St. John's Gate, for electrical experiments, which were the rage of the day.

After Cave's death, in 1754, the *Magazine* was printed and published at the gate by Cave's brother-in-law and nephew. On the nephew's death Mr. David Bond became the publisher for the family, and continued so till the end of 1778. Mr. Nichols then purchased a considerable share of the *Magazine*, and in 1781, just fifty years from its commencement, the property was transferred to Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street, and after forty years there, it was transferred to Parliament Street, where it remained for thirty-six years.

A short biographical notice of the worthy Cave, Johnson's earliest patron, is indispensable to a full history of that interesting relic of old London, St. John's Gate. The enterprising printer and publisher, born in 1691, was the son of a man reduced in fortune, who had turned shoemaker, and was educated at Rugby. In youth he was alternately clerk to an excise collector, and a Southwark timber-merchant. After being bound apprentice to a London printer, he was sent to manage an office and publish a weekly newspaper at Norwich. He was subsequently employed at the printing-office of Alderman Barber (a friend of Swift), and wrote Tory articles in *Mist's Journal*. Obtaining a small place in the Post

Office, he began to supply the London papers with provincial intelligence, and the country printers with surreptitious reports of Parliamentary debates, for which, in 1728, he was imprisoned for several days. From the Post Office he was moved to the Frank Office, where he was dismissed for stopping a letter—as he considered legally—being a frank given to the terrible old Duchess of Marlborough by Mr. Walter Plummer. Putting by, at last, a sum of money (in spite of endless unsuccessful projects), Cave started the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and for the last twenty years of his industrious life was an affluent, thrifty man. His prizes for poems and epigrams brought forward but few poets, and his chief prize-takers, after all, turned out to be Moses Browne, a Clerkenwell pen-cutter, and Mr. John Duick, another pen-cutter, in St. John's Lane, with whom Cave used to play at shuttlecock in the old gate-house.

In 1751 the death of his wife hastened Cave's end. One of his last acts was to fondly press the hand of his great contributor, and the main prop and stay of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Dr. Samuel Johnson. Cave died at the old gate-house in 1754, and was buried (probably without memorial) in the old church of St. James, Clerkenwell. An epitaph was, however, written by Dr. Hawkesworth for Rugby Church, where all Cave's relations were buried.

An old three-quarter length portrait of Cave was found by Mr. Foster in a room on the south side of the great chamber over St. John's gateway, and, in his usual imaginative yet business-like way, Mr. Foster labelled it "Hogarth." This gentleman, it is said, originally kept the "Old Milestone" house, in the City Road, near the "Angel," and in 1848 removed to St. John's Gate, where, by energy and urbanity, he soon hunted up traditions of the place, and, indeed, where they were thin, invented them. He was chairman of the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum, and was active in the cause of benevolence. He died in 1863, of apoplexy, after speaking at a Clerkenwell vestry-meeting.

The Urban Club, a pleasant literary society, well supported, was started at St. John's Gate during Mr. Foster's reign, under the name of "The Friday Knights," but soon changed its name, in compliment to that abstract yet famous personage, Sylvanus Urban. It annually celebrated the birth of Shakespeare in an intellectual and yet convivial way.

The once famous "Hicks's Hall," from whence one of the milestone distances from London was computed, stood, says the indefatigable Mr. Pinks, about 200 yards from Smithfield, in the widest part of St. John Street, near the entrance to St. John's Lane. Hicks's Hall was a stately house, built in 1612, as a sessions house for Clerkenwell, by that great citizen, Sir Baptist Hicks, silk mercer, in Soper Lane, in the reign of James I. During the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth the Middlesex magistrates had generally met in a scrambling and indecorous fashion, at some chance inn, frequently the "Windmill" or the "Castle," in St. John Street, by Smithfield Bars. The noise of the carriers' wagons vexing the grave Justice Shallows of those days, James I. granted, in 1610, to Sir Thomas Lake and fourteen other knights and esquires of Middlesex, a piece of ground, 128 feet long and 32 feet broad, with 20 feet of carriage-way on each side. Sir Baptist, having built the new sessions hall at his own proper charge, feasted, on the day of opening, twenty-six justices of the county, who then, standing up with raised goblets, with one consent christened the new building Hicks's Hall. Sir Baptist seems to have been a most wealthy and influential citizen, and to have lent King James, who was careless and extravagant enough, vast sums of money, besides supplying the court with stuffs and cloths, of tissue and gold, and silks, satins, and velvets, the courtiers getting very much entangled with the rich mercer's bills and bonds. In 1614 the Earl of Somerset borrowed Sir Baptist's house at Kensington, and it is certain that he lived with all the splendour of a nobleman. In 1628 Sir Baptist Hicks was advanced to the peerage as Viscount Campden. He died in the year 1629, and was buried at Campden, in his native county of Gloucestershire. Of his daughters, one married Lord Noel, the other Sir Charles Morison, of Cashibury, and it is said he gave each of them £100,000 for a marriage portion. He left £200 to the poor of Kensington, founded almshouses at Campden, and left large sums to the Mercers' Company. That celebrated preacher, Baptist Noel, son of the Earl of Gainsborough, Viscount Campden, derived his singular Christian name from the rich mercer of Soper Lane. Sir Baptist's great house at Kensington (with sixty rooms), burnt in 1816, was, it is said, won by him from Sir Walter Cope, in a game of chance. The Viscountess of Campden, the widow of Sir Baptist, left vast sums in charity, some of which bequests, being illegal, were seized by the Parliament.

The sessions hall built by Sir Baptist was a mean square brick house, with a stone portico, and annexed to the hall was a round-house, and close by was a pillory. At Hicks's Hall criminals were dissected.

This court has been the scene of some great historical trials. The twenty-nine regicides were tried there, and so were many of the conspirators in the so-called Popish Plot; and here also Count Königsmarck was tried for murdering his rival, Mr. Thynne, and was acquitted. Hicks's Hall is referred to in "Hudibras:"—

"An old dull sot, who told the clock
For many years at Bridewell dock,
At Westminster and Hicks's Hall,
And *hiccius doccius* played in all."

When Sir John Hawkins, a builder, the father of Dr. Johnson's spiteful biographer, used to go to Hicks's Hall, as chairman of the Middlesex Quarter Sessions, he used to drive pompously from his house at Highgate, in a coach and four horses.

In 1777 Hicks's Hall became so ruinous that it was proposed to rebuild it, at an expense of £12,000. This was opposed in Parliament, the traffic of Smithfield rendering the place too noisy and inconvenient. A new sessions house was therefore built on the west side of Clerkenwell Green, in 1782, and the old hall was pulled down, but for a long time afterwards the new hall went by the old name. To the new house a portrait of Sir Baptist Hicks and a fine Jacobean mantelpiece were removed by Rogers the architect.

St. John Street, Clerkenwell, is one of the most ancient of the northern London streets, and is mentioned in a charter of confirmation as early as the year 1170. It seems originally to have been only a way for pack-horses. It was first paved in the reign of Richard II. In the reign of Henry VIII. it had become "very foul, full of pits and sloughs, very perilous and noxious," and very necessary to be kept clean for the avoiding of pestilence. In Stow's time this road was used by persons coming from Highgate, Muswell Hill, &c., but grand persons often took to the fields, in preference, as we find Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. doing; and no doubt St. John Street was a deep-rutted, dirty country road, something like a neglected plank road in Kentucky, or a suburban street in a Russian country town.

There was, in early times, a raised and paved causeway leading from St. John Street to Islington Church, which was called the "Long Causeway." About 1742 numerous footpads prowled about here. On the fortification of London during the civil wars, in 1642–3, a battery and breastworks were erected at the south end of St. John Street; Captain John Eyre, of Cromwell's Regiment, superintended them. There were also fortifications at Mountmill (the plague-pit spot before mentioned), in Goswell Street Road; a large fort, with four half bulwarks, at the New River upper pond, and a small redoubt near Islington Pound.

What is now Red Lion Street, Clerkenwell, was formerly an open piece of ground belonging to St. John's Priory, subsequently called Bocher or Butt Close, and afterwards Garden Alleys. The houses were chiefly built about 1719, by Mr. Michell, a magistrate, who lived on the east side of Clerkenwell Green. His house was afterwards occupied by Mr. Wildman, the owner of that unparalleled racehorse, Eclipse, who sold him to lucky Colonel O'Kelly for 1,700 guineas. This horse, which was never beaten, and said to be a "roarer," could run four miles in six minutes and four seconds.

The house No. 1, at the north-west corner of Red Lion Street, was once the "Jerusalem" Tavern, a great house for sales and parochial meetings. It was here that industrious compiler, Mr. John Britton, was bound apprentice to Mr. Mendham, a wine-merchant, an occupation which nearly killed the young student. In snatches of time stolen from the fuming cellar, Britton used to visit Mr. Essex, a literary dial-painter, who kindly lent him useful books, and introduced him to his future partner in letters, Mr. Edward Brayley, and to Dr. Trusler and Dr. Towers, the literary celebrities of Clerkenwell.

This Dr. Trusler was a literary preacher, who, in 1787, resided at No. 14, Red Lion Street, and supported himself by selling MS. sermons to the idle clergy. His father had been proprietor of the fashionable "Marybone Gardens," and his sister made the seed and plum-cake for that establishment. Trusler, a clever, pushing man, was at first an apothecary and then a curate. Cowper, in "The Task," laughed at Trusler as "a grand caterer and dry nurse of the church." He seems to have been an impudent projector, for when told by Dr. Terrick, Bishop of London, that he offered his clergy inducements to idleness, Trusler replied that he made £150 a year by his manuscript sermons, and that, for a benefice

of the same value he would willingly discontinue their sale. He afterwards started as printer, at 62, Wardour Street, and published endless ephemeral books on carving, law, declamation, farming, &c.—twenty-five separate works in all. He died in 1820. In 1725 a Jew rag-merchant of this street died, worth £40,000. Early in the century an Arminian Jew named Simons lived here. He made some £200,000, but, ruined by his own and his son's extravagance, died at last in the parish workhouse. In 1857 an old lady named Austin died in this street (No. 22), aged 105.

It was to a printer named Sleep, in St. John Street, that Guy Fawkes, *alias* Johnson, used to come stealthily, in 1605, to meet fellow-Romanists, Jesuits, and other disaffected persons. St. John Street was a great place for carriers, especially those of Warwickshire and Nottingham, and the "Cross Keys," one of their houses of call, was one of Savage's favourite resorts, and there probably his sworn friend, Johnson, also repaired. The "Pewter Platter," the "Windmill," and the "Golden Lion" were well enough, but some of these St. John Street hostelries, in 1775, seem to have been much frequented by thieves and other bad characters.

St. John's Square occupied, says Mr. Pinks, the exact area of the court of the ancient priory. In the reign of James II., a Father Corker built a convent here, which was pulled down by Protestant rioters, in 1688, and several 'prentice boys were shot by the Horse Guards during the riots. The Little Square, as the north-western side is called, was formerly known as North's Court, from the builder, a relation of Lord Keeper North, in Charles II.'s time. Sir John North resided here in 1677 and 1680. Dr. William Goddard, one of the Society of Chemical Physicians, who lived in St. John's Close, as it was then called, was one of those who had Government permission to sell remedies for the Great Plague. At the south-west corner of Jerusalem Passage stood the printingoffice of Mr. Dove, whose neat "English Classics" are still so often seen at old bookstalls. On the south side of the square is the Free-Thinking Christians' Meeting House. This body seceded from the Baptists, and built this chapel, about the year 1830. They were at first in Old Change, then in Cateaton Street (now Gresham Street), but were persecuted by Bishop Porteus. They have discussions on passages of the Bible, but no public prayers or ceremonies whatever.

In 1661 Charles Howard, first Earl of Carlisle, resided in the precincts of St. John's Square. This useful partisan of Charles II., ennobled at the Restoration, was our ambassador in Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, and was subsequently Governor of Jamaica. At the same period Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex, resided here, until 1670. He was afterwards Viceroy of Ireland, and First Lord of the Treasury. Persecuted for his doubtful share in the Rye House Plot, he killed himself in the Tower. Here also lived the first Lord Townshend, one of the five Commoners deputed by Parliament to go over to Holland and beg Charles II. to return. Another eminent resident was a staunch Commonwealth man, Sir William Fenwicke, who died in 1676. To these noble names we have to add that of Sir William Cordell, Master of the Rolls in the times of Mary and Elizabeth. He was SolicitorGeneral at the trial of Sir Thomas Wyatt. Queen Elizabeth visited him at his estate in Suffolk, when the Duke of Arencon sent to sue for her hand.

The following epitaph on Sir William Cordell is thus translated by Fuller from the tomb in Long Melford Church, Suffolk:—

"Here William Cordal doth in rest remain,
Great by his birth, but greater by his brain;
Plying his studies hard his youth throughout,
Of causes he became a pleader stout.
His learning deep such eloquence did vent,
He was chose Speaker of the Parliament;
Afterwards Queen Mary did him make (knight),
And counsellor, State work to undertake;
And Master of the Rolls, well worn with age,
Dying in Christ, heaven was his upmost stage;
Diet and clothes to poor he gave at large,
And a fair almshouse founded on his charge."



EDWARD CAVE. (*From the Portrait by Hogarth.*)

The site of the birthplace of that clever but unprincipled demagogue, John Wilkes, is now a clock manufactory. His father, Israel Wilkes, a rich distiller, lived in a handsome old brick house, approached by a paved court with wide iron gates, north of the church. There had been a distillery here as early as 1747. The old distiller who lived here, like a generous and intelligent country squire, drove a coach and six horses, and cultivated the society of philosophers, men of letters, noblemen, and merchants. The house, which was pulled down about 1812, was at one time occupied by Colonel Magniac, who rendered himself famous by the automaton clocks he made for the Emperor of China.

Clerkenwell is noted for its clock-makers, and here armies of busy and intelligent men spend their lives in brass-casting, silvering dials, wheel-cutting, pinion-cutting, and glass-bending; and at No. 35, Northampton Square, Clerkenwell, is the British Horological Institute, for the cultivation of the science of horology, and its kindred arts and manufactures. At No. 28, St. John's Square is the office of the Goldsmiths' and Jewellers' Annuity Association, for relieving the decayed members of the two trades.



THE CRYPT OF ST. JOHN'S, CLERKENWELL.

A special feature of this part of Clerkenwell is Burnet House (No. 44, formerly No. 36), on the west side of St. John's Square. It was originally a noble mansion of two storeys, says Mr. Pinks, and lighted in front by fourteen square-headed windows. The forecourt, upon which shops were built in 1859, was a garden. The grand entrance, now a poor bricked passage leading to Ledbury Place, which stands on

the site of the bishop's old garden, was approached by several steps, and boasted a portico consisting of two Tuscan columns supporting a moulded entablature. In course of time the house lost caste, till, in 1817, it was shared between an undertaker and a hearth-rug maker, and in 1865 it harboured numerous families. The old staircases are gone, but in the windowless basement are the original kitchens and cellars. "In several of the rooms," says Mr. Pinks, "are very handsome mantelpieces, different in design, the ornaments in relief upon them consisting of flowers and leaves in festoonings, medallions, interlacing lines, and groups of female figures. The chimney jambs are of white marble, as are also the hearths. The old stoves have been all removed, and replaced by smaller ones of more recent date. There was formerly a very curious back to one of the grates in this mansion; it was a bas-relief in iron of Charles I., with the date of 1644 upon it, and represented that monarch triumphantly riding over a prostrate female figure, the Spirit of Faction. On each side were pillars, encircled with bay-leaves and a scroll of palm-branches. On the top were the royal crown, and the initials, 'C. R.,' and below the effigies of two women, seated on low stools, having baskets of fruit before them. Nothing is known of this device by the subsequent inmates, and it was probably either burnt out or removed. In the north-east corner of the yard of the right wing of the house, raised about eighteen inches from the ground on two piers of brickwork, was an old leaden cistern, the dimensions of which are four feet two inches in length, twenty and a half inches in width, and two feet six and a half inches in depth, with a mean thickness of half an inch. The cistern, which was a massive piece of cast work, was ornamented with several devices in low relief. On the front, and at either end, was a figure of the Goddess of Plenty, recumbent, by the side of a cornucopia overflowing with flowers and fruits, and behind her was a sheaf of full-eared wheat. Within a panel there was also a shield, quite plain, and over this, as a crest, was a lion passant, the dexter paw resting on a blazing star. Near the upper edge of the cistern was the date of its casting, 1682, and the initials, 'A. B. M.,' doubtless those of an occupier antecedent to Burnet's tenancy of the premises.

"There was until recently another cistern on the premises, similar to the above, bearing the date of 1721, and the initial 'G.,' for Gilbert, surmounted by a mitre. This may have been re-cast by one of Burnet's successors, as a memorial of him. Recently, having fallen from its position, it was removed altogether off the premises, and sold for old metal, and it is said to have weighed four hundredweight."

Bishop Burnet, the son of an Edinburgh lawyer, was born in 1643. He was educated in Aberdeen; in 1669 he became professor of divinity at Glasgow, and when only twenty-six years old was offered a Scottish bishopric, which he modestly declined. In 1674, when he had already married a daughter of the Earl of Cassilis, he came to London, and was appointed preacher at the Rolls' Chapel by Sir Harbottle Grimstone, and soon after was chosen lecturer at St. Clement Danes. In 1679 appeared the first folio volume of the chief work of his life, the "History of the Reformation." Charles II. offered him the bishopric of Chichester, if he would only turn Tory, but Burnet, though vain, and fond of money, conscientiously refused, and even wrote a strong letter to the king, animadverting on his flagrant vices. At the execution of the good Lord William Russell, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Burnet bravely attended him on the scaffold, and in consequence instantly lost the preachship at the Rolls and the lectureship of St. Clement's.

On the accession of James II. Burnet retired to the Continent, and travelled; but on the accession of the Prince of Orange was rewarded by the bishopric of Salisbury. According to some writers, Burnet was the very paragon of bishops. Two months every year he spent in traversing his diocese. He entertained his clergy, instead of taxing them with dinners, and helped the holders of poor benefices. He selected promising young men to study in Salisbury Close, under his own eye; and was active in obtaining Queen Anne's Bounty, for the increasing small livings.

Burnet died at his Clerkenwell house in 1715, and was buried near the communion-table of St. James's, Clerkenwell, the base Tory rabble flinging stones and dirt at the bishop's hearse.

In conversation Burnet is described as disagreeable, through a thick-skinned want of consideration. One day, during Marlborough's disgrace and voluntary exile, Burnet, dining with the duchess, who was a reputed termagant, compared the duke to Belisarius. "How do you account for so great a man having been so miserable and deserted?" asked the duchess. "Oh, madam," replied the bishop, "he had, as you know, such a brimstone of a wife." Burnet was opposed to the clergy enjoying a plurality of livings. A clergyman of his diocese once asked him if, on the authority of St. Bernard, he might hold two livings. "How will you be able to serve them both?" inquired Burnet. "I intend to officiate by deputy in one,"

was the reply. "Will your deputy," said Burnet, "be damned for you too? Believe me, sir, you may serve your cure by proxy, but you must be damned in person."

Burnet was extravagantly fond of tobacco and writing, and to enjoy both at the same time, he perforated the brim of his large hat, and putting his long pipe through it, puffed and wrote, and wrote and puffed again.

How far Burnet's historical writings can be relied on is still uncertain. He was a wholesale Whig, and seems to have been a vain, credulous man, who, according to Lord Bathurst, listened too much to flying gossip. Swift, in his violent and ribald way, denounced Burnet as a common liar, but, on the whole, we are inclined to think that he was only a violent party man, who, however, had a conscience, and tried his best to be honest. There is no doubt, however, from a letter discovered in the Napier charter chest, that on the discovery of the Rye House Plot, Burnet made many timid advances to the cruel and corrupt court.

In Burnet's house afterwards lived that remarkable man, Dr. Joseph Towers, the son of a poor bookseller in Southwark, who was born in the year 1737. Failing as a bookseller himself, Towers turned dissenting minister. He compiled the first seven volumes of "British Biography," and wrote fifty articles for Kippis's "Biographia Britannica." In 1794 Towers was arrested for his connection with the Society for Constitutional Information, of which Sheridan, Erskine, and the Duke of Norfolk were members. He died at this house, in St. John's Square, in 1799. Dr. Adam Clarke, the learned and pious author of the well-known Bible commentary, frequently lodged at No. 45, St. John's Square, where his sons carried on a printing business. He was fifteen years passing his eight quarto volumes through the press. He died in 1832, and was buried in the rear of the City Road Chapel, near Wesley. The Wesleyan chapel next this house was erected in 1849, at a cost of £3,800, by the transplanted congregation of Wilderness Row Chapel. The old-established printing-offices of Messrs. Gilbert and Rivington were started in St. John's Square about 1757, and Mr. William Rivington became a partner in 1830.

St. John's Lane was, in the Middle Ages, the chief approach to the Hospital of St. John from the City. About 1619 this quarter was fashionable, numbering Lord Berkeley, Lady Cheteley, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Anthony Barker, and Lord Chief Justice Keeling among its noble and influential inhabitants. This last disgrace to the Bench was the base judge who sent John Bunyan to prison for three months, for being an upholder of conventicles. Some persons were once indicted before him for attending a conventicle; and, "although it was proved that they had assembled on the Lord's Day, with Bibles in their hands, without prayer-books, they were acquitted. He therefore fined the jury 100 marks a-piece, and imprisoned them till the fines were paid. Again, on the trial of a man for murder, who was suspected of being a Dissenter, and whom he had a great desire to hang, he fined and imprisoned all the jury, because, contrary to his directions, they brought in a verdict of manslaughter." Retribution came at last to this unjust judge. He was cited to the bar of the House of Commons in 1667, for constantly vilifying Magna Charta, and only obtained mercy by the most abject submission. He retired to his house in Clerkenwell, disgraced, drew up a volume of divers cases in pleas of the Crown, and died in 1671.

In this same memorable lane resided, in 1677, that hard theological student, Matthew Poole, the compiler of the great Biblical synopsis, in five volumes folio. During the sham disclosures of Titus Oates, Poole's name was said to be down for immediate assassination. He fled to Holland in dismay, and died there the same year.

The "Old Baptist's Head," in St. John's Lane, a very historical house, was part of an old Elizabethan mansion, and the residence of Sir Thomas Forster, one of the judges in the Court of Common Pleas, who died here in 1612 (James I.) The quaint sign of the house was "John the Baptist's Head on a Charger." The inn formerly boasted bay windows of stained glass, and in the tap-room a carved stone mantelpiece, with what was supposed to be the Forster arms in the centre. In 1813 the rooms still had panelled wainscoats, and in the tap-room hung a picture of a Dutch revel, by Heemskerke, an imitator of Brauwer. In later years the "Old Baptist's Head" became a haltingplace for prisoners, on their way from Newgate to the New Prison, Clerkenwell. In 1716 one of the celebrated Whig mug-houses was in St. John's Lane; and at the south-west corner of St. John's Lane, just beyond the boundary-mark of the

parish, stood the "Queen's Head." It bore the date 1595, and in a niche of the gable-ended front was a bust of Queen Elizabeth, carved in stone.

In 1627–28 (Charles I.) a secret Jesuits' College was discovered near Clerkenwell Church, in a house where the Earl of Marlborough had formerly lived. Sir John Coke, then Secretary of State, drew up a report of the discovery, which has been edited by Mr. Nichols, and re-published in the "Camden Miscellany." Sir John's narrative commences thus: "About Christmas last Humphrey Crosse, one of the messengers in ordinarie, gave mee notice that the neighbours in St. John's saw provisions carried into the corner house uppon the broadway above Clerkenwel, but knewe none that dwelt there. In March following, about the beginning of the Parliament, Crosse brought word that divers lights were observed in the howse, and that some companie were gathered thither. The time considered, I thought fitt to make noe further delay, and therefore gave warrant to the sayd Crosse and Mr. Longe, and the constables next adjoining to enter the house, and to search what persons resorted thither, and to what end they concealed their being there. At their entrie they found one that called himselfe Thomas Latham, who pretended to be keeper of the howse for the Earle of Shrewsburie. They found another, named George Kemp, said to be the gardener; and a woman, called Margaret Isham. But when they desired to go further, into the upper roomes, which (whilst they had made way into the hall) were all shutt upp and made fast, Latham tould them plainly that if they offred to goe further they would find resistance, and should doe it at their perils. They thereuppon repared to my house and desired more help, and a more ample warrant for their proceedings. And then both a warrant was granted from the councell boorde, and the Sheriffes of London were sent for their assistance. But by this protraction they within the upper roomes gott advantage to retire themselves by secret passages into their vaults or lurkinge-places, which themselves called their securities; so as when the officers came up they found no man above staires save only a sick man in his bed, with one servant attending him. The sick man called himselfe by the name of Weeden, who is since discovered to be truely called Plowden; and the servant named himselfe John Penington. More they found not, til, going downe againe into the cellars, Crosse espied a brick wall, newly made, which he caused to be perced and there within the vault they found Daniel Stanhop, whom I take to be Father Bankes, the Rector of their college, George Holland, alias Guy Holt, Joseph Underhill, alias Thomas Poulton, Robert Beaumont, and Edward Moore, the priest; and the next day, in the like lurkinge-place, they found Edward Parre."

Lord Mayor in 1657, who proclaimed Richard Cromwell Protector. He lived long, and was styled the Father of the City. Sir William Bolton, an alderman, knighted by Charles II., also resided on the Green, and in 1670 we find, in the list of rich residents, Sir William Bowles, Bart., Sir Edward Smith, and Lady Windham.

Above all these aldermen and custos rotularums, rejoice, Clerkenwell, because that good and gentle spirit, Izaak Walton, once lived in thy midst, and often paced his guileless path, pondering on mighty barbel in the muddy depths of the pleasant river Lea. On his retirement from the snug little linendrapers' shops, first at the Exchange and then in Fleet Street, Walton, before the year 1650, says Sir Harris Nicholas, took a house at Clerkenwell. That delightful book, "The Compleat Angler; or, the Contemplative Man's Recreation," sold by Richard Marriot, in St. Dunstan's Churchyard, Fleet Street, appeared in 1653. The good, pious old fisherman lived at Clerkenwell, it is supposed, till 1661. He went to Worcester after that, and died at Winchester, at the house of a son-in-law of his, a prebendary, in 1683. In his will the worthy old man left forty-two mourning-rings to his friends, and (could human forgiveness go further?) £10 to his publisher, Richard Marriot.

George Sawbridge, an eminent bookseller of 1670, who published a book by Culpeper, the herbalist, also dwelt on Clerkenwell Green. He left £40,000 to be divided among his four daughters. Elias Ashmole records that he was a friend of Lilly, the sham astrologer.

Jack Adams, a Clerkenwell simpleton, who lived on the Green, became a notorious street character in the reign of Charles II. This half fool, half knave (like many of Shakespeare's jesters) is constantly mentioned in pamphlets of Charles II.'s reign. In an old work, called "The Wits; or, Sport upon Sport" (published in 1682), the writer describes the excellent comedians at the Red Bull Theatre, in Red Bull Yard, now Woodbridge Street. On one occasion, when Robert Cox, a celebrated low comedian, played "Simpleton the Smith," he used to come in munching a huge slice of bread-and-butter; Jack Adams, seeing it, cried out, "Cuz, cuz, give me some! give me some!" to the great amusement of all the spectators. This Adams seems to have turned astrologer and fortune-teller. You got a better fortune from him for five guineas than for five shillings, and he appears to have been as willing to cheat as his dupes were to be cheated. The conjuror of Clerkenwell seems, after this, to have generally adopted this popular name. There is an old print of Jack Adams, in which he is represented with a tobacco-pipe in his girdle, standing by a table, on which lies a horn-book and "Poor Robin's Almanac."

In 1644, during the Civil Wars, Lady Bullock's house, on Clerkenwell Green, was attacked by soldiers, who stole fifty pieces of gold, and tore five rich rings from her ladyship's fingers. Dr. Sibbald, the incumbent of Clerkenwell, who resided near, remonstrated with the Parliamentary soldiers from his window, but the only reply was three musketbullets at his head, which they narrowly missed. A servant of Lady Bullock's was wounded by the soldiers.

In 1844 the Lamb and Flag Ragged School was established on Clerkenwell Green. Since that time day-schools, night-schools, and Sunday-schools have been added to it.

At the corner of Ashby Street, which leads from St. John's Street Road to Northampton Square, stands the old manor house of Clerkenwell, the residence of the Northampton family till nearly the end of the seventeenth century. The first baron was Sir Henry Compton, of Warwickshire, summoned to Parliament among the nobles in 1572 (Elizabeth). The second Lord Compton was created Earl of Northampton in 1618 (James I.), and also K.G. and Lord President of the Marches and Dominions of Wales.

How that nobleman carried off the daughter of rich Lord Mayor Spencer, in a baker's basket, from Canonbury, we have before related. The wife of the second earl had the courage to attend her lord to the battle of Edgehill, where she witnessed the daring and danger of her three Cavalier sons. Spencer Compton fell at the battle of Hopton Heath, in 1643. The third earl resided at Clerkenwell in 1677; his estates, which had been confiscated, were returned to him at the Restoration. He is said to have had a troop of 200 retainers, who wore his livery of blue and grey, and he was one of the king's Privy Council and Constable of the Tower. This earl's youngest brother, after being a cornet of horse, was made Bishop of London, and was entrusted with the education of the Princesses Mary and Ann. After

being suspended by James II., he performed the coronation service for William of Orange, and was appointed one of the commissioners for revising the Liturgy. His toleration of Dissenters rendered him unpopular with the Tories. He died in 1713. Joshua Alwyne Spencer, the tenth earl, was the President of the Royal Society.

At the end of the seventeenth century the old manor-house of the Spencers was converted into a private lunatic asylum, by Dr. Newton. Thoresby, the Leeds historian, speaks doubtfully of this doctor's honesty. He published a herbal, which Cave printed, and seems to have had a botanic garden behind the madhouse. It was here that strange fanatic and false prophet, Richard Brothers, was confined. This man had been a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, but left the service in 1789, and refusing, from conscientious scruples, to take the necessary oath, he lost his half-pay. He then became poor, and had to take refuge in a workhouse. In 1790 he became insane, believed himself a prophet sent from God, and warned all who called him mad, an impostor, or a devil, that they were guilty of blasphemy. In 1792 he sent letters to the king, the ministers, and the speaker, saying he was ordered by God to go to the House of Commons, and inform the members, for their safety, that the time was come for the fulfilment of the seventh chapter of Daniel. He went accordingly, and met with the rough reception that might have been expected. Soon after Brothers prophesied the death of King George, the overthrow of the monarchy, and the delivery of the crown into his own hands, which, being treasonable, he was sent to Newgate. On his release, he persuaded many weak people to sell their goods and prepare to accompany him, in 1795, to the New Jerusalem, which was to be built on both sides of the river Jordan, and to become the capital of the world. In 1798 the Jews were to be restored, and he was to be revealed as their prince and ruler, and the governor of all nations, a post for which Brothers had even refused the divine offer of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Brothers at last got too troublesome, even for English toleration, and was confined as a lunatic in Clerkenwell; he was released in 1806, by the zealous intercession of his great disciple, John Finlayson, with whom he afterwards resided for nine years. Brothers died suddenly, of cholera, in 1824. His last words were addressed to Finlayson, asking if his sword and hammer were ready, referring to the building of the New Jerusalem. In 1817 the old manorhouse was turned into a ladies' boarding-school.

Albemarle Street was so called from General Monk, Duke of Albemarle, during whose popularity the street was built. Albion Place was erected in 1822. In this street, in 1721, lived Christopher Pinchbeck, an inventor of "astronomico-musical clocks," and the peculiar compound metal to which he gave the name. We have already briefly mentioned this ingenious man in our chapter on Fleet Street. Pinchbeck made musical automata that played tunes and imitated birds, like the curious Black Forest clocks now so familiar to us. He also sold self-playing organs, to save the expense of organists in country churches, and he also condescended to mend clocks and watches.

Miss Ray, that unfortunate mistress of Lord Sandwich, who was shot by her lover, Hackman, the clergyman, served her time with a mantuamaker in St. George's Court, Albion Place. A pleasant memory of those delightful old engravers, the Bewicks, is also associated with St. George's Court, for here, about 1780, lived a bookseller named Hodgson, for whom they worked. In the same obscure yet honoured locality also lived that sturdy old antiquary, Dr. Thomas Birch, the son of a Quaker coffee-mill maker, of Clerkenwell. Birch eventually, after being usher to Mr. Besse, a Quaker in St. George's Court, took orders in the Church of England, and married the daughter of a clergyman. Lord Hardwick patronised him, and in 1734 he became domestic chaplain to the unfortunate Jacobite Earl of Kilmarnock, who, joining in the luckless rebellion of '45, was beheaded on Tower Hill. In 1743 he was presented to the united rectories of St. Michael, Wood Street, and St. Mary Staining. He worked much for Cave, and was killed by a fall from his horse, near Hampstead, in 1760. He bequeathed his valuable library and manuscripts to the British Museum, and the residue of his small property to increase the salaries of the three assistant librarians.

Aylesbury Street, says Mr. Pinks, is so called because in old times the garden-wall of the house of the Earls of Aylesbury skirted the south side of the thoroughfare. Aylesbury House was probably a name given to part of the old Priory of St. John, where the Earls of Elgin and Aylesbury resided about 1641. Robert Bruce, second Earl of Elgin, who lived here in 1671, was a devoted Cavalier, and an ardent struggler for the Restoration, and was made Earl of Aylesbury in 1663 by that not usually very grateful king, Charles II., to whom he was privy councillor and gentleman of the bedchamber. At the coronation of that untoward monarch, James II., the Earl of Aylesbury bore in procession St. Edward's staff, eight pounds nine ounces in weight, and supposed by credulous persons to contain a piece of the true cross.

The earl died in 1685, the year he had been appointed Lord Chamberlain of the Royal Household. Anthony à Wood sums up the earl as a good historian and antiquary, a friend to the clergy, and a "curious collector of manuscripts."

But a far more interesting resident in Aylesbury Street was Thomas Britton, the "musical smallcoal man," who, though a mere itinerant vendor of small coal, cultivated the highest branches of music, and drew round him for years all the great musicians of the day, including even the giant Handel. This singular and most meritorious person, born in Northamptonshire, brought up to the coal trade, and coming to London, took a small stable at the south-east corner of Jerusalem Passage, on the site now occupied by the "Bull's Head" public-house, and commenced his humble business. His coal he kept below, and he lived in a single room above, which was ascended by an external ladder. From Dr. Garenciers, his neighbour, this active-minded man obtained a thorough knowledge of practical chemistry, and in his spare time he acquired an extensive practical and theoretical knowledge of music. This simpleminded man founded a musical club, which met at his house for nearly forty years, and at first gave gratuitous concerts, afterwards paid for by an annual subscription of ten shillings, coffee being sold to his distinguished visitors at a penny a cup. The idea of the club is said to have been first suggested by Sir Roger l'Estrange. Dr. Pepusch, or the great Handel, played the harpsichord; Bannister, or Medler, the first violin. Hughes, a poet, and Woolaston, a painter, were also members, while Britton himself played excellently on the viol di gamba. The musical invitation to these concerts ran thus:—
"Upon Thursdays repair to my palace, and there
Hobble up stair by stair, but I pray you take care
That you break not your shins by a stumble;
And without e'er a souse, paid to me or my spouse,
Sit still as a mouse at the top of the house,
And there you shall hear how we fumble."

Britton's friend, Ned Ward, describes these pleasant Thursday evening concerts, which, he says, were as popular as the evenings of the Kit-Cat Club, and that Britton, in his blue frock, with a measure twisted into the mouth of his sack, was as much respected as if he had been a nobleman in disguise.

"Britton," says our Clerkenwell historian, "besides being a musician, was a bibliomaniac, and collector of rare old books and manuscripts, from which fact we may infer that he had cultivated some acquaintance with literature. It often happened that, on Saturdays, when some of these *literati* were accustomed to meet at the shop of one Christopher Bateman, a bookseller, at the corner of Ave Maria Lane, Paternoster Row, Britton, who had usually completed his morning round by twelve o'clock at noon, would, despite his smutty appearance and blue smock, after pitching his sack of small coal on the bulk of Bateman's shop, join the literary conclave, and take part in the conversation, which generally lasted an hour. Often as he walked the streets some one who knew him would point him out, and exclaim, 'There goes the small-coal man, who is a lover of learning, a performer of music, and a companion for gentlemen.' The circumstances of Britton's death are as remarkable as those of his life; he was literally frightened out of his life by a practical joke which was played on him by one Robe, a justice of the peace, and a frequenter of his concerts, who one day introduced as his friend a man who had the sobriquet of the 'Talking Smith,' but whose real name was Honeyman. This man possessed the power of ventriloquism, and when he saw Britton he, by a preconcerted arrangement, announced in a solemn voice, which seemed to come from a long distance, the death of Britton in a few hours, unless he immediately fell upon his knees and repeated the Lord's Prayer. Britton, in the terror of his soul, instinctively obeyed; but the chord of his life was unstrung by this sudden shock. A brief illness supervened, and in a few days he died. His death occurred in September, 1714, when he was upwards of sixty years of age. On the 1st of October his remains were followed to the grave by a great concourse of people, and interred in St. James's churchyard." Though Britton was honest and upright, ill-natured people, says Walpole, called him a Jesuit and an atheist, and said that the people attended his meetings to talk sedition and practise magic. At his death the worthy smallcoal man left 1,400 books, twenty-seven fine musical instruments, and some valuable music.

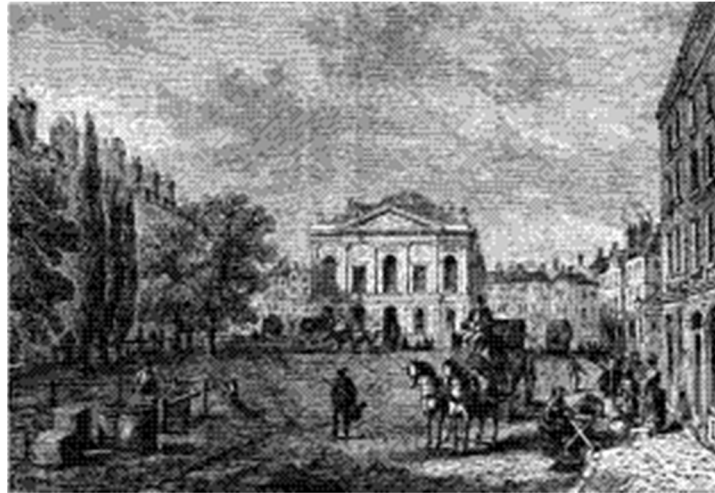
Berkeley Street, formerly called Bartlett Street, was so named from its chief pride, Berkeley House, which stood at the corner facing St. John's Lane. The advanced wings of the mansion enclosed a spacious forecourt, and at the rear was a large garden. Sir Maurice Berkeley, who lived here, was standard-bearer to Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Queen Elizabeth. He it was who, when Sir Thomas Wyatt was beaten back from Ludgate to Temple Bar, yet would not surrender, induced Wyatt to mount

behind him on his horse, and ride to Whitehall. In this house lived and died that pious Earl Berkeley, who, in Charles II.'s time was called "George the Traveller," and "George the Linguist." The first Earl of Berkeley obtained the title of Viscount Dursley and Earl of Berkeley as a reward for his loyalty to Charles II. When the English prisoners were to be released from Algiers he offered to advance the money for their redemption. He bestowed on Sion College a valuable library, and he wrote some religious meditations, which obtained for him a eulogy from Waller. He died in 1698. His second daughter, Lady Theophila, married the pious and learned Robert Nelson, author of "Fasts and Festivals." At what period Berkeley House was pulled down is unknown, but in the year 1856 a moulded brick, stamped with a lyre, supposed to be a relic of the old mansion, was found in Berkeley Street.

At the south-east end of Ray Street, a broken iron pump, let into the front wall of a dilapidated tenement, says Mr. Pinks, marks, as nearly as possible, the site of the old Clerks' Well, used by the brothers of St. John and the Benedictine nuns, and the place where, as the old chronicler says, the London parish clerks performed their miracle plays. In Stow's time this fine spring was cared for and sheltered with stone. In Aggas's map (about 1560) there is a conduit-house at the south-west corner of the boundary wall of St. Mary's nunnery, and the water falls into an oblong trough, which is enclosed by a low wall. In 1673 the Earl of Northampton gave this spring for the use of the poor of the parish of St. James, but it was at once let to a brewer. Strype, writing about 1720, describes the well as at the right-hand side of a lane which led from Clerkenwell to Hockley-in-the-Hole, and it was then enclosed by a high wall, which had been built to bound Clerkenwell Close. Hone, in 1823, writing of the mystery plays of the Middle Ages, points out that as the priory stood about half way down the slope from Clerkenwell Green to the Fleet, people stationed on the rising ground near could have easily seen the quaint performances at the well. Near the pump, erected in 1800, to mark the old well, stood one of the parish watchhouses, erected in 1794.

Vineyard Walk, Clerkenwell, is supposed to mark the site of one of the old priory vineyards. The ground was called the Mount, and against the western slopes grew vines, row above row, there being a small cottage at the top. It existed in this form as late as 1752. There was also a vineyard in East Smithfield as late as the reign of Stephen. It is said that the soil of this Mount Pleasant was sold, in 1765, for £10,000.

That remarkable man, Henry Carey, the author of "Sally in our Alley," one of the very prettiest of old London love songs, lived and died at his house in Great Warner Street. Carey, by profession a music-master and song-writer for Sadler's Wells, was an illegitimate son of the Marquis of Halifax, who presented the crown to William III. He was for long supposed to have written "God Save the King," but the composition has now been traced much further back. The origin of Carey's great hit, "Sally in our Alley," was a 'prentice day's holiday, witnessed by Carey himself. A shoemaker's apprentice making holiday with his sweetheart, treated her with a sight of Bedlam, the puppet-shows, the flying chairs (ups and downs), and all the elegancies of Moorfields, and from thence proceeding to the Farthing Pye House, he gave her a collation of buns, cheesecakes, stuffed beef, and bottled ale; through all of which scenes the author dodged them. Charmed with the simplicity of their courtship, he wrote his charming song of "Sally in our Alley," which has been well described as one of the most perfect little pictures of humble life in the language. Reduced to poverty or despair by some unknown cause, Carey hung himself in 1743. Only a halfpenny was found in his pocket.



CLERKENWELL GREEN IN 1789.

The Red Bull Theatre, a house as well known, in Elizabeth's time, as the Globe or the Fortune, stood at the south-west corner of what was afterwards a distillery, in Woodbridge Street. At the commencement of the reign of James I. the queen's servants, who had been the Earl of Worcester's players, performed at this house. In 1613, George Wither, the poet, speaks disparagingly of the place. Edward Alleyn, founder of Dulwich College, played here in 1617. In 1627 we find the king's company obtaining an injunction from the Master of the Revels, forbidding the use of Shakespeare's plays by the Red Bull company. Some of the earliest female performers upon record in this country appeared at the Red Bull. The theatre was rebuilt and enlarged in 1633, when it was, probably for the first time, roofed in, and decorated somewhat elaborately, the management particularly priding itself on a stage curtain of "pure Naples silk." We find Carew, in some commendatory lines on a play of Davenant's, denouncing the Red Bull performances as bombast and nonsense.



THE OLD CHURCH OF ST. JAMES, CLERKENWELL.

During the Commonwealth, when the victorious zealots prohibited stage plays, the Red Bull company were permitted to produce drolls and farces. From a print dated 1622 we see that the stage was at that time lighted by chandeliers, and that there were boxes for spectators behind the actors. At the Restoration the king's players acted for a few days at the Red Bull, and then went to a new playhouse built for them in Vere Street, Clare Market. Pepys speaks of the Red Bull as a low theatre, and the performance as bad. The house closed in 1663, and was then turned into a fencingschool.

In the same street as the Red Bull Theatre, in Queen Anne's reign, Ned Ward, a coarse but clever writer we have often quoted, kept a publichouse. In his poetical address to the public he says, with indistinct reference to the Red Bull Theatre—

"There, on that ancient, venerable ground,

Where Shakespeare in heroic buskins trod,
Within a good old fabrick may be found
Celestial liquors, fit to charm a god;
Rich nectar, royal punch, and home-brewed ale,
Such as our fathers drank in time of yore.

* * * * *

Commodious room, with Hampstead air supplied.

* * * * *

No bacchanalian ensigns at the door,
To give the public notice, are displayed,
Yet friends are welcome. We shall say no more,
But hope their friendship will promote a trade."

Ward, who retorted an attack of Pope's in the "Dunciad," was, as we have mentioned, a friend of the musical coal-man, and at his public-house Britton's books and musical instruments were sold after his death.

The old church of St. James, Clerkenwell, was only a fragment in Stow's time. No. 22 in the Close was the original rectory house. The church was sold in 1656 to trustees for the parish. The steeple fell down in 1623, after having stood for five centuries, and, being badly rebuilt, fell again, when nearly repaired, the bells breaking in the roof and gallery, and all the pews. There was no organ in the church till within sixty years of its demolition. The old building was pulled down in 1788, and a fine monument of Sir William Weston, the last prior of St. John's, was sold to Sir George Booth, and removed to Burleigh. The prior's effigy represented a skeleton. There was also a fine brass over the monument of Dr. John Bell, Bishop of Worcester in the time of Henry VIII., to whom it is said he acted as secretary. He was engaged by the king in the matter of his divorce from Catherine of Arragon and Anne of Cleves. He was buried, says Green, the historian of Worcestershire, "like a bishop, with mitre and odours, things that belong to a bishop, with two white branches, two dozen staves, torches, and four great tapers, near the altar," in the old church of St. James, Clerkenwell. On the north side of the church stood a costly stone altar-tomb, with Corinthian pillars, to the memory of Lady Elizabeth Berkeley, whose effigy lay in state, with the head of a negro at her feet. This lady was a gentlewoman to the Princess Elizabeth, in the Tower, and re. fusing to go to mass, was so threatened that she was compelled to fly to Geneva, where she remained till the death of the persecuting Mary. There was also the monument of Thomas Bedingfield, one of Queen Elizabeth's gentlemen pensioners, the son of that worthy Governor of the Tower who treated Elizabeth with such kindness and forbearance when, in her earlier years, she was a prisoner in his care.

The old church also contained a marble tablet, affixed to a chancel pillar, to the memory of that patient old antiquary, John Weever, who collected a great volume of epitaphs and inscriptions. A tomb to the memory of Elizabeth, Countess of Exeter, who married the grandson of the famous Burleigh, and died in 1653, is now in the vaults of the new church. On a painted board near this tomb it was stated that the venerable countess was grandmother to thirty-two children, and great-grandmother to thirty-three. In the old chapter-house, which had been turned into a vestry, was buried Sir Thomas Holt, father of the famous Lord Chief Justice Holt. Near the south-east corner of the church was a black and white marble monument, which had been erected in memory of George Strode, an old Cavalier officer, and a great benefactor to the poor of Clerkenwell.

The new church of St. James, which cost nearly £12,000, was consecrated by Bishop Porteus, in 1792. The church contains several interesting monuments, including one erected to the memory of Bishop Burnet, in 1715, who, as we have already stated, was buried beneath the altar in the old church. The plain blue slab, carved with his arms, surrounded by the garter, is now preserved in the vault. Against the wall, on the gallery staircase, is a memorial stone to the famous Clerkenwell archer, Sir William Wood, captain of the Finsbury archers, who died in 1691. He was the wearer of many a prize-badge, and the author of "The Bowman's Glory," a curious little book in praise of archery. He lived to the age of eighty-two, and three flights of whistling arrows were discharged over his grave.