

Pass along the Boulevards of Paris, on a fine evening in June or August—give yourself up, a passive listener, a silent spectator, "all eye and ear," to the sights and sound—permit the loftiest and most familiar associations to confederate harmoniously in your mind, nor, after fixing your eyes on the sunset illuminations of the towers of Notre Dome, disdain to cast a furtive glance on the wooden pillars of the guinguettes at your feet—surrender yourself wholly to the influence of the season, and say if you could have spent such an hour in any city of the world save Paris. It is not that the air is balmy and that the heavens are clear, for further south, on the beach of Palermo or on the mole of Naples you might breathe a still kindlier atmosphere, and move under the light of a still serener sky; yet, though nature is as prodigal of her gifts to Sicily as to France, and human mirth rises as readily at the tales of the improvisatore as at the contortions of the Scaramouch, in what other city, among what other people, could we hope to find this riotous exuberance of human enjoyment—this flushed and feverish excitement—this salient elasticity of spirit, so readily adapted to all tones, and breaking into a *chanson a boir*, a laugh at the drolleries of harlequin, or an *emue* at the Porte St. Martin, with the same Protean versatility?

Walk in any direction within or without the barriers—listen to the mirth around you, whether it proceeds from patrician or plebeian lips—stand in its shops or churches, and France, Paris—the gaiety, the frivolity, the sentiment wide but shallow of that city, colour every thing around you. These groups, promenading slowly along, pausing at intervals to bandy a joke or criticise a passer-by—that elderly gentleman seated in the chair before you, with the journal in his hand—these booths, encircled by so many rows of upturned benches—these venders of fruit and lemonade, the modest purveyors to the moderate enjoyments of the middle and lower classes—that thoughtful youth, with his shirt collar thrown open, and hat *à la jeune France*—these personages, one and all, are they not the very creatures of the soil—the indications, as well as the cause, of their half-artificial society—true autochthones with golden grasshoppers in their hair? That priest who officiates at the altar, who saunters past you with a more worldly eye and bettered appearance than usually squares with our notions of sacerdotal abstinence—that confiseur, who presents you with your bonbons with an air of confidential politeness which would have softened the roughness of Johnson and flattered the vanity of Chesterfield—that itinerant vender of toys and ribbons, who entreats your attention to his wares with a modest but insinuating earnestness, which at least extorts a gratified look from you if you are churlish enough to pass on without acknowledging his request in any more substantial form—that fair modiste, who to your wife or daughter (if you are favoured with such blessings by Heaven) unfolds the silken miracles of her cartons with a delicacy, an ease, a salient grace, a glibstretic fluency—that blooming grisette, who hands you an ice that would have gratified the palate of Lucullus or Apicius—these crowds in the cafes, in the theatres, in the *Maisons de Jeu*, in the *Champ de Mars*—the wit, the intellect, the genius, the pleasure of Paris—moving figures, transacting a part and fulfilling a period—waves of human existence, brightening and breaking under the same glimpse of light—dim processions of life on a more comprehensive arras than any that D'ypres' loom ever covered with its dumb mimicry of earthly joy or suffering—this great panorama, eternity in a state of transition—are they not indigenous, by the necessity of their nature, to the spot in which they are found? The air and heart of man here act and react with perfect harmony on each other. In St. Petersburg there is no adaptation of this kind; every thing is transferred or reproduced—every thing, save its government, is at second hand; its manners are a revival of the etiquette of the Bourbons—its literature is an imitation of foreign schools—its music (which, however, appears to us worthy of all commendation) is an importation from La Scala, or the *Academie Royale de Musique*—its architecture, with a few exceptions, designed by strangers, (and these in some instances are admirable,) is an admixture of styles without a sufficient reference to climate or purpose—the domes and cupolas of the Bosphorus ogling, like triumphant coquettes, the demure pretensions of stuccoed pilasters and plaster friezes.

The first point which strikes the stranger on his arrival at Petersburg, is the predominance of the military over the civic dress. So numerous are the uniforms, from the plain simple cloak of the subaltern in the line, to the showy coat or tinselled jacket of the Cossack or Hulan, that we could imagine that we were present in an extensive encampment rather than in the capital of a country, the emporium of its productions, and the seat of its government. In its streets you are constantly jostled by mustachoid heroes—not paragons of perfection so far as the external gifts of nature are concerned—whose swarthy complexions and stunted noses continually remind you of the Tartar hordes of the Steppes, save when a young Circassian, attired in the dress of his native country, gallops past, as elastic of movement and manly of demeanour as though, instead of gracing the cortege of the czar, he were prepared to do battle for the liberty of the Caucasus. Nothing can inspire a stronger wish that the good cause should prevail in the present struggle between these fearless tribes and the overwhelming power of the Russians, than the contrast between the tawny aspects of the latter and the chivalrous beauty and the graceful manhood of the former. Surely the same Power which, for so many ages, prevented the masses of Persia from occupying Sparta and Athens, will not permit

any permanent submission of these free mountaineers to the advancing power of Nicholas. It is only necessary to spend a few days in St. Petersburg to become convinced that Russia is essentially a military people, relying on her arms alone for her position in the scale of nations, and hurried forward by a necessity of progression to the establishment of a still increasing dominion. In the cafes every second person is an officer; and if, on an evening on which Taglioni performs in the *Sylphide* or the *Nymph of the Danube*, you should visit the Opera House, bravos which resound on every side come from bearded lips, and the hands which are used so unsparingly in summoning back the danseuse are evidently more familiar with the pommel of a sword than with the instrument of peace and widening civilization. On this point their enthusiasm is unbounded. Cheer succeeds cheer, encore follows encore, summons is repeated after summons, till the object of their congratulation, after innumerable acknowledgments of their favour, is at last permitted to rest from her labours.

The attention of the Russians to the services of religion, if one might form an opinion from the edifices dedicated to its uses, is not inferior to that of any other country on the continent. The Cazan Church is a noble building, inferior of course to St. Peter's or St. Paul's, but in many respects possessing merits of a high order. On our first visit to its interior we were deeply impressed by it. Every thing conspired to raise a solemn feeling—the open floors and sweeping colonnades, the imperfect light of the sacred candles, the elevated penetralia, the dim pictures, the sepulchral voices of the priests, the kneeling figures, the solitary tomb,* and the stained and tattered pennons drooping mournfully from the majestic capitals of the granite pillars. What a painful impression do these last leave in the mind! the eagles of the empire, the triumphant emblems of dominion, which in their flight had described an arch from France to Egypt, and had ruled the current of victorious battles at Jena and Austerlitz, Lodi and Marengo, the thunder-bearing birds that swooped with imperial wing over the pyramids, sinking at last in the storms of a Borealic winter. If the contest had ennobled their loss, we could have forgotten their fate; but to know that the symbols of Napoleon's ambition and success did not yield to their destiny in a field of "locked lances;" the chivalry of the second Charlemagne arrayed against the tumultuous hordes of the north; but (a prey to the avenging elements) were wrung from the hands of their vexillarie, "faithful in death," by a barbarous and cruel foe, (the standard of the tenth legion gracing the ovation of the Hetman of the Cossacks,) is enough to recall in tenfold strength the bitter lessons of the instability of fortune, of which history is but an extensive chronicle.

* The tomb of Kutuzoff is in this church.

From the British Magazine. HODNET CHURCH.

I sat down upon an old bench of heavy black oak in the rector's chancel of Hodnet Church. The day was very beautiful; it was one of those mild and sunny days that come, many of them together, before the blackthorn blossoms and the sharp east wind sets in, making a second, though a short-lived winter. Through the Gothic arch-way of the little chancel-door, all seemed bright and cheerful in the open air, the atmosphere full of golden light, the springing grass in the church-yard, the young fresh leaves just opening, the ceaseless cawing of the busy rooks in the high trees about Hodnet Hall, and the sweet songs of a hundred joyous birds.

The solemn quietness and mellowed light within the church were better suited to my mood. I was thinking of Reginald Heber. It was in that church that he had led the worship of the great congregation, during the period of his ministry in England, until he was made Bishop of Calcutta. How often had his untravelled heart turned to his beloved parishioners in dear Hodnet; and doubtless that country church and the old familiar faces there, had often and often risen up before him, and been welcomed with blessings from his kind and loving heart. I thought of his farewell sermon in the midst of his sorrowing flock, and of the affecting description given of his departure from Hodnet. "From a range of high grounds near Newport, he turned back to catch a last view of his beloved Hodnet; and here the feelings which he had hitherto suppressed in tenderness to others, burst forth unrestrained, and he uttered the words which have proved prophetic, that 'he should return to it no more!' As I thought of him I blessed that gracious Master, who in calling his servant from the charge of a few sheep in this quiet and remote spot, to make him the shepherd of the flocks upon a thousand pastures, had so graciously fitted him for his high calling, not only bestowing upon him many splendid gifts, but those meek and lowly graces without which no gifts of genius could have made him fit to be the minister of Him, who is at once meek and lowly in heart, and the Great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. I thought of that which has always appeared to me the most blessed assurance of his growth in grace, and his ripeness for eternity, the prayer found after his departure in his book of private devotions. And as I thought upon this prayer of a contrite and believing heart, I felt how many of those who praise Reginald Heber for the natural sweetness of his disposition and his character, naturally lovely among men, how many think nothing of that disposition and that character which distinguished him as a renewed and spiritual

man before his God. Had he rested in his natural character, it might have been said of him, "And Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest;" he did not, however, rest in that fair and amiable character, but was taught by the Gospel to form his opinion of himself, and on his tomb it might have been written, and written in sober truth, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

On the side wall of the southern chancel, just beyond and above the very spot where the good rector of Hodnet had so often stood, is a tablet of white marble, upon which the finely shaped head and intelligent features of Reginald Heber have been cut in bold relief by Chantrey. The tablet itself, and the folds of rich drapery partly veiling it, are extremely elegant. There is a long inscription—too long for the monument of Heber, and too commonplace. I was glad, however, to find an English epitaph over a minister of the Church of England, which the poor and unlearned of an English congregation can read for themselves.

I have had more facilities than a mere visitor would have had for learning something of the history of Hodnet Church, but very slender materials are to be found at the place itself. Leland's description of it in one word exactly suits it now: "Hodnet, a townlet." It is neither a village nor a town, but consists of little more than two streets of irregular buildings. At the upper end of the higher street stands the church. The whole church-yard and many parts of the "townlet" are bedded on a huge mass of rock, the old red sandstone which is often, I believe, a projecting stratum in this part of Shropshire. The church is built of the same kind of rock. There are two small chapels of ease to the church of Hodnet, for the parish itself is very extensive, and consists of thirteen townships; but the clergymen of the little churches of Mortonesea and of Weston do not officiate in Hodnet Church.

The work of spoliation seems to have been carried on at Hodnet with a bold and reckless hand during the rebellion. The rector, Dr. Sohn Arnway, Archdeacon of Lichfield, being devotedly attached to the royal cause, was driven from Hodnet by the garrison of Wenn. His rectory and his books were burnt, and not merely to the rector, and his own personal possessions, did this persecution extend—the church was stripped of its ancient memorials, even the registers were destroyed. Dr. Arnway has related part of his sufferings in two little pieces called "The Tablet," and "An Alarm." He lost a large fortune, which he did not lament in his extreme penury, and never recovered either his books or papers, but after being imprisoned and very ill-used, he fled first to the Hague and then to Virginia, where he died in poverty before the Restoration.

The spacious church is divided into two broad aisles and chancels by a row of six pillars, five of them circular and one octangular, running lengthways the whole extent of the building, and supporting five circular and two pointed arches; the capitals of the pillars are without any ornament. The ceilings of the north and south chancels are panelled with dark oak, and small, but flowered, bosses.

There is little that is attractive either to the antiquary or the man of elegant taste in Hodnet Church. The font is very old and grotesque, but some village painter has exerted his barbarous skill to spoil its old rough carving of griffins and other monsters, by a smooth surface of white paint, smeared and striped with grey, intended to represent marble. In the broad and lofty mullioned window that fills up the whole eastern end of the northern chancel, there are one or two fragments of coloured glass, no more. Beneath this window stands a reading desk, of carved oak, to which some old books are fastened with chains. But Fox and Jewell and the other few ancient volumes are now seldom opened.

"All needless now their weight of massy chain,
Safe in themselves the once loved works remain;
No readers now invade their still retreat,
None try to steal them from their parent seat;
Like ancient beauties they may now discard
Chains, bolts, and locks, and lie without a guard."

On the south wall, but on the chancel wall higher up, are two other monuments, the most simply elegant of any in the church, both possessing a melancholy interest; for they are memorials of the graves of two young clergymen, Thomas Cutlbert Heber, and Charles Cowley Cholmondeley, the first the younger brother, the latter the husband of Reginald Heber's only sister.

Hodnet is worthy of notice as being the native parish of the family of the Hills, of Hawkstone. The family vault, bearing the date of a. d. 1500, is beneath the pavement of the north chancel. Sir Rowland Hill, an ancestor of the present family, was born at Hawkstone, in the parish of Hodnet, in the reign of Henry the Seventh. He was one of the most opulent merchants of his time, and possessed immense wealth. Fuller has given this fine testimony to his character,—"Being sensible that his great estate was given him of God, it was his desire to devote it to his glory;" and he seems to have acted according to this desire, for he was not only prayerful, conscientious, and watchful, but distinguished for his good deeds and his munificent spirit.

There are several monuments in Hodnet Church sacred to the memory of members of this family.

In a corner, where it cannot be generally seen, is the monumental tablet of Sir Richard Hill, the elder brother of that generation of which the late Rev. Rowland Hill was then the only survivor.