

## HISTORY AND POETRY IN GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES.

(Concluded.)

We can, moreover, trace the identity of the Norwegian occupation by the number of local Norse names, and the contrasts are sufficiently striking. In Lincolnshire, there are about three hundred Norse names, in Yorkshire, about three hundred; in Bedford and in Warwickshire, only half a dozen.

So much for history in our local names, and one might have easily said a hundred times as much on the subject. But there is interest, for both young and older hearers, in details and in points that are of much smaller importance.

The open-eyed and open-minded teacher, who is always on the lookout for whatever will bring into connection and interest with his lessons, will not disdain even the slight assistance he will gain from the relative positions of places, and the names that have come from this. He tells his pupils, for example, that another name for the German Ocean is the North Sea; but he will surely go a step further than this, and show him that there is a South Sea also, which the Dutch call *Zuyder Zee*. Another step, and he will point out that the Germans call the Baltic the East Sea, and that the West Sea must of necessity be the Atlantic. In the same way the Weser or Vesper is the West River. In China this use of names of direction seems to reach its height; for there we have Peking and Nankin, the northern and southern coasts; Peking and Nanling, the northern and southern mountains; Peking and Naho, the northern and southern rivers; and Nanhui, the Southern Sea.

Even the simple epithets *old* and *new* lend some interest to the teacher's work in geography. The word *old* takes many forms: it appears as *alt*, *elt*, *al*, and *ald*. In Althorp, Eltham, Albury, Aldborough. *New* is an epithet, which, like every other thing on earth, must itself grow old. Thus New Forest is one of the oldest forests in Great Britain; New College is one of the oldest colleges in Oxford, for it was founded in 1380. New Palace Yard, in Westminster, dates from the eleventh century, and the fifty-two New Streets in London are among the oldest in that vast wilderness of houses. There are in England 120 villages with the name of *Næbun*, 10 towns called *Næccaste*, and 11 called *Næbun*. It is interesting, too, to observe the forms that the word *new* may take: as *Næw* in Neufchâtel, *Nœ* in Novgorod, *Nein* Neville, and *Næ* in Naples or Neapolis.

Color, too, gives some interest to our geographical names. Thus Cape Verde is the cape fringed with green palms. The local name for the Indus is the *Nilab* (or Blue River); and the mountains in the south of India are called the *Nulherrie* (or Blue Mountains), a name which we find also in Virginia. The city of Adria or Adra, from which the Adriatic took its name, is 'the black town,' because it was built upon the black mud brought down by the Padus. The Himalaya, or, as we call the range, Hymalaya, is 'the abode of snow,' and Lebanon means 'the White Mountain.' The word *Apennines* means 'the white heads.' Mont Blanc, Sierra Nevada, Ben Nevis, Snowdon, Snechalton, Snæfell, and many other mountains, all have the same meaning. The word *alp* itself, being a form of *albus*, gives us the same indication, and connected with it are Alisma, Albion, and Albany, which was the old name of Scotland.

With pupils of a more advanced age, it would be useful to show the identity of the Hindostani *abad* and the Hebrew *beta* with the English *butte* (we have it in Newbattle and Bothwell) and *bid*, with the Slavonic *Buda*, and with the Cymric *bod* in Bodmin and Bosawen. *Alahabad* is 'the house of Allah'; *Gethany* 'the house of dates'; *Bethlehem*, 'the house of bread'; and *Bethel*, 'the house of God.'

We have seen that names throw light upon history, and that history throws light upon names, but names throw light upon physical changes, and on the variations of climate that have taken place in this island. Thus we have in different parts of England places and parts of towns called *Vineyard*, where no vines can nowadays grow. Mr. Thompson, the eminent gardener, tells us that when he was a boy the

island of Mull had many orchards of excellent apples, while now the whole surface of the island is not adequate to the production of a single eatable apple. He tells us, too, that at Hatfield, near London,—the seat of Lord Salisbury,—there used to be fourteen hundred standard vines, which produced the grapes that found the house in its supplies of wine; whereas now there is not a single grape produced except under glass. The name *vineyard* in Britain is therefore nowadays a name, and nothing more.

There is, not far from Loch Marce, in Ross-shire, a farm that bears the name of *Kinloch Ewe*; that is, the heron of Loch Ewe. But Loch Marce, or Mary's Loch, was, geologists tell us, at one time only one of the upper reaches of Loch Ewe; and this conclusion of geologists is borne out by the name *Kinloch Ewe*, which is not on Loch Ewe at all but about a mile above the upper end of Loch Marce. But there can be no doubt that this farm marks the point to which the older Loch Ewe at one time extended.

Local names, too, give us evidence of animals that are now extinct in this island. The existence of the wolf and the bear in England is marked by such names as *Wolfselov* in Herefordshire, and *Barnwood* in Gloucestershire. The wild boar, or cofer, was found at Eversley, Evershot, and Everton; and the presence of the beaver is indicated by such names as *Beverly*, *Beverstone*, and *Bevercoats*.

Changes in our customs, too, are to be traced in old names. Two of the strongest marks of the importance of a town are to be found in the existence of a market, or the possession of a bridge over the neighboring stream. The Old-English verb *ceapian* (to buy) gives us the words *cheap*, *goodcheap*, *dogcheap*, *chaffman*, *claffer*, *horsecheap*, and *chop*; and it also gives us the prefixes *chepping*, *chep* and *kippin*. Cheap-side and Eastcheap were the old market-places of London; and into Cheap-side, even to this day, run Bread Street (where Milton was born), Milk Street, and the Poultry. In the North of Europe we find Copenhagen, which means 'Clipping or Market Haven'; Nordkioeping, which means 'North Market'; and many others.

Even the mistakes in names are full of suggestion. The readers of Sir Walter Scott's 'Pirnie' know Fitful Head in Shetland as the *shole* of Norna. But Fitful Head, though a quite appropriate name, is a mere corruption, undoubtedly by mistake of the old Scandinavian name *Het-fell* (or White Hill). Cape Wrath, again, has in its oldest meaning nothing to do with storm, but, in its old Norse form of *Cape Hearf* simply indicates a turning-point—the point where the land trends in a new direction, and it contains the same root as the words *wharf* and *Antwerp*.

Many similar corruptions are to be found in England. The walk from Buckingham Palace to Westminster is now called *Birdcage Walk*, which is only a meaningless corruption of *Beaue Walk*; *Chateau Vert*, in Oxfordshire and in Kent, has been altered into *Shaker Hill*, and a legend about Robin Hood and Little John has been attached; *Beau Lieu*, in Monmouthshire, has grown into *Bexley*; *Grand Pont*, in Cornwall into *Grampound*; and *Don Gué* (the good ford), in Suffolk, has been, too, naturalized into *Bungay*.

So far, we have seen that history and philology become the loyal servants of the teacher. Shall we be able to say the same of poetry? How shall the most brilliant outcome of the human intellect, the most inspired expression of the mind, the product of the noblest faculties, strengthened by and intertwined with the deepest emotion, help our much study of the world?

To some extent it has already done so. Longfellow has procured for us a geographical library in thirty-two volumes, which he calls 'Poems of places.' Four of them have been republished by Messrs. Macmillan & Co., in this country; but the whole thirty-two volumes ought to be in the library of every large school and college. Such a collection, contains and must contain, a great deal of what is good, of what is indifferent, and we know that neither gods nor men tolerate the indifferent in poetry.

But this side of the question would carry us too far. What I am driving at is a humbler aim. All through this statement I have been trying to insinuate,

—to suggest that the teacher should bring into all his lessons on geography the maximum of connection; that he should try to make the map *live* before his pupils; that in education, as in a statue, there should be no dead matter; and that the satisfaction of the day's curiosity, or mental appetite, should be followed by the growth of a stronger appetite still. I think that we who live in this latter part of the nineteenth century may congratulate ourselves on the immense amount of young active intellect that has thrown itself into education, and on the better methods that, with this youth and activity, have been imported into our school-rooms. It is not so long ago that boys were kept for years over the *As in præcanti* and the *Propria quæ maribus* before they were able to form a first-hand acquaintance with even the earliest Latin author; nowadays a boy does not learn a new word or a new inflection without being asked at once to build his new knowledge into an interesting sentence. Not long ago children were taught lists of names without seeing a picture, a diagram, a model, or a map, and this was called geography; now we have the geographical societies, both of Edinburgh and of London, working steadily for them, and showing them all that there is of beautiful and wonderful, and strange and thoughtful, in the life of man upon this remarkable planet.

Another point before I have done. The path of education is the path of discovery; it is not the dead-beaten road upon which you can sow no new seed, it is not the region of the second-hand, the fossilized thought, the mere traditional and repetitious idea. If, then, the teacher is to make those old times live again,—those old times that have left ineffaceable marks in our names of places, just as the underlying rocks have left traces of themselves in our soil,—he must excite the curiosity of his pupils, and set them hunting for new examples of old names; must ask them to find the old in the new, and the new in the old. It is as true of education as of life,—and the one is only an epitome and compressed symbol of the other,—that for us all it is

"Glad sight whenever new and old  
Are joined through some dear home-born tie:  
The life of all that we behold  
Depends upon this mystery."

The passion of hunting is the strongest passion in human nature: can we gratify this passion in the school-room? I think we can, and geography is one of the happy hunting-grounds in which we may be able to gratify it.—*Science*

"No credit, as we are aware," says an exchange, "has heretofore been given in any college in the Dominion or in the United States to students in their examinations, for any colloquial knowledge of French or German. As these languages are of such importance, especially to professional men, this state of things seems to be an unaccountable paradox. It makes no difference how fluently and elegantly a candidate for examination in moderns might speak French, German, and Italian—as well, indeed, as Gambetta, Bismarck, or Manzoni—he might not pass a more successful examination than a man who had never heard pronounced a word of either language. The professor is wont to dissect for the benefit of his students, dead Latin or Greek, French or German, with the knife, forceps, and hook and chain of grammar, philology, and rhetoric, and the result is that these two modern languages are now as dead, in most colleges, as their honoured predecessors."

The following ironical remarks, found in a letter addressed to the editor of a western town, may amuse our readers:

"I look forward to the period when the teacher shall be relieved of every drudgery, and the duties above mentioned, when receiving and considering the excuses of parents who may have failed to perform the full task of educating their children, will be all that shall be required.—When, in fact, the 'home work' now assigned to both parents and children shall cease to be even nominally additional to the school work, but shall comprise the whole prescribed course; when school buildings shall be for the use of the 'teachers,' and children go to school only to play in the yards.—Yours truly, WORKINGMAN."