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WILLIAM DURANT,
Chronicle Office, Saint John, N. B.

Miscellany.

From the New York Spirit of the Times.

WOBURN ABBEY,
THE SEAT OF THE RUSSELLS.

Mr. Downing, writing from England, thus describes the above princely abode, in a late number of the "Horticulturist."

I received in London a note from the Duke of Bedford, which led me, while I was in Bedfordshire to make a visit to Woburn Abbey.

This is considered one of the most complete estates and establishments in the Kingdom.

It is fully equal to Chatsworth, but in another way. Chatsworth is semi-continental, or rather it is the concentration of everything that European art can do to embellish and render beautiful a great country residence. Woburn Abbey is thoroughly English; that is, it does not aim at beauty, so much as grandeur of extent and substantial completeness and thorough admixture of the whole. Besides this, it interested me much as the home for exactly three centuries, of a family which has adorned its high station by the highest virtues, and by an especial devotion to the interests of the soil. The present Duke of Bedford is one of the largest and most scientific farmers in England, and his father, the late Duke, was not only an enthusiastic agriculturist, but the greatest arboriculturist and botanist of his day, whose works, both practical and literary, made their mark upon the age.

The Woburn estate consists of about thirty thousand acres of land. You enter the approach thro' a singularly rich avenue of evergreens, composed of half a mile, and then you leave it and wind through an open park, spacious and grand—for a couple of miles—till you reach the Abbey. This is not a building in an antique style, but a grand and massive pile in the classical manner, built about the middle of the last century on the site of the old Abbey. I have said this place seemed to me essentially English. The first sight of the house is peculiarly so. It is built of Portland stone, and has that mossy, discolored look which gathers about even modern buildings in this damp climate, and which we in America know nothing of, under our pure and bright skies—where the freshness of stone remains unsullied almost any length of time.

Woburn Abbey is a large palace, and containing as it does, the accumulated luxuries of art, refinement, and comforts of so old and wealthy a family—(With an income of nearly a million of our money,) you will not be surprised when I say that we have nothing with which to compare it. Indeed, I believe Woburn is considered the most complete house in England, and that is saying a good deal, when you remember that there are 20,000 private houses in Great Britain, larger than our President's mansion. To get an idea of it, you must imagine a square mass, about which, externally—especially on the side fronting the park, there is little to impress you—only the appearance of large size and an air of massive dignity. Imagine this quadrangular pile three stories high on the park or entrance front, and two stories high on the garden or rear, and over two hundred feet in length on each side. The drawing room floor, though in the second story, is therefore exactly on a level with the gardens and pleasure grounds in the rear, and the whole of this floor is occupied with an unbroken suite of superb apartments—drawing rooms, picture gallery, state bed rooms, library, etc.—projecting and receding, according as one may be among the delicious scenery of the pleasure grounds, in the most agreeable manner. There is a noble library with 20,000 fine volumes. There is a state picture gallery 250 feet in length, filled with fine sculptures—(among other things the original group of the three Graces, by Canova,) and a vast number of rare and valuable pictures by the best masters. Rich cabinets of natural curiosities, and of art, and forming the most interesting museum, in the midst of the collections made by this noble family.

Now, imagine the apartments contained in the rear, on one side, and the same on the other, and you will have the most extensive and splendid series of drawing rooms, dining rooms, libraries, &c., &c., that I have ever seen in any house. Indeed, I am quite unable to say how large they are. I know, however, that they contain an avenue of staircases backed by another of Deodar cedars in the most luxurious growth—each fine arborvitæ of a thousand feet long. A fine specimen of the latter tree, twenty five or thirty feet high, attracted my attention, and there was another twenty five feet, of the beautiful Norfolk Island pine, growing in the open ground, with the shelter of a glazed frame in Winter. These pleasant grounds, however, interested me most in that portion called the American garden—several acres of sloping velvet turf, thickly dotted with groups of rhododendrons, azaleas, etc., forming the richest masses of dark green foliage that it is possible to conceive. In the months of May and June, when these are in full bloom, this must be a scene of almost dazzling brilliancy. The soil for them had all been formed artificially, and consisted of a mixture of peat and white sand, in which the rhododendrons and kalmias seemed to thrive admirably.

Besides this scene, there is a garden composed wholly of heaths, the beds cut in the turf, one species in each bed, and full of delicate bells; a parterre flower garden, in which a striking effect was produced by contrasting vases colored quite black, with rich masses (growing in the vases) of scarlet geraniums. I also saw a garden devoted wholly to willows, and another to grasses—both the most complete collections of these two genera in the world—the taste of the former Duke—and with which I was familiar before hand, through the "*Salictum Woburnense*," and Mr. Sinclair's work on the "*Grasses of Woburn*."

The park is the richest in large evergreens of any that I have ever seen. The planting taste of the former Duke has produced at the present moment, after a growth of fifty or sixty years, the most superb results. The cedars of Lebanon—the most sublime and venerable of all trees, and the grandest of all evergreens, bore off the palm—tho' all the rare pines and firs that were known to aboriculturists half a century ago are here in the greatest perfection—including hollies and Portugal laurels which one is accustomed to think of as shrubs, with great trunks like timber trees and magnificent heads of glossy foliage. A grand old silver fir has a straight trunk eighty feet high, and a lover of trees could spend weeks here without exhausting the aboricultural interest of the park alone—which is, to be sure, some ten or twelve miles round.

A very picturesque morceau in the park, inclosed and forming a little scene by itself, is called the Thornery. It is an abrupt piece of ground covered with a wild looking copse of old thorns hazels, dog woods and fantastic old oaks, and threaded by walks in various directions. In the centre is a complete little cottage, with the neatest Scotch kitchen, little parlour, and furniture inside, and a sort of fairy flower garden outside.

All this may be considered the ornamental portion of Woburn, and I have endeavoured to raise such a picture of it in your mind as would most interest your readers. But you must remember that farming is here a matter of immense importance, involving the outlay of immense capital, and a personal interest and systematic attention which seem almost like managing the affairs of state. About half a mile from the house is the farmery—the most complete group of farm buildings, perhaps, in the world, where the in-coming harvest makes a figure only equalled by the accommodations to receive it. Besides these there are mills and workshops of all kinds, and on the outskirts of the park a whole settlement of farm cottages. I can only give you an idea of the attention bestowed on details, and the interest taken in the comfort of the immediate tenants, by resorting to figures, and telling you that the present Duke has expended £70,000, within the past five years, in the farm cottages on this estate, which are model cottages—combining the utmost convenience and comfort for dwellings of this class, with so much of architectural taste as is befitting to dwellings of this size.

Of course, a large part of this estate is let out to tenants, but still a large tract is managed by the Duke himself, who pays more than 400 laborers weekly throughout the year. The farming is very thorough, and the effects of draining in improving the land have been very striking. Above fifty miles of drain have been laid, in this estate alone, *annually*, for several years past.

You will gather from this that English agriculture is not made a mere recreation, and that even with the assistance of the most competent and skilful agents, the life of a nobleman, with the immense estate and the agricultural tastes of the Duke of Bedford, is one of constant occupation and active employment. Besides this estate, he has another in Cambridgeshire, called the "Bedford Level"—5 vast prairie of some 18,000 acres reclaimed from the sea, and kept dry by the constant action of steam engines, but which is very productive, and is perhaps the most profitable farm land in the kingdom.

A Pattern Queen.—The following extract from the memoir of Queen Mary, wife of William the Third, written by the late Rev. Samuel Barder, of London, will be perused with pleasure.

"Her sense of religion and duty not only in the great step of life, of which mention is hereof and beneath in the world, but the whole of her character and behaviour abundantly evinced what an extraordinary piety and virtue possessed her soul.

"Her punctual attendance not only to public offices, but to her secret retirements, with so regular that it was never put off in the greatest crowd of business or public journeys; for them, though the hour was anticipated, the duty was never neglected. She took care to be early on these occasions, that she might prevent others from forget, or very much disturb that devotion upon which she reckoned that the blessing of the whole day turned.

"She observed the Lord's day so religiously, that, besides her prayers or retirements, she was constantly present a day, in the public worship of God, and the sacrament once in a year. Four times a day were the delight that I am quite unable to say how large they are. I know, however, that they contain an avenue of staircases backed by another of Deodar cedars in the most luxurious growth—each fine arborvitæ of a thousand feet long. A fine specimen of the latter tree, twenty five or thirty feet high, attracted my attention, and there was another twenty five feet, of the beautiful Norfolk Island pine, growing in the open ground, with the shelter of a glazed frame in Winter. These pleasant grounds, however, interested me most in that portion called the American garden—several acres of sloping velvet turf, thickly dotted with groups of rhododendrons, azaleas, etc., forming the richest masses of dark green foliage that it is possible to conceive. In the months of May and June, when these are in full bloom, this must be a scene of almost dazzling brilliancy. The soil for them had all been formed artificially, and consisted of a mixture of peat and white sand, in which the rhododendrons and kalmias seemed to thrive admirably.

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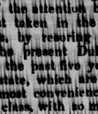

It is announced to visit this country, accompanied by a dove with olive branch and turtle in their mouths.

Illness, Parliament says it is a common profession of those that have not any other way to excuse their absence from it.

Law, the only thing that could make Northumberland House yield the immense supply they receive for the purpose of eight centuries.

Sir Isaac Newton says, "After throwing off your covering your every time shall, Et. to.

It may be remembered that the Duke, on the occasion of the late fire, was the first to arrive, and was most active in the extinguishment. Since the event, he is reported to have said that he would not be content to be the owner of the house, but to be a permanent night better than none."

A few days since a gentleman, who, though well known in the literary world, is great from the Commissioner Court of Insolvency, was examining the case of Chichester, in the name of Price, in the usual manner, observing that Chichester was a person of the appearance of the Bishop, and Commissioner Law, who was sitting on the case, interrupted him by saying, "Stop a moment, Mr. ——, I am not aware that the Bishop of Chichester has been in this Court."

* The first John Russell, Duke of Bedford, whose family possessions at the time were very limited, was a favorite of Henry VIII, and was rewarded for his services by the gift of the Abbey of Woburn, with the manor and estate belonging to it, which had been in the possession of the Church for 300 years.

From Late English Papers.

PRINCE ALBERT'S CONFESSION OF FAITH.

Monday last the Society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, held their 150th anniversary, having been incorporated June 16, 1701. The proceedings at this meeting, when all who felt an interest in the missionary proceedings of the Church of England were invited to join in celebrating with thanksgiving and prayer, its third jubilee, were peculiarly gratifying, and we regret we cannot find room for the reports as we find them in the papers. Prince Albert, who presided, seldom appears on a platform, on the present occasion the following declaration made by him on opening the business of the meeting will be read with interest and gratification :—

"We are assembled here to-day in order to celebrate the third jubilee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, incorporated by royal charter, and one of the main sources of the spiritual aid which the Established Church provides to our extensive colonial dependencies. We are not commemorating, however, an insulated fact which may be merely useful to the country, but we are thankfully acknowledging the Divine favour which has attended the exertions of the society, extending over a period of 150 years. We are at the same time met to invoke the further continuance of that favour, pledging ourselves not to relax in our efforts to assist those of our brethern settled in distant lands, and building up countries and states where mens footsteps have yet to be planted on the soil, and where nature has yet to be conquered to his use—(hear, hear.) This society was chartered by that great man, William III., Prince of Orange,—the greatest sovereign this country has to boast of. By his sagacity and energy he closed that struggle for civil and religious liberty which so long convulsed this country and secured to us the inestimable advantages of our Constitution and Protestant faith, and placed this country at unity at home and peace with foreign nations.—All honour be to that sovereign for endeavouring to place that strong foundation on the rock of the church. The first jubilee of this society was at a time when religious apathy succeeded to the overexcitement of a preceeding age. Lax morality and sceptical philosophy began to undermine the foundation of our Christian faith, treating with ridicule and indifference the most sacred subjects. But this society persevered in its labours with untiring zeal, directing its chief attention to the North American Continent, where a young and vigorous society was springing up. The second jubilee found this country in a most critical position. She had obtained a moment's respite from that tremendous struggle with our continental neighbours, and which secured to her permanent peace. The North American Colonies, which had been peopled by British subjects who had left their homes, had thrown off their allegiance to the mother country, the attachment to which they had carried out with them to the British colonies. But this country was not dismayed, but continued with success its labours in the North American and West Indian colonies (cheers.) This, the third jubilee, falls upon a happier epoch, when peace is established on the continent, and religious fervour is kindled at home. At this moment we were witnessing the result of peace and civilization in the visits of large bodies of people from all quarters of the globe, recognising for the first time their advancement to be a common good; their interests identical, their mission on earth the same. And this civilization rests upon Christianity—and can only be maintained by Christianity (hear, and cheers.) At a time when peace and prosperity prevail, we cannot help deploring that the church should be afflicted with internal divisions. I have no fear, however, for her safety (hear, and cheers.) I have no fear for her safety, I say for her safety, so long as she holds fast to what our ancestors gave it at the Reformation—the Gospel, and the unfettered right to try its use. The difficulties and dissensions which we are witnessing in our own and other churches arise from the natural and necessary conflict of the two antagonistic principles which move human society, in the state as well as in the church—I mean the principles of individual liberty and of allegiance and submission to the will of the community, exacted by it for its own preservation. These two conflicting principles cannot be disregarded—they must be reconciled. I trust that as we have become a model to all nations of the earth, our church may also become a model to all churches of the world. Let us look upon this simply as a token of hope, and may the harmony which reigns amongst us at this moment, and which we owe having met for the promotion of a religious object, be abundantly blessed."

His Royal Highness resumed his seat amidst loud cheering.

A Day in the Convent at Westbury.—An article entitled "English Convents and Conventualism," by a Lay Roman Catholic, published in Colburn's New Monthly Magazine, contains the following:—"Here is a short sketch of the life of a nun, which is taken from the rules of the convent of the Visitation at Westbury, near Bristol. At five in the morning the convent bell rings, when the sisters rise and repair to matins, after which they take breakfast, which is a slight repast. At a quarter to seven the community attend mass in the choir; and, with the intervals of occasional prayers, the nuns are employed till half-past ten in the domestic duties of the house, no servant whatever being kept. But sisters or persons who have taken the vows without bringing any fortune to the convent attend to the out door business of the community. At half-past ten dinner is served in the refectory, during which, and the earlier portion of the morning, absolute silence is imposed upon all. This is the chief meal of the sisters, and is very heavy, simple, consisting chiefly of vegetables and broth, with coarse bread, together with a small allowance of weak beer. A portion of the sisters dine from the rest, and one reads aloud from a religious book, generally the life of the founder, St. Francis de Sales, or the last magazine, St. Francesca. These sisters generally dine twice, and have the arrangement of the refectory at their disposal. After dinner the sisters go to recreation, which lasts two hours, when they return to the choir, where they repeat the office of vespers, occupying the time till six o'clock. At six o'clock the bell rings for supper, which is taken in silence, and lasts half an hour. At seven o'clock the whole community assemble in the choir, where they remain in silent meditation till nine o'clock, when the weary sisters retire to their cells. The bedding of the convent consists of a mattress, a pillow, and a blanket, and the sisters sleep in their clothes. The dressing robes of the community are of black serge, and the veil is of black muslin. Each sister has a separate cell, and no one is allowed to enter the cell of another, but she is permitted to speak to her through the door. The sisters are not allowed to converse with each other, except at recreation, when they repeat the lives of the saints, or read aloud from religious books. They are not allowed to write to their friends, but they are permitted to receive letters, which are read by the lady superior before they are delivered to the sisters. The high-walled enclosure of the convent is not to be passed by the sisters, who are never allowed to look outside the walls. Their only exercise is in the garden, within the high-walled enclosure, and they are not allowed to converse with any person outside the convent walls. Even the gardener, who occupies the time till he is relieved by the lay sister, is not allowed to converse with her. The strictest rules of the convent severely prohibit the sisters from having any communication with their friends, except on the occasion of their visits, which are very short, and are not allowed to be frequent. The sisters are not allowed to receive visits from their friends, but they are permitted to receive letters, which are read by the lady superior before they are delivered to the sisters. They are not allowed to write to their friends, but they are permitted to receive letters, which are read by the lady superior before they are delivered to the sisters. They are not allowed to converse with each other, except at recreation, when they repeat the lives of the saints, or read aloud from religious books