

CURIOSITIES AND LAW OF WILLS.

Boys. One benevolent old gent left his money to portion off deserving old maids and let his own daughters pine in single blessedness for want of portions; another gave his property to set up a life-boat: *Johnson v. Swan*, 3 Madd. 457, and compelled his sons to paddle their own canoe; another gave his estate to plant a botanical garden, leaving his daughters to droop and fade away as wall-flowers: *Townly v. Bedell*, 6 Ves. 194.

Mr. Proffatt has in his introduction given us a number of extracts from curious wills, culled chiefly from the Records of Doctor's Commons, as given in the *Illustrated London News* some three or four years ago. A few of these will be good reading for this midsummer weather.

A Mr. Zimmerman had decided views on the subject of funerals; in his will he says, "No person is to attend my corpse to the grave, nor is any funeral bell to be rung, and my desire is to be buried plainly and in a decent manner, and if this be not done, I will come again—that is to say, if I can." The Countess of Sandwich directed that at her funeral there were to be "no undertaker's frauds or cheating, no scarfs, hat-bands, or nonsense." She evidently had Byron's idea, that in mourning coaches there's a deal of fun when the funeral's done.

Mr. J. W. Freshfield was so fearful of being interred alive, that by his will, proved in the last decade, he desired that previous to his burial his body should be opened, the heart effectually separated and then returned to its original position. Another testator for the same reason directed his heart to be pierced through with a red-hot iron.

Henpecked husbands often say in their wills what they have often thought but never dared to utter *viva voce*. Our author gives an interesting excerpt from the will of that broken-hearted man, whose wife heaven sent into the world solely to drive him out of it; of her the

poor wretch writes: "The strength of Samson, the genius of Homer, the prudence of Augustus, the skill of Pyrrhus, the patience of Job, the philosophy of Socrates, the subtilty of Hannibal, the vigilance of Hermogenes, would not suffice to subdue the perversity of her character."

But for the credit of humanity, we are glad to be able to say that some wills bear testimony in the strongest and most affectionate language to the virtues and excellencies of wives. Mr. Sharon Turner, the eminent author of "The History of the Anglo-Saxons," in his will says of his dead wife: "None of the portraits of my beloved wife give any adequate representation of her beautiful face, nor of the sweet, and intellectual, and attractive appearance of her living features, and general countenance and character." While Mr. Granville Harcourt, who died in 1862, thus speaks of his living spouse: "The unspeakable interest with which I constantly regard Lady Waldegrave's future fate induces me to advise her earnestly to unite herself again with some one who may deserve to enjoy the blessing of her society during the many years of her possible survival after my life; I am grateful to Providence for the great happiness I enjoy in her singular affection." Mr. Harcourt was equalled by Mrs. Van Hennigh, who, after bequeathing to her husband all her property, and directing him to sell her old clothes to pay her funeral expenses, adds in her will, (proved in 1868), "It is also my earnest wish, that my darling husband should marry, ere long, a nice, pretty girl, who is a good housewife, and above all, to be careful that she is of a good temper." What a contrast do these last two wills present to the churlish stipulations anent the wife marrying again that one finds in so many wills!

Our author says that he cannot call to mind a single case in which a married