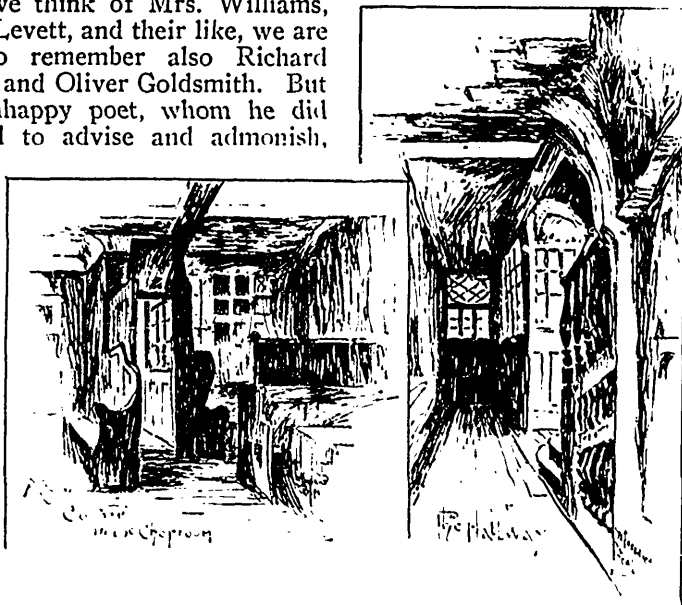


And wholesome berries thrive and ripen  
best  
Neighbour'd by fruits of baser quality."

Had Savage been destitute of his undoubted merits, his misfortunes and injuries must have commended him to Johnson, who knew how to succour and to pity. When we think of the helpless and miserable of mankind whom he sheltered in his great heart, and whom he never made to feel their own inferiority—when we think of Mrs. Williams, of Dr. Levett, and their like, we are glad to remember also Richard Savage and Oliver Goldsmith. But that unhappy poet, whom he did not fail to advise and admonish,

indeed, in the plaintive notes of the nightingale, but at others in the cheerful strains of the lark."

Johnson has, in his biography of the poet, said all that may properly be said in his defence; but that he has been true to the law of moral life may be argued from his closing sentence: "This relation will not be wholly without its use, if those who languish under any part of his sufferings shall be enabled to fortify



CHOP-ROOM AND HALLWAY OF THE "CHESHIRE CHEESE," LONDON.

had generous impulses and exalted conceptions. He had genuine poetical ability, and vied with Johnson in conversational gifts of a high order, which on every occasion he was ready to exercise. He could snatch an ignoble content out of the heart of misery, and seems to have had his most tranquil hours within prison walls, for he has written: "I am now more conversant with the Nine than ever, and if, instead of a Newgate bird, I may be allowed to be a bird of the Muses, I assure you, sir, I sing very freely in my cage; sometimes,

their patience by reflecting that they feel only those afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or those who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, shall be reminded that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible."

An episode in the life of Johnson, on which we love to dwell, is his association with the Thrales. He