

the Cavendish Society; a Life of Sir Humphrey Davy; Life of Professor John Reid, St. Andrews; Chemistry of the Stars; Chemistry of the Electric Telegraph; The Five Gateways of Knowledge; Researches on Colour Blindness; the volume on Chemistry in Chambers' Educational Course; besides numerous pamphlets and lectures. His sudden departure has caused a blank which will not be easily repaired, whether we look to the University and popular science, to the social circle, or to the cause of religion. He has rested from his labors, and his works do follow him. To his friend the Rev. D. Carins, in his dying moments, he expressed his assured faith in the merits of his Redeemer, and his latter end was peace.—*From the Edinburgh Courier.*

No 3. THOMAS DE QUINCEY, ESQ.

Mr. Thomas de Quincey died on 8th December at Edinburgh, having considerably passed the term of three score years and ten. Thomas De Quincey was born at Manchester in 1786. He was educated at Eton and Oxford. The biography of his early days may be found in his "Confession," and scattered through the pages of his other books. The "Confessions of an Opium Eater," the book by which De Quincey is best known, originally appeared in the old London Magazine in 1821. For some weeks past his health had been seriously affected; but, as he was frequently an invalid, alarm was not excited as to his condition till very lately, and the end, though it could not be said to be either sudden or premature, was yet so far unexpected. The Scotsman says that almost till the very last his perceptions were as vivid, his interest in knowledge and affairs as keen as ever; and while his bodily frame, wasted by suffering and thought, day by day faded and shrunk, his mind retained unimpaired its characteristic capaciousness, activity and acuteness. Within a week or two he talked readily, and with all that delicacy of discrimination of which his conversation partook equally with his writings, of such matters as occupied public attention; displaying so much of elasticity and power that even those who had the rare privilege and opportunity of seeing him in those latter days cannot be otherwise than startled and shocked by the seeming suddenness of his death. With the departure of Thomas De Quincey almost the very last of a brilliant band of men of letters, who illuminated the literary hemisphere of the first half of our century with starry lustre—differing each from each in glory, but all resplendent—is extinguished.—*Manchester Guardian, Dec. 10.*

No 4. THE SCHILLER FESTIVALS.

The centennial anniversary of the birth of Frederick Schiller has been celebrated throughout England, the United States and Canada with great enthusiasm. He is the most popular of the German poets, not even Goethe excepted. Schiller was born Nov, 10, 1759, at Marback, a town of Wurtemberg, a few miles from Stuttgart, on the banks of the Neckar. His father was a surgeon in the army of Wurtemberg, and possessed little but the emolument to be derived from his office. His son Friedrich was sent to school at Labwigsburg where he studied the Greek and Latin classics under the tuition of the celebrated Jahn. His father's restricted circumstances, however compelled him to gather the materials of his education under various masters, and to be left frequently to his own resources of self-culture. He was early distinguished for an exquisite sensibility and a love of nature. There is an anecdote told of his having been found, when quite a child, during a thunderstorm, perched on a branch of a tree, gazing at the sky and watching the flashes of lightning, and when he was reprimanded, replying that it was so beautiful he wished to see where it came from.

IX. Papers on Classical Subjects.

1. ANCIENT SHIELDS.

Extracts from a Paper recently read at the Canadian Institute by the Rev. John McCaul, LL.D., President of University College.

Dr. McCaul, at the commencement of this paper, said that the subject presented a wide field for research; and as he believed there were some misapprehensions on some points connected with it, whilst on others there was a total silence on the part of those who had examined it, the topic seemed to be suitable for bringing before the Institute. It was, however, too extensive to admit of the whole of it being discussed at one meeting; and he therefore thought it advisable to limit himself to the examination of Grecian shields and their characteristics. He need scarcely say that the main authority in considering this subject, was Homer. The shields mentioned by him were circular, with a radius of probably eighteen inches. He

uses *aspis* and *sakos* indifferently, but it appears from a passage in the Phœnissæ of Euripides, that there was a distinction in form. Perhaps the latter was oblong. Besides these there were other ancient Greek shields not alluded to by Homer; there were crescent-shaped and of other forms. The lecturer exhibited on a blackboard representations of the different shields in use by the Greeks; including the *aspis*, the *pelta*, the *gerron*, and the *thureos*. The shapes of shields, he might mention, were of great importance in determining the country of those who bore them. The lecturer here referred to the Carians, who had been disinterred at the lustration of Delos, the Ætolians who used the *sakos*, the *pelta* of the Thracians, and the *gerron* of the Persians. So far as to the shape; with reference to the material of which these defensive weapons were composed, we read of them in Homer as having been made of leather. The shield of Ajax, celebrated in the Iliad, was made of seven folds of hide and one of brass or bronze, or a mixture of copper and tin. The shields of Hector, Æneas and Sarpedon, were also of the same materials. Nestor's was mentioned as being made of gold. Agamemnon's shield was composed of ten circles of brass, with twenty bosses of tin, and one in the middle made of a metal called cyanus. The shield of Achilles, which was supposed to have been forged by Vulcan, was made of two layers of brass, two of tin, and one of gold; and what was extraordinary was, that it was the middle one that was of gold. The lecturer then considered the question of how the shields were carried, and said that in the Homeric era they were suspended by a belt around the neck. There were two passages in the Iliad where a word occurred which had been translated as "handles," but he questioned the accuracy of this translation and of the interpretation given by Heyne. It was distinctly stated by Herodotus that handles were invented by the Carians, and that the ancients, before that invention, had no appliances for the management of the shields but the belts. Much confusion had been produced by the indiscriminate use of *ochanon* and *porpax* by commentators, lexicographers, and scholiasts. It was evident from Plutarch that they were different, for Cleomenes directed the Spartans to carry the shield by the former and not by the latter. The last topic to which he would advert was the mode of decorating the shields. In Homer, Agamemnon's was adorned with the Gorgon's head, and around it personifications of Terror and Fear. The shield of Achilles was embellished with various representations, which the lecturer minutely described. Æschylus and Euripides had each given descriptions of the shields carried by the seven chieftains at Thebes. Some of them were decorated with figures, as if speaking, with representations of the words proceeding from their mouths. On one, that of Polynices, as described by Euripides, were moveable figures, representing the Potnian mares, put in motion by some internal mechanism. The reference to this suggested an enquiry into the knowledge of the ancients of *automata* and objects moved by internal machinery, but he had already occupied so much time, that he must decline the investigation however interesting. At the conclusion he was warmly applauded. [The lecture, which was a very interesting one, will be published in full in the journal of the Institute. It will, no doubt, be highly acceptable to all classical readers.]

2. REPASTS OF THE ANCIENTS.

A very remarkable peculiarity in the banquets of the ancients was, their not confining the resources of the table to the gratification of one sense alone. Having exhausted their invention in the confection of stimulants for the palate, they broke new ground, and called in another sense to their aid; and by the delicate application of odors and richly-distilled perfumes, these refined voluntaries aroused the fainting appetite, and added a more exquisite and ethereal enjoyment to the grosser pleasures of the board. The gratification of the sense of smelling (a sense held up with us in very unreserved neglect, probably on account of its great delicacy) was a subject of no little importance to the Romans. An attention to this delicate organ they might have learned from the East, where, from the remotest antiquity, perfumes were considered as one of the indispensable enjoyments of the higher class of society. The very nature of the climate might have led to this; for, under the influence of a burning sun, the stomach neither requires nor can support much of heavy and substantial food, nor are its demands by any means so pressing as in colder climes. It may not be altogether fanciful to suppose that in those fiery atmospheres strong and aromatic perfumes may possess some alimentary properties, and help in some measure to allay the cravings of appetite. At all events, such a supposition is not altogether out of place in the land of Persia and birds of paradise, which latter are said, according to the beautiful superstition of the country, to live upon the ethereal breath of flowers. However this may be, it is certain that the Romans considered flowers as forming a very essential article in their festival preparations; and it