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RICARDUS CORINENSIS :

A LITERARY MASKING OF THE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY.

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Mr. Richard Gough, in his introduction to the "Archæologia," which was destined to be the enduring repertory of English Antiquities, labours to establish a becoming age for the Society of Antiquaries itself. According to him, that brotherhood of antiquarian devotees had its origin in the great era of religious and intellectual revolution to which Queen Elizabeth's name is fitly applied, when men of the highest intellect, possessed by the new ideas of the age, were struggling for the world's emancipation from the thralldom of antiquity. In the year 1572, a few eminent English scholars, under the auspices of Archbishop Parker and Sir Robert Cotton, assembled at the house of the latter, and formed themselves into a society for the preservation of the ancient monuments of their country. The British Museum Library is the enduring memorial of the labours of one of those conservators of national antiquities, in an age of revolution. But it is to a far different age, and to a very diverse reign, we must turn, for the actual foundation of the Society of Antiquaries. Not in the earnest, progressive era of Queen Elizabeth, but in that most unearnest of centuries with which Queen Anne's name is fitly associated : a body of gentlemen, not less zealous, though of far inferior note to their precursors of the sixteenth century, began their meetings, in 1708, in the Young Devil Tavern, Fleet Street, London ; and established a society for the study of antiquities, which has since rendered valuable service to letters and national history. It was not, however, till 1718, that they were thoroughly organised, with a staff of office-bearers, and a regular record of their proceedings. But from this we learn that their first President was Peter Le Neve, Esq., Norroy King-at-Arms, and their first Secre-

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tary Dr. William Stukeley, a fitting type of the antiquarian enthusiast of that eighteenth century. He was still a layman, a Fellow of the College of Physicians, devoted to the study of the natural sciences, a zealous botanist, an ingenious experimenter in chemistry, and an active cooperator in many curious anatomical dissections, with Stephen Hales, a fellow member of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Dr. Stukeley settled in his native county of Lincolnshire as a medical practitioner, and acquired considerable professional reputation. But soon after he reached his fortieth year, his own health began to fail; and, on the persuasion, it is said, of Archbishop Wake, he abandoned the medical profession and took orders. Soon after, in 1729, he was presented, by the Lord Chancellor King, to the living of All Saints, in Stamford; and thenceforth he devoted his leisure to the gratification of his favourite taste for antiquarian research. Much of his spare time had been given to such studies even in earlier years, when his professional training, and the bent of his friend Hales' tastes, tempted him in other directions. So early as 1720, he published "An Account of a Roman Temple, and other Antiquities near Graham's Dike, in Scotland;" said "Roman Temple" being the famous Arthur's Oon, a singular bee-hive structure of squared masonry, twenty-eight feet in diameter, and with all its characteristics pointing to a very different age than that in which Roman temples were reared. A hint of the Scottish historian George Buchanan, sufficed for the theory that it was the *Templum Termini*, a sacellum reared on the limits of Roman rule. Dr. Stukeley giving his imagination full play, conceived of it as the work of Agricola, and dedicated to Romulus, the parent deity of Rome; and in his enthusiasm pronounced it to be a fac simile of "the famous Pantheon at Rome, before the noble portico was added to it by Marcus Agrippa." Other works followed in the same vein, dealing with Stonehenge, Abury, the Druids, and British antiquities in general. He could use his pencil, as well as his pen, with facility; and grudged no outlay in the issue of copiously illustrated folios and quartos, according to the fashion of that age. Hence his reputation was extended far and wide, as one foremost among the antiquarian authorities of his day.

But Stukeley's day was one in which antiquarian zeal was little tempered by critical judgment. The historian Gibbon, while turning to account his "Medallic History of Marcus Aurelius Valerius Carausius, Emperor of Britain," adds in a note: "I have used his materials, and

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rejected most of his fanciful conjectures." Few writers have more widely differed in every mental characteristic, than the calm, philosophic, sceptical historian of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and the fanciful, credulous, but enthusiastic author of the "Itinerarium Curiosum." He visited Oxford, in September, 1724, and one of its fellows, Thomas Hearne, has recorded the fact in his Diary, with this comment on his brother antiquary: "This Dr. Stukeley is a mighty conceited man, and it is observed by all I talked with that what he does hath no manner of likeness to the originals. He goes all by fancy. . . . In short, as he addicts himself to fancy altogether, what he does must have no regard among judicious and truly ingenuous men." A biographer in the "Penny Cyclopædia" sums up his character in this fashion: "No antiquarian ever had so lively, not to say licentious a fancy as Stukeley. The idea of the obscure, remote past, inflamed him like a passion. Most even of his descriptions are rather visions than sober relations of what would be perceived by an ordinary eye; and never, before or since, were such broad continuous webs of speculation woven out of little more than moonshine." An amiable enthusiast himself, he was well fitted to maintain in friendly cooperation the fellowship of antiquaries who, in that eighteenth century, set themselves to work, with characteristic enthusiasm, on coins, medals, seals, ancient monuments, records, rolls, genealogies, and manuscripts of all sorts; and was specially noticeable among the antiquarian fraternity, as one to whom a novice in the craft might turn for sympathy, without much danger of being troubled by critical doubts or questionings as to the genuineness of any plausible antique submitted to him. He was accordingly selected, in due time, as the confidant of an antiquarian discoverer, of a type peculiar to that eighteenth century; and has since owed his chief fame to the part he bore in the marvellous literary disclosure.

In the year 1743, in which Dr. Stukeley published his learned folio on "Abury, a Temple of the British Druids," the Princess Louisa, youngest daughter of George II., was married, at the age of nineteen, to Frederick, Crown Prince of Denmark, who, within less than three years thereafter, succeeded his father on the throne of Denmark and Norway, by the title of Frederick V. The English princess won universal good-will by her simple, unaffected manners, in striking contrast to the exclusiveness and formal etiquette which had prevailed during

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the previous reign. She gave an heir to the throne, in the Crown Prince, afterwards Christian VII. ; but within two years the Danes had to lament her death, in giving birth to another son.

Among the attendants who constituted the retinue of this royal daughter of England, there went to Copenhagen one Bertram, a silk dyer, and with him, if not earlier, his son, Charles Julius, a youth who by-and-by achieved for himself, in very questionable fashion, a notable reputation among European scholars.

The age was one of much literary ingenuity, and of not a little successful imposture. The prevailing ideas in reference to historical evidence were so vague and crude, that the most barefaced literary frauds obtained ready acceptance even among scholars and critics ; and their exposure brought little or no discredit on their perpetrators. One well-known example of literary masquerading will suffice to illustrate this curious phase of the eighteenth century. Lady Wardlaw, of Pitreavie, the wife of a Scottish Baronet, found, according to her own account, in a vault of Dunfermline Abbey, or elsewhere, an ancient manuscript containing the greater part of the heroic ballad of "Hardyknute." This was published in 1719 as a genuine antique, at the joint expense of Lord President Forbes and Sir Gilbert Elliot, of Minto ; and figured at a later date, in Percy's "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," as "a Scottish fragment : a fine morsel of heroic poetry." After a time some less credulous critics began to suspect the modern authorship ; and Lady Wardlaw, without distinctly admitting it, practically confirmed their judgment by producing additional stanzas. Still later, Lord Hailes—who had persisted in the opinion that the ballad was ancient, though retouched and much enlarged by its professed discoverer,—is said by Bishop Percy to have communicated extracts of a letter from Sir John Bruce, of Kinross, the year after his death in 1766, "which plainly proved the pretended discoverer of the fragment of *Hardyknute* to have been himself." According to the earlier account, Lady Wardlaw "pretended she had found this poem, written on shreds of paper employed for what is called the bottoms of clues." But Lord Hailes furnishes this quotation from the letter asserted to have been addressed by Sir John Bruce to Lord Binning : "I send you a true copy of the manuscript I found some weeks ago in a vault at Dunfermline. It is written on vellum, in a fair gothic character, but so much defaced by time, as you'll find, that the tenth part is not

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legible." Sir John Bruce, a brother-in-law of Lady Wardlaw, was already in his grave, so no questions could be asked. Whoever penned the extract, most probably meant nine-tenths, when he referred to "the tenth part." But to whomsoever its authorship be ascribed, the letter was not more genuine than the parchment it referred to.

The poem itself had long before issued from the press of James Watson, of Edinburgh, in the form of a twelve page folio tract; but later editions include additional stanzas, over and above those first produced by Lady Wardlaw in practical acknowledgment of her title to the authorship of the whole. To the versatile pen of this little-headed Scottish poetess, Dr. Robert Chambers has since ascribed the production of "Sir Patrick Spens," "Gil Morrice," "Young Waters," "Gilderoy," and others: the cream of Scottish ballads, hitherto regarded as genuine antiques, and printed by Percy as such, though not always without unacknowledged patchings, or variations and additions on the authority of his ancient folio MS.

Or let us take an example among the foremost critics of that day. The hero of the "Dunciad," Lewis Theobald, had his revenge on his satirist, by publishing a critical edition of Shakespeare's dramas which completely eclipsed that of Pope, and is still recognised as a valuable addition to Shakesperian textual criticism. But in 1728, he printed, as a genuine play of Shakespeare, recovered from an original manuscript: "The Double Falsehood," a worthless production, which was nevertheless introduced on the stage, and received with general admiration. The following passage, so foreign alike to the style and rhythm of Shakespeare, was specially singled out for general commendation:—

"Strike up, my masters;
But touch the strings with a religious softness;
Teach sound to languish through the night's dull ear,
Till melancholy start from her lazy couch,
And carelessness grow convert to attention."

The vanity of the real author was not proof against the seductive applause lavished on these choice lines. He confessed that they were his own, but at the same time persisted in accrediting Shakespeare with the rest. The title of "The Double Falsehood" most aptly preserves the memory of this characteristic incident in the history of the literature of a period, when vanity, and a craving for notoriety on any terms, gave birth to a singular brood of literary bastards.

In striving to elucidate the literary history of that period, the modern editor gets more and more confounded between his reluctance to believe that Lords and Ladies, Bishops, Scholars, Knights and Lord Justices, deliberately penned forgeries, and persisted in contradictory falsehoods: and the impossibility of deducing from their statements any honest version of their story. Theobald, Macpherson, Walpole, Chatterton, and others of minor note, all excited the interest of credulous contemporaries by the same means, until such forgeries of the eighteenth century have come to constitute a highly characteristic department of the literature of that age.

Young Bertram left England in the suite of the Princess Louisa, at a time when such spurious offspring of antiquarian zeal found everywhere an undoubting welcome. "Hardyknute" was then in as high esteem as the "Nibelangen Lied" was destined to be; though the first instalment of that genuine Germanic liad, printed in 1757, attracted little attention. For years after, whatever interest he maintained in the literature of his native land, was rewarded by the perusal of ballads, heroic epics, and other products of the same mint, possessing at times genuine merit of their own; but deriving a fictitious value, to which their chief importance was due, from some romantic story of recovered parchment, or antique record. There was nothing of the poet in the boy: or a Norse Saga, after the model of "Hardyknute," would have been the fittest discovery among the archives of Copenhagen; but he had the ambition to rank among the discoverers of his day, and achieved his triumph in a more enduring fashion. The genuineness of his professed discovery remained unchallenged for nearly a century, nor is it wholly discredited even now. But its reputation was chiefly associated with its English editor, and little can be ascertained relating to its discoverer, beyond what Dr. Stukeley has put on record. Slight, however, as are the additions recoverable, they are sufficient to give a novel aspect to the history of the most mischievous of all the literary forgeries of the eighteenth century.

When the boy-poet Chatterton set to work, after the fashion of his age, on the creation of fifteenth century epics and interludes, his old poet-priest, Rowley, was as genuine an offspring of his invention as the poems ascribed to his pen. But the imaginative faculty was weak in Bertram; and it better suited the purpose he had in view to invent, for an actual chronicler of the fourteenth century, the spurious contribution

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In the year 1350, when Abbot Nicholas de Lythington ruled over the Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter, Westminster, Richard of Cirencester, a native of the ancient city in Gloucestershire from whence his name is derived, entered that Monastery, at an early age. Hence, when the fame of his literary labours had given importance to his name, he was sometimes referred to as the Monk of Westminster. Nothing is known of his family; though it has been inferred from the education he had received, in an age when facilities for the attainment of any high intellectual culture were beyond the reach of the people at large, that his relatives must have belonged to a superior rank in society. Education, however, was then exclusively in the hands of the Church; and he may have been admitted to the enjoyment of its advantages in return for his own eager desire for knowledge. His name occurs in documents of various dates, pertaining to the monastery, up to the closing year of the century. He obtained in 1391, a licence to visit Rome, from Abbot William, of Colchester, who records therein the virtues and piety of the literary monk, and his regularity in fulfilling all the requirements of Benedictine rule. He appears to have been an inmate of the Abbey infirmary in 1401, where he died in that or the following year; and doubtless his ashes lie in the neighbouring cloisters, outside that Poet's Corner to which the ambition of England's later generations of literary men turns in seeking for death's rarest honours. The genuine historical work of Richard of Cirencester is his "Speculum Historiale de Gestis regum Angliæ." His other authentic works are theological: his "Tractatus super Symbolum Majus at Minus;" and his "Liber de Officiis Ecclesiasticis." But whatever rightful merit pertained to him, has been eclipsed by the spurious reputation which has attached to his name since the middle of the eighteenth century, as a monk of such enlightened zeal, as to have ransacked the libraries and ecclesiastical establishments of England, and explored its ancient remains, with a view to the elucidation of Roman Britain.

The fault of the Tractate, viewed simply as an ingenious invention, is that it is too good for what it professes to be. To Whitaker, Roy, Pinkerton, Chalmers, and all later Roman antiquaries, the idea of being able to retrace the Watling, Iknield, or Ermyn Street, and

review their favourite objects of study under the guidance of an intelligent observer of the fourteenth century, was possessed of too fascinating a charm to be lightly rejected. Dr. Bruce searches in vain for any trace, along the line of the Roman Wall, of what was abundantly manifest to Horsley little more than a century before. What would he not give to know how it looked to the eyes of the good monk, Richard, in the year 1350, before the waste of five centuries had done its work. To all appearance this was the grand consummation actually achieved for English antiquaries by the discovery at Copenhagen, in 1747, of the MS. treatise "De Situ Britanniae," to which Richard of Cirencester has ever since owed his celebrity. If he did surpass himself, it was due to the virtue of his theme and the character of his guides. Whitaker thus expresses the feelings begot in his mind by a comparison of the novel treatise with Richard's genuine history of Britain from the days of Hengist: "the hope of meeting with discoveries as great in the British and Saxon history, as he has given us concerning the previous period, induced me to examine the work. But my expectations were greatly disappointed. The learned scholar and the deep antiquarian I found sunk into an ignorant novice, sometimes the copier of Huntingdon, but generally the transcriber of Geoffrey. Deprived of his Roman guides, Richard showed himself as ignorant and as injudicious as any of his illiterate contemporaries about him." Yet for all this, not the slightest suspicion of fraud seems to have suggested itself to the acutest of such critics.

Dr. Stukeley was still residing at his Lincolnshire parsonage, when, as he tells us, in the summer of 1747, he "received a letter from Charles Julius Bertram, Professor of the English tongue in the Royal Marine Academy of Copenhagen, a person unknown to me. The letter was polite, full of compliments, as usual with foreigners; expressing much candor and respect to me: being only acquainted with some works of mine published. The letter was dated the year before; for all that time he hesitated in sending it. Soon after my receiving it, I sent a civil answer; which produced another letter, with a prolix and elaborate Latin epistle enclosed, from the famous Mr. Gramm, privy-counsellor and chief librarian to his Danish Majesty: a learned gentleman who had been in England, and visited our Universities. He was Mr. Bertram's great friend and patron. I answered that letter, and it

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created a correspondence between us. Among other matters, Mr. Bertram mentioned a manuscript, in a friend's hands, of Richard of Westminster, being a history of Roman Britain, which he thought a great curiosity; and an ancient map of the island annexed."

Nothing could be better devised for securing a reception to the reputed discovery. Every nook and cranny of Roman England had already been ransacked with loving zeal by the Lincolnshire antiquary; imagination had been called in where facts failed, to eke out a coherent narrative; but still much remained obscure. But here was the politely appreciative foreign savant, full of respect for the Doctor and praise of his works; and, in the midst of all his pleasant "candour and respect," dropping incidentally the hint of a recovered history of Roman Britain, as it presented itself to the eyes of an antiquarian brother of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter, in the year 1350, with all that the waste of five centuries had since defaced and obliterated.

Soon after the receipt of Bertram's first letter, Dr. Stukeley was presented to the Rectory of St. George the Martyr, Queen Square, London; and so was permanently established within easy access to his favourite literary associates, whose meetings were now held in the Mitre Tavern, Fleet Street, until their removal, in 1753, to a house of their own in Chancery Lane. The stimulus of such society speedily manifested its influence. He had not, apparently, while resident at Stamford, fully appreciated the advantages of a history of Roman Britain, as studied by an observer of the fourteenth century; or been, as he says, "solicitous about Richard of Westminster." But, as he writes in 1747, "in November, that year, the Duke of Montagu, who was pleas'd to have a favour for me, drew me from a beloved retirement, where I proposed to spend the remainder of my life;" and so he goes on to state: "when I became fix'd in London, I thought it proper to cultivate my Copenhagen correspondence, and I received another Latin letter from Mr. Gramm; and soon after an account of his death, and a print of him in profile."

Of his Danish Majesty's privy-counsellor and chief librarian, a word or two more may be needful before the close; but it was not till after the news of his death that the correspondence with Bertram was renewed, and his great literary discovery actually transcribed. The discussions with the Gales, Talman, Vertue, and other antiquaries at the Mitre meetings, soon fanned the old zeal into renewed fervour; and, as Dr. Stukeley tells us, he "began to think of the manuscript, and desired

some little extract from it; then an imitation of the hand-writing, which I showed to my late friend, Mr. Casley, Keeper in the Cotton Library, who immediately pronounced it to be 400 years old. I pressed Mr. Bertram to get the manuscript into his hands, if possible; which at length, with some difficulty he accomplished; and on my solicitation sent me, in letters, a transcript of the whole, and at last a copy of the map: he having an excellent hand in drawing. Upon perusal, I seriously solicited him to print it, as the greatest treasure we now can boast of in this kind of learning."

The date of the reception of the completed transcript and map, we learn from Dr. Stukeley's Journal, extracts from which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1835. He thus writes, under date, March 1st, 1748-9: "I rec'd from my friend, Mr. Bertram of Copenhagen, a copy of his curious MS. of *Ric'us Westmonasteriensis* with the map—t'is a most valuable curiosity to the antiquity of Brittan, being compiled out of old manuscripts in Westminster Library, now lost;" and by the 31st of the same month he is able to record in his journal: "I finished the translation of *Ricardus Westmonasteriensis*."

Whatever may have been the cause of Dr. Stukeley's indifference on first receiving Bertram's hint of his reputed discovery, his zeal now became unbounded; and the reception of his labours by European scholars and historians left him no reason to doubt that it was expended in a worthy cause. In 1757, he published the "Itinerary," with an abstract of the remaining portions of the work. In professed obedience to his urgent entreaties, Bertram himself, in the following year, put the whole to press, and published at Copenhagen, a volume in which Richard figures alongside of Gildas and Nennius, under the title "*Britannicarum Gentium Historiæ Antiquæ Scriptores tres: Ricardus Corinensis, Gildas Badonicus, Nennius Banchoensis, &c.*" The book was in immediate demand, and, if only genuine,—which nobody then doubted,—well merited the most careful study.

The Itinerary contains eighteen Iters, professedly compiled by Richard from certain fragments written by a Roman General,—supposed by Stukeley, in defiance of all possibilities, to have been Agricola;—and from Ptolemy and other authors. Richard, indeed, in a style wonderfully unlike that of a monkish historian, takes credit to himself for having altered the work, as he hopes for the better, with their assistance. The Itinerary of Antoninus, the most ample record on the subject, contains references to one hundred and thirteen Roman stations, while

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Richard mentions one hundred and seventy-six. To the Scottish antiquary his additions are peculiarly tempting: for he fills up the whole map of Roman Scotland to the Moray Firth, and plants a municipium on the site of Inverness. No wonder that the Copenhagen edition soon became scarce. A third edition, forming part of Dr. Stukeley's "Itinerarium Curiosum" in two amply illustrated folio volumes, was issued after his death. In 1809, Hatcher published another edition, with a translation, commentary, maps, and fac-simile of the MS. A reprint of this followed in 1841; and so recently as 1848, it was once more reproduced, as one of "Six Old English Chronicles," edited, with illustrative notes, for "Bohn's Antiquarian Library," by J. A. Giles, D.C.L., late Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford: without a hint of any suspicion of its genuineness.

The time for challenge had seemingly gone by. Authenticated by Gibbon and other historians; by Whitaker, Roy, and the whole fellowship of antiquaries: it seemed befitting later editors to elucidate the text, with no further challenge than consisted with the probable shortcomings of a monkish antiquary of the middle ages. Yet the history of the original discovery curiously illustrates the uncritical credulity of that eighteenth century. Bertram, an unknown foreigner, informed Stukeley of the MS. as then "in a friend's hand." By-and-by he is able to state that, not without some difficulty, it has been transferred from its nameless owner to himself. His friend and patron, the privy-councillor Gramm, possibly left on the mind of Dr. Stukeley the impression, after perusal of his "prolix and elaborate Latin epistle," that he had seen it. But the privy-councillor died before the MS. was transcribed; Bertram himself died in 1765, and nobody from that day till this ever saw it, or heard of any one who had done so.

Nevertheless, this work continued, for nearly a century, to be regarded among British scholars as the indispensable hand-book of the Roman antiquary, and still forms a part of some of his most useful text-books. Mr. Ackerman has printed it in his "Archæological Index," as the legitimate sequence to Ptolemy, Antoninus, and the Notitia. Still later, Mr. Thomas Wright has followed his example, and in the appendix to his "Celt, Roman, and Saxon," after giving the portion of the Antonine Itinerary relating to Britain, he adds in succession the "Itinerary of Richard," and the "Ravenna List." When his edition of 1852 appeared, the authority of Richard's Tractate had become matter of discussion, and so the author inserts a saving clause to lighten

his critical responsibility. Richard's description of Britain, he says, "appears to be made up of very discordant materials. How much was really the work of a monk of Westminster, and how much we owe to the modern editor, Bertram of Copenhagen, it is not easy to say, for the manuscript has very strangely disappeared. It appears, however, that the old monk had before him a Roman itinerary similar to that of Antoninus, or perhaps a map, from which he extracted the part relating to Britain. That this Itinerary was not invented by Bertram seems clear from the circumstance that his roads, though they are not always the same as those in Antoninus, have been traced where he traces them, and that their existence was certainly not known in Bertram's time;" and so having thus asserted the genuineness of the Itinerary, he proceeds to insert it as the legitimate link between that ascribed to Antoninus Augustus, assigned to A.D. 320, and another derived from the Cosmography of the anonymous writer of Ravenna, compiled not later than the seventh century.

This process of inserting the spurious document between two genuine ones was first adopted by Bertram himself; and while the authentic Gildas and Nennius, selected by him for the purpose, gave an air of genuineness to their new found associate; the reputed monkish antiquary of the fourteenth century appeared to no slight advantage alongside of those credulous Celtic chroniclers. But, in reality the forging of such an Itinerary as Bertram produced required neither learning nor ingenuity. "It appears that the old monk had before him a Roman itinerary similar to that of Antoninus," says the author of the "Celt, Roman, and Saxon," and so it "seems clear" to him that Bertram could not have invented it. But what if Bertram, himself, had the Antonine Itinerary before him, along with any map of Roman Britain, the feat of making such a one as he produced to Dr. Stukeley lay within the compass of any ordinary school boy's capacity for invention. The Itinerary is nothing more than a series of local names, arranged in columns, in geographical sequence, with the distances in thousand paces, stated in Roman numerals: though this indispensable requirement of an itinerary is omitted by Richard whenever he is in more than usual uncertainty; or, as Mr. Thomas Wright says: "The text of Richard's Diaphragmata is in some parts imperfect, from the damaged state of the manuscript." In reality the whole *Iter Britanniarum* of Antoninus is engrafted into Richard's Itinerary, with the exception of less than a dozen towns. The series are broken occa-

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sionally, and sometimes inverted; but just where the measurements of new roads are in request the manuscript is sure to fail. But indeed the only manuscript ever ascertained to have been seen by Danish or English antiquary is the Bertram correspondence with Dr. Stukeley. Its transcriber was not even put to the trouble of rendering his letters in fourteenth century characters.

The manuscripts of Antoninus are numerous; but the discrepancies in the distances given in different MSS., consequent on the liability to error in the transcription of arbitrary numerals, greatly detract from its value; so that a genuine itinerary of later date, with trustworthy measurements; or even an accurate transcript of an early manuscript of the *Itinerarium* ascribed to Antoninus, would be an important addition to Roman geography. No one, however, has pretended to accord credit Richard with this virtue; but in lieu of it, he is appealed to for novel additions to the elder itinerary.

"Two imperfect itineraries," says Mr. Thomas Wright, "giving the names and distances from each other of the towns and stations on the principal military roads, have been preserved." The first of these is that of Antoninus; "the other is contained in the work of Richard of Cirencester, and is supposed to have been copied by a monk of the fourteenth century, from an older itinerary or map. They differ little from each other; but our faith in Richard's Itinerary is strengthened by the circumstance that nearly all the roads he gives which are not in Antoninus have been ascertained to exist." The ground of faith, thus indicated, in Richard, is vague enough when analysed; for the most he has done is to supply a string of names, with, or without specific distances, between certain well-known Roman towns. Enthusiastic antiquaries have done the rest. The names supplied by him have been appropriated to sites of Roman camps, stations, or traces of earth-works of any kind: but while the names in the *Notitia* have been repeatedly localised by their discovery on inscribed altars and tablets, or on vessels, such as the famous bronze Rudge Cup: no single name among all the places mentioned for the first time in Richard's Itinerary has been verified by such means. Without this, the appropriation of his names to intermediate points between well-ascertained Roman stations can furnish no corroboration of his text.

Nevertheless, the foremost authorities among Roman antiquaries of our own day have been no less ready than General Roy was, a century before, to adopt Richard as their guide. The history, indeed, of the

eager reception,—without one dissentient voice,—of a professed manuscript of the fourteenth century, unheard of before; unseen, so far as now appears, by anybody; and ascribed to a monk whose chronicle and theological writings were well known; but whose name had never before been heard of in connection with so remarkable a work: is highly interesting as an illustration of the crude ideas as to literary or historical evidence which then prevailed.

As to Dr. Stukeley, his delight at the discovery of the treasure he had been privileged to introduce to the learned world was unbounded. Apologising for the short-comings of his earlier labours and researches in the field of Britanno-Roman antiquities, he thus introduces the new-found luminary by whose beams all doubt and obscurities are to be dissipated: “the more readily, therefore, I can excuse myself, in regard to imperfections in that work [the *Itinerarium Curiosum*], as I had not sight of our author's treatise, Richard of Cirencester, at that time absolutely unknown. Since, then, I have had the good fortune to save this most invaluable work of his, I could not refrain from contributing somewhat toward giving an account of it and of its author:” and so—after once more felicitating himself and all who share in his literary and antiquarian sympathies, on having reason to congratulate themselves “that the present work of Richard is happily rescued from oblivion, and most likely from destruction;”—he proceeds to narrate the mode by which his knowledge of it was acquired.

The “*De Situ Britanniae*” was recognised from the first as a compilation; was indeed professedly set forth by its author as such. “Compiled out of old manuscripts in Westminster Library, now lost,” says Dr. Stukeley; “the old monk had before him a Roman itinerary similar to that of Antoninus,” says Mr. Thomas Wright. Of ancient authors he, of course, makes use. Diodorus, Pliny, Cæsar, Tacitus, &c., are quoted: and with such minute accordance with certain texts—as we shall find,—as to furnish very amusing anachronisms for a monk of the fourteenth century. Solinus, the Latin geographer, is followed *verbatim* in the opening sentence, as elsewhere, without reference or acknowledgement. That, however, an old monk might perhaps be allowed to do without challenge. But when he betrays a like familiarity with Camden; reproduces hints of Horsley; and even suggests a suspicion whether he may not have been a borrower from Stukeley himself: any faith in the authenticity of an ancient manuscript of the *De Situ Britanniae*, becomes impossible.

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A school of Roman antiquaries, however, was at work in that eighteenth century. with much learning and zeal, but with still more credulity. Sir Walter Scott has pictured them with graphic humour in his immortal Antiquary, with his "Essay upon Castrametation, with some particular remarks upon the vestiges of ancient fortifications lately discovered by the Author at the Kaim of Kinprunes:" the supposed *Castra pruinis* of Claudian. Agricola was the central figure of all their speculations; and Tacitus the authority on whose narrative their discoveries and speculations were ever throwing new light. In the midst of such seductive toils, the discovery of Richard's manuscript, was like the lost books of Livy to the historian of early Rome. The acutest among the critical investigators of the age—though engaged in controversies carried on with a bitterness happily unknown to modern literary dissentions,—concurred in welcoming the Benedictine's Itinerary; and so ingeniously adapted its vaguest hints to their own speculations and discoveries, that for nearly three quarters of a century, no doubt, was raised as to Bertram's good faith in the reputed discovery.

Foremost among those who thus gave confirmation to Richard's treatise on ancient British geography, by identifying its sites and stations with their own discoveries, was the distinguished author of "The Military Antiquities of the Romans in North Britain." Major-General Roy had served as an officer of engineers under the Duke of Cumberland, in his Scottish Campaign of 1745. He was employed in the surveys and military works suggested by the events of that critical period; and was subsequently commissioned to construct a map of Scotland from actual survey. In doing so he made careful and accurate drawings of Roman camps, roads, and other earth-works: the whole of which, with his descriptive narrative, furnished the materials for a costly folio printed at the expense of the Society of Antiquaries of London, in 1791, under the comprehensive title of "The Military Antiquities of the Romans in North Britain; and particularly their ancient system of castrametation: illustrated from vestiges of the camps of Agricola existing there. Hence his march from South into North Britain is in some degree traced; comprehending also a treatise, wherein the ancient geography of that part of the island is rectified, chiefly from the lights furnished by Richard of Cirencester."

The work of General Roy is, and ever will be, an invaluable contribution to the history of the period of Roman occupation of Britain. It furnishes accurate surveys of many important earth-works, since

defaced or wholly destroyed; and by associating the name of Richard with the accurate and trustworthy record of his own surveys and measurements, the supposed monkish antiquary was presented anew to the learned world with credentials scarcely admitting of challenge by any ordinary critic.

Gibbon discriminated between the "fanciful conjectures" of Stukeley and the numismatic materials accumulated by him in his "Medallic History;" but of Richard and his "*De Situ Britannia*," he says: "he shows a genuine knowledge of antiquity very extraordinary for a monk of the fourteenth century." No wonder, therefore, that such historians as Lingard and Lappenberg; and a whole century of Roman antiquaries: have appealed undoubtingly to the monkish chronicler. Whitaker in his "History of Manchester," and Stuart in his "Caledonia Romana," deal with him as an undoubted and valuable authority. Ritson, the keenest of literary censors, accepts his treatise unchallenged. Roy says of him, "it is evident that Richard had borrowed very considerably from the Alexandrian geographer; yet there is one part of his work, namely, that including the *Diaphragmata* [*i. e.*, the Itinerary], which is quite new and curious, and carries along with it the appearance of being truly genuine." Nearly every English writer on Roman history or antiquities in the latter half of the eighteenth century refers to it in like fashion, as a valuable addition to the materials at his command. Stuart makes no distinction between the provinces of Roman Britain recorded in the "Notitia Imperii" and that of *Vespasiana*, which rests on the sole authority of Richard, and spread, according to the author of the "*Caledonia Romana*," "from the barrier of Antoninus northward, and was bounded, as is supposed, by the great valley through which now passes the Caledonian Canal;" so also Mr. Charles Roach Smith, one of the most zealous among the Roman antiquaries of our own day, uses Richard's Itinerary as a safe guide to Roman Britain; and in his excellent work devoted to "the Antiquities of Richborough, Reculver, and Lyme, in Kent," unhesitatingly employs him to correct, or supplement the geography of Ptolemy, and the Itinerary of Antoninus. The latter, according to his received text, makes *Dunrobrivæ*, or Rochester, thirty-seven miles distant from *Londinium*; whilst Richard assigns only twenty-seven miles. But Mr. C. R. Smith accounts for it by assuming for the former an indirect route; and finds in "the apparent discrepancy one of the internal evidences of the authenticity of this writer."

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It need not excite our wonder that what is thus set forth by the highest antiquarian authorities, is taught without hesitation in schools and colleges. The maps provided for them are supplemented with names derived from Richard's Itinerary; and the authoritative book of reference on Ancient Geography produced under the editorship of Dr. William Smith, presents to every student of Roman Britain a text in which Richard of Cirencester amends Ptolemy, overrides Tacitus, and mingles truth and fable in inextricable confusion.

The difficulties of the Romano-British antiquary have been perplexing enough; but once he fully awakes to the worthlessness of this long accepted authority, the complexities attendant on his researches will be wonderfully multiplied: when he is compelled to be on his guard in every reference to his authorities, for more than a century subsequent to the year 1748, lest he too be cheated with the chaff they have thus persistently mingled with the true grains of knowledge.

So recently as 1858, Mr. Henry MacLauchlan's "Survey of the Roman Wall" issued from the press, in fulfilment of the liberal purpose of the late Duke of Northumberland. There Richard of Cirencester is referred to, along with Nennius and Bede, without a doubt being hinted as to the one being less genuine than the other; and on the elaborately executed maps of the survey the names of Roman stations are taken as freely from Richard as from any other authority. The same is true of the maps of the Ordnance Survey; of Mr. C. C., Babbington's Map of Roman Cambridgeshire; and indeed of nearly every map of Roman Britain published during the present century.

So far, then, it is obvious that, if the "De Situ Britanniae," ascribed to Richard of Cirencester be indeed one of the literary forgeries of the eighteenth century, produced in that age of perverse ingenuity which gave birth to Hardyknute, Ossian, Rowley, and other poetic creations of the same class: its fabricator had his abundant reward. His success is, indeed, without a parallel in the history of literary frauds: unless we go back to a time little less modern than that of the Westminster monk, when Ingulf's reputed History of his Abbey of Croyland, and its Saxon charters,—including the *Golden Charter* of Ethelbald, resplendent with illuminations wholly unknown in Saxon times;—were produced in A.D. 1415, by Prior Richard, to the discomfiture of his opponents, when prosecuting a suit in the King's Court, against those who were treating his ecclesiastical sentence of excommunication with open contempt. Hickes, in his *Dissertatio Epistolaris*, inclines to

cast the odium of their forgery on Abbot Ingulfus himself, who died A.D. 1109. Sir Francis Palgrave thinks both History and Charters no older than the end of the thirteenth, or first half of the fourteenth century. But Mr. H. T. Riley, in his "History and Charters of Ingulfus considered," (*Archæol. Journ.*) fixes on Prior Richard himself as contriver, forger, and producer of the fraudulent documents: not as a literary hoax; but as deliberately forged evidence in the prosecution of a suit in the Courts of Henry V. at Westminster.

Such legal forgeries appear to have been no less characteristic of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than the literary ones of Macpherson and Ireland were of their later age. Their manufacture had become a regular trade; and not only spurious Royal Charters, but even Papal Bulls, could be had to order: such as those ascribed to the Popes Honorius and Sergius I., produced by the Prior of Barnwell, as papal delegate for Pope Martin V. in 1430, and still inscribed on the Great Register of the University of Cambridge.

The History and Charters of Croyland Abbey were prepared by its prior with a graver criminal intent than the MS. of his reputed Westminster namesake. Both achieved the amplest success that their forgers could desire; but the discrediting of the former is no more than a curious question of antiquarian research, whereas the latter has not wholly ceased even now to sully the pure stream of historical evidence. Let us then review the grounds on which it has at length been displaced from its long accredited position as an indisputable authority on the traces of the Roman occupation of Britain; and follow out the researches which first cast suspicion on a treatise appealed to without hesitation from the days of Gibbon almost to our own. The Itinerary, itself, as has been already said, was a simple enough invention, though now it is the only part of the work for which any defence is attempted. The Commentary consists of two books the first of which extends to eight chapters. Book II. breaks off, in a fragmentary condition, in its second chapter. The narrative is, for the most part, prosaic enough to have proceeded from the Benedictine scriptorium; but in his seventh chapter the old monk is represented as thrown into some doubt about the profitableness of antiquarian researches. His Abbot had, it would seem, taken him to task for wasting the precious hours of life, all too brief for occupations that ought to engross the thoughts of a cloistered Benedictine, on what were only fit to delude the world with unmeaning trifles. Richard

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enters on the defence of his labours in an orthodox fashion which seems about as much of an anachronism as his antiquarian zeal. He yields, however, to the good Abbot's remonstrance, lest he should indeed merit the title of an unprofitable servant, and hastens to bring his work to a close. "The following Itinerary," he says, "is derived from fragments left by [a Roman General. Its order is in some instances changed, according to Ptolemy and others: it is hoped for the better;" and so he proceeds to treat of the ninety-two cities of the Britons.

Ptolemy, Antoninus, and other available authorities have been freely used and improved upon. *Vespasiana*, for example, is a province affirmed to have been formed in the time of Agricola out of a region to the north of the Antonine wall, conquered in the reign of Domitian; but of which Agricola's own son-in-law and biographer says nothing. Among the Roman Stations in Richard's fourteenth Iter, "Ad Isca per glebon lindum usque," is *Alauna*, mentioned by Ptolemy as a town of the *Damnii*, in Warwickshire, with its modern name of Alchester. But there is another Alchester, or Alcester, in Oxfordshire, also celebrated as the scene of Roman discoveries. The former of those is stated in Baxter's Glossary to have been called "Ellencester," by Mathew Paris; and so Richard—it might almost seem blundering over Baxter's *Glossarium Antiquitatum Britannicarum* of 1733,—makes out of the wrong Alchester his *Ælia Castra*; which properly belonged to a wholly different Iter. Again, the establishment of another province, that of *Valentia*, erected by Theodosius, about A.D. 369, is ascribed to Constantine, who died thirty-two years before. In the Ninth Iter, "Ad montem Grampium," all Scottish antiquaries were charmed with the promised identification of the famous *Mons Grampius* of Galgacus. But the location given to it would in no way harmonize with their theories; and, if modern critics are to be believed, monk Richard anticipated a blunder of the printing press when he adopted the popular name: for Tacitus, according to the most trustworthy MSS., wrote *Groupius*, not *Grampius*.

The first doubts cast on the authenticity of the "De Situ Britanniae" of Richard of Cirencester, were set forth in a document issued by the English Historical Society in 1838, as reasons which guided the Council in omitting it from their republication of ancient materials of English History. But the judgment was not a unanimous one; and research was encouraged, in the hope that the discovery of an ancient manu-

script of the work might still serve to remove all incredulity. But meanwhile Dr. Carl Wex, a distinguished German scholar engaged on a revised edition of the *Agricola* of Tacitus, on turning to Richard for the elucidation of his text, was surprised by the discovery that the reputed occupant of a Benedictine cell in the monastery of St. Peter's Westminster, in 1350, had systematically adopted readings traceable to an edition of Tacitus printed at Venice more than a hundred years after his time, and supplemented by the conjectural emendations of later editors. A careless compositor of A.D. 1497 for example, has in setting up the passage (cap. 16), "quod nisi Paulinus cognito provinciae motu subvenisset," &c., repeated two letters thus, *co cognito*. The conjectural emendation by an editor of the following century of *eo cognito* was adopted as the reading of subsequent editions; and on turning to Richard, he is found to have anticipated the double blunder before compositors or typographical errors had a being! Similar examples abound. Bertram's ingenious monk of the fourteenth century has an intuitive perception of all conceivable misreadings, and anticipates everywhere the corrupt text of the seventeenth century. Cumulative evidence of this kind, by which the minutest typographical blunders, and their conjectural emendations by later editors, are all found in a professed MS. of the fourteenth century, ought to suffice as a settlement of the question. That a Westminster monk of 1350 should find Tacitus and all other classical works at his elbow, might of itself surprise us; but that he should quote the blunders of modern printers can only be reconciled with any probability by assuming the all-comprehensive misreading of 1350 for 1750.

In 1846 Dr. Carl Wex embodied the prolegomena of his edition of the *Agricola* of Tacitus—in so far as these refer to The Tractate on Britain,—in an article published in the *Rheinisches Museum*, at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, in which he is by no means complimentary to "Stukeleio et anglicis antiquariis," in reference to their championship of this masquerading monk of the eighteenth century.

Mr. Arthur Hussey, in 1853, drew attention, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, to the spurious character of the work, and indicated Camden as the source of much of its materials. More recently, Mr. B. B. Woodward, the learned curator of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, has followed out an independent series of researches no less curious and conclusive. If it surpasses every probability that a monk of the fourteenth century should be found anticipating the cumulative blunders,

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and the latest misprints of ill-edited classics : the marvel is little less when he is shown to have been beforehand in like manner with the conjectures and bold hypotheses of Camden. We learn from the *Notitia Imperii* the names of the five provinces of Britain, but for the relative position or boundaries of, at least, three out of the five, we are left wholly to conjecture. Roman antiquaries have accordingly shifted their localities according to the theories they advocated ; and Camden, among the rest, has his hypothesis : anticipated as a demonstrable geographical distribution of the Roman divisions of the island, in Richard's Tractate. To those he does, indeed, add *Vespasiana*, apparently as his own entirely novel contribution to Roman geography ; but even this Mr. Woodward conceives to be traceable to a hint of the great Elizabethan antiquary.

Camden assumes a river *Urus* on which to place *Eburacum*, or York, but Richard already had it. Out of Ptolemy's *Trisanton* he constructs, by means of a false etymology from *Hants*, a word *Antona*, and applies it to the River Itchen ; but the old monk of Westminster was before him in this ingenious blundering. Camden makes of the "Madus" of the Peutingerian Table a river, and identifies it with the Medway ; the "Lemana" of elder authorities becomes with him the "Lemanus fluvius ;" Richard adopts both, and adds, to complete the rivers of Cantium, the "Sturius et Dubris : " he or his *alter ego*, having mistaken the name of the town of Dover for that of a river.

These are mere illustrations of the blundering servility with which Camden's ingenious hypotheses are adopted ; and his errors accepted, even to such orthographic variations as "Segontium" for "Segontium." The examples cited by Mr. Woodward of Richard's anticipations of such conjectures and assumptions are numerous and conclusive beyond all dispute. One of the boldest of his conversions of a mere analogy into a fact will best illustrate this process of manufacture of ancient geography. Camden in support of his etymology of the name of Cornwall, says there were promontories in Crete and in the Tauric Chersonese, called *Κριῶν μέτωπα*, because of their resemblance to the horn of a ram ; and so Richard supplies us with authority for naming the British "Ram's Head" of Camden *Κριῶν μέτωπον*.

There is some satisfaction in referring to the labours of English scholars in the exposure of a fraud on which English scholarship has expended such misplaced zeal. Yet even now, there are antiquaries of good repute who have not disavowed their faith in the antiquarian

Benedictine of the fourteenth century. The Copenhagen manuscript has utterly vanished; or rather, appears to have been mythical from the first; and no fragment, or reference to any other copy, has ever been seen or heard of. Dr. Stukeley's first idea was to secure the original for the British Museum; but Bertram had a plausible story to account for his declining either to lend or sell it, when it passed, as he affirmed, into his own hands. It was, according to him, part of a large MS. stolen out of an English library, by one who had been wild in his youth; and whose mode of showing his later penitence was that "he gave it to Bertram at Copenhagen, and enjoined him to keep it secret." On this the conjecture has been founded that the Bertram MS. may have been purloined from the Cottonian Library at the fire of 1732, carried to Copenhagen, and so made the basis of the published tractate. It is at any rate worth notice, among the other consistencies of this story, that the mode adopted by Bertram for keeping his confidant's secret was to communicate it forthwith to the most likely of all Englishmen to publish it to the world. Had this been followed up by the restoration, or even the sale, of the stolen manuscript, it would have satisfied all minds; but, as the excuse accepted by Dr. Stukeley and his contemporaries for preventing anyone obtaining a sight of the original, it reads now as the shallow invention of an impostor.

But again it is suggested by those who still cling to the possible genuineness of the Itinerary, that Bertram may have so altered, patched, and tampered with, the copy he sent to Dr. Stukeley, to adapt it to the tastes of his correspondent, that he was tempted to destroy the original. Nor is there wanting a hint on which to found such an hypothesis. Mr. Bertram's monk was introduced to Dr. Stukeley as Richard of Westminster. The Doctor thereupon betook himself to the Abbey Library, and was able to tell his Copenhagen correspondent that he had found traces enough of the old chronicler, Richard of Cirencester, a monk of Westminster; whereupon Bertram's antique MS. at once adopts the change; and its title expands into "Ricardi Corinensis Monachi Westmonasteriensis De Situ Britanniae." The title is of a modern form; for the old monk who wrote the "Speculum Historiale" styles himself "Ricardus de Cirencestria." But the Copenhagen MS. had a wonderful adaptability; and when printed there, at Dr. Stukeley's urgent advice, in 1757, it embodied sundry variations from the text he had edited from Bertram's own transcript, including differences in the distances of the Itinerary, and a map so

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But such discrepancies, if noticed, excited no suspicion. So greatly was the work in demand, that, some eight years later another English edition was projected, and its proposed editor wrote to Copenhagen in order to procure an exact fac-simile of the original map. But Bertram had died on the 8th of January, 1765, and nobody from that day to this has been heard of who ever had a glimpse of either map or manuscript. Richard's other, and undoubtedly genuine works are traced without difficulty; but the amplest catalogues of ancient manuscripts contain no notice of that to which he owes all his modern fame.

But let us hear what one of the most diligent of modern Roman investigators has to say on his behalf. "Richard of Cirencester's *De Situ Britanniae* has been questioned," says Mr. Charles Roach Smith, in his "Richborough;" "and Bertram, who published it, has been accused of having collected his materials from the best ancient and modern authorities, and arranged the entire work. Hatcher, in the preface to his translation, has ably combated the objections brought against the originality of the Itinerary; and in one of his letters to me, dated Salisbury, November 23, 1846, he writes: 'Captain Jolliffe kindly called my attention to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for the observations on Richard of Cirencester. After all, they are only fighting with the wind. In my edition I gave up, long ago, his description of Britain, and his chronology, except the account of the rank held by the British towns, which was known only to our native antiquaries; and this in more instances than one. As for poor Bertram, the sneers at him are as unmerited as they are ridiculous.'" The old editor of Richard adds, "I intended once, to have set this question at rest; but that time is gone by;" and so the worthy antiquary died in the faith of Bertram's honesty, and Richard's genuineness.

But there is a confirmation, of a kind peculiarly suitable to the character of Bertram's "Richard," which has escaped the notice of his enthusiastic defenders. The very reverend Jeremiah Milles, D.D. Dean of Exeter, and President of the Society of Antiquaries of London, rendered the same pious services to "Thomas Rowlie, parish priest of St. John's, in the city of Bristol, A.D. 1465," which Dr. Stukeley did to "Richard of Cirencester," the Benedictine monk of Westminster. Our incredulous age has come, for the most part, to believe that

Thomas Chatterton, the Bristol Bluecoat boy, was the sole author of the Rowley poems. But Dr. Milles published a very learned quarto to prove the genuineness of the apocryphal priest, and the antiquity of the marvellous charity-boy's "Ælla," "Hastings," "The Bristowe Tragedy," and the rest. The Dean did not meddle with the reputed prose works of his medieval priest. They were then in preparation for the press by a no less painstaking Bristol antiquary: Mr. William Barrett, Surgeon and F. S. A. But among the latter is a passage, which, had any unbeliever then ventured a doubt as to the genuineness of Richard's Itinerary, would have been hailed by his champions as an irrefragable confutation. It curiously illustrates the revolution of opinion in the interval, that the same evidence would now suffice, were any such needed, to confute all the voluminous arguments of Dean Milles in support of the imaginary poet-priest of the fifteenth century.

The good priest Rowley is in search of manuscripts and antiquarian treasures of all sorts, for his friend and patron, Maister William Canynge, Mayor of Bristol. But the times are full of trouble, for they are those of the wars of the Roses; and Rowley, writing from Cirencester, betrays his political sympathies. But, after a brief comment on my Lord of Warwick's unprincipled ambition, he thus passes to a more congenial theme, suited to the place from which he writes. "I have founde the papers of Fryar Rycharde: he saieth nothyng of Bristolle, albeit he haveth a long storie of Seyncte Vyncente and the Queede. His celle is most lovelie depycted on the whyte walles wythe black cole, displaieyng the Iters of the Woste." Such was the spirit of that eighteenth century; ingenious, inventive, but wholly unscrupulous as to the uses to which its ingenuity was applied.

Yet Bertram and Chatterton, though foremost among the "literary forgers" of that eighteenth century, must not be classed together, as though they stood on common ground. Chatterton did indeed deceive Barrett, Milles, and many another credulous dupe; but now that his mystifications have all vanished, his priest Rowley remains as an ingenious, and harmless fiction; and his Ballads, Epics, and Dramatic Interludes take a permanent rank in the poetic literature of his age. But the *De Situ Britannie*, if a forgery of that eighteenth century, is not merely worthless: it is one of the most mischievous of literary impostures, reflecting disgrace on its mendacious perpetrator; and tainting with misconception and falsehood the investigations of honest

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and laborious workers in an important department of historical research.

It becomes a matter of interest then, to recover any information that can now be obtained relative to this Charles Julius Bertram, Professor of the English Language at the Royal Naval School of Copenhagen ; and to this I am able to make a slight contribution. In the first edition of the "Prehistoric Annals of Scotland," published in 1851, I referred to "the Monk of Westminster, whom antiquaries may be pardoned suspecting to have assumed the cowl for the purpose of disguise, being in truth a monk not of the fourteenth but of the eighteenth century." This led to a correspondence with an Anglo-Roman antiquary who was still a devout believer in Richard and his Itinerary : in consequence of which I wrote to my late friend, Professor P. A. Munch, of Christiania, the Norwegian historian, begging him to ascertain for me anything that he could from literary friends at Copenhagen relative to Bertram, or his manuscript. In his reply Professor Munch says : "I have got an answer from Mr. Werlauff about *Richardus Corinensis*, containing everything that he knows of information as to this matter. The MS. is nowhere to be found, that is sure enough. Yet Mr. Werlauff is not at all inclined to think it a forgery : an opinion which indeed surprises me very much. That Stukeley—says Mr. Werlauff,—knew the Bertram MS. already ten years before the first edition was made, appears from a letter, written by Dr. Stukeley to the celebrated Hans Gramm at Copenhagen, (dated Sept. 1, 1747,) of which letter an abridgement is given in the preface. In the original, however, the passage runs much more complete, as follows : "Bertramo tuo me commendatum facias oro, quem felicem tuo patrocinio existimo. Felicem me quoque reddidit, tuo in respectu, fragmentum suum M.SS. Ricardi mon. Westmonasteriensis. Rarum est cimelium in bibliothecis nostris ignotum. Ego non indignum censeo ut prelo committatur, opus nostris antiquariis acceptissimum." "This" adds Professor Munch, "certainly does not savour of anything like forgery or falsehood on the part of Stukeley : " an idea which no one familiar with the character of that amiable enthusiast would think of entertaining.

Mr. Werlauff inferred, from a reference in one of Bertram's papers, that he had come to Denmark some time before his father : having, according to his interpretation of that notice, arrived in Copenhagen ten years prior to 1748, "indirectly asked to come by King Christian." But, according to Worm's Lexicon of Danish Authors, Bertram was

born in 1723, and was therefore barely fifteen at the date of this supposed royal invitation. We may therefore still adhere to the more probable account that he accompanied his father, in the suite of the Princess Louisa, in 1743.

"As for Bertram," continues Professor Munch, "he seems to have been rather a worthy man. His father, a silk-dyer, is said to have immigrated into Denmark with the people and menials accompanying the English Princess Louisa. In 1744, he established himself at Copenhagen as a hosier. His son, the Bertram in question, was a student, a kind of protégé of King Christian VI. From papers in the Record Office of the Academical Council at Copenhagen, it appears that he gave in to the said Council a petition, dated 5th July, 1747, requesting that he might be inscribed as a student, although belonging to the Anglican Church. He meant to *excolere historiam, antiquitates, philosophiam, et mathesin*. On the 23rd March, 1748, he petitioned the King that he might be appointed to lecture *publice* on the English Language. There exists still in the Library at Copenhagen a fragment of Bertram's treatise on Cnut the Great;" and it may be added that the literary characteristics of this manuscript are said to furnish very poor evidence of the scholarship of their transcriber. It only remains to state that Bertram died January 8th, 1765, in his forty-second year; and Dr. Stukeley survived him less than two months.

A certain authority and weight has heretofore been given to "*Professor*" Bertram, which it now appears was wholly without foundation. At the date of his letter to Dr. Stukeley he was not even an undergraduate. He was only petitioning for admission as a student at the University of Copenhagen; and his professed transcripts of the Richard MS. were the product of an undergraduate's pen. As to his professorship, with its high sounding title: it does not appear to have amounted to much more than the tutorial work to which many a Scottish undergraduate resorts under similar circumstances, with a view to eke out his slender finances, and help him on to his degree.

Nevertheless there is a certain appearance of scholarship, and some facility in Latin composition, involved in the concocting of the Richard MS. which might be supposed to surpass the powers of an undergraduate. He quotes some fifteen or sixteen ancient authors, including Diodorus Siculus, Livy, Strabo, Cæsar, Pomponius Mela, Virgil, Pliny, Lucan, Tacitus, &c. Most of his references may indeed be found, as already stated, in Camden; and the remainder could readily

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be culled from more familiar pages, including those of Stukeley himself. Yet it might be assumed, without inquiry, that some scholarship, and a degree of practise in Latin composition, were necessary, in order to put together such a piece of work for the eyes of European scholars. It is noteworthy, therefore, that Bertram in his petition for admission to the University, professed to study History, Antiquities, Philosophy and Mathematics; but of the Classical Languages nothing is said. Are we to infer from this that he was already so perfect in them as to regard their further study superfluous; or must we assume, in accordance with the ordinary practise of undergraduates, that he exercised his options in selecting the departments best suited to his tastes and acquirements?

In reality the latinity of Richard, which so charmed Dr. Stukeley and his contemporaries, is very much in the style of undergraduate, or school-boy Latin composition; and can only have passed muster with them on the assumption that it was fair monkish Latin, which must not be tried by too high a standard. Mr. Woodward has pointed out the anachronism of a monk of the fourteenth century, using the word *statio*, neither in its ancient sense, as the spot on which a guard was placed; nor in its medieval sense as a religious station, or halting-place for ecclesiastical processions: but in its wholly modern and antiquarian acceptance. Similar examples abound. But, in truth, most of the original paragraphs, by means of which the classical quotations are pieced together, read very much like a school-boy's exercise, first written in English, and then translated, word by word, with the help of his dictionary.

This suggests an inquiry, which has hitherto been overlooked, though by no means without its important bearing on the general question. What part was "the famous Mr. Gramm, Privy Councillor and Chief Librarian to his Danish Majesty," playing in the ingenious mystification, when he wrote the "prolix and elaborate Latin epistle," which Bertram enclosed to Dr. Stukeley in his own first reply? The correspondence with Bertram was apparently conducted, on both sides, in English. But to Herr Gramm, as we have seen, Dr. Stukeley replied in a Latin epistle as elaborate and stately as his own, in which he refers to the rare and seemingly unique Copenhagen fragments of a newly discovered work of Richard, monk of Westminster. It is no slight apology for Dr. Stukeley's unquestioning reception of Bertram's transcripts of an unheard-of fourteenth century MS., that its existence was thus guaranteed by one of the very highest authorities:

the Custodian of the Royal Library, and the fittest of all men in Copenhagen to certify to the genuineness of the professed discovery. At least one more Latin epistle from the same lettered dignitary followed; and then came the news of his death: before Dr. Stukeley had become sufficiently "solicitous about Richard of Westminster" to ask for extracts from his Roman treatise.

But when the English antiquary's curiosity was fairly roused, he did his best, according to the light of that uncritical age: strove to get hold of the original MS.; proposed to purchase it for the British Museum; and, on failing in this, obtained a transcript of the whole. That Dr. Stukeley should have been content with this and the excuses of Bertram for withholding the original,—lame as they now appear,—cannot greatly surprise any one who fully estimates all the circumstances. But that Bertram was able to put off the Royal Librarian in the same fashion, and induce him to write to a distinguished foreigner about a MS. only known to him by the vague report of an undergraduate, is inconceivable. If there ever was a manuscript, genuine or manufactured, Herr Gramm must have seen it. One of the rarest and most precious of ancient historical works, not only unknown, as Dr. Stukeley wrote to him, in any British Library, but seemingly unique, lay ready for easy acquisition by the Copenhagen Royal Library. It had been the subject of elaborate Latin correspondence with the learned secretary of a foreign society, and its worth had been set forth in the strongest terms. Yet, if such a MS. ever existed, instead of being secured for the Royal Library, it was allowed to pass into the possession of Bertram, and when enquired for by English scholars immediately after his death, was no where to be found.

Bertram was a humble friend and protégé of his Majesty's privy councillor and chief librarian. Under such circumstances Herr Gramm might command his services in any needful correspondence with Dr. Stukeley about genuine or apocryphal manuscripts; but Bertram could have no influence over the learned Librarian's pen. Can we, then, avoid the inference that he was in some degree *particeps criminis* in the earlier proceedings, by means of which Bertram successfully palmed on English scholars the mischievous imposture which has more or less affected the historical and antiquarian literature of Europe, for a whole century, in reference to the Anglo-Roman period of British History?

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history of Roman Britain, were not transmitted to Dr. Stukeley till after the death of Mr. Gramm; nor indeed was it till after that event that Bertram professed to have "at length, with some difficulty, got the manuscript into his own hands."

It is perhaps a bold hypothesis to conceive of one in the position of the Royal Librarian bearing any share in a literary forgery. But the age was characterised by singularly loose ideas on such subjects; and the part he is shown to have taken in the correspondence is equally inexplicable, whether we suppose that a genuine MS. did exist, about which he gave himself no further trouble, or that a hoax was being perpetrated on English scholars in which he bore a part. Had the Latin of the commentary been as creditable to the scholarship of its reputed author as the enthusiasm of its first editors represented it to be, we might have been tempted to trace in it the hand of Dr. Stukeley's "prolix and elaborate" Latin correspondent. But in reality the portions of the Tractate not made up of quotations, are, as has been already said, very much in the style of Latin to be expected from the Anglo-Danish undergraduate. Assuming, therefore, his ability to produce the Latin commentary, his familiarity with the English language rendered him otherwise well fitted for the task. As to Mr. Gramm, he had been in England, visited the Universities, was remembered by Mr. Martin Folkes as a learned foreigner, and possibly carried away with him reminiscences of its antiquarian enthusiasts which bore fruit of a kind then cultivated on the tree of knowledge. The writings of Dr. Stukeley are seasoned with a sufficient stock of credulous fancy to provoke even a grave privy councillor into lending a helping hand at a trial of his gullibility. If, on the contrary, we suppose him to have been Bertram's dupe and tool, he must have proved even more gullible than the English antiquary.

As to the motives which induced the chief culprit to carry out his fraud with consistent pertinacity, they need not greatly perplex us. It was a work of time: begun probably with no deliberate purpose of carrying it to the culpable extent it ultimately reached. Bertram's first letter was probably the mere hoax of a clever, but thoughtless undergraduate. But for the opportune death of Hans Gramm,—whatever the nature of his share in the correspondence may have been,—it may be presumed that the later stages of full-developed imposture would never have been reached. But when Dr. Stukeley settled in London, "began to think of the manuscript," and became "solicitous

about Richard of Westminster," his Copenhagen correspondent had to choose between confessing, and persisting in the forgery;—and how many subsequent pages of antiquarian literature depended on his choice! Dr. Stukeley's importunities could not be evaded; and once committed to his dishonest course, Bertram carried it out consistently to the end. His success may have delighted or alarmed him, according to the aspect in which he regarded it; but, tried by the standard of that eighteenth century, his delight is more probable than his alarm. He had achieved for himself a name among European scholars, and established confidential relations with foreign literati; and he thenceforth cultivated them without dread of exposure. He appears to have attained to the highest academic honours, and to have maintained a friendly correspondence with his learned English dupe to the last. So late as Oct. 30, 1768, Stukeley records in his Diary: "I received from my friend, Dr. Bertram, 3 copies of the designs of the Danish Military, colored: one for the King."

In the age of Psalmanazar, Macpherson, and Chatterton; a century which gave birth to the "Hardyknute," the Ossian Epics, and the Rowley Poems; to "the Double Falsehood" of Theobald, the "Vortigern and Rowena" of Ireland, and so much else of a like kind: it cannot be denied that the fabricator of the "*Commentarioli geographici de Situ Britanniae, et Stationum quas Romani ipsi in ea Insula ædificaverunt*," ascribed to Richard of Cirencester, had his abundant reward. Not only Dr. Stukeley and his credulous brother antiquaries, among whom the ingenious but fanciful Whitaker may be classed; but the incredulous Ritson, the laborious and accurate Roy, with some of the very foremost of historians, Gibbon, Suhm, Lappenberg, and Lingard: have bowed to his authority; and a whole century of European scholars has yielded unquestioning faith to his bold imposture.

