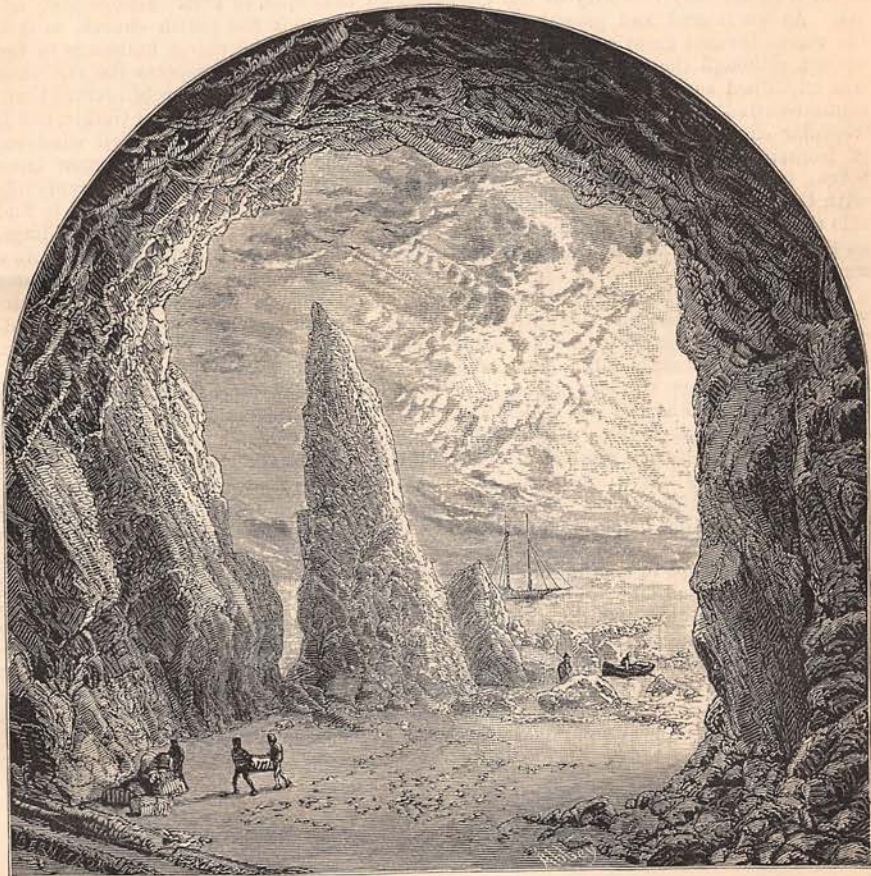


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HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

No. CCCI.—JUNE, 1875.—VOL. LI.

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.



CAVE AND ROCK, GRÈVE AU LAUOOU, JERSEY.

THE severest gale that had blown for several winters had lashed the shores of Great Britain. The whole country was covered with unwonted snows, and frozen by cold very unusual there. Many wrecks had occurred, and the Channel had, as usual, been swept by the tempest. A large steamer had foundered in its waters, and the costly breakwaters of Alderney and Jersey had been greatly damaged. Hardly had

the waves yet gone down when the royal mail packet *Southampton* steamed down the Solent, past the Isle of Wight, at midnight, for the Channel Islands. But on getting out into the open sea we found the wind piping up again, and a high sea directly in our teeth. Accordingly we put back, and lay till morning in Yarmouth Roads. The wind moderating at daylight, we weighed anchor and made a second attempt. All

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VOL. LI.—No. 301.—1

day it blew fresh, with quite "a lump of a sea" on, but toward night Alderney hove in sight, then the three light-houses warning the mariner to give a wide berth to the Caskets, one of the most dangerous and most celebrated reefs in the Atlantic. On these rocks was lost Prince William, the only son of Henry I., after which event it is said the king never smiled again. In later times the wrecks of a Russian line-of-battle ship, and of the English man-of-war *Victory* with 1100 men on board, have, among other wrecks, given a melancholy celebrity to the Caskets. As we neared and passed this reef the waves became greatly larger and more broken, although the wind was less. This was explained as caused by the tides and counter-currents, which, owing to the very irregular character of the adjoining coast of Normandy and the numerous sunken ledges surrounding the channel, combined with the extraordinary rise and fall of the tide to render navigation in this archipelago generally rough, and in the winter season hazardous.

Picking her way carefully between the various pitfalls which line the entrance to St. Peter's Port, the steamer moored alongside the pier after night-fall. As I wound my way up the steep winding streets to my lodgings it seemed as if I had fallen upon some old fortified rock town of the Middle Ages, and the impression was not altogether contradicted by inspection of the place by daylight. St. Peter's Port has a population of 16,000, females being in an excess of nearly a third, as is also the case in Jersey. It is built on a slope of considerable steepness, rising two hundred feet above the sea, and consists of the old and the new town. The former faces the port, and is fronted by a pleasant esplanade, ornamented with trees and protected by a sea-wall. The port itself, originally built by Edward I., is entirely artificial, and has been enlarged in later

years with great labor and expense. On a rock at the end of one of the piers stands Castle Cornet, a massive pile without much beauty, but dating back, it is said, to the Romans, and presenting various interesting additions since then. It suffered greatly three hundred years ago by the explosion of its powder-magazine, which was struck by lightning. On the esplanade is a really very fine colossal bronze statue of Prince Albert, and close at hand is a bronze plate stating that the Queen and her consort landed on that spot in 1846. Immediately adjoining stands the parish church, as it is called, one of the oldest buildings in the group, and in some respects the one most worthy of attention for architectural beauty. The style is Flamboyant Gothic, and it is enriched by beautiful stained windows. Wandering about the steep narrow lanes radiating from this choice and venerable relic of antiquity, one is astonished to find such stern massiveness in the buildings, such winding irregularity in the narrow streets, and a steepness that necessitates the most curious succession of long stairways, with cross lanes meeting at the landings leading up other narrower steps, all in the most quaint and unexpected manner.

The new town may be said to begin with St. Paul's Chapel, and extends back of the old town north and south, generally more level, and always pleasing. While in the old town the houses are almost entirely of sombre granite, in the new they are as universally stuccoed, and tinted of a soft cream or brown tint. I think it would be difficult within the same space to find elsewhere so many charming streets and houses as in St. Peter's Port, giving an air of unostentatious competence. On almost every one is painted either the family name or some pleasing title in English or French, as "Merida Villa," or "Bon Repos," while in front are little garden-plots, neatly kept, or rows of



ST. PETER'S PORT, GUERNSEY.

ivied elms; ivy also clings lovingly to the surrounding walls. Every where one comes across these cheerful, home-like streets, leading by easy degrees to pleasant inland views, with a central spire surmounting some time-worn chapel of past ages, where still the villagers meet with undiminished devotion.

Not an unimportant addition to the pleasure a stranger takes in rambling about St. Peter's Port is the physical beauty of those he meets. We find here the pure Norman race, the same as that which conquered Britain, but, unlike that, scarcely mixed with Saxon or any other foreign blood. The men have a fresh, ruddy complexion, an honest, frank, good-humored, but manly expression. The women have a skin remarkably fair, delicate, and clear, and features regular, expressive, and often beautiful. If but their eyes were as brilliant and eloquent as those of their sisters of Greece or America, they would present a nearly perfect type of female beauty. And the children are, of course, charming, and even when they run out of the peasant houses in the remote districts and beg the passer-by for "doubles," there is a witchery about them seldom found in beggars elsewhere. But to speak of beggars in Guernsey is almost absurd, for extreme poverty is nearly unknown, while almost every tiller of the land cultivates a patrimony inherited from his ancestors for many centuries, and it is difficult to find evidences of squalor in the island. Even the houses of the peasantry are neatly kept, and a clean lace or cambric curtain hides the lower windows of the humblest cots, while flowers and vines are trained on the window-seat during the winter season.



MONUMENT TO PRINCE ALBERT, GUERNSEY.

The language is the old Norman French, pure and simple, although the dialect of Guernsey differs slightly from that of Jersey. English is now spoken by the better families, and often understood by those who do not use it among themselves. Services in many of the churches, and all proceedings in the courts and Legislature, are in



MARKET-PLACE AT ST. PETER'S PORT, GUERNSEY.



CHILDREN BEGGING FOR "DOUBLES."

French. Strange as it may seem to many, the islands are in their government very nearly independent of Great Britain, to which they owe a sort of feudal allegiance. In the transaction of their own affairs they are practically independent; and stranger still, Jersey has a government and laws of its own, while Guernsey, with the dependencies of Sark and Alderney, is ruled by still another code and Legislature. The Legislature consists in each case of a Senate-house, composed of the bailiff, or chief justice, and the jurats, and the Assembly, including a larger number, called the States, and of less influence. The laws still smack of the rough emergencies of the Middle Ages, and are sometimes quite arbitrary. Any one who chooses to set up a claim as creditor has a right, on his bare assertion, to seize either the person or the property of the alleged debtor, whether a native or a stranger, and the debtor has no redress; on the other hand, the sheriff can not enter a house unless the door is opened voluntarily, and, if he desires to arrest a man or woman, must sometimes resort to artifice to decoy the victim into his clutches, as, for example, to send an ally into the house on some errand, who can open the door when the sheriff knocks.

Notwithstanding this semi-independence, and the fact that French is the popular and official language, the Queen boasts no subjects more loyal than these Normans of the Isles. To question their loyalty is to inflict

insult almost amounting to injury. Some of England's most distinguished soldiers and sailors have come from these islands, where their names are cherished with patriotic pride. More than this: it is the common opinion here that instead of being a fief of England, England herself owes her allegiance to the lords of the Norman Isles. For why: these islands are a part of Normandy, and were so when William of Normandy reduced Britain to subjection to Norman rule. During all the changes that have happened in the succeeding centuries, they alone have survived of the Norman territory, and have preserved a remnant of that race intact and unmixed which laid England at its feet and has kept her subject ever since. This is not so absurd, after all. It is quite as reasonable for these little islands to be lords paramount of England as for the comparatively small England to hold sway, as once she did, over the whole of North America, Hindostan, Australia, etc.; and the apostolic succession of the Church is scarcely as clear as the descent of these Channel Islanders from the fellow-countrymen of William the Conqueror and Richard Cœur de Lion. It may be well to add here that one law exists in Guernsey advantageous to foreigners residing within its limits: they are not subject to the payment of taxes unless holding real estate in the island.

The ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the group was for several centuries under the control of the Bishop of Coutances; but after the

doctrines of the Reformation were universally accepted by the people, they were transferred to the diocese of the Bishop of Winchester, who is represented in each island by a dean. The islanders are, with few exceptions, good Protestants; churches and chapels abound, and are generally well attended. Puseyism and ritualism have, so far, made little progress here; the Low-Church still continues popular, while the Non-conformists of all the leading sects are in a flourishing condition. Superstition is gradually losing its hold, and much genuine and intelligent piety doubtless exists in some of these islands. But in the hamlets most remote from town, and among the older people, curious superstitions still obtain belief. On Christmas-night there are some even in St. Peter's Port who will on no account go to a well to draw water. Others will not venture into a stable at midnight lest they should surprise the cattle, asses, and sheep on their knees worshipping the infant Saviour. A photographer is sometimes regarded as dealing in the black-art, and some refuse so far to compromise their character as to allow themselves to be photographed. In Guernsey, at St. George, is a well called "Holy Well," still visited by damsels, for on the surface of its waters maidens are said to be able to see the face of their future husbands. In Jersey, near St. Clement's, is the Witches' Rock, where, it is said, the witches hold their Sabbath: the belief in witchcraft is not entirely extinct here. The marks on that rock are confidently asserted to be the foot-prints made by his Satanic majesty during the visits which, it is to be feared, he makes quite too frequently in Jersey as well as elsewhere.

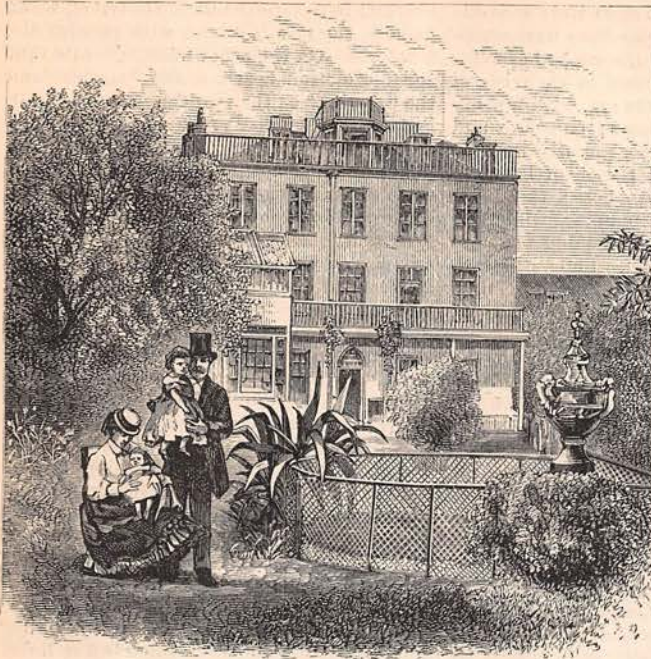
One of the first things the stranger hears of, on coming to these islands, is the exclusiveness of the upper class, their hauteur and pride, and the contempt in which a tradesman is held. It is stated that a gentleman will be on very good terms with a tradesman in his shop, but will not con-

descend to recognize him in the street, while at balls the line is drawn with painful distinctness. On the other hand, it is said that the distinction between the "sixties" and the "forties," as the two classes are termed, is wearing away. For an exclusiveness so much more pronounced than usual even in an English colony there was doubtless some ground originally, arising from local causes, which is now forgotten.

St. Sampson's is the only other town of any size in Guernsey after St. Peter's Port. It is named after some mythical Irish saint who came here in the sixth century. The place is about two miles from the capital, the road being by the sea, skirted with houses on one side and a sea-wall on the other, with here and there an old martello tower or a bit of an ivied castle to relieve the view. The port of St. Sampson's is a good one of its size. I counted as many as sixteen vessels there, loading with granite for England. The granite trade is the most important business of Guernsey. The church of St. Sampson's was consecrated in 1111. It is the oldest building in the island, but offers no architectural attractions. More interesting are the Vale Castle adjoining and the Druidic remains. Long before Rollo the Norman visited and conquered these islands, long before St. Sampson and Julius Cæsar, the Celt had braved these perilous waters in his rude bark, and had scaled these almost inaccessible shores. Here, in those ages lost in the vague mists of unrecorded antiquity, the Druid practiced his mysterious and bloody rites, and left numerous dolmens and cromlechs to tell the tale of a race that would otherwise have passed away from these isles into the utter silence of oblivion. Many of these remarkable vestiges have unfortunately been destroyed; of those which remain one of the most interesting is at L'Aucresse Common, near St. Sampson's. It is covered by seven blocks, the largest estimated to weigh thirty tons, and is seventeen feet long by ten



CROMLECH, GUERNSEY.



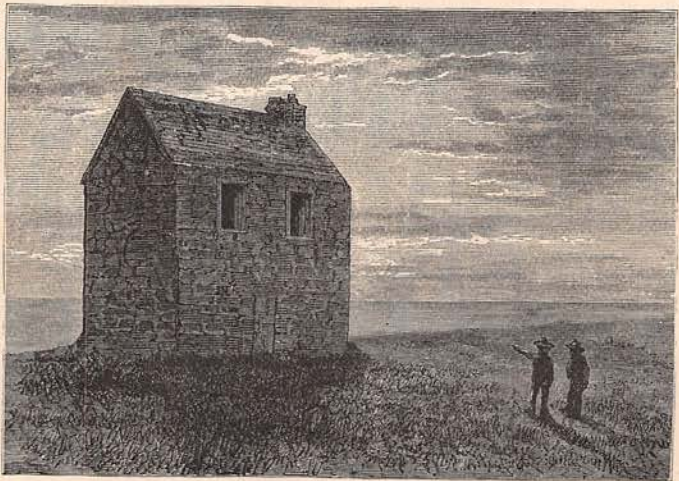
HAUTEVILLE—VICTOR HUGO'S LATE RESIDENCE IN GUERNSEY.

wide and four and a half feet thick, while the whole cromlech is forty-five feet long by thirteen in width. Under the floor were found one hundred and fifty urns, human bones, amulets, and the like.

St. Sampson's and the adjacent portion of the little island are also interesting, as many of the scenes of Victor Hugo's impossible *Toilers of the Sea* are laid there. There is no foundation for the story, so far as I can learn, but it is very well told, and gives incidentally vivid and often truthful descriptions of the scenery and people, and should be read by every one contemplating a visit to the islands. Passing through the old part of St. Peter's Port, by the markets, well stocked with most excellent fish, beef of a very superior quality, and fine vegetables, and proceeding in the rear of Fort George, one comes to Hauteville, for many years the residence of Victor Hugo. He is now in Paris, but his

mansion remains furnished as he left it, in a manner highly characteristic of the distinguished author. Keeping on in a southerly direction, one comes to the south side of the island, to the artist or scientific student searching for studies in geology or crustaceology by far the most interesting part of Guernsey. As Guernsey is triangular in form, and only nine and a half miles on its longest side, much the pleasantest way to see its beauties is on foot. The southern coast is indented with several small but exceedingly beautiful bays, presenting a great variety of granitic forms, often almost volcanic in gro-

tesqueness of shape, the cliffs rising sometimes over three hundred feet, often perpendicularly, from the silvery beaches of soft white sand at their base. Wild caverns are hollowed into the sides of the cliffs, and rivulets, under the sylvan covert of many varieties of vines and shrubs, descend from the plateau above to these bays. Le Moulin Huet Bay, Icart Point, Petit Bot Bay, the Gouffre, Gull Rock, Pleinmont, are in turn the favorites of the enthusiast who visits them; but the stern, precipitous, thun-



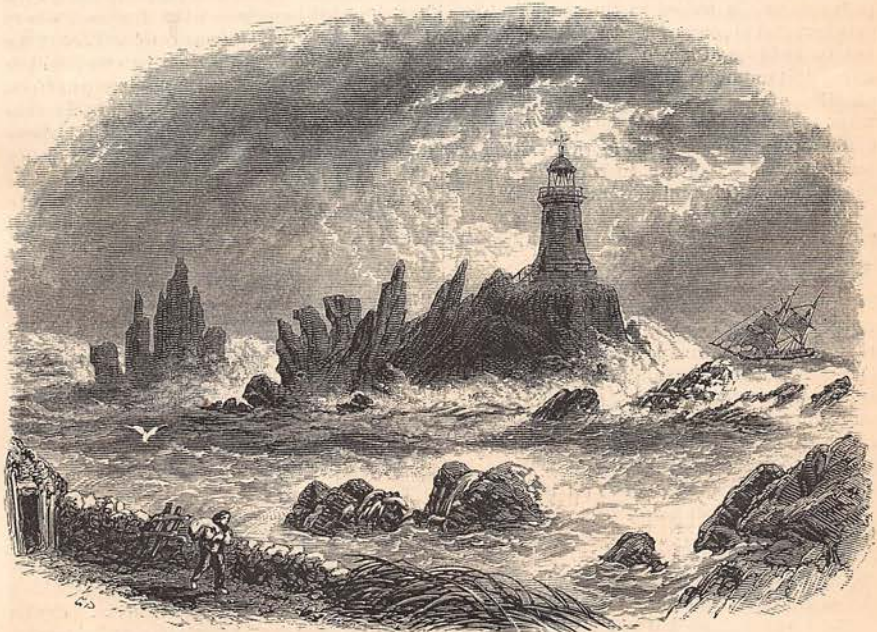
GUARD-HOUSE DESCRIBED IN "TOILERS OF THE SEA."

der-scarred Titanic cliffs of Pleinmont seemed to me the grandest place for a sea-view in Guernsey, and one of the finest to be found any where. Near the brow of these precipices Victor Hugo lays the scene of some of the most striking passages in his book. The small guard-house, which he represents to have been haunted, and makes the rendezvous of smugglers, stands there still, entirely alone on the cliff.

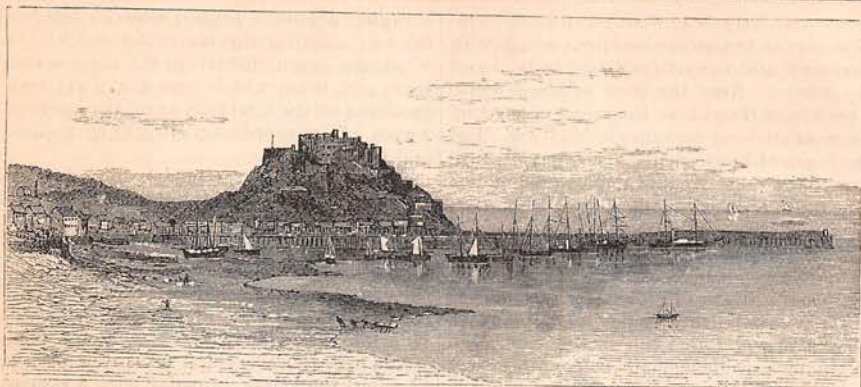
In plain sight from Guernsey in good weather, twenty miles from land to land, in an east-southeast direction, lies the island of Jersey, twelve miles long and seven wide, in area nearly twice the size of Guernsey. St. Helier's, the chief town, contains over 30,000 inhabitants, and is situated on the bay of St. Aubin, a most beautiful sheet of water, skirted by a level sand beach, flanked by high slopes and cliffs, and ornamented on the opposite side by the charming little town of St. Aubin. The approach to St. Helier's from Guernsey is around the southwestern angle of the island, bristling with reefs, showing their teeth to the mariner in a most threatening manner. Of these the most formidable is the Corbière, or "Sailors' Dread," the haunt of innumerable corbières, or sea-crows. A light-house has recently been erected on the highest point, but it is a most formidable foe, as the writer can testify from personal observation, having passed it twice, in a heavy gale of wind from the southeast, much nearer than was agreeable. It must be owned that few spots present a finer opportunity for studying the effect of

a raging sea on a rugged shore. The under-tow meeting the waves formed by the wind, and again affected by the diverse currents and tides, which here rise forty feet, produces off the Corbière, as off the Caskets, waves of extraordinary height, grandeur, and fury.

The entrance to the port is very dangerous, owing to the reefs that skirt the channel and extend miles to the eastward. The harbor is almost entirely artificial. On the left, on entering the mole, is a high rock surmounted by the remains of a hermitage many centuries old. St. Helier, Hilary, or Hilarius, was one of those shadowy Irish saints whose apocryphal adventures serve to adorn the saints' calendar with a species of pious *Arabian Nights'* tales. From what is said of the good people of St. Helier's, one might infer that they had made the mistake of spelling his name Hilarious, and suited their lives to the name. To eschew the world, the flesh, and the devil is not enough the custom in this insular Paris. Just northward of the Hermitage, on a rock of some height, stands Elizabeth Castle, a rather picturesque pile, of which a portion once formed an abbey. The town is not very pleasing near the port, the streets being narrow and dark, but it rambles up on higher ground, and gradually assumes a more cheerful and inviting aspect. The shop windows often make a display of wares quite metropolitan. The markets are well worth a visit, and the market-women sometimes dress in a costume slightly peculiar,



THE CORBIÈRE AND LIGHT-HOUSE, JERSEY.



MOUNT ORGUEIL CASTLE, JERSEY.

the only noticeable local costume in the islands. Generally the people of these islands dress and wear their hair with excellent taste, combining the English common-sense ideas of comfort with a certain French gracefulness that one too often fails to see in England.

Odd as it may sound, there are two Lilliputian railroads in Jersey, starting from St. Helier's, one running five miles to Govey, called the Eastern Railway, limited; the other also extending about five miles, to St. Aubin. The latter cost a large amount, and swamped two or three local banks, producing much business prostration, and still further reducing the value of local currency. They seem to have been borrowing lessons from the United States in this island; paper money is issued in the most reckless manner, and much enterprise, in the form of hollow bubbles of speculation, has enriched a few and impoverished many; but the law, mindful of the claims of the sufferers and what it owes to the defense of society, has made an example of some of the leading offenders, from which we, in turn, can take a lesson from the island of Jersey. Considerable shipping is owned at St. Helier's, employed in foreign commerce or in the cod-fisheries.

After St. Helier's, or rather before it in interest among the objects to attract the visitor to Jersey, is Mount Orgueil Castle, at the village of Govey, on the eastern coast. It is now dismantled, and occupied only by a warder, but this makes it all the more attractive. Perched on a rock washed by the waves, the highest parapet of the venerable pile is 270 feet above the sea. Built of stone the same as the rocks on which it is founded, it looks in many parts almost like a portion of the cliff. Setting aside the legends about Julius Cæsar, who is made responsible for the parentage of half the castles in Europe, there is no doubt that Mount Orgueil was occupied, if not built, by Rollo, the grandsire of William the Conqueror,

whose escutcheon is still quite distinct over the main entrance to the keep. The crypt under the chapel, with a marble statue of the Virgin and Child, is in good preservation. Also the apartments occupied by Charles II. while seeking an asylum in this island, which remained faithful to the house of Stuart. These apartments have unfortunately been modernized recently for barracks, although untenanted at present. The guard-room where military courts were held is gone, but the adjoining cell where criminals were executed remains, with vestiges of a secret staircase which communicated with the keep and the sally-port. The dungeon is a ghastly place, but the most interesting spot in the castle is the dark, dismal cell, some six feet by four, with but a small loop-hole over the sea, where Prynne, the Puritan, was confined for three years. He had ample time to compose poetry or philosophies in these close quarters, although the scene was not altogether congenial to tranquil meditation. That rheumatism, megrims, and misanthropy did not quite corrode his bones or his intellect is evident from the fact that he did try to write verse, as shown by the following doggerel lines, besides certain moral disquisitions:

"Mount Orgueil Castle is a lofty pile,
Within the eastern part of Jersey Isle,
Seated upon a rock full large and high,
Close by the sea-shore, next to Normandie,
Near to a sandy bay, where boats do ride
Within a peere, safe from both wind and tide," etc.

From the battlements rusty chains still hang, by which criminals in those rough ages were suspended alive.

The view from the top commands the coast of Normandy and Brittany, including the Cathedral of Coutances on clear days, and, besides a prospect of the landscape of Jersey, gives one an idea of the dangers which beset the mariner in these waters. Scylla and Charybdis were very trifling affairs compared with the chevaux-de-frise of rocks

under and above water which encircle these islands. If the sailor escapes the Caskets, the labyrinthine snares of the Little Russel are ready to trip him, or, if sailing for Jersey or St. Malo, the St. Roquier or the Hanways lie in wait for him, or the Paternosters, so terrible that they are thus called, perhaps, because there is nothing left to him who encounters their savage blows but to say his prayers. Escaping these, he still has the Corbière or La Couchière to avoid, and is not yet past dangers, for by no means the least savage yet lie near his path—the Chausseys, and the terrible Minquières, fronting the coast of France many miles, like a picket-guard; and the most awful and solitary of all, the Douvres, like an advanced post in the ocean, solemn and implacable. The coast of Jersey is also every where dangerous of approach, and rises in many places over three hundred feet on the northern side. Many very bold, striking cliffs are to be seen there, many rocks of remarkable form and size. The Jersey granite is considerably warmer in color than that of Guernsey, which renders its cliffs slightly less stern, and more in harmony with the vivid green of the surges that lash their feet and fill their vast caverns with the dread thunders of the storm. Boulet Bay, Grève de Lecq, Grève au Lançon, Cape Grosnez, the Pinnacle, or La Pule, at L'Étoe, are a few of the many points deserving the investigation and the enthusiasm of the tourist, the naturalist, and the artist. St.

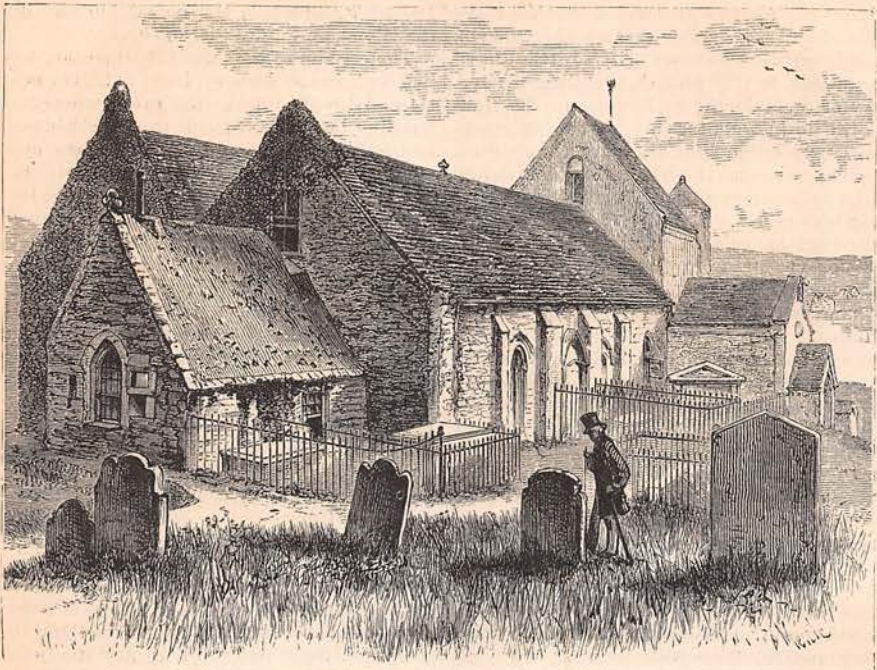
Brelade's Church is the oldest building on the island, and quite picturesque.

The interior of the island is altogether belied by its coast scenery, for it is highly rustic and idyllic, intersected every where by winding lanes almost concealed by hedges, and banks abounding in ferns, mosses, and thick-embowering vines and shrubs. So very winding and intricate, in fact, are the rural lanes of Jersey that a cause is assigned for it: the island was in early ages infested by pirates, who carried off the people as well as their goods to that degree that, in order to mislead the freebooters and make it easier to cut them off before they could reach the sea, paths were twisted into a species of labyrinth. These lanes are, however, gradually being replaced by more direct roads, and many of the old avenues of trees are falling before the axe of improvement or necessity.

Twenty miles in a northeasterly direction from Guernsey lies Alderney, called by the Normans Aurigny, in most respects the least interesting of the group, although the abruptness with which its elevated tableland plunges into the ocean presents some very striking scenes. But the tableland itself is generally flat and bare, and the town of St. Anne's offers few points of interest. The island is but three miles and a half long. It claims our attention, however, on two accounts. On its northwestern side is Braye Harbor, celebrated for the breakwater or mole which the English government has



THE PINNACLE, JERSEY.



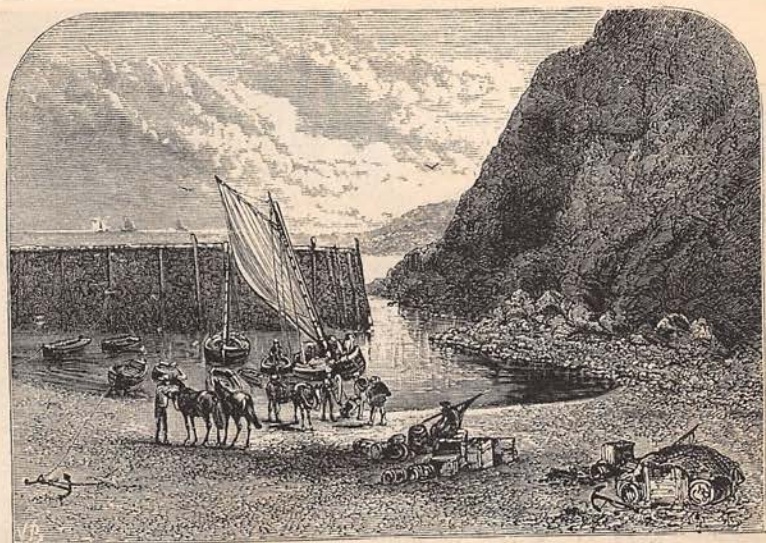
ST. BEELADE'S CHURCH, JERSEY.

been building for many years at an enormous expense as a naval station and harbor of refuge, to offset the corresponding port of Cherbourg in Normandy, and enable the English to command the Channel. This breakwater has, very strangely, been constructed in a most blundering manner, at least in its form, so that it presents itself to the sea in such a way that it often suffers serious damage, and will eventually have to be altered. Alderney is also known for the breed of cows which bears its name. These

are so called probably because the first ones exported were from that island, although now very few that are sold as Alderney cows are directly from there. Those of that breed actually exported from these islands are generally from Jersey, where the cattle are much the same as those of Alderney, small, with tapering heads, and of a delicate fawn-color. The Guernsey cow is esteemed by some even more highly than the Alderney; it is rather larger, and more of a red, brindled, in color. The cows are milked three



VRAICKING.

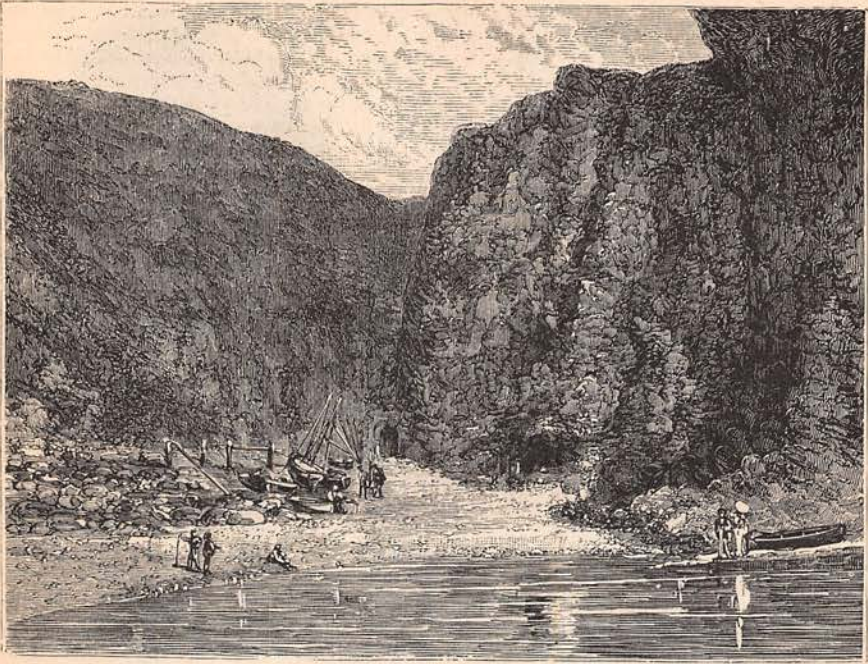


OREUX HARBOR, SARK.

times daily, and the milk is churned without skimming; one pound of butter a day is by no means an uncommon yield for a good cow. The cow cabbage is made to reach a size so large that the leaves are used to wrap the butter in for market, while the stalks are varnished and armed with ferrules and extensively used at St. Helier's for canes. The cows are very carefully coddled. The grass they feed on is highly enriched by the *vraic*, a species of sea-weed gathered from the reefs at low tide. There are two *vraic* harvests appointed by the government, one in the spring, the other in August, although it is gathered at other times in small quantities. All hands turn out in the season with boats and carts, frequently at night, and it is a very lively, picturesque occupation, though often attended with risk and loss of life from the overloading of boats or sudden rising of the tide. The cows are always tethered when feeding; they eat less in this way, really giving more milk than if glutted with food, and while they are cropping the grass on one side of a field, it has time to spring up on the other side. When they have done eating, they are at once removed from the sun into the shade. The breed is preserved from intermixture with other breeds by strong and arbitrary laws very carefully enforced. No cattle are allowed to enter the islands except for slaughter within a certain number of days, with the exception of oxen for draught.

Opposite the eastern coast of Guernsey are the islands Herm and Jethou, about three miles distant from St. Peter's Port. The former is a mile and a half long, high, and in some places very bold, and possesses withal a sand beach abounding to a very

unusual degree with shells of great variety and beauty. It is chiefly valuable, however, at present as a resort for sportsmen. Two or three houses are on the island, including a hotel, much resorted to in summer. Jethou is close at hand, but is much smaller, and tenanted chiefly by rabbits. Beyond these islands, a little more to the southward, and only seven miles from Guernsey, is Sark, one of the smallest, most curious, most interesting, most elusive, most desolate, most beautiful, most dangerous, most sublime, of the Atlantic islands. The old legend-makers, who have sung such weird tales of phantom islands, now appearing close at hand, then vanishing like enchantment, must have drawn their inspiration from watching Sark from Guernsey. On some days it is so distinct and looks so near that cliffs and houses and even men can be distinguished with the naked eye, and the soft play of light and shade and color on the rocks. The next day one shall look in the same direction, and he will discern with difficulty the faint hazy outline of what seems an island forty miles away. The approach to the island is almost always hazardous, and except in the best weather no boat can land or leave, owing to the maelstrom-like velocity and turbulence of the tides, which rush raging in all directions around the shore, and fill the hollow caves with melancholy dirges, as for the many wrecked on that merciless coast. The late Seigneur of Sark was lost off Point Nez, and the present Seigneur and his family have had an escape bordering on the miraculous. Sometimes, even in summer, weeks will pass without the possibility of communicating with the island. In winter one must depend entirely on Sark boats, of sev-

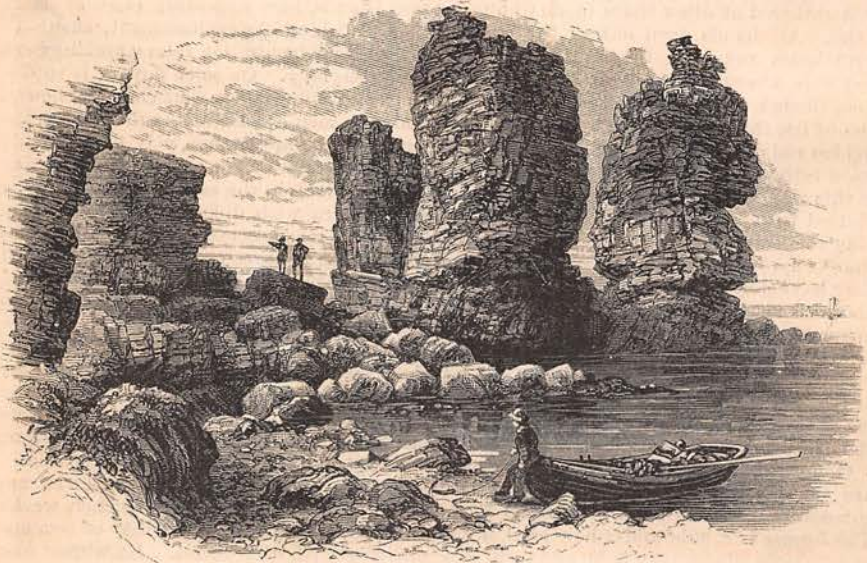


ENTRANCE TO THE CREUX LANDING-PLACE, SARK.

en or eight tons burden, strong and weath-
erly. In summer a small steamer plies in
good weather between Guernsey and Sark,
but it can not enter the port, which is doubt-
less the smallest in Europe. It is formed
by a breakwater thrown across a miniature
bay called the Creux. A little beach ex-
tends around the base of the vertical cliffs,

and the interior of the island is only reach-
ed by an artificial opening actually pierc-
ed through the surrounding wall of granite.

Sark is about three miles and a half long,
and is divided into Great and Little Sark,
the latter being a small peninsula at the
southern end, united to the main portion by
a curtain of rock some two hundred yards



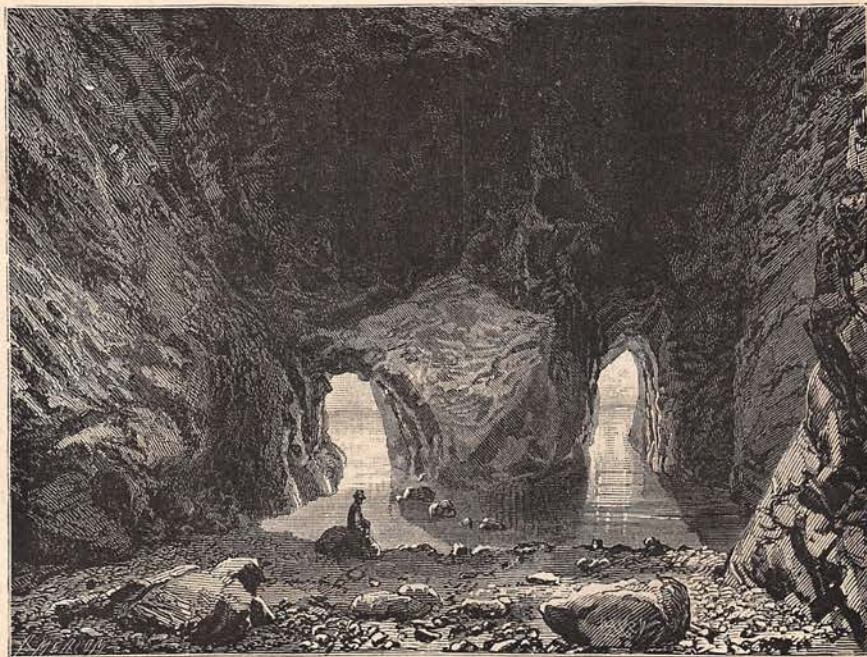
THE ANTELETS, SARK.

long, called the Coupé. It is three hundred feet above the sea, on one side literally vertical, on the other nearly so. The path at the top is not over five feet wide. It is said one person who lived on Little Sark never dared during a lifetime to cross over the Coupé. Another old fellow, who used to like to take his grog of an evening in Great Sark, would, on returning to Little Sark at night, walk several times over a log that lay near the Coupé. If the result was satisfactory to his equilibrium, he would then venture to reel across the Coupé. The cliffs surrounding the island furnish an inexhaustible supply of the grand, the wild, the picturesque. The rocks are clothed with highly colored vines and lichens; the magnificent caves, seemingly the abode of sea-fairies, teem with varied and beautiful submarine vegetation and diverse forms of life, shell-fish, mollusca, algæ, and the like. Our limits forbid more than allusion to such spots as the Antelets, the Creux du Derrible, D'Ixcart Bay, etc.

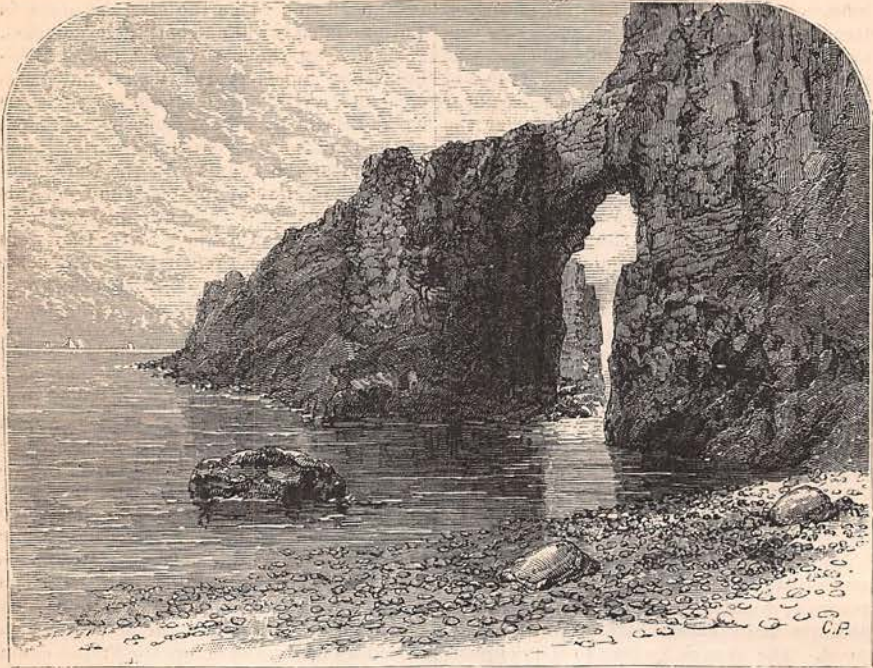
The interior of the island is devoted to agriculture and pasturage, and although not generally wooded, and destitute of streams, presents many choice bits of rural under-wood. The avenue leading to the Seigneurie is exceedingly beautiful, and the building itself is a very pleasing object. The huts of the peasantry are often of the most massive construction, having walls six feet thick.

Those who suppose Monaco, or Andorra,

or San Marino to be the smallest state in Europe must awake from their delusion. Sark has, by the last census, only 546 inhabitants, and is practically an independent state, owing only a feudal allegiance to Great Britain by way of Guernsey. Traces of the Druids exist, showing their early occupation of the island. In the Dark Ages it was the haunt of pirates, who from this almost inaccessible eyrie swooped down on ships passing the Channel. After they were exterminated, the French held Sark some time, but in the reign of Elizabeth it was taken by a very ingenious stratagem, of which only a brief recital can be given here. It seems a galley anchored off the island under pretense of being a trader whose captain—of course a good Christian—had died on the voyage. To consign so pious a man to the deep seemed a gratuitous sin, when Sark was so near at hand. Would the garrison allow his comrades to land the coffin and bury him in consecrated ground? They would go ashore unarmed, and would allow themselves to be searched on landing. This was, after due deliberation, granted. The coffin was landed, and in solemn procession borne into the church. The door was then closed suddenly, and before the French could discover the object of this manœuvre, the coffin, which was filled with arms, was broken open, and arming themselves, the sailors rushed out and cut down the French right and left. In their panic some threw themselves from the cliffs, the rest surrendered.



CREUX DU DERRIBLE, SARK.



NATURAL BRIDGE, PONT-DU-MOULIN, SARK.

Since that time Sark has continued under the English flag.

The Seigneur is feudal lord of the island, and shares the government with the other land-holders, about forty in all. The worthy pastor, a Swiss, Mr. Cauchmeyer, has not been off the island for thirty-seven years.

As regards the climate of the Channel Isl-

ands, it is noticeable that it varies in all. They occupy different positions in the atmospheric current, although so near together. Jersey is, on the whole, warmer than Guernsey, but more damp, consequently more relaxing. Guernsey is more equable, slightly warmer in winter, and cooler in summer. From October to January the

most rain falls. Although snow is rare, it occasionally falls to a depth of two or three inches. The climate of Guernsey is said, on good authority, to be the most equable in Europe, and for social reasons is also the most to be recommended for a residence. The saline matter in the air, common to small islands, makes the dampness less relaxing than might be supposed. Alderney and Sark enjoy an air more bracing, more dry, than that of the other islands, and are resorted to from Guernsey and Jersey by those



SEIGNEUR'S HOUSE, SARK.

whose systems have become enervated by too long residence there. The Channel Islands can be safely recommended to consumptives who need to escape our east winds or sudden summer changes of heat and cold, and are especially favorable from April to September, inclusive. For rheumatic or neuralgic patients their permanent advantages are more doubtful, although good, perhaps, for a short time, by way of change.

Hotels of various grades are found in all the towns and near many of the points of interest on the coast. Several are excellently suited to those who desire good fare well served, with absence of ostentation or the noisy reveling of the bar-room. Bree's Stopford House at St. Helier's, Gardner's Old Government House at St. Peter's Port, Gavey's at Sark, are undoubtedly the best. The expense of living is not as moderate as formerly. The late French war hastened a rise in prices, gradually becoming inevitable, and the cost of good board will average little, if any, less than in England or at most resorts for invalids. Carriage-hire still continues reasonable.

The islands are reached by good boats run-

ning from Southampton five times a week, and from Weymouth twice weekly in winter, oftener in summer. Those who desire to shorten the sea journey should go by way of Weymouth; it is the shortest by several hours, although the Southampton line is every where, with inconceivable impudence, advertised as being the most direct. A glance at the chart exposes the lie at once. In the winter season—and at any time, in fact—heavy weather is to be looked for; but the boats are strong, the passage is usually performed in eight to twelve hours, and the possibility of its being a rough one does not deter many from resorting to the islands for health, pleasure, art, or scientific investigation, especially, however, in summer. We can heartily and truthfully recommend the invalid and pleasure-seeker to give them a trial—with a bit of advice on a point not always regarded by persons culpably foolhardy or totally ignorant of boat-sailing, especially in these very dangerous waters: never set out in a boat here, or undertake to go to Sark or any of the islands, if the boatmen are reluctant to try it, or if you are advised by the natives to wait for a change of weather.

ERIC'S FUNERAL.

Tired? Yes, a little, I believe. I'm not so very strong,
And older than I was, my dear: I'm sure it won't be long
Before *my* turn comes. Life is sweet, but *surely* sweeter far,
Where we will find our faded youth, beyond the morning-star.

I've been to Eric's funeral—my old friend Eric Gray.
To think that he is gone! Ah, well! how peaceful like to-day
He looked as there he lay at rest, in narrow confined space,
The snow-white lilies on his breast, the death-white on his face!

I mind him years and years ago. A half-remembered dream,
A feather-flake of falling snow that melts upon a stream,
To me has yesterday become. My memory fails with age,
But all that filled my early home is like a pictured page.

I saw him first at father's house. They held the meeting there
On Wednesday evenings, and the church convened for praise and prayer;
The old and young together sat, and lifted up the psalm
In tones that seemed the phrase to fit, with blending cadence calm.

Not men of many words were they; grave-browed and stern and strong;
Yet on Predestination they would argue loud and long,
With keenest blades of logic, and with hammer blows of will,
The while the women listened there, in acquiescence still.

"Society" was what they called the Presbyterian band
Of earnest-hearted folk who tried to keep the Lord's command,
Though hard as iron it might press, and blight their lives with pain,
Who took earth's joy with thankfulness, and patient bore its bane.

Once more I see, through years of gloom, the candles burning bright,
The row of chairs around the room, the table covered white,
The Bible opened at "the place," and father waiting there,
A light upon his reverent face, and on his silver hair.