

THE DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE ENGLISH.

DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

X. OCCUPATIONS OUT OF DOORS.—THE PLEASURE GARDEN.
—AMUSEMENTS.—HAWKING AND HUNTING.—RIDING.—
CARRIAGES.—TRAVELLING.—HOSPITALITY.—LEARNING
AND STUDIES.

We begin now to be better acquainted with the out-of-door amusements of our forefathers, which were numerous and varied. Among the more refined classes, the favourite place of resort was the garden, which during the middle ages appears to have been an object of great care and attention. We trace throughout the mediæval poetry proofs of a great love of flowers; and both maidens and young men are often described as passing their times in forming posies or plaiting garlands in the alleys of the gardens. In festivals, the guests were often crowned with garlands of roses and other flowers. The gardens were also diversified with plots of soft grass, on which they indulged in games, many of which would not be tolerated by modern politeness. But the favourite amusement was the carol, or dance. In Chaucer's "Frankeleyn's Tale," when the Lady Dorigen was in want of amusement to make her forget the absence of her husband, her friends, finding that the sea-shore was not sufficiently gay,—

—schope hem for to pleien somewhere elles,
They leden hire by rivers and by welles,
And eke in other places delitable;
They dauncen, and they play at ches and tables.
So on a day, right in the morve tide,
Unto a gardeyn that was ther beside,
In which that they had made her ordinance
Of vitale, and of other purveance,
They gon and plaie hem al the longe day:
And this was on the sixte morve of May,
Which May had painted with his softe schoures
This gardeyn ful of leves and of floures;
And craft of mannes hond so curiously
Arrayed had this gardeyn of suche pris
As if it were the verray paradis.

* * * * *
And after dinner gan thay to daunce
And singe also; sauf Dorigen alone—

An important incident in the story here occurs, after which—

Tho come hir other frendes many on,
And in the alleys romed up and down,
And nothing wist of this conclusioun,
But so deynly began to revel newe,
Til that the brighte sonne had lost his hewe.

It would be easy to multiply such descriptions as the foregoing, but we will only refer to the well-known one at the commencement of the Romance of the Rose, where the carolling is described with more minuteness than usual. There were employed minstrels, and "jogelours," and apparently even tumblers, which are thus described in Chaucer's English version:—

Tho mightist thou karollis sene,
And folks daunce, and merie ben,
And made many a faire tourning
Upon the grene grasse springing.
There mightist thou se these flutours,
Minstrallis and eke jogelours,
That well to singin did ther paine.
Some songin songis of Lorraine;
For in Lorraine ther notis be
Ful swetir than in this contré.
Ther was many a timbrestere,
And sailours (*jumpers*, or *tumblers*), that I dare wel
swere.

Yeothe (*Acne*) ther craft ful parfity,
The timbris up ful subtilly
Thei castin, and hent them ful oft
Upon a fingir faire and soft,
That thei ne failid never mo.
Ful fetis damosellis two,
Right yong, and ful of semelyhede,
In kirtils and none othir wede,
And faire y-tressid every tresse,
Had Mirthe y-doen for his noblesse
Amidde the carole for to daunce.
But hereof lieth no remembrance
How that thei dauncid quaintly,
That one would come al privily
Agen that othre, and when they were
Togithre almoste, thei threw i-fero (*in company*)
Their mouthis so, that through their plaie
It semid as thei kist alwaie.
To dauncin wel couthe thei the gise,
What should I more to you devise?

These lines show us that our forefathers in the middle ages had their dancing girls, just as they had and still have them in the East; it was

one trait of the mixture of Oriental manners with those of Europe which had taken place since the crusades. Many other amusements, besides dancing, were practised by the ladies and young men on these occasions, most of which have since been left to mere children. We find some of these represented in the illuminated margins of old manuscripts, as in the annexed example (from MS. Harl. No. 6563), which



No. 1.—BALL-PLAYING.

represents apparently two ladies playing with a ball. In other instances, a lady and a gentleman are similarly occupied.

Among the uneducated classes the same rough sports were in vogue that had existed for ages before, and which continued for ages after. Many of these were trials of strength, such as wrestling and throwing weights, with archery, and other exercises of that description; others were of a less civilised character, such as cock-fighting and bear and bull-baiting. These latter were favourite amusements, and there was scarcely a town or village of any magnitude which had not its bull-ring. It was a municipal enactment in all towns and cities that no butcher should be allowed to kill a bull until it had been baited. The bear was an animal in great favour in the middle ages, and was not only used for baiting, but was tamed and taught various performances. I have already, in a former paper, given an example of a dancing bear under the Anglo-Saxons; the accompanying Cut (No. 2), is



No. 2.—A DANCING-BEAR.

another, taken from a manuscript of the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Arundel. No. 91).



No. 5.—LADIES HAWKING.

perched on a short post, which is often alluded to in the directions for breeding hawks. The falconer wears hawk's gloves, which were made expressly to protect the hands against the bird's talons.

Hawking and hunting, especially the former, were the favourite recreations of the upper classes. Hawking was considered so honourable an occupation that people were in the custom of carrying the hawk on their fists when they walked or rode out, when they visited or went to public assemblies, and even in church, as a mark of their gentility. In the illuminations we not unfrequently see ladies and gentlemen seated in conversation, bearing their hawks on their hands. There was generally a *perche* in the chamber expressly set aside for the favourite bird, on which he was placed at night, or by day when the other occupations of its possessor rendered it inconvenient to carry it on the hand. Such a *perche*, with the hawk upon it, is represented in our Cut No. 3, taken from a manuscript of the romance of Meliadus, of the fourteenth century (MS. Addit. in the British Museum.



No. 3.—A HAWK ON ITS PERCH.

No. 12,224). Hawking was in some respects a complicated science; numerous treatises were written to explain and elucidate it, and it was submitted to strict laws. Much knowledge and skill were shown in choosing the hawks, and in breeding and training them, and the value of a well-chosen and well-trained bird was considerable. When carried about by its master or mistress, the hawk was held to the hand by a strap of leather or silk, called a *jesse*, which was fitted to the legs of the bird and passed between the fingers of the hand. Small bells were also attached to their legs, one on each. The accompanying Cut (No. 4), is from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, (No. 6956)



No. 4.—HAWKS AND THEIR KEEPER.

represents the falconer or keeper of the hawks holding in one hand what appears to be the *jesse*; he has a bird in his right hand, while another is



Hawking was a favourite recreation with the ladies, and in the illuminated manuscripts they often figure in scenes of this kind. Sometimes they are on foot, as in the group represented in our Cut (No. 5), taken from a manuscript in the

British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. VII.). One lady has let go her hawk, which is in the act of striking a heron; the other retains her hawk on her hand. The latter, as will be seen, is hooded. Each of the ladies who possess hawks has one glove only—the hawk's glove; the other hand is without gloves. They took with them, as shown here, dogs in couples to start the game. The dogs used for this purpose were spaniels, and the old treatise on domestic affairs entitled "Le Ménager de Paris" gives particular directions for choosing them. In the illuminations, hawking parties are more frequently represented on horseback than on foot; and often there is a mixture of riders and pedestrians. The treatise just referred to directs that the horse for hawking

should be a low one, easy to mount and dismount, and very quiet, that he may go slowly, and show no restiveness. Hawking appears to have commenced at the beginning of August; and until the middle of that month it was confined almost entirely to partridges. Quails, we are told, came in in the middle of August, and from that time forward everything seems to have been considered game that came to hand, for when other birds fail, the ladies are told that they may hunt fieldfares, and even jays and magpies. September and October were the busiest hawking months.

The ladies also practised with the bow, and they not only shot at birds, but they often followed nobler game. Our Cut (No. 6), taken

instance is singularly and rather rudely formed. The rider is seldom furnished with a whip, because he urged his steed forward with his



No. 8.—A KNIGHT AND HIS STEED.

spurs; but female riders and persons of lower degree have often whips, which generally consist of several lashes, each having usually a knob at the end. Such a whip is seen in our Cut (No. 9),



No. 6.—LADIES HUNTING THE STAG.

from the same manuscript as the last, represents two ladies hunting the stag. One, on horseback, is winding the horn and starting the game, in which the other plants her arrow most skilfully and scientifically. The dog used on this occasion is intended to be a greyhound.

It must be remarked that, in all the illuminations of the period we are describing, which represent ladies engaged in hunting or hawking, when on horseback they are invariably and unmistakably represented riding astride. This is evidently the case in the preceding group. It has been already shown, in former papers, that from a very early period it was a usual custom with the ladies to ride sideways, or with side-saddles. Most of the mediæval artists were so entirely ignorant of perspective, and they were so much tied to conventional modes of representing things, that when no doubt they intended to represent ladies riding sideways, the latter seem often as if they were riding astride. But in many instances, and especially in the scenes of hunting and hawking, there can be no doubt that they were riding in the latter fashion; and it is probable that they were taught to ride both ways, the side-saddle being considered the most courtly, while it was considered safer to sit astride in the chase. A passage has been often quoted from Gower's "Confessio Amantis," in which a troop of ladies is described, all mounted on fair white ambling horses, with splendid saddles, and it is added that "everichone (every one) ride on side," which probably means that this was the most fashionable style of riding. But it has been rather hastily assumed that this is a proof that it was altogether a new fashion, and we have even been told that it was first introduced by Anne of Bohemia, the first queen of

7178), of the fourteenth century, represents two ladies riding in the modern fashion, except that the left leg appears to be raised very awkwardly; but this appearance we must perhaps ascribe only to the bad drawing. It must be observed also that these ladies are seated on the wrong side of the horse, which is probably an error of the draughtsman. Perhaps there was a different arrangement of the dress for the two modes of riding, although there was so little of what we now call delicacy in the mediæval manners that this would be by no means necessary. Chaucer describes the Wife of Bath as wearing spurs, and as enveloped in a "foot-mantle":—

Uppon an amblere esely sche sat,
Wymlid ful wel, and on hire heed an hat
As brood as is a bocler, or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hire hupes (hips) large,
And on hire feet a paire of spores scharpe.
(*Cant. Tales*, l. 471.)

Travelling on horseback was now more common than at an earlier period, and this was not unfrequently a subject of popular complaint. In fact, men who rode on horseback considered themselves much above the pedestrians; they often went in companies, and were generally accompanied with grooms, and other riotous followers, who committed all sorts of depredations and violence on the peasantry in their way. A satirical song of the latter end of the reign of Edward I, represents our Saviour as discouraging the practice of riding. "While God was on earth," says the writer, "and wandered wide, what was the reason he would not ride? Because he would not have a groom to go by his side, nor the grudging (or discontent) of any gadding to jaw or to chide:—"

Whil God was on erthe
And wondrede wyde,
Whet was the reson
Why he nolde ryde?
For he nolde no groom
To go by ys syde,
Ne gruchyng of no gedelyng
To chaule ne to chyde.

"Listen to me, horsemen," continues this satirist, "and I will tell you news—that ye shall hang, and be lodged in hell:—"

Herkneth hideward, horsmen,
A tidyng ich ou telle,
That ye shulen hongen,
Ant herbarewen in helle!

The knight still carried his spear with him in travelling, as the footman carried his staff. In our Cut (No. 8), from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (No. 6963), to the rider, though not armed, carries his spear with him. The saddle in this



No. 9.—A HORSEWHIP.

taken from a manuscript of the thirteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Arundel. No. 91) which represents a countryman driving a horse of burthen; and he not only uses the whip, but he tries further to urge him on by twisting his tail. A whip with one lash—rather an unusual example—is in the hand of the woman



No. 10.—LADY AND CART.

driving the cart in our Cut (No. 10), which is taken from a manuscript of the romance of Meliadus, in the French National Library (No. 6961), belonging to the fourteenth century. The lady here is also evidently riding astride. The cart in which she is carrying home the wounded knight is of a simple and rude construction. As yet, indeed, carriages for travelling were very little in use; and to judge by the illuminations, they were only employed for kings and very powerful nobles in ceremonial processions.

Travelling was at this period very insecure, and people appear to have joined together in parties, whenever they could, for mutual protection; and they made but short stages on account of the badness of the roads. Hostels or places of public entertainment were now multiplied on all the great roads, but still travellers were often obliged to have recourse to private hospitality, which was seldom refused, for, in the country every man's door was open to the stranger who came from a distance, unless his appearance were suspicious or threatening. In this there was a mutual advantage; for the guest generally brought with him news and information which was highly valued at a time



No. 7.—LADIES RIDING.

Richard II. Our next Cut (No. 7) taken from a manuscript in the French National Library (No.

when communication between one place and another was so slow and uncertain. Hence the first questions put to a stranger were whence he had come, and what news he had brought with him. The old romances and tales furnish us with an abundance of examples of the widespread feeling of hospitality that prevailed during the middle ages. The door of every house was open; and even in the middle and lower classes, people were always ready to share their meals with the stranger who asked for a lodging. The denial of such hospitality was looked upon as exceptional and disgraceful, and was only met with from misers and others who were looked upon as almost without the pale of society. In the beautiful fabliau "*De l'Ernite, qui s'accompagna à l'Ange*" (Meon's Collection, vol. ii.), the travellers seek hospitality at the house of a rich usurer, who refuses to let them enter the door, and they are obliged to pass the night outside, under the steps which lead to the upper apartments. In houses, in general, the door leading into the eating-room or hall seems to have been always kept open by day. In a metrical treatise on behaviour for the ladies of the thirteenth century, entitled "*Le Chastiment des Dames*" (Barbazan, vol. ii.), they are told that when passing people's houses, they ought not to stop and look in at the door, because the people of the house might be doing something which ought not to be seen:—

Toutes les foiz que vous passez
Devant autrui meson, gardez
Que ja por regarder leenz
Ne vous arestez; n'est pas sens
Ne cortoisie de baer
En autrui meson, ne muser;
Tel chose fet aucuns sovent
En son ostel privéement,
Qu'il ne voudroit pas c'on veist,
S'aucuns devant son huis venist.

They are further recommended that, before walking in through the door-way, they should cough or speak, so that those inside might not be taken unawares, and perhaps surprised in some action which required privacy:—

Et se vous entrer i volez,
A l'entrée vous estoussez,
Si c'on sache vostre venir
Par parler ou par estoussir.
Ne se doit nus entre la gent
Entrer desporvement;
Ce samble que ce soit agnis.

Among the richer and more refined classes, great care was taken to show proper courtesy to strangers, according to their rank. In the case of a knight, the lord of the house and his lady, with their damsels, led him into a private room, took off his armour, and often his clothes, and gave him a change of apparel, after careful ablution. A scene of this kind is represented in the accompanying Cut (No. 11), taken from a



No. 11.—RECEIVING A STRANGER.

manuscript of the romance of Lancelot, of the fourteenth century, in the National Library in Paris (No. 6956). The host or his lady sometimes washed the stranger's feet themselves. Thus, in the *fabliau* quoted above, when the hermit and his companion sought a lodging at the house of a *bourgeois*, they were received without question, and their hosts washed their feet, and then gave them plenty to eat and drink, and a bed:—

Li hoste orent leur piez lavez,
Bien sont peu et abrevez;
Jusqu' au jor ase ce jurent.

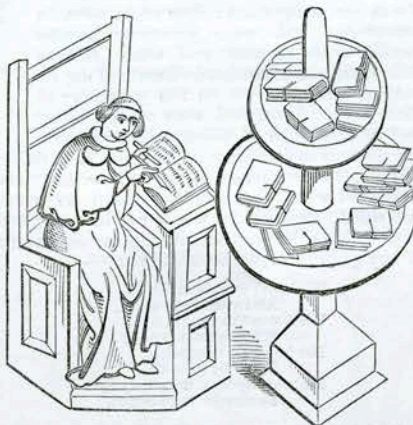
We might easily multiply extracts illustrative of this hospitable feeling, as it existed and was practised from the twelfth century to the fifteenth.

Among the amusements of leisure hours, reading began now to occupy a much larger place than had been given to it in former ages. Even still, popular literature—in the shape of tales, and ballads, and songs—was in a great measure communicated orally. But much had been done during the fourteenth century towards spreading a taste for literature and knowledge; books were multiplied, and were extensively read; and wants were already arising which soon led the way to that most important of modern discoveries, the art of printing. Most gentlemen had now a few books, and men of wealth had often considerable libraries. The wills of this period, still preserved, often enumerate the books possessed by the testator, and show the high value which was set upon them. Many of the illuminations of the fourteenth century present us with ingenious, and sometimes fantastic forms of book-cases and book-stands. In our Cut (No. 12), from a manu-



No. 12.—A MONK AT HIS STUDIES.

script of metrical relations of miracles of the Virgin Mary, now preserved in the library of the city of Soissons in France, we have a monk reading, seated before a book-stand, the table of which moves up and down on a screw. Upon this table is the inkstand, and below it apparently the inkbottle; and the table has in itself receptacles for books and paper or parchment. In the wall of the room are cupboards, also for the reception of books, as we see by one lying loose in them. The man is here seated on a stool; but in our Cut (No. 13),



No. 13.—A MEDIEVAL WRITER.

taken from a manuscript in the National Library in Paris (No. 6985), he is seated in a chair, with a writing-desk attached to it. The scribe holds in his hand a pen, with which he is writing, and a knife to scratch the parchment where anything may need erasure. The table here is also of a curious construction, and it is covered with books. Other examples are found, which show that considerable ingenuity was employed in varying the forms of such library tables.

THE SOCIETY OF ARTS.

A MEETING of the members of this Institution, for the purpose of awarding prizes to meritorious inventors and others, was held at the Society's Rooms in the Adelphi early in the last month. The meeting was presided over by the President of the Institution, Prince Albert, who in opening the proceedings remarked that, "Three years have now elapsed since this Society last distributed its medals and awarded its prizes. The interruption that took place was owing to the Great Exhibition of 1851, which caused so much excitement and interest, and claimed such a large share of the public attention. The Society took so honourable a part in that great event that it need not be ashamed to refer to it. I hope you will be convinced, from the works of Art and new inventions which will be brought before you to-day, that the inventive genius as well as the skill of this country is making rapid strides."

The following extract is from the report read by Mr. Solly, the secretary:—

"Since the last general meeting of the Society for the distribution of premiums, three years have elapsed, and this period has certainly not been the least eventful portion of the history of the Society, whether the subjects which have occupied the whole body, or the exertions of the individual members, are considered. If there were no other circumstances to chronicle than those which relate to the part taken by the Society in connexion with the Great Exhibition, there would be much connected with the Industrial progress of the world to record, and everything belonging to the history of that great event has a new and ever-growing importance, when taken in connexion with the rapidly developing spirit of international co-operation, of which it was in truth the first illustration. The share which this Society had in the progress of the Great Exhibition, will be recorded in the history of our country; it is known to all, and, in truth, it would hardly be necessary now to refer to it, were it not that several of the prizes now about to be awarded relate directly to the Great Exhibition; and further, that the varied and important services connected with it, which for nearly two years have occupied many of our most active members, have to a considerable extent interfered with and modified the prize lists of the last three years. In the year 1851 the ordinary prize list of the Society was altogether suspended, and, in place of it, special premiums connected wholly with the Exhibition were offered. It must not be supposed, however, that in consequence of the time and attention thus devoted to these particular subjects, the other branches of the Society's operations have been abandoned or neglected. On the contrary, it is probable that in no three years of the last century has the Society done more to advance the true interests of the Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce of the country than it has in the last three sessions. This is not the time to enumerate the good works which the Society has undertaken or carried out, yet it is right that I should remind you of them, and that I should observe that, if a smaller number of prizes are now given than used to be the case, it is not because the Society is less able or less willing than it was formerly to reward merit, but because, from the altered spirit of the times, the encouragement and aid of the Society are less needed as a means of bringing forth isolated inventions and dormant talents, and are more urgently needed in the development of enlarged generalisations and comprehensive measures."

It is unnecessary for us to give a detailed list of all to whom prizes were awarded; we subjoin only those whose productions have, either directly or indirectly, reference to Art.

To Mr. Joshua Rogers, 133, Bunhill Row, for his Shilling Box of Water Colours—the silver medal. To Mr. John Cronmire, 10, Cottage Lane, Commercial Road East, for his Halferown Box of Mathematical Instruments—the silver medal. To Mr. Henry Weekes, A.R.A., for his Essay on the Fine Arts Department of the Great Exhibition—the silver medal. To Mr. F. C. Bakewell, for his Essay on the Machinery of the Great Exhibition—the silver medal. To Mr. G. Edwards, for his Improved Portable Photographic Camera—the Society's medal. To Mr. A. Claudet, for his Essay on the Stereoscope, and its applications to Photography—the Society's medal. To Mrs. A. Thomson, of New Bond Street, for Four Drawings in Outline—the Society's medal. To the Rev. W. T. Kingsley, of Cambridge, for his Discoveries in Photography—the Society's medal.

of manufacture were freely employed, and by the end of the seventeenth century nearly all the well-known varieties of decorative furniture were in vogue, except perhaps two rather prominent modes, which belong to the next century; these are Japan work, often insertions of real oriental productions, which became popular in the earlier years of the eighteenth century, and the elegant kind of furniture in precious wood, inlaid with plaques of painted porcelain, which was of still later introduction. Holland, Germany, and more especially Venice, became famous for their beautiful manufacture in cabinet work during this period, although France undoubtedly maintained the first rank in this respect.

In England, a great impetus to the production of decorative furniture was doubtless given by the gay luxurious reign of Charles II., at whose accession a flood of continental fashions were introduced; much of the state-furniture of our old mansions of this period was, however, evidently imported; and, generally speaking, furniture of undoubtedly English origin will not bear comparison with the fine specimens of foreign manufacture. In the reign of Charles II., however, a vigorous and most artistic style of wood-carving sprung up in England, which may be seen exemplified in more than one specimen at Gore House. The works of Grinlin Gibbons at this period would bear comparison with those of the most able continental wood-carvers, and the peculiar style brought into vogue by this celebrated artist and his contemporaries was prominently developed and extended in the earlier years of the succeeding century: English rococo-carving in wood being often distinguished by marked originality, and a well-defined national bias. The works of Chippendale, a famous cabinet-maker of St. Martin's Lane, exhibit very great merit. The fine mirror-frame by him from Cumberland Lodge, (*No. 77 Catalogue*) will be recognised as a beautiful instance of a style which is prominently seen in the fittings of great numbers of the old mansions of the nobility both in town and country.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the characteristic style is the "rococo," which is merely a still more florid and extravagant development of the previous mannerism, characterised by a picturesque irregularity of detail, scorning all rules, making use of all motives, natural, conventional, or utterly monstrous, as the case may be, without the slightest concern at the innumerable violations of common sense even, which are of constant occurrence. Beautiful and masterly manipulation in all kinds of Art-workmanship has reached its highest pitch, and with it the series of genuine and original styles in ornamental manifestations may be said to have closed; after this commences the mania of revivals. There was perhaps some vitality in the phase of style known as the "Louis XVI.," of which the splendid CABINET by Goutier, *No. 7, (No. 71 Catalogue)* in the possession of her Majesty, is a fine example, but the rage for the revival of classical ornament soon put an end to all genuine motives. The cold and rigid formality of the period of the Revolution and the Empire in France was perhaps the very falsest period of the decorative arts that the world has yet seen, and as France, even then, was the great arbiter of style and fashion, a kindred revolution in taste took place with greater or less completeness in almost all the other European countries. As our readers may judge, we have only taken a rapid review of the history of cabinet work, sufficient however, we trust, to interest them in it.

THE DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE ENGLISH.

DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

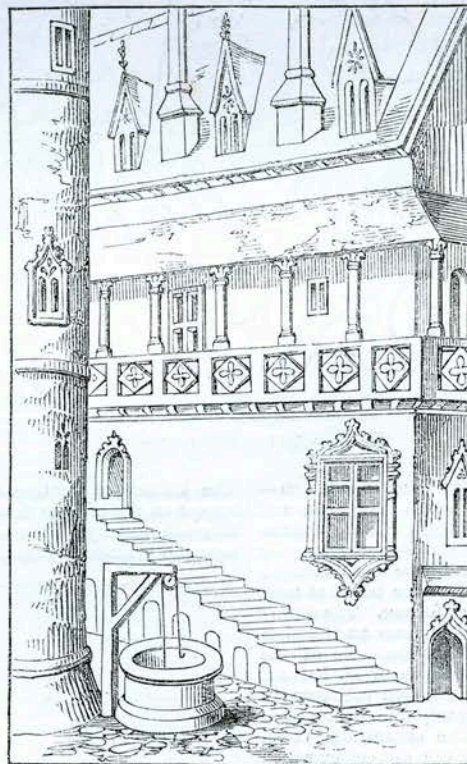
BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

XI. SLOW PROGRESS OF SOCIETY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.—ENLARGEMENT OF THE HOUSES.—THE HALL AND ITS FURNITURE.—ARRANGEMENT OF THE TABLE FOR MEALS.—ABSENCE OF CLEANLINESS.—MANNERS AT TABLE.—THE PARLOUR.

The progress of society in the two countries which were most closely allied in this respect, England and France, was slow during the fifteenth century. Both countries were engaged either in mutual hostility or in desolating civil wars, which so utterly checked all spirit of improvement, that the aspect of society differed little between the beginning and the end of the century in anything but dress. At the close of the fourteenth century, the middle classes had made great advance in wealth and in independence, and the wars of the roses which were so destructive to the nobility, as well as the tendency of the crown to set the gentry up as a balance to the power of the feudal barons, helped to make that advance more certain and rapid. This increase of wealth appears in the multiplication of furniture and of other household implements, especially those of a more valuable description. We are surprised in running our eye through the wills and inventories during

this period, at the quantity of plate which was usually possessed by country gentlemen and respectable burghers. There was also a great increase both in the number and magnitude of the houses which intervened between the castle and the cottage. Instead of having one or two bedrooms, and turning people into the hall to sleep at night, we find whole suits of chambers; while instead of the family living chiefly in the hall, privacy is sought by the addition of parlours, of which there were often more than one in an ordinary sized house. The hall was in fact already beginning to diminish in importance in comparison with the rest of the house. Whether in town or country, houses of any magnitude were now generally built round an interior court, into which the rooms almost invariably looked, only small and unimportant windows looking towards the street or country. This arrangement of course originated in the necessity of studying security, a necessity which was never felt more than in the fifteenth century. We have less need to seek our illustrations from manuscripts during this period, on account of the numerous examples which still remain in a greater or less state of perfection, but still an illumination now and then presents us with an interesting picture of the architectural arrangements of a dwelling-house in the fifteenth century, which may be advantageously compared with the buildings which still exist. One of these is represented in our cut No. 1, taken from an illuminated copy of the French transla-



No. 1.—COURT OF A HOUSE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

tion of Valerius Maximus (MS. No. 6984, in the National Library at Paris). The building to the left is probably the staircase turret of the gateway; that before us is the mass of the household apartments. We are supposed to be standing within the court. At the foot of the turret is the well, a very important object within the court, where it was always placed in houses of this description, as in the troubles of those days the household might be obliged to shut themselves up for a day or two and depend for their supply of water entirely on what they could get within their walls.

The cut just given is a remarkably good and perfect representation of the exterior, looking towards the court, of the domestic buildings. The door on the groundfloor to the right is probably, to judge by the position of the windows, the entrance to the hall. The steps leading to the first floor are outside the wall, an

arrangement which is not uncommon in the existing examples of houses of this period in England. We have also here the open gallery round the chambers on the first floor, which is so frequently met with in our houses of the fifteenth century. It is probable that within the door at the top of the external flight of steps, as here represented, a short staircase led up to the floor on which the chambers were situated. Perhaps it may have been a staircase into the gallery, as the opening round the corner to the right seems to be a door from the gallery into the chambers.

In another illumination in the same manuscript, a knight is represented knocking at the door of a house into which he seeks admittance. The plain knocker and the ring will be recognised at once by all who have been accustomed to examine the original doors still remaining in so many of our old buildings, but why the

person who thus signifies his wish to enter should hold the ring with his right hand, and



No. 2.—A KNIGHT AT THE DOOR.

the knocker with his left, is not very clear. The knocker, instead of being plain, as in this cut,

was often very ornamental. This is of course the outer door of the house, and our readers will not overlook the loophole and the small window through which the person who knocked might be examined, and, if necessary, interrogated, before the door was opened to him.

Let us now pass through the door on the ground floor, always open by day, into the hall. This was still the most spacious apartment in the house, and it was still also the public room, open to all who were admitted within the precincts. The hall continued to be scantily furnished. The permanent furniture consisted chiefly in benches, and in a seat with a back to it for the superior members of the family. The head table at least was now generally a permanent one, and there were in general more permanent tables, or tables dormant, than formerly, but still the greater part of the tables in the hall were made for each meal by placing boards upon trestles. Cushions, with ornamental cloths, called bankers and dorsers, for placing over the benches and backs of the seats of the better persons at the table, were now also in general use. Tapestry was suspended on the walls of the hall on special occasions, but it does not appear to have been of common use. Another

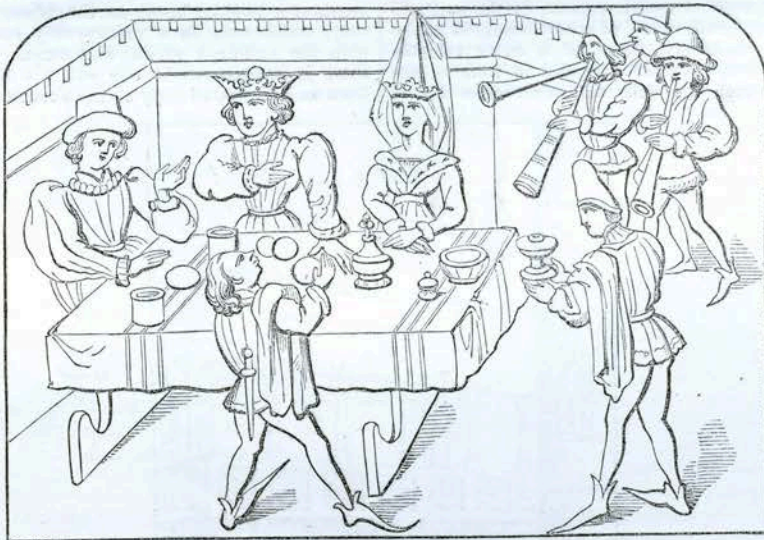
and chattels. In the English metrical *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, or rules for behaviour at table, written by Lydgate, the guest is told to "bring no knyves unskoured to the table," which can only mean that he is to keep his own knife that he carries with him clean. The two servants are here duly equipped for duty, with the towel thrown over the shoulder. The table appears to be placed on two board-shaped trestles, but the artist has forgot to indicate the seats. But in our next cut, a very private party, taken from a manuscript of the early French translation of the Decameron (in the National Library at Paris, No. 6887), are placed in a seat with a back to it, although the table is still evidently a board placed upon trestles. It may be remarked that in dinner scenes of this century, the gentlemen at table are almost always represented with their hats on their heads.

As we have already hinted, the inventories of this period give us curious information on the



No. 4.—A PRIVATE DINNER.

furniture of houses of different descriptions. We learn from one of these, made in 1446, that there were at that time belonging to the hall of the Priory of Durham, one dorsal or dorser, embroidered with the birds of St. Cuthbert and the arms of the church, five pieces of red cloth (three embroidered and two plain), no doubt for the same purpose of throwing over the seats; six cushions; three basins of brass; and three washing-basins. A gentleman at Northallerton in Yorkshire, who made his will in 1444, had in his hall, thirteen jugs or pots of brass, four basins, and two ewers (of course, for washing the hands), three candlesticks, five (metal) dishes, three kettles, nine vessels of lead and pewter, "utensils of iron belonging to the hall," valued at two shillings—probably the fire-irons, one dorser and one banker. An inventory of a gentleman's goods in the year 1463, apparently in the southern part of England (printed in the new *Retrospective Review*), gives, as the contents of



No. 3.—A DINNER SCENE AT COURT.

article of furniture had now become common—the buffet, or stand on which the plate and other vessels were arranged. These articles appear to have been generally in the keeping of the butler, and only to have been brought into the hall and arranged on the buffet at meal times, for show as much as for use. The dinner party in our cut No. 3 taken from an illumination of a manuscript of the *Romance of the Comte d'Artois* in the possession of M. Barrois, a distinguished and well-known collector in Paris, represents a royal party dining at a table with much simplicity. The ornamental vessel on the table is probably the salt-cellar, which was a very important article at the feast. Besides the general utility of salt, it was regarded with profoundly superstitious feelings, and it was considered desirable that it should be the first article placed on the table. A metrical code for the behaviour of servants, written in the fifteenth century, directs that in preparing the table for meals, the table-cloth was first to be spread, and then, invariably and in all places, the salt was to be placed upon it; after this were to be arranged successively, the knives, the bread, the wine, and then the meat, after which the waiter was to bring to each guest what he might ask for.

Tu dois mettre premierement
En tous lieux et en tout hostel
La nappe, et apres le sel;
Cousteaulx, pain, vin, et puis viande,
Puis apporter ce qu'on demande.

In our last cut it will be seen that the "nappe" is duly laid, and upon it are seen the salt-cellar, the bread (round cakes), and the cups of wine.

The knives are wanting, and the plates seldom appear on the table in these dinner scenes of the fifteenth century. This perhaps arose from the common practice at that time, of people carrying



No. 5.—RECEPTION OF THE MINSTRELS.

their own knives with them in a sheath attached to the girdle. We find, moreover, few knives enumerated in our inventories of household goods

the hall,—a standing spear, a hanging of stained work, a mappa-mundi (a map of the world) of parchment—a curious article for the hall, a side-

table, one "dormond" table (a permanent table), a beam with six candlesticks.

The permanent, or dormant table, is shown in the scene given in our cut, No. 5, taken from the beautifully illuminated manuscript of the Roman de la Violette, at Paris, some fac-similes from which were privately distributed by the Comte de Bastard. We have here also the seat with its back, and the buffet with its jugs and dishes. In the first of our cuts, we had the waits or trumpeters, who were always attached to the halls of great people, to announce the commencement of the dinner. It was only persons of a certain rank who were allowed this piece of ostentation; but everybody had minstrelsy to dinner who could obtain it, and when it was at hand. The wandering minstrel was welcome in every hall, and for this very reason the class of ambulatory musicians was very numerous. In the scene just given, the wandering minstrel, or, according to the story, a nobleman in that disguise, has just arrived, and he is allowed without ceremony or suspicion, to seat himself at the fire, apparently on a stool, beside the two individuals at dinner.

The floor of the hall was usually paved with tiles, or with flag stones, and very little care appears to have been shown to cleanliness, as far as it was concerned, except that it was usual to strew it with rushes. Among the various French metrical "Contenances de Table," or directions for behaviour at table, of the fifteenth century, the person instructed is told that he must not spit upon the table at dinner time:

No craiche par dessus la table,
Car c'est chose desconvenable,

which is necessarily an intimation that he must spit upon the floor. In another of these pieces he is told that when he washes his mouth at table, he must not reject the water into the basin:

Quant ta bouche tu laveras,
Ou bacin point ne cracheras.

The reason for this rule was evidently the circumstance that one basin might serve for all the company; but the alternative again was of course to spit the water out upon the floor. Again, in one of these codes, the learner is told that when he makes sops in his wine, he must either drink all the wine in the glass, or throw what remains on the floor—

Enfant, se tu fais en ton verre
Souppes de vin aucument,
Boy tout le vin entierelement,
Ou autrement le gette à terre.

Or, as it is expressed in another similar code more briefly,

Se tu fais souppes en ton verre
Boy le vin ou le gette à terre.

There can be no doubt that all this must have made an extremely dirty floor. Another rather naive direction shows that no more attention was paid to the cleanliness of the benches and seats: it is considered necessary to tell the scholar always to look at his seat before he sits down at table, to assure himself that there is nothing dirty upon it!

Enfant, prens de regarder peine
Sur le siege où tu te sierras,
Se aucune chose y verras,
Qui soit deshonneste ou vilains.

The fireplace at the side of the hall, with hearth and chimney, were now in general use. An example is given in our last cut; another will be seen in our cut No. 6, and here, though evidently in the hall, and a monastic hall too, the process of cooking is pursued at it. The monks appear to be having a joyous repast, not quite in keeping with the strict rule of their order, and the way in which they are conducting themselves towards the women who have been introduced into the monastery, does not speak in favour of monastic continence. This picture is from a manuscript bible, of the fifteenth century, in the National Library at Paris (No. 6829).

Manners at table appear to have been losing some of the strictness and stiffness of their ceremonial, while they retained their rudeness. The bowl of water was carried round to the guests, and each washed his hands before dinner, but the washing after dinner appears

now to have been commonly omitted. In one of the directions for table already quoted, the scholar is told that he must wash himself when



No. 6.—A MONASTIC FEAST.

he rises from bed in the morning, once at dinner, and once at supper, in all thrice a day—

Enfant d'honneur, lave tes mains
A ton lever, à ton disner,
Et puis au soupper, sans finer;
Ce sont trois foys à tout le moins.

And again, in another similar code,—

Lave tes mains devant disner,
Et aussi quant voudras soupper.

Still people put their victuals to their mouth with their fingers, for, though forks were certainly known in the previous century, they were so rare that it was only a prince or some very rich man who possessed one. It was considered, nevertheless, bad manners to carry the victuals to the mouth with the knife.

Ne fais pas ton morsel conduire
A ton coustel qui te peult nuire.

Another practice strictly forbidden in these rules was picking your teeth with your knife while at table. From the use thus made of the hand, in the absence of forks, it may be supposed that we should have directions for keeping it clean during the process of eating. One of these appears droll enough to us at the present day. It is directed that a person sitting at table in company is not to blow his nose with the hand with which he takes his meat. Handkerchiefs were not yet in use, and the alternative of course was that, if any one felt the need of performing the operation in question, he was to lay down his knife, and to do it with the hand which held it. In one of the French codes this direction is given rather covertly, as follows:—

Ne touche ton nez à main nue
Dont ta viande est tenue.

But in another it is enunciated more crudely, thus:—

Enfant, se ton nez est morveux,
Ne le torche de la main nue
De quoy ta viande est tenue,
Le fait est vilain et honteux.

All these circumstances show a state of manners which was very far from refined.

Among other directions for table, you are told not to leave your spoon in your platter; not to return back to your plate the food you have put in your mouth; not to dip your meat in the salt-cellar to salt it, but to take a little salt on your knife and put it on the meat; not to drink from a cup with a dirty mouth; not to offer to another person the remains of your pottage; not to eat much cheese; only to take two or three nuts, when they are placed before you; not to play with your knife; not to roll your napkin into a cord, or tie it in knots; and not to get intoxicated during dinner-time!

Our next cut, No. 7, represents one of the backed seats, after a pattern of this century. It is taken from a manuscript of the Roman de Launcelot du Lac, in the National Library at Paris (No. 594). It is probable that this seat belonged to the parlour, or, as the name signifies, conversation room. The custom still continued of making seats with divisions, so that each person sat in a separate compartment. A triple seat of this kind is represented in our cut No. 8, taken from a manuscript of the French Boccaccio in the National Library at Paris.

The parlour appears to have been ornamented with more care, and to have been better furnished than the hall. It appears to have been placed sometimes on the ground floor, and sometimes on the floor above, and large houses had usually two or three parlours. It had often windows in recesses, with fixed seats on each side; and the fireplace was smaller and more comfortable than that of the hall. As carpets came into more general use, the parlour was one of the first rooms to receive this luxury. In the inventory I have already quoted from the new Retrospective Review, the following articles of furniture are described as being in the parlour.

A hanging of worsted, red and green.
A cupboard of ash-boards.
A table, and a pair of trestles.
A branch of latten, with four lights.
A pair of andirons.
A pair of tongs.
A form to sit upon.
And a chair.



No. 7.—A DOMESTIC SCENE.

This will give us a very good idea of what was the usual furniture of the parlour in the fifteenth century. The only movable seats are a single



No. 8.—A TRIPLE SEAT.

bench, and one chair—perhaps a seat with a back like that shown above. The table was even here formed by laying a board upon trestles. The cupboard was peculiar to this part of the house; many of our readers will no doubt remember the parlour cupboards in our old country houses, the branched candlestick of metal, suspended from the ceiling, and the tongs and hand-irons for the fire.

THE DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE ENGLISH.

DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

XII.—THE PARLOUR AND ITS FURNITURE.—IN-DOOR LIFE AND CONVERSATION.—PET ANIMALS.—THE DANCE.—RECREATIONS.

OUR last chapter closed with an enumeration of the principal articles of furniture in the parlour, from a record of the fifteenth century. These are all exhibited in illuminations in manuscripts of the same period. The "hanging of worsted," was, of course, a piece of tapestry for the wall, or for some part of the wall, for the room was in many, perhaps in most, cases, only partially covered. Sometimes, indeed, it appears only to have been hung up on occasions, perhaps for company, when it seems to have been placed behind the chief seat.* The wall itself was frequently adorned with paintings, in common houses rude and merely ornamental, while in others of a better class they represented histories, scenes from romances, and religious subjects, much like those exhibited on the tapestries themselves. In the cut annexed (No. 1) taken from a beautifully illuminated manuscript of the romance of Lancelot, in the National Library at Paris, No. 6784, we have a representation of a parlour with wall paintings of this kind. Morgan le Fay is



No. 1.—MORGAN LE FAY SHOWING KING ARTHUR THE PAINTINGS OF THE ADVENTURES OF LANCELOT.

showing King Arthur the adventures of Lancelot, which she had caused to be painted in a room in her palace. Paintings of this kind are very often alluded to in the old writers, especially in the poets, as every one knows who has read the "Romance of the Rose," the works of Chaucer, or that singular and curious poem, the "Pastyme of Pleasure," by Stephen Hawes. Chaucer, in his "Dream," speaks of

A chamber paint
Full of stories old and divers,
More than I can as now rehearse.

There was in the castle of Dover an apartment called Arthur's Hall, and another named Genevra's Chamber, which have been supposed to be so called from the subjects of the paintings with which they were decorated; and a still more curious confirmation of the above sketch is furnished by an old house of this period still existing in New Street, Salisbury, a room in which preserves its painting in distemper, occupying the upper part of the wall, like the story of Lancelot in the pictures of the room of Morgan le Fay. We give a sketch of the side of this room occupied by the painting in the accompanying cut. It occupies the space above the fireplace, and the windows looking into the street, but it has been much damaged by modern alterations in the house. The subject, as will

* A Bury will, of the date 1522, mentioned a little further on, enumerates among the household furniture "the steynd clothes hangyng abowte the parlour behynde the halle chemny."

at once be seen, was of a sacred character—the offering of the three kings.

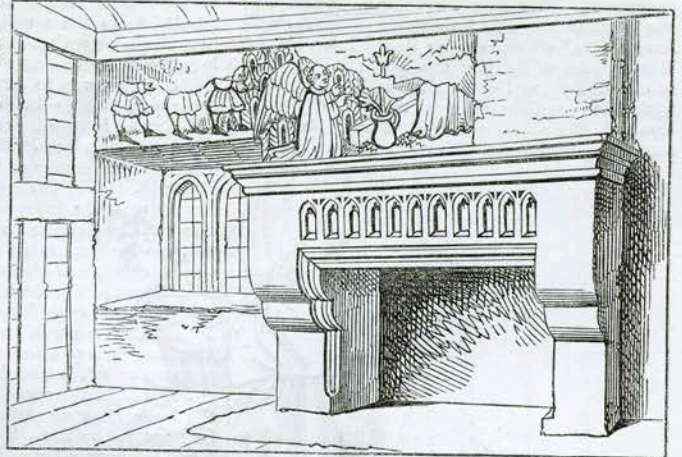
The window to the left of the fireplace, which is one of the original windows of this house, has a deep sill, or seat, which was intended as one of the accommodations for sitting down. This was not unfrequently made with a recess in the middle, so as to form a seat on each side, on which two persons might sit face to face, and which was thus more convenient both for conversation, and for looking through the window at what was going on without. This appears to have been a favourite seat with the female part of the household when employed in needlework and other sedentary occupations. There is an allusion to

this use of the window sill in the curious old poem of the "Lady Bessy," which is probably somewhat obscured by the alterations of the modern copyist; when the young princess kneels before her father, he takes her up and seats her in the window—

I came before my father the king,
And knelt down upon my knees;
I desired him lowly of his blessing,
And full soon he gave it unto me.
And in his arms he could me thring,
And set me in a window so high.

The words of our inventory, "a form to sit upon, and a chair," describe well the scanty furnishing of the rooms of a house at this period. The cause of this poverty in moveables, which arose more from the general insecurity of property than the inability to procure it, is curiously illustrated by a passage from a letter of Margaret Paston to her husband, written early in the reign of Edward IV. "Also," says the lady to her spouse, "if ye be at home this Christmas, it were well done ye should do purvey a garnish or twain of pewter vessel, two basins and two ewers, and twelve candlesticks, for ye have too few of any of these to serve this place; I am afraid to purvey much stuff in this place, till we be surer thereof." As yet, a form or bench continued to form the usual seat, which could be occupied by several persons at once. One chair, as in the inventory just mentioned was considered enough for a room, and was no doubt preserved for the person of most dignity, perhaps for the lady of the household. Towards the latter end of this period, however, chairs, made in a simpler form, and stools, the latter very commonly three-legged, became more abundant. Yet in a will dated so late as 1522 (printed in the "Bury Wills" of the Camden Society), an inhabitant of Bury in Suffolk, who seems to have possessed a large house and a considerable quantity of household furniture for the time, had, of tables and chairs, only—"a tabyll of waynskott with to (two) joynyd trestelles, ij. joynyd stols of the best, a gret joynyd cheyre at the deyse in the halle—the grettest close cheyre, ij. fote stoles—a rounde tabyll of waynskott with lok and key, the secunde joynyd cheyer, ij. joynyd stols." The ordinary forms of chairs and stools at the latter end of the fifteenth century are shown in our cut No. 3, taken from a very curious sculpture in alto-relievo on one of the columns of the Hôtel-de-Ville at Brussels. At this time we begin to find examples of chairs ingeniously constructed, for folding up or taking to pieces, so as to be easily laid aside or carried away. Some of these resemble exactly our modern camp-stools. A curious bedroom chair of this construction is represented in our cut No. 4, taken from a manuscript of the romance of the Comte d'Artois, of the fifteenth century, in the collection of M. Barrois of Paris,

but now I believe in the library of Lord Ashburnham. The construction of this chair is too evident to need explanation.



No. 2.—WALL-PAINTINGS STILL REMAINING IN A HOUSE AT SALISBURY.

At this time much greater use appears to have been made of candles than formerly, and they seem to have been made of different substances and qualities. Candlesticks, made usually of the mixed metal called laton or latten (an alloy of brass), were found in all houses; they appear to have been still mostly made with a pike on



No. 3.—SCULPTURE FROM THE HOTEL DE VILLE, BRUSSELS.

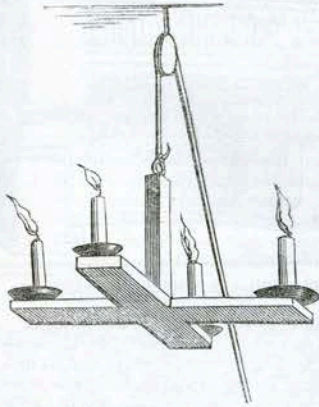
which the candle was stuck, and sometimes they were ornamented, and furnished with mottoes. John Baret, who made his will at Bury, in 1463, possessed a "candylstykke of laten with a pyke," two "lowe candylstikkez of a sorth," (i. e. to match), and three "candelstykes of laton where-



No. 4.—A BEDROOM CHAIR.

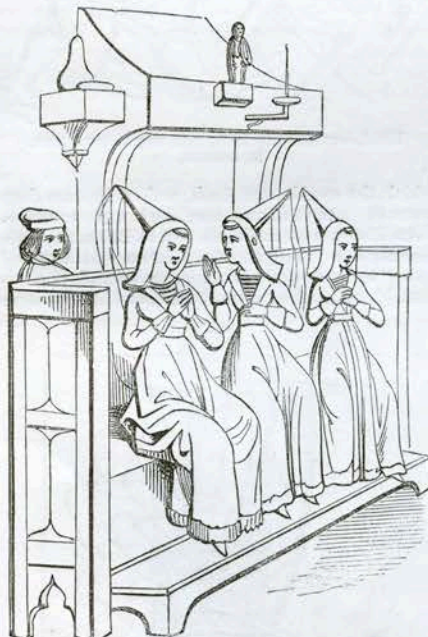
upon is wretyn grace me governe." A testament dated in 1493 enumerates "a lowe candilstykke of laton, oon of my candelstykes, and ij. high candilstykes of laton." In the will of Agas Herte of Bury, in 1522, "ij. belle canstykes and a lesser canstyke," occurs twice, so that they seem to have formed two sets, and there is a

third mention of "ij. bell canstykes." We also find mention at this time of double candlesticks, which were probably intended to be placed in an elevated position to give light to the whole apartment. Our inventory of the contents of the parlour contains "a branch of latten, with four lights," which was no doubt intended for this purpose of lighting the whole room (a sort of chandelier), and appears to have been identical with the candlebeam, not unfrequently mentioned in the old inventories. A widow of Bury, named Agnes Ridges, who made her will in 1492,



No. 5.—A CHANDELIER.

mentions "my candylbeme that hangyth in my hall with vj. bellis of laton standyng thereon," i. e. six cups in which the candles were placed. Our cut No. 5, represents a candlebeam with four lights. It is slung round a simple pulley in the ceiling, by a string which was fixed to the ground. It is taken from a manuscript of the *Traité des Tournois* (treatise of tournaments) by King René, in the National Library at Paris, No. 8352; and as the scene is represented as taking place in a princely hall, which is fitted up for a festive entertainment, we may take it



No. 6.—LADIES SEATED.

as a curious proof of the rudeness which was still mixed up with the magnificence of the fifteenth century. In a fine illumination in a manuscript of Froissart in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 18 E. 2), representing the fatal masque at the court of Charles VI. of France, in 1393, in which several of the courtiers were burnt to death, we have, in the king's palace, a chandelier exactly like that in our last cut, except that each candlestick on the beam contains two candles—a "double candlestick." This manuscript is of the latter part of the fifteenth century. It

had been the custom, on festive occasions, or in ceremonies where large apartments required to be lighted, to do this by means of torches which servants held in their hands. This custom was very common and is frequently spoken of or alluded to in the mediæval writers. Nevertheless, the inconvenience and even danger attending it, led to various plans for superseding it. One of these was, to fix up against the walls of the room, frames for holding the torches, of which some interesting examples are given in the November number of the *Art-Journal* from the originals still preserved in the Palazzo Strozzi at Florence. One of that group, it will be observed, has a long spike, intended to hold a large candle. Candlesticks fixed to the wall in various manners are seen in manuscripts of the fifteenth century; and an example is given in our cut No. 6, taken from a part of the same illumination of Froissart mentioned above. The candle is here placed before a little image, on the upper part of the fireplace, but whether this was for a religious purpose or not, is not clear.

In this cut, the three princesses are seated on the large chair or settle, which is turned with its back to the fire. This important article of furniture is now found in the parlour as well as in the hall. In fact, as people began to have less taste for the publicity of the old hall, they gradually withdrew from it into the parlours for many of the purposes to which the hall was originally devoted, and thus the latter lost much of its former character. The parlour was now the place commonly used for the family meals. In a curious little treatise on the "most vyle and detestable use of dyce play," composed near the beginning of the sixteenth century, one of the interlocutors is made to say, "So down we came again," i. e. from the chambers above, "into the parlour, and found there divers gentlemen, all strangers to me; and what should I say more, but to dinner we went." The dinner hour, we learn from this same tract, was then at the hour of noon; "the table," we are told, "was fair spread with diaper cloths, the cupboard garnished with much goodly plate." The cupboard seems now to have been considered a necessary article of furniture in the parlour; it had originally belonged to the hall, and was of simple construction. One of the great objects of ostentation in a rich man's house was his plate; which, at dinner time, he brought forth, and caused to be spread on a table in sight of his guests; afterwards, to exhibit the plate to more advantage, the table was made with shelves, or steps, on which the different articles could be arranged in rows one above another. It was called in French and Anglo-Norman a *buffet*, or a *dressoir* (dresser), the latter name it is said being given to it because on it the different articles were *dressés*, or arranged. The English had, in their own language, no special name for this article of furniture, so they called it literally a cup-board, or board for the cups. In course of time, and especially when it was removed from the hall into the parlour, this article was made more elaborately, and doors were added to it, for shutting up the plate when not in use. It thus became equivalent to our modern side-board. We have seen a figure of a cupboard of this more complicated structure in a cut in our last chapter; and we shall have others of different forms in our next.

As the parlours saved the domestic arrangements of the household from the too great publicity of the hall, so on the other hand they relieved the bed chambers from much of what had previously been transacted in them and thus rendered them more private. In the poem of the Lady Bessie, when the Earl of Derby and Humphrey Brereton visit the young princess, they are introduced to her in her bower, or chamber, but she immediately conducts the latter into the parlour, in order to converse with him.—

She took him in her arms, and kissed him times three;
"Welcome," she said, "Humphrey Brereton;
How hast thou spedd in the west country?
I pray thee tell me quickly and anon."
Into a parlour they went from thence,
There were no more but hee and shee.

The female part of the family now passed in the parlour much of the time which had been

formerly passed in their chambers. It was often their place of work. Young ladies, even of great families, were brought up not only strictly, but even tyrannically, by their mothers, who kept them constantly at work, exacted from them almost slavish deference and respect, and even counted upon their earnings. The parental authority was indeed carried to an extravagant extent. There are some curious instances of this in the correspondence of the Paston family. Agnes Paston, the wife of Sir William Paston, the judge, appears to have been a very harsh mother. At the end of June 1454, Elizabeth Clere, a kinswoman who appears to have lived in great intimacy with the family, sent to John Paston, the lady's eldest son, the following account of the treatment of his sister Elizabeth, who was of marriageable age, and for whom a man of the name of Scroope had been proposed as a husband. "Therefore, cousin," writes Jane Clere, "meseemeth he were good for my cousin your sister, without that ye might get her a better; and if ye can get a better, I would advise you to labour it in as short time as ye may goodly, for she was never in so great a sorrow as she is now-a-days, for she may not speak with no man, whosever come, nor even may see nor speak with my man, nor with servants of her mother's, but that she beareth her on hand otherwise than she meaneth; and she hath since Easter the most part been beaten once in the week, or twice, and sometimes twice in a day, and her head broken in two or three places. Wherefore cousin, she hath sent to me by friar Newton in great counsel, and prayeth me that I would send to you a letter of her heaviness, and pray you to be her good brother, as her trust is in you." In spite of her anxiety to be married, Elizabeth Paston did not succeed at this time, but she was soon afterwards transferred from her paternal roof to the household of the lady Pole. It was the custom at this time to send young ladies of family to the houses of the great to learn manners, and it was not only a matter of pride and ostentation to be thus surrounded by a numerous train, but the noble lady whom they served, did not disdain to receive payment for their board as well as employing them in profitable work. In a memorandum of errands to London, written by Agnes Paston on the 28th of January 1457, one is a message to "Elizabeth Paston that she must use herself to work readily, as other gentlewomen do, and somewhat to help herself therewith. Item, to pay the lady Pole twenty-six shillings and eightpence for her board." Margaret Paston, the wife of John Paston, just mentioned, and daughter-in-law of Agnes, seems to have been equally strict with her daughters. At the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., she wrote to her son John concerning his sister Anne, who had been placed in the house of a kinsman of the name of Calthorpe. "Since ye departed," she says, "my cousin Calthorpe sent me a letter complaining in his writing that forasmuch as he cannot be paid of his tenants as he hath been before this time, he proposeth to lessen his household, and to live the straitliet, wherefore he desireth me to purvey for your sister Anne; he saith she waxeth high (*grows tall*), and it were time to purvey her a marriage. I marvel what causeth him to write so now, either she hath displeased him, or else he hath taken her with default; therefore I pray you commune with my cousin Clare at London, and weet (*learn*) how he is disposed to her-ward, and send me word, for I shall be fain to send for her, and with me she shall but lose her time, and without she will be the better occupied she shall oftentimes move (*wee*) me and put me in great inquietness; remember what labour I had with your sister, therefore do your part to help her forth, that may be to your worship and mine." There certainly appears here no great affection between mother and daughter.

Among other lessons, the ladies appear to have been taught to be very demure and formal in their behaviour in company. Our cut No. 7 represents a party of ladies and gentlemen in the parlour engaged in conversation. It is taken from an illumination in the manuscript of the romance of the Comte D'Artois formerly in the possession of M. Barrois. They are all

apparently seated on benches, which seem in this instance to be made like long chests, and placed along the sides of the wall as if they served also for lockers. These appear to be the only articles

of furniture in the room. There is a certain conventional position in most of the ladies of the party which has evidently been taught, even to the holding of the hands crossed. The four

her hand, which she holds by a string, as represented in our cut (No. 9).

The parlour was now the room where the domestic amusements were introduced. The guest in the early tract on "Dyce Play," quoted above, tells us, "and, after the table was removed, in came one of the waiters with a fair silver bowl, full of dice and cards. Now, masters, quoth the goodman, who is so disposed, fall too." Gambling was carried to a great height during the fifteenth century, and was severely condemned by the moralists, but without much success. Dice were the older implements of play, and tables (or draughts); a religious poem on saints' days, in a manuscript written about the year 1460, warning against idle amusements, says—

Also use not to play at the dice ne at the tablis,
Ne none maner gamys, upon the holidays;
Use no tavernys where be jestis and fablis,
Syngyng of lewde balettes, rondelettes, or virolais.

After the middle of the fifteenth century, cards came into very general use. In 1484, Margery Paston writes to her husband, "I sent your eldest son to my lady Morley, to have knowledge what sports were used in her house in Christmas next following after the decease of my lord her husband; and she said that there were none disguisings, nor harping, nor luting, nor singing, nor none loud disports; but playing at the tables, and chess, and cards, such disports she gave her folks leave to play, and none other." At the beginning of the following century, there was such a rage for card-playing, that an attempt was made early in the reign of Henry VIII. to restrict their use by law to the period of Christmas. When, however, people sat down to dinner at noon, and had no other occupation for the rest of the day, they needed amusement of some sort to pass the time; and a poet of the fifteenth century observes truly,—

A man may dryfe forthe the day that long tyme dwellis
With harpyng and pipyng, and other mery spellis,
With gle, and wyth game.

Such amusements as these mentioned, with games of different kinds in which the ladies took part, and dancing, generally occupied the afternoon, from dinner to supper, the hour of which latter meal seems generally to have been six o'clock. The favourite amusement was dancing. A family party at the dance is represented in our Cut No. 10, from M. Barrois' manuscript of the Comte d'Artois. The numerous dances which were now in vogue seem to have completely eclipsed the old carole, or round dance, and the latter word, which was a more general one, had displaced the former. The couple here on their legs are supposed to be performing one of the new and tasteful fashionable dances, which were much more lively than those of the earlier period; some of them were so much so as to scandalise greatly the sage moralists of the time. The after-dinner amusements were resumed after supper; and a practice had now



No. 7.—A CONVERSATION SCENE.

ladies with the gentleman between them are no doubt intended to be the attendants on the lady of the house, holding towards her the position of Elizabeth and Anne Paston. We have precisely the same conventional forms in the next cut (No. 8) which is taken from an

find a receipt for food for that favourite bird of the medieval poets, the nightingale.* The plot of some of the earlier fabliaux turns upon the practice of taming squirrels as pets, and keeping them in cages. In one of the compartments of the curious tapestry of Nancy, of the fifteenth



No. 8.—A SOCIAL GROUP OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

illumination in a manuscript of the *Legenda Aurea* in the National Library in Paris (No. 6889). We see here the same demureness and formal crossing of the hands among the young ladies, in presence of their dame. It may be observed that, in almost all the contemporary pictures of domestic scenes, the men, represented as visitors, keep their hats on their heads.

One of the most curious features in the first of these scenes is that of the cages, especially that of the squirrel, which is evidently made to turn round with the animal's motion, like squirrel-cages of the present day. We have allusions from a very early period to the keeping of birds in cages, and parrots, magpies, jays, and various singing birds, are often mentioned among domestic pets. To confine ourselves to the century of which we are now more especially speaking, the poems of Lydgate furnish us with several examples. Thus, in that entitled "The Chorle and the Bird," we are told—

The chorle (*countryman*) was gladdre that he this birdde hadde take,

Mery of chere, of looke, and of visage,
And in al haste he cast for to make
Within his house a pratie litelle cage,
And with hir songe to rejoice his corage.

And in another of Lydgate's minor poems, it is said of Spring,—

Which sesoun prykethe (*stirs up*) fresshe corages,
Rejoissethe beastyng walking in ther pasture,
Causith briddys to syngen in ther cages,
Whan blood renewyth in every creature.

Among these, we find birds mentioned which are not now usually kept in cages. Thus, in a manuscript of the time of Edward IV., we

century, which has been engraved by M. Achille Jubinal, we see a lady with a tame squirrel in



No. 9.—LADY AND SQUIRREL.



No. 10.—A DANCE.

established itself of prolonging the day's enjoyment to a late hour, and taking a second, or, as

it was called, a rere-supper (*arrière souper*).

* This receipt is curious enough to be given here; it is as follows:—"Fyrst, take and geve hym yellow antes, otherwyse called pysmerys, as nere as ye may, and the white ante or pysmers egges be best bothe wynter and

somer, ij. tymes of the day an handful of bothe. Also, geve hym of these sowest hats reye with many fete, and falle oute of howce rovys. Also, geve hym whyte wormes that breede betwene the barke and the tre."—*Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. i., p. 203.

Sound; then comes the Eddystone; but the best picture at the outset is the "saloon of the steamer." There are but few figures, yet the light is admirably managed, so much so, that it would be worth while to light another group or two further from the eye, and so assist the perspective and the space. The Island of Madeira is passed, then Cape de Verde, Sierra Leone, and the Island of Ascension. In the last view a very successful representation is afforded of the rollers breaking on the shore by moonlight. We then sail on to St. Helena, and contemplate the now tenantless tomb of Napoleon; thence we proceed to Table Bay, False Bay, the Mauritius, the Maldivo Islands, Point de Galle, Pulo Penang, Singapore, Batavia, Port Philip, Sidney, Mount Victoria, the Ophir gold-diggings, the Australian Alps, a sheep station, &c., &c. These views are selected with taste and discernment, and executed with great artistic power, insomuch that this diorama is equal in interest to those which have preceded it at the same gallery.

PICTURES BY TURNER.—Six pictures by this celebrated painter were sold on the 20th ult. at Messrs. Christie and Manson's, and realised altogether the sum of 4683*l.* :—"Venice—Evening; Going to a Ball," exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1846, sold for 546*l.* "Morning—Returning from the Ball," exhibited in 1846, 641*l.* "The Dawn of Christianity, and Flight into Egypt," exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1841, 746*l.* "Glaucus and Scylla," exhibited in 1841, 735*l.* "The Dogana—Church of St. Giorgio, &c.," painted for Sir Francis Chantrey, and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1841, brought 1155*l.* "The Approach to Venice"—

"The path lies o'er the sea.

* * * * *
The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her.—BYRON.

realised 800*l.*

THE PANOPTICON.—Since we last noticed this important addition to the novelties of London, we find that it has approached a completion very satisfactory to the eye. The exterior is novel and striking, but the interior possesses the same claim, added to a gorgeous eastern magnificence, which will not fail to gratify the public. The beauty of the general form of the vast domed hall, with its fanciful decorations, its gilded lamps, its prismatic colouring, and the elegant and novel oriental fountain in the centre is something entirely unique in London. The galleries are to be filled with manufacturers of all kinds at work, so that here the public may be practically acquainted with the manipulation of many processes, whose results they know and use, but of whose construction in the workman's hands they are ignorant. In the scientific part of the building the same practical knowledge will be brought to bear, and its results communicated to all students who may require it; already rooms are opened for the proper instruction in the daguerreotype and the other cognate Arts to which it has given rise, and a perfect series of rooms and apparatus provided for all who may avail themselves of the lessons here to be obtained at a moderate rate, with the assistance of such philosophic materials as cannot so readily be met elsewhere. Apparatus is provided for enlarging sun-portraits to the size of life, and with so many "appliances and means to boot" as this institution will have at command, we look forward confidently to a result of much practical good to the onward march of science. The building may open in the autumn, but the photographic portion is now entirely open and in good working order.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION.—We suppose we may now look forward to Photographic Exhibitions as one of the attractions of each London season. The result of the collection brought together at the rooms of the Society of Arts was so satisfactory, that we have immediately upon its heels a new exhibition in Bond Street. This collection is not nearly so numerous as the former; but it is in every point of excellence a considerable advance. We have here some beautiful views of the Venetian palaces; classic bits of old Rome; and a choice selection of views in other continental cities. Among the

most remarkable, are some views by M. Martens, particularly the Castle of Chillon, and a view of Lausanne. In these photographs we have minute details, airy distance, and a general effect, which is finer than anything we have previously seen. Mr. Delamotte, the proprietor of the institution, has some beautiful examples of the collodion process; not merely portraits and copies of statues, but charming landscapes; and the Sydenham Palace with its net-work of iron girders, and ranges of slender columns. Amongst other exhibitors, there are Mr. Owen of Bristol, who has some beautiful interiors; Mr. Buckle, of Peterborough, Mr. Roslyn, and many other well-known photographers. We hear that the Photographic Society contemplate an exhibition this season: we received a ticket for their Soirée on the 23rd of last month, too late for any notice in our present number, but we shall hope to say something about it in our next.

ENGRAVING AND LITHOGRAPHY BY LIGHT.—The elder Niepce was the inventor of a process to which he gave the name of "Heliography." It consisted in covering a metal plate with the bitumen of Judea. This, when exposed to light, underwent a remarkable change, and the parts exposed had a different degree of solubility from those in shadow. Taking advantage of this, some parts being dissolved off, leaving the plate bare, while others were covered, etchings were produced by attacking the metal with an acid. Lately, M. Niepce de St. Victor, the nephew of the early photographer, has taken up the subject with much success; and he is now producing etched plates by a modification of the above process, from which impressions of a fine character have been taken. In addition to this, lithographic stones are prepared in a similar manner, and the impressions having been made by sunlight, they undergo some subsequent preparation, not yet divulged, and printed from in the ordinary way. These lithographs are peculiar in their character, but exceedingly beautiful. Mr. Fox Talbot has also published a process, by which he proposes to etch steel plates after a photographic picture has been obtained. His process consists in mixing some bichromate of potash with a solution of isinglass, spreading a uniform film of this on a steel plate and drying it. Any object, as leaves, a print, or a piece of lace, is placed on this, and being pressed close with a plate of glass, exposed to sunshine. The bichromate of potash being decomposed by light, its chromic acid combines with the isinglass, and renders it less soluble than the parts protected from the solar rays. A picture being thus obtained is placed in water, and the soluble gelatine removed. The plate is then etched by the application of the bichloride of platinum: we have not seen any of the impressions obtained. Mr. Talbot says they are very fine.

PHOTOGRAPHY is making rapid strides in its useful applications. Pictures are now being obtained directly upon lithographic stones which, when properly prepared, can be printed from, as if they were the usual lithographic drawings. The collodion films upon which pictures have been obtained can also be transferred to wood, and these blocks then submitted to the engraver. The last number of the "Microscopic Journal" has an illustrated plate, executed by the Photographic process, which, as one of the earliest attempts of this kind on an extended scale, is eminently successful. The details of the microscopic objects are given with extreme minuteness and beauty, at the same time as the utmost degree of truth is obtained in the representation.—Mr. Stewart, of Edinburgh, has, by the collodion process, reached such an exquisite degree of sensibility as to be enabled to obtain views of the restless ocean with so much exactness, that when the pictures are viewed in the lenticular stereoscope the waves appear as if they had been fixed by the hand of magic, ere yet the billow could fall in obedience to the law of gravitation. Messrs. Ross and Thomson's beautiful views of the abbeys of Scotland are commanding much attention from their extreme truth and beauty. These gentlemen have just published "A few Plain Answers to Common Questions regarding Photography," which should be read by every amateur.

REVIEWS.

THE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.
Edited by J. O. HALLIWELL, Esq., F.R.S.,
&c. With Illustrations by F. W. FAIRHOLT,
F.S.A. Published for Subscribers only.

The catalogue of editions of Shakespeare, of books devoted to the elucidation of his works, and of those called forth by the opinions of commentators, shows most forcibly the living power possessed by the extraordinary genius of the man whom all nations are beginning to appreciate and honour equally with the men of his own land. The interest in him and his works would seem to increase with age, in an inverse ratio to that of other men, and well did his friend Jonson prophesy that he was "not for an age, but for all time," the laudation of friendship in this instance becoming a simple matter of fact. From the Restoration downwards, his works have received the utmost attention of the best minds of his country, who have been employed in the closet or on the stage in the elucidation of his thoughts; men of all kinds have here found a noble field of labour. Edition after edition of his works, of all shapes, sizes, and price, have been unsparingly brought forth by the press; yet still others are demanded, and the labours of commentators continue with unabated zeal. Can there be a nobler proof of the enduring power of his genius, than this voluntary homage of all men at his shrine? The very abundance of talent brought to bear on his works now renders it a necessity to condense the thoughts of the many who have devoted their lives to their elucidation, and to give us an epitome of their labours, and that of the literature of the period when Shakespeare lived, and which gave the tone to his own mind. This heavy responsibility Mr. Halliwell has taken upon himself—"the labour we delight in physics pain"—and we find in this his first volume (an enormous folio of 600 pages) abundant proof of an amount of literary labour, from which less enthusiastic men would shrink, accompanied, as it must in some instances be, by the dryness of the most rigid scrupulousness of research. All this labour, too, for 150 subscribers only, and the twenty large folio volumes of which it will consist cannot, in the nature of things, repay the expenditure, to say nothing of the time or talents of the editor. This first volume comprises a Life of Shakespeare, and the play of "The Tempest," and, in looking over the enormous mass of documentary evidence brought together by Mr. Halliwell from all quarters to elucidate the poet's career, we cannot help feeling the deep value of such patient industry in a field where so little was declared to exist. The impression left upon the mind is singularly satisfactory; it shows the poet not as a mere dreamy enthusiast, but as a prudent man of the world, combining the highest poetry with the proper thrift, dealing with his fellow townsmen for wood and stone, accumulating wealth gradually and surely, but preserving his good heart intact to the last; for Mr. Halliwell has recently discovered among the Stratford Papers a note in the diary of his townsman, Thomas Greene, narrating that the poet in conversation with him had declared "that he was not able to bear" the enclosing of Welcombe common lands, and thus deprive the poor of their advantages. The fac-simile of this entry, given by Mr. Halliwell, will prove to the uninitiated the tedious and troublesome character of the researches of that gentleman. We cannot conceive a more painstaking yet wearying task than that of wading through such documents, on the bare chance of finding a fact worth knowing. Mr. Halliwell has, however, personally inspected every paper connected in any way with the poet, and he has given fac-similes of them all in the course of his work. In this, and in the antiquarian engravings which elucidate the plays, he has been assisted by Mr. Fairholt, who has also produced a series of views of Stratford and the neighbourhood, of great interest. The frontispiece to the volume is also by Mr. Fairholt, and is the largest and most truthful representation of the poet's monument at Stratford that has yet been engraved, exhibiting its peculiarities with rigid exactitude; indeed, this last qualification is the governing principle of the entire work, literary and artistic. The great amount of documentary and contemporary evidence brought together by the editor aims successfully at this alone; and such engravings as are given are in the nature of pictorial notes to the plays, and are as much in the way of commentary as the literary part of the work. The entire absence of pretension, of squabbling with other critics, and the earnest desire only to illustrate and elucidate the poet, marks Mr. Halliwell's labours as worthy of respect; while the pages he devotes to an explanation of the guiding rules he has taken in the formation of