position, could not be out of fashion. To her ladyship, therefore, M. Brunel sent what appeared to be a miniature pigeon-house, shaped like a turret, and with pigeon-holes all round the upper part. It was not, however, for pigeons, though it might be for pigeoning. It was, in fact, a contrivance for dealing cards for round games. The cards were laid in at the top, a spring was touched, the tower whirled about, and, according to the index, dealt as many cards from the apertures into as many packets as was desired. Everybody was in raptures with the design, and the cards turned up trumps for the lucky inventor. Trifle as it was, the card-dealer was exceedingly ingenious, and the artist having thus won his way to a fair hearing, was within a very short period settled at Portsmouth, superintending the manufacture of that block machinery, of which it is not too much to say that to it Great Britain was deeply indebted for the means by which her grand series of brilliant victories were achieved, and a commerce that overspread the globe was nourished and protected. And how simple did it seem—more simple than the card-engine; for here the shapeless lump of wood was merely thrown into the machine, and in a few seconds emerged the complete, convoluted, and finished block, which had hitherto taxed the utmost skill and patience of experienced workmen to produce in sufficient quantity to supply the pressing wants of naval supremacy.

Henceforward there was, of course, remunerative business for M. Brunel; and he continued to make new and important additions to his undertakings, of which his adopted country reaped the benefit. He went on improving and prospering. But such a spirit can never be still. There must ever be some object in view to keep alive its activity. The Thames Tunnel came upon the public with a startling effect. It was a problem. Opinion ran into admiration or ridicule. Extremes, and no medium, and the most entertaining "reason why?" was assigned by a travelling countryman of the projector's, who treating, as French authors will do, of English national character, stated that we were ever emulous till we had attained a certain pitch of excellence, which we immediately despised, and then turned quite another way to gratify our restless ambition. Thus, he observed, "Having succeeded in building the finest bridges in the world over rivers, they became quite disgusted with the perfection, and got my compatriot, M. Brunel, to devise for them a sort of bridge, not to go over, but under the river." The joyous and jocund propounder of this matchless scheme, ever as playful as in his boyhood, would laugh heartily at the explanation, and still more when told of the remark, in broken English, of another of his Norman friends, who boasted of him as a very great giant in engineering, who had "pushed his *toe-nail*" (tunnel) all under the Thames.

His action was brisk; his laugh was always ready, loud, and merry; his ideas original and extraordinary. I remember, on one philosophico-festive occasion, when dilating on the inexhaustible wealth and resources of Great Britain, he calculated an approximate value of her canals and turnpike roads, and ended with an estimate showing how many gold and silver watches were worn by particular members belonging to the several classes of the people, and how, if laid down on the road, touching each other, they would reach from London to Portsmouth, with a few miles, roods, and yards to spare. He was perfectly in earnest, and probably not far wrong in the total sum of value he attached to this very long watch-chain.

Sir Mark Isambard Brunel died ten years ago, much beloved and lamented. His unassuming manners, tinged with a ready disposition for pleasant humour, furnished no intimation of the extraordinary mechanical talent with which he was gifted. He was the impersonation of Philosophy in Sport, and not the less a true philosopher.

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

Having been induced to spend a part of my summer holidays last year in the Channel Islands, I was agreeably surprised at the numerous points of interest which they present to the English tourist. It is a common remark that we seek attractions in foreign lands which lie unobserved at our own doors. Doubtless, in this case, the sea voyage is a serious impediment, for the islands lie in the most exposed part of the Channel, where winds and waves are often more disagreeable than on the open ocean. The passage to Guernsey, however, is usually accomplished from Plymouth or Weymouth in seven or eight hours, and from Southampton in ten or eleven; while to those who like a good blow on the salt water, the longer voyage from London Bridge offers the attraction of very low fares. There is also a small steamer at a low price between Newhaven and Jersey. The distances from this island are as follows:—Guernsey, 32; Weymouth, 105; Plymouth, 110; Southampton, 132; Newhaven, 145.

I crossed myself from Plymouth, where we steamed through the Channel squadron lying in the Sound, and with a bright sun and sparkling sea, the billows bounding vigorously before a capful of wind, and at times shaking the manes of their white horses in rather too lively a mood. The good boat "Sir Walter Raleigh" ploughed her way along the cliffs of Devonshire to the Start, and so onward to our destination. Alderney was in sight before England had disappeared; but our course lay away to the right, and I saw nothing of the famous fortifications there constructing as a counterpoise to Cherbourg.

On nearing Guernsey, I found the sea all studded with rocks, which render the navigation intricate and perilous to inexperienced hands. All of them, including the larger islands, are rocks of the primary formation, granite, gneiss, and hornblend, and of course wholly void of fossil remains. Such rocks often rise in peaks and precipices, imparting a wild and rugged aspect to the scenery, but in these islands a mild form of beauty prevails. The outline is rounded and undulating; the numerous bays which indent the shores are radiant with smiles, and a few caves are all one sees of the

sterner lines in Nature's countenance. The usual course is by the eastern side of Guernsey, leaving on the left hand its three dependent islands, Jethon, Herm, and Sark, and so due south to Jersey; but in making for the latter direct from Southampton or Newhaven, the other islands are all left to the right. Herm and Jethon are simple rocks, only valuable for their marine productions; the few persons who live on the former receiving their provisions in boats from Guernsey. Sark is a larger and more productive island, with a population of six hundred, among whom a clergyman, who is also the *seigneur*, or lord of the manor, resides, to the great advantage of the inhabitants. The population of Guernsey amounts to 30,000, distributed in eight parishes, while the twelve parishes of Jersey number just twice as many souls. The latter island (which is the larger of the two) being only eleven miles by five, it will be seen that no other portion of the British dominions, or indeed any other state, is so densely populated. The population of England, compared with its whole area, gives 304 persons to the square mile; Ireland has 242, and Scotland only 110; Belgium, the most densely populated kingdom in Europe, does not exceed 337, but Guernsey and Jersey contain above 1000!

Some may think this comparison rather fanciful, and demand why these little specks of territory should be separated from the great country to which they belong, and not rather be lumped in with the English census. But let me tell any such reader that the islands to which I am now introducing him are not a part of England, still less would they condescend to be thought a colony or dependency. They claim, in fact, priority over the whole British empire, as the most ancient of the Queen's dominions, and attached to her royal person by a tie which is even older than the crown itself.

The Channel Islands formed a part of the great fief which Charles the Simple of France bestowed, together with the hand of his daughter, on the Norman Rollo (A.D. 912), as the price of his desisting from piracy and embracing Christianity. "Henceforth," said the Norman chief, placing his huge hands between those of the king, "I am your leal man, and swear to preserve your life and honour." The monarch honoured him with the title of Count or Duke, but the Norman was already styled king among his followers, and he bestowed on his new conquests the name and institutions of his fatherland. It was this Normandy—not a province of France, but practically a separate state, swarming with a stalwart population ever crowding in from the north—that effected the conquest of England in the following century. Its dukes were still less submissive to the throne of France when their coronet had been exchanged for a crown; and for two centuries the English Channel was bordered on both sides by the dominions of the English king. The dissensions under king John gave the first opening for French aggrandizement. Philip Augustus summoned his vassal of Normandy before him, to answer to his liege lord for the murder of his nephew Arthur, and, in default of his appearance, declared the fief escheated to the French crown. The sentence was followed by a military invasion, which Normandy was in no condition to resist. The tie which had so long bound its inhabitants to their dukes and nobles across the sea was weakened by distance, and the growing approximation of the Anglo-Norman and Saxon populations in England. John and his barons were too absorbed in their own disputes to attend to the appeals of the ancestral country, and Normandy was rapidly and irrecoverably incorporated with the dominions of France. In less than a century after, the two divisions of the race of Rollo had come to regard each other as natural enemies, under the appellations of English and French. The Plantagenets struggled long and valiantly for their continental possessions. They were often successful against the French arms, but they had become foreign intruders in their own patrimony, and when the English domination was finally expelled, Normandy remained a constituent portion of France.

In this revolution, which restored the Channel to its natural function as the boundary between two great nations, the islands which lie in its mouth adhered to the dukes, in preference to the people, of Normandy. Though actually inclosed within a French bay, and at the nearest point less than twenty miles distant from the French coast, they have remained zealously and enthusiastically English. In all the subsequent struggles between the rival countries, nothing has been able to shake their fidelity for a moment. Descended from the same origin, and still retaining the same language as the people on the neighbouring shore, the islanders have ever manifested the most anti-Gallican spirit. The elderly people of Jersey still talk of the feats of their friends and relatives in resisting a French invasion during the last war. They show you with pride the market-place, where the troops and inhabitants rallied after the governor had been taken and weakly signed a capitulation, where the French leader was shot down while seeking shelter behind his prisoner, and where the gallant Peirson fell in the arms of victory.

A newer topic, which I met with at every turn, was the visit of Queen Victoria in 1846, repeated in the brief and sudden excursion of the royal yacht last year. The former was the first occasion on which either of the islands had been known to receive the person of their sovereign; though, during the rebellion against Charles I, the Prince of Wales found a brief refuge in Jersey, and after coming to the throne remembered its name in the earldom bestowed on his favourite, Villiers. Her Majesty was received with transports of joy. At St. Peter's Port, the principal town of Guernsey, a monument marks the spot where the royal foot first accosted the grateful soil. A tower also of some beauty has been erected in commemoration of the visit, from the summit of which I enjoyed a magnificent view of all that side of the island; but unfortunately this imposing structure is of no other utility. Jersey, which is a place of greater trade, has better marked its gratitude by erecting two fine piers at St. Heliers, which bear the names of Victoria and Albert.

The exuberant loyalty of the islanders could

not fail to re-echo the alarm recently raised on our own shores as to the possibility of a French invasion. I was assured that some families had actually fled from Jersey in a panic, and more than once I found myself engaged in reassuring others, by the very obvious reflection that, however near in point of distance, France could never hope to seize, and still less to retain, islands which do not feed their own population, until she has first made herself mistress of the seas. A descent upon the Channel Islands would simply insult the honour of England, without in the least weakening her resources. The expedition would run into a trap, where it could be inclosed and captured without a possibility of escaping or standing a siege. No; when the British fleet has been all taken or destroyed at sea, when our dockyards can no longer send out ships for the encounter, and the Gallic eagle swoops through the Channel without check, Guernsey and Jersey may expect to be reunited to their parent Normandy. But *then*, Guernsey and Jersey will be little thought of. Portsmouth and London will be equally accessible, and the ports of Normandy may at last prepare to repeat the conquest of the eleventh century.

This idea, however preposterous, has never been quite laid aside in Normandy. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, a league was projected between the Normans and Bretons, to effect a new conquest of England, and the spoil was actually portioned out between the king, the barons, and the clergy, in anticipation of an easy victory. In 1338, Philippe of Valois granted the request of the adventurers to place his son at their head, and a treaty of conditions was drawn up and deposited at Caen. The expedition did not sail; but ten years after, the English king, effecting a descent upon Normandy, captured Caen, and, discovering this treaty, delivered the town up to pillage. In our own century again, Napoleon I caused the tapestry at Bayeux to be carried about the towns of Normandy, in order to stimulate the French to the expedition he meditated against our shores; but the British general entered Paris, and sent Napoleon to St. Helena; while Dieppe, and even Cherbourg itself, continue as yet to send us no visitors but such as are heartily welcome. So, calm your fears, sweet islands: your fruits and flowers are in little danger of the Frenchman's gripe—so long at least as (and we hope that prospect will content you)

> "Britannia's march is on the wave,
> Her home is on the deep."

The union with England is cemented by the unanimous and deep-seated attachment of the islanders to the principles of the Protestant Reformation. Their first evangelization, indeed, seems to have been the work of the British, not the Romish Church. Samson, whose name is still borne by the oldest parish church in Guernsey, was a British bishop, some say of St. David's, but more probably of York, where his name has been also left to one of the city churches. Flying from the persecutions of the Saxons, he passed over into Brittany (A.D. 520), and found refuge at Dol, where he erected an abbey, and thence issued forth on missionary expeditions to the adjacent islands, which were finally incorporated with the continental Church. Rollo, on obtaining his fief, annexed them to the diocese of Coutances, whose cathedral towers, though rising at some distance from the sea, are clearly visible in Jersey. King John is said to have transferred them to the see of Exeter, and Henry VII to that of Salisbury, but they had returned to Coutances at the time of the Reformation, whence they were transferred by Queen Elizabeth to the jurisdiction of Winchester. At that troubled period, however, some eminent pastors of the German Confession had pitched their tent in these remote refuges, and the episcopal polity was but coldly received; in fact, the queen was induced to sanction the presbyterian discipline at the chief towns of both islands. The liturgy was subsequently imposed by the Act of Uniformity, but the surplice did not come into general use till within the last twenty years, and is still not used at funerals. The first protestant episcopal visit was made as late as 1818, when Bishop Fisher of Salisbury, acting for the Bishop of Winchester, either for want of a more suitable conveyance, or perhaps to exhibit his idea of the union between church and state, arrived on board a man of war, and landed under the thunder of her guns. The present state of religious feeling throughout the islands is deeply and unmistakeably protestant; and in whatever degree the French emperor may rest his popularity on his support of the Papacy, in the same degree would the idea of submission to his government be insupportable to the Channel islanders.

[To be continued.]

SIXPENNYWORTH OF ZOOLOGY.

It is two o'clock in the afternoon of a sunshiny Monday, which, as all the world knows, is a sixpenny day in the Zoological Gardens. As we are traversing Regent's Park towards that "animal kingdom" of the Londoner, we form one of a numerous and miscellanous company, all proceeding in the same direction—the decently-dressed artisan with his wife and family of little ones—the red-coated soldier—the rubicund countryman with his wondering dame—the liberated apprentice—the servant maid on afternoon furlough—all these and many more are in the procession that strolls leisurely and laughingly on among the shadows under the foliage, which, even now, is turning red and rusty, and shedding the sere leaves whisperingly along the path.

There is quite a crush at the pay-place, and a pause during the ceremony of depositing the sixpences, as the crowd pass in in single file. Then we are following a section of the multitude along a flowered pathway, which lands us ere long at the door of the aqua-vivarium. The building is so crammed with beholders that we have almost to take for granted the contents of the glass tanks—where the hermit-crabs sit at the doors of their stolen houses, on the look-out for customers to be taken in—where the silly shrimps paddle them-

and all his influence went to make offended parties settle their differences amongst themselves, to shake hands in forgetfulness of the past, and in the resolution to be better friends than ever for the future. His house was always open for the poor

MARKET-PLACE, ROSS.

and needy. Round the kitchen fire was a large block of wood on which the poor used to sit, and, having been warmed and fed, would go away blessing their benefactor. Many anecdotes are told of his benevolence, of which the following is but a faint sample. "About a year after the death of the Man of Ross, which took place in the year 1724, when he had arrived at the great age of eighty-eight, a tradesman of the town came to his kinsman and executor, and said privately to him, 'Sir, I am come to pay you some money that I owed to the late Mr. Kyrle.' The executor, asking his name and address and the amount of the debt, told him that, after looking over the old gentleman's account book, he could not find any entry upon the subject. "Why, sir," said the tradesman, "*that* I am aware of: Mr. Kyrle said to me, when he lent me the money, that he did not think I should be able to repay it in his life-time, and that it was very likely you might want it and press me for it, before I could make it up; 'and so,' said he, 'I won't have any memorandum of it besides what I write and give you with it; and do you pay my kinsman when you can: and when you show him this paper he will see that the money is right, and that he is not to take interest.'"

Anecdote after anecdote of his goodness and worth was recurring to my mind, when I heard the bell give warning that if I wanted to catch my railway train I must delay no longer. I hurried down, casting a look at the house in which the good man died, but which has now undergone so many changes that its once venerable owner would hardly know it again, save for the rough drawing of a hedgehog on one of the doors, which he is said to have executed one day with some sharp instrument, when he was confined to his room by illness. I could see no trace of the almshouse where once the aged poor waited for their benefactor's coming; but a townsman, in strong Herefordshire accent, informed me, "it uzed to ztand zummut yahr!" The Blue Coat School, the hospital, the institutions in which he used to take so much interest and delight, have all disappeared; but as the train came up, it in my mind beat time to Pope's melodious poetry.

That the lesson of the good man's life may be more practical, we conclude with Dr. Johnson's comments on these lines, in his "Life of Pope." "Wonders are willingly told and willingly heard. The truth is, that Kyrle was a man of known integrity and active benevolence, by whose solicitation the wealthy were persuaded to pay contributions to his charitable schemes; this influence he obtained by an example of liberality exerted to the utmost extent of his power, and he was thus enabled to give more than he had. This account Mr. Victor received from the minister of the place, and I have preserved it, that the praise of a good man being made more credible, may be more solid. Narrations of romantic and impracticable virtue will be read with wonder, but that which is unattainable is recommended in vain; that good may be endeavoured, it must be shown to be possible."

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

PART II.

The important considerations referred to in the previous paper render the Channel Islands, to an Englishman, hardly more like a foreign country than the Isle of Wight. It is true that the native language is French: the proceedings of the courts of law, and the service in the parish churches, are conducted in that tongue, and it is generally spoken by the middle and lower classes, especially in the country parts. Nevertheless, English is well understood by all classes, and is the usual language of the shops and of society. There are also English chapels, which are more numerously attended than the French parish churches. In several of the latter, too, English services have been lately introduced in the afternoon. The children in the streets are already heard talking to one another in English, and there is every prospect that in a short time the French will be altogether superseded.

Still, many interesting relics of Norman origin are in full force—some, indeed, which have disappeared from the parent state through its incorporation with France. While preserving their allegiance to the throne, or rather to their own duke upon the throne, of England, the islanders have jealously kept aloof from the laws and usages of the English people. They contribute nothing to the British treasury. Guernsey and Jersey possess each its own constitution, being, in fact, independent states, like the petty principalities of Germany. Oddly enough, too, they are as tenacious of the distinctions that subsist between themselves as of the more important institutions which distinguish them from England and France. Each island regularly assembles its "states," composed, as in all the feudal monarchies, of the three orders of society, the

jurats (the island judges) occupying the place of the temporal nobility, the dean and clergy constituting the spiritual estate, and the commons appearing by their elected representatives. The whole is presided over by the "bailiff" of the sovereign, who is also the chief justice. Laws are here enacted, subject of course to the approval of the crown, by whom also orders in council are occasionally issued, which have the force of law, because these Norman "states" never achieved the liberties of an English parliament. The law passed in England in 1840, to authorize marriage before the registrar, was twice rejected by the states of Guernsey, and finally introduced by an order in council, dated 3rd October, 1840.

While submitting to the crown, however, the states and tribunals of the islands claim co-ordinate authority with the parliament and courts of law in England. At one time they denied to the latter any authority whatever within the islands; but it is now agreed that the imperial parliament is supreme, and that the Queen's writ, issued out of Westminster Hall, must be obeyed by the island courts. Still, they are not bound by any Act of Parliament unless expressly named in it, and their judicial proceedings are carried on in perfect independence of the English courts, an appeal only lying to the Queen in council. Taxes there are none; a light duty on the importation of wine and spirits is applied to island purposes, while the military defence is paid for by Great Britain. The inhabitants, however, are bound to serve in their own militia. The bailiff and jurats exercise all the powers of the highest courts of law and equity. The former is appointed by the crown, but the latter are elected by the people, and all must be natives of the island. The judicial proceedings are conducted in the French tongue, the barristers being called *avocats*, and the crown officers, who represent our attorney and solicitor-general, having the designation of *procureur-general* and *avocat-general* respectively. The court is always opened with prayer, read by the *greffier* or registrar; but I was sorry to observe it was little attended to by any but the judges. Twice a year, a *cour d'heritage* is held for the appearance of the *seigneurs* or lords of the manor, who hold of the sovereign in the island. Being present on this occasion, at Jersey, I was amused to hear the Norman "bishops, abbots, and abbesses" called in right of benefices once possessed in the island, but which passed at the Reformation to the crown. The call was answered by the lieutenant-governor, who, in the full dress of a general officer, held up his hand for the ejected dignitaries!

On the same occasion I heard the oath administered to the advocates: they were publicly sworn to a faithful discharge of their office, and, among other things, not to undertake any cause which shall not appear to them founded in justice. This oath is the more stringent, because the advocates communicate direct with their clients, and not, as in England, through an attorney. They are consequently in a condition to form a better opinion on the real merits of the case than an English barrister. Yet, I could not discover that any great difference exists in point of practice between these courts and our own. However commendable, then, the intention of this oath, it could only work as an impediment to justice, or a snare to the advocate's conscience. In many cases the real merits of a claim are not apparent, even to the parties concerned, till the other side has been heard; and if an advocate on his own private view is to refuse his assistance, the question cannot come to a judicial decision at all. This is the more important in the island courts, because the bar is a close corporation, consisting only of a few persons admitted by the court, and the client, if rejected by one, can have little chance of inducing another to take a more favourable view of his case. In order, therefore, to prevent a failure of justice, the advocate must take refuge in the maxim which obtains in England, that every man has a right to have his case tried, and, consequently, justice requires his advocate to make the best of it. But this maxim, though quite defensible in itself, stands in no need of the oath imposed on the advocates: in fact, it is only by a circuitous and undesirable process that it can be reconciled with its words.

Another incongruity struck me in the jurats being appointed by popular election, and *not* from the legal profession. It is true that the London aldermen arrive at the bench after the same fashion, but the precedent is one "more honoured in the breach than in the observance;" and, considering the important range of judicial authority in the islands, it would be surely better to select the puisne justices, like the bailiff, from the legal profession, and by appointment of the crown, in preference to election by those on whose affairs they are to sit in judgment. A royal commission is now sitting to examine into the state of the law and jurisprudence of the islands, and can hardly fail to recommend this reform.

I was permitted to visit the jail at Jersey, which I found clean and well kept, under the care of the Sheriff, or, according to the Norman title, still in use, the "Vicomte." The prisoners were very few in number, only two being females, and they not convicted. It was distressing to see these young women, charged with a domestic theft, locked up *before trial* in a cell with an iron grating, like condemned criminals. It seems that the police and the judicial authorities are combined in the same functionaries, and one place serves both for station-house and prison. The cells being quite separate, however, and the wards spacious, the ill effects may not be so great as one would think.

In the end cell, when the huge bolts were drawn and the iron door turned on its axle, a boy of eleven years old crept from his corner like the mouse from the mountain. He had been charged with some petty theft, and, it appearing that he belonged to an Irish family, his parents were called upon either to quit the island with the whole family, or give security in forty shillings for their good behaviour. This security they were unable to obtain, and the poor boy was kept in prison, without trial or examination, till this singular law should be obeyed. The boy was well fed, it is true, and sent to school in the jail, with as much liberty as could be granted;

still, his appearance in a dungeon painfully affected both the bailiff and myself, and I rejoiced to hear the former, on the next court-day, order his discharge.

Another curious specimen of island law presented itself in the shape of a Londoner, alleged to be one of the swell mob, who complained loudly that he had been detained *more than three months* in jail without trial. The reason seems strange. He was indicted along with another person for picking pockets; the accomplice had been admitted to bail, and, being thus at liberty, kept constantly applying for a postponement of the trial. The prisoner, who had either been denied bail or could not obtain it, was perpetually remanded; and, though I was assured of his guilt, I could not but sympathize with his complaints. The chief defect in the French procedure seems to be the extreme delay and postponements that it admits of, upon every pretence.

In one point the island jurisprudence, though widely different from that of England, is in perfect accordance with the matured convictions of my own judgment. It excludes the unreasonable and injurious power of disposing of property *by will*. It is only with respect to personal estate, or in default of legal heirs, that the possessor is entitled to exercise the power of bequest. Landed property, whether purchased or inherited, passes to the legal heirs, among whom parents are included in default of descendants. This simple and rational arrangement obviates at once all the innumerable evils endured in England, from the affectation of prolonging the existence of an individual after God has removed him from the land of the living. The earth is given for the sustenance of the successive generations of mankind. What can be more vicious in principle than for those who have enjoyed their turn during their natural lifetime, to be still meddling after death with the enjoyment of their successors? Such a power is essentially *immoral*, as being exempt alike from responsibility and correction. Every act which a man does in his lifetime is open to censure, remonstrance, and amendment; but the wrong which he leaves to take effect only when he is himself in the grave, is not only beyond the reach of argument and reproach, but beyond the repentance of the transgressor himself. It is a power which only begins to live when the agent is no more, and which must live on, creating mischief and heart-burning to successive generations, when the author of it may be torn with remorse in another world. When one reflects on the amount of litigation, dissension, and misery created among the living by our unreasonable attention to the caprices of the dead, it is really wonderful that such an abuse should be tolerated. Half the time of our public courts is taken up in wrangling over the by-gone will of a person who has ceased to have any power of willing upon this earth for ever. Judges are employed, advocates retained, witnesses assembled in crowds, a whole county agitated and obstructed in its rightful duties, by an inquiry, prolonged for days, whether some foolish or wicked person, who has gone to his own account at another tribunal, was at a given moment in a state to know his own mind, and what it was. It is not asked whether the disposition he made is right, just, and fair to those who come after him—whether his intentions were honest or dishonest—whether he was mistaken or misled—but only if he knew what he was about. If so, the law will seize upon that one act in the face of a hundred duties, obligations, and even of more equitable arrangements executed at a prior date, and give it an unending vitality, precisely because the agent has lost that responsibility without which power is always immoral and destructive. In English law, in short, a *will* is a Frankenstein.

Consider the cases which every one must know within his own circle. A father is unreasonably exasperated against an unoffending child, and makes a will to his exclusion. The matter is afterwards explained, the parties are reconciled, but from indolence, and the reluctance that men have to make arrangements for death, the half-forgotten will still lurks in some dark corner of his desk. The father dies, and it leaps out to revive the old wrong and give permanency to a transport of mistaken and repented passion.

Again, a will is made to the detriment of a child who may happen to be at a distance at the time, and to the unjust advantage of those who are at hand. Is it in human nature that the injured party should not suspect the favoured one of exercising an undue influence? In other cases, wills are made with a conscious intent to disappoint or even defraud—in some that I have known of, with the diabolical view of creating and perpetuating feuds among the survivors. Yet all this is rendered sacred by the irrational determination to give a fictitious existence to one who has ceased to exist, and to recognise action where there is no responsible agent. A deed which is to take effect in this world only when the doer is gone to another, is a solecism in morals and jurisprudence which the legislature of the Channel Islands has been wise enough to avoid.

The result of their more rational law of succession, which was revised and modified by an order of council dated July 13th, 1840, is doubtless the subdivision of land to an extent which our English statesmen hold in abhorrence. The largest of the islands, in fact, would form but a paltry estate in the eyes of our great landowners. Guernsey contains altogether some 15,000 acres, of which about 10,000 are arable. There is, perhaps, not a property in the island exceeding fifty acres, and few as large as thirty. Yet these minute subdivisions have been known to yield more than fifty bushels of wheat to the acre, while in England I doubt if any one has yet reached forty. In regard to other productions, I was told that twenty tons of parsnips to the acre is *no uncommon* return. The pasture is notoriously fine, sustaining the handsomest and most productive cattle perhaps in the world. A good Guernsey cow* gives eight quarts of milk, or a pound of its famous yellow butter, in the twenty-four hours. The fruits and flowers are luxuriant beyond description. At an exhibition which I attended in Jersey, I saw fifty Chaumontel pears (the finest-flavoured fruit in the queen's dominions) which weighed fifty-two

* The Guernsey breed is the most carefully preserved. Those in England called Alderney and Guernsey generally come from Jersey.

pounds Jersey weight, or about fifty-eight pounds English. The large baking pear called *belle de Jersey* often exceeds three pounds each, and the grapes are so large and luscious that the royal table is regularly supplied from this island.

This extraordinary productiveness is owing partly to the climate,* partly to the *vraic*, or seaweed, which forms a rich and inexhaustible manure, but very largely also to the spade husbandry resulting from the subdivision of the land and the density of the population. There is no pauperism and little immorality; and if they lack lordly landholders, enormous farms, or high scientific agriculture, the islands can boast, in exchange, a prosperous and contented people, groaning under no taxes, industrious, orderly, loyal, and religious.

The state of the people is to me at all times a more interesting topic than the physical features of a country. Nevertheless, I must not fail to add my tribute to the well known loveliness of the island scenery. The bays that indent the coast open a succession of marine pictures of much beauty. The castle of Mount Orgueil in Jersey, (where the apartments of Prince Charles and the cell of Prynne the puritan are seen in curious proximity,) Elizabeth Castle in the same island, and Castle Cornet in Guernsey, are fine specimens of sea fortresses, while every point and rocky islet bristles with some preparation against the invader, which may interest the disciples of Vauban. In the interior, the islands are abundantly furnished with good roads leading through wooded dells and sunny slopes, which, though hardly equalling the best scenery in England, are always pleasing, and often, on a small scale, very picturesque. In the churches there is nothing to admire except the large congregations that fill them. The old parish churches are pewed and galleried in the worst state of a by-gone age. Many of them are without a communion table, the chancel being pewed up to the east wall, and a moveable table being placed beneath the pulpit, after the old Presbyterian model, for the celebration of the sacrament. The later edifices are arranged as in the churches of England. There are several Protestant Nonconformist chapels in both islands, but only a very small sprinkling of Roman Catholics. The schools are well attended to, and the general usage of learning two languages equally must tend to enlarge the intellect of the rising generation. Finally, let me add that the kind, cordial, and untiring hospitality of a refined and intelligent society has imprinted on my mind the most agreeable impressions of my ten days' trip to the Channel Islands. A large number of English have pitched their tents there, attracted by the absence of taxes and the cheapness of living. The latter advantage, however, is fast disappearing before the equalizing powers of steam and telegraph; but it may be trusted the islands will never lose the greater charm of an indigenous and educated gentry, endowed, if not with great riches, yet with that happy competency which is more conducive to real comfort, knit together by traditional and family ties, and distinguished by a graceful and generous hospitality to the English visitor who has the good fortune to be introduced to their notice.

* In this respect, however, the islands are not suited to persons who require a dry atmosphere. The quantity of rain is twice as great as in London.

THE BANDIT OF BALAGUER.

Once upon a time, and that time very soon after the Inquisition was suppressed in Spain, a certain man, whose name I forget, but whom we may call Juan de la Vega y rey de los Bribones by way of shortness, came to reside at Tarragona, which, if you turn to your map and look for, will not be found very far removed from either Barcelona or Valencia, and midway between both. Moreover, if your map be a good one, you will also find, quite close to the sea-coast, a place called Balaguer. Now this Juan de la Vega y rey de los Bribones was a gentleman, in the police court definition of the same; you will, therefore, for politeness sake, put *Don* before his christian name whenever you chance to address him, and on occasions of extraordinary politeness you will be careful to put *Señor* before the Don. This Juan de la Vega was a man who ate, drank, and dressed well, though he was by no means merry. A certain sombre gravity of demeanour seemed natural to him. He was a man of few words, severe, and sometimes repulsive. He had the habit of eyeing one askance and never looking a man straight in the face when he addressed him. Altogether the Señor Don Juan de la Vega was what the Scotch would call "uncanny."

But the hidalgo had his good points, according to his own way of viewing the case. His house bristled with crucifixes, large and small; his walls were covered with the pictures of saints. He went to mass regularly when at home, and confessed from time to time. The Señor Don Juan lived well, as I have said, though visible means of subsistence he had none. This was not, however, a matter for adverse comment or suspicion in a country where hardly anything fit to wear is made at home, and whence every foreign thing fit to wear is prohibited by the laws—people managing to get foreign goods notwithstanding. The sea was near; smuggler ships abounded. The Señor Don Juan might, nay, he *must*, do a little business in the smuggling line; he must be a contrabandista. This conviction is a passport to respect in Spain among a certain class; but, nevertheless, for some reason which I cannot explain, the Señor failed to conciliate the respect of his neighbours, much less gain a hold upon their affections. Bit by bit the fact that he was not a contrabandista came out. That was clear; and being clear, the question arose with redoubled pertinence, what did the Señor Don Juan do? He was destined to acquire a bad name in the end, as you will presently see; but among his vices I do not think drunkenness can be laid to his charge. He was not a total abstainer either, as the sequel will make appear. From time to time the Señor Don Juan drank wine, and he drank aguardiente; and "in vino veritas," you know, I dare say; and so it happened in the end that a stoup of wine brought