

on the way, where they were seen, and where with many bitter tears the tale was recounted, when a subscription was made for the required service. The Campo Santo of St. Michele is visited twice every year by a sort of committee, who see that the proper regulations are carried out, and that the ground is kept in order.

The monks, notwithstanding their mournful employment, seem a happy set of men, and are great gardeners. Some of the rarest flowers in Italy are to be had in this solemn garden, and to see their dark-robed cowed figures sitting at evening among the flowers which surround the old grey church is a sight which would charm into action the pencil of the artist.

Among these quiet brothers, even in later days, there have been those whose names are well known. It was at St. Michele that Cardinal Turla, the historian of the Venetian navigators, found time to write his very valuable work; and here the late Pope Gregory XVI, under the name of Fra Mauro Cappellari, compiled his code of criminal law.

The churches and Tombs having been for some years shut up, rich and poor bury their dead at St. Michele, and as this is becoming full of the "mounds of mortality," the Venetians must ere long find another Campo Santo.

According to the population of Venice, the mortality is less than in most other cities of the continent. From a census taken in 1862, the population was 114,000, the deaths averaging fourteen per day, or about ninety-eight in a week, and 5,096 in a year. Of these deaths the causes were various, but not so much so as in other cities. Gastric fever is the most fatal to life. Other fevers prevail during the summer months, but not contagious or fatal ones. A remarkable fact is, that consumption is scarcely known in Venice, and in visiting other lands the first care of a Venetian is to guard against it. The deaths by drowning are not so numerous as might be supposed in a water city, fifty per year being the average; but the gondolas are so constructed that it is almost impossible for them to upset. The mortality of infants is less than in most parts of Italy. The longevity of the Venetians is remarkable, about twenty of the deaths being at the age of ninety, and some live even to a hundred years, worthy successors of Cornaro. On the whole, the bills of mortality will surprise those who imagine that this city must be an unhealthy one. The waters of the lagoon render the air pure, and effectually carry away all impurities.

THE LATE RICHARD HARRIS, M.P. FOR LEICESTER.

As the traveller enters Leicester from the north, he crosses a strip of land enclosed by the River Soar and the Union Canal, called "Frog Island," which contains a place appropriately designated the "World's End." A little to the west lie the "Dane Hills," which consist of several fields bearing Danish fortifications, while to the east rise the remains of Leicester Abbey, best known now as the place where Cardinal Wolsey, fallen from his high estate, retired to "leave his bones." On the banks of this River Soar (anciently Leir), the tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the genius of Shakespeare, give local habitation to King Lear with his three daughters, there residing in rural simplicity,

"In shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads."

On this "Frog Island" there was born, in a humble cottage, in October, 1777, Richard Harris, one of those

men of the people who, by the force of great natural abilities, combined with unswerving integrity of character, raise themselves to high social position and leave their mark in the place in which they live. He was the eldest of a family of six children. His parents were respectable and industrious, but poor, and unable to procure for him the advantages of even a common English education. It happened at the very time that the Sunday-school system, which has conferred such signal benefits on the working classes, was introduced into Leicester by the Rev. Thomas Robinson, the vicar of St. Mary's, known not only for his benevolent and active spirit, but as the author of an excellent work entitled "Scripture Characters." Amongst the first scholars enrolled was Richard Harris. Thirsting for knowledge, he also sought and obtained admission into a night school, and there and in the Sunday-school he acquired the rudiments of a plain education.

At the age of fourteen, he was placed in the printing-office of Mr. Phillips (afterwards Sir Richard Phillips), who was a prominent politician of the time, as well as an author of some repute, and the editor of the "Leicester Herald." The "Herald" sympathised with the principles of the French Revolution which was then commencing. Soon after entering the office, he became the innocent occasion of a piece of mischief. One evening, just as the paper was going to press, a frolic occurred in which young Harris stumbled or was pushed against the frame in which the type was set, displacing and throwing into confusion two or three columns of it. All was dismay! What was to be done? There was no time to reset the type. The Nottingham coach was nearly due, which required a considerable number of copies. The master was called, and his ingenious mind at once hit upon the following expedient. The broken type he still further disarranged, and converted into a hopeless mess, technically called "pie." The whole received the title "The Dutch Mail," to which the following explanation was added: "Just as our paper was going to press the Dutch mail arrived, and as we have not time to make a translation we insert the original!" The "pie" thus served up to the numerous readers of the journal occasioned no little perplexity to the linguists, and to the village politicians of the Midland Counties. No one had ever seen such Dutch, nor any other language resembling it. It was fairly an instance of an "unknown tongue," and many were the letters received from "Constant Readers," asking for an explanation of the mysterious columns, which the editor, for "want of time" and other reasons, excused himself from giving.

An informer having purchased in the printing-office of Mr. Phillips a copy of "Paine's Rights of Man," the printer, for the offence of selling it, was thrown into prison for eighteen months. The master being removed, the youth passed out of his employ, and began stocking-weaving, an occupation which was then far more remunerative than it is now. In this art he speedily excelled. Having learned all he could of the stocking trade in his native town, he travelled to Nottingham, in order to make himself master of the machinery there in use. While residing there another change in his eventful life took place. England was at the time deluged with the works of the French infidel writers written in a style adapted to captivate the mind and heart of young men. Many of these he read with avidity, and his faith in the truth and verities of the Christian religion was unsettled. At the same time the great continental war was raging, and all the resources of England in men and money were called forth against "Bonaparte." Mr.

Harris, like most young men at the time, imbibed the military spirit, and was led to join what was called the "supplemental militia." This force was stationed at different places along the south coast, to be ready in case of need to aid in repelling the threatened invasion.

After having been with his regiment in the south of England, Mr. Harris obtained a furlough of some weeks and returned to his native town. During this visit the foundation of his religious life was laid. The place of worship which his pious mother attended was that in which, afterwards, the great and gifted Robert Hall officiated. A funeral sermon was announced for the evening, and the anxious mother persuaded the sceptical son to go and hear it. He consented, and took his seat with her in the chapel. The preacher selected for his text, "A great man has fallen this day in Israel!" The announcement excited the half-suppressed laughter of the young man; for this "great man" that had fallen was a poor scissors-grinder, who by his cheerfulness and uprightness in the midst of deep poverty had won the respect of all who knew him. Quieted by the gentle rebuke of his mother, who sat by his side, he listened attentively to the preacher, who proceeded to explain the nature of true greatness, and to show how religion made men truly great, both in this world and in the next, however insignificant they might seem, when judged by the world's conventional standard of greatness. While thus listening, his levity gave way to serious reflection. He had known the poor scissors-grinder, and esteemed him for his goodness and his invariable cheerfulness under all circumstances. There must be a power and reality in religion to raise such a man in character and in happiness above all the trials of his lot; at least there *might* be, and he resolved at once to reconsider the question of the truth of Christianity. He did so, and after much reading and prayerful investigation, he renounced for ever his infidelity, and as a man would destroy the phial which contained the poison he had taken in mistake, so he burnt the books which had for a time led him astray. He became an earnest Christian, and united himself with the congregation over which Robert Hall presided, and enjoyed the ministry and the intimate friendship of that distinguished preacher until his removal from Leicester to Bristol in the year 1826.

Not long after this, apparently at the time of the peace of Amiens, Mr. Harris quitted the ranks of the militia, and retiring to his native town commenced that business career in which he eventually became so successful. When he commenced his career, the stocking-frame machine, after being long neglected and then violently opposed, had become a recognised and lawful engine of labour, but was in a rude and simple state, and his ingenious mind soon perceived that it was capable of great improvement, and of being adapted not only to the manufacture of every kind of hosiery, but of an endless variety of other articles of apparel. To the development of its capabilities he devoted his life and energies. His mind was fertile in new design, and ingenious in the alteration and adaptation of machinery to their production. His business at first was small, but year by year it increased and extended, until at the time of his death, as the result of years of skill and untiring industry, it had reached colossal proportions.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men." Success in life, earned by honourable industry, integrity, and skill, soon brings along with it office and honours. Richard Harris acquired the confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens, and was called upon to fill

the various municipal offices. While holding that of chief magistrate, in the year 1843, he was honoured with an invitation to Belvoir Castle, where the Queen was then staying, and a distinguished party of guests. Among these was the "Iron Duke," who seemed to court the company of Mr. Harris. Both were early risers, and long before the other guests had awoke from their slumbers they might have been seen walking in the beautiful grounds of the castle, and conversing earnestly together.

There remained yet another honour to be conferred on him, the highest in the power of his native town to bestow. During a period of nearly forty years he had taken an active though not a noisy part in the politics of the times. The passing of the Registration Act, which has proved so useful to society at large, offending no man's conscience, and leaving no man's property insecure, was in a great measure due to the external pressure which he created, and the information which he supplied to Lord Nugent and other advocates of the measure in Parliament. In the year 1848 the representation of the town of Leicester became vacant, and the electors at once turned their thoughts to Mr. Harris and his friend Mr. John Ellis. They consented to become candidates, and were elected without opposition.

An election in Leicester in the year 1826 cost one candidate £60,000. The whole cost of the election of Mr. Harris and his friend, including everything, did not exceed £200.

For four years Mr. Harris discharged the duties of his responsible position in a manner satisfactory to his constituents. He retired from public life in the year 1853, and for a time enjoyed the "otium cum dignitate," moving quietly about in his native town, unostentatiously and in various ways doing good, respected and honoured by all who knew him. "When the eye saw him it blessed him." He passed into rest February 2nd, 1854, amidst every demonstration of respect by his fellow-citizens.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

AFTER the close of the Exhibition of 1851, many claims were urged on her Majesty's Commissioners for the disposable estate at Kensington Gore. The South Kensington Museum came in for the larger share, but a successful application was also made for ground upon which to build a great central institution for promotion of scientific and artistic knowledge as applicable to productive industry. Under this plea a site was granted, on a nominal rental of a shilling a year, for 999 years, which is estimated as a donation of £60,000. The site is on the south side of the high road to Kensington, opposite the Albert Monument. The foundation-stone was laid by her Majesty, and the hall has the prestige of being associated with the memory of the good deeds of the Prince Consort, as patron of art and industry.

The plan of the building, first designed by the late Capt. Fowke, R.E., was on his death carried out by Lieut.-Colonel Scott, R.E., and the construction is hastening toward completion, under the charge of Messrs. Lucas.

As the scheme advanced, a larger scope was announced in describing the possible uses of the edifice. To the advancement of industrial art were added various projects, combining commercial with scientific advantages, as in the case of the Crystal Palace. The estimated cost being about £200,000 rendered every extension of the original project advisable. "The hall," we