Street was formed, at the time when George the Fourth came to the throne, to Claypath Lane, which led round its south base from Westoe Lane to Temple Town.

The ballast heap east of Laygate Lane and south of Trinity Church is of comparatively recent formation, as are likewise some of the other mounds along the line of the St. Hilda's waggon-way. But all the way up behind Holborn, back from the main street, to the head of the town, there was formerly nought but great heaps of pan rubbish, crowding one upon another, and only interrupted by Laygate Lane, a rough country road, or rather rut, for the passage of lime and farm carts to and from the town.

The enormous heap called Carpenters' Hill, between Nile Street and Hill Street, took fire in February, 1872, and continued burning for several years afterwards. Some said the fire was consequent upon the erection of a foundry at the north end of the hill, and it is certain that it broke out in that quarter; others attributed the casualty to the breaking of a gas-pipe. The fact is, however, that some such accident was almost sure to occur, sooner or later, owing to the inflammable nature of a large proportion of the constituents of the heap. When one house after another was destroyed by the fire, and the whole neighbourhood was plainly in imminent danger, the Corporation was implored to do something to stop the destructive process; but the Improvement Committee could not see its way how to interfere without infringing upon the rights of property and taking the responsibility from the parties directly concerned. The owners of the houses could not agree among themselves what to do, or, indeed, to do anything, and an Act of Parliament, or, at least, a law suit, would have been needed to compel them. Trenches were dug with the view of saving neighbouring houses, but neither long enough nor deep enough to do any good. Several tenants and owners ridiculed all idea of risk, founding their confidence on a few yards' lineal distance; and one or two even refused to let their more prudent neighbours dig trenches to isolate their houses. By and by, however, the fire, creeping stealthily and steadily on, reached these unbelievers' domiciles, and one fine morning they found themselves enveloped in foul smoke, like the after-damp or choke-damp in a coal pit, from which, to avoid being suffocated, they had to make their escape as fast as they could. Thirty families were thus forcibly unhoused, and their former habitations were reduced to blackened heaps. Volumes of smoke issued from the west side of the hill, and as far back as the top, even the sewers and ventilators acting as channel pipes to convey it to all parts. The underground fire was not suppressed till 1882, when the whole of the property on Carpenters' Hill had been destroyed.

A contemporary writer thus described the appearance of the burning hills of Shields in 1874 :—"Among the first objects that strike a stranger on approaching the entrance to the Tyne at night, especially after heavy rains, are the singular fires seen burning with more or less intensity, in the face of the curiously-shaped artificial cliffs formed by the huge deposits of ballast and other rubbish upon the Bents and at the Lawe. The fire is accompanied by a loud crackling noise and a fusty, sulphurous smell, which causes a peculiar sensation in those who visit the place for the first time. But the sight of incandescent pit-heap rubbish—as at Ryhope Colliery, for instance—is familiar to all dwellers in coal countries. It is precisely the same phenomenon, however, on a small scale, which volcanoes present, a deal of the alkaline and earthly stuff of which these heaps are formed being naturally decomposed with an evolution of intense heat whenever they come into contact with moisture."

This was not the first time that South Shields has been subjected to a similar casualty. The hill to the west of Cone Street took fire about ninety years ago, and quietly burned itself out. It took its name of the Red Hill or Red Hole, from this circumstance, owing to the bright colour of the burnt ashes.

A Bedlington Legend.

LONG years ago, at a time too remote to be specified in any local record, there lived in Bedlingtonshire, a part of Northumberland belonging to the County Palatine of Durham, a worthy couple, to whom the blind goddess of Fortune had given great store of wealth—it is not said in what manner acquired, whether by inheritance from their "forbears" or by their own industry and frugality. This couple had an only child—a daughter—to whom, when they should pay the debt of Nature, all their riches would come. She was fair beyond her compeers, "with ruby lips and auburn hair." She was, moreover, deeply in love with "a famous youth," who, though he had no fortune but his own worth, was prized by all who knew him "for generous acts and constant truth," and who warmly reciprocated her love.

When the girl's parents learned the state of the case, they did all in their power to induce her to break off the attachment, as cruel fathers and mothers are conventionally understood by young people always to do when there is money on the one side and none on the other. They did not reflect that many a hardy youth begins the world with nothing but his head and hands, and ends with being a millionaire; while others, of softer mettle, whose fathers have left them estates, die in the workhouse. James Robson's good qualities were not unknown to them. They knew him to be sober, steady, well-mannered, and amiable, as well as handsome—everything, in short, that a young fellow ought to be. But then one thing was lacking, and for that nothing in the world could make up: he

was the son of a poor widow, whose husband had been a hind, and he was himself only a common ploughman, living in a cot house.

So, finding that the young woman's heart was set upon her penniless sweetheart, and that it was impossible to hinder them from having almost daily or nightly stolen interviews, the old couple, "hoping it would be for her good," resolved to try what absence from the beloved object could effect, and made up their minds to send her away to an uncle's at Stokesley, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, then practically as far from Bedlington as the Land's End is now. The old ballad which is said to have related the sequel, but of which only a fragment is left (if, indeed, there was ever any more of it than the introduction, which John Bell gave to the world in his "Rhymes of Northern Bards"), tells how, at parting, there was

——many a sigh and tear
Of love and truth through life sincere;
Nor death should part, for from the grave
Short time should the survivor save.

The lady had not been gone a week when the young man fell deadly sick.

He sickened sore, and heart-broke died,
Which pleased her parents' greedy pride.
They determined that she should now be wed to another,
Forgetful what she'd sworn or said.

On the night after the poor lad's funeral, the old man told his wife he would give his mare a double feed, so that she might be able to stand a little extra fatigue the next day. "And do thou," said he, "get all ready for a journey. Lay out thy hood and thy safeguard (meaning by the latter an outer petticoat, worn by women in those days to save their clothes in riding.) I will get saddle and pillion all right, and do thou prepare some bread and cheese for a lunch. We shall start for Stokesley before daybreak, and ere sundown thou shall see thy bonny daughter, if all goes well. There is no fear but we shall soon make her a happy bride, now that that fellow is dead and gone."

But the purse-proud farmer was reckoning without his host. For when that dead midnight hour arrived, "when restless ghosts their wrongs deplore," the deceased ploughman rode up to the door of the girl's uncle at Stokesley, upon her father's favourite mare, and knocked for admitance.

O, who is there? the maiden cries;
O, it is I, the ghost replies.

And then he added, "Come out quick, love. Here is your mother's hood and safeguard, and this is your father's good grey mare. I have been sent for you as the most trusty messenger that could be got. You are to ride home with me forthwith. Fear no evil. No harm shall betide you."

The uncle, who had been wakened out of his first sleep by the noise at the door, hearing what the messenger from Bedlington said and, trusting that it was all right, and for his dear niece's good that she should take her departure thus suddenly in the middle of the night, helped her to mount behind the man, whom he made to swear, however, that he would take her straight away to "her father dear," without insult or injury, doubt or damage.

No sooner had she got fairly seated on the pillion, with her right arm round her companion's waist to steady herself, than off they started.

They travelled faster than the wind;
And in two hours, or little more,
They came unto her father's door.

This was hurricane speed; for Stokesley is distant from Bedlington, as the crow flies, about fifty miles, and a good deal more by the road. Making this great haste, the rider began to complain soon that his head did ache; whereupon the lady pulled out her handkerchief, and bound it round his brow. As she did so, she exclaimed, "My dear, you are as cold as lead." Then, the moon breaking out from under a dark cloud, she saw with surprise that her dear companion cast no shadow, though both herself and mare did. Arrived at her father's door, James set her gently down, and said

Your mare has travelled sore;
So go you in, and, as I'm able,
I'll feed and tend her in your stable.

When she knocked, or "tirled at the pin," as the old manner was, her father cried, "Who is there?" "It is I," replied the lovely maid. "I have come home in haste behind young James, as you ordered me." This made the hair stand upright on the old man's head, as well it might, he knowing that James was dead. But, letting in his daughter, he hurried into the stable, where he could see "no living shape of mankind." He only found his mare all in a sweat, which put him in a grievous fret, for he cared infinitely more, apparently, for his cattle than for any supernatural phenomenon.

The Flower of Bedlingtonshire, on learning the real state of the case, went from one fainting fit into another, and when she came partially to her senses remained quite inconsolable. The colour left her cheek, her rosy lips grew livid, her eye had an unnatural wildness, her whole frame shook and quivered, and it was plain that she was in a high fever. She was immediately put to bed, and the doctor sent for, but he, worthy man, could do her no good. Her symptoms and the cause of them were such as no medicine could deal with. She lay as quiet as a lamb, and made no complaint of any sort, but sank hopelessly from the very first. She knew she was fast dying. She expressed no regret at leaving this world, cut off, as she was, in the bloom and heyday of youth, by an unhappy fate, which had robbed her life of all its charm and hope, and would have left her desolate had she lived. When her mother spoke to her, she was silent; when her father approached her bedside, she turned away; and yet it was not unforgiveness, but pity—pity for him more than for herself. The only wish she expressed was to be buried in the same grave and laid in the same coffin with her lover.

And this her last will and testament was respected, so that it was done accordingly.

On opening the coffin, the hapless maid's handkerchief was found tied round his head, just as she had told her parents on her return home!

This story, which may have had some foundation in fact, finds a parallel in Bürger's celebrated ballad of "Leonore," which takes the highest rank in its class of lyrical compositions, and has been repeatedly translated into English.

> Tramp, tramp! across the land they rode;
> Splash, splash! across the sea.
> Hurrah! the dead can ride apace!
> Do'st fear to ride with me?

Richard Halfknight, Artist.

MR. RICHARD HALFKNIGHT, landscape painter, was born in High Street, Sunderland, on July 11th, 1855. Educated first at Sunderland, and then at a private establishment kept by the father of Miss Winifred Robinson, the violinist, on the outskirts of Boston, Lincolnshire, young Halfknight completed his studies at Clare College, Scorton, Yorkshire. On leaving school, he entered the office of Messrs. Jos. Potts and Son, architects, where he soon gained a reputation for the lovely colours he could mix for the decoration of plans, sections, elevations, &c.; but this occupation proving uncongenial, he left it, and entered his father's business as a painter and decorator. During the evenings he worked hard at the local school of art, under the direction of Mr. W. C. Way. All his holidays and spare moments were devoted to copying pictures from the small but choice collection of his father. Mr. Halfknight was also indebted to many of the connoisseurs residing on Wearside for the loan of works by artists from whom he thought he might obtain hints of a technical nature. About this period, a marine painter, named Callow, visited Sunderland, and, after being introduced by a mutual acquaintance, the two became very friendly. Mr. Callow strongly advised Mr. Halfknight to adopt painting as a profession. A legacy from a relative decided the business. At the age of twenty-one he started for London, full of ambition, and with a belief in his own abilities. Now began a struggle such as he says he devoutly hopes no other "brother of the brush" will ever have to undergo.

In the summer of 1884 Mr. Halfknight exhibited his first picture in the Royal Academy. This was a water-colour drawing, which at the time most people considered colossal in size for a work in that medium. "Dredging on the Thames" was the title, and 50in. by 30in. the size without frame. This year marked an epoch in Mr. Halfknight's career, as he joined Mr. Yeend King in a studio at St. John's Wood, a suburb famed for its temples devoted to art. Mr. King had just returned from a three years' sojourn in Paris, bringing with him a wonderful stock of technical knowledge. Both artists being desirous of excelling as colourists, they set to work, and before long invented a palette which has since been largely imitated. Next year Mr. Halfknight exhibited two large *pictures at the* Royal Academy—a water-colour drawing, entitled "When Autumn Turns the Silver Thames to Gold," which was hung on the line in the place of honour; and an oil painting, representing "Streatley: Late Afternoon," which was hung as a pendant to Mr. Vicat Cole's "Iffley

Mill." Mr. Halfknight's picture was purchased by the Art Union of London, an institution which also honoured him by purchasing one of his works at the Suffolk Street Galleries during the same year.

The year 1886 was a most successful one, though fraught with much vexation of spirit. One of his best pictures, "Still Waters," was then painted. Recognizing in this a subject suitable for publishing, Mr. Halfknight had it photographed, and spent the greater part of a month in calling upon publishers, who, with the usual timidity of the class, refused to take it up, their principal reason being that Mr. Halfknight's work was unknown in their trade. Eventually he was obliged to part with his copyright to Messrs. Brooks and Sons for a small sum, but it gave him the opening for which he was striving. Scarcely a month after it was issued three hundred copies were sold, and the firm gave him a commission for a companion picture—this time at his own price. Up to the present, some ten thousand etchings of this picture have been dis-