

in winter glittering like a fairy palace with the long fantastic icicles formed by the frozen waters of the little torrent." The present writer has verified the truth of this description within recent years, when, too, every branch and twig of the overhanging trees was covered with frozen crystals, glittering like myriads of diamonds in the cold clear sunshine.

Continuing on our way, and passing the end of the Prebends' Bridge, the path begins rapidly to ascend, and we emerge into South Street, from whence we have one of the finest views of the Castle and Cathedral which can possibly be obtained. The late Canon Ornsby described this view as "unequaled in dignity and grandeur." Descending South Street, we pass the church of St. Margaret on our left, and immediately reach the foot of Crossgate. A few yards further, and we are once more at Framwellgate Bridge.

Once again let us wend our way to the Market Place. From the north-east corner we enter the street called Claypath, or, as in ancient documents, Clayport. Near the further corner of the church the roadway was formerly spanned by the Claypath Gate, "a weak, single arch of common stone and rubble," taken down in 1791. Claypath continues to near the summit of the first hill, and here the name of the road becomes Gilligate, or, as the old people will have it, Gilligate. At the same point stood formerly a leaden cross, which is mentioned as early as 1454. Here, too, we leave the parish of St. Nicholas and enter the parish and borough of St. Giles. The street, under its changed name, stretches forward to the junction of the Sunderland and Sherburn roads. The junction is the site of the Maid's Arbour, whence came the fair cross which once adorned the Market Place, and here also, in bygone times, the traveller, leaving the city, entered on the green expanse of Gilligate Moor, formerly the well-known muster-ground of local militiamen and volunteers. The old account books of more than one neighbouring parish record the cost of carrying "the town's armour to Gilligate Moor."

In this rambling survey of Durham we have not travelled beyond the city and its immediate suburbs. Let it not be supposed that its more distant and rural surroundings lack interest. Many are the delightful field-paths and lanes and bye-ways round Durham. They lead, through scenes that charm every true lover of nature, to sites rich in historic associations and in the romance and mystery of bygone centuries. Such sites include Old Durham and Maiden Castle, Kepier and Finchale, Neville's Cross and Bearpark, Sherburn and Brancepeth. I have only space to mention these favourite resorts. The reader who will take the trouble to learn their history and legends, and will then make such pilgrimages to them as he has opportunity to accomplish, will, I am sure, be amply repaid.

J. R. BOYLE, F.S.A.

Cutty Soams.

PROBABLY the most dismal place in the universal world is the "goaf," the sooty, cavernous void left in a coal mine after the removal of the coal. The actual terrors of this gloomy cavity, with its sinking, cracked roof and upheaving or "creeping" floor, huge fragments of shale or "following stone" overhead, quivering ready to fall, and "blind passages that lead to nothing" and nowhere, save death to the hapless being who chances to stray into them in the dark and loses his way, as in the Catacombs. These terrors formerly had superadded to them others of a yet more appalling nature, in the shape of grim goblins that haunted the wastes deserted by busy men, and either lured the unwary wanderer into them to certain destruction, or issued from them to play mischievous pranks in the workings, tampering with the brattices so as to divert or stop the air-currents, hiding the men's gear, blunting the hewers' picks, frightening the putters with dismal groans and growls, exhibiting deceptive blue lights, and every now and then choking scores of men and boys with deadly gases.

One of the spectres of the mine—now, like all his brethren, only a traditionary as well as a shadowy being—used to be known by the name of Cutty Soams. Belonging, of course, to the genus boggle, he partook of the special nature of the brownie. His disposition was purely mischievous, yet he condescended sometimes to do good in an indirect way. Thus he would occasionally pounce upon and thrash soundly some unpopular overman or deputy-viewer, and would often gratify his petty malignity at the expense of shabby owners, causing them vexatious outlay for which there would otherwise have been no need; but his special business and delight was to cut the ropes, or "soams," by which the poor little assistant putters (sometimes girls) used then to be yoked to the wooden trams for drawing the corves of coal from the face of the workings out to the cranes. It was no uncommon thing in the mornings, when the men went down to work, for them to find that Cutty Soams had been busy during the night, and that every pair of rope traces in the colliery had been cut to pieces. But no one ever, by any chance, saw the foul fiend. By many he was supposed to be the ghost of some of the poor fellows who had been killed in the pit at one time or other, and who came to warn his old marrows of some misfortune that was going to happen, so that they might put on their clothes and go home. Pits were laid idle many a day in the olden times through this cause alone. Cool-headed sceptics, who maintained that the cutting of the soams, instead of being the work of an evil spirit whom nobody had ever seen or could see, was that of some designing scoundrel.

As these mysterious soam-cuttings, at a particular pit

in Northumberland, in the neighbourhood of Callington, never occurred when the men were on the day shift, suspicion fell on one of the deputies, named Nelson, whose turn to be on the night shift it always happened to be when there was any prank played of the kind. It was his duty to visit the cranes before the lads went down, and see that all things were in proper order, and it was he who usually made the discovery that the ropes had been cut. Having been openly accused of the deed by another man, his rival for the hand of a daughter of the overman of the pit, Nelson, it would appear, resolved to compass his competitor's death by secretly cutting, all but a single strand, the rope by which his intended victim was about to descend to the bottom. Owing to some cause or other the person whose destruction was thus designed was not the first to go down the pit that morning, but other two men, the under viewer and overman, went first. The consequence was that the rope broke with their weight the moment they swung themselves upon it, and they were precipitated down the shaft and dashed to pieces.

As a climax to this horrid catastrophe, the pit fired a few days afterwards, and tradition has it that Nelson was killed by the after-damp. Cutty Soams Colliery, as it had come to be nicknamed, never worked another day. To be sure, it was well-nigh exhausted of workable coal; but whether that had been so or not, not a man could have been induced to enter it, or wield a pick in it, owing to its evil repute.

So the owners, to make the best of a bad job, engaged some hardy fellows to bring the rails, trams, rolleys, and other valuable plant out of the doomed pit, a task which occupied them several weeks, and then its mouth was filled up. The men removed to other collieries, and the deserted pit row soon fell into ruins. Even the bare walls have long since disappeared. There is nothing left now to mark the site of the village, if we may believe our authority, Mr. W. P. Shield, "but a huge heap of rubbish overgrown with rank weeds and fern bushes."

As for old Cutty Soams, he now finds no one to believe in his ever having existed, far less in his still existing or haunting any pit from Scremerston to West Auckland.

The Quayside, Newcastle.

AMONGST the pictures in the Bewick Club Exhibition this year was Mr. Frank Wood's portrayal of the commercial bustle of Newcastle. The Quayside is everywhere regarded as the very heart of the business life of the city, and the artist has succeeded in giving a most accurate representation of the scene, besides introducing as much pictorial effect as possible. The Tyne, it must be remembered, is not always smoky and murky, and Mr. Wood has chosen its aspect upon a bright summer day. Taking his stand-

point at Hillgate Wharf, on the Gateshead side of the river, he has faithfully delineated all the objects of interest within the space at his command. The steam wherry has taken the place of the old keel, and steaming towards the Swing Bridge a modern tug is seen. Pleasure-seekers, probably bound for Norway, are crowding on to a tender lying at the ferry-landing, and the masts of vessels of various builds tower up before the windows of the mercantile houses that line the thoroughfare, while behind rise the spire of All Saints', the lantern tower of St. Nicholas', and the grim walls of the Old Castle. The High Level Bridge, with a passing train, completes the picture. With so many prosaic details, the artist has endeavoured to realise a very difficult subject, and it must be said that he is rewarded by the result of his labours. Mr. Wood is assistant master of the Newcastle School of Art, now associated with the Durham College of Science.

The Elopement of John Scott and Bessie Surtees.

MR. WILSON HEPPLÉ showed at the late Bewick Club Exhibition in Newcastle a large oil painting, in which he undertook to represent on canvas one of the most romantic incidents connected with the history of Newcastle—the elopement of John Scott and Bessie Surtees.

Full details of the affair are recorded in the *Monthly Chronicle* for June, 1888; but it may be briefly explained that Bessie Surtees was the daughter of Aubone Surtees, banker, Sandhill, Newcastle, and that John Scott was the son of William Scott, a respectable merchant and coalfitter, also of Newcastle. The young pair had become acquainted at Sedgfield, and the acquaintance ripened into friendship and love. Thus we arrive at that stage when the fair heroine, "in a moment of terrible indiscretion," as one of the historians of Newcastle puts it, consented to leave her father's house and join her fortunes with those of the merchant's son. For a while the young couple had a hard struggle; but John Scott in no long time carved out his own fortunes. At first he studied for the Church, but his marriage debarred him from taking holy orders: so he turned his attention to the law. After distinguishing himself in several minor cases, he became in succession a King's Counsel, a member of Parliament, Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas, Baron Eldon, Lord High Chancellor, and Earl of Eldon.

Mr. Hepple has painted many North-Country subjects, but it may be doubted whether he has ever produced a work of so much interest as that which is engraved on the next page. The old-fashioned houses loom up in mysterious bulk; the moonlight effect is rendered with