

thereupon accused him of high misdemeanours before the Privy Council.

Upon reaching London, Knox found that his enemies had been uncommonly industrious in their endeavours to excite prejudices against him. But the Council, after hearing his defence, gave him an honourable acquittal. He was employed to preach before the Court, and his sermons gave great satisfaction to the king, who contracted a favour for him, and was anxious to have him promoted in the Church. The Council resolved that he should preach in London and the Southern Counties during the following year; but they allowed him to return for a short time to Newcastle, either that he might settle his affairs in the North, or that a public testimony might be borne to his innocence in the place where it had been attacked.


A short time afterwards the see of Durham was divided by a special Act of Parliament, and Newcastle was made into a City, and the headquarters of a Bishopric. No appointment was made under this Act. It is said that Bishop Ridley (the Martyr) was to have had Durham, and John Knox Newcastle, but Knox refused to be made a bishop on the ground that the office was destitute of Divine authority, and soon afterwards the illness and death of the king put a stop to the proceedings.

In the course of the same year Knox was repeatedly prostrated with attacks of gravel, and his general health, of course, suffered much; but the undaunted spirit within him bore him up in a fashion that reminds the reader of his letters of a great man and great sufferer of very recent days—the famous Robert Hall. In a letter to his sister, written in Newcastle, he says:—"My daily labours must now increase, and therefore spare me as much as you may. My old malady troubles me sore, and nothing is more contrarious to my health than writing. Think not that I am weary to visit you: but unless my pain shall cease, I will altogether become unprofitable. Work, O Lord, even as pleaseth thy infinite goodness, and relax the troubles at thy own pleasure, of such as seeketh thy glory to shine. Amen." In another letter to the same correspondent, he writes: "The pain of my head and stomach troubles me greatly. Daily I find my body decay; but the providence of my God shall not be frustrate. I am charged to be at Widdrington upon Sunday, where, I think, I shall also remain Monday. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus rest with you. Desire such faithful with whom ye communicate your mind to pray that, at the pleasure of our good God, my dolour both of body and spirit may be relieved somewhat; for presently it is very bitter."

Knox happened to be in London when King Edward died, and he was one of the first to realise the seriousness of that event to Protestant interests. He remained there until the 19th of July, 1553, and then returned to Newcastle. Shortly after his return he was

married to Marjory Bowes. Her father was wealthy enough to have secured him from anxiety; but Knox was as proud in his way as any Bowes of them all. It was therefore natural that he should have an anxious time of it after his salary as chaplain was taken away by Queen Mary. In weariness of mind, and often in great physical anguish, he preached day after day during the autumn of that year. The new Parliament had repealed all the Acts on which the Reformation rested. Tunstall was restored to Durham. The Protestants were allowed till the end of the year to signify their conformity to the new order of things, after which they stood exposed to all the pains of law. With great reluctance Knox yielded to the advice of friends in leaving Newcastle for the less conspicuous sphere of Berwick; but he never got so far. He took refuge on the coast, and when pursuit after him waxed hot he took ship for Dieppe. Thus he disappeared from Newcastle.

Mother Shipton and her Prophecies.

 All the prophets and prophetesses that Britain has produced, from the days of Merlin and Thomas the Rhymer downwards, none has had a wider and more lasting reputation than Mother Shipton, the celebrated Yorkshire witch, whose "strange and wonderful prophecies" are contained in one of those popular chap-books, "printed for the flying stationers," of which millions of copies have been issued first and last, and of which early editions now bring fabulous prices. The personal history of this shrewd prognosticator of remarkable events, as related by her anonymous biographers, is manifestly apocryphal. Only she appears to have lived at Clifton, a village on the banks of the Ouse, just outside the walls of York; and, if any dependence could be placed on the traditions regarding her, she must have lived to a quite extraordinary age, having come into the world under King Henry VII., and not having left it until after the Great Fire of London, so that her span of earthly existence must have been lengthened out to upwards of two hundred and sixty years, only forty years less than the patriarch Enoch, who was three hundred years old when he was translated to Heaven.

It is of her prophecies, however, and not of her length or manner of life, that we intend here to speak. We are told that it was shortly after her marriage that she set up for a conjuror, or what would now be called a medium, thought-reader, or psychognotist, informing people, for a consideration, who had stolen this or that from them, and how to recover their goods. She soon got a great name, far and near, as a "cunning woman," or "woman of fore-

sight," and her words were counted "lively oracles." Nor did she meddle only with private persons, but was "advised with by people of the greatest quality." The most exalted personages in the realm were not above the scope of her ken, or indifferent to the weight of her words.

Thus, when the great Cardinal Wolsey fell into disgrace, about the year 1530, and got an order from the king to remove from Richmond-on-Thames to his see of York, Mother Shipton publicly said he should never come there. His eminence, so runs the story, being offended when he heard of this, caused three lords to go to her to make inquiries. They went in disguise to Dring-Houses, where she then resided, and, leaving their horses and grooms behind, knocked at the door of her house, which was shown to them by a man named Bearly. "Come in, Mr. Bearly, and those noble lords with you," was her immediate welcome from within; "whereat," says the story-teller, "the lords were greatly amazed, not comprehending how the woman should know them." But as soon as they entered, she saluted each of them by his name, and, without asking their errand, set refreshments before them. Whereupon one of the lords said, "If you knew our errand, you would not make so much of us. You said the cardinal should never see York. What warrant had ye for that?" "No," replied the pythoness; "you say not sooth; I said he might see York, but never come at it." "Well," rejoined the lord, "when he does come, thou shalt be burnt." Then, taking her linen handkerchief off her head, says she, "If this burn, then I may burn." And she immediately flung it into the fire before their eyes, and let it lie in the flames for the space of a quarter of an hour or more, which it did without being even the least singed. The event justified her vaticination; for the cardinal, having arrived on his journey northwards at his magnificent palace or castle of Cawood, between nine and ten miles south of York, and having mounted to the top of one of the towers, and had the Minster pointed out to him, is reported to have said:—"There was a witch who would have it that I should never see York." "Nay," said one present, "your eminence is misinformed; she said you should see it, but not come at it." "Well," replied the cardinal, "I shall have her burned as soon as I get there." But that very day he was arrested for high treason by the king's orders, and carried back directly south, without being allowed to revisit his archiepiscopal see, which he never again saw; for he died on his way to London, at Leicester Abbey, of a violent attack of dysentery, brought on partly by the fatigues of his journey and partly by distress of mind.

It is related that on one occasion Mother Shipton had a stolen visit from the Abbot of Beverley, who, seeing the turn that things were taking under the renegade Defender of the Faith, and dreading that the monastery he presided over might be included in the number of religious

houses to be summarily dealt with, put on counterfeit clothes and went to consult the wise woman, hoping she might be able to clear up the dark future to him. But the moment that he knocked at her door, she called out to him and said:—"Come in, Sir Abbot, for you are not so much disguised but that the fox may be seen through the sheep's skin. Come, take a stool and sit down, and you shall not go away unsatisfied. I am an old woman, who will not flatter nor be flattered by any; yet will answer simple questions as fast as I may. So speak on." And, in reply to his reverence's queries about the fate overhanging the monasteries, she poured forth her vaticination in Hudibrastic verse as follows:—

When the Cow doth wive the Bull,
Then, priest, beware thy skull!
The mitred Peacock's lofty pride
Shall to his master be a guide;
And when the lower shrubs do fall,
The great trees quickly follow shall.
The poor shall grieve to see that day,
And who did feast must fast and pray.
Riches bring pride, and pride brings woe,
And Fate decrees their overthrow.

Here by the cow was meant King Henry, who, as Earl of Richmord, bore a cow on his escutcheon; and the bull betokened Anne Bulleyn, to whom her father gave the black bull's head in his cognisance. When the king married Anne, in the room of Queen Catherine, then was fulfilled the second line of the prophecy, a number of priests having lost their heads for offending against the laws made to bring the matter to pass. Cardinal Wolsey, who was intended by "the mitred Peacock," in the height of his pride and the vastness of his undertakings, intended to erect two colleges, one at Ipswich, where he was born, the other at Oxford, where he was bred; and, finding himself unable to endow them at his own charge, he obtained license of Pope Clement VII. to suppress forty small monasteries in England, and to lay their old lands to his new foundations, which was done accordingly, the poor monks that lived in them being turned out of doors. Then King Henry, seeing that the cardinal's power extended so far as to suppress these "lower shrubs," thought his prerogative might stretch so far as to fell down the "great trees"; and soon after he dissolved the priory of Christ's Church, near Aldgate, in London, which was the richest in lands and tenements of all the priories in London and Middlesex. This was a forerunner of the dissolution of the rest of the religious houses, which was brought about in due course.

Another of Mother Shipton's prophecies was:—

A prince that shall never be born
Shall make the shaven heads forlorn.

This alluded to King Edward VI., who was brought into the world by the Caesarian operation, his birth having cost his mother, Jane Seymour, her life.

Again she foretold the accession of Queen Mary:—

A princess shall assume the crown,
And streams of blood shall Smithfield drown.

The long reign of Mary's successor, Queen Elizabeth, was predicted in the following couplet :—

A maiden queen full many a year
Shall England's warlike sceptre bear.

The destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588 by the English fleet under Sir Francis Drake was anticipated in two significant lines :—

The Western Monarch's wooden horses
Shall be destroyed by the Drake's forces.

The Union of the Crowns under "bonny King Jemmy," and the consequent cessation of the Border wars, suggested the following learned quatrain :—

The Northern Lion from over Tweed
The Maiden Queen shall next succeed,
And join in one two mighty states ;
Then shall Janus shut his gates.

The marriage of Prince Charles with the Princess Henrietta Maria of France, his accession to the throne as Charles I., and the assassination of the Royal favourite Buckingham, were summarised in the following lines :—

The rose shall with the lily wed ;
The crown then fits the White King's head ;
Then shall a peasant's bloody knife
Deprive a great man of his life.

Buckingham was only great, however, in the sense of being the greatest man in favour at Court ; and Charles was called the White King merely because at the time of his coronation he was clothed in white.

The next prophecy refers to the troubles commencing in 1630, taking their rise in Scotland, and thence spreading to England :—

Forth from the North shall mischief blow,
And English Hob shall add thereto ;
Men shall rage as they were wood,
And earth shall darkened be with blood.
Then shall the counsellors assemble,
Who shall make great and small to tremble,
The White King then, O cruel fate !
Shall be murdered at his gate.

The Cromwellian Protectorship and the Restoration were sung in the same doggerel strain :—

The White King dead, the Wolf shall then
With blood usurp the Lion's den ;
But death shall hurry him away,
Confusion shall awhile bear sway
Till fate to England shall restore
A king to reign as heretofore,
Who mercy and justice likewise
Shall in his empire exercise.

The great plague of London in 1665, and the great fire in the following year, are tersely described in a couple of lines :—

Grizly death shall ride London through,
And many houses shall be laid low.

Many other prophecies have been recorded of this remarkable woman, most of them, doubtless, only placed to her name. What we have quoted are interesting as illustrative of the truth of what we read in "The Historie of Philip de Commines, Knight, Lord of Argenton," that "the English are never unfurnished of a prophecy to suit any great occasion."

A stone was erected to the memory of this cunning

woman near Clifton, where she resided at the time of her death, and on it the following epitaph was engraved :—

Here lies one who never lied,
Whose skill often has been tried ;
Her prophecies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive.



According to some accounts, Mother Shipton, whose Christian name is said to have been Ursula, which means "a she bear," was born in the reign of Henry VII., not at Clifton, but at Knarborough, in a cottage situated at the foot of the limestone rock out of which the celebrated Dropping Well springs. There is in the same neighbourhood a cavern (shown in our engraving) which goes by the name of Mother Shipton's Cave.

Ullswater and Stybarrow Crag.

ANY writers assert that Ullswater is the grandest of the English Lakes. Undoubtedly the mountain masses around the head of it are scarcely inferior in majesty and impressiveness to those of Wastwater, while for variety and sylvan charms it is quite equal to Windermere and Derwentwater.

According to tradition, Ullswater derives its name from Ulf, first Baron of Greystock or Greystoke. Hutchinson, a writer on the English Lakes, avers that the lake was sometimes called Wolf's Water, in allusion, as he supposes, to the wolves which used to frequent its