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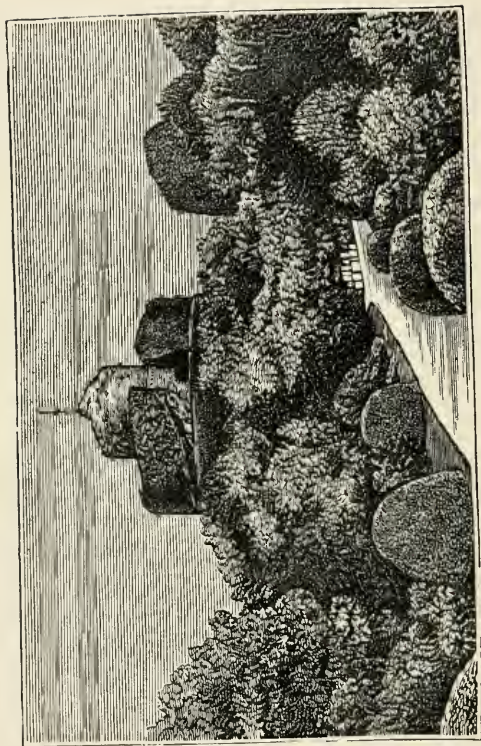
J. Penderel-Brothurst, Esq.

with the Author's kind regards.  
(25.7.90)



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THE CASTLE OF LAUNCESTON.

# LAUNCESTON,

PAST AND PRESENT;

A

Historical and Descriptive Sketch,

BY

ALFRED F. ROBBINS,

( "DUNHEVED" ).

Shall we go see the reliques of this town ?

. . . . . : . . . . .

I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes

With the memorials and the things of fame

That do renown this city.

—TWELFTH NIGHT.

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LAUNCESTON :

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TO  
RICHARD ROBBINS,  
THIS,  
THE STORY OF HIS NATIVE TOWN,  
IS  
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
BY  
HIS YOUNGEST SON,  
THE AUTHOR.



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Entered at Stationers' Hall.

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## P R E F A C E .

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AUNCESTON, or, as it is still called in official documents, DUNHEVED, is a borough of whose position in history its inhabitants have a right to be proud. Neither a cathedral city nor the palace of kings, neither the scene of mighty conflict nor the home of widespread manufactures, neither the birth-place of world-known genius nor the sepulchre of a nation's hope, Launceston is yet of such ancient celebrity as to deserve more than passing notice. Kings have slept within its precincts and princes have had custody of its walls, Parliament has resounded with the voice of its representatives and England with the fame of its castellans, and from century to century as time has rolled its onward course it has been known to chronicle, to story, and to song.

It is therefore somewhat of a surprise that hitherto the borough has possessed no complete record of its history, though this has not altogether arisen from lack of attention. Tradition states that John Anstis, Garter King at Arms, who represented Launceston in 1713, left in manuscript a history of the town, but all attempts to trace it have been vain. The Rev. F. Jago-Arundell, son of a Launceston solicitor, collected at the beginning of this century materials for the

same purpose but with like paucity of result. Mr. S. R. Pattison, at that time a Launceston lawyer, delivered in 1848 an interesting sketch of local history before the Mechanics' Institute, of which he was President; three years later the same gentleman read a paper on the castle before the Royal Institution of Cornwall, and shortly afterwards, on the restoration of the church of St. Mary Magdalene, published a historical account of that edifice, it being matter for regret that neither of these, each of which is most valuable, is now to be procured. Just previously to the opening of the Railway in 1865, and for the better celebration of that event, the then Mayor and present Town Clerk, Mr. R. Peter, offered a premium to anyone who would undertake a history of the town, the result of which was the publication by Mrs. Gibbons, wife of the then Vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, of her "Itinerary of Launceston," which that lady herself regarded only as a sketch that might serve as aid and incentive to other workers. In 1873 a series of articles, with the same title as the present work, and by the same Author, was commenced in the *East Cornwall Times*, signed "Dunheved," in which (for the first time as he believes) an attempt was made to gather all the available facts concerning Launceston and arrange them in chronological sequence. The material was mainly gleaned from the County Histories of the latter part of the eighteenth and the early years of the nineteenth centuries, coupled with that which was to be obtained from Oliver's *Monasticon*, much of the former being speculation, which subsequent investigation has not tended to support. Since the publication of these articles (and the series was not completed, not progressing further than the sixteenth century,) there have been various lectures delivered locally upon Launceston history, one of which was by the present Author before the Mechanics' Institute on March 14th, 1881. It is upon that lecture that this work is based, and the Author has in addition availed himself of much that he had previously published upon the subject.

It has, in fact, long been the Author's hope to find the necessary time and material for writing a history of his native town. But the more investigations he has made, the greater has seemed the number

required ; fresh fields of interest have continually been found, and it has at length become necessary to acknowledge that what at first appeared likely only to be the leisure-time labour of months would prove if completed the effort of years. Upon this the resolution was taken to write a preliminary sketch, which should, however, as far as its limits would allow, deal with local history as national history now is dealt with—not as a thing of shreds and patches, a mere list of names and dates and dry events, but as a study of much interest, out of which instruction is to be gained.

Fortunately, it has of late years become much more easy than it formerly was to tell such a story as that of Launceston. Patient investigators among the state records have done good service to intending historians by placing at their disposal a mass of information not otherwise obtainable, except at the cost of such time and toil as could by few be afforded. The facts disclosed by the labours of the Royal Commissions upon the public records and upon private collections of historical manuscripts, and of the various investigators into the contents of the state papers, have done much to bridge the gaps that had marked previous attempts to relate the story of Launceston. But beyond this, the path of the local historian has been made the smoother by the growth of that spirit of historical inquiry which has marked the present age. Times to which the memory of man runneth not have by this been brought close to us, and much that had been matter for dreamiest speculation has been resolved into fact. The investigation of folk-lore, of place-names, and of legends has greatly simplified the task of compiling local chronicles, and this, with the other sources of information named above, has been freely made use of in the present venture.

The work does not profess to be anything but that which is claimed by the title page. It is a sketch and a sketch only. The time may come when all the materials that can be obtained will be available, and it be possible to write a complete history of Launceston. But that time is not yet. All that can be done by any labourer in the field is to deal with certain aspects of the local story. Bearing this in mind, the Author's aim has been to trace the borough's rise in what are to a large extent prehistoric times and its progress,

civil, military, social, and ecclesiastical, to the day in which we live. Such assistance as was to be derived from local names and legends has been made avail of, and the intimate connection between Launceston and some of the greatest men and most important events in English history has especially been noted. The institutions symbolised by the Castle, the Church, the Priory, and the Guildhall, have afforded scope for much interesting detail, and the social and industrial progress of the inhabitants has occupied its fitting share of attention. It has been hoped, in short, to make the work a faithful picture, though necessarily only in outline, of the progress of Launceston from that distant period when, in ways even yet unknown, it came into being as a town.

LONDON, *February*, 1883.



# LAUNCESTON, PAST & PRESENT.

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I.—FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE COMING OF ÆTHELSTAN  
(B.C. . . . —A.D. 927.)



HE summer traveller who stands upon Dartmoor at break of day has difficulty in deciding the precise moment at which the sun begins to rise. Hill and valley are enshrouded in mist, night fades into morning without an effort, and light increases imperceptibly until the heavens are all aglow with sunshine. As the traveller looks, the crests of the hills emerge from the clouds that cover them, the valleys commence to indicate their varied outlines, and the first rays of the rising sun

bathe them all in gold till the wasted moor seems one vast corn-field, ready for bounteous harvest. Gradually the prospect grows less confused and all objects become clearer: but with increasing clearness is diminished beauty; the hills are now seen to be barren and the valleys to be bare, the golden hues vanish and the sombre tones of dull reality assume their rightful sway. And the traveller departs with the saddened feeling of dispelled illusion, the commonest companion of a thoughtful walk through life.

Thus it is with the history of Launceston. The mists of antiquity have closed around its origin, and we grope as in the darkness of the night for trace of its founder. Glimpses of it are seen as the sun of civilisation in these islands begins to rise; what may be called the

hill-top of the town in the shape of its fortifications is the first object clearly to be distinguished. Gradually the valleys—its ancient priory, its early representatives, its venerable church—are more plainly to be noticed; the sunshine of romance lights up the prospect as, in the stirring days of the Great Rebellion, the castle for the last time is the centre of contention and the scene of sanguinary strife; and then comes the fulness of day, the romance disappears, the reality remains, and Launceston past gives place to Launceston present—a little town in the West of England that has drifted out of the rushing stream of progress, that has been swept aside from the main arteries of commerce, and the pride of whose in-dwellers must feed rather upon the greatness of the past than upon any glories to be anticipated from the time that is to come.

There seems little reason to doubt that, as long as Britain has been peopled, the south-western portion in which Launceston is situate has had inhabitants. As far back as that dim distant period known to science as the Newer Stone Age (in which, the use of metals being undiscovered, men tipped with flint their tools and weapons) hunters were to be found in the district of which our town is the centre. Lurking by the edge of Dozmory Pool the far-off fathers of races now extinct waited for the deer as they came from neighbouring forests to drink, and the flint heads of the arrows that failing to hit dropped into the water and could not be recovered, have lain at the bottom there through all these thousands of years, to be brought forth in our own day as a proof to us of what was happening in ages when towns had no existence and to a people by whom writing was unknown.

It is a long step from the Britain of this period—a period in which skins were the only clothes and roots and raw flesh the principal articles of diet—to the Britain, still barbarous but in a far different degree, of the days when Cæsar first cast a longing glance towards the island. Until comparatively a short time since, it would have been by all contended that, as regards Cornwall at least, much was to be taken into account relating to this interval. The story that the Phœnicians visited the county centuries before the Christian Era as traders for tin was implicitly believed, and many were the



speculations in local history to which it gave rise. An archæologist whose works at one time enjoyed much popularity, was so carried away by contemplation of the supposititious Phœnicians that he practically gave to them the credit of a building whose origin has baffled all the skill of architects and antiquaries. "Launceston Castle," he says,\* "must be placed among castles of very great antiquity; both in the manner in which the staircases are constructed, and on account of the small dimensions of the inner tower. Perhaps it was erected in the first ages by the Danmonii, who had acquired a degree of art beyond the rest of the Britons, from their commercial intercourse with the eastern nations. We cannot but remark the similarity between the castle of Launceston, and that of Ecbatana, the capital of Media, as described by Herodotus. The keep of our magnificent fortress, which was built in the first ages of the world, greatly resembles the keep of Ecbatana." The venerable gentleman then gives an account of the fortress alluded to, and adds:—"This is very nearly a description of Launceston Castle and the adjacent town," going on to say: "When we read in 2 Kings ix that on Jehu's being appointed King over Israel, at Ramoth-Gilead, the captains of the host, who were sitting in council, as soon as they heard thereof took every man his garment, and put it under him *on the top of the stairs*, and blew with trumpets, proclaiming 'Jehu is King,' and, when I consider the historian's account of Ecbatana, which was at no great distance from Syria, and in a country much connected with it, and reflect also on the appearance of the top of the staircase at Launceston, I am apt to conclude that at Launceston is still to be seen nearly the same kind of architectural scenery as was exhibited on the inauguration of Jehu at Ramoth-Gilead." In another of the same gentleman's works† treating of the fortresses erected in far-off times throughout Cornwall, Launceston is assigned the most remote antiquity, from its agreement with various of the Phœnician, Syrian, and Median castles, and especially with those of Asia Minor.

But, asks a recent writer|| "was there any trade in tin carried

\*Mr. King, *Archæologia*, vol. vi., p. 291.

† *Munimenta Antiqua*, vol. iii.

|| Professor Rhys, *Celtic Britain*, p. 47.

on directly between Cornwall and the Continent, continued [to the advent of the Romans] from the time of the Carthaginians or Phœnicians? There is not a scrap of evidence, linguistic or other, of the presence of Phœnicians in Britain at any time, and the supposed proof (in the writings of Festus Avienus, a somewhat confused poet of the fourth century) that Himilco, in the flourishing times of Carthage, carried his voyage of discovery so far as this country, is exceedingly unsatisfactory." But, although upon the advice of this author, we may abandon the Phœnician theory, and discard the tradition that the Cassiterides were the Scilly Isles in favour of his statement that they were certain islands in Vigo Bay, we are allowed to continue in our belief that Cornwall had communication with the Continent before the days of Christ. The metal for which the county was chiefly famous was in great demand, and the Veneti, a Gaulish tribe, had the trade mainly in its hands. The then inhabitants of the peninsula were the Dumnonii, "the remains of whose language in Devon and Cornwall leave us in no kind of doubt that they were of the earlier Celts or Goidels, not Brythons. Nor is it improbable that, in point of civilization, they were behind the inhabitants of the south-east of the island, with the exception of the tin districts, which in ancient times were chiefly Dartmoor, with the country around Tavistock, and that around St. Austell, including several valleys looking towards the southern coast of Cornwall."\*

Adopting this view, and considering the nearness of Launceston to Tavistock and to Dartmoor, and that we have proof of the district having been inhabited from the earliest times, we may fairly conclude that long before the Christian Era the hills and valleys around us were dotted with the huts of a portion of the Dumnonii further advanced in civilization than most of their fellows. It is probable that communication was at that time carried on between the south-west and south-east of England, though whether by roads or boats is not certain; and, although the Dumnonii (unlike some of the tribes whose progress had, in consequence of freer communication with the Continent, been more developed) did not practise the art of coining money, a system of barter was in existence by which

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\*Ibid, pp. 44-5.



the produce of the agricultural district of Launceston might have been transferred to tin-producing Dartmoor. In fact, although the Dumnonii did no coining for themselves, there is proof that they exchanged money with others, there having been discovered in Cornwall some coins current among the Durotriges, a tribe which occupied a portion of the country between the Exe and the Mendip Hills. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that, for the whole period of British history, the spot on which the Castle of Launceston stands has been the centre of active human energy; and it is a pleasure to glean from the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, who wrote at the beginning of the Era, that the then inhabitants were very fond of strangers, and, owing to their intercourse with foreign merchants, civilized in their mode of life.

The flint arrow heads of the earliest dwellers in the district have been described; of the time at which these dwellers became extinct or were absorbed by invaders from the Continent we know nothing; but we now come at a stride from the Age of Stone to that of Bronze. An interesting relic of this latter period was discovered in 1857, by a mower of corn on the banks of the Tamar, in a field at Lawhitton, about three miles from Launceston. The scythe struck against what is known as a "celt," an article supposed to have served as a weapon of war to the early British. Many specimens have been found in Cornwall, but Carew's remark concerning them,\* that "they make small show of any profitable use," must have been echoed by subsequent inquirers, for it is difficult to judge from their construction the exact service they were designed to render. They bear some distant resemblance to a wedge, and look in some respects like the hatchets and chisels possessed by the South Sea Islanders when first brought into contact with Europeans. The specimen unearthed at Lawhitton weighs slightly over a pound, stands about five inches high, and is entirely composed of bronze. It originally possessed a handle, which seems to have been welded to the body of the celt, and the whole may have served the same purpose as the tomahawk of the North American Indian. The specimen is interesting not only as a British relic, but as indicating an intermediate stage

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\* Survey of Cornwall, p. 8.

between the flint celts of the Stone Age (only one of which has been discovered in Cornwall) and the steel axe of to-day.

The wielders of these weapons, the forerunners of present day Launcestonians, were destined to a rude awakening from their customary pursuits. The Romans invaded the land, and, although it was the south-east that was first attacked, the south-west had in turn to face the foreigner. The invasion of Julius Cæsar in B.C. 55 resulted in no permanent Roman settlement, but in A.D. 43 Claudius Cæsar, determining to conquer Britain, sent Aulus Plautius with an army for the purpose. This general was materially assisted by his lieutenant Vespasian, to whom is due the credit of having subdued the two most powerful peoples of Britain. Who these may have been "we are not told, but they were most likely the Belgæ and the Dumnonii, who occupied nearly the whole of the south-west of the island, including the tin districts, which cannot have escaped the attention of the Romans, whose operations here, up to the time of the departure of Plautius, are spoken of as having emphatically made Britain a part of the Roman Empire."\* Speculation has built much upon this connection of Vespasian with Cornwall, and one county historian† has adventured the theory that it was this general, who was afterwards himself Emperor, who founded the Castle. But this there is no reason to believe. Some Roman coins, of Vespasian and of Domitian, were certainly a long time since discovered in a Launceston wall of great antiquity, and another inscribed with the letters IVLI (Julius) in the soil upon which St. Mary Magdalene's now stands, while half-a-century ago when the Eastern Road was being made another coin bearing the image and superscription of Cæsar was found, and further specimens of Roman money have been discovered in the neighbourhood. Remains of an ancient encampment (supposed by some to be Roman) have also been suspected to have been seen in Kestle Wood, about two miles from the town,‡ and traces of a Roman road recognised at Bradridge or Broadridge, between Launceston and Stratton,|| the last-named certainly a Roman station.

All these facts establish a connection between the Romans and

\* Rhys, Celtic Britain, p. 79. † Polwhele.  
vol. iv., p. 221.

‡ New Parochial History of Cornwall,  
|| Borlase.

the Launceston district, but the attempts to prove that the town was established by our earliest recorded conquerors are only attempts after all. Dr. Borlase \* has argued that the very name of Launceston carries with it the proof that it was given by the Romans. He contends that it was originally Lanchestreton, a name formed like Execestre (the old Exeter) and on the same principle as Lancaster and Lanchester, this being shortened in course of time into that which the borough at present bears. The theory is ingenious but scarcely conclusive; it merits respect but not reception, at least until we have further evidence than is at present forthcoming of the continued presence of Romans in our midst. That some names in the neighbourhood were known to or given by the Romans is assured; Exeter was to them *Iscæ Damnoniorum* and the Tamar was the not greatly different *Tamarus*. The river was noted by Ptolemy, a Roman geographer who visited these islands in the second century, and who mentions as being in its vicinity the four towns *Voluba*, *Uxela*, *Tamare*, and *Iscæ*. The last-named is the only one now clearly to be identified. Grampound and Falmouth both assume to be *Voluba*, as well as *Lostwithiel*, which in default of proving this asks to have its claims weighed with those of *Siltash* for *Uxela*; while *Saltash* in its turn has in the estimation of local historians divided with *Tamerton* and *Tavistock* the honour of being *Tamare*. But if the theory that Launceston was a Roman town be accepted, may not its name have been that one akin to the river upon which it stands?

The whole question is at once so full of difficulties and of interest that it merits close attention. Upon the face of it, no violence to the imagination is done by the belief that one of the ways by which the Romans marched into Cornwall was the route so often in after times followed as the main road from the capital to the Land's End, and that the hill overlooking the fords of the Tamar, framed by nature for defence, was elaborated by art into a fortification, added to afterwards, and traces of which may remain to us even now. Some county historians would go even further back than this. Davies Gilbert, for instance,† quotes

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\* Antiquities.    † Parochial Survey of Cornwall.

authorities for the opinion that the Castle is of more than Roman antiquity. Kennet agrees\* and contends that "the conjecture appears to be fully warranted that its foundation is as remote as the time of the Britons." Carew endeavours to compromise† the question. "Although," he observes, "the origin of Launceston Castle has been attributed to the Britons, it still appears to bear about it some marks of Roman workmanship. The Romans succeeding the Britons in the dominion of the country no doubt took possession of all their strong and fortified places; and consequently this fortress then fell into their hands. All such alterations as were then deemed necessary were therefore made in the Roman style. Its repairs were finished on the same common principle; and hence the motley appearance which its parts exhibit even in the present day." Borlase is of the same opinion‡: "the buildings which remain of this castle are of different styles, and shew that the several parts of it were built at different times. . . . That the Romans should fortify here is not at all improbable." And, finally, Lysons remarks|| "there seems good reason for Dr. Borlase's opinion that it was a British work, and the chief residence of the Cornu-British Prince: it is supposed, with great probability, to occupy the site of a Roman station."

Of all these theories it can only be said, as has been stated of Borlase's derivation of the name of the town, that they are ingenious but scarcely conclusive. The proof of the existence of a Roman road from Stratton to Launceston would be worth more than a thousand speculations; for while there were Roman ways to the site of the present Stratton not only from Exeter but from the spot on which Taunton now stands, there is no evidence that there was a road through Launceston from Exeter to the west, and this despite the fact that there is mention many centuries since of a bridge over the Tamar at Polson. It is consequently safe to assume that if the Romans made a way from Stratton to Launceston it was because the latter was already either a British town, as might be conjectured from what has been said, or a Roman station which it was desired to link with the other camps. But against this theory it must be borne in mind that there is no record of the existence of Launceston during

\* Parochial Antiquities, p. 697. † History of Cornwall, p. 359. ‡ Antiquities  
|| pp. 1387-89.

the Roman occupation, that no Latin inscriptions have been found in the neighbourhood, as would almost certainly have been the case had there been a camp established here, and that the Castle cannot in these days be assumed to have been of Roman design.

We have, therefore, still to struggle in the darkness for the origin of Launceston. It is only with possibilities and at most with probabilities that we can deal. Dead and gone historians could revel in Phœnician, in British, and in Roman speculations, manipulating the few facts at their command into as many fantastic shapes as their fancy could dictate; but even a local chronicle has in these days to be written with due regard to the actual. And hence it is that the relation borne by the Castle not only to Roman times but to the Arthurian Legend has now to be treated in a sceptical spirit. Until a comparatively recent period even sober students of history placed implicit faith in the story, wedded by Tennyson to immortal verse of Arthur and the Table Round. Drew \* says "The great antiquity of Tintagel castle is sufficiently proved by its being the birth place of the renowned hero, prince Arthur, about the year 500;" adding "If resemblance in architecture can be admitted as a proof of correspondent antiquity, the castles of Launceston and Tintagel may be said to have some claims to British origin." Borlase is equally explicit: "Whether this castle," he writes † concerning Launceston, "though of larger jurisdiction, higher honours, and stronger fortifications, may be more ancient than that of Tintagel, it is impossible to determine." And Davies Gilbert says‡ there can be no doubt that the date of Launceston Castle might be co-eval with that of Tintagel.

So far the county historians; on this point, however, we have the testimony of one more famed than any of them. Sir Thomas Malory, in his "*Morte d' Arthur*," compiled from the French and printed by Caxton in 1470, refers || to Gothlois, the "mighty Duke in Cornwall," who, when threatened by Uther Pendragon, "went and furnished two strong castles of his, of the which the one hight Tintagil and the other castle hight Terrabil." The latter can be none

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\* History of Cornwall, pp. 203-210. † Antiquities, p. 362. ‡ Parochial Survey of Cornwall. || Book I, c. 1.

other than that of Launceston, "Castle Terrible" being a name often given to it of old; and, therefore, if the author of the "noble and joyous" book is to be believed, Arthur, son of Uther, conqueror of Cornwall, one of the Nine Worthies of the World, the praise of whose fame has been sung for centuries, and will continue to be sung as long as the English language stands, was at one time ruler of Launceston Castle. But there is a probability that Arthur, who according to tradition never died, as a matter of reality never lived. One of our most popular present-day historians \* dismisses "the 'dreams of Arthur,' so long cherished by the Celts of Brittany," as the work of a "daring fabulist;" and "the whirlpool of Arthurian romance" is described by another recent writer † as "a wonderful fabric" based upon pure supposition.

It is not without a pang that Arthur is thus sacrificed upon the altar of modern criticism, and one clings to the hope that the romance that enwraps him has grown only like that of Roland of Roncesvalles, and that just as there is a basis in fact for the great "Chanson" so there is for the Arthurian tradition. But the circumstantiality attending it, as stated by Cornish historians, must disappear. It is no longer as safe to give dates upon the point as it was in the days when Carew wrote: "A.D. 525, Vpon the river of Camel, neere to Camelford, was that last dismal battel strooken between the noble king *Arthur*, and his treacherous nephew Mordred, wherein the one took his death, the other his death's wound. For testimony whereof, the olde folke thereabouts will shew you a stone, bearing *Arthur's* name, though now depraved to *Atry*." But, for the comfort of those who would still cling to the old story and who would fain believe that Tintagil was the home of the Round Table and Terrabil one of the castles held by Arthur, it is to be noted that Camelford is not alone in its possession of an Attery, for the tributary which flows into the Tamar a little to the south of Launceston bears the same name, said† to have been derived from a similar tradition.

The reason why all the early period of local history is so difficult

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\* J. R. Green, Short History of the English People, p. 115. † George Saintsbury, Primer of French Literature, p. 5. ‡ Mrs. Gibbons, Itinerary of Launceston, p. 14.



to trace is that the British holders of the two western counties proved like their brethren of Wales hardy foes to the invader. The physical features of these districts had much to do with repelling the incomer. The forest which occupied that portion of Devonshire abutting upon Cornwall was a barrier which protected the Britons of the west; and the Romans, skilled as they were in road-making, avoided it as they avoided other of the great British forests, and did not attempt its penetration. From Exeter, therefore, their road into Cornwall skirted the south of Dartmoor, just as now does the Great Western Railway, and proceeded in the direction of the Land's End by a not very dissimilar route to that taken at this day by the Cornwall and West Cornwall lines; while on the northern side of the moor was the previously referred-to road towards Stratton, at which point it stopped. But the Romans did not settle in West Wales, as all the west-country on the Launceston side of the Exe came to be called; no towns of importance sprang up there under their auspices; the hills and the moors of Cornwall were not to them inviting, and it was for the mineral wealth of the county alone that they came. With their withdrawal from the country, Cornwall is for a period lost sight of. Although the names of Hengest and Horsa are familiar in the Launceston district as those from which Hingston Down, the old Hengestesdun, and Horse, or rather Horsa, Bridge are traditionally derived, we have no record of their appearance in our midst. That the Britons here fought against the Saxon invaders may be gathered from the germs of the Arthurian tales; but centuries rolled on, and the dwellers in West Wales continued to be independent of Saxon, Jute, or Engle.

It is not inconceivable that it is in this dim period that Launceston first became the seat of a stronghold. The then British "inhabited low huts clustered around the residence of a petty chieftain, whose arts were those of savage life, whose religion was a degenerate idolatry, whose occupations were the chase and war. The political condition of the people was that of division into tribes, each occupying a particular district and united by affinity. Dunheved had the honour of being the seat of some one of these petty monarchs. We may imagine a collection of huts in the opening glades of a wood

near Dunheved Green, the dwelling of the chief more elevated than the rest, and above it still the beacon on Windmill Hill, kept constantly watched to discern the approach of the foe.”\*

That foe and in great strength came at last. The ever aggressive West Saxons pushed the boundary of the West Welsh, which originally extended to the Forest of Selwood, first to the Axe,† next to the Tone,‡ and then to the Exe.§ It was in the reign of Egberht that the English, for so they may now be called, seized upon Cornwall. “Strife between the sprinkling of Englishmen who had recently settled in Devon and the Welsh (who still held their ground across the Tamar) grew into a war which in 815 forced Egberht to march into the heart of Cornwall. After eight years of fighting, his attack proved successful; the last fragment of British dominion in the west came to an end, and the whole of Dyvnaint owned the supremacy of the West-Saxon King. The conquest of Cornwall marks a fresh stage in the long warfare between Britons and Englishmen. . . . Egberht’s campaign brought the struggle to an end by the reduction of the one British state which still remained unconquered; and the Britons of the south-western peninsula, after the successive losses of Somerset and Devon, saw the West Saxons masters of their last strongholds from the Tamar to the Land’s End.”||

Was Launceston one of these strongholds? Though the Castle as it exists to-day may be of Norman build that would not, as occasionally appears to be imagined, preclude the thought that a stronghold of some kind stood upon its site centuries before William landed at Pevensey. The rock (probably volcanic in its origin) upon which it is built is fitted by nature for fortification, a fact that can hardly have escaped the attention of warriors ever on the watch for fresh attacks from the Saxons, and not likely to neglect any points of vantage on the Tamar, their second line of defence and the only one upon which they could rely did the Exe fail them. The importance in county history that Launceston assumed immediately upon the Normans subduing Cornwall, must be taken as against the theory that, at command of the Conqueror, the town sprang suddenly from the

\* S. R. Pattison, *Lecture on Launceston* (1848.)    † cir. 670.    ‡ 710.    § cir. 823.  
 || J. R. Green, *The Making of England*.



earth. And the anomaly, often commented upon while Launceston was still an assize-town, of the capital of Cornwall being only two miles from the border, could not originally have been such if there were a time when it was the centre of a county stretching from the Land's End to the banks of the Exe.

We are still, however, in the realm of conjecture, and against all theories must be placed the fact that in no record of earlier date than the Conquest does the name of either Dunheved or Launceston appear. The English Chronicle talks much of Cornwall but nothing of the town which for so long was its capital. The doings of the Danes in our district are, therefore, just as dark to us as the struggles of Briton and Saxon. The few facts which have been preserved concerning the district tempt us to believe that, did we but know more, the mystery of Launceston's origin would be solved: but the chroniclers appear to march all around us; they tell of the battle of Hengestesdun in 835 between Egberht and the united hosts of the West Welsh and the Danes; of the defeat in 927 of Howel, King of the West Welsh, by Æthelstan; of the simultaneous expulsion of the British from Exeter and the fixing of the county boundary at the Tamar; of the pillage of Devon and Cornwall by Swegen and his Danes in 905, of their raids up the Tamar, and of their attack upon Lidford where they "burnt and slew all that they found": each of these facts the English Chronicle makes clear to us. Launceston is in the centre of all, but upon its share in the struggles the Chronicle is silent.

But this is not the only difficulty with which, in dealing with this period, the local historian has to contend; the British inhabitants of the district left behind them even less trace than did the Romans, and we are not much better served in the matter of relics in later times. "In the town," says Drew \* "no remains of its Saxon antiquities are extant, except a curious arch or doorway, which now forms the entrance to the White Hart Inn, and which displays some very neat and ornamental carvings." A perforated cross, which is to be seen in the grounds of Trelaske, had probably a Saxon origin; and the remains of a Danish encampment are still to be traced in the

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\* History of Cornwall, p. 420.

woods attached to the same estate. In all this there is something, yet not much, to help us, though in the last-mentioned fact the circle executed by the Danes is drawn considerably nearer the town.

But now, for the first time in the history of Launceston, we light upon a definite date, which, however little to be relied on, is some advance upon the previous era of dateless speculation. Carew quotes a certain "M. Hooker," who says "The town was first founded by *Eadulphus*, brother to *Alpsius*, Duke of *Deuon* and *Cornwall* (900) and by his being girded with a wall, argueth in times past to have carried some value." As far as we know, there may have existed an *Alpsius*, Duke of Cornwall, at about the period named, and there is no inherent reason for disbelieving that he had a brother called *Eadulphus*; but, even if that brother did found Launceston as a town, it would by no means follow that the Castle also was erected by him, if, as Borlase argues, "the town was built for the sake of the castle, to be near the residence of the prince, not the castle to guard the town." It may, however, fairly be doubted whether the contention thus stated is as absolutely valid as its author appears to imply. A town, or rather an agglomeration of huts, upon the site of present-day Launceston may well have existed before the Castle from its swelling hill first frowned above the valley of the Tamar

But where is evidence to be looked for when written record is lost? The only source from which the sought-for knowledge can be drawn is the place-names of the district, and these merit a larger attention than has yet been their lot. We have seen how Dr. Borlase has attempted,\* but without certainty of success, to derive Launceston from *Lancestreton*; and other etymologists have similarly tried and similarly failed to fit the name to their ideas. Carew, while leaning towards a Cornish derivation which would indicate that Launceston is "scatteringly erected," favours the theory that the original name was *Lanstuphadon*, the Church of St. Stephen. Tonkin adopts this unhesitatingly, while Borlase hints a very strong doubt and suggests, in apparent despair of proving his case for *Lancestreton*, that the earliest name

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\* ante p. 7.

was Lancelston, which “signifies, in mixed British, the church of the castle.” We have further the opinion of Herr Muller that Launceston was originally Laundscireton, which, split into sections, would give *Laundscire* as equivalent to region and *ton* to town, the whole meaning the town of the region or capital.

These etymologists do not disagree much more than etymologists are accustomed to do, but it must be admitted that there is something very disappointing in the result of the speculations. The only one of the theories that attempts to deal with the name as it was ever actually written is that of Borlase. We find the form Lancelstona in the foundation deed of the Priory \*; in Domesday the name is given as Lancescavetone; in the earlier charters it appears indifferently as Lanzaventon, Lanzaneton, Launcendaniton, and in various other fashions; but we shall have to look long for either Laundscireton or Lanstuphadon, for the etymologists in their anxiety to explain have only imagined.†

We are not in exactly the same difficulty with regard to Dunheved, but even here the doctors disagree. “*Dunheved*, the ancient name of Launceston, but more especially of the castle, is supposed to be a Saxon word signifying the head or summit of the hill.”‡ This is the commonly accepted derivation, but Herr Muller supplies another by taking the second half as originally *heafod* signifying chief, the whole thus meaning chief of the hills. It may seem rash to add a further suggestion upon the point, but is it so absolutely necessary as appears by local etymologists to be thought, to assume that Dunheved is a Saxon name, the first portion of which certainly signifies a hill? May it not as reasonably be derived from an earlier period, the first syllable being the Gaulish *dunon*, the Welsh *din*, and the Irish *dun*, indicating a town or fortress? If this theory could be accepted it would push back to a much earlier period than is now likely to be allowed the date of our first fortification.

Thus it is that the very science we had called to our aid as assisting in the search for the origin of Launceston fails to give

\* cir. 1120. † See Appendix, Note A. ‡ New Parochial History of Cornwall, vol. iii, p. 80.

with any approach to exactitude that which we require, though if we take the names not only of the town but of its surroundings a nearer guess may be made. We have already seen \* that even previous to the days of Ecgberht a sprinkling of Englishmen had made Devonshire their home. The settlements of these descendants of the Teutons were very generally named after the family establishing them. "In England, as of old in Sleswick, the village community formed the unit of English society. Each such township was still bounded by its mark of forest, mere, or fen, which divided it from its nearest neighbours. In each lived a single clan, supposed to be of kindred blood and bearing a common name."† Wellington and Faringdon, Warrington and Kennington, Islington and Newington are examples of the appellations of these settlements, and close to Launceston is Werrington (or, as one time frequently written, Warrington), where the family of the Wærings had their home. In Cornwall only two such names are to be found (one of which should undoubtedly be Callington) thus affording another proof of how staunchly the West Welsh held their ground, but in Devon there are as many as twenty-four. The existence of two of these settlements so close to Launceston—one two miles off, the other ten—may be taken to show that the clans found homes up to a point just over the Cornish border (for, until a little later than the Conquest, Werrington was, as it geographically should be, considered a portion of Cornwall) and went no farther. But in addition we have other names of undoubtedly Saxon origin close to our walls. The Werrington estate includes a property known as Ham Mill, and on the way from Launceston to the Tamar, and not far from the spot where Polson Bridge marks the old crossing place from Exeter to the west, is Bamham. In each instance the name tells the story of the place: the petty kings of the Saxons "possessed many separate *hams* or estates in their domain, in each of which food and other material for their use were collected by their serfs. They moved about with their suite from one of these to another, consuming all that had been prepared for them in each, and then passing on to the next."‡

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\* ante p. 12. † Grant Allen, *Anglo-Saxon Britain*, p. 42.

‡ Ibid, p. 74.

Coupling both name and situation the origin of the appellations Bamham and Ham Mill is explained.

There is a further point to be noticed in this connection, and that is that these names of undoubted Saxon origin lie upon the English side of Launceston, while upon the western only names of obviously British derivation are to be found. The old saying runs

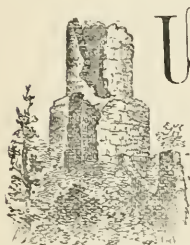
By their Tre, Pol, and Pen  
Thus shall ye know your Cornishmen,

and when we look from Launceston towards the Land's End we speedily see the truth of the description ; a mile brings us to Pennygillam, another leads us by Trebursye and Tregadillett, and so onwards to that portion of the county where the prefix Pol is most familiar. Launceston stands on the dividing line between the settlements of the West Saxons and the home of the West Welsh ; and to this day its inhabitants are considered by those from a distance to partake in dialect and character more of the men of Devon than of those of Cornwall. It may be that in this there is clue to the mystery sought to be unravelled, and that Launceston is really a West Saxon town. That there was an earlier British settlement is possible and highly probable, but it would be no surprise if future researches showed that Launceston as it now exists, a town with a means of defence and a system of Christian preaching, had its beginning in the days immediately succeeding Æthelstan's march into Cornwall, when a Saxon settlement may well have been required to dominate the direct way from the newly conquered portion of Damnonium to the centre of the still rebellious west.





## II.—FROM THE COMING OF ÆTHELSTAN TO THE FIRST CHOICE OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (927—1295.)



UP to this time we have been travelling in what is to some extent an undiscovered country. Pathways amid the densities of darkness have been attempted but no roads been driven forest-through, and the growth of ages still obscures the light. And though we are rapidly approaching a point where the way will be made more smooth, we have before reaching it to toil yet a little longer in the tanglewood of speculation. For we have to ask, in telling the story of such a town as Launceston, not only when the foundations of its military fame were laid, but also when first a Christian ministry was established in its midst. Where traces of Roman influence, if ever they existed to appreciable extent, have died into nothingness the beginnings of civilisation must be looked for in the earliest services of the Christian Church.

Cornwall is so truly British that it is not necessary to wait for the days of Augustine and his monks before thinking of a Christian community within its borders. The early British Church flourished among the clan-cousins of the Cornish, and probably among the Cornish themselves, long before the story *Non Angli sed Angeli* could have had meaning; but it is probable that it was not until the Saxon conquest of the county that any foundations were therein laid of the Christian institutions of which we have record or which continue to exist among us. At that period, all that was eminent in learning and in the arts and sciences dwelt in the bosom of religious communities. There only could be found the peace necessary for the



due pursuit of lettered investigation, for around them roared the torrent of scarcely-ceasing strife, the struggles of Christians converted wholesale and at word of command, and little removed from the barbarism brought by their forefathers from Saxon shores. The conquering English, after being leavened with Augustinian Christianity, showed as they thrust forward their settlements the desire to plant evidences of their belief upon the soil, and religious houses sprang up along their line of march. It was thus in the country west of the Exe : Plympton, Bodmin, and St. Germans, dating the origin of their religious establishments from the time of Æthelstan, claim that king as their founder ; and a hint is thus afforded that it is in this period that the beginning of Christian activity in Launceston must be sought for.

The record in Domesday of the existence of a college of secular canons at Lanscavetone, the site of which institution is gathered to be the now St. Stephens, proves that there had been a religious foundation by the earlier settlers in the district. Regarding the date of this we can be guided only by inference from the history of similar establishments in the county. To Bodmin, at which tradition asserts a hermitage to have been founded by St. Petrock in the sixth century, was given by Æthelstan in 926 a priory of Benedictines ; and in 930, according to an old chronicler\*, the same king “ being in full possession of the English gave to God a house for founding a monastery for monks, and for the canonical brothers of St. German and their servants in Cornwall.” In each of these cases, the foundation fell before the Conquest into the hands of secular canons, the property of whom at Bodmin was taken by the Earl of Mortain upon the incoming of the Normans. In the case of St. Germans, Cnut is stated to have endowed it with larger revenues than had been granted by Æthelstan, and in 1020, according to Hals, “ turned it, after ninety years continuance in monkery, to a collegiate church of secular canons, which might marry wives.” It is not an unfair inference that the canons of St. Stephen came into existence as a body at very much the same date as those at Bodmin and St. Germans. And although

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\* Roger de Hoveden.

belief has not been general in the old distich which states that

When Launceston was a furzy down  
St. Stephens was a market town,

we know from Domesday that the latter possessed a religious establishment and was the centre of a trading community before we have any authentic record of the existence of the town on the opposite hill.

But we are now on the threshold of a period in which Launceston becomes the all in all of local history and St. Stephens shrinks into a suburb. At the Norman Conquest, according to the story handed down to us, Condorus, or Cadocus, was chief of the Cornish. "He was," says Drew,\* "of royal British blood, and had inherited his right of dominion from his distant ancestors; and neither the Saxons nor the Danes had presumed to dethrone him." But three years after the Conquest he was deposed for his share in an insurrection against the First William, and Robert, Earl of Mortain, half-brother of the King, was granted his dominion. Thus arose what Mr. Freeman styles† "the great Earldom and afterwards Duchy of Cornwall, which was deemed too powerful to be trusted in the hands of any but men closely akin to the royal house, and the remains of which have for ages formed the appanage of the heir-apparent to the Crown."

It is to this period that most modern inquirers assign the erection of Launceston Castle. If Roman camp or British earthwork or Saxon "strength" previously occupied the site, no trace remains; what we have with us appears to be Norman and early Norman, for, as evidencing that no time was lost in the matter, Domesday Book, which was completed in 1086, mentions the Castle as existing, Trematon being the only other Cornish fortification similarly named. Of the grounds upon which is based the belief that the Castle is Norman, the chief are naturally architectural. Mr. Pattison, in his exhaustive account of the fortress, holds the general arrangement of the walls to be that of a Norman castle intermediate between the solid square keeps of the year 1100 and the walled quadrangles with

\* History of Cornwall, p. 552.

† E. A. Freeman, History of the Norman Conquest, vol. iv., p. 170.



less prominent keeps of the Edwardian period: "the cordon, the general character of the mouldings, the portcullis grooves, the low pointed arches, are all post-Norman in style, though they may have been contemporaneous with Norman works elsewhere."\* The learned gentleman does not, however, attempt to bind himself to the theory that the Castle was built at a date subsequently to the accession of Henry the First, and admits that "the fair conclusion from the few documents [that can be] quoted is at variance with this and points to a prior date. . . . [These] indicate that the Castle was raised by the Earl of Moreton soon after the Conquest, [and] that it was at once completed and endowed with all the dignities of a complete feudal establishment and residence." Another local inquirer, Mr. C. H. Peter,† "thinks it possible the Castle was commenced by Edward the Confessor, who spent much of his early life in Normandy, and soon after he was made King was threatened with an invasion from Magnus, King of Norway. Earl Godwine advised him to strengthen all his fortresses, pulling down old Saxon castles, and putting up new ones like those he had seen in Normandy. He imported several Norman workmen into England, and they may have commenced the Castle and left it unfinished until after the Conquest." The true balance, however, appears to be struck by Gwill,‡ who gives Launceston Castle as the first example of military Norman architecture for the period stretching from 1070 to 1270, the Castles of Windsor and Carisbrooke, the Tower of London, and other undoubted specimens of Norman design being in the same group.

All the presumptions to be drawn from the connection of Robert of Mortain with Launceston aid to the same conclusion. Sir Henry Ellis§ points out that "the Conqueror was sensible that the want of fortified places had greatly facilitated his success. To remedy this defect and to overawe his subjects, he erected numerous castles. . . . His reign was in fact a new era in the history of our castellated structures." After indicating that of forty-nine castles mentioned in Domesday only one, and that one Arundel, is noticed as existing in the time of the Confessor, the same authority remarks: "It is

\* S. R. Pattison, *Launceston Castle* (1851).    † Lecture on *Launceston Castle* (1879).

‡ *Encyclopædia of Architecture*.    § *Introduction to Domesday Book*, vol. i., p. 211.

singular that the ruins which are now remaining of almost all these Castles have preserved one feature of uniformity. They are each distinguished by a Mount and Keep ; marking the peculiar style of architecture introduced into our castellated fortifications by the Normans at their first settlement.”\*

If, in fact, it was not during the earliest days of the Normans' first settlement that Robert began to build, the use in Domesday of the present tense when the Castle is spoken of would be ludicrous. And the Earl, in selecting a site for his principal fortification in the West, was not forgetful of the lines of the “ castle on the rock,” his Norman dwelling-place. “ The Lord of Mortain,” says Mr. Freeman,† “ had fixed his home in perhaps the most picturesque of all the picturesque sites in which the Norman chiefs seem to have delighted.” “ The lord of the waterfalls,” as he is elsewhere called, erected his Castle at Launceston upon a spot the picturesqueness of which must have recalled some aspects of his Mortain home. As from the hill above the Kensey, Earl Robert saw beneath him the rich pasture-lands which follow the course of the Tamar and around him the tors and the downs, the moorlands and the glens, no deep regret can have oppressed him for his severance from the home he had left in Normandy. But the satisfaction with which the Earl was doubtless filled was not shared by those who dwelt in the town at his feet. “ Wherever a Norman castle had been reared, it was the object of the bitterest of all hatred, as the living embodiment of the foreign yoke. . . . When those towers were still newly built, when their square stones were still in their freshness, when the arches of their doors and windows were still sharp and newly cut, they were to our fathers the objects of a horror deeper even than that with which France in the moment of her uprising looked on the Bastille of her ancient Kings. They were the very homes of the Conquest ; within their impregnable walls the foe was sheltered ; from their gates he came forth to spread fear and horror through the streets of the city, or through such surrounding lands as still owned an Englishman for their master. In the eyes of the men of those days the castle was an accursed thing, to be swept away from the earth by the stroke of

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\* Ibid, p. 223.    † Norman Conquest, vol. iii., p. 151.

righteous vengeance as when liberated Syracuse swept away the citadel from which her Tyrants had held her in thralldom.”\*

Under the heading “Land of the Earl of Mortain,” Domesday records: “The same Earl holds DUNHEVET; in the time of King Edward [the Confessor] it was taxed for one virgate of land, but notwithstanding there is one hide: the arable land is ten carucates: in Domain there is one carucate, three bond servants, and one villein, and thirteen borderers, with four ploughs: there are two mills, which return forty shillings, and forty acres of pasture: formerly it was worth 20 pounds (£), now 4 pounds. There is a Castle of the Earl.” Beside this is the entry already referred to. “The Canons of St. Stephen hold LANSCAVETONE: there are four hides of land, which were never taxed: the arable land is 20 carucates: there are three ploughs; and three miles of pasture; and sixty acres of wood: formerly it was worth 8 pounds (£), now 8 pounds. From this manor the Earl of Mortain has taken away one market, which lay there in the time of King Edward.” Elsewhere it is stated, under “The Land of the King”: “The King holds PANIDRAN. . . . From this manor is taken away three Lands, PENNADELUAN, and BOTCONOAN, and BOTCHATUNO: there are two hides and a half: the arable land is ten carucates: the Canons of St. Stephen of Lancsavetone hold of the Earl of Mortain: formerly it was worth forty shillings, now it is worth twenty shillings.”†

More than one fact of interest, more than one aid to our better understanding of the customs of our forefathers, is to be gleaned from these extracts. And foremost, as affording the most striking contrast to the habits of to-day, stands the exhibition of serfdom as existing in the Launceston of eight centuries since. In Dunhevet there were three bond servants, “who lived in the house of their lord, and laboured in all kinds of work without wages, at the will of their master: they were, of course, fed and clothed, but any thing they received was at the pleasure of their owner; who, if the land were sold, was at liberty to transfer them with it to the purchaser, together with their wives, their children, and all the little property they might chance to possess. The villein [one of which class is mentioned as being

\* Ibid, vol. iv., pp. 270-1. † See Appendix, Note B.

in Dunhevet] was possessed of privileges that were unknown to the bond servant, but their service was nearly the same, and they were liable also to be sold from one master to another; yet custom and perhaps the law, was in favour of their possessing some small property in their own right; and in other respects the law afforded them some degree of protection: even the amount of service on which they held their little cottage was in some degree settled beyond the absolute will of the master. Borderers, *bordarii* [thirteen of whom were in Dunhevet] were of a less slave-like condition than either of the two former: their name was obtained from living in a cottage on the borders of the manor; and they held some land as their own on the condition of supplying the lord with poultry or other articles *in kind*. But however they might differ in other respects, the persons who were in these respective conditions were so firmly fixed to the land on which they were born, that they were not able by any act of their own to separate themselves from it: they were *adscripti glebæ*, as much in thought as in person; and, probably, never thought or wished to change their place.”\* It is not, however, to be imagined that because it was so detailed in Domesday the system of serfdom was an imposition of the Normans. Of its existence in Cornwall long before the Conquest we have proof in a ninth-century copy of the Gospels, which originally belonged to Bodmin, and upon the blank pages of which, written partly in Saxon and partly in Latin, are forty-six entries of the manumission of slaves before the Bishop of Bodmin between the years 940 and 1020.† From this record we find that the freeing of slaves was a religious duty performed for the benefit of the soul of the owner or his immediate relatives, the Church praying that “whosoever shall infringe this liberty let him be accursed, and whosoever shall defend it may he be blessed.”

But set over against the serfdom is the high-handed action of the Earl, and although Domesday was compiled by the King’s Justiciaries, there is evidenced no hesitation in inserting complaints concerning the Sovereign’s half-brother. In depriving St. Stephens of its market, presumably that he might add to the wealth of the town at the base

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\* New Parochial History of Cornwall, Supplementary Papers, p. 30.

† Ibid, vol. i., p. 92.

of his new fortification, Robert of Mortain acted as he did elsewhere in the county on

The good old rule, the simple plan,  
That they should take who have the power,  
And they should keep who can.

For the Earl seems to have had a fondness for meddling with other people's markets. The Bishop of Exeter held Matele; "the market of this manor is possessed by the Earl of Mortain, but the Bishop held it in the time of King Edward." The same Bishop held "a manor which is called the Church of St. German. . . . In this manor there is a market on the Lord's Day, but it is reduced to nothing because of the market of the Earl of Mortain that is near it." Not content with the great number of manors given him by the Conqueror, not content even with despoiling others of their markets, the Earl absorbed land not his own with a sublime disregard for vested interests. The Church of St. Michael held Treiwal, attached to which were two hides that were never taxed; "of these the Earl of Mortain took away one hide: it is worth twenty shillings." Several lands "were taken away from St. Petroc [Bodmin Priory]: the Earl of Mortain holds them, and his men hold of him." And so the tale of spoliation runs on. The Canons of St. Pieran who held Lanpiran were deprived by Robert of two acres of land, and "the Earl took away all the money." The clergy of St. Neot held Neotestov; all this agrarian possession "except one acre of arable land which the Priests hold, was taken away from the church by the Earl." Of the "Land of the Church of Tavestoech," "the Earl of Mortain holds unjustly the four manors, Boietone, Elent, Trebichen, Trewant: the Abbot finds great fault that they were taken away from the Church." Neither did this gigantic spoliator shrink from a petty action. "St. Constantin hath half a hide of land, which was quit from all service in the time of King Edward; but afterwards the Earl received the land: he returned the tax unjustly as the land of the villeins." The founder of Launceston Castle deserves that his lesser-known achievements should be set by the side of the particular one which concerns us most, so that we may the better judge the man he was.

In his "History of the Norman Conquest" Mr. Freeman supplies many details anent Robert of Mortain which fully bear out the evil opinion to be drawn from Domesday alone concerning his dealings with Cornwall. He speaks\* of the Earl's "share of the spoils of England" as having been "greater than that of any other one man," and points to the fact that besides Robert "hardly any other landowners appear in Cornwall, except the Crown and ecclesiastical bodies," the spoliation of the western churches "aiding to glut the insatiable appetite of the new Earl."† Elsewhere‡ Mr. Freeman mentions "a curious entry [in the Exeter Domesday] of an incidental wrong done to the see of Exeter," in this referring to the previously-named interference by the Earl with the market at St. Germans,§ but he goes on to characterise the transfer to Dunhevet of the market of the Lanskavetone canons as "a more direct wrong of the same kind;" "complaints," he adds, "of the same sort occur throughout the whole record." Altogether, Robert of Mortain appears to have been a spoliator of more than ordinary daring even in days when spoliation on the part of the great was a custom honoured in the observance.

Domesday proves one point beyond possibility of doubt, and that is that the founder of the Castle was not the founder of the town. "Formerly," says the record, the land of Dunhevet "was worth 20 pounds, now 4 pounds;" and thus the building of the Castle had evidently not brought prosperity in its wake. Although the land of the canons at Lanskavetone had not been diminished in value as a consequence of the Conquest, their holding at Panidran had been reduced to half its previous worth, while in Dunhevet land in the days of the First William was of only one-fifth the value of what it was in those of the Confessor. And these were not isolated cases; again and again in the county the same thing is encountered. Whether it was that the Earl carried fire and sword into the manors he either accepted or seized is not stated, but the fact remains that it is mostly in connection with his property that this extraordinary diminution is to be noted. It may have been that all this devastation was a result of the merciless manner in which was subdued the rebellion of the towns of the

\* Norman Conquest, vol. iv., p. 168.    † Ibid, p. 169.    ‡ Ibid, p. 765.    § ante p. 25.



West headed by Exeter. The Conqueror pursued the same policy wherever an insurrection occurred, first crushing remorselessly all signs of resistance and then erecting castles to hold in awe the land so lately won. The old story that Othomarus de Knivet, hereditary constable of Launceston, was displaced for having been in arms against the Norman King may be dismissed as improbable; but the existence of the tradition, with other signs shortly to be noticed, tends to show that in the league of western towns which struggled against the invader Launceston was one.

A proof that Dunhevet was a town of size is the Domesday record that it contained two mills. This indicates it as having been then what it is now, the active centre of an agricultural district to which the corn of the surrounding farms was brought to be ground: and it is not rash to speculate that we have among us at this day, in the two on the Kensey (one close to the site of the Priory, the other on the old road from Exeter to the borough), direct representatives of the mills thus mentioned; Town Mills, although diverted for a time to other uses, points in its name to some antiquity and importance, while Ridgegrove Mill figures as Riggrove Mylle in the ancient Priory Rent Rolls. But while Dunhevet possesses its two mills as well as more men and more ploughs than Lanscavetone, the town of the canons had the advantage in arable and pasture land and in the holding of a market; and the peaceful home of St. Stephen's monks retained its money value despite the turbulence of the times, whilst that of its neighbour on the other hill was much diminished by the change. But Lanscavetone was punished for remaining quiet as it would have been punished had it stirred; and Dunhevet, having in all probability been sacked by the Normans for its resistance, was now in a sense rewarded by being made the seat of the Earl of Cornwall and the market town of the district. Robert of Mortain as yet fortified only a little within the Cornish border, the Castles of Launceston and Trematon being the fruit of the activity of himself and his son, William, who succeeded him. And it may be believed that just as the Saxons probably began by fortifying the border of a troublesome county and ended by absorbing it, so did the Normans commence by making secure these two strongholds by the Tamar and conclude by becoming undisputed masters of the shire.

From the time of William's invasion, the history of Launceston is not wholly that of the Castle. We have seen\* how, before the Conquest and probably as a result of the warring of Æthelstan in Cornwall, a college of secular canons was founded at St. Stephens. These canons possessed privileges differing in great degree from those of ordinary monks; they might marry wives and hold converse with the world, and were not tied to monastic life. But, however valuable might have been these privileges at a time when it was not in every case so much a desire to be entirely devoted to a Christian career as to be enabled to pursue study in peace that led men into religious houses, it is obvious from their very nature that they were open to grievous abuse; and during the holding of the see of Exeter by Bishop Warlewast in the early years of the twelfth century, more than one of the colleges of secular canons were forced to give place to a house of stricter rule. But it was rather because of their monetary than of their moral shortcomings that the canons of St. Stephens were disestablished and disendowed; on the ground that the college was inadequately provided for the Bishop before-mentioned obtained a grant of its property from Henry the First, and refunded it for canons professing the rule of St. Augustine.

The Canons Regular of St. Augustine, or Austin Canons, as for the convenience born of greater brevity they were often called, held in the religious world of mediæval days a middle position between monks and secular canons, almost resembling a community of parish priests living under rule. They dwelt beneath one roof and had a common dormitory and refectory, and from the colour of the hood that covered their cassock became known by their most common title of Black Canons. As the order did not exist in this country until the reign of Henry the First, their earliest seat having been Colchester in 1105, it is evident that Launceston was no late specimen of the 170 houses which ultimately in England bore their name. Tanner states† that the secular college at St. Stephens was given to the see of Exeter by Henry the First, and that "it was suppressed before A.D., 1126, by Will. Warlewast, Bishop of Exeter, who in lieu of it founded in the

\* ante, p. 19.

† Oliver, *Monasticen Diocesis Exoniensis*, pp. 21-2.  
Monastica, Nasmith's Edition.

‡ Notitia



next suburb under the castle hill, a priory for canons, of the order of St. Austin, which was also dedicated to St. Stephen, to which he gave the best part of the college lands," and Leland says\* "took the residew himself." So far it would seem as if no doubt could attach to the connection of Warlewast with the early days of the Priory, "but," is added in a note to the just-quoted extract from Tanner, "in the recital of the donors and donations of this priory, made in the charter of King John, there is no mention at all made of this bishop; but therein Reginald the son of King Henry I., and Earl of Cornwall seems to make the greatest figure, and he was certainly a considerable benefactor if not founder of this new house, as he is said to be by Camden."

But how was it that it was the King and not the Earl of Mortain who dealt directly with the Bishop of Exeter concerning the canons, and that Henry's son Reginald, and not a descendant of William's half-brother held the Earldom of Cornwall? William, son and successor of Robert of Mortain, having in 1104 joined Robert, Duke of Normandy, in an abortive insurrection against Henry the First, was made prisoner, his earldom taken from him, and his property held in demesne for a long period, both earldom and property being then conferred upon Reginald de Dunstanvill, natural son of Henry, who held it for thirty-five years. Hals records a story to the effect that this Earl "endeavoured with all his power and interest with King Stephen to bring back the bishopric of Cornwall transferred or translated to Kirton (Crediton) and Exeter, and fix the bishop's see and cathedral at this place and church of St. Stephen, 1155, and Robert Warlewast, then Bishop of Exeter, opposed," as was only natural, and the scheme came to naught. But as William (not Robert) Warlewast held the see of Exeter only from 1107 to 1138, and Reginald did not receive the earldom until 1140, the story falls to the ground, despite the added detail of another writer that Warlewast became acquainted with Reginald's design whilst on a visit to his manor of Lawhitton in the neighbourhood.

Notwithstanding the previously referred to doubt cast by Tanner, there is no reason to disbelieve the accepted story that,

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\*Itinerary, vol. ii., p. 110.

while Reginald was greatly its benefactor, it was Warlewast who established the Priory. This was probably about the year 1120, and the foundation deed,\* in which appear the names of Ralph, deacon of the church of St. Stephen and Launceston (Lancestond), and of William (Warlewast), bishop of Exeter, was witnessed by the abbot of Tavistock, the prior of Plympton, the archdeacon of Cornwall, and the chaplain of the King. When Reginald became Earl he granted a charter to the Priory, taking the property and persons of the canons under his immediate protection. In this document† (which bears no date, but which, from the careful and frequently drawn distinction between "Henry King of England" and "King Henry my father," would probably be of the time of Henry the Second) Reginald refers to "the church of Lanstone," with all its belongings ecclesiastical and lay, and to the canons of the same place "ministering in honour of God and of the blessed protomartyr Stephen." He confirms all the privileges enjoyed by the Priory, and, because of the transfer by the Earl of Mortain of the Sunday market from "the town of St. Stephen of Lanstone" to "the new town of the Castle of Dunhevet," orders that on behalf of the burgesses of Launceston the Governor of the Castle, who at that time appears to have been Mordont Sprakelyn, should pay the canons a yearly pension of twenty shillings at Martinmas. It is to be noted as a coincidence worthy to be remembered that among the witnesses to this, the first ecclesiastical document concerning Launceston of which we have record, appears one Jordan de Trekarl, not improbably an ancestor of the Trecarrell who four centuries later left as his legacy to the borough the Church of the Magdalene. To what extent King Stephen aided the Earl in his benefactions to the Priory is now unknown, but that he did so and appreciably is evident from an entry in the return made in 1534 when Henry the Eighth ordered an inquiry into the revenues of the various monasteries throughout the country, wherein we find that the sum of five pounds was yearly paid by the Priory to "the celebrating chaplain in the Chapel under the Castle of Downheved out of the grant of Stephen formerly King of England."

Having traced the story of Lanseavetone with its canons, of

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\* Lansdowne MSS., 939 fol., 21 b.

† Oliver, Monasticon, p. 23.

Dunhevet with its castle, and of "St. Stephens in Midelhill," with its priory to the time of Earl Reginald, we have leisure to consider how the immediate district had meanwhile fared. And of the five parishes which now form the parliamentary borough of Launceston, it is with Lawhitton that we earliest become acquainted. We are told\* that about the year 905, Formosus, the then Pope, having remonstrated by letter with Edward the Elder for suffering the West Saxons to be destitute of bishops for seven years together, the King to fill the void at once created seven prelates, giving to him of Crediton what Carew calls a "town in Cornwall, named Landwhitton." Before the date of Domesday, this manor (which included a portion of South Petherwin, another of the five parishes) had passed into the possession of the Bishops of Exeter, and it is evident from the entry that the property was a valuable one: "The Bishop [of Exeter] himself holds LANGUITETONE: in the time of King Edward it was taxed for four hides, but notwithstanding there are eleven hides: the arable land is forty carucates: in Domain there are two carucates: and seven bond servants, and twenty-seven villeins, and twenty borderers, with 29 ploughs, there are eight acres of meadow, and one hundred acres of pasture, and ten acres of small wood: formerly it was worth 8 pounds (£) and now 17 pounds."

We have thus had in Domesday the greater part of the land of Launceston accounted for, and when we turn to another side of the borough and examine Werrington, which more than any portion has swayed the town's political fortunes, we find equally early records of existence. The names of Bamham and Werrington have already† been pointed to as proofs of the Saxon origin of those places, and we have now found that Lawhitton, in which parish Bamham is situate, was known under its present appellation a century and a half before the Conquest. Tradition comes to the aid of our etymological theory concerning Werrington just as fact has done regarding Bamham, and asserts‡ that it "was the land of Ordulph, that great Duke of Devonshire, which he gave to the abbey of Tavistock." This Ordulph, famed for his size and strength, was the son of Ordgar, Earl of Devon, who in 961 founded the Benedictine

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\* Camden, *Magna Britannia*. † ante, p. 16. ‡ Risdon, *History of Devon*.

Abbey of Tavistock and (again according to Risdon, who wrote about 1630) his "coat-armour [by which some have concluded is meant no more than his coat of arms—if, as is very unlikely, Ordulph possessed one] was to be seen not long since in the church of this parish." In a history of Werrington House,\* the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence says: "Tradition built on this connection of the parish with Ordulph to give to a place in the parish called Lady Cross, the honour of being the birth-place and residence of Elfrida, and a bed is shewn in the old house at Werrington of some date certainly, as 'Edgar's bed'; but it needs a stretch of imagination to believe that Elfrida lived in Werrington, or that the bed of the King who died A.D. 975, is yet in existence." Coming from tradition to fact, we find that about the year 1090 William the Second confirmed to the then abbot of Tavistock the grant of the manor of Werrington (Wlerintun), and in a bull granted to the abbey just a century later by Pope Celestine III. the manor is once more mentioned. Meanwhile another near neighbour to Launceston was assuming importance, for we find that in 1156, when Henry the Second, desiring to provide fitting dowry for his daughter, levied an aid for that purpose upon the towns and manors he held in demesne, the men of Lifton (Liftona) were included among those in Devon upon whom it was assessed by the Justiciers Itinerant.† There is no notice of Launceston being summoned to contribute to this particular tax, but we find in the records of the same reign an instance of the town being called upon by the Sovereign for monetary assistance. In 1177, Ralf Fitz-Stephen, Turstin Fitz-Simon, and William Ruffus, Justiciers Itinerant, assessed an aid upon "the Burghs, Towus, and Men in Cornwall."‡ Towards this Launceston (Lanzaventon) paid four marks,§ the same amount as Helston, while in Devonshire Lifton paid twenty shillings and Lidford as much as four pounds. It may be noted that it was at the Council of Northampton in the year before this aid was levied that Henry, having previously restored the King's court and the occasional circuits of its justices, rendered the institution permanent by dividing the kingdom into six districts, to each of which were assigned three itinerant

\* Werrington and its Possessors (published 1882). † Madox, History of the Exchequer, vol. i., p. 588. ‡ Ibid, p. 604. § Equivalent to £2 13s. 4d.

justices ; and, from the fact that the circuits thus defined correspond roughly with those which now exist, and that the fourteenth-century burgesses of Launceston claimed that the yearly county assize should always be held in their town as it hitherto with unjustifiable exceptions had been, it may fairly be presumed that the semi-financial assize of 1177 was the first of that regular series of Launceston judge-visits terminated so lately as the first half of the present century.

No one who examines the Castle, ruinous as to-day it is, can fail to be impressed with its strength, and to be drawn to the conclusion that the erection of the whole scheme of Launceston fortification must have been the labour of many years. The completion of the innermost portion may have satisfied the first Earl of Mortain, it being left for subsequent holders to build the gateways to the base-court beneath (each of which presents a different style of architecture) and the walls of the town, with northern, southern, and western gates. In all likelihood it was not until a century had elapsed from the time of the Normans possessing the place that the whole work of fortification was done, but the greater portion of that which remains to us was probably the earliest erected. At first glance it might not appear possible that the Castle, with its triple ring and its walls ten feet in thickness, should have been built in the years of Robert of Mortain, but the speed with which a century later\* Richard the First erected Château Gaillard, a castle which in some respects strikingly resembles that of Launceston,† may be taken as showing that Norman builders were not necessarily slow, though their work was assuredly strong. Earl Robert's Castle of Mortain on the other side of the Channel was founded on a rock "in perhaps the most picturesque of all the picturesque sites in which the Norman chiefs seem to have delighted;"‡ and he established in a somewhat similar position his chief fortification in Cornwall—for that Launceston was of this importance is evident from the fact that while Trematon was held by Reginald de Valla Torta under the Earl,§ our Castle was in the hands of Robert himself. And what is said of Richard with regard to his "Saucy Castle," Château Gaillard, may be thought applicable to Robert and

\* 1197. † See View in Building News, March 6, 1874. ‡ Freeman, Norman Conquest, vol. iii., p. 151. § Exeter Domesday.

Launceston: "Even now in its ruin, we can understand the triumphant outburst of its builder as he saw it rising against the sky: 'How pretty a child is mine, this child of but one year old.'"\*

While subsequent holders were completing the ring of fortification for which Robert had provided a mighty centre-piece, another building was rising in the valley below. Probably, like most Augustinian erections (and Bristol continues to afford us an excellent example), the Priory at Launceston possessed a nave of great length to accommodate a large congregation, but such is our misfortune that we can only conjecture on the point. It stood in a meadow adjacent to the existing Church of St. Thomas, and it has been said that in very dry weather its outline can still be recognised stamped upon the soil. But, unlike the Castle which crowned the hill above, the peaceful home of the Augustines has vanished, leaving not a single stone to indicate that it ever had been.

We are still in the times of Earl Reginald, benefactor of the Launceston monks, when the name of the first Prior of whom we have record gleams out for us, this being of Geoffrey (Galfridus) who witnessed a deed in 1171, but it is not for another eighty years that we have glimpse of a second Prior of the Black Canons. In the meantime much was being done of moment to the town upon the hill. Reginald died in 1175, leaving a natural son, Henry Fitz-Count, who did not immediately succeed to his father's possessions; and fourteen years later Richard, at his accession, conferred both earldom and property upon his brother John, whom he had previously also created Earl of Mortain. Two years passed, and while Richard was at the Crusades John was weaving schemes of treachery in England. From various causes these were not destined to succeed, and John, by an engagement of July 28, 1191, agreed to give up the Castles of Nottingham and Tickhill to be held for the King as well as the other castles of his honours, Wallingford, Bristol, the Peak, Bolsover, Eye, Hereford, Exeter, and Launceston (Lanstaventun), the last two being allotted to the charge of Richard Reuel.† This Castellan did not long hold the position as regards Launceston, Walter Reynell,‡ "lord

\* Green, *Short History*, p. 110. † Roger de Hoveden (Stubbs), vol. iii., p. 136. ‡ Not improbably a relative of his predecessor, it being a moot point whether that predecessor's name was Reuel or Renel: see Polwhele, *History of Cornwall*, (1803), book ii. p. 89.



of the manor of Trebarth,"\* being appointed about the year 1193. He was apparently succeeded by Richard Flamank (*Ricardus Flandrensis*) whom John, now King of England, directed by a commission granted at Orival, in Normandy, on April 15, 1202, to give the Castle of Launceston (*castrum de Landscaveton*) to Hubert de Burgh.† It is a curious subject for speculation whether this appointment was any part of the reward offered by John to Hubert to secure the murder of the King's nephew, Arthur of Brittany. Tradition runs, and Shakspeare by adopting has rendered it undying, that Hubert was in this the instrument of his monarch. In the scene ‡ where he is tempted to promise the committal of the crime, Hubert is represented as a man to be bought; and though he refrained from putting out Arthur's eyes, the fact remains that the young prince perished while in his keeping. As the date of Hubert's becoming eastellan of Launceston is close to that of Arthur's death, it is no fanciful theory that would assign the award of the Castle as one portion of the payment for the deed.

Hubert (who, it may be noted, secured by his marriage a moiety of the manor of Treglasta, in Davidstow §) held the constableness for no great time, seeing that he became eastellan of Wallingford in May of the same year as his appointment to Launceston; but even if he held both offices at the same time, we find there was soon a change respecting Launceston, the town and castle being delivered by the King in 1205 to the keeping of John Fitz-Richard. The changes altogether in this period are many and perplexing. According to the Patent Rolls,|| William de Bottreux (as deputy to the Earl of Cornwall) was commanded on December 15, 1207, to give the Castle to Richard Fitz-Richard, the grant being confirmed to the latter by a commission dated at Clarendon, March 19, 1208; but we find on June 10 of the same year the previously-mentioned John Fitz-Richard yielding up the Castle to Henry Fitz-Count, who thus received it thirty-three years after the death of his father, once its possessor.\*\* But there were still further changes in the constableness

\* Obviously Trebartha, Northhill; the manor passed in later years to a family which assumed its name: see *New Parochial History of Cornwall*, vol. iv., p. 9. † Patent Rolls (Hardy), vol. i., part 1, p. 9. ‡ KING JOHN, Act iii., Scene 3. § *New Parochial History of Cornwall*, vol. i., p. 20. || Vol. i., part 1, p. 77. \*\* ante p. 34.

before the expiration of this reign. On May 30, 1215, a writ issued at Odiham directed John Fitz-Richard to deliver to Robert Kardinan the custody of both castle and county; on June 21, six days after the signature of Magna Charta, and upon the field of Runnymede itself, there was a confirmation of this grant; on September 17, a writ issued at Dover directed Kardinan to deliver the Castle to Henry Fitz-Count; and on the next day a further writ named Geoffrey Monk to hold it in Henry's behalf.

It is evident from all these appointments, and especially from that of De Burgh,\* that Launceston was at this time of much importance. Although the statement of Browne Willis† that the successors of Robert of Mortain had their chief residence at the Castle may well be doubted, it being little fitted by design for a prince's habitation, the subsequent assertion that between the Conquest and the accession of John the town had increased much in building and riches may be accepted as certain. The action of Earl Robert in transferring the market from Lanscavetone to Dunhevet, however reprehensible from a moral point, was undoubtedly a main cause of the borough's prosperity. The market was originally held on a Sunday, like that of St. Germans mentioned in Domesday, though Sunday markets had been forbidden by the early laws of the priests,‡ as well as by those of Æthelred and Cnut; Matthew Paris, however, informs us that at the opening of the thirteenth century fairs and markets were constantly so held in England and had been from a remote period. But although it was not until 1449 that an enactment was made abolishing these markets, and notwithstanding that even in the reign of Elizabeth the custom continued in Wales, it is evident there had long been growing a public opinion against it. In 1206, the inhabitants of Launceston gave the King five marks for a licence to change the holding of their market from Sunday to Thursday§; but concerning the date at which this was altered from Thursday to Saturday there appears no record.

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\* A further connecting link between Hubert and the town is afforded by the fact that "Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent, Justiciar of England," appears first among the witnesses to an inexpressimus charter granted to Launceston by Henry the Third, and to be subsequently described. † Notitia Parliamentaria, vol. ii., p. 17. ‡ cir. 950.

§ Madox, History of the Exchequer, vol. i., p. 407.



The period with which we are now dealing is fruitful in references to the borough. It was at Launceston that in 1201 was granted by John the first charter to Helston, this ordaining that the inhabitants should have and enjoy all the privileges of the burgesses of Launceston Castle, which privileges, it would appear from what followed, included the liberty of founding a gild merchant, exemption from paying toll in any place except the city of London, and the not being impleaded anywhere except in their own borough. There does not seem to be in existence the original charter of Launceston, but it was probably granted before that of Earl Reginald to the Priory previously quoted\*, references being therein made to the liberties of the borough and to certain things to be done by or on behalf of the burgesses. In that charter there is a mention of the governor (prepositus) of the Castle, and in a writ of John of 1207 directed to the "Vicecomes Cornubiæ" we find "Hamelin, governor (prepositus) of Lansaweton (? Castle), and Edward, governor of that town" as being liable for a tax of ten marks whilst "Duddeman (? Prior) of Lansaveton" is liable for five. † All this time we have no record of the existence of local self-government in Launceston, but as Bodmin, by a charter of John granted in 1216 (and in which it is recorded that "the town and borough is held of the King, and pays annually to the King's audit at Launceston between five and six pounds per annum rent, beyond the records of time," ‡) was privileged with a mayor, town clerk, twelve aldermen and twenty-four councilmen or assistants, it is not rash to presume that in the charter John is stated to have granted to Launceston in 1201 similar privileges were allowed. Of one thing we are certain, and that is that the Priory was not forgotten during this period by the great ones of the land, for on August 22, 1215, John granted to the prior and canons of Launceston (Lanceaveton) the advowson of a moiety of the chapel of the Castle, the name of Roger, formerly chaplain, appearing in the writ. || And in 1216, during the first year of the succeeding reign, an inspeximus charter was granted to the Priory, reciting and confirming a charter of the deceased monarch,

\* ante p. 30. † Patent Rolls, vol. i., part 1, p. 70.  
vol. i., part 1, p. 153.

‡ Hals. || Patent Rolls,

and speaking of "Humelin, the priest of the chapel of the Castle" and also of "the lordship of our Castle of Launceston," of "the mill which is under the Castle of Dunheved," and of the appurtenances and the rights possessed by the Castle whilst in the possession of Earl Reginald.

The records of the reign of Henry the Third are as fruitful in references to Launceston as those of John. In the Close Rolls we have several of these—some of no great interest, perhaps, except to professed antiquarians, others valuable as throwing light upon the social life of the time and upon the passage of the town and its castle from hand to hand. On May 9, 1221, Henry, by a deed signed at Westminster, gave the town of "Lanzanetun" to "Waleramus Teutonicus"\*; on the fifteenth of the same month Henry Fitz-Count appears in a writ as holding the Castle of "Lanzanetun"†; on October 28, 1222, the Castle was given to William de Putot‡ and on the following January 9 to "Walerandus Teutonicus".§ Both in the Close Rolls|| and in the Rolls of Fines\*\* we find record of a suit between a doctor named Ade and his wife, Lucy, on the one hand and Robert Sprakelin on the other as to land in "Wymetun and Lanzavetun"†† held *in capite* of the King. Mention of this same Robert Sprakelin or Sparkelin is to be found under the date 1202 in the Chancellor's Roll‡‡ linked with the Castle of "Lanzavetun," and it may be the same or his son who appears in the "Rotuli de Oblatis"§§ of 1220 as "Rob' fil Sparkeling" in connection with "Winenton and the Castle of Lancaveston." A further mention of early suitors at Launceston for justice is given in the Annals of Tewkesbury, where is recorded at some length a settlement by William of York and his fellow-justices itinerant in Cornwall of a suit at Launceston (Lardstanetune) between Robert, Abbot of Tewkesbury, and Richard de Grenville.|| ||

In 1230 Henry the Third granted the earldom of Cornwall and with it the Castle of Launceston to his brother, Richard, King of the

\* Close Rolls (Hardy) vol. i, p. 456. It may be noted that in a Charter subsequently granted to Launceston by Richard, King of the Romans, Henricus Teutonicus appears as one of the witnesses. † Ibid, p. 457. ‡ Ibid, p. 517. § Ibid, p. 528. || Ibid, p. 502. \*\* Excerpta Rotulis Finium in Turri Londinensi Asservatis: Henrico Tertio Rege, A. D. 1216-72, p. 85. †† According to the Close Rolls; "Wimetun and Lancavetun" in the Rolls of Fines. ‡‡ Rotulis Cancellarii de Anno Tertio Regni Regis Johannis, p. 14, under the heading "Devenesr. De Oblatis." §§ p. 91. || || Annales Monastici (Luard): Annales de Theokesberia, vol., i. p. 107.

Romans, a figure of some note in the civil broils of the period, who during his long holding of Launceston appears to have annoyed the inhabitants as much as he befriended them. In a charter of 1230\* he made Dunheved a free borough, and, among other liberties, gave the burgesses the right to choose their own bailiff, and granted them a site for a new guildhall (which was to be "held of him and his heirs by a pound of pepper to be paid yearly at Michaelmas for all service and demand whatever,") exemption from certain taxation, and permission to establish a gild merchant. But about 1260 the Earl having his palace at Restormel removed to Lostwithiel the assizes which had previously been held at Launceston; and not unnaturally this blotted from the memories of our burgesses much of their gratitude for the charter. They protested energetically against the injustice that had been done them, and to such effect that upon petition Richard consented, on the payment of a fine, that the assizes should be held as had been accustomed. It is interesting to know as indicating that assizes in that day must have been attended by even more pomp than in this that those which were held at Launceston in 1248 were before the Earl of Cornwall, the Bishop of Exeter (Blondy), and three others, the King's Justices.†

At this point ecclesiastical Launceston once again claims our attention. After Prior Geoffrey, previously mentioned ‡ as the first of whom we have record, we know of no ruler of the local Augustines before Robert Fissacre, whom we find in September, 1258, to have been excommunicated by Bishop Broneseombe, who had then held the see but a little over a year, because of disobedience and many offences. The Priors of Bodmin and Tywardreath were directed to publish the sentence in Launceston chapter-house; but, whatever Fissacre's "many offences" may have consisted of, they can scarcely have been of very grievous kind, as it was only a week after his excommunication that he was absolved by the prelate himself at Bodmin. It may have

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\*The charter itself bears no date, but internal evidence shows it to have been granted in the year mentioned. It is so dated in Dugdale (*Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. vi., p. 211), and further in a charter to Liskeard in 1240 the burgesses are allowed all the liberties given to Launceston "about ten years before." † Izacke, *Memorials of Exeter*, pp. 12-13. A suit by the Mayor and citizens of Exeter against the Dean and Chapter touching the fee and liberties of St. Sidwell's, in that city, was disposed of at this assize. ‡ ante p. 34.

been during this prior's tenure of office that in 1239 a composition was entered into between the convents of Launceston and Glastonbury respecting the tithes of certain lands near Looe ; and also within his days of rule that in or about 1260 Earl Richard granted a charter by which the property of the monks of St. Michael de Lanmana, a small cell on an island in the parish of Talland, opposite Looe, was given to the Abbot of Glastonbury, the lands being held by a yearly fee of ten shillings sterling, to be paid either " to our seneschal " or to the governor (ballivo) of Cornwall at the Castle of " Lanstavetone " at Michaelmas of each year.

It was just at this period that Bishop Bronescombe appears to have been especially active in regard to Launceston Priory. We find from a letter addressed to Alured, who had just been elected Abbot of Tavistock, that on September 7, 1260, the prelate was at his manor of Lawhitton, and two days later he ordained that the vicar of Stratton should pay twenty-five marks yearly to " the conventual church of St. Stephen of Lancetton " in lieu of tithes. It would seem as if while residing in the district and taking so much interest in the affairs of the priory, the Bishop became impressed with the virtues of one at least of the canons, for in the months immediately ensuing upon those just named he pronounced the election of William de Chagford as Prior of Canonsleigh, in the deanery of Tiverton, to be void, and substituted on December 17, 1260, Henry de Trewinneke, a monk of Launceston. But all was not plain sailing between the Bishop and our priory, for when on September 12 of the next year, Robert Fissacre resigned because of old age (being carefully provided for by Bronescombe and the convent during the rest of his days) and the canons chose successively Brother Lawrence and Richard de Uppetoun as Prior, the prelate annulled the elections on the grounds of informality and undertook himself to provide a prior, but who was appointed is not known. In thus acting the Bishop did not prove himself as complaisant to the wishes of the monks of Launceston as he had to those of Tavistock in the above-mentioned Lawhitton letter, for although the election of Alured was similarly void for informality, the prelate, taking into consideration the monk's meritorious character, gave him the office. \*

\* The greater portion of the information regarding the Priory is gathered from Oliver's *Monasticon* ; in cases where it is not, the source is quoted.

Altogether Bishop Bronescombe ("whose frauds and oppressions," says Prynne,\* "you may read in Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops,") appears to have greatly worried many worthy people during his tenure of the see. He was alleged to have used his ecclesiastical powers for purposes of oppression, to have imposed grievous penalties, and to have exacted illegal oaths to the peril of the dignity of the Crown and the liberties of the subject. So much was this the case that Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, was at length compelled to complain to the King, then Edward the First, and in 1278 an inquiry was held at Launceston before Roger Loveday and Walter de Wynborn into the malpractices charged.† Damages to the amount of ten thousand pounds were cast against Bronescombe, but he continued to pursue his course, and even went so far as to excommunicate all who had lodged complaints against him, until once more the Earl and county had to beseech the King to take this troublesome prelate seriously in hand.‡

It was about the year 1250 that the hospital for lepers, dedicated to St. Leonard, was founded at Gilmartin. It had before existed at Launceston, it being provided in the previously-mentioned charter of Earl Richard§ that the bailiffs of Launceston should answer the farm of the borough by paying a hundred shillings to himself, sixty-five shillings and tenpence to the Priory, and a further hundred shillings to the lepers of "St. Leonard of Lanston." A charter still preserved among the records of the borough grants hospital and chapel to "the leprous of Gillemartin" by the Convent of "Lancene-tone" with Prior Robert at its head. It is attested by Earl Richard, by the then Bishop of Exeter,|| the Archdeacon of Cornwall, the seneschal of the county, and others, including Hamelin Miles, Mayor of the borough, and Oliver Core and John the Dyer, "prepositi"—aldermen, reeves, or magistrates. In this charter several local names may be noted, both of places and persons, which remain to us even now: the Kensey appears in it as "aqua de Kensi," the Tamar as "fluvium Tambia," the hospital being situated close to the point where the lesser flows into the greater river; and among

\* W. Prynne, *Vindication of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the English Kings*, vol. iii., p. 200. † *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 209. § ante p. 39. || Richard Blondy, who held the see from 1245 to 1257.

the signatures we meet with a Hornicote and a Trelose (Trelaske), a Bottreaux (Bottrell) and a Wise.

The reason for founding a lazar-house has in these days passed away—at least for England. Leprosy, which was so prevalent in the middle ages, and which may have been originally brought from the East by the Crusaders and then fostered by the too extensive fish diet of our ancestors, appears to have especially afflicted Cornwall. There was a lazar-house of St. Mary Magdalene at Liskeard, but this does not seem to have been either as ancient or as important as those of St. Leonard at Launceston and St. Lawrence at Bodmin. Of the last-named Hals has left us an account which would very probably have served in most particulars for the one on the banks of the Kensey. “In this parish,” he says of St. Lawrence, “stands a lawres hospital, that is to say a hospital for lepers (loure or lower in British is a leper), which hath good endowment of lands and revenues appertaining thereto, founded by the piety and charity of the well-disposed people of this county in former ages, for the relief, support, and maintenance of all such people as should be visited with that sickness called elphanteasy, in Latin lepra or elephantia, in English leprosy, in British lowery; being a white infectious scurf running all over the bodies of such persons as are tainted therewith. The custom of the place was such, that none were to be admitted by the governors of the same for the time being, unless the person so brought in paid them 5d. a pot for dressing their meat, a purse and a penny in it to receive alms.” Whether the hospital at Launceston was established like that of Bodmin upon lands and revenue given by “the piety and charity of the well-disposed people of this county,” we have no means of knowing; Mr. Pattison\* inclines to this belief, and in this is supported by the fact that in giving one hundred shillings yearly to the lepers of St. Leonards,† Earl Richard expressly declares the sum to be granted “out of our alms.”

And now is forged a link with the circumstances of to-day which some future Schedule A may break and at no distant date with ruthless hand. In December, 1264, for the first time, an English

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\* Lecture on Launceston.

† ante p. 41.



Parliament at all resembling the present was summoned by Simon de Montfort, but it was not until thirty years later, the next occasion upon which two burgesses were called "from every city, borough, and leading town," that Launceston returned members. In 1295 five Cornish towns—Launceston, Liskeard, Truro, Bodmin, and Helston—received the privilege of representation, and to the Parliament which was to assemble "at Westminster on Sunday next after the Feast of St. Martin, 13 Nov. 23 Ed. I.," and which was "prorogued to Sunday next before the Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, 27 Nov. 24 Ed. I.," the burgesses sent from Launceston were John Gerveys and Stephen Duck.





### III.—FROM THE FIRST CHOICE OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TO THE BUILDING OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S (1295—1524.)

**I**N the course of the period out of which we have now passed were laid the foundations of the Launceston to-day presented to our view. The Castle was built, the Priory established, Members were returned to Parliament, a Mayor and Corporation were at work, and a Guildhall was become the centre of local life. Six centuries have gone, and although the only buildings of the earlier time remaining to us are the South Gate and the Castle, we can trace to day the outlines of the town as it existed when first a Member for Launceston sat with the Commons. The testimony of the roads may be invoked to prove that the main lines of traffic between the borough and the surrounding districts, superseded now by improved highways but the only ones available as lately as our fathers' days, were in use at the fortifying of the town.

The old roads were originally bridle-paths, taken straight over hills not so much to lessen distance as to find ground which would not dissolve into a marsh at every fall of rain or in-setting of thaw. The ancient ways into Launceston seem as if designed to render the approach as difficult as possible to the heavily burdened. It is only in these days that for the convenience of traffic hills have been turned which our forefathers surmounted; and, as a consequence, tracks which the necessities of centuries broadened from bridle-paths to wheel-roads, and from wheel-roads to turnpike-ways, have drifted into lanes little used save by those living along their length. From Exeter, then the metropolis of the West, the road of the thirteenth century ran through Okehampton and Lifton over Polson Bridge to



St. Leonard's, and thence by Colhay Lane to Ridgegrove and Angel Hill, where at the South Gate it met the way from Plymouth which had come by Tavistock and Lawhitton to Page's Cross, and thence down Race Hill. From the South Gate a road, still known to the elder among us as "Under the Wall," ran by the side of the town's fortification to the West Gate, joining on its way a track from Dunheved Green and Windmill Hill, on the latter of which was fixed a beacon of warning and alarm. Issuing from the West Gate was the road by St. John's Chapel and Pennygillam to Southpetherwin and Liskeard on the one hand, and to Trebursye and Bodmin on the other, while from the same exit, and probably in this case also by the side of the wall, the Dockhay ran to the western gate of the Castle. At this point the wall of the town and the Castle Dyke may have lain together as far as the eastern gate of the Castle, the former then proceeding to the borough's North Gate, whence the wall, with no eastern entrance must have swept around to the previously-mentioned junction of the roads from Exeter and Plymouth. The reason for no East Gate having been built was probably because no road was required from that direction; Devonshire was reached from the South Gate, Cornwall from the West Gate, St. Stephens and the country beyond from the North Gate; and though it might have been practicable to have driven a road up the steep slope from the Kensey to the east side of the borough, seeing that a similar difficulty was successfully overcome in Old Hill, leading from St. Thomas through the North Gate to the town, there was no district to be served by such a track and consequently no such track was made.

And just as the roads themselves thus tell their story of antiquity so do the streets of the town. In the days when bridle-paths were the only highways and wheeled vehicles practically unknown, Broad Street, which does not now impress us with a sense of especial width, deserved its name when compared with Church Street, Castle Street, and High Street, the outlines of which were framed centuries ago, and whose narrowness in parts is a reproach even now. We do not know when the three gates were erected, but the process of fortification was probably completed not later than the end of the twelfth or the early portion of the thirteenth century;

and it is certain that ever since the time of the building of the gates there have existed houses along the streets still leading from the South to the West Gate, from the West Gate to the Church, from the Church to the Castle, and from the North Gate to the South. Broad Street and High Street, Castle Street and Church Street, Southgate Street and Fore Street are no products of to-day or of yesterday, but of the period when the Black Canons worshipped by St. Thomas Bridge, when the Lepers of St. Leonard's languished in their Gilmartin home, when the Castle was in the plenitude of its power, and when the foundation of our Church was not even laid.

It is here to be noted that as yet the only mention we have of religious observance within the borough walls is in connection with a chapel of the Castle\*, although in various surveys there is another mentioned, a very small one and probably the private chapel of the Earls. This absence of information as to the town's centre of religious life is the more striking as in each of the other four parishes of the present parliamentary borough there are indications at this period of the existence of a church. Bishop Bronescombe on October 23, 1259, dedicated the parochial church of St. Stephen at Launceston; in the Inquisition of the Bishops of Lincoln and Winchester into the value of Cornish benefices, taken in 1294, the "chapel of St. Thomas in the deanery of Trigg Major" appears, just as in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 does that of Southpetherwin; while in the rent roll of the See of Exeter, under date 1308, is a mention of ecclesiastical workings at Lawhitton. But it is not until seventy years after even the latest of these dates that we meet with the Church of the Magdalene at Launceston.

"The first foundation bearing the Magdalene's name at Launceston," says Mr. Pattison,† "is a chantry chapel, a private religious establishment existing here in the days of the Plantagenet Kings. This was altogether of humble origin, and owed its endowment not to the feudal lord of the castle, but to the piety of the grave burghers of the town. The Earl of Moreton had provided two chapels in the castle, both mentioned in a survey of the year 1338, and in other

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\* ante, p. 38. † S. R. Pattison, *Some Account of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene* (1852).

documents and charters. In the taxation of Pope Nicholas (1291) we find no mention of Saint Mary Magdalene here, but only of 'capella de castro' which is rated at £1 6s. 8d. per annum. By this time the mayor and commonalty of the increasing borough had obtained a royal charter, sought the attendance of a priest, and some burgesses desired to have, after the fashion of the time, a perpetual succession of prayers for the prosperity of their families whilst living and the repose of their souls when dead. Nor were the poor altogether forgotten in their pious endeavours. . . . During the progress of recent repair\*, the walls have yielded some traces of earlier buildings on the site of the existing structure. Fragments of ancient cut stone have been used as materials for the present fabric; on these being disinterred, they tell of the pre-existing edifice, and enable us to reconstruct in imagination the small chantry chapel of the middle ages.† The heavy shaft of a pier, with portions of its capital and arch, shew the first building to have been in pure late Norman style. The massive support, the deeply cushioned capital, and round arch, speak of their Lombard ancestry. Traces of colouring are yet discernible, and the contour of all the fragments exhibits the excellent style of the twelfth century." Thus the testimony of the walls comes to our aid in proving the existence of a church on the site of the present edifice long before mention of it is met in written record, just as the testimony of the roads has already afforded us materials for an outline map of the borough centuries anterior to the draughting of any that now we possess.

With this proof of the early origin of Launceston Church, we may take up the thread of our narrative at the first choice of Members for the town. Of the ancestry of Stephen Duck we know as little as we do of his personal history, and although concerning that of Gerveys somewhat more is to be gathered, the two men are to us but as dimly outlined shadows projected across the page of local history by the solid fact of our earliest parliamentary representation.‡

\* This was written at the date of the Church's restoration. † Mr. Pattison adds here as a note: "The essential object of an endowed chantry is to sing masses and obits; another object may often be superadded, in which alms and education are among the purposes of the founder."—Oliver, p. 472." ‡ In the Parliamentary Writs, vol. i., Johannes Gerveys and Stephanus le Duk are given as the names of Launceston's first Members, the latter figuring in subsequent documents as Stephanus Duck and Stephanus Dux.

Gerveys was of a Cornish family, and though sitting for Launceston in only one Parliament was elected for Helston to no less than six during the reigns of the first three Edwards. Duck, of whose origin we know nothing, represented Launceston in the Parliament which sat at Westminster in 1295 and in that which met at York in the Whitsuntide of 1298; five years later he was "returned for Launceston to a special Convention of Merchants held before the Council in the Exchequer of York, on the morrow of St. John the Baptist, 25 June, 31 Ed. I.," \* and is thus indicated to have been a man of much consequence among the Launcestonians of that day and highly respected by his neighbours. It does not seem, however, that members always attended the Parliaments to which they were elected. In 1298, for instance, Stephen Duck and Roger de Huneford were returned for Launceston to the Parliament at York, but in the Parliamentary Writs † we find that David de Kalewystock ‡ acted in their stead. The name does not appear in the official list of Members because De Kalewystock was never actually elected by the burgesses; unlike Peter Fitz-John who sat for Launceston in several Parliaments from 1304 onwards, and who two years previous to the earlier date had acted on Walter Godman's behalf, and John Fitz-John, returned for Launceston in 1306-7, who had appeared in place of Bartholomew Keche elected for the borough in 1304-5.§

This is but one of the differences between the representative system of that day and of this. It can readily be understood that when Parliaments were summoned to meet at such diverse points as Westminster in 1295, Berwick as in 1296, and York as in 1298, it was often a matter of extreme difficulty for those elected to proceed to the places named. Thus it was that substitutes were allowed; and it was for much the same reason that, contrary to the practice of

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\* Parliamentary Writs, vol. i.: this was not, however, a Parliament properly so-called, and, therefore, Duck's name does not appear in this connection in the official list of Members for Launceston. † Vol. i. ‡ Probably Calstock. § In all these cases the name of the individual who thus took a member's place is not to be found as such in the official list, but in the Parliamentary Writs only. There are two other differences concerning this period between these authorities which may here be noted: in the official list John Colyn is given as sitting for Launceston in 1307, and John Landue in 1309; neither of these appears in that capacity in the Parliamentary Writs, but a John Colyn is named in them as acting in 1295 on behalf of Hubert de Colecester, returned for the borough bearing the same name.

the present day, constituencies paid members for the privilege of electing them. In 1314, Roger de Tavistock\* and John Cork† were Launceston's choice, and the Writ de Expensis‡ tested at York on September 28, makes provision for their "attendance at Parliament from the return day (September 9) until Friday next before the Feast of St. Michael (September 27), together with their charges coming and returning." In the next year we find a writ which specifies the exact sum paid to the Members for Launceston; William Brackyf and William de Landen (or Landeu) were chosen, and there was allowed them "for attendance at Parliament from the Return Day (January 20) until Sunday next before the Feast of St. Gregory the Pope (March 9) four pounds sixteen shillings each, at the rate of two shillings each per diem."§ This appears to have been the regular rate of payment at this time, as may be gathered from instances of later years; in 1326-27 John de Lanhun and Robert de Penleu sat for our borough, and the Writ de Expensis || was in this case "directed to the Bailiffs of the Town of Launceston for twelve pounds for sixty days attendance at Parliament, coming and returning, at the rate of two shillings each per diem"; in 1329-30 the bailiffs of Launceston were directed to pay their burgesses for their attendance in Parliament, forty-two shillings having to be given to Robert de Ponton for twenty-one days' service\*\* ; while a further writ, dated October 30, 1363, and addressed to "the bailiffs of the town of Dounheudburgh,"†† directs them to pay to Henry Nannam and Robert Wysdom,‡‡ "burgesses of the aforesaid town to our Parliament at Westminster," the sum of £8 4s. for forty-one days service.§§ It is not, perhaps, a matter for wonder that, when constituencies had to defray the expenses their members incurred by

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\* Rogerus de Stavystok in the Writ de Expensis. † Johannes Cork de Donheved in the official list. ‡ Close Rolls, 8 Edw. II. m. 31. d. § Writ de Expensis, tested at Westminster, March 9, 1315; Close Rolls, 8 Edw. II. m. 13 d. || Tested at Westminster, February 23 (or perhaps March 9), 1327; Close Rolls, 1 Edw. III. m. 15, d. \*\* Rolls of Parliament, vol. ii., p. 444. †† This is one of the three instances extant in which this name is used to describe the town, the others being in an indenture formerly in possession of the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence, which is stated to have been "given at Dounheudburgh," on February 5, 1430, and in a charter of pardon to the borough of "Dounheudburgh," granted by Henry the Eighth on June 29, 1509. ‡‡ Both had represented Launceston in a Parliament held early in the same year, and had now been re-elected. §§ W. Prynne, *Parliamentary Writs*, vol. iv., p. 265, the writ being quoted in full from the Close Rolls, 37 Edw. III.; this is the latest instance yet discovered of the payment of members for Launceston.

representing them, the poorer among the boroughs occasionally raised a protest and prayed to be relieved from the duty of sending members at all. In later days several of the boroughs that had thus upon their own motion been disfranchised, wished once more to be represented, but they had lost their opportunity and were not again allowed the honour.

There are other matters of interest to Launceston in the Rolls and Writs of Parliament, as these do not alone concern the borough's representation but deal also with questions of knight-service and legal dispute. In the Parliamentary Writs we find that John de Dunheved was summoned in 1301 from the counties of Warwick and Leicester to perform military service in person against the Scots, the muster being at Berwick-upon-Tweed on Midsummer Day\*; and that in 1322, the Abbot of Launceston† was requested by a writ tested at Gloucester on February 16, to raise as many men-at-arms and foot-soldiers as he could for the purpose of marching against the rebels or adherents of the Earl of Lancaster, his men having to muster at Coventry on the first Sunday in Lent.‡ In the Parliamentary Rolls we are told, in addition to matters to be subsequently described, of what is referred to in their index as a "dispute between the Prior of Launceston and the Parson of Liskeard": and from the account therein given § it appears that in 1314 the tenants of Liskeard, who held land belonging to Launceston Priory, petitioned the then King, Edward the Second, complaining that the Bishop of Exeter had excommunicated them for non-payment of the tithe of mills, in lieu of which the vicar had been paid a demi-mark, and the Prior as parson eight shillings yearly, under a composition made in the time of Richard, King of the Romans; upon this petition a commission of inquiry was issued, and the Bishop was commanded meantime to supersede his sentence.

And this directs our attention once more to the affairs of the Priory. It has already been said || that it is not known who the

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\* Parliamentary Writs, vol. i. † This title (Abbas de Launceveton, as it appears in the original writ,) deserves to be noted as showing that Hals was right in a statement, made by him alone among county historians, as to "the abbey or priory of St. Stephen's, whose governor was indifferently called the abbat and prior of St. Stephan's and Launceston." ‡ Parliamentary Writs, vol. ii., division 3. § Rolls of Parliament, vol. i., p. 313. || ante p. 40.



Prior was that Bishop Bronescombe appointed in 1261, but we are told that a certain Richard, whose surname is lost to us, and the date of whose institution cannot be found, died Prior during the vacancy of the see of Exeter caused by the death of Bishop de Button and the accession of Bishop Stapeldon. For the election of a Prior it was now necessary to obtain the license of Edward the Second, and the canons having selected Roger de Horton, their choice was approved by the King, and on May 3, 1308, he was confirmed Richard's successor.\* This was probably the "Prior Horeston" who, according to Leland,† "had a fair tumbe on the south aisle of the priory church"; and it may well have been that the special honour was largely due to the sympathy felt for Prior Horton in the affliction of blindness which overtook him, and which caused Bishop Stapeldon on September 29, 1316, to provide him as coadjutor with a canon named Ralph de Huggewarthe.

The wealth of the Priory was in the meantime increasing, for about the year 1308 the manor of Boyton became its property. Originally purchased by Suetricius, Abbot of Tavistock, it was forcibly retained by Robert of Mortain ‡; subsequently it passed through many stages into the hands of Henry Bodrigan, who died in 1301, and it soon afterwards came into possession of Launceston Priory. Another connection between Boyton and Launceston at this period may here be recorded. A writ of Edward the First, bearing date April 17, 1297, directed the committal to Launceston Gaol of Paganus, chaplain of Boyton, and several other Cornish clergymen "for the publication of the letter of the Pope."§ The King was at that time engaged in a fierce struggle with the clergy because of their refusal to surrender half their income towards the royal expenditure; they urged that "their aid was due solely to Rome, and pleaded a bull of exemption granted by Pope Boniface VIII. as a ground for refusing to comply with further taxation. Edward met

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\* In the "Account of the Executors of Richard, Bishop of London, 1303, and the Executors of Thomas (de Button), Bishop of Exeter, 1310," printed for the Camden Society in 1874, among the payments of De Button is the sum of £13 6s. 8d. to Robert de Gossington, described as the Bishop's nephew, for "warizona" on taking possession of the Priory of Launceston. Why this payment was made does not appear.

† Itinerary, vol. ii., fol. 71. ‡ ante p. 25. § Prynn, *Vindication of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the English Kings*, vol. iii., p. 700.

their refusal by a general outlawry of the whole order. The King's courts were closed, and all justice denied to those who refused the King aid. The clergy had, in fact, put themselves in the wrong, and the outlawry soon forced them to submission."\* It appears that thirty-four priests were ordered by writ directed to the Sheriff of Cornwall † to be detained "in our prison of Launceneton," there to be kept "till they made their peace with the King and were released by his special writs," the list including the aforesaid Paganus chaplain of Boyton, Richard vicar of Morwenstow, Peter chaplain of Kilkhampton, Robert vicar of the church of Stratton, Sampson vicar of Poughill, Robert chaplain of Marhamchurch, Richard chaplain of Week St. Mary [Wyke], William chaplain of Jacobstowe, Thomas chaplain of Whitstone, Richard chaplain of Tamerton, and William vicar of the church of St. Gennys. This was the first of a series of religious prisoners incarcerated at Launceston upon the plea of political necessity.

This is the first definite mention we have of prisoners at Launceston, but it appears from an inquisition taken at Stokeclimsland in September, 1331, ‡ "before Roger de Eikdesburgh, steward of the lord the King's§ lands and tenements, which belonged to Isabella queen of England|| . . . concerning prisoners within the borough of Liskeard taken for felonies, to be conveyed to the gaol of Launceston, from a certain cross which is called Luxycross. . . . From the time [1272] of Richard, formerly Earl of Poitou and Cornwall, his tithing men and tithing of Liskeard used to convey all prisoners taken within the borough of Liskeard from a certain cross called Luxycross to the gaol of Launceston, to the keeper of the gaol, there to be delivered over." What kind of prison this was will soon be seen.

The chief rule of the county was at this period undergoing radical change, and the Castle of Launceston did not remain unaffected. Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, who had succeeded his father Richard in 1272, and who continued to transfer the assizes to Lostwithiel, died in 1300, and owing to his leaving no issue, the Castle

\* Green, *Short History*, p. 199.

† Quoted in full by Prynne from *Close Rolls*, 25 Ed. I., m. 18. ‡ *New Parochial History of Cornwall*, vol. iii., p. 147. § Edward III.

|| Queen Isabella, wife of Edward II., had in the previous year been ordered to be confined for life in Castle Rising; hence probably this inquisition as to her property.



with his other possessions passed once more to the Crown. Seven years later, Piers Gaveston, "gay, genial, thriftless," the favourite whom Edward the Second had recalled from exile immediately upon his accession, was raised to the vacant earldom, but was not destined long to enjoy it. Hated by the baronage, with whom his life in England was one constant struggle, he was executed by his enemies in 1312, and was succeeded in the governorship of Launceston by Walter de Bottreaux, lord of the manor of Boscastle, and the last holder of the Castle not of princely blood.

"From 1312," says Drew,\* "the title of Earl of Cornwall continued without any possessor until the year 1328, when it was bestowed by Edward the Third either on his second brother or younger son, for on this historians have not agreed, whose name was John, and who is generally known by the name of John of Eltham, and with him the title of Earl finally expired. In the year 1329, the King, into whose hands the title and its appendages had again fallen [by the death, young and unmarried, of John of Eltham], gave a new name to the office, and finally created his eldest son, well-known afterwards by the name of Edward the Black Prince, Duke of Cornwall. A few years after this [1337], he procured an Act of Parliament for settling this new title, together with all the possessions that had been connected with the old one, on the eldest son of the King of England for ever," with whom it still remains. Launceston Castle, even then beginning to fall to decay, thus passed into the hands of the Prince, who years afterwards was the hero of Cressy and Poitiers, and in his last moments, sick unto death, gave his hearty support to the Commons in their struggles for liberty against the oppressions of the baronage and the infamous weakness of the King himself.

The Roll of the Seisin, taken on the annexation of the Castle to the Duchy, is full of information as to its then condition and past history. The walls are described as being ruinous, the cellars as requiring to be newly roofed, the windows of the chapel as being weak, the doors and windows of the chambers as of no value, "one vile gaol" (by which, however, is simply meant a common prison)

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\* History of Cornwall, vol. i., p. 404.

as being badly covered with lead, and "one other prison," much dilapidated. Minuteness was the especial attribute of the inventory, for it records that "there are also in the same Castle an iron chisel, a sledge hammer, iron wedges, a crow-bar for lifting stones, an oaken chest in good preservation for money and rolls, an oaken measure, and some rope." John Moneron (who at this time represented the borough, and who was re-elected upon two subsequent occasions) is named as being constable of the Castle, held for his life under a grant of John of Eltham, confirmed by the King, he having succeeded in the constablenesship one Peter Burdet. The mayor and burgesses do not seem to have very favourably impressed John of Woodstock and William of Mordon, who took the account: they claimed the assize of bread and ale within their town, they protested against the removal of the assizes, they complained that the Prior had without warrant taken the assize of bread and ale of the town of Newport, and they contended that the town of Bodmin was within the liberties of their borough; yet, although they pleaded that they and their predecessors had had these rights from time immemorial, the commissioners sceptically observed "but no other title can they show." Thirty years afterwards a similar remark could have been retorted by these worthy burgesses concerning the Black Prince himself, who, about the year 1368, laid claim to the patronage of the Priory, "but no title could he show," and the claim was abandoned.\* And, although the commissioners put on one side the burgesses' complaints regarding the assizes being at Lostwithiel, because "they shewed no reason save of prescription," an Act was passed in 1397, in the reign of the son of the Prince whom they had served, enacting that the Cornwall county assizes and sessions should be held at Launceston and not elsewhere.

This same Roll of the Seisin gives some interesting information with regard to the feudal tenures then existing. One example of these had been previously recorded in connection with Launceston, in the Pleas of the Crown for 1283, where it is stated that one Robert Hurdyn held an acre of land and a bakehouse in the town and Castle of Launceston (Lanceveton), by the serjeantry of being in the Castle

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\* Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian Library.

of Launceston with an iron helmet and a Danish hatchet or pole-axe for forty days in time of war at his own proper cost, and, after the forty days, if the lord of the Castle chose to detain him there, it should be at the cost of the said lord. In the Roll of 1337 is a list of the Knight's fees held in honour of the Castle, of which this may be taken as example: "John Dynham, who is under age, holds of our lord the Duke seventy fees in Cornwall and Devon; whereby in time of war he should send at his own charges for forty days seventy men, well armed, to garrison the Castle of Launceston (Launceveton), so that for each fee he should keep one 'kernel' [opening between battlements] with one man; and when he dies, his heir under age should be in the Duke's wardship, and when of full age then the Duke of ancient prerogative should take in hand all his lands and goods until the heir should do homage and pay a relief of five marks; and these are Mortain's fees." A Court of Wayternefe also was held at the gate of the Castle, at which were paid various dues of a somewhat curious sort, three hundred puffins or six-and-eightpence as their equivalent being required from Scilly, \* a bow of laburnum wood† or eightpence from Truro, a measure of lime from the manor of Penfest, and a hare from John Lercedekne, the total dues amounting to twelve pounds thirteen shillings in addition to the puffins, the bow, the lime, and the hare. One other point in the seisin roll deserves notice as supplying what the feudal customs do not—a link with the present time. It is stated that there was a park of a league in circuit, containing fifteen deer, but which was considered to be capable of maintaining forty, and without deer would be worth twenty shillings a year for agistment. Even to this day some property situate immediately beneath the Castle's walls is known as the Deer Park, a name that long since ceased to have a meaning.

But the connection of the Black Prince with Launceston did not alone consist in his being seised of the Castle. He was only seven

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\* It also appears from an "Inquisitio post mortem" bearing date 1348 that Sir Ralph de Blanchminster or Whitminster (de Albo Monasterio), lord of Scilly, held his castle with the islands from the Castle of Launceston, to which Castle or honour the lords of Scilly were bound to render annually a certain number of puffins. The more ancient tenure had been by the service of maintaining armed men to keep the peace. This fief of the Duchy eventually became vested in the Crown. † "Are de aburn."

years old when the dukedom was conferred upon him, and sixteen years later, accompanied by the members of his council and of his household, he slept within our gates.\* “On the 11th of August, 1353, the Prince was at Chudleigh, 18th August at Launceston, 24th August at Restormel, 1st and 2nd September at Restormel, 5th September at Launceston, 10th September at Restormel, 10th and 11th September at Exeter. Where the Prince was between these dates can only be matter of conjecture. His personal occupations were probably receiving the homage of vassals, of which many instances are recorded, and sporting. It is noticeable that seven days are not accounted for in August between the Prince being at Exeter and his being at Chudleigh; and that the dates relating to Restormel extend to seventeen days, with the exception of the 5th September, when he was at Launceston. The seven days referred to were probably passed at Exeter, near which was not only the Forest of Dartmoor, part of the Duchy possessions, but also the important Manor of Bradnich, belonging to it, and the residence of the steward of the Duchy. The Prince’s Council in attendance on him were, it may be supposed, occupied during the time of the visit in obtaining information about the extent and state of the Prince’s possessions. From the tenour of many orders of earlier date, directing his officers to repair his castles, it would appear that in 1353 they were found to be in a dilapidated and ruinous condition, and that even Restormel, the largest and most commodious of them, afforded but indifferent accommodation for the retinue of a court. A commission for an inquisition, dated 30th November, 1354, was issued for the purpose of ascertaining what lands Edmund Earl of Cornwall died possessed of. In the return of the jurors serving in this inquisition they gave the particulars of the Castles of Restormel, Launceston, and town of Lostwithiel, in their respective revenues.” It would be interesting to know where the first Duke of Cornwall was lodged during his stay in Dunheved. “At Launceston,” to again quote Mr. Boger, “besides the Castle, belonging to the Prince, which, from its apparent construction, would not much invite a halt, there was a religious

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\* Deeble Boger, Visit of Edward the Black Prince to Cornwall (a paper read before the Royal Institution of Cornwall, November, 1874.)

house, Launceston Priory, and to offer hospitality, especially to the Prince who was the feudal superior of the Prior, would be his natural and pleasant duty." And as the Priory is reputed to have obtained celebrity not only for its benevolent attentions to the poor but also for its hospitality to strangers, it may well have been at this institution that the Black Prince stayed.

If this were so, Edward's host was Thomas de Burden who succeeded on July 13, 1346, Adam de Knolle, who himself had been the successor, but at what date is not known, of Prior Horton.\* Adam de Knolle had proved himself an unworthy superior, and resigned, probably because he was required to do so, on June 26, 1346; what his offences were we do not know. It may have been that his accounts were badly kept, that he was too fond of dogs and not sufficiently fond of books, or that he had fallen in love with the game of chess—all of which misdemeanours had been charged years before upon a brother Augustinian Prior;† but upon the actual charge history is silent. It was during Prior de Burden's tenure of office that Ogerius Bant, a canon of Launceston, was appointed Prior of Bodmin, this being on March 22, 1349; some years later Bant incurred suspension, but Bishop Grandisson, on his proper submission, restored to him the seal of office on March 20, 1362. This appears, in fact, to have been an age of ecclesiastical troubles, and Launceston had a full connection with them. In 1356, John Hardy, appointed seven years previously to be Prior of St. Michael's Mount, was indicted at Launceston for having sent secret letters in 1354, with a sum in gold and silver amounting to sixty pounds, into Normandy to the King's enemies, and for harbouring two men from that country for two weeks at Treverabo. The alleged treason must have been committed when the war with France, which had arisen in 1339 out of the claim by Edward the Third to the French crown, was renewed, and when the Duke of Cornwall led his army of Freebooters up the Garonne to the plunder of Narbonne. But Prior Hardy proved his innocence of that which was alleged against him and was acquitted.‡

\* ante, p. 51.

† Athenæum, Archbishop Peckham's Register, February 17, 1883.

‡ Patent Rolls, 30 Ed. III., p. 3, m. 22.

The accession of Richard the Second in 1377 found Roger Leye Prior of Launceston, he having succeeded de Burden at some unknown time, but probably about 1368, when (presumably in consequence of an election of Prior) the Black Prince laid claim to the patronage,\* but certainly before May 29, 1373, a document of which date is in existence bearing his name as head of the canons. Leye in his turn was followed on October 27, 1379, by Stephen Tredydan, a Prior who might fairly have claimed to be a true representative of the church militant. Leland tells us† that he was “richly tumbled,” and this honour he doubtless deserved in the eyes of his fellows if only for the spirit he displayed in asserting what he considered to be the rights and privileges of the Priory. In January, 1399, he marched into Liskeard with an armed force, rescued from arrest its vicar, one Henry Frend, and carried away a book of the value of thirteen-and-fourpence and two towels of the value of six-and-eightpence, the property of the parishioners. A *distringas* issued, but the Crown granted a pardon and no judgment followed, history being silent as to whether book, towels, or vicar ever again came into the safe keeping of Liskeard. But Prior Tredydan was not satisfied with oppression of a military turn; he used his ecclesiastical powers to the same end, and, in 1400, the parishioners of Liskeard (in whom probably dwelt the remembrance of the previous year’s fray), Linkinhorne, and Talland complained to Parliament that this same Prior had obtained a papal bull for the extinction of those vicarages and the complete appropriation of the revenues on the ground of poverty, whereas the convent had an income of one thousand pounds (and here there seems a touch of scorn) which was sufficient to maintain fifteen canons; the petition added that the Pope had revoked the bull on discovery of the facts, but that the Prior had sent to Rome large sums of money to get the later bull removed. And Tredydan, according to this petition, had not been content to use influence only at Rome, for he had also besought Parliament to annul the Bull of Revocation, and it was against this that the worthy men of Liskeard, Linkinhorne, and Talland protested so vigorously.‡ A statute passed in 1402 provided a sufficient remedy for a grievance

\* ante, p. 54.    † Itinerary, vol. ii., p. 71.    ‡ Rolls of Parliament, vol. iii., p. 505.



like this, and in the next year the "turbulent priest" passed away from mortal strife.

It was within the first year of Tredydan's rule of the Priory that the "Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene, in the borough or town of Launceston" was made parochial. On June 12, 1380, the mayor and burgesses obtained a licence from Bishop Brantyngham to have service performed in this edifice,\* and it is probable that about the same date the old chantry chapel† was extended to accommodate the now increased number of inhabitants of the town. "The building," says Mr. Pattison,‡ speaking of this period, "was now enlarged. Among the materials extracted from the walls, the care of the present builder has detected and preserved some carved stone-work, forming a beautiful large window in the decorated style. This was the first addition to the little Norman church. It long continued to be the principal ecclesiastical edifice in the borough as the castle-chapel soon fell into ruins."|| And another authority \*\* observes that "the present Parish-Church was made out of a Chantry-Chapel, enlarged in the time of Henry IV,†† and made big enough to receive the Inhabitants of the Town." The tower which still overlooks St. Mary Magdalene's is certainly the product of an earlier period than the Church itself, and is probably to be assigned to a date very shortly after the burgesses had obtained Bishop Brantyngham's licence.

And here may be considered a question concerning Launceston in the reign of Edward the Third which has not hitherto received attention. It appears from a report of the Historical Manuscripts' Commission‡‡ that in 1363, on "Monday after the feast of St. Katherine the Virgin," William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury and Lord of Man, granted by charter "to his beloved nephew and godson, William, son of Guy de Bryone, the reversion in fee of the manor of

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\* Oliver, *Monasticon*, p. 22. + ante, p. 46. ‡ The Church of St. Mary Magdalene || Mr. Pattison also says: "The late discentombing process [1852] has brought to light a piscina of early English style, which once stood beside the chantry altar. To the same date belongs the fragment in the churchyard, once constituting the upper portion of a sculptured and figured cross." This latter fragment, it may be assumed, is the one which now surmounts the grave of the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence. In the Church also are at present [1883] lying an ancient carved font and a holy-water basin, discovered some time since in the churchyard, and fairly to be presumed to have belonged to the edifice which preceded the present Church. \*\* Camden, *Magna Britannia et Hibernia, Antiqua et Nova* (Edition 1720), vol. i., p. 338. †† 1399-1413. ‡‡ Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Second Report, Appendix, p. 23.



Dunheved, &c., which Thomas Waryn held for life and for one year after his death." If this be the Dunheved with which we are dealing, and not the Dunheved of Wiltshire (as may at first sight seem probable from the local connections of the Earl of Salisbury), the charter named is our first intimation of the connection between the Lord of Man and Launceston. And colour is lent to the supposition that this Dunheved is our Dunheved by the fact that Robert of Mortain, builder of Launceston Castle, was also Lord of Montacute, and that the Waryns were a Launceston family, of whom one member, Robert Waryn, was at a date subsequent to this period elected Prior.

The records of Richard the Second, like those of Henry the Second more than a century and a half before, are fruitful in references to the town. On May 1, 1383, letters patent were granted by the King touching the liberties of the Prior of Launceston (Lanceve-ton) and the burgesses of Dunheved, confirmatory of a certificate of a finding upon a Quo Warranto before the justices itinerant in 1302. In this document Earl Reginald, the Priory's benefactor, comes before us under the new name of "Reginald de Mortain, formerly Earl of Cornwall," and his arrangement between the Priory and the burgesses is recited and confirmed. The "jurors of the hundred of Est Wyveshire," or, as we should now say, "the Hundred of East," also appear in this document as a new body to be noticed. On May 2 of the same year, an inspeximus was granted, under the Great Seal, of the Charter of Earl Richard,\* confirming and extending the liberties he had granted. The witnesses to this document included Sir Andrew Cardinan, Sir Reginald Valletort, Sir William Bottreaux, Henry Bodrigan, and Roger de Trelosk—all names intimately connected with the history of Cornwall in general and Launceston in particular.† A number of local names are also to be found in a parchment indenture, formerly possessed by the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence,‡ which was "given at the borough of Dounheved, on Wednesday next after the Feast of the Translation of Saint Thomas the Martyr, in the eighth year of the reign of King

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\* ante, p. 39. † Both these documents are preserved among the borough records; the first is to be found in full in Oliver's *Monasticon*, the second is summarised in the Appendix to the Sixth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. ‡ Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, Appendix, p. 525.

Richard, after the Conquest the Second.”\* This was a grant by “Henry, son of Robert Page,† of Launcestone” to Roger de Lausant of “the hall and kitchen in the vill of Landu, with the whole third part of the land of the same vill to me belonging,” the witnesses including Serlo Wysa, Henry de Trecarl, John Langedone, John Page, and Henry Fox. The name of Trecarrell, previously noticed‡ as being peculiarly linked with that of Launceston, here again appears as that of a prominent townsman, as it had also done in a deed of the reign of Henry the Third or the early part of that of Edward the First in which “Sir William Wysa, of Greyston” had granted to William de Landu “all my right that I had, or could have, to one pair of white gloves, with homage and service, which Thomas son of Richard de Landu, and his heirs or assigns, were wont to pay and to do yearly, unto me and my heirs and assigns at the Feast of St. Michael, for that half acre of land which William Fridley formerly held in the vill of Landu,” this document bearing the name of John de Trecarl among the witnesses, as well as those of Robert de Hurdin (now Hurdon) and Roger de Lausant (now Lezant.)

The “pair of white gloves, with homage and service” which Thomas de Landu had to render to Sir William Wise is a reminder of many curious customs of feudal days with which the name of Launceston or of places in its district are mingled—customs which assist us to realise more clearly than any philosophical dissertation the difference between the tenures of the Middle Ages and those of to-day. It is recorded, for instance, that, among the free tenants of the manor of Liskeard, John de Landewarner held of the Duke of Cornwall two Cornish acres of land, by the service of meeting the Duke at Polson Bridge on his coming at any time into Cornwall, and there receiving a grizzled cap from Walter de Carburra, which this same Walter was called upon to render for his tenements to the Duke at the spot named, and Landewarner had further to carry the cap through the county at the expense and in the presence of Cornwall’s lord. Polson Bridge is identified with a similar custom in respect to the manor of Pengelly, in the parish of St. Neot, which, and until as late

\* 1335. † This name may have been that of the family which gave its present appellation to Page’s Cross, which is on the high road from Launceston to Trecarrell, Landue, and Lezant. ‡ ante, p. 30.

as the reign of James the First, was held by the service of providing a grey cloak for the Duke of Cornwall whenever he should come into the county, this having to be delivered at Polson Bridge to the lord of the manor of Carbilly, whose office it was to attend the Duke with it during his stay west of the Tamar.\* The coming of the Duke into Cornwall was also opportunity for providing another fulfilment of feudal service, which seems to reduce the early mayors of Launceston below the status to which as representative chiefs of a free borough they were entitled. The lord of the manor of Treveniel in Northhill (now the property of Mr. Rodd, of Trebartha), claimed of the Mayor of Launceston through immemorial custom the service of having his stirrup held by him whenever he should mount his horse upon the occasion of the Duke coming to the town. The same event was further of importance to the bailiff of the manor of Stokeclimland, who in addition to other services had, when the Duke visited Launceston, to carry as often as the lord desired and at his own expense one load of wood daily from the manor to the town. And, anticipating a record of over two centuries later than the time of which we have been speaking, we find from a warrant, dated February 25, 1616, and addressed to the free tenants of the manors of Swaunacott and St. Mary Week, that the same were held of the Castle of Launceston by knight service, and, from an order of 1637, that the steward and bailiff had to appear within goat-skin mantles and account for them before the Duchy court at Launceston. Of such holdings under the Castle as that by the yearly render of a brace of greyhounds, as in the case of the manors of Lanyhorne and Elerky, in the parishes of Ruanlanyhorne and Veryan, mention has already been made in connection with the seisin roll of 1337.†

Although Henry the Fourth came to the throne because of civil war, it was soon made apparent to the burgesses of Launceston that they were to suffer no loss from the change, and that though the Second Richard in publicly resigning his crown had confessed his inability to govern, the extended liberties which he had granted to them‡ were not to be curtailed. In the very first hours of the new

\* This is a somewhat similar custom to one recorded in Carew's Survey concerning an acre of land in Lamellyn, which was held in the time of Edward I. by the service of keeping the King's grey coat when he came into Cornwall. † ante, p. 55. ‡ ante, p. 60.

monarch's reign—eleven days in fact before Richard had formally abdicated—letters patent were granted by Henry, bearing date September 18, 1399, confirming the previous King's charter.\* This haste on Henry's part to do service to Launceston is worth noting as an indirect evidence, where direct is wanting, that the burgesses had declared in Bolingbroke's favour in the struggle to overthrow Richard. When we proceed from the reign of the Fourth to that of the Fifth Henry, we find that Shakspeare's Prince Hal granted on January 25, 1415, a charter of pardon to the mayor, provosts (prepositi), and commonalty of "the borough of Dounheved or town of Launceston," having, on the previous May 12, issued letters patent reciting inspections of several earlier charters, and recognising that assizes had been held in the borough from a period beyond the memory of man.

From the point at which were last touched the names of Launceston's representatives in Parliament,† the town had continued with some unexplained interruptions to return members, most of whom are now to us nothing but names. Irregularities in election were then but little heeded; it did not appear strange that in some parliaments counties alone should be represented, or that in others no Cornish borough, or at most only one or two, should return members. But in the majority of cases Launceston appears to have enjoyed the privilege of election, and the burgesses do not seem to have too loudly grumbled at having to pay their members' expenses. A question of some interest is suggested by the fact that a large proportion of the early members for Launceston sat also for Helston at various periods and sometimes even in the same parliament.‡ What may have been the especial bond of sympathy between the easternmost and westernmost boroughs of the county—a sympathy not similarly

\* This document is in the borough archives, and both deed and seal are stated to be in fine preservation. † ante, p. 49. ‡ Robert Mayudy was returned for both Launceston and Helston in the parliament of 1337-38, and was again elected for the latter borough in 1338-39; John Tremayne, who was member for Launceston in 1344, sat for Helston in three parliaments; and his son, who was elected for Launceston in 1351-52, also sat for Helston. Several other instances could be given as well to exhibit the close electoral connection between Helston and Launceston as to show how it was possible in those times for one man to represent several constituencies in one parliament. The most prominent instance of this is John Hamly, who was returned for Helston, Liskeard, Lostwithiel, and Truro in 1355, and for Launceston, Helston, Lostwithiel, and Truro in 1357-58; John Caeron had been chosen as the second member for Launceston, Bodmin, Lostwithiel, and Truro in the former parliament.

shown in aught like so striking a fashion between Launceston and any other Cornish town—must be matter for conjecture; but the guess may be indulged in that this had to large extent arisen from a fact apparent from a charter of the time of Henry the Sixth, in which Hugh de Treverbyn granted to the borough of Porthyghan, better known by its later name of West Looe, “all the libertyes and antient customs which other the free Burgesses in Cornwall have, viz.: Helstone and Lauceston”—the fact that these two were the typical free boroughs of Cornwall.

In the latter years of the reign of Henry the Fourth Launceston had for one of its members Richard Trelawny, son of Sir John Trelawny, of Trelawne. It is recorded of this Sir John that he not only acquitted himself so well at Agincourt as to increase his reputation and gain a pension, but that he so won the favour of Henry the Fifth that that monarch caused to be inscribed over one of Launceston's gates and immediately under the royal arms the distich

He that will do aught for mee  
Let hym love well Sir John Tirlawnee.

Bond\* adds to this that the lines were “under the picture of Henry the Fifth which stood formerly over the gate at Launceston,” but the story is somewhat doubtful. Sir John does not seem to have had any especial connection with Launceston; he was probably great grandson of William Trelawny who sat for the town in 1325, his son was certainly member for the borough, and he himself as county coroner must have paid the place many an official visit; but all these things, even when coupled with his admitted bravery, afford no reason for the quondam Prince Hal affixing poetry in his praise upon a Launceston gate. The story is told only as something heard and not as anything seen, and had probably its origin in the fact of Sir John's influence at court, which was displayed in various ways not only in the reign of Henry the Fifth but also in that of his successor, the latter granting him in 1424 a fair at Menheniot which continues to be held to this day.

After the death of Tredydan in 1403,\* Roger Combrigg became Prior of Launceston, but, in great contrast to his predecessor, did

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\* Quoted in New Parochial History of Cornwall, vol. iv., p. 32. † ante, p. 59.

nothing to stamp his name upon local history. He died in office on Wednesday, June 18, 1410, and was succeeded on the fifth of the following month by John Honyland, the principal ecclesiastical event of whose term of office was the erection in 1427 of a chantry within the Priory, dedicated to St. Margaret and St. John of Bridlington, at which one of the community had weekly to officiate: the funds of the Priory were not, however, allowed to suffer by this innovation, as the officiating canon received for his service two marks from the vicarage of Linkinhorne, three marks and a half from Tamerton, and one mark from Werrington. This measure of monetary prudence may have been forced upon the Priory by temporary stress caused by a financial transaction entered into with the Sovereign some time before. In the year that Agincourt was fought Henry the Fifth was in want of money, and from an Issue Roll of Easter, 1415,\* it appears that upon the security of the King's jewels, "John Copelston, junior, and divers other persons" came from Devonshire to London with the sum of £573 6s. 8d., borrowed from various ecclesiastical and municipal dignitaries of the two western counties, among whom was the Prior of Launceston. Honyland, who must have been one of the negotiators in this transaction, was Prior until his death on September 28, 1430, and was succeeded by William Shyre, who was, however, owing to some irregularity in his election, not officially declared Prior by Bishop Lacy until August 21 of the next year.

In the customarily accepted list of Priors of Launceston there is at this point a gap for a considerable period. When Shyre died, what he did while head of the canons, and who it was that succeeded him—all these points are alike unknown, and it is not until 1507, as will afterwards be shown, that the accepted list is again of service. But a Rental-book of the Priory, possessed by the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence, shows that in 1474 Robert Waryn† was Prior. The book is described‡ as "a small folio volume containing about 56 leaves of paper, now inclosed in a handsome modern binding. . . The first entry in the book is, in a clear bold hand,—

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\* Frederick Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer from King Henry III. to King Henry VI. inclusive*, p. 341.    † ante, p. 69.    ‡ Sixth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, Appendix, p. 525.



‘Launceston londe. Rentale ibidem renovatum tempore Roberti Waryne, Prior [*sic*] Prioratus Sancti Stephani, Launceston; anno Domini millesimo quadragesimo septuagesimo quarto; et anno regni Regis Edwardi Quarti quarto-decimo.’—The names of the properties and tenants of the Priory then follow; and on the 8th leaf are the names of the burgesses of Neuweport 14 Edward IV. . . . Further on, the volume contains (tr.):—‘Names of the tenants of the manor of Launcestonlonde, in the 14th year of the reign of King Edward the Fourth.’ Copies of deeds and leases, and numerous abstracts of leases, are interspersed in its pages; for example,—‘John Syssely has a lease, for 10 years, of Canonhalle.’ Some of the tenants, as, for instance, Ralph Carkyke, who holds Carsbroke, are bound to carry salt and lime for the Convent, when forewarned, on penalty of 12 pence for failure as to each cart. The tenants at Carnedon Prior seem, in almost every instance, to pay an addition of 4 pence to their fixed rent, for hens (*gallinis*); such tenants going under the name of ‘*conventionarii*’ (*covenanters*), as distinguished apparently from the freeholders. The names also are given of certain ‘freeholders of Launcestonlonde, who ought to plough and reap there.’”

Some glimpses of the inner life of the burgesses are to be obtained concerning this period from the borough accounts and ecclesiastical records. In the former, under date 1446, is an entry of “rent paid to John Parkman for a tenement in Castel Strete formerly called Le Dryhows, 4½d.”; the sum of eightpence is allowed for a hundred “*de latthis pro Gilda Aul’a*,”\* and six-and-eightpence “for the keeper of the Clokke and the Sacristan.” Four years later, when Cade’s rebellion was convulsing the country, the then Launcestonians, as appears from entries in the same accounts, strengthened their fortifications so as to be ready for emergency, money being

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\* One of the first mentions of the existence of a Launceston Guildhall is in the Ministers’ Accounts of the Duchy of Cornwall for 1338-9 (these being the earliest Duchy Accounts extant) in which John Beyghe, mayor, and Robert Page and Richard Gybbe, provosts, made a return concerning the fee farm of the borough and the escheats, among which is “*Leproci de Gylham Martin’ redditus de la Gyhall*” (*Gylhall*); see Duchy of Cornwall Accounts, abstracted by Henry Cole, British Museum Additional MSS., vol. 12493, p. 12.



likewise paid to certain "sawdyers" who were to work the "gunnys."\* Another matter of interest concerning early Launceston is to be found among the Tanner Manuscripts, at present located in the Bodleian Library, in a document bearing the title "Inquiry concerning the marriage of T. Morley, of Launceston, 11th May, 1450."

These same Tanner Manuscripts establish a link between the affairs of Launceston and those of the great ones of the land, which is worthy of note. It has been said† that William Shyre, who was chosen head of the canons on the death of John Honyland in 1430, was not officially declared Prior for eleven months after his election. An intrigue appears to have been set on foot against him, and Cardinal Beaufort, then Bishop of Winchester, wrote to Bishop Lacy of Exeter regarding the dispute.‡ Shyre evidently had reason to be suspicious of the interference of the Cardinal; and he sent a letter to Humphrey Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, (who at that moment was at deadly enmity with Beaufort, and was even endeavouring to deprive him of his see) beseeching him to grant a commission to Thomas Bromis to settle the disputed election.|| The petition had its effect, for, as has been seen, Shyre was ultimately seated in his office; and that he continued to regard Gloucester as his patron is shown by his subsequently appealing to the Duke to settle a suit between himself and Lord Botreaux.§

In connection with a record in Oliver\*\* that on June 16, 1440, Bishop Lacy granted an indulgence of forty days to all true penitents who should contribute assistance "to the support of the minstrels of St. Mary Magdalene at Launceston,"†† Mrs. Gibbons supplies‡‡ a legend to the effect that Veysey, a later holder of the see of Exeter, on his coming to Launceston to consecrate the burial ground adjoining the old chantry, was met at the South Gate by the band of minstrels, who sang "one of the merry choruses with which, in olden days, they had been used to greet the monks on their return from their hunting excursions:" this was a proceeding sure to arouse the indignant horror of the ascetic prelate's pious attendants, as well as of

\*C. H. Peter, *Lecture on the Early History of Dunheved* (1882). † ante, p. 65. ‡ *Index Codicum MSS.*, Thomæ Tanner, p. 827. § *Ibid.*, p. 1112. || *Ibid.* \*\**Monasticon*, p. 22.

†† "Ad sustentationem ministrallorum Beate Marie Magdalene, Launceston." Vide *Lacy's Register*, fol. 213. ‡‡ *Itinerary*, pp. 49-54.

the Bishop himself, though ultimately the latter not only joined heartily in the chorus, but promised to set apart a small portion of the revenues of his see for the maintenance of the Minstrels. Though it always seems a somewhat ruthless proceeding to attempt to dispel an old tradition, it may be noted regarding this one that it was not Veysey, or Vesey, himself who consecrated the cemetery attached to St. Mary Magdalene's, but his suffragan, Thomas Vyvyan, Prior of Bodmin, and in any case the story is of later date than the period with which we are now dealing. From Lacy's Register\* may be gathered a further fact regarding the fifteenth century, the Bishop having, on October 29, 1447, granted an indulgence in favour of "the Chapel of St. Catherine, near the Priory of Launceston." The days of indulgences were not yet at an end; in another century Tetzal had arisen, and likewise had Luther; the new light had spread, and indulgences had vanished from England as completely as had the Chapel of St. Catherine from the neighbourhood of Launceston. Another sight of the social state of this age is afforded by the circumstances of the murder, in 1471, of one Joslin Glynn, of Morval House. The murderers were arrested, and were to have been arraigned at the next Launceston Assizes, but Glynn's widow petitioned Parliament to have the case tried in London by a Cornish Jury, on the ground that she could have no redress for these outrages in her own county, and Parliament recognised the justice of her plea.

And now for the first time we begin to see Launceston as others have seen it. The earliest visitor to the town who left an account of it which exists till to-day was William of Worcester, a scholar of Oxford, who, in 1478, journeyed to Cornwall and carefully noted the incidents of his trip. He set out from Norwich on August 17, reached London three days later, arrived at Bristol by September 1, and departed for Cornwall the next day. September 13, which was a Sunday, found him at Launceston, where he spent the day and the night, pursuing his journey towards the west on the Monday. Having visited St. Michael's Mount, he turned back by Penryn to Bodmin, and thence left Cornwall by way of the south coast. His descriptions are bald

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\* Vol. iii., fol. 295.

and disjointed, but he is especially careful to mention distances, to note the rivers, the bridges, and the towns, and from him we gather not only that Launceston was at that time the largest as well as the chief of the towns of Cornwall, \* but also that the bridges of Polson and Greystone were in existence, the former being several times referred to, as if its importance had particularly impressed him. † He summarises early Launceston history in very much the same fashion as later writers: "Bishop Warlewast established the church of regular canons of Launceston. . . . The castle of Mortain in Launceston was founded by the Earl of Mortain"; and mentions that his host during his stay of a day and a night was a certain Doctor Ewen, that he left on the Monday afternoon, and that he proceeded over the moor, where he met with an accident to his horse. ‡

And now we pass into a period of civil contention which left a mark upon the history of Launceston as on that of England. With the Wars of the Roses Cornwall had little to do; and it is not until the accession of Richard of Gloucester, in 1483, that the chronicle of Launceston is interwoven with that of the long-continued strife. Richard Edgecumbe, of Cothele, and afterwards castellan of Launceston, appears to have been notoriously disaffected to Richard's cause, for although we find there was granted to him on January 26, 1484, a free pardon "for all treasons," § a special commission of oyer and terminer was issued on October 24 of the same year "for the trial of Richard Egecombe, esq, John Lenne, late of Launceston, mercer, John Bellamy, of Lyskard, mercer, and John Toser, of Exilond, dyer, accused of certain treasons, felonies, conspiracies,

\* Memorandum quod villa Lawnceston est principalis et major latitudo totius comitatus Cornubiæ. † He makes in all four references to it, in one of which he describes it as being a bridge of six arches, built at the public expense. With regard to Greystone, the date of its erection is stated to have been about half-a-century before William of Worcester thus took note of it, as would appear by a quotation in the New Parochial History of Cornwall (vol. iii, p. 124,) from a history of the parish of Bradstone, Devon, by the Rev. Mr. Holmes, a former rector, which states that it was built by John Palmer, who represented Launceston in several Parliaments of the reigns of Henry the Fifth and Henry the Sixth. It may be noted as connected with this, that the first colleague John Palmer had was, according to the list of Launceston's Members given by Browne Willis, Oliver Wise, whose family seat was at Greston, and whose arms, it may be noted, are emblazoned in Launceston Guildhall, he having been mayor of the borough in 1473. ‡ Locutus fui de doctore Ewen et certis croniciis. Lume, 14 die Septembris, exaltationis sanctæ crucis de prioratu Launceston, equitavi per le Moore post meridiem, ubi equus meus occidit. § Patent Rolls, 1 Ric. III., p. 5.

&c.”\* Cornwall and Devon seem, in fact, during Richard’s reign to have been seething with insurrection, for on November 13, 1483, a commission had been issued “for the arrest of rebels in those counties, and the seizure of their goods and estates, and to make inquest of the value thereof”;† and Halnathus Malyverer—one to whom the commission was granted—is to be noted. He was probably either son or grandson of the Halvethus Malivery, who, according to Carew,‡ held in 1402 half a knight’s fee in the manor of Tamerton, and of the Halvatheus Maulever who, with his wife, having established the right in the King’s Bench, presented to the rectory of Ladock in 1470. This much is certain of him that he was a favourite of the King, for to this “esquire of the royal body” was granted on December 1, 1484, the manors of Boconnock, Glyn, and Bradock, which had been stripped from “Edward Courtenay, the rebel,”|| and on the seventeenth of the same month was given “the office of constable of the castle of Launceveton, alias Dunheved, for life.”§ But the battle of Bosworth Field on August 22 of the following year brought his term of office to a much earlier close.\*\*

At Bosworth Sir Richard Edgcumbe received the honour of knighthood in the field, and on the accession of the Earl of Richmond was substantially rewarded, among his preferments being the constablenesship of Launceston, this being especially reserved to him by the Act of Resumption passed in the first year of the seventh Henry’s reign.†† As to the reward given to “John Lenne, late of Launceston, mercer,” who had been Sir Richard’s co-mate in conspiracy, we know nothing of certainty, but may judge from later records that his services to the Tudor cause were remembered to the advantage of either himself or his sons; for in 1515, in an Act for levying a subsidy, the commissioners named for Launceston included William Lenne and John Lenne ‡‡; and in a subsidy of 1523, the former again figures as a commissiioner for Launceston. || ||

It was not long after his accession before Henry the Seventh

\* Ibid, 2 Ric. III., p. 1.

† Ibid, 1 Ric. III., p. 1.

‡ Survey, fol. 40 b.

|| Patent Rolls, 2 Ric. III., p. 2.

§ Ibid. There is a similar entry (“Halvath Mauleverer hath the office of Constable of the Castle of Launceston”) in the Harleian MSS.

433, art. 1139. \*\* It is not recorded when Malyverer died, but the fact that “Dame Anne Malyorey” presented to the rectory of Ladock in 1518 points to his decease prior to that date.

†† Rolls of Parliament, vol. vi., p. 367. ‡‡ Statutes of the Realm, vol. iii., p. 156. |||| J. S. Brewer, Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII., vol. iii., part 2, p. 1365.

was seriously threatened from the county which a few years previously had furnished him so many adherents. In 1497, while the King was engaged in some disturbances with the Scots, the Cornish rose against a parliamentary subsidy to defray the cost of the war. The arrival in the county of the collectors of the new impost was the signal for revolt, the tax-gatherers reporting that they found in Cornwall "a stout, big, and hardy race of men tumultuously assembled," and inflamed by one Thomas Flammoek, a gentleman, and Michael Joseph, a blacksmith, who designed to lead them to London. The party, which numbered at first only three thousand, soon swelled to six, and marched from Bodmin to Launceston, and thence to Blackheath, where they were overthrown with heavy loss, and their leaders either hanged or beheaded. Less than two months later the unruly spirits of Cornwall were again to the fore, Perkin Warbeck landing at St. Michael's Mount, and proceeding through Cornwall to Bodmin, where he was proclaimed King of England; thence he marched into Devonshire, probably through Launceston, as Flammoek's men had done, but the rebellion, like its predecessor, came to an ignominious end.

From the stirring scenes of civil strife we return to more peaceful concerns, though even in these there are echoes of contention to be heard. Henry the Seventh, ever on the watch for some method by which to increase his wealth, had seized the Stannaries, consequent upon the interference of Arthur, Duke of Cornwall. That in so doing he had deprived the tinnors of privileges granted and confirmed by previous sovereigns weighed not at all with the employer of Empson and Dudley, but the one circumstance which did weigh was that he found the stannaries not so profitable as he had expected. He was, therefore, sufficiently gracious in the opening years of the sixteenth century, to grant the tinnors his pardon—on payment of a thousand pounds—and to restore their liberties, together with the privilege of having their concerns tried by a jury of twenty-four, chosen by the mayors of the four stannary towns, Launceston, Lostwithiel, Truro, and Helston. Previous to this charter having been granted, Henry had, on February 10, 1487, issued Letters Patent to the borough of Launceston, confirming those of earlier date; and seventeen years later the same

monarch decreed that eight county courts should yearly be holden in Dunheved.

In 1506, three years before the Seventh Henry departed this life, we first have tangible mention of St. Thomas Church. That it had existed for a long period we have already had proof, but the date of its erection is unknown. The Chapel of St. Thomas is rated at thirty shillings in the Inquisition of 1294,\* and, on November 6, 1333, its cemetery was consecrated by Bishop Grandisson, but the date of its becoming parochial is uncertain. Difficulties having in the course of years arisen between the Prior, the proprietary rector, and the inhabitants of the chapelry of St. Thomas the Martyr,† “in the parish of St. Stephens-in-Midelhill,” a composition was entered into by the Prior and Convent of Launceston on the one part, and the Parishioners of St. Thomas on the other, this occurring in the prelacy of Hugh Oldam, the deed being signed at Exeter on November 9, 1506.‡ In this, provision is made for a priest to celebrate in the Chapel of St. Thomas, for the inhabitants every year on Christmas Day to attend matins in the conventual church, and for the repairs of the chapel and the churchyard. It was further directed that the Prior should provide bread and wine for the masses and wax and holy oil for the baptismal font|| and that the churchwardens should annually present, in token of subjection to and recognition of the mother church, a wax candle of a pound in weight at the high altar of the mother church of St. Stephen, in turn with that of the conventual church. The sacristan, or clerk of the chapel, was instructed to lodge or sleep in a certain chamber of the convent tower, of easy access to any in case it should be necessary to call the curate to administer the Sacrament; and with regard to the point last mentioned, it may be noted that there is a square latticed

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\* ante, p. 46. † The parish is now known as St. Thomas the Apostle, but it was originally named after Thomas Becket. ‡ Given in full in Oliver's Monasticon, as extracted from Bishop Oldam's Register, fol. 53, b. || Concerning this font, as “the chief feature in St. Thomas Church to interest antiquarians,” Mrs. Gibbons (Itinerary, p. 34,) says: “By persons competent to judge, it has been pronounced of Norman date; and from the Eastern character given to the heads at each angle, it was surmised by the late Sir W. Carpenter Rowe (a native of Launceston,) that the artist had been connected with the Crusades.” In the New Parochial History of Cornwall, (vol. iv., p. 221,) it is stated that “the massiveness and superior character of the font induces a belief that it once belonged to the ancient religious establishment, of which this locality was the site.”



opening in the tower at St. Thomas, which, according to tradition, was used for the purpose of allowing the lepers of St. Leonard's to partake of the Communion.

The Prior referred to, though not mentioned by name, in the document just quoted, was William Hopkyn, who died in office on August 10, 1507, and who thirteen months previously (July 15, 1506) had given his consent to a composition respecting the cemetery of the chapel of St. Winwolaus of Tremayne, a daughter church of the Priory. The sub-prior, John Carlian, was chosen on September 18, 1507, to fill his place, and to him and his successors was granted by Bishop Oldam a licence, bearing date January 7, 1509, to wear during divine service and processions "amices" of grey fur, similar to those worn by the canons of Exeter Cathedral and other collegiate churches. But it was not all sunshine and the wearing of new vestments in the Priory's history at this period, as is testified by a paper still preserved in the Record Office, bearing date April, 1511. This gives a list of "diverse prelates bound to the King deceased [Henry the Seventh], and for none payment put in suit in the second year of the present King," and among them figures the name "John, prior of Launceston," with those of sixteen other heads of priories or abbeys.\* What the debt may have been or under what circumstances it was contracted does not appear, but what does appear is that it was not paid, and accordingly legal process followed in November, 1512,† the Attorney and Solicitor General being directed to take action against the Prior, and to be assisted among others in the task by "Master Tho. Woley our almoner," destined to do much more delicate work for the King in later times. This, it may be noted, is the third instance in which we can find that the Priory of Launceston had direct monetary dealings with the sovereign: in the reign of Henry the Fifth, the Prior was a lender to the King‡; in that of Henry the Sixth, William Shyre was compelled to write to the monarch asking for the settlement of certain moneys and grievances||; and now in the time of Henry the Eighth, it was the turn of the monarch to press the Priory for payment of sums due.

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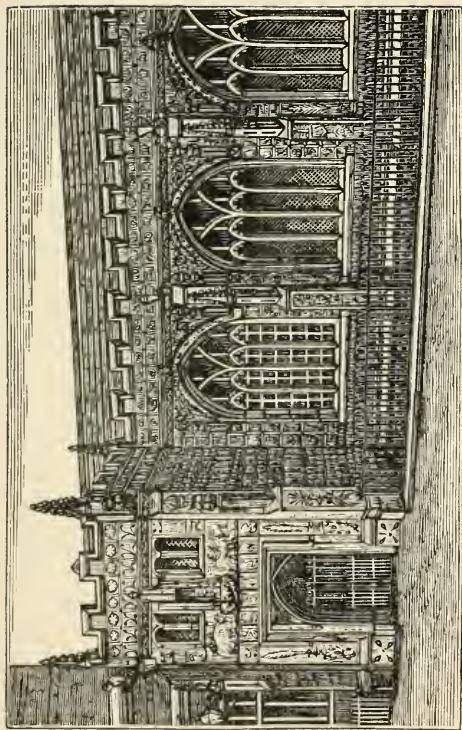
\* Brewer, Henry VIII., vol. i., 1639. † Ibid., vol. i., 3497. ‡ ante, p. 65. || Index Codicum MSS., Thomæ Tanneri, p. 1112.



John Carlian was probably Prior when occurred an event much affecting us even to this day—the building of the existing Church of St. Mary Magdalene. Henry Trecarrell\* of Trecarrell, in Lezant, to whom this act of pious munificence is due, is one who should for this be held in ever grateful remembrance by the people of the town.† He is “described as having been very learned in philosophy, astrology, astronomy, and other sciences; and it is said that having surveyed the planetary orbs just as his child was expected to be brought into the world, he conceived that the time was unfavourable to its birth, and forebode a speedy and accidental death to the child. . . . The (son) grew up in a very promising way, until a servant maid having placed him to stand near a bowl of water in order to wash him, chanced to have forgotten the towel; and stepping into another room to procure one, on her return found the boy dead, having fallen into the water, with his head foremost; and in consequence of this unfortunate event, the father spent a great part of his large property in charitable purposes, and in building and repairing religious edifices.” Thus far Mr. C. S. Gilbert,‡ but the mixture of the sublime and the somewhat ridiculous tends to shake one’s faith in the authenticity of the legend.

The public service rendered by Trecarrell in various directions affords further matter for disbelief in the story of his devotion to astrology. Sprung from a family which long had settled at the place of his birth, the name of Henry Trecarrell is one of frequent mention in the records of the reign of Henry the Eighth. The year 1511, marked as being that in which he commenced the erection of St. Mary Magdalene’s, may be further noted as that in which we first find him on the commission of the peace for Cornwall,|| though he figures in the previous year on that for Devon.§ On March 3, 1512,

\* Commonly called in local narratives “Sir Henry Trecarrell,” but he does not appear as such in the family pedigree given in the New Parochial History of Cornwall, vol. iii., p. 123, nor in the many documents still preserved, and hereafter referred to, regarding his public services. † It is gratifying to note that this appears at length to have become the general Launceston view, two evidences having within the last three years been furnished for the first time of a desire to hold Trecarrell’s name in honoured memory. In 1881, when the new Guildhall was built, the arms of Henry Trecarrell, who was mayor in 1543, the year before his death, were emblazoned among those of other of our greater local worthies; and in 1883, there was placed in the church of the Magdalene a stained glass window, dedicated “to the glory of God and in pious memory of Sir Henry Trecarrell.” ‡ Historical Survey of the County of Cornwall, p. 496. || May 28, 1511; Brewer, Henry VIII., vol. i., 1694. He is mentioned also in several later commissions, but not in all that were issued. § July 12, 1510: Ibid, vol. i., 1166.



THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.



he was named with one Nicholas Oppy to inquire as to the possessions held by William Antron of Antron, Cornwall, who had been attainted in 1504\*; on September 20, 1514, he was appointed one of the Duchy commissioners†; on July 4, 1521, a stannary assessor‡; and on August 30, 1523,|| and again on August 1, 1524, § a commissioner for Cornwall to collect the subsidy; and on November 9, 1523, one of four to make an after-death inquiry concerning the lands and heir of John Trenowthe, of Cornwall.\*\*

During the whole period of these of Trecarrell's exertions in the public service, the Church of the Magdalene was in process of erection. The name of the architect of this, perhaps the most striking of the Cornish churches,†† is as unknown to us as are the names of those whose sculpture of the granite of which the walls are entirely composed would have entitled them to remembrance. The arms of Henry the Eighth at the apex of the chancel window, together with the Roman numerals MCCCCXI over the porch, tell us the date of the building's foundation; while the sculptured representation of a company of musicians beneath the figure of the Magdalene which reposes under the great east window, is evidence that the minstrels of St. Mary‡‡ had a warm place in the founder's remembrance. And in the midst of the many carvings with which the exterior is enriched—the legends of St. George and the Dragon and of St. Martin of Tours over the porch, the extinguished torch above the north door, the arms of Trecarrell and of Kelway,||| the pomegranate and the palm-branch, the wind-mill and the mansion, the feathers and the foliage—stands out, letter by letter upon the shields that surround the building, the solemn invocation: "Ave Maria, gracie plena, Dominus tecum; sponsus amat sponsam; Maria optimam partem elegit. O quam terribilis ac metuendus es locus iste; vere aliud non est hic nisi domus Dei et porta celi."† And set above these awesome words, as if in all humility to lead the soul from melancholy contemplation to

\* Rot. Pat. 3 Hen. VIII., p. 3, m. 2d.—quoted by Brewer, Henry VIII., vol. i., 3039.

† Ibid, vol. i., 5431. ‡ Ibid, vol. iii. || Ibid, vol. iii. § Ibid, vol. iv. \*\* Ibid, vol. iii.

†† Vide Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. vi., p. 427, art., "Cornwall"; J. D. Sedding, Cornish Churches (1882). ‡‡ ante, p. 67. ||| Trecarrell married Margaret, daughter and heir of John Kelway, of Lezant. §§ "Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; the bridegroom loveth the bride; Mary hath chosen the better part. O how terrible and fearful is this place; surely this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven."

the things of hope, is the legend over the south door—"We will go into His tabernacle, and fall low on our knees before His foot-stool."

For the purposes of the church a cemetery was required, and to provide this, John Baker, who at some date unknown had succeeded Carlian as Prior, conveyed on August 1, 1521, on behalf of the Convent, the fee of "Le Polholme Gardyn" (which is described as lying between the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene on the west part, and the town wall and the road leading to "Le Blindhole," and to another garden of the Priory on the east side,) to Richard Miller, the then mayor, John Chamond and Henry Trecarrell, esquires, and the burgesses of Launceston, in return for which the mayor and corporation bound themselves to pay yearly at Michaelmas a consideration of six-and-eight-pence.\*

Three years later the Church had been so far completed as to admit of its consecration, and Vesey (or Veysey) of Exeter commissioned to the work his suffragan, Thomas Vyvyan, Prior of Bodmin, and titular Bishop of Mægara. The cemetery purchased in 1521, and which lies on the east of the Church above the Upper Walk, was directed to be consecrated at the same time as the chapel of "St. Mary Magdalene, in the borough of Dunheved, near to the castle of Launceston, †" the deed being signed at Crediton, on June 18, 1524. The exact date of the ceremony is unknown; the popular rejoicings and the ecclesiastical ceremonies attending it can only be imagined; that mayor and corporation, prior and canons, Bishop Vyvyan and Henry Trecarrell, played noted parts in the day's proceedings, we may consider to be certain—and we know no more. But the occasion is one ever to be held in memory as marking the birth-day of modern Launceston. The shadow of impending dissolution was soon to fall upon the ancient Priory; the Castle in the course of centuries was to crumble into picturesque ruin; but the Church of the Magdalene was destined to remain through these three hundred years a monument to Trecarrell's piety, which may last for ages yet. And though the Roman ritual with which it was consecrated was soon swept aside, the same Liturgy of the Church of

\* Vesey's Register, vol. ii., fol. 33.      † "Burgum de Downhevede juxta castrum de Lawneeston." The instrument is given in full in Vesey's Register, vol. ii., fol. 1.

England was being said and sung before its altar, even previous to its builder's death, as is being said and sung to-day, and the worshipper at this present, when once within its walls, is removed as it were but a hand-shake from Trecarrell himself.





#### IV.—FROM THE BUILDING OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S TO THE ELECTION OF SIR JOHN ELIOT (1524—1623.)



THE Church of St. Mary Magdalene having just been consecrated, the inhabitants of Launceston in the early years of the second quarter of the sixteenth century were entitled to believe that little change in the ecclesiastical arrangements of their town was to be expected for a long while to come. The whispers from foreign parts of the doings of a daring monk who, having set Pope and Church at defiance, had brought upon himself literary chastisement from no less a personage than King Henry himself, seemed not to affect the dwellers in the ancient town. But events marched rapidly in those days of religious change; in the same year that St. Mary Magdalene's was consecrated, Wolsey obtained from the Pope a bull for the suppression of monasteries to the amount of three thousand a year for the maintenance of his college; and although this measure did not touch the religious house at Launceston, even here must some murmurings have been aroused by an arbitrary course which formed an evil precedent. Four years later commenced the struggle between King and Pope which began in proceedings for a divorce and ended in a reformation of religion; and in 1531, the separation between England and Rome took place. The clergy met in convocation and declared the King's marriage to be void, and as John (Baker) Prior of Launceston, figures in a list of persons summoned to the Convocation of Canterbury in 1529,\* thus shewing that our Priors were entitled to a seat in that assembly, it is probable that his successor and our last Prior, John Shere,† participated in this decision.

\*Brewer, Henry VIII., vol. iv., p. 269. †Appointed, according to Dugdale, June 6, 1531



But complaisance to the King's will in the matter of the divorce was not sufficient to save the clergy and the religious houses from the ruin that was threatening. The former were compelled to acknowledge Henry as supreme head of the Church and were forbidden to appeal to Rome, the latter were daily drawn nearer to destruction. In 1534, Convocation declared its submission to Henry's authority, and the individual clergy followed suit. On August 28, of that year, John Shere and his Launceston brethren signed an acknowledgment of the supremacy. The "Priory of St. Stephen of Launceston" was represented in this document (still extant and with seal unbroken,) by twelve canons. John Shere, as Prior, headed the list, followed by John Morle, Sub-Prior, and then in their order, John Baker, John Hicks, John Fort, John Hau, William Genys, Sir Thomas Webb, Richard Tozer, Richard Trewynnick, Stephen George, and John Lawrence.\* It indicates the connection of the Launceston of that period with the Launceston of this, that two-thirds of these surnames have lately been, or are still to be, found upon the roll of our burgesses.

With what eyes, it may be wondered, did the men of Launceston look upon these changes? Of one of them it is not difficult to make guess; the rest to us are silent. The most casual glance at St. Mary Magdalene's indicates to the onlooker that the tower adjacent was not built contemporaneously with the main edifice. It is, in fact, of much older date, and from the space which is left between the two erections (a space long filled by dwelling-houses, and now by a vestry-room) and from the absence of carving on the side of the church nearest the tower, it is apparent that it was in contemplation when the former was erected, to worthily complete the work. The most plausible reason for Trecarrell not doing this is lack of inclination rather than want of time, seeing that the church was begun and ended within thirteen years, and that in the two decades which remained of the builder's life, no effort was made towards superseding the old tower as the old chantry had been superseded. It has already† been pointed out that it was at a date not far distant from the consecration

\* Inventory of the Original Acknowledgments of the Royal Supremacy, made by Religious Houses, &c., and deposited in the Treasury of the Receipt of the Exchequer, temp. Henry VIII. Seventh Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, Appendix p. 290.

† ante, p. 76.

that the separatist troubles began ; what more natural than that Trecarrell, who had proved himself sufficiently devoted to the old faith to erect a temple for its service, should draw back in distaste from giving further out of his abundance to complete that temple for a form of worship not his own ? And that he was devoted to the old faith may be conjectured from the fact that during the last twelve years of his life, Trecarrell, once so active, does not appear to have been at all employed in the public service. On February 12, 1528, we find him joined in a commission of sewers, headed by the then Bishop of Exeter, "for the water of Tamar and marshes adjoining, from Cargreen to Bamham,\* in the parish of Lawhitton, Cornwall"† and in April, 1532, he is named one of the commissioners of gaol delivery to deliver Launceston Gaol.‡ This is his last recorded appearance in such official capacity, and this, it may be noted, is the year in which the crisis between England and Rome became acute. But Launceston had not lost him though the State no longer required his help, for in 1543 he became mayor of the town.§ In the summer of the next year he passed into his rest.||

Two years before Shere signed the acknowledgment of supremacy, and about a twelve-month after he had become Prior of Launceston, he was entangled in a dispute, the details of which are of much interest as throwing light upon the internal arrangements of the Convent in its dying days. A paper in the Record Office§ gives "the answer of John Shere, Prior of Launceston, to the bill of complaint presented to the King by the procurement of William Kendall," with the observations of Bishop Vesey thereon. From this it seems that charges of various kinds were levelled by Kendall against Shere, "because," says the latter, "the Prior denied him the farm of St. Thomas Church, which he desired to have under its value." He had apparently alleged that the Prior had not only cruelly treated his brethren, but had deposed his predecessor, and had gained his election by malpractice ; and further that he was not fit for his post, and had allowed the Priory to be in debt. Shere strenuously denied these

\* "Corgrewyn to Bainham" in the original. † Rot. Pat. 19. Hen. VIII., p. 2, m. 13 d., quoted in Brewer, Henry VIII., vol. iv. ‡ Ibid., vol. v. § ante, p. 74. ¶ He was buried at Lezant on June 19, 1544. § Brewer, Henry VIII., vol. v., pp 396-8.

accusations, and in return carried the war into the enemy's camp by averring that his opponents (of whom Kendall was but the representative) had wished to elect as Prior one "openly known to be a man of vicious living, without learning to understand the rules of his religion;" and he here appears to have been standing on firm ground, for the Bishop notes that "the complainants have confessed this." Interrogatories were administered by Kendall to various persons regarding the methods by which Shere secured his election, his insinuation being that bribery and intimidation had been employed; and upon this point the Bishop took the evidence of Thomas Hicks, then Mayor of Launceston, whose brother was a canon under Shere,\* and who had been especially pointed at by Kenda<sup>n</sup> as unduly helping the new Prior in his monetary concerns. The Bishop, by the remarks appended to each of Shere's answers to the accusations preferred against him, and by the fact that he suffered Shere to remain in office, seems to have sided with the Prior. But the whole transaction was not particularly creditable to the parties involved, and the record which remains is proof that all was not meekness and charity and long-suffering in this one at least of the English monasteries in the days immediately preceding its fall.

And yet, if ever there were a time when the instinct of self-preservation alone should have served to make the Canons of St. Stephen cautious how they exposed their monetary difficulties and partisan battles to the world, that time was now. The adherents of the old order should have stood shoulder to shoulder for danger was very nigh, and it was not long before the presence of one in especial of the prisoners in the Castle above might have pointed a moral to the monks in the Kensey Valley. It was on December 6, 1533, that Sir Piers Edgcumbe, writing from Cothele, reported to Thomas Cromwell that he had examined Friar Gawen, Warden of the Grey Friars at Plymouth, with two of his brethren, and had committed the former to the Castle of Launceston until the King's pleasure should be known; and had further, in accordance with Cromwell's demands, "punished by pillory and stocks in the market-places such persons as spoke opprobrious words of the Queen."† This Sir Piers

\* ante, p. 79.

† Anne Boleyn: Domestic State Papers, 1533.

Edgeumbe, son of the Sir Richard of whom mention has been made,\* and ancestor of the present Earl of Mount Edgeumbe, was probably at that time still holding the Constablership of Launceston Castle, to which he had been appointed on June 22, 1509,† presumably in succession to his father.

Friar Gawen's commitment had not long been made out when the religious houses throughout the land received a note of warning which preceded their dissolution by a very few years. In 1534, an inquiry was ordered into the ecclesiastical revenues of the various monasteries in the country, and the return concerning "the Priory of Launceston, Deanery of Trigg Major," showed that the total value of all its spiritualities and temporalities was £391 19s. 6½d. and the necessary external expenditure £38 10s. 3d.‡; the latter sum included payments to "the water carrier of the parish of Launceston," and to "the celebrating chaplain in the Chapel under the Castle of Dunheved, out of the grant of Stephen, formerly King of England," in addition to alms "to the poor in the Hospital of St. Leonard," "to the prisoners in the Castle of the lord the King at Launceston," and "to the poor on the anniversary of the death of the founder." Among the payments are also to be noted an item of 13s. 4d. to the Prior of St. Germans on behalf of St. Mary Magdalene, and another of £2 10s. to the Abbot of Tavistock on behalf of Werrington. We have already seen || that Werrington was attached to Tavistock Abbey long before this period, but both date and occasion are lost at which St. Germans obtained hold upon Launceston Church.

The days of the Priory were now numbered. In 1536, an Act was passed which suppressed nearly four hundred of the lesser monasteries, and this was followed three years later by a sweeping away of the whole of the religious houses. The preamble to the earlier measure had declared that in the greater monasteries religion was "right well kept and observed," but the later§ did not recognise any such distinction. Those heads of houses who chose to surrender were pensioned; opposition to Henry's will was dangerous, as the Abbot of Glastonbury—a house connected of old with that of

\* ante, p. 69. † Rot. Pat. 1, Hen. VIII., p. 2, m. 12. ‡ This gives a net revenue of £353 9s. 3½d. According to Vesey's *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, taken two years later, the net revenue was £354 1s. 0d. || ante, p. 32. § 31 Henry VIII., cap. 13.

Launceston\*—found to his cost, being for his daring hanged on the hill overlooking his Abbey. John Shere and the Launceston Canons, thinking it well to yield with a good grace, signed their surrender on February 24, 1540. The Prior heads the list, eight of his brethren also subscribing, these being John Ham, John Morle, John Hicks, Thomas Webb, Richard Trewynnich, Stephen George, John Lawrence, and John Fish.† John Baker, John Fort, William Genys, and Richard Tozer, who had subscribed the acknowledgment of supremacy six years before,‡ are absent from this list; John Fish we meet for the first time.|| Pensions were granted to those who signed, £100 being paid to the Prior, £10 to the Sub-Prior (who now appears to have been Stephen George, though John Morle, who signed both documents, is expressly mentioned in that of 1534 as holding the post), £6 13s. 4d. to John Ham (though for what reason he received more than his brethren is not apparent), and £5 6s. 8d. to each of the other canons.

Among our last glimpses of the Priory is one which represents it as in monetary default, this being in connection with the ecclesiastical arrangements of Liskeard, which it had long superintended. Very soon after its foundation the great tithes of that parish were appropriated to it by Earl Reginald,§ and the grant was confirmed by a charter of King John in 1199, and by another of Henry the Third about 1230. That there were disputes between the people of Liskeard and the Priory we have seen,\*\* but the latter kept firm hold upon the former, as is testified in some striking instances. In 1428, a deed was executed between Prior Honyland and the mayor of Liskeard stating that the former (being, in the right of his church of St. Stephen, seised of the impropriation of the parish church of Liskeard, which the prior and convent were entitled to hold to their own use) would

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\* ante, p. 40. † Deeds of Surrender of Abbeys, or other Religious Foundations, preserved among the Records of Court of Augmentations, &c. Eighth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, Appendix, p. 290. ‡ ante, p. 79. || The names of the subscribing canons are spelt in various ways, some of the differences probably arising from the difficulty at this date of deciphering them. For instance, the "Hame" who is said to have signed the supremacy, is undoubtedly the same as the "Hains" who is given as signing the surrender, and the "Hamme" of Browne Willis; the last being in all probability the nearest approach to the real name. Similarly, George appears as "Gurze" and "Gourze," and Trewynnich as "Trewynnyk," "Trewenysck," and even "Treddenicke," and, as if the last were not sufficiently far from the real name, the New Parochial History (vol. iii., p. 77) gives him as "Trederrickke." § ante, p. 30. \*\* ante, p. 58.

grant liberty to the commonalty of the borough to build a chapel or aisle adjoining the chancel of their church. Two years later the Prior granted liberty to the same personages to construct the said chapel anew and in a better manner; while, by a third deed in 1477, Prior Waryn empowered them to erect a second chapel or addition on the other side to that previously built.\* But, as against the obligations of Liskeard to the Priory, there must be set the obligations of the Priory to Liskeard, and it must be confessed that the monks do not appear to have been too prompt to fulfil their share. That they were always ready to present to the vicarage may be taken for granted, the living occasionally falling to one of themselves†; but when it came to paying what they owed they drew back. It appears from the Liskeard records that in 1392 the Prior of Launceston,‡ as one of the free tenants of the borough, had to be fined a small sum for not rendering suit of court; a similar fate overtook Prior Shyre in 1449; in 1497 the then Prior had to pay a similar penalty; and in 1536 the fine, which had previously varied from one penny to threepence, was raised to sixpence for the benefit of Prior Shere. || This is the next to the last record of any business transaction of the Priory; the last is of a grant made in 1539 by Shere to Humphry Prideaux, of Thuberys, Devon, of the tithes of grain of the rectory and church of Liskeard for a term of sixty years, in reversion of a term already granted therein to Richard Miners and John Harris, at the annual rent of £25.§ Within a year of this grant being made Shere had lost all power, for in just a month (March 28, 1540) after he had signed the surrender, the King, by presenting a vicar to Liskeard in place of Oliver Baker, who had just died, indicated very clearly the beginning of a new order of things. Thirteen years later we find the last mention of the Convent.\*\* Shere had died in the meantime; George, Ham, Trewynnick, and Webb were all that were left of the canons; and with this record the history of Launceston Priory ceases to be. Glimpses of its crumbling ruins may later be seen, but even these are

\* John Allen, *History of the Borough of Liskeard and its Vicinity*, pp. 38-9.

† The first vicar presented by the Priory, was, as far as is known, Martin Pypard on January 14, 1263, and the last Oliver Baker on April 12, 1529; Robert Parys, a canon of Launceston, was appointed November 11, 1457: *Ibid*, pp. 114-5. ‡ Whose Christian name was Francis, according to Allen, but the Prior at that date was Stephen Tredy-

dan: *ante*, p. 78. || *Ibid*, pp. 270-1. § *Ibid*, p. 116. \*\* "Pensions paid, An. 1553:" Browne Willis, *History of Mitred Parliamentary Abbeyes*, vol. ii., p. 53.



now an almost faded memory; and all the remains of the religious house in the valley, famed as the oft-repeated story runs "for its hospitality to strangers and benevolent attentions to the poor," are a few facts, a few figures, a few details of interest to the antiquarian but the importance of which died long ago into nothingness.

The probable reason for the ruin into which the Priory buildings speedily fell was that they were not required for parochial functions, the church of St. Thomas supplying all the spiritual wants of the surrounding inhabitants. Unlike, therefore, such Abbeys as Bath, Tewkesbury, and St. Albans, which were allowed to stand because of their parochial uses, but in similar case to those of Bolton and Fountains, the Priory of Launceston, by reason of possessing monastic functions only, was suffered to drift into disrepair. Present-day Launcestonians could, however, have forgiven this had the ruins been suffered to stand, as have been those of the Abbeys last named, to be an ornament to the landscape and a constant joy to all lovers of the past. But just as half a hundred years since the Launceston builder in search of a good corner-stone made of the Castle walls his quarry, so undoubtedly did his predecessors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with regard to the Priory. The only thing to be said in defence of either is that there were illustrious examples for the practice in the Middle Ages, when Pope vied with Pope in despoiling the Coliseum.

In the same year as that in which the Priory was suppressed Henry, by Act of Parliament, severed from the Duchy of Cornwall the castle and honour of Wallingford—to read a history of which Berkshire borough\* with its frequent references to Edmund Earl of Cornwall, Richard King of the Romans, Piers Gaveston, and others dealt with at various points of this narrative, is almost to seem to be reading a history of Launceston—and in lieu thereof annexed to the Duchy many manors and estates, including ten which had been part of the property of Launceston Priory. The Priory itself—the building and its appurtenances—was at the same time allotted to Sir Gawen Carew, son of Edmund, Baron Carew,† and brother of Sir Peter Carew,

\* e.g. J. K. Hodges, *History of Wallingford*, vol. i. † *Computus Gawini Carewe de terris prioratus de Launceston*, temp. Hen. VIII.; Sir T. Phillips' MSS. 13996. In the first volume of a Calendar to the Rolls of Particulars for Leases in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I., remaining in the Augmentation Office together with references to the Transcripts of such Leases (vide Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 254) Sir Gawen appears as the lessee of "the seite of ye Priory" as well as of "lands parcel of the Manor," but the date of the leases is not given.

who later did good service in connection with the suppression of the western rebellion.\* The first mention of his appointment is contained in a chance reference of Leland,† who, in an account to be presently described of a visit to Launceston in or about 1540, observes that “Gawen Carow hath the custody of the Priory”; but the possession was not a source of unmingled pleasure to the favoured knight, as Chancery suit after Chancery suit during Elizabeth’s reign would prove. The first of these would appear to have been a suit brought by Sir Gawen against John Bewes, the object of which was to obtain a counterpart of the under leases, the premises affected being “land parcel of the manor of Launceston and burgh of Newport, demised to plaintiff by grant from the Crown.”‡ The second suit would seem to have been instituted some years later, Thomas Hicks being now the plaintiff, and the defendants the same John Bewes (or Bewys) as before, his wife Margaret, his daughter Joan, George Glanvyle, and John Horwill; the object was to recover the plaintiff’s title deeds concerning “the manor of Launceston land and Newporte Borough, granted by the Queen’s letters patents to Sir Gawen Carewe, Knight, for a term of years, and by him assigned to the plaintiff.”|| Very shortly afterwards Hicks brought another suit, the defendant this time being Henry Greston, his object being to set aside claims by leases, the plaintiff’s statement declaring that “Queen Elizabeth by her letters patent, demised to Sir Gawen Carew, Knight, and his assigns, her manor of Launceston land and Newporte Borough, which lease was afterwards assigned to the plaintiff; and the defendant and several others claim to hold parcels of the said manor under leases alleged to be granted to them by John Shere, Prior of the dissolved monastery of Launceston.”§ Later it will be seen that even these do not exhaust all the lawsuits given rise to by the dissolution of the Priory and the grant of a portion of its possessions to Sir Gawen

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\*“The Carews of Mohun’s Ottery were among the oldest of the Devonshire families:” J. A. Froude, *History of England*, vol. v., p. 171, note. † *Itinerary*, vol. ii., p. 110. ‡ *Calendars of the Proceedings in Chancery*, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, vol. i., p. 196, C.c. 17, No. 15. † *Ibid*, vol. ii., p. 48, H. h. 16, No. 53. In a *Calendar to the Rolls of Particulars of Fee Farm Rents reserved upon Grants from the Crown and remaining in the Augmentation Office* (vide Cole’s MS. extracts from the *Duchy Records*, p. 244) Thomas Hicks is named as one to whom “the tenth—belonging to St. Mary’s Rectory, Launceston,” was granted. § *Chancery Calendars*, vol. ii., p. 54, H. h. 18, No. 8.

Carew. It is, however, to be remembered to the credit of Henry and Cromwell that it was not intended when the Priory was suppressed to secularise its property, for about the time of its dissolution "Cromwell presented a bill to the Houses of Legislature, of which the preamble was drawn up in the King's own hand-writing, providing for the formation of new bishoprics, among which was to be Cornwall, which latter was to be endowed from the revenues of the suppressed monasteries of Launceston, Bodmin, and Tywardreath; the bill, however, was not passed, owing probably to the opposition of Cranmer."\* In this connection it is interesting to note that the first purely episcopal function, excepting confirmation, performed in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene after its consecration, was an ordination in the autumn of 1871, by Bishop Temple, of Exeter, in whose holding of the see the long talked of revival of the ancient bishopric of Cornwall has taken place.

Leland has left in his "Itinerary"† a sketch of the town as it appeared to him when wending his way from New Bridge into Newport and up the hill to Dunheved, by which we can look at Launceston with the eyes of centuries since. Like William of Worcester fifty years before, he was exceeding particular in noting the bridges in the district through which he travelled. Having named several of these—Yeolm Bridge, New Bridge, Polson Bridge, and Greystone Bridge—he thus proceeds: "After that I had enterid a litle into the suburbe of Launstoun, I passed over a brooke caullid Aterey ‡ that rennith yn the botom of the stepe hil that Launstoun stondith on. . . . After that I had passed over Aterey, I went up by the hille thorough the long suburbe ontylle I cam to the toun waul and gate, and so passid through the toun, conscending the hill ontylle I cam to the very top of it, wher the market-place and the paroehe church of S. Stephane, lately re-edified, be.§ The large and auncient Castelle of Launstun stondith on the knappe of the hill by south a litle from

\* The Rev. J. J. Wilkinson, *Lecture on Launceston* (1873). † vol. ii., p. 110.

‡ Obviously the Kensey, but the two names are often confounded in maps and gazetteers. § St. Mary Magdalene's, the confusion probably arising from Leland's imperfectly distinguishing between the town church and "the priory of elanons regular dedicate to St. Stephan," which he describes as being "in a vale at the foote of the hil of the sayde town, abowt an arrow shot fro the castel northward." It is to be noted, however, that in a Latin account of the execution of Cathbert Maue, Camden (*annals of Queen Elizabeth*, 1577) refers to "Fannm Stephani (Launstun vulgo vocant)"—the Church of St. Stephen (commonly called Launceston)—as being the place of trial.

the parochie chirch. Much of this castel yet stondith ; and the moles that the kepe stondith on is large and of a terrible highth, and the arx of it, having 3 severale wardes,\* is the strongest but not the biggest that ever I saw in any auncient work in England. Thir is a litle pirl of water that servith the high parte of Lanstoun.† The Priorie of Launstoun stondith in the south-west parte of the suburbe of the toun, under the rote of the hille, by a fair wood side ; and through this wood renneth a pirl of water,‡ cumming out of an hil therby, and servith al the offices of the place. In the chirch I mark'd 2 notable tumbes, one of Prior Horeston, and another of Prior Stephane. One also told me there, that one Mabilia, a Countes, was buried ther in the Chapitre House. . . . There yet standith a Chirch of S. Stephan about half a mile from Launstoun on a hille, wher the Collegiate Chirch§ was. Gawen Carow hath the custody of the Priory. There is a Chapelle by the west-north-west, a litle without Launstowne, dedicate to S. Caterine ; it is now prophanid. . . . Ther be within this town iiii gates, and a postern|| ; also a gate to go owt of the castel ynto the old parke.\*\* Sum gentlemen of Cornewal hold their landes by castel-guard, that ys to say for reparation of this castel and towne ; and withyn this castel ys a chapel, and a hawle for sysses and sessions,†† for a commune gayle for al Cornwayle is yu this castel. Withyn this town is a market, a mayre and burgesses, with a chapel of Mary Magdalen to their uses. . . The wall of Dunevet ys hy, larg, and strong, and defensably set.‡‡ By the north side of the priory runneth a litle ryver.|||| In Dunevet be ii conduites of derived water.”§§

\* The third of these has now vanished, though plainly marked in the old plans and pictures. It was merely a low parapet, probably for the protection of the archers ; a few fragments of its foundation are still distinguishable on the northern side. † This may have been at Dunheved Green, wherethere was in later days, and until the making of the water-works at Lanivet, a reservoir for the supply of the town. ‡ The stream which separates the parish of St. Mary Magdalene from the hamlet of St. Thomas. § Of secular canons before the establishment of the Priory ; ante, p. 19. || One of the gates yet remains and the positions of the others are known ; that of the postern is not. \*\* ante, p. 55. †† This is an incidental confirmation of a fact to be frequently found in ancient records (e.g. commission of June 28, 1484, in Ninth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, Appendix II., p. 29) that the commissions of gaol delivery were once directed to Launceston Castle, just as they are at this day to York Castle and the Castle of Exeter : “ a verie spacions hall wherein the assizes for the whole Shyre ar helde ” stood in the base-court of the Castle, (Norden, p. 92) ‡‡ The only traces which remain are close to the South Gate. |||| The Kensey. §§ The improvement of the water-works has rendered conduits practically useless ; one which was by the Jubilee Inn disappeared in 1870, in the course of the improvements effected at the building of the present Wesleyan Chapel ; another, however, still stands by the London Inn, but is in ruins ; there is a supply reservoir, also of ancient date, and the water in which is not now used for drinking purposes, just by the spot where the West Gate stood ; and there is a second under Broad Street by the Corn Market, and just by the site of the old Guildhall : these two may have been the conduits Leland refers to.

The reference by Leland to the Church of St. Catherine is a reminder that there were formerly within the borough various ecclesiastical establishments of which in some cases only the name remains, and in others not even so much. Cattern's Lane, as it is familiarly known, marks for us the site of St. Catherine's\*; Chapple still serves to tell us where St. John's originally was fixed; but of St. Sidwell's and St. James', of the once existence of which the borough records afford proof, nothing, not even a name, remains.† In the progress of time other of their traces have disappeared; St. Leonard's Fair, held on November 17, and marking the time when the Leper Hospital gave it its appellation, vanished as lately as 1865, when the monthly Cattle Markets were established. There also existed until the incoming of the present century fairs upon the days dedicated to St. John and St. Catherine,‡ which carried on the tradition of the time when seven churches supplied the religious wants of the borough. Of one other ecclesiastical establishment, a friary, said by Carew|| to have existed here, there is no trace in any records that have yet been published. There is nothing inherently improbable in the statement, but it lacks confirmation.

That Launceston was specially distinguished as an ecclesiastical town, that in fact, as Drew says,§ it “was not less celebrated for religion than for war,” is evidenced by an Act of Parliament\*\* passed in 1540 “Concerning Sanctuaries.” This measure commenced by reciting the abuse to which Sanctuaries had been put, and decreed that they all, except churches and churchyards and places expressly reserved by the Act, should be abolished. The second clause specified these places: “And furthermore the Kinges roiall maiesty of his accustomed goodnes mercy and benignity is pleasid and contentid that it be enacted by auctoritie of this present parliament, that fromhensfurth thies places and territories hereafter expressid and declarid that is to say, Wellist†† Westminster Manchester Northampton Norwich Yorke

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\* ante, p. 68. † It may be that one of these was the Chapel of the Castle (ante, p. 38), the latest reference to which is made by Norden, in whose *Topographical Description of Cornwall*, taken in 1584, it is stated that “the base court [of Launceston Castle] compriseth a decayd chappell” (p. 92, Edition of 1728.) ‡ Nicholas Carlisle, *Topographical Dictionary of England*, vol. ii., (1808.) || Survey, pp 81-116. § History of Cornwall, vol. ii., p. 412. \*\* 32 Hen. VIII., cap. 12: Statutes of the Realm, vol. iii., p. 756. †† Wells.



Derby and Launceston, shall be fromhensfurth admitted allowed and taken to be places of privilege and tuytion for term of lif of and for all and singulier offendours and malefactours, of whatsoever quality kinde or natures all and every their offences be or shalbe for the which their said offences and crymes the paynes and punyshment of death should ensue by the statutes lawes or custumes of this realme." In the year after this Act was passed Sanctuary was taken away from Manchester by special enactment.\* The whole privilege was an anomaly as was speedily proved, but the point which affords us the most interest is that the Act indicates very clearly that Launceston must have been regarded as a place of some importance in days when it could be selected as one of only eight towns, and these the largest in the kingdom, to which such a privilege should be granted. It is to be noted that a name which yet attaches to one part of the borough may be a survival of the period when sanctuary existed still; Ram Alley, which runs out of Fore Street and is at no great distance from the Church, bears the same appellation as a portion of the Sanctuary of Whitefriars, the Alsatia of all romances dealing with mediæval London.

But it was not alone in the particular described that the Parliament sitting in 1540 attempted to benefit Launceston, for the borough was included in a statute† "for reedification of Townes westward." It seems to have been a favourite theory at this period that boroughs in a state of decadence could be made prosperous by Act of Parliament. In previous years of the reign measures had been passed with this object, and that of 1540, touching the western towns, set forth that "For Asmuiche as in tymes past diverse and many beautifull houses of habitation have been within the walles and liberties of . . . the Burroughs and Townes of Lanceston Lyskerd Lestuthiel Bodman Truru and Helston within the Countie of Cornewall," as well as various others in Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Essex, and Warwick, "which nowe are fallen downe decayed and at this tyme remayne unreedified lying as desolate and voide groundis and many of them adioning nighe unto the high stretis replenished with much ordure filth and unclenes with pittes sellers and vaultes lying open and uncovered, to

\*33 Hen.VIII., cap. 15: Statutes of the Realm, vol. iii. †32 Hen. VIII., cap. 19: Ibid.



the greate perill and daungier of all thinhabitauntis and other the Kinges subjectis passing by the same, and some houses be very weke and feoble redy to fall downe and therefore daungerous to passe by, to the greate decay and hinderaunce of the said Boroughes and Townes," it should be enacted that, if the owners of the lands upon which decayed houses stood did not rebuild the same within three years, the lords of whom the lands were holden might enter and rebuild in the two years ensuing; in default of this, persons having rent-charges thereon might enter and rebuild within the year following upon the term last-named; and, if these failed, another three years were allowed for the mayors and governing bodies to do the same; should all these neglect their duty, the first owners might re-enter as in their former estate.

The date of the Act affecting Cornwall has led some county historians to the belief that it was the suppression of the religious houses which necessitated the measure, but a comparison of figures will show that this must be groundless. With regard to Launceston, there seems little doubt that it was in mediæval as in much later times not only a town of military and civil but also of some industrial importance; and coins and tokens discovered during the restoration of St. Mary Magdalene's and on the site of the destroyed church at Werrington lead to the belief that, in the first half of the sixteenth century, Flemings were either largely trading or manufacturing here\*; and the fact that about the year 1535 the number of Flemings in London had increased so largely that by Henry's orders fifteen thousand were expelled at one swoop affords a hint of what may have happened elsewhere to account for decay. But, whatever the reason for its passing, the measure does not, as far at least as the Cornish towns were concerned, appear to have done much good. Norden, writing in 1584, states that in Launceston "the Statute tooke litle affecte," though he adds that "the towne is much repayred in buyldinges and increased in wealth of late yeares;"† he makes very similar remarks regarding the effect of the Act upon Truro and Helston, saying of the former

\* Itinerary of Launceston, pp. 73-4: Appendix by R. Peter. In 1502 (vide Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 72) John Jarpenfelt made a return to the Duchy as bailiff of Newport; the name suggests a foreign origin. † Topographical Description, p. 96.

that despite the intention of the measure "it succeded not accordinglie," and of the latter that "the success was not aunswerable to the meaning."

Some idea of the ecclesiastical arrangements of the borough in Reformation times is given in the return of the commissioners appointed at the commencement of Edward the Sixth's reign to inquire into the endowments of the various churches throughout the country. That regarding Launceston is dated 1548,\* and "affords an interesting instance of the transition form which endowments assumed during the convulsions of the Reformation, and the tendency toward educational efforts at that period. At first the chantry was established by 'Ellys Crocker and Tomasyn hys wyff' to keep obits† and distribute alms. Then a priest was pensioned and a schoolmaster added to teach grammar, besides almsgiving and the repair of the church. In the present instance there is also the remarkable anticipation of a free common school for the poor in the salary of 13s. 4d. given to the 'aged man to teache yonge childerne' "† From the same document it appears that the priest of St. Mary Magdalene had a salary of six pounds, in addition to another twelve which was "a pencon out of the possessions of the late monastery of Launceston."

A note to the return gives us the earliest mention of the Launceston Grammar School and runs thus: "The pencon of ye prest to be borne by th' inhabitants of ye towne, being ye scolemaster of St. Mary Weke, by there own suite, is removed thither." The foundation at Week St. Mary or St. Mary Wike (the addition distinguishing it from St. Mary Magdalene) was the work of Thomasine Bonaventure, the "Whittington of the West," who, attracting the notice of a London merchant while tending her sheep upon the moors, was first taken into his service and ultimately married by him. Outliving three husbands, the last of whom was Sir John Percival, once London's Lord Mayor, she employed her latter years in the doing of charitable deeds, among which was the foundation at her native village of a chantry and free school. Her will (which included a legacy of twenty

\* Oliver, *Monasticon*, p. 489. † The last mention of an obit in connection with Launceston is to be found, perhaps naturally enough, in the reign of Mary: on May 31, 1557, land was granted "for the continuance of one obit in the borough of Launceston for Vincent Calmady," of Wenbury, Devon, who died in 1579 (Harleian MSS., 606, art. 214). ‡ Pattison, St. Mary Magdalene.

marks towards the building of the church tower of St. Stephens-by-Launceston) was dated 1512, and it is not therefore probable that she lived to see the part frustration of her benevolent schemes when, in the reign of the Eighth Henry, the chantry was suppressed and the school for the sake of convenience removed to Launceston.

The whole of the period at present under review was a time of storm and stress, and the Reformation was accompanied by more than one outbreak of rebellion. In April, 1548, William Body, one of the royal commissioners for Cornwall, was stabbed to instantaneous death by William Kylter of St. Keverne, while inspecting the church at Helston and demolishing some images there. Kylter and his comrades were arrested and to the number of twenty-nine suffered death, the first-named being, in company with his brother and about twenty others, tried by special commission at Launceston on May 28, 1548. A verdict of not guilty was returned with regard to two of the prisoners, one other was found guilty of felony and murder alone, and the remainder were convicted of high treason. The published record\* baldly adds: "Judgment as is usual in cases of High Treason. Place of execution not stated." But it is probable that Launceston saw the deaths as it had seen the trials, and Carew has preserved for us a striking little picture of an occurrence during the incarceration here of the prisoners: "For activity," he says, "one Kiltor, committed to Launceston Gayle for the last Cornish commotion, laying there in the castle-greene upon his back, threw a stone of some pounds weight over that Towres top which leadeth into the parke."†

The affair of Kylter was but the prelude to a general Cornish insurrection, headed by Sir Humphrey Arundel, Governor of St. Michael's Mount, which broke out at the Whitsuntide of 1549. The probability is that, as in the rebellions of Flammoek and of Warbeck‡ the insurgents marched to Bodmin and thence through Launceston to Exeter, which city they besieged. Lord Russell was chosen by the Privy Council to head the resistance, but, as he was unable to immediately set out, Sir Peter and Sir Gawen Carew (the connection of the latter of whom

\*Second Part of the Inventory and Calendar of the Contents of the Baga de Secretis: Fourth Report of the Deputy Keeper, Appendix II, pp. 217-9. † This tower has now disappeared; it must have stood to the north of the present western gate of the Castle, and overlooking the New North Road. ‡ ante, p. 71.

with Launceston has been noted\*) came into the West with the resolve to promptly and sternly put down the disturbance. The rebels, who had marched ten thousand strong through Launceston, now held the Castle, having probably secured it without the striking of a blow, and to it was conveyed Sir Richard Grenville the elder, who had figured at the head of those named in the special commission for the trial of Kylter and his party in the previous year. He had stoutly defended himself at Trematon, but, being induced to come forth to parley, was treacherously seized and his death threatened if that place were not surrendered; it was accordingly yielded up, and, to use the words of Carew, Sir Richard "made an exchange from Trematon Castle to that of Launceston, with the gayle to boote." From the hardships he here suffered the unfortunate knight died, leaving the major portion of his estate to his grandson, the hero of the *Revenge*.

Meanwhile, engagements were being fought around Exeter. Lord Russell, who was now in the West, won after great struggle a battle at St. Mary's Clyst, and on August 6, having again defeated the rebels, he raised the siege of the Devonshire capital. The surrounding country was given over to pillage, and the ill-treatment of the people served to keep alive a spirit which enabled the Cornish still to make a stand. On August 15, however, Russell marched by way of Crediton to Sampford Courtenay, where two days later a battle was fought which resulted in the complete overthrow of the insurgents. "All this night," said the victor in his despatch to the Council,† "we sate on horseback, and in morning we had word that Arundel was fled to Launceston, who immediately began to practice with the townsmen and keepers of Grenfield and other gentlemen for the murder of them that night. The keepers so much abhorred this cruelty as they immediately set the gentlemen at large, and gave them their aid with the help of the town for the apprehension of Arundel, whom with four or five ringleaders they have imprisoned. I have sent incontinently both Mr. Carews with a good band to keep the town in a stay; and this morning I haste thither with the rest." What was the exact sequence of events after Arundel was beaten

\* ante, p. 86. † Harleian MSS., 523: Froude, *History of England*, vol. v., pp. 197-8.

at Sampford Courtenay is to some extent uncertain; but that, after great slaughter of the rebels, their leader fell back upon Launceston is clear. We can judge from Lord Russell's despatch that the reception accorded by the townsmen to the beaten Sir Humphrey was cool even to hostility, but it is to be hoped that it was due only to the heated rumours of the moment that Arundel was accused of plotting the deliberate murder of the aged Grenville and other prisoners in the Castle. From the records of the trial it is to be learnt that the process of making Sir Humphrey prisoner was attended with a street struggle in Launceston itself; for when Arundel was indicted before a special commission in London on the following November 26, John Wynchelade, "late of Tregareke, in the county of Cornwall, gentleman," being tried with him, one of the charges was that "they and other traitors, 19 August, 3 Edward 6, at Launceston, with banners displayed etc., slew divers of the King's lieges under the command of Sir John Russell, Knight of the Garter, Lord Russell, Keeper of the Privy Seal, and also being the King's Lieutenant in Cornwall, who had been sent to seize and arrest them; and that they . . . were on the said 19 August, defeated and captured." Found guilty at the same time as Thomas Bliston (another Cornishman charged with much the like offences, but with no mention of Launceston in the indictment), Ket the Tanner, and other rebels, Arundel and Wynchelade were sentenced to the death "usual in cases of High Treason," and were executed at Tyburn.\*

While severities of most grievous sort were forming the lot of the unhappy followers of Sir Humphrey and his fellows, and Sir Anthony Kingston, the provost marshal, was, according to the stories handed down to us, anticipating by a century and a half the enormities of Kirke and his "Lambs," Launceston was so far from suffering royal displeasure that it was being granted additional favours, and it may thus be believed that the inhabitants had not taken active part in the rebellion just put down. Since the charter previously mentioned† as granted by Henry the Seventh, there had been a charter of pardon in the first year of his successor,‡ another of *inspeximus* in 1515

\* Second Part of the Inventory and Calendar of the Contents of the Baga de Secretis; Fourth Report of the Deputy Keeper, Appendix II, p. 222. † ante, p. 1. ‡ Granted to Dounhevdburgh, June 29, 1509: ante, p. 42.



confirming previous charters, another in 1543,\* and yet another three years later,† at the opening of the reign of Edward the Sixth. And now a greater privilege than any granted by these documents to the borough itself was to be given to the district outside the walls, but which, as having contained the Priory and as having perhaps been the mother-town, had always been intimately linked with the fortunes of the borough. In 1552, at a time when several other Cornish towns, hitherto unrepresented, were striving to secure a footing in the Commons, Newport challenged a right to return members, and upon its exercise the members so sent were admitted; the precedent was pleaded in after years, and the privilege continued to be enjoyed until the Reform Act of 1832.

It would seem, in fact, as if just at this period Newport was determined to assert itself. Flushed with its success in obtaining parliamentary representation, it endeavoured to encroach upon the privileges of its neighbour, but here it received a check, for, in 1558, a writ of quo warranto was issued against the newly-enfranchised borough for having held fairs and markets,‡ the suit probably being undertaken at the instance of the Corporation of Launceston.¶ This rebuff, however, had its effect mitigated by a mark of royal favour in this same year when a charter for “the town of Launceston alias Newport, alias Lawnceston” (a designation which although complicated was undoubtedly meant for Newport only) was granted to “John Cottell and other worthy men.”§ It must not be supposed because it first was given parliamentary representation and (as far as is known) a royal charter at so late a date, that Newport as a town separate from Launceston had not existed long before. At the compiling of Domesday it had been considered a part of the demesne of the canons of St. Stephen, whose possessions were subsequently absorbed by the Priory. The earliest mention of the borough by its present name is in the Roll of the Seisin in 1337, in which the

\* Dated November 15. † October 21, 1546. ‡ Hil. 3 and 4 Philip and Mary, Ro. 4: [Court of Exchequer]; vide Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 284. ¶ Ibid, p. 283. It may be noted that a dispute arose as lately as 1883 between the Town Council and one of its members as to the right of holding a market at Newport. § “Launceston, alias Newport. Carta Johanni Cottell, et aliis probis Hominibus Villæ de Launceston, alias Newport, alias Lawnceston. 4 Pars Original. 3 et 4 Philippus et Marie, Rotulo 5”: Index to Records called the Originalia and Memoranda on the Lord Treasurer's Side of the Exchequer.



mayor and burgesses of Launceston complained that the prior of St. Stephen had without warrant taken the assize of bread and ale of the town of Newport, which anciently belonged to the Castle. In the Duchy Accounts for the next year "the town of Neuport in Launceston" is twice referred to,\* while a bailiff of Newport is named in the same records for 1502,† and in the Priory Rent Roll of 1474‡ a list of the burgesses of "Neuweport" is given. The origin of the name was probably that the North Gate, through which the dwellers in and around the Priory had to reach Launceston, was the latest built of the town entrances; the Nova Porta remained the New Port to all ages, as Newgate has remained in London, and just as the North Road below the Castle has for two generations been, and for many generations may be, known to the inhabitants as New Road. But Newport's name as a borough fluctuated somewhat during its parliamentary existence; in 1552, the Sheriff of Cornwall "sent up Members for Dunheved, alias Newport, and again in the last Parliament of Philip and Mary, and anno 5 Eliz. Members were return'd for Dunheved as well as for Launceston, and in one of the Indentures it is called Villa Dounheved alias Launceston; tho' in some of the intermediate ones 'tis nam'd Newport, juxta Launceston, and in others Newport, as at this day."|| It was probably because of its enjoying a separate jurisdiction and being a part of the King's demesne that Newport claimed and secured its own representation:

In the same year as that in which Newport was established as a borough, Launceston was represented by one Henry Killigrew, who was subsequently high in the favour of Queen Elizabeth, by whom he was at various times appointed ambassador to the Palatinate, to Scotland, to France, and to the United Provinces, as well as one of the royal delegates at the assembly of Reformers at Frankfort. But Newport a little later, and only four years after it had been granted parliamentary representation, did itself greater honour even than returning an embryo ambassador by electing Richard Grenville, son

\* Vide Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, pp. 12-3. † Ibid, p. 72: ante, p. 91, note. ‡ ante, p. 65. § Browne Willis, *Notitia Parliamentaria*, vol. ii., p. 162. In the Preface to the same work, vol. i., p. xix, is the following: "Newport, call'd by the Inhabitants St. Stephens, which in the Indenture is stil'd Villa Dounheved, alias Newport; and in the next Return, Anno 1 Mar. Dunheved, and in others Newport, juxta Lancceston."

of the brave old knight killed by imprisonment in the Castle above,\* as one of its members, for Sir Richard will be known to all time as the hero of the *Revenge*, wherein, though deserted by his own admiral, he fought fifty-three Spanish ships of war from mid-afternoon until daybreak, and sank in his own vessel very speedily after an honourable surrender.

But, as in all this story, we have to turn page by page from the pomps of war to the progresses of peace, from the struggle of a Sir Richard Grenville, verse-celebrated by Tennyson, to the granting of a new charter to Launceston, soberly told by a county historian. On February 14, 1555,† Philip and Mary issued an *inspeximus* charter to the town, still preserved in the borough records, and, with its full-length portraits of the sovereigns, a striking specimen of the illuminator's art. It "recites that this Borough having been by ancient Kings endow'd with many Privileges and great Immunities, and anciently govern'd by a Mayor &c. (which Officer I find it had Temp. Henry IV.) She ordains it should be incorporated by the Name of Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty of the Borough of Dunheved alias Launceston, and by that name to have perpetual succession, and be enabled in Law to purchase Lands, etc., and to plead and be impleaded: That the Mayor and Aldermen should have a common Seal for their Affairs: and that the Borough and Corporation should consist of eight aldermen, besides the Mayor, who should yearly be chosen on the Nativity of our Lady (viz: Sep. 8), which said Mayor and Aldermen should be call'd the Common Council, and have power to elect a Recorder, who with the Mayor should be Justices of the Peace within the Borough."‡ And the provisions of this charter, despite attempts at change to be afterwards described, governed the town until the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835.

A painful page of local history now opens, and religious persecution is the stain which rests upon it. In 1558, during the Marian terror, Agnes Prest, of Northcott, in the parish of Boyton, was indicted at

\* ante, p. 94. † Rot. Pat. 2 Ph. and Mar.: in the "Index to Records called the Originalia and Memoranda on the Lord Treasurer's Side of the Exchequer," among the Memoranda is the following reference to this charter: "LAUNCESTON, alias DUNHEVED. Carta Confirmationis diversarum Libertatum Majori et Burgensibus Villæ de LAUNCESTON, alias DUNHEVED, 2 Pars Original. 2 and 3 Phil. and Mar. Rotulo 13.

‡ Willis, *Notitia Parliamentaria*, vol. ii., pp. 17-8.

Launceston, for that she denied the real presence in the sacrament of the altar ; and for saying the same was but a sign and figure of Christ's body ; and that no Christian doth eat the body of Christ carnally, but spiritually." The evidence against her was furnished by her husband and children, from whom she had fled because they would have compelled her by force to attend the celebration of mass. A true bill was returned by the grand jury at Launceston Assizes, and the unhappy woman was tried, found guilty, and handed over to the spiritual arm. The Bishop of Exeter, Turberville, then further examined her, and after some delay, and principally it is said by the efforts of Blackstone, his chancellor, she was condemned by him as a heretic, delivered once more to the secular power, and burnt without the walls of Exeter—the only martyr who suffered death in the diocese for the Protestant religion during Mary's reign.\*

Although Agnes Prest was the first anti-Catholic martyr connected with Launceston in the days succeeding what has been aptly termed the Protestant Revolution, there had, a century and a half previous to the date of her death, been established a link between the town and "the Morning Star of the English Reformation." In 1382, two years before the death of Wiclif, and when in retirement at Lutterworth he was issuing his translation of the Scriptures, Bishop Brantingham of Exeter published a mandate to the Prior of Launceston (who was then Stephen Tredydant†), the Prior of Bodmin, the Provost of Glasney, and the Vicar of Probus, directed against one Laurence Stevine or Bedeman, apparently a Cornish fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, who had been preaching the Lollardite doctrines in our county. In this document it was set forth that "a certain Laurence Bedeman, who goeth in vestments, having entered our fold secretly with fraud and stealthily under the feigned image of holiness, with foxlike craft endeavours in his public and private discourses to turn aside our sheep and to lead them into the various errors of heresy." The Bishop, therefore, "being desirous to chase away such a fox from our fold lest he worry our sheep," commissioned the Prior of Launceston and the others before-named to "carefully enquire

\* See Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," where is given in great detail an account of the proceedings at Exeter.

† ante, p. 58.

where and what things the aforesaid Laurence, whether in church or in other places in Cornwall, and on what feasts, times, or days the aforesaid Laurence may have preached, propounded, said, or proffered to our sons and subjects . . . and also what things and what sort of things the aforesaid false prophet Laurence or any other may have preached against the Catholic faith and the articles thereof." The "false prophet" was easily frightened; whether it was the Bishop's mandate, the Prior of Launceston's vigilance, or, as some suggest, the Peasants' War which led Stevine to reconsider his course, the fact remains that he afterwards conformed and became Rector of Lifton.\* The worthy man was not of the stuff of which martyrs are made.

But now comes a very different picture. In the summer of 1577, close upon twenty years after the martyrdom of Agnes Prest, the throne then being filled by Elizabeth, Francis Tregian, of Golden, was arrested with Cuthbert Maine, his chaplain, by Sir Richard Grenville as Sheriff of Cornwall, and accused of recusancy, or in plainer language of Roman Catholicism. Tregian, after being bound over to appear at the next Launceston Assizes, was taken to London, there to be examined by the Privy Council, but Maine was committed on a charge of high treason to the Castle of Launceston, "where, when he came, he was laid in a most loathsome . . . dungeon, scarce able at high noon to see his arms or his legs."† Tregian meanwhile was summoned before the Council, and was absent when his servant was put upon his trial at the Launceston Assizes, which commenced on September 16. "Thither forsooth," says the friendly chronicler, "in pompous manner the Prince of the West [probably the Earl of Bedford] must purposely come with his trumpeters before him, sounding to the slaughter." Maine was charged with having published a papal absolution, with having administered private mass, and with having possessed "a certain vain sign and superstitious thing called an Agnus Dei, made of silver and stone, and hallowed, as it is commonly reported, by the Bishop of Rome in his own person." Another count in the indictment

\* C. W. Boase, *Register of Exeter College, Oxford*, preface, pp. xiv-xv. † "A Treatise touching the imprisonment and indictments of Mr. Francis Tregian, Esquire, of Volvedon, now called Golden, in Cornwall [from the manuscript belonging to St. Mary's College, Oscott]": Given in full in *The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers*, First Series, Edited by John Morris, S.J., pp. 75-140.

charged "Cuthbert Maine that there standest" with having on "the 14th day of February last past, at Launceston within this county, by express words in teaching maliciously, advisedly, and directly" upheld the ecclesiastical authority of the Pope.

The trial would seem to have been a mockery, for the senior of the two presiding judges interrupted the Attorney-General in the very opening of the case to inform the jury that "this fellow here, Cuthbert Maine, is, as you see, a Rome-runner, a secret traitor to the Queen and her realm, and one that goeth about to seduce the people from their obedience both to God and to their Prince, and therefore is to have no favour at all," with much more to the same effect. This may have been considered necessary because of the weakness of the evidence to be produced, one specimen of which was the testimony as to Maine's having at Launceston upheld the papal authority. This rested upon the statements of three witnesses who averred that "being permitted by the keeper of the gaol to have some talk with Cuthbert Maine in the place where he there remained close prisoner, he, amongst many other speeches used unto them, should deny that the Queen was Supreme Head of the Church of England." A conviction was of course obtained and the prisoners were taken back to the gaol. "The next day they were all brought forth again to receive judgment, coupled like dogs, two together with chains of iron, saving Cuthbert Maine, who also with iron fast fettered both hand and foot, went all alone as their captain before them, in which sort they marched on as well as they could, to the great admiration of the people, from the common gaol into the place of judgment." After some disagreement between the two judges who had tried the case, Maine was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered in the Launceston market-place, and the other prisoners to the forfeiture of their goods and perpetual imprisonment.

Owing to the difference between the judges two months elapsed before the capital sentence was carried out, but November 29 was at length fixed for the execution. On the day previous a sedulous attempt was made to induce Maine to recant, but he who had simply murmured "God be thanked" when the sentence was passed was not likely to falter now, and he held his ground in disputation from



eight in the morning until night, refusing life and liberty rather than change his religion. "Wherefore, according to the judgement he had received, the next day he was uneasily laid on a hurdle, and so spitefully drawn, receiving some knocks on his face and his fingers with a girdle, unto the market-place of the said town, where of purpose there was a very high gibbet erected, and all things else, both fire and knives, set to the show and ready prepared." Mounting the ladder, Maine declared to those assembled that Tregian had no knowledge of the things for which he was condemned. "Then beginning to use some words in way of exhortation, one of the justices, interrupting his talk, commanded the hangman to put the rope about his neck, and then, quoth he, let him preach afterward; which done, another commanded the ladder to be overturned, so as he had not the leisure to recite the verse, In thy hand O God, to the end." He was speedily cut down, and as speedily drawn, quartered, and decapitated, his head being set up on the Castle of Launceston, and his quarters distributed between Bodmin, Barnstaple, Tregony, and Wadebridge.\*

At the same Assizes as those at which Maine had been condemned, Sir John Arundell, Francis Tregian, and a number of other prisoners were charged with not going to church,† but they were removed by special writ to the King's Bench, whence they were returned to Launceston without judgment being pronounced. Tregian for aiding Maine was ultimately sentenced to banishment under pain of forfeiture of goods, but for four months he remained in our gaol, in "a dark dungeon, a place often, by reason of the dankishness thereof, infested with foul toads and other filthy vermin, where the only outward solace he could receive was to behold at a little loop with the upper face of the

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\* Another version is given in the *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, pp. 11-20, published in 1741, which describes Maine as "the first Missionary Priest that suffered in England for religious Matters, and the Proto-Martyr of Doway College, and all the Seminaries." The details are very much the same as in the account already quoted, but it adds a statement of a "great light" which was seen in his cell while engaged in religious exercises a day or two before his death, and avers that "the Hangman who embrew'd his Hands in his innocent Blood, in less than a Month's time became mad, and soon after miserably expired." Stow in his *Chronicles* simply mentions Maine as having been executed "for preferring Roman Power," while Strype in the second volume of his *Annals* has an account of the trial. Oliver refers to it in his "Collections illustrating the history of the Catholic Religion in the counties of Cornwall, &c." p. 2., but gives no extra details worth attention. † Brief of the indictments of papists at the assizes at Launceston in Cornwall, Sept. 23, 1577: Tanner MSS., lxxx, 52.



earth (not able by reason of the darkness of his den to see again) some soberly talking, nodding their heads; some scornfully laughing, pointing with their fingers; and some bitterly weeping and wringing their hands.”\* He was subsequently removed by order of the Council to the King’s Bench Prison and afterwards to the Fleet, where he remained for close upon thirty years, being then suffered to betake himself to Spain.

There is a touch of strangeness in the fact that, in detailing the persecutions to which Maine and his fellows were subject, we have leaped a score of years beyond a point at which was established in the Parish Register a very direct connection between Elizabethan and Victorian Launceston. It was in 1559 that this record was commenced,† the first baptism being performed on October 17 of that year, the first burial on December 10, and the first marriage on January 29, 1560.‡ During the first complete year in which the Register was used seventeen baptisms, three marriages, and seventeen burials were recorded,§ and the average of the succeeding ten years was twenty-two, five, and sixteen respectively, this increasing decade by decade until the end of the century, when it was thirty-four, seven, and thirty-six, these figures indicating a rapid growth of population at that period.

Those in search of interesting details concerning the social life of our Launceston forefathers can find them in abundance in the Parish Register. Such entries as those of the burial of “a prisoner” unnamed, of the christening of “Phillippe the daughter of a prisoner woman,” or of the interment of “John Harris a condemned prisoner” are reminders of the days of the gaol, just as the existence of a military force at the Castle is recalled by records of the funerals of “Walter Thomas a soldyer,” of “——Piper captaine,” and of “Richard Trewin of Hartland souldier.” And, continuing to look only at the Register of the latter half of the sixteenth century, there are indications of the

\* “A Treatise touching . . . Mr. Francis Tregian,” p. 119. †The title-page of the original Register reads as follows: “A true Register of all Marriages Baptismus and Burialls within ye parish of Mary Magdalen in Launceston, from ye yeere of our Lord god 1559 Truly copied out accordinge to the old Register this present yeere 1601. Written by John Harbert, 1601.” The ink of this page appears almost as black to-day as it could have been when originally employed. ‡ “1559. October. Imprimis the xvijth day was christened John the sonne of Thomas Hardye—December. The xth daie was buried James Adam—January [1560 N.S.] Imprimis the xxixth daie were married John Banniste and Bridget Bennet.” § See Appendix, Note C.

trades of the townsmen in the accounts of the burial of "Willm sonne of John Pears smyth," and of the baptisms of "Nicholas sonne of John Kingdon cutler" and "Philipp and Wilmot the sonne and daughter of William Barnerd shoemaker"; while, in default of other sources of information, we learn something of the Launceston clergy from being told of the interment of "Dorothie daughter of Roger Selly curate" and of the christening of "Alicc daughter of William Churton clearke." The great ones of the town pass before us as we read of the funerals of "John Trevanion gentleman," of "Mr. John Vigurs Maior," and of "Mr. Sampson Piper gent."\*; the smaller ones are to be seen in the record of burial of "Alicc Nowyre of the almes house" and of "a walkinge woman named Margaret." The interments of "Johan daughter [of] Hugh Mowd a traveler," of "Ellyn the welchwoman," and of "Robert Geritoo a straunger" show that there was traffic with the outside long before railways and even before good roads; while those who know the social circumstances and prejudices of the time will not need to have their imagination stimulated as to the misery of such records as that of the funeral of "William sonne of Williams ye papist," of the christening of "Nicholas sonne of James Bownia an Egiptia rogue,†" or, perhaps saddest entry of all in its touching incompleteness, of the burial of "Elizabeth—a poore woman."

The Register is not the only record preserved in our midst of the social state of Launceston in the days of Elizabeth. In the keeping of the Town Council is what, until the chance discovery in October, 1882, of a number of borough records dating from 1340 onwards, was thought to have been the oldest Corporation book extant, this being a somewhat decayed paper folio, containing pleas in Latin in reference to actions of debt, trespass, detainer and such like.‡ The entries commence in 1566, and one of the earliest complaints is that of William Kendall (who may have been the same who objected to the election of Shere as Prior§) "against

\*Ancestor of Sir Hugh Pyper; he was buried on August 2, 1592. He was mayor in 1586, and his arms are among those in the Guildhall window. † This term, now corrupted to "Gipsy," is said to have been introduced in the previous century. ‡ Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, Appendix, p. 525. § ante, p. 80. About the year 1576 (vide Domestic State Papers, 1547-80, p. 534) Letters Patent were granted to William Kendall of Launceston, giving him the sole privilege of making alum for twenty years, and at the same time an indenture was entered into between the Queen and Kendall "for the manufacture of alum within the realm of England."

John Austyne in a plea of detainer of three dishes of silver," Austyne retorting with a plaint "against William Kendall in a plea of debt." The Sergeants at Mace\* who are still appointed, though greatly shorn of their ancient prerogatives, appear to have enjoyed extensive powers. In 1566 they presented "Thoma Wadge [and three others] for that they sell vitailles without aprons and use theire fyngers and knyves fylthylle." An equally curious presentment was made four years later by the jurors at a "Session of the Peace and Law Court" against "suche as do not come to Church to serve God not in long tyme. There excuse is that they be yn dept; So that by that meanes they displese God more ways than ij or iij. We praye you, Mr. Mayor, to see an order for it, or els to rede the Towne of such persons." The righteous indignation of the Launceston jurors against those who were lax in their religious duties was extended in 1599 to those who were the reverse of lax in their business capacities, "Mr. William Grilles and his man or his servant Thomas Kenver" being presented "for extorcion to be vsed and taken of th'Inhabitantes of this Towne and Country near here aboutes in weighing their Woll and Yarne,"† while higher game was at the same time flown at in the presentment of "Mr. Mayor nowe of this Towne for suffering of such extorcion to be vsed and taken, and for suffering of smale weightes and measures within this Towne without reformation." The Mayor, in fact, was expected to exercise the utmost vigilance in all matters touching the well-being of the borough, he being on one occasion instructed by the jurors "to see some order for Harrie Bere, because he is betrothed unto Jane Cornishe and dothe not marye her, which is contrary to any good order."‡

Much information regarding the Launceston property owners at this period is to be gathered from the Duchy and borough records. In the Duchy accounts of 1556, William Mill, mayor, certified to the

\* *Servientes ad Clavam*, the form of oath administered to whom in 1599 is written in one of the Court-books.

† This is an early mention of the trade in wool which then and for long afterwards made Launceston prosperous: in the Parish Register a little later than this date are entries touching a weaver and a dyer, showing that the manufacture which extended to the present century was then in existence. The earliest reference to the establishment of the woollen trade in this immediate district is probably to be found in an Act of 7 Edward IV, cap. 2 (1467) "to enable the Inhabitants of the Hundreds of Lifton, Tauestocke, and Rowburgh, to mix Flocks in their Woollen Cloths."

‡ C. H. Peter, *The Early History of Dunheved* (1882).

various arrears and the fee farms within the borough, while Richard Pallyn, bailiff of the Hundred of East, made a return regarding the town of Newport.\* In 1582 a lease was granted by the Crown of "tythes &c. of ye Rectory of St. Mary Magdalen" to Richard Boorde, and three years later of "a wood called Castle Wood parcel of ye Manor," to D. Grenvile†; while about the same time two water mills (perhaps those which existed at the compilation of Domesday‡ and which exist now) were leased to Richard Trefusis, and "a park parcel of the Boro'" (probably that which was named centuries before as part of the Duchy property§) to William Killigrew. The "Rent Roll of the Burghe of Dunheved, alias Launceston," collated in 1578 and 1581, contains a schedule of tenements "holden of the same Burghe freely by custome, life, years, and otherwise." In this appears an entry which distinctly refers to the original Madford House (a residence which tradition records to have been the first founded outside the town wall, and which will afterwards be seen to hold a noteworthy place in the history of the borough), Mr. Sampson Pyper|| having to pay—in addition to twelvecpence for a stable in Westgate, sixteenpence for a barn in White Lane (now Race Hill), and fourpence for a barn and courtlage before the door—the comparatively heavy sum of eight shillings for his dwelling. Bound up with the rent-roll is "The Book of all Surrenders of Messuages" within the town, a considerable portion of the land in which was held by the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses, as Lords of the Borough, by Copy of Court Roll according to custom. It is with something of a pang that present-day Launcestonians see how much property once belonged to the town and how little is possessed by it now. As Mr. Pattison observes\*\* "the Corporation appear to have become poor and insignificant among their endowed brethren of other towns by alienating their lands. Very many of the houses in the town were corporate property, and were sold for terms of five hundred and a thousand years in the reigns of the Tudor monarchs, and thus alienated in fact from the municipality. Had the property thus conveyed away been

\* Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Accounts, pp. 49-50.  
p. 6. ‡ ante, pp. 27. § ante, p. 55. || ante, p. 104.

† Ibid, pp. 226-32: ante,  
\*\* Lecture on Launceston  
(1848).

leased for lives only or for shorter terms, there would now have been ample means for government, police, and education." The only consolation to be extracted from the deplorable loss suffered by the borough, owing to the jobbery and bad management of the old Corporation, is that by the enfranchisement scheme adopted within the past few years there has been raised from these long leases a large portion of the cost of the new Guildhall.

The Launceston Grammar School, just now fallen into sore decay, but up to a very few years since under the energetic mastership of the Rev. S. Childs Clarke\* a large and flourishing institution, dates from the period we are now considering. Its original foundation was by Thomasine Bonaventure at Week St. Mary,† but, that place being inconvenient, it was transferred to Launceston in the time of Elizabeth, and by her "endowed with an annual sum of £17 13s. 3½d,‡ now [1818] payable out of the Land Revenue of the Crown."§ The grammar schools at Bodmin, Penryn, and Saltash received grants at the same time, grants which with the exception of that to Penryn continue to be paid, but in no case did these reach to one-half of that given to Launceston.

From such a record of peaceful times we turn to one of war. The prospects of a Spanish invasion were as eagerly discussed in the reign of Elizabeth as were those of a French one in that of George the Third; and although the Armada did not sail until 1588 preparations were made in Devon and Cornwall as early as 1575 to meet the Spaniards. Men were raised and a route of march laid down "from St. Burine in Cornwall to London," which would pass through "Bodnam" to "Lanneston" and thence by "Ocomton" to Exeter and on to the metropolis.|| Two years later these preparations were interfered with by an outbreak of that scourge of the Middle Ages which has happily disappeared from the England

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\*Perpetual Curate and afterwards Vicar of St. Thomas from 1818 to 1874; now Vicar of Thorverton. † ante, p. 92. ‡ In the Financial Reform Almanack for 1883, p. 87, under the head "Ancient and Hereditary Pensions," there is recorded this same grant as having been given by Charles II. and made chargeable upon the Hereditary Land Revenue, the gross amount being as above stated and the net £16 12s. 3d. Out of forty-four Grammar Schools in this list, only four (Salisbury, Cirencester, Fodringhey, and Kendal) receive more than Launceston. § N. Carlisle, A Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England and Wales, vol. i., p. 139. || R. Polwhele, The Civil and Military History of Cornwall, p. 72.



of to-day. On September 19, 1577, during the Assizes at which Maine was condemned,\* the Commissioners for the County of Cornwall, writing from Launceston, reported to the Privy Council that they had been obliged to defer taking the musters on account of the Plague.† It is evident from the Parish Register that this outbreak commenced in the town in the previous year. The number of burials, which had been fourteen in 1574 and sixteen in 1575, rose suddenly in the next year to thirty-six. The Plague would appear to have claimed its first ascertainable victim in the January of the last-named year in the person of "Jane daughter of John Monke," her mother "Anne wief of John Monke" following her to the grave six weeks later. In the April "Mowde wief of Degorie Horten" was buried the day before "Jane daughter of Degorie Horten," and again and again in the course of this year and the next the Parish Register affords similar record of more than one bereavement in the same family, the twelvemonth closing with the burials within three weeks of "Willm servant to John Dodge," "John Dodge" himself, and "Margaret Dodge widow." In 1577 the mortality slightly decreased, the number of deaths being thirty-one, and this total fell a further six in 1578, and yet another six in the next year. In 1580 it rose again to twenty-four, and in 1581 to half as many more, the cause of the increase in these years being not, however, so much a renewed outbreak of the Plague as of gaol-fever, one of those contagious disorders which, like its fellow just described, has disappeared in England before the advance of sanitary science.‡

Launceston Gaol appears to have earned at an early period of its existence an evil reputation for filth and discomfort. It has already been pointed out§ that the record in the Roll of the Seisin that the Castle contained "one vile gaol" did not indicate that the prison was a vile one in the present sense of the word, but if it had so indicated it would have only stated the simple truth. To it, from all accounts, could have been applied with exactitude the description given in 1512 of the stannary gaol at Lydford:—"a dongeon and a depe pytte

\* ante, p. 100. † Domestic State Papers, 1547-80, p. 555. ‡ It appears from the Bodmin Register (Rev. John Wallis, No. 1, p. 15) that in 1576, 1581, and 1590, a great mortality prevailed in that town, and from the New Parochial History (vol. iv., p. 117) that "in 1591 Redruth was visited by the plague, which occasioned the death of 91 of the inhabitants, the population then being about 1000." § ante, p. 53.



under the ground . . . the whiche prison is one of the moste annoyous contagious and detestablest places within this realme.”\* The “most loathsome and lousy dungeon” already described as having been the resting place of Cuthbert Maine† must have resembled this one at Lydford, for its terrors appear to have impressed the principal chronicler of his martyrdom so much that he again and again emphasises his disgust at the prison in which the victim was confined. For him no words are too strong in which to describe Maine’s dungeon; it was “a vile place,” viler even than the common gaol in which his fellow-sufferers were confined and where “their beds were a bare floor and their pillows hard stones”; the abode of the condemned prisoners was “a most miserable and horrible dungeon”; Maine’s employer and others were “brought again to remain in that place where their adversaries knew by experience they should want no kind of rigour and filthy imprisonment”; and Tregian himself was “committed unto a dark dungeon, a place often, by reason of the dankishness thereof, infested with foul toads and other filthy vermin,” and altogether a “most filthy and solitary den.”‡

Even if facts to be subsequently narrated did not bear out these strongly-worded descriptions of the Launceston prison, the Parish Register would afford practical confirmation by its proofs of the frequency with which the gaol-fever raged within it. In the December of 1570 one of these outbreaks commenced, the burials of four prisoners being recorded within the month; in the January of 1571 there were three others, in February another, and in April one more. Five years later there was a repetition of the mortality, when seven prisoners were interred in six months; in 1582-3 a further seven were buried within twelve months as well as “Richard Colyn minister (out of ye gayle),” and the dismal tale was repeated in 1587-8 when in the same period there were twelve deaths inside the prison.

Before turning to more cheerful subjects, and while considering the gaol, it may be asked whether the local lock-up placed over the South Gate (which was abandoned as lately as 1882, upon the

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\* An Acte concernynge Rychard Strode; 4 Hen. VIII., cap. viii; vide *Bibliotheca Devoniensis*, p. 199. † ante, p. 100. ‡ A Treatise touching . . . Mr. Francis Tregian, pp. 75-140.

substitution of the county for the borough police) does not date from the period of which we are speaking. Even the most casual observer cannot but be struck with the fact that the two storeys of cells which now stand over our only remaining Gate are of later erection than that upon which they are placed. "A dark house and a whip" were, we are told, the Elizabethan formula for the treatment of madness, and it was as "The Dark House" that the Launceston place of detention for crime was generally known,\* while its locality was indicated by the fact that when a person was arrested he was said to be "put over the gate." In the Parish Register it is stated that in January, 1582, "the first daie was christened John sonne of John Cramer at ye south gate," the latter being probably the keeper of that entrance to the town, and it is not unlikely that the now disused cells are the oldest dwelling places in the borough, older even than the house which faces the corn-market, and which bears upon it the stamp of being built in the days of Elizabeth.†

Norden tells us‡ that in 1584, when he visited it, Launceston was "a prettie towne, neatly kepte, and well governed by a Mayor and his brethren, that upon festivalls goe in their scarlet Roabes." The imagination may dwell with delight upon the picture thus suggested as somewhat different to the sober one we see to-day, when at the mayor-choosing§ the aldermen and councillors follow their new chief in procession, and only two are robed and these in no such gay colour as scarlet||; but Norden's remark is not the only indication that the Launceston Corporation thought much of ceremonial at this period. Nine years before the chronicler's visit, Robert Cooke Clarencieux King of Arms, had declared\*\* that the Mayor and Aldermen and their successors had the right to use the arms of the borough,

\* Some of the older inhabitants were accustomed to call it "The Clink," a name of mediæval origin. † There are upon one of the windows of this building the initials T. H. cut in granite; these may not improbably refer to T[homas] H[icks]: ante, p. 56.

‡ Topographical Description of Cornwall, p. 95. § It would be interesting to know at what date commenced the practice which has obtained until the present day, of the wife of the newly-chosen mayor presenting half-a-crown to the lad of fleetest foot who reached her from the Council Chamber with the earliest intelligence that her husband had been actually elected chief magistrate.

|| The present mayoral robe of violet trimmed with sable was purchased in 1851, upon the occasion of the then civic chief (the late Mr. T. S. Eyre) being invited to the opening of the Great Exhibition; the gold chain was bought in 1882 by a subscription among past mayors (or their representatives), raised chiefly by the efforts of the late Alderman John Ching. The robe of "the Justice" (as the immediate ex-mayor is locally called) is of fine black cloth.

\*\* The certificate is dated July 24, 1573.

which of ancient time were gules, a keep or castle, gold, on a bordure azure, semey turrets of the second, these being surmounted by a crest, a lion's head, gules, between two plumes, springing from a crown, or, and resting on a gorget.

The prominence given to the Castle in these arms is perhaps the best proof of the importance the townsmen attached to their fortification in the days which are past. But Norden in two distinct parts of his description calls attention to the decay, both moral and material, of the fortress in the period now under review. "The Dukes and Earles in former times," he exclaims, "had castles and howses of residence within the Duchie, namely Dunhevet, an auntient castle nere Launceston, aduanced vpon a verie steepe mounte, with a parke of fallowe Deare\* ; but time and neglechte of reparation hath much decayde the firste, and profitable providence clene ouerthrowne

the second ; insteede of a princely habitation it is now become the Comon gayle of the whole Prouince, the Custodie whereof is annexed vnto the Canstableship of the



THE BOROUGH ARMS.

and regard," and which "is now insteede of a princes Courte and honorable resorte" become a prison, he ejaculates: "This triple crowned mounte thowgh abandoned retayneth the forme, but not the fortune and favour of former times; *Tantum cœi longinqua ualet mutare uetustas.*"† It says a great deal for the original strength of the Castle that it should so long have withstood the time and neglect of which Norden speaks. As early as 1337 it was officially described as being ruinous,§ and in 1369 the Duchy found it necessary to spend certain sums upon the Castle and the Park.|| Repairs were, of course, constantly required, and we find that two-thirds of the tithes of

Castle, which is graunted out by lease"†; and after, in another place, giving an almost identical description of this Castle, which "hath bene in former times of greater importance

\* ante, pp. 55-106. † Topographical Description of Cornwall, p. 24. ‡ Ibid, p. 93 : on the same page is the earliest extant picture of the Castle with its triple ring and complete wall, including a wall around the Castle Dyke. § ante, p. 53. || 42 Ed. 3, Minister's Account of Payments; *Expensæ operum Castri et parci de Launceston* incipient : Vide Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 72.

various tenements in St. Neots were anciently appropriated to that purpose\* ; and as near as 1562 to the time with which we are dealing, there is an entry in the Duchy Accounts which shows “suche charges as Hewe prust hathe bestowed aboute the Castell and Housinge at Launceston sithen ye feaste of St. Michell tharcangell Anno domini 1562 unto the said feaste in the yere of our Lord God 1563.”† Later we shall see that whatever efforts were put forward, the Castle rapidly fell more and more into disrepair ; but, confining ourselves for the present to the points raised by Norden, it may be noted, in connection with his statement that the Constablenesship was “graunted out by lease,” that about the year 1586 there was a “grant to W. K.‡ of the offices of Escheator and Feodary of the Crown lands in the Duchy of Cornwall, and Constable of Launceston Castle, vacant by the death of H. C.§ Esq.”|| A curious feudal dispute was not improbably settled during “W. K.’s” constablenesship, for in the State Papers is a document of January, 1592, showing “allegations on the part of Rich. Tresilian, in a question between him and the Queen as to whether the Castle of Launceston, part of the Duchy of Cornwall, is held by knight’s service or in soccage,” it being decided that it was held by the latter.\*\*

Launceston appears from the Parish Register to have been visited with a very severe outbreak of the Plague during the two years immediately succeeding the settlement of this feudal dispute. 1592 had been exceptionally healthy, there having been in it only fifteen deaths, the lowest total since 1586, and the earlier months of 1593 were not marked by any extraordinary mortality. But in November of the latter year there were nine burials, which swelled to fifteen in the next month, making a total of forty-five for the year, as against fifteen in the twelve-month preceding. This time it did not seem as if the gaol was responsible for the calamity, only two prisoners being named as buried in 1593. January of the next year, in which month the number of deaths was usually one or two or three, had no less than nine, February six, March seven, April six, May nine,

\* New Parochial History, vol. iii., p. 413. † Cole’s MS. Extracts, pp. 171-2. ‡ It may be that this was the W[illiam] K[illigrew] who about this time received a lease of the Park : ante, p. 106. § Perhaps H. C[arew]. || Domestic State Papers, 1581-90, p. 378. \*\* Ibid, 1591-4, p. 176.

We shall close the record of the sixteenth century with considerations of the law. Already there have been given some particulars of Chancery cases affecting Launceston in the reign of Elizabeth\* and these did not exhaust the list. John Glanville and Olyver Collyn sued Richard Baker, Henry Baker, and others "respecting a grant made by the mayor and commonalty of Dunheved alias Launceston of certain beams and weights there"†; another suit concerned "certain land held of the borough of Dounehevitt alias Launceston"‡; a third had reference to an estate in "Donhevet Borough, Bodashe, and St. Stephens near Launceston"§; another was between a Hicks and a Baker (the names of the most frequent local litigants of those days) as to "certain mills called Rudgrowe Mills|| and lands thereto belonging, near Launceston"\*\*\*; a lease granted by Thomas Hicks,†† now deceased, provoked a suit between

\* ante, p. 86.      † Calendar of Chancery Proceedings, vol. i., p. 368.      ‡ Ibid, p. 377.  
§ Ibid, vol. ii., p. 61.      || ante, p. 27.      \*\* Calendar of Chancery Proceedings, vol. ii.,  
p. 67.      †† ante, p. 86.



Philip King\* and two others†; while the last recorded suit of the century was touching “the rectory of Julett or St. Julett, formerly parcel of the possessions of the priory of Launceston, and demised by the Queen’s letters patent.”‡

A quainter phase of Launceston’s connection with the law is here to be studied. Thomas Walmysley, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in the later years of the sixteenth and the earlier of the seventeenth centuries, and who rode the Western Circuit at every autumn and spring assizes from July, 1596, to March, 1601, was careful to keep a full record of the expenses to which he was put on each of his journeys, and his note-book contains an abundance of matter to interest Launceston readers.§ “For the Western Circuit,” we are told, “the judges and their officers started on horseback from Holborn, and thence proceeded from town to town. Where the distance between any two places was great they rested at some gentleman’s house, or at some intermediate town. . . . The judges usually slept at Mr. Fulford’s, or at Mr. Sergeant Glanville’s, between Exeter and Launceston; at Mr. Gale’s, at Kirton||; at Mr. Monk’s, or at Mr. Stuckley’s, or at Mr. Jennings’, or at Mr. Berry’s, on the way between Launceston and Taunton.” The expenses the judges had to meet were fees to the servants in those houses at which they stayed and charges for their lodgings and stable-equipment. “An Order in Council in February, 1574, had relieved the sheriffs from the charge of the Judges’ diet, yet the sheriff of each county sent large presents of fish, flesh, and fowl for the use of the Judges. . . . In every county some of the mayors of towns and other public bodies, and the principal country gentlemen, also sent presents of like provisions.”

The account in which appears the first detailed description of the judges’ expenses and presents is dated July, 1596, Walmysley being accompanied on circuit by Edward Fenner, of the Queen’s Bench. The first entry is of “joynt chardges at Okington, beinge in the waie

\* This is the first mention of a name and family which afterwards played an important part in the corporate history of Launceston. † Calendars of Chancery Proceedings, vol. ii., p. 115. ‡ Ibid., p. 405. § The Expenses of the Judges of Assize Riding the Western and Oxford Circuits, temp. Elizabeth, 1596-1601. Edited from the MS. Account Book of Thomas Walmysley, one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, by William



to Launston, where yor. LL. [lordships] did dyne, xxiiij Julij, ao. xxxviiij Eliz., total spent there xxs. viijd." Between Okehampton and Launceston two shillings are recorded to have been paid for twelve gallons of beer "in the extreme heat," and then comes an account of the Assizes held "at the Castle of Launceston"\* on July 26, the opening item of which is "Presents at Launceston," under which are entered: "Imprimis of Mr. Sheriffe,† one gurnett, one soale, one hadock, one brayme, one buck, two pies, one mutton, one veale, two lambes, two turkies,‡ one hernesshawe, vj chickings, ij ducks, iij gullies, wyne, and a hoggeshead o beare viijs. : Item of Mr. Trelawney, one mutton, one kidd, xij chickings, ij capons, iij turkies ijs. : It. of Mr. Wraie, ij capons, vj chickings, and vj pigeons, the reward xijd. : It. of Mr. Sharock, vj gullies, vj turkies, vj rabetts, the rewarde ijs. : Suma for p'sents ib'm xijs." These viands were not all that the judges required, and they were put to the following expenses for "Provision bought at Launceston": "Imp'mis a qr. of mutton, halfe a veale, a qr. of lambe, and a legge of mutton vijs. vjd. : It. iij lambes p'tenances xijd. : It. iij paire of calves feete vjd. : It. iiij chickings ijs. : It. one capon xvijjd. : It. bread and flower xxixs. : It. the grocer's bill vs. xd. : It. salt, vinegar, and herbes ijs. : It. wyne iijjs. iiijd. : It. firewoode viijs. : It. yor LL. chambers ls. : It. butter and egges vs. iiijjd. : It. to the butler iiijjs. : It. to the turnespitt xijd. : It. for washinge the lynnens ijs. : It. for suett viijjd. : It. for beare vs. : It. for bakinge the veneson xvijjd. : It. for candles ijs. : It. to Mr. Maior his s'uant of Saltaishe for oysters xijd. : It. ij coople of rabetts ijs." The total joint expenses at Launceston were, therefore, £7 13s., and in addition to his half-share of these Walmysley's "private chardges" were: "Imp'mis for horsemeate iiij li. ijs. xd. : It. for neates foot oil vjd. : It. to the sadler xijd. : It. o the poore xxd. : It. to the ostler xijd. : It. to Mr. Justice Fenner's cooke for his paynes the whole circuite xxs." The total of joint and private expenditure to which Walmysley was put at Launceston was, consequently, £9 3s. 6d., in addition to which there was a sum of £2 7s. 9d. "disbursed by me from Launston unto

\* ante, p. 88.

† Sir William Bevill.

‡ Turkeys were then a rare bird, and they were given to these judges first at Launceston.

Bristoll," bringing up the grand total for the circuit to £49 11s. 7d.

In the spring of 1597, for some reason not explained, no assizes were held for either Cornwall or Devon, but on July 8 of that year Walmysley was again at Launceston. Mr. Sharrock on this occasion presented the judges a dish of sea fish, Mr. Wray four capons, and Mr. Trelawny a kid, twelve chickens, four young "gannyes" (which are thought to have been gowbills), two gulls, two capons, and three salmon peel. The Sheriff (now Mr. William Wray) gave a sheep, half a calf, two capons, a lamb, and a dish of fish; Mr. Coryton half a buck; Mr. Carew, of Antony, three bass and three mullett; and Mr. Hender six gulls and six puffins, the latter bird appearing only at Launceston in all these accounts of the Western Circuit. At Walmysley's next visit in March, 1598, about an equal number of presents was made, among them being a hogshead of beer and a tart as well as several varieties of fish from Peter Courtney, the year's sheriff; while to "Lamerton, who brought beer from Mr. Sheriff, and waited all the assizes" was given half-a-crown. The next spring, Sir William Bevill being once more sheriff, the presents included an "isle of salmon," a "quartern of razerfish," a quartern of cockles, a piece of conger, a piece of porpoise, and a box of marmalade; the last-named item was evidently a rarity, being met with only at Exeter in addition to Launceston, while the porpoise (which was supposed to be roasted or cooked like the sturgeon) was even more rare, for it is given at Launceston alone and upon no more than one occasion; but presents, common or uncommon, did not supply all the wants of their lordships, whose purchases here at this assize included a thornback and oysters. 1599 seems to have been a prolific year for salmon peel, one county gentleman giving two, another ten, and another as many as twenty, and we meet in this list for the first time a dish of artichokes, a lobster, and some "scorched" apples and pears, as well as another "box of marmalett." At the Spring Assizes of 1600 the Sheriff appears to have been unusually generous, giving, in addition to the customary barrel of ale, a separate series of presents upon each of the three days that the judges sat,\*

\* Carew, in his Survey published two years later (fol. 90) points with some regret to the fact that whereas in former times the Launceston Assizes was attended by only one judge, they then needed the presence of two.

their lordships assisting digestion of the viands (which now included teal, sanderlings, plover, heathcock, and quails) with oranges, herbs, and salads, for which they paid eight-pence, while at the Autumn Assizes of the same year they spent half-a-crown upon cheese and strawberries, three shillings upon wine, and exactly eight times as much upon beer; the latter was in addition to the Sheriff's hogshead, and the extra quantity was probably required because of the unusually large amount of fish presented by the gentlemen of the county on this occasion.

One more item concerning Launceston's connection with the law at this period is to be found in Carew's Survey of Cornwall, first published in 1602. The venerable historian, after complimenting certain Cornish lawyers who "testifie the honesty of their carriage by the mediocrity of their estate," expressed the opinion that, if they would give him leave "to report a jest," this verified "an old gentleman's prophesie, who said, that there stood a man at Polton bridge (the first entrance into Cornwall as you passe towards Launceston, where the assizes are holden) with a blacke bill in his hand, ready to knock downe all the great lawyers, that should offer to plan themselves in that countie. In earnest, whether it be occasioned through the countries pouerty, or by reason of the far distance thereof from the supremer courts, or for that the multiplicity of petty ones neere at hand, appertaining to the Dutchy, Stannary, and Franchises, doe enable the attourneyes and such like, of small reading, to serue the people's turne, and so curtaill the better studied counsellours profiting: once certayne it is, that few men of law have, either in our time or in that of our forefathers, growne heere to any supereminent height of learning, liuely-hood, or authoritie."\*

From the assize court to the gaol is but a step, and it is of a noted prisoner we have now to speak. In the summer of 1603, when it was becoming clear to the Romanists that the accession of James the First, contrary to what they had fondly expected, was not likely in the least to benefit their condition, it was reported from Penryn by Thomas St. Aubyn to the Privy Council that a seminary priest, one Roger Gwyn, or Wynn, of Carnarvonshire, had been seized on

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\* Survey, fol. 59-60.

board a French ship.\* This report was dated June 6, and seventeen days later Sir Francis Godolphin and Christopher Harris,† both men of note in the county, despatched from Launceston a letter to the Council giving details regarding the proceedings taken against the prisoner. They enclosed two papers, the first containing an account of Gwyn's education in Spain and a statement as to the number of Jesuits and Catholics in England, and the second a confession he had made to Captain John Fisher, one of his captors, to the effect that his intention in coming to England was to kill the King and introduce Popery. "The readiness with which he gave this information," says the most noted historian of these times,‡ "gives cause for a suspicion that he was not in the full possession of his senses. However this may have been, it was, at least, certain that he came from Spain, and the fright which this affair caused the King, predisposed him to listen to Rosny's [the French Ambassador's] stories of Spanish treachery." On June 28, Godolphin and Harris reported to Lord Cecil (who, as early as the tenth of that month, had been in correspondence on the matter) that they had sent their prisoner under custody from Launceston to London. Even if it had not been for Gwyn's own confession (which, as after events proved, was not worth the material upon which it was written) the Act of Elizabeth directed against the seminary priests of Douay was sufficient to justify his detention. The execution of Maine,§ which was the first-fruit of the enactment, proved, as Green says,|| that the Act was no idle menace, and "gave a terrible indication of the character of the struggle upon which Elizabeth was about to enter"; and the struggle was not yet destined to cease as Gwyn himself found. What occurred to him after his arrival in London from Launceston is not clear, but eleven months subsequent to his journey we find him in the custody of Sir Thomas Vavasour, the

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\* Domestic State Papers, 1603-10, p. 13 and foll. † Christopher Harris, who was afterwards knighted, and who became Sheriff of Cornwall in 1609, was appointed in the summer of 1606 (together with Sir Ferdinando Gorges, William Strode, Sir Anthony Rous, Richard Carew the Historian, and the Mayor of Plymouth for the time being) on a commission to enforce the orders of the Privy Council respecting the pilchard-fishery of Devon and Cornwall; the Commissioners met at Launceston on August 13, and here issued a warrant to the parish constables of the two counties directing them to summon the owners and masters of seines and boats to appear before them at Saltash three days later (Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, Ninth Report, Appendix, p. 265: Corporation of Plymouth's Records.) ‡ S. R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-1642 [edition 1883] vol. i., p. 106. § ante, p. 102. || Short History, p. 401.

Knight Marshal, who was allowed two pounds weekly for his keep ; \* and as his rambling story was evidently not believed he was liberated not far later, a warrant to Sir Thomas, undated but probably of this same year 1604, granting an increase of pay upon one of his prisoners and stating that Gwyn had been " long since discharged." † Another abortive prosecution at Launceston in the reign of James, but this time against a Church of England clergyman and on strictly political rather than on semi-religious grounds, may here be noted. The Rev. John Fletcher, M.A., vicar of Fowey, " who is said to have been highly esteemed as a critic, scholar, and an orator," was accused under an Act of Elizabeth with speaking or writing against the King's Government, and was sentenced at Launceston Assizes to abjure the realm, but on appeal to the King's Bench the judgment was reversed, and Fletcher was honourably acquitted. ‡

The Lazar-house at St. Leonards disappears from view about this period as an institution in active work. In the return of Edward the Sixth's Commissioners certain lands in the parish of St. Stephens are stated to be devoted to the payment of " a priest to minister in a spittle house there," § and there has been noted an extract from the Parish Register to show that just at this time the "almes house" still contained inmates, || while now in 1607 we find an equally tangible proof of existence in the shape of a receipt given by the Prior of St. Leonards (a title which appears curious half a century after the full accomplishment of the Reformation) to the Mayor of Launceston for the hundred shillings which Richard, King of the Romans, nearly four hundred years before had directed the Corporation to pay to the lepers. \*\* "Be it known vnto all men by these psents," runs the receipt, " that I degory Band Prior of the hospitall or Lazer howse of Saynt Leonardes als Gylmartyn with the rest of my Bretheren and Systers doe acknowledg our selues to haue receaued of Mr. Arthure Piper ††

\* May 24, 1604; Domestic State Papers, 1603-10. † Ibid. ‡ New Parochial History, vol. ii., p. 32. § Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 268. || ante, p. 104. \*\* ante, p. 41. †† He was probably the son of Sampson Pyper (ante, p. 104) and was distinguished from him in the Parish Register by being described simply as "Arthur Pyper" (Register, p. 62) while the other was named "Sampson Pyper, gent." (ibid, p. 65). He was the father of a Hugh Pyper, who was baptised on June 21, 1574, and who was married on September 2, 1604, to a lady whose Christian name was Deborah, but whose surname is omitted, and who was buried a little more than six months later (April 2, 1605); the family of Pyper was so numerous in Launceston at this period that it is not possible to tell with exactitude whether the Sir Hugh Pyper of later renown was descended directly from this "Hugh Pyper, gent."



Mayor of the Borough of Dunheved, als Launceston the whole and Intire some of vli. [five pounds] of lawful mony of England due vnto vs at the ffeast of Saynt Michael tharcaungle now last past being the kings maties ffree gift to wardes the aforesaid hospitall of Saynt Leonardes als Gylmartyn wherefore I the sayd degory Band with the rest of my bretheren and Systers do acknowledge our selues to be thereof Satisfied Contented and payd and we haue caused this our acquittance to be made and haue here vnto fixed our Common Seale of the said howse\* the tenth day of October in the Raigne of our Souereigne Lord James By the grace of god of England ffrance and Ireland King defender of the ffayth &c. the ffiveth and of Scotland the one and ffortith 1607.”†

From this period we see nothing of the working of St. Leonards, a name which, by the way, was given to more than one Lazar-house in the kingdom: as early as the reign of John we find mention of a St. Leonard’s hospital for lepers at Bedford and at Northampton,‡ and in the Chancery Records of Elizabeth there is a reference to a “dissolved hospital of St. Lennard in Newport Pond,” Essex.§ The ordinary historians of such institutions have devoted so little attention to the one at Gilmartin that it has even, by a stroke of extraordinary fatuity, been described as if it were three. In the latest edition of Dugdale, under the heading “Hospitals of the Order of St. Augustine omitted by Dugdale,”|| it is first mentioned by the name of “Gild Martyn,” and some doubt is expressed as to whether it was situated in Devon or Cornwall; then is noted a hospital at Launceston, dedicated to St. Leonard; and next is given a hospital at Newport, dedicated to St. Thomas, “which was well endowed and governed in Mr. Carew’s time.” Part of this confusion is to be attributed to the diverse

\* “The seal is evidently a mediæval one. It is vesica-shaped, charged with what seems to be a saint in a Gothic niche. It is impressed on a wafer between two sheets of paper”: Notes and Queries, 3rd Series, vol. xii., (1867) pp. 461-2. † Ibid; the receipt is in the Augmentation Office, Miscellaneous Books, vol. lxi: in the same Office is a similar receipt of some six years later, described (Cole’s MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 171) as an “Acknowledgment or Acquittance from the Prior of the Hospitall of Seint Leonards alias Gilmartyn for receipt of £5 from Mr. Roberte Hoeken Mayor of the borough of Dounheved alias Launceston.” ‡ Extracts from the Patent Rolls, vol. i., part 1. § Calendars of the Proceedings in Chancery, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, vol. iii., p. 259. With regard to the name here quoted it may be noted that in the accounts of Launceston Priory, given in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of Henry VIII. (ante, p. 82) figures a fee to “Henry Shere bailiff of the borough o Newport Pونده.” || Edition of 1830, vol. vi., part 2, p. 757.



names under which the institution went; part also has undoubtedly arisen from the disappearance of the hospital by the absorption of its revenues into those of the Launceston Corporation.

While thus tracing as far as is possible the course of public affairs in the centre of the existing borough, the parishes immediately around must not be forgotten. Few but ecclesiastical affairs are to be recorded concerning them, but in these there is something of interest. Previous to the Reformation, the rectory of South Petherwin was in the gift of the Prior of St. Germans, who received a mark yearly out of the living. Upon the suppression of the monasteries the advowson passed into the hands of the Crown, and Mary, by Letters Patent, dated May 2, 1553, granted to the University of Oxford the rectory and advowson, the reason assigned for this being the impoverished condition of that seat of learning.\* This was not the first connection between South Petherwin and Oxford University, for in the report of Edward the Sixth's Commission the sum of forty shillings is mentioned as being given out of "the stipendarye called Nenweneek, or Menwenecks," "to a scholar at Oxforde for his exhibeyon yerelye xls." Out of the same came also a grant "to fynde a pryste to celebrate masse, dirige, and other dyvine servyce for his sowle [that of the founder 'William Menwenecke, clerke'] in the parish church of Southpederwyn, and he to have for his yerelye stipend evjs. viijd." The Register for this parish does not, however, commence for a long time as yet, while that of St. Stephens opens in 1566,† only a few years after the Register of St. Mary Magdalene's, and in the Church of St. Thomas are still to be found floor-stones which so far answer the purpose of such a document that they show us that "Darytie Stone the deafter of Mr. John Stone of St. Mynver" died on January

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\* For this information, supplied by Dr. Griffiths, Keeper of the Archives of Oxford University, the Author is indebted to the Rev. H. T. May, as he also is for much other material concerning South Petherwin. According to Boase's Exeter College (p. 202) there is a South Petherwin deed in the archives of that institution, dated May 20, 1554; its specific contents are not given, but it appears from it that the Rev. John Moreman, a prominent local divine of that period, was then still living, concerning whom it is elsewhere stated that "this language [the Cornish] was so generally spoken in Cornwall till the time of Henry VIII. that Dr. John Moreman, who was vicar of Menhynnet, or Menhinnick, near Launceston, in that reign, was the first who taught his parishioners the Lord's prayer, creed, and commandments in English," (A New Display of the Beauties of England, 3rd edition [1776] p. 400). † This Register was in such a dilapidated condition that the late Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, Recorder of Launceston in the early part of this century, caused it to be re-bound.

9, 1576, and that "Thomas hecks, the sonne of Degary hecks" was buried on February 22, 1586.\*

With regard to St. Stephens, there are some further facts of interest concerning this period. On July 9, 1575, Elizabeth granted to Sir Gawen Carew and his wife for a term of sixty years the rectory of St. Stephens and the chapel of St. Nicholas of Tresmere, and "all the tithes of sheaf, grain, hay, wool, flax, hemp, lambs, and all the small tithes of every kind belonging to the same rectory and chapel"; and on May 16, 1600, for the consideration of £1738 14s. 10d. the Queen granted a reversion of this property to "Henry Best and Robert Hollande, of London, gentlemen, their heirs, successors, and assigns for ever." About the latter year, William Heddou, rector of St. Stephens, brought a suit in Chancery against one Henry Courter "to compel the performance of a contract made with plaintiff for his serving the cure of St. Stephen's," the statement of particulars setting forth that "Sir Gawin Carewe, Knight, deceased, having presented the plaintiff to the cure of the parish of St. Stephens, Launceston, the defendant and other parishioners, on account of the insufficiency of the stipend, agreed to augment it with 40s. per annum, which agreement they performed for four years, and afterwards was discontinued."†

The Rev. William Heddou must have ministered in a building very similar in most respects to that which was seen at St. Stephens up to the time of its restoration just now completed. The original St. Stephens Church, erected probably on the falling into ruin of that of the superseded canons of Lanscavetone, was dedicated in 1259,‡ and this was not improbably expanded somewhat more than two centuries later, to meet the wants of the growing population, at the same time that the tower was built, towards which, as has been mentioned,§ Thomasine Bonaventure in 1520 gave twenty marks. Portions of the thirteenth century erection were found during the recent process of restoration in the shape of sculptures, one representing Christ in Majesty and another the Virgin and Child, together with the

\* There cannot be much doubt that this is the same Thomas Hicks who was concerned in the Chancery proceedings touching "the manor of Launceston land and Newporte Borough" (ante, p. 86). † Calendar of the Proceedings in Chancery, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, vol. iii., p. 7., S.s. 2. No. 12. ‡ ante, p. 46. § ante, p. 93.

foundations of what was either a sacristy or a lady-chapel. The original churchyard extended far beyond its present limits, and the Rev. E. S. T. Daunt informs the Author that the Northumberland Arms stands upon a portion of it, graves being underneath that building as well as below the roadway which now passes between it and the Church.

Before again temporarily leaving affairs ecclesiastical we may turn once more to the Register of St. Mary Magdalene. From this we find that during the first decade of the seventeenth century, the average of births was slightly higher than in any similar period previously recorded; the average of marriages was much higher, (being, in fact, the highest recorded between 1560 and 1671, save from 1651 to 1660, when for exceptional reasons to be subsequently described the average was greater than usual); while that of deaths, though somewhat lower than in the plague period of the previous ten years, was heavier than it had been before that date. As might be imagined, many of the deaths are to be attributed to gaol fever, among the probable victims of this being "Blayth a Scotteshman imprisoned,"\* who was buried on July 9, 1603, and whose offence, considering the political condition of the country just then, was not unlikely to have been treason. No average can be struck for the ten years from 1611 to 1620 owing to the Register being imperfect during some of them. It is recorded "that the noates of all such marriages as were from Januarie 1612 [1613 N.S.] until May 1614 are lost," similar entries being made concerning the christenings and the burials; but before the commencement of another decade the Register was again rendered perfect, as is shown by the statement "Here followeth a copie of such marriages as have been since May 1614, transcribed out of the paper-booke which William Middleton clerke had made of such noats as he found, and continued during his Clarkshippe: By John Saint-hill, Minister of this Towne, this present yeere 1620." From the fact that "Daniel Northwell Minister" was buried (in the "chancill," as the funeral entry states) on January 2, 1620, it may fairly be conjectured that this business of righting the Register was one of the first employments of Mr. St. Hill, his successor in the living.

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\* A similar entry of nationality is given on January 19, 1625, when there was baptized  
"Richard sonne of a french woman."

William Middleton, it may be remarked, survived the work a full twenty years, he being buried on February 25, 1640, the Register describing him as "an old Clarke of ye Church." It is not improbable that the "old Clarke" could have told something of the last days of Launceston as a Sanctuary-town,\* for it was in the first year of James (when, from internal evidence afforded by the Register, John Harbert† had been succeeded in the clerkship and probably by Middleton) that an Act was passed which enacted "that so much of all Statutes as concerneth abjured Persons and Sanctuaries, or ordering or governing of Persons abjured or in Sanctuaries, made before the five and thirtieth yeere of the late Queen Elizabeths Reign, shall stand repealed and be voide"‡; and twenty years later another statute provided "that no Sanctuarie or Priviledge of Sanctuary shalbe hereafter admitted or allowed in any case."||

In 1612 a return was made to James the First concerning "the Bailliwick of Launceston," this including "a particuler of the house and site of the Priory of Launceston and the barton or grange of Newhouse with its appurtenances" (a similar return being given on November 12, 1613) and "particulers of the Stewardship of all mannors nuper Comitis Exon. and of the pryorye of Launceston conc' Richard Billinge."§ On December 21, 1614, James granted to Richard Connocke and his heirs "all the house and site of the late dissolved priory of Launceston, with the rights, members, and appurtenances thereof, the barton and grange of Newhouse, and the two water-mills\*\*," this Richard Connoek being presumably the same who on March 12, 1603, examined as auditor the accounts of the seneschal of the lands of the Priories of Launceston and Tywardreath, annexed to the Duchy.†† In August, 1615, an investigation was made regarding the tenures which Charles, Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles the First) claimed as Duke of Cornwall, these including "all ymediate Tenures by Knights service as of the Honnors of Launceston or Tremorton";‡‡ the inquiry was held in the early part of the month, the return for the manor of Stokeclimsland being dated as having been taken at Launceston on the second and that for the manor of Rillaton on the fourth.§§

\* ante, p. 89. † ante, p. 103. ‡ 1 Jac. I., cap. 25: Statutes of the Realm, vol. iv., p. 1051. § 21 Jac. I., cap. 23: Ibid, p. 1237. § Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 171. \*\* ante, pp. 27-106. †† Cole's MS. extracts, p. 193. ‡‡ Ibid p. 199. §§ Ibid, p. 98.

Just as the knight-service here recorded was dying into desuetude we find our first mention of a Launceston literary man, one of a class which, if the promise of the present be fulfilled, is destined to grow rather than to decay. The nearest connection between Launceston and literature which could previously have been established was that there is some probability that John Trevisa (who a little after the time of Wiclif followed the example of that Reformer by translating the Bible into English) was brother of Ralph and Richard Trevisa, who represented the borough in the two Parliaments of 1371. But in the latter years of the sixteenth century there was born (it is thought at Launceston) one John Carpenter who published on his own account. Entering Exeter College, Oxford, he remained there four years "studying the arts with unwearied industry."† He then became rector of Northleigh, Devon, and his first printed effort was "A Sorrowful Song for Sinful Souls, composed upon the strange and wonderful shaking of the earth, 6th April, 1586," this being issued in London in the year named. Two years later he published a little work entitled "Remember Lot's Wife; Two Godlie and fruitfull Sermons, very convenient for this our time, on Luke xvii., 32"; and in succeeding years he issued six other books, the last of which was in 1607, and was called "The Plaine Man's Spirituall Plough. Containing the Godly and Spirituall Husbandrie wherein every Christian ought to be exercised, for the happie increase of fruite to eternall life," the writer being described as "I. C., Preacher of the Word." The title of this last work (the writer of which died at Northleigh in March, 1620) may be linked with that of a publication of a namesake of the author, intimately connected with Launceston nearly two centuries later, "A Sermon on the Harvest of this Year, 1777, from Acts xiv, verse 17, addressed to the Farmers of this Kingdom; with a serious Hint or two to their Superiors," having been published (in London by G. Robinson and in Launceston by R. Martin) from the pen of the Rev. William Carpenter, D.D., Vicar of Treneglos and Warbstow, and afterwards Perpetual Curate of Launceston and Prebendary of Exeter, who died at the last-named place in 1808.

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\* Wood, *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, ii., 287.



That part of the social history of a town which is to be traced in its taverns is as interesting to the general reader as that which is to be gathered from its literature ; and, in days when the liquor traffic is an important factor in politics and its restriction a battle-ground of parties, the existence of such a letter as that which the Mayor and Justices of Launceston sent on February 14, 1623, to the Council, stating that they had executed the orders for suppressing unnecessary alehouses,\* is worth remembering. There is an earlier record of the existence of Launceston taverns in the borough archives, where, under date November 28, 1582, is a list of forty-two persons apparently authorized to keep inns ("pro Tabna. tenend.") within the jurisdiction of the Corporation, each tavern keeper being bound in the sum of five pounds and each of his presumed securities in fifty shillings to keep good rule in the houses.† It is not, therefore, much to be wondered at that out of such a large number of inns, altogether disproportionate to the size of the town, some could have been suppressed with advantage. But it was not only about the taverns that the Launceston authorities wrote in the letter to the Council already quoted. They were concerned also with the supply of corn, and it was with joy that they could report that they found that the bushel of wheat had come down in price from twelve shillings to ten shillings and that the quantity of barley brought to market was doubled. Three months later, Sir John Speccott, then High Sheriff, writing from his seat at Penheale, forwarded to the Council, "the certificates of some of the justices on the orders for preventing dearth of grain." These included a certificate of the justices of the Hundred of Lesnewth, dated at Launceston March 13, declaring that "there is great lack of corn for Botreaux Castle [Boscastle] market; the prices are high and likely to increase, the survey having made known the general want"; another from the justices of the Hundred of Trigg, dated at Launceston the same day and to the same effect; and a third from the justices of Penwith and Kerrier, dated April 1, declaring like the rest that there was great lack of supply, and adding that "prices will rise unless foreign corn comes in."‡

\* Domestic State Papers, 1619-23, p. 491. † Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, Appendix, p. 525. ‡ May 3, 1623: Domestic State Papers, 1619-23, p. 576.



It was in this season of stress that one of the greatest patriots whom England has seen was returned for Newport. Sir John Eliot of Port Eliot, "the most illustrious confessor in the cause of liberty whom that time produced," had first entered the House of Commons in 1614, being elected for his native borough of St. Germans in his twenty-third year. In that short-lived Parliament "although he doubted the wisdom of some of the leaders, he was with the party of opposition,"\* but this did not prevent him from being knighted in 1618 and being made the next year Vice-Admiral of Devon. He had no seat in the House which was called in 1620, but in 1624 (after having just been in grievous trouble and even in prison because of his capturing a notorious pirate who, in the most literal sense, had "friends at Court") he was elected for Newport. It is not altogether difficult to account for his choice of a constituency, for "in the winter of 1611, Eliot, then only in his twentieth year, married Rhadagund, the only daughter of a Cornish squire of considerable fortune, Richard Gedie, of Trebursey,"† who may well have had interest in the borough which immediately adjoined his seat. The elections took place early in 1624; Sir Beville Grenville and William Coryton, of whom much will afterwards have to be recorded, were returned for the county, Sir Francis Crane and Sir Miles Fleetwood for Launceston, and on January 19 (three days before the election for the sister borough) "Sir John Eliot, Knt., of Port Eliot, county Cornwall, and Richard Estcott, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, London," for Newport. All Eliot's "previous parliamentary experience consisted in the silent part he took during his youth in the four months' parliament of 1614 . . . and now, from the first moment of his active public life, his patriotism began."‡

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\* John Forster, *Biography of Sir John Eliot*, vol. i., p. 14. † *Ibid.*, p. 10. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 64.





V.—FROM THE ELECTION OF SIR JOHN ELIOT TO THE DEATH OF  
SIR BEVILLE GRENVILLE (1624—1643).



WITHIN a very short period after Sir John Eliot practically commenced his political career by becoming member for Newport, the inhabitants of the West of England were distracted from the proceedings of Parliament and even from those attendant upon the change of monarch by two enemies of the public peace dead as far as the England of to-day is concerned—Pirates and the Plague. It is impossible to study the general history of the time without feeling how largely in parts it is coloured by both these influences, and their effect is almost as marked upon our local chronicles. During the reign of James the First Cornwall and Devon had suffered grievously from the ravages of the Sallee rovers—a body remembered by most of us merely because of a chance reference in *Robinson Crusoe*—and at the accession of Charles the evil had not abated. Frequent petitions to the Council from ports in the West told the dismal tale of rapine, and bore out the truth of the story of “the distressed wives of almost two thousand poor mariners remaining most miserable captives in Sallee in Barbary,” who implored the Duke of Buckingham that as their husbands had for a long time continued in most miserable estate, suffering such unspeakable misery and torture that they were almost forced “to convert from their Christian religion,” and as the King had not answered a single one of their many petitions for relief, his grace would “in his wonted goodness and gracious pity towards poor women and miserable captives” intercede with Charles on their behalf.\*

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\* Domestic State Papers, 1625-26, p. 516.

In the beginning of 1625, Sir John Eliot presided at an Admiralty Sessions at Plymouth for the trial of twenty-three "Turks and renegadoes" for piracy, and twenty of these were hanged. But this sweeping execution did not save the south-western coast from further attacks. In the April the Mayor of Plymouth informed the Council that "certain Turks, Moors, and Dutchmen of Sallee, in Barbary, lie on our coasts, spoiling such as they are able to master":\* and on the same day Sir James Bagg, an admiralty servant, wrote from that town to Buckingham that "a Turkish pirate, who lies upon our coast, has this week taken a Dartmouth ship and three Cornish fisher-boats, even in the mouth of the harbour," and to repel the attacks of the rovers "the press" had been despatched to raise two hundred and fifty men in Devon and two hundred in Cornwall, Bagg adding, with a touch of the malice often subsequently displayed, "Sir John Eliot is displeased that he was not solely employed."†

Sir John's constituents soon had an opportunity for judging what the Sallee rovers were like. The town lay too far from the coast to have any fear of the nocturnal incursions which harried those nearer the sea, but its prison afforded a means for becoming acquainted with the foe. As long before as 1611 we find pirates in the gaol, but these appear to have been English, "Roger Polkinhorn, gentleman," being paid £72 "for his costs and charges in setting out a ship of his own to sea, for apprehending of one Griffin, a pirate, and his company, and having laid them prisoners at Launceston."‡ But fifteen years later a much larger haul was taken. Writing to Nicholas, the Secretary of the Council, on May 24, 1626, Francis Bassett, Admiral of the North Parts of Cornwall, reported that a "Sallee ship has been brought into St. Ives by Wm. Harrys, of Looe, and other Englishmen, who, having been taken by the Turks and kept as slaves, revolted, slew those on deck, and kept thirty-two under hatches, until they brought them to St. Ives," and he requested "a Commission of Oyer and Terminer for the trial of these villains, and that as soon as possible, he being at near ten shillings a day expense upon them."§ Three weeks later Bassett wrote for further instructions, pointing out

\* Ibid. † Ibid. ‡ The warrant is dated October 3, 1611, and the payment seems to have been made on October 10; Devon, Issues of the Exchequer (James I.), p. 143: Domestic State Papers, 1611-18, p. 79. § Domestic State Papers, 1625-26, p. 339.

that, although he had received a commission to try his prisoners, "various official persons" had directed him not to put them to death, and he added the natural consequence that "they are a great charge for their diet and a guard."\* Nicholas evidently listened to the appeal, for when in the August Bassett wrote to him once more no further request was made regarding the captives, while in the same month Buckingham moved at the Council that the forty-one Turks at St. Ives (the number having grown since the first estimate) should be transferred to the prison at Launceston.† This was agreed to, but the basis of dissatisfaction was merely changed, not done away with, and, in the following month, one Charles Barrett (who seems to have been a prominent agent in the emancipation of enslaved Englishmen) joined with other inhabitants of Cornwall to petition both Buckingham and the Council to deliver to him the Turkish captives, "to be by him exchanged for English subjects now prisoners in Barbary," the petitioners being "grievously burdened with their detention and relief."‡ This request was not granted, perhaps because of a letter from a Captain John Harrison to the King, accusing Barrett of intending to sell into slavery the Turks he proposed to exchange§; and in the November John Sorrell, keeper of the gaol at Launceston, complained to Barrett that Bassett had sent him fifty Turkish prisoners—the number is constantly growing—without money or clothes, although the Admiral had taken their ship, worth five hundred pounds, and the prisoners had had to be maintained by the writer and "the country," as the county was then often called.|| At this point all trace of the Turks disappears; and whether they were hanged to save expense, or were transferred to Barrett to be exchanged for English captives, or were indefinitely detained at Launceston to be a continued source of tribulation to Mr. John Sorrell and the ratepayers the State Papers which have told the story thus far afford no clue. Very much the same mystery attaches to some other captives taken at sea and confined in Launceston Gaol four years later. On this occasion Captain Sidrack Gibbon (who appears to have done a great deal in the direction of capture) writing to Nicholas from

\* June 17, 1626; Ibid, p. 356. † Ibid, p. 418. ‡ Sept. 28; Ibid, p. 439. § Date not given, but probably November; Ibid, p. 529. || November 30; Ibid, p. 433.

"aboard the Tenth Whelp in Plymouth Sound" tells him of his having taken a Biscayan ship and landed the crew at St. Michael's Mount with a certificate to travel to London; he had heard, however, that some country justices (for whom Captain Sidrack may be imagined to have had a hearty contempt) had sent them to Launceston\* — a name which the gallant navigator spelt "Lanson," thus adopting a barbarous usage which has extended even to this day, and which cannot be too strongly reprehended. What was to become of the Biscayans Captain Gibbon did not seem much to care; all he was anxious about was that "the Biscayner," as he called their vessel, should be given to him; and the fate of the men is unrecorded.

The Pirates had of necessity to be content with devouring the substance of those near the coast, but the Plague devastated the whole country. In 1625 the visitation was so severe that Parliament had to be prorogued because of it, and an entry in the archives of the Corporation of Plymouth shows how it affected the south-western district. Under the date given it is recorded: "This yeare the greate plague raged in this kingdome, and of itt there dyed in this towne in this yeare about 2000; and a publicke faste thorough the kingdome was proclaymed to dinert God's judgment, which was observed solemnly every wensdaye, and thereon the plague stayed throughe his great merceye."† We have evidence in our local Register that where Plymouth so grievously suffered Launceston did not escape. In the year immediately preceding there had been only twenty-one deaths, an unusually small number, and there was the same total in 1625, but it is to be observed that by far the most of these were in the second half (there having been only six in the first half) thus showing that the epidemic was doing its work, and in the next year the number rose to thirty-eight, only the month of October passing without a death, and January and February contributing the heaviest totals.

Despite all the topics of conversation to be suggested to Launcestonians of this period by the events just narrated, there must have been room in the daily talk for consideration of matters, parliamentary

\* July 26, 1620; Domestic State Papers, 1620-31, p. 312. † Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, Ninth Report, Appendix, p. 278.

and electoral, with which the town was closely concerned. Sir John Eliot was assisted in his efforts in the House of 1624 by Pym, elected for Tavistock, and by Beville Grenville and William Coryton, the two representatives of Cornwall, who both in later Parliaments sat for Launceston and whose history is linked with that of the town. The member for Newport was prominent in his endeavours to rectify abuses, to secure the liberties and privileges of the Commons, and to abolish monopolies—one of which, as we have seen,\* was held in Elizabeth's reign by an inhabitant of our borough. The House, under Sir John's guidance, became too bold for James to tolerate; it was prorogued, and prorogued, and prorogued again until the death of the King brought about its dissolution.

James died in March, 1625, and in the next month the writs were issued for a new Parliament. Sir John Eliot was again returned for Newport, having Paul Speceott† (who in the previous House had sat for East Looe) for his fellow-member, his old colleague Escott moving to Launceston, where he and Beville Grenville replaced the two former representatives. It is not known what was the influence which at this election drove the two old members from the county (Coryton finding a place at Liskeard) but they were supplanted by Charles Trevanion and Sir Robert Killigrew, the former of whom we shall find to be a friend of Eliot in days not long after. Parliament was opened in June, in the next month it was adjourned on account of the Plague,‡ and when it met again at Oxford Coryton showed his patriotic zeal by suggesting in the debate on Supply that the first place should be given to religion, and that the House should "proceed after the old parliamentary way." But all this zeal was stopped by a dissolution within little more than six weeks after the House had assembled at Westminster.

Eliot had left London for the West on the day of the adjournment, and, as Vice-Admiral of Devon, was soon busily engaged in dealing with the Pirates. After the dissolution he had private affairs to

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\* ante, p. 104. † Mr. Forster (vol. i., p. 134) calls Sir John's new colleague "Mr. Ralph Speot," but this does not seem to be correct. ‡ It may be noted that the outbreak would appear from the Register to have commenced in Launceston in the August, seven deaths (as large a total as for the previous seven months) being therein recorded.



occupy him as well. Charles had issued what were known as "privy seals," directing that those who were able should contribute to the royal exchequer; and the deputies for Cornwall showed their dislike for Eliot "by returning his father-in-law, Mr. Gedie, for an exorbitant amount. There was no pretence of dissatisfaction in the case. Mr. Gedie had served only the preceding year as sheriff of Cornwall, and his estate was still suffering from expenses consequent thereon. Yet he was certified for an amount of which the oppressiveness appears in the fact that it doubled the highest imposed upon some of the richest estates in Yorkshire, Sir Thomas Wentworth [afterwards the Earl of Strafford] being taxed for twenty and Mr. Gedie for forty pounds."\*

The influences which were being used to secure the ruin of Eliot's father-in-law were, in the Knight's own estimation, being exercised to prevent the re-election for Newport of himself. The Duke of Buckingham, once his friend, had now good reason for opposing him, and, although it is not fully known, it is suspected that his grace, at the election of January 1626, threw the weight of the Duchy of Cornwall, necessarily powerful in Newport, against Eliot's return. Sir John consequently withdrew from that constituency, and, declining an offer to contest the county, was chosen once more for St. Germans. His colleague, Paul Speccott, was returned for Bos-siney [Tintagel], and thus, while Grenville and Escott were re-elected for Launceston, there was a complete change in the representation of Newport, and one which was evidently accompanied by much friction, not only between such personages as the Duke of Buckingham and Sir John Eliot but among the inhabitants themselves. There appears to have been a dispute at Newport as to whether the right of returning the members lay in the vianders (officers appointed yearly at the court leet of the lord of the manor†) or in the inhabitants, it being finally decided in favour of the latter, who, as scot-and-lot voters or potwallopers, enjoyed the privilege until 1832. But at this time the matter was far from settled, and upon it rested the question whether the members returned should represent the

\* Forster, Sir John Eliot, vol. i., pp. 271-2.

† This custom has been obsolete only a few years.

opinion of Newport or only that of the lord of the manor. At the election of 1625 the dispute does not appear to have come to any active issue, though there were two indentures sent up to certify the return of Sir John Eliot, thus showing that some difficulty in this matter of return was felt. But at the struggle of 1626 there was evidently a contest, with the result that three certificates were despatched to Parliament, Thomas Gewen (auditor of the Duchy, who had represented Bossiney in 1624, and of whom we shall hear in later and more troubled times) being returned by one, Sir Henry Hungate by another, and Thomas Williams, junior, by the third. Immediately the House met the matter was referred to the Committee of Privileges, and the following entry in the Commons Journals\* will show how it was then decided: "Sir Jo. Finch reporteth from the Committee for Privilege, for Newport in Cornewall, Mr. Willyams' Case.—Three Indentures of election returned; One dated 18o. Jan. the other 12o. Jan. The 2d. is by the Inhabitants and Freeholders for Mr. Willyams. He deserted the Cause; and therefore the Committee of Opinion, that the Indenture for Mr. Willyams should be withdrawn, being with the Clerk of the Crown, and the other Two, viz. . . . Hungayte, and Mr. Gewen, to serve by the Two other Indentures — Upon Question, Ordered." By the seating of the two Court candidates the precedent was thus laid down that the election lay with the vianders, but this was reversed at the next dissolution.

There are abundant signs that in the forward action Eliot was now taking against the Court Grenville was his supporter. When in May, 1626, the former was sent to the Tower because of his attacks upon the Duke of Buckingham, the senior member for Launceston, writing to his wife, told her of the arrest and added "we are all resolved to have him out again, or will proceed to no business"; and two days later he was able to tell her that "we have Sir John Eliot at liberty again. The House was never quiet till the King released him."† Within a month of these proceedings Parliament was dissolved, and before another House of Commons was summoned stirring events took place in Cornwall. Charles determined to raise a forced loan, the county sheriffs being directed to procure from the freeholders

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\* Vol. i., p. 837: March 17, 1625-6.

† Forster, Sir John Eliot, vol. i., p. 342.

a voluntary levy of what the House "intended to have granted," and this was strongly resisted throughout the kingdom. In our county Eliot, Coryton, and Grenville were in the forefront of opposition, and Sir James Bagg, as early as September, 1625, noted the two first-named as men to be marked down for official destruction, recommending to Buckingham that Eliot should be superseded in the Vice-Admiralty of Devon, and that Coryton should be supplanted in the Vice-Wardenship of the Stannaries by a Mr. John Mohun, than whom none except Bernard Grenville (who may have been either the father or brother of Beville) had been so forward to express their loyalty. The advice as to Eliot was soon taken, he being sequestered from his Vice-Admiralty in the October; and it is not to be doubted from the date of the order that it was issued in revenge for Eliot having evidently inspired the reply of the Cornish justices at the beginning of the month to the King's demand for a loan, this informing his majesty that money was extremely scarce, but that if he would be pleased to summon a Parliament they would be ready, by sale of their goods or what else they had, to give satisfaction to the royal desires "in such parliament."

Cornwall was the last county to refuse, and on the very day its justices wrote from Truro a new proclamation was issued by the King demanding more urgently the raising of a loan. The Cornish remained contumacious, and in February, 1627, Eliot and Coryton were among many others reported to the Council for resistance. The only people in the county who seemed desirous that the loan should be paid were "the billeters of soldiers" who replied, according to a letter of the Cornish Commissioners to the Council, "that in their hearts they are most dutifully ready to subscribe to the loan, so as they may receive a defalcation of the money due to them from his Majesty."\* In the April Bagg wrote to Buckingham that "that pattern of ingratitude Eliot, malicious Corrington [Coryton], and a man no less true to his friend, Sir Ferdinando Gorges†" were the "invited familiars" of the Earl of Warwick, and that in Cornwall all lend except Eliot, Coryton, Arundell, and their associates," adding

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\* Feb. 16, 1627; Domestic State Papers, 1627-28, p. 57.      † ante, p. 118.

that he "hopes the King will make them examples for times to come."\* Bagg had not long to wait, for in the next month he could report to the Duke that "Eliot and Coryton are gone to London, now or never to receive their rewards," and that if the latter were examined about the privy seals his conduct would be found "foul to his ruin."† Eliot was imprisoned at the Gatehouse and Coryton in the Fleet, whence the latter, according to a report from Lord President Manchester to the King, "sent a proud answer" to the charge of refusing the loan, in the course of which he said he had expected that the Lords of the Council would have let him know his offences and so have given him either punishment or freedom.‡ In the meantime, blows continued to be struck in the county itself at other Cornishmen who had refused to pay the loan. Writing on June 27, Buckingham informed Nicholas that Sir Richard Buller, Ambrose Manaton (of Trearrell, who afterwards sat for Launceston§), and Nicholas Trefusis (of Landue, who represented Newport in the next Parliament), three Justices of Cornwall, were, in consequence of their opposition to the loan, to be "outed of their places" before the Launceston Assizes, and that Buller and Trefusis were to be sent for to the Lords, together with Humphrey Nicholls and Francis Courtney "men of ill affections"; and, that there should be no mistake in the matter, his grace wrote underneath, "I pray thee have a special care of this business."|| On the following day Bagg also wrote to the Secretary, urging him to effect the removal from the commission of the peace of the three justices named, "so that it may be at the assizes at Launceston on Tuesday sennight," adding that the Duke was anxious to have the refusers of the loan sent for to the Council: "his grace is very desirous to have this done, and I know it will tend much to the advantage of his majesty's service in these parts, and make these western people sensible that Eliot and Coryton do not only lie by the heels for my lord's sake."\*\* Buller and Trefusis with three others (not including Manaton) were sent for to the Council as Buckingham had directed, and on July 16 were struck off the

\* April 20, 1627; Domestic State Papers, 1627-28, p. 143.

† May 23; Ibid, p. 187.

‡ July 28; Ibid, p. 274.

§ The Duke spells the name "Mannington," as does Bagg in the next letter quoted.

|| Domestic State Papers, 1627-28, p. 231.

\*\* Ibid, p. 232.

commission of the peace, but Buller afterwards paid the loan and in the following November was again placed on a commission by the King.

Towards those who unlike Buller remained steadfast to the popular cause popular honour was soon to be shown. In January, 1628, the King was compelled by force of circumstances to call a new Parliament, and within the next two months the elections took place. Throughout the country the struggle resulted in favour of the party opposed to the Court, and nowhere was this fact more marked than in Cornwall. For the county, despite the utmost efforts of the supporters of Charles, Eliot and Coryton were returned, Grenville (who, with Escott, had been re-elected for Launceston) so heartily assisting them that Bagg wrote to Buckingham suggesting that Eliot, Grenville, and John Arundel (a colleague of the second-named in the representation of the county in 1621) should be outlawed and put out of the House, his "excellency's most bounden servant and slave," as Sir James here signed himself, having been shocked at the sight of "Beville Grenville, John Arundel, and Charles Trevanion coming to the election with five hundred men at each of their heels."\* The contest at Newport, though necessarily not on as large a scale, was as exciting as that for the county. The old dispute as to the right of elections† raged more keenly than ever, with the result that, instead of two members, no less than five were returned, these being Nicholas Trefusis (who the previous year had been deprived of his justiceship of the peace‡), Piers Edgecumbe, Sir William Killigrew, Sir John Wolstenholme, and John Herne of Lincoln's Inn|| The elections then took place in Newport Square, in the centre of which was the block of granite which is now in the "Newport Town Hall," and upon which the newly-returned members stood to declare their thanks. Sir John Eliot was present at this contest, and the voters expressed themselves eager to have him once again as their representative, but he was already safe for the county, and, upon his

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\* March 17, 1628; Domestic State Papers, 1628-29, p. 24. † ante, p. 133. ‡ ante, p. 136. || It is stated in the Official List of Members of Parliament (1878) that the indentures relating to the last three "were taken off the file by order of the House, 14 April, 1628," but the Commons Journals do not mention either Wolstenholme or Herne, and agree with a speech of Sir John Eliot, afterwards to be quoted, in naming Killigrew only.

recommendation, they chose his friend and fellow-sufferer Trefusis,\* with Piers Edgecumbe as his colleague, while the vianders sent up Sir William Killigrew, who, with Sir Thomas Edmonds, Treasurer of the Household, had been returned two days previously for Penryn.† It had been intended that John Mohun and Richard Edgenmbe should fight the county against Eliot and Coryton, but their following was so small that it did not justify them in going to the poll, and, as Mohun's administration of the Stannaries had been notoriously corrupt, Bagg endeavoured to get him into the House of Lords as the surest means of saving him from justice. Writing to Nicholas he urged him to keep Buckingham in mind that Mohun "desires to be a baron by the title of John Lord Mohun, baron either of Polrode, Launceston, Bodmin, Lostwithiel, or Boconocke"; and to the Duke the same day he despatched a request similarly framed.‡ In the next month Mohun (who afterwards denounced Bagg to the Star Chamber as a swindler) was accordingly made a peer, but, to the credit of Launceston, he did not take his title from our town.

Parliament had no sooner met than the elections both for Cornwall and Newport were brought under the notice of the House. In the case of the former, some of those deputy-lieutenants and magistrates who had been most prominent in opposition to the return of Eliot and Coryton were sent for, and on May 8, John Trelawny, Edward Trelawny, Sir William Wrey,§ and Walter Langdon (afterwards castellan of Launceston) were brought to their knees at the bar of the Commons for contempt, the first and last-named being sent a few days later to the Tower, Sir William Wrey and Edward Trelawny remaining in the custody of the Sergeant-at-arms; and they were all ordered to be detained until they had admitted their offence against the liberty of free election and their contempt of the authority of the House. It was further proposed that they should be compelled publicly to make a similar declaration at the next

\* Nicholas Trefusis was a nephew of William Coryton, his father, Thomas Trefusis of Landue, having married the latter's sister; the relationship is referred to by Bagg in a letter to Nicholas from Plymouth, August 28, 1627, in which he "urges the punishment of Mr. Trefusis, Mr. Coryton's nephew, and Mr. Nicholls, a Commissioner for the loan, but both defaulters" (*Domestic State Papers*, 1627-28, p. 320.) † The returns for Newport are dated March 5, those for the county March 10, for Launceston February 21, and for Penryn March 3.

‡ March 17, 1628; Forster, *Sir John Eliot*, vol. i., pp. 426-7. § ante, p. 116.



Launceston Assizes. "This was resisted with such unusual warmth by the council, that many who before had voted with the majority went over to the other side; but Wentworth flung into the scale against the court his eloquence and impetuosity, and weighed it down."\* The order was made by a majority of 220 to 185, but the Cornishmen refused to obey, and were kept in prison until June 26, the day of the prorogation, when Charles ordered the release of Langdon and John Trelawny, paying all the charges of their detention and creating the latter a baronet with remission of the ordinary fees. The Launceston Autumn Assizes did not see, therefore, the spectacle which the Commons had wished to provide.

Meanwhile the Newport election had been dealt with. On March 22, "a Motion [was] made concerning the Election at Newport Medina [sic]† in Cornewayle. This referred to the Committee of Privileges to be heard according to former Orders."‡ Before, however, the question was so referred, Sir John Eliot made a speech upon the matter, strenuously defending the rights of his old constituents. This, it is believed, has never yet appeared in print, even Mr. Forster in his very exhaustive biography dismissing it in a couple of lines. A report of it has lurked all these years in the Harleian Manuscripts, whence it is now extracted with all apology for the possibilities of mistake afforded by a first transcript from a crabbed note: "Mr. Speaker moued concerning the sending of the Cornish Gent. Ordered yt a messenger be sent for them.—Sir Jo. Eliott. Mr. Speaker, I am to draw youre advise and Resolution concerning our selues in the matter of election. The Burrowe of Newport in Cornewall is to present two Burgesses, And they haue made their election, but with some difference of opinion. Some pretend that the officers which they call [vianders§] and they have the election, and they suppose an auntient custome for it. Others think yt it renounced them and resolue (as a way best agreeable to the libtie of a Subject) that it should be committed to the vote of the greater parte of the inhabitants or freeholders there. The officers differ amongst themselues: for one

\* Forster, Sir John Eliot, vol. ii., p. 125. † This is an error of the entry, Newport, Cornwall, being confounded with Newport, Isle of Wight. ‡ Commons Journals, vol. i., p. 874. § The original transcriber of the speech has left a blank here as if not certain how these officers were named.

of them finding his fellow would not ioyn with him in the equall nominacon presumed to name both. I was psent at the Courte and therefor I do propound it. Th'other finding the differaunce and that the power was not in him alone, ioynde with th'inhabitants and [?] went] to an election. In that election they were all willing to conferr the first place on mee, having formerly served them, but being otherwise elected I desire them to put it upon a neighbor of myne in the countrie; and hee for the first place was chosen with the genrall consent of all. For the second place there was in competition Sir Wm. Killegrew and Mr. Edgcombe. And for these there is some question. The Sheriff hath onely made Retorne of Mr. Trefuse, and Sir Wm. Kellegrew is obnoxious to question. A Certificat was sent up to that purpose. The Clarke of the Crowne passed not this Certificat made to him, but after, some meanes [?] being made to the Clerke of the Crowne, hee stops the Certificat, so yt wee cannot haue the true Member of the howse. I would know whether the Sheriffs Retorne bee not a sufficient warrant for us to haue a Member; Or if it shalbee obnoxious to the Clerke of the Crowne to stoppe this or all other Retornes at his pleasure.—This was referred to the Committee of Privileges.”\*

The matter came before the House once more on April 14, when “Mr. Hackwill reporteth from the Committee for Privileges, the Case about the Return at Newport. Four indentures returned. The Opinion of the Committee that Mr. Trefusis and Mr. Edgcombe be well chosen. 1, Upon Question, this not to be re-committed. 2ly, Upon Question, Mr. Edgcomb well elected. 3ly, Upon Question, a Supersedeas to be awarded to the Clerk of the Crown, for Stay of the Writ, made upon Sir Wm. Killigrew his Refusal to serve for that Place. 4ly, The Indentures, which concern not the Election of Mr. Trefusis and Mr. Edgcombe, to be withdrawn.”† It will thus be seen that even now the question raised at the election was not settled, for just as Mr. Williams, returned by the freeholders, “deserted the cause” in the previous Parliament, so in this one Sir William Killigrew, backed by the vianders, did not feel it necessary to contest the point, having already been chosen for Penryn.

\* Harleian MSS., 6799, 94, fol. 335 b.: Die Sabbati, 22 Martii, 1627-8. † Commons Journals, vol. i., p. 883.

From politics we turn to more personal details, which yet have some connection with affairs of State. Soon after Charles the First came to the throne, and while still possessed of the Duchy of Cornwall (with the revenues of which, during the twelve years suppression of Parliament, he endeavoured in great measure to carry on the business of the Kingdom) he effected the sale of some of its possessions, including the manor of Launceston-land.\* According to a petition presented to the House of Lords fifteen years later by Leonard Treise, Recorder of Launceston, on behalf of himself and others of the tenants, "in 1626, the King intending to sell the manor caused proclamation of the sale to be made, in order that the tenants might have an opportunity of purchasing their holdings, but Mr. Paul Speccott, bearing ill-will to some of the tenants and seeking his own advantage by underhand ways, prevented the tenants from obtaining a copy of the proclamation, or getting any benefit under it, and having bought the lands himself has distrained for rent, and threatens to turn out many of the tenants, who will have no means of livelihood if they are not allowed to renew their leases, as they have always expected to be able to do upon reasonable terms."† What answer the House of Lords returned to the prayer for redress which concluded this petition we do not know, but it may be noted that this was not the first occasion upon which official interference was asked in connection with this property, "Degory Honney and Gavin Gater, tenants of Launceston lands, Cornwall" having in the previous reign petitioned Lord Salisbury "to be more moderately rated."‡

It would appear that it was not only Paul Speccott but his brother Peter who largely purchased at this sale by the Duchy. On July 20, 1627, there was given under the Privy Seal to the latter and Richard Ligon a "grant in reversion upon contract with the Commissioners for sales of Parcels of the manors of Launceston, co. Cornwall, and Bovey Tracy and Ottery St. Mary, co. Devon, with confirmation of assignments thereof by the King's lessees in trust when he was Prince."§ That these two purchasers were most extensive in their

\* ante, pp. 66-86. † May 27, 1641; House of Lords Papers: Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fourth Report, Appendix, p. 68. ‡ November 9, 1608; Domestic State Papers, 1603-10, p. 466. § Forty-third Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper.

transactions is shown in the Duchy records, tenements at St. Stephens, Tresmere, Kestle, Trebursye, Tregeare, Trelaske, Tregadillett, Trevallett, Lancast, Lewannick, Bodgate, Dutson, and Penheale, among others, falling into their hands.\* Peter Speecott was the eldest and Paul the second son of Sir John Speccott, of Penheale,† the former having been born in 1595, and they were educated at Exeter College, Oxford, at the same time as Beville Grenville, with whom and other Cornishmen they, in 1613, contributed poems to the “Threni Exoniensium” on Lord Petre,‡ Grenville being at that time just seventeen. Paul (who sat for Newport in 1625 and again in 1640, besides, as has been mentioned,§ being in other Parliaments member for Bossiney and East Looe) died in October, 1644, at Penheale, and a monument to his memory and one to that of his first wife are in Egloskerry Church.

Of Ambrose Manaton, of Trecarrell, another near neighbour prominent in Launceston affairs about this time, a more extended notice may here be given than the brief mention of him previously afforded in connection with his refusal to pay the loan.|| At what period the Manatons came into possession of Trecarrell is not known, but that there was a connection of long standing between the family of the builder of St. Mary Magdalene’s and that of the future member for the borough is established by the fact that the arms of the former are to be seen in Southill Church upon the tomb of John Manaton, who died in 1508.\*\* Ambrose Manaton was the son of Sampson Manaton of Southill,†† and the first certain mention we find of him in connection with Launceston is concerning a military duty in 1625.‡‡ On March 22 of that year there was drawn up a “list of 150 soldiers levied in Cornwall for Ireland, and delivered by the Deputy Lieutenants to Jas. Finch and John Duck, Deputies of Capt. Edw. Thynne,

\* Cole’s MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, pp. 210-14. † ante, p. 126. ‡ Boase, Exeter College, p. 228. § ante, pp. 132-3. || ante, p. 136. \*\* New Parochial History, vol. iii., p. 124. †† Ibid, vol. iv., p. 158. In Boase and Courtney’s *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis* (vol. i., p. 335) the father’s name is said to have been Peter Manaton. Opportunity may here be taken to express the Author’s indebtedness to this invaluable work, whose compilers deserve the heartiest thanks for their labours, without which much of the information in this volume could not have been obtained. ‡‡ In the return to the High Sheriff of the justices of the Hundred of Lesnewth (dated Launceston, March 13, 1623; ante, p. 126) one of the signatures is “Manyington,” the initial of the Christian name being indistinct (Sir John Maclean, *History of the Deanery of Trigg Minor*, vol. iii., p. 428.)

with conduct money for their march to Barnstaple, and 3*l.* for their stay of one night at Launceston, after they were pressed.”\* With this or a similar movement of troops Manaton must have been directly connected, for in the House of Lords manuscripts is a warrant, dated May 26, 1625, “to pay Ambrose Manington 5*l.* for the press of 300 footmen and their conduct from Cornwall to Barnstaple for service in Ireland.”† Save, however, for this and the anti-loan episode of two years later, his history is dark to us until he was returned for Launceston to the Short Parliament of 1640.

The ejection of Coryton from the Vice-Wardenship of the Stannaries in favour of Mohun had its effect upon Launceston. Under Henry the Seventh’s charter to the tinnerns,‡ the chief magistrate of our borough was one of the four Cornish mayors who each had, in the words of Sir John Eliot,§ “to cause to be elected or returned six discreet and able men of each division, and these to be chosen by the free vote and suffrage of the said mayor and their brethren respectively,” to decide all stannary disputes. At the Christmas of 1627, Mohun issued the usual summons, but, instead of allowing a free election, named those who were to be chosen, and “the mayors thereupon, not daring to resist him (for the noise of his former practice, as was testified, had struck a terror into them), summoned the men:”|| but the jury proved themselves more independent than the Mayor of Launceston and his three fellows, and after much dispute broke up without doing any business. On June 17 Eliot followed up this exposure by denouncing Mohun to the Lords, but three days later he was forced to abandon the attack by melancholy news from Cornwall, the Commons Journals of the twentieth containing the entry “Sir John Eliot, in respect of the death of his wife, hath leave to go down into the country.” Lady Eliot had been failing in health for some time, but the end, which took place at Port Eliot, was sudden. Of her “all that is known to us is the tenderness with which her husband described, as ‘a loss never before equalled,’ what had befallen him by her death; and that she was said to have been so devoted to her children as never to have willingly consented to be

\* Domestic State Papers, 1623-25, p. 507.

iii., p. 1274.

† ante, p. 71.

‡ Speech in the House of Commons, May 27, 1628: Forster, Sir John Eliot, vol. ii., p. 140.

|| Ibid.

† Quoted in Bibliotheca Cornubiensis, vol.

absent from them . . . Care for his younger children appears to have occupied him at first; and some were placed with their mother's father, Mr. Gedie, of Trebursey, to whom Eliot is lavish of grateful expression for his service at this time.\*"

In the next month Eliot, writing from his seat to Sir Robert Cotton in reply to a letter of sympathy, thanked him "for relieving, by his letter, the ignorance of those Cornish parts; almost as much divided from reason and intelligence as their island from the world."† But he did not occupy much time with complaints, as is evident from an epistle, written at midnight and endorsed "Haste, haste, post-haste, haste, post-haste," from Mohun to Bagg in the October, in which the former stated that Eliot and Coryton had been incessantly roaming up and down all Cornwall collecting evidence against him,"‡ and the fruit of this activity was seen in the next session. In the January, after Sir John had returned to his parliamentary duties, Mr. Gedie wrote to him from Trebursye about his children, and complained of the infrequency of his letters. "Eliot tells him in reply that he had not had opportunity to write since his coming up; and though it might seem an omission of his duty, yet he presumed his father-in-law would give it an interpretation of more favours, there being nothing in his desires more than Mr. Gedie's satisfaction . . . 'I hope, he concludes, 'you all retain your health at Trebursey, though I fear the sickness proved mortal to your servant. I shall daily pray for the continuance of your happiness, and will be ever your most affectionate son-in-law, J.E.' "§

In a debate in the same month Eliot referred to Coryton as "that noble gentleman, my countryman" who had done "many excellent services,"|| but his colleague was very soon to be weighed in the balances and found wanting. Beville Grenville was at that time absent from the House, and Eliot wrote urging him to come to Westminster. The member for Launceston replied that he was much occupied with private affairs, and he begged his friend to procure a letter from the Speaker to the judges of the Western Circuit to stop a trial in which he was concerned at the coming assizes—probably those at Launceston, though the place, as Eliot notes in his reply,

\* Ibid, p. 148.    † Ibid, p. 149.    ‡ Ibid, p. 185.    § Ibid, pp. 202-3.    || Ibid, p. 210.



was not specifically mentioned. Sir John appears to have given the best help he could, but before the trial could have come on Parliament was dissolved,\* this being precipitated by the action of certain members of the country party, among whom Coryton was prominent, in holding down the Speaker in his chair while Eliot made a declaration regarding "the miserable condition we are in, both in matter of religion and of policy."† For their share in the scene Eliot and Coryton with several of their colleagues were sent to the Tower, but Coryton had not been long in prison before his courage failed him. According to his own account, he had "a poor estate full of trouble, a great family, and much indebted,"‡ and we learn from a letter of Sir Allen Apsley, the Lieutenant of the Tower, that he had not been many days in the fortress before "two of the Plunketts, Irishmen, came to see Mr. Corrington about money he oweth them."§ The consequence was that "while the other prisoners were being examined before the Star Chamber . . . Coryton fell away from his great colleague . . . and Eliot suffered bitterly by his defection."|| As a reward for his subservience, but greatly to the disgust of the professed loyalists of Cornwall, he was again made Vice-Warden of the Stannaries.

Eliot meanwhile remained in the Tower, whence, writing in August, 1629, to Mr. Gedie he expressed the happiness he should feel when he had the opportunity of seeing him once again, but a little more than a month afterwards that gentleman died.\*\* Among the friends who helped Eliot in his time of trouble was Leonard Treise,†† Recorder of Launceston,‡‡ who with his wife (who is thought to have been a relative of the deceased§§) was most active in settling Mr. Gedie's affairs and attending to Eliot's children. "You see, sir," wrote Eliot to Treise, "how like a flood of trouble I pour myself upon you." "For his children he had written to Mr. Treise's wife, who had been to them so kind a friend. He was indeed so much beholden to them both that he could hardly judge where the greater obligation lay.

\* Ibid, pp. 234-5. † February, 1629; Ibid, pp. 230-43. ‡ Letter to Secretary Dorchester, April 25, 1629; Domestic State Papers, 1628-29, p. 527. § Forster, Sir John Eliot, vol. ii., p. 258. || Ibid, pp. 272-3. \*\* Ibid, p. 279. †† ante, p. 141. ‡‡ He is so described in a Latin inscription on a tablet erected to his memory in St. Mary Magdalene's Church. §§ Vide note by the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence in Forster's Eliot, vol. ii., p. 233.

But the several engagements were so strong that they must ever bind him to be of both the most faithful friend. He then turns to Mrs. Treise and closes the letter with some special words to her of earnest thankfulness for her kindness to his little ones.\* And Mr. Forster adds, "This worthy pair will not again, or very slightly, appear in the imprisoned patriot's history; but let their names have honourable and grateful memory for active and kindly service to him in his hour of need."† Treise will demand longer mention later on; for the time, it may simply be noted that his first appearance in a Launceston record is on May 26, 1615, in a reference to the christening of "Willm sonne of Leonard Trease," a subsequent entry of February, 1617, giving the name as "Mr. Leond. Treys," the prefix denoting that even then he was a man of influence and position in the borough.‡

Eliot's connection with our town did not cease with his imprisonment or even with the death of Mr. Gedie. Writing to Grenville from the Tower on July 10, 1631, he stated he had a lawsuit with Sir Richard Edgecumbe which would come on at the next Launceston Assizes, and asked him to secure that some of his neighbours should be on the jury so that the case might be fairly tried. Beville did as he was requested, and reported from Stowe, early in the November, that he sent his neighbours to Launceston, "which did not deceive your trust nor fail my expectation."§ He offered to do one more favour for Eliot before the latter's death. In January, 1632, he wrote asking whether there was any truth in the rumours that a Parliament was to be called. "If it be so, I wish you would let me have some timely notice, that I might do you service, which I more desire than any earthly thing besides. I presume I have some interest in the affections of the people, and I have taken such course as you shall be sure of the first knight's place whensoever it happen. But I assure you you shall not have your old partner, whoseever be the other."||

\* Forster, *Sir John Eliot*, vol. ii., p. 283. † *Ibid.* ‡ In Eliot's will, dated December 20, 1630, (and in which two of the four executors named were Beville Grenville and John Hampden) is the following passage: "I will and bequeath unto Leonard Treise, for his care and diligence to be employed in performance of this my last will and testament, and the trust reposed in him, and in regard to the special love and affection which I bear unto the said Leonard Treise, beside the annuity of four pounds bequeathed unto him by the will of my said father-in-law [Richard Gedie], one hundred pounds, to be paid so soon as the debts of my said father-in-law and myself, and the other legacies given by the will of my said father-in-law, given and bequeathed or appointed to be paid, shall be satisfied and paid." (*Ibid.*, p. 370.) § *Ibid.*, pp. 392-4. || *Ibid.*, p. 451.

In his reply, which was the last letter he ever sent to Grenville, Eliot made no reference to the remark respecting Coryton, but hinted that in another Parliament he might not choose to stand again for the county. He never had the chance to choose, for on November 27 of the same year he died in the Tower.

Eliot's acquaintance with the Duke of Buckingham has been touched upon, as has also the connection between Newport and his grace, and in the State Papers there is a record of a curious scare concerning the Duke which, originating in Wales and imported into Cornwall, affected also Launceston. On July 13, 1628, it was communicated by Edward Cosowarth to Nicholas that two seamen, named Ematt and Browne, who had just come from Swansea, had reported "the death of the King slain by the cruel hands of the Duke of Buckingham"; Cosowarth added that he had concealed the matter as closely as he could until the Launceston Assizes, "fearing the rumour might bring terrible distractions in these parts."\* The Privy Council immediately instructed the Justices of Assize for Cornwall to so proceed with the seamen "as their punishment may serve for a fit correction to them and a warning to others," and to apply the severity of the law where in the circuit they met with similar offences, certain Cornish justices being the same day directed to keep the men in Launceston Gaol until the assizes, "and, if the rumour has caused any apprehensions in the minds of the people, to make known that it is false, and the reporters punishable."† When the justices inquired into the matter, the rumour was found elaborated to the effect that the King had been poisoned by the Duke, and Ematt and Browne were detained at Launceston pending the assizes.‡ The Lord Chief Baron and Baron Denham were the judges here on that occasion,§ but, though the result is not given, it is not probable the men were heavily punished, since they were able to prove that the report was actually current at Swansea in the July. Perhaps the strangest thing in connection with the whole transaction was that, while the men were still at Launceston awaiting the settlement of their case, the Duke of Buckingham who was hinted at as an assassin, was himself assassinated.||

\* Domestic State Papers, 1628-29, p. 210. † July 20, 1628; *Ibid.*, p. 221. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 236.  
§ August 23; *Ibid.*, p. 272. || August 23.

In the early part of 1631 Sir John Trelawny,\* then Sheriff of Cornwall, wrote from Launceston to the Council that the county justices had taken care to see the markets well furnished with corn, with which the shire was well stored, but the price was high (wheat, for instance, being ninepence per gallon), this proceeding from a report of scarcity in other parts of the kingdom.† A missive from Launceston of a more contentious character had occupied the attention of the Council in the previous year. It appears that John Roberts, the elder, of Lawrick, had procured the excommunication in the Exeter Consistory Court of Robert Rous, the captain of a foot company then stationed in the county; he had thus given great offence to the Earl of Pembroke, Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, who declared that he should suffer a year's imprisonment for the contempt shown of his authority. But though a mittimus was accordingly made out by Sir Reginald Mohun and Sir Bernard Grenville for the committal of Roberts to Launceston Gaol,‡ John Jeffrey and Thomas Baker, constables of Lawrick, "contemptuously refused to do their duty" and arrest him. Rous thereupon complained to the Council before whom the disobedient constables were haled, and to whom they presented a petition setting forth the reasons why they did not think themselves justified in conveying Roberts to Launceston, and they prayed that, having been drawn two hundred miles from their dwellings, they might be admitted to their counsel for their farther defence.§ The petition was even more effective than they could have hoped, for they were released on the day it was presented, while Roberts was reprimanded, and Rous, although the Bishop of Exeter was entreated to take off the excommunication, was blamed for not attempting to settle the matter in his own county.

For some years after this date nothing of interest appears on the records of Launceston history, but suddenly, in 1637, the town had share in a transaction which was the herald of stormy events now very soon to be encountered. Some time previously William Prynne, in after days member for Newport, "a lawyer distinguished for his constitutional knowledge, but the most obstinate and narrow-minded of men,"|| had published his "*Histrio-mastix*," a bitter attack

\* ante, p. 139. † February 5, 1631; Domestic State Papers, 1629-31, pp. 498-9.  
‡ August 7, 1629; Ibid, p. 255. § May 12, 1630; Ibid. || Green, Short History, p. 512

upon stage-players. Two friends of his followed the example of dealing violently with that which they opposed, John Bastwick, a doctor of medicine, declaring in his "Litany" that "Hell was broke locse, and the Devils in surplices, hoods, copes, and rochets, were come among us," while Henry Burton, a London clergyman who had been placed under the ban of the High Commission Court, described the bishops as "robbers of souls, limbs of the Beast, and factors of Antichrist." Archbishop Laud caused the three to be brought before the Star Chamber, and on June 29, 1637, himself condemned them to lose their ears, to be each fined five thousand pounds, and to be perpetually imprisoned "in three remote places of the Kingdom, namely, the Castles of Carnarvon, Cornwall [*sic*], and Lancaster."\* The first part of the sentence was carried out on June 30, and, to use the words of Green, "the crowd who filled Palace Yard to witness their punishment groaned at the cutting off of their ears, and 'gave a great shout' when Fyenne urged that the sentence on him was contrary to the law. A hundred thousand Londoners lined the road as they passed on the way to prison; and the journey of these 'Martyrs,' as the spectators called them, was like a triumphal progress."

"On the 26th day of July, 1637," runs the contemporary narrative,† "Dr. Bastwick, before his wounds were perfectly cured, was by Mr. Hopkins cheife Warden of the Fleete, and his substitutes, conveyed from the Gate-House towards the Castle of Launceston; and so strictly looked unto that his Wife, who followed him in a Coach, could not for some dayes space bee admitted, so much so as to speake with him, or to lodge in the same Inne where he lodged . . . Dr. Bastwicke arriving at Lancelton the first of August was by force of this Warrant‡ the next day shut up close Prisoner in the Castle there, part whereof not long before had fallen downe through age, and murthered the Keeper of it, and his Wife in their bed, a little child lying betweene them both escaping without harme.§ His chamber

\* A new Discovery of the Prelates Tyranny, in their late prosecutions of Mr. William Pryn, an eminent Lawyer; Dr. John Bastwick, a learned Physician; and Mr. Henry Burton, a reverent Divine [1641], p. 32. † Ibid, pp. 78-81. ‡ It was dated July 15, and directed that Bastwick should be "carried down to the Castle of Launceston." § In a note it is stated that "Judge Finch [the Chief Justice who the next year was one of those who decided in Hampden's case that the imposition of



was so ruinous that every small blast of wind threatened to shatter it down upon his head, yet there, or nowhere must he be lodged." This description of the Castle is confirmed in a petition addressed by Mrs. Bastwick to the House of Lords on October 7, 1644,\* wherein she states that her husband was sentenced "to suffer perpetual close imprisonment in Launceston Castle, Cornwall, a place so ruinous that it was formidable to behold," adding that, "before his wounds were healed he was removed thither, and the use of pen, ink, paper, and books denied him; while petitioner, who had followed him thither, was not allowed to come near him, even to dress his wounds." Despite this statement she was, it would appear, permitted to see her husband on some occasions during his detention at Launceston, Nicholas recording in his notes of Privy Council proceedings that "Bastwick's wife has access, and strangers to him," and he then makes some dim reference to a letter having been conveyed to the prisoner in the haft of a knife.† This was set down on September 3, 1637; exactly a fortnight later the Sheriff of Cornwall was directed to remove Bastwick from Launceston "to the Castle in the Isle of Scilly, there to be kept close prisoner."‡ "Upon receipt of these Orders and warrants, the high Shrieve of Cornwall cause Doctor Bastwick to be suddenly removed, without any warning, from Launceston to Plimouth, upon the 10 day of October, 1637,"§ whence he was taken to Scilly, and was met there by "many thousands of Robin Redbreasts (none of which birds were ever seene in those Islands before or since)," which, having "welcommed him with their melody, within one day or two afterwards tooke their flight from thence, no man knowes whither."||

The fact that there are three parishes in the county named after St. Stephen\*\* is a hindrance to our knowing whether "John Fathers,

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ship-money was legal] being informed hereof, said by way of scoffe, That the Dr. by his Faith, and Parayrs, would hold it up from falling." No record appears in the Parish Register of the fatality here referred to, though there is a specific mention of other cases of fatal accident, as for instance in 1654, "Aprill The 10th was Buried Julian Gliddon who was slaine with a pease of the great clocke," in 1660 [N.S.], "February The 20th day was Buried William Hamblye Drowned," and in 1667 [N.S.], "March The 13th was Buried Cyros Bowden of St. Teth who dyed by a fall at sheapherds well in ye time of ye Assizes." \* Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, Appendix, p. 30. † Domestic State Papers, 1637, p. 403. ‡ Ibid, p. 422. § A New Discovery, p. 96. || Ibid. \*\* St. Stephens-by-Launceston, St. Stephens-in-Brannel, and St. Stephens-by-Ash [Saltash].



clerk, vicar of St. Stephens, Cornwall," who was complained of to Laud in 1638 for having committed offences punishable by the High Commission Court (an institution as heartily detested by the Puritans as the Star Chamber itself) was directly connected with Launceston. But the prominence this reverend gentleman (whose fate when he came before the court we do not know) gave to Bastwick's name, pointing out that the Doctor could have escaped all punishment if like himself he had made up his mind to confess when called upon, is perhaps the better understood if he were vicar of a parish adjoining the one in which that sufferer was incarcerated.\*

Bastwick was not the only Star Chamber victim at Launceston during this period. On January 14, 1639, Emanuel Langford, "a late defendant in the Star Chamber at the suit of Henry Carey and others," complained to the King that having, in the Michaelmas Term of 1637, been mulcted in a fine which, with the costs, he was in process of paying, he was "then sentenced to stand upon the pillory at the next assizes at Launceston, which plaintiffs then waived, but last Michaelmas Term they moved the court to have the said corporal punishment the next Lent Assizes, which was ordered accordingly." Langford therefore petitioned Charles that, as he was "a gentleman of an ancient family, near fourscore years of age, and a sickly man," his majesty would pardon that part of the sentence "for his innocent posterity's sake." The prayer was answered in the affirmative, and the Attorney-General was directed to prepare a bill granting the petitioner his desire.†

We are now upon the threshold of the Civil War, one of the causes of which was the King's attempt to levy ship-money, a portion of which impost Launceston had to pay. Writing to the Council on April 19, 1639, Francis Godolphin, then Sheriff of Cornwall, stated that, upon receipt in the previous December of the writ for ship-money, he imposed "a fit proportion" upon every parish and hundred, causing the constables to be the collectors. He was assured that no clergyman had cause to complain of being over-rated, and he had directed that "no poor man should be rated unless he had an estate

\* Petition of Roger Biekton to Archbishop Laud, March 6, 1638; Domestic State Papers, 1637-38, p. 296.

† Ibid, 1638-39, p. 314.

in lands or tenements worth 20s. or upwards by the year, or goods to the value of £10." But everybody was not satisfied, for the Corporations of Callington, Camelford, and St. Mawes, in particular, "complained much of their poverty and disability, and desired to be relieved by other corporations," and generally Godolphin found "no great willingness in the commonalty to pay," and he expressed a fear lest he might be forced to make good some part of the assessment himself. In another letter of the same date he informs Nicholas that a communication from the latter on the same subject, of March 11, had reached him on March 25 while at the Launceston Assizes, and he had not been able previously to reply because of the difficulties he had had over the ship-money. Although he took credit for himself that Cornwall had been the first county to send an instalment in answer to the writ, it was evident he was ill-satisfied with the success of his efforts, and he complained that only five towns had responded, Launceston with £30, Padstow with £25, Penryn with £18, Helston with £17, and Penzance with £10. He had threatened the other boroughs with pains and penalties if they did not soon pay, and he now asked for an order that any constables who did not recover the full sum assessed on their parishes should be sent for to the Council.\*

The difficulties thus pictured by Godolphin were repeated and increased throughout the country, and Charles was forced in the spring of 1640 to call what is known in history as "The Short Parliament." The members returned for Launceston were Sir Beville Grenville and Ambrose Manaton,† while for Newport John Maynard and Nicholas Trefusis‡ were elected. Of Grenville there is little to be mentioned between the date of Eliot's death and that of his fourth return for Launceston. In 1636 his father, Sir Bernard Grenville, had died at Stowe, Kilkhampton, and in the next year

\*Ibid, 1639, p. 63. †This is according to Browne Willis's *Notitia Parliamentaria*, which gives Nicholas Trefusis alone as member for Newport. The Official List of Members omits Launceston from the list of boroughs returning representatives to the Short Parliament, but these are only instances of the many errors to be found in that compilation. It may be noted that Browne Willis names "P. Speccott" for Newport, in addition to Maynard and Trefusis; it is not improbable that, because of the old dispute between the vianders and the freeholders, there were again more indentures returned than were necessary. ‡ Nicholas Trefusis was concerned in some measure in the disputes which arose out of the sale of the manor of Launceston (ante, p. 141), he being a defendant in a suit brought by Noy, the Attorney-General, in the Exchequer in 1633, touching this property "at the relation of Thomas Dennys, of Minchymmet, his Majesty's farmer or tenant"; vide Thirty-ninth Report of the Deputy Keeper, Appendix, pp. 389-98.

Beville is to be found with John Trefusis reporting to the Council that they had endeavoured to settle a municipal dispute at Bodmin but in vain.\* In 1638 he raised a troop at his own expense with which to assist Charles in the expedition against the Scots,† showing in this the first sign of that devotion to the King which was afterwards to be his most distinguishing feature, but which, as exhibited by the tried friend of Eliot, has seemed a paradox not easily to be explained. In the summer of 1639, while still in the North with the King, he was knighted,‡ and we find him writing from Newcastle in May of that year to William Morice,§ afterwards owner of Werrington and member for Newport, a prominent agent in bringing about the Restoration, and Secretary of State to Charles the Second. Grenville's attachment to the royal cause may be differently looked at, but the most commonly accepted view is that taken by the sympathetic biographer already quoted, "that he saw sooner than most the bad designs that were forming, and apprehended very clearly the pernicious consequences which must follow from them."||

The Short Parliament was summoned to meet at Westminster on April 13, 1640, and was dissolved on May 6, but it was impossible for Charles to govern any longer without legal authority for taxation, and the Long Parliament was called. In this Grenville took his seat for the county, while Ambrose Manaton (described in the Official List of Members as Recorder of the borough) and William Coryton (who in the Short Parliament had sat for Grampound and who was now re-elected there) were chosen for Launceston, and John Maynard and Richard Edgecumbe for Newport. Of the four Maynard alone was devoted to the Puritan party, and he sat for Newport only a sufficient time to declare his preference for Totnes, for which place also he had been elected. It is to be noted, however, that there is some confusion among these returns. The Official List of Members, in addition to leaving Launceston altogether out of the boroughs represented in the Short Parliament, names Nicholas Trefusis as the only member for Newport; while for the Long

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\* April 20, 1637; Domestic State Papers, 1637-38, p. 9. † Biographia Britannica, vol. iii. (1750), p. 2291. ‡ Domestic State Papers, 1639, p. 384. § Thurloe State Papers, vol. i., pp. 2-3. || Biographia Britannica, vol. iii., p. 2291.

Parliament it gives for the two boroughs the four mentioned above. But Browne Willis, whose authority has usually been accepted in these matters, names Grenville and Manaton for Launceston and Trefusis, Maynard, and Paul Speecott for Newport in the Short Parliament, and Manaton and Coryton for Launceston, and Richard Edgcumbe and Sir J. Percival, Knt., for Newport in the Long. At the first glimpse it would seem as if the Commons Journals would settle the point as to Maynard in favour of Browne Willis, for on April 17, 1640, in the Short Parliament, it is stated "Mr. Jo. Maynard chooses to serve for Totness, and waves Newport,"\* it appearing unlikely that Maynard would have been twice returned for the both boroughs after the distinct preference he had shown for the one; but this is upset by an entry of December 8, 1640, that "Mr. Maynard, chosen for Newport and Tothnes, waves Newport, and chooses to serve for Tothnes."† Although, however, a new writ was issued on the same day, it does not appear to have been acted upon, as on February 9, 1647, an order was again made for a writ for Newport, "in the place of Mr. Maynard, who . . . chose to serve for Totnes."‡

The feelings of the majority of the Commons towards Coryton had been shown in the Short Parliament by the fact that in their order for a production of the proceedings in the Star Chamber and King's Bench concerning several members of the previous House, with Eliot at their head, his name is not given though six of those implicated are set out at length.§ And the Long Parliament had not been in session many days before the vengeance of those who had not forgotten or forgiven his defection from Eliot began to be visited upon him. Acting as mayor of Bossiney he had, it was alleged, unduly interfered with the return of members; the matter came before the Committee of Privileges, with Maynard as chairman, the Commons instructing that inquiry should be made not only into the election at Bossiney but also into "the undue proceedings of the said Mr.

\* Commons Journals, vol. ii., p. 4.    † Ibid, p. 47.    ‡ Ibid, vol. v., p. 79. It may be that the reason for this double issue of the same writ arose out of a renewal of the dispute concerning the rightful electors of Newport, it being ordered on February 22, 1642, "that the committee, to which the Election for Newport in Cornwall is referred, be revived, as to that Election" (Commons Journals, vol. ii., p. 449.)    § April 18, 1640: Commons Journals, vol. ii., p. 6.

Coryton, as Vice-Warden of the Stannaries, contrary to the Petition of Right.”\* In the next month it was ordered “that the Committee for Mr. Corriton’s Business shall consider also of the Misdemeanours committed by Mr. Corryton, as Steward of the Duchy, and Deputy Lientenant of the County;”† and, after a long inquiry, it was resolved on August 18, 1641, “that Mr. Coryton shall not be admitted to sit as a Member in this Parliament,” it being furthermore agreed on the same day that a new writ should be issued “for electing of another Burgess to serve for the Town of Dunnevet, instead of Mr. Coryton.”‡ In his place, though the date of the election is not known, John Harris was returned.

The House of Commons at this period had, however, more serious work on its hands than the punishment of Coryton. Strafford was attainted at the end of April, 1641, Sir Beville Grenville opposing the step, and within a fortnight and before the execution, “Great Multitudes of People did repair to Westminster, being Full of Fears and Jealousies of Plots and Designs against the Parliament.”§ One outcome of the popular movement was a “protestation,” declaring attachment to the reformed religion and to the rights and liberties of the subject. Hundreds of Members signed on May 3, the day on which it was first laid on the table, among them and at the same time as Cromwell being Sir Ralph Hopton, afterwards the Royalist commander in Cornwall; Piers Edgecumbe, member for Newport in 1627, and Richard Edgecumbe, member for Newport in the existing Parliament, it being doubtful which of these was the “Mr. Edgecomb” denounced by the populace as one of the “Straffordians, Betrayers of their Country”; and in addition there were John Maynard, member for Newport in 1640, who signed next to Denzil Holles, and Sir Alexander Carew, member for the county,|| whom Grenville had vainly besought to vote against the attainder. Signatures were added on several days during the next fortnight, but it was not until nearly every member who cared to affix his name had done so that, on the eighteenth, Ambrose Manaton, member for Lanunceston,

\* November 14: *Ibid.*, p. 29.

† December 7: *Ibid.*, p. 47.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 261-2.

§ John Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III., vol. i., p. 248.

|| *Ibid.*, pp. 244

and foll.



followed the example, while Grenville, though not in the previously mentioned list of fifty or sixty Straffordians, did not sign at all. Two months later Parliament ordered that the whole nation should sign, and certificates preserved in the House of Lords show that the clergy, churchwardens, overseers, and constables of the parishes of St. Mary Magdalene, St. Thomas, St. Stephens, Lawhitton, and South Petherwin, as well as those of Tresmere, Trewen, and other places in the neighbourhood of Launceston, did in this matter as the Houses bade them.\*

The certificates referred to are mainly dated February or March, 1642, and in the January one of the clergymen who could have signed had passed away. The Register records that on January 6, 1642, (N.S.) "was buried Mr. Willm Crompton minr of Lancelton," and it would appear that the reverend gentleman before coming to St. Mary Magdalene's had been "Preacher of the Word of God at Barnstaple, in Devon," as well as at Little Kimble, Buckinghamshire, and Laneast, Cornwall, this information being mainly gathered from the title-pages of sermons he preached and published, principally in an endeavour to prove St. Augustine to have been the first Protestant. It is not probable that he had been long at Launceston when he died, (for "John son of Edward Gubbins minister" was buried here on May 3, 1636) but at all events sufficiently long to merit the honour of a special funeral sermon, preached by the vicar of Tavistock, and, with a dedication to the mayor, recorder, and aldermen of the borough, published in London, a copy being still to be seen in the Bodleian Library.† Five years later, there was admitted to Merchant Taylors' School "William Crompton, eldest son of William Crompton, clerk and Parson of Lancelton, co. Cornub., born at Little Kimble, co. Bucks, 13 Aug., 1633," who afterwards became vicar of Cullompton, publishing some of his sermons as his father had done before him, and dying in 1696.‡

\* Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fifth Report, Appendix, p. 121. † "The Art of Embalming Dead Saints discovered, in a Sermon preached at the Funerall of Master W. Crompton, the late Reverend and faithful pastor of the Church in Lancelton, Cornwall, Jany. 5th, 1641 [O.S.] by G. Hughes, B.D., Pastor of the Church in Tavistocke. Lond., printed by A. N. for John Rothwell, and are to be sold at his shop, in Paul's Churchyard, at the sign of the Sun, 1642." The pamphlet is a small quarto containing 52 pages. ‡ The Author is indebted for this information to the Rev. C. J. Robinson, whose researches among the records of the Merchant Taylors' Company are well known.



On May 30, 1642, when both sides in the great constitutional struggle were eagerly preparing for the war which was now felt to be imminent, John Escott, a Launceston woollen draper, was sufficiently incautious to condemn the proceedings of the Parliament in the hearing of Henry Willis, a townsman, who on the sixteenth of the next month deposed to the same before Nicholas Gennys, Mayor of Launceston, and Leonard Treise, Justice of the Peace. The affidavit was immediately forwarded to the House of Lords, which on the twenty-third ordered "that John Escott, who hath spoken scandalous words against the Parliament, shall be sent for as a Delinquent."\* The unfortunate woollen draper was accused of having stated that "he never knew nor heard of a Parliament that did proceed so basely as this present Parliament now doth; that many able honest Men of the House were grieved at their Proceedings; and that Mr. Seldon (who was a Man that had more Learning than a Thousand Round-headed Pymys)" had observed to an acquaintance that there was no good to be done in the House of Commons. Escott obeyed the order of the Lords, to whom, on July 11, he presented a petition stating that he had come two hundred miles to answer a false charge, and praying that the matter might be inquired into or that he might be discharged upon bail.\* The former portion of his prayer was granted, but in a manner little calculated to give satisfaction to the suppliant, as is evident from another petition he presented on October 9, in which he said that he had undergone part of their lordships' sentence, having stood in the pillory in Cheapside and at Westminster, that he had lain in Newgate, where the sickness had been very hot for more than nine months, by which his health had been impaired, and that his estate had been consumed by excessive fees; he therefore prayed to have liberty on bail in London and within six miles round.† Ten days later the Lords, "in regard the Plague is in Newgate, and he aged and sick," granted his request "for his health's sake," simply stipulating that he should "render himself within three days after notice given him from this House; "

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\* Lords Journals, vol. v., p. 156; Willis's deposition is given in full. † Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fifth Report, Appendix, p. 37; House of Lords Papers.

‡ Ibid, p. 54.

|| October 19, 1642; Lords Journals, vol. v., p. 406.

but it is not known whether he was further persecuted for what would seem to us a legitimate effort of political criticism. What relation, if any, the sufferer was to Richard Escott, colleague of Eliot for Newport and of Grenville for Launceston,\* is also uncertain. From the Parish Register it appears that "John sonne of Richard Escotte"† was christened on March 30, 1585, and on August 22, 1614, the baptism of "Richard sone of John Estcott" is recorded, here as in later instances the name of the latter (sometimes given as "John Estcott, gent.") being written unusually large. It may be thought that an individual once described as "gent." could scarcely figure as a "woollen draper" thirty years later, but as a careful distinction is made in the Register between "Mr. John Badcock mercer" or "Mr. Robt Pearse mercer," and such other tradesmen as "John Abbot shopkeeper" or "William Cornish innholder," it is evident that a superior social position was recognised in the case of the business with which the sufferer was connected.

While Escott was smarting under the sentence of the Lords, stirring events were occurring in his native town. The struggle between the King and the Houses became acute in the summer of 1642, and it was of the utmost importance to each side to secure the armed forces of the various counties. Cornwall was a doubtful shire, and it was determined by both parties to make a trial of strength at the Launceston Summer Assize.‡ The Royalists, who were welcomed into Cornwall by Sir Beville Grenville, had chosen Truro as their head-quarters, with Sir Ralph Hopton as their leader, while the Parliamentarians held the eastern part of the county, with Sir Alexander Carew and Sir Richard Buller at their head and Launceston as their rallying point. The former had been invested by the King with a "commission of array," upon the authority of which Hopton was levying troops, while the latter were endeavouring to raise the militia, the dispute concerning which had been the last factor in provoking the struggle. The Parliamentary Committee resolved to

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\* ante, pp. 127-32. † "1635: July. The 25 day was Buryed Richard Esteott gent." A daughter of "Richard Escott, of Launcesto., Gent." was buried at St. Stephens, May 4, 1631, as is recorded on a tablet to her memory in the church there. ‡ Clarendon in his History of the Rebellion (vi., 240) says it was at the quarter sessions, but this is an error.

put the matter to the test of law, commencing proceedings by delivering to Mr. Justice Foster, the presiding judge at the Launceston Assizes, an order from the Lords and Commons inhibiting the execution of the commission of array, but when they required his performance of the same his lordship simply replied that "he would do his duty." From the presence of the judge the members of the Committee proceeded to the church of St. Mary Magdalene's, only to find the pulpit occupied by "one Mr. Nicholas Hatch," whose assize-sermon was a strong attack upon the policy of the Parliament; and on their return to the court matters were not much more to their satisfaction, for the judge in charging the grand jury "made a little noise of the commands" of the Houses, and only found "vigour, voice, and rhetoric" when upholding the royal instructions. Despite these discouragements, the Committee caused a presentment to be made "against divers men unknown, who were lately come armed into that county against the peace of the King," but Hopton immediately produced in answer a commission to himself, signed by the Marquis of Hertford on Charles' behalf. "After a full and solemn debate" the grand jury acquitted Sir Ralph and his companions, and turned the tables by preferring an indictment against Carew, Buller, and the rest of the Parliamentary Committee "for a rout and unlawful assembly at Launceston, and for riots and misdemeanours committed against many of the King's good subjects in taking their liberties from them." The High Sheriff, John Grylls, was thereupon instructed by the grand jury "to raise the *posse comitatus* for the dispersing that unlawful assembly at Launceston, and for the apprehension of the rioters," and as he was a Royalist he was nothing loth to obey.

All this did not take place without a wrangle in the court. The Parliamentary Committee told Sir Nicholas Slanning, one of Hopton's colleagues and a member of Parliament, that the House required his presence, "but he answered with a politic silence," while the Sheriff replied that he was a servant of the King, and "a shuffling answer" was all that could be obtained from our old acquaintance Coryton. After the grand jury had given its decision, both parties appealed to the townspeople. The day following the Assizes

Slanning, Grenville, and many companions, together with the Sheriff and his guard, went to the Launceston market-place and there read the royal proclamations explaining the differences between the King and the Houses, whereat, according to the Royalist account, "the people appeared well pleased." But immediately the Parliamentary Committee heard what was being done they in their turn sallied into the market-place, and bade the Sheriff and his friends be silent, but these declined either to do that or to read the House's commands, whereupon the Committee had to request their servant to do the latter, and the strange scene ended in a wordy contest, and not, as might have been expected, in blows. The Royalists straightway went westward to recruit their forces, while the Commons' Committee remained another two days in the town "labouring a right understanding of the power of Parliament and to undeceive the people," and they then reported to the Speaker that their efforts had certainly been "of high advantage."\*

For the time this did not appear to be the case. Hopton, following up the success he had legally gained, returned to Truro, and, having gathered a force of three thousand men, "advanced towards Launceston, where the committee had fortified, and from thence had sent messages of great contempt." Sir George Chudleigh, a Parliamentary, "being then at Tavistock with five or six full troops of horse," drew to Lifton to assist his friends at Launceston, but his services were not required. "Sir Ralph Hopton marched within two miles of Launceston, where he refreshed his men, intending the next morning early to fall on the town; but Sir Richard Buller and his confederates, not daring to abide the storm, in great disorder quitted the town that night, and drew into Devonshire, and so towards Plymouth; so that in the morning Sir Ralph Hopton found the gates of Launceston open, and entered without resistance."† The Royalists next moved towards Saltash, "where was a garrison of two hundred Scots, who, upon the approach of Sir Ralph Hopton, as kindly quit Saltash as the

\* This account of the assize proceedings is drawn from three independent sources, namely, a long description in Clarendon (vi., 240 and foll.), a letter sent from Launceston by the Parliamentary Committee of the West to Speaker Lenthall (given in full in the Lords Journals, vol. v., p. 275), and one from Beville Grenville and his companions (dated Launceston, August 5, 1642) to the Earl of Bath (summarised in the Fourth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, Appendix, p. 307). † Clarendon, vi., 242; no dates are given, but this probably occurred in the October.

others had Launceston before.”\* The Parliamentary forces were thus entirely driven out of the county, and as the Cornish Royalists would not advance beyond the borders of their own shire (a determination which ultimately proved the ruin of the King’s cause in these parts) they were disbanded “till a new provocation from the enemy should put fresh vigour into that county.”†

Meanwhile the Houses had been taking steps to punish those who had been most prominent in opposing their Committee at the Launceston Assizes. On August 9, 1642, the Lords received from the Commons the letter previously quoted from,‡ and forthwith agreed to resolutions adopted by the Lower House disabling Slauning from being a member and sending for him as a delinquent, the latter step being also ordered for “Mr. Hatch, the Minister that preached the Sermon,” and for the Sheriff of Cornwall, while Beville Grenville and John Arundell of Trerise, both members, were summoned to attend the service of the House.§ In the letter already noted|| from Grenville and his friends it was prayed that they might have the King’s warrant not to leave their county except by his majesty’s orders. This request was evidently granted, for Grenville and Arundell replied to the order of the Commons that “they were commanded by his Majesty’s special Commands to continue in their County, to preserve the peace thereof,” and the Sheriff returned the same answer. The Commons thereupon resolved that Grenville should be disabled from continuing a member, and referred the case of the others to a special committee.\*\*

The winter which followed was a troubled one. According to journals favourable to the Parliament, the Cornish Cavaliers “like brethren in iniquity” were suffered by Hopton and Slanning to do as they liked, one of their exploits consisting in plundering the residence at Tavistock of John Maynard, the late Puritan member for Newport, for they “toare in pieces his writings, cut his beds in pieces, and cast abroad the feathers, and pulled down part of the rooffe of his house.”†† Comfort was, however, extracted by the Parliamentarians from a

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\* Ibid, 243. † Ibid. ‡ ante, p. 160. § Lords Journals, vol. v., p. 275. || ante, p. 160.  
 \*\* September 19, 1642; Commons Journals, vol. ii., p. 772. †† Special Passages and certain Informations from severall places, Collected for the use of all that desire to be truly informed. (No. 17, for the week from Nov. 29 to Dec. 6, 1642, p. 142; another account of the same proceeding is given p. 144.)



report that Hopton and his adherents in Devon and Cornwall "are in much distresse, having so lamentably plundered the Country, that it is unable any longer to sustaine them,"\* and from a later rumour that "Sir Ralph Hopton is either dead or dangerously sicke, and that Sir Bevil Greenvill and the rest of the malignants in Cornwall, are determinel to breake up their army, being no longer able to continue them together for want of money and other provision."† A pamphlet, dated December 10 and entitled "A true Relation of the Present Estate of Cornwall," contains a doleful picture of the troubles of the time. In this a certain Jeremiah Trivery denounced "the malicious malignant party, the Cavaliers of Cornwall," who, having despoiled the inhabitants of Fowey at the end of the preceding month in return for hospitable entertainment, had proceeded for Launceston, where "getting in with the like wild they likewise plundered that, all but of their owne religion that are yet secure."

January opened gloomily enough. Hopton, who had been besieging Exeter, learnt in the last days of December of the approach from Somersetshire of the Earl of Stamford with a large force, and he retreated by way of Torrington and Okehampton to Launceston.‡ The Parliamentarians endeavoured to come up with him, and having on January 13 taken New Bridge after a smart engagement, occupied Launceston which the Royalists had abandoned.§ Ruthven, Governor of Plymouth, was the Parliamentarian leader in this enterprise, and was closely followed by the Earl of Stamford who came to Launceston "with a strong party of horse and foot."|| The Royalists had retreated from Launceston to Bodmin and the Parliamentarians now advanced from the same town towards Liskeard. Battle was joined on January 19 at Bradock Down between Hopton and Ruthven, and the latter was so signally defeated that Grenville, writing on the same day to his wife (the Lady Grace Grenville who years before had been so much a friend of Eliot that he had called her his "sister"), felt the news to be so good that he told her that although "the messenger is

\* Diurnall Occurrences, Truly Relating The most Remarkable Passages which have hapned in both Houses of Parliament, and other parts of this Kingdome and elsewhere (for the week from Nov. 23 to Dec. 5, 1642, p. 40). † Ibid, p. 8. ‡ Mercurius Aulicus, a Diurnall, Communicating the intelligence and affaires of the Court to the rest of the Kingdome (No. 2, from Jan. 8 to Jan. 14, 1643.) § Speciall Passages (No. 25, from Jan. 24 to Jan. 31, p. 208.) || Clarendon, vi., 247.



paid, yet give him a shilling more." Ruthven fled to Saltash, and Stamford, "receiving quick advertisement of this defeat, in great disorder retired [from Launceston] to Tavistock,"\* which he quitted upon the Royalist advance; and, Ruthven having again been beaten, a treaty was entered into between the combatants "whereby the peace of those two counties of Cornwall and Devon might be settled, and the war be removed into other parts."†

"The end of the treaty," says Clarendon‡, "was like that in other places." Solemnly entered into in the February it was broken before the close of April. Each side had felt certain that this would be the case and had made preparation accordingly. In the April many gentlemen of Cornwall sent in their plate to the royal commissioners to assist the cause, and on the 29th an order was given from Launceston to Piers Edgcumbe and his fellows "to take into your hands what is to be gotten beyond what is already come in and speed it to Sir Richard Vivyan."§ A letter from the county, dated the 23rd of the same month and published in the *Mercurius Aulicus*, stated that the treaty had been broken off and that the war was likely to be renewed, and the prediction was soon verified. On April 25 the Parliamentary forces entered Cornwall by way of Polson Bridge.|| "The night before the expiration of the treaty and cessation, James Chudleigh, the major-general of the rebels, brought a strong party of horse and foot within two miles of Launceston, the head quarter of the Cornish, and the very next morning, the cessation not being determined till after twelve of the clock in the night, marched upon the town, where they were not sufficiently provided for them. . . . Sir Ralph Hopton and Sir Bevil Greenvil [had] repaired to Launceston the day before the expiration of the treaty, to meet any attempt that should be made upon them . . . [but] all that was done the first day was, by the advantage of passes and lining of hedges, to keep the enemy in action till the other forces came up; which they seasonably did towards the evening; and then the enemy, who received good loss in

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\* Ibid. † Ibid, 254. ‡ Ibid, vii., 86. § Historical Manuscripts Commission, Second Report, Appendix, p. 23. || In the History of the Common Warre of England (1662) it is stated (p. 32) that an encounter took place at Polson Bridge between Hopton and Sir George Chudleigh, James Chudleigh's father, but no details of the fight are given; very probably it was the same skirmish as is here detailed.

that day's action, grew so heartless, that in the night they retired to Okington [Okehampton], fifteen miles from the place of their skirmish."\*

A more particular description of the day's fighting, and one which shows more clearly the position of Launceston in regard to it, is given by Rushworth.† He states that James Chudleigh, who was in command of the Parliamentarians, because of the Earl of Stamford being ill of the gout at Exeter, "having Intelligence, That the Town of Lanceson in Cornwal had but a slender Garison, no great Guns, and that their Ammunition was carrying away, etc., did enter Cornwal, beat the Centinels Polson Bridge, and approached near to the Town, which is naturally well fortified with a Hill, called the Windmill, on and near which Sir Ralph Hopton's Forces lay, having made a kind of Fort there. The Major gave them a Charge, but met with a more vigorous Resistance than he expected; and after several hours warm Dispute his Foot were forced to give ground, having no opportunity of bringing on his Horse to assist them, by reason of the many Hedges. Sir Ralph's forces seeing them shrink, stoutly pusht on their Success, and sent a Regiment of Foot and three Troops of Horse to wheel about and fall on their Rear, and take Pulson Bridge behind them. But this was prevented by the coming in of some broken Companies of Colonel Mericks Regiment from Plimouth under the Conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Calmady, and 100 of Colonel Northcot's Regiment, under the Command of Sergeant-Major Fitch, who secured the Bridge, over which the Major Retreated, and brought off his Ordnance Ammunition and Carriages, without any extraordinary Loss, and lay that night at Lifton, and the next Day march't to Okehampton, where they lay as in Garison."

This was the first blood shed in battle at Launceston from the time of Arundel's rebellion close upon a hundred years before,‡ but it was by no means to be the last. Chudleigh, when he retreated upon Okehampton closely followed by Hopton's forces, reported to the House of Commons that he had completely overthrown the Cavaliers, but this statement was contemptuously disposed of by a

\* Clarendon vii., 86. † John Rushworth, Historical Collections, Part III., vol. ii., pp. 267-8: it is here stated that the treaty expired on April 22, and the account of the skirmish is placed under the date April 25. ‡ ante, p. 93.

Royalist newspaper, which observed that all that the Parliamentarians had done had been "to spend a little of their fury on the walls of Lancelton," before forced by Hopton "to retreat backe to their owne quarters on the Edge of Devon."\* But Chudleigh was nothing if not startling, and in his anxiety to astonish he was not above claiming for himself victories which he had not won.† He now represented that in a fight in the early days of May with Hopton's men near Okehampton "the Lord sent Fire from heaven, so that the Cavaliers Powder in their Bandaliers, Flasks, and Muskets tooke fire, by which meanes they hurt, and slew each other, to the wonder and amazement of the Parliaments Forces," it being added that this mystic fire "so lamentably scorched and burnt many of their bodies, that they sent for 12 Chyrurgions from Launceston to cure them."‡

The Earl of Stamford, having recovered from his gout, now took the Parliamentary command in person, and his forces "being 5000 foote and 1000 horse marched into Cornewall,"§ and with this information was sent to London the same day§ a rumour that Hopton had died after a fight on Roborough Down. Stamford advanced upon Stratton, the only part of the county then well affected to the Houses, and detached Sir George Chudleigh to surprise Bodmin. Hopton and Grenville with the Royalist forces (which were far inferior in numbers to the Parliamentary) were at Launceston, whence they marched, as Clarendon says, "with a resolution to fight with the enemy upon any disadvantage of place or number."\*\* The two bodies drew within a mile of each other on May 15, and on the next day was fought the battle of Stratton, in which the Parliamentarians (chiefly, as Stamford urged, through the treachery of some of his subordinates, and especially of James Chudleigh††) were completely routed with heavy loss.

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\* *Mercurius Aulicus*, (No. 18, p. 229, under date Friday, May 5.) † See *Mercurius Aulicus* (No. 2, from Jan. 8 to Jan. 14, 1643) for an instance of this in addition to the one just given. ‡ *Joyfull Newes from Plimouth* (published in London May 18, 1643): see also Rushworth, Part III., vol. ii., p. 268. || *Special Passages*, May, 1643, p. 322. § May 6; *Ibid.* \*\* Clarendon, vii., 87. †† He was taken prisoner, and ten days later joined the King's service, being "convinced in his conscience and judgment of the errors he had committed" (Clarendon, vii., 88.) There are very full accounts of Stratton Fight in the newspapers of the time, such as *The Roundheads Remembrancer*, *The Kingdome's Weekly Intelligencer* (No. 22, p. 169), and *Certaine Informations* (No. 20, p. 154), as well as in subsequent statements of Stamford to Parliament, in which he emphasised his conviction that the victory was secured by treachery.

In a letter dated the day before the battle, a certain J. T. (who was probably none other than the Jeremiah Trivery previously mentioned\*) communicated to a Puritan friend in London a relation of "the places and Garrison towns of the Cornish Forces, with the number of souldiers therein."† In this he stated that the Royalist army lay at Liskeard, Saltash, Launceston, Bridgerule, Stratton, "and other Parishes neer the river." "At Launceston M. Trevanian his Regiment is quartered, consisting of about 700 foot"; and in the list of officers appended to the letter occur some names which sound familiarly in Launceston ears. There is first "Sir Bevill Greenville (Colonell of one Foot Regiment)," there is a Sergeant-Major Mannington and a Captain Mannington, a Captain Estcott, and two Captains Piper, one of these last-named not improbably being Hugh (afterwards Sir Hugh) Pyper, of whom much is later to be heard. In the same letter is a hesitating denial of the rumour of Hopton's death‡—a rumour which, with Chudleigh's story of the thunder-and-lightning victory, and the Parliamentary defeat at Stratton, inspired Sir John Denham, a Royalist poet, to write "A Western Wonder," the opening verses of which may be quoted :

Do you not knew, not a fortnight ago,  
How they bragg'd of a western wonder?  
When a hundred and ten slew five thousand men,  
With the help of lightning and thunder?

There Hopton was slain, again and again,  
Or else my author did lie;  
With a new thanksgiving, for the dead who are living,  
To God, and his servant Chidleigh.

But now on which side was this miracle try'd,  
I hope we at last are even;  
For Sir Ralph and his knaves are risen from their graves,  
To cudgel the clowns of Devon.§

The Royalists lost no time in following up their victory. Sir William Waller ("William the Conqueror" as he was fondly called by the Parliamentarians) marched from London towards the West, and the Cornish forces, now joined by Prince Maurice, the Marquis of


\* ante, p. 162. † A True Relation of The Proceedings of the Cornish Forces under the command of the Lord Mohune and Sir Ralph Hopton (1643) ‡ ante, p. 165. § In a note to this song in Professor Henry Morley's "The King and the Commons" (pp. 95-199) its origin is evidently mistaken, for in explanation is given a short statement of the proceedings at the Launceston Assizes of 1642 and of the Parliamentary defeat at Braddock Down, with neither of which had the verses any relation.

Hertford, and the Earl of Carnarvon, advanced from Stratton through Devonsbire into Somersetshire, to meet him. After many skirmishes a battle was fought at Lansdowne, near Bath, on July 5, which with severe struggle the Royalists won, but their success was dearly bought. "That which would have clouded any victory," observes Clarendon, "and made the loss of others the less spoken of, was the death of Sir Bevil Greenvil." "Bravely behaving himself" said Sir John Hinton many years later in a memorial to Charles the Second, the old member for Launceston "was killed at the head of his stand of pikes," within a fortnight of his friend of the Eliot days, John Hampden, having died from a wound received on Chalgrove Field.





VI.—FROM THE DEATH OF SIR BEVILLE GRENVILLE TO THE  
RETURN OF WILLIAM HARBORD (1643—1680).

N endeavouring to form some conception of what Launceston was like in this period of wars and rumours of wars, let us picture a trooper of Rebellion days standing on the ramparts of the Castle. Not only the great natural objects—the Cornish tors, the Devonshire moors, and the valleys of the Tamar and the Kensey—but the church of the Magdalene at his feet, of St. Thomas in the hollow, of St. Stephen on the other hill, and of South Petherwin among the trees, as well as the South Gate with its Dark House above, would be as visible to him as to us. But the fort on Windmill, the North and the West Gates, plain then, have gone now; and the Guildhall and the Gaol, the Bridewell and the Wall, St. Leonard's Hospital and the Priory ruins, have similarly been swept from sight into remembrance.

And when we imagine our trooper descending from the keep and strolling into the town, the differences between the Launceston of two centuries ago and the Launceston of to-day become even more striking. Passing through the western archway of the Green, he would cross the draw-bridge over the castle dyke, a name not limited then as now to a portion of the old moat, and would proceed through Dockhay to the West Gate. By this he could go into the town, or, if he chose, could climb the hill to the military post on Windmill, or skirt the wall under Mount Madford and enter by the South Gate. Through whichever portal he passed he would soon find himself in Broad Street, a name familiar to him as to us and a thoroughfare then as



now the business centre of the town. There before the Guildhall he would see the pillory, lately devoted to the sufferings of offenders against the Star Chamber and now being used for the punishment of words spoken against Crown or Parliament as either was for the moment uppermost, and he would read, if his culture had reached that unusual point, the latest proclamation of the King or the Houses according as Royalist or Roundhead then held the walls. As he glanced around his eyes would rest upon a dwelling, erected in the time of Elizabeth and still in existence, and as he looked towards the West Gate he would observe some houses of refreshment the names of which have descended even to us. If he turned his steps towards St. Mary Magdalene's, the carvings upon which had not yet lost their sharpness, he would take High Street or Church Street on his way, and in the latter would walk by the old shambles where the sale of meat was carried on, and beneath the overhanging stories of many a gabled residence, only one specimen of which remains. Passing the entrance to Blindhole, by which he might again have sought the South Gate, and turning from Fore Street, with the North Gate at its foot, he would by Castle Street gain the eastern gate of the Green, then surmounted by the residence of the Constable of the Castle. And the portcullis, the grooves of which are still plain to view, having been raised, no enemy being near, he would pass Doomsdale on the one hand and the old gaol on the other and again reach his quarters.

It is probable, however, that although the Castle would be the scene of the trooper's military life it would not be his abiding place by night, the sleeping-accommodation being of necessity limited, and he would, therefore, be billeted upon one of the inhabitants. The frequent changes in the occupation of the town from Royalist to Parliamentary and from Parliamentary to Royalist must have been a great embarrassment to those taverners who wished to keep upon good terms with the often-moved soldier-inmates of their houses. For the borough scarcely knew at any hour what force would command it the next. A drum-beat in the direction of Polson Bridge would announce the approach from Exeter of a tide of Royalists, and the road to Ridgegrove would be lined with spectators as these swept

through the South Gate into the town. No sooner would they be settled into quarters than a hasty order from Hopton, borne at a gallop down Race Hill and through the same gateway, would call them away, and all the windows beyond the wall on that side the town would again be filled with gazers as the troops marched out towards Saltash. Shots from the Stratton side would next announce that hot work was being done in that quarter, and Fore Street would be filled as the Parliamentary forces with steady stride climbed St. Thomas Hill, and passing through the North Gate took possession of the Castle. And a day's halt would be called, a Council of War held, and through Dockhay and by the road from the West Gate the Puritans would take their departure for Bodmin, there to yield to the Royalists or become masters of the West.

The whole changing circumstances of this period are more like a dream than anything we can imagine as occurring in a sober far-from-the-world town like Launceston. We have seen in how many ways the borough was a participator in the events which led to the great struggle, have noted the wrangle at the assize-court in which both parties, already armed for the encounter, professed their strict regard for the law, and have followed the course of Grenville and Hopton, Ruthven and Stamford as political dissension developed into civil war. There is yet to be unfolded a series of scenes in which the clang of arms is again and again to be heard, amid the disputes of the Corporation ending in the expulsion of a Puritan alderman ; amid the visits of Essex, of Fairfax, and of Cromwell, of Charles the King and Charles Prince of Wales ; and amid all the confusion of successive Royalist and Parliamentary occupations of the town, with street-fighting in the streets and at the gates, with the Church despoiled of its lead for the casting of bullets and the Castle of its woodwork for the better embarrassment of the next besieger.

It was not only in matters of warfare that Launceston was closely connected with the origin, the progress, and the outcome of the Great Rebellion. It was a centre of opposition to the King when taxation was first sought to be illegally imposed ; one of the country squires whose seats were within sight of the Castle, Richard Gedia

of Trebursye, was father-in-law of the stoutest opponent of the loan, while two others, Nicholas Trefusis of Landue and Ambrose Manaton of Trecarrell, were joined in support of Eliot at the most critical period of the patriot's career. And although Grenville and Manaton and Coryton, each member at some time for Launceston, fell away from the side they first adopted in public life, Leonard Treise of Tresmere, the borough's Recorder, and Robert Bennett of Hexworthy and Thomas Gewen of Bradridge, two other of the neighbouring squires, were prominent in their devotion to the Parliament, the services of the first being rewarded by the Houses with a pension, those of the second being recognised by Cromwell appointing him to a seat in his Council of State, and the third proving himself so devoted to the Protector that he proposed the crown should be conferred upon him. And just as Bennett and Gewen, both members for Launceston, showed themselves staunch adherents of the Parliament, so Sir John Grenville, son of Beville, and Sir William Morice of Werrington, both members for Newport, approved themselves friends of the monarchy by being the principal intermediaries between Monk and Charles the Second when the one was plotting to bring the other to the throne. The whole story of the Great Rebellion falls, in fact, within the period bounded by the first return for Newport of Sir John Eliot, earliest leader of the opposition against Charles the First, and the last return for the same borough of Sir William Morice, first Secretary of State to Charles the Second.

The completeness of the Royalist victory at Stratton, with its necessary consequence of freeing Cornwall from the Parliamentary forces, might have been expected to have brought peace to the county for some time to come. But the departure of the King's supporters to encounter Waller left the shire exposed to attack, and in August, 1643, "it is informe out of Devonshire, that the Inhabitants of Barnstable, Beddyford, and Terrington, in the North part of that County, are joyned in a body, and are gone into Cornwall, and that they intend to seize upon the houses, estates and goods of such of the Cornish Cavaliers as now besiege Excester"\*; but these worthy gentlemen had speedily to retire "without effecting much to their

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\* Certaine Informations (No. 31, p. 233, under date August 15).

purpose, because the whole power of the County of Cornwall rose against them, so that their numbers being farre unequall to the Cornish strength, they were forced to give over their designe, and returne to their own homes againe.”\*

Cornwall, therefore, remained true to the King, and Charles marked his sense of its devotion by a special letter of thanks, “given at our camp at Sudeley Castle, the 10th of September, 1643,” recognising to the full the zeal which had been displayed, “and commanding copies hereof to be printed and published, and one of them to be read in every church and chapel therein, and to be kept for ever as a record in the same; that, as long as the history of these times and of this nation shall continue, the memory of how much that county hath merited, from us and our crown, may be derived with it to posterity.” A copy of this letter, painted on a wooden tablet, was placed and is still to be seen in most churches in Cornwall; in Launceston it is in the vestry-room (which, until the erection of the new Guildhall, was the Council Chamber), and only a few years ago it was repaired and re-painted. Immediately the Parliamentarians knew what the King had done they protested against it, and declared that the letter would “instead of being a Monument of Honour to that valiant Countrey in subsequent ages, remaine as a blemish and dishonour upon them, That they should be so seduced as to spend their strengths and lives and estates not in asserting their Liberties, and in defence of the King, joyned with his highest and best Councell the Parliament (as all good Patriots ought to doe) but in taking part with the King misled by evill Councellors who would (might they obtaine their wished ends) introduce popery and slavery upon them and the rest of the Kingdome, and will deserve no other Character than of being, The most infamous and industrious betrayers of the true Religion, and their owne Liberties.”†

The year ended without further fighting in the neighbourhood of Launceston, but it was a most fatal one for the inhabitants of the town. During its course the appalling total of 116 deaths, nearly double that of the highest number recorded for over a century, was

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\* *Ibid*, p. 240 (under date August 17).      † *Mercurius Civicus* (No. 17, from Sept. 14 to Sept. 21, p. 236).

entered in the Parish Register.\* There were three in January, two in February, and three in March, and then there was a sudden leap to seventeen in April. In May there were twenty-three deaths, in June nineteen, in July sixteen, in August fifteen, and then another eighteen for the remaining four months of the year. That the war, in addition to being the cause of many of these by reason of the privations and alarms of the inhabitants, was the direct cause of several is shown by the number of soldiers buried in the town that year. The first was interred on March 22, another followed on April 2, "Captain James Bassett" on April 24, "John Arundle an Ensigne" on April 25, "James Fithams Lieutnt" on May 3, and "Henry Mynard a Lieutenant" on May 30, besides three privates in May, one in June, one in July, and one in August; while in the next year (in which there was a total of 42 deaths) "Richard Jonas a souldier" was buried on April 25, "John Millott a lieut" on August 13, and "Alexander Winchborow a souldier" on September 10. The mention of these interments suggests the question whether all the soldiers who died or were slain in Launceston during the progress of the Rebellion were buried in the churchyard. Rather more than twenty years since, when the Castle Green was being made more level, many human bones were found a little below the surface, and it has been thought that these were of persons killed in the course of the Civil War or of prisoners who had died in the gaol. There may have been cases of both, seeing that the Register contains no reference to the death of prisoners for many years about this period, and in 1646, for instance, has no entry of a military funeral, though, as we shall afterwards see, at least two soldiers were killed here in that year.

Early in 1644, the Commons determined to expel those members who could be accused of "deserting the service of the House, and being in the King's quarters, and adhering to that party,"† and among those so dealt with were Manaton‡ and Harris, members for Launceston, Piers Edgecumbe, a former member for Newport, and Richard Edgecumbe, the sitting member for that borough. Manaton and Piers Edgecumbe certainly, and the others probably, being

\* Between 1559 and 1672 the highest other totals were 68 in 1597, 62 in 1594, and 54 in 1671. † January 22, 1644; Commons Journals, vol. iii., p. 374. ‡ "Mr. Ambrose Mannaton" is fifth on the list of fifty-two members now expelled.

deprived of their seats at Westminster, joined the "Mongrel Parliament" which met at Oxford, the head-quarters of the King, on the very day of the expulsion, and on March 21 the honorary degree of D. C. L. was conferred upon the two former.\*

The siege of Plymouth by the Royalists was meanwhile proceeding, not without great difficulties in the way of the besiegers, one of which is shown in the record that the Cavaliers threatened to hang all those in the district who would not join their forces, "and having pressed six in Lifton Parish . . . they were compelled to send a guard with them to Exon."† But soon Launceston was again to bear the brunt of battle. The Earl of Essex, contrary as some assert to his own judgment, made a descent upon our county. On June 26, says Rushworth, the Earl "entered into Cornwall, Sir Richard Greenville‡ at Newbridge, the Passage into that County, maintaining an hot dispute for some time but at last the Parliaments Forces, with the loss of about forty or fifty Men gain'd the Pass and so passed on to Launceston the Shire Town, where they took divers Barrels of Powder."§ In a list of the Parliamentary victories, published as a broadside in 1646 for popular circulation, this encounter is named as the one hundred and fifty-second success of the Puritan army, it being placed "in the moneth of June, 1644," and described as "Launceston with four more final Garrisons taken by the E. of Essex, with all the ammunition."

While this was passing on the borders of Cornwall, Queen Henrietta Maria was in sore trouble at Exeter. "Here is the woofullest spectacle my eyes yet ever looked on," said Sir Francis Bassett to his wife (writing at Exeter but directing his letter from Launceston|| after Essex had evacuated the town); "the most worne and weake pitifull creature in ye world, the poore Queene, shifting for one hour's liffe longer." The Princess Henrietta had been born at Exeter on June 16, and, according to tradition, it was a Launcestonian who

\* Bliss's Wood, *Fasti Oxonienses*, vol. iv., part II., p. 66. † April 25, 1644: A Continuation of the True Narration of the Most Observable Passages in and about Plymouth (published in London May 10, 1644), p. 7. ‡ A younger brother of Sir Beville, who had earned for himself the violent hatred of the Parliamentarians; his name was seldom mentioned in their newspapers or pamphlets without the addition of an opprobrious epithet, as "skellum," meaning villain, "runnagado," or such-like. § Rushworth, Part III., vol. ii., p. 691. || According to New Parochial History, Supplementary Papers, p. 5, but the dates there given are difficult to harmonise with those in Rushworth.



was of great help to her Majesty in her time of need. For "when the beautiful Queen, Henrietta Maria, was fearful for want of the rare thing—gold, she should bring a royal infant into the world with a state and ceremony as bare as its own nakedness, Sir Hugh Piper's silver dishes, plates, candle drinking-cups, and ladles, all went to the melting-pot, to furnish forth royal bedding and baby clothes, fees for wise women, possets for nurses, and spoons for godmothers and gossips, at the royal Exeter lying-in of the Queen."\* According to the inscription to his memory in Launceston Church, Sir Hugh was born in 1611,† and as this was one of the years during which the Register was imperfect‡ it is not possible to tell from that source whether he was of Launceston birth, though there is not a doubt that he was of Launceston descent. The name of "Hugh Piper, gent." occurs in the Register in the earliest years of the century, both marriage and death being entered within the space of six months,§ thereby precluding the possibility of this being Sir Hugh's father; and the next entry of the name (which, were it not that the fact that Sir Hugh was at this time a Plymouth merchant prevents it from being a certainty, would appear to be that of the knight himself) is in 1641, when on "the 22th of August was bapt. Arthur the son of Hugh Piper gent.," "Mary, wife of Hugh Piper gent."|| being buried nine days later, and the child itself in November of the next year. But whether of Launceston birth or not, we shall find afterwards how closely connected with the town was he of whom it is stated on his monument that "he served in the Civil Wars as an Ensign, Lieutenant, and Captain, under Sr. Richard and Sr. Beville Granville, Knts., at the siege of Plymouth, at the battles of Stratton and Lansdowne,\*\* where he was wounded in the neck, thigh, and shot through the shoulder. His estates were sequestered by the Rump Parliament for his loyalty to his Master and injured Sovereign, King Charles the First," whose Queen he now assisted in her escape through Cornwall to France.

\* Mrs. Bray, Warleigh, pp. 16-17 (edition 1884). † "He died July 24th, 1687; aged 76."

‡ ante, p. 123. § Married Sept. 2, 1604; Buried April 2, 1605. || In the inscription previously noted, "Dame Sibella" is given as wife of Sir Hugh, which throws an additional doubt upon the identity of these two Hugh Pypers. \*\* Mrs. Bray (Warleigh, p. 16) states that for his services at Stratton he was appointed Constable of Launceston Castle, and for those at Lansdowne knighted.

Essex evidently did not stay long in Launceston, for when the King joined Prince Maurice at Exeter and marched into Cornwall, "some of his horse and foot entered into Landson [July 31], all Essex his army being gone thence and no resistance."\* On that day Charles, who remained on the Devonshire side of the Tamar, received a message from Sir Richard Grenville desiring his majesty to hasten towards the West, and "the King bid the fellow tell him he was coming with all possible speed with an army of 10000 foot, 5000 horse, and 28 piece of cannon." The next day the King and the remainder of his forces crossed Polson Bridge, passed through Launceston, and "marched to Trecarel in the psh of Lysant and lay there at the house of Mr. Manaton in com. Cornubia," while "the whole army lay this night round about this house in the field," the men having been cheered on their way from Polson by the fact that "a fellow that was carrying letters from Essex was taken and hang'd below the rendezvous that all the army might see him as they marched by."

The King did not remain at Trecarrell more than one night, proceeding the next morning to Liskeard, whence he advanced towards Lostwithiel, and the greater part of the month was occupied with skirmishing, Essex refusing to treat because he had no authority from the Houses to do so. On August 31, the Parliamentary horse began to retreat from Cornwall, and "the King supposing they would go through Liskerd and Launceston sent 2 messengers of our troope, Mr. Brooke and Mr. Samuel West, with a letter to Sir Fr. Donington (who hath a 1000 horse in Devon) to stop their march. But the enemy went not near Liskerd this day, but went right to Saltash to ferry their horse over into Devonshire." On the same day, the King gave battle to the Parliamentary forces at Lostwithiel and completely defeated them, but Essex had fled with the horse, leaving Major-General Skippon to negotiate a surrender. Charles, a few days later, withdrew to Liskeard and thence from Cornwall, not again passing through Launceston, however, but proceeding direct from Liskeard to Tavistock. It was not much wonder, after such a severe reverse to the Parliamentarians, that Cromwell was moved to exclaim

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\* Richard Symonds's Diary. In the *Iter Carolinum* the journey is thus noted: "Thursday, the 1st [of August] to Trecarrol, Mr. Mauington's house in Cornwall, 1 night—8 miles."

“ We do with grief of heart resent the sad condition of our Army in the West, and of affairs there. That business has our hearts with it; and truly had we wings, we would fly thither! So soon as ever my Lord [Manchester] and the Foot set me loose, there shall be in me no want to hasten what I can to that service.”\* But it was eighteen months before his aspiration could be realised, and for twelve of these, as far as Launceston was concerned, there was cessation of active strife.

But though there was no fighting in the neighbourhood for this period, political warfare raged keenly within the borough's walls. The majority of the Corporation was Royalist, but one of the aldermen at least, Thomas Bolitho by name, was not afraid, even though the town was held by the King's forces, to stand up in behalf of the Parliament, and he suffered for his temerity. According to a petition presented by him to the Lords on June 19, 1646, he went to Plymouth two years before “and took up for the service of the Parliament,” for which act he was indicted at the Town Court as a rebel, and was on February 3, 1645, deprived by the Corporation of his place as alderman of the borough. As long as the Royalists still triumphed he held his peace, but when they were overthrown he prayed the Lords that he might be restored to his aldermanship and might receive reparation for the wrongs inflicted upon him. And the Lords, impressed with the justice of his plea, immediately ordered “that the said Bilithoe shall be restored to be a Burgess of the said Town of Launceston, and enjoy his Privilege.”†

The autumn and winter of 1645 will be ever memorable in the annals of Launceston because of the sojourn of Charles Prince of Wales in the town. “When the prince,” says Clarendon, “came to Launceston from Exeter (which was about the middle of September‡) after the loss of Bristol, and the motion of the enemy inclined westward, it was then thought fit to draw all the trained bands of Cornwall to Launceston [under the command of Sir Richard Grenville||] . . . The day after the Prince came to Launceston, Sir

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\* T. Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, vol. i., pp. 170-71. † *Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, Appendix*, p. 122; *Lords Journals*, vol. viii., p. 385. ‡ It should be July, as will later be seen. || Clarendon ix., 92.

Richard Grenvil writ a letter to him, wherein he [re]presented the impossibility of keeping that army together, or fighting with it in the condition it was then in.”\* Dissensions, in fact, filled the royal force; Lord Goring, the commander of the King’s forces, who had been defeated by Sir Thomas Fairfax, thought himself badly served, and Sir Richard Grenville was at variance with several of the other officers as well as with the Cornish gentlemen, who through their commissioners (of whom Coryton was one) presented to the Prince “a sharp complaint against him in the name of the whole county, for several exorbitances and strange acts of tyranny exercised upon them.”† It was immediately after Goring’s rout that the Prince visited Launceston, from which town his royal highness addressed a letter to the defeated general on July 26, regarding the heavy pressure of the military upon Cornwall and Devon.‡

As soon as the Prince entered Cornwall, his mission was so referred to by the Parliamentarians as to show how little they feared he would succeed. “Observe,” said one of the Puritan newspapers,§ “how they hurry poor Prince Charles from place to place, by his presence to raise the better supplies, and now at last to his Tenants in Cornwal: they will make him spend and adventure all his Interest before they have done with him.” The earliest effort the Prince made in the county was evidently at Launceston, where first he stayed, and where without doubt it was that “hee lately made a speech to the Countrey-men, wishing them, That as they had formerly, so they would still continue to stand for their Prince, and that they would raise all the strength they could to oppose the Rebels.”|| But the old difficulty\*\* arose once more, for “the Cornish promised, That they would assist him with their lives and fortunes in their owne Countrey, but would not be perswaded to stir out of it.”†† “The truth is,” sadly observed a Royalist newspaper a fortnight later, “the Cornish men are unwilling to come out of their County, and many of them begin to imbrace an indifferent good opinion of Sir Thomas Fairfax Army.”‡‡ Just at the same time as this was

\* Ibid, 133. † Ibid, 54. ‡ Tanner MSS., 60, art. 116. § The Moderate Intelligencer (No. 21, from July 17 to July 24, 1645, p. 167). || The True Informer (No. 4, for the week ending July 26, p. 110). \*\* ante, p. 161. †† The True Informer (No. 4, p. 110). ‡‡ Mercurius Veridicus (No. 17, from Aug. 4 to Aug. 11, p. 133).

published, "Prince Charles with Hopton, Greenville and the rest kept his Rendezvous at Launceston in Cornewall\* ; they cannot raise in all above 5000 horse and foot at most . . . The Prince cannot raise above 1500 to bring out of Cornewall the Trained-bands absolutely refusing to stir."† Goring then resolved that the whole of his army (including his foot quartered at Okehampton, his horse at Lidford, and Sir Richard Grenville's men at Tavistock) should rendezvous at Launceston, preparatory to a march into Devonshire ‡ The result was a disappointment, and the Prince, writing from Launceston on September 1, dwelt upon the small attendance of the trained bands at the day appointed, and adjourned the muster until the 24th of the same month.‡

The Prince continued to make Launceston his head-quarters, and on October 14 sent a letter hence to Col. P[iers] Edgcumbe ordering him to bring up more troops.§ But his mission had failed, and although one Parliamentary newspaper could in this same month positively assert that "The Prince was Munday the 20 instant at Launston,"|| other journals gave most conflicting accounts of his movements, one even inserting a rumour (while the Prince was still in all probability located in Madford House,\*\* the finest dwelling then in Launceston) that he had fled to France.†† Through most of the winter his royal highness remained in the town, endeavouring to heal the differences between Goring and Grenville, but his efforts were in vain, and the latter proved so insubordinate that the Prince had no alternative in the beginning of 1646 but to cast him into prison in Launceston Castle.

The cause thus divided against itself did not long stand. "The imprisonment of Greenville hath caused some distractions & mutinies amongst them," we are told in the February, "the Greenvillians who

\* Tuesday, August 5. † *Mercurius Civicus* (No. 116, from Aug. 7 to Aug. 14).

‡ *The Parliaments Post* (No. 15, from Aug. 12 to Aug. 19, p. 5); *The Kingdome's Weekly Intelligencer* (No. 113, from Aug. 12 to Aug. 19, p. 906); and *The True Informer* (No. 17, for the week ending Aug. 16, p. 133): the two last-named contain an almost exactly similar paragraph regarding the rendezvous, which they place at "Leston," while the first-mentioned gives "Launceston."

§ *Historical Manuscripts Commission, First Report, Appendix, p. 51*: Sir John Trelawny's Papers. The letter is here stated to have been dated "Lancaster," which is an obvious misprint. || *Ibid.*, Second Report, Appendix, p. 21: Lord Mount Edgcumbe's Papers. ¶ *A Continuation of Certain Speciall and Remarkable Passages* (from Oct. 24 to Oct. 31, p. 8.)

\*\* ante, p. 106. †† *The Kingdome's Weekly Intelligencer* (No. 123, from Oct. 21 to Oct. 28, p. 985).

are most mutiners being much displeased at it, and unwilling to be commanded either by the Gorians or Hoptonians.”\* Launceston was in fact the scene of many Royalist distractions. “From the Enemies Quarters,” says a Parliamentary journal, “we have advertisement by some prisoners who came about Exchange from Lauceston, That many of the Cornish Souldiers which were taken at Dartmouth,† upon their comming into Cornwall, much boasted of the clemencie of his Excellencie Sir Thomas Fairfax, who had not only spared their lives when he had them at mercy, but also gave them their liberties, and two shillings apeece. These comming to Lauceston, were questioned by Hopton’s forces whether they would serve the Prince or no, which they refusing, about thirty of them were clapt up prisoners.”‡

Despite these differences, the neighbourhood of Launceston continued to be well guarded against a surprise, as Major Seely, of the Parliamentarians, found when he “was opposed by the Cornish, as he would have gone over Ponstor [Polson] Bridge, whereupon he retreated back to Leyton [Lifton], where he quarters”§; but the Prince discovered, soon after he had imprisoned Grenville, that his position was fast becoming untenable. He had not only to contend with quarrels among his generals but with mutinies among his troops, and now desertions were frequent. In the last days of January he accordingly “retreated further into Cornwall, and his Forces quitting Launceston, carrying what Provisions they could out of that Port of Devon [*sic*] into Cornwall.”|| Of this movement, Sir Thomas Fairfax gave a striking account in a letter to Speaker Lenthal, written at Chudleigh on February 2. “Tuesday last,”\*\* he says, “divers ploughs and horses, all laden, some with provisions, have been sent out of Launceston Westward; there was also great store of Bread baked, the Bread was brought in flaskets from a Bakehouse in that town, where it was baked by the Princes Baker, and was immediately sent away Westward; six or seven ploughs more were drawn out of Launceston on Wednesday night Westwards, also further into Cornwall, much of their Lading was Musquets, Pikes, and other

\* The Moderate Messenger (No. 2, from Feb. 3 to Feb. 10, 1646, p. 11). † Dartmouth was taken by storm by Sir Thomas Fairfax on January 18, 1646. ‡ The Kingdome’s Weekly Intelligencer (No. 138, from Feb. 3 to Feb. 10, pp. 10-11). § Ibid.

|| The Weekly Account (No. 7, from Feb. 4 to Feb. 11). \*\* January 27.



Ammunition ; the rest of the Lading was Victuals, as poudred Beef and Cheese, with them were about fifty horse, laden with Powder, Match, and Bullets, and Lead which they had taken off from the Castle, so that it is all unleaded ; much of the Ammunition was loaded out of Guild-hall, which is their main Guard ; on Thursday night neer fifty more horse laden with provisions, as Bacon, Pork, and such like, were sent the same way, all reported to be for the Princes Court . . . Thursday also the prisoners in Launceston were turned over from Greenvile's Marshal to the Lord Hopton's Marshal ; fifty Souldiers ran the same day out of one Regiment ; those that they gather out of the country run away daily : Friday, six ploughs more were drawn into the castle green to be loaded, with them were forty horse, with pack-Saddles, Crooks and Paniards ; these were all reported to be sent after the rest : That day thirty Hogsheads of Syder were brought into Launceston from Merrington [Werrington], which were likewise to be sent Westward for the Prince ; and the Marshal gave order this day, that the prisoners in Launceston should be carried to Truro . . . The Trained-Bands of the town of Launceston get others for money to serve in their rooms ; the Trained-Bands further West will not rise at all. There is now but one Iron Gun in Launceston, which is an Iron piece planted between the Princes Quarters and Guild hal ; the poor people pull down the Works about the town to get away the Wood, none hindring them ; the Prince and Hopton were Saturday, Jan. 31, both in Launceston."\*

The Prince had returned to the town a day before the date mentioned, only to hear that on the Thursday (Jan. 29) there had been "a mutiny in Launceston between some of Hopton's men and some of Greenvills, which made many of the common Souldiers erie home, and accordingly some ran towards Greston [Greystone], some towards Braston [Bradstone], and some to other places."† His royal

\* Sir Thomas Fairfax's Proceeding about the Storming of Exeter (published as a pamphlet by authority of the House of Commons, Feb. 9; it was also printed in full in the *Mercurius Civicus*, No. 142, from Feb. 4 to Feb. 12, pp. 2035-37). Letters from the West (summarised in *Perfect Passages of Each Dayes Proceedings in Parliament*, No. 68, from Feb. 4 to Feb. 11, p. 538) add to the information given by Fairfax that on January 29 "divers of the Princes carriages with goods, and provisions, and Horses with Ammunition, passed by Tregodock, in the way to Camelford, and all the corne that could be got about Newport, Botadon, Lawhetton, and the parts adjacent, was fetched in for the Army"; it is further stated that Launceston was "soundly plundred," and that the lead upon the Town Hall and the Church "was pulled downe and carried away." † *Perfect Passages* (No. 68, pp. 538-39).

highness (who was accompanied by Hopton, the Earl of Berkshire, and Sir Edward Hyde, afterwards the Earl of Clarendon) "took much pains" on the Saturday, then as now the Launceston market-day, "to appease the souldiers and the Countrey-people."\* The Prince remained with Hopton in the town for some days, and during his stay the Royalists are reported to "have defaced much the Castle of Launceston, by taking away the Lead, and giving the Timber to the people to burn, who pull down the Works."† His royal highness then proceeded to Holsworthy,‡ the head-quarters of Goring's horse (a portion of which lay at North Petherwin), and next by way of Truro to Pendennis and thence to France.§ Before departing, the Prince commanded the trained-bands "to keep guards on the river day and night," and a party of Royalist horse was posted at Lifton|| to cover the way to Polson Bridge and thence through Launceston into Cornwall.

Dartmouth had been taken by storm in the middle of January,\*\* and on February 16 Fairfax advanced on Torrington, where he defeated Hopton. The latter, who was wounded in the fight, fled on the night of the battle to Launceston, and, leaving Colonel Bassett to defend the town, went into the West.†† Fairfax remained at Torrington for a week and then, having despatched a force to occupy Stratton, advanced into Cornwall by way of Holsworthy, the townsmen of which "shewed much cheerfulness" at sight of the Parliamentarians.‡‡ On the morning of Wednesday, February 25, the Army marched from Holsworthy towards Launceston, "which place was reported to be strong, and to have 1000 in it of mercenaries and Train-men." On the way some fifty prisoners were captured, and "when we came within two miles of Launceston our forces took divers

\* Ibid. † The Moderate Intelligencer (No. 49, from Feb. 5 to Feb. 12, p. 292).

‡ Ibid (No. 50, from Feb. 12 to Feb. 18, p. 297) § Ibid, p. 301. || A Diary or an

Exact Journall (No. 4, from Feb. 12 to Feb. 18, p. 3). \*\* ante, p. 180.

†† The History of the Commons Warre of England, p. 75. ‡‡ Sir Thomas

Fairfax His Victorious Proceedings in the Taking of Launceston, with the Magazine and Armes . . . Published by Authority, London . . . 4 March 1645 [1646

N.S.] : this is a pamphlet of eight pages containing two letters describing the advance

upon and capture of the town, one being "from an officer of Sir Thomas Fairfax his

Army," signed "W. C., Launcester, Feb. 25, 1645, at one at night," and the other "a

letter sent to a Member of the House of Commons," signed "J. R., Launcester, the 26

of Febr. 1645, about nine a clock in the morning." "W. C." was "Master W. Curtis,

Messenger to Master Bedford, Scout-master Generall to the Committee of both King-

domes," and "J. R." was John Rushworth, then Secretary to Fairfax, and afterwards

author of the Historical Collections.

of the Enemies Scouts, and some straggling Parties, who were most of them drunk; those who were best able to expresse themselves boasted, That Col. Basset was resolved to maintaine the Towne against our Forces; whereupon our forlorn hopes of Horse and Foot were sent to enforce entrance, the Enemy having shut the [North] Gate, and the Towne very strong, made some opposition, but Sir Thomas Bisset Generall of the Horse, and Col. Blits Governour of the Towne, with Col. Strevaticans\* Regiment of Foot, in all about 500 Horse and Foot, having quitted the Towne about an houre before we came, and left it onely to some few of the Trained Bands, they after some resistance retreated; our men entred, tooke some Prisoners, and killed onely two, it being now dark the rest escaped: we seized upon the Armes and Magazine in the Towne, the inhabitants seemed generally to be much revived at our comming, being sensible that they were formerly but deluded with the blandishments of the Kings Party, pretending what they did was in defence of the King, when indeed it was chiefly to the destruction of the Subject. Our Souldiers notwithstanding the opposition they received at the entrance, did not then nor since plunder any one house that I know of, but demeaned themselves very civilly." This is Curtis's narrative of the capture of Launceston, and Rushworth's letter does not add many details, while it corroborates the statements that the Launcestonians were glad at the coming of the Parliamentary forces and that these latter behaved well after they had taken the town. The only point to be noted in another contemporary account of the fight is that after the Cavaliers had been put to flight in great disorder "by the darknesse of the night, narrownesse and steepnesse of the wayes, most of them escaped."†

"The Horse and Foot," wrote Rushworth in a postscript on the morning after the battle, "have been put to hard duty upon the march, and Guards, and going out upon parties, so that I beleeeve we shall not heare [?] leave] this day." The prediction proved correct, for until the Saturday "the head Quarter continued at Launceston, the Foot being much wearied out with the two dayes march before."‡

\* These three somewhat mysterious names should not improbably read Bassett, Bolitho, and Trevanion.

† Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva* (1647), Part IV., chap. iii., p. 198.

‡ Ibid.

On the Thursday, Sir Thomas Fairfax (who immediately upon his taking the town the previous night had communicated with the House of Commons\*) “viewed the ancient Castle of Launceston, situated upon a Mount, raised very high, but not fortified: the Works and Mounts on the top of the Hill [° Windmill] the Enemy left standing undemolished. Many Cornish were taken prisoners in the Towne the night before, who being brought before the General this day, had twelve pence apeece given them, and Passes to goe to their homes: The Townes people in Launceston were much affected with such mereifull usage”†—they were, in fact, so impressed by the good behaviour of the Parliamentarians that “they frequented the Markets again as in former time.” Fairfax, after visiting the Castle, and after seeing that none of the houses were plundered, “not so much as the Governour’s,” directed his rear-guard “to quarter along the River Tamar, the better to prevent the breaking through of the Enemies Horse,”\* and sent on a company of dragoons “to possesse a House near Camelford, to gaine intelligence, and the more to amuse the Enemy.” On the Friday the Plymouth foot regiments were ordered from Tavistock to Launceston, and on the Saturday “the greatest part of the Army marched from Launceston to Lowenrick [Lewannick], but three miles, in regard there could be no conveniency of Quarters between that and Bodman,”§ while “on the Lord’s day March 1. the Generall and Lieutenant Generall advanced all the whole army towards Bodman.”||

In the House of Commons on the next Saturday morning, Curtis, who had hastened back from the front, “being asked by Master Speaker (before the House) what he had to say concerning the Army, and where he left them, and when . . . made this Answer. Master Speaker, this Honourable House being already sufficiently informed concerning the proceedings of the Army about Launceston, I shall therefore omit that, and apply my selfe to acquaint you with what

\* “A Letter from Sir Thomas Fairfax General, from Launceston, of 25<sup>o</sup> Februarii 1645 [1646, N.S.] was this Day read?”; March 5, 1646. Commons Journals, vol. iv., p. 463. The letter appears to have referred to measures necessary for the prevention of foreign forces being landed on the Cornish Coast. † Sprigge, Part IV., chap. iii., p. 198.

‡ According to further despatches from the district, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, “the Generall sent a Letter to Captaine Weldon, to send all the Horse he could spare, and as many Dragoones he could possible, to advance up the River as farre as Lifton, to stay the passage at the Fords.” § The Late Victorious Proceedings of Sir Thomas Fairfax [by W. Curtis, published by Authority March 9, 1646], p. 2.

|| *Ibid.*, p. 3.

hath been done since. Master Speaker, The Generalls Excellencie advanced from Launceston on the last Lords Day, earely in the Morning, part of his Army being gone the night before, and had marched about 4 miles in the way to Bodman; On that morning there was a generall Rendezvouz on a Moore by a Village called Atternoone [Altarnun], 6 Miles beyond Launceston, 12 Miles on this side Bodman; from thence the whole Army marched in Batalia towards Bodman,"\* which after some skirmishing was seized on the Monday.†

The "Lieutenant Generall" who advanced with Fairfax from Launceston on this eventful Sunday morning, was Oliver Cromwell. From the time when, in September, 1643, he wrote to some friends that "the King is exceeding strong in the West,"‡ and when, twelve months later, in a letter previously quoted,§ he did "with grief of heart resent the sad condition of our Army in the West, and of affairs there," Cromwell had hoped to do something to secure Cornwall to the Parliament, and his opportunity had now come. Being, however, placed second in command to Fairfax, it is more of the General than of the Lieutenant-General that the chroniclers speak, with the result that Cromwell's biographers have dwelt but little upon his share in this western campaign. All that Carlyle can spare on the subject is that "Cromwell returned to Fairfax; served through the Winter with him in the West, till all ended there"||; and Mr. Picton, the latest of the Protector's biographers, is scarcely more detailed in his account of this immediate period.\*\* A local tradition, which was still to be heard a few years since, was to the effect that Cromwell stayed during his rest at Launceston with Col. Bennett†† at Hexworthy; and although there appears no direct evidence upon the point, the fact that that staunch Parliamentarian was, as will later be seen, one of Oliver's trusted advisers in the days of his power gives colour to the story.

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\* Ibid, p. 10. † In Josiah Ricraft's Perfect List of all the Parliamentarian Victories (1646), the 272nd is "by the Renowned Sir Thomas Fairfax. In the month of April [sic] 1646. Launceston taken, and Bodmin quitted by the enemy in the west." Besides the authorities already named, accounts of the capture of Launceston are to be found in A Diary or an Exact Journal (No. 6, from Feb. 25 to March 5, p. 6), The Moderate Intelligencer (No. 52, from Feb. 26 to March 5, p. 324), Perfect Occurrences of Parliament (No. 10, week ending March 6), and A Continuation of Certain Speciall and Remarkable Passages (No. 24, from Feb. 27 to March 6, pp. 1-2), as well as in letters to the Commons published at the time by the House's authority. ‡ Carlyle, vol. i., p. 146. § ante, p. 177. || Carlyle, vol. i., p. 217. \*\* J. A. Picton, Oliver Cromwell [second edition] pp. 203-4. †† After whose family "Bennett's Arms" is named



The Royalist forces in Cornwall were speedily brought to a surrender; Goring fled to France, Hopton agreed to a treaty by which his troops were disbanded, and on March 21, Fairfax began his return from Truro. Four days later he and Cromwell went on to Plymouth, "whilst the Army marched another way by Launceston"\*; and on the 27th, while the General and Lieutenant-General proceeded by way of Tavistock to Okehampton, the army departed from Launceston for its bivouac five miles from the latter town.† The campaign in Cornwall was thus at an end, and there probably now returned to Launceston one who could scarcely have remained there during the Prince's stay, seeing that for his services to the Puritan cause the Parliament had granted him a pension while the town was still held for the King. On January 12, 1646, upon his "humble petition," the Lower House ordered "That the Committee of Lords and Commons for Advance of Money, at Haberdashers Hall, do weekly pay unto Leonard Treise Esquire‡ the sum of Forty Shillings per Week for the present Subsistence of him and his Family."§ Ten days later the Lords' concurrence was asked for the grant,|| and on the next day this was given.\*\* Six months previously, Leonard's son John (who was born at Launceston in March, 1613), a captain of foot in the Parliamentary service, had been summoned before a court martial at Plymouth, whence he appealed to the Houses asking for a speedy decision that he might "return to his Command being at present as his Livelihood."†† It was thus evident that the Treises at this period were not in flourishing circumstances, a conclusion borne out by the fact that the Commons, in addition to voting forty shillings weekly to Leonard, ordered that he should be "recommended to the Committee of the West, to bestow upon him the Sum of Fifty Pounds for his present Subsistence."‡‡ It may be believed that this Committee did as it was desired, for during its sittings at Launceston in this same year it seized upon various estates belonging to adherents of the King and forced their owners to make composition for them.§§

\* Sprigge, Part IV., chap. v., p. 232. † Ibid. ‡ ante, p. 145. § Commons Journals, vol. iv., p. 405. || Ibid, p. 414. \*\* Jan. 23, 1646: Lords Journals, vol. viii., p. 121; the draft order is still preserved in the House of Lords (see Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, Appendix, p. 95). †† July 19, 1645: Lords Journals, vol. vii., p. 502. ‡‡ January 12, 1646: Commons Journals, vol. iv., p. 405. §§ One instance of this (the order for which was issued on August 20, 1646, by the Parliamentary Committee sitting at Launceston) is given in Maclean's Trigg Minor, vol. i., pp. 559-60.



Not long afterwards the House of Commons, apparently satisfied that the Royalist resistance had been crushed, ordered new writs for various constituencies which had years before been deprived of their members for siding with the King. On July 23, 1646, writs were issued for Cornwall in the room of Sir Beville Grenville and Sir Alexander Carew,\* on August 12 for Launceston in the place of Ambrose Manaton,† and on February 9, 1647, for Newport in that of Richard Edgecumbe and John Maynard,‡ all these members, except the last, having been disabled by order of the House. For Launceston there was returned on January 4, 1647, Thomas Gewen of Bradridge (who in subsequent pages will demand greater attention), and for Newport on May 19 of the same year were chosen Sir Philip Percival and Nicholas Leach.§

The two members originally elected for Launceston to the Long Parliament,|| William Coryton and Ambrose Manaton, were meanwhile suffering for their Royalist zeal. On February 15, 1647, a report was made to the Commons from the Committee of the West concerning these and other gentlemen of Cornwall, and it was resolved that they should be "admitted to their several and respective Compositions, at Two years full Value, for taking off their respective Delinquencies, and the Sequestration of their Estates."\*\* Coryton, it appears from a later entry in the Commons Journals,†† had petitioned the House in March, 1646, the month of the Royalist collapse in Cornwall; and it would seem that while he had been intriguing for the King, his daughter, a Mrs. Philippa Coryton, had been helping the other side, for, her claim being supported by Cromwell, she was ordered to receive over eight hundred pounds out of her father's estate "in regard of her extraordinary good Affections and Service to the Parliament,"‡‡ the Committee of the West having previously taken from her, by the way, nearly double that amount. On January 3, 1648, Coryton, having been fined in this sum of £828, was "cleared of his delinquency" and pardoned for "having been in arms against the Parliament"§§; and on October 7 of the same year Manaton was similarly dealt with.||| With one more mention both

\* Commons Journals, vol. iv., p. 615. † Ibid, p. 642. ‡ Ibid, vol. v., p. 79. § Official List of Members, vol. i., p. 486. || ante, p. 153. \*\* Commons Journals, vol. v., p. 88. †† November 9, 1647: Ibid, p. 353. ‡‡ Ibid. §§ Lords Journals, vol. ix., p. 627. ||| Ibid, vol. x., p. 532.

disappear from our page; they died within a month of each other, Coryton being buried at St. Mellion in May, and Manaton at South Petherwin in June, 1651. Of the two men, Manaton, who was probably the less affected in his political principles by personal considerations, had the simpler monument\*; it is characteristic that Coryton should have been described on his tombstone in adulatory terms,† and that sixteen turgid lines should have been placed upon it in order to persuade the reader that

“ Words may not set his Prayses foorth,  
Noe Prayses comprehend his Worth.”

The disturbed state of society in the Civil War period can be seen from a petition of a French doctor, one Peter Le Royer, presented to the House of Lords on July 13, 1647. In this Le Royer stated that he had been doctor to the King of France, and that about nine years previously he had been sent into England to the then French Ambassador. Going into the West during the Rebellion he was imprisoned by the King's forces for holding correspondence with the Parliament, the Mayor and Minister of Launceston certifying to this fact; subsequently, when bound for France, he was stopped at Dartmouth, his trunks broken open, and himself obliged to flee for his life; and, when living in Cornwall by licence from Sir Thomas Fairfax, he was plundered by the mayors of Launceston and Bideford and by the sequestrators for the county; therefore, as a stranger who had thus lost his small fortune and was without the means of returning home, he prayed the Lords for redress and recompense.‡ The House thereupon ordered the question to be referred to the Commons with recommendations.§

On March 1, 1648, new writs were issued¶ for Newport in the room of Sir Philip Percival and Nicholas Leach, who had been elected only the previous year,|| and both of ¶whom were now deceased. For one of the seats thus vacant (though the fact is¶ somewhat characteristically not recorded in the Official List)¶ William Prynn,

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\* “Ambrosius Manaton de Trearrell, Ar [migeri]. Obiit 11 mo. die Junii, An. Dom. 1651.” † “Viri genere et virtutibus illustris.” ‡ Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, p. 186: House of Lords Papers; the certificate of the Mayor and Minister of Launceston is dated July 2, 1647, and is still preserved. § July 13, 1647: Lords Journals, vol. ix., p. 328. || ante, p. 187.

of the "Histrio-mastix," was returned,\* and, according to his own account, freely and unanimously without either his knowledge or seeking.† He took his seat in the House on November 7, and on December 4 he delivered a speech "touching the King's answer to the propositions of both Houses upon the whole treaty, whether they were satisfactory or not satisfactory," which speech he published, and placed upon the title-page the text (singular as coming from this author) "Blessed are the peacemakers." According to Prynne himself it was simply his endeavour, in order faithfully to discharge the trust Newport had reposed in him, "to put a speedy and happy period to our unnaturall long-lasting bloody Wars, and settle a firm well-grounded peace, upon such terms of honor, freedome, safety, and advantage, as no Subjects under Heaven ever yet enjoyed from the Creation to this present"; but the General Council of Officers held a different view, and two days later commenced "Pride's Purge," Prynne and forty of his colleagues being seized by the soldiery and marched to a neighbouring tavern,‡ where, according to Carlyle,§ the member for Newport showed himself "louder than any in the question of Law." Gewen, the member for Launceston, shared this fate of exclusion by Col. Pride a few days later; and Prynne, during his seven weeks imprisonment, appealed from "these usurpers . . . unto you alone who elected me, and are best able to know and judge of your owne trust . . . from whom I shall humbly request so much right and justice, upon the perusall of the enclosed Speech and Papers (which I desire may be read openly before all my Electors at the next publique meeting) as to certifie to the world under your hands and seals (which you set to the retorne of my Election) your own judgments and opinions whether I have betraid or broken the Trust you reposed in me or not." The letter, which is dated "From the Kings Head in the Strand Jan. 26, 1648 [1649 N.S.]," (three days before the remnant of the House decided to exclude him and his colleagues for having voted the King's concessions a ground for peace) is addressed

\* In Cunningham's *Lives of Eminent Englishmen* (vol. ii., p. 462) it is stated that Prynne was elected for Newport in 1640, but this has been shown to be an error.

† "Mr. Prynnes Letter to the Borough of Newport, in Cornwall, for which he serves in Parliament"; this was included in a pamphlet published in 1649, the main portion of which was the summary of a speech delivered by Prynne in the House on December

4, 1648. ‡ Rushworth, Part IV., vol. ii., p. 1353. § Cromwell, vol. ii., p. 90.

"To his honoured Friends the Vianders and Free Burgesses of the Borough of Newport in Cornwall" by their "most affectionate Friend and faithful Servant and Burgesse, William Prynne."

Whether this letter was discussed at "the next publique meeting" of the electors of Newport is not known, and even if it were, and if the result were according to the member's own request transmitted to him "with all convenient speed," little service was effected. Rather over ten years later, and just before Richard Cromwell resigned the Protectorate, Prynne (who in the meantime had not been allowed to sit) went down to the Lobby intending to demonstrate to the House that "their New Common Wealth (or Good Old Cause) was originally projected by the Jesuites, and other foreign Popish Enemies," that the Long Parliament was absolutely dissolved by the King's beheading, that the Commons sitting since that date had sat illegally, and that the monarchy ought to be speedily restored. Prynne published "a true and perfect Narrative of what was acted and spoken" in the Lobby on the seventh and ninth of May, 1659, dedicating it to the whole English Nation, but "especially those Vianders and free Burgesses of the Borough of Newport in Cornwall (who without Mr. P. his Privity or liking, unanimously elected him for their Burgesse.)\* But Prynne was never again returned for Newport, and with this pamphlet his connection with the borough ceased.

To obtain some idea as to what was passing in Launceston itself during the years immediately succeeding the close of the Civil War, it will be needful to turn to the Parish Register. This record shows that when once the storm had passed the death-rate fell rapidly, but this indication of better times was somewhat neutralised by the lessening number of births and marriages, there being only twenty baptisms in either 1647 or 1649, and only two weddings in 1648. In 1649 there were six marriages, the first of these, between "William White and Mary Corke wid.," being celebrated on January 30, and the contrast between the scene presented on the same morning by the execution at Whitehall and this quiet wedding in St. Mary

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\* This formula is varied in another edition of the pamphlet to "without his Privitie, Sollicitation, or good liking."

Magdalene's cannot escape notice. But Launceston, like all other towns of the Kingdom, was soon called upon to realise what this thirtieth of January had brought forth, for, on the very afternoon of the royal execution, the Commons ordered that all Sheriffs and Mayors should notify by sound of trumpet that whosoever proclaimed a new King, either Charles the Second or any other, without the authority of Parliament, should suffer death as a traitor;\* and to Oswald Kingdon (whose arms as chief magistrate in that year are in the Guildhall window, and representatives of whose family have ceased only within the last few years to be prominent in local affairs) fell the task of making this declaration in the market-place of Launceston.

The Register of St Mary Magdalene's also affords some glimpse of the ecclesiastical controversies of the time. Up to May, 1610, when some of the records were lost,† each child was stated to be "christened," but after the resumption of registration, and when a higher Church doctrine was being preached, although the heading of each page was still "christenings," the word used in all the separate entries was "baptised." This was invariable until 1651-52, in the entries of which years there were various instances of the use of "borne," but these were evidently written in later. In 1653, for the first time, this word was used at the period of entry, though for some months "baptised" was still the regular form. But after July, 1653, the heading was "Birthes" and "borne" was used in each case (except three, two of which are in a later hand), this continuing until March, 1657, when the heading became "Birthes and Baptismes," and after August of that year there was affixed in many cases the date of christening as well as that of birth. It was thus evident that the more strictly Puritan rule was breaking down, and in July, 1660, when Charles the Second had received "his own again," the heading "Birthes and Baptismes" was taken from the page, and the latter word resumed its old monopoly.

But it is concerning the marriages of this period that the Register affords perhaps the best indications of ecclesiastical dispute. After the execution of Charles, and when Church affairs were to a great

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\* Commons Journals, vol. vi., p. 126.      † ante, p. 123.

extent in a state of chaos, many marriages which would ordinarily have been solemnised in the country districts had to be celebrated in towns, and to Launceston flocked couples from South Petherwin and St. Stephens, St. Gemys and Stoke Climsland, St. Minver and Great Torrington, and even (which is difficult to account for) Plymouth and Bodmin. This influx from the outer districts commenced in 1653 and was at its height in 1655 (when, of thirty weddings at St. Mary Magdalene's, sixteen were from outside the borough boundary), there having been passed by the "Barebones Parliament" on August 24 of the former year an Act for solemnizing marriages by justices of the peace. Two months later, "Thomas Reese being before this tyme duly chosen to bee Parish Register within this borrough in obedience and according to the late act of this present Parliament in yt behalfe made & provided was this present day [October 11] approved allowed of and also sworne before mee Richard Grills gentn. maior of this Borrough and one of ye Justices assigned." The St. Mary Magdalene's Register further contains an entry that the same Thomas Reese was, on November 9, "dulye chosen and sworn Register of St. Thomas by Mr. Leanerdt Trease." This was almost the last public duty performed by Launceston's then Recorder, for on March 19, 1654, "was buried Mr. Lenerd Trease Esqre in the Chancell" of St. Mary Magdalene's.

It was apparently not for two years after the passing of the Act that justices of the peace were the actual solemnisers of marriage in Launceston. The wedding entries from 1653 onwards to the last days of 1655 are in their customary form, and in the latter year the marriage of John Parker and Anne Glubb "both prisoners" is recorded as if such ill-promising matches were in no way out of the common. But after a marriage of November 27, 1655, and in a blank space left at the bottom of a page so that with a fresh order of things a new leaf might literally be turned, is written in a bold hand, "Hereafter follow marriages by Laymen, according to ye prophanes and giddynes of the times, without preecedent or example in any Christian Kingdom or Comonwealth from the Birth of Christ unto this very year 1655." The first of these marriages was celebrated on December 20, when there "were maried by Mr. Joseph Hull minister



of this towne in the presents of Mr. Thomas Gewen and John Lampon Esquire and Philippe Pearse gent. and maior of this towne and divers other witnesses Thomas Mill of the psh of St. Gennis and Joan Biam of the same psh having their bannes published Three severall lords dayes in the said psh as aforesaid by a Certificate from John Goutsoe Register of the said psh. The said parties afore said were married the same time also by Thomas Gewen Esqre and Justice of the Peace and pronounced by him to be man & wife according to the acte of pliment nowe in force." While the entries of subsequent marriages under this system are not so full, in each case it is stated that the banns were called "without contradiction."

In January, 1656, "Phillipp Pearse gentleman and Maior of this towne" again officiated, it being noted that the banns had been published "in the Congregation" (the last three words, however, being subsequently struck out), and in the March the banns appear to have been called by his orders "on three severall markett days," but Sundays are named in every other case. This mayor (who, as will subsequently be seen, was a thorn in the side of the Quakers during his holding of office) is specially recorded as having celebrated fifteen marriages, some of which were from Altarnun, Egloshayle, Treneglos, and other out parishes; and although in the April a wedding was marked as having been performed "by Rob: Bennett Esqr.," a pen was put through the name of the Colonel and that of the mayor was substituted. In October, John Hicks was chosen as the new mayor, and in his year of office he celebrated nine marriages, the banns of only one of which were proclaimed on market days, the others being on Sundays and, as is often mentioned, "in the Church of lanceston." In the next mayoralty, that of Nicholas Comins, who was appointed in October, 1657, seven weddings were celebrated by the chief magistrate, and in one of these again the banns were "published in the markett place of Lanceston Three severall markett days three weekes following without contradiction." In January, 1658, a couple were married by Comins, and "also by Mr. William Oliver Minister of this Towne"; and in the next month, for the first time after the new system had come into operation, we find the clergyman acting simultaneously with the justice, the mayor being

in this case assisted by "Thomas Seamor Minister of Luffingcott in Devon." The lay system then began gradually to disappear; on March 4, 1658, Colonel Bennett celebrated his only marriage, twelve days later a wedding is entered as having been performed "by Mr. Oliver" no layman being mentioned, and in the next month, when the bride was a "daughter of Nicholas Comins of this Towne gentn. deceased" (and the marriage must have followed hard upon his funeral), no celebrant is named. Richard Grylls, now for the second time elected as mayor, officiated at only one wedding, and Henry Bennett (not improbably a son of the Colonel), who became chief magistrate in October, 1659, is not mentioned as having celebrated any.

It was during this period that the South Petherwin Register was commenced. On June 16, 1656, before Colonel Bennett, "Robert Cowling chosen by the householders of this parish of South Petherwin to be their parish Register was approved and sworn," and on the same day the first entry of burial occurs, the first baptism being on August 5, and the first marriage on October 4 (the banns of this couple being noted to have been called on three previous Sundays).\* The minister of Launceston at the time, as has been mentioned in connection with the first of the lay marriages,† was Joseph Hull. If the table of St. Mary Magdalene's incumbents given on the fly-leaf of the Register were chronologically arranged (which it certainly is not) it would indicate that Hull succeeded Crompton in 1642,‡ but this is by no means certain, the record affording no clue to the holder of the living between Crompton's death and January 23, 1649, when was baptised "Rubin sonne of Joseph Hull Clarke." After this there are several entries concerning Hull's children; and, even if there were no other proof that this clergyman was an Independent, it might be guessed from the fact that one of these entries in 1654 is of birth and not of baptism, and that the original name of a son, born in 1651, was partially obliterated, and an insulting epithet substituted, by the same hand which after the Restoration played various tricks with the Puritan references in the Register. But the clearest proof is

\* As far as the entries in the Register show, there were no civil marriages at South Petherwin. † ante, p. 192. ‡ ante, p. 156.

afforded by the circumstance that on October 30, 1655, the Council of State approved "an augmentation of £50 certified by the Trustees for maintenance of Ministers to Jos. Hull, minister of Launceston, co. Cornwall."\* And on December 25 of the same year (for the Puritans rather prided themselves upon working on Christmas Day), a further sum of fifty pounds was granted by the Council on a similar recommendation for the maintenance of the Launceston minister, this it may be noted being the same amount as was given to Fowey and to Mylor, but ten pounds more than to Truro and twenty more than to either Bodmin or Padstow, while out of nineteen places assisted in Devon none had so high a grant.†

The chronicle of Launceston is curiously mingled with that of religious persecution, and a strange tale has now to be related of the sufferings in the borough of the founder of the Society of Friends. Sewel, in his "History of the People called Quakers," gives a narrative from which it appears that George Fox was arrested at St. Ives, with two of his companions, by a Major Ceely,‡ who, as justice of the peace, committed them "to the keeper of his highness's gaol at Launceston, or his lawful deputy in that behalf." The first impression of the inhabitants of the town evidently did not prepossess Fox, who describes them in his "Journal" as "dark and hardened." For nine weeks the Friends lay in prison awaiting trial, "and though many were greatly enraged against them, and expected that these prisoners, who thou'd and thee'd all, and did not put off their hats to any man, should at the assizes be condemned to be hanged if they did not pay that respect to the bench; yet there were many friendly people, out of several parts of the country, that came to visit them; [and] many were convinced of the truth of the doctrine held forth by them. At the time of the assizes, abundance of people came from far and near, to hear the trial of the Quakers; who being guarded by the souldiers and the sheriff's men to the court, had much ado to get through the multitude that filled the streets: besides the doors and windows were filled with people looking out upon them."

\* Domestic State Papers, 1655, p. 402.

† Ibid, 1655-56, p. 72.

‡ Or Seely, a Parliamentary Major, and afterwards Governor of St. Michael's Mount, who ten years previously had prematurely attempted an assault upon Launceston (ante, p. 180).

The trial resolved itself into a prolonged wrangle between the Chief Justice of England, Glyn, and the accused. Commanded to take off their hats, the prisoners refused, and Fox pleaded not only the Bible but English law to prove that no necessity existed for them to do so. The judge, exasperated at this, cried "Take him away, prevaricator! I'll ferk him," and the prisoners were accordingly "taken away, and put among the thieves. But presently after the judge called to the gaoler, 'Bring them up again.' This being done, 'Come,' said he, 'where had they hats from Moses to Daniel? Come, answer me; I have you fast now.' To this G. Fox replied, 'Thou mayest read in the third of Daniel, that the three children were cast into the fiery furnace, by Nebuchadnezzar's command, with their coats, their hose, and their hats on.' This plain instance stopped him; so that not having anything else to say, he cried again 'Take them away, gaoler.' Accordingly they were taken away, and being thrust among the thieves, they were kept there a great while," and at length, tired and almost spent, carried again to prison, a multitude of people following them, with whom they discoursed and reasoned at the gaol. In the afternoon they were had up again to the court, their guards having great trouble in getting them through the crowd, and the wrangle was renewed, beginning on the lawfulness of taking an oath, and ending with a demand from Fox, which the judge refused, that their commitment should be read. Fox thereupon asked one of his fellow-prisoners to read it, as he had a copy; but the judge tried his old remedy. "It shall not be read," he said; "gaoler, take him away; I will see whether he or I shall be master." For the third time Fox was removed, and for the third time he was recalled, when he managed once more to defeat the Chief Justice. "He still cried to have the mittinus read; and the people being eager to hear it, he bid his fellow-prisoner to read it up," which he did according to the copy already mentioned. Major Ceely, having signally broken down in his attempt to prove the charge of treason he had originally brought against the three Quakers, now accused Fox of having in the Castle Green struck him such a blow as he had never had in his life. Fox demanded corroborative evidence of a charge which evidently astounded him, but this was not forthcoming,

Ceely afterwards explaining that the "blow" was simply a rebuff in theological argument; yet the judge once more cried "Take him away, gaoler," "and fined the prisoners twenty marks a piece, for not putting of their hats, and to be kept in prison till they paid the fine: and so they were brought to gaol again."

Refusing to pay the gaoler seven shillings a week each for themselves and as much for their horses, "he grew so very wicked," says Sewel, "that he turned them into a nasty stinking place, where they used to put persons condemned for witchcraft and murder. This place was so noisome, that it was observed few who went into it, did ever come out again in health: . . . and the gaoler would not suffer them to cleanse it, nor let them have beds or straw to lie on . . . And all this could not satisfy the rage of this cruel gaoler, but he railed against them so hideously, and called them such horrible nicknames, that they never heard the like before . . . That this gaoler was so desperately wicked, is not so much to be wondered at, since (as they were informed) he had been a thief, and was on that account burnt both in the hand and on the shoulder; and the under gaoler in like manner: their wives had also been burnt in the hand. It was not at all strange then, that the Prisoners suffered most grievously from such a wicked crew; but it was more to be wondered at that Colonel Bennet, a Baptist teacher, having purchased the gaol and lands belonging to the Castle, had there placed this head gaoler. It was much talked of, that spirits haunted this dungeon and walked there, and that many had died in it; some thinking to terrify the prisoners therewith. But G. Fox told them, that . . . he feared no such thing; for Christ, their priest, would sanctify the walls of the house to them."

The suffering Quakers having petitioned the Quarter Sessions at Bodmin, the justices "gave order, that the door of Doomsdale (thus the dungeon was called)\* should be opened, and that they should have liberty to cleanse it, and to buy their meat in the town . . . They also sent up a relation of their sufferings to the protector; who

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\* Tradition has it that Doomsdale was situated at the eastern gate of the Castle, being an inner chamber of a part of the gateway, of which the outer portion is still to be seen; if this be so, Fox's quiet resting-place is now [1884] a stable in the occupation of Mr. Dingley.

thereupon sent down an order to the governor of Pendennis Castle, to examine the matter." About the same time one of Fox's friends "went to Oliver Cromwell, and offered himself body for body, to lie in Doomsdale prison in his stead, if he would take him, and let G. Fox go at liberty. But Cromwell said he could not do it, for it was contrary to law; and turning to those of his council, 'which of you,' quoth he, 'would do so much for me if I were in the same condition.'" Thus the Friends continued in prison, but not under such severe restrictions as previously. Quakers from all quarters of the kingdom came to Launceston to visit them; and though Fox tells us that "those parts of the West were very dark countries at that time," he and his companions now had liberty to walk in the Castle Green, where on Sundays they used to preach and hold disputations with professors of other forms of Christianity, "and a great convincement began in the country." Fox mentions that he was often in personal danger because of his preaching, and narrates how once a soldier drew his sword upon him, and how at another time his gaoler allowed into his cell a man who purposed to slay him with a knife.

The next year "the wicked gaoler received a recompense of his deeds; for he was turned out of his place, and for some wicked act was cast into gaol himself; and there his carriage was so unruly, that he was by the succeeding gaoler put into Doomsdale . . . and so died in prison." Retribution is not, however, recorded for the perjured Ceely nor for the then Mayor of Launceston,\* who "was a fierce persecutor, casting in prison all he could get; and he did not stick to search substantial grave women, for letters, as supposed." Fox, however, took a somewhat ingenious revenge upon him. "A young man having come to see us, who came not through the town," he says, "I drew up all the gross, inhuman, and unchristian acts of the Mayor (for his carriage was more like a heathen than a Christian), to him I gave it, and bid him seal it up, and go out again the back way; and then come into the town through the gates. He did so; and the watch took him up, and carried him before the mayor, who presently searched his pockets and found the letter, wherein he saw all his actions characterised. This shamed him so, that from



that time he meddled little with the servants of the Lord." It appears, however, that, even after this, the mayor conspired with the gaoler to detain, until it was too late to be of service, a cheese which the wife of one of the Quakers had sent for his use.

After remaining in gaol six months (for their commitment was dated January 18, 1656) the Friends were released on July 13, having been much comforted during their detention by the visits of many fellow-believers, one of whom, Anne Downes (who came from London to Launceston at Fox's special request, "to buy and dress their meat" and to assist them in other ways, "for she was a good writer, and could take things in short-hand") was the first woman Quaker who preached publicly in the metropolis. Fox left behind him in Launceston a "little remnant of Friends that had been raised up there while [he was] in prison," whom he visited when he returned to the town a very short time after his liberation. He twice more came into Cornwall—in 1659 and in 1663—but he does not appear to have again set foot in our town, though, on his last visit, when he was at Stoke, he held a large meeting which was attended, as he notes, by some Quakers of Launceston.

To this account, it may be added, still using Fox as our authority, that the imprisoned Friends were much grieved by the light-heartedness of the dwellers in Launceston. They protested, but fruitlessly, against Major-General Desborough (who had been sent down by Cromwell to offer them liberty if they would promise to go home and preach no more) playing at bowls in the Castle Green with the justices and others.\* Fox subsequently drew up an address "To the Bowlers in the Green," "to all you vain and idle-minded people, who are lovers of sports, pleasures, foolish exercises, and recreations, as you call them," warning them to consider of their ways and repent. Furthermore, observing while he was a prisoner, "how much," to use his own words, "the people (especially they who are called the gentry) were addicted to pleasures and vain recreations," he was

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\* Although bowling has died out of the list of Launceston amusements, Fox's warning did not prevent it from being practised for many years after his time. Tonkin notes in 1731 the bowling-green of Mr. Samuel Line; and the cemetery below the Walk (closed in 1881 by order of the Home Secretary) is spoken of by the older inhabitants even now as "The Bowling Green," that being the purpose for which the plot was originally used.

moved before he left the place to issue a solemn warning to them not to misspend their time.

The whole subject is of such interest that some further details, given by Edward Pyot, one of the sufferers, may be appended, taken from a pamphlet published the year after the occurrences, a portion of the title-page of which runs "The West answering to the North in the fierce and Cruell Persecution of the manifestation of the Son of God, As appears in the following short Relation Of the unheard of, and inhumane Sufferings of Geo. Fox, Edw. Pyot, and William Salt at Lancelston in the County of Cornwall, and Of Ben. Maynard, Iames Mires, Ios. Coale, Ia. Godfrey, Io. Ellice, and Anne Blacking, iu the same Gaole, Town, and County . . . Also A sober reasoning in the Law with Chief justice Glynne concerning his proceedings against Geo. Fox, E. Pyot, and W. Salt at Lancelston Assizes 25. of the 1. month 1656. in a Letter sent to him by the Prisoners."\* After setting forth the circumstances of the arrest, the pamphlet deals at much length with the charges brought against the prisoners, and proceeds to describe the scene at the Assizes, on the second day of which they were put forward, "multitudes of people being in and about the Court, and in the Town." A letter is then given, written to the judge by Pyot "from the Gaole in Lancelston the 4. day of the 5. month, 1656," protesting against the imprisonment, but the details of the trial itself are lightly passed over. The gaoler is stated to have been anxious that the prisoners should pay their fines forthwith, as they had been "a great curb to the prophane swearing, and drinking, and cursing, and blaspheming, and gaming, used by them who came to drink strong drink in his house, and to use vain pleasure in the prison green"; but finding they would not do so he treated them in the scandalous fashion described by Fox, and here detailed in terms too strong to admit of quotation. They were joined in prison by one Benjamin Maynard, "who for standing still in Lancelston Steeple-house, and speaking not a word, till violent hands were laid on him, and he haled near the dore, was committed" (by

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\* "London, Printed for Giles Calvert at the West end of Pauls, 1657": this is a pamphlet of 172 pages, the first 155 of which are mainly devoted to the Quakers' sufferings at Launceston.

Recorder Gewen it is stated in another place), and this sufferer "having put up a paper in the prison green against pleasures, the Gaoler . . . broke forth in great fury against them, and abuses, and by the haire of the head put Benjamin Maynard down into Domsdale, amongst the felons, reviling, and reproaching him, and the other prisoners exceedingly." On the evening, not long afterwards, when Fox and his friends were themselves thrust "into a low place in the prison called Domesdale," the gaoler let in upon them "some of his Consorts, viz. Degorie Pearse, Francis Oliver, and William Walsh, wicked and prophane men, to abuse them . . . of which [and of being beaten the same night by the gaoler] they complained to the Major [Mayor] of the Town, but he took no notice thereof"—the local chief magistrate, as a matter of fact, having no control over the prison, the gaoler being sufficiently audacious to threaten that "if the Mayor come there, he would put him by the heels." Subsequently "to Thomas Gewen Judge of the Court, was the Representation of the sufferings of the Prisoners by the Gaoler delivered, who grasping it in his hand, and wrumpling it, put it in his pocket, and said he would make Mum of it, and abused the Messenger with slighting language." Gewen was strongly prejudiced against the Quakers, and when a lame girl of the town, who was their servant, was accused before him of breaking into their prison, and Colonel Bennett pointed out the absurdity of the charge, he put aside the Colonel and gave his decision against the girl. It was no wonder that Pyot should exclaim, "In this kinde of persecution the town of Lancelton leads, T. Gewen aforesaid the Recorder thereof is of Counsell, Philip Page [Pearse] the Mayor begins the execution." As to the latter, one instance of his persecution will suffice: Salt, after his removal from Domsdale, was allowed out on bail, but, upon returning from a walk towards Polson Bridge, he was seized and searched by order of the Mayor, who "to the darke house committed him." When General Desborough came to Launceston (staying "at a large house in the Town"), he consulted with the Sheriff and the magistrates, and "his just and even carriage" changed the whole aspect of affairs; the gaoler was dismissed, the justices became civil, and the judges of assize gave the prisoners good usage, Desborough directing that they should be

immediately discharged upon condition that they repaired to their homes. After the General had left the town, Colonel Bennett had an interview with the Quakers, and finding they would give no promise "he friendly parted from them," and shortly afterwards freed them unconditionally. Salt and Coale (two of the Friends) were soon again in trouble for preaching, and were once more sent "from Constable to Constable to the cruell Gaole at Launceston." They were tried at the Quarter Sessions at Bodmin, where Bennett, perhaps tired of the Quakers and all their works, did his best to secure their conviction, and "they were remanded to Launceston Prisoners, being thus returned in the Kalendar: William Salt, and Joseph Coale, for refusing to behave themselves peaceably while they be in the Countrey." The relation, without telling us what was their fate, then winds up with a long exhortation to "Poor Colonel Bennet," who is told that all his struggles in favour of liberty had been hollow and unreal, and that he had better set his house in order while yet there was time.

Fox and his fellow-prisoners were not the only Friends whom Launceston Gaol received. Humphrey Lower, of Bodmin ("a grave, sober, old man," says Fox in his Journal, "who had been a justice of the peace,") visited them while in our prison, and became so convinced of the truth of their doctrines, that, in 1658, for not attending the national worship, and for refusing to enter into a bond to appear at the assizes, he was committed to Launceston, where he continued until the gaol-delivery, when he was discharged without trial. Two years later, after the Restoration, upon declining to take the oath of supremacy, he was again imprisoned at Launceston for a short period; but nothing served to break his spirit, and Fox mentions large and satisfactory meetings held at his house in 1663 and 1668, and says that he continued serviceable until his death, the date of which is not recorded. There was also Nicholas Jose, of whom Fox speaks as "an honest fisherman," who, becoming a Quaker in 1659, "was a great sufferer, both in loss of goods and imprisonment in Launceston Gaol, Pendennis Castle, and other places; indeed scarcely a year passed over without his being called on to suffer severely in some way or other for the testimony of a good conscience."\*

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\* George Fox, Journal, vol. i., p. 356.

Of Bennett and Gewen, both of whom were so prominent in connection with these Quaker persecutions, the time has come to speak more at length. Robert Bennett, Colonel in the Parliamentary service and staunch supporter of Cromwell, was the son of Richard Bennett, Counsellor-at-law, of Hexworthy, Lawhitton, and was born at that place in 1604. He was fifteen when his father died, and the earliest indication of his connection with public affairs is given by Clarendon,\* who names him as commander in the autumn of 1643 of twelve hundred foot and three hundred horse which attempted to surprise Colonel Digby at Torrington, but were defeated in the effort, the next hint of the side he adopted during the War being the tradition already noted,† to the effect that it was at his residence that Cromwell sojourned during his three days' stay in 1646 in the neighbourhood of Launceston. Bennett's thorough sympathy with the most advanced section of the Parliamentary party was shown in 1649, when at the Quarter Sessions at Truro he justified the trial of the King "by scripture, law, history, and reason"; and for his services to the cause he was appointed Governor of Pendennis Castle and St. Michael's Mount. In the next year, when the Duchy property was sold by order of the State (a Parliamentary survey of the whole having previously been taken), Bennett, in addition to other purchases of messuages and manors, bought "the honor with the appurtenances and sundry other premises and fee farm rents" of Launceston Castle, together with the deer-park, and "the reliefs payable by the tenants of sundry lands of the Castle of Knight's service,"‡ this being, by the way, not the first time that premises had changed hands in Launceston because of a revolutionary effort, certain rents and tenements in the town having been seized by Henry the Eighth in 1539 upon the attainder and execution of the Marquis of Exeter as a supporter of Cardinal Pole.§ This purchase by Bennett was pointedly referred to by both Fox|| and Pyot,\*\* each expressing surprise that one who professed Christianity (and Bennett appears to have been a strict Baptist) should have kept in office such a wicked gaoler as he under whose rule they suffered so much.

\* History of the Rebellion, vii., 194. † ante, p. 185. ‡ Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 218. § Ibid, p. 261. || ante, p. 197. \*\* The West Answering to the North, p. 38.



In the same year as that in which he became possessed of Launceston Castle, Bennett was authorised by Parliament to raise a force of a thousand foot in Devon and Cornwall, and the financial difficulties consequent upon this and other military matters caused frequent correspondence between the Colonel and the Council of State, one of his letters, dated from Hexworthy in January, 1651,\* being preserved at the Record Office. On April 29, 1653, when there was appointed a temporary Council of State, Bennett was one of the thirteen of whom it was constituted, among his colleagues being Cromwell and Desborough.† Two months later, when the "Barebones Parliament" was named by Cromwell himself, Bennett was nominated one of the four members for Cornwall,‡ and was about the same time placed upon a more regularly constituted Council of State§; but in the December, upon the "Barebones Parliament" yielding up its powers to Cromwell, the Colonel was not included in the new Council.|| In the next year another Parliament was called, in the summoning of which Cromwell anticipated the Reform Act of 1832 by disfranchising most of the smaller boroughs (including Newport), by taking away one member from Launceston, and by giving representatives to Leeds and Manchester.\*\* To that House, Bennett (who is described in the return as an alderman of Launceston) was elected for our borough,†† but he had no seat in Cromwell's last Parliament, summoned to meet in September, 1656, and dissolved in February, 1658.‡‡

When Richard Cromwell's Parliament was called in January, 1659, however, and the old system of representation was returned to,

\* Domestic State Papers, 1651, p. 25; see also the same for 1649-50, 1651-52, and other years during the Commonwealth. † Ibid, 1652-53, p. xxiv; David Masson, *Life of John Milton*, vol. iv., p. 498. ‡ Parliamentary History, vol. iii., p. 1407. § July 9, 1653: Commons Journals, vol. vii., p. 283. Out of 242 meetings of the Sixth Council, Bennett was present at only 74, a lower total than that of any other of the thirteen members originally appointed; in August and September out of 75 meetings he attended none, and was at only eight meetings of the 32 in October, the last month of his holding office. (See Domestic State Papers, 1652-53, p. xxiv and foll.) These figures may not improbably account for his not being reappointed. || Parliamentary History, vol. iii., p. 1416. \*\* Ibid, pp. 1418-19; it is of interest to note that while Cromwell allowed twelve members to Cornwall (eight for the county and one each for Launceston, Truro, Penryn, and Looe), the Reform Act of 1832 allowed fourteen, and that of 1867 thirteen, as against forty-three in older days. †† According to the Official List he was returned for Looe on July 12, 1654, as well as for Launceston on July 6, while, according to the Parliamentary History (vol. iii., p. 1428), he was elected for Launceston alone. ‡‡ The Official List places "no returns found" against the county of Cornwall; but Bennett is not named as a member of this House in the list given in the Parliamentary History (vol. iii., p. 1479), or in "A Perfect List of the Names of the Several Persons returned to serve in this Parliament 1656," published in London in that year, and a copy of which is now in the Grenville Library.



Bennett was chosen with Gewen for Launceston, while for Newport, now for several years unrepresented, were elected William Morice and Sir John Grenville.\* In the discussions in February, 1659, upon the Bill to recognize Richard Cromwell as Protector, Bennett twice took part, on the first occasion urging caution as to how they proceeded,† and on the second advising, under the existing circumstances, the appointment of a Protector supported by two Houses.‡ In a subsequent debate he advocated a House of Lords with certain reservations§; and though, in a later one still, he expressed the opinion that “hereditary legislature has been destructive to the people of the nation,” he was sufficient of a practical politician to add “I am for a government with defects rather than for none at all.”|| Our last glimpse of Bennett in this Parliament is in connection with his having, contrary to rule, left the assembly during a debate, but upon his pleading that he had only gone out for “the despatch of some private and particular affairs of his own, which required some haste,” the Commons “rested satisfied.”\*\* Four days after this the House was dissolved at the bidding of the army officers, and of the “Rump,” formed of the remnant of those who had continued to sit after the execution of the King, Bennett was one,†† he having in 1651 been returned to the Long Parliament for West Looe.‡‡ In the political strife which followed the resignation of Richard Cromwell, Bennett appears to have been a partisan of Fleetwood,§§ but he was not elected to the Convention which restored Charles the Second; and, deprived of his constableness of Launceston Castle by the victorious Royalists, he retired to his seat at Hexworthy, where he died, and was buried in Lawhitton Church, on July 6, 1683, in his seventy-ninth year.

Thomas Gewen, of Bradridge, in the parish of Boyton, was as sturdy a Presbyterian as Robert Bennett was an Anabaptist. At a much earlier date than that at which the latter came into public notice, the former was an auditor to the Duchy of Cornwall.||| of which

\* Official List of Members, vol. i., p. 507, (no members are here given, however, for Newport); Parliamentary History, vol. iii., p. 1531. † Feb. 8, 1659: Diary of Thomas Burton, vol. iii., p. 138. ‡ Feb. 14: Ibid, p. 265. § Feb. 19: Ibid, p. 359. || March 5: Ibid, vol. iv., p. 29. \*\* April 18: Ibid, p. 449. †† Parliamentary History, vol. iii., p. 1547; as this was not a new Parliament the Official List contains no record of its members. ‡‡ Oct. 28, 1651: Commons Journals, vol. vii., p. 31. §§ Jan. 24, 1660: Ibid, p. 829. ||| Domestic State Papers, 1628-29, pp. 7 and 575; there are entries referring to him (in the former as “Gowen?”) under date March 5, 1628, and June 12, 1629.

office he was deprived before the outbreak of the Civil War.\* The reason for this may have been his taking sides against the Court in the political disputes then raging, for when the Rebellion came to a head he was appointed by the Parliament to be a member of the Cornwall Committee which had to see to the speedy raising of money "by taxing such as have not at all contributed or lent or not according to their estates and abilities."† Our next glimpse of Gewen is in June, 1644, when the Commons "referred to the Committee at Plymouth to examine the Business concerning Mr. Thomas Gewen of Plymouth,"‡ and in January, 1647, he was elected member for Launceston. In the July, when by the action of the army eleven of the more prominent Presbyterian members were excluded from the House, and the citizens of London, headed by their Common Councilmen, reinstated them, Gewen "spake modestly in their behalf."§ He had not, however, as he was told by the next who addressed the House, spoken so modestly at a meeting of the Common Council, for, though in Parliament he denied any intent on the part of the City to raise a new war, he had advised the Councilmen to "Up and be doing." After this, Gewen was in frequent encounter with the military party, who did their best to rid themselves of such a determined opponent,|| and he was one of those excluded by "Pride's Purge."\*\*

Gwen's strong self-will is noted by Pyot, who, when referring to him as the chief Launceston persecutor of the Quakers, observes "This is he (as is said) that was one of the secluded Members of the long Parliament, who after the Kings death being asked, in whose name the Orders of Court should pass, answered in the name of T. Gwen Esquire Recorder of Lanceton, when as the Act of Parliament said, In the name of the Keepers of the Liberties of England, who in disdain and scorn asked who they were, Who in the last Parliament, was very zealous for a King and a House of Lords."†† These

\* This is to be gathered from the Thirty-ninth Report of the Deputy Keeper (Appendix, p. 456), in an account of a suit of October 13, 1637. † "An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons for the speedy raising of Money. Printed May 11, 1643"; the list of the Cornwall Committee (in which Gewen is called "Thewen") is on p. 3. ‡ June 1, 1644: Commons Journals, vol. iii., p. 514. § Parliamentary History, vol. iii., p. 907; the account is stated to have been supplied by a member. || Commons Journals, vol. v., pp. 259, 296, 366, &c. \*\* Ibid, p. 1248; Somers' Tracts, vol. vi., p. 38: in the list given in the latter Gewen stands second and Prynne fourteenth of the twenty Cornish members excluded, only four members for Cornwall being left in the House. †† The

concluding words, published as they were in 1657, show that Gewen (who was naturally not selected by Cromwell to be in the "Barebones Parliament," but who was chosen one of the eight representatives for Cornwall in 1654 and member for Launceston in 1656) had advocated a Cromwellian monarchy and a House of Lords at an earlier date than that at which any other record appears of the fact. On the day of the opening of the Parliament of 1654, the Commons being in a difficulty because they had been summoned on a Sunday, and not feeling certain whether it was lawful even to adjourn on that day, Gewen had stopped the profitless discussion, and, "standing in his place, and, by general consent of the House, pronounced the adjournment."\* He next figures as a petitioner to the Commons,† and in 1658, when member for Launceston, he moved "for a convocation, or assembly of divines, which was in all former Parliaments"—his object being to revive the Presbyterian system which at the beginning of the Rebellion had been so powerful; but "this motion stood a long time still," and after discussion it was agreed to waive it for the present ‡ A few days later, he was again on his legs, defending from a charge of corruption the party to which he had belonged in the "Long Parliament," and denouncing the accuser as "a thorough paced Republican."§ The next week he proved how entirely he meant the taunt by moving "That now we are a free Parliament, we would draw up a Bill to invest His Highness in the title and dignity of King, Providence having cast it upon him"; || but the proposal (which was similar to one carried twelve months before and put aside by the Protector) came to naught, for the very next day Cromwell, weary of the continual talk of the House, dissolved the Commons. In Richard Cromwell's Parliament, Gewen, who again sat for Launceston, affirmed that his "opinion always was, and is, that a well-regulated monarchy is best."\*\* About the same time he argued that the old peerage should have restored to it its legislative functions, pointing out that unless this were done the Lords might be induced to "bring

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\* Sept. 3, 1654: Commons Journals, vol. vii., p. 365; Burton's Diary, Introduction, p. xviii. † November 2, 1654: Commons Journals, vol. vii., pp. 380-1. ‡ Jan. 21, 1658: Burton's Diary, vol. ii., p. 333. § Jan. 29: Ibid., p. 392. || Feb. 3: p. 424. There is, by the way, no record of such a motion either in the Parliamentary History or the Commons Journals. \*\* Feb. 9, 1659: Burton's Diary, vol. iii., p. 180.

in Charles Stuart"; \* and in a subsequent debate he reaffirmed the right of the original peers as a matter of strict law, winding up by exclaiming, "I know my twenty-four letters as well as the learnedst man."† Later he protested vigorously against members for Scotland and Ireland being allowed to sit in an English Parliament: "it is not for the honour of the English nation," he said on the first occasion, "to have foreigners to come and have a power in the legislature"; ‡ "it were better both for England and Ireland that they had Parliaments of their own," was his utterance on the second.§ He made one more speech in that House, this time in defence of the liberties of the subject, declaring he "would not have men sold like bullocks and horses,"|| and then came dissolution. He was too firm an opponent of the army to be a member of the "Rump," but when the Convention was chosen in the spring of 1660 he was returned once more for Launceston, and without doubt as a supporter of the Restoration. By the Act of Oblivion he was replaced in his offices under the Duchy,\*\* but he did not long enjoy the privilege, for he died in the autumn after the King's return, and his posts were given to Sir William Morice.††

It has been noted‡‡ that to Richard Cromwell's Parliament William Morice, of Werrington, was returned for Newport. He had previously sat in the House, having been elected for Devon in August, 1648,§§ and he was one of those excluded in "Pride's Purge"|||; to the Parliament of 1656 he was again chosen for Devon,\*\*\* and soon showed himself in opposition to the Cromwellian party which endeavoured to exclude him.††† Clarendon describes him as "a Devonshire gentleman, of a fair estate and reputation, a person of a retired life, which he spent in study, being learned and of good parts, and [he] had always been looked upon as a man far from any malice towards the King, if he had not good affection for him, which they who knew him best

\* Feb. 28; *Ibid.*, p. 529. † March 5; *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 22; it is hardly necessary to point out that "the learnedst man" would now need to know twenty-six letters.  
‡ March 11; *Ibid.*, p. 130. § March 23; *Ibid.*, p. 249. March 30; *Ibid.*, p. 304.

\*\* It is so stated in a petition to Charles II., summarised in *Domestic State Papers*, 1660-61, p. 365. †† December, 1660; *Ibid.*, p. 433. ‡‡ *ante*, p. 205. §§ *Official List*, vol. i., p. 487. || According to *Somers' Tracts*, vol. vi., p. 38 (being there placed first on the list of fifteen Devonshire members excluded), but his name does not occur in the list given in the *Parliamentary History*, vol. iii., p. 1248. \*\*\* *A Perfect List* [1656]. ††† *Parliamentary History*, vol. iii., pp. 1486-87.

believed him to have in a good measure.”\* He had control of Monk’s Devonshire estate, and he informed the General that in the West “the King’s restoration was so impatiently longed for, that they had made choice [for the Convention, to which he was returned for Newport with Sir Francis Drake] of no members to serve for Cornwall or Devonshire, but such who they were confident would contribute all they could to invite the King to return.”† His colleague in the negotiations with Monk was his fellow-member for Newport in 1659—John Grenville, eldest son of Beville, and afterwards Earl of Bath. Upon the death of his father at Lansdowne, and before he was sixteen, Sir John had put himself at the head of a Cavalier regiment, and in 1644 he was wounded at the second battle of Newbury. He remained faithful to the royal cause through all its vicissitudes; and in 1660, having become known to Monk through bestowing the living of Kilkhampton upon the General’s brother, he was the principal intermediary between Monk and Charles during the negotiations which led to the latter’s restoration.‡ For their services Grenville was thanked by the House of Commons and created Earl of Bath, and Morice was made a baronet and one of the two Secretaries of State.

The elections to the Convention Parliament produced a dispute as far as Launceston was concerned. It was reported to the House of Commons that Thomas Gewen and Edward Elliot had been returned “by the proper officer,”§ and they were, therefore, allowed to sit until another certificate, bearing the name of Sir John Clobery, had been examined. In the result, Clobery was seated instead of Elliot,|| and having also been elected for Hedon (Yorkshire) he chose to represent Launceston.\*\* Morice also had been doubly returned for Newport and Plymouth, and, on his deciding to sit for the latter, a new writ was issued for the former,†† Lawrence Hyde being selected to succeed him.‡‡ In the spring of 1661, when a Parliament was called which lasted eighteen years, Richard Edgeumbe, of Cothele, and Sir Charles Harbord, the Surveyor-General, were sent up for Launceston, and Sir Francis Drake and John Speecott, of Penheale, for Newport.

\* History of the Rebellion, xvi., 162. † Ibid, 164. ‡ Biographia Britannica, vol. iv., pp. 2317-2342. A full account of these transactions is given by Clarendon, xvi., 162 and foll. § May 5, 1660: Commons Journals, vol. viii., p. 13. ¶ June 29: Ibid, p. 77.

\*\* July 6: Ibid, p. 82. †† July 12: Ibid, p. 88. ‡‡ Aug. 29: Official List, vol. i., p. 512.

Harbord, who had been chosen also for Hindon (Wilts) and who elected to remain member for Launceston during this "Pension Parliament,"\* is described in a publication of the time, attributed to Andrew Marvell, as "first a poor Solicitor, now His Majesty's Surveyor-General, and a Commissioner for the sale of the Fee-farm Rents,"† and in another pamphlet (for discovering the author of which a reward of two hundred pounds was offered by proclamation) he is said to have "got £100,000 of the King and Kingdom," and to have been "formerly a solicitor of Staple's Inn, till his lewdness and poverty brought him to court." Edgeumbe was attacked in the former work because he had married a daughter of the Earl of Sandwich, one of the chief promoters of the Restoration, but both members for Newport were left alone. Drake, however, deserves mention here, for it was he who founded Werrington Park, having been granted on April 10, 1631, a licence under the privy seal "to impark lands in the parishes of Warrington (*sic*) and St. Stephens, near Launceston, with grant of free warren therein, &c."‡ Sir Francis, according to Sir William Pole,§ "here built himself a faire house," and a stone was still to be seen at Ham Mill|| some years ago bearing the inscription "A.D. 1641, Francis Drake." The then owner of Werrington sided with the Parliament during the Civil War, being one of the Devon Committee in 1643 for the raising of money,\*\* and it is stated by Gilbert†† that he had his lands confiscated by Charles the First, and that these were given to Sir Richard Grenville, being restored to Drake only on the overthrow of the monarchy. To say the least, this is exceedingly doubtful, but it seems probable that the story of Prince‡‡ that Drake sold Werrington to William Morice about 1650 may be true. By his ownership of that property, however, and his subsequent election for Newport he established the connection between the "Werrington influence" and our parliamentary borough which has only recently disappeared; and, as nephew of the great circumnavigator, he added another link to the chain binding Launceston to some of the most notable of the Elizabethan heroes of the sea, for

\* May 11, 1661: Commons Journals, vol. viii., p. 246. † *Flagellum Parliamentarium*, p. 4. ‡ Forty-third Report of the Deputy Keeper. § Quoted by N. H. P. Lawrence in *Werrington and its Possessors*. || *ante*, p. 16. \*\* "An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons," p. 3. †† *History of Cornwall*, p. 521. ‡‡ *Worthies of Devon*.



Sir Richard Grenville, as has been observed,\* had been one of his predecessors in the representation of Newport, and Sir John Hawkins, now perhaps chiefly remembered as the founder of the Virginian slave-trade, was grandson of John Hawkins, of Tavistock, who married a daughter of one William Amydas, of Launceston.†

In the autumn of 1660, the Convention adopted a measure which indirectly affected our town, in that it abolished the claims of the Crown to reliefs and wardship, and did away with knight-service. The latest record we have of an actual suit in wardship, touching "lands in Cornwall, held by knight's service, as of his Majesty's castle of Launceston," was in October, 1640, not long before the outbreak of the Rebellion.‡ The "profits of the reliefs of the manors of Trematon and Launceston" appear to have been given about this period to Walter Langdon,§ a zealot in the Royalist cause, but he complained in 1663 to Charles the Second that "the wars and then the taking away of the Court of Wards deprived him thereof."|| Bennett, when he purchased the Castle from the Parliament,\*\* became its constable, and was succeeded in that office, at some time unrecorded, by Thomas Rosse, of whom all that we know is that in April, 1661, Launceston Park was demised to him for thirty-one years at an annual rent of ten pounds,†† and that on the following July 19 there was made a "grant to Philip Piper, on surrender of Thos. Rosse, of the office of Constable of Launceston Castle."‡‡ This grant could only have been given in recognition of the services of Philip Pyper's father, Sir Hugh,§§ for Philip himself (who afterwards became an alderman of the borough and died in the spring of 1678) was only some fifteen years of age when it was made.||||

The Castle, when Philip Pyper became its constable, was practically in ruins. In the Wars it had suffered grievously, not so much from assault as from the manner in which it had been treated by those who were supposed to be its defenders\*\*\*; and the parliamentary survey of 1650††† described it as being much out of repair, the hall and chapel

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\* ante, p. 97. † Prince, *Worthies of Devon*, p. 472. ‡ Domestic State Papers, 1640, p. 217. § ante, p. 138. || Dec. 9, 1663: Domestic State Papers, 1663-64, p. 368. \*\* ante, p. 203. †† Domestic State Papers, 1660-61, p. 578. ‡‡ Ibid, 1661-62, p. 40. §§ ante, p. 175. ||| According to his memorial in St. Mary Magdalene's. \*\*\* ante p. 182. ††† Referred to in Cole's MS. extracts from the Duchy Records, p. 208.

being level with the ground, and only one old tower, then a prison, in reasonable repair. It remained, however, even after this as a military centre. In 1653, there was born in Launceston the daughter of "a trumpeter," this being the first time a soldier had been mentioned in the Register for some years, while there were buried "Major Halfys in the Chancell" in 1657, and "William Homes Late of London a souldier under the comand of Captaine Engelsby," and "William Baylye of the psh of Oarton in Northampton sheere A Trooper under the comand of Captaine Rogers" in 1658, these being the last soldiers named. And as the Castle and the prison were so closely linked, it may here be noted that "Hugh Wooger The old Executioner" was interred in our church on March 26, 1660.

The year 1662 is one worthy especial remembrance in the history of Launceston, and according to a publication of the time it was memorable not only locally but throughout the country. In this pamphlet, which is a description of "*Mirabilis Annus Secundus; or The Second Year of Prodigies*," we have "A true and impartiall Collection of many strange Signes and Apparitions, which have this last Year been seen in the Heavens, and in the Earth, and in the Waters." Among the many wonders "now Published as a Warning to all Men speedily to Repent, and to prepare to meet the Lord, who gives us these Signs of his Coming," there were some from Launceston. One of these came under the heading "Prodigies in the Heavens," and the account relates that "upon the 16th of February 1661 [1662, N.S.], being the Lord's day, and two dayes before the great Wind, there was seen over St. Stephens near Lancelton in Cornwal, a great Blazing-Star, with a Bow, and an Arrow, and a Dart coming out of it"; while "much about the same time, in an evening, were seen over Lancelton in Cornwal, Two Moons, by some persons of considerable quality and credit in that place, who have testified the truth of it" (the St. Stephens star, by the way, having been "seen by above Twenty credible persons, inhabitants of the said place, who do confirm the truth of the Relation to all that make enquiry after it.") Nor did Launceston come behind with "Prodigies in the Earth," for it was here that "an Ewe brought forth a Lamb which had one head and two bodies, and eight legs"; and "much about the same time

also, a Woman of St. Ginnis, six miles from Launceston . . . was delivered of four Children at a Birth, viz. three sons, and one daughter, who dyed presently; but the three sons lived to be baptized, and were named Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; but they are all three since dead," the truth of the former prodigy being guaranteed to "appear to any who have opportunity to enquire after it," and the account of the second having been "received from a person of eminency and honesty, who lives near the place, and hath assured us of the truth of the whole Relation."

But it was not only in such matters as these that 1662, as far as Launceston was concerned, is worth remembering, for it was now that the town contributed another victim to religious persecution. We have had Protestant persecuted by Catholic, Catholic by Protestant, and Quaker by Puritan, and now we have Puritan by Episcopalian. In 1662, the Act of Uniformity enforced the use of the Prayer Book, and the Prayer Book only, in all public worship, an unfeigned consent and assent being demanded from every minister of the Church to all which it contained; and, on St. Bartholomew's Day, the last day allowed for compliance with its requirements, nearly two thousand rectors and vicars, or about one-fifth of the English clergy, were driven from their parishes as Nonconformists, one of this number being William Oliver, pastor of St. Mary Magdalene's. The name first occurs in the Launceston Registers in connection with a marriage of February 3, 1648, between "William Olliver and Alice Middleton," but it is improbable that the bridegroom was the same as he of whom we are now speaking, as the ejected clergyman, who was born at the end of 1627, did not matriculate until December 3, 1648.\* He was admitted chaplain of Exeter College by order of the Visitors in January, 1651, a position which he resigned in October, 1653; and on November 23, 1655, when he received his degree of Master of Arts, he was described as "formerly of this and of the other University, now a minister of the Gospel in the remoter parts of this nation." Launceston, however, could not have been these "remoter parts," since Joseph Hull is mentioned as having officiated at a marriage a

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\* Boase, Exeter College, p. 70.

month later than this date.\* When Hull died is unrecorded, but the first mention of Oliver as "Minister of this Towne" is in connection with a wedding of January 5, 1658.† In September of the same year, when the birth and baptism of his daughter Honor were separately entered, some words were written after his name, probably describing his pastoral position, which were afterwards completely scratched out; but the same process (which was very frequently employed in Restoration days upon the entries of this period) was not so successful in the entry of baptism of Oliver's son William in July of the next year, for, despite the combined efforts of knife and pen, "pastor of the Church of this [town]" is still to be distinguished as having been written after the minister's name. According to Baxter,‡ Oliver's father, "who was a Gentleman of this County, gave him a liberal Education. He was a Critick in the Latin and Greek Tongues . . . He was a good Scholar and an excellent Preacher; for which he was much valu'd by the Gentry of Cornwall and Devon. Mr. Secretary Morice had a great esteem for him, and gave him a Yearly Pension for the support of his Family, after he was Silenc'd."§ In a later edition of the same work,|| it was added that Oliver "kept a School in this Town, bred many good Scholars, and died a Lay-Conformist." It was while head-master of the Launceston Grammar School that another son was born to the ejected minister,\*\* but the spirit of religious faction was so strong that even now, eighteen months after his expulsion, the word "Clarke" originally appended in the Register to the father's name was elaborately struck out. Oliver made his peace, however, with the dominant Church before his death on July 6, 1681, and a eulogistic Latin inscription on his memorial stone in St. Mary Magdalene's graciously allows him to have once held the office of pastor.

\* ante, p. 192. † ante, p. 193. It may be noted that on May 20, 1658, "was Buried Deborah Oliver the daughter of Samuell Oliver gent., And Pastor of Wells in Somerset."

‡ Edward Calamy, *An Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's History of his Life and Times* [1713], vol. ii., p. 147. § Morice is described by Green (*Short History*, p. 605) as "a steady Presbyterian." It is recorded by Baxter (vol. ii., pp. 240-1) that "Mr. Morice . . . wrote for a promiscuous Admission to the Lord's Table; in Answer to it, Mr. Sanders [incumbent of Holsworthy] wrote an Antiaditribe, or an Apology for Administering the Lord's Supper to a select company only, 8vo, 1655."

|| *A Continuation of the Account* [1727], vol. i., p. 212. See also Samuel Palmer, *The Nonconformist's Memorial* (based on Calamy) [1777], vol. i., p. 280. In both these later editions it is asserted that Oliver's Christian name was John and not William as correctly stated in the original work. \*\* Baptised, April 29, 1664.

The Minister of St. Mary Magdalene's was one of some thirty-nine or forty ejected in Cornwall under the Act of Uniformity, of whom only six conformed after having been silenced.\* But this clean sweep of the Puritans did not suffice to satisfy the more intolerant among those opposed to them, as is evidenced by a letter of the gentlemen of Cornwall, addressed from Launceston to the Earl of Bath on February 7, 1663, which stated that "the King's late clemency has wrought so little on disingenuous spirits that the same destructive principles are lodged within, and will appear if their counsels ripen"; and these zealous defenders of Church and State wound up by asking "whether those who live under the protection of law should not give assurance of loyalty by conforming thereto."† In the same year it was reported to London that seven Quakers had been apprehended in Somersetshire and had been sent thence to Launceston Gaol ‡; and there was "Written in Bridewel,§ near Lanston, in Cornwall, the 11th Moneth. 1664," a violently-entitled pamphlet directed against the Church of Rome, the work of a suffering Quaker named Josiah Coale, who is not, however, to be confounded with the Joseph Coale imprisoned at Launceston nine or ten years before.||

Concerning one of the Cornish sufferers under the Act of Uniformity, something in the shape of a miracle was performed. Joseph Sherwood, incumbent of St. Hilary, continued after his expulsion to preach at St. Ives, and for one of his sermons was committed, by a local justice named Robinson, to Launceston Gaol. Upon hearing the decision, "Mr. S., looking him full in the face, said 'Sir, if you die the common death of all men, God never spake by me.' He was then committed to gaol; where he gained so much respect that he was permitted to walk about the town. It was not many days after this transaction, that Mr. Robinson walking in the fields, was met near a gate by a bull, that had been remarkably tame. His maid who had been milking the cows, was then standing before her master.

\* Calamy, Abridgment, vol. ii., pp. 136-50. † Domestic State Papers, 1663-64, p. 57.

‡ Nov. 9, 1663; Ibid, p. 333. § This is the first mention of a Launceston Bridewel; it was placed next the Workhouse in the old Exeter-road, and, having in the later years of its existence been mainly devoted to the punishment of refractory paupers, was abolished when the new Poor Law came into operation. || ante, p. 200. Joseph Coale, who died in Reading Gaol in 1670, is believed to have been about 19 when he suffered at Launceston; Josiah Coale, who died in 1668, was about 32 when in our prison.

The bull pushed her gently aside with his horns, and running upon the magistrate, he instantly tore out his bowels.”\* In another version of the story, given in the same work from which the foregoing has been extracted, it is stated that it was while Robinson was on his way for a warrant to send to Launceston Gaol another expelled clergyman, Mr. Tregosse, of Mylor, that this judgment fell upon him.

The chronicle of a town of such antiquity could scarcely be considered complete without a ghost-story, and though that with which Launceston was in some way connected was not of an astoundingly remarkable character, it was fortunate, at least, in its historian, who was none other than the author of “The Remarkable Apparition of Mrs. Veal,” Daniel Defoe. The latest biographer of the writer of “Robinson Crusoe” gives a description both of the ghost and the publication concerning it which may well be quoted. “On the 18th of June, in the same year [1720] there was published a pamphlet of two and a half sheets, entitled ‘Mr. Campbell’s Pacquet, for the Entertainment of Gentlemen and Ladies. Containing . . . an account of a most surprising Apparition sent from Launceston, in Cornwall, Attested by the Rev. Mr. Ruddle, Minister there.’ I have only now to do with the third section of this pamphlet, which occupies from pages 20 to 33 inclusive, and is headed ‘A Remarkable Passage of an Apparition, 1665.’ There can be no more doubt that this was written by Defoe than that he wrote the Apparition of Mrs. Veal . . . The professed relator, Mr. Ruddle, a young clergyman, kept a school in Launceston, and some of his scholars died of a disease that happened in the town. Among them was John Elliott, the eldest son of Edward Elliott, of Treberse, Esq.\* At the youth’s request Mr. Ruddle preached a sermon at the Funeral, ‘which happened on the 20th day of June, 1665.’ An Ancient Gentleman in the Church was much affected by the discourse, having a son who, a few months before, had a character like that given of young Elliott; but had changed greatly to the affliction of his parents. The old man afterwards addressed Mr. Ruddle, and impertuned him to visit him at his House. There seems to have been

\* Calamy’s Baxter, A Continuation of the Account, p. 213, the story being stated to be “from a good Hand.” † Third son of Sir John Eliot; he was born in 1619,

and was elected member for Launceston in the Convention of 1660, but the return was rejected by the Commons (ante, p. 209).



considerable difficulty in fixing a day convenient to all parties ; but at last, on arriving, he found there a Brother of the Coat, a neighbouring Minister, and as soon as an opportunity occurred after dinner, the two clergymen went into the Garden, where Mr. Ruddle learnt that this poor Boy had grown melancholy from being, as he stated, haunted with a Ghost. After several conferences with the parents, it was agreed that Mr. Ruddle should talk with the boy alone, before giving his advice. ‘He told me,’ Mr. Ruddle says, ‘with all naked freedom, and a Flood of Tears, that his Friends were unkind and unjust to him, neither to believe nor pity him, and that if any Man (making a bow to me) would but goe with him to the Place, he might be convine’d that the Thing was real,’ etc. ‘This Woman which appears to me (saith he) lived a Neighbour here to my Father ; and dyed about eight years since, her name Dorothy Dingley, of such a Stature, such Age, and such a Complexion.’ She met ‘him on his way to and from School, morning and evening, in a Field called the Higher Broom Quartils.’ He began to be much alarmed and says ‘Then I changed my Way, and went to School the under Horse-Road, and then she always met me in the Narrow Lane, between the Quarry Parke and the Nursery, which was worse.’ He goes on to describe his growing horrors : ‘Night and Day, Sleeping and Waking, the Shape was ever running in my Mind, and I often did repeat these Peaces of Scripture (with that he takes a small Bible out of his Pocket), Job 7, 14—Thou scarest me with Dreams, and terrifiest me through Visions ;—and Deut. 28, 67—In the Morning thou shalt say, would God it were Evening,’ &c., &c. At last his misery became unsupportable, and he told his Brother William, who acquainted their Parents. Mr. Ruddle, by arrangement, went next morning with Master Sam to see the Spectrum. He says, ‘The Field he led me to, I guessed to be about twenty acres, in an open Country, and about three Furlongs from any House.’ Both saw the Ghost, but had no communication with it then, and Mr. Ruddle was compelled to return to Launceston the same evening. He could not go again in consequence of his wife being taken ill, until three weeks afterward, but he says, ‘I studied the Case, resolving by the help of God to see the utmost.’ After several visits to the Field, generally alone, all of

which are described in the most circumstantial manner, he persisted on Thursday, the 28th of July, 1665, in speaking to it 'until it spake again, and gave me Satisfaction. But the Work could not be finish'd at this time; wherefore the same Evening, an Hour after Sun-set, it met me again near the same Place, and after a few Words on each side it quietly vanished, and neither doth appear since, nor ever will more, to any man's disturbance. The Discourse in the Morning lasted about a quarter of an Hour.' He then solemnly affirms the truth of his narrative, answers the arguments urged by the incredulous, and fortifies himself in a Postscript, by referring to the ancient Fathers of the Church, and quoting from St. Cyprian, and Pamelius's notes on Tertullian. It is observable that he artfully conceals every word of his discourse with the Ghost, intending no doubt to leave that to the individual imagination of the reader, but assigning as his reason, 'I being a Clergyman, and young, and a stranger in these Parts,\* do apprehend silence and secrecy to be my best security. In rebus abstrusissimus abundans cautela non nocet.' The Account is subscribed with the date, September 4th, 1665."†

The apparition thus described has always locally been known as "The Trebursye Ghost," but some latter-day narrators have placed it much farther down in the county than the immediate neighbourhood of Launceston. According to Drew,‡ the Rev. John Ruddle showed his powers of exorcism "in a field about half a mile from Botaden or Botathen," in the parish of Little Petherick, between St. Columb and Padstow; and the Rev. R. S. Hawker, of Morwenstow, in his "Footprints of Former Men in Far Cornwall,"§ adopts this view in his narrative of "The Botathen Ghost." The Little Petherick theory, however, does not at all fit in with the earliest printed relation—that of Defoe—Little Petherick being somewhat too far from Launceston for an incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene's to have been running thither night and morning. The Rev. F. Jago-Arundell

\* Ruddle was at this time about twenty-nine years of age, and had been incumbent of Launceston for a little over eighteen months. † William Lee, *Life of Daniel Defoe*, vol. i., pp. 323-4. A very similar narrative is given, though in greater detail, in C. S. Gilbert's *History of Cornwall*, vol. i., pp. 115-19., published in 1817, and also in a manuscript account of the tradition, written in the early years of this century by George Parthing, great-uncle of the present Author, and read by Mr. E. Robbins before the Launceston Working Men's Club in 1864, but now unfortunately missing. ‡ *History of Cornwall* [1824] vol. ii., pp. 548-51. § 1870; pp. 103-24.

(who vouched for the fact that the account given by C. S. Gilbert was discovered by him in the course of his antiquarian researches—which were especially directed towards a history of Launceston—and was in the handwriting of Ruddle himself) believed that the apparition made itself visible near Trebursye. His opinion was shared by Mrs. Bray, who made the story the basis of her novel, “Trelawney of Trelawne,” and who was so convinced that it was a ghost of the vicinity of our town that she fell into the singular error of imagining that the name “Dorothy Dingley” was a fictitious one, designed to spare the feelings of relatives, because she had “never heard of it in Launceston or the neighbourhood”; and she argued that it was likely to be Durant (as in some versions\*) because she remembered “a tall respectable man of that name in Launceston.”† And not only are these opinions, as well as the detailed description of the locality given by Defoe, in favour of the tradition that the apparition was seen near Trebursye, but there is the convincing fact that the name of the ghost-ridden boy was Bligh, and that the family of Bligh had its home for generations at Botathan, in the parish of South Petherwin.‡ And, therefore, although when the Rev. F. G. Lee published in 1875 his “Glimpses of the Supernatural,” and therein§ unhesitatingly accepted the story as true, his belief was laughed at by such grave journals as the *Examiner* and the *Athenæum*, it is as well, as long as the apparition is spoken of at all,|| that it should be spoken of in its old and correct fashion as “The Trebursye Ghost.”

John Ruddle, Ruddell, or Rudall, who is mentioned so prominently in this narrative, took the degree of Master of Arts at Caius College, Cambridge, in 1662, and, according to our Register, “began his ministry at Lancelton at ye Feast of our saviours Nativity, 1663,”\*\* he then being some twenty-seven years of age; and there are entries in 1664 and 1666 of the baptism of two of his sons, in 1667 of the

\* It is to be noted that in a deed of 1457 granting his lands at Landue and Hendra to John Page, John Bligh, of Botathan, is described as “Johannes Blyghe als. Durant:” this document was in the possession of the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence. (*New Parochial History*, vol. iv., p. 66.) † Mrs. Bray’s General Preface to her collected works.

‡ *New Parochial History*, vol. iv., p. 66.

§ Vol. i., pp. 58-9.

|| In the latest ghost book (J. H. Ingram’s “*Haunted Homes of Great Britain*,” published in 1884) it is accorded a place, while the Rev. J. M. Neale, in “*The Unseen World*” [1858], describes it as “one of the most remarkable stories” related in his volume and as bearing “the very impress of truth” (p. 115).

\*\* Not 1663, as stated in the *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*, vol. ii., p. 606.

death of his first wife,\* and in 1671 of the marriage of "Mr. John Ruddle Minr. of this town and Mrs. Mary Bolythoe." In 1679 he was appointed vicar of Altarnun,† and in an inscription on the communion rails in that church, cut in 1684, he is described as "minister of Lauceston, preb. of Exon., and vicar of this psh.," he having been made prebendary of Exeter in October, 1680. He held all these proferments until his death in January, 1699, when he was buried in our church at the age of sixty-two.‡ This "fanatical minister of Launceston," as some of his critics have called him,§ is probably responsible for many of the polemical alterations in the Register already noted; and it was during his tenure of the living that the Register closed, all the entries for the two or three years after 1670 being struck out with the appended remark "These are entred in ye new Booke."||

Before losing sight of the old Register, some of its entries not previously dealt with may be noted. It is stated in it that on August 20, 1653, there was "Collected in ye towne & parrish towards the reparation of ye sad & lamentable loss at Marlborough in Wilts by orde from ye Councill of State ye sum of Fifty fower shillings."\*\* On September 1, 1661, there was "Colected in ye Church of Mary Magdalen in Lauceston towards a loss by fire att ye Citty of Oxon 11s 11d," and "The same day Colected towards ye loss by fire att Fronnington 11. 7d."; while on November 12 of the same year there was "Colected in this Towne toward ye losses of the protestants in Lytuania £2. 3s. 8d." A month later the sum of seven shillings was gathered

\* There is a monument to her memory (but none to that of the second wife) in St. Mary Magdalene's, with an epitaph of eight lines entitled "The Husband's Valediction."  
 † Ruddle had provided himself with a curate for Launceston long before, for, according to the Register, "John Eyme was made Deacon of ye chirche of St. Mary Magdalen Lauceston 7bre [September] ye 20th 1668": "Richard ye son of John Eyme clark" was baptised July 24, 1671. ‡ He was succeeded, according to the fly-leaf of the old Register, by "Mr. Nathanioll Boughton [who] began his ministry heare ye 25th March 1699."

§ He was evidently strongly opposed to the Puritan party, and he supplied much information concerning the Royalist clergy of Cornwall to the Rev. John Walker, for that author's "Account of the numbers and sufferings of the clergy," published in 1714 (vide Preface, p. xxv.) || There are two other Parish Registers of Launceston in existence, one covering the period from 1671 to 1812, and the other that from 1813 to 1837. The fly-leaf of the former bears the inscription "A Register of the Parish of St. Mary Magdalen Launceston begun in the year 1671 John Ruddle Minr.": there is no name on the fly-leaf of the latter. For this information and for great kindness concerning the earliest Register the Author is indebted to the Rev. C. E. Gandy, curate of St. Mary Magdalene's. \*\* This is signed "Joseph Hull pastor [the name being afterwards partially erased] Francis Glanvill Henry Hickes church-wardens."

“towards the Reliefe of Bullinbrooke in Lincolnshire,” and of nine shillings “towards ye Reliefe of Bridgnorth in ye County of Sallope””; while in 1662 twenty shillings and fourpence was raised in St. Mary Magdalene’s “Toward the Rebuilding of ye Church of pontifract,” and seventeen and ninepence “towards the church for Fakingham in Northfolke,” in 1663 seven shillings “towards the Repairing of the Church of limington in the Countye of Southampton,” and in 1664 four and ninepence each “for the Repairing the Church of Withingham in Sussex,” and “the Church and Steeple of Sandwich in the Countye of Kent,” five and elevenpence “towards the Rebuilding the Church of St. Michaels in Semersett,” and seven and twopence for the same purpose for “the Church of Basing in Southampton.” All these collections for church repair are in the years immediately following the Restoration, and are a sure indication of the widespread ecclesiastical destruction which had marked the reign of the Puritans, but which, although Launceston was more than once in their power, never affected the edifice dedicated here to the Magdalene.

There has now to be considered the commencement of the attempts to take the county assizes from Launceston, which, beaten back for a time, were again and again repeated until in the early years of the eighteenth century one assize was secured for Bodmin, and fifty years since the other. From the very earliest days of the holding of assizes, those for Cornwall, with but few exceptions, had been held at Launceston. It has been stated† that it is not improbable that the semi-financial assize of 1177 was the first of the series, and in 1260, when the King of the Romans removed the assizes to Lostwithiel, the burgesses of Launceston protested with such effect that, upon payment of a fine, they had the assizes again.\* Edmund, the next Earl Cornwall, disregarded this arrangement, and regave the assizes to Lostwithiel, but Launceston once more reclaimed them§ In 1337, when the Roll of the Seisin was taken, our burgesses complained that Earl Richard had removed the assizes to Bodmin and Earl Edmund to Lostwithiel,|| but although the commissioners dismissed the plaint

\* John Worsey and Alexander Morlye were now churchwardens. † ante, p. 33.  
 ‡ ante, p. 39. § ante, p. 52. || According to Maclean (Trigg Minor, vol. i., p. 106) assizes had been held at Bodmin in the reign of Henry III. as well as in 1311 and 1331, and at Lostwithiel in 1318.



because the townsmen "shewed no reason save of prescription,"\* we find only one further instance of the Cornwall assizes being elsewhere than at Launceston, and this in 1393, when, in consequence of the Plague, they were transferred to Saltash.† Four years later all likelihood of dispute was ended by the passing of an Act declaring that they should be held at Launceston and not elsewhere.‡

As far as can be learnt no attempt was made to alter the settlement of 1397 until after the Restoration. In 1661, a petition was presented to the House of Commons "of the Gentlemen, Inhabitants of the County of Cornwall,"§ "for removing Assizes from Launceston to Bodmin,"|| but it was "laid aside."\*\* This easy method of dealing with the matter did not commend itself to those who wished for change, and, apparently despairing of moving the Commons, they appealed direct to the King. On January 25, 1665, "the Gentlemen of Cornwall now serving in Parliament," presented a petition to Charles "for transfer of the assize courts from Launceston to Bodmin, where is a public hall and all necessities"; for, they urged, "the former place is in one end of a county eighty miles long, is inconvenient to witnesses, jurors, and suitors, and improper in taking the deputy-lieutenants and other officers so far away from some parts of a county exposed on two sides to the sea." Launceston's reply was presented to the King simultaneously with the challenge, the Mayor and his brethren asking "that the assizes and gaol delivery of the county, held there by ancient charter, and the chief support of the town, may not be removed, as proposed by some gentlemen of the county, to Bodmin, a mean town, lying twenty miles further within the county, and inconvenient for the judges by the badness of the ways." Both petitions were referred to the Attorney-General,†† and there for some years the matter rested.

Early in 1671 the attention of Parliament was definitely called to the question, and, on March 10, "a Bill for settling the Assizes in the County of Cornwall" was read a first time in the House of

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\* ante, p. 54. † Rot. Parl. III., 326. ‡ Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward V., granted, however, another charter of assize in 1475. § June 15, 1661: Commons Journals, vol. viii., p. 271. The petition was the first business of the day, but it was merely "read," not so much as its object being mentioned in the Journals. || Note Book of Sir John Northcote, p. 135. \*\* Ibid. †† Domestic State Papers, 1664-65, p. 179.



Commons without a division.\* Four days later the second reading was similarly agreed to, and the measure was immediately referred to a committee which included "all that serve for Cornwall or Devon."† On the twenty-fourth the opponents of the Bill asked "that a further Day be given for hearing the Matter," but this was defeated by forty-three votes to twenty, Sir John Coryton, member for the county, and Sir Charles Harbord, member for Launceston, being the tellers for the minority, and Mr. Ford and Mr. Sprye (representing respectively Tiverton and St. Mawes) those for the majority.‡ After some postponements, the committee reported the Bill with amendments on April 8, and, these being agreed to by the House without a division, the measure was ordered to be engrossed.§ Up to this point there is nothing in the Journals to indicate the intention of the enactment, but, on April 11, it is stated that "the ingrossed Bill for holding the Summer Assizes for the County of Cornewall at Bodmin, was read a Third time." On the question "That the Bill do pass," the House divided, and it was carried by forty-nine to thirty-one, Sir Jonathan Trelawny (Cornwall) and Mr. Roberts (Bossiney) "telling" for the majority, and Sir John Coryton (Cornwall) and Mr. Vaughan (Hereford) for the losing side.|| Sir Jonathan Trelawny immediately carried the Bill up to the Lords, and, on the same day, the Peers, having read it a first time, "after some Consideration had thereof" ordered "That some Person or Persons sufficiently authorized from the Town of Launceston . . . shall appear at the Bar of this House within Ten days after Notice given hereof to the said Town in order to their being heard before the said Bill be read the Second Time in this House."\*\*\*

Things had progressed so pleasantly for Bodmin in the Commons, where no especial thought was taken for the place to be injured by the Bill, that it was not until the Lords directed the "Town of Launceston to be heard about it,"†† that Bodmin conceived the measure to be in peril. Steps were then taken to avert the danger; the Mayor of Bodmin bought a "town mare" whereupon "Warden Kessell"

\* Commons Journals, vol. ix., p. 216. † Ibid., p. 219. ‡ Ibid., p. 224. § Ibid., p. 232.  
 || Ibid., p. 233. \*\* April 11, 1671; Lords Journals, vol. xii., p. 485. †† Ibid., in margin.

did "ride to London about the assizes," receiving two payments of five pounds each "for labour and paines." In addition, the Mayor records having "paid by myself towards the charges of the carrying on the business of the assizes at London" a similar sum, as likewise did Mr. Humphrey Williams, while "Mr. Richard Opie disbursed tenne poundes on the same."\* Kessell received his first five pounds on May 10, but on May 16 Parliament was prorogued without anything further being done about the Bill, which consequently dropped with the termination of the session. On August 24, when the Mayor of Bodmin entered up his various payments, it must have been with sadness of heart for so much money fruitlessly expended, even the "town mare," on which Warden Kessell had had his adventurous ride, selling for much less than it had cost. And although it was apparently only by accident that the Bill had failed, not far short of half a century elapsed before the Cornwall assize question was heard of in Parliament again.

While all this was going on, changes were taking place in the parliamentary representation of Launceston and Newport. Sir Francis Drake, member for the latter, died at the end of 1661,† and against the election which followed and at which Piers Edgecombe the younger was returned, Henry Ford, of Nutwell, Devon, petitioned on March 24, 1662‡; on the following April 29, the day appointed for hearing the case, "Mr. Edgecomb, who is concerned, being at a great Distance, and depending upon the Adjournment of the House, could not attend, or bring up his Witnesses," and it was ordered that the matter should be adjourned over the recess.§ Although the result is unrecorded, it is certain that Edgecombe was seated,|| for on March 25, 1667, he having died, Nicholas Morice was returned in his stead.\*\* On January 28, 1678, a writ was issued for Newport in the room of John Speccott, deceased,†† and for this vacancy was elected Ambrose Manaton, a son of the member for Launceston in the Long Parliament. His return was petitioned

\* Bodmin Mayor's Accounts: Maclean's Trigg Minor, vol. i., p. 167. † A new writ was issued Jan. 17, 1662: Commons Journals, vol. viii., p. 346. ‡ Ibid. p. 394. § Ibid. p. 415. || Ford, during the existence of this same Parliament, had his revenge upon the town for his rejection by Newport, for, having been chosen for Tiverton at a bye-election in April, 1664, he acted as "teller" in 1671 for the majority in favour of depriving Launceston of the Summer Assize (ante, p. 223). \*\* Official List, vol. i., p. 520. †† Commons Journals, vol. ix., p. 427: Speccott was buried at Egloskerry, Jan. 10, 1678.

against by John Coryton\* (son of Sir John Coryton, the friend of Launceston on the assize question†) and by Sir Walter Young,‡ both petitions being referred to the Committee of Elections and Privileges. As this body apparently did nothing in the matter, Coryton again petitioned three months later,§ and Young once more closely followed suit,|| the latter now claiming that he “was duly elected and ought to have been returned.” Both petitions were again referred to the Committee of Elections and Privileges, but once more nothing seems to have been done. In no way daunted, Coryton in the autumn handed in another petition, on this occasion alleging that Manaton “was returned but by One of the Vianders of the said Borough; whereas the Two Vianders make but one Officer; and that the Petitioner was duly elected, and ought to have been returned”; and the Commons, for the third time referring the matter to the Elections Committee, added the instruction that it was “in the First place to examine the Merits of the said Return.”\*\* Young, again two days behind Coryton, handed in his third petition also, and once more it was sent to the Committee,†† but up to the time that Parliament was dissolved on January 24, 1679, nothing whatever was done to settle the matter.

At the general election of February, 1679, Coryton obtained the seat he had so long struggled for, Manaton, his old antagonist, being his colleague, while Sir Charles Harbord was re-elected for Launceston, Bernard Grenville, son of Beville and younger brother of the Earl of Bath,‡‡ taking the place of Richard Edgecumbe.§§ “John Maurice, Merchant” petitioned against Coryton’s return as an “Injury of the Petitioner who was duly elected, and ought to have been returned,”||| but the Commons sent the complaint to the Elections Committee, and nothing more was heard of the subject. When this Parliament was dissolved, after sitting only four months, John Coryton, who had now come into the baronetcy, was chosen member for Launceston with Sir Hugh Pyper,\*\*\* while his brother and successor in the title, William Coryton, was returned for Newport together with Manaton,††† Sir John Coryton died the next year, and Charles, Lord Lansdowne,

\* Feb. 20, 1678: Commons Journals, vol. ix., p. 442. † ante, p. 223. ‡ Feb. 23, 1678: Commons Journals, vol. ix., p. 444. § May 23: Ibid, p. 482. || May 25: Ibid, p. 483. \*\* Oct. 23: Ibid, p. 518. †† Oct. 25: Ibid, p. 521. ‡‡ ante, p. 209. §§ Official List, vol. i., p. 534. ||| March 20, 1679: Commons Journals, vol. ix., p. 571. \*\*\* ante, p. 175. ††† September, 1679: Official List, vol. i., p. 540.

eldest son of the Earl of Bath, was elected in his stead.\* The new member for Launceston was barely of age when chosen, and he did not remain our representative more than the few months which elapsed before the dissolution. Three years later he achieved distinction for his bravery under John Sobieski, King of Poland, in the decisive victory over the Turks near Vienna, in September, 1683, but his end was a sad one. His father died in London in September, 1701, and, while making preparations to take the body to Kilkhampton for interment, Lord Lansdowne accidentally shot himself with a pistol he was examining, and both father and son were buried at their Cornish home on the same day. When the Parliament of 1681, which sat but a week, was called, Ambrose Manaton was re-elected for Newport, having William Morice, son of the Werrington baronet, as his colleague, while with Sir Hugh Pyper there was returned for Launceston a stranger to the district, one William Harbord.

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\* Nov. 19, 1680: *Ibid.* The writ had been issued on October 26: *Commons Journals*, vol. ix., p. 639.





VII.—FROM THE RETURN OF WILLIAM HARBORD TO THE  
DISFRANCHISEMENT OF NEWPORT (1681—1832).



E have now touched the high-water mark of local history, and what is left to be considered is a time of gradual decadence. The words which Macaulay applied to the Taunton of 1685 apply with almost literal force to our own borough. Launceston, "like most other towns in the south of England, was in that age more important than at present. Those towns have not indeed declined. On the contrary, they are, with very few exceptions, larger and richer, better built and better peopled, than in the seventeenth century. But though they have positively advanced, they have relatively gone back. They have been far outstripped in wealth and population by the great manufacturing and commercial cities of the north, cities which, in the time of the Stuarts, were but beginning to be known as seats of industry." At that time the town "was an eminently prosperous place. Its markets were plentifully supplied. It was a celebrated seat of the woollen manufacture. The people boasted that they lived in a land flowing with milk and honey. Nor was this language held only by partial natives; for every stranger who climbed the graceful tower of Saint Mary Magdalene owned that he saw beneath him the most fertile of English valleys. It was a country rich with orchards and green pastures, among which were scattered in gay abundance, manor houses, cottages, and village spires."\*

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\* Lord Macaulay, *History of England*, vol. i., p. 235.

Within the next century and a half much of this was changed. Details of interest are still to be found : now some noted prisoner is to be tried, now some criminal condemned to death to be petitioned for ; now the inhabitants complain that their letters are not delivered in due course, and now some more than usually renowned member is sent to Parliament ; now a Wesley visits the town on a mission of faith, and now a Howard on an errand of mercy : but the symptoms of decay are abundant. One assize is removed to Bodmin, to be followed in the present century by the other, the borough is deprived of three of the four members previously returned for Launceston and Newport, the trade in woollen goods leaves the district, and the population stands still or actually decreases. Of late years there has been a slight revival : the Castle has been to some extent, but to a sadly inadequate one, preserved from immediate fall ; a railway has been opened to bring the town once more into that connection with the rest of the kingdom which was almost broken when the mail coaches from London to Falmouth ceased to run ; houses have sprung up more abundantly than for many previous years ; and the population has once more slightly increased. But the Launceston of later days is not the Launceston of ages ago, and the more romantic study in local history is that of the far past.

At the opening of the period with which we have now to deal Launceston was still, as for centuries it had been, the chief in all respects of Cornish towns. Carew had observed at the beginning of the seventeenth century that it exceeded even Truro in its buildings though perhaps not in its riches, and Hals at the end of the century endorsed the remark, while Kneebone, who compiled in 1684 a history of the Hundred of East,\* described Launceston as in a "flourishing condition, and the inhabitants, by their industry, very wealthy." And besides the added source of prosperity given to the town in the passing through it for a century and a half of the passengers and mails landed by the packets at Falmouth, and hastening on to London, the continued holding here of the assizes not only twice every year brought much money into the borough, but contributed to the intellectual

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\* This remains unpublished ; a copy was in the possession of the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence.



edification of the inhabitants by the incursion of counsel well versed in the most recent intelligence from the capital, an important consideration at a time when newspapers were practically unknown. It is in connection with these assizes that we catch more than one glimpse of the life of the time. In 1666, for instance, Francis Bellott writing to Lord Arlington's secretary from Launceston, having "come in thither from Pendennis for the assizes," tells him that "there are great rejoicings for the victory,"\* presumably that in the Channel over the Dutch fleet some ten days previously, when twenty of the enemy's ships were destroyed. And the tone of the public life of the period is indicated in the story told by Hals to the effect that a judge who went the Western Circuit for two or three assizes in the reign of Charles the Second, and who endeavoured when at Launceston to discourage the litigious spirit of the Cornish and to shorten the trials, was the subject of a petition to the King from "the attornies and lawyers of the Western Circuit all in confederacy together, as the shrine-makers of Diana at Ephesus against St. Paul," which petition had such effect that "he was never more seen in these parts"; "since which time," Hals plaintively adds, "the judges that come this circuit are content to hear with great patience the loud, reflective, perplexed arguments of counsel upon trials of small moment and concern, if not to suffer themselves to be at some times imposed upon in point of law and evidence therein, by the importunate arguments of topping serjeants-at-law, according to the magnitude of the fees they receive from their clients; so that it is become a proverb among those men in this province, it matters not what the case be so the client hath store of money."

It was not only in connection with this just judge that Charles the Second had direct dealings with Launceston. There is preserved in the Corporation records the royal grant on September 30, 1670, of a standard bushel for the borough, and on July 22, 1682, the King gave us a new charter. This step was undoubtedly taken because Launceston was at that time a Whigborough, Charles being determined to manipulate the Corporation to his own ends, and one of the means he adopted was to expressly reserve to the Crown power *ipso facto*

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\* August 4, 1666: Domestic State Papers, 1666-67, p. 13.

to declare the Recorder to be amoved from his office without further process.\* Two years later the Cornish towns “unanimously and with great chearfulness resolved to surrender their Charters and Franchises to His Majesty,” who “was pleased Graciously to accept of them, and to command his Lordship [the Earl of Bath] to assure the said Corporations, that he very well remembered the Duty and Loyalty of that County in the worst times of Rebellion, and was well pleased with this fresh Demonstration of it by them.”† Launceston, it may be gathered, was one of the towns which had “with great chearfulness” yielded up its charters, even though its latest was only two years old, for three months afterwards, and within a few weeks of James the Second succeeding to the throne, a new charter was granted to the borough, in which the older documents were not recognised. Like others of the same reign this was put aside after the Revolution, though in an electoral dispute of a century later, to be noticed in its place, it was argued, but without effect, that this charter had been accepted by the burgesses as superseding that of Philip and Mary.‡ Among the Cornish boroughs which suffered a similar fate to Launceston, in thus being for political reasons deprived of ancient rights, were Bodmin, Saltash, Looe, Fowey, St. Ives, and Liskeard; and, as far as can now be gathered, it was only in the case of the last-mentioned that the validity of these proceedings was contested in a court of law; at Liskeard one party held by the old charter and another by the new, and it was not until it was decided at Launceston Assizes that the former was void that the dispute ceased.§

In the year that James gave the new charter to Launceston, an official return was issued showing that thirty-two Quakers were imprisoned in Cornwall, a good proportion of whom were detained in our gaol. All these were liberated by the King, except those confined for non-payment of tithes, and one of the former was John Peters, of St. Minver, who, having joined the Society of Friends in 1672, had travelled through the South and West of England preaching the Gospel. His first detention was at Bodmin, “after which, he underwent

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\* First Report from Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in England and Wales [1835], Appendix, Part I., p. 517.  
 † London Gazette, No. 1990: from Dec. 11 to Dec. 15, 1684. ‡ ante, p. 98. § Drew, History of Cornwall, vol. i., p. 633.

some Years Imprisonment at Lancelton, for refusing to Swear, in obedience to Christ's Command."\* While he was in our gaol, he, with other imprisoned Quakers, addressed a letter "for the King's Judges now in Commission to hold the Assizes or General Goal-Delivery at Launceston, for this our County of Cornwall," protesting that they were detained "for no other Reason or Crime, but for bearing a Faithful Testimony to the God of Heaven and Earth, and for Worshipping, Serving and Obeying of him, according to his Requirings."† The first of the signatories was Nicholas Jose, Fox's "honest fisherman,"‡ of whom it is mentioned in the letter (which appears to have been written in the autumn of 1680) that formerly he had been "a Prisoner for the same Testimony near Twelve Years in this Goal," and who had now again been put in prison because "he with others called Quakers [had] peacably met together, waiting in Silence upon the Lord." The specific offence of Peters, who signed second, was that he had conscientiously refused to take the oath of allegiance; and the four fishermen and one "poor old man," who also subscribed their names, had committed the crime of worshipping together in Quaker fashion. Whatever may have been the fate of the others, Peters remained in prison, whence we find him in April, 1683, writing to his wife expressing the cheerfulness with which he bore his bonds.§ A few weeks afterwards, he sent "from this our County Goal in the Castle of Lancelton" a letter to "Dr. Reynolds and all others, within this Borough of Lancelton, yea both Priest and People, who are concerned in endeavouring to oppose and hinder that blessed Work of the Lord, which he hath begun, and is carrying on by his own everlasting Arm of Power," warning them not to continue their persecutions, "for it's a dangerous thing for any to be found fighters against the Lord and his People."|| Three other letters were published as having been written by Peters from Launceston, two of these being to his wife (one of which was penned "when under a sore Exercise . . . being confin'd a close Prisoner"), and the third and last, dated May 17, 1684, being "An Epistle to Friends in Devon and Cornwall."

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\* A Briefe Narration of the Life, Service, and Sufferings, of that Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, John Peters [1709], p. 7.    † Ibid, p. 97.    ‡ ante, p. 202.    § April 8, 1683; A Briefe Narration, pp. 102-6.    || May 1: Ibid, pp. 107-10.

Side by side with this evidence of the persecuting spirit we find traces of the growth of the more enlightened ideas which were destined to cause persecution to cease. Charles the Second had confirmed to Launceston Grammar School the grant of Elizabeth,\* and gratitude for the boon may account for the survival, even to the very few years ago when this establishment mysteriously ceased to be, of an extraordinary amount of attention given by the boys to Restoration Day; any one of these who did not sport a sprig of oak on each twenty-ninth of May was vigorously pinched by his colleagues until he had possessed himself of a piece, and every desk was ornamented with the memorial oak-leaves during school-hours. In the year that this King died, George Baron, of Tregeare, bequeathed by his will, dated October 9, 1685, ten pounds yearly to the school, with a power for himself and his successors to nominate ten boys to be educated there free of expense; a descendant, one Oliver Baron, restricted this number to five,† at which figure it continued to stand as long as the school flourished, and the "Baron Prize," given yearly by the representative of the family (now Mr. J. C. Baron Lethbridge), was among the principal distinctions a pupil could win.

One of the fruits of the new Launceston charter was witnessed at the general election of April, 1685, which followed the accession of James the Second, William Harbord, a decided Whig, having to give place as member for the borough to John Grenville, a lad scarcely twenty years of age, and, as son of the Earl of Bath, an undoubted Tory. Sir Hugh Pyper, whose claims were local rather than political, was re-elected, as was William Morice, son of the owner of Werrington, for Newport, the place of Ambrose Manaton being taken by John Speccott, of Penheale,‡ son of John Speccott, member for Newport in the "Pension Parliament,"§ and grandson of Paul Speccott, colleague of Sir John Eliot in 1625,|| and again member for the borough in the Short Parliament of 1640.\*\* In the rising under

\*ante, p. 107. †Carlisle, *Concise Description of Endowed Grammar Schools*, vol. i., p. 139.

‡ Speccott, who subsequently sat in three Parliaments for the county, and who was buried at Egloskerry on July 20, 1705, left in his will twenty shillings yearly to the labouring poor of every parish in Cornwall and Devon, where his high and rack rents amounted to £10 per annum. The poor of St. Stephens and St. Thomas are stated to have enjoyed this until about 1806, when the charity disappeared in the mysterious manner in which many such have been swallowed up. § ante, pp. 209-224. || ante, p. 133.

\*\* ante, p. 154.

Monmouth Cornwall took no part, and Jeffreys and his "Bloody Assize" left no mark on the history of Launceston. But the growing exhibition of the King's desire to bring the nation once more into the fold of Rome was too much even for loyal Cornwall. In answer to the Earl of Bath, who had offered the most tempting bribes if they would but support the Sovereign, "all the Justices and Deputy-Lieutenants of Devonshire and Cornwall, without a single dissenting voice, declared that they would put life and property in jeopardy for the King, but that the Protestant religion was dearer to them than either life or property."\* The next year the imprisonment of Sir Jonathan Trelawny, one of "the seven bishops," roused the country to frenzy; and when James fled and there was chosen in January, 1689, the Convention which gave the crown to William and Mary, although Newport re-elected its old members, Launceston sent up two Whigs, Edward Russell and William Harbord.† The latter had been chosen also for Thetford and Scarborough, both of which boroughs he abandoned to sit for Launceston‡; and, within a day or two of his resolution being announced in the House, we find that, on its being proposed that William should be absolutely King and Mary only Queen Consort, "William Harbord, one of the most zealous of the Prince's adherents, was so much exasperated that he sprang out the bed to which he was confined by gout, and vehemently declared that he never would have drawn a sword in His Highness's cause if he had foreseen that so shameful an arrangement would be made."§ The arrangement against which Harbord thus energetically protested was not carried into effect, and six weeks later the member for Launceston was enabled to do good service to the new sovereigns. A Scotch regiment on its way to Harwich to embark for the Continent mutinied at Ipswich, declared in favour of James, and marched to the north. "A committee of the Privy Council was sitting when the tidings of the mutiny arrived in London. William Harbord, who represented the borough of Launceston, was at the board. His colleagues entreated him to go down instantly to the House of Commons, and to relate what had happened. He went, rose in his place,

\* Macaulay, History, vol. i., p. 489. † Russell was a brother of Lord William, the colleague of Algernon Sidney (*Ibid.*, p. 573). ‡ February 1, 1689: Commons Journals, vol. x., p. 16. § Macaulay, vol. i., p. 646.

and told his story. The spirit of the assembly rose to the occasion,\*\* measures were immediately taken, and the mutiny was put down. The cause which Harbord then supported was that adopted by the county, the capital of which he represented, for on July 24 of this same year an address was adopted to the King and Queen by "the High Sheriff, Justices of the Peace, Grand Jury, and other Gentlemen now met at the Assizes at Launceston," expressing the utmost thankfulness for their deliverance from "Popery and arbitrary powers," and hailing their majesties as "the Great Restorers, Preservers, and Defenders of our Religion, Laws and Liberties."†

In the spring of 1690 the first of William's Parliaments was called, and to this Harbord was again returned for Launceston and Speecott for Newport, while Bernard Grenville (who had sat for the town in the speedily-dissolved Parliament of 1679,‡ and who had in succeeding Houses represented Plymouth and Saltash) was once more elected for Launceston, and Charles, Lord Cheney, Viscount Newhaven in the peerage of Scotland (Scotch peers being then, though not now, allowed to sit in our House of Commons), was sent up as second member for Newport. In the November the last-named, who had been elected also for Harwich, decided to sit for that town, and, a new writ being issued for Newport,§ John Morice in the next month was returned in his stead.|| There was a contest for the seat, Morice's opponent being Narcissus Luttrell, whose diary is an often-quoted authority for the events of this period. It may be that the diarist had local connections, for in the winter of 1661 there was granted to one Francis Luttrell and his heirs a yearly fair at Penheale,\*\* where the Speecotts, members for Newport, had their residence. But Narcissus, whatever may have been the influences exercised on his behalf, did not succeed in obtaining the seat. He complained to the House on the subject, and though the petition was withdrawn "by reason the Prayer thereof was conceived to be irregular,"†† he next day presented another "setting forth, That the petitioner was duly elected

\* Ibid, p. 675. † This was presented at Whitehall on August 7, 1689, to William "who received it very Graciously": London Gazette, No. 2477, from Aug. 5 to Aug. 8.  
 ‡ ante, p. 225. § Nov. 18, 1690: Commons Journals, vol. x., p. 475. || Dec. 16: Official List, vol. i., p. 564. \*\* November, 1661, according to the Sloane MSS. (British Museum, 856, art. 37, fol. 10 b.) ; Dec. 27, 1661, according to Domestic State Papers, 1661-62, p. 192. †† December 31, 1690: Commons Journals, vol. x., p. 531.



by the Majority of the Electors of the Borough of Newport in the County of Cornwall; and an Indenture sealed by Mr. Mannaton, a Member of this House,\* and one of the Vianders of the said Borough, and the Majority of the Burgesses: But that by an Indenture under the Seal of Mr. Horwell the other Viander, and some others, John Morrice, Esquire, is returned in Prejudice of the Petitioner.”† The House ordered that the case should be heard at its bar on that day six weeks, but four days later it adjourned until March 31, and nothing more was heard of the petition. Luttrell, however, did not lose much by this, for, on October 30 of the same year, “Nareissus Luttrell, esq., of Kenterbury, county Devon,” was returned for Saltash.‡

In the interval between the general election and this disputed return for Newport, Charles, Lord Lansdowne, an old member for Launceston had been winning fresh laurels in the neighbouring county. A French fleet of slave-propelled galleys having made a descent upon Devonshire in the summer of 1690, “the beacon on the ridge overlooking Teignmouth was kindled; the High Tor and Causland made answer; and soon all the hill tops of the West were on fire.”§ Teignmouth was bombarded and sacked by the enemy, and the Cornish, ten thousand of whom had just previously signed an address of loyalty to the Queen, assembled in strength to assist their brethren of Devon. Lansdowne took command of “the tumultuary army which had assembled round the basin of Torbay,” but the French retreated without further attack. It is not to be doubted that one of the “hill tops of the West” which flamed forth the alarm on this occasion was the Windmill Hill overlooking Launceston. Standing even higher than the Castle top, a watch house in olden times was placed upon its summit, but long before this was built and for many years after it had disappeared a beacon fire signalled to the hills around when danger was near. As lately as the marriage of the Duke of Cornwall in 1863, a bonfire on this site shed a light over many miles, but probably the last occasion upon which an alarm signal was placed there was at the close of the eighteenth century, when an invasion of the French was continually expected. “A beacon upon the top of a

\* He sat in this Parliament for Camelford. † Jan. 1, 1691: Commons Journals, vol. x., p. 562. ‡ Official List, vol. i., p. 565. It may be noted that Luttrell makes no reference in the famous Diary to his Newport experiences. § Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 201.

mountain, an ensign on an hill," such as that of which Isaiah speaks, must have stood upon Windmill from the very first day of the town's existence until a time almost within living memory; use for it now has gone, the mention in the borough records of the beacon on the hill is all that is left, except the memory of such announcements to a wondering neighbourhood as it made that night when "the beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall," when "swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread," when the Spanish Armada was sighted off the Cornish coast.

It is no long step from the Windmill to the Castle, and just about the time when the former was playing its part in national history the condition of the latter was being brought under public notice. "The inhabitants of the county" petitioned the King in 1690 as to the obligation of the Crown or Sir Hugh Pyper, constable of the Castle, to repair the prison, the partitions of which were broken down, "so that the men and women committed to the said gaole are constrained to bee and lye together."\* In response to the petition, which was dated January 29, 1690, the Attorney-General was directed to make a report, and thirteen months later action was taken, though apparently not as a direct consequence of the memorial. On March 3, 1691, William Harbord, who held the office of Surveyor-General, informed the Lords of the Treasury that he had considered the petition of one Thomas Howells seeking the reversion for two lives of the constablenesship of the Castle, granted by Charles the Second to Sir Hugh Pyper and his son and grandson. The petitioner, in further asking for the usual fee of £13 6s. 8d., offered to put the gaol in good repair for £120 and then to keep it so; and Harbord (recalling to the remembrance of the Treasury the statement of the parliamentary survey of 1650 that the Castle at that date was much in decay, having only two rooms standing, which were used for criminal prisoners) suggested that the prayer of the petition should be granted. This was apparently done, for on January 5, 1692, "Mr. Chancellour" was directed to "give an account of this," and a clause was drawn up "for the patentees to keep the Castle in repair."† In

\* Domestic State Papers, Treasury Series, 1556-1696, vol. vii. † Ibid, vol. xiii. The original three lives for which the constablenesship was granted were not disposed of, however, for many years after this: Sir Hugh Pyper died on July 24, 1687, Philip Pyper on March 21, 1677, and Hugh Pyper, of Tresmarrow, not until Oct. 25, 1754.

the same year the Surveyor-General had done his last work for both town and nation, a new writ being issued on November 4 "for the Borough of Dunhevot alias Launceston in the room of Wm. Harbord Esquire, deceased."\*

Eleven days after the writ was ordered Henry, Lord Hyde, eldest son of the Earl of Rochester, a somewhat uncertain adherent of the new *regime*, was returned for Launceston, and at the general election of October, 1695, he was re-chosen, having for his colleague William Cary (as he is termed in the Official List†) but not improbably William, afterwards Sir William, Carew, who, as brother-in-law of Manaton, Newport's former viander and member, possessed some local connection. For Newport John Morice was re-elected, while the place of John Speecott, now returned for the county, was taken by Viscount Cheney, who left upon the borough more trace of his connection than most members by restoring St. Stephens Church, as a tablet standing therein continues to record. He sat for Newport only in this Parliament, and his politics may be gathered from the fact that to the next House William, Viscount Cheney, presumably his son, was elected for Bucks as a Tory, fighting a duel with the leader of the local Whigs as if to celebrate the occasion.‡

During the existence of this Parliament we gain our first sight of a local bookseller (though as yet no printer could be boasted by the borough), there being printed in London in 1697 "for W. Major, bookseller in Newport near Launceston in Cornwall," a "History of the horrid and detestable plots and conspiracies contrived and carried on by Papists and other persons for the compassing the death and destruction of King William III.," plots and conspiracies which in the previous year, as William himself told his Parliament, would, but for the protection of Providence, have made him a corpse and secured an invasion by France. Our next mention of a Launceston bookseller occurs only three years later, and this time it introduces us to another local institution, which exists to this day, a map of the county, "newly surveyed by J. Gascoyne," being announced in 1700 to be sold "by Charles Blith, at the White Hart, in Launceston."

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\* Commons Journals, vol. x., p. 697.    † Vol. i., p. 572.    ‡ Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 742.

It is another seventy years before we meet a Launceston printer, and then, singularly enough, in connection with this same hotel, which deserves note, however, not only in these relations, but because it possesses as a door-way probably the only relic of the Priory now in existence.

Lord Hyde and William Cary continued to sit for Launceston without intermission in six Parliaments after the one to which they were first returned, but the representation of Newport was by no means as fixed. At the general election of August, 1698, John Grenville, who had sat for Launceston in 1685,\* was chosen with John Morice as his colleague. Since his previous political connection with the borough the former had seen many vicissitudes. Joining the navy at an early age, he, not improbably with great reluctance, accepted the Revolution, and was continued by William in the command given him by James, as well as made a Colonel in the Guards. He took part in the naval battle off Beachy Head in the summer of 1690, in which Torrington, the English Admiral, was thought to have acted with culpable negligence, and his fortunes suffered with those of his leader, for he was dismissed his command and allowed to hold no further office under the new King.† In all likelihood, therefore, he was returned for Newport as a decided Tory, the side his family had almost consistently espoused, but it is by no means certain to which party Morice, his colleague, may have belonged. The latter at this election had been returned also for Saltash (in company with Speccott), and, choosing to sit for that place, a new writ was issued for Newport.‡ For the vacant seat there was evidently a lively contest, for although Francis Stratford was declared to be elected,§ his opponent, John Prideaux, of Souldon, petitioned the House against his return. Prideaux asserted that he “ had a Majority of 34 voices duly qualified; yet the Vianders, who, with the Freeholders and Inhabitants, ought to have made the Return, withdrew themselves from the said Borough without declaring who was duly elected, though demanded thereto by the Petitioner, and his Electors; and, in another County, by themselves alone, signed a Return of Mr.

\* ante, p. 232.

† J. Charnock, *Biographia Navalis* (1794), vol. ii., pp. 155-8.

‡ Jan. 2, 1699: Commons Journals, vol. xii., p. 368.

§ Jan. 27: Official List, vol. i.,

p. 579.

Stratford, contrary to the ancient Constitution of the said Borough, and in prejudice to the Petitioner's Right."\* The petition, as usual, was referred to the Committee of Privileges and Elections, but as a prorogation came and nothing more was heard of it, Prideaux on the opening day of the next session again brought his complaint before the Commons in very much the same terms, and once more the matter was sent to the Committee.† Even now there was shown a strong disinclination to deal with the question. On March 11, 1700, it was decided that the report should be made three days later,‡ but when the appointed day came it was resolved by a narrow majority to adjourn the matter for a week.§ On the day now fixed upon, the matter was again put off,|| and three subsequent fixtures were similarly served\*\* ; upon the last of them, after two divisions, a sixth appointment was made, but when the day was reached the report was not mentioned, and after repeated prorogations Parliament was dissolved in the next December without the petition having been disposed of by the House.

This was a direct encouragement to the Newport Vianders to continue in the path of illegality, and they gladly took the hint. At the general election of January, 1701, the old members, Colonel Grenville and Francis Stratford, again offered themselves, while Prideaux once more entered the field as well as John Morice, who had already sat for the borough in two Parliaments and had been elected to three. The vianders declared Stratford and Prideaux, the former rivals, to be returned, but against this Grenville protested. As soon as the House met he presented a petition setting forth that he had been duly elected, "yet the Vianders, being prevailed on by unjustifiable Practices, went from the Place of Election, without declaring the Majority ; and refused a Scrutiny ; and have arbitrarily, and falsly returned Francis Stratford Esquire, having declared their Resolutions so to do, before the Election, if he had but Ten Votes." A motion that the matter of the petition should be heard at the bar of the House was negatived without a division, and it was referred

\* Feb. 16, 1699 [June in original by copyist's error] : Commons Journals, vol. xii., p. 513.

† Nov. 16 : Ibid., vol. xiii., p. 4.      ‡ Ibid., p. 277.      § Ibid., p. 282.      || Ibid., p. 289.

\*\* March 26, April 2, and April 5 : Ibid., pp. 298, 311, and 314.

to the usual committee,\* a similar course being adopted with regard to a petition presented the same day by "the Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Borough of Newport." This, after setting forth the names of the candidates and the traditional rights of the electors, stated "that Mr. Granville and Mr. Prideaux were duly chosen by a vast Majority; and that an Indenture, for their Return, was tendered to the Vianders, signed by the Electors; who refused to execute it, as also to take a Scrutiny; but promised to take a Scrutiny the next Day; withdrawing, with one Nicholas Morriss Esquire,† into another County: but, late in the Evening, one Richard Blight, a servant to Mr. Nicholas Morris, by whom the Vianders were solely governed, came into the Borough, and with the Tythingman, declared, That the Vianders had returned an Indenture for the said Mr. Francis Stratford, in prejudice to the Right of Mr. Granville and the Electors."‡ Both petitions came to naught, for three months later they were withdrawn by leave of the House§; and it is not improbable that this was the result of some private arrangement providing that the sitting members should not again be returned, since, when Parliament was dissolved at the end of this year, the representatives chosen by Newport were William Pole and John Sparke. These, however, sat for an even less time than their immediate predecessors, for the death of the King in the summer of 1702 caused another dissolution, when Sparke was re-elected for Newport, but the place of Pole was taken by Sir Nicholas Morice, who had distinguished himself as "patron of the borough" in January, 1701.

While this Parliament was sitting a postal reform was introduced which directly affected our town. Late in 1703 the Postmaster-General, in a report to the Lord High Treasurer respecting the establishment of a new post from Exeter to Truro, stated that John Grenville, the old member for Newport (who had this year been made a peer), with other gentlemen of Cornwall had represented that the post road passed along the south coast of the county, with the consequence that several inland towns, including Launceston, were

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\* Feb. 13, 1701: *Ibid*, p. 327.      † A nephew of the Nicholas Morice who was elected for Newport at a bye-election in 1667: *ante*, p. 224.      ‡ *Commons Journals*, vol. xiii., p. 328.  
 § May 7, 1701: *Ibid*, p. 515.



under great disadvantages in their correspondence, and had to pay twopence each letter beyond the postage because they were served only by a bye-post. Exeter, Plymouth, and Launceston had been consulted on the matter and a scheme had been proposed; and although it was doubted whether the charge would be met by the sending of more letters, especially when the number of franks was considered, "they found by experience in other places that, where they had made the correspondence more easy and cheap, the number of letters had thereby much increased." The Treasury approved the scheme, only directing that at the end of twelve months it should be represented "how farr it answers ye charge" \*; and it may be presumed that this was the beginning of the passing through Launceston of the mails from the West to London which continued until about forty years since.

A very few years later another link with our own times was forged. Although there is little doubt that Nonconformity existed in Launceston when Puritanism was supreme, and Bennett was holder of the Castle, Gewen recorder of the town, and Oliver minister of St. Mary Magdalene's, we have no definite mention of its settlement here until early in the eighteenth century. In 1707, Edward Bennett, of Hexworthy, conveyed a piece of land and the sum of £120 bequeathed by his father, William Bennett, a worthy descendant of the Parliamentary Colonel, to six trustees (of whom only one, Samuel White, is described as being a townsman) to found "a Presbyterian Meeting House in or near Launceston." Castle Street was chosen as the site, and the building, erected in 1712, was conveyed in trust by a deed dated September 25 of that year to John Facy, of Coleman, Devonshire (one of the original six trustees), the Rev. Michael Martin, who was ordained on August 24, 1694, appearing to have been the first minister. Some years later he removed to Lymptone, and was succeeded at Castle Street by the Rev. William Tucker, but on the latter's departure for St. Ives about 1728, Martin returned to Launceston, and remained here exercising his ministry until August 10, 1745, when he died, leaving fifty pounds to the Castle Street meeting-house and another ten to a similar institution at Hatherleigh.†

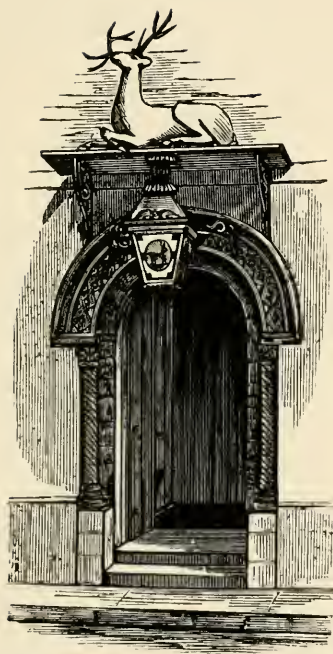
\* Nov. 22, 1703: Domestic State Papers, Treasury Series, vol. lxxxvii., p. 205.

† Early History of the Castle Street Independent Chapel, Launceston, Cornwall, copied from the Statistical View of Dissenters in England and Wales: Congregational Magazine.

To the first Parliament of Great Britain, elected in May, 1705, the old members both for Launceston and Newport were returned, but upon the death of Sparke, Sir John Pole, who had sat for East Looc in 1702, was chosen,\* and with the exception of the fact that his place was taken by Sir William Pole (member for Newport in 1701 and sent up for Camelford to the two succeeding Parliaments), the next dissolution, that of 1708, made no difference in the representation of the sister boroughs. Towards the end of this Parliament (which was dissolved in September, 1710, when the storm raised by the prosecution of Sacheverell had scarcely subsided and the Whig Ministry had just been overthrown) Launceston was evidently inclined to the winning side. On August 6 an "humble address of the mayor, recorder, deputy recorder, aldermen, town clerk, common council, free burgesses and other inhabitants of Dunheved alias Launceston" was presented to Queen Anne at Kensington "by the lord Hyde and William Cary Esq. their representatives and the honourable George Granville Esq. their recorder," this "declaring their detestation of republican principles."† Two days later several of the Whig Ministers were replaced by Tories, and on September 21 Parliament was dissolved. The presentation of the address was Cary's last public appearance as member for Launceston, for at the general election in October, when Hyde was for the eighth time returned, Cary's place was taken by Francis Scobell, who was as certainly a Tory as was George Courtenay, chosen for Newport in the place of Sir William Pole as colleague of Sir Nicholas Morice, both these new members being soon afterwards appointed to offices in the Tory Government.

George Grenville, who figured in the presentation of the address as Recorder of Launceston, was the last of the name with whom the borough had intimate relations, and, if only from a literary point of view, the connection is one of which we may be proud. He was the son of Bernard Grenville, who sat for Launceston in 1678 and 1690‡ (and who, by the way, was described in the "Flagellum Parliamentarium"§ as having "had £3000 given him to fetch him out of prison.") Prevented by his father on account of his youth from taking part in

\* Jan. 21, 1707: Official List, vol. ii., p. 1. † A Collection of Addresses, No. 6. [1710].  
‡ ante, pp. 225-234. § p. 4.



A RELIC OF THE PRIORY.



the suppression of the Monmouth rising, he was eager in 1688 to oppose William of Orange. During the latter's reign Grenville lived in retirement, employing his leisure in writing poetry and in fitting Shakspeare to the exigencies of the contemporary stage. When Anne ascended the throne he became active in politics, and, having sat for Fowey in the first three Parliaments of her reign (during which time apparently he was by the royal favour appointed Recorder of Launceston), he was returned for the county in 1710 at the general election which swept into power the party whose battle-cry in Cornwall was

Grenville and Trevanion as sound as a bell,  
For the Queen, the Church, and Sacheverell.

Neither the Recorder of Launceston nor the members for the two boroughs had any reason to complain of the principle that "to the victors belong the spoils" not being fully applied. Grenville had the post from which had been ousted Robert Walpole, and was soon afterwards created a peer as Lord Lansdowne, while Hyde was appointed Joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland; a little over a year later Courtenay (who, returned for both Newport and Ashburton at the general election, chose to sit for the former\*) was given a Commissionership of the Victualling Office;† and not long elapsed before Scobell was made receiver and paymaster of the tin-farms in Cornwall and Devon ‡ Even this did not exhaust the connection between Launceston and the Ministry of Harley and Bolingbroke, for in May, 1711, when Hyde succeeded to the Earldom of Rochester, his place as member for the town was taken by a Lord of the Admiralty, George Clarke.§ But at the general election of 1713, both Launceston and Newport appear to have turned from strangers and office-holders, and to have again sought to be represented by men of local claims. Scobell|| and Clarke lost their seats for Launceston

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\* March 19, 1711: Commons Journals, vol. xvi., p. 563. † A new writ for Newport was issued Dec. 12, 1711 (Commons Journals, vol. xvii., p. 7), and Courtenay was re-elected on Dec. 27 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 19). ‡ A new writ for Launceston was issued March 4, 1712 (Commons Journals, vol. xvii., p. 124), and Scobell was re-elected on March 15 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 19). § May 29, 1711: Official List, vol. ii., p. 19. The writ had been issued on May 16: Commons Journals, vol. xvi., p. 639. || Scobell, who is described in the British Parliamentary Register [1753] as of "Meniguns, Corn.," sat for Grampond in the Parliament of 1705 and for St. Germans in that of 1708, and, upon leaving Launceston, was elected for St. Mawes in 1713.

and in their place were sent to Westminster John Anstis, son of a late Registrar of the Archdeaconry of Cornwall, and Edward Herle, of Landue, great-grandson of Nicholas Trefusis, to whose political exertions reference has been made.\* Courtenay likewise disappeared from the representation of Newport, and Sir Nicholas Morice's new colleague was Humphry Morice, his cousin. The politics of the last-named might be guessed from the fact that he was a Governor of the Bank of England (at that time regarded almost in the light of a Whig institution), but a clearer indication is his presence with Robert Walpole in the minority which in 1714 voted against the expulsion from the House of Commons of Addison's friend, Steele, for his published attacks upon the Tory Ministry.† At the dissolution of January, 1715, caused by the death of the Queen, both Launceston and Newport re-elected their members. Two of these (Anstis and Sir Nicholas Morice) were Tories, and one (Humphry Morice) was as certainly a Whig, but of the politics of Herle we know nothing. Three divisions of such importance as to have the list of those participating in them preserved‡ were taken in this Parliament, and in not one of them did Herle vote. In 1716, Humphry Morice supported and his cousin opposed the Septennial Bill, Anstis not voting§; in 1719, all three were in the lobby with Walpole against a bill "for strengthening the Protestant interest"||; and in the same year Anstis and Humphry Morice voted with Sir Robert against a measure designed to restrict the creation of peers, while Sir Nicholas Morice was absent.\*\* Upon these votes it would be difficult to assert that Anstis was a Tory, but his arrest and imprisonment in the first year of the new reign on suspicion of a design to restore the Stuarts, in addition to his receiving from the Tory Ministry in the last days of Anne the reversion of the post of Garter King of Arms, is sufficient evidence of his leaning in politics. There is not much doubt that his views were shared by many of his Launceston constituents, as well as by others connected with the town. Lord Lansdowne, the

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\* ante, pp. 136 and foll.    † March 18, 1711: Parliamentary History, vol. vi., p. 1283. Only a list of the minority is here given, and in this three out of the four members for the boroughs do not appear.    ‡ It was not until less than half a century since that the House of Commons itself published the division lists.    § Parliamentary History, vol. vii., pp. 367-71.    || Ibid, pp. 585-88.    \*\* Ibid, pp. 624-27.



borough's Recorder, had shortly before the Hanoverian succession been put upon his trial for Jacobitism, but the charge fell through and he continued in his office, though, as has been noted, the Crown had power to remove him without process.\* And the sympathies of many in the county may be gathered from the relation by Hals that, when one James Paynter, "too warmly espousing the politics then most popular in Cornwall, took an active part in proclaiming King James on the death of Queen Anne," and he was indicted for the offence at Launceston, he was, upon his acquittal, "welcomed by bonfire and by ball from thence to the Land's End."

Anstis and Herle had not been unopposed at the general election of 1715, and their opponents, Sir William Pendarves and Charles Statham, petitioned on the ground that they "had a Majority of legal Votes; notwithstanding which, Thomas Bennet, Mayor of the said Borough, by illegal and unwarrantable Practices, hath returned Edward Herle and Joshua [*sic*] Anstis Esquires." The petition was referred to the usual committee,† which, in customary fashion, took an extraordinarily long time in considering it, and eleven months later it was withdrawn.‡ Six weeks afterwards a writ for Launceston was moved for because of Anstis having become Garter King of Arms, but the matter was postponed for the production of his patent§; this was to hand the next day, and the issue of the writ was again proposed, but the object of the majority was evidently delay and the debate was adjourned for ten days by 153 votes to 45, Humphry Morice acting as one of the tellers for the minority || The postponement proved to be for a much longer time than that appointed, and it was not until the end of the following year that the writ was ordered; \*\* Anstis was immediately re-elected,†† and he continued to sit for the borough until the close of this Parliament. He deserves especial remembrance because, as far as can be gathered, he was the town's earliest historian. It has been asserted in more than one county compilation that he "left in MS. a history of Launceston and other treatises not now to be found," and an effort made by the Rev. F. Jago-Arundell to call the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine* to

\* ante, p. 230. † March 30, 1715: Commons Journals, vol. xviii., p. 32. ‡ Feb. 15, 1716: Ibid, p. 376. § March 27: Ibid, p. 414. || March 28: Ibid, p. 415. \*\* Dec. 6, 1717: Ibid, p. 655. †† Dec. 16: Official List, vol. ii., p. 38.

his aid in tracing the missing document was fruitless.\* That it had an existence is shown by an entry in a book on British topography published thirty years before Mr. Jago-Arundell's appeal, a "History and antiquities of Launceston" being described as "MS. Anstis's Catalogue, No. 621;"† but the Earl of Ashburnham, whose manuscripts included Anstis's heraldic collections, informed the present author, upon their dispersal in 1883, that this particular treatise was not among them. Hope, however, need not be abandoned, and hidden in the many collections yet unsifted this history will very probably yet be found.

While Anstis was waiting the pleasure of the House of Commons as to the new writ for Launceston,‡ a matter of great moment to the town was occupying the attention of the legislature. For forty-five years the assize question as far as Parliament was concerned had been allowed to slumber, but with the in-coming of the Hanoverian dynasty (locally marked, as it probably was, by the adoption of the White Horse as the sign of the inn facing the polling place for Newport) another attempt was made to deprive Launceston of at least one of the assizes and this time successfully. In April, 1716, there was presented to the House of Commons "a Petition of the High Sheriff, Deputy Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, and other Gentlemen and Freeholders of the County of Cornwall" setting forth the assize-grievance in not dissimilar fashion to that adopted in the previous century,§ and praying that the assizes should be held at Bodmin, "wherein is a publick Hall, and all other Accommodations and Conveniences." The petition having been read, it was immediately moved and resolved by 136 to 78 that a bill should be brought in according to its prayer, Sir Nicholas Morice acting as a teller for the minority, and Mr. James Craggs, member for Tregony (who afterwards "died of terror at the investigation" into his share in the South Sea Bubble) as one for the majority.|| The Launceston authorities were evidently prepared for this rebuff, and on the following day it was ordered that their charters, "whereby they claim the Privilege of having the Assizes for the County of Cornwall, held at the said Borough, be laid before this

\* Gentleman's Magazine, Aug. 1810; vol. lxxx., part 2., p. 103.  
 Topography [1780], vol. i., p. 270. ‡ ante, p. 245. § ante, p. 222.  
 Commons Journals, vol. xviii., p. 418.

† Gough's British  
 || April 11, 1716;

House.”\* On April 16, the bill was read a first time without a division, and it was ordered for second reading on that day week †

On the day fixed for this important stage, the Mayor of Launceston attended at the bar and presented two charters of assize, one granted by Edward, Duke of Cornwall, in 1475‡ and the other by Henry the Eighth in 1515,§ “acquainting the House, That he had other Charters also, if there was Occasion for them.” Upon his withdrawal, there was read “a Petition of divers Gentlemen of the County of Cornwall and Parts adjacent, as well as of the Mayor, Deputy Recorder, Aldermen and others, of the borough of Launceston . . . and other Boroughs in the said County,” which set forth that, although they could not “doubt of the preservation of the Rights and Privileges of all his Majesty’s Subjects by this House, after the happy Dissipation and Silencing the unnatural Rebellion that lately infested these Realms,” they felt bound to furnish some reasons why their town should not be deprived of its “most ancient and undoubted Franchises.” Launceston, it was urged, “hath been very anciently the chief Castle and Residence of the Earls and Dukes of this County,” while Bodmin “was only the Town of the Prior of that Place;” the assize buildings and the judges’ lodgings had lately been improved, while there was not a single house at Bodmin fit for their lordships’ accommodation; the badness of the roads to the latter town would extend the length of the circuit by at least three days; moreover, the common gaol of the county being at Launceston, not only would great risk of escape attend the periodical removal of the prisoners to Bodmin, but there was no place provided there for their safe-keeping; and those confined at Launceston being “maintained partly by the Donations of former Inhabitants there, and partly by the Bounty of the present,” it could not be expected that Bodmin would furnish similar advantages. The petitioners, therefore, prayed that they might be heard by counsel against the Bill, and the second reading was deferred for two days to allow of this being done.||

Upon April 27 (the second reading having been postponed for a

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\* April 12: *Ibid.*, p. 419. † *Ibid.*, p. 422. ‡ *ante*, p. 222. § This was dated March 16, 1515, and was a charter of *inseximus* in confirmation of preceding charters; it was the second of three granted to Launceston by Henry VIII., the others being in 1509 and 1543. || April 23, 1716; *Commons Journals*, vol. xviii., p. 427.

further two days\*) counsel were heard on Launceston's behalf but without effect, the measure, by a majority of 148 to 67, being ordered to be committed, Mr. Trefusis and Mr. Chetwynd (who sat for Penryn and St. Mawes respectively) being the tellers for the winning side and Sir William Carew (who now represented Cornwall\*) and Humphry Morice for the losers.† The Bill was sent to a committee of the whole House, which considered it on May 1, and made some amendments the effect of which is not stated.§ On the next day the House agreed to all these except one, and added another on its own account, the one with which it disagreed appearing to have provided that both assizes could be removed from Launceston if the Lord Chancellor should so desire.|| Two days later the Bill was read a third time without a division, and it was immediately sent up to the Lords.\*\* On May 7 it was by them read a first time, any who wished to be heard upon it being directed to be present at the second reading; †† and on the next day the Mayor of Launceston claimed the privilege of being heard by counsel at the bar.‡‡ This was granted, and on May 11 counsel appeared both for and against the bill, which was then read a second time and committed without a division.§§ In this assembly also it was a committee of the whole House which considered the measure, and this body in its turn made some amendments||| which were agreed to by the Peers, \*\*\* and which, recognising that the constant holding of the assizes at Launceston had been "oftentimes found inconvenient," provided that they should "not be confined to the said Town," but the wishes of those who sought to deprive the borough of both assizes (and which seem to have been embodied in the original draft of the measure) were set at naught. The Bill was read a third time in the Lords on May 18, ††† the Commons agreed to the amendments without a division on May 30, ††† and on June 26 the Royal Assent was given by George the First in person. §§§

\* April 25 : *Ibid.*, p. 430. † This may be taken as an incidental confirmation of the theory (*ante*, p. 237) that William Cary, M.P. for Launceston in six Parliaments, was Sir William Carew, who, not being re-elected for Launceston in 1710, was returned for Saltash at a bye-election in January, 1711, and for the county at the general election of 1713, and who continued to sit for Cornwall without intermission until his death in 1744. ‡ *Commons Journals*, vol. xviii., p. 432. § *Ibid.*, p. 434. || *Ibid.*, p. 436.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 437. †† *Lords Journals*, vol. xx., p. 351. †† *Ibid.*, p. 352. §§ *Ibid.*, p. 255. ||| May 14 : *Ibid.*, p. 359. \*\*\* May 15 : *Ibid.*, p. 360. ††† *Ibid.*, p. 362. ††† *Commons Journals*, vol. xviii., p. 452. §§§ *Lords Journals*, vol. xx., p. 396.

On the day the measure became law it was intimated from London to the civic authorities at Bodmin that the judges would hold the next assize at that place, and they were called upon to level the roads and ways from Launceston thither, and to cut the trees and hedges fit for travelling with coaches. These instructions, it is to be presumed, were attended to, and the Corporation of Bodmin, being determined that everything should pass off pleasantly at their first assize, gave ten shillings "to John Alford for rideing to Polson Bridge against the judges to show the way,"† which lay through Launceston and Camelford. The Bodmin authorities were so satisfied with the result that they wrote to the Earl of Radnor, Lord Lieutenant of the county, and one of the principal promoters of their aims, assuring him, amid their thanks, of the happy way in which all concerned (perhaps because none of them belonged to Launceston) had been satisfied at the first assize; and the Earl replied with an assurance that, as long as he held the lieutenancy, the summer assize should continue to be held in their town.†

In the year that the assize question had temporarily been settled to the detriment of Launceston, "John Horwell, of the city of Dublin," whom it is not difficult to identify with the Newport Viander prominent in the electoral dispute of 1690,‡ did something to raise the spirits of the townsmen by making a will, which bequeathed all his money "for the purpose of maintaining, clothing, and educating six poor boys of the parish in which he was born; three of the boys to be elected by his nearest of kin and three by the feoffees of the parish; he allows £30 per annum for the maintenance of the boys; £6 per annum for their clothes, which was to be uniform; £3 per annum to a schoolmaster; and £5 per annum to a poor widow to look after them: the boys to be admitted at seven years of age, and apprenticed at fourteen."§ The benevolent intentions of Horwell (who was probably a descendant of the Christopher Horwell, of Lawhitton, buried at St. Stephens in 1628) were not destined to do much service to his native parish for many years, his estate

\* July 25, 1716: Bodmin Corporation Accounts quoted in Maclean's *Trigg Minor*, vol. i., p. 107. † May 31, 1718: Bodmin Register, p. 90. ‡ ante, p. 235. § Lysens, *Magna Britannia*, vol. iii., p. 358.

being thrown into Chancery upon his death and an endeavour made to dispute the will. The Grammar School consequently remained the only educational establishment of note in the town, and, at this very period, one of its pupils, Bartholomew Vigers, born at Bishop's Tawton in 1645, was Bishop of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin in the Established Church of Ireland, a see he held from 1691 until his death thirty years later.

The mention of a bishop naturally leads to a remembrance of the church. It had been stated in the petition presented by our Mayor to the House of Commons in 1716 upon the assize question\* that several houses in Launceston "had not long since been rebuilt, altered, and improved by the Members of the Borough, and others, at their own Charge," and this process of renovation was extended to the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. Lord Lansdowne, having emerged from the cloud of Jacobitism under which he had for a time been obscured, threw himself into the work with great zeal, and a letter is in existence written by him to Lord Gower on February 6, 1719, asking that nobleman for aid towards repairing the school and the church at Launceston, of which town, as he mentioned, he was the Recorder, and he added that most of the Cornish gentlemen had subscribed.† What was the precise nature of the restoration then effected cannot now be learnt, but that whitewash and plaster were abundantly employed, in the approved style of an age which believed the Gothic to be barbarous, was unfortunately only too evident to later eyes. Upon one point, however, there is no doubt: five of the six bells in the tower bear the date 1720, when the restoration was probably completed, these being cast by Abraham Rudhall, of Gloucester, (who was the founder of many bells in Cornwall about this time) and each ornamented with a somewhat trite motto, wishing well to Church, State, and Town; but although there is no earlier mention of the existence of bells in the Launceston Tower, this does not prove that it had stood empty and silent for over three centuries‡ The incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene's who saw these changes effected was the Rev.

\* ante, p. 247. † Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fifth Report, Appendix, p. 190; Duke of Sutherland's Papers. ‡ Dunkin in his Church Bells of Cornwall gives several instances of the earlier existence of bells in other parishes; by diligent search similar mention of the original Launceston bells will probably yet be found.



William Bedford, who had become incumbent in 1714\* not improbably in succession to Nathaniel Boughton,† a son of whom, George by name, matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1715.‡

While Launceston was rebuilding its church, one of the local members was distinguishing himself by coming into the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. On December 7, 1719, the House was "called," a practice which has become obsolete, and among the absentees was Sir Nicholas Morice. Two days later, "his excuse not being allowed of," he was, without a division, ordered into the keeping of the Sergeant-at-Arms although his cousin, Humphry Morice, was a teller for the majority which excused Sir William Pole, the old member for Newport,§ and soon again to be returned for that borough.|| Fifteen in all were sent into custody, but most of them were soon released, Sir Nicholas being let off on December 12 upon payment of the fees.\*\* Sixteen months later there was a change in the representation of Launceston, caused by the death of Edward Herle, and, a new writ being issued on April 24, 1721,†† Alexander Pendarves (who, in previous Parliaments, had sat for Saltash, Penryn, and Helston) was returned on May 11.‡‡

At the general election of April, 1722, Sir Nicholas Morice was re-chosen for Newport with Sir William Pole as his colleague, Humphry Morice being sent up for Grampound together with the then Marquis of Hartington,§§ and, as Pole was Master of the Household to Anne under the Tory Ministry in 1712, this evidently meant the loss of a seat to the Whigs in Newport.|||| At Launceston, where there was a severe contest, the Whigs for the time did not fare very much better. Anstis did not again offer himself, but in addition to Pendarves three candidates came forward—Dr. John Friend (or Freind), Mr. Thomas Smith, and Mr. John Willes. The Mayor, Nicholas Herle, returned Pendarves and Friend, and against this a petition was presented, purporting to be signed by Smith and Willes, but which,

\* It is recorded on a memorial in the church that William Bedford died in 1737, and that his sons Charles and John died in 1786 and 1787 respectively, the three having been "Curates of this church successively 73 years." † ante, p. 220, note. ‡ Boase's Exeter College, p. 90. § ante, p. 249. || Commons Journals, vol. xix., p. 188. \*\* Ibid, p. 191. †† Ibid, p. 524. ‡‡ Official List, vol. ii., p. 38. §§ Ibid, p. 51. || Pole was elected also for Honiton, and, choosing to sit for that borough, a new writ was issued for Newport (Commons Journals, vol. xx., p. 62), and John Morice was returned on December 11, 1722 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 51).

as the former denied having any part in it, was rejected by the House.\* On the same day two other petitions against the return were handed in, one from "the major Part of the Inhabitants" and the other from Willes, both setting forth that the last-named had a majority of legal votes, and the former emphasising the fact that Herle, "contrary to the Rights and Privileges of the Petitioners, did take upon him to Return Mr. Pendarves and Doctor Friend." The petitions were immediately referred to the Committee of Privileges and Elections,† which, as seems to have been the custom, did nothing in the matter. In January, 1724, therefore, Willes appealed again to the House, being not improbably stimulated to this action by the fact that Friend in the previous year had been committed to the Tower for high treason, though afterwards discharged without trial.‡ Willes in his earlier petition had complained that Herle had been "guilty of several illegal practices," and he now declared that Pendarves and Friend had been "guilty likewise of such illegal Practices as rendered them incapable of sitting in Parliament, even though they had a Majority," the possession of which, however, he denied to them. The Committee was again directed to inquire into the matter,§ and in a little over a couple of months presented its report, which fills seven columns of the Commons' Journals. This went into the question of whether (as the petitioner asserted) only inhabitants of the town could vote under the charter of Philip and Mary or (as the sitting members contended) whether "foreign burgesses" could exercise the suffrages, they having been allowed to do so, it was alleged, since the time of James the Second. Several witnesses were called on each side, and the Committee decided that the right of election was "in the Mayor, Aldermen, and Freemen, being Inhabitants at the time when they were made free, and not receiving Pay of the Parish." A scrutiny of the poll was then made, this having been declared as 43 for Pendarves and Friend, the Tory candidates, and 25 for Willes, the chosen of the Whigs, and counsel for the latter attempted to strike off 20 from Mr. Pendarves and 21 from Dr. Friend, and to add

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\* Oct. 19, 1722: Commons Journals, vol. xx., p. 26.    † Ibid, p. 27.    ‡ The British Parliamentary Register (1753), No. 21.    § January 10, 1724: Commons Journals, vol. xx., p. 228.

five to Willes. The former included Sir Nicholas Morice, the member for Newport, and Thomas Ching, one of an honoured family in Launceston concerns, and a family which still retains the politics here indicated, the difference of one between Pendarves and Friend being caused by the fact that the second vote of a Tory elector who attempted to poll for the former and a "Doctor Elliott," was given by the Mayor to Friend. It was asserted by the petitioner that John Abbott, who had been recorded as voting for Pendarves and Friend, was too faint to speak when brought to the poll, that he was carried away in that condition, and that he died within three days; that another voter for the respondents, Robert Squire, "received Parish Pay, and wore the Parish Badge, before, and at the time of, the Election;" and that another, James Wakeham, "was outlawed for Debt." Carew Tingcomb, John Gudding, Shadrack Gewen, Nicholas White, and Daniel Eyme\* were the five Whigs who claimed to be allowed to vote for Willes, Tingcomb declaring that he had "often demanded his Freedom of the Corporation and was always refused, because he was not of the Right Party, and for no other Reason." The committee agreed that Pendarves was duly elected, but proposed to seat Willes instead of Friend, and this was adopted by 181 to 102.†

Sir John St. Aubyn, one of the members for the county, was a teller for the minority in this division, and it is not difficult to guess that, in addition to his desire to defend a fellow Tory (for he "acquired popularity by opposing the administration of Sir Robert Walpole"‡) he took this step because he was the son-in-law of Sir Nicholas Morice, one of those whose vote was attacked by Willes. By his marriage, Sir John received not only a dowry with his wife of ten thousand pounds, "which were conveyed in two carts from Werrington to Clowance, all in half-crowns,"§ but also eventually the manor of Stoke Damerel, upon which stands the old Plymouth Dock—the Devonport of to-day.|| Sir Nicholas himself died about two years after the Launceston election petition was dealt with, and on February

\* It is not known whether Gewen was descended from Thomas Gewen, the former member for Launceston, or Eyme from Ruddle's curate at St. Mary Magdalene's (ante, p. 229): Tingcombe as a surname is still familiar in the town. † March 17: *Ibid.* pp. 297-300. ‡ Davies Gilbert, *Parochial History of Cornwall*, vol. i., p. 265. § *Ibid.*

|| A portion of Devonport still bears the name of Morice Town.

18, 1726, his place as member for Newport was filled by his brother-in-law, the Hon. Thomas Herbert,\* son of the Earl of Pembroke. Three months later there was a vacancy for Launceston, caused by the appointment of Willes as Second Justice of Chester. If he offered himself for re-election he was certainly defeated, but, from the fact that in March, 1725, upon the death of Pendarves, Dr. Friend, his old rival, had been returned,† it is improbable that he again came forward. In any case Henry Vane, of whom we know little further than this fact, was elected for Launceston,‡ and Willes ten days afterwards found a seat at Weymouth,§ in place of a member expelled the House for forgery, and for which borough a writ had been issued on the same day as for Launceston. In the next Parliament he exchanged Weymouth for West Looe, and, having become successively Chief Justice of Chester and Attorney-General, he was made Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1737.

While these electoral changes were occupying the town, its name was being taken for the first time as the title of a peer. John Mohun, just a century before, had intimated that he would not object to being made Baron Mohun of Launceston,|| and now a higher placed than he, and bearing an even more disreputable character, was to have a title from the borough. Just after George the First ascended the throne Frederick, eldest son of the Prince of Wales, was created Duke of Gloucester, and in 1725 he received five other titles, one of which was Viscount Launceston. The first bearer of the name was "loathed by George II. and never mentioned by George III.,"\*\* and the popular estimate of him remains in the epitaph which relates that

Here lies Fred

Who was alive and is dead.

The title passed upon Frederick's death to the prince who was afterwards George the Third, and the last who bore it was George the Fourth during the time he was Prince of Wales. When the present

\* Official List, vol. ii., p. 51. The writ had been issued on Feb. 9: Commons Journals, vol. xx., p. 566. † March 29, 1725: Official List, vol. ii., p. 51. The writ had been issued on March 17: Commons Journals, vol. xx., p. 451.

‡ May 31, 1726: Official List, vol. ii., p. 51. The writ had been ordered on May 23: Commons Journals, vol. xx., p. 704. § Official List, vol. ii., p. 52. || ante, p. 138. \*\* W. M. Thackeray, The Four Georges, George III.

Duke of Cornwall was created Prince of Wales he was not made Viscount Launceston, although there was a fond and temporarily well-founded belief among many of the townsmen about the time of the Prince's marriage that he intended buying a seat in the county, and that this seat would be at Werrington.

Matters were very quiet in Launceston for some years after this new title had been created. At the general election of August, 1727, caused by the death of George the First, Friend and Vane gave place as members for Launceston to the Hon. John King and Arthur Tremayne, while John Morice at Newport was succeeded by Sir William Morice, son of the late Sir Nicholas, and Herbert was re-chosen.\* The last-named was a pronounced Whig, Morice was a Tory as his father had been, and Tremayne was of the same party, but although King also was most probably a Tory, he took no part in the three crucial divisions of this Parliament. In the first of these, in 1729, Herbert sided with Walpole in a division on the Civil List, but the three other members were absent†; in the second, in 1733, Tremayne and Morice voted against Walpole's excise scheme, while Herbert and King were away‡; and in the third, in 1734, Morice and Tremayne supported the repeal of the Septennial Act, which Herbert opposed.§

The general election of May, 1734, did not pass off as quietly at Launceston as that of 1727 had done. Sir William Morice contested the town (his place at Newport being filled by Sir John Molesworth, Herbert being again chosen||), and there were three other candidates—John King, Charles Wyndham, and Sir William Irby. Caleb Jenkins, the then Mayor, declared Morice and King to be returned, whereupon Irby (who was Chamberlain to the Princess of Wales,\*\* and, therefore, in all probability a professor of Whig principles) petitioned the House, setting forth that “at the said Election, many Persons were admitted to poll for the said Mr. King who had no right so to do; and the Votes of several Persons, who had a Right to Poll, and offered to Vote for the Petitioner were refused; by which undue Means, and by the Partiality and unwarrantable Practices of

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\* Official List, vol. ii., p. 62; Vane was returned at this election for St. Mawes. † Parliamentary History, vol. viii., p. 703. ‡ Ibid., p. 1312. § Ibid., vol. ix., p. 479.  
 || Official List, vol. ii., p. 73. \*\* Parliamentary History, vol. ix., p. 618.

Caleb Jenkins, who acted as Mayor of the said Borough, and by other illegal and unwarrantable Practices, the said Mr. King is returned." Irby claimed to have received a majority of legal votes, but Wyndham, who handed in a petition on the same day, only averred that he had an equal number to King; he added, however, that "several Persons were admitted to Vote who gave their Votes against the Petitioner, who, as the Petitioner apprehends, had no Right to Vote at the said Election," and he charged the returning officer with various illegal practices. The petitions were at once referred to the usual committee,\* but five weeks later Wyndham's was withdrawn.† On March 24, it was decided by 109 to 67 to receive the committee's report as to Irby's complaint, from which document it appears that the petitioner's counsel claimed that, under the charter of Philip and Mary,‡ the power of election rested with the mayor and aldermen together with "such of the more discreet, prudent, and quiet Men and Inhabitants" whom they might choose as freemen. The committee pronounced in favour of this contention, basing their decision upon that of the committee of 1724,§ and evidence was then taken concerning the circumstances of the election. The return of the mayor was handed in, giving thirty votes to King and twenty-nine to Irby, and the latter's counsel undertook to show that Hugh Pyper, of Plymouth; John Roberts, who at one time and another had been curate of Northhill, "hackney writer to Mr. Lyne, an Attorney," and usher to a school; Edmund Cheney, who "was supported and lived by the Charity of his Father-in-law"; Arthur Lawrence, who had "served as a Clerk with Mr. Lyne aforesaid"; and two other voters were not qualified as freemen. Of these, the two first had voted for the Tory candidates in 1722, and had been objected to before the election committee of 1724|| upon much the same grounds as now. The committee, no counsel appearing for King (for the sufficient reason that he had now succeeded to the peerage as Lord King) allowed the objection to all six, the House adopted without a division their conclusion that Irby was duly elected,\*\* and the next

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\* Feb. 1, 1735: Commons Journals, vol. xxii., p. 343. † March 10: Ibid, p. 406.  
 ‡ ante, p. 98. § ante, p. 253. || ante, p. 252. \*\* March 24, 1735: Commons Journals,  
 vol. xxii., p. 428.



day the Deputy Clerk of the Crown amended the return accordingly.\*

During several years at this period the intention of the Act of 1716 with regard to the Cornwall Assizes was being steadily ignored. For some reason, now difficult to trace, Launceston in 1727 once more became the sole assize-town for Cornwall, and for eleven years the situation was undisturbed. But at the beginning of 1738, "the Justices of the Peace, Gentlemen Freeholders and others, of the County of Cornwall" were again to the fore with the usual petition, in which the facts of the county being "near Ninety Miles in Length," of Launceston being at one end and of Bodmin being in the centre, and of the inconveniences to which "several ancient and infirm Witnesses and other Persons" had consequently been put, were once more set forth; and the Commons were asked to pass a bill amending the Act of 1716 in order that there might be no doubt of Launceston being deprived of at least one assize. Such a measure was immediately ordered to be introduced,† it was brought in the next day,‡ read a second time and committed three weeks after§ (as it would have been before but for the illness of the Speaker which necessitated the adjournment of the House), passed through committee with amendments a few days later,|| the amendments agreed to by the House twenty-four hours afterwards,\*\* the bill read a third time and sent up to the Lords within another two days,†† and all without a single division. But the Upper House once more came to Launceston's rescue. In the Commons no resistance appears to have been offered by our local authorities, but immediately the measure reached the Lords the mayor, aldermen, and freemen petitioned that they might be heard by counsel against it, and their request was granted.‡‡ A few days afterwards the judges were ordered to attend the House at the second reading,§§ and, when the day fixed for this arrived, the proceedings commenced with the reading of a "Petition of the High Sheriff,||| Grand Jury, Justices of the Peace, Gentlemen and other Freeholders, assembled at the Assizes held at Launceston in and for the County of Cornwall, the 15th Day of this Instant March," praying

\* Ibid, p. 429. † Feb. 7, 1738: Commons Journals, vol. xxiii., p. 24. ‡ Feb. 8: Ibid, p. 25. § March 2: Ibid, p. 49. || March 6: Ibid, p. 61. \*\* March 7: Ibid, p. 64. †† March 9: Lords Journals, vol. xxv., p. 184. ‡‡ March 10: Ibid, p. 186. §§ March 16: Ibid, p. 190. ||| John Honey, of Treuant, in Menheniot.

that the Act of 1716 might "still continue in Force, in the Form it is at present." When the second reading had been formally agreed to, counsel were heard on behalf of Launceston, these presenting the charter of Philip and Mary "reciting an Inspeximus of a former Charter of Richard the Second, whereby the Justices of Assize were appointed to hold their Session for the said County at the said Borough, and no where else."\* Evidence was then taken, a Mr. Piccard testifying to the "Fitness of the Town of Launceston for holding the Assizes for the County of Cornwall; and of the Unfitness of the Town of Bodmin, in the said County, for that Purpose:" while a Mr. Luke† on behalf of Bodmin contended that that town was a fitting assize place "with respect to the Cheapness and Goodness of Provisions, and to the Roads thereabouts." But the former evidence was thought the weightier, and it was ordered without a division "That the Bill be rejected."‡ Yet, although Parliament thus refused to interfere, the summer assize was restored to Bodmin, and the half-and-half system continued for exactly a century.

Towards the close of the Parliament which had had this assize-matter in hand, Thomas Herbert, member for Newport, died, and his brother, Nicholas Herbert, a Whig like himself,§ was returned in his stead.|| At the general election of May, 1741, the latter was re-chosen, and, the Morice influence being now chiefly devoted to family uses, he was given as his colleague "Thomas Bury, Esq. of Colleton, county Devon," who seems to have been a brother of the "Miss Ann Bury, of a Devonshire family," whom Sir William Morice married after he had secured a divorce from his first wife.\*\* Sir Johu Molesworth, thus deprived of his seat for Newport, was sent up for the county at a bye-election three years and a half later on the death of Sir John St. Aubyn, the Werrington baronet's brother-in-law,†† while Morice himself and Sir William Irby were re-elected for Launceston.

\* ante, p. 69.

† Query, Lake.

‡ March 21; Lords Journals, vol. xxv., p. 196.

§ In a division on December 10, 1742, upon the question of the Hanoverian troops being taken into British pay, Herbert voted with the Whig majority and Bury with the Tory minority, while Morice, though absent, is mentioned as an opponent; Irby is not named (Parliamentary History, vol. xii., p. 1051). || Jan. 22, 1740: Official List, vol. ii., p. 73. The writ had been issued on Jan. 8: Commons Journals, vol. xxiii., p. 411.

\*\* "An Act to dissolve the Marriage of Sir William Morice, Baronet, with Lady Lucy Whartol, and to enable him to marry again, and for other purposes therein mentioned," was passed in 1738. †† ante, p. 253.

Morice had lately been employed in effecting alterations at Werrington. In 1740, he obtained an Act to enable him to grant to the incumbent of the parish a piece of ground on which a new church might be built. The old one, which was now much out of repair, had stood almost in front of the mansion, and it was removed in order to give space for the existing dwelling, which was placed partly in the first Werrington churchyard, the tombstones being imbedded into the park walls and the yew trees left standing to this day. The new church was consecrated on September 7, 1743,\* but the whisperings of the parishioners that the family which had desecrated the original edifice would never flourish were not silenced, and at no distant date the estate, which meanwhile had passed from the childless Sir William to a second cousin, was in the hands of strangers.† It is to this Sir William Morice, who had travelled much in his youth, that the park owes some of its pseudo-antiquities, of the type of which the eighteenth century was fond, such as an imitation of the tomb of the Horatii and Cuiratii in St. Malcolm's Copse,‡ of a Roman temple on the terrace, and of a triumphal arch on the hill nearest Launceston; the last-named, which, according to tradition, was erected to commemorate an electoral victory, was destroyed in 1883 by the present owner of Werrington (Mr. J. C. Williams).

Sir William appears to have determined upon showing to what a high degree could be carried the "Werrington influence" in the two boroughs, for, at the general election of July, 1747, not only did he once more return himself for Launceston, and his family connections, Nicholas Herbert and Thomas Bury,§ for Newport, but he caused Sir William Irby to go to Bodmin for a seat and filled the Launceston vacancy with his nephew, Sir John St. Aubyn (the previous baronet, son-in-law of Sir Nicholas Morice and member for the county,|| having died in the winter of 1744\*\*). And when Sir William himself departed this life, he was succeeded as member for Launceston, as well as in his entailed estates, by his second cousin,

\* A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Werrington, Devon, at the Consecration of that Church on Wednesday, Sep. 7, 1743. By William Hole, M.A., Fellow of Exeter College in Oxford, and Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Exeter. Published by Order of his Lordship and at the desire of some Gentlemen who were present. Oxford, 1743.

† N. H. P. Lawrence, Werrington and its Possessors. ‡ Smallacombe Copse, as it is commonly called. Locally the tomb is known as "The Sugar-loaves." § ante, p. 258.

|| ante, p. 253. \*\* Official List, vol. ii., p. 98.

Humphry Morice,\* a London merchant, son of the member for the borough in days gone by.†

This period is, however, to be marked in Launceston's history not because of its electoral but of its religious interest, for it was during its course that John Wesley first preached to the town. Mr. Wesley's earliest visit was paid on September 21, 1743, when he rode hither from St. Ives on his way to Exeter, and his next was on April 2, 1744, when he records that the ground was covered with snow as in the depth of winter. On each occasion he appears to have simply passed through without preaching, but on August 29, 1747, he held a noon-day service on St. Stephens Down, having on the previous Sunday occupied the pulpits of the parish churches of Tamerton, Week St. Mary, and St. Gennys, visiting those of Tresmere and Laneast within the next two days. On August 28, 1750, he again preached on St. Stephens Down, this time at eight in the morning, having officiated at Tamerton and Laneast the previous day; and when, on September 21 of the next year, he re-visited Launceston, a room was provided for his accommodation, which is believed to have been in a house in "Samford Timewell's Lane," on the site now occupied by the residence of Mr. John Symons, in Church Street. He had ridden with his wife from Tiverton,‡ and they were received by a mob (probably the larger because it was market-day) which, in addition to attending them to the room, made a great noise and threw missiles at the assembly as it dispersed, but no one was hurt. On the next morning, it being Sunday, he preached at eight o'clock in the main street to what he describes as a large congregation of serious persons, but "soon after a mob of boys and gentlemen gathered on the other side of the street; they grew more and more noisy, till finding I could not be heard there, I went to the room and quietly finished my discourse," preaching again after morning service and then "hasting to Tresmere," with the incumbent of which (Mr. Bennet) he was on friendly terms. It was at Launceston on July 23, 1753, that Mr. Wesley first met the Stewards for

\*The election took place on Feb. 2, 1750 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 99, where the date is wrongly given as 1749). † ante, pp. 244-251: he died in 1731. ‡ Not impossibly pillion-fashion. Attached to more than one of the older Launceston inns is the stone "heppen-stock" from which wives used to join their husbands on the pillion, but the number of these relics has greatly decreased within the last dozen years.

Eastern Cornwall, and he preached in the town once more on August 13 of the same year. Thirteen months later—on September 3, 1754—he rode hither from Tiverton, arriving in time to preach at six o'clock and to meet “the society” afterwards. The next morning in the Town Hall he addressed a “wild yet civil congregation,” in the afternoon he met the Cornish Stewards, and in the evening he held another service, concerning which he says that, for the sake of that hour only, he would have thought all the labour of his journey well-bestowed.\*

Before Wesley again visited Launceston a great change had come over the political complexion of the two boroughs. At the dissolution of April, 1754, Humphry Morice was the only one of the four old members re-elected,† while he was given as his colleague the Right Hon. Sir George Lee, Dean of the Arches, Judge of the Prerogative Court of the Province of Canterbury, and Treasurer to the Princess Dowager of Wales,‡ it being probable from the last-named appointment that the Duchy influence was exercised in his favour. For Newport there was a contest, the first for many years, the successful candidates being John Lee, of Albemarle Street, London, and Edward Bacon, of Erleham, near Norwich,§ who polled 145 and 144 votes respectively, and the unsuccessful Jeffery French and Richard Rigby, the former securing 60 and the latter 59 votes.|| The contest was evidently an attempt of John, Duke of Bedford, leader of what was politically known as “the Bloomsbury gang,” to exercise influence upon Newport, for French and Rigby were at this same dissolution returned for Tavistock, his pocket-borough,\*\* and the latter was notoriously his creature. From whatever causes it may have arisen, one of the brightest points in Newport's electoral history is this rejection of the man of whose “blunt, or if I may call it, awkward integrity” *Junius* sarcastically wrote,†† and whom Macaulay

\* The Author is indebted to Mr. Dingley for this account of the beginnings of Wesleyanism in Launceston, and for what will be subsequently given on the same subject.  
† Official List, vol. ii., p. 110. ‡ Parliamentary History, vol. xv., p. 298.

§ Bacon had been chosen for Callington at a bye-election in April, 1743 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 98), and his family may be conjectured to have had some influence in Cornwall, seeing that Waller Bacon (member for Norwich in six Parliaments, and not improbably Edward's father) was doubly returned for Norwich and St. Germans at the general election of 1715. || H. S. Smith, The Parliaments of England, vol. ii., p. 17.

\*\* There may have been a personal element on the Duke's part in his opposition to John Lee, who is described in the official return for Newport to the next Parliament as of “Risely, county Bedford” (Official List, vol. ii., p. 124), in which shire his grace had some severe political battles to fight. †† Letter of Philo-Junius, June 22, 1769.



coupled with the infamous Sandwich to describe as "able debaters, pleasant boon companions,\* dexterous intriguers, masters of all the arts of jobbing and electioneering, and, both in public and private life, shamelessly immoral."†

The problem of providing for the poor of the town was now for the first time attempted systematically to be dealt with, as Launceston was beginning to show signs of the commercial decay which in later times more completely overtook it, and the number of the indigent was yearly increasing. Accordingly, on January 15, 1755, a petition of "the Mayor and Commonalty" was presented to the Commons, "alleging, That if a Workhouse was erected within the said Borough and Parish, for maintaining and employing the Poor thereof, it would save many of them from Ruin, and make them useful to the Public; and setting forth, That the Mayor and Commonalty of the said Borough are possessed of an uncultivated Common, called Searne, which they are desirous may be let or sold; and that the Rents and Profits thereof may be applied for the Maintenance of their Poor, if a Workhouse is erected for the Purposes aforesaid."‡ The petition asked that a Bill might be introduced to meet these points, and the question was referred to a committee, which included Morice, Sir George Lee, John Lee, and Sir William Irby§ (now sitting for Bodmin), but not Bacon.|| Nearly three weeks later Morice presented the committee's report, which stated that "to prove the Allegations of the said Petition, Mr. Joshua Thomas and Mr. Richard Welsh,\*\* being severally examined, said, That the Number of poor People has of late Years very much increased within the Borough of Launceston," that the erection of a workhouse would be highly desirable, and that it might well be paid for out of the proceeds of Searne, which was "in its present Situation of very little Advantage to them." The committee thereupon recommended that the asked-for Bill should be introduced, and Morice and Sir George Lee were

\* "Mr. Rigby was introduced into political life by the Duke of Bedford, to whom he had chiefly recommended himself by his convivial talents" (Editor of *The Letters of Junius*). † Lord Macaulay, *Second Essay on the Earl of Chatham*. ‡ The petition further asserted that the two general sessions of the borough, held under the Charters of Philip and Mary and Charles the Second, had been "found insufficient for the Management and Government of the said Corporation," but nothing appears to have been specially done by Parliament upon this point. § *ante*, pp. 255-58.

|| *Commons Journals*, vol. xxvii., p. 87. \*\* Joshua Thomas and Philip Welsh were aldermen of the borough; not improbably the latter was the witness referred to.



directed to prepare it.\* The Bill "for the better Relief and Employment of the Poor of the Borough of Danheved" was accordingly brought in a week later and at once read a first time,† the second reading following in another three days.‡ Some amendments were made in committee,§ and the measure passed on February 27, when Sir George Lee was directed to "carry the Bill to the Lords, and desire their concurrence."|| This duty the member for Launceston fulfilled on March 3,\*\* the Bill was read a first time by the peers the next day, a second time and committed the day following, reported without amendment on the day after that, and was passed on the day succeeding,†† George the Second giving his assent in person on March 20.

The Act provided for the creation of a body of Local Guardians, to consist of the mayor and aldermen with five other persons "to be elected out of the ablest and discreetest inhabitants"; and the first meeting for the purpose of choosing these was held "this Thirtieth Day of June 1755 at the Comon Councill Room of the said Borough." There were present "Edmund Cheyne, Esqr. Mayor, Joshua Thomas gent John Carpenter gent Philip Welsh gent Joseph Carpenter gent and Charles Lawrence gent Aldermen of the said Borough," Cheyne being elected Treasurer, and Thomas Darke, Solomon Spettigue, George Mann, Richard Kingdon, and Anthony King the first Local Guardians, and the minutes were signed by the Mayor and the five other aldermen in attendance.‡‡

Edmund Cheyne, who here figures as chief magistrate of the town, was hero of a love romance which, it is believed, has not hitherto found its way into print. In the earlier years of the century, Samuel Lyne, attorney, and one of the most zealous of Launceston Tories,§§ occupied the large house opposite the old Town Hall, which was the birthplace and for many years the residence of the late Alderman John Ching. His only child was a daughter, and when Edmund

\* Feb. 3, 1755: Commons Journals, vol. xxvii., p. 135. † Feb. 10: Ibid. p. 147. ‡ Feb. 13: Ibid. p. 169. § Feb. 24: Ibid. p. 174. || Ibid. p. 180. \*\* Lords Journals, vol. xxviii., p. 349. †† Ibid. pp. 352-45-8. ‡‡ There are two minute books in existence of the elections of Local Guardians from 1755 and of Local Guardians and Overseers from 1784. §§ He and his clerks took an active part in the contests of 1722 and 1734 (ante, pp. 251-55). That he was a man of substance is shown by Tonkin's reference, in the record of his visit to Launceston in 1731, to "the hill on which Mr. Samuel Line has built his pleasure house and enclosed a bowling-green."

Cheyne, a young man in his own profession, came to the town as a stranger it was with Joanna Lyne that he fell in love. The father so strongly disapproved the match that an elopement followed, and Lyne vowed that his daughter should never darken his doors again. Later he relented, but, determined not to break his word, he erected at the back of his residence a place now used as a warehouse, but originally well fitted up. In this the young couple were lodged, and, as if to remind them of their adventure, there was suspended from the ceiling of the chief room a figure of Cupid, drawn-bow in hand and with finger on arrow ready to shoot.\* It may be taken that the builder of "Cupid's room," as it long was called, more completely forgave the offence as time rolled on, for, although his daughter died in 1724, nearly thirteen years before himself, we find incidental confirmation of the story—of the poor estate of Cheyne and of the help he received from Lyne—in the proof before the Parliamentary Committee in 1735 that one of those who in the previous year had voted for the Tory candidates at Launceston without being duly qualified as a freeman was Edmund Cheyne,† who "was supported and lived by the Charity of his Father-in-law."‡

At no long interval from the date at which a new Launceston institution was being founded an old Launceston family was being extinguished. Hugh Pyper, of Tresmarrow, the second of the two lives for which the reversion of the constablenesship of the Castle had been granted a century before,§ died on October 25, 1754, his brother, Granville Pyper (to whom he was heir-at-law and to whose memory the finest monument in Launceston Church is dedicated) having pre-deceased him by twenty-eight years. On February 26, 1755, the constablenesship was given by George the Second to John Bolt, he being succeeded in the office on February 6, 1760, by George Knill, whose commission was confirmed on July 14, 1761, by George the Third. The last-named deed of appointment granted to Knill, in addition to the constablenesship, "the care and custody of the gaol, and

\* This information is gathered from the MS. left by the late Alderman Ching of a lecture he intended locally delivering upon fifty years' recollections of Launceston, a project the execution of which was prevented by his death on March 12, 1883. † In the Commons Journals called Cheney. ‡ ante, p. 256. There is a monument in St. Mary Magdalene's to the memory of Lyne, his daughter and son-in-law, and their three children. § ante, p. 236.

all and singular the houses, structures, and edifices within the said Castle," provided that he should at his own charge keep the buildings in repair, his yearly allowance being £13 6s. 8d. out of the Duchy Revenues and such fees as had customarily attached to the office. According to the unpublished Duchy records, from which this information has been drawn,\* the constablenesship was transferred on November 29, 1763, to John Mules, but there is some confusion here, Mules being really the deputy-constable or gaoler, Coryndon Carpenter holding the higher office. This is evident from the fact that "the upper part down as far as the arches" of the house over the northern gateway of the Green, "wherein formerly in 1650 lived John Sorrell ye Constable of the Castle†. . . was all taken down by the orders of Mr. Coryndon Carpenter in the month of July 1764"‡; and it is confirmed by John Howard, who, in describing his visit to our prison in 1775, gives as gaoler "John Mules, Deputy, under Coryndon Carpenter Esq. Constable of the Castle."§

Though Launceston and Newport were usually and rightly regarded as "close boroughs," under the influence at this period of the Morice family, contests were not as infrequent as in later days. But for a few years after the electoral battle of 1754,|| there seemed little disposition to fight, and, upon Bacon vacating his seat for Newport in 1756 in order to stand for Norwich,\*\* Richard Bull, of Chipping Ongar, Essex (a connection of the Morices, and one of whose family was remembered in Humphry's will) was returned, and, as far as is known, without opposition;†† while in the next year Humphry Morice, on his appointment as one of the Clerks Comptrollers of the Household, was similarly served as to re-election.‡‡ But when Sir George Lee died, in the winter of 1758, there was a severe contest at Launceston. The writ was issued on

\* By permission of Mr. George Wilmshurst, Secretary to the Duchy of Cornwall.

† John Sorrell was keeper of the gaol in 1626 (ante, p. 139). ‡ This statement is from

"Mr. Leach's Plan of Launceston Castle and Parks," made (it is believed) in August, 1764, and now in the possession of Mr. C. L. Cowland, to whom the Author owes much information concerning the Pyper family and Madford House. § John Howard, *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* (1st edition, 1777), p. 381.

|| ante, p. 261. \*\* The writ for Newport was issued on June 18 (Commons Journals, vol. xxvii., p. 619), and Bacon was elected for Norwich on June 25 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 114). He was in 1760 appointed a Commissioner for Trade and Plantations, and he continued to sit for Norwich until the dissolution of 1784, when he did not again offer himself.

†† The election took place on June 26 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 110).

‡‡ The election was held on May 19, 1757 (Ibid.).

December 20,\* and the election took place ten days later, Sir John St. Aubyn, who had sat for the borough in the previous Parliament,† being declared to be returned.‡ But on the opening day of the next session (the House having risen on the day the writ was ordered), a petition was presented by Peter Burrell, the other candidate, declaring that he was duly elected, “but that Joshua Thomas,§ the Mayor of the said Borough, who acted as returning Officer at the said Election, behaved in a very partial and arbitrary manner, in Favour of the said Sir John St. Aubyn, and refused or disallowed several Votes which were tendered for the Petitioner; and that many other undue, unwarrantable, and illegal Practices were made use of in Relation to the said Election.” Instead of the case being referred to a committee, it was immediately ordered to be heard at the bar of the House,|| and this was done on February 21, the day appointed. Counsel for Burrell appear to have had an easy task, for, after it had been proved by evidence that the votes of four freemen wishing to support Burrell had been illegally refused, and that these, added to the petitioner’s poll, would have given him a majority, the House resolved *nemine contradicente* (as it is expressly recorded) that Sir John St. Aubyn had not been duly elected, and that Burrell’s name should be inserted in the return.\*\*

The new member for Launceston was by no means fresh to Parliamentary life, he having sat for Haslemere (Surrey) from 1722 to 1754, and, on his defeat at that borough in the last-mentioned year, he vainly petitioned against the successful candidates.†† The very day after the Launceston return was formally amended he was placed upon a special committee,‡‡ and he was soon to do good service to his new constituents. On January 24, 1760, a petition was presented to the Commons from the principal inhabitants of our district setting forth that the roads around Launceston—whether towards “a certain Place called Pennigillam Pool,” Trekellearn Bridge, Greston Bridge, Page’s Cross, or Hurdon Water—“are become so ruinous, that the same cannot, by the ordinary course appointed by Law, be sufficiently widened, enlarged, and amended,” and a Bill was prayed for to deal

\* Commons Journals, vol. xxviii., p. 356. † ante, p. 259. ‡ Official List, vol. ii., p. 110. § ante, pp. 262-63. || Jan. 16, 1759: Commons Journals, vol. xxviii., p. 356. \*\* Ibid, p. 437. †† Ibid, vol. xxvii., pp. 20 and foll. ‡‡ Feb. 23, 1759: Ibid, vol. xxviii., p. 439.

with the matter. The question was at once referred to a large committee, upon which Burrell's name stood first,\* and which reported four days later that "Mr. John Luxmore [who appears to have been a prominent local road surveyor] being examined, said, That the several Roads mentioned in the said Petition are in a very ruinous Condition, and, in many Parts, very narrow and incommodious; and that the same cannot be sufficiently amended, widened, and repaired, by the Laws in being." Burrell being directed to bring in the required Bill,† it was read a first time on February 18,‡ the second reading taking place four days later,§ and it was then referred to a specially-appointed committee, of which Burrell, Bull, and Bacon were members, as well as such well-known men as General Cornwallis and Lord North. Before it reported, "several Gentlemen and others of the County of Cornwall" petitioned "that the several high Roads leading towards the North" from Launceston should be provided for in the Bill, and the point was referred to the committee,|| which, upon the evidence of a Mr. William Webb, advised the House to grant the prayer.\*\* This was done, and on March 28 the measure passed, Burrell being directed to carry it to the Lords.†† It was disposed of very rapidly by that Chamber. Read a first time on March 31,‡‡ it went through its next stage on April 2,§§ and, an attempt to amend it in committee having failed,||| it passed on April 25,\*\*\* the royal assent being given by commission during the next month.†††

At this time are to be noticed two links connecting the town with the stage. The proprietor of the Plymouth Theatre, in a play-bill of 1759, announced to his patrons that he had "been over to Launceston to engage some of the best performers belonging to the company there";††† and during the same year was born a daughter of a Launceston banker, named Harvey, who, as Mrs. Davenport, was to prove the finest actress of old women the English stage has seen. Appearing at Covent Garden for the first time on September 24, 1794, she remained there thirty-six years, for "she loved her business, and

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\* Jan. 24, 1760: Commons Journals, vol. xxviii., p. 721. † Jan. 28: Ibid., p. 734.  
 ‡ Ibid., p. 772. § Ibid., p. 783. || March 7: Ibid., p. 806. \*\* March 11: Ibid., p. 810.  
 †† Ibid., p. 844. ‡‡ Lords Journals, vol. xxix., p. 631. §§ Ibid., p. 636. ||| April  
 24: Ibid., p. 661. \*\*\* Ibid., p. 663. ††† May 22: Ibid., p. 701. ††† R. N. Worth,  
 History of Plymouth, p. 283.

did it well and cheerfully."\* She seems to bind us to the last century, seeing that she did not die until the age of eighty-four, and within the memory of many now living who would hesitate to call themselves old.

At the general election of March, 1761, all four members for Launceston and Newport were re-chosen, Sir John St. Aubyn, Burrell's old opponent, finding a seat for the county.† There was, however, a change in the representation before the year expired, a writ being issued for Newport on November 28, "in the Room of John Lee Esquire, deceased:"‡ William De Grey, a rising barrister, was returned on December 7, and he was re-elected two years afterwards§ on becoming Solicitor-General, and again three years later|| on being raised to the Attorney-Generalship. Meanwhile Humphry Morice had been re-chosen for Launceston after appointment as Comptroller of the Household. This was on January 3, 1763,\*\* and in another three months he succeeded James, Earl Waldegrave, as Lord Warden of the Stannaries.†† The question was raised in the House, at Morice's own suggestion, whether by accepting this office he vacated his seat, but, two Acts on the point having been read, a motion that the seat was vacant was negatived without a division.‡‡

A striking instance of Morice's efforts to strengthen his popularity among his constituents has only recently come to light. At the summer assizes of 1767, held at Bodmin, two men, William Pearce and Richard Williams, were condemned to death for wrecking. The sympathy of the county was strongly aroused on their behalf, and, though they were remitted to Launceston for execution, the carrying-out of the sentence was delayed until the Government could be petitioned on the matter. Morice took up the case, and, writing from Werrington on August 31 to Lord Shelburne, then a Secretary of State,§§ (who had already received more than one communication on the subject) he besought the pardon of the criminals, adding that he could not in any way avoid interceding for them as both Launceston, which he represented, and Newport, where he chose the members,

\* Boaden, quoted in W. Clark Russell's *Representative Actors*, p. 265. † Official List, vol. ii., p. 124. ‡ Commons Journals, vol. xxix., p. 52. § December 27, 1763. || November 28, 1766. \*\* Official List, vol. ii., p. 124. †† Bentson's Political Index [1806] vol. ii., p. 386. ‡‡ April 19, 1763: Commons Journals, vol. xxix., p. 646. §§ No addressee is named, but the letter is believed to have been sent to Shelburne.



interested themselves that the men should be saved; if, however, it should be improper to grant this request, he asked "the favour of an ostensible letter."\* On September 4, he again wrote to the Secretary, thanking him for respiting the prisoners, who remained in our gaol, and mentioning that Williams had been reprieved by the judge since his previous letter, "and the people of this neighbourhood are now more anxious than ever to have the other saved." He feels that he "need not explain to his Lordship the situation one is in with voters of boroughs just before a general election, and how apt they are to fancy one has not done one's utmost if one fails of success in a point that they have set their hearts upon"; and he concludes by stating how material it is for him "that this William Pearce, who is above fourscore years, and condemned for stealing rope from the wreck of a ship, should have the same mercy from his Majesty that the other convict has had from the Judge."† But his efforts were unavailing. Lord Shelburne replied on September 30 that, though the sentence on Williams had been commuted to transportation for life, "the circumstances of William Pearce's case were so abundantly worse" that the same mercy could not be extended to him, for "the inhumanity of plundering the distressed and increasing the calamities of the unfortunate" could not be disregarded.‡ Pearce was accordingly executed at Launceston on October 12, as is stated on the title-page of a pamphlet issued at the time, containing "A Dialogue between a Captain of a Merchant Ship and a Farmer, concerning the pernicious practice of wrecking; as exemplified in the unhappy fate of one William Pearce of St. Gennis . . . shewing also how the Captain was converted to a life of much seriousness and consideration."§

The general election, to the proximity of which Morice had referred, was held in March of the next year, when the members for both boroughs were re-chosen, with the exception of Burrell, who was returned for Totnes,|| his place at Launceston being filled by

\* Home Office Papers, 1766-69, p. 184.      † Ibid.      ‡ Ibid, p. 187.      § Bibliotheca Britannica, vol. i., p. 829. No copy of the pamphlet is in the British Museum, and though the particulars of several executions in this year are given in the contemporary *Gentleman's Magazine* and *Annual Register*, this one is not noticed.      || Burrell, who was a director of the South Sea Company as well as of Greenwich Hospital, was appointed Surveyor-General of the Land Revenue in 1769, but was defeated upon seeking re-election at Totnes in 1774.

William Amherst, of Troublefield, Hants., an aide-de-camp to George the Third and groom of the bedchamber to the Duke of Gloucester, this being a gain of a seat to the Tories.\* Nearly two years later, De Grey (who meanwhile had earned a somewhat grudging tribute to his legal ability from *Junius*, against whose publisher, Woodfall, he had proceeded†) resigned his seat for Newport in order to stand for Cambridge University in place of Charles Yorke, the new Lord Chancellor (who committed suicide within three days of his appointment.) He was returned, but he represented this constituency only a twelvemonth, when he was made Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. Eleven days after his election for the University and seven after the writ had been issued for Newport, the vacancy he had caused was filled by Richard Henry Alexander Bennett, of Beekenhampstead, Kent.‡

It is not clear at what date the Werrington estate passed from the hands of Humphry Morice into those of Hugh, first Duke of Northumberland,§ but it was probably not until after the general election of October, 1774, at which Humphry Morice, as if determined on this last occasion to show of what strength his influence was, had himself returned for both Launceston and Newport, supplanting Bennett at the latter place, and having John Buller, of Morval, as his colleague at the former. Bull also was put in nomination for Launceston as well as a certain John Arscott, of whom this fact is all that is known, and at the poll (which, for reasons later to be explained, was much smaller than at the previous contests of which we have record) Morice secured seventeen votes, Buller twelve, Bull eight, and Arscott one.|| Bull lost nothing, however, by this defeat, for on the next day he was re-elected for Newport, and the place of

\* Burrell had voted with Pitt in the minority in the debate concerning general warrants and the seizure of papers on Feb. 17, 1763 (Parliamentary History, vol. xv., p. 1403).

† Preface by Junius to the collected Letters. In a letter of Philo-Junius, of June 22, 1769, while De Grey still represented Newport, there is, however, a sneer at him as "EX-OFFICIO the guardian of liberty."

‡ De Grey, who held the Chief Justiceship nine years and who was then created Baron Walsingham, was elected for Cambridge University Feb. 1, 1770 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 137) and Bennett for Newport on Feb. 12 (ibid. p. 138), the writ for the latter having been issued on Feb. 5 (Commons Journals, vol. xxxii., p. 646).

§ Mr. Northmore Lawrence (Werrington and its Possessors) gives it as "about the year 1763," but we have it under Humphry's own hand (ante, p. 268) that four years after that date the Morice influence in the two boroughs was intact, and there is no trace of that of the Percy family being exercised until 1780.

|| H. S. Smith, The Parliaments of England, vol. i., p. 42.

Morice, who chose to sit for Launceston, was taken by John Frederick, of Burwood Park, Surrey,\* son of a baronet of the same name.†

We may now again turn to the more purely domestic aspects of the town, and note that it was in 1765 that the Tradesmen's Friendly Society, which still exists, was founded. This was an evidence of the growth of a more organised social feeling among the inhabitants, and it is only one of several such signs which present themselves about this period. Although Wesley at his first coming was disturbed at his services by an unruly crowd,‡ he soon began to win upon the townsfolk, and on September 18, 1755, he was enabled to record that he "preached in a gentleman's dining room capable of containing some hundreds of people." Two years later he was again in the place, but in the three years which elapsed before his next visit several of his adherents fell away. Writing to a Truro friend in 1758, he couples the parish clergymen of Launceston§ and Plymouth Dock as men who "neither know, nor live, nor teach the Gospel"; and on September 3, 1760, when he once more preached at Launceston, it was to the remains of a dead and scattered society, which had "scarce any discipline and only one sermon a fortnight." Just two years later he still found the Launceston society very dead, but from this time the record as a rule is more cheerful. By 1766, a room had been provided, but this was not sufficiently large to contain the congregation Wesley had drawn together, and which was much affected by his teaching; by 1768 things were even better, he being much impressed by the largeness and seriousness of his auditory; and he visited the town in twelve out of the next seventeen years, only expressing regret upon one occasion, and that in 1776, when he found that the work had gained no ground, mainly, as he thought, because the preachers had not adhered to the peculiar Methodist doctrine of "perfection."

Meanwhile another Nonconformist body was securing a foot-hold in the town. After the death in 1745 of the Rev. Michael Martin,|| the Presbyterian cause in Launceston had somewhat languished. The Rev. Mr. Castle, a Dissenting minister of Hatherleigh, preached here

\* Dec. 30, 1774: Official List, vol. ii., p. 150. † Parliamentary History, vol. xviii., p. 3.  
‡ ante, p. 260. § The Rev. Charles Bedford (ante, p. 251). || ante, p. 211.

occasionally for a few years, but at length the meeting-house was closed, and was sold to Thomas Parson, jun., a local clothier, to be turned into a dwelling. This, however, was averted, and the cause was revived, mainly by the efforts of two brothers, John and William Saltern (both of whom were subsequently Independent ministers) and the Rev. John Eyre, of Hackney. It was at a room in the house of William Sheeres, at Newport, that the first-named commenced operations, and, being soon joined by his brother, the increase of hearers speedily forced them into more extensive quarters, a large kitchen being first hired near Newport Square, and then a move made to the "Great House," the property of Mr. Joshua Thomas,\* at the foot of St. Thomas Hill, where for years the work was pursued with vigour and success.

Launceston was still the gaol-centre of the county, and its prison, miserable as it has been shown to have been in earlier days,† had not improved with years. Dr. Borlase, writing about this time, described it as a narrow wretched place for human creatures to be confined in, all supposed innocent till convicted, "but here the innocent and the guilty must be contented to remain till their fate is determined or a better one is built." This testimony was borne out by John Howard, who visited Launceston in 1775, when John Mules was gaoler, the Rev. Charles Lethbridge chaplain, and Mr. Bennet surgeon. The gaol he describes as very small, and all its dungeons very offensive. "No chimney : no drains : no water : damp earth floors : no Infirmary . . . Their [the prisoners'] provision is put down to them through a hole in the floor of the room above (used as a Chapel) ; and those who serve them there, often catch the fatal fever. At my first visit I found the Keeper, his Assistant, and all the Prisoners but one, sick of it : and heard that a few years before, many Prisoners had died of it ; and the Keeper and his wife in one night." As for food, the allowance to felons was "a three-penny loaf each in two days ; white or brown at their option," while "the Mayor sends the Prisoners weekly one shilling's worth of bread," the outcome of an old legacy of which more will be heard. And it is gratifying to know that, despite the scantiness of their fare and the

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\* ante, pp. 262-63.      † ante, p. 108.

scandalousness of the accommodation, "the Prisoners respect the Chaplain, and were very attentive."\*

Side by side with this exhibition of the darker side of Launceston life at the period under notice is to be placed one of the lighter. To us it may seem strange that a theatre should have contrived to exist in so small a town, but as Launceston was then in a much greater degree the centre of county society than it is now or is ever likely to be again, it had long enjoyed privileges in this direction which much larger places were only just seeking to obtain.† In 1874 an inhabitant of the town found pasted on the inside of an old box several playbills of just a century before, which showed that the fame of the Launceston Theatre‡ had not yet died away. These announced that "the Exeter Comedians" would appear on various dates in May and June, 1772, "at the New Theatre at the White Hart, in Launceston," tickets ("Pit, 1s. 6d., First Gallery, 1s., Second Gallery, 6d.,") being obtainable at that hotel and the King's Arms, which latter still stands just inside the South Gate as one of the two principal local hotels. A varied programme was offered: on one night was presented "An Historical Play, call'd *King Henry IV., with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff*," to which was added "The English Burletta, call'd *Midias*" (*sic*); on another "A celebrated Tragedy, call'd *The Orphan, or, The Unhappy Marriage*," with "A Farce, call'd *The Jubilee*"; and on "positively the last night but one" a comedy, "written by the Author of *The West Indian*, and never acted here, call'd *The Brothers*," especial attractions being offered in this last case by the addition at the end of the second act of "a favourite Song, from the New Opera of *Cymon*, call'd 'Sweet Passion of Love,'" and at the "End of the Play a Facetious Dialogue on the Times, between Sir Toby Beleh and Sir Andrew Aguecheek." The building in which these performances were given stood at the back of the White Hart Hotel, abutting on Madford Wall, where there is now an extensive range of stabling, and was doubtless used as an assembly room when not occupied as a

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\* John Howard, *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* (1st edition, 1777), p. 382. † "A Bill to enable His Majesty to license a Playhouse, in the Town or Place commonly called or known by the Name of Dock Town" (the present Devonport), was before Parliament in 1770 (*Commons Journals*, vol. xxxii., pp. 617 and foll.)

‡ ante, p. 267.

theatre.\* The playbills were "Printed by J. Collins, at Mr. Penwarden's at Star-Cross,† where Printing is performed in all its Branches"; and although it may be doubted whether Collins was the first to use the press in Launceston (for much printed matter must have been required in an assize town for which it would not have been convenient to have had always to send to Exeter or Plymouth) there is no proof of any earlier, and, until these bills had been discovered it had been thought that a Mr. Bray, who commenced business in 1789, was our first local printer.‡

In the year 1778 the Tradesmen's Friendly Society, "held at the Exeter Inn, in Launceston, for the mutual support of each other in sickness, casualties, and death," began to keep a record of its proceedings. It had been founded in 1765,§ by George Wevill, Thomas Rogers, Thomas Geake, John Mules,|| and others, but the first written intimation of its existence is the entry in February, 1778, of a resolution "that Richard Smith be fined for not attending with his key, and not giving the same to his deputy." Many instances of fines are on the minutes during the early years of the Society's life, several of them for contravention of a rule which provided that "No Members shall presume to curse, swear, profane the Lord's most Holy Name, quarrel, fight, talk indecently or enter the Society Room disguised in liquor."\*\* On September 3, 1780, John Bounsall was "fined one shilling for calling T. Down 'Fool,'" and on November 6 of the same year Thomas Saunders was fined a like sum "for ridiculing, threatening, and defaming the character of Mr. Carter." The first President who appears to have been elected was George Fardint†† on November 8, 1781, and he, during his term of office, was seriously complained of for having accused a member, who happened to be a clock-maker, of the somewhat mysterious offence of "boiling

\* In the beginning of the present century what was known as a theatre existed on the Walk, but it was only used by amateurs for Christmas mummings. † Starcross was the name applied to that portion of the town, near the Assize Courts and close to the White Hart, where several roads met, and as an appellation it did not disappear before the middle of the present century. ‡ W. L. Powell, Lecture on Printing in Launceston (1881). § ante, p. 271. || ante, pp. 265-72.

\*\* The rule goes on to prohibit members from "raising any dispute touching Church or State; defaming the Society or any of its Members in any other Company; upbraiding any Member or his friends for any benefit he may have received from the box; or in any manner interrupting the Clerk or Stewards in the execution of their duty." This is taken from the book of rules issued in 1833, which is believed to have been the earliest printed, and it is doubtless in the same form as it was originally drawn. †† A name afterwards corrupted to Farthing (ante, p. 218).



the clock." There is no record of a fine for violating the rule "that no Member shall practise cudgelling or wrestling either on the Stage or Ring," but a well-merited penalty was imposed on August 5, 1782, upon Richard Frost, who, according to a special report of the President himself, had had the hardihood, with deliberate defiance of grammar, to say that "not five men in the Society did not know their right hand from their left."\*

The condition of Launceston Gaol deservedly occupied the attention of Parliament in 1778, early in which year a petition, adopted at the Quarter Sessions held at Bodmin on the previous October 9, was presented "setting forth, That the Common Gaol of the said County, for Criminals, is within the Castle of Launceston, and is at present in a very bad Condition . . . and that the said Gaol, and the Town of Launceston, being situated near the Eastern Extremity of the said County, the Ease and Convenience of the Public would be best suited by an additional Gaol for Criminals being provided nearer the Centre of the said County," and suggesting that such prison should be built at Bodmin.† The Bill passed the Commons without opposition, and was equally successful in the Lords, the King's assent to the measure, as far as it affected the Duchy of Cornwall, being signified during its progress. Up to that time the Duchy had had to bear the cost of repairing the prison, it not being the property of the county but really "the King's Gaol at Launceston," as it was termed as far back as 1524 in a "Testimonial of the Town of Bodmin against the Prior"‡; and George the Third now gave two thousand pounds towards the building of the prison at Bodmin and five hundred towards the enlarging of that at Launceston, on condition that the Duchy should be absolved from future liability for either. In the year afterwards, out of the five hundred pounds of the King's bounty appropriated to Launceston, four new cells for men were built, while the older portion of the prison was reserved for women§; but although the physical comfort of the inmates was now more attended to by the erection of a pump in the men's court and the

\* The minute-book from which this information is taken covers the period from 1778 to 1840. † Jan. 29, 1778: Commons Journals, vol. xxxvi., p. 637. ‡ Bodmin Register, p. 301. § John Howard, *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* (4th edition, 1792), pp. 391-92.

better looking after of the drains, divine service on Sundays was dispensed with,\* despite the fact that Howard in 1775† had been “edified by the serious behaviour of the Chaplain at Prayers.”

At the general election of September, 1780, a clean sweep was made of the members for Launceston and Newport, the “patronage” of the boroughs having passed from Humphry Morice to the Duke of Northumberland, and, of the four thus displaced, only Buller succeeded in gaining a seat elsewhere, he being returned for West Looc. For Launceston there were elected James, Viscount Cranborne, eldest son of the Sixth Earl of Salisbury, and Thomas Bowlby, Commissary General, and brother-in-law of the Duke of Montagu; while for Newport were chosen James, Viscount Maitland, eldest son of the Seventh Earl of Lauderdale,§ and John Coghill, who was created a baronet six months later.|| Of these, the one of most interest to us is the first-named, he being grandfather of the present Conservative leader in the House of Lords. He had sat for Great Bedwin (Wilts) in the previous Parliament, and at this dissolution was returned for both Launceston and Plympton, but which seat he would have chosen is unknown, for he came to the earldom on the death of his father before he was called upon to select. In 1789 he was created one of George the Third’s many Marquises, and, dying in 1823, was followed by his son, who was himself succeeded in 1868 by the present Marquis of Salisbury.

His place as member for Launceston was taken on November 28, 1780, by the Hon. Charles George Perceval,\*\* and very shortly after the latter’s election, a petition was presented to the Commons by the Trustees of the Launceston Roads setting out that the term granted by the Act of 1760†† required to be extended as “several Roads therein mentioned are still greatly out of Repair.”‡‡ Five weeks later the necessary Bill was ordered to be brought in by

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\* An Account of the Prisons and Houses of Correction in the Western Circuit (1789), p. 34. † ante, p. 272. § He was elected for Malmesbury in 1784, succeeded to the earldom in 1789, was made an English peer in 1806, and died in 1839. || Parliamentary History, vol. xxi., pp. 771-73. \*\* Official List, vol. ii., p. 163. Perceval, who became Lord Arden in June, 1784, on the death of his mother (Baroness Arden in her own right) was a son of the second Earl of Egmont (the present holder of which title is likewise called Charles George Perceval) and was elder brother of Spencer Perceval, whose assassination in 1811, when Prime Minister, is the basis of a well-known Cornish dream story. †† ante, p. 266. ‡‡ Jan. 29, 1781: Commons Journals, vol. xxxviii., p. 135.

Bowlby and Perceval, the evidence of a Mr. Langueville Hales being held to prove its necessity,\* and it was speedily run through both Houses. This question of the roads had greatly troubled the district for many years, for a list is in existence, dated August 2, 1756, of "Subscriptions for making a good Wheel Road over the Moors, from Bodmyn to Launceston, and for erecting Mile Stones from Truro to Launceston;"† and thirteen years later the Mayor and Corporation of Bodmin petitioned Parliament concerning the "very bad and ruinous condition" of most of the roads in their district, including "the Highways leading from Kennard's House, in the Parish of South Petherwin, over Hicke's Mill Bridge, and through the Parishes of Lawannick and Alternon,"‡ with the result that an Act was passed which may be hoped to have had some good effect.

On Bowlby's acceptance of the Chiltern Hundreds, there was chosen on January 31, 1783, Sir John Jervis, Knight of the Bath, who, fourteen years later, for his famous naval victory over the Spaniards was created Earl St. Vincent. This election appears to have caused some stir in Launceston, for eight days previous to the return, a petition of "the principal inhabitants and freeholders" had been presented to the Commons, which, in protesting against the choice of members being in the hands of a small body, gave an interesting chapter of local history. It stated that for two hundred years after the Philip and Mary charter there existed in the town not only aldermen and freemen but an intermediate body acting as a Common Council, this consisting of eight members elected by the former from among the latter, and each aldermanic vacancy being supplied from the ranks of the Common Councillors, "keeping up the Number of Freemen to preserve the Independency of the Borough."§ The petition went on to say that "the Custom of supplying the Upper Bench from the Lower, and keeping up the Number of Freemen was observed for more than Two Centuries," but that from the election of 1734 || "the Body of Common Council lost its Influence, as the Aldermanick Body was supplied sometimes from the Common Council, but more

\* March 7: Ibid, p. 270.

† Bodmin Register, p. 335.

‡ Commons Journals, vol.

xxxii., pp. 119 and foll.

§ The number of freemen voting at the election of 1722 is stated in this petition to have been over 60, and 44 at that of 1734, exclusive in each case of mayor, aldermen, and Common Council.

|| ante, p. 255.

frequently from the Freemen at large ; that, about Twenty years ago, the Body of Common Council was annihilated, and within these Fourteen Years no Freemen have been elected but partially to supply the Aldermanick Body ; that the present Freemen are only Ten, Two of which at least are under the Influence of the Mayor and Aldermen” ; and that Parliament ought “ to restore a more equal Right of Representation to the Inhabitants.”\* The petition was put aside after a protest by Perceval against its having been presented, and a solemn warning by Edmund Burke against any attempt to tamper with the constitution as at that moment existing †

Upon the formation of the Pitt Ministry in December of the same year, Perceval was made a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty, and was immediately re-chosen for Launceston,‡ one of his first duties after re-election being to assist his constituents in a matter which had troubled them thirty years before and which troubled them still. The Scarne transaction, authorized by the Act of 1755,§ had not proved a success, which was perhaps not to be wondered at under all the circumstances. An indenture had been made on May 2, 1757, between the mayor (then Humphry Lawrence) and aldermen on the one part and John Pearse, a local innkeeper, on the other, granting Scarne Common (except all timber then growing or which might thereafter grow||) for the term of five hundred years at the yearly rent of £25, a sum scarcely large enough to pay the expenses which it was hoped when the Act was passed that Scarne would meet. In consequence, on February 16, 1784, “ a Petition of the Governor and Guardians of the Poor . . . and also, of the Mayor, Aldermen, Burgesses, and others,” was presented to the Commons, “ Setting forth, That the said Governor and Guardians have proceeded in the execution of the said Act, but the Money authorized to be raised hath been found insufficient for the Purposes thereby intended, and a considerable Debt hath been

\* Commons Journals, vol. xxxix., p. 81. † Gentleman's Magazine, vol. liii., part 1, p. 199.

‡ The election was held on January 3, 1784 (Official List, vol. ii., p. 163.) § ante, p. 262.

|| In 1806 the Local Guardians sold for £5 19s. all timber then growing, and for another £10 all that might thereafter grow during the remainder of the term. It is of a piece with this whole transaction, by which a valuable property was alienated from the borough for five centuries for a miserably inadequate sum, that, on the title-deeds being ordered by the Local Guardians in 1836 to be produced by their Clerk (John Darke), they were taken in Darke's pocket to the King's Arms, where, by some unexplained means, they were removed from his possession and have not been heard of since.

incurred for the necessary Purposes of carrying the said Act into Execution, which now remains due; and that the said Act hath been found, in many other Respects, ineffectual for the Purposes intended; And therefore praying, That Leave may be given to bring in a Bill for altering and amending the said Act, in such Manner as to the House shall seem meet." The petition was immediately referred to "Mr. Perceval, Sir John Jervis, &c." to consider,\* but the House was too much concerned with weightier matters to attend to the wants of Launceston. The Whig majority which was harassing Pitt and his Ministry day by day and hour by hour was not particularly desirous of obliging the Tory members for a Tory borough, and a dissolution came before the question was again referred to.

At the general election of April, 1784, Perceval was once more returned for Launceston and Coghill for Newport, but Jervis gave place to "George Rose, Esq. now or late of Duke-street in the city of Westminster" (who, on the formation of the Tory Administration in the previous December, had been appointed Joint Secretary to the Treasury, and whose son, as first Baron Strathnairn, is even at this day a member of the House of Lords) and Viscount Maitland to Sir John Miller, bart., of Bath Easton Villa, Somerset. Immediately Parliament assembled the question of the Launceston poor was again thrust to the front, and this time with success. "The Governor and Guardians of the Poor" presented, on June 11, another petition to the Commons, showing, but in more detail than before, how they had failed in executing the Act of 1755, and alleging that the aftermath of the "several Common Lands, called Great Pennygillam, Little Pennygillam, Hay, Windmill, and Longland," which had "of ancient Right and Custom, been enjoyed by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Free Burgesses, and the Widows of Free Burgesses" was of little benefit to those entitled thereto, "and it would be advantageous to the Petitioners, if the same was to be sold, or let, for the best Price or Rent which could be had for the same, and the Money arising thereby applied towards repairing the Church, repairing and lighting the Streets, or any other Purpose, for the Ornament of the said

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\* Commons Journals, vol. xxxix., p. 919.



Town, or the Convenience of the Inhabitants.”\* Rose and Lord Maitland (for the latter, though now representing Malmesbury, had not forgotten his old constituents) were appointed on the committee to examine the petition, and they, upon the evidence of Thomas Jago, advised that an amending Bill should be introduced, and this was done by Rose and Perceval (now Lord Arden†). The measure encountered no opposition in either House; it was run rapidly through each, and it received the royal assent‡ within seven weeks of the petition being presented. Under its provisions overseers were first appointed, the earliest of these being William Moffett and Richard Derrent, while at the same time Thomas Jago (perhaps for his services in assisting to obtain the Act) was chosen Clerk and “John Derry and his Wife to be Master and Mistress of the House,” this being the first mention in the minutes of either of these functionaries. The system of election of overseers and local guardians laid down by this Act was followed for exactly a century (though the powers of the latter had practically been rendered obsolete by the New Poor Law) when the Board, which the Act of 1755 had declared should “continue for ever,” disappeared in the midst of a political difference over a five-pound note.§

In the year after this poor law question had temporarily been settled “the Principal Inhabitants and Freeholders within the Borough of Launceston,” nothing daunted by their ill-success of two years before,|| presented a petition to Parliament, showing that, though “sensible of the Original Excellence of the Constitution of this Country, and most ardently wishing to have it maintained upon the genuine Principles on which it was founded,” they were of opinion that “the House should take into their most serious Consideration the present inadequate State of the Representation of the People in Parliament, and apply such Remedies to this great Constitutional Evil, as to the House may seem meet.” The Commons were in no humour to agree with such an outspoken complaint; they were

\* Commons Journals, vol. xl., p. 110. † June 28, 1784: Ibid, p. 264. ‡ July 30: Lords Journals, vol. xxxvii., p. 140. § The last meeting was held on January 18, 1884. The then members were Messrs. John Hawkins, John Grylls Millman, William Prockter, Henry Short, James Treleaven, and George Graham White, jun. (appointed by the Town Council of members of its own body) and Messrs. William Cater, George Elliott, Richard Dennis Gillbard, James Ham, John Nicolls, William Philp, Philip John Raddall, Thomas White, and William Wise (appointed by the ratepayers at the annual statutory meeting in 1883). || ante, p. 277.



in a few weeks to reject Pitt's plan of parliamentary reform, and they ordered the document to lie upon the table.\* But although similar treatment was accorded to a petition from the Mayor and Commonalty of Launceston the same session, praying for severe measure to be accorded to hawkers, whose existence was highly offensive to the "resident Traders, who are well-known, and whose characters are at stake for carrying on their Trades upon fair and reasonable Terms,"† the House evidently sympathised with it more than with the other, for in this year it passed a Bill dealing with the hawkers much in the manner that Launceston and other towns had asked.‡

On the death of Sir John Coghill in 1785, William Mitford, of Ecbury, Hants, was returned for Newport.§ Mitford, who was descended from a Northumbrian family,|| and whose younger brother, John, (afterwards Solicitor-General, Speaker of the House of Commons, and first Baron Redesdale) sat for many years as the Percy nominee for Beeralston, is best remembered as a friend of Edward Gibbon (who was a major in the Hampshire Militia when Mitford was a captain, and who himself sat for a Cornish borough) upon whose advice it was that he wrote a "History of Greece," which, for its hatred of democracy, is described in a modern publication as "a pugnacious, opinionative, one-sided, and even fanatical production,"\*\* and the first volume of which was issued the year before he was chosen for Newport. He represented the borough only in this Parliament, but in later years the friendship of the Percy family returned him with his brother for Beeralston.††

A few months after the election of Mitford for Newport, the death of the first Duke of Northumberland and the succession of Hugh, Second Duke, (who had for ten years already held the Barony of Percy through his mother) changed the whole aspect of political affairs in the two boroughs. The new owner of Werrington, who in later days was on the Council of the Duke of Cornwall (afterwards

\* March 4, 1785: Commons Journals, vol. xl., p. 579. † July 4: Ibid., p. 1120.

‡ See debate upon the measure in Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lv., part 2, p. 966. § Dec. 13, 1785: Official List, vol. ii., p. 176.

|| Joshua Wilson, Biographical Index to the present House of Commons (1806), p. 384.

\*\* Chambers's Encyclopedia (Edition of 1883, vol. vi., p. 493). †† He sat for that borough in the Parliaments of 1796 and 1802, and died on February 8, 1827, two days before completing his eighty-third year.

George the Fourth and himself in constant opposition to the Tory Ministry) among the other members being such well-known Whigs as Erskine, Sheridan, and Jekyll,\* soon caused it to be felt that he shared their political opinions. George Rose, one of the members for Launceston,† was the first victim, for when, in June, 1788, he was made Clerk of the Parliaments, he “was refused his re-election,” by direction of the Duke,‡ Sir John Edward Swinburne (of Capheaton, Northumberland, and thus probably an old acquaintance of his grace) being returned in his place,§ and Rose having to seek election for Lymington, where Harry Burrard at the desired moment had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.¶ The ducal power was even more fully shown at the dissolution of 1790, when a complete alteration was effected in the representation of the boroughs, the Hon. Captain John Rodney, of Armsworth, Hants., (son of the famous Admiral, first Baron Rodney) and Sir Henry Clinton, Knight of the Bath, of Portland Place, London, being chosen for Launceston, while Robert, Viscount Feilding, eldest son of the Sixth Earl of Denbigh\*\* (who had sat for Beeralston in the two previous Parliaments), and Lieutenant-General Charles Rainsford, Governor of Chester (who had been returned for Maldon at a bye-election in 1773, and at another for Beeralston in 1787) were sent up for Newport.††

The religious revival in the town was meanwhile making great headway. The Presbyterians or Calvinists (for in practice they savoured much of the former and in precept of the latter‡‡) having made good their footing at St. Thomas§§ moved up the hill, and

\* Beatson's Political Index (1806), vol. ii., pp. 388-89. † ante, p. 279. ‡ T. H. B. Oldfield, *An Entire and Complete History, Political and Personal, of the Boroughs in Great Britain* [2nd edition, 1794], vol. i., p. 113. § June 18, 1788: Official List, vol. ii., p. 176. It was rumoured in the beginning of 1884, though apparently without authority, that the present Sir John Swinburne, great-grandson of the baronet here named, would become a candidate for Launceston in the Liberal interest at the next dissolution. ¶ Rose was returned for Lymington on July 1: Ibid., p. 181. \*\* He died before his father, who expired in 1800. †† Official List, vol. ii., p. 188. Of the old members, Lord Arden was the only one who again came prominently forward in politics; he was elected for Totnes in the Parliament of 1796, and was made Master of the Mint on the formation of the Addington Ministry in February, 1801. ‡‡ The Presbyterian practice of sitting during the singing and standing during the prayers continued until 1865, when the Rev. John Horsey, at the end of a long ministry, protested against and succeeded in abolishing it; and among the older inhabitants the attendants at the Congregational Chapel are still spoken of as “the Calvinists.”

§§ ante, p. 272.

William Saltern, who had carried on the work since his brother's entrance to the ministry (supporting himself in part by the Society and partly by help from other places) purchased in 1788 the plot of ground in Castle Street on which a previous dissenting meeting-house had stood.\* At a cost of £380 a building was there erected which was opened for worship on September 18, 1788; and a church was then formed, for the guidance of which rules were drawn up signed by thirty-four persons as members, William Saltern being ordained minister on June 9, 1790. He died on April 18, 1795, greatly regretted as the Society's minutes testify, and Jonas Lewis, after a twelve-month's probation, was ordained his successor on October 12, 1796.

The local Wesleyans were not less strenuous. Between the visit of their founder in September, 1785, and another he paid in the same month of 1789, a piece of ground was bought in Back Lane upon which was erected a new "room," the trustees being James Palmer, John Bray, Henry Essery, John Clode Hender, Richard Williams, William Pearse, and John Paul, the last-named being parish clerk, master of the workhouse, and Methodist local preacher in one. When this building was opened is not on record, but Wesley preached in it on September 28, 1789, and found it too small for the congregation which was exceedingly lively. In 1794, Launceston became the head of a circuit, which embraced the present ten circuits of Launceston, Northhill, Kilkhampton, Holsworthy, Okehampton, Callington, Tavistock, Gunnislake, Liskeard, and Looe; and two years later the local chapel had to be enlarged, a new piece of ground being bought adjoining the old, the trustees of the purchase, in addition to those above-named, being Jeremiah Davey and Nicholas Burt. The site is now occupied by cottages, but many even of the comparatively young can remember the building as the old school-room, it standing where is now the third house on the right from the bottom of Back Lane.

It may be that these various efforts had something to do with lessening the superstition which then prevailed in the district. Dr. Rowe, of Launceston, in 1790 informed Brand, the author of "Observations on Popular Antiquities," that some rites with fern-seed (the

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\* ante, p. 241.

possession of which, gathered with specified ceremonies at midnight on the eve of St. John the Baptist, was supposed to render one invisible) were still observed here\* ; and a dweller "on the edge of St. Stephens Down" assured the inquirer only a few days later that he had seen his cows kneel in their stalls and had heard them "moan like Christians" on Christmas Eve, "walking off in a pettish humour" when he noticed that his tale was received with incredulity.†

Howard had noted on his visit to the Launceston prison in 1775‡ that there was no memorial in the gaol of the legacy under which the Mayor sent the inmates a weekly shilling's-worth of bread, and a return made to Parliament a dozen years later§ stated that the donor was unknown as well as the date of the gift, all that was asserted being that it was a rent-charge providing a clear annual revenue of £2 12s., and that it was vested in the Mayor and Corporation "for bread to the prisoners in Launceston Gaol." It does not seem improbable that this was really the same charity as was given by the Priory to "the prisoners in the Castle of the lord the King at Launceston,"|| seeing that the alms to "the poor in the Hospital of St. Leonard" and to "the poor on the anniversary of the death of the founder," similarly given by the Priory, may be taken to be accounted for in this return by a money possession yielding £3 18s. yearly which in trust of the Corporation was "for bread to the poor," and one in land of the annual value of £10, the proceeds of which were distributed by the Mayor "to the poor," the donors and the date of both of which were unknown, but the latter "supposed to have been granted by the Crown ; originally for poor people afflicted with leprosy." Our last previous glimpse of the Leper Hospital was in the early years of the seventeenth century when two separate sums of £5 were recorded as having been paid to it by Launceston's mayor,\*\* and it seems to have mysteriously passed away, building and lepers and all, in the intervening years. It has left its name on the farm which occupies its site, but the only conceivable relics of the old edifice are the granite gateway-tops which are still to be seen at the

\* Brand, *Observations on Popular Antiquities*, vol. i., p. 180. †Ibid, p. 250. ‡ante, p. 272.

§ This return, though taken in 1786-88 was not printed until 1816. The facts relating to Launceston and the surrounding parishes are to be found in Part I., pp. 166-7.

|| ante, p. 82. \*\* ante, pp. 119-20.

entrance of St. Leonards, and the record in gilded letters on the front of St. Mary Magdalene's gallery touching "St. Leonard's Hospital Lands, fields called the Lazar Ground, lying in the parish of St. Stephens by Launceston, containing 17 acres, now (1840) rented by W. Mitchell at Twenty Pounds per ann. Belong to the poor of this parish and of the ancient Borough of Dunheved."

This was not the only Launceston charity which contrived to vanish in the lapse of years. In a description of the town published in 1776, it was stated that there then existed here "a free school and two charity schools; the free school was founded by Queen Elizabeth, and the charity schools are supported by private contribution. They are for the benefit of both sexes; and the girls besides reading, are taught to knit, sew, and make bone-lace, and are allowed what they earn."\* The girls' charity school (which has altogether disappeared) was probably assisted by the legacy of Richard Welsh,† who in 1765 bequeathed £50 "for placing out Poor Girls of this Parish (between the age of 12 and 14 years, whose parents should receive no Parish Pay) to some trade or business." The money, which was secured by a deed poll on the Launceston turnpike tolls, was still being paid fifty years later, and there is reason to believe it is being paid to-day.

Stirring events agitated Launceston at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1794, when a French invasion was daily expected, corps of volunteers were raised throughout the country, and in Cornwall Launceston was the first to move. Edward Archer, of Trelaske, great-uncle of the present squire, was then High Sheriff, and his brother, Samuel Archer (who had retired as Lieutenant-Colonel from the 3rd Foot Guards, and was then residing at Tremeale) was placed as Major Commandant at the head of two companies of infantry of fifty men each, one from Lewannick, Northhill, South Petherwin, and Lezant, and the other from Launceston. A troop of volunteer cavalry also was raised, the muster-roll of which is dated June 4, 1794, and fifty-one out of whose fifty-five members resided in Launceston or St. Stephens. John Cudlipp was the captain

\* A New Display of the Beauties of England [3rd edition, 1776], vol. ii., p. 382.

† ante, p. 262.



of the latter, his subalterns probably being Coryndon Rowe and John Martyn, jun., while Captain Spettigue acted for the infantry under Colonel Archer, whose commission as Major Commandant was dated June 9, 1794. Official record of the work is to be found in the minutes of a county meeting held at Lostwithiel on July 18 of the same year, the High Sheriff presiding, which resolved "That it appearing to this meeting the gentlemen of Launceston have raised a complete troop of cavalry and also of infantry, it is ordered that a further sum of £50 be immediately paid to the captain of the said troop of horse."\* Colonel Archer's "green linnets," as they were popularly known from the hue of their clothes, were twelve months later, on June 4, 1795 (the King's birthday), presented with colours, the gift of the Duchess of Northumberland, the occasion being celebrated by a sermon of the Rev. William Carpenter, D.D.,† vicar of Lewannick, perpetual curate of St. Mary Magdalene, and son of Joseph Carpenter, a Launceston Alderman of forty years before.‡

Added to the fears of foreign war there was just now in Launceston the turmoil of domestic strife. George Rose had not forgiven the Duke of Northumberland for having refused him re-election in 1788,§ and he had lain in wait for revenge. The electoral body for Launceston at this time consisted of twenty-three members—eight aldermen and fifteen freemen—and in January, 1795, when a vacancy was caused by the appointment of Sir Henry Clinton to the Governorship of Gibraltar, the Duke "recommended the Hon. John Rawdon to supply his place, but it was then discovered that Mr. Rose had attached a majority of these grateful electors to the interest of the treasury, and Mr. Garthshore, private secretary to Mr. Dundas, was elected in opposition to Mr. Rawdon by a majority of sixteen to five."||

This was a rebuff with which the Duke was not likely patiently to put up. His grace for years had been endeavouring to strengthen the influence of which he was now temporarily deprived, and, probably

\* The Author is indebted for this information to Colonel Archer, of Trelaske, in whose possession are the original muster rolls of these early Launceston Volunteers.

† The sermon was published, it being "printed [in London as the title-page states] for Robert Martin, Launceston." Martin appears to have been simply a bookseller, he having published (but not printed) a previous sermon for Mr. Carpenter (ante, p. 125).

‡ ante, p. 263. § ante, p. 282. || T. H. B. Oldfield, *History of the Original Constitution of Parliaments* . . . to which is added . . . an impartial Account of the several Contests which took place at the last Election [1797], pp. 268-69.



to ingratiate himself with the townspeople, had secured from the Duke of Cornwall the Constableness of the Castle, to which in 1776, on the death of Coryndon Carpenter,\* John Anthony Roe, had succeeded†; and he had also been appointed by the Crown to be Recorder of the borough.‡ When the election was decided against his nominee, he obtained a rule against some of the freemen who had supported Garthshore, to cause them to show by what right they had voted, but he failed in attempting to get it made absolute. The next year he tried again, but this time through Mr. Tyeth, a Launceston wine merchant,§ whose financial position was seriously impugned during the hearing. This second case was argued before the King's Bench in 1796, and it was urged on behalf of the Duke's opponents that it was practically the same as had been disposed of in the previous year, that Tyeth was not a freeman but only "an accidental inhabitant," and that it was evident who was the real prosecutor because the Deputy Recorder (Christopher Lethbridge) had declared that he must sign the affidavit or disoblige the Duke. It was further argued that as "the inhabitants of Launceston do not appear to have any immediate and subsisting interest as they do in many Corporations of the Kingdom," and as Tyeth was merely a dweller in the town and not a freeman, "there is not the least foundation for saying he has any more connexion with this borough as an existing borough at this moment than any other man in the Kingdom," this being the extreme length to which the old "borough-mongering" theory could be pushed. Erskine, afterwards Lord Chancellor in the "Ministry of All the Talents," was the leading counsel for Tyeth, or, rather, for the Duke, and he argued that "if the Charter of Philip and Mary is the Charter under which this place is to be governed we are wrong—if the Charter of James the Second has not been accepted we are wrong. But there is evidence that it has been accepted." He added that he was no friend to the charters of "that same King James

\* ante, p. 265. † Carpenter died on April 23, 1776, and the Constableness was granted to Roe by George the Third on November 8 of the same year, it being confirmed to him by the Duke of Cornwall on Nov. 19, 1783. The date of the Duke of Northumberland's appointment is uncertain, but Roe would appear to have still been Constable in 1790 (Howard's Prisons, 4th edition, 1742, p. 391). ‡ One of the Duke's predecessors in this office during the eighteenth century was Richard Vyvyan, of Tresmarrow, who died in 1771. § Tyeth in the original MS., in which there are such mis-spellings as "Forest" for "Frost" and "Ledbridge" for "Lethbridge."

the Second," but if this one was the existing law of the place it would have to be obeyed. As to the interest of the Duke, he exclaimed, "When impositions and jobs are talked of, I can say for one that I shall be glad to see that day arrive when no duke or other great man of the realm could have any interest whatever in an information in the nature of *quo warranto* about mayors, officers, and burgesses of the lowest description." The famous Whig lawyer, who did not live to see his hopes fulfilled by the Act of 1832, was followed by another counsel on the same side, who contended that the Duke, as being Recorder and as having a seat in the neighbourhood, had a peculiar right to interfere in the elections for "this great town"; but the four judges decided against his grace, mainly on the ground that this was a similar case to that which had been before disposed of.\*

The Duke of Northumberland, however, soon had his revenge. Both sides made the most active preparations for the struggle at the dissolution, and the Launceston election of May, 1796, was perhaps the most exciting the borough has witnessed. The Duke's candidates were John Rawdon, of Bolney Court, Oxford (his former nominee), and James Brogden, of Clapham, Surrey (who is described as having been "a respectable Russia Merchant,"† and who was in later years Chairman of Committees of the House), these being opposed on behalf of the Treasury by William Garthshore and the Earl of Dalkeith (father of the Duke of Buccleuch who died in 1881), the connection between whom was not only that they had been travelling companions on a continental tour,‡ but that Dalkeith was the brother-in-law of the Hon. J. T. Townshend (afterwards second Viscount Sydney), a Lord of the Treasury, under the auspices of which department Garthshore had before been returned. The contest was the closest possible, Rawdon and Brogden each securing twelve supporters while Garthshore and Dalkeith had eleven,§ but the Duke's victory was regarded as so complete that he had not to withstand another contest at Launceston until after the Reform Act. To provide, however,

\* These particulars are gathered from a manuscript in the Duke of Northumberland's collection at Alnwick, "The King versus Edgecombe and others. Copy from Mr. Gurney's Shorthand Notes of the Argument in the Court of King's Bench Tuesday April 26th, 1796," from which his grace, through his librarian (Mr. T. Bosworth), allowed the Author to take them. † Joshua Wilson, Biographical Index to the Present House of Commons (1806). ‡ Ibid. § Oldfield, History of the Original Constitution of Parliaments (1797), p. 269.

against the possibility of danger again arising from there being as many as twenty-three electors to purchase or persuade, the Duke caused the number of aldermen and freemen to be reduced as occasion served first to twenty and then to sixteen.

While Launceston was thus electorally agitated, Newport was tranquil. The voting power, though nominally household suffrage, was in the hands of the Duke of Northumberland and Sir Jonathan Phillips, of Newport House, who between them held all the burgage tenures upon which votes could be obtained. The worthy knight (who bequeathed a hundred pounds to the poor of St. Stephens) had himself sat in Parliament for a few months in 1784, being returned for Camelford at the general election, in company with James Macpherson, of Ossianic fame; he resigned, however, the same summer, and Pitt gave him his reward two years later by causing him to be knighted, when, as Mayor of Camelford, he presented an address to George the Third, congratulating him upon escaping the knife of Margaret Nicholson. At the dissolution of 1796, two Whigs, nominees of the Duke (his being by far the stronger influence), were returned for Newport, one being William Northey, of Box, Wiltshire, "commander of the Box volunteer infantry,"\* and the other Joseph Richardson, a Northumbrian by birth, a barrister by profession, and a dramatist by practice, "whose literary talents, political principles, and private virtues, eminently qualified him for the most distinguished situation"†; and with the record of their election the local chronicle of the eighteenth century comes to an end.

The nineteenth century opened for Launceston with the continuance of useful social and religious work. The Rev. Jonas Lewis, the Independent minister appointed to Castle Street in 1796,‡ resigned his charge in 1799, owing to a personal difficulty with the congregation; and, after the pulpit had been vacant over a twelvemonth, his place was filled by the Rev. Richard Cope, LL.D., then a senior student of Hoxton Academy. Dr. Cope preached his first sermon here on June 29, 1800, and was ordained minister on October 21, 1801. In September of the same year he was enabled to found the

\* Wilson, Biographical Index (1806). † Oldfield, History of the Original Constitution of Parliaments (1797), p. 333. ‡ ante, p. 283.

Castle Street Union of Sunday Schools (extending to Langore, Dutson, Polyphant, and Greston Bridge\*) the first institution of the kind in Cornwall; and his zeal as a social as well as a religious reformer may be gathered from a published sermon, preached by him at Launceston on May 1, 1807, in favour of the abolition of the slave trade.† So great was the success of Dr. Cope's ministry that a gallery had to be erected in the chapel in 1803, and when at the next Christmastide a violent storm stripped the roof from the building, the townspeople, irrespective of party or creed, subscribed to repair the damage.

It was not Launceston alone that proved itself generous in time of need, for in 1807, upon a fire of extraordinary destructiveness occurring at Chudleigh, the parish of St. Stephens, following in the wake of St. Mary Magdalene's in similar cases a century and a half before,‡ gave nine pounds towards the subscription raised to relieve the sufferers.§ And these were not the only channels into which money was being well diverted at this time. The Independents, because of growing numbers, erected a second gallery in 1804 and lengthened the building in 1809, and in 1810 the Wesleyans, finding their congregation to have greatly increased, determined upon a new chapel, this occupying the site of the present one, its second successor.||

Despite these signs of progress there were still black spots on the town's reputation, and James Neild, who may be said to have been Howard's direct successor in the work of prison reform, has left a doleful picture of the state of the various Launceston places of detention in the earliest years of our century. The workhouse, which was to have done so much for the local poor,\*\* presented to him in October, 1803, "a scene of filth, rags, and wretchedness scarcely exceeded in the Tolbooth at Glasgow." Whole families, men, women, and children, "pigged together," and the stench caused the visitor such serious indisposition that he was prevented from visiting the

\* Launceston, Langore, and Dutson now (1884) form the Castle Street Union.

† Earl Percy, who, as will later be seen, sat for Launceston in this same year, was an advocate of the suppression of slavery (Wilson, *Biographical Index*, 1808, p. 444.

‡ ante, p. 220. § *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, Sept. 19, 1807. || The trustees were

William Pearse, George Pearse, Thomas Davey, William Littleton, William Philp, John Browning, Samuel Hocken, Richard Williams, John Aubridge, William Pulton, and John Grigg. \*\* ante, p. 262.

magistrates on the matter. Of the county gaol Neild spoke more favourably, there being an excellent supply of water, besides clean straw and good ventilation; but the town prison (known to us as the Dark House, and then used for debtors and petty offenders) was in a "very filthy and ruinous state," while the Bridewell also, which was in the workhouse yard and which possessed no water, was "very dirty."\* Three years later, when Neild was again in Launceston, he had not a much brighter tale to tell.† On this occasion he does not seem to have been as well pleased as before with the county gaol, parts of which he found, though clean, to be very damp, and he particularly objected to the practice of keeping ducks and fowls in the prison, which "occasions dirt and negligence," at the same time protesting against a frequent omission to read divine service on the part of the Rev. John Rowe, perpetual curate of St. Mary Magdalene's, who had succeeded the Rev. John Lethbridge‡ as Chaplain. The Dark House was now in a "most filthy and dilapidated state," one of Launceston's mayors being of opinion (so a Town Sergeant told Neild) that "the blacker it is the better—it has more the appearance of a gaol," and the Bridewell, as before, was "very dirty."§

But even if Neild and Howard were virtuous, it did not follow to the people of Launceston that there should be no more cakes and ale—the latter especially, "a hogshead of strong beer being drunk in the Broad Street by the populace" when, in 1806, the bounds of the borough were beaten with great ceremony. "At ten o'clock on Monday, Sep. 8, the Mayor [John Spettigue] and most of the corporation with the principal inhabitants preceded by the Volunteer Fifes and Drums|| and the Town Mace Bearers and Constables" went the rounds, whipping various boys at the halting-places, each lad receiving half-a-crown as compensation for his pains. Many points of interest which might otherwise have faded from remembrance are embalmed in the accounts of the proceeding, both prose and verse,

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\* Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxxiv., part 2, pp. 608-11 (July, 1804): Letter VIII on Prisons; the communication from Neild is dated Chelsea, Nov. 5, 1803. † From the work next to be quoted it would appear that this visit was paid in September, 1806. ‡ ante, p. 272, where the Christian name by a misprint is given as Charles. § James Neild, *State of the Prisons in England, Scotland, and Wales* (1812), pp. 330-31. || From which, and from a line in the poetic version of the day's proceedings, it may be concluded that the volunteer corps formed twelve years previously (ante, p. 285), still existed.

which have been handed down to us. We learn, for instance, from the prose description that "a cross was formerly erected" at Brandize Park, and that "St. John's Chapple," "Convent Garden," "the Priors," "the Hospital of Gilmartin," and "the Lazar Grounds"\* were still familiar names to the townspeople, though not one of them except the first (and that shortened to "Chapple") is now to be heard. And the rhymed account, in acquainting us that

The parish gossip's cucking stool,  
Down here, right by St. Thomas' pool,  
Held scolds and shrews in stocks,

affords the only mention of the local existence of the "cucking stool," though, as to the stocks, two men for drunkenness were placed in them as lately as 1859, when, the St. Mary Magdalene's pair having disappeared, those of St. Stephens were borrowed for the occasion and placed in Broad Street, but a bonfire in Castle Dyke the same night made an end of this particular ancient institution.

At the beginning of this century, Polwhele, desirous as he was of recording every county notability then living, had to content himself regarding Launceston by "offering his respects" to a Dr. Cutcliffe, "than whom few are more active in the cause of science and humanity," but whose activity has left no permanent mark, and to Mr. Ching, a local apothecary who had patented certain worm-lozenges, which had secured him "a large fortune, perpetual fame, and a very sensible well-informed wife."† Further than these he had only to mention that "in 1804, Samuel Mortimer, of Launceston (father of Mr. Mortimer, gun-maker to his Majesty,) performed a pedestrian feat, scarcely exceeded, if equalled, by a person of his age," walking from Launceston to Stratton when eighty-eight years old, in less than five hours.‡

Launceston Grammar School for a short time at this period was under the care of the Rev. John Wood, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, who, being appointed to a college-tutorship in 1805, was the next year succeeded by the Rev. W. Cowlard, Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. There were at that time eleven boarders, besides day-boys,

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\* The St. Mary Magdalene's Sunday School was accustomed fifty years since to hold its annual festival in these grounds—a survival of the days when they were devoted to semi-ecclesiastical uses. † Polwhele, vol. v., p. 130. ‡ Ibid, vol. vii., p. 37.



"and the bounty was increased from twenty-six to forty pounds; independent of the annual sum for tuition."\* In 1811, the Corporation erected a new school-house, "upon the site of an old one, at an expense of £1000," but, "from the badness of its construction, this building very soon fell into decay,"† Even worse things were in store for the institution. Mr. Cowlard was followed in the mastership by the Rev. J. H. Hutton, "who," said Carlisle in 1818, "has an excellent House and delightfully situate; but it is unfortunately in a neighbourhood of no affluence to furnish many Scholars."‡ This gentleman, as will later be seen, was not best calculated to make the institution prosperous, and in 1821 the Launceston Grammar School temporarily ceased to be.§

But almost simultaneously with this eclipse of the old school a new one arose. The will of John Horwell,|| though the testator had died in 1726, had never yet been allowed to bear fruit. A chancery suit was instituted as soon as possible to set it aside, but though it failed the legacy appears to have been lost sight of until about 1756, when the sum bequeathed was recovered with interest. It still, however, was put to no purpose, for the parliamentary return of 1786,\*\* which stated that the gross amount of the endowment was £1705 15s. 2d., added that it was vested in the Accountant General, the money being "in the Funds, but depending in Chancery." A suit concerning it was set down to be heard on July 7, 1792, the Attorney General taking action at the instance of the Rev. Charles Lethbridge (son of the incumbent of St. Stephens, and himself appointed the previous year perpetual curate of St. Thomas††) and Martin Miller, on behalf of themselves and the other parishioners of St. Stephens, against the Second Duke of Northumberland, Sir Jonathan Phillips, the Rev.

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\* R. Polwhele, *The Language, Literature, and Literary Characters of Cornwall* (1806), p. 57. + Thirty-second Report (Part I) of the Commissioners on Charities (1837), p. 404. † Carlisle, *Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools*, vol. i., p. 139. It is here stated that "the School has never exceeded Twelve or Fourteen boys of late years," and that in addition to the Baron payment (ante, p. 232) there was at this time (1818) an annual endowment of £15 by the Duke of Northumberland. § Charity Commissioner's Report, p. 404. || ante, p. 249. \*\* ante, p. 284. †† He was born in 1763, was incumbent of Landulph from 1787 to 1805, of Stokeclimsland from 1805 to 1840, of St. Stephens from 1818 to 1840, and of St. Thomas from 1791 to 1840, dying at St. Stephens on Dec. 15 of the last-mentioned year. Mr. Lethbridge received the living of Stoke from the Duke of Cornwall (afterwards George IV.), to whom he had been introduced on a visit to London, and whose favour he had won, according to the local gossip of the time, by the singing of a good song,

John Lethbridge, Sir W. Burrell, Richard Bennett Coffin,\* John Roe, and nine others; and it was ordered that the parties should lay a scheme before one of the Masters in Chancery for carrying the charity into execution. A second cause came before the court on July 2, 1819, when the Rev. Charles Lethbridge and Martin Miller again complained through the Attorney General, and the defendants (now nine in number) included the Third Duke of Northumberland, Christopher Lethbridge, and John King Lethbridge. The Master of the Rolls ordered that the decree of 1792 should be carried on, and that it should be ascertained what sum would be required for building a school.† The effect of this was that feoffees were appointed and a school built in 1823; and, in addition to that for the original six boys, provision was made for giving to others a sound commercial education. Mr. William May was chosen in 1825 to be the first master, and, upon his death in the spring of 1865, he was succeeded by Mr. Richard Reed, the present master, under whose management Horwell's Endowed School has attained a degree of excellence never before secured, and a popularity undreamt of previous to his appointment.‡

The electoral peace of the two boroughs was in no way disturbed for several years at the beginning of the century, though the Duke of Northumberland gradually severed himself from the Whigs. At the general election of July, 1802, Brogden for Launceston and Richardson and Northey for Newport were re-chosen, while Rawdon's place was filled by Richard Henry Alexander Bennet (now described as being a captain in the Royal Navy) who had sat for the borough in 1770.§ Upon the death of Richardson in the next year, Edward Morris, a barrister, son-in-law of Erskine (who had pleaded in the Duke's interest in 1796||), and a dramatist like his predecessor, was elected for Newport,\*\* and he, like the other members for the two boroughs, was to be found in the Whig minority whenever there was a critical party division in this Parliament.†† In

\*Of Hexworthy, grandson of Colonel Robert Bennett, of the Civil War period (ante, p. 203).

† For an account in great detail of these transactions see Thirty-Second Report (Part I) of the Commissioners on Charities (1837), pp. 409 and foll. According to local remembrances, much of the credit for forcing this matter into public notice was due to Mr. Nicholas Burt and Mr. Vaughan Ridgman. ‡ The Charity Commissioners laid down a new scheme for the school in 1878, varying its regulations but better fulfilling the purposes of its founder. § ante, p. 270. || ante, p. 287.

\*\* June 20, 1803: Official List, vol. ii., p. 216. †† Joshua Wilson, A Biographical Index to the present House of Parliament (1806).

November, 1806, Brogden was once more chosen for Launceston and Northey and Morris for Newport, but Bennet gave place to Earl Percy, the Duke's eldest son, Launceston being the third constituency that nobleman had represented within three months. In August, when he had not long attained his majority, he was sent up at a bye-election for Buckingham, but in October, on the death of Fox, he exchanged that seat for Westminster, "and it was supposed that he would be of course returned again at the general election, but he was brought in for Launceston."\* He was re-chosen here (as well as the three other members) at the general election which followed in May, 1807, but, having been seated also for Northumberland, he decided to represent that constituency, and Captain Bennet (who to the short-lived Parliament of 1806 had been returned at a bye-election for Enniskillen, and who had unsuccessfully contested Ipswich at the dissolution of 1807) was sent up in his stead.† In 1812, he was called by the Tory Ministry to the Upper House in his father's barony of Percy, and this visible sign of the return of his family to Tory principles was speedily followed by the resignation of Bennet, whose place was filled by Jonathan Raine,‡ auditor to the Duke of Northumberland's estates, who, beginning political life as a Whig, had followed his patron in becoming a Tory. Raine, who was a special pleader of some distinction, had been a member of the Parliaments of 1802 and 1806, but had lost his seat at the general election of 1807.

At the dissolution of 1812 Brogden and Northey were again re-elected for Launceston and Newport respectively, but Raine, displacing Morris, moved from the one borough to the other, and his seat at Launceston was taken by Pownall Bastard Pellew, a captain in the navy and son of the celebrated admiral, whom he succeeded as Viscount Exmouth in 1833, dying the same year. This state of the representation continued unchanged at the general elections of June, 1818, and March, 1820, Raine having been re-chosen in March, 1816, upon his appointment as a King's Counsel. But this does not signify that there was no opposition to the Duke's nominees, for though all chance of any being displayed at Launceston had been destroyed by the

\* Ibid, Edition of 1808, p. 444. † July 17, 1807: Official List, vol. ii., p. 243. ‡ May 8, 1812: Ibid,

policy the Corporation had steadily pursued since 1796, of very strictly limiting the number of voters,\* at Newport there was more material for fight. At the general election of 1818 the Duke of Northumberland (the Earl Percy, member for Launceston, of twelve years before†) “met with an unexpected opposition from Mr. Phillips, of Newport House. This gentleman, who owns a minority of the burgage-holds, proposed Sir John Kennaway,‡ and Ralph Franco, Esq., in opposition to the Duke of Northumberland’s nomination of Jonathan Raine, Esq., and William Northey, Esq. At the close of the poll the numbers were :

For Jonathan Raine, Esq.	...	...	...	43
William Northey, Esq.	...	..	...	43
Sir John Kennaway	...	...	...	15
Ralph Franco, Esq.	...	...	...	15

Upon which the Duke of Northumberland’s nominees were declared duly elected.”§ At the dissolution caused by George the Third’s death in 1820, Raine and Northey were again unsuccessfully opposed, this time by a Mr. John Sympton Jessopp, but the numbers polled are unmentioned.||

A record of burials in the parish of St. Mary Magdalene from 1815 to 1840, kept by the then sexton, John Frain, is of peculiar interest in considering this period because of its references to any special incident occurring at the interment. Such entries deal with widely differing affairs; in two cases it is noted that a person “dropt in something for an Evil”; in another it is stated that a youth, one of a well-known family, was buried by torch-light, the church being “Crowded with Spectator’s, Some Very Disorderly”; in several instances there is an assertion that “the Clergyman reprimanded some Young Men for their Ill Behaviour During the Burial,” or words to a similar effect; and in many it is noted that “Scores attended,” “hundreds attended,” or, as in one instance, “very few attended.” In connection with the burial of an infant in 1817 it is

\* ante, p. 289.

† ante, p. 295. He had succeeded to the title in 1817.

‡ Grandfather of the present member for East Devon. He had won his baronetcy by his services in India, having been appointed in 1788 Resident at the Court of the Nizam, and having in that capacity done good work in connection with the war against Tippoo Sultan.

§ T. H. B. Oldfield, *A Key to the House of Commons* (1819), p. 21.

|| Smith, *Parliaments of England*, vol. ii., p. 18.

stated that "the Cle—n\* Read to the Burial what Could not Be found in the Book, from a state of Intost—n"; and questions of deportment appear particularly to have interested the sexton, he recording on two occasions in 1822 that the son of the deceased "Keep His Hat On During the Burial"; while, in the same year, at the interment of a young woman, "the Bell Tol'd 56 Minutes and Her Father at the Grave Side Never shed a Tear." On one occasion "No Parents Attended"; on another "the Clergyman Lectured them for Coming too Late"; and on a third, the corpse was "Carried by ye Trade in White Aprons." It is carefully set down at what funerals the minute bell was tolled and at which the bells were chimed and the "dead peal" or the "dumb peal" rung; while it is often noted that "Job's Anthem," "Vital Spark," or "the 90th Psalm" was sung, the first-named being the evident favourite. The state of the weather also is a frequent subject of remark: once there was "Heavy Rain during the Burial as Ever was Known," then there were "Rain and Hail's," and another time it was "Wet, dyrtty, and Cold with Snow." In several instances the cause of death, when at all exceptional, is given, but only twice is any heed taken of national events, namely in 1821, when it is mentioned that there was a funeral on "the Day after the Coronation of George 4th" (possibly noted because, in celebration of the ceremony, a popular feast had been held the previous day on the Walk, immediately adjoining the scene of the sexton's labours); and in 1837, when a body was interred on May 24, "Princess Victoria B'day"—just four weeks before her present Majesty came to the throne.

Beyond these there are in this book several entries of interest as affecting the clergymen of the district. The incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene's† naturally figures the most prominently, and when "old Parson Rowe," a sporting clergyman of a type now almost extinct, died at the age of 59, and was buried on March 14, 1837, it is recorded that he had been "Minister 32 Years," and that his popularity was so great that hundreds attended the funeral and that all the shops

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\* The Rev. J. H. Hutton (ante, p. 293). This reverend gentleman is recorded to have officiated at several funerals at St. Mary Magdalene's in 1815 and the two following years, the last entry of his name being of a burial on September 16, 1817. † The Rev. John Rowe (ante, p. 291).



were shut "except Castine and Printer Philp." The reverend gentleman's successor, it may be noted, was the Rev. George Buckmaster Gibbons, who became perpetual curate of St. Mary Magdalene's on March 30, 1837, at the age of twenty-nine, the sexton recording that "The First Duty with Mr. Gibbons" was on May 7 of the same year, the new incumbent having to "lecture ye Assembly" (presumably for their ill behaviour) at two interments in the following month.\* The only other of the many clergymen mentioned in the book who need be referred to here is the Rev. Francis Vyvyan Jago-Arundell, son of Thomas Jago,† who, born at Launceston in 1780, and appointed rector of Landulph in 1805 (a preferment he held until his death in 1846), was greatly interested in local history, and planned but never published a work on the subject.‡

Of the other entries in the book only a very few can be noticed. One (in the chief magistrate's own handwriting) dated 1826 and signed "J. Roe Esqr. Mayor of Launceston" states that it was "Order'd January 4th Any More Vaults to be Made None to Be But two Coffins wide But as Deep as ye Like," and it is noted at the end of the volume that on September 15, 1840, was brought "The New Engien from Plymouth." A few of the addresses given of those interred have already passed out of memory, for Starcross,§ Back Street, the Fish Market, and the Butter Market are no longer recognised as places of abode.|| As to the curious entry of a torchlight burial, referred to above, it may be noted that it was of Christopher Morshead Lawrence (brother of the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence) who died at the age of sixteen, and was interred at eight o'clock in the evening on March 2, 1816. His father, Humphry Lawrence, who died at Whitely, Lifton Down, on April 2, 1811,\*\* had received a similar funeral, the remains being met at the head of Race Hill at half-past eleven at night by the mayor, corporation, and tradesmen

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\* Mr. Gibbons, who was born in London on Jan. 2, 1808, was curate of Dartmouth from 1835 to 1837, perpetual curate of Launceston from 1837 to 1866, vicar of Lancastr from 1866 to 1869, and vicar of Werrington from 1869 to 1878, when he gave up his clerical duties and retired to Manor House, Camelford, where he died on April 17, 1884. † ante, p. 280. ‡ He is mentioned in 1818 under his original name of Jago but in the next year as Jago-Arundell. § ante, p. 274. || Back Street was that portion of High Street (as it is now styled throughout) which was at the rear of the old Guildhall; the Fish Market, the Butter Market, and the Butchers' Market were in the streets, and the parts where they were held were called after their respective names. \*\* He was a son of Humphry Lawrence, mayor of Launceston in 1757 (ante, p. 278).



of the town, and, amid muffled peals, escorted by torch-light to St. Mary Magdalene's, where they arrived exactly at midnight and were buried in the family vault. Humphry Lawrence, another son of the Humphry here referred to, who died at Exeter in 1840, was brought to Launceston to be buried in the same vault, and was the last person interred within the church.

A scarcely less interesting record of some aspects of Launceston life in the earlier part of the present century is afforded in the only existing minute-book of the proceedings of the Local Board of Guardians, which opens with a report of the resolutions taken "at a court held at the Workhouse, Monday, 6th of January, 1817, Mr. Pearce,\* chairman." Among the orders is one which directs that "The Methodists are not allowed to preach or pray in this house," a rather different state of things to that which must have prevailed when the workhouse-master was a Methodist local preacher as well.† But a month afterwards the Guardians seem to have repented a little of their curt directions, for they now resolved "That in case of sickness, and then only, such person in such state shall be at liberty to apply if they wish to the Master to send either for a clergyman of the Established Church of England or of (*sic*) any Dissenting Minister for their mental comfort, and that elderly persons of moral habits, on application to the Master, be allowed to go to either meeting until the Master has proof of their making an improper use of their permission." From the minutes of three months later it would appear that inoculation was still practised here, it being ordered on May 3 "that the surgeon of the Workhouse be desired to vaccinate the poor and be allowed 2s 6d per head for the same, and that such persons as may refuse to have their children vaccinated must themselves pay for inoculation"; and among the other resolutions of interest passed the same year was one unanimously agreed to on July 7, "That having this day proceeded to the election of a surgeon upon the principle of rotation, we earnestly recommend the adoption of the same plan by our successors in office." Two further points may be noted as exhibiting phases of poor relief now extinct,

\* Mr. Thomas Pearce, a solicitor, who was afterwards prominent in the local Reform agitation. † ante, p. 283.

it being resolved on October 5, 1818, "That John Scawn have 7s. 6d. to take him to Bideford to procure himself work," and there being several orders in both these years to issue summonses upon tradesmen of the town to bind parish apprentices.

Various influences were at work at Launceston in the earlier portion of the century to break up the spirit of exclusiveness which had long characterised the town. Some of these were social, others material, and perhaps still more religious. The detention here of several French prisoners of war during the prolonged struggle with Napoleon\* could not fail to introduce an element of broader information into the households in which they were domiciled on parole, and to the younger members of which they taught the language, while improved communications by coach led to greater movement to the large towns and even to the metropolis. And although the leading inhabitants were still attached members of the Church of England (the Corporation assembling every Sunday in the Council Chamber preparatory to attending St. Mary Magdalene's in a body), dissent was making striking headway. A noteworthy instance of this is afforded by the fact that William O'Bryan, the founder of the Bible Christian connexion, convened here on August 17, 1819, the first conference of that body,† the second being held at Badash, near the town, just twelve months later. O'Bryan was at the time last-mentioned living at Badash, whither he had come with his family from Kilkhampton on February 11, 1819, and where he remained until October 6, 1820, when he took up his residence at Race Hill, Launceston,‡ removing thence four years afterwards to Mill Pleasant, Devonport.§ The society struck root in the town, and at the chapel in Tower Street is continued the work commenced by O'Bryan nearly seventy years since.

The material changes meanwhile were mainly in the direction of improvement. In the early part of the century the Walk was laid out by the Corporation, and the churchyard (which in 1765 had been added to by purchase, and which was further enlarged in

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\* One of these continued to live in the town even after peace was concluded, and ended his days as care-taker of the Wesleyan Chapel. † S. L. Thorne, *William O'Bryan, the Man and his Work*, p. 118. ‡ Ibid, p. 23. § Ibid, p. 119.

1809\*) was cut in two by a path leading from Church Stile to the Higher Walk, and passing over the vaults of some of the oldest families in the town. About the same time a piece of land near the chancel door, on which had stood two houses, was added to the church area, and a window compartment, previously blocked by these dwellings, was opened to view, thus completing the fabric in its present state.† Some years later the Duke of Northumberland removed a couple of houses which occupied the space between the church and the tower,‡ replacing them by a building designed to be both Council Chamber and Vestry Room, a double function which ceased only in 1881, when, on the opening of the new Guildhall, the Town Council had no further occasion for its use. And these were not all the improvements, (though the value of some to be named may be considered doubtful), effected at this period. In the first year of the century an Act was passed in continuation and amendment of the measure of 1781 dealing with the Launceston roads,§ and extending its powers “to the road from the West Gate under Madford in Launceston by Docacre, to the North Gate in Launceston,”|| and this in its turn was amended fourteen years later.\*\* Under the provisions of these Acts, the North Road, the Exeter Road, and the Tavistock Road were made, but, in the making, several relics of the town’s former station were swept away. The West Gate was the first to disappear†† and much of the outer wall of the Castle followed in its wake when the North Road was made. But the worst result of the latter improvement was an unintentional one. The town had resolved to spare the Witches’ Tower (which stood fifty or sixty feet high at the corner of Castle Dyke facing the White Hart, and by which the road had to pass) but the work weakened the foundations, and, in an unusually severe storm one night in 1834, the tower was blown into the road. In the same year the North, the second of the three old gates of the town, was deliberately demolished, on the ground that it interfered with the traffic—a pretence disposed of by the fact that the traffic by that time had been diverted to the North Road. But

\* Pattison, St. Mary Magdalene. The lower burying ground (formerly the Bowling Green) was consecrated about 1813. † Ibid. ‡ ante, p. 79. § ante, p. 276.

|| 41 Geo. III., cap. x. \*\* 55 Geo. III., cap. liii. †† Mr. Pattison in his Lecture on Launceston gives the date of this demolition as 1812.

the third gate, the South, is now safe from the spoiler, the Town Council having resolved in 1884 that it should be devoted to the purposes of a local museum, and having voted funds for its repair accordingly.\*

This last-named gate continued at the early part of the century to be what for ages it had been—at once a house of detention, a gaol for petty offenders, and a prison for debtors. The top-storey was devoted to the last class, of whom there was no great number, partly for a reason supplied by Mr. J. K. Lethbridge in a parliamentary return of 1835—that the place was in so scandalous a condition that tradesmen preferred their debtors to go free than confine them in such a dungeon. The lower room, used for criminals, like the other, was “in a most filthy and dilapidated state,”† while no fire was allowed, water had to be brought in as it suited the keeper, and sanitary conveniences were unknown. This condition of things culminated in 1827. Five suspected burglars had been committed to the Borough Court, then held quarterly, for trial, and, being refused bail, had to remain in the Dark House, with one bed between them and neither ventilation nor comfort of any kind. The attention of the then Home Secretary was called to the matter, not by any official but by a working townsman,‡ and an order was immediately issued that the men should be liberated on bail and the prison ventilated and better fitted up. This was of necessity attended to, while the men, upon trial before Mr. J. K. Lethbridge (then Deputy Recorder), were acquitted.

But it was not only the town prison which was attracting public attention at this time. The county gaol, despite the improvements effected because of the royal grant of 1778,§ was of the old pattern and afforded a striking contrast to the new prison at Bodmin, built on the lines laid down by Howard. It was acknowledged, however, to be a great deal better than it had been when, as Drew observes,|| “for filth, gloom, and unwholesomeness, it was rendered proverbial throughout the county,” and when, as he goes on to state, “a finished description of the wretchedness of any situation . . . frequently

\*It is pleasing to record that this resolution was adopted unanimously, upon the motion of Mr. C. L. Cowlard, a prominent Conservative, seconded by Mr. R. Robbins, an equally active Liberal. † Neild, *State of the Prisons*, p. 331. ‡ George Parthing (ante, p. 218). § ante, p. 275. || *History of Cornwall*, vol. i., p. 577.

terminates in this: 'It is almost as bad as Launceston Gaol.' " The tenacity of tradition is shown by the fact that, even as lately as the summer of 1883, an acquaintance of the present author overheard, in the course of a dispute at a St. Blazey inn, one of the combatants attempt to crush the other by the verbal criticism, " You've got a face like a Launceston Gaoler."

A parliamentary return compiled in 1818 reported the prison to be capable of containing twenty-five persons, and to possess two yards and two day-rooms. No labour was done by the inmates, each of whom was allowed two pounds of bread daily and a quarter-pound of beef on Sundays, with sixpence a week for "necessaries," clothing, when required, being provided at the county expense; and such prisoners as were taken to the Dark House received the same allowance.\* Two years later another parliamentary paper stated that, although since the previous return four sleeping cells had been fitted up for males, the gaol was now capable of containing only twenty-one prisoners,† and this despite the fact that the return of 1818 had stated that twenty-five were confined there at one time in that year. The earlier document had observed that, to class the prisoners as the law directed, it would "be necessary to build additional apartments on the outside of the present walls, the expense of which would probably amount to the sum of £1,000"; and that of 1820 confirmed this in the statement that there was "not room within the mound walls for further classification."

But it was now become increasingly evident that two county prisons were one too many for Cornwall, and it might have been taken for granted that the more central would not be regarded as the superfluous one to be swept away. The regular series of gaol returns for 1823 and a few subsequent years show that the number of prisoners at Launceston was gradually being reduced while at Bodmin it was being enlarged, the former now requiring the services only of the gaoler and a single turnkey. The labour done was that the "males at times work in Gaoler's gardens; females make, mend, and wash clothes,"

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\* An Account of all the Gaols, Houses of Correction, or Penitentiaries in England and Wales (ordered to be printed March 16, 1819), p. 7. † Returns from all the Gaols, Houses of Correction, or Penitentiaries in England (ordered to be printed April 13, 1821).

all the time occupied being "a few hours in a day at work," and even then there was "not employ for all the prisoners." Everything was so comfortable under this system that no punishment had been recently inflicted and no irons were in use, while the Chaplain prayed and preached once every Sunday, and Bibles and other books were allowed. But from the point of view of the Government Official, it must have seriously detracted from the Arcadian happiness of the whole to find that no answer had been given to a searching question regarding the "amount of earnings and how applied."\*

The returns of the visiting justices for 1823 and 1824 showed that the gaol was kept cleaner than in older days, and that of 1825 that some alterations had lately been made for the better accommodation of the female convicts; but a significant addendum to the last was made by the Clerk of the Peace (then Mr. Edward Coode)—"And I further certify that an addition to the gaol at Bodmin is in considerable forwardness." This was completed in 1828, and in 1829 the gaol establishment at Launceston was broken up. Christopher Mules, who had followed his father, John Mules,† as gaoler, did not live to see what to him would have been a rueful day, for he died in November, 1826, and was buried in the presence of a "large assembly of people." His eldest son, called Christopher like himself, succeeded him in the office, and, upon the great change, was appointed warder in the prison at Bodmin.

The last execution which took place at Launceston was in 1821, when two men named Thomson and Barnicott were hanged in the Castle Green for the murder of a farmer near Probus, the scaffold being erected on a slight mound in the centre of the Green, known from this circumstance as Gallows Hill until it was levelled some twenty years since. The previous execution to this was in 1818, when William Rowe, of Stokeclimsland, suffered the death penalty for sheep-stealing.‡ In his previously-quoted recollections,§ Mr.

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\* Reports to Parliament under the Gaol Act for 1824 and following years (among the Parliamentary Returns). † ante, pp. 265-72-74. ‡ The following, supplied by a lady of Bodmin, is a list of the latest executions at Launceston:—1793, William Trevarris, murder; 1805, James Joice and John Williams, burglary at the Launceston Post Office; 1810, Lawrence Roach, murder; 1812, William Wyatt, murder of a Jew; 1813, Elizabeth Osborne, murder; 1814, William Baines, murder; 1815, John Syms, forgery; 1818, William Rowe, sheep-stealing; and 1821, Barnicott and Thomson, murder. § ante, p. 264.



Ching states "the unfortunate from Stoke, after hanging the usual time, was cut down, and I well remember seeing his own father in the West Gate Inn waiting for his son's body, which he afterwards took away in an open cart, followed by a crowd of onlookers." The executioner was an Exeter man, who used to come to the town at each assize, and for whom a special rope was always manufactured by Richard Heath, a Launceston roper, who exhibited it on his stall on the previous market-day, and after it was used, says Mr. Ching, "it was eagerly sought after and disposed of by persons afflicted with scrofula and other diseases."\* The only condemnation for murder at Launceston after that of the two men above-mentioned was of one, named Henwood, at the spring assizes of 1835. The unfortunate man had killed his father without apparent provocation, and all the circumstances seemed to point to his insanity, but he was sentenced to death. As soon as the assizes were over, he was taken in an open van to Bodmin with several other prisoners, who joked him upon his awful position the whole way down, he being executed, in accordance with the then regulations, within a few hours of his arrival at the new county town.

This subject leads to the consideration of other punishments for crime practised in Launceston in the early part of this century. The pillory, which we know to have stood in the town in former years,† though not yet abolished by Act of Parliament, had disappeared from Launceston life, like the cucking stool for scolds,‡ before the opening of the nineteenth century, but some of the old and barbarous punishments remained in use. The stocks§ were in frequent requisition for drunkards and petty offenders, and there was also the process of flogging at the cart's tail for larceny. This was got rid of in 1826, the last to suffer the infliction being a man for stealing silver spoons. The penalty of twenty-five lashes on the bare back was laid on by the town scavenger, the wretched cavalcade starting from the

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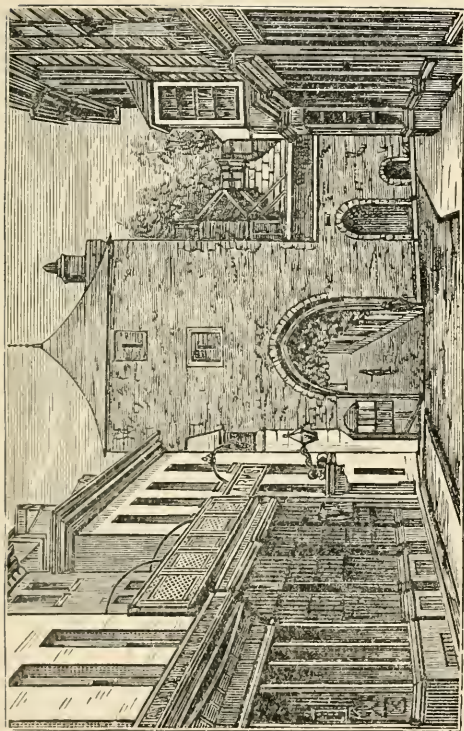
\* The Author is informed by the Rev. W. S. Johns, vicar of St. Thomas, that according to the churchwardens' accounts (which date from the end of the fifteenth century) that parish used to have the providing of the ropes for executions at Launceston and the subsequent disposal of the bodies. It may have been for this reason that Thomson and Barnicott were buried in St. Thomas churchyard, on the right-hand side about half-way up the path, where the marks of the graves are still visible on a foggy morning. † ante, p. 151. ‡ ante, p. 292. § Ibid.

Pig Market at Starcross,\* and proceeding down High Street, turning around by the old Butchers' Market† into Church Street, and then back by Broad Street into the Pig Market again. Other floggings took place at the old pump in Broad Street, close to the assize courts, the scavenger still officiating, and a couple of men were flogged in the town on two successive days in 1826.‡ The last who suffered punishment at the pump was a man in 1831 for stealing tarts, but the last flogging which took place in Launceston was in the autumn of 1834, when, under a sentence pronounced at the Borough Court by Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, a young man was tied to a tree which stood in the centre of the old Workhouse yard, and there given twenty-five lashes as a preliminary to three months in Bridewell for assault. Within the next two or three years Bridewell, and Law Court, and flogging, had all disappeared from the borough of Launceston.

Among other disappearances at this period must be noted a custom which had probably lived for centuries. On the first Monday in each September, the day on which the Corporation chose the Mayor, the roughs of the town selected a man after their own heart, made him drunk with beer, and then took him to Starcross, where they proclaimed him "Mayor of the Pig Market" for the ensuing year. They then powdered his head with flour, tied a frying-pan to his hair at the back, and led him through the streets, continuing to cast flour upon the miserable being and jeering loudly at him as he stumbled along. The last exhibition of this sort was in 1827, in which year a more rational amusement was provided for the people of the town in the shape of cricket. The first club which was formed in this district was at Tregillis, in South Petherwin, and it owed its origin to a Mr. William Crowhurst, who came from the Midlands to superintend the erection of Trebursye House for Mr. Eliot. He and his sons were good cricketers, as were also two gentlemen named Morgan, living at Treguddick, in the same parish, and these being

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\* This was removed to Southgate when the market houses were built in 1840. † Where Mr. Hayman's shops now stand. ‡ April 14 and 15, the culprit in the former case being said to have been "tied to the Launceston Pump," and, in the latter, "flogged round the town." This information has been supplied the Author by Mr. John Chegwyn from a book in which his father used to make occasional entries of notable local events, and which, it may be noted, under date "Sat. May 3, 1817" records that potatoes were 6d. per gallon, meat 6½d. per pound, and wheat 20s. to 30s. per bushel.



THE SOUTH GATE.



joined by many from Launceston (including Mr. Thomas Ching, Mr. John Ching, Mr. Aaron Eyre, and Mr. William Thorne) a club was formed which met weekly at Tregillis, and which proved an attractive novelty in the district, especially as cock-fighting (which was then frequently practised on the second ring of the Castle, though in a field under Windmill when the judges happened to be in the town, and upon which much betting used to take place) was just beginning to pass out of fashion.

Nor was the cricket club the only new form of recreation provided for the better class of Launcestonians about this date, for in 1829 was founded a Philosophic Society, of which Dr. Patch, Dr. Pethick, and Messrs. Collins, T. S. Eyre, John Darke,\* William May,† R. K. Frost, Charles Gurney, and Edward Cope were the committee of management. It possessed, we are told, a library and “a good apparatus,”‡ while lectures were given during the winter in the upper portion of the old Grammar School which stood on the Walk, and which, according to the authority just quoted, was “also occasionally used for concerts, plays, etc.”; but the society died of inanition in a few years as such are apt to do in so small a town.§ But another institution of social importance—the Launceston Savings Bank—established eleven years before, still exists and is in a flourishing state. It was founded in 1818, a year prolific in the birth of such establishments in Cornwall. Falmouth had set the example the previous year which was now followed by Launceston, Helston, Liskeard, Penzance, Redruth, and Truro, the three other savings banks in the county, Bodmin (since closed), Wadebridge, and Camborne, being of much later date.||

Religious growth, meanwhile, was no less marked than social. “A handsome Methodist meeting-house” is noted as among the

\* ante, p. 278. † ante, p. 294. ‡ Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1831), vol. iii., p. 34. § The “Literary and Philosophic Society” is mentioned as still existing in *The Parliamentary Gazetteer of England and Wales* (1843), vol. iii., p. 48, but it had died out some years before the date given. || *Parliamentary Return on Savings Banks* (ordered to be printed July 24, 1884), p. 78. The Launceston Savings Bank, as it appears from this, bears favourable comparison, for the economy and efficiency of its management, with other such institutions either in the county or the country generally. The present officers are Mr. J. L. Cowlard, hon. treasurer, Mr. James Grigg, actuary, and Mr. Thomas C. Langdon, auditor. In semi-connection with this institution was founded in October, 1865, by the Rev. S. Childs Clarke, a Penny Bank, which existed several years.

possessions of the town at this period,\* and the Wesleyans continued to make progress, though the number of resident ministers—two at the formation of the circuit in 1794,† and increased to three in 1808 and four in 1809, because of the many stations to be served—was reduced to two again when Tavistock (including Okehampton) and Liskeard (including Callington and Looe) were taken from Launceston and formed into separate circuits, the size of the original being further reduced in 1815 by the severance from it of Holsworthy and Kilkhampton. The Independents also were pushing ahead, and when Dr. Cope‡ left the town in June, 1820, to take the position of tutor of the Irish Evangelical College, Dublin,§ there remained a body so flourishing that in 1815 it had had to erect yet another gallery behind the pulpit to accommodate the ever-growing congregation, while for the use of members of the church a library of seven hundred volumes had been formed. Dr. Cope was succeeded in March, 1821, by the Rev. Alexander Good, of London, whose ministry in Launceston was a comparatively short one, his place being taken in 1824 by the Rev. J. Barfett, who, two years later, saw the erection of the present chapel.||

Before leaving this desultory sketch of the social events of interest to Launceston during the first thirty years of the century, a glance may be given at the crimes committed in the town during the same period, which were more than a nine-day wonder to the inhabitants. The burglary at the Launceston Post Office, for which two men were hanged in 1805,\*\* caused a great local sensation, and much credit was given to the three borough constables (by name Atkins, Short, and Watts) for, according to the saying of the time, having found the culprits out “like Narraway (or Norway) rats.” There is a tradition that the men were taken in an open cart, rope around neck, from our gaol to Gallows’ Hill on St. Stephens Down, followed by a large crowd, and that on their way to execution the landlady whose house they had frequented got up into the cart and kissed

\* John Gorton and G. N. Wright, *A Topographical Dictionary of Great Britain and Ireland* (1833), vol. ii., p. 527. † ante, p. 283. ‡ ante, p. 289.

§ While in Launceston Dr. Cope was head of a school at Belle Vue. After his labours in Dublin he became minister of the Congregational Churches at Wakefield and Penryn respectively, and died at the last-named town on October 26, 1856, aged eighty, having been born in London on August 23, 1776.

|| For information regarding the later history of Castle Street Chapel the Author has to thank Mr. William Cater.

\*\* ante, p. 304.



them\* ; but one is bound to accept the legend with caution in the absence of proof that this transport to St. Stephens was ever portion of a Launceston execution. In connection with the condemnation here of a Fowey innkeeper, named Wyatt, in 1812, for the murder of a Jew,† it is told that when the judges had left the town after sentencing him, it was discovered that the date fixed for the execution was Good Friday, and, as the man could not legally be hanged on that day, he was kept alive until the May following. But even in the times when folks were hanged for forgery, and sheep-stealing, and a myriad of other offences, it was not every one who deserved the death penalty, according even to the theory of this milder period, that received it. A woman of Launceston, who died but a few years since, was indicted in the old days for child murder, of her commission of which no one entertained a doubt, but, owing to her having been described in the indictment with the omission of one of her Christian names, she was acquitted. A still more striking instance of the ease with which those guilty of murder escaped the gallows, while a multitude of lesser offenders were hurried into eternity, was afforded in 1814. An execution for rent had been "put in" at Higher Bamham, and the sheriff's officers went on a Saturday to levy distress. They found the door to be locked, and, having waited until the next day and still gained no admittance, they called upon the borough constables (then chosen annually from among the inhabitants) to assist them to break open the door. The constables (Samuel Jory, a Broad Street tradesman, Joshua Farthing, a sergeant of militia, and William Tapson, keeper of the Plymouth Dock, now the Devonport, Inn) went to Bamham on the Sunday accordingly, and were preparing to force an entrance, the farmer and his two sons being within, when Jory was shot dead through the doorway. Nothing daunted, the remaining constables made their way in and arrested the three, who were committed to the assizes at Bodmin charged with the murder, but they were acquitted on the ground that no witness saw the fatal shot fired. Jory was buried in Launceston Churchyard, with an inscription on his tombstone setting forth that he had been murdered in the execution of his duty, but the monument has now in some unexplained manner

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\* Cornish and Devon Post, Jan. 13 and 20, 1883.      † ante, p. 304.

disappeared. One other criminal incident regarding Bamham is sufficiently curious to be mentioned. A few years after the event just narrated a burglary was committed there on a Saturday night, and the next morning, when the matter was investigated, a hat was found which was traced to a man living at Launceston; he was at once arrested with another conjectured to be an accomplice, and, though the day was Sunday, no time was lost in haling them before the Mayor for public examination during the time of evening service.

We must now betake ourselves once more to political matters, for it is with them that this portion of our history closes. In 1823, Jonathan Raine was re-elected for Newport after appointment as "First Justice of the counties of Merioneth, Carnarvon, and Anglesey, in the Principality of Wales,"\* and three years later, on the death of William Northey, who had sat for Newport without intermission for thirty years, Charles Greathead Bertie Percy, of Guy's Cliffe, Warwick, was chosen,† there being no opposition in either case. But at the dissolution of June, 1826, electoral affairs at Newport were not so quiet. At Launceston, Brogden and Pellew were once more re-elected without trouble of any kind, but in the sister-borough a contest was arranged, and arranged in a curious fashion. There dwelt in Newport many restless spirits who, though accustomed to vote with the Duke when the poll was taken, were determined to extract as much excitement as possible from their possession of the suffrage. One such was Mr. James Snell, a tanner of St. Stephens Hill, and he, knowing that Mr. Nicholas Burt, Mr. Vaughan Ridgman,‡ Mr. Samuel Holman, and other independent electors were longing for an opportunity to oppose the Duke's nominees, essayed a somewhat perilous adventure in order to secure a contest. At the end of 1824, having heard that a London banker, named Stevenson, was desirous of fighting a borough upon Whig principles, he wrote to that gentleman in the name of Nicholas Burt, the leader of the anti-Percy section, telling him there was a good chance at Newport. Acting upon the implied invitation, Stevenson sent to the borough an agent, who waited on Burt, by whom the letter was at once

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\* March 21, 1823: Official List, vol. ii., p. 285.    † Feb. 8, 1826: Ibid.    ‡ ante, p. 294.

denounced as a forgery. Despite this, Burt entered into negotiations with the banker, and, when Parliament was dissolved in 1826, Stevenson intimated to him that he should at once leave London for Newport, and appointed Lifton Down as the spot where he would like to be met by his supporters. A procession of men on horseback, to the number of thirty or forty, was accordingly formed at Newport, and this (accompanied by hundreds of pedestrians, all wearing laurel leaves and shouting "Stevenson for ever," with Burt and Ridgman at the head) marched through Launceston to Lifton Down, where, while waiting outside the local inn, beer was freely given to the horses to drink. In about half-an-hour, and amid loud cheers, a carriage-and-four drove up with the candidate himself, and the procession marched back to Newport. Burt (who was a currier) had cleared out his drying-loft (which stood upon the site of the "temple of the winds," built two or three years later, and known as the "Newport Town Hall"), and there Stevenson addressed the electors, who, in the fashion of the time, were afterwards regaled with several hogsheads of beer, inhabitants of St. Thomas and St. Stephens hastening to the spot with pitchers so that they might share in the feast. On the following day another procession was formed under Burt's directions in Newport Square, and this, consisting of representatives of all ages and both sexes—the men leading, followed by the youths, and then by the women and children—wended its way at great length up St. Thomas Hill, and through the North Gate to the King's Arms, where Stevenson and his friends were dining, and from the windows of which was thrown, in order to amuse the crowd, a quantity of silver and copper coin, previously raised nearly to red heat in a frying-pan. One of Stevenson's most ardent adherents was Thomas John Phillips (grand-nephew of Sir Jonathan Phillips,† and whose "unexpected opposition" to the Duke eight years before has been noted‡) whose hospitality at Newport House was unbounded throughout the contest, and at Brimble Park, a portion of his property, was given a *fete* to keep up the excitement. Beer was again distributed in plenty, prizes were offered for cricketing, running,§ grinning

\* ante, p. 137. † ante, p. 289. ‡ ante, p. 296. § There remain in 1884 three survivors of the lads who competed for the running prizes, namely, Mr. David Lavis, Mr. Peter Bray, and Mr. Richard Robbins, to the last-named of whom is due this account of

through a horse-collar, eating penny loaves and treacle, races between women for dresses, and other amusements. But when the poll came to be taken Stevenson's supporters melted away, and the last contest for Newport resulted in the overwhelming defeat of the Whig candidate, and the re-election of Raine and Percy. It may have been in disappointment at this that Mr. Phillips\* shortly afterwards sold his Newport property to the Duke of Northumberland, who was now more than ever master of the borough.

His grace's lordship over both boroughs was strikingly exemplified a little later, though he held the position at no very dear price, the four members being returned at far less expense to the patron than at Helston, for instance, where the Duke of Leeds defrayed the whole of the town rates for the privilege of choosing the two representatives. Just at this period, however, the owner of Werrington was spending a great deal of money in the boroughs. In a speech delivered by Sir Henry Hardinge in the House of Commons in 1833 (the reason for which will later be explained), the then member for Launceston stated that "the Duke of Northumberland, in the year 1822, subscribed to the public charities, Sunday-schools, and to the poor of the parish £213, and towards the improvement and repairs of the town £334 . . . and, during the six years between 1825 and 1831, the noble Duke subscribed £5,233."† Probably this large sum included a portion of the cost of the Launceston water-works erected at this time. In 1817, St. Stephens had been supplied with water from Gallows' Hill‡ at the Duke's expense, and ten years later, for the benefit of Launceston, a storage reservoir was formed at Dunheved Green,§ at a cost to his grace of over £2000. In November, 1825, during its construction, Mr. John Burt (father of Mr. William Burt, builder, Newport), and a man, named Thomas Warne, were killed and some others injured by the falling in of the works, which were completed in 1826. The reservoir, which held 252,000

the contest (who heard of Snell's share in it from that gentleman himself) as well as much other information regarding the history of Launceston during the past sixty years.

\* Mr. Phillips had purchased Landue (an estate connected centuries before with the history of Launceston) about the year 1820, and it descended to his son, Col. Paul Phillips, who sold it in 1867 to Mr. J. S. Treguning, whose son is the present proprietor. † House of Commons, April 29, 1833: Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, vol. xvii., p. 726. ‡ ante, p. 308. The spring there is known as Holy Well.

§ ante, p. 12.

gallons, and which stood at a sufficient elevation to supply the town proper, was fed by springs, aided by the drainage from the Windmill Hill\* above; but, as will subsequently be seen, it failed to answer expectation.

For these favours the inhabitants were grateful even to the verge of straining their conscience. If there had been one point more than another upon which the Tory majority both in Launceston and Newport felt strongly, it was that no relief should be given to the Roman Catholics, and yet each, at the bidding of the Duke, returned a member in favour of Emancipation in 1829. This was owing to the fact that his grace had been appointed in January of that year to the Viceroyalty of Ireland, in succession to the Marquis of Anglesey, who was recalled by the Wellington Ministry because by a very few months he had anticipated their promise to grant Emancipation. The new Viceroy found that he could do no other than follow in the footsteps of the old, and, in the accustomed fashion of a borough-patron, required the members he returned to change their votes as he directed. Captain Pellew, one of the representatives of Launceston,† declined so to do, and resigned rather than support the Relief Bill; and the Launceston Corporation, greatly to their chagrin (the members having frequently and publicly vowed that they would never return a supporter of the Catholic claims) had to choose as his successor the Quarter-master-General of the Forces, Lieutenant-General Sir James Willoughby Gordon, bart., G.C.B., of Niton, Isle of Wight, whose son, the second and last baronet, bore the name of Percy, the family which placed the father in Parliament.

This return took place on March 17,‡ on the evening of which the second reading of the Emancipation Bill was to be taken in the Commons, and three days later there was an election also for Newport, Percy, the junior member,§ having been appointed Comptroller of the Household to his relative, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and his grace filled the vacancy with Mr. William Fitzgerald Vesey Fitzgerald, President of the Board of Trade and Treasurer to the Navy.|| This

\* ante, pp. 12-235. † ante, p. 295. ‡ Official List, vol. ii., p. 301. § Percy, who was a son of the first Earl of Beverley, and brother of the fifth and uncle of the sixth (the present) Duke of Northumberland, was raised to the rank of a Duke's son by royal warrant in 1865, and died in 1870. || Official List, vol. ii., p. 301.

gentleman played a part in the history of his time which is not to be forgotten. He had sat for Ennis from 1808 to 1818 and for county Clare from 1818 to 1828, and in the summer of the last-named year (when, owing to the resignation of Huskisson, all "the Canningites" left the Wellington Administration) he was appointed President of the Board of Trade, and had to seek re-election. "He was in favour of the Catholic claims; and neither he, nor any one else in England, doubted his being returned, as a matter of course, with the hearty good-will of the Catholics."\* Even so thorough a Nationalist as John Mitchel admits that Fitzgerald, whom he describes as "a highly honourable and liberal gentleman," had good reason for the belief,† but the Catholics were determined to make this a test election, and Daniel O'Connell was nominated as their candidate, his proposer being the O'Gorman Mahon, a member of this present Parliament in 1884. The contest proceeded with the utmost excitement; "Mr. Fitzgerald reasoned," says Miss Martineau, but it was to no effect. The voting commenced on June 30, and after six days polling Fitzgerald, finding he had no chance, withdrew. "Though deeply mortified, he took his defeat with a gentlemanlike calmness,"‡ and in another few months found a more complacent constituency. But the Tory majority at Newport could not show themselves very hearty in support of their new member, and an eye-witness of the scene at the return in Newport Square relates that, while no applause was heard from those whose choice Mr. Fitzgerald presumably was, cheer after cheer burst from the assembled Whigs, whose opinions on Catholic Emancipation were now represented in Parliament as they could never have hoped them to be.

Fitzgerald did not sit for Newport for a longer period than the then existing Parliament, on the dissolution of which in July, 1830, upon the death of George the Fourth, he was elected for Lostwithiel.§ Brogden and Gordon were re-chosen for Launceston, and Raine was given as his colleague for Newport another Hibernian acquaintance of the Duke, John Doherty, of Ely Place, Dublin, the Solicitor General for

\* Harriet Martineau, *History of the Peace*, vol. ii., p. 183.    † John Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 308.    ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 313.    § He sat for Lostwithiel until December, 1830, when he resigned, and at the general election of 1831 he was returned once more for Ennis, being created Baron Fitzgerald and Vesey in the beginning of 1832.



Ireland.\* In the December, upon the appointment of the last-named to the Escheatorship of Munster,† he was succeeded by Major-General Sir Henry Hardinge, K.C.B.‡ This gallant gentleman, who was the third son of a Durham rector, was born in March, 1785, and was gazetted as ensign before he was fifteen. He served in the Peninsula with distinction, and, when Napoleon escaped from Elba, he was appointed by Wellington to be commissioner at the Prussian head-quarters. Owing to the loss of his hand at the battle of Ligny he was unable to fight at Waterloo, and at the dissolution of 1820 he entered Parliament as Tory member for Durham, where he was re-elected in April, 1823, on becoming Clerk of the Ordnance, and again at the dissolution of 1826. At the formation of the Wellington Administration, early in 1828, he was re-appointed to this office, and, upon the defection of "the Canningites" a few months later, he succeeded Lord Palmerston as Secretary-at-War, and subsequently became Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, thus being brought into close relationship with the Duke of Northumberland with important results. He did not offer himself again at Durham at the dissolution of 1830, but was returned for St. Germans, which seat he resigned to become member for Newport. It was while Chief Secretary that Sir Henry tried a fall with O'Connell, and, unlike a predecessor in the representation of Newport, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald,§ he had the best of it, for, although O'Connell publicly described him as a "paltry, contemptible, little English soldier," and the administration to which he belonged as "base, bloody, and brutal," the member for Clare refused to fight his one-handed opponent, though called upon to do so by Sir Henry's challenge and the moral code of the time.||

The agitation for parliamentary reform, which so soon swept out of existence three-fourths of the representation of the two boroughs, grew rapidly to a head very shortly after the first return

\* Official List, vol. ii., p. 316.

† He was afterwards Chief Justice of the Irish Common Pleas, and O'Connell, in the course of an attack in the House of Commons on July 5, 1833, upon the Irish Judges, though declaring that "Mr. Doherty never had fifteen briefs in any one term during his life," admitted that "he had a great deal of common sense, and that he managed himself upon the Bench, with only one or two exceptions, much better than any of his brother judges." (M. F. Cusack, *The Speeches and Public Letters of the Liberator*, vol. i., p. 273.) † Dec. 17, 1830: Official List, vol. ii., p. 316.

§ ante, p. 314.

|| Martineau, *History of the Peace*, vol. ii., pp. 388-90.

of Sir Henry Hardinge for Newport, and it did not leave Launceston untouched. Many of the inhabitants felt, as had their fathers close upon fifty years before,\* that "the House should take into their most serious consideration the present inadequate state of the representation of the people in Parliament"; and a requisition in the earliest days of 1831 was presented to the Mayor, signed by 53 persons, asking him to convene a town's meeting on the subject. This the chief magistrate declined to do, "from a sense of public duty," as he explained; and thereupon eleven of the leading "inhabitant householders"† called a meeting "to be held at the Long Room, at the King's Arms Inn" at noon on January 27, "to consider the propriety of Petitioning Parliament for a Reform in the present System of Electing Members to the House of Commons." Within a little over two months of this meeting, and a month after Lord John Russell had introduced his scheme disfranchising Newport, Sir Willoughby Gordon resigned his seat for Launceston, and in his place was chosen Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B.‡ Sir John, who was born in 1769, was a native of Dumfriesshire, and commenced active service at the age of fourteen as a cadet in the Madras Army. He distinguished himself at the siege of Seringapatam in 1792, and eight years later was sent as ambassador to Persia. Subsequently he became President of Mysore, Political Agent in the Deccan, and Governor of Bombay, finally leaving India in 1830. He was the author of several historical works upon the country with which he had had so much to do, and having, as will be stated, been re-elected for Launceston to the last unreformed Parliament, he found no place in the re-organised House of Commons, and died of paralysis at Windsor in May, 1833.

Thirteen days after Malcolm's return, William the Fourth dissolved Parliament amid a scene of excitement in both Houses unexampled in our later history. Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan, the Tory member for Cornwall, was interrupted in a speech against the Reform Bill by the booming of the Tower guns which announced that

\* ante, p. 280.

† Thomas Pearse (ante, p. 299), James Prockter, W. E. Nicolls, R. Dingley, H. Greenway, Thomas Geake, John Doidge, Wm. Thorne, Thomas Eyre, sen., Robert Parkyn, and Nath. Spry, as their names appeared on the handbill convening the meeting.

‡ April 9, 1831: Official List, vol. ii., p. 316.

the King was on his way to Westminster; and above the din, and above the frenzied attempts of Sir Robert Peel and Lord Althorp, Lord John Russell and Sir Francis Burdett to gain a hearing, the voice of Sir Henry Hardinge could be heard threatening the Reformers that "the next time they heard those guns they would be shotted," for the junior member for Newport shared the belief of his party that revolution was very near.

The last full election for that borough took place on May 2 and for Launceston a day later, and in each case the old members were re-chosen\*; but Sir Richard Vyvyan lost his seat for Cornwall, though a great number of Launceston Tories went to Lostwithiel (then the only polling place for the county) to support him. On the Sunday before the contest eighty horses and twelve four-horse coaches passed through Launceston on their way to Lostwithiel, for the purpose of bearing supporters of Sir Richard to the poll, and on the next day a Tory contingent followed from our town. They did not return until the Saturday night, by which time Mr. Pendarves, the old Whig member, and his colleague, Sir Charles Lemon, had been elected by more than two to one over Sir Richard Vyvyan and Lord Valletort, their defeat costing the Tory candidates more than thirty thousand pounds.

Two months later Jonathan Raine died, and there was chosen in his place for Newport Viscount Grimston, the present Earl of Verulam, who had been returned for St. Albans at the head of the poll at the dissolution of 1830, but who had found himself at the bottom at that of 1831. No special incident marked this last election for the sister-borough, the date of which was July 12, 1831, and the new member himself has summarised his parliamentary connection with our locality in a very few words addressed to the present author: "I only sat for Newport in the last Parliament of its existence as a borough upon the death of Mr. Raine. I had lost my election at St. Albans owing to my vote against the Reform Bill. There was no contest." Lord Grimston, like the other members for the two boroughs, opposed the First Reform Bill as he has lived to oppose more than half-a-century afterwards what for convenience sake may be called the Third†; but

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\* Ibid, p. 329.      † The Earl of Verulam was in the Conservative majority in the House of Lords against the second reading of the Franchise Bill on July 9, 1884.

the doom of Newport was sealed, although, according to the statements of the time, the Duke of Northumberland, in an endeavour to save his various pocket-boroughs, subscribed a hundred thousand pounds towards his party's expenses at the general election which preceded the passing of the Bill. It is curious, however, to think that, on the principles Lord John Russell himself applied in drafting his measure,\* Launceston and Newport, had they originally been the one borough they were now made, would have continued to return the two members to which they would have been entitled; but, being divided, Newport had less than the two thousand inhabitants which would have still secured it one member, and Launceston less than the four thousand which would have still secured it two. They were accordingly deprived of three out of their four representatives, and on June 7, 1832, when the royal assent was given to the Bill, Newport ceased to retain the privilege it had held from the time of the Tudors of sending members to the Commons House of Parliament.

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and against the compromise proposed by Lord Wemyss on July 17. After leaving Newport, he sat for Hertfordshire from 1832 to 1845, when he succeeded to the earldom.

\* Earl Russell, *Essay on the English Government and Constitution* (Edition of 1865), p. 226.





VIII.—FROM THE DISFRANCHISEMENT OF NEWPORT TO THE  
PRESENT TIME (1832—1884).



THE closing years of Launceston's chronicle as far as time has yet progressed have now to be considered, and although they contain nothing of romance they include much that is important. Three of the members for the two boroughs had been taken away, the gaol establishment had just been abolished, the removal of the assizes had been practically decided upon, and the woollen trade was passing into nothingness, all at the opening of the period under notice. For thirty years the town continued to sink until the grass seemed almost growing in its streets, but, at the end of that time, by exertions yet to be described, railway communication was secured with the outer world, the population ceased to lessen, the rapidly-dwindling trade took a turn for the better, and improvements were commenced which in benefiting have beautified the town. And now, half-a-century after Launceston looked as if the beginning of its end had come, and at the very time that the loss of its only remaining representative in Parliament appears inevitable, it is not only being made the centre of a railway system which cannot but restore much of its ancient prosperity, but a spirit is being aroused among its sons which must retain to it most of its ancient renown.

For a description of the commercial and industrial state of the town and its immediate neighbourhood at the beginning of this period, an extract may be taken from a lecture delivered before the Launceston Mechanics' and General Institute on November 3, 1856,

by Mr. Richard Robbins. Recapitulating his remembrances of from twenty to thirty years before, the lecturer observed: "There were the manganese mines of St. Stephens, paying wages to the amount of £500 per month, or £6,000 per year, and the Lifton, Stowford, Sydenham, and Dippertown mines paying monthly £1,400 or £16,800 a year. We had the spinning jenny manufactures at New Mills, Town Mills, Ridgegrove, Wooda Road, and the island at St. Thomas bridge, these hives of industry employing hundreds of people, and paying wages at the rate of £250 per month or £3,000 per year, the greater part of which found its way into the tills of our shopkeepers, and adult females and girls and boys of eight years of age could then earn their own living. We had a thriving building trade, in which there were scores, if not hundreds, of hands as masons, carpenters, painters, and labourers. There was also a wholesale malting trade, carried on by Messrs. Perkyn, Greenway, and Daniel Shilson, which necessarily engaged several persons. The hatting, tailoring, shoemaking, and smithy businesses were in a prosperous condition. There were the woollen, skin, and combing trades conducted by Messrs. James Langdon, John Langdon, Walter Clease, Thomas Eyre, sen., Moses Symons, John Geake, William Hender, Edward Marshall, and last, though not least, William and Thomas Pearse, of Newport, which caused a large amount of money to be circulated in the town and district; and we can form some idea of the quantity of business in the three trades mentioned from the fact that there were three wool wash-houses on the higher side of the Town Mill leat, one below St. Thomas bridge, and another by St. Thomas Churchyard, in addition to several other extensive woollen and combing establishments at St. Thomas, Castle Dyke, and Fore Street, as well as the serge factory at Town Mills. There was also a good trade with Bude and Boscastle, waggons plying to and from every day; and we had further a large flour business carried on by Mr. Bailey at Ridgegrove, Mr. Uglow at Town Mills, and Mr. Jury at Yeolmbridge, it being supposed that these three sent to Plymouth upwards of two hundred sacks of flour weekly. To this long and healthy list must be added the garden and nursery business of Mr. Spry, which employed about fifteen hands, who received not less than £15



weekly in wages. We were the centre of the great London Road, which created an immense traffic, the packets at that time coming and going through this place to London and Falmouth daily, and expresses continually riding from London to the west of Cornwall. Gentlemen's four-horse and other carriages were almost daily visiting the town, and, of course, benefiting some by their presence. There were two large waggon establishments on the London Road, those of Russell and Davis. The Spring Assizes were held here, which were the means of circulating hundreds, if not thousands, of pounds annually, and we had also the privilege, with Newport, of returning four members to Parliament, which caused a large amount of money to be spent, and in addition there were extensive gentlemen's establishments kept up in the neighbourhood. The local taxation of the town was small compared with later years, and the shopkeepers and others had the power to erect stalls outside their houses, and in some instances they let them at from £3 to £10 annually; while another and a true indication of prosperity was seen in the fact that it was a very rare occurrence for houses to have the significant window sign 'To be Let.' Our markets also were extensive and largely supplied by the district around, so that the draper, the grocer, the druggist, and other tradesmen were busy from morning till night, customers being sometimes obliged, on account of the rush, to wait more than half-an-hour to be served. To give fresh impulse to trade the Tavistock, Western, and New North Roads were made, and, the prosperity of the town thus progressing, builders and others speculated in the erection of houses, and the necessary conveniences sprang up numerous and with great rapidity, causing the expenditure of many thousands of pounds in labour and materials." The Lecturer then described in detail the new buildings which had been erected at this thriving period, including the Central and the Western Subscription Rooms, the Tamar Terrace, the Independent Chapel, the Bible Christian Chapel, the Gas Works, the new King's Arms, the National School, the Union Workhouse, and most of the best houses and shops now standing in the town; and he proceeded to say: "Matters went on prosperously in the various departments of industry. Labour was plentiful, rates and taxes moderate, provisions cheap (corn selling in

1835 and the following year at nine shillings per bag), contentment and plenty were residents of the cottage as well as of the mansion, and there was no complaining in our streets. The commercial affairs of the town continued to improve until 1837, from which time it may be safely said our declension commenced."

So much for the industrial state of the borough in the early years of this latest period. As for the social, there is abundant evidence that the time of prosperity in business concerns was a time of much cordiality in private affairs. Mr. Ching, in his recollections of fifty years since, observes concerning the Launceston of that date that "there was a great amount of hospitality shown. The custom of giving dinner parties was frequent, the cost of the entertainment being considerably increased by the demand on the wine cellar; a bottle per man was a moderate computation, and some in Launceston even now can testify that this was often exceeded. The ladies frequently had tea parties at six in the evening, and as this was before the days of gas and the street oil-lamps shed an imperfect light, the family lanthorn of considerable size was used to light the ladies to their homes soon after ten. Needlework, knitting, and such-like occupied the evening, the elders indulging in a rubber at whist, Pope Joan, etc. In those days I have myself seen the four members for Launceston and Newport dining at the White Hart with their constituents after a general election, when the scenes of noise, confusion, and strife were discreditable to a civilized community. Beer was drawn into the open space outside the Town Hall in hogsheads, and given away in jugs to any who did not mind the struggle in getting it. The sin of drunkenness was then thought lightly of: there was no such word as 'teetotalism,' and no temperance societies to show a good example to those who were over indulgent with liquor. On the evening of the quarterly Law Court there was a public dinner held, when all who pleased might join. The Corporation, the Deputy Recorder, the Grand Jury (composed of the principal tradesmen of the town) the attorneys, and others came, and this was a most pleasant meeting and brought all parties together in amity and friendship, many improvements being suggested and carried out as the result of these gatherings. The religious bodies were the members

of the Church of England, the Wesleyans, and the Congregationalists. The services for the first-named were morning and afternoon only, but both the Nonconformists' Chapels had, in addition to morning and afternoon, an evening service, to which several church families went. The Church was not opened for regular service during the week, except on saints' days, and until 1837 there had not been an evening service in it."

In returning to a more connected chronicle of the town's history, the first event to be considered is the election of December, 1832. The enthusiasm for parliamentary reform, which had filled the country in the days immediately preceding the Act being passed, did not die away until a Parliament had been returned in which only 170 Conservatives sat upon the benches of the Opposition, and of this number Sir Henry Hardinge, the late member for Newport,\* was one as representing Launceston. But he had not been elected without a struggle, the history of which has yet to be written. In this case, as in that of most of the modern events which have interested the borough, room is not here left for full description; but it may be hoped that the spirit of inquiry into local history, which has of late been strongly apparent in the town, will not evaporate until, from the recollections of those of longer years who yet remain to us, a full account of modern Launceston is secured for all time.

The Liberals, deciding to try their strength at the first open election in the borough, chose David Howell, of Trebursye, as their champion. The contest raged for months, two newspapers were called into existence to chronicle the progress of the campaign,† and, though the Werrington influence was used to the full on behalf of Sir Henry Hardinge, the issue to the last remained doubtful. The polling occupied two December days, at the end of the first of which Mr. Howell was ahead, but by the utmost exertions Sir Henry Hardinge was placed just in front on the second day, and when the poll closed it showed that the Conservative candidate had secured 115 and the Liberal 108, a Tory majority of seven after every available vote

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\* ante, p. 315. † "The Reformer" was published by Mr. Thomas Eyre, sen., and "The Guardian" by Messrs. Thomas and William Roe Bray. Only three sets—two complete and one incomplete—of these periodicals are known to be in existence.

had been recorded.\* A little over two years later, when the next general election took place, the same candidates entered the field, but the reform wave had receded, and the defeat of Mr. Howell by 163 votes to 84† was regarded by the Liberals as so decisive that, although upon more than one occasion opposition was threatened, not another contest took place for thirty-nine years, Launceston thus remaining under the open system a longer period without a contest than it had, as far as can be traced, while it was more distinctly a pocket borough.

Very shortly after the first Reformed Parliament assembled, the attention of the House of Commons was called to the circumstances of the Launceston election. On April 17, 1833, Sir William Molesworth (then representing East Cornwall) presented a petition to the House from inhabitants of the town, "complaining of corporate abuses, and of the want of respectability in the persons composing the body of Aldermen in the borough, and praying an inquiry into the subject."‡ Sir William contended that, through the influence of the Duke of Northumberland upon the Corporation, Launceston was as much a nomination borough as it was before the passing of the Reform Bill, but this was denied by Sir Henry Hardinge, who asserted that the petition had been "got up to serve electioneering purposes by Mr. Pearse,§ who had . . . formerly been a Tory, but changed his politics on the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill, and had been disappointed in his wishes to obtain the Aldermanic gown for himself." Mr. Charles Buller, the member for Liskeard, defended Mr. Pearse, "the only charge against whom was that he had once been a Tory, but that stain he had wiped away by two or three years' constant opposition to that party"; while as to the Launceston Corporation, he observed that it was "the worst in Cornwall as to general character, and that there had been more complaints made

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\* Of the 223 who exercised their suffrages at this contest, five remain fifty-two years after the fight:—Mr. John Geake and Mr. Joseph Beard Geake, who supported Mr. Howell, and Mr. Jonas Copp, Mr. John Lethbridge Cowland, and Mr. Charles Gurney, who favoured Sir Henry Hardinge. † In Acland's Imperial Poll Book (1869) as well as in McCalmont's (1880), which, in fact, is based upon it, the figures are given as Hardinge 103, Howell 84; the mistake arose because in an earlier edition of the former, followed by both, the figure 6 had been damaged and looked somewhat akin to 0.  
 ‡ Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, vol. xvii., pp. 201-2. § ante, pp. 299-316. Mr. Pearse's name was the first on the petition (Hansard, p. 202).

against its honesty than against any other in the same district"; and, despite another protest from Sir Henry Hardinge, the petition, as proposed by Sir William Molesworth, was referred to the Committee on Municipal Corporations.\* Twelve days later Mr. Buller presented a further petition† from electors of Launceston, "complaining that bribery had been used at the last election for that borough, and that they were only prevented from proving it before the House by the enormous expense which attended the taking of evidence before Election Committees." The honourable member made a strong speech in support of the petition, but Sir Henry Hardinge "most distinctly denied on behalf of himself, his agents, or his friends, that there was one single instance of bribery or corruption at his election." Both Mr. Buller and Sir William Molesworth, who next spoke, disclaimed any idea of accusing Sir Henry personally, but Sir William contended that the Duke of Northumberland was "the arch-criminal." Sir Henry thereupon exclaimed "It is false," an expression which the Speaker called upon him to withdraw, but, as Sir William Molesworth adhered to his accusation, the member for Launceston would only consent to slightly modify his retort, and, after a little further verbal conflict, the petition was ordered to be laid upon the table.‡

The Corporation of Launceston, which was thus attacked individually in the House, had not for very many years been regarded as satisfactory by a large portion of the inhabitants. The protest, fifty years before, against its political action has already been mentioned,§ and it will have been seen from the debates just referred to that in this respect it was still open to criticism. But in the general management of local affairs it was equally the subject of censure. Mr. Ching mentions in his recollections that "the Borough Rents were never sufficient to meet the expenditure," and this is confirmed by a return made to Parliament on February 23, 1833, signed by Mr. John King Lethbridge, then Town Clerk, which stated that "the annual certain expenditure exceeds the receipts, without the slightest reference to the repairs of the buildings and other works."|| In other

\* Ibid. † The first signature on this petition was that of Mr. Howell, and the second that of Mr. Pearse (Ibid, p. 724). ‡ Ibid, p. 727. § ante, p. 280. || Reports relating to Corporate Offices and Charitable Funds (Session of 1834), p. 317.

ways the local administration was far from satisfactory. Mr. Lethbridge's return showed that more than one of the charities was allowed to be in arrear, and that one of 1611, providing a sum out of the small tithes of Boyton for distribution "among the poor felons in the county gaol at Launceston," had actually been allowed to lapse within the previous few years. It must, however, be set against this, on the testimony of Sir Henry Hardinge in the speech previously quoted,\* that "in the year 1831, when complaints were made in this respect [of the misapplication of corporate funds] to the Corporation, that body submitted to a full inquiry for any period that the parties thought proper. That inquiry was gone into by Mr. Pearse and another gentleman; and though they went back into the accounts for a period of upwards of twenty years, the result was that not a single instance of misapplication or abuse could be found."† But, whatever the individual merits of the Launceston Corporation, it was reformed like 177 others in England and Wales by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, and a body of twelve councillors and four aldermen placed in its stead,‡ with the consequence that the first local municipal election was held on December 28, 1835, and the first meeting of the Launceston Town Council on January 1, 1836.§

Another local institution was being brought into line with modern requirements at this period, the New Poor Law of 1834 effecting a revolution in the system of dealing with our paupers. Those who then dwelt in the Launceston Workhouse were allowed to do pretty much what they chose. They could go out when they liked, they could sell their meals if they pleased, and they had no regular work. Those who received out-door pay were not required to be really poor, a tradesman of the town, who made his own goods and brought them to market every Saturday, being regarded as a fair claimant for relief, but the Act of 1834 changed all this, with at first the inevitable result of much friction. The parishes around Launceston were formed into a union having this town for a centre, and the first

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\* ante, p. 324. † Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. xvii., p. 202. ‡ It was provided by the Act that all officers of the old Corporation should receive compensation according to their deserts, and the last to be so dealt with was Mr. Thomas Peter Hamlin, organist of St. Mary Magdalene's, who, as lately as 1868, was paid a lump sum by the Town Council on his resignation of office. § For the names of the last members of the Corporation and the first of the Town Council, see Appendix.



meeting of the Board of Guardians was held on February 3, 1837, when Mr. Thomas John Phillips\* was elected Chairman. On the following tenth of April, the Launceston Local Guardians agreed to let the Workhouse† to the Union Guardians until the new building at Page's Cross should be completed, and from that time the history of the Union Board has been as uneventful as it has been full of use. The first Chairman died in 1855, and on June 16, Mr. John King Lethbridge was chosen his successor in office, so remaining until a few weeks before his death on May 28, 1861. The Rev. Henry Addington Simeoe was selected on April 20 of the latter year, and continued in the chair until 1869, the year of his death, when the Rev. Charles Rodd was chosen. On that gentleman's retirement in May, 1871, Mr. Reginald Kelly succeeded him, and was Chairman until 1873, upon November 18 of which year the present holder of the office, Mr. John Christopher Baron Lethbridge,‡ son of Mr. John King Lethbridge, was elected, the vice-chairmen now being Mr. R. K. Braddon and Mr. P. F. Simeoe §

It is in the matter of change in local institutions that the early portion of the present period is prolific. A movement had been going on for many years to take away the second assize from our town, and on December 21, 1821, Mr. Reginald Pole Carew, of Antony, foreman of the Grand Jury, had addressed a letter to the principal inhabitants of the county, stating that the judges having complained at the previous summer assizes at Bodmin of the state of the courts there, they had been unanimously assured by the Grand Jury that the county would do all the necessary improvement if both assizes were held in that town; the twelve judges, headed, had since signified their concurrence in the measure, and signatures were asked to a memorial to the Chancellor (then Lord Eldon) requesting his sanction.|| The memorial set forth the stock arguments against the Launceston Assize in very much the same fashion as of old, but no immediate result followed, Lord Eldon being as averse to change in this matter as in everything else. In 1832, however, a proposition was made at Quarter Sessions to recommend Parliament

\* ante, pp. 296-311.    † The last master of the old Workhouse was Mr. William Hayne; the first of the new one Mr. Gruzelier.    ‡ ante, p. 232.    § To Mr. G. Graham White, jun., the present Clerk to the Guardians, this information is due.    || Bodmin Register.

that both assizes should be held at Bodmin, and this was carried by an overwhelming majority, only five magistrates voting against it, all these being of our immediate district—Mr. Thomas John Phillips, of Landue,\* Mr. Francis Rodd, of Trebartha, Mr. David Howell, of Trebursye,† Mr. Edward Archer, of Trelaske,‡ and Mr. John King Lethbridge, of Tregeare.§ The effect of this might have been anticipated; and it was speedily provided that both assizes should be held at Bodmin as soon as the new halls in that town (of which a Launceston man, Mr. William Burt, was the builder) should be finished. While these were being erected from 1836 to 1838, both assizes were here, but on August 27, of the latter year, the death-knell of the Launceston Assize was rung. Lord Denman, then Lord Chief Justice of England, sat in the Criminal Court, and, having sentenced as the last case a boy, thirteen years old, to penal servitude for life for stealing three gallons of potatoes, he observed, “I have a word to say before I vacate my seat”; and, looking up to the gallery in front of him, he added “I see a few of the Grand Jury present: I have to inform you that the new hall at Bodmin is all but completed; therefore the assizes will be held at that town in the future.” And with these words the holding of assizes at Launceston closed for ever.||

Before leaving the subject, it may be mentioned that the principal barristers of the Western Circuit who attended the Launceston Assize during its last days were Serjeant Bompas, Serjeant Wilde, Mr. Erle (subsequently Lord Chief Justice), Mr. R. Budden Crowder (afterwards member for Liskeard and a judge), Sir R. Monsey Rolfe (member for Falmouth and ultimately Baron Rolfe), and Mr. Alexander Cockburn (the late Lord Chief Justice of England), concerning the last-named of whom it is told by a gossiping ex-inhabitant that during one of his visits to Launceston “he had to stay up late at night with his briefs before him, and it was noticed how fond he was of coffee. I heard it remarked we never got the stains out of the china cups, the decoctions he used were so strong as to discolour the china.”\*\*

\* ante, pp. 289-311-327. † ante, p. 323. ‡ Father of the present squire. § ante, pp. 302-27.

|| It is of interest to note that in 1884, when Bodmin was threatened with a similar loss, the Launceston Town Council, forgetting the constant struggle Bodmin had made to lower the prosperity of our borough in this matter, unanimously supported a movement to retain the assizes at the modern county town. \*\* T. Nicolls Vosper, *A Story of Commercial Life* (1871), p. 33.

The old Guildhall, in which the assizes were held, stood in Broad Street upon the site of the present Corn Market, but covered a larger amount of ground than that erection.\* It was divided into two halls, one for the Nisi Prius and the other for the Crown Court, the latter being on the White Hart side, and the town clock (which originally came from Hexworthy House) with its quaint "quarter-jacks" standing over the former.† Built at the Nisi Prius end of the block were three shops, one occupied by a watchmaker and grocer, another by a boot-maker, and the third by a barber celebrated in the contest of 1832 by a verse, which, even if not as striking as the one in the *Anti-Jacobin* attacking "Duke Smithson of Northumberland," deserves remembrance here :

The Duke he was a tallow-man, a tallow-man was he,  
And he invited all his friends to take a cup of tea.  
So they put on their red-and-whites, and sent for Johnno Higgs,  
The tittivating barber, to frizzify their wigs.‡

The Guildhall was destroyed in 1840 to make room for the Corn Market, the Butchers' Market being erected at the same time near Church Stile, owing to an unfortunate difference of opinion among the tradesmen as to the site, there thus being two blocks built instead of the one which would have sufficed. The Corn Market (which was designed in an "Italian" style, found by experience to be unsuited to the raw atmosphere of north-east Cornwall) is used for poultry and butter, just as the outer portion of the Butchers' Market is for vegetables§ and fish; and the tolls, amounting to some five hundred pounds yearly, are a valuable property of the Town Council. The buildings were constructed under an Act "for regulating the markets and erecting a market-house in Launceston," which received the royal assent on June 19, 1840,|| and by the provisions of which the ancient connection between town and church was continued by the payment

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\* Back Street, as it was then called, which stood in the rear of the old hall, was originally known (according to Mr. Ching) as Pillory Lane, and was, therefore, presumably the site of the pillory long before destroyed (ante, p. 305). † Until 1872 this clock had only one face; it has now three, the principal one illuminated, owing to the liberality of Mr. Ching. ‡ The Duke, who had been speculating in tallow about this period, had just before the election invited the local Tories to a tea, which they attended wearing white trousers with a broad red stripe down the off sides—a striking combination of the party colours.

§ The potato-market was held along Southgate Street until twenty years ago, when accommodation was found for it outside the Butchers' Market. || 3 and 4 Vict., cap. lxxv.

out of the market tolls of £25 yearly to the incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene's. Until the passing of the Ballot Act in 1872 the hustings stood within the Corn Market, this being the only relic it possessed of the duties of the old Guildhall, the woodwork of the interior of which, when destroyed, was used to beautify a new house in the town, the painted copy of the royal arms, which ornamented the gallery facing the judge in the Crown Court, being still to be seen supporting the counter of one of the largest local shops.

With the removal of the assizes there came not only the destruction of the Guildhall but of the old Gaol. The latter building stood not far from the western gate of the Green and very close to the existing lodge, and its position may best be judged from the well which was in the female portion of the prison, and which was re-opened in 1883 by Sir Hardinge Giffard, the present Constable of the Castle. The widow of Christopher Mules, the elder,\* was in possession of the old buildings until the end, and, as the Castle and its belongings are extra-parochial, the difficulty which had always been found in securing the payment of rates from this property, extended to the process of evicting the last occupier. This, however, was at length effected, and in 1842 Launceston Gaol disappeared from the scene.

This was only a portion of a larger scheme. The condition into which the Castle had been allowed to fall was a disgrace to all who had its management. Pigsties were abundant on its slopes, cabbage gardens occupied the space between "Sting-nettle Lane" (which bounded the bottom of the mount) and the Castle Green, and a skittle-alley, appropriated to the customers of the Exeter Inn, stood within the boundaries and not very far from the Gaol. Cock-fighting, as has been mentioned,† was common on the second ring, this amusement being varied by pitch-and-toss and such-like games. No steps led to the Keep, which was inaccessible to any but speculative builders in want of good corner stones, and these were accustomed, crow-bar in hand, to use the Castle as their quarry, one result of which is especially obvious at the Green's western gate, where the whole of the Polyphant stone forming the inner portion of the arch has been stripped away. Tradition asserts that public attention was at

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\* ante, p. 304.      † ante, p. 307.

length called in a somewhat curious fashion to this condition of things. The story runs that the Queen of Portugal, travelling incognito, was passing through the town on her way to London very soon after our present sovereign ascended the throne, and while here visited the Castle ruins. She was so astonished at the state in which they were allowed to be that she informed Mr. James Eckley Prockter (the proprietor of the White Hart Hotel, at which she was staying) that she should report the matter to Queen Victoria when she reached London. The Portuguese monarch was as good as her word, and our Queen called the attention of the Duke of Northumberland, as Constable of the Castle, to the matter. The result was most gratifying, for his grace directed the enclosure of the entire area, and had the grounds laid out in their present fashion in the years from 1840 to 1842, at a cost to himself of some thousands of pounds.

The improvements which were thus being effected within the borough were enhanced by some outside the boundaries, one of the most important of which was the building of a new Polson or Polston Bridge.\* The old one (erected at the public expense, according to William of Worcester†) was “a large fair stone fabric,”‡ and was very similar to the existing Greston or Greystone Bridge, lower down the Tamar, built, as has been seen, at the beginning of the fifteenth century.§ The reason for the change was because of no weakness on the part of the bridge itself, for it was as solid a piece of granite as could well have been seen, but of its insufficiency in width to accommodate the ever-growing traffic on the main road from London through Exeter to Falmouth, then the most important packet station of the kingdom. An accident, which occurred in the winter of 1828, illustrated the danger of the old structure, a pair-horse coach, the property of Mr. W. H. Smith, of the King’s Arms, returning from Okehampton, being driven during a flood into the Tamar owing to the narrowness of the entrance to the bridge, the horses being drowned but the driver saved. The new erection was built at the joint

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\* Polston appears to be the preferable spelling, the original name (as it appears in the Roll of the Seisin of 1337, and also in an Assession Roll of 1468) being Poulstonel Bridge (Maclean’s *Trigg Minor*, vol. ii., pp. 339-40). † “Per patriam edificatus.”

‡ A New Display of the Beauties of England (3rd Edition, 1770), vol. ii., p. 377.  
§ ante, p. 69.

expense of Cornwall and Devon, a curious mishap taking place in 1835 during the progress of the work : the mail coach from London, due in Launceston a quarter after eleven at night, drew up one evening, as usual, at the Arundell Arms, Lifton, and driver, guard, and passengers, also as usual, dismounted, Mr. Wilson, the agent of the Duke of Northumberland,\* being the only one left in the vehicle. The horses, the near-leader of which was blind, suddenly bolted and galloped towards Launceston, and, having crossed without accident the temporary wooden bridge at the foot of the hill at Polston, halted driverless and breathless at the White Hart Hotel, their accustomed stopping-place, closely followed by the guard, one Cornelius Crowhurst, who had thrown himself on horseback immediately he had discovered their flight, and who was rejoiced to see that all was well.

It was at the White Hart that most of the coaches at that period running through Launceston had their head-quarters, here also where the county assemblies were held at assize-time, and here further where public events of striking character were to be expected. One such was witnessed in the early days of 1835, when the body of the last Lord de Dunstanville (a Bassett of Tehidy), who had died in London, was brought to Launceston on its way to the family seat. It was taken to the White Hart and there lay in state for twenty-four hours, the public being admitted by the front door and leaving at the back, the coffin then proceeding towards the West with its "out-riders and ten pages on horseback."† In later years, and up to the time of the opening of the railway, this hotel was the news-centre of the borough, and particularly from 1860 to 1865, during the American Civil War, when the pavement was crowded every dinner-hour to await the arrival of the Emerald coach from Tavistock with the morning papers from Plymouth, the fall of Sumter, the death of "Stonewall" Jackson, the assassination of Lincoln, and all the most stirring events of a stirring period (including the last of the great prize-fights, such as those between Sayers and Heenan, or King and Mace) being first made known to Launceston by the "boots" at the hotel, who, securing

\* Oldfield, in *The Representative History of Great Britain* (vol. iii., p. 217), states that "the Duke of Northumberland's steward, Mr. Richard Wilson, of Lincoln's Inn, attorney-at-law, is recorder of Launceston and manager of Newport"; the former post was certainly allotted to him in error. † W. H. Tregellas, *Some Cornish Worthies*, vol. i., p. 136.



the earliest copy, declaimed to the eager crowd the leading items of the day's news. And close upon twenty years before this, Launceston, in common with many towns throughout the country, had been thrown into a state of great excitement by the passing through it in March, 1846, of one of the four-horse coaches chartered by the *Times* to bear to all parts of the kingdom the momentous intelligence that Sir Robert Peel's resolutions for the repeal of the Corn Laws had passed their first reading by a majority of 97.

Fifty years ago coaches afforded the principal source of daily excitement to the town. Until the opening of the South Devon Railway, in 1849, there were four four-horse coaches travelling between Falmouth and Exeter and passing through Launceston, one each way by night and the same by day. "The Falmouth packets," says Mr. Ching, "were at this period in full working, and as the Continent of Europe supplied most of the correspondence of those days, whenever any disturbances occurred and the Government were anxious for the earliest information, the important despatches were sent on by horseback, the bearer taking his 'time table' to the post office\* to have the hour recorded; whilst this was being done the next boy and fresh horse were ready to get on. On one occasion (I don't know the why) twenty of these despatches passed through in one day." In 1834 a competing coach was started from Launceston to Exeter, running on alternate days, this continuing for some six years; about the year 1838 there was a four-horse coach put on the road from Plymouth to Bideford, passing through Launceston and Holsworthy, but this did not remain long in existence; while five years subsequently Mr. Prockter, of the White Hart,† started a two-horse coach to Plymouth, carrying the mails, leaving in the morning and returning at night. The Vivid ran to Exeter in later times, and did so until the South Western Railway pushed its system beyond that point and towards Lydford, it then running first to North Tawton, next to Sampford Courtenay, and then to Okehampton, as the line was made to each of these places, ceasing its work in 1874, when connection was established by narrow-guage between Exeter and Lydford. The Emerald and the Royal Mail coaches ran daily

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\* The Post Office was then situated in Broad Street.      † ante, p. 331.

from Launceston and Tavistock, in connection with the branch opened in 1859 from the latter place to Plymouth, until it was extended to our town in 1865, while a coach has run for many years, and is still running on alternate days during the summer, between Launceston and Bude; and the North Cornwall Coach Company has had its Pioneer on the road from Launceston to Camelford and Wadebridge for nearly a decade, and will keep it there until the narrow-guage is carried through our town to those two places.

In addition to the coaches which were on the main road fifty years since, there were the goods-wagons belonging to the firms of Russell and Davis. Every Sunday morning one of Russell's wagons arrived in Launceston from Falmouth with six, eight, or ten horses, according to the load, bearing gold, both bars and dust, to the Mint, protected by a guard on each side, dressed in white fustian and carrying a blunderbuss. The wagon remained here during the afternoon and proceeded in the evening for the metropolis, the departure being always watched by a small crowd; while the return journey, which commenced in London on a Monday morning, finished in Falmouth the next Saturday afternoon, this system continuing until 1837. Davis's conveyances ran between Launceston and Exeter, a heavy wagon leaving here on the Monday morning and starting on its way back on the following Thursday, and a light wagon, which departed hence on the Wednesday, arriving in Exeter at four o'clock the Thursday afternoon, and returning hither the next Saturday afternoon, these wagons having a connection also with Camelford and Wadebridge. Persons who could not afford to travel to Exeter by coach went by way of Davis's heavy wagons, starting at eight in the morning, sleeping at Sticklepath, and reaching the Devonshire capital at two the next afternoon, while, if they wished to go to Truro, they left here at nine a.m., passed the night at Bodmin, and arrived at their journey's end the afternoon afterwards.

Resuming the more regular chronicle of events, political affairs claim our first attention. At the dissolution of 1837, caused by the death of William the Fourth, Sir Henry Hardinge was re-elected for Launceston without the semblance of opposition, but at that of 1841, consequent upon the defeat of the Melbourne Ministry, there was the

promise of a contest, Mr. (now Sir) Robert Porrett Collier tendering his services in the Liberal interest. "I happened to be staying with Lord Vivian—the first Lord Vivian—during the election of 1841," writes Sir Robert to the present author, "when it suddenly occurred to him to suggest my standing for Launceston; he offered me introductions, said he thought I had a good chance, and started me off. I issued an address offering to 'emancipate' the borough, made an active canvass, called public meetings, made speeches, and was extremely well received—so well that I thought at one time my election very probable. Sir Henry Hardinge, on hearing of all this, hastened from London; he did not venture to call a public meeting . . . but he employed his time with great success in a house-to-house canvass . . . Many who had promised me turned round, and I found that I was beaten and that it would be useless to go to the poll . . . I had, therefore, no alternative but to retire, after publishing an address in which I denounced the nomination system in somewhat strong terms."\* Sir Henry was, therefore, again returned unopposed, and Mr. Collier, who, when he visited Launceston was 24 years of age, was rewarded in 1852 by being elected for Plymouth, for which borough he sat until 1871, when he became, as he still is, a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

When Sir Robert Peel formed an Administration on the resignation of the Whig Cabinet, he appointed as Secretary-at-War the member for Launceston, to whom in his short-lived Ministry of 1834 (of which as of the later one Mr. Gladstone was a member) he had given his old post of Chief Secretary for Ireland.† He was re-chosen for Launceston in the September of 1841, only severing his connection with the borough when he closed his career in the House of Commons by accepting the Viceroyalty of India, in which position, as in the subsequent one of Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, Sir Henry (afterwards Viscount) Hardinge assisted to "make history," and gained for himself the golden opinions of his contemporaries. His successor in the representation of Launceston was Rear-Admiral

\* In Dad's Parliamentary Companion, as long as Sir Robert Collier was a member of the House of Commons, it was stated that he "unsuccessfully contested Launceston, 1841," and the same statement is still to be found in Debrett's House of Commons and the Judicial Bench. It is, however, scarcely an accurate representation of the facts, seeing that he did not go to the poll on the occasion referred to. † ante, p. 315.

William Bowles, a naval friend of Lord Algernon Percy, himself an admiral, who shortly afterwards became fourth Duke of Northumberland in succession to his brother.\* Admiral Bowles was a jovial personage, whose speech from the hustings at his return in May, 1844, was received with much good-humoured applause. "Mr. John King Lethbridge was proposed and seconded, but being present at once declined," says a solemn chronicler of the election,† not aware that this was a part of the jocular character of the whole proceeding, Mr. William Morgan, a local solicitor, being the leader in the transaction. Twelve years before, Mr. Lethbridge, then known to his political opponents, by an easy transposition of his Christian names, as "King John," had been seriously put forward as a possible Tory candidate for the borough, but the Duke placed his veto upon the idea, and Mr. Lethbridge never entered Parliament. His son, Mr. J. C. Baron Lethbridge, was similarly named as a possible Conservative candidate for Launceston, a little over thirty years after the father had been formally proposed, but the notion, if ever entertained, was for some reason put on one side. Concerning Admiral Bowles, all that is to be added as to his parliamentary career is that he was once more elected at the dissolution of 1847, and that he made way at that of 1852 for the Hon. Josceline William Percy, second son of the fifth Duke of Northumberland, and brother of the sixth (the present) holder of the title. This gentleman, who was again chosen at the general election of 1857, though he did not visit the town during its progress, and who retired from Parliamentary life in 1859, was raised to the rank of a Duke's son six years later, and died in 1881 at the age of seventy.

While Admiral Bowles was still sitting for the town, the Launceston Mechanics' and General Institute was founded in connection with the Society of Arts, the date of its birth being April 5, 1847,‡ but the success with which it met caused it to become a more extensive institution than had at first been contemplated. In the following

\* ante, p. 295.

† H. S. Smith, *The Parliaments of England*, vol. i., p. 257.

‡ The earliest committee was composed of Messrs. R. K. Philp (treasurer), Richard Robbins (curator), Richard Hayne (secretary), John Prior, Michael Studdon, and John Brooming, and for two months the meetings were held in the Coffee Rooms of Mr. William Davies in Westgate Street, the first lecture being delivered by Mr. R. K. Philp and the second by Mr. John Prior.

year an opportunity arrived for strengthening its basis. Algernon, fourth Duke of Northumberland,\* who had succeeded to the title in 1847, arrived with the Duchess at Werrington on July 1, 1848, and a deputation from the committee of the Institute (consisting of Messrs. Studdon, Hayne, and Robbins) waited on his grace at Werrington House to ask his help to their undertaking. They were kindly received, were given some good advice, and were promised a donation which enabled the Institute to occupy wider ground. In its new home at the Central Subscription Room, it had for its first President Mr. Samuel Rowles Pattison (whose great services to the cause of local history may here be gratefully acknowledged), and for several years success attended its efforts. When Mr. Pattison exchanged his home at Launceston for one in London, he was succeeded in the chair by Mr. Richard Kingdon Frost, who, in turn, upon his resignation, was followed by a third local solicitor, Mr. George Graham White, sen., who held the office until the Institute died of inanition at the end of 1881.†

Another institution founded in Launceston a little before the same period has proved more lasting. About the year 1837 or 1838 (for precise details are difficult to obtain upon the point), some local members of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, dissatisfied with the attitude of their ministers on various points of church government, seceded from the parent body, and met for worship in a private house, shortly afterwards engaging the Western Subscription Room for preaching services. Their numbers so increased that in 1840 the erection of a chapel was commenced in the North Road, the money being raised by shares, which were afterwards sold and given up, the building being settled on a trust in conformity with the rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Association. In 1850 and 1852 further secessions took place from the original body, additionally strengthening the local forces of the Association, which joined with the Wesleyan Reformers in 1857 to form the United Methodist Free Churches,

\* ante, p. 336. † The last officers of the Institute were Messrs. G. G. White, sen., (President), E. Pethybridge, R. Reed, and J. Ching (Vice-Presidents), A. Fraser, H. Hayman, C. P. Wise, T. H. Nicolls, G. M. Gifford, W. Wise, A. Prust, G. G. White, jun., B. Balkwill, and G. Elliott (Committee), J. B. Genke (Treasurer), and J. Robbins (Secretary); the successive secretaries had been Messrs. H. Short, W. Cater, T. Dunn, W. H. Cory, and J. Robbins.

though the name of "Association Chapel" did not die out for many years. At first Launceston had been a portion of the Camelford Circuit, but about 1846 it was made the head of the Launceston and Stratton Circuit, which was in its turn divided in 1883, six churches forming the Stratton and Bude Circuit and five the Launceston. The minister's house attached to the chapel was rebuilt in 1876, while the chapel itself was re-seated and otherwise improved five years later.\*

Such controversy as attended upon the foundation of a new sect was naturally limited to a minority of the people of the town, but in 1849 a discussion arose as to the formation of a new institution which absorbed the interest of the whole borough. The cholera epidemic of 1832 had left Launceston untouched, while that of 1848 and the following year claimed only one victim, and that one a commercial traveller, named John Hardy, of Worcester, who, arriving at the White Hart Hotel on the evening of September 15, 1849, died the next morning from the terrible complaint: he was buried in a remote corner of "The Bowling Green,"† where his lonely grave, railed off from the rest, can still be marked; and the Commercial Body, in erecting a tablet to his memory in Launceston Church, chose as a fitting text, "He brought down my strength on my journey and shortened my days." But although our town had thus been singularly free from the epidemic (the more to be wondered at because Plymouth, Tavistock, and other places not far distant had been affected) there was much uneasiness caused, especially as the water supply provided a score of years before‡ had proved to be inadequate. A memorial to the General Board of Health was accordingly drawn up and signed by many of the inhabitants, asking for an inquiry into the sanitary state of the borough, and Mr. George T. Clark, one of the superintending inspectors of the Board, who was directed to make it, held public sittings in the Central Subscription Room, on March 15 and 16, 1849, at which much evidence was taken.

"It is difficult in words," said Mr. Clark in his report,§ "to convey an adequate idea of the state of things which I witnessed,

\* For this information the Author has to express his thanks to Mr. T. H. Nicolls.  
 † ante, p. 301. ‡ ante, p. 312. § Report to the General Board of Health, on a Preliminary Inquiry into the sewerage, drainage, and supply of water, and the sanitary condition of the inhabitants of the borough of Launceston, by George T. Clark, Superintending Inspector (London: Printed by W. Clowes and Sons, 1850), pp. 8-9.



and of which these persons complain . . . Having been originally crowded up for defence, and, I presume in later times retained so for electioneering purposes, the houses are built back to back, quite close, either without any back yards at all, or with them of only about 6 feet square; and being, in addition, undrained and very ill supplied with water, the whole is in as bad a condition as the worst parts of any crowded city. Happily though the population is dense, the area is small, and the position high and uncommonly healthy. Nature has done much, but everything tending to give health or comfort has been neglected by man." The supply of water, which was always inadequate, usually failed in August or September, while the public drains were "on the whole the greatest nuisance in the town." To provide a proper amount of water it would be necessary to recast the whole of the existing arrangements, but this, Mr. Clark thought, would not be unduly expensive, as "few towns are in a position to secure a more efficient or a more economical supply," while "the sewerage will be equally simple and equally economical with the water supply." He, therefore, recommended that a part of the parishes of St. Thomas and St. Stephens should be joined with Launceston as an administrative area under the Public Health Act, the Local Board to consist of nine members with the Mayor *ex-officio*, of whom six, exclusive of the chief magistrate, should be selected by the Town Council and three by the owners and ratepayers in the non-corporate parts; and he considered that an improved water-supply could be executed at a cost of £2500 and a new system of sewerage for another £2000. To this expenditure the practically unanimous consent of the inhabitants was given, but very speedily it was intimated by the authorities in London that a fresh survey was necessary, and, when this was made by another gentleman, it was computed that the total expenditure might be expected to amount to about £7000.

This was more than Launceston was prepared to meet, and public opinion was most unhesitatingly against it. The Mayor (Mr. David Thompson, sen.) refused, however, to comply with a requisition to call a town's meeting to discuss the subject, and the requisitionists turned to the overseers (Mr. R. Robbins and Mr. John Powell), who yielded to the wish, and at the gathering (the first and last ever called

by the overseers in their official capacity) the scheme was unanimously condemned. But the Town Council favoured it, and on July 31, 1850, a provisional order was issued by the General Board of Health establishing the Local Board as had been suggested by Mr. Clark just twelve months before.\* The first meeting was held on the following September 27, there being present Messrs. Thomas Symes Eyre (*ex officio* as Mayor), William Richard Derry (appointed Chairman†), John Ching, Henry Pethick, William Prockter, sen., John Huxham, and Northmore Herle Pierce Lawrence (chosen by the Town Council), and William Stert Brendon, William Spettigue, and Henry Badcock (selected by the non-corporate parts), Mr. Charles Gurney being appointed Clerk and Mr. Richard Dingley Treasurer.‡ The new body soon started its career by erecting water-works at Trethorne (according to the suggestions of the second surveyor) at a cost of nearly £9000, but these proved little more a success than the old at Dunheved Green which Mr. Clark would have utilised, but which were now abandoned (as well as several ancient sources of supply), and the reservoir was filled up on the making of the Dunheved Road in 1869.

Before this last date, however, the water question had again become pressing, and in 1866 the indignation of the ratepayers at the ever-decreasing supply found vent at a crowded meeting. When the Trethorne works were made it was anticipated that they would yield fourteen gallons daily per head for a population of four thousand inhabitants, but this was speedily found to be a mistake, and in 1867 Mr. Edward Appleton, C.E. was called in by the Local Board to report upon the matter. He recommended, as Mr. Clark had done before him, the formation of a storage reservoir, but the advice was neglected, though an attempt was made to furnish a sufficient supply to the town by bringing in water from an adit at Trebursye in addition to that from Trethorne, this necessitating an extra

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\* His report was dated July 25, 1849. The Provisional Order was confirmed by 13 and 14 Vict., cap. 108. † The subsequent chairmen have been Mr. John Ching and Mr. John Dingley. ‡ The members of the Board for 1884 are Messrs. John Dingley (Chairman), James Treleven (*ex officio* as Mayor), John Hawkins, Thomas Brooks Hender, Richard Robbins, Thomas Shearm, and Thomas White (chosen by the Town Council) and George Burt, Edmund Pearse Nicolls, and John Mortimer Strong (selected by the non-corporate parts) with Mr. Christopher Lethbridge Cowlard as Clerk (having succeeded, upon his resignation in 1884, his father, Mr. John Lethbridge Cowlard, who had himself followed Mr. Gurney) and Mr. Edward Pethybridge as Treasurer.

expenditure of about £1200. But although the yield from Trebursye is double as much as that from Trethorne (the latter giving in September, 1884, only two and a half gallons daily per head) the supply has proved to be still far from adequate, and in 1881 a rate-payers' committee was formed to agitate the Local Board concerning it. After much discussion, that body has again in 1884 called Mr. Appleton to its aid, and, at the time of this work passing through the press, that gentleman was engaged upon a scheme for the formation of a storage reservoir, such as had been recommended in 1849 and in 1867, but put upon one side in each instance.

The question of water often runs parallel in the public mind with that of gas, and Mr. Clark, in the report before quoted, observed, after dealing with the one matter, that concerning the other "the gas arrangements in this borough form a very legitimate cause of complaint among the rate-payers."\* Gas had been introduced into Launceston in the autumn of 1834, the town having previously been favoured with a few scattered oil lamps, probably not a dozen in all, and these not regularly lighted; a female then seldom went out by night without a lantern, and on a dark Sunday evening, when much walking was done, scores of hand-lanterns might have been counted in the streets and roads. A private company erected the gas-works at St. Thomas (in the excavations for which some remains of the Priory were found,† the meadow in which it stood being at the rear) and for a long time had things all its own way, charging fourteen shillings per thousand feet at the time of Mr. Clark's visit, while the price of coal delivered was at the same period only about twenty-three shillings per ton. In his report to the General Board of Health, Mr. Clark suggested "that a provision enabling the Local Board to establish gas-works, or to contract with parties for lighting the district, and to levy a lighting rate, be secured under the applied Act"; but this power was never put in force, though popular dissatisfaction with the public lighting arrangements grew to such a head in 1874, that the Local Board reverted for a time to the system of oil-lamps, and continued it for several months. The head-quarters of the original

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\* Mr. Clark's Report, p. 11. † One of these, the top of a window, still lies in the gas-yard, exposed to the weather and attracting little heed.

proprietors were at Plymouth, but their property was transferred in 1874 to a local company, of which Mr. John Ching was chairman and Mr. James Treleaven managing secretary.\* The effect has been beneficial, the price of gas now being five shillings and threepence per thousand feet, and the complaints of the inhabitants far fewer than of old.

The effect of the cholera outbreak of 1848 in leading to the establishment of the Local Board has been described, but another, and, perhaps to the historian, a more interesting one was, curiously enough, the restoration of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. On November 15, 1849, the day of public thanksgiving for exemption from cholera, the Rev. G. B. Gibbons, then Perpetual Curate,† preached from the text "Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing,"‡ and advocated a restoration of the church as the most fitting offering Launceston could render. The reverend gentleman had not spoken before it was time. Owing to the constant making of new vaults and opening of old ones,§ the building had in previous years been so much undermined that the pillars of the middle aisle had commenced to sink, and, leaning on the one side towards the graveyard and on the other towards the street, had had to be braced up by two heavy bars of iron stretching across the central aisle, these rendering the interior as ugly as it was dangerous. Something, however, had to be done, when one rather short shaft, for instance, was as much as seventeen inches out of the perpendicular, and, as a consequence of the old neglect, the whole fabric, though perfectly sound, leans a little even now. The woodwork also at the time Mr. Gibbons spoke was worn and unsightly, and the roof sadly out of repair, and when the question had once been raised, there remained no option for the townsfolk but to take the restoration in hand.

A working committee was formed for the purpose of obtaining

\* Mr. Treleaven continues to hold his post, and Mr. Ching's place is occupied by Dr. Thompson. † ante, p. 298: the incumbent now is a vicar. ‡ 11 Samuel, xxiv., 24. § The last buried in the Church was Mr. Humphry Lawrence in 1840 (ante, p. 299). There are several references in the old Register to such interments, the earliest instance being that of the Rev. Daniel Northwell in 1620, he having been buried in the "chancell" (ante, p. 123), and the others being Mrs. Mary Dinfont "in the church" in 1645, Leonard Treise "in the Chancell" in 1654 (ante, p. 192), and "the Ladye Emblinge Speccott in the Chancell" and "Thomas Hickes Alderman in the Church" in 1660.

subscriptions, and the Duke of Northumberland and others contributed largely. There was a grant of £600 from the Aftermath Fund,\* and a ladies' bazaar in 1851 brought in about £200, so that the total cost (which was about £2000) was soon within measurable distance of being reached. The church was closed for restoration from the first to the last month of 1852, the Mayoralty Room being used for services, while the neighbouring churches accommodated part of the congregation; and on December 28 of the year just named the building was re-opened. In the course of the works the vaults beneath the building were filled in or (as in the case of that belonging to the Lawrence family) bricked over and cemented down, new bench seats were placed throughout, and an oak reredos (the gift of Mr. John Ching) was erected where previously had stood painted copies of the Ten Commandments, and a couple of antique pictures representing Moses and Aaron, now hanging in the Vestry Room. Very shortly afterwards the windows were begun to be filled with stained glass, mainly of representations of Biblical scenes; these were erected by members of the principal families in the town in memory of departed relatives, the only exceptions being that to Henry Ching, a midshipman in the royal navy, who died of yellow fever in Jamaica in 1863, and to whom the window was "dedicated by the officers and crew of H.M.S. *Shannon*, as a tribute of their esteem and a parting token of their regard,"† and that to Henry Trecarrell, the product in 1883‡ of a subscription organized by Mr. G. M. Gifford among those who had been baptised in the church.§

Mr. Gibbons, to whom so many thanks are due for his share in the restoration, remained incumbent of Launceston until 1866, when he became vicar of Lancaut,|| and he was succeeded by the Rev. Wickham Montgomery Birch, M.A. (of Trinity College, Oxford) who, having commenced his clerical career in 1854 by being for three years curate of Abbenhall (in the diocese of Gloucester and Bristol),

\* ante, p. 279. † He was the youngest son of Mr. John Ching, and to the memory of his mother, who died in the previous year, another pictorial window had been erected, while there is also in the church a tablet in commemoration of the youngest son of his grandfather "who in the month of August, 1834, after having been wrecked in the ship 'Charles Eaton' on a voyage to China, suffered a more cruel fate at the hands of ignorant savages, by whom the crew was decoyed and murdered in the Island of Boydang, in Torres Straits." ‡ ante, p. 74. § For the major portion of this information the Author has to express his obligations to the late Rev. G. B. Gibbons and

Mrs. Gibbons. || ante, p. 298.



was in a similar position at Long Ashton (in the diocese of Bath and Wells) from 1857 to 1862, was vicar of Boyton for the next four years, and held the living of St. Mary Magdalene (the patronage of which then lay with the owner of Werrington\*) from 1866 until 1880. In the last-mentioned year Mr. Birch (who had married a daughter of the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence, and who had been a member of the Launceston School Board from its foundation) was presented by the Dean and Chapter of Exeter to the vicarage of Ashburton, and he was succeeded at St. Mary Magdalene's by the Rev. Samuel William Elderfield Bird, M.A. (of St. Mary Hall, Oxford), who had been assistant-master in the Felstead Grammar School, Essex, from 1861 to 1864, curate of St. James-the-Less, Plymouth, from the latter year to 1872, vicar of All Saints, Plymouth, from 1875 to 1878, and Diocesan Inspector for the diocese of Exeter in 1879. Mr. Bird was elected a member of the Launceston School Board in 1883, and immediately appointed chairman, but in the same year he was presented by the Dean and Chapter of Exeter to the living of Veryan, and his successor at Launceston was the Rev. John Benson Sidgwick, M.A. (of Trinity College, Cambridge). The present vicar of St. Mary Magdalene's, who was ordained deacon by the Archbishop of York in 1859 and priest in the next year by the Bishop of Worcester, was curate of Alvechurch (in the diocese of Worcester) from 1859 to 1861, of St. Thomas, Huddersfield, in 1861 and 1862, and of Copley, Yorkshire, for the next three years, perpetual curate of the last-named for the following nine, and rector of Huntshaw, near Bideford, from 1874 to the time of his coming to Launceston, where he was inducted to the living on November 9, 1883.†

From the clergymen themselves to the pulpit in which they have preached is no far cry, and, concerning the latter, the story runs that it originally came from North Petherwin, a carpenter, engaged in its repair when in that church, having informed those concerned that it

\* It is now in the hands of the Bishop of Truro. † Among recent curates of St. Mary Magdalene's have been the Rev. William Hart Smith, M.A., from 1849 to 1861 (now rector of St. Peter's, Bedford), the Rev. Benn Wilkes Jones Trevaldwy, from 1865 to 1868 (now rector of Nether-Whitacre, in the diocese of Worcester), the Rev. William Watkins (at that time Second Master of the Launceston Grammar School) in 1865-66 (now curate-in-charge of Bridgetown, Totnes), the Rev. Edward King, B.A., from 1871 to 1879 (now vicar of Werrington), the Rev. Edward H. Marshall from 1874 to 1878, the Rev. J. G. Curry, B.A., from 1878 to 1881 (now curate of St. Mark's, Kennington), and the Rev. Charles Edward Gandy, appointed in 1882 and still holding the position.



was an old thing not worth mending, and that he would make them a new one of imitation mahogany for less than the other would cost to put in order, and having then removed it to Langore, whence it found its way to Launceston. The Rev. T. B. Trentham, the present vicar of North Petherwin, writing on the subject, says: "There is a tradition that the Launceston pulpit once belonged to this place, but it is very vague, and I do not think there is any record of such a transfer. I think that the 'tabernacle work,' or carved canopies to the panels of the Launceston pulpit, is of earlier date than the rest, which appears to be Jacobean, so that it is not unlikely that when some ancient pulpit of late perpendicular work was broken up, being thought not worth mending, some one may have got hold of the tabernacle work and attached it to the Launceston pulpit, and this may have come from North Petherwin."

Our last glimpse of the Grammar School as an institution was in 1821, when for a time it ceased to be.\* Reporting sixteen years later the Commissioners on Charities observed: "The building, together with the site, was sold, in 1835, to the Duke of Northumberland for £280. In the same year, another dwelling-house, situate in Thomas Hill (*sic*), was purchased of Mr. [Thomas] Ching, the Mayor of the borough, for £650, for the purpose of being converted into a new school room. The purchase was effected by means of the £280 received for the old school-house, and a sum taken from the proceeds of the sale of the aftermath . . . No master has yet been appointed, although several applications have been made . . . No payment has been made by the Duchy since 1821, there having been no master since that period . . . No payment [of the Baron endowment†] has been made since 1821, as there has been no schoolmaster to receive the money. His grace the Duke of Northumberland formerly allowed the master £15 per annum, and it was stated that in case the school should be re-established, the payment would probably be resumed."‡ The first head-master after the interregnum was the Rev. John Henry Kendall, son of the Rev. Charles Kendall, vicar of Talland, and younger brother of Mr. Nicholas Kendall, who sat for East Cornwall

\* ante, p. 293. † ante, p. 232. ‡ Thirty-second Report (Part I) of the Commissioners on Charities (1837), p. 404.

in the Conservative interest from 1852 to 1868. On April 16, 1841, this reverend gentleman had been chosen by the inhabitants of St. Thomas to be their perpetual curate, in succession to the Rev. Charles Lethbridge,\* and he held the office until his removal to Warbstowe in 1848: in 1857 he became vicar of Treneglos (while continuing vicar of Warbstowe), and he died there on August 29, 1862, aged fifty-seven.†

The Rev. Samuel Childs Clarke, M.A., who succeeded Mr. Kendall at St. Thomas, was appointed by the Town Council on January 5, 1849, to succeed him also as Head Master of the Grammar School. The number of pupils was then very small, and the duties of the school were carried on in an inconvenient and contracted room at the back of the school-house in St. Thomas Hill. Mr. Clarke, on the number of the boys increasing, determined to build a suitable room for such an institution, and for this purpose he surrendered as a site his kitchen garden, and applied to the Charity Commissioners to be allowed to use the principal of an investment made in Turnpike Deeds Poll, which yielded about £7 per annum to the master, this money having accumulated during the time the school had been in abeyance. The other part of the endowment was derived from the Inland Revenue,‡ the contribution of the Duke of Northumberland to the master's income§ having been withdrawn on Mr. Clarke's appointment. Plans were prepared by a competent architect, and were approved by the Charity Commissioners and stamped March 28, 1861. A very handsome building, consisting of the school-room, a class-room,|| and convenient offices, was erected, the foundation stone being laid by Mr. T. C. Haliburton, M.P., in 1861, the Duke of Northumberland contributing one-fifth of the cost. It was opened on June 17, 1862,\*\* in the mayoralty of Mr. W. R. Derry, and was used by Mr. Clarke for many public purposes, entertainments of various kinds, and for a Working Man's Club, which he assisted in starting in 1864, and of which he acted as secretary. In the fourth year of its existence Mr. Clarke was presented with an address and a purse of sovereigns by the members

\* ante, p. 293.

† Gentleman's Magazine (1862) vol. xliii., p. 504.

‡ ante, p. 107.

§ ante, p. 345. || The school-room measures 43 feet by 23 feet, and the class-room 15 feet 6 inches by 12 feet.

\*\* The Grammar School having, for some unexplained reason, been allowed to die a natural death soon after the departure of Mr. Clarke (although the Rev. W. S. Johns, the new vicar of St. Thomas, was appointed to succeed him as head master) the premises are now used for a Girls' High School.

past and present, and in the former was ascribed to him the commencement of the Penny Bank,\* Library, and Penny Readings.

The pupils of the school were much encouraged by their master in dramatic recitation. Their first efforts in the old school-room were so popular that they were obliged to use the National School, and thence migrated to the Central Subscription Room, where for many years they enjoyed a wide-spread reputation for histrionic talent. By means of their Christmas recitations the building fund of the school was largely increased, and many were the testimonies sent to Mr. Clarke by former pupils to the great utility as well as enjoyment which these performances had been the means of promoting. When first started, so evil was thought the tendency of such dramatic representations that prayer was offered in one place of worship to counteract the harm the head-master was supposed to be doing, but so completely did he disarm prejudice that several sons of prominent Dissenters were among his best performers. After twenty-seven years work in Launceston, Mr. Clarke was presented to the living of Thorverton, Devon, by the Dean and Chapter of Exeter; and on his removal the proscenium which had adorned the stage in the Central Room for so many years was purchased by the master of the Plympton Grammar School, and was by him re-sold to the Rev. E. Peacock, curate of Thorverton, who established a flourishing school in that parish, and who still as Christmas comes round maintains the associations attaching to the old proscenium of the Launceston Grammar School, the frame-work of which has done duty in the acting of many a clever drama and been the scene of many a prize-presentation to the best boy of the oldest Launceston School.†

The declining trade of the borough in the years immediately succeeding the removal of the second assize‡ may have made especially welcome to local men of business an Act of 1841 “for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town and Borough of Launceston and other Places in Cornwall and Devon.”§ The old process for recovering debts had been exceedingly unsatisfactory, even

\* ante, p. 307. † For this information the Author is indebted to the Rev. S. Childs Clarke, ‡ ante, p. 323. § 4 and 5 Viet., cap. 76. “An Act for the Recovery of Small Debts within the Town of Totnes and other Places in Devon” was passed in the same year (4 and 5 Viet., cap. 80).

with the possibility of imprisoning the debtor thrown in,\* but, whatever advantages the new Act may have possessed, it was repealed in 1846,† when the county courts were placed very much upon their present basis; and four years later, upon the regular system of county court circuits being established, Launceston formed part of the Fifty-eighth Circuit, which included the principal towns of Devonshire. The first judge was Mr. William Carpenter Rowe, followed in 1854 by Mr. Praed, who was succeeded in October, 1857, by Mr. Matthew Fortescue; but in June, 1872, when Mr. Montague Bere, Q.C., was appointed judge of the Fifty-ninth (or Cornwall) Circuit, Launceston was taken out of Mr. Fortescue's jurisdiction and attached to Mr. Bere's, where it remains ‡

But even an improved method of recovering debts did not contribute greatly to the profit of the local tradesmen. The population, which at every census from 1801 to 1841 had shown a steady rise, slightly decreased between 1841 and 1851,§ and in the period immediately succeeding the last-named year it became obvious that the diminution was largely increasing. The thoughts of some in the town thereupon turned to a railway as the method by which this rapid wane in the prosperity of the borough could best be stayed. The necessity of improved communication with the outer world had long before been recognised. As far back as 1774 an Act had been passed "for making a canal from Bude to the river Tamar in Calstock parish,"|| which would have affected this district, and a scheme was put forward twenty-one years later "for making a navigation from Morwelham Quay in Tavistock parish to Tamerton-bridge in Cornwall, and also a collateral cut from Poulston-bridge in Lifton parish, Devon, to Richgrove (*sic*) Mill in St. Stephen's parish, Cornwall."\*\*\* Both projects failed, but as the result of an Act of 1819†† there was constructed the Bude Canal, terminating at Druxton Wharf, four miles from Launceston (being prevented from being brought nearer the town by

\* The last person imprisoned for debt in Launceston was a certain purser's steward, named William Davies, in 1828. † By 9 and 10 Vict., cap. 95. ‡ Had Launceston continued a portion of Circuit 58, it would now be in the jurisdiction of Mr. J. W. De

Longueville Giffard, the borough member's eldest brother. § For detailed population tables, see Appendix H. || 14 Geo. III., cap. 53. \*\* 36 Geo. III., cap. 67.

†† 59 Geo. III., cap. lv.

the influence of the Duke of Northumberland), this being for many years the chief coal-carrying agency of the district.\*

The bringing of a canal to a spot miles from the town did not, however, satisfy the wishes of the inhabitants, and in 1836 the first railway scheme in connection with the place was projected. An Act was obtained in that year "for making and maintaining an harbour and breakwater at Tremoutha Haven, St. Gennys, and making a railway from thence to Launceston,"† and the plans were on the most extensive scale. A new town was to be founded at Tremoutha, to be called Victoria‡ (a very early instance of the use of our present Queen's name as that of a town), and it was intended "to construct a safe and commodious harbour with breakwaters, to which vessels might run at all times of the tide, and, in connexion with the harbour to form a railway to Launceston, to be called the Launceston and Victoria Railway."§ But the Duke of Cornwall's Harbour and Launceston and Victoria Railway Company—as it was magnificently called—failed to answer expectations, though there was a great stir locally in its favour.||

The next project was one of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Goldsworthy Gurney, inventor of the "Bude Light," who in 1841 started a scheme for a railway from Launceston to Plymouth on the atmospheric principle (tried by Brunel on the South Devon line between Newton Abbot and Exeter and ultimately abandoned). A company was formed, of which Mr. Charles Gurney, of Trebursye, Town Clerk,\*\* and Mr. John Ching were the chief promoters, but, though many shares were taken up in the town and neighbourhood, much opposition was shown to the scheme. Mr. William Arundell Harris Arundell, of Lifton Park,†† who was the foremost opponent, called a meeting

\* The canal having for some years failed to pay its expenses, it has been resolved in 1884 to abandon it. † 6 and 7 Will. IV., cap. cxxiv. ‡ The Parliamentary Gazetteer of England and Wales (1843), vol. iii., p. 48. § Ibid., vol. iv., p. 355. || The late Mr. John Ching was among the supporters of the scheme, much information concerning which is to be found in Hyde Clarke's Railway Register (1846), vol. iv., pp. 170-85.

\*\* He was appointed by the Corporation in succession to Mr. J. K. Lethbridge in 1833, when the latter became Deputy-Recorder, and was continued in office by the Town Council. He was succeeded upon his resignation in 1867 by his partner, Mr. J. L. Cowlard, who himself resigned in 1874, and was followed by Mr. Richard Peter, the present holder of the office. †† Mr. Arundell (who assumed that name in 1822 in addition to his patronymic, Harris) published in 1855 and 1856 through Mr. T. W. Maddox, of Launceston, various poems on current events and a comedy, entitled "The Contested Election," one of the former being suggested by the wreck of the emigrant ship "John" on the Manacle Rocks, on May 2, 1855, in which perished among many others Mr. Michael Staddon (ante, p. 336).

in the Central Subscription Room, which proved to be one of the most heated known to have been held in the town, finally degenerating into the bandying of personalities; but the discussion had the effect of causing this project also to collapse. Mr. Arundell's main objection to it had been that its adoption would be a block to a central line from Exeter through Launceston to the West, and three years later, when the Rev. Edward Rudall (of Boyton) proposed with others the making of a line from Launceston to Doublebois, Mr. Gurney strongly opposed it on the ground his old antagonist had taken against the atmospheric scheme, and carried his audience with him when a meeting was held in the Central Room on the subject, with the consequence of this collapsing also.

For several years after these disheartening failures the subject slumbered and trade and population continued to decrease. At length the time appeared appropriate for again bringing the matter to the test of public discussion, and on November 3, 1856, Mr. R. Robbins, in his lecture previously quoted from\* on "The Past, Present, and Future of the Town of Launceston," put the question "What can be done to remedy the decline?" and answered it by saying "Something may be done and that something is a Railway," the line he advocated being one from Launceston to Plymouth. "Let not this matter be delayed," he concluded by observing, "but let us go at it at once and see if we cannot keep up good old Dunheved, and make her more prosperous than ever the oldest of us can remember. If not, if we do not rally in this matter, we shall become little other than a Deserted Village, a theme for some future Goldsmith to immortalize." The discussion, in which most of the leading men of the town took part, was generally favourable to the idea that something ought to be done, but Mr. Gurney was faithful to the central scheme, and contended that "the traffic from Plymouth will not sustain a railway; but, if we have one from Exeter, we shall be able to throw our traffic over a much more extensive district."† In proof of the sincerity of Mr. Gurney in the advocacy of the central scheme, it is to be noted that in 1860 he advocated a project for the formation of a narrow-gauge line to Copplestone, there to join the North

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\* ante, p. 319.    † Launceston Weekly News, Nov. 8, 1856.



Devon system from Exeter to Barnstaple. A company was formed, and a bill presented to Parliament in the session of 1861, but it was thrown out, mainly owing to the opposition of Mr. Woollecombe, chairman of the South Devon Company, who, however, practically gave a pledge before a Committee of the House of Commons that, if this scheme were rejected, the South Devon Company would not leave Launceston in the cold.

Matters were not destined to remain long in this condition. On October 29, 1860, Mr. Robbins had again lectured before the Mechanics' Institute, taking this time for his subject "The advantages of a railway to Launceston," and had once more received the enthusiastic support of a crowded audience when he advocated the formation of a line. "The crisis is come," he said, "the magnitude of which it is difficult to over-estimate . . . And my last appeal to you is 'Get a Railway.'" By this date the branch from Plymouth to Tavistock had been opened, and the advocates of the central scheme had to face the difficulties of supporting a project which would have entailed the making of over forty miles of line against one which involved the making of only eighteen. In the autumn of 1861, after the Copplestone scheme had been rejected, a meeting was held at Plymouth, presided over by the Mayor of that borough, at which the late Sir Lawrence Palk (afterwards Lord Haldon) and other influential gentlemen connected with the South of Devon, put forward a plan to unite Exeter with Launceston and Tavistock, the line passing through a portion of South Devon, branching off at Newton, and extending to Lydford, whence a branch would be cut on the one side to Launceston and on the other to Tavistock; and though this plan did not seem likely to find ready acceptance, owing to the fact that the line would be about forty-two miles in length, and would cost from £700,000 to £1,000,000, its production had the effect of stirring up the South Devon Company to a sense of the danger to itself of delaying a settlement of the question. Accordingly, on the invitation of Mr. Woollecombe, six of the leading townsmen visited Plymouth on September 24, 1861 (a historic date in connection with this matter), and had an interview with the South Devon directors; and on that day the first practical step towards gaining the long-wished-for railway was taken.

The South Devon authorities intimated that, if Launceston proved itself ready to assist, a plan for cutting a line from Tavistock should have their support, and the Mayor (Mr. John Doidge) called a meeting for October 2 of the subscribers to the old Mid-Devon and Cornwall scheme, to discuss the suggestion. Owing to the action of some more adventurous spirit the meeting was turned into a public one, and a proposition, made by Mr. Daniel Shilson and seconded by Mr. William Richard Derry, was unanimously carried by the crowded assembly in support of a line from Launceston to Tavistock. A deputation, of which Mr. Richard Dingley was a leading member, was at once appointed to further confer with the South Devon directors, and the result was so satisfactory that before November 30, the statutory limit, a measure was deposited in the Private Bill Office "for making a railway in Devon and Cornwall, to be called the Launceston and South Devon Railway."

It is difficult for those whose memories cannot carry them back as far as 1862 to realise the excitement which pervaded the town while "the Bill" (for no longer title was ever given to it in Launceston) was before Parliament.\* The great difficulty it had to encounter was the active opposition of Mr. John Tremayne, of Sydenham, and Mr. Henry Bradshaw, of Lifton Park (through whose estates the line was to run), and the passive objection of the Duke of Northumberland, a lesser being supplied by the fact that the War Office was against the scheme, because it wished to see an independent railway constructed from Exeter to Plymouth. The measure first came before a select committee of the House of Commons, of which Lord Stanley (the present Earl of Derby) was chairman, and, while it was under consideration, a petition to the Duke of Northumberland, signed by over seven hundred inhabitants within twenty-four hours, had the effect not only of inducing his grace to withdraw his opposition but to subscribe £5000 towards the scheme. This was an omen of victory which was speedily confirmed, for, although Sir George Cornwall

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\* Mr. Woolcombe told the Committee of the House of Commons that the excitement in Launceston in favour of the scheme was such that a higher pitch of enthusiasm could not have been reached by the Allied Armies when they won Waterloo; "We are already on the plains of Waterloo, and the last struggle is at hand," exclaimed a local paper carrying out the same idea, "we well remember the trial of Queen Caroline, and the agitation that prevailed on the passing of the Reform Bill, as well as the capture of Sebastopol, but on these occasions there was not the hundredth part felt by the Launceston people as at present." (East Cornwall Times, March 15, 1862).

Lewis (then Secretary for War). sent a letter to the committee against the scheme, and Lord Palmerston (then Prime Minister) was called as a witness on the same side, the committee unanimously decided on March 17, 1862, that the preamble was proved. The news was telegraphed to Tavistock, and thence brought to Launceston by mounted messenger, who, though his horse threw a shoe as he galloped through the South Gate, never halted until he reached the White Hart where he announced the glad tidings. Bells were rung, bands played, cannon were fired, tar-barrels blazed, and business was suspended; the night was given up to rejoicing, and the next day a whole holiday was granted to the school children, many of the shops were shut, and a procession was formed which met at Pennygillam Colonel (then Major) Archer, chairman of the Launceston and South Devon Railway Company, and escorted him to the Castle Green, where a great public meeting was held. Even then the rejoicings did not cease; a torchlight procession went at night to Page's Cross to escort into the town the witnesses in favour of the Bill, and the next day bells and band welcomed home Mr. John Dingley, the honorary secretary of the Company.

But danger to the scheme was not even yet at an end, and on April 23 "one of the largest meetings ever held in the town of Launceston assembled in the Western Subscription Room, which is as large a public hall as any in the county, convened by the Mayor (Mr. W. R. Derry\*) on receipt of a most numerously signed requisition, for the purpose of considering the propriety of adopting a petition to the House of Lords in favour of the Launceston and South Devon Railway";† but although an amendment was moved it found no favour, the proposed petition, supported by Major Archer and Mr. Woolcombe, being enthusiastically accepted.‡ Success continued to attend the promoters when the Bill reached the Lords. Mr. Tremayne

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\* For a list of Mayors since 1836, see Appendix E. † Western Morning News, April 25, 1862. ‡ The hand-bill summoning this assembly, which was posted by hundreds over the town and even upon every tree on the Walk, will show the state of feeling then existing: 'Our Railway. Come to the meeting to-night!! Citizens: The enemy is in the field. Arouse ye! Arouse ye! and do battle to the enemies of your sacred rights. Having pledged yourselves at two public meetings to support the Launceston and South Devon Railway, now, in the hour of trial, stand forth as a Samson to crush tyranny and despotism. Now or never!!! But be a united band, and act on the Cornish motto—'a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether,' and the victory will be yours!!! Dated April 23rd, 1862.'

withdrew his opposition on May 12, and three days later a petition, twenty yards long and signed by two thousand inhabitants of the district, was despatched to the Upper House in favour of the measure. On May 30 the Lords passed the Bill, and there was another outburst of what were long known as "the railway rejoicings," which culminated on the next morning, when the favouring witnesses were received at Twinaways on the Tavistock road, and drawn by hand into the gaily-decorated town. On June 9 an open-air concert was held on the Walk to celebrate the victory, and when, on the last day of the month, the royal assent was given to the measure\* a railway to Launceston was secured.

The engineers chosen by the Company (Mr. John Fowler and Mr. P. J. Margary) soon had their plans ready, and a contract was entered into with Mr. York on April 29, 1863, to construct the works, which were speedily put in hand. As the line crept nearer Launceston the townsfolk made frequent excursions to Lydford, and then to Coryton, and next to Lifton to mark its progress; the throwing of the girders across the Tamar at Polston was regarded as a public event; the first engine which travelled on the uncompleted work as far as Lifton Down was welcomed by thousands; and when Colonel Yolland made his inspection on behalf of the Board of Trade, the Walk was crowded with spectators eager to see the train steam for the first time up the valleys of the Tamar and the Kensey.† The opening was at length fixed for May 30, 1865, and then postponed until June 1, on which day the formal ceremony took place.‡ The Tuesday had been marked by fine weather; the Thursday witnessed one of the severest downpours within memory; trades' procession in the morning, open-air luncheon in the afternoon, and torchlight display in the evening were alike spoilt by the pitiless rain; and for many years an exceptionally wet day continued to be spoken of as being "almost as bad as railway-opening."

\* 25 and 26 Vict., cap. xli. Three other Acts affecting this line were subsequently passed, one in 1863 for making a deviation, etc. (26 and 27 Vict., cap. cv.), another in 1866 giving further powers in relation to capital, etc. (29 and 30 Vict., cap. cxlvii), and the third in 1869 for enlargement of powers for raising money and for vesting the undertaking in the South Devon Company (32 and 33 Vict., cap. xli). The concern is now vested in the Great Western Railway Company.

† Many of these spectators could doubtless remember when a sedan-chair was the best-known method of progression within the town, for there still lives, in the person of Mr. William Cudlipp (who for many years has been Town Crier), a bearer in one of these vehicles (the property of a Mr. John Grigg) of hundreds of ladies visiting their friends in by-gone years.

‡ The opening for traffic did not take place until Saturday, July 1.

During the four years in which the line was possessed by an independent company, its success, especially with goods traffic, exceeded the hopes of its most sanguine promoters, and had the effect of stimulating the adherents of a central scheme to renewed activity instead of to the eternal defeat which some might have imagined awaited them. Various projects to connect Launceston with the narrow gauge have been put forward; an Act of 1864 authorised the incorporation of a Launceston, Bodmin, and Wadebridge Junction Railway Company, with power to make arrangements with the Okehampton Company;\* in the next year another Act changed the name to the Central Cornwall Railway Company, and allowed it to extend itself to Truro;† while a third Act in 1867 gave it still further powers‡ which have never been executed. Undeterred by this, a Devon and Cornwall Railway Company was incorporated, which in 1873 secured an Act for an extension to Holsworthy and Camelford, and to the Launceston and South Devon Railway,§ but this also fell through; and a prominent townsman, who had whimsically vowed never to take milk in his tea until a central line should be made, died without his hope having been accomplished. In despair of any independent line being constructed, application was made by Launceston to the Railway Commissioners to constrain the Great Western Company to convert the section between Launceston and Lydford Junction into a mixed gauge, but although Mr. Frederick Peel, one of the Commissioners, held a public inquiry with that object in the Western Subscription Room in 1877, and the town was practically unanimous in its support, the *vis inertia* presented by the Great Western Company frustrated the scheme. But in 1882 success at length smiled upon a practical effort to bring the narrow gauge to Launceston, an Act being passed to make a line forty-nine miles in length from the South Western system at Halwill through Launceston to Delabole, Wadebridge, and Padstow; and the North Cornwall Railway Company having raised sufficient money to undertake the

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\* 27 and 28 Vict., cap. cclxxxix.    † 28 and 29 Vict., cap. cclxxiv. In the same session was passed an Act "for incorporating the Bude Canal and Launceston Junction Railway" (28 and 29 Vict., cap. cclxiii), but some years later the Board of Trade issued a warrant authorising the abandonment of this scheme (Parliamentary Papers, 1870, vol. lix).    ‡ 30 and 31 Vict., cap. cxcix.    § 36 and 37 Vict., cap. cxii.

section from Halwill to Launceston, the first sod was cut on June 30, 1884. And as, in this same year, the Liskeard and Caradon Railway Company has obtained power from Parliament to carry its line through Altarnun to Launceston, our town seems likely soon to be the centre of a large system of railway communication. That which it has already gained has given fresh life to the borough. The population has shown an increase at each census since the opening, houses have sprung up where no dwellings had before been seen, and business premises have been enlarged or re-built in a fashion unknown for many previous years. And the increased accommodation now being provided should do still more to raise the once flagging fortunes of the town.

The discussion of the South Devon scheme in 1862 had the effect of introducing a new element into the Launceston Town Council. Previous to that time the Conservatives had held almost undisputed power upon that body; there had never been more than two or three Liberal Councillors, and these seemed to exist by sufferance; and though more than one fierce contest had taken place, the result had been disastrous to the Liberal candidates. The railway agitation changed all this, for although many Conservatives strongly supported the South Devon project, its principal opponents were the leaders of their party, and, as the Liberals in a body were in its favour, such political advantage as accrued from it was gained by the latter. The first breach in the Conservative stronghold was made in 1862, when Mr. Richard Peter (the present Town Clerk), a Liberal, ran as a "railway candidate," and was returned. The success was followed up, and year after year the Liberal minority was strengthened until it became a majority.\* At the election of 1866 the excitement and anger caused by the annual contests culminated in a formal protest handed in by the Conservatives against the candidature of the retiring mayor (Mr. G. G. White, sen.) and, after an abortive attempt to secure a hearing of the case at the Bodmin Spring Assizes of 1867, the writ of *quo warranto* was carried to the Superior Courts, where a decision was given in favour of Mr. White. After this defeat the Conservatives

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\* The returns of the contests since 1862 (for which the author has to thank Mr. John Brimmell) are given in Appendix G.



did not for some years offer any opposition to the Liberal candidates, but in 1871 contests again commenced and have continued ever since with but slight intermission. The Liberals more than once have had to contend with the same spirit of division in their own ranks which, when displayed by their opponents, gave them their first chance of success; and, though they still possess a slight majority on the Council, parties now appear more evenly balanced than ever before. Whatever some may say as to the wisdom of introducing politics into municipal contests, it has had the effect in Launceston, as in many other boroughs, of securing the presence upon the Council of the most active men from both sides which the town possesses.

As may be imagined a great part in these contests has been played by the Press. Times have singularly changed within this century with regard to the circulation of news. Previous to the Peninsular War there was no regular receipt in Launceston of the news of the day, but at that period, when matters full of interest to every Englishman were forthcoming in rapid succession, the Duke of Northumberland agreed to send daily to the mayor of the borough a copy of the *Times*. Upon its arrival, and immediately after glancing through it on his own account, the chief magistrate was accustomed to send it around to the Aldermen in succession by a special messenger, whose duty it was to leave it at each house a certain number of hours and then carry it to the next.\* In times of special excitement a more effective method was taken of circulating the latest intelligence, as, for instance, when the result of Waterloo reached the town, several days after the battle was fought, and the Mayor (then Alderman Roe) proceeded to different parts of the borough and there proclaimed the victory. The contrast between this state of things, or even that existing during the American Civil War,† and that of later days could scarcely have been more strikingly shown than in the course of the Franco-German War in 1870, when, by a subscription among the leading townsmen, telegrams concerning the most important events were daily received and posted in front of the Corn Market.

As has been noted‡ the contest of 1832 brought forth two newspapers

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\* This custom obtained until 1835, when the direct relationship between the Duke and the Corporation was broken. † ante, p. 332. ‡ ante, p. 323.

*The Reformer* first appearing on July 21, with "Vox Populi, Vox Dei" as its motto, and *The Guardian* a week later, with "Truth" as its watchword. These papers, which were very small, were mainly devoted to the events of the contest, and were filled with personalities of the most astounding kind. "The entire contents from week to week," says Mr. Ching, "were the upholding the faults and shortcomings of the other party, and at last the personalities became so great that the leading men of each side signed a requisition to the Editors to suppress further issues, and they ceased their publication." Our first newspaper, pure and simple, was the *Launceston Weekly News*, which appeared on April 19, 1856, under the editorship of the proprietor, Mr. John Brimmell, who still occupies both positions. In March of the next year, at the time of the dissolution by Lord Palmerston, consequent upon the vote of the Commons condemnatory of his Chinese policy, Mr. William Philp,\* who had commenced business in the town as a printer nearly a quarter of a century before, published a sheet called the "Supplement to the *Cornish Times*" (which paper was published at Liskeard by his brother, Mr. John Philp), containing local items of intelligence; and this developed at the next dissolution in May, 1859, into an independent paper as the *East Cornwall Times*. The latter (which was the Liberal organ just as its elder rival was the Conservative) issued its last number in December, 1877, on the first day of which month a company had started the *Cornish and Devon Post*, under the editorship of Mr. William Lydra Powell, who is now its proprietor, and this continues the Liberal tradition of the paper which it now absorbed.

Before the railway agitation rose to its height, and while municipal contests were still undreamt of, the present Launceston Volunteer force sprang into being. The existence here of train-bands during the Civil War (whose characteristic, according to Sir Thomas Fairfax, was "to get others for money to serve in their rooms"†), and of a body of volunteers during the threatened French invasion in 1794,‡ has been referred to; and in 1859, when Napoleon the Third's colonels breathed threatenings towards England, and Tennyson's cry "Riflemen, form," was taken up with enthusiasm throughout the country,

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\* ante, p. 298. † ante, p. 181. ‡ ante, p. 286.

Launceston rose to the occasion. A public meeting was called for November 23, and Mr. E. Baring-Gould, of Lew Trenchard, a retired Captain of the East India Company's Service, who was present, was unanimously requested to put himself at the head of the Launceston contingent. Patriotic speeches were made, and those who were willing were invited to come forward and be sworn in. But the thing at first hung fire. Then Mr. W. D. Hanson, at that time resident at Landue, who had in the course of his speech expressed his regret that shortsightedness disqualified him, as he thought, for personal service, exclaimed "This won't do. Come, Mr. Dingley, if you will join, I will"; and, Mr. John Dingley cordially responding, they advanced to the table together and were sworn in. Their example was immediately followed by many of the leading young men of the town, and then the Corps was formed, Captain Baring-Gould nominating Mr. Hanson as Lieutenant, and Mr. Dingley becoming Ensign. A Drill Sergeant, named Evans, was provided, who was speedily superseded by the late Sergeant Gould,\* (who had been for some years resident in the town as recruiting sergeant for the militia) and drills were at once begun; they were held in the early morning, at mid-day, and again in the evening, and thus the men were soon got into shape. This went on all the winter, the Lieutenant zealously galloping in from Landue as soon as it was light, and generally breakfasting with the late Mr. Ching, who was one of the most energetic members of the corps from its commencement, and who, becoming in turn Ensign and Lieutenant, continued to serve until a few years before his death.

The corps well started, the Captain, Mr. Baring-Gould, resigned, his residence being ten miles away, and by the unanimous wish of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, Mr. Edward Archer, the popular squire of Trelaske,† assumed the command, the invitation being conveyed to him by the Lieutenant and the Ensign in the name of the whole corps on March 27, 1860, the former officer having on the seventh of the same month represented the Launceston contingent at the special levee held by the Queen at St. James' Palace for the officers

\* Sergeant Gould, who retired in 1873, beloved by all the men, and who died in 1878, was succeeded by Sergeant Fidler, who has assisted to raise the corps to a high pitch of efficiency.

† ante, p. 353.

of the Volunteers. At the commencement of the movement the advice had been given "Don't let anybody persuade you to try to become soldiers," the idea being that a kind of guerilla force was all that was possible, but it was soon apparent that the Volunteers aspired to, and were capable of, winning the high position they now so admirably occupy as an Army of Reserve. The officers of the Launceston corps, therefore, took steps to thoroughly qualify themselves for their commands; Captain Archer and Lieutenant Hanson attached themselves to the Royal Marines at Stonehouse for a month's drill, and Ensign Dingley underwent a course of musketry instruction at Hythe. When Captain Archer was promoted to be Major in the 2nd (East Cornwall) Battalion, Mr. Dingley became the Captain, Mr. Hanson having previously resigned the lieutenancy, and when Mr. Dingley in his turn retired (being presented on the occasion with an address on vellum from the corps, thanking him for having taken the command in time of need), Mr. P. F. Simcoe, of Penheale, was promoted to be captain. He resigned in 1872, but still remained for some years a private in the corps, and he was succeeded by Mr. Arthur Bevan Collier, of Carthamartha, whose place, when he was raised to be major in 1880, was taken by Mr. Thomas Ching Langdon, the present captain, who has for lieutenants Mr. Claude Hurst Peter and Mr. Edward Lethbridge Marsack.

The Sixth Duke of Cornwall's Rifle Volunteers (as was their first name, now lost in the newer designation of C Company of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry) had their earliest shooting range at Gordon Hill by the Tamar, but soon the present more convenient range near the South Petherwin road, between Mr. Cardell's barn and Landlake, was selected. The "long Enfield" was the rifle with which they were first armed, changed in 1871 to the Snider, and this being likely soon to be altered to the Martini-Henry. In August, 1873, the corps (thanks mainly to the energy of Captain Collier and the liberality of the late Colonel Deakin) took an eight days' part in the autumn manœuvres on Dartmoor, and received an audible compliment from the Commander-in-Chief as they marched past him on Ringmore Down. Since that date they have further smartened their appearance by discarding the old

grey or blue-black uniform for the scarlet, and, so far from any falling off being witnessed, their enthusiasm is as great as, and their numbers even greater than, ever before.\*

One consequence of the formation of the Launceston corps was that in 1862, the Castle Green, the surface of which had previously been far from smooth, was levelled for its convenience at the expense of the Duke of Northumberland, many bones and other relics of the past being disinterred in the process. Previous to volunteers coming into being, the Cornish militia had occasionally been mustered at Launceston, the latest occasions having been in 1856 and 1857 (the best-remembered officers being the present Sir John Trelawny and his brother, Mr. Harry Reginald Trelawny, Sir John St. Aubyn, and Ensign—now Colonel—Sterling) when the assembly of the men for church parade on the Sunday was especially regarded as noteworthy, just as the oldest inhabitants have not forgotten how, in the days when the main road from Falmouth to London ran through Launceston, bodies of troops often marched through the town, the passage of from three to four hundred dragoons in 1825 being only less memorable than the visit of the 42nd Regiment in the next year, when the men stayed in the town from the Saturday until the Monday morning, and were drilled in Broad Street in presence of a large crowd on the Sunday afternoon.

The levelling of the Castle Green by the Duke of Northumberland was one of the last public acts performed by the Percy family in Launceston. At the general election of 1859, when Mr. Joseceline Percy retired,† the ducal nominee was Mr. Thomas Chandler Haliburton, who was, of course, returned. The new member, who was descended from an old Scottish family, was the son of a judge of Nova Scotia, and was born at Windsor in that colony in 1796. Educated at King's College, Nova Scotia, he became a barrister and afterwards member of the House of Assembly. In 1829 he was made a judge of the colonial Common Pleas, and eleven years later a judge of the Supreme Court, retiring from the bench in 1850, and coming to England to reside. He had made a great literary reputation as

\* For this information the Author has to thank Captain Langdon, Mr. Hanson, and Mr. G. M. Gifford (ante, p. 343), the last-named of whom rendered valuable service to the corps as secretary in its earliest days. † ante, p. 336.

“Jam Slick,” and, becoming known to the Duke of Northumberland, was offered the representation of Launceston. In Parliament (to which he avowedly went as “Member for Nova Scotia” rather than for the borough which returned him) he failed to sustain his reputation as a humourist, and, at the dissolution of July 1865, he withdrew from public life. He was not, however, long in retirement, for he died at Isleworth on the twenty-seventh of the following month, “having attained a place and fame difficult to acquire at all times—that of a man whose humour was nurtured in one country, and became naturalised in another; for humour is the least exotic of the gifts of genius.”\*

The main reason for Mr. Haliburton’s retirement probably was that his parliamentary patron had in 1864 sold the Werrington Estate. All that remains of its occupancy by the Percy family for eighty years, beyond the recollection of the restoration of the Castle† and the aid given to the railway,‡ is the name of the Launceston Foresters’ Court, of the leading St. Stephens inn, and of a lane leading from Northgate Street to Tower Street. The purchaser of the property was Mr. Alexander Henry Campbell, a Manchester cotton merchant, who speedily intimated his intention of standing for the borough, and, though a Mr. John Cooke issued an address to the electors in the Liberal interest, no real opposition took place at the dissolution of 1865, and the new owner of Werrington was duly returned. Mr. Campbell, however, was unfortunate in some very heavy cotton speculations, and in the early part of 1868 he sold the property to Mr. William Wentworth Fitz William Dick, of Hume Wood, Baltinaglass, Wicklow, for which county he sat from 1852 to 1880. Being already in Parliament for an apparently safe seat, Mr. Dick did not require to represent Launceston, and on the resignation of Mr. Campbell in April, 1868, he put forward Mr. Henry Charles Lopes for the vacancy.

Mr. Lopes had won the confidence of Mr. Dick (then Mr. Hume) some four years previously as counsel for him in a case of some delicacy, but he had in addition a claim upon the consideration of the

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\* Chambers’s Encyclopædia (edition of 1883) vol. v., p. 197. † ante, p. 331. ‡ ante, p. 352.



electors of Launceston which, as far as recollection can serve, has not hitherto been noted. His name originally was Franco, for he was the third son of Mr. Ralph Franco, who unsuccessfully contested Newport in the Whig interest in 1818,\* and who changed his patronymic when he succeeded to the baronetcy of Lopes in 1831 on the death of his maternal uncle, the first baronet, Sir Manasseh.† Mr. Henry Charles Lopes (who was born in 1827, and was educated at Winchester and at Balliol College, Oxford) was called to the bar at the Inner Temple, in 1852, and travelled the Western Circuit, being appointed Recorder of Exeter in May, 1867. At the general election of November, 1868, he was for the second time returned for Launceston, and in the next June was raised to the dignity of a Queen's Counsel. In August, 1871, Mr. Dick, who had never really liked Werrington, sold the property to Mr. James Henry Deakin, of Manchester, an honorary lieutenant-colonel in the Lancashire volunteers, who, some twelve months later, communicated to Mr. Lopes that he intended at the next election to represent Launceston, "either by myself or my nominee." The sitting member so resented the notice to quit that he subsequently published the whole correspondence in the *Standard*, but he profited by it so far as to offer himself as Conservative candidate for Frome, for which borough he was elected at the dissolution of 1874, and in November, 1876, he was appointed a Judge of the High Court of Justice, which position he still holds.

In September, 1873, Colonel Deakin issued an address to the electors of Launceston announcing his intention of contesting the borough when a vacancy should arise, and the dissolution of the next January gave him the opportunity he sought. The fact that Parliament was to be dissolved was made known on Saturday, January 24, and for a day or two it seemed as if the first election for Launceston under the Ballot Act would pass as quietly as had all its open-voting predecessors since 1835.‡ But a change was soon apparent: on the Tuesday, Mr. William Derry, of Plymouth, intimated his willingness to come forward if the Liberals wished, while Mr. Henry Clark, Recorder of Tiverton, and brother-in-law of Mr. Lopes, was talked

\* ante, p. 296. † Sir Manasseh (or Massch) Lopes was convicted at Launceston Assizes in 1818 for bribery at Grampound, and was subsequently sentenced to a heavy fine and a term of imprisonment (Oldfield's Key, p. 13.) ‡ ante, p. 324.

of in the same interest. On the Wednesday it was seen that a contest was inevitable, for three would-be Liberal candidates put in an appearance before the electors—Mr. Herbert Charles Drinkwater, of Manchester, Mr. John Freeman Norris, barrister, of Bristol (and now a judge of the Indian High Court), and Mr. John William Batten, barrister, of London, who was professionally connected with the South Western Railway. These agreed to allow a public meeting to decide on their claims, and this being held in the Western Subscription Room the same afternoon, the choice fell upon Mr. Drinkwater, Mr. Norris being second favourite. A vigorous contest was at once undertaken; Colonel Deakin hastened from Manchester, where he had stayed to assist the Conservatives of his own city, and when he reached Launceston on the Thursday found that the extensive preservation of rabbits on his estate was being used as a political weapon to weaken his hold on the tenantry. On the Friday the nomination took place, and the same evening, at a meeting at the Northumberland Arms, the Colonel announced that each tenant was at liberty to destroy the rabbits on his farm. The Liberal candidate at once denounced this as an act of bribery, and on Monday, February 2, when the polling was held, he served on every one voting a formal notice that, if defeated, he should claim the seat on that ground. The poll showed that 453 had supported Colonel Deakin and 216 Mr. Drinkwater,\* and within the statutory month the latter filed a petition against the return. The trial took place in the Western Subscription Room on May 5 and 6, before Sir John Mellor, then a Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, Mr. Leresche and Mr. Bompas appearing for the petitioner, and Serjeant Parry and Mr. Edwards for the respondent; and on the afternoon of the second day the judge unseated Colonel Deakin, holding that the rabbit concession under the circumstances was an act of personal bribery, but reserving the question of Mr. Drinkwater's claim to the seat. This was argued the next month in the Common Pleas, before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, Mr. Justice Brett (now Master of the Rolls), and Mr. Justice Denman, and judgment, at first reserved, was given against the petitioner and declaring the seat vacant.

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\*These are the numbers as officially announced; those given in most of the usual books of reference are erroneous.

The Launceston Conservatives, in addition to presenting an address of sympathy to Colonel Deakin, took a practical method of showing their appreciation of him by signing a requisition to his eldest son, Mr. James Henry Deakin, jun., asking him to come forward. The Liberals immediately brought out Mr. John Dingley,\* but at the same time nominated Mr. Hardinge Stanley Giffard, a prominent Conservative barrister who was just then seeking a seat, and offered to allow him to be returned unopposed if the other side would withdraw Mr. Deakin. To this the Conservatives declined to agree, and Mr. Giffard, having visited the town and learnt the state of affairs, issued an address counselling all Conservatives to support their chosen candidate. This apparently they did not do, for at the poll on July 3 thirty-six fewer voted for him than had for his father in the February and seventeen more for Mr. Dingley than for the previous Liberal candidate, while one solitary elector recorded his suffrage for Mr. Giffard. From that time rumours were frequent that Mr. Deakin intended to resign, and Launceston electoral matters were kept before the public by the abortive attempt of the late Mr. Wykeham Martin, Liberal member for Rochester, to carry a bill in the session of 1875 for the remission of the disabilities entailed upon Colonel Deakin by the decision of the judge. In February, 1877, Mr. Deakin resigned, Sir Hardinge Giffard (as by this time he had become) immediately issued an address, and Mr. Robert Collier (a young barrister, and eldest son of Sir Robert Collier, who had embarked on a similarly hopeless contest thirty-six years before)† entered the lists on behalf of the Liberals. The polling took place on Saturday, March 8, when the Conservative majority, which had dwindled from 237 in February, 1874, to 184 in the following July, was now lowered to 118, Sir Hardinge Giffard securing 392 and Mr. Collier 274.

The new member for Launceston, who still occupies the seat, is a son of the late Stanley Lees Giffard, J.L.D., his mother being the eldest daughter of Mr. Frank Moran, an Irish magistrate, residing at Downhill, county Mayo. He was born in 1825, and was educated at Merton College, Oxford, where he graduated Bachelor of Arts in 1852 and Master of Arts three years later. In January, 1850, he was

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\* ante, pp. 353-59.      † ante, p. 335.

called to the bar at the Inner Temple, and joined the South Wales Circuit, marrying in 1852 his first wife, Caroline Louisa, daughter of the late Mr. William Conn Humphreys, of Wood Green, Middlesex. He became a Queen's Counsel in 1865, and three years afterwards made his first attempt to enter Parliament by contesting Cardiff in the Conservative interest against Mr. J. Crichton-Stuart who had been returned from 1857 and always without a struggle. He was beaten by 446 votes, a majority which, against the same opponent, he succeeded in reducing to nine at the general election of 1874. In the same year he married his second wife (the present Lady Giffard) Lynie, daughter of Mr. Henry Woodfall, of Riverside, Twickenham, and was appointed Chairman of the Carmarthenshire Quarter Sessions. In November, 1875, though without a seat in Parliament, he was given the Solicitor-Generalship by Mr. Disraeli, in succession to Sir John Holker, a post he held until the fall of the Conservative Ministry in April, 1880, and he became a knight bachelor very soon after his appointment. In 1876, he again tried to enter the House of Commons, this time for Horsesham, but was once more defeated, the poll being 478 for his opponent as against 424 for himself; and on March 3, 1877, he was first elected for Launceston as stated above.\*

At the dissolution of March, 1880, Mr. Collier again offered himself in opposition to Sir Hardinge Giffard, but had only the satisfaction of very slightly reducing the Conservative majority, it now standing at 105, Sir Hardinge polling 439 and Mr. Collier 334;† and the latter has since severed his connection with the borough by accepting the Liberal candidature for Chatham. The member for Launceston was appointed Treasurer of the Inner Temple for 1881, and on January 19, 1883, was given by the Duke of Cornwall the Constablenesship of Launceston Castle‡ (the last previous holder of which office had been Algernon, Duke of Northumberland,§ who died

\* The biographical information regarding Sir Hardinge Giffard is mainly gathered from Debrett's House of Commons, supplemented by Dod's Parliamentary Companion. It is singular to note that in the latter, as well as in Dod's Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage, no mention is given of the member for Launceston's parentage, date of birth, or place of education. † The apparent contradiction in a Conservative constituency returning a Liberal Town Council is accounted for by the fact that the parliamentary borough includes the parishes of St. Stephens, South Petherwin, and Lawhitton, in addition to the municipal borough.

‡ London Gazette, January 19, 1883, p. 328.  
§ ante, pp. 336-37-52-62.

in February, 1865) and he has built a house in the borough, for which he appears likely to sit until its disfranchisement. Its representation had not been touched by the Reform Act of 1867, though, in introducing the abortive Redistribution of Seats Bill the previous year, one of the objects of which was "to group as many of these [small] boroughs as can be joined together with geographical convenience," Mr. Gladstone had named as the second of sixteen groups Bodmin, Liskeard, and Launceston to return two members;\* but the redistribution which is likely to be undertaken very shortly after these lines have passed through the press, will in every probability deal much more harshly with Launceston's existence as a parliamentary borough than this. One thing connected with the history of local politics it is curious to note: for two centuries the "Werrington influence" has played, as has been seen, an important part in the representation of the town, but after the death of Mr. J. H. Deakin† in 1881 (his father, Colonel Deakin, having pre-deceased him in 1879) the family determined to sell the property, the northern portion of which was purchased in June, 1882, by Mr. John Charles Williams, of Caerhays Castle, second son of the late Mr. John Michael Williams, who, save for the destruction of Morice's Arch,‡ has been doing much to restore the park to its old splendour. But although of a Liberal family, Mr. Williams exhibits no wish to interfere in parliamentary concerns, and as the remainder of the estate has been broken up and sold in lots to a number of purchasers, Werrington as a political influence has died in the dying days of the independent parliamentary existence of Launceston.

With this change in the lordship of the manor, a venerable institution in the shape of the viandership of Newport disappeared. The importance of the office had gone with the disfranchisement of the borough, but the ceremony of choosing the in-viander and the out-viander§

\* Speech in the House of Commons, May 7, 1866. † ante, p. 365. ‡ ante, p. 259.  
 § A curious relic of the viandership was found in October, 1884, by Mr. George Burt, while investigating some old papers of his father, the late Mr. Charles Nations Burt, this being a parchment signed by the Rev. W. Carpenter, incumbent (ante, pp. 125-286) and Richard Edgecombe and Moses Bowring, churchwardens, of St. Mary Magdalene's, setting forth that (in accordance with the Test Act) on Sunday, January 6, 1788, "John Braddon, Out Viander of the Borough of Newport . . . did receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Parish Church aforesaid immediately after Divine Service and Sermon according to the Usage of the Church of England," and that Nicholas Burt made oath that he saw Braddon take the Sacrament at the mentioned time and place.



was still kept up at the court leet held annually either in October or November at the Northumberland Arms; and to the vianders, as also to a reeve, to the "foreman of the grand inquest," and to the members of the jury, an oath was administered pledging them to keep secret "the Queen's counsel, your fellows', and your own," and to "present all persons and things truly and fairly as they shall come to your hands according to the best of your skill and judgment." The last ceremony of the kind was in 1891, when Mr. Henry Burt was appointed foreman of the jury, and Captain Langdon and Mr. William Burt the last of a long line of vianders of Newport.\*

But while some institutions were disappearing others were coming into existence. Educational accommodation, especially of an elementary kind, was very limited in Launceston as elsewhere early in the century, and in 1840, mainly by the help of the Duke of Northumberland, a National School was erected. This was followed by a British School, but the latter was closed in 1870, when the Education Act came into operation. A town's meeting in December of that year decided upon the formation of a School Board, and the first election for this took place on February 27, 1871, with the result that three Nonconformists—Mr. John Dingley (Wesleyan), Mr. J. B. Geake (Congregationalist), and Mr. John Nicolls, sen. (United Methodist Free Church)—and two Churchmen (the Revs. W. M. Birch and S. Childs Clarke) were chosen after a contest in which Mr. John Ching (Independent Churchman) was defeated. The old British School was enlarged and formed into a Board School, and the work has since gone on uninterruptedly, though in 1883, for the first time, the Liberal Nonconformists found themselves in a minority.† A School Board for St. Stephens was formed in the spring of 1875, the first

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\* It is probable, seeing that an assize of bread and ale is known to have existed at Newport long previous to 1337 (ante, p. 54), that vianders had been chosen for Newport for at least six hundred years. The members of the last jury were Messrs. Robert Badeock, Thomas Box, George Burt, Lambert Burt, Charles Congdon, John Dew, William Goodman, Thomas Ham, sen., Thomas Brooks Hender, David Lavis, Henry Lillierap, Robert D. Maddever, Joseph Mitchell, William Mitchell, Henry Short, and John Mortimer Strong. Mr. J. C. Williams is now lord of the manor, and the court rolls are in his possession. For much of this information the Author has to thank Mr. J. L. Cowland. † The present members of the Board are Mr. Edward Barrett (Churchman), the Rev. S. W. E. Bird (Churchman), Mr. William Cater (Congregationalist), Mr. John Dingley (Liberal Wesleyan), and Mr. Edward Marshall (Conservative Wesleyan). Mr. Dingley was chairman from 1871 to 1883, when Mr. Bird was appointed, Mr. Marshall being vice-chairman: Mr. Richard Peter (Town Clerk), has been the clerk from the commencement.



meeting of members taking place on April 8, and a school-house situated opposite the church testifies to its labours.\*

In another direction St. Stephens has shown signs of awakening. The Wesleyans have for some time had a thought of planting a district chapel there, and the adherents of the Established Church are doing their best to provide against rivalry by restoring their edifice. The work was commenced in January, 1883, by Mr. William Burt, under the direction of Messrs. Hine and Odgers, of Plymouth, and during its progress some interesting antiquarian discoveries have been made.† Eleven years before this had been undertaken St. Thomas Church had been restored on the plans of Mr. J. Piers St. Aubyn, and mainly owing to the exertions of the Rev. S. Childs Clarke,‡ who also secured the erection of a mission church at Tregadillett, at the extreme end of the parish, about the same period.

The Dissenting bodies meanwhile were far from idle. Owing to the secessions previously noted§ the Wesleyan body had in "the Fifties" become comparatively weak, and at the commencement of "the Sixties" a determined effort was made to strengthen it. In May, 1862, the chapel, which had been rebuilt but unfortunately on the old foundation, was re-opened, but in seven years it had to be raised to the ground to prevent it falling. Messrs. Norman and Hine, of Plymouth, prepared the plans for a new one on a much larger scale, the foundation stone of which was laid on November 17, 1869, the builder being Mr. Blatelford, of Tavistock. The congregation worshipped in the Western Subscription Room while the chapel was being erected, and it was opened on November 4, 1870, the success which has attended the society since that date justifying the enlarged building which had been undertaken.|| Within three

\* The present members of the Board are Messrs. George Burt, John Edgecumbe, John K. Rundle, Richard Sampson, and Henry Short. † The present vicar is the Rev. Edward Synze Townsend Daunt, who entered upon the living in 1853, in succession to the Rev. E. Polwhele, who had himself been appointed on May 21, 1845.

‡ Mr. Clarke was one of the first clergy in the undivided diocese of Exeter to commence a weekly offertory, this being begun on September 17, 1854, the resulting amount rising in a few years from £21 to over £100 per annum, though the church was small and the congregation poor. On Mr. Clarke becoming vicar of Thorverton, the Rev. William Stabbaek Johns was in May, 1875, elected by the parishioners to be his successor, after a contest in which he defeated the Rev. Nicholas Lower Gedye (now vicar of Fleet, Weymouth) by a few votes. § ante, p. 337. || In 1857 the membership was only 120, while in 1884 it was nearly 300. In other portions of the parliamentary borough the cause is spending also, a new Wesleyan Chapel having been opened at South

Petherwin on May 23, 1872, and another at Tregadillett the next year.

months, the Congregationalists had determined upon restoring the interior of their chapel in Castle Street, erected in 1826, in the ministry of the Rev. J. Barfett,\* who was succeeded in July, 1836, by the Rev. John Horsey. This reverend gentleman announced his resignation in March, 1865, but subsequently withdrew it, and, after some painful discussions, the major portion of the congregation seceded and worshipped at the Western Subscription Room until the latter end of 1866, being ministered to mainly by students from the Western College, Plymouth. When Mr. Horsey definitely resigned, the Rev. Thomas Edward Minit Edwards became the pastor of a united congregation in January, 1867, and, on his accepting a similar position at Staines at the end of 1869, the pulpit was vacant until September, 1870, when the Rev. Thomas Jackson entered upon his ministry at Castle Street. The chapel was restored during the summer of the next year, the Western Room being again called into use, and in the September it was re-opened. Just twelve months later, Mr. Jackson, owing to differences on points of doctrine with some leading members, tendered his resignation, but this the congregation emphatically refused to accept. For another year Mr. Jackson held the ministry, but, though Dr. Allon and Professor Charlton—names venerated by the Congregational body—testified to the soundness of his orthodoxy, differences again developed themselves, and the reverend gentleman, despite the strongly expressed wish of the large majority of the congregation, determined upon withdrawing, and preached his last sermon at the end of December, 1873.† In September, 1874, the Rev. Jesse Bamford took the pastorate, which he still retains, and the vitality of the congregation is shown in the fact that during his ministry the rooms above and adjoining the chapel, in which the Sunday School‡ is held, and which were enlarged in the early Sixties, have been found too small, and a new building has been erected in Northgate Street opposite the chapel to accommodate the children, the foundation stone of which was laid in November 6, 1883, the opening taking place on June 26, 1884.

\* ante, p. 308. † Mr. Jackson abandoned the ministry rather than again pass through a similar ordeal, and, adopting medicine as a profession, settled at Croydon, being elected at the head of the poll for his ward on the formation of the first Town Council there in 1883. ‡ ante, p. 290.

In connection with the existence of Nonconformity in Launceston, it may here be recorded that on November 27, 1874, the Rev. Samuel Naish (at that time Superintendent Wesleyan Minister for the Launceston Circuit) addressed, as chairman of the annual meeting of the United Association of Nonconformist Ministers of the district, representing forty-eight congregations, a letter to Mr. Gladstone stating that the Association desired to thank him for his pamphlet on "The Vatican Decrees," and "fervently beseeching God to guide, protect, and bless you, and finally to crown your useful life by the gift of Heaven's glory." To this Mr. Gladstone personally replied (in, it was stated at the time, the only communication he addressed on the subject to a public body) from Hawarden Castle on December 2, thanking the Launceston ministers for their expression of confidence, and assuring them "that, within the limits of the arguments and expostulation which I have endeavoured to mark out, I shall firmly abide by the propositions set forth in my pamphlet."\*

Another fruit of Nonconformity is to be seen in the establishment of the Dunheved College, which was founded in February, 1873, temporary buildings being opened at Westgate Street while plans were being prepared.† The founders were Messrs. John Dingley, E. P. Nicolls, Edward Pethybridge, Richard Gubbin, and Benjamin Ralph, who were afterwards joined by Messrs. John S. Pethybridge (Bodmin), T. B. Hender (Launceston), William Sims (Tavistock), T. P. Trood (Launceston), and others; and the new buildings at Dunheved Green were opened in September, 1874, by the Rev. Luke Wiseman, M.A. The motto of the college is *Bene orasse Bene Studuisse*, and the spirit of the education is set forth by the phrase.‡ From the first there have been two departments, the second providing education for girls, and many of the most distinguished pupils have come from the latter department. The numbers have gone up progressively with but little variation from six, with which the College opened, to seventy-eight, the present total. The College, which prepares for professional life, business, and matriculation at the Universities, has had since the

\* The correspondence is given in full in the Times of Dec. 12, 1874. † The architect was Mr. Hine, of Plymouth, formerly of the firm of Norman and Hine, who designed the present Wesleyan Chapel and other prominent buildings in the town. ‡ A characteristic feature of the establishment is that every boarder has a private room, except in the case of brothers.

foundation, for its Principal and Headmaster, Mr. Benjamin Ralph, B.A., LL.D. (Dublin). The educational arrangements were completed in 1884 by the opening of a Kindergarten with a Junior School, to unite the most elementary teaching with the course pursued in the College classes: for the convenience of young pupils, the Junior School is at present located in the Odd Fellows' Hall, and it now numbers thirty-two pupils, making a total of one hundred and ten, whose ages vary from three to eighteen years, who receive instruction from Dunheved College.\*

The social institutions of a town are almost of as much importance as the educational, and of these the friendly societies play an important part. The Tradesmen's, which still flourishes, has been dealt with,† but beyond that and some small local clubs—male, female, and “death”—there is nothing in this direction to note until the establishment on May 16, 1859, of Lodge Dunheved (789) of the Freemasons. Mr. Charles Thomas Pearce was the first Master,‡ Mr. Michael Frost the Senior Warden, and Mr. W. Derry Pearse the Junior Warden, the earliest meetings being held at the King's Arms, and there continuing until the Freemason's Hall in the Tavistock Road (of which Mr. Hine was the architect) was opened in July, 1877.§ The Loyal Unity Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (Manchester Unity) was founded at the Bell Inn on July 10, 1860, Mr. George Mountstephen being the first Noble Grand: it held its meetings at the same place until 1874, when it moved to the Western Subscription Room, and in 1880, it entered a hall of its own in the Western Road.|| On February 22, 1862, Court Northumberland of the Ancient Order of Foresters was inaugurated at the London Inn, where it continues to meet, Mr. Henry Reynolds being the first Chief Ranger. And eleven years later a lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars was opened at the Western Subscription Room,

\* The Author's thanks are due to Dr. Ralph for this information. † ante, pp. 271-74.

‡ The following is a list of the Past Masters: Messrs. C. T. Pearce, M. Frost, W. D. Pearse, J. Hawkins, A. Metherell, F. Couch, W. T. Parsons, P. D. Maddox, D. Thompson, J. Harris, W. R. Bray, F. Thorne, E. Sargent, D. H. W. Horlock, C. G. Archer, P. F. Simcoe, G. Ross, T. P. Trood, C. Parsons, E. Trood, J. Kittow, H. M. Harvey, and W. Andrew. The present Master is Mr. Richard Sampson, Mr. R. Reed being Senior Warden, Mr. Thomas White Junior Warden, Mr. William Pyke Senior Deacon, and Mr. T. Sherston Junior Deacon. § Sergeant Fidler (ante, p. 359) has been caretaker of the hall since its opening. || The hall is used on Sundays for Baptist services: the old Baptist Chapel stood in Southgate, and the body afterwards met in a room in

Duke's Lane, but for some years up to a recent date, there were no regular services.

which is not now in existence. The old Launceston and Werrington Cricket Club, which flourished for several years, died in the Sixties, but there is now a flourishing Launceston Club, of which Mr. G. G. White, jun., is captain, and clubs attached to Dunheved College and Horwell's School, as well as some especially intended for boys not connected with either of those institutions. A Bicycle Club also was formed in 1875 to provide for the wants of young Launceston in that direction.

For the protection of the town in various ways there exist more than one force. "Fifty years ago," says Mr. Ching, "the police arrangements were of a very simple character. Four master mechanics were sworn in as special constables, a shoemaker, roper, blacksmith, and carpenter.\* They were never on duty and I think were paid a trifling sum annually, and, I believe, received the fees chargeable on any case heard by the borough magistrates." This system, as may be imagined, was not particularly effective, and in the winter of 1831 so many burglaries and other robberies were committed in the town that six watchmen were specially appointed to be on duty on alternate nights, but this only lasted the one winter. The first regular policeman was John Brooming, appointed in 1846, he being succeeded by John Holman and William Caddy, and they in turn by Edward Barrett, who held the position from 1860 until 1883. Although assistance was given by two special constables, complaints were frequent as to the inadequacy of the police establishment, and these culminated at the latter end of 1882, when the Town Council resolved with practical unanimity upon employing the county force. Accordingly, as the official government report says, "on the 5th February 1883 the police force of this borough was consolidated with that of the county of Cornwall, and the only regular officer of the local force was pensioned for life. He had been 23 years in the service, and was above 60 years of age."† A Volunteer Fire Brigade, talked of for many years (a scheme having been put forward by Mr. John Dingley, for instance, in 1865), was established in 1872, and has done useful service; its first captain was the late Mr. John Ching, the present holder of the office being Mr. G. G. White, jun., and his lieutenants

\* This can apply only to some special year as the constables were frequently changed.

† Parliamentary Return on Police Forces, dated March 25, 1884, p. 12.



are Mr. C. H. Hayman and Mr. F. Downing. In semi-connection with this body was founded in 1879 a Salvage Corps, of which Mr. T. P. Trood has been captain since its formation, his lieutenants being Mr. Claude H. Peter and Mr. Charles Parsons.

To these institutions for the preservation of life and property must be added one for the saving of life and limb and the curing of disease. The Rowe Dispensary was founded early in the Sixties upon a bequest of £400 given by the will of the late Sir William Carpenter Rowe, and for some years it occupied temporary premises at Southgate. But, the want of an infirmary being keenly felt, members of the Rowe family added to the legacy by subscribing a sufficient sum to purchase a freehold site in the Western Road, on which was built in 1871 a hospital, which was handed over to the managers of the Dispensary to be supported by voluntary subscriptions. The many advantages of such an institution have again and again been proved, and its honorary secretary, Mr. C. L. Cowlard, in organising the first annual Hospital Sunday collection known to this district, has been able to add to them. The income of the old Lazar Ground at St. Leonards is now, by authority from the Charity Commissioners, applied to the benefit of the institution, under an arrangement whereby tickets of recommendation for the poor in the municipal borough are distributed; and it is one of the most pleasing instances of historical continuity which Launceston can show that a charity established as early as 1230,\* even if not before, still furnishes aid in time of need to the sick and afflicted of the town.†

In drawing the story of Launceston to a conclusion, a few words may be allotted to a subject which admits of no direct chronicle. The town's connection with literature is not as extensive as might be wished. Many sermons preached in its places of worship have been published, the verses of a few local poets have been given to the world, and some of its sons have attained a prominent position upon the Press; but in the regions of pure literature it has done little, though it has furnished the scene in more than one popular tale. Sir

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\* ante, p. 41. † The present trustees are Messrs. C. Gurney, H. M. Harvey, and F. C. C. Rowe, and they possess an endowment fund of £1650 in addition to the infirmary buildings. The information concerning this institution has been supplied to the Author by Mr. C. L. Cowlard.



Hugh Pyper\* and his faithful Cornet Davy, who figure largey in Mrs. Bray's "Warleigh," "both lie buried in Launceston Church"†; and the same author made the story of the Trebursye Ghost‡ the basis of her "Trelawney of Trelawne." At the end of the eighteenth century, an unknown author published a forgotten tale, "The British Knight Errant," the scene of which was laid at Launceston Castle§; and in the present day some of the most popular novelists have dealt with the town. Mrs. Lynn Linton's *Joshua Davidson* walks through it from his home at Boscastle when on his way to London, to there try, in these degenerate days, to emulate the fight Christ fought in Jerusalem eighteen centuries ago.|| Mr. William Black, in his "Three Feathers" (a title bearing obvious allusion to the arms of the Duke of Cornwall), the scene of which is Eglosilyan, located close also to Boscastle, has many references to Launceston, where his chief characters, while waiting for luncheon to be prepared at what was evidently the White Hart Hotel, "went for a stroll up to the magnificent old castle," knowledge of the physical geography of the place being shown by the statement that "they walked from the hotel *down* to the station," at which usually unromantic spot an important scene took place.\*\* In "Over the Sea with the Sailor," Messrs. Besant and Rice make more than one mention of the town,†† and Miss Braddon in "Mount Royal" gives a glowing description of the ride from the station up the North Road under the Castle ramparts; while Mr. Francis Charles Burnand, the editor of *Punch*, in a volume of sketches published first in that periodical some thirteen years since, makes distinct mention of having visited Launceston, though, even if he had not, his account of a sojourn with Mr. Pendell, of Penwiffle, who lived four miles from the Cornish station at which he arrived from Exeter, who read the "Ingoldsby Legends" to his guest, and at whose dinner party were to be met the

\* ante, p. 175. †Mrs. Bray, *Warleigh* (edition of 1884), p. 344. ‡ ante, pp. 216 and foll. § "The British Knight Errant. A tale in two volumes. Lond. printed for W. Lane, Leadenhall street, 1790. 12mo. pp. 163 and 154. NOTE.—The scene is laid at Launceston Castle": *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*, vol. iii., p. 935. No copy of the tale appears to be in the British Museum. || p. 46. \*\* Chapter xv. Launceston is mentioned in several other parts of the book. †† Similar references in contemporary novelists could doubtless be found; the latest certainly is that in Mr. R. E. Francillon's "Ropes of Sand," now (November, 1884) running in "The Illustrated London News," where it is observed (chapter xxvi) that "foreign travel, even though no further than Exeter or Launceston, meant a great deal to the Stoke Juliot mind."

Tregonies and the Bodds\* and other local families, the names of which are equally thinly veiled, would have set both place and people beyond doubt. It is interesting also to know that it was while staying in Launceston in June, 1870, that John Forster, biographer of Eliot, of Goldsmith, and of Dickens, received the intelligence of the death of the last-named, his dearest friend†; and it may here be mentioned that in 1852, the late Mortimer Collins lived for awhile in our town as a schoolmaster, an experience, however, which he remembered with no great pleasure in his later life.

It may be regarded as a semi-connection of the town with literature that it should have furnished the surname of a chief character in one story and the Christian name of another published within the last few years—*Marion Launceston* figuring in a three-volume novel issued in 1880‡ and *Launceston Latham* in a “Queer Story” in *Truth* in 1883,§ while in a racing chronicle of the latter year the name is also to be found as that of a race-horse of somewhat indifferent performance.|| But a far greater honour has been done the place by its name having been taken for that of the second town in Tasmania.\*\* Tradition asserts that the reason for this was that the antipodean town was founded by settlers from our district, and the fact that the counties of Devon and Cornwall in Van Diemen’s Land lie side by side as in the old country, parted there as here only by the Tamar, and that standing near to the river in the southern as in the northern world is the town of Launceston, gives colour to the tale. If so, our own borough should be proud of its child, in which, we are told, “there are innumerable free schools for the poor, to which the only passport is poverty,” and (herein much resembling the old town) “the Dissenting element is strong, and the crown of ecclesiastical structures is the Wesleyan Chapel.”††

\* F. C. Burnand, *My Health*, pp. 289 and foll. † John Forster, *Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. ii., p. 610. ‡ “Mary Browne” by L. E. Wilton. § July 4, 1883. || *Launceston*, aged, bay gelding, by Viscount Melbourne, dam by Lord Lyon—Sadie: *McCall’s Racing Chronicle* for 1883, p. 2v. Details as to the running of this animal are to be found on pp. 47-254 of the same work. \*\* It may be noted that the residence in Queensland of Mr. John Ching, third son of the late Alderman John Ching, is at “Dumheved Island.” †† *Tasmania and its Resources* (1876—published at Launceston, Tasmania), p. 5. In the *History of the Island of Van Diemen’s Land*, from the year 1824 to 1835 inclusive (1835) it is stated (p. 36) that in 1825, “Launceston was just then showing signs of a flourishing port,” and on page 14 is given an account of a meeting of “the inhabitants of the County of Cornwall, Van Diemen’s Land, assembled at the Court House at Launceston, 15th Nov. 1823,” in which Mr. Thomas Archer, J.P. took a prominent part. This seems to give a Cornish clue, but Colonel Archer, of Treلاسke, informs the Author that, though he believes can account for every member of his family for very many generations, there is none whom he could identify as the Thomas Archer in question.

And with the record of what should be our Launceston's thriving offspring, this account of the history of the town may amid pleasing recollections be brought to a close. In its compilation there has been ever before the Author the fear that in the multitude of details may have been confusion. But, if it be asked of what use is such an attempt to ravel the tangled skein of local history, he would reply that there is no borough in the whole West of England which more than Launceston deserves its tale to be told. From the period when the first stone of the castle was placed in position, there has been growing, and ever growing, a story worthy of being so recorded as to be handed on undiminished to those who will be proud of the name of Launceston when all now living are in eternal sleep. We look back through the long avenue of time and see the castle in the glory of its strength and in the beauty of its decay; in the valley beneath comes to the gaze the ancient priory, with its monks chanting a never-ending strain to the Creator they had bound themselves to serve; we cast our eyes around and the church, cathedral-like in its grandeur, embraces in its memories the soul's outpourings of many generations; and, as we stand upon the castle ramparts, and observe that, though our greatness has departed, the emblems of peace and progress, of happiness and prosperity lie thickly about us, we cannot but feel confident that, in the days which are yet hidden, Launceston will prove as worthy of her heritage as when kings and princes slept within her gates, and the war of freedom surged and broke around her venerable walls. And it is in the belief that, by encouraging the feeling of reverence for the past, something may be done to elevate our hope for the future, that there has been compiled, in however incomplete a form, a record of events of which every child of old Dunheved has great good reason to be proud.





## APPENDIX.

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### (A.) The Name of Launceston (page 15).

THE local historians are much at variance as to the derivation of the name. Carew says, "Those buildings commonly knowne by the name of Launston, and written Lanceston, are by the *Cornishmen* called *Lesteeuan* (*Lez* in *Cornish* signifieth *broad*, and those are scatteringly erected) and were anciently termed *Lanstuphadon*, by interpretation *S. Stephens Church*: they consist of two boroughs, Downeut and Newport: that (perhaps so called) of downe yeelding, as hauing a steep hill." Tonkin dismisses Carew's theory with some appearance of contempt: "As for what Mr. Carew says, that the Cornish men called it Lesteeven, that is no other than an abbreviation of Lanstephan"; and he speaks with an air of positiveness when he tells us that "it is well known that this town and parish took their name from an ancient priory and church here, now demolished, dedicated to S. Stephan, being called by the Cornish Lan Stuphadon, the church of Stephan." Borlase in leading up to his contention for Lancestreton writes: "The common opinion is that *Lanceston* is derived from *Lanstuphadon*; *Lanscavetone*, as in *Domesday*; or *Lostephan*, as in *Leland*. that is the church of Stephen; whereas they seem to me the names of two different places": he then contends that the proper name is Launceston or Lanceston, which "signifies in mixed British, the church of the castle . . . Lanceston may also be a contraction of *Lancesterton*; and 'tis not improbable that the most ancient name of the castle should have been *Lancestre*, and the town thence called *Lancestreton*, but by contraction *Lanceston*." Mr. John Dingley, in a communication to the Author, considers that all probability is in favour of the original name having been "Lanceveston," literally "Lan cac ves ton," Cornish words signifying the enclosure at the boundary or fence of the meadow land, and that Dunheved is derived from "Dun neff yt," the Cornish for "Castle in the sky." To these diversities of opinion it may be added that the theory as to Lestephan or Lanstuphadon having been the original name finds no justification in any form of spelling preserved in the oldest records, though these vary greatly; for instance, in the first part of the first volume of Hardy's Extracts from the Patent Rolls, the name is variously given as *Laceventon*?, *Lancaventon*?, *Lanceaveton*?, *Lanczaventon*?, *Landscaveton*?, *Landzaveton*?, and *Landzaventon*?. In addition it figures three times in the first volume of Hardy's Extracts from the Close Rolls as *Lanzavetun*?, and in other documents as *Lanzaneton*, *Lanstaneton*, *Lanceneneton*, *Lannzaneton*, *Lancendaniton*, *Landzaneton*, and *Launceton*, but, making due allowance for the imperfect orthography of the time, these variations are not so great as at first they seem.

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### (B.) The Measures Used in Domesday (page 23.)

"A carucate of land is as much as might be tilled with one plough and the beasts belonging to one plough in a year . . . A hide is in general to be understood as containing 120 acres of the common English measure . . . A virgate of land in Cornwall amounted to forty acres." (*New Parochial History of Cornwall: Supplementary Papers*, pp. 29-30).

(C.) VITAL STATISTICS OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S  
During the Period embraced in the earliest Register (page 103).

	BAPTISMS.		MARRIAGES.		BURIALS.	
	Decennial Total.	Annual Average.	Decennial Total.	Annual Average.	Decennial Total.	Annual Average.
1561—70	223	.. 22	49	.. 5	157	.. 16
1571—80	291	.. 29	70	.. 7	226	.. 23
1581—90	344	.. 34	78	.. 8	261	.. 26
1591—1600	340	.. 34	75	.. 7	368	.. 36
1601—10	354	.. 35	115	.. 11	316	.. 32
1611—14	Register imperfect.					
1615—20	238	.. 40	52	.. 9	143	.. 24
1621—30	338	.. 34	88	.. 9	284	.. 28
1631—40	369	.. 37	71	.. 7	329	.. 33
1641—50	301	.. 30	70	.. 7	373	.. 37
1651—60	306	.. 31	114	.. 11	256	.. 26
1661—70	327	.. 33	62	.. 6	341	.. 34

NOTE.—In 1560, the first complete year during which the Register was kept, the baptisms were 17, the marriages 3, and the burials 17; in 1671, the last complete year, the totals were 25, 4, and 54 respectively.

(D.) LAUNCESTON CORPORATION—1835 (page 326).  
(As constituted under the Charters).

ALDERMEN.

Ching, Thomas	Hockin, Parr Cunningham
Cooke, John	Penwarden, Richard (Mayor)
Frost, Langford	Roe, John
Green, James	Rowe, Coryndon

FREEMEN.

Brendon, Peter	Green, Thomas
Cowland, John Lethbridge	Snell, James
Frost, Michael	Spettigue, Edmund
Frost, Richard Kingdon	Spettigue, William

RECORDER: Hugh, Third Duke of Northumberland.

DEPUTY RECORDER: John King Lethbridge.

TOWN CLERK: Charles Gurney.

LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL—1836.

(As constituted under the Municipal Corporations Act).

ALDERMEN.

Cooke, John	Greenway, Henry
Frost, Richard Kingdon	Lawrence, Northmore Herle Pierce

COUNCILLORS.

Brendon, Peter	Essery, William Spear
Ching, John	Pearse, Thomas
Ching, Thomas	Penwarden, Richard (Mayor)
Darke, John	Prockter, James Eckley
Derry, William Richard	Smith, Joseph Ford
Dingley, Richard	Spettigue, William

TOWN CLERK: Charles Gurney.



## (DA.) LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL, 1884—5.

## ALDERMEN.

	First Elected to Council.		First Elected Alderman.		Term of Office expires.
Geake, Joseph Beard	1848†	..	1873	..	1889
* <i>Shearn, Thomas</i>	1873	..	1883	..	1889
*Thompson, David	1863‡	..	1875	..	1886
**White, George Graham, sen.	1863	..	1874	..	1886

## COUNCILLORS.

	First Elected.		Term of Office expires.	
<i>*Cowlard, Christopher Lethbridge</i>	1881	..	1887	
<i>***Dingley, John</i>	..	1863	..	1887
<i>Hawkins, John</i>	..	1875§	..	1886
<i>Millman, John Grylls</i>	..	1883	..	1885
Nicolls, John	..	1884	..	1887
<i>**Pethybridge, Edward</i>	..	1864	..	1885
<i>Prockter, William</i>	..	1883	..	1886
Robbins, Richard	..	1877	..	1885
<i>Short, Henry</i>	..	1874	..	1885
<i>*Treleven, James</i>	..	1873††	..	1886
<i>*Trood, Thomas Pomeroy</i>	..	1874‡‡	..	1887
<i>*White, George Graham, jun.</i>	..	1883	..	1886

\* The asterisk (\*) denotes that the person to whose name it is prefixed has been mayor, the number signifying how many times the mayoralty has been held.

† Retired in 1851; elected again in 1865.

‡ Retired in 1866; elected again in 1872; retired once more in November, 1875; chosen Alderman, in place of Mr. John Doidge, on December 6, 1875.

§ Lost his seat in 1878; elected again in 1880.

|| Lost his seat in 1877; elected again in 1879.

†† Lost his seat in 1881; elected again in 1883.

‡‡ Retired in 1880; elected again in 1881.

NOTE.—The names in *Italics* are those of the Conservative members (6) of the Council; the remainder are the Liberal members (10).

## (L.) THE BOROUGH BALANCE SHEETS.

## LAUNCESTON CORPORATION.

*Balance Sheet for 1832.\**

## RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
Rents of lands and manorial rents	69	0	0
Market Toll†	153	0	0
Town manure	13	0	0
Rent of site of yarn market	22	0	0

## EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.
FEES:—			
Mayor	26	13	4
Recorder	3	6	8
Town Clerk	1	6	8
SALARIES AND WAGES:—			
Steward	5	0	0
Sergeants-at-Mace (2)	6	0	0
Bailiff	3	0	0
Scavenger	23	8	0
Superintendent of the Clocks	4	0	0
Constables (3)	12	0	0
CHURCH:—			
Curate †	58	0	0
Clerk	8	0	0
Sexton	4	13	6
Organist	30	0	0
Sacrament Wine	7	18	0
SUNDRIES:—			
Officers' Liveries	14	14	0
Fee Farm Rents to the Crown	8	5	4
Rates on Town Revenues	36	0	0
Deficit in Land Tax Rate	9	15	6
Land Tax	0	15	0
	£257	0	0
	£262	16	0

\* Compiled from a Return to Parliament, dated February 23, 1833, and signed by Mr. John King Lethbridge, then Town Clerk.

† These tolls produced £501 in the year ending March 25, 1884.

‡ The Vicar of St. Mary Magdalene's is now paid an annual stipend of £25 (less Income Tax) out of the Market Fund.

# LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL.

*Balance Sheet for the year ending September 29, 1883.*

## RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
Balance of last Account	..	..	45 0 11
Rents	..	..	41 8 3
Chief Rents	..	..	62 6 4
Justices' Clerk's Fees	..	..	19 15 6
Savings' Bank and Interest	..	..	59 19 4
Board of Health, Rent of Guildhall	..	..	5 0 0
Registration Expenses	..	..	17 18 5
Sundries	..	..	10 3 10
Borough Rates at 4d.	..	..	169 15 5
Ditto at 3d.	..	..	133 4 4

---

£564 12 4

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## APPENDIX.

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## EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.
Mayor's Allowance	..	..	15 0 0
Salaries of Justices' Clerk,* Town Clerk, and Treasurer	..	..	41 5 0
Collection of Rates and Taxes	..	..	5 17 8
Police	..	..	45 11 2
School Board	..	..	180 0 0
Repairs and Improvements	..	..	12 8 1
Ordinary Expenditure	..	..	46 16 4
Parliamentary Registration Expenses	..	..	19 2 6
Borough Ditto	..	..	6 16 0
Legal and other charges	..	..	3 4 0
Land near the Dockey	..	..	170 0 0

---

546 0 9

Balance in the Treasurer's Hands

.. 18 11 7

---

£564 12 4

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\* For 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  year

(F.) LIST OF LAUNCESTON MAYORS SINCE 1836.  
(Under the Municipal Corporations Act).

1836	*Penwarden, Richard, sen.	1861	*Derry, William Richard
1837	*Ching, Thomas	1862	*Derry, William Richard (re-elected)
1838	*Lawrence, Northmore Herle Pierce	1863	*Shilson, Daniel
1839	*Derry, William Richard	1864	†Peter, Richard (A)
1840	*Smith, Joseph Ford	1865	<i>White, George Graham, sen.</i>
1841	*Ching, John	1866	<i>Pethybridge, Edward</i>
1842	*Hughes, W.	1867	*Good, Thomas
1843	*Dingley, Richard	1868	*Nicolls, John, sen.
1844	*Penwarden, Richard, jun.	1869	<i>Dingley, John</i>
1845	*Frost, Richard Kingdon	1870	*Ching, John
1846	*Darke, John	1871	Pearse, William Derry
1847	*Pethick, Henry	1872	*Hender, John
1848	*Thompson, David, sen.	1873	Stephens, Thomas
1849	*Eyre, Thomas Symes	1874	*Ching, John
1850	*Lawrence, Northmore Herle Pierce	1875	<i>White, George Graham, sen.</i>
1851	*Derry, William Richard	1876	<i>Shearm, Thomas</i>
1852	*Prockter, William, sen.	1877	<i>Thompson, David, jun.</i>
1853	*Ching, John	1878	<i>Trood, Thomas Pomeroy</i>
1854	*Huxham, John	1879	<i>Dingley, John</i>
1855	*Dingley, Richard	1880	<i>Dingley, John</i> (re-elected)
1856	*Hender, William	1881	<i>Pethybridge, Edward</i>
1857	*Pethick, Henry	1882	<i>Cowlard, Christopher Lethbridge</i>
1858	Wright, John	1883	<i>Treleven, James</i>
1859	*Frost, Richard Kingdon	1884	<i>White, George Graham, jun.</i>
1860	*Doidge, John		

\* Those to whom an asterisk (\*) is attached are dead. † Now Town Clerk (appointed June, 1874).

NOTE.—Those in *Italics* are still (1884-85) members of the Council.

TOWN CLERKS SINCE 1836.

1836—67 Charles Gurney.\*

1867—74 John Lethbridge Cowlard.

1874— Richard Peter.

\* Continued in office from the old Corporation.

NOTE.—Both the retired Town Clerks are still living (1884).

SURVIVING EX-MEMBERS OF THE LAUNCESTON TOWN COUNCIL.

Member from	Member from
<i>Andrew, William</i> .. 1878 to 1884	Nicolls, Edmund Pearse 1868 to 1871
<i>Burt, William</i> .. 1875 1878	*Pearse, William Derry 1864 1881†
Geake, John .. 1865 1871	*Peter, Richard (A) 1862 1874
Geake, Joseph Ford .. 1878 1881	Powell, John .. 1871 1874
Gubbin, Richard .. 1877 1880	Shepherd, John .. 1873 1876
Hayman, Henry .. 1877 1883	*Stephens, Thomas .. 1871 1883
<i>Marshall, Edward</i> .. 1874 1883†	Wise, Charles Pearse 1874 1875

\* Filled the office of Mayor. † Lost his seat in 1877; again elected in 1880.

‡ Retired in 1867; again elected in 1870.

NOTE.—Those in *Italics* are Conservatives; the remainder are Liberals.

## (G.) LAUNCESTON MUNICIPAL CONTESTS SINCE 1862.\*

## 1862—NOVEMBER.

- \*Wright, John (C)  
 \*Hender, Thomas (Ind. C.)  
 \*Hender, William (Ind. C.)  
 Peter, Richard [A] (L)

NOTE.—Mr. Thomas Symes Eyre (Ind. L.) the fourth retiring Councillor, was nominated, but retired before the poll.

## 1863—NOVEMBER.

- \*Doidge, John (L) .. 139  
 White, George Graham, sen. (L) 139  
 Thompson, David (L) .. 132  
 \*Frost, Richard Kingdon (C) .. 121  
*Eyre, Thomas Symes* (Ind. L.) .. 101  
 \*West, Edward Lawrence (C) .. 100  
 \*James, William (C) .. 87

## 1864—NOVEMBER.

- Wise, Richard (L) .. 161  
 Pethybridge, Edward (L) .. 148  
 Shepherd, Abraham (L) .. 138  
 Pearse, William Derry (L) .. 127  
 \*Shilson, Daniel (C) .. 65  
 \*Huxham, John (C) .. 63  
 Woolley, John (C) .. 31

## 1865—NOVEMBER.

- \*Peter, Richard [A] (L) .. 162  
 Geake, John (L) .. 150  
 \*Hender, Thomas (Ind. C.) .. 111  
 \*Hender, William (Ind. C.) .. 93  
 Woolley, John (C) .. 65

## 1866—NOVEMBER.

- \*White, George Graham, sen. (L) 156  
 \*Dingley, John (L) .. 153  
 Geake, Joseph Beard (L) .. 150  
 \*Frost, Richard Kingdon (C) .. 142  
*Procter, William, sen.* (C) .. 124  
*Shilson, Daniel* (C) .. 124  
*Felce, Stamford* (C) .. 85

## 1867—AUGUST.

(Upon Mr. Peter becoming Alderman on the death of Mr. Richard Dingley)  
 Nicolls, John, sen. (L)

## 1867—NOVEMBER.

- \*Wise, Richard (L)  
 \*Pethybridge, Edward (L)  
 \*Shepherd, Abraham (L)  
 Good, Thomas (L)

No contest.

## 1868—NOVEMBER.

- \*Geake, John (L)  
 \*Nicolls, John, sen. (L)  
 Hender, John (Ind. C.)  
 Nicolls, Edmund Pearse (L)

No contest.

## 1869—NOVEMBER.

- \*White, George Graham, sen. (L)  
 \*Dingley, John (L)  
 \*Geake, Joseph Beard (L)  
 \*Frost, Richard Kingdon (C)

No contest.

## 1870—NOVEMBER.

- \*Wise, Richard (L)  
 \*Pethybridge, Edward (L)  
 \*Good, Thomas (L)  
 Pearse, William Derry (L)

No contest.

## 1871—NOVEMBER.

- Stephens, Thomas (L) .. 196  
 \*Nicolls, John, sen. (L) .. 189  
 Powell, John (L) .. 188  
 \*Hender, John (Ind. C.) .. 182  
*West, Edward Lawrence* (C) .. 162  
*Burt, William* (C) .. 152  
*Bray, William Roe* (C) .. 140  
*Brimmell, John* (C) .. 124

## 1872—NOVEMBER.

- Thompson, David (L) .. 200  
 \*Geake, Joseph Beard (L) .. 197  
 \*Dingley, John (L) .. 195  
 \*White, George Graham, sen. (L) 193  
*Short, Joseph* (Ind. L.) .. 104

First Election by Ballot.

## 1873—NOVEMBER.

- Shearm, Thomas (C) .. 224  
 \*Pearse, William Derry (L) .. 222  
 \*Pethybridge, Edward (L) .. 217  
 Shepherd, John (Ind. L.) .. 217  
 \*Good, Thomas (L) .. 175  
 White, Thomas (Ind. C.) .. 143

This date is chosen because it marks the commencement of a sustained series of party struggles for mastery of the Town Council, not ended even yet.

1873—NOVEMBER.		1878—NOVEMBER.	
(Upon Mr. J. B. Geake becoming Alderman on the resignation of Mr. William Richard Derry.)		*Dingley, John (L)	.. 287
Treleaven, James (L)		Geake, Joseph Ford (L)	.. 250
No contest.		*Treleaven, James (L)	.. 237
1874—JULY.		Andrew, William (C)	.. 228
(Upon Mr. G. G. White, sen., becoming Alderman on the appointment of Mr. Peter as Town Clerk.)		*Hawkins, John (C)	.. 224
Wise, Charles Pearse (L) .. 193		Fraser, Alexander (L)	.. 221
West, Edward Lawrence (C) .. 181		Marshall, Edward (C)	.. 212
1874—NOVEMBER.		Short, Henry (C)	.. 203
Short, Henry (C) .. 228		1879—NOVEMBER.	
*Stephens, Thomas (L) .. 214		*Pethybridge, Edward (L)	.. 278
Marshall, Edward (C) .. 211		*Shearm, Thomas (C)	.. 272
Trood, Thomas Pomeroy (L) .. 206		*Robbins, Richard (L)	.. 271
Burt, William (C) .. 196		Short, Henry (C)	.. 247
*Nicolls, John, sen. (L) .. 189		*Pearse, William Derry (L)	.. 236
Hender, Thomas Brooks (L) .. 184		Fraser, Alexander (L)	.. 222
Hawkins, John (C) .. 180		Trist, Robert Faremouth (C) .. 208	
1875—NOVEMBER.		Gifford, George Mortimer (C) .. 189	
*Dingley, John (L)		1880—NOVEMBER.	
*Treleaven, James (L)		*Stephens, Thomas (L)	
Hawkins, John (C)		*Hayman, Henry (L)	
Burt, William (C)		Hawkins, John (C)	
No contest.		Marshall, Edward (C)	
1876—NOVEMBER.		No contest.	
*Shearm, Thomas (C)		1881—NOVEMBER.	
*Pearse, William Derry (L)		*Dingley, John (L)	.. 321
*Pethybridge, Edward (L)		Cowlard, Christopher Lethbridge (C)	296
Prockter, William, sen. (C)		Trood, Thomas Pomeroy (L) .. 279	
No contest.		*Andrew, William (C)	.. 268
1877—OCTOBER.		*Geake, Joseph Ford (L)	.. 265
(Upon the death of Mr. Prockter.)		*Treleaven, James (L)	.. 263
Robbins, Richard (L)		Burt, William (C)	.. 224
No contest.		Pyke, William (C)	.. 205
1877—NOVEMBER.		1882—NOVEMBER.	
*Trood, Thomas Pomeroy (L) .. 271		*Pethybridge, Edward (L)	
*Stephens, Thomas (L) .. 259		*Shearm, Thomas (C)	
Gubbin, Richard (L) .. 236		*Robbins, Richard (L)	
Hayman, Henry (L) .. 236		*Short, Henry (C)	
*Marshall, Edward (C) .. 216		No contest.	
Andrew, William (C) .. 215		1883—JUNE.	
*Short, Henry (C) .. 203		(Upon Mr. Shearm becoming Alderman on the death of Mr. John Ching)	
Hender, Henry (C) .. 173		Millman, John Grylls (C) .. 266	
		Geake, Joseph Ford (L) .. 261	
		1883—NOVEMBER.	
		Treleaven, James (L)	.. 290
		Prockter, William, jun. (C) .. 270	
		*Hawkins, John (C)	.. 269
		White, George Graham, jun. (L) .. 269	
		*Marshall, Edward (C)	.. 257
		*Stephens, Thomas (L)	.. 235
		White, Thomas (C)	.. 224
		*Hayman, Henry (L)	.. 217
		Orchard, John (Ind. L)	.. 72



1884—NOVEMBER.

*Trood, Thomas Pomeroy (L) ..	311	*Andrew, William (C) ..	242
*Dingley, John (L) ..	308	Peter, Richard [B] (L) ..	233
*Cowlard, Christopher L. (C) ..	299	Burt, William (C) ..	232
Nicolls, John, jun. (L) ..	243	Hender, Alfred John (C) ..	219

Mr. Thomas Stephens (Independent Liberal) was proposed but withdrew on account of an informality in his nomination paper.

NOTE.—Those to whose names an asterisk (\*) is attached were the Councillors who, retiring by rotation, offered themselves for re-election, while those whose names are in Italics were the unsuccessful candidates. In cases where a candidate is described as Independent, it is signified that he was not supported by the organised strength of his party.

## (H.) POPULATION OF LAUNCESTON.

	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881
ST. MARY MAGDALENE	1483	1758	2183	2231	2460	2591	2069	2220	2430
ST. STEPHENS	738	896	977	1084	1068	934	873	929	959
ST. THOMAS	355	459	608	826	1125	1004	887	955	1035
LAWHITON	289	368	435	485	487	503	435	473	425
SOUTH PETHERWIN	699	733	914	988	997	974	876	891	826
	3564	4214	5117	5614	6137	6006	5140	5468	5675

## MUNICIPAL BOROUGH.

	1861	1871	1881
Inhabited Houses	542	546	623
Population	2790	2935	3217

## PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGH.

	1861	1871	1881
Inhabited Houses	1020	1064	1122
Population	5140	5468	5675

## INCREASE

## DECREASE

1811 ...	650	—
1821 ...	903	—
1831 ...	497	—
1841 ...	523	—
1851 ...	131	—
1861 ...	866	—
1871 ...	328	—
1881 ...	207	—
	3108	997

NET INCREASE since 1801 } 2111

## ERRORS AND ADDITIONS

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Page 18.—*Undiscovered* should read *unexplored*.

Page 36, note.—*Justicar* should read *Justiciar*.

Page 57.—It appears from the Assize Rolls (Maclean's Trigg Minor, vol. iii., p. 410) that "an assize of view of recognizance" was held at Launceston in 1343 "to inquire if Adam [de Knolle], Prior of Launceston, Brother Auger [Ogerius] de Bant, Canon of the same Priory, and other Canons of the House, had disseized John de Skewys of one corody which he had in the said Priory of Launceston: viz., of having for himself for every day throughout the whole year eatables and drinkables at the table of the Esquires of the Priory, like as the Esquires of the Prior have there, and of receiving yearly at the feast of the Nativity from the said Prior one robe, cut after the fashion of the Esquires of the Priory, of the price of 20s. or instead 20s.; and for hisshoeing yearly, at the same feast 10s.; and for his boy daily throughout the whole year meat and drink at the table of the said Priory, as the boys of the Priory have, and to receive yearly for his boy at the same feast, one robe of the cut of the boys of the Prior of the price of 6s. 8d., or instead 6s. 8d.; and of having easement in any suitable chamber of the same Priory for the whole year for himself, and easement for his horse in any stable within the said Priory, of having each night for the whole year at his chamber, one half flagon of beer of the best quality out of the cellar of the said Prior, and two candles of tallow called 'parish candles' from the chamber of the said Prior there, and of having and using nightly from the Feast of All Saints to the feast of Invention of Holy Cross one fagot of wood for his chamber, and for his horse nightly for the whole year in the same Priory, one half-bushel of oats, and hay sufficient for the same horse as one Esquire of the Prior receives for his horse in the same Priory, &c., &c. And the Prior came, and the others came not, but a certain William de Trelouny answered for them as their attorney, and said for them that they had done no injury or disseizin to the said John de Skewys, and upon this they place themselves upon the assize, and John de Skewys likewise. And the aforesaid Prior says that John de Skewys by his plea intends to burden the Church and Priory aforesaid, and prays that the said John may shew cause, if he has any, wherefore the said Priory ought to be burdened by the aforesaid corody, &c." Pleas and counter-pleas followed, the Prior disputing the whole claim, and the document concludes thus: "A day was given in Easter term to try the case, but John de Skewys did not appear, and judgment went by default, the Prior was discharged *sine die*, and John de Skewys and his pledges were in mercy."

Page 66, note.—In the Duchy Accounts are also to be found mention of several names connected with the history of Launceston. Johannes de Moneroun (see page 54) appears in the Ministers' Accounts of 1331-39 as Receiver of the Duchy Revenues, he rendering an account at Launceston in September, 1338. In similar accounts of 1352-53, Serlo Wisa (see page 61) is named as Bailiff of the Hundred of East; and in those of 1361-62 Robertus Wysdom (see page 49) is mentioned as holding certain knight's fees.

Page 107.—*A large portion of the cost of the new Guildhall* should read *A large sum towards paying off the market debentures*. [The Guildhall, it may be noted, was built entirely by private subscription.]

Page 110, note.—*The late Mr. T. S. Eyre* should read *The late Mr. Northmore Lawrence*.

Page 121.—*Darytie Stone* should read *Charytie Stone*.

Page 121, note.—*Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, Recorder of Launceston*, should read *Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, Deputy-Recorder of Launceston*.

Page 122.—The Rev. S. Childs Clarke has furnished the author with an extract from the "Ministers' Accounts co. Cornwall, 30-31 Henry 8. No. 90," showing the possessions of the rectory of "Sancti Thome juxta Launston," William Piper and his wife Elizabeth then holding these from Gawen Carew; and with a copy of a grant dated 3 Edward VI., of the rectory and tithes of St. Thomas to Giles Keylway, of Stroud, soldier, and William Leonard, of Taunton, merchant.

Page 152, note.—*This is according to Browne Willis's Notitia Parliamentaria* should read *This is according to the Official List of Members*.

Page 198.—The following extract from the latest published volume of the Calendar of Domestic State Papers (1656—57, p. 262) shows that Cromwell was not disposed to push matters to an extremity with the Friends: "Council. Day's Proceedings. Feb. 3, 1657. Whereas at Launceston assizes on 24 Nov. 1655, Edw. Pyott, George Fox, and Wm. Salt [Quakers] were indicted and convicted for several contempts and misdemeanours, and were fined for the same; Rich. Faireman and Geo. Bayly the same at Dorchester assizes, 24 July 1656; Thos. Boylstone, Priscilla Cotton, and 11 others, at Exeter, 2 Aug. 1656; and John Ellis, and 3 others, at Launceston, 9 Aug. 1656;—order that the clerks of assize for the western circuit forbear to estreat the Quakers for any of the said fines until further order. Approved by the Protector 7 Feb. [I. 77 pp. 665—674]."

Page 223.—Since this page passed through the press, a copy of the measure as presented to the Lords has for the first time been published. It runs as follows:—"Whereas the assize for the County of Cornwall has for many years been held at Launceston, which is very inconveniently situate for the rest of the said county, being not above a mile from the boundary, and the said county being 70 miles in length, the remote inhabitants are not only exposed to great labour and expense but also suffer in their matters of right as well for want of their aged witnesses and their own attendance at trials there, as also by undue verdicts, the causes for the most part being there tried by mercenary tales-men, the able and honest freeholders choosing rather to be fined than attend at so expensive a distance, whereby the common justice of the said county is very much eluded," the Bill enacts that, from and after 1st May, 1671, the summer assizes shall be held at Bodmin, and the Lent Assizes at Launceston (Ninth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, Part II., Appendix, p. 16.)

Page 253.—Sir John St. Aubyn, son-in-law of Sir Nicholas Morice, was Mayor of Launceston in 1739, and his arms are among those in the Guildhall Window. A youthful adventure of his at Launceston with the daughter of an innkeeper is detailed by Dr. Borlase, his companion on the journey, who

states that it occurred "as we were passing through that fatal town," the reason for this uncomplimentary appellation not being given. (*Quarterly Review*, vol. cxxxix.)

Page 262, note.—*Was the witness referred to* should read *was brother of the witness referred to*.

Page 285.—The statements regarding the Leper Hospital must be read in connection with the information regarding the Rowe Dispensary (page 374.)

Page 298.—*Whitely, Lifton Down* should read *Whitely, Lifton*.

Page 301.—The Vestry Room now existing was built in 1850 by the Duke of Northumberland, taking the place of the one erected early in the century.

Page 305, note.—The Churchwardens' Accounts of St. Thomas date from 1481, and the Parish Register from 1676.

Page 307.—The Author has been favoured by Mr. Grigg with the following information regarding the Launceston Savings' Bank:—The original minute book is lost, but it appears that the institution was established on January 28, 1818. The Patron was Hugh, Third Duke of Northumberland, who also acted as the first President, with the Hon. William Eliot (then of Trebursye, and afterwards Second Earl of St. Germans), as Vice-President. The first Trustees and Managers were the Hon. William Eliot, Sir William Pratt Call, bart., Mr. Francis Hearle Rodd, Mr. John Tillie Coryton, Mr. Edmund Prideaux, Mr. William Arundel Harris, Mr. George Call, Mr. George Harward, Mr. William Baron, the Mayor of Launceston for the time being, the Rev. Samuel Hart, the Rev. Charles Lethbridge, and the Rev. John Rowe, while the Managers were Mr. F. H. Rodd, Mr. William Hicks Horndon, Mr. John Roe, Mr. George Call, the Rev. George Plummer, the Rev. John Davies, Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, Mr. Coryndon Rowe, Mr. Thomas Pearse, Mr. P. C. Hockin, Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, the Rev. Charles Orchard, the Rev. James Coffin, Mr. Richard Penwarden, Mr. John Darke, Dr. Bignell, the Rev. Richard Cope, Mr. William Harvey, Mr. Thomas Ching, Mr. James Prockter, Mr. William Derry, Mr. William Pearse, Mr. Richard Kingdon, and Mr. Henry Pethick. Mr. J. K. Lethbridge was the first Treasurer, and he continued in that office until 1833, when Mr. J. L. Cowlard succeeded him and has held the post for more than fifty years. Mr. William Dymond was the original Actuary, and continued to be so until his death in 1877, although, for several years previously, the active duties of the office had been undertaken by Mr. Grigg, who now has the appointment. The successive Presidents have been the Third Duke of Northumberland, Mr. F. H. Rodd, Mr. J. K. Lethbridge, Mr. F. R. Rodd, and Mr. Charles Gurney, the last-named of whom is the present holder of the office, and who states that the credit of founding the institution is to be given to Mr. F. H. Rodd and Mr. J. K. Lethbridge.

Page 369.—A Wesleyan Mission Chapel, situated on the main road, and the site of which was given by Mr. Edward Pethybridge, was opened at St. Stephens on November 13, 1884. The architects were Messrs. Wise and Wise, of Launceston, and the builder Mr. William Burt, of Newport, the estimated cost being about £340.

# INDEX.

## ABBREVIATIONS.

C. — Cornwall.	Cas. — Castle.	Ch. — Church.	L. — Launceston.
Mem.—Member.	N.—Newport.	P.—Parliamentarians.	Pr.—Prior.
Py.—Priory.	R.—Royalists.	St. M. M.—St. Mary Magdalene.	
St. S.—St. Stephens.	St. T.—St. Thomas.		

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## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES AND ADDITIONS.

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CONTENTS.—Some of the dates in this Table are wrong; those at the heads of the respective chapters are to be relied upon.

Page x.—The Preface should be dated February, 1885.

Page 31.—In a valuation of the estates of the Bishoprics of England and Wales, taken by order of Parliament in 1647, Lawhitton appears as a portion of the temporalities of the see of Exeter, the “present rents and p’fits p’an.” being set down at £62 4s., and the “improvements above p’ann.” at £168 1s. (*Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. iii., p. 41.)

Page 79.—The full text of the deed of surrender is to be found in Rymer’s *Foedera* (1712), vol. xiv., pp. 493, 520, it being given at the Chapter House (“datum in Domo nostra Capitulari”) by the “Prior Domus sive Prioratus Sancti Stephani de Launceston et ejusdem Loci Conventus,” and it is added that the seal is of red wax. See also Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of Henry VIII., vol. vii., p. 329, from which it appears that, with the exception of Plympton, the surrender was more numerously signed at Launceston than at any other of the religious houses of the diocese of Exeter.

Page 97.—*Son* should read *grandson*.

Page 127.—“Rich. Escote of Lincoln’s Inn” possessed according to Dugdale, one of the cartularies of the dissolved Priory of Launceston.

Page 138.—*Afterwards castellan of Launceston* should be omitted after *Walter Langdon*.

Page 195.—On February 18, 1658, the Council of State approved a grant of £20 to the “Schoolmaster of Launceston, Cornwall,” as “advised by the Trustees for Maintenance of Ministers” (*Domestic State Papers*, 1657-58, p. 294). As William Oliver was residing in Launceston at this time, and is known to have acted as Master of the Grammar School (see p. 214), it is most probably to him that this grant was made.

Page 220.—The great fire at Marlborough occurred on April 28, 1653, and the matter was laid before the Council of State on May 18 (*Domestic State Papers*, 1652-53, p. 336, and also 1653, p. 40.)

Pages 237-248n.—Mr. W. P. Courtney (one of the compilers of the *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*) has given the Author good grounds for believing that the identity of William Cary with Sir William Carew cannot be established.

Page 245.—*Shortly before the Hanoverian succession* should read *shortly after*. In a letter of Pope to the Earl of Burlington, dated August, 1714, (and quoted as a note in Thackeray’s “English Humourists”) occurs the following reference to this episode: “‘Now, Sir,’ continued Mr. Lintot [the publisher], ‘in return for the frankness I have shown pray tell me, is it the opinion of your friends at court that my Lord Lansdowne will be brought to the bar or not?’ I told him I heard he would not, and I hoped it, my lord being one I had particular obligations to.—‘That may be; replied Mr. Lintot; ‘but by G— if he is not, I shall lose the printing of a very good trial.’”

Page 250.—*Bishop of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin*, should read *Bishop of Ferns and Leighlin*.

Page 251.—The *Norwich Mercury* of Saturday, August 10, 1728, contained the following paragraph: "On Sunday last [August 4] died at Hampstead Nicholas Herle, of Launceston, in Cornwall, Esq.; a gentleman of good character and great estate, who not long since, when he was High Sheriff of that county, had the misfortune accidentally to shoot his lady." According to some notes made by the late Mr. Northmore Lawrence, Nicholas Herle, who was a posthumous child, "was a barrister and resided at Dockacre in the borough of Launceston. He was many times mayor, and married Elizabeth Acland, daughter of the Rector of Northcote. He died without issue in 1734 or 1735 (?) and is believed to have been buried at Lezant." The uncertainty displayed by Mr. Lawrence concerning the date of death and place of burial is only a portion of the mystery which attaches to Nicholas Herle. A tradition remembered by Mr. Lawrence is that Herle brought about the death of his wife (who, according to a monument in St. Mary Magdalene's, "depart. ys life ye 25th of December, 1714") by starvation or other unlawful means; and it is perhaps not placing too severe a strain upon the imagination to fancy that in this is the germ of the ghost-story connected with Dockacre, referred to in "John Herring."

Page 255.—John King (who was son of Lord Chancellor King) was returned also for Exeter at this election.

Page 270.—Amherst (who was a brother of Lord Amherst) had sat for Hythe from November, 1766, until the General Election at which he was returned for Launceston; he later became Adjutant General of the Forces and Governor of St. John's, Newfoundland, and died May 13, 1781 (*Foster's Collectanea Genealogica*, vol. i., p. 41, and *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. li., p. 324.)

Page 270.—*Bennett* should read *Bennet*.

Page 271.—The only local contemporaneous reference to Wesley's visits to Launceston is to be found in a diary (for the loan of which the Author has to thank Mr. Albert Prust) kept during 1785 by Robert Pearse, jun., of Newport, who under date of Wednesday, August 31, recorded "Mr. Wesley preachd at Lanson—a Mixture of Stuff." Mr. Pearse, who, it should be noted, was a staunch Calvinist and sturdy believer in William Saltren, goes on to observe "Mr. Saltren met the People after"—obviously considering it a case of bane and antidote.

Page 272.—In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1793 (vol. lxxiii, part 1, p. 576) is recorded the death on May 30, of "Mr. Rob. Bennett, coroner of Launceston."

Page 273.—Although this is the first discovered mention of the King's Arms under its present name, it may be taken that this hotel is the lineal descendant of the Queen's Arms, mentioned in evidence on the petition of 1724 (see p. 252) as a place where public business had been transacted.

Page 287.—In connection with Coryndon Carpenter it may be noted that his heir, William Fountleroy Carpenter, fell in a duel at the age of 21 on August 22, 1796; the story is told at length in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (vol. lxxvi, part 2, p. 709.)

Page 294.—*Who had sat for the borough* should read *who had sat for Launceston*.

Page 302.—*Mr. J. K. Lethbridge* should read *Mr. Christopher Lethbridge*.

Page 304.—The picture facing this page is printed from the block which, in the days when executions took place at Launceston, was placed by a local printer at the head of the “last dying speech and confession,” the hawking of which always followed a hanging; on the gallows was allowed space for the representation of three suspended culprits, the number being reduced according to requirement.

Page 309.—The “proof that this transport to St. Stephens was ever portion of a Launceston execution” has been afforded since this page was printed. In Robert Pearse’s Diary, under date March 23, 1785, is the entry “a Chimney Sweeper executed at St. Stephens for the Murder of his Apprentice being fully proved at Lanson Assizes;” while on the opposite page under the same date, as if to put the question beyond the reach of argument, is “at Meeting a most Excellent Sermon very striking on acct. of a Chimney Sweepers being Executed at St. Stephens.”

Page 367.—By the Redistribution Bill, now (April, 1885) passing through Parliament, Launceston is constituted the head of one of the six Divisions of Cornwall, each returning one member. The name of the town will continue, therefore, to appear on the Roll of Parliament, as it has done since 1295.

Page 374.—Owing to a much-regretted oversight, the Rev. S. Baring-Gould’s novel, “John Herring,” is not noticed in relation to Launceston’s connection with literature, for the scene of the work is in great part laid in the town, and much of the action passes at “Dolbeare,” easily to be recognised as Dockacre. It is further deserving of mention that *Rawdon Crawley*, immortalised in “Vanity Fair,” is expressly stated by Thackeray (edition of 1878, vol. i., p. 67) to have been named “from the Prince of Wales’s friend, whom his Majesty George IV., forgot so completely,” and whom there is not much difficulty in identifying with the Hon. John Rawdon, member for Launceston from 1796 until 1802.

Page 384.—Please read—

TOWN CLERKS SINCE 1836.

1836—67 Charles Gurney.\*

1867—74 John Lethbridge Cowlard.

1874—85 Richard Peter.

1885— Claude Hurst Peter.

\* Continued in office from the old Corporation.

NOTE.—Mr. Cowlard died January 9, 1885; both Mr. Gurney and Mr. Richard Peter are still living.

Page 384.—*Pearse, William Derry*, 1864 to 1881 should read 1864 to 1879.

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#### NOTE BY THE AUTHOR.

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The Author will be greatly obliged by the forwarding to him through his publishers of any hints or corrections bearing upon this work; he will be even more gratified by the loan of any letters, diaries, or other documents bearing upon the past life of the borough which may be known to be in existence or which may in the future be found. It is only by such aid that the gaps still left in Launceston’s history can be hoped to be filled.

LONDON, *March* 31, 1885.



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