

What now remains? It yet remains to try
 What hope, what peace, religion can supply:
 It yet remains to catch the parting ray,
 To note his worth ere mem'ry fade away;
 To mark how various excellence combin'd—
 Recount his virtues, and transcribe his mind;
 It yet remains with holy rites to lay
 The breathless reliques in their kindred clay.

Ye wise, ye good, the holy rites attend:
 Here lies the wise man's guide, the good man's friend;
 Awhile let faith exalt th' adoring eye,
 And meditation deep suspend the sigh;
 Then close the grave, and sound the fun'ral knell,
 Each drop a tear, and take a last farewell;
 In peace retire, and wish to live as well." }

Although it would give me much pleasure to think that the foregoing eulogy on a member of the family from which I sprung should have been penned by such a man as Samuel Johnson, I think the first epitaph bears the strongest impress of the "fine old Roman hand." Besides, Mrs. Williams had been upon terms of the most familiar intimacy with the family of Sir John Philipps from her childhood; and if any thing could give an impulse to the chords of her lyre, it would be the untimely fate of a friend and a benefactor. It may, however, be like the poem "On the Death of Stephen Grey, the Electrician," contained in the *Miscellanies*. Boswell, on reading it, maintained the poem to be Johnson's, and asked Mrs. Williams if it were not his. "Sir," said she with some warmth, "I wrote that poem before I had the honour of Dr. Johnson's acquaintance." Boswell, however, was so much impressed by his first notion, that he mentioned it to Johnson, repeating at the same time what Mrs. Williams had said. His answer was, "It is true, Sir, that she wrote it before she was acquainted with me; but she has not told you that I wrote it all over again, except two lines."

JOHN PAVIN PHILLIPS.

Haverfordwest.

PUNISHMENT: "PEINE FORT ET DURE."

It has generally been supposed that Mr. Walter Calverley, who was arraigned at York for murder and refused to plead, was one of the last persons who suffered the horrible punishment, and that, although the law remained, it was never put in execution.

In an old 4to newspaper called the *Nottingham Mercury* of Thursday, January 19, 1721. The following paragraph is given as part of the London news, from which it appears that as late as that year the law was practically put in force:—

"Yesterday the Sessions began at the Old Bailey, where several persons were brought to the bar for the highway, &c., among them the highwaymen lately taken in Westminster; two of which, viz. Thomas Cross, alias Philips, and Thomas Spigot, alias Spigat, refusing to plead, the Court proceeded to pass the following sentence upon them:—

"You that are prisoners at the bar, shall be sent from hence to prison from whence you came, and put into a mean house stopped from light, and there shall be laid upon the bare ground without any litter, straw, or other covering, and without any garment about you saving something to cover your privy members, and that you shall lie upon your backs, and your heads shall be covered, and your feet bare, and that one of your arms shall be drawn with a cord to one side of the house, and the other arm to the other side, and that your legs shall be used in the same manner, and that upon your bodies shall be laid so much iron and stone as you can bear, and no more; and the first day after you shall have three morsels of barley bread, without any drink; and the second day you shall drink so much as you can three times of the water which is next the prison door, saving running water, without any bread, and this shall be your diet until you die."

"The former, on sight of the terrible machine, desired to be carried back to the Sessions House, where he pleaded Not Guilty; but the other, who behaved himself very insolently to the ordinary who was ordered to attend him, seemingly resolved to undergo the torture. Accordingly, when they brought cords, as usual, to tie him, he broke them three several times like twine thread, and told them if they brought cables he would serve them after the same manner; but, however, they found means to tie him, and chain him to the ground, having his limbs extended; but after enduring the punishment an hour, and having 300 or 400 weight put on him, he at last submitted to plead, and was carried back again, when he pleaded also Not Guilty."

The form of the judgment is the same as given by Cowel and Blount in their works. The law was not repealed until a much more recent date than above-named. EDWARD HAILSTONE.
 Horton Hall.

PRE-DEATH COFFINS AND MONUMENTS.

Having occasion, in 1857, to visit the coast town of Wester-Anstruther, in Fifeshire, Scotland, I was induced to step into a dwelling-house of two stories or floors, which stands on the east side of the burgh, in consequence of noticing this curious invitation painted on each side of the entrance door:—

"Here is the splendid Grotto-room,
 The like's not seen in any town;
 Those that it do wish to see—
 It's only Threepence asked as fee."

The "grotto-room," which is upon the second floor, is an apartment of about seven or eight feet square. The ceiling and walls are covered with marine-shells of great variety, disposed in many curious and ingenious devices. A mirror and several prints are set in frames ornamented by the same interesting objects. But the most extraordinary piece of furniture (if it may be so called) is a coffin or chest for a dead body, the top, sides, and ends of which are also closely covered with sea-shells, and painted black, except that the masonic signs of the sun, moon, and seven stars, the figure of a human heart, and the initials of the *artiste*, whose body the coffin is intended to

to the Reader," as an apology, if not a *ruse*, for the publication of this tragedy. "This I thought good to say," he tells us, "both for the play, and also in my own behalf, to clear myself of the scandal of this poor translation, wherewith I was slandered, in spite of all that I could say in private, in spite of what the Prologue and Epilogue affirmed on the stage in publick, which I wrote in the Translator's name, that if the play met with any success, he might wholly take to himself a reputation of which I was not in the least ambitious."]

ROWING MATCH.—Can you give me any information respecting the following extract from *The Weekly Journal*, Saturday, August 15th, 1715, in my possession?—

"Monday last, six watermen, who were scullers, rowed from London Bridge to Chelsea for a silver badge and livery, which was won by one John Hope; and this trial of skill, which is to be performed yearly on the 1st of August, caused a great concourse of people to be then on the River of Thames."

I think it has something to do with the watermen of the Lord Mayor. BILIKE ROSARU.

[This extract has reference to the first rowing match founded by that zealous Whig and comic actor, Thomas Dogget, to commemorate annually the day (August 1st) on which George I. ascended the throne. The competitors are six young watermen,—the prize, a waterman's coat and silver badge. The distance rowed extends from the Old Swan at London Bridge, to the White Swan at Chelsea, against an adverse tide.]

WITCH TRIALS.—Where can I read anything of the Witch Trials, conducted by Matthew Hopkins in the seventeenth century, to which reference is made by T. D. P. in his paper on "Norfolk Folk Lore" (3rd S. v. 237)? P. S. C.

[Consult the following scarce works: 1. "A True and Exact Relation of the several Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the late Witches executed at Chelmsford, in the county of Essex, who were condemn'd by the Earl of Warw'ick. Lond. 1645, 4to." Reprinted at the private press of Charles Clarke, Esq., Great Totham, 1887, 8vo, with a portrait of Hopkins. 2. "A True Relation of the Arraignment of Eighteen Witches at St. Edmondsbury. Lond. 1645, 4to." Vide Bohn's *Louvres*, p. 2960.]

Replies.

PUNISHMENT: "PEINE FORT ET DURE."

(3rd S. v. 255.)

There seems to be some diversity in the evidence as to the persons who suffered the sentence of "pressing" in 1721.

It appears from the Old Bailey Sessions Papers that, at the January Sessions in 1720, one Phillips was "pressed" for a considerable time, until he begged to stand his trial; and at the December Sessions, 1721, Nathaniel Hawes continued under

the press with 250 lbs. for seven minutes, and was released upon his submission. (*Penny Cyclo.* xvii. 373.) From the *Nottingham Mercury*, quoted by Mr. HALLSTONE, it seems that Thomas Spigot, alias Spigat, was "pressed" on January 18, 1721, and that Phillips did not undergo the punishment.

Perhaps the date 1720 mentioned in my quotation is a clerical error for 1721, which may have arisen in extracting the information from the Old Bailey Sessions Papers. On the other hand, the report of the *Nottingham Mercury* may have been erroneous as to the person who actually suffered.

At all events, it seems that there were cases of "pressing" since December 1721. Mr. BARRINGTON says (*Barr. Ancient Statutes*, p. 86), that he had been furnished with two instances in the reign of George II., one of which happened at the Sussex Assizes before Baron Thompson, and the other at Cambridge in 1741, when Mr. Baron Carter was the judge. In these later instances the press was not inflicted until, by direction of the judge, the experiment of a minor torture had been tried, by tying the culprit's thumbs tightly together with string, though this course was wholly unauthorised by law. (*Penny Cyclo.* xvii. 373.)

As to the language of the judgment given against Spigat and Phillips, the *Nottingham Mercury* quotes part of the judgment thus: "And that upon your bodies shall be laid so much iron and stone as you can bear, *and no more.*" The italics are my own. Now in all the forms of the judgment for standing mute, beginning with that which was established in 1406 (*Year Book*, 8 Hen. IV. 1), and which substituted the punishment of pressing to death for the old punishment of imprisonment with scarcely enough food to sustain life, the words *and more*, instead of *and no more*, invariably occur. The reason of this is evident, for the practice of laying weights on the body of the delinquent was, as Blackstone remarks (*Comm.* iv. 328) intended as a species of mercy to him, by delivering him the sooner from his torment.

A form of the judgment, which will be found in Hawkins' *Pleas of the Crown*, vol. ii. p. 466, is as follows:—

"That the prisoner shall be remanded to the place from whence he came, and put in some low dark room, and there laid on his back without any manner of covering, except for the privy parts, and that as many weights shall be laid upon him as he can bear, and more; and that he shall have no manner of sustenance, but of the worst bread and water, and that he shall not eat the same day on which he drinks, nor drink the same day on which he eats, and that he shall so continue till he die."

The following words were added by 14 Ed. IV. 8, pl. 17, and 2 Inst. 178, to the word "room":—

"That he shall lie without any litter or other thing under him, and that one arm shall be drawn to one quarter of the room with a cord, and the other to another, and that his feet shall be used in the same manner."