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FORTNIGHT'S RAMBLE

TO

THE LAKES

IN

WESTMORELAND, LANCASHIRE,

AND

CUMBERLAND.

BY A RAMBLER.

HEAVENS! what a goodly prospect spreads around
Of Hills, and Dales, and Woods, and Lawns —

— — — — —

Happy BRITANNIA! where the QUEEN OF ARTS
Inspiring vigour, Liberty abroad
Walks, unconfin'd, even to thy farthest cots,
And scatters plenty with unsparing hand,

THOMSON.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HOOKHAM AND CARPENTER,

NEW AND OLD BOND STREET.

1792.

CHAP. XXVIII.

BUTTERMERE.

*Enchanting Walk—Newland Valley—Rustic
Civility—Two Water Falls—Mountain
Pastures—The Village of Buttermere.*

WE intended starting between two and three in hopes of seeing the setting moon, and the rising sun upon Skiddow; we were not so fortunate, for it rained and blew hard all night, and it was fine when we went to bed: thus far the lake yesterday foreboded right. I was so vexed at this disappointment I was deservedly punished by being kept awake: however the morning is clear, and we are going to set off to Buttermere.

We

We passed along the Cockermouth road for a mile and a half, then turned towards Newland Valley, keeping a most enchanting sight of Bassenthwaite Lake, and frequently of Derwentwater, Keswick appearing to the best advantage it can be seen in : instead of keeping the road we dropt down some fine pastures, until we came to a deep brook ; the bridge had been carried away, which obliged us to go higher than the point we intended making ; however we found a ladder some good-natured farmer had laid across for general accommodation.

Before we reached the brook we saw a treble-trunked oak ; the centre trunk was hollow, and a mountain ash grew out of it ; about two yards down it, we broke a hole with our sticks, and the ash was strong and healthy.

We

We now reached the side of the hill, and being at a loss which way to proceed, an old woman, upwards of ninety, who was keeping house whilst the family were at harvest, directed us to the head of Newland, where we stopped at a large farmhouse, and asked for some whey: they had two machines at work, (each of which could churn thirty pounds) and were making butter for salting; in an instant we had two bowls of whey and half a dozen hands offered us chairs; we were pleased in thinking every trifle interesting that so agreeably proves the active civility of these mountaineers: and who would not?

We had an easy ascent to the head of Newland, (a chaise could go up it) where there are two waterfalls upon one face of a mountain; the largest is a very fine one, and, I should think, at any time equal to Lowdore; it has now much the advantage of it:

the hills around it are covered with sheep and cattle, and as you return your eye upon the rich vale, you may see Saddle Back, and look down upon the *top* of Castle Crag: you then pass *a defilé*, and after a regular descent of two miles come suddenly upon Buttermere chapel, with a sight of its straggled village, and Crummack lake. The head mountain and two side ones are the most beautiful carpets I ever saw, particularly the right, which is covered with innumerable sheep, and, although above two miles in length and a considerable circumference, it is not defaced by one stone.

CHAP. XXIX.

BUTTERMERE.

A Guide—Disagreeable Walk—Buttermere and Crummack Lakes—Sound of Scale-Force Waterfall—Its delicate Effect—Description of it—Reasons why the Inhabitants don't know the Names of their Mountains—Natural Child—Candour of his Mother—Manner of supporting their Poor—Chapel and School both one—Without a Clergyman—Inhabitants used to chuse their own—Eagles—Schoolmaster officiates as Parson—Their Regret at the want of one.

AFTER ordering some dinner at a small ale house, we got a son of Crispin to attend us to the cascade ; the road we took was
 very

very uneven and boggy; with a number of beau traps: as we ascended we gained a full view of both Buttermere and Crummock lakes, separated by good land and a deep river; there are two small islands upon the latter, and at the bottom the country looks fertile; it is about two miles to the Waterfall, and we found it an uncomfortable task. But mountain troubles vanish the instant you behold the object of a walk.—My ears first caught the mellow sound, and after clambering over a rough wall, we came suddenly upon the cause of it. I was lost in admiration in one of those *vacant* delights, in which the mind thinks of nothing but what is before it, and makes you feel yourself more than man; I required a tap over the shoulder to return to mortality—I received it, and I thus feebly describe the cause of it.

Scale-Force Waterfall is two hundred feet

o

perpen-

perpendicular, except where it flushes over a small jut; the steep on both sides is covered with variety of moss, fern, ash, and oak, all fed by the constant spray and flourish in indescribable verdure; the delicacy of the effect is heightened by being in a narrow chasm, a hundred yards in the rock, before it rushes into the lower fall, at the point of which you have the grand view: clamber up the left side and look into the first basin, and, although you may be wet with the spray, you cannot help feeling the solemnity of this deep, this musical abyss, enchanting as verdure and melody, can make it; and although there has been no rain for nine days, it far exceeds any thing of the kind I ever saw, and the boasted one at Coo* in Germany sinks below comparison.

I sup-

* I once had the curiosity to ride over a most dreadful way to see this waterfall; we were no sooner there

but

I suppose we saw it in the best state it could be received in; had it been after rain, it might have filled us with astonishment; but what would have become of the verdure of the sides?—the foam would have nearly covered them: as we saw it, every part was in unison with the music it created; the mind comprehended it, and car-

but men and women began by throwing dogs above the head of the fall; our party were so disgusted with it, we paid them to desist; many of the poor creatures were lame; sometimes they are lucky enough to hit against a piece of rock and are killed. Those that survive *steal* away as if they felt they were victims to the unfeeling BOORS: the K— of S— was there the year before, and they were surprised we could not be pleased with it, because he was.

The chapel was about the size of Buttermere chapel, and the *curè* told us he did not receive ten pounds a year; but I observed the inhabitants had a greediness for money, and a rudeness of manners because we could not satisfy them *all*—which do not disgrace our English mountaineers.

ried away one of the most inimitable scenes that ever enriched the fancy of man, or graced the pencil of a Moore.

On asking the guide the names of different hills, he said in this valley we call them fo and fo—“ but other guides have gi’en
 “ um feck * fine neames, we do naw re-
 “ collect um, bu we mun naw contradict
 “ um, as they thinken umfelves cleverer
 “ folks than we are.”

We met a rosy boy with a fatchel on his back; he was going to one of the householders for a stated time. The poor live amongst the farmers in proportion as they are assessed, and they are always treated like one of the family; the only pauper at present is the little alien; his mother knew her frailties too well, and was too honest to swear to a father, therefore the

* Such.

villagers

villagers have taken the boy amongst them, and are going to send him to school.

They said with concern until a fortnight ago they have had no regular schoolmaster these two years; in short, since the period of choosing their clergyman was taken from them.

The chapel and the school serves for both purposes, and I could almost reach the roof with my head; the inhabitants time out of mind used to appoint their own clergyman, and he was generally chosen with full consent; perhaps it was the very poorest livelihood in the kingdom, even with the addition of Queen Ann's bounty; but it was a vehicle for a minor priest to get superior orders, and there never was a want of candidates: they now say they have lost their right, at any rate they are afraid to claim it, as they are more in dread

of the Great Eagle of the north than the eagles which build in their mountains;— they think it a judgement upon them for unanimously voting *àû contraire* at a contested election; but whatever may be the reason, they are left to go to Heaven as quietly as they can;—the schoolmaster, without being a parson, officiates as such, and a clergyman, from Lorton, the parish church, comes over about once in six weeks to administer the Sacrament, which may be the means of preserving the bounty:— in this forlorn *manner* is the service* performed in the village of Buttermere;— luckily it could not have happened in a village where it appears less wanted, but as good harmless people always regret the loss of a good custom, they regret it.

* As the chapel enjoys Queen Ann's bounty, should not the Diocesan take care they have a proper pastor? but I cannot suppose he is informed of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

BUTTERMERE.

Number of Families—Their Riches—Mode of paying Ale Duty, and of providing Provisions—Of procuring Surgeons for the Sick—A Rainbow—Never but one Chaise in the Valley—Sally of Buttermere.

THE village consists of fourteen families, and some of them are rich people; that is, they may have fifty pounds a year landed property, and healthful flocks of sheep; and I can tell you we looked into a kitchen that Crispin said belonged to the richest man in the place; and I never saw furniture shine brighter in my life; to be sure it was Saturday, and that is a

polishing day in every cottage in the kingdom.

We had salt provisions and vegetables for dinner, and I do not think there was a fresh joint in the valley; the ale was home-brewed, and good, but rather too strong for our taste. If you are fond of strong ale, I must tell you Buttermere is reckoned famous for it. Wine and spirits are not sold here, and they are so far from the excise, they pay their duty by compromise, ten pence halfpenny a week; the landlady says they do not sometimes sell six penny-worth a week; but as her husband is one of the head quarry men, his companions often make amends, for her “ale is as gud as ony in aw Christendom.”

On our return we met a woman with a loaded horse; she had been to Keswick
mar-

market, laying in meat and other necessaries for herself and neighbours; this amicable custom is equalled by the following: when a person is sick, or a woman about to lay in, a horseman is sent express to Keswick or Cockermouth for a surgeon, and the neighbours send a relay of horses to expedite him.

We reached the *defilé* with a fresh breeze, but a hot sun; we were afraid we should have been much incommoded by losing the former; luckily the mountain that kept the breeze from us, likewise hid the sun; so we enjoyed a pleasant walk along a gentle descent. I mention this for information to those who may walk or ride this road, as after six in the evening it is under shade until you come to Portinscale.

When we came to the Cockermouth road, we had a rich sight of a rainbow extending

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When we came to the Cocker-mouth road, we had a rich sight of a rainbow extending from Keswick, and just including Lowdore fall. It was rendered more beautiful by a watery tinge on the tops of the hills, and by the sun's partially leaving them shewing which was the highest.

The

The landlady had never seen but one chaise in the valley, which came from Cockermouth, and left it at the Kefwick road; she spoke of it as a phænomenon.

I have since met with the party; it was an excursion soon after marriage. They are too valuable to their numerous friends, amongst which number I have the happiness to think myself, ever to run any more mountain risks. They were not aware of the danger, and I believe this cured them.

SALLY OF BUTTERMERE.

Her mother and she were spinning woollen yarn in the back kitchen. On our going into it, the girl flew away as swift as a mountain sheep, and it was not until our return from Scale Force that we could say we first saw her. She brought in part of our dinner, and seemed to be about fifteen. Her hair was thick and long, of a dark brown, and, though unadorned

adorned with ringlets, did not seem to want them; her face was a fine oval, with full eyes, and lips as red as vermilion; her cheeks had more of the lily than the rose; and although she had never been out of the village (and I hope will have no ambition to wish it), she had a manner about her which seemed better calculated to set off dresses, than dresses *her*. She was a very Lavinia,

“ Seeming, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.”

When we first saw her at her distaff, after she had got the better of her first fears, she looked an angel; and I doubt not but she is the reigning lily of the valley.

Ye travellers of the Lakes, if you visit this obscure place, such you will find the fair SALLY OF BUTTERMERE.

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