ware was sent down from Staffordshire in what is called the biscuit or unglazed state, and after having been printed, glazed, and fired, was returned to the manufacturers in the potteries. The curious in topography, may perhaps feel some interest in visiting the spot, which is up a gateway on Shaw’s Brow, and not probably two hundred yards distant from where we are at present assembled.

I cannot but regret my inability to enter into more scientific details. My intention has been merely indeed to afford you a faithful record of a process, which as I before observed has never previously been published, and which on that account, and the circumstance of being eminently a practical one, may not be devoid of a certain amount of interest. Even though abandoned, as it probably will be at no distant period for the acid process of which I have given you a slight sketch, it may not be uninteresting to trace the progress of the manufacture through its earlier and ruder stages. We are the better enabled to appreciate excellence by a review of the slow and frequently toilsome process by which excellence in science or art has been obtained, as the traveller who climbs the mountain to admire an extensive and beautiful landscape, enhances his pleasure by turning round to review the steep and laborious ascent by which he has gained its summit.

Cowley, and the Poets of the Seventeenth Century.

By David Buxton, Esq.

(Read December 14th, 1854.)

I may be somewhat singular in my opinion, and in any other place than the calm arena of literary research it might provoke a war of words as hot as was the strife of swords between Cavalier and Roundhead, but I do hold, most sincerely and firmly, that few brighter days ever dawned for English literature than that which was so soon and sadly overcast by the troubles of the “Great Rebellion.”

The two periods which are generally regarded as the most illustrious in our literary history are the reigns of Elizabeth and Anne—the latter half of the sixteenth and the earlier portion of the eighteenth centuries. My
vocation to night is to vindicate the seventeenth. That, in some particulars, the Elizabethan age is entitled to a pre-eminence over it, I am as willing to admit, as I am prepared to deny the superiority of the other, later, period. In many respects the seventeenth century stands second to none, notwithstanding the disturbing causes of political strife, and social convulsion, which were so long and so fatally at work. Who will venture to place in any inferior rank, an age which counts among its worthies such men as Usher, and Laud, and Jeremy Taylor; Bishops Bull, Hall, and Bedell; Hammond, Isaac Barrow, Prideaux, Chillingworth, Fuller, Hales of Eton, Selden, Sir Thomas Browne, Sir Kenelm Digby, Izaak Walton, John Evelyn, Lord Clarendon, and Sir Matthew Hale; and then, in the particular province of our present enquiry, Milton, Cowley, Dryden, Waller, Denham, Wither, Crashaw, Herrick, and the author of "Hudibras?" Cowley himself has remarked that "a warlike, various, and tragical age is best to write of, but worst to write in."* Of the vast number of writers, whose names have come down to our own days, the circumstances of those unhappy times must have repressed and stunted the genius of many among them, diverted to different pursuits the talents of others, and harassed and embittered the lives of almost all. But if the early promise of King Charles' reign could have been fulfilled, there is little doubt that it would have been illustrated, in every department, by genius as gifted, and works as imperishable, as the happier reign of Elizabeth can boast.†

* Preface to Works, p. iv.  
† "The accession of Charles the First," says a writer, to whom no suspicion of partiality can attach, "seemed an auspicious event for the cause of literature and the arts. The Sovereign himself was a prince of much learning, and of a refined and elevated taste. To him this nation is indebted for the acquisition of the Cartoons of Raphael; he invited Vandyke, Rubens, Bernini, and other foreign artists to this country; was the liberal patron of Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones, and other native poets and artists; and amongst the crimes with which he was charged by his enemies was one which, at the present day, we cannot judge to be quite unpardonable, namely, that the volumes of Shakspeare were his companions day and night. The poets who flourished in his reign, in addition to those who survived the reigns of his predecessors, although they possessed not the commanding genius, and the wonderful creative powers of the Bards of the Elizabethan age, for there were giants on the earth in those days, were yet among the most polished and elegant writers which the nation has produced. The sweetness of their versification was not of that tame and cloying nature which the imitators of Pope afterwards introduced into our literature—smooth to the exclusion of every bold and original thought. • • • •. The favourite amusement of this period was the dramatic entertainments called masques." Of those produced at Court, "Ben Jonson commonly wrote the poetry, Lawes composed the music, and Inigo Jones designed the decorations. Had Charles long continued to sway the English sceptre there is no doubt that literature and the arts, but especially the latter, would have been materially advanced."—Neele's Lectures on English Poetry, pp. 16–18.
It is a curious and very noticeable historical fact, that ever since the revival of learning, our literary history has exhibited a constant succession of alternations—first eminence, then mediocrity—first brightness, and then gloom.

"When sun is set, the little stars do shine."

The most striking proof of this is seen in the contrast between the successive reigns of Elizabeth and James—of Anne, and the first two Georges. As in mining, when you have worked out one rich lode, you must dig through a mass of rubbish before you can find another remunerative vein: as the coldness and sterility of Winter ever follow the sunny glow of Summer, and the glad luxuriance of Autumn; and these must be endured ere the hopefulness and cheering of another Spring can revisit us: and as a night of darkness separates the dying day from the approaching morrow, so is it in our literary history. And yet another illustration occurs to me, which, for its aptness, I hope may be excused. The distance between any two of those epochs which we delight to dwell upon, and the interval of common-place which divides them, remind me of the great squares of the metropolis. Go through that in which our own noble president resides, and which gives a colloquial designation to the district. The dwellings are palaces, and their inhabitants are the rulers of the land. Further on is another square of the same class. The backs of the houses of each meet, and together form a line of—stables, called locally a mews. And you can no more pass from one bright period of literary glory to another, without that dreary inter-space of mediocrity, than you can get from Belgrave-square to Eaton, without making that unpoetical passage of the stables. The reign of James I. was one of these intervals. It had little or no poetic excellence properly its own. All the brightness which adorned those times was either the twilight of the day which had made glorious the reign of Elizabeth, or the coming dawn of that which was to break in social storm and political convulsion afterwards. Not forgetting the names of Donne, and Sir Henry Wotton, and Bishop Henry King, it may justly be said that the characteristic of that epoch was mediocrity; and that, in comparison with the one which followed it, and still more with that which preceded it, it shrinks into littleness and insignificance.

Of all the poets of the Caroline era, Cowley was unquestionably the most
popular, and—Milton alone excepted—he was the best and most highly
gifted amongst them. Milton's own wish for himself was that he might "fit
audience find, though few;" but his contemporary was more fortunate than
even this: he had the applause of congenial minds, but not of these alone.
To the commendation of the critic was added the admiration of the multi­
tude. Dr. Johnson says, "He was in his own time considered as of
unrivalled excellence." Clarendon represents him as having taken a
flight beyond all that went before him; and Milton is said to have de­
clared that "the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakspeare,
and Cowley."* Wordsworth mentions, in proof of his popularity, that
his own folio copy of Cowley's works is the seventh edition, dated 1681.†
This was only fourteen years after the poet's death. In 1693 another
folio edition was published, a copy of which is before you; and Mr. Craik
also mentions that a twelfth edition was issued by Tonson, in 1721, of
the collection made by Cowley himself;‡ On his decease, King Charles
declared that he "had not left a better man behind him in England."||
Sir John Denham penned an elegy, on his interment in Westminster
Abbey, and Bishop Sprat wrote his life—the same which is prefixed to
his works, and which has furnished the materials for every subsequent
biography. But his popularity did not last long. Other great and living
names arose, before which that of the departed Cowley might well
grow dim. In the year of his death, "Paradise Lost" appeared—the
work which its author had contemplated in his early manhood as that
"something" which he should leave "to after times," "so written" "as
that they should not willingly let it die."§ In the same year Dryden
published his *Annus Mirabilis,* and thence we may date that public life
of the author of "Absalom and Achitophel," in which, like his own Zimri,
he was

"Everything by turns, and nothing long;"
pouring forth the odes of the laureate, the licentious plays of the popular
dramatist, the stinging satires of the partisan and polemic, and the
more polished works of the ripe scholar, with a profusion, and a general,
though not unexceptionable, excellence, which make his life an epoch in

† Essay Supplementary to the Preface to his Works.
‡ Literature and Learning in England.
|| Life, by Bishop Sprat. § Against Prelacy, A.D. 1642.
our history. He, with other far inferior writers, who, aiming to be popular, ceased to be pure, and whose petty productions rank as low when tried by the canons of criticism as by the laws of morality, now received the popular applause which had once been awarded to Cowley; and thus it happened that in the very next generation Pope could ask:

"Who now reads Cowley? If he pleases yet, 
His moral pleases, not his pointed wit; 
Forgot his epic, nay, Pindaric art, 
But still I love the language of his heart."

Thus neglected, he passed away from public notice. Few persons read him: the popular impression was traditional, and it imputed to him the ingenious concatenation of dry conceits, uninspired by warmth of feeling, or gaiety of fancy, and unadorned by any considerable graces of language or versification. Dr. Johnson greatly strengthened this error by appending his notice of the metaphysical poetry to the life of Cowley, and illustrating it copiously from his works. I do not dispute the propriety of placing him amongst these writers, but I do claim for him poetical merits infinitely superior to any which he has in common with them. That he had faults is undeniable: his style was modish and involved; his diction both careless and artificial, loaded with conceits, strained indeed, and yet feeble. But these were the faults of the age he lived in, and of the fashion which he too readily followed. While they appear as blemishes upon his merits, they do not eclipse them, and those merits were all his own. Pope, in the quotation just made, expresses love for the "language of his heart." Neele says, "His very faults are the offspring of genius; they are the exuberances of a mind 'o'er-informed with meaning;' the excrescences of a tree, whose waste foliage, if properly pruned and arranged, would form an immortal wreath on the brows of any humbler genius."* A lover of nature, such as *Comus* alone sufficiently shows Milton to have been, could not but prefer Cowley to Dryden: we therefore find that Cowley was one of his favourite authors; but of Dryden he said: "he was a good rhymist, but no poet."†

The great authority on the other side is Dr. Johnson, whose judgment later writers have too commonly adopted without enquiry, and repeated with mischievous assiduity. It may seem presumptuous to impeach such

† Johnson's Life of Milton.
an authority, but I do hold it as incontrovertible, that no critic of English poetry ever injured it by false criticism, and the enunciation of unsound principles, to the extent that Johnson did. The late Professor Wilson,* and the author of the "Christian Year,"† have each exposed the erroneousness of his views regarding sacred poetry, as set forth in his "Life of Waller." Mine, though perhaps a bold, is still an humbler task. Without entering now into any theory upon the subject, it will, I think, be admitted that among the chief qualifications of a poet, must be reckoned quickness of perception, tenderness of feeling, a passionate love of nature, and a close and intimate sympathy with those warm affections which spring out "of the depth and not the tumult of the soul." Then, if these are the necessary qualifications of the poet, so are they of the competent judge of poetry; for notwithstanding the celebrated dictum, which tells us that a man may be a sufficient judge of a well-made table though he cannot make a table himself, still it is a simple truism to assert, that he who is deficient in certain mental faculties must be incapable of forming a sound judgment upon that which involves the exercise of those faculties. And that is true of Johnson which he wrote of another: "That with all his variety of excellence he is not often pathetic; and had so little sensibility of the power of effusions purely natural, that he did not esteem them in others. Simplicity," he adds, speaking of Dryden, "gave him no pleasure; and for the first part of his life he looked upon Otway with contempt, though at last, indeed very late, he confessed that in his play 'there was nature, which is the chief beauty.'" (Life of Dryden.) But it was not the beauty of nature which he admired. His whole life shows that the objects of his admiration were the artificial, and the artificial alone. Books and men, as they constitute the almost mechanical routine of city life, were his fields of observation; and his views of nature were practically limited, and that by choice, to the Temple Gardens and the civic Thames. He was a man, who, while he sought to know everything, had so little desire to see everything, that he regarded with contempt the universal opinion of the advantages of travelling. His "Journey to the Western Islands" is the work of a scholar—not of a poet. Wordsworth visited some of the same scenes sixty years later, and nothing can more strikingly illustrate the distinction

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* Recreations of Christopher North. Vol. ii.
† Quarterly Review, vol. xxxii, 1823. See Life of Dr. Arnold, vol. 1, p. 73.
I have just made, than a comparison between Wordsworth’s verse and Johnson’s prose, written on the same subjects. His further description of Dryden is also true of himself: “The power that predominated in his intellectual operations was rather strong reason than quick sensibility. Upon all occasions that were presented, he studied rather than felt, and produced sentiments not such as nature enforces, but meditation supplies. With the simple and elemental passions, as they spring separate in the mind, he seems not much acquainted; and seldom describes them but as they are complicated by the various relations of society, and confused in the tumults and agitations of life.” The poetry which he found in possession of the popular approval was the Didactic—often mere moralizing in verse—a style of composition which as it is nearest akin to prose, both in its subjects and its mode of treatment, must necessarily be of an inferior order of poetry. We know what works were read in Johnson’s time—at least we know their names, if little else. They were Pomfret’s “Choice;” Phillips’ “Splendid Shilling;” the same author’s poem on “Cider;” Dyer’s “Fleece;” Somerville’s “Chase;” and the “Creation” of “that portentous bore, Sir Richard Blackmore,” as Mr. Macaulay styles him.*

I think no other evidence is needed to indicate what was the character of the popular poetry of that day: but if more should be requisite, it is very easily produced. The last great work of Johnson’s life was to write the “Lives of the Poets;” on the title page they are styled “the most eminent English Poets.” Now who were they? And by what standard was this eminence measured? The booksellers made the selection, leaving a limited discretion to the editor, which he did not omit to exercise. The list of names shows that the publishers understood poetic eminence only in the commercial sense; and, as if the selection which they made upon this principle was not sufficiently absurd in itself, Johnson exercised his own discretion by making it worse. The names of Pomfret and Watts, Blackmore and Yalden, were added by his special recommendation. He wrote a biography of each of the writers whose works I just now mentioned, and sent forth to the world a list of the “most eminent English Poets,” which included, besides the authors already named, some others, of whose original compositions not a single line survives, while it excluded Spenser and Shakspeare, and every other illustrious writer from Chaucer, until

Cowley appeared. Nor is this all. When a better feeling began to awaken, he treated it with such contempt as, for a time, withered it. But though, like the first wave of the tide, it retreated, and seemed to be lost, it soon came back again with increased force, and at length bore down the barriers upon which it had at first so vainly broken. Speaking of the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," to which I am now alluding, Wordsworth has placed it on record how much Germany is indebted to that work, while "for our own country," he adds, "its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it." Yet Johnson saw no merit in this book; he treated it with burlesque and ridicule. So that not only by his support and sanction to the vicious style in vogue, but by his disparagement of that which so worthily succeeded it, the fact is shown that the influence of Johnson upon English poetry was an injurious influence. The hidden charms and beauties which abound in natural poetry, as in the common things of nature itself; the simple diction appropriate to simple things which are when "unadorned adorned the most;" the sweetness of a common strain; the picturesque effect produced by the happy use of significant, though ordinary words; the involuntary grace which pertains to simple, natural, thoughts, as it does to the spontaneous movements and postures of children: these had no charms for that critic who, in reviewing Comus, found more to censure than to praise—who saw little to commend in the "Allegro," and the "Penseroso;" and nothing at all either in "Lycidas," or those sonnets which Wordsworth calls—

"Soul-animating strains—alas, too few."

Speaking of Lycidas he said, "Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief." And yet the man who wrote this—a son remarkable for his filial attachment—pened his own fiction of Rasselas to defray the funeral expenses of his widowed mother. If it were not both very possible and very easy to distinguish between respect for a man, and submission to his authority in a matter of literary taste, I should not have said so much upon this subject. The character of Dr. Johnson appears to me to be such a striking embodiment of our national character, in its apparently anomalous combination of strength and weakness, greatness and littleness, that it seems as natural for an Englishman to sympathise with his failings, as to

* Preface to Supplementary Works.
admire his noble qualities. I have stood, many a time and oft, upon that spot in Poet’s Corner which is made more sacred by his dust, beneath the shadow of Shakspeare’s monument, and Addison’s, and of that simpler tablet upon which is recorded his own famous epitaph of Goldsmith, and I have looked down upon his grave with as much pride and admiration, and with as deep a conviction of the great good which was wrought by his example and influence, as were ever felt, either in his own time or since: but in this matter of poetical criticism I hold him to be wrong, not only actually but necessarily. A man who could not endure to be out of London; who talked about the "silver flood" of the Thames at Greenwich;* who said "that when a man was tired of London he was tired of life;" who assented to and approved the sentiment that the spreading park "girt with the solemn majesty of trees," was not equal to Fleet street; and one of whose reasons for refusing to apply for Holy Orders (it must in justice be remembered that it was not the only one, or the chief, but it was one to which he frequently referred), was that he could not bear the insipidity of the country;—such a man could not possibly be a fully qualified judge of some of the highest beauties of poetry. How differently does the poetical temperament of Cowper speak out, in that passage of the Task wherein he alludes to Cowley, as

——“stretched at ease in Chertsey's silent bowers
Not unemployed, and finding rich amends
For a lost world in solitude and verse.”

His own ardent attachment to the country finds expression in the exclamation—

“I never framed a wish, or formed a plan
That flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss,
But there I laid the scene.”

And a greater man than either Cowley or Cowper has left on record one of the most touching and simple longings to escape from “the noise and opposition” of London to more congenial scenes, which was ever penned. “My Lord,” says Richard Hooker to Archbishop Whitgift, after giving an outline of his work on Ecclesiastical Polity, “I shall never be able to finish what I have begun, unless I be removed into some quiet parsonage, where I may see God’s blessings spring out of my mother earth, and eat my own

* Johnson’s London.
bread in privacy and peace.” This was a feeling Johnson could neither estimate nor properly understand; but the want of it is a fatal disqualification for forming a sympathetic and therefore just judgment of poetry.

I shall now endeavour to show how much he was mistaken in his estimate of Cowley.

Speaking of the “Metaphysical Poets,” and of Cowley as one of them, he says, “They cannot be said to have imitated anything; they neither copied nature, nor life;” and again, “their thoughts are often true, but seldom natural.” Turn to Cowley’s address to the “Old Patrician Trees,” in his Essay on Solitude:

“Here let me, careless, and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds above me flying,
With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying,
Nor be myself too mute.
A silver stream shall roll his waters near,
Gilt with sun-beams here and there,
On whose enamel’d bank I’ll walk,
And see how prettily they smile, and hear
How prettily they talk.”

The next quotation will remind us of Burns’ exquisite song, beginning, “Ye banks and braes”—

“How could it be so fair, and you away?
How could the trees be beauteous, flowers so gay?
Could they remember but last year,
How you did them, they you delight,
The sprouting leaves which saw you here,
And call’d their fellows to the sight,
Would, looking round for the same sight in vain,
Creep back into their silent barks again.”

In anticipation of a happy marriage, he thus speaks of her name:

“Then all the fields and woods shall with it ring,
Then echo’s burden it shall be;
Then all the birds in several notes shall sing,
And all the rivers murmur thee:
Then every wind the sound shall upwards bear,
And softly whisper it to some angel’s ear.”

But there is a strength and vigour in many of his passages which must not be overlooked. The following extract is from the first Book of the *Davideis*—
"Beneath the mighty ocean's wealthy caves,
Beneath the eternal fountain of all waves,
Where their vast court the mother-waters keep,
And undisturbed by moons, in silence sleep,
There is a place, deep, wondrous deep below,
Which, genuine night and horror does o'erflow;
No bound controls th' unwearied space, but Hell
Endless as those dire pains that in it dwell.
Here no dear glimpse of the sun's lovely face
Strikes through the solid darkness of the place;
No dawning morn does her kind red display;
One slight weak beam would here be thought the day.
No gentle stars with their fair gems of light
Offend the tyrannous, and unquestioned night.
Here Lucifer the mighty captive reigns;
Proud, 'midst his woes, and tyrant, in his chains.'

The next lines are more fearfully expressive. The scene is an infernal conclave:—

"The quaking powers of night stood in amaze
And at each other first could only gaze.
A dreadful silence fill'd the hollow place,
Doubling the native terror of Hell's face:
Rivers of flaming brimstone, which before
So loudly raged, crept softly by the shore:
No hiss of snakes, no clank of chains was known,
The souls amidst their tortures durst not groan."

By way of contrast to these powerful but repulsive pictures, let us glance at another fine passage in the same poem:—

"Above the subtle foldings of the sky,
Above the well-set orbs' soft harmony;
Above those petty lamps that gild the night,
There is a place o'erflow'd with hallowed light;
Where heaven, as if it left itself behind,
Is stretched out far, nor its own bounds can find:
Here peaceful flames swell up the sacred place,
Nor can the glory contain itself in th' endless space.
For there no twilight of the sun's dull ray
Glimmers upon the pure and native day.
No pale-faced moon does in stolen beams appear,
Or with dim taper scatters darkness there.
On no smooth sphere the restless seasons slide,
No circling motion doth swift time divide;
Nothing is there to come, and nothing past,
But an eternal now does always last."

The Davideis from which these passages are taken was never finished.
nor, as the author himself tells us, were the Four Books which he did complete, ever revised "with that care which he had resolved to bestow, and which the dignity of the matter well deserves." But no man had a more exalted idea than he of the grandeur and sublimity of the incidents in Scripture story, and of their capability of being woven into the loftiest verse. He closes his preface with this striking passage:—"All the Books of the Bible are either already most admirable and exalted pieces of poesie, or are the best materials in the world for it. Yet though they be in themselves so proper to be made use of for this purpose, none but a good artist will know how to do it: neither must we think to cut and polish diamonds with so little pains and skill as we do marble. For if any man design to compose a sacred poem by only turning a story of the Scripture ... or some other godly matter ... into rhyme; he is so far from elevating of poesie, that he only abases divinity. In brief, he who can write a profane poem well, may write a divine one better; but he who can do that but ill, will do this much worse. The same fertility of invention; the same wisdom of disposition; the same judgment in observance of decencies; the same lustre and vigour of elocution; the same modesty and majesty of number; briefly, the same kind of habit, is required to both; only this latter allows better stuff, and therefore would look more deformedly, if ill drest in it. I am far from assuming to myself to have fulfilled the duty of this weighty undertaking, but sure I am, that there is nothing yet in our language (nor perhaps in any) that is in any degree answerable to the idea that I conceive of it. And I shall be ambitious of no other fruit from this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and industry of some other persons, who may be better able to perform it thoroughly and successfully."

It is surely not without significance, as a comment upon this final sentence, that in the very year of Cowley's death, *Paradise Lost* appeared.

I do not pause to point out the resemblances which may be traced between many familiar passages in modern poetry and some which are to be found in Cowley. That is a branch of literary investigation, which, if followed out, would reveal some curious facts. I hope some member of the Society having the requisite leisure may be induced to take up the subject, and bring his reading to bear upon it, in its threefold aspect of unconscious resemblance, avowed imitation, and arrant plagiarism.

Perhaps, after all that has been said, it may seem strange to conclude with the admission that, in spite of all his merits, Cowley will never be popular. Yet no student of English literature will do justice, either to his subject, or to himself, who passes by the works of Abraham Cowley. I think I have given sufficient reasons for paying some attention to his
GROTESQUE

MASK OF PUNISHMENT,

from the Castle of

NUREMBERG.
poetry; but his prose is more admirable still. Like Dryden, he is known chiefly—I may almost say exclusively—in one character. His reputation as a poet has prevented his being known, much less appreciated, as an essayist. But if "the varying verse, the full-resounding line" of Dryden, and the more artificial numbers of Cowley, were henceforth obliterated from human knowledge, both would live, and would deserve to live, in the admiration of their countrymen, for qualities in their prose writings, of a high and uniform excellence, such as the most partial critic could not claim for their poetry, though, strangely enough, the poetry, with its inequalities and its faults, has hidden from view the more perfect graces of the prose.

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ON A GROTESQUE MASK OF PUNISHMENT OBTAINED IN THE CASTLE OF NUREMBERG.

By Frederick W. Fairholt, Esq., F.S.A.

(Read 14th December, 1854.)

In the Museum of Antiquities, collected by my fellow Member of the Society of Antiquaries of London, Mr. Joseph Mayer, I have observed, with some curiosity, the very rare example of a scold's bridle which he possesses. Such relics of the olden time are of great rarity; and of the small number known to exist, the majority belong to places whence they cannot be disovered. In the church of Walton-on-Thames, about 20 miles from London, is one of these implements, which is said to have been presented for the use of the Parish by a neighbouring gentleman, who lost a considerable estate, through the babbling of a mischievous woman to the relative from whom he would have received it. Upon it was inscribed the date 1633, and the distich, now quite obliterated,

"Chester presents Walton with a bridle
To curb women's tongues that talk too idle."

The punishment originated at a period when some degree of ridicule was allowed to take the place of that severity which characterized earlier forms of punishment. Like many other of our customs, it would appear to have