

Mr. Jacob exhibited at the same time, the helmet and sword of a Russian soldier killed in the attack upon the Redan.

Mr. Marsh exhibited a stone celt or "toki" found among the Maoris of New Zealand.

Mr. Blackmore exhibited a medal, and made some inquiry respecting it, which had been sent by Mr. Lingard, of Eastham. It* was struck in 1689, on the flight of James II.

Mr. Percy M. Dove exhibited two MS. volumes of autograph letters, and copies of others, from distinguished persons, written during the last 70 or 80 years. Among them were several original letters from Dr. Franklin, Bloomfield, Rogers, Miss Edgeworth, &c.

In connexion with this subject, Mr. Bloxam exhibited a copy of "Cicero de Senectute," printed and published at Philadelphia, in 1754, by Benjamin Franklin.

The following Paper was then read:—

ON SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF DR. FRANKLIN. *By Percy M. Dove, F.S.S., F.I.B.A.*

Mr. Dove laid before the Society two large volumes of Autograph Letters and Scraps, which had been the property of the late Benjamin Vaughan, Esq. They contained several original letters from Dr. Franklin, all of them illustrating the published biography of that eminent man, and confirming the high opinion which the public have already formed of him. They did not of themselves, however, contain matter of sufficient general interest, to require their publication.

The dates of the principal letters were October 4th, 1774; December 16th, 1774; May 5th, 1779; August 18th, 1788; and December 9th, 1788.

In connection with this subject, Mr. Dove furnished some information respecting the Vaughan family, with whom this literary correspondence had taken place. Benjamin, eminent as a scholar and philanthropist, was specially the friend of Franklin; and Priestley dedicated to him the first edition of his "Lectures on History." Some letters of his in the life of Bentham, gave rise to an inquiry respecting him from Miss Edgeworth, contained in the present collection. He was in Parliament for some time; and in the negotiations for peace between Great Britain and the United States, he was trusted by both parties. He afterwards settled in America; and we are indebted to him for the admirable Autobiography of Franklin. This is acknowledged in the *Life* itself; and is confirmed by the last of these letters of 9th December, 1788. Mr. Vaughan's publication of Franklin's "Political, Miscellaneous, and Philosophical Essays," in 1779, gave rise to a singular charge against Dr. Franklin, respecting the Parable on Persecution.† William Vaughan was a merchant in London, and the founder of the "London Provident Institution." He had turned his attention greatly to the subject of canals and docks, and is said to have written articles on those subjects for Rees's Encyclopædia. He was intimately connected with literature and science during the greater part of his life. He settled finally in Philadelphia, where he died. Another brother, the Hon. Samuel Vaughan, was Assistant Judge and Member of Assembly in Jamaica. All the members of the family were long lived, in accordance with the theory that the vitality is expended in some families from generation to generation at an early age, say 50 to 60, while in others the members are equally hale at from 80 to 90.

* *Obverse.* The head of James with the inscription "Jacobus II. Britan. Rex. Fugitiv. Reverse An oak tree prostrated by the storm, and beside it an orange tree in full bearing. Around "Pro glandibus aurea poma," and below "Post fagam regis delata regni administratio Principi anreazian. 1689. S.N." See Pictorial History of England, vol. iv. p. 29, where the inscription is incorrectly given.

† "I am diligently employed in writing the History of my Life, to the doing of which the persuasions contained in your letter of January 31st, 1783, have not a little contributed."—*Franklin to Vaughan, October 24th, 1788.*

‡ This "is one of the most curious topics in literary history. It has often been made the foundation of a charge of plagiarism against Dr. Franklin, but as I think, without foundation. In its modern form, it was published by Lord Kaimes in 1774. He says 'it was communicated to me by Dr. Franklin, of Philadelphia,' but he does not say that Dr. Franklin claimed the authorship of it. It was, not long after, inserted in a small collection of Dr. Franklin's miscellaneous writings, published by Mr. B. Vaughan, (a gentleman recollected by Lord Lansdowne), in London. Mr. Vaughan took it from Lord Kaimes's work."—*Life of the Rev. Sydney Smith.*