

ART. VII. *A Translation of the Record called Domesday, as far as relates to the County of York, including also Amounderness, Lonsdale, and Furness, in Lancashire, and such parts of Westmoreland and Cumberland, as are contained in the Survey; also the Counties of Derby, Nottingham, Rutland, and Lincoln.* By the Rev. William Bawdwen, Vicar of Hooton Pagnell, Yorkshire. Doncaster, 1809. 4to. pp. 628.

THAT numerous class of readers, who are contented with information, as distinct from erudition, will feel themselves not a little indebted to the industrious translator of this great national record. Genuine antiquaries will indeed 'desiderate' in the volume before us, the curious and motley language of the original, the technical marks and contractions with which it abounds, and the venerable appearance of the page, as exhibited in the magnificent edition already printed. But this great and expensive work was never meant for general circulation, and indeed, had it been universally accessible, the cause already hinted at must have rendered it unintelligible to the bulk of readers. While, therefore, the favoured few continue to revel upon the charms of the original Domesday in secret, let them not murmur at seeing their favourite produced, for the first time, before the public eye, in the garb of their own age and country.

The volume commences with a judicious and able introduction, in which the editor, with an eye, no doubt, to the class of readers already described, after having very distinctly related the systematic manner in which this vast survey was accomplished, proceeds to examine into the consequences which resulted from its completion, the importance of Domesday in all succeeding ages as a national record, and its utility to the courts of justice as a book of reference, at present. He then reverts to the period immediately antecedent to the Conquest, and gives a short but clear detail of the manners and civil institutions of our Saxon ancestors.

The next object of his attention is one which, perhaps above every other human institution, civil or military, has exercised the ablest pens, and challenged the most profound investigation: we mean the Feodal system. On a subject of such extent and difficulty, neither the limits of Mr. Bawdwen's work would allow, nor the expectations of his readers require, more than a faithful outline. On this part of the subject, therefore, it will suffice to say, that, modestly following in the train of superior writers, he traces the feodal tenure from the customs of ancient Germany, as transmitted to us by Tacitus and other contemporary authors—their progress from allodial and proprietary in the strict sense, to beneficiary dependencies,
and

and their gradual resolution into numerous fiefs, which, 'before the conclusion of the reign of William the First, had already become general in Great Britain,' (more properly in England).

It is very certain that in all this we meet with little, which, strictly speaking, can be called new; neither, after the labours of our great legal antiquaries, could discoveries on such a subject well be expected. The author's purpose and that of his readers was equally answered by a clear arrangement and intelligible detail of materials, for which not one in a thousand of the latter would have had either means or inclination to search in the bulky volumes of Selden or Spelman, of Craig or Du Cange.

The Conqueror was undoubtedly a man of genius, and there is something magnificent in the conception of a great national survey like that of Domesday. Yet it must strike every attentive mind, that the execution of this vast undertaking was inartificial and even barbarous. Surveying, as a science, was probably unknown; and hence, in particular, the mode of reducing manors to imaginary geometrical forms, as for example, one leuca in length, and half a leuca in breadth, besides that, like round numbers, it must always be inaccurate, is perpetually contradicted by the number of carucates of which the same manor is made to consist, some exceeding and as many falling short of the number of acres included within the general outline, making every reasonable allowance for its irregularity.

Of this mode of inexactness, if the present were a critique upon Domesday itself, numerous instances might be given. At this period of universal intelligence and activity, which afford a reasonable expectation that, at no distant æra, scarcely an acre will be left in the kingdom unappropriated and unimproved—the state of husbandry, as represented in Domesday, must appear deplorable indeed. To say nothing of the waste of muscular strength upon their clumsy ploughs, which, from many circumstances, appear to have required eight oxen, it appears that in many manors almost half the surface was covered with brushwood, or what Mr. B. translates 'wood pasture,' which equally deprived the owner of the profits of planting and pasturage; for, while on the one hand the growth of timber would be perpetually interrupted by the browse of cattle, the herbage on the other hand would be choked by a thick covering of stunted brushwood.

Another observation occurs on the perusal of the translation before us. The orthography of our English Villare in the reign of the Conqueror cannot have been so widely different from what it is at present, as we find it represented in Domesday. What to allow for the melting down of the Saxon orthography into that which took place about the reign of Henry the Second, as heved for head, &c. we know precisely; but the pronunciation at the time of the
Conqueror's

Conqueror's Survey must have been nearly the same as at present; at least, it is absurd to suppose, that any change should have taken place in the radical consonants, of which instances perpetually occur. Of this species of inaccuracy no other account can be given, than that the returns made by many of the commissioners for surveying particular districts were obscurely written, while the transcriber of the whole; (for the uniformity of the hand-writing seems to prove that the work was not divided,) unaided by local information, was compelled, in many instances, to guess at the reading of proper names, and in consequence frequently guessed wrong. We have also to remark, incidentally, that the word *quarentena*, which, as referring to superficies, is known to be equivalent to a rood of land, has never been accurately defined as a measure of length—it appears, however, to be something less than one-twelfth of the *leuca*, and therefore less than 40 perches, but certainly much more than 40 yards. But perhaps the Normans had a smaller *pertica* or pole than our own, 40 of which constituted the *lineal quarentena*.

This observation introduces us in the last place to Mr. B.'s useful, but not always accurate glossary, in which he has been unfortunately misled by the authority of Hearne to confound the *carucate* with the *oxgang*, whereas the latter, as we apprehend in every instance, (certainly in the north of England, to which the present volume is nearly confined,) was only an eighth part of the former—one consisting of as much land as a single ox could 'ear' or plough in a season, the other of the measure, which required an entire team of eight. But though the proportion between these two measures never varied, the *oxgang* was expanded or contracted according to the quality of the land; yet so, that about 40 acres and six acres constituted the maximum and minimum of the *oxgang*.

Antiquaries have doubted, how far it may be inferred that no churches existed in England at the close of the Conqueror's reign beside those which are enumerated in *Domesday*. Undoubtedly the commissioners of survey were required to make exact returns of the number of churches and priests in every district; yet, whatever may have been the reason, this part of their office appears to us to have been very negligently and imperfectly discharged: since to acquit them of all inaccuracy on this head, would lead to more than one improbable conclusion; as first, that all the towns or villages in the north of England enumerated in *Domesday*, of which the names begin with *kirk* or *church*, and those also denominated in whole or in part, *Preston*, where no church is specified, had received their appellation from ancient Saxon churches then dilapidated; and secondly, that many fine specimens, apparently of Saxon architecture, are nevertheless posterior to the year 1080. The exact and distinctive criterion between the Saxon and Norman styles has not

not yet been ascertained, with respect to the latest examples of the former and the earliest of the latter, but we think ourselves justified in affirming that there are some churches unnoticed in Domesday, which, from their diminutive size, great strength, square piers, &c. bear marks of a period greatly anterior to the Conquest.

The character and contractions of Domesday, from their uniformity, are easily mastered, and he who has decyphered the survey of three or four manors, will meet with little to obstruct his progress through the whole volume. We subjoin, however, for the reader's satisfaction, a short specimen of the original, and of Mr. Bawdwen's version. 'In RIPV^o Leuza S' Wilfridi poss. e'e' x caruce, ꝥoc maner' tenuit Eldred, archi n̄c Thom. arch h̄c in dmo ii car' ꝥ i mold x sol ꝥ i piscaria iii sol' ꝥ viii villi ꝥ x bord' h̄ntes vi car. ꝥēi acre x—silva minuta—' which is thus rendered: 'In Ripum Leuga Wilfridi (St. Wilfred's lowy or) liberty in Ripon, there may be ten ploughs—Eldred, archbishop, held this manor—Thomas, archbishop, now has in the demesne two ploughs and one mill of ten shillings, and one fishery of three shillings, and eight villains, and ten bordars, having six ploughs—meadow ten acres—coppice wood.'

The contemplation of Domesday cannot but awaken in the breast of every Englishman other feelings, at present, than those of an antiquary. A conqueror issuing from the northern ports of France, overwhelming, in a single engagement, the collected force of this country, mounting the vacant throne, and then extending the measuring line of an absolute proprietor from east to west, and from north to south; disregarding all rights, annihilating all property, and binding the yoke of military despotism on the necks of an entire nation, is a spectacle at once awful and interesting. 'Were it our cue' to despond at so momentous a period, we might anticipate the multiplied evils of conquest and confiscation; the insolence of recent domination, and the sullenness and dejection of unaccustomed servitude: but we are full of hope and confidence; and cheered by a thousand animating circumstances which meet our view on every side. Our Saxon progenitors, though a brave, were yet a stupid and brutal people, while the bulk of the nation, 'Bordars and Dringes,' (who were not called to the contest,) thought little more, perhaps, of a change of masters, than the ox their fellow-drudge. At present, all ranks feel an interest in the state; all have comforts to enjoy, or rights to defend; more enlightened, but not less courageous than their ancestors, the peasantry, yeomanry, and gentlemen of England, comprehend their advantages, and are unanimous in their resolution to maintain them; the 'carucates and oxgangs' which they received from their fathers, they will transmit-

mit to their children ; and from the dreadful example before them ; derive wisdom and energy to crush the ambitious foe, who should aspire to profane the soil, and stretch, once more, the line of desolation over this free and happy country !

ART. VIII. *Emily, a Moral Tale, including Letters from a Father to his Daughter, upon the most important Subjects.* By the Rev. Henry Kett, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and Author of the *Elements of General Knowledge, &c.*, in two vols. 8vo. London, 1809.

THIS publication arises, as it should seem, from pure good will and affection to the female sex. The author takes the very judicious precaution of informing us in his preface, that he once wrote a certain book called 'The Elements of General Knowledge,' designed, as he gives us to understand, for the edification of the male part of the creation. He is naturally unwilling to leave any cause for the suspicion that he is less favorably disposed towards the other sex ; and accordingly sends forth the present work, designed exclusively for their service.

The volumes are ushered in with a glare of exalted names, which dazzles the critic's eyes almost to blindness. They are dedicated, 'by permission,' to no less than five princesses of this realm. These illustrious ladies, it should seem, are ever ready to aid by their gracious patronage any undertaking, which has for its object the advancement of useful knowledge and sound morality.

And, as far as regards the design of Mr. Kett, we freely allow that this patronage is, on the present occasion, well bestowed. The design of infusing into the minds of females a zest for useful information and polite learning—of guarding their morals by sound practical precepts—of giving a right tone to their feelings and dispositions—of cultivating and refining their tastes—of turning their attention from mere outward accomplishment, to pursuits of real and solid value—is too intimately connected with the general improvements of social life, to be ever deemed of inferior importance. Indeed, there is no feature in the character of the present times, which we contemplate with greater pleasure, than the increased and increasing care employed in training and informing the minds of females through the higher and middling ranks of society.

When however we proceed to consider the execution of the design, we are compelled to express very considerable doubts whether the literary merit of the work at all answers to the illustrious patronage