THOMAS

BEWICK

LIFE

AND

WORKS.

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THE LIFE AND WORKS
OF
THOMAS BEWICK

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS CAREER AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN ART

WITH

A NOTICE OF THE WORKS OF JOHN BEWICK

BY

DAVID CROAL THOMSON

With One Hundred Illustrations

LONDON

“THE ART JOURNAL” OFFICE, IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW

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DEDICATED

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TO

AN ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRER OF
BEWICK'S GENIUS,

JOHN RUSKIN, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., &c.

WHOSE WRITINGS HAVE ADDED GLORY

TO THE

ART OF THE PAST,

AND

WHOSE TEACHING HAS GIVEN GREATNESS

TO THE

ART OF THE PRESENT.

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PREFACE.

It has long been an acknowledged want in artistic biography that no comprehensive volume on the Life and Works of Thomas Bewick, the recognised father of the Art of Engraving on Wood in England, has hitherto been published. At various times and in different ways—as memoirs in journals, as notices in newspapers, and as biographical accounts forming prefaces to lists of his works—the outline of the story of Thomas Bewick’s career has appeared; but, except in one instance, these have not aimed at giving in detail a narrative of the interesting episodes in the artist-engraver’s long, fruitful, and well-spent life.

This one exception is “A Memoir of Thomas Bewick, written by himself,” published upwards of thirty years after his death. It was edited by Jane Bewick, the engraver’s eldest daughter, “a very superior woman, animated, intelligent, and gentle.” In this the record of the early life of the artist is in every respect acceptable,* but the narrative of the later period does not give a satisfactory account of the engraver’s achievements; and it enters into the discussion of questions on which the writer had not expended more study than is given by an ordinarily thoughtful man.

The purpose of the present work is to show the engraver more than the politician; the pictorial designer in place of the religious advocate; the energetic artist and graphic moralist rather than the letterpress teacher.

In carrying out this end, the following pages, in many instances, take a bibliographic form. This is not mentioned to be apologized for, as it is necessary in describing Bewick’s works; but that the ordinary reader may not be disappointed in finding so much space devoted to the purely technical portion of the scheme. To the admirer of Bewick’s prints, and to the collector of his works, the particulars of books (which have never

* Mr. Ruskin recommended it to his Oxford students as one of the first Art books they ought to obtain.

previously been given in the same way) will be considered the most practically serviceable part of the whole.

It has been my rule, throughout the long study necessary to compile this volume, not to describe any engraving without having seen it. Every endeavour has been made to insure accuracy, yet it is scarcely to be expected that, in detailing so large a number of works, errors of commission or of omission should have been wholly avoided, and the reader's indulgence is craved for any that may be detected.

The authorities which have been specially consulted are : Bewick's Memoir, 1862 ; Hugo's "Bewick Collector," and the Supplement to the same ; G. C. Atkinson's Memoir of Bewick ; Chatto and Jackson's "Treatise on Wood Engraving ;" Fox's "Synopsis of the Newcastle Museum ;" Bell's "Catalogue of Bewick's Works ;" and F. G. Stephens's "Notes on Bewick."

I have to thank the following gentlemen for information supplied during the preparation of this volume :—Dr. Joly, Dublin ; Mr. Crawford J. Pocock, Brighton ; Mr. J. W. Ford, Enfield ; Mr. C. Welsh, London ; the Rev. Mr. Wray, Ovingham ; Mr. R. S. Nisbet and Mr. E. T. Nisbet, Newcastle, with other friends in Northumberland ; also Professor W. H. Corfield, London, and Mr. Thomas Allan Croal, Edinburgh, for special information and assistance. My thanks are also due to the Rev. Mr. Pearson, Messrs. Griffith and Farran, Messrs. Chatto and Windus, the Rev. Mr. Buckley, Mr. C. Hopper, Mr. Salkeld, and Mr. Mozley, for the loan of blocks ; and to Mr. W. Bowman and Mr. H. Bowman for a perusal of, and permission to make extracts from, Mr. J. E. Bowman's manuscript. I have also to thank the subscribers to the volume who so quickly came forward in response to the circular issued in November last, and to hope that the publication will meet with their approval.

D. C. THOMSON.

LONDON, *June 1st*, 1882.

Feeding the Fowls. Vignette in the "Looking Glass for the Mind."
From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE ART of Engraving on Wood in England, though never practically lost from the period of its first introduction about the end of the fifteenth century, was in a very languid condition at the time when Thomas Bewick was apprenticed in Newcastle in 1767. Professors of the Art did then certainly practise in London, if not also in other places in England, but their productions were of a very feeble kind, though they served to keep alive the traditional methods of this branch of Engraving.

In other countries at the same date Engraving on Wood was, as also in England, discarded, in the case of important work, for the practice of engraving on copper. France appears to have been the only nation whose wood engravers exhibited works of merit during the interval between the end of the sixteenth century and Bewick's time, but even the engravings of Nicholas Le Sueur and John Michael Papillon are good only in the sense of being the best of their age.

For the finest early examples of works of Art multiplied by having been cut on wood we have to look to the German Schools; to the masterpieces of Albert Dürer, Louis Cranach, Hans Holbein, and other artists of the country where such works were first produced in Europe. Few, if any, of these early

designers cut their own drawings on the wood, this part of the labour being given over to men (and it is said sometimes to women) who had no knowledge of Art, but who knew how to cut wood round the lines drawn on the flat surface, and who worked under the guiding eye of the draughtsman.*

The works of Thomas Bewick are of quite a different class. They, too, as designs, are of the supremest quality. They were not only conceived and drawn, but were also engraved by him. As the productions of a thorough artist, each may be looked on as exemplifying the legitimate condition of the Art of Engraving on Wood, as opposed to plate engraving, and as different from simple wood cutting. A wood engraving ought, as a matter of course, to be a work which cannot be given in a better way by any other method for the purpose for which it is intended to be employed. The greatest use of wood engraving is to have it worked together with type for letterpress printing, and this being what no other method of artistic production could, until very recent years, readily be adapted to, therefore the first consideration is the fulfilment of this condition. It is quite possible so to engrave a wood block that it cannot satisfactorily be printed from.

The most artistic work is what is termed "white-line" engraving, obtained by cutting the lines forming the picture into the wood. Facsimile engraving, or as it is sometimes, though perhaps not quite correctly, called, "black-line" work, is produced by cutting away the wood so as to leave the lines drawn by the artist untouched—cross-hatched or otherwise—a style now much more extensively practised than the former. For this less freedom can be allowed than for the other, as the engraver or cutter must carefully, almost servilely, avoid the artist's pencil strokes, and show his skill (and that sometimes he does admirably) by trained hand

* It is to be remembered, therefore, in examining these old German woodcuts, that while the designs are, for the purpose, of the highest quality, the engraving, or, more exactly, the cutting of these blocks is only a mechanical result, and one not at all to be admired for its own sake, it being often rude in the extreme.

work only, as the head can scarcely enter into the labour. At the same time it is to be observed that it is possible to combine the two methods, as is done in many modern wood engravings.

It is also proper that in an engraving on wood each line should be cut with definite meaning, without inaccuracy, and also without undue hesitation. It may not by multiplicity or rigidity of line invade too far the province of plate engraving, and thus lose the advantages afforded by wood over metal; nor of etching by unnecessary looseness or trickily obtained mystery. It must for a basis have open, honest, sound work, such as can only be produced on wood, and not by any other style of engraving.

It may be thought little to claim for Thomas Bewick's works the correct observance of these conditions; yet it was as necessary for him to observe them as it must and ever will be for engravers who wish to practise their Art, not as imitating steel-plate work or original drawings in pen and ink on paper, or any other method, but as the distinct and beautiful Art of Engraving on Wood. That Bewick satisfied these provisions will be at once and without debate admitted, and it is only necessary to add a few words on his claim as a master in his profession.

In the first place we find him as a youth, with fewer advantages for observing artistic labours than are now yearly afforded to thousands of children, able, before he has terminated his seven years' apprenticeship, to produce works very greatly in advance of his master; in twelve years more to engrave blocks beside which the works of the best contemporaries are meagre and commonplace; and in another twelve years to render himself, by his truthfully drawn designs, the first engraver in the world. The "Select Fables," the "History of Quadrupeds," and the "History of British Birds" reveal on every page the superiority of his talent in depicting with his pencil and graver the correct form and true spirit of those animals which every one may contemplate with admiration.

This was a very great change in Wood Engraving. Until his time it had

been content to show outlines wanting the finish of a shaded drawing, or prints usually occupying, amongst copper-plate illustrations, a place of a very inferior kind. Before Bewick's day, also, there had been little attempt at transcript from nature, and conventionality reigned supreme.

The change from conventionality to natural forms was one that could not have been brought about except by one possessing the royal stamp of genius. And with this Thomas Bewick was certainly endowed. He also had the humbler, yet quite as necessary, gift of perseverance; and together these led him to approach nature in simplicity, to receive her lessons with faithfulness, and to depict what he saw with unfailing certainty and loveliness. Thus it was with the Figures in the Birds and Quadrupeds. With the Vignettes for these works and in the Fables it was somewhat different, for here his grave humour as well as his glorious veracity displayed itself, and showed another side of the artist-engraver's powerful mind.

When Bewick began his labours artistic Wood Engraving did not exist. He led it from mechanism to untrammelled and enduring excellence. It is perfectly probable the change would have come by other means, if not through his exertions; yet it must have been slower and less individual, "here a little, there a little, line upon line," and therefore less striking. Reforms and changes in all things must come, but because of this certainty we are none the less to honour the immediate instruments who stimulate to new or more vigorous life. Bewick may only have been the inevitable exponent of a reformation, but none the less are we to bow before the heaven-born gift of ability to carry that reformation to a successful issue.

The Common Snipe. The "History of British Birds," Vol. II.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND SCHOOL LIFE.

THOMAS BEWICK, whose works in the art of engraving have been, from the time of their production, increasingly admired by every class, and whose career it is proposed to trace in the succeeding pages, was born on the 12th of August, 1753, in a small cottage standing on a slope overlooking the river Tyne, in the county of Northumberland.

His father, John Bewick, who was born in 1715, supported himself and his family partly by the proceeds of a land-sale colliery which he rented, and partly by farming. He married comparatively early in life, but his wife dying childless, he was married again to Jane Wilson, the daughter of a Cumberland farmer, who was born in 1727, and who became the mother of the illustrious engraver. Cherryburn House, where they went to live, is nearly twelve miles in a westerly direction from Newcastle, and close

to the little village of Eltringham, in the parish of Ovingham, whose church is on the opposite side of the river Tyne.* Bewick in his writings mentions that his mother, when still young, had been chosen housekeeper to the curate of Ovingham, the Rev. Christopher Gregson, and while there the Cumberland lass won the heart of the widower. Mr. Gregson was, in after-years, one of the warmest friends the engraver had, and Bewick records with satisfaction how readily the clergyman acknowledged the value of his young housekeeper. Mr. Gregson, whose stipend was not great, had a number of pupils to whom he imparted education, and he found his housekeeper as helpful on account of her ability to superintend the Latin lessons of the learners, as of her proficiency in her more special duties. From this scene of combined mental and practical responsibilities she was taken to preside over the cottage at Cherryburn in 1752.

Here, the next year, Thomas Bewick, eldest of the family, was born. The 12th of August was the day on which he celebrated the anniversary of his birth; but there was, even to himself, some doubt of the precise date, and it may possibly have been the 10th or the 11th of the month. A tablet erected to the artist's memory in Ovingham Church gives the date as August 12th. The parish register only records the date of his baptism, which took place at Ovingham on the 19th August, 1753.

In due time the family increased until the children numbered eight—five girls and three boys; but, with one exception, we have here very little to do with them. The exception was the second son, John, born about March, 1760,† who, inspired by his brother's example and precept, also became a celebrated engraver. William, the third son, lived until 1833, when he died at the ripe age of seventy-one; Jane, the youngest child, was fifty-six when she died in 1825; Hannah, the eldest girl, died in her brother Thomas's house at the Forth in Newcastle in 1785, aged thirty-one. There

* See Sketch Map, p. 37.

† The parish register does not contain the exact day: the baptism took place on March 30th, 1760.

were also Agnes (born 1756?), Ann (born 1758?), and Sarah, born in 1766, who was cut off in early maidenhood in 1782.*

The house at Cherryburn where Bewick was born is to-day sadly different from what it was in the engraver's youth; yet the surrounding scenery still possesses much of the character and beauty described in the Memoir written by himself, and published in 1862.

"At the south end of the premises was a spring-well, overhung by a large hawthorn bush, behind which was a holly-hedge, and further away was a little boggy dean with underwood and trees of different kinds. Near the termination of this dean, towards the river, were a good many remarkably tall ash-trees, and one of oak, supposed to be one of the tallest and straightest in the kingdom. On the tops of these was a rookery; the sable inhabitants of which, by their consultations and cawings, and the bustle they made when building their nests, were among the first of the feathered race to proclaim the approaching spring. The corn-fields and pastures to the eastward were surrounded by very large oak and ash trees. . . . To the westward, adjoining the house, lay the common or fell, which extended some few miles in length, and was of various breadths. It was mostly fine green sward or pasturage, broken or divided, indeed, with clumps of 'blossom'd whins,' foxglove, fern, and some junipers, and with heather in profusion, sufficient to scent the whole air. Near the burns which guttered its sides were to be seen the remains of old oaks, hollowed out by time, with alders, willows, and birch, which were often to be met with in the same state."

The cottage where Bewick was born still stands amidst trees and greenery, and the Cherryburn still runs down the steep incline to the river, though the water is less than it was in Bewick's time. The landscape, though not so heavily wooded, is doubtless much the same as the young artist saw it; the river can be heard and seen in its course to the harbour of the Tyne; and the rooks still congregate in the neighbourhood, though their former homes in the ash-trees have long since disappeared.

* In the "*Archæologia Æliana*" the Rev. Anthony Hedley gives the derivation of the name Bewick, which is applied to various places in the northern part of Northumberland. He says Bewick is "one of the few Norman appellations in the county; imposed, probably, by the monks of St. Albans, who, with the church at Eglingham, had very early possession of the township and other lands in the same parish. It is composed of *beau*, fine, pretty, and the Saxon *wick*, in allusion to the happily chosen site of the village of Old Bewick."

This cannot but be noted by the visitor of the present day; and the natural beauty of the spot renders the mind ready to receive a favourable impression of the house where the father of English wood engraving was brought into the world. But alas! instead of a neatly kept cot, as might be expected, the "house" is found to be a stall, a covering for useful and picturesque, but at close quarters not too agreeable, animals—a veritable byre with all its unpleasant odours. There is nought but the bare walls which enclose the space occupied by the room of the celebrated Cherryburn; there is now neither window, fireplace, nor chimney, nothing of any kind to show it once was inhabited by human beings; merely four plain stone walls, with an opening only at the door, and over it there is written, "Thomas Bewick born here."

Cherryburn.

The accompanying cut gives a view of the "house" in its most favourable aspect. The artist and author of "The Tyne," Mr. W. H. Palmer (Messrs. Bell and Sons), has rendered it with all the beauty its surroundings lend, but

his artistic sense has hidden the cottage itself as much as possible from sight. Ardent hero-worshippers may wish to view the very room where the great engraver and moralist was born, but the environs will be the attraction for most people—the scenes from which Bewick drew many of his inspirations, the Northumbrian hillsides where, as Mr. Ruskin says, he “grew into as stately a life as their strongest pine.”

Around, far and near, the country is one noble picture of beautiful river scenery diversified with rocks and foliage, vividly recalling the vignettes in the *Birds* and *Quadrupeds*. Here a corner of river border-land, with trees above and rocks below; there a distant view of a cultivated hill-side with farmhouse nestling among the trees. One time a tail-piece is recalled by a ferry-boat waiting for passengers; at another by a glimpse of the ruins of Prudhoe or of the Norman tower of Ovingham Church. The entire country, to one acquainted with Bewick's cuts, is filled with a series of delights and surprises. A journey there, even in the present day, unfolds the wonderful fidelity of every landscape Bewick drew, and fills the visitor with admiration and enthusiasm for the delineator of the grand simplicity and truth of nature.*

Bewick's father, though not rich, was not by any means one of the poorer sort. In the pit which he rented he employed a number of miners, and his profits from the colliery must have been enough to make him a person of some consequence.† Charnley, in his slight memoir, mentions that he “was considered a great wit in his part of the country; and being possessed of a vast fund of anecdote, was in the habit of entertaining customers with his

* The family who reside at Cherryburn at the present time are descendants of Thomas Bewick's youngest brother, William. The house has been built since the engraver's youth, and is a large structure much more suited to modern requirements than the little cottage of Bewick's birth.

† A Land-sale Colliery is a colliery where the coals are sold only by land-sale, *i.e.* they are sold at the pit's mouth and carted away, or else sent overland by rail in trucks. In speaking of a land-sale colliery it is meant the coals wrought from that colliery are not shipped. In most offices separate books are kept for “Land-sale Coals” and “Shipment Coals.”

stories, so long as he had company at the colliery." He was a man not unlike in personal appearance what his son afterwards became. "He was a stout, square-made, strong and active man, and through life was a pattern of health," relates Bewick in his Memoir. "He never would prosecute any one for theft; he hated going to law, but he took it in his own hand, and now and then gave thieves a severe beating." But he "could not be troubled to harbour ill-will in his mind, and if he were passionate he was equally compassionate."

He was always rather severe with his son, but the boy knew how to evade any punishment his father thought necessary to inflict. In one instance young Bewick had given some trouble, and he relates how he did not dare go to his usual sleeping-place until his father's passion had subsided. He cautiously remained hidden for a time, knowing that if he kept out of sight his father's displeasure would evaporate, and he would altogether escape chastisement.

From what is related it is evident that the miners had occasionally no easy time with their employer's eldest son. All sorts of tricks were played by the scarcely controllable boy on the pitmen, who, ignorant and superstitious, were easily frightened at ghosts and unaccountable occurrences, of which young Bewick was often the origin. But though the boy sometimes played on their fears, he was also capable of appreciating their readiness to assist each other in moments of danger.

As will be seen in the appendix, in an extract from an unpublished manuscript, it is said that Bewick worked in the pit with his father's men; and though this is a statement unsupported by other evidence except Dovaston's, it is not at all unlikely that he did sometimes go down the pit. It may safely be presumed that he was constantly about the mine, and familiar with the methods of labour, and it is certainly no disparagement to the greatness of the artist that he was able to free himself from the debasing associations of the miner's life. Granting that he put his hand to the pick-

axe, the fact only further displays his strength of character in the early choice he made of the high pursuits of an artist-engraver.

As the boy's years became greater he was sent to school: not so much that he should learn, but that he might be kept from mischief. Doubtless, as the family increased, the parents were glad to have their restless "laddie" sent even for half the day, when they could be free from anxiety concerning him. The teacher appreciated the circumstances, and did not press his young scholar at first with many lessons, and Bewick was some time at school before he mastered his alphabet, not to mention words even of the smallest size. The teacher, though thus discreet at first, did not very long allow his pupil so much freedom; he was a pedagogue of the old school, and thoroughly believed in the use of the birch. Soon after, Bewick was made to feel the "delicate persuasiveness" of the instrument, and, as he relates, the master frequently beat him unjustly for not learning what he was not advanced enough to comprehend. The master, in short, was a cross-grained and rather ignorant old man, without sufficient capacity to teach, and without enough cunning to rule, the boys. After a tremendous struggle one day between him and Bewick, in which the master's shins suffered severely from the iron-hooped clogs of the scholar, the spirited boy ran away, and did not make his appearance at school again until another teacher had been appointed. He "played the truant every day," he says, and in a little burn or rivulet not far off he entertained himself by making dams and swimming boats, probably very much in the manner shown in the frontispiece to Volume II. of the "*History of British Birds.*" When a new schoolmaster was installed Bewick was sent to see how he would succeed with him, and as the new-comer proved to be a man as naturally suited for his post as the former one was unfitted, the boy soon made friends with him, and mastered his lessons as quickly and as happily as his parents could desire. Between the time of his breaking the shins of the old master and his return to school, young Bewick had been frequently subjected to

chastisement, both by his father and his mother, in order to compel him to go back to his lessons. The good couple had, no doubt, some anxiety over the refractoriness of their eldest boy. It was not a very terrible crime, however; boys have always been, and ever will be, truants when they are dissatisfied and can obtain an opportunity of escape. But Bewick's mother had received a fair education herself, and it must have given her serious pain to perceive in her son what could only have appeared symptoms of a disposition to despise book-learning, and which might, to the nervous apprehension of a devoted mother, seem leading to something worse. Good lady, though she did not live to witness the greatest of her son's achievements, she survived long enough to see all her best desires fulfilled. Her anxieties disappeared ere long, owing to the character her son established as a successful and respected citizen, and in the filial respect his growing intelligence began to pay to his parents.

When not at school young Bewick made himself useful in running errands. In a letter written after he had left Cherryburn over fifty years, he relates his well-remembered experiences of earlier days. "When a boy," he says, "I was frequently sent by my parents to the fishermen at Eltringham Ford to purchase a salmon, and was always desired not to pay twopence a pound; and I commonly paid only a penny, and sometimes three-half-pence."*

The second teacher Bewick was under at Mickley school only lived to occupy the position a few years, and the boy was then sent to another master. This was to Ovingham, which, like Mickley, is about a mile from Cherryburn, but in an opposite direction and across the Tyne. There the Rev. Mr. Gregson, Bewick's mother's former employer, still received boys as day

* From a letter dated April 26, 1824, to a friend on "Salmon destruction in the Tyne." Another extract from this letter is curious to read at the present time. "I have been told," Bewick writes, "an article had always been inserted in every indenture of apprenticeship in Newcastle that the apprentices were not to be forced to eat salmon above twice a week, and the same bargain was made with common servants."

scholars, and sometimes girls too, and the boy was now handed over to him. Bewick's former character for unruliness was somewhat injudiciously imparted to the new master by the father. The hint given at the same time was acted on, and the pupil was rather severely treated. But Bewick bore no resentment for what he felt he partly deserved, and an intimacy began between teacher and pupil which afterwards ripened into friendship between man and man.

The Turkey. "History of British Birds," Vol. I.

Winter. From a vignette in the "History of British Birds," Vol. I.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST GLEAMS OF ART.

IT has been well said that "we need no testimony of the preternatural sort" to make us believe Bewick must have been very early in the habit of noticing natural beauties as well as the village surroundings in which he was placed. We have no difficulty also in believing that he took much delight in endeavouring, to the best of his ability, to make representations of their forms. Though it is evident no forcing or training could have developed Bewick's genius, and it was as natural for him to turn to artistic pursuits "as the sparks fly upward," yet we love to learn the little details of how he first came to depict the familiar objects in his works. He was emphatically a student of nature; he loved its sincerity and simplicity. Before he had seen any works of artists he began to show a strong indication of his taste, and nature and the little details of cottage life provided him with everything he longed for. It was at first only occasionally that the indications of his affection for such things were seen, although they were as characteristic of the fully developed artist as of the embryo delineator of

nature. From the little window of the tiny bedchamber at Cherryburn he early observed how the seasons changed from the beginning of spring to the end of autumn : how “the bushes and trees began to put forth their buds, and make the face of nature look gay,” until the first frosts of autumn bared the branches, and clad the landscape in another and quite as wonderful covering. Besides taking notice of these varying aspects, he was commencing to put his thoughts and feelings into actual shape. When at the parsonage school he filled the unoccupied portion of his books and slate with sketches of any object which came before him, and when the blank spaces of the books were full, he occupied his play-hours among the gravestones and in the church porch by drawing figures with a piece of chalk.

Thus Bewick went on, spending his time between his lessons, his parents’ errands, and his chalky sketches. His teacher ridiculed him, and his father reproached him for “mis-spending his time in such idle pursuits.” But without much heed of the punishments inflicted by either, he persevered in making the best he could of the poor implements for drawing he possessed, until a friend who had taken an interest in the boy’s doings presented him with some paper to sketch on. This being supplemented by brushes and colours, he was then able to make proper drawings. Hitherto he had found it necessary to work on his knees with his chalk ; at home, he relates, he had covered much of the stone floor with his sketches ; but now he was able to sit at table. At first by pen, ink, and a little blackberry-juice, and afterwards with his brushes and shells of colours, he made representations of animals and figures, or whatever took his fancy. In the eyes of the rustics of the hamlet these drawings appeared like the revelations of a great painter. It must have been at this time that Bewick first felt the indescribable pleasure of having his works admired. They were indeed only the first weak movements of the designer who was afterwards to soar so high above his contemporaries ; the beginnings of the moralist whose achievements were yet to hit hard at the frailties of his associates. But to

the people who seldom or never saw how pictures were made, the struggling genius of the boy was in its results like the finished performances of a trained artist. Their admiration was unbounded. They did what few north-country people will do without some right good reason—they put their hands in their pockets, and paid hard cash—not much, indeed, but still cash—for the little drawings which he designed.

The artistic labours of the boy were entirely the outcome of his innate feeling. At this time he had never received a lesson, and it is doubtful if he had ever heard of drawing with a pencil. In Northumberland, among the villagers, Art was almost unknown. The only specimens of painting with which they could be familiar were the glaring sign-boards of the inns in the villages. At Ovingham, the nearest one to Bewick's home, there were painted signs at the White Horse, the Salmon, the Black Bull, and the Hounds and Hare, as well as the King's arms hung in the parish church. These seem often to have haunted the boy's mind; yet from them he could have formed little idea how to make drawings on paper or stone. There were also views of battles, and portraits of the principal leaders, hung round the room of the house at Ovingham where, as a boy, Bewick left his dinner "poke" on his way to school. These, which were also "common in every cottage and farmhouse throughout the country," were the only rude representations he was familiar with in his early youth, and it was from them, if from anything besides his own genius, that he received his first ideas of the art of making designs. How little real art they possessed let any one imagine who has seen the ordinary village painter's performances. The sign of the Hounds and Hare seems especially to have taken the lad's attention. It was much less ably painted than the others in the village, and he arrived at the conclusion that he might be able some day to produce a better hunting scene himself. Subjects of this nature were those which pleased his rustic purchasers best. In his productions, as he mentions, the huntsmen, horses, and dogs

were, in his own as well as in his patrons' opinion, quite correctly represented.

Bewick relates in his Memoir that it was at this time he commenced to have a real love for and appreciation of the birds and beasts which were in and around his home. He tells how keenly he listened to the debates and stories current amongst his father's friends, and how he frequently went with a company who would start, "it might be in the chase of the fox or the hare, or in tracing the fowmart in the snow, or hunting the badger, at midnight." In such excursions Bewick was made familiar with the haunts and habits of many animals: of birds as well as beasts. During snow-storms, also, the boy sometimes perched himself carefully just within shelter in order to watch the birds which, tamed by hunger and extreme cold, came close to the house at Cherryburn. This was a kind of scene Bewick seems always to have been fond of, and in several vignettes in his works he depicts such subjects with great success. The design standing at the head of this chapter is one that appears in the "*History of British Birds*," vol. i. The snow man is another splendid example of a winter scene; and the houseless, hungry ewe, with its kid seeking nourishment where none is to be found, is one of the most pathetic of the exquisite series of tail-pieces.

It is interesting to notice how Bewick's early observation of the animal creation asserted itself. He had great satisfaction in observing the practices of the feathered inhabitants of the surrounding woods, and also the performances of the ants and bees whose haunts he came across. He relates with what pure delight he watched "the birds, their nests, their eggs, and their young." The bees, returning laden with their morning spoil, were particularly noticed by him, as one of his employments was to watch before the hives to destroy or frighten away the wasps which approached to plunder their wiser and richer neighbours. The actions of spiders were sources of never-ending wonder to him; and with ants he experimented, by overturning their work

and watching their manner of living, until he was thoroughly acquainted with all their characteristics.

Some painful incidents which happened at a hunting excursion in the neighbourhood gave Bewick a great dislike to this pursuit. He came to feel that however exhilarating and exciting the chase may be to man, the hunted animal has nothing to think of but terror and fatality. On another occasion the youthful Bewick's compassion was strongly aroused by his unexpectedly knocking down a bullfinch with a stone. Often had he thrown missiles at birds, but no victims previously had fallen into his hands. This time the wounded bird fell from the tree half dead, and as he examined it he felt the full force of what he had done, and as a result, it was the last bird he killed, though, as he truly adds, "many indeed have been killed since on my account."

Had Bewick lived at the present day he would have been foremost in all the philanthropic movements relating to the prevention of cruelty to animals. Perhaps, however, he would have been more anxious to promote their welfare by agitating for rewards to those who were kind and attentive to their charges than to punish those who were harsh. His theory of such matters was, that by praising and honouring those who did their duty with marked distinction, an example was given to the vicious which would be of more efficacy than all deterrent regulations.

Dog-fights, cock-fights, and man-fights were among the common entertainments of the peasants of the period, and Bewick was often present at a set-to. With such performances he acknowledges he was not much displeased, though he seems to have been more amused by the grotesque grimaces of the spectators than with the unhappy combatants. How hard must Bewick have felt it to dissociate himself from the habits of the people with whom he thus passed his early life! It is little short of a miracle that he was able to retain exalted feelings on the relationship of brute to man, for these ordinary exercises of his neighbours could only blunt the

finer sentiments of an average human being, and even to Bewick the difficulty of keeping clear of the taint must have been very great.

Bewick's earliest life has now been sketched, and, as we have glanced at his first dozen years of existence, we may pause to consider how fit he was to go out into the world to fight the great battle of life. Although it appears his education did not extend any great length beyond the usual elementary tasks of reading, writing, and arithmetic, it is certain that in these at least he got a thorough grounding. He never was passionately fond of reading; but in the matter of written composition it cannot be said he was at all deficient, and in his later life his work in this way deserves the very highest praise. With figures he never had much to do except in his own business transactions, and in these he was always shrewd enough. In handwriting his letters and manuscripts show that he had been very carefully taught to handle his pen: his correspondence was ever the model of neatness, and in spelling he had fair accuracy. In drawing—the principal employment of his long life—he had not received any lessons, and though he had to use chalk at first, the timely present of drawing materials enabled him to proceed with facility. Though his genius had found a loophole through which to display itself before he possessed proper implements, he understood and quickly acted on the maxim, that “The best materials make the best work.” We do not know all the subjects he tried to draw when he was young; but in after-life he always accompanied a wonderfully feathered bird or a lifelike quadruped with a faithful representation of a country scene, or a little pictorial anecdote wherewith to “point a moral or adorn a tale.” For this work, in which he was yet to succeed, the less formal training he had the better: he needed no interference from skilled hands to teach him the manner of representing the truths he saw around him; some guidance at first would necessarily have been advantageous, but complete academical training would have utterly spoiled him. But certainly no training was better than bad

training; and though it might be interesting to speculate how Bewick would have bent his genius had he received competent teaching—for, as Mr. Ruskin tells us, Bewick “without training was Holbein’s equal”—yet, after all, it was best as it happened; and above everything we have to congratulate ourselves that no teacher of the false or feeble order had any hand in rearing Thomas Bewick.

The Hungry Ewe and Lamb. From a vignette in the “General History of Quadrupeds.”

The Butterfly and Boy. "Select Fables" of 1776 and 1784. From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

CHAPTER III.

APPRENTICESHIP.

WHEN Bewick's father saw that his son possessed such a strong inclination for drawing, he wisely left off exhorting him to follow other pursuits. He decided that the boy should commence as soon as possible to make use of his gift, and he had him apprenticed to an engraver. This was not accomplished until after careful deliberation. It was apparent that some business connected either directly or indirectly with drawing was the most suitable for young Bewick, and at first a bookseller and printseller was thought of, where he would have met with work calculated to develop his inclinations. However, Ralph and William Beilby, engravers, Newcastle, hearing through the boy's godmother that he was looking for an opening, and being in want of an apprentice, called at Cherryburn to talk the matter over with his parents. After giving an account of their business, no doubt as glowing as possible, for they had heard the boy was clever, it was settled

that Bewick should be sent on trial to Ralph Beilby, who, together with his business of engraver and enameller, undertook other work of a very miscellaneous kind. He engraved the faces of brazen clocks, door-plates, and all kinds of seals; on steel, silver, and gold; mourning rings, coffin plates, invoice heads, and bank-notes, with only an occasional job in what they were afterwards to become famous—the execution of woodcuts for printers. In fact, Ralph Beilby, with his brothers, became the “common resort in several useful arts and accomplishments;” they declined nothing which came under the headings of engraving, chasing, or enamelling; they were hard-working, honest men, with a desire to do good work when they were paid for it, but when an order came for cheap labour they never refused it, but did the best they could for their customers.

Bewick spent some time with Beilby, and gave sufficient satisfaction for the time to be finally decided when the contracting documents were to be signed. It was a woeful day for the boy, who had hitherto spent his life in the country. At school he had had some liberty, and when he felt he wanted more he took a holiday and bore the punishment. But now he was to be chained to a room all day long. Even when night approached and work was over, his master’s eye would still be upon him, ready to note any trifling misadventure or censure any wrong; and the position was dreadful to contemplate. He had been sufficient time in Newcastle both to like the business and esteem his master; but, as he says, “to part from the country, and to leave all its beauties behind me, with which I had been all my life charmed in an extreme degree, I can only say my heart was like to break.” The day approached, and half willing and half reluctant, a little happy that he was to prosecute the drawing he had ever been thinking about, but very sorrowful to exchange his country freedom for town bondage, he was taken by his father on the 1st of October, 1767, to be apprenticed to the Newcastle engraver.

While the father and son rode on horseback to the town, the elder dis-

coursed to the younger on the many temptations he would be confronted with, and how he might avoid them; he spoke of truth, honesty, and religion; he impressed his son with feelings the boy had never previously considered; he instilled sentiments of humility into his son's mind; and he spoke practically of the business they had more immediately in hand. "He urgently impressed upon me," Bewick records, "to do my duty to my master, in faithfully and obediently fulfilling all his commands, to be beforehand in meeting his wishes, and, in particular, to be always upon my guard against listening to the insinuations and the wicked advice of worthless persons whom I would find ever ready to poison my ear against him."

Ralph Beilby was only twenty-four years old when Bewick was apprenticed to him. He was the third son of a once well-to-do goldsmith and jeweller in Durham, who had become insolvent and removed to Gateshead-on-Tyne, opposite Newcastle. The goldsmith's eldest son, Richard, was apprenticed in Birmingham, and there learned the business of seal engraving. William, the second son, was taught to enamel and paint on glass in the same town. Richard taught Ralph, Bewick's master, seal cutting, and William taught a younger brother and sister what he had learned. Ralph Beilby was considered by his apprentice to be one of the best masters for teaching he could have obtained; he obliged his assistant to put his hand to all descriptions of work, fine or coarse, and thus Bewick had, in after-life, many more resources than most engravers when he desired to accomplish any end to assist him in business.

When the brothers Beilby visited Cherryburn to see for themselves what the boy was like of whom the godmother spoke so well,* young Bewick had the opportunity to go either with William or Ralph Beilby; he, "liking the look and deportment of Ralph the best, gave the preference to him," and he goes on to say, "My grandmother having left me twenty pounds for an

* It is stated in an account of Thomas Bewick which appears in the "Annual Biography," vol. xiv., that Beilby accidentally discovered the boy at work making chalk drawings on barn-doors, and thus was led to engage him.

apprentice-fee, it was not long till a good understanding between parties took place." During the seven years of his apprenticeship Bewick lived on good terms with his employer.* Disputes with his master, and one notable quarrel with his master's family, did certainly occur; but it was not until years afterwards, when the engravers became partners and the business of publishing was carried on, that real contentions and unfortunate misunderstandings arose.

The terms of the indenture were not finally settled until some minor difficulties had been overcome. Beilby had heard some tales of the boy's turbulency; and it took the persuasion of the Rev. Mr. Gregson, as well as another friend, to convince him that Bewick was likely to prove as satisfactory in business habits as he also deemed him to be in capability. His teacher had recognised the error that had been made since he was first told of the petty misdoings of the boy, and he was doubly anxious that no second misconception should arise. He laid special stress on the fact that Bewick was never either sulky or saucy, nor likely to prove revengeful. In the end Beilby accepted him as an apprentice, agreeing to teach him the art and mystery of engraving—not specially on wood, but that too if his patrons should furnish him with commissions.

It was also settled that Bewick should form one of Beilby's family, taking his share in the household duties as well as in the workshop. At first he was allowed considerable freedom when not engaged in business; but one Sunday evening (Sunday was often an unlucky day with Bewick) he, as related in his Memoir, became embroiled in a fight with "three low blackguard 'prentice lads," who, after provoking a quarrel, fell all three upon him, and blackened his eyes and scratched his face. His appearance was an unpardonable crime to the mind of his master, and after this he was compelled to submit to comparative imprisonment—at least the country lad considered it so; and

* Compare with Chapter VII. and Appendix, Notes on a visit to Thomas Bewick in 1825.

doubtless the reading of "the Bible or some other good book" was sorely against his inclination even on Sundays, although he always had the profoundest reverence for religious matters.

In taking the course of sending his boy to the employment of his choice, Bewick's father deserves credit for his appreciative perception of his son's latent talent. In glancing over the early lives of painters, how often have we to lament that the elder people around the young artist should have been so dull in observing signs of the youth's genius whose charge lay to their hands! Happily it was not so in Bewick's case. Like every one, he had obstacles to encounter; but to his parents' honour be it said, when once they perceived the bent of their son's mind, and that it was not "mis-spent time," as at first they naturally supposed, they encouraged him to persevere with his art; and they never afterwards could have had a moment's doubt that they did right in allowing their son's wishes for exercise in drawing to be completely carried out.

Louisa and the Boy who sold the Birds. "Looking Glass for the Mind." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

The Bears and the Bees. "Select Fables" of 1776 and 1784. From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST ATTEMPTS AT WOOD ENGRAVING.

THE time had now arrived when Bewick was allowed to apply himself steadily to the art by which he is known to the world. At first his exercise with Ralph Beilby, his master, was to copy a set of published designs styled "Copeland's Heraldic Ornaments," and—to quote his own words—"this was the only kind of drawing upon which I ever had a lesson given to me by any one. I was never a pupil to any drawing master, and had not even a lesson from William Beilby or his brother Thomas, who, along with their other professions, were also drawing masters." This is written in good faith, and is perfectly credible as far as it goes; but, although no formal lesson was ever received by Bewick, yet the mere fact of his being at times

a witness of others working with the pencil must have assisted him considerably in attaining to proficiency in drawing.

As may be observed from the work done during his early apprenticeship, his hand frequently failed to depict what his imagination suggested or his eye witnessed; and it was only after practising hard as well as seeing the progress of drawing in others that he arrived at his power of draughtsmanship. Every one who has essayed to draw knows that watching an artist at work, or even seeing a picture or drawing in progress from time to time, is in reality as good a lesson as if the artist had taken some pains to explain the reasons for his methods. Bewick, having been for some considerable time an inmate of Beilby's house, must have heard much of that distinctive talk which belongs to artistic families; this being often repeated would lead him to understand the mode of manipulating artistic tools, and thus greatly smooth the way over the mechanical difficulties of his art. And, after all, what teacher can do more than point the way a pupil ought to go, and leave him by his own industry or genius to achieve greatness?*

Bewick appears to have been afraid that some day it might be asserted that he received teaching from those more advanced in methods while he was still learning. He seems only dimly to have recognised that it was his personal genius alone which his contemporaries wondered at, and which succeeding generations would so much admire. No one cares, in looking at his works now, whether or not he received lessons at some remote period in his history; the desired result was obtained, and that being what had not previously been accomplished, it was and is duly recognised and esteemed.

Bewick may therefore be said to have been advantageously placed with his first employer. Though Beilby could never ultimately have hindered Bewick from becoming what he did, yet had the young artist been placed in

* It is right to mention that Charnley, the bookseller, says that Bewick "employed his leisure hours in improving himself in drawing under the care of a master;" but he omits to give any authority for this statement, so contradictory to the engraver's own testimony.

a less favourable position he might have spent many years longer in learning his proper sphere of action.

The first work that Bewick was put to in the art of engraving on wood was blocking out or rough-hewing the wood round the lines for diagrams; not very high art it is true, but necessary. The diagrams having been drawn on the smooth surface of the boxwood, he was taught to cut away the corners or large open spaces between the lines, but without approaching the marks very closely. This was Bewick's occupation with the blocks for the diagrams in "The Ladies' Diary," edited by Charles Hutton, and also for the cuts for the same writer's "Mensuration." After the boy had gone as far as he was permitted, Beilby took the blocks and finished them. But this was work that Beilby did not enjoy; his delight was to ornament silver with the elaborate chasing in which he really excelled; so, finding his pupil apt to learn, he soon allowed him to execute the blocks from first to last without any assistance.

Dr. Hutton, the mathematician mentioned, published a statement in 1822, giving the story of Bewick's first woodcuts in a somewhat different though substantially the same manner; adding, moreover, details which are full of interest to those who wish to know exactly how Bewick first came to engrave on wood. He says, "The first edition of the work on 'Mensuration' was printed in Newcastle in 1768, where I then resided as a mathematical master, and it becoming necessary or convenient to have the numerous diagrams which occur in the work executed on wood in that town, and having during the course of several visits to London seen the process of cutting similar diagrams, I applied to Mr. Beilby to execute those which I required. I explained to him the process, and he agreed that the apprentice should undertake the work, and in consequence I procured the necessary blocks of boxwood from London, with the tools proper for cutting or engraving them, with instructions how to cut and square the blocks, and to cut or engrave on their smooth faces the necessary lines and letters in the diagrams, by which,

and in frequently attending them for their instruction, we got the cuts tolerably well executed as they then appeared in the first and all subsequent editions. Thus, then," concludes Dr. Hutton, "I was the instructor of the very ingenious Mr. Bewick in his branch of engraving, which he has since carried to such a high state of perfection."

There is some pardonable pride in Dr. Hutton claiming to be Bewick's teacher after the engraver had risen to the most prominent place in his profession. Bewick himself does not explain in his Memoir how the wood and working implements were obtained, and as there is no record of any earlier work on wood done by him, we must give some weight to Dr. Hutton's relation of the incident.

Dr. Hutton's "Mensuration" was illustrated with numerous diagrams, and was completed in 1770. In it appear what are undoubtedly the earliest of Bewick's works, but beyond this fact there is very little interest attached to the volumes. The only cut which gives the mildest indications of promise is that of a diagram on page 42, in which is introduced the spire of St. Nicholas' Church in Newcastle. It is tolerably accurate, but very primitive in its treatment, and the house at the side—so disastrously out of perspective—gives little indication of its being the work of an engraver who was to gain distinction. Two of the copper-plates in the volumes are the work of Beilby (in the dedication and on page 600); otherwise the diagrams are understood to be Bewick's workmanship. The "Mensuration" was published in parts by subscription, the first number appearing in 1768. It is now rarely to be met with, but except to those who desire to possess every work undoubtedly Bewick's, the scarcity is no loss.

"The Ladies' Diary," of about the same date, with which Dr. Hutton was connected, also contains some of Bewick's very earliest work; but, like those in the "Mensuration," the cuts are diagrams, and exceedingly uninteresting. The sub-title of the book is "The Woman's Almanack, containing new Improvements in Arts and Sciences, and many entertaining particulars

designed for the Use and Diversion of the Fair Sex." A portrait of Queen Charlotte embellishes the title-page, but this could not have been Bewick's work, as the same head had been many years in use.

It was for the illustrations of these books that Bewick employed the double-pointed graver of his own making, so as to produce a clear line at one effort. The incident is related by G. C. Atkinson in his sketch of Bewick, published shortly after the artist's death:—"Bewick thought of making a chisel with two points, which being immovable would not fail to produce a line of equal thickness. There was a difficulty—no one could make him a tool sufficiently fine; here, however, his ingenuity again befriended him, for he covered the steel with a coat of etching-ground, and by the application of an acid easily procured a cavity of the requisite form, and found the tool answer every expectation. From this time he devoted himself more exclusively to wood engraving: his success in cutting the figures for Dr. Hutton, and their easiness of execution when compared to the heavy, laborious work he had been before engaged in on metals, gave a bias to his inclinations which led him almost entirely to relinquish the other branches of the art in favour of wood engraving." Several tools such as those described were among the collection at the Bewick Exhibition in Bond Street in 1880. It is a curious fact, however, that modern engravers have almost entirely given up using such implements, although at one time they were pretty extensively employed.

In little more than a year after Bewick began his apprenticeship he was also able to produce a small woodcut which brought him into considerable notice. This was the representation of St. George and the Dragon, executed for the bar-bill of the public-house of that name at Penrith. It was the first cut done by Bewick of a kind more ambitious than the diagrams, though its execution could not have called forth much ingenuity. It was an advance, however, in the right direction, and being so much better than the cuts ordinarily seen ornamenting the legend of pints and glasses, Beilby

and his apprentice became talked about; the Northern worthies over their potatoes noticing and criticizing the cut. Shortly afterwards another block was produced for use in a similar way for the Cock Inn, a celebrated house at the head of the Side in Newcastle. There is no difficulty in believing that these cuts were looked on as productions of a very superior nature when compared with the wretched contemporary engravings. Relatively crude they are in comparison with the artist's maturer efforts, but they have a certain natural air wanting in the work of others, and to Bewick collectors they are exceedingly curious, as they afford an interesting study of the engraver's earliest blocks.

A little book, "Moral Instructions of a Father to his Son," gives a favourable idea of what children's books were like at the time Bewick was commencing his labours. This was one of T. Saint's publications. He had heard of Beilby's apprentice by the little designs for the bill-heads, and he gave several orders to Beilby for blocks for juvenile works published by him. Saint was a prominent bookseller in Newcastle, and it was from his shop that most of Bewick's early works appeared. For the "Moral Instructions" Bewick had something to do, but only a few of the cuts are his. They are all, throughout the work, very small—scarcely the size of a penny—and in design and execution are of an order which at the present day would be scorned even by children. The cuts illustrate a series of fables which in the letterpress form a distinct part of the book from the Instructions, and are named, "Select Fables on the most important occasions in Life: from the Ancients." There are thirty-four cuts in all, and many contain crude representations of animals. The illustration to the Fox and Bramble fable is one of the more advanced, and may possibly have been Bewick's work; it contains a representation of a hunt with dogs, horsemen, and fox, of a similar idea as that displayed in many of his more advanced cuts. Several of the designs bear, in like manner, a certain relation to the cuts in Gay's and the "Select Fables," and it might be possible to find a linked connection between them and these early productions.

Miss Bewick is stated to have given her opinion that the cuts were engraved by her father, with the exception of one of a ship at sea done by a fellow-apprentice. In a copy of the "Moral Instructions," once the property of Miss Bewick, is inscribed the name of Thomas's younger brother John, showing that the book was well known in the family.

In 1776 Saint published the first of his editions of the "Select Fables," a work much better known in the 1784 edition and the more recent reprints by Mr. Pearson than in the original. In some instances the cuts in the 1776 edition are the same as in the fables of the "Moral Instructions," but the majority are different, and fourteen at the end are from the blocks afterwards used to illustrate the third part—Fables in Verse—in the 1784 publication. There are in all one hundred and twenty-eight engraved head-pieces to the Fables, and one (used also in 1784) on the title-page. There is a copper-plate frontispiece, signed "R. Beilby delin^t. et sculp^t," where Æsop is shown discoursing, surrounded by animals of various kinds—a design repeated on wood for the "Beauties of Æsop," 1822. The arrangement of the 1776 is different from the 1784 edition, being prefaced by an address "To my Friend," signed "The Editor," containing a few words of counsel to the readers of the work. Then follow, as in 1784, the Life of Æsop and an Essay upon Fable, occupying sixteen pages. The Fables, "Part I. After the manner of Dodsley's," come next, there being some difference in the letterpress; and the forty-eight cuts, like those in "Moral Instructions," are rather poorly drawn and engraved. In the sixty-six "Fables with Reflections" the cuts are of the same quality, while the difference is greater in the letterpress, many fables appearing which are not repeated in 1784. The "Fables in Verse" only number fourteen, as against twenty-six in 1784.

Some of the first one hundred and fourteen cuts are much better in design and execution than others—the Snipe Shooter, page 48; the Angler, page 50; the Horse and Ass, page 66; and the Discontented Ass, page 148, being among the best. The great charm of the book, however, lies in the fourteen cuts

illustrating the third part, *Fables in Verse*. These fourteen, with one exception, are repeated—printed from the same blocks—in the 1784 edition, and they show the immense advance Bewick had made in his art in a short time. The cuts at

The Discontented Ass.
"Select Fables," 1776.

the beginning of the volume are the early work of Bewick, while the fourteen referred to are known to be his work of a later period. In the former we have the young engraver struggling against technical difficulties, and not quite able to overcome them; in the latter we have the artist growing into the moralist, telling the story of the fable with strong, firm hand, not

yet indeed quite perfectly, but in a manner sufficiently plain to mark the true genius of the engraver. A fac-simile of the Discontented Ass at page 148 is introduced here to show the style of the early cuts in the 1776 *Fables*, and at the same time an impression is given from the original block of the same subject in the 1784 edition, page 142. The treatment is quite different, but the smaller cut is nearly as well drawn as the larger, and though less of a picture, possesses some artistic value, especially when taken in comparison with other cuts of the period. The Bears and the Bees at the head, and the Sow

The Discontented Ass. "Select Fables," 1784. From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

and Peacock at the end of this chapter, both appear in the 1776 and the 1784 editions, as also does the Butterfly and Boy on page 17, all being printed from the original blocks executed by T. Bewick. The only cut in the 1776 edition which does not appear afterwards is the illustration to the fable of the Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow. This is here given as a reproduction from the rare

print, the chief point in the design being the figure of the cat just going to spring on the "wanton sparrow" of the fable.*

The Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow.
"Select Fables," 1776.

"A prowling cat the miscreant spies,
And wide expands her amber eyes :
Near and more near Grimalkin draws,
She wags her tail, protends her paws ;
Then springing on her thoughtless prey,
She bore the vicious bird away.
Thus in her cruelty and pride
The wicked wanton sparrow dy'd."

The change which Bewick wrought in juvenile literature is one of his noteworthy triumphs. To improve the style of infants' books may seem a trifling matter, but there can be no question that a child brought up among the elegant toy-books of the present day must have an æsthetic feeling that never could have been hoped to be implanted by the pitiable pamphlets of Bewick's earliest days. The revolution Bewick's art brought about in these little works is felt to the present time. He led the way with the amusing and, to young folks, entertaining alphabets of illustrated letters; he followed by introducing rational and pleasing designs for fables and story-books, until they slowly but surely took the place of the paltry illustrations he found. As their influence became more and more widely spread, they paved the way for the high-class books of to-day. Colour he only very occasionally tried on his engravings, but he first demonstrated the fact that children are most satisfied with what is lastingly good, even in black and white; and while the influence of the hopelessly bad cuts became

* "The Looking Glass for the Mind," by John Bewick, has a block with a similar design. In the reproduction it will be observed that two lines run through the design. These were drawn the whole length of the page in the volume in the author's possession, from which the cut is taken. The fable, as noted, was not inserted in the 1784 edition. Is it possible that this volume, which is very rare, is the one employed by Saint when compiling the later publications, the cut being marked through to show that the page was cancelled?

feebler, that of his thorough work became stronger, and by its example led others into the right path.

Though Bewick had already given evidence of his superiority in wood engraving, his master was not able to allow him much practice in that branch of the business, because orders for other kinds of engraving far exceeded those for woodcuts. Bewick had, indeed, some cause to grumble. Being often engaged in the engraving of clock-faces, in polishing copper-plates, and in hardening and working steel seals, his hands became as hard as a blacksmith's, and he said he felt almost inclined to give up the business. He persevered, however, in his apprenticeship, and in time the firm of Beilby, together with the apprentice, became so well known that commissions for woodcuts got to be more frequent. They were only like an oasis in the desert, which causes the surroundings to appear more dull, yet they gave hope of future pleasure and prosperity; and for the love of his art Bewick performed the disagreeable duties as silently as he could, while his mind dwelt on the potentialities of the better-beloved work of engraving on wood.

There are several little books which have always been included in lists of Bewick's works, and while it is almost certain that the young engraver executed many of the cuts therein, yet some doubt exists, as Bewick himself did not acknowledge them in after-years—possibly, as he said of the 1820 Fables, because he did not feel inclined “to feed the whimsies of bibliomanists.” One of the earliest of these was printed in 1771 by T. Saint for W. Charnley, and was called “A New Lottery Book of Birds and Beasts for Children to learn their Letters by As soon as they can Speak.” This book, of which there are at least two editions, is now very scarce; it contains forty-eight tiny cuts, which have much of the appearance of Bewick's first work; it is said, indeed, to have been the third work for which he executed cuts. On the first page there are two complete alphabets in Old English characters; following this each page alternately contains the letter of the alphabet and

small cuts of objects whose titles commence with the letter opposite. Each letter has one or two illustrations, according as it had been found easy or difficult to obtain subjects; the birds are, as a rule, superior to the quadrupeds, the Lark being especially good, though the Elephant and the Ass possess considerable animation.

Another miniature book which Bewick is thought to have illustrated is the "New Invented Horn Book," containing twenty-four very small cuts not unlike those of the Lottery Book. The "Child's Tutor and Entertaining Preceptor"—Saint (three editions)—also possesses sixteen very primitive designs, of which Garrett—a personal friend of Bewick—wrote, "Engraved in the first year of Bewick's apprenticeship, though he was afterwards ashamed to own them." These books are in all cases entered in modern catalogues as containing the works of Bewick. The difficulty in deciding if they really are his has been mentioned; but from the fact that Bewick in his Memoir says that his master received orders for cuts for children's books chiefly from Saint, and as these illustrations possess merits vastly superior—poor as they are in execution—to anything of the kind contemporaneously published, they may be safely placed amongst the engraver's earliest labours.

The Sow and the Peacock. "Select Fables" of 1776 and 1784.
From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

Angling. From a Vignette in the "History of British Birds," Vol. II.

CHAPTER V.

FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES.

FOR many months Bewick lived with his master's family, but his share in the domestic work having led to some disagreement, he not unwillingly left Beilby's home and went to live with an aunt, Mrs. Blackett, who resided in Newcastle. The immediate cause of Bewick's dispute with his employer was some offensive remarks made to him by one of Beilby's brothers in regard to the part Bewick took in stable-work. We may believe that only a slight offence would give him excuse to withdraw, as he could not forget the ever-recurring irritation of confinement on Sundays. This may the more readily be credited when it is said that the dispute in question did not lead to further rupture otherwise than in household arrangements, for Bewick appears to have continued in friendly relation with the brother with whom he was indentured.

Shortly after Bewick went to reside with his aunt he made the acquaintance of a man who, though never rising above a humble position, seems to

have had sufficient strength of mind to make a deep impression on Bewick's yet imperfectly formed character. This was Gilbert Gray, who had lately settled in Newcastle as a bookbinder. He had been intended for a clergyman, but not liking their ways he travelled from his home at Aberdeen to Edinburgh, entered the service of Allan Ramsay, the pastoral poet, as shopman and binder of books, and after a sojourn there he removed to Newcastle.

"This singular and worthy man," relates Bewick, "was perhaps the most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with. His moral lectures and advice to me formed a most important succedaneum to those imparted by my parents. His wise remarks, his detestation of vice, his industry, and his temperance, crowned with a most lively and cheerful disposition, altogether made him appear to me as one of the best of characters. In his workshop I often spent my winter evenings."

Bewick goes on to tell how a number of young men were also in the habit of visiting Gray's shop, "many of whom," he says, "I have no doubt he directed into the paths of truth and integrity." By steadily pursuing a temperate mode of life he accumulated small sums of money, and "this enabled him to get books of an entertaining and moral tendency printed and circulated at a cheap rate. His great object was, by every possible means to promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth, and to prepare them for becoming good members of society." Gray was in the habit of sitting beside Bewick whilst he was engraving, and being possessed of a reflective mind which led him to think and speak much on the men and manners of the vicinity, the two became intimate friends notwithstanding their disparity of age.*

There can be no doubt that the instruction received from Gray had a powerful influence on Bewick. It is seen in the similarity of the two men's

* Mr. Ruskin, in "*Ariadne Florentina*," quotes Bewick's eloquent description of Gray's character, which tells "consummate and unchanging truth concerning the life, honour, and happiness of England." The passage is one of the most notable in Bewick's writings.

work. Gray had for his aim the promotion of virtuous and valuable principles in his pupils; Bewick in his wood engravings, especially in the tail-pieces, had exactly the same end in view. And, as has been said, in Gray's strong good sense and knowledge of character we may trace something of the qualities for which Bewick was remarkable.

For some unexplained reason Bewick was cut off from having access to Gray's books, of which there seems to have been some number. Gray's son William, however, who had a separate bookbinding business, and who was a lifelong friend of the engraver, was in a position to allow his companion to have access to the partly bound works of the authors which came into his hands. And as the son had added special aptitude to his parent's teaching, his business was even of a better class than his father's, and Bewick, through his kindness, had thus an opportunity of studying the best writers of the period. Bewick also managed to purchase a few volumes out of his own meagre wages. Beilby's servant clandestinely allowed him to peruse his master's books, so he never was altogether without something elevating to read and ponder over after he had reached an age capable of enjoying the labour of others. He says, indeed, that at this time he cared for few other acquaintances besides his books.

He had, however, pursued his studies too heavily. After the close attention required for the business of the workshop the further steady application was too much for his health, and a physician had to be called in. Beilby had noticed the pale looks of his apprentice, and was disposed to do all he could for his useful assistant. The doctor pronounced the boy "as strong as a horse," though at the same time he commented severely on his master keeping him so much chained to the working bench. Bewick was instructed to take regular pedestrian excursions, and this having been systematically performed, there was no further need for the doctor.

During his walks, the sweetest medicine that could have been prescribed for Bewick, he frequently visited his father's house at Cherryburn. One

writer declared that when he did so, and when the river Tyne was too swollen to cross, he was in the habit of shouting his inquiries over the flood; and having given and received his messages, contentedly returned to Newcastle. This, however, Bewick contradicted, calling it "babbles and nonsense," so far as the shouting was concerned, though he admits he once did such a thing. "It never happened but once," are his words, "and that was when the river had suddenly swollen before I could reach the top of the allers (a small plantation), and yet folks are made to believe that I was in the habit of doing it."

Weekly visits to his parents were from this time kept up by Bewick during his apprenticeship, and indeed also for years afterwards, lasting long after the doctor's orders became unnecessary. He was in the habit of going to Cherryburn, returning on the same day; most likely on Sundays, when he had his leave. His other holidays during his apprenticeship were at Easter and Whitsuntide, as agreed on when taken into Beilby's employment; but these were occupied mostly with angling, a pursuit of which Bewick was, like many Northumbrians, most passionately fond.

"Well do I remember," he says, in one of the passages in his Memoir, "mounting the stile which gave the first peep of the curling or rapid stream, over the intervening, dewy, daisy-covered holme—bounded by the early sloe, and the hawthorn-blossomed hedge—and hung in succession with festoons of the wild rose, the tangling woodbine, and the bramble, with their bewitching foliage—and the fairy ground—and the enchanting music of the lark, the blackbird, the throstle, and the blackcap, rendered soothing and plaintive by the cooings of the ringdove, which altogether charmed, but perhaps retarded, the march to the scene of action, with its willows, its alders, or its sallows—where early I commenced the day's patient campaign. The pleasing excitements of the angler still follow him, whether he is engaged in his pursuits amidst scenery such as I have attempted to describe, or on the heathery moor, or by burns guttered out by mountain torrents, and bounded by rocks or grey moss-covered stones, which form the rapids and the pools in which is concealed his beautiful yellow and spotted prey. Here, when tired and alone, I used to open my wallet, and dine on cold meat and coarse rye bread, with an appetite that made me smile at the trouble people put themselves to in preparing

the sumptuous feast ; the only music in attendance was perhaps the mumuring burn, the whistling cry of the curlew, the solitary water ouzel, or the whirring wing of the moor game."

The accompanying sketch map shows the district between Newcastle and Cherryburn. It is "taken from an actual survey, and laid down from a scale of an inch to a mile, by Lieutenant Andrew Armstrong and Son, and engraved by Thomas Kitchin, 1769." The line of railway from the central station at

The Tyne Valley, from Newcastle to Cherryburn, in Bewick's Childhood.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, which passes Prudhoe, is marked in for reference, but otherwise the map represents the country as it was in Bewick's day. The best way to go, for any one wishing to visit Bewick's birthplace, is to take train from Newcastle to Prudhoe station, ten and a half miles ; and after inspecting the fine old ruins of Prudhoe Castle, proceed by road to the village of Eltringham, close to which is Cherryburn House, described in an earlier chapter. Crossing the ferry at Eltringham there is a pleasant walk to Ovingham, Bewick's burial-place, and the traveller can then return to

Prudhoe station by ferry, or continue down the river to opposite Ryton, by which means a good idea of Bewick's country may be obtained.* When the weather is fine the most enjoyable way to visit these places is to drive out from Newcastle, by the western turnpike, as far as Walbottle, and by Newburn and Wylam to Ovingham and on to Eltringham ferry, where the water is usually fordable: should it not prove so, a drive of half an hour will take to a stone bridge up the river, and the return journey can be made on the southern bank of the water by Cherryburn, Mickley Square, Prudhoe, Ryton, Blaydon, and Gateshead, over the Scotswood suspension bridge to Newcastle.

The road which Bewick followed when journeying to see his parents would be varied at different times, but as he always spoke of going by Ovingham, it is tolerably certain that he preferred the northern side, leaving Newcastle by the Sand-hill and the Close, and proceeding along the river to Scotswood, Newburn, and Wylam, at that time "beautiful, with a deal of wood," to the ford at Eltringham, where he was wont to cross. The Scotswood Road was not then in existence. He may also occasionally have gone up the hill to the western turnpike, passing the famous Denton Hall, where the giants in literature and art in the last century frequently stayed, and then turned down to the river at Walbottle, obtaining magnificent views from the elevated roads; but we may be sure he would get down to the riverside as soon as he could, so that from Newburn to the ferry opposite Cherryburn is certainly the exact route, so far, taken by Bewick on his long-continued weekly visits.

Another of Bewick's favourite walks was to the little hamlet called Elswick, which he sometimes visited as often as three times a day. Of this route the Rev. Mr. Turner, in his notice of Bewick in the "Annual Biography" for 1830, gives some interesting details:—

"For many years of the early period of Bewick's life, he made an invariable

* In the latter the actual walk would be about seven miles, but by returning to Prudhoe it would only be about three miles.

practice of visiting every morning a farmhouse at Elswick, then a small village about two miles distant from Newcastle, and indulged himself in partaking of hot rye cake and butter-milk, a repast which was regularly prepared by Goody Coxen, the respectable hostess of the cottage, for such of the Newcastle pedestrians who were inclined to enjoy a morning walk before the business of the day commenced."

What is now known as Elswick is a neighbourhood in the town of Newcastle, being one of the wards of the town, which nearly comprises what is called the "West End." But in former times, before the town had spread out so much in that direction, there was "Low Elswick" and "High Elswick." The former lay near the river, not far from where Sir W. Armstrong's Elswick Engine Works now stand; the latter lay higher up, on what was formerly called Elswick Lane, but is now known as Elswick Road. It is likely that Bewick went along by the Close, to the famous "curds and cream house," which is said to have been situated in Low Elswick, where Armstrong's works now are. This place was long the resort of pleasure-seekers, who hired boats after partaking of curds and cream, and had a row on the river.

Bewick relates how happy these apprentice years were when he went on his excursions by the river, and he goes on to tell how he trained himself to temperance and exercise by what, in constitutions less hardy than his own, would surely have laid the seeds of future trouble. He, however, did not think so, but considered his method a sure one to health and happiness. He says :—

"On setting out upon my weekly pedestrian 'flights' up the Tyne, I never looked out to see whether it was a good day or a bad one; the worst that ever fell from the skies never deterred me from undertaking my journey. On setting out, I always waded through the first pool I met with, and had sometimes the river to wade at the far end. I never changed my clothes, however they might be soaked with wet, or stiffened with the frost, on my returning home at night, till I went to bed. I had inured myself to this hardship, by always sleeping with my windows open, by which a thorough air, as well as the snow, blew through my room. In this way I lay down, rolled in a blanket, upon a mattress as hard as I could make it. Notwithstanding this mode of treating myself, I never had any ailment, even in the shape

of a cold, while I continued to live in this way." And further on he adds, "My travelling expenses for the day were commonly only a penny or twopence for crossing the water."

Bewick was now quite a man in stature and appearance. He grew to be nearly six feet in height, although, being stout in proportion, he scarcely seemed so tall. He was possessed of courage and great strength, qualities that he was somewhat proud of displaying. At one time, it is told, he was forced to combat with two miners who assaulted him near his father's house. Disdaining the powerful frames of his opponents, and his own disadvantage of being one against two, he fought them together, and his strength was tried and his courage tested. He stood his ground with vigour; he was the aggrieved party, and he did not hesitate to employ all the skill he had gained when practising soldiers' drill with the veterans of the village. He caused his adversaries to acknowledge they were beaten, and, as he termed it, he "paid them both well."

The Sheep and the Bramble Bush. "Select Fables," 1784.

From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

The Hound and the Huntsman. "Gay's Fables," 1779. By Thomas Bewick.
Lent by Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

CHAPTER VI.

WORK DURING APPRENTICESHIP.

AFTER living some time with his aunt, Bewick left her and went to lodge with a flax-dresser called Hatfield. This was not altogether a desirable change for the young engraver, Hatfield having a number of rather disreputable acquaintances coming about his place. Although Bewick felt displeased at their ways, he still remained in his lodgings; yet it is right to mention it was only for a time that specimens of the very lowest class of the flax-dressing community resided with his landlord. Hatfield, besides his regular business, eked out his earnings by breeding canaries, and this brought another class of people frequently to the house. These were mostly dealers, who made their living by trapping and rearing birds.

Mixing much with those people in the evenings, Bewick listened with interest to the tales they had to tell of the feathered creation. It is easily understood that to one like Bewick such stories would have more than ordinary attraction. He had been brought up in the country, where he had himself seen many a device to entrap the birds; and interested as he was in all things relating to animal life, it is not to be wondered that he found

the company agreeable. The associations there helped to foster the feeling he had never lost, of love for birds and animals, and served as a link to the time when he would achieve distinction in depicting them, and, no doubt, they "had something to do with developing the naturalistic tastes of the artist, which were so strongly brought out in future years."

At this time Bewick acquired the wholesome experience of learning the true value of money. North-country people are often credited with the quality of knowing well how many shillings are in a pound, or, to express it more nicely, how many pence are in a shilling, and Bewick seems to have entered deeply into the spirit of this quality. In after-life he was ever good at a bargain, though he never went very far into the region of niggardliness. His wages from Beilby were, no doubt, small, and it is said he helped to make the sum serve his wants by bringing a brown loaf every week from his mother. He paid Hatfield only ninepence weekly for his lodging, and a *British Quarterly Reviewer* (the Rev. Dr. Vaughan), in 1845, said that—

"He actually tried the experiment of the minimum upon which he could contrive to live. The sum he arrived at, as being necessary to existence, was very small, but it afforded a *calculus* by means of which he could estimate what was really requisite to a comfortable independence. Unlike many men of genius he was early prudent, economical, and industrious. His mind was essentially homely, even amidst the finest of its aspirations."

Towards the end of Bewick's apprenticeship, Saint, the Newcastle publisher, gave to Beilby, and through him to Bewick, a commission to execute the cuts for a volume he proposed to publish, "Fables by the late Mr. Gay;" being persuaded to do this, doubtless, on observing the growing capacity of the apprentice to delineate subjects suitable for such compositions. The Fables for which engravings were required were written by Gay about 1726, at the suggestion, it is said, of the Princess of Wales, made when the poet read his tragedy of the *Captives* to her Royal Highness in 1724. The Fables had several times been illustrated. In 1746 they were published in London,

with designs by Kent, Wootton, and Gravelot, and another edition was issued in 1755. Saint proposed to make an edition smaller in size than these, but more elaborately embellished; the volume, when complete, containing sixty-six head-pieces for the Fables, and a number of vignette tail-pieces.

The work was not issued until 1779, or five years after Bewick's apprenticeship was over; many, if not most of the blocks, however, being engraved prior to the end of his engagement. Beilby seems to have exerted himself to produce the illustrations as well as could be done; the frontispiece, which he engraved, being one of his most carefully wrought works. Bewick, too, entered into the work with much enthusiasm, and produced cuts in advance of anything he had yet executed. He was a great believer in the power of fables as a means of inculcating virtue, and in his Memoir dilates on the advantages to be gained by their perusal:—

“It is the duty of parents and guardians,” he says, “to endeavour, with the utmost care, to discover the capacities and fitness of youth for any business before they engage in it. . . . But the fondness of parents for their offspring is mostly such as to blind them in forming a judgment, and disappointment is sure to follow. It would be well,” continues he, “for such parents to read Gay’s fable of ‘The Owl, the Swan, the Cock, the Spider, the Ass, and the Farmer.’”

In this edition of Gay’s Fables the most notable engraving is the well-known cut called “The Hound and the Huntsman,” on page 132 of the work. The design, which appears at the head of this chapter, is a carefully drawn man on horseback, whipping a dog which has disturbed the hunting party. “The Huntsman to the clamour flies, The smacking lash he smartly plies.” This is surrounded by a floral border of neat workmanship. At a glance it is evident that much thought had been spent on the design, but it is also evidently the work of one who was only feeling his way and trying his strength. The sentiment of the composition nevertheless is complete. This cut has often been called the Huntsman and Old Hound (as, for instance, in the *contents* of Bewick’s Memoir), a title first given to it in the 1820 Fables.

For some years the Society for the Encouragement of Arts (London) had offered prizes or premiums for the most successful specimens of the "Polite Arts," among them being engravings on wood. The competition was announced by the Society in the following manner:—"For the best engraving on wood or type metal for illustrating books, and capable of being worked off with the letterpress, twenty guineas. One or more specimens of the engraving, united with the letterpress, to be produced on or before the first Tuesday in February, 1775. N.B. The representations of animals, plants, and machines, or proper designs for head or tail-pieces of chapters for the decoration of books, are the designs desired to be produced in claim for this premium."

Beilby had been so satisfied with the cuts for Gay's Fables that he sent the Hound and the Huntsman, it is said, with four others, to the competition. Bewick's name was honestly attached to the works by his master (something of the same kind is springing up amongst modern employers of skilled labour), and the result was that Bewick was awarded the second prize of seven guineas as the designer of the five cuts. The twenty guineas were not always awarded in one prize. The successful competitors in the 1775 examination were, as shown in the register of the premiums and bounties given by the Society under Awards for the Polite Arts, 1775, "Engraving on wood: Mr. William Coleman, £7 7s.; Mr. Thomas Bewick, £7 7s.; Mr. Thomas Hodgson, £6 6s." Bewick was offered a gold medal (it could not have been very large) or the seven guineas in cash, and preferring the ready money, he received it a few months after becoming a journeyman, but before he had left Beilby's workshop. The seven guineas Bewick gave to his mother, and he remarks, "I never in my life felt greater pleasure than in presenting it." "On this occasion," he further says, "amongst the several congratulations of kind neighbours those of the Rev. Mr. Gregson, my old master, stood pre-eminent. He flew from Ovingham, where the news first arrived, over to Eltringham, to congratulate my father and mother."

Mr. Gregson had spoken out kindly and decidedly for his pupil when there seemed a fear that the negotiations for the apprenticeship would fall through, and in many other ways had testified his kindly interest in the boy's welfare. Here then was testimony, and substantial testimony, that his confidence was not misplaced, and when he hurried to inform Bewick's parents of the success of their well-beloved boy and his much-thought-of pupil, no wonder, as Bewick says in his old-fashioned way, the "feelings and overflowings" of his teacher's heart "can be better imagined than described."

The volume in which these cuts were first published was dedicated by Gay to William, Duke of Northumberland, as "New Fables invented for his amusement." There are two parts, the first with fifty fables and the other with sixteen, the second part being the fables left by Gay after his death. Besides the Hound and the Huntsman, there are several other cuts which surpass in merit the remainder of the sixty-six illustrations to the Fables. At p. 158 the vulture, sparrow, and other birds are excellent, the cock possesses the same stately character as does the domestic cock in the "History of British Birds;" the dog and fox, p. 153, the jackal and the leopard, p. 204, are faithful drawings; and the vignette used in pp. 81 and 94 is unmistakably like Bewick's later work. The bull and mastiff, p. 36, possess much force of action, the sentiment of the bull enraged at the barking of the dog being thoroughly good; the shepherd's dog and wolf, p. 59, are full of well-defined character; and the landscape background of the Ant in Office, p. 169, is a noteworthy study from nature. The four cuts besides the Hound and the Huntsman, for which the premium is also said to have been given, are not now known, but it is likely they were among those here mentioned.

Besides the works already described as having been executed during his apprenticeship, there were several done by Bewick towards the end of that period. A few engravings on wood and copper were made for the headings of bills and invoices, but they have no artistic value. The cuts in the small

volume called "The Youth's Instructor, or Entertaining Story Teller," were probably wrought by Bewick before he left Beilby. This was first issued in 1774, and the thirty-seven designs seem to indicate that he had a considerable share in their execution.

In 1772 there was published in London a book of "Songs, Comic and Satyrical," by George Alexander Stevens. The cut on page 6 of this is mentioned in the "Bewick Collector" as "thought to be by Bewick;" but it is nearly certain that he had nothing to do with it. The cut represents a table on which three bottles stand: they support a large bowl on their mouths, the two handles of which consist of hands holding small beer pots. The design is simple, it has no artistic value, and the engraving is unworthy of Bewick's weakest imitator. In the 1778 edition the same cup appears, but in the 1801 another takes its place. In the latter edition are a considerable number of cuts which have been "attributed to Bewick."

During his apprenticeship Bewick also did a number of little cuts for "The only Method to make Reading Easy," by T. Hastie, published by

The Beggar and his Dog. "Select Fables," 1784.
From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

Angus, Newcastle. Many of these little cuts possess a considerable amount of sprightliness, and though the execution is immature, the sentiment is well represented in each subject. The book went through a great number of editions; that of 1839, the seventy-third, is the one of which the largest number of copies is now to be found, but the earlier editions, such as the fortieth in 1814, are not difficult to be obtained.

The Pheasant. "History of British Birds," Vol. I.

"Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain."
From Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell.

CHAPTER VII.

END OF BONDAGE.

THE time for which Bewick was engaged with Beilby now drew to a close, and on October 1st, 1774, for the first time in his life, he felt himself at liberty. But though he was sensible of more freedom, he was in no hurry to leave Beilby's workshop. As we have seen, he was still with him when the Society of Arts' premium was awarded in February, 1775, and he continued probably until the spring-time of that year, when the charm of the budding flowers and lengthening days doubtless proved irresistible to his awaking fancies; he then gave up his situation and went back to his father's house at Cherryburn.

But before he did this an opportunity presented itself which, if he had taken, would possibly have lost him to Art. Beilby did much work for a certain Isaac Hymen, a Jew dealer in seals, watches, and trinkets generally. By this man he was frequently employed to do the engraving of the seals, and by a procedure not uncommon still, but dishonest, Hymen represented to his patrons that this work was done by himself. Not only so, but the Jew was clever enough to cause purchasers in Newcastle to believe

that if they bought their seals from him they got superior goods to what Beilby himself could supply. The Jew paid Beilby three shillings and sixpence for what he charged twelve and sixpence, and he sold almost as many as Beilby's and Bewick's cunning hands could engrave, yet Beilby found it no easy matter to sell the same things in his own shop at five shillings. Hymen, in fact, went on until he had monopolized the entire business, and Beilby had cause to complain that not a few of his former customers went past him, and, by praising his rival's so-called work, even contrived to lessen the little business he did in this way. "Our friend Isaac," says Bewick, "continued long uninterruptedly thus to carry all before him, till some of our old customers became irritated at him and . . . took great pains to open out and expose the business;" and he goes on with the reflection that he had "often seen in London 'the pale artist ply his sickly trade' to keep in affluence such managing, money-making, pretended artists as Isaac Hymen; and this must continue to be the case so long as gentlemen will not go themselves to the fountain-head, and be at the pains to encourage merit."

Hymen the Jew saw how much "good stuff" there was in Beilby's journeyman ("I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be *all* sorts of men," says Carlyle), so he offered him double the wages he was receiving to go to canvass for orders for jewellery, and also, no doubt, to engrave the seals; but Bewick had another "notion," and remained for the time in Newcastle with his single guinea a week.

Bewick spent the remainder of the year, 1775, at Cherryburn, doing piece-work both for Beilby and for Angus, the Newcastle publisher. He usually went to Newcastle once or twice a week, and, returning, executed the orders then given, which consisted of various "jobs," as well as wood engraving. Much of his time was also spent in roving about the country, visiting his neighbours. "This was a time of great enjoyment," he says, "for the charms of the country were highly relished by me, and after so long

an almost absence from it gave even that relish a zest which I have not words to describe."

At this time it is also recorded that Bewick proceeded enthusiastically to examine into the habits of the various animals he met with in the neighbourhood. His favourite employment, angling, still continued to be his peculiar delight. During his apprenticeship it was only at intervals that he was able to pursue the "gentle craft," and his hours were then all too short. Now freed from the fetters of a master and at liberty to attend to business when it suited him, he plunged into its staid pleasures. Besides working at engraving, when he was able to tear himself from the fascination of the fishing-rod, he also did a little business for his father in collecting accounts, calling on the farmers and other customers when their bills for coals became due; and, at the same time, when Christmas approached, taking part in the revelry of Yule-tide rejoicings.

This continued until the summer of 1776, when Bewick began to think that his much-desired liberty had become rather dull; and he relates how, sitting one day engaged in his favourite pursuit, it occurred to him that he should like to visit his mother's brother in Cumberland, and he at once determined to start on a pedestrian excursion. His mother was naturally anxious and surprised at the sudden resolve, but after a little explanation, and seeing how determined her son was to go, she gave an unwilling consent. She prepared his knapsack, and, sewing three guineas in his waistband, bade him an affectionate farewell. The idea was the thought of a moment, and no time was lost in carrying out the project. In the afternoon Bewick had been sitting idly fishing, with no definite work in hand nor object in view; the wish for change suddenly came, and by the evening he was on his way on a long walking tour, from which he did not return for fully two months.*

It is not necessary to follow Bewick in this excursion, which he details in

* Compare with Notes on a Visit to Thomas Bewick in 1825 in Appendix.

his writings, as the experience gained by it in an artistic way was considerable. It led him, however, to see nature in many forms, and gave him leisure to observe the charms of the country through which he passed—a part of England and Scotland now yearly haunted by hundreds of tourists. Bewick remained at Ainstable, his uncle's residence, for about a week, and then proceeded by Carlisle, Langholm, Hawick, Selkirk, and Dalkeith to the capital of Scotland. "I had been," he says, "particularly charmed with the Border scenery; the road in places twined about the bottom of the hills which were beautifully green like velvet, spotted over with white sheep, which grazed on their sides, watched by the peaceful shepherd and his dog. I could not help depicting in my mind the change which had taken place, and comparing it with the times of old that had passed away, and in inwardly rejoicing at the happy reverse."

From Edinburgh, where he was "lost in admiration of the grandeur of its situation," Bewick walked to Glasgow in one day, a distance of above forty miles; thence, after some rest, to Dumbarton, and up the side of Loch Lomond into the very heart of the Highlands. In his wanderings he met with much kindness, which he never forgot. Fairs, trysts, and other merry-makings he witnessed in the simplicity of the time, and after a pleasant tour he left the Highlands with more than ordinary regret, and arrived at the old key of the country, the ancient town of Stirling.

His excursion among the mountains was not altogether unprofitable, for reflections of his thoughts during his residence there appear in after-years. "While I was pursuing my ramblings in the Highlands," he says towards the end of his Memoir, "and beheld with admiration the great projecting rocks so often to be seen holding up their bare heads to the winds, it struck me that it was a great pity they could not be converted to some use;" his idea being to fill up the bare places in the hills with names of the illustrious dead of the locality. Other references he makes to this visit, but it is to be noted that

except in the Shepherd reading, p. 112 of the "Birds" (1804), in one of the cuts in Goldsmith's and Parnell's Poems, and in the "Sportsman's Friend," there are no designs which give strong impress of his life amongst the hills.

When at Stirling, Bewick's landlord marvelled at him, an engraver, not carrying his easily packed implements of work with him, as he could have made money by engraving seals and crests for the better-class people among whom he travelled. But Bewick preferred to have a thorough holiday from all work, and though we cannot but regret the time thus in one sense lost, yet the leisure must have been useful for him in maturing his mind, and adding to his knowledge of human character.

Returning to Edinburgh, he prepared to sail for the north of England, and after having some not unusual experiences of sailing vessels, he got back to his native place on August 12th, 1776. The three guineas that his mother provided had lasted well. After his prolonged journey he still had something left on reaching home. The unwillingness of the Highlanders to take payment was the primary reason for the small expenditure, and Bewick adds that "my friends in Newcastle quizzed me not a little for having, as they termed it, begged my way through Scotland."

During the years 1775 and 1776 no work of importance, except the "Select Fables," appears to have been done by Bewick. Beilby and Angus gave him some commissions, but they must have been principally seal cutting and metal engraving, for there is no record of other contemporary publications in wood engraving. The time indeed was purely probationary—a period between the term of apprenticeship and the actual labours of the journeyman; between that of one being taught and the fully furnished worker; between pupilage and mastery. The time was not for action only, but also for thought and preparation; for the mind to take counsel with itself as to its future course of labour. And though Bewick's first undertaking after this period was not immediately carried through—to make his name famous in London—he had

had time to form his plans and think of his position and prospects. When he recognised the error he made not long after in proceeding to the metropolis, he soon made up any loss it entailed, and then trimmed his ship steadily, and sailed without mishap safely and gently along his course until he arrived at the deserved haven of success.

The Departure. "The Deserted Village."
From Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell.

The Deserted Village.
From Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell.

CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST VISIT TO LONDON.

HAVING been away from his Newcastle business so long, Bewick found a goodly number of orders waiting execution on his return ; but notwithstanding his lengthy sojourn in the north, he was not at all disposed to settle down to work in Northumberland. He got through his engagements as fast as possible, and thus having earned sufficient money to pay his passage to London, he started once more from Newcastle. This was only a month after his arrival from Leith ; and, making for the great metropolis, he landed there on the 1st of October, 1776, exactly two years after the expiration of his apprenticeship.

Here Bewick found many Northumbrian friends who gave him warm welcome. William Gray, the son of Gilbert, whom Bewick so much respected ; Christopher and Philip Gregson, sons of the vicar-teacher at Ovingham ; and Pollard, an old friend and an engraver, the new-comer discovered to be both able and willing to assist him in business and social matters. Through the

influence of the last named Bewick obtained a quantity of wood blocks to engrave, and, having made a short inspection of the sights of London, he commenced to labour at them assiduously. Mention is made by Atkinson in his Memoir that Bewick was employed by a certain person called B. Cole, an engraver, but neither he nor Chatto, who quotes the incident in "*The Treatise on Wood Engraving*," is able to point to any works by an engraver of that name; the latter saying that he could not discover any trace of such a person. Cole, however, is known as an engraver on copper, and he executed many well-finished and almost superior plates for works published both before and after the time Bewick was with him. The engraving work of these is clear and well drawn, evidently having been made by one who knew his business.* Carnan and Newbery, the famous publishers of Goldsmith's works, also engaged Bewick for some time, and the connection then begun lasted for many years. Bewick's younger brother John also did many blocks for their publications, a number of which are mentioned further on under the dates of their first issue. Thomas Hodgson, a printer and publisher, a native of Newcastle, also gave Bewick many commissions, having promised them before Bewick arrived in London, a circumstance which no doubt had made him impatient to leave Newcastle.

But though affairs in a business way were prosperous, privately Bewick was far from happy, and earnestly desired to be back to his native place. Twenty-seven years afterwards he wrote to one of his former schoolmates recalling his experience, and giving the result of his residence in London; concluding his remarks by saying that he "would rather be herding sheep on Mickley bank-top than remain in London, although by so doing I was to be made Premier of England." Rightly or wrongly, he was continually squabbling among the young Londoners with whom he came in contact.

* B. Cole engraved the vignettes in "*Orpheus Britannicus*," a collection of songs set to music; the frontispiece to Draper's edition of *Æsop's Fables*; the coat of arms in A. Young's "*Dissertation on Religion*," 1784, &c. There was also an I. Cole, an engraver, who lived earlier.

Sometimes he fought because he thought them impudent, at other times he quarrelled because they sneered at his homely language. Besides disliking the ways of the cockneys, he also found London itself extremely distasteful to his essentially rustic mind. "It appeared to me," he said, "to be a world in itself, where everything in the extreme might at once be seen: extreme riches, extreme poverty, extreme grandeur, and extreme wretchedness; all of which were such as I had not contemplated before. Perhaps I might, indeed, take too full a view of London on its gloomy side. I could not help it. I tired of it and determined to return home. The country of my old friends, the manners of the people of that day, the scenery of Tyneside—seemed altogether to form a paradise for me, and I longed to see it again."

Kind friends expostulated with Bewick on what appeared to them the unreasonable distaste he had taken to London and its people, but no persuasion could turn him from his purpose of going back to Northumberland. "No temptation of gain," he replied, "of honour, or of anything else however great, could ever have any weight with me;" and he said he would rather join the army as a soldier, or herd sheep at five shillings a week as long as he lived, than be compelled constantly to reside in the great modern Babylon.

Bewick would never have been able to achieve much if he had remained in London—no vignettes with charming daylight effects of purely country characteristics—everything would have to be filtered through a mind warped, even though only slightly, by the majority of days spent beyond sight of purely natural aspects. To be confined almost continually to walk in thronged and noisy streets—for even then the streets of London had little country feeling about them, and there were no railroads to whirl the tired worker to distant villages—to see nothing save at intervals of the glories of the fields he knew so well how to appreciate, to dispense greatly with his former frequent walks in green lane and fertile meadow, was more than he could

bear, and would have cut off many opportunities to make the earnest country studies he did. John Bewick, his brother, in after-years went to London, but fell ill, partly through confinement, and died at a comparatively early age. Might not this, too, have been the elder brother's experience, had not his nature so thoroughly revolted at the thought of prolonged residence in London? It is true he had desired heartily to leave his native place, but, like many another young man who feels an inclination to travel, when the hoped-for joys were tasted they were found to be more unsatisfying than he had imagined. The novelty of London life had worn off, he had visited the famous places of the metropolis, and seen the wonders of which he had heard, and it only remained for him to settle down to business; but he found as many difficulties to contend with as ever, and he missed his one grand consolation—his interviews with nature and communion with the rustic spirits in whom he delighted. Therefore his mind was made up to return to Newcastle, and he wisely resolved to leave London at once.

Hodgson, who had given him work, perceived some reason in Bewick's wish to return, and excusing what he perhaps considered only a passing fit of home sickness, kindly promised to give sufficient employment to keep him occupied for several months to come. This proposal Bewick eagerly accepted, for one great fear he had in returning to Newcastle was that he might have to seek business in direct opposition to Beilby, his former master. Bewick had too tender a respect for his old employer to want to detract from his not too extensive business.

It may be well here to mention the results of the work which Bewick did while in London. It consisted mainly, so far as is now known, of several cuts for the "Curious Hieroglyphick Bible," and a considerable number of blocks employed, as Bewick mentions in his Memoir, "in embellishing the endless number of old ballads and histories printed at the office, with rude devices as head-pieces to them." Besides these there must have been a number of other cuts, but they were probably only partially wrought by Bewick, or his

employer has received the credit of their production. It is also said that Bewick executed a cut for a circus advertisement while in London. It represents a man leaping on to the back of a galloping horse, and the work has considerable spirit.

The "Curious Hieroglyphick Bible" deserves some notice, as the cuts are characteristic and authenticated productions. The first date of the publication was 1776. On a proof of the cover in the British Museum the following note is written and signed by John Bewick:—"T. Hodgson has sold three thousand Hieroglyphick Bibles since Sept. last, and is going to print another edition. 1787. . . . 3080 printed since Sep. 1781." The volume, it may be said, is now becoming rare. The cuts, of which there are a large number, are small, and they illustrate "Select passages in the Old and New Testaments," which are "represented with emblematical figures . . . designed chiefly to familiarize tender age in a pleasing and diverting manner with early ideas of the Holy Scriptures." Of these cuts the more notable are: Eve introduced to Adam, the figure of Eve being graceful, and the animals fairly good; Abraham's Sacrifice, which, though poorly drawn, is well composed; the vine on p. 39 is delicate in its decorative slender style; the full-rigged ship on page 43 is also good; and the prophet Elijah in the chariot is "curious." The stories of Joseph, Moses, Samson, David and Goliath, are treated particularly well. The Evangelists are depicted writing their Gospels. St. Matthew listens to an angel, St. Mark meditates beside a lion, St. Luke has a bull, and St. John a large bird. The hieroglyphics are of a still familiar style, being interspersed with words; as, for instance, we have "Six days shall" (then "work" is represented by a man delving, some others reaping, and in the distance a man ploughing) "be done, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of Rest, an holy" (then "assembly" is a large cut, which, however, does not appear in all the editions, showing the interior of a well-filled two-galleried church: on the ground-floor the people stand mostly with backs to the spectator), "ye shall do no work therein," &c. The designs of

the Nativity, the Wise Men offering gifts, the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, and the Resurrection are well composed. Those which more particularly display a feeling of Bewick's later style are the camel, donkey, and sheep on p. 15, the donkey on p. 37, the peacock on p. 43, the fowls on p. 91, the children on p. 122, and the border of cut on p. 134.

On a portrait published in 1815 Bewick is called the "Restorer of the Art of Wood Engraving," but, as has been frequently pointed out since, if Bewick was the restorer, how could he have found ready employment on the art at more than one workshop? It is of course perfectly obvious that however much Bewick may have done for wood engraving, he had no claim to be called its restorer in the sense of its re-finder. He had every title to be styled the reviver or recoverer of the art from neglect, but he had no right, nor did he personally pretend to have any, to be entitled the restorer of wood engraving in the sense of being its re-discoverer. Possibly Bewick was indiscreet in permitting the words to be placed on his portrait, but it amounted to nothing more than indiscretion. Yet though he may have meant the word restorer to be understood in its original sense, he might have known that the hasty reasoning of some would infer that he called himself its re-inventor.

There is less to be said for Atkinson, who, in 1833, wrote the interesting, though short, account of Bewick's life. In it Bewick is styled the discoverer of the lost art of wood engraving. But Bewick was then only recently dead, and Atkinson was possibly carried away by his personal enthusiasm for his friend's character, and too much disposed to apply every panegyric and virtue to one who was only mortal. But no purpose is served in dwelling on such an incident; enough for us to understand clearly that, however much the artistic world owes to Bewick, it does not owe the re-discovery of the so-called lost art of wood engraving.

Bewick's sojourn in London, though it opened his eyes to the competition

he had to contend with, cannot be said to have done him much good. True, it gave him a wholesome knowledge of what others were able to accomplish—although he says he never was allowed to see the engravers actually at work—but this could only incite him to labour more vigorously, and triumph in the end more completely. He now knew the men amongst whom he had to fight for fame, and we may believe he went back to his northern home determined to conquer. It is well for people to see around them while they are still youthful; it is well for them to know that others are struggling to achieve the same end as they; it is well for the countryman to feel that the townsman is striving hard for success, and it is also well for the townsman to know that a countryman, even though half despised, may snatch the laurel before it reaches his expectant hands. Bewick left London with expressed contempt for the “Cockneys,” but in his heart he must have known how small was his chance in contending against those with so many opportunities for study in their favour. But he shrank not from the contest; he was determined to succeed, and though success was still far off, he was able ultimately to surprise and immeasurably excel those who returned his unconcealed disregard with openly vented sneers.

That Bewick did right in returning to Newcastle there cannot be any doubt. In the metropolis he would have been a spoiled countryman, and never a thorough Londoner. The eternal fitness of things declared that Bewick should be an exponent of nature, and this at a time when Turner was only an infant, and Mr. Ruskin and the pre-Raphaelites in the far-off future. Bewick was forced to leave London; none of his thoughts harmonized with it, nor were his manners its manners. Nothing else could be done but leave, so in the warm month of June, 1777, he bade the capital farewell, and on the 22nd of the same month he again arrived in Newcastle. He had been away for nearly nine months, and he returned to his native place, not to leave it for many a day.

The Bear and the Two Friends. "Select Fables," 1784.
From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

CHAPTER IX.

NEWCASTLE AGAIN.—JOHN BEWICK.

SHORTLY after his arrival in Newcastle Bewick became partner in business with his former employer, Ralph Beilby. Although they eventually separated, Bewick and Beilby lived together on terms of pleasantness for many years. Beilby ever showed appreciation of his pupil's skill, acknowledged it on many occasions, and was the first to bring him into extended general notice by sending the woodcuts to the Society of Arts.

Previous to the partnership Bewick had proposed to set up a workshop for himself. He had been promised sufficient employment by London and other friends, and he immediately commenced to work at wood engraving. Silver chasing was also given to him by Newcastle tradesmen, and, everything considered, the outlook of his personal position was not by any means discouraging. Bewick called to see Beilby as one of his primary duties on returning to Newcastle, so that they were on the best terms when, as Bewick himself relates, a friend proposed that the former master and servant should unite their respective talents and position, or perhaps it should be said, the

one's scarce yet acknowledged gifts, and the other's well-earned reputation, and thus by mutual assistance make to themselves a more rapid independence than if they became rivals, and, as the saying goes, "cut each other's throat."

Bewick's Memoir having been written after the unfortunate quarrel with Beilby at the close of the century, his narrative is strongly influenced by later experience. He appears to doubt very much if the friend—unnamed—who brought about the partnership acted in good faith; the tone and style seem to indicate unusual feeling on Bewick's part, and he proceeds in a manner scarcely warranted by the circumstances.

"I did not relish the proposal so warmly as our mutual friend expected. I had formed a plan of working alone, without apprentices, or being interrupted by any one; and I am not certain whether I would not have been happier in doing so than in the way I was led to pursue. I had often, in my lonely walks, debated this business over in my mind; but whether it would have been for the better or for the worse I can now only conjecture. I tried the one plan, and not the other; perhaps, each might have had advantages and disadvantages. I should not have experienced the envy and ingratitude of some of my pupils, neither should I on the contrary have felt the pride and the pleasure I derived from so many of them having received medals or premiums from the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, and taken the lead, as engravers on wood, in the metropolis. Notwithstanding this pride and this pleasure, I am inclined to think I should have had—balancing the good against the bad—more pleasure in working alone for myself."

It was certainly ungracious of Bewick to write in this manner; for Beilby, his partner, was of great use to him in after-years in getting up the "History of Quadrupeds" and the first volume of the "History of British Birds;" of so much use, indeed, that when the contention arose and Beilby departed, Bewick was grievously distracted, and found much difficulty in carrying on the literary part of the work without him. Bewick, however, seems scarcely to have arrived at a self-satisfactory opinion on the question; he is only "inclined to think," not by any means strongly of the opinion, that he would have had more pleasure in working alone. And even on the ground of consideration of his own happiness, it seems as if he erred in judg-

ment in making the statement. Bewick was essentially a social, lovable human being, not a cold, ascetic philosopher. He never could have been happy by himself; he required some one to talk to, even though it was only to have an occasional contention.

Bewick must also have known that it was better for his art that he should have taken apprentice-pupils. Had he worked entirely alone, much, perhaps most, of his experience would have been lost. It is a truism to say that in imparting knowledge to his pupils he greatly increased his influence and power for good. His apprentices did not all become great or known men, but Clennell, Johnson, Nesbit, and Harvey, with several others, were artists who, in their various lines, acknowledged, and through their works showed, the strong influence Bewick possessed over them. It is possible that Bewick personally might have had more freedom from worry and trouble of various kinds if he never had had apprentices, but there cannot be a shadow of a doubt it was better for his art, and for succeeding generations, that he allowed his attainments to be a special example for others while they were yet forming their style, and with his precepts of experience guided their taste and skill.

Everything was at last satisfactorily settled, and "Beilby and Bewick" was now the name of the house previously and always honourably known by Ralph Beilby's name alone. Beilby was thirty-four years old, a prudent, "canny" man, and a keen man of business; not niggardly when the occasion arose for judicious dispensation of charity, and yet quite able and willing to control his more youthful partner at times when his easily aroused sympathy might have brought about unpleasant complications.

Some time previously to the settlement of the partnership Beilby had received an apprentice into his workshop, and, as a premium had been paid, it was agreed—to make the partners equal—that Bewick should also find a youth to take as an apprentice. Thus it was that one event brought on another, and it proved almost a necessary result of the partnership that

Bewick should have apprentices. After due consideration Bewick decided that his younger brother John would prove a suitable pupil, and he was bound as an apprentice and received into the workshop.

John Bewick, having been born at Cherryburn early in 1760, was, at the time of his entering business, more than seventeen years of age. Details concerning his childhood are singularly scanty, but it is understood that he went through a training similar to his brother's. Most probably when at Cherryburn he had assisted, even more than Thomas is said to have done, in the coal mine held by their father; the authority for this is, however, rather inadequate. John did not show the same early love and aptitude for drawing that his brother displayed, yet, after training, he executed some designs quite equal to many by Thomas; but, at the same time, his best were far behind the choicest of his brother's. He was hasty and impatient in the execution of his engravings, and from a letter from Thomas to him in 1788 we find the elder earnestly impressing on the younger the need there then was that he should take more pains with his work.

John, being a young man of different temperament from Thomas, was more inclined for company—though his brother, as has been said, was no hermit—and being of a very lively and pleasing disposition, his presence was considered an acquisition to any friendly meeting. He was never engrossingly devoted to his art in the way the elder was, and appeared to be of the opinion that other duties of life were more entertaining, and he sometimes severely tried his brother's temper by showing himself too fond of these pursuits, though it must be said he never went very far into the wrong road. He learned his art rapidly, and, as we shall see, was able in a comparatively short time to make shift for himself.

The two brothers now went together on the weekly visits to their parents at Cherryburn, rambling at the same time over the country. Bewick's description of the scenery through which they passed is one of the most delightful passages in the Memoir. As it is an aim of this volume to point to

the principal beauties of the writing as well as the engraving of Thomas Bewick, the following quotation from pp. 110 and 111 of his *Memoir* is given, as displaying one of the engraver's happiest flights in literature. It shows that if he had turned his attention to literary composition he would have been able to exemplify the theory, that a great man could be all sorts of men, if necessary. But Bewick, partly no doubt from want of training, never liked writing; it was always a labour to him, and he probably had infinite trouble with the following passages before he felt they at all approached a thorough description of the scenes his eye and pencil delighted in, and which he so much more easily, by another form of art, transferred to paper:—

“It will readily be believed that, if I had not felt uncommon pleasure in these journeys, I would not have persisted in them; nor in facing the snow-storms, the floods, and the dark nights of so many winters. This, to some, appeared like insanity, but my stimulant as well as my reward was in seeing my father and mother in their happy home. . . . The ‘Seasons,’ by the inimitable Thomson, had charmed me greatly; but viewing nature thus experimentally pleased me much more. . . . The autumn I viewed as the most interesting season, and, in its appearance, the most beautiful. It is then that the yellow harvest of the fields and the produce of the orchards are gathered in, as the reward of the labours of the year; while the picturesque beauties and varying foliage of the fading woods, with their falling leaves, and the assembling in flocks of the small birds, put me in mind of the gloomy months with which the year is closed. . . . To be placed in the midst of a wood in the night, in whirlwinds of snow, while the tempest howled above my head, was sublimity itself, and drew forth aspirations to Omnipotence such as had not warmed my imagination so highly before; but, indeed, without being supported by ecstasies of this kind, the spirits, beset as they were, would have flagged, and I should have sunk down.”

“As soon as the days began to lengthen, and the sprouting herbage had covered the ground, I often stopped with delight by the side of woods, to admire the dangling woodbine and roses, and the grasses powdered or spangled with pearly drops of dew; and also, week after week, the continued succession of plants and wild flowers. The primrose, the wild hyacinth, the harebell, the daisy, the cowslip, &c.—these, altogether, I thought no painter ever could imitate. I had not, at that time, ever heard the name of the great and good Linnæus, and knew plants only by their common English names. While admiring these beautifully-enamelled spots on my

way, I was also charmed with the equally beautiful little songsters, which were constantly pouring out their various notes to proclaim the spring. While this exhilarating season glided on by imperceptible degrees, unfolding its blossoms till they faded into summer, and as the days lengthened, my hours of rising became more and more early. I have often thought, that not one half of mankind knew anything of the summer mornings in the country, nor have ever witnessed the rising sun's shining forth upon the new day."

The Singing Milkmaid. Vignette in the "Looking Glass for the Mind."
From the original block by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

The Oak and the Willow. "Select Fables," 1784.
From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

The Country Maid and the Milk Pail. "Select Fables," 1784.
From the original block engraved by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

CHAPTER X.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS, MISCELLANEOUS CUTS, AND THE "SELECT FABLES."

1777—1784.

THE principal publication of the year 1777, with illustrations by Bewick, was the miniature volume called "A New Year's Gift for Little Masters and Misses," published by Charnley of Newcastle, and printed by Saint in a small square 24mo. In this there is no letterpress of any kind, simply a series of woodcuts, about two inches by one and a quarter in size; they are mostly of groups of figures, not following nor illustrating any one legend further than that six exemplify the story of Robin Hood. Some are very poor, and cannot be attributed to Bewick, but the cut of a girl gathering wild flowers, those of Red Riding Hood with the fox, and that of Cock Robin shot by the sparrow, are examples of Bewick's early method of engraving. In 1777 Bewick also engraved a cut to illustrate the programme of the Newcastle Races—an oblong design showing three horses approaching the winning-post. It is signed Bewick at the right-hand corner,

and the galloping horses display appropriate action. In the same year, immediately after his return from London, he engraved a copper-plate of the Theban Harp for a publication called the *Pismire Journal*. The plate measures $6\frac{1}{4}$ by $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches: it represents an ordinary harp, with Egyptian figures as ornaments, and it was taken from a drawing executed from ruins found in Upper Egypt.

In 1778 Bewick and Beilby were engaged to furnish a large series of diagrams for Dr. Horsley's edition of Sir Isaac Newton's works. They were recommended to Dr. Horsley by Dr. Hutton, for whom the *Mensuration cuts* were completed in 1770; and, as in that case, the preparation of the blocks devolved on Bewick. Like those in the *Mensuration*, the cuts are by no means interesting, and might be by any engraver, good or bad, there being no scope in the subjects for artistic labour. The work was issued in five quarto volumes, partly in Latin and French, and the rest English: the first and second containing woodcut diagrams only; the third volume also a few diagrams on copper, several signed J. Basire; the fourth many cuts, and some unsigned as well as some signed plates by Basire; the fifth volume containing no woodcuts, and with only two on copper, both signed Basire.

For the "*Newcastle Directory*" of 1778 Bewick made an engraving of the arms of the town for the title-page. This is a charming engraving, and was the first block Bewick cut of the arms with St. Nicholas' steeple in the background. This design was in after-years very frequently repeated. In 1781 the same cut was used by the State Lottery Office to embellish their prospectuses.

In the year 1779 Saint published two small books, both of which have since become famous: they were the "*Fables by Mr. Gay*," described at p. 43 (though the cuts were done at the time there mentioned, the work was not published until this date); and "*The Pretty Book of Pictures for Little Masters and Misses; or, Tommy Trip's History of Beasts and Birds*." The latter contained a series of nearly sixty tiny

woodcuts by Bewick, many of them delicate and dainty, and not unworthy of their designer. This little work is perhaps the germ from which the *Quadrupeds* sprung, though the book of "Three Hundred Animals" more probably forced Bewick to produce something of a better class. Atkinson says of Tommy Trip, "It is to this that we are indebted for the more finished and celebrated 'History of *Quadrupeds*' and 'History of British Birds.'" But this was necessarily only surmise, although it is not improbable that the drawing of these animals led Bewick to think more seriously of his desire to outvie the "Three Hundred Animals." This most interesting point to the Bewick collector is discussed further when treating of the preparation for the publication of the *Quadrupeds*. The original edition of Tommy Trip is now rarely met with in perfect condition. The frontispiece shows Woglog the Giant attempting to seize Tommy Trip; other fine cuts are the hen and ducklings, the tame duck, the camel—a cut closely allied to that in the *Quadrupeds*—a fox looking at geese in the water, the reindeer in Lapland, a tiger, a boy frightened at his own shadow, a wild boar, a shepherd seated at an open fire, with a dog behind him (a design repeated by John Bewick in the "Looking Glass for the Mind"), as well as a number of other figures and animals, engraved in the style of the 1776 "Select Fables" and the 1779 Gay's Fables. The cuts were also printed separately in a small octavo volume. Many were used to embellish Charnley's "Select Fables" in 1820, and they were also employed in the interesting reprint of the whole work which appeared in 1867.*

Several minor publications were illustrated about this time for Saint and others, but it would be as tedious as unnecessary to dwell upon them, as they are given in the catalogue at the end of this book. There are a few publi-

* Mr. Charles Welsh, of the firm of Messrs. Griffith and Farran, successors to Newbery, in reading this account in manuscript, makes the following note:—"It would be only fair to say that this book was originally published by John Newbery, corner of St. Paul's Churchyard. What must have been the condition of the laws of copyright to have admitted of such proceedings as Saint was often guilty of in this way?" It appears that Saint, as well as other provincial publishers, was in the habit of republishing entertaining volumes which appeared in the metropolis.

cations, however, that are worthy of special mention. About 1779 Bewick executed for a Newcastle bookseller, Joseph Barber, a beautiful cut to be used as a border for his shop-card. The design represents an old tree at each side, one quite withered, the other with some life still remaining, and a fresh branch springing from near the parent root and spreading gracefully along the top of the cut, reaching over and down towards some flowers by the side, the foreground being filled with a pond, well-defined plants, and part of a paling; the centre of the block was hollow, to allow type to be inserted. It is signed T. Bewick. Barber died in 1781, and the cut was then used first by Humble, and next by Humble and Roddan, his successors. Hugo, the collector, having learned that the block was still in existence, sought for it, and after a long time discovered it in "an obscure and remote town in Northumberland." Another cut he unearthed at the same time was a similar subject, consisting of a light wreath of roses supported by gently twining branches.

About 1779 Bewick appears to have executed the first cuts of fighting cocks, showing two of the infuriated birds commencing an engagement. This was employed for announcements of cock-fights in the newspapers: for in those times such encounters were publicly advertised and attended, and Bewick himself, at least at one time in his life, dearly loved a "main of cocks." From 1779 onwards similar cuts appeared frequently in the northern newspapers. Another design for advertisements, doubtless also by Bewick, was in use at this time. This was for "Lost, Stolen, or Strayed," the cut representing in a miniature way a man on horseback, with a demon riding behind. The latter lays hold of the man, who is presumably a thief running off with the horse, in order to suspend him from the gallows to which they approach. It was a quaint conceit to put this cut at the top of such an advertisement, and suggests that the middle word of the heading more often truly described the case than "Lost" or "Strayed." Among other newspaper cuts done by Bewick during 1781

and immediately succeeding years were figures of ships used in advertisements of sailings, figures of Britannia for the headings of foreign news, the headings of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, the *Newcastle Journal*, the *Newcastle Courant*, the *Newcastle Advertiser*, and, some years afterwards, the *Durham Chronicle*. There was also a cut employed for many years in the *Newcastle Chronicle* for local news, being a view of the "canny toon," and it is said that over a million impressions were taken from it before it was laid aside. This is the cut referred to by Bewick in his Memoir, being the one he selected to give the most convincing proof of the durability of wood. It is a favourite saying with some that "nothing is softer than metal, nothing harder than wood," for engraving purposes; but, without altogether endorsing this statement, it may be said that in an ordinary way a good wood engraving will print many hundreds without its beauty being impaired. For large publications, however, it is almost a universal custom nowadays to print from electrotypes, which, if well done, make the number of impressions to be taken from a wood engraving practically unlimited. At the time referred to this process was not introduced, and Bewick expresses himself of the opinion that the manner in which this little block kept so long in fair condition was his having surrounded it by a strong black line, a little higher than the actual engraved surface; thus protecting the work both from damage if roughly printed from, or if carelessly left lying about when not on the press.

Of the newspaper headings the one done for the *Newcastle Courant* was the most important; it represents an oak-tree against which stand three shields bearing the arms of Newcastle, Northumberland, and Durham; in the distance the steeple of St. Nicholas is seen; while from each side of the tree couriers are riding at full speed bearing their news, with "Hic et ubique" at the foot of the cut to give a key to the composition. The block, being in constant use, became somewhat worn (showing that there is a very decided limit to the employment of wood), and was often re-engraved. In

all the subsequent blocks St. Nicholas appears, the old castle being afterwards introduced, and the trunk of the oak changed to some rocks with thick foliage above. Bewick himself did many of these duplicates, and it is curious to follow and observe the little variations developed during the time the cuts were employed. After about thirty years' use the cuts appear to have been engraved by another and much more mechanical hand. They gradually lose force and beauty, until the later ones printed can scarcely be recognised as the same design as that from which they were all copied.

The *Newcastle Journal* cut had the arms of Newcastle in the middle, and those of Durham and Northumberland on each side. The *Chronicle*

The Arms of Newcastle.

heading was simply in text writing, sometimes solid and sometimes in outline. The *Advertiser* had the arms of Newcastle shown in the accompanying illustration, which is taken from an excellent electro, and the *Durham Chronicle* the arms of the bishopric in the centre, and of the city in each corner.

The Broad and Crown Glass Company of Newcastle had a copper-plate done by Bewick about 1779, which they used for bills; it showed the arms of Newcastle, with the initials of the company in ornamental capitals enclosed in a scroll border.

In 1780 there was published in London an edition of "Aristotle's Complete Masterpiece," with nine somewhat unpleasant cuts of human monstrosities, probably executed under Bewick's supervision. About the same year saw the publication of "The Mirror, or a Looking Glass for both Sexes," by Saint, in which several pretty cuts appeared.

In the following year Saint published "A Choice Collection of

Hymns and Moral Songs, adapted to the capacities of young people, on the several duties and incidents of life ; adorned with elegant woodcuts to impress more lasting ideas of each subject upon the mind than can be attained by those in common use," the cuts being in many cases from the blocks previously employed in works issued from this press. In the spring of 1781 Bewick also executed a cut for Matthew Hall, innkeeper, which was inserted at the head of an advertisement announcing that Hall had left the Black Swan Inn, and had purchased and entered upon the Cock Inn, Head of the Side, Newcastle, and adding, "where he hopes to merit the approbation of his friends and the public. May 25th, 1781." This cut was a cock with farmyard in the background, which Hall used for a heading to his bar bills. Hugo says that this was the cut mentioned by Atkinson as having been done early in Bewick's apprenticeship; but if this were so, it must have been done for an earlier occupant, because Bewick at the time of Hall's entry into the business was twenty-seven years of age, and of course long past his apprenticeship.

In 1782 Hargrove's "History of the Castle, Town, and Forest of Knaresborough" was published. It has a pretty cut of a coat of arms (a rampant lion) leaning against a tree. The border of the shield is simple, but being nearly all black, it contrasts vividly and charmingly with the white ground on which the lion rears itself.

In the "Supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe," Saint, Newcastle, 1782, there are a frontispiece and three small cuts attributed to Bewick. The first, of Crusoe, is very poor, and not like his work, but the others, of Old Zigzag listening to the goldfinches, with a "poor little Jack Ass" and a Cock, are all fairly well done, being executed in the manner of "Tommy Trip" and the 1776 Fables.

Towards the end of 1782 or the commencement of 1783 Bewick was commissioned by Saint to prepare a set of cuts for a new edition of the Fables that he proposed to publish, and in 1784 the work was ready. This book

was the famous "Select Fables" of 1784. The full title is, "Select Fables, in Three Parts. Part I., Fables extracted from Dodsley's. Part II., Fables with Reflections in Prose and Verse. Part III., Fables in Verse. To which

Lion, Tyger, and Fox. "Select Fables," 1784.
From Bewick's original block. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

are prefixed the Life of Æsop; and an Essay upon Fable. A new edition, improved. Newcastle, printed by and for T. Saint. MDCCLXXXIV." The Life occupies fully six pages, with another three of the Essay defining fables to be "the method of conveying truth under the form of an allegory."

Of the Fables extracted from Dodsley's there are forty-eight, followed by sixty-seven Fables with Reflections, some in prose and some in verse, and twenty-six altogether in verse.

The cuts, like the 1776 edition, commence with the Miller, his Son, and their Ass; and the Fox and Bramble, the Maid and Milk Pail follow, each fable being illustrated with a cut; the number of blocks being one hundred and forty-one, with thirty-one tail-pieces of ornaments and figures. The cuts, which are most interesting on account of their ingenuity as well as their artistic value, are printed in the present publication from the original wood engraved by Thomas Bewick.* These are inserted at various pages throughout this volume. Of the engraver's early style we have the Bears and the Bees, and the Sow and Peacock, which first appeared in the 1776 Fables.

* The twelve cuts of these Fables are introduced into this work through the kindness of the owner, the Rev. E. Pearson, of Cheltenham, who possesses the entire series of Thomas Bewick's "Select Fables" blocks. From these a limited but superb *édition de luxe* has recently been produced at the Ballantyne Press for private distribution to subscribers, with an illustrated preface by Edwin Pearson, revised, and numerous supplementary illustrations of Bewick's genius. This beautiful edition and faithful reprint of T. Saint's famous Newcastle publication of 1784 will never be reproduced, but copies are still (1882) to be obtained at the subscription price, on application to the Rev. E. Pearson, Cheltenham.

These are given on pages 22 and 32. Of Bewick's capacity for drawing human figures, we have the Country Maid and the Milk Pail, page 67, the Brother and Sister, page 80, and the Butterfly and Boy, page 17, the last also from the 1776 Fables. These figure subjects have much of the feeling that John Bewick imparted to his work, and a likeness will readily be seen between them and those by the younger brother on pages 21 and 66. The Beggar and his Dog, page 46, is very similar to a design of one of the vignettes in the Birds, at page 84 of the second volume. Of landscapes

A Shepherd and a Young Wolf. "Select Fables," 1784.
From Bewick's original block. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

we have the Oak and the Willow on page 66, the Sheep and Bramble Bush on page 40, while the Shepherd and Young Wolf above contains a well-drawn figure of an animal really suspended in mid-air, and a glimpse of mountain scenery. With animals only, we have the Lion, Tyger, and Fox, on the opposite page; and embracing human figures, the Bear and two Friends, page 61, and the Discontented Ass, on page 29.

These blocks passed from the hands of Saint's executors to Wilson and Spence, of York, who occasionally employed a few to embellish their publications. They subsequently became the property of Charnley, a bookseller of Newcastle, who used them to illustrate an edition of "Select Fables," published in 1820, after removing some of the ornamental borders. In this, which is uniform in size with the Quadrupeds and Birds, the letterpress is different from the 1784 edition.*

* There were two editions of the "Select Fables" printed in 1784, varying slightly from each other. The Fables with Reflections are longer, and those in verse shorter, in one than in the other. Vignettes are inserted at pages 122, 125, and 152, and there are differences in the letterpress at pages 123, 143, 144, 145, 151, 152, 164, and onwards.

These cuts have in many instances designs very nearly approaching in conception those in early editions of Croxall's "*Æsop's Fables*." In 1722 E. Kirkall illustrated these Fables in a very superior way; but Chatto, in the "*History of Wood Engraving*," mentions that these again are in many cases merely reversed copies of engravings on copper by S. le Clerc, in illustration of a French edition of *Æsop's Fables*, published about 1694. There is no doubt that Bewick took his primary ideas from these prints, but he treated the designs so much more naturally and ingeniously that they possess all the essential character of original works. The volume issued in 1784 was not, indeed, a first edition, for—as has already been mentioned in Chapter IV.—in 1776 a volume of Fables was issued by Saint, the 1784 publication being an improvement and enlargement of the earlier. Of the vignettes, the Man and Donkey at pages 14 and 88, and the Stag at page 17, the Fox and Swan, and the ornament at page 26, also appear in the Fables by Gay.

It is said that Bewick was paid only nine shillings each for several of the engravings in the 1784 Fables; but possibly he found he could make a small profit even out of this—it could not have been a large one—as he had so many to execute at once, and comparative leisure to do them at spare times. Blocks of similar size and subject would not be taken in hand nowadays at less than three or four guineas, and at this price we should have the cheapest, commonest, unpleasantest work imaginable. Bewick may only have received the paltry sum named, yet the labour he gave in return was not to be had for payment of any kind: a genius may receive wages, but his labours confer honour on whatever his hands touch, and repay in years to come more real value than money can equal. Saint might have paid a thousand pounds for his series of blocks to one of the engravers of the day then considered at the head of his profession, and now they would have been entirely forgotten. No money could insure the purchase of the gems for which he paid so trifling a sum, yet they give the book a renown sure to last as long as Bewick is recognised as the revolutioniser of wood engraving in England.

Among other works published in Newcastle about this time was an octavo book on Christian Piety, which contained a cut signed "T. Bewick." The subject of this is Christ Blessing Little Children, but the drawing is poor, and the engraving singularly weak for one of Bewick's own blocks. Forgeries of Bewick's style and subjects have since proved a great stumbling-block for collectors of the artist's works, and it behoves them to be wary in accepting anything signed "Bewick" as being really his work. Bewick himself knew of many such forgeries, and though he declined to feed the "whimsies of bibliomanists" in the case of the 1820 Fables, he appears not to have been able to stop what has now come to a great height; namely, the practice of unscrupulous or ignorant booksellers selling nearly all volumes issued from 1770 to 1830 with cuts as containing the genuine works of Bewick.

A small cut of the Crow's Nest bears the date May, 1783. The sketch was drawn from the spire of the Exchange at Newcastle, and it shows a crow's nest built on the vane, and in such a way that the nest turned and always kept the entrance to the direction opposite to that from which the wind was blowing. This was first built by the crows in March, 1783, and the Newcastle people took great pleasure in watching the birds, not allowing any one to molest the nest; and for several years the crows returned to their curious habitation. The cut by Bewick is circular, and appears to have been made to fit into those old-fashioned watches which required padding to keep their cases tight. The view is only of the top of the spire, the nest being rather large in proportion to the building. It was printed for the first time in an interesting little pamphlet published in Newcastle in 1876.

In 1784 a Stockton publisher issued the "Bishopric Garland," which contained two cuts by Bewick. One is uninteresting, but the other of the Arms of the Bishopric is worthy of notice from the beauty given to a not too charming subject by the introduction of a few flowers in the conventional coat of arms. The cut at page 177 of the "History of All Nations" (London, 1784), though attributed with some authority to Bewick, is at the best a very

doubtful example. It was about this time that Bewick engraved the blocks of the Roman Altars, the Arms, and the Seals which illustrated Hutchinson's "History of Durham," published in 1785. The publisher in Newcastle was Solomon Hodgson—one with whom we shall have more to do—and at the end of the second volume Bewick inserted a cut of his initials as a tail-piece. The copper-plates in the work were mostly done by Beilby.

The Newcastle edition of 1785 of "Fables of Æsop and Others," by S. Croxall, has some cuts either by Bewick or his pupils. The numerous

The Old Exchange, Newcastle, 1785, exhibiting the Crow's Nest at the top.

London (only) editions have no Bewick's works, while the London and York editions, 1797, 1804, and 1810, have fifty-eight "Select Fables" (1784) blocks.

In October, 1785, Beilby and Bewick advertised the preparation of the "Newcastle Almanac" for 1786, and on November 5th it was published, "embellished with an accurate perspective view of the Exchange, exhibiting the Crow's Nest at the top." This view was taken from the Sand-hill, and showed the building as well as the nest previously described. The plate was also published separately, marked "Printed for and sold by Beilby and Bewick, Engravers, Newcastle." The impression here introduced is from an engraving

of the same subject, which was inserted under a portrait of Bewick by Charlton Nesbit, and also employed in the 1820 Fables, where it is stated to have been engraved by Bewick in 1819.

This brings us up to the time when Bewick was about to commence his long-cherished scheme of the publication of a History of Quadrupeds. Before entering on a notice of this celebrated volume it will be necessary to look into his home life, and then to examine the minor works published before 1790, the year in which the *Quadrupeds* appeared.

The Sad Historian. "The Deserted Village."
From Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell.

The Brother and Sister. "Select Fables," 1784.
From the original block by Thomas Bewick. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

CHAPTER XI.

DEATHS IN THE FAMILY.—BEWICK'S MARRIAGE.

AFTER the publication of the "Select Fables," and before Bewick had commenced work on the cuts of the *Quadrupeds*, the family were visited by a series of heavy calamities which impressed Bewick very strongly. Mrs. Bewick, the mother of the artist, was of that benevolent nature, peculiarly appropriate, and happily not uncommon, to matrons. She was well known at Ovingham, as being a helpful and sympathetic nurse in all matters of emergency, and it was not unusual for her advice to be asked and taken by the people of the country-side. One evening towards the end of January, 1785, as related by her son, she was suddenly summoned to see a young woman who had been taken alarmingly ill. The nearest road lay over a marsh, and as this appeared to be frozen, Mrs. Bewick did not hesitate to go over what otherwise was a somewhat dangerous place. Unfortunately, the frost was not so strong as it appeared, and the surface giving way, she got a severe

wetting. Fulfilling the characteristics of the family, Mrs. Bewick did not allow this occurrence to prevent the carrying out of her design, but proceeding forward to see the invalid, she gave her advice before returning to change her soaking garments. The violent chill thus received led to a heavy cold, and though good medical assistance was obtained, she died after a few weeks' illness, at the age of fifty-eight, on the 20th of February, 1785.

No sooner was this melancholy incident over than Bewick's eldest sister fell ill through the exertion and anxieties borne during her mother's illness. She had been married and resident some time in London, having only returned to Cherryburn on a visit. Everything, humanly speaking, was done for her—good nursing, good advice, and removal to Bewick's own comfortable home at the Forth. There sunshine and beauty were at all times, and especially in the spring, as it then was, when the fruit trees were blossoming and the long garden was filled with lovely flowers; for Bewick had now been some time in the house, and could have things his own way, and nothing pleased him more than to be at work among his plants. We can imagine him some clear afternoon later in the season, leaving his workshop early to come home to labour in the garden, and coming into the house in the evening with a bunch of his favourite roses culled specially for his sick sister. But though the illness was protracted, the end surely approached, and she died on the 24th of June, 1785, a little more than four months after her mother.

Still another heavy blow was in store for Bewick, and when it came he must have felt desolate indeed. His father, now nearly seventy, was visibly affected by the death of his wife and daughter. Bewick, assiduous and affectionate, advised medical aid, but the old man had never been accustomed to medicine, and would have none of it. Gradually losing interest in the few things on earth that now had any attraction for him, he died on the 15th of November, 1785, on his seventieth birthday, and on the day Bewick had commenced his grand project of the work on "The General History of

Quadrupeds." His death must have been unexpected at the end, for his son was at work as usual, and the shock was therefore proportionately great. The family burying-place at Ovingham was opened for the third time that year, and Bewick's father was laid beside his wife and eldest daughter.

Bewick ever had a profound respect for his father. He knew how sincerely he had been encouraged and how frequently assisted by him in his youth; and when he had arrived at manhood he was ever ready to repay, by attention and respect, what he had so fully received. Neither of Bewick's parents lived to see their son arrive at the height of his prosperity and dignity, and he was yet some distance from full popular acknowledgment of his genius; yet they left him in a fair position in life, with good prospect of further success, and their last words could contain nothing but blessings for their eldest son. Happy indeed must the parents be who have as little anxiety for their children as Bewick's had for him: for John their thoughts could not have been so calm, but they knew they left in Thomas one who would take a parent's part with him if ever it became necessary.

Bewick's father has already been described, but it will not be amiss to recall that he was a man of happy and humorous temperament at home, a stern hater and denouncer of hypocrisy abroad; not afraid to take law into his own hand at times when he thought he could right what seemed wrong; a man of strong character, having something of the Puritan without extreme severity; a man to be loved by his friends, of whom he had many, and feared by his foes, of whom, like most of his character, he had not a few.

The deaths in the family put an end to the frequent visits to Cherryburn, and Bewick turned his thoughts towards the foundation of a family circle of his own; sisters and brothers he had, but they were separated, and his father's house had lost its charm, so that he naturally and wisely turned his mind towards matrimony. He had never at any time been notably fond of ladies' company. He could enjoy the refinements of their society, while he regarded them with too much respect to trifle with

their feelings. He relates the first time he ever took particular notice of the fair sex, which was when a boy at school. Miss Betty Gregson, the daughter of his teacher, one time reproved him, but in a winning way, for some unkindness to her little dog, "a sleek, fat, useless animal." The gentle manner of the reproof was more successful than a beating from his father would have been, and he says the good impression made by her gentleness prevented him annoying any of the girls at school, and was never effaced, but was "fostered through life and settled into a fixed respect and tender regard for the whole sex." Such a sentiment does honour to the manhood of the writer. This tenderness and esteem for woman formed a characteristic of Bewick noticeable to all, even when he was young, and it became more emphasized as he grew old. Rough he could be among his companions, and ready for any frolic, but no one was ever able to say he had failed to pay proper respect to the other sex.

Towards the end of his apprenticeship Bewick says he entertained an undeclared feeling of love for Miss Beilby, his employer's daughter. He would have offered to marry her, he asserts, had there not been so many obstacles in the way, for his attachment was strong; but when her uncle insulted him and he removed from the house the attachment seems to have terminated.

At another time, in 1776, when he was roving in the Highlands, he had a little adventure which afforded him some pleasure and excitement for the moment. Departing from a house where he had remained a day or two, he was pressed by a young Gaelic girl to accept some trifling memento of his visit; and this, he says, she did with such sweetness, seeming to urge his further stay, that, to use his own words, "I could not help it, I seized her and smacked her lips," and when the "lassie" sprang away, and her healthy agile form disappeared, he moralised on his disappointment, "and felt grieved because he could not hope ever to see her more."

At another time he expresses his decided opinion that "it would be

extreme weakness to maintain that all women are good," and faults only to be ascribed to man.

"I am obliged," he says, "to admit that there are good and bad of each sex. I have often attempted to make an estimate of their comparative numbers, in which I have felt some difficulties. Sometimes my barometer of estimation has risen to the height of ten to one in favour of the fair sex; at other times it has fluctuated, and has fallen down some degrees lower in the scale" (notice his tact—he won't say how far it had gone down); "but with me it is now settled, and I cannot go lower than four good women to one good man. I have often wondered how any man could look healthy, beautiful, sensible, and virtuous women in the face without considering them as the link between men and angels. For my part, I have often felt myself so overpowered with reverence in their presence that I have been unable to speak, and they must often have noticed my embarrassment. I could mention the names of many, but it might offend their delicacy. When a man can get such a help-mate for life, his happiness must be secured; for such a one is of inestimable value; her price is far above rubies."—*Memoir*, p. 97.

This was a favourite theme with Bewick, and he seems never to weary in showing the claims of woman to entire respect, and on the question of marriage his views were quite as decided. "Marriage," he states, "is an engagement of the utmost importance to individuals and to society, and which of all others ought to be the most unbiassed; for it cannot be attended with honour, nor blessed with happiness, if it has not its origin in mutual affection." And again in his *Memoir* he gives old-fashioned but everlastingly true advice as to what he lays down as rules for matrimony; and such is his energy in urging that a careful selection should be made that if a man is not able to find a suitable spinster in his own country, he says "he had better travel in search of one from Land's End to John o' Groat's."

Such were the feelings of the man who was now thinking seriously of matrimony for himself. It is all very well to moralise, and say what others ought to do when circumstances are favourable, but frequently quite another thing to do the right. Fortunately Bewick never was put to the actual test; but his general character points to the unlikelihood of his taking a wrong

step in such a serious matter, and his choice fell on one who was not found lacking in her duty.

Bewick's mother had desired to see her son married before her death, and even proposed that he should pay court to a maiden of whom report spoke well; but though Bewick dutifully obeyed in so far as visiting the lady, he found her quite unsuitable to his idea of what a wife should be. After recovering from the gloom caused by the deaths in the family he married Isabella Elliot, the daughter of Robert Elliot, of Ovingham, close to his own birthplace. Living all her youth so near Bewick's father's house, they were on long-standing terms of intimacy.* "I had seen her," Bewick says, "in prosperity and in adversity, and in the latter state she appeared to me to the greatest advantage. In this she soared above her sex, my determination was fixed, and in due time we were married." The marriage took place in the quaint and still perfect old church of St. John, in what is now called West Grainger Street, Newcastle, on the 20th of April, 1786.† The entry of the marriage is still to be seen among the records of the church. It runs thus:—"Thomas Bewick & Isabella Elliot both of this Chapelry were married in this chapel by Licence this Twentieth Day of April 1786 by me Jn^o. Brown curate. This Marriage was solemnized between us (signed) Thomas Bewick Isabella Elliott In the Presence of us (signed) Sarah Hunneyman Gilfrid Ward."

The signature of Bewick is bold, and quite like his usual writing at less exciting moments; that of his wife is of one not so perfectly accustomed to use her pen, but is still good plain writing. She spelled her name, however,

* Dovaston, in the *Magazine of Natural History*, tells a story to the effect that Bewick, when a boy, was in the habit of annoying in church the young girls who happened to be near him. Once, he says, a "winsome lass," burning with indignation, jumped up and exclaimed loudly to the parson, "Oh, sir, guide Thomas Bewick;" upon which she got the youth a flogging. This lass, Dovaston says, was Isabella Elliot, his future wife.

† Bewick at this time was thirty years old. His wife was about the same age, but the year of her birth is differently given: her tombstone states she was seventy-two when she died in 1826, while a tablet inside Ovingham Church says she was born on August 12th, 1752.

with a *t* added at the end, though the curate in the first instance spelled Elliot as her family name really was.

He never had any reason to regret his choice; Mrs. Bewick was ever a devoted wife to her husband, and an attentive, wise, and affectionate mother to the children she afterwards bore him. She well deserved the motto her husband lovingly gave her, "The best of wives and very best of mothers." Bewick took her to his picturesque old house at the Forth, where he had now resided some time. This house was built beside a bowling-green which was made in 1657; overlooking the green was a tavern with a projecting balcony and a parapet wall, "from whence the spectators could behold the bowlers." In 1680 a wall was built to enclose this place, and "lime trees brought out of Holland planted around it." The house where Bewick lived had been previously occupied by Dr. Hutton, author of the "Mensuration," from whose wife Bewick is said to have purchased part of the furniture when she removed to London to go to reside with her husband. A delightful house it was, with its extensive garden and old-fashioned belongings, and here Thomas Bewick and his wife lived in happiness and contentedness for many a year.

"Till death us do part." Vignette in the "Looking Glass for the Mind."
From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

The Dog under the Manger.
From Hewlett's "Spelling Book."

CHAPTER XII.

BEWICK'S MINOR WORKS, 1785 TO 1790.

BEFORE describing the few minor works executed during the years 1785 and 1790, it may be well to observe that throughout this season of preparation for the Quadrupeds Bewick accepted no orders for work that he could reasonably avoid. It is not recorded that he actually declined any commissions, but it may be gathered from his remains that he only undertook those pressed on him by monetary considerations or regard for his patrons.

During the latter end of 1785, after his father died, and in the earlier part of 1786, when he married, Bewick does not appear to have executed anything besides the first Quadruped cuts and his ordinary shop-work. But towards the end of 1786 Beilby and Bewick commenced engraving the copper-plates for the "Tour through Sweden, Lapland, Finland, and Denmark," by Matthew Consett and Sir H. G. Liddell, which was published in 1789.

These were undertaken for a small sum, and are not remarkable for brilliancy of execution, but are interesting as being favourable examples of Bewick's work on copper—a method he neither liked nor was familiar with. The workmanship, indeed, is very peculiar, for the prints are not like copper-plate work in the usual sense of the term. A specimen of such a plate, executed for J. Headlam, is given on the next page. The technique is bolder, freer, and less conventional, and more like careful etching than engraving, although the happy phrase which has been attached to them, "wood engraving on copper," describes them best.

The plates are in some cases unsigned, some are signed by Bewick, and others by Beilby and Bewick. The Reindeer and the Midnight Sun are marked "T. B." The Lapland Girls and the view at Upsal (or Upsala, as it should be, and as it is called in the letterpress, though the last vowel is wanting in the title on the plate) are not signed, while the Birds are signed "B. & B." The birds represented are the Hierpe (female Willow Grouse), the Kader (Wood Grouse), the Orre (Blackcock), and the Snoripa (Willow Grouse). The Lapland girls were brought to England, and lived at Ravensworth Castle, where Bewick sketched their portraits from life, and they were afterwards sent back to their native land "in comparative opulence." Upsal and the Midnight Sun were taken from pictures at Ravensworth by Martin, a Swedish painter.

Several interesting details about this tour are given in Fox's "Synopsis of the Newcastle Museum" (1827), where it is said that the most remarkable result of the expedition was the importation from Lapland of five or six reindeer. These lived some time at Eslington Park, near Whittingham, where for a time they thrived well and bred—a circumstance contrary to the opinion of Buffon and other naturalists, though the result justified their belief in so far that the young deer died before long. It was one of these reindeer that furnished the figure of the animal for the Tour and for the Quadrupeds, but in the latter case the horns were drawn from a

more perfect pair in Bewick's own possession. The Birds were engraved from drawings made by a young artist, and this may account for the want of life and lack of beauty in the designs. The only woodcut in the *Tour*—a sledge—is repeated in a smaller size in the *Quadrupeds*. It may be of interest to note—what is not stated in the work itself—that the *Tour* was compiled by the Rev. J. Brewster. It is in the form of forty-one letters, from notes made by Consett in his tour of nearly four thousand miles on land. In a letter to Bewick from Wycliffe, November 6th, 1788, which fixes the date when the plates were finished, Marmaduke Tunstall acknowledges receipt of the prints for the *Lapland Tour*, which, he says, “demand my grateful thanks; I think them very finely executed, especially the birds.”

About 1787 Bewick made two cuts—both remarkably fine—of a negro kneeling. One represents the chained black in a suppliant attitude, hands clasped, and one knee on the ground, with a view of a plantation in the distance, where a Legree thrashes an unfortunate slave, and there is a

Book-plate on copper.

motto round the top, “Am I not a man and a brother?” This was used in the title-page of “*The Princess of Zanzibar*,” a dramatic poem issued in 1789, though it was executed for an Anti-Slavery Society. Since then it has been employed for several publications, both intimately and remotely connected with Slavery and the Negro question. The other cut shows a negro kneeling in a similar manner, but the size is smaller, and there are no figures in the background. In the supple-

ment to Bell's Catalogue of Bewick's Works, 1851, impressions of both are given.

In 1787 there appeared in the *Newcastle Courant* for the first time a view of the Custom House near the Tyne, which was engraved for a grocer. In 1788 a cut of a top-boot—an object neither interesting nor elegant—appears among the advertisements of a bootmaker; it was probably, like the former, from Bewick's workshop. In this year also Bewick made a cut of the Newcastle arms for Angus, the printer, which was signed "T. Bewick, Scul^r., N'castle, 1788." The heading for the *Advertiser* on page 72 is very similar to this.*

On the 10th of April, 1789, Beilby and Bewick published an important copper-plate—10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 7 in. in size—of a once locally famous animal, the Whitley Large Ox, belonging to Mr. Edward Hall, of Whitley, in Northumberland, "drawn and engraved by T. Bewick." The ox is represented standing, displaying its huge yet gainly proportions amidst a scene of which a view of Tynemouth Castle forms the background. This plate is now somewhat difficult to obtain. It is perhaps the best specimen of Bewick's handiwork on copper, but as he was rather weak in this department of art, and as the artistic merit is not more than ordinarily conspicuous, the print cannot be pronounced worth much trouble to search after.

"The Beauties of Natural History," from Buffon's "History of Quadru-

* In 1788 (not 1778, as stated in the "Treatise on Wood Engraving") Beilby and Bewick received as a pupil or apprentice to copper-plate engraving Robert Johnson, who was born in 1770 in Northumberland, not far from Bewick's own birthplace. Bewick's mother during her last illness had been nursed by Johnson's mother, and it was at the invalid's request that the youth was taken for an apprentice. He did not show any aptitude for engraving, but as a designer and water-colour painter his work was of the very highest quality. It was with this pupil that the partners had a lawsuit concerning the payment of some drawings executed by the youth—but not in business hours—which had been sold for £40. This money was retained by the partners, but was claimed by the friends of the apprentice. The employers' defence, that it belonged to them, was disallowed on it being shown that drawing in water-colours was not necessarily a part of the apprentice's education as an engraver. Johnson died at the early age of twenty-five, on October 29th, 1796, after having executed a number of drawings for Pinkerton's Scottish Gallery. Some of his larger works are of the most exquisite kind. One in the possession of Mr. Crawhall, Newcastle, is a perfect gem, and equal in every respect to Turner or Girtin. This drawing is, indeed, almost too valuable for a private collection; when it comes to be public property (as it is intended it should) connoisseurs will be greatly and agreeably surprised to see its marvellous beauty.

pedes," published by Catnach about 1790, has a number of cuts from Bewick's workshop. Some of them, such as the Fox and the Sheep, bear evidence of the master's own graver, but the majority were probably executed by Bewick's apprentices from his own designs in the *Quadrupeds*. "The Life of John Howard" (1790) contains an excellently engraved vignette on the title, being the initials of the printer (W. Thompson), with foliage surrounding them, and is a cut of considerable beauty.

The plate of the *Kyloe Ox* possesses many points of resemblance to that of the *Whitley Large Ox*. The copper measures 13 in. by $8\frac{1}{2}$ in., and represents the tremendous ox in full length. It was executed for Robert Spearman, of Rotheley Park, Northumberland, and bears date "July 22nd, 1790. Drawn and engraved by T. Bewick, Newcastle." In this plate the surroundings are more interesting than the animal itself; the grass, the five-barred gate, and the foliage are most carefully and minutely drawn, the curious combination of wood engraving on copper being as observable as in the *Whitley Large Ox* and in the plates of *Consett's Tour*.

In the "Treatise on Wood Engraving" Chatto gives the woodcut of this Ox in the *Quadrupeds* as one likely, if copied, to challenge the skill of any engraver—and there are still many—who believes that Bewick as a craftsman is overrated. This and the copper-plate were drawn and engraved entirely by Bewick. Most of his designs were drawn by himself either from the objects, or, as in the case of several in *Consett's Tour*, from pictorial representations by another artist; and in many instances Bewick drew on the material on which the designs were to be engraved. This is an uncommon practice nowadays, and it appears to be becoming more so as time goes on. A few engravers are still able to make their drawings as well as cut their blocks; but the use of photography in mechanically reducing drawings to the size required, and transferring them to the wood, renders the service of a draughtsman in many cases superfluous. When it is necessary to have a drawing made on the block, most engravers

prefer employing a professional draughtsman to taking up the pencil themselves. Modern engravers, it is true, do go through a careful training in drawing; but there is no doubt that they are looking to mechanical methods of working more and more every day, and it is to be feared this will greatly deteriorate the quality of all kinds of wood engraving. At the present time the fashion is to have cuts made as minute and fine in their lines as it is possible to have them; but this is merely a passing style, partly in imitation of photography, and not one likely to be much longer preferred by the public. It is to be hoped that the increased attention paid to Bewick's thoroughly sound and true method of wood engraving will bring about a return to more healthy productions in the art he did so much to improve.

Christian at the Wicket Gate. Benyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," 1806.
From the original block. Lent by the Rev. Mr. Buckley.

The Dromedary. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

CHAPTER XIII.

PREPARATION FOR "THE HISTORY OF QUADRUPEDS."—THE CHILLINGHAM BULL.

TUESDAY, the 15th day of November, 1785, was an eventful day for Bewick. While it was, as has been related, the omega of his worthy father, so was it the alpha of an enterprise by which he was to take his stand as one of the worthy workers of his age. After long and careful premeditation, he that day commenced to engrave the first wood block for the "General History of Quadrupeds"—the figure of the Dromedary, afterwards placed at page 122 of the first edition of the finished work. Bewick did not comprehend that his father was so ill, or we may be sure he would not have been found working as usual when the messenger arrived with the doleful tidings. He performed the last sad duties to his parent, and, as every one must do, heavy-hearted or light, went on again with his daily toil.

Bewick having been in later years publicly taxed with receiving credit to which he had no just claim, in having conceived and carried out the "History of Quadrupeds," he published a detailed account of the origin and progress of the work. At a later stage we shall consider the reason for this attack on

Bewick's character, but meanwhile will learn under what circumstances the compilation was commenced.

In a reply to the charge referred to, Bewick wrote to the *Monthly Magazine* in 1805, giving the following narrative: "From my first reading, when a boy at school, a sixpenny 'History of Three Hundred Animals,' to the time I became acquainted with works on Natural History written for the perusal of men, I never was without the design of attempting something of this kind myself; but my principal object was (and still is) directed to the mental pleasure and improvement of youth; to engage their attention, to direct their steps aright, and to lead them on till they become enamoured of this innocent and delightful pursuit. Some time after my partnership with Mr. Beilby commenced, I communicated my wishes to him, who, after many conversations, came into my plan of publishing a 'History of Quadrupeds,' and I then immediately began to draw the animals, to design the vignettes, and to cut them on wood, and this, to avoid interruption, frequently till very late in the night; my partner at the same time undertaking to compile and draw up the descriptions and history at his leisure hours and evenings at home. With the accounts of the foreign animals I did not much interfere; the sources where I had drawn the little knowledge I possessed were open to my coadjutor, and he used them; but to those of the animals of our own country, as my partner before this time had paid little attention to natural history, I lent a helping hand. This help was given in daily conversations, and in occasional notes and memoranda which were used in their proper places." In his Memoir Bewick gives substantially the same story, though in different words. He adds also that Beilby being a cautious and thinking man, and wishing to be more satisfied as to the probability of such a publication paying for the labour, he desired to have the advice of others, and the partners consulted Solomon Hodgson, the editor and printer of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, who gave it as his opinion that such a work would be certain of success. As has been noted, Bewick's first idea for the Quadrupeds was possibly aided

by his production of the cuts for the child's book, "Tommy Trip's History of Beasts and Birds," though it is more certain, as related in Bell's Catalogue, that the publisher Saint's expressed desire that Bewick should produce cuts after the manner of the "Three Hundred Animals" was, with the engraver's natural bent for the subject, the real beginning of the undertaking.

The work called "A Description of Three Hundred Animals, viz., Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Serpents, and Insects," was published in many editions during the latter half of last century. The illustrations are on copper, unsigned, and are a ludicrous set of caricatures. One or two of the beasts, as the Wild Boar and the Squirrel, and a few of the birds, the Parrot and the Turkey, are passable. The Salmon, the Sprat, and the Turbot are the best of the fishes; while the Whale, and the Shark with its powerful teeth, are something truly wonderful. The serpents and insects are similarly poor in quality. These cuts are far inferior to those in the little-known "*La Clef des Champs*," 1586, or the "*Ornithologia Nova*," 1744, which both contain more spirited representations of animals; some, indeed, in these books are sufficiently well produced to be worthy of the most careful examination. The colouring of the illustrations in "*La Clef des Champs*" is as natural and subdued as the most refined could desire. The sub-title is, "Pour trouuer plusieurs Animaux tant Bestes, qu' Oyseaux avec plusieurs fleurs et fruitz. Anno 1586. Imprimé aux Blackefriers pour Jacques le Moyne dit le Morgues painter."

Of his indebtedness to Buffon's works Bewick frequently tells. Some of the animals he never could hope to see alive—such as the Giraffe, the Buffalo, the Bison, and others—therefore he was compelled to look for assistance to books which contained drawings—perhaps themselves only copies from more original works—and Buffon was certainly as good as any he could have selected. Bewick, besides, took every opportunity that presented itself to acquire accurate knowledge of the subject; reading naturalists' works, watching the habits of indigenous animals, and, when a travelling menagerie made its appearance in Newcastle, he was one of its most frequent patrons.

One of his remarks in a letter written to his brother John, dated January 9th, 1788, is, "I am glad to find that a large collection of animals is now on its way to this town. They are expected here on the latter end of this month. They consist of various kinds of the Ape tribe, Porcupine, Tiger-cat, and Tiger, Greenland Bear, and one of the fiercest Lions, very lately brought over, that ever made its appearance on this island; so I expect to have the opportunity of doing such of them as I want from the Life."* It may seem strange to those who reside near Zoological Gardens that a writer on animals should not see anything better than a menagerie, and it may be thought to indicate that Bewick was in error not to make himself more familiarly acquainted with their living appearance; but it is to be remembered that the menageries which perambulated the country a century ago were of a much higher class than the present-day ordinary visitors to fairs and markets. Bewick drew sketches of the animals from memory, and, as opportunities such as these presented themselves, corrected his drawings from the living animals. This work necessarily was slow, both on account of the difficulty of obtaining specimens, and because the first consideration of the partners was the ordinary business of the workshop. It was only after the "pot-boiling" labours of the day had been got through that they thought themselves justified in proceeding with what was to them, as yet, only a doubtful speculation.

Beilby did nothing to assist with the engravings, his part of the work being confined to writing the descriptions, and in this, as the 1805 letter says, Bewick gave him considerable assistance. At the same time it is only just to Beilby to say that his manner of composition was of great assistance to the success of the book, for the notes on the animals are ample without being elaborate, and complete for the purpose without being abstruse. In future editions some modification of the letterpress was made, but the main principle, to give clear, accurate, and readable accounts of the animals, was

* "Transactions of the Natural History Society of Newcastle, etc., 1878."

always adhered to, and must be pronounced decidedly successful. That Beilby could have written a Natural History book which the present generation would care to read is not likely; but taking into consideration the fact that Bewick's works are more suited to have the simple truth placed beside them than thorough scientific explanation, the peculiar qualities of Beilby's writings were the most appropriate to go alongside Bewick's cuts.

In this manner the work went on, until, having made some progress, an advertisement was issued in 1787 announcing the intended publication, and from that time the project took a definite form, but it was not until 1790 that the completed volume appeared.

The Wild Bull. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

One of the reasons of the delay in publishing the "History of Quadrupeds" was an important commission received from Marmaduke Tunstall for a plate of Chillingham Cattle. Tunstall was an eminent amateur naturalist, and owner of the celebrated Wycliffe natural history collection, which after various vicissitudes was acquired by the town of Newcastle, where a new museum is now being built partly for its reception. Tunstall wanted engravings of the Cattle, as he had taken much interest in their rearing,

and had some intention of publishing his notes regarding them. Bewick suggested that the cow and bull should be put together in one design, no doubt because Tunstall was unwilling to incur the expense of separate engravings. Bewick appears to have written to him proposing this. In the "Memoirs of Tunstall," published in 1827, a letter addressed to Bewick is given, which says, "I approve of your idea of putting the Chillingham Bull and Cow into one plate, and that a copper one;" adding, "I should like to have about sixty impressions taken off and sent me with the plate, when finished, together with your account, which I will immediately discharge." This was dated the 6th of November, 1788, nothing at that time having been done to the design. Matters lay in abeyance until the spring of 1789, when, according to agreement, Bewick visited Chillingham, which is about fifty miles from Newcastle, for the purpose of making a sketch of the animals. He started on foot, leaving Newcastle early on Easter Sunday, and, accompanied by a friend, arrived in due course at John Bailey's house at Chillingham.

Bewick experienced much difficulty in obtaining his sketch, partly because of the restless habits of the animals, and also of the danger attendant on approaching them closely. "I was obliged," he says, "to endeavour to see one which had been conquered by his rival, and driven to seek shelter alone in the quarry holes or in the woods, and, in order to get a good look at one of this description, I was under the necessity of creeping on my hands and knees to leeward, and out of his sight, and I thus got my sketch or memorandum, from which I made my drawing on the wood."

Having secured the sketch, Bewick lost no time, on his return to Newcastle, in proceeding with the engraving. He very wisely declined to follow the instructions contained in Tunstall's letter of November 6th to make it on copper-plate, as he was quite aware of his weakness in that branch of art. The rather unsuccessful representation of the animal in the Whitley Large Ox plate was then in hand, and the Kyloe Ox engraving, not long finished,

was not nearly so good as his woodcuts; besides, he was probably fired with ambition to make a wood engraving equal in size as well as importance to these two plates, and having got four pieces of boxwood joined together, he commenced his engraving. From Tunstall's letter it is evident Bewick had had under consideration the desirability of introducing the cow prominently beside the bull; but apparently finding it so troublesome to obtain satisfactory sketches, and from the increased difficulty in the composition of the design, he preferred to make a large drawing of the bull in the foreground, with others only seen in the far distance.*

The design of the Chillingham Bull, as shown in the fac-simile (which is taken partly from one on paper in the possession of Mr. M. Mackey, Newcastle, and partly from Mr. E. Gray's vellum impression), represents the bull standing impatiently pawing the earth, the full side length of the animal shown, with the head slightly turned towards the spectator, foam dropping from its mouth. Overhead and in the background there is a mass of foliage, and in the front various plants, sufficiently realised for their classes to be distinguished. At the right in the distance two of the wild animals appear. The engraving proper measures $7\frac{3}{4}$ by $5\frac{5}{8}$ inches, but, when first printed from, it had a beautiful and separately wrought border three-quarters of an inch broad.

Tunstall, on receiving the impressions, said he considered the figure well engraved and with much expression, though, "on looking again at the engraving I think," he wrote, "the shading of the muzzle rather faint, and there seems to be a white line straight down from the mouth, but this last may probably have happened in the taking off, though observable in all;" and then he asks, as in an after-thought, while he hits the truth, "Can it be meant to show the foam?"

The chief beauty of the Chillingham Bull lies in the marvellously varied

* In the "View of the Agriculture of Northumberland," published in 1797, there is a representation of Chillingham Cattle, drawn by J. Bailey (Bewick's friend) in 1794, and engraved on copper by Neele, of the Strand. It shows the Bull and Cow prominently; but it is poorly designed, and quite unlike Bewick's engraving of the Bull. The drawing of the Cow, however, has some good qualities.

and minute character of the foliage; the trees, which form a rich background, seem to have had more loving labour bestowed on them than the animal itself; and the intensely realistic plants on the ground show how carefully and patiently Bewick studied from nature, and how triumphant the master could render his art when the subject was one in which his whole soul delighted. Bewick was one of the earliest English artists to go direct to nature and transfer her forms unaltered to his picture, and this at a time when landscape painting was little practised in England, and when illogical Sir Joshua was discoursing on Generalisation and the Grand Style as the only true means of attaining distinction. Bewick might in our day have been styled a Pre-Raphaelite, "retaining in his delineation of natural scenery a fidelity to the facts of science so rigid as to make his work at once acceptable and credible to the most sternly critical intellect;" and the engraving of the vegetation in the Chillingham Bull is one of the most striking proofs of this faculty. It is a cut too precious to be lost sight of or neglected by those who would study art in all its phases.

Opinions, nevertheless, differ as to the artistic value of the Chillingham Bull. Bewick himself is said to have considered it his chief work, which it undoubtedly is as a separate engraving, and many are still of the same opinion. Chatto, in the "Treatise on Wood Engraving," makes a very guarded estimate of its value. He says—

"Though it is well engraved, and the character of the animal is well expressed, yet as a wood engraving it will not bear a comparison with several of the cuts in his 'History of British Birds.' The grass and the foliage of this are most beautifully expressed, but there is a want of variety in the more distant trees, and the bark of that in the foreground to the left is too rough. This exaggeration of the roughness of the bark of the trees is also to be perceived in many of his other cuts. The style in which the bull is engraved is admirably adapted to express the texture of the short white hair of the animal; the dew-lap, however, is not well represented, as it appears to be stiff instead of flaccid and pendulous: and the lines intended for hairs on its margin are too wiry."

The *British Quarterly Review*, in an article in 1845, also speaks somewhat

slightly of the Bull, while Hugo was of opinion that the block is the one "which by right claims among the cuts the first place of honour."

The Rev. Mr. Turner, in his notice of Bewick, says Tunstall was very urgent to obtain a representation of the Chillingham Bull upon a larger scale than was contemplated for Bewick's projected work of the Quadrupeds then in hand. Later on he sent the following letter, dated February 11th, 1789, in reply to an inquiry from Bewick :—

"I have no objection to what you propose for the plate being made use of in a particular account of them, but as I have collected many anecdotes about them, most of which I have already communicated to you, and hope to be able to procure more, I propose making up a small memoir to send to Sir Joseph Banks, the President of the Royal Society, of which I am a member, which probably may be ready for the next winter, and I should be sorry it should be anticipated by the publication you mention; but after that it is of no importance."

From the date of the letter it is probable that Tunstall never was able to send this account, as no such paper appeared, and his death happened on October 11th, 1790.

Some interesting notes contributed by Tunstall are given at the end of the first edition of the Quadrupeds; they mention the various places where at that time the Wild Cattle were to be found, and describe the specimens then extant.

Tunstall, having expressed satisfaction with the engraving, wrote on July 15th, 1789, asking that fifty impressions be taken off, half with and half without the border, all on good strong paper, adding, "I should be glad to have printed under them, *Bull of the Ancient Caledonian Breed now at Chillingham Castle, Northumberland*;" and in the same letter he says, "I understood by your last that both bull and cow were to be in one plate, which would have made the expense much less. . . . I can say nothing about the cow till I know the price of the engraving, which I desire you will send me, as also of the specimens taken off." According to this letter it appears that

Tunstall wanted fifty impressions taken, but this order was not executed, as nothing like that number of copies is known to exist of those taken off before, by a most unhappy accident, the block was split. The details of this occurrence are full, but the evidence is conflicting. The point, however, to be established involves the material question of the number printed of the finest of Bewick's larger works, and it is hoped that a careful, if lengthy, consideration of the various statements will not be unacceptable.

Bewick, having drawn and engraved the block, proceeded one Saturday to Solomon Hodgson's office, then in Union Street, Newcastle, in order to take off some early proofs. The engraving was completed in the middle of a week in the summer of 1789, and Bewick had called on the Friday with the block to have proofs pulled. But Hodgson being the printer of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, had that day all his presses filled with newspaper work, and was compelled to ask Bewick to come at another time; the cut being laid aside. On Saturday afternoon, as related in a letter by John Bell, published in the "Bewick Collector," Bewick again called to have the proofs taken, and Bell's father, who was foreman to Hodgson and the actual man who printed the impressions,

"Mentioning some fine parchment, which he had that day received from London, to make some plans of estates on, he being also a land surveyor, it was got out and a skin cut into six pieces; and he (Bell), Bewick, and Hodgson went to the printing-office where the six impressions, afterwards said to be on vellum, were printed off, together with the same number on paper."

And the letter goes on to relate—

"When the impressions were taken off, Hodgson, from the size of the cut, wanted to know where it was to be put until Monday, when the quantity wanted was to be printed. Bewick, taking the cut, laid it upon the stone imposing-table and the parties left the office. On Monday morning, when the office was opened, the cut was found to have split, the sun, for the most part of Sunday, having acted upon it through the window."

This is from a letter dated May 20th, 1840. In another, written also by

Bell in 1850, the details are slightly differently given, *four* being stated as the number, and the material *vellum*.

"It was laid into the shop desk," it is then said, "until the Saturday afternoon, when he (Bewick) came again, and with my father went to the printing-office. My father having a very fine small skin of vellum, which he had got for a plan, but which had not been used, he would try how the impressions would look on it, and took it with him to the printing-office, where it was divided into four, and four impressions taken off, which were all of them as good as possible. . . . When the printing was finished, the cut was cleaned off and brought from the press-room to Mr. Bewick, who laid it upon the office window as the safest place; but on Monday morning when the office was opened the cut was found split in two from the heat of the sun, the window facing the south-west. Putting the wet cut upon the window was altogether the act of Mr. Bewick."

The accident of the block splitting was a very annoying, and, as it proved, an irremediable misfortune. Perhaps it was well that Bewick himself did the deed; if another had been the delinquent no excuse would ever have availed with the artist. But if he were the cause of the mishap, so was it also he who had to bear the loss. In his Memoir Bewick never mentions the Bull further than describing the journey to Wycliffe to sketch the figure—an omission to excite surprise, as it is certain he was very proud of the engraving. Mayhap he felt the misfortune so keenly that he could not trust himself to write on the matter.

Bewick at once endeavoured to make good the disheartening blunder, but alas! it could not be properly rectified. Bell, in another letter dated June 27th, 1840, says—"He succeeded so far in closing the block that he took it back to the printing-office to have it printed, and was able to print some impressions without any mark of the crack, but it soon, either by bad management or otherwise, got hove up on the edge of one side of the crack, which made a line along the side of the Bull, from below its eye to the tail, blacker on the under side than the part immediately above on the same line."

Thus it was, after all his hopes of success and fears of failure, his fears

were realised and his hopes seemed blighted. He had believed that this engraving would prove satisfactory, and of course increase his reputation. He had proved by this block that he was the artist he felt himself to be; but now, within a few days of the completion of his anxious labours, the work had fallen to pieces in his hands. Subsequent events, however, have shown that even though shattered a sufficient number of proofs had been taken to display its exquisite beauties, and these copies, being so few in number, have become proportionately valuable.

Of the number of impressions taken off on the Saturday, and therefore before any damage came to the block, it is almost impossible to give a correct account. The proofs on vellum can nearly all be traced, but of those on paper the number cannot now authentically be given. In a letter which Tunstall wrote to Bewick, dated July 15th, 1789, he says, "I duly received the six impressions of the Chillingham Bull on vellum. * * They were rather relaxed and a little crumpled in the coming." These six were sent therefore to Tunstall, not taken by Bewick himself, as Bell states, and appear to have been returned to Bewick on Tunstall's death shortly after. It is also known that Bewick retained a proof for himself—it is still in his daughter's possession—that both Mrs. Hodgson and Mrs. Beilby received one each, and that Bell claims that his father had the privilege of choosing the best impression. This raises the number of vellum or parchment proofs of the Bull to ten, and these are now in the possession of the following :—

1. Mr. J. W. Ford, Enfield.	6. Rev. Mr. Buckley, Middleton Cheney.
2. Dr. Joly, Dublin.	7. Miss Bewick, Newcastle.
3. Mr. Pollard.	8. Dr. Joly, Dublin.
4. South Kensington Museum.	9. Mr. Edwin Gray, York.
5. Mr. Kettelles (? now).	10. Earl Spencer.

The first on this list was given to Mr. Bailey, the land steward at Chillingham, with whom Bewick lodged when sketching the Bull. On this impression are the words, in Bewick's handwriting, "For Mr. Bailey." Mr. Ford, in a

letter to the author dated Nov. 28th, 1881, remarks, "It was sold in London a few years ago (Dec., 1877), and half believed at the sale to be a forgery. I knew Bewick's writing and bought it, and afterwards verified the facts by calling on Mr. Bailey Langhorne, solicitor, of Wakefield (grandson of the steward), who had acted for the vendors of the library, and who told me it had never been out of the family since it was given by Bewick. It is a brilliant impression in faultless condition."

The second was purchased by Dr. Joly at Hugo's sale in 1877; Hugo having bought it from Miss Bewick. The third was given to Pollard, the engraver, with whom Bewick was very intimate, and it still remains in the family. The fourth was bequeathed to the South Kensington Museum by the Rev. George Townsend, who purchased it from Mr. Michael Coombes, Regent Street, by whom it was bought from Mr. Edwin Pearson for fifty guineas; Mr. Pearson having acquired it from Mr. W. Dodd, bookseller, Newcastle. The fifth was at one time in the possession of Mr. Kettelles, but was sold a number of years ago. The sixth was purchased for £3 10s. at Hugo's sale, who in 1852 had paid Miss Jane Bewick £15 for it and the one marked No. 2. The seventh remains in the artist's family. The eighth was one retained by Bell, from whom it passed to Hugo, at whose sale it was purchased by Dr. Joly for £5. The ninth is probably the one to which Bell refers ("Bewick Collector," p. 435) when he says, "Mrs. Hodgson, I believe, gave that which her late husband got to some friend of his." This, however, must remain doubtful, as Mr. Gray, in reply to a query by the author, says, February 7th, 1882, "I have nothing to show how the engraving came into my father's possession. It was found some years ago in an old scrap-book, and thence rescued and mounted." The tenth was given to Mrs. Beilby, who after her husband's death sold it to Earl Spencer for, it is said, the sum of £50.

This number of ten proofs is different from that considered correct by previous writers on the Chillingham Bull, but from the list of the recipients given it may safely be accepted as the right one. Hugo, in the "Bewick

Collector," says, "It would appear to be tolerably certain that six impressions on parchment and the same number on paper were all that were taken, with Bewick's knowledge, on the Saturday before the block was injured, but Simpson may have clandestinely taken some other impressions on the Sunday, and to his unauthorised use of the cut the lamentable injury may possibly be attributable. Allowing, however, that Simpson had the power, I do not believe that he exercised it in this particular instance." And Hugo further says, "I very much doubt whether more than six impressions on parchment with the border, and really without the name, can be found to exist." In this estimate of the number Hugo, who goes by what Chatto and Bell say, is mistaken; the letter acknowledging receipt of six, in Tunstall's Memoirs, was either unknown or ignored by these writers; and collectors since their time have often been puzzled to account for the larger number known by many to exist.

Hugo's reference to Simpson, who was a pressman at Hodgson's, is because of the letters which he prints from Chatto and Bell regarding a paragraph in the "Treatise on Wood Engraving." It is there said, "When only a few impressions of the Chillingham Bull had been taken, and before he had added his name, the block split. The pressmen, it is said, got tipsy over their work, and left the block lying on the window-sill exposed to the rays of the sun, which caused it to warp and split. About six impressions were taken on thin vellum before the accident occurred." In commenting on this statement Bell wrote, "The writer of the account of this cut in line 13, page 570 (first edition), of the 'Treatise on Wood Engraving,' is incorrect in saying that 'the pressmen got tipsy over their work,' as at that hour when the impressions were printed most of the men of the office had left." Chatto, the author of this account, in reply to Bell's letter, says, "I have first to observe that you do not fairly quote what is stated about 'the pressmen getting tipsy over their work' at page 570 of the Treatise. In writing that identical passage I was particularly guarded, in order that what I stated

might not be supposed as proceeding from my own knowledge ; and on referring to the page, you will find that I merely mentioned the circumstance as a report. My words are, ' it is said.' I am, however, strongly inclined to believe that the report was correct, and that there are circumstances connected with the taking of an additional number of parchment or vellum impressions which in all probability your father neither heard of nor suspected."

Hugo states, nevertheless, that these impressions are second states, and bear the name of the artist, so that they must have been pulled after Bewick's first attempt at putting the block together.

The first ten impressions of the block on vellum show no mark of the split ; they have the ornamental border, with no title and without Bewick's name at the left low corner ; the reproduction given is a fac-simile of this state, impressions of which are both scarce and valuable.

The second state differs from the first by having T. Bewick, Newcastle, 1789, at the corner left dark in the first state, the T and B being in monogram. The following title is at the foot:—"The Wild Bull, of the Ancient Caledonian Breed, now in the Park at Chillingham Castle, Northumberland, 1789." These were pulled after Bewick had taken the cut home, and after he had been able to close it up so that some impressions were obtained without showing the crack.* The value of these is not nearly so great as the first state, yet a high price has been paid for a perfect copy. Several impressions of this state also exist with the cracks as they appeared after they began to show again.

The third state, in which the block remained until 1817, shows the block in a dilapidated condition ; the cracks present themselves over the plate, across the centre, lengthwise, and in other places ; the small piece which was

* A prominent collector in Newcastle has an impression which he believes to have been taken surreptitiously on the Sunday. This is unsigned, but taken on paper, and *without the ornamental border*, but considered by its owner to be unique ; the workman, it is thought, having feared to use the border, it being a separate piece of wood.

added to the block, so as to make it fit the border, also shows more distinctly; the border itself has disappeared (it has been lost sight of for many years), and only a simple double line of black surrounds it.

In 1817 the block was repaired by having an iron band screwed round it, and impressions were pulled without showing the crack. Underneath "Newcastle, printed by Ed. Walker, 1817," was inserted. In this, the fourth state, many impressions were taken, and their value is just what the collector cares to give, the published price in 1847 being 5s., as shown in the advertisement at the end of the *History of Birds* of that year.

The Chillingham Bull original wood block without the border was sold to Mr. Hugo for £40, and in 1877 was again sold for £26 among Mr. Hugo's collection. It is now the property of Mr. Gow, of Cambo, near Newcastle. In 1877 it was then in the clamped condition it had been put into sixty years before, and the cracks were again apparent. Since then the block has been reclamped, and the fifth state was first published in Newcastle in 1878. The impressions are advertised to be "equal in brilliancy and richness of tone to any hitherto printed, with the exception of some few special copies." A few impressions have been taken on vellum, and also a larger number on paper, some of which are still to be had at a moderate price.

In Mr. Hugo's collection there was a proof of the Bull "without the border and title, and spaced out by Bewick with a blacklead pencil into squares for re-engraving." This had been obtained from W. Garret, of Newcastle, who said in a letter to Hugo on the subject, "This impression of the Bull is a curious and valuable one, for when the block was cracked Bewick despaired of its ever being repaired, and therefore set to work and squared out an impression (the one under notice) for a new block, should he not succeed in clamping it together." Bewick did not engrave another large block, but there is reason to think that he either copied, or deputed some of his apprentices to copy, the design in a much smaller size. Bell, in his *Appendix*, says Bewick engraved such a cut, and mentions the great rarity of the impres-

sions. The spaced-out copy is now in the collection of Mr. Crawford J. Pocock, Brighton. An inquiry as to the Bull having been started in a Newcastle newspaper, Mr. Pocock was led to minutely examine this impression, and, in conjunction with a copy of the block printed underneath, he arrived at the conclusion, after considering what Garret and Bell have said, that this small block is the one executed by Bewick, in reverse, from the large pencilled one. He found, on reducing the spaces one-third (the smaller block being, therefore, one-ninth of the larger), that the little cut comes exactly similar to the other. From the beauty of the workmanship and the very precise nature of the copy, it appears very probable that Mr. Pocock's conclusion is correct, though there is no further documentary evidence to support it. In any case it cannot be denied that this small cut is a very superior engraving.

The Chillingham Bull. Small size.

The Lion. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

CHAPTER XIV.

"THE GENERAL HISTORY OF QUADRUPEDS."

THE circumstances under which the "General History of Quadrupeds" was begun, and the manner in which the work progressed during the first years of its preparation, have been explained in the previous chapter. It is there related that Bewick drew and engraved the woodcuts of the animals and tail-piece vignettes, while his partner, Ralph Beilby, compiled the description and histories; this being mostly, if not entirely, done after ordinary business hours.

After a time, a considerable number of blocks being ready, the partners put their proposal into a form which was submitted to the public in a prospectus. They seriously considered how best to have the work published, and this, to the engravers, who had no personal experience in the matter, was a source of no small anxiety. In his letter to the *Monthly Magazine* of July, 1805, Bewick says, in reference to this, "Prudence suggested that it might be necessary to inquire how our labours were to be ushered to the world; and, as we were unacquainted with the printing and publishing of

books, what mode was the most likely to insure success. Upon this subject Mr. Hodgson (then editor of the *Newcastle Chronicle* newspaper) was consulted, and made fully acquainted with our plan. He entered into the undertaking with uncommon ardour, and urged us strenuously not to retain our first humble notions of ‘making it like a school book,’ but pressed us to let it ‘assume a more respectable form.’” Thus it was determined to make the publication of a kind to give it an immediate place amongst works of a high character, and we have to thank Hodgson for the urgent counsels which gained this point. Otherwise, Beilby and Bewick might not have thought themselves justified in speculating further than the expense of “making it like a school book.”

Bewick, in his Memoir, gives very little information regarding the Quadrupeds. In a letter to his brother John, dated January 9th, 1788, he mentions his intention to have the first edition “done by subscription,” and in the same month the partners published the prospectus previously referred to. As it is a scarce document, and of considerable interest in connection with the completed work, it is here given at length.

“NEWCASTLE, *January 28th*, 1788.

“Proposals | for publishing by subscription | A General History of Quadrupeds, | containing | a Concise Account of every Animal of that kind | hitherto known or described.—With | observations on the Habits, Faculties, and Propensities | of each creature | intended as | A Complete Display of that Part of Animated Nature, | At once Useful, Instructive, and Entertaining. | Embellished with | Accurate Engravings on Wood | of each Animal. | Drawn from the Life, or Copied from the Productions of the best Authors | on that Subject. | TO THE PUBLIC. To add to the number of Publications already extant on this Branch of Natural History, may seem at first View both presumptuous and unnecessary; but when it is considered that the great expense of the more voluminous Works confines them chiefly to the Libraries of the Wealthy, and that the smaller Publications of this sort are such mean and pitiful Productions as must disgust every Reader of Common Observation, the propriety and usefulness of this undertaking will appear sufficiently obvious.

“The great care that has been taken to give the true Portrait and Character of

each Creature, and the masterly execution of the WOOD ENGRAVINGS, will, it is hoped, strongly recommend this Work to every Admirer of that Part of Nature's Productions. Many of the animals have been accurately drawn from Nature; and in this respect the Editor has been peculiarly fortunate, in being enabled to offer to the Public more faithful Representations of some rare Quadrupeds than have hitherto appeared.

“* The work will be neatly printed, in One Volume Octavo, on a good Paper, with entire new Types.

“†§ Price to Subscribers 8 Shillings in Boards. To be paid on Delivery. Printed for, and sold by S. Hodgson, by whom Subscriptions are taken in; also by Beilby and Bewick, Engravers, &c.”

This prospectus had specimens of the woodcuts proposed to be inserted. They were printed on drawing paper, each with three or four examples.

In connection with this prospectus, the first number of the *Bibliographer* (Dec., 1881) published a letter from Bewick to the secretary of the London Society of Arts, dated from Newcastle, May 22nd, 1788. In this, after a few preliminaries, Bewick says :—

“The favourable reception which some of my juvenile performances have met with from that honourable body (the Society of Arts) and their request to me at that time (1775, when Bewick won a premium), ‘That I would not rest satisfied with one attempt, but subject my future performances to their inspection,’ have again emboldened me to submit my labours to their view. I know not that there is at this time any reward offered by the Society, or any competition in the way; but if I should be so happy as to find that the work now in hand meets with their approbation and patronage, it might silence the clamour of ill-natured criticism, and tend to promote its sale. When the curious are served with the best impressions, a second and inferior edition will be done for the use of youths at school, with a view more widely to diffuse a better knowledge of this branch of natural history, and also to awaken in the contemplative mind an admiration of the wonderful works of Nature. If you think it worth your notice, I will send you the rest of the prints to complete the set as soon as they are done.”

From this letter it will be seen that Bewick was still thinking of his favourite scheme of improving the minds of the young by his labours, and it had evidently been his intention to publish a cheap edition of the work. Very possibly the partners were not able to agree how this should be done;

as it was afterwards found that eight shillings was as small a sum as would give a reasonable return for the outlay, which necessarily must have been large.* Be the cause as it may, a cheap edition never was printed, but the second edition was raised to nine shillings, the fourth to ten shillings and sixpence, the fifth to thirteen shillings, and the sixth and last two editions to a guinea.

As the blocks were engraved by Bewick he took them to his old friend Thomas Angus, the printer—it was before the printing connection with Hodgson—and had a few impressions taken off, some on thin paper, as proofs, and about a dozen on thick paper. The latter Bewick at first intended to issue coloured, but “the labour and expense deterred him from doing all the animals in this manner. They were never sold; and what were done, or at least a few of them, were coloured by the apprentices in his shop for the use of his own children.”†

The first edition of the “History of Quadrupeds” consisted of 1,500 copies, printed on demy octavo paper, and sold at eight shillings. A hundred copies were also printed on paper a little larger—royal octavo—and sold for twelve shillings. The latter are now very difficult to obtain; while the former are also much increased in value, but, from the large number of the edition, are frequently to be met with at moderate prices. The wood engravings number two hundred, with over a hundred vignette tail-pieces of various sizes and importance.

On the title-page is a print of a stag drinking at the basin of a spring which gently trickles over a rock, as “Maga” said, “like a well asleep in a moss-grown cell, built by some thoughtful recluse in the old monastic day.”

The work proper begins with the Horse, which is followed by the Ass, the Ox, the Sheep, the Goat, and the Deer. This arrangement is more

* The net profit of the first edition is stated by Bell to have been £125 16s. 8d., and the second, £342 5s. 11d. This was divided equally between Bewick, Beilby, and Hodgson.

† Garrett, in the “Bewick Collector.”

utilitarian than scientific, and though it follows that pursued by Pennant in his "British Zoology," and is the system first adopted by Ray, yet it cannot be pronounced thoroughly satisfactory. Nevertheless, when carefully carried out, as in the later editions of the *Quadrupeds* (the first edition is by no means perfect), it is more easily grasped than the more correct yet complicated arrangement beginning with the Monkey, Bat, and Mole, and down the correct scientific scale.

The first figure is the full-length representation of the Race Horse, a cut firmly drawn and skilfully engraved; the high temper of the racer faithfully shown in the backward turn of the ears, and the hind leg ready to vent its force on any offender. The background, as in most of the cuts in the *Quadrupeds*, emphasizes the prevailing sentiment in connection with the figure, and in this the scene is laid near Newcastle, on the Town Moor, where races are still held; the steeple of St. Nicholas is shown in the distance, and near at hand a neck-and-neck race is going on. Followed by horsemen, a crowd runs along to keep up with the riders, and on the rising ground far away, the figures, though minute, are distinctly seen to move towards the winning-post. This cut, like a large number in the *Quadrupeds*, is signed by the engraver. The heavier figure of the Hunter follows: there is scarcely so much animation in this, the careful drawing of the legs being the principal point in the picture. The background lends special interest to the design; the Hunter in full cry after the hounds marks the particular employment of the horse, and makes a perfectly complete picture. The next figure, the Black Horse, is massive, strong, and intelligent, the head a trifle small perhaps, but the limbs able for any load that could be put to it; in the distance half-a-dozen horses roam at will. The fourth and last of the Horses is a striking contrast to the Race Horse at the beginning. This, the Common Cart Horse, has few personal attractions; Bewick depicts him untidy and uncared for; in the background he pulls a cart with entire responsibility, for his master sleeps (but whip in hand) in the lumbering vehicle, and the poor cart-horse labours

wearily along, while his aristocratic neighbour before him bears a fashionably dressed lady. Beilby found very little to say about the Cart Horse, so he touches on the theme of cruelty to horses, and, no doubt inspired by Bewick, gives vent to the opinions which forty years later called forth the design, "Waiting for Death."

The Mule and the Ass, the next two figures, are both fully characteristic; the mule is a steadily drawn living-looking animal, with intelligence in its eye, which, with the distant mule in the design, makes a lively opposition to the toilsome travelling of the pedestrian going in the other direction. The Ass is perhaps scarcely so successful in the figure, but the story told in the background is worthy of some attention. A family of vagabonds are on the march; the husband lazily and shamefully rides on an ass already heavily laden with panniers, while his wife wearily walks, carrying a babe on her back, and lagging behind with her other child. This is one of the designs which make Bewick's cuts so different and so much preferable to others; there is a complete story, not very pleasing, but with unswerving fidelity to truth, for of all animals the poor ass suffers more from unfeeling men than any other. Even the heavy panniers and the man's weight do not seem to be enough for it to endure; and Bewick shows the man raising his cudgel to belabour the unfortunate animal.

Of the ruminating animals, we have first two blocks on one page, the Common Bull and Cow, in later editions called the Holstein or Dutch breed. The large figure of the Bull is somewhat stiff, and is far surpassed by the distant sketch of a man pursued by a maddened bull. The man's hat and wig have dropped in the excitement of the race, but he waits not to pick them up, does not even glance to see where they lie, but rushes on to elude the irritated animal. Small as the figure of the man is, his frightened look and eagerness to be out of danger are patent to the most undiscerning beholder.*

* The design of the Man chased by a Bull is repeated more than once in other Bewick blocks, and in the "Looking Glass for the Mind" it appears as one of John Bewick's works.

The Cow, as becomes its nature, is represented in a quieter scene, standing in a meadow, having just been left by the milkmaid, who walks off, pitcher on head and dog in front, while other two cows ruminate in the distance. It is to be observed in the engraving of this cut that there is no outline along the back of the animal, but the engraving leaves off almost abruptly: although much easier for the engraver, this style of work has many disadvantages, and even in Bewick's skilful hands the result is not perfectly satisfactory.

The next two figures appear on one page, with the title "Wild Cattle," of which reproductions are given on this and page 97, being figures of the

The Wild Cow. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

Wild Bull and Cow. The Bull has some similarity to the design of the Chillingham Bull, the figure, however, being reversed. The foliage is richer in the background than usual in the Quadrupeds blocks, but the animal itself is inferior to the large design: the hair is scarcely repre-

sented, and the outline of the figure has a harshness which gives the whole a somewhat "common" effect. The Cow stands motionless, in contrast to her mate, which paws the earth; like the other, it is somewhat hard in the outline. The scene in the distance shows the keeper of the animals riding off after he has shot a bull which falls wounded; in retaliation the bull chases the sportsman, hunting these animals being no child's play. The Urus, or Wild Bull, though unsigned, is of a quality equal to the home animals. It is full of action, pawing and bellowing, and the shaggy mane is excellently engraved. The dark foliage of the foreground is taken away in the fourth (1800) edition. Of the three animals following, the Bison, the Zebra, and the

Buffalo, none are really good ; they were engraved by Bewick from sketches made by others, and they lack what all Bewick's own works possess in so eminent a degree—a feeling of characteristic animation. The Buffalo has a dark mass in the foreground, which is not shown in any but the first three editions. In it and in the Urus there is a feeble attempt at cross hatching, both the white and the black line being essayed, but the result is unsuccessful, and shows how much difficulty Bewick found in the mechanical part of engraving in which modern engravers are so proficient.

Of the engravings of the Sheep, animals which Bewick could sketch from life, and therefore all fine, the best is the Common Ram, or the Black-faced Ram, as all later editions style it. The sagacious head with “the crooked horn” is full of feeling, and quite worthy of Landseer, and the pastoral piece in the distance adds value to the design.

The Common Antelope. “The General History of Quadrupeds.”

The Leicestershire Breed, dated Sandal, Dec. 22nd, 1788, makes the animal stand on the *top* of the snow which covers the ground ; and the Wedder of Mr. Culley's Breed was engraved from a drawing made by Bailey, with whom Bewick lived when at Chillingham. The curious deformed look of the under jaw of the Dunky, or Dwarf Sheep, is explained to be natural, though artistically it might have been rendered better. The fern in the background, cut white against the rock, has a brilliant effect. The Tartarian Sheep was drawn from life, and is more excellent than the three other foreign sheep which follow.

The Common Antelope is an example how beautifully Bewick engraved

when circumstances were favourable. It is scarcely credible, indeed, that the same hand did some of those immediately preceding, and there must, at least, have been a long time between their execution. In the Common Antelope, which is reproduced on page 117, there is correct drawing, action, and colour; the rotundity of the form and the intelligence of the eye leave nothing to be desired; and the foliage makes up a very pretty engraving. The cut of the two little animals, the Chevrotain and Meminna, a skilfully composed group, is succeeded by the large and fine design of the Nyl-Ghau. This is signed, which is more than several of the feeble ones are, and has received much attention from the engraver; the gradations of light and shade are fine, the drawing excellent, and the engraving, especially of the head, most carefully and powerfully attended to: the cut is one which grows in quality with acquaintance, and deserves close examination. The block of the Musk is not so satisfactory, and then comes the terrible failure, the Giraffe, or Cameleopard. This must have been drawn from a very badly stuffed specimen. At the time no giraffe had been brought to England alive. The bend in the neck could never have been drawn by one who knew there are but seven vertebræ in that part of the body, the other joints are quite out of their sockets, and the figure is about as ill drawn as it could be. Yet, with all these defects, there is one good point in the design—the head—it having considerable animation. In the rear a couple of Indians seek to compass the capture of two giraffes seen grazing, these being more correctly drawn than the large figure.* The Elk is good in many parts, notably the head, the whole giving a fair idea of the animal, and is followed by the Reindeer, which was drawn from that done for Liddell and Consett's "*Tour through Lapland and Sweden.*"

With the print of the Stag, or Red Deer, we return to those engravings which give the great value to the series. It is a very beautiful design;

* The Giraffe in the 1824 edition is slightly different.

the stately animal, turning slightly round, gives a graceful curve to the neck, and the "bold branching horns" are skilfully balanced by the foliage of the tree beside which it stands. The half-anxious, half-inquiring look of the eyes is eminently characteristic, and reveals the deep knowledge the engraver had of the deer's timidity, when, as described in the text, "he approaches a thicket, stops to look round him on all sides, and attentively surveys every object near him." The Fallow Deer was no doubt drawn from life, the feeling of reality through the figure being intense, and great care has evidently been spent on it; the animal has elegance and repose in every limb, and the quiet watchfulness of the eye is full of understanding. The Roebuck is also a careful engraving, but the animal does not offer the same attractive form as the Fallow Deer: a number of birds in flight above the figure is an effect occasionally employed by Bewick, notably in the farmyard scene at the beginning of the "History of British Birds." In the second and later editions this flight disappears, having probably been taken away to avoid the distraction it produced in the composition.

The Camel is a ponderous-looking representation, the engraving most likely copied from a copper-plate. In the "Beauties of Natural History," 1777, there is a Camel almost identical with this. The Dromedary in "Tommy Trip," 1777, is also very similar to that in the Quadrupeds, which Bewick was just commencing when the announcement of his father's death reached him on Nov. 15th, 1785. This was the first figure done for the volume, and though it does not possess much actual beauty, it evinces some care and perseverance in making the form and tints as correct as possible. This design, reproduced on page 93, also bears the curious combination of wood and copper-plate engraving which is noticeable in the Camel.

The Wild Boar is a print with some pretensions, but the Common Hog, or Common Boar, as later editions call it, is more true to the life. In the distance some of the same kindred feed at a trough, towards which several

young pigs run with all their might. The African Boar is excelled by the Mexican Pig, though the absurdity of the animal putting its feet on a snake at which it does not look is very apparent. The Thick-nosed Tapir should be noted, as being in later editions taken from among the Hog kind and placed beside the Cavy. The Rhinoceros, Two-horned Rhinoceros, Hippopotamus, and Elephant are moderately good specimens, the last not nearly so well drawn as might be.

The Tiger. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

Up to this the animals represented are of those kinds which in some way serve the needs of man, but as the text says, "the scene must be diversified, and we come now to a sanguinary and unrelenting tribe—the bold and intrepid enemies of man." The Lion of course heads the list, and is a powerful representation of the King of Beasts. The half-angry scowl on the face and the whisp of the tail tell of the savage temper of the animal, and the incident of the Lion leaping on its prey in the background renders the story of its ferociousness with striking power. The engraving, of which a fac-simile is at the head of this chapter, was drawn from a Lion which was shown in Newcastle in 1788.

The Tiger fac-simile above is also from one exhibited in Newcastle in 1787, and is a wonderfully faithful portrait. The lithe movement of the

limbs is particularly admirable, and it shows how perfectly true to nature Bewick could be when he had the opportunity to draw from the life. The attitude of the insatiable animal is quite statuesque, and in skilful hands would make a startling alto-relievo. The Panther, Leopard, Ounce, and Jaguar are hardly so striking, but reveal much skill in avoiding "spottiness" in the fur. They are, however, superior to the Cougar and the Black Tiger, the latter being spoiled by an excess of lightness given to the left hind leg, which makes it seem to have no connection with the remainder of the animal. The Ocelot, taken from life, is a pretty cut, the Marguay not so good, and the Serval is greatly hurt by the depth of the spots on its coat, although the engraving of the head is delicate. The Wild Cat has a sense of largeness, but is somewhat stiff, and the Domestic Cat is neither a finely drawn nor a favourable specimen of its race, considering Bewick's fondness for cats and the many opportunities he had to make studies of them. The Lynx, like the Black Tiger, suffers from the endeavour to gain force by accentuating the lighter parts; and the Caracal finishes the species, being a fairly powerful drawing.

Of the Weasels the engravings are all careful and well drawn, but the forms of the animals do not allow of much artistic beauty. The best are the Stoat, the Foumart—which has a little story connected with it, given in the text—and the Ichneumon, with a background similar to that in the Camel. The Racoon is also cleverly drawn.

The text mentions that the Sand Bear was taken from one kept in the Tower, and very probably was sketched by Bewick when he was in London in 1776, or perhaps was drawn by John Bewick, who was resident in London at the time it was done. After the Glutton we have the Brown Bear, a very poor design considering the many times Bewick must have seen it perambulating the country. The Black Bear is not very good either, and the print of the Polar Bear is most unsatisfactory. In the second edition it is replaced by a more natural representation. The Striped

Hyena is one of the failures, and was replaced by a superior block in the 1800 edition.

After the number of comparatively mediocre cuts, it is a great pleasure to meet with the fine series of Foxes. In these we have engravings of animals which Bewick took from nature. The first is the Greyhound Fox, of which a fac-simile is given as a tail-piece to this chapter. It stands beside a newly captured lamb, and the whole design is rich and beautifully engraved. The Cur Fox, in like manner, stands beside a dead chanticleer, and is also a marvellously fine block, the proportions elegant and carefully produced, and with the help of the ever-ready foliage forming a brilliant

The Cur Fox. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

example of Bewick's mastery. Any artist might, indeed, be proud to be able to produce two such faithful and beautiful pictures. It is not too much to say that Landseer in all his glory never produced anything better in composition than these: his works

may have been larger and in colour, but for conception and execution the Foxes are quite equal to "Not Caught Yet" or Just Caught." The Arctic Fox and Jackal are jejune, and the Wolf is only partially successful, but this for the reason that Bewick was not certain of his work. In a letter dated January 9th, 1788, which has been previously quoted, and which was published in 1878 in the Newcastle Natural History Society's Transactions, Bewick says to his brother John, "I am obliged to you for the drawing of the Lion. I wish I had as good a one of the Wolf, the form and shape of which is so variously and contradictorily represented to me by different people that I am quite puzzled as to its real appearance."

The long and interesting series of the Dog engravings is begun with the Shepherd's Dog, upon whose "vigilance and activity depend the safety, order, and discipline of the shepherd's flock." The interest of the Cur Dog lies almost wholly in the background, where a dog drives along a laggard bull. The Greenland Dog in like manner stands before a scene where three of its companions drag a sledge, thus giving the great use of the dog in a manner which makes the letterpress almost superfluous. The same, indeed, may be said of all the Dog engravings: the scowling Bull-dog hangs on the lip of an escaped bull; the noble Mastiff stands in front of a dog-fair, where all breeds assemble; the Dalmatian is close to a roadway along which the coach will shortly pass; the supple Greyhound follows fleetly on the fugitive hare; the Lurcher has caught its prey; the plain, honest Terrier fights hard with the badger; and the Beagle (though not so good as those in the "Chase") is a capital picture of a running animal. The Harrier which follows this is one of the best of the Dogs; the engraving is refined, the form well-nigh perfect, and it stands out like marble from the surrounding scene. In the background two hunters sit on horseback, most skilfully drawn, and on the slope before them a number of harriers spread themselves over the ground. The signature does not appear on this block, though it must have given the artist much pleasure to engrave. The Fox Hound figure is not nearly so fine, and the Old English Hound is rather formal in the execution. Both are inferior to the Spanish Pointer, which is reproduced on a future page. This is a very lovely print, and quite worthy of the highest praise. The English Setter is placed amidst a long stretch of northern country, just the best place where the sagacious dog may "range in the new-shorn fields, his nose in the air erect," and where, as we see, "from ridge to ridge panting he bounds." It is followed by the important block of the Newfoundland Dog, done from a sketch made at Eslington, where, as described in his Memoir, Bewick stayed for two days when on his return from Chillingham, after he had drawn the Bull in 1789.

Besides the signature, place, and date, there are the letters P., V., B., T. B. (the last in monogram) under four figures crossing a bridge in the background, a number of dogs scampering before them. The T. B. is easily recognisable as Bewick's big burly figure, and the one who takes his arm is John Bell, the steward to Sir Harry Liddell, of Sweden and Lapland fame. The large Rough Water Dog is characteristically depicted beside a coast scene, where the dog swims behind a little boat. The next, the Large Water Spaniel, stated in the text to have been drawn from "one of the finest of its kind," is a beautifully wrought block, the hair more carefully engraved than the previous one. The Small Water Spaniel and the Springer are also thoughtful drawings, and the landscape backgrounds are executed with much appropriateness. The Comforter, the last of the Dog series, is perhaps the least pleasing, the insipidity of the surroundings killing the beauty of the portrait. In the text there follow after this some reflections on the manners of dogs and men, and in connection therewith it is interesting to observe that in the Memoir, at pages 159 and 160, Bewick expresses sentiments on dog life of a noteworthy character, which read as a pleasant sequel to Beilby's writing in the Quadrupeds.

The "harmless and inoffensive" Hare is an engraving which, while containing many admirable qualities, shows the animal on too large a scale to give a true idea of its size. The arrangement of placing the head against a half-dark background is skilful, as it allows the whiskers to be marked without difficulty to the engraver. The Rabbit is more successful, the action good, the drawing certain, and the colour of the fur cleverly manipulated: it may be noted that the whiskers are partly black against white, and white against black. The Domestic Rabbit excels both the previous blocks. The figure is full of life, and though a large portion of the body is left pure white, the rotundity of the form is perfectly maintained—a feat in engraving which is much easier to write about than to equal or excel.

The Guinea Pig is not altogether satisfactory, and the Spotted Cavy was

considered by Bewick so poor that in future editions it is replaced by a much truer portrait of the animal. Differently from the Rabbit, the white fur of the Squirrel is rather insufficiently rendered, and the blackness round the feet suggests that the engraver had had difficulty in pictorially detaching them from the branch. The Grey Squirrel is unsatisfactory; but the Ground Squirrel is sufficiently well engraved to please the most critical. The transition of the stripe is managed without causing the animal to appear anything but round—an operation to a draughtsman in black and white of considerable difficulty.

In the Jerboa the texture employed for representing the rock is distinctly varied from that used for the grasses, and the soft hair of the animal is altogether different from both. The Tail-less Marmot is from a drawing by Pennant, and is referred to in a letter from him to Allan, the purchaser of the Wycliffe Museum, dated November 27th, 1786, in which he says he sends the drawing and regrets he has no others, having long since been exhausted.

The Rat, although the drawing is correct, might reasonably have been expected to have been more characteristic. The Water Rat has received more labour, but the Musk Rat is not so good as either, while the Muscovy Musk Rat is almost devoid of originality. In the later editions the Beaver was inserted after the Rat, but in the first edition the Mouse comes next. The latter block is most remarkably poor, for though the drawing is faithful the engraving is weak in the extreme. Bewick appears to have felt this, as in the 1820 edition (the seventh) it is changed for another. The Long-tailed Field Mouse (reproduced on page 130) is the best of this series, and greatly excels the Short-tailed Field Mouse, the Shrew Mouse, and the Dwarf Mouse, though the last has some good points.

Of the large number of the Monkey tribe, the best are the Gibbon and Baboon. They are both executed with great skill, and the latter having been taken from life, Bewick did not fail to produce a block of superior quality. The Mona also is clever, and the Cagvi and the Mico are

characteristic, but the last is overweighted with a heavy rock for a background; this gives an opportunity, however, for much beautiful engraving in the plants beside the rock.

The Porcupine and the Hedgehog are blocks over which the artist must have spent some time; the former taken from life, with the usual faithful result, and the other a lovely piece of engraving, though the subject is not easy to treat. In the Otter design there is a striking transcript from nature in the clump of foliage above the animal. The Great Manis and the Armadillos have been thoroughly drawn, the subject requiring some subtlety in execution. The Walrus wants variety, a quality which the Seal has in due proportion; while the Sea Bear, like the Walrus, exhibits the influence of the copper-plate, from which it was probably copied. This is the last animal treated in the volume proper, but the addenda contain a description and illustration of the American Elk, a large and fairly faithful representation taken from life. In the background a hunter fires at a horned Elk which is galloping near him. The later editions have this cut immediately after the ordinary Elk. The first issue concludes with a letterpress description of Wild Cattle, supplied by Tunstall, of Wycliffe, which is not introduced in other editions.

In the second and later editions of the *Quadrupeds* many other animals were described, and, as will be found in the chapters on subsequent editions, a large number of important illustrations were added. The most noticeable of these was the series of the Bats, which first appear in the second (1791) edition. Their omission was probably due to the uncertainty which prevailed in the author's mind as to the true position of the Bat, occupying as it does a "middle nature between four-footed animals and birds."

One of the great attractions of the publication of the *Quadrupeds* was the uncommonly striking, truthful, and satirical tail-piece-vignettes, or tale-pieces, as Bewick loved to call them. The first edition did not contain a large number, but several are among the most famous of Bewick's productions.

At page 147 is the cut of a tombstone, "*Firmum in vita nihil*," which John Bewick repeated, slightly altered, in the "*Looking Glass for the Mind*;" and this is followed at page 162 by one of the best Bewick had then done—an elephant throwing up its trunk, its mouth open, the whole animal being foreshortened. In the text it is related that "in order to induce the Elephant to exhibit itself in the unusual attitude to more advantage, a person was employed to throw fruit into its mouth." This person "sometimes deceived it by only making an offer of doing so, and retaining the fruit in his hand. Enraged at this kind of treatment, and, as it would seem, guessing the painter (who was making a drawing) to be the cause, it ejected a quantity of water from its trunk which spoiled the paper, and prevented him from proceeding in his work." Beilby does not say the artist was Bewick, but the inference that it was so is very fair. This is one of the instances when the tail-piece becomes truly a "tale-piece," and has a direct bearing on the text.

The Ford—Left Behind. Vignette in the "*Looking Glass for the Mind*." From the original block by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

In the vignette at page 176 a man steadies himself in crossing a rivulet, and at page 195 a cat and dog exhibit their deadly hatred to each other. Farther on two boys amuse themselves with wading and fishing; again, a boat filled with men and women is being ferried across a river; and another ferry scene is at page 244, where an old man, astride an already well-laden horse, gently guides his steed for the other shore, while from the bank a dog sends up a howl of indignation at being left to find his own way across, just as a petted child, who is suddenly ignored, bawls to attract attention. A similar design, printed above, is used by John Bewick in the "*Looking Glass*."

After the White Bear, and as if following out the description in the text, there is a drawing of a company of strolling players, reproduced at p. 128.

The procession is headed by two performing dogs, the bearward following, and leading a white bear, a dressed monkey on its back; the wife trudges along with a large bundle and one of the dogs in her arms, and she is followed by another actor, also heavily burdened. One of the dancing dogs brings up this strange group, odd enough to make most people turn and look, and to the rustic mind conveying all sorts of marvels and dreads. By way of comment on these poor players' probable reception, Bewick places a scaffold in the distance. At page 265 the tail-piece is a beautiful vignette of a fox running from its pursuers by the edge of a rock, above which the foliage is thick and beautiful; magpies above follow

Strolling Players. Vignette in the "General History of Quadrupeds."

Reynard, marking out his path. Farther on "two unfeeling fellows enjoy the pleasures of hanging a dog; a gibbet seen in the distance, to denote that those who could quietly enjoy the dying struggles of a dog would not have been unlikely to hang a man." A wayside repast occupies a space at page 285, where a dog watches for the crumbs that fall from his master's meal, a cut which bears a strong resemblance to one in "Tommy Trip," and another in the "Looking Glass for the Mind." After several dog subjects, all of a natural but indelicate nature, we have, at the end of the notice of Dogs, a scene where a blind beggar crosses on a one-plank bridge in the midst of a severe storm. Everything seems against him; the wind carries off his

hat, and the rain descends in torrents on his bald head; the guiding rail of the bridge is broken, and the old man steps along on the edge of the wood, dragged by his miserable dog. At one time he has seen better days—perhaps he had been in the army, and lost his eyesight in his country's service; now he is led by a dog, is the sport of wind and rain, and it will be little short of a miracle if he reaches the other side in safety. In another vignette a mad dog is chased by some countrymen armed with pitchforks and sticks; right in the dog's path a helpless old woman comes along unconscious of her danger, and like the novels which purposely permit the most exciting points "to be continued in our next," Bewick leaves the result to the imagination.

At page 364 a youth holds a cat while the rat he is letting loose obtains a fair start—stag-hunting on a small scale; farther on an old man, accompanied by a cur dog, drives a sow to market, the waywardness of the sow held in by a leash. In an inappropriate place—at page 375—the cut of two boys and an ass is inserted; in other editions it comes after the mule. This design suggests the likelihood of the gallows being the ultimate portion of the young scapegraces who belabour the immovable ass with all their strength. After a "Bewick bit"—"Among the Ruins"—there is a design of a man leaping across a stream by a long pole, showing that one bold effort will sometimes overcome what otherwise seems impossible. Another, desiring to cross a half-frozen ford, sends his dog in advance to try the ice before he himself ventures on. A monkey shaving, and a very pretty sketch of a ruined castle (page 426), bring us to the largest vignette in the volume, that of a wolf falling into a trap set with a lamb. This is a complete pictorial representation of the subject, and in all its details is thoughtfully and correctly carried out. The expectation of the wolf to catch a prize has scarcely left its face as it falls into the deftly concealed trap; the action of the disappointed wolf is admirable, and the bleating of the lamb tells how the hungry animal had been led to the spot. The engraving

is remarkably fine throughout, the foliage having much loving labour bestowed on it. The last tail-piece is at the end (page 456), where two blind fiddlers play to an audience consisting of a boy, a dog, and a plaster cast grinning over a wall. The men work away at their instruments, chorusing in to help the effect of their appeal, but their labours are lost in the deserted roadway into which they have strayed. Did Bewick not mean by this to inculcate the moral that unless we have a reasonable certainty of being listened to there is no use in fiddling; that unless something better than plaster casts are present it is vain to wait expectingly for recompense; in short, that unless we have certain conditions granted we may as well remain silent?

It may be interesting here to note one or two opinions which specially deal

The Field Mouse. "The General History of Quadrupeds."

with the Quadrupeds. We begin with some letters which passed between George Allan, the purchaser of the Wycliffe Museum, and Thomas Pennant, the naturalist, and one from Allan to Bewick personally, which were published in 1827 in Fox's "Synopsis of the Newcastle Museum."

From Thomas Pennant to George Allan, dated Downing, December 16th, 1783, there is a note evidently in reply to one sent to him asking if he could do any service to help forward Bewick. The date is a considerable time before the Quadrupeds were commenced, and the specimens probably sent were from the 1784 "Select Fables" blocks. It is to be noted that it was through Allan that Bewick was introduced to Tunstall, for whom the Chillingham Bull was

engraved. Pennant says, "I admire greatly Mr. Bewick's ingenuity. The moment I can make him useful I will. To make him known, if that is your wish, I would immediately strain a point."

The patronising tone adopted in this note is less observable in the one dated July 17th, 1786, in which Pennant again writes to Allan, "I have bought [subscribed for?] Mr. Bewick's pretty book of Quadrupeds. As I am most interested in illustrating my own work with prints, let me beg your interest for some of his. I have some claim on Mr. Bewick, as my works are a considerable help to him."

Various negotiations between Bewick and him appear to have taken place, and the engraver executed at least one block for the celebrated natural historian. In a letter to Pennant, dated December 31st, 1792, Allan says, "Bewick cut an animal of the dog genus, whereof he sent me an impression. What do you call it? I see he has advertised a third edition of the Quadrupeds." The reply by Pennant, dated Downing, January 13th, 1793, says, "The animal you mention is the Aye Aye of Madagascar, a species of squirrel.* I rejoice at Bewick's success." In another letter, dated Downing, July 13th, 1798, Pennant further says, "... I enclose this in a cover to the ingenious Mr. Bewick, from whom I was happy in receiving a letter, supposing he was no more. He is a wondrous artist."

What a world of difference lies between the promise of 1783—"the moment I can make him useful I will"—and the perfect note of praise, pronouncing him "a wondrous artist," little more than fourteen years later. A toilsome journey it had been for Bewick during these years, with difficulties and disagreements to contend with, and many obstacles to overcome. But these fourteen years were not always beset with difficulties. Many a time since the publication of the Fables and the Quadrupeds had he had

* The figure is to be found in Pennant's "History of Quadrupeds," the third edition, vol. ii. p. 142. Pennant died Dec. 16th, 1798. Allan died May 18th, 1800.

cause to be thankful for the honours he received and the influence he had attained. His admirers were numbered by thousands; his patrons had now no need to beg influential people "to make him known;" his "History of British Birds" (1797) placed the corner-stone in the temple of his fame; and in 1798 he was in the proud position of the most popular artist-engraver of the day.

An interesting letter, published in the Newcastle Natural History Society's Transactions, 1878, from John Bewick to Thomas, dated London, June 16th, 1790, gives an account of what London people thought of the volume of the *Quadrupeds*. John says:—

"Since I wrote last I have been with my good friend Mr. Sharp, who has shown your work to the famous Mr. Barry, painter, which pleases him so much that he wishes to have a dozen copies more. Mr. Sharp (and several of my friends) wish to know whether they can have the animals printed in a copy without the letterpress with the names only. I could sell a great many in London. I think it would answer your purpose well to do it. I have not a book left, and between twenty and thirty bespoke, so that I wait with the greatest impatience to hear from you. Mr. Ord, of Bradley, hearing the work was in London, and impatient to see it, sent Matthew to me for three copies which I let him have, though I suppose this number has been sent to Bradley for Miss Simpson. I shall have the opportunity, through Mr. Sharp, to introduce your royal paper copy to the first artists in London. The general cry here with people that wish you well is, 'Why does not he come to Town?'"

This is a remarkable letter in several ways. It shows that besides working as an engraver, John also assisted his brother by acting as agent for the sale of his works. It gives the opinion of Barry on the *Quadrupeds*, and proves how early and rapidly the book made its way among the artists of the metropolis; and it states the general cry of those best able to assist Bewick to have been, "Why does not he come to Town?"—a cry which the artist must have found some difficulty in answering to the satisfaction of his friends, but which did not move him from his firm resolve not to leave Northumberland.

The "Annual Review" for 1804 contains an acute critical opinion on the *Quadrupeds*, which ably sums up the character of the work. It says:—

"Bewick's particular turn of mind led him to observe and to delineate the form and manners of the animal creation, and he soon found that the yielding consistence of wood is better fitted to express the ease, freedom, and spirit, which ought to characterize portraits of animated beings, than the stubborn surface of a metallic substance; he accordingly engraved wooden blocks of all the domestic and most of the wild British *Quadrupeds*, and neglected no opportunity of drawing such foreign animals as were exhibited in the itinerant collections which visited Newcastle-upon-Tyne. These universally show the hand of a master. There is in them a boldness of design, a correctness of outline, an exactness of attitude, and a discrimination of general character, conveying at a first glance a just and lively idea of each different animal, to which nothing in modern times has ever aspired, and which the most eminent old artists have not surpassed. But Mr. Bewick's merits as an artist extend far beyond the simple delineation of the animal; the landscapes which he sometimes introduces as a background and relief to his principal figures, as well as the greater part of his numerous vignettes, have a similar excellence, and though the parts of which they consist are extremely minute, there is in them a truth to nature, which admits of strictest examination, and will be admired in proportion as they are more attentively observed and better understood."

The Greyhound Fox. "The General History of *Quadrupeds*."

The Woodcock. "The History of British Birds," Vol. II.

CHAPTER XV.

DOMESTIC LIFE—1786 TO 1797.

TAKING up the tale of Bewick's life as distinct from his professional career, we recall that he was married in April, 1786. On the 29th of the same month in the following year his first daughter was born—Jane, no doubt named after his own mother, who died only a little more than two years previously. Within a few days of another year, on April 26th, 1788, Bewick's heir and only son was born, and was christened Robert Elliot. Of him we shall occasionally have to treat, as he was trained to his father's profession. Though he never attained any distinction in the art of engraving, his assistance was of much service to his parent, both as an apprentice and a partner; and after his father's death he carried on the establishment and published two editions of the Birds. The second daughter, Isabella, was born on January 14th, 1790, and entered in the parish register of St. Nicholas as

baptized on March 26th of the same year. Elizabeth, the fourth and last child, was born on March 7th, 1793.

These children all survived their father, and Miss Isabella still (1882) lives in the house No. 19, West Street, Gateshead-on-Tyne, to which the family removed in 1812. Robert Elliot died on the 27th July, 1849; Elizabeth on April 7th, 1865; and Jane on April 7th, 1881, all unmarried.

The house at the Forth was the one in which all the children were born and arrived at maturity, and there, after the day's work was done, Bewick returned to share in the pleasures of his ever affectionate family—to comfort the mother in the little household troubles of the day, and help on the welfare of his children by ardent precept and faithful example. In the morning he would set off for business in the town, walking mayhap by Westgate Street

Bewick's Workshop, St. Nicholas Churchyard, Newcastle.

and Denton Chare, or through Forth Lane to his workshop in St. Nicholas Churchyard. The former was the nearer though the less pleasant way, while the other was by cheerful gardens and orchards, leading past the Grammar School of old to the shop, immediately behind the ancient church of St. Nicholas, in a house which still remains much as it was then. Its surroundings, however, now bear more of the impress of a busy city's centre than they did in the early days of Bewick's married life. The accompanying

engraving, done nearly fifty years ago by John Jackson, a pupil of the Newcastle engraver, gives a fair idea of what the house was then and is now. It is, indeed, so slightly changed that one can easily fancy Bewick sitting in his little room on the floor above the doorway, ready to receive a visitor if necessary, but busy in the meantime in cutting the block of a bird, a quadruped, or a fable, or thinking out a quaint design for a tail-piece, or perhaps guiding the talent of his apprentice pupils, or writing or dictating to his son or daughter an important business epistle.

Although Bewick had a choice of ways for his morning walk to business, it is not to be thought that the distance was a great one; even at the leisurely pace the artist was wont to employ at such times, he could arrive at the shop in a quarter of an hour after leaving home, and had there been reason to hasten, something under ten minutes would have given him time to cover the ground. Punctuality, however, was one of Bewick's characteristics, and in those good old days, when people were content to take things easily, he was seldom seen in a hurry, but walking quietly along, carrying a silver-headed stick, after the prevailing fashion, and dressed in the knee breeches and buckled gaiters, which showed to so much advantage his stalwart figure. "By general repute" he was "'a canny man,' respected for his ability and moral worth, but with decidedly a country stamp on his features and attire, reminding the beholder of a better sort of gardener or small farmer."

In 1790 Bewick joined "Swarley's Club," which met in a noted public-house in Newcastle, and he spent many happy evenings with the cronies who congregated there regularly. Unfortunately, after the publication of the "History of Quadrupeds," he was obliged to shun it for a time, because the praises it received excited the jealousy of some people in the town. "They raked together and blew up," as he relates, "the embers of envy into a transient blaze; but the motives by which I was actuated stood out of the reach of its sparks, and they returned into the heap whence they came and fell into the dust." The stories that these unfriendly acquaintances listened to

were no doubt the accusation—sometimes unjustly made since—that the *Quadrupeds* was not his original work. Bewick might have remembered that “a prophet is not without honour save in his own country,” and from that have taken comfort. The same tale, however, was some years afterwards publicly repeated in the “*Monthly Magazine*,” and Bewick sent an elaborate though almost unnecessary explanation to the same publication, which is referred to in its proper place.

In the same year Bewick was greatly grieved by the death of his respected and much-loved teacher, the Rev. Christopher Gregson, of Ovingham. Ever since Bewick was a boy he had looked to him for advice and guidance in many matters. In his *Memoir* Bewick pays a warm tribute of gratitude to the friend who had been able, at a notable turning-point in his career, to assist in his immediate entry into a position which, all things considered, was the best that could have been obtained by the young artist.

In the summer of 1791 Bewick went to Wycliffe to make drawings for the first part of the “*British Birds*,” and while he was there his wife took the children to the seaside. In a letter, quoted elsewhere, published in the 1878 *Newcastle Natural History Society’s Transactions*, dated August 8th of that year, Bewick asks his wife to be careful, when she returns to the house at the Forth, to see that the beds are free from damp. Little Robert had been ill, and Bewick expresses the utmost anxiety for his health, and hopes the change will have done him good.

In the education of his children Bewick adhered to the honoured maxim to train them “in the way they should go,” and some of his written observations display the importance he attached to this duty. “They ought to be taught,” he said, “that all they can do while they sojourn in this world is to live honourably, and to take every care that the soul shall return to the Being who gave it, as pure, unpolluted, and spotless as possible, and that there can be no happiness in this life unless they hold converse with God.” His children well repaid all the care bestowed on their training. Never were members of a

family more affectionately attached to their father and each other. The veneration and esteem manifested for Bewick by his daughters have increased as years have proceeded, and there does not exist a warmer attachment between daughter and parent than at the present day, fifty-four years after the parting, is still cherished by the survivor of the household for her dearly beloved father, Thomas Bewick.

Bewick had also vigorous ideas as to the training of boys; how they should be allowed freedom "to fish, to wade, and to splash" in the waters of country rivulets; "to scamper about amongst whins and heather" on the moors, and not harassed with education before their minds are fit for it. In these theories Bewick had evidently been thinking of the advantages of his own childhood. He was brought up in the country, ran about half wild, possessed a strong flow of spirits, and was in every way the opposite of the early matured Lilliputian plants whose nurture he so forcibly condemns. Writing of the rearing of girls, he exposes the follies of tight lacing and the following of the dictates of fashion in all its absurdities, and goes on to hint what he thinks a favourable occupation for ladies. As it is one not yet taken up by the fair sex, his words may be quoted.

"There is one thing," he says, "to which I would draw their attention, and that is Horticulture. And connected with this I would recommend them, as far as convenient, to become Florists, as this delightful and healthy employment—which has long been in the hands of men—would entice them into the open air, stimulate them to exertion, and draw them away from their sedentary mode of life, mewed up in close rooms, where they are confined like nuns. This would contribute greatly to their amusement and exhilarate their spirits. Every sensible man should encourage the fair sex to follow this pursuit."

The actions of the British Government after the outbreak of the French Revolution called forth Bewick's strongest condemnation, and the position of public affairs weighed so strongly on his mind that in 1794 he seriously thought of removing his home to America. He was completely cast down

by the gloomy aspect of political matters in England, and hoped in the land of the "incomparable Washington" to find laws and liberties more to his taste. In a letter dated October 4th, 1794, given in the appendix of his Memoir, he thanks his correspondent (now unknown) for the opinion sent on America, and proceeds :—

"Before I get the Birds done, I have no doubt of matters being brought to such a crisis as will enable me to see clearly what course to steer. My fears are not at what you think will happen in America: it is my own much-loved country that I fear will be involved in the anarchy you speak of; for I think there is not virtue enough left in the country gentlemen to prevent it. I cannot hope for anything good from the violent on either side; that can only be expected from (I hope) the great majority of moderate men stepping manfully forward to check the despotism of the one party and the licentiousness of the other. A reform of abuses, in my opinion, is wanted, and I wish that could be done with justice and moderation; but it is because I do not hope or expect that will take place in the way I wish it that makes me bend my mind towards America."

This proposal of emigrating in the will-o'-the-wispian chase of sounder political government appears to have sunk out of Bewick's calculations. As affairs at home began to bear a more hopeful aspect, nothing is heard about what perhaps was only written in the flush of political strife, and without due consideration of all the results attendant on the carrying out of such a scheme.

From the letter quoted, and from the general tone of his remarks on the Government, it is evident that Bewick was an intense Liberal in politics, though far from being what is now called Radical. He believed in universal education, in simplifying parliamentary elections, and in freedom for piscatorial pursuits. The principle of Land Bills is contained in his belief that "as an act of justice due to the industrious farmer, he ought, on entering upon his lease, to have his farm valued, and, when his lease is out, valued again; and whatever improvements he may have made, ought to be paid for on his leaving." His remarks on the country with which the British Government has so much trouble read like paragraphs from a newly published journal.

"The people of Ireland," he says, "ought instantly to be put upon a par in every respect with their fellow-subjects." . . . "Landowners in all countries, as well as in Ireland, ought, as far as possible, to spend their rents where they receive them. Where they do not do so, any country is certain to become poor." Should this take place, he thinks there "would then be no need to keep Ireland in subjection, like a conquered country, by an expensive military force." The words written nearly sixty years ago are almost prophetic in the accuracy of their description of the Ireland of 1882. Universal suffrage he protested strongly against, because he says—

"I conceive that the ignorant and the wicked ought to be debarred from voting for anything; they should neither be honoured with privileges nor employed in any office of public trust; a virtual representation is all-sufficient for them. Could matters be so managed," he continues, "that none but sensible, honest men should be allowed to vote, either for members of Parliament, or for any other public functionary, the country would in a short time put on a very improved appearance."

For several years after this Bewick's whole existence appears to have been absorbed in the production of his great work, and while he spent at least one evening a week at "Swarley's Club," he worked during the others at the blocks for the Birds. His children, too, were gathering about him, and, like a faithful and affectionate parent, he felt the responsibility of their young lives, and often spent hours in conversing with and instructing them.

From a vignette in "*The History of British Birds.*"

A vignette from "The Chase," by W. Somerville.

CHAPTER XVI.

JOHN BEWICK.

THIS chapter is devoted entirely to an enumeration of the principal engraved works of Thomas Bewick's brother John. These works are not, like those of the more famous elder brother, of great originality, and it is certainly a moot-point, had Thomas not urged his pupil-brother on, if John Bewick would ever have attained to the position he did. There can be no question, at the same time, that his engravings show much power and ingenuity. Though not so varied in execution as the works of the better-known artist, they possess a charm which is quite distinct from any design in the Quadrupeds or Birds. It is not probable that John Bewick had strength of character and indomitable spirit enough to have carried forward the art of wood engraving in the marvellous manner sustained by his brother. He had neither the requisite patience nor insight into the beauties of nature to produce such exquisite details on the blocks as is discovered on every page

of the Birds. Engraving on copper also he very seldom practised, but in designing his powers were almost unrivalled, and, as evidenced in the series of cuts which illustrate Goldsmith's and Parnell's Poems and Somerville's "Chase," they possessed potentialities which suggest that if he had been given, or had taken, the means to obtain the training of an artist, and had been taught the manipulation of colours, he would have risen to be a painter of great celebrity. Ill-health, united with an unfortunate unstability of disposition, probably deterred him from studying so much as he should have done. These, combined with being early compelled to trust to his own resources for a livelihood, and possibly with a lack of careful counsel and supervision when he left home, contributed much towards leaving his powers incompletely called forth; and his comparatively early death cut him off at a period when he had just achieved the most notable success of his life.

His elder brother and many of his London friends always spoke in high terms of his ability as a designer. Thomas, years after John's death, is recorded to have expressed his firm conviction that his brother might have attained great distinction, even more than he himself had done, if the hand of death had but spared him for a few years longer.

It is not only probable, but very likely, that John Bewick, during his apprentice years in Bewick and Beilby's workshop, helped considerably in the execution of some of the cuts of the "Select Fables" of 1784. As the finishing touches, however, would all be done by Thomas, there are none in the series which completely bear the impress of John's method of work. The cut illustrating the "Brother and Sister" Fable on p. 172 of the original volume and p. 80 of this, or the "Butterfly and Boy" on p. 239 of the 1784 edition and p. 17 here, possess in the figures something of the style adopted by John Bewick in later years. This style is not by any means so artistic or long-satisfying as that of Thomas; it is dry and apt to be monotonous. Yet John's

designs were, as a rule, so excellent that the method of production may easily be overlooked.

John Bewick made a drawing of the house at Cherryburn in 1781, and commenced to engrave it, but left it unfinished. It was many years afterwards completed by Thomas. A few early impressions were taken from the block, which show variation in the height of the tree in front of the cottage, and also in the foliage at the corner where is written "Drawn by John Bewick, 1781." The cut was employed for the frontispiece of Bewick's *Memoir*, but the general result is not altogether satisfactory.

After John Bewick had remained about five years with his brother, the apprenticeship begun in 1777 was broken off. Thomas relates that John diverged a little from the strict path of duty, and that he was well lectured in consequence; but the young man—John was now twenty-two—did not care to benefit by the experience of the elder, and declined to be dictated to, as he termed it. These scoldings happening frequently without attaining any satisfactory results, the brothers quarrelled, and finally separated. John took leave of the north, and thinking of the advantages and honours to be gained in far-off London, he turned his face eagerly towards the metropolis, the place which his brother despised, and was glad to make his way out of, but in which the younger trusted to attain distinction. He thought more of having people around him pursuing his own profession than did his brother; and he believed in being always at the head-quarters of the kingdom, where work was more plentiful, if not always of a better class. London was then what it is now becoming more emphatically every day, the special market-place for those who mix in artistic or literary transactions; and John, no doubt, felt that there he would be able to meet and bargain with publishers who, if more exacting, commanded a wider constituency than any provincial town, and might thus bring him speedier renown than was to be gained anywhere else.

When John Bewick arrived in the metropolis he found plenty of work to do. He was there, his brother mentions, "freed from his former associates;

his conduct was all that could be desired, and he was highly respected and esteemed. He was as industrious in London," Thomas continues, "as he had been with us. He was almost entirely employed by the publishers and booksellers in designing and cutting an endless variety of blocks for them. He was extremely quick at his work, and did it at a very low rate." In a letter dated January 9th, 1788, published in the Transactions of the Newcastle Natural History Society for 1878, Thomas refers to the fact of his brother's working direct for the engravers, and he gives him fraternal counsel as to his greatest failing, that of being impatient with his labour. "I am glad," says Thomas, "to find you have begun on your own bottom, and I would earnestly recommend you to establish your character by taking uncommon pains with what work you do. I hope it will in the end turn better out than doing it slightly." John certainly took this to heart, and his later works are much more careful than his impetuous early ones, but some of the first cuts he did in London are of the poorest quality, and do much to damage his reputation as a conscientious artist.

Before describing the volumes which contain prints the undoubted work of John Bewick when he was resident in London, it may be well to refer to the cuts in a publication which, if done by him at all, must have been executed before he left Newcastle. This is the 12mo edition called "Choice Emblems; or, Riley's Choice Emblems," first issued in 1772 and 1775. In the third edition, published in 1779, there are nineteen new cuts added to the previous forty-six. In Bell's Catalogue of Bewick's Works (1851) these are set down as the work of John Bewick, while Hugo, in the "Bewick Collector," (1866) expresses a doubt of their genuineness. In the first place, it is to be observed that John only began his apprenticeship in 1777, and he remained some years with his brother, so he could not have done them in London, as Bell states. It is just possible, nevertheless, for Bell seldom made a complete mistake, that he wrought them in Newcastle, and they are certainly poor enough to be the work of a second years' apprentice.

Amongst the earliest publications issued in London with woodcuts the authentic work of John Bewick are the "Children's Miscellany," 1787; the "Honours of the Table," 1788; and the 1786, '90, '91, and '92 volumes of the "Habitable World Described." The first contains twenty-nine, said on the title-page to be by "Bewick;" yet only a few display anything but the most ordinary spirit. Those at pp. 34 and 167 are the best, and greatly resemble the works of John: the Gilpin design, signed "J. Bewick, del: and scul:," has some action, but its correctness is questionable. The "Honours of the Table, with the whole Art of Carving Illustrated by a Variety of Cuts" (the play on the words is obvious), contains illustrations which are little else than diagrams: the second edition (1791) has an additional block.

In 1789 there was published in London a volume containing the first large series of engravings that John carried through, and one of his most important undertakings. This was the "Emblems of Mortality," issued by T. Hodgson, the publisher of the Hieroglyphick Bible, whose office was in George's Court, St. John's Lane, Clerkenwell, close to where John resided. The frontispiece represents a general procession of all ranks proceeding slowly to the grave, each mortal being accompanied by a skeleton; there are a pope, an emperor, a prince, a canoness, a bishop, and others lower in the spiritual and social scale. This engraving was prepared specially for this edition, as the English publisher found it inexpedient to insert the design in the original, which represented the Godhead in the dress of a pope. The general illustrations are taken from the Latin edition of "Imagines Mortis," Lyons, 1547, with some additional designs from one published in French in 1562. As an introduction, designs representing the Creation, the Fall, and the Curse of Man are first given. Then follow those intended specially to display the mortality of man, with a picture of the Pope: "Soon shall thy office in the place a successor admit." Although the work is scarce in Bewick's editions, the designs have been so often described that it is needless to do so here. They are summed up in the words, "In these small leaves there is a world of

thought, and relations united together with highest mastery." The blocks were done from tracings by John Bewick which are still in existence, and they preserve much of that precise, neatly drawn work for which Holbein is famous. Though Bewick's execution is a little rough, they bear evidence of having been wrought by one who knew well how to handle the graver. Bell, in his Catalogue, states—

"The work went through only three editions, the blocks being destroyed by fire in London. The third edition is much inferior to the two first. Charnley, of Newcastle, at a subsequent time, reprinted the title, inserting his own name in lieu of Hodgson's, but retaining the original date. Another edition of this work, with woodcuts resembling those of Bewick, but much inferior, was published in London at a subsequent period, but has the same number of cuts, and is also of great rarity."

The letter from Thomas Bewick to John, previously quoted, dated January 9th, 1788, says:—

"I am much pleased with the cuts for 'Death's Dance,' and wish much to have the book when it is done. I am surprised that you would undertake to do them for 6s. each. You have been spending your time and grinding out your eyes to little purpose indeed. I would not have done them for a farthing less than double that sum. I showed them to Mr. Edwards, a very capital and eminent [scene] painter, as well as a very worthy man. He approved much of them, but was surprised when I told him the price you had for them."

We cannot wonder, on reading a letter which tells of such hard working for so paltry sums, that John Bewick was not long able to stand the anxiety and toil of London life. Unfortunately, although he worked constantly, he was not able always to give lasting beauty to his blocks. In the same year as the letter just quoted was written, the "New Robinson Crusoe" was issued with thirty-two illustrations, called on the title "beautiful cuts." They are, nevertheless, very badly drawn and most carelessly engraved; and though more than a dozen are signed, they are altogether discreditable to John Bewick's reputation as an engraver. Indeed, unless they had been signed they might easily be supposed to be the work of a vastly inferior artist.

On May 1st, 1790, a small volume was published which the author, Dr. Trusler, says "is a proper book to amuse and instruct youth, and the price, viz., 3s. half-bound, will hurt no one." It is called "*Proverbs Exemplified and Illustrated by Pictures drawn from Real Life.*" Dr. Trusler states in his preface that, "having met with an artist (Mr. John Bewick) who knew how to illustrate the follies and vices of mankind better than most men, I have profited by his abilities." The engravings are fifty in number. These exhibit the influence of Holbein's "*Dance of Death*" over John Bewick's gradually increasing power as a designer and engraver. The best points of the education received from the elder Bewick are also clearly visible, while the designs retain sufficient individuality to be entirely original works. John Bewick was acting on the good advice tendered by his brother in the January 1788 letter; he was taking "uncommon pains" to arrive at excellency, and without doubt he found it "turn better out than doing them slightly."

A similar volume to "*Proverbs Exemplified*" is one that bears no date, and was not published until some time afterwards, perhaps not until 1800—the "*Bewick Collector*" says possibly 1810. It is called "*Proverbs in Verse; or, Moral Instructions conveyed in Pictures,*" with fifty-six blocks by John Bewick. The engravings in this are at least equal in merit to those in "*Proverbs Exemplified.*" At page 13 there is one of three little boys bowing and advancing towards their instructor, which is as clever as anything John Bewick did of the kind. The engraving of "*Sic Transit Gloria Mundi,*" at the end, a funeral procession approaching the church, possesses a solemnity and deep sense of feeling unusual in his work. These two blocks also appear in the "*Progress of Man and Society,*" 1791. Many of the cuts in "*Proverbs Exemplified*" are repeated here, while in the tail-pieces there are a considerable number of new designs. The "*Beauties of Creation,*" 1790, two volumes, has a large number of signed engravings by John Bewick. They are representations of quadrupeds, birds, insects, trees, and flowers, and are interesting specimens of his labour. The "*Wallachian Sheep*" is signed Lee, and it

is very probable that a number in the work were done by this inferior engraver.

In 1791 a most attractive book was published, setting forth the life of man in all ages and pursuits. This—the “Progress of Man and Society”—contains a large number of blocks by John, executed with much felicity; they commence with representations of man in an infant state, then go on with the amusements and occupations of boys, girls, and men: with man as he is in a state of nature, and civilised, the whole forming one complete story.

The “Looking Glass for the Mind,” the first edition of which was published in 1792, contained blocks “designed and engraved on wood by John

Bewick,” to the number of seventy-four. The letterpress is chiefly translated from the French work, “*L’Ami des Enfants*,” by M. Berquin. The difference in style between the engraved work of John and Thomas Bewick is at once apparent in these woodcuts. This lies principally in the manner of using the graver, the inattention to the advantages to be obtained in carefully drawn backgrounds, and the more pronounced use of the full

Mrs. Lenox and her children Leonora and Adolphus.
“The Looking Glass for the Mind.” From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

dark and pure light, which by Thomas would have been much more softened and refined. The difference, however, is in style only, for the merit displayed in the prints is unmistakable; in one sense they surpass the cuts of Thomas, the figures being well drawn, and the faces piquant and beautiful. This was a kind of work the elder never was thoroughly good at, and few of the human figures engraved by him can bear comparison with the little children produced by John.

By permission of Messrs. Griffith and Farran, St. Paul's Churchyard, the successors of Newbery, the original publisher of the work, impressions from the chief blocks are inserted at various places throughout this book. Of those illustrative of the letterpress, the best are "Louisa and the Boy who sold the Birds," at p. 21, and "Mrs. Lenox and her children Leonora and Adolphus," at p. 148. In these the cleverness of the draughtsman and engraver is fully displayed, particularly in the attitudes and the racy expression of the faces in the first mentioned. The others—viz. "Mr. Jackson and his son Junius" (p. 210), "Madam D'Allone admonishing her four pupils" (p. 150), and the following towards the end: "William and Amelia, and their friend Charlotte," "Bella and the poor stranger Marian," and "Caroline, or a lesson to cure vanity"—have all been chosen as among the best pictures John Bewick engraved for children's books. Of the six vignettes, "The Singing Milk-maid" (p. 66), and "Feeding the Fowls" (above our Table of Contents), are as dainty and delightful pictures as possibly can be obtained; they excel anything Thomas Bewick did in human

Ruminating. Vignette in the "Looking Glass for the Mind." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

figure engravings. "Till death us do part" (p. 86) possesses a large element of comicality; "Ruminating" (above) is an animal not far short of those in the Quadrupeds, while "The Ford—Left behind" (p. 127), and "Waiting for Death" (p. 245), have been chosen on account of similarity to cuts by Thomas Bewick. The first will be found to be of a corresponding character with "The Ford" (p. 220), taken from Ferguson's Poems, and the other exhibits a sentiment closely allied to the large block of "Waiting for Death."

The cut of a gravestone, with the inscription "*Firmum in vita nihil*," is in the Quadrupeds, and is also like that in the "Pleasing Instructor,"

1795, p. xii. The sketch of the Mad Bull is similar to the chase depicted in the background of the Bull in the Quadrupeds, and the tail-piece to "Clarissa" of a Cat and Bird bears a striking resemblance to the cancelled cut of the 1776 Fables given on p. 30. A number of the tail-pieces are also printed in the "Beauties of History," published by Newbery in 1796. The Shepherd travelling with a Dog amid wind and rain was shown in the Bewick Exhibition of 1880 as a sepia sketch.

About this time John Bewick found it necessary to revisit his native place. Hard work and close confinement had told on his constitution. He appears

never to have been so healthy as his brother, and no doubt the anxieties consequent on his not receiving adequate remuneration for his labours helped to keep him from getting so strong as he might have done. He repaired to Northumberland, remained breathing the invigorating air of his birth-place until he believed he had recovered his health, and returned once more to his labours in the metropolis.

Madam D'Allone admonishing her four pupils.
"The Looking Glass for the Mind." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

Besides his work in London as an engraver, John also acted as an agent for the sale of his brother's books. In one of his letters, dated June 16th, 1790, quoted at page 132, he writes asking to have a number of the Quadrupeds sent by land if Thomas had not an immediate opportunity to send them by sea, and he mentions that he had received orders for between twenty and thirty copies, which could not be fulfilled until his brother sent a fresh supply.

In 1793 the first volume of the "Peerage of Great Britain and Ireland,"

by Robert Pollard, appeared. The author, a Northumbrian, was one of the greatest of Thomas Bewick's friends when he spent his short sojourn in London, and friendship also existed between him and John. An announcement made with the publication of this book promised to issue a volume every six months, to be printed by Bulmer, who afterwards produced the Goldsmith and Parnell, "*The Chase*," and other fine works; but the sale of this, the first part, being very small, it was resolved to discontinue it. No other volume, therefore, appeared, although the preface states that the subjects for the second had been put into the hands of the respective artists. There are numerous copper-plates in the volume published, but the woodcuts only are by John Bewick. That of *Classical Ruins* on page 33 is signed; a very fine cut of a ruin, with carefully drawn trees, is on p. 105 (repeated on p. 136); the others are artistically arranged heraldic devices and weapons of warfare.

The next year, 1794, E. Newbery published the "*Amusing and Instructive Tales for Youth*." This work contains thirty-five engravings by John, which—questionably, however—have been pronounced to be "among the highest efforts of his genius." The letterpress was composed by J. H. Wynne, the author of "*Riley's Choice Emblems*," and it was meant to be a companion book to that work. The prints are of a similar character to those in the "*Progress of Man and Society*," though they are scarcely so good on the whole. The best-known design in the volume is the one on page 55, a cat prowling along the edge of a river bank watching some fish which pop their heads up out of the water, after the manner of Japanese and pre-Raphaelite productions. The figure of the cat is surprisingly clever, and though it is scarcely true that it is the most natural likeness of the animal ever engraved up to that time, as has been said, yet it is, when well printed, an exceedingly fine representation of the stealthy, tiger-like movement the cat sometimes makes.

In April, 1794, William Bulmer, an intimate friend of the Bewicks, who had become successful as a publisher in London, issued a circular to the following effect :—

"Shakespeare Printing Office, Cleveland Row, St. James's. W. Bulmer having long intended to execute a work at the Shakespeare Press that should at once combine the various beauties of printing, type-founding, engraving on wood, and paper-making, as well with a view to ascertain the near approach to perfection which these had attained in this country as to invite a fair competition with the best typographic productions of other nations, he is now happy to inform the public that he has finally completed his arrangements."

These arrangements were made with a view to publish the volume, issued in 1795, of poems by Goldsmith and Parnell, and the publishers promised that

"The volume, to render it in every respect curious and valuable, will be enriched with twelve engravings on wood from the most interesting passages of the poems by Thomas Bewick, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and John Bewick, of London, some of which are of a large size, the whole forming the most extraordinary effort of the art of engraving on wood that has ever been produced."

This volume, and that of Somerville's poem "The Chase," issued the following year, contain the finest of all the cuts designed by John Bewick. Few of them, however, were engraved by him.

Though not mentioned in the publisher's notice just quoted, there were also other artists who aided in the designing and engraving of the illustrations. Thomas Bewick's pupil, Robert Johnson, assisted, and his cousin, John Johnson, drew the Hermit, here printed on p. 161. Charlton Nesbit engraved the four vignettes for the "Traveller" and the "Deserted Village," two of which are given on pp. 48 and 54; and R. Westall drew the large design of the Traveller.

John Bewick engraved the important block of the "Sad Historian" on page 79. This is distinguishable from his brother's work by the lack of life and natural growth in the foliage, and by the strong contrasts made by the introduction of pure high lights and deep dark shadows. The drawing of the figure is fine, however, and the details of the foreground are carefully wrought out. The other cuts engraved by John are those on the title-pages

of the two subdivisions of the volume: on the title to Goldsmith's Poems, a ruined memorial stone, on which can be deciphered the words, "Oliver Goldsmith, 16 Apr. 1774 Æ 45 years;" and the cut on the "Hermit" title, a decayed monument, presumably to the honour of the writer. A characteristic

The Hermit, Angel, and Guide. Drawn by R. Johnson. Engraved by T. Bewick.
From Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell.

piece of John Bewick's work is seen in the carefully drawn, half-rotten tree, placed sharp and clear against a dense mass of foliage, producing an effect which is pretty, but unnatural.

The blocks engraved by Thomas Bewick are "The Departure" (see p. 53), "The Traveller," "The Hermit, Angel, and Guide" (p. 153), and "The Hermit at his Morning Devotions" (p. 161). The engraving of the two latter is particularly skilful, the large masses of foliage freely drawn, yet careful, and withal perfectly natural.

In a volume which was shown in the Bewick Exhibition, 1880, there are some extracts from letters written by Bulmer to Thomas Bewick, which are interesting as being the instructions the engraver received from the publisher. Of "The Departure" Bulmer says:—

"Give as much character to the faces as you possibly can; and suppose you make the foreground rather coarser than you generally do, in order to form the stronger contrast with the finer finishing of the block."

Of "The Traveller" he writes:—

"Mr. Westall, you will see, has drawn an outline to this painting which will assist you much. Be very particular in finishing the block, and above all things preserve the characteristic sentiment of the face which so happily accords with the language of the poet. Without this the whole force of the drawing will be lost. The shrub, too, must be exactly copied. Omit the R. W. at the corner."

Of "The Hermit, Angel, and Guide" Bulmer further says:—

"Give the Hermit more of age and feebleness, and keep the landscape part gloomy, rugged, and dangerous. The drowning man to remain as it is. . . . Let the drapery of the Angel seem floating and free, and the face delicate and sweetly interesting."

These remarks show how capable Bulmer was to direct what should be done to assist the engraver in the translation of the drawings to the wooden block. He had a proper notion also what was the right sentiment that should animate the engraver when at work, and the last sentence quoted gives, in a few words, a complete idea of what the poet had written, and to what it was best the engraver should direct his attention.

The volume which is frequently coupled with the Goldsmith and Parnell is

that of "The Chase," a poem by William Somerville. It was published by Bulmer in 1796, and containing, like the Poems, work both by Thomas and John Bewick, is as interesting a volume for the Bewick collector as can be desired. On the title-page is a cut of a Sportsman and four pointers waiting to commence the pursuits of the day. The address or preface which follows, written by Bulmer, and dated May 20th, 1796, gives an account of his dealing with John Bewick, and being written in a sympathetic strain, again makes manifest the appreciative employer he was to the delicate young artist. It proceeds :—

"Unfortunately for his friends and the admirers of the art of engraving on wood, I have the painful task of announcing the death of my early acquaintance and friend, the younger Mr. Bewick. He died at Ovingham, on the banks of the Tyne, in December last of a pulmonary complaint. Previously, however, to his departure from London for the place of his nativity, he had prepared and indeed finished on wood the whole of the designs except one which embellish the Chase; they may therefore literally be considered as the last efforts of this ingenious and much to be lamented artist."

The engraving of the blocks drawn by John was executed by Thomas Bewick. Bulmer sent word to him to take up the work unfortunately left unfinished by his brother, and in a letter dated December 10th, 1795, Bulmer asks him to make "a bold effort to finish them in the specified time." This letter, given in the Memoir, goes on to say that "the whole number is only twelve blocks, besides the vignette for the title. Many of the tail-pieces are small. I wish fine execution in them, I confess, but yet there must be that happy mixture of engraving in them that will at the same time produce a boldness of effect." Bulmer also says in the address that Thomas, in executing the engravings, had bestowed every possible care on them, and the beautiful effect produced from the joint labours of the brothers would, he had no doubt, meet with approbation. Thomas was, besides his usual carefulness, most likely to be actuated by a desire to produce engravings of the very highest quality for the sake of the brother he had taught and laboured to make a true artist,

and after the Birds and Quadrupeds there are few finer specimens of his engraving than in "The Chase."

The work begins with an essay on Somervile and a preface by the author, and then Book I. of the poem commences. The frontispiece to this is an incident after the chase, when the spoils of the day—a dead stag and a hare—with various implements of hunting, lie at the foot of an oak-tree, two pointers keeping watch over them. To the poem itself there is a head-piece, where on the banks of a river a huntsman is whipping up his hounds; at the end is a tail-piece of several Beagles which lie waiting underneath a thickly foliated tree, the effect of the various coloured dogs being greatly heightened by the dark background. On the title to Book II. a stag drinks at a well, a very graceful beautiful animal, powerfully drawn and charmingly engraved; the head-piece to the letterpress being a hunter dismounted, and amidst a throng of hounds holding up a fine hare. The composition is well managed, except that the trunk of the tree is placed in the centre of the design, while in the engraving the foreground is so black as almost to appear unfinished. The tail-piece to this Book is the death of a Tiger, the chase of which is described in the poem. The ferocity and rage of the royal brute fairly overpowered by his enemies are ably depicted. The cut on the title of the Third Book shows a Lion's head and skin and hunting material. The head-piece is a fox hunt, one of the most spirited of all John Bewick's works. The hounds chase the fox very closely, and poor Reynard is seen in the foreground fleeing like lightning from his pursuers. The chase seems actually to move along, and the dash and vigour of the impetuous animals are splendidly accurate. The tail-piece represents King George III. at a chase in Windsor Park; and witnessing the misery of the hunted stag, he rebukes the "disappointed hungry pack" in the manner mentioned in the poem. The King is nearest the spectator, but he wants life, and appears somewhat inanely riding amidst his courtiers. The trumpeter sounds the close of the chase, while the poor wearied stag labours up an incline in the background. Farther off the

King's carriage awaits his Majesty to take him to Windsor Castle, seen in the distance. The subject of this block probably explains why King George III. took such a deep interest in the manner in which it was executed, as mentioned in the "Treatise on Wood Engraving." It there says that the King "thought so highly of the cuts that he could not believe that they were engraved on wood, and his bookseller, Mr. George Nicol, obtained for his Majesty a sight of the blocks in order that he might be convinced of the fact by his own inspection." Perhaps, however, as Chatto says, the King

George III. hunting. From "The Chase," by W. Somerville.

merely desired to see the blocks, as he was unacquainted with the difference between wood and copper-plate engraving. The fourth title cut is a Tiger's skin and head, with Eastern weapons for the hunting-field. The head-piece shows an Otter in the foreground in the act of devouring a magnificent salmon he has just caught. In the distance, and half hidden from the otter by a projecting rock, some hunters with their dogs wait a favourable moment to begin the chase of the unconscious animal. The tail-piece shows the death of another otter caught beside its native waters. In almost every case the engravings in "The Chase" have been carefully and beautifully

printed, and there can scarcely be any difficulty in the collector procuring a volume with good impressions.

The volumes issued in 1795 of a collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads relating to Robin Hood was illustrated by fifty-eight engravings by Thomas and John Bewick. The first, a Forester relating his tale to a friend, is signed "T. B.," and is not unlike the work in the *Quadrupeds*. The tail-pieces appear to be by Thomas, while John's work is apparent in the cut of Robin Hood and the Beggar, Robin Hood and Little John, and Robin Hood's Death and Burial. In Bewick's *Memoir* a letter from Ritson, the compiler of the Robin Hood Songs, gives a glimpse into the transactions of the time when the book was being prepared. Dating from Gray's Inn, Ritson says he was "sorry he was gone out when Mr. Bewick called; but hopes he will proceed with the other cuts, which shall be left entirely to his own fancy, and in which he will undoubtedly consult his own reputation." *

The "Blossoms of Morality," by the Editor of the "Looking Glass for the Mind," London, 1796, is scarcely so clever as the "Looking Glass." Here and there the prints are nearly equal in merit, but others are far below. Newbery, the publisher, in the preface expresses the obligation he was under to John Bewick for the illustrations, and says, "Much time has elapsed since the commencement of this edition owing to a severe indisposition with which the artist was long afflicted, and which unfortunately terminated in his death. And sorry, very sorry are we to be compelled to state that this is the last effort of his incomparable genius."

The following letter, in the possession of Mr. C. J. Pocock, dated from Crouch End, March 9th, 1795, is apparently in answer to one written either by Newbery about the "Blossoms of Morality," or by Bulmer respecting "The

* In the appendix to Bewick's *Memoir* there are three blocks printed which are stated to have been engraved for Ritson's work by John Bewick; while proofs of the same blocks in the British Museum collection have Thomas Bewick's name attached to them. They do not, however, appear in the 1795 edition, the reprint of 1832, nor in the 1820 edition of the *Poems*: the cuts in the last, it may be mentioned, are not by Bewick.

Chase" or "Les Fabliaux." When it is borne in mind that the "Blossoms" was completely finished, while "The Chase" and "Les Fabliaux" were not at the time of John Bewick's death, it is more probable that the letter was written concerning one of the latter: which, it is difficult to say, as the manuscript bears no address.

"GENTLEMEN,—I received yours and shall be very happy to undertake your job, if you can allow a sufficient time to do them, but as I am not acquainted with the subjects, nor the size of the cuts, or whether or not the designs are to be made therefrom, cannot pretend to fix a time when they can be done. I could not begin upon them immediately, but I think in the course of a couple of months shall be able to finish a job in hand. If that time can be made convenient to you, shall be happy to serve you, and am

"Your very humble servant, JNO. BEWICK."

"Les Fabliaux," or *Tales abridged from French manuscripts*, Bulmer, 1796, contain twenty-five cuts in the first volume, none of which can be said to be very fine. These cuts were partly executed by John when he was residing at Cherryburn in the year in which he died, and are among the last works he executed. After his death a few were completed by Thomas, who also did those in the second volume, which appeared in 1800. These illustrations, when contrasted with the *Birds*, or the *Goldsmith and Parnell Poems*, are found to be greatly inferior, the large ones being especially poor. In the first volume the foliage of the tail-pieces deserves at the same time some commendation, and the vignette of armour beside a tree on p. 142 is unusually fine. In the second volume the "Road to Paradise" is carefully drawn, and the "Griseldis" cut has foliage very like that in the *Goldsmith and Parnell*.

The chief works of John Bewick have now been described; a few were finished by his brother soon after his death, and various editions of the more popular were published later, but nearly all appeared during his lifetime. Their list is not so long in proportion to the time he lived as his elder

brother's, but only those actually executed by him have been noted, while in the case of Thomas the cuts done in his shop by apprentices, and probably only finished by the master, as well as those wholly executed by his own hand, have to be enumerated.

After residing some time in London on returning from Northumberland, John again fell into ill-health, and was once more compelled to flee from the atmosphere which agreed so badly with him, and again he sought recreation in the North. Soon he seems to be restored, and once more returned to London, this time not altogether to his former close confining labour, but also to try teaching drawing as a means of livelihood. He obtained a situation at Hornsey Academy, and daily rode there from his work-office. This arrangement lasted until, as Thomas says—

“His health began to decline and he finally left London in the summer of 1795, and returned yet once more to the banks of the Tyne. Here he intended to follow the wood engraving for his London friends, and particularly for Wm. Bulmer, for whom he was engaged to execute a number of blocks for ‘The Fabliaux,’ or ‘Tales from Le Grand,’ and for Somerville’s ‘Chase.’ Many of the former he had, I believe, finished in London, and had sketched others on the blocks which he finished at Cherryburn. He had also sketched the designs on the blocks for the ‘Chase,’ and to them I put the finishing hand after his decease.”

John Bewick died on December 5th, 1795, and was buried beside his father and mother, in the place where, thirty-three years after, his brother Thomas was to be laid, in the family burial-ground at Ovingham. He was nearly thirty-six years old when he succumbed to the disease which had so long affected him. The “Gentleman’s Magazine,” in mentioning his death, said, “The works of this young artist will be held in estimation, and the engravings to Somerville’s ‘Chase’ will be a monument of fame of more celebrity than marble can bestow.” Bulmer, his last and loving friend, mourned his death as something above an ordinary loss, and wrote to Thomas testifying how much the news had disturbed him. “He was a young man,” he said,

“whose private virtues and professional talents I equally admired; so much so, indeed, that, as a grateful tribute to his memory, I have clothed myself in mourning. His death has affected me in a manner that has much depressed my spirits.” Thomas was also greatly grieved at his brother’s early death; and, as he affectionately says in his Memoir, he put up a stone to his memory on the west wall of Ovingham Church, just above the family graves, “where I hope when my glass is run out to be laid down beside him.” The inscription thereon is brief, but in its few words it comprehends the character of John Bewick’s life, which is summed up in the words, “His Ingenuity as an Artist was excelled only by his Conduct as a Man.”

The Hermit at his Morning Devotions. Drawn by John Johnson. Engraved by T. Bewick.
From Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell.

Thomas Bewick. Engraved by his pupil, John Jackson.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREPARATION FOR THE HISTORY OF BRITISH LAND BIRDS ;
MINOR WORKS FROM 1791 TO 1804.

WHILE Thomas Bewick was busy preparing and publishing the second and third editions of the *Quadrupeds* his thoughts turned to another project in which it had long been his ambition to succeed. From his good fortune with the *Quadrupeds* he rightly judged that he had a fair chance of producing another book, which, while there was a promise of profit, the undertaking was one full of highest pleasures for the artist; of difficulties

also to be attacked and delightfully overcome by the designer; and of mechanical and artistic triumphs for the engraver. This was the celebrated "History of British Land and Water Birds," the first volume of which was issued in 1797, and the second in 1804.

Bewick in 1791, the year in which he actively commenced preparations for the publication, was in the very prime of life. At thirty-eight his early ideas and schemes had matured; and his experience had become greatly enlarged while preparing for and issuing the volume on Quadrupeds. Besides this, the long practice in engraving endowed his hand with a superior cunning to what it had before possessed. The time, therefore, was favourable to begin another important work, and however much we may be pleased with the History of Quadrupeds, we cannot but acknowledge that the History of British Birds very far surpasses it.

Bewick's opportunities were also better. Not only had he the advantage of prolonged experience, but his fame had so increased that, when the public heard of the project, he had no difficulty in finding ample material wherewith to make his illustrations. Mr. Constable, who had inherited the Wycliffe Museum from Tunstall, invited him to visit, inspect, and draw from the objects in his collection. Friends wrote offering him all sorts of help in the way of description and anecdotes, and many sent him rare and fine specimens of birds newly shot. These, accompanied with his determination to draw only from nature, and his having diligently studied the standard works of Natural History of the day, combined with his skill in the artistic representation of birds, as well as the keen insight into human life shown in the vignettes, make the volumes of the British Birds Bewick's greatest and most lasting achievement.

The Natural History written by Thomas Pennant had been published, and Bewick was greatly indebted to him for the method pursued in the compilation of the Birds, but to Pennant's arrangement he did not strictly adhere. Buffon's plates also supplied him with much knowledge of the

forms of birds with which he was not fully acquainted, and White's History of Selborne, he says, pleased him exceedingly. To these and several other books Bewick acknowledges his indebtedness.*

It is scarcely necessary to say that had he depended entirely on the knowledge thus acquired he would never have produced works of permanent fame. It was his truthfulness to nature, his ability to grasp whatever was most near the actual fact, his unaffectedness and sincerity, that made him the celebrated artist he became. These, as Mr. F. G. Stephens says, in his Notes on Bewick, "produced a mode of art which is manifestly so great in respect to *style* that, from the little cuts in the Fables, which were the works of his youth, to the Birds, hardly one is not a treasure of grave yet graceful, dignified yet homely and elegant design."

On July 16th, 1791, as recorded in his own writings, Bewick started from Newcastle on a visit to Wycliffe. For two complete months he worked among the stuffed specimens in the museum there, making careful drawings—many, if not most, in water colours—of the birds he wanted afterwards to engrave for the proposed publication. These drawings are now the property of the British nation, and are exhibited in the British Museum. One of his letters written while there tells how hard he wrought, and how anxious he was for the welfare of his wife—"My Bell," as he fondly called her—and for the health of his children, more particularly Robert, who had been taken to the seaside to strengthen his constitution.

"If, upon my return," he says, "I find him recovered, I think I shall be frantic with joy. Indeed, if, upon my return, I find you all well, I shall look upon my fire-

* In 1744 there was published at Salop a book in two volumes called "Ornithologia Nova, or a New General History of Birds." This contains 350 wood engravings equal, and in many cases superior, to those in the "Three Hundred Animals." The weak parts of the drawings are the claws, they being invariably made too large and clumsy. The Flamingo, the Reeve, the Kingfisher, the Heron, and several of the Parrots, Wrens, and Bullfinches possess considerable excellence. There are a number of tail-pieces, but they are chiefly ornamental. Other editions are dated Birmingham, 1743, and London, 1745.

side at the Forth like a little heaven. I hope I shall, when I return, but I think it will be about three weeks yet before I have that pleasure. I have plenty of work before me to keep me closely employed a much longer time; but I am tired out already and wish it was over. I have dulled myself with sticking to it so closely. In short, I lose no time in order to get through with the business. . . . Tell Jane and Robert that if they behave well I will let them see a vast of little pictures of Birds when I come home, and I hope my little Bell will be able to say more than dadda when I see her again." And he signs himself, "My Bell's loving husband."

Having completed his mission at Wycliffe, Bewick set off on foot again for Newcastle, and on his arrival at home at once commenced engraving the drawings he had been employed with.

"But," he says in his Memoir, "I had not been long thus engaged till I found the very great difference between preserved specimens and those from nature; no regard having been paid, at that time, to fix the former in their proper attitudes, nor to place the different series of the feathers so as to fall properly upon each other. It had always given me a great deal of trouble to get at the markings of the dishevelled plumage; and, when done with every pains I never felt satisfied with them. I was on this account driven to wait for birds newly shot, or brought to me alive, and in the intervals employed my time in designing and engraving tail-pieces, or vignettes."

For over two months, therefore, Bewick had laboured almost entirely in vain. The only good he got by his residence at Wycliffe was a more thorough knowledge of the colours of the various birds; and also, no doubt, the studies he made of the heads and claws would be afterwards found useful. Through having to wait for specimens from which he could make drawings true to natural form, many delays took place in the preparation of the volume, and nothing was publicly announced for some years. As to the time Bewick took to execute individual blocks of the Birds, it is mentioned by Atkinson that he was sometimes able to finish one in a day, or sometimes in a few hours, when the foliage was slight, or when there was none at all; but, as he seldom wrought a complete day at a block, it would have been difficult even for him to say exactly how long an engraving would have taken him if he had kept right on without attending to other work.

About six weeks after his return from Wycliffe, Bewick sent one or two presents to his friends there, in token of the kindness with which he had been treated. The following characteristic and interesting letter was sent at the same time, for the use of which the author has to thank the Rev. Mr. Buckley, of Middleton Cheney; it is addressed to "Mr. Jno. Goundry Wycliffe (with a small parcel p. favour of Mr. G. Cosh)," and is dated from Newcastle, 28th October, 1791:—

"FRIEND JOHN,—A hurry of Business, since my arrival in Newcastle, has long prevented me from writing to you, but I cou'd not resist the present opportunity of sending you these few lines by Mr. G. Cosh who is so obliging as to take the trouble of delivering them to you—he has also taken a letter from me to Mr. Collier. I have herewith sent you a stamp for marking your linen, which please to accept off as a trifle sent in remembrance of your civility during our short acquaintance at Wycliffe—Be so obliging as to give your Father the Razor herewith sent, with my best wishes and kindest respects to him—I cou'd think of nothing else to send him and whether it may be a good one or a bad one I cannot tell but it will never be sharp enough to cut the thread of friendship that I have for him—I was really grieved when I bid him farewell, and I am now affraid it will be the last time of my ever seeing him again, as I find all things are to be sold at Wycliffe—I wish I had stayed a while longer as I did not get my business completed. I was in hopes of seeing you all again in the ensuing spring if the Library and the Museum had not been disposed off—but I have not now any hopes of having that pleasure—I am now very busily employ'd in cutting the Birds from the drawings which I made while I was with you—I cou'd soon have them all done if I was not taken off with other Jobs—Give my best respects to your Bro: & Sister at the Mill, your Bro: & Sister Copeland & all enquiring friends—Compt: to M^r. Jn^o. Porter & Wife—and when you write to me, which I hope you will do at your leisure, inform me how your father is in health, also your Nephew Tommy, he seems rather tender—any news or particulars from Wycliffe will always be interesting to me—the remembrance of every thing that passed at Wycliffe is as clearly before me as if I was now looking at it. I can imagine that I hear Robin singing in the Mill, old John Baylis riding upon the Poakes & poor old Kitty Wycliffe talking about Clocks and Sun Dials, &c.—I am, friend John, Yours, &c., THOMAS BEWICK.—P.S. I have not yet forgot your works of diff: colour'd wax but have not been able yet to get them." *

* This letter was in a copy of Bewick's *Quadrupeds*, Second Edition, 1791, in the original binding, having on the fly-leaf the following inscription by Bewick, in an oval, very beautifully written:—*The Gift of Thomas Bewick to John Goundry, 1791.*

What may be termed the minor works executed by Thomas Bewick from 1791 to 1804 are neither of large number nor of great interest. The engraver's mind and hands were so much occupied with preparations for the Birds, and with the two new editions of the Quadrupeds, that he could undertake only a very little more labour than these publications required.*

The first to be mentioned are the figures of Quadrupeds in the periodical published at Edinburgh called "The Bee." From 1791 until 1794 a number of cuts appeared there which had been engraved with the highest skill; they are mostly copies from the illustrations in the Quadrupeds, but from the perfection of the workmanship they may fairly be taken as Bewick's own work. It is only in minute points that they differ from the engravings undoubtedly by the master hand. In 1791 also commenced the publication of the engravings of the heads of the Kings of England, which were used to illustrate Goldsmith's Abridgement of the History of England. This work was printed in many editions down to 1820. There were also a series of large heads done by Bewick for Mozley's Gainsborough edition of the same work. These heads are not by any means favourable specimens of Bewick's skill; they are in numerous instances ill-drawn, characterless, and loosely engraved.

For many years various cuts appeared in the Northumberland newspapers. Though not all executed by Bewick, they were in several instances his work, while others were probably done in his shop under his superintendence. In advertisements of coursing meetings a figure of a pointer was employed; for letting a residence, a house; and for the notice of a death, a coffin-lid grimly headed the lines. A figure of Fame—an angel flying and sounding a trumpet—was used; and a very well-executed Anchor and Key formed the design employed by a hardware merchant. Others were

* At this time Charlton Nesbit was an apprentice of Bewick's, he having joined in 1789, when he was fourteen years of age. Shortly after the expiration of his apprenticeship he executed a large engraving (15 by 12 inches) of St. Nicholas, Newcastle, for which he received a medal from the Society of Arts. Many of his engravings were from designs by Thurston: his work, though very careful, lacks the genius of the master, yet he was considered one of the best of Bewick's pupils. His cuts for Northcote's Fables are amongst his best, and are reckoned by Chatto to rank with the finer productions of the art of wood engraving of his time. He died November 11th, 1838.

fashionable linen-drapery surrounded with floral decorations ; an eye for an oculist's sign ; a set of three feathers in one newspaper and a sign in another for an upholsterer ; a suspended sheep for a woollen-draper ; a naked foot for a chiropodist ; and a horse and jockey for a stallion advertisement.

About 1794 Bewick did a remarkably beautiful block for Graham, printer, of Alnwick ; the foliage much richer and varied than usual, an impression being given on the opposite page. The copper-plates done for the Society of Cordwainers and the "Hebbern Main" colliery are excellent ; the sheaf of wheat and anchor for the Cheap Flour Society also contains some careful work. Of

this, Garret, in the "Bewick Collector," says : — " In 1795, when corn and flour were so dear in Newcastle, a very respectable society was founded by the gentry to supply the poor with bread. They got Bewick to engrave this beautiful cut for their manifestoes."

In 1795 Beilby and Bewick were employed to engrave plans of a canal, which it was proposed to make from Newcastle to Carlisle. Bewick, in his Memoir, says of this project, " My partner and self were busily engaged in engraving the plan. . . . After a great deal of scheming and manœuvring, the whole of this great, this important national as well as local undertaking was baffled and set aside." Bewick was engaged to labour for the opposing parties, yet he heartily sympathized with the project, and regretted the failure of the negotiations. The reason of this failure was not far to seek ; the coal owners "below bridge" fancied the undertaking might hurt their trade, and, as Bewick says, "private interest was found to over-power public good."

In 1796 the block done for the Newcastle Royal Exchange Fire Assurance Office, being a view of the Exchange building, appears as an advertisement, and also one of a Phoenix. Bewick also did a small distant view of Newcastle with rocks and luxurious foliage, employed to embellish a ball ticket. In 1797* he executed a book plate for Thomas Bell, it too being a distant view of the city, and in the foreground an ancient oak-tree with an ornamented oval having "T. Bell, 1797" on it, and the full name underneath in script. The Custom House was done for Harrison, tea dealer, and an important cut, with appropriate designs, for Ed. Wilson, spirit merchant. Three little book plates, executed for the Hewitsons, of Newcastle, are beautiful and rare specimens of Bewick's engraving. One is of a pool over which hang a rock and a tree; in the distance are a coach and pair approaching a milestone; on the rock is the date April 24th, 1800, and on the trunk of the tree "Jane Hewitson." Another of similar subject,

with a cottage, is not so carefully executed, and appears later in date; on the rock is W. C. Hewitson. The other was Henry Hewitson, cut with the initials amidst foliage. About 1799 Bewick engraved a block 7 by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which was never used, of a four-horse waggon descending a hill, which Atkinson mentions was done for a carrier in Leeds, who objected to the price when it was sent to him, and returned it. In its passage to or from Leeds the block was injured, which irritated Bewick considerably.

* 1797. Luke Clennell was apprenticed to Bewick on April 8th. Having applied himself with diligence to the business, he was soon able to assist his employer very much, and it is even maintained by Chatto that he engraved many of the tail-pieces for the second volume of the *Birds*. In 1809 his beautiful cut of the Diploma of the Highland Society gained the gold medal of the Society of Arts. Clennell had also some reputation as a painter. In 1817 he became suddenly insane, and though he lingered on until 1840, he was never able to do any more engraving.

Amongst numerous other designs executed for private people was one in memory of Solomon Hodgson, Bewick's printer, who died on April 4th, 1800. It is a tombstone with Hodgson's name and date of decease, placed in a rural churchyard, and was used, as well as elsewhere, in Bell's Catalogue, 1851. Another was made for Gregson and Bullen, upholsterers, of Liverpool—an oak-tree with distant view, with various implements used in the trade, signed with Bewick's initials in the usual monogram. Bells and Hedley's Ewe and Sucking Lamb, signed "T. Bewick, sculpt.", is an interesting copper-plate of about this date, and the one of Laidler the "Taylor," also signed, shows a frequent design of Bewick, being the royal arms with the merchant's

The Boy and the Wolf. Hewlett's "Spelling Book."

name in script. The Lifeboat, with Tynemouth in the distance, given on a subsequent page, was employed for broadsides in connection with the Northumberland Lifeboat. A similar design was published in the "Select Fables" of 1820, but smaller, and a larger and different rendering of the same subject in the "Monthly Magazine," vol. xiii. 1802.

J. Hewlett's "Introduction to Reading and Spelling," published in various editions at the end of the century, contains a number of Fable blocks by Bewick, some of which are signed. Three of them are given in this volume—the Dog under the Manger, page 87; the Old Man and his Ass, page 201; and the Boy and the Wolf, printed above. Although inferior to the engravings in the "Select Fables," they have a certain character which gives them the stamp of originality.

Relph's Poems, published January 1st, 1798, is chiefly remarkable for the foliage cuts by Bewick; Bulmer's "Julia, or Last Follies," 1798, contains two excellent engravings; and the "Economist" of the same year has a fine figure

typical of Liberty. The "Literary Miscellany," or, as Bewick calls it in his Memoir, "Elegant Selections from various Authors," was published in parts in and about 1799, each part containing one or two unimportant blocks by Bewick. "Recreations in Agriculture," by Anderson, who conducted "The Bee," was published in London as a periodical, commencing 1799, and in it there are several engravings after Bewick, and one signed by him, a view of St. Machar Cathedral, Aberdeen. This is a very poor production; the perspective is faulty, and the foliage about the worst Bewick ever attached his name to—if indeed he actually engraved the block.

In 1800 the first edition of the "Charms of Literature," in Prose and Poetry, was published in Newcastle, having eight woodcuts in each volume; the best being Wolkmar and his wife, Harley's visit to Bedlam, and Louisa Venoni. In 1801 Nicholson of Poughnill published the "Elegiac, Shaw's Monody, &c.," containing a clever block illustrating the "Elegy on my dying Ass Peter," engraved by Bewick, the turn of the ass's head being amusingly expressive, while the knee-breeched man is a very well-drawn figure. "Morning's Amusement," by Mrs. Mathews, is a beautiful little York book, illustrated with a number of Fable cuts. "Anecdotes of the Clairville Family" is a similar publication, and, as will be gathered from our list at the end, there are a number of York publications which are almost all illustrated with engravings executed for Fables, many of them of the greatest beauty.

"A Short Treatise on that Useful Invention called the Sportsman's Friend," by H. U. Reay, was published in June, 1801. The invention is shown in an etching by Bewick to be simply a peg to which was attached a rope for the horse's bridle, and the peg driven into the ground. This plate is signed, but possesses little artistic merit. The other two illustrations are woodcuts, also full octavo pages, and much better than the frontispiece etching. The Bay Pony is as fine a Quadruped as Bewick ever drew. The landscape behind was probably a recollection of some Highland scene, and possesses considerable variety, with church, cottage, mountain, and loch.

Another point in the design is a cow drinking in a pool, magnificently brought out by its contrast with the dark pony and the tinted rocks behind.

"The Beauties of Modern Literature," Richmond, 1802, contains a well-finished title cut. "Rural Tales, Ballads, and Songs," by R. Bloomfield, Vernor and Hood, 1802, contains a number of vignettes, but none bear the impress of Bewick's work, nor of having been engraved in his workshop. Of Bloomfield's "Farmer's Boy," published in twelve editions, from 1800 to 1811, and so persistently sold by booksellers and auctioneers as containing Bewick's work, it is enough to look carefully at the prints to ascertain that they are not by Bewick. Some indeed are signed "Nesbit." No book of a similar kind is more often retailed as a genuine Bewick than this, the mistake probably arising from the British Museum Catalogue, which classes it as the great engraver's work. Fisher's "Spring Day," 1803, has four blocks, the chief attractions of which are the foliage and landscapes. The Flowering Hawthorn and the Man Deranged are particularly fine.

Besides those mentioned there were a number of works published during these years containing engravings by Bewick; the more important are noticed, and the reader is referred to our list at the end for the titles of the others.

Bewick relates, in his writings, that when he was occupied in engraving the figures of the second volume of the Birds, as well as writing the letterpress for the same, he was also executing plates for various banks to be employed in printing their notes. In 1798 he did one for the Carlisle Bank, and of this he furnishes the following account:—

"It happened, one evening, that whilst I was in company with George Losh, Esq., who was in some way connected with the Carlisle Bank, he asked me if I could engrave a bank note that could not be easily forged. In reply I told him I thought I could. 'Then,' said he, 'do it immediately;' and I lost no time in beginning upon it. . . . My object was to make the device look like a wood-cut; and in this, though a first attempt, I succeeded; and the number of impressions were sent to Carlisle."

This copper-plate was for a note of One Pound; it had the arms of Carlisle

surrounded by a floral design. The Berwick Bank Note for One Guinea and the Five Pounds of the same, issued shortly afterwards, have some very superior engraving. In 1799 one of Bewick's bank notes was shown to George III., "who greatly admired and approved of it;" and in 1801 an official of the Bank of England wrote respecting its execution, asking various questions as to how it had been engraved. Bewick states he was strongly advised not to give the information; but he did not take this advice, and "after a deal of trouble in writing to them," he was cavalierly told that though such a plate "would do well for country banks, it would not do for the great number wanted for the Bank of England."

The plates which Bewick engraved for the Berwick Bank were made so as to prevent further forgeries in pen and ink; and similar work was put on the Northumberland Bank plates (signed "Bewick"), for One and Five Pounds. This was a combination of plate and wood engraving, the script being done on the copper, and a neat little view executed on wood, and probably printed afterwards. At this time there was great controversy in Parliament and throughout the country respecting forgeries of bank notes, and the punishments connected therewith. But although Bewick's ingenious device of employing both wood and copper engraving rendered imitation very difficult, he did not reap any benefit from his labours. This was a sore point with Bewick, and, as will be seen further on, cost him much trouble and anxiety. In 1802 he did a plate for the Dumfries Banking Company for One Guinea. The figure of Hope with which it was decorated fitly symbolized the feelings of the bank's creditors. Bewick for his work received three of the notes signed, but on presentation it was found that the bank had stopped payment.*

In 1799 Bewick executed four large wood engravings of animals for Gilbert Pidcock, the owner of a travelling menagerie. They were representa-

* The "Scottish Banking Magazine," in "A History of Banking in Scotland," refers to "a wretched attempt at Dumfries, where James Grace, with the assistance of his son and another partner, started the Dumfries Commercial Bank in 1804, only to succumb four years later with a deficiency of 10s. per pound."

tions of an elephant, a lion, a zebra, and a tiger, and are now rarely met with. Before the blocks were handed to Pidcock there were printed 250 of the elephant, 200 of the tiger, and 150 each of the zebra and the lion. These were also re-engraved subsequently, probably as exercises by his more advanced apprentices, either Temple or Nicholson, receiving general supervision, and most likely a few finishing touches, by Bewick.

The Elephant here reproduced has been copied from a very rare impression on India paper in the possession of Professor Corfield. It is one of the second series of the cuts, and is reversed from Bewick's first block. It is given as a contrast to the Chillingham Bull, which, from the richness of the foliage and the border, makes a far more successful print. It is to be observed that the block was engraved almost entirely without cross-hatching, the little that is done being with the white line, and not, as most modern engravers would execute it, with the black. For a young engraver no better lesson could be found than to copy this in fac-simile.

The Tiger and Zebra were also done twice; the first Tiger without any background; the Zebra with very little foreground, the second of the same having some plants. The Lion was afterwards three times engraved: the original has its head to the right and its tail elevated, glaring furiously at some supposed object in the foreground; the second was similar, but reversed; the third was commenced by Harvey and finished by the master, the head to the right, the appearance of hair being rather unsatisfactory; the fourth has the head also to the right, and some foliage is introduced: of it only a very few were printed.

One of each of these was published in 1800, by Pidcock, in a second edition of notes on his animals, where the engravings are said to have been executed by Bewick. In this the Elephant looks to right (being the one reproduced); the Tiger to the left; the Zebra to the left; and the Lion to the right. Hugo, in the "Bewick Collector," gives other details of these large blocks.

Æsop. From the original wood block executed by Bewick for Mozley, Gainsborough, about 1808, for an edition of Croxall's "Fables." Lent by Mr. Mozley, Derby.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEW EDITIONS OF THE HISTORY OF QUADRUPEDS, 1791 TO 1804.

THE sale of the first edition of the *Quadrupeds* being immediate and continuous, Bewick published the second edition in the following year (1791). There was a great improvement in the illustrations in this ; many large gaps were filled, and important additions made both in the figures of the animals and in the tail-pieces. The majority of the purely insipid cuts which found places in the 1790 edition were dispensed with, the impressions of the cuts do not show any signs of wearing, while the whole having been revised with the experience gained through the first edition, the 1791

work is generally more desirable than the previous publication. There were 1,500 copies printed on demy 8vo paper, for which the partners found it advisable to charge 9s. in place of the 8s. for the same size of the first edition, and 300 on royal 8vo, sold, like the 1790 copies, at 12s. The pages were increased to 483, with 212 figures and 108 vignettes, several of the latter being repeated. The profits of this edition are stated by Bell to have been £342 5s. 11d.

The first addition to the second edition is the Arabian Horse. The next are the Long-horned or Lancashire Breed and the Kyloe Ox. The latter animal is the same as that represented in Bewick's large copper-plate issued in 1790; it is executed with the greatest vigour and beauty. The characteristic Polar Bear is new, replacing the weak one of the first edition. Three new cuts are added among the dogs, the first being the Ban Dog, another remarkable example of Bewick's skill, the variety of tones and the manipulation of texture displaying everything that wood engraving can legitimately attain. The greyness of the Irish Greyhound is conveyed by dexterous use of delicate shade, while the third, of the Turnspit, is not nearly so clever, being stiff and ungraceful. The block of the Spotted Cavy at page 346 replaces a very poor one in the 1790 edition. The other new engravings are the Long-tailed Squirrel, the Short-eared and Long-eared Bats, and the Roussette. Various changes are also made in the titles of the figures.

The vignettes added in the second edition of the Quadrupeds are in some instances very noteworthy. The first new one is the Old Coachman and the Young Squire, in which the young gentleman rides importantly along on a little pony, followed by an ill-favoured servant on a very high horse.

One of the finest and most touching designs Bewick ever drew is "The Hungry Ewe"—fac-similed at p. 16—vainly trying to get food in a snow-covered country and beside a desolated house. Her little lamb kneels on the snow as it endeavours to obtain sustenance from the source to which nature prompts it to apply, but which, alas! is empty. It is said, in "The Treatise

on Wood Engraving" (page 487), "Though the subject be simple, yet the sentiment which it displays is the genuine offspring of true genius. Near to a ruined cottage, while all around is covered with snow, a lean and hungry ewe is seen nibbling at an old broom, while her young and weakly lamb is sucking her milkless teats. Such a picture of animal want—conceived with so much feeling, and so well expressed—has perhaps never been represented by any artist except Bewick." A boy waving his hat as he courses along on the back of a goat is new, and at pages 121 and 357 (it being repeated) is a vignette of an old man carrying his young wife and child across a stream.

The cut of the old soldier at pages 127 and 386 is new. The poor man has travelled far, and has still far to go, the milestone he is just passing marks eleven miles one way and fifteen the other, a blinding storm of wind and sleet blows in his face, his garments are in tatters, his feet appear through his worn shoes, and he gazes wistfully for his destination, which as yet does not appear. Life has evidently been a thorny path for him, and his present journey seems to be only one of many troubles he has had to encounter. Another print shows three tinker's children in a pair of panniers on an ass's back. The time is winter, and one of the children's faces bears signs of feeling the chilly atmosphere. The donkey tries to get something eatable out of some faggots, and in the distance a couple of cottages and a haystack are seen, the chimney sending up a thick smoke, telling of big fires inside to keep out the cold. Although the block at page 419 is quite out of place in being among the apes, it is allowed to be one of Bewick's best works. A nurse left in charge of a babe has, in the blandishments of her lover, forgotten her duty, and while she is engaged with her wooer the child has toddled over the field to where a young unbroken colt has been grazing, and pulling the hairs of its long tail, has roused in it a wrath which causes it to lift its heel, and possibly to kick if further provoked. The mother from the house has suddenly noticed the danger to which her child is exposed, and in an agony of fear leaps down the stile from her garden to rescue the innocent babe. This is said

to have been an incident that happened in Bewick's own family at Cherry burn.

The second edition of 1,800 having sold as rapidly as the 1,600 copies of the first, Bewick made arrangements to print a third, which was published in 1792. This was almost a reprint of the previous year's volume; no animals were added, but five new tail-piece vignettes were inserted, and the whole of them rearranged, and blocks repeated in the other edition were now only printed once. The new tail-pieces are a Tiger waiting to spring on an Antelope, which is seen running along half suspicious that danger is near (page 192); Ruins of an Ancient Castle (page 236); an Eagle with a hare preparing to make a meal of it, though the victim is rather unconcerned in the matter (page 344); a Weasel and bird (page 357); and a boy dragging a toy cart in which a playmate is seated. In the letterpress there was a note added at page 392, containing information regarding a new use of mole-skins in the manufacture of hats. The number of copies, price, and size were the same as in the second edition.

Bewick was now deeply engaged with the publication of the Birds, and not employing himself with another edition of the Quadrupeds for some time, the fourth did not appear until February 22nd, 1800, nearly three years after the issue of the first volume of the Birds. This edition was more scientific than any of the three earlier ones; to the vulgar names of the animals the Linnæan and Buffonian were added; and the work appeared more ambitious, though it is doubtful if all the changes were improvements. An innovation was made in the size of the copies, as 230 were issued in imperial 8vo, and uniform with the largest paper of the Birds, the price being a guinea; and there were 300 royal 8vo at 15s., and 100 on demy 8vo at half-a-guinea.

The publication of this gave rise to some misunderstandings between those concerned in the returns, and it was decided that Bewick, Beilby, and Hodgson should each have a third part of the edition, and sell it as best he might. Beilby had retired from the publishing business, and he sold his portion

to John Bell, bookseller, Newcastle, whose name appears on part of the edition in the title-page. Beilby subsequently sold his interest in the copyright of the volume to Bewick, it being after this that the quarrel arose between the engraver and the widow of Hodgson, as detailed in Chapter XXI.

The blocks added in the fourth edition are—The Old English Road Horse, the Improved Cart Horse, the Heath Ram, the Cheviot Ram, the Tees Water Breed (of Sheep), the Improved Breed (of Sheep), the Sow of the Improved Breed, and the Chinese Sow; and the Spotted Hyena replaces a former poor cut. Several additional vignettes appear in the fourth edition; namely, the farmyard in winter, with a man and dog labouring through the snow, page 34; two cows standing in a pool at page 37, also used in the Birds with the addition of the hawk; a lame man looking at a direction-post, page 171; a crow and frog on rock at page 173; and the fox and the fowls at page 455. The vignettes are actually fewer in number than in the third edition because of the omission of several of the ornamental cuts, which the book was better without. The “Addenda” contain two cuts of rare animals sent to the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle—the Wombach and an unnamed amphibious animal (the *Ornithorhynchus*)—both very poor engravings.

In 1804 an American edition of the “History of Quadrupeds” was issued. In it no thanks are given to Bewick, nor is there any further acknowledgment than appears on the title-page, which reads as follows:—“A General History of Quadrupeds. The figures engraved on wood, chiefly copied from the original of Thomas Bewick by A. Anderson. First American edition with an appendix containing some American animals not hitherto described. New York, printed for G. and R. Waite, No. 64, Maiden Lane, 1804.”

Anderson was an extensive copier of the Bewicks’ works, and engraved those in the “Looking Glass for the Mind” and other books. These publications are pure piracies. Bewick’s name does certainly appear on the title, though that was probably done to make the book sell better. Occasionally the letterpress is altered to suit the different circumstances

of the publication, as where in the "Addenda" to Bewick's volume it is said, "We are favoured by the Literary and Philosophical Institution with the figures," and in Anderson's is changed to "the figures and description were sent to the Literary and Philosophical Institution, Newcastle."

The English edition of 1800 was followed by the American publishers; the pages are a little smaller, but the blocks are almost identical in size, the American work having 531 pages, and the English 525. The figures are all reversed, that, of course, being easier than drawing them the contrary way on the block; the designs are faithfully copied, but the workmanship is very decidedly inferior. Several are fair copies, and one or two are nearly equal to Bewick's; but the majority are stamped with the lack of genius, and form a sufficient answer to those who maintain that Bewick as an engraver did nothing which could not be easily and successfully imitated.

The few cuts of American animals are the Hamster of Georgia, an amphibious animal (no name given), the Viviparous Shark of Long Island, the Wild Sheep of California, and the Mammoth of New York. All these illustrations are of the most ordinary class, and form a sorry comment on the education received from copying the engravings of Bewick.

The Cole Titmouse. "The History of British Birds," Vol. I.

The Willow Wren. "The History of British Birds," Vol. I.

CHAPTER XIX.

"THE HISTORY OF BRITISH BIRDS," VOL. I. 1797. (LAND BIRDS.)

IN the arrangement of the volumes of the "History of British Birds" Bewick acted differently and more discreetly than with the Quadrupeds. It was his intention at one time to make a General History of the bird creation, after the style of that of the four-footed animals.* But this would have had a much wider area than the Quadrupeds, and if there were difficulties found in obtaining specimens of these, that embarrassment was greatly increased with the birds. It is also to be observed that a History of British Birds comprehends a more varied scheme than any History of British Quadrupeds can do, and by pressing into service every feathered visitant to these islands, Bewick was able to fill two volumes

* The preface to the Engravings of the Land Birds, published separately in 1800, says, with reference to the fourteen foreign birds which are added there, that they "were originally intended for a General History of Birds, but the design, comprehending a work of too great magnitude, was laid aside."

of equal size with the volume on four-footed animals. Moreover, Bewick was aware that "his talents were best displayed when employed on representations of such subjects as he was able to see alive;" and it is distinctly observable throughout the *Quadrupeds* that the figures not drawn from life are far inferior to those taken from nature. For these reasons, therefore, Bewick arranged to have a work which required the illustrations to be drawn from the feathered flocks of Britain only.

Taken as a whole, the "*History of British Birds*" is a greater work than the "*History of Quadrupeds*." There are few, if any, failures, and when the artist-engraver had obtained special opportunities for studying the living birds, the figures have all the spirit and character of the animated original. Of these, and in the majority of the landscape backgrounds, the engraving is well-nigh perfect, resulting in effects which no other style of art can more appropriately convey. In the representations of the feathered coverings it is quite unsurpassed, and in the marvellously dexterous employment of the graver unsurpassable. At the same time it is entirely different from any other method of engraving, being, in fact, the art of wood engraving in its most pure, healthy, and proper condition. The entire form of the work—thanks for this in the *Land Birds* as much to Beilby as to Bewick—is also more carefully thought out than in the earlier compilation, and it is more concise and correct as well as clearer in the letterpress.

It is not, however, in the mere arrangement, or even in the engraving, that the *Quadrupeds* is excelled. It is also in the gallery of tail-pieces scattered profusely throughout the volume; the stories of humanity told in a few square inches, the satires on life conveyed with unflinching certainty and with no apparent exertion, and the beauties of nature exhibited in the little landscapes. Success of the supremest quality is also displayed in the figures of the *Birds*, which, without exaggeration, are the most faithful to life that have ever been executed. Beautiful illustrations have since been published, and more thoroughly scientific arrangements other natural historians have

employed; but no one has given us the true living bird, as has been done in these volumes by Thomas Bewick.

The work was divided into two great parts, Land Birds and Water Birds. The latter was not published until 1804; but the first volume, being the Land Birds, appeared on October 7th, 1797. The edition consisted of 24 copies on imperial 8vo paper at 2*is.*, 850 each on thick and thin royal 8vo at 1*5s.* and 13*s.*, and 1,000 on demy 8vo at 10*s.* 6*d.* each.*

The Introduction is headed by the famous design of the English farm-yard, a representative engraving, being a foretaste of what the reader may expect in the pages following, and well fitted to preface a work on British Birds. The Table of Contents is headed by a print of a heavily laden pedlar, with many miles yet to travel; and at the end of the same is a figure said to be Bewick himself when on his travels in Scotland.

It is not possible to name each bird or vignette separately, as a large volume could be filled with details of the inexhaustible merits of the designs. It will be sufficient to point to any interesting matter in connection with them.

"In order to recognise one of Bewick's Birds, the naturalist is not compelled, however rapidly, to go over the inventory of his characteristics—to compare the greater or less coverts, the quills primary or secondary—to glance at the contents of his tail, or ascertain the length, breadth, or thickness of his bill. The bird, whether rich or rare, is before him, and he recognises it as he would the living original. In the best of Bewick's landscape sketches, much of the same wonderful precision is unquestionably to be found. It is difficult to study them attentively and not arrive at the conclusion that many of them are literal transcripts of that which existed, altogether or in part." †

The first figure represents the Golden Eagle, a beautiful engraving, giving all the characteristics of the magnificent bird at a glance; the work "leaps to the eye," a complete representation of the king of birds. The Sea Eagle,

* Except when otherwise stated, the numbers of copies printed are taken from Bell's Catalogue, 1851.

† "The British Quarterly Review," vol. ii. 1845, p. 569.

like a few others (notably the Magpie and the Blackbird) was slightly altered by Bewick; in most copies it has the words, "Wycliffe, 1791," at the foot, but the early impressions are without them, while all after the first edition (including the 1798 edition) are so marked. The Goshawk is a charming engraving, correctly drawn, carefully tinted, and full of animation. The Sparrow-hawk is almost as fine, the featheryness of the plumage being particularly beautiful. The exquisite and noble series of the Owls, in which every one is a perfect study, are specimens of the highest class of Bewick's engravings. The White Owl was done from a water-colour drawing by Bewick which bears the inscription, "Mr. Wm. Hawke; shot 17th March, 1792;" and this block and the Tawny Owl show the greatest skill that any worker with the graver has yet attained.

The arrangement of the work differs at this place from that of Pennant, and, by placing the Shrike after the Owls, the lines laid down by Buffon are observed. The cleverly engraved vignette following represents a miller, who, having loyally made himself drunk on the old king's birthday, is sleeping off the effects under a bush. The numerals which make this inference fair do not, however, appear in the original water-colour sketch.

Amongst birds of the Pie kind the Hooded Crow is particularly excellent from the ashen colour of the feathers. After the Jackdaw there is a lovely tail-piece of two cows standing in shade in a pool on a hot summer day. This forms a complete picture, possessing all the elements necessary for a large painting. In the same cut in mid-air "we have most intelligibly depicted the futile attempts of a hawk to make his escape from the buffeting of two tyrannical crows; the magpies, like school-boys, only being there to see the fun." The Magpie engraving presents a fine contrast of tones in its various shades of black and white. This is a block which was more than once altered during the various editions. In the first state it has a double-branched decayed stick conspicuously in the foreground, as shown in the reproduction at p. 242. In the 1798 edition—with the date 1797,

and having the word "engraved" on the title-page—one of the branches disappears, and in all the later editions the black mass is transformed into a beautiful piece of foreground work. In the background an ill-fed horse is breathing its last—"Waiting for Death."

The Red-Legged Crow is placed in the foreground of a landscape very like that round Tynemouth Castle; it is a fine and true representation, but "the crow, as a crow, fails to impress the world with his dignity, because, compared with the utter nigritude of the raven's plumage, his feathers are a little 'seedy,' weather-beaten, and dimmed; he always looks a little 'out at elbows,' and reminds one of our hired mutes at a 'respectable' funeral."* The Snow-man vignette is a scene at Cherryburn, the little boy on the stool being meant for Bewick himself. The boys have nearly finished their large snow figure, but how the head was placed so high by the small urchins is difficult to understand; their joy and pride at beholding their work are unmistakable, however, and they are quite happy, though chilled "to the bone" by the severe frost. The vignette of the Runaway Horse is a satirical comment on the practice of long lingering at taverns by last-century drivers. The children amusing themselves in the empty cart have startled the horse, which rushes off more and more frightened by the screams of the terrified children. A boy tumbles out at the back of the cart, the driver hurries from the tavern, while a woman adds to the confusion by shrieking her loudest. This design was also employed on Sunday School broadsheets to exemplify the evil effects of children's rashness and disobedience. The vignette of a Blind Man standing in a street patiently fiddling away while no passengers are within eye or ear shot is excellent. The dog seems to be quite aware of the humour of the proceeding, and sits with a superior sort of consciousness, as if it thoroughly enjoyed the position. The Black Ouzel, or Blackbird, has

* From F. G. Stephens's "Notes," 1881.

a pleasant view of Cherryburn in the background. The bill of the bird was several times re-engraved. The tail-piece "Pensioners," two horses standing in a downpour of rain on a miserable evening, is a well-engraved block, one which Mr. Ruskin, in his *St. George's Museum* copy of the *Birds*, says has "highest possible quality—an amazing achievement in engraving, and for feeling of melancholy in rain."* The *Field Fare* which follows is one of the finer of the series, and the *Cuckoo* is a charming and splendid engraving, in which the bird literally lives.

The tail-piece styled "The End of Evil Men" represents a demon who, having caught a coal merchant, is preparing to suspend him from gallows under which the coal cart has been driven. The frightened looks of the man and the horse's horror-stricken appearance, together with the evident satisfaction of the demon, are admirably rendered. Bewick designed this cut in order to frighten a coal dealer who had cheated him, and the idea so impressed the dealer that he "confessed his guilt and on his knees implored pardon." At the end of the notes on the *Grosbeak* another demon smokes a pipe, while in the distance a man is suspended from a gibbet, the demon being of opinion that he has done a good day's work. The *Bullfinch* is a pretty print, and treated differently from those immediately preceding it, as it has no background; the figure from this loses something in delicacy in the feathery look of the wings and breast, but it gains in beauty of line. The *Yellow Bunting* is one of the finest, and was considered by Bewick as the most beautiful of all his bird engravings. That it is among the best there cannot be any question, but that it is the very best is doubtful; yet the delicacy in the feathers could not be surpassed, and by a subtilty quite unexplainable the yellow colour of the bird seems to be present in the woodcut.

The tail-piece called "The Poachers" represents a snow-clad landscape,

* It may interest some to know that this copy of Bewick's work—being in the *Sheffield Museum* solely for educational purposes—has the vignettes at pp. 42, 47, 254, 285, and 317 cut entirely away.

over which a man and dog pursue a hare, whose flight is intercepted by a man appearing at a hedge at the farther end of the field. The hare leaves marks of its tracks in the snow, which the dog follows, as shown in the fac-simile here given. Of this Mr. Ruskin, in his *St. George's* annotated copy, says, "Quite glorious in all intellectual and executive qualities. Seen, thought, and done, to the uttermost, so far as the subject had anything in it to see, think, or do, and as his means went."

The House Sparrow is treated in the letterpress at some length, though the engraving fails to convey the ordinary colour of the bird. "The Howdy," a tail-piece at p. 157, represents a man hurrying off a midwife, his horse's

The Poachers. From a vignette in "The History of British Birds," Vol. I.

head and half of the background being covered with a leaf engraved as if it were laid on after the drawing had been finished. Bewick said the design was intended to convey that this person's work was one that should be concealed from view.

The snow landscape, a tail-piece reproduced at p. 10, is one of the finest little sketches in the collection, and the original drawing possesses very remarkable breadth and beauty. The Skylark is usually printed in an admirable grey tone, greatly enhancing the engraving. The tail-piece to the Nightingale is an old man pondering over the inscription, "Vanitas Vanitatum omnia Vanitas," on a tombstone in a ruined churchyard. A

thoughtless and happy boy runs after his hoop, like an ideal mortal pursuing pleasure, while the aged stands thinking over all that has come and gone.

The Willow Wren, reproduced on p. 181, is a pretty engraving, the varieties of tint and beauty of line making it very attractive. The Greater Titmouse, a foreshortened delineation of the happy and active little bird, was drawn, no doubt, from the pet in Bewick's own home. The Cole Titmouse, given in fac-simile on page 180, is also a dainty representation.

Of the Gallinaceous Birds we have a brilliant example in the Domestic Cock. It "is such a masterpiece of style that if it had been carved by a Greek in marble it could hardly have been finer."* The varied tints of the feathers in the tail contribute greatly to the grandeur of the engraving; feather rises above feather in regular gradation, and every detail is minute and true. It is somewhat curious that, although the subject is well and even gracefully described in the text, there is no engraving of a sitting hen, the "lively emblem of the most affectionate solicitude and attention." It is, however, noticeable that Bewick seldom engraved the female of any of his animals. The Pheasant is another statuesque production; the long line of its back elegantly curved, and every detail brought out with great power. A fac-simile of it is given on page 47.

On the details and condition of the vignette on page 285 of the *Birds* depend the rarity and value of the volume. Not that the engraving itself indicates intrinsically any superiority, but it is a well-established fact that on the publication of the first volume in 1797, Bewick found many objections raised to the grossness of this tail-piece. He therefore, after the issue of the twenty-four on imperial paper, and probably a few of the thick royal, inked over the cut so as to obliterate, or at least apologize for, the rudeness of the design. In many instances the ink has so dried in that the complete design may be observed through it, and in unscrupulous dealers' hands the cut has sometimes been cleaned so as to endeavour to cause it to be taken for an

* From F. G. Stephens's "Notes," 1881.

uninked impression. This, however, can never be so entirely done as to deceive a careful observer. In the 1805 and later editions the design is materially altered, and the most indelicate part taken away, and all are therefore without the ink stain.

The fine block of the Turkey, given in fac-simile on page 9, like the Pheasant, the Cock, and the succeeding design of the Peacock, is carefully drawn and powerfully executed; the delicate colouring of the head and neck being simply wonderful, while the dark-tinted foreground helps to give effect to the half-tints of the rest of the design. The Peacock is one of the largest of the blocks. The details are marvellously minute, while the engraving is delicate, though there is scarcely enough aerial perspective shown in the background. The deep tone of the head and breast, with their fine flowing lines, makes this cut at once commanding and pleasing.

The Pintado seems in the design to be much larger than it is in reality. It appears nevertheless, from the following interesting note, given by Hugo in his "Collector," to have been drawn from life:—"Bewick drew this bird from a living specimen at Elswick Hall, near Newcastle. Accompanied by his daughter Jane, then a child, he made the sketch whilst out walking between five and six o'clock on a fine summer morning. The gate of the yard being fast, he had to climb over the wall to obtain an entrance, and has represented this incident in the background to the cut. Though very minute, the resemblance to himself of the figure on the wall is quite perfect." *

The Partridge given on the next page is from a copy by John Jackson. This is a cut which may be looked on as one of those more peculiarly characteristic of Bewick. The form is perfect, the position easy, and the down and feathers as downy and feathery as nature itself.

The Quail is a remarkable little gem, delightfully varied in light and shade. The Plovers, though usually placed among the water birds, are inserted here because the editors "cannot help considering the greater part of

* The note is signed R. Robinson.

them as partaking entirely of the nature of land birds.” One of the tail-pieces depicts a man reaping—a composition which, from the openness of the view and the variety of the country represented, is very favourable to a much larger size of picture. The Dotterel shows the cheery, contented, yet self-conscious animal in its best features. The Ring Dotterel is another bird which is decidedly aware of its consequence, and it is succeeded by the last engraving in the volume, that of a feather, executed from a marvellously minute water-colour drawing made by Bewick. The last page of the first

The Partridge. “The History of British Birds,” Vol. I.

volume of the third edition of the *Birds* has frequently an advertisement of the *Quadrupeds*, and sometimes it is a blank.

In 1798, no doubt because the sale proved large, a further impression of the volume was printed, consisting of 207 in imperial 8vo, 669 in royal 8vo, and 750 in demy 8vo.* Though printed and published a year after the 1797 edition, they bear the date 1797, and do not carry any words on the title-page to show that they are later. They may, however, easily be distinguished from the first by a slight difference in the title and in the preface, as well as

* These were advertised in the *Newcastle Chronicle* for August 25th, 1798, as follows :—“ ‘History of Birds.’ The public is respectfully informed that a few copies of this work are just printed on a wove imperial paper at one guinea each. Super Royal 18s., Fine Thick Royal 15s., Royal 13s., Demy 10s. 6d. Printed for R. Beilby and T. Bewick, and sold by them and all booksellers.” A similar advertisement appeared in the *London Morning Herald* of October 10th, 1798 : in this the figures are said to have been “engraved by J. Bewick.”

by other minor changes throughout the text. The engravings are the same in both issues. The 1797 edition bears on title, "The figures engraved on wood by T. Bewick," while the 1798 says, "The figures engraven," etc. In the first also the price appears thus: "(Price 1*l.* 1*s.* in boards)," in the other it is "one guinea." The 1798 preface has a line less on the first page than the other, and the words "and necessary," on p. 4, line 5, are deleted, making an improvement in the composition.

The other differences in the text * show that the two impressions were not taken from the same setting of types. That the latter was printed before 1804, and not printed then to sell with the second volume, is proved by the advertisement at the end, which announces the fourth edition of the "Quadrupeds" as "In the press and speedily will be published;" the fourth edition appearing in 1800. This advertisement also marks these copies as being later than 1797, from the fact that the earlier ones have (when there is an advertisement at all), "Lately was published the third edition of the 'History of Quadrupeds.'" It may also be useful to note that the first volumes of the Birds, which bear the date 1804, are simply second (1805) editions with a different title-page. This with many collectors constitutes another edition, and makes, with the usually acknowledged eight editions and the 1798 impression, ten different editions of the first volume.

In 1800 the figures and tailpieces of the Land Birds volume and fourteen foreign birds were printed without letterpress in demy 8vo, and 500 impressions were issued at 12*s.* each. This was done, as stated in a short preface, "in compliance with the wishes of many of the editors' friends, who were desirous of possessing good impressions of the British Birds, unaccompanied with the descriptive part;" but nevertheless the sale of the copies was far from satisfactory, and many of them were destroyed. A very few of the engravings of the Water Birds were also printed in 1804.

* Differences will be found at the following pages, as well as in others: 14, 20, 31, 52, 81, 95, 108, 120, 130, 148, 162, 183, 216, 223, 251, 273, 292, 316, and 335.

The Mute Swan. "The History of British Birds," Vol. II.

CHAPTER XX.

"THE HISTORY OF BRITISH BIRDS," VOL. II. 1804. (WATER BIRDS.)

THE second volume of the "History of British Birds," being the Water Birds, did not appear until August, 1804, or nearly seven years after the publication of the volume on Land Birds. As mentioned in the succeeding chapter, Beilby and Bewick dissolved partnership as from January 1st, 1798, and thus the latter was left to pursue or abandon his scheme for the publication of a complete history of the British feathered creation. Bewick wisely decided to proceed, and while the exercise of having both to design the figures and write the descriptions told severely on him, yet he steadily persevered, and though he published it so many years after the issue of the other part of the work, it sold quite as readily as the first volume.

So soon as Bewick's friends heard that he was proceeding with the Water Birds he received—as in the case of the first volume—many presents of specimens from which to make drawings. He also acknowledges in the preface to have received literary help from the Vicar of Bedlington, the Rev. Henry Cotes. After Bewick had written his observations on the birds, Mr. Cotes carefully revised the composition, and in some instances, it is said, also made considerable additions to it. Bewick, as we are aware, was able to write remarkably well, but he knew his training had never been specially directed to this employment, and doubtless he was sufficiently engaged with his engraving to prevent him thoroughly thinking out the descriptive matter. "Two heads are better than one," he knew, at such a time, especially when he had been so unexpectedly called upon to take up his pen; and it is satisfactory that he was sufficiently aware of the desirability of revision to accept Mr. Cotes's assistance. If a similar friend had been found for his *Memoir*, published in 1862, much of the extraneous matter there would have been omitted, and a volume produced in every way worthy of the man.

The volume was printed at Walker's office by George Barlow, "who was brought down from London to print Bewick's works, and outshine Simpson (who printed the *Land Birds* at Hodgson's), which he never could nor did, but was much beholden to Simpson for his knowledge of overlaying the tympan so as to reach the lower parts of the blocks." ("Bewick Collector.") There were 1,000 demy 8vo copies printed, and the price was 12s.; also 850 copies each on thin and thick royal 8vo, at 15s. and 18s. each; and a number in imperial 8vo, at 24s.

The engraving on the title-page represents boys playing with toy ships not far from Newcastle. The boys might represent Bewick and his play-fellows when he played truant, and, as he says, amused himself "by making dams and swimming boats, in a small burn, which ran through a place then called the 'Colliers' Close Wood,' till the evening, when I returned home with my schoolfellows." The vignette at the head of the Advertisement

shows an old man saying grace with closed eyes, while his cat avails herself of the opportunity to make free with his porridge—a block which the Rev. Mr. Cotes, his literary friend, desired Bewick to withdraw; but Chatto relates that he declined, saying he could not help laughing at the over-righteous man who, “while craving a blessing with hypocritical grimace, and with eyes closed to outward things, loses a present good.” The original sketch for this is now in the British Museum.

In the Advertisement Bewick mentions his indebtedness to the Wycliffe Collection and to Buffon’s coloured prints of birds. He states that, “notwithstanding this help, the figures of several birds are still wanting,” which was attributed to the difficulties in obtaining many of the rarer animals; and he apologizes for the long period which had elapsed since the appearance of the Land Birds.

At the head of the Introduction an old soldier and his comrade exchange salutations and utter laments for the days gone by. The tail-piece to the same teaches how by mutual help difficulties may be overcome: a blind man carrying a lame fellow-traveller across a rivulet. The head-piece to the Contents is an old man on horseback, laden with goods for the market, on a rainy, windy day. Chatto says, “The horse on which he is mounted has become restive, and the rider has both broken his stick and lost his hat. The horse seems determined not to move until it suits his own pleasure; and it is evident that the old man dare not get down to recover his hat, for, should he do so, encumbered as he is, he will not be able to remount.” Bewick had grim pleasure in depicting his fellow-creatures in small troubles like these.

The first bird is the Sanderling, an engraving not possessing any marked qualification above others for the position it sustains. The Long-Legged Plover is enhanced by a half-caricature of its lengthy limbs in the tail-piece, where a sportsman crosses some water elevated on high stilts. The vignette at page 9, representing a man on a blowy day bending to the blast, while the string of a boy’s kite catches his head, is a design of which Bewick did no

less than three drawings, slightly varying in details. The vignette of the feather of the Water Crane (reproduced at an earlier page) is a very significant print. "In these marvellous specimens," Mr. Stephens says, "we have not only the peculiar texture and form of the subject, but the very cohesion of the fibres of the feathers is expressed by, as is usual with Bewick, the cutting out of the light of the block with perfect delineation of the half tint, while not the least hint of an outline, or margin of any sort, is to be seen anywhere." The tail-piece at p. 23 is a view of Bywell Boat-pool and Bywell Castle—a man, with a salmon leister, wading in the water: this is said to be the first of the series of vignettes executed by Bewick at his work-bench. For a vignette to the fine Spoonbill there is a poor, hungry, wooden-legged beggar eating ravenously from a bone, while his equally hungry dog looks on watching for the least morsel, and waiting for the entire dainty when his master has finished his meal. In strange and striking contrast to the group, there is on a distant wall a well-fed strutting peacock, an emblem of the luxury within the walls at the door of which the beggar sits. In the "Select Fables" of 1784 a similar design appears (printed on page 46 here), but with the addition of the Courtier's Dependant. The next tail-piece represents a man who, to secure a bird's nest seen in the upper part of a tree overhanging a river, has come to grief by the branch giving way, and his descent is rapid towards the running water below, illustrating how "we must bow to fate in trusting to a rotten stick."

The Heron is in the act of devouring its prey, while in the distance another stands waiting in its patient way for a similar meal. The tail-piece shows another kind of animal waiting for prey—this time a human one—and a miserable time he is having of it. Notwithstanding his four rods he seems little likely to catch the fish, while his personal wretchedness, amidst the heavy rain, gives a vivid idea of the occasional discomforts of angling.

The Night Heron (reproduced at page 212), though scarcely to be called a British bird, is introduced into Bewick's work on account of its occasional

visitation to these lands. The cut was drawn from a bird preserved at Wycliffe, and is exceptionally fine, coming from such a usually unsatisfactory source. The Bittern is one of the large cuts of the series, and one of those the background of which is as beautiful as the figure itself.* The succeeding tail-piece of "an old codger fettling his hooks" is one of the charming series of angling cuts; and the next on page 52, here reproduced on page 33, gives an angler standing ankle-deep in the flowing water—a fine sketch, and carried out with pleasing effect. The vignette following the Curlew represents a noted character—a tanner—enjoying the sport of seeing three thoughtless boys chase a dog at whose tail is strung the proverbial tin pan: the frightened look of the poor dog is a contrast to the pleasure depicted on the man's face and to the eagerness of the youthful torturers. Bewick is said to have watched for a long time to see how leather leggings were worn by a tanner of the Westgate, Newcastle, so that he might be correct.

The Whimbrel, engraved by Henry Hole, one of Bewick's pupils, is a pretty cut, with its half-misty distance: the roundness of the back was altered afterwards, as it was drawn from a badly prepared specimen. The tail-piece shows a sportsman who, in shooting at a woodcock, now flying away, has hit a magpie, which has fallen dead, while the man strongly expresses his disgust at his ill-luck, looking round at the woodcock while he reloads for another, and, let us hope, a better result. The Woodcock is a wonderful specimen of Bewick's art. A fac-simile of it is given on page 134, executed by Jackson for the "Treatise on Wood Engraving."

The Common Snipe, given here as a fac-simile on page 1, is almost equal to the Woodcock, and the purely English background has an impression of direct truthfulness and of a perfect transcript from nature. The other two cuts of Snipes are not far behind this; and the landscape of the Judcock is

* The following note was written by Bewick in a volume having the Bittern coloured. This copy, which contains several other interesting notes, is now in the possession of Professor Corfield. "One of these birds from which the print was coloured was sent to me on November 14th, 1817, being shot in Sutton Pasture. It exactly accorded with the description."

very similar to that given with the Snipe. As Mr. Ruskin says, in his *St. George's Museum* copy of the *Birds*, when, as in these cases, Bewick felt he had done the birds very well, he usually went in enthusiastically for the backgrounds also. Of the five figures of the Godwits the merit varies considerably: the Spotted Redshank and the Redshank are fairly well done, though the spottiness of the birds detracts from the designs as pictures. The vignettes to them are as different as delightful: at page 82 there is a sportsman bringing down his bird, to which the dog runs; at page 84, the Pedlar and Mastiff design, with the man protecting himself from the ferocious brute; at page 85, a man crossing the frozen pond with a branch between his legs to save him from going down too far if the untried ice breaks, with the dog at the side afraid to venture over; a vagrant blowing a fire with wonderfully expressive face; and at page 90, another of the lovely feather series.

Of the Sandpipers there are eight magnificent examples, every one a perfect representation of the birds. The Reg-Legged Sandpiper is a very full design, and is perhaps the best; but nothing can exceed the delicate beauty of the Purre and the Little Stint. The vignettes to the series are the feathers reproduced at page 249; the Ungrateful Beggars leaving the gate open, letting in all the dirty-footed animals to soil the bleaching clothes; a Tyneside view; Bird-nesting on the old walls of Newcastle (as seen from Bewick's house at the Forth); the pastoral scene of the Old Shepherd reading while his flocks graze—either a Border bit, or a remembrance of the visit to Scotland; and the feathers, one of which is given in fac-simile at page 140.

The vignettes at this part of the volume are of greater interest than the birds. The cut of a man ploughing, with the words underneath, "*Justissima Tellus*," has a great deal of good work. Then comes the Beggar attacked by a mastiff, the man holding up his staff in the only way a dog can be kept at bay. A little farther on we have a burial-ground by moonlight, with a tombstone on which the inscription runs, "*Good times and Bad times and all times get over*," another of the character-making designs, bringing in a

motto, a saying, or a moral at the most unexpected moment. How true the sentiment of the words is, we all realise for ourselves: as we look back to things past, and remember the many delights we have had, and the many sorrows, we marvel how they seem to have passed so almost entirely away, leaving only a vague sense of pain or pleasure. At page 173, the penny-wise and pound-foolish owner of a cow is seen up to the waist in a running stream. In the distance a bridge crosses the water, but beside it stands a toll-house, and the payment there is what has caused the miserly man to risk life and limb. The cow has started for the other shore, and though its master would now fain turn back, the animal goes on regardless of the cries and gesticulations of the men on the other side who give warning of still further dangers. The man's hat has blown off, and he has laid hold of the cow's tail illustrating "the use of entailed property."

The engravings of the birds at this place are neither interesting from association nor specially fine in execution, and not until we reach the Black-backed Gull do we find one more than ordinarily good, though all have certain qualifications to make them noteworthy above other engravers' work. Of the tail-pieces, the wintry landscape at page 198 is one of the gems of the volume—the chilly feeling given by the snow spread on the ground and the bared trees makes a lovely little picture. At page 208 an old man stops his donkey to speak with a beggar; and the next, on page 211, is a satire on gourmands who did not, like Bewick's friend Gilbert Gray, eat only when hungry, and drink when dry. At page 220 an old man reads a lesson to a boy from an ancient stone standing in the midst of a civilisation of another age; while the next vignette gives a sarcastic touch concerning the water in which the washerwoman makes *clean* her clothes.

The Mute Swan, reproduced at the head of this chapter, is singularly rich in its composition, and though the water is not so reflective as it ought to be, the eye instinctively rests on the feathers and the foliage, wrought with all Bewick's grace and skill. At page 245 is a sketch of Wetherall Church

standing on a pinnacle overlooking the sea; a few gravestones surround it, and on one close to the foreground are the words, "This stone was erected to perpetuate the memory——" exhibiting the fallacy of human hopes, for the stone, which was to make the memory imperishable, is broken in two, and likely soon to be swallowed by the waves. Page 248 contains a vignette which might easily pass unnoticed. It appears as if it only represented a rock by the seashore; but, on looking closely, it will be seen to have the topmasts of a sunken ship a short distance from the shore. Half in the waves close at hand there is a sailor's hat thrown up by the treacherous waters. Yesterday it seethed and foamed around, and finally overwhelmed the vessel, perhaps within sight of home and harbour; to-day it encircles and almost fondles the only remnant which has come to land of the once-gallant ship now falling to pieces at the bottom of the sea.

The Monkey turning the roast with a *red-hot* poker, at page 263, is a capital print, giving the household appliances of Bewick's time. Farther on are two pretty vignettes—one a man crossing a falling stream by a plank on which he trembles; the other a man getting over a quiet water by a more precarious method, yet with considerable confidence in his manner. At page 271 is the cut of Geese going home, which Mr. Stephens says "is full of the fruits of study and knowledge laboriously and faithfully accumulated, and delineated with ineffable skill and delicacy." At page 286 an old man takes his geese to market on a bleak wintry day, the birds tied in sacks, and their heads protruding, and all laid on the back of the tired horse.

The large engravings of the Geese are all excellent, the backgrounds being frequently fine landscapes from nature. That in the Grey Lag Goose is a faithful drawing of a scene beside a frozen loch, and that behind the Tame Goose is a farmhouse—very like that which Bewick often drew. The Eider Duck is well engraved; and the Mallard is also one on which much labour was bestowed, but the most beautiful of all the birds is the Tame Duck, given in fac-simile as a heading to our Introduction. The care

and skill lavished on this little block are quite beyond praise. Few of the birds after this are of note, though the Shoveler, the Pochard, the Pintail Duck, and the Teal are all specimens of what is good and legitimate in wood engraving. The Tufted Duck was engraved by Henry Hole, and is one of the three, with the Whimbrel and Lesser Tern, mentioned in Atkinson's *Memoir* as not being Bewick's work. The vignette, at page 291, of an old woman driving geese away from a well, is, in Mr. Ruskin's *Sheffield volume*, sarcastically said to be "Bewick's idea of refined female character and features in advanced life," but containing so much splendid engraving work that "if any modern wood-cutter can do more I should like to see it." The next but one is the *Road to Glory*, where a number of boys are seated on gravestones. The first blows a trumpet, and the others are clothed fantastically in imitation of different kinds of warriors. "This," says the "*British Quarterly Review*" (vol. ii. 1845), "generally passes for mere 'burlesque of war,' but the sting goes deeper. Upon the highest stone, next the trumpeter, it will be seen that the artist has placed the well-dressed gentleman's son; the next to him is sans shoe or stocking, and the last is the quintessence of a poor little ragged urchin, probably destitute of father, mother, or friend, a true picture of the system of promotion in the British army at this hour."

At page 319 a sportsman, in reaching over a river for his bird, seems likely, from the breaking branch, to receive a ducking; at page 337 an old countryman leans smoking over a gate, beer-pot in hand, contemplating a couple of "quacks;" and farther on a woman administers the water-cure to a man with most woe-begone countenance. The print at page 370 was done as a book plate for the Rev. Henry Cotes, who revised the letterpress, but some misunderstanding arising concerning it, Bewick, who liked the cut, took away Cotes's name and employed it for a vignette: the first impressions of it are rare. The last of all is on page 400—a hull of a ship, containing wonderfully felicitous wood engraving of the strong, firm character so eminently Bewick's own.

The Old Man and his Ass. Hewlett's "Spelling Book."

CHAPTER XXI.

PRIVATE LIFE AND PUBLIC QUARRELS. 1798—1812.

FROM the 1st of January, 1798, the dissolution of the partnership between Bewick and Beilby took effect, but Beilby appears to have retained his interest in the *Quadrupeds* and the first volume of the *Birds* for some time. In 1800 Hodgson, the partner in the *Quadrupeds* to the extent of a third, died, and disputes arising between the other partners and Hodgson's widow, Beilby, "in order to avoid this cloud of mischief," retired from the partnership altogether, and sold Bewick his share in the *Quadrupeds* and the first volume of the *Birds*. Disagreements about money matters also arose, and in referring to the time when he purchased the shares from Beilby, Bewick says in his *Memoir*:—

"I had no sooner agreed to give the price demanded, than many recollections of the past crowded upon my mind, and, looking at the unfavourable side, I could not help thinking of the extra labour and time I had spent in the completion of these works, wherein he [Beilby] had borne comparatively a small part—not even an equivalent in time and labour in the other department of our business; and in this instance, I could not help thinking that he had suffered greediness to take possession of his mind; but having promised to pay the sum, I made no further observations to anyone."

Bewick, as we have seen, was considerably troubled by Beilby's defection at the critical time when the second volume of the *Birds* was still unfinished, yet he did not dismiss the long-established friendship without a word of regret, and he generously continues :—

“On the other side of this account, I called to my remembrance the many obligations I owed him for the wise admonitions he had given, and the example he had set me, while I was only a wild and giddy youth. These I never could forget, and they implanted so rooted a respect for him that I had grudged nothing I could do to promote his happiness.” *

In April, 1798, and during the following months, Bewick busied himself with new engravings for the *Quadrupeds*, and visited many neighbouring districts; Woodhall, Barmton, and Darlington being among the places to which he went to make sketches of animals. After the fourth (1800) edition of the *Quadrupeds* was published, his whole time was taken up in preparing the second volume of the *Birds*. Swarley's Club, however, he appears to have continued to visit, and there, “by way of unbending the mind after the labours of the day,” he and a number of “staunch advocates of the liberties of mankind” debated the great questions then agitating the whole world.

Bewick's children were now beginning to have a personality of their own, and we learn with what keen pleasure Bewick entered into their sports and pastimes, one of his greatest delights being to be present at any meeting of the younger folk, and be a witness of the enlivening dances in which they took part. “And when his own daughters aided the grace of the female part of the company, the circumstance gave additional zest to the natural feelings of the father.” †

Bewick had a quick ear for music, and he enjoyed listening to the strains

* Ralph Beilby, after separating from Bewick, became a watch-glass and clock-work manufacturer. In many ways Beilby was a clever man: his literary compositions and his engravings on metals have been noticed; he was also a great lover of music, and occasionally performed in public; he was one of the promoters of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle, still a flourishing institution, and he was always highly esteemed by his contemporaries. He died on January 4th, 1817, at the age of seventy-three.

† “British Quarterly Review,” 1845, vol. ii.

of the players as much as watching the dancers. His son was able to perform with some power on the "Northumberland small pipes," and the same reviewer relates that on occasions when his son piped and his daughters assisted in the dance, especially when the music and the figures were purely Northumbrian, "the rapture of the artist was at its height, and he would exclaim with almost tears of pleasure in his eyes: 'There they go—queens of England! queens of England!' The scene was indeed animating and the sight beautiful, and few, we suppose, could scruple to join Bewick in his exclamation, or fail to respect and love enthusiasm such as his, even when carried thus far." *

Solomon Hodgson, the partner of Beilby and Bewick in the publication of the *Quadrupeds*, and printer both of it and of the first volume of the *Birds*, died on April 4th, 1800, and, as mentioned, some serious difficulties arose during the succeeding years between Mrs. Hodgson, his widow, and Bewick. On the title-page of the "*History of Quadrupeds*" of 1790, 1791, 1792, and 1800 the imprint was "Printed by and for S. Hodgson, R. Beilby, and T. Bewick," while the first volume of the *Birds*, 1797, carries, "Printed by Sol. Hodgson for Beilby and Bewick." This shows at once that Hodgson's position was materially different in the two cases.†

During Hodgson's life affairs between Bewick and him were always conducted harmoniously, but the widow and executrix appears never to have been satisfied with the arrangements found existing, and in 1805 a violent explosion took place, the quarrel being carried on in public. The attack was too violent to be allowed by Bewick to pass unnoticed; but it drew such an interesting statement, in reply, from the engraver, that we have now no reason to regret the publicity given to the discussion.

The "*Annual Review*" for 1804 (p. 731) published an article giving Bewick the credit of having conceived and brought forth the *Quadrupeds* and *Birds*,

* "*British Quarterly Review*," 1845, vol. ii.

† The second volume of the *Birds*, 1804, bears, "Printed by Edward Walker for T. Bewick," and both volumes of the 1805, 1809, 1816, 1821, and 1826 editions are the same.

and, after mentioning the dissolution of partnership between Beilby and Bewick, proceeds to say :—

“We are sorry to learn from private information that an alliance so honourable to the parties and so beneficial to the public was dissolved upon not the most friendly terms. Mr. Bewick, we understand, has purchased Mr. Beilby’s interest in the concern, but, through a disagreement with the other partner or his executors, the first volume has for some time been out of print and is not likely to be republished. We cannot but consider this as a public loss.”

These remarks aroused the full strength of Mrs. Hodgson’s ire, who, though “*eminent for her integrity, benevolence, and intelligence,*” seems thoroughly to have lost her good temper, and she sent a letter to the editor, giving her view of the matter. This letter the editor did not insert or notice (he had the excuse that no letters were appearing in his publication), and Mrs. Hodgson forwarded it to the “*Monthly Magazine,*” where it was published. After referring to the article on Bewick’s works, and allowing that—

“It is the lot of all editors to be imposed on by correspondents at a distance,” she says she is prepared to send documents “by which you [the editor] will be convinced that Mr. Bewick was neither the original projector nor author of either the ‘*History of Quadrupeds*’ or of the first volume of the ‘*History of Birds*.’ Mr. Bewick,” she proceeds, “was employed merely as the engraver, or wood-cutter, and that he should be held up in the article now under consideration as the first and sole mover of the concern, together with the insidious use which has been made to me of your remarks on the subject, by a friend of Mr. Bewick’s, leave no doubt in my mind from what source you have had the communication. . . . My late husband paid his proportion, or share, of expense both to the person who compiled and arranged the letterpress of the work, or in other words, the author’s charge for his labours, as he did for the expense of the wood engravings—therefore, both equally belong to me. . . . I shall conclude with observing that I have used every endeavour in my power to have the ‘*History of Quadrupeds*’ put to press, and if the public has sustained a loss by the book having been so long out of print, I have the satisfaction to say I am not to blame.—(Signed) SARAH HODGSON, widow and executrix of Solomon Hodgson. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 16, 1805.”*

This is an essentially feminine letter: the composition of one unaccus-

* The “*Monthly Magazine,*” 1805, vol. xx., p. 5.

tomed to write for publicity, and carried away with the heat of her imagination. Poor Mr. Hodgson must have had a sad time with her if she were often so excited. Be that as it may, it was evidently the lady's notion that her husband was a greater and more eminent man than the "wood-cutter," Bewick. Mr. Hodgson had been, indeed, a clever editor and business man, and his widow was doubtless unwilling that all honour should not be rendered to him. Nevertheless, her argument is not worthy of serious consideration. That her husband paid his proportion of expense of the author's labours and the wood engravings is true; "therefore," she triumphantly asserts, "both equally belong to me." Certainly both equally belonged to her—in their proportion; but that she had a shadow of a claim on the whole was unquestionably absurd, for the words employed conclusively show that it was only a share Mr. Hodgson paid. It is possible that Mrs. Hodgson supposed the entire works to belong to her husband because she found receipts for the moneys nominally paid to Bewick and Beilby in settlement of their claims as engraver and compiler, just as Beilby and Bewick probably held receipts from Hodgson for his printing. This is only conjecture, but it was reasonable that the artist and author should have been first paid a sum for their work in the same way that Hodgson required something above his share of the profits to pay for the setting up and printing; and, from what Bewick says, it appears that such sums were actually arranged. Bewick's answer to the charge was a powerful letter repelling all the insinuations. After replying to a statement in Pinkerton's "Scottish Gallery," * he says:—

"In answer to Mrs. Hodgson, I may be allowed to ask if I was merely employed as the 'wood-cutter?' Who gave me the order and furnished the design? I

* Pinkerton, in the introduction to his "Scottish Gallery," 1799, refers to the death of Bewick's pupil, Robert Johnson, whom he had engaged to make copies of portraits at Taymouth Castle. He says, "His correspondent informed him that Johnson had been bound apprentice to Bewick," and "Bewick, observing his uncommon genius for drawing, employed him to trace the figures on the wood in his elegant 'History of Quadrupeds.'" This statement led Bewick to reply, at the beginning of the 1805 letter, "It is only necessary for me to declare, and this will be attested by my partner, Mr. Beilby, who compiled the 'History of Quadrupeds,' and was a proprietor of the work, that neither Robert Johnson, nor any person but myself, made the drawings, or traced or cut them on the wood."

challenge the publication of the documents she mentions. They can only prove that her late husband paid one-third part of the price of the engravings, and a similar compensation for compiling the book. Her property therein has never been denied by me, and therefore it was unnecessary for her to attack my character under the pretext of an 'Address to the Editor of the "Annual Review,"' for whose mistakes I am not answerable."

Then follows the paragraph quoted on page 94 under "Preparation for the Quadrupeds," where Bewick details the origin of that volume, and the work undertaken by Beilby. He goes on to say :—

"As the cuts [of the Quadrupeds] were engraved, we employed the late Mr. Thomas Angus, of this town, printer, to take off a certain number of impressions of each, many of which are still in my possession. At Mr. Angus's death the charge for this business was not made in his books, and at the request of his widow and ourselves, the late Mr. Solomon Hodgson fixed the price; and yet the widow and executrix of Mr. Hodgson asserts in your Magazine that I was merely employed as the engraver, or wood-cutter, (I suppose) by her husband! Had this been the case, is it probable that Mr. Hodgson would have had the cuts printed in any other office than his own? The fact is the reverse of Mrs. Hodgson's statement; and although I have never, either 'insidiously' or otherwise, used any means to cause the reviewers, or others, to hold me up as the 'first and sole mover of the concern,' I am now dragged forth by her to declare that *I am the man.*"

Bewick proceeds with the sentences quoted in detail at page 110, mentioning how Hodgson was consulted, and how, from his great interest in the undertaking, he was received into partnership with Beilby and himself on April 10th, 1790.

"What Mr. Hodgson did in correcting the press, beyond what falls to the duty of every printer, I know not; but I am certain that he was extremely desirous that it should have justice done it. In this *weaving of words* I did not interfere, as I believed it to be in hands much better than my own, only I took the liberty of blotting out whatever I knew not to be truth. This work was published in 1790. The History of Land Birds was begun 1791, and published in 1797, under circumstances exactly similar to the former work, excepting that Mr. Hodgson had no share, and was merely employed as the printer. The History of the Water Birds, from Mr. Beilby's declining [retiring from] the engraving business, devolved wholly upon myself. In undertaking this, the vanity of being an author never entered into

my mind ; there was no choice ; absolute necessity compelled me to ‘ write a book.’ In 1800 death deprived us of Mr. Solomon Hodgson, after he had printed four editions of the *Quadrupeds*, and the first volume of the *Birds*. With him we might have gone on peaceably to the end, but we soon found his ‘ widow and executrix ’ to be a very different person, and disputes without end were what we had to look to. In order to avoid this cloud of mischief Mr. Beilby sold me his share in the *Quadrupeds* and left me the publication of that book to do the best I could with my new associate. With our squabbles it would be impertinent to trouble the world ; they have been painful to me ; they have been with the widow of my deceased friend. By these disputes I was compelled to intrust the printing of the *Water Birds* to another office, where this kind of work had not previously been attended to, and consequently I had to run the hazard of an experiment which might have injured the reputation of the work. Fortunately this experiment succeeded, and this, I believe, is one motive for Mrs. Hodgson’s attack.—I am, Sir, &c., THOMAS BEWICK. Newcastle, October 8th, 1805.” *

This is one of the most interesting letters Bewick ever wrote, and gives us a better conception of the man’s aims and methods than is elsewhere to be found. The editor of the *Magazine* declined to allow further correspondence on the subject, and no more is heard publicly of the matter, but better counsels prevailed, and the publication of the fifth edition of the *Quadrupeds* took place on May 13th, 1807. This was, however, “ Printed by Ed. Walker for T. Bewick and S. Hodgson,” being a change in the imprint from the 1800 edition, which bears, “ Printed by and for S. Hodgson, R. Beilby, and T. Bewick.” The sixth edition (1811) was again different, and is, “ Printed by Edward Walker for T. Bewick and Longman,” etc. ; the 1820 and 1824 editions being the same as the 1811, as regards the proprietors’ names.

In an article in the *Newcastle Courant* for April 14th, 1881, which claims to have been written by one who knew Bewick personally, it is said that at the beginning of the century—

“ The business of engraver was thought highly genteel, and the country gentry were glad to apprentice their sons to a rising artist like Bewick. Some of these votaries of the graving tool had rather aristocratic notions—not having heard the

* The “*Monthly Magazine*,” 1805, vol. xx. p. 303.

grand lectures of our day on 'the dignity of labour.' They were expected, however, to take in their turn certain servile duties, which always fell to the lot of the last-comer. One of these was to go to the well-known 'pant' of 'The Two Sisters,' so called from its twin spouts, at the head of the Side. A pitcher stood in the shop from which the men refreshed themselves, and it had to be replenished at least once a day. A youth of the 'better class' of society having entered upon his novitiate was duly informed that he would be expected to act as water-carrier; but he stoutly refused to undertake what he deemed a degrading duty. Bewick heard of this dire revolt; but instead of administering a storm of rebuke, he donned his hat and coat, seized the obnoxious jug, and quickly desiring the youth to follow him, sallied forth to the 'pant.' The unusual sight was immediately the subject of gossip. Mary Jane told Sally, maid told mistress, and scores of gossips rushed out to see 'Bewick carrying the jug.' The news spread like wild-fire; and on the return of master with jug and apprentice without, the reason having leaked out of 'this strange eventful history,' the hapless lad was smothered with ridicule and reproach by groups of tittering women and girls. The lesson was not forgotten. It was the first and last time Bewick carried the water-jug past Amen Corner."

Among these pupils was Isaac Nicholson, who was, a fellow-apprentice afterwards said, "one of Bewick's cleverest scholars had his ambition corresponded with his taste." He achieved some distinction in his profession, and executed many cuts in the style of his master, illustrating works on Fables, Quadrupeds, Birds, History of England, Robinson Crusoe, and others. He died in 1848. Another of Bewick's favourite pupils, and the one who succeeded Nicholson, was William Harvey, who was born at Newcastle in 1796, and who entered the workshop about 1810. Harvey and a succeeding apprentice who joined shortly after him, W. W. Temple, were the scholars on whom Bewick afterwards leant for considerable aid. It is acknowledged in Bewick's Memoir that Harvey greatly assisted him with the cuts for the Fables, published in 1818. Harvey left Newcastle for London in 1817, and from that time was engaged in drawing and engraving many important works. Two years previously, in 1815, Bewick gave his much-esteemed apprentice a New Year's gift of a copy of the Birds, and with it a characteristic letter which is quoted in the "Treatise on Wood Engraving." This contains a small piece of personal history, for there is no doubt, however

Chatto may scoff, that the concluding sentence of the letter was written more with a keen remembrance of his personal experience than with a clear idea of his pupil's future course of life. "When your mind grows rich in integrity," he says, "you will fear the frowns of no man, and only smile at the plots and conspiracies which it is probable will be laid against you by envy, hatred, and malice."

On January 1st, 1812, the following advertisement appeared in the Newcastle papers:—

THOMAS BEWICK,

Engraver and Copperplate Printer, Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

RETURNS his grateful Thanks to his Friends and Customers for past Favours, and begs Leave to inform them, that he has taken his Son, ROBERT ELLIOT BEWICK, into Partnership. The Business will be carried on in all its Branches, under the Firm of THOMAS BEWICK & SON; and all Orders with which they may be favoured, will be punctually executed, in the best Manner, and on the lowest Terms.

An APPRENTICE wanted.

A few Imperial Copies of the History of Quadrupeds, Price 1l. 11s. 6d.; and Royal Copies of the History of British Birds, 2 Vols. 1l. 16s., remain for Sale.—Newcastle, Jan. 1, 1812.

Throughout the artist's writings we hear very little of his son Robert. He appears to have suffered from some serious complaint. In a letter dated 7th May, 1821, written by Thomas Bewick to Richard Wingate, it is said, "My son had another bad bout since I saw you; he was attacked with it on Friday after dinner, and it kept him in great misery till about midnight on Saturday or towards Sunday morning. It has left him very faint and weak."* Bewick did not think highly of his son's aptitude for engraving; and he closes one of the chapters in his Memoir with the words, "And now, when the time is fast approaching for my winding up all my labours, I may be allowed to name my own son and partner, whose time has been taken up with attending to all the branches of our business, and who, I trust, will not let wood engraving go down; and though he has not shown any partiality towards it, yet the talent is there, and I hope he will call it forth."

In the "Synopsis of the Newcastle Museum," published in 1827, there are

* From a letter in the possession of Admiral Mitford.

two engraved copper-plates by him, one of the Rakkelhan Grouse, after a drawing by Thomas, and the other of the Wombat (in a different position from that given in the *Quadrupeds*), but neither of these shows any artistic feeling. The Rev. Mr. Turner said that Robert possessed eminent talents as an engraver on wood, and that his "accuracy in delineation was, perhaps, equal to his father's;" but none of them are really of more than ordinary merit. As is mentioned farther on, Thomas Bewick was engaged on a work to be called "*A History of British Fishes*," and had completed a good number of the illustrations before his death in 1828. Commenting on this, Mr. Turner said, "It was hoped that his son would have gone on with and completed the work, but in this the public have been disappointed, and now that Mr. Yarrell's work is completed it possibly might not suit."

Mr. Jackson and his son Junius. "*The Looking Glass for the Mind*." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

This may have been the actual reason why the son did not proceed with this work, but it is much more probable, if we may judge from "*The Golden Chain*," published two years after Thomas Bewick's death, that dearth of talent and want of will were the real obstacles in young Bewick's progress.

"*The Golden Chain*" was published at Berwick, a little book, "embellished with cuts by Bewick." Any admirer of the father who purchases this

work, thinking it by the master, will be grievously disappointed. There are four blocks by Robert, and all are of the most elementary description. They are not much worse in execution than a few of Thomas Bewick's and some of John Bewick's early works; but there is a total lack of genius, or original feeling, that is almost amazing, especially considering the training Robert had, or at least might have had—for there is no evidence to show that he took advantage of his position. These cuts display how far the son halted after the father's genius. In all there is scarcely a redeeming quality, though, in a feeble way, the father's wonderful power of rendering foliage is imitated in certain parts of the designs. The best block that Robert did is the engraving of "Bewick's Swan," in the 1832 and 1847 editions of the *Birds*, this exhibiting some artistic power. The copper-plates of *Bywell Bay*, on the Tyne, a separately printed engraving, and the *Maigre*, in the 1862 *Memoir*, also contain much conscientious work; the seaside view at page 323 of the *Memoir* is likewise by Robert, and is one of his best productions.

After his father's death in 1828 Robert took charge of the business, publishing the 1832 and 1847 editions of the *Birds*. He died on July 27th, 1849, and was buried at Ovingham.

Edwin and Angelina. Goldsmith's *Poems*, 1812.

The Night Heron. "The History of British Birds," Vol. II.

CHAPTER XXII.

NEW EDITIONS OF QUADRUPEDS AND BIRDS—MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.

1805 TO 1811.

WE have now come to the turning-point in Bewick's artistic career. Hitherto every step he had taken had been one of progress; first, from a boy with rude implements, to an apprentice with every difficulty to be overcome by his own exertion and ingenuity; then, after mastering the technicalities of his art, to roam about for a time, and finally settle down to labour in his well-beloved Newcastle, satisfied that by steady application he could reach perfect workmanship, and assured by his inward power that when this was done, his genius would find full scope in following the dictates of Nature. He had been able to enter into the very soul of the subjects his pencil or graver depicted, reveal their inner meaning, and give freshness and life to what formerly was mere dry-as-dust research.

Having attained his highest artistic powers, faithfully expounded the message given him to deliver, and fulfilled and justified the reason of his being, he had now reached the time when he could not hope further to improve.

He was over fifty years of age; and though he had done his work well in days gone by, and could look back with serenity on what he had accomplished, the time had come when he could not surpass these labours. Age was gradually but surely creeping on him; his vigour was none the less, yet his hand did not make progress, but instead had begun slowly to lose its cunning; and though his knowledge of the world—animal and moral—never ceased to grow, nothing he did after the second volume of the *Birds* reached the great standard attained by that work; and, as years went by, it became more and more evident that his greatest achievements were in the past.

Bewick had no sooner published the second volume of the *Birds* than the speedy sale and increasing demand required another edition of the already popular work, so he issued a new edition of both volumes in 1805. One figure of a bird and seven vignettes, besides eleven diagrams to illustrate the new technical introduction, were added to the first volume. In the second volume only one new block was inserted—that of the Swan Goose at page 281. The addition to the first volume, the figure of the Grey Linnet, is an engraving showing little exceptional merit above the general quality of the others, but at the same time scarcely below it. Of the vignettes, the two dyers carrying a tub, at page 17, is new. Atkinson says these are portraits of two old men who belonged to Ovingham. They are conveying chamber-lye to the dye-house, and, as Atkinson mentions, “the olfactory organs of both are evidently affected by the pungent odour of their load.” The next new vignette, the Suicide (page 70), is a painful and suggestive idea; the contrast between the calm beauty of the natural scene and the distracting thoughts which only recently had filled the mind of the man now hanging dead, is immediately perceived, and leads to thoughts of stern truth and everlasting judgment. Ploughing, at page 173, is new, but feeble; while the other additions, a woman gathering flowers (page 211), and one seated in a bower (page 228), have much excellent work in the foliage, though the figures are somewhat weak. The closely wedged ring of rough men shown on page 312

is a company eagerly engaged either with a dog or a man fight, a sight then not uncommon in Northumberland. The last addition is the man on a donkey, at page 300 of the volume.

Bell states that no demy copies of the 1805 edition were printed; but the following letter proves that there were five hundred taken off. This letter appears to have been addressed to Messrs. Vernor, Hood, and Sharpe, with whom Bewick frequently had transactions of this nature: it is now in the possession of Mr. Crawford J. Pocock, of Brighton, who has kindly lent it for publication:—

“Newcastle 14 Sept. 1805. Gentlemen,—A new Edition consisting of 500 Sets of the British Birds, in two Volumes Demy, is now ready for delivery—shou’d you be disposed to buy any quantity of them, I will send them to you immediately—my terms are these—they must be packed and shipped at your expence and risk—and be paid for by a Bill @ 6 months, more or less according to the number ordered—and charged to me @ 9^s ½ Vol: in Boards the selling price is 12s. If these terms are agreeable to you be so good as to write to me as soon as convenient. The Imperials and Royals of the same work are now at press and will be finished in about 4 Months hence—Messrs. Longman & Co. names are printed on the Title as the publisher’s, but I do not mean, as I did before to confine the sale to them only. The good opinion I entertain of your House, as well as the obligations I owe it, induces me to give you this first offer. The Cuts you have had done, at the prices you named in your Letter amounts to £⁵/₈ 11^s. I will send you a Bill of particulars at a future opportunity—and in the meantime wou’d be obliged if out of this sum you wou’d be so good as to pay Mr. B. Lepard, Stationer Cov^t Garden £⁶/₁₁ 5^s which I owe him for paper and Cards and tell him the goods arrived yesterday. The sooner you can send me the designs you mention the better, as short and dark days are fast approaching and the difficulty of doing them well is thereby greatly increased—I am Gentlemen Yours most obed^t THOMAS BEWICK.”

The third edition of the Birds was issued in 1809, and it differs in several important points from the earlier editions. It was printed only on demy octavo paper, and the title-pages are marked Part I. and Part II. in place of Volumes I. and II. The volumes thus form one book, and are usually bound together. The type employed was smaller, and the pagination different, the ordinary pages being numbered in after the Contents and Introduction. The alteration of type making some changes, the vignettes are arranged on

another plan ; and as the figures do not always head the pages, as in the earlier volumes, the work is altogether less imposing in style. Notwithstanding these alterations, only three very insignificant new cuts are added, on pp. 294, 296, and 327, in the first Part. The paper employed for this edition, though much poorer in quality than any of the others, has produced impressions of the cuts more generally perfect than in later or earlier copies. Even the first edition does not always excel these, and the proofs published in 1825 are in many cases distinctly inferior, they having lost by insufficient pressure in printing many of the delicate parts of the blocks "lowered" according to Bewick's usual method. That this system was not always successful is evidenced by the varying impressions, for when the thick hard paper of many of the editions had not been sufficiently damped, the lowered parts are sometimes not taken at all. The 1809 edition, being of thin and slightly absorbent paper, was easily pressed into the minute parts of the blocks, and occasionally details are brought up in these prints which in others are only vaguely felt. An eminent naturalist and bird-stuffer in Newcastle, Richard Wingate, coloured a complete set of Bewick's Birds, spending many years over the task. The prints were of the 1805 edition, printed faint, so as to take colour. Of these exquisitely coloured proofs Bewick wrote, "I think there is in them a fidelity and a nearer approach to truth and nature than anything of the kind I ever saw."

On May 13th, 1807, the fifth edition of the *Quadrupeds* was advertised for sale. Of this edition none were printed on royal octavo, and for the imperial octavo and the demy octavo copies the prices were put up to £1 11s. 6d. and 13s. respectively. This edition contains only one new figure, that of the Musk Bull, p. 49, a cut almost exactly a reverse of one published on January 1st, 1794, in the eighteenth volume of "*The Bee*." Three new vignettes are introduced, viz. a Rainy Day, a Stag, and a Stage-coach, at pp. 65, 142, and 251. A letter, in the collection of Mr. Pocock, from Bewick to Messrs. Vernor, Hood, and Sharpe, dated

Newcastle, June 1, 1807, states that he had that day shipped two boxes containing copies of the *Quadrupeds* at the following prices: twelve imperial copies at £1 2s., £13 4s.; eighteen royal at 15s., £13 10s.; and fifty demy at 9s., £22 10s.; in all, £49 4s.; and Bewick goes on to state that he hopes they will arrive safely, and regrets he has not charged the London trade all the same price, but will do so in future.*

The sixth edition of the *Quadrupeds*, published in 1811, was printed only on demy octavo, and the price augmented to a guinea. The difference between this and the fifth edition is very slight, being only in the letterpress and arrangements of vignettes after p. 510, where a foot-note being inserted anent Short-eared Bats, the text is altered up to p. 520.

The Northumberland Life Boat at Tynemouth. From the original block.

The more valuable of Bewick's minor works published between 1805 and 1811 have now to be mentioned. Some are specially interesting, while others are disappointing from their meagreness and want of artistic

* Bell states that Bewick sold his share in this, the fifth (1807) edition to Longmans, taking his authority from a letter, fac-similed in his Catalogue, dated 22nd July, 1811, in which Bewick informs a firm (probably Vernor, Hood, and Sharpe) that "I have sold the whole of my share of the impression of the *Quadrupeds* to Messrs. Longmans and Co., excepting those copies which were subscribed for by you and some other of my London friends." In place of being the fifth edition that was thus disposed of, it appears much more likely to have been the sixth. This was published in 1811, and would therefore only recently have been subscribed. It is scarcely likely that Longmans would purchase a part of an edition of a work already four years old, and with a new edition just coming out. The 1811 volume also bears Longmans' name as one of the publishing firms, which the 1807 edition does not.

merit. Taking the more noteworthy in chronological order, we commence with "The Seasons," by Thomson (1805), which, according to the title, has "engravings on wood by Bewick from Thurston's designs." The blocks in this volume are quite different in workmanship from those in the *Birds*; they are so much like several of Bewick's pupils' work as to make it exceedingly doubtful if the master did more than superintend their execution. "The Holy Bible," 1806, is a thick folio volume with about fifty full-page copper-plate engravings, thirty-six signed "Engraved by Beilby and Bewick." Hugo says the plates do not increase the artist's reputation, but that is treating the large series of important plates rather shabbily. Out of thirty-six it may readily be believed that some at least are good, and indeed a few are of very great merit.

The third edition of the "Hive of Ancient and Modern Literature" was published in Newcastle in 1806, the second having appeared in 1799, and the first earlier (undated), about 1798. In this edition the cuts were increased to fourteen by Bewick, and nine by Clennell, together with tail-pieces by the latter. There is some distinction in the style of the two engravers' works. Clennell's are softer, more mannered, and perhaps more learned than Bewick's rugged and natural, yet far cleverer manner of work. "The Hermit of Warkworth," issued from Alnwick in 1806, contains ten engravings by Bewick; a few copies of the second edition, in 1807, were published on large paper; a London edition was also published in 1806 with Bewick's cuts, and another with blocks by Nesbit and Clennell, after Thurston.

The next book of importance to which Bewick contributed was "Burns's Poetical Works," with "engravings on wood by Bewick, from designs by Thurston," in two volumes, 1808. There are in all 54 woodcuts, 32 in the first volume and 22 in the second, but none are very favourable specimens of the engraver's works, and in these illustrations Bewick appears to have lost the greater part of the subtle charm of his earlier labours. The engravings which display something of the old magic are "Going Home," a

lovely block—when well printed—showing a man returning from market with his unladen donkey. “Tam o’ Shanter chased by the Witches” is fair, and the Cows on p. 30, the Fox Hunt at p. 85, and the Dog and Cat, p. 140, in the second volume, are excellent examples of Bewick’s best style at this period. At least three editions of these Poems, in two volumes, were published. The one described was issued by Catnach and Davison, Alnwick, and dated 1808, the first volume having pp. i—vii, 17—276, and the second pp. i—viii, 9—266. A similar edition with the same date, but with William Davison’s name only on the title, has in the first volume pp. 1—6, vii—xlii, 43—266, and in the second pp. i—viii, 9—270. Another edition was published later by W. Davison, probably in 1812, copies with the original boards bearing that date on the cover, the pages numbering in the first volume i—vii, i—xlii, 43—297, and in the second i—xii, 13—320, 1—26.

The partnership between Catnach and Davison lasted only from the end of 1807 until towards the close of 1808. There were a number of editions of Burns published from Alnwick between 1808 and 1840, some being issued in parts and sold at one shilling each. In all the pagination is very defective, and in the 1812 (?) edition there are a number of engravings additional to those in the 1808 volumes. Another and quite different edition appeared in 1828 in one volume, published by Davison, with twenty engravings, several being from the earlier editions.*

“The Repository of Select Literature,” 1808, contains few prints which had not previously appeared in other Alnwick publications. It is ludicrous to find, among several others, the cut which appears in Burns as the “Poet and Coila” doing duty as an illustration to the “Vision of Azidah” in the Repository, and the Burns block of “The Lammas Night” illustrating the meeting of Edwin and Ethelinde. Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress,” printed in Taunton by J. Poole, 1806, has six designs drawn by Thurston

* Davison in 1811 made a proposal to print a three-volume foolscap octavo edition of Burns’s Poems, with three copper-plates and eighteen woodcuts by Bewick, at the price of eighteen shillings, but the project was abandoned.

and engraved by Bewick. The "Treatise on Wood Engraving" tells us that Thurston, who died in 1821, was at first a copper-plate printer, and latterly a designer on wood. "He drew very beautifully, but his designs are too frequently deficient in natural character and feeling." This is to a certain extent true of the design now under notice, for none of the six in the "Pilgrim's Progress" are of the highest class; and besides, the engraving

Christiana passing the River. "Pilgrim's Progress," 1806.
From the original block lent by the Rev. Mr. Buckley.

bears evidence of other workmanship than Bewick's, though in the foliage parts now and again his hand is visible.

By the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Buckley three of the cuts are introduced into this volume, the impressions being taken from the original wood blocks. That of "Christian at the Wicket Gate," on p. 92, is the frontispiece; the one above represents "Christiana passing the River," the grace of Thurston's drapery drawing therein being specially observable; and on the next page is the design of Tender Conscience and Good Resolution at the Cave.

In 1809 a large series of small engravings, many by Bewick, illustrating Natural Histories of Quadrupeds, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, Serpents, and Insects, was published by Davison, Alnwick. There are in all 247, and many being representations of animals not elsewhere drawn by Bewick, the work is interesting. It is not difficult to be obtained, and is sometimes in one or two volumes, or in seven separate parts. The "General View of the Agriculture of Durham, 1810," by Bewick's friend Bailey, contains six engravings by Bewick, the best being the Durham Ox and Mr. Mason's Cow, two very carefully engraved animals, the execution clean and neat, the Ox being the better, while the foliage in both is good.

During the years 1805 to 1811 many interesting little books were published in York, Alnwick, and Newcastle, containing impressions from blocks by Bewick. The majority had been previously published, but there were also a number of books which contain minor prints by the engraver. The volumes are named in our list at the end.

Tender Conscience and Good Resolution. "Pilgrim's Progress," 1806.
From the original block lent by the Rev. Mr. Buckley.

The Ford. "The Poetical Works of Robert Ferguson," Vol. II.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE 1818 AND 1820 FABLES—PORTRAITS—MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.
1812 TO 1820.

IN 1812 Bewick went through a severe illness, which laid him aside for a considerable time. It was hardly expected that he would recover, but his strong constitution was proof against the disease, although it left him very feeble. His thoughts were busy when his limbs were idle, and he made up his mind, if strength returned to him, to proceed with engravings for a volume on the Fables of Æsop, a project of which, years before, he had often thought, but to begin it there had not been found an opportunity. "While I lay helpless, from weakness," he says, "and pined to a skeleton, without any hopes of recovery being entertained either by myself or any one else, I became, as it were, all mind and memory. . . . I could not help regretting that I had not published a book similar to Croxall's 'Æsop's Fables,' as I had always intended to do. I was extremely fond of that book; and as it had afforded me much pleasure, I thought, with better executed designs, it would impart the same kind of delight to others that I had experienced from attentively reading it." After his recovery he therefore went on with this work, but it was not until 1818 that it was published.

In 1812 the family removed from their house at the Forth, and went to reside

on the opposite bank of the river, in the place then called the Back Lane, now No. 19, West Street, in the township of Gateshead-on-Tyne. In those days this was a vastly different place from what it is in 1882. At the present time West Street is completely built round with dwellings and workshops, is fairly busy with traffic, often dingy from the smoke of neighbouring furnaces, and not at all a desirable place for an artist to live in. Seventy years ago, however, there were the verdant meadows of the Barney Close, with cultivated fields and a long stretch of pleasant country by the side of the water, and with the picturesque Windmill Hill close at hand, all forming an outlook at any time delightful, and at sunset peculiarly attractive. From the Back Lane Bewick's customary way to business was down the Bottle Bank to the bridge over the Tyne (now the Low Bridge), and up to his workshop in St. Nicholas's Churchyard through the Sand-hill, the Side, Dean Street, and the Churchyard Stairs. In all these places Bewick had friends and acquaintances, whom he either merely saluted and passed by, or stopped to have a gossip with about the topics of the day.

Bewick having now become a famous man, many of his admirers desired to possess his portrait. In 1798 there was published the weak copper-plate by T. A. Kidd, after a painting by Miss Kirkley, of "Thomas Bewick, Restorer of the Art of Engraving on Wood," previously described. J. Summerfield engraved a plate from a miniature by Murphy, painted about the beginning of the century, and published it on November 1st, 1815. The "Graphic Illustrator," 1834, gives an interesting letter, addressed to Summerfield, from Bewick, concerning this engraving, where he says, under date Newcastle, 3rd January, 1814 :—

"DEAR SIR,—I have just been with Mr. Busby, who informs me that he will pack up his parcel which is to contain this & the portrait of me, by Mr. Murphy, this Evening.—I fear the portrait of me, which he has in hand, will not be finished to send along with the other—but I don't know whether or not—he has, however, promised me to send you his remarks upon Mr. Murphy's, which he examined & compared with the Original—and considering the length of time it has been done

(12 or 13 years), he thinks it very like. I hope you will do it to please yourself, & that you will reap sufficient profit by it in the sale as a frontispiece to my Books. —Mr. Kidd's was so very unlike, that it was almost universally condemned by my London Friends, & of course fell into neglect. An eminent Bookbinder here, who bought Kidd's Plate, has, however, sold a great number of them. . . . I am Dear Sir with best wishes, yours, THOMAS BEWICK."

In 1816 Thomas Ranson, a pupil of Kidd, executed a fine plate in line of a portrait by Nicholson, Bewick's pupil. On October 25th, 1817, Colnaghi published the very excellent portrait of Bewick, engraved by John Burnett after James Ramsay, which was reprinted in Bell's Catalogue in 1851. In 1820 Nesbit's wood engraving of Bewick was issued, having been taken from a picture by Nicholson. It was used in the "Select Fables" of that date, together with reduced woodcuts of the four plates above named. A portrait, also by Nicholson, has been recently published as an etching, executed by one of the first of modern artists, Leopold Flameng. John Jackson drew two portraits of Bewick, both on wood, one of which was printed in Bell's Catalogue and the other in the "Treatise on Wood Engraving:" it is also to be found in this volume at page 162. Baily's bust, mentioned further on, was engraved in 1830, but the sculptor thought it "not like the cast from which it has been taken, nor like the great original." "Howitt's Journal," No. 38, 1846, has a woodcut, and Jardine's "Naturalist's Library" (Parrots volume), 1843, a small steel plate by Lizars. A full-length portrait by F. Bacon, after Ramsay (painted in 1823), was published in 1852, and used also in Hugo's folio volume, 1870, and in Mr. Pearson's large "Select Fables." This is a full-length portrait of the old man, and at once recalls the "better sort of gardener, or small farmer," to which Bewick has been likened. The original belongs to Mr. R. S. Newall, Ferndene, Gateshead.

The Frontispiece to our volume is from a plate engraved by Meyer after Ramsay, which has been kindly lent for use here by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

The other portraits in oil colour that exist of Bewick are the two head-size canvases by Ramsay, one in the artist's house at Gateshead, and the other

in the Literary and Philosophical Institution, Newcastle-on-Tyne. A cabinet full-length seated portrait of the engraver, painted by T. S. Good, of Sunderland, also belongs to Miss Bewick, and the water-colour by Nicholson (recently etched) is the property of Mr. T. Crawhall, Newcastle. Dr. Joly, Dublin, has two pencil portraits of Bewick, one by Ranson, the other by Meyer.*

On the visit of the Grand Duke Nicholas (afterwards the Emperor of Russia, against whom "General Février turned traitor"), in 1816, to Newcastle, Bewick was put on the list of notables, and on December 13th "he had the honour of laying before the Grand Duke some specimens of his skill in the art of engraving on wood," as the local papers said; "and of explaining the mode of execution, of which his Highness was pleased to express approbation."

In March, 1818, Bewick gave details of his method of preventing bank-note forgeries to Sir M. W. Ridley, at the time when a Parliamentary Commission was appointed to inquire into the great increase of false notes. In May Bewick further communicated with Ridley, asking him to lay his plans before the Commission. These were to print bank-note paper for the use of country banks with elaborate borders, which would be extremely difficult and very expensive to imitate; the Government to exact duties on the papers sold ready to be filled up, rather than to stamp those submitted by the bank. In September Bewick wrote to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, on the same subject, stating, besides, that almost any number could be printed from the blocks prepared by his method.

In 1819 Bewick received a letter from the Secretary to the Parliamentary Commission, in answer to his communication, in which he was told, "With regard to that part of your letter which relates to country banks, it does not appear to come within the limits of the Commissioners' duties, but rather to

* A Bewick admirer, residing in London, possesses a portrait in oil which he purchased as being a likeness of Bewick, after Good. The resemblance is very strong, but after careful inquiry the owner has not been able to ascertain the original proprietor or verify the artist's name.

belong to the directors of the Bank to make such arrangements as they may think proper with regard to it.”*

In the “*Repository of Arts*, 1822,” an account of Sir W. Congreve’s plan for the prevention of forgery is given, illustrated with three specimens of bank notes executed by Robert Branston. In this Congreve’s method of combining various printings in colour on one note, and his extensive employment of engine-turned engraving, are commented on. It also refers to the “great obligation which the country bankers, and indeed the country at large, owe to Sir William Congreve for the introduction of the coloured stamps in lieu of the common dry stamp used in stamping bank notes.” This statement drew forth a letter from Bewick which appeared in the “*Monthly Magazine*” for May, 1822. In this he protests against Congreve having all the merit of inventing inimitable bank notes, and refers to his communications with Sir M. W. Ridley and Sir Joseph Banks on the subject in 1818, and to a correspondence he had with Samuel Thornton, M.P., and Sir T. Frankland in 1801. He shows that he had long advocated something very similar to Congreve’s inventions, but admits that the engine-turning was not his idea.†

The “*Repository of Arts*,” in its June number of the same year, publishes a letter from R. Branston, the engraver, which warmly maintains Congreve’s right to be called the inventor of the notes previously published, and of two more given in the same number of the magazine. The writer lays stress on the fact that he was anxious “to undeceive a very worthy man, Mr. Bewick, of Newcastle,” whose letter had partly been copied in the newspapers, giving a colour to the matter not favourable to Congreve. Branston says he witnessed the progress of the invention for upwards of three years, and he believed Bewick would find himself mistaken in supposing that

* “*Monthly Magazine*,” May, 1822. The Parliamentary Commission presented their report on January 22nd, 1819, but it arrived at no definite conclusion.

† Sir W. Congreve was in the English travelling suite of the Grand Duke Nicholas, and doubtless saw Bewick in 1816.

Congreve's method was borrowed from him. "Mr. Bewick is indeed too good an artist," says Branston, "and too candid a man, after taking credit for the security of surface printing in one colour, which was his own proposition, not to admit it when combined with the additional difficulties arising from the perfect register of colour in the compound plate, which is the essence of Sir W. Congreve's plan." *

Bewick requested Congreve to say if the scheme were his own or Bewick's, but, as our engraver says in his Memoir, "neither Sir William nor any of the commissioners took any notice," excepting Branston's letter, which, "though it began very impudently, did not answer my letter at all. This I could not help treating with contempt; to enter into a paper war with such a person," Bewick continues, "I thought would be great folly." So, notwithstanding all his trouble, he did not gain anything by his exertions, and the project dropped. It must be admitted, however, that Bewick's plan was not nearly so complete for the prevention of forgery as that of Sir William Congreve, though Bewick's artistic skill and ingenuity displayed in the note engravings were very conspicuous.

The works published from 1813 to 1820 with new engravings by Bewick were not large in number, but are in several cases important publications. The "Poetical Works of Oliver Goldsmith," Alnwick, 1812, contain two vignettes in the body of the volume, and the block (printed here at p. 211) of Edwin and Angelina, from the *Hermit*, employed as a frontispiece. It has no very great merit beyond other contemporary work by Bewick. Marshall's "Epistles in Verse," 1812, contain a collection of woodcuts, each of which fills the quarto page. There are examples by Clennell, Nesbit, and others, and one by Bewick. The "Poetical Works of Robert Ferguson," Alnwick, 2 vols. 1814, contain in the first volume over twenty engravings, but, with the exception

* Bewick's notes were in one colour only, Congreve's in two or three. Branston promised in his letter to produce further evidence of Congreve's method, but does not appear to have done so.

of one or two of the tail-pieces, none are of much merit. The best are the resting traveller and the man and donkey, which were used in the editions of Burns's Poems; several of the others were also employed by Davison for various publications. The second volume contains about the same number of blocks, and of a better quality than those in the first. The three cows, the traveller amid rain, and the Ford are the best. The latter, printed on our page 221, is thus spoken of by *The Times* of January 3rd, 1882, when reviewing The Fine Art Society's "Bewick Notes:"—

"The back of the sturdy rider who is crossing the stream is turned towards us, and yet we are struck at once by the acquaintance with anatomy it displays. But there is far more in it than mere anatomical knowledge. The angles of the tucked-up thighs and the arms, the stoop of the shoulders, the set of the short back, the very creases in the clothes, as rendered in a line or two, all convey irresistibly the idea of a man who is concentrating his energies in avoiding being splashed, while the rock under the scraggy tree in the foreground, with the gate and wind-beaten bushes in the middle distance, makes a charming sketch of Northumbrian landscape."

The fourth edition of both volumes of the "History of British Birds" was published in 1816, being printed on demy octavo paper only, and in separate volumes. The only additional figures in the first volume are the Peregrine Falcon and the Pied Flycatcher. In the second volume the Eared Grebe is the only new one. The vignettes of the fowls under cover on a rainy day and the guillemots on the seashore are vigorously drawn, and rendered with much beauty in black and white.

The "History of Hartlepool," by Sir Cuthbert Sharp, 1816, contains a number of wood engravings stated, in a note in the work, to be by Bewick and Nicholson. They are principally coats of arms, seals, medals, and initial letters, with a few uninteresting views of old erections. The two largest represent a fisherman coming home from the sea, and a group of detached rocks at Hartlepool—an engraving, the text says, which "may convey a faint resemblance of their general appearance." The block given here, which is

printed for the first time, is a view of the same place, with a coat of arms placed on the central rock. This block was supplied by Bewick to Sir Cuthbert Sharp for the "*History of Hartlepool*," but, like one mentioned in the "*Bewick Collector*," p. 463, it was not printed. It is now the property of Mr. C. Hopper, Sunderland, who acquired it from Sir Cuthbert's housekeeper, and who has lent it for publication here.

In 1817 an association was formed in Newcastle in order to reprint the interesting and scarce tracts connected with the north of England. These were published from 1817 until 1845, and form an important series. Some contain several engravings by Bewick, but the majority were embellished only by a single block, which had been done for a private patron. There were six different ones employed: Adamson's, Brockett's, Fenwick's, Garrett's, Hodgson's, and Straker's. The "*Fisher's Garland*," from 1821 to 1845, was among this series, which altogether numbers nearly a hundred. In connection with the publication of one of these, which contains a copy of one of his designs, Bewick sent a letter to Charnley, which conveys a severe comment on the practice of copying another's work. The original letter is in the possession of Mr. Crawford J. Pocock, Brighton, who has given permission for its insertion here. It is dated Gateshead, May 22, 1826, and, after mentioning his illness that year, Bewick says:—

"While I was beset with grief and disease, Mrs. Roxby's pretty little '*Fisher's Garland*' was put into my hands, and this, as far as it went, threw in upon me its proportion of vexation. This I never expected from Mr. Charnley, whom I had fondly considered as my friend, and who ought to have known better than to get my design copied to embellish the little book. The copyright of every artist's design is secured to him by an express law, and the punishment for copying or imitating them is quick, short, and summary, both upon the person who employs an artist

and the artist himself who executes them. I trust you will see this in its proper light, and in future not attempt to act so improperly. I suppose Mr. Nicholson was the artist employed in this unfriendly business. If so, I shall be obliged to convince him of the impropriety of his conduct. He knows perfectly well how easy it is to make a fac-simile of any design on wood, and that an impression from any woodcut can, line by line, be transferred to a plain block, so that there is no difficulty in cutting the lines so distinctly thus burnished on. If I do not put a stop to this kind of work, then I may expect the next move will be to copy the Quadrupeds, Birds, and *tale* pieces, and every original design I have done."

This is one of the most forcible letters Bewick ever wrote, and the words "quick, short, and summary" comprehend a world of meaning in their brevity.

In 1817 a few copies (about twenty-five) of the Figures of the Land and Water Birds, with the Foreign Birds, were printed without the letterpress, and published at two guineas each quarto volume; and the same number of the Figures of the Quadrupeds and Vignettes was issued the following year.

"The Fables of Æsop, and others, with Designs on Wood by Thomas Bewick," 1818, were commenced under the circumstances narrated at the beginning of this chapter. Bewick acknowledges the assistance he received with the work from his son, and from his pupils, William Harvey and William Temple, "who were eager to do their utmost to forward me," says Bewick in his Memoir, "in the engraving business, and in my struggles to get the book ushered into the world."

The engravings are all different from those in the preceding volumes of Fables, neither is the letterpress the same, but both the text and the prints are similar in design to those in the 1784 edition. Some disappointment was felt on the publication of the work because it did not reach the exalted standard of the Birds. Nevertheless the engravings are wonderfully clever, and, as a matter of fact, received more actual expenditure of labour than did the Birds. It must be admitted, however, that what they gain in finish they lose in force; and, while we have refined and delicately manipulated designs,

we have engravings executed in a manner foreign to that by which Bewick made his name, and which are somewhat feelingless in character and feeble in workmanship. This sentiment of disappointment, nevertheless, has not been endorsed by succeeding critics; and though it is acknowledged that the engravings are not all Bewick's, yet the 1818 Fables are as eagerly sought after as the Quadrupeds or Birds. The tail-pieces in one or two cases are somewhat broad for a book devoted to leading "hundreds of young men into the paths of wisdom and rectitude," and materially "assisting the pulpit." The letterpress was either Bewick's own composition, or selected and prepared by him. The royal 8vo edition may be known from the demy 8vo (even if cut down) by the vignette on page xvi, which is an allegorical subject, the smaller paper copy having a demon there. A small number were printed on imperial 8vo paper. The following letter, in the possession of Prof. Corfield, who has kindly consented to its publication, gives additional interest to Bewick's work. It is dated Newcastle, 24th August, 1818, and is addressed to "Messrs. Tipper and Fry," paper merchants:—

"GENTLEMEN,—We want two quires of *Imperial paper the same as this $\frac{1}{4}$ sheet*, to finish the Book of Fables & the Press now waits for it. Mr. Hollingworth furnish^d the paper & I think we paid *you* for it, and how he or you happens not to know the kind we want, rather puzzles us. If Mr. H. could refer to his Books he w^d see both the kind, quality,* and quantity he sent us—should it happen that you cannot exactly match this—something near it, as you can, must be sent—for it is very disagreeable to stop the press to wait for it. We are well aware that this business is both of trifling import and troublesome to you but at present we do not need a greater quantity. We were quite disappointed at the contents of your letter rec^d to day—instead of the two quires of paper,—We are Gentlemen Your most obed^ts T. BEWICK & SON. P.S. please to observe it is not *plate paper* we want but *letterpress paper*." †

The seventh edition of the Quadrupeds was published in 1820, in

* Quality had been written in afterwards, so that "both" was at first correct.

† The letter is written by Thomas Bewick, who signs for the firm. The mistakes in spelling and grammar seem partly due to haste; and probably the annoyance of receiving a letter, instead of the paper for printing, also made Bewick less than ordinarily careful.

imperial, royal, and demy 8vo, at £2 2s., £1 11s. 6d., and £1 1s. respectively. In a newspaper advertisement of this, "T. Bewick begs leave to inform his friends, that the execution of this edition he conceives on the whole to be the best that has appeared, particularly the imperial, which nearly equals in size an ordinary quarto and only a small number is printed. T. B. has sold the principal part of the edition to Mr. Charnley, reserving to himself a few copies for his private sale amongst his friends, whose orders will be thankfully received." This edition is not materially different from the sixth (1811). With the exception of the cut at the end of the index, the volume is the same up to page 410; after this the order is changed slightly, the Beaver being placed before the Rats; the Musquash, a new cut and description, coming between these. The block of the Mouse, which was becoming worn and is really a poor example of Bewick's art, was replaced in 1820 by another, which, though more formal, is in some respects a better design, but the hardness in the outlines is a little objectionable.

The "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Luis de Camoens," the Portuguese poet, were published in 1820, and contain in the first volume four woodcuts: a coat of arms, two medals of Camoens, and a small design showing the pen and sword crowned with laurel. The medals were both cut by Bewick, the first giving a remarkably fine profile portrait of the poet. The other is in outline only, and was done altogether by Bewick himself. Adamson, the author, noticed that the thick stroke of the x in the word EXCVDI was reversed and made by the engraver to read X; he pointed out the error to Bewick, who, however, "coolly looking at the impression, and without being put out of his way, said, 'Well, Mr. Adamson, it's still an X.'"

In a letter relating to this, in the author's possession, Adamson says he has no complete recollection of the remark, but as he knows the X was shown to Bewick, he entertains little doubt the remark was made. In the second volume there are three engravings: a medallion portrait of Camoens, and two very coarse wood fac-similes of old heads of Portuguese

heroes.* In 1820 Bewick also engraved a block, $4\frac{1}{4}$ by 3 in., of the Setting Sun public-house, used in a small tract entitled "The Genteel Sabbath Breaker"—a scene more nearly allied to the art of Hogarth than any of Bewick's contemporary work, as it represents the effects of liquor in the most straightforward way.

Joseph Hawke

On August 3rd, 1820, a selection of the early works of the Bewicks was published, under the principal title of "Select Fables," being a reprint of the cuts in the 1784 Fables, but with different letterpress and arrangement, and with a short sketch of the lives of the engravers, and a brief catalogue of their works. It contains about three hundred and forty prints, some being among Thomas Bewick's earliest works, and others done just before publication. Some of the tail-pieces are by Nicholson. It was printed in demy 8vo, 15s.; with

Horace Walpole's Book-plate.

a few copies, royal 8vo, 21s.; imperial 8vo, 31s. 6d.; and twelve of the largest size, with India-paper proofs, £5 5s. The sizes being similar to the Birds and Quadrupeds, it forms an excellent companion to them, and the volume is altogether a desirable one. The Fable blocks were altered for this edition, and many of the ornamental borders taken away, thus somewhat spoiling

their effect. In Mr. Pearson's reprints, and in those printed in the early part of this volume, these have, as far as possible, been restored.

* 1820. Under this date there are in the British Museum a number of little pamphlets with engravings said to be by Bewick. They are miserable productions, and certainly not his, though a few are copied from his designs.

During many years Bewick executed a considerable number of book-plates, which form a brilliant series of engravings; they were mostly done for private gentlemen, and "being well paid for, were invariably excellently engraved." On June 26th, 1822, Bewick received £5 from R. E. Croker for one. Several have already been described: the later ones were:—"J. H. Affleck, Newcastle-on-Tyne," a copper-plate of a shield among flowers. A woodcut, with rock, foliage, and a distant view of Newcastle, done for William Armstrong, and afterwards altered, and used on the title-page of Bewick's *Memoir*, 1862. A view

of Strawberry Hill House, executed for the Honourable Horace Walpole, of which an impression is given opposite. A Hawk standing on rock was done for W. Hawks, and a similar bird alone, with the name in script, for Joseph Hawks, for which see previous page. Armorer Donkin's book-plate contains a beautifully varied cluster of foliage, and

J. W. Sanders's Book-plate.

Wm. Taylor's and John Stobart's (which are very like each other) contain excellent work. The woodcut done for J. W. Sanders (given here) is another fine engraving, and the copper-plate for "John Headlam, M.A.," reproduced on page 89, contains much characteristic work. John Adamson's cut—ruins—is among the very best of the series, and Brockett's—a doorway not unlike that in Jedburgh Abbey—W. Garret's (sometimes also used for a concert ticket), and Straker's cuts were all employed at different times to embellish the titles of the Newcastle reprints of 1817 and onwards. Bewick also did some excellent engravings on silver, several impressions from such work being in the British Museum collection.

From the original wood block executed by Bewick for Mozley, Gainsborough,
for a Spelling Book. Lent by Mr. Mozley, Derby.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LATER YEARS AND DEATH. 1821 TO 1828.

FOR the best descriptions of Bewick during his later years we have to look to accounts which have been left of visits paid to him by admirers attracted to Newcastle by the greatly extended fame of the engraver. J. E. Bowman and J. F. M. Dovaston visited him together in 1823 and in 1825, and Audubon, the naturalist, in 1827. All have left details of their visits, that of J. E. Bowman being partly inserted in our Appendix, from the highly interesting unpublished manuscript.

In August, 1823, Bewick visited Edinburgh in company with his daughter Jane. They started on the 11th, and remained a fortnight, Bewick finding time to make and renew previous acquaintance with many of the notables in the Scottish capital. It was during this visit to Edinburgh that Bewick executed the only lithographic design—the “Cadger’s Trot”—he ever produced. He appears to have been anxious to ascertain the capabilities of Senefelder’s recent discoveries. It was hurriedly drawn one morning before breakfast, and, as Bewick says in his Memoir, “the proofs were taken from it on the same day. In doing this,” he continues, “I could see what that manner of making prints was capable of.” Hugo’s story that Bewick drew the design to correct a man he saw drawing in Ballantyne and Robertson’s printing office is in direct contradiction to Bewick’s own statement, and is a very unlikely occurrence. Only a small number of these prints was taken, and the drawing was then washed off the stone. Bell gives the number as 20, Hugo at 25, and others have said 19 only. They are printed on paper of various tints; some are creamy white, others green, and others on a ruddy colour. The accompanying fac-simile is from one on creamy white paper in the possession of Professor Corfield, who kindly lent it for reproduction; the original has the name “Ballantyne and Robertson” in very minute characters at one side, but this has been purposely left out in the fac-simile.

On October 1st, 1823, Dovaston and Bowman saw Bewick for the first time, their visit being thus described in the “Magazine of Natural History,” vol. ii. page 317, 1829.

“We had been told that Bewick retired from his workshop on evenings to the Blue Bell in the Side, for the purpose of reading the news. To this place we repaired. . . . Bewick was sitting by the fire in a large elbow chair, smoking. He received us most kindly, and in a very few minutes we felt as old friends. He appeared a very large athletic man, then in his seventy-first year, with thick, bushy, black hair, retaining his sight so completely as to read aloud rapidly the smallest type of a newspaper. He was dressed in very plain clothes, but of good quality,

with large flaps to his waistcoat, grey woollen stockings, and large buckles. In his under lip he had a prodigious large quid of tobacco, and he leaned on a very thick oaken cudgel, which, I afterwards learned, he cut in the woods of Hawthornden. His broad, bright, and benevolent countenance, at one glance bespoke powerful intellect and unbounded good-will, with a very visible sparkle of merry wit. The discourse at first turned on politics (for the paper was in his hand), on which he at once openly avowed himself a warm Whig, but clearly without the slightest wish to provoke opposition. I at length succeeded in turning the conversation into the fields of natural history. . . . In many instances, though frequently succeeding to the broadest humour, his countenance and conversation assumed and emitted flashes and features of absolutely the highest sublimity."

In the summer of 1825 a project was put into tangible form of having a marble portrait bust of Bewick "executed by an eminent artist at the expense of his friends, to be placed in the Library Room" (then new) "of the Literary and Philosophical Society, as a testimony of respect to their distinguished townsman due to his high character and talent." A meeting was called on June 6th, and a resolution to the foregoing effect having been unanimously passed and the subscription limited to one guinea, "in order to give his numerous friends an opportunity of testifying their respect," it was arranged to ask Baily, the celebrated sculptor, to undertake the execution of the bust. Subscriptions were duly received, and Bewick having given his consent to the project, the next thing to consider was the costume in which he was to be taken. Baily proceeded to Newcastle from London, and proposed to put the usual loose garment round the shoulders. "Against this, however, Bewick at once rebelled: he was resolved," says the "British Quarterly Review," "if he must appear on earth after his death, to do so after the fashion of Hamlet's father, 'in his habit as he lived,' and from this resolution he would not budge. The toga was accordingly given up, and the artist was taken in his coat and waistcoat, not forgetting his neckcloth and ruffled shirt." The bust still remains in the Institution.

Early in 1826 the first break in Bewick's family circle took place, and when the newspapers announced, "At Gateshead, on Feb. 1, died, aged

W. C. C. 1858
24 Oct 1858
W. C. C. 1858

seventy-two, deeply and justly regretted, Isabella, wife of Mr. Thomas Bewick of this town, engraver," his heart must have been heavy indeed; while the nearness of death and the uncertainty of all things human would lead him to meditate on his own more than completed threescore years and ten—a time of life he as a younger man did not think he ever would reach. Bewick records that from their marriage day until the end no cloud, so far as concerned themselves, ever passed over them to obscure a lifetime of uninterrupted happiness. "My Bell," as he was in the habit of fondly calling her, "the best of wives and very best of mothers," died after a protracted and severe illness, and was buried beside her husband's kinsfolk in the churchyard of Ovingham.*

Not long after his wife's death Bewick was ordered to go to drink the waters at Buxton, as he was suffering severely from gout in the stomach, and he set out on the journey thither, with his daughters Jane and Isabella, at the end of May. Before starting he wrote a letter (now in the possession of Mr. C. J. Pocock) to Charnley, the bookseller, dated May 22nd, 1826, in which, after relating the cause of his approaching departure, he says, "I am aware of the heavy and at this time inconvenient expense this will bring upon me and am using every exertion to come at the means and enable me to meet it, and it is on this account that I now solicit payment of your Christmas account, which I hope it will be convenient to you to settle."

Dovaston, in the "*Magazine of Natural History*" for March, 1830, states that early in June, 1826 (misprinted 1827), Bewick wrote to him from Buxton, telling him of his visit, and Dovaston, a man of independent means and enthusiastic tendencies, at once started from his house at Shrewsbury for the same place. Dovaston relates his interviews with the old man and his daughters at their apartments, nearly opposite the Old Hall, and close to the famous Crescent. There Bewick sat at the window watching the people passing to and fro, and Dovaston says he drew caricatures of the

* As mentioned on p. 85, there is some doubt as to Mrs. Bewick's age.

most striking, while he discoursed on their probable histories and ailments.

We have a delightful sketch of Bewick the following year from Audubon, the American naturalist, who relates in his "Ornithological Biography" (vol. iii. page 300), that in April, 1827, he visited Bewick at his workshop.

"There," he says, "I met the old man, who, coming towards me, welcomed me with a hearty shake of the hand, and for a moment took off a cotton night-cap, somewhat soiled by the smoke of the pipe. He was a tall, stout man, with a large head, and with eyes placed farther apart than those of any man that I have ever seen: a perfect old Englishman, full of life, although seventy-four years of age, active and prompt in his labours. . . . The old gentleman and I stuck to each other, he talking of my drawings, I of his woodcuts. Now and then he would take off his cap, and draw up his grey worsted stockings to his nether clothes; but whenever our conversation became animated, the replaced cap was left sticking, as if by magic, to the hind part of his head, the neglected hose resumed their downward tendency, his fine eyes sparkled, and he delivered his sentiments with a freedom and vivacity which afforded me great pleasure. . . . I revisited him at 8 on the 16th April. The good gentleman, after breakfast, soon betook himself to his labours, and began to show me, as he laughingly said, how easy it was to cut on wood; but I soon saw that cutting wood in his style and manner was no joke, although it seemed to him so easy. His delicate and beautiful tools were all made by himself, and I may, with truth, say that his shop was the only artist's shop that I ever found perfectly clean and tidy. My opinion of this remarkable man is, that he was purely a son of nature, to whom alone he owed nearly all that characterized him as an artist and a man. Warm in his affections, of deep feeling, and possessed of a vigorous imagination, with correct and penetrating observation, he needed little extraneous aid to make him what he became, the first engraver on wood that England has produced."

The eighth and last published edition of the *Quadrupeds* appeared in 1824, in the same sizes and prices as the seventh (1820), of which it is almost a reprint. Up to page 514 the volumes are alike; the space then occupied, in 1820, by the vignette of the castle (as at page 426 of the first edition), is in 1824 filled by letterpress; and the cut of Sawyers, at page 520 of the seventh edition, being omitted in the eighth, everything falls back one page. Farther on the vignette in the *Addenda* of 1820 is also omitted, and by

transposing the position of the last two vignettes, the matter is compressed, and another page gained, there being thus a difference of two pages in the volumes, the 1824 being the smaller.

Of the *Birds* the fifth edition was published in 1821, containing the same engravings as the fourth (1816) edition. It was published in demy 8vo, £1 11s.; royal 8vo, £2 2s.; and in imperial 8vo, with the Supplement, £3 3s.

The Supplement was published separately, and in the above three sizes, at 6s., 8s., and 12s. The *Land Birds Supplement* contains in its 50 pages 21 figures of birds and 22 vignettes; the *Water Birds* 49 pages, with 21 figures and 18 vignettes. Several of the prints are fine, but many fall short of those in the first edition; the backgrounds are more mannered, and in several cases are sadly lacking in texture, while occasionally the bird seems unconnected with the remainder of the design. The finest are, among the *Land Birds*, the *Rough-Legged Falcon*, *Snowy Owl*, *Mountain Linnet*, *Lesser Field Lark*, *Spotted Flycatcher*, *Pratincole*, *Grey Plover*; and among the *Water Birds*, the *Little Bittern*, *Godwit*, *Pigmy Sandpiper*, *Young Kittiwake*, *Cravat Goose*. The vignettes in both parts are mostly feeble, the best being the *Water Spaniels*; and there is another version of "Waiting for Death." The fourteen foreign birds which appeared first in the 1800 volume of engravings of *Birds* are also introduced.

The sixth edition of both volumes of the *Birds* was published in 1826, in demy, royal, and imperial octavo. All the figures in the 1821 Supplement are incorporated, the British birds being inserted at their proper places throughout the book, thus greatly altering the appearance of the work. Besides these, there are thirteen new figures of birds added to the first volume, and twelve to the second. The *Girl Bunting* and the *Snow Bunting* are the finest of these additions in the first volume; but the *Black Woodpecker*, the *Bee Eater*, the *Carrion Crow*, and the *Ash-coloured Falcon* are not good. In the second volume the *Forked-tailed Petrel* and the *Red Phalarope* are poor, while the *Little White Heron* is a carefully finished print.

A further addition to the 1826 volumes was made in the form of Addenda, consisting of fourteen figures in all, four belonging to the first volume. The best of these are the *Anthus Richardi* (Lark), the Blue-throated Robin, the Night Warbler, the Great Snipe, the Selninger Sandpiper, and the Wood Sandpiper. The figure inserted in the body of the 1826 volume as a Woodchat is given in 1832 and 1847 as the Female Red-backed Shrike, while the Woodchat of the Addenda (quite different) is repeated as such in the body of the two later editions. The Harlequin Duck and the Cream-coloured Courser, the last of the birds Bewick engraved, show a decided lack of half-tints, with an evident endeavour to obtain tone by black left solid in the background. The Harlequin Duck does not seem to have satisfied Bewick, as in a letter dated Sept. 27, 1827, Robert, writing to Wingate, states that his father thought the stuffed figure bad, and the plumage in parts dishevelled. A still further addition to the 1826 edition was made in the form of a one-leaf "Additamenta," containing an engraving of an Alpine Vulture from a drawing made by Miss Julia Trevelyan.*

Bewick never forgot his desire to outrival the book of "Three Hundred Animals," as we find him, at the end of 1824, returning to the project of adding another work to the scheme of the Quadrupeds and Birds. At that time he issued the following prospectus:—" 'A History of British Fishes,' the figures engraved on wood by T. Bewick and Son. The work is intended to be put to press in 1826, and to be printed on imperial, royal, and demy papers, to match the 'Histories of Quadrupeds and British Birds' and the Fables of Æsop. Subscriptions received by T. Bewick and Son and by all booksellers." This prospectus was adorned with a specimen of the fishes and one of the vignettes, sometimes the John Dory, the Ballan Wrasse, the Dace, the Samlet, or the Lump Sucker. Although these prospectuses were extensively circulated, there does not appear to have been any large number

* A long correspondence relating to this block is to be found in the Transactions of the Newcastle Natural History Society for 1878.

of subscriptions received, this being probably because of the uncertainty that was felt of the work ever being published.

The Appendix to Bewick's Memoir states that, in conjunction with his son, Bewick commenced the "History of British Fishes," and for this there were prepared sixteen figures of fishes on wood and one by Robert on copper, together with about fifty vignettes. The work never was completed, and the figures of the fishes were published for the first and only time in the 1862 Memoir. Thirty-one of the vignettes were also printed in the same volume, and "about twenty" appeared in the 1847 edition of the Birds. At page 286 of the Memoir is the last vignette Bewick did, being a view of Cherryburn, with a funeral procession descending to a boat awaiting to take it across the Tyne to Ovingham. It was anticipated that Robert Bewick, after his father's death, would proceed with the work, but probably from the difficulty of obtaining good pictorial representations, as well as from the absence of the master mind, the whole project was abandoned.

In 1822 a copper-plate of Ryton Church was engraved for the Rector, and signed T. Bewick and Son. It is very carefully done, and is in execution one of the finest of Bewick's smaller plates. A large plate was executed about the same time, and signed in a similar way, for the Newcastle Grand Lodge announcements. In the following year Bewick made a design which he called "The Border Wars of 1823," a wood engraving of $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, representing two boys relieving themselves in a natural (but quite Bewickian) manner, and deriving pleasure from the contest they are engaged in.

The design on page 243 was engraved for the Waltonian Club, for a small volume, "On the Pleasure and Utility of Angling, 1824," being a paper by W. A. Mitchell. Dovaston's Poems, 1825, contain a signed engraving of a frozen river with a man skating, who is looking round, and does not observe that a monkey has made a hole with a hatchet in the ice where he approaches: another of the many instances of Bewick's

fondness for portraying people in trouble. "Vignettes by Thomas Bewick," 1827, in quarto and octavo, contain nearly all the vignettes engraved for the *Quadrupeds* and the various editions of the *Birds*. The octavo edition forms one of the most attractive of all Bewick's publications. "The Synopsis of the Newcastle Museum" contains two woodcuts by Bewick and two plates by his son Robert, as well as a quantity of letters and information of which free use has been made by the author of this work.

A favourite speculation with Bewick, first suggested by Papillon in 1768,

The Magpie. From the "History of British Birds," Vol. I. 1797.

was that by means of printing one block over another, much more finish, colour, and softness could be obtained than by the ordinary method of single-block printing. In order to demonstrate that the method of double and treble printing was practicable, Bewick prepared a block from which he took an impression, which he proposed to engrave so as to fit exactly over the other, and by different arrangements of its lines add to the depth and variety of the first. The subject of this block was a vignette of a man riding amidst rain. It was printed on the title of the quarto volume of *Quadrupeds*

cuts published in 1824, and on page 5, vol. i. of the 1847 Birds. Hugo, in the "Bewick Collector" (page 256), gives some details of the first experiments with it, stating that Bewick exclaimed, when assured of the success of the process, "Would that I had been but twenty years younger!"

The large block which Bewick afterwards prepared to further prove the practicability of the method is called "Waiting for Death,"* being a representation of a wretched old horse, past all labour, and was intended to illustrate a carefully compiled address on cruelty to animals, calculated "to

Newcastle Waltonian Club. From "On the Pleasure and Utility of Angling," by W. A. Mitchell.

improve at once the taste and morals of the lower classes, particularly in the country," and the whole dedicated to the Society for the Prevention of

* In the first volume of the Birds (1797) Bewick introduced a horse in the background of the Magpie "Waiting for Death," of which a fac-simile is given opposite. To this Atkinson attaches a story of Bewick's childhood:—"A neighbour [at Cherryburn] wanted a horse to go to Newburn with, and borrowed an old favourite of Bewick's father under strict promise of good usage: he neglected the condition and overworked the horse, which died soon after, and Bewick used to step aside in going to school to see and shed a tear over the old horse."

The Magpie block underwent considerable alteration. In the fac-simile given there are two black branches in the foreground. It was printed thus in the 1797 edition. In the 1798 impression (with "engraven" on the title, and 1797 as date) there is only one branch. In the 1800 publication of the cuts of the Birds alone it has again one branch. But in the 1804 (really 1805), 1805, and subsequent editions the whole dark mass is taken away, it having been reduced on the wood to a light foreground, to correspond with the remainder of the design.

Cruelty to Animals. The size of the block was the largest Bewick engraved, measuring $11\frac{11}{16}$ by $8\frac{3}{4}$; and this was made by joining four pieces together, and in order to prevent a like accident to what happened to the Chillingham Bull, he had it bound with transverse layers of mahogany. On this the preliminary design was engraved, giving the forms without tints; the second and third blocks (never proceeded with) were to be exactly fitting, and to give the light and shade of a finished engraving. The unpleasant flat appearance that the first block has is thus explained.

Bewick laboured at this engraving up to within a very few days of his death in 1828. It was only the Saturday previous to his decease that he himself carried the block to Walker, the printer, and had four impressions on vellum taken off. One of these is now in the British Museum collection.

It is scarcely fair to the artist to criticize the engraving, it being so unfinished. There is no question that it would have answered the purpose for which it was prepared, namely, of arousing pity for and sympathy with a faithful horse in its old age; but there is much question if it can be looked on as a work of art, even if it were completely finished. The landscape, as usual with Bewick, has the elements of success in this its first stage; and the feeling of chilled misery is represented with something more than potentiality. But the central point in the design, the horse, to which everything else ought to be subordinate, is, in reality, the weakest part of the whole, and the head is out of all proportion with the remainder of the animal. When making the drawing, Bewick had some difficulty in satisfying himself with the eyes of the horse, and Atkinson mentions that he tried to make one on paper, but after repeated endeavours, resulting in what Atkinson thought considerable success, "he declared he must want to copy one from nature." The head is said to have been finished by another engraver in 1832 (when it was published by Robert Bewick at 5s. a copy); but the error in drawing the head was fundamental, and could not easily be exaggerated by another artist. At the same

time it is to be noted that the undue largeness of the head is rather accentuated than otherwise by the wasted condition of the body.

The Old Horse stands "Waiting for Death," without shelter, amid a heavy shower of rain, on a cold autumn afternoon. Beside it is a broken tree trunk, shattered, and falling to pieces, a wreck like the animal of which it is an emblem. To the right the ground slopes downwards to a farm, where the stacks stand piled for the fast-approaching winter; but a fence and wall prevent the Old Horse reaching the protection to be found there; and the

Waiting for Death. Vignette in the "Looking Glass for the Mind." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

whole design is cold, pitiless, and depressing. The reproduction, because of its reduced size, renders it less miserable—and is therefore, in one sense, more pleasing—than the large block.*

In October, 1828, a paragraph appeared in several newspapers stating that—

"The celebrated Bewick, whose engravings on wood some years ago excited so much admiration, and which are considered even yet extraordinary specimens of art, is still alive and in good health at the age of ninety. He a short time since paid a visit to the metropolis, when, to the great gratification of the venerable old man, a number of the engravers on wood waited on him to express the esteem in which they held his works, and to converse with him on subjects connected with the art. He is, we understand, still in the habit of working for an hour a day at his old occupation, although his past labours enable him to live in perfect comfort and independence."

* The original is now the property of Mr. Gow, of Cambo, Newcastle, and from it a number of excellent copies have been taken, and are sold, together with the appeal written by Bewick so long before as 1785, the year in which the Quadrupeds were commenced. It describes a horse which, after having been well cared for and happy, is at the last reduced to disregard, discomfort, and utter misery. (This appeal is also given at length in Bewick's *Memoir*, p. 330; Hugo's "Bewick Collector," p. 476; and in Bell's *Catalogue*, p. 65.) Together with this account there is an impression given from a copper-plate, which is said to be the artist's first conception of the design. The dying or dead horse is also, as previously noted, in the background to the *Magpie*. It appears again at p. 198 of Lawrence's book on the Horse (1809), and also at p. 338 of the 1818 *Fables*. It was also employed by John Bewick in the "Looking Glass for the Mind," as shown in the above cut.

This, it will at once be seen, is not altogether correct; he was at the time seventy-five years of age, and not in the best of health, while he sometimes wrought three or four hours a day at his profession. Otherwise the notice is fairly accurate, as late in the summer of 1828 he visited London, with his daughters Jane and Isabella, about some of his publications. He was invited at that time to attend a public dinner to be given in his honour by the principal engravers; but though he was strongly pressed, he felt unable to accept the invitation. Yet the motive of his artistic brethren could not have failed to touch the heart of the old man.

Nothing, however, appears to have interested him in the strong way he appreciated things in his earlier years. "He had ceased to feel an interest," Chatto tells us, "in objects which formerly afforded him great pleasure, for when his old friend, William Bulmer, drove him round the Regent's Park, he declined to alight for the purpose of visiting the collection of animals in the gardens of the Zoological Society." Dovaston, however, relates that Bewick wrote him "several very humorous letters on the utterly artificial life of the Cockneys; with the mass of whom, since he was among them half-a-century before, he thought the march of intellect had not equalled the march of impudence." And Audubon also mentions that Bewick visited him in London during the same year, and he thought he looked as well as when he had seen him in Newcastle in 1827.

Bewick, on his return to Newcastle, busied himself with the experiment of printing exemplified in the "Waiting for Death." The following letter, written at this period (in his daughter's hand, but signed by Bewick), and now printed for the first time, is one of the most interesting that has been published:—

"Newcastle, Nov. 1, 1828.

"Mr. Pickering, D^r to Thomas Bewick.

"Nov. 1. To 12 Supts [Supplements to Birds] Royal in sheets 5/1 £^{s.} 1^{d.}₃—

"D^r SIR—With this you will receive the above which hope you will find quite right. I have taken the liberty of enclosing a small package, and shall be much obliged if

you will forward the accompanying note by the two penny post. I am sorry I cannot perform my promise of sending you a few more prospectus's, but will take an early opportunity of sending you something instead which I hope you will do me the favour to accept.

"When I had the pleasure of seeing you, you mentioned your having an intention of sending to the Continent for some Vellum of excellent quality : as I should very much wish to have some of it I will be glad if you will let me know if you can supply me, & the price. I have now nearly finished a large Wood-Cut (12 inches by 9) & it would be very desirable to have a few printed upon vellum. I am Dr Sir Your obliged & ob^d, THOMAS BEWICK. Gateshead, Newcastle, Nov. 1, 1828."*

It will be observed that this letter possesses a most pathetic interest, from the fact that it was written on the day he took the "Waiting for Death" to be proved, and that in a week from its date the writer had passed over to the majority. The hands that had scarcely been idle since 1767, when he began his apprenticeship, were in these few days folded together at rest, and for the last time. There is nothing in the letter but hopeful looking forward to the duties in which he had been so long engaged ; anxiety to send his correspondent "something which I hope you will do me the favour to accept ;" and tidings of what he considered his great undertaking, the engraving on different blocks of the Old Horse "Waiting for Death."

Thomas Bewick died at half-past one o'clock on the morning of the 8th November, 1828, being at the time seventy-five years of age. On the Saturday (the date of the letter inserted above) he had, as stated, taken the "Waiting for Death" block to be proved ; on the Sunday he became unwell, on the Monday he was worse, and he gradually sank, though he remained to the end "in full possession of his fine and powerful mental faculties in quiet and cheerful resignation" until he died.† He was buried beside his wife, "My Bell," his brother, sister, and parents, at Ovingham, on Thursday, the 13th,

* On the outside is the address, "Mr. W. Pickering." The letter is now in the possession of Professor Corfield, and for the use of it here, as well as for other assistance, the author is greatly obliged. The communication is entirely in handwriting, and not on an engraved bill-head, although the invoice statement commences it. The price noted is interesting, showing the sum Bewick charged to the trade.

† Davoston, in the *Magazine of Natural History*, vol. iii. p. 104, 1830.

and his funeral was attended by many old friends to the quiet country churchyard in the midst of the scenery which, as a man, he loved so well, and as an artist had depicted so often.*

The stone on the wall of the church only records the date of his birth and death, but inside the chancel there is a tablet which contains the following:—"In Memory of THOMAS BEWICK, whose genius restored the art of engraving on wood. The most perfect specimens of his skill are shown in his 'History of Quadrupeds' and 'British Birds.' Born at Cherryburn, Eltringham, August 12, 1753. Died at Gateshead, November 8, 1828. Also of ISABELLA, his wife, born August 12, 1752, died February 1, 1826. Also of ROBERT ELLIOT BEWICK, their only son. Born August 26, 1788, died July 27, 1849. Also of ELIZABETH BEWICK, their daughter, born March 7, 1793, died April 27, 1865."

* "This spot, which will now for ever form the most noted one in the churchyard of Ovingham, was obligingly granted to the Bewick family by the lay patron, C. W. Biggs, Esq., and they were allowed by him after Bewick's death to enclose it."—*Howitt's Journal*, vol. ii. p. 180, September 18th, 1846.

Bewick's Grave, Ovingham.

From a vignette in the "History of British Birds," Vol. II.

CHAPTER XXV.

WATER-COLOUR DRAWINGS.

THE collection of Bewick's water-colour drawings exhibited in The Fine Art Society's rooms, New Bond Street, London, during November and December, 1880, gave the public an opportunity for the first time of seeing the original conceptions of most of the engravings in the volumes of the Birds as well as in other publications. This exhibition was more than ordinarily successful, and drew large numbers of Bewick's admirers to examine its contents. As a designer and engraver Bewick had long been known, but very few were aware of his high attainments as a water-colour painter.

In the early part of 1882 all the drawings exhibited in the 1880 exhibition were presented to the British nation by Miss Isabella Bewick, and they are now deposited in the British Museum, where they are accessible to visitors. It is a curious fact—one, indeed, which led to The Fine Art Society's exhibition—that little or no notice has been taken by any writer on Bewick's works of his wonderful facility as a water-colour painter. Of his capacity as a draughtsman, a designer, a humorist, and a moralist we have continual mention, but as a painter scarcely once by any one. Hugo makes note of several drawings he possessed, but he has little to say about them; the Chillingham Bull, the Birds, and the Quadrupeds call forth many

observations in the "Bewick Collector," but the drawings do so only in the slightest way. This oversight becomes the more extraordinary when we see the exquisite colour and careful manipulation of the Birds, with the wondrous beauty of their plumage, the absolutely correct yet free drawing of other details, and the breadth of the landscape vignettes. And our wonder at the neglect blends into enthusiasm when we recollect at what an early date these drawings were done. "Turner, when a young man," Mr. Hamerton tells us, "did little more than repeat what had been done before by other topographical draughtsmen, applying a traditional method to new subjects." But here we find Bewick at a contemporary time (1791 to 1804) executing drawings in water-colours that are perfect marvels of freshness and beauty, and breadth and purity of tone; drawings of simple truths from nature made without straining after effect; pictures complete in every sense, taken from the feathered flocks or from the ordinary landscape; effects and studies each one a perfect gem in itself. This, be it remembered, not only in the careful outline of the subject, but also in the colour. In comparing them with modern work, they, from their age, appear weak; but in many instances this is no disadvantage, as it only lends additional delicacy to drawings whose chief merits lie in the tenderness of their execution.*

The greater number of the drawings in the collection in the British Museum are of the Birds, the Quadrupeds being scarcely represented. The reason of this appears to be that, in many cases of his early designs, Bewick never had a sketch on paper at all, but drew them at once on the wood. Or it may be that he did not think them of sufficient value to be kept, and either destroyed them or gave them away to friends. Mr. J. W. Ford, of Enfield, exhibited nine pencil and nine water-colour drawings by Bewick at the

* In the "Treatise on Wood Engraving" Chatto asserts that many of the vignettes in the Birds, especially those in the second volume, were neither designed nor engraved by Bewick; but it is difficult to believe that the drawings are not all by the same artist, as their manipulation is so nearly identical. The whole matter is gone into in detail in the Treatise, to which the reader is referred, but it should be borne in mind that none of the draughtsmen or engravers there mentioned were able to produce similar subjects of equal merit when they had not Bewick's mind to inspire them.

1880 exhibition, and Mr. Edward Ford, of Old Park, at the same time lent a frame of sketches, containing seven water-colour and three pencil drawings, among them the Hungry Ewe and the Neglectful Nurse, both from the 1791 Quadrupeds. Hugo had ten drawings in his collection, one being by John Bewick, and this small number in the most extensive Bewick collector's possession proves the great difficulty there is in obtaining an example of Bewick's powers as a water-colour painter. Prof. Corfield possesses an exquisite sketch of the Turkey, the tail-pieces at pages 42 and 285 of the first volume of the Birds, drawn in pencil on vellum, a rough sketch of foliage, and a number of heads of minute size in a small note-book formerly in the collection of E. J. Jupp, to whom Miss Jane Bewick presented them in 1869. These are in pencil, and are mostly portraits, one being marked Cicero and another Frederick the Great. They bear a strong resemblance to several of the drawings in the British Museum.

Together with the drawings mentioned as having been exhibited in 1880, the graving tools referred to at page 26, and the eye-glass employed by Bewick while at work, were shown. The eye-glass was only an acquisition of Bewick's later years. Atkinson says, "In his younger days he could finish one of his Bird blocks, if not accompanied with much foliage, in a day, or sometimes in a few hours. At a later period, though still possessed of excellent eyesight, he could not work so unremittingly. . . . At one period of his life he injured by over-exertion one of the nerves of the eye, and it was almost feared at the time that he would never fully recover his strength; happily, however, he did."

In the exhibition there were also a number of Bewick's finest engravings: the Chillingham Bull, vellum proof, from Miss Bewick's collection, and fine editions of the Birds, Quadrupeds, Select Fables, the Chase, and others. Many newspapers * made detailed comments on the collection, and from these

* *Academy*, Nov. 20; *Athenæum*, Nov. 6; *Art Journal*, January, 1881; *Builder*, Nov. 20; *Field*, Nov. 20; *Illustrated News*, Nov. 13; *Madras Mail*, Dec. 16; *Manchester Guardian*, Nov. 10; *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Nov. 9; *Northern Echo*, Nov. 5; *St. James's Gazette*, Nov. 11; *The Times*, Nov. 12th, 1880.

we may trace much of the lively interest that has been recently displayed in the works of Bewick. About thirty of Bewick's blocks were also printed in the room, these lending an additional interest to the exhibition: the prints were afterwards bound up in a quarto book. At the close of the exhibition, the drawings having been returned, the following letter was received by Mr. Marcus Huish, through whose instrumentality the exhibition was organized, from Miss Isabella Bewick, which bears witness to the interest she and her elder sister, Miss Jane, who was then alive, took in the project:—

"Gateshead, January 28th, 1881. Mr. Huish. Sir,—I have the pleasure to inform you that we have received our *Treasures* all safe, and consequently we are *very busy*. My sister joins me in thanks to you for all the trouble you have taken, and I am, with the greatest respect, Yours truly, ISABELLA BEWICK."

Besides the drawings there are in the Museum about 2,620 proofs of wood and copper engravings taken from the blocks and plates executed by Thomas Bewick. The Birds and the Quadrupeds, and their vignettes, the 1818 *Æsop Fables*, the woodcuts for the unpublished *History of Fishes*, the *Tommy Trip*, 1776 *Fables*, and many others are included in the collection. The original designs and the finished engravings being thus brought together, visitors can examine them with more than ordinary interest. The spirit of the artist can be distinctly traced therein by noting the little additions here and there in the engraving, which in black and white bring out the subject more completely. The collection comprises also the "Waiting for Death," the "Kylloe Ox," Pidcock's four large animals, and a great number of small engravings extracted from books. There are also impressions from several of Bewick's engravings on silver, a large woodcut (14½ by 5 inches) of the York, Hull, and Newcastle Mail Coach, and many of the proofs of the Quadrupeds coloured by the engraver himself. In order to obtain a thorough insight into the large quantity, the fine quality, and the immense variety of Bewick's work and the extent of his genius, it is only necessary to pay a visit to the Bewick Collection in the British Museum.

Bella and the Poor Stranger, Marian. "The Looking Glass for the Mind." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HINTS TO BEWICK COLLECTORS—BEWICK BOOKS SINCE 1828.

AS in the case of many works of genius, especially in the world of art, it is difficult for many people at the first to appreciate the worth of Bewick's engravings. Some are disappointed that they are not more "important," both in size and subject; others think they are not so good as much work that is commonly performed for our modern illustrated papers; while others prefer etchings, or engravings, or any other of the methods invented to reproduce works of art. It is only after some acquaintance with the wealth of Bewick's invention, the accuracy of his delineations, the beauty of his compositions, and the other innumerable attractions of his works, that the strength of his power is understood. When this acquaintance has been prolonged—and to do so is worth some trouble, when the repayment is so rich—then his master-hand cannot fail to be recognised, his talent appreciated, his humour understood, and his genius applauded; while the intelligent observer forthwith becomes a "Bewick Collector." Some collectors may delight in objects containing more superficial picturesqueness, and others

may prefer articles of greater cost ; but to those who desire works of art for their intrinsic as well as their relative value, for genuineness of feeling and wide range of subject, few things could be chosen capable of affording a more delightful pastime than the formation of a representative collection of the copper-plate and wood engravings executed by Thomas and John Bewick.

The "History of British Birds" is the work which, of all others, ought to hold the first place in a collection of Thomas Bewick's works. Details of the usually accepted eight editions are given at their proper places throughout this volume ; and there are also the 1798 and 1804 editions of the first volume mentioned at page 191, both of which are in collectors' eyes quite distinct from the 1797 and 1805 publications. The editions of 1797 and 1804, on imperial octavo paper, are those most difficult to obtain, and are the most valuable ; and if, on page 285 of the first volume, the vignette bears no evidence of having been inked over, the collector may know he possesses one of the great rarities of Bewick's works. The differences of the Sea Eagle and the Magpie blocks, noted at page 184, ought also to be remembered. Any of the first six editions — 1797-1804, 1805, 1809, 1816, 1821, or 1826—are worth looking for, as they were all superintended by Bewick himself while passing through the press. The 1832 and 1847 editions, published after his death, are not so perfect. The 1826 edition is the most complete.

The "General History of Quadrupeds" (1790), also in eight editions, is the next in importance to the Birds, but the first edition is by no means the best, the second (1791) contains many improvements, the third (1792) is again better, while the fourth (1800) and the fifth (1807) contain all the best additions, and are usually well printed.

Proofs of the Birds and Quadrupeds, and of the Vignettes of both, were all published separately, without letterpress. These are valued because, having been more carefully printed, and with no type impressed on the other side, they display the genius and dexterity of the engraver to the best advantage. Sometimes, however, the impressions in the ordinary editions exceed in beauty

many so-called proofs. Bewick's blocks having been worked by hand, and "lowered" in the soft parts of the engravings, they vary considerably in their impressions. Therefore, though the chances are that the proof is really the better, it may and does occur in individual instances that the prints of the volumes possess greater brilliancy than the proofs. The Vignettes, published without text in book form in 1827, are usually lovely prints, while the Figures of Birds and Quadrupeds of 1824 are not particularly fine.

The several editions of the Fables are volumes containing much that is characteristic of Bewick. The 1776 "Select Fables," described at page 28, though Bewick is said to have denied being their author, contain many blocks that are undoubtedly his, and a proof of the Cat and the Sparrow (on our page 30) is in the Bewick Collection in the British Museum. This book it is now almost impossible to obtain. The 1784 edition of the same is altogether a superior work (see page 74), and is also rare. Several later editions of it have been published, all of which are worth possessing, especially the *édition de luxe* by Mr. Pearson mentioned in note at page 74. Gay's Fables, 1779 (see page 42), many times reprinted, contain the block of the Hound and the Huntsman, which marks an important passage in Bewick's history. The 1818 "Fables of Æsop" (see page 229), the last of Bewick's work in this way, make an elegant volume. The Poems of Goldsmith and Parnell, and the Chase, by W. Somervile, contain many excellent productions of both Thomas and John Bewick, as well as of Thomas's pupils. They are described at pages 152 and 155, and while these are indispensable for a good collection, they are fortunately not very difficult to find.

The following are other volumes possessing works full of attraction by Thomas Bewick:—Hutton's "Mensuration," described at page 25, contains the first cut Bewick did of St. Nicholas' steeple. "The Hieroglyphick Bible," noticed at page 58, has a number of interesting blocks, and "Tommy Trip's History of Birds and Beasts" (page 69) holds the earliest series of representations of animals by Bewick. The "Tour through Sweden" (page 87) has

specimens of Bewick's engraving on copper. The "Sportsman's Friend" (page 171), the "Hive of Modern Literature," and the 1806 Bible (page 217) include many fine examples of Bewick's work on wood and on copper, and are all worthy of honoured places in a collection. Hewlett's "Spelling Book" (page 170), and many of the York publications by Wilson and Spence, contain prints from Bewick blocks, a large number used again and again in different works. Burns's Poems, Ferguson's Poems, and the "Pilgrim's Progress," described at pages 217, 226, and 219, are examples of the later period of Bewick's art.

Of John Bewick's works the volumes most worth possessing are, besides the Goldsmith and Parnell and the "Chase," the "Emblems of Mortality" (p. 145), "Proverbs Exemplified," and "Proverbs in Verse" (p. 147), the "Progress of Man and Society," and the "Looking Glass for the Mind" (p. 148), and the "Blossoms of Morality" (p. 158).

The prints by Bewick published separately are more difficult to secure. The Chillingham Bull (see pp. 97-109), the Kyloe Ox (p. 90), and the Whitley Large Ox (p. 90), the large wood engravings of the Lion, the Elephant, the Tiger, and the Zebra (p. 174); the "Waiting for Death" (p. 243), and the "Cadger's Trot" (p. 235) have all their proper place in a collection. The book-plates for private gentlemen, and cuts for advertisements, shops, societies, race programmes, and kindred purposes, are almost all now difficult to find, as they have become much scattered; the principal have been mentioned, and their design, when important, described under the date when sent out from Bewick's workshop. The bank notes referred to at p. 173 have an interest attached to them beyond their beauty, or because of their being Bewick's work.

It is scarcely profitable to advise the collector to acquire original drawings, as there are none to be purchased except at rare intervals, when they obtain high prices. It is almost equally useless to try to give the monetary value of any of these works, as so much depends on the condition of the individual copy. Collectors, however, should remember that all fine

impressions are steadily increasing in price, and they will certainly go on becoming more valuable as the knowledge and appreciation of them extend.

The following prices were obtained at the sale of the Rev. Mr. Hugo's celebrated collection, which took place at Sotheby's Auction Rooms in August, 1877. It must be borne in mind, before accepting these as average values, that the sale took place at a dull season, that it was not largely advertised, and that the number of Bewick's works thrown on the market at once had the usual tendency to prevent high sums being offered.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Bewick's Wood Engravings. Fifteen large				Select Fables, 1820 (imperial 8vo) . . .	15	0	0
quarto volumes and one folio, containing a				" 1784 (choice), published at 1s. 9d. . .	2	14	0
complete collection of proof and early				Gay's Fables, 1779 and 1792 (two copies), pub-			
copies of Bewick's works (purchased by				lished at 1s. 9d. each . . .	2	10	0
Dr. Joly, Dublin) . . .	155	0	0	Ancient Popular Poetry, 1791 . . .	0	17	0
Birds, 1797—1804 (p. 285 inked) . . .	4	12	0	Bewick's Memoir, 1862 . . .	0	10	6
" " (royal 8vo, no advt.) . . .	3	3	0	" " (with auto-receipt) . . .	1	11	0
" " (demy 8vo, advt. of 3rd				Bewick Collector and Supplement (imp. 8vo) . . .	1	13	0
Quadrupeds in first vol.) . . .	4	10	0	Bewick's Woodcuts, Hugo, folio . . .	1	3	0
" 1798 (dated 1797) and 1804, imp. 8vo				Consett's Tour, 1789, 4to . . .	0	14	0
(advt. of 4th Quadrupeds in first vol.)	38	0	0	Emblems of Mortality (tall copy), 1789 . . .	1	18	0
" 1826 (imp. 8vo, with all additions) . . .	7	0	0	Fabliaux, royal 8vo, 1796—1800 . . .	0	16	0
" 1847 (selected copy) . . .	2	2	0	Hermit of Warkworth, 1807 (1.p.) . . .	0	17	0
" Proofs of Figures and Vignettes (earliest,				Hive of Modern Literature, first ed., 8s.; third	0	9	0
on cartridge) . . .	16	16	0	Hutton's Mensuration, 4to, 1770 . . .	0	3	6
" Proofs of Land Birds and Vignettes,				Looking Glass for the Mind, 7th ed., tree calf	0	13	0
1800 . . .	2	8	0	Lottery Book, 1771 . . .	0	19	0
" Proofs of Water Birds (rare), 1807 . . .	7	0	0	New Invented Horn Book (Saint) . . .	1	0	0
" Supplement, imp. 8vo, 1826 . . .	5	0	0	New Year's Gift, 1777 . . .	0	10	0
" Addenda, imp. 8vo . . .	2	9	0	The Sportsman's Friend . . .	0	9	0
Quadrupeds, 1790 (stained) . . .	2	2	0	Tommy Trip, cuts only, 1779 . . .	1	4	0
" 1820 (imp. 8vo) . . .	4	15	0	Vicar of Wakefield, Hereford, 1798 . . .	1	8	0
" Proofs on India . . .	4	8	0	The Kylloe Ox, 6s.; do. with large margin . . .	1	1	0
Vignettes, 4to, 1827 (perfect) . . .	13	15	0	Lion, Tiger, Elephant, and Zebra (parch-			
" 8vo, 1827 (office paper) . . .	5	10	0	ment) . . .	5	0	0
Fables of Æsop, 1818 (imp. 8vo) . . .	17	17	0	Whitley Large Ox, 6s.; do. with large margin	0	11	0

BEWICK BOOKS PUBLISHED SINCE 1828.

After Bewick's death in 1828, there were two editions of the "History of British Birds" published, one in May, 1832, and the other in 1847. Neither of these is so well printed as the earlier copies, the paper is not so sympa-

thetic, and the want of careful supervision is very apparent. No new Birds were added in either of the 1832 volumes, but the titles of some were changed, as, for instance, the Brown Starling of 1826 becomes the Young Starling in 1832. The fourteen foreign birds are at the end, as in the 1800, 1826, and 1847 publications. Several changes are made among the vignettes in the 1832 edition, eight which appeared in the first volume of 1826 being taken away in 1832, and eight others added in different places. In the second volume ten vignettes are taken away, but no new ones are added.

The last edition of the Birds, 1847, contains only one new figure of a bird more than those of 1826 and 1832. This is a representation by Robert Bewick of Bewick's Swan, and is one of the best examples of the son's engraving. The bird was first observed as a distinct species in 1828, but there is some difference of opinion who was the first observer. Bewick's Swan is like the *Hooper*, but has a different trachea. "Its near affinity and close external resemblance to that species have, no doubt, occasioned it to be long confounded with it." The vignettes have "about twenty" additions to their number, being chiefly those executed for the unpublished "History of Fishes." Hancock's Synopsis, of thirty-six pages, is published for the first and only time in the 1847 edition. The number of birds in Volume I., 1847, is 170, being 156 British and 14 foreign birds, and 157 vignettes, besides the 12 explanatory cuts giving details of the different parts of birds. The second volume contains 150 figures of birds and 152 vignettes. The last edition of the Birds, it will thus be seen, differs in great degree from the original publication. The arrangement of the two works also varies considerably, many of the birds in the second volume being transferred to the first, and *vice versa*, the system made more in accordance with other authorities, and a great number of the titles of the birds altered in the last edition.

It is again and again repeated in various accounts of Bewick's career that the "Memoir of Thomas Bewick, written by himself," issued in 1862, was prepared during the latter years of his life. Dovaston and Bowman

mention it, and Turner, in the "Annual Biography," 1830, refers to it. It was written, it is said, to correct some statements which had been published, and extended to two thick quarto volumes. Turner says Bewick intended to accompany it with portraits of his early and particular friends, and with many engravings to be executed on wood. Of the numerous conjectures offered why the Memoir was kept back so long, the most probable is "that it was so replete with personal allusions that it could not see the light of day during the lifetime of his contemporaries." But in the way the volume was ultimately published it is quite certain that none of the "personal allusions" could give offence, though it is possible that much material was cut out before publication. As a literary work, giving accurate and in many cases well-written descriptions of the scenes through which the author passed, certain parts of the Memoir are skilfully written. But as a biography the work is very deficient: there is a discontinuity and lack of sequence which is eminently unsatisfying to the reader, and can only be explained by the fact that it was written by an old man long after most of the incidents related had taken place; and besides, the work bears evidence of having been abridged. It is somewhat misleading, for instance, to find an event recorded several pages before another which happened previous to it; and it is disappointing to find the details so meagre on some of the most important points in the engraver's life—such as the Chillingham Bull incident, or the publication of the *Birds*. Hugo, in his preface—all too short—to the "Bewick Collector," after referring to the charming pictures of natural objects contained in the Memoir, continues:—

"But I hesitate not to say that, with regard to other parts of the volume, I should have been glad of some omissions. I fully appreciate the feeling of an affectionate and devoted daughter, which this most estimable lady ever was, regarding as sacred everything left behind him by an idolized and lamented father, and supposing the more minute account it possessed of his sentiments the more the world would admire and love him. But I think that most readers of the Memoir will agree with me in regretting that the chapters on religious and

political matters were not omitted. It is the artist life of Thomas Bewick which one desires to possess, not his opinions about subjects on which he was and could be no authority."

This sums up the defects of the volume very pithily, yet gently. Other critics have been harder, and one, although a friendly reviewer, in an article in a prominent Northern newspaper printed the day after the publication of the Memoir, feels himself called on to condemn one sentence as unworthy of the writer, and to wish "that some friendly hand had suppressed his lucubrations," or that the writer had not dwelt so much upon religious topics. The Memoir was published at the end of May, 1862, "in one volume, demy 8vo, embellished by numerous vignettes never before published, with an Appendix containing the finished cuts for the author's intended work on British Fishes; price 18s." It is a book which has constantly been referred to in this volume, and its fifty engravings have mostly been described.

It is not necessary to mention every one of the Bewick books published since 1828. The following are the most interesting, and every one ought to be in a complete collection of Bewick's works:—"Sketch of the Life and Works of the late Thomas Bewick," by G. C. Atkinson, published in the "Transactions of the Natural History Society of Newcastle" for 1831 (this, although short, contains one of the best sketches of Bewick's career); the "Gentleman's Magazine," vol. xcix., January and February, 1829; the "Annual Biography," vol. xiv., 1830; and Jardine's "Naturalist's Library," Edinburgh, 1843, where the volume on Parrots contains the Rev. Mr. Turner's Memoirs of Bewick, which are full of genial observations and interesting anecdotes. The "British Quarterly Review" for November, 1845, includes a remarkably brilliant article on Bewick, and "Howitt's Journal," September, 1846, has an equally pleasant account of him. Chatto and Jackson's "Treatise on Wood Engraving," 1839, 1861, and 1882, possesses an account of Bewick's works, with many authentic stories regarding their author, as well as giving a complete general survey of the Art of Engraving on Wood. Bell's Catalogue

of Works illustrated by Thomas and John Bewick, 1851, though far from exhaustive, contains much reliable information. The Rev. Mr. Hugo's "Bewick Collector" and Supplement, 1866-8, are, on the other hand, full-laden with practical knowledge, and with details which, though fragmentary, are judiciously given, and form a work indispensable to the collector. Hugo's folio of "Bewick's Woodcuts," with over two thousand impressions from blocks a great number undoubtedly Bewick's, is also a desirable volume.

In "Ariadne Florentina" Mr. Ruskin gives trenchant criticism on the engravings of Bewick, and goes straight to the root of their genius while he dwells on the untrained excellence of the designer's work. The last important Bewick book published was that issued in 1881 by The Fine Art Society, containing notes by Mr. F. G. Stephens, being vigorous yet more felicitous and sympathetic criticism of Bewick's labours than almost any that have been published.

William and Amelia and their friend Charlotte. "The Looking Glass for the Mind." From the original block engraved by John Bewick. Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

Travelling in the Snow. By Thomas Bewick. From the "Treatise on Wood Engraving," first edition, 1839.

"Oh, now that the genius of Bewick were mine,
 And the skill which he learn'd on the Banks of the Tyne !
 When the Muses might deal with me just as they chose,
 For I'd take my last leave, both of verse and of prose.
 What feats would I work with my magical hand !
 Book learning and books should be banished the land."

WORDSWORTH'S *Lyrical Ballads*.

CHAPTER XXVII.

GENERAL SURVEY—CHARACTER OF THOMAS BEWICK.

IN looking over the lengthy list of the engraved works of Thomas Bewick one cannot fail to be struck with the large amount of labour crowded into one life, long though it undoubtedly was. Subjects of almost every kind have been treated, many successfully, a very few unfortunately. Transparent moving water, portraiture, and the inexhaustible varieties of cloud form are among the latter ; but the real triumphs lie in the representations of birds and beasts ; of foliage ; of fishes ; of purely English landscapes ; and of expressive human figures ; anglers, sportsmen, old men and women, sturdy beggars, tired travellers, and playful children, all abounding in character such as no one but Bewick has been able to portray in black and white with boxwood and graver.

Thomas Bewick found Wood Engraving in such a condition as hardly to deserve the appellation of Art, but he left it very much in the position we possess it at the present time. Changes we have had since his day—

whether all are improvements is another question—notably in the method of fac-simile engraving leaving “the black line,” and in cross hatching, styles Bewick never completely mastered; but one of the finest engravers of the present day, Mr. J. W. Linton, keeps steadily to the legitimate path of wood engraving “with the white line,”* a method which will certainly conquer, and in the end reign supreme for the production of artistic work, although this is yet far off, and the monotonous American style must first succumb.

Such a change, achieved mainly by one man, stamps Bewick at once as a genius and an extraordinary character, one of the reforming and redirecting minds of the human family. And it is to be observed with profound emphasis, that this reforming tendency was not only in his art, but also most strongly in the sentiment and teaching of the subjects his pencil and graver depicted. As a reviver of wood engraving he claims our attention, but as a reformer and satirical commentator on man’s ways of working he demands and retains our fullest consideration. We learn from him how hollow is the fame of the battle-field by the children astride the gravestones, and the old comrades greeting each other after many days’ separation. He tells us that “good times, and bad times, and all times get over,” and strengthens our belief that “*Vanitas Vanitatum omnia Vanitas*” by a strongly sketched vignette. It is true Bewick had an almost unaccountable preference to depict people who had fallen into trouble, such as the End of Evil Men, the Children and the Runaway Horse, the Mad Dog, the Nymph at the Well, or the different unfortunate sportsmen. This certainly was a blemish, but only of a minor kind.† It is seldom, indeed, that Bewick appears to have actually rejoiced in

* See Linton’s marvellous wood engraving, a head after Titian, in Hamerton’s “Graphic Arts,” 1882.

† Another and more serious defect is the occasional indelicate tail-pieces in the three large works. One subscriber is said (“Bewick Collector,” p. 325), on account of these prints, to have returned the Birds, “as an improper book, where it shows nature rather too plainly.” This, probably, was affectation, as the value of the books is scarcely impaired by the designs; yet it has often been felt that if they could be cut out (like Mr. Ruskin’s Sheffield copy), the work would be improved. At the same time, the humour and artistic merit in many are undeniable, and the temper of the age Bewick lived in quite sanctioned their insertion.

his labours, as so many of his works are tinged with a slight melancholy. He seems to have felt like a man fully aware of his position, and not to be caught doing anything beneath his dignity. Therefore we never find him expounding through his designs, except in a solemn and laboured way, as if overpowered with the responsibility of his task.

With regard to Bewick's personal character, he was a man full of affection for those who had proved themselves his friends, but apt to have a strong dislike for those who had done anything to make him consider them his enemies; the former feeling having, at the same time, always the greater influence. He was a man naturally formed for high and noble actions, though now and then his impetuosity led him into positions difficult to justify—occasions so rare as to leave no blemish that cannot readily be overlooked. It has been sometimes said that Bewick was niggardly in his dealings, and in several instances there is some ground for the assertion. Yet, as we may learn by his Will in the Appendix, he did not die by any means rich. Sixty years of arduous labour in the higher walks of art and of teaching were not heavily recompensed by the two thousand pounds sterling accumulated at his death. In pecuniary matters Bewick was entirely influenced by anxiety to provide for those of his own house, and not at all by any miserly desire to hoard. If occasionally “near,” he was oftener liberal, and when the cause was good he could bestow with an unstinted hand.

Bewick's personal appearance—tall, well formed, and healthy—more like a small farmer than a competent artist—has been several times referred to. His language in conversation was plain and forcible, while at the same time it “exhibited much of that quaintness and shrewd insight into character which so eminently distinguishes the tail-pieces.” He was seldom to be found in mixed company, but preferred the society of his children, or the gossipings of his old and tried friends from his own country-side, to what he thought the insipidities of more cultivated people. He was purely English in most of

his tastes and ideas, and cared little for things which did not affect his life or his art. In religious matters he was an earnest Christian, and a member of the Church of England, while he considered that "every man should be welcome to follow his own opinions" on this all-important subject. "Paradise," he said, "was of every man's own making; all evil caused by the abuse of free-will; happiness equally distributed, and in every one's reach." "Oh!" he said, "this is a bonny world as God made it; but man makes a pack-horse of Providence."

In this quiet, brave, and earnest spirit Thomas Bewick lived and died. The few small controversies of his life throw no shade on his character, and whether as a son, a husband, a father, a friend, or a citizen, there was nothing in his career on which a favourable verdict cannot be pronounced. His works have been spoken of at great length in this volume, and his position in Art—both in his own peculiar branch and in relation to Art generally—has been indicated. With many men of genius, history has to overlook faults of life or character, and to keep alive only their public works as subjects of admiration. But the biographer who can point to his hero as not only great in accomplishments and intellect, but as "wearing the white flower of a blameless life," has a pleasant task throughout, and this gratification must belong to all who dwell in detail on the Life and Works of Thomas Bewick.

Caroline; or, a Lesson to Cure Vanity. From the "Looking Glass for the Mind."
Lent by Messrs. Griffith and Farran.

APPENDIX.

NOTES ON A VISIT TO THOMAS BEWICK IN 1825.

FROM "A Tour through the Hebrides, Highlands, and Lowlands of Scotland. Drawn from the travelling notes of J. F. M. Dovaston and J. E. Bowman, with comments and observations by the latter."—*Extracted from an unpublished manuscript in two volumes.**

VOL. II. pp. 304—307.—"Friday, 12th August [1825].—We rose early and put ourselves into trim to walk up to Gateshead to breakfast, intending to devote the whole of the day to our kind and worthy friend Bewick. When we reached his house, the family had breakfasted, though yet scarcely eight o'clock; but a second table was quickly spread before us, and our meal was heightened by the conversation of our cheerful host. He told us it was his birthday, having now attained seventy-two. . . . When the tide and effusion of heart at meeting had somewhat subsided, we settled down into calmer delight. His bright daughter, Jane, showed us many boxes filled with blocks, principally *tale*-pieces for his new work on Fishes, many of which were unsoiled by ink, having never had even a proof impression struck off. As far as could be judged, these are all equal, some of them superior, to anything he has already published, and are full of incident and humour. He told us his inventive faculty and ardour were still as vigorous as ever, though his eyes began to fail, so that he was restricted from working more than two or three hours at a time, and altogether by candle-light; but that his bodily health was generally good. He is indefatigable in the sedulous employment of his time, and occupies himself as closely, either in engraving or writing, as is consistent with a due regard to his health, knowing, as he says, that his span of life cannot be much longer extended. Thus he often sits

* The manuscript is in the possession of Henry Bowman, Esq., of Brockham, Surrey, and for the use of it the author is indebted to the kind services of W. Bowman, Esq., Clifford Street, London.

"There is a vein of generous enthusiasm—a glow of friendship—a halo of the finest feelings of our nature throughout and around Dovaston's Memoir, which has the sincerity and singleness of heart of A FRIEND."—*The Mirror*, vol. xx. 1832, p. 18.

at work at a small table after dinner, while his friends are drinking wine, and enjoys their conversation whilst cutting his blocks. And if he goes from home, as he sometimes does, to Tynemouth, for the benefit of the sea-breezes, he takes his tools and work with him. He says his chief delight is in throwing off subjects of fancy for his *tale*-pieces. He does the birds, &c., more as a task, but is relieved by working the scenery and background; and after each figure he flies to cut an ornamental tail-piece with avidity; for in the inventive faculty his imagination revels. It has been supposed by many, and publicly asserted by a few, that he does not write his works, but is wholly and solely employed on the designs: to this we had his positive contradiction; and, in addition to the *Memoir* about to be named, which we saw in his own manuscript, Dovaston saw him draw up the accounts of several of the Birds; and not only does he write his own language, but (judging from his Prefaces) I think his talent in that department is not surpassed even by the other effusions of his genius. His son engraves the Fishes for his new work, and Bewick says he does them admirably, and is very intent upon them; but, from what we saw of him, though modest and ingenious, I fear he does not inherit the brilliant talent and imaginative genius of his father. His eldest daughter, Jane, is a very superior woman, animated, intelligent, and gentle: she is mistress of her father's house, which she conducts with such silent and easy management that everything is done, as it were, by magic, without bustle or disturbance. She also corrects the press for his works, and attends to the getting of them up; writes his letters of business, and superintends the arrangements of the workshops. He calls her his right hand, as, indeed, she truly is; and she, in her turn, almost adores, in affection and ceaseless attention to his comforts, the virtues and talents of her excellent father."

VOL. II. pp. 313—326.—"After dinner our friend read to us large portions of a thick quarto volume of his own Memoirs, which he had drawn up at the request of his daughter Jane, but which will not be printed till after his death. His countenance would often become animated and beam with benevolence when he touched upon passages relative to scenes of his early life, which he stopped to explain or illustrate. Dovaston, who remained behind, and spent six days with him after I had left, read the whole volume. . . ."

After detailing what is known of Bewick's early life the manuscript continues:—"He was frequently sent out among the braes of Tyneside to cut birch rods; and in these truant hours of sunshine he would loiter along the river banks, watching the sand martins hovering like butterflies about the precipitous promontories, or the speckled trout sporting among the flies that streaked the dimpling waters beneath; and in these delicious moments nature was busy depositing in his fine and fertile mind those seeds that have since produced such a plenitude of rich blossoms and wholesome fruits. His first tendency to drawing was noticed by his chalking the floors and grave-stones with all manner of fantastic figures, and by sketching the outline of any well-known character of the village, dogs, horses, &c., which were instantly recognised as faithful portraits. . . . In consequence of his propensity to drawing, some liberal people, of whom he says there are many in Newcastle, got him bound apprentice to a Mr. Beilby, an engraver in copper and brass. . . . His infant genius was bound down by his master to cut clock-faces and door-knockers, and he actually showed Dovaston several in the streets of Newcastle he had cut. Still his restless enthusiasm for nature stirred within him, and on his master's 'licking' him, he one morning gave

them all 'leg-bail,' and marched off, as he intended, for Scotland; but from his ignorance of the way, he walked to Carlisle, and perambulated the bold, rich, and lovely scenery of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as he says, to his utter amazement and rapture. Having here somewhat slaked his prodigious thirst for nature he struck off for Scotland, and for many weeks wandered among the nearer Hebrides and Highlands, living on milk, bannocks, and kebbuck, for which, like poor Goldsmith (whom his father once sheltered in his cottage), he repaid the hospitable Highlanders with his flute. When, on his return, he came to Jedburgh, he says his heart began to fail, and the walk from thence to his master's bench was the heaviest of all the hundreds of miles he had tramped.* He never speaks of this wild excursion but with the most rapturous animation; and no doubt it was among that awful, amazing, and stupendous scenery those seeds of genius vigorously germinated, and took most tenacious root, whose branches were strengthened by the subsequent storms of life, and whose luxuriant foliage now basks in the sunshine of prosperity, amid the well-earned radiation of success. . . . In the Memoir he has detailed his sentiments on the purity of representation and free government in a manner worthy the pen of a Bacon or a Locke; a history of the art of wood engraving, of which he is the reviver, and has frequently given observations on the progress of his own mind. Though some of his less important opinions may, to persons who know him not, appear but as whimsical fancies, they are the levities of a great and benevolent genius, that, like the brilliant airy bubbles of a deep clear fountain, rise playfully to the surface without sullying its purity. The style is plain and simple, but sinewy and nervous, marking his character as much as his manners and even his dress, and is strongly tinged, like his conversation, with broad Northumbrian and Scottish provincialisms, which, particularly when he reads it aloud, strengthen the efficiency. The narrative is replete with anecdote, particularly in the earlier parts, wittily recorded and morally applied, and very much reminded me of that of Franklin; indeed, to that good and great man, both in his religious and political sentiments, he appeared to me to bear a nearer resemblance than to any other character I know. He is indefatigable and intrepid in his search after truth—dauntless and strenuous in the declaration of his matured sentiments, however opposite they may be to received opinions—and fearless of any pains or penalties which the avowal of them might bring upon him from persecuting bigots. But the objects nearest his heart are to render the works of the Creator familiar to youth by dressing them in their most alluring form, and thereby to lead men to the knowledge and adoration of their great Author, and to the principles of what he believes to be true religion, and what all believe to be those of sound morality. These are his constant aim and study; and to these he considers everything else as subordinate. Of the success of his labours in this field he acknowledges he is proud; but it is the only point where he is sensible to flattery and praise. He was unconscious of his success till made aware of it by the voluntary and unsought admiration of the world. . . . I repeated what I had told him on my former visit [in October, 1823], that I was first led, in very early life, to the study of natural history, by reading the introduction to his 'History of British Birds,' and allured by his fascinating wood engravings; that my own children were passionately fond of them and never weary of examining them, but that this was an

* This account makes Bewick go to Scotland during apprenticeship, while in his Memoir Bewick states he went after that period. Mr. Bowman's statement is given as it appears; but he must have been mistaken as to the exact time.

indulgence only granted as a reward for good behaviour. He has the strongest feelings of humanity towards the brute creation of any man I ever saw, particularly towards horses and dogs ; and he told us several instances in which he had drawn himself into little difficulties by defending them against the cruelty of their owners. His amiable and affectionate mind displayed itself in a most interesting light, when he spoke in tears of his wife, then in a very poor state of health, and of the talents of his late brother John, who was also a genius in engraving, but who died many years ago [1795]. He repeatedly said that, had he lived, he would have attained to greater eminence in the art than himself. When they both began their career, it was almost lost and totally neglected ; but he has brought it to its present high pitch of perfection, and many of the most celebrated wood engravers of the present day have been his pupils. He told me the way by which he attained, step by step, his present knowledge, and illustrated it by specimens of the blocks. He also invented all his own tools, and directed the printers, upon whom much depends, how to strike off the impressions properly. He also gave me his opinion, in answer to my queries, of the old method of cross-hatching, a style not now used, and, he says, useless, as every effect may be produced by engraving in parallel lines, thicker or thinner, at greater or less distances from each other, and in the lighter parts, by a little sinking of the surface of the block. The latter was one of his own inventions, and by it a judicious pressman can produce every gradation of shade from black to nearly white. Bewick thinks the old engravers produced the cross-hatching either by covering the block or metal plate with wax, through which the lines were cut, and an acid then applied to eat into the surface of the plate ; or by the use of cross or double blocks, requiring two impressions to produce a single figure. This latter plan he thought would succeed ; and he gave me (with many others) the tail-piece here inserted,* of a traveller in a storm, done in this way, in imitation of cross-hatching. A person acquainted only with the common method would be at a loss to conceive how the singular union of the opposite styles of engraving on copper and wood could be exhibited in the same design. The black diagonal lines, particularly those on the foreground, constitute its great curiosity as a wood engraving ; in addition to which the absolute life he has given to the figures, and the circumstance of its not appearing in his published works, render it highly valuable. In many of his tail-pieces he has given numerous imitations of etching and cross-hatching ; but these are all worked in the usual manner, the surface of the wood being picked out with infinite labour and surprising skill from between the lines. He seldom engraves from any other copy than nature, having the bird or other subject before him, and sketching it with a black-lead pencil on the surface of the block ; his foregrounds, landscapes, and light foliage of trees, &c., are *first* traced with the tool, without being even previously pencilled out. It is curious to observe his economy of box-wood, which is dear and difficult to be procured. He has it sawn in the round to the thickness of the letter-types, and made very smooth on the surface : the pieces being circular, he divides them according to his designs, so as to lose little or none ; and should there be a flaw or decayed spot, he contrives to bring that into a part of the drawing that is to be left white, and so cut out. We asked him as to the durability of the blocks ; he said they incalculably outlast engravings on copper, which wear very much in cleaning for every impression with chalk. But editions of wood blocks must be very remote indeed before they show

* The cut inserted in the MS. is the Man riding amidst Rain, mentioned in our page 242, and printed on page 5, vol. i., of the last edition of the "British Birds" (1847).

any feebleness; for he told us that in early life he had cut a vignette for the Newcastle [*Chronicle*] newspaper, and last year it was calculated that more than 900,000 impressions had been worked off: the block is still in use, and not perceptibly impaired. . . . I had walked down to Newcastle before tea to call upon Mr. Read, and to take my place homewards for the following morning, in opposition to the repeated pressing entreaties of Mr. B. and his amiable family, from whom nothing but a feeling of duty would have compelled me to part so soon. As I was to set out at five next morning I preferred sleeping at the inn, where I retired at a late hour, bidding both them and my fellow-traveller a hearty farewell. Dovaston, being perfect master of his own time, lingered fondly at Newcastle, day after day, till the 18th, assisting Bewick in arranging the new edition of his 'Birds,' which has since been published. He (Dovaston) liberally furnished him with the substance of his own valuable and copious notes, the fruit of his long and ardent study of ornithology; but a large portion of them came too late for insertion."

THOMAS BEWICK'S WILL.

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me THOMAS BEWICK of the Back Lane in the Parish of Gateshead in the County of Durham Engraver I direct my just debts and funeral and Testamentary expences to be paid and satisfied I give and devise all that my Freehold House and Garden situate in the Back Lane aforesaid and now in my occupation with the appurtenances to my Son Robert Elliot Bewick his heirs and assigns for ever And I give and bequeath all that my Leasehold Messuage or tenement workshops offices and premises with the appurtenances situate in Saint Nicholas Church Yard in Newcastle upon Tyne and now in the occupation of my said son and also all my books prints and engravings of every description (except my unsold stock of the Histories of Quadrupeds and British Birds and Æsops Fables and of any other work or Book which I may publish) unto my said Son Robert Elliot Bewick for his absolute use and benefit I give and bequeath all and singular my household furniture plate linen and China in and about my said house in the Back Lane aforesaid unto my three daughters Jane Bewick Isabella Bewick and Elizabeth Bewick in equal shares and proportions And I give and bequeath unto each of my said three daughters Jane Bewick Isabella Bewick and Elizabeth Bewick the sum of Two hundred pounds Sterling And I give devise and bequeath the said unsold Stock of the Histories of Quadrupeds and British Birds and Æsops Fables and of every other Work or Book which I may publish and my interest in the respective Copyrights of or in the Histories of Quadrupeds and British Birds and Æsops Fables and any other Work or Book which I may publish and the woodcuts or blocks employed in printing the said works respectively and all monies invested on Mortgage or any other security and all the rest of my estate and effects both real and personal whatsoever or wheresoever and of what nature or kind soever unto my said Son Robert Elliot Bewick and my said three daughters Jane Bewick Isabella Bewick and Elizabeth Bewick and their respective heirs executors and administrators according to the respective natures and tenures thereof to be

divided between and amongst my said son and daughters in equal shares and proportions as Tenants in common and not as joint Tenants. And I declare that the shares of my said three daughters of or in the said last mentioned gift and devise shall be for their respective sole separate and peculiar use and benefit free from the control debts and engagements of any husband or husbands of my said daughters respectively. I constitute and appoint the said Robert Elliot Bewick Jane Bewick and Isabella Bewick Executors of this my last will and Testament. And I give and devise all and every the lands Tenements and hereditaments I am seised of or entitled to as Mortgagee in fee or upon Trust for securing money with their appurtenances and all my estate and interest therein unto my said Son Robert Elliot Bewick and my said daughters Jane Bewick and Isabella Bewick their heirs and assigns. Upon trust that they the said Robert Elliot Bewick Jane Bewick and Isabella Bewick or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs or assigns of such survivor do and shall on payment to them as my executors of such sums of money as shall be due and owing upon or in respect of the several Mortgages and securities affecting the said premises convey and assure the same with the appurtenances unto and for the person and persons and his and their heirs and assigns who at the time of making such respective payments shall be entitled to the equity of Redemption of and in the said Mortgaged premises. And I declare that my said Executors shall not be answerable the one for the other or others of them and that they or any of them shall not be chargeable with or answerable for the Acts receipts neglects or defaults of the others or other of them but each of them for his or her own acts receipts neglects or defaults only nor for any involuntary losses. And also that they shall and may respectively deduct and be allowed out of the said Trust estate and effects all their costs charges damages and expences to be occasioned by the execution or performance of the Trust of this my Will or in relation thereto. And I hereby revoke all former Wills and Testamentary dispositions by me at any time heretofore made. And I declare this to be my last will and Testament. In witness whereof I the said Thomas Bewick have to this my last Will and Testament contained in this and the two preceeding sheets of paper set my hand and seal that is to say my hand to the two preceeding sheets thereof, and my hand and seal to this the third and last sheet thereof this twenty seventh day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty seven—THOMAS BEWICK (L.S.)—Signed sealed published and declared by the said Thomas Bewick as and for his last Will and Testament in the presence of us who in his presence at his request and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as witnesses. John A. Pybus, Sol: Newcastle—Geo: T. Gibson. Willm. Oxford Clerks to Mr. Pybus.

Proved at Durham on the 3rd day of December 1828 by the Oaths of Robert Elliot Bewick the Son and Jane Bewick and Isabella Bewick Spinsters, the daughters, the Executors to whom Administration was granted.

Effects under £2000.

Errata.—Page 59, line 20, for 1833 read 1830.

Page 103, line 19, for Wycliffe read Chillingham.

Page 195, line 2, for Crane read Crake.

The Spanish Pointer. The "General History of Quadrupeds."

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