

HERE A POEM WAS BORN.

THE SPOT WHERE GRAY GOT THE IDEA OF HIS ELEGY.

How Stoke Poges Looks Today and How It Appeared in the Past—Bits of History in Regard to the Family to Which William Penn Belonged.

The very accident of rural retirement compelled or induced Thomas Gray to create the one bit of verse which gave him place among the immortals.

He was practically mad for and from book knowledge. His devotion to research seemed an endless intoxication of acquirement for the thing or fact encompassed, rather than that healthful acquisition of knowledge for the uses to which it may be wisely put.

Precisely as with thousands of so-called scholars in our own time, he allowed study and learning-getting to become a disease, instead of making it subservient to wise living and noble accomplishment.

It is no doubt also true that he had not written the "Elegy" in place in the biographies would have been no more than "Thomas Gray, erudite and sometime companion of Horace Walpole."

For these and other reasons the one place in all the world, Stoke Poges, which prompted a single incomparable example of what Gray might have been to literature had been shut away from the deadening influence of Cambridge books, and perhaps compelled to earn his own living, becomes doubly interesting.

Stoke Poges is a thinly settled village or a thickly settled sylvan parish of Buckinghamshire, not over 25 miles west of London, and about two miles north of the railway station of Slough, which is in turn the same distance north of Windsor and Castle.

It derives its unpoetic name from Amicia de Stoke, who brought the manor in marriage to a certain Robert Pogeis, a knight of the shire in the 12th century.

In the time of Edward III. the estate passed into the possession of Sir John Molyns. He had a license from the king to fortify and embattle a mansion here; and it was he who built the picturesque old church made famous by Gray's elegy.

The new Stoke Hall was built by John Penn from designs by Wyatt. Many visitors here mistake the old manor house at the north of the church for Gray's former

home. It is a beautiful and picturesque half ruin, occupied by the keeper of Stoke Park. Its chimneys are the largest I have seen in any old English manor house, and there are undoubtedly today more bricks in these ivy covered mementoes of old time cheer than were originally required in the entire construction of the walls.

John Penn built the modest yet noted mansion of Solitude, still standing on the banks of the Schuylkill, opposite Fairmount, in Philadelphia. Much of the revenue from remaining Pennsylvania "Proprietary" interests was expended here. Vast sums were used upon new Stoke Hall, and its library, statuary and paintings. He also rescued from oblivion the actual burial place of Gray, by placing the memorial slab against the church wall, beneath the vestry window, and erected at his own expense the huge monument to the poet which dominates all the slumberous scene.

A curious illustration of the decadence of great families, as well as of vast fortunes even in England, is found in the final extinction of this the most eminent branch of the Penn family, and the diversion of their once great estates. Every one is familiar with the escheating of William Penn's American possessions, in which the "estate of the late proprietaries was vested in the Commonwealth," the payment by Pennsylvania of £130,000 sterling to the devisees and legatees, "in remembrance of the enterprising spirit of the Founder," and the granting by the English parliament, in 1790, of an annuity of £4,000 to his heirs and descendants.

These passed into the tentacles of that great English octopus, the Chancery Court, and finally, after the death of the unfortunate Thomas, got into the possession of William Stuart, gentleman, of Aldenham Abbey, in the shire of Herts. Today the Penns of Stoke Poges are no more. The romping children of a country squire have banished the tender wraiths that peopled the home and haunts of Gray at West End Cottage. While the lord of the manor—whose park keeper now uses as a farm house the ancient home of the Cobhams, the cokes and the lordly house of Hastings, were Queen Elizabeth was royally entertained, and whose own present princely habitation was once the palatial seat of the Penns—is a maker of matches in London.

A LONG VIGIL AT A GRAVE.

A Chinese's Vow to Watch His Mother's Tomb for Three Years.

A correspondent of a Shanghai journal, writing from Klukiang, on the Yangtze, mentions that he has seen a sight which is not often seen even in China. This is a man who has taken a vow to watch three years at his mother's grave. The lady died at the end of last year and was buried, as usual, on the side of a neighboring hill in the family burying place.

During the three years of his vigil he does not wash himself, the straw upon which he lies is not removed, he does not change his clothes until the time has expired, he does not come out of the little place for any cause whatever, he speaks to none, except perhaps, occasionally, and then only briefly, to his nearest relatives.

He spends the time muttering prayers and burning incense at the head of the tomb, along the length of which he is stretched. The but is not high enough to allow him to stand upright and is only a few feet longer than himself. "One can faintly imagine the foulness of such a den and the condition of an unshorn human being after such an existence; what he will be like at the end of the summer I cannot conceive. It does not seem possible that a man should be able to live through three years of such horrors—none but a Chinaman could do it." If he survives the three years he will be highly honored, the officials will go in state and receive him and report the matter to the throne, and he will receive from the emperor's hand a board containing four characters lauding his virtue. He may also receive some small official preferment, and will thus be provided for. The natives say that although he is alone on the hillside among the graves, no ghosts or devils will interfere with him and poisonous snakes will not come near him.

The Shah of Persia, Nasr-ed-Din, was in England in 1873. When informed of the immense wealth of more than one of the English dukes, he calmly told the Prince of Wales that all such subjects were dangerous, and therefore should be put to death, and zealously enjoined upon the Prince the necessity of so doing.

WOMEN IN PROVERBS.

Wise Saws of Many Lands on Woman and Her Curious Ways.

Women's jars make men's wars. A change of wives makes men bald. A woman's tears are a fountain of craft. Where women and grease are there is no lack of noise.

IRISH. The best of women are never at a loss for words. A bag of flees is easier to watch than one woman. Where the devil cannot go himself he sends an old woman.

FRENCH. What woman wills God wills. He who takes a wife finds a master. A woman conceals what she does not know. Never a looking glass told a woman she was ugly.

ITALIAN. The born beauty is born betrothed. Women and hens are lost by gadding. When woman reigns the devil governs. In craft women can give points to the devil.

DANISH. Judge a maiden at the kneading pan, not at the dance. Give your wife the short knife, keep the long one yourself. One hair of a maiden's head pulls harder than ten yoke of oxen.

GENERAL. Women are wise on a sudden and fools on reflection. A woman who looks much in the glass spins little. A tender hearted mother makes a shabby daughter. A dear husband and a blind wife makes a happy couple.

Weather, wind and women's mind change like the moon. It is a sad house when the hen crows louder than the cock. Women, donkeys and hazelnuts need strong hands.

A woman's in pain, a woman's in woe, a woman is ill when she likes to be so. Who loves not women, wine and song, remains a fool his whole life long.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

He Was the Large Party Himself. A story is told of a gentleman prominently connected with one of the big foundries in Pittsburgh. The gentleman in question is an unusually large man, very tall and far around. Finding himself caught in a little town about twenty-five miles from Pittsburgh one night, with no train going to the city, and being very anxious to reach there at 11 o'clock, he went to an express down the track to stop for him.

"We stop for officials only," came the answer. Quick as a flash went the second telegram:—"Will you stop for a large party?"

"Yes," was the reply, and the long express slowed up and stopped when it reached the little town, and the gentleman complacently stepped aboard.

"Where is the large party?" inquired the conductor, with wide open astonished eyes as he gazed about the empty depot.

"Ain't I large enough?" chuckled the delighted new passenger. The conductor glared, and then burst into a hearty laugh, as the fitness of the application burst upon him.—Ex.

How Would You Like to Try It. Here is a simple exercise to reduce hip measurement. Just try it an hour a day for two months and see if its effects are not magical.

Hunt up a solid box that will raise you two or three inches from the floor. Stand firmly on right foot, hands on hips, with the left knee stiff, slowly swing the left leg from the hip backward and forward, not bending at waist. Reverse the movement, standing on left foot.—N. Y. Press.

THE BEST Remedy for colds, coughs, and the common disorders of the throat and lungs, Ayer's Cherry Pectoral is universally recommended by the profession. It breaks up the phlegm, soothes inflammation, allays painful symptoms, and induces repose. In bronchitis and pneumonia, it affords speedy relief, and is unrivaled as a prompt and effective

Emergency Medicine in croup, sore throat, and the sudden pulmonary diseases to which young children are so liable.

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral has had a wonderful effect in curing my brother's children of a severe and dangerous cold. It was truly astonishing how speedily they found relief, and were cured, after taking this preparation.—Miss Annette N. Moen, Fountain, Minn.

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A certain amount of opposition is a great help to a man. Kites rise against and not with the wind. Even a head-wind is better than none. No man ever worked his way in a dead calm.

PELEE ISLAND CLARET for Dyspepsia is the same Grape Cure so famous in Europe. GLASGOW, 17th December, 1891.

FOURTH QUARTERLY REPORT FOR 1891 ON ROBERT BROWN'S "FOUR CROWN" BLEND OF SCOTCH WHISKY.

I have made a careful analysis of a sample of 10,000 gallons of Robert Brown's "Four Crown" Blend of Scotch Whisky, taken by myself on the 9th inst., from the Blending Vat in the bonded stores, and I find it is a pure Whisky of high quality and fine flavor, which has been well matured.

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The sense of duty is the fountain of human rights. In other words, the same inward principle that teaches the former bears witness to the latter. Duties and rights must stand and fall together.—Channing.

C. C. RICHARDS & Co. Gents.—My daughter was suffering terribly with neuralgia. I purchased a bottle of MINARD'S LINIMENT, and rubbed her face thoroughly. The pain left her and she slept well till morning. Next night another attack, another application resulted as previously, with no return since. Grateful feelings determined me to express myself publicly. I would not be without MINARD'S LINIMENT in the house at any cost. J. H. BAILEY, Parkdale, Ont.

It is curious that men are not generally ashamed of any form of anger, wrath, or malice; but of the first step towards a noble nature—the confession of a wrong—they are ashamed.

It is a sad house when the hen crows louder than the cock. Women, donkeys and hazelnuts need strong hands.

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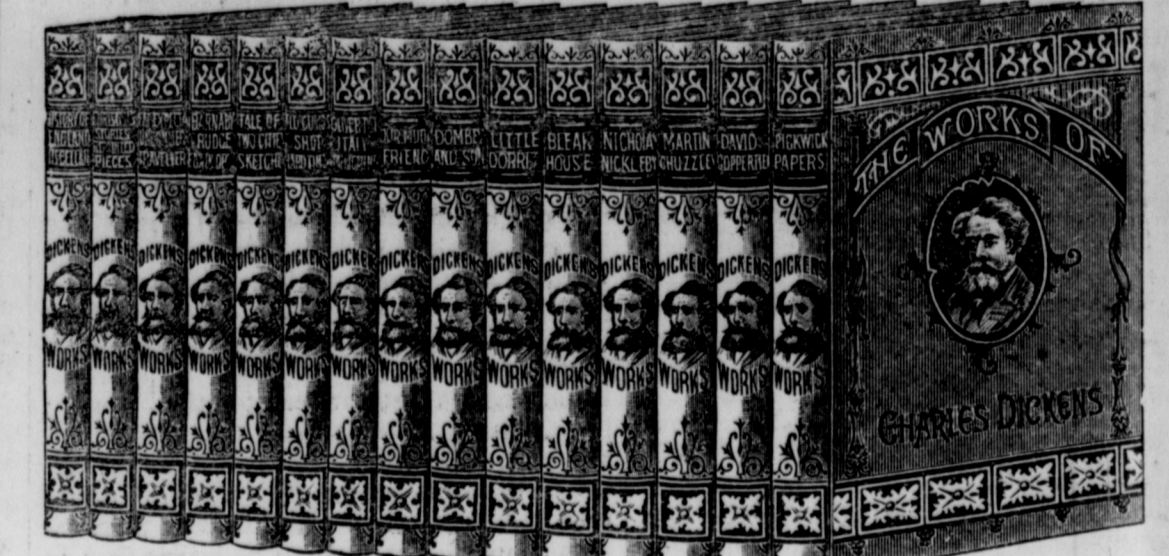
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