

Gilgal was to "renew the kingdom," 1 Sam. xi. 14. The next occasion was after he had "reigned two years over Israel," when the Philistines threatened him, and then he disobeyed the commandment. The last time he was met by Samuel at Gilgal, was after the slaughter of the Amalekites, when he "came to Carmel and set him up a place," i. e. pitched his camp preparatory to dividing the spoil; but his heart misgave him, for it was told Samuel, "he is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal." He must make some excuse for the booty he had brought away,—it was to be for sacrifice. Samuel then came to him as at other times, but refused to offer sacrifice until Saul besought him; and then it is said he "came no more to see Saul until the day of his death," i. e. came no more down to Gilgal to meet him.

It is clear, then, that the charge which was given to Saul, chap. x. 8., was one of great moment; that it informed him of the manner in which he was to worship the Lord and learn His will; and that on his due observance of it the stability of his kingdom was to depend.

H. C. K.

— Rectory, Hereford.

VENICE GLASSES.

(Vol. vi., p. 76.)

The popular error, current in the Middle Ages, that drinking-glasses manufactured at Venice possessed the valuable property of shivering to pieces upon a poisoned liquid being poured into them, may probably have arisen partly from the extreme desirability of some such detective instrument in that "age of poisons," and partly from an exaggerated idea of the excellence of the Venetian manufacture. Sir Thomas Browne discourses upon the fallacy (*Vulgar Errors*, b. vii. c. 17.):

"Though it be said that poison will break a Venice glass, yet have we not met with any of that nature."

And says further:

"Though the best of China dishes, and such as the Emperor doth use, be thought by some of infallible virtue to this effect; yet will they not, I fear, be able to elude the mischief of such intentions."

Lord Byron (*The Two Foscari*, Act V. Sc. 1.) makes the Doge, in alluding to the ascribed property, disclaim his own belief in it:

"Doge. 'Tis said that our Venetian crystal has
Such pure antipathy to poisons, as
To burst if aught of venom touches it.

Lor. Well, Sir?

Doge. Then it is false, or you are true;
For my own part, I credit neither:—'tis
An idle legend."

Mrs. Radcliffe, too, has made use of the same fiction in that fine imaginative work *The Mysteries of Udolpho*; and W. Harrison Ainsworth has done the like in his *Crichton*.

Another property was also ascribed to Venetian glass, that of sustaining violent blows or shocks with impunity. This quality is alluded to in the *Miscellanies*, p. 132., of credulous old Aubrey. A certain Lady Honeywood entertained doubts as to her salvation, and her spiritual adviser, Dr. Bolton, was endeavouring to reassure her:

"'I shall as certainly be damned,' said she, holding a Venetian glass in her hand, 'as this glass will be broken,' and at that word threw it hard upon the ground, and the glass remained sound, which did give her great comfort. The glass is yet preserved among the *cimelia* of the family."

Howell, however (*Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ*, p. 310.), entertained a different opinion of its tenacity:

"A good name is like Venice glass, quickly cracked, never to be amended, patched it may be."

We may note from this that the excellence of Venice glass was such that it had become proverbial as an illustration of perfection.

It may not be considered irrelevant to remind your correspondent that similar virtues have been attributed from the earliest ages to the horn of the rhinoceros. This opinion obtained in India when the English made their first voyage thither in 1591, and the horns of this animal were carefully preserved by the native monarchs on account of their reputed efficacy. Calmet, in his *Dictionary of the Bible*, also alludes to this belief, and says that drinking-cups were made of this horn, and used by Oriental monarchs at table because it was believed that "it sweats at the approach of any kind of poison whatever."

According to Thunberg, the same belief prevailed in Africa. He states in his *Journey to Kaffraria*, that

"The horns of the rhinoceros were kept by some people both in town and country, not only as rarities, but also as useful in diseases and for the purpose of detecting poisons. As to the former of these intentions, the fine shavings were supposed to cure convulsions and spasms in children. With respect to the latter, it was generally believed that goblets made of these horns would discover a poisonous draught that was poured into them, by making the liquor ferment till it ran quite out of the goblet. Of these horns goblets are made which are set in gold and silver and presented to kings, persons of distinction, and particular friends, or else sold at a high price, sometimes at the rate of fifty rix-dollars each."

Our traveller made the matter a subject of experiment:

"When I tried these horns," says he, "both wrought and unwrought, both old and young, with several sorts of poisons, weak as well as strong, I observed not the least motion or effervescence; but when a solution of corrosive sublimate or other similar substance was poured into one of these horns, there arose only a few bubbles, produced by the air which had been enclosed

in the pores of the horn, and which were now disengaged."

A writer in *The Menageries* (vol. iii. pp. 19—22.) thinks that the great value set upon the horn of this animal, on account of its imaginary virtues, suggested the image to the Psalmist, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of the unicorn," and that consequently this animal and the rhinoceros are identical.

I hope that my discursive and desultory remarks may afford your correspondent Rr. some part of the information he desires.

WILLIAM BATES.

Birmingham.

These glasses, as their name implies, were manufactured at Venice, or rather at Murano, one of her isles. At the time these glasses were in the greatest repute, Venice was the only European city possessing a glass manufactory. No ornamental glass vessels, which can positively be ascribed to Germany, are known of an earlier date than 1553. The earliest English glass-houses for the manufacture of fine glass, those of the Savoy and Crutched Friars, were not established until the middle of the sixteenth century, and they apparently were for a considerable time much inferior to the Venetian; for in 1635, nearly a hundred years later, Sir Robert Mansel obtained a monopoly for importing fine Venetian drinking-glasses. Probably Venice owes the introduction of her glass manufacture to her share in the conquest of Constantinople in the beginning of the thirteenth century. The glass bowls, salvers, bottles, &c., painted in enamel, and vessels with coloured threads or "canes" enclosed in the stems, for which Venice became so celebrated, were the immediate effects of this participation, which were further stimulated by the immigration of Greek artists into Italy 250 years later, on the breaking up of the Empire of the East. The peculiarity of the Venice workmanship consists in its exceeding lightness, no lead being employed in its material. I was not aware that the superstition of the power of a Venice glass to detect poison had ever obtained in modern times. Sir Thomas Browne, in his work on *Vulgar Errors*, published in 1646, remarks—

"Though it be said that poison will break a Venice glass, yet have we not met any of that nature."

Might not this superstition arise from these glasses being sometimes used in alchemical processes? When made for this purpose they were grotesque in shape, and frequently in the form of the signs of the zodiac. Some amusing information of Murano and her glass manufacture may be obtained from Howell's *Familiar Letters*, Nos. 28 & 29. He was sent to Venice by Sir Robert Mansel to obtain information concerning the art. Your correspondent, if really interested in this beautiful

fabric, must have lost much if he did not witness the magnificent collection of Venetian glass brought together and exhibited by the Society of Arts in 1850. Possessing one or two specimens of the art, and having but little knowledge concerning it except what I have stated, I shall be very glad if my Reply and Query elicit any further information on the subject.

EMABEE.

Replies to Minor Queries.

Styles of Dukes and Marquises (Vol. vi., p. 76.).

—The proper style of a duke is *Most Noble*, that of a marquis *Most Honourable*. The style *Most Noble* has of late been constantly misapplied to marquises; most improperly, if there be any utility in *distinctions*, and in being correct. The official notices in the *London Gazette*, from many public departments, are, in respect to the styles of people, frequently wrong; so much so, at times, as to be of no authority, as in the instance referred to by L. T.

G.

Burials (Vol. vi., p. 84.). — It is quite possible that I may have spoken too positively, yet I cannot help thinking that his bishop could catch the clergyman whose irregularity is described, if the bishop chose to try. Such conduct is a violation of the rubric of the burial service, and, I should have thought, a breach of the Act of Uniformity. If a clergyman be at liberty to use the rites and ceremonies of the church just as he likes, so long as he keeps outside the consecrated boundary, perhaps the profanation of the Lord's Supper by administering the elements to a monkey was not punishable. I have heard that this was done at the instigation of the notorious Lord Sandwich, when at the head of the Navy, and that the priest, who "made himself vile," was rewarded with a valuable benefice.

ALFRED GATTY.

If BENBOW will look into the Act of Uniformity prefixed to the Book of Common Prayer, he will soon discover that "the whole matter" of burials, about which he writes, does not "resolve itself into a question of good taste and eminent churchmanship," but of heavy pains and penalties, to which every clergyman is liable, if he uses any of the "open prayers" otherwise than is "set forth in the said book."

BENBOW seems to be a feigned name: if he desired an early answer for the authority of the Rev. ALFRED GATTY's position, he might no doubt have easily obtained it, through Her Majesty's Post Office messengers, by addressing his Query direct, and under his own proper signature.

As to burial in unconsecrated ground, if any one prefers some other spot than "God's Acre," or other consecrated ground, where he wishes his remains to be deposited, in that he may certainly have his own choice; but he thereby excommuni-