ECCENTRICS IN MEDICINE.

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Eccentricity is frequently a mark of strong personality and is as often a characteristic of those gifted with vision as of drolls and charlatans. 'Eccentricity of genius,' exclaimed Mr. Pickwick on learning that there were two sawbones downstairs, Bob Sawyer drinking brandy neat out of the bottle neck, and Ben Allen, 'him in the barnacles,' opening oysters and as fast as he swallowed them hurling the shells at the fat boy. Mr. Pickwick was easily taken in, like all the glorious fools of this world. But great genius is said to be never without an admixture of madness, for the restless eagerness which impels men to desert the common path and choose byways of their own is often accompanied by oddity amounting to eccentricity. A shortage of those who dare to be eccentric is a mark of the poverty of the times. What would the Elizabethan or Victorian Age have been without its eccentrics?

Melancholy, supreme egotism, wrong-headedness, aggressiveness have all been notable in unintegrated personalities who yet at some momentous point in their careers have suddenly displayed amazing tautness and admirable concision in promoting their chief interests. Original thinkers have often been men of strong individuality, impatient of the common ruck, and outwardly presenting such deviations from normality as to be considered curious or comic or even confounded nuisances. Time and again, such men have provoked startled comment. Some of the stormy petrels of the ages have been men singular to the point of eccentricity, and very able men have done very queer things indeed, though they may have left the indelible marks of persons of unusual powers. There is, of course, an element of showmanship in many eccentricities.

The men of mark, pathfinders and forerunners, interesting as exotic personalities and in their achievements, are often giants difficult of contemporary understanding and laborious to appraise (Cromwell, for instance), but lesser men, whose deviations may not be concerned with revolutions and upheavals, provide by their foibles and oddities, legitimate amusement. Physic, hard task-mistress as she is, has had eccentrics in her train, some who have flirted with strange gods and plucked flowers in out-of-the-way places. Some of them were truants, as Moynihan called them, men who deserted medicine yet triumphed; others practised some branch of their art all their lives and are remembered for their idiosyncracies, and a few developed eccentricity as they grew older, from degenerative changes unnoticed by themselves. Thus we have seen great men grown old and sadly queer.

ODDITIES OF DOCTORS.

Oddities of expressions, manners, behaviour are well remembered, and medical history and biography teem with instances. So it was said of Abernethy (1764-1831) that, in the lecture room, he ' shone eccentric like a comet's blaze.' He entered with his hands buried deep in his breeches pocket, his body slouching, whistling or humming, and his lower jaw jutting aggressively. Then he threw himself into his chair, one leg over an arm of it and began to talk abruptly. He it was who told a patient to ' live on sixpence a day and earn it " ; good advice to the over-fed nabobs he treated. He had nothing to do with that hard monstrosity, the Abernethy biscuit ; such attribution was as false as was probably the story that, when he proposed to a lady whom he had only seen once, he wrote that he was too busy to make love and she must make up her mind by the end of the week. She married him. His friend Sir Richard Jebb had an odd rough manner and often offended patients. A lady asked if she could eat a muffin. Jebb said it was the best thing for her, and when reminded that he had forbidden muffins a few days ago, roared ' Good heavens, Madam, that was on Tuesday, this is Thursday.' To another, he recommended boiled turnips and, when informed that the patient loathed turnips, snarled ' then, Madam, you must have a d—d vitiated appetite.' Such are the tales that are told.

Of Lettsom (1744-1815) it is said that his eccentricities were numerous. He was a Quaker and would not modify his dress, even at Court. On one occasion, he left a cheque for a substantial amount on the table as a prescription. He made a large income, practised philanthropy, was a friend of Boswell and founded the London Medical Society. Although he entertained largely and lavishly, he published a tract on hard drinking in which he enumerates the stages of intemperance and equates them with the results in thermometer fashion through seventy degrees, beginning with water and ending with gin and brandy, tracing the effects from simple idleness to Botany Bay and the gallows.

One of the English eccentrics was surely George Fordyce, a contemporary of Radcliffe's, who dined only once in twenty-four hours on whitings, a broiled fowl with trimmings, and a pound and a half steak. This he washed down with a tankard or two of strong ale, a bottle of port and half a pint of brandy. He dined at four and went to deliver his daily lecture at six. On the other hand, the queer Dr. Glyn rarely dined at all, and another dined once or twice a week on two Abernethy biscuits, consumed during a quick walk. From later times comes the story of the duchess who was advised to walk round Berkeley Square before breakfast, sipping a glass of cold water.

Fordyce's friend, John Radcliffe (1650-1729) was a man of eccentric behaviour, shrewd though arrogant and insolent, but philanthropic like many of the 18th century doctors. He said that when he started practice,

he had twenty remedies for every disease, but at the end, twenty diseases for which he had not one remedy. He quarrelled with Sir Godfrey Kneller, the Court painter about a door between their premises, telling Kneller that he could do as he liked about the door so long as he didn't paint it. To which Kneller replied that he would take anything from Radcliffe except his physic. In old age, he had a ridiculous love affair, probably from the usual cause, and was lampooned by Steele in the *Tatler*. He had been something of a misogynist and once told a lady who complained of singing in the ears to curl her hair with a ballad.

The greatest men have often been regarded as cranks by their contemporaries. Even Harvey (1578-1657) was thought crack-brained when his book on the circulation of the blood came out. He was a choleric man who carried a dagger in his youth and was wont to observe that man was but a great mischievous baboon. According to Aubrey, he said that Lord Chancellor Bacon, whose physician he was, had an eye like that of a viper. Harvey suffered from gout and his cure was to sit on his roof, even in the worst weather, with his legs in a pail of water until he was almost dead with cold. Then he repaired to his stove and behold, the gout was gone. Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), a wizard in words, was a truant and eccentric, proud to strut around in his bloom-coloured silk coat and scarlet breeches. A genius unstable and erratic in his youth, he played the flute and made ballads in ale-houses, and later travelled Europe paying his way with drollery and fluting. Back in London, he made some attempt to practise medicine, lived precariously in a shabby lodging, where he had little but a table and a chair, and kept his coals in a chamber-pot. Though he talked nonsense, poor 'Goldy' made immortal literature.

Sir Hans Sloane in old age became so infatuated with money and his museum that he became abstemious to the point of meanness. John Wolcot (Peter Pindar), an Aberdeen graduate, was a quarrelsome fellow who wrote a farce *Physic a Delusion; or Jezebel and the Doctors.*

Coming nearer our own times, we meet the Napoleonic Sir William Gull (1816-1890), who left a fortune of over £300,000. He was a most able man, but opposed surgical anaesthesia. His tongue was sharp and could be blistering. He told a neurotic woman she was Mrs. X multiplied by four. Of cranks who opposed Lister there were many. Lawson Tait of Manchester (1845-1899) was probably as violent and truculent as any, though he was an accomplished gynaecological surgeon, boasting loudly of his results, all obtained by simple cleanliness. Women have made more than one surgeon's reputation by their tough resilience. Sir James Y. Simpson (1811-1870), tousled and untidy, was bigoted against Listerism, though he disliked bigotry directed against his own use of chloroform anaesthesia. Patrick Heron Watson, the Edinburgh surgeon who in youth had been Lister's colleague, was also bitterly opposed to Listerism.

These stormy petrels did not pull their punches ; they were all good men with blind spots.

The great Pasteur in his lifetime suffered much from the denigrations of lesser men. It is strange that new ideas are often formulated by eccentrics and violently controverted by other eccentrics.

Most older doctors can remember eccentrics of their own times ; the great surgeon who was proud to call himself a non-coöperator, another who kept a decanter of liquid paraffin between the sherry and port on his sideboard or he who was supposed never to remove a prostate without pausing, closing his eyes and mentally dedicating the act ' to the memory of my master, A. F. McGill, godson of Sir William Ferguson.' Many tales are told of the strange saying of obstetricians and gynaecologists, such as that of one who persistently avoided precision by ending statements with the phrase ' in a general kind of way,' and one day in lecturing, described a patient as a virgin—in a general kind of way. But he was a good women's surgeon ; his scars were hair-like.

There is no end to the stories about the odd sayings and doings of eminent doctors. The doctor's intimate experience of humanity often seems to lead him to the perpetration of philosophic jocosities, sometimes wise and kindly, sometimes roguish and occasionally vicious and damaging. The doctor's life often makes demands upon the histronic art, unguarded indulgence in which is liable to become eccentricity. But let us now consider at length three quaint fellows: a priest, a pirate and a buffoon.

PRIEST, PHYSICIAN AND TRAVELLER.

An odd character was Andrew Boorde or Borde, born near Cuckfield in Sussex about 1490. Thomas Hearns called him the original ' Merry Andrew,' but although his conduct was freakish, it is doubtful if the eponymous jester can be traced to Boorde. He is said to have made humorous speeches at fairs and markets ; he wrote a jocose poem about friars and had a reputation for drollery. Acting as foreman of a jury trying a man for stealing a pair of breeches, when the case broke down under the slender evidence, he prevailed on his colleagues to return the defendant guilty of manslaughter ! He made a Latin pun on his own name, calling himself Andreas Perforatus.

Educated first at Oxford, he was, as a minor, received into the harsh order of Carthusians, perhaps at the London Charterhouse, but the stringency of monkhood was too much for him, and he was ' falsely accused ' of being conversant with women. None the less he was appointed Suffragan of Chichester, but probably never properly fulfilled his office. About 1528, tired of the austerities of religious life, he sought a dispensation from his vows and departed overseas to study medicine for

two years. Returned, he evidently practised physic, for he attended the Duke of Norfolk, crept into Court circles, and waited upon Henry VIII. Before long, he was travelling again and visited all approved universities and schools—Orleans, Poitiers, Toulouse, Montpelier in France, and Wittenburg in Germany. He also saw something of the practice of surgeons in Rome and went on a pilgrimage to Compostella in Navarre. By 1534 he was in London again and rejoined the Charterhouse, but he was temperamentally unsuitable and was freed through the agency of Thomas Cromwell (afterwards Earl of Essex), Henry VIII's Machiavellian minister, who sent him abroad again. On this, his third tour, he was probably commissioned to test the feeling in Europe towards the English king. He reported that ' few friends hath England in these parts ' (France and Spain). While on this tour, he sent Cromwell the seeds of the rhubarb plant (which came out of Barbary). This was two centuries before rhubarb was cultivated in Britain where it was much used as a medicine in the 18th century.

In 1536, the year of Paracelsus's *Chirurgia Magna*, Boorde made his famous visit to Scotland where he seems to have passed by the name of Kerr and was taken for a Scot. He stayed in a little place ' naymed Glasko ' where he studied and practised physic, which must have been a mixture of herb-doctoring and quackery, for the Revival of Learning had as yet done little to disperse the cloud of superstition enveloping medicine. It was a sign of the times, however, that men like Ambrose Paré in France and William Clowes in England were doing something for surgery, and Henry VIII showed perspicacity in 1540 by authorising the dissection of four executed criminals each year.

Boorde or Kerr visited the ' King's house ' and got to know some of the aristocracy who controlled Scottish policy and' according to H. A. L. Fisher, were ' as corrupt a body of jobbers as any in Europe.' This spying in the Northern Kingdom produced the famous message to Cromwell, ' Trust ye no Skott, for they wyll yowse flatteryng wordes and all ys falsehold.' and the further injunction that Scots over the border might do harm to the King's liege men by their ' evyll wordes.'

After his return to London, Andrew was again attached to Cromwell's suite and again was sent abroad, probably for political purposes. He went across Europe by Calais, Antwerp, Cologne, Worms, reaching Venice. Thence he went to Rhodes and on to Joppa and to Jerusalem to visit the Holy Sepulchre. He completed what in those days must have been an arduous itinerary by returning via Naples and Rome, crossing the Alps, to arrive at Montpelier where he spent some time at ' the most noble university in the world for physicians and surgeons and for the practice of physic.'

Boorde in his time wrote several books. The *Dyetry* (1542) he dedicated to the Duke of Norfolk. It deals with food and drink in sickness and

health and also with housing. His famous *Breviarie of Healthe* (1547) is a kind of household medicine and intended for popular consumption. Lousiness, drunkenness, women, and common disorders are its subjects. He advocates closed bedroom windows, scarlet night-caps and recommends people to wash their faces only once a week and to wipe them dry on a scarlet cloth. This treatment, he says, is a good remedy in some cases. There is wit and homely wisdom in his writings. He also wrote of his travels, itineraries of England and Europe, and even produced a book of sermons. In his *Introduction to Knowledge* (1547), written at Montpelier, he publishes the first account of the gipsy language in a description of Egypt. He may have been drawn upon by Shakespeare (as he certainly was by Robert Burton) for Boorde wrote of the English, ' if they were true within themselves, they need not fear though all nations were set against them.' Finally the doctor-priest produced a book on beards ; he was against them.

Boorde's varied career indicates a man of parts and a singular character with elements of the mountebank, but he can hardly be classed as a buffoon. He was as superstitious as his age and printed almanacks or prognostications from astronomical or astrological findings. He must have acquired a knowledge of plague and syphilis for both were almost endemic in Europe in the 16th century. In England too, malaria was widespread, and the sweating-sickness spread over Europe about 1530. Influenza was pandemic about 1510.

Boorde lived in an age sorely beset by major diseases of which he must have had first-hand knowledge. So little is known about him that the impact of the times on his mind is unrevealed, but a period boasting Paré, Linacre, Fernel, Vesalius and Rabelais and which saw the foundation of the Royal College of Physicians (1518) and the Company of Barber Surgeons (1540) must have strongly influenced this much travelled man.

An ascetic in early years, wearing a hair-shirt and keeping his shroud at the foot of his bed, he succumbed to the younger Aphrodite at various times in his life, and towards the end he was said to have kept three loose women in his chambers at Winchester. Ultimately, for some reason, he was thrown into the Fleet prison in London, and there in 1549, made his will and died. Until recently at any rate, there was a house at Pevensey in Sussex described as Andrew Boorde's.

BUCCANEER-DOCTOR.

A roaring disputatious rascal with a violent temper but capable of controlling ruthless men might make a good pirate. Such apparently was Thomas Dover, born in Warwickshire about 1660, whose name has been perpetuated, like those of Dr. Gregory and Dr. James, on a powder label. Osler, who devoted an essay to Dover, found few facts about his life, but drew a picture of a ' good fighter, a good hater,' an eccentric

with many weaknesses, but certainly to be remembered, apart from his diaphoretic powder, because he rescued ' Robinson Crusoe ' from his desert island.

Dover was at both Oxford and Cambridge, graduating B.A. from St. Mary Hall and M.B. from Caius College. Information about his early years is lacking, but he was in Bristol in 1684 and seems to have practised medicine there until 1708. At one time he was a pupil of Sydenham and lived in his house. While there, he contracted smallpox. Sydenham treated him initially by bleeding him of twenty-two ounces and giving him a vomit. Dover went about until he was blind and then retired to bed. It was January and he was kept in a room without a fire with all windows wide open, and with the bedclothes no higher than his waist. During this spartan regime, his medicine consisted solely of twelve bottles of small beer acidulated with spirit of vitriol every twenty-four hours.

In Bristol, Dover naturally became acquainted with the band of merchant-adventurers of whose company were John Hawkins, William Dampier and Woodes Rogers, and having made money, invested so heavily in a projected South Sea cruise that when the expedition sailed, he was able to insist upon being given a command though he knew nothing of navigation. He sailed in 1708 as ' second captain ' to Woodes Rogers in the ' Duke ' and ' Duchess,' two privateer ships. He was not the fleet surgeon for there were four regular surgeons on board. Incidentally, this was Dampier's last voyage.

It was on February 1st, 1709, that they arrived off Juan Fernandez Island, a coast known of old to Dampier, who had been there in 1681 and 1684, in the latter year bringing off a Mosquito Indian who had been left there when the buccanneer captains had to draw off their fleet quickly for fear of Spanish ships three years previously. This time Dover went ashore and brought off Alexander Selkirk, from Largo, Fife, who had been there alone, marooned at his own request, for four years and four months. Some credit for this rescue should perhaps go to Dampier, who had known Selkirk long before, and had probably been present when he was marooned in September, 1704. It seems as though the Mosquito Indian should share with Selkirk the honour of being ' Robinson Crusoe.' Selkirk returned to Largo, but later went to sea again and died at sea in 1723, leaving his effects to sundry loving females—two of them claiming to be his widow.

After the rescue, the expedition sailed north and captured a Spanish ship which was put under Dover's command and re-named ' Batchelor.' Our physician's next exploit was to lead the van in an attack on the two cities of Guayaquil. These the pirates sacked and the sailors stored booty in churches where the guard at night protested at the vile smell of newly buried corpses. For ' plague ' was rife, and within forty-eight

hours of the sailors returning to the ships, 180 in one alone were taken ill. Dover took drastic action, by ordering every one to be bled 100 ounces, and to drink copious draughts of dilute sulphuric acid. This heroic treatment was successful for Dover admitted only 8 deaths. It seems unlikely that the outbreak was classical plague, but must have been some malignant fever.

The ships moved on with their spoil and later seized a Spanish vessel crammed with treasure, reputed to be worth a million pounds. When, however, the merchant-pirates made landfall at Bristol in 1711 after circling the globe via Guam, Batavia and the Cape, the trip had realised only £170,000—riches indeed in the 18th century, even if it fell short of expectations. ' Robinson Crusoe's' share as mate of one of the ships was £700. Dover resumed his practice in Bristol.

But he was restless and 1721 found him residing in the Strand in London, practising as a physician on the licence of the College of Physicians. He saw his patients at the Jerusalem Coffee House. With the exception of five years in Gloucestershire from 1728, Dover practised in London until his death. He became a great advocate of mercury and was dubbed the ' quicksilver doctor.' In 1732 he published his book *The Ancient Physician's Legacy to his Country*, a popular compendium of medicine for the use of private families, based on forty-nine years of experience of the author. It was written for revenue purposes only and has no pretence to be a scientific treatise. The ancient physician's chief remedy was metallic mercury, his universal specific. So much quicksilver did he order one patient for his asthma that it amounted to 120 lbs. weight. Dover ordered an ounce daily, often combined with ' a spoonful of the gas of sulphur in a large glass of spring water at 5 o'clock in the afternoon and at bed-time.'

In his book he courted publicity like a quack by blowing his own trumpet and attacking the apothecaries and physicians for their large fees and useless treatments. In later editions of the book, he condemned the College of Physicians as a ' clan of prejudiced gentlemen ' who should not be taken for oracles. Indeed, retaliation by pamphlet became the order of the day. All in all, Dover appears to have received as good as he gave, and was soundly trounced for his eccentricities. The *Legacy* was condemned as a useless work, which did not prevent it running into several editions, the sixth appearing in 1742. The formula for the famous powder is given in the section on gout. In its original form it was one ounce of opium and ipecacuanha with four ounces each of saltpetre and vitriolated tartar, the whole mixed and ground fine. He recommended 60 to 70 grains for a dose taken in a glass of white posset. Its survival in its modern form testifies to its value as a popular remedy.

Dover ever spoke well of his master Sydenham and followed his practice in many things. He adopted Sydenham's treatment of fevers,

and like him, was against blistering. He believed with Sydenham that without opium, medicine would be in a poor way.

In his last years, Dover practised in Lombard Street, and finally in Arundel Street, off the Strand, where he died early in 1742.

A BUFFOON AMONG THE WHIGS.

Boswell records that Dr. Johnson was vehement against old Dr. Mounsey (or Monsey) of Chelsea College as a 'fellow who swore and talked bawdy.' Dr. Percy of the *Reliques* controverted this, but Johnson bawled him down. It was probably true, for Messenger Mounsey was eccentric even among 18th century physicians. He was described as uncouth, unwashed and generally unpopular but tolerated for the wit and malice of his remarks. His father was Rector of Bawdeswell, but Messenger Monsey was born at his grandfather's home at Whitwell in Norfolk in 1693, and named after his grandmother, Elizabeth Messenger. He seems to have been educated at home in a Tory setting until he went to Cambridge in 1711. Here he graduated B.A. from Pembroke and then went off to study and practise physic under Sir Benjamin Wrench of Norwich. Ultimately he started practice on his own at Bury St. Edmunds, where 'his rusty wig, dirty boots and leather breeches' became well-known. He had a reputation for brusque, brutal speech and a sarcastic tongue and was not very successful as a practitioner. Here he might have stayed and remained obscure, but for the incident of the second Lord Godolphin (son of Queen Anne's Lord Treasurer) being taken ill on his way to Newmarket. Bury being the nearest town, Monsey was summoned and quickly restored the patient who was so tickled by his doctor's coarse witticisms and malicious comments on men and affairs that he invited him to London and carried him off there and then in his train. Godolphin introduced his eccentric find to his friends and kept him in his household, later securing for him the post of non-resident physician to Chelsea Hospital. Meanwhile Monsey continued to live in St. James's, with a society reputation for wit.

The impact on London society of this queer Norfolk doctor with the unwarranted aplomb and appalling manners was remarkable. He was soon one of the curiosities of Whig society and welcomed at the tables of the great. Godolphin's friends made much of him. He treated Lord Chesterfield who recommended Monsey's powders to his son. Sir Robert Walpole, who loved company and never lost his own Norfolk accent, welcomed him, and, himself somewhat boisterous, enjoyed the doctor's robust impudence. Monsey was reputed to be the only man who dared contradict the great Whig minister and beat him at billiards. Indeed he rapidly became to the Whigs what Radcliffe had been to the Tories, but Walpole did nothing for him. He was a sentimental ass also, and soon became a worshipper in the salon of the queen of the blue-stockings, Mrs.

Montagu, at her house in Portman Square. He wrote her long screeds of impassioned rhodomontade liberally garnished with verse of his own composition. Monsey was a great letter writer all his life, and in later years conducted a long and flatulent correspondence with the grandfather of Bulwer Lytton, the novelist. The reputation of this turbulent fellow for oddity however, rests more upon his talk and his habits than on his letter-writing.

One eccentricity was his manner of extracting teeth, his own as well as his patients'. This was to tie round the offending tooth a piece of catgut or fiddlestring, to the other end of which he attached a bullet. The bullet he rammed into his pistol with a good charge of powder, and to remove the tooth simply pulled the trigger. Dramatic and effective, we can hardly deny. Another of his tricks was to hide his money in queer places. Once going from home, he hid banknotes in the grate under the kindling of his fire. He arrived back to catch his servant applying a light in anticipation of his return, and was just in time to extinguish the flames (and the servant) with a bucket of water.

While his patron lived, Monsey flourished and kept the tables he sat at in a roar by his coarse buffoonery, but Godolphin died in 1766 and the doctor's popularity waned. Even Chesterfield who had boosted his medical skill gave him up, so he retired to apartments in Chelsea Hospital. He still went about a good deal, and dined out whenever he could. Always quarrelsome, he fell out with Garrick and when friends tried to patch up the quarrel, would have none of it, abusing them for wasting time in trying to reconcile a ' Merry Andrew and a Quack.' Although he was growing increasingly unpopular, he still had friends. Cheselden the surgeon used to visit him, and Fanny Burney, whose father was organist to Chelsea Hospital, records meeting old Dr. Monsey who growled ' I suppose you are the Queen's Miss Burney '—to which Fanny replied that she certainly was. Monsey twitted the younger generation among his doctor friends for wishing him to die so that they might get his post and salary. He kept them wishing, for he lived to be 95.

The old rogue was getting on and his health began to trouble him. His letters are full of crude jokes, Latin quotations and references to mortality, with, curiously enough, thanks to God that so far he has been spared gout, rheumatism and the stone. He still dined out and at 93 we find him with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Malone. But his day was done ; his wit was too coarse for the politer age being ushered in by newer writers and by the advent of Pitt above the horizon. He suffered much from tachycardia in his last years, which seemed to afford him and his friends much amusement ; ' my fantastical, impudent blackguard pulse ' he wrote. He became a collector of old clocks and watches and must have mellowed slightly for he seems to have been kind to old soldiers and pensioners, even to the extent of mild philanthropy.

He still scrawled interminable letters in an old man's hand quoting Horace frequently, and pathetically

'Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti
Tempus abire tibi est . . .'

He died in 1788, leaving his body for dissection and ordering that 'the remains of my carcase may be put into a hole or crammed into a box with holes and thrown into the Thames.' This was done and anatomical lectures delivered over his cadaver at Guy's Hospital. He left his own cynical epitaph of which one version of the last four lines runs

'What the next world may be never troubled my pate;
But be what it may, I beseech you, O Fate,
When the bodies of millions rise up in a riot,
To let the old carcase of Monsey lie quiet.'

Such was Dr. Messenger Monsey, son of a Norfolk Vicarage, who boasted that his great-grandfather was a baker and a dealer in hops, and who himself, according to Jeaffreson, was the great-grandfather of a Lord Chancellor of England.

CONCLUSION.

That it would be labouring the subject to the borders of eccentricity to pursue it further at present, although there is no lack of material in the 'wild moraine of forgotten books, on the glacier of years gone by.'

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