

LETTER FROM THE REV. JAMES BULWER,
 TO
 DAWSON TURNER, ESQ., V.P.
 WITH
 EXTRACTS FROM THE REGISTER-BOOK
 OF
 Great Dunham, Norfolk,
 AND SOME INCIDENTAL REMARKS TOUCHING THE PARISH.

MY DEAR SIR,

In a paper printed in a former part of this volume, are inserted some extracts from the Register-Books of the parish of Great Dunham. One of these, taken from your extensive and valuable collection, relates to a former rector, Ambrose Pimlowe, and records his deep perplexity and remorse, on learning that he had been ignorantly the instrument of disturbing the happiness of a neighbouring family, by officiating at a clandestine marriage. Now, as that extract, standing as it does alone, has left on the minds of certain of our readers a somewhat unfavourable impression of a really pious and amiable man, I am sure that you will agree with me, on a principle of justice,—to say nothing of the old adage, “de mortuis nil nisi bonum,”—that the additional extract, which I copied a few days ago from the same Register and now send you, should also have a place in this volume of the Society. At the same time, I cannot but add, that I do not myself see that the memory of a man who would spontaneously record his contrition at having unwittingly brought sorrow on any person, needs apology.

From the Register of Burials, 1750:

“The Rev^d. and worthy Rector, Ambrose Pimlowe, was buried Sept. y^e 6th, 1750.”

Here follows the customary affidavit:*

“He was a kind, good-natured, honest, and upright man to all; but in a very particular manner to his numerous relations, who were supported by him according to his abilities whilst here, and taken care of by his Will not long before he went hence to be no more seen. He was likewise, to the utmost of his power, constantly aiding and assisting the widows and orphans of his deceased brethren, and in my opinion for some time died daily, making his peace with God, and was in charity with all men.

DAN. BURSLEM, Rec^t.
of Great Fransham,
and Sequestrator † of the Living of
Great Dunham.”

At the same time I likewise transcribed the following entries, as curious and deserving to be recorded.

The Burials in the year of our Lord 1733, March 25th, are prefaced by Mr. Pimlowe with a motto from the *Revelations*, xiv. 13:

“I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, from henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours.”

* Affidavits were required at this time to satisfy the Act which made it compulsory to bury in woollen.

† This is the term to denote the party responsible, during the vacancy of a parish, for the performance of the duties. Here a successor was not inducted for nearly eighteen months. “*Mem.*—The Rev^d. John Arnam, Clerk, A.M. was inducted into the possession of this parish of Great Dunham, Feb. y^e 13, 1752, by Dan^l. Burslem, Rector of Great Fransham.”

In the following year he has entered the circumstances of a death as follows :

“ Thomas Hoogan, Esq^r. found dead at North Pickenham, with his horse tied to a bush, and perished with cold, with his hat and wig off, and flat upon his back, with his face and head scratched with thorns, and heavy with water, by stumbling into the river as groping in the dark for his hat or wig or both, as judged, and got out of the river again, but, not able to mount his horse, lay down on dry land and perished, when he might have been saved if a shepherd's page had made, that night he saw him in distress, any discovery: the next morn the boy spoke of it: he was found by the Rev^d. Mr. Walters Rolf, Rector of North Pickenham, and Mr. Holman, dead, with five guineas and ten shillings in his pocket, a gold watch, and silver spurs. He was brought home by the Rector of Great Dunham, Amb: Pimlowe, the same day, and the Coroner's Inquest past upon him the day after; and he was buried the next day; viz. He was found dead on Wednesday morn, Feb. 5, and buried on Friday, Feb. 7th, 1734.

Faciant aliena pericula cautum.

AMB: PIMLOWE, Rector.

WILL: BALE, Church Warden.

ROB: LARGE, Parish Clerk.”

The family of the Hoogans occupied “ *The Hall* ” at great Dunham, and became extinct with the successor of this gentleman about the end of the last century. A Thomas Hoogan is mentioned during the Usurpation, as a Parliament man, in most of the ordinances and commissions relating to Norfolk. The building was taken down in 1800, and the lands sold. (See *Blomefield*, Vol. V, fol. edit. p. 987, for its earlier history.)

Another entry is thus :

“ 1742. *Burials.* John Burrige, a religious, well-disposed labourer, who was never heard to swear an oath, and who set a worthy example to his fellow labourers, was unhappily killed in a marl-pit at Newton near Castle-acre in Norfolk, on Munday June 28th, and buried on June 29, 1742. The marl-pit belongs to Will: Martin, farmer at Newton aforesaid.

AMB: PIMLOWE, Rector.

RUDD KIDDALL, } Wardens.”
WILL: HERRING, }

There are numerous notices of the foregoing character in Pimlowe's hand writing; all of them indicating that he was ever alive to, and anxious to relieve, the distresses of his parishioners.

The Parsonage-house in which he lived remains unchanged. It is a low, long, clay building, thatched, and prettily ornamented with roses and creepers.

In the garden, many fragments of a former church have been dug up and preserved by Mr. Jackson, the present Curate. Among the most interesting of these remains are, the shelf of the stone altar, with a star ornament round the outer edge, and with three of the crosses still visible on its surface, and some tiles bearing the same patterns as those from Bawsey and Blackborough, near Lynn. The present church is supposed to be St. Andrew's, as a field to the east of it is still called St. Andrew's close; and the Institution books furnish a regular series of incumbents to the present time, while the list of those of St. Mary breaks off at about 1437, when probably the building became dilapidated. Pieces of Roman pottery, coins, stone celts, and a flint arrow-head have been found in the parish.

Before I close these remarks, I will mention, for the cu-

rious in such matters, that a family of the name of Greengrass is buried in the churchyard, whose grave-stones tell us that among their Christian names were, Adolphus, Alpheg, Alethea, Hegesias, &c., and that the following tributes were paid to their memory.

On one stone to the memory of Elizabeth Greengrass, wife of Thomas Greengrass, aged 33, 1789 :

“ My Saviour fell a sacrifice in his prime, aged 33 ;

“ I leave this world in my prime, the same age as he.”

On another, to the memory of William, the son of Thomas and Susan Greengrass, who died May 6, 1815, in the 23rd year of his age :

“ This young man was a great student. He understood the French, Italian, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages ; also Astronomy and Astrology. He wrote his own nativity, and predicted the time he was to die.

“ O DEATH, THOU HAST STOPPED HIS CAREER.”

If these desultory notices should appear to you worthy of the place proposed for them, I shall be gratified ; but it will occasion no disappointment, should your better judgment consign them to a less conspicuous one in our collections—viz. the Portfolio of the Society.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

JAMES BULWER.

Aylsham, March 30th, 1847.
