It is singular that the two Poets Laureate of James I. should have exactly the same epitaph. Davenant followed Jonson as Poet Laureate, and by his direction his stone (near that of Old Parr) bears only the words "O Rare Sir William Davenant"; so there are four inscriptions in the Abbey bearing the words "O Rare," three of which are to Jonson.

D. J.

Ben Jonson died 6 Aug., 1637, in one of the little houses which used to cover St. Margaret's Churchyard, and, as a dweller in the precincts, was buried in the Abbey. His grave is in the third bay of the north aisle of the nave; and a mural monument with a bas-relief portrait bust was put up (close to Spenser's tablet) above the low doorway in the south wall of the south transept (Poets' Corner), in 1728, by a posthumous admirer, Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford.

The poet's surname is traditionally spelt Jonson; but Clarendon employs the more usual form Johnson, which also appears on his gravestone.

A. R. BAYLEY.

A story about Jonson's grave is told by Mr. Watson in his history of 'The Savage Club,' which is, I think, interesting enough to be retold in these columns. It is as follows:

"One not knowing the history of the poet's burial wonders how, so large a man, came to have so small a gravestone. The fact is that the stone rests just above the crown of his head, for the author of 'Every Man in his Humour' was buried standing upright. That the head should now be under the pavement at Westminster is owing mainly, and I may say entirely, to Draper's reverence for the poet's memory. It came to his ears in Dean Buckland's time that the grave had been opened with a view of putting to a test the tradition as to the strange manner of Johnson's burial. Was it actually true that he was buried standing on his feet? The story was verified in every particular: some of the resurrectionists were also relic-hunters, and one of them carried off Jonson's thigh-bone, and another his skull, which had still some of the poet's characteristic red hair adhering to it. Draper was then the contributor of a weekly article to The Illustrated London News, and hearing that a distinguished man of science and popular writer had the skull in his possession, and meant to keep it, he intimated pretty plainly to this gentleman that if the illustrious relic was not returned to its proper resting-place, he would make a public exposure of the whole of the facts. It happened, in consequence, that Ben Jonson's grave was again opened, and that the renowned skull, with its red hair, was once more placed under the little diamond-shaped stone."

The Mr. Edward Draper referred to was a very old member of the Savage Club, and I had the pleasure of his acquaintance myself in the sixties and seventies of the last century.

ALAN STEWART.

See also 7 S. iv. 129, 235, 434; 8 S. xi. 368, 452; xii. 71.

John T. Page.

Long Itchington, Warwickshire.

[Mr. J. H. MacMichael, Mr. Willoughby Maycock, Mr. A. Rhodes, and Mr. W. Scott also thanked for replies.]

CHILDREN WITH THE SAME CHRISTIAN NAME (10 S. xii. 365; 11 S. i. 35, 79).—It is difficult to believe that a practice fraught with such obvious confusion and inconveniences could have been utilized to any great extent, and I think it not improbable that many of the cases cited would collapse if they could be closely investigated.

Mr. McMurray (ante, p. 35) quotes evidence of three successive Samuels, of the same parents, being respectively baptized in 1684, 1688, and 1689, which, however, proves nothing. For instance, a Dr. Dove (who appears to have come from the county of Durham, and who married the "pretty Miss Martin of Gotham" of Anna Seward's letters) settled in Nottingham, and St. Mary's baptismal register shows that three successive George Doves were born to him in 1775, 1776, and 1777. Any wonder aroused by this circumstance is promptly dissipated on reference to the corresponding burial register, which proves that the first two died each before the appearance of his successor. Consequently, for Mr. McMurray's case to carry any weight, it is essential that he should ascertain what the records of mortality have to say (if anything) as to the duration of life of the first two Samuels.

Col. Parry says (ante, p. 35) that John appears to be the name most generally duplicated in the same family; but if this statement is based on parish-register entries I have a suspicion that the old-time clerks sometimes used the same spelling indifferently for John and Joan. The two following quaint entries I recently extracted from St. Mary's burial register, Nottingham:

9 Aug., 1568: "Jhon and Johan, both the infant twyn lyngs of Henrye Pett."
20 Nov., 1585: "John & John, the ii twyns of Wyllyam Dearneley."

Unfortunately, I have not the evidence of the baptismal register with respect to these two cases, so that they are not submitted as definite evidence, one way or the other, as proof of sex is lacking.

A. STAPLETON.

39, Burford Road, Nottingham.