NOTES AND QUERIES.

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Doctrines of Permutations and Combinations, by Mr. James Bernoulli, together with some other useful Mathem. Tracts. Publ. by Francis Mas- seres, Esq., Cursitor Baron of the Court of Exchequer," Lond., 1795, 8vo. Maseres in his pre- face says, p. vii:—

"This Table of Prime Numbers Dr. Wallis set a high value on, insomuch that he took the pains to examine it carefully throughout, and to correct the few errors that he found in it; so that now, with his corrections, it may be considered as very accurate. This Table therefore, together with the Appendix in which it is con- tained, I have here caused to be reprinted immediately after the foregoing Discourse of Dr. Wallis."

JOHN E. BAILEY.

Stretford, near Manchester.

"THE SPIRIT OF DESPOTISM," BY VICESIMUS KNOX, D.D.

In the year 1821 this work was reissued by the celebrated William Hone, in popular form, demy 8vo., double columns, pp. 94, "dedicated to Lord Castleragh," and with a woodcut vignette on the title-page, from a design by George Cruikshank, representing a spaniel licking a scourage, with the motto from All's Well that Ends Well, "What a past saving slave is this!"

The editor says in his short preface that the book

"Was first privately printed at London in 1795, during the war against France, in a duodecimo of 280 pages, and a very few copies of it circulated with great secrecy. The time is arrived for its being removed from the shelf of the curious in rare books for the perusal of the British People; yet its Author, and his reasons for not publishing it, must for the present remain unknown. His genius and sentiments command a respect which restrains me from omitting, substituting, or altering a single word; even his Italics and Capitals are preserved, and his mottoes placed at the back of the title. I have merely placed running head-lines to the subjects, and prefixed a Design, to denote that, as the fawning spaniel licks the scourage, so a free man, who crouches to the oppressor, becomes a slave and worshipper of the Lash."

In the following year (1822) the same editor published what may be termed a "library edition" of the work—a handsomely printed octavo, pp. 623, dedicated to Lord Castlereagh, and with a woodcut vignette on the title-page, from a design by George Cruikshank, representing a spaniel licking a scourge, with the motto from All's Well that Ends Well, "What a past saving slave is this!"

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In the following year (1822) the same editor published what may be termed a "library edition" of the work—a handsomely printed octavo, pp. 623, with the name of Vicesimus Knox, D.D., the imputed author, upon the title-page. This eminent writer had died in the interval (Sept. 6, 1821); and we have therefore to depend upon the statement of Hone that he had fully admitted the author- ship. From the "Advertisement" of the editor prefixed, we gather that, after publishing the earlier edition, and "making fruitless inquiries after the name of the author," he succeeded in discovering this; that he had had an interview with him for the purpose of apologizing for the unauthorized publication of the work; and that he had found "that the interval which had elapsed since its composition had only tended to confirm the writer in the constitutional principles of English liberty that in the following pages are so forcibly main- tained."

Hone further states, as to the original edition, that the writer, upon a calm review of his work, fearing that the strong indignation which animated him in its composition might seem to have led him to employ language too glowing and enthusiastic, determined "to suppress the publication altogether, and not a solitary copy had been at any time circul- ated with his consent," but that three copies had been, "by some means," preserved. From one of these an edition had been printed in America without a name; another "fell accidentally into the hands of a private gentleman"; and a third was "accidentally purchased at a bookseller's in London by the editor."

Now, has any one ever seen the original "privately printed" edition, of London, 1795, or the American reprint? I do not find that the Spirit of Despotism is included by biographers among the admitted works of Dr. Knox; and without wishing to insinuate the slightest doubt of the veracity of the much abused Hone, it seems rather odd that, seeing how "unique" and "rare" books have a knack of turning up everywhere, one has never caught a sight of the "original edition"; and very unfortunate that the imputed author should have happened to die in the short interval between the publication of the two reprints.

A few passages—notably one describing the wealthy and aristocratic suitor of some pauper "Iphigenia" (ed. 1821, p. 60)—deemed a little too strong even for that day, were omitted in the issue of the following year. William Bates, B.A.

Birmingham.

[See "N. & Q." 5th S. x. 448, 503.]

FOLK-LORE: RUBBING WITH A DEAD HAND.

A beneficed clergyman in an eastern county has just told me the following horrible story of what happened in his parish about forty years ago. As a piece of folk-lore it ought to be put on record, but my reason for sending it to you is moral, not scientific only. What is here men- tioned took place in December, 1837. There has, however, been little or no change since that time in the beliefs of un instructed people. These survivals of savage modes of thought are interest- ing, but the suffering they entail is so great that one cannot but wish that schoolmasters and all others who come into official connexion with the ignorant would make it a point of duty to endeavour to uproot them.

Educated people for the most part think that practices of this sort are rare because they seldom read of them in the newspapers or hear them spoken of. The facts are far otherwise, but those who believe in and practise such rites have a notion that they are contemned for their faith by
their superiors, and will keep it secret when they can. They also believe that, though efficacious, rites of this sort are connected with things evil, and are, therefore, not to be spoken of.

A little girl of about eight years of age had from birth been troubled with scrofulous disease, and had been reared with great difficulty. Her friends consulted "the wise man" of the neighbourhood, who told the mother that if she took the girl and rubbed her naked body all over with the hand of a dead man, she would be restored to perfect health. The experiment was tried, and the poor little girl was nearly killed with fright, and, of course, made no better. It is hard to conceive more intense misery than the child must have suffered. She has long been dead, and, as she moved to a distant place, my friend cannot trace her history. There can be little doubt but that the memory of this horrible rite would haunt her imagination awake and sleeping as long as she lived.

When I had written thus far I showed my letter to a lady who has much knowledge of the habits and feelings of the poor: she says that this practice of rubbing with the dead hand for the purpose of taking away disease is at this present time a constant practice in the neighbourhood where she lives.

EDWARD PEACOCK.

Botteford Manor, Brigg.

[See "N. & Q.," 1st S. vi. 145.]

THE ISLE OF WIGHT.—The following extract is from a History of the Isle of Wight, published at Newport in 1785, by J. Albin. I give the extract verbatim, but am inclined to think that it is only a copy of some previous copy of the petition. The want of uniformity in spelling and close resemblance in many cases to our modern orthography lead me to infer that it is not absolutely literal, although it may be verbatim. As to the defenceless condition of the island, there are many documents which show that it was for centuries the object of attacks from France. Forts were built, but not always kept in good repair or well manned. Yarmouth Castle was one fort erected by Henry VIII. out of the ruins of the religious houses which were then dissolved. Yet this castle had for defence in the year 1559 (Elizabeth) only one porter at 8d. a day, and three gunners at 8d. a day each, amounting to 39L 10s. 10d. annually. The whole island was in a very unfit state for resistance, and for many reigns continued so, although spurs were occasionally made to repair and strengthen the defences.

Defenceless State of the Isle of Wight in 1449.

"Petition of the Inhabitants of the Isle of Wight to the King in the 28th of Henry VI., 1449.

"Isle of Wight—To the kyng our soveraigne lord: Please it unto youre most excellent grace to be informed how that your yeole of Wighte stondeth in the greystest jeopardy and daunger of any partes of youre Realmes of Englands; the whiche Isle withynhe five yeeres was at the

nombre of x.m. fensable men and xxx. Knightes and squyers dwellyng withinne; the whiche x.m. abovesaid are anentised through pestellence and Werres, and some volded because of oppression of extorcioners, that now there is skante xic. of fensable men, and Knightes never one, and squyers now no mo but Harry Bryn quyter of youre Howsthold, that may labour aboute Werres. And youre castle withynhe youre seid isl is not repaired, neither the walles, garrettes and lopes, nother stuffled with men and harneys, nother with gonnes, gonpowder, crosse bowes, quarrelles, longe bowes, arrowes, longe spere, axes, and glowyes, as suche a place shuld be in tyne of Werres; wherefore youre seid squyret ben so disconforted, and thorough the grete clamer noyse and enforcement that they heren daily of youre trewe lige men, that ben distressed and come oute of Normandy, that youre adversaries of France ben fully purposed and sette, and other youre enemies, for to conquer the seid isl, whiche God defende. Beseecheth mekele youre full humble subgettes of the seid isl, that it may like unto youre highnesse to ordeyne and appointe other elles to commund suche as shall occupie the said isl through vertus of youre grants, to ordeyne and appointe suche suteant of men, and studie above written, as it may be sufficient for the defene of the seid Isle. And as youre said subgettes shall have no cause to rejoyce owte of your said isl; and youre seid subgettes shall pray to God for you. Besponsso. The kyng woll that the Lord Beauchamp see to the rule thereof."

A. MURRAY.

THE FRENCH OATH "TUDIEU!"—The other day on awaking from a nap after dinner, and whilst I was still half asleep, the French word "tudieu" came—why I know not, for I had had nothing to do with French oaths—into my mind, and I began to consider its etymology. It immediately occurred to me that there was also the oath "vertuelle = vertudieu* = vertu de Dieu," and I came to the conclusion that "tudieu" was a contracted form of vertudieu, the first syllable ever having been dropped. I then rushed off to Littre, hoping and thoroughly expecting to find my conjecture confirmed; but what was my surprise to find that he considers tudieu to be a euphemism for "tue Dieu!" I must say that my own explanation, though arrived at in a half-waking state, seems to me much more probable and

* Blieu was used, as in parbleu (=pardon); and vertuelle (=vertu de Dieu), in order to avoid the use of dieu, much as od in English was used for God, as, e.g., in od's bodhius, od's pitkis (Nares), &c. Vertuchau was also used, in which the last syllable was still less like dieu, and Littre seems to think that this word was formed from another, vertuel, which had long struck me as singular. The latter should have been changed into blieu, but I now see that the change was not direct, but gradual. I have been led to this conclusion, not by anything that Littre says, but by two quotations which I have found in his Dict., and from which it appears that in old French vertuelle (sixteenth cent.) and verscelue (fifteenth cent.) were used. If so, dieu in the first instance became blieu by the simple change of d into b, and then beru, which had no meaning, was changed into the very similar berue (as it is done over it is very like d), which had. This beru, in the case of verscelue, was, as Littre tells us, also changed into bille (making verscelule), which formed a kind of feminine to it. Comp. the patois bieu (=fée) and fille. This bieu also had a meaning.