ALNWICK: WALKING THROUGH A BOG.—
John Wesley makes the following note in his ‘Journal’ for 25 April, 1753:

“We came to Alnwick on the day whereon those who have gone through their apprenticeship are made free of the corporation. Sixteen or seventeen, we were informed, were to receive their freedom this day, and in order thereto (such is the unparalleled wisdom of the present corporation, as well as of their forefathers), to walk through a great bog (purposely preserved for the occasion; otherwise it might have been drained long ago), which takes up some of them to the neck, and many of them to the breast.”

RICHARD H. THORNTON.
36, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.

Queries.

We must request correspondents desiring information on family matters of only private interest to affix their names and addresses to their queries, in order that answers may be sent to them direct.

BISMARCK, MISS RUSSEL, AND MISS LORAINE.—Prince Otto von Bismarck (born 1815), the first Chancellor of the German Empire, was in Aix-la-Chapelle in 1836, where, as well as in 1837 in Wiesbaden, he was on friendly terms with two young English ladies whose names, according to a letter from Bismarck to his wife in 1851, were “Miss Russel and Miss Isabella Loraine.” It is reported that Bismarck had then the serious intention of becoming engaged to one of these ladies.

In another letter from Bismarck dated 1836 the above-named Miss Russel is referred to as “the niece of the Duke and Duchess of C.” This “C.” means, doubtless, Cleve-
dale.

Any information about the life, birth, family, &c., of Miss Russel and Miss Isabella Loraine would be appreciated by

DR. A. VON WILKE.
Wilmersdorf, near Berlin, Kaiseralle 192.

MATTHEW PRIOR’S BIRTHPLACE.—Has anything been discovered in regard to Matthew Prior’s parents, ancestry, and place of birth since Johnson wrote the ‘Lives of the English Poets’? In it he speaks of Prior as of unknown parents; saying that according to some he was born at Wimborne, Dorset, but that others said he was the son of a joiner in London. In a note Johnson adds:

“The difficulty of settling Prior’s birthplace is great. In the register of his College he is called, at his admission by the President, Matthew Prior of Winburn in Middlesex; by himself next day, Mathew Prior of Dorsetshire, in which county, not in Middlesex, Wimborn, or Wimborne as it stands in the ‘Villare,’ is found. When he stood candidate for his fellowship five years afterwards, he was registered again by himself as of Middlesex. The last record ought to be preferred, because it was made upon oath.” &c.

There are references to this subject in ‘N. & Q.’ previous to 1893; also in Hutchins’s ‘Dorset,’ third edition, and in Longman’s Magazine for October, 1884; but I infer that at that date nothing was definitely known either as to his parents or place of birth.

E. HALVILAND HILLMAN.
3227, Campo S. Samuclle, Venice.

[The ‘D.N.B.’ in 1806 gave the date of Prior’s birth as 21 July, 1804, and state that the place of birth is uncertain, but that “the bulk of tradition” is in favour of Dorset.]

THACKERAY’S LAST WORDS.—Thackeray was found dead in his bed at 2, Palace Green, Kensington, on Christmas morning, 1863. According to his biography by his daughter, the last words he ever wrote, which were found by his bedside, were these: “And his heart throbbed with an infinite peace.”

In which of his works do these words occur?

FREDERICK T. HIBGANE.
8, Tottenham Place, Clifton.

[Not correctly quoted, but from the latest sheets of ‘Denis Duval’.

BOWLES’S ‘HUNDRED OF PENWITH’—I should be very grateful indeed to any owner of Bowles’s ‘Short Account of the Hundred of Penwith’ (1805) who would be kind enough to lend me this scarce volume. I am writing a history of the parishes of Phillack and Gwithian, and desire to refer to the above work.

J. HAMBLEDY ROWE, M.B.
88, Horton Grange Road, Bradford.

SONGS OF THE PEASANTRY.—Have any readers heard old servants, gardeners, labourers, and others singing songs remembered from youthful days? I began to collect such songs twenty years ago, and have been the means of saving many a gem from being forgotten. I am about to publish another book of songs of the peasantry, and shall feel obliged if any reader will contribute to it, naming the singer and place where obtained. Acknowledgment will be made. Songs lately published are not desired. Dialect or ordinary English words may be sent, and the name of the tune or a rough copy of the melody should be given. Songs of love-struck swains, dialogues between lovers, humorous incidents in life, carols, ballads,