not allow it to give immediate passage to the overflow, a portion of the current continues to pass onwards along the southern shore, and, when more than usually strong, even completes the entire circuit of the sea. There are no perceptible tides in this basin.

As might be expected from the foregoing, the salinity of Black Sea water varies (like that of the Baltic) at different periods of the year; but in consequence of the much greater total mass of water contained in the deeper part of this basin, the variation of its salinity is by no means so great as that of Baltic waters,—the usual range of its sp. gr. being from about 1·012 to 1·014, which corresponds to a little less or a little more than half the salinity of ordinary sea-water.

The most contradictory notions have prevailed as to the influence of the Euxine waters on those of the Mediterranean,—some writers having represented the rivers of the former as important contributors to the maintenance of the level of the Mediterranean, which the enormous evaporation from that area is always tending to reduce; whilst others assert that the Bosphorus and Dardanelles' currents are entirely due to the agency of wind. A valuable *datum* is afforded by the condition of the Caspian, in the closed basin of which, contracted by a reduction of its level to 80 feet below that of the Black Sea, an equality is now established between the amount of water lost by evaporation and that which is restored by its rivers and by the rainfall on its own surface. The areas of the Caspian and of the Euxine are not very different; and though the axis of the former basin lies north and south, while that of the latter lies east and west,—so that the northern portion of the Caspian is colder, and the southern portion warmer, than the northern and southern portions of the Black Sea,—the annual average temperatures, and consequently the total evaporation, of the two areas cannot differ much. Now, the drainage area of the Volga is equal to that of the Danube, the Dnieper, and the Dniester taken together; the Ural, with the two Transcaucasian rivers, Kur and Araxes, may be considered as equalling the Don; and thus the Bug and the rivers of the Caucasus and Asia Minor may be regarded as furnishing the excess of water discharged into the Black Sea above that which is received by the Caspian. Hence, as the whole of the river and rain water annually discharged into the basin of the Caspian is only sufficient to replace that which is lost by evaporation during the same period, it follows that we may in like manner regard the principal rivers of the Black Sea as only fulfilling the same function; consequently, if the Bosphorus were closed, the water which they pour into the Euxine basin would not produce any elevation of its level, being entirely dissipated by evaporation. Thus the water which the Black Sea has to spare for the Mediterranean only represents the *excess* of its river supply above the total river supply of the Caspian; and that this excess is small in amount appears from the fact that the salinity of the water of the Ægean is not sensibly reduced by it below that of the Mediterranean. But that there is some excess is evident from the consideration that if the evaporation of the Black Sea were merely neutralized by the return of fresh water, its water would have the salinity of that of the great basin with which it is in free communication, instead of containing only about half its proportion. It is further evident, on the other hand, that a continual efflux of the half-salt water of the Black Sea, to be replaced only by the fresh water discharged into its basin by rain and rivers, would in time completely drain that basin of its salt; and as its proportion, though liable to seasonal variation, undergoes no sensible diminution from year to year, it is obvious that the salt which passes out must be replaced by re-entry of Ægean water. The mode in which this replacement is effected has been recently elucidated by a careful examination of the currents of the Black Sea straits, of which an account will be presently given.

It is during the winter months, when a large proportion of the drainage area of the Black Sea rivers is covered with snow, that the supply of water is at its minimum; but it is then that the evaporation from its surface is also at its minimum; so that there is no reason to suppose that the level of the Black Sea ever falls below that of the Ægean. There can be no reasonable doubt that during the spring and early summer, when the melting of the snows causes the rivers to swell to their highest, the quantity of fresh water thus brought into the basin, being greater than that which is lost by evaporation (as is shown by the general reduction which then takes place in the salinity of its contents), would cause a considerable rise of level, if this were not kept down by the outflow through the straits.

Dardanelles and Bosphorus Currents.—It has been known from very early times that a current, usually of considerable strength, sets outwards through the Black Sea straits during a large part of the year,—its rate being subject, however, to considerable variation in accordance with the breadth of the channel, and also with the force and direction of the wind. Thus, when the N.E. wind is of average strength, the rate of the current at Gallipoli is about 1 knot per hour; whilst in the "Narrows" at Chanak Kaleski it is about 3 knots, increasing with a strong wind to about 4½ knots. In calm weather the out-current of the Dardanelles is usually slack; and if, as sometimes happens even during the general prevalence of N.E. winds, the wind should suddenly blow strongly from the S.W., the surface outflow may be entirely checked. It requires a continuance of strong S.W. wind, however, to reverse its direction; and its rate, when thus reversed, never equals that of the out-current. The Bosphorus current has not been as carefully studied as that of the Dardanelles; but its rate is greater, in accordance with the limitation of its channel, which is scarcely wider at any point than the "Narrows" of the Dardanelles. It continues to run, though at a reduced rate, when there is no wind, and is not known to be ever reversed except in winter after a S.W. gale of long duration. Even then it appears that the reversal is confined to the superficial stratum,—the direction of the sub-surface water-weeds proving that there is still an outflow from the Black Sea into the Ægean. Hence it cannot be reasonably maintained that it is by this occasional and superficial reversal that the immense mass of salt continually being carried outwards by the Bosphorus and Dardanelles currents is restored to the Black Sea basin.

The existence of an inward under-current (although controverted by an authority of weight) has been clearly demonstrated by the recent experimental researches of Captain Wharton, R.N., of H.M. surveying ship "Shearwater." By the use of a "current-drag," so constructed and suspended as always to present a large vertical surface, it was found that when the outward surface-current was at its strongest there was an inward under-current sufficiently strong and rapid to carry inwards the suspending buoy.

The difference in specific gravity of water obtained from different depths was found, in Captain Wharton's investigations (as in those previously made by Dr Carpenter, in conjunction with Captains Calver and Nares, in the Strait of Gibraltar), to afford, under ordinary circumstances, a very sure indication of the direction of the movement of each stratum,—the heavy water of the Ægean, as a rule, flowing inwards, and the lighter water of the Black Sea flowing outwards. And it was indicated alike by both modes of inquiry that the two strata move in opposite directions, one over the other, with very little intermixture or retardation,—the transition between them being usually very abrupt. The anomalies occasionally met with seemed due to the prevalence of opposite winds at the two ends of the straits.

Putting aside for the time the influence of wind, the double current of the Black Sea straits may be accounted for as follows:—The excess of fresh water discharged into the basin of the Black Sea is always tending to raise its level; and this produces an outward surface-current, which as regularly tends to keep it down. On the other hand, the reduced salinity of the Euxine column gives to the Ægean column an excess of lateral pressure, which causes its lower stratum to flow back into the Black Sea basin; and as the equality in the amount of salt thus carried back by the under-current to that which escapes by the surface-current is indicated by the maintenance of the standard salinity of Black Sea water, it follows that, as the water which escapes contains about half as much salt in equal measures as the water that enters, the volume of the latter must be about half that of the former

Now, when the rate of the surface-current is augmented by a N.E. wind, there will be not only a more rapid lowering of the Black Sea level, but a tendency to elevation at the Ægean end of the strait; and as this will augment the difference between the downward, and therefore the lateral, pressures of the two columns, the force and volume of the inward under-current will be augmented. When, on the other hand, the S.W. direction of the wind reverses the surface-current, it tends, by piling up the water at the N.E. end of the strait, to augment the weight of the Black Sea column,—the excess of which (notwithstanding its lower salinity) over that of the Ægean column, will then produce a reversal of the under-current also. When the S.W. wind is moderate enough to check the surface outflow without reversing it, the inward under-current will likewise be brought to a stand; for a slight rise in the level of the Black Sea column will cause its greater height to compensate for the greater salinity of the Ægean column, so that their lateral pressures will be equalized.—We have here a "pregnant instance" of the potency of slight differences in level and in salinity to produce even rapid movements of considerable bodies of water; and a strong confirmation is thus afforded by direct observation to the doctrine that differences in density produced by temperature are adequate to give rise to still larger, though slower, movements of the same kind in the great ocean basins.

Zoology.—The basin of the Black Sea is frequented by seals, dolphins, and porpoises; and it is said that in the neighbourhood of the mouths of the Danube the porpoise is perfectly white, so that the Greek mariners, when they catch sight of it, know that they are in the current of that river, although in 30 fathoms water, and many leagues from land. The fish of the Black Sea appear to be for the most part the same as those of the Caspian and the Sea of Aral. Its northern rivers bring into it the sturgeon, sterlet, and other fresh-water fish, which can live in and near their estuaries. On the other hand, its waters are elsewhere salt enough for the mackerel, whiting, mullet, turbot, and sole. The *pelamys* spoken of by Strabo as issuing from the *Mœotis* (Sea of Azoff) in shoals, and as following the coast of Asia, is still abundant; though commonly spoken of as the herring, it seems to be a large sprat. The principal fish that enters this basin from the Mediterranean is the tunny, which comes into the Black Sea in large numbers at the spawning season. The other inhabitants of the Black Sea have not been especially studied; but it may be noted that a species of *Teredo* is very common and destructive both to ships and to wooden harbour-works, and that it is not confined to the salter waters of the basin, but frequents the estuaries where the water is almost fresh. (W. B. C.)

BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*), belongs to the *Turdidæ* or Thrushes, a family of Dentirostral Birds. The plumage of the male is of a uniform black colour, that of the female various shades of brown, while the bill of the male, especially during the breeding season, is of a bright gamboge yellow. The blackbird is of a shy and restless disposition, courting concealment, and rarely seen in flocks, or otherwise than singly or in pairs, and taking flight when startled with a sharp shrill cry. It builds its nest in March, or early in April, in thick bushes or in ivy-clad trees, and usually rears two broods each season. The nest is a neat structure of coarse grass and moss, mixed with earth, and plastered internally with mud, and here the female lays from four to six eggs of a blue colour speckled with black. The blackbird feeds chiefly on fruits, worms, the larvæ of insects, and snails, extracting the latter from their shells by dexterously chipping them on stones; and though it is generally regarded as an enemy of the garden, it is probable that the amount of damage done by it to the fruit is amply compensated for by its undoubted services as a vermin-killer. The notes of the blackbird are rich and full, but monotonous as compared with those of the song-thrush. Like many other singing birds it is, in the wild state, a mocking-bird, having been heard to imitate the song of the nightingale, the crowing of a cock, and even the cackling of a hen. In confinement it can be taught to whistle a variety of tunes, and even to imitate the human voice. It is found throughout Europe, Palestine, and the northern parts of Africa; and Darwin states that he observed it as far west as the Azores. Individuals reared in Britain, it is said, do not migrate; but annually great flocks arrive on the eastern shores of England from more northern countries, remaining for a few days only, and then proceeding southward.

BLACKBURN, a large manufacturing town and municipal borough of England, situated on a stream called, in *Domesday Book*, the Blackeburn, but now only known as "The Brook," in the north-eastern division of the county of Lancaster, 209 miles from London by railway, 15 E. of Preston, and 30 N.N.W. of Manchester. Besides its numerous churches and chapels, the public buildings of Blackburn comprise a large town-hall, finished in 1856, a market-house, an exchange, built in 1865, a county court (1863), public baths (1864), and, outside the town, an infirmary (1862). A public park of about 50 acres was opened in 1857. Since about 1865 a variety of extensive and important improvements have been effected in the general condition of the town, which is now well paved and lighted, has an elaborate system of drainage, and receives an abundant supply of water. Previous to that date the so-called streets were, over a large area, almost useless for purposes of traffic. The staple trade of Blackburn has long been the manufacture of cotton, for the development of which a great deal was done by some natives of the town, such as Peel and Hargreaves, in the last century. The subordinate branches include woollen factories, engineering works, iron foundries, and breweries. In 1871 there were employed in the cotton factories 14,220 men and 17,075 women, of twenty years of age and upwards; the engineering works gave employment to 356 men, and the iron manufacture to 794. Coal, and lime, and building stone are abundant in the neighbouring district, which is, however, very far from fertile. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal passes the town, which has also extensive railway communication. Blackburn is a place of some antiquity, and its parish church of St Mary's (for the most part taken down in 1813), dated from before the Norman Conquest. It was for a time the chief town of a district known as Blackburnshire, and as early as the reign of Elizabeth ranked as a flourishing market town. About

the middle of the 17th century it became famous for its "checks," which were afterwards superseded by a similar linen-and-cotton fabric known as "Blackburn greys." A charter of incorporation was obtained in 1851, when W. H. Hornby, one of the largest cotton manufacturers of the place, was elected first mayor. The population of the town, which was only about 5000 in 1790, had increased by 1801 to 11,980. In 1861 there were 11,306 inhabited houses in the municipal borough; and by the census of 1871 the number had increased to 14,690. In the former year the population of the municipal borough was 63,126, and in 1371 it amounted to 76,339 (males 36,099, females 40,240), while the parliamentary burgh with its extended boundaries contained 82,928 inhabitants. Blackburn returns two members to parliament.

BLACKCOCK (*Tetrao tetrix*), a Gallinaceous Bird belonging to the family *Tetraonidæ* or Grouse, the female of which is known as the Grey Hen and the young as Poults. In size and plumage the two sexes offer a striking contrast, the male weighing about 4 lb, its plumage for the most part of a rich glossy black shot with blue and purple, the lateral tail feathers curved outwards so as to form, when raised, a fan-like crescent, and the eyebrows destitute of feathers and of a bright vermilion red. The female, on the other hand, weighs only 2 lb, its plumage is of a russet brown colour irregularly barred with black, and its tail feathers are of the ordinary form or but slightly forked. The males are polygamous, and during autumn and winter associate together, feeding in flocks apart from the females; but with the approach of spring they separate, each selecting a locality for itself, from which it drives off all intruders, and where morning and evening it seeks to attract the other sex by a display of its beautiful plumage, which at this season attains its greatest perfection, and by a peculiar cry, which Selby describes as "a crowing note, and another similar to the noise made by the whetting of a scythe." Its nest, composed of a few stalks of grass, is built on the ground, usually beneath the shadow of a low bush or a tuft of tall grass, and here the female lays from six to ten eggs of a dirty-yellow colour speckled with dark brown. The blackcock then rejoins his male associates, and the female is left to perform the labours of hatching and rearing her young brood. The plumage of both sexes is at first like that of the female, but after moulting the young males gradually assume the more brilliant plumage of their sex. There are also many cases on record, and specimens may be seen in the principal museums, of old female birds assuming, to a greater or less extent, the plumage of the male. The blackcock is very generally distributed over the highland districts of Northern and Central Europe, and in some parts of Asia. It is found on the principal heaths in the south of England, but is specially abundant in the Highlands of Scotland, where great numbers are killed annually during the statutory shooting season, which commences on August 20 and extends to December 10. The bird does not occur in Ireland, and all attempts that have hitherto been made to naturalize it there have failed, although it now thrives and breeds in the south-west of Scotland within 21 miles of the Irish coast. During summer, blackcock reside chiefly on the ground, feeding on seeds, the young shoots of heath, and insects; in autumn they regularly frequent the stubble fields; but in winter they perch on trees, especially the birch and fir, the tender shoots of which then form their principal food.

BLACKLOCK, Thomas, a Scottish poet and divine, was born of humble but respectable parents at Annan, in Dumfriesshire, in 1721. When not quite six months old he lost his sight by the smallpox. Under this misfortune, his father and friends endeavoured to amuse him as he grew up by reading to him various books,—among others, the works of Milton, Spenser, Prior, Pope, and Addison. Shortly after the death of his father, which took place in 1740, some of Blacklock's poems began to be handed about among his acquaintances and friends, and a few specimens were brought under the notice of Dr Stevenson of Edinburgh, who was struck by their merits, and formed the design of giving the author a classical education. Blacklock, in consequence, was enrolled a student of divinity in the university of Edinburgh in 1741, and continued his studies under the patronage of Dr Stevenson till 1745, when he retired to Dumfries, and resided there until the close of the civil war. When peace had been restored, he returned to the university, and during this residence in Edinburgh he made the acquaintance of several literary men, in particular of Hume, who was extremely useful to him in the publication by subscription of the 4to edition of his poems in 1756. Two editions in 8vo had previously been published at Edinburgh, in 1746 and in 1754. After applying closely for a considerable time to the study of theology, he was in 1762 ordained minister of the church of Kirkcudbright; but owing to an opposition to the appointment on the part of the parishioners, he resigned his right to the living, and accepted a moderate annuity in its stead. In 1767 the degree of doctor in divinity was conferred on him by Marischal College, Aberdeen. He died on the 7th of July 1791. His poems are pleasing but weak effusions, and there is nothing remarkable about them save that they were written by one who laboured under the misfortune of blindness.

BLACKMORE, Sir Richard, a physician, and voluminous writer of theological and poetical works, was born in Wiltshire about 1650. He was educated at Westminster and Oxford, graduated in medicine at Padua, and settled in practice as a physician in London. Having early declared in favour of the Revolution, he was in 1697 chosen one of King William's physicians in ordinary, and received the honour of knighthood. On Queen Anne's accession, Sir Richard was also appointed one of her physicians, which office he held for some time. He died on the 9th October 1729. Blackmore had a passion for writing epics. No fewer than seven long poems were published by him between 1695 and 1723. The first was *Prince Arthur*, in 10 books; then followed *King Arthur*, in 12 books; *Eliza*, in 10; *Creation*, in 7; *Redemption*, in 6; *Nature of Man*, in 3; and *Alfred*, in 12. Of these *Creation*, a philosophic poem directed against the atomic theories of Epicurus and Lucretius, and intended to refute the atheism of Vanini, Hobbes, and Spinosa, and to unfold the intellectual philosophy of Locke, has been the most favourably received. Addison and Johnson praised it highly, the latter anticipating that this poem would transmit the author to posterity "among the first favourites of the English muse." It would be hard to find grounds for this expectation, which has certainly not been realized. The poem, like everything else that Blackmore wrote, is dull and tedious, and exhibits in every part the author's want of true poetic sensibility and taste.

BLACKPOOL, a seaside town of England, in Lancashire, situated on the coast to the north of the estuary of the Ribble, about 20 miles W. of Preston by rail. It is largely frequented as a bathing-place. A good sandy beach, bracing air, and a fine view, are its chief attractions. In the end of last century it was a mere hamlet, but since then it has gradually increased. It has two churches, two market-halls, a court-house, and assembly rooms. The parade affords a fine promenade. A new pier was built in 1866. Population in 1871, 6100.

BLACKSTONE, Sir William, an eminent English jurist, was born at London, July 10, 1723. He was a posthumous child, and his mother died before he was twelve

years old. From his birth the care of his education was undertaken by his maternal uncle Thomas Bigg, an eminent surgeon in London. When about seven years old he was sent to the Charterhouse School, and in 1735 he was admitted upon the foundation there by the nomination of Sir Robert Walpole. His progress was so rapid that at the age of fifteen he was at the head of the school, and qualified to be removed to the university, and he was accordingly entered a commoner at Pembroke College, Oxford, on the 30th of November 1738. At the time of entering he held an exhibition from his school, and in February following he was elected by his college to one of Lady Holford's exhibitions for Charterhouse scholars. He was a diligent student, devoting himself specially though not exclusively to the Greek and Roman poets. At the early age of twenty he compiled a treatise, entitled *Elements of Architecture*, intended for his own use only and not for publication, which was highly spoken of by those who were permitted to read it.

Having made choice of the profession of the law, he was entered in the Middle Temple, November 20, 1741. In a copy of verses of considerable merit, afterwards published by Dodsley in the fourth volume of his Miscellanies, entitled *The Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse*, he gave utterance to the regret with which he abandoned the pleasing pursuits of his youth for severer studies. Besides this, several fugitive pieces were at times communicated by him to his friends; and he left, but not with a view to publication, a small collection of juvenile pieces, consisting of both original poems and translations. Some notes which just before his death he communicated to Steevens, and which were inserted by the latter in his last edition of Shakespeare's works, show how well he understood the meaning and relished the beauties of his favourite English poet.

In November 1743 he was elected into the society of All Souls' College. In the November following he spoke the anniversary speech in commemoration of Archbishop Chichele, the founder, and the other benefactors to that house of learning, and was at the same time admitted actual fellow. From this period he divided his time between the university and the Temple, where he took chambers in order to attend the courts. In the former he pursued his academical studies, and on the 12th of June 1745 took the degree of bachelor of civil law; in the latter he applied himself closely to his profession, both in the hall and in his private studies; and on the 28th of November 1746 he was called to the bar. Though but little known or distinguished in Westminster Hall, he was actively employed, during his occasional residences at the university, in taking part in the internal management of his college. In May 1749, as a small reward for his services, and to give him further opportunities of advancing the interests of the college, Blackstone was appointed steward of its manors. In the same year, on the resignation of his uncle, Seymour Richmond, he was elected recorder of the borough of Wallingford in Berkshire. On the 26th of April 1750 he commenced doctor of civil law, and thereby became a member of the convocation, which enabled him to extend his views beyond the narrow circle of his own society, to the benefit of the university at large. In the summer of 1753 he took the resolution of wholly retiring to his fellowship and an academical life, still continuing the practice of his profession as a provincial counsel.

His lectures on the laws of England appear to have been an early and favourite idea; for in the Michaelmas term immediately after he quitted Westminster Hall, he entered on the duty of reading them at Oxford; and we are told by the author of his *Life*, that even at their commencement, the high expectations formed from the acknowledged abilities of the lecturer attracted to these lectures a very crowded class of young men of the first families, characters, and hopes. Bentham, however, declares that he was a "formal, precise, and affected lecturer—just what you would expect from the character of his writings—cold, reserved, and wary, exhibiting a frigid pride." It was not till the year 1758 that the lectures in the form they now bear were read in the university. Mr Viner having by his will left not only the copyright of his abridgment, but other property to a considerable amount, to the University of Oxford, in order to found a professorship, fellowships, and scholarships of common law, Blackstone was on the 20th of October 1758 unanimously elected Vinerian professor; and on the 25th of the same month he read his first introductory lecture, which he published at the request of the vice-chancellor and heads of houses, and afterwards prefixed to the first volume of his celebrated *Commentaries*. It is doubtful whether the *Commentaries* were originally intended for the press; but many imperfect and incorrect copies having got into circulation, and a pirated edition of them being either published or preparing for publication in Ireland, the author thought proper to print a correct edition himself, and in November 1765 published the first volume, under the title of *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. The remaining parts of the work were given to the world in the course of the four succeeding years. It ought to be remarked, that before this period the reputation which his lectures had deservedly acquired for him had induced him to resume his practice in Westminster Hall; and, contrary to the general order of the profession, he who had quitted the bar for an academic life was sent back from the college to the bar with a considerable increase of business. He was likewise elected to parliament, first for Hindon, and afterwards for Westbury in Wilts; but in neither of these departments did he equal the expectations which his writings had raised. The part he took in the Middlesex election drew upon him the attacks of some persons of ability in the senate, and likewise a severe animadversion from the caustic pen of *Junius*. This circumstance probably strengthened the aversion he professed to parliamentary attendance, "where," he said, "amidst the rage of contending parties, a man of moderation must expect to meet with no quarter from any side." In 1770 he declined the place of solicitor-general; but shortly afterwards, on the promotion of Sir Joseph Yates to a seat in the court of Common Pleas, he accepted a seat on the bench, and on the death of Sir Joseph succeeded him there also. Blackstone died on the 14th February 1780, in the fifty-seventh year of his age.

The design of the *Commentaries* is exhibited in his first Vinerian lecture printed in the introduction to them. The author there dwells on the importance of noblemen, gentlemen, and educated persons generally being well acquainted with the laws of the country; and his treatise, accordingly, is as far as possible a popular exposition of the laws of England. Falling into the common error of identifying the various meanings of the word law, he advances from the law of nature (being either the revealed or the inferred will of God) to municipal law, which he defines to be a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power in a state commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong. On this definition he founds the division observed in the *Commentaries*. The objects of law are rights and wrongs. Rights are either rights of persons or rights of things. Wrongs are either public or private. These four headings form respectively the subjects of the four books of the *Commentaries*.

Blackstone was by no means what would now be called a scientific jurist. He has only the vaguest possible grasp of the elementary conceptions of law. He evidently regards the law of gravitation, the law of nature, and the law of

England, as different examples of the same principle—as rules of action or conduct imposed by a superior power on its subjects. He propounds in terms a fallacy which is perhaps not yet quite expelled from courts of law, viz., that municipal or positive laws derive their validity from their conformity to the so-called law of nature or law of God. "No human laws," he says, "are of any validity if contrary to this." His distinction between rights of persons and rights of things, implying, as it would appear, that things as well as persons have rights, is attributable to a misunderstanding of the technical terms of the Roman law. In distinguishing between private and public wrongs (civil injuries and crimes) he fails to seize the true principle of the division. Austin, who accused him of following slavishly the method of Hale's *Analysis of the Law*, declares that he "blindly adopts the mistakes of his rude and compendious model; missing invariably, with a nice and surprising infelicity, the pregnant but obscure suggestions which it proffered to his attention, and which would have guided a discerning and inventive writer to an arrangement comparatively just." By the want of precise and closely-defined terms, and his tendency to substitute loose literary phrases, he falls occasionally into irreconcilable contradictions. Even in discussing a subject of such immense importance as equity, he hardly takes pains to discriminate between the legal and popular senses of the word, and, from the small place which equity jurisprudence occupies in his arrangement, he would scarcely seem to have realized its true position in the law of England. Subject, however, to these strictures the completeness of the treatise, its serviceable if not scientific order, and the power of lucid exposition possessed by the author demand emphatic recognition. Blackstone's defects as a jurist are more conspicuous in his treatment of the underlying principles and fundamental divisions of the law than in his account of its substantive principles.

Blackstone by no means confines himself to the work of a legal commentator It is his business, especially when he touches on the framework of society, to find a basis in history and reason for all our most characteristic institutions. There is not much either of philosophy or fairness in this part of his work. Whether through the natural conservatism of a lawyer, or through his own timidity and subserviency as a man and a politician, he is always found to be a specious defender of the existing order of things. Bentham accuses him of being the enemy of all reform, and the unscrupulous champion of every form of professional chicanery. Austin says that he truckled to the sinister interests and mischievous prejudices of power, and that he flattered the overweening conceit of the English in their own institutions. He displays much ingenuity in giving a plausible form to common prejudices and fallacies; but it is by no means clear that he was not imposed upon himself. More undeniable than the political fairness of the treatise is its merit as a work of literature. It is written in a most graceful and attractive style, and although no opportunity of embellishment has been lost, the language is always simple and clear. Whether it is owing to its literary graces, or to its success in flattering the prejudices of the public to which it was addressed, the influence of the book in England has been extraordinary. Not lawyers only, and lawyers perhaps even less than others, accepted it as an authoritative revelation of the law. It performed for educated society in England much the same service as was rendered to the people of Rome by the publication of their previously unknown laws. It is more correct to regard it as a handbook of the law for laymen than as a legal treatise; and as the first and only book of the kind in England it has been received with somewhat indiscriminating reverence. It is certain that a vast amount of the constitutional sentiment of the country has been inspired by its pages. To this day Blackstone's criticism of the English constitution would probably express the most profound political convictions of the majority of the English people. Long after it has ceased to be of much practical value as an authority in the courts, it remains the arbiter of all public discussions on the law or the constitution. On such occasions the *Commentaries* are apt to be construed as strictly as if they were a code. It is amusing to observe how much importance is attached to the *ipsissima verba* of a writer who aimed more at presenting a picture intelligible to laymen than at recording the principles of the law with technical accuracy of detail. (E. R.)

BLAINVILLE, Henri-Marie Ducrotay de, a distinguished naturalist, was born at Arques, near Dieppe, Sept. 12, 1777. About the year 1795 he entered the school of design at Rouen, but after a very short time he went to Paris, where he became a pupil of Vincent the painter. Attracted by the lectures of Cuvier and other eminent professors in the College of France, he commenced the study of anatomy, and in 1808 he took the degree of M.D. He now devoted himself to the study of natural history, particularly the department of myology, and he soon attracted the attention of Cuvier, who engaged him to draw some figures for one of his works, and to carry out some of the practical work of anatomy. He was also chosen by that illustrious professor to supply his place on occasions at the College of France and at the Athenæum, and in 1812 he obtained the vacant chair of anatomy and zoology in the Faculty of Sciences at Paris. His somewhat irascible disposition was probably one cause of the subsequent estrangement between him and Cuvier, which ended in an open and irreconcilable enmity. In 1825 Blainville was admitted a member of the Academy of Sciences; and in 1830 he was appointed to succeed Lamarck in the chair of natural history at the museum. This he resigned in 1832, being appointed on the death of Cuvier to the chair of comparative anatomy, which he continued to occupy for the space of eighteen years, and in the conduct of which he proved himself no unworthy successor to his great teacher. Blainville was found dead in a railway carriage while travelling between Rouen and Caen, May 1, 1850.

Besides a great variety of separate memoirs, he was the author of *Prodrome d'une Nouvelle Distribution Méthodique du Règne Animal*, 1816; *Ostéographie ou Description Iconographique Comparée du Squelette*, &c.; *Faune Française*, 1821–1830; *Cours de Physiologie Générale et Comparée*, 1833; *Manuel de Malacologie et de Conchyliologie*, 1825–1827; *Histoire des Sciences Naturelles au Moyen Age*, 1845.

BLAIR, or Port-Blair, the chief place in the convict settlement of the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean, is situated on the south-east shore of the South Andaman Island, in 11° 42′ N. lat. and 93° E. long. In 1789 it was selected as a convict settlement, under orders of the Indian Government, by Lieutenant Blair, R.N., whose name the port bears. It possesses one of the best harbours in Asia, while its central position in the Bay of Bengal gives it immense advantage as a place of naval rendezvous for military operations in this part of the world. For further particulars see Andaman Islands.

BLAIR, Dr Hugh, was born April, 7, 1718, at Edinburgh, where his father was a merchant. He entered Edinburgh University in 1730 and won the favourable notice of Professor Stevenson by an essay on the Beautiful, written for the logic class in his sixteenth year. On taking the degree of M.A. in 1739, he printed a thesis *De Fundamentis et Obligatione Legis Naturæ*, which contains an outline of the moral principles afterwards unfolded in his sermons. He was licensed to preach in 1741, and in a few months the earl of Leven, hearing of his eloquence, presented him to the parish of Collessie in Fife. In 1743 he was elected to the second charge of the Canongate Church, Edinburgh, where he performed the pastoral duties with great success, until removed to Lady Yester's, one of the city churches, in 1754. He married his cousin, Katherine Bannatyne, in 1748, and by her had a son, who died in infancy, and a daughter who lived to her twenty-first year. In 1757 the University of St Andrews conferred on him the degree of D.D., and in the following year he was promoted to the High Church, Edinburgh, the most important charge in Scotland. In 1759 he commenced, under the patronage of Lord Kames, to deliver a course of lectures on composition, the success of which led to the foundation of a chair of rhetoric and belles lettres in the Edinburgh University. To this chair he was appointed in 1762, with a salary of £70 a year. Having long taken interest in the Celtic poetry of the Highlands, he published in 1763 a laudatory *Dissertation* on Macpherson's *Ossian*, of which he maintained the authenticity. This critique, after being greatly overrated at the time, has now fallen into neglect. In 1777 the first volume of his *Sermons* appeared. It was succeeded by other four volumes, all of which met with the greatest success. Dr Samuel Johnson praised them warmly. "I love Blair's *Sermons*," Johnson said, "his doctrine is the best limited, the best expressed; there is the most warmth without fanaticism, the most rational transport." The *Sermons* were translated into almost every language of Europe, and in 1780, to signify the royal approbation, George III. conferred upon him a pension of £200 a year. In 1783 he retired from his professorship and published his *Lectures on Rhetoric* which he had carefully revised, and which have been frequently reprinted. He died, after a brief illness, on the 27th December 1801. In the church Blair belonged to the "moderate" or latitudinarian party, and his *Sermons* have been objected to as deficient in doctrinal definiteness. His once brilliant reputation is now becoming forgotten. His works display little originality, but are written in a flowing and elaborate style; and his *Rhetoric*, although inferior to Campbell's, and wanting in research and depth of thought, is unworthy of the neglect it has met with.

BLAIR, Robert, author of the well-known poem entitled *The Grave*, was the eldest son of the Rev. Robert Blair, of Edinburgh. He was probably born at Edinburgh about the year 1700, and at the university of that city he received the elements of a classical education. He afterwards spent some time on the Continent. Upon his return he took orders, and in 1731 was ordained minister of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian, where he spent the remainder of his life. He died of fever, February 4, 1746, and was succeeded in his living by John Home, the author of *Douglas*. His fourth son became lord-president of the Court of Session. Blair wrote several other pieces besides *The Grave;* but that poem alone constitutes his title to rank as a poet. It consists of a succession of descriptions and reflections, which have no other connection except what they may derive from their relation to a common subject, but these are interspersed with striking allusions, picturesque imagery, touches of a rude though effective pathos, and a vein of sentiment at once natural and just. The rhythm is often harsh, and the versification frequently devoid of correctness, harmony, and grace; but it has nevertheless a masculine vigour and freshness about it, which more than atone for the defects in the finishing; while, in certain moods of the mind, the air of deep and almost misanthropical melancholy diffused over the whole proves highly touching and impressive. Campbell, in the *Pleasures of Hope*, has borrowed, with a slight variation, a line from this poem—

"Its visits,
Like those of angels, short and far between."

The vigorous, though occasionally rather forced, poetic conceptions of the author of *The Grave*, were finely illustrated in Cromek's edition, published in 1808, by the grandly wild designs of William Blake, engraved by the delicate burin of Schiavonetti. *The Grave* was first printed at London in 1743.

BLAKE, Robert, the famous English admiral of the Commonwealth, was born at Bridgwater in Somersetshire, in August 1598. His birth thus falls in the year before that of Cromwell; their lives ran parallel in the service of their country; their characters present many points of likeness; and they died within a few months of each other. Blake was the eldest son of a well-to-do merchant, and received his early education at the grammar school of Bridgwater. At the age of sixteen he was sent to Oxford, entering at first St Alban's Hall, but removing afterwards to Wadham College, then recently founded by his father's friend, Nicholas Wadham. He remained at the university till 1623, and though certainly not wanting in ability or in diligence, he missed, for some reason not clearly ascertained, such college preferment as he naturally aimed at. From Oxford, after taking his degree of M.A., he returned to his father's house, where, through the memorable and troubled years which followed, he led a quiet and retired life. His thorough honesty, his public spirit and disinterestedness, his courageous utterance of what he thought of the court and the church, of shipmoney and the High Commission Court and the licence of the times, made him a man of mark among his neighbours. And when, after eleven years of kingship without parliaments, a parliament was summoned to meet in April 1640, Blake was elected by the Presbyterian party to represent his native borough. This parliament, named "the Short," was dissolved in three weeks, and the career of Blake as a politician was suspended. Two years later the inevitable conflict began. Blake declared for the Parliament; and thinking, says Johnson, a bare declaration for right not all the duty of a good man, he raised a troop of horse in his county, and rendered such efficient service, that in 1643 he was entrusted with the command of one of the forts of Bristol. This he stoutly held during the siege of the town by Prince Rupert, and was near being hung for continuing his resistance after the governor had capitulated. In the following year Colonel Blake took Taunton by surprise, and notwithstanding its imperfect defences and inadequate supplies, held the town for the Parliament against two sieges by the Royalists, until July 1645, when it was relieved by Fairfax. Blake did not approve of the trial and execution of Charles I.; but he adhered to the Parliamentary party after the king's death, and within a month (February 1649) was appointed, with Colonels Dean and Popham, to the command of the fleet, under the title of General of the Sea. In April he was sent in pursuit of Prince Rupert, who with the Royalist fleet had entered the harbour of Kinsale in Ireland. There he blockaded the Prince for six months; and when the latter, in want of provisions, and hopeless of relief, succeeded in making his escape with the fleet and in reaching the Tagus, Blake followed him thither, and again blockaded him for some months. The king of Portugal refusing permission for Blake to attack his enemy, the latter made reprisals by falling on the Portuguese fleet, richly laden, returning from Brazil. He captured seventeen ships and burnt three, bringing his prizes home without molestation. After revictualling his fleet, he sailed again, captured a French man-of-war, and then pursued Prince Rupert once more to the harbour of Carthagena. The Spanish governor would not allow him to violate the peace of a neutral port, and he therefore withdrew. In January 1651 he at last attacked the Royalist fleet in Malaga harbour, and destroyed the whole