

**PICTURESQUE VIEWS ON THE RIVER
THAMES, FROM ITS SOURCE IN
GLOCESTERSHIRE TO THE NORE; WITH
OBSERVATIONS ON THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS
AND OTHER WORKS OF ART IN ITS VICINITY.
IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. II; PP. 3-258**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649671496

Picturesque Views on the River Thames, from Its Source in Gloucestershire to the Nore; With Observations on the Public Buildings and Other Works of Art in Its Vicinity. In Two Volumes. Vol. II; pp. 3-258 by Samuel Ireland

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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SAMUEL IRELAND

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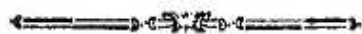


PICTURESQUE VIEWS

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

SAMUEL IRELAND,

Author of *A Tour through Holland, Brabant, &c.*

PICTURESQUE VIEWS OF

The Rivers Medway, Avon, and Wye;—of Graphic Illustrations

of Hogarth, and of Picturesque Views of the

Inns of Court, *&c. &c.*

VOL. II.



LONDON:

Printed by C. CLARKE, Northumberland-Court, Strand;

PUBLISHED BY T. EGERTON, WHITEHALL.

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THE town of Maidenhead, which gives name to the hundred, lies partly in the parish of Bray, and partly in that of Cookham. The ancient name of this place was Southialington. Whence its present name was derived we know not; but it is conjectured by some visionary to have taken its origin from one of the eleven hundred virgins said to have suffered martyrdom with St. Ursula, their leader, near Cologne in Germany; but a shrewd Jesuit, one Simordus, judging like a priest of the improbability of so many virgins meeting together, has reduced their number to two, viz. Ursula, their leader, and one other, named Undecimilla. In the time of Edward the Third, it seems to have obtained a more rational name, that of the brothers and sisters of Maidenhithe, under which it was incorporated.

ABOUT a mile below the bridge is the village of Bray, rendered famous by its accom-

modating Vicar, who, during the reign of Charles the Second, and the four succeeding Monarchs, never failed to conform to the prevailing principle of the times; and, as it is told, when reprobated for his apostacy, justified himself by saying, “ He had always been governed by what he thought a very laudable maxim—never on any terms (if he could avoid it) to part with his vicarage;” or, as the song said of him,

“ Old principles I did revoke,
 “ Set conscience at a distance ;
 “ Passive obedience is a joke,
 “ A jest is non-resistance.”

WHETHER this Vicar of Bray, the object of so much raillery, ever existed at all, or whether it was levelled at Vicars in general, I know not ; certain it is, that in the reign of Charles the Second, Dr. Caswell was Vicar of Bray, in Berkshire, near fifty years, and that he was not considered as particularly accommodating

commodating in his principles to the changes of the times. His successor, whose name was Brown, also held his vicarage fifty years; and he too was deemed steady in his principles; he died about thirty years since. These facts may possibly do away the imputation of apostacy from the respectable names I here mention. The following story has been in circulation relative to a Vicar of Bray, for the truth of which I cannot vouch :

“ CHARLES the Second had been hunting
 “ in Windsor Forest, and in the chase was
 “ separated from his attendants. In return-
 “ ing, he lost his road, and came to Bray
 “ after it was dark, where, on enquiring
 “ for the Vicar’s house, and being intro-
 “ duced, he told him that he was a traveller
 “ who had lost his way, and having spent
 “ all his money, begged that he, would ren-
 “ der him assistance to proceed on his
 “ journey, and that he would soon repay
 “ him