HERMES BRITANNICUS, A DISSERTATION ON THE CELTIC DEITY TEUTATES, THE MERCURIUS OF CAESAR, IN FURTHER PROOF AND CORROBORATION OF THE ORIGIN AND DESIGNATION OF THE GREAT TEMPLE AT ABURY, IN WILTSHIRE

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Hermes Britannicus, a Dissertation on the Celtic Deity Teutates, the Mercurius of Caesar, in Further Proof and Corroboration of the Origin and Designation of the Great Temple at Abury, in Wiltshire by W. L. Bowles

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W. L. BOWLES

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BY THE REV. W. L. BOWLES, M.A. M.R.S.L.

CANON RESIDENTIARY OF SARUM.

Deum maximè Mercurium colunt: hujus sunt plurima simulacra: hunc omnium inventorem artium ferunt, hunc viarum atque itinerum ducem; hunc ad quæstus pecuniæ mercaturasque habere vim maximam arbitrantur. *Post hunc*, Apollinem, et Martem, et Jovem, et Minervam.

CÆSAR.

LONDON:
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1828.

Gough Adds Wilts
p 29.

TO THE

RIGHT REV. THOMAS BURGESS,

LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY,

AND

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE.

My Lord,

To you, *not* as my venerated Diocesan, but to you as the President of the Royal Society of Literature, established under the especial patronage of our gracious Sovereign and most generous Benefactor, (the official seal of which Society is that fabled God of Learning and Eloquence, the subject of these notices,) I dedicate these remarks, on matters obscure indeed and recondite, but connected in no slight degree, however hitherto unnoticed, with our national antiquities, and not entirely foreign from some greater and more important views. I am, my Lord, with prayers for health and length of honoured days,

Your most faithful Friend and Servant,

W. L. Bowles.

INTRODUCTION.

If I shall have succeeded in throwing some additional light on the remains of the Druidical monuments in our island, particularly in that part where I have so long resided, Wiltshire, it has been entirely accidental.

Having promised Sir Richard Hoare to furnish the history of one parish, that with which I am connected, as a contribution towards the great work of Topographical History, in the illustration of which he has set so noble an example, I could not pass over the vast Wansdyke, whose track over the highest point of the Downs, at ten miles distance, I see from my parlour window. This circumstance led me to consider more particularly the adjoining remains of our most stupendous Celtic monument at Abury.

In the Parochial History of Bremhill I pointed out what appeared to me, upon reflection and com-

parison of the whole scene around it, to have been its origin and designation.

As the subject led me into a track of inquiry far beyond the limits of a chapter in a topographical parochial history, and as the inquiry was in a great degree novel, and had excited some attention, I became interested as I proceeded, particularly when all the proofs of what I first advanced seemed to accumulate, and therefore, as they connected themselves with points more important, I pursued the track with increased ardour, till what I intended as additional notes and confirmation became a volume.

I now submit all the relations which the extensive subject has suggested, and the arguments by which they are supported, to the dispassionate judgment of my readers, in a separate publication. Many will turn from the subject, scarcely deeming it worth a thought; some, who have made such subjects their study, may not agree with me; others, if they proceed, may regard my theory and illustrations with more interest: be that as it may, I have offered, on a subject interesting to some readers, my own views, suggested by reflection, and confirmed by reading. Few and scattered are the

monumental remains which gave rise to these remarks. The whole arrangement of the mysterious scene is dissolved; but who of cultivated feelings can survey these venerated relics unmoved? The Turk sits in sullen apathy amidst the works of the MIGHTY OF PAST AGES with which he is surrounded—he looks on these vast works with senseless indifference, or adds his petty havoc to the havoc of resistless Time. Shall we say this of any educated man in a country of knowledge, where such fragments and magnificent ruins lie? Yet educated men like these are found: Cicero and Johnson might best rebuke them. Alas! the remains of these gigantic structures are private property; otherwise could we doubt that, as the preservation of Eltham Palace has been advocated before our legislature, the enlightened nobleman, whose taste and feeling interfered on that occasion, would also, as he lives near the spot, raise one eloquent voice to preserve the last relics of that monument, which, before the light of revelation, recorded the dark but only hopes of our forefathers?

Respecting the origin of the popular worship paid to the subject of these pages, if what I shall say may be considered as having any basement in

truth, three things will follow:—either the almost super-human character of whom I have spoken, originated, as an individual, the arts, sciences, sublime doctrines, and discoveries with which his name is connected; or these were the inventions of various individuals generically classed under one name; or, thirdly, the knowledge which this mysterious individual was a means of communicating had a higher source; I mean that the knowledge thus communicated was that of a world passed away, and as such was connected with the first revelations of an Almighty and merciful Being to fallen man upon earth. I need not say, I trust, what my own opinions are; for the two first propositions appear impossible: whether the *third* shall appear to the reader, after a dispassionate consideration of the arguments, as convincing as it does to me, must be submitted to his decision. But the knowledge, more or less dark, communicated to the most distant inhabitants of the globe from the east to the west, pervading, ab origine, the habitable world, appears to me one of the most singular circumstances detached from revelation, and viewed in all its relations, in the history of mankind.

W. L. B.

Oct. 28, 1828.