

that building, together with almost the whole of the furniture, and other property to a large amount. The building being detached, the flames did not reach the neighbouring edifices, though they raged with such violence as to melt the leaden pipes of the nearest houses. The two parish engines were the only ones that came to the spot till the conflagration had subsided from a want of materials to prey upon, when the whole building was reduced to ashes. On investigation it appeared, that, as Mrs. Fenn was sitting by the fire in her bed-room on the first floor, a coal flew out and burnt the carpet; the old lady, as she thought, extinguished it, but in a few minutes after it blazed, and, in her attempt to put it out, her handkerchief caught fire, which so alarmed her as to put her in a senseless state. Sir John and Lady Roze, who had been on a visit to Dover, arrived just in time to witness the destruction of their premises. Mrs. Fenn was so agitated as to be obliged to be taken out by force to a neighbour's house.

*Monday, Jan. 7.*

The lease of Don Saltero's coffee-house at Chelsea was sold, with all the curiosities. This well-known coffee-house was first opened in the year 1697, by one Salter, a barber, who drew the attention of the publick by the eccentricities of his conduct, and by furnishing his house with a large collection of natural and other curiosities, which till now remained in the coffee-room, where printed catalogues were sold, with the names of the principal benefactors to the collection. Sir Hans Sloane contributed largely out of the superfluities of his own museum. Vice-Admiral Morden, and other officers who had been much upon the coasts of Spain, enriched it with many curiosities, and gave the owner the name of Don Saltero; (see *Tatler*, No. 34, *Nichols's* edition, where Saltero is ridiculed for his credulity in appropriating his pincushion and hats to Q. Elizabeth's chamber maids, &c. (*Lytton's Environs of London*, vol. II. p. 77.) In the same light is to be considered a famous relic we have seen in the Museum of the Royal Society at Crane-court, under the name of Pontius Pilate's wife's grandmother's hat, but better calculated to fit mother Shipton or her grandame. Such collections, however, aided by those of Tradescant, Ashmole, and Thoresby, cherished the infancy of Science, and should not be depreciated as the playthings of a boy after he is arrived at manhood. Mr. Pennant's great-great-uncle, who lived at Chelsea, often took his great-nephew, Mr. Pennant's father, to the coffee-house, where he used to see poor Richard Cromwell, a little and very neat old man, with a most placid countenance, the effect of his innocent and unambitious life. He imagined this was Don Saltero's

coffee-house, to which he was a benefactor, and has the honour of having his name mentioned in the collection. Mr. Pennant, when a boy, saw "his gift to the great Saltero," which was a *higified* hog. What Mr. Pennant thus facetiously denominates, in the edition of Saltero's Catalogue that we have seen, is called "a piece of a root of a tree that grew in the shape of a hog." He feared this matchless curiosity was lost; at least it is omitted in the last, or 47th edition of the Catalogue. *Hist. of Whiteford and Holywell*, p. 13. What author of us except Mr. Pennant can flatter himself with delivering his works down to posterity in impressions so numerous as the labours of Don Saltero.

To the collections of rarities should be added these "natural ones, collected with great industry, cost, and 30 years travel in foreign countries, by Robert Hubert, alias Forges, gent. and sworn servant to his Majesty, and daily to be seen at the place called the Musick House, at the Mitre, near the West end of St. Paul's church;" a catalogue of which was published in 1664, 12mo. These were entirely natural curiosities, and many of them presents from Charles I. and II. and their queens, and many other crowned heads and princes of Europe, as well as governors of the West India islands, physicians foreign and domestic, &c. &c.

*Saturday, Jan. 12.*

This evening, between 9 and 10, the house of the parish clerk of St. Andrew, Holborn, in Shoe-lane, was robbed of the communion-plate of the church, and 200l. in cash, belonging to the rector. The robbers entered the house by the garret window, having, it is supposed, got over the bone-house in the church-yard. In their retreat they dropped a silver cup and cover, which was found in the church-yard.

*Tuesday, Jan. 15.*

Lord Holland has entered on the Journals of the Lords a protest against the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, on the ground that no proof had been offered of its necessity.

*Saturday, Jan. 19.*

The Middlesex justices have been during this week most laudably employed in an investigation of the state of the prison at Clerke-well; and the result has been most completely satisfactory. It appears, that during the space of the last 4 years upwards of 5000 persons have been imprisoned, out of which number 17 only have died a natural death, and 2 by suicide. This day Dr. Blane, with some of the magistrates, went round the same prison, and, out of between 2 and 300 prisoners, only 1 man was ill, and that of an asthma.

*Wednesday, Jan. 23.*

At a Court of Common Council, the Lord Mayor produced a letter from the

Hon.