

MR. JOHN TIMBS.

AT an age which is said to afford little to make life desirable or tolerable, this honest, hard-working man has vanished from the scene. For more than half a century Mr. Timbs laboured in the field of literature. He ploughed, indeed, with other people's heifers, but he was useful in his generation. As he worked hard, so did he work cheerfully. His work, it is true, needed no thought for its accomplishment, and he was not himself a man given to reflection. It may be said of him, as Dryden said of Cymon,—

He whistled as he went, for want of thought.

Mr. Timbs's name is on hundreds of volumes; if not always his name, his hand is there. He probably never wrote an original line, but he had an apt way of taking not only lines but pages from other writers, and arranging them in a readable form. Humble was the work, but it enabled many readers to form an acquaintance with writers who, but for Mr. Timbs's zeal, would, perhaps, have remained unknown to them. He was ever ready to compile and bring into the market any book on any subject. Nothing came amiss to him except real authorship, but he was *facile princeps* at gathering materials. The Society of Antiquaries, in his former days, thought him worthy of being elected an F.S.A. Those days, however, passed away, and with age the old worker found his strength no match for his purpose. Although of a cheerful disposition when young, Timbs was proud—a little impracticable and wayward when helping hands were stretched out to him. He quitted even the harbour of the Charter House, and preferred living and labouring where he could have the companionship of an old friend with whom he had lived for many years outside. Still there was succour at hand before the supreme moment set him beyond all need of it. And so died this hard-working man. But he did not die an F.S.A. When Mr. Timbs ceased to be able to pay his subscription, his name was erased from the list of Fellows. With unfeigned respect for the Society and its President, we must say that the Council did not do itself honour, nor John Timbs justice, when it gave this wound to the shy, proud man, to whom admission was granted—when he could pay for it. *13 March '75*

TIMBS, John, *timms*, a miscellaneous writer, who commenced his career under the auspices of Sir Richard Phillips, the publisher, whose amanuensis he became. From 1827 to 1838 he continued editor of "The Mirror," and shortly after the establishment of "The Illustrated London News," in 1842, he was appointed one of the editors of that journal. He produced more than a hundred volumes, either original or compiled, the best known of which were, "Curiosities of London," "Things not Generally Known Familiarly Explained," "The Year-Book of Facts in Science and Art," "Curiosities of History," "Curiosities of Science," "Stories of Inventors," "Century of Anecdote," "Things not Generally Known," "Club Life in London," "Strange Stories," "Nooks and Corners of English Life," and "The Abbeys and Castles of Old England." B. in London, Aug. 17, 1801. 171.28V.3

S. Dyer Knott Esq
The Castle
Exeter.

Grays Lane,
Feb. 6/37.

Dear Sir,

At length, I send you
the completion of the M.S.
— save one article — the description of the Bell in an
Hyacinth glass.

I have omitted the phenomena of Sound, Electricity, &c.
in the form of recapitulations,
as they certainly will not be
legitimate for the plan.

Now, may I ask you an
especial favour — an unusual
one in a first transaction, certainly — but, the request of
which is to me unavoidable:
I mean, the advance of — say
£10. Your compliance will
greatly oblige and serve me,
pardon me I am of its irregularity.
I am, Sir, Yours &c.
John Sims.

Smith, Jm
Feb 24/37

Author of Laconics. Knowledge
for the People &c.