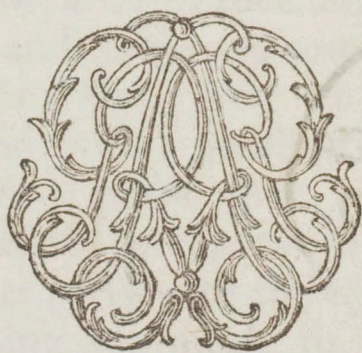


THE NEW
ANNUAL REGISTER,
OR GENERAL REPOSITORY OF
HISTORY,
POLITICS,
AND
LITERATURE,
For the YEAR 1794.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

The HISTORY of KNOWLEDGE, LEARNING, and TASTE,
in GREAT BRITAIN, during the Reign of King JAMES the First,
Part the Second.



L O N D O N,

Printed for G. G. and J. ROBINSON, Pater-noster-Row.

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ANTIQUITIES.

OBSERVATIONS on some EGYPTIAN MUMMIES, and the ARTS PRACTICED by the VENDERS of them, by JOHN FREDERIC BLUMENBACH, M.D. F.R.S.

[From the Second Part of the PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS for the Year 1794.]

“AMONG the many instances of kindness I have experienced during my late abode in London, of which the recollection can never be obliterated from my memory, I reckon and acknowledge with gratitude, the uncommon, and to me very interesting, opportunities that were afforded me, to open and examine several Egyptian mummies.

“A few days after my arrival, I found in the library of my honoured friend Dr. Garthshore, F. R. S. among other Egyptian antiquities, a small mummy, not above one foot in length, of the usual form of a swathed puppet, wrapped up in cotton bandages, painted and gilt in its front part, and inserted in a small sarcophagus of sycamore wood, in which it fitted exactly.

“Having expressed a wish to know the contents of this figure, the doctor was kindly pleased to permit the opening of it; which accordingly took place on the 21st of January, 1792, at his house, in the presence of the president and several members of the royal society, and other men of letters.

The mummy itself measured $9\frac{1}{2}$

inches in length, and 8 inches in circumference at the breast, where it was of the greatest thickness.

“The mask, exhibiting human features, was of a gypseous plaster, which here and there shewed some signs of having once been gilt.

“Of the semicircular breast-plate only some fragments were still extant.

“The lower part of the front covering was, as is frequently observed on large mummies, in a manner dissected in regular compartments; and on it were painted the two standing figures that so often appear on the integuments of mummies, viz. on the right side, Anubis with the dog's head, and on the left, Osiris with the head of a sparrow-hawk.

“The mummy itself was opened at the side. The outward integuments were glued so fast upon each other that it was found necessary to use a saw: the inner ones were less adhesive. I counted in the whole above 20 circumvolutions of these cotton bandages.

“Within these was found, as a kind of nucleus, a bundle, about 8 inches long, and full 2 inches in circumference.

circumference, of the integuments of a larger mummy, strongly impregnated with a resinous substance, which rendered it hard and compact, and which appeared on the edge to have been shaped into this oblong form by the paring of a knife. Pieces of this mass having been put on a heated poker, emitted a smell perfectly similar to that of fir-resin, or the drug called wild incense from ant-hills.

"The sarcophagus consisted of six small square boards of sycamore, fastened together with iron nails.

"Soon after I found in the collection of Dr. Lettsom, F. R. S. another similar mummy, which, outwardly, perfectly resembled the above, was likewise contained in a sarcophagus, and differed only in the dimensions, this being $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and $11\frac{1}{2}$ in circumference at the breast.

"The proprietor was likewise kind enough to suffer me to open it, which I did at his house on the 29th of January.

"But much as it resembled Dr. Garthshore's mummy externally, it was found very different as to its contents, there being in it a great number of detached bones of the skeleton of an Ibis, which were only here and there indued with resin.

"This striking difference, no doubt, rather excited than satisfied my curiosity; and having hereupon found in the British Museum no less than three such diminutive mummies, which were now to me become enigmatical (viz. two in the Hamiltonian collection of antiquities, both contained in the same kind of square wooden coffins, clinched with iron nails, and the third in the Sloanian collection), I felt an irresistible impulse

to apply to the president of the royal society, as one of the curators of the Museum, for his interference towards obtaining permission to open one of these three, in order to have an opportunity for some further comparison.

"The result of this application was, that at the very next meeting of the curators leave was granted me, in the most liberal manner, not only to open one of these little mummies, but also to choose among the four large ones that are in that noble repository, the one that should appear to me the most likely to afford some material information on the subject.

"I chose among the small ones the Sloanian, as it seemed to me to differ more than the two in the Hamiltonian collection, from either that of Dr. Garthshore or Dr. Lettsom. The four large mummies resembled in the main the one deposited in the academical museum of Göttingen, which I examined in the summer of the year 1781. I selected, however, the one that appeared to differ most from the others, and from ours, by the close adhesion of the bandages, from which I had reason to expect some difference in the interior preparation of it.

"The 18th February was appointed for the opening of these two mummies at the Museum, in the presence of a numerous and respectable meeting.

"The small mummy was externally very similar to those I had opened before, except that it was only $11\frac{6}{10}$ inches in length, and $8\frac{2}{10}$ inches round the breast, somewhat more compact in the handling, and, proportionably to its size, rather heavier.

"On sawing it open, a resinous smell was immediately emitted, and glutinous

glutinous particles of rosin adhered to the heated saw. This was owing to the cotton bandages having been from without impregnated with rosin, which was not the case with the two former ones.

" On opening it completely, we found in the inside a human os humeri, being part of the mummy of a young person, perhaps eight years old, who had been embalmed with rosin; and with it were also found some shreds of the original integuments likewise impregnated with rosin. The upper end (*caput*) of the bone was inserted in the head, and the lower extremity was at the feet of the little figure.

" Although when viewed externally nothing appeared suspicious in this little mummy, I found, however, on examining carefully the successive integuments, that the outward ones had some traces of our common lint paper, with which it seemed to have been restored, and afterwards painted over.

" The large mummy I was permitted to examine, appeared by its stature to be that of a young person, not above 14 years old, but who had not, it seemed, as yet shed all his teeth. Its outward painted integuments were very similar to those of the Gottingen mummy, as it is figured in the IVth Vol. of the *Commentationes Societatis Scientiarum*. The bandages about the head were in a manner caked together by means of rosin. The skull was inclosed in a kind of cast of the same substance, which could with difficulty be removed from it. It seemed also, to judge by its weight, to be filled with rosin, which particularly appeared in the cavity between the palate and the lower jaw. The rosin here having been gradually punched out, not the least

appearance of a tongue was discernible; though some have asserted to have found traces of it in mummies; nor was any thing like the little golden plate (the supposed *naulus*) to be here met with. There were no remains whatever of the soft fleshy parts, of skin, tendons, &c. in short, nothing was found but mere naked bones.

" The maxillæ were sensibly prominent, but by no means so much as in a true Guinea face; and not more so than is often seen on handsome negroes, and not seldom on European countenances.

" What appeared to me very remarkable, and has, as far as I can learn, never yet been noticed, is two exterior artificial ears, made of cotton cloth and rosin, and applied one on each side of the head. That on the right side was prominent; but the other seemed to have been shoved from its proper place; it was compressed, and much disfigured.

" The cotton bandages on the remainder of the body were loose, not glued together, and readily yielded to the pressure of the hand.

" The great cavity of the trunk was filled with bundled rags, and dark brown vegetable mould, in which, however, some pieces of rosin were here and there discovered. But the inside of the thoracic cavity on both sides of the spine, and the inner surface of the ossa ilium, were covered with a thick coat of rosin.

" No idol, or any artificial symbol whatever, was found in the inside of this mummy. Nor did it contain any thing like an onion, such as have been now and then found about the parts of generation, or under one of the foot-soles of mummies.

" The bones of the arms lay along

along the side of the body, in the same manner as those of the Gottingen mummy, and the one at Leipzig, described by Kettner. Whereas in the mummy at Gotha, described by Hertzog, the two at Breslau, that were examined by Gryphius, another at Copenhagen, that was dissected by Brunnich, and a fifth which belonged to the royal society, and has been described by Dr. Hadley in the Philosophical Transactions, the arms were found lying across over the breast.

“ On some of the bones of the arms, for instance on the left *os humeri*, was found some glutinous rosin, which on being touched stained the fingers of a dusky red greasy colour, and had a strong empyreumatic alkaline taste. In the remainder of the body, the dry rosin was almost entirely covered or impregnated with a saline crust, by which the *thoracic vertebrae* in particular were much corroded, and which had entirely stripped the intermediate *corpora vertebrarum* of their *periosteum*.

“ Circumstances did not allow me to make any experiments on this salt; but I have since obtained from my worthy friend John Hawkins, esq. F. R. S. some considerable pieces of mummies which he had bought of a druggist at Constantinople, one of which was covered and impregnated with a saline incrustation, which in taste and appearance was very similar to that I have just now mentioned. Of this I dissolved a part in water, filtered and evaporated the solution, and thus obtained a true *soda*, or mineral alkali (*natrum*), which shot into very neat and regular crystals.

“ For the sake of comparison, I examined another large mummy in the Museum, which had already been opened in several places. This

was of a full grown person, and measured 5 feet five inches in length. Like the former, it shewed not the least trace of any of the soft parts, but consisted of nothing but naked bones.

“ Except a little rosin which stuck fast between the teeth, this mummy, as far as its inside could be examined, contained none of that substance; its thoracic and abdominal cavities being entirely filled with a dark brown mould, which also occupied the whole space between the palate and the lower jaw, where it could easily be loosened and drawn out with the fingers.

“ The *maxillae* of this mummy were still less prominent than those of the former one.

“ Some weeks after, viz. the 17th March, I had an opportunity to examine one more mummy at the honourable Charles Greville's, F. R. S. which had four years before, viz. March 29, 1788, been already opened in the presence of several curious spectators. It belonged to John Symmons, Esq. of Grosvenor house, Westminster, who with the most obliging readiness allowed me unconditionally, not only to dissect it as much more as I should think proper, but also to select and take away whatever parts of it I should think worthy of a particular investigation.

“ It was a mummy of a child about six years old, which as to its preparation, (viz. without rosin, and without the least remaining trace of any of the soft parts), and the painted semicircular breastplate, consisting of several folds of cotton cloth glued upon each other, was very similar to those at the British Museum, and the one at Gottingen, except that the characters upon that part of the cotton integu-

integument which covered the shanks, resembled rather more the figures of the one delineated by count Caylus, in his *Recueil*, &c.

" Nothing remained of the head but some pieces of the bones of the face, a few teeth, and the mask, which still adhered to the cotton bandages.

" Among the teeth I found the incisores, which notwithstanding the tender age of the person had however a very short thick crown, considerably worn away at that edge which is usually sharp. This therefore, is a new confirmation of the extraordinary phenomenon which I had already noticed in a complete skull, and some fragments of jaws, in my own collection, and which had also been observed by Middleton in the Cambridge mummy, and by Bruckmann in the one that is at Cassel. Storr has also seen something similar in a mummy that is preserved at Stuttgart.

" If we reflect during how many centuries, and through what a variety of revolutions, the Egyptians have used the practice of mummifying their dead bodies, it will naturally occur that we are not to expect in all mummies a similar characteristic formation of the teeth, any more than we are to look for a similar characteristic national form in their productions of art.

" This peculiar structure of the teeth was not observed in the two mummies I examined in the British museum, neither does it exist in our Gottingen mummy. A detached skull of a mummy in the museum, prepared with rosin, and which bore great resemblance to the abovementioned in its general form, and especially in the narrowness of the poll, had unfortunately the crowns of the teeth

so much mutilated as to afford no manner of information concerning this circumstance.

" The above observation however appears, at all events, to be well worth attending to, as it may hereafter prove a criterion for determining the period at which any given mummy has been prepared.

" But what interested me most in Mr. Symmons's mummy was the mask, to the two sides of which pieces of the bandages, with which the whole of the exterior integuments had been fastened to the corps, still adhered. The inner part of this mask was sycamore wood, its outside being shaped, by means of a thick coat of plaster, in bas-relief, into the form of a face, the surface of which seemed to have been stained with natural colours, which time had now considerably blended and obscured. Having, however, with Mr. Symmons's leave, taken this mask, together with some other very interesting pieces of his mummy, with me to Gottingen, I there steeped it in warm water, and carefully separated all the parts of it. By this means I discovered the various fraudulent artifices that had been practised in the construction of this mask: the wooden part was evidently a piece of the front of the sarcophagus of the mummy of a young person; and in order to convert its alto-relievo into the basso-relievo of the usual cotton mask of a mummy, plaster had been applied on each side of the nose; after which paper had been ingeniously pasted over the whole face, and lastly, this paper had been stained with the colours generally observed on mummies.

" The small Sloanian mummy in the museum had probably been prepared nearly in the same manner.

That

That the deception has in both cases been very industriously executed, appears from this, that, as far as I can learn, no one has observed it before, although both these pieces have no doubt been often seen, and examined by persons conversant with these matters.

"Some other suspicious circumstances in the mummies I examined in London were more evident. For instance, the coffins of sycamore wood fastened together with iron nails, in which the small mummies of Dr. Garthshore, Dr. Lettsom, and sir W. Hamilton, were contained, had most probably been recently constructed of pieces of decayed sarcophagi of ancient mummies. The little Sloanian mummy even lay in a box in the form of a sarcophagus, which was made of a dark-brown hard wood, totally different from the sycamore, and manifestly of modern construction.

"How many other artificial restorations and deceptions may have been practised in the several mummies which have been brought into Europe, which have never been suspected; and may perhaps never be detected, may well be admitted, when we consider how imperfect we are as yet in our knowledge of this branch of Egyptian archæology, which, as a specific problem, few have hitherto treated with the critical acumen it seems to deserve.

"All the knowledge we have concerning the manner of preparing mummies is derived from two sources, viz. the examination of the mummies themselves; and two classical passages in Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus; Strabo and other ancient authors having mentioned mummies only incidentally, and in very few words.

"But unfortunately these two classical passages do not in the least agree with the state of the mummies brought into Europe, which are in general of two sorts, viz. the hard compact ones, wholly indued with rosin, which hence can be knocked into pieces; the soft ones, which yield to the pressure of the hand, and are prepared with very little rosin, and often none at all, whose loose bandages may be wound off, and which contain in their cavities scarce any thing but a vegetable mould, and particularly no idol whatever as far as I have been able to learn.

"The front part of the latter is usually covered with a painted, and, at times, gilt mask of cotton cloth; and as they appear more variegated than the former, and have no rosin in them yielding drugs for traffic, they are brought in much greater numbers, and may be seen in many collections in Europe in a more perfect state than the former, though often rendered so by restoration. The former on the contrary, have for this very reason remained most of them in the hands of druggists.

"Of this, viz. the former sort, were the two in the dispensary of Crusius at Breslau, which Gryphius described in the year 1662, and particularly the very valuable body of a mummy which was opened by the apothecary Hertzog, at Gotha, in 1715, and in which more idols, beetles, frogs (as symbols of fertility), nilometers, &c. were found, than was ever, to the best of my knowledge, known to have been contained in any other mummy whatever.

"But Herodotus, that very inquisitive and credulous historian (as one of the most learned and judicious

dicious antiquaries in England has named him), does not so much as mention either of these sorts of mummies; nor does he speak of the rosin, or painted masks, although he expressly describes such painted integuments on the Æthiopian mummies.

“Diodorus is equally silent as to the rosin, and the painted covering; whilst on the other hand he advances some very strange assertions, such as that the skill of the embalmers extended so far as perfectly to preserve the lineaments of the face, although the faces of mummies of both sorts be generally covered with cotton cloth to the thickness of nearly a man's hand.

“These authors, although they have both been in Egypt, had probably their intelligence merely from hearsay; for, on the other hand it would no doubt be too paradoxical to assert, that all the mummies we are now acquainted with have been made since the days of Diodorus, and that none of those described by him and by Herodotus should have reached our time. Count Caylus rather conjectures, that no mummies were made since the conquest of Egypt by the Romans (about the time of Diodorus); but in this he is manifestly mistaken, since we learn from St. Augustin that so low down as his own time (viz. in the first half of the fifth century) mummies were certainly made in Egypt. But that among the mummies that now exist, especially the hard ones, which are entirely done over with rosin, there cannot but be many of a much greater antiquity, will, among other proofs, appear particularly from the style of workmanship of several of the little idols contained in them.

“At least it may be admitted, without much hesitation, that the mummies we now possess, which differ so much in their preparation and characteristic structure, are at least of a period including one thousand years.

“But it were much to be wished that we might have certain criteria, to determine with some accuracy the precise age of any particular mummy that may happen to fall into our hands. Before, however, we can expect to obtain this object, the two following *pia desideria* must first be accomplished, viz.

“A more accurate determination of the various, so strikingly different, and yet as strikingly characteristic national configurations in the monuments of the Egyptian arts, together with a determination of the periods in which those monuments were produced, and the causes of their remarkable differences.

“A very careful technical examination of the characteristic forms of the several skulls of mummies we have hitherto met with, together with an accurate comparison of those skulls with the monuments abovementioned.

“This, at least, I consider as the surest method of solving the problem; being persuaded that, especially after what has just now been said of the fraudulent restorations, it can hardly be expected that we should be able to draw any just inferences from the mere style, and the contents of the painted integuments of the mummies we may have opportunities to examine.

“Still less can we infer aught from the sculpture or paintings on the sarcophagi, as to the contents

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of the mummies sent us into Europe; Maillet having about sixty or seventy years ago detected the fraud of the Arabs, who he says are in the practice of breaking in pieces the mummies contained in the catacombs in the more ornamented sarcophagi, for the sake of the idols they expect to find in them, of replacing them with tolerably preserved common painted mummies (such as I have called soft), and thus offering them for sale.

"The osteological properties which I have had opportunities to observe in the skulls of mummies, are most of them mentioned in the description of my collection of the skulls of different nations above quoted; and will, I hope, prove useful to others for further comparisons.

"As to the different national physiognomies of the ancient Egyptians, I shall here advert only to what, in my physiological study of the varieties in the human species, I have deduced from my comparisons of these skulls with the artificial monuments found in Egypt. For I am wholly at a loss to conceive how learned writers, not only of the stamp of the author of the *Recherches sur les Egyptiens*, but even professional antiquaries, such as Winkelmann, and the author of the *Recherches sur l'Origine des Arts de la Grèce* could ascribe to the artificial monuments found in Egypt one common character of national physiognomy, and define the same in a few lines in the most decided and peremptory manner.

"It appears to me that we must adopt at least three principal varieties in the national physiognomy of the ancient Egyptians; which, like all the varieties in the human

species, are no doubt often blended together, so as to produce various shades, but from which the true, if I may so call it, ideal archetype may however be distinguished, by unequivocal properties, to which the endless smaller deviations in individuals may, without any forced construction, be ultimately reduced.

"These appear to me to be, 1. the Æthiopian cast; 2. the one approaching to the Hindoo; and, 3. the mixed, partaking in a manner of both the former.

"The first is chiefly distinguished by the prominent maxillæ, turgid lips, broad flat nose, and protruding eye-balls, such as Volney finds the Copts at present; such, according to his description, and the best figures given by Norden, is the countenance of the Sphinx; such were, according to the well-known passage in Herodotus on the origin of the Colchians, even the Egyptians of his time; and thus hath Lucian likewise represented a young Egyptian at Rome.

"The second, or the Hindoo cast, differs *toto cælo* from the above, as we may convince ourselves by the inspection of other Egyptian monuments. It is characterized by a long slender nose, long and thin eyelids, which run upwards from the top of the nose towards the temples, ears placed high on the head, a short and very thin bodily structure, and very long shanks. As an ideal of this form, I shall only adduce the painted female figure upon the back of the sarcophagus of capt. Lethieullier's mummy in the British museum, which has been engraved by Vertue, and which most strikingly agrees with the unequivocal national form of the Hindoos, which,

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especially in England, is so often to be seen upon Indian paintings.

“ The third sort of Egyptian configuration is not similar to either of the preceding ones, but seems to partake something of both, which must have been owing to the modifications produced by local circumstances in a foreign climate. This is characterized by a peculiar turgid habit, flabby cheeks, a short chin, large prominent eyes, and rather a plump make in the person. This, as may naturally be expected, is the structure most frequently to be met with.

“ I thought this little digression the less intrusive, as it appears to me that it may on the one hand prove useful, not only towards illustrating the history of the origin and descent of the nations that were transplanted into Egypt, and have acquired the general denomination of Egyptians, but also for the determination of the different periods of the style of the arts of the ancient Egyptians, concerning which we have as yet very imperfect ideas; whilst, on the other hand, it might lead to much accurate information as to matter of fact; many very eminent authors having given the most incongruous representations of the Egyptian national character, such as Winkelmann for instance, who produced a wretched figure of a painted mask, without any character whatever, engraved in *Beger's Thesaur. Brandenburg. T. III. p. 402.* as one of the most characteristic representations of the form of the ancient Egyptians; and who, as well as several others, will have this form to be similar to that of the Chinese; an assertion which, after having had opportunities to compare twenty-one living Chinese at Amsterdam, and having since seen in London abundance of ancient Egyptian mo-

numents, especially in the British museum, and the collections of Mr. Townley, Mr. Knight, and the marquis of Lansdown, has ever appeared to me incomprehensible.

“ Adopting, as I think it conformable to nature, five races of the human species, viz. 1. the Caucasian; 2. the Mongolian; 3. the Malay; 4. the Æthiopian; 5. the American; I think the Egyptians will find their place between the Caucasian and the Æthiopian, but that they differ from none more than from the Mongolian, to which the Chinese belong.

“ Thus far concerning the bodies of the Egyptians prepared into mummies. I shall conclude with some observations on the probable meaning and destination of the diminutive mummies, which have given rise to the present inquiry.

“ They certainly are not what they have long, I believe, universally been taken for, namely, mummies of small children and embryos. Some of them are the real mummies of Ibises, such as one of Dr. Lettsom, and one of the two in the Hamiltonian collection, in the British museum, which had by decay been so far laid open as to allow me plainly to distinguish in it the bill of an Ibis, and other bones of a bird.

“ These sacred birds, it is well known, were usually, after having been swathed round with cotton bandages, placed in earthen urns, and deposited in the catacombs appropriated to the Ibises. Sometimes, without being stuck into an urn, they were prepared in the form of a puppet, yet so that the head and bill projected at the top; one of this sort has been figured by count Caylus. And thirdly, the whole bird was frequently wrapped up in this puppet form, and dressed

dressed in a mask, like one of the human species.

“ But as the two others, viz. Dr. Garthshore’s and the Sloanian, were externally perfectly similar to the abovementioned, I am led to conjecture (for in the total want of information from the ancients concerning these small mummies, we must however fix upon some conjecture,) that the manufacturers of mummies, who made them for sale, in order to save themselves the trouble of preparing a bird, took a bone, or other solid part of a decayed mummy, or indeed any thing that was nearest at hand, dressed it up as the mummy of an Ibis, and tendered it for sale.

“ Whoever recollects what a despicable set the Egyptian priests were, even in the time of Strabo, and how the whole religious worship of the Egyptians was then already fallen into decay, will not think this conjecture too gratuitous, or void of probability.

“ Or shall we rather consider these puppets as the *memento mori* which it is well known the Egyptians were wont to introduce at table in their meals and festivals? Herodotus says, that little wooden images were usually carried about for this purpose, and I do actually recollect having seen such small

wooden representations of mummies in the British museum. Lucian also relates, as an eye witness, that in his time the dead bodies themselves were introduced at table. It is easy to conceive how, during the long interval of near 700 years, before the transition took place from the first simple idea to this disgusting practice, such little mummies may at some period or other have formed the intermediate step.

“ The author of the *Recherches sur les Egyptiens* seems unwilling to to admit that real mummies had ever been introduced at table: but his scepticism appears to me to be no better founded than the contrary assertion of one of the most eminent physicians of the last century, Casp. Hoffman, who, in his once classical work *de Medicamentis Officinalibus*, in the section of the Egyptian mummies, gravely relates, that in lower Saxony no feast was ever given without the introduction of a mummy. And strange as this *qui pro quo* between an Egyptian corpse and a particular kind of Brunswick strong beer must appear, it is however a fact, that several more modern writers upon mummies have actually copied it out into their works with implicit confidence.”

The ORIGIN and HISTORY of NEWSPAPERS in GREAT BRITAIN, to the REIGN of GEORGE I.

[From CHALMERS’S LIFE of RUDDIMAN.]

“ THE origin of news-papers, those pleasant vehicles of instruction, those entertaining companions of our mornings, has not yet been investigated with the precision which is undoubtedly due to what has been emphatically called

one of the safeguards of our privileges. We are still unacquainted with the name of our first newspaper, and we are still ignorant of the epoch of its original publication.

“ The intelligent editor of *Dodfley’s*