

and a portion of the wall of the north aisle, which alone was not pulled down when the church was rebuilt.

Wilson, in his description of Bromley, published in 1797, gives the following paragraph:—"I have met with a very old account which says this church was originally dedicated to St. Blaise, but for the last 700 years it has been considered, and certainly is, that of St. Peter and St. Paul." "It is much to be regretted," observes Mr. Dankin, "that Mr. Wilson has not given his authority, as no such account is to be found in any author I have had an opportunity of consulting. Nor have I been able to meet with any information to countenance this opinion. I have been informed that the late Bishop Dampier always maintained that the church was dedicated to St. James from the circumstance of one of the fairs being held on that day: an opinion evidently grounded on the idea of this fair originating in a meeting of the people to celebrate the dedication of the church, according to an old custom, and that the charter was only a confirmation of a more ancient fair, as appeared in many other instances. I understand the bishop's opinion was adopted by several persons, and the bills of mortality made out accordingly. But I consider the mode of arguing very inconclusive, for the same reasoning equally applies to St. Blaise; and if any 'very old account' is in favour of the latter saint, the bishop's argument is completely overturned; at any rate, the opinion of the 'last 700 years' is entitled to the most serious consideration."

Mr. Beeby, in his "History of Bromley Church," says:—"The statement that the church was dedicated to St. Blaise lacks verification, but is not improbable. The names of other churches have been changed in deference to the feeling of the times; that of St. Saviour's, Southwark, was originally called St. Mary Overies. The orientation of Bromley Church is not opposed to this supposition, and we know that the name of St. Blaise has been in several ways associated with the neighbourhood. Thus for many years a fair was held in the town on his day, as was often the custom in places where the church was dedicated to one of the minor saints of the calendar." St. Blaise was the patron saint of the wool-combers.

Here lies the wife of Dr. Samuel Johnson; she was buried here in 1753. On her gravestone is the well-known Latin inscription printed by Boswell. The following account of Dr. Johnson's marriage is taken from Macaulay's essay on him in the "Encyclopædia Britannica":—"Whilst leading this vagrant and miserable life, Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was a Mrs. Elizabeth Porter,

a widow, who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colours, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queenberries and Lepels. To Johnson, however, whose passions were strong, and whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish crise from natural bloom, and who had seldom been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration for her was unfeigned cannot be doubted, for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her but little honour, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued under the illusions of the wedding-day until the lady died, in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription extolling the charms of her person and manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, 'Pretty creature!' She does not seem to have done much to add to his domestic comforts, or to those of the pupils whom he took and taught in order to maintain her; and Garrick, one of those pupils, used to mimic her manners, and especially her endearments." Mrs. Johnson's monument is on a slab in the floor of the centre aisle of the church.

Thus it will be seen that the town of Bromley is intimately connected with the great name of Samuel Johnson. The eccentricities and boorishness of this queer great man are forgotten when we reflect upon his extraordinary affection for his no less queer wife, which shows us that "the great lexicographer" had a warm heart as well as a wise head. "Her wedding ring," says Boswell, in his "Life of Johnson" "when she became his wife, was, after her death, preserved by him as long as he lived with an affectionate care in a little round wooden box, in the inside of which he pasted a slip of paper, thus inscribed by him in fair characters as follows:—

"Eheu!
Eliz. Johnson,
Nupta July 9th, 1736.
Mortua heu
Mart. 17^o, 1752."

In the epitaph which he caused to be placed on her tombstone here, Johnson breaks out into warm praise of her virtue and beauty (if we may trust his