

king believed that she paid for it all out of her own money; nor would he ever look at her intended plans, saying that he did not care how she flung away her own revenues. He little suspected the aids that Sir Robert Walpole furnished to her from the Treasury. When she died she was indebted

eccentric man of letters, the Rev. Stephen Duck, who was her Majesty's librarian here. Born in humble life about 1700 at Charlton, in Wiltshire, and having worked as a day labourer till fourteen years of age, he taught himself grammar and a smattering of history and science, and began to



*Such was the gift, gods that Merlin made,  
And gave unto King Bygone for his guard,  
But never for his kingdom might invade,  
But he is known at home, and them abroad  
Says, I am.*

*For Merlin's, to strange love a slave,  
Gave her, whose converse to Merlin gave,  
The Merlin's attendant, a prisoner made,  
His dance raised by eyes Merlin's and  
Says, I am.*

FROM MERLIN'S CAVE.

£20,000 to the king." In all probability the patient British taxpayer really defrayed the entire cost of Merlin and his companions in the cave. Be this as it may, however, the cave and grotto furnished fruitful themes for aspirants for poetical fame in the earlier half of the last century, and even the scholars of Eton and Westminster did not disdain to issue their effusions in compliment to the royal taste in elegiac and lyric Latin verses.

The Stephen Duck above alluded to was that

write poetry. At thirty he had made the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Spence, who helped him to publish his effusions, which, happening to hit the fancy of Queen Caroline, led her to settle on him a small pension, and to procure his admission into holy orders. Having held the librarianship at Richmond for a few years, he was appointed to the living of Byfleet, where he proved a zealous and able country clergyman. There he rhymed and wrote sermons, and poems also, "Cæsar's Camp,"