

Note on the existence of a French Colony in the Mendips.

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I HAVE often been struck with the marked peculiarities of some of the individuals I have, from time to time, met with on the Mendip Hills. There is, in some of them, a mobility of frame and gracefulness of action, coupled with a softness and refinement of manner, which at once arrests attention, and forces the conviction on the mind that they must be of French extraction, and such an enquiry appears to be the case; indeed it would seem from the following details copied, the first from a monument in the Church of Hinton Blewitt, and the second from one in that of Axbridge, that such is the case:—

IN MEMORY OF

Dr. Lewis Thiery, who was born in France, and being persecuted, for true religion came over to this free and happy kingdom about the year of our Lord 1650, and was buried under this stone about the year 1680. He had by his wife, Grace, five sons and one daughter, who were, most of them, buried near this place. Bevis Thiery, hosier, one of the sons of the above Lewis and Grace,

died at Coley, and was interred here, 23rd April, 1746, aged 82 years. He had by his wife Mary three sons, Richard, Lewis, and Bevis; and five daughters, Grace, Hannah, Dorothea, Mary, and Betty, who all lived to be married, and left a numerous offspring.

Dorothea, who was the last of that line, died at Lytton, and was buried here the 24th of November, 1788, aged 88 years. She lived to see sixty-four great grand children, forty-four of whom are now living, and by her particular request eight of her grandsons carried her to her grave.

The above family, though not all of them possessed of abundant riches, lived well by honest industry; respected by their superiors and equals, and beloved by all men.

READER,

Let their bright examples provoke thy imitation.

Near this place, in hopes of a blessed resurrection, lyes the remains of the late Rev. Elias Rebothier, who was rector of this parish (Axbridge) forty-five years. Dyed 19th December, 1765, aged 88 years. He was born at St. John De Gardonnengue in the Cevannes, in the province of Langudock, and at the great persecution of Protestants in France fled from that place and left his family, fortune and friends to seek after the most pure religion of the Church of England. He followed his studies for some time in Geneva, Holland, and Germany, and after enduring many hardships and vicissitudes of fortune he came to England, where he was, by that great and good prelate, George Hooper, Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells, taken into his palace as chaplain, and promoted to many favours in the Church by his Lordship.

Though nearly two hundred years have elapsed since

these men took up their abode in this country, and although the marriages have been exclusively English, there are still evident tokens of the peculiarities of their race amongst them. Many of the surnames are no doubt lost, still the Thierrys and Maugres are represented by Thiery and Moger of the present day ; and the prefix of Lewis (Louis) is not uncommon. Moreover the Thierys and their descendants are taken from Charter House to Hinton Blewitt for interment to the present day.
