We have received another letter from Prof. Ommot, in which he repeats his charges against Dvarve. He says he is “absolutely refused to receive a money indemnity for half the objects, but demands the objects themselves, and is given photographs instead, the objects not being now to be discovered anywhere.”

PETRARCH’S HOME
La Balialega, near Padua, August 22, 1764.

It may please those who have read my friend, Dr. J. Barnard Davis, in your issue of the 16th inst., to learn that there is no possibility, privately, at least, of “restoring” the great Laeteare. His tomb is a massive sarcophagus, with pent-roof and corner ears, supported upon four stumpy columns acting as pillars, not “in the churchyard,” as “Murray” says, but on the open and public place, the street of the town of Santa Maria, in Arqua di Sotto. Like the fans, the tomb lies, roughly oriented, east and west; and at the western short end a metal plate shows, according to the villagers, where the arm-bone was extracted—of course by an Englishman. (For parenthetically, one of that singular race was lately carried up in a chair to see the house.) Near the tomb is an inscribed slab of metal brass, to contradict an ugly split in the sarcophagus, which is of coarse “rosso di Verona,” apparently painted or varnished. The general shape and proportions of the inscription is that which bears the name of Hiram’s Tomb, near Tyrre, and which, to judge from the architectural and mortuary remains about Safety, is the last resting-place of some forgotten Falmainus.

“I Petrarch’s House” in Arqua di Sopra is suggestive, even without the “maccio,” or cut, which remarkably resembles a ferret, the poet’s pet, his arm-chair, and other similar. It is not chosen for its size, convenience, nor prospect. The only pretty bit of view is from the south-eastern windows, where the blue-green lawns about the Po appear through the green hills. The left hand is the limp saddle-back Monteferro, now a monascerì; while in the right, abruptly rising from a white base of limestone and tertiary marl, stands the two remarkably regular cones, Monti Serro and the Serrare, the former crowned by a bit of ruin. But we can easily understand how this mountain-village and its half-bandit people, in the last twenty-five years, as late as the last, only by a goth-path, commended itself to the tired spottled child of Genius, Fame, and Fortune, who, says local tradition, chose to dis siting in a cabinet, hard by the church.”

They laid his bones in Arqua[,] where he died.

Pity ’us that our poets do not mind their quantities more. Southey spoils a fine line thus:

“A feeble action of Greek[s] race,
when all the world pronounces Greek. And I need hardly any how hideous the first verse would become were “Arqua” written and pronounced, as it should be, “Arquas” (—Arques).

M. G. CRADDOCK, F.R.G.S.

We have also received an interesting letter on the subject from Dr. Mal, the distinguished Tehek Professor of Laws in the University of Prague, who is an Italian scholar of note. He was a friend to the reader to the work published by the city of Padua.

LAURA’S GRAVE.

So far from being surprised that Dr. Barlow should have lain the resting-place of Laura’s grave. With respect to the former, I ought to have qualified my last paragraph on the relic by reminding you that I did not visit Arque, but that I was reading what I heard from several papers “Petrarchists” at Vindase, one of whom, indeed, showed me something resembling a relic; it was said from the Italian tomb. Paying no attention to that, I did listen with interest to a few discussions on the chances of these remains having really escaped through a course of a hundred years, formerly in the charge of Arqua disappeared altogether from historical light, and of the sacrilege of 1630 having been the only one perpetrated; so that the sentence quoted should be qualified of the opinions thus expressed, and not my own. I say, indeed, accepting the judgment of the Boroleone Academy, recorded December, “as his own Arqua;” but the Vindase journal is not very confident in their assertions on the subject; and one, a Republican print, exclaims, “as though Arqua could afford to surrender her shrines.” On the contrary, as seems to be the case with Arqua’s, a recent position of her husband’s family, and contained—employing the language of the local criticism—a sonnet, written on parchment, and “attributed to Petrarch,” though 1635, “have” been composed by one of his friends. At all events, Francis I. made a pilgrimage and wrote some verses in honour of it, and certain Englishmen inscribed an epitaph on Laura on a funeral day, in 1635, in a church in the province of Avignon, but now in the garden of the museum in that city. This inscription is partly in Latin, partly in Italian. Not, however, to expiate, I may add, three hundred years the church in which Laura was buried stood in the Street of the Cordeliers; that it stood in the Street of the Doctors; that it was long known as “The White Horse;” and that the sacred spot is close to where Petrarach saw his idol for the first time, in the Church of S. Claire, now replaced by a private dwelling. Reverting to the Petrarch relics, his essay might be adapted to the theory that they are, or that they are not, in excess, with the exceptions admitted, at Arqua.

H. J.

MUCLE-MOUTHED MEG.

With reference to Sir Walter Scott’s descent from Scott of Harden, and, as it were, called Muckle-mouthed Meg, it appears to me that it is your Correspondent, C. W. E., and not your reviewer, who is in error. Sir Thomas Lauderdale probably derived his information in this respect from a statement made in the Ashstreet Memoir (edit. 184s. p. 1), which I quote for your Correspondent’s benefit, and which seems to set the matter beyond dispute. Sir Walter’s grandfather (writes Sir Walter) was Walter Scott, well known in Tiviotdale by the surname of Boardie. He was the second son of Walter Scott, first Laird of Abbotsford; the younger son of Sir Walter Scott, and the grandson of Walter Scott, commonly called in tradition Auld Wat of Harden.” The Sir William Scott mentioned above was the husband of Muckle-mouthed Meg (Lockhart’s Life).