commander of the City troops. He was not present at Edgehill, but he rode up and down the lines of his raw militiamen at Turnham Green, cheering and encouraging them in the face of the king’s victorious army. Essex, the Lord General of the Parliament forces, soon made Skippon his major-general, a post which carried with it the command of the foot and the complicated duty of arranging the line of battle. He was with Essex at Gloucester, and at the first battle of Newbury distin­guished himself at the head of the infantry. At the end of 1644 the amazing desertion of Essex when his army was surrounded at Lostwithiel left Skippon in command; compelled to surrender without firing a shot, the old soldier bore himself with calmness and fortitude in this adversity. At the second battle of Newbury he and Essex’s old foot had the satisfaction of recapturing six of the guns they had lost at Lostwithiel. The appointment as major-general of the New Model Army soon followed, as, apart from his distinguished services, there was scarcely another man in England with the knowledge of detail requisite for the post. In this capacity he supported Fairfax as loyally as he supported Essex, and at Naseby, though dangerously wounded, be would not quit the field. For his conduct on this decisive field the two Houses of Parliament thanked him, and they sent him special physicians to cure him of his wound. It was long before he was fit to serve in the field again. He only reappeared at the siege of Oxford, which he directed. At the end of the war he was selected for the command of the forthcoming Irish expedition, with the rank of marshal-general. The discontent of the soldiery, however, which ended in open mutiny, put an end to a command which Skippon had only accepted under great pressure. He bore a part in all the movements which the army leaders now carried out. A Presbyterian himself, he endeavoured to preserve a middle position between his own sect and the Independents, and to secure by any means a firm treaty with the king. The army outstripped Fairfax and Skippon in action. The major-general was named as one of the king’s judges, but, like his chief, did not take his place. During the Commonwealth period he held high office, military and civil, but ceased to influence passing events. He was one of the members of Cromwell’s House of Lords, and, in general, was universally respected and beloved. Age and infirmities prevented him from taking any part in the revolutions which culminated in the restoration of the Monarchy, and in March 1660 he died. Skippon was a deeply religious man, and wrote several books of devotion for the use of soldiers. One of his few sayings in Parliament, that on the fanatic Naylor, has become famous: "If this be liberty, God deliver us from such liberty! ”

See Vicars, *English Worthies* (1647).

**SKIPTON,** a market town in the Skipton parliamentary division of the West Riding of Yorkshire, England, 26 m. N.W. of Leeds by the Midland railway, served also by the Lancashire and Yorkshire railway. Pop. of urban district (1901) 11,986. It is picturesquely situated in the hilly district of the upper valley of the river Aire, the course of which is followed by the Leeds and Liverpool canal. The strong castle built by Robert de Romille in the time of the Conqueror was partly demolished in 1648, but was restored by the countess of Pembroke. Of the ancient building of de Romille all that remains is the western doorway of the inner castle. In the castle grounds are the remains of the ancient chapel of St John. The church of the Holy Trinity, mainly Perpendicular, was also partly de­molished during the Civil War, but was restored by the countess of Pembroke. The free grammar-school was founded in 1548 by William Ermysted, a canon of St Paul’s, London. There are also science and art schools. There are extensive woollen and cotton factories, and, in the neighbourhood, a large limestone quarry.

Skipton was the capital of the ancient district of Craven. At the Norman accession it became part of the possessions of Earl Edwin, and was granted to Robert de Romille. Subse­quently it went to the Albemarle family, but was again vested in the Crown, and Edward II. bestowed it on Piers de Gaveston. In 1311 it came into the possession of the Cliffords. The castle was taken by the parliamentary forces in 1645 after a desultory siege of three years.

SKIRRET, known botanically as *Sium Sisarum* (natural order Umbelliferae), a fleshy-rooted perennial, the roots of which are boiled, and afterwards served up like salsify. It requires a free, deep and much enriched soil, and is generally raised from seeds, which should be sown in drills a foot apart about the end of March, the bed being well-watered in dry weather. The roots will be in use about November, and will continue fresh through the winter if carefully stored.

**SKIRVING, ADAM** (1719-1803), Scottish song-writer, was born in Haddington in 1719. He became a farmer at Garleton, near Haddington, and died in April 1803. He was buried at Athelstaneford. His reputation rests on two Jacobite ballads on the battle of Prestonpans, one of which, “ Hey, Johnnie Cope, are Ye Waking Yet ? ” has a well-deserved place in most collections of Scottish songs.

**SKITTLES** (from O. Eng. *sceoten,* to shoot), a game played on the green or an alley with a number of “ pins ” of wood, which are knocked down by an oval, flattened missile called the *cheese,* about 10 lb in weight, thrown by the player. The game has been in existence for centuries in many countries under different names, *quilles* in France, *Kegelspiel* in Germany, *skayles, kails, closh, cloddynge, roly-poly, Dutch bowls,* &c., in Great Britain. In early days in England “ sheepe’s joynts ” were thrown at the pins, and in many varieties of the game, for instance in the German and Dutch, balls were used, which were rolled along the ground at the pins. As now played, nine large, oval-headed pins are set up in a square, three pins on each side, with a corner angle presented to the player, who stands about 21 ft. from the pins. One step in advance is allowed in delivery. The object is to knock down the greatest number of pins in the fewest throws. In the eastern counties of England four pins only, one on each corner, are generally used. In Dutch skittles the centre pin is called the “ king-pin ” and often has a crown on its head. The object of this game is to knock down the “ king ” without touching any of the other pins, or to knock down all the other pins and leave the king. In Germany and Holland balls have always been used, and the game in that form was introduced into America from the latter country early in the 18th century, but is not now played there, being replaced by bowling.

**SKOBELEV, MIKHAIL DIMITRIÉVICH** (1843-1882), Russian general, was born near Moscow on the 29th of September 1843. After graduating as a staff officer at St Petersburg lie was sent to Turkestan in 1868 and, with the exception of an interval of two years, during which he was on the staff of the grand duke Michael in the Caucasus, remained in Central Asia until 1877. He commanded the advanced guard of General Lomakine’s column from Kinderly Bay, in the Caspian, to join General Verefkin, from Orenburg, in the expedition to Khiva in 1874, and, after great suffering on the desert march, took a prominent part in the capture of the Khivan capital. Dressed as a Turko­man, he intrepidly explored in a hostile country the route from Khiva to Igdy, and also the old bed of the Oxus. In 1875 he was given an important command in the expedition against Khokand under General Kaufmann, showing great capacity in the action of Makram, where he out-manoeuvred a greatly superior force and captured 58 guns, and in a brilliant night attack in the retreat from Andijan, when he routed a large force with a handful of cavalry. He was promoted to be major-general, decorated with the order of St George, and appointed the first governor of Fergana. In the Turkish War of 1877 he seized the bridge over the Sereth at Barborchi in April, and in June crossed the Danube with the 8th corps. He commanded the Caucasian Cossack Brigade in the attack of the Green Hills at the second battle of Plevna. He captured Lovtcha on the 3rd of September, and distinguished himself again in the desperate fighting on the Green Hills in the third battle of Plevna. Promoted to be a lieutenant- general, and given the command of the 16th Division, he took part in the investment of Plevna and also in the fight of the 9th of December, when Osman Pasha surrendered, with his army. In January 1878 he crossed the Balkans in a severe snowstorm,