The expence of it exceeded the ſum of 200,000l. of which 3000l. are ſaid to have been expended in gunpowder alone, used for the blowing up of the rock. This new canal was completed in 1789, in leſs than ſeven years from its com­mencement. A communication, not only with the Trent, but with the Merſey, has likewiſe been effected by a canal from Oxford to Coventry ; and an act of parliament has paſſed to extend another canal from this, at Braunſton, to the Thames at Brentford. This is to be called *The Grand Junction Canal.* On the extenſive advantages reſulting from theſe navigable communications from the metropolis with the ports of Briſtol, Liverpool, Hull, &c. and the principal manufacturing towns in the inland parts of the kingdom, it is needleſs to expatiate. The tide flows up the Thames as high as Richmond, which, following the wind­ing of the river, is 70 miles from the ocean ; a greater diſtance than the tide is carried by any other river in Europe. The water is eſteemed extremely wholeſome, and fit for uſe in very long voyages, during which it will work itſelf perfectly fine.

Thames is alſo the name of a river in the ſtate of Con­necticut in America. See the article Connecticut.

THANE, or Thanus, a name given to the nobility in Britain before the time of William the Conqueror. It signifies a miniſter or honourable retainer, from the verb *thenian* “ to miniſter.” There were ſeveral degrees of nobility among the Anglo-Saxons ; but thoſe moſt commonly men­tioned are the king’s thanes and the alderman’s thanes. The king’s thanes ſeem to have been of three different degrees, according to their different degrees of wealth or fa­vour at court. The alderman’s thanes ſeem to have been of the loweſt degree of nobility, and next to them thoſe who were promoted to that dignity from their advancement in the church, from their valour, ſucceſs in agriculture or com­merce : for if a ceorl or farmer applied to learning and attained to prieſts orders, if he acquitted himſelf ſo well as to obtain from a nobleman five hythes of land, or a gilt ſword, helmet, and breaſt-plate, the reward of his valour ; or if by his induſtry he had acquired the property of five hythes of land ; or if he applied to trade, and made three voyages be­yond ſea in a ſhip of his own, and a cargo belonging to himſelf- he was denominated a *thane.*

The thanes, who were the only nobility among the Anglo- Saxons, were a very numerous body of men, comprehending all the conſiderable landholders in England, and filling up that ſpace in society between the ceorls or yeomanry on the one hand, and the royal family on the other ; which is now occupied both by the nobility and gentry. In times of war, they conſtituted the flower of their armies, and in times of peace they ſwelled the trains of their kings, and added greatly to the ſplendour of their courts, eſpecially at the three great feſtivals of Chriſtmas, Eaſter, and Whitſuntide. From this body all the chief officers, both civil and mi­litary, as aldermen, greeves, earls, heretogens, &c. were taken@@; and to obtain ſome of theſe offices was the great object of their ambition. Before they obtained an office, their lands were their only ſupport ; and they lived in great­er or leſs affluence, according to the extent of their eſtates. Theſe they divided into two parts ; one of which they call­ed their *inlands,* and the other their *out lands.* Their in­lands they kept in their own immediate possession, and cul­tivated them by the hands of their slaves and villains, in order to raiſe proviſions for their families ; their outlands they granted to ceorls or farmers, either for one year, or for a term of years; for which they received a certain ſtipulated proportion of their produce annually. Theſe cuſtoms had long prevailed among their anceſtors in Ger­many, and were adhered to by their posterity *in* England till the conquest.

The thanes were under no obligations on account of theſe lands, except the three following, which were indiſpenſably neceſſary to the defence and improvement of their country ; To attend the king with their followers in military expedi­tions, to aſſiſt in building and defending the royal caſtles, and in keeping the bridges and highways in proper repair. To theſe obligations all proprietors of land (even the churchmen for a long time not excepted) were ſubjected ; and theſe services were conſidered as due to their country, rather than to the perſons of their kings ; and were agreed to by all as being neceſſary to their own preſervation and conveniency.

This title of thane was aboliſhed in England at the conqueſt, upon the introduction of the feudal syſtem by Wil­liam. The titles of earl and baron were about the ſame pe­riod introduced into Scotland by Malcolm Canmore, and the title of thane fell into diſuſe.

THANET, an island of the county of Kent, ſurrounded by the ſea except on the north-eaſt side, where it is bound­ed by the branches of the river Stour, now inconſiderable to what they were formerly. It contains ſeveral villages, and the ſea-port towns of Margate and Ramſgate, and has the title of an earldom. It is celebrated for being the ſpot through which arts, ſciences, and divine knowledge, came into this happy iſle. The Britons called it *Richborough,* from its vicinity to the city of that name, now only a vener­able ruin ; but the Saxons called it *Thanet,* from fire, ha­ving ſo many beacons erected on it. It is in the north-eaſt part of the county, lies open to the ſea on the north and eaſt, with the river Wantſum on the west and ſouth, is about 10 miles long from the North Foreland to Sarre-Bridge, and about 8 broad from Westgate to Sandwich-Ferry@@. The north part of it is all arable, except ſome barren land, that is ſown with ſaintfoin, which produces a load and ſome­times two loads of hay upon an acre ; by which means, the land that otherwiſe is not worth half-a crown an acre yields 30s. or 40s. The ſouth and west parts of the iſland are moſt of them marſh or paſture lands. The soil is gene­rally very fertile, eſpecially in the beſt of barley, and other sorts of grain, of which it is computed above 20,000 quarters are ſent hence to London in a year, beſides what is sold to other places. The *alga marina,* or ſea-ore, as they call it, is their chief manure. This they dry on the shore, and burn, in order to make kelp, which the potters uſe in glazing their ware. But the ſmell of the rotten ore upon the soil, and the ſmoke of it when burning, is very noiſome. The gentlemen’s families are for the moſt part gone from this part of the county, having sold their eſtates ; ſo that their manſion seats are converted into farm-houſes ; but then, on the other hand, many of the yeomen and farmers have good eſtates, on which they live very genteelly. In this iſland are ten pariſhes, but ſeven pariſh-churches, and one chapel.

THAPSIA, the deadly carrot, in botany: A genus of plants belonging to the class of *pentandria,* and order of *digynia ;* and in the natural syſtem ranging under the 45th order, *umbellatæ.* The fruit is oblong and girt with a mem­brane. There are five ſpecies ; the villoſa, foetida, aſclepium, garganica, and trifoliata. The roots of the fœtida were formerly ordered in medicine, but are now entirely diſuſed ; a ſmall doſe operating with extreme violence both upwards and downwards.

THAWING ,the reſolution of ice into its former fluid ſtate by the warmth of the air. See Congelation and Frost.

THEA, in botany. See Tea.

@@@[mu] Henry's History of Great Britain, vol. ii.

@@@[mu] Luckombe's England's Gazetteer.