

SUMMER RAMBLES

ROUND

MANCHESTER.

Alfred Rimmer.

RIMMER'S RAMBLES.

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AROUND

MANCHESTER.

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BY

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PREFACE.

Two years ago I walked from London to Chester along the old coaching road, desirous of seeing what the prospects our fathers met with were like, and much was my surprise to find how great the difference was between the old days and the new; the contrast between bustle and activity and life, on the one hand, and a dead, sleepy calm on the other. If, indeed, an Englishman fifty years ago could have seen the highways as they are now, even though the population may almost have doubled, he would have thought that his country had been overrun by foreign foes and destituted. In the second half of the present century even there were eighty or ninety coaches that stopped at inns, now useless, or put to the humblest of purposes, such as taverns, with the rooms vacant up stairs, or farm labourers' lodgings; and not only were the roads alive with coaches, but there were private vehicles, post-chaises, market carts, and the many waggons that distributed the freight of the manufacturers. Now we may sometimes walk for two miles without seeing a pedestrian or a vehicle, and when we do see the latter it is probably only a shandry or market cart going slowly to the nearest market town to make a sale or a purchase. The lanes are much more lonely than they were when Isaac Walton wrote his "Angler" or Shakespeare his "Henry IV." But the scenery is there as of old, the great inns only want customers, the elms and oaks, and old bridges and hills have not been moved, and the ancient churches, with their towers and spires, are there, too; but, alas! how changed these are in fifty years. Of the towns we see along the road, Thackeray has given a very fair description in "Pendennis," when speaking of Clavering: "The town, so cheerful at a distance, a few furlongs off looks very blank and dreary. Except on market days, there is nobody in the streets. The clack of a pair of pattens echoes through half the place, and you may hear the creaking of the rusty old ensign of the Clavering Arms without being disturbed by any other noise; and the stables are now cheerless and empty, except when on Thursdays the farmers put up there, and their tilted carts and gigs make a feeble show of liveliness in the place." The constant wonder is that Englishmen will go to foreign parts, and leave the beauty and interest of their own country behind. I have walked through every county in England from Truro to Hexham, and all I can say is that I know very little indeed after twelve years' research of the scenes of interest and beauty that our island affords.

I am sure that if Gaze or Cooke, or any of the tourists' guides were to conduct an English expedition in any county, they would find much more to interest them than in all the trips to Paris or Italy or Egypt. Nay, these are pretty well played out, and if we do not mind, our American cousins will be getting the upper hand of us, and they will send their own Gazes and Cookes to show us England. In the early part of last summer a gentleman came to Chester, which is almost the first resort of Americans, and he hailed from Philadelphia. He had brought a travelling carriage, and was about to hire horses for his journey through England. It was my good fortune to meet with him, but I must confess that I felt a little humiliated when he said that his wish was to visit Shrewsbury, Lichfield, Gloucester, Coventry, Wenlock, Tewkesbury, &c., and I thought what a rebuke he was to our own travellers. But this should be fairly said, no means are afforded to Englishmen to know much about their country, in say, a journey from Lancashire to London. The railway sweeps them past everything, there are embankments and cuttings and tunnels, and when they stop at a station the sheds and offices give but a dreary prospect; yet, if they only knew it, they have most probably been passing quaint country towns, shady lanes, and ancient churches, or, it might more properly be said, churches that once were ancient, for, as I bitterly know, there are few churches that have not succumbed to the merciless hands of a restoring rector or vicar. The ancient oak pews and black oak galleries (only now beginning to be the most valued part of a church) are all swept away, and bald, shadowless benches, like market fish-stalls, substituted. Often have I conversed with country farmers whose grandfathers have sat in the ancient pews, and they have one and all deeply regretted that some new comer to the parsonage that "knew not Israel" had swept away nearly all that they venerated, against the earnest wishes of the helpless congregation. There can be no doubt that much harm has been done in this direction; but this is only an item, and the towers and spires have almost always escaped desecration, it is pleasing to add, and these, after all, constitute the chief parts of the landscape. Now and again, but how rarely! we come across a church that has escaped, and here we have a treasure indeed—the high, black oak pews, the richly-toned oak galleries, and the whole edifice inside, when the sun shines from any quarter, a picturesque grouping of light and shade. Unhappily—and I speak from exceptional opportunities of judging—it is the unfeeling way in which the old associations of the parish church goers have been dealt with that strengthens the cry for disestablishment. The anathema on those who remove their neighbours landmark which is pronounced when the Communion Service is sometimes read, receives a deep "Amen" from those who are and those who are not present.

Beautiful as the scenery round Manchester is it is somewhat dimmed at

times by factory smoke; still this has been very much diminished and kept in order. A greater grievance is the condition of the streams. The surroundings of these, and the shapely pools and rapids, and wooded banks, are all that could be desired by any artist, but those who have been in the habit of seeing Wales, or Derby, or Yorkshire, will hardly credit their eyes when they come to the upper waters of the Irwell, or the Medlock, or even the Mersey. There may be nothing actually deleterious in their waters to the health of the neighbouring inhabitants. But the evil is so pressing that great movements are being made to remedy it, and that, too, in Manchester itself; and when these come from such a quarter, success may be eventually looked for. If the days come, and they cannot be far distant, when Englishmen will enjoy what their own country affords, everyone and every interest will be bettered, the farmer, the hotel-keeper, the country tradesman, and certainly railway dividends.

Some time ago there were letters to the *Times* calling attention to the excessive prices charged at inns—"hotels," of course, the word was, though anyone prefers the English name, and I do not think any hostelry in England would lose in estimation if the exotic word were struck out, and "Inn" replaced on the signboard. The complaints were too often just, and perhaps in some cases any traveller, except a "commercial," was so "rara" an "avis" that it was considered right to make the most out of his temporary sojourn. Now, however, few complaints can lie in such a direction, and I give a list of prices collected for Black's guide and averaged—that seems fair:

Country Town Inns.			Town Hotels.		
Breakfast	1/6 to	2/-		2/- to	3/-
Dinner.....	2/- to	3/-		3/- to	4/-
Tea	1/6 to	2/-		2/- to	3/-
Supper.....	1/6 to	2/-		According to what is ordered.	
Servants are generally charged 1/- per day				1/6.	

Now all this is moderate, and often the accommodation in country inns is fully equal to that we find in their more imposing fellows in large towns. There is one point, however, in all of them that needs to be looked into—the price of wines, and I took as many averages of these as I could from wine cards. Marsala, which is a somewhat under-appreciated wine, is charged at 4s. a bottle, and 2s. a half bottle. Now, the price for excellent, if a cask is taken, is 7s. 6d. a gallon, or 1s. 4d. a bottle, and 8d. a half bottle. So that even if 100 per cent profit was charged, which surely is not under the mark, the price would only be 2s. 8d. and 1s. 4d. Better-class after-dinner sherries may now be had at £38 per hogshead, and these are charged 6s. to 7s. per bottle. Now, a hogshead contains 320 bottles, which is 2s. 1d.

per bottle, and surely 4s. ought to pay, or even less; but the most erratic charges are made in clarets. I was charged, I remember, at a well-known inn at Oxford, almost an historical establishment, 6s. for a bottle of vin ordinaire, and very "ordinaire" it was, quite inferior to that which is sold at 1s. 2d. a bottle. I saw, lately, Moët and Chandon's champagne charged on a wine card in a town in Kent 12s. a bottle, and I happened to be told by a wine merchant that he had sold it for 6s. (less 5 per cent) per bottle. Still this is of less importance than Marsala, or vin ordinaire, for if travellers want champagne and truffles they, of course, are prepared to pay. The landlords of the inns have, I am sorry to say, a counter indictment, for they may well add that except commercial travellers few ever are their guests, and their tariffs have not been altered since the old days when wines were double the cost, and members of Parliament and peers with carriages of four or six used to fill the roadside houses on their way to and from the metropolis. The country round Manchester is still of great beauty, and abounds with the residences of merchant princes. Its natural advantages are in great contrast to the surroundings of Liverpool, where the land is flat and swept by sea breezes, which dwarf the trees; and the terrible vapours of Widnes, sadly as they have blighted the foliage of western Lancashire, have not apparently damaged the trees that surround Manchester. Liverpool, however, has an advantage in the bracing air that of necessity must sweep over it. There are many parts which are in easy reach of the city, and are indeed but little known, like the high moors that lie beyond Saddleworth, and may be reached easily on any summer-day on foot. Then we are on the confines of Feather-fed Moss, a district that has many objects of interest, from Druidical remains to rare specimens in fauna and flora. The south-eastern part of the district includes the beautiful country that contains the vales of the Etherow, and the Goyt rivers—which unite near Stockport to form the Mersey. The southern ranges of Manchester include some of the most beautiful parts of Cheshire, with clear streams and woods and hills, and quite enough ancient architectural remains to illustrate an exhaustive work on the English styles, from the Norman Conquest to the present day. The north-west part is the land of the Irwell, and the hills and dales round Bury and Bolton. One great advantage which the tourist round Manchester has is that he can nearly always come home by another route, or if time presses or weather threatens he is never far from a railway station. The "Cheshire lines," which the Midland has opened through Cheshire, has placed many scenes of historical interest and great beauty within easy reach of Manchester, and the railways that come in to Manchester at the Exchange have long done the same in other districts.

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RAMBLES AROUND MANCHESTER.

OUGHTRINGTON.

OUGHTRINGTON is situated on a high ridge of land that forms a spur of the Cheshire hills, and the scenery in every direction is of exceeding beauty. It was a most perplexing matter to select any spot that offered any superior attractions for a sketch, and, as usually happens under such circumstances, the one selected was far from being the best. The present owner of Oughtrington has apportioned part of his estate to building lots, and chosen the southern side of the hill, which looks towards the south, and commands views of what is called the "Cheshire Backbone;" and this certainly includes some of the finest scenery in England. The sites of the villa residences are well chosen, and the houses do not interfere with each other. But what would the result have been if the houses themselves had been more picturesque? Black and white exteriors, or early Hanoverian, according to the taste of the owners, would have suited the site admirably. The lanes here are very rural—not Surrey or Kent can boast of any which are more so,—and some of the hedgerows are extremely ancient. The lanes in many instances lie deep down between the hedgerows, and the passer-by would almost think that they had been scooped out. The following has been put forward as the received explanation of this peculiarity: "The rains of many generations have washed away the surface soils, especially in cultivated fields, and the slope of the ground has caused the material to be carried down. The hedge

has stopped its further conveyance, and thus caused the upper side of the hedge to be so much higher than the lower. Destroy the hedge, as is often done when one field has to be thrown into another, and you will have running parallel to the valley a genuine terrace, which some geologist hereafter, ignorant of the true cause, may put down as having been formed when the river stood higher than it does now. Many lanes which have all the appearance of being cut have been formed in this way; the ground on the other side has been flooded with rains, which have been stopped by the hedges, and the water has had a free course to wear the roadway down."

Among the birds in the lanes here are to be found the greater number of those which form so charming a feature of the rural parts of England. But some species, like the yellowhammer and goldfinch, are not nearly so plentiful as they were some few years ago, and the cause is not difficult to discover. Improved agriculture and the clearing away of weeds to the roots of the ancient hedgerows have deprived these birds of the seeds on which they used to feed, and they naturally are not so ready to pair and propagate. Partridges are becoming scarce in England, and they have almost disappeared on some highly-cultivated estates owing to the want of cover, and the few opportunities they have of hatching. But on some properties in Lancashire, like Mr. Weld-Blundell's and others in the western part, sufficient cover has been retained in a few hedgerows at intervals to preserve the species, and that without at all affecting the farming interest. With pheasants, of course, the case is different. They can be reared round keepers' or farmers' cottages, and taken every care of till the leaves begin to wither in the fall of the year. Birds of the thrush tribe, however, show no signs of diminution, and throstles, blackbirds, and field-fares are just as plentiful as ever. This may be accounted for by the circumstance that their food is not interfered with, as it consists of snails and worms of all kinds, which may be found always on the ground, and, it must be added, upon fruit in its season. In the lanes that lead from Lymm to Warburton, and from Warburton to Dunham Massey and Agden Hall, nearly every species of inland

bird may at times be seen, both those which stay with us all the year and those which are migratory. To the latter class it is not generally known perhaps that blackbirds belong, and anyone who is conversant with the beautiful district of which we are speaking would be apt to say that there are quite as many of these birds in winter as in summer. So there are, and probably many more; but our own blackbirds have migrated across the Channel to more genial regions, and those we see in winter months are the immigrants from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. These



FROM OUGHTRINGTON HILL.

immigrants are somewhat smaller, and not so rich in plumage, and they visit our island with the fieldfare. The birds which migrate and which return to our shores always go back to their old locality, just as certainly as a salmon will find its own stream; and the birds when they reach the North of Africa, which is a favourite winter resort with them, are equally as fond of their localities there; so that when we see a swallow or a blackbird arriving in our lanes we may be sure he is an old friend. A gentleman who lived in Norfolk

once put a small silver ring on the leg of a swallow, and he has assured me that he saw the same ring for nine years in succession. It goes without saying that game birds, excepting of course such as blackcock or grouse, which are only found on moors, literally swarm in this region.

Oughtrington Hall was long the seat of a younger branch of the Leigh family of West Hall, and its history very briefly is this: The estate formerly belonged to William de Hutrington, who was a physician in the reign of the third Henry, and in the year when Cressy was fought he devised it to Thomas Wynne, with all its lands. It afterwards passed by marriage to a younger member of the Leigh family, and it remained with them for many generations. The last of this name was Trafford Leigh, whose uncle died in 1791 and left him his large estates, with an injunction to assume the name and arms of Trafford of Staffordshire. The crest he had to take was curious—perhaps unique in heraldry. It is a man with a flail threshing out a heap of corn, and it rests on the following legend, which Hearne gives in his “Discourses.” He says that the “arms” of “Trafard” are the most ancient in the kingdom; and then he relates how at the time of the Conquest one of the Traffords and other gentlemen were defending a ford over the river against some Norman invaders, but they were at last outnumbered and overpowered. Trafford took refuge in a barn, and at once donned a rustic coat and took up a flail. The Normans at last found him, and asked him why he so demeaned himself as to use a flail, and his reply was “Now thus.” One hardly sees the point of his reply, unless, which is probable, he emphasised his remark with the flail he held. Had it been like “old Sir Thomas Erpingham’s”—when ordering the memorable charge at Agincourt he threw on high his white baton with “Now strike!”—it would have appeared somewhat more appropriate. But there the crest is, and it is the crest of Sir H. de Trafford also. This device is often quoted as a proof of the great antiquity of the family, but in fact it was only granted about the middle of the sixteenth century, when in the Visitation so many Cheshire and Lancashire gentlemen made additions to their arms. Still the legend was there before, and it probably dates back to a

very remote period, especially as it seems there is a ford in the beautiful Bollin river where tradition says the encounter took place. In 1817 Oughtrington Hall was pulled down, or very nearly so, and rebuilt by Mr. Trafford. It has since been sold with 1,100 acres of land to Mr. Dewhurst, of Manchester. Mr. Dewhurst has built a church, and though we may not be able to compare it with the beautiful brick edifice at Ashley, which Lord Egerton has the credit of designing, it is a very good piece of architecture. The nave is thirteenth century, or lancet, and the chancel is in the style which prevailed a century later. Not that we can quarrel with this, for we see, for example, in Chester Cathedral every style, from Norman, or it is just possible, Saxon, to "Batty Langley," though really in looking over Batty Langley's work again I feel bound to say there is some merit in his classic revivals. The church at Oughtrington has been most liberally built and endowed at the sole expense of Mr. Dewhurst, who is now the lord of the manor. The Leigh family, from whom he purchased the estate, and who assumed, as we have remarked, the surname of Trafford, would appear to have been the ancestors of many ancient houses.

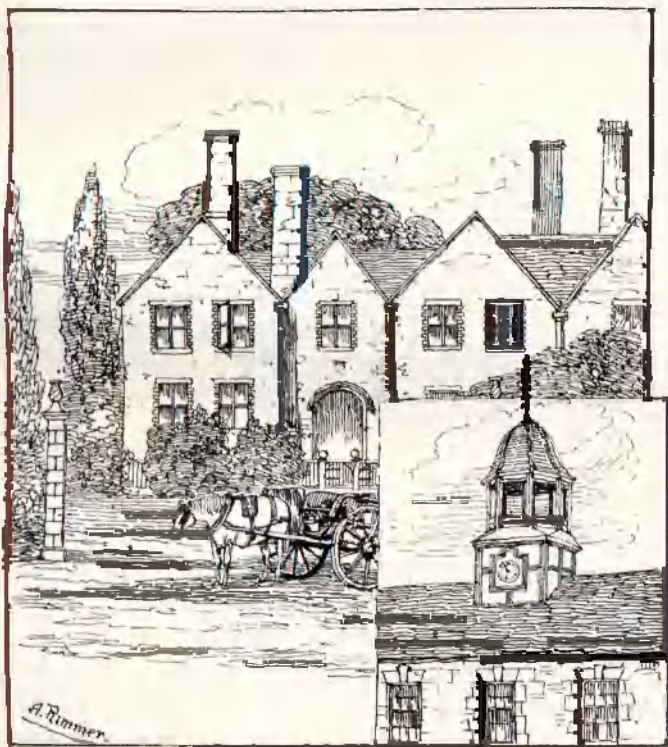


ASHLEY AND BOWDON.

WITHIN two miles of Altrincham is situated the fine old mansion of Ashley Hall, which is now the residence of an opulent farmer, who keeps the gardens and the house in excellent order. It is a delightful abode, and the interior is but little altered since it was the resort and council-house of ten men of estates and dignity who sought to alter the succession to the English throne. The entrance hall is very noble, and the carved black oak staircase has many landings and nooks, that suggest armchairs and "monthlies" to pass away an idle hour. There is one fine oak-panelled room left, but the principal apartments are enriched with the beautiful plaster work that distinguishes the earlier part of the Carolean period. Some of this enrichment is in advance even of the best Carolean revivals of the present day, which are becoming, and justly becoming, so popular among architects.

The estate of Ashley at one time belonged to the family of Dutton, who have been so prominent in Cheshire for centuries; and in the fourteenth year of Edward I., Geoffrey Dutton made over Ashley Manor, with all its rights, to Hamon Dutton, who, in accordance with the custom of the time, assumed the name of Ashley, so as to be, in old phraseology, "Ashley of that ilk," "ilk" being the north country word for "same." The ten country gentlemen who met at Ashley formed themselves into a club to decide how far they would support the claims of James Francis Stuart—a name that Scott has himself helped to brand with infamy—to the throne. They were strongly in favour of rendering him all the help that they and their tenants could afford, and most probably they would have risen if there had been any encouragement in the fortunes of the unprincipled claimant. But news was at hand that

altered the colour of their councils. The defeat of the Jacobites at Dunblane under Lord Mar and the treachery of Lord Lovat caused them to waver in their heroism, and the shocking cruelties which were practised by the Hanoverian monarch (new in his throne) upon the prisoners who were captured induced them to reconsider their position ; and accordingly it was put to the vote if



ASHLEY HALL.

they should or should not forsake their old traditions and bind themselves in allegiance to the House of Hanover. Wisdom prevailed, though, it is said, only by the casting vote of Mr. Assheton, who at that time held the high office of Governor of Chester Castle. The portraits of these gentlemen were then painted, and they hung

in Ashley Hall until quite a recent period. They now ornament some of the apartments at Tatton Hall. The Hall is kept just as one would wish it to be—not altered out of all knowledge by modernisms and the requirements of “society,” but solidly furnished by a prosperous farmer, and perhaps not very dissimilar in comforts to what it was when the judicious committee of ten decided that under the changed aspect of events King George, even though he could not hold a conversation in English, was the best man to preside over the destinies of Great Britain. How one often wishes that antiquities could be preserved just as events and circumstances have left them to us. The remains of an abbey are much more interesting if they are allowed to continue in ruins than if they are restored, and perhaps even made a luxurious residence for the proprietor. Even if they are allowed to lapse into farm buildings—as in many cases I could mention, where cattle feed in cloisters and chapter-houses, and chapels are converted into cart-sheds—even then there is more beauty and solemnity than when they are transformed into gilded and tapestried *salons*, and of this class of monastic relics there are but too many.

At Ashley there have been found the remains of ironworks of great antiquity, belonging, it is said with every degree of probability, to the period of the Roman occupation of Britain. The old park of Ashley slopes down to the beautiful river Bollin, and one fairly wonders now why the possessor of a place of such beauty should ever have troubled his head—to say nothing about risking it—whether a Stuart or a Hanoverian was seated on a throne. Between Ashley station and Ashley Hall there is a new brick church. Now, brick is not a promising material to build a church with, and we know that excepting in rare instances, like the old square at Lincoln’s Inn, or the Hall at Audley End in Essex, or Hurstmonceaux, and a few other old examples, no happy effects are likely to come from its use. But it is pleasant to have to say that this church is of unusual beauty. Its proportions are small, but the outline is good, and all the details are in exceedingly good taste; absolutely correct in all minutiae, they seem to fit their places well. I was puzzled at first to think who the architect could be :

not Scott, for it was beyond him ; and I put it down to Bodley, or it might be Austin, who has done admirable work lately ; and I was exceedingly surprised to hear from the vicar that it was designed and every detail drawn by Lord Egerton of Tatton, who, he assured me, studied architecture in a London office. Near Knutsford, and on the road to Mobberley, there is another church, built—or rather, as these lines are written, building—of brick. It also is successful, but it is not equal in excellence to Ashley.

In some of the old Cheshire houses there are still preserved compromising letters written at the period above referred to, and James II., in his blindness, had before this supposed that he would find the county a happy hunting ground to prosecute his designs against the liberties of his subjects. He came to Chester, and was entertained with great splendour and enthusiasm ; but when he tried to induce the country gentlemen to assist him in abolishing the disabilities against the Catholics, he found them stubborn, and left the county in dudgeon. More recent events have given the deliberations of the club of ten who assembled at Ashley Hall a peculiar interest. They, it is true, objected to the Jacobian efforts to repeal the Test Acts, which excluded Catholics from the high offices of State ; but their opposition must not for a moment be confused with the bigotry of George III. when he personally took upon himself to forbid Pitt to introduce the comprehensive scheme of Catholic emancipation. But in the time of James the Catholics were only in the ratio of one to every fifty of the inhabitants, yet James endeavoured to place them in all great offices of trust in the kingdom, and had already made them Lord Lieutenants, Judges, Ambassadors, and even High Commissioners over the Church of England. It may be mentioned here that when the second Pretender came over the Border, some quarter of a century later, Manchester, of all other places, was regarded, according to Green, as “the most Jacobite of all English towns.” Happily there is room to think that a libel, for all that they contributed was an illumination and £2,000.

From Ashley Hall to Bowdon it is only a short walk, but a very pleasant one. There is a picturesque water-mill on the road, which

is only one of a number that dot the landscape over. Ruskin has well said that nothing connected with steam and iron works can well be picturesque, and he has regretted the loss of water-power in the rivers and brooks that daily run so wastefully to the sea. But he would find much here to modify some of his strictures. Bowdon is delightfully situated, and, as many may be able to remember, not much more than a quarter of a century ago it was a beautiful rural village, exceptionally pleasant even for England. But now, of course, the increasing want of Manchester for building sites has altered this, and villas and terraces abound in all directions. But, what is most to be regretted, the ancient church is taken down and all its accumulation of pews and galleries destroyed, and a larger church occupies the site. I have no quarrel with this as a building, but could not the ancient fabric have stood as it was, and a new one have been erected in its stead? Bowdon Church was formerly an appendage to Birkenhead Priory, of which some beautiful remains yet exist. They are built up by the modern town, and perhaps not visited by strangers; but there they are, and they are well worth a visit. When Bowdon Church was destroyed, it is satisfactory to be able to say most of the monuments were saved. On a mural monument of white marble by Westmacott is inscribed:

In a vault near this place were interred
The remains of THOMAS ASSHETON, of Ashley, Esquire,
On the 9th day of July, 1759, aged 64;

And in the same vault, HARRIET ASSHETON,
Who died at Manchester, 1773, aged 74;

Also the remains of THOMAS ASSHETON SMITH, of Ashley,
Esquire, son of the above Thomas and Harriet,
Who died April 16, 1774, aged 49 years.

To whose memory William Henry Assheton, Esquire,
Erects this Monument.

This monument at once connects Bowdon Church with the wavering Jacobites of Ashley Hall; and in the Old Church of Bowdon there was erected a monument to Henry, Earl of Warrington, who died in 1694, at the age of forty-two. He had had an eventful

life, and he did his country good service. He was tried before the notorious Judge Jeffreys, for high treason, and a select number of his peers who were supposed to be favourable to the Court, but he was acquitted. The other judges probably saw that there were no legal proofs against him, and a sufficient sum, which would easily be forthcoming, would enable Jeffreys to see the justness of their conclusions. But he figured again in history. James II. was probably the worst of the House of Stuart, and though in John and Stephen he might have met others to contest the pre-eminence with him, he was probably, take him for all in all, the most shocking example of a king that ever sat on an English throne. The acquittal of the seven bishops was followed by vindictive retaliatory measures of the part of the King, which even his officers refused to carry out, till William of Orange appeared, and then the Earl of Warrington placed himself at the head of an armed force and supported the new arrival; and when the almost peaceful revolution was over he was one of those who were selected to convey to the wretched monarch the news that his subjects had done with him. The rectory of Bowdon is vested with the Bishop of Chester, and it is registered as being worth £650 a year, besides a house and land.

The names of the gentlemen were as follows: Thomas Assheton, of Ashley, Esq., Sir Richard Grosvenor, of Eaton, Bart., James Barry, Earl of Barrymore, Marbury, Charles Hurlestone, of Newton, Esq., Amos Meredith, of Henbury, Esq., Alexander Radcliffe, of Fox-denton, Esq., Robert Cholmondley, of Holford, Esq., John Warren, of Poynton, Esq., Henry Legh, of High Legh, Esq., and Peter Legh, of Lyme, Esq. These gentlemen used to meet at each others houses, and discuss the chances that James Francis had of recovering the throne for his family from the Hanoverians. Great was their enthusiasm when they heard that his standard was set up on the 6th September, 1815, at Bramar by the Earl of Mar, and before long he was established at Perth with a following of 12,000 men. It was in vain that Bolingbroke had urged James not to attempt a rebellion. He was as sluggishly deaf to reason, even as a Stuart, and more incompetent as a commander

than the feeble Mar. James created knights and peers, and probably even touched for the "King's evil," but after the battle of Dunblane and the treachery of Lovell, and the certainty that a number of executions must soon follow, the ten gentlemen began to consider the claims of George I., and decided some new lights had been thrown upon them. These were fully discussed, and a vote was taken, which decided that the company should swear allegiance to the new house, and the unnecessary cruelties practised on the leaders of the rebellion did not alter them from their resolution.

In order that no aspersion should ever be cast upon their loyalty to the throne it was decided that their portrait should be painted and hung up in the hall of Ashley as a memorial. The hero shared in his extremity the natural prudence of his father James. It was clear that his cause was hopeless, and the Earl of Argyle was pushing forward in the service of George I. The Stuarts fled to Dundee, and were ordered to march to Montrose, where some French men-of-war lay, but they suddenly refused to obey, believing that this was a ruse to cover his retreat to France, and leave them to the tender mercies of Argyll. Mar hastened to "undeceive them," and said the gallant King would place himself at their head, and make a bold stand at Aberdeen. The horses and guards were drawn up before the Monarch's door, while he slipped away, and, getting a boat, he reached a French man-of-war, and left his followers to their terrible fate. He was a son of the second James, a grandson of Charles, and a real "chip of the old block."



KNUTSFORD TO MOBBERLEY.

THE ride from Manchester to Knutsford is only a short one, and it is to be feared that it is not familiar to many sojourners, except those who attend the Quarter Sessions and whose home lies in or near to Manchester. Yet when we are there we are absolutely in the midst of great park lands and the seats of ancient families whose names are frequently met with in the chronicles of history. Tatton Park, which is identified with the great Lord Chancellor, whose justice and dignity form even now a landmark among all the Chief Justices and Chancellors of England; Booth's Hall, Toft Hall, Tabley and Mere Halls, and others are close by. Peover and Capesthorn lie a little outside the twelve-mile limit that it was proposed should not be overstepped, but they are full of interest and beauty, and have many ancient associations connected with them. The actual acreage in park lands in this district of Cheshire I never measured, but it would amount to many square miles. Still there is a compensating process at work for all this. The land is not lost to the people, for they have the parks to wander by, and not unfrequently to wander through also; and if anyone will look over the park walls, and just for a little remand the proprietor on the indictment that it takes a rather long ladder at times to do so, he is nearly sure to see cattle and sheep of a superlative quality, that after long generations of high culture can turn the land to greater money value than all their ancestry ever could.

At the beginning of this century the cattle were in comparison to what we now see even as Pharaoh's lean kine were to the fat ones, though their consumption of grass and turnips was greater many fold. They, as we may say, ate up the fat land, "yet they were ill-favoured and lean-fleshed such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness." Americans, who are quite alive to the value of dollars, would not come here and pay prices for Cheshire cattle (a tenth of which would have given a stock to any of our grand-

fathers) unless they knew there was value in their venture. Let anyone who will visit these regions walk for a little into the meadow lands that are the glory of Cheshire. It may be that further to the south-west of the county we shall see the grasses to greater perfection, but here we have some of the very best, and such as have made Cheshire a great cheese centre. Cheshire could supply half the world with cheese if the farmers had kept up with the improvements of the times. Still, let anyone go into the fields here, and what magnificent grasses he will find! There is the lotus, the cocksfoot grass, the sweet vernal, the bird's-foot trefoil, the meadow foxtail, the wood meadow grass, and the meadow fescue, with many others that are native growths, and so delicate that the ordinary manuring of farming lands would almost alter their nature. Yet these produce the incomparable Cheshire cheese, which Americans sometimes come to the Cheshire cheese fairs to buy at the highest price, though the purchasers have to pay I know not what fiscal claims before it could reach the consumer in New York. To give one signal instance of the service the great landowners round Knutsford have rendered to the country, if we remember the late Manchester Exhibition and the excellent works of Sydney Cooper—now, I believe, still alive and hale, though he must have passed by many years the “allotted time”—what shall we see? We shall see the cattle of our forefathers, and that not long past. I had the good fortune to be able to purchase a series of his lithographs of cattle, and can never cease to admire them, for he is incomparably the finest cattle artist in the world; even Cuyp is hardly more than a “bad second.” But how would his cattle—long horned, very bony, and hungry—look now in a pasture field near Knutsford along with the sleek shorthorns we see? And yet this vast transformation is the work of the landlords whose parks we are now amongst.

Knutsford has not very much to interest us. It is a small country town, where the sessions are held, and where the county gaol is; but there is nothing of antiquity to interest us, excepting a very few black-and-white tenements. The church is in the worst style of so-called Hanoverian architecture, and gives everyone a

chill as soon as he sees it. The name of Knutsford is derived, it is said, from Canute, whose name was spelt Cnut or Knut, and who, according to tradition, forded the river Birken here with his army. And this is not impossible, for though he was the first of the Danish kings, he did not, like the Norman Conqueror, introduce a new language or new tenures, and "*ffordd*," which is one of the most pronounceable words in the Welsh language, is still used to designate a passage or road. Of course Knutsford is known as almost the only place where the May-pole is still an institution, and it figures annually on May-day. The old enthusiasm it used to call forth even infected Stubbs, the Puritan writer, though, indeed, after giving a pleasant account of the May-pole, he calls it a "— idol" and a heathen custom. Not long ago, it is said, a movement was made by the clergy of the district to select as "May Queen" the most regular school teacher or district Church of England visitor, and it is appalling to think, if the election had been fair, what it is just possible the appearance of the May Queen might on some anniversaries have been. But now something of the old custom prevails. So great an interest does the ceremony cause that special trains run and the lanes are crowded with wagonettes and drags. In the present year the festivities were postponed until the Queen's birthday, to adapt them to the Jubilee, and the May Queen was the daughter of a respectable butcher in the town. The high office is open to all ranks of life, but, as I heard a very old Cheshire dame say some years ago, "there is more beauty in the buttery-hatch than in the drawing-room." All the festivities savour of primitive days, but they are redolent of England, and pleasant. There are morris-dancers in their odd costumes, and jugglers, and a falconer with his hawks. The May-pole is carefully decked with ribbons and flowers by the "maids of honour," and one is almost inclined to say, with an old song that was written in 1657 :

The May-pole is up.
Now give me the cup,
I'll drink to the garlands around it ;
But first unto those
Whose hands did compose
The glory of flowers that crowned it.

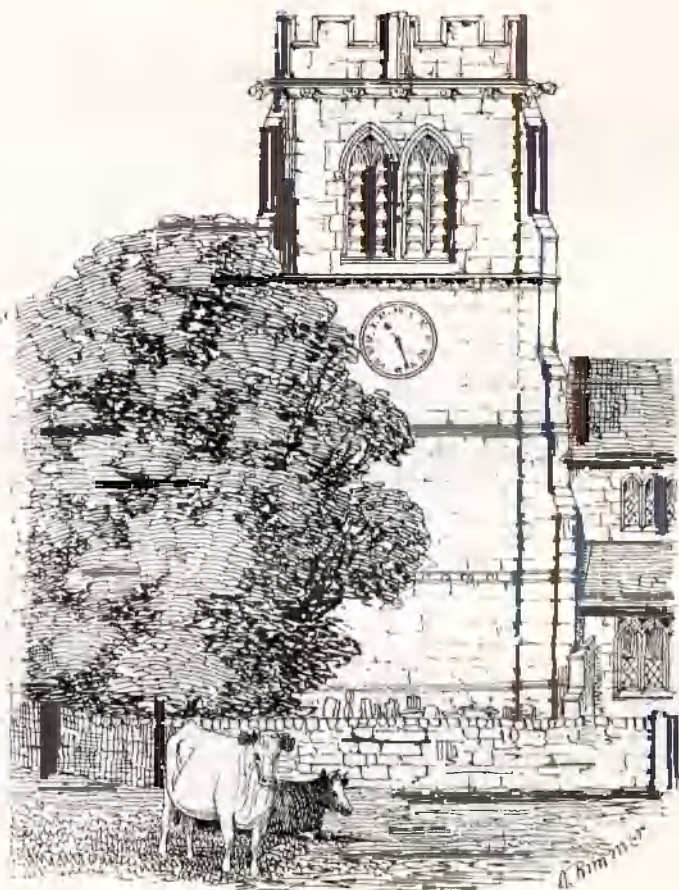
Stubbs, the Puritan, was exercised at the custom of May-poles, and, when speaking of the revellers, says: "They have twenty or thirty yoke of oxen, every ox having a sweet nosegay of flowers tied to the top of his horns, and these oxen draw home the May-pole, which they cover all over with flowers and herbs, bound round with string, and sometimes it was painted with variable colours, having 200 or 300 men, women, and children following it with great devotion. They set up summer halls, bowers, and arbours hard by it, and then they fall to banqueting, feasting, and dancing." Some very strait-laced persons who were passing through Knutsford during one of these festivities did make the remark that "such things should cease." They were shocked at the morris-dancers and the jesters, but much more so when I suggested that these innocent rustics cost us nothing, while we paid thousands to their more refined successors, the marshal of ceremonies, the master of ceremonies, the clerk marshal, and all the lords in waiting and all the grooms in waiting and extra grooms in waiting, and gentlemen ushers and honorary gentlemen-at-arms, &c. The falconer at Knutsford gathering did carry a couple of falcons, which is a great deal more than his Grace the Hereditary Grand High Falconer of England ever did.

There is a singular custom at Knutsford and some of the villages round it—"sanding the streets" for a wedding. This consists of laying white sand in fancy patterns and monograms along the thoroughfare. There was a village wedding at Ashley when the notes were made for this chapter, and the inn and one or two houses were sanded in front with fancy patterns of roses and initial letters. These devices, it seems, are formed by pouring sand through some fine funnels that are made for the purpose, but I can find nothing to account for the curious custom. From Knutsford the way to Mobberley lies through a pleasant rustic country of much interest. In twenty minutes' walk from Knutsford we pass through a small valley called Podmore Hollow, and on the right-hand side of the road is a picturesque lake called Podmore Pool. It is not large; a walk round its banks would be little short of a mile. This lake is said to abound with fish, and on its surface I

saw several swans, doubtless from private waters in the neighbourhood, and by a singular chance one passed over Podmore at the time. I was never more impressed with the power of the air in sustaining locomotion than when I saw its flight. It probably weighed 20lb. or 25lb., but its powerful wings, which did not appear to move rapidly, drove it through the air with leaps and bounds, and it would probably have overtaken the swiftest swallow. One thing I noticed — the swans on Podmore Pool took little notice of it, but there was a most garrulous cackling at the further end of the mere, which proceeded from three wild ducks that rose when I reached the extremity. After passing Podmore we come to an angular bend in the road which goes round Duckenfield Hall. This is a very fine old farmhouse, of which I find no record either in *Lysons* or *Ormerod*, but it must have belonged to some family of mark, as the well-proportioned gables and high chimney stacks would show. The heavy stacks of hay when the value was £3 or £4 per ton conveyed the impression that if the tenant of Duckenfield Hall was not over-rented his way in life must be a happy one. To arrived at Mobberley we must make another sharp turn to the right, and leave on the left the great plantations of Tatton Park.

Mobberley is soon reached, and here we find Mobberley Mere, which turns a large mill, and is fed by a tributary of the *Bollin* river. The town is very straggling, but most picturesque, and the lake forms a very fine feature here, as indeed meres do in various other *Cheshire* and *Shropshire* towns; and the square tower is visible from many interesting landscapes. It was built when *Miles Coverdale* commenced his *English Bible*, and the names of the builders, *Sir John Talbot*, and *Margaret*, his wife, are still preserved in an inscription by the Master Mason. Mobberley Church, according to *Leycester*, was dedicated to *Wilfrid*, Archbishop of *York*, who died in 708. There used to be a priory of black canons here which was built by *Patrick de Modbury* in 1206, but in about thirty years from its foundation it was annexed to *Roncaster*, and every record of it has perished. The gift of the living is vested in the family of *Mallory*. *Thomas Mallory* was Dean of *Chester* in the

Civil Wars, and held the livings of Davenham and Mobberley. He was a younger son of Sir William Mallory, and was warmly attached to the House of Stuart. He fled to Chester for safety,



MOBBERLEY CHURCH.

died there in 1644, and is buried in the Cathedral. A monument to him probably exists, but it must have been covered over. The registry of the Cathedral would, however, inform us if this is so.

Among other records of Mobberley, I find the following : "Thomas Mallory, Dean of Chester, younger son of Sir William Mallory, of Stewdley, in Yorkshire, succeeded parson of Mobberley 1621. He was parson of Davenham, in Cheshire, about forty-three years, and of Mobberley about twenty-three years. In November, 1642, he was forced (by reason of the rebellion then raised in England) to fly from Mobberley to Chester, where he lived sequestered from both his parsonages at Davenham and Mobberley until the 3rd day of April, 1644, on which day, being Wednesday, he died at the Dean's house, in the Palace-yard, at Chester, and was buried in the quire of the Cathedral Church of that city, aged about seventy-eight." He married Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. Vaughan, Bishop of Chester, and had many children. The family still have a territorial interest in the neighbourhood, and Mobberley living is in their gift. The house, Chester Deanery, where Thomas Mallory expired, has been entirely rebuilt since his time in consequence of a fire, but the conventual cellars remain, and there is an ancient archway that dates back apparently to the thirteenth century. Soon after him we find another section whose family was well known in the neighbourhood. He was James Stanley, the younger son of Thomas Stanley, of Nether Alderley, and he was Master of Arts at Jesus College, Cambridge.





ORDSALL HALL.

ORDSALL HALL,

WITH REMARKS ON SOME OLD MANCHESTER HALLS.

I WAS really surprised to find how many men there are in Manchester who do not know that they possess within the city limits one of the noblest and one of the most perfect ancient halls, when we consider the period that it dates back to, which is left for us in England. We may not compare it with Knowle or Penshurst or Haddon perhaps, for these are ancient palaces; but I cannot now remember any dwelling in England that has preserved for us more completely a picture of the seat of a country gentleman of high rank at the time when Richard III. said:

Simple, plain Clarence, I do love thee so,
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,
If heaven will take the present at our hands.

One of the Radcliffes of Ordsall was the prime favourite of Richard when he uttered this shocking determination. Formerly, also, the land (a hyde) on which Ordsall Hall stands belonged to Edward the Confessor, who was too mild for the "vile blows and buffets of the world," and who left the government of the kingdom to his minister, Godwin. From an early period Ordsall Hall belonged to the Radcliffe family, whose pedigree can be traced back to the early part of the twelfth century. This family took its name from a red cliff or rock on the east side of the river Irwell. The name of Rougemont was frequently given to this bluff, and the same was often used by some members of the Radcliffe family. Here we have a curious instance of the manner in which the French language that was imported at the Conquest mingled with our own. A very similar mingling of tongues is to be found in Canada, where

we may not uncommonly hear such expressions as "*Apportez moi the spade*," or "*Où est the gun, voilà les canards*." Yet while all this babel of tongues was going on the languages of the Continent were written with as much precision as they are at the present day. The Radcliffe of Ordsall Hall, who figured so conspicuously as an adviser of Richard III., had really the same name as Richmond, who superseded that monarch, though in no way connected with him, even remotely. Richmond, Rougemont, and Radcliffe are all one word. Richard III. in the fourth act impatiently interrupts Buckingham when the latter comes to him to claim the Earldom of Hereford—which had been, as it would appear, promised to him—and says in reply to Buckingham's advances :

Richmond ! When last I was at Exeter,
The Mayor, in courtesy, showed me the castle,
And called it Rougemont ; at which name I started,
Because a bard of Ireland told me once
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

Sir John Radcliffe, "Knt of Ordesall," represented Lancashire in Parliament just at the time when great constitutional changes were introduced such as made Edward's Parliament a forerunner of our own. He was also, of course, a warrior, and was present at the battle where three feathers were plucked from the helmet of the blind King of Bohemia and given to the Black Prince. These the Prince adopted as the badge of the Princes of Wales, along with the motto "*Ich Dien*." In addition to Cressy, Sir John Radcliffe was also at the siege of Calais and Caen, and the motto of the family at the present time is "*Caen, Cressie, Calais*." His daughter married William Fairfax, of Walton, in Yorkshire, whose family in after years was identified with the Civil Wars so very prominently.

It was during the American Civil War that I happened to enter a book sale in Montreal, and for an almost nominal sum purchased a large number of very valuable English works. The sum was under £2, but it required a chaise to bring all the "spoils" away. The collection came from the library of a Southern planter, and I happened to find there a history of the Radcliffes. It certainly seems strange that in America so many relics are to be acquired.

But the old class of Southern planters seemed almost to represent the oldest form of English life and costume. They were the most courtly of gentlemen. I well remember during the war that the Governor of Virginia identified himself so much with the habits of his ancestry that he wore a "pigtail." Among the volumes that I acquired at this sale was a large edition of Burke's "Landed Gentry," which was some forty years old, but all the volumes were in perfect order, and it would seem that this book is not now to be procured. As much as £50 has been offered for my copy, though it realised at the sale only 10s. It contains excellent histories of old families, including all those round Manchester, which for some reason seem to have special mention in the pages of the history. The descendants of Sir John Radcliffe would appear by this to have become connected with the principal houses in the North of England—the houses of Molyneux, Venables, Standish, Hulton, and very many more; and one of them is chronicled in "Richard III." This was the Radcliffe of whom Collingbourne wrote:

The cat, the rat, and Lovell the dogge,
Rule all England under a hogge.

'The cat was Catesby, and the rat Sir Richard Radcliffe; the hog was, of course, in allusion to the armonial bearings of Richard III. The couplet took amazingly, and was in everyone's mouth, but it cost the poet his life. Radcliffe appears at Bosworth field in "Richard III.":

Radcliffe, send out a pursuivant at arms
To Stanley's regiment; bid him bring his power
Before sunrising, lest his son George fall
Into the blind cave of eternal night.

The family is now represented by C. J. Radcliffe, Esq., of Fox-denton, near Oldham, a residence that formerly belonged to H. Trafford, and it may be worthy of notice, as showing how widely they were connected, that there are twenty-seven quarterings on their arms. In one very melancholy way, indeed, the family figures again in history. The terrible lessons of the seventeenth century were not sufficient to lay the evil genius of the House of Stuart. Charles

and Monmouth and the Second James had met with their deserts, but the weedy root reappeared in two pretenders to the throne in the eighteenth century. Among the adherents of the first of these pretenders was a descendant of the house of Radcliffe, the amiable Earl of Derwentwater, who had in an evil hour cast in his lot with the worthless claimant. At the battle of Preston he was taken, with many others, and all were condemned to death. Some of them contrived to have their sentences commuted or to escape but three of their number—Lord Derwentwater, Lord Kenmure, and Lord Nithsdale—were reserved for execution. The first two suffered very heroically, but Lord Nithsdale—where was he? His wife was the heroine of the often-told tale of his escape from prison in a disguise which she herself had smuggled into the cells. It will be remembered that not very long ago an eccentric lady claimed to be Countess of Derwentwater, and even went so far as to establish herself on some part of the property and claim rents and dues in right of her pretensions, and indeed there were some who looked into the pedigree of the family and did not consider her case to be quite a made-up one.

The drawing of Ordsall Hall which is here given is from a sketch that was made by me before the moat and bridge were removed, and before the dreary colony of brick houses by which it is surrounded was built. When the sketch was made it was in the country, and cut up into three residences, but now it is entirely closed in with streets of small property. The four gables that are shown differ from each other, though they all harmonise, and the gable on the left, which, as it were, dissolves itself into a noble bow window, is a thing of beauty. One of the most charming points in old domestic architecture is the quaint way in which forms are altered by what are called in technical language “stops;” that is to say, where by splays, or cuttings away, or it may be in some cases even by projections, the character of some feature is entirely altered. In the bases of some of the old crosses we see this to perfection. This is beautifully illustrated in Ordsall Hall, where many such conversions are conspicuous. Take, for example, the three bow windows that are shown in the plate. In the first one

there is a fine oriel window with angle buttresses, which are converted by two angle splays into a square gable. In the next gable the conversion of a great oriel window into a gable, and the two gables, have distinctive features of their own. But the glory of Ordsall is the great hall, a stately apartment with a magnificent open roof, that certainly would seem to belong to the very earliest period of the fifteenth century, and almost reminds us of Rufford or Adlington, to neither of which is it inferior in beauty. This hall has the appearance of a little greater antiquity than the other parts of the building, though it is quite possible that they almost approach it in age. The bell under the penthouse which rang the porter is still there, and with a little alteration the Hall might easily be made one of the most taking sights not only in Manchester, but even in Lancashire. It may not rival Speke in picturesqueness, or perhaps Samlesbury, near Blackburn, in antiquity, but it is excelled by none for grace and beauty; and if the woodwork in the great hall is painted fantastically, it is only very recently, and no harm is done. A few pounds would bring everything back to its normal condition. The whole building is now devoted to a workman's club, and we may console ourselves with the reflection that it is in strong hands, and not likely to suffer from so-called "public improvements." Ordsall Hall must at one time have been a pleasant abode. Its lands were bounded by the clear waters of the Irwell, and it lay rather low in woods. The fords and rapids that left their names behind them have disappeared through the improvement in the navigation, but in the early part of last century it abounded with the finest of trout, grayling, and salmon. There is actually a picture extant—dated, if I remember rightly, 1720—where an angler is hastening down to the limpid waters of the Irwell, fly-rod and landing net in hand. Even Lysons, who wrote in 1809, speaks of the Mersey near Manchester as having trout and salmon. How far the enforcing of the Rivers Pollution Act would revive old times remains yet to be seen.

If we could only carry our memories back to the beginning of the eighteenth century, we should see Manchester surrounded by ancient halls and manor houses of which any one would be a model

for an architect. The halls of Collihurst and Hough were both seats of some branch of the Mosely family ; and Ancoats was a favourite residence of Sir Oswald Mosely. The lumbering red building which faces Great Ancoats Street is comparatively modern, little more than half a century old, but it supplanted a noble old black and white structure, of which, fortunately, a good likeness has been preserved. It is singularly picturesque, and adaptable to modern requirements. There was another hall of a somewhat similar character—Hulme Hall—which was also a seat of the Mosely family. This was in Hulme, near Manchester, and it must have been of noble architecture, but it was demolished in the present century. There is a singular history attaching to it, which may possibly be of interest to some one of enterprise. All the districts round Manchester came in for their share of the Civil Wars, and, though the popular cause had the greatest number of adherents, the evil house of Stuart was abundantly supported by men whose truth and loyalty were worthy of a far better cause. Hulme Hall belonged to Sir Thomas Prestwich, whose estates were sequestered in the Civil Wars. These were conveyed to Sir Edward Mosely of Rolleston, and they remained in his family. Sir Thomas Prestwich left a son and a dowager widow, and the latter continually told the proper heir that the King would come back again and have his own. She encouraged him to adhere to the Royal cause, as she had hidden treasure enough for all his wants, but this, of course, could not be unearthed, as it would belong to the present owner of the land. Shortly afterwards the old lady became paralysed and speechless ; and, through her sudden death, which occurred shortly after, the secret remained unrevealed, and the treasure is probably hidden still in some part of Hulme. Hulme Hall is illustrated in Charles Knight's "Old England," and according to the drawing it was a model of picturesqueness, but the only resources at command were evidently so defective that it has not been reproduced here. The house had been demolished long before this article was written.

CHESHIRE MERES.

THE meres of Cheshire extend, it is true, much beyond the limits of these papers, but as the most beautiful of them, such as Rostherne and Mere and Tatton, lie well within the range, they are a fair text for an article. They extend from near Manchester to the south-west of Cheshire, and there are some considerable ones in the south-east, such as Crewe and Betley. The principal meres besides those named are Budworth, Pickmere, Tabley, Northwich—which is illustrated on the next page—Oak Mere, Oulton Mere, Cholmondley Mere, Bar Mere, and Combermere, besides many smaller ones, which have, however, been formed in a manner similar to their larger neighbours. I will endeavour to give a slight account of the formation of these deep sheets of water as free from technical wording as possible, for triassic and tertiary and keuper, even where they may not be quite unfamiliar to the reader, are rather like coming across a knot in carpentry. It is known that the earth is one vast cooling mass, and that countless ages ago it was covered with a primæval ocean, which was to a great extent in a state of vapour. We know that this ocean either in water or vapour was some two and a half miles in depth. The present oceans of the earth cover about two-thirds of its surface, and they vary in depth from a few feet to five miles, so that we can see that there must have been great upheavings of dry lands, such as our world is composed of, and, in consequence, deep depressions. Volcanic agencies, as they are now termed, were at work, throwing up large tracts of territory, and then perhaps subsiding, and leaving these to cool; and as the earth itself cooled its surface crumpled up. Now, it is quite clear that in all these disturbances of nature, when the dry land appeared, there must have been great land-locked lakes of salt water, and these we see yet in various parts of the world.

Indeed, where any great primæval lake like the Caspian Sea or the Salt Lake of Utah has no outlet, it is sure to be salt water, like the Dead Sea of Palestine. The question may at once arise, why salt? and what has salt water to do with Rostherne Mere or 'Tatton Mere? Well, they were small salt lakes at one time, probably in different dimensions, but atmospheric and many other agencies have entirely altered their character and habit. When the dry lands rose in different parts of the earth, the British Isles were among the others, and a large salt lake was impounded. This lake occupied the middle part of England, and it reached, we may



NORTHWICH MERE.

say, from North Lancashire, all through Cheshire and Staffordshire, right away down to Worcestershire and the Severn Valley. With the monsters that inhabited it we have nothing now to do. But ages and ages before the appearance of man, as we believe, on the face of the earth, this great lake was beginning to dry up. There cannot have been any considerable flow of fresh water on so comparatively small a surface as our isles, such as would have interfered in any degree with evaporation; and here, though it hardly seems to be necessary to explain, the settlement of salt and the

settlement of, let us say, clay or any outside element differ entirely. Salt is held in solution, and cannot deposit, but clay or earth or chalk deposits. In other words, no filters in the world could alter the saltiness of water. It would be just as salt when it had been filtered ever so many times as it was before it was put on the filter beds. But if clay or earth is mingled with water, it is not held in solution, as the expression is, but is simply held suspended, and if left to itself it would settle down and leave the water clear; but we know that a bucket of sea water would never become fresh by the salt depositing at the bottom of the vessel. This will give a proper clue to the formation and the present aspect of the rock salt of the Cheshire mines.

Large basins would be left in the rapidly drying inland land-locked seas, and these, too, would sometimes be crystallising, and sometimes when the sunny seasons came back they would melt again, and the flush of rainwater would bring with it great sediments of marl to mingle with the rock-salt crystals. There is a parallel geological change going on now in a lake in India. The lake is called Lake Sembhur. In the dry season this lake contains no water at all, but consists of a great area of salt crystals of a dazzling roseate hue, and here and there the monotonous surface is varied by patches of brine in the course of evaporation. But when the wet season comes on, the salt district is converted into a vast lake twenty miles long and five miles broad. Here we have an iteration of the Cheshire meres, but the transformation occurs annually in India; and then there is this great difference—the water that overflows the Indian mere is clean, coming as it does from indurated hills, but that which in the wet season flooded the Cheshire meres was charged with marls, and these marls settled among the rock-salt crystals; and this is just what we find actually, when, after long ages, we open up the earth, for sometimes the product of the mine shows pure crystals of salt, and sometimes the clay so much predominates that it is almost difficult to say if the specimen we are examining is salt or clay. There are, as has been said, two great districts of salt in Cheshire, one above the other, and these are separated by a bed of marl thirty feet in thickness.

How such a dense mass of marl ever came to be deposited over the rock salt, and then another salt mine formed over it, has never been very satisfactorily shown. It would almost seem as if the lower bed of salt had dried up and hardened, and been coated and crusted over with the bed of marl, and then in some great volcanic change in after years there were more upheavals and shrinkages and consequent depressions of the old lake surface. This would be again filled with salt water from the outer ocean, and the new lake would go through the same processes of evaporation and crusting over with earth.

And now to account for the meres. These were, of course, once deep salt lakes, and subsequently salt mines. But they were so situated that the copious rainfalls of the wet seasons reached them, and this became brine. The super-incumbent earth forced this up in brine springs, sometimes near the lake, but often at a considerable distance away, where an outlet was found on a lower level, and so in vast geologic ages a hollow was formed into which it is possible that a rill flowed. This became filled with water, and the lake is now a Cheshire mere. It would be curious to know if there were any forms of life peculiar to them that indicated a continuous series of ancient pools that joined with each other, and varied from the forms of ponds of a different formation of which there are so many in Wales. This is the more interesting as it is now commonly admitted that the fish of Gennesereth differ from those of Europe in many features, and yet that corresponding fish are found in the great lakes of Central Africa. This, it is said, would point to a chain of lakes of which the Red Sea was one, and once a fresh-water lake. The subject is the more interesting if we remember how sea denizens sometimes adapt themselves to fresh water. Thus in the St. Lawrence, once an arm of the sea, there are vast shoals of herrings whose ancestry countless ages ago had become acclimatised, and these differ neither in appearance nor flavour from those of the sea. And salmon in the great lakes still preserve their nomadic habits, though they have no salt water to go to. But the real interest that attaches now to the Cheshire meres is this : in some parts of the county they are increasing to

an alarming extent, and threaten now to engulf a great part of Northwich and of Winsford in ruin.

We have seen what the slow agencies of nature can do to make lakes and meres, and to engulf what was once fertile soil. But if we come to the same class of agency when multiplied fifty-fold by artificial means, we can easily understand that the changes must proceed with alarming rapidity. Mr. T. Ward, a considerable salt proprietor at Northwich, has devoted much time and calculation to the subject, and he is perhaps now the most reliable and careful authority that we have, and I would borrow a few statistics from able and exhaustive lectures he has given in Manchester and Warrington. Where natural brine springs exist, Mr. Ward says, it would take ages, even perhaps geologic ages, to make any visible alteration in the appearance of the surface of the land. They ooze quietly away and are often impeded and stopped, so forming a perfectly solid foundation for the overlying soil. Still even here the lapse of ages tells, and the great depressions that form the meres are the result. And now, as Mr. Ward has pointed out, if such results follow the almost imperceptible workings of nature, what can we look for when great pumping engines are at work in all directions to draw up the brine from its bed of rock salt? In former times it might have reposed, but now pumping engines of vast power are at work—the stagnant brine is moved on, to be succeeded in its stead by more water; and in fact the whole of the district under Winsford, Northwich, and Marston is being rapidly eaten away by running canals of brine. Mr. Ward makes the following remarkable statement: “The quantity of brine annually extracted and pumped up will give an idea of the denudation annually occurring in Cheshire. During 1886 the salt denuded by water over the whole Cheshire district and pumped up in brine for the manufacture of salt would fill a channel 30 feet wide, 15 feet deep, and extending all the way from Warrington to Northwich. In the last ten years a space large enough to form a ship canal from Northwich to Warrington 150 feet wide and 30 feet deep has been excavated by brine pumps. If the subsidences formed in the Cheshire salt districts during the present century by

brine pumping could be brought together, they would form an excavation very much more extensive than would be required for the Ship Canal from Manchester to Liverpool." Mr. Ward might here have quoted his table of the white salt shipped down the Weaver to make his case still stronger, for in the excellent paper he read before the Manchester Geological Society in 1887 he points out that in 1796 the amount was 100,155 tons, and in 1880 it had reached 1,087,214 tons, and the alkali trade is greatly increasing the consumption. The interesting question, however, and one, indeed, of especial interest to the inhabitants of Northwich and Winsford, is this: Will these towns ever become the bed of a great mere? Now, to show how vastly these subsidences are increasing, and how entirely they are owing to the great salt pumpings, it may be said that only those were known in the early part of the present century which belonged to geological periods. Ormerod, it is true, in 1819 speaks of some slight subsidence at Northwich. But Lysons, in his painstaking work written in 1810, does not even allude to it. Mr. Ward has summarised the area of depression in his paper of 1887. There are, he says, in the Northwich district more than 1,200 acres of land, and in the Winsford district more than 1,500 acres, that are sinking. In Northwich 900 buildings, and at Winsford more than 400 were affected, and the property is estimated at over £500,000. This was in 1880, and since then the damage has been going on at a much greater rate than ever. The new mere which forms the illustration of the chapter has been formed within the memory of men still living, and it is as large as Rostherne. It is very deep, and is only 200 yards distant from another lake of twelve acres in extent and of great depth. The road which it extends to is a public highway, and has sunk fully 40 feet within six years. A third lake has formed since 1880, and this is in places 70 feet deep; and probably all three will join. This is at Northwich, where buildings are cracking and ominous sinkings in the middle of the town are already but too common. At Winsford a mere is forming in the town, and the waters cover the floors of now deserted tenements. The Red Lion Inn is a notable example of subsidences here, for we can see it with our eyes. Some twenty

years ago it was approached by a flight of ten steps which led up to the front door. Now the same steps and the same door are used, but the inn has sunk down into an area. And the direction of the steps is reversed, and only the bedroom windows and the chimneys appear above the roadway ; so that although the whole area of Winsford is sinking, and some parts of it lie over deeper apertures than others, and though those who are most concerned do not seem to trouble themselves much except when they have to fill up the gaps in their crumbling houses or prop up their failing roads, a wayfarer would be almost inclined to say, as the stranger did to Lot, "Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee ; neither stay thou in all the plain."

Since the above was written some further alarming subsidences have occurred in the district, and I quote a few extracts from London papers that indicate what has occurred since the article was written : "The townships of Winsford and Northwich are upon most treacherous foundations, and from time to time the evidence of this is seen in the sinking of their buildings. The reason of these collapsings is traced to the great salt springs helped on by human agency. It is reported that nearly one million and a quarter tons of white salt are annually exported from this district, besides some half million tons of rock salt. Now, when we consider that the whole of this is taken from the earth—the former being pumped from brine pits that are sunk in these cavernous wells, while the latter is also extracted from the earth—the sinking is not to be wondered at." The Wheatsheaf Inn has had some narrow escapes. I saw it shortly after the cellar collapsed, and some hogsheads of ale which were being placed on skids were launched with three men into a deep salt pit. Soon after a stable disappeared, swallowing up a valuable horse, and on the 30th September, 1888, the inn itself collapsed, ominous cracks shot across the road, the huge beam supporting the gable snapped with a loud report, and the building soon became some feet out of perpendicular ; and the Wheatsheaf is now no more. The most singular part of the matter is that the inhabitants have become so accustomed to living on a brink that they do not trouble them-

selves about it. The landlord of the Wheatsheaf remained happily in his house till the place was becoming a ruin, and only left it before it was no more. Not far from this demolished hostelry there was a shop which was approached by a flight of steps, but now it has sunk below the road, and a temporary footway is provided by planks, which themselves must soon disappear.



TURTON TOWER

AND

HALF-TIMBERED ARCHITECTURE.

THE history of the half-timbered architecture of England has yet to be written. It has had many developments, and those who have well scanned the details, though indeed they are not many, quite believe that we might find as many aids to determine the date of a black-and-white house as now even the unlettered can in assigning the date to a window in an ancient church. This particular style of building is beginning again slowly to appear, and I fear it must be said that only in some few instances has the old humour of the original designers been fairly approached. There could not be a better centre than Manchester for a proper study of the style. The old Halls of Speke and Worsley and of Bramhall, and especially perhaps the farmstead of Moreton, are among the very finest remains in the kingdom, and they cannot be too closely studied by architects. The material of which a building is fashioned often gives some little light as to the age when it was constructed. We have, of course, in the eastern counties the fine brickwork that is seen in Holland, with the red "Dutch" bricks in "Flemish bond" and the tall and elegant stacks of chimneys; and in Yorkshire and Derbyshire, for example, the old stone residences tell us of quarries that have been utilised for minsters and halls. But the black-and-white houses of Lancashire and Cheshire speak of a district that abounded with great oak trees; and indeed, so far from some of the houses being, as is called, "half" timbered, there are a few that are so thoroughly built that way that the oak beams and uprights constitute far more than half the building. Bridge Street in Chester furnishes some fine examples of this style,

and all the way from Chester within a wide radius, extending to Manchester, are to be found excellent specimens, though some of them are now farmhouses. There was a noble hall at Bold, near Warrington, and one at Hooton, the seat of the oldest branch of the Stanley family; but these have disappeared, to give place to some more recent structures, though both are good examples of classic architecture. The genius of modern architects does not seem to have quite adapted itself to the exigencies of the style. There are a few architects who seem to have partly appreciated it, but their name is not legion. Our modern black-and-white architects are attracted by the oddness of old buildings, and they even go so far as to study irregularity in design, and so their efforts fall flat, and weary us. Now the sixteenth century designers of the black-and-white houses, and indeed of all our best buildings of old, strove after regularity, and the meaning of the term is soon explained, and the monotonous façade of Versailles, imposing as it is, will hardly gain by the comparison. Regularity in architecture is only another name for harmony, and the charm of our old buildings is the grouping of the blocks and bays, evidently resulting from adapting them to the requirements of the interior; and then the exteriors in our best examples are made as uniform as the circumstance admit. In a palace like Versailles it seems as though the exterior were the principal part to consider, and the long lines of windows are put sometimes to strange uses. An internal partition will occasionally cut a great window in two, and let one half serve for lighting a footman's pantry and the other a back staircase, or fill some such use. In the reviving interest which is now taken in works of beauty there is great room to hope that half-timbered houses may again figure in our villages and country towns. There are other woods less costly than oak that would furnish admirable material. Take tamarac, for example, a sort of pine that grows in great abundance in Canada, or Baltic fir. If these woods were cut into planks of the right thickness, it would be very simple to contrive a steam auger that should form them into quatrefoils, the principal and almost the only ornamental panel that is used, and houses would

be readily and substantially erected, and all this could be done well in America. The timber might thus be shipped to England all ready for building purposes, and labour and freight saved. But there is one point that deserves particular attention, and speaks most hopefully for the English people regaining the lead in artistic excellence, which with greater freedom they would never have lost. An industrial art experiment was begun at Keswick about four years ago, and it has been so successful that it has exceeded the utmost hopes even of the promoters, for whom no words of praise could be too strong. It was proposed to revive the ancient system of village handicrafts that may be said to have expired in the evil days of the Stuarts. The villagers of Keswick, Grasmere, Milnthorpe, and others readily fell in with the views of the promoters of the scheme ; and though, indeed, only a few hours each week could be given to the rustics, and though their hands were hard, they fell into the work so readily as to show what has recently been urged, that the artistic genius which carved our churches and cathedrals has never been lost. "Within a month of starting the school," says a writer in *Murray's Magazine*, "simple work in the form of brass or copper finger-plates for doors was produced which was saleable." But here the astonishing part of the story only begins. The rough hands soon adapted themselves to copying artistic work, and this work soon gave place to excellent designs, the result of the taste and skill of the workers. I copy an extract from the *Liverpool Mercury* upon this subject: "Visitors to the Manchester Exhibition may have noticed the specimens of work sent from the Keswick Art School, and if so they must have been struck by the beauty of the designs and the careful workmanship ;" and speaking of the village workmen, the same paper says: "The results of their labour find purchasers in preference to the machine-pressed articles in wood and brass and copper which are to be found in such profusion in the little towns of the Lake District. In this way the school has become self-supporting. Last winter sales were effected to the amount of £288, which, after all expenses were paid, left sufficient balance to keep everything going during the session now commenced." Here is a record indeed. Now, there is a village in

Kent called Chiddingstone. It lies off a railway track, and requires a long walk to reach it from a station, so that it is little visited ; but here we may see an English village as it might, and let us hope will be in future days. The barge-boards of this village—that is, the eaves-board, or the boards that hang from the gables—are excellently designed, as are also the great hinges, and the handles and latches and locks that adorn the doors. Yet it is without doubt that all the designers were of the same class as that which is now turning out such admirable work in the Lake District, and should



TURTON TOWER.

and probably will, be followed by other parts of the kingdom. Why we should fear German competition in artistic work, and why some £50,000 a year should be paid by a single firm, as is stated, for the reproduction of Christmas and other cards, is a question worth inquiring into. As for any natural artistic gifts the foreigner may be supposed to possess over us, such a claim would surely be settled by the exhibition of pictures last year at Old Trafford. All Europe could not produce such a grand collection, and these were painted during the present reign.

The woodwork of Turton is not given here as exceptionally fine, but it is fairly good, and the fine old tower sets it off to great advantage. The former tower once belonged to the "good Duke of Lancaster," as he was called, and it in after years descended to the family of Orrells. The Turton estate, as has often been remarked, contains just as many acres as there are days in the year—365. It was finally purchased by Humphrey Chetham, who added more land, and who has left his name not only in Manchester, but in history.

At the May meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society in 1885 there were many interesting remarks about Turton tower. The records, Mr. Scoles said, are not abundant, and the earliest one is not, perhaps, very reliable. The first one states that the whole township was given to one Orrell by William the Conqueror as a reward for his services, and one of the family built the original tower. He gave the workmen a penny a day, but its dimensions were so great that the resources of the Orrells were crippled, and they never recovered from the effects of its cost. This, however, is much doubted, and there is no record of any Orrell having been seated here before the time of Henry IV. The tower gives its name to the township, having been abbreviated from Tower-town to Turton. At the end of the sixteenth century the present mansion replaced the ancient fortress, and the lath and plaster part, which is very characteristic of the work of that period, was built by Mr. John Orrell. At this meeting Mr. J. E. Bailey communicated some very interesting information concerning the rooms of Turton Tower and their contents. An inventory of these was taken in 1642, just before the Civil War, for Mr. Humphrey Chetham, who had purchased the tower and estates for the very moderate sum of £4,000. His purchase included the tower and demesne, and seven hundred acres of cultivated land, and some five hundred acres more of waste land. The value of the movables was put down at £1,050, and the live stock was estimated as follows: "Seventy-four cattle—to wit, steers, kine, fat kine, stirks for kine—and a few swine were estimated at £400, or about £5 10s. each," a very liberal price in

those days; while the sheep—that is, the wethers, tups, and ewes—were valued at seven shillings each. The corn from thirty acres of land was put down at £160, which does not differ so much from its present value, as we find in the live stock.

There are two principal rooms in the tower proper, called “the further and the nearer highmost chambers.” These were furnished with a stately “four-poster” and a “truckle-bed” for the guest and his attendant. The truckle-bed was run under its more stately companion in the day-time. Mr. Chetham’s room is pointed out as one of these. The rooms were furnished with stool and chairs and panelled chests, and were abundantly hung with curtains. Six pairs of linen sheets are valued at £1 each, and indeed all the bedroom linen is very fine in quality, and trimmed with Flanders lace. The valuation put down the damask table napkins and tablecloths, and cupboard cloths and pillow cases, at £3 a dozen, and these were kept in oak chests, such as we may see now in curiosity shops and old farmhouses. Among the bedroom linen were cadows, which at the meeting referred to were explained by some Bolton gentlemen to be a name for a peculiar manufacture of the town, and still called caddy quilts. There were seven smaller bedrooms, and the furniture in them altogether amounted to £115 in value. The dining chamber was hung with armour, muskets, and “dragoons” for the equipment of light horsemen and pike-men. There was a clock here, and two brass candlesticks. The other rooms were the closet, the buttery opening into the dining-room, the deyhouse for salting beef and bacon, pantry, kitchen, larder, brewhouse, workhouse, &c., &c. There is also in the stable chamber the hackney saddle and pack saddle, used by the master in his large trade with London, and here we may have a vivid illustration of the celebrated scene in “Henry IV.,” where the carriers are setting out before daylight from Rochester. We find a chamber at Turton tower where there were beans and peas and malt measured by the hoop, with pack saddles and panniers, etc., and lanterns, and in “Henry IV.” is the memorable scene where the carriers meet before day, and sleepily arrange their work in half ill-humour at being called up so early:—

1 *Carrier.* Heigh ho ! An't be not four by the day, I'll be hanged : Charles' wain is over the new chimney, and yet our horse not packed. What, ostler.

2 *Carrier.* Pease and beans are as dank here as a dog, and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots : this house is turned upside down, since Robin ostler died.

1 *Carrier.* Poor fellow ! he never joyed since the price of oats rose ; it was the death of him.

This gives a vivid picture of the scenes that were met with everywhere in hostelries in Shakspeare's days. Humphrey Chetham's wardrobe is given with the liveries of his serving men, and that does seem to have been a very imposing affair indeed.

The peculiar effect of brickwork or stonework and timbered gables has been tried in recent structures in Lancashire and Cheshire with more or less success, and in the hands of Mr. Norman Shaw or Mr. Nesfield, or Mr. Douglas, of Chester, the result is not perhaps disappointing, but a thorough building like Bramhall or Speke or Moreton is to be preferred. Not far from Turton is Breightmet, and here a Roman road passed. The relics that have been brought to light in former times so thoroughly correspond with the recent discoveries in the old Chester walls, which even now are being exposed for the first time to view, as to warrant the conclusion that there must have been almost a constant communication between the cities of Chester and Manchester.



ROYTON OLD HALL.

ROYTON lies about two miles to the north of Oldham, and the streets extend from Manchester to this place in almost an unbroken line. It is in a valley, and must at one time have been a picturesque residence. The drawing gives a very good idea of the place as it stands, but only half of it is shown; the portion on the left extends for three more bays and then joins another gable of dimensions similar to the one shown, but the windows, which number nine, are comparatively modern sash windows. On the other side of the Hall, next to the principal street, are a pair of old-fashioned gate piers, and the road through these leads to a quaint quadrangle. It is now occupied by the Roman Catholic priest of Royton, the Rev. F. M. W. C. Willemse. Royton was granted to the Byron family as far back as the early part of the fourteenth century. Sir John Byron was a son of the Governor of York, and, with some men of note, was one of the witnesses of the Charter of Manchester. His son, Sir Richard, was styled Lord of Cadenay and Clayton in 1308. Little of interest appears for some years in connection with the Byron family. Royton was held, as was the custom, under certain obligations of military service, and the Byrons were continually away at the wars. But Henry VI. granted a licence to John Byron, Knt., and others of a peaceful tone. They were permitted to build a perpetual chantry for two chaplains in the Church of the Blessed Mary of Eccles, for their welfare while living and the rest of their souls when dead, the chaplains to hold no ecclesiastical office outside Eccles. They were endowed with lands to the extent of twenty-four marks annually, and they would seem to have well earned this if they adhered to the duties laid down. They were not to be absent more than thirty days in each year, and daily to observe the hours according to the Use of Sarum, and say Mass of the Dead—"Placebo et dirige," with the lesson and "*Commendacionem*"—for a very long list of persons,

who are duly chronicled. The chapel was dedicated to St. Katherine. John Byron fought at Bosworth Field on the side of his friend Stanley, and so well did he order himself and his charge that he was knighted on the battlefield by Henry VII. The Byrons had for long been lords of the manor of Rochdale, but the title of Baron Byron was not conferred upon them until the days of the Stuarts, whose cause they espoused. Lord Byron was a vigorous supporter of Charles I., and had committed to his charge the Lieutenancy of the Tower; but he spoke so openly against the popular cause that Parliament dismissed him from his office, and placed the old soldier, Sir John Coniers, in his place. How devotedly he conducted himself for the Stuart family Lloyd's



ROYTON OLD HALL.

Memoirs abundantly show. "How valiantly and warily he led the King's horse at the first fight of Newberry, when Colonel Middleton protested there was no dealing with Byron, who would give no advantage, is well known; and how prudently he pursued His Majesty's interest about Wales, where he was Field Marshal General, may be guessed by the command given him of that important place;" and he further adds: "Consider (so much you know, as you consider) his magnanimous performance in most storms in person, his great art in keeping both town and garrison, contented with cats and dogs—yea! and those failing, with but one meal in three days while there was any hope of relief, refusing nine

summonses, and not answering the tenth till his messenger returned with assurance that there was no hope of relief, when he yielded on the most honourable terms." He is said to have died "oppressed with the sad thoughts of the murther of his sacred Majesty." Lord Byron's estates were sequestered, and were held for several years by Sir Thomas Alcock, who held court at Rochdale two years after Byron's death. Byron was excluded from the Act of Oblivion which was passed after the execution of Charles I. The Byrons were loyal to the Crown in a much more worthy manner in the days of Elizabeth, and came forward nobly with men and money to resist the Armada—or the two, for it is unnecessary to say that the "Invincible" was preceded by another of smaller size. There is a curious postscript in the letter of Sir John Byron to the justices of Salford: "Upon receipt hereof send forth this letter from one gent. to another with all possible speed, I praye you, and subscribe every your names to the same," so that in a simple manner, and in the absence of penny posts, notices were spread over the country. A curious order is sent to Sir John Byron at this period by the Judges of Assize—Clench and Rhodes. They say that in 1588-9 there are by far too many alehouses and bakeries in Manchester, and the justices and deputy lieutenants are invited to look into the matter and suppress all those that are in excess. Alehouses we can partly understand, but bakeries! Sir Wilfrid Lawson would not complain if every other shop was a bakery. Royton remained in possession of the Byron family until the year 1662, when it was sold to Mr. Thomas Percival, a wealthy linen manufacturer. He was the son of Mr. Richard Percival, of Manchester, who appears in the family pedigree as *occisus* 1642. In fact, he was one of the first who lost his life in supporting the Commonwealth against the Stuarts. The Percivals were descended from a mercantile family of several generations old, who held a high position in Bristol. Thomas Percival, the purchaser of Royton, was interred in the Collegiate Church of Manchester in 1694, where his wife had previously been buried. His son, Richard Percival, married a daughter of Thomas Norris, of Speke Hall, between Liverpool and Warrington. It is still occupied by the proprietor,

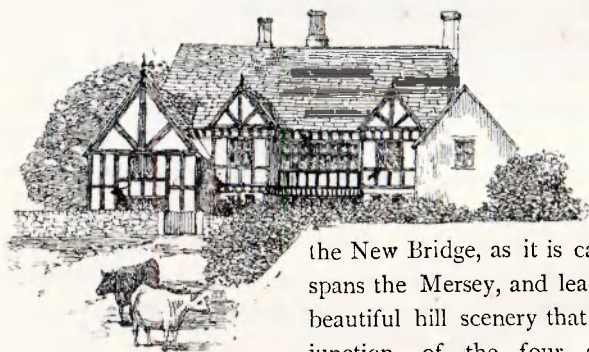
and it is perhaps one of the most wonderful examples of an unaltered black-and-white house in the kingdom. Yet it is not kept at all as a show house, but it is in daily use, with its wonderful carvings and broad fireplaces with firedogs and all antiquities simply adapted without change to suit the uses of modern refinement. The way in which Royton came into possession of the Radcliffes is as follows: The Radcliffes of Oldham were long settled in those parts, and William Radcliffe, by his marriage with Elizabeth Dawson, an heiress, succeeded to a large estate in Yorkshire. He died without issue in 1795, and bequeathed his estate to Joseph Pickford, of Royton, who had acquired it by intermarriage with the Percivals. In compliance with the will of his maternal uncle, he assumed the name of Radcliffe, and in the year 1813 he was created a baronet.

There is one touching record connected with Royton. It was for long the seat, as we have seen, of the Byrons, and Lord Byron before his travels visited it, perhaps as much from curiosity as any other motive, for it had not been theirs for generations, though it was in reality the cradle of their race. The glory had quite departed from it even in the early part of the present century, and if the grounds were not covered with briars and thistles, they were only kept as the means of a curate and his own industry would permit. Lord Byron made himself known to the curate (he had charge of Shaw Chapel), and he has left a record of the visit. When Byron saw it even the Percival Radcliffes had abandoned it, and Mr. Shaw was the unpretending tenant. Byron thus alludes to it in the first canto of "*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* :

Deserted is my own good hall,
Its hearth is desolate;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall,
My dog howls at the gate.

Continually the name of Byron appears in the chronicles of the Civil Wars, and Moore, in his "*Life of Byron*," says that there were seven brothers Byron who fought at Edgehill. The Byrons were indeed a warlike family, and Lord Byron, according to Moore, was more fond of his ancestry who figured at Bosworth and Cressy than he was of his own great poetic powers.

THE UPPER MERSEY.



GOYT HALL.

If we leave
Stockport
to the
west, we
shall soon
arrive at

the New Bridge, as it is called, which
spans the Mersey, and leads us to the
beautiful hill scenery that lies at the
junction of the four counties of
Lancaster, York, Chester, and Derby.

Vernon Park, an enclosure that is
freely open to visitors, is charmingly situated on the banks of
the Mersey. A pleasant lane leads us past Bredbury Hall, and
in a short time we arrive at the old-fashioned building called
“Goyt Hall.” Bredbury Hall is a comparatively modern building,
which occupies the site of a much more ancient residence, and it is
at the present time uninhabited. The steep lawn which leads to
the Mersey is beautifully studded with trees and plantations, and
beyond the Mersey the outlines of the Cheshire hills form a
picturesque background. Goyt Hall is one of the many examples
of ancient halls that have gradually sunk down in degree, and
though enough of it remains to attest its former splendour, it is
only a wreck of its old self when it was the seat of the Davenports,
of Henbury, and one of the most hospitable manor houses in the
district. The first Davenport was a “delinquent,” and he was
afterwards joint lord of the manor with the head of the house of
Arden, or Harden, or Ardenne—a name which the learned, if

somewhat eccentric, Dr. Whitaker believes to be derived from the forest of Ardennes. Goyt Hall afterwards belonged to Sir Fulke Lucy, of Hanbury, who was heir to the Davenports. Another residence of the Ardens in this district is called Harden Hall. It is finely situated on the Tame, which it overlooks from an eminence. This residence resembles the old hall which lies near the entrance to the Mersey canal. Ormerod thus describes it: "The original part of the fabric is a tall pile of grey stone, behind which a slender turret rises above the rest of the building and includes a circular staircase. In front of the mansion are projections terminating in gables, some unusually large bay windows, and a flight of steps leading up to the great hall. This apartment, which had its windows filled with good stained glass, is about eleven yards in length by eight in breadth, but at the upper end is a raised part which extends into one of the projections already noticed in the front and into another at the back of the building, making the ground plan somewhat resemble the form of the letter T. The room is very lofty, and is wainscoted about three yards high, the upper part being plaster; but the whole surface is covered with a very unusual number of family paintings, the greater part of which are going rapidly to decay, and some are gone irrecoverably. The rest of the apartments are small, some being wainscoted and some having ceilings ornamented with pendants; and in one apartment is an ancient carved oak bedstead, probably coeval with the hall itself." It may seem a little singular that family portraits were allowed to remain at Harden Hall when it was in reality only a farmhouse; and not only so, but it was a farmhouse when Lysons wrote his "*Magna Britannia*," which was at least ten years before Ormerod's great work on Cheshire appeared. These valuable portraits were sold, some of them going to houses in the neighbourhood that had no connection with the ancient family of the Ardens. It would be interesting to trace the final result of the sale, and to find out where all the portraits were domiciled, for the sale was in recent days. Some of these were removed to Pepper Hall, in Yorkshire, a later residence of the family, and others were removed to Bradwall Hall, the seat of the Lathams. Among these

was a portrait of Sir John Done, of Utkinton, and his wife, Mary Wilbraham, by Jackson, the Royal Academician. Perhaps the most interesting of them all is one of Jane Lane, who thought she did well in assisting Charles II. to escape to France. She was one of the principal figures in the flight, and her portrait had a crown concealed under a cloak that she is wearing, which is a delicate reference to Charles II., whose cause she befriended. There was also a half-length portrait of Judge Clinch in his robes of office. I cannot find out who this magistrate was. What one grieves at most is that the fine old mansion should be allowed to fall into decay and ruin, while such immense sums are spent to modernise and efface old parish churches in the name of "restoration."

The next seat of the Arden family to be noticed is a very grateful contrast. Stockport is the centre of a great canal traffic, and it has water communication with the Dee, the Severn, the Trent, and the Ribble, and the canals that these supply. The streets are for the most part narrow and steep—at least in the old town—and within comparatively recent times it was a town of picturesque beauty. There are yet preserved many drawings of fine old examples of black and white architecture, and some two or three of these places are left. By far the most interesting and valuable of them is the old seat of another branch of the Arden family, which in its confined limits has been most carefully preserved; it would have perished if it had not been acquired by the Manchester and Liverpool District Bank. It was a residence of the family even down to the present century. The front to the street has hardly been altered, and the ancient railings and piers, which have panels that appropriately represent coins overlapping each other, are quite complete. There were grounds about it even in the present century that reached to the Mersey, but these are now of course all built over. In the interior is one beautiful chimney-piece that was coated over with plaster and paint, and which required a month to clear it from its coverings; but this has been well performed, and the month was very well spent indeed. What an example is here set to church restorers, who commonly are rectors that come from a distance to some parish church of which they know little, and

with which they can have but few sympathies. They read Bloxham's "Gothic Architecture," or Rickman, or some other really good book, and soon look upon themselves as authorities. The parish church may be out of repair possibly, and an opportunity is at once taken to find occupation for their (unhappily) too many leisure hours. To raise the funds out of the neighbours gives them something to do; work is always found for idle hands, and the mischief is very soon irreparable. The rectors of parish churches in the last fifty years have blotted out more ancient work and



MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL DISTRICT BANK, STOCKPORT.

time-stained buttresses than Cromwell's armies ever did. These did not "make a full end," but our vicars and rector say, "Let us make havoc of it altogether." As Ruskin has said, "A future generation will regard us with contempt and envy, that had such treasures and allowed them to pass away with hardly an effort made for their preservation." If this future generation is told that all this havoc was done by those who should have had a reverent care for the fabric which was committed to their temporary charge, they would hardly credit it; they would think it was the heathen that had come to the inheritance and made Jerusalem a heap of stones.

It is hardly possible to speak with patience of these desecrations, but I may claim some little right to make my protest, as I have now for fourteen years been engaged in making some record, however slight, of the fading reminiscences of ancient days, and have walked for this purpose through every county in England, from Cornwall to Northumberland.

Nobody who has not had many opportunities of judging can form the slightest idea of how ivy-mantled towers, grey buttresses, and black oak seats, with all the venerable surroundings that make an old church a delight, have been swept away. How I do wish that the Heir Apparent could visit some "unrestored" church like Whalley or Ashby St. Leger's, where a scene of delight meets the artist at every turn, and compliment the rector. This would go through all the papers, and the spoiling would stop from that hour. I remember a noble old church in the midland counties that was a picture for an artist and quite a study for an archæologist. I had not seen it for some years, and, having to stay over the night in a neighbouring market town, I went the following day to look at it once more. But what destruction met my sight! The ivy had all gone, the grey stones were re-chiselled, pinnacles were added to all the buttresses just because there was a trace of one, and nobody could have told the church from a new one. The rector, a young man who had been four years in the living, eyed me from his house, and soon joined me, mistaking, I suppose, my wonder for admiration. He gave me a brief sketch of the restorations, and smilingly produced his subscription-book, telling me how hard his case was. He had been summoned to another sphere of usefulness, and he had made himself responsible for some £200 or £300 for "beautifying and restoring" the church. What a contrast does the Stockport Bank present! For here is a building that only a few years ago would have been swept away for some classic front with columns and entablatures, but an old landmark is reverently preserved by men deeply engaged in business. The great praise that is due to the directors of this bank is that it is unusual for a wealthy banking house to occupy such apparently homely premises, admirably indeed as, I am told, they are internally adapted to their

business ; and a resolution passed at an annual meeting would easily have procured for them palatial premises on the site of the present building.

The most striking feature in Stockport is, of course, the viaduct, which resembles the great aqueducts that we meet with in Spain and Southern Europe, and which attest the genius of Roman architects. It is a very impressive sight. In 1487 Sir Ralph Shaw founded a free grammar school at Stockport, and, as is usual in such cases, the revenues have enormously increased since that time. Sir Ralph's brother preached the celebrated sermon in St. Paul's in favour of King Richard III. when he was yet only Duke of Gloster, and is doubtless alluded to in Shakspeare when the hypocritical monarch comes forward with a prayer-book in his hand to impose upon the audience, and Buckingham, whom he afterwards throws over so callously, is his spokesman and apologist :

Lord Mayor. See where his Grace stands, 'tween two clergymen !

Buckingham. Two props of virtue for a Christian prince,

To stay him from the fall of vanity.

And see, a book of prayer is in his hand :

True ornaments to know a holy man.

Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince,

Lend favourable ear to our requests,

And pardon us the interruption

Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.

The principal manufactures of Stockport are cottons and hats, and some London houses have factories here. The town lies in the middle of a very charming district, and objects of interest and beauty abound on every side. In Ormerod there is a steel engraving of the town before smoke had dimmed its atmosphere or chemicals had spoiled the clear waters of the Mersey, and it must have been in those days a very delightful place indeed.

PART II.

NOTWITHSTANDING the countless millions of wealth that the Mersey has brought into Liverpool, it is very doubtful if there are on the Exchange there five merchants who could give even a reasonable account of where the river rose or where the streams that form its source derive their supply of water. The Mersey receives its distinctive name at the junction of two rather important mountain streams—the Goyt and the Etherow. The former takes its rise somewhere in the neighbourhood of Buxton, and it is joined by several other streams from the Peak district. It enters Cheshire through a beautiful valley near Taxal, on the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway, and for some miles it forms the irregular boundary between the counties of Chester and Derby. Near Whaley it receives the overflow water of two deep lakes that are well worth a visit. They are wild mountain tarns, and one can hardly realise that we are so near Manchester when we see the one on the Derbyshire side. New Mills is soon reached, but not before the quaint old town of Chapel-en-le-Frith is passed. The scenery round it is very grand and imposing, and many Roman remains are found within its limits. The Goyt is joined by the Etherow, which rises in Yorkshire, far among the moors. The latter tributary has already assumed the dimensions of a goodly stream when it joins the Goyt. It marks the boundary of the two counties, and passes through Longdendale before it reaches the “Waters’ Meeting,” and forms the river Mersey. The scenery is extremely beautiful, and one really hopes that in the course of time the waste of the mills will be made useful and the beautiful streams rendered pure.

The old spelling of Marple was Merpull, from a pool that was formed by the waters of the Goyt, but so little importance was attached to it in old times that it does not even appear in Domesday Book. It belonged to the Vernon family, and one of these was so noted for his hospitality and splendour that he was called the King of the Peak, his principal residence being at the Peak in

Derbyshire. He had the honour of being the builder of Haddon Hall, one of the noblest, if not the noblest, of the ancient residences in the kingdom. The hospitality of Haddon Hall can be judged if we look for a moment at the vast kitchen ranges and the



MARPLE.

larders. There are lines for holding an unlimited number of spits, and copping blocks of great dimensions. The traditions of Haddon were well sustained by the first Duke of Rutland. He was made a duke in 1703, and had twelve days Christmas feasts; they were

a traditional record up to the present century. He had, all told, some 140 domestic servants, male and female, in his establishment. But with the picturesque grandeur that we see, Haddon Hall, like similar structures, must have been sadly short of comfort. The doors, both outward and inward, do not fit, and we are almost reminded that the wonderful tapestries are only intended to cover the defect of joinering—had to be lifted by the passers—and great hooks were fixed in the walls to hold them back when required. The country round Marple is extremely beautiful and romantic. There is one part that can hardly be excelled for scenery in England. Over the high ridge known as the Coombes Rocks there is a road that runs from Charlesworth to Upper Raworth, a distance of some three miles, and some of the views from this are magnificent. One circumstance that gives so special an interest to Marple is that the great John Bradshaw, who presided at the trial of Charles I., once lived here. Wybersley Hall, where he was born, is now a farmhouse, but Marple Hall was the family seat, and now the residence of the Isherwood family. It is an extremely interesting building, and has some very good stained glass in the windows; and there is a goodly quantity of oak furniture in the rooms. The estate is also notable as being the place where the river Mersey commences. From the junction of the Goyt and the Etherow it flows at a right angle at a point called the "Waters' Meeting," a beautiful spot that is seldom visited. A short distance below this is the viaduct over the Mersey, which is one of the most notable in the kingdom. The height of the middle arch is 93 feet. But the great interest to Englishmen connected with the district is, as I have said, that President Bradshaw was a native of the place. He was the second son of Henry Bradshaw and Catherine Winnington. His mother was an heiress, and of course, as the second son, he succeeded to her estates at Offerton. There was at one time in Macclesfield churchyard a gravestone with the curious and almost prophetic verse:

My brother Henry must heir the land,
My brother Frank must be at his command,
While I, poor Jack, will do that
That all the world will wonder at.

In the 1837 edition of Burke's "Landed Gentry" it is stated that there were three sons—Henry, John, and Francis—and two daughters—Dorothy married to George Newton, and Anne unmarried. President Bradshaw was a lawyer of eminence and ability, and he it was who brought Charles to his trial. The proceedings are among the most interesting in all English history, and they develop the English character in its highest form, from the pike-man and musketeer to the mighty spirit of Cromwell. When the Parliament decided to remove Charles to Windsor and bring him to trial, some few who were left in the House of Lords rejected the ordinance, and this produced the memorable resolution: "That the people of England are under God the original of all just power; that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled—being chosen by and representing the people—have the supreme power of the nation; and that whatsoever is enacted and declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of a law, and all the people of this nation are included thereby, although the consent and concurrence of the King or the House of Peers be not had thereto." Bradshaw sat in the memorable Parliament of 1654, which Dr. Green considers to be perhaps the most representative of Parliaments until more recent days have enabled the people to speak their will. It was in 1661 that a new Parliament, "composed of young men," passed a decree that the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw should be disinterred and hung on gibbets at Tyburn. Samuel Pepys, whose Diary would show that he was not quite saintly, says of the new Parliament of Charles, that "they were the most profane swearing fellows that I ever heard in my life."

The Bradshaws before they came to the property resided at Wybersley Hall, the manor of which seems to have belonged to that of Marple. The baptism of the distinguished lawyer is thus recorded in the register at Stockport: "1602, John, the sonne of Henry Bradshaw, of Marple, baptised the 10th December," and in the margin in another hand is written "Traitor." President Bradshaw by will dated 1653 bequeathed the sum of £700 to buy an annuity for maintaining a free school at Marple, and he

nominated his brother Henry the principal trustee to devise and advise how best his wishes could be carried out. The will is still to be seen at Marple Hall, which is well worthy of being the seat of one of the most dignified and just of all our English lawyers. In a small court off Watergate Street, Chester, there is a very fine carved oak front to a house called Stanley House, and here it was that Lord Derby past his last day before being removed to Bolton for execution—a sentence that was passed upon him for the share he took in the plot to bring back the Stuarts to the throne. Henry Bradshaw, a colonel in the army, was one of the judges who sat upon the Commission that condemned the conspirators. He was the son of Henry, the elder brother of John, the President of the Council, and he was summoned to London to answer for his share in the transaction. He declared in his defence that he was only an officer in General Cromwell's army, and of course bound to obey orders; that he sat on the trial with much reluctance, and that he even tried to the utmost of his power to save the life of the Earl of Derby. He says that he wrote to his brother to use his utmost endeavours to spare the Earl's life, but all in vain. He says further that he is "a poor man, indebted, with a small estate," and that he has a poor wife with eleven children all unprovided for to maintain. He never, he said, had anything "belonging to the Earl or his Countess or any of theirs," and he ends his petition to the House of Lords by stating that he intended for the future to live a proper life, "and so demean himself as becomes an obedient subject." He craves His Majesty's favourable consideration of the premises, and begs that the most mild construction may be put upon his acts, and that "his errors may be imputed to his much-lamented ignorance and mistake." He was confined in the house of Thomas Lee, a messenger of the Black Rod, from July 17 to August 14, 1660, and then released on the sureties of "Colonel Bradshaw, Henry Bradshaw, and Cromwell Meverell, of Derbyshire," in a bond of £500. A receipt still exists for the payment of £40 due to the Usher of the Black Rod as fees, and 30s. more as a "gratuity" to the public servant who was paid for detaining him.

The township of Hyde, not far from Marple, belonged jointly to the families of Hyde and Baguley as far back as the reign of Henry III. and Edward III. The families of Hyde and Clarke intermarried, and Hyde-Clarke is now the family name of their representatives. What gives especial interest to this branch of the subject is that George Clarke was the Lieutenant-Governor of New York in the middle of the last century, and his monument is in the south transept of Chester Cathedral. Often have I seen and read it, but I never knew till writing this article that the family was so intimately connected with Cheshire. The inscription on the marble tablet runs thus :

To the memory of
GEORGE CLARKE, of Hyde, Esquire,
who was formerly
Lieutenant Governor of New York,
and afterwards became resident
in this city.
He died January xii., mdccclx.,
aged lxxxiv. years,
and was interred in this chapel.

The family of the Hydes is of great interest, and perhaps there are not very many Lancashire people who know how nearly the neighbourhood of Manchester is connected with royalty. Robert Hyde, who lived in the reign of Henry VIII., was married three times, and his third wife was the daughter of John Boydell, of Pulcroft. Through her he was the ancestor of the Hydes of Wiltshire, and of course of the great Earl of Clarendon, who was the grandfather of two Queens of England—Anne and Mary. One of the Hydes married a daughter of Sir William Calverley, of Calverley, in Yorkshire, and her brother was the Calverley who figures in Shakspeare's disputed play, "*A Yorkshire Tragedy*."* He committed the cruellest of murders, killing his own two young children, and he was only prevented from slaughtering a third by one of his grooms, who overtook him on his way. It may be interesting to note that in addition to Hyde Hall, the family still retain a seat at Lake Otsego, in New York, a very delightful place in summer weather.

* Calverley Hall, near Leeds, is now a farm house. I went to visit it, and found some parts of the old residence still standing, and the traditions are yet retained in the country of the shocking murders. But it is pretty certain that the play is not Shakspeare's, and the most hasty perusal will confirm this.

OLD CHESTER CROSS.

If we could see England as it was in the fifteenth century, it would be like a dream. The abbeys were intact, and hundreds of them that have furnished the materials for farmhouses and fencings, and even pavements, were models of picturesque beauty, and would have afforded examples of almost priceless value to the architect of to-day. There was no "churchwarden gothic" or attempt at exotic display, but everything seemed to exactly fit its use, and there was as much artistic feeling very often in the front of a yeoman's house as there is in the choir of a cathedral. To attempt to enlarge upon so great a theme would be out of place. Our present concern is with a market cross of that old day. Of crosses there were many kinds—memorial, market, boundary, preaching, and weeping crosses. There are the remains of crosses in Delamere Forest that we do not exactly know the uses of. One tradition says they were sanctuaries for travellers beset by robbers; another speaks of them as boundaries, which the monks of Delamere Abbey had erected; but possibly they were only reminders to wayfarers of their duty. A singular double cross at the entrance of Lyme Park is quite a puzzle to antiquarians. On the blank side of the hills in East Cheshire people were buried who died of the plague, and crosses were placed by the gravestones to make amends for their not being admitted to the churchyard.

The cross, which is figured here in the position in which it is proposed to re-erect it, for long lay hidden in a rockery at a country house some mile and a half from Chester on the Eaton road. It was demolished in the early part of the present century and taken to Netherfield House, which was then the residence of Sir John Cotgreave, who was knighted during his mayoralty of Chester in 1815, on the occasion of his presenting an address to the Princess

Charlotte. This house and some acres attached to it were only a recent acquisition of the Duke of Westminster, and he did not even know of the existence of the cross till some time after his purchase. On his being informed of its existence he at once presented it to the city of Chester, and has taken a great interest in its restoration. The Chester cross which it is now proposed to



OLD CHESTER CROSS.

restore at the Market Square formerly stood in a very different place. Chester, like other Roman towns, was quadrilateral, and it was intersected by four streets, each at right angles. Where these met in Chester the place is called "The Cross," and here the High Cross of Chester stood. There was a church called St.

Peter's, which still stands and retains much of its ancient character, and this was approached by a flight of steps leading to a large landing on which the cross stood. The arrangement was peculiar and perhaps exceptional. To some extent it may have filled the duties of a market cross, but probably it was more frequently used as a preaching cross and a place where proclamations were read, as Henry IV. says to Worcester before the battle of Shrewsbury :

These things, indeed, you have articulated,
Proclaimed at market crosses.

It was before this cross that the Chester mystery plays were acted—a kind of burlesque upon Scripture scenes, though meant in all good faith. On the south side of St. Peter's, where the cross stood, was a lean-to building called the Pentice Court. It was a magistrates' court, and almost fulfilled the uses of a town hall. It was demolished in 1803. There the mayor and aldermen used to meet at Easter, and, donning their robes of office, they inaugurated the plays. After playing "The Flood," "Balaam and his Ass," and other scenes, the players left the cross and went to other parts of the city to act. But they had scenic effects as well, and some of these would appear to have been of a most enterprising character. We find, for example, "Item, payd for mending hell's mouth ijd. ; item, payd for keeping fyer at hell moute iiijd. ; item, payd for setting the world of fyre vd."

The cross will stand now in an admirable position, chosen by the Duke of Westminster, who gave it to the city. It will face the great gateway of St. Werburgh's Abbey, now the Cathedral, and it will have Prince's Street, with many old gables, for a background.* It belongs to the tabernacle order, which are more common in the South than in the North of England, and it much resembles a very beautiful cross at Sedgemoor which was erected to commemorate the "Bloody Assize" of Judge Jeffreys. There does not appear to have been a market in the place where the cross formerly

* It unfortunately happens that since the above was written, the Chester Town Council have decided not to have it in the great market square, under some impression that it might impede the traffic, and it is to be erected not very far from its old situation, near St. Peter's Church.

stood, though doubtless the country people flocked round it with their goods. But the cross seems to have been the arena of the annual riots on the occasion of the election of the Mayor of Chester, and we read of the Mayor in Randal Holme's time entering rather freely into the disturbances, for he left the steps of the cross "and smote freely among them, and he broke his white staff." It is quite possible that other crosses are either buried or misused, like that of Chester, which if restored would add greatly to our architectural possessions. The Eleanor crosses numbered 15, and of these three only remain, but they are the models of all that is excellent in memorial architecture. It would seem to be almost certain that all the rest have not perished, and that some are hidden, as was the Chester Cross, and may yet be recovered.





MIDDLETON CHURCH.

MIDDLETON.

It was a matter of surprise to me that I did not find the beautiful country round Middleton crowded with excursionists. The distance from Manchester by road is about four miles, and it passes through Blackley. Here there was at one time a private oratory of the Byrons, established in the reign of Henry IV. In 1611 Sir John Byron, of Newstead, sold it to the inhabitants, but they do not seem to have exercised the right of patronage, which has long been vested in the Collegiate Body of Manchester. The chapel has given way to a modern edifice built in 1844. Middleton was held for half a knight's fee from the Earl of Lincoln and the Duke of Lancaster. It is a very large parish, and contains nearly 12,000 acres. On the Laceys becoming extinct as regards that branch of the family, their possessions passed into the hands of the Dukes of Lancaster. In Edward II.'s time the manor was held by Roger de Middleton and Agnes his wife, and through Agnes, who survived her husband, it ultimately descended to the Assheton family. Sir Ralph Assheton was Knight Marshal of England in the reign of Edward IV., and when Richard Duke of Gloster ascended the throne he made him Vice-Constable of England in recognition of his services to the House of York. The King also augmented his already ample possessions by gifts of manors and lands. The Parish Church of Middleton is a very ancient building, and wonderfully picturesque. The eastern portion, which is shown here, belongs to the Tudor period, but parts of the interior are much more ancient. The churchyard is literally paved with gravestones, and opposite the principal entrance on the other side of the road is a fine specimen of a black-and-white roadside inn, where formerly the coaches stopped. In this is the old courtroom where the county magistrates used to sit. It is still fitted up with the seats

and a justice bench with a canopy, but it has not been used for many years. A church existed here in the thirteenth century, as there are the signatures of Thomas, "clerk of Middleton," and Peter, parson of Middleton, for grant of lands to Stanlaw Abbey, which is situated on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, where the river broadens out into a lake. It is now a farmhouse, and the Ship Canal will pass through it. There are some chapels of great interest in Middleton Church. A very curious one is called the Rector's Chapel; in it there are the remains of many former incumbents. There is a window with the head of an ecclesiastic that is now believed to be Thomas de Langley, whose career was very remarkable. He belonged to an ancient Lancashire family, and was a retainer in the service of the House of Lancaster. He was brought up in a monastery in one of the eastern counties, and rose through various offices to be Dean of York. After the execution of Archbishop Scrope for his share in the rising of the Percys (which is narrated in "Henry IV.," Part II.), he was elected in his place, but was translated to Durham. He became also Chancellor of England, and was made a cardinal. There is also the Assheton Chapel, in the south-eastern part of the church, which contains many monuments to the family and part of the armour worn by Sir Richard Assheton at the battle of Flodden. It was probably through him that the alliance took place between the Trafford family and the sister of Katherine Howard, the unhappy wife of Henry VIII. Her father held a command at Flodden, and greatly contributed to the issue of the day.

The windows of the church have been enriched with some fine stained glass from Middleton Hall, and in one window there is a group which was glazed by Sir Richard Assheton. It represents a chaplain and seventeen warriors with bows and quivers of arrows. This was supposed to be put up in commemoration of Flodden, but a date on the window shows that it was designed eight years previously. The record of Sir Ralphe Assheton, who was the last of that distinguished family, is thus inscribed on a monument in the chapel: "Near thls place lie the remains of Sir Ralphe Assheton, the last of the male line of the ancient house of Middleton," &c.

There is also the Hopwood Chapel, of which mention will be made when we come to Hopwood Hall—a building of great interest. There are some brasses in the church that are curious—one to Edmund Assheton, the rector in 1522, who is represented as holding a chalice and wafer. Another represents a lady with her three husbands—John Lawrence, Richard Radcliffe, and Thomas Bothe; another brass is to Richard Assheton, the lord of the manor; while a fourth is to Ralphe Assheton and his wife. The most unsatisfactory part of the building is the tower, which seems to be of much later date than the main body of the structure, and has an especially mean appearance as we approach from the station. The rectory house was formerly surrounded by a moat crossed by a drawbridge, and there was also a wooden bridge house, which has disappeared within the present century. Perhaps one of the most important institutions in Middleton is the Grammar School, which was founded by Dean Nowell in 1572, on the site of a still older one, where the Dean was educated with his brother Robert. The latter said to the Dean just before his death, “Forget not Middleton School, where we and other of our brethren were taught in our childhood.” Nowell provided a competent endowment for master and under-master, and founded thirteen scholarships at Brasenose. Elizabeth also presented £20 a year to the school in perpetuity. Dean Nowell provided further endowments, but now the revenues have dwindled down to a nominal sum. How this has happened we do not know, and the Charity Commissioners have declared that as the Principal and Fellows of Brasenose College are Commissioners of Middleton School, the case does not come within their scope of inquiry. Middleton Hall, the ancient seat of the Asshetons, was taken down in 1845, and the deer park is now converted into farms.

On the 18th of December, 1889, a meeting was held at Middleton to discuss what should be done with regard to the endowment of Middleton School that had been appropriated by Brasenose College, Oxford, and the Mayor, who had made great efforts on the subject previously, furnished the following interesting particulars which show how exceedingly and sometimes unaccountably the value of property may rise in market value. He said: “The

manor of Upburry, in Kent, was bequeathed to Middleton, and the rentals of the manor when Dean Nowell gave it amounted to £27 6s. 8d., £7 6s. 8d. of which was given to the Queen, and the balance of £20 was sent as the endowment to the Grammar School of Middleton. In 1843, when the case of Lord Suffield was brought up before the courts, it was proved that the value of the estates had risen to about £3,000 a year, and it is reasonable to suppose that since that time they have increased greatly in value." It was, indeed, pointed out that possession was many points of the law, and it was an established old plan for those to get that have the power, and those to keep that can—a view from which the clerical party could not be expected to dissent very seriously, but doubtless the meeting will have a good result.



ORMSKIRK.

ORMSKIRK is a market town, situated some eleven or twelve miles to the north of Liverpool, and though there are as a matter of course many new buildings, it still retains much of its old character. Leland and Camden both describe it, and in their days it would be only a little behind Liverpool in importance. Southport and Birkdale now have quite overshadowed it. Ormskirk was, and, indeed, is yet, the centre of a great game country, and the preserves of the Derbys and Seftons and Scarisbricks and Weld-Blundells form one continuous and vast district. Some of the rarer birds, such as the dotterel and quail, and even the ruff, make visits occasionally to the marshes surrounding the old country town. If we go by road from Liverpool to Ormskirk we pass through the once beautiful village of Everton. These two places have given their names to confectioners that are known almost all over the world, for Everton toffee and Ormskirk gingerbread are advertised in the capitals of both North and South America, and, it is said, even in Calcutta and Capetown, though of course it is only the name that clings to them. Ormskirk during the early part of last century, and, indeed, till much later on, was a sort of little rural capital, and there are yet some very good old-fashioned houses. Local gentry, younger sons, and widows made it a residence, and in winter time it was a cheerful place. London was quite out of reach except for the few, and for those whose residence was not quite so removed as such distant spots as Ormskirk.

There is one striking feature in the old parish church which has probably not a parallel in England. It can boast of possessing a tower and a spire, and both of ample proportions. The legend that is firmly held by the rustics, and which found its way even

into Baines's "Lancashire," is that the church was built originally at the sole charge of two maiden ladies named Orme, and that there was a dispute as to whether there should be a tower or a spire, which dispute ended in the compromise we see. The probable version of the tower and spire is this. The spire belonged to the original church, and the great tower was built to accommodate the bells of Burscough Priory when the monasteries were dissolved. It is a large belfry, as will be seen by the drawing, and measures twenty-seven feet internally each way. This theory of the tower and spire is the more probable as the style of architec-



ORMSKIRK CHURCH.

ture corresponds exactly with the date of the dissolution. Burscough Priory held the valuable living of Ormskirk, among other possessions. There is still a chancel arch of the Priory standing, which may be seen from the railway. In Roby's traditions of Lancashire there is a legend of a Prior of Burscough who had a "grange," where almost in durance one Margaret de la Bech lived; and an old admirer of hers found out her place of captivity, and hastened to rescue her. It was only, however, after long and deep-laid devices that he could discover her in her concealment. He at

once rescued her and her female watcher or attendant, but an arrow aimed for her killed the latter, and a bolt struck her rescuer. Every effort was made to bring the culprit to justice, but Roby, in his "Traditions of Lancashire," says so great a scandal would follow an execution upon the church that the Prior of Burscough received a free pardon from Edward III. in the twenty-first year of his reign. This quaint church of Ormskirk is the final resting place of the Stanley family, and many an Earl of Derby is interred there. There are two chapels of the Stanley family here, and they are both of fine dimensions. One is to the earlier race of Stanley, and the other is the Bickerstaffe Chapel, which was the property of the family that now represents the old Earls of Derby. There are plentiful heraldic devices which speak of the "Kings of Man;" and in more ancient times the legend is illustrated of the famous crest, "The Eagle and Child." The old legend speaks of Lord Stanley and his lady finding on a rock a very beautiful infant, and an eagle with outstretched wings perched on a cradle and contemplating his morning's meal. This, as we know, is the Stanley crest. Another legend says that Sir Thomas Stanley was the father of Isabel Stanley, in the sixteenth century, but he had no male heirs to inherit his property, and one day, as he was walking in a wood with his lady and directing the route they should take, the knight and lady came upon a handsome cradle with an infant comfortably wrapped up inside its folds—the son, as it would appear, of one Mary Oscatel, a lady of high family and a friend of the lord of Lathom. Great were the expressions of surprise from Stanley and his wife at this discovery, but it is probable that those of Lady Stanley were sincere. At the suggestion of Sir Thomas Stanley, the foundling was at once taken to Lathom, and his trustful lady is said in an old ballad to have given it a cordial reception.

 Their content was such to see this hap,
 That the ancient lady hugs it to her lap,
 Smooths it with kisses, bathes it in her tears,
 And into Lathom House the babe she bears.

But Sir Thomas Stanley, it is said, felt some qualms of conscience about the ruse, and settled his estates upon Sir John Stanley, who

married Isabel, his daughter. Oscatel, according to the accredited traditions, was invested with estates at Astbury, and became the founder of the house of Lathom, which has a high position in East Cheshire, and still retains the eagle and child as its crest. There are other versions of the legend, but this is probably the most correct.

But to return to the church. It certainly was a substantial edifice, good for any number of years; but what do we find? Rebuilding has been begun. The south side is shown here, and two windows which it is proposed to copy in extension have already made their appearance. This extension would necessitate the destruction of a very interesting wall and three windows which were built about the year 1720, and which are good examples of the pseudo-classic taste that found so much favour after the age of Wren. It is also proposed to run the ridge of the higher part of the roof, as seen at the east end, along the church until it reaches the tower, thus reducing the apparent height of this campanile to the last degree of stumpiness. The north wall of the church, which lies on the other side from the picture, it is proposed to pull down entirely and rebuild, though it is admitted on all sides that the masonry is good and that the windows are as they were three centuries ago. This, it is stated, will absolutely destroy all the old building, leaving only the tower and the spire as records of what has been. The inside of the church is a wreck, and, excepting the chapels, it bears no resemblance to its former self. It was studded along the aisles with black oak bench ends. These have been replaced by new white ones, and the old ones have been disposed of for shipment to Boston. There is an ancient carved chest in the vestry for the church records; the chest has been there, it is said, since the days of the Tudors. The enterprising American who secured the bench ends said he must really have this "in with the lot," but fortunately his bid was not high enough, and it is there yet. The rector properly told him that as for this old chest, and the records, he could not have those at any price.

When Lord Derby was condemned to death at Chester for his infatuated adherence to the House of Stuart, the Governor sent a

messenger to ask if he had some friendly groom or gamekeeper to "do the deed he wot of" at Bolton, and was met with the prompt reply, "If those who would have my head cannot find one to take it, let it stay where it is." His headless body lies in Ormskirk Church, or perhaps it would be more safe to say it did, for all the flooring has been ripped up, and, against the earnest appeals of the parishioners, the remains of the intermural interments have been deposited elsewhere or destroyed. Those, however, who are responsible for the undoing of Ormskirk Church say that his remains are intact.

A gentleman from Ormskirk has sent me a book that illustrates the old church and the modern one. George Eliot has in an eloquent summary shown what is taking place in our own time in so many instances: "Shepperton Church was a very different looking building 25 years ago. To be sure its substantial stone tower looks at you through its intelligent eye—the clock—with the expression of former days, but in everything else what changes! Now there is a wide span of slated roof flanking the old steeple, the windows are tall and symmetrical, the outer doors are resplendent with oak graining, &c."; and then there is a description of Shepperton Church as it was, and it will recall many recollections everywhere. "I recall with fond sadness Shepperton Church as it was in the old days, with its outer coat of rough stucco, its red tiled roof, its heterogeneous windows patched with desultory bits of painted glass, and its little flight of steps running up the outer wall, and leading to the children's gallery." It is not modern architecture we want for old churches; it is the quaint picturesque features that have accumulated through ages, even to the present century, and cannot be replaced, and the favourite excuse of rectors and vicars that the building would have fallen is in no instance I have ever met with correct.



ADLINGTON HALL.

ADLINGTON HALL.

ADLINGTON HALL is a very noble old mansion, and occupies a conspicuous place among the ancient baronial residences of England. It forms the subject of one of the finest drawings in Nash's "Mansions of the Olden Time," and, like Bramhall or Old Worsley, has not suffered any serious damage from the restorer. It lies in a pleasant country some six miles in a direct line from the south end of Stockport. The park is extensive, and has all the appearances of an ancient demesne of dignity. It is intersected by the pleasant little river Dean, which flows through a cover called "The Wilderness," and after passing the principal front of the hall turns a water-wheel just outside the park. The house is very large, and a perfect model of an ancient mansion. Three sides are remarkably picturesque and irregular, and afford some very good examples of the black-and-white architecture that is so prevalent in this part of England. The fourth side is of old brickwork, and is two storeys in height. There is a portico in front supported by stone columns. This is on the south side, and is the principal front to the venerable mansion. At Adlington there is an ornamental organ, which is said to have been much admired by Handel when he visited the house. Colonel Charles Legh it was, according to current report, that suggested to the immortal composer the tune of the "Harmonious Blacksmith." There was a fine collection of curiosities at the hall, and some pictures of great value by such artists as Sir Peter Lely, Kneller, and Vandyck; but, unhappily, these were disposed of in 1847. The court, which is shown in the illustration, is a fine example of black-and-white, though it does not exhibit any quatrefoils, which are always a pleasing feature in houses of this period. The inscription in the porch over the door might mislead one as to the age of the building: "Thomas Leyghe, esquire, who built this house, married Sibbell, daughter of

Sir Urian Brereton, of Handforde, knighte, and by her had issue four sonnes and five daughters, made this building in the yeare of our Lord God 1581, and in the raigne of our Soveyraigne lady Queen Elizabeth xxiii." This can only refer to some of the more recent parts, as the great hall is considerably older.

The family of Legh of Adlington belongs to the great Cheshire family of Leghs, that have so long held a prominent place among the county families of England. The oldest branches of the family can trace their descent to a time previous to the Conquest. John Legh, who lived in the time of Edward I., was the father of Robert Legh, and from him sprang the Leghs of Adlington, Lyme, Annesley, Ridge, Stonelegh, &c. In a very old edition of Burke's "Landed Gentry" we read: "Robert de Legh of Booths was father of Robert Legh of Adlington, the representative of one of the most ancient of knightly families of which the county of Chester may so justly boast." It was the fifth in descent from this gentleman (Robert Legh) who was made to surrender his right and claim to the estates of the Pulford family in favour of Sir Thomas Grosvenor, the ancestor of the Duke of Westminster, with such exceeding pomp and circumstance, in the chapel of Macclesfield. Sir Thomas le Grosvenor, Sir Robert Legh, Kt., and Henry de Birtheles, counsel to Sir Thomas le Grosvenor, read the deeds over before the altar, and finally Robert de Legh's chaplain celebrated a Mass. There were fifty-seven of the principal gentry of Cheshire who held up their right hands turning towards the Host, and affirmed themselves to be each and singly witnesses to the deeds by which Legh of Adlington abandoned his claims to the Pulford estates near Chester, which are now held by the Duke of Westminster. It would seem that the Legh family pretended to a claim under some document that was in a settlement from Thomas de Belgrave and Joan his wife, and it is interesting to know that the origin of the name of Belgravia is from a farmhouse with a moat, not at all of great dimensions, and the rustics speak of Belgrave as they would of an every-day farm.

The Leghs appear to have led the lives of quiet country gentlemen till the time of Sir Urian Legh, who at the age of

thirty-five received the honour of knighthood from the Earl of Essex at the siege of Cadiz. A fine portrait of Sir Urian was preserved at Bramhall, and is now at Adlington. He is in Spanish costume, and is popularly regarded as the hero who figures in the well-known ballad, "The Spanish Lady's Love." At the surrender of Cadiz there was among the prisoners a lady of great beauty and wealth, who received courteous attention from Sir Urian, and he seems to have captivated her so much that she offered to confer her great estates upon him and to become his wife. When orders came to set the captives free she was unwilling to leave his custody—

Gallant captain, show some pitie
To a ladye in distresse ;
Leave me not within this citie
For to dye in heavinesse.

But Sir Urian gently rejected her suit—

Courteous lady, leave this fancy.
Here comes all that breeds the strife :
I in England have already
A sweet woman to my wife.

The Spanish lady at once craved pardon for her error in the following terms, and afterwards retired to a nunnery :

O, how happy is that woman
That enjoys so true a friend !
Many happy days God send her ;
Of my suit I make an end.

Commend me to that lovely lady,
Bear to her this chain of gold,
And these bracelets for a token,
Grieving that I was so bold.

In turning over the pedigree of the family of Legh, I was interested to find that the wife to whom Sir Urian was so devoted was the daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, of Trafford.

Adlington was besieged during the Cromwellian period, but fortunately the venerable pile seems to have received little injury. It was after the raising of the siege of Nantwich that Sir Thomas

Fairfax hastened with his forces to the investment of Adlington Hall, which had been garrisoned for Charles. Nantwich had been besieged by Lord Byron, of whom mention has been made in previous articles. Fairfax defeated him under the walls, and the Royalist leader retreated to Chester. The inhabitants of Nantwich were jubilant at the rising of the siege; this occurred on January 25, which until almost recent times was called "Holy Day," and the inhabitants always wore holly in their hats on the anniversary. The march to Adlington was about twenty-five miles, and would lie through the delightful district of Congleton, Gawsforth, and Macclesfield; but the siege only lasted a fortnight, though the house was well garrisoned and armed. John Legh, the fifth son of Sir Urian Legh, was in charge of the defences, and he afterwards fell in the Civil War. Fairfax gave him honourable quarter, and allowed the garrison of 150 soldiers to depart, taking with them their personal effects, and only leaving behind their arms, 700 stand, and fifteen barrels of powder. It may be stated that the destruction of the Spanish lady's infatuation is claimed by another family—the Bolles, of Bramley Grange, near Rotherham—and some relics are said to remain with them—jewellery which the gracious Spanish captive sent to the wife of the faithful husband. Dr. Percy in his "Relics of English Poetry" gives the ballad at length, but he admits his inability to decide between the claims of Sir Urian Legh and Sir John Bolle.



ECCLES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

ECCLES CHURCH has, of course, suffered from the ruthless hands of recent "restorers," but much less so than many others. The interior is light and lofty, and there is a fine panelled roof of the Tudor period. The columns that divide the nave from the aisles are of an irregular octagon shape, and are a departure from ordinary forms of architecture. There are curious niches in them that are of uncommon form, and the details are very singular. The registers begin in 1563. Randle Holme, who visited the church in 1652, has left some curious records of it in his "Church Notes." In the chancel of the church are the recumbent figures of Richard Brereton, of Worsley, and his wife. He is fully armed, and she is dressed in the costume of the period. It is the oldest monument in the church, and was erected by Dorothy, the widow of Richard Brereton, who survived her husband forty years, and must have lived to a patriarchal age. Richard Brereton bequeathed the Worsley estates to Lord Egerton, and his wife Dorothy left Worsley Old Hall, which has been figured in this series, to a son of Lord Egerton. There are no other monuments in the church that present any special feature of interest, nor, indeed, any others that can lay particular claim to antiquity. One remarkable feature of Eccles Church is its enormous churchyard, now quite paved over with gravestones. The tower is rather stumpy, and was possibly intended to be surmounted by a spire; the clerestory is large and bold, and every part of the church is embattled. The windows belong to the later Tudor period, and have no very special features to recommend them. As at Chester and other places, there is a curfew bell here, which is rung regularly every night. Among the contributors to Eccles Church was Richard le Rymour de Withenton, which means a dwelling among the withes or oziers. The family of Rymour spread to the west of Lancashire, and their descendants now spell their name Rimmer, but this alteration was only introduced in the

last century. All visitors to Southport will remember how common the name is there, and, indeed, until the immigration from Manchester and the districts around there was scarcely another surname.

It was the old system of leaseholds that when these were fixed on lives the lease might be renewed by paying a fine, and then a new life might be substituted. Now, in 1726 there was a small cottage upon the vicar's glebe lands, and this was let on life lease, but, owing to some especially hard lot, the tenant, George Bridge, was compelled to renew his lease no less than three times within five years. It was probably in an epidemic that the three lives were lost. A memorial was signed by the curates and ministers in the vicinity,



ECCLES CHURCH.

praying all good people to come to the poor man's assistance, so that he might not be homeless and the church should not be deprived of its just dues in the way of fines. The vicar at the time was Thomas Vaughan, and a letter that he wrote to his parish clerk is still extant, and it does, indeed, illustrate some of the ways of the Church in the last century. He seems to have held another living near Lichfield, and to have let his vicarage house at Eccles, and he writes thus to his parish clerk :

Mr. Parr,—I hope this will find you well recovered of your distemper. I desire you would send me word per next post in what circumstances Ned

Watson died, and if my rent is safe, and if his widow designs to continue my tenant. Let me know how my parish is for health. And pray let me know if the vicarage house be empty, and if you can recommend a proper tenant. I suppose the surplice fees rise highly this sickly time. I hope you continue to collect 'em. Pray collect all my Michaelmas rents of all but Widow Watson. Let Mr. Bayley pay Mr. Spence what he owes me, and pray pay the brickmen; but, first of all, stop 30s. for ye sexton; and anywhere else where they owe money, and take care they do not cheat me or the country. I must depend on you for my steward till I come over, which I am afraid will not be this winter. Pray ask Mr. Jones, of Flixton, to pay you the sum of money the bishop ordered for dilapidations, and send it me by bill from any Manchester man to Lichfield. I believe Mr. Martinscroft would take the house, but I leave it to your care and management. Till I have a tenant pray keep an eye over it, and the rest of my affairs. My service to your wife and all friends. Concludes from your very affec. friend and servant,

THOS. VAUGHAN.

Let me know if Spence's wife be come to Eccles.

It is clear from this that when a rector or vicar was pluralist, as nearly all of any influence were, a fatal epidemic, if local, was an advantage, for he could go, as the vicar of Eccles did, out of the way of infection, and write to his agent: "I suppose the surplice fees rise very highly this sickly time. I hope you continue to collect 'em;" and further on adds: "Take care they do not cheat me, nor the country. I must depend upon you as my agent." A succeeding vicar, the Rev. Benjamin Nichols, seems to have tried the parishioners of Eccles even more sorely, and there are many points of interest in the indictment the parishioners drew up. They say that the vicar has all the tithes, the great and small, &c., with messuages, dwelling-houses, and fields round Eccles Church; and they go on to state that he lives more than twenty miles away, and hardly ever comes inside the parish, and, indeed, with all his cumulative advantages, he does not perform duty more than two or three days in the year. And now we can get a glimpse of the churchyard when Eccles must have been a place of great beauty. There was abundant herbage, and the complaint of the parishioners is that he "sets or lets" the said churchyard to yearly tenants for their horses, &c., "and frequently with their feet to beat and destroy the gravestones," &c. They say also that the churchyard was planted some thirty or forty years before with fir trees by one

of the former inhabitants for shelter and ornament to the church, and that these trees were pruned and dressed at the expense of the wardens. These fir trees, they say, have grown up high and are a "great ornament," "but very healthy trees, and much short of their full growth;" and they say that the said vicar has ordered them all to be cut down "without acquainting or advising with the churchwardens or other inhabitants," and has, in fact, disposed of the trees to his own proper advantage: "Which behaviour is a vexation to the said parishioners, and a wrong, as is thought by them." Accordingly, counsel's opinion was taken, and Mr. George Kenyon, of Peel Hall, was the referee selected. He afterwards became Chief Justice of England. He said at once that by the



MONKS HALL, ECCLES.

statute of Edward I. "parsons are forbid to fell the trees growing in the churchyard unadvisedly," except to repair the chancel; and further, when appealed to concerning the herbage of the churchyard, he decided that the parson had the right of herbage, but the cattle must not break up gravestones, as in that case a special action would be against the rector, but it would more safely lie against the tenants of the churchyard. There was some few years ago a list of the pews and chapels of the church in the vestry, and all the owners and tenantry of the halls were properly apportioned. But the seats, besides those in the aisle, were appropriated to the families who had contributed to church expenses, rigidly separating them according to their contributions.

The old house called Monks Hall is situated near Eccles Church. It is supposed that at one time it was a grange of Whalley Abbey, and it was for long in possession of the Willis family, who have large possessions near Prescott. On a stone inside the barn that pertains to it is an inscription : " Mrs. Helen Willis, relict of Martin Willis, gent., deceased. Me *Ædificavit.*" The hall is now occupied by Dr. Hedley Crocker, and he kindly sent me a sample of silver coin that was found in an earthen jar not unlike a flower-pot. This coin belongs to the reign of Henry III., and is of the first coinage, where there are two circles on the reverse and a cross, but this stopped short at the inner circle. Clippings, however, became so common that the cross was extended to the rim, and so any defacements could be seen at once. There was an ancient orchard, now built over, opposite the hall, and here in 1864 a workman found a treasure of coins, 6,000 in all, some of great value, of Henry I., II., III., some of King John, and others of William the Lion of Scotland. There was wrangling between the Treasury and the Duchy of Lancaster for the possession of this great treasure, but it ultimately was adjudged to the Queen as " Duchess of Lancaster," and a consideration was generously offered to the finder. These coins were worth, if offered to collectors, many thousand pounds, but it was decided that the finder should hardly reap such a benefit, and they became the property of the " Duchess of Lancaster." Some were given to the British Museum, and a few elsewhere. The exact weight represented £73 2s. 6d., and this the finder of the treasure was awarded, though, of course, by feudal law, which still prevails in many cases, he was not legally entitled to a penny.

ROCHDALE.

THERE have been various conjectures concerning the origin of the name of this town, but Baines refers it to the river on which it is situated—the river Roche. This river is so called from once having abounded with the silvery fish which bears the same name. It is needless to say that none are to be found now in its waters, for the stream would prove immediately fatal to even tadpoles or newts, or the lowest organised forms of life.

Although it is sa'd that "strangers thrive best at Rochdale," it must never be supposed that the natives are not abundantly able to take care of themselves; and a facetious wag who applied Izaak Walton's description of a roach to them—"And you may take notice that as the carp is accounted the water-fox for his cunning, so the roach is accounted the water-sheep for his simplicity or foolishness"—was very much out of his reckoning.

There was a castle here in Saxon times, and the name Castleton, which is a suburb of Rochdale, is still preserved. Rochdale passed through various owners to Sir Henry Saville, who was lord of the manor in the time of the Tudors, and on his death it would seem to have merged into the Duchy of Lancaster. Queen Elizabeth demised it to Sir John Byron, the head of a very old family that held estates in different parts of England. We may see the name of a celebrated member of the family in Nichol's "Leicestershire." Sir John Byron fought at Bosworth Field, and was present when Richard galloped out of the ranks on a horse he had freshly mounted after "White Surrey" was killed, madly intent on the slaughter of Richmond.

A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

To quote words I have used elsewhere—"From the time Richard galloped out of the ranks to the time he fell can only have been

some fifteen minutes ; but how full of import they were to England ! The house of the Plantagenets was extinguished, the Barons' power was reduced to a name, and the Church, more wealthy and powerful than either, might have heard its knell in the chimes that rang in the coronation of the first of the Tudors." Sir John Byron was knighted on Bosworth Field, and he was not long before he received much more substantial favours at the hands of the family he had helped to place on the throne. At the dissolution of the monasteries, Newstead Abbey, originally a friary of Black Canons, was granted to him, with nearly all its vast possessions—it remained the principal family seat until the death of the illustrious poet—and, as has been stated, the next of the Tudors granted the manor of Rochdale to the representative of the Byron family. Baines, in his "*Lancashire*," relates a singular trial for what we should now call murder in which Byron figured as the accused. It would seem that Lord Byron and Mr. Chaworth had been dining together at a tavern, and some dispute arose about the game on their estates, which were near to each other. An altercation was heard ; but this afterwards subsided, and they left the room together apparently on friendly terms, and according to the evidence at the State trial it was described as such as would hardly be remembered by either party. When they left the tavern dining-room and descended the staircase Lord Byron asked Mr. Chaworth to step into an empty room, as he wished to speak to him, and, drawing his rapier, told the astonished Mr. Chaworth to defend himself. This he did as quickly as possible ; but Lord Byron shortened his hold, and, closing with him, gave him a wound that proved to be mortal. In the brief span of life that was left him after this, he made the statements which are condensed here, and which appeared at the trial. This Lord Byron succeeded to the property and title in 1736. The title dated from the time of Charles I., who appointed Sir John Byron a lieutenant of the Tower (very much against the advice of his Council), and afterwards he made him a peer of the realm, and this was just a century before the tragedy alluded to occurred. The jury in the murder case returned a verdict of manslaughter, probably in deference to the high rank of the accused,

and he at once claimed some privilege under a statute of Edward VI., which was allowed, and he regained his liberty. Mr. Chaworth was doubtless an ancestor of the Mary Chaworth whose life was so much mingled with the career of the great poet, and who is sometimes alluded to in the most pathetic of his poems. Rochdale remained in the Byron family until Lord Byron's day; in 1823 he sold it to Mr. Dearden, of the Orchard, at Rochdale, in whose family it now rests. The Deardens can trace back a long line of ancestry. The first Precentor of Lichfield, who held the dignity in 1130, was Walter Durdent, and he became Prior of Canterbury and Bishop of Lichfield. The name is pronounced in Lancashire Du-er-den, and in his Law Dictionary Jacob interprets it—"a thicket of wood in a valley." In the Civil Wars we find that the family were "staunch Royalists," and this is recorded on a family portrait of James Dearden, who died 1672.

There is a curious episode in the history of Rochdale that relates to its markets and fairs. In 1241 Edward de Lacy, who was King's page, obtained permission to hold a market and fair at Rochdale, or, as it was termed in the title, Rochdall. This in those days was a privilege of much value, and was granted to the heads of great families, but now, of course, it is vested in corporations. The grant would be about the period of the great struggles between the Crown and the Barons. The latter utterly refused to comply with the demands of the King, and their conduct was indeed one step towards freedom for the people, but not an immediate one, for they set up feudal rights and privileges beyond what the monarchs could have done; still it was a step. It was about the time when Edward granted the manorial privileges to Rochdale that the celebrated, and indeed dramatic, interviews occurred between the English Kings and the Barons. Bigot, the Earl of Norfolk, was among the foremost to resist the arbitrary demands of monarchs, and his speeches reached the Lord of the Manor of Rochdale. When Henry III. demanded aid from Bigot, and was refused, the King angrily said, "I will send reapers and reap your fields for you;" and was immediately met with the reply, "And I will send you back the heads of your reapers." To the more illustrious son

of Henry III. Bigot's response was equally to the point, for when he told Edward that he would not join him in his wars with Flanders, saying his feudal tenure, did not bind him, and recounting the vast expenditure of these wars, the King said in anger, "By God, Sir Earl, you shall either go or hang;" and Bigot quietly rejoined, "By God, Sir King, I shall neither go nor hang." These responses were heard by Edward de Lacy, and he seems to have considered that he had a right to be heard, too, for he declared that if any of the King's officers presumed to interfere with his jurisdiction and attempted to arrest anyone in his manors for "debt," he would meet the King's *posse comitatus* with his *posse*, and drive them out of all his manorial rights of Rochdale. But here we must remember that the "being in debt" does not allude to the condition we now speak of as such. It was not purchasing goods and failing to pay for them. Such irregularities were nearly unknown in those days. It more probably indicated a failure to comply with some feudal claims—of serfage, or vassalage, or many of the other claims which a superior class had over the tillers of the soil and the weavers of webs.

A few words may be said of the fairs and the markets of Rochdale, and of the singular privileges which these conferred in the Middle Ages and even much later, and as our district was concerned in chartered fairs to a degree which we can hardly credit, a slight detour may be claimed. There are fairs within a few miles of Manchester, and, indeed, all through Cheshire and Lancashire and in almost every county in England or Wales, but these are simply a shadow of the glories of old times. The canals which Brindley's consummate genius constructed connecting Manchester with Liverpool and Yorkshire, and the roads of Macadam and of Telford, strange as it may seem, were almost the death-blow to fairs. We find in the household book of the Percy family, which shows the rigid economy upon which great households were conducted, that the fairs were really the only means, or the principal means, by which the necessities of life were procured. Of course no town could hold a fair without a royal charter, and an instance in the present day of the jealous way in which such privileges are

regarded may be interesting. It occurred only last year in Chester. The cheese fairs that used to occur quarterly are held on the third Wednesday of each month in the City Market, and great additional space has been provided for them. They were held in the large Linen Hall before, which is a deserted building of great size, and was the seat of the Irish linen fairs until the manufacture of linen in Ireland was suppressed by the English Government as being inimical to British industry. Now some of the old Cheshire farmers resorted to the Linen Hall, and for a few months met with encouragement from those who were concerned in the property; but it was decided that as ratepayers' money had found the accommodation, they must leave the old market, under penalties. A fair in old times had its staff of officers, not only notaries to witness bargains, but even samplers to see if the articles exposed were up to the mark, and it was attended by judges and a market court, where all differences might be speedily settled. The privileges which were claimed by dignitaries when the rights of the fairs were vested in them are really astonishing to us now. Thus, for example, when the Abbot of Westminster claimed tollage and Church rights for his fair, all the shops in London had to be closed so as not to interfere in their traffic with his just dues. But the Bishops of Winchester took a much higher view of the privileges that belonged to their sacred office, and when the fair of St. Giles came round, of which they held the charter, they closed up the gates of Winchester, and the mayor and burgesse; reverently gave them the keys of the city. They were thus not only the men in possession, but they could debar the excess of any article from interfering with the market value of the supply, and the wagoner had to return home with his produce—it might be webs and cloths, or it might be the produce of the soil; but in either case the merchandise was barred. Perhaps the merchant might have attempted to sell his goods after he had left Winchester, but it was enacted that anything offered for sale within seven miles of Winchester or Southampton was confiscated to the spiritual lord. And if we remember that Southampton was doing a large trade, we can well believe that after the Feast of St. Giles, when the

bishop's fairs were held, he found his house filled with good things and cloths and garments for which he neither toiled nor spun. Talk of tithes after this ! The fairs of Rochdale are on the 14th May, Whit-Tuesday, and the 7th of November. Anciently the market day was Wednesday, as we find by a charter granted by Henry III. to Edmund de Lacy in the twenty-fifth year of Henry's reign, but in the early part of the reign of George III. the day was changed to Monday. This, however, is a relic of antiquity, as the wares of the town are sold then, and the manufactures of the district, and what are called staples. There is wool, and grain, and dye-wares, and oil, and such things as are connected with trade ; but the market day for provisions is as in other towns Saturday. The allusion to old privileged markets would hardly have been so extended unless it had been to give emphasis to the success of the latest movement for supplying the wants of consumers.

If we turn from the privileges of the Episcopacy to the present day, we shall see a contrast indeed in Rochdale. It was here that the first co-operative stores were started, and their success is only to be paralleled by perhaps the London Waterworks, the original shares of which have risen from £10 to perfectly independent fortunes ; but that has taken three centuries to accomplish. In 1844 a mutual society was projected in Rochdale for supplying the members with the necessities of life at prime cost, and the small house where the first meetings took place is still standing. The members numbered twenty-eight, and the total capital of the company was £28, and they might indeed say, "With my rod and my staff I crossed over Jordan, and now I am become two bands." The number of members has increased to eleven thousand, and the capital of the company is about £350,000. The society owns property to the extent of £40,000, and they have built themselves new and noble premises that have cost more than £14,000, and out of a small part of the surplus profits they devote £800 a year to educational purposes. This is a record indeed, and it is perhaps unrivalled even among the great manufacturing centres of South-East Lancashire ; yet it simply is the result of accurate management and economy, for, as Terence says, "No man knows how great a revenue economy is."

Rochdale Parish Church is grandly situated, and the views which it commands are very striking. A very long flight of steps leads up to it from the town, and in the stopping stages as we ascend there are beautiful examples of old wrought ironwork. There is an idea by those who have never seen the town that it resembles some such place as Oldham; but when I saw the churchyard for the first time a north-countryman asked me something about a road, and turned round and looked about him. It was a reckless remark to make, but I said, "Does not this remind you of Edinburgh?" Before, however, I had time to reflect on my impru-



ROCHDALE CHURCH.

dence, I was pleased to find no hostile demonstration; he even admitted that there was some resemblance. From Rochdale Churchyard there is a noble view of the ranges of hills round Clitheroe, and those that rise above the beautiful valley of the Aire; and a little further to the west the ranges called Rivington Pike, with Anglezark, Bromley, and Longworth, are all before our eyes. The history of the church is almost unique in the records of any diocese, and in one sense the rectors must have almost corresponded in kind with the prince-bishops of old. The

limits forbid much longer notice, but, according to some records in Chester Cathedral library, it would seem that there was some connection between the rectors of Rochdale and the Primate of Canterbury, for at one time Cranmer held the rectorial tithes, and the schools, which have been rebuilt in a most beautiful form in recent days, are the gift of Matthew Parker, whose father was a highly-respected tradesman, and who became in aftertime Archbishop of Canterbury.

To the north of Rochdale is situated "One Ash"—"Wunnush," as the natives call it—the residence of the late John Bright. It is characteristic indeed of the man himself—a plain, square, honest-looking abode, with a circular bow window that reaches the two storeys. It is situated in a not extensive garden, but this is laid out in walks very pleasantly; and almost in the same enclosure are the residences of his family. On the opposite side of the road are the mills of the Brights; they are old fashioned and substantial, and the views from them are charmingly beautiful.





CAPESTHORPE HALL.



CAPESTHORPE HALL.

CAPESTHORNE.

THERE is a very direct road which leads from Manchester to Stoke, and it is full of interest in all directions. It passes through Withington, Cheadle, and Wilmslow, and then goes by the old halls of Handforth and Cheadle. The road from Chorley then skirts Alderley Park, and it is unsurpassed for rural beauty. Alderley Edge rises up on the left, and the landscape is a succession of roadside edges and shady lanes, and distant woods and hills. Even the country gentlemen, as has been remarked, retain more of the character of the old English squire than we commonly find in other parts. It would not be difficult to select a good example of Sir Roger de Coverley, or, perhaps, an improved Squire Weston. Capesthorne Park is reached directly after passing Alderley, and, indeed, all this district is studded with park after park. One is hardly left before we come to the lodge of another. The annals of Capesthorne are scant, but in the last edition of Ormerod there are some few particulars of its early occupiers. There was a family of Capesthorne who possessed it in the reign of Edward III., and at its close it seems that Sarah de Capesthorne, who held the estates, married John le Ward, who came from Somerford, in Yorkshire, according to the belief of Ormerod, though there are some other authorities who would connect him with the Wards of Norfolk. The name of Somerford, however, which is reported at Somerford Park, close by, would point to Ormerod's belief as being correct. I do not know if there is any authentic sketch of the original hall remaining, but the present one was in the stately style of architecture which is called Early Hanoverian, and which always looks well when set off by such noble trees as we find in this district. But the Hanoverian type has gone, and Blore some years ago remodelled Capesthorne and transformed it into an Elizabethan building. Mr. Egerton Legh speaks of it as a noble example of brick architecture,

and mentions Crewe and Marbury in conjunction with it ; but though it is a fairly good example of modern Elizabethan, it can hardly be placed in the same list as Crewe, which is, indeed, a noble specimen of the handling of such a difficult material as brick. With modern architects it has produced, for example, Russell Square, but under the architects of old, Hurstmonceaux Castle and in later ages Crewe arose to show what could be done. A collection of Etruscan pottery was made by one of the Davenports. Mr. Egerton Legh narrates a rather amusing circumstance. He says that "house" is a word commonly used to distinguish the sitting-room from the kitchen offices in a farmhouse, and some farmer's daughter who went with a message to Mr. Davenport naturally took stock of the library, where he was sitting, when she delivered her note, and went home in amazement, telling her relatives that the Davenports "kept their kitchen mugs in the house-place." In 1861 a great fire occurred that still is spoken of with awe in all the district, and the centre block was destroyed, though the wings escaped. Salvin, the architect who built Peckforton Castle, the seat of Lord Tollemache, was also employed in the reconstruction of Capesthorpe. Just outside Capesthorpe is Redesmere, a pool that is well described by its name. In this is the celebrated floating island, and, as Mr. Egerton Legh describes it, it is a peat moss some twenty yards wide, with birch trees on it as much as twenty feet high and a foot in diameter. It can not only float but dive as well, as it disappears sometimes for two years. Mr. Egerton Legh truly says that the growth round the floating island must in time fill up Redesmere, and water-hens will be the only sufferers.

A little way beyond this pool we arrive at Marton. The church of Marton, which has been what is termed "restored," forms a picturesque object from the distance. The country it overlooks is extremely rich and well wooded, and at some few miles distance is the range of Derbyshire and Cheshire hills, which come to an abrupt termination in the cliff called Cloud End. Marton is one of the timber churches at one time so common in England. Greenstead Church, in Essex, which is built entirely of oak and which is older than the Norman Conquest, is an example too well known to

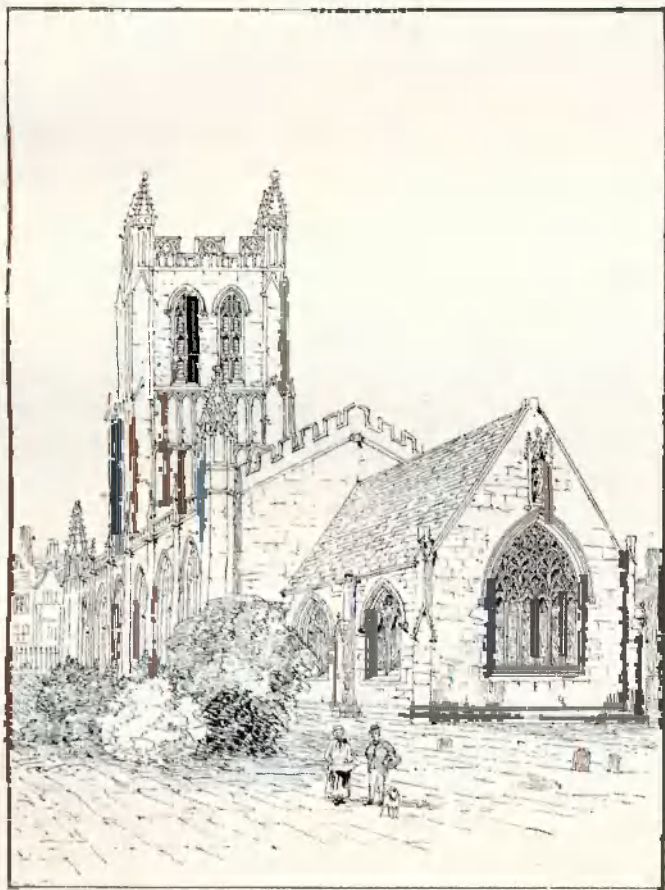
need mention, but I have noted a number of churches of wood and plaster in the Manchester district that are well worth a record. The chancel of this church was pulled down and rebuilt in brick, but in 1871 the new chancel was itself pulled down, and one of the former style took its place. There are some fragments of very ancient stained glass in the windows. There is a tombstone with two knights in armour, and on the bolster under their heads is the gruesome crest of the Davenport family—a felon's head "couped," but only a portion of the rope is left. Marton Hall is built of wood and plaster, and has long been used as a farmhouse. The framework of timber is less ornate than we should look for in a district that is famed for its black-and-white architecture, but the old hall is very picturesque. Its centre and wings are crowned with gables, and there is a fine entrance hall. On the left of this is a wainscoted parlour with the Davenport arms inlaid in different woods. "The Mere" is here, as it is still called, though now drained and cultivated. But one of the greatest features is the celebrated Marton Oak, said to be the largest in England, though I should almost think the Cowthorpe Oak runs it hard. Congleton, near here, is the home of the Parnell family. Colonel Parnell defended Chester for the Royal cause, and I thought from a record in the Cathedral library that he belonged to them, and wrote to Mr. C. S. Parnell to ask if that was so. He replied at once that I was right, though at the moment he could not supply me with all the information I wished. His relative, who is the head of the family, takes his name from the district as Lord Congleton.



STOCKPORT CHURCH.

THE strictures on the destruction of Ormskirk Old Church which have appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* naturally lead to some very grave reflections. Having walked through every county in England, I can speak from personal observation of what I have seen, and perhaps there are very few who could credit the destruction which has quietly been going on through the length and breadth of the land. Not two per cent of our ancient churches have escaped the desolating hand of the restorer. If Cromwell's soldiers did in many instances break down crosses and images, and if Georgian churchwardens put up some classic tablets and galleries which already have historic interest, they left the churches in all their ancient interest and beauty, and it remained for the men of the present day to "say in their hearts, Let us make havoc of them altogether." Whalley Church in Lancashire, and Ashby St. Leger's in Northampton, are uninjured specimens of churches, and are well worth a pilgrimage to see. I cannot remember any others. It is, however, quite possible that the chancel of Stockport, which it is proposed to "restore," may remain as it is. This chancel seems to have been built originally in the fourteenth century, and the geometrical tracery of the windows is very characteristic of the period and very excellent of its kind. The deeply recessed mouldings of the side windows are very good examples of jambs, and the proportions of the chancel, with its high-pitched light roof, are excellent. There is a drawing of the old church, as a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* has written me, in the Free Library at Stockport, which was taken before it succumbed to the building that was designed by Wyatt soon after he had completed the plans for Tatton Hall. The present building is possibly not a fabric that modern church architects would feel proud to own, but it is quite as good as its day. The mouldings show an ignorance of

Gothic, but, as we know, such knowledge has only accrued since Wyatt's time. The history of Stockport is very interesting. It was a town of importance during the Roman occupation of Cheshire, and many remains of great interest have been found in its vicinity.



STOCKPORT CHURCH.

Its importance did not even cease during the Saxon supremacy, and there are good reasons for believing that a Saxon church stood here in olden times, but there is no mention of any church at all in Domesday Book. There are some very interesting monuments in

the chancel. There was till recent times an effigy of Richard de Vernon, that dated back to the time of Edward III., but this has been removed to Poynton Church. There was formerly a manor attached to the Stockport rectory, and in a curious record we learn that a court was attached to the manor, and the manor was held by the extraordinary service of being foreman of the jury at the time. Near the church in former days stood Stockport Castle, but every trace of this has vanished; it had in its day an eventful history. Even before the Civil Wars it had seen service, as it belonged at one time to Hugh le Despenser, who was an ally and supporter of Simon de Montfort. The barony afterwards passed to the De Stokeports, and was sold or exchanged for other lands to one Robert de Lumley, who seems also to have inherited some singular privileges and rights. Among other things he was entitled to the lumber washed down the Mersey and stranded on his park boundaries, and it indicates how great the growth must have been in those days when we learn that the drifts were of great value, and sufficient to keep the farmhouses in repair and to add any more buildings that they wanted for the estate. In Ormerod's "Cheshire" there is a drawing by De Wint, of Stockport, which dates back some sixty-five years, but even then the town was beginning to present an array of tall smoky chimneys. Perhaps there is not very much of the picturesque left in Stockport to commend it to a traveller, but it is very easily reached in a few minutes at any time of the day from Manchester, and there are few parts of England that can offer such abundant opportunities for country walks. The short railway ride lands us in the middle of the finest scenery in the northern counties.



PRESTBURY.

PRESTBURY is a village of great beauty—one of the old unspoiled settlements that happily are still to be found in every English county. It quite recalls the days of Isaac Walton and Christopher Marlowe, though I fear that if Walton had seen the condition of the Bollin as it is now some expletives would have found their way into the "Complete Angler" hardly harmonising with the quaint, cheerful language of Piscator. This is the more to be regretted as the stream is not like the Irwell, that has so long to run the gauntlet before it reaches Victoria Station, but is comparatively transparent, for the stones and pebbles in the bed can be distinguished in the shallow parts. It is probable that the Bollin is a very good starting-point to make experiments for purifying on a small scale. In Ormerod's "Cheshire" there is a beautiful engraving from a water-colour drawing by De Wint. It shows what the surroundings of Prestbury must have been in 1819, when Finden, who has often been considered the greatest engraver of his day, first etched the scene. Soon after entering the village we come across a post and petrel house that has been slightly modernised, but which is still of great beauty, and strongly reminds us of the picture Thackeray drew of Clavering. Besides this example, we see other gabled houses and the great tower of Prestbury Church. To quote Thackeray: "The ancient church tower and peaked roofs of the houses rising up among trees and old walls, behind which swells a fair background of sunshiny hills that stretch from Clavering westwards towards the sea, look so cheery and comfortable that many a traveller's heart must have yearned towards it from the coach top, and he must have thought that it was in such a calm friendly nook he would like to shelter at the end of life's struggle." This is, indeed, a very fair picture of Prestbury as it is, and in the long street which forms the little country town there are some other specimens

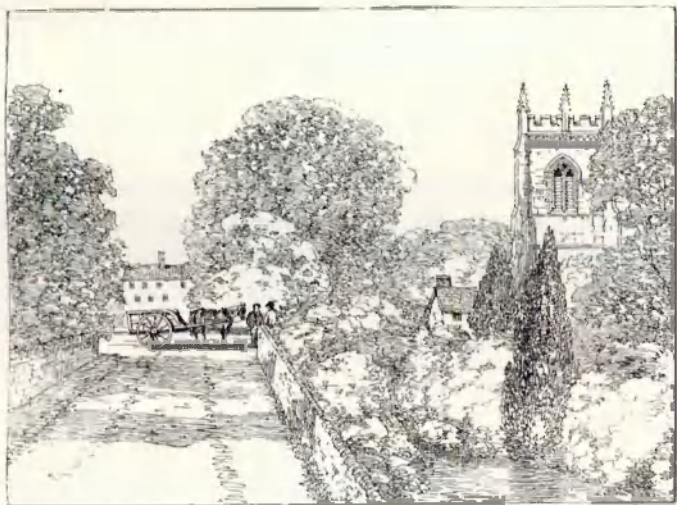
of black-and-white architecture. Some of these are of singular interest, and one is shown here. It is called "The Vicarage," and is said to have been the residence of the vicar in old times. It would seem to be of the period of Henry VIII. The projections are very bold and striking, and there is a singularly old-world appearance about the whole building. It is very quaint, but it does



PRESTBURY HALL.

not seem quite to have kept within the unwritten rules of black-and-white which guided the architects of Speke, and Bramhall, and Moreton to forms of certain beauty. But for all purposes of a picturesque village object the vicarage is ample. "It appears probable that in the Saxon period Hamestan hundred was divided into two great parishes—Stockport and Prestbury—to which churches

the greater part of the Macclesfield hundred is yet subject (1818). Northenden was comprehended in Bochelan; Mottram and Taxal lay among the wild wastes at the borders of Derbyshire; and Wilmslow and Alderley, if existing, were probably dependent churches to Prestbury, Stockport, and Northenden, as Gawsworth certainly was to the first of these at a somewhat later period. The silence therefore of the Domesday Survey as to the existence of the churches of Stockport and Prestbury, or to the places themselves, is somewhat singular." These are the words of Ormerod, and they



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will at once commend themselves to everyone who has a local knowledge of the district.

On the south side of Prestbury Church there is a very interesting building with a fine Norman front. It is about forty-five feet long and twenty-seven feet wide, and is divided into a nave and chancel. The west front of this building is extremely interesting, and as comely as we can reasonably expect from the rude times of the Norman architects. It would seem to have been built, judging by the style, about the earlier part of the twelfth century. One can

hardly agree to the full extent with Mr. Croston that Prestbury Church contains within itself the elements of all the various styles of architecture. The Norman is exceptionally well illustrated, but here is an end for any specially good architecture. Still, if we examine the mouldings and some of the ornamentation carefully, we may admit that he is correct technically. But with the exception of the Norman front there is little which we should choose to illustrate a work on architecture, however beautiful the outline and surroundings may be. It was with much misgiving that I entered the church when I heard that Gilbert Scott, the arch "church restorer," had laid his heavy hands upon it. The interior is now a wreck. All the black seats but one are demolished, and the weary, pert whitewood benches have taken their place. Many hundred bedroom chairs occupy the place of the old oakwork, and we see in Prestbury only another melancholy example of what churches have suffered. At the north end of the communion table are two slabs fixed in the wall. On the first of these is the figure of a knight in armour, and it commemorates one of the former tenants of Poynton :—

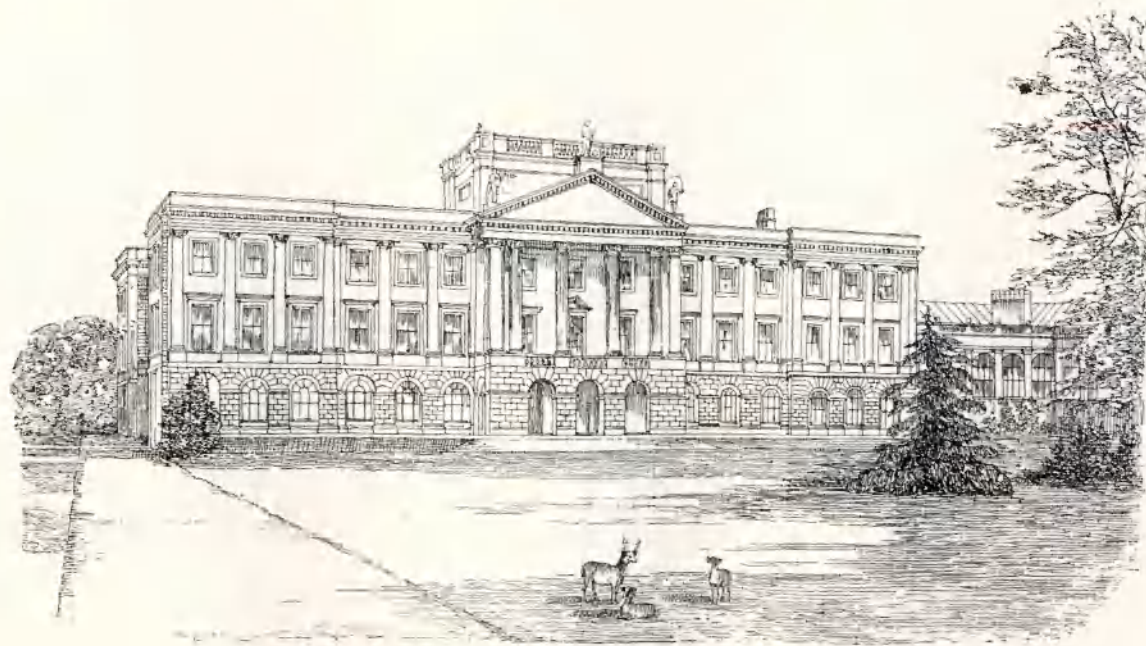
Here lyeth the bodye of
EDWARD WARREN, of Poynton, Knight,
wyche departed frome this transitory lyfe the
XII. day of October, in the
yeare of our Lord God MCCCCCLVIII., whose
soul God pardon. Amen.

Close to this there is another stone, handsomely ornamented, with a foliated cross, to the memory of Reginald Legh, of Adlington, and this has a Latin inscription.

Adlington Hall has already been alluded to in this series, and the somewhat homely white house which faces the pedestrian on his entrance into the street which constitutes the country town is one of the family seats of the Leghs, though now it is let to a tenant. More than one article could easily be filled with the domestic architecture and associations of the beautiful little town. The clergyman during the government of Cromwell used to occupy the balcony which is shown in the front of the old vicarage, and harangue the people. In the churchyard is a very curious stone

coffin, cut out with great care to fit the body, so that the gigantic dimensions of six feet nine inches in length probably indicated the real proportions of the occupant, who is supposed to have been Vivian Davenport, of Marple. He was the Chief Forester of Macclesfield, then a royal forest, and it is very interesting to remember that though these royal forests have lapsed, and are no more, the offices that they filled, such as the Grand Master of the Hawks, huntsmen, whippers in, and many others with great revenues, still remain, and are the rewards of those who are loyal to the crown. He died in 1250. This relic was dug up in 1882. All the lanes round Prestbury are full of interest and beauty, and many are the homely, beautiful farms and cottages we come across from the station at Alderley Edge. There are two roads, one along the cliff and another along the lower lane past Mottram, and each road has its own interest. The hills of Kerridge, which are of exceeding beauty, rise close to Prestbury — almost abruptly from the plain. Tegsnose, which is at the south limit, rises more than 1,300 feet above the sea, and from it fine views of the surrounding counties are obtained.





LYME HALL.

LYME HALL.

LYME HALL is one of the most stately residences in England, and, if we except Eaton, by far the most imposing in Cheshire ; and a contrast may be well drawn between Lyme, with its classic façades, and the architecture of Eaton or Worsley New Hall, with their many gables and pinnacles. An Italian front is always more impressive among trees and hills, as affording something for the eye to rest on, while the turrets and steep gables of a modern Tudor house are confusing ; hence it is that Tudor architecture is more suited to the flat streets of a town, and an Italian front to the irregular charms of woodlands. Lyme is reached, of course, from Stockport, a town which, though now simply a manufacturing centre, was in the middle of the last century a place of picturesque beauty, and contained half-timbered houses of great excellence. From Stockport the road to Disley lies through Hazelgrove and past Poynton Park, the seat of the Vernons. The train may be left at Hazelgrove, and a delightful walk of an hour will bring us to the pleasant village of Disley. The stream that runs nearly along the roadside is clear and bright, and it is the same one that we see running still unpolluted by Bramhall Park. The situation of Lyme Hall is rather peculiar and characteristic ; it suits the stillness and loneliness of the neighbourhood. The principal entrance lies within half a mile of Disley, and a walk of little more than a mile leads to the great mansion. When it was first my chance to see Lyme Hall, a number of years ago, there was a herd of wild cattle in the park, which were kept away from guests by a strong iron palisading ; but these cattle are now extinct. They were similar to those of Chillingham, and are doubtless from the stock of the old English aboriginals. Quoting from Gosse, I may add a few words to the subject of the wild cattle : "In a few parks in the North of England there exists a breed of cattle in a wild state which is probably identical in species with the domestic race. They are invariably

white, with red ears and a black muzzle. At the first appearance of any person they set off at full gallop, and at the distance of about 200 yards make a wheel round and come boldly up again, tossing their heads in a menacing manner; on a sudden they make a full stop at the distance of forty or fifty yards, looking wildly at the object of their surprise, but upon the least motion being made they all turn round and fly with equal speed, but not to the same distance; forming a shorter circle and again returning with a bolder and more threatening aspect than before, they approach much nearer, probably within thirty yards, when they again make another stand, and fly off as before. This they do several times, shortening their distance, and advancing nearer and nearer, till they come within such a short distance that most people think it prudent to leave them and not provoke them any more." The deer of Lyme Park are considered to be unsurpassed for the quality of their venison in all England. Formerly there was a practice of gathering them together at midsummer and driving them into a pool that now stands before the hall, and there were festivities on the occasion. An old keeper is mentioned who used to be conspicuous then, and he lived, according to Ormerod, to the age of 104. According to Whitaker, in his history of Whalley, there was a similar custom at Towneley. At the upper end of the park, where it declines to the south, there are the remains of a large pool, and into this every year the park-keepers drive the deer. Deer are very apt at swimming, as anyone who is conversant with a Canadian lake in summer can affirm.

We come upon the hall rather suddenly, as it lies in a kind of hollow; but by far the best view is from Jackson Edge, a ridge near the station. From this standpoint nearly the whole of the great park of Lyme can be seen. Marple ridge, near here, affords even a greater general prospect, and Taxal and Chinley and the great Derbyshire range are near. Lyme Hall seems half hidden in trees, but to the west the great plain which includes Vale Royal and reaches to Delamere stretches out before us. The north side of the hall is the one with which the visitor becomes first acquainted, and it is very plain as compared with other parts of the splendid pile; but

there is a singular entrance, which reaches to the roof, and is in the very best Jacobean style. The quadrangle is reached through this, and the principal entrance from it is through the great hall. The state dining-room is a noble apartment, and lies between an ante-room and a chamber which contains the arms of James I., over the mantle and a stag hunt in stucco, while round it are panels with many incidents of the chase, some of which would hardly be considered sportsman-like now. The great drawing-room, which occupies an angle on the opposite side from that which is shown in the illustration, is extremely interesting, and is, perhaps, one of the noblest apartments in the county. When Disley Church was dismantled it contained some excellent stained glass, and among this there was a goodly display of heraldic painting. This now forms part of the decoration of the drawing-room. The arms of the family are over the mantelpiece, and the magnificent apartment is panelled. The ceiling is a fine specimen of Jacobean work. The east front is, perhaps, the most broken, and it opens upon a terrace of admirable proportions, from which there is a greenhouse of 120 feet in length. But the most architectural front of the mansion is undoubtedly that shown in the illustration. This was designed by Wyatt in the present century, and it hides the antiquity of the building behind. Still it is a noble piece of domestic architecture. It is fifteen windows in width, and the rusticated basement is well introduced. The portico in front, with its four fluted Ionic columns and two *antæ*, is excellently well proportioned. On this front is the wainscoted library and the principle staircase. There are also some admirable carvings by Grinling Gibbons. The interior of this quite palatial mansion is filled with old works of art and heirlooms, suits of armour, and old family pictures in great numbers. Sir Piers Legh, Knt., younger son of Robert Legh, of Adlington, married in November, 1388, Margaret, only daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Danyers, Knt., of Bradley, and so obtained a grant of the lands of Hanley, now Lyme, in Macclesfield. This Danyers distinguished himself at the battle of Cressy. This battle, as has been pointed out, was destined to teach Europe a lesson, and one that the English them-

selves had learned at Bannockburn. Everything had rested upon a military basis, and a knight was supposed to be equal in prowess and usefulness to ever so many "churls" or "villains." But at Cressy the Saxon churls showed that they were more than a match for a knight at arms with ever so long a pedigree, and feudalism received its first shock, for the terrible number of 30,000 footmen and 1,200 knights lay dead upon the field of Cressy.

Sir Thomas Danyers had taken the chamberlain, Tankerville, prisoner at the battle of Cressy. There was for long a family tradition that the hero of Cressy was Sir Piers Legh, Knt., but this was an error. He married in 1388 Margaret, the heiress of Sir Thomas, and in 1399 he was beheaded in consequence of his adherence to the cause of Richard II. His remains were interred in the Legh Chapel at Macclesfield, and the following lines were inscribed on a tablet to his memory :

Here lieth the body of PERKIN A LEGH,
That for King Richard the death did die,
Betrayed for tighteousnesse ;
And the bones of Sr. PEERS, his sonne,
That with King Henry the Fifth did winne
In Paris.

The epitaph was restored in 1620 by Sir Peter Legh, with another inscription added :

This Perkin served Edward III. and the Black Prince, his sonne, in all their warres in France, and was at the battle of Cressie, and had Lyme given him for that service, and after their deaths served King Richard the Second, and left him not in his troubles, but was taken with him and beheaded at Chester by King Henrie the Fourth ; and the said Sir Peers, his son, served King Henrie the Fifth, and was slain at the battle of Agincourt. In their memory, Sir Peter Legh, of Lyme, Knt., descended from them finding the said olde verses written upon a stone in this chapell, did re-edifie this place in A.D. 1620.

The Black Prince settled an annuity upon him derived from the lands at Frodsham, and finally he was confirmed in the lands of Hanley in Macclesfield Forest. He only lived two years to enjoy his possessions, for when the Duke of Lancaster advanced into Cheshire he was beheaded. This history of the family is extremely interesting and intimately connected with the annals of Cheshire, but space forbids any more lengthened allusion.

RADCLIFFE TOWER AND CHURCH.

THE family of Radcliffe is one of the very ancient families for which South Lancashire is so remarkable. They derive their name from the village of Radcliffe, so called from a red cliff or rock on the east side of the Irwell opposite the village. Edward the Confessor held Radcliffe, with two hides of land, one belonging to Salford, which afterwards came into the possession of the Earls of Chester. Richard de Radcliffe, of Radcliffe Tower, was Seneschal and Minister of the Forests of Blackburnshire. He accompanied King Edward I. in his wars with Scotland, and received a charter of free warren and free chase in all the demesne lands of Radcliffe. He married a daughter of Boteler, of Bewsey. The name Boteler, or Butler, occurs frequently in old families in the north, and in some they were called Pincerna, which, of course, is the Latin word for a butler. And when we remember how many families there have been in England that owned possessions from the Norman times, we are sadly reminded of how the Norman nobles endowed their retainers with the spoils of the Saxons. Richard Radcliffe had two sons—one, Robert, was the father of William of Culcheth, commonly called "Great William." From him rose the Radcliffes who afterwards were Earls of Sussex, and the other branch who became the Barons Fitzwalter, now extinct. From him sprang also the Radcliffes, of Ordsal and of Smithells, while John, the brother of "Great William," who was rector of Bury, left a son behind him, and he became lord of Catherton and the ancestor of the Radcliffes, of Broad Clist, in Devonshire. It must have been about "Great William's" time that what remains of Radcliffe Tower was built, for though we read that James Radcliffe had letters patent from Henry IV. in 1403 to "embattel his house with walls of mortar and stone," this clearly alludes to a mansion already existing. As we look through the family tree, there is hardly any

great Lancashire house with which the owners of Radcliffe Tower or their descendants were not connected. Sir William Radcliffe, who succeeded to the Ordsal estate in the reign of Edward VI., was very much allied to many of the leading families in Lancashire. The estates of Baron Fitzwalter were to be his, in the failure of certain issues, by the will of the Earl of Sussex. He married first Margaret, daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, and secondly and thirdly the widows of Sir John Towneley and of Sir Richard Assheton, of Middleton. The noble old hall of Radcliffe has been destroyed, and that not long ago. A drawing of it has been pre-



GREAT HALL, RADCLIFFE. (Destroyed to build modern cottages.)

served, and from that my sketch is taken. Whitaker, in his "History of Whalley," has left us a description of the venerable apartment, and in another place he speaks enthusiastically of its splendour. "The noble old hall was forty-three feet two inches long, and in one part twenty-six feet wide and in another twenty-eight feet. The two massy principles which support the roof are the most curious specimens of ancient woodwork I have ever seen. The broadest piece of timber is two feet seven inches by ten inches. A wall plate on the outside of one beam, from end to end, measures

two feet by ten inches. The walls are finished at the square, with a moulded cornice of oak. The pillar at the right has neither capital nor moulding, and appears to have been inserted at a later period when the hall underwent repair. At the bottom of this room is a hall opening into one of the towers, the lower part of which only remains, of massy grout work, and with three arches, each furnished with a funnel or aperture like a chimney. On the left of the hall are the remains of a very curious window frame of oak, wrought in Gothic tracery, but square at the top. Near the top of the hall are the remains of a doorway opening into what was once a staircase, and leading to a large chamber above the kitchen, the approach to which beneath was by a massy door of oak, pointed at top. The kitchen and door above stand at right angles to the top of the hall,



RADCLIFFE TOWER.

and are separated from it by a wall of oak work. The chamber is thirty-eight feet long by eighteen feet five inches, and has two massy arches of oak, without mouldings, but with an oaken cornice moulded like those in the hall; the floor of thick oaken planks; height to point of arches, sixteen feet. Over the high tables of ancient halls (as in the case in some college halls at present) it was common to have a small aperture, through which the lord or master could inspect, unseen, what was going on in the hall below; but in this situation at Radcliffe is a ramified window of oaken work, opening from the apartment above mentioned, but now closed up. This consists of eight arches, with trefoil pointed tops, 4 and 4, with two narrower apertures above." A perusal of

Whitaker's account will show us what we have lost in noble relics of old architecture, and he accounted for the many great houses the family had founded by saying that from such a noble residence such an issue might well be understood.



RAYCLIFFE CHURCH.

There is a romantic interest attaching to the demolished hall, as it was the scene of the celebrated "Lady Isabella's Tragedy," otherwise called "The Stepmother's Cruelty." Whitaker seems to have believed that there was some kind of foundation for the story,

though in carefully looking over the family pedigrees I cannot point out the Radcliffe referred to. Still the records are incomplete, as for example, I could never identify the Radcliffe who figures in "Richard III." so often, and in the morning before Bosworth field says, "O, Radcliffe, I have dreamed a fearful dream," &c., with any of the old members of the family ; nor, though ever so willing, have the present representatives been able to render any assistance in the matter. The one thing about the Radcliffe Tower ballad which would seem to give it interest is that it is not, I believe, repeated, like "Gellart" and other well-known legends, in other languages and countries. There is a blackletter copy in the Pepys collection, and another in the British Museum, which speaks of the Lady Isabella as being "the only daughter of a noble duke." According to the ballad, which has often been printed, Radcliffe was married twice, and his second wife was very jealous of a beautiful daughter of his first one.

This lord he had a daughter deare,
Whose beauty shone so bright,
She was beloved both far and neare
Of many a lord and knight.

The stepmother then made an arrangement with the master cook that the Lady Isabella should go into the hall kitchen, and, summoning the master cook, tell him to "dresse the milke-white doe," never dreaming she was meant till she saw his knife, which, he told her, was pointed to rid her of her life.

"O, then," cried out the scullion boye,
As loud as loud might be,
"O save her life, good master cook,
And make your pyes of me.

"For pity's sake do not destroye
My ladye with your knife,
You know she is her father's joye,
For Christ's sake save her life!"

"I will not save her life," he sayd,
Nor make my pyes of thee;
Yet if thou dost this deed betraye
Thy butcher I will bee."

Now when this lord he did come home
For to sit down and eat,
He called for his daughter deare
To come and carve his meat.

'Now, sit you downe," his lady sayd,
"O, sit you downe to meat ;
Into some nunnery she is gone,
Your daughter deare forget."

Then solemnlye he made a vowe
Before the companie
That he would neither eat nor drinke
Until he did her see.

"O. then," bespake the scullion boye,
With a loud voice so hye,
"If now you will your daughter see,
My lord, cut up that pye.

"Wherein her flesh is minced small,
And parched with the fire,
All caused by her stepmother,
Who did her death desire.

"O cursed bee the master cook,
O cursed may he bee !
I proffered him my heart's blood
From death to set her free."

Then all in blacke the lord did mourne,
And for his daughter's sake
He judged her cruell stepmother
To be burned at a stake.

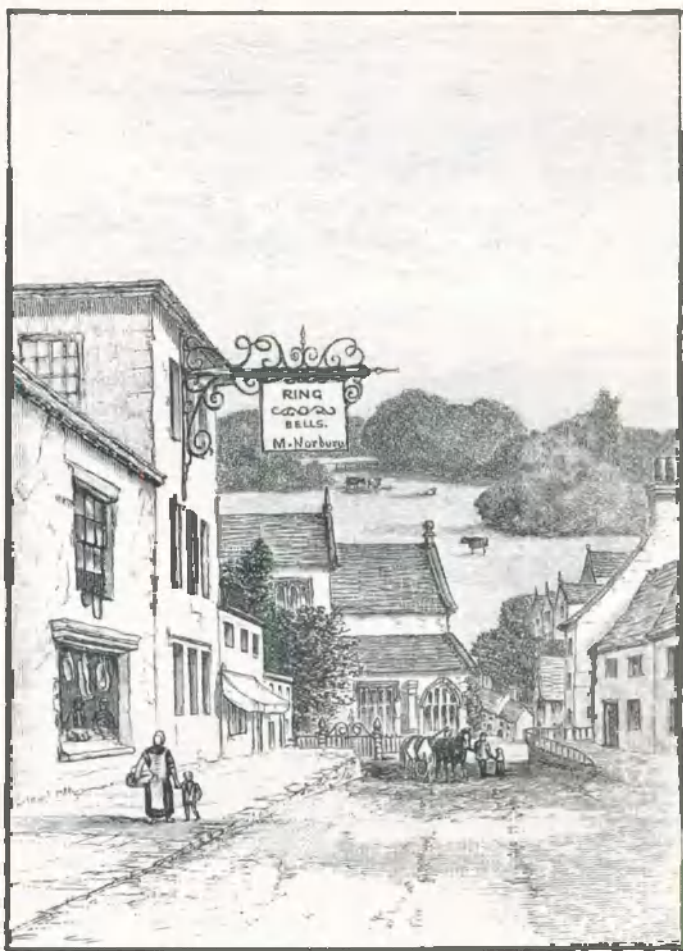
Likewise he judged the master cook
In boiling lead to stand,
And made the simple scullion boye
The heir to all his land.

There is hardly space left to do more than allude to the church, which dates back to the Norman period, but has more recent and interesting features, especially two singular windows that I do not remember seeing repeated in any county in England.

WILMSLOW.

WILMSLOW lies some little distance from Stockport, on the Manchester and Crewe line. It fortunately is a short distance from the station, so that it is not disfigured by sheds or greatly startled by the railway whistle. If we except the church, there is not much architectural interest, but it retains the character of a peaceful old country town, where the inhabitants are living in quiet and in plenty. Just before arriving at Wilmslow we pass Bollin Hall. It is a modern building. There was formerly an old one, which Ormerod describes as "an ancient brick gabled house" that in his time was converted into a large farmhouse, but unhappily it lay on the railway line between Manchester and Crewe, and was taken down, and a viaduct passes over where it stood. Norcliffe Hall lies somewhat further to the north, and was the residence of Mr. Robert Hyde Greg, a popular and liberal-minded Manchester merchant, who represented the city in Parliament in 1839. Styal is close by, and the road leads us on to Northenden and passes Peel Hall and Chamber Hall. The lanes are rusticity itself, and it would hardly be possible to find a more pleasant ramble for those whose time was limited for an excursion. The east end of Wilmslow Church is shown here, but at the other extremity there is rather a fine tower, which contains a peal of six old bells. The nave is divided from the chancel by five pointed arches supported on octagonal piers, which seem to be of a somewhat earlier date than the exterior of the building. The arms of the Trafford family appear in various parts of the church. The chancel roof, which is dated 1522, was given by "Dr. Henry Trafford," who was rector of Wilmslow and also of Bolton Percy, in Yorkshire. This Trafford was Chancellor of York from 1528 to 1537, the year of his death. Underneath the chancel of Wilmslow is an ancient crypt, which is supposed to have formed part of an earlier

church. On a rough slab of marble before the altar rails there are two brasses which are said to be the best in the county. These represent Sir Robert Booth and his wife Douce. At the feet of



WILMSLOW CHURCH. (East end).

Sir Robert is a greyhound, and the feet of his wife rest upon another of smaller size. Sir Robert is in plate armour, and at the corners of the tomb are four armorial bearings, three of which

belong to well-known old Cheshire families. The arms of Booth, Massey, Thornton, and Fitton were on the brass, but two are now defaced. There are monuments in the church to various families of Cheshire, some of whom remain to the present day. There is a monument to Samuel Greg. It was Mr. R. H. Greg who laid out the beautiful grounds of Norcliffe, before spoken of, and these in some respects are the best in this part of the country. Special care has been taken with the conifers, which are represented by nearly fifty species. In the Pownall Fee Chancel are two wide arches, and in them are altar-tombs on which are resting effigies of Humphrey Newton and his wife Ellen, who died in 1536. But the most interesting of all the monuments is one on the north side of the altar rails, on which is the recumbent figure of Dr. Henry 'Trafford, "sleeping in cold dull marble." This dates back to 1537, the year of his death. Under his head there is a clasped book, which also bear an inscription. This is, however, quite disfigured. On the south side of the churchyard there is chancel that is now called the Hawthorne Chapel. It was built by the Leghs, of Hawthorne Hall, which lies not far away. The Rev. Thomas Wright, who was rector of Wilmslow during the Civil Wars, was a staunch supporter of the Stuarts; indeed, the weapons of his warfare were even carnal, for at the age of eighty he fortified the rectory, and it was held against the forces of Cromwell, which were at the time commanded by Colonel Dukenfield, whose name so frequently appears in Cheshire history. Two female servants were killed during the siege, which was not of long duration, and this is hardly to be wondered at; but the rector, notwithstanding his advanced age, lived to see the end of the Civil War, and himself reinstated in his church of Wilmslow. The oldest account says that one person was killed. Wright died in 1661. There is near Wilmslow a lane called Hawthorne Lane, and in this lane is Hawthorne Hall. It lies not far from the road, and it contains, as a popular novelist says, "more gables than a lazy man would care to count on a hot day." It belonged to a younger branch of the family of Booth; from them it passed to the Lathoms and from these to the Leghs and Pages in succession; and now it is occupied as a school.

There are near here two very fine old halls, now converted into farmhouses. One is Handforth Hall, about two miles from Wilmslow, and reached by a pleasant road that runs almost in a parallel line with the railway. It is a very fine example of black-and-white architecture, perhaps among the best in the county. The south front contains two gables, a third having been destroyed, but they are models of the best style of oak and plaster work. There is a beautiful staircase of very characteristic Elizabethan work; the steps are broad, with an easy ascent, and great landings break the ascent at every turn. The balustrades and newels are simply one enrichment of Elizabethan carving. Chorlton Hall is externally even more picturesque, but it would hardly be possible to do any justice to it without a separate article.

Mr. Robert Langton, in the proceedings of the Cheshire Archæological Society, gives the following sad account of the modernising of Wilmslow Church, and the loss of its ancient character: "This church was altered—I cannot call it restored—in 1863. It must have had then certainly a venerable appearance—something old, wild, and quaint, you will say! It took some £7,000 to convert this old building into a spic and span bran new looking church. A very short description of the alterations must suffice. In the first place, a score or two of dead bodies were removed to make room for a transeptal chapel, with heating apparatus beneath. The plain oak timbered roofs of the aisles of the nave were panelled with deal at £1 a panel; a chancel arch was built where no chancel arch was ever seen before; the ancient seats of solid oak, the first benches ever placed in the nave of the church, and which had existed for a century or two under the seats, which were a more modern but still old set of pews, were removed; many of the monuments altogether disappeared, including some to the memory of the Trafford family; painted benefaction boards were removed from the walls and placed behind the organ boards, like "benefits forgot;" the ancient font was shifted into the churchyard, and replaced by a very poor new one; and lastly, when the church was re-opened, the old parishioners, mostly farmers, were put out into the cold, while a new set of people,

mostly from the large houses on Alderley Edge, were installed in the best places in the church." Formerly Wilmslow was a noted manufacturing town, and one Ralph Bower, who was a prosperous yeoman, erected a water mill at Hawthorne Cross, and this place is still called the silk mill ; and long after his death it was worked by Mr. Charles Barber, and he afterwards built a steam mill near the town pump of Wilmslow. His sons each in turn became spinners, and Wilmslow was soon noted for its cotton shops, and was, indeed, far in advance of many towns that have since greatly surpassed it in importance.

The greater part of the parish is divided into two districts, called Bollin-fee and Pownall-fee. The beautiful hall of Chorley, which still stands, and is almost a model of picturesque beauty, is now a farmhouse. It lies close by, and was once the seat of the Davenport family, who inherited it in the year 1400.

Wilmslow lies in the hundred and the ancient deanery of Macclesfield, and is seven miles from this place. It is also seven miles respectively from Altrincham, and from Knutsford and Stockport, and twelve miles from Manchester. There are six townships in it : Chorley, Dean Row, Hough, Fulshaw, Morley, and Styall. The village of Wilmslow is principally in the township of Hough, but part of it is in Dean Row, and part in Morley.

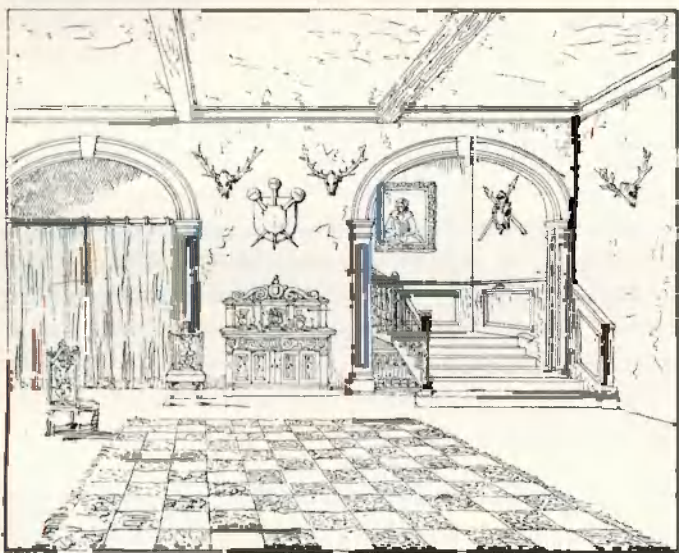


SHAW HALL, FLIXTON.

THERE is a very pleasant walk from Eccles to Urmston, through a rustic country, and the lane from Urmston to Flixton is quite as rural as any part of Warwickshire or Kent. On arriving at Barton we pass by the Aqueduct, which was so scouted and derided when it was first proposed, though the predictions of failure from even such an engineer as Smeaton never for a moment even weighed with the immortal genius of Brindley. It is some two hundred yards in length and twelve yards wide, the centre being sustained by a bridge of three semi-circular spans, of which the middle one is sixty-three feet. This aqueduct carries the canal over the Irwell, and even the ablest of engineers called it a castle in the air. The channel was puddled, a simple operation in which Brindley had the utmost confidence, and, however derided at the time, the puddling has lasted for above a century. Puddling will be resorted to, it is needless to say, in many parts of the Ship Canal. It consists of mixing marl, well tempered, with water, and laying it about three feet thick in courses.

Shaw Hall is noted as being the residence of Mr. Egerton, who was one of the defenders of Manchester in 1642. Lawrence Asshawe, who lived in Elizabeth's reign, left the Shaw Hall estates to his nephew, Leonard, and it is probable that he was the builder of the present mansion. Leonard's grand-daughter married Peter Egerton, who afterwards acquired the estates. He belonged to the great family of Egerton that has so conspicuously figured in Cheshire history, and in 1641 occupied the position of High Sheriff of Lancashire; but as he was opposed to the policy of Charles I. he was replaced in his office by Sir John Girlington, a stolid Royalist. The Government appointed Lord Strange as the

lord lieutenant of Lancashire, but the Parliamentarians, who were now in equal power, appointed Lord Wharton in his place, and he nominated Mr. Peter Egerton, of Shaghe, as a deputy-lieutenant, and from this time he became a staunch Parliamentarian. When it was finally known that the Stuart forces were coming on to Manchester, some time before they appeared on the banks of the Irwell, Mr. Egerton was trying to prevent the hardships of civil wars, and indeed already in Cornwall and Devon the gentry had



SHAW HALL, FLIXTON.

come to an arrangement for peace on both sides ; but Manchester refused any such terms, and the summonses of Lord Strange for a surrender and liberal terms were sternly rejected. That Colonel Egerton should have offered to live on terms with the adherents of the Stuarts is hardly to be wondered at, as in those days Manchester and all the district round were hardly surpassed in pleasant beauty. The woods of Trafford and Ordsal came down to the sparkling waters of the Irwell, and the parks of Medlock and Ancoats Halls

were bordered by the Medlock. The prosperity of Manchester even in those early days was great, and all around it there were stately residences, while the town itself was full of buildings of beauty, such as even Old Manchester in the Jubilee Exhibition—admirable as it was—can give but a faint idea of. But Egerton's proposals found no favour, and he at once made up his mind to join the patriot cause. Flixton bells were rung and alarm bells in private residences, posts were sent out, and a valuable contingent was soon on its road from Shaw Hall to Manchester. After the Royalists retired defeated, he served under Fairfax at the siege of Lathom House. The siege was raised owing to the arrival of Rupert in Lancashire, but afterwards he was made General Egerton by Cromwell, and advanced again to the reduction of Lathom with a force of 4,000 men, and the gallant defenders could do nothing but surrender before such odds.

The outline of Shaw Hall would seem not to have been much altered, although the windows have been entirely modernised, much to the disadvantage of the old pile. The following account of the hall is from Baines: "Shaw Hall, near the small village of Shawtown, is a venerable mansion of the age of James I., with gables and wooden parapets on the south-west and north sides. The roof has a profusion of chimneys, and a cupola in the centre. In one of the apartments is a painting covering the principal part of the ceiling, which represents the family of Darius kneeling before Alexander the Great. The picture, though two hundred years old, is in fine preservation, and the faces and figures denote the hand of a master. There are some smaller paintings and tapestry in other rooms, in one of which is represented a Persian chief at parley with Alexander, and afterwards submitting to the conqueror. There are still some stained-glass windows in the hall, with the arms of Egerton and Asshawe upon them. Formerly a moat surrounded the hall, as was common everywhere here, but this is now almost dry, and its site is planted over. The cupola has disappeared also. The name of Peter Egerton sometimes appears in old documents of an official character about the middle of the seventeenth century; thus we find it affixed to a charter which granted the

forfeited lands of the Earl of Derby to Humphrey Chetham, but he seems to have taken little part in any public matters, and died in 1656 at Shaw Hall. He was in the habit of taking flour of brimstone for some internal disorder, and when the servantmaid went to the storeroom to mix it with milk she accidentally put in some poisonous substance instead, and he died in a few hours. The eastern portion of Flixton is called Shaw or Shawtown; the villagers call it Shagh, and this is in accordance with the manner of spelling it in old deeds.

The proximity of Manchester made farming profitable, and the more so as after the Civil War the Egertons disposed of their estates among their tenants, the greater part of the sales taking place between 1660 and 1680. Leonard and his son Peter were the vendors; probably the impoverishment of Peter for the part he took in the war was the cause of this, but certain it is that after the death of Peter plot after plot was disposed of, and the place was divided among small landowners. It is a little singular that loom-weaving was practised here until almost the middle of the present century, and was quite a source of income to many of the inhabitants, and the importance attached to this industry may be gathered from the circumstance that in conveying property the value of the looms and loom rooms is indicated on the title deeds. There is a legend connected with the hall that has formed the subject of a ballad. Sir Ralph Valentine, the owner of Shaw Hall in the fifteenth century, set out with one hundred men to join Richmond at Bosworth, and said to his wife, who was overwhelmed with grief at his departure, that he would come back alive and well, she might be sure. But she had a dream that when he left Shaw Hall he parted from her, as she dreamt, just on the spot where he actually did, though his words were that he would come back "alive or dead," and this, she imagined, was prophetic of some evil. The legend then goes on to say that as she wandered along the Mersey, by "Flixton's sunny meadows," she saw through the trees a troop of horsemen coming to the river, and ran to the ford. Here she soon recognised the retainers that had left with Sir Ralph, and she saw him riding at their head; but soon had misgivings, and these

proved to be but too true, for he was a corpse in armour. He had led one of the charges against Richard's forces at Bosworth, and fell, but asked some of his company who were near to take him home as he was to his wife at Flixton, as that would fulfil his last promise. The Battle of Bosworth Field is the one of all the Wars of the Roses which has the greatest attractions for Englishmen, and the sudden change of Stanley on the battlefield, at the time when he could have out-flanked either army and gained the day, must always connect this battle with the county of Lancaster. Twelve cruel battles had been fought, and Bosworth was, perhaps, the least bloody, but it ended the war, and closed the life of a cruel king, and united the houses of York and Lancaster. The country people round there even yet speak in disparaging terms of Richard, and when I asked for King Richard's well, on the battlefield, a countryman showed me, but said, "We always call it 'King Dick's' here." There is the old legend of a subterranean passage leading from Shaw Hall to Flixton Church, but this is no more confirmed by evidence than other stories of a similar character. Still, there is no doubt that there were subterranean passages in many ancient buildings that connected them with an ecclesiastical establishment, but as a general rule they have perished. It would not be too much to say that South Lancashire sealed the fate of Richard III. and the House of York.



ALTRINCHAM AND BOWDON.

ALTRINCHAM lies about eight miles from Manchester, and is so easily reached either by road or rail that probably everyone is acquainted with it. As we enter the town we see a black-and-white building of imposing dimensions. It is a private bank, and happily it represents the idea of a genuine ancient front. Mr. George Truefitt, of London, was the architect. Some fifty years ago Altrincham was a much quainter old town than it is now. The market-place was especially picturesque. The dungeon stood here, and through its grated windows the prisoners might be seen, excepting some few who could afford to make things square with the authorities; these latter being allowed to betake themselves to an upper room called the Star Chamber. It was an apartment in a public-house, and the privileged prisoners might carouse the day away if their money lasted. Near the prison were planted the stocks; the square also contained a market cross, with steps, similar to those now seen in many old Cheshire towns. Here all vendors of cheese and butter were compelled to bring their goods before selling, and a shopkeeper was fined if he violated this custom and purchased the goods at his own door. Indeed he was not even permitted to buy at the cross until after two o'clock, when the townspeople were served. The cock-fights of Altrincham and the bull-baits at Bowdon are spoken of even yet. There is a very delightful walk from Altrincham along the Dunham Road. Before us we see the spire of St. Margaret's Church, which is lofty and well proportioned, and from the churchyard the view is charming even for the surroundings of Manchester. Oldfield Hall, a fine residence, lies in front of us, perfectly embedded in wood, and to the right is the old mansion called Riddings. Ashton-on-Mersey is clearly visible, and in the distance the Lancashire hills rise up. The church is, in fact, situated on the same ridge as

Oughtrington, though the view from it is scarcely as grand as that from the incomparable terraces of the latter. The neighbourhood of the church is laid out for villas and residences, and many are abodes of the wealthy merchants of Manchester that we pass on the road to Dunham Park.

We pass through a long avenue of oaks and elms to reach the



OLD MILL, DUNHAM.

mill which forms the illustration, and skirt the north side of the park until we arrive at Dunham Massey, when we enter the old park. A road which the public are at liberty to use passes by the front of the hall, and immediately after we reach the venerable water mill. This mill was turned by a stream that rose from the slopes which provide the "Fairy Well" and "Timperley" brooks

with water, but it is now nearly dried up, and only a rill passes by the wheel-house. It was here that the Bowdon tenantry were compelled to grind their corn, and the landlords of old were extremely jealous that their privileges in this respect should be preserved to them entire. In the "Moore Rental," which was edited for the Chetham Society by Thomas Heywood, there is an amusing example of this. Sir Edward Moore was the eldest son of Colonel Moore, who distinguished himself in the Civil Wars and was one of those who signed the death-warrant of Charles. Sir Edward was of a less worthy type, as his instructions to his son would show: "Old Hall Street. Make your leases, according to my new leases in Moore Street, without boons, otherwise they will not build. Be careful of the clause to grind at your mill; it is a great thing to your estate, and see your tenants observe it well. Take this notice from me—what you expect your tenants should do let them be bound to in their leases, otherwise riches and pride are so predominant over them in this town, together with a perfect antipathy they have against all gentlemen, much more your family, in regard they know your interest is always able to curb them." Speaking of one Robert Johnson, he calls him "an arrant knave, one that grinds *from* my mill very often; trust him not." And so through a long list of tenants, for whom he has no good word; but the worst thing seems to be grinding at any mill excepting his. His property was sold at about the beginning of last century to the Earl of Derby for £12,000, and it now forms a large portion of Liverpool. There does not seem to have been so much difficulty in preventing the tenantry of Dunham from grinding corn away.

As soon as we leave the mill we emerge from Dunham Park and enter the picturesque little village of Bollington, through which the river Bollin flows. Here it is formed into a long mill-dam for the use of another mill on a much larger scale; but this is now closed. A walk of another mile brings us into Watling Street, which leads from Manchester to various parts of England, and if we turn to the left we soon reach a road that takes us to Bowdon. The tower of the church shows up well among the trees, and it has quite the

appearance of an ancient structure. The old church was a building of picturesque beauty. There are many photographs of it, fortunately, and some years ago I sketched it with Mr. A. W. Hunt, whose pictures figured so well in the great Exhibition at Old Trafford, in 1887. This was one of the churches in connection with Birkenhead Priory which for a year or more we sketched together. All these were lithographed by Mr. Hunt excellently well, and published in a work called "Birkenhead Priory." Some copies may yet remain, but they are becoming scarce. It was a pity to pull the old Bowdon Church down. Some people said it was insecure; but all such complaints respecting old buildings are not founded on fact, for it cannot be too well known that any old church, however tottering it may appear, can be strengthened and restored without anyone knowing that it had been touched. The new church, however, is a very excellent building, and one of the few modern churches which, but for the new stone, one might take for a relic of the past. It is built in the style that prevailed about the year 1500.

From here to Altrincham the distance is about a mile. There are, indeed, two roads of about equal length, and each of them is studded with first-class houses standing in their own gardens. The route described covers about six miles, and it would well repay a holiday ramble in summer time. The road takes us past the front of Dunham Hall, and I fear a passer-by would say that the hall is something of a disappointment. It was built in 1730 in place of an older and, from a drawing which exists of it, a much more imposing building. Ormerod describes it as "a large quadrangular pile, with gables within and without. The gables within the courtyard were indented and scalloped, and large transom windows were introduced." He adds, "The front seems to have been finished at a late period, with pilasters and ornaments, in imitation of the Italian style of architecture." Large octagonal turrets were placed at the corners. A copy of an old print which shows what it then was is published in a very extensive work called "A History of Altrincham and Bowdon, with an Account of the Barony and House of Dunham." From this it is clear that the

front was Jacobean, and built at the time when the regulation trip to Italy, which was considered so essential to a young man of fortune, had made such havoc with our ancient mansions. The interior of the quadrangle, as clearly appears from the print, was black and white, and must, though on a somewhat larger scale, have resembled the courtyard of Adlington, a sketch of which recently appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*. Dunham Hall now is the residence of the contractor for the Ship Canal. On returning to Altrincham we pass Brooks's Bank, and arrive in the market square, which is only a wreck of its former self as far as any claim to picturesque appearance is concerned.





WARDLEY HALL.

WARDLEY HALL.

WARDLEY HALL is one of those fine old black-and-white residences which are so numerous around Manchester. Indeed, within a radius of fifteen miles there are examples that would illustrate all the varieties of that kind of architecture from the early date when Baguley Hall, one of our oldest specimens, was erected, to the time oak trees had become few and the timber had ceased to be used for external walling. Wardley Hall is situated five miles from Salford, near one of the old Roman roads that lead to Manchester. It is at the end of a woody clough that still retains its ancient character. In Baines's "Lancashire" the date is put down to the reign of Edward VI., but though doubtless there are reasons for this, it would generally, from its appearance, be regarded as some half a century later.

Wardley is quadrangular in form, and there is a roomy courtyard. In the apartment which is called the hall there is an oak roof, fluted, and a fine wainscot, and the stairs which lead from it are capacious. The history of the hall is, like that of many other baronial residences, wrapped in obscurity ; but it is said to stand on the site of a more antique building which was the ancient seat of the Worseleys, or Workesleys, as they were formerly called. The founder of the family, or at any rate the early owner of the soil, was one Elias or Elezias, who had the property granted him soon after the Conquest. He was a man of gigantic strength, and warmly espoused the cause of the Christian against the Saracen : but the weapons of his warfare were carnal, and it is recorded of him that "he fought many battles for the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and obtained many victories." It is said that he was one of the earliest Crusaders, and after performing many feats of valour against the Paynim he died and was buried at Rhodes. But perhaps Wardley Hall has derived more notoriety from the celebrated

skull that figures in its history than from any other source. Roger Downes was the former owner of Wardley Hall, and he was an ardent follower of the Second Charles. He knew the traditions of the House of Stuart, and was not slack in following the way of life that met with favour in their royal palaces. Returning one night late from an orgie, and being in a state of high inebriation, he told a companion that he would kill the first man he met, with his rapier. The victim turned out to be a poor tailor, and he lost no time in putting his vaunt into execution. He was, of course, brought up for trial before the courts of justice, but in consideration of his social position and the loyalty of Downes to the reigning house the affair was passed over by the judges and justices of the Carolean period, especially, of course, as his victim was in humble life. Downes, as it would seem, was afterwards concerned in some fray at Epsom Wells, and according to tradition his head was cut off quite cleanly by the bill of a watchman. The head was enclosed in a box and sent to Wardley Hall, where a sister of Downes was living, and she placed the relic in safety. But if the minute account of the death of Roger Downes preserved in the Hatton Correspondence is to be depended upon, the Wardley skull is not that of the former owner of the house. About a century since, Thomas Barrit, the veteran antiquary, of Manchester, visited the place, and he says that "this skull hath had a superstitious veneration paid to it by not permitting it to be removed from its situation, which is on the topmost step of a staircase. There is a tradition that if removed or ill-used some uncommon noise or disturbance must follow, to the terror of the whole house; yet I cannot persuade myself this is always the case. But some years ago I and three of my acquaintances went to view this surprising piece of household furniture, and found it as above mentioned, and bleached white with weather that beats on it from a four-square window in the hall, which the tenants never permit to be glazed or filled up, thus to oblige the skull, which, they say, is unruly and disturbed at the hole not being always open. However, one of us who was last in company with the skull removed it from its place into a dark part of the room, and there left it and returned home; but the night

but one following such a storm arose about the house of wind and lightning as tore down some trees and unthatched outhousing. We hearing of this, my father went over in a few days to see his mother, who lived near the hall, and was witness to the wreck the storm had made. Yet all this might have happened had the skull never been removed, but, withal, it keeps alive the credibility of the believers." According to Barrit, the victim of the Carolean practical joke was a "poor sailor."

There is another version of the relic which Barrit mentions, and he heard it from one Thomas Stockport. According to this there was a Romish priest in the time of William III. who was guilty of some seditious utterances and practices, and he was the chaplain at Wardley. He was executed, and his skull was preserved in the hall. But another version, which I gather from a paper that was read before the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, still remains to be named, and it would certainly form the best text of all for a chapter in the "Ingoldsby Legends." This story has been extant for more than a century, and has continued in a family for three generations—a long-lived family. According to this tale the lord of Wardley was summoned to London suddenly, and left his wife in a critical state of health.

He left her in charge of a priest who was held in high estimation in the family, and who promised her every care. But he may not have been skilled in medicine, and he recommended a hot bath for the lady. This brought on a chill, and to this she finally succumbed. When her husband returned from London, by the slow and painful marches that such a journey entailed, he hastened to see his wife, but was told that she was a victim to a hot bath the father confessor had ordered for her. The cleric was at once decreed by the simple judicature which prevailed to lose his head, and this is the relic that has for so long survived, the late Lord Ellesmere having ordered a new receptacle for its preservation.

The conversion of the creeds of Trafford and Downes, who set about converting each other from Catholicism to the Protestant creed, and *vice versa*, reminds one of an old tale which is similar to a curious incident that occurred on the Ganges—

when a missionary set about converting a Mahometan, and they talked for some hours. The missionary was, he always said, successful, but the native had left so great an impression on his mind that he ever after had a strong leaning towards Mahometanism. John Downes was married to a daughter of Sir Cecil Trafford, who was knighted in 1617, and Sir Cecil made an earnest effort to convert his son-in-law to Protestantism, but in the effort he became himself a Catholic.

Wardley, after the death of Roger Downes, was the inheritance of his sister, who married Richard Savage, the fourth Earl Rivers, and represented a Cheshire family that gave the name of Rock-savage to a place near Runcorn. Sir John Savage belonged to this family, and he it was, it is said, who placed the crown on Henry VII. after the battle of Bosworth Field, before the armies had actually left the scene. Shakspeare says of his deeds :

And then, as we have ta'en the sacrament,
We will unite the White Rose with the Red.

Earl Rivers, it will be remembered, was the reputed father of Richard Savage, the poet. I may here quote the words of Mr. Harland, who made a visit to the place for the purposes of a pamphlet now out of print: "The visitor next comes to Roe Green, which is an open common of about twenty or thirty acres in extent, and is surrounded by the comfortable dwellings of artisans and colliers employed on the Worsley estates, and for neatness and amplitude of furnishing the cottage homes of the Roe Green colliers will bear comparison with those of any of their class in any part of the world. The visitor will find his way off the Green by the north-west corner, and pass through Daub Hole into Old Clough Lane, a highway thoroughly and simply rural. About a quarter of a mile up he will find, in a low sweet spot by the rippling stream, a tremendous blue boulder stone called the "Giant's Stone." It appears to lie about half buried, and it is computed to be about twelve tons in weight." The history of this enormous stone is that in the days when there were giants one of them sat on Rivington Pike, and saw the sun glistening on a sheet

of water, and, becoming suddenly spiteful, he took up the boulder on which he was sitting and hurled it into Clough Pool, saying that he would splash the water out of Old Clough Pool, and it is dry now. Clough is a Lancashire word for a cleft or fissure in the rock. Cloughs are generally well wooded, and are happy hunting grounds for botanists. The word is pronounced "cluff" in Lancashire, but in the South it would probably follow the pronunciation of "though." And this was a notable feature during the Tichborne trial. The Claimant had read that the head master's name at Stonyhurst was Clough, and pronounced it "Clo," as it probably would have been so-called at Wapping, but to emphasise his statement he further said that his fellow pupils also alluded to him as "Old Clo."





HALL-T'-TH'-WOOD, BOLTON.

HALL-I'-TH'-WOOD, BOLTON.

THE "Hall-i'-th'-Wood," as a venerable mansion is called which lies a short way from Bolton in a situation of great beauty, has especial interest for Manchester, as it was here that Samuel Crompton lived when he invented the spinning mule. Leland, the antiquary, who visited Lancashire in 1538, says, "Bolton-upon-Moore market standith most by cottons; divers villages about Bolton do make cottons." The "cottons" here spoken of are, however, woollen fabrics, as cotton was not used in manufactures, for it had been known many centuries in other countries before it made its appearance in England. Crompton died almost in poverty, yet his invention raised the manufacture of cotton to a degree of excellence it had never known before, and which it could never have reached without it. His workshop was in the small room over the porch, which is shown in the illustration, and he commenced his labours at the early age of twenty-one. It took him five years to complete the machine, and in writing to a friend he says: "In regard of the mule, the date of its being first completed was in the year 1779. At the end of the following year I was under the necessity of destroying it or making it public, as it was not in my power to keep it and work it; and to destroy it was too painful a task, having been four and a half years at least wherein every moment of time and power of mind as well as expense which my other employment would permit were devoted to this one end—the having good yarn to weave; so that to destroy it I could not." Since Crompton's time of course the machinery his consummate genius invented has been improved in mechanism a hundred times, for he had no knowledge of the use of tools beyond what his own industry and limited leisure hours gave him.

The situation of "Hall-i'-th'-Wood" is extremely fine. It is on a bluff that overlooks a charming valley through which the river

runs. Of its history before Crompton's time we have little knowledge, but it is a commodious residence, and the black and white work is extremely good. The date would seem to be some time about the early part of Elizabeth's reign, though the stone part, where the mule was invented, and which forms the left part of the picture, is probably some years later. The well-known portrait of Crompton shows a refined, thoughtful face, and suggests a scholar of eminence rather than a weaver. One awfully dramatic incident occurred towards the close of his life. His services had been so eminently useful to the country that the leading manufacturers of the North joined in a memorial to the Government to make him some proper acknowledgment, and he proceeded to London in 1812, where the Prime Minister, Spencer Percival, interested himself in his behalf and introduced a short bill granting him £5,000. Before this passed into law, Crompton saw his friend assassinated in the House of Commons by Bellingham. The bill, however, was passed, and the £5,000 was voted free of all costs and charges. Unhappily, Crompton placed his sons in business, and greatly through their mismanagement this sum was lost. But a committee was soon formed to help him again. This committee included Mr. Jeremiah Garnett, of the *Manchester Guardian*, Mr. Kennedy, and other prominent citizens, and an annuity was purchased which made provision for his last years.

Though England is now, of course, the centre of the cotton manufacture, Asia was the original birthplace, and according to Herodotus, who wrote some four and a half centuries before the Christian era, it would seem that cotton was commonly worn in India during his time. And the records we have of the extraordinary perfection that the manufacture had acquired, and in some few spots even now retains, are hardly credible. Yet the cotton is in itself inferior to American grown, owing to the want of care in its cultivation. Mr. Orme, who has written some excellent articles on the Indian manufacture of cotton, says that it cannot but seem surprising that the most exquisite fabric of cotton can be woven by human hands when the machinery is so coarse and the raw material has been so grossly neglected, and the anomaly is

explained by the remarkably fine sense of touch that the effeminate people possess, by their patience and gentleness, and, perhaps, by the fact that for generations some families have held a hereditary continuance in fine cotton fabrics. Of this cotton it is said that thirty-five yards only weigh sometimes four ounces, and there are some few families in Bengal who spin by the hand with such consummate skill that the fabric is only like the slightest gossamer. Four months are required to weave a single piece, and this sells for four or five hundred rupees ; so fine is it that when it is laid out on the grass, and after it has had a single fall of dew, it becomes quite indiscernable to the eye. Sir Joseph Banks, in writing to the India house, speaks of the thread with which such muslin is made, and has, after great care in his calculations, shown that a single pound of it will extend 115 miles two furlongs and sixty yards. And much more than this may be found in an admirable work by Baines on the "History of Cotton Manufactures." When the mule was first invented it was known by the name of the Hall-in-the Wood wheel, and afterwards it was called the "muslin-wheel." Of course, as in other great inventions, the originator reaped little fruit. Arkwright and Strutt, indeed, accumulated immense fortunes, but they were business men. As for Crompton, he was so far from desiring to be a millionaire that he took out no patent, and only regretted that public curiosity did not allow him to "enjoy his little invention to himself in his garret," and so keep himself and family in peace and quietness.





WOBURN OLD HALL

WORSLEY OLD HALL.

WORSLEY village is situated about six miles from Manchester, and it may be approached by rail many times during the day. Though a modern place, it has all the outline of an ancient country town, and if anyone entered it for the first time on a misty evening when only outines were visible, that is the impression it would convey to him, if even he were experienced in the lore of our ancient remains. The Old Hall of Worsley is a great attraction on a Manchester holiday, and part of the grounds are always open to the public. These are kept in beautiful order, and contain many choice and rare exotics. To some the front of Worsley Old Hall might at first appear disappointing, and indeed it is very simple, and may want some of the enrichments and especially the quatrefoils of Bramhall, or Moreton, or Carden, but it has the reposeful air of a half-timbered building, and the characteristics which are now so commonly wanting in modern architecture of this type are to be found here. If we take the diagonal bracings, for example, that separate the ground from the first floor, we shall see that in the whole width of the building they do not vary in character, whereas in modern architecture it is much if at least two or three totally separate designs would not have found their way into the long frieze. The history and characteristics of this class of architecture will probably soon find an exponent, and if they cannot be reduced into orders, as Chambers has reduced the Classic styles, or dates, as Rickman has done with the Gothic styles, they would gain much by a discrimination of their features. For example, the oak and plaster architecture of Lancashire differs much from that of some of the Midland counties, where great oaks were not so abundant. The timbers are commonly lighter and more enriched in these; indeed, in Lancashire and Cheshire I have sometimes seen the beams and joists so heavy that if the oak were carefully used which appears in a single room it would go very far to timber a moderately sized house.

Worsley Hall is immortalised in history as the place where the young Duke of Bridgewater and Gilbert, his agent, and Brindley spent so many days in planning the Bridgewater Canal. The first intention was to descend by a series of locks from the level of the Worsley coal to the river Irwell, and so reach Manchester. There seems to have been some difference of opinion as to the manner in which this could best be performed, and Gilbert suggested the calling in of Brindley. Nearly all that part of England was beginning to acknowledge the unrivalled genius of the unlettered engineer, and he was known to Gilbert through his brother, who was the agent to Lord Gower, and who had employed him to make the survey of a canal to connect the Trent and the Mersey. Brindley took up his quarters at the Old Hall of Worsley with the Duke and Gilbert, and soon made a survey of the proposed undertaking. Here it was that he laid down the great principle which develops the one advantage of water carriage—when you have your canal on a level keep it so, and have as little to do with locks as possible, for a very little force will pull hundreds of tons along a level water, but when you come to raise them up and down half your advantage has gone and half your time. It was this that led to the construction of the Barton Aqueduct, a triumph of genius in its day, and one which enabled Telford in after years to build his great aqueducts of Chirk and the Dee. While living at Worsley the Duke cut down his expenses to £400 per annum, dismissing his establishment, and confining himself to the luxury of a jug of ale and a pipe. At his wits' end for money to pay the men, the Duke never lost heart, though how to raise the capital was often a matter of great anxiety. But failure the trio would not acknowledge. On one occasion word was brought to the Duke that a seam of intensely hard rock had been met with in his subterranean canal workings, and the schemes of abandoning or diverging the direction were discussed, but it was agreed that the original plan was the best. Often in old times have I heard the record of the event. After listening to all that could be said, he took out his gold snuff box and said, "Can you get this much out per day?" And on, of course, hearing an affirmative reply, he added, "Then go on as you

were doing." And so these three self-taught engineers indomitably persevered, though not dreaming of the great wealth it was soon to bring to its builder or the incalculable riches it would confer upon the kingdom. Not only was this done without encouragement from the outside, but with prophecies of failure from every quarter more dire than those which heralded the commencement of its great successor.

Not far off is Wardley Hall, also a black-and-white house, and similar in construction to Worsley, but on a smaller scale. It is a picturesque house, but a moat which I remember when I saw it first has now disappeared, and the house is converted into cottages. It became the property of the Tildesleys in their intermarriage with the Worsleys in the reign of Henry IV. It then became the residence of Mr. Richard Downes. In the neighbourhood are the remains of another old hall, Kempnall, which belonged to the Starkies, of Huntroyde. It was inhabited by the family in the time of Edward VI., when a case of supposed demoniacal possession occurred there. Soon after the finishing of the canal the Duke of Bridgewater built another hall at Worsley, a substantial brick mansion of noble dimensions, and at the beginning of the century it was inhabited by Mr. R. H. Bradshaw, the agent to the vast property. In place of the fine brick mansion spoken of, Lord Ellesmere has built an Elizabethan residence in the park, and the view from it is extremely grand. Here he entertained the Royal family and the Duke of Wellington in 1851, and at the Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857 he received the Royal family again. It cannot be said that the new hall is entirely a satisfactory piece of architecture. Indeed, with the Elizabethan or Jacobean style it is always difficult to avoid the appearance of a large county building. The beautiful old black-and-white hall is infinitely more like a mansion than its successor.

It is mentioned that one great attraction of Worsley was the abundance of game, and the covers on the upper lands are still well stocked. On Barton and Chat Mosses the rarer kinds of English marsh and aquatic birds found a home when they were beginning to become scarce in other parts of the country. The solitary or

great snipe was occasionally met with. This rare bird, of course, is migratory, but it is stated that it used to breed in England. Those singular birds the ruff and reeve used to be found here, and every known variety of duck that visits or is indigenous to England were to be met with in these marshes. A list I saw the other day much surprised me. Bitterns were, of course, quite common in such a congenial resort, and in the pools and flashes of the moss every kind of wild-duck, pintails, gargenys, golden eyes, and many other species were abundant.

Worsley Hall has been in succession the seat of several families of distinction in their county. The families of Massey, so well known in Cheshire, of Stanley and Brereton, occupied it before it came to the Egertons. In the hall are some very curious carvings of great interest. These came from the state-rooms of Hulme Hall, a building of great dignity, that has only been destroyed in recent years. Some of them would seem almost to belong to the satirical characteristics which we find levelled against the regular clergy, by their rivals the secular clergy. There are carvings that represent monks dressed as domestic buffoons, and others are symbolical of the habits that had begun, as was said, to prevail among the hierarchy. So far as can be judged by the costumes, the figures belong to the years that just preceded the Reformation. It is supposed, from the armorial bearings which some of them bear, that they were executed by the order of James Stanley, who was one of the wardens of Manchester College from 1506 to 1515, and they were intended for the church, but were relegated to the hall for security during the troublesome times which preceded the Reformation.

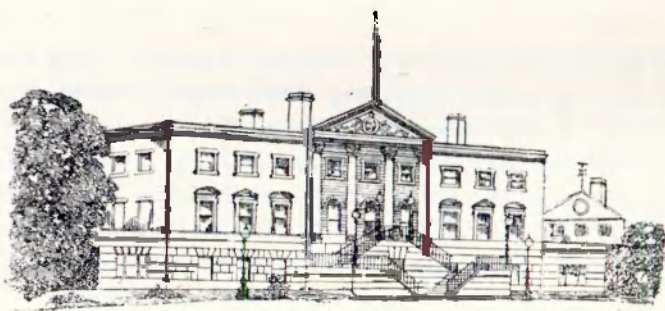


BANK HALL, WARRINGTON,

WARRINGTON must at one time have been among the most pleasant and picturesque of country towns. We may see by the few quaintly gabled houses what it must have been at the end of the last and, indeed, at the beginning of this century. There is one house especially, on the lower side of the market square, that is a wonderfully good example of the best kind of black-and-white. It greatly resembles the "Old Falcon," in Bridge Street, Chester. It has gables and a continuous window from end to end, and at one time the square was encircled with similar buildings. There were beautiful villages round Warrington, and some of them have not lost their beauty, except only where chemical vapours have attacked the upper parts of the trees. The Mersey here even last century abounded with salmon, and smelt, and sparring—a fish that is not often seen now in any part of England. There was a bridge over the Mersey here so far back as 1304, as we learn from a charter of 33 Edward I., now in the possession of Lord Lilford. This and one or two other ancient charters mention it. But in 1364 it had become so dilapidated that it was necessary to rebuild it, and this had to be done under the King's protection. There was always an outcry against the bridge on the part of the lord of the ford and the ferry. It interfered with his profits, and nobody in those days would dream of placing the public convenience in competition with manorial rights. But this bridge was doomed to disappear, for in the Lyme manuscript we find the following: "*Ubi pons stetit*," and this manuscript was written in 1465. So, shortly after the battle of Bosworth, Stanley built the bridge anew to do honour to Henry, who was connected with him by marriage. The street leading from the bridge of course soon assumed the name of Bridge Street, and a narrow passage that would hardly admit of a coach led to an opening in which there was a large lofty mansion.

This was the seat of the Pattens until the building of Bank Hall. It then became the residence of Miss Bover, a celebrated belle, and said to be as accomplished as she was beautiful. Still this was hardly the place for the head of a great house, and in 1750 Bank Hall was commenced. I have heard the house attributed to Vanbrugh, but Mr. Gibbs was the architect. It is a finer piece of work than might be expected from Vanbrugh. The front, which appears in the sketch, is especially imposing, and lighter than might be looked for from the architect of Blenheim. Gibbs was the architect to the Senate House in Cambridge, a very fine building for the day in which it was erected.

There is a notice of Bank Hall in the works of the Rev. Dr. R. Pococke, the great Eastern traveller, who afterwards became



BANK HALL, WARRINGTON.

Bishop of Ossory. He tells us that as he was passing through Warrington on the 14th July in 1750 he saw Thomas Patten, Esq., busy building this house, and he further adds that the foundations were laid in copper slag cast into moulds and set like masonry. This is quite unusual, but as far as permanence is concerned it means indestructibility. Thomas Patten left a daughter; she was married to Sir Richard Brooke, whose beautiful park has of late years been so cruelly blighted by the alkali vapours of St. Helens and Widnes. He also left a son, who was called after him, and became a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for the county, and served the costly office of High Sheriff for Lancashire in 1773

and for Cheshire in 1775. It may not generally be known how the name Wilson became connected with that of Patten. We have all heard of the good Bishop Wilson, who was born at Burton-on-the-Dee. He was the first Bishop of Sodor and Man, and was chaplain to the Earl of Derby, and afterwards tutor to his son, whom he took to the Continent. The Earl was then Sovereign of the Isle of Man, and he made Wilson the Bishop of Sodor and Man. The revenues of the See were only £300 a year, but there were considerable demesnes, which he managed so well that he kept open house for all. In 1698 Mary, daughter of Thomas Patten, married Bishop Wilson, and had a son, who married a cousin-german, Miss Patten, who inherited the Bank Hall estates. They had no issue, so he devised them to his mother's family on condition that the inheritor took the name and arms of Wilson. There is a noble square hall, which is open to the public. It is enriched with the delicate ornaments which one may see in Italian palaces, but it seems as if the staircase leading off on the left was hardly equal to the house. The entertaining-rooms are very fine and imposing, and Warrington Town Hall is really something for the inhabitants to be proud of. The three windows to the right are the morning room, and to the left the dining-room, and at the back of the building is the grand drawing-room, which extends the whole width, and is now the Council Chamber. This overlooks the spacious and well-kept grounds, which are freely open to the inhabitants of Warrington.





NEAR BURY.

BURY.

THE scenery to the north of Manchester differs materially from that on the Cheshire side. In the latter it is peaceful and quiet, with shady lanes and clear streams and meres, and many great residences. In Lancashire the scenery is much bolder, and the hills are more abrupt. The hill which figures here is called Holcombe Hill. Perhaps the most pleasant way to reach it is to take the tram to Walmersley, and then a walk of a mile or little more brings us to Ramsbottom, which is associated with the great Peel family. Here their mills stood, and one that is utilised as a bleachworks is a fine example of a Hanoverian building. This mill is said to be 122 years old. Before reaching Ramsbottom, however, we pass through a pleasant country soon after leaving the cars on the tramway. After we have passed the grounds of Walmersley House the grand view of Holcombe Hill suddenly opens out upon us, crowned as it is with the Peel Monument. A few factory chimneys at Ramsbottom rather tend to throw some obscurity over the prospect, but this is not always so, and as the town lies low in the valley the upper parts of the hills are visible, and only at times is the town itself dimmed. The high road leads through a country abounding in interest to Burnley, Colne, and on to Skipton, in Yorkshire. Indeed, it traverses the great county through some of its most picturesque parts. At Ramsbottom a shady lane leads to the left, past some fine mansions, and the flowers are apparently chosen from the most highly scented that grow in our gardens. A river crosses the road on its way to the Roach, and this is spanned by a picturesque bridge. There were pools and rapids and eddies, and all the outward appearance, if we look at it through half-closed eyes, of a stream where trout would delight to congregate. But, alas! we might wash in its waters and not be clean. The lane just referred to skirts the grounds of a fine hall, which is the residence

of the Grant family. They have built a tall tower on the hilltop of the eastern side of the valley, which is directly opposite the Peel Monument. An excellent account of Grant Brothers has been written by Mr. T. H. Hayhurst, and though only a pamphlet it is full of interest: "The principal manufactory at Ramsbottom, founded in 1785 by Mr. Peel, passed into the virtual possession of the Grants in the year 1806. It was by no means large, as mills go nowadays, but it was the largest in the district to the north of Bury at the time." "Ramsbottom was little more than a village, but it was noted throughout East Lancashire as a delightful pleasure resort. The mills and houses were lighted by candles after sunset; a considerable proportion of the weaving was accomplished by handlooms at the homes of the employes, who fetched the warps and weft from the mills, and took them back woven. A good hand loom weaver would earn £2 a week; a young apprentice, 8s." The Grants took over Sir Robert Peel's business, and soon with their great commercial aptitude they were able to discharge all their liabilities to the firm, but they further greatly extended the branches of the business, and were among the foremost of all English manufacturers. Dickens has unhappily burlesqued these great men as the "Cheeryble Brothers," to whom they have no more resemblance than the original picture by Hablot Brown has to their appearance when in an etching they are represented as coming into their office and looking at Nicholas Nickleby, apparently rather inebriated—a picture that has justly caused offence. But the admirable record that Mr. Hayhurst has written cannot be condensed into our limits. By the monument there is a farm where pleasure parties go, and a retreat called "Uncle Tom's Cabin," where they find accommodation. The view from this point is very fine, and those who can enjoy it have little need to go abroad for a grand panorama. Cob House at Ramsbottom was the seat of Captain Kay, who greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Lathom House under the Countess of Derby, and some members of the Kay family have left a name behind them in Bury. John Kay invented the "picking peg" or "fly shuttle," and his son Robert Kay invented the "drop box." By this a weaver can

without any difficulty change the colour of his threads and produce a fabric of different tones.

Though Bury has the appearance of a modern town, it dates back to high antiquity ; and though the fact is not generally known, there are many old fireplaces and ceilings to be found behind more modern walls. Attempts have been made to show that it was a Roman station, and Camden undertook the task of proving this very hopefully ; but it is now pretty certain that its history does not go further back than Saxon days. A castle stood here which was one of the twelve baronial castles of the county, but it has long since ceased to exist, though its buried ruins are often met with. Local tradition says that it was destroyed and dismantled by Cromwell, but an old copy of Leland says that when he visited it, just one hundred years before that time, it was in ruins. It stood in a locality called Castle Croft, close to the town, and on the banks of the old course of the Irwell, and was in some way connected with the royal manor of Tottenham, where prisoners were tried and executed on an eminence that still retains the name of Gallows Hill. The old Parish Church of Bury was taken down in 1773, as it was pronounced, according to the light of the builders of the period, to be insecure. What old monuments and records of the past perished with it we do not know.





EAST HALL, HIGH LEIGH.

EAST HALL, HIGH LEIGH.

THE nearest station to this hall, which is well seen from the road, is Heatley Heath, just past Altrincham; but the most pleasant road is to get off at Altrincham, on the Midland line; and if we go through Powdon and cross to Watling Street by the field road, we shall within a two-mile walk reach the bridge over the pleasant river Bollin, where trout and dace yet live. If we then turn to the right, we shall have a noble view of the Oughtrington Ridge. After passing Agden Brook and the farm called Brook Farm, we pass by Agden Park, and a short walk of some four or five minutes brings us into the rustic lane which leads to High Leigh. On the left we have the woods and park lands of High Leigh Hall, the seat of Colonel Cornwall Legh; and on the right we have West Leigh Hall, the seat of the Leighs, of West Leigh. They have lived side by side for some six hundred years, and they do not seem to be descended even from a common ancestor, but the families have occasionally been brought more closely into relationship by intermarriages, some of which date back to the time of Richard III. The singular confusion in such families, so widely apart in one sense and so close in another, has led to some curious lines, such as—

Two establishments separate, two halls, and two squires,
Two parsons, two chapels, two bells, and two quires.

East Hall lies at the west end of a finely wooded park. Its architecture is of the plain Italian style, that always looks so well when set off by shady trees. The deeds, which are of great historic value, had been almost neglected and laid aside in the recesses of the hall until they were arranged and catalogued by Mr. J. P. Earwaker. Among many others there is one of special interest. It is dated October 31, 1442, and in this the Archdeacon of Chester

commands all the chaplains or clergy within its archdeaconry to admonish three times, and peremptorily, "all those sons of iniquity who have cut and carried away trees and underwood of the Worshipful Thomas de Legh, have fished in his ponds and marlpits, and carried his timber from his houses at Knutsford, and have taken his household stuff, and done him other injuries." If these law-breakers did not within fourteen days make full restitution, they were to be excommunicated with "bell, book, and candle." In this form of excommunication candles were lit in a darkened chancel, and as each bell tolled a candle was extinguished, with cries and howls, till darkness reigned. The "letters of cursing," as they were called, seem to have had a due effect in the case of the Legh troubles, for one after another, from Warrington, and Knutsford, and Rawsthorne, penitents came forward and acknowledged some if not all of their delinquencies. It may be a mistake to suppose that the days of excommunication are quite over. Indeed, I was present myself when a bishop of the Church of England, who was a most worthy gentleman, electrified his congregation by reading what he termed the "greater excommunication" upon Dr. Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, for having written some works that reflected upon the arithmetical accuracy of some of the books of the Old Testament. There is about a mile from High Leigh a dwelling of exceeding beauty, one that is very well worth a pilgrimage from Manchester, or, indeed, from a very much longer distance than that, and this is Swinyard Hall, formerly called Swinehead Hall. It lies near the roadside, and is so enveloped in trees that it breaks quite suddenly on the view of the pedestrian. The front is well exposed to view, and it consists of two beautiful gables—one of which is covered with quatrefoils of black oak—and of a long front to the right of these, which is relieved by a verandah. It is surrounded by a moat that is both broad and clear, and quite a paradise for geese and Aylesbury ducks, of which numbers may be seen floating on the waters and quite seeming to enjoy the picturesque spot and the shade of the great trees. This beautiful farmhouse, as we at once see, has known more important days. It was the residence of a branch of the Legh family in the days of the Edwards, but

two hundred years ago it was purchased by Legh, of High Leigh, from his nephew, and with its estates still remains in the family. This hall would seem to have been built at the same time as West Leigh, which has been taken down, but of which a drawing is preserved in Ormerod. It would seem to have been a richly panelled black-and-white house of wonderful beauty. In the present century the old chapel also had to give way to the modern, dreary, classic structure where the West Leigh tenantry assemble for service. The old chapel was a highly picturesque building of wood, and the chapel bell was hung on a great sycamore tree which shaded the charming scene. The proprietor of East Leigh Hall, Colonel Legh, does not live at the home of his ancestry, which is now occupied by a gentleman whose family have been long and successfully known in the wine trade. The adjoining family of Leigh would seem, though less prominent as landowners, to have been in old times even more prominently before the public. Agnes de Leigh was a woman of mark. Her first husband was Richard de Lymm. They had one son, who assumed the name of Leigh, and became possessed of the West Leigh estates. Her second husband was William Venables, and their son also took the name of Leigh, and he acquired Booths and the estates pertaining to it. The grandchildren of Agnes Venables founded the great families of Adlington, Lyme, and Stoneleigh. A third time, after the demise of William Venables, did Agnes change her name, and this time she married Ralph de Hawarden, who also became an heir. The arms of the family embrace those of the husbands of Agnes de Leigh, and quarter the bearings of Lymm, Venables, and Hawarden. The most pleasant way to return is by Lymm. There are three or four roads of almost equal length that lead to the lake and the country town, which has by a succession of the very ugliest and most mean-looking modern buildings spoiled one of the most beautiful situations in all the kingdom; indeed, it would hardly have been possible to spoil the charming little town more completely even if all the builders had conspired together to that end.



SMITHELLS HALL.

SMITHELLS HALL.

THERE are in Bolton many curious examples of antiquity, though they are covered with modern fronts ; but in the street which leads to the town from the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Station, there are many ancient relics. In some of these there are panelled rooms with quaint plaster ceilings, which are passed by unknown. The population numbers now nearly 110,000, and they are busily occupied in cotton manufacturing and bleaching. The great works of the Ainsworth family are situated here, and for long the family have occupied Smithells Hall. Whitaker, in his history of Whalley, mentions two disused customs. Smithells was held under the superior lordship of Sharples, and every year the lord of the manor claimed a pair of gilt spurs, and he also claimed the inconvenient privilege of the unlimited use of the cellars of Smithells, with all the good cheer they contained. Smithells was sold by the Byron family to the Ainsworths for £21,000. The hall, which is here illustrated, is a very wonderful example of a considerable mansion built at various times in bygone days, and yet preserving a fairly uniform front. Its ancient gables and high chimneys and its long drawn-out façade almost remind one of the extended street of an ancient country town. The park and its surroundings are very delightful, and great praise is due to the family of the Ainsworths for allowing the old mansion to stand, and adapting it to present requirements, instead of doing as many would have done—pulled it down and built a modern Italian residence in its place. Smithells is most commonly known as the place where George Marsh was brought up before the commission in the days of Queen Mary for his heretical opinions. He is traditionally said to have stamped upon the floor where his judges committed him for heresy, and the foot mark is there in red blood. I was shown the spot in the days of the late Mr. Peter Ainsworth ; a cup of water was thrown on the

place, and a red mark did appear: the upper side, doubtless, of some stone tinged with iron. Marsh was the son of a Lancashire yeoman. He was educated at a grammar school, and went afterwards to Cambridge, where he became a proficient scholar. He was appointed to the curacy of All Hallows, Bread Street, London, and was greatly beloved by his congregation. But he preached the reformed religion, and for this he was apprehended by the Earl of Derby. From Smithells Hall Marsh was brought to trial at Chester, and finally, being condemned by the Chapter of Chester to death, he was taken to Boughton, a village about a mile from the city, where he was burned under circumstances of great cruelty. The wind seems to have carried away the smoke, which sometimes stifled the sufferings of the martyrs, and he was literally scorched to death. The place where he suffered at Boughton is railed round, and it has been used till recent days as a burial ground. It stands just at the junction of the two principal roads from the city, one of which leads to the recesses of Delamere Forest, and the other to the quaint towns of Nantwich and Whitchurch.

The situation of this ground, where at one time executions were carried out, must have been extremely beautiful. There is a slope of land to the Dee, which here curves round in a fine sweep, but which is now built over, and on the other side of the sweep were the gardens and grounds of St. John's Priory, a noble building that could boast of a tower that rivalled Wrexham, but which lately fell down suddenly.

There is a legend about Smithells that was long current in Lancashire, and of course credited. The legend runs that there was a guest at Smithells somewhere about the autumn of 1732, and he slept in the room called the Green Chamber, where George Marsh was tried before Sir Roger Barton. He had retired early, and about 10 o'clock, just as he was about to lie down, he was startled by a strange apparition—standing before him there was what appeared to be a clergyman, with a Church Service in his hand. He was dressed in a white gown, and wore the usual bands. The minister appeared still in the room, and approached the door beckoning the visitor to follow, and vanished as though going to

the chapel. Again and again the story was repeated, until the owner of the estate ordered the deserted chapel to be re-edified, and service held there every Sunday as in former days. The stone where it is said George Marsh struck his foot and left the impression behind him, is the subject of another legend. Some young gentlemen from the hall took away this as a kind of practical joke, but on retiring to rest the same night some terrible noises were heard through the house which kept the inmates from their sleep, and on the following morning an inquiry was held as to the causes of these disturbances. The nearest constables were called in, and after a long investigation the delinquents confessed, and admitted the place where they laid the stone; this was searched out, and the treasure restored to its resting place, when all the disturbances ceased. According to Roby, there is a tradition that King Egbert founded Smithells, and no doubt the vaults are of great antiquity, and were used as burial places, for many remains have been found when digging for foundations for more recent structures. The situation, Mr. Roby says, is very secluded, and quite favours the general opinion that this was the retreat of the famous pirate, Sir Andrew Barton, and, as Mr. Roby remarks, it is strange that so little is known of this great and very brave man, whose conduct so nearly led to a war between England and Scotland.





TRAFFORD HALL.

TRAFFORD PARK.

OPPOSITE to the principal gateway of the Exhibition of 1887 was the entrance lodge to Trafford Park, so that Manchester could in that year fairly boast of two extremes in a small compass — the entrance to the finest collection of modern pictures that has ever been brought together, and the entrance lodge to the residence of probably the oldest family in England. Some of the Italian houses may, of course, trace their descent to more remote periods, but probably none of them, not the Orsinis themselves, can boast, as Sir Humphrey de Trafford can, of an unbroken line of male heritage that has now lasted for nearly a thousand years. Many families can date back to the Conquest in every county, but in all the kingdom those which are antecedent to that date may be counted by units. There seems to be almost an impression that at the Conquest the people emerged from darkness into light, and that a new era began. A new era did indeed begin, but it was one of retrogression, as the pages of Domesday Book so sadly show, and the family of the De Traffords are, as we well see, a memorable monument of this. William the Conqueror came over to England with a great following of free-lances, and overran the whole country, which when he landed was in a state of prosperity. It was agricultural, and had settled down after all the troubles with the Romans, and the Picts, and the Scots, and the Danes, to a quiet pastoral life. Swords and spears were beaten into ploughshares and pruning-hooks, and the English Channel kept invaders away. The northern enemies had long been at peace, and Canute, the Danish king, was much more English than anything else. But Domesday Book must speak for itself. The country could boast of such kings as the just and lofty Canute, and the amiable “Confessor,” when William with his piratical hordes overran it. Domesday Book contains an exact account of every homestead and every

head of cattle in the country, with the limits of the farms, and even the poultry. There is, perhaps, no survey of any country that is so exact. Unhappily, however, the end and the object of it all was to make grants to his Norman followers, and they simply divided the lands among them, ignoring almost the existence of a Saxon ownership. The Saxon landlords, of course, disappeared, or else were converted into serfs or villeins, and the Normans took possession of their inheritance. Now, as has been noticed in the last paper, it is evident from a legend which rests on authority, that the Traffords were Saxon landlords at the Conquest, for Trafford and his friends defended a ford of the Bollin against some Norman marauders, and it is almost certain that among these was Hamon de Massie, who founded the family of Massie, of Dunham-Massie, and who, a few years before the death of William, obtained the King's peace and protection for the Traffords. The friendship between the houses seems not to have ended with Hamon de Massie, for we read that at the beginning of the thirteenth century, or at any rate sometime during the Wars of the Barons, Hamon and his daughter, Margery, conveyed lands to Richard de Trafford, to be held under William de Ferrers, Earl of Derby, and Trafford finally divided his extensive possessions between his two sons. To Geoffrey he left Fox-denton and Catherton, which afterwards came to the Radcliffes; and to his son, Henry de Trafford, he left Trafford, Stretford, and his lands near Manchester. From him it is that the present family is descended. In looking over the family history it does not appear that the Traffords ever took any very active part in public matters, either in war or politics. Henry Trafford, D.D., was rector of Wilmslow, in Cheshire, and Bolton Percy, in Yorkshire, and he filled what was the high and very lucrative position of Chancellor of York, at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and for twenty-seven years after that period. Then we find that Sir Edmond Trafford was with Henry VIII. at the siege of Bolyn. His son afterwards became brother-in-law to the King, at least as the relationship was then considered, by marrying Mary, the third daughter of Lord Edmond Howard, and sister to Queen Catherine Howard. Lord Edmond was a brave com-

mander, and rendered essential service at Flodden Field; but he was overwhelmed with poverty and debt, and sought foreign service, leaving, unhappily for her, the future Queen Catherine to the charge of her grandmother, the Duchess of Norfolk, who not only neglected her, but left her in the care of those who did not teach her well. Sir Edmond Trafford was born on June 3rd, 1526, so that he must have married Mary Howard some years after the fifth wife of the Defender of the Faith had ended her short but erring career. By her he had no family, but after her demise he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Ralph Leicester, of Toft, and in 1590 he left two daughters and a son, Sir Edmond Trafford, of Trafford. This gentleman was knighted at York, and he would seem to have mixed himself up more prominently with county matters than the others, as he was three times High Sheriff of Lancashire.

Trafford Park is situated about two miles from the old boundaries of the city, but so far have the city limits extended that they may be said almost to reach the park gates, or at any rate there is no cessation of houses until the lodges are reached. These are in plain Doric architecture, and well proportioned, but they are always now kept closely guarded by lock and key, to secure some quiet for the owner, on account of their proximity to Manchester. The hall is situated on a pleasant eminence, about two miles from the principal entrance gates. Soon after passing this we cross a bridge that spans the Irwell canal. Though the canal runs through the park, it is so well separated from the grounds that the boatmen as they pass through would hardly suppose they were in the middle of a great residential estate. The home farm, which is a pleasant house covered with ivy, lies along the road, and the poultry and water-fowl are in great variety. Further along is the park lake, which is hardly more than a large pool, and nothing at all compared with such sheets of water as Tatton or Rostherne. But it is quiet and undisturbed, and I could not fail to notice how the instinct of wild fowl will show itself. There was by a small island a flock of teal ducks and another of pochards, or dun-birds—a duck that is almost (some say quite) identical with the canvas-back of America. But

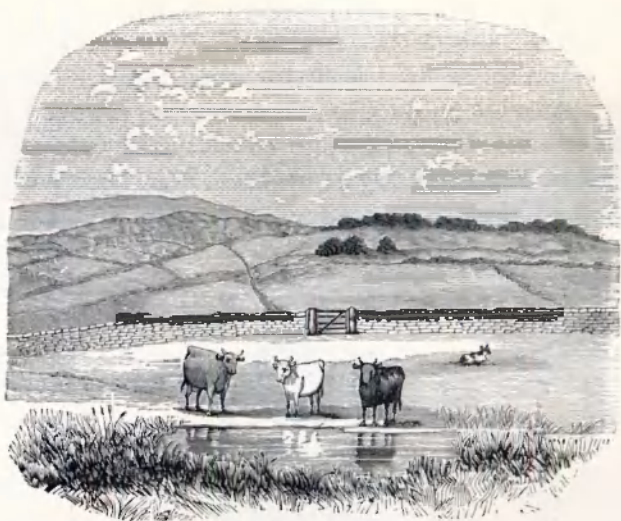
feeding on the great celery beds of Chesapeake Bay has done much to alter the latter, and those on Trafford lake were really wild, and evidently felt uncomfortable so near a great industrial centre. They were a considerable way from the road to the hall, but as soon as I stopped to watch them they showed signs of being very uneasy, and began cackling and diving. They soon rose, and flew to the furthest end of the pool. On private lakes in the country, which are far removed from the noise of a town, the wild ducks, if not disturbed, become almost domesticated. Directly after passing the lake the hall opens out. It is a fine building in the Italian style, and would seem to belong to the early part of the Hanoverian period. The deer in the park seem to differ from the ducks in their habits, as they are exceptionally tame—more so than those at Eaton. They come up almost to the gravel drive that joins the hall, and are only kept back by the iron railing. The house itself is really an imposing building, and an admirable example of the late classic style that at one time played such sad havoc with our old black-and-white and brick houses. It is built of a pleasantly-coloured sandstone, inclining to buff, and when, on leaving, I looked back, the effect on an October day was very fine. In the background was the dark grey atmosphere of a great city, over which a heavy cloud was hanging. A break in the sky let in one ray of sunshine, which just lit up the house and no more, but that for a short time intensely. The house is nine windows wide, and it has a pediment supported by four three-quarter diameter Corinthian columns of the Jupiter Stator type; the angles are finished with quoins. It is not a difficult style of house to design, and it generally looks well. Of the exact age and the architect who designed it I find no record, but it looks like the early work of Adams, who belonged to the school of Vanbrugh, and whose details are extremely careful and painstaking. The entrance hall, which is a really noble apartment, has a fine portrait of the late Sir Humphrey de Trafford and his wife, a sister of the seventeenth Earl of Shrewsbury. The dining-room is hung with pictures of the early Dutch and Italian Schools; the ceiling, which is ornamented with what might be called the later Carolean period, is beautiful

coloured and gilded. But the most delightful of the rooms are those with the circular bow window on the left of the picture. These command so pleasant a view of trees and distant high lands, that it seems incredible that we are standing almost in the confines of Manchester. The Ship Canal will soon be cut through the park, and just in front of the bow window. The park did not seem to be lacking in pheasants and partridges. It would appear that the black waters of the Irwell, which environ the northern limit, are a terror even to poachers; at least so I was told. It would be tedious to describe the apartments of this charming residence in more minute detail, but it has hardly any superior for elegance and comfort. The bedrooms, especially, which number some forty, are very pleasant, and the chapel, which is at the end of a corridor; has its light subdued by stained glass. The trees in the park do not last in their foliage so long as those of Eaton, Tatton, or other country parks, for on the 17th of October they were almost bare. But they are not killed, as are those round St. Helens and Widnes, by the deadly alkali vapours.



THE RIVER IRWELL.

THE Irwell takes its rise from the watershed of the high lands that range up between Burnley and Bacup, and extend eastwards until they are called the Yorkshire moors and the Yorkshire hills. As in the case of the hilly lands in the neighbouring county, there are valleys and streams of great beauty; but it must be admitted



SOURCE OF IRWELL.

that Yorkshire scenes have an immense advantage over ours in the purity of their crystal waters. Mr. Grindon, in his book, draws attention to a curious aquatic moss called *Fontinalis antipyretica*, which he says may be found clinging to the stones that cross the river. It is more commonly found, perhaps, now on the old trunks of trees that we see on the banks of sluggish streams, but it is hardly so common as it at one time was. Linnæus so called it from the uses that the Swedish peasantry put it to. The country

people there used to fill up the spaces between the walls of their houses and the chimneys to complete the building, and make it weather proof. The same habit prevails in the backwoods of Canada, where squared logs are used by new settlers, and the apertures between them are filled with a similar moss, as are also



LANE BY UPPER IRWELL.

the window frames, and admirably it suits the purpose, as these log huts are much warmer in the terrible winter than the houses of the neighbouring town. There is no rail from Bacup to Burnley, and those who would travel from one to the other must either drive or walk. But the distance is not great, and the scenery is very beautiful. For some way the Irwell runs in a limpid stream

by the roadside, and the broad highway is pleasantly shaded by elms and oaks. The river leaves the road about a mile or a little more from Bacup, and we only catch occasional glimpses of it as it descends the valley past "Irwell Springs." After leaving Bacup the trees, which have been such a delight to the traveller, gradually disappear, and we enter upon a hilly country of gentle elevation that is richly cultivated and contains many noble herds of cattle.

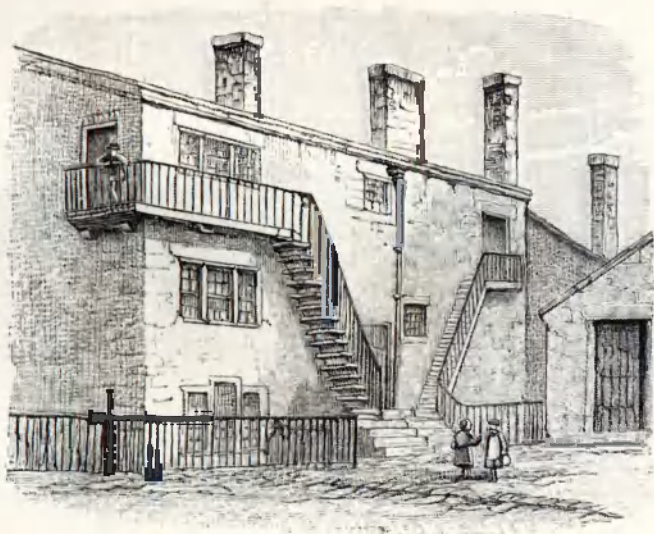


BACUP.

When I passed it on the 9th of August, 1888, the hay crop, which was unusually late, was being gathered in, and it was not only in excellent condition, but it was of the largest and best that has been collected for some years, and all the lanes were sweet with its perfume. The road to Burnley turns to the right at Dirply, where there is a small old-fashioned country inn, and near this is Thieveley Pike. The name Dirply is said to be derived from Deer-play, and

the spot where the deer disported themselves. One thing at any rate is true—the natives call it “Deer-play” even yet. Thieveley Pike is a charming place for a ramble in summer weather. It rises to a height of 1,480 feet, and commands views of the noble grouse moors of Blackstone Edge; and if we look over the Lancaster side we see swelling low ranges and high cultivation. One ridge rises in great regularity beyond, and this sometimes gives it very much the appearance of prairie land.

The name of Bācup is rather doubtfully derived, according to



OLD HOUSES, BACUP.

Baines, from bay (red) and cop (a hill), on account of the great herds of red deer that frequented it in old times. Bacup is not an ancient town, though it is irregularly built and has somewhat of an old-fashioned appearance. The houses approached by flights of steps illustrated here are perhaps the oldest in the town, which now can number probably 20,000 inhabitants. On the roadside that leads to Burnley there is a long earthwork known as the Dykes. It is a third of a mile in length, and it must have been impregnable at the time it was built to shelter a defending army against the

invader, though it would be easily captured from the Yorkshire side—a defect which Mr. Wilkinson seems to think must have caused it to be abandoned in old times and left in an unfinished state. Here, the same authority tells us, a great battle was fought between the troop of Athelstane and the united forces of the Danes, Britons, and Picts. Of course the Saxons were victorious as usual, and it would solve not a few problems in antiquarian researches if we always bore in mind that though Britain was the most Romanised



IRWELL VALLEY.

of all Roman colonies, its exotic civilisation was more completely annihilated than that of any other colony by invading hordes, of which the Saxons were the most ruthless.

Burnley was, according to Whitaker, a Roman station, or rather settlement, but it was, as he points out, never a military one. The road passes by the noble park of the Towneley family, the grounds almost reaching the ancient town. It must for long have been a grain-growing district, as Whitaker mentions a very curious circumstance in the history of Dr. Thomas Whitaker, the Cambridge

scholar. He married one Elizabeth Nowell, and, according to the custom of the times, she had a settlement at her marriage. This consisted of forty-six marks, and a settlement of forty-six shillings to be paid to her annually. For the security of this sum all the manors and leases of Richard Whitaker were held as security, and even after that the amounts were generally partly paid in oatmeal. Burnley is reached in about seven miles from Bacup. There is an ancient church here, which dates back to the time of Edward III., and contains among other chapels one to the Towneley family, in which there are a number of monuments. In this neighbourhood there are many interesting houses, none more so, perhaps, than the Holme, which is the seat of the Whitaker family, and has been since the early part of the fifteenth century. The house is a fine specimen of wood and plaster, and it has preserved much of its original character. One member of the family was the Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Regius Professor of Divinity at the University. He was rather bigoted, it is said, but Bishop Hall leaves this record of him—that he was “the honour of our schools and the angel of our Church, than whom the present age saw nothing more memorable.” The church at Holme contains two stained-glass windows, one to him and one to his much better known successor, Dr. Whitaker, the lively historian of Whalley. The historian gives an account of his ancestor in his biological sketches of Lancashire, and quite admits that he was a somewhat bigoted divine, and got at times into sad trouble with those of his pupils who were suspected of a leaning towards Ritualism. The second edition of his work on this part of England appeared seventy years ago, and in his amusing preface he says it was his first, last, best book. Spenser, the poet, lived near him for some time, and here it was that he wrote the “Shephearde's Calendar.” This he dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, and it was the means of his procuring the patronage of the Earl of Leicester. The house where Spenser lived was situated close to Hurst Wood, an old residence belonging to the Towneley family.

PART II.

AFTER the river passes Bacup the scenery increases greatly in beauty. We soon reach Rossendale and the parochial chapelry of Newchurch. It may be interesting to know that a lease of this was granted to James de Greenhalgh, which was confirmed at Lancaster by Humphrey, Duke of Gloster, the Regent in Henry VI.'s reign. The Forest of Rossendale is, of course, no more, but it has many legends which remain. It was under the charge of forest bailiffs, who were called Greaves, and the name still remains, though the ancient duties are abolished. Three times the church has been pulled down and rebuilt, and there is a very good grammar school here that has been endowed with estates at Heald, bequeathed by John Kershaw. Kershaw lived at Wolfenden Fold, which is close by. Doubtless the red deer which were so abundant in this part of England at one time had some connection with the name of Wolfenden, for the place was a great resort of wolves. There is an interesting document extant which shows the condition of Rossendale Forest in Tudor times. In the fourth year of Edward VI. the inhabitants sent a petition to the King stating that "forty-four years ago, or thereabouts, the forest of Rossendale was only or chiefly occupied with keepers of the deer but upon representation to King Henry VII., and afterwards to Henry VIII., that if the deer were taken away the forest was likely to come to some good purpose, the said forest was deforested, and granted, demised, and let forth in divers sorts, some for a term of years, some by copy of court roll, so that whereas before that time was nothing else but deer and other savage and wild beasts, there is by industry of the inhabitants grown to be very fertile ground, well replenished with people; and for as much as the Castle Church of Clitheroe, being their parish church, is distant twelve miles from the said forest, and the wais very foul, painful, and perilous, and the country in the winter season is so extremely and vehemently cold," &c. The "savage" beasts were of course wolves, and wild cattle, similar to those we see at Lyme and Chillingham, and wild

boars, of which animals a few survivals are still left in the New Forest. These wild animals have left their record behind them in such names as Boarsgrave, Wolfenden, Wolfstone, Roecliffe, Hart-hill, Hogshead, Cowhope, and various others.

The petition I have referred to goes on to say that if the place were entirely deforested and the land let out in leases the prosperity of the place would be greatly increased, and the singular fact is mentioned that when the deforesting begun, some thirty-eight years before, there were only eighty inhabitants ; but in that comparatively short time the number had increased to 1,000, "young and old." The parochial chapelry of Newchurch in Rossendale contains a large church, built in 1825 on an old foundation ; it replaced one built in 1560-1, which had replaced a still older one. The living is now a rectory, valued at £580 a year, and is the gift of the Vicar of Whalley. The churchyard contains a gravestone to John Kershaw, of Wolfenden Booth, and his wife Anne. It was he who founded the grammar school at Newchurch ; on it are the words :

They lived long beloved
and dy'd bewailed
and two estates
upon one school entailed.

Haslingden, or the town of hazels, lies on the right of the vale of the Irwell. There are many traces of the origin of its name in the surrounding country. Hazel boughs and nuts are found in great abundance in the peat of the adjoining moor. The high lands here are very picturesque, and the views from them cover great reaches of landscape. A long plain stretches on to Manchester, and through this the Irwell and the Roche, on which Rochdale is situated, find their way with many windings to the Mersey. It must have been at one time a scene of wonderful beauty. This plain ends in the Derbyshire hills. In the view to the west we look over the district comprised in Amounderness Hundred. The Irish Sea is easily seen, and on a clear day the vessels which navigate it are distinctly visible. The old church of Haslingden was built in the middle of the sixteenth century, but it was pulled

down in 1780, to be replaced by a successor of unsightly design. In 1857 further alterations were made, and the remains of a gilded skull and crossbones were found; the gilding was deep and rich. They are supposed to be relics of St. James, the patron saint of the church, but they were lost some little time since.

As we join the Irwell again we find the bends and turns of the



MILL POOL, IRWELL VALLEY.

river exceedingly beautiful, and there are many pools in the stream of charming outline; but the demoralisation of the river has been in progress for some time since it left its limpid haunts by Bacup, and those who have been accustomed to the clear streams of Wales, or Derbyshire, or Scotland, will be surprised at the turgid coffee colour of its waters, staining and discolouring even the boulders

that lie in its bed. Still the vegetation and the trees along its bank do not seem to suffer ; so that if the waters are ever purified, no expense as regards this will be incurred in restoring the scenes to their former rustic beauty. It would not be possible with much larger scope than can be given here to do even scanty justice to the beautiful scenes on the river, but from the rail there are many charming nooks and bends and rustic bridges that can be seen, especially in the neighbourhood of Cloughfold, Ewood, and Ramsbottom. One of the illustrations here given shows a beautiful milldam that extends for a considerable distance along Irwell Vale, and there is



MILL DAM AND FALLS OF IRWELL.

a pleasant rustic footpath all along its side. At a bend in the valley there is a waterfall over a dam, and this brings the water to a head to make this long millpool. This waterfall comes from a small lake of deep water on the Irwell, which is also shown ; and as we proceed along the narrow pathway we are delighted with the thick foliage that overhangs its still, but polluted course. Another view of the millpool is given lower down the valley, and finally it falls into the Irwell, not very far from Summerseat. A view of Summerseat Hall is shown here. It is delightfully shaded with woods, and not far off are good game covers. Nearly all along

this part of the Irwell valley we see the two monuments which crown the hilltops on each side of the valley—one erected to Peel, and the other to Grant, one of the Cheeryble brothers. Bury is soon reached, and there is no more interesting building of modern date than the plain, substantial house where Peel is often supposed to have been born. At the time of its construction it must have been very beautifully situated. Peel was actually born in a small cottage near the hall, as the latter was undergoing redecoration and painting, but his early days were spent here. The hall is now



SUMMERSEAT.

empty, and the neighbourhood is not very inviting, though from its position among hills and streams it must have been in the last century a very delightful abode. The hills were free from factory chimneys, and the rivers abounded with trout and grayling. Cotton printing was in its infancy when Peel fixed upon this as his future centre for operations, and his success was beyond all possible belief. There were several partners in the firm, and these rode over to breakfast every Monday morning, at all times of

the years, to the hall. One of them had a little daughter, Ellen Yates, and Smiles, in the work on "Self-Help," says that Peel used to take the child on his knee, and say, "Nellie, my bonnie dear, wilt be my wife?" and the child naturally said, "Yes," to which Peel added, "Then I'll wait for thee;" and as she grew in beauty and towards womanhood words that were said at first in joke became earnest, and Nellie Yates was the mother of the greatest of statesman. Perhaps the law that forbade the emigration of artisans

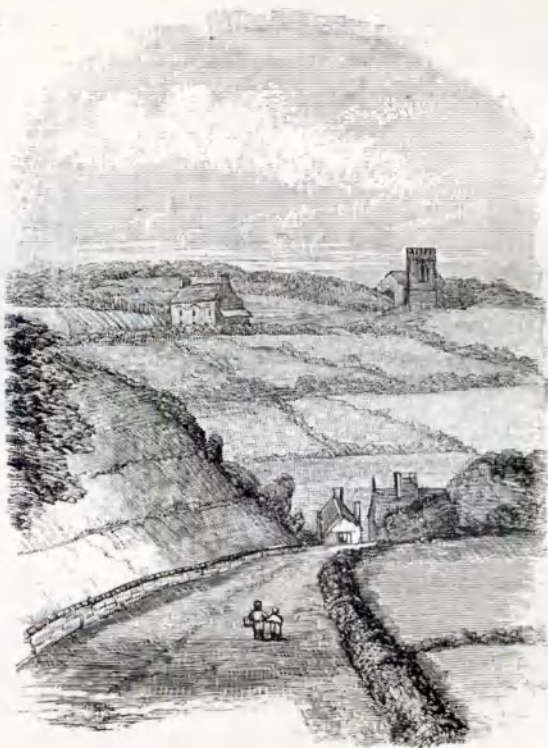


PEEL'S HOUSE, BURY.

employed in the printing trades was one stimulus to the concern, but cotton spinning was soon added to the industry of printing, and the firm, in which there were now six partners, established mills at Ramsbottom and Summerseat, and other places. So great was their prosperity, that within thirty years the fortune that Peel, now a baronet, had made amounted to considerably over a million sterling. Behind the building shown here there are the remains of an ancient hall—the old "Chamber-hall" in fact.

PART III.

RADCLIFFE CHURCH was dismissed rather slightly in the last article, but there is an excellent account of it in the second issue of Baines's "*Lancashire*," edited by the late Mr. John Harland, who was



STONECLOUGH.

probably one of the most painstaking and, as I have often thought, the most absolutely reliable of our northern antiquaries. From him I copy a few records. The reading-desk, he says, is the gift of Charles Beswicke, M.A., the rector of the parish, and the date is 1665; and there is the really apt inscription: "All my words that

I shall speak unto thee receive into thine heart and hear with thine ears.—Ezekiel, iii. chap., 10 verse.” There is a window on the north, as he says, with the head of a king wearing his diadem, and the features are like those of Edward III., but not in the least like those of Henry VI. But the most interesting of all the relics was the monumental slab to James de Radcliffe and his wife. This was sketched and described by Barrett, of Manchester, a self-taught antiquary. The sketch is produced in Harland’s edition of Baines. The portraiture of the couple seems very comely, as the country people must have thought, for the monument has been destroyed piecemeal by their carrying away nearly the whole of it in chippings broken off as relics. The parish registers commence in 1559; in that year there were ten baptisms, nine marriages, and twenty-seven burials. We find here, as in other parishes of the Salford hundred, that the banns of marriage were sometimes published by Edward Hopwood, Esq., a magistrate. Radcliffe Tower was leased by the Earl of Wilton to the firm of Bealey and Co., bleachers. This very interesting relic was taken down by them and the materials employed in their works. A tale of the family is still told in the neighbourhood; I had it from a gentleman who has now passed his ninetieth year and well remembers the Mr. Bealey referred to. It was during the strikes against machinery and dear bread. Mr. Addington (Lord Sidmouth), the trusted adviser of George III., had deliberately advised the Cabinet that 80s. a quarter was not sufficient to “give confidence to the corn-grower,” and foreign wheat must be excluded even at that. Peterloo and much besides were the consequence of this, and mill fires followed in all directions. A crowd had met to destroy Mr. Bealey’s mill at Radcliffe, when he came forward and asked them what quarrel they had with him. They said they “wanted bread.” “And you shall have it,” he said, and going to his counting-house he brought out a liberal sum and gave it to them. His mills never suffered.

From Radcliffe the Irwell runs through a beautiful valley, in which are many remains of antiquity, till it reaches Farnworth, where it joins the Croak, which runs by Bolton. The situation of Farnworth is exceedingly grand, and Darley Hall, which is here

shown, is finely situate on an eminence. It is a plain brick building, with two bow windows and a flat front, and some stone dressing, a style of architecture that always looks well for a residence, especially if it is embedded in trees. The entertaining rooms are large, and well proportioned and finished, but long neglect and damp have told their tale. The neglected park was extensive. From the windows of the fine but deserted residence Bolton is visible, being only two and a half miles distant ; but a more interesting sight is



IRWELL VALLEY, FARNWORTH.

Bradshaw Hall, which is little more than a mile distant, and faces Darley, on the opposite side of the beautiful vale of Irwell. This residence has quite an historic interest, as it was the home of the Bradshaw who presided at the trial of Charles. The family were residing here in the days of the Tudors, and in 1606 Henry Bradshaw purchased Marple Hall, in Cheshire. He had three sons. The youngest of these was John Bradshaw, who was brought up to the Bar, and became afterwards Chancellor of the Duchy of

Lancaster. He it was who presided at the court that pronounced sentence on Charles. The house is very interesting as having been his home. Bradshaw Hall is almost hidden in trees, but is just visible from Darley. It is a long irregular building, and has many arms of the ancient family depicted on it. The other sketches show, however, imperfectly, some of the beauties of the Irwell Valley—a line of country which increases in beauty as it approaches Manchester. Even in the present century the pools and rapids of the river we see here in their dusky beauty were the resort of trout and grayling, and salmon spawned in the shallows of the Irwell.



DARLEY HALL.

Happily the movement which is now on foot to purify its waters is not one antagonistic to the wealthy millowners who people its banks, and, as I heard repeatedly, this class will be among the most hearty supporters of the movement that would benefit them so much. The neighbourhood of Farnworth is particularly rich, or, perhaps, one should say, was till lately very rich, in black-and-white houses. There is one not very far away that well deserves a visit. It is now a farmhouse, and is called Darcy Lever Old Hall—one of the seats of the Lever family. There are four gables to the front, though only one seems to have preserved its original form ; but

this is extremely picturesque. The district around it is mired in its picturesqueness by brickfields and coalmines ; but it must have been at one time very beautiful. The quatrefoils on the middle gable are very well proportioned. From Farnworth a lane, called Buckley Lane, leads to the great Roman road that traverses England, and almost at the junction there are two ancient halls called Peel Hall— one Yates Peel and the other Kenyon Peel. It is now a number of years since I saw it, but I made drawings of it then which are engraved in a work long out of print. The woodwork is irregular and somewhat fantastic. The spaces do not seem to fit each other, or to adapt themselves quite so harmoniously to their surroundings as they do at such noble examples as Bramhall or Moreton, but the old lodge and stable are quite models for an architect. There is a very quaint old summer-house in the outer court that closely resembles the one on Chester walls which is called Pemberton's Parlour ; and the ancient stone gateway is an excellent example of the architecture of the early part of the seventeenth century. This house was for some time the residence of Miss Alice Kenyon. She was the aunt of Lord Kenyon, the popular judge of the Court of King's Bench. For a short time the Rigbys or De Rigbys possessed this estate, until it passed to the Kenyon family by marriage. One of the Rigbys has left a number of monumental inscriptions. Over the gateway is one : "Peace be within thy walls. Geo. Rigby, 1637." The other Peel Hall which is close by, is called Yates Peel Hall, and this also is an ancient mansion. It was the residence of a judge—Sir Joseph Yates, Knight, Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. It is built of stone, and consists of a centre and two wings ; the north side of the hall is castellated. The last of the family of Yates was Joseph Yates, who died about 1817 ; he sold the estate to the late Mr. Ellis Fletcher, of Clifton.

PART IV.

RINGLEY is familiar to travellers in this part from its isolated church tower, which differs so much from its surroundings. The tower was built, it would seem, in 1626, and the church in 1854, at which time the body of the old one was demolished. It is a valuable living, and is in the gift of the rectors of Prestwich, Bury, and Middleton jointly. A schoolhouse was built here in the year 1640 by Nathaniel Walworth, and some of his descendants still remain in



RINGLEY.

the district. The appearance of Ringley as we approach it from Farnworth station is very picturesque. We can see the tower reflected in the water, before we notice the condition of the Irwell itself. There is one thing that a stranger is often struck with in this part of England, and that is the number of churches which have been built at the cost of some single individual. At Prestolee, close by Ringley, is one erected at the cost of £5,000, by Mr. W. J. Rideout, in memory of his uncle, Mr. J. B. Crompton, and there are many other such monuments of liberality in the district. Birch House, near Farnworth, was at one time the residence of the

Rasbotham family. The best known member of it, Mr. Dorning Rasbotham, was High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1769, and made a painstaking collection of memoirs of the ancient families. I copy the following from Harland's edition of Baines's "*Lancashire*": "Had he lived to execute his intentions, he would have supplied the county with a history worthy of its ancient families and of its modern rank among the counties of England. To this labour he had been invited by his brother magistrates and other competent judges, but his health failed him before his Herculean task was accomplished. Mr. Rasbotham's collections, which were confided to the author of these pages, are contained in four partially filled volumes of MS. notes, chiefly written in Byrom's shorthand characters. The materials are selected from various authors, and are enriched with a number of original observations, illustrated by plans, drawings, and armorial bearings, chiefly the production of his own pencil." He was very accomplished as an etcher, and it is doubtful whether he excelled more with his pencil or his pen. After the death of Mr. Rasbotham the estate of Birch Hall passed to the family of Mr. John Bentley, and he made great additions to the manor house. It may be interesting to know that one of Mr. Rasbotham's most able works was addressed to the workmen who rioted against the introduction of machinery, but he was not a coercionist like Mr. Speaker Addington.

And now we come to a very beautiful range of the river; indeed it is so beautiful that if the waters were purified it would hold its rank among the most charming parts of England. After passing Ringley Church we arrive at the canal which connects Manchester with Bolton and Bury. This canal was commenced in 1791, and descends by a series of six locks to the Mersey and Irwell Navigation by the Prince's Bridge at Salford. There is a broad walk on the right-hand side as we descend the canal, and if we take this walk at Ringley we shall have from there to Clifton a charming range of some three miles of exquisite scenery. It greatly resembles the vale of Llangollen, though it is on a smaller scale. The Irwell, with its pools and eddies and rapids, has now become a considerable river, and we see it through richly wooded banks

far down below us winding its way to the Mersey, while the canal, which is on a level with the broad roadway, is slowly passing along to the same destination. The parallel between this scene and the Dee winding its way through the vale of Llangollen, while the Chester and Ellesmere Canal is travelling on a higher level in the same direction, is very striking ; but, as before said, the Dee valley is on a larger scale. The total length of this canal is fifteen miles and one furlong, and its actual rise is one hundred and eighty-seven feet. It passes through a country that abounds with coal



BOLTON CANAL.

and other mineral products, but it is pleasant to add that its waters are fairly pure. Roman relics, of course, were found in the excavations, which shows how thoroughly this part of England was settled, and also how the exotic civilisation of Rome was destined to decay when not supported by the imperial power from the Eternal City. While sketching the single-arched bridge which figures here, I observed a fish leap out of the water after a fly, and saw its form very clearly ; indeed it was not five yards away, and I could not refrain from thinking what its fate would be if it were for even only a few seconds in the outwardly beautiful river that ran

below. Probably the days are coming when the Irwell will be able to give its fellows a more hospitable reception than its present waters can offer. There was a curious advertisement in this district which must be peculiar to it. For at least two miles there were repetitions of a placard which was headed "Submission," and it went on to say that four men, whose names are given, trespassed upon a turnip field and committed some act of larceny which is not specified. The men express their regret and contrition, and agree to pay all expenses and never do so again. And indeed their expenses must have been considerable, as for certainly two miles I did not see a gatepost, or door, or wall, or telegraph post without



ON CANAL: IRWELL BELOW.

the announcement. It is signed by the delinquents, who give their addresses; and though I have walked through every county in England I do not remember to have seen so singular an expression of penitence. Almost in the middle of Prestwich parish is Stand, where the Pilkingtons had an estate. The parish of Prestwich is very large. It covers nearly 22,000 acres, and though built over in all directions still contains scenes of beauty, with cloughs and glens and streams that in the present century were the happy haunts of trout. The great Roman road which runs to the north through Bury passes by Prestwich, and not a few Roman relics have been found in recent years among its ancient foundations.

PART V.

ALL the necessities of manufacture, with the tall chimneys and stained brooks and rivers which are the consequents, cannot entirely rob the Irwell of its natural beauty. The cloughs and trees and headland are all there, and when the movements on foot for purifying the river are happily advanced, the holiday seeker will not have to go very far to enjoy his leisure. If after arriving at Ringley we keep on the right bank of the Irwell, instead of crossing over to the beautiful walk spoken of in the last paper, we arrive at Clifton Hall, a very pleasant old residence. It is at present empty, but it can only be its proximity to two busy lines of railway that prevents its having a tenant. From its general appearance, and the character of the internal architecture, it would seem to be about 160 or 170 years old. The rooms to the front are very pleasant, and there is a remarkably fine willow tree on the circular lawn that is noted all round the district. The grounds and gardens are very excellently laid out, and have not been allowed to suffer on account of its vacancy. The family of Holland formerly were lords of the manor of Clifton—or “Clyfton,” as it was then written—and it must, indeed, have been an agreeable spot when they owned all the lands, messuages, woods, and mills, for the mills were water mills, and the water was in all its purity. In the reign of James I. the daughter of Thomas Holland, of Clifton, married Ralph Slade; she died without issue, and Clifton Hall was sold to the family of Gaskell, of Thornes House, in Yorkshire, and it remains still in their possession. The manor became at the same time the property of the Heathcote family, and so remains.

The river here for some reason often used to overflow its banks. Rasbotham says: “The floods often rise to sixteen feet above the surface of the common water. In 1744 the Irwell overflowed to within a few inches of twenty-four feet, and about twenty years ago there were three floods in two years, which rose a few inches more than twenty-four feet above the common level. The river hath

trout, chub, dace, gudgeon, and eels. Salmon came up it before the establishment of the fishery at Warrington (till within the last twenty years higher than this township), but there is no such thing experienced at present." One of the overflows yet remains. It covers some acres, and has been in its present form, as I was told by the residents, for nearly a quarter of a century, till it has assumed the form and appearance of a natural lake. Near Clifton is Woodyate, and that is connected with a name that is familiar to



ON IRWELL.

everyone in England who has studied even the rudiments of the Latin language. Robert Ainsworth, the author of the once famous Latin Dictionary, first saw the light here. He was born in 1660, educated at Bolton Grammar School, and became the head master there. Afterwards he removed to the neighbourhood of London. At Hackney especially he was successful, and acquired a competence, as his profound knowledge of the classics made him much sought after. His dictionary, which engaged him for twenty years,

was first published in 1736. He was born in the year when Charles II. was put on the throne, and lived to see the Hanoverian dynasty, expiring in his eighty-fourth year just as the Pretender was engaging in his plot to reinstate the worthless race of Stuarts. In 1698 he wrote his first, entitled "The most natural and easie way of Institution, containing proposals for making education less chargeable to parents and more beneficial to children." His celebrated dictionary was written at the instance of some eminent London booksellers, and it took him twenty-two years to complete.

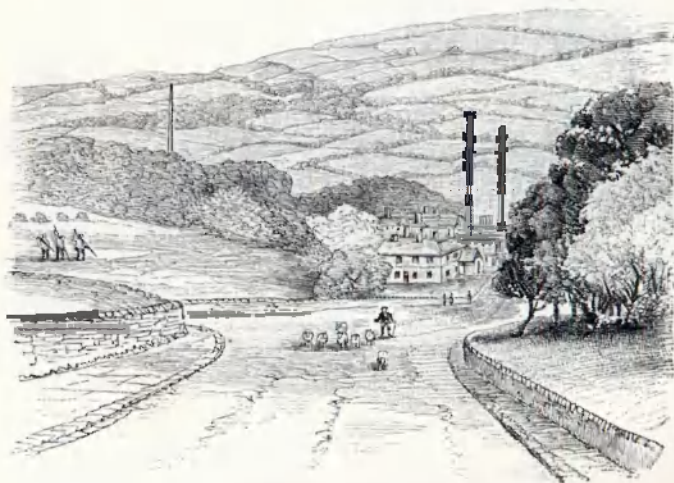


POOL ON IRWELL.

In his latter years one of his favourite occupations was to go round the second-hand dealers in London and purchase old coins and relics, and many of these were afterwards sold at a considerable profit. Almost opposite to Clifton Hall, on the left bank of the Irwell, is Irwell Hall, which is just visible through the trees, and it would seem to be a remarkably pleasant residence.

Agecroft Bridge is very picturesque, and a stileway leads to a footpath that runs parallel to the right bank of the Irwell, which is

now beginning to assume the inky appearance that is so familiar to residents of Manchester. If we cross the bridge and turn to the right we soon reach Kersal Hall, which stands in gardens not far removed from the roadside. It is a black-and-white house, and very shapely in its outline, though only of moderate proportions, and it would seem to have been but little altered since its erection. Close to this and a little nearer Manchester is Kersal Cell. This was a seat of the Byrom family, and the early home of John Byrom, the poet and stenographer. His father was a linendraper of high standing in Manchester, and he received his education at Charter



ENTERING INTO BACUP.

House, removing to Trinity College afterwards. His talent for verse was great, and he contributed some excellent pieces to the *Spectator*. The pastoral of "Colin and Phœbe," which was composed in his twenty-third year, was one of the most popular compositions in the language; but he is now known best through one of his hymns, for he wrote "Christians, awake." The heroine of "Colin and Phœbe" was a daughter of Dr. Bentley, the master of Trinity College, Cambridge, who was afterwards married to the Bishop of Clonfort and Killaloe. He seems

to have run through his fortune, and to have taught shorthand for a living, and his rules are very simple and explicit—first, he says that all the simple sounds of the language should be denoted by the shortest and simplest strokes in nature ; secondly, that those marks which were the shortest and easiest to be formed should be assigned to the commonest letters ; thirdly, that those letters which most frequently occurred should be denoted by marks which were the most easily joined ; fourthly, that all the marks of which any word was composed should be written without taking off the pen, or permitting any of them to rise or sink below two parallel lines ; and lastly, that all rules of abbreviation should be founded on the



ON BOLTON CANAL.

proprieties of the language, and expressed by the letters of the alphabet only, without admitting any arbitrary marks at all. From Agecroft Bridge to Salford the distance is probably not more than two miles in a straight line, but if we follow the windings of the river it is about five miles.

Since beginning the Irwell series I have had a letter and report kindly sent to me by a gentleman who is a very learned chemist. The day must come, he says, when the Irwell will present a very different appearance from what it does at present, but he points out some difficulties which I had overlooked. He says that it may run through Manchester and Salford in a comparatively clear condi-

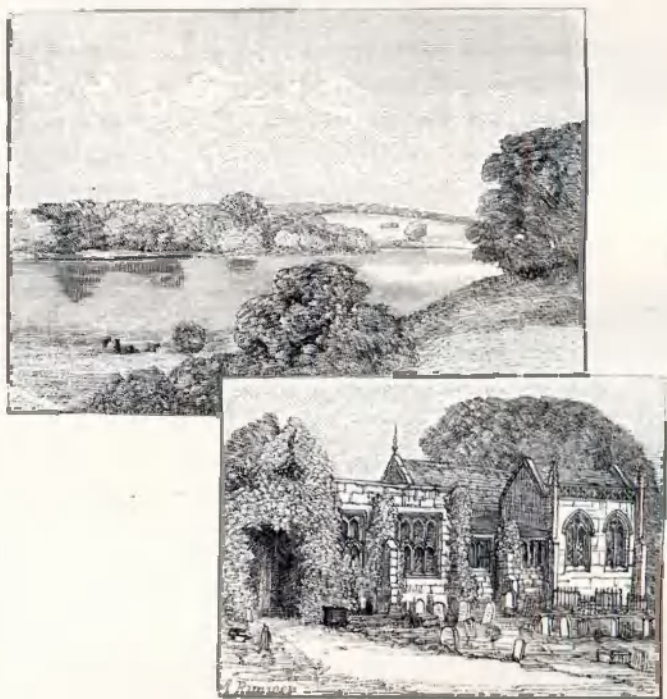
tion—the lime and other matters will do much for that ; but it is questionable if it would ever be, even for some distance above Manchester, the resort of Izaak Walton's followers. Filtration, and not lime, must do this. Now, filtration is a comparatively undeveloped science, but some experiments, as it would seem, upon the Irwell water have had remarkable results. The strain upon filters, as he points out, would be great and costly, and there is no provision in the Rivers Pollution Act that could reach an evil so deeply seated. But let anyone ramble up the banks of the Irwell—and for convenience, I would say, take the canal side—from Ringley to Clifton, and if it is a summer's day, I am sure we shall find an enthusiastic advocate for the purification of the beautiful river. It is not like the troubles of residents round St. Helens or Widnes or Runcorn, where the alkali vapours find grounds like the Garden of Eden and leave them behind a desolate wilderness. Bright verdure comes down to the banks of the river. No pestilence flies by night to destroy it. Indeed, I could point out many a forest tree that as it shades the river would worthily appear in Harding's "Studies" or in any rural picture that ever appeared on the walls of the Academy. Successful efforts are now being made to secure the purification of the Thames, and though, of course, the Irwell may offer greater obstacles to overcome, it is quite certain that extensive improvements would not be difficult to introduce, especially if a short act of Parliament were procured. A great change followed the act for the consumption of smoke, and this might be even further advanced.



ROSTHERNE MERE AND CHURCH.

THE beautiful lake of Rostherne is probably familiar to nearly all the inhabitants of Manchester. It is thirty-five years since I saw it before, and I had quite expected to find it altered out of all knowledge by villa residences and the mansions of Manchester merchants, but what was my surprise at finding it on September 20th, 1887, just as it was in 1852. It is easy and natural to call out on the lords of the soil for monopolising so many beautiful sites and preventing the public from enjoying them, and, doubtless, if the slopes that encircle Rostherne Lake were to be placed on the market for sale, they would be purchased on the Manchester Exchange within a few hours at vast sums of money. But here the compensating process, as we find it in the animal world, comes in; and I would apply it in this case with the profoundest respect to everyone who is interested in the lovely shores of the lake, premising, of course, that the great landlords of England, with their town leases and feudal laws, have sins enough to answer. And it is pleasant to put in a plea for at least this monopoly, which the men of Manchester will probably admit may have some weight. If we continue the simile of the compensating process, it is pretty sure that if opportunity were offered, and if anything like legitimate latitude were afforded to the wealthy men of Manchester, the lake would soon be shut out by high-walled gardens and stately mansions, and the holiday-seeker would know it—at least as of old—no more. Now, it is a theory that grouse moors and partridge covers are injured if such birds as falcons are entirely kept down, and some great authorities on such subjects lend their support to this view of the case. Well, keeping this in mind, can we deny that the delightful scenery of Rostherne is properly preserved in its beauty, even if the object of such preservation was not conceived perhaps entirely, or originally, in the interests of the public?

The nearest station to Rostherne is Ashley, on the Midland Railway. It lies some three miles to the south of Altrincham, and is readily reached from the Central Station in 25 minutes. The road to the lake is very rustic and pleasant, and from all surroundings we might easily suppose ourselves in Hampshire, or Northampton, or Dorset. Nobody, indeed, would credit the state-



ROSTHERNE MERE AND CHURCH.

ment that such rural beauty lay so near to Manchester, unless they had seen it for themselves. The roads are well kept and the hedges neatly trimmed, showing we are near some great residence like Tatton Hall, and for the rest, the trees that are standing attest the affluence of the landlord. The few farmhouses are in excellent order, and they would seem to be well provided with the gardens that supply our markets, and do so much to pay the land-

lord's rent. Within some half-mile of Ashley Station we pass over Birkin Bridge, which spans a beautiful brook of the same name, and in looking over the parapet, I happened to see a youth playing with a large trout, which he subsequently secured with a landing net his companion had with him. And this so near Manchester! I know well that the rivers of North Wales might be fished over for a long time without such a result.

There is a lodge to Tatton Park close by the bridge over the Birkin, and the lane, which is called Salter's lane, is shaded on both sides with noble trees. It is not impossible that the name of the lane is connected with the great industry of mid-Cheshire, and some brine springs which broke out in the county last century were utilised in many instances for the manufacture of salt. On reaching the second lodge to Tatton Hall along this lane, a sharp turn to the right brings us to Rostherne village and lake. The view is especially picturesque, and the mere is not excelled in quiet beauty by any lake in Westmoreland. Rostherne lake forms the last of a long string of Cheshire meres that begins with Combermere, and includes those of Marbury, Cholmondeley, Oulton, Oakmere, Budworth, Tatton, and many others. The origin of these meres is intensely interesting, and the following is the accepted theory. The salt deposits belong to the triassic period, and date back to unknown ages. They are even earlier than the tertiary epoch, when such monstrous creatures roamed over the earth, that, as Mr Kinns, in his interesting work on "*Moses and Geology*," has said the favourite food of the megatherium was crocodiles! And if we look to Asia we shall see the natural forces at work which produced the Cheshire meres, but on a larger scale. When the upheaval of the land first took place on the surface of the earth, it is easy to see that many salt seas must have been impounded, and the heat of the cooling earth and the heat of the ancient suns converted these into great mines of rock salt. The Dead Sea is an excellent illustration of what is here suggested, though in the case of this great salt lake volcanic agencies have been at work, for its surface is 1,300 feet below the surface of the Mediterranean, though the actual distance between the two sheets of water cannot be much

more than fifty miles. About ninety miles to the north of the Dead Sea is the Lake of Genneserath, which was once a deep salt reservoir, but the Jordan has long since washed it clean, and filled it with the purest of fresh water. Now, if there had been an entrance to any ocean from the Dead Sea, this would have become quite as pure and clean as Genneserath; but it lies, as has been said, in the deepest of hollows, and the hot suns of Palestine would have made it a vast salt mine but for the rivers that it receives. Not only does the Jordan empty itself into it, but it is fed by the rapid waters of the Arnon and the Cedron, and the many rivers that drain the steep hills of Judea, Moab, and Edom. Perhaps even here evaporation is slowly overtaking the supply of fresh water; but in Cheshire there was no such supply, and hence the deep deposits of salt which lie along the valley of the Weaver. There are two beds of rock salt. The upper one averages 75 feet in thickness, and the lower one is separated by a bed of coloured marl some 30 feet in thickness, according to Page, whose accuracy cannot be too highly praised; and it is more than 100 feet in depth. There may be lower beds than these, but this is at present unknown. How the pumping system is producing vast subsidences, and how Northwich and Winsford are sinking in the earth, and will perhaps in our day be the beds of a great lake, we read indications of in our daily papers; but some astonishing data have been procured which will, it is hoped, form the subject of a future chapter. Rostherne Mere, like the other one in the chain that indicates the salt region, was a hollow in the impounded ocean, and how it oozed away in brine springs there is hardly room here to discuss. Of all the meres it is the most charming. Combermere is exceedingly interesting and beautiful, and when the Abbey was unaltered into the churchwarden Gothic that distinguishes it, it must have been well worth a pilgrimage. It is with regret that I have to say that Rostherne Church is faring no better a fate than many another that was once a delight to the artist and the antiquary. It is now being, as these lines are written, pulled down for a modern structure, and half the charm of the lake will have vanished. One ancient part is left so far, but the ivy is pulled

down from it and stacked over the tombstones in the churchyard. The ancient black oak pews have vanished—pews where the farmers and their great-grandfathers before them used to assemble on Sundays. The roof was off, the church open to the skies and filled with debris, and the enemy, as one might say, was in the middle of the sanctuary breaking down the carved work with axes and hammers. When will church restorers learn that there is more to delight an artist (and all men should have a love of art in them) in an old black oak galleried church, with the ancient square pews fitted in any way, than in the most costly and correct structure that takes its place? This church once belonged to the Abbey of Laund, in Leicestershire, and it was given after the dissolution of monasteries in 1536 to the dean and canons of Christ Church, Oxford, and it passed through several families until it is now vested in that of Lord Egerton of Tatton, whose park—which is the largest in Cheshire, and one of the largest private parks in England—contains a lake which is not inferior in dimensions, though it is in beauty, to Rostherne. The nave of the church is divided from the aisles by four pointed arches, and at the end of the south aisle is the chapel of the Leghs, of High Legh, a name that is now commonly spelt Leigh. There are, or were, three smaller chapels appropriated to the manors of Agden, Mere, and Tatton. In the Leigh chapel there is a fine monument, by Westmacott, to the memory of Elizabeth Leigh, daughter and co-heiress of Francis Jodrell, Esq., and a verse on it says :

Happy the man who's blessed with such a wife,
 Happy the children who have such a friend ;
 In doing good she spent her valued life,
 And view'd with Christian fortitude her end.

But the building is, or was, quite celebrated for its monuments. There is a very fine one by Bacon to Samuel Egerton, of Tatton Park, who died in 1780, and this bears a long inscription, stating, among other things, that he was elected as a knight of the shire "without opposition," on the strength of his well-known character. The inscription records the demise of many members of his family, and ends by saying, "How they demeaned themselves each in

their mortal state of probation is known truly to Him only from whom no secrets are hidden, but will one day be declared in the presence of the Host of Heaven." There are many monuments of great interest in this church, which will doubtless be preserved during the re-building, and among others is one to Major Dickson, of the 62nd, the son of Sir Jeremiah Dickson, who fell before Sebastopol early on the morning of the 8th June, 1855, while bravely defending the "Quarries" from the Russian attack.



TONGE HALL

TONGE HALL is situated on a high eminence some four and a half miles from Manchester. It overlooks Middleton, and has a fine view of the hilly country round Bolton and Bury. The heavy timbers with which it is framed point to a time when great oak trees must have contributed a conspicuous item to the picturesque scenery round Manchester. It was once the residence of the Tonge family, who were considerable landowners, and who were seated here at a very remote period. They were among the oldest families in Lancashire, and the Tongs, of Tong Hall, in Yorkshire, and Tong, of Tong, in Kent, all spring from a common ancestor, who came over with William the Conqueror. There is an early record of the family that dates back to John's reign. Gilbert de Tonge held one bovate of land at Tonge for the "yearly service of 4s." There were in Lancashire two distinct branches of the family—one at Bolton and one at Prestwich—and their names appear frequently on important deeds. In a history of Kent there is a memorandum that one Richard Tonge lent Richard II. money in the twenty-first year of his reign, and some ten years before he was deposed, the year of the battle of Chevy Chase. The name Assheton Tonge frequently occurs in the registers of the parish of Middlewich, and descendants of the family who retain the name of Assheton still live near Alderley. The old residence is now a farmhouse, and consists of two blocks only, which are terminated in pediments. Formerly the front was much more extended, and beyond the two gables there was a façade in the same character which terminated in a gable, and in this was the entrance porch, which was well proportioned and carved. But it is clear that the building did not end here; beyond the porch there was in all probability, if we go by the precedents that surround us, an extension of front terminating in gables like those which are here shown.

In the Chetham Library there is a good drawing of the building as it stood in 1845, since which time, for reasons best known to the owners of the venerable pile, the ancient hall has been reduced to the fragments shown. This sketch shows a down spout on the left-hand side of the façade, that discharges into a very curious receptacle of large proportions which stands on a tripod, but I could make nothing whatever of it, as the whole apparatus is different from anything I have met with. The peculiarity of the hall is the continuous repetition of quatrefoils in the walls, without a break in the form of "strutts" or "standards." A facsimile of



TONGE HALL, MIDDLETON.

the drawing at the Chetham Library is given, and if we connect it with the illustration here given, which is of course accurate, we shall see that it must have been a very imposing building.

Many modern architects in their designs of black-and-white seem to study irregularity as though that were the same thing as picturesqueness. But this is the reverse of what the old Tudor architects did. They made their picturesque features by grouping the masses of the buildings, and kept the details in harmony with each other. But in Tonge Hall uniformity is almost too pronounced. If there are many competent judges who do not feel this, there may be others who would almost have preferred a

variation in the lower storey, consisting, perhaps, of a succession of uprights and diagonal braces. Still, if there is an error, it is in the right direction. Some of the leadwork in the windows of the ancient fabric has not been disturbed, and these windows are very beautiful. The drawing shows the hall as it now stands, a farmhouse of very unpretending dimensions, but one very well worth a visit. It would be absurd to say that the repetition of quatrefoils showed any lack of design in the builder; he saw the surroundings, and he knew how they fitted themselves to these. He did not, as is so commonly the case now, make his designs on a sheet of paper and let them come out how they would, but he saw them in progress and fitted his outlines accordingly.

Richard Tonge was the last but one of the owners of Tonge Hall. He was buried at Middleton, April 22, 1713. His burial is mentioned in the diary of Edmund Harrold, a Manchester tradesman, and this is preserved in the Chetham Society's records. By his first wife he had one daughter, and by his second wife two sons, Jonathan and Thomas. To Jonathan the estates devolved, and he would seem to have embarked in some commercial ventures and lost much of his money. Between 1718 and 1724 he mortgaged his lands several times, till the total amounted to £2,937, the principal lender being John Starky. In 1725 he made his will, directing his estates to be sold, and Mr. Starky purchased them from the surviving brother for £4,350. In 1846 Mr. James Starky left the property to his relatives, Mrs. Hornby and Mr. Joseph Langton, Liverpool. Mr. Langton belonged to the very old firm of Earles and Langton, and it may be interesting to notice that the General Earle who fell in Egypt was a son of Sir Hardman Earle, Bart., the head at one time of the firm. There is one old panelled room in the hall which is very interesting. The work is of Charles I.'s time, and over the chimneypiece is an old painting of a man who has fallen apparently in a duel, and a lady riding up and discovering his body. I could not find any record of the event.

WARBURTON.

WARBURTON is a very interesting and beautiful little village, and can still boast of stocks and other accessories designed for the well-being and happiness of a rustic settlement. It contains also a church that has black-and-white work, and near the church is the rectory, a fine old-fashioned building with tall chimneys and gables. The river Mersey runs by it in a long, even course. The living of Warburton used to be held with that of Lymm, but now they are divided and are in different gifts. There was a priory here, but all records of it are lost, as is the case with so many other religious houses, of many of which the only trace to be found is in tradition or the archives of some old foundation. Anyone who doubts the ability of the river Mersey to provide continual water accommodation for the largest ocean steamers and sailing vessels could do no better than stand on the bank at Hoblin's Ferry or Warburton and watch the sweep of the water. It bristles over, as one might say, with pools for trout and salmon, and at one time it must have been alive with these fish; and it would be so yet if the water were clear and the spawning beds in even moderately good order. It is grateful to read in the Manchester journals that the authorities are about to enforce, or try to enforce, or at any rate to do what they can in the way of trying to enforce, the Pollution Act, and make the Irwell and Mersey pure, limpid streams. All honour and good speed to them. The first time I saw that part of the Mersey that passes by Warburton was in winter, and I asked a dweller on the banks if the water was really always as it was then; and he said, mistaking my inquiry, "Eh, no, sir; you should see it in summer!"

The Warburtons, of Arley, belong to that class of landed gentry who would receive no additional dignity from a title, but would indeed rather lose caste. It was a matter of surprise to Voltaire

when he visited England to see so many vast estates and mansions inhabited, not by counts or dukes, as would have been the case in his own country, but by plain Mr. This or Mr. That. The founders of the Warburton family came over at the Conquest, and took up



WARBURTON.

their abode at Dutton, in Cheshire. They adopted the name of Dutton, and we read of them in the reigns of Henry II., Richard I., and John. Sir Geoffrey Dutton was an enthusiastic Churchman in the days when the Church is supposed to have held at least half the landed property in England. He was contemporary with

Becket, who was said to have expressed a wish to be "greater than the saints and better than St. Paul." He had long decided to go to the Holy Land, and though it is certain that he distinguished himself, little is known of his career there. Ormerod mentions the circumstance of a cross being in the armorial bearings of the family, and he supposes that this was gained for some successful encounter with a powerful foe. On the Warburton arms there is a Saracen's head with three ostrich feathers. Whether this relates in any way to the Prince of Wales and his then new title I cannot say. It is not improbable that Chester Cathedral contains some trace of this gentleman. He endowed the Priory of Warburton, which was dedicated to St. Werburgh, and this is the patron saint also of Chester Cathedral. Now, in the great vestibule, which leads from the east cloister to the chapter-house of the cathedral, there are some curious vaultings with scarce any caps to the columns. When the present Mr. Weld-Blundell, of Ince Blundell, saw these, he at once said they were imitations of the date palm, or rather, perhaps, adaptations; and nothing can be more probable: he is a gentleman who has travelled much in the East and studied architecture. We know how the styles of English architecture succeeded each other, from the Norman, which is a rude, but, as we have it with its mould of antiquity, a picturesque revival of the Roman columns and arches, and we can see the gradual progress of English architecture—which, as before remarked, may be abundantly examined round Manchester—without coming so far afield as Chester. But just about the time of the Second Crusade there is no doubt that many Saracenic forms found their way into England, and this date-palm growing, which Mr. Weld-Blundell has pointed out, corresponds in age to the return of Sir Geoffrey Dutton from Palestine. In the cloisters there is an Arabic arch that clearly came from the Holy Land, as we have nothing like it in English architecture. In the Priory of Birkenhead there are similar groinings—or very nearly similar—to these, which also resemble the date-palm; and as a seat of the family of Warburton lay at Sutton-by-Frodsham, it is not impossible that Sir Geoffrey Dutton (Warburton) may have suggested both examples.

The family is continually met with in the events of English history. There is one very interesting circumstance in connection with them, and that is the readiness with which Peter Warburton received the royal pardon after the battle of Shrewsbury, for he fought under the Percy whom Falstaff alleges that he slew. But here again history helps us, for we read in some old documents that Henry IV. would willingly have granted a free pardon to all who had taken up arms. About three miles from Shrewsbury is Battlefield Church, a beautiful edifice that was built to commemorate the struggle. This was a century old when Shakspeare saw it, and it seems almost impossible to avoid the belief that when the speech of the King to Worcester was written a stained glass window in the church was present to the poet's mind. On it the King is represented with a majestic but very sad countenance, quite suggestive of his language :

How now, my lord of Worcester? 'Tis not well
That you and I should meet upon such terms
As we now meet. You have deceived our trust,
And made us doff our easy robes of peace
To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel.
This is not well, my lord, this is not well.

And when Worcester returns to the "rebel camp," he says, "My nephew must not know, Sir Richard, the kind, liberal offer of the King." . . .

For treason is but trusted like the fox,
Who, ne'er so tame, so cherished, and locked up,
Will have a wild trick of his ancestors.

It is probable that Worcester was wrong, and he paid on the following day a shocking penalty ; but the complete pardon of Warburton was granted, it is probable, as soon as it was asked for. In after years allegiance was cheerfully transferred from the line of Plantagenet to the House of Tudor, for the lord of Warburton fought gallantly at Flodden Field. The family had, as already mentioned, a country seat with a large park at Sutton, and they had another at Budworth, so that they were in constant intercourse with the heads of Cheshire families. And when James IV. of

Scotland sent his insolent challenge to Henry when he was on the Continent, the latter quietly told the herald who brought the message that the Earl of Surrey would know how to answer his master. The Earl of Derby recruited his following largely from Cheshire, and there is in the Harleian MSS. a very quaint ballad that alludes to this. From the ballad I quote the following :

The Royal Radcliffe, that rude was never,
And trusty Trafford kene to try,
And mighty Warburton out of Cheshire,
All came with the Earl of Derbye.

There seems, according to the minstrel, to have been some little banter between the Earl and the King, and the latter rather disparaged his following, which, of course, is a device of the poet to enable Lord Derby to dwell upon their merits. And certainly Christopher Savage would not seem to have been a "laggard in war," for Lord Derby sadly laments the loss of his follower—not that any tidings of his demise had reached him, but on general principles he is sure his friend would never think of leaving the field while he had any life left at all.

Farewell, Christopher Savage, the wight,
Well I know that thou art slayne,
For while thy life would last to fight,
Thou would'st never beside the playne.
Farewell Done and Sir Done,
Ye have ever been true to me ;
Farewell the Baron of Kinderton,
Beside the field thou never would'st flee.

The Radcliffe spoken of would be Sir Alexander Radcliffe, of Ordsall Hall. He succeeded his grandfather, and filled the office of High Sheriff of Lancashire, an office that carried more dignity then than it does now. The Trafford mentioned would probably be Sir Edward de Trafford, whose grandson married the sister of the unhappy Queen Katharine.⁵ The Warburton was Sir John Warburton, one of the knights to the body to Henry VII., and Sheriff of Cheshire by a patent under the Great Seal for life. The name of Warburton is said by Lysons to be derived from St.

Werburch, to whom the monastery of Præmonstratensian canons were dedicated, and this decides the old pronunciation of the name, for the old inhabitants of Chester always call St. Werburgh's Lane, by the cathedral, Warbush Lane. John Lucy, who was Constable of Chester, granted the moiety of Warburton to John de Dutton (Warburton), on condition that he held it under the Priory of St. John at Jerusalem. At this time the Knights at St. John were quiet and peaceful and very charitable, and had not developed into the warlike bands that occupied Rhodes and fortified Malta.

We find in the family records that there was at least one interment of the Warburtons at the priory, and this was the son of Adam de Dutton, the founder. One of the family afterwards became Chief Justice of Chester, and later years one of the daughters married the celebrated commentator, Mathew Henry, who died seven years before she inherited a considerable estate. The Ship Canal will be cut within half a mile of the river, and the old bed will form a ravine, overlooked by the church and rectory. Indeed it is curious to speculate upon the alterations in the landscape and the general features of the country when the great enterprise is completed. That any damage will be done to the picturesqueness of the scenery is very improbable; indeed, it is more likely that in a few years after the canal is finished we may have acquired a number of country dells which will be pleasant resorts for a summer day's ramble, and the great ships will pass so rapidly by that they will be quite isolated in their course from the surrounding landscape. Anyone who shoots wild fowl for the first time on the flat marshes of the upper St. Lawrence will remember the singular effect produced in this way. The reeds rise up some feet in the air, and the river is quite invisible, as we are walking almost on the same level as the surface of the water. Suddenly a high three-decked steamer appears towering above the land, and rapidly passes through a sweep of the hidden channel. This is the effect we may look for when we walk along the meadows that skirt the Mersey, and a great vessel passes by, carrying her foreign freight to Manchester.

PRESTWICH.

PRESTWICH may, of course, be reached in a few minutes by train from Manchester, but the walk along the highroad, if the day is bright, is extremely pleasant, studded as it is with fine trees along a good part of the way. The beautiful cloughs near Prestwich, with brooks running through them, are happy hunting grounds for botanists and naturalists and all who delight in rustic scenery. Mere Clough is, perhaps, one of the most interesting in the district, but there are others of great beauty, too. Leland, speaking of his celebrated tour through England in the reign of Henry VIII., says: "There is a bridge very hy and great tymbre of the Irwell, and thereby is Pylketon Park, and thereon is a stone house of the Pylketons, attainted by Henry VII., and given to the Lorde of Darbye." There is also Hurst Clough, to the west of Stand, where there once stood a noble residence beonging to the Pilkington family, one of whom had received royal permission to kernel and embattle his house. But one of the great charms of the Prestwich dells is the variety of wild flowers that abound in the hollows. There is one plant especially that blossoms here, the *Equisetum sylvaticum*, or, as it is popularly termed, the "sylvan horsetail." These plants resemble the larch-tree very closely indeed, and might very readily be taken for miniature specimens of it. Bluebells and violets flourish in these cloughs, and as we approach the reservoir we find the beautiful wood-anemone, and in its season the yellow marsh-marigold and wood-sorrel. The old rectory of Prestwich must have been a charming building. It was a black-and-white structure, and it dated back to 1485. The entrance-hall was very noble, and there were some finely carved timbers in the interior. It was unhappily taken down in 1837, and a modern mansion erected on the site. There is at Stand, where there was once a seat of the Pilkingtons, an old barn that is well worth a visit. The

roof is beautifully carved, and resembles the roof of the south aisle of the church at Prestwich ; but all the country abounds in objects of interest.

Baines, in his "History of Lancashire," asserts that the records of the old family of Prestwich date back to such antiquity and their tenures are so ancient, that it is quite probable they were seated at Prestwich Manor before the Conquest. They hardly seem to have taken any very considerable share in the affairs of State, but a somewhat untoward event occurred in the reign of Edward III. Alicia de Prestwich, who was possessed of a bovate



PRESTWICH CHURCH.

of land in Pendlebury and a carucate at Prestwich, besides other lands, appealed to the King that certain free-lances had taken away her goods and chattels and cattle while she was under the protection of the law of Chester, and this to the value of £200—a very large theft indeed in those days. The names of the robbers are clearly recorded. There were Richard and Henry Starky, William de Leye, Robert de Wynnynton, and some others. Some names of the marauders are suspiciously like those of ancient families of worth and worship. "At an inquisition of *post mortem* taken at Lancaster, March 14, 1394, it appears that Roger de Longley was

seised of Agecroft Hall and the lands, with land in Penulbury, a tenement called Tettlelowe, in Burghon, as well as a parcel of land, Birchehawe, in Oldham." They found also that the advowson of the church of Prestwich was vested in him, and the date may possibly have given rise to a tradition which has appeared in print that the building dates back to the fourteenth century instead of the sixteenth. After the death of Roger de Longley his estates and rights came finally to two great heiresses, Margaret and Agnes. Margaret, who was of a serious turn, took the veil, and her sister Agnes became possessed of the great property of Roger de Longley. It is hardly possible for anyone who is not personally interested in the matter to follow all the changes and chances of the ownership of the Longley property, of which Prestwich is the centre; but there is an inquisition (and even that is without date) that at some time (which is conjectured to be in the reign of Henry VIII.) the estates were vested in Robert Longley. Sir Robert Longley's eldest daughter married Alexander Reddish, of Reddish, Esq., and the issue consisted of daughters entirely. One of these was married to Clement Coke, a son of the great lawyer, and the estate remained in the Norfolk family for many generations; but as they wished to increase their already enormous property in Norfolk, the owner sold his manors of Prestwich and Pendlebury to Peter Drinkwater, whose family were seated at Irwell Hall. Their son, Edward Coke, was the first baronet of the family, and his sons, Robert and Edward, were baronets successively, but with Edward the baronetcy expired, and the estates passed to Edward Coke, the brother of Lord Lovel.

The congregation of Prestwich Church were amongst those affected by the earnest preachings of John Bradford, the martyr, and he remembered the people of the parish when he wrote from prison shortly before his death to the Protestants of Lancashire and Cheshire. John Bradford was a man of eminence in his day. He had been brought up to a military career, which he changed for the law, and afterwards, in consequence of a sermon he heard from Latimer, he became a minister of the church, and was made a prebendary of St. Paul's and chaplain to Edward VI. He was

tried for being a Protestant before Bonner and others, and burnt at Smithfield on June 30, 1555. Just before his martyrdom he wrote a very eloquent letter to his mother in Manchester, which is still preserved. During the Commonwealth it was the scene of a Presbyterian ordination of ministers, one of them being a son of the well-known Puritan, John Angier. Perhaps the most distinguished incumbent of Prestwich was Dr. John Lake, known in history as one of the "seven bishops" who resisted James II. The church dates from the sixteenth century, but has been restored in recent years. In the church and adjoining graveyard are memorials of Thomas Henshaw, the founder of the Blind Asylum; Henry Wyatt, the artist; Charles Swain, the poet; and Mr. John Brooks, of the Anti-Corn Law agitation. Various members of the family of the Earls of Wilton are also commemorated. At the south-east corner of the church is the tomb of Julia Young. She was the youthful and beautiful wife of Charles Mayne Young, the famous actor, and came with him to Manchester in 1806. In the course of a rural walk the husband and wife visited Prestwich Church. She was charmed with the beauty of the scene, and marked this spot as the one where she would desire to be buried. There was something prophetic in the preference thus expressed, for she died before the end of her husband's engagement at the Manchester theatre, and rests in the quiet spot she had selected.



AGDEN, BOLLINGTON, CARRINGTON, ETC.

THERE is a pleasant and interesting walk from Manchester, if we go to the Flixton Station on the Manchester and Warrington Railway. A short walk will take us to Carrington, which is on the north-east side of Carrington Moss, and here many summer days of interest may be spent. There are many kinds of mosses and ferns which would easily supply all that a fernery or rockery needs ; and here we may see in great profusion the marsh marigold, which we can detect fifty yards away by their bright yellow flowers. The early orchis is also found on the borders of the marsh, a plant the tubers of which used at one time to be boiled and sold in provincial towns as a great delicacy. They are said to contain more farinaceous matter than any other esculent. We find also the cuckoo flower and lady's smock, which Shakspeare alludes to in one of his most delightful songs :

When daises pied, and violets blue,
And lady smocks all silver white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight.

On Carrington Moss also we find that remarkable carnivorous plant the sundew, or *drosera*, with some examples of the butterwort and the bladderwort, though the latter is not so common. The natural history of these plants is very curious. The roots of plants, as we know, spread under the surface of the soil to procure nutrition and to enable them to grow. Now, these insectivorous plants have as a rule very small roots—some are indeed so small that they would not support the plant if it were not for accidental surroundings. The apology for a root which the round-leaved sundew has is surrounded by broad, cup-shaped leaves, which are fringed round with bright red hairs, and smaller hairs cover the surface. From these a bright

saccharine fluid exudes, which is very tenacious, and which can hold a fly closely—very much as we may see in “flypapers.” Well, the root of the plant is quite unable to go in search of nitrogen, so the leaves procure this necessary article, and by some occult process the tiny gnats and ephemerae are made to supply it with its food. In America the pitcher-plant, which is a member of the same family, grows to very much greater dimensions, and the game it captures is proportionately larger in size. Humming-birds are said to be amongst these, but how far this may be exactly in accordance with the actual facts of the case I cannot quite say. There is nothing incredible in it, though I have heard it doubted by those who are not perhaps acquainted with the country.

Manchester has many marshes and moors around it, and a few words on the formation of these interesting features may not be out of place. We have Chat Moss, Carrington Moss, Sliddens Moss, Westend Moss, Armfield and Spond Moors, and ever so many more in the immediate neighbourhood. In the districts round Manchester there would evidently in remote times be many shallow sheets of surface water where no great subterranean sinkings had occurred—shallow at the sides, and perhaps not more than 12ft. or 14ft. deep anywhere. Now there is a growth of low organic formation called sphagnum, which, when it formed round the edges of the lagoon, would soon spread under water, and, raising its spongy mass, would gradually absorb the shallow waters and form a bed of peat. Some parts of marshes are formed by decaying surface plants such as lilies, water crowfoot, starwort, and duckweed, and we find in all marshes in some parts the trunks of trees. These are probably trees that were growing on some elevated parts of the lagoon, and the rising of the marsh through the growth of sphagnum or some kindred plant has invaded their roots and the trees have fallen. In Canada I have seen both causes at work. Passing through one of the lanes on the north side of Lake Ontario, there was a large space covered with tree stems slightly blackened, that lay over each other in all directions, and a green moss of rapid, spongy growth was forcing its way up. In some parts it had just begun to imbed some portions of the trunks, though

others were high and dry. The whole area, which by this time is, I should think, a peat moss, did not cover more than a few square miles, and its history was this. The rapid growth of a Canadian forest does not leave much time for roots to form, unless, as in some timber limits, the trees are thinned out, in the ratio of ten or twelve to one. It seemed that during a hot July day, when the undergrowth had become exceedingly dry, there was what is so common in America—a forest fire; but it just swept over the tops of the dry grass, and was out before the stems could ignite. Copious rains fell; the roots wanted the slight support they had, and the trunks fell like a house of cards all through the forest. Then pools settled, mosses grew, and the foundation of a morass was laid.

The antiseptic qualities of the moss are remarkable, for on Carrington Moss even the silvery line of the birch bark is found in excavations, and it is said that when it is drained the seeds and flowers of bog plants are found almost as fresh as when they fell, and that birch trees will spring up from long-hidden seeds. We know that it is the Irish bog that has preserved to us the forms of the elk and the great primæval ox; in many instances the ligaments and tissues are preserved in apparent entirety. Nothing is more remarkable in these marshy lands than the fondness of the inhabitants for them. The people are quite as much attached to their morasses as the dwellers in the mountain heights of Central Europe are to their hills, and this we find very easily if we enter into conversation with any of the older inhabitants who settle round those of South Lancashire. Rogers says, in speaking of Holland, that it was a republic against which the elements were fighting; the land the people fought for had to be renewed day by day, and yet "they constantly cultivated the arts of peace, producing amidst all their difficulties not only the greatest seamen, but the greatest lawyers, the greatest physicians, the most accomplished scholars, the most skilful painters, and statesmen as wise as they were just." To this tribute Rogers might have added that while they achieved this greatness they were fighting daily battle against all the powers of Spain, fighting continually up to their knees in water, suffering

defeat after defeat from the overwhelming Spanish forces, but never conquered, even Alva and his armies at last giving up the task of subduing them in despair. We have in South Lancashire descendants of many of the men who fought so stubbornly in the Low Countries, and many of the settlers' words and idioms are preserved, though these may perhaps be made more apparent in an article on Tim Bobbin, the celebrated Lancashire poet. There were until recent years, when drainage altered the face of these districts, some of the rarest plants in the country, as well as birds



AGDEN HALL.

that are now seldom met with in any part of England, such as the redshank and the ruffs and reeves; even the great solitary snipe was by no means uncommon in the marshes round Manchester.

From Carrington the road that leads to Agden through Bollington is very pleasant, and Agden Hall itself is a building full of historical interest. It was the seat at one time of a branch of the Venables family, who were among the principal houses in Cheshire, but have entirely died out in name, though some representatives in the female lines still exist. The Venables were a race of warriors,

and there hardly seems to be any great event in English history, from the Barons' War of Henry III.'s time till the last of the line expired, many years ago, in which they were not concerned. The Barons' War, as it is popularly called, was simply a dispute for supremacy between the King and the barons, and ended in the latter laying the foundations of our own Parliamentary system. Sir Richard Venables was found on the side of the King in these struggles, and his son, Sir William Venables, was a conspicuous leader in the wars of Edward I., when so many nobles refused to join his standard. We find in a third generation after this that a Venables was Constable of Cheshire, which implies a very high office indeed. Another Venables fought on Flodden Field; he was the Baron of Kinderton, and his prowess was extolled in ballads at the time. Sir Richard Venables was slain at Shrewsbury, fighting on the side of Mortimer, whose cause so many of the Cheshire gentlemen espoused. Perhaps the reason for this was that, according to the new mapping out of England, Cheshire would adjoin Owen Glendower's territory, and be almost the headquarters of Hotspur's domain. In "Henry IV.," act 3, scene 1, Glendower says :

Come, here's the map. Shall we divide our right
According to our threefold order ta'en?

Mortimer. The Archdeacon hath divided it
Into three limits very equally :
England, from Trent and Severn hitherto,
By south and east, is to my part assign'd;
All westward, Wales, beyond the Severn shore,
And all the fertile land within that bound,
To Owen Glendower; and, dear coz, to you
The remnant northward, lying off from Trent.

In these lines we may gather many reasons why so many of the Cheshire gentlemen espoused the cause of Mortimer. In later days the head of the house was slain at Blore Heath, in Staffordshire, and with him ended the male line of the Venables. The separate title of Baron of Kinderton seems to have died out with Peter Venables in 1676, but it still pertains to Lord Vernon, who through a female line represents the oldest branch of the house.

Unhappily the old Hall of Kinderton was taken down in 1760. The only residence that can be connected with this ancient family is Agden Hall, a beautiful country seat, now occupied by Mr. Charles Lister. There are some charming views in the park, which occupies exactly the same acreage as Rostherne Mere. In speaking of the Barons of Kinderton, it may be interesting to note that it was they who kept to the last their high-handed prerogative of Baron's Court. There has been much discussion among antiquaries regarding these courts, but it would seem that the last extreme sentence was pronounced at the court of the Baron who owned Kinderton and Agden, and this was so lately as 1597, or not 300 years ago, when one Hugh Stringer was tried at the Baron's Court and sentenced to death. The Venables of Agden are now represented by Sir George Chetwode, of Market Drayton.

The name of Agden has been variably spelt as Aketon, Acton, and Agden. In Henry III.'s time the owner was one Simon de Lee, whose grand-daughter was married to William. He inherited the property, and assumed the name of Aketon in 1270. The estate passed through many ownerships, until it has arrived at the present proprietor, Sir George Chetwode, whose principal seat is at Oakley, near Market Drayton. The baronetcy is a very old one, dating back to the days of Queen Anne. Agden Hall was the residence of Sir Thomas S. Bazley from 1855 to 1867. He is the second baronet, and the son of Sir Thomas Bazley, who represented Manchester in Parliament, and was chairman of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. During his occupancy he made some considerable additions to the mansion, and erected an astronomical observatory, in which he placed an eight-inch refracting telescope. From this on a bright day it is quite easy to see the clocks in Manchester and the headlands of no fewer than eight counties. The grounds and gardens are kept up by Mr. Lister in admirable order, and the park affords in its limits a very good supply of game.



WYTHENSHAWE HALL.

WYTHENSHAWE.

WYTHENSHAWE HALL lies some twenty minutes' walk from Northenden station, and the road is very pleasant. Northenden village is old and rural, and one of the hundreds of retreats that are available for Manchester residents to go to for a holiday. The church has unfortunately been over-restored, and has the appearance of a new building, though, to repeat the oft-told tale, the amount of money expended upon it would have preserved the ancient building entire and in abundant strength, without a passer-by ever knowing that it had been touched. It is dedicated to St. Wilfred, and the living is in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Chester. At the dissolution of the monasteries, when the abbey church of St. Werburgh was made into Chester Cathedral, this portion of the abbey possessions was granted to the new See. The church contains a chapel belonging to the Tattons, of Wythenshawe, and there are several monuments commemorative of members of that ancient family. The rebuilding of the church was commenced by the Rev. E. R. Johnson, and was not completed when he was promoted to the bishopric of Calcutta. It was then carried out by the Rev. Edward Leathes Deacle, who was for some years the popular precentor of Chester Cathedral. Wythenshawe Hall, though it has many of the old parts remaining, has rather a builder's villa character about it, as the illustration will indicate. But it is situated in beautiful park-like grounds, and there are noble plantations round it. The country is somewhat flat, but a delightful shallow valley takes Baguley Brook past Wythenshawe. There was once a chapel in connection with the hall, but every trace of it has gone. In this it resembles many other East Cheshire halls; to these a domestic chapel was a more necessary adjunct than, I think, in other parts of England. Some yet remain, and are models everything an artist could desire for beauty.

The Tattons of Wythenshawe represent a very old family. They are a collateral branch of the Tattons, of Tatton, and Robert Tatton would seem to have established more securely in Wythenshawe the ancient branch of the family. He married a sister of William Massie, of Coddington (a family now represented by Admiral Massie, of Chester), at the time when the ruthless foreigner, Margaret of Anjou, was disturbing all the quiet of the north of England to gratify her reckless ambitions. There was a fine old mansion at Coddington, a noble example of the black-and-white which distinguishes Cheshire, but this was pulled down about the year 1800 all excepting the gateway, for what reason it is difficult to say, as it was not rebuilt. The Tatton pedigree after this points to alliances of the family with almost all the ancient houses of this part of the country. Robert's son William was married to a daughter of William Davenport, of Bramhall. He had no family, and the next brother, Robert, was a priest in holy orders, and the estates devolved upon the third son, John, who also married into the family of Davenport, and left a successor, Robert, who married a daughter of Booth, of Dunham. And so the long pedigree goes on to the time of Robert Tatton, who was born in the same year that James was transferred from the Scottish to the English throne. At the age of thirty-nine he served the office of high sheriff of Cheshire—an office which then had even more weight than it has at present. He was, like the majority of his neighbours, a staunch Royalist, and early took up arms in defence of the unpopular cause. When Colonel Duckenfield was marching from Nantwich upon Mr. Leigh, of Adlington, and Tatton had already placed Wythenshawe in a state of defence, we learn from Burghall's diary that the utmost had to be made of the means which were at the disposal of the besieged, for the garrison only consisted of Mr. Tatton and "some gentlemen," with a party of soldiers who had "quarter for life." The stock of provisions, however ample for a country house, had a limit, and it is said that the store of ammunition was but small, though in those days large country houses were supplied with proper means of defence. On the 14th of February Adlington Hall capitulated to Colonel Duckenfield, the future governor of Chester

Castle, and he marched with his forces through Handforth and Cheadle to the reduction of Wythenshawe. As the garrison showed signs of a determined resistance, two pieces of ordnance were brought from Manchester, and the hall walls were not proof against such engines as these. Many years ago, in making some alterations at Wythenshawe, the workmen discovered six skeletons. They were lying close together, and had evidently been carefully buried. These, there is no doubt, were the skeletons of soldiers who had fallen during the siege and who were buried in the house. It is recorded that on the day when the house surrendered, February 25, a Parliamentarian was on the top of the park wall, and a servant girl who had observed him went to the guard and begged for a firelock to try her maiden hand at a shot. She was greatly surprised to see the man fall. The victim of her shot was, it would appear, a Captain Adams, who, as the records state, "fell at the siege of Wythenshawe," and was "slayne February 25, 1643:4." There is a memorandum that he was buried in Stockport, February 25. Mr. Tatton compounded for his estate for £707 13s. 4d. This must have been a heavy fine, for in 1622 Webb speaks of the Tattons as being "much eclipsed by troubles and encumbrances, whereunto greatest estates are oft subject." Mr. Tatton had married in his twenty-third year Anne, daughter and co-heiress of William Brereton, of Ashley, and had a family of four sons and two daughters. The family then seem to have occupied the quiet position of country gentlemen, and mixed very little in public affairs: but in 1747 William Tatton, of Wythenshawe, married the daughter of John Egerton, of Tatton, for his second wife, who eventually, through the death of her brother Samuel, was heiress of Tatton. Mr. Tatton assumed the name of Egerton on acquiring the vast estates of his wife. They had one son, William, and a daughter, Elizabeth, who married Sir Christopher Sykes. Their son, Sir Tatton Sykes, has become almost an historical character in England; as a Yorkshireman said on seeing a memorial in the form of a village church in memory of his wife, "There will be haply a vast number of Sir Tatton Sykeses, and the more the better, but there will only be one 'Sir Tatton.'" He was

up each morning by daylight, and had a breakfast of milk and apple-tart. He rode to the kennels fifteen miles away, and in the season spent the day in hunting, or else hedging or ditching with his tenantry. Yet, unlike many of his fellow squires, he was rigidly abstemious. William Tatton married twice. His first issue all died. His second wife was the daughter of Wilbraham Booth, of Lathom. The estates were separated as before, and his eldest son became Wilbraham Egerton, of Tatton, while to the second the Wythenshawe estates passed. Sharston gave the name to a family that is extinct. Sharston Hall was near Wythenshawe, and in its place now stands Rosehill, the seat of Sir Edward Watkin.



M E R E .

A QUIET country lane leads us from Rostherne to the high road which connects Manchester with Cheshire, and which is part of the great Watling Street that still remains to attest the genius of the Romans as colonisers and settlers, for at their occupation much of Britain, excepting the high lands, was marsh. This was the case even in the time of Severus, fully a century after the Romans had settled in the country. Agricola was, of course, the great civiliser of England, and, as Tacitus says (I must quote from memory), the Britains were of a roving disposition, and very prone to war. Agricola taught them the more pleasant ways of peace. He showed them how to make roads, and how to erect temples, market places, courts, and houses. He praised the diligent and reproached the indolent, and when they had erected all that was necessary for their use "they proceeded to build others for their pleasure." He enumerates theatres, porticoes, galleries, and other structures, including banqueting-rooms, &c.—things that were really almost beyond their requirements. Watling Street, which forms the most important of the Cheshire roads, is one of his creations. It runs south from Manchester, and passes through Stretford until it reaches Altrincham, and then, continuing in a fine sweep, it passes through Mere and Tabley Park until it reaches Northwich, a town of such weird interest that in the present series it has been considered well to go further afield than the twelve-mile radius, and devote a further article to it. I have this morning come from some excavations which are being made at the Chester walls, and I was amazed at the architectural treasures which were revealed—treasures which were almost in their entirety. The friable red sandstone had been embedded in the Chester walls soon after the carvings were chiselled, and when they were this morning brought to the surface the conclusion was irresistible that we have



MERE HALL.

little idea of the high civilisation of the lands that lie between Manchester and Chester in the Roman period. Liverpool in those days was, of course, nowhere—it was not inhabited even by fishermen, only by cormorants and sheldrakes; but the great Watling Street must have presented a succession of Roman villas and of monuments which have passed away, with scarcely a trace left behind. Some relics that are now being turned up remind us of the Palace of Diocletian and the Portico of Octavia and of many other standard types. There can be little doubt that a hundred tessellated pavements lie hidden under a few feet of turf along the highway which separate the cities of Manchester and Chester. In Delamere Forest it would seem that the traces of Watling Street are lost, and whether the small but pleasant villages of Kelsall and Tarvin, which lie two or three miles to the west of the forest, are on it or not I was never able to judge. But our Roman street re-appears at Stamford Bridge, which lies four miles from Chester, and makes a straight run into the city through the Eastgate. The Roman arch which spanned the entrance to it was standing till recent times, and from drawings still extant it would seem to have equalled in stately proportions the Roman gate at Lincoln. But Cheshire has many traces of Roman roads that have evidently disappeared excepting where they had a hard foundation, for Chester was the headquarters of one of the three legions that formed the standing garrison of Britain. There are some authors of great weight, including Lysons, who believe that this road, which connects Manchester with Chester, is in reality older even than the Roman occupation of Britain, and dates back to the time when there was a considerable trade between the latter country and Ireland, for though the Irish were generally at war with each other, almost as bitterly and almost as senselessly as the English were fourteen centuries later on—say during the struggles of the Houses of York and Lancaster—there was a very considerable amount of industry in the country that under a liberal and just government would ages ago have raised the people to wealth and happiness.

When we reach Watling Street from either of the lanes that pass by Rostherne Mere, of which one is called “Green Lane,”

and the other, I think unjustly, "Dirty Lane," we open upon a grand view of the Cheshire hills, though perhaps strictly speaking the term "Cheshire hills" is more commonly applied to the beautiful range that runs through the middle of the county. But to reach Mere we must leave this high land and the woods of Dunham Park for another day. At the eleventh milestone from Manchester we come to four lane ends, and one leads to Millington, which is well worth a ramble on a summer's day. The family of Millington was once seated here. They spelt their name in various ways—Mollington, Mullington, or Millington, but this was only adhering to the custom of the period. There are deeds which convey property and grant copyhold titles not very far from Manchester where on the same parchment the father and the son have attached their signatures, and they have spelt their name differently. But what is this to the case of another Cheshire family, the head of which used to preside at Knutsford and see many Manchester gentlemen there at quarter sessions? In deeds now in possession of the family the name of Mainwaring is spelt in 133 different ways! This amazing total is given in Lysons' "Cheshire." But the Millingtons are no more, and their estates are owned by the Lord of Tatton.

It was on one of the pleasant days of last July which made that month so conspicuous in our weather annals that I visited Mere for the purposes of the present paper. All the air was redolent of hay, and indeed we might have been in the land of Tonquin beans. From Millington to Lymm the road runs over a high ridge of singular beauty. The hedges were filled with many wild flowers, and, as David Copperfield says of the garden behind his Suffolk home, some parts of this road are a "very preserve of butterflies." Indeed, anyone living in Manchester or the neighbourhood could hardly find a more happy hunting ground for making a collection of either moths or butterflies. The distinction between them is very marked. Butterflies go their rounds by day and moths at night. Then the antennæ of butterflies protrude in front and have two little nobs at the tips. But the most obvious difference is the way in which they rest. A butterfly when at rest has its wings

erect and back to back, but a moth folds its wings upon its back and neatly stows its antennæ under them. Of course the commonest form of butterfly we come across here is the white cabbage-butterfly, with its evil but only too just reputation. But some of the rarer and gayer coated ones are quite common along these lanes. Indeed it is said that the "Camberwell beauty," so much prized by collectors, was seen here several times in 1872. The peacock (*Vanessa io*) is very common, and it was amusing to watch it on the ground opening and closing its gorgeous wings, evidently admiring its beauty, for the complex eyes of a butterfly enable it to look in all directions. The red admiral (*Pyrameis atalanta*) may be also seen here later on in the year, and it has the same habit of admiring its colouring and form. The tortoiseshells and the blues and the small copper butterflies are also very abundant. Not only the forms but the habits of these little creatures are interesting.

Brooke of Mere is a branch of the very ancient family of Brooke of Norton. Thomas Brooke, who was living in 1578, married three times, and by his third wife, Eleanor Gerrard, he had a son, Sir Peter Brooke, who purchased Mere in 1652 from John Mere, Esq., and received the dignity of knighthood from Charles II.; but his name does not appear in the list of those who were reserved for the honour of the "Knights of the Royal Oak"—an order which Charles was later on wise enough to abandon. Like his father, Sir Peter married three times—Alice Hulse of Kenilworth, and twice (shades of Weller!) widows, one the relict of William Merbury, of Merbury, and the other the widow of Richard Clayton. His son Thomas had two wives, and from his first descended Thomas Langford Brooke, who contested the borough of Newton against Colonel Patten, then living at that charming abode, Bank Hall, Warrington, which even in the base uses of town offices to which it has come cannot lose its look of quiet dignity. It is perhaps the best of all the works of the architect of the Cambridge senate house. The election addresses and squibs that were issued in the Patten interest have not been preserved, but many of those that were issued for Mr. Brooke are kept, and they show how greatly the result of an election at the end of the last century depended on the

landlords. One handbill tells the electors that it is "time to shake off the vassalage you have laboured under so long," and, after praising the generosity of Mr. Brooke, inquires, "What can be expected from his rival for your favours? When and where were his benevolence and generosity manifested? Not at Newton! or elsewhere;" &c., &c. Another poster tells how a leaseholder was demanded a twenty-four years' purchase for the privilege of adding a life to his lease unless he voted right. An electioneerer tried his hand at verse :

Three hundred years we've been deprived
By Haydock's haughty house
To chuse our representative,
But take what tyrants chuse.

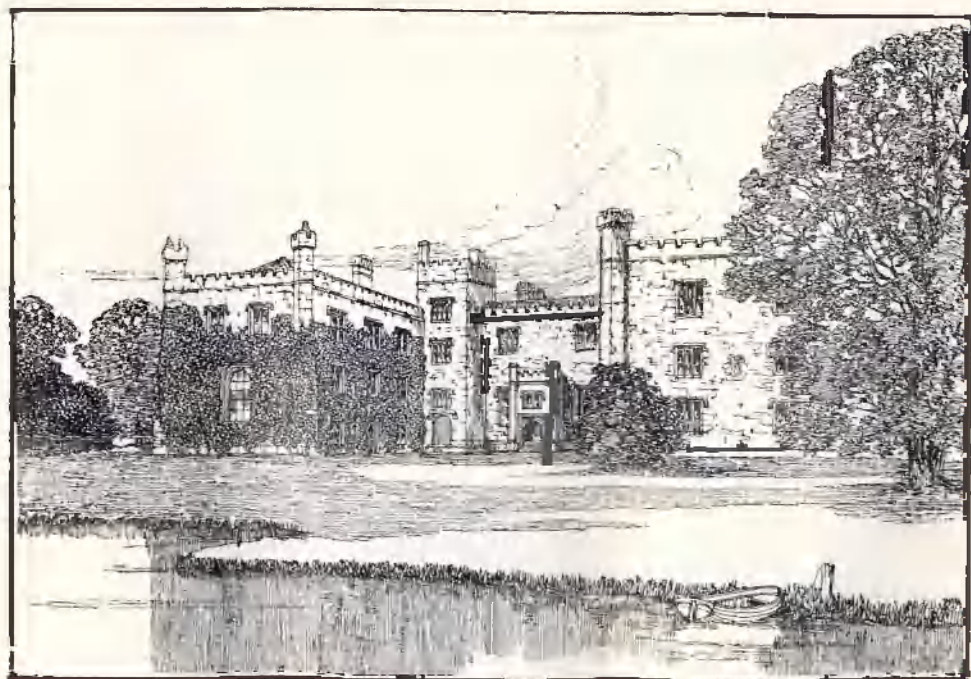
Then be not basely bought or bribed,
But spurn despotic sway ;
Your independence now maintain,
And Brooke shall win the day.

Of course we have only the Brooke version of the case, as the Patten side is lost, but the election took place in 1797, and proceeded with great energy. Placards were not then run off as they are now at election times ; they were as a broad-wheeled wagon to an express train. Every detail brings to mind the immortal pictures of Hogarth—"The Canvass," "The Polling," and "Chairing the Member." Appeals to patriotism and independence were made frantically on both sides. The polling lasted four days, and the money spent was so great that for a time even the great houses of Brooke and Patten had to economise. Yet it would seem that Brooke had inherited through his mother, in addition to Mere, the large property of her father, Joseph Langford, of Antigua. Now, when we consider that in all the votes for Mr. Brooke were thirty-nine and for Colonel Patten thirty-seven, we may form a faint, though only a faint, idea of the halcyon days that the "free and independent" must have enjoyed. But in those days it was considered right for a borough with only two voters to return a member—as right as franking letters, or the many old privileges of recent years—tampering with which, it was considered, would

endanger the stability of England itself. Mr. Brooke would seem to have been perfectly satisfied with things as they were. Writing an address from Mere Hall, he says : " I have the highest veneration for our present happy Constitution, which I will ever support " (!) The finest oak in the county is said by Colonel Egerton Leigh to be at Mere, " abutting the road from Mere town to Tabley ; " and he adds, " In old Mere park is the ruin of an enormous oak, possibly coeval with the Druids."

Nothing can be more imposing in English lane scenery than the point of Watling Street which is intersected by the road that leads from Knutsford through High Leigh on to Grappenhall and Warrington. There are parks on all sides, and Mere Park joins the vast park of Lord Egerton of Tatton. Indeed, this part of Cheshire is more fully studded with the estates of the gentry than any part of England, if perhaps we except the southern part of Buckinghamshire. The old Hall of Mere, which formerly had a brick exterior is now whitened over, and it is probably improved in outward appearance in consequence. It forms the illustration to the chapter and it is charmingly situated in a well-wooded park. This was the residence of the Brookes of Mere, but in 1834 they left it for a new mansion of much larger dimensions, which was built on the other side of the road, near the large Mere that has given the name to the hamlet and to the family of Mere. And the change is greatly for the better, so far as scenery is concerned. The banks of the lake, which is entirely enclosed in the park, are undulating and delightfully wooded, and the windows of the new Hall command a beautiful view of the Cheshire range of hills that has been alluded to already.





TOWNELEY HALL.

TOWNELEY HALL.

TOWNELEY HALL, which lies a little to the south of Burnley, is a very noble mansion. The park in which it is situated is large and studded with venerable oak trees, and there are few residences indeed in England that have about them a more baronial air than Towneley Hall. Formerly it was a complete quadrangle, but about a hundred years ago Charles Towneley removed the south side, which contained the chapel and sacristy, with library over, and he rebuilt it with venerating care on its present site. The panellings and stonework and everything that might be supposed to be consecrated were carefully preserved entire. The walls of the house are of great strength, being in the ancient parts more than six feet in thickness. The hall lies in a country which is full of picturesque scenes, and the Yorkshire moors are only a few miles distant. There are many quaint farmhouses in the neighbourhood, and there are churches which have never appeared in any work on architecture, but which have details and examples such as would be quite sufficient to illustrate and explain a complete glossary of Gothic architecture.

The history of the Towneley family is interesting not only to Lancashire, but to England itself, and is one unbroken record of gentlemen and scholars. They may have erred in their adherence to the unworthy House of Stuart, and, indeed, they suffered—perhaps out of proportion to their acts—for their loyalty to that cause; but if Charles Edward Towneley was decapitated and his head exposed on Temple Bar, he was a true and faithful man. Dr. Whitaker, the lively and painstaking historian of Whalley, took very great trouble to trace the actual origin of the Towneley family, and he has presented us with some startling results. He says that Spartlingus, who was the first Dean of Whalley, lived in 896, when Alfred was on the throne, that four Deans of Whalley

were his heirs and successors, and that Robertus, the fourth dean had three sons. Godfrey married a daughter of Roger de Laci, Constable of Chester, who granted him two bovates of land in Tunleia (Towneley), with everything built upon or belonging to it, and with liberty to hunt there "with all manner of chase of wild beasts," &c. Godfrey had two sons, both deans of Whalley, and his grandson first used the present arms of the Towneley family. Sir Richard Towneley was knighted by Lord Stanley in Scotland in 1481. Sir John Towneley, who lived in 1500 and died at a great age about 1540, was a man memorable in his day and generation, and he increased the Towneley estates very considerably. He founded the chantry of St. Mary's at Burnley, and built the family choir. He had the good sense to avoid identifying himself with an insurrection in the north which was disastrous to his friends and relatives. This was the Pilgrimage of Grace, an attempt to regain the Catholic supremacy. Sir Richard married Frances Wymbish, a great Lincolnshire heiress, and as he left one daughter who succeeded to the now large estates, Mary Towneley was properly regarded as a great Lancashire prize. She selected her cousin, John Towneley, from among her suitors, so that the Towneley estates remained still in the old family. John Towneley was a devoted adherent of the "old religion," as it is still termed in Lancashire, and suffered much in consequence. There is in the long gallery at Towneley an exceedingly interesting series of family portraits, extending from the date when the Queen Eleanor crosses beautified the land, to the present day, and in this is one of John Towneley, with his wife and children. Beneath the portrait is a curious record of his sufferings and losses. "This John, about the 6 or 7 yere of her Ma.tie yt now ys for professing ye Apostolicall Catholick Romain faith, was imprisoned first at Chester Castell, then sent to Marshalsea, then to York Castell, to ye blockhouses in Hull; then to the Gatehouse in Westminster, then to Manchester, then to Broughton, in Oxfordshire, then twice to Elie, in Cambridgeshire. And so now of : 73 : years old and blinde, is bounde to appear and to kepe within five myles of Towneley his house, who hath since ye statute of 23 : paid into

ye Exchequer XX, £ ye month, and doth still, yt theer is paid allready above Five M.£ [£5,000] 1601." His grandson, Christopher Towneley, spent a long life of leisure in transcribing the ancient evidences and charters of Towneley and Burnley and all the surrounding neighbourhood. Those were the days of painstaking research, and the result of his labours is preserved still in the library of Towneley Hall. It comprises twenty-two folio volumes. Charles Towneley died in 1621, and is buried in St. Clement's Church, Strand. His son, Charles Towneley, who succeeded him, espoused the Royal cause very warmly, and joined Rupert's forces when they were opposed by Lord Manchester, but he fell at the battle of Marston Moor, where the Royal cause was virtually lost. Charles Towneley's wife survived him for many years, and died at the advanced age of ninety-one. We now come to a distinguished scholar in his eldest son's heir—Richard Towneley. He was an astronomer, and a mathematician as well, and addressed a very able letter in Latin to the Royal astronomer, Flamstead, on the eclipse of the sun. At the Restoration he was compelled to sell Norton Hall and the vast estates that surrounded it in order to repair all the losses the family had sustained for recusancy and loyalty to the Crown. This was the property that came to the family through the heiress of Wymbish. Two of his grandsons became notable, but in how different a way! John Towneley was born in 1697, and as he was destined for the law he was placed in the office of the celebrated Salkeld, but he afterwards entered the French service. He was present at the siege of Philippsburg, in Germany, which had rather a memorable history. It was founded by Philip von So'ern after the Thirty Years' War, and taken by the French in the summer of 1734. Twice again it was besieged by the French, and in 1799 under Bernadotte, and after the siege was raised it was renewed some months later on and again raised. John Towneley was present at the siege of 1734, and was by when Marshall Berwick was killed. He was tutor to the Chevalier St. George, and he was also a very brilliant scholar. He translated "Hudibras" into French. His brother Francis was much less fortunate, and it does seem as though the evil genius of the House

of Stuart could never be exorcised nor cease from troubling. Charles Edward in 1745 made a reckless attempt to possess himself of the crown. Francis Towneley was, according to Green, the only Lancashire squire who joined the Pretender, and, however misguided, he was a worthy gentleman. He was executed in 1746, and his head was placed on Temple Bar.

But, coming to later times, the name of Towneley is known all over the kingdom through the accomplished antiquarian and scholar, Charles Towneley. He spent many years in Rome, and made a collection of bronzes and marbles and terra-cottas at great expense. The British Museum became possessed of these, the Towneley collection being purchased for £28,200, a sum probably very considerably below what it cost. He died without issue, and I copy the concluding paragraph from a volume of Burke, now more than half a century old: "Charles Towneley dying unmarried, his estates devolved upon his only surviving brother, Edward Towneley Standish, Esq., of Standish, who thus became likewise of Towneley. He married Anne, daughter of Basil Thomas Eccleston, Esq., of Eccleston, but dying without issue the Standish and Towneley properties were divided, the former passing to his nephew, Thomas Strickland, Esq., and the latter to his uncle." We have all seen in recent papers that a claimant to the property has come forward from America, and we have read his narrative; but the only point decided so far by the judge is that the case must proceed. The Towneleys belong to a class that is almost confined to England, and is well represented in Lancashire and Yorkshire—country gentlemen with revenues which would rank among the largest in the Upper House; ancient pedigrees that few even there can lay claim to, and great ancestral residences. Within the present century peerages have been refused by some of these on the ground that a new name and title would lessen their social standing and dignity.

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