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James Croston**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HISTORIC SITES OF LANCASHIRE AND
CHESHIRE ***

HISTORIC SITES
OF
Lancashire and Cheshire.

A WAYFARER'S NOTES IN THE PALATINE COUNTIES,
HISTORICAL, LEGENDARY, GENEALOGICAL,
AND DESCRIPTIVE.

BY
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"Nooks and Corners of Lancashire and Cheshire,"
etc., etc.

JOHN HEYWOOD,
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TO
JOHN LEIGH, Esq.,
OF
THE MANOR HOUSE, HALE, CHESHIRE,
THE PRESIDENT AND
ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE
REPRINTING OF THE RARER POETICAL LITERATURE
OF THE SPENSERAIN AGE,
IN TESTIMONY OF LENGTHENED FRIENDSHIP

AND LITERARY OBLIGATION,
AND
IN APPRECIATION OF HIS EFFORTS
TO RESCUE FROM OBLIVION THE LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS
WHICH CAST THE HALO OF ROMANCE ROUND MANY OF
THE OLD HALLS AND MANOR HOUSES OF
LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE,
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED WITH
THE BEST WISHES OF HIS SINCERE FRIEND,
THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

THE favourable reception accorded both by the Public and the Press to a former work—*NOOKS AND CORNERS OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE*—has encouraged the Author to prepare the present volume, which is issued with the hope that it may be found not less worthy of acceptance. Like the one which preceded it, it illustrates, in a certain degree, the history and romance of the two Palatine counties, the Author's aim having been to give to particular localities an individuality and freshness, by presenting in an entertaining and popular form the "sites" of remarkable scenes and incidents of bygone days. "England," says a well-known writer, "is pre-eminently the country (compared with the rest of Europe) in which the monuments that embody historical associations, and link the present with a far-reaching past are most thickly strewn;" and in Lancashire and Cheshire the soil is plentifully studded with the memorials of ancient days, that stand out in refreshing and instructive relief among the crowding evidences of modern power and civilisation—places hallowed by associations and as the homes of those whose memories we would not willingly let die, and scenes that are identified with much of the history, tradition and romance of the centuries that are gone. No pretention is made to what is commonly called the dignity of history, which usually means the placing of important personages and great events in prominent relief without regard to minor incidents or the relations the figures in the background bear to the occurrences recorded, the Author's purpose having been rather to combine with well-attested facts, topographical description, personal narrative and local legend, and to snatch from Oblivion's spoils the shadowy fragments of tradition that have floated down through centuries of time—things that the ordinary historian casts aside as unworthy of his notice, but which, though oftentimes inexact in detail, are generally founded upon a substratum of fact, and tend therefore to throw additional light on human thought and action in the past.

The agreeable duty remains for the Author to express his obligations to those friends who, by information communicated and in other ways, have aided him in his enterprise. His thanks are due to Miss Abraham, of Grassendale Park, Liverpool; the Rev. Edward J. Bell, M.A., Rector of Alderley; John Leigh, Esq., The Manor House, Hale; Thomas Helsby, Esq., Lincoln's Inn, the learned Editor of "Ormerod's Cheshire;" J. P. Earwaker, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., Pensarn, Abergele, the historian of East Cheshire; Thomas Middleton, Esq., Springfield, Adlington; Edward T. Cunliffe, Esq., the Parsonage, Handforth; Mr. John Owen, Mile End, Stockport; and Mr. D. Bennett, Shakspeare Terrace, Ardwick.

UPTON HALL, PRESTBURY, CHESHIRE,
SEPTEMBER, 1883.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I	
Swarthmoor Hall and the Founder of the Society of Friends	<u>1</u>
CHAPTER II	
Old Alderley and its Memories—The Stanleys—Edward Stanley, Pastor and Prelate—The Home of Dean Stanley	<u>50</u>
CHAPTER III	

Rivington and the Lords Willoughby—The Pilkingtons—The Story of a Lancashire Bishop	104
CHAPTER IV	
Handforth Hall—The Breretons—Sir William Brereton	171
CHAPTER V	
Newby Bridge and the Lake Country—An Autumn Day at Cartmel—The Priory Church	249
CHAPTER VI	
Disley—A May Day at Lyme—Lyme Hall and the Leghs	278
CHAPTER VII	
"Jemmy Dawson" and the Fatal '45	397
CHAPTER VIII	
A Morning at Little Moreton	431
CHAPTER IX	
Wardley Hall	448
L'Envoi	483



ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
SWARTHMOOR HALL	4
GEORGE FOX'S BIBLE	4
GEORGE FOX'S CHAIR	9
ULVERSTON CHURCH	16
AUTOGRAPH OF MARGARET FELL	22
GEORGE FOX'S MEETING HOUSE	22
MEETING OF FOX AND CROMWELL	29
AUTOGRAPH OF THOMAS FELL	30
FAC-SIMILE OF FOX'S HANDWRITING	37
GATEWAY, LANCASTER CASTLE	37
AUTOGRAPH OF WILLIAM PENN	40
AUTOGRAPH OF DANIEL ABRAHAM	48
DEAN STANLEY	50
ALDERLEY CHURCH	55
ALDERLEY SCHOOL	59
ALDERLEY RECTORY	62
AUTOGRAPH OF EDWARD STANLEY	92
AUTOGRAPH OF THE BISHOP OF NORWICH	95
AUTOGRAPH OF DEAN STANLEY	103
RIVINGTON CHURCH	127
INTERIOR, DURHAM CATHEDRAL	151
DURHAM CASTLE	158
NANTWICH	211
AUTOGRAPH OF SIR WILLIAM BRERETON	217
SIR WILLIAM BRERETON	245
THE "SWAN," NEWBY BRIDGE	248
LYME HALL	281
WINDMILL AT CRESCY	292
AUTOGRAPH OF SIR PETER LEGH	361
AUTOGRAPH OF RICHARD LEGH	367
TRAITORS' GATE, THE TOWER	371
LEGH ARMS	383
MR. BYROM'S HOUSE AT THE CROSS	398



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HISTORIC SITES
OF
LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.
CHAPTER I.



HE traveller who, by chance, finds himself in the quaint old town of Ulverston with a few hours at his disposal will find no difficulty in occupying them pleasantly and profitably. In the busy capital of Furness he is on the very threshold of that great storehouse of English scenic beauty, the Lake Country; almost at his feet is the broad estuary of the Leven, and beyond, spreads Morecambe Bay with its green indented shores, presenting alternately a flood of waters and a trackless waste of shifting sand. In that pleasant region there is many a picturesque corner, many a place of historic note, and many an ancient building that wakes the memories of bygone days.

One of the historic sites, and certainly not the least interesting, is within the compass of a short half hour's walk—Swarthmoor Hall, for years the resort, and, for a time, the home of George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends; and scarcely less interesting is the primitive-looking little structure that stands within a few hundred yards of it, the first regularly constituted meeting-house in which Fox's disciples, the "Friends of Truth," or the "Children of Light," as they were indifferently called, worshipped. The locality is one he always loved. Here he gained his most enthusiastic converts, achieved his greatest triumphs, and suffered his severest persecutions; it was here, too, he won his faithful wife, and here, also, in the later years of his life, he loved to retire to recruit his weakened energies and prepare himself for a renewal of his arduous work.

It was a warm summer's evening when we set forth upon our short pilgrimage; the air was unusually clear, a dreamy quietude spread around, and the sun, as it declined towards the west, glowed grandly upon the distant woods and fells. As we slowly mounted the ascending road we could see the lonely sands gleaming in the mellow light, and the broad expanse of water that lay far out in the offing calm and smooth as a mirror; while in rear, and upon the right, the wild mountains stood out in picturesque disorder, dark, rugged, and forbidding, save where here and there a golden radiance brightened their loftiest peaks. A short distance beyond the railway we turned off the road and struck into a pleasant meadow path on the right that soon brought us to a green and bosky dell, at the bottom of which a mountain stream, the Levy Beck, meandered freakishly beneath the embracing trees, prattling with the rough boulder stones and aquatic plants along its course, and telling its admiration in a never-ending song of gladness as it rippled onwards towards the sea. The little bowery, untrodden nook is just the place for fays and fairies to secrete themselves, the spot of all others where John Ruskin would expect to catch sight of Pan, Apollo, and the Muses. Every sight and sound is suggestive of peaceful quietude, and, while the lazy wind stirs the over-arching branches for the warm sunshine to steal through, we are tempted to linger in the vernal solitude, watching the playful ripples on the water and listening to the gentle murmuring around—

Nature's ceaseless hum,
Voice of the desert, never dumb.

An old-fashioned bridge bestrides the stream, and the stump of a tree offers an inviting seat. While we stay to contemplate the scene, the soft zephyrs that play about and the alternate sunshine and shade as the light clouds float overhead induce a dreamy forgetfulness of outer things. Then we are up again, and, crossing the stream, follow a rough and miry cart-way that climbs up the opposite height, and brings us in a few minutes to the breezy summit.

Swarthmoor, for that is the name, possesses historic renown. It lies just where the parishes of Ulverston, Pennington, and Urswick join each other, and is said by tradition to have derived its name from the Flemish general, "Bold Martin Swart," or Swartz, a valiant soldier of noble family, who, in 1487, with Lord Lovel and the Earls of Lincoln and Kildare, encamped here with an invading army of 7,000 German and Irish troops, who had landed at the Pile of Fouldrey with the object of placing Lambert Simnel on the throne of England. But tradition in this instance, is at fault; for the name has a much earlier origin, and is met with as *Warte* as far back as the time of Duke William of Normandy. At a later date, when the soldiers of King Charles had entered Furness and "plundered the place very sore," as the old chronicle has it, Colonel Rigby, the Parliamentary commander, temporarily withdrew from Thurland Castle and started in hot pursuit; and we are told that the Roundheads, after stopping on Swarthmoor to pray, marched on to Lindale, a couple of miles further, where they fought with such vehemence and resolution that the unlucky Cavaliers were put to flight.

But Swarthmoor has other and more peaceful associations. On reaching the summit of the moor, which is now enclosed, you see in front of you a large, irregular, and somewhat lofty pile of building, of ancient date, which, though by no means pretentious in its outward appearance, still wears an air of sober dignity that well accords with the memories that gather round. Evil times have fallen upon it, and it is now occupied as a farmhouse; but in its pristine days it was successively the home of Judge Fell and George Fox. From the high table-land on which it stands you can look round upon a scene but little changed from what it must have been when the father of Quakerism gazed upon it, more than two centuries ago. The old hills and the wild fells still lift their heads to the breezes of heaven; the tide ebbs and flows over those broad sands as it did of yore; there are the same bleak moorlands, the same broad fields, the same crops of golden wheat, and the same sun ripening for the harvest; but how changed are all human affairs since earnest George Fox, "the man in leather breeches," discoursed in Ulverston church, and Judge Fell's wife "stood up in her pew and wondered at his doctrine, for she had never heard the like before."

The hall evidently dates from the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, and, though it has been altered from time to time to meet the wants of successive occupants, it still retains many of the architectural features of that period. The roof is gabled; the windows are square, with the usual latticed panes and heavy mullions and transoms—they have in places been bricked up, but their original position may be determined by the moulded dripstones which still remain—and on one side a square bay of three storeys projects from the line of the main structure, the only feature specially noticeable in the building. Externally the place has a forlorn and neglected appearance, and exhibits unequivocal signs of heedless indifference and unseemly disrespect. It is partially surrounded with barns, shippens, and outhouses, and heaps of refuse and farmyard litter strewn about give an air of meanness and disorder that but ill accord with its earlier associations as the abode of a vice-chancellor and circuit judge.

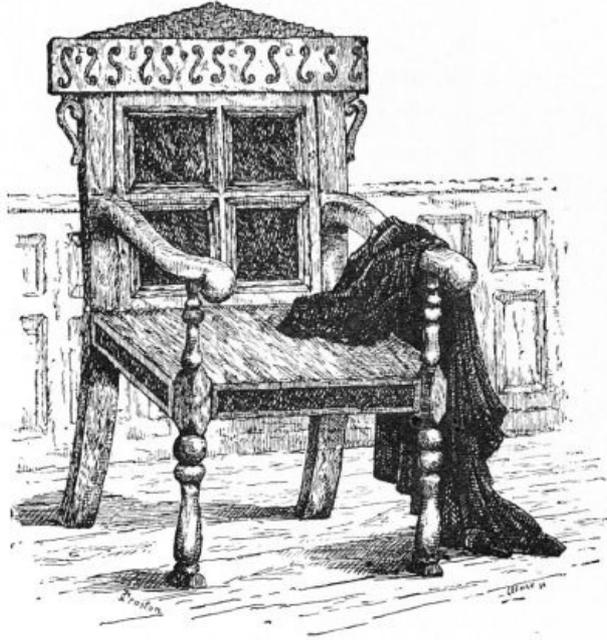


SWARTHMOOR HALL.



We loitered about for some time, and then, pushing back the gate, crossed a little enclosure which seems to have been at some time a garden, but is now only so by courtesy, and entered by a narrow doorway a passage that communicates with the "hall." Though shorn of its original proportions, it is still a spacious apartment; plain, however, to a degree, and exhibiting the gloomy character common to many houses of the Tudor period; it has a plain flagged floor, some remains of oak wainscotting, and a huge fireplace that seems to have been intended to make up in warmth what was lacking in cheerfulness. In this room the earlier meetings of the Friends were held, and here it is said that for forty years they were in the habit of assembling, after which the chapel on Swarthmoor was built by George Fox's order and at his cost. On one side of the room is a deep embayed recess with a slightly raised floor—a cosy nook, with mullioned and quaint latticed windows lighting it on three sides, and here is preserved an old-fashioned oak desk, a treasured relic of the great reformer. A couple of stone steps lead into a small and dimly-lighted room which tradition affirms to have been the study of Judge Fell and afterwards of George Fox. The upper chambers are large and airy, and one of them, more pretentious than the others, exhibits some remains of ancient ornamentation. An old four-post bedstead of carved oak, on which it is said that Fox slept, still remains, and we were told that the privilege of sleeping upon it is never denied to any member of the Society of Friends, but that it is one very rarely availed of. From one of the chambers on this floor a door opens to the outside, though at a considerable distance from the ground, leading to the belief that there has been at some time or other a projecting balcony, and it is said that within the memory of persons still living there was such a projection with a sort of canopy above it. It is commonly affirmed that from this elevated

position Fox was wont to address his followers assembled in the garden below, when the number was too large to admit of their being conveniently accommodated in the house. We were standing upon the self-same spot where the hardy, earnest, and fearless, though imaginative and rhapsodical, Puritan preacher stood more than two hundred years ago, while on the green sward below, the little band of his own faith listened with wondering awe to the outpourings of his prayers and the torrent of his eloquence, and worshipped with silent, contemplative, "waiting" reverence of soul. As we gazed upon the scene the events of that period of tumult and strife crowded upon the memory. A more fitting time for our visit could hardly have been chosen. The shadows were drawing on, and the soft, mellow sunshine fading into the warm grey light of evening, seemed to wrap every object in its dreamy embrace; the distant hills were fading from view and a calm and solemn stillness prevailed that well accorded with the impressive memories associated with the place.



Of the early history of Swarthmoor Hall comparatively little is known. Shortly after the commencement of the troublous reign of the first Charles, it was in the occupation of Thomas Fell, a barrister of Gray's Inn, and afterwards a justice of the Quorum, a worthy legal brother and contemporary of Sir Matthew Hale. Though nominally a Churchman, the owner of Swarthmoor strongly inclined towards Independency, and, on the breaking out of hostilities, took the side of the Parliament party, but he does not appear to have at any time engaged in active military operations, though it is more than probable his house afforded hospitable shelter to Colonel Rigby and his friends, when they and their small army marched to Lindale Close to give battle to the Cavaliers under Colonel Huddleston. The year in which the first shot in that great struggle was fired, an ordinance was addressed by the Parliament to Lord Newburgh, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, requiring him to place certain gentlemen named on the Commission of the Peace for the county, and the name of Thomas Fell occurs among the fourteen mentioned. Three years afterwards (1645) he was returned with his neighbour, Sir Robert Bindloss, of Borwick Hall, as representative in Parliament of the borough of Lancaster. When the Parliament found itself sufficiently powerful to sequestrate the estates of those who had taken up arms in the cause of the King and had refused to take the National Covenant, committees of sequestration were appointed, and on the 29th of August, 1645, Mr. Fell was named on the one for dealing with the estates of "Delinquents" in the county of Lancaster. In 1648 he, with Colonel Assheton and Major Brooke, was deputed to organise the defence of the county against the anticipated advance of the army of the Duke of Hamilton; in the succeeding year he was appointed to the office of Vice-chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and he was also named as one of the judges of assize for the circuit of West Chester and North Wales. His name also occurs in 1650 on the commission for the survey of Church livings and the provision of a competent maintenance for preaching ministers in the several parishes throughout England and Wales. Fell was much esteemed in his own locality, and is described as a wise and learned man, incorruptible as a judge, honoured and feared as a magistrate, and beloved by his neighbours.

In 1632 John Fell took to himself a wife in the person of Margaret Askew, a lady of good family and exemplary piety, the daughter of John Askew, of Marsh Grange, in the adjoining parish of Dalton-in-Furness, he being at the time 34 years of age, and his bride not quite 18. Mrs. Fell inherited an historic name that she was in every way worthy of, her great-grandmother being Ann Askew, the most notable of the victims of the horrible persecutions which dishonoured the closing years of the reign of Henry VIII. Ann Askew was well known at Court, if indeed, she was not actually employed about the person of Queen Catherine Parr, whose Lutheran tendencies were more than suspected, she herself being an avowed believer in the reformed doctrines. She had been married against her will, and had been discarded by her bigoted husband on account of the strength of her convictions. Her religious zeal outran her discretion, and, having expressed her opinions of the doctrine of transubstantiation with imprudent frankness, she was subjected to an examination by the Bishop of London; she escaped on that occasion, but was subsequently

examined before the council, when she was less fortunate, being sentenced to be burnt at the stake in Smithfield after having undergone the torture of the rack. The barbarous scene is thus described in a letter addressed by a London merchant, Otwell Johnson, to his brother at Calais:—"Quondam Bishop Saxon (Shaxton), Mistress Askew, Christopher White, one of Mistress Fayre's sons, and a tailor that came from Colchester or thereabouts, were arraigned at the Guildhall, and received their judgments of my Lord Chancellor (Wriothesley) and the council to be burned, and so were committed to Newgate again. But since that time the aforesaid Saxon and White have renounced their opinions; and the talk goeth that they shall chance to escape the fire for this viage. But the gentlewoman and the other men remain in steadfast mind; and yet she hath been racked since her condemnation, as men say; which is a strange thing in my understanding. The Lord be merciful to us all." Burnet says that he had seen an original journal of the transaction in the Tower, which shows that "they caused her to be laid on the rack, and gave her a taste of it;" but he doubts the accuracy of the statement of Fox, the martyrologist, that the Chancellor, when the Lieutenant of the Tower refused "to stretch her more," threw off his gown, and himself "drew the rack so severely that he almost tore her body asunder." Lord Campbell gives this horrid story without noticing the doubt of Burnet, and adds that Griffin, the Solicitor-general, assisted in the detestable crime. Let us hope that in this case human nature was not so utterly degraded as the somewhat credulous historian of the English martyrs has represented. There was a disgusting scene in Smithfield which soon followed the torture of the high-minded woman, who, amidst her sufferings, would not utter one word to implicate her friends. Upon a bench under St. Bartholomew's Church sit the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Bedford, the Lord Mayor, and other dignitaries. There are three martyrs, each tied to a stake. The apostate Shaxton is to preach the sermon. It is rumoured that gunpowder has been placed about the condemned to shorten their sufferings. The Chancellor and the other high functionaries have no compunction for their victims, but they are in terror for their own safety. Will not the exploding gunpowder drive the firewood where they sit? They hold a grave consultation, and are persuaded to sit out the scene. The gentlewoman and her fellow sufferers die heroically—a noble contrast to the cowardice that quakes in the extremity of its selfishness upon the bench under St. Bartholomew's Church. Such was one of the scenes that marked the closing days of the life of Henry the Eighth.

[1]

Ann Askew had a son, William, who became heir to the Marsh Grange estate on the death without issue of Hugh Askew, on whom it had been bestowed by the crown in 1542. This William had a son, John, the father of Margaret Askew, who, before she had well attained to womanhood, became the wife of Lawyer Fell, and the mistress of Swarthmoor. Margaret Fell, as we shall see, proved herself a worthy great-granddaughter of the martyr Ann Askew.

The period that immediately preceded the great and bitter conflict in which many of the dearest interests of England were involved, and much of her best blood shed, was one of great religious activity and excitement. The seeds sown at the Reformation had ripened, and there had been a steady continuity and successive advance towards Calvinism and the rejection of all ceremonial not directly authorised by Scripture. The Church had been purged of the most flagrant of the Romish superstitions, but the Book of Common Prayer retained many things in the ritual it enjoined which, to those who assumed a superior sanctity and claimed to hold the Bible as their only rule, were held to savour of Popery and idolatry. Preferring to do what was right in their own eyes, they rejected the Liturgy and the Episcopal form of government. They disliked the surplice and would not wear it, and they objected to many of the ceremonies the Church prescribed. There were great divergencies of opinion; the public mind was much exercised with the controversies that arose; and the feeling of hostility was increased by the intolerant and persecuting spirit manifested by the authorities of the day. The Puritans, as they were called, had gained considerable ascendancy, and, though they had not withdrawn themselves from the Church, they had become a powerful party within its pale, and asserted their peculiar views with much tenacity. It is difficult to say what a more moderate policy might have produced, but the determination of Laud to reduce them to submission, instead of serving the interests of the Church, only drove them into more open resistance, and converted religious enthusiasts into political agitators.

Such was the condition of religious parties in England at the time when Thomas Fell and his youthful spouse became the occupants of Swarthmoor Hall. At that time there was living in the little rural hamlet of Drayton-in-the-Clay, in Leicestershire, a weaver of the name of Christopher Fox, a zealous attender on the ordinances of the Church, and who, from his integrity and piety, was known among his neighbours by the *sobriquet* of "Righteous Christer." His wife, Mary Lago, was a woman imbued with strong religious feelings, well read, and of an education superior to that usually possessed by persons in her station of life. To this couple was born a son—George Fox—who at the time of Thomas Fell's marriage with the great-granddaughter of the martyr, Ann Askew, was eight years of age. His childhood and youth were passed in the quietude and seclusion of his Leicestershire home, with little idea of the great world beyond or the questions that were then stirring the minds of men. He grew up silent, pensive, and thoughtful. After receiving a scanty education, he was placed with a relative who combined the several occupations of wool dealer, shoemaker, and grazier. In pursuing his humble calling, young Fox frequently attended the country fairs, but, finding his occupation distasteful, he forsook his wool dealing and sheep-herding and betook himself to the neighbouring town of Lutterworth, the place from which, two centuries and a half previously, John Wycliffe had sent forth his itinerant preachers—the "Poor Priests," as he designated them—who traversed nearly the whole kingdom, disseminating his opinions as they went. Of a taciturn and meditative turn of mind, with no

settled occupation, but possessing an earnest desire for holiness, Fox became unsettled in his views and controversial in his habits. He conferred with one divine after another in his efforts to obtain light and peace—Churchman and Presbyterian, Independent and Baptist, each in their turn, but could not satisfy himself with any. He remarks: "Neither them (the Episcopalians) nor any of the dissenting people could I join with, but was a stranger to all, relying wholly upon the Lord Jesus Christ." As Macaulay says: "He wandered from congregation to congregation; he heard priests argue against Puritans; he heard Puritans harangue against priests; and he in vain applied for spiritual direction and consolation to doctors of both parties.... After some time he came to the conclusion that no human being was competent to instruct him in divine things, and that the truth had been communicated to him by direct inspiration from heaven." He had spent much of his time in studying the Scriptures alone, in the fields and orchards, and in the deep gloom of his native woods, and in this way had acquired a ready aptitude in quoting particular texts. Believing that the time had arrived for promulgating his own peculiar views of Christian truth and ecclesiastical polity, he wandered from place to place disputing with some and rebuking others. In 1647 he began to hold meetings, and astonished those who heard him by his earnestness and fluency of speech. The quiet pastoral regions of the Trent Valley and the Derbyshire hills formed the scene of his earliest labours, and here Quakerism may be said to have had its birth. At Nottingham, seeing the church upon a hill, he went there, and found, as he expressed it, that "the people looked like fallow ground, and the priest like a great lump of earth stood up in the pulpit above." He interrupted the preacher, and for doing so was cast into prison. On regaining his liberty he proceeded to Mansfield-Woodhouse, where he was again "moved to go into the steeple-house and declare the truth to the priest and people;" but the people fell upon him, put him in the stocks, and threatened him with "dog-whips and horse-whips." Continuing his itinerant ministry, we next find him at Derby, where, in accordance with his usual practice, he proceeded to church, and after the service stood up to address the people. For uttering "blasphemous opinions" he was taken to prison, and brought before Justice Bennett, whom he bade to "tremble at the word of the Lord," an expression which caused the magistrate to apply to him the term *Quaker*—a nickname that has ever since attached to his followers, who previously had designated themselves the "Children of Light."

After these rough experiences he visited Yorkshire, traversed the picturesque Wensleydale, Grisedale, and Lunedale, and thence passed into Westmoreland. Here, on the high fells between Kendal and Sedbergh, he preached a sermon memorable in the annals of Quakerism. It was delivered from the summit of a weather-beaten rock adjoining the bleak moorland chapel of Firbank, whither a great company of zealous preachers and laymen had assembled from the surrounding district for a conference. Fox preached a sermon of three hours' duration, and with such earnestness that many of his hearers in their enthusiasm resolved to devote themselves to the work of promulgating his views. In all, it is said that about sixty energetic preachers formed the harvest of this northern mission, who traversed the country on foot, spreading the Quaker doctrines over the entire kingdom, many of them wearing out their lives in the hardships, privations, and persecutions they had to endure. Journeying southwards, Fox climbed to the top of Pendle Hill, which rises within the borders of Lancashire. "As we travelled," he says in his *Journal*, "we came near a very great hill, called Pendle Hill, and I was moved of the Lord to go up to the top of it, which I did with difficulty, it was so very steep and high. When I came to the top, I saw the sea bordering upon Lancashire. From the top of this hill the Lord let me see in what places He had a great people to be gathered. As I went down I found a spring of water in the side of the hill, with which I refreshed myself, having eaten or drunk but little for several days before." The spring is still there, and in the neighbourhood is commonly known even at this day as George Fox's Well.



ULVERSTON CHURCH.

The district comprehended within his view became the scene of his most important labours. He spent several years among the pleasant valleys of the Lune and the Kent, and along the breezy shores of Morecambe Bay. In his wanderings he never missed an opportunity of rebuking the "priests," in their "steeple-houses." At Staveley, close by the foot of Windermere, he disputed with the minister, and was roughly treated in consequence. The same afternoon, at Lindale-in-Cartmel, a picturesque spot a couple of miles north of Grange, he, with more prudence, waited till the service was over before he commenced his harangue. Thence he proceeded to Ulverston; his fame had gone before him, and the people flocked to listen to his utterances. The visit was a memorable incident in his life, for it was the occasion on which he first met the courtly but courageous woman who afterwards became his wife. He was taken by a friend to Swarthmoor Hall, where he stayed all night; the next morning being a fast-day, he attended service at the old church of St. Mary's. When he entered, Lampitt, the Puritan vicar, whom he describes as "a high

notionist, who would make it appear that he knew all things, was singing with his people; but his spirit was so foul, and the matter they sang so unsuitable to their states, that, after they had done singing, I was moved of the Lord to speak to him and the people"—a practice that was sometimes permitted in that age, provided it was done with courtesy and decorum; conditions, however, that Fox did not always observe. It must have been a stirring scene; the tall and powerfully-built "man in leather breeches"—the stern, uncompromising reformer, who had almost turned the religious world upside down—clad in his strange, uncouth garb, wearing his broad-leaved immovable hat—which, by the way, had not then become the accepted badge of Quakerism—his long, lank hair depending upon his shoulders, and his eyes flashing with light as he declaimed against "hypocritical professors," and "hireling priests." Standing on one of the seats, he delivered a stirring address on the necessity of sincerity in religious profession. The people marvelled at his eloquence, and many of them were moved by his earnestness. As he proceeded the fervour increased and rose to a pitch of intense excitement, the heart of many a listener was touched, and the stifled sob and the heaving sigh told of the powerful effect of his utterances. Judge Fell was not there, being away at the time discharging his judicial functions on the Welsh circuit, but his wife, Margaret Fell, was present, and her heart was stirred by the enthusiasm of the preacher. "I stood up in my pew," she says, "and wondered at his doctrine, for I had never heard such before;" and then, after describing the sermon, she adds, "I saw clearly we were all wrong; so I sat down in my pew again, and cried bitterly; and I cried in my spirit to the Lord, 'We have taken the Scriptures in words, and know nothing of them in ourselves.'" Fox's hearers were not, however, all moved by the same spirit. Justice Sawrey, who was amongst the congregation, denounced the intruder, and ordered him to be taken away, but he continued his address until he was forcibly removed, and then preached in the churchyard, when a crowd gathered round, maltreated him, and drove him out. According to his own version his sufferings were cruelly severe. He thus describes in his *Journal* the scene that occurred on the occasion of another of his visits to the "steeple-house" at Ulverston:

The people were in a rage, and fell upon me in the steeple-house before his (Justice Sawrey's) face, knocked me down, kicked me, and trampled upon me. So great was the uproar, that some tumbled over their seats for fear. At last he came and took me from the people, led me out of the steeple-house, and put me into the hands of the constables and other officers, bidding them whip me, and put me out of the town. Many friendly people being come to the market, and some to the steeple-house to hear me, divers of these they knocked down also, and broke their heads, so that the blood ran down several; and Judge Fell's son running after to see what they would do with me, they threw him into a ditch of water, some of them crying: "Knock the teeth out of his head." When they had hauled me to the common moss-side, a multitude of people following, the constables and other officers gave me some blows over my back with willow rods and thrust me among the rude multitude, who, having furnished themselves with staves, hedge-stakes, and holme or holly bushes, fell upon me, and beat me upon the head, arms, and shoulders, till they had deprived me of sense; so that I fell down upon the wet common. When I recovered again and saw myself lying in a watery common, and the people standing about me, I lay still a little while, and the power of the Lord sprang through me, and the eternal refreshings revived me, so that I stood up again in the strengthening power of the eternal God, and stretching out my arms against them, I said with a loud voice: "Strike again! here are my arms, head, and cheeks!" Then they began to fall out among themselves.

Whilst we honour the great Quaker evangelist for the unfaltering testimony he bore to his principles and admire his honesty and fortitude, it must be admitted that he provoked much of the persecution he was subjected to by his obtrusive and intolerant disputations, and his disregard for ministerial authority and ecclesiastical sanctities.

Swarthmoor Hall, the home of the Fells, was then known far and wide for the hospitality of its owner, and to none was a heartier welcome accorded than to the professors and teachers of religion. The evening following his first harangue in the church at Ulverston Fox was a guest within its walls; at the request of his hostess he preached to the family and servants, and with such effect that the whole household became converted to his principles. Two or three weeks afterwards Mrs. Fell's husband returned to his Lancashire home. As he crossed the trackless waste of the Leven Sands, the only way at that time from Lancaster into Furness, a company of his friends and neighbours went out to meet him and apprise him of the events that had occurred at Swarthmoor in his absence. "A deal of the captains," writes Margaret Fell, "and great ones of the county went to meet my then husband as he was coming home, and informed him that a great disaster was befallen among his family, and that they were witched, and that they had taken us out of our religion; and that he might either set them away, or all the country would be undone." The judge, as may be supposed, was greatly concerned at the intelligence and much incensed against the man who had "bewitched" his family and wrought such trouble in his house. Mrs. Fell told her husband the true state of things, and at night Fox, who was still in the neighbourhood, was sent for. On his arrival he answered all his interrogator's objections in so satisfactory a manner that the judge "assented to the truth and reasonableness thereof;" he set forth in detail the points of his new doctrine, and inveighed against the conduct of the clergy. Margaret Fell thus records the result of the interview:—"And so my husband came to see clearly the truth of what he spoke, and was very quiet, that night, said no more, and went to bed. The next morning came Lampitt priest of Ulverston, and got my husband into the garden and spoke much to him there; but my husband had seen so much the night before that the priest got little entrance upon

him." The judge must have been greatly impressed with the arguments of his guest, for from that time he offered no further objection to the Quakerism of his household; though he himself remained a Churchman to the end of his days he was a steady friend to the members of the new sect and its founder on all occasions when it was in his power, and in token of his sympathy gave them permission to hold their meetings in his house, there being no other place in the neighbourhood where they could assemble. "He let us have," said his wife, "a meeting in his house the next first day after, which was the first public meeting that was at Swarthmoor; our meetings being kept at Swarthmoor about thirty-eight years, until a new meeting-house was built by George Fox's order and cost, near Swarthmoor Hall."

*Thy dutyfull wife fell
Draught Margaret Fell*

'8 Feb. 1652

The "new meeting-house" remains to this day, and is still resorted to for religious worship by the Friends of Ulverston and the surrounding district. It is a modest, unpretending structure, standing within a little walled enclosure, and, of course, perfectly unadorned. In the house, which forms part of the structure, is still preserved the Bible given by Fox, with the original chain by which it was fastened to the reader's desk, and also his "great elbow chair."^[2] We passed through the open gate into the flagged space in front to make a sketch of the building, on which at the time of our visit the sun was casting its evening benison of golden radiance. In front is a small gabled porch with a panel over the doorway bearing the inscription:—"Ex dono, G. F., 1688," the year of English freedom. That modest little structure, unostentatiously religious and impressive in its simplicity, was to us more "spirit-moving" than many a more pretentious monument. In that lowly building Quakerism was cradled.



The Quakers may almost be called a Lancashire sect, for the palatine county was the scene of the earliest and most successful labours of the founder, and it was from the immediate district that the largest accessions to their ranks were obtained, results that were no doubt largely due to the influence which George Fox acquired over the household at Swarthmoor, and to the protection and encouragement given to him by Judge Fell himself. After the disorderly scene in Ulverston Church and churchyard, Fox proceeded to the market place, where he was subjected to the same rough treatment, and beaten with sticks until he lost consciousness.

Close behind him, close beside,
Foul of mouth and evil eyed,
Pressed the mob in fury.

On recovering his senses he returned to Swarthmoor, where he found the inmates of the hall busy dressing the heads of the Friends who had tried to protect him from the violence of the mob in the town.

A fortnight afterwards he visited the Isle of Walney, off the adjacent coast, where he met with similar treatment, so that his friends had to hurry him back to the boat for safety; but here they found themselves in a dilemma, for when they attempted to land on the other side the people of Dalton "rose up with pitchforks, flails, and staves, to keep him out of the town, crying 'Kill him, kill him, knock him on the head, bring the cart and carry him away to the churchyard.'" Mrs Fell, hearing of his misfortune, sent a horse to convey him to Swarthmoor, when Thomas Fell issued warrants against his assailants, some of whom deemed it expedient to leave the country. Shortly afterwards warrants were issued by two magistrates, Sawrey and Thompson, against Fox himself for having spoken blasphemy, and he was required to appear at the sessions at Lancaster to answer the charge. Thomas Fell and Colonel West were present, and stood him in good stead on the occasion, pointing out the discrepancies in the evidence and reproving the witnesses. The charge could not be sustained and Fox was liberated, having achieved a triumph in that he had had an excellent opportunity of proclaiming his principles to a large assembly of the local magistracy. After the sessions he held a meeting in the town and gained many converts, among them being Colonel Gervase Benson, Major Ripon, then mayor of Lancaster, and Thomas Briggs,

who afterwards became an active missionary among the Friends and accompanied the founder when he went out to the West Indies in 1671. Having held several meetings in the town, in spite of the threats of the "baser sort of people" to throw him over the bridge into the Lune, he returned to his old quarters at Swarthmoor, but was not long before he found that another information had been laid against him. At the following assize at Lancaster, Windham, the presiding judge, directed a warrant to be issued, but Colonel West, the clerk of assize, spoke boldly in his defence, and resolutely refused to prepare the warrant, and so the matter fell to the ground.

From Lancaster Fox again returned to Swarthmoor, and occupied the closing months of the year (1652) in visiting various parts of North Lancashire and adjoining parts of Westmoreland, exhorting the people, declaiming against "steeple-houses," and unceremoniously interrupting those who taught therein by loudly contradicting their statements of doctrine and proclaiming them to be "hypocritical professors." Before quitting Swarthmoor he addressed several vigorous protests to the local magistrates and ministers, especially those who had been the most active among his opponents, including Sawrey and Lampitt, the vicar of Ulverston, and some of the epistles he was "moved" to write it must be confessed were not remarkable as manifesting a spirit of meekness and forgiveness. Thus he writes to his old enemy, Sawrey:—"Thou was the first stirrer up of strikers, stoners, persecutors, mockers, and imprisoners in the North, and of revilers, slanderers, railers, and false accusers! How wilt thou be gnawed and burned one day, when thou shalt feel the flame, and have the plagues of God poured upon thee, and then begin to gnaw thy tongue because of the plagues! Thou shalt have thy reward according to thy works. Thou canst not escape. The Lord's righteous judgments will find thee out."^[3] Lampitt, the Puritan vicar, he designates "a deceiver, surfeited and drunk with the earthy spirit," and "a right hypocrite in the steps of the Pharisee," adding "when thou art in thy torment (though now thou swellest in thy vanity and livest in wickedness) remember thou wast warned in thy lifetime...."

Having thus cleared his conscience to the priest and people of Ulverston he went into Westmoreland, but returned in the spring of 1653 to his friends in Furness, and about this time he writes in his *Journal*:—"Being one day in Swarthmoor Hall, when Judge Fell and Justice Benson were talking of the news, and of the Parliament then sitting, which was called the Long Parliament, I was moved to tell them, that before that day two weeks, the Parliament should be broken up, and the Speaker plucked out of his chair. And," he adds, "that day two weeks, Justice Benson coming thither again, told Judge Fell, that now he saw George was a true prophet, for Oliver had broken up the Parliament." That event, which will be ever memorable in the annals of England, occurred on the 20th April, 1653; Colonel Worsley, Manchester's first parliamentary representative, on a signal from Cromwell, entered the house with a force of 300 men, expelled the members from their chamber, and "took away the bauble," and so the Long Parliament, which for twelve years, under a variety of forms, had alternately defended and invaded the liberties of the nation, fell by the parricidal hands of its own children without a struggle and without regret.

From Swarthmoor Fox travelled further north, visiting Cumberland, Durham, and Northumberland, where he frequently came in contact with the Baptists, a sect that had anticipated many of the doctrines and much of the system of discipline adopted by the Friends, and many of whom became followers of Fox. In the border city he preached in the Castle, at the Market Cross, and then went into the "steeple-house," where a tumult arose. "The magistrates' wives," he says, "were in a rage, and strove mightily to be at me;" then "the rude people of the city rose and came with staves and stones into the steeple-house, crying 'Down with these round-headed rogues.'" For interrupting the services in the church he was committed to gaol and subjected to many hardships; Wilfrid Lawson, a predecessor, but not an ancestor of the present baronet of that name, who was then high sheriff, "stirred them up to take away his life," and his peace was disturbed at night by "a company of bitter Scotch priests, Presbyterians made up of envy and malice" and "foul-mouthed." He lay in the prison at Carlisle for several months. On regaining his liberty he passed into Westmoreland, and thence to his constant friends, the Fells, of Swarthmoor.

Fox had now fought and won the decisive battles of his life; Quakerism had become an established fact, and had taken a firm hold on the minds of many of the people in the north, and not a few of the converts had begun to preach the new doctrines in other parts of the country. Having, as he considered, concluded his great pioneering work, he took his departure from the hospitable mansion at Swarthmoor in the spring of 1654, and travelled through the midland and southern districts of England. While in his native county, preaching, disputing, and holding conferences, he was taken prisoner by a company of the Parliamentary troopers, and sent by Colonel Hacker to Cromwell under the charge of Captain Drury. When in the presence of the Protector, at Whitehall, he exhorted him to keep in the fear of God; and Cromwell, having patiently listened to his lecture, parted with him, saying, "Come again to my house, for if thou and I were but an hour a day together, we should be nearer one to the other. I wish no more harm to thee than I do to my own soul." Fox found a friend in Cromwell, and on another occasion, when he and some of his friends had been dispersing "base books against the Lord Protector," as Major-General Goffe informed Thurloe, Cromwell sent the Quaker away, on receiving from him a written promise that he would do nothing against his government.

The age was characterised by much religious enthusiasm and extravagance. George Fox and his "quaking men in their leather coats" were becoming formidable from their increasing numbers, and attracted much attention. Their opposition, obstinacy, and self-sufficiency, too, in denying the authority of Presbyteries and Synods, and all ecclesiastical officers, frequently brought them

into collision with the magistrates. So numerous had they become that it has been computed there were at this period seldom fewer than 1,000 of them in prison, some for disturbing the peace, some for refusing to pay tithes, and others because they would not do violence to their principles by taking the oath of allegiance or uncovering their heads in the presence of the magistrates. So frequent and severe were the prosecutions to which the Friends were then subjected that Margaret Fell addressed several letters to Cromwell, drawing his attention to the sufferings they were compelled to undergo. In one of them, written in 1657, she warned the Protector that the wickedness of the oppressor would come to an end, and praying that his understanding might be lightened, and that he might exercise justice and judgment without fear, favour, or affection.

In the three years from 1654 to 1657 Fox travelled over nearly the whole of the south of England and Wales. In the autumn of 1657 he turned his steps in the direction of Swarthmoor, passing through Chester and Liverpool on the way, and calling at Malpas; whence he proceeded to Manchester. His reception in the last-named town he thus describes in his *Journal*:—

Thence we came to Manchester; and the sessions being there that day, many rude people were come out of the country. In the meeting they threw at me coals, clods, stones, and water. Yet the Lord's power bore me up over them, that they could not strike me down. At last, when they saw that they could not prevail by throwing water, stones, and dirt at me, they went and informed the justices in the sessions; who thereupon sent officers to fetch me before them. The officers came in while I was declaring the word of life to the people, plucked me down, and haled me up into their court. When I came there all the court was in disorder and noise. Wherefore I asked, where were the magistrates that they did not keep the people civil? Some of the justices said they were magistrates. I asked them why then did they did not appease the people, and keep them sober? for one cried "I'll swear," and another cried, "I'll swear." I declared to the justices how we were abused in our meeting by the rude people, who threw stones, clods, dirt, and water; and how I was haled out of the meeting and brought thither, contrary to the instrument of government, which said, "none should be molested in their meetings that professed God and owned the Lord Jesus Christ;" which I did. So the truth came over them, that when one of the rude fellows cried "he would swear," one of the justices checked him, saying, "What will you swear? Hold your tongue." At last they bid the constable take me to my lodging; and there be secured till morning, till they sent for me again. So the constable had me to my lodging; and as we went the people were exceedingly rude; but I let them see "the fruits of their teachers, and how they shamed Christianity, and dishonoured the name of Jesus, which they professed." At night we went to a justice's house in the town, who was pretty moderate; and I had much discourse with him. Next morning we sent to the constable to know if he had anything more to say to us. And he sent us word "he had nothing to say to us; but that we might go whither we would." "The Lord hath since raised up a people"—he adds—"to stand for His name and truth in that town over those chaffy professors."

From Manchester he went to Preston, and thence to Lancaster, where, at his inn, he met with his former friend, Colonel West. Shortly afterwards he crossed the sandy shores of Morecambe Bay to Swarthmoor, where, he says, "the Friends were glad to see me;" and, he adds, "I stayed there two first days, visiting Friends in their meetings thereaways."

From Swarthmoor he went through Westmoreland and Cumberland into Scotland, where he remained some time, visiting Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling, Dunbar, the Highlands, and other places; returning through Durham and Yorkshire into Furness, where for a few weeks during the winter he was again the guest of the Fells. In the beginning of 1653 he made another journey into the southern counties, and on that occasion he had another interview with Cromwell—a very brief one, and his last, for it was a few days before the Protector's death. In his *Journal* he tells us something of the great man's appearance at the time when London was gay with ambassadors extraordinary from France, and Mazarin's nephew was assuring the Protector of the profound veneration his uncle had for him—"the greatest man that ever was." But the day was passed for poms and flatteries.

"Taking boat," says Fox, "I went to Kingston, and thence to Hampton Court, to speak with the Protector about the sufferings of the Friends. I met him riding into Hampton Court Park; and before I came to him as he rode at the head of his life guard I saw and felt a waft (or apparition) of death go forth against him; and when I came to him he looked like a dead man. After I had laid the sufferings of the Friends before him, he bid me come to his house. So I returned to Kingston, and next day went to Hampton Court to speak further with him. But when I came he was sick, and—Harvey, who was one that waited on him, told me the doctors were not willing I should speak with him. So I passed away, and never saw him more."

Carlyle thus characteristically comments upon Fox's narrative:—

"I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him." Or in favour of him, George? His life, if thou knew it, has not been a merry thing for the man, now or heretofore! I fancy he has been looking this long while to give it up, whenever the Commander-in-chief required. To quit his laborious sentry-post, honourably lay up his arms, and begone to his rest—all eternity to rest in, George! Was thy own life merry, for example, in the

hollow of the tree, clad permanently in leather? And does the kingly purple, and governing refractory worlds instead of stitching coarse shoes, make it any merrier? The waft of death is not against *him*, I think—perhaps against thee, and me, and others. O George, when the Nell Gwynne defender and two centuries of all-victorious cant have come in upon us, my unfortunate George.



MEETING BETWEEN FOX AND CROMWELL.

Cromwell died on the 3rd September; and in little more than one short month Fox lost another, and that his truest, friend. For some time previously the health of Judge Fell had been declining; on the 8th of October he passed away from the scene of his earthly labours, and a few days later was buried by torchlight in a grave under his family pew, in the old church of St. Mary, at Ulverston.

Writing long afterwards, his widow, Margaret Fell, thus recorded her loss:—

We lived together 26 years, in which time we had nine children, and one that sought after God in the best way that was made known to him. He was much esteemed in this country, and valued and honoured in his day, by all sorts of people, for his justice, wisdom, moderation, and mercy.... He was about 60 years of age. He left one son and seven daughters, all unpreferred; but left a good and competent estate for them.^[4]

Tho: Fell 

By his will, which bears date September 23, 1658, he left various legacies in trust for poor and aged persons in the parishes of Ulverston and Dalton, and also for the maintenance of a schoolmaster at Ulverston. Among other bequests is one to his "very honourable and noble friend, the Lord Bradshaw" (John Bradshaw, the regicide), of "ten pounds to buy a ring therewith, whom I humbly beseech to accept thereof as all the acknowledgment I can make, and thankfulness for his ancient and continued favours and kindness undeservedly vouchsafed unto me since our first acquaintance." Bradshaw did not live long to wear the memento of the departed judge's friendship, for within a year he had found a grave in the mausoleum of kings at Westminster.

Under the provisions of Thomas Fell's will, Swarthmoor Hall, with its appurtenances and fifty acres of land, were reserved to the use of his widow during the remainder of her life, or until such times as she should marry again, when the property was to pass to Daniel Abraham, the husband of his daughter Rachel. Mrs. Fell remained in the occupancy of the old mansion, and the meetings of the Friends were held in the house weekly, as they had been during the judge's lifetime. It was not, however, until after the Restoration that George Fox paid another visit to the place. In 1660, he returned from the south, and, after holding a general meeting for all the Friends in Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire at Arnside, he proceeded once more into Furness, and took up his abode at Swarthmoor; but he had scarcely done so when Major Porter, then mayor of Lancaster, issued a warrant for his apprehension. He was forcibly carried away from the hall to the constable's house at Ulverston, where he remained for the night; and the following morning was conveyed across the sands to Lancaster, when he was committed by Porter on the charge of being "an enemy to the King, and that he had endeavoured to raise a new war, and imbrue the nation in blood again." In vindication of his innocence, Fox denied that he was "a disturber of the nation's peace;" and affirmed that he was "never an enemy to the King, nor to any man's person upon the earth." Margaret Fell, who considered that an injustice was done to herself by his removal from her house, also addressed a letter of remonstrance to "all the magistrates concerned in his wrong taking up and imprisoning;" and, failing to obtain redress, determined on proceeding to London, in order that her case might be laid before the King.

"Having a great family," she says in her "Testimony," "and he being taken in my house, I was moved of the Lord to go to the King at Whitehall; and took with me a declaration, and an information, of our principles; and a long time, and much ado, I had to get to him. But, at last, when I got to him, I told him if he was guilty of these things, I was guilty, for he was taken in my house; and I gave him the paper of our principles, and

desired that he would set him at liberty, as he had promised that none should suffer for tender consciences; and we were of tender consciences, and desired nothing but the liberty of our consciences. Then, with much ado, after he had been kept prisoner near half a year at Lancaster, we got a Habeas Corpus, and removed him to the King's Bench, when he was released."

To send the delinquent Quaker all the way to London guarded by a party of horse was a serious matter, and after much deliberation George Chetham, of Clayton and Turton Tower—a nephew of Humphrey, the founder of the Chetham Hospital at Manchester—who was then sheriff, to avoid the expense of conducting his prisoner, liberated him on his promise to appear before the judges in town on a day fixed. From Lancaster he went straight to Swarthmoor, where he stayed two or three days; and then set out for London, passing through Cheshire and Staffordshire, and holding meetings at several places on the way. When he arrived in London "multitudes of people," he says, "were gathered together to see the burning of the bowels of some of the old King's (Charles I.) judges, who had been hung, drawn, and quartered." The following morning he proceeded to the King's Bench, and, pulling out of his pocket the writ charging him with embroiling the nation in blood and making a new war, presented it to the judges, who, as may be supposed, were a good deal astonished and amused at the inconsistency of paroling a prisoner accounted such a dangerous personage, and permitting him to travel a distance of 250 miles without guard or restraint. None of his accusers appearing, and there being nothing sufficiently serious to warrant his committal, the matter was referred to the King, who at once gave orders for his release.

In the summer of 1663 Fox was again at Swarthmoor, when, after a brief stay, he went over to Arnside to attend a meeting, and thence travelled through Northumberland and Cumberland, returning to the hospitable home of Mrs. Fell in the autumn of the same year. On his arrival he was informed that Colonel Kirkby, a neighbouring justice and a member of Parliament, had, on the preceding day, sent his officers to search the house in the expectation of finding Fox there. Undismayed, Fox went the next morning to the colonel's house, Kirkby Hall, when he found the Flemings, of Rydal, and several other of the neighbouring gentry assembled to take leave of the colonel before his departure to London to attend to his Parliamentary duties. Fox, in the presence of the company, asked if there was any charge against him; and he was told, in reply, that "as he," Colonel Kirkby, "was a gentleman, he had nothing against him. But," he added, "Mistress Fell must not keep great meetings at her house, for they meet contrary to the Act."^[5] A few days later he was again apprehended and conveyed to Holker Hall, the residence of Justice Preston, the brave-hearted Margaret Fell accompanying him; when, after being examined, he was ordered to appear at the sessions at Lancaster. He then returned with Mrs. Fell to Swarthmoor; and shortly afterwards, while the Friends were peaceably assembled at a meeting in the hall, the door was opened, and William Kirkby, of Adgarley, a half-brother to Colonel Kirkby, entered with the constables, exclaiming, "How now, Mr. Fox! You have a fine company here!" and at once proceeded to take the names of those present; any who refused being handed over to the custody of the officers. This proceeding led to Margaret Fell herself being examined and committed for trial. Having traversed from the spring assizes, she was brought up on the 29th June, 1664, her chief offence being that of having had meetings for worship in her house at Swarthmoor. It would appear from the evidence she had received an intimation that, on her giving security to discontinue the meetings, the prosecution would be abandoned; and the offer was again made that, if she would give the required security, the case against her would be dismissed. But she refused, and the jury found for the King. A respite was allowed; but, she remaining obstinate, sentence of premunire was passed against her in September of the same year, and she was committed to prison, where she remained until the summer of 1668. Fox, who was also a prisoner for being a "rebel" and a dangerous character, was for a time more successful, his shrewdness and acumen enabling him to discover several errors in the indictment; but he was immediately questioned again, the oath was tendered and refused, and, being once more put upon trial, he traversed to the next assizes. The sufferings of both were very severe; each prisoner wrote an account of their trials, and the descriptions they give furnish some interesting particulars respecting the condition of the prison at Lancaster at the time. From the narrative of Margaret Fell it appears that, after her trial, the judge said:—"Mistress Fell, you wrote to me concerning your prisons, that they are bad and rain in, and are not fit for people to lie in; and (she says) I answered, the sheriff doth know, and hath been told of it several times; and now it is raining, if you will send to see, at this present, you may see whether they be fit for people to lie in or no. And Colonel Kirkby stood up and spoke to the judge to excuse the sheriff and the badness of the room, and I spoke to him, and said if you were to lie in it yourselves you would think it hard; but your minds is only in cruelty to commit others, as William Kirkby hath done, who hath committed ten of our friends, and put them into a cold room, where there are nothing but bare boards to lie on, where they have laid several nights, some of them old ancient men, above three score years of age, and known to be honest men in their country where they live. And when William Kirkby was asked why they might not have liberty to shift for themselves for beds, he answered and said, they were to commit them to prison, but not to provide prisons for them. And we asked him who should do it, then? and he said the King; and then the judge spoke to him, and said, they should not do so, but let them have prisons fit for men." George Fox also made complaint. He says:—"I desired the judge to send some to see my prison, being so bad, they would put no creature they had in it, it was so windy and rainy; and so I was had away to my prison, and some justices, with Colonel Kirkby, went up to see it; and when they came up in it, they durst scarcely go in it, it was so bad, rainy, and windy, and the badness of the floor, and others that came up said it was ... I being removed out of the prison I was in formerly; and so Colonel Kirkby told me I should be removed from that place ere long." While lying in this deplorable state in the gaol at Lancaster,

he says he was so starved with cold and rain that his body became greatly swelled, and his limbs much benumbed. Well might Macaulay say of those times, "The prisons were hells on earth, seminaries of every crime and of every disease. At the assizes the lean and yellow culprits brought with them from their cells to the dock an atmosphere of stench and pestilence which sometimes avenged them signally on bench, bar, and jury."

*the wt the oath to mee known
that I could not swar becafe Chriff
& the a col ell foot bides it
G.F.*

(George Fox)

After some time Fox was transferred from Lancaster to the castle at Scarborough, where, during his incarceration, he was visited by the widow of General Fairfax. His condition there was no better than at Lancaster. The room in which he was placed, he says, "being to the seaside, and lying much open, drove in the wind forcibly, so that the rain came over my bed and ran over the room, that I was fain to skim it up with a platter. And when my clothes were wet I had no fire to dry them; so that my body was benumbed with cold and my fingers swelled, that one was grown as big as two." His friends were forbidden to supply him with any comforts, and he remarks, "Commonly a threepenny loaf served me three weeks and sometimes longer, and most of my drink was water with wormwood steeped or bruised in it."



GATEWAY, LANCASTER CASTLE.

After he had been two years in confinement an order for his release was obtained from the King, procured, as it would seem, through the influence of a friend at Court, one "Esquire Marsh," to whom he had been long known, and who declared that, if necessary, "he would go a hundred miles barefoot for the liberty of George Fox." He was set at liberty on Saturday, the 1st of September, 1666, and he notes in his *Journal* that "the very next day after my release (Sunday, September 3), the fire broke out in London and the report of it came quickly down into the country." The date is confirmed by the gossiping Secretary of the Navy, Samuel Pepys, who, as he tells us in his "Diary," on that said Sunday morning rose at three o'clock, slipped on his nightgown, and looked out of the window of his house in Seething Lane, at the east end of the city, but, thinking the fire far enough off, "went to bed again and to sleep."

After his release from a severe imprisonment of two years and nine months, Fox was greatly weakened in body, and it seemed at the time unlikely he could long survive the hardships he had had to endure. On his release, he thus moralises upon his oppressors:—"And, indeed, I could not but take notice how the hand of the Lord turned against those of my persecutors who had been the cause of my imprisonment, or had been abusive or cruel to me in it. For the officer that fetched me to Howlker Hall wasted his estate, and very soon after fled into Ireland. And most of the justices that were upon the bench at the sessions when I was sent to prison died in a while after," and, he adds, "when I came into that country again, most of those that dwelt in Lancashire were dead, and others ruined in their estates. So that, though I did not seek revenge upon them for their acting against me contrary to law, yet the Lord had executed his judgments upon many of them."

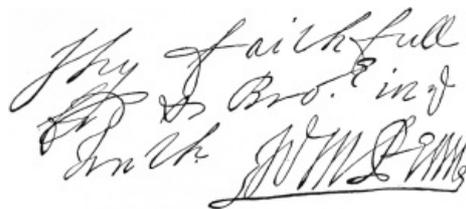
It was not until 1667 that George Fox again visited Lancashire. In that year he was at William Barnes's, near Warrington, whence he sent letters into Westmorland and other places by Leonard Fell and Robert Widders; monthly meetings of the Friends were held, and to one of them he says:

—"Margaret Fell, being a prisoner, got liberty to come, and went with me to Jane Milner's in Cheshire, where we parted." In the summer of the following year (1668) Mrs. Fell was set at liberty, and, on regaining her freedom, went into Cornwall with her daughter Mary, and her son-in-law, Thomas Lower. Shortly afterwards Fox proceeded to Ireland, and on his return he met with Margaret Fell at Bristol, she being, at the time, on a visit to another married daughter, Isabel Yeomans. "I had seen from the Lord a considerable time before," says Fox, "that I should take Margaret Fell to be my wife, and when I first mentioned it to her, she felt the answer of Life from God thereunto. But, though the Lord had opened this thing to me, yet I had not received a command from the Lord for the accomplishment of it then. Wherefore I let the thing rest, and went on in the work and service of the Lord as before, according as he led me; travelling up and down in this nation and through Ireland." His conduct in respect to his marriage was honourable and disinterested. Before finally deciding, he consulted the seven daughters of his intended wife and her sons-in-law, and obtained their sanction to the proposal, and, further, took care that the provision for the children of Judge Fell was settled and secured before the marriage. The judge's son was the only member of the family who disapproved of the union, but, as he is described as irreligious and of irregular habits, his opinion was disregarded. In his *Journal* Fox thus records the attendant circumstances:—

But now, being at Bristol, and finding Margaret Fell there, it opened in me from the Lord, that the thing should be accomplished. After we had discoursed the matter together, I told her, "if she also was satisfied with the accomplishing of it now, she should first send for her children," which she did. When the rest of her daughters, were come, I asked both them and her sons-in-law, "if they had anything against it, or for it," and they all severally expressed their satisfaction therein. Then I asked Margaret (Mrs. Fell) "if she had fulfilled and performed her husband's will to her children." She replied, "the children knew that." Whereupon I asked them, "whether, if their mother married, they should not lose by it?" And I asked Margaret, "whether she had done anything in lieu of it, which might answer it to the children?" The children said she had answered it to them, and desired me to speak no more of it. I told them, he adds, "I was plain, and would have all things done plainly; for I sought not any outward advantage to myself." So, after I had thus acquainted the children with it, our intention of marriage was laid before the Friends, both privately and publicly, to their full satisfaction; many of them gave testimony thereunto that it was of God. Afterwards, a meeting being appointed for the accomplishing thereof, in the meeting-house, at Broadmead, in Bristol, we took each other, the Lord joining us together in the honourable marriage, in the everlasting covenant and immortal seed of life.

The marriage of George Fox with Margaret Fell, which took place on the 18th of October, 1669, eleven years after the death of Thomas Fell, occasioned very little interruption to Fox's ministerial activity. After a brief "honeymoon" of ten days they took leave of each other, he going on a religious mission through the country, while his wife returned to her own home at Swarthmoor.

A few months after Margaret Fox's return her old adversary, Colonel Kirkby, caused her to be again arrested and recommitted at the age of 56 to Lancaster Castle. "The Sheriff of Lancaster," she writes, "sent his bailiff and pulled me out of my own house, and had me prisoner to Lancaster Castle (upon the old *præmunire* ^[6]), where I continued a whole year, and most of that time I was sick and weakly." At length, in April, 1671, through the intercession of influential Friends, a discharge under the Great Seal was obtained and she was set at liberty, the sentence of *præmunire* passed seven years before being annulled. "Then," she says, "I was to go up to London again, for my husband was intending for America."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to George Fox. The text is difficult to decipher but appears to include the words "thy faithful" and "brother" followed by a name that could be "George Fox".

The founder of Quakerism had determined upon a voyage across the Atlantic for the purpose of organising the numerous Friends who had been gathered in the far West by the earlier Quaker preachers. In these days such a voyage is accounted as little more than a mere pleasure trip to those who like, or do not absolutely dislike the sea, but in the days of the Stuart Kings it was a serious undertaking; nothing, however, could daunt the spirit of Fox or obstruct his progress when once an enterprise was determined upon. On the 12th of June, 1671, the little yacht, the "Industry," with its living freight of fifty passengers, including Fox and the twelve preachers, who had agreed to accompany him on his mission, sailed down the Thames, Margaret Fox and several Friends going with them as far as Gravesend. On the voyage they were chased by Barbary pirates, and after their landing they underwent many perils and hardships, for travelling in the then primitive condition of the American colonies was arduous work, involving constant camping out at night, fording deep rivers, wading through swamps and quagmires, and penetrating vast forests and wildernesses. Fox was generally welcomed, and received more kindness and courtesy from all classes than in his own country. The journey occupied two years, and in one of his letters he thus summarises it: "We have had great travail by land and sea, and rivers and bays and creeks, in New England, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina; where we have had

great service among Friends and governours and others, and with the Indians and their King and Emperor." On the 21st March, 1673, he set sail for England, and after a tempestuous voyage reached Bristol harbour on the 28th of the following month. His wife went up from Swarthmoor to meet him, accompanied by her son-in-law, Thomas Lower, and two of her daughters. It was the time of Bristol fair; great meetings were held, and the occasion was a memorable one, for it was amid the rant and turmoil of the fair that George Fox first made the acquaintance of William Penn. The great reformer had just landed from America, and there can be little doubt that this meeting led Penn to investigate human nature in the New World. A close intimacy sprang up between the two; they travelled much together, and in Fox's journal the name of the fearless and honest lawgiver—the future founder of Pennsylvania—is frequently mentioned. They visited at each other's houses. Fox was a guest at Worminghurst while Penn and his family resided there; and there is a well-founded tradition that he visited Fox at his abode at Swarthmoor, in Lancashire.

In January, 1674, Fox again found himself placed in durance on account of his preaching at Worcester; Thomas Lower, Margaret Fox's son-in-law, being imprisoned with him. He suffered from a lingering sickness, his life at one time being despaired of. After remaining in attendance upon him for seventeen weeks, his faithful wife went up to London, wrote a letter to the King beseeching him to release her husband, and took it herself to Whitehall, where she had an interview with Charles. Her pleading was unsuccessful; but eventually, after being in confinement for a year or more, a writ of Habeas Corpus was again obtained. He was paroled until the time of his trial, when the indictment against him was quashed, and he was set at liberty, being allowed to pass the remaining fifteen years of his life in peace, unmolested by gaolers, writs, or assizes. While he lay in the gaol at Worcester his aged mother died, her end being hastened, it is said, by bitter sorrow at her son's inability to come and take leave of her.

On regaining his liberty Fox returned northwards, accompanied by his wife. At Lancaster there was great gathering of the Friends; and having stayed there two nights and a day, they went over sands to Swarthmoor, where they arrived on the 25th of June, 1675. Here they were visited by many friends from different parts of the country, and among others their old antagonist, Colonel Kirkby, called to bid them welcome into the country, and, as the account says, "carried himself in appearance very lovingly;" though he immediately afterwards instructed the constables of Ulverston to inform Fox that "they must have no more meetings at Swarthmoor; for if they had, they were commanded to break them up." The imprisonment at Worcester had told seriously upon his health, and it was a year and eight months before he was again able to leave Swarthmoor. His time, however, was fully occupied in writing pamphlets, epistles, and controversial papers. Early in 1677 Fox left his northern home, his spirit being "drawn again towards the south;" and he did not return until the summer of the following year. In the interval, in company with William Penn and Robert Barclay, he spent several months preaching in Holland and Germany, after which he returned to London, where he stayed some time, and then proceeded to Swarthmoor, remaining there uninterrupted for a period of two years.

During his absence from Swarthmoor he vigilantly watched over his wife's interests, and took measures to protect her from the persecutions of some of the neighbouring clergy and magistrates. Thus, in a letter written from London on the 8th August, 1681, he says:—"Dearly Beloved,—There is a rumour here that one of the Justice Kirkbys (but which I cannot tell) took one of our fat oxen and killed him for his own table, in his own house, which ox was distrained and taken away from thee on account of your meeting at Swarthmoor. Now of the truth of this I desire to know, and, with a witness or two, to prove it; for justices of peace do not deny appeals here." And he concludes with the words: "Therefore, sweetheart, I do entreat thee to let me soon know the truth of all these things, and what thou writes let it be proved by witnesses."

It was in the same year that Fox and his wife were sued in the Cartmel Wapentake Court for the small tithes of the Swarthmoor Hall estate; he demurred to the jurisdiction of the court, when the plaintiffs carried the suit into the Exchequer Court at Westminster, where, he says, "they ran us up a writ of rebellion for not answering the bill upon oath, and got an order from the sergeant to take me and my wife into custody." In his answer to the plaintiffs' bill he stated that his wife had lived forty-three years at Swarthmoor Hall, and that during all that time no tithes had been either paid or demanded. Other proofs were given, but the answer could not be received without an oath, which the uncompromising Quaker would not take, and so, he says, "the court granted a sequestration against me and my wife together. Thereupon, by advice of counsel, we moved for a limitation, which was granted, and that much defeated our adversary's design in suing out the sequestration, for this limited the plaintiff from taking no more than was proved." On the same occasion William Mead, who had married one of Judge Fell's daughters, bore testimony to Fox's disinterested conduct, and informed the court that "he had before marriage engaged himself not to meddle with his wife's estate;" a statement the judges could scarcely credit until the documents in proof of it were produced.

Fox derived from his own property an income amply sufficient for his personal requirements without trenching upon that of his wife. Though he had never actively embarked in business he held shares in two small vessels trading from the port of Scarborough, and he had also an interest in other undertakings, besides moneys deposited in the hands of various friends. In addition, he had in Pennsylvania a thousand acres of land which were given to him by William Penn, though there is no evidence that he ever received any income from that source. The only lands he possessed were about three acres he had purchased at Swarthmoor for the maintenance of the meeting house, which, in 1688, the year of English freedom, he had there erected for his

disciples, and which, shortly before his death, he conveyed by a deed of assignment to the Friends for ever. "It is," he says, "all the land and house I have in England; and it is given up to the Lord, for it is for his service, and for his children."

The declining years of his life were passed in comparative tranquillity, and its evening was soothed with the sunshine of many precious friendships. His time was spent chiefly either at Swarthmoor Hall or in London, where he had many followers, and where several meeting-houses had been established, the most notable being the one in Aldgate Street, named from its proximity to the celebrated old hostlery, the Bull and Mouth, now, as Mr. Cunningham justly says, "foolishly called the Queen's Hotel,"^[7] and occasionally he made quiet journeys through some of the counties. In April, 1690, he was present for the last time at the annual gathering of the Friends from all parts of the kingdom, held in London; through the following winter he continued to attend the meetings of the society; and on Sunday, January the 11th, 1690-1, he attended a large meeting at Gracechurch Street, when he preached for the last time "fully and effectually." On leaving he went to Henry Goldney's in White Hart Court, close by, when he remarked that he "felt the cold strike to his heart as he came out of the meeting." He survived but two days, dying on Tuesday, January 13th, in the 67th year of his age, his last words being, "The power of God is over all." Three days after his remains, followed by a procession of 3,000 friends, were conveyed to their last resting place in that *campo santo* of Nonconformists—Bunhill Fields.

Fox lived long enough to see a considerable relaxation in the severity of the penal laws against Nonconformists, and the dawn of more peaceful times. After the accession of James II., the condition of the Quakers was much improved, the King permitting them to substitute an affirmation for the oath, when one of the chief causes of persecution was removed. William Penn, too, was high in favour at Court at this time; he had opened an asylum for the Friends in his new State of Pennsylvania, and, enjoying the personal favour of the King and the chief officers of the State, he won the means of securing further toleration for his co-religionists. Then followed the peaceful revolution which placed William of Orange upon the throne of England, when the rights of conscience were still more fully recognised, and the Act of Toleration put an end to the miseries and persecutions the Friends had so long been subjected to. If the Church was too severe in the punishments she awarded to her truant children, and oftentimes provoked them by her harshness to forsake the sanctuary and wander forth until new tabernacles sprang up in the wilderness of the world, it cannot be said that Quakers fared better under the sway of the Presbyterians or the rule of the Protectorate, for Puritanism itself was then a grinding social tyranny, too strict in its discipline, too little regardful of human weaknesses, and too fully persuaded that there could be no truth or godliness outside its own conceptions. Unfortunately for themselves, the Quakers were accounted a distinct community, with whom neither Episcopalians nor Protestant Dissenters had any legal or religious connection. The religious mind of the nation was entrenched within what it persuaded itself were the limits of Christianity, and the new sect which had sprung up was declared to be beyond the pale. The bitterness of spirit with which the disciples of Fox were regarded may be gathered from the resolution passed by the delegates and ministers of the Congregational churches in London who assembled on the occasion of the abdication of Richard Cromwell. They then declared, among other things, that while "we greatly prize our Christian liberties, yet we profess our utter dislike and abhorrence of a universal toleration, as being contrary to the mind of God in his word.... It is our desire that countenance be not given, or trust reposed in, the hands of the Quakers, they being persons of such principles as are destructive to the Gospel, and inconsistent with the peace of civil societies." It was a persecuting age, and not on one side alone of the great civil strife of the 17th century does the stigma of bigotry and intolerance remain; happily, out of the weakness, the foulness, and the darkness of those times, the nation, the Church, and the people have emerged with a strong hold on better things, the ascetic piety of the Puritan and the breadth of view of the Churchman—the religion of Herbert and of Laud, of Sibbes and of Milton—have mingled together and become elements of the national life and fruitful for the common good.

The followers of Fox were subjected to unparalleled hardships, but to their honour be it said their general acts were in strict accord with their religious professions, for during those long years of suffering for conscience sake there is not a single instance recorded of vindictive retaliation on their part, or of recourse being had to any weapon sharper than a text of Scripture. Fox, it is true, shared the extravagances of his age, and, like all teachers of his class and time, he was for a period more of an alarmist than a comforter; prone, like pious enthusiasts of the present day, to plough up the hearts of the people and discover sins which before they dreamt not of. In one respect he and his followers were certainly most reprehensible, in disturbing the worship of those differing in religion with themselves, for it must be admitted by those who respect their principles and admire their honesty and fortitude that they provoked much of the persecution they so patiently endured. The best principles of Quakerism—peace, and love, and brotherhood—remain, but the distinctive formula is on the decline, and those characteristics which made them obnoxious to other religious professors have disappeared altogether. As Dr. Halley justly observes, "A modern 'Friend,' mild, pleasant, neatly dressed, carefully educated, perfected in proprieties, is as unlike as possible, except in a few 'principles,' to the obtrusive, intolerant, rude, coarse, disputatious Quaker of the early days of their sect."^[8]

Margaret Fox survived her husband 11 years, her death occurring at Swarthmoor on the 23rd February, 1702, in the 88th year of her age. At the time of her marriage with the Founder of the Society of Friends she had one son and seven daughters. Swarthmoor Hall, at her death, passed to her youngest daughter, Rachel, who had become the wife of Daniel, son of John Abraham, of Manchester; to them was born, in 1687, a son, John Abraham, who succeeded to the property,

and who appears to have made some alterations and additions to the old mansion, as evidenced by a stone in the wall of one of the outbuildings, inscribed T F, 1651, and J A, 1715; the initials answering to Thomas Fell and John Abraham. Owing, as is supposed, to losses from some unsuccessful mining speculations in which John Abraham had embarked, the property became much encumbered, and in 1759, was finally brought to the hammer and disposed of in lots, when the family removed to Skerton, near Lancaster.

Daniel Abraham

Of the descendants of Margaret Fox by her first husband, Thomas Fell, it was recorded a few years ago that there were then living ninety, of whom forty-three were members of the society which their ancestress had so largely helped to found.

Concerning John, the father of Daniel Abraham, who married the daughter of Margaret Fell, the following particulars are given in a publication called the *British Friend*, published at Glasgow, 1845:—

In Market Street (Manchester) is a pile of building called Abraham's Court. This was the property of John Abraham. He was a man of good parentage, and of standing and estate, of a family originally descended, it is said, from the Abrahams of Abram near Wigan; but his immediate ancestors resided at or near Warrington, where he was brought up to the trade of a grocer.^[9] After his marriage he carried on his business in Manchester with great prudence and honesty, and to a large extent. He was one of the first who joined Friends, and suffered in the cause of truth. In 1675 he travelled southward. In Kent he was pulled down by the informers whilst preaching in a Friend's house, and taken to an inn with other Friends, but soon after dismissed: but the magistrate seized his horse, and two others, belonging to a poor man, which they ordered to be sold; the owner of the house was fined £20 for allowing the meeting to be held, and £7 for the pretended poverty of John Abraham, though he told them where he dwelt, and that he had an estate of his own at Manchester. For these fines, the owner of the house suffered distraint of goods from his house and warehouse to the amount of £77, equivalent to upwards of £150 in those days. No account of John Abraham has ever appeared. He was interred in the Deansgate burial ground; a stone marks his corporeal resting-place, and the Society's register of deaths records that "he was a minister, and travelled in Ireland and Scotland."

John Abraham had, in addition to his son, Daniel, a daughter, Mary, who became the wife of Edward Chetham, of Cheetham, Nuthurst, and, ultimately, of Turton Tower, the representative of Manchester's great benefactor, Humphrey Chetham, the founder of the hospital and library which bears his name, and from the marriage descends the present Right Hon. Sir Henry Bartle-Frere, Bart., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

The third in descent from John Abraham, who removed to Skerton, was likewise named John; he married in 1844 Maria Hayes, daughter of John Tyerman, of Liverpool, and his wife, Mary Mitford. He resided at Grassendale, a pleasant suburb of Liverpool, and died February 20th, 1881, leaving as his heir Thomas Fell Abraham, and, with other issue, Emma Clarke Abraham, a lady to whom the author is indebted for many interesting particulars concerning the Fell and Abraham families.

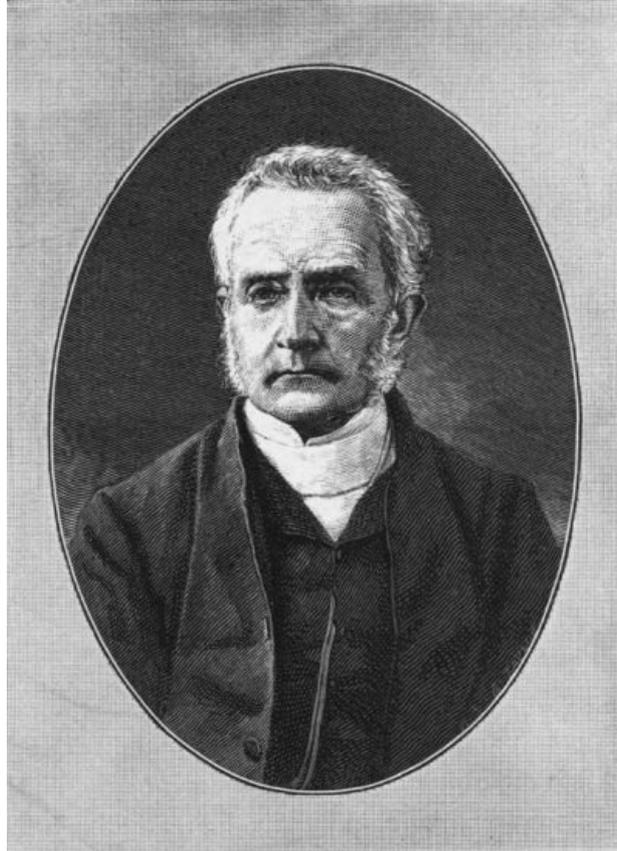
Such are some of the memories of Swarthmoor. By the time we had completed the inspection of the old mansion and the primitive-looking little meeting-house, impressive in its severe and unostentatious simplicity, the sun was rapidly sinking in the west, and the shadows of objects were growing longer and longer, as if drawing themselves closer to the earth; the dark range of hills looked solemnly down upon us, and night's sable curtains were gradually closing over the scene. Turning to depart, we retraced our steps and descended the rugged track which soon brought us to the bottom of the dingle again. Then mounting the opposite eminence we reached the highway, and a few minutes later were comfortably settled in a cosy room in the "Sun," at Ulverston.



CHAPTER II.



WHEN travel far to see the dwelling-places and the costly tombs of Kings and Conquerors in their desire to recall the memory and the mighty deeds of the great ones who have gone before, and surely the homes of those who have taught goodness by example to high and low, and shed a holy and a happy influence through their country, are shrines equally worthy of our homage. It is in that spirit, and with the desire to keep green within the sanctuary of the heart the memory of good men, that we enter upon our present pilgrimage. It is to the place where Bishop Stanley spent his happiest years, and where his son, Dean Stanley, passed his boyhood's days—the one, the "good bishop" who united in himself the apostolical charity of a Tillotson and the pastoral energy of a Burnet; and the other, that loving and large-hearted divine who so lately passed into his rest, and whose removal from our midst sent a thrill of sadness through the land, and moved the sensibilities not of Englishmen alone but of the world.



DEAN STANLEY.

Alderley, or Old Alderley as we prefer to call it in contradistinction to the aggregation of modern Swiss chalets, Italian villas, and imitation castles which Manchester's merchant princes have built for themselves on the wooded hill yclept Alderley Edge, is one of the most charmingly picturesque spots in the county—we had almost said in the kingdom; the sort of place where, if lowered with overwork and worry, you would wish to retire to for perfect peace and quietude—and of a truth the wearied toiler might wander hither and thither for many a day before he could find a retreat more to his liking. The country is rich and varied, and there is an air of wild and untrimmed prodigality in the woods and plantations that is delighting to the eye. It is not a village—it can hardly be called a hamlet, the houses are so few. On a little triangular spot where four roads meet is what is emphatically called "the Cross," and a little way above, standing by the wayside, may be seen an antiquated hostelry that might be called the house of many gables. Time was when the tired wayfarer might find within its cosy parlour a hearty welcome, and be able to refresh himself with nut-brown ale; but good things are oftentimes abused, and so, now-a-days, to enforce sobriety, though the traveller may receive the welcome he must content himself with tea and coffee or such harmless beverages as lemonade and ginger ale. Near the inn is the old corn mill, a building that, with its surroundings, has formed the subject for many a picture, as the walls of our local exhibitions testify; in the rear, half hidden among the trees, is the old-fashioned rectory, standing in the midst of its equally old-fashioned garden, in which the old mulberry trees still flourish. The garden reaches up to the churchyard, reminding us of Wordsworth's exquisite description—

Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
Is marked by no distinguishable line.
The turf unites, the pathways intertwine,
And wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,
Garden, and that domain where kindred, friends,
And neighbours rest together, here confound
Their several features, mingled like the sound

Of many waters, or as evening blends
With shady night.

The place belongs entirely to the past; the shadows of bygone centuries seem to spread around, and everything bears the impress of hoar antiquity and undisturbed respectability; while even the few homesteads you see retain the picturesque features their builders imparted to them long ages ago. The church tower, grey and weather worn, and overgrown in places with ivy, looks with placid serenity over the broad pastures and the green country that stretches southwards and away to the west until it seems interminable, and the eye becomes wearied in trying to follow it to its furthest limits. A sombre-looking yew that has braved the winter's blasts through long centuries of time flanks the gateway; the tall trees that partly surround the churchyard throw their shadows across the grass-grown hillocks, the grasshopper skips about and the white moth flits to and fro, and above the blackbirds and the thrushes pour forth their sweetest music. The ancient fane itself is thoroughly English in its character, a church such as an artist loves to paint, and of which a true-hearted Englishman would carry away many a pleasant remembrance. It exhibits many architectural diversities; the tower is broad and massive, and nave, and chancel, and porch are picturesque in their grouping. On the north side a curious dormer window rises above the roof, and on the south the attention is arrested by the old stone staircase that leads up from the outside to the Stanley pew, a feature that may smack somewhat of exclusiveness, but quaint and pleasant to look upon notwithstanding. As you enter you see at a glance that the fabric has been cared for both within and without, for though the "restorer" has been at work he has dealt tenderly and lovingly with it, repairing only where repairs were needed. The old pews in which somnolent bucolics were wont to recline during sermon-time have been taken away; the flat painted ceiling has disappeared and the whitewash of a dozen generations of churchwardens has been removed from wall and pillar, but everything that was worth preserving has been carefully retained, and—

So absent is the stamp of modern days
That, in the quaint carved oak, and oriel stain'd
With saintly legend, to Reflection's gaze
The Star of Eld seems not yet to have waned.



ALDERLEY CHURCH.

The only part that has been modernised is the chancel. It was rebuilt thirty years ago, and in it you may see many sepulchral memorials of the Stanleys and other local notabilities. On the south side is the monumental effigy of John Thomas, the first Lord Stanley, who died in 1850, and on the opposite side, on an altar-tomb, richly inlaid with mosaic work, is the sculptured form of the last lord, who died in 1869; it is an exquisite work of art, and as you gaze upon the chiselled features you are struck with the remarkable resemblance they bear to the late Dean of Westminster. Against the wall on the same side of the chancel is a tablet of white marble in memory of Edward Stanley—the Bishop of Norwich—and his wife and their two sons, Charles Edward and Owen Stanley, and their daughter Mary.

From these marble memorials of the dead you turn to the galleried pew where, in life, those they commemorate were wont to worship. The front of that little enclosure is resplendent with heraldic blazonries, and tells, in the language of the "noble science," the story of the marriages of the lords of Alderley for a couple of centuries or more. The Stanleys are evidently proud of their armorial ensigns, for they are displayed on every hand, and as you gaze upon the oft-repeated shields the memory wanders back along the dim avenues of the past to the time when, ages ago, a Sir William Stanley, by his marriage with the heiress of Bamville, obtained the forest of Wyrral, and with it the right to bear, as his device, the three bucks' heads upon a cross-belt of cerulean hue; and to the time, too, when that Sir William's great-grandson married the heiress of the house of Lathom, and thereafter assumed as his crest the eagle and child—the "brid and babby," as Lancashire people prefer to call it—which tradition commemorates the circumstance of an infant being found in an eagle's nest by a Lathom, who adopted it, and, being childless, made it heir of all his lands.

The church is not a large building, but it is exceedingly picturesque, and its interest is nothing lessened by the consciousness that within its walls the voice of praise and thanksgiving has been heard for five hundred years and more. Everything about it is decent and comely, as befits the

house of God, and if a stranger should happen to be there on a Sunday he will find the services creditably sung by a choir of boys, and the prayers devoutly read by a clergyman who is a sound Churchman, and a worthy successor of good old Edward Stanley.

On one side of the entrance to the churchyard an aged yewtree, weather-beaten and decayed, but still fighting time gallantly, flanks the churchyard gate—the emblem of immortality reminding the living that the spirits of those laid low have passed to the life beyond. On the other side is the little school-house, with its quaint windows, and mullions and masonry of red sandstone, a structure that was not reared yesterday, as its grey lichen-stained walls testify. As you enter the garden of the dead your ears are greeted with the pleasant music of young voices, and your attention is arrested by the number of green mounds where successive generations are sleeping their last sleep. A summer's day might be spent here in meditation among the nameless but hallowed graves, and in conning over the "uncouth rhymes" that the weather and the green moss are fast obliterating from the crumbling memorials on which they are inscribed. You may note, too, in places bunches of simple wild flowers that have been placed by loving hands upon the newly upheaved turf—the offerings of that tender affection which longs for "the touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still." Near the east end, under the shade of a yew, is a plain white marble cross, with a small tablet at its base, embedded in the rock, on which is the following inscription:—

Here
Rests
CATHERINE STANLEY
Died March 5 1862, aged 69
The wisdom
That is from above
Is first pure,
Then peaceable, gentle,
Easy to be entreated,
Full of Mercy
And good fruits
Without partiality
And without hypocrisy



ALDERLEY SCHOOL.

It is to the memory of the wife of Bishop Stanley—the mother of the late Dean of Westminster—who entered into the dark valley while her son was accompanying the Prince of Wales on his journey through Egypt and Palestine. That grave has been once reopened—on the 2nd of December, 1879, it received the remains of the Dean's sister, Mary Stanley, a lady whose memory will be gratefully remembered for her heroic efforts to mitigate the sufferings of our soldiers during the Crimean War. The 5th of March, on which Catherine Stanley passed away, was Ash Wednesday, a day that ever after had its saddening associations for her son, who on another Ash Wednesday (March 1st, 1876), had to endure another and more terrible trial, for on that day he stood by the death bed of her who had loved, supported, and comforted him when the spirit of his mother had passed away—his wife.

My mother—on that fatal day,
O'er seas and deserts far apart,
The guardian genius passed away
That nursed my very mind and heart—
The oracle that never failed,
The faith serene that never quailed,
The kindred soul that knew my thought
Before its speech or form was wrought.

My wife—when clos'd that fatal night,
My being turned once more to stone,
I watched her spirit take its flight,
And found myself again alone.

The sunshine of the heart was dead,
The glory of the home was fled,
The smile that made the dark world bright,
The love that made all duty light.

Now that those scenes of bliss are gone,
Now that the long years roll away,
The two Ash Wednesdays blend in one,
One sad yet almost festal day:
The emblem of that union blest,
Where lofty souls together rest,
Star differing each from star in glory,
Yet telling each its own high story.

In another part of the graveyard is an altar-tomb with a Latin inscription perpetuating the name of Thomas Deane, of the Park—a house near Monk's Heath—who endowed the parish school, and who is described as a lover of God, his Church, his King, and of all good deeds. Not far distant is an old disused font that was dug up half a century ago; it has a circular bowl capacious enough to immerse a child in, and, in its general outline, much resembles the one at Prestbury, both being probably of the same age.

From the churchyard we step into the rector's garden. The rectory house presents much the same appearance that it did fifty years ago, when Edward Stanley was its occupant; indeed, so little is it changed that it would require but little stretch of the imagination to picture the kindly-hearted old pastor watching the movements of his feathered friends, or, mounted upon his little black cob, setting out on a mission of mercy to some member of his rustic flock, his pockets the while filled with sweets and gingerbread for the children, with whom he was ever a favourite. The house is the *beau-ideal* of a country clergyman's home. It has no architectural beauties or peculiarities to boast of, and there is nothing pretentious about it; but it is a roomy, enjoyable sort of place, with an air of comfort and contentment pervading it that suggests the idea of the happy domestic life peculiar to England. A trellis work that forms a kind of verandah extends along the front, with honeysuckles, roses, and creeping plants climbing round the supports, and meeting overhead in a bower of vernal beauty. Of that verandah, which forms a kind of balcony, the Dean's mother thus wrote in one of her letters:—

Give me credit for coming from my balcony, from the sky, the stars, the moon, the heavenly air, to write to you. But it is not quite coming from them; my door is open, and I look now and then to the church tower, standing out so clear from the moonlight sky, which has scarcely yet lost its sunlight tinge—and my summer furniture of mignonette and sweet peas outside, to say nothing of the roses below or the trellis and the honeysuckle above—their united perfume all come streaming in the air. When I think of your imprisonment and your present deprivations of such a day as this, whose healing influences you so well would feel, I rejoice in your power of sympathy with the enjoyments as well as the sufferings of others, which makes me feel that I am refreshing rather than tantalizing you by placing my present position before you.

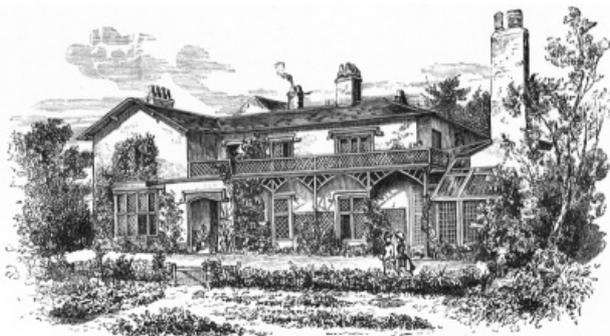
The door of the house stands invitingly open, and the wide entrance hall into which the visitor is ushered is in itself suggestive of the welcome awaiting the coming guest. The rooms are spacious, and lead one into another in a social sort of way, and the windows, reaching down to the floor and opening on to the lawn, give a bright prospect of the beautiful world without, of the pleasure grounds and the green grass carpet, chequered as we look upon it with the woodland shade and a moving group of laughing, bright-eyed nymphs engaged in a garden game. Oftentimes from those windows, as well as in his walks and rides, did the good old rector pursue his favourite study. "Close before the window of our observation," he says in his "Familiar History of Birds," "a well-mown, short-grassed lawn is spread before him (the starling)—it is his dining-room; there in the spring he is allowed to revel, but seldom molested, on the plentiful supply of worms, which he collects pretty much in the same manner as the thrush, already described. Close at hand, within half-a-stone's throw, stands an ivy-mantled parish church, with its mossy grey tower, from the turreted pinnacle of which rises a flagstaff, crowned by its weathercock; under the eaves and within the hollows and chinks of the masonry of the tower are his nursery establishments. On the battlements and projecting grotesque tracery of its Gothic ornaments he retires to enjoy himself, looking down on the rural world below; while, at other times, a still more elevated party will crowd together on the letters of the weathercock, or, accustomed to its motion, sociably twitter away their chattering song, as the vane creaks slowly round with every change of wind."

But Alderley has other attractions besides its venerable church and its pleasant old-fashioned rectory. We are not now going to speak of the Edge—of the Castle Rock, of the Holy Well, of Stormy Point, of the weather-beaten Beacon and the glorious view over the Cheshire Plain which it commands; nor yet to repeat the legend of the Wizard, the Iron Gates, and the Enchanted Cave in which stand the innumerable milk-white horses with the warriors beside them, all in a profound sleep and so—

Doomed to remain till that fell day,
When foemen, marshalled in array,
And feuds intestine, shall combine

To seal the ruin of our line.

The park, the beech woods, and Radnor Mere are well worthy of a passing notice, and the story of the Stanleys deserves to be told, for Alderley, though a small place, has a history behind it, and one which it need not be ashamed to own.



ALDERLEY RECTORY.

Alderley Park, "the fair domain" of the Stanleys, lies on the opposite side of the road to the church and the rectory. It is not so extensive as Tatton or Lyme, but it is equal to either for sylvan beauty and the charming views it affords. The rising grounds that extend in the direction of the Edge are clothed with a thick umbrage, the tall "patrician trees" mingling with the "plebeian underwood;" many of the older denizens of the wood are curled and distorted into all sorts of weird shapes, and bear the marks of the rough warfare they have had for ages to wage against the elements. Here and there pleasant vistas open out and from the high ground you can look over the fairest portion of the Vale Royal of England, over miles and miles of woodland and pastures and green fields, dotted at intervals with old farm houses and still older churches, a prospect such as no other country but our own can show, and which many a wanderer in distant lands would give a year of his life to see again. It is thoroughly pastoral in character, and imparts an undefinable sensation of quietude and rest, suggesting the idea of eternal tranquillity and peace. The view is charming at all seasons, but never more so than in the spring-time, when the trees have put on their fresh leafage, when the air is laden with the sweet odours of the scented thorn, and the thrush and the blackbird pour forth their melodious notes as if to make perfect the charm and witchery of our English scenery.

From among the time-worn fathers of the grove a little rindle winds its way with many a curve and sinuosity until it empties itself in a broad lake, formerly called Radnor Mere, but now more commonly known as Alderley Mere—a relic, so tradition affirms, of the great lake that in pre-historic times is believed to have extended as far as High Legh, a dozen miles or so away, and of which Tatton Mere, Rostherne Mere, and Mere Mere formed a part. But the glory of the park is the beech wood which reaches down almost to the edge of the mere; it was planted, so the local chroniclers tell us, more than a couple of centuries ago by Sir Thomas Stanley, the first baronet, who obtained a supply of beech mast from his father-in-law's grounds at Kyre, in Worcestershire, the tree being then uncommon in Cheshire. Possibly he was influenced by the advice which John Evelyn about that time had been giving in his "Discourse of Forest Trees," and desired to supply his tenantry with stuffing for their beds. The author of "Sylva" says:—"But there is yet another benefit which this tree (the beech) presents us; its very leaves, which make a natural and most agreeable canopy all the summer, being gathered about the fall, and somewhat before they are much frost-bitten, afford the best and easiest mattresses in the world to lay under our quilts instead of straw, because, besides their tenderness and loose lying together, they continue sweet for seven or eight years, long before which time straw becomes musty and hard." It would be interesting to know if the primitive custom to which Evelyn referred continues in any part of rural England at the present day, or if it has been entirely discarded. More stately trees than the Alderley beeches we have seldom seen in any part of the country; they stand thick in the background, giving a forest-like character to the scene, and the pathways that wind beneath them in a wild and wandering sort of way afford as delightful a sylvan walk as the foot of man can tread. The dead leaves lie the whole year round upon the turf, and overhead the branches meet in a verdant canopy, imparting a mysterious gloom that seems like a perpetual twilight. No one who longs for seclusion needs "fly to a lodge in some vast wilderness," for here he may wander for a day without the sound of a fellow mortal to disturb him or hearing any footfall but his own, and can, if so disposed, realise the full meaning of the words—

One impulse from a vernal wood
Will teach thee more of man,
Of moral evil, and of good
Than all the sages can.

Well do we remember a summer evening's saunter through the park and the old beech wood in the pleasant companionship of the worthy rector of Alderley, beguiling the time with cheerful chat.

'Twas Summer tide; the eve was sweet
As mortal eye has e'er beholden;
The grass look'd warm with sunny heat;

Perhaps some Fairy's glowing feet
Had lightly touch'd and left it golden.

Entering by a gate near the old corn-mill we struck across the park in an easterly direction and soon reached the edge of the wood, from which there is a good view of the hall and the old deer house, with the mere in front, feathered down almost to the water's edge with stately trees. The wilder parts of the grounds are alive with rabbits, and as we strode over the green sward they started up from the fern and the thick grass and scampered off to their warrens in all directions; but no other sign of life was visible, and, save that now and then we could hear the distant croaking of the corn-crake and the thrush chanting a requiem to the departing day from a neighbouring copse, even the birds seemed to have sunk to rest in their foliaged homes. The woods were in the fulness of their summer verdure, displaying a thousand varied tints of green and yellow; to the right we could see the great plain of Cheshire stretching away towards the Frodsham hills and the estuary of the Dee, the green meadow-breadths looking almost golden in the sunset sheen. A warm aërial haze suffused itself over the landscape, softening into beauty every object; the breeze which so lately frolicked through the trees had died away, and the wide mere lay spread before us calm, and still, and bright as a mirror, while its surface, unruffled by a single ripple, gave back with wonderful minuteness the outline of the plummy woods, the amber radiance of the sky, and the moving forms of the reeds and water flags that fringe its margin; the effect being heightened as now and then a shaft of ruddy light quivered through the foliage and shed an almost unearthly splendour upon the water.

No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer day
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell there did it rest.

That scene has been so exquisitely described in the "Journal" of Catherine Stanley that we are tempted to transcribe it:—

The purplish brown of the wood rising above the softened reflection of it in the water, and a few touches of brighter brown in the shrubs and ferns near the edge; the boathouse relieved by the dark wood behind it; a line of yellowish brown reeds breaking the reflection of it in the water, and another still brighter yellow-and-brown island coming immediately before it; the soft blue haze spread over the water and softening the reflected outlines of the wood without weakening the effect, contrasted here and there with the vivid and determinate outline of a few leaves or weeds lying on the surface of the water; the scene enlivened now and then by a wild duck darting from the reeds across the lake, making a flutter and foam before her, and leaving a line of clear light behind her on her path, her wild cry distinctly echoed from the wood and deerhouse together—such a simplicity yet variety of tint, such a force of effect, and such a softness of shade and colour! Artists, one and all, hide your diminished heads!

The home of the Stanleys is a stone building of no great antiquity and very little architectural merit, and, considering the many advantageous sites the park affords, has been placed with a singular disregard for the charms of situation. Until 1779 the family resided at the old hall near the church, but in the spring of that year it was burnt down, and until the present mansion was built they were obliged to take up their abode at the Park House, a tenement formerly part of the estates held in Alderley by the Abbey of Dieulacres, near Leek. The Hon. Miss Stanley, in her description of "Alderley Edge and its Neighbourhood," says: "The old hall of Alderley was burnt down in the spring of the year 1779. Sir John Stanley was absent at the time; he was on the road home, returning from Chester, where he had gone the day before—he arrived when the whole was nearly consumed—very little of the furniture was saved. It was never known how the fire originated. The house stood in the village of Alderley, close to the mill. It was surrounded by a moat spreading out into a large sheet of water on the east side, and on the west filling a channel cut out of the solid rock. When the house was burnt, it consisted of three sides of (comparatively speaking) a modern built mansion, a large hall of an older date occupying the other side, and offices behind the hall. A handsome stone bridge of two arches crossed the moat from the ground entrance and west side to a stone terrace, which commanded views of the Park, the church, and the plain of Cheshire, and by a flight of steps led to a handsome stone arched gateway close to the road, built by Sir Thomas, the first Baronet." The inscription on the tombstone in Alderley church of Sir Thomas Stanley, who died in 1591, says: "He rebuilt the houses of Alderley and Weever," from which it is evident there was a still earlier mansion upon the site; the house he erected was doubtless the "large hall of an older date" referred to by Miss Stanley, the other portions of the building having been added about the beginning of the last century. The two end pillars, bearing the crest of the Stanleys—the eagle and child—with a portion of the wall, may be seen abutting upon the roadside; but, with these exceptions, not a vestige of the old mansion remains.

The connection of the Stanleys with Alderley dates back about four hundred and fifty years or thereabouts, when the estate was acquired by the marriage of John Stanley, a brother of the first Earl of Derby, with Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Thomas Weever, of Weever and Alderley. This John's father, Sir Thomas Stanley, of Lathom, after serving as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, emerged from among the country gentlemen as Lord Stanley, and was made controller of the household of the "meek usurper," Henry VI., when, in consideration of his services, he had granted to him by favour of the King the wardship and marriage of Thomas Weever's heiress, and

he, with commendable care for the worldly well-being of his younger son, bestowed the lady and her lands upon him.

The house of Stanley, which ranks among the greatest of our governing families, is one of the most ancient as it is one of the most distinguished in the page of history, comprising at the present day, in addition to the baronetcy enjoyed by the elder line—the Stanleys, of Hooton in Wirral—two peerages, the Earldom of Derby of Knowsley, in Lancashire, and the Barony of Stanley of Alderley, in Cheshire, besides the younger branches in Staffordshire, Sussex, Kent, and Hertfordshire. The first known ancestor was one Adam de Aldithlegh, so named from his paternal estate of Audithlegh, in Normandy, who came over with William the Conqueror. Acquitting himself bravely on the field of Hastings, he was rewarded with large territorial estates in the newly conquered country. He was accompanied in the expedition by his two sons, Lydulph or Lyulph and Adam de Aldithlegh. These sons married, and in due course two grandsons were born to the old Norman warrior, both of whom married into a Saxon family of noble rank and ancient lineage, which had been fortunate enough to retain possession of its estates, while confiscation had been the lot of those around it. The family derived its name from the manor of Stanley or Stoneley, the stony lea or stony field according to the Anglo-Saxon meaning, a little hamlet lying about three miles south-west of the small manufacturing town of Leek, in Staffordshire, a place which, Erdswick, the old topographer, remarks "seems to take its name of the nature of the soil, which, though it be in the moorlands, is yet a rough and stony place, and many craggy rocks are about it." One of the grandsons, Adam, the son of Lyulph de Audithlegh, became in right of his wife lord of Stanley, and was ancestor of the Lord Audley of ancient times, and is represented through the female line by the Touchets, Lords Audley of the present day. The other grandson, William, the son of Adam de Audithlegh, acquired with his wife the lordship of Thalck, better known as Talk o' th' Hill, in the same county. This William seems to have conceived a liking for the stony lea before referred to, and exchanged his lordship of Talk with his cousin for it. Thenceforward he made Stanley his seat, and, as the old chronicles tell us, in honour of his wife and of the great antiquity of her family, assumed her maiden name and became immediate founder of the Stanleys, a race the most illustrious in the country's annals, and associated with the most stirring events of history.

Sir William Stanley, the fourth in descent from the William who first assumed the name, gave an impetus to the fortunes of the family by one of those matrimonial alliances to which the house of Stanley owes so much of its prosperity. He took to himself a wife in the person of Joan, the youthful daughter and co-heir of Sir Philip Bamville, master forester of Wirral, and lord of Storeton, a place some few miles south of Birkenhead.

Associated with this match is a love story that in its romantic incidents is scarcely less interesting than the one related of the fair heiress of Haddon, Dorothy Vernon. The daughter of the house of Storeton had given her heart to young Stanley, and to escape the misery of a forced marriage with one for whom she had no love she determined to elope. While a banquet was being given to her father, she stole unobserved away, and, being joined by young William Stanley, the anxious lovers rode swiftly across the country to Astbury Church, and there, in the presence of Adam Hoton and Dawe Coupelond, plighted their troth to each other. Six hundred years have rolled away since that scene was enacted, but it requires little stretch of the imagination to picture the resolute maiden hastening with tremulous steps from her father's house, the exciting ride across country, and the hurried joining of hands and hearts in the old church at Astbury, and forgetting that all this occurred long ages ago, we wish from our hearts all happiness to the pair. The story is no mere legend, for the facts are to be found in those musty and unromantic records, the Cheshire Inquisitions, which have been unearthed, and their contents made accessible to the world, by the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records. In a return to a writ of enquiry as to the betrothal of William Stanley, the Inquisition sets forth—

That on the Sunday after the Feast of St. Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist, two years ago, viz., on the 27th September, 1282, Philip de Bamville, with his wife and family, was at a banquet given by Master John de Stanley (an ecclesiastic apparently, priests at that time who had an academical degree being entitled to be called master), on which occasion Joan (Bamville), suspecting that her father intended to marry her to her step-mother's son, took means to avoid it by repairing with William de Stanley to Astbury Church, where they uttered the following mutual promise, he saying, "Joan, I plight thee my troth to take and hold thee as my lawful wife until my life's end," and she replying, "I Joan take thee William as my lawful husband." The witnesses were Adam de Hoton and Dawe de Coupelond.

By this marriage William Stanley became owner of one-third of the manor of Storeton (the remaining two-thirds he subsequently acquired), and also the hereditary bailiwick or chief rangership of the Forest of Wirral, which then overspread the peninsula lying between the estuaries of the Mersey and the Dee, and which was so thickly wooded that, according to the old saying:—

From Blacon point to Hilbree
A squirrel may leap from tree to tree.

After this marriage the Stanleys migrated from the Stony-lea in Staffordshire to their newly acquired home in Cheshire, and at the same time Sir William, in allusion to his office of hereditary forester of Wirral, assumed the arms which have ever since been used by his

descendants in place of those borne by his ancestors, viz., *argent*, on a bend *azure*, three bucks' heads caboshed *or*; in other words, over a shield of silver a belt of blue crossed diagonally with three bucks' heads displayed thereon.

Another and still more important addition was made to the patrimonial lands of the Stanleys through the marriage of Sir William de Stanley, the fourth in direct descent from the first of the name who held the forestership of Wirral, with Margery, only daughter and heir of Sir William de Hooton of Hooton, a township midway between Chester and Birkenhead, and occupying one of the most delightful situations which the banks of the estuary can boast, commanding, as Ormerod says, "a peculiarly beautiful view of the Forest Hills, the bend of the Mersey, and the opposite shore of Hale, and shaded with venerable oaks which the Wirral breezes have elsewhere rarely afforded." From this marriage descended the Stanleys of Hooton and their offshoots, among whom may be mentioned that Sir William Stanley who, in the reign of Elizabeth, betrayed the trust committed to him by the English Government in the base surrender of Deventer to the King of Spain.

The younger line of the Stanleys, with whose fortunes we are more immediately concerned, commences properly with a younger brother of Sir William Stanley of Hooton, Sir John Stanley, who married Isabel, the daughter and sole heir of Sir Thomas Lathom, lord of Lathom, whose ancestress had also been heir of Sir Thomas de Knowsley, lord of Knowsley, and who thus, in right of his wife, became master of the extensive estates around which his descendants' princely property has accreted. By the marriage with the heiress of Bamville the Stanleys acquired the three bucks' heads which have continued ever since to be the distinguishing charge on their heraldic coat; and in like manner, by the marriage with the heiress of Lathom, they obtained the remarkable crest which to the present day continues to surmount their arms, the well-known Eagle and Child, in heraldic language described as—on a chapeau *gules* turned up ermine, an eagle with wings elevated *or*, preying upon an infant swaddled of the first, banded *argent*. Many are the stories that are told respecting Sir John's elopement with the heiress of Lathom, and great is the amount of legendary lore that gathers round the crest which he adopted in her honour. The tradition has often been related, and the curious who wish to know more respecting it will find much interesting information in the *Miscellanea Palatina* (1851) and in a contribution to Nichol's *Collectanea* by the learned historian of Cheshire. The greatness of the Stanleys may be said to have commenced with Sir John—a cool, shrewd, and efficient man—who in his lifetime raised the family from the rank of simple country gentlemen. We need not recount all the honours and distinctions bestowed, or the steady shower of royal benefactions that descended upon him. A knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, he was a rare instance of a courtier who could carry himself through four successive reigns with ever increasing prosperity—and without once sustaining a reverse. His eldest son, Sir John Stanley, fully sustained the dignity of the family, and his grandson, Sir Thomas, in whose person the elevation of the Stanleys to the peerage took place, increased it. But it remained for the son of the last-named Sir Thomas to carry the fortunes of the house to heights before unknown. Living in an age when the spirit of chivalry had given place to a policy of subtlety and success depending less on strength of arm than astuteness of head, he ran a career of successful faithlessness that has scarcely a parallel in English history. Looking always to his own interest, fighting always for his own hand, and changing sides at his own discretion, but always changing to the dominant party, he received as the reward of his consummate tact enormous royal grants which went to swell the originally great possessions of his house; and, finally, by the boldest and most adroit stroke of his whole life—when the rival Roses met on the field of Bosworth and he had beguiled both combatants with promises of sympathy, after the fate of the battle was decided he went over to the side of the victor, and completed his services by placing the battered crown of the vanquished Richard upon the brow of the triumphant Richmond, exclaiming—

Courageous Richmond, well hast thou acquit thee!
Lo, here, this long-usurped royalty,
From the dead temples of this bloody wretch
Have I plucked off, to grace thy brows withal;
Wear it, enjoy it, and make much of it.

Thus Thomas Stanley earned for himself and his descendants the Earldom of Derby. Through his eldest son, George Lord Strange, who succeeded to the title, Thomas, Earl of Derby, was progenitor of a race of illustrious men, conspicuous among whom were James, the "Martyr Earl," distinguished for his attachment to the Royal cause during the Civil Wars, and the eminent statesman of more recent times, Edward Geoffrey Smith-Stanley, 14th earl, who died in 1869—the father of the present holder of the title.

The Stanleys of Alderley trace their descent from John, a younger brother of Thomas the first Earl, who became possessed of the manor of Alderley by his marriage with the heiress of Thomas Weever, lord of Weever and Alderley. When Duke William of Normandy parcelled out the land in the newly-conquered country among his faithful followers Alderley fell to the share of William Fitz Nigel, the bulder and fortifier of Halton Castle, and was held by him as of his manor of Halton. In 1294 he granted Over Alderley to one Roger Throsle, who in turn gave it as a marriage portion to his daughter Margery when she became the wife of Edmund Downes. Subsequently it passed into the possession of the Ardernes, who held it for two or three generations. Peter de Arderne, the last male representative of this line, had an only surviving daughter, the heiress of all his lands; wishing in his life-time to secure a suitable match for her he, in the reign of Edward III., purchased from Sir John de Arderne, lord of Aldford and the paramount lord of Weever, the

wardship and marriage of Richard, son and heir of Thomas de Weever, paying for the same 40 marks (£26 13s. 4d.), an investment he turned to profitable account by marrying his young ward to his daughter. In this way the estates of Weever and Alderley became united, and so they continued until the reign of Henry VI. In 1445 Thomas de Weever, the great-grandson of Richard de Weever and Margaret Arderne his wife, died, leaving an only daughter, Elizabeth, who thus became heiress of the lands in Weever and Alderley. Being under age at the time of her father's death she became a ward of the King, and he, as previously mentioned, gave the disposal of her in marriage to his favourite, Thomas, the first Lord Stanley, who made the most of his opportunity by marrying her to his third son, Thomas Stanley, thus securing for him and his descendants a very handsome patrimony, embracing the manor of Weever and the lands in Over and Nether Alderley, &c.. Weever remained in their possession until 1710, when it passed by sale to the Wilbrahams of Townsend, now represented by George Fortescue Wilbraham, Esq., of Delamere House, but Alderley was retained and still continues the chief residence of the family, who have held it in continuous succession for a period of more than four hundred years.

It is not our purpose to trace the descent of the Stanleys through successive generations, we therefore pass over the history of the ancient house to the time of Sir Thomas Stanley, the sixth in direct descent from John Stanley, who married the heiress of Weever, and the one who added a baronetcy to the honours of the Alderley line—an interval of nearly two centuries, during which time the family estates had been largely increased, partly from the possessions of the dissolved abbey of Dieulacres, and partly from lands acquired at different times through prudent marriages, as evidenced by the Inquisition taken in 1606, after the death of Sir Thomas Stanley, Knight, who had married the heiress of Sir Peter Warburton of Grafton, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and which shows that at his decease he held the manors of Weever, Over Alderley, Nether Alderley, Clive, Little Meols, and Pulton Launcelyn; and lands in those and the following places: Barretspool, Wimbaldesley, Stanthorne, Spittle, Middlewich, Rushton, Bredbury, Upton near Macclesfield, Chorley, Hough, Warford, Chelford, Astle, Birtles, Mobberley, Ollerton, Torkington, Offerton, Norbury, Occleston, Sutton, &c., all in the county of Chester. This Thomas, who had been knighted by James I. while at Worksop Manor on his progress towards London, after the death of Elizabeth, a journey during which he shed the honours of knighthood on no less than two hundred and thirty-seven gentlemen who were presented to him, was succeeded by his eldest son, Thomas Stanley, who was only eight years of age at the time of the father's death.

Shortly after he came of age Thomas Stanley married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir James Pytts, of Kyre, in Worcestershire, and in 1634 he was honoured with the shrievalty of his native county. The time was an anxious one. It was the year preceding the arbitrary levy of ship-money, when the storm was gathering that ere long was to break with such disastrous force upon the head of the ill-fated Charles. When the sword was drawn the head of the Alderley Stanleys ranged himself on the side of those who contended for the privileges of Parliament in opposition to Kingly prerogative, and who were resolved upon upholding the bulwark of the national liberties; he does not appear, however, to have engaged in any of the great military enterprises which marked that stirring period, the help he rendered to the cause being limited in a great measure to the discharge of the civil functions which devolved upon him as a magistrate, and in the performance of which he was very zealous and energetic. His name is of frequent occurrence in the church books in his own part of the county, and when, during the time of the Usurpation, marriage, as a religious ceremony, was forbidden by the law, and transformed into a civil contract to be entered into before a justice of the peace, Mr. Stanley appears to have been one of the magistrates most frequently performing the office. Though a staunch Puritan, he can hardly be said to have been a violent supporter of the party, and except in the assiduous discharge of his magisterial office he took little part in the events that were then transpiring. Possibly it was the moderation shown in those exciting times that led to his being one of the Cheshire gentlemen selected for a baronetcy on the occasion of the Restoration of Charles II., and curiously enough his name appears first on the list from the county on whom that dignity was conferred. The hall at Weever had up to this time been the principal residence of the family. Some time before 1640 Thomas Stanley added to his possessions by the purchase of Chorley Hall, an old mansion of the Davenports, in Wilmslow parish; afterwards he greatly improved the ancestral home at Alderley, and erected in front of it a handsome stone-arched gateway, two of the pillars of which may still be seen in the wall bordering the roadside; it is said that he also planted the beech woods bordering upon the Mere, which now form such a pleasant adjunct of the park.

Until the present century the succeeding generations of the Stanleys took little active interest in national affairs, preferring the quieter and less exciting life of country gentlemen, passing much of their time in Cheshire improving their estates, and spending much of their leisure in the indulgence of their literary tastes. Sir Peter Stanley, who succeeded as second baronet on the death of his father, Sir Thomas, in 1672, served the office of sheriff in 1678. He died in 1683, having had by his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Leigh of Northcourt, in the Isle of Wight, two sons and seven daughters. Thomas Stanley, the eldest son, who succeeded to the barony and estates, was born at Alderley on the 25th March, 1652, and baptized there on the 15th April following. He added to the family estates by his marriage with Christiana, daughter and heiress of Sir Stephen Leonard, of West Wickham, Kent, Bart. During his time the old hall of Weever, a half-timbered mansion, pleasantly situated on an acclivity that rises from the banks of the river of the same name, and which had come into the possession of the Stanleys as early as the reign of Henry VI., and been their principal residence until 1660 or thereabouts, was sold, the purchaser being Randle Wilbraham, of Townshend, direct ancestor of the Wilbrahams of Delamere House. Lady Stanley, who died February 16, 1711-12, bore him in addition to two daughters, both of

whom died unmarried, two sons, who in turn succeeded to the honours and estates of the family. Sir Thomas Stanley died at West Wickham in 1721, when the eldest of his two sons, James Stanley, succeeded as heir. He married in November, 1740, Frances, youngest daughter of George Butler, of Ballyragget, in the county Kilkenny, in Ireland, but by her had no issue. He seems to have been a somewhat eccentric personage, if we may judge from a remark made by Miss Stanley. She says, quoting from the recollections of John Finlow, an old retainer of the family, that "Sir James used to drive up to the Edge almost daily in his carriage drawn by four black long-tailed mares, always accompanied by a running footman of the name of Critchley." She adds that her informant, Finlow, was a lad then, and used to get up behind the carriage. Notwithstanding his little foibles the old baronet is represented as having been of a remarkably mild and placid temperament, a character that seems to be borne out by some lines he is believed to have written, and which were found among his papers after his death—

The grace of God and a quiet life,
A mind content, and an honest wife,
A good report and a friend in store,
What need a man to wish for more.

Sir James Stanley died March 17th, 1746-7, when the baronetcy as well as the patrimonial lands devolved upon his younger brother, Edward, who succeeded as fifth baronet. He did not, however, long enjoy possession of the estates, for in 1755, while returning from Adlington, where he had been on a visit to Charles Legh, he was suddenly seized with a fit of apoplexy, and died in his carriage before he could be conveyed home. By his marriage with Mary, daughter of Thomas Ward, a wealthy banker, of London, who survived him and died at Bath in 1771, he had two sons, James Stanley, who died in infancy, and John Thomas, born 26th March, 1735, who succeeded as sixth baronet. He was in his twenty-first year at the time of his father's decease, and married in April, 1763, Margaret, daughter and heiress of Hugh Owen, of Penrhos, in Anglesey, a well-wooded estate, about a mile from the town and harbour of Holyhead. When he came into possession of the family estates the steep rocky promontory known as the Edge, and with which every Manchester holiday-maker is familiar, was a wild dreary common, without any sign of cultivation, except the few clumps of hardy fir trees which had been planted by his father and by his uncle, Sir James Stanley, between the years 1745 and 1755. It is recorded that in 1799 he enclosed the Edge, with other waste lands on the estate, and, at the same time repaired or rebuilt the old Beacon which had been in existence from the time of Elizabeth, if not from a still earlier date, and which was then in a state of decay, covering in the square chamber with the pyramidal roof which, until it became obscured by the thick umbrage around, made it one of the chief landmarks in Cheshire.

Sir John Thomas Stanley died in London, November 29th, 1807, and was buried at South Audley. By his wife, who survived him, and died February 1st, 1816, he had a numerous family—two sons and five daughters. Of the sons, the eldest, born November 26th, 1766, and named after himself, succeeded as seventh baronet, and in 1839 was elevated to the peerage by the title of Baron Stanley of Alderley. The other son, Edward, the youngest of seven children, was born at his father's residence in London, January 1st, 1779.

While the baronetcy and the broad lands of Alderley were reserved for the eldest son of Sir John Thomas Stanley, the family living—the rectory and the pleasant old rectory house—was the portion that Edward, the youngest son, could look forward to, for the Stanleys were then, as now, patrons of the church, as well as lords of the manor of Alderley.

The future rector, as we have seen, first saw the light on New Year's Day, 1779. He was born at his father's residence in London, and his birth and baptism are thus recorded in the church register at Alderley:—

1779. Feb. 21.—Edward, son of Sir John Thomas Stanley and Margaret, Lady Stanley, was born in the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, co. Middlesex, the 1st of January, 1779, and baptized on the 31st of the same month (by the Rev. Ralph Carr, rector of Alderley) at Sir John's house, in the said parish of St. George's.

Though born, as it were, to the prospect of taking Holy Orders, Edward Stanley's sanguine temperament, his love of adventure and spirit of enterprise, led him in early years to long for the excitement and the perils of a naval life, a passion that is said to have been inspired by a visit he made, when a child of three or four years, to Weymouth, where he first saw an English man-of-war. Though the boyish fancy was overruled by circumstances beyond his own control, the impression made upon his mind was never eradicated, and his enthusiastic love for a profession from which he was excluded remained and gave a colour to his whole after life. As his son in later years observed, "the sight of a ship, the society of sailors, the embarkation on a voyage, were always sufficient to inspire and delight him wherever he might be."

A bright, happy, eager childhood seems to have been his. Of amiable disposition, with a cheerful flow of animal spirits, fertility of resource, activity of mind and body, and an exuberance of boyish mirth and daring, he carried with him into the active business of life those natural characteristics which enabled him, when he had attained to manhood, to overcome whatever difficulties might beset his path—characteristics that were especially useful to him when he entered upon his University career, for it can hardly be said that up to that time his education and training were such as to specially fit him for the sacred calling in which he was to find his vocation, or such as were ordinarily given to boys destined for the Church. His early life was passed in a succession of

removals from one private school or tutor to another; subsequently he was placed in the Grammar School at Macclesfield, under the Rev. Dr. Inglis, whose classical attainments had earned for the school a high reputation in the Universities. In 1798 he entered at St John's College, Cambridge, to find, however, that he had to begin his course of study almost from the very foundation. Dean Stanley, in his "Memoirs," to which we are indebted for many interesting particulars of his life, says: "Of Greek he was entirely, of Latin almost entirely, ignorant; and of mathematics he knew only what he had acquired at one of the private schools where he had been placed when quite a child." His earnest application and indomitable perseverance, however, soon enabled him to make up for these deficiencies, and to make such progress that in 1802 he appeared as 16th Wrangler in the mathematical tripos. Of him it might with truth be said that "he applied his heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom," and we might almost fancy him to have been the subject of the portrait of an English clergyman which a Fellow of his own college, W. Mackworth Praed, drew with such a skilful hand—

Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
The doctrine of a *gentle Johnian*,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
Whose phrase is very Ciceronian.

He cherished a grateful recollection of the advantages he gained from his academic course at Cambridge, and his affection for his *alma mater* was shown in the spirited letter he addressed to a local journal when, a generation later, an attack was made upon the University by Mr. Beverley. "I can never," he says, "be sufficiently grateful for the benefits I received within those college walls; and to the last hour of my life I shall feel a deep sense of thankfulness to those tutors and authorities for the effects of that discipline and invaluable course of study which rescued me from ignorance, and infused an abiding thirst for knowledge, the means of intellectual enjoyment, and those habits and principles which have not only been an enduring source of personal gratification, but tended much to qualify me, from the period of my taking orders to the present day, for performing the duties of an extensive parish."

Having taken his B.A., he made a Continental tour, visiting Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. On his return he was admitted to Holy Orders and ordained to the curacy of Windleshaw, in Surrey, where he remained for about three years, when the rectory of Alderley became vacant, by the resignation of the Rev. Ralph Carr, who had held it for the long period of forty-three years, the greater part of which time he had been non-resident. This was in 1805—the year in which he proceeded to his degree of M.A.—and he was then presented by his father to the vacant living and inducted November 15th.

Though little of his early life had been passed at Alderley, the place was endeared to him by many family associations, and from his first entering upon the ministerial office the ardent desire of his heart was to do something for the people, who, through the apathy and long continued absence of his predecessor, had been as sheep having no shepherd.

At that time the religious life of England was at a very low ebb; ministerial neglect was the rule rather than the exception, and the conduct of the clergy generally was not regulated by any very high standard of morality or excellence. Among the changes that have been wrought in our national institutions during the present century none have been more remarkable than those in the Church—not in its abstract constitution, but in the character and conduct of its ministers. The clerical "lights of other days" shone but dimly. Those who resided upon their benefices were content to spend their days in an easy hand-in-glove kind of association with their people, but seldom or never rose above the ordinary routine of the stated services of the Church. With the wise man they believed that "in much study is a weariness of the flesh," and to avoid that "weariness" they were wont to give more time to the foxes than to the Fathers. The typical clergyman of eighty years ago preferred conviviality to controversy; he was more concerned about his pigs than his preaching, and dreaded distemper in his herd a great deal more than he did dissent in his flock. Alderley was no exception to the general condition of the country, and many are the stories of clerical shortcomings that still linger in the memory of the older inhabitants. Rector Carr had made it his boast that he "never set a foot in a sick person's cottage," and it is related that when service was held in the church "the clerk used to go to the churchyard stile to see whether there were any more coming to church, for there were seldom enough to make a congregation."

A parish which had remained so long in a state of spiritual torpor presented many difficulties to a new comer filled with a desire to promote the well-being of his people, and whose creed was—

Of hope, and virtue, and affection full.

Surrounded by so much ignorance and indifference the enthusiasm of his fervent spirit was enkindled, and his ardent nature, combined with his strong sense of duty, acted as an incentive, and increased the desire to minister to the wants, both temporal and spiritual, of his flock, and faithfully to fulfil the sacred trust committed to him in his parochial cure. But those among whom he was called to minister were untaught in the first rudiments of the Christian faith, and upon ground so unprepared it was clear that the seed of the Word read and preached in the church, and the services of the liturgy, however reverently said or sung, could profit little, and that it was only by clothing his thoughts in language suited to their capacity—by giving in the plainest words such simple instruction as should touch their hearts, and by a kindly sympathy in all their concerns that he could hope to become "a father and a leader" to his hitherto neglected

parishioners, and sustain among them a higher standard of conduct than was then common among an agricultural population. To be, in short—

A pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;
And tender Goldsmith crown'd with deathless praise.

With him duty seemed to be a delight, and piety an instinct; though among the indolent, easy-going divines of the old school, in whom the true liturgical teaching of the Church had withered down into a mere lifeless form, his unwearying devotion to the charge committed to his care was looked upon as only the fervid zeal of an enthusiastic visionary.

Edward Stanley had nearly completed his twenty-seventh year when he entered upon his ministry at Alderley. In his twenty-ninth year he became engaged to the lady who may with truth be said to have been the sunshine of his heart, who took an unfailing interest and pride in his labours, and who was his constant stay and support through life—Catherine Leycester, the eldest of the two daughters of the Rev. Oswald Leycester, at the time rector of Stoke-upon-Terne, but who, in Edward Stanley's boyhood, had been curate of Alderley, a position he resigned on being presented by his brother, George Leycester, to the living of the neighbouring church of Knutsford. They were married in 1810, as Maria Leycester in her family notes, transcribed in "Memorials of a Quiet Life," thus records: "On the 8th of May, 1810, my sister was married in Stoke Church, to Edward Stanley, Rector of Alderley. Upon her marriage I left Leighton Cottage, and until my mother's death I remained at home. My father gave me lessons in—it must be confessed—*bad* French and Italian, but it was my sister who still directed my studies by letter, constantly sending me questions on the books which I read, and expecting me to write her the answers.... Edward Stanley was to me the kindest of brothers, and great was the amusement he gave by the playful verses he wrote to please me."

The Leycesters of Toft, of which house Oswald Leycester was a younger son, were an offshoot of the Leycesters of Tabley, now represented by Lord de Tabley. The family held high rank among the Cheshire squirearchy, and between them and the Stanleys a friendship had long existed, the intimacy being increased by near neighbourship, for Toft, their ancestral home—a charmingly situated manor-house, where, before his removal to Stoke, Oswald Leycester resided with his widowed mother—was only a few miles distant, and a continuous intercourse was kept up between the two families. "My great delight," wrote Maria Leycester, "was to go to Alderley Park and play with the 'Miss Stanleys;' and it was a joy when, standing by the breakfast table, I heard it settled that the carriage was to be ordered to go to Alderley, and that I was to be of the party." The Leycesters could boast a lineage as ancient as that of the Stanleys, and through the Tofts, whose estates they had acquired by marriage with a heiress of that family in the reign of Richard II., were able to trace their descent from Gunnora, Duchess of Normandy, the grandmother of William the Conqueror.

Edward Stanley was approaching his thirty-second year at the time of his marriage—his wife had then just passed her nineteenth birthday. But, young as she was, she had, owing to the delicate health of her mother, been taught, almost from the time of leaving school, to think and act for herself, and had had moreover the responsibility cast upon her of educating her younger sister, Maria Leycester. "Hers was a porcelain understanding," said Sydney Smith; her journal and the letters written in her earlier life give a true reflex of her mind, and justify the remark of her son that "there was a quiet wisdom, a rare usefulness, a calm discrimination, a firm decision, which made her judgment and her influence felt through the whole circle in which she lived."

To the old rectory house at Alderley, Edward Stanley took his bride, and in that happy home five children were brought up. Of the every-day life in that household we get many pleasant glimpses in the journal of Maria Leycester, to which reference has already been made. She writes upon one occasion:—

We live here (Alderley Rectory) in such perfect retirement and tranquillity that it is more like Stoke than Alderley, and I enjoy excessively the exemption from all interruption to the happiness of my life here. I believe you will not have any difficulty in imagining how great that happiness is, in the society of two people that one loves excessively, with children that are as interesting to one as if they were one's own, and with all the luxury of delicious spring weather (this was written May 10, 1819) in beech woods and green fields. I would defy you to tantalise me with the greatest temptations London could offer; as far as happiness, real *true* happiness is concerned, nothing in London could present to me half as much as one perfectly retired uninterrupted day at Alderley.

In one of her letters to Miss Clinton, written from Stoke Rectory in the early summer of 1825, she says:—

That I have not written to you before you will easily understand to have arisen from my unwillingness to lose a single hour of my last days at Alderley. They were indeed very precious to me, and after staying there for four months uninterruptedly you may well imagine how painful it was to me to leave all those who were more than usually endeared to me by the comfort they had offered me during a time when nothing else could have pleased or interested. Certainly, too, altogether, with its inhabitants, its abundance of books, of drawing, liberty unrestrained, beautiful walks and rides and

seats, luxuriance of flowers, and, in delicious weather, there cannot on earth be so perfect a paradise. During the hot weather we generally went on the mere—or rode in the evenings. Every morning, before breakfast, Lucy and I met in the wood at the old Moss House, where we spent an hour together, and Owen (Edward Stanley's eldest son) came to ferry me home. With so much around to interest and please me, I put away self as much as possible, and endeavoured as much as I could to enjoy the present. You know how dearly I love all those children, and it was such a pleasure to see them all so happy together. To be sure it would be singular if they were not different from other children, with the advantages they have, when education is made so interesting and amusing as it is to them.... While others of their age are plodding through the dull histories, of which they remember nothing, of unconnected countries and ages, K.'s (Katharine Stanley's) system is to take one particular era, perhaps, and upon the basis of the General History, pick out for them from different books all that bears upon that one subject, whether in memoirs or literature, making it at once an interesting study to herself and them.

The old rectory house at Alderley was not the home of the parson only—it was, in a sense, the home of the parish, and became the resort of all who were in trouble or difficulty, or who needed counsel or assistance. The house was, as it were, thrown open, and every one knew that in it they had a friend ready to listen to their little grievances, and equally ready to remedy them where it was in his power to do so—one who could "weep with them that wept, and rejoice with them that rejoiced"—who had a kindly sympathy in all their concerns, and could enter into their interests with the feelings of a father and a friend. The good man's delight in ministering to the temporal comforts of his people was extreme, and he took an especial pleasure in drawing them around him, in order that he might turn any passing circumstance to profitable account, and speak to them more familiarly and more directly upon matters connected with the parish that might be commented upon or set right. He preferred kneeling by the sick bed in a cottage to the cushioned ease of a mansion, and a serious conversation with the poor to the small talk of the drawing-room. It was this feature in his ministerial career that left a never-fading recollection in the minds of those he ministered to, and many a good deed done in secret only came to light when he was removed to another sphere of duty, and but for that removal would probably never have been disclosed. Mounted upon his little black cob, he might be seen daily going his rounds among his parishioners, advising them in their difficulties, comforting them in their sorrows, and encouraging or reproving them as he saw occasion. The sound of his horse's feet was as music in the ears of the rustic cottagers, who would hasten to their doors to greet his approach, while their children, with bobbing courtesies, would stand in eager expectation of the "goodies" that were sure to be the reward of those who were clean and tidy. "When he entered a sick chamber," it was said, "he never failed to express the joy which order and neatness gave him, or to reprove where he found it otherwise," and whatever was proposed for the general good was sure to receive his active support; he took so much trouble, the people said, in whatever he did—never sparing himself in whatever he took in hand. He felt that he was in a measure a temporal as well as a spiritual guide, a leader and encourager of sobriety, good order, and peacefulness, as well as a teacher of sound doctrine and an example of Christian practice, and that his mission was rather to raise the rude and uncultivated to his own level than to lower himself to theirs.

In those days pastoral life was not so charmingly innocent, nor the Colins and Phœbes nearly so amiable and virtuous, as imaginative poets and painters have pictured them to us. In Alderley, as in many other places, drunkenness was the besetting sin; immorality, as a matter of course, followed in its train; and what should have been a kind of Arcadia was oftentimes the scene of riotous disorder. The good rector spared no pains to repress the evil, and whenever he heard of any drunken fight in the village he would, with the dash and daring of an English sailor, hurry off to put a stop to it. It is related that on one occasion word was brought to him that a riotous crowd had assembled on the confines of his parish to witness a desperate prize fight. "The whole field," so a rustic spectator described it, "was filled, and all the trees round about, when in about a quarter of an hour I saw the rector coming up the road on his little black horse as quick as lightning, and I trembled for fear they should harm him. He rode into the field, and just looked quick round (as if he thought the same) to see who there was that would be on his side. But it was not needed—he rode into the midst of the crowd, and in one moment it was all over; there was a great calm; the blows stopped; it was as if they would all have wished to cover themselves up in the earth—all from the trees they dropped down directly—no one said a word, and all went away humble." The following day he sent for the two men, but instead of scolding he reasoned with them, and sent each away with a Bible in his hand.

He was the centre from which whatever there was of spiritual life in the parish emanated. Self-reliant, resolute and unwearied, but kind and conciliatory, and withal cautious and discreet in his operations, he exhibited a thoroughness of character that enabled him to exercise a controlling influence over his charge, and his self-devotedness was often gladdened by the sympathy and encouraged by the affection of those whom he had won from the slavery of sin to the freedom of Christian life. When he settled down with his young wife among the scattered units that in the aggregate constituted his flock, he found them for the most part sunk in ignorance, mental and moral; and the parents, indifferent themselves, had allowed their children to grow up in the same indifference. To reclaim the young, he set about gathering them into the village schools, in the successful working of which he ever manifested the deepest interest. Public elementary education had then made but little progress, and the proverbial three R's, with perhaps a dash of unintelligible geography and history, made up the total of the knowledge usually imparted.

Edward Stanley was far in advance of many of his clerical brethren in the desire to place the means of instruction within the reach of even the poorest classes of society, as well as to improve the methods of conveying it; and his zeal in this direction has been testified to by a former Chancellor of the diocese of Chester, the Rev. Henry Raikes.

"He was the first," said the Chancellor, "who distinctly saw and boldly advocated the advantages of general education for the lower classes. Schools had been founded; he had borne his part—and a most active part—in the first movement, but I think that he first set the example of the extent to which general knowledge might be communicated—and beneficially communicated—in a parochial school. I well remember the appearance," he says, "of the school at Alderley, where, in addition to the usual range of desks and books, the apparatus for gymnastic exercises was seen suspended from the roof. I remember the admiration excited at a lecture which he delivered in Chester, where he exhibited a 'hortus siccus' of the plants found in the parish, made by one of the girls in the school; and, though few or none did more than wonder at what was accomplished at Alderley, an impression was created that a large amount of useful secular knowledge might be added without any deduction from what would be considered the proper objects of a school."

His love of learning manifested itself in other ways. When half a century ago the British Association had sprung into existence, causing a flutter among Church dignitaries, who failed to see that Christianity had everything to hope and nothing to fear from the advancement of science, and very reverend deans were addressing letters of remonstrance to its promoters on the "Dangers of Peripatetic Philosophy," Edward Stanley courageously came forward as its advocate, and was enrolled as one of its early vice-presidents. A one-sided development of the mind was then the characteristic of the older universities, and men often-times left college without a single idea concerning the common things of every-day life or the slightest knowledge of any of God's works. The rector of Alderley was in many respects self-educated; dependent in a great measure upon his own resources, he had discovered that dead literature could not be made the parent of living science or active industry, and was one of the first clergymen to direct popular attention to the wondrous history of the stones of the field, the birds of the air, and the "gnats above the summer stream." "The perversions of men," he was wont to say, "would have made an infidel of him but for the counteracting impressions of Divine Providence in the works of nature." Like Gilbert White, at Selborne, he devoted much of his leisure in noting the instincts of animals and the phenomena of ever-changing nature. Ornithology was his favourite subject of study, and the staircases and corridors of his rectory house, adorned as they were with cuttings from "Bewick," bore testimony to his love of birds, while their habits and peculiarities formed a constant source of interest and amusement to him in his rambles through the fields and along the rural lanes of his parish. The result of his labours he embodied in a pleasantly-written work, published by the Christian Knowledge Society—"A Familiar History of Birds: their Nature, Habits, and Instincts"—a work that has passed through several editions—in which are recorded many of the observations made at Alderley.

On the 13th of June, 1811, the rector's heart was gladdened by the birth of a son, who, in compliment to his grandmother, was named Owen. Owen Stanley inherited his father's passionate desire for the naval profession, and the wish was indulged from a recollection of the painful effort it cost the father in his boyhood to overcome the same impulse. Another child, a daughter, was born on the 14th December, 1813, Mary Stanley, and his happiness was added to by the birth of a second son, on the 13th December, 1815—Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the future Dean of Westminster. Of the home life in the pleasant old parsonage house many glimpses are given us in that tribute of filial affection from the pen of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley to which reference has previously been made, as well as in that delightful chronicle of English domestic life—its comfort, its quiet, and its innocence, written by Arthur Stanley's kinsman—"Memorials of a Quiet Life." Writing to her sister in May, 1818, Mrs. Stanley remarks:—

How I have enjoyed these fine days—and one's pleasure is doubled, or rather, I should say, trebled, in the enjoyment of the three little children basking in the sunshine on the lawns, and picking up daisies, and finding new flowers every day—and in seeing Arthur expand like one of the flowers in the fine weather. Owen trots away to school at nine o'clock every morning, with his Latin grammar under his arm, leaving Mary (his sister) with strict charge to unfurl his flag, which he leaves carefully furled, through the little Gothic gate, as soon as the clock strikes twelve. So Mary unfurls the flag and then watches till Owen comes in sight, and as soon as he spies her signal he sets off full gallop towards it, and Mary creeps through the gate to meet him, and then comes with as much joy to announce Owen's being come back as if he was returned from the North Pole. Meanwhile I am sitting with the doors open into the trellice, so that I can see and hear all that passes.

Two years later the fond mother writes:—

I have been taking a domestic walk with the three children and the pony to Owen's favourite cavern, Mary and Arthur taking it in turns to ride. Arthur was sorely puzzled between his fear and his curiosity. Owen and Mary, full of adventurous spirit, went with Mademoiselle to explore. Arthur stayed with me and the pony, but when I said I would go, he said, colouring, he would go, he *thought*. "But, mamma, do you think there are any wild dogs in the cavern?" Then we picked up various specimens of cobalt, &c., and

we carried them in a basket, and we called at Mrs. Barber's, and we got some string, and we tied the basket to the pony with some trouble, and we got home very safe, and I finished the delights of the evening by reading *Paul and Virginia* to Owen and Mary, with which they were much delighted and so was I. You would have given a good deal for a peep at Arthur this evening, making hay with all his little strength—such a beautiful colour, and such soft animation in his blue eyes.

Among the letters of Mrs. Stanley is one that has more than a local or domestic interest. She was one of the spectators on the occasion of the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester railway on that memorable 15th September, 1830, when the Duke of Wellington, who was then Prime Minister, came down to preside at the ceremony, and poor William Huskisson, who had been such a strenuous and eager supporter of the enterprise, met his death. After a vivid account of the scene and the incident that gave such a mournful interest to it, she describes a visit she made a year or two after to High Legh. She says:—

We are a party of twenty-six in the house. There are so many that one's presence or absence is perfectly immaterial and unremarked. There is one person who interests me very much—Mrs. Tom Blackburne, "the Vicarress" of Eccles, who received poor Mrs. Huskisson, and immortalised herself by her activity, sense, and conduct all through. She made one ashamed of the ease and idleness of one's own life, compared with hers. They have to deal with such a population—25,000 souls. She has been the ruling spirit evidently; and under her guidance, and the help of a sound head and heart her husband has become the very man for the place, with quickness and presence of mind for any sudden emergency: and she describes the people—all Manchester weavers—as grateful and sensitive, far beyond our agricultural experience. He is in general at home to parishioners from 8 till 12 and from 4 to 6 every day, and often fully occupied all the time; but during the four days Mrs. Huskisson was in the house, none of them entered the gates. She asked afterwards why it was, and one of them said, "Eh, we knowed what you were at, and so we did without."

I made her give me the details of those days. She said the most painful thing she had to do was waking Mrs. Huskisson out of her sound heavy sleep the morning after. She went three times into the room before she had resolution to wake her outright, as was necessary. Mrs. H. went into the most violent hysterics the moment she opened her eyes and saw Mrs. Blackburne. Lord Granville, hearing her screams, came to Mrs. Blackburne's assistance. He and his valet were her chief assistants all through. She said the advantage of having such people to deal with was great. Many would have thought it an additional trouble to have great people in such circumstances—she found it just the reverse; the high breeding and true gentlemanliness that come out smooths over every difficulty and awkwardness of strangers in such close quarters. Lord Granville, in particular, entered into every feeling with a woman's delicacy. Poor Mrs. Huskisson was alternately in paroxysms of grief and a still more dreadful calmness, especially the day after, when it was wished to relieve her of all business, and she insisted on doing everything herself.

Just before she left the house, she locked herself into the room, and after violent hysterics, during which Mrs. Blackburne tried in vain to get to her assistance, she heard her praying for her and her husband, and all connected with them.

She desired Mrs. Blackburne to remember her to Lady Elizabeth Belgrave, and to hope she had not suffered from the shock (she was near her confinement). "What should I have felt if you had been in her situation?" This she said to Mrs. Blackburne, who was at the moment within three months of her time. Of course Mrs. Blackburne said nothing, but wrote to her after her confinement, and Mrs. Huskisson answered her that it was the first ray of sunshine that had come to her, for she had afterwards found it out, and it had weighed heavily upon her.

Some months afterwards she sent Mr. Blackburne a Bible with gold clasps, and in the purple silk lining inside, these words in gilt letters:—"I was a stranger and ye took me in." Both last Christmas and this she sent also £20 to him to distribute amongst his poor, well knowing that she could not make him a more acceptable present.



For thirty-two years Edward Stanley continued to minister to the wants—temporal as well as spiritual—of the population of his pleasant little rural parish, looked up to by the cottage as a father and a friend, and endeared to all by his earnestness, his simplicity, and his geniality; his faithful coadjutor during the whole of that long period being the Rev. Isaac Bell, his curate, the father of the present worthy rector of Alderley, the Rev. Edward John Bell. For a time (1824 to 1829) he enjoyed the friendly co-operation of the rector of the adjoining parish of Wilmslow—the Rev. J. Mathias Turner,^[10] who afterwards became Bishop of Calcutta, and many were the schemes of parochial improvement then formed, and which, doubtless, afterwards influenced in

no small degree the Church work in the dioceses to which the two rectors were respectively appointed. Stanley could never find happiness in repose; his intervals of leisure, as we have said, were mainly devoted to the study of ornithology, but he also found time for literary pursuits. In addition to the pamphlets which he issued from time to time in the form of addresses to his people—"A Few Words on behalf of our Roman Catholic Brethren," "A Few Observations on Religion and Education in Ireland," and "A Country Rector's Address to his Parishioners"—he contributed to the "British Magazine," to "Blackwood," and to other periodicals, the results of his studies and the records of his brief holiday excursions; one of these latter, an account of an adventure in the Alps, on the "Mauvais Pas," is believed to have suggested to Sir Walter Scott the opening scene in his novel of "Anne of Geierstein." Among the results of his scientific and antiquarian investigations is a history of the parish of Alderley, still preserved in MS., which it is hoped will at no distant day be given to the world.

But the time came when the literary occupations and the scientific investigations with which he had so pleasantly beguiled his leisure hours at Alderley were to be laid aside—when he was to be wrenched out of his rural surroundings to undertake the episcopal supervision of an important diocese. When it was proposed to erect Manchester into a see the rector of Alderley declined the invitation to become its first bishop, but in 1837, at the instance of the then Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, he was, after much deliberation and a severe struggle which almost broke down his health, induced to accept the nomination to the bishopric of Norwich. To leave the quiet, peaceful parsonage where so many happy years had been passed, and where all his children had been born and reared—to part from those among whom he had so long laboured—was a sore trial, and the news of the preferment which was to sever the tie that had so long bound pastor and people was received by the parishioners amidst an uncontrollable outburst of grief.

It is not our purpose to dwell at any length upon the labours of Edward Stanley as a bishop of the Church of England; suffice it to say that on leaving Alderley, where so many years of his useful life had been spent, and which was endeared to him by so many ties of affection and sympathy, he turned with alacrity to the work which lay before him, and with the same spirit of energy, and the same dauntless courage, applied himself to the development of those schemes of practical usefulness that lay within his grasp, in order that his cathedral city might become the centre of the moral and religious life of the diocese. Broad in his sympathies, courageous in his outspokenness, and impetuous in his temperament, he oftentimes brought himself in conflict with those who were content with things as they had been, and in the earlier years of his episcopate he found his diocese anything but a bed of roses, for during the closing years of the long rule of his predecessor, Bishop Bathurst, Norwich had been a byword for laxity among the sees of the English Church, a condition of things the new prelate could not endure. Stanley's whole life had been a protest against the lethargy and inactivity which was then only too common a characteristic of the clergy, yet his broad liberality, his fatherly sympathy, and his geniality and simplicity enabled him, while correcting abuses, always to leave peace behind. His personal kindness won the hearts of the clergy of his diocese as thoroughly as it had previously won those of the cottagers in his parish. "I felt," said one of them, after a visit from the bishop, "as if a sunbeam had passed through my parish, and had left me to rejoice in its genial and cheerful warmth. From that day I would have died to serve him; and I believe that not a few of my humble flock were animated in a greater or less degree by the same kind of feeling."

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Norwich". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent initial "E" and a long, sweeping tail on the "w".

Amid the cares inseparable from the active supervision of an important diocese, he never forgot his old parish of Alderley, and his attachment for the scene of his early labours continued unshaken. "It would be vain and useless," he said, on commencing his primary visitation, "to speak to others of what none could feel so deeply as myself. What it cost me to leave Alderley, it is for myself alone to feel." On parting with his parishioners he had given a sacred pledge that he would visit them every year, and the annual recurrence of the time when he could again make the familiar round of visits to those he had known and loved during his long ministerial intercourse, and who themselves looked forward to his coming as the greatest pleasure of their lives, was anticipated with fond delight. "I have been," he wrote to a friend, a few months before his death, "in various directions over the parish, visiting many welcome faces, laughing with the living, weeping over the dying. It is gratifying to see the cordial familiarity with which they receive me; and Norwich clergy would scarcely know me sitting by cottage firesides, talking over old times, with their hands clasped in mine, as an old and dear friend."

On the last day of December, 1848, the eve of his seventieth birthday, he wrote in his Journal:—

In a few hours I shall have attained the threescore years and ten and closed the eleventh year of my episcopal life ... and though these latter years have been accompanied with much labour and pain and sorrow, more and more alive as I am to the difficulties presenting themselves, still I feel satisfaction in what I have been instrumental in doing. How many parishes have been supplied with resident clergy, in which no pastoral care had been for years manifested? How many churches have had the full measure of services prescribed, in which from time immemorial the most scanty administration had sufficed? And how many schools have been established for the benefit of the thousands who had been, with the most culpable negligence, permitted to

remain brutalised and uncivilised and perishing for lack of knowledge?

Before another year had passed away, the good prelate was numbered among those who "fell asleep and were laid unto their fathers." During the summer the state of his health had been such as to cause anxiety to his family; his overtaxed faculties needed rest, and, after an ordination at Norwich, he was induced to start with his wife and daughters on a short tour in Scotland. While at Brahan Castle, in Ross-shire, a change for the worse occurred; this was on the 3rd of September; on the following day he rallied a little, and expressed a desire to go down to the warm sunshine of the bright autumnal morning which lay on the greensward under his window, and rose to attempt it, but the effort was more than his strength would bear, and he sank down upon the bed never in life to rise again. For two days the struggle with nature continued, and on the evening of the 6th, in the presence of his wife and daughters and his son, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, calmly and unconsciously, as if in a dream, he passed into his rest.

In life he had expressed a desire to be buried in the churchyard of Alderley, among those with whom he had so long lived, unless that "circumstances and the wishes and judgment" of those on whom he most confided "might decide upon the spot which had been the last scene of his ministerial labours." Their decision was that he should rest within the precincts of his own cathedral; and there, on the 21st of September, his remains were interred, a vast multitude attending to pay the last tribute of respect to his memory. "I can give you the facts," wrote one who was present, "but I can give you no notion of how impressive it was, nor how affecting. There were such sobs and tears from the school children, and from the clergy who so loved their dear bishop. A beautiful sunshine lit up everything, shining into the cathedral just at the time. Arthur was quite calm, and looked like an angel, with a sister on each side."

In the centre of the nave of Norwich Cathedral, where the warm rays of the setting sun as they steal through the great west window which he had desired should be restored as a memorial of him, dye the pavement with rainbow hues, a plain black marble tablet marks the spot where his ashes lie. It is inscribed:—

Installed Aug. 17, 1837

—
Born Jan. 1, 1779.

—
In the faith of Christ
Here rests from his labours
EDWARD STANLEY
32 years Rector of Alderley,
12 years Bishop of Norwich;
Buried amidst the mourning
of the diocese which he had animated,
the city which he had served,
the poor whom he had visited,
the schools which he had fostered,
the family which he had loved,
and of all Christian people
with whom, howsoever divided, he had joined
in whatever things were true, and honest,
and just, and pure,
and lovely, and of good report.

—
Died Sept. 6, 1849, aged 70.

—
Interred Sept. 21, 1849

While the solemn sound from the great bell-tower of the cathedral announced to the citizens of Norwich that the mortal frame of him who had won the hearts of all sorts and conditions of men was being committed to the tomb, a mournful knell echoed from the grey tower of the quiet old church of Alderley, cleaving the silent air with its funereal tone—the tongue of death with mournful accents laden—conveying

A message to the living from the dead

that awoke a feeling of sorrow as touching and unfeigned as that more openly manifested at Norwich; for though twelve years had gone by since Edward Stanley had been withdrawn from the parish, and many changes had taken place, the feeling of affection which had gathered round him during the thirty-two years of his ministry was fresh and green in the hearts of the people, and the tidings of his death were received with a burst of grief that was all the more affecting from the simple language in which it found utterance; a sorrowful gloom spread over the parish, many a cottage was darkened, and many an eye was dimmed with tears at the consciousness that the same hand which had deprived the Church of one of her worthiest sons had reft them of a sincere and devoted friend. When the bishop's papers came to be examined, it was found he had not forgotten those who held him in such loving regard. Among the documents were two addresses, one to the parishioners and the other to the school children of Alderley, with a request that a copy of each might be sent to every house in the parish.

Bishop Stanley was spared one affliction. His youngest son, Charles Edward Stanley, who had

entered the service of the Royal Engineers, and was afterwards appointed private secretary to Sir William Denison, Governor of Van Diemen's Land, was suddenly cut off by fever at his official post in Tasmania on the 13th of August, 1849. The news had not reached England at the time of the prelate's decease, and it was not until December that the widowed mother became acquainted with the fact of her son's death. To add to her sorrow, intelligence was received in the course of the following summer that the eldest son, Captain Owen Stanley, had been found dead in his cabin on board ship at Sydney, a few days after receiving the tidings of his father's and his brother's death. The two brothers remain in those distant regions, one in St. George's churchyard, Hobart Town; the other in a secluded spot in the graveyard of St. Leonard's, which Owen Stanley had chosen as his resting-place in the event of his dying in Australia.

Thus, of the three sons of Edward Stanley, only one survived to be a stay and comfort to the widowed mother—Arthur Penhryn Stanley, the profound scholar and the earnest and fearless thinker, who afterwards became Dean of Westminster. Born and brought up in his father's rectory, he to the last retained an affectionate interest in the place where his boyhood was passed; when he had attained to manhood he was in the habit of regularly visiting his old nurse, Ellen Baskerville, and when she died, only a few years ago, he came down from Westminster to read the burial service over her body.

A brief notice of Arthur Stanley's early days may fittingly conclude our notice of Alderley and the Stanleys. The letters already quoted have given us a side glance into the happy home in which his boyhood was passed. Unlike his brothers, who were strong, robust, and full of spirit and adventure, the little Arthur was weak and delicate, thoughtful and reserved in his manner, with a shyness in his disposition that caused him to shun the companionship of other boys of his own age. Mrs. Stanley's happy method of imparting instruction had awakened in his young mind a passion for poetry and romance, and his imagination was stirred by the many weird legends and quaint traditions that gathered around the neighbourhood of his home, and which, though now fast dying from the memories of the inhabitants, were then implicitly believed. His ideas frequently found vent in rhyme, and at the early age of twelve he is said to have written some verses on the occasion of his watching the sun rise from the tower of Alderley church. When nine years of age he was sent to a private school at Seaforth, near Liverpool. Twelve months after his aunt, Maria Leycester, who was on a visit at his father's rectory, wrote to one of the family:—

July, 1825.—You know how dearly I love all these children and it has been such a pleasure to see them all so happy together. Owen, the hero upon whom all their little eyes were fixed, and the delicate Arthur, able to take his own share of boyish amusements with them, and telling out his little store of literary wonders to Charlie and Catherine. School has not transformed him into a rough boy yet. He is a little less shy, but not much. He brought back from school a beautiful prize book for history, of which he is not a little proud; and Mr. Rawson has told several people, unconnected with the Stanleys, that he never had a more amiable, attentive, or clever boy than Arthur Stanley, and that he never has had to find fault with him since he came. My sister finds in examining him, that he not only knows what he has learnt himself, but that he picks up all the knowledge gained by the other boys in their lessons, and can tell what each boy in the school has read, &c. His delight in reading *Madoc* and *Thalaba* is excessive.

Again, writing from her father's rectory at Stoke-upon-Terne, under date August 26, 1826, Maria Leycester remarks:—

My Alderley children are more interesting than ever. Arthur is giving Mary quite a literary taste, and is the greatest advantage to her possible, for they are now quite inseparable companions, reading, drawing, and writing together. Arthur has written a poem on the Life of a Peacock Butterfly in the Spenserian stanza, with all the old words, with references to Chaucer, &c., at the bottom of the page.... I never saw anything equal to Arthur's memory and quickness in picking up knowledge; seeming to have just the sort of intuitive sense of everything relating to books that Owen had in ships—and then there is such affection and sweetness of disposition in him.... You will not be tired of all this detail of those so near my heart. It is always such a pleasure to me to write of the rectory, and I can always do it better when I am away from it and it rises before my mental vision.

At the age of thirteen, that is in 1828, Arthur Stanley had his first experience of foreign travel, having in that year accompanied his parents and some other relatives in a tour to Bordeaux and the Pyrenees. The sight of the snow-tipped peaks rising above the masses of cloud filled his mind with wonder, and in a thrill of childish delight he exclaimed, "What shall I do? What shall I do?" In the spring of the following year he was sent to Rugby, where Dr. Arnold had, only a few months before, been appointed to the head-mastership. It was an anxious time for all at the rectory, for the weak, timid, bashful boy, accustomed only to the peaceful seclusion of his native village and the quietude of the private school at Seaforth, was but ill-fitted to cope with the active, strong-limbed youths he would be sure to encounter in a large public school, where might oftentimes takes the place of right, to say nothing of the terrors of prepostors and fagging. Under the judicious training of Dr. Arnold, however, his native diffidence was in a great degree overcome; he began to take his part in the manly exercises in which all Rugbeians were expected to perfect themselves, and made for himself many friends, among them being one who in after life became associated with him by closer ties—the Rev. Charles J. Vaughan, D.D., Master of the Temple, who in 1850 married his youngest sister, Catherine Maria Stanley. We get a glimpse of

him during his school life from one of his mother's letters written in February, 1831. She says:—

Charlie writes word from school, "I am very miserable, not that I want anything, except to be at home." Arthur does not mind going half so much. He says he does not know why, but all the boys seem fond of him, and he never gets plagued in any way like the others; his study is left untouched, his things unbroke, his books undisturbed. Charlie is so fond of him and deservedly so. You would have been so pleased one night, when Charlie all of a sudden burst into violent distress at not having finished his French task for the holydays, by Arthur's judicious good nature in showing him how to help himself, entirely leaving what he was about of his own employment.

From a child he had manifested a tender spirit of piety, and it is related on good authority that he was the original Arthur who won the heart of Tom Brown at Rugby, by kneeling down at his little bed in the presence of a rough crowd of boys, and saying his prayers before retiring, the practical effect of which was that several of his schoolfellows who from shame had given up all habit of prayer were emboldened to begin the practice again.

For five years Arthur Stanley was the favourite pupil of Dr. Arnold, but the friendship then formed continued until the great schoolmaster's sudden and memorable death on the eve of his birthday in 1842. In 1834 Stanley entered at University College, Oxford, and was elected a scholar on that foundation in 1837, the year in which his father removed from Alderley to Norwich. On the 7th of June in the same year he recited in the Sheldonian Theatre his Newdegate prize poem, "The gipsies;" his father was a listener, and when he beheld the tumult of applause with which it was received, he burst into tears. In the following year he graduated B.A.; shortly after he proceeded to the higher degree of M.A., and in the Autumn of 1839 was ordained.

It does not come within the scope of this brief sketch to relate in detail his progress at the University, or his career as a divine of the Church of England—they are familiar to everyone. As was truly remarked in a sermon preached in the old church of Alderley by the present rector on the occasion of his death, he "combined in a singular degree not only the excellences of his father and the virtues of his accomplished mother, but he inherited also their combined intellects. It was not, however, so much his high and refined intellect or his graphic writings which endeared him to those who knew him, as the more genial and gentle virtues of his private life." He had the widest sympathies, and he manifested them with remarkable tact and delicacy; indeed, the great work of his life seemed not so much the writing of books or the preaching of sermons as the broadening of the foundations of Christian charity, and the furthering of a spirit of Christian union. Few men were less influenced by theological dogma. He was always ready to draw moral lessons from Christian doctrines, but it is doubtful if he had any very definite conception regarding those doctrines, or subjected them to any serious sifting. It was this loose hold on theology—this indifferentism in regard to inspiration that, while it made him popular among laymen, created a feeling of irritation among those of his brethren who had definite ideas on the most momentous of subjects. To him such questions served mainly as a background to a high morality and wide charity.

With clear calm eye he fronted Faith, and she,
Despite the clamorous crowd
Smiled, knowing her soul-loyal votary
At no slave's altar bowed.

With forward glance beyond polemic scope,
He scanned the sweep of Time,
And everywhere changed looks with blue-eyed Hope,
Victress o'er doubt and crime.

But inward turning, he, of gentle heart,
And spirit, mild as free,
Most gladly welcomed, as life's better part,
The rule of Charity.

After a brief illness, which was not at first regarded as serious, erysipelas supervened, and shortly before midnight, on Monday, the 18th of July, 1881, in the Deanery House, at Westminster, quietly and without suffering, the spirit winged its flight from earth. On the Monday following his body was deposited in the grave in Henry VII. Chapel, Westminster, where, on the 9th of March, 1876, his wife, Lady Augusta Stanley, had been laid to rest.

*Ever yours truly
A. B. Stanley*

Dean Stanley's visits to Alderley were frequent. The last time he occupied the pulpit of the old church was on the 5th of May, 1878, when he preached before a crowded congregation in aid of the fund for restoring the church. On a more recent visit, though pressed for time, he stopped by the way at the cottage of a suffering parishioner, offered words of comfort and prayer by his bedside—"the same prayer," as he afterwards remarked, "that he had used by the bedside of his own dear wife." His final visit was in the autumn of 1880, on his return from a short sojourn in

the Isle of Man, when he visited the rectory and his mother's and sister's grave, accompanied by his friend, the Bishop of Manchester.



CHAPTER III.

RIVINGTON AND THE LORDS WILLOUGHBY—THE PILKINGTONS—THE STORY OF A LANCASHIRE BISHOP.

“No, sir, hardly a vestige of the old house remains, and even the Willoughby coat of arms with the supporters, the ivy-wreathed savage and the horseshoe-eating ostrich, that once adorned and gave dignity to the outbuilding, has been taken away by sacrilegious hands, and now only a blank space remains to show where once it was.” Such was the remark of a friend at whose hospitable abode in Heath-Charnock we were spending a few days, a year or two ago, in reply to our inquiries as to the present condition of Shaw Place, an ancient habitation on the confines of Rivington, once the home of the Lords Willoughby of Parham.

But Rivington and its vicinity have other associations to claim attention not less interesting than the fading memories of the extinct Willoughbys. The tower-crowned summit of the Pike, rising to the height of 1,545 feet above the sea level, calls to remembrance the stirring times of the Armada, and the scarcely less anxious days of nearly a century ago when our grandfathers were in daily dread of invasion, and constant watch was kept in order that the beacon fire might flash the signal of danger from hill to hill should their fears be realised; and the "Two-lads," a double pile of stones on the further side, has its tale of disaster to beguile the time if we care to listen to it. Those bleak mountain ridges that stretch away towards the south were once included within the limits of the great forest of Horwich, "a place of great sport," as the old chroniclers have it, with its aeries of eagles, of hawks, and of herons. Rivington was for centuries the home of the Pilkingtons, "gentlemen of repute in their shire before the Conquest," as old Fuller tells us; if tradition is to be relied on, the chief of them bore himself bravely upon the red field of Hastings, and when sought for by the victors for espousing the cause of the defeated Harold, to avoid discovery, disguised himself as a mower, in commemoration of which circumstance his descendants have ever since borne the man and scythe for their crest. A scion of this ancient house, Richard Pilkington, in the days of the Eighth Harry or shortly after, founded the church of Rivington, and his son, James Pilkington, who had suffered exile for the reformed faith in the time of the Marian persecutions, was nominated by Queen Elizabeth first Protestant bishop of the palatinate see of Durham, and was also founder of the Grammar School at Rivington, an institution that to this day perpetuates his name.

Our host having suggested a walk as far, we were nothing loth to act upon his advice and renew acquaintance with a locality familiar to us in earlier years. It was not the most favourable day for a pedestrian ramble, for, though the rays of the February sun had made some feeble attempts to wake the firstlings of the year from their long winter sleep, the indications of spring had proved delusive, and King Frost still held the vegetable world fast bound in his icy fetters. Of a verity it might be said that the lingering winter chilled the lap of spring, for though we had entered upon the month of March the crocus, which, according to the old saw—

Blows before the shrine
At vernal dawn of St. Valentine

had not yet ventured forth as the harbinger of returning animation, and even the tiny snowdrop, forerunner of the glorious train of summer flowers, hid its drooping head beneath the fleecy robe of nature's weaving from which it takes its name. Winter had returned upon us with old-fashioned severity, and his keen breath had again begun—

To glaze the lakes, to bridle up the floods,
And periwig with snow the bald-pate woods.

The snow, which had fallen heavily during the night, enfolding the earth in a downy mantle, had nearly ceased, and only a few stray feathery flakes descended; the broad breezy moors that stretched their length across the landscape were thickly covered, and it lay deep in the cloughs and dingles that the storms of ages had channelled down their sides. The hedgerows in their fleecy garniture assumed quaint and indefinite shapes, and chequered the cold snow with their fantastic shadows, and the few trees bordering the wayside stretched their naked boles across the path, looking weird and gaunt and grim; but there was neither colour nor savagery enough to make a picture—nothing but a dull leaden gloom that left a saddening and depressing influence upon the senses, instead of making glad the heart of the beholder. The eddying wind that blew from the west broke in fitful gusts, and drove the dark leaden cloud-rack and drifted sea-fog swiftly athwart the sky, betokening a coming change; there was a rawness, too, in the atmosphere that sent a chill through your veins, and everything seemed cold and comfortless;

while the few wayfarers you met looked sad and woe-begone, and as sullen and ungenial as the weather. We missed the cheery sunshine, and the sharp, crisp, nipping air of a clear, frosty day; but for all that we trudged along with light heart and steady step, though the roads were heavy, for the snow had melted in places, and now and then we plunged ankle-deep in thick icy sludge that oozed through the sodden ground.

The rounded summit of Rivington Pike—Riven Pike, as it was anciently written—stands out boldly against the dull background of mist and murkiness, and the little square tower that crowns its highest point looks as if it had suddenly thrust its dark form up through the surrounding whiteness. As we mount the higher ground the prospect widens, and looking round the eye takes in a broad expanse of country. In front, in addition to the "Pike," are the bleak moors of Rivington and Anglezark; below, half hidden by the leafless woods, we get occasional glimpses of the long lake-like reservoirs of the Liverpool Corporation Waterworks. Northwards, where the smoke hangs like a pall, is Chorley; and further on, had the day been clear, we might have seen the tall chimneys of Preston and the gleaming waters of the Ribble estuary. Duxbury, for centuries the home of the Standishes, reminds us of the Puritan captain, Miles Standish, whom Longfellow has immortalised:—

He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly
Back to Hugh Standish, of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England,
Who was the son of Ralph, and grandson of Thurstan de Standish—
Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded;
Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock, argent—
Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.

Hall-o'-th'-Hill was the dwelling place of the Asshawes, who were also lords of Flixton; one of them—Sir Ralph—Mr. M'Dougall has made the subject of the most pathetic of his legendary ballads; while another—Ann—was the wife of that Richard Pilkington who built Rivington Church, and the mother of James, the Puritan prelate, who founded the school. Adlington lies below us; and beyond the view takes in the great plain that stretches away to the Fylde, dotted over with collieries and mills and loomsheds, that bear testimony to the active industry of the people. Westwards, crowning a rocky ridge that rises abruptly from the banks of the Douglas, we see the village of Blackrod, with the battlemented tower of its ancient church rising above the lowly habitations that gather round. The remains of a Roman causeway, it is said, may still be traced along the summit, and learned antiquaries confidently assure us that here the subjects of the Cæsars had a military station—the *Coccium* of Antoninus, and the *Rigodunum* of Ptolemy; though other antiquaries, equally learned, with no less confidence and much more show of reason, tell us that the old Roman station was not at Blackrod, but further north, at Walton, on the Ribble. Whether the masters of the ancient world bore the imperial eagles along those heights, and awoke the echoes with the cry of "Ave! Cæsar Imperator!" we will not stay to inquire, but leave others to determine. The snow lies like a great white carpet upon the scene, spreading over moss and moor, and field and fell—a wide wilderness of unsullied purity, broken only where the lanes wander and the hedgerows cross and recross each other, or where a wooded bluff, a solitary homestead, or some manufacturing hamlet stands out in bold relief. Occasionally a faint gleam steals through a rift in the shifting clouds, lighting up and beautifying some distant spot upon the landscape; but the brightness is only transient, and the scene soon resumes its cold grey monotonous gloom.

Presently the road bends to the right, and in a few minutes we reach the entrance to a long straight avenue of beeches that leads down to where the home of the Willoughbys once stood. Tall patrician trees they are that border the way, and meet almost in a canopy overhead, very patriarchs of their kind, that have withstood the winter's blast and summer's sunshine, and budded and blossomed and shed their leaves through long ages; but what time has failed to do sulphurous fumes from a neighbouring tile kiln have effectually accomplished, and now they present only the scathed and blighted semblance of their former glory. At the end of the gravelled walk may still be seen the two tall gate-posts that once flanked the entrance to the garden court; they are massive in character, rusticated at the joints, and surmounted by ball ornaments of ponderous size. To the right is a long range of outbuilding, with a tablet high up on the gable bearing the inscription

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and the date 1705, from which we gather that it was erected by Hugh, the twelfth Lord Willoughby, and the Lady Honora, his wife, in the earlier years of Queen Anne's reign. On the side is a square panel that was formerly adorned with the armorial ensigns of the house, but the carved stone-work was taken away some few years ago, and, as we were told, when last heard of was waiting for a claimant at a remote railway station. The house itself has been rebuilt, and is now tenanted by a farmer, a fragment of masonry on one side being the only portion of the original mansion remaining.

The connection of the Willoughbys with this part of Lancashire dates from about the middle of the seventeenth century, when Thomas Willoughby acquired lands in the neighbourhood by his marriage with Eleanor, daughter of Hugh Whittal, or Whittle, of Horwich, the representative of an old Puritan family, ranking as substantial yeomen, and a descendant, in all likelihood, of that Ralph Whittal of whom Oliver Heywood makes mention when, alluding to his boyish experiences, he says:—"Many days of prayer have I known my father keep among God's people; yea, I

remember a whole night wherein he, Dr. Bradshaw, Adam Fearnside, Thomas Crompton, and several more did pray all night in a parlour at Ralph Whittal's, upon occasion of King Charles demanding the five members of the House of Commons.^[11] Such a night of prayers, tears, and groans I was never present at in all my life. The case was extraordinary and the work extraordinary."^[12]

The Willoughbys were a family of ancient and illustrious lineage, deriving their patronymic from the manor of the same name in Lincolnshire, where the parent stock had been seated almost from the time of Duke William of Normandy. One of them, Sir William Willoughby, in the reign of Henry III., signed the cross—in those days the highest object of human ambition—and accompanied the young Prince Edward in the expedition to Palestine to recover the holy places from the Moslem, and, in allusion to some now long forgotten exploit there, adopted a Saracen's head for his crest, which, on the Darwinian principle, has since developed into the "Black Lad," the sign, at the present day, of the village hostelry at Rivington. His warlike spirit was inherited by his descendants, who shared in the glories of Crescy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, and on many a well-fought field besides; bore their part in the sanguinary struggle between the rival houses of York and Lancaster, and were present at the final fight on Bosworth field—which alike put an end to feudalism and the power of the barons—when the victorious Richmond ascended the throne and terminated the fratricidal strife by twining the white rose with the red. In acknowledgment of their valorous deeds, they were at different times ennobled by the titles of Lords Willoughby of Eresby, of Broke, of Parham, and of Monblay and Beaumesguil.

Of this illustrious stock was one of whom we know just enough to make us wish to know more—the brave Sir Hugh Willoughby, who defended Lauder Castle in Berwickshire against both the French and Scots; and, though suffering the severest privations, with a mere handful of men, held it until peace was proclaimed; and who, as we are told, "by reason of his goodly personage, as also for his singular skill in war," was in 1553 chosen by "The Mystery, Company, and Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers," to command the first Arctic expedition that ever left the English shores—an expedition that was fated never to return, for before a year had passed Sir Hugh, with the crews of two of his ships, in all about 70 men, were frozen to death in the North Sea, about the very time that his grand-niece, the Lady Jane Grey, and her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, perished upon the scaffold.

Such was the Briton's fate,
As with first prow (what have not Britons dared!)
He for the passage sought attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous Nature with eternal bar,
In these fell regions in Arzina caught,

And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate seal'd; he with his hapless crew
Each full exerted at his several task,
Froze into statues; to the cordage glued
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm.

Scarcely had the solemn sound heard from the bell-towers of England, announcing the decease of King Henry the Eighth, died away, when Sir William Willoughby—descended through a younger line from William, fifth Lord Willoughby de Eresby—was raised to the dignity of Baron Willoughby of Parham, in Suffolk, the patent of his nobility bearing date February 16, 1547, the very day on which the remains of the defunct king were committed to the dust at Windsor. This Lord William, from whom the future owners of Shaw Place derived their descent, lived to a ripe old age, and died in 1574, leaving a son Charles, who succeeded to the barony, and who was then married to the Lady Margaret Clinton, a daughter of Queen Elizabeth's Lord High Admiral, Edward Clinton, first Earl of Lincoln. By her he had several sons, among them William, the eldest, who died in the lifetime of his father; Sir Ambrose; and Thomas, whose descendants we shall have occasion to refer to hereafter. Charles Lord Willoughby died in 1603, and was succeeded in the honours of his house by his grandson William, who had espoused the Lady Francis Manners, daughter of John, fourth Earl of Rutland, by whom he had three sons, Henry, Francis, and William, who successively became fourth, fifth, and sixth Lords Willoughby. Henry enjoyed the title only for a short time, and died before attaining his majority. Francis, who succeeded, married Elizabeth Cecil, a great granddaughter of the famous Lord Treasurer, William Cecil, Lord Burghley. On the breaking out of the great Civil War, he took sides against the King, and had a command in the Parliament's army, but did not achieve any great distinction; indeed he seems rather to have lacked the qualities that generals are made of. Early in the summer of 1643 he seized Gainsborough, and held it for the Parliament; but on the news reaching the Marquis of Newcastle, he despatched a force out of Yorkshire under General Cavendish, who laid siege to the town, whereupon, Cromwell, who had just taken Burleigh House, the seat of the Cecils, hastened with his Huntingdonshire troopers, and a few regiments of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire horse to the relief of the beleaguered garrison, and attacked and defeated the Royalist forces, Cavendish being killed in the encounter.

In connection with Lord Willoughby's occupation of Gainsborough an incident occurred which is worth recording. On the capture of the town several persons of rank were made prisoners, including Robert Pierrepont, Earl of Kingston, surnamed the "Good." When it was known that the Royalists were advancing, Willoughby, to prevent the Earl's escape, had him placed in a pinnace

and conveyed to Hull. While on the voyage Cavendish, in ignorance that so distinguished a companion in arms was on board, ordered his men to fire upon the vessel, and an unlucky shot struck his lordship and killed him on the spot. Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, in her "Memoirs" of her husband, gives the popular version of the story, from which it appears that when Kingston was first invited to join the Royalists, "he made a serious imprecation on himself: 'When,' said he, 'I take arms with the King against the Parliament, or with the Parliament against the King, let a cannon bullet divide me between them,'" "which God," she says, "was pleased to bring to pass a few months after; for he, going into Gainsborough, and there taking up arms for the King, was surprised by my Lord Willoughby, and, after a handsome defence of himself, yielded, and was put prisoner into a pinnace, and sent down the river to Hull, when my Lord Newcastle's army, marching along the shore, shot at the pinnace, and, being in danger, the Earl of Kingston went up upon the deck to show himself, and to prevail on them to forbear shooting; but as soon as he appeared a cannon bullet flew from the King's army and divided him in the middle, being then in the Parliament's pinnace; who thus perished according to his own unhappy imprecation."

The "notable victory," as he phrased it, gained by the embryo Lord Protector at Gainsborough, though it proved insufficient in raising the siege, yet afforded an early example of that decision, energy, and valour for which Cromwell subsequently became so famous. Whitelocke, in his "Memorials," says that this gallant encounter with Newcastle's forces was "the beginning of Cromwell's great fortunes, and he now began to appear in the world." If it made the name of the Lord of the Fens, as he had been previously designated, a familiar word throughout England, it did not add much lustre to that of Lord Willoughby. He was obliged to surrender Gainsborough; and Lincoln, whither he had retreated, had also to be given up to the victorious Royalists. In a desponding letter to Cromwell, written from Boston, August 5th, 1643, he says:—"Since the business of Gainsborough the hearts of our men have been so deaded that we have lost most of them, by running away, so that we were forced to leave Lincoln upon a sudden; and if I had not done it then I should have been left alone." His position even at Boston seems to have been very precarious, for he adds, "If you will endeavour to stop my Lord of Newcastle, you must presently draw them (the Parliamentarian forces) to him and fight him, for without we be masters of the field we shall be pulled out by the ears one after the other." In the same letter he pathetically remarks, "You see by this how sadly your affairs stand. It's no longer disputing, but out instantly all you can; raise all your bands, send them to Huntingdon; get up what volunteers you can; hasten your horses; send these letters to Norfolk, Sussex, and Essex, without delay. I beseech you spare not, but be expeditious and industrious. Almost all our foot have left Stamford; there is nothing to interrupt the enemy but our horse. You must act lively; do it without distraction. Neglect no means." Willoughby was evidently not the kind of general that a soldier of Cromwell's daring and resource could patiently act under, and that worthy was not long in expressing his opinion to the Parliament, for we find him a few months later in the House of Commons complaining of "my Lord Willoughby's backwardness as a general." He who could not "hold out" at Gainsborough and Lincoln, and who wrote from Boston expecting himself and his men to be "pulled out by the ears one after the other," was certainly not the right man in the right place according to the Ironside standard; and it was not long, therefore, before he was, on Cromwell's suggestion, removed from his command and the Earl of Manchester appointed in his stead.

Though as a general Lord Willoughby might not come up to Cromwell's standard, he nevertheless did "very considerable service for the Parliament in Lincolnshire," as Whitelocke affirms, "and manifested as much courage and gallantry as any man in the service," and it is evident that, for some time at least, he retained the confidence and esteem of the ruling powers, for in December, 1645, on the close of the first war, his name appears among those who were to have dignities and honours conferred upon them, an earldom being assigned to him; and about the same time, in the overtures for pacification, he was named one of the commissioners to the Scots' army, then lying before Newark, an appointment that gave great umbrage to the war party. Willoughby was a staunch Presbyterian, determinedly opposed to kingly prerogative, a devoted admirer of the Parliament, and possessed withal of much real zeal for the liberties of his country, but he was not altogether destitute of loyal feeling or prepared to

Hew the throne
Down to a block.

Dissension had sprung up in the ranks of the two great rebel factions, resulting in a general confusion of political principles in the dread of political supremacy. Fearing for the safety of the Constitution, and believing that his associates were proceeding to too great lengths, he went over to the side of the King, a procedure that aroused the hatred of the Parliament party, who became as eager to effect his overthrow as they had previously been to compass the death of Strafford. On the 8th of September, 1647, he was impeached of high treason by the Commons, but, the impeachment for some cause or other not being proceeded with, he appealed to the Lords, on the 17th January following, to be set at liberty. His request was complied with, and on regaining his freedom he immediately sought refuge in Holland, the House subsequently, "being in a good humour," as we are told, discharging the impeachment. Whitelocke says:—

He was in the beginning of the troubles very hearty and strong for the Parliament, and manifested great personal courage, honour, and military as well as civil abilities, as appears by his actions and letters, whilst he was in the service of the Parliament. In whose favour and esteem he was so high that they voted him to be general of the horse under the Earl of Essex, and afterwards to be an Earl. But having taken a disgust of the Parliament's declining of a personal treaty with the King, and being jealous that

monarchy, and consequently degrees and titles and honour, were in danger to be wholly abolished, he was too forward in countenancing and assisting the late tumults in the city, when the members of Parliament were driven away from Westminster to the army. Upon the return of the members he was, with other lords, impeached of high treason for that action, and rather than appear and stand a trial for it he left his country and revolted to the King, and was now with the Prince in his navy, for which the Commons voted his estates to be secured.

Rupert was at the time carrying on privateering hostilities against the Parliament with such energy that, as was said, a packet-boat could hardly sail from Dover without being pillaged, unless it had a convoy. Willoughby accepted a commission, and became admiral of the Prince's fleet, and in the month of August, 1648, while in the Downs, was fortunate enough to intercept and capture a vessel returning from Guiana with a cargo of merchandise and £20,000 in gold.

The year following the execution of the King he went out to Barbadoes, established himself as governor, and proclaimed Charles II. king. On hearing of this exploit, Cromwell's government despatched Sir George Ascue with a fleet to effect the reduction of the place; after several ineffectual attempts to obtain submission he landed a force and stormed the fortress, when Lord Willoughby, fearing a revolt of the garrison, yielded on honourable terms, which included protection for the enjoyment of his estates. He then returned to England, but the Republicans, being doubtful of his loyalty to the Commonwealth, caused him to be committed to the Tower (June, 1655) on the charge of high treason. He must have remained in confinement for a considerable period, for two years later we find him petitioning Cromwell for permission to go into the country to despatch some necessary business in relation to his estates, and promising to return to prison—a request that was complied with. He subsequently obtained his release, and, after the death of Cromwell, appears to have co-operated with Monk in effecting the dissolution of the Commonwealth and the recall of the exiled Stuarts.

The year which followed the Restoration was to Lord Willoughby a year of sorrow, and the joy with which he had greeted that event was quickly overshadowed by a great domestic affliction. Ere a year had rolled round from the time when Charles landed at Dover he lost, within the short space of a few days, both his eldest son and his wife. Samuel Hartleb, in two of his letters written at the time to his friend Dr. Worthington,^[13] alludes to these painful events. Writing on March 26, 1661, he says: "My Lord Willoughby's eldest son is dead. My Lady Willoughby is also dangerously sick, which is all I have to add;" and a week later he writes: "His (Mr. Brereton's)^[14] mother-in-law (Lady Willoughby) is dead also."

Shortly afterwards Lord Willoughby was appointed to the governorship of Barbadoes, a post he continued to hold until 1656, when he was unfortunately drowned during a hurricane that swept over the island, an occurrence that Pepys thus alludes to in his "Diary:—

November 29th (1666). I late at the office, and all the news I hear I put into a letter this night to my Lord Brouncker at Chatham, thus—"I doubt not of your lordship's hearing of Sir Thomas Clifford's succeeding Sir H. Pollard in the Controllership of the King's house; but perhaps our ill (but confirmed) tidings from the Barbadoes may not have reached you yet, it coming but yesterday; viz., that about eleven ships (whereof two of the King's, the Hope and Coventry), going thence to attack St. Christopher's, were seized by a violent hurricane and all sank, two only of thirteen escaping, and these with loss of masts, &c. My Lord Willoughby himself is involved in the disaster, and I think two ships thrown upon an island of the French, and so all the men (500) became prisoners."

Lord Willoughby having no surviving male issue, the titles and estates devolved upon his younger brother, William, who, in 1672, was also appointed Governor of Barbadoes, and to whom Evelyn, in his diary, thus refers:—

April 16th (1672). Sat in Council preparing Lord Willoughby's Commission and instructions as Governor of Barbadoes and the Caribbé Islands.

He died at Barbadoes, April 10th, 1673, having held the post barely a year. His lordship married Ann, one of the daughters of Sir Philip Carey, of Stanwell, county Middlesex, who bore him with other issue, three sons—George, his heir, and John and Charles, who eventually through failure of direct descent successively inherited the honours of the house.

George, the eldest son, who succeeded, died in the following year, leaving by his wife Elizabeth, eldest daughter and co-heir of Henry Fynes-Clinton, of Kirkstead, in Lincolnshire, grandson of Henry, second Earl of Lincoln, a son, John Willoughby, who succeeded, but he dying issueless in 1678, the barony reverted to his uncle, John, son of George, the seventh lord. This nobleman died before the close of the year, and, having no surviving male issue, the title and estates passed to his younger brother, Charles, who succeeded as tenth baron, and who was then married to Mary, daughter of Sir Beaumont Dixie. He did not, however, long enjoy the honours, his death occurring in the following year, and being, like so many of his predecessors, childless, the barony remained for a time in abeyance; the vast estates in Lincolnshire passing meanwhile, in accordance with the provisions of his will, to his niece Elizabeth, only daughter of George, seventh Lord Willoughby, and then wife of the Hon. James Bertie, eventually second Earl of Lincoln.

On the failure of the elder line by the death of Lord Charles without issue, the barony should by right have reverted to the heir of Sir Ambrose, second son of Charles, the second Lord Willoughby; but Sir Ambrose's grandson, Henry Willoughby, being then settled in Virginia, whither the "Pilgrim Fathers," who, "well weaned from the delicate milk of their mother-country," had gone some years before, and having no knowledge of the failure, took no steps to establish his claim. Under these circumstances, and in the belief that the line of Sir Ambrose was extinct, the barony was erroneously adjudged to Sir Thomas Willoughby, son and heir of Sir Thomas, the fifth and youngest son of Charles, the second lord, who, as previously stated, was then settled in Lancashire, having married Eleanor, daughter of Hugh Whittle, of Horwich, the representative of a noted Puritan family, whose religious opinions he had embraced.

The broad lands of the oldest line of the Willoughbys, as we have seen, passed by distaff to the Earls of Abingdon; the representative of the younger stock, who had summons to Parliament 19th May, 1685, being left the while to support the title with an estate of very modest proportions—the fortune his father had acquired in marriage with a yeoman's daughter. Sir Thomas Willoughby had attained to the ripe old age of 82 when he succeeded to the barony, and he lived to enjoy it for a period of nearly seven years, his death occurring in February, 1691-2. Born in the last year of Elizabeth's golden reign, he had witnessed the accession of James, and lived through the eventful reigns of the Stuart sovereigns. He had passed the meridian of life when Charles was brought to the block; had experienced Republicanism under Cromwell; had seen the restoration of Monarchy in the person of Charles's son; the re-establishment of Episcopacy, and the "Black Bartholomew," as the Dissenters love to designate the day on which the Nonconforming divines, preferring conscience to emolument, withdrew from the Church; and had lived long enough to see the feudal supremacy of the Crown, which had lasted for nearly six hundred years, abolished, when the second James was sent by his betrayed subjects to expiate his offences in exile, and the "bloodless revolution" set the Prince of Orange upon the throne, and paved the way for the succession of the House of Brunswick. Lord Willoughby's wife, Eleanor Whittle, who died in 1665, bore him, with other issue, two sons—Hugh, who succeeded as his heir, and Francis, who married Eleanor Rothwell, of Haigh, and by her had three sons, Thomas, who died unmarried, and Edward and Charles, who, on the death of their uncle, succeeded in turn to the title and estates.

Hugh Willoughby, who, on the death of his father in 1691-2, succeeded as twelfth baron, was then 65 years of age, having been born in 1627. He had married in early life Anne, daughter of Lawrence Halliwell, of Tockholes, in Blackburn parish, and by her had a son, Thomas, who died in infancy; she died in 1690, at the age of 52, and shortly after his accession to the barony he again entered the marriage state, taking for his second wife the youthful widow of Sir William Egerton, K.B., of Worsley, brother of John, third Earl of Bridgewater—the Lady Honora, daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh, son and heir of Thomas Lord Leigh, of Stoneleigh, and the great-granddaughter of Sir Thomas Egerton, the renowned Lord Chancellor—the lady numbering 19 summers, while Lord Willoughby had attained the mature age of 55. His lordship was an uncompromising, and, it is to be feared, not over scrupulous Presbyterian. Sir Henry Ashurst, in a Dedication of the Life of Nathaniel Heywood, the Puritan Vicar of Ormskirk, written by his brother Oliver, to this Lord Hugh, speaks of his "exemplary piety and zeal for our holy religion in such a degenerate and licentious age, and the countenance he gave to serious piety, wherever he found it, among all the different parties into which we are so unhappily broken," but the occasional references to him in Henry Newcome's autobiography, leads us to doubt the justness of the Presbyterian writer's panegyric. Under date Thursday, September 7, 1693, Newcome writes:—

We went with several others to welcome the Lord Willoughby to house, and stayed till after eight, in much freedom; and parted with a psalm and prayer.

The occasion would probably be that of his lordship's first coming to his wife's house—the old hall of Worsley, in Eccles parish, where he spent a good deal of his time—but it was not long before the old Puritan divine had occasion to speak in a less cheerful tone. Thus, he writes:—

May 5 (1694). The Lord Willoughby was with me, and the Lord helped me, to deal plainly with him, and he took it as I could desire.

And a few months later:—

Aug. 4. I was troubled about Lord Willoughby and went out to have spoken with him, but though he was not at home, he called on me on his return, and I eased myself by speaking freely to him; and he seemed to take it well, and I hope it may do him good. This greatly revived me.

Lord Willoughby busied himself greatly in the religious affairs of the county, and was not unfrequently a cause of disquiet to Episcopal dignitaries from his confused ideas of *meum* and *tuum* in regard to ecclesiastical funds. The parson of Horwich found him an exceedingly unpleasant neighbour, and poor James Rothwell, the vicar of Dean, complained bitterly to the bishop of his wrong doing. Rothwell's predecessor, Richard Hatton, had not renounced the Covenant; but had, nevertheless been inducted into the vicarage by a kind of dispensing power. One illegal appointment led to another. The Nonconforming vicar of the church appointed a Nonconforming preacher to the Episcopal chapel. The Dissenters having thus got the chapel into their hands through the "contrivance" of Lord Willoughby, held possession for many years, and were only induced in the long run to surrender to the ecclesiastical authorities to escape a costly

litigation. When Rothwell had got rid of the intruders, and recovered possession of the chapel, he found that he could not get possession of the endowment, as the trustees, who were Presbyterians, were appropriating it to the support of a minister of their own persuasion, and, "against justice and honesty," were going to "build a meeting house with part of the money, and apply the remaining part towards supporting a Presbyterian teacher." He had complained to the bishop, but failing, as it would seem, to obtain redress, addressed the following letter to Dr. Wroe—"Silver-tongued Wroe"—the warden of Manchester, urging his intercession:—

Bolton Sep. 21, 1717.

Revd Sr.—I thought it necessary to send you ye following account of Horwich Chappel, wch I desire you to transmit to my Lord Bishop of Chester. This Chappel is three miles distant from ye Parish Church, & ye revenue belonging to it is commonly said to be about 9 or 10li. p. ann. being ye Interest of about 200li. belonging to it, & for a more full proof of ys, I here give my following Testimony.

But in ye first place it may be convenient to acquaint you yt ys Chappel has for above ys 20 years last past been in ye hands of ye Dissenters through ye contrivance of ye late Lord Willoughby, and ye connivance of my Predecessour (Richard Hatton.) But wn my Lord Bp. of Chester was upon his visitation at Manchester, I acquainted his Lordship wth ys matter, & his Lordship commanded me to give Mr. Walker ye Dissenting Teacher notice to desist, wch accordingly I did, & he submitted to his Lordship's commands. Immediately after ys I put into ye Chappel a Conformable clergyman, who has supplied ye Cure ever since, wch is above one whole year; and tho' I gave him ye Surplice Dues of ye Chappelray wch is all yt belongs to me in yt part of ye Parish, & two pounds p. ann. besides, yet ys wth his contributions, wch is all yt he has had to subsist on thus far, has not exceeded 14li. And when he demanded ye Interest of ye Chappel Stock during ye time of his Incumbency, ye Trustees for ys money being Dissenters, tell me they will not pay it, till they be forced to do it. Now one of these Trustees has told me, & several others, yt ye Chappel Stock is one hundred & ninety pounds; & about two months ago he showed Some bonds yt was made unto him upon ye account, to ye Sum of about 80li. And there are now several living witnesses, yt can & do testify, yt ye Interest of ye said Chappel Stock was paid to Episcopal conforming clergy men, yt officiated at Horwich Chappel during ye Reigns of King Charles ye 2nd: King James ye 2nd: And till some time after ye Revolution; and tho' ys money as it is said was given to all intents & purposes towards mentaining a Curate yt should supply ye sd Chappel, yet both against justice and honesty these Trustees have sent me word, yt they will build a meeting house wth part of ys money, & apply ye remaining part towards Supporting a Presbyterian Teacher; wt now is to be done in ys affair, I humbly desire my Lord Bp. of Chester's opinion & direction with your own,

Who am your most Humble & most obedient Servt: JA: ROTHWELL
For The Reverend Dr. Wroe, Warden of Manchester.

Bishop Gastrell, in his "Notitia," describes the chapel as "ancient" and "consecrated." It certainly was in existence in 1565, for in that year it was visited by the commissioners for removing superstitious ornaments. The money which through the "contrivance" of Lord Willoughby and the Dissenting trustees was being thus misapplied is said to have been recovered (that is, so much of it as was not lost in expensive litigation) in 1724. On another occasion, at Coppul, a neighbouring township, we find Lord Willoughby busying himself in church affairs, and joining with others in open resistance to constituted authority; breaking open the doors of the Episcopal Chapel, and defying the bishop when he sought to remove an unlicensed curate, Mr. Ingham, who had given offence by his immoral life and the solemnisation of clandestine marriages. Ellenbrook, also an Episcopal Chapel, in close proximity to Lady Willoughby's house at Worsley, had also unpleasant experience of his lordship's active but mistaken zeal, for Bishop Gastrell, in his "Notitia Cestriensis," remarks:—"There was a Suit depending about this Chap.(el) an.(no) 1693, bet. (ween) the Bp. and Ld. Willoughby of Parham. V.(ide) Mr. Kenyon's Letters." The chapel had been endowed in 1581 by Dorothy, daughter of Sir Richard Egerton, of Ridley, and wife of Sir Richard Brereton, of Worsley, who in her widowhood married Sir Peter Legh, of Lyme, Knt., and her endowment would appear to have fallen into the hands of Nonconformists during the period of the Usurpation.

Lord Willoughby died in June, 1712, at the age of 75; his wife the Lady Honora, survived him and maintained her widowhood for the long period of 38 years, dying in 1750, at the age of 77. Having no surviving issue, the title and estates devolved upon his nephew, Edward—the eldest surviving son of Francis, second son of Thomas, the eleventh in succession in the barony, and his wife, Eleanor Rothwell, of Haigh—who was at the time serving as a private soldier in the confederate army in Flanders. He enjoyed the title only for a few months, his death occurring in April of the following year. Being childless, the family honours and possessions reverted to his younger brother, Charles, who married Hester, daughter of Henry Davenport, of Darcy Lever, an offshoot of the old Cheshire family of that name, and by her had issue, in addition to a son Hugh, his heir, two daughters, Helena and Elizabeth.

Hugh, who succeeded as fifteenth Lord Willoughby, was an infant at the time of his father's decease (July 12, 1715). He was brought up in the Presbyterian faith, but appears to have been less demonstrative in the assertion of it than some of his progenitors; at all events his neighbours found him much less troublesome in that respect than his grandfather had been. Cole, the

Cambridge antiquary, describes him as a Presbyterian "of the most rigid class," and remarks that he had heard "Mr. Coventry, of Magdalen College, Cambridge, declare that his conscience was so nice that he could not bring himself to receive the sacrament in the Church of England on his knees without scruple and thought it idolatry." He resided for the most part in London, but when at Shaw Place he usually attended the Nonconformist chapel at Rivington. It is said, though apparently on slender foundation, that when in London he professed himself a strict Churchman, and that some of his friends there, hearing that he was in the habit of worshipping with the Nonconformists when at Rivington, took him to task, whereupon he forsook the chapel and became a worshipper at Horwich Church. The accuracy of the story may very well be doubted. His lordship lived and died in the faith of his fathers; the canopied pew he was wont to occupy in Rivington chapel may still be seen, though the glories of its decoration have become somewhat faded; and at his death he bequeathed £100, the interest of which helps to pay its minister's stipend at the present day. He was more of a philosopher than a polemic, and a liberal patron of literature and art. In 1752 he succeeded Martin Foulkes as Vice-president of the Royal Society, and two years later he was elected to the honourable position of President of the Society of Antiquaries. It was in this latter capacity that John Byrom, of Manchester, addressed to him his famous poetical letter "On the Patron of England," and facetiously started the question whether *Georgius* was not a mistake for *Gregorius*, contending for the non-existence of St. George of Cappadocia or any other George as patron saint of England, and calling upon the society to say whether England's patron was a knight or a pope. The *jeu d'esprit* startled the sedate president, and drew forth a serious rejoinder from the learned Dr. Pegge in his "Observations on the History of St. George."^[15] Lord Willoughby filled the office of Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords for a considerable period; he was also a Trustee of the British Museum, one of the Commissioners of Longitude, and Vice-president of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts. When the Dissenting Academy, at Warrington, was founded in the latter half of the last century, his lordship was chosen to be the first president, the Presbyterians, as Dr. Halley says, being "with pardonable vanity in their declension fond of exhibiting the relics of their former glory." He died unmarried, at his residence in London, February 9, 1765, at the age of 54, and, in accordance with his expressed desire, was buried in the family vault at Horwich Church. When some years ago the present fabric was erected on a site a few yards distant from the old structure, his remains were, at the expense of his grand-nephew, Mr. Charles Leigh, of Wigan, removed from their resting place in front of the communion rails, and placed in a vault in the churchyard, over which a stone bearing the family arms and the following inscription was placed:

—

In memory of the Right Hon. Hugh, 15th Baron Willoughby, of Parham, who resided at Shaw Place, in this county, and who died on the 21st of January, 1765, at his house in London, unmarried, aged 54 years. Also of Eleanor, daughter of William Wood, of Aspull, Esq., and wife of Charles Leigh, grand-nephew of the above Hugh. She died 21st of January, 1858, in the 57th year of her age.

Of the two sisters of Lord Willoughby, Helena, the eldest, became the wife of Baxter Roscoe, by whom she had two daughters and a son, Ebenezer Roscoe, who married his cousin Hannah, daughter of John Shaw, and dying in January, 1766, left an only daughter, Helena, who died at the age of 19 in 1794. The eldest of the two daughters married Mr. Fisher, and the younger became the wife of Mr. Leigh, from whom Mr. Charles Leigh, mentioned in the inscription just cited, claimed descent. Elizabeth, the younger sister of Lord Willoughby, became the wife of John Shaw, of Rivington, and had by him a son, named after his father, and a daughter Hannah, who, as already stated, married her cousin, Ebenezer Roscoe. Surviving him, she again entered the marriage state, her second husband being the Rev. William Heaton, incumbent of Rivington, and Head Master of Bishop Pilkington's Grammar School.

On the death of Lord Willoughby the barony again fell into abeyance. For a period of 80 years, that is from 1685, when Sir Thomas Willoughby had summons to Parliament, to the decease of Hugh, Lord Willoughby, in 1765, the bearers of the title had been only supposititious lords. As previously stated, the honours should of right have reverted to the descendants of Sir Ambrose, the second son of Charles, the second baron, but they, having settled in America and remaining in ignorance of the default, did not put forward their claim, and hence the barony was erroneously adjudged. Henry Willoughby, the grandson of Sir Ambrose, who settled in Virginia, died there in 1685, leaving a son of the same name, who married Elizabeth, daughter of William Pidgeon, of Stepney, near London, and by her had, with other issue, two sons, Henry and Fortune. This Henry, when the barony fell into abeyance in 1765, claimed to be the representative of Sir Ambrose, and in 1767 his right was established by a decree of the House of Lords as the great-grandson and heir male of the body of Sir Ambrose, and consequently heir male of Sir William Willoughby, who was elevated to the dignity of a baron by the title of Lord Willoughby of Parham in 1547. Mr. Henry Willoughby thereupon became sixteenth lord, and took his seat in the Upper House on April 25th, 1767. He died January 29th, 1775, leaving by his wife Susannah, daughter of Robert Gresswell, an only daughter, Elizabeth, who married (first) John Halsey, of Tower Hill, London, and (second) Edward Argles. His lordship having no male heir, the title devolved upon his nephew George, son of Fortune Willoughby by his wife Hannah, daughter of Thomas Barrow, and widow of Cooke Pollitt, of Swanscombe, who succeeded as seventeenth baron, but dying issueless in 1779 the barony, which had been in existence from the first year of Edward the Sixth's reign, became extinct.

After a brief inspection of the modernised home of the Willoughbys and the ancient outbuilding

adjacent, which happily still remains—"standing," as has been well said, "like a faded, tarnished court-train wearing out in the service of the descendants of its original proprietor's lady's maid"—we bent our steps in the direction of the old chapel at Rivington, where the family worshipped, and where many of their kin sleep their long sleep.

Descending into the valley, we pass through a plantation that has been formed by the side of one of the large reservoirs of the Liverpool Corporation Waterworks. The tall trees stand out in all their nakedness against the background of snow, looking black, and grim, and spectral like, though relieved in some measure by the bright-hued holly bushes, the glossy-leaved laurels, and the other hardy shrubs, that try to look cheery and make a pretty show. Below, where, in summer time, the far-spreading water reflects the surrounding beauty and flashes and glitters in the mellow sunlight, there is now only a dull leaden glaze, for the returning spring has not yet thawed the mantle of ice in which the hard hand of winter has enfolded it. Across the valley the smoke curls upwards from some unseen habitation, else we might fancy the inhabitants had fled, for neither flocks nor herds are to be seen in the fields; even the rook as he sails listlessly overhead looks dull and dejected, and the fieldfares huddle themselves up in the leafless branches as if they had lost heart; all around is still and cold and lifeless, save that now and then the hedge sparrows set up a twittering as unmusical as the grating of a knife-grinder's wheel, and that sprightly little fellow, the red-breasted robin, trills out his song from the naked hawthorn spray where the tiny buds are striving to break forth. Presently we come to a little lodge, and then, turning to the left, cross the embankment that separates the lower from the upper and larger Rivington lake. At the other end a short length of road straggles upwards towards the village—rough and stony withal, and fenced in places with patches of broken wall, built up of loose stones that time has softened into beauty and decked with moss and lichen and a wealth of clingy ivy.



RIVINGTON CHURCH.

A quiet, picturesque spot is this same little village of Rivington. There is an air of calm repose and pastoral serenity about it that is pleasant to contemplate. Here the busy hum of looms and spindles is never heard, and, though the shrill whistle of the locomotive may occasionally find an echo, the railway itself maintains a respectful distance, and hides away as if afraid to disturb the peaceful quietude. The church stands a little way back from the road upon a gentle acclivity, from which it overlooks the humbler dwellings that gather round, but without the least air of pretentiousness. It has an ancient and weather-worn appearance, though the present fabric dates no further back than the time of the second Charles; a little octagon cupola rises from the western gable, and the crumbling ruins of an old campanile that now serves as a depository for lumber may be seen in a corner of the quiet graveyard. A little higher up on the other side, crowning a grassy knoll, is the modest meeting-house we are in search of; on the lower slope of what answers for the village green two or three cottages stand at irregular distances from each other and on the opposite side of a little hollow that intervenes is, or rather was, the old grammar school, for it is "old" no longer, the reforming Charity Commissioners having lately overhauled the good bishop's foundation, and caused a new elementary school to be erected on the site; and, in addition, have built a larger and more convenient grammar school near the southern end of the lower lake. The houses are few in number, and are scattered irregularly about in a promiscuous, hap-hazard, stand-at-ease sort of way, without any regard to order or uniformity, so that it is hard to say where the village proper really begins, unless we assume that the village hostelry below the church bank, standing, as it does, with its door invitingly open, may be taken as indicating the threshold. But the "Black-boy," which perpetuates, though very imperfectly, the heraldic honours of the Willoughbys, submitting to the onward march of events, has had to change its position, the site its more primitive possessor occupied having been absorbed when the adjacent reservoir was made.

The memory of a former Boniface of that ancient hostelry is still cherished by the villagers, and quaint stories are told respecting him. The old worthy, it seems, combined with the duties of host on week-days those of chief musician at the chapel on Sundays; his chosen instrument being the violoncello, or "th' great-gronfaither fiddle," as the inhabitants of the little Arcadia were wont to call it; a clarionet and a deep-mouthed but somewhat hiccupy bassoon completing the orchestra, the performers being chosen, like Cremona fiddles, more for age than looks or excellence, enough if only they could produce a sufficient foundation of sound whereon the congregation might raise their superstructure of song. Anniversary sermons and similar high days and festivals

were those on which the host of the "Black-boy" put forth his utmost energies, and showed to greatest advantage. Surrounded by a troop of school children, and a galaxy of rustic beauty arrayed in white, and his choir strengthened by the addition of

The flute,
And the vile squeaking of the wry-necked fife,

he then laboured at his bass viol with such energy, that, as is related, on one occasion, being overcome with the sense of his own importance, and the extra exertion necessary for the successful rendering of "Fixed in his everlasting seat," he missed the centre of gravity, toppled over and smashed his monster fiddle.

The chapel in which the Willoughbys worshipped stands, as we have said, at the further end of the village; it is a modest looking structure, and, in its externals at least, plain and simple enough to satisfy the requirements of the most rigid and lugubrious Puritan. But the authoress of "Lancashire Memories" has given such an exquisite description of it that we cannot refrain from reproducing her sketch: "A little gray, old stone building," she says, "half covered with ivy, and one bell that rang, and rang, from ten o'clock until the minister was fairly seated in the pulpit. The pews were gray and worm-eaten, of all sizes and shapes. Some seemed not to have borne age so well as their neighbours, and to have sunk a little on one side under their infirmities. One was distinguished by a wooden canopy over it, and had once belonged to that *rara avis*, a dissenting peer. One of his descendants, no other than the village schoolmaster, occupied the pew, and in the pride of his descent had painted on the door 'Lord Hugh Willoughby.' When did Dissenters know anything of heraldry? Or the difference between Lord Hugh and Hugh Lord? It converted the baronial ancestor into quite another person. But it did just as well; a lord's a lord all the world over, and Burke's Extinct Peerage had not come out. There was no vestry in the chapel; but the minister wore no gown, so no robing room was required. The bier stood at one end, a perpetual *memento mori*, and over it hung the bell-rope, looped up on a peg. The minister walked straight into the pulpit from the outer door, and the service began with the clerk giving out the hymn in a thin, feeble, snuffling voice, and, lest any of the congregation had not caught the number, assisted their memories by writing it in chalk on a slate, and suspending it from a nail from the pulpit over his head; the rubbing out of this chalk, ready for the next hymn, occupying a good deal of his time and attention during the succeeding prayer. The music was a bassoon and a violoncello, with a pitchpipe to enable them to start fair, and the singing was confided to the congregation in general. The doors and windows were left open in summer, for no sound could enter more disturbing than the twitter of a bird or the bleat of a lamb. Flies came buzzing in, or a bee hummed her way round, and perhaps settled in one of the posies carried on Sundays by the country girls, and esteemed a sovereign remedy against sleeping during service. It would be difficult to sleep anywhere with such a rich combination of sight and scent as those nosegays of lad's-love and thyme, wall flowers, pinks, and roses. The graveyard was grassy, still, and peaceful; not a gravel walk up to the door; all was grass, silent and calm. The weekly worshippers held it in affectionate reverence, for there they had laid their own kindred, and there they expected to be laid in turn. After service the congregation dispersed seriously and quietly; those who lived in the same direction walking together, discussing the sermon or enquiring after each other's affairs; but all in a hushed, subdued tone that belongs to Sunday in the country. I could fancy there was a stillness in the air peculiar to the day, as if all nature, animate and inanimate, rested the one day in seven, and worshipped in reverential silence."

The chapel of Rivington, with which the memory of the Willoughbys is so closely associated, presents a venerable aspect, though it has no very great antiquity to boast of. At the passing of the Act of Uniformity, Samuel Newton, who had been minister of the Episcopal Chapel, withdrew, but returning some time after and his place remaining unoccupied, he was allowed "to preach in the church without disturbance." When the Conventicle Act was in force the good people of the place frequently assembled to celebrate public worship in the open air at a place called Winterhill, a part of the mountainous ridge of which Rivington Pike forms so prominent a feature. Seats were cut out of the side of the hill so as to form a kind of amphitheatre, and in the centre a stone pulpit was erected from whence the assembled throng were usually addressed.

The present chapel was built in the early part of Queen Anne's reign—in 1703, it is said, and about the time that Hugh, Lord Willoughby, the first of that name, with his co-trustees were causing so much anxiety to poor Vicar Rothwell by retaining the funds of Horwich Episcopal Chapel, and threatening "against justice and honesty" to build a meeting-house with them. Like many other chapels erected contemporaneously, it was built and endowed for the promulgation of doctrines accordant with those of the Church, but enforced by a Presbyterian form of government; eventually Arian sentiments were introduced, and it has experienced the declension almost universal with English Presbyterian congregations. There is a tradition current that when these changes were introduced they were received with so much disfavour that a worthy couple in the neighbourhood who had a child born to them at the time, determined that it should be named Ichabod, believing, as they said, the glory to have departed.

The building, clothed in its mantle of verdant ivy, stands a little way back from the wayside in the midst of its own graveyard and encompassed by a grey stone fence that looks as old as the structure itself. Having obtained the key, we passed through the little wicket into the enclosure—

Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap.

A few shrubs grasp the cold earth, and you can see where flowers have been planted by loving

hands, but there is no gravelled path, and so you have to pick your way round the grass-grown hillocks, stepping from dwelling to dwelling of the listless dead, and over the half-sunken flagstones, many of them bemossed with age and appearing as if about to sink into the graves of those they commemorate. Time, as Hawthorne says, gnaws an English gravestone with wonderful aptitude. Our climate soon gives an antiquity of aspect, and the moisture encourages the moss and lichens to fill up the lettered furrows with a living green that obliterates the inscription while the beloved name it records is yet fresh upon the survivor's heart—

The record some fond hand hath traced,
To mark thy burial spot,
The lichen will have soon effaced,
To write thy doom—forgot.

Unlocking the door, we entered the little sanctuary, which looks as though it had remained undisturbed since the time when the Willoughbys were in the heyday of their power. The interior is plain and simple almost to ugliness, and a chill pervades the place that tends more to inspire a melancholy gloom than to attune the mind to reverent devotion; the pavement is damp and uneven, and the mildewed and worm-eaten pews, though doubtless favourable to the quiet slumbers of bucolic Rivingtonians, suggest the idea that the worshippers in this Nonconformist Zion have little sympathy with demonstrative worship, and are not much given to indulgence in æsthetic gewgaws—at all events, that whatever their tabernacle may have done for the promotion of piety, it is not likely to do much for the cultivation of taste. The pulpit is placed in the centre against the wall, and directly opposite is the high seat of the synagogue—the pew or enclosure set apart, when the chapel could boast a peer among its worshippers, for the lordly owners of Shaw-place—importance being given by a wooden canopy, somewhat faded and decrepid in appearance, that overshadows it, and nowadays spinsters or bachelors who occupy the seat of honour are liable to have their thoughts distracted by the notice that stares them obtrusively in the face, "Marriages may be solemnised in this chapel," a reminder that might have been useful in former days when, as we have seen, there was an apparent forgetfulness, if not reluctance, on the part of some of the lordly occupants to enter the holy estate.

There is not much display of mural literature; a small marble tablet perpetuates the name of Thomas Lowe, of Rivington, and Alice his wife, but the only sepulchral memorial deserving of especial notice is a singular coffin-shaped slab, inscribed with a pretentious pedigree and a long laudatory epitaph, erected in recent years by a descendant of the Willoughbys who had evidently less mercy for the marble-cutter than admiration of the hereditary dignities of his departed ancestors.

It is about four or five yards in height, and adorned with a number of small shields blazoned with the armorial ensigns of the family alliances. Here is the inscription:—

In memory of Thomas eleventh Lord Willoughby of Parham in Suffolk, of Horwich, Adlington and Shaw-Place in this county who died February 20th, 1691, aged 89. Also of Eleanor, Lady Willoughby, who died in 1665, aged 67. And Hugh their eldest son, twelfth Lord Willoughby, who died in June 1712, aged 75. Also of Anne, his Lordship's first wife, who died in 1690, aged 52. Likewise the Lady Honora, his second wife, eldest daughter of Lord Leigh of Stoneleigh, and relict of Sir William Egerton of Worsley, Knight of the Bath, second son of John, Earl of Bridgewater and his countess Elizabeth, daughter of his Grace the Duke of Newcastle. She died in 1750, aged 77. A truly congenial pair, fondly attached to rural scenes and retirements, and endeared to all around them by the urbanity, benevolence, and purity of their lives, evinced at their favourite retreat Worsley Hall, Lord Willoughby in pursuits like the Noble Earl himself, a spirited agriculturist affording employment to vast numbers on that fine domain, a dower possessed in right of her ladyship's first espousal, having issue thereby John and Honora Egerton.

Also in memory of Edward the thirteenth Lord who died unmarried, in Flanders, valiantly fighting under the renowned Duke of Marlborough, in April 1713, aged 37 years.

Also of Charles, his brother, the fourteenth Lord, who died June 12th, 1715, aged 34, sons of the Honourable Francis.

Also Hester, Lady Willoughby, his wife, who died in 1758, aged 73 years, youngest daughter of Henry Davenport, Esqr., of Darcy Lever, a surviving branch of the ancient family of the Davenports of Davenport in the county of Chester, and eventually heiress to her brother and sister, an eminently distinguished family amongst the Dissenters of that period. Educated in the adjoining township under their relative, the venerable Oliver Heywood, M.A., the Father of the Nonconformist Divines, and a native of Little Lever.

Lastly in memory of the Right Honble. Hugh, their only son, and fifteenth Baron Willoughby of Parham, who expired at his house in London, unmarried, January 17th, 1765, aged 51. Interred by his Lordship's express desire in the family vault of his ancestors within Horwich Church, February 9th, and had a befitting funeral for so exalted a character and Peer of the Realm; the Nobility, Officers of State, Patrons and Directors of the various Institutions joining the solemn cavalcade through the City to

St. Alban's on its route to Lancashire which journey occupied nigh three weeks; in whom too the male line of this branch became extinct.

A constant attender and supporter with his revered and early widowed and exemplary mother of this Chapel and to which he bequeathed the sum of £100. Here, as the Son, the Brother, the Friend, above all as the Christian his name is perpetuated. An elegant and accomplished scholar who, after enjoying the advantage of foreign travel for some years returned to England, filled with a patriotic devotion for his native country. Open, kind-hearted, and magnanimous, he commenced his onerous Parliamentary duties, and soon gave evidence of that legislative talent which afterwards shone forth with so much splendour, conferring upon him, by being unanimously chosen Chairman of the Committees of the House of Peers, an official reward and the lasting esteem of his most gracious Sovereigns George II. and III. to the close of a transcendently brilliant political career. With his universally acknowledged refinement of taste, enriched abroad and extensively cultivated at home, and his judicious bestowal of patronage, exercised in the promotion of Literature, Science and the Arts, in whatever walk his comprehensive mind discerned genius or oppressed worth, his fostering hand brought forth the "flower born to blush unseen," which in speedy requital for such true greatness of soul obtained for him the additional very high appointments, viz., President of the Society of Antiquaries, and Vice-president of the Royal Society, succeeding the learned Martin Foulkes, Esq., Vice-president of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts; a trustee of the British Museum, and one of the Commissioners of Longitude. A nobleman who adorned the title derived from his forefathers by his own social and domestic virtues; leaving a grateful nation to deplore his unexpected removal from this sublunary state and two sisters, his co-heiresses at law, the Honble. Helena, wife of Baxter Roscoe, Esqr., and the Honble. Elizabeth, the wife of John Shaw, Esqr.

As a tribute of affectionate regard due to so lamented a Servant, Philanthropist and Relative, this monument is erected by his grand-nephews and nieces.

Friends we have had—the years flew by,
How many have they borne away?
Man like the hours is born to die,
The last year's hours, oh, where are they?
Catch then, O catch the transient hour,
Improve each moment as it flies,
So teach us in our solemn hour,
That we ourselves are dying flowers.
He dies—alas! how soon he dies,
Yet all these flowers now lost by death
In other worlds shall brightly bloom,
Spring with fresh life, immortal breath,
And burst the confines of the tomb.

Recorded in the Museum:—"The illustrious Lord Willoughby, who holds a distinguished place in the Temple of Science and as a pre-eminent personage elected to fill the two offices vacant by the demise of the justly celebrated Martin Foulkes, Esqr., powerfully aided in design and furtherance of its object this stupendous structure, by his unremitting zeal and matured conception as a virtuoso. Founded in his 39th year A.D. 1753." Extract from Lysons:—"His Lordship's stipend from Government was 1,200 guineas per annum. He was a father to the poor, a benefactor and protector of indigent deserving authors, a munificent patron of learning, music, painting, and poetry, and a statesman who sought without fear or favour the common good." These mementoes of five generations and alliances of a patrician race summoned to Parliament 7th Edward II., 1313, are faithfully detailed from authentic documents possessed only by the writer himself, who snatched them from oblivion, and compiled chiefly for the Antiquary and Herald, every vestige beside regarding them being flagrantly destroyed with the ancient sacred edifice wherein reposed their bodies.

After this fulsome eulogy, which offends alike against piety, simplicity, and truth, may we not exclaim with Sir Thomas Browne in his *Hydriotaphia*, "Man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave, solemnising nativities and deaths with equal lustre."

Any account of the Willoughbys would be incomplete that did not make mention of that *preux chevalier*, the hero of Zutphen, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney, and the idol of popular fame, who, if he did not bear the name, was yet of the blood of the Willoughbys—Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby of Eresby, whose valour was proved on many a hard-fought field, and whose name so often rang on the plains of the Netherlands—

The brave Lord Willoughby,
Of courage fierce and fell,
Who would not give one inch of way
For all the devils in hell.

His mother, the Lady Katharine Willoughby, the only daughter and heiress of William the ninth lord by a Spanish lady of high birth, Mary Salmes, after the death of her first husband, Charles

Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, brother-in-law of King Henry VIII., became the wife of Richard Bertie. On the accession of Queen Mary she was forced to fly from her own country to escape the cruelties and persecutions of Bishop Gardiner, whose enmity she had drawn upon herself by some imprudent manifestations of her dislike of his character in the preceding reign. Accompanied by her husband, she sought refuge in the Low Countries. "On an October evening," says Lucy Aikin in her "Memoirs of the Court of Elizabeth," "followed only by two maid-servants, on foot, through rain and mire and darkness, the forlorn wanderers began their march to Wesel, one of the Hanse towns. On their arrival, their wild and wretched appearance gave them, in the eyes of the inhabitants, so suspicious an appearance that no one would harbour them; and while her husband ran from inn to inn vainly imploring admittance the afflicted duchess was compelled to betake herself to the shelter of a church porch; and there, in that misery and desolation and want of everything, was delivered of a child, to whom, in memory of the circumstance, she gave the name of Peregrine." The son who first saw the light under these inauspicious circumstances was, at her death in 1580, and in her right, summoned to Parliament as tenth Lord Willoughby. Two years afterwards, when Elizabeth, on account of the hostility of Philip of Spain, was desirous of cultivating a closer friendship with the Northern Powers, Lord Willoughby was selected as her special envoy to the King of Denmark to invest him with the Garter as a token of her goodwill. Subsequently, when the battle between the two great principles that divided Europe was being fought out by England and Spain, he had many opportunities of distinguishing himself and won undying fame.

Elizabeth had sent an army to assist the Protestant people of the Low Countries to maintain their civil privileges and their religious faith against Philip and against Rome. Leicester, who had the chief command, was unable to cope with so skilled a general as the Prince of Parma, and the campaign was a disastrous one. Among the heroes in that little band was the rare scholar, the accomplished writer, the perfect gentleman, the darling of the English people, Sir Philip Sidney, and with him his intimate friend, the brilliant and quick-witted—the bravest of the brave on the battle-field—the "good Lord Willoughby"—"Good Peregrine," as his "most loving sovereign," Elizabeth, familiarly styled him in one of her letters. The following story of his prowess at the battle of Zutphen, in which Sidney received his mortal wound, is related in a comparatively modern work, "Five Generations of a Loyal House":—

On the 22nd September, 1586, an affray took place, in which Lord Willoughby pre-eminently distinguished himself by valour and conduct, and many others with him upheld the glory of the English name. Sir John Norreis and Sir William Stanley^[16] were that day reconciled; the former coming forward to say, "Let us die together in her Majesty's cause." The enemy were desirous of throwing supplies into Zutphen, a place of which they entertained some doubt; and a convoy, accordingly, by orders of the Prince of Parma, brought in a store, though an insufficient one, of provisions. A second, commanded by George Cressiac, an Albanois, was despatched for the same purpose, the morning being foggy. Lord Willoughby, Lord Audley, Sir John Norreis, and Sir Philip Sidney encountering the convoy in a fog an engagement began. The Spaniards had the advantage of position, and had it in their power to discharge two or three volleys of shot upon the English, who, nevertheless, stood their ground. Lord Willoughby himself, with his lance in rest, met with the leader, George Cressiac, engaged with, and, after a short combat, unhorsed him. He fell into a ditch, crying aloud to his victor: "I yield myself to you, for that you be a seemly knight," who, satisfied with the submission, and having other matters in hand, threw himself into the thickest of the combat, while the captive was conducted to the tent of the general, Lord Leicester. The engagement was hot, and cost the enemy many lives, but few of the English were missing. Willoughby was extremely forward in the combat; at one moment his basses, or mantle, was torn from him, but recaptured. When all was over, Captain Cressiac, being still in his Excellency's tent, refused to acknowledge himself prisoner to any but the knight to whom he had submitted on the field. There is something in this and the like incidents of the period, which recall us very agreeably to the recollection of earlier days of chivalry and romance. Cressiac added, that if he were to see again the knight to whom he had surrendered himself, in the armour he then wore, he should immediately recognise him, and that to him and him only would he yield. Accordingly, when Lord Willoughby presented himself before him, in complete armour, he immediately exclaimed: "I yield to you!" and was adjudged to him as his prisoner. It was in this skirmish that the gallant and lamented Sir Philip Sidney, the boast of his age, and the hope of many admiring friends, received the fatal wound which cut short the thread of a brief but brilliant existence. During the whole day he had been one of the foremost in action, and once rushed to the assistance of his friend, Lord Willoughby, on observing him "nearly surrounded by the enemy," and in imminent peril: after seeing him in safety, he continued the combat with great spirit, until he received a shot in the thigh, as he was remounting a second horse, the first having been killed under him.

The story of Sidney's death has been told by his friend Lord Brooke, and the affecting anecdote of his demeanour when he was carried faint and bleeding from the walls of Zutphen inspires a love and reverence for his name, which never ceases to cling about the hearts of his countrymen. "Passing along by the rear of the army," says his biographer, "where his uncle (the Earl of Leicester) the general was, and being thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for some drink, which was presently brought him. But as he was putting the bottle to his mouth he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had eaten his last at the same feast, ghastly casting up his eyes at the

bottle; which Sir Philip perceiving took it from his head before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man with these words, 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine.'"

When the Earl of Leicester abruptly left for England Lord Willoughby was by his direction appointed to the chief command, in which he was subsequently confirmed by the Queen herself. He was not less magnanimous than brave; and, disdaining the servility of a Court life, is thought to have enjoyed on this account less of the Queen's favour than her admiration of military merit would otherwise have prompted her to bestow upon him. Some time after the defeat of the Armada he retired to Spa, ostensibly for the recovery of his health, but more probably in resentment of some injury inflicted by a venal and treacherous Court, the intrigues of which his noble nature scorned; but Elizabeth, unwilling to lose the support of one of her bravest and most popular captains, addressed a letter of recall to him. He does not appear, however, to have been actively engaged in any of the expeditions against Spain which ensued; though he was subsequently appointed Governor of Berwick, an appointment he held until his death in 1601. His son was afterwards created Earl of Lindsay, and the title of Duke of Ancaster has been borne by his descendants.

There are other names associated with the annals of Rivington of equal historic interest with those of the former lords of Shaw Place, and foremost among them must be ranked that of the worthy prelate, who in the golden days of the maiden Queen, when he had risen to be Bishop of Durham, and out of the love he bore to his native county founded the free school at Rivington for the "bringing up, teaching, and instructing children and youth in grammar and other good learning, to continue for ever." In good Bishop Pilkington's early days the opportunities of learning were few; the well-born might get admission to the house of some great territorial lord and there receive a scholastic training, but to those of lowlier birth the monasteries were almost the only available sources, and the youths there educated were usually trained for the priesthood. The heaviest reproach that Shakespeare's Jack Cade could heap upon Lord Say was "that he had most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school." Little progress had, however, been made in "corrupting the youth" of Lancashire, for at the time of the Reformation there were only three such schools in the county—Farnworth, Manchester, and Warrington—and they had then been only recently founded; hence the common people, as may be supposed, were rude and uncultured, and, though the merriest of Englishmen, were as illiterate as they were merry; even the thrifty manufacturers were in very little better case, for in only very few instances did they know how to write their names.^[17]

The Pilkingtons derived their patronymic from the manor of that name in Prestwich parish, where they were located shortly after the Conquest, though Fuller in his "Worthies of England" assigns, but without any apparent authority, a much earlier date, and tells us that one of them fought under Harold at the battle of Hastings, and, being pressed, put on the dress of a thatcher and so escaped; whence the family crest and the allusive motto, "*Now thus, now thus.*" But in this the pleasant old chronicler is clearly at fault, for the crest of the Pilkingtons is not a thresher but a mower, and the motto imputed to the family belongs to the Traffords. Fuller says he had the story from his "good friend, Master William Riley, Norroy King of Arms," a Lancashire man. Whatever its origin—and tradition, if never wholly accurate, is seldom entirely destitute of foundation—it is a singular coincidence that the same, or nearly the same, story is applied to the Traffords, the Levers, and the Bridgeman family.

An offshoot of the Pilkingtons was settled at Rivington in the first half of the fourteenth century, and the old hall was the residence of this branch of the family for many generations. The earlier history of the family is involved in much obscurity, but in the 10th Edward III. (1336-7) Robert, a younger son of Sir Roger de Pilkington and his wife Alice, sister and heiress of Henry de Bury, obtained a grant of the manor of Rivington from Alexander, son of Cicely de Rivington. This Robert Pilkington was in the time of Richard II. a juror in the great Scrope and Grosvenor cause, which occupied the court of the Lord Marshall of England four years in determining the conflicting claims of Sir Richard le Scrope and Sir Robert le Grosvenor to bear for arms on a field azure, a bend or—a golden bar placed diagonally across the shield. Heraldry in those days was the recognised mark of hereditary honour and gentility, and coat armour had an intrinsic value. The suit in which Robert Pilkington, of Rivington, took part has scarcely a parallel in history; deeds, chronicles, monastic records, and muniments that purported to date back to the fabulous days of King Arthur were submitted; and John O'Gaunt, Owen Glendower, Geoffrey Chaucer, and scores of lords, knights, and esquires, the surviving veterans from the wars of Edward III., who had beheld the blazonry borne before the walls of Ascalon, in the Crusades, in northern France, under the standard of the Black Prince, on the plains of Crescy and Poitiers, and many other famous places and fields of fame, were called as witnesses. As the humourist has it—

Would you know more, you must look at "The Roll,"
Which records the dispute,
And the subsequent suit,
Commenced in "Thirteen sev'n-ty-five,"—which took root
In Le Grosvenor's assuming the arms Le Scroope swore
That none but *his* ancestors, ever before,
In foray, joust, battle, or tournament wore,
To wit "*On a Prussian-blue Field, a Bend Or;*"
While the Grosvenor averr'd that his ancestor bore
The same, and Scroope lied like a—somebody tore
Off the simile—so I can tell you no more,

Till some A double S shall the fragment restore.

Robert Pilkington, by his wife Katharine, daughter of J. de Aynsworth, had a son Alexander, his heir, who, as appears by an inquisition taken 9th Henry V. (1421-2), held seven parts of the manor of Rivington of his cousin, Sir John Pilkington, Knight; he settled his estates 8th Henry VI. (1429-30), and was succeeded in turn by his son, Ralph Pilkington, who died 30th January, 15th Edward IV. (1476). His inquisition was taken at Eccles on Monday before the Purification of the Virgin, 17th Edward IV. (26th January, 1478), when it was found that Robert Pilkington, who was then 28 years of age, was his son and next heir.

The Battle of Bosworth Field proved as fatal to the fortunes of the parent stock of the Pilkingtons as to the power of their royal master, Richard III. They were devoted adherents of the house of York, and bore a part in the bloody contest which ended the struggle between the Red and White Roses, and alike terminated the power of the feudal barons, the line of the Plantagenet kings, and the political system under which England had been governed by them for more than three centuries. For his adherence to the fortunes of the fallen monarch Sir Thomas Pilkington's estates were forfeited to the victorious Richmond, and by him bestowed upon his crafty stepfather, Thomas, Lord Stanley, first Earl of Derby, the only noble who survived the wars of the Roses with added power and splendour, he having given to him almost all the lands forfeited in the north; the originally great possessions of his house being swollen by enormous grants of the estates of Sir Thomas Broughton, of Broughton; of Sir James Harrington, of Hornby; of Francis, Viscount Lovel; of Sir Thomas Pilkington, and what Sir Thomas had inherited by descent from the heiress of Chetham—in fact, from these forfeited possessions of the Pilkingtons came all the lands which the Stanleys obtained in the Salford Hundred. If there is any foundation for the story of a Pilkington having disguised himself to escape his pursuers, it must have been after the fatal fight at Bosworth, and not at Hastings, as Fuller affirms. There is a common belief that Sir Thomas Pilkington was captured on the occasion of Richard's overthrow, sent prisoner to Leicester, and there put to death; but the statement is incorrect, for this devoted servant of the fallen king was afterwards in arms against Henry VII., and took part in the action at Stoke Field, near Newark, where he lost his life, June 6, 1487, the occasion being that on which Lambert Simnel, the pretended Edward Plantagenet, was taken prisoner.

Though Robert Pilkington, of Rivington, also fought on the side of the Yorkists at Bosworth, his lands appear to have escaped the general wreck, and his descendants continued in the occupation of the ancestral home for several generations. Richard Pilkington, a son or grandson of this Robert, was born in 1480, and had to wife Alice, daughter of Lawrence Asshawe, of Hall-on-the-Hill, in Heath-Charnock, a township adjoining Rivington, which would appear to have come into the possession of the Asshawes by marriage with a heiress of the Harringtons of Westby. The Asshawes at a later date also owned lands in Flixton, where they had a residence, Asshawe Hall, which still exists. Round this family Mr. M'Dougall has thrown the halo of romance, and under the title of "The Ladye of Asshawe" has enshrined in verse a lingering tradition that possibly possesses some faint glimmerings of truth, with, however, much that is undoubtedly apocryphal.

A branch of the family was seated at High Bullough, in Anglezark, in the reign of Henry VIII.; and from this line, through James, younger son of John Asshawe or Shaw, as the name began to be written, who married Mary Gerard, a daughter of the house of Ince, descended the Shaws who were seated at Shaw Place, in Heath Charnock, before that mansion passed into the possession of the Willoughbys, and were residing there when Sir William Dugdale, Norroy King of Arms, made his visitation in 1664, Peter Shaw then registering a pedigree of six descents. We shall make acquaintance with the Shaws of High Bullough and Shaw Place in the course of our inquiries.

Fuller says, and the statement has obtained currency by frequent repetition, that Richard Pilkington, who married the daughter of Lawrence Asshawe, built the church of Rivington, but the statement is not strictly accurate, though it was no doubt through his exertions that the building then existing received consecration. That there was an ecclesiastical foundation here at an earlier date is evident from the "humble complaint" which Richard Sim, the churchwarden, and other inhabitants of the chapelry in 1628 addressed to Bishop Bridgeman. It appears that a claim had been set up by one Thomas Breers to the inheritance of the church and churchyard as his lay fee, on the ground that it had formed part of the possessions of Richard Pilkington, and had been conveyed by his grandson, Robert Pilkington, to Thomas Breers, the elder, the claimant's father. A reply was filed declaring that long before the inquisition taken on the death of Richard Pilkington (1551) the inhabitants of Rivington, Anglezark, Hemshaw, and Foulds, in the parish of Bolton-le-Moors, and who were then reckoned to number five hundred, at their own cost had built the said chapel "upon a little toft and quillit of land" in Rivington, there to celebrate divine service, sacraments, and sacramentals, which were performed accordingly "for manie yeres of antiquitie;" and that afterwards Richard Pilkington made great labour and took great pains with Dr. Bird, the Bishop of Chester, and desired him to dedicate the same chapel and chapelyard to God and His Holy and divine service, and the same was consecrated the 11th day of October, 1541. They further showed that Queen Elizabeth, by a grant under the great seal dated at Westminster 13th May, in the eighth year of her reign (1566), did, amongst other things, at the petition of James Pilkington (son of Richard), Bishop of Durham, grant to the governors of the Grammar School in Rivington and their successors, that from time to time and ever afterwards there should be in the said chapel sacraments and sacramentals celebrated, and other divine services used, and also baptising of infants, celebration of matrimony, burying and inhumation of the dead within the said chapel and chapelyard, and all other rites, celebrations,

prayers, and services in the said chapel for ever, there to be used in all and every construction and purpose, as is, are, or ought to be used in the parish church of Bolton-in-the-Moors. And that ever afterwards the people and inhabitants within Rivington, Anglezark, Hemshaw, and Foulds on their own proper costs should find, from time to time, one discreet, learned, and fit chaplain or minister to serve in the said chapel, and make his residence there, and to perform all divine offices in the said chapel, and all other things there which may or ought to belong to the office of rector (*sic*) of the said parish church of Bolton, or any other rector or curate or parish church of England. And that the said inhabitants should not be compelled or bound to repair to the parish church of Bolton, or to any other church or chapel, to hear divine service, or to receive the sacraments, to bury their dead, or to celebrate matrimony, but only to the chapel of Rivington. They also offered to depose and prove that, time beyond the memory of man, they and their ancestors had quietly enjoyed the said church or chapel and chapelyard, with all the freedoms, privileges, and immunities thereof, and had continually repaired, maintained and upholden the same, and had also as then kept and provided a sufficient minister and preacher at the same, and they therefore besought the Bishop to continue the privileges to them, their heirs, and successors for ever. The inhabitants established their case, and under date November 15th, 1628, the Bishop confirmed all their rights to them.

It would thus seem that originally Rivington had been a kind of minor (succursal) chapel of ease, erected for the accommodation of the people, who, residing in a remote hamlet, found it inconvenient on all occasions to resort to the mother church, and had been licensed for public worship, without, however, possessing the full privileges and characteristics of a church until, through the influence and exertions of Richard Pilkington, the Bishop of Chester was induced to consecrate it.

It will be seen that at that early date the good people of Rivington appointed their own minister, a circumstance that goes far to confirm the belief that, though the Pilkingtons might have been liberal benefactors, they were not the actual founders of the church. The inhabitants have ever since continued to exercise the right of patronage, the incumbent whenever a vacancy occurs being elected by the votes of the ratepayers, a practice that is not without its disadvantages, as people of all religious beliefs and of no religious belief at all have equal rights in the selection of the minister, and exercise them, not always with a view to the church's efficiency or usefulness.

The old chapel—doubtless a very primitive-looking structure—was rebuilt in 1666, and within the last few years has undergone a thorough restoration. By whomsoever founded, it is clear that one of the most liberal contributors to the endowment was George Shaw, of High Bullough, a kinsman of Richard Pilkington's wife, whose name is perpetuated in the following inscription on a small brass placed below one of the windows on the north side:—

Here Lyeth the Bodye of George Shaw, Gentleman, who was the fourth sonne of Laurence Shaw of High Bullough in the county of Lancaster, who in his Lyfe time gave £200 to be as stocke for ever for the use of the Church of Rivington, the profitts whereof to be paid yearly to a Preaching Minister at this Church. And at his death hee gave, besides other large legacies to his kinsfolkes and friends, the sume of £100 to be as stocke for ever, the profitts whereof to be yearly distributed amongst the Poor Inhabitants of Rivington, Andlesargh, Heath Charnock and Anderton, on Peter's Day and Michael's Day, by even portions; And £190 (being the remainder of his Estate) hee also gave to be bestowed on land or laid upon a rent charge for ever, the profitts whereof to be lent from tyme to tyme gratis to the poore tennants within the townes aforesaid towards the paying of their Fynes for such tyme and at the discretion of Mr. Alexander Feeilden and Mr. George Shaw his Executors, and their heires, and others named in his last Will. Hee dyed November the VIII day, anno Doni, 1650, being of the age of 73 years.

The memory of the Pilkingtons is preserved in the following inscription on a memorial in the church:—

Vivit post Funera Virtus. Richard Pilkington qui Templum hoc condidit hic sepeliebatur
año Dñi 1551, et maii 24, tunc doñica Trinitatis, ac ætatis suæ 66, bonæ memoriæ Vir.

Alicia Asshaw ei uxor 12 liberos ei peperit, è quibus tres concionatores fuerunt et
Cantabrigiensis à Collegio S. Johannis ac ea vivit octogenaria. Fathers teach yor
children nurtur & learning of the Lorde.

Jacobus istorum filius creat' Episcop' Dunelme 2 Martii año 1660, et ætatis suæ 42,
hanc Scholam aperuit anno 1566 et Templum. Children obey yor parents in ye Lord.

Richard Pilkington, who married Alice Asshawe, and died on the 24th May, 1551, had a numerous family. One of his daughters, Katharine, became the wife of John, son of James Shaw, of Shaw Place, in Heath Charnock. Of the sons, Charles, the eldest, died young; George succeeded to the family inheritance, and left a son, Robert, his heir, who by his will dated 16th November, 1605, left the manor of Rivington, with his other estates, in trust to Mr. Serjeant Hutton, Thomas Tildesley, Esq., and Mrs. Katharine Pilkington, who sold the manor to Robert Lever, of Darcy Lever. His only daughter and heiress, Jane, in 1653, became the second wife of her kinsman, John Andrews, of Little Lever, son and heir of Nicholas Andrews, of the city of London, an offshoot of the old Northamptonshire family of the Andrews of Charwelton, and his wife, Heath, daughter of Thomas Lever, of Little Lever Hall, a captain in Cromwell's army; and the lordship has continued

in their descendants to the present time. James, the third son of Richard Pilkington, became Bishop of Durham, and of this distinguished member of the family we shall have more to say anon. Francis Pilkington, the fourth son, died in 1597. Leonard, the fifth son, became master of St. John's College, Rector of Whitburne and prebendary of Durham; his grandson, a stout Church-and-King man, who had to compound for his estates on account of his adherence to the cause of the unfortunate Charles I., acquired extensive possessions in Ireland, and founded the line of the Pilkingtons of Tore, in the county of Westmeath, represented at the present day by Henry Mulock Pilkington, Esq., as well as that of Pilkington of Carrick, in Queen's County. John, the sixth son, like his brothers, James and Leonard, was in holy orders, and became archdeacon of Durham with a prebendal stall in that cathedral, three of the sons of Richard Pilkington thus attaining to distinguished positions in the Church, and holding, respectively, the offices of bishop, archdeacon, and prebendary of Durham.

James Pilkington, "the good old Bishop of Durham," as Strype calls him, first saw the light in the year 1518, three years after good Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, had founded his grammar school at Manchester, when Wolsey was in the plenitude of his power, and the learned Erasmus was winning renown by his Greek translation of the New Testament; the year in which Martin Luther, by his denunciation of the new-fangled doctrine of indulgences, shook the foundation of the Papacy, and cleared the way for that mighty change in religious thought and sentiment the full meaning of which is tersely comprehended in the one word which marks the epoch—the Reformation. Young Pilkington received his earliest instruction in the seminary where so many Puritans were trained—the Grammar School at Farnworth, which had been then lately founded by William Smyth, of Widnes, Bishop of Lincoln, the companion in his boyhood's days of Hugh Oldham, of Exeter, Manchester's great benefactor. It is probable that Thomas Lever, a younger son of John Lever, of Lever Hall, so intimately associated with Pilkington in later years of study, labour, and exile—the future master of St John's, Cambridge, and the favourite preacher of Queen Elizabeth—was attending the same school at the time, so that the two, being about the same age, may very likely, as Dr. Halley suggests, have been taught by the same teacher, and whipped with the same birch.

Pilkington subsequently entered at St. John's, Cambridge, at that time a stronghold of the reformed doctrine and a favourite resort of Lancashire men, where he had his quondam schoolfellow, young Lever, as a fellow collegian. At the University he greatly distinguished himself by his zeal in promoting the revival of Greek literature. In due time he obtained the degree of doctor of divinity, and was also elected a fellow of his college. He became famous for his eloquence and his success as a preacher of the reformed doctrines; and in December, 1550, he was presented by the young King Edward to the vicarage of Kendal, but did not enjoy that preferment very long. On the death of his royal patron he ranged himself on the side of the partisans of the hapless Lady Jane Grey, but he does not appear to have been very actively concerned in the futile attempt to place her upon the throne. On the accession of Queen Mary the fires of martyrdom were kindled. John Bradford's preaching brought him to the stake, and Pilkington would doubtless have shared the fate of the Manchester martyr had he not prudently withdrawn from his vicarage and sought safety abroad, where he remained for some years a voluntary exile, three other Lancashire men being his associates in adversity—his old companion, Lever, who afterwards became Archdeacon of Coventry; Alexander Nowell, of Read, in Whalley parish, the future Dean of St Paul's; and Edwin Sandys, of Hawkshead, in Furness, whom Queen Elizabeth promoted to the Bishopric of Worcester, and who subsequently became Archbishop of York. While at Geneva, Basle, and Zurich Pilkington read lectures and became associated with the leading Calvinistic Reformers, whose views in relation to ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies he warmly espoused, though when he attained to power, strict Puritan as he was, he was never so rigorous in enforcing them as his friend Lever.

With the close of the short reign of Mary the glare of the Smithfield fires died out. On the accession of Elizabeth, Pilkington, being no longer in peril, returned to his own country, and on the 20th of July in the following year (1559) was elected master of St. John's College, Cambridge—that in which he had graduated. He was one of the six divines appointed to revise the Book of Common Prayer, and for these and other services he was, on the 26th December, 1560, nominated to the vacant see of Durham. On the 20th February following, Elizabeth issued her warrant for his election to the palatinate. He was consecrated on the 2nd of March, received part of the temporalities on the 25th, and on the 10th of April following was enthroned at Durham,

Where his Cathedral, huge and vast,
Looks down upon the Wear,—

the "great high place"—

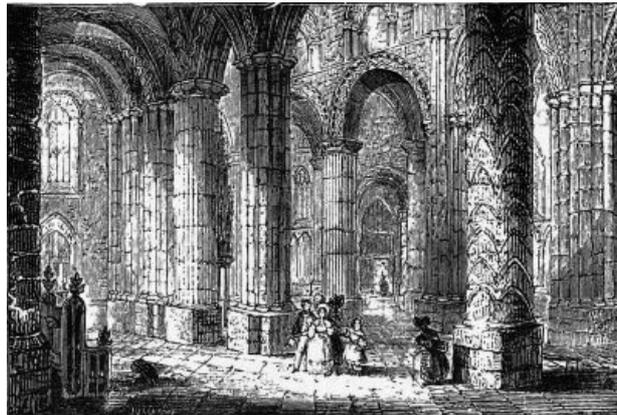
Deep in Durham's Gothic shade,

where in earlier days the prince-bishop, whose worldly franchises invested him with a faint shadow of sovereign power, bearing alike the sword and the pastoral staff, "looked down," as Dr. Freeman says, "from his fortified height, on a flock which he had to guard no less against worldly than against ghostly foes."

There is a wide-spread belief among the people of Rivington that Pilkington was the first Protestant bishop appointed by Queen Elizabeth, but this is undoubtedly an error. Parker had been appointed to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury in the preceding year, and many other vacant sees had also been filled up, but those of York and Durham had been purposely kept open

for a year, in the hope that the former holders—Heath and Tunstall—would conform.

Nothing, perhaps, more forcibly illustrates the sturdy independence and inflexible determination of the old Lancashire divine than his uncompromising resistance to the unjust attempt made by Elizabeth to appropriate to her own use, or that of some of her favourites, a portion of the temporalities of his bishopric. The revenues of the Cathedral church of Durham had attracted the cupidity of the sordid minions of the Court, who were anxious to enlarge their hereditary estates by the seizure of the Church's lands, and, at their instigation, the Queen, following the example of her father, Henry VIII., on Pilkington's nomination, had excepted out of the restitution several valuable manors and estates, a procedure that the newly-enthroned prelate, whose manly spirit, disdaining the slavish obsequiousness which characterised many of his episcopal brethren, refused to acquiesce in. He at once took measures for the recovery of the detained estates, and prosecuted his claim with so much firmness and energy, that Elizabeth, who was wont to speak of "unfrocking" contumacious bishops, had in the long run to yield, and Pilkington in 1566 had the good fortune to obtain the restoration of the whole of his lands, with the exception of Norhamshire, charged, however, with the payment of an annuity to the crown of £1,020. The bishop was no respecter of persons. If he was ready to brave the displeasure of the Queen in guarding the rights of the Church in his own diocese, he was equally willing to defend her interests elsewhere, and, as we shall hereafter see, did not scruple even to rebuke both a bishop and an archbishop in doing so.



INTERIOR OF DURHAM CATHEDRAL.

The Church has seldom had a more faithful pastor or zealous administrator than worthy James Pilkington. In the month of October, 1561, the first year of his episcopate, he made a visitation of his diocese, passing through his native county on his way north, and that would appear to have been the occasion on which he addressed a letter of admonition to Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the lamentable state of ecclesiastical affairs in Lancashire, and a deplorable picture his letter presents of the Church at that time. The Archbishop was the patron and rector of the three great parishes of Rochdale, Blackburn, and Whalley, then embracing within their limits a large number of chapeltries, the incumbents of which were as ill-paid as their cures were badly served; indeed, the position of the clergy was much worse after the Reformation than before, partly because of the extensive confiscations of parochial property, and partly because they lost many of the fees that had been customarily paid for religious services. William Downham was Bishop of Chester at the time—an easy-going prelate, who was not much troubled with earnest scruples of any kind. The Bishop was negligent, and, as might be expected, his clergy were, for the most part, wanting in earnestness; many of them, too, were miserably poor, lamentably incompetent, sadly ignorant, and some grossly immoral. The Archbishop of York had compounded with the Bishop of Chester for the visitation of the diocese, and that prelate contented himself with simply receiving the visitation fees, which were collected for him by a deputy, alleging, as an excuse for his personal negligence, the difficulty of travelling in the wild parts of Lancashire; while the jocund demeanour of the Bishop of Man, who had taken up his abode in the county away from his own charge, was not likely to induce much veneration for his episcopal office. Two of the Archbishop's parishes—Blackburn and Whalley—were very sorrily supplied, James Hylton, the vicar of the first-named, being obliged eventually to resign on account of his ignorance, negligence, and utter incompetence; whilst George Dobson, the vicar of Whalley, was a cleric of low habits and licentious character, grossly ignorant, unable to read intelligently, and altogether incapable of discharging the duties of his office. The dependent chapeltries were in even worse plight; in many, the services were neglectfully performed, and in some not at all, or only on the occasion of the visit of some itinerant preacher. Such was the condition of affairs at the time Pilkington visited his native county. No wonder that so energetic and zealous a worker should have addressed the following letter of complaint to the negligent Archbishop:—

It is to be lamented to see and hear how negligently they say any service, and how seldom. I have heard of a commission for ecclesiastical matters directed to my Lord of York, &c. But because I know not the truth of it, I meddle not. Your cures all, except Rachdale, be as far out of order as the worst in all the country. The old Vicar of Blackburn resigned for a pension, and now liveth with Sir John Biron. Whalley hath as ill a vicar as the worst. And there is one come thither that has been deprived or changed his name, and now teacheth school there; of evil to make them worse. If your

Grace's officers list, they might amend many things. I speak this for the amendment of the country, and that your Grace's parishes might be better spoken of and ordered. If your Grace would, either yourself or by my Lord of York, amend these things, it were very easy. One little examination or commandment to the contrary would take away all these and more. The Bishop of Man liveth here at ease, and as merry as Pope Joan. The Bishop of Chester hath compounded with my Lord of York for his visitation, and gathered up the money by his servants; but never a word spoken of any visitation or reformation. And that, he saith, he doth of friendship, because he will not trouble the country, nor put them to charge in calling them together. I beseech you, be not weary of well-doing, but with authority and council help to amend that is amiss. Thus after commendations I am boldly to write, wishing good to my country, and furtherance of God's glory. God be merciful to us, and grant *ut liberè currat Evangelium. Vale in Christo, Cras profecturus Dunelmum, Volente Deo.*

Tuus Ja. Δυνελεμεν

Though Pilkington kept his Puritanism well under control, he was uncompromising in the assertion of his Protestant principles, and the boldness with which he proclaimed them not unfrequently provoked the anger of the Papal party. The beautiful spire of St. Paul's Cathedral, the loftiest in the kingdom, which had been restored so recently as the year when Queen Mary ascended the throne, was in 1561 stricken, as was alleged, by lightning^[18] and destroyed, together with the bells and the roof of the nave and aisles. The Roman Catholics represented the accident as a judgment of Heaven for the discontinuance of the matins and other services which had used to be performed in the church; whereupon the Bishop preached a sermon at Paul's Cross in which he accepted it as a judgment, but on the sins of London in general, and particularly on the abuses by which the church had formerly been polluted, and concluded by exhorting his hearers "to take the dreadful devastation of the church to be a warning of a greater plague to follow if amendment of life were not had in all estates." His observations were supposed to reflect upon the Papists, who immediately circulated a paper about the city declaring the chief cause of the destruction to be "that the old fathers and the old ways were left, together with blaspheming God in lying sermons preached there, polluting the temple with schismatical service, and destroying and pulling down altars set up by blessed men, and where the sacrifice of the Mass was ministered." Pilkington, in vindication of his sermon, published a tract giving an animated description of the practices that had prevailed, and which is interesting at the present day as portraying the curious scenes and incidents of which St Paul's was then the theatre. "No place," he said, "had been more abused than Paul's had been, nor more against the receiving of Christ's Gospel; wherefore it was more wonder that God had spared it so long, than that he overthrew it now.... From the top of the spire, at coronations or other solemn triumphs, some for vain glory had used to throw themselves down by rope, and so killed themselves vainly to please other men's eyes. At the battlement of the steeple, sundry times were used Popish anthems, to call upon their gods, with torch and paper in the evenings. In the top of one of the pinnacles was Lollard's Tower, where many an innocent soul had been by them cruelly tormented and murdered. In the midst alley was their long censer, reaching from the roof to the ground; as though the Holy Ghost came down in their censuring, in likeness of a dove. In the arches men commonly complained of wrong and delayed judgments in ecclesiastical causes; and divers had been condemned there by Annas and Caiaphas for Christ's cause. Their images hung on every wall, pillar, and door, with their pilgrimages and worshippings of them; passing over their massing, and many altars, and the rest of their popish service. The south alley was for usury and popery, the north for simony and the horsefair, in the midst of all kinds of bargains, meetings, brawlings, murders, conspiracies. The font for ordinary payments of money as well known to all men as the beggar knows his dish.... So that within and without, above the ground and under, over the roof and beneath, from the top of the steeple and spire down to the low floor, not one spot was free from wickedness."^[19]

In his prosperity the Bishop was by no means unmindful of those who had been his associates in adversity. Shortly after his elevation to the Bishopric of Durham, Thomas Lever, the companion of his boyhood, his fellow-collegian at Cambridge and his friend in exile, was collated to a prebendal stall in his cathedral; and his brother, John Lever, was appointed archdeacon of Northumberland, and subsequently became Prebendary of Durham.

In 1567 Pilkington made another visitation of his cathedral, when, doubtless, he felt little or no reluctance in carrying out the instructions of the Queen's Commissioners for the removal of superstitious books and ornaments and effacing idolatrous figures from church plate. It was shortly after this visitation, and while he occupied the see of Durham, that the unhappy enterprise, the "Rising of the North," occurred, when the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland took up arms and proclaimed their design of restoring the old religion. The insurrection was precipitated by the arrest of Thomas Duke of Norfolk, "the most powerful and the most popular man in England," but who, allured by ambition, and animated by a chivalrous feeling for the beautiful but ill-fated Queen of Scots, then the captive of the implacable Elizabeth, formed the intention of effecting her release and then marrying her, a project that eventually proved fatal to his own peace and life. The Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, who were believed to be implicated, were ordered to repair to Court, but, apprehensive of the fate that might await them, Northumberland marched with his vassals to join Westmoreland at Brancepeth Castle; Richard Norton, of Rylstone, had been called to their aid, and a proclamation was issued to those professing the Catholic faith, who in the thinly-inhabited border counties

were numerous as well as desperate. Bishop Pilkington, by his energetic zeal in the cause of Protestantism, had made himself particularly obnoxious to the insurgents, and their first efforts were directed against his episcopal stronghold. They entered the city without opposition, and thence proceeded to the Cathedral, where they tore up and trampled under foot the English Bibles and Books of Common Prayer, and then celebrated Mass. The rebels marched under a banner representing the bleeding Saviour—"the banner of the five wounds"—

The wounds of hands and feet and side,
And the sacred cross on which Jesus died,

which was borne by the venerable lord of Rylstone, Richard Norton, a brave old man, whose fate and the fate of his eight sons have been preserved from the oblivion of dry annals, by the legends which a true poet^[20] has invested with almost historical reality:—

Now was the North in arms; they shine
In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,
At Percy's voice: and Neville sees
His followers gathering in from Tees,
From Wear, and all the little rills
Concealed among the forked hills.
Seven hundred knights, retainers all
Of Neville, at their master's call
Had sat together in Raby Hall;
Such strength that Earldom held of yore;
Nor wanted at this time rich store,
Of well appointed chivalry,
Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,
And greet the old paternal shield.
They heard the summons; and, furthermore,
Came foot and horseman of each degree,
Unbound by pledge of fealty;
Appeared, with free and open hate
Of novelties in church and state;
Knight, burgher, yeomen and esquier,
And the Romish priest, in priest's attire,
And thus, in arms, a zealous band
Proceeding under joint command,
To Durham first their course they bear,
And in St. Cuthbert's ancient seat
Sang Mass,—and tore the book of prayer,—
And trod the Bible beneath their feet.

The revolt was quickly suppressed, and a terrible vengeance followed. Martial law was carried out and the triumph of 1569 was disgraced by fearful executions; an alderman, a priest, and above sixty others were hanged in Durham alone, and many others suffered in every market town between Newcastle and Wetherby, the "reverend grey beard," Richard Norton, and his eight sons being among the number.

Thee, Norton, with thy eight good sons,
They doom'd to dye, alas! for ruth!
Thy reverend lockes thee could not save,
Nor them their faire and blooming youthe.

The princely house of Neville was entirely ruined, and the immense estates of the castles of Raby and Brancepeth, with the dependent manors, were seized by the Crown. These properties should, by right, have vested in the bishopric, according to the full right of forfeitures for treason and felony within the palatinate, but Elizabeth continued to retain possession on pretence of covering the expenses incurred in suppressing the rebellion. Pilkington claimed the forfeitures in right of his palatinate, and, in support of his claim, brought an action against the Queen for the recovery of the forfeited estates, which he prosecuted with so much vigour and success that nothing but the interposition of Parliament prevented the Sovereign being beaten by a subject in her own courts; the Act decreeing that "the convictions, outlawries, and attainders of Charles, Earl of Westmoreland, and fifty-seven others, attainted of high treason, for open rebellion in the north parts," should be confirmed, and "that her Majesty, her heirs, and successors, should have, for that time, all the lands and goods, which any of the said persons, attainted within the bishopric of Durham, had, against the bishop and his successors, though he claimeth *jura regalia*, and challengeth all the said forfeitures in right of his church." After the failure of his suit the Bishop, whose health seems to have given way under the anxieties of prolonged litigation, petitioned for liberty to pass the winter in the South, with the hope, perhaps, and the desire of being removed to some other diocese.

On the first alarm of Northumberland and Westmoreland's rising, Pilkington, conscious that his reforming zeal, as well as the fact of his being a married prelate, would be likely to provoke the fury of the insurgents, removed with his family into the South, and there remained until all danger was passed. Fuller says that his two daughters were conveyed away in beggars' clothes to prevent the Papists killing them; there was, however, only one child of the marriage born at the

time of the outbreak. His wife, Alice, was a daughter of Sir John Kingsmill, a Hampshire knight, but it is not known with certainty when they were married, the fact having probably been kept secret for some time on account of the strong prejudice that society—Protestant as well as Roman Catholic, acting under the influence of old traditions—had against married priests; for marriage with the clergy was then accounted as hardly respectable, and even the wives of bishops—bishops' women as they were sometimes contemptuously styled—occupied an unpleasant position in the ranks in which their right reverend husbands were accustomed to move.



DURHAM CASTLE.

Elizabeth had a rooted aversion to married priests, and took delight in subjecting them to annoyance and humiliation. It is recorded that in a progress she made into Essex and Suffolk in 1561, the year of Pilkington's appointment to the see of Durham, she expressed high displeasure at finding so many of the clergy married and the cathedrals and colleges so filled with women and children. In consequence she addressed to Archbishop Parker a royal injunction, "that no head or member of any college or cathedral should bring a wife or any other woman into the precincts of it, to abide in the same, on pain of forfeiture of all ecclesiastical promotion," and when the Archbishop ventured to remonstrate with her against the Popish prohibition she replied that she repented having made any married bishops. It was to Parker's own wife that, in a fit of ill-humour, she addressed the ungracious and humiliating remark, when acknowledging the magnificent hospitality with which she had been entertained at the archiepiscopal palace: "Madam, I may not call you; mistress, I am ashamed to call you; and so I know not what to call you; but, howsoever, I thank you."^[21]

Pilkington's wife bore him four children, two sons and two daughters, all of whom were born during his occupancy of the see of Durham. The sons, Joshua and Isaac, both died young, and concerning them there is a curious tradition still current in the neighbourhood of Rivington, though possessing no historical value. On the highest point of Wilders Moor, a bleak mountain ridge within the limits of the old forest of Horwich, and about three-quarters of a mile to the south-east of Rivington Pike, are two rude piles of stone known as the Wilder Lads, or, more commonly, the Two Lads, which, according to popular belief, were erected in memory of two unfortunate youths who were "wilderred" (*i.e.* bewildered) and lost in the snow at this place. Baines says (*Hist. Lanc.*) a tradition prevails in the neighbourhood that the two unfortunate youths lost in the storm, to whose memory these two piles are supposed to be erected, were the sons of Bishop Pilkington, but, he adds, there is no evidence to support this supposition except the coincidence that the bishop had two sons and they both died young. Of the prelate's two daughters, Ruth became the wife of — Dantze or Dautesy, of Bucks, a representative probably of the family of that name of West Lavington, in Wiltshire, and Agecroft, in the parish of Prestwich, in Lancashire, and Deborah, baptised at Auckland, October 8th, 1564, who, at the time of her father's decease, was said to be engaged to Sir Thomas Gargrave, Knight, but who married Sir Henry Harrington, of Exton, son of Sir John Harrington by his wife Lucy, daughter of Sir William Sidney, of Penshurst, and had by him a daughter, Anne, who became the wife of Sir Thomas Roper, Knight, who for his military exploits was ennobled by the titles of Baron Bantry and Viscount Baltinglass, and was mother of, with other children, Mary, who became the wife of the wise and witty divine, Dr. Thomas Fuller, the church historian and the author of "England's Worthies"—quaint old Fuller—the "dear, fine, silly, old angel," as Charles Lamb delighted to call him.

Of the three Lancashire reformers, the friends in exile during the Marian persecutions, James Pilkington was the first who finished his work. On the 23rd of January, 1575-6, "the good old Bishop of Durham, a grave and truly reverend man, of great learning and piety, and such frugality of life as well became a modest Christian prelate," entered into his rest. He died at Bishop Auckland, and was buried there in accordance with his expressed desire with "as few Popish ceremonies as may be, or vain cost," but his remains were subsequently transferred to his cathedral at Durham, where a sumptuous monument, bearing a long Latin inscription, was erected to his memory. His "frugality of life"—for the pomp and estate usually observed by the prelates of Durham, prince-bishops of the palatinate see, were not much to his mind—enabled him to accumulate, what in those days was deemed a considerable estate, sufficient to admit of his giving his daughters, when they married, portions equal in amount (£4,000 each, it is said) to those possessed by the Princesses Frances, Duchess of Suffolk, and Eleanor, Duchess of Cumberland, nieces of Henry the Eighth, a circumstance which so greatly excited the jealousy of Queen Elizabeth, who "scorned that a bishop's daughter should equal a princess," that she afterwards took £1,000 a year from the see and gave it to the town of Berwick for garrison expenses. Possibly the Queen had not forgotten the courageous manner in which the sturdy Lancashire prelate had asserted the right of the Church to retain her ancient patrimony and the fearlessness with which he had resisted her unconstitutional exercise of the Royal prerogative.

Pilkington's will was proved on the 18th of December, 1576, by his widow and executrix, whom he therein names as "Alice Kingsmill, my now known wife," an expression that tends to confirm the belief that his marriage was, for some time at least, kept secret, though it must have been openly avowed at the time, or shortly after his elevation to the see of Durham, for in his *Confutation of an Addition*, printed in 1561, the year of his preferment, in his argument against the prevailing prejudice with respect to the marriage of ecclesiastics, he says, "I am sure that many will judge that I speak this to please my wife," an evidence that his own marriage was then generally known.

Though some of his contemporaries might be indolent in the discharge of their episcopal duties, Pilkington himself was a worthy son of the Church, and performed the functions of his office with all diligence and fidelity. "A bishop," he wrote, "is a name of office, labour, and pains, rather than of dignity, ease, wealth, or idleness. The word *episcopus* is Greek, and signifies a scout-watch, an overlooker, or spy; because he should ever be watching and warning that the devil our enemy do not enter to spoil or destroy." Though he had, while at Geneva, imbibed the principles of Puritanism, he duly conformed to the practices of the Church, from his respect to constituted authority, but all through his episcopate he manifested a strong disposition to deal tenderly with his nonconforming brethren. He was a prolific writer as well as an able and energetic administrator, and his literary productions, which are, for the most part, of a controversial character, are marked by much colloquial force, and a terseness and vigour of language that is strongly indicative of the Lancashire mind. His collected works were reprinted in 1842 by the Parker Society,^[22] and include his "Sermon on Bucer and Phagius, 1560;" "Exposition upon the Prophet Haggai, 1560-1562;" "Exposition upon the Prophet Obadiah, 1562;" "The Burning of St. Paul's Church;" "Confutation of an Addition, 1563;" "Answers to Popish Questions, 1563;" "Letter to the Earl of Leicester on behalf of the Refusers of the Habits, 1564;" "*De Prædestinatione, tractatus Jacobi Pilkington dum erat studens Cantabrigiæ; Epistola ad Andriam Kingsmill*, 1564;" and "Exposition upon certain Chapters of Nehemiah," the last-named work having been published after his death by his friend Foxe, the Martyrologist, in 1585.

In one respect Pilkington may be said to have been in advance of his age. Brought up in a county where the practice of astrology and alchemy extensively prevailed, where the belief in supernatural powers was cherished and preserved long after an improved education had driven it from more civilised communities, and where witchcraft could boast its greatest number of votaries; living at a time, too, when a conjuror was reckoned a necessary official in the household of an Earl of Derby, when bishops gave authority and a form of licensing to their clergy to cast out devils, when Jewell, in a sermon preached before the Queen, could lament "the marvellous increase of witches," and when Elizabeth herself was consulting the English Faust, Dr. Dee, the future Warden of Manchester, as to the most lucky day for her coronation, it is pleasant to find the old Lancashire divine, with all the vigour of his robust intellect, exposing the generally prevailing delusions, and protesting against the casting of horoscopes and the belief in lucky and unlucky days. "What can we say for ourselves," he remarks, "but that we put great superstition in days, when we put openly in calendars and almanacks, and say, These days be unfortunate, and great matters are not to be taken in hand these days, as though we were of God's privy council? But why are they unfortunate? Is God asleep on those days? or doth He not rule the world and all things those days as well as on other days? Is He weary, that He must rest Him in those days? Or doth He give the ruling of those days to some evil spirit or planet? If God gave to stars such power that things cannot prosper on those days, then God is the author of evil. If stars do rule men those days, then man is their servant. But God made man to rule, and not to be ruled; and all creatures should serve him."

Though himself of ancient and honourable lineage, Pilkington had little respect for the "pride of ancestry" or reverence for mere "gentle" descent, as will be seen by the following passage in his writings:—

And to rejoice in ancient blood, what can be more vain? Do we not all come of Adam, our earthly father? And say we not all, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed, &c.?" How can we crack then of our ancient stock, seeing we came all both of one

earthly and heavenly Father? If ye mark the common saying, how gentle blood came up, ye shall see how true it is:—

When Adam delved, and Eve span,
Who was then a gentleman?
Up start the carle, and gathered good,
And thereof came the gentle blood.

And although no nation has anything to rejoice in of themselves, yet England has less than any other. We glory much to be called Britons; but if we consider what a vagabond Brutus was, and what a company he brought with him, there is small cause of glory. For the Saxons, of whom we came also, there is less cause to crack. So that of Brutus we may well be called brutes for our brutish conditions, and of the Saxons *saxi*, that is, stout and hard-hearted; but if we go up to Cain, Japhet, and such other fathers of us gentiles, we may be ashamed of our ancestors, for of all these we came, that knew no God.

All this is doubtless true, but the converse equally holds good, for however we may affect to despise hereditary rank there can be no doubt that the personal virtues as well as the heroic deeds of ancestors who have signalised themselves in tournament, or on the tented field, tends to inspire a feeling of emulation in the breast of their descendants, and even Pilkington himself was not unmindful of the outward marks of honour, gentility, and family distinction. The great legal luminary, Lord Chief Justice Coke, affirmed that every gentleman must be "*arma gerens*," and that the best test of gentle blood was the bearing of arms; so we find Pilkington, on his preferment to Durham, showing his regard for hereditary distinctions, as well as his respect for the noble science, by establishing his claim to bear arms, and obtaining from Sir Gilbert Dethick, Garter King, an honourable augmentation—*quibus ex antiquo tempore ulebatu*. The grant, which bears date February 10, 1561, sets forth that the *Reverendus in Christe pater D. Jacobus Pilkenten Theologiæ baccalaureus Dunelmensis Episcopus est ex nobili et antiquâ familiâ ortus gerens arma vel insignia*; the hereditary coat—*argent*, a cross patonce, voided *gules*—having the addition of a chief *vert*, thereon three suns *or*; and examples of this coat may still be seen in the restored picture in Rivington Church, one impaling the arms of the see of Durham and the other those of Kingsmill, the bishop's wife—*argent*, semée of cross-crosslets fitchée *sable*, a chevron *ermine*, between three mill-rinds of the second; a chief *ermine*.

Of the monument erected to Pilkington's memory in Durham Cathedral scarce a fragment remains, but one of a more enduring character survives to perpetuate his name—the free Grammar School which he founded in his native village, and endowed with lands and rents, situate in the county of Durham, for the "bringing up, teaching, and instructing children and youth in grammar and other good learning, to continue for ever;" the school to be open, as the Queen's patent expressed it, to "all our faithful and liege people, whosoever they bee." The statutes for the government of the school contained many curious directions. The management was vested in six governors, who were "to choose one of the wisest and discreetest among themselves to be spokesman (*i.e.*, president) for the year." The voters had to take an oath before the election, the governors and spokesman at election. The regulations respecting the election of voters and those entitled to vote were carefully laid down, and the oath to be taken by the voters as well as that to be made by the governor-elect is prescribed. The duties of the governors, of the scholars, and of the masters and ushers are also defined, those regulating the conduct of the scholars in regard to their apparel, their pastimes, and their manners at meals being curiously minute, and throwing much light on the school-life of a grammar-school boy, as well as on the habits of the poorer classes of the time. The devotional exercises for early morning, as well as the prayers for midday and evening, and the grace before and after meat are set forth. "After that they have prayed in the morning they shall dress their beds, comb their head, wash their hands, and see their apparel be cleanly; their hose shall not hang about their heels, nor out of their shoes, nor their shoes be torn; for though their apparel need not be costly, yet it is a shame to wear it slovenly; their coats and hosen shall not be costly furnished, cut, graded, nor jagged; no nor torn, slovenly worn, nor ragged; nor caps with feathers or aglets. No kind of staff-dagger nor weapon shall they wear, except a penknife, nor go to the fencing school, but their chief pastime shall be shooting, and that in honest company and small game, or none for money. At meat they shall not be full of talk, but rather hear what their elders and betters say; if they be asked a question they shall reverently take off their cap and answer with as few words as may be; and they shall not eat greedily nor lye on the table slovenly." No doubt these precepts were necessary in an age when there was little disposition to value manners above morals, or to regard pleasantness as better than honesty; and when, if one may judge from the "Bokes of Nurture" and "Curtasy" then in vogue, the hopes-of-England even in the higher ranks were but dirty, ill-mannered, awkward young gawks. It was strictly enjoined that neither the schoolmaster nor usher should serve as curate of the church; the holidays were specified, and the modes of correction particularised. As the school was not intended for rudimentary instruction, none were to be admitted who could not read "except in great need," when the usher should teach it; but "in learning to read much time was not to be spent, for the continual exercise of learning other things should make it perfect." The children were to be taught English grammar, and the usher was to teach them the Latin of every noun and verb, "that by this means he and others that hear may learn what everything is called in Latin, and so be more ready to understand every word what it signifieth in English when they come to construction. As first to begin with Latin words for every part of a man and his apparel; of a house and household stuff, as bedding, kitchen,

buttery meats, beasts, herbs, flowers, birds, fishes, with all parts of them; virtues, vices, merchandise, and all occupations, as weavers, tanners, carpenters, ploughers, wheelwrights, tailors, tilers, and shoemakers; and cause them to write every word that belongs to one thing, together in order."

Some interesting particulars respecting the state of Pilkington's school a century after his death are given in a return made to Mr. Christopher Wase, one of the Superior Bedells in Oxford University, who, in the latter half of the seventeenth century had conceived the idea of publishing an account of the whole of the grammar schools in England, with a view of showing whether those foundations were being rightly used or not. The work was never published, but the returns obtained are included in the MS. collection of Mr. Wase, now preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. For the following transcript of that relating to Rivington we are indebted to the industrious research of Mr. J. P. Earwaker, F.S.A. There is no date appended to the return, but it was presumably written in 1673-4:—

RIVINGTON FREE SCHOOLE.

Sir,—I received a paper from your office purportinge a designe of a gentleman in Oxon to report the state of the present English ffree schoolis, which paper desires my Answer to and Resolution of Sundry Queries touchinge the free Gramar School of Rivington, which accordinge to desire is done and herewith sent to your office, which you may please to take and represent as followeth.

Imprimis.—The fabrick of the free Gramar School of Rivington in the parish of Bolton was built at the charge and by the appointment of the pious and Learned prelate James Pilkington, Bishopp of Duresme, son of Richard Pilkington of Rivington aforesaid Esqr. who also endowed the said school with lands and Tenements of the clear yearly value of 27li. 14s. 10d., part whereof ariseth out of lands lying in Lancashire viz. 2li. 13s. 4d. The remainder ariseth out of lands scituate and lying in the Bishoprick of Durham. Other accession of revenue by benefactors the school hath none, except with improvement the Governors of the said school successively have made, which amounts not to above 6 or 7 li. per annum.

(2). The said schoole at the humble suite of the said reverend and pious prelate made to Queen Elizabeth of happy memory was founded, created, erected and established by her Royal Grant in the nature of Letters patents (bearinge date the 13th of May in the eighth year of her reigne) by the name of the free Gramar School of Queen Elisabeth in Rovington *alias* Rivington, whereby one master or teacher and one usher or under teacher are ordained to continue for ever, and also six governors by the name of the governors of the possessions, revenues, and goods of the free Gramar School of Queen Elizabeth in Rovington *alias* Rivington to bee one body corporate and politick of themselves for ever incorporate and elected by the name of the governors of the possessions, revenues, and goods of the free Gramar School of Queen Elisabeth in Rovington *alias* Rivington in the county of Lancashire.

(3). The names of the Governors expressly assigned chosen nominated and appointed by the foresaid Grant or Letters patents were Thomas Ashawe, Esq., George Pilkington, Esq., Thomas Shaw, Gentleman, Richard Rivington, John Green, and Ralphe Whittle, yeomen. The names of the Governours now in beinge are Thomas Willoughby, gentleman, John Walker, clark, Thurstan Bradley, George Shaw, Richard Brownlow, and Thomas Rivington, yeomen.

(4). Patron of the said school was the good Bishop himself *durante vita*, and after his decease, the Master and Seniors of the Colledge of St. John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge for the time being, as also the Bishops of Durham and Chester all which are instructed and authorised by the said Grant in some Cases and with some Limitacons to chuse nominate and appoint who shall succeed in the Governors school Master and Ushers office h. e. when and so often as the Governors of the said school shall faile in and not execute the power and trust committed to them.

(5). To whom of right it belongs to visit I can not say, but 'tis averred by some intelligent persons that it peculiarly appertains to the jurisdiction of the Dutchy of Lancaster and that it is solely subjected to the inspection of the Honourable Chancellor of the Dutchy. *Sed de hoc quære.*

(6). The school hath not any Exhibition in either of the Universities.

(7). School Masters of the foresaid school I find to have been many, but have not seen or heard of anything printed by any of them, a catalogue of their names you may take as followeth. Mr. Robert Dewhurst, Master of Arts was appointed schoolmaster by the said patron or donor himself. Mr. Hallstead, Mr. Saunders, Mr. Brindle, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Rudall famous, Mr. Bodurda, Mr. Shaw, Mr. Duckworth, Mr. Crook, Mr. ffielden famous, Mr. Breeres, whose successor I was.

(8). Some bookes (and by many tis believed a considerable quantity) were left by the patron or donor to the School. But by one ill means or other how or when is not known they are reduced to a small and inconsiderable number. Neither is there any Library within any Town near adjoining except such as the School near of Bolton can give a

more perfect accompt of them I.

John Bradley from Schoolmaster of
Rivington.

Leave this at the Regesters office in Chester according to desire and direction to be communicated to whom it concernes.

In later years the trustees obtained from Parliament an Act by which they were enabled to exchange the lands and tenements in Durham for property in the more immediate neighbourhood of the school, and the revenues having largely increased the Charity Commissioners have lately propounded a scheme for the better regulation of the foundation, under the provisions of which the old school has been rebuilt, and is now used for the purposes of an elementary school, and a new grammar school has been erected on the confines of the township.

Such is the story of the school that good Bishop Pilkington launched three centuries ago, and which, through many changes and vicissitudes, has floated down the stream of time to our own day and generation. Well does the generous-hearted founder deserve the niche which Fuller has accorded to him in his gallery of "The Worthies of England." If he gathered wealth he did not forget the Divine injunction, "to do good and to distribute;" he did his best according to his lights to make his surplus wealth available for the benefit of the community to which he belonged. Though "pillared bust" or "storied urn" may no longer mark his resting place, he has himself left a more enduring monument, for

The glory of one fair and virtuous action
Is above all the 'scutcheons on our tomb,
Or silken banners over us.

His name will ever be held in honoured remembrance by Lancashire men, who will be ready to say, as Fuller said of another "Lancashire worthy"—Humphrey Chetham—"God send us more such men."



CHAPTER IV.

HANDFORTH HALL—THE BRERETONS—SIR WILLIAM BRERETON.

THE stranger who perchance for the first time finds himself a worshipper within the ancient church of Cheadle, in Cheshire, may haply have his mind diverted from his devotions by the sight of a curiously-wrought oaken screen which separates an old chantry chapel, at the east end of the aisle, on the south side, from the remaining portions of the church. It is an interesting relic of bygone days, black with age, and carved with many a quaint device, and, withal, of such excellent design and workmanship as to prove that our forefathers were by no means deficient in the higher graces of architecture; the cornice is battered and broken in places, but upon it you may still trace a running figure representing the stem and foliage of the briar, with the figure of a cask or tun, and the letters V and B frequently repeated. In the east window are some fragments of heraldic glass commemorating one of the heroes of Flodden Field, and within the enclosure, placed side by side, is a group of altar tombs of more than passing interest; upon them are the recumbent figures of knights armed cap-à-pie, each with his hands uplifted and conjoined upon his breast as if in supplication. Two of them are of alabaster and of ancient date; whatever there may have been of armorial insignia among their decorations has long since disappeared, but a collar of SS round the neck of each denotes the rank of Esquire of the Body of the Sovereign, and the character of the armour in which they are encased shows that they must have played their parts in the time of that long and bloody struggle between the adherents of the rival Roses which terminated on the Field of Bosworth when the sun of the Plantagenets went down and the flower of English chivalry was destroyed.

Those days of ruin
When York and Lancaster drew forth the battles,
When, like a matron butchered by her sons,
And cast beside some common way, a spectacle
Of horror and affright to passers by,
Our groaning country bled at every pore.

The third of these sepulchral memorials, the only one that bears an inscription, is of stone, and perpetuates the name of the last scion of an illustrious house. The verger, if encouraged, will recount, with delight, the valorous deeds of—

The ancient knights whose sculptured glories

and tell you that the grim warriors graven in stone represent some of the earlier lords of Handforth, one of the manors within the parish; that this old chantry was their burial place; and that the letters with the briar and the tun that have attracted your attention are the initials and the punning rebus of Sir Urian Brereton, who, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, of pious memory, acquired the Handforth estate by his marriage with the heiress of that name; "buylded" or rather rebuilt the "haulle" there, and erected the curious piece of carpentry in Cheadle Church for the greater sanctity of the place where repose the remains of his wife's progenitors. Within that little enclosure the gathered ashes of long centuries rest; there many a warlike Honford and many a valorous Brereton sleep in peace; but tabard and helm, sword and buckler, have disappeared, and scarce a relic remains to remind us of their daring and their prowess, or even to perpetuate their names, for—

Monuments themselves memorials need.

The frail carving on the screen commemorates the first of the Breretons, who resided at Handforth, and the name of the last of them is written upon one of the altar-tombs, but of that Sir William Brereton whose name figures so prominently in Cheshire history, and who played so conspicuous a part in the great struggle between King and Parliament that preceded the Commonwealth, not a single memento has been preserved. The church registers thus record his death:—

1661. Sir William Brereton, Barronet, died at Croyden ye 7th of April.

This, and nothing more. He died at the Archiepiscopal Palace, which had been granted to him by the Parliament after the execution of Laud, and where he resided during the Protectorate, and his body was sent down into Cheshire for interment in the sanctuary that canopies the bones of so many of his ancestors. Did he find a resting-place there? Old gossips shake their heads mysteriously when you inquire, and relate the strange legend that has shaped itself in the popular mind, and which, through the medium of oral tradition, has floated down through the long avenues of time—how that fate, which had permitted the stern Republican to see the King "enjoy his own again," willed that his body should not, after death, find a resting-place in the church which, in life, he had despoiled; that when those who accompanied the body from London were approaching the village of Cheadle a fearful storm arose in the night; trees were blown down, houses were unroofed, the rain descended in torrents, and the rivers were flooded, so much so that when they came to ford one of them the coffin, with its lifeless occupant, was swept away by the surging current, and never seen again. Such is the legend that has been handed down through successive generations, but which, in this unromantic age, is fast fading from the memory of the inhabitants. For its trustworthiness we fear we can ascribe no higher authority than—

Tradition's dubious light,
That hovers 'twixt the day and night,
Dazzling, alternately, and dim—

It belongs, we suspect, to that native spirit of romance that gilds to its own satisfaction, and without which the world with all its natural delights would be but a dull reality. Certain it is, that there has not been preserved a single memento of Cheshire's greatest Puritan soldier—the captor of her Cathedral City, and the despoiler of the stronghold of Beeston.

Any particular description of these tombs, or of the individuals whose dust they enshrine, we will defer until after our visit to the ancient and somewhat dilapidated mansion in which their occupants lived and had their being.

From Cheadle the old Hall is distant a good three miles, but from the railway station at Handforth it is only a few minutes' walk. It was a cold December morning when we started upon our quest; the sunshine and the warmth of summer had passed away, winter was upon us, and the year was fast hastening to its close. There was a stillness in the atmosphere and a dull leaden light in the sky that betokened a fall; the meadows far and near were covered with a thin coating of crisp white snow that gathered in heaps about the twisted roots of the trees, and through the haze we could see the umbraged heights of Alderley Edge looming spectral-like, while the hills, forming the eastern boundary of the county, were thickly covered with a fleecy mantle of Nature's weaving; the little pools and runnels by the wayside were congealed, the ice-gems decked the branches of the trees, making them look like so many fairy fountains, and the hoarfrost glittered on every plant and shrub. There were not many signs of human life about; some sheep were vainly endeavouring to find pasturage, and a few stirks stood gazing vacantly in the meadow, their breath visible in the frosty air. As we strode along the sound of our steps reverberated from the hard and frost-bound road, the crisp brown autumn leaves crackled beneath our feet, and the keen air drove the blood from the surface of the skin and sent it back into the heart like freezing water.

Handforth, or Handforth-cum-Bosden, as it is officially called—the manor of Handforth with that of Bosden forming a joint township in the parish of Cheadle—is still only an inconsiderable village, though in its outward aspect it has changed materially since the time when, in 1534-5, Sir William Brereton, then a young man of thirty or thereabouts, recorded his adventures in other lands and made favourable comparisons between his native place and those he visited. Thus,

complaining of the scanty provision he had to put up with after a forty miles' ride in Ayrshire, he says: "The entertainment we accepted, in a poorer house than any upon Handforth Green, was Tharck-cake (*i.e.*, oatcakes), two eggs, and some dried fish buttered;"^[23] in Ireland he fared no better, for at Carrick, he says, "Here, in this town, is the poorest tavern I ever saw; a little, low, thatched Irish house, not to be compared unto Jane Kelsall's, of the Green, at Handforth."^[24] Of poor Jane Kelsall and her humble hostelry, in which, possibly, the lord of Handford, before he went a "colonelling," may have occasionally enjoyed his cup of sack, not even a memory has been preserved, and the village green is now only so called by courtesy, for the railway traverses a part, and what remains has been enclosed, though the name lingers in a meadow which is still known as the "Green" field.

From the railway station a pleasant rural lane that crosses the line descends into a little valley, at the bottom of which a tiny rindie hurries on to add its tributary waters to the river Dean; crossing this the road ascends and presently brings us in front of the old mansion, a quaint half-timbered structure with black beams and a diaper-like pattern traced in places upon the white ground of intervening plaster, and built after the fashion of so many of the Cheshire houses with projecting gables and overhanging chambers. Approaching more nearly we note that much of the old timber work has been removed and replaced with brick painted in imitation of the original oaken framework to deceive the eye of the casual observer; the old mullioned windows, too, have disappeared, and their place has been supplied with others of later date, though of a considerable age, as evidenced by the small latticed panes. Ormerod says the building was originally quadrangular in plan; though there is nothing to indicate that such was the case there can be no doubt it has been shorn of its former proud and graceful proportions; its palmy state belongs to other days, but there is, nevertheless, much left to show what it has been, with the added interest that the halo of antiquity and romance throws around it. The portion that remains has for many years been used as a farmhouse, and the occupants, as may be supposed, have attached but small import to the interest it derives from old associations—alterations have been made to adapt it to its present purposes, and repairs that have been effected have not always been done in the most judicious manner or in the best taste. It is an oblong structure with two gables projecting from the principal front, one of them forming the porch or main entrance, and this constitutes one of the principal features of the exterior. The sideposts and the lintel of the wide open doorway are elaborately carved, and on the transverse beam above is the following inscription in old English characters:—

This haulle was buylded in the yeare of oure Lord God mccccclxii by Uryan Brereton
Knight whom maryed Margaret daughter and heyre of Wyllyam handforth of
Handforthe Esquyer and had Issue vi sonnes and ii daughters.

The inner mouldings of the sideposts are enriched with the running figure of the stem and foliage of the briar, similar to that carved on the screen in Cheadle Church, and the same ornament is continued along the under side of the lintel, with the addition of a tun in the centre, and the initials V and B placed one at each angle. The outer face of each sidepost had an arabesque ornament carved in low relief, the one on the left terminating in a shield of arms now so much worn by exposure to the weather as to be scarcely decipherable, though in its perfect state it represented the coat of Brereton impaling Honford or Handforth—the sinister half, quarterly, first and fourth, *argent* two bars *sable*, on the upper bar a crescent of the first, between the bars a cross fleury *gules*, charged with five bezants for Brereton; second and third, *argent* a chevron between three crescents *gules* for Ipstones. On the dexter half, quarterly, first and fourth, *sable* an estoile *argent* for Honford; second and third *gules*, a scythe *argent* for Praers. On the sidepost on the right of the doorway the carved ornamentation terminates in the Brereton crest—a bear's head erased ppr., muzzled *or*, on the neck a cross patée for difference.

The interior in its general arrangement has in the course of years undergone considerable change, alterations having been made from time to time as the requirements or convenience of successive occupants have dictated; but, notwithstanding the altered purposes to which many of the apartments are now applied, it still exhibits a good deal of its ancient character, and happily the oaken panelling and other carvings that remain have escaped alike the common infliction of whitewash and the sacrilegious touch of the painter's brush. The most remarkable feature is the wide and handsome oak staircase that is no doubt coeval with the erection of the building. It is in a perfect state, and furnishes a more than usually good example of the carpentry of the Elizabethan period; the balusters of the same material are flat, the upper portion being enriched with a series of small enarchments and other decorations, with the addition of a broad heavy handrail, bright with the rubbings of successive generations. This staircase communicates with a landing on the upper storey, admission to which is gained by a large panelled folding-door, black with age and ornamented with fleurs-de-lis, &c.

On the slope below the hall the searching eye may still discover traces of the old plesaunce with the fish-ponds and terraces that existed when it was in truth a pleasure ground, when the parterres were garnished with thick borders of yew and thyme and bushes of sweet-smelling briar, and the dainty masses of greenness were bespangled with flowers of every hue, for our forefathers knew the true uses of a garden as well as of a house, and were not restricted by the ideas that guide their successors in the present day.

The hand of improvement, like the "Spectral bunch of digits," in the fairy tale, is fast plucking our ancient monuments from the soil. Handforth remains, but its palmy days have long since passed away, never to return; but even in its present abject state, whether considered as a relic of

antiquity or as associated with some of the most important events in the history of the county and the country, it will, while it exists, have strong claims upon attention and call up imaginative fancies as to the fate of those who lived and died within it, for how many a volume of happy or mournful history—of deep affection and patient endurance—of daring deeds and heroic actions—may we not read as we tread its dismantled apartments and gaze upon its venerable walls, for—

Here the warrior dwelt,
And in this mansion, children of his own,
Or kindred, gathered round him. As a tree
That falls and disappears, the house is gone;
And, through our improvidence or want of love
For ancient worth and honourable things,
The spear and shield are vanished, which the knight
Hung in his castle hall.

The manor of Handforth was owned for many generations by a family who derived their patronymic from their estate. It is not known with certainty when or how they acquired possession, but the name occurs in the local records as early as the reign of Henry III., at which time (circa 1233-6) Robert de Stokeport granted to Henry de Honford the ville or town of Bosden, forming part of the lands of his barony of Stockport. A descendant of this Henry, Roger de Honford, accompanied Edward the Black Prince in his expedition against the King of France, and, as we learn from an entry on the Cheshire Recognisance Rolls preserved in the Record Office, he was rewarded by the Prince, who was also Earl of Chester, for his "services in Gascony, and particularly at the battle of Poitiers." Those were days in which—

Each sturt Bowman, dauntless, ready, true,
Scoured through the glades and twanged his bow of yew.

The men of Cheshire were noted for their skill in archery. They looked upon the earls of their palatinate as their titular sovereigns, and fighting under their banner gained much renown in the wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and nowhere did they display greater bravery or win more renown for England than on the morning of that memorable Monday in September, 1356—ten years after the fight at Crecy—when the Black Prince, with his small force of 8,000, found himself surprised by the King of France, with an army of 60,000 men. The result we know; rather than beat a dishonourable retreat or yield to superior numbers, the Prince accepted battle, and, ere midday was reached, the red Oriflamme, with its golden lilies, was laid in the dust; the mighty host of France was completely routed, those who escaped with life flying from the fields of Beauvoir and Maupertuis to the very gates of the city of Poitiers; and the French King himself, with his youthful son, Prince Philip, were prisoners in the English camp. In a locality full of the recollections of the glory of France; where Clovis defeated Alaric, King of the Goths, and established the faith of the creed of St. Athanasius—where Charles Martel drove back the host of invading Saracens and saved Europe from Mahometanism—England added to her laurels her proudest and most brilliant victory—Poitiers. In that death struggle the flower of Cheshire chivalry were engaged, and the Cheshire bowmen bore themselves bravely and well. Roger de Honford shared in the glories, and greatly distinguished himself on that memorable day; and it was well for him, perhaps, that he had the opportunity of atoning by his bravery for certain offences that he would seem to have been previously guilty of, for it is recorded on the Recognisance Roll that on the 25th May in the following year (1357) a warrant was granted by Edward the Black Prince for a pardon to him and one William de Neuton or Newton, of all felonies, &c., committed by them in the county of Chester, except the death of the Prince's ministers and of Bertram de Norden and Richard de Bechton.

Mr. Earwaker, in his "History of East Cheshire," tells us that another member of the family, Geoffrey, son of John de Honford, met with his death in 1360 by foul means. In what way is not stated, but in all probability it was in one of the forays that in those days were of such frequent occurrence between the owners of neighbouring lands, when in the case of a feud one or other of the disputants, impatient of the dilatory and uncertain processes of the law, would be tempted to adopt the simpler and less tardy method of taking the adjustment of his differences into his own hands and making a raid upon his adversary's possessions, for on the 23rd November, 35 and 36 Edward III. (1363), Edward Prince of Wales, Earl of Chester, granted a pardon to John de Hyde, Knight, apparently the head of the house of Norbury and Hyde; William, son of John de Hyde; John, son of William de Hyde; and Hugh Frensshye, servant of Sir John de Hyde, for the death of Geoffrey, son of John de Honford, on the payment of 200 marks (£133 6s. 8d.). The name of the servant implicated, Frensshye, suggests the idea that he may have been brought over, possibly as a captive, from France by some representative of the house of Hyde.

Geoffrey de Honford left an only daughter, Katharine, his heir, then under age, and as appears by an enrolment of January 13, 1360-1, Robert de Legh, the younger, had a grant of the custody of the lands, together with the wardship and marriage of the said Katharine.

Subsequently to this time the name is of frequent occurrence in the public records, but the actual relationship of the persons mentioned has not been ascertained, and it is not until near the close of the century that we meet with anything like a continuous record. In 1393 an inquisition was taken after the death of John, the son of Henry de Honford, who had by his wife, Margaret, the daughter and co-heir of William de Praers, who predeceased him, an elder son, John, who succeeded as heir; and in addition a son, William de Honford, who attained to considerable note

in the county. In 1402 he was appointed with Robert de Newton, of Longdendale, and others, collector of a subsidy in the Hundred of Macclesfield granted to the King. There appears to have been some irregularity respecting the descent of the land which he inherited from his mother, Margaret, one of William de Praers's co-heiresses, for, in 1407, Henry Prince of Wales granted him a lease of the lands and tenements in Wylaston, near Alvendeston, belonging to Alexander de Venables and his wife, and which were then in the Prince's hands by reason of their having been alienated to William de Praers without licence being first obtained. He married Isabel, the widow of her kinsman, Robert de Legh, of Adlington, who had died of the pestilence at Harfleur, just before the battle of Agincourt was fought, in 1415, and having, in 1420, acquired lands in Chorley, in Wilmslow parish, he founded the line of the Honfords, of Chorley Hall.

In 1397 John de Honford, who, four years previously, had succeeded as heir to the paternal estate of Handforth, had a grant from the Crown of an annuity of 100s., the King having retained him in his service for life. He did not, however, long enjoy it, his death occurring in 1400, when John de Honford, his son, then only nine years of age, succeeded as heir.

This John, on attaining to manhood, well sustained the martial fame of his progenitors, and served with distinction in the French wars in the reigns of Henry V. and VI. In 1424 he took part in the famous battle of Verneuil (August 17), when the Regent, the Duke of Bedford, utterly routed the French army in an engagement that is described on the rolls of Parliament as "the greatest deed done by Englishmen in our days, save the battle of Agincourt," and it is not unlikely that it was here he won his spurs; so conspicuous was he in the battle that in acknowledgment of his bravery a pension of £100 Tournois was granted him for life out of the forfeited possessions of John Tancrope, as fully set forth in an ancient document preserved among the Adlington MSS. in the Chetham Library. The victory at Verneuil was followed by a reverse in 1427. For some time the war was carried on without any decided success on either side, but in the year just named the forces of the Duke of Bedford sustained a severe defeat, which compelled them to raise the siege of Montargis, and it is more than probable that Sir John de Honford, who had participated in the glories of the previous victory, shared in the mortification of that disaster, for his name occurs on the Cheshire Rolls in that year as being "about to depart for France."

From that time misfortune followed upon misfortune. A simple country girl—Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans—had been wonderfully raised up to serve her country's need; victory followed wherever she led, and after several actions the English, in 1429, were compelled to raise the siege of Orleans. No story of ancient heroism reads more like a romance. The English never recovered the blow struck by the maid for the freedom of her country. Their hold upon the soil of France gradually relaxed, and one by one the territories which had been won by the sword were surrendered. The Duke of Bedford gathered a vast force for the prosecution of the war; Sir John de Honford was in his retinue, and in a contemporary document his name occurs as holding, in 1434, the important post of Keeper of the Bridge over the Seine at Rouen for the Regent Bedford, with one horseman, three lance soldiers on foot, and twenty bowmen. ("*Pons de Rone super aquam de Sayne: Johannes Hanneford, chevalier locum tenens domini regentis (cum) i lanceam equestrem iij lanceas pedesires et xx archers.*") Those were evil times for England; Harfleur, the first trophy of Henry V., had been recaptured in 1432, and in 1435 the peace of Arras was concluded between Charles VII. and the Duke of Burgundy, the news of which caused the young King Henry to weep. At this important crisis in her history England sustained an irreparable loss by the death of the Duke of Bedford, who expired at Rouen September 14, 1435, at the very time the negotiations for the peace were being concluded.

Sir John de Honford must have quitted his post at Rouen, for before the close of the year he with other influential knights and gentry of the shire were summoned to the King's council at Chester for the purpose of granting a subsidy to enable him to carry on the war. Whether he returned to Normandy with the reinforcements or took part in the engagements in which Harfleur was retaken, and the brave Lord Talbot won such renown, is not clear, but his martial spirit could not find happiness in repose, and in 1441 (October 26) we find him entering into an engagement with Humphrey Earl (afterwards Duke) of Buckingham, then owner of the fortified stronghold of Macclesfield, to serve him in a military capacity for the remainder of his life in consideration of an annual fee of £10 chargeable on the manor of Thornbury, in Gloucestershire.

There was no standing army in England then; fighting was done by contract, and such agreements were therefore not of uncommon occurrence. Upon emergencies forces were raised by the King's letters under the Privy Seal; lords, knights, and esquires quickly responded to the summons of the sovereign, and an army was readily got together if the means of paying the adventurous spirits who comprised it were forthcoming. But it must not be supposed that the fighting Englishmen of those days were taken from the plough without any previous military training. The casque and the morion were hung up in the cottage of the serf as well as in the castle of the feudatory chief, and the good yew bow was suspended in the halls of the knights and esquires for the use of their servants and retainers, in accordance with the statute (II Henry IV.) to shoot at the butts on every Sunday and high festival, the municipal authorities at the same time being required to see that the youths in their respective districts were taught to send the "light flight-arrow" to the legal distance of 220 yards, so that when they had grown to lusty manhood they might perform the same feat with the heavy war-arrow. Hence, in those days there were to be found Locksleys in every village to whom the long range offered no difficulty when the King's letter came, whether direct or through the chief landowner to his subinfeudatory tenants and partisans.

Three years after Sir John Honford had entered into the agreement with the Earl of Buckingham

he was appointed one of the Justices in Eyre for the three Hundreds of Cheshire, and in 1449 he is again found on active service in Normandy—this time with the army commanded by the Duke of Somerset. The truce agreed to in 1444 had been broken, complications had arisen, the town of Fougiers in Brittany had been seized, and in the month of April Sir John ("Messire Jehan Hanneford, chevalier," as he is styled) was specially commissioned to return to England and report to the King the outrages that had been committed. It was the beginning of the end. One by one the provinces which had been won had been surrendered, and even those which Henry had inherited were given up. In July the French King invaded Normandy, Somerset had to submit to the capitulation of Rouen. Cherbourg was the last town to yield, it surrendered August 12, 1450, and thus in one campaign, almost without a struggle, England lost the large and fertile province of Normandy, containing more than a hundred fortified towns; Calais was the only possession retained in France, and that Queen Mary lost a century later; yet with a strange infatuation the Kings of England paraded the empty title of Kings of France and bore the golden lilies upon their heraldic shield until the first day of the present century, when by Royal Proclamation they were removed.

Of Sir John Honford's subsequent adventures little or nothing is known, and even the time of his death has not been ascertained with certainty; but it must have been about 1461, for in that year the manor of Honford was conveyed to his son, also named John. Mr. Earwaker says it is possible he died abroad; but this is scarcely likely, for there was then little for an English soldier to do abroad, and much to occupy his attention at home; and we can hardly suppose that such a veteran as Sir John de Honford would let his sword remain in the scabbard when in England the storm-cloud of war had burst, and the rival houses of York and Lancaster were in their death struggle—"the convulsive and bleeding agony of the feudal power." It was the year which ended the inglorious and unhappy reign of the "meek usurper" Henry VI., that in which Edward of York was borne to the throne upon the shoulders of the people—the year of Mortimer's Cross, of the second battle of St. Alban's and of Towton, the crowning victory of the White Rose. Though there is no record of the fact, it is more than probable that his remains were interred in the chantry at Cheadle, and from its appearance and general characteristics it would seem likely that the older of the two alabaster effigies there was placed over them to perpetuate his memory. Though the sword has disappeared, the figure of the old warrior, in its rich suit of ornamented armour, still remains comparatively perfect; the uncovered head resting upon his helmet, a pillow not much softer than that which Henry V. regretted that his faithful follower, Sir Thomas Erpingham, had to repose on, when, on the night before the fight at Agincourt, he exclaimed—

A good soft pillow for that good white head
Were better than a churlish turf of France.

John Honford, who succeeded as heir on the death of his father, had married in 1422 Margery, one of the daughters of Sir Laurence Warren, of Poynton. He died in October, 1473, and was succeeded by his son, also named John, who had to wife Margaret, daughter of Sir John Savage, of Clifton. By this lady, who survived him and married for her second husband Sir Edmund Trafford, of Trafford, he had two sons; John, the eldest, predeceased him, and William, the younger, succeeded as heir. He was under age at the time of his father's death in 1487, and, fortunately for him, the wardship of his lands and the sale of his hand in marriage was given to his grandfather, Sir John Savage, who in turn granted them to his stepfather, Sir Edmund Trafford. Of this member of the family but few records have been preserved. In 1513, in the month of May, he appeared in the amiable character of a peacemaker between Sir John Warburton and Sir William Boothe, two neighbouring knights, who had quarrelled over the rights they respectively claimed to cut turf on Warburton Moss; and William Honford, Sir Thomas Boteler, Sir Richard Bold, and Laurence Marbury drew up a deed by which the matters in dispute were amicably adjusted. It was one of the latest acts of William Honford's life, for ere four months had passed, or the warm golden tints of autumn had deepened upon the landscape, he had met a soldier's fate. On the 9th of September, 1513, the battle of Flodden Field was fought, and when night closed upon the scene the moon looked down upon Sir William's corpse as it lay stiffening on Branksome Moor.

There is, perhaps, no event in the annals of the country that has been the subject of so much exultation on the part of Lancashire and Cheshire men, or that has formed the ground-work of so many traditions and furnished so fruitful a theme for ballad writers as the victory of Flodden Field. Contemporary records are full of the achievements of the heroes of that memorable day, and the valiant deeds of those who bore a part in the fight have oft been celebrated in prose and rhyme.

To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail,
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong;
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
 Of Flodden's fatal field,
When shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
 And broken was her shield.

It was an overthrow which spread sorrow and dismay through Scotland; patriots bewailed it,

poets sang dirges over it, and long was it remembered as one of the greatest calamities that country had sustained.

Henry VIII. was at the time besieging Terouenne, and the Scottish King, thinking it a favourable opportunity for a descent upon England, mustered a large force, crossed the Tweed, and sat down before the castle of Norham, which surrendered in a few days; three other border fortresses fell in quick succession, when the invading host continued its march southwards. The report of this plundering raid fired the ardour of the English people, and roused the men of Lancashire and Cheshire to enthusiasm. The war note which had been sounded met with a ready response; William Honford prepared himself for the field, and he and many of his neighbours summoned their retainers, and, mustering under the banners of their respective leaders, marched to meet King James of Scotland, their force consisting for the most part of archers and billmen, and, as the tablet formerly preserved in the old church of Bolton-le-Sands expressed it—

The bolt shot well, I ween,
From arblast of yew tree green,
Many nobles prostrate lay
On the glorious Flodden day.

On reaching Hornby the Lancashire and Cheshire forces placed themselves under the command of Sir Edward Stanley—

From Lancashire and Cheshire, too,
To Stanley came a noble train
To Hornby, from whence he withdrew
And forward set with all his train.

The two armies met on the 8th September, on the banks of the Till, a branch of the Tweed, that flows by the foot of the Cheviot Hills, and the battle began on the afternoon of the following day, the Scots having descended from their position on the heights of Flodden. The Earl of Surrey, who had been entrusted by the Queen Regent with the command, divided his forces into two parts; the vanguard he confided to his son, the Lord Admiral, and the rear he headed himself. Sir Edmund Howard commanded the right wing, and Sir Edward Stanley the left. The fight began about four o'clock, and the contest was fierce and furious. The first report was that the Cheshire men, overwhelmed by a large body of Scottish spearmen, had wavered and fallen back; and, as ill news always travels apace, this report, it is said, was the first that reached King Henry, then at Terouenne. The battle swayed to and fro for some time until the Scottish ranks were thinned by the murderous discharges of the English archers; their King, James IV., surrounded by a strong body of knights, fought on foot, and seeing the English standard almost, as he thought, within his grasp, marched with steady step to secure it. It was the agony and very turning point of the contest, for at the same moment Sir Edward Stanley, heading the Lancashire and Cheshire bowmen, led the famous charge which Scott has enshrined in imperishable verse—

Victory!
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!
Were the last words of Marmion.

It turned the fortunes of the day. The shock was irresistible, and the Scottish force fell into disorder; 10,000 of the bravest of Scotia's warriors were slain, and her King fell a lifeless corpse almost within a spear's length of the feet of Surrey. Among those who bit the dust that day were the Archbishop of St. Andrews, two bishops, two abbots, twelve earls, thirteen barons, five eldest sons of barons, and fifty other persons of distinction, including the French Ambassador, the King's secretary, and, last and saddest of all, the King himself. "Scarce a family of eminence," says Scott, "but has an ancestor killed at Flodden," as the Scottish minstrel laments:—

Dool and wae for the order, sent our lads to the border!
The English for ance, by guile wan the day;
The flowers of the forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair liling at the ewe milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The flowers of the forest are a' wede awae.

The English loss was also very severe, the number slain being estimated at seven thousand; but the men of rank who fell were not nearly so numerous. Cheshire lost many of her sons, among them William Honford, of Handforth, with his neighbours, Thomas Venables, the Baron of Kinderton; Christopher Savage, the valiant Mayor of Macclesfield; and many substantial burgesses of that town.^[25] As the ancient poem of "Scottish Feilde," believed to have been written by a Cheshire man—a Legh, of Baguley—expresses it—

The Barne (Baron) of Kinderton full kenely,
was killed them beside;
So was Honforde, I you hete,
that was a hynde swyer!^[26]

Fulleswise^[27] full feil,
was fallen to the ground!
Christopher Savadge was downecaste
that kere^[28] might be never!

Another of the heroes of Flodden, more fortunate than William Honford, we shall meet with anon—Sir John Stanley, who afterwards became lord of Handforth Hall.

With the death of William Honford the direct line of the house of Honford terminated, the estates devolving upon his only daughter, Margaret, a child of ten years at the time her father lost his life. His widow, Sibyl, some twelve years later became the second wife of Laurence Warren, of Poynton, Esquire. William Honford's Inquisition, from some cause or other, was not taken until January, 1516; his daughter Margaret, then twelve years of age, was found to be his heir, and in the interval between the victory at Flodden and the taking of the Inquisition she had been married by her feoffees to Sir John Stanley, William Honford's companion in arms.

Sir John Stanley, who was about seven years older than his youthful bride, was an illegitimate son of James Stanley, warden of Manchester, and afterwards Bishop of Ely, a younger son of that Thomas, Lord Stanley, who according to popular tradition, which, by the way, is in this instance a popular error, placed the crown of the vanquished Richard upon the head of the victorious Henry of Richmond on the field of Bosworth.^[29] The mother of Sir John was doubtless the lady to whom Fuller in his quaint fashion refers, when, commenting upon the Bishop's frailty in the infraction of his vow of celibacy, he says that he blamed him not "for passing the summer with his brother (? nephew) the Earl of Derby, in Lancashire, but for living all the winter at Somersham, in Huntingdonshire, with one who was not his sister, and who wanted nothing to make her his wife save marriage."

When the war note had been sounded, and the enthusiasm of the Lancashire men had been roused by the threat of invasion, Bishop Stanley, with ready response, summoned his retainers and dependents, but, unlike the Abbot of Vale Royal, who led his contingent to the field in person, and by his presence gave the sanction of religion to the cause, placed them under the charge of his young son, John Stanley—"that child so young," as Weber calls him in one of his ballads—to whom the writer of the metrical story of the "Scottish Feilde" has incorrectly assigned the place of honour as the real commander in the decisive attack in the battle, instead of his uncle, Sir Edward Stanley, who, as we know, for his bravery, was in the following year created Lord Monteaule.

Sir John Stanley that stowte knight,
That stern was of deedes!
With four thousand fursemen^[30]
That followed him after;
They were tenantes that they tooke,
that tenden on the bishopp.
Of his household, I you hete
hope ye no other,
Every burne had on his breast
browdered with goulde;
A fote of the faireste foule
that ever flowe on winge!
With their crownes full cleare
all of pure goulde!
Yt was a semely sight,
to see them togeder,
Fourtene thousand egill feete,^[31]
feteled in arraye.

That the Bishop of Ely raised so large a contingent as 4,000 may be very much doubted, but, whatever their number, his son, who had the command, displayed such prowess that he was knighted upon the field.

About the time of Sir John Stanley's marriage with the heiress of William Honford, his father, the Bishop of Ely, died. While holding the wardenship of Manchester he had built the spacious chapel on the north side of the Collegiate Church, now the Cathedral, known in the present day as the Derby Chapel; this was completed in the year in which Flodden was fought, and at the time of his death, in 1515, he was employed in erecting a smaller chapel adjoining it, in which his tomb is placed. This chapel Sir John, in accordance with his father's directions, completed, and placed over the door the arms of himself and his wife with a supplicatory inscription, prefaced by his favourite motto, *Vanitas Vanitatum et omnia Vanitas*.

In 1519 he was appointed with Sir Peter Legh, of Lyme, William Swetenham, of Somerford, and John Holynworth, collector of a subsidy within the Hundred of Macclesfield. Four years afterwards he became involved in a dispute with his neighbour, George Legh, of Adlington, respecting the renewal of the lease of the tithes of Prestbury, a grant of which he had contrived to obtain from the Abbot of St. Werburgh, at Chester, the particulars of which are more fully set forth in the account of Adlington Hall and the Leghs.^[32] Sir John, having refused to surrender his lease, was committed to the Fleet at the instance of Cardinal Wolsey, a high-handed procedure

that subsequently formed one of the charges in the articles of impeachment exhibited against that ecclesiastic, and it was not until he had undergone a twelve months' imprisonment that he could be induced to yield.

The ardent soldier who had displayed such valour in the field at Flodden on attaining maturer years became somewhat of a religious enthusiast, and while yet comparatively a young man, being little more than thirty, retired from the world, and sought the seclusion of the cloister, from, as has been said, "displeasure taken in heart" at the treatment he had received at Wolsey's hands.

In 1527-8 he obtained "letters of fraternity" from the Abbot of Westminster, and in a volume of MS. pedigrees at Tabley, near Knutsford, there is still preserved the original grant under the convent seal of the abbey, dated January 5th, under which John, abbot of that house, grants to Sir John Stanley and dame Margaret, his wife; John Stanley, their heir; and Anne Stanley, their sister; that they shall be prayed for in that monastery, "*in vita pariter et in morte*," and all other places in their order through England, and that their names shall be enrolled on the fraternity's martyrology *post obitum*. Whatever may have been the cause of Sir John's withdrawal from society, certain it is that, having arranged all his worldly affairs, he and his wife, in 1528, prayed for a divorce in order that they might severally devote themselves to a religious life and be quit of the world. The divorce was granted, Sir John and his wife were released from their marriage vows, and put asunder one from the other for ever. He entered the Abbey of Westminster, and assumed the cowl and tonsure of a monk, and it is believed that his death occurred shortly afterwards.

Mr. William Beamont, in his "Notes on the Lancashire Stanleys," thus sums up his character:—"His mind turned towards seriousness if not sadness. He loved the Preacher's motto 'All is vanity,' and where he could he liked to inscribe it openly. This natural tendency was deepened and increased by the stigma of his birth and other circumstances which he could not forget. The stain on his father's life, and his death excommunicated, would not let him, even in the inscription on his grave, where he supplicates for him the prayers of the faithful, call the bishop by the sacred name of father, and in the letters of fraternity all mention of his father's name is avoided. Sir John's mind dwelt too much upon chantries, burial-places, obits, indulgences, and the like. It was his favourite subject, and he crowned this part of his career by retreating from the world and disappearing in the deep shadow of the cloister."

Sir John left an only son, bearing his own baptismal name, who was an infant at the time of his parents' divorce. His father's will provided that he should be placed under the care of the Abbess of Barkyng until he should attain the age of twelve years, when he was to be transferred to the care of the Abbot of Westminster, with whom it was directed he should remain until he was twenty-one, when, and not before, he was to be at liberty to choose himself a wife, with the advice of the Abbot of Westminster and Edmund Trafford, Esq. Of his subsequent career little is known. He attained to manhood, when he married Ellen, daughter of Sir Edward Fitton, of Gawsworth, Knight, but does not appear to have had any issue by her. He was living in 1551, but after that all trace of him is lost, and with him the line terminated.

In the east window of the little chantry chapel in Cheadle Church, to which reference has already been made, there are some remains of heraldic glass, very fragmentary in character, but which still serve to perpetuate the memory of Sir John Stanley and his wife Margaret, the heiress of Handforth. The mantling and the helmet, with a part of the crest, are there; but the shield itself has been much mutilated. Sufficient, however, remains to indicate what the charges have been, and on one side may still be seen a label bearing the words "*Vanitas Vanitatum*," the other side, doubtless, having had at one time a corresponding label inscribed with the remainder of Sir John Stanley's mournful motto—"et Omnia Vanitas." In its pristine state the shield was divided paleways, the dexter half—*or*; three eagles' feet erased *gules*, on a chief indented *azure* three stags' heads caboshed *or* for Stanley of Handforth; the sinister half—quarterly first and fourth, *sable*, an estoile *argent* for Honford, second and third, *gules*, a scythe *argent* for Praers. Crest an eagle's head erased *or*, holding in its mouth an eagle's claw erased *gules*. Only the chief of the Stanley coat and the second and fourth quarters of the sinister pale with a fragment of the crest remain.

Dame Margaret Stanley, the wife of Sir John, who appears to have shared in some degree the religious fervour of her husband, had also evidently intended entering a religious house, but when the divorce was obtained and Sir John had been comfortably settled among the monkish fraternity at Westminster her opinions underwent a change. She was still young, being only about five-and-twenty, and the world, it would seem, had not altogether lost its attractions, for she abandoned the idea of becoming a recluse, and again entered the marriage state, choosing for her second husband a scion of the ancient house of Brereton, a family that boasted an antiquity equal to that of any house in Cheshire, tracing its descent back very nearly to the time when Duke William of Normandy parcelled out the newly-conquered country among his warlike followers. The original Breretons, who derived their patronymic from the manor of that name, if we may judge from the arms they bore, were kinsmen, if not actually direct descendants of Gilbert Venables, the first Norman Baron of Kinderton, and from them descended Sir Urian Brereton, who became the second husband of William Honford's daughter and heiress, and the builder of the present Hall of Handforth.

Sir William Brereton, who was lord of Brereton in the reign of Edward III., had by his second wife, Margaret, daughter of Henry Done, of Utkinton, a younger son, Randolph, who received the

honour of knighthood, and had to wife Alice, daughter and heir of William de Ipstones, through whom he acquired considerable territorial possessions, and became the founder of the line of Brereton of Shocklach and Malpas, in Cheshire. His great-grandson, also a Sir Randle, was Chamberlain of Chester in the reign of Henry VII., and one of the knights of the body to that King. He is mentioned generally as Chamberlain to Henry VII., and he acted in the same capacity to Henry's son and successor, Henry VIII., holding the same office under both sovereigns for the long period of twenty-six years. At the time that William Brereton, of Honford, and his compatriots were engaged in the death struggle at Flodden, King Henry, as previously stated, was with an army at Terouenne; Sir Randle Brereton was with him, and for his distinguished services there and at Tournay he was made a knight banneret. He built the Brereton chancel in Malpas Church in 1522, and carved upon the oaken screen this supplication:—

Pray good people for the prosperous estate of Sir Rondulph Brereton, of thys werke edificatour, wyth his wyfe dame Helenour, and after thys lyfe transytorie to obtegne eternal felicitie. Amen. Amen.

His wife, "Dame Helenour," bore him a family of nine sons and three daughters. Sir Randle, the eldest, continued the Malpas line; Sir Richard founded the line of Brereton of Tatton; Sir William Brereton, the seventh son, succeeded his father as Chamberlain of Chester, and was also made Groom of the Chamber to King Henry VIII., an office that involved him in the ruin that befell the second of that sovereign's wives. He married Elizabeth, widow of Sir John Savage, and the daughter of Charles Somerset, Earl of Worcester; and on the 17th May, 1536, when only twenty-eight years of age, and then recently married, was beheaded along with Lord Rochfort, the Queen's brother; Sir Henry Norris, Groom of the Stole; Francis Weston, a Gentleman of the Bedchamber; and Mark Smeaton, a musician, on the questionable charge of criminal intercourse with Queen Anne Boleyn, the Queen herself submitting to the same unhappy fate on Tower Green two days later; a hideous crime that has found an apologist in a modern historian—Froude—who, in his exuberant admiration of Henry's self-asserting force of character, has sought to prove a "human being sinful whom the world has ruled to be innocent," oblivious of the fact that, while on the one hand there is a total absence of satisfactory proof against Anne, there is undeniable evidence of heartless cruelty, wilfulness, revenge, and shameless lust on the part of her husband. On the morrow of her death the King married Jane Seymour; but getting rid of one wife in order to obtain another was not a solitary act in the life of Henry.

The memory of that cruel wrong long rankled in the mind of the Breretons, and the recollection may not improbably have had its influence on Sir William Brereton, who a century later did so much to accomplish the overthrow of monarchy, and who in this way may be said to have avenged the death of his kinsman, and thus have added one of those retributive parallels of which history furnishes so many instances.

Sir William Brereton, who came to so untimely an end in 1536, had a younger brother, Urian Brereton, who in his earlier life was also one of the Grooms of the Privy Chamber. In 1526 he was appointed Ranger of Delamere Forest, and the same year Escheater of Cheshire, the latter an office he also held in the successive reigns of Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, until his death in 1577. On the voluntary seclusion of Sir John Stanley, Urian Brereton married his divorced wife, Margaret, the daughter of William Honford, and thus became the founder of the line of Brereton of Handforth.

The vindictive feeling which Henry manifested towards Sir William Brereton was not extended to the person of his younger brother, for the King, as if to mark the appeasement of his wrath, not only retained him in his position as Groom of the Privy Chamber, but also conferred other offices of distinction upon him. On the 8th July, 1538, he had a grant for life of the office of Attorney of the King in the counties of Chester and Flint; and on the 1st of August following he had a grant for life in survivorship of the office of Sheriff of the county of Flint on the surrender of the same by his kinsman, John Brereton, on whom it had been bestowed four months previously, and on the 16th of June, 1543, he and Randle Cholmondeley had conferred upon them the appointment for life, in survivorship, of the office of Attorney of the Earl of Chester (the young Prince Edward) in the counties of Chester and Flint. In 1544 he accompanied the Earl of Hertford in the expedition to Scotland to demand the infant Queen Mary, who had been promised in marriage to the King's son, Edward Earl of Chester, and he was present at the burning of Leith, where, in acknowledgment of his valorous deeds, he received the honour of knighthood.

Shortly after the expedition to Scotland Sir Urian Brereton had the misfortune to lose his wife, Dame Margaret, who died at Handforth Hall, though the exact date of her decease has not been ascertained, the registers of Cheadle, where doubtless she was buried, not commencing until 1558. Her manors and lands descended to the son by her first husband, John Stanley, who on the 24th May, 1 Edward VI. (1547) entered into a covenant with Sir Urian Brereton under which the estates were settled between them.

On the 7th of July, 1550, Sir Urian and his relative, Richard Brereton, Esq., had conferred upon them for life, in survivorship, the office of Escheater of the county of Flint, and shortly after he commenced the rebuilding of the Hall of Handforth, completing it in 1562, as the inscription over the door, which has been already given, testifies. He also about the same time erected the handsome carved oak screen in the Brereton chantry at Cheadle church, placing upon it his initials, V. B., and his punning rebus, a briar and a tun.

After the death of Dame Margaret Sir Urian again entered the marriage state, his second wife

being Alice, the third daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, of Trafford, Esq., and the widow of Sir William Leyland, of Morleys Hall, in Astley. His death occurred at Handforth Hall on the 19th of March, 1577, and twelve days later his remains were interred at Cheadle. By his first wife he had, as the inscription over the porch at Handforth records, six sons and two daughters, and by his second wife, who survived him little more than a year, one son and four daughters. His Inquisition was taken at Knutsford on the 28th March, 1580, when Randle Brereton, his eldest son, then of the age of forty, was found to be his heir; he did not, however, long enjoy possession, his death occurring on the 30th December, 1583, when, being unmarried, the estates, in accordance with a deed of settlement of 1575, devolved upon his younger brother, William Brereton, who five years previously, had been united in marriage with Katherine, daughter of Roger Hurleston, of Chester, and who was at the time described as "of the Nunneryes, Chester," a house and lands which the "Defender of the Faith" had taken from the fair nuns of Chester and given to his favourite, Sir Urian Brereton, the founder of the Handforth line. This William served the office of Sheriff of the county in 1590, and died at Handforth on the 5th June, 1601, at the age of fifty-three. He was buried at Cheadle, and Mr. Earwaker gives a copy of his funeral certificate transcribed from the Lansdowne MSS. in the British Museum (879 fo. 18):—

William Brereton of Honford Esquier died the fifth day of June A.D. 1601; he maryed Katherine daughter of Roger Hurlestonne of Chester, gent. and has issue three sonnes and two daughters, viz. Urian first sonne died young, Richard third sonne died young, Jane eldest daughter died young. William Brereton sonne and heire married Margaret daughter of Richard Holland of Denton in the county of Lancaster Esq. Dorothie Brereton only daughter now living.

His widow, Katherine, became the second wife of Sir Randle Mainwaring, of Over Peover, Knight. William Brereton, the second and only surviving son, who succeeded as heir, was only sixteen years of age at the time of his father's death. By this marriage he became allied with a family which had for many generations been resident on their lands at Denton, and who claimed descent from the Hollands of Up-Holland, in Lancashire, a family whose members played an active part in the most picturesque and chivalrous period of English history; who figured among the founders of the Order of the Garter, allied themselves repeatedly with the royal family, attained the highest rank in the peerage, and it may be added, experienced the greatest vicissitudes of fortune; one of them, Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, doubly descended from the Plantagenets and the brother-in-law of King Edward IV., being reduced to such extremities that Philip de Commines, as he relates, saw him "walking barefoot after the Duke of Burgundy's train, and earning his bread by begging from door to door." The Denton Hollands from the time of the Reformation had been noted for their leanings towards Puritanism. Richard Holland, the father of William Brereton's wife, when High Sheriff of Lancashire, received the thanks of Queen Elizabeth for his services in prosecuting Popish recusants and zealously promoting the Protestant religion, and his nephew, Colonel Holland, was one of the earliest to take up arms in the Puritan cause in the great struggle between Charles and his Parliament, and had the command of Manchester when it was besieged by the Royalist forces in 1642.

William Brereton died on the 18th February, 1609-10, and was buried at Cheadle on the 26th of the same month, his widow surviving him only a few days, the Cheadle registers recording her burial there on the 14th April following. He left issue—in addition to two younger sons, Richard and Urian, and a daughter, Margaret—a son, William, then only five years of age, who succeeded as heir, and who in after years was destined to play a conspicuous part in his country's affairs, his military exploits becoming inseparably interwoven with the history of his native county.

It is not known with certainty when the future Parliamentary General first saw the light, but, as he was baptized at the Collegiate Church of Manchester, the probabilities are that he was born at his grandfather's house, Denton Hall, which is situate within the limits of the ancient parish of Manchester. Of the events of his early life but little is known. They were apparently few, simple, and common-place, and there is nothing in the record of them to foreshadow those strong political and religious prejudices which afterwards developed in his mind, or to indicate the possession of that military genius for which he became so distinguished. He succeeded to the family inheritance at a very early age, and being deprived of the guidance of both father and mother was left to the care of his mother's relatives, and doubtless imbibed from them those strong Puritan sentiments which had then become traditional in the Holland family. He came of age in 1625, and on the 10th March, 1626-7, he had a baronetcy conferred upon him by Charles I., who had only recently ascended the throne, though the gathering clouds were even then heralding a political tempest. Whether he had undertaken to perform the conditions on which the distinction was supposed to be conferred—the furnishing of thirty men at 8d. per day for three years for the settlement and defence of Ulster—or had compounded by the payment of a lump sum, to replenish an exhausted exchequer, is not recorded, but we may be well assured that William Brereton was made of sterner stuff than to have bowed in the ante-room of either the coarse and faithless James or his successor, the proud and dignified Charles. In the following year (1628) he was elected as the representative of his native shire in the Parliament which assembled on the 27th March,—a year famous as that in which the name of Oliver Cromwell for the first time appears, and in which, to secure the voting of supplies for the war, Charles assented to the demands of the Petition of Rights, confirming those liberties which were already the birthright of Englishmen. He also represented the county in the Parliament which met on the 13th April, 1640, to be so speedily dissolved, and, again, in that which assembled on the 3rd November in the same year—the most extraordinary and eventful of any in England's history—the Long Parliament.

William Brereton loved worthily, and, when he had attained to man's estate, he married whom he loved—the daughter of Sir George Booth, of Dunham, "free, grave, godly, brave Booth, the flower of Cheshire," as he was described by writers of the day—a "person," as Clarendon says, "of one of the best fortunes and interest in Cheshire, and, for the memory of his grandfather, of absolute power with the Presbyterians," and the "chief corner stone" of their cause in the county. His lot seemed an especially happy one. Boasting an old and honourable lineage, possessed of an ample estate, which had doubtless been increased during his long minority, successful in his marriage, endowed with every domestic enjoyment, and surrounded by the children of his love, of cultivated taste, too, with a mind stored with knowledge which had expanded and ripened under the experience gained in foreign travel, and, withal, possessing a healthy and vigorous frame that enabled him to enjoy all outdoor pursuits, the cultivation of his lands, and the participation in such harmless sports as country gentlemen in his day were wont to indulge, he could only have been induced to leave the privacy of the home life he so much loved by the stern duties of times in which pleasure and self-gratification must unobtrusively yield.

Clarendon speaks of his notorious aversion to the Church. This was undoubtedly true, so far as her form of government was concerned, and was in all likelihood heightened by the circumstances under which he received his early training, as well as by the connections formed in later life. Yet he was a professed member, and in 1641 his name occurs in the parish register of Wanstead, in Surrey, with those of about fifty of the principal inhabitants, as signing a protestation expressive of their attachment to the Church of England and their abhorrence of Popish innovations. He was of a sober, serious turn, and imbued with strong religious feelings, but his attachment to the Church could neither have been very strong nor very exclusive; he was fond of "spicy" sermons, and seems to have listened with equal satisfaction and delight to the discourses of a Brownist or Anabaptist as to the ministrations of the most eminent of the preachers of the Church of which he professed himself a member.

In 1634, when the great and awful conflict in which many of the dearest interests of England were involved seemed as yet far distant, Sir William Brereton made a lengthened tour in Holland and the United Provinces, and in the following year he travelled over a great part of England, Scotland, and Ireland. On his return he wrote an account of his journeyings from the brief notes made on the way, and this journal, the original MS. of which is in the possession of Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton, of Oulton, has been published by the Chetham Society. Singular to say, there is nothing in it to lead us to suppose that at that time the writer felt any interest in military affairs; nor is there any reference to the great political and religious questions which were then agitating the public mind in his own country, and in which it might naturally be supposed he would feel much concern. The narrative is, as Mr. Hawkins, the editor, expresses it, "a plain, unimpassioned statement of what he saw and observed. The beauties of nature never warm him into admiration; nor do the feelings, habits, or phenomena of the people, or the countries which he visited, seduce him into any philosophical investigation." He was not a deep thinker, and evidently looked at things from a purely matter of fact point of view; his observations are confined in a great measure to a description of what he saw and heard, and not unfrequently comparison is drawn between the places he visited and those of a kindred character in his own country, generally to the advantage of the latter. He describes pleasantly the "stately city of Rotterdam" and the "fair maiden town of Dort;" Schiedam he describes as a "dainty, sweet, pleasant town, larger than Namptwich," with "a delicate, spacious, market-place, a fine church, and a great channel walled on both sides with free-stone, running along the middle of the street, whereunto their ships come." He descants upon land tillage, tells the prices of dairy and farm produce, and generally expresses his opinion on the system of agriculture pursued; but that which seems most to have attracted his attention was the method adopted in different places of taking wild fowl by decoys, a hobby he appears to have indulged in at his Cheshire home, where he says he also had a decoy, probably in the low-lying grounds, watered by the Deane in the valley below Handforth Hall. At Amsterdam he "dined with Mr. Pageatt," where he had "a neat dinner and strawberries." It is pleasant to find him thus making acquaintance with a noted Cheshire worthy, John Paget, the author of "The Defence of Presbyterian Church Government," who had been minister of Nantwich in 1598, but who, in 1605, the year following that in which Brereton was born, had been compelled to retire on account of his nonconformity, when he settled at Amsterdam, where, in 1607, he had a call to the pastorate of the English church, in which he continued to minister for the long period of thirty years.^[33]

In 1635 Sir William Brereton returned from his travels in Ireland. In May of the following year he was in London, visiting, at Westminster and the Temple, his younger brother Urian, whom Mr. Earwaker incorrectly represents as dying in 1631,^[34] but who in 1636 was apparently following the law. While there he was laid up with sickness, and "feared a violent, burning fever," but happily was soon restored to health.

In the early summer of the succeeding year a great sorrow fell upon him, and the gloom of sadness overshadowed his house. On the last day of May, 1637, the solemn knell that echoed from the bell towers of Cheadle and Bowdon churches proclaimed to hall and hamlet that the mistress of Handforth, the beloved and cherished wife of William Brereton, had passed away, and on the 6th of June her remains were laid beside those of her progenitors in the quiet old church of Bowdon.

The tender and affectionate wife, the woman of his early love, the mother of his young children, for they were still in their infancy, was taken from him at the time when her counsel was needed most. The trial was a sore one, and his domestic sorrow seemed to have loosened the cords of

life; his habits were entirely changed; the green lanes, the wooded uplands, and the bosky dells that surrounded his Cheshire home were no longer pleasant to look upon; his decoys had lost their attractions, and he ceased to find enjoyment in those rural pastimes and pursuits in which he had previously delighted. It was a sorrowful episode in his life, but there was another sorrow deepening in the country that helped to obliterate the remembrance of it. The funeral plumes that waved over the coffin of his wife were stirred by the trumpet blast of discontent that swept over the country. A blow had been struck at the liberty of Englishmen; the writ for the levying of "SHIP MONEY"—that word of lasting memory in the annals of the nation—had been issued; a tax as startling as it was novel, that had been raked up from among the dust of forgotten records, had been reimposed. Hampden had resisted it, and earned for himself thereby a cheap immortality. Ship money was in all men's ears a hated word; Brereton's heart was stirred within him, and he quitted his rural retirement, with its mournful associations, to join in the great struggle against kingly prerogative. It was the levying of this obnoxious tax that first brought him into collision with the constituted authorities. As previously stated, he had inherited an estate in Chester—the Nunneries, given by Henry VIII. to his ancestor, Sir Urian Brereton. He maintained that these lands were exempted from rating. The Mayor of Chester ignored his claim, and much personal animosity between himself and the city was engendered in consequence. The blood of Sir William Brereton, which had been so unrighteously shed by King Henry, had not been avenged; the memory of that cruel wrong still lingered, and when, in obedience to the command of Charles, a levy was made upon his property for the payment of the hated ship money, the slumbering feeling of discontent was fanned into the flame of open resistance; and when the Commission of Array was issued he was the first to incite the citizens of Chester into insurrection.

On the 27th June, 1642, Thomas Cowper, of Overleigh, then Mayor of Chester, the Earls of Derby and Rivers, and Viscount Cholmondeley, were appointed by Charles the Commissioners of Array for the county of the city; and on the Monday, the 8th August, Sir William Brereton, being at the time one of the members for the shire,^[35] caused a drum to be beaten publicly in the streets for the purpose of enlisting recruits in the service of the Parliament, in consequence of which he narrowly escaped falling a victim to the indignation of the populace, whose sympathies were on the side of the King. Hemingway, in his *History of Chester*, thus records the circumstance:—

Information of this treason having been given to the Mayor, Mr. Thomas Cowper, this intrepid magistrate immediately directed some constables to apprehend the leaders of the tumult, but the latter forcibly resisted, and compelled the constables to retire, upon which the Mayor stepped forward in person to expostulate with them on their conduct, and upon being disrespectfully treated, he boldly advanced up to one of the Parliamentarians, and, seizing him by the collar, delivered him to the civil officers, at the same time wresting a broad sword from another of the party, with which he instantly cut the drum to pieces, securing the drummer and several others. The firm and manly demeanour on the part of the Mayor effectually put an end to the tumult, and finally repressed it. During the affray the common bell was rung, the citizens lent their cheerful aid to the chief magistrate, and when they had seen him in a state of personal security the city was restored to peace. Sir William Brereton, a gentleman of competent fortune in the county, and knight for the shire, and who was a strong partizan for the Parliament, was brought before the magistrates at the Pentice, to answer for the part he had taken in the above disturbance, though he owed his rescue from the popular fury to the personal interference of the Mayor; he was, however, discharged.... His subsequent severities are stated to have proceeded from his resentment on this occasion, and [Hemingway adds] it has been a subject of regret to many of his political opponents, that the active interposition of the Mayor had rescued from the popular fury a man who afterwards proved to be so severe a scourge to the city.^[36]

If the men of Chester were loyal to their Sovereign, the prevailing feeling in the county was decidedly in favour of the Parliament; the popular party were able to prevent the Commissioners of Array from carrying the Royal proclamation into effect, while at the same time their own levies proceeded with little interruption. The attempt to maintain the neutrality of the county by the Treaty of Pacification, as it was called, which enjoined an absolute cessation of arms and the demolition of the fortifications made by either party in Chester, Nantwich, Stockport, Knutsford, and any other town, having failed, each of the hostile parties set to work to procure military stores in anticipation of the approaching conflict. The Commission of Array established itself at Chester, Nantwich being at the same time made the head-quarters of those in arms against the King. Sir William Brereton was entrusted by the Parliament with the arming of the county, to him was also confided the seizure of the goods and weapons of the "delinquents," as the Royalists were called, and he was subsequently appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Parliamentarian forces in Cheshire, Staffordshire, and Shropshire, his kinsman, Colonel Robert Dukenfield, of Dukenfield, and Colonel Henry Bradshaw, of Marple, the elder brother of the future judge of the High Commission Court, being two of his most active officers.

Eager for the conflict, Sir William Brereton was unable to restrain his impetuosity. Before any commissions were issued the sword of the restless and robust Puritan had left the scabbard, and the blast of his trumpet had been heard as he gathered together his dependents and the friends of the "cause," and trained them to the use of arms; staunch and stern enthusiasts they were, who quickly caught the spirit of their leader, whom we can picture in imagination marshalling

them in the leafy valley of the Deane, or upon the broad plateau of Handforth Green.

On the 25th of August, 1642, Charles appeared at Nottingham, with a few troops of horse, and about six hundred foot, the mere shadow of an army; the blood-red ensign, blazoned with the royal arms, and bearing the suggestive motto, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," was set up on the hill adjoining the castle. It was a hasty and imprudent act—a terrible symbol, reviving the traditions of feudality, and virtually proclaiming that the kingdom was in a state of war and the ordinary course of law at an end. Such a ceremony had not been witnessed in England since the time when Richard III. raised his standard on the field of Bosworth, a century and a half previously. The auspices were not favourable; the weather was sullen and tempestuous; the dark clouds heralded a storm, and the gloom of the lowering sky was in harmony with the shadow that lay on men's minds. Scarcely had the streamer been unfurled than a fierce gust of wind swept with wild moan over the hill top and laid the emblem of sovereignty prostrate upon the ground. It was an unhappy omen, and whispered words of sorrowful misgiving passed from man to man. The next day the ceremony was repeated, the trumpet sounded, the herald read the proclamation, and the few friends assembled shouted, "God save the King." Thus the olive branch was cast aside, King and Parliament were divided, and the royal sanction given to the wasting calamity of war—war that was to determine whether the monarchical or the democratic estate of the kingdom should possess the ruling power, and in which the best and bravest blood of England was to be shed.

In that memorable struggle which convulsed the kingdom and drenched it in civil slaughter—a struggle that may be said to have begun with a tumult in Manchester, when a poor linen weaver looking on was accidentally shot,^[37] and Parliament, to inflame the people, magnified the event into "The Beginning of the Civil Wars in England, or Terrible News from the North," and which ended with the restoration of monarchy in the person of Charles II., when the same old Puritan town, to do honour to the occasion, put on its peacock's feathers, and made the conduit to flow with wine, and the gutters to swell with strong beer—the Lord of Handforth played a very conspicuous part, and there can be little doubt that much of the ultimate success of the Republican party was due to his unwearying energy and military skill. His delight lay in the din of arms, the rattle of musketry, and the clatter of troops; and a record of his doings would be little else than a chronicle of the events that were then occurring in the northern parts of the kingdom. A circumstantial account of his military exploits is given by contemporary writers. Burghall, the Puritan Vicar of Acton, in his "Providence Improved,"^[38] makes frequent mention of him, and in Josiah Rycroft's "Survey of England's Champions and Truth's Faithfull Patriots," 1647, and John Vicars's "England's Worthies," published in the same year, are "lively pourtraitures" of Cheshire's famous general.

The rejection of the Bill for regulating the militia, passed by the Commons in February, 1642, and which, if confirmed, would have transferred the power of levying armies to the Republican party, widened the breach between King and Parliament. From that hour the link which bound them together was riven. It was evident that the difficulty could be only adjusted by an appeal to arms, and, as the spring advanced, both sides began in earnest to prepare for the conflict, though each was anxious to avoid the responsibility of commencing it. The fast decaying traditions of the miseries attendant upon the old domestic feuds—the struggles of the Barons, and the Wars of the Roses—were wholly drowned by the loud beating of the warlike pulse; men were suddenly withdrawn from the plough, the anvil, and the loom; the services of foreign mercenaries were eagerly sought, and on every hand the signs of preparation were apparent.



NANTWICH.

Sir William Brereton, one of the deputy-lieutenants, as well as one of the members for Cheshire, was authorised by the Parliament to put in force the ordinance concerning the militia, and as the harvest-time approached he proceeded to Nantwich for that purpose. The King's Commission of Array, who were at Chester, hearing of his intention, marched with a body of men towards Ravensmoor to prevent him. On the 12th August both parties met on Beam Heath, when an altercation arose, which would most likely have ended in bloodshed but for the mediation of Mr. Werden, of Chester, on the one side, and Mr. Wilbraham of Dorfold on the other. Nantwich commanding, as it did, one of the approaches into North Wales, was an important strategical position, and the inhabitants being for the most part favourable to the Puritan cause, the place was barricaded, and made the head-quarters of the Parliament party, of which, as we have said, Sir William Brereton had the chief command.

Charles remained at Nottingham after the Royal standard had been erected until his army had been increased by reinforcements from various quarters, when he set forward, marching across Derbyshire in the direction of the Welsh borders, intending to establish his head-quarters at Shrewsbury, where considerable promises of support had been given. About the same time Lord Grandison, on behalf of the King, presented himself at Nantwich, and on the 12th September, accompanied by Lord Cholmondeley and a considerable body of horse entered the town, the inhabitants, fearing the approach of the royal army, which was then at Shrewsbury, having quickly made terms for the surrender of the same, as well as of their arms, ammunition, and accoutrements; and at the same time Woodhay, Doddington, Haslington, Baddiley, and other houses in the neighbourhood, the owners of which were known to be disaffected, were subjected to the same treatment. Two days later the king, having advanced from Shrewsbury, entered the ancient city of Chester, where he received a welcome as enthusiastic as that accorded to his father, five-and-twenty years before. The mayor and corporation entertained him sumptuously at the Pentice and presented him with £200, bestowing at the same time £100 upon the Prince of Wales, their titular Earl, who accompanied him. His Majesty took up his abode at the Episcopal Palace, whence a summons was issued through the sheriff requiring Sir Richard Wilbraham of Woodhay, Sir Thomas Delves of Doddington, Mr. Mainwaring of Peover, and Mr. Wilbraham of Dorfold, to await the King's pleasure. They repaired to Shrewsbury in charge of the sheriff, and remained there for three weeks in the hope of being discharged, but the two Wilbrahams were detained prisoners, Sir Richard dying in April of the following year, while still in confinement there.

The King returned to Shrewsbury, and thence proceeded towards London. On the 23rd October, when the morning dawned, he saw from the brow of the wild ridge of hills that overlook the vale of the Red Horse, near Kineton, in Warwickshire, the army of the Earl of Essex drawn up in order of battle upon the plain below. On that day Edgehill, the first great battle of the great civil war, was fought; thirty thousand of the best and bravest of Englishmen were put in array against each other, and on that cold autumn night, as the keen searching wind sighed through the heath and furze and along the unsheltered slopes of Edgehill, darkness closed upon the field of carnage, where five thousand men lay in their death agony—so many sacrifices to the Moloch of intestine strife—without any substantial advantage having been gained by either side.

After the battle, the King continued his march southwards; but Colonel Hastings, who had also

taken part in it, repaired into Cheshire with a small force, and occupied himself during the winter months in harassing those opposed to the Royalist cause. On the 23rd of December a kind of peace—the Treaty of Pacification, as it was called—was entered into at Bunbury, but was immediately afterwards broken. In January, 1642-3, a skirmish took place outside Nantwich between a small force of Royalists, led by Sir Thomas Aston, and a company of Parliamentarians, commanded by Captain Bramhall, the former being compelled to retire, when Sir William Brereton followed in hot pursuit, took one hundred prisoners, and pillage to the value of £1,000; at the same time, as Vicars affirms, "making Sir Vincent Corbet fly in a pannick feare for his life." In the same month a list of instructions was drawn up by Parliament and transmitted to Sir William for his guidance in relation to the conduct of military affairs in the county, and in accordance therewith he sent out his warrants requiring the train bands and other forces of the shire to muster at Tarporley and Frodsham on the 21st of February, hearing of which the Royalists issued from Chester with two pieces of ordnance, and entrenched themselves at Ruddyheath, when, on the morning of the 22nd, the opposing forces met. A few shots were fired on both sides, but little or no harm was done. What, however, was of more importance occurred on the preceding night, when a small force of Parliamentarians from Nantwich, taking advantage of the darkness, scaled the lofty eminence of Beeston and took possession of the castle, which was at once repaired and put in a state of defence. Some of them coming down to Brereton's assistance were met by a troop of Royalist horse on Tiverton Town field, when a slight skirmish took place, and lives were lost on both sides.

The army at Nantwich had by this time been largely reinforced, Colonel Mainwaring, Captain Dukenfield, Captain Hyde, Captain Marbury, with other gentlemen, and their companies of horse and foot, having joined. On the 10th of March, Sir Thomas Aston having made a descent upon Middlewich and plundered the town, Sir William Brereton advanced from Nantwich to give him battle; an engagement ensued, the Royalists were driven out of the town, and many prisoners taken. A characteristic account of the attack, from the pen of a Puritan writer, who appears to have been present and to have taken part, is thus given in a pamphlet published at the time:—

Sir Thomas Aston and his partie, recovering strength after their late overthrow, exercised the same in mischiefe, and all wicked outrages; for besides their plundering and wasting of all the countrie neere Chester, they laid such intolerable taxes both on the citie and countrie thereabout, that their own partie was embittered against them; yea, before we secured Northwich, while some of our forces were in that countrie, they plundered Weverham and the county about; they carried old men out of their houses, bound them together, tyed them to a cart, drave them through mire and water above the knees, and so brought them to that dungeon, where they lie without fire or light, and now through extremities are so diseased, that they are ready to yield up the ghost. On the Sabbath, March 12, having a little before advanced to Middlewich, they plundered all that day, as a most proper season for it, commanded the carts in all that countrie about to carrie away the goods, kept a faire that day neere Torperley to sell these goods. In Over when they had plundered they left ratbane in the house wrapt in papers, for the children, which by God's providence was taken from them before they could eate it, after their parents durst returne to them; and being a considerable body they sent for more strength, and by their warrant to the churches about, commanded all the countrie to come in with such insolent and imperious expressions, that they were hatefull to some malignants, and concluded to give no quarter to any roundheads, and were confident quickly to carry all downe before them. Sir William (Brereton) was at that time at Northwich with a considerable partie; many gentlemen of his partie were at Namptwich, with about seven or eight hundred armed men; their generous spirits were enrag'd to see such outrages committed; it wrought alike in all Sir William's forces to provoke us for to fall upon the enemy, though wee could not easily communicate our purposes one to another. At Namptwich we agreed to assault them the next morning, signified the same to Sir Will(iam). He was as forward as we. Our gent. desired a minister to come to their Chambers, upon the alarum to be given at twelve o'clock, that commending them to God in prayer, they might speed the better. Some ministers and others fell to the worke that day by prayer and fasting, though not as Moses, Aaron, and Hur, in prospect of the armies, yet wrestling as Jacob did, and putting their mouthes in the dust, if so bee there might be hope, of which they had a gracious returne by three o'clock. The business of that day was carried thus:—Sir William being foure miles from the enemy, assaulted that side of the towne by eight o'clock, March the 13th, and continued the fight for about three or foure houres before we came to his help; in which time this accident fell out, that his powder was all spilt, excepting about seven pound they tooke councill upon it, and it was concluded they must retreite because their partie from Namptwich was not come in to their assistance, but Sir William was resolute not to retreit but to send to Northwich for more powder, and to keep them in play as well as they could till the powder came, which accordingly they did; betwixt eleven and twelve o'clock we came to their assistance, which they knew not of till they heard us in hot service on the other side of the town; when we began their powder came.

The enemy had chief advantages, their ordinance planted; we had none; they layd about 150 musquetiers in an hole convenient for them. They layd their ambuskadoes in the hedges, musquetiers in the church and steeple, and had every way so strengthened themselves that they seemed impregnable; but God led on our men with incredible

courage—Captaine George Booth fac'd the towne with his troope whilst they plaid on with their ordinance, which once graz'd before them, and then mounted cleare over them in another; in another that it dash't the water and mire in his and two other captaines faces, but there it dies. This was no discouragement to our men; they marched upon all their ambuskadoes, drave them all out of them into the towne, entered the towne upon the mouths of the cannon and storme of the muskets, our major (a right Scottish blade)^[39] brought them up in two files, with which he lined the walls and kept the street open, went up to their ordinance, which he tooke; then the enemy fled to the church; Sir Thomas Aston would have gone after them but they durst not let him in, lest we should enter with him: then he mounted his horse and fled with all speed by Kinderton, and divers others with him, for that way only was open, all the rest we had surrounded; we slew divers upon the top of the steeple, and some, they say, within the church.

In this encounter 400 Royalists were taken prisoners, among them several officers of rank, including Captain Massie, of Coddington, Captain John Hurleston, Colonel Ellis, Major Gilmore, Captain Corbet, Captain Starky, of Stretton, and Captain Morris; a Lancashire man was also numbered among those captured—Sir Edward Mosley, of Hough End and Aldport Lodge, in Manchester, at that time sheriff of Staffordshire, who for his "delinquency" had to compound for his estates by the payment to the Committee of Sequestrations of £4,874, which greatly impoverished him.

By the defeat at Nantwich the Royalist army was greatly weakened, and Brereton found himself free to turn his attention in other directions. Hearing that the Earl of Northampton was marching northwards, he immediately set out to the assistance of Sir John Gell, who was then in the neighbourhood of Stafford.

It was a short fortnight after the siege of Lichfield Close, whither Sir John, with a body of fighting men, had gone to reinforce the army of Lord Brooke, who had himself fallen a victim to the unerring aim of the keen-eyed Dyott, a bullet from whose arquebus had passed through the visor of his helm and pierced his brain—the time

When fanatic Brooke
The fair cathedral stormed and took,
But, thanks to heaven, and good St. Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had.

Hearing of the attack on

Moated Lichfield's lofty pile,

the Earl of Northampton hastened with a strong party of horse to relieve the beleaguered city, when Gell, knowing himself to be in no condition to cope with him, retired towards Stafford. Brereton, whose new strung vigour and eager impetuosity seldom permitted him to leave the saddle or let his sword rest in the scabbard, marched at once with 1,500 horsemen from Nantwich, by way of Newcastle and Stone, until he reached Salt Heath, a place about three miles north-east of Stafford, where, on the 19th of March, a week after the fight at Middlewich, he joined the forces of Sir John Gell. At Hopton Heath, adjoining Salt Heath, the Earl of Northampton fell upon their rear, and an engagement ensued. The Parliamentarians numbered in all 3,000 horse and foot, and the Royalists about half that number. Brereton posted his horse in two bodies in front of the infantry, and awaited the attack from the Earl, who charged the main body and dispersed them, the second attack being followed by the same result; but the Royalist victory was quickly turned to mourning. The Earl's cavalry, pursuing their advantage with rash precipitation, threw themselves among the ranks of Sir John Gell's foot; in this encounter the Earl of Northampton had his horse shot under him, and while on foot was quickly surrounded by his foes. Quarter was offered but refused, when a trooper with his heavy matchlock smote off his helm, and another from behind dashed his halberd into his brain. Sir Thomas Byron, who commanded the Prince of Wales's troop, followed up the attack, but night coming on both armies drew off, each claiming the victory. The advantage, however, would appear to have remained with the Parliamentarians, who were enabled to drive their opponents out of the county. Sir William Brereton, in the fanatical phraseology so characteristic of the time, thus concludes his account of the transaction:—

In the success of this battle the Lord was pleased much to shewe himselfe to bee the Lord of Hosts and God of Victory; for, when the day was theirs and the field wonne, he was pleased mightily to interpose for the rescue and deliverance of these that trusted in him. And, as my lord generall (Essex) said concerning Keinton (Edge-hill) battle, soe may it bee said of this, that there was much of God and nothing of man, that did contribute to this victorie. To him I desire the sole glory may be ascribed, and that this may be a further encouragement to trust in him, and an engagement to adhere unto this cause, as well in the midst of daungers and streights as when they are more remote. To this end I beseech you assist with your prayers those who often stand in neede thereof; and believe that there is none that doth more earnestly pray for and desire the encrease of all comfort and happiness then Your most faithfull frend,

Will: Brereton

Apart from the horrors inseparable from fratricidal strife, or the results which civil war may ultimately secure, there are attendant circumstances that make such an upheaval of the national life not altogether an unmixed evil. If in the great social convulsions of the past there has been much that we must deprecate and condemn, much that must lead us to rejoice that our lot has been cast in more peaceful times, there has been also much that is morally good and dear to our every feeling of existence. If there were barbarism and selfishness and ruthlessness, there were also high achievements and flashes of heroism that will not be forgotten while great qualities find a sanctuary in the human heart, even though we may not be able to approve the ends to which they were devoted. While the coarser passions may have found vent in heartless violence, honour has been as often roused from the embrace of luxury, and a spirit of patriotism evoked that might never else have struggled into light. Through the fissures caused by such dislocations of the social strata, genius and virtue and devotion have forced their way; men have struggled for principles as men struggle for life, and have renewed their nobility in something nobler than in name.

Accustomed to a life of luxury and ease, upholding the Puritan doctrines in which he believed, and watching, it may be from afar, the widening breach between King and people, William Brereton had taken but little active interest in public affairs; but when the trumpet-blast of war sounded in his ears his courage, promptitude, and zeal were instantly aroused. Forced by the troublous times from the lethargy of security and passionless ease, he quickly evidenced the possession of qualities of which he had never given even a crude or ostentatious promise. In what he conceived to be the path of duty he was prodigal of his personal safety, and in that great struggle against prerogative no man was less mindful of the hardships and the dangers inseparable from a soldier's life. It was no boyish enthusiasm that led him to take down the spear and the arquebus from the ancestral wall and to don the armour of his forefathers; for, when he entered the arena of civil strife, he was verging upon forty years of age, and the blaze of youth had sunk into the burning fire of middle life. Noble was the idea he had set before him. To contend with the oppressor and to battle for right and justice was a high work. It is not our province to enter upon the merits of the great civil war of the seventeenth century; we reverence the principles of civil and religious truth for which the Puritans professed invincible attachment, but we cannot close our eyes to the fact that some of those who pleaded so loudly for conscience, and offered such uncompromising resistance to despotism, when they got the power into their own hands, instead of righting the wrongs of which they had complained, merely changed the venue and transferred a grinding social tyranny from the hand of one faction to that of another. As old Fuller, in his quaint way, observes, "they girt their own garment closest about the consciences of others." We can sympathise with the Puritanism of Brereton in the effort for the advance of civil and religious liberty and the purity of moral life, but we cannot sympathise with the Puritanism that manifested itself in fanatical excesses and the profane handling of things that ought to have been sacred, even to fanatics, if they believed in the cause for which they contended.

Sir William Brereton could no longer find happiness in repose; his new-born zeal knew no restraint. Scarcely had he returned from the fight at Hopton Heath than he was again in the saddle, and marching with his troops to Northwich. On Easter Monday, April 3rd, he advanced from that place towards Warrington, with the object of assisting the Manchester men in wresting that town from the Earl of Derby, who then held it for the King. An engagement took place at Stockton Heath, when the Earl, being worsted, fell back upon Warrington, which was shortly afterwards invested; but as he destroyed some of the buildings, and threatened to lay the remainder in ashes rather than surrender, the siege was raised, and Brereton with his army returned to Nantwich.

The period which followed was one of considerable activity. Before the month had closed he was again in Staffordshire, and at Drayton encountered Sir Vincent Corbet, whom he a second time defeated, Sir Vincent, as Burghall tells us, escaping "in his shirt and waistcoat, leaving his clothes behind him, which Captain Whitney took, with all his money and his letters found in his pockets." On the 15th May, Brereton's dragoons, having been joined by some companies from Leek and Newcastle-under-Lyme, entered the town of Stafford in the middle of the night, while the people were in their beds, took possession, and made several prisoners; among them Captain Biddulph, probably of the family of Biddulph Hall, and Captain Legh, of Adlington. From Stafford the victorious Parliamentarians proceeded to Wolverhampton, which was speedily taken; they then returned into Cheshire, and advanced to Warrington to join the Manchestrans in renewing the attack upon the town, which had been left by the Earl of Derby to the care of Colonel Edward Norris, of Speke; and on Saturday, May 27th, "after a week's siege, the Royalists were obliged to surrender this key of the county," when, as we learn from Burghall, "Sir George Booth (Brereton's brother-in-law), being lord of the town, entered it, and was joyfully entertained by the inhabitants." Sir William knew no rest. Two days later we find him marching at midnight from Nantwich with a force of eight hundred men to Whitchurch, where Lord Capel had fixed his headquarters, arriving there at three o'clock in the morning; when, after two hours' sharp fighting, the place surrendered, and the victors returned to Nantwich laden with "cheese, malt, wheat, bacon, and ammunition," and other spoils of war.

During the preceding months the Vale of the Weaver had been harassed and made the scene of many a predatory descent from Capel's forces, aided occasionally by the Royalists from

Cholmondeley; the country round, but Nantwich more especially, had been plundered, the rich meadows and pasture lands which had been brought under cultivation in pre-Reformation times by the monks of Combermere being more productive than other parts of the county offered a strong inducement; whilst the inhabitants, having for the most part sided with the Republican party, were accounted as fitting subjects for Royalist vengeance. Moss House, near Burley Dam, Dorfold Hall, Acton, Ravensmoor, and Sound are named as being plundered of horses, cows, young beasts, and household stuffs during the occasional absences of General Brereton from head-quarters. In retaliation, Cholmondeley Hall was itself attacked, the Nantwich troops issuing from their entrenchments by the north road; then, passing Mr. Wilbraham's house at Dorfold, they quitted the Chester Road and proceeded by Monk's Lane, passing Acton Church and Vicarage—the latter at the time the residence of Edward Burghall, the Puritan diarist—and thence over Ravensmoor to the stone cross near where stood the entrance to Woodhay, the owner of which, Sir Richard Wilbraham, had died only a few days before, a prisoner in the castle at Shrewsbury. Soon Cholmondeley was reached. The Royalists, being apprised of their intention, turned out to meet them, and an engagement took place, when the Cavaliers, having sustained some loss, withdrew to the shelter of the hall, and their opponents returned to Nantwich with a booty of six hundred horse.

Shortly after this some of the Nantwich men sustained a severe reverse. The troops left in possession of Whitchurch, having imprudently advanced beyond Hanmer into Wales, were met by Lord Capel and the Welsh forces of the King, who had been lying in ambush. They were attacked and dispersed, several of their number being killed or wounded, and many taken prisoners. It was a sorrowful day for them, and Burghall laments that it was "the worst day's work the Nantwich soldiers did from the beginning of the war." It was a sorrowful day elsewhere, for on the preceding day John Hampden—

The noblest Roman of them all,

received his death wound on Chalgrove Field, the avenging ball of a Royalist having shivered his vigorous right arm on the very spot where he had first executed the ordinance of the militia and engaged his tenantry and serving men in rebellion, and he then lay at Thame, where, with the grace and dignity of the old Roman, but with the fortitude and trusting faith of the true Christian, he died after six days' agony.

It does not appear that Sir William Brereton was present at the disaster which befell his troops in the Welsh Marches; had he been, it is possible the result might have been different. A few days before, he was at Liverpool, directing the unloading of a ship which had arrived freighted with ordinance and ammunition from London. This misfortune was, however, speedily made up for by an attack on Eccleshall Castle, which surrendered with all its ordinance, arms, and ammunition on the 26th June, and on returning to Nantwich he was, we are told, "received with much joy." On Thursday, July 17th, having received reinforcements from Staffordshire and Manchester, he set out for Chester; but there his usual good luck failed him; an assault was made, but the city was found to be strongly fortified, and learning that Lord Capel, with the Shropshire forces, was advancing, he deemed it prudent to withdraw his men and return to Nantwich. He did not long remain there, for, hearing that Colonel Hastings had marched with four hundred horse from Lichfield to relieve the Royalists, who were then holding out at Stafford Castle, he set out with 1,000 men to the help of the besiegers, bivouacking for the night at Stone. On his approach the garrison fled in dismay, when the castle was taken and demolished, except the keep. Taking advantage of his absence, the Royalists, who, though driven out of Whitchurch, still hung about the Welsh border, determined upon attacking Nantwich. Lord Capel advanced with a considerable force by way of Baddington-lane, when the Parliamentarians, fearing they might be outnumbered, prudently retired within the town, having sustained but slight loss. On that warm summer's night, August 3rd, the Royalists lay on Ravensmoor, and the next morning, taking advantage of a thick mist that hid them from view, set upon the town, directing their fire from the meadows lying between Marsh Lane and the left bank of the Weaver. The attack lasted from six o'clock in the morning until nine or ten, when the sun dispelled the mist, and Capel, finding himself too near, withdrew his men. The report that Capel had threatened the town caused reinforcements to be sent from Lancashire and Staffordshire to the aid of the Cheshire men, but finding he had fallen back they returned to their respective counties, the "Moorland Dragoons" from Staffordshire marching by way of Aslington, where they quartered on the night of the 5th of August, and then, continuing their march, "they gave," as the Puritan Vicar of Acton relates, "a strong alarm to Mr. Biddulph's house (Biddulph Old Hall) in Staffordshire, where was a garrison. This Biddulph," he adds, "was a great Papist," a name of reproach applied by the Presbyterians to many a good Protestant.

At the time of Capel's descent on Nantwich, Brereton was with the Parliamentary army in the neighbourhood of Wem, where he remained for some time, having fortified the town, and being thus enabled to make frequent predatory incursions from it into the surrounding country, to the alarm of the Royalists who then garrisoned Shrewsbury. Taking advantage of his prolonged absence, Lord Capel resolved once more on attacking the great Puritan stronghold of Nantwich. On the 14th of October, he set out with a force of 3,400 men and artillery, moving by way of Whitchurch, Combermere, and Marbury; his men reached Acton at noon on the 16th, when, finding that some of the Nantwich troops were approaching, they took up a position in the church, which they fortified along with the neighbouring mansion of Dorfold, but hearing that Brereton was returning from Wem they deemed it unsafe to hazard an engagement, and, during the night, withdrew.

Brereton did not remain many days at Nantwich. On the 7th November, accompanied by Sir Thomas Middleton, he set out for Wales. When night closed on that short November day they had got no further than Sir Richard Wilbraham's house at Woodhay, where they bivouacked for the night. On the following day they were joined by the Lancashire forces, when an attack was made upon Holt Castle, the Royalists were driven out, and the victors then marched to Wrexham, whence they would seem to have directed their march towards Chester, for on Saturday, November 11, Sir William, in company with Alderman Edwards, who had been mayor of the city in 1636, and a small force, set out for Hawarden Castle, which surrendered on their approach without so much as a shot being fired. On the Thursday following Brereton sent a summons from Hawarden to Sir Abraham Shipman, the governor of Chester, demanding the surrender of the city, and threatening severe punishment in case of refusal. To this demand the gallant old Royalist sent a curt and characteristic reply assuring Sir William that he was not to be terrified by words, and that if he wanted the city he must first come and win it. In the meantime, in anticipation of any attack that might be made, he caused the Handbridge suburbs to be destroyed to prevent the Roundheads sheltering in them, and at the same time demolished Overlegh Hall, Bache Hall, and Flookersbrook Hall, with their outhousing, lest enemies from other quarters might effect lodgments therein.

Happily for the inhabitants the landing at Mostyn of a body of the King's troops, returning from employment against the rebels in Ireland, saved the city from immediate danger. Brereton returned to his quarters at Nantwich, and the Lancashire men hastened homewards. Burghall says "it was a wonder they made such haste to relieve Hawarden Castle, a stronghold, lately taken, only they left one Mr. Ince, an able and faithful minister, and about 120 soldiers in it, with little provision, and in great danger. It was also thought strange, that they should leave Wales, which in a manner, was quite subdued a little before, and so many good friends who had come to them, were left to the mercy of the enemy." Brereton was doubtless a better judge of the exigencies of the case than the Puritan divine whose ideas on military tactics were in this instance at fault. Retreat had become necessary, for had the Royalists with the large reinforcements from Ireland have moved on Nantwich in his absence they would in all likelihood have been successful, and not only have deprived the Parliamentarians of that important position, but also have cut off the retreat of their army, and have forced them to fight under great disadvantage in the rocky defiles of the Welsh border, which at that season of the year would have been all but impassable for troops encumbered with heavy ordnance.

Hawarden Castle, being left comparatively unprotected, was, as Burghall says, "in great danger," but the little garrison held out bravely. On the 21st of November Colonel Mann sent a trumpeter to demand the castle for his Majesty's use; the demand was refused, and a week later Captain Standford, who commanded the Irish force then just landed, sent the following peremptory summons:—

Gentlemen,—I presume you very well know, or have heard, of my condition and disposition, and that I neither give or take quarter; I am now with my firelocks, who never yet neglected opportunity to correct rebels; ready to use you as I have done the Irish, but loth I am to spill my countrymen's blood; wherefore, by these, I advise you to your fealty and obedience towards his majesty, and shew yourselves faithful subjects by delivering the castle into my hands for his majesty's use; in so doing you shall be received into mercy, &c. Otherwise, if you put me to the least trouble, or loss of blood, to force you, expect no quarter for man, woman, or child. I hear you have some of our late Irish army in your company; they very well know me, and that my firelocks used not parly.—Be not unadvised, but think of your liberty, for I vow all hopes of relief are taken from you, and our intents are not to starve you, but to batter and storm you, and then hang you all, and follow the rest of that rebel crew. I am no bread and cheese rogue, but as ever a loyalist, and will ever be whilst I can write or name

Nov. 28th, 1643. THO. SANDFORD, Cap. of Firelocks.

I expect your speedy answer this Tuesday night at Broadlane hall, where I now am your near neighbour.

To the officer commanding in chief at Hawarden castle and his consorts there.

On this summons the stout-hearted defenders of Hawarden also refused to surrender. The besiegers then made application for assistance from Chester, and a force of 300 of the citizens and trainbands having arrived, the attack commenced on the 3rd December; on the following day a white flag was hung out and the garrison capitulated; the castle being surrendered early on the next morning on the condition that its defenders should be free to march out with half arms, and two pairs of colours, one flying and the other furled, and to be safely conveyed either to Wem or Nantwich.

The Cheshire men who sided with the Parliament party appear to have had a wholesome terror of Captain Sandford and his notorious firelocks. An assailant whose cardinal principle is neither to ask or give quarter is not a pleasant person to encounter, and hence the Cestrians were by no means desirous of cultivating acquaintance with a soldier who had not only declared his intention of putting to the sword all who presumed to offer opposition to his demands, but who, on previous occasions, had shown that he could be as good as his word.

Following up their success at Hawarden, the Cavaliers advanced to Beeston; the garrison there,

having heard of Brereton's retreat, had become demoralised, and surrendered the castle to Sandford without even the semblance of a struggle. Burghall thus relates the story of the capture:—

December 13th (1643) a little before day Captain Sandford (a zealous Royalist) who came out of Ireland, with eight of his firelocks, crept up the steep hill of Beeston Castle, and got into the upper ward and took possession there. It must be done by treachery for the place was most impregnable. Captain Steel, who kept it for the Parliament, was accused and suffered for it; but it was verily thought he had not betrayed it wilfully; but some of his men proving false, he had not courage enough to withstand Sandford to try it out with him. What made much against Steel was he took Sandford down into his chamber, where they dined together, and much beer was sent up to Sandford's men, and the castle after a short parley was delivered up; Steel and his men having leave to march with their arms and colours to Nantwich, but as soon as he was come into the town the soldiers were so enraged against him that they would have pulled him in pieces had he not been immediately clapped in prison. There were much wealth and goods in the castle belonging to gentlemen and neighbours, who had brought it thither for safety, besides ammunition and provisions for half a year at least; all which the enemy got.

The surrender of Beeston was a great discouragement to the Parliamentarians, and so exasperated were the Nantwich men at what they believed to be the treachery of Steel, that shortly after he was "shot to death" in Tinker's Croft, by two soldiers, according to judgment against him. Whether Steel was actuated by treachery or cowardice is a matter of doubt, but, in any case, an example was required to be made, and the stern Puritans could hardly have pronounced a milder sentence; for the dining with Sandford, and the regaling of his men with "much beer" must have told greatly against him. With the loss of Beeston the way lay open from Chester; the garrison at Nantwich had in consequence a busy time of it, being kept in a state of perpetual alarm by the oft repeated rumours of the approach of Sandford and the much-dreaded firelocks. The town, we are told by an old chronicler, had no rest day or night, and a guard had to be kept continually upon the walls to give warning in the event of the enemies coming. Danger increased on every hand, the Royalists had been reinforced by the Anglo-Irish contingent sent over by the Marquis of Ormond, and the whole district lay at the mercy of Lord Byron, who had the chief command, and who, elated with his successes, advanced without much loss of time with the intention of attacking Brereton in his own quarters. On the Sunday following the capture of Beeston, "during sermon time," as we are told, news came that the Cavaliers were at Burford, a place about a mile distant. Sergeant-major Lothian, with a company of soldiers, went out to meet them, but the sergeant got the worst of it, and in the encounter was made prisoner, when his men took to their heels. Immediately after Stoke, Hurleston, Brindley, Wrenbury, and the country round was ravaged, and much injury was inflicted. On the 22nd December the Royalists crossed the river to Audlem, Hankelow, Buerton, and Hatherton; on the Saturday they reached Barthomley and dispersed a number of Brereton's men, who had established themselves in the church; and on Christmas day and the day after they plundered Barthomley, Crewe, Haslington, and Sandbach. On the last-named day Brereton, having left a guard at Nantwich, marched with a considerable force towards Middlewich, Holmes Chapel and Sandbach, and at Booth Lane, about a mile from the last mentioned town, he was overtaken by the Royalists, when a fierce battle was fought, and he had to retreat to Middlewich, whither he was pursued, again attacked, and finally compelled to seek safety in flight, leaving his magazines behind him and two hundred prisoners. After this disaster he made his way northwards, when, as we learn from the "Briefe Summary" of the troubles Mr. William Davenport had to undergo, he was on New Year's Day "about Stopport, when with Captain Sankey, Captain Francis Dukinfield and a few soldiers, he made a raid upon Mr. Davenport's house at Bramhall, helped himself to what he could find, took away all the horses, about twenty in number, and all the arms he could lay his hands on. Meanwhile the victorious Cavaliers were by no means inactive; Crewe Hall was captured, but surrendered again the next day; Dorfold was taken on the 2nd of January (1643-4) and on the 4th Doddington yielded without a struggle. Nantwich had been invested and subjected to intermittent attacks, and on Thursday, January 17," after being besieged for five weeks and suffering great privation, it was assaulted on all sides; in the attack Captain Sandford met a soldier's death under the guns of his own hot battery, and within a few days of that on which Captain Steel was led out to execution. The siege lasted for more than a week, when General Fairfax, fresh from his victories in Yorkshire, passed through Manchester, and, being joined by the forces of Sir William Brereton, marched to the relief of the beleaguered town. The advancing army mustered in all three thousand five hundred and fifty horse, and five thousand foot; after a slight skirmish in Delamere Forest, in which forty prisoners were taken, their progress was arrested for a while at Barr Bridge, where a small force of Royalists had posted themselves behind Hurlestone Brook, the main body of Byron's army, however, remaining in the neighbourhood of Acton Church. The frost which had continued for some time, suddenly broke up, and the flooding of the Weaver, consequent upon the rapid thaw, placed the Royalists at a considerable disadvantage; a temporary bridge which they had constructed was swept away; communication between the cavalry and the infantry was thus cut off, and the former, being confined in deep lanes with great high hedges, were unable to sustain or relieve the suffering infantry, and, in fact, could only reach them by a detour of five miles. About half-past three in the afternoon of the 25th of January the two armies were put in array against each other in the fields lying between Acton Church and Ravensmoor, and on that raw winter's afternoon, before darkness had closed upon the scene, the Royalist infantry had given way and sought refuge in Acton Church, where they were surrounded

and compelled to surrender. About one thousand six hundred of their number were made prisoners, among them Colonel Monk, who was sent to the Tower, the same who, after he had brought about the Restoration, developed into the Earl of Albemarle. The slain were very few, considering the large number of men engaged, only about fifty in all; their bodies were buried in a field belonging to Sir Thomas Wilbraham of Woodhay, which to this day retains the name of the "Dead Man's Field." The relief of the town was an occasion of much rejoicing; thanksgivings were held, and for many years after, on St. Paul's Day (January 25th), the anniversary of their deliverance, the townsmen wore sprigs of holly in their hats in commemoration of the event.

Clarendon, in his History of the Rebellion, observes that Nantwich was the only garrison which the Parliament had then left in Cheshire, and that from the beginning of the troubles it had been the only refuge for the disaffected in that county and the counties adjacent. He adds that the pride of the late success, and the terror which the Royal soldiers believed their names carried with them, led them before this place at the most unseasonable time of the year, but that "it cannot be denied that the reducing of this place at that time would have been of unspeakable importance to the King's affairs, there being between that and Carlisle no one town of moment (Manchester only excepted) which declared against the King; and those two populous counties of Chester and Lancashire, if they had been united against the Parliament, would have been a strong bulwark against the Scots." With the disaster at Nantwich the power of the Anglo-Irish army which the Marquis of Ormond had sent over to the help of the Royalist cause in England was wholly destroyed, and Fairfax was free to return to Yorkshire, where some months after he took part in the decisive battle of Marston Moor.

Shortly after the raising of the siege of Nantwich Brereton's men made an assault on Crewe Hall, which surrendered on the 4th of February. Three days later Doddington Hall was given up, and on the 14th Adlington Hall, after bravely holding out for a whole fortnight, was delivered up to Colonel Dukinfield, who, a month later, in accordance with an order of Parliament, handed over the possession to Colonel Brereton, who pillaged the house, and seized the family possessions into his own hands.

While these events were transpiring a kinsman of Sir William Brereton's, Lord Brereton of Brereton, who had been collecting arms and ammunition for the King's service, became alarmed, forsook his own residence, Brereton Hall, and, with his wife and son, took up his abode at Biddulph Hall, a fortified manor-house on the confines of Staffordshire, which was at once put into a state of defence. Angry at this proceeding, Sir William Brereton determined on its reduction, and at once set out with an armed force to accomplish that object. On the way one of the unlovely elements in the Puritan character manifested itself—the fanatical soldiery broke into the church at Astbury, one of the most beautiful ecclesiastical edifices in the county, defaced the costly architecture, broke the painted windows, demolished the carved screen-work, turned the fabric into a stable, and carried the organ away to a field close by, where they set it on fire—the spot retaining the name of the "Organ Field" to this day. Having performed these exploits, Brereton and his men resumed their march towards Biddulph, passing over Congleton Edge on the way. On the 20th of February the siege began, but the besiegers held out for a lengthened period—three months, it is said. Mr. J. Eglinton Bailey, in a paper recently read before the members of the Manchester Literary Club, gives the following interesting particulars:—

The ordnance was first planted on Congleton Edge, but little or no mischief was done from that standpoint. A fragment of an old song is remembered in which Lord Brereton, seeing Sir William on the Edge, is made to say—

"Yonder my uncle stands, and he will not come near,
Because he is a Roundhead, and I a Cavalier."

... During this time the investment was pretty close. Communication with the neighbourhood is said to have been held by means of a servant appropriately named "Trusty," who had nightly egress by an underground passage, through which victuals were taken in. The Parliamentary army frequently changed the position of their camp. Meanwhile the garrison became expert marksmen. A person riding through Whitmore Wood towards the army at Congleton Edge had his horse struck by a shot, and the rider took to his heels, not staying to remove the horse's bridle. It is also said that when Mr. Bowyer, of Knypersley Hall, was galloping over Bradley Green a ball from Biddulph took off the heel of his boot. At length the besieging party fetched from Stafford a large cannon, bearing the feminine name of "Roaring Meg," which was planted on the west side. The gun was next tried on a battery on the rising ground on the east side, the country people having informed the general that that was the weakest side of the hall. The old record is that from this site the artillerymen battered furiously for some time; that at last a ball accidentally struck the end of a beam supporting the hall, thus giving the building such a shake that its defenders thought it would have fallen down; and that thereupon Lady Brereton was so much affrighted that at her earnest entreaty the place was surrendered.

A number of prisoners were taken, including Lord and Lady Brereton and their son and heir; three hundred stand of arms, with ammunition, also fell into the hands of the victors, who sacked the mansion and bore off the plunder to Stafford Castle.

In the accounts of the old corporate town of Congleton there are several entries of moneys expended on the occasion of the visit of Sir William Brereton and his followers while on their way

to Biddulph. They appear to have had a fondness for the good cheer for which the place was even then noted; thus we read of "Meat and drink to Sir William Brereton's men on the way, £1 13s. 3d.;" "Paid in meat and drink to Sir William Brereton's men, £0 18s.;" "More, £0 18s. 3d.;" "Spent on Captain Manwaring and Captain — from London in burned ale and victuals, £0 10s. 0d.;" "Burned ale to Colonel Duckenfield, £0 1s. 8d." "Burned ale" was a beverage the Puritan soldiers seemed to have been rather partial to, and they had almost an equal fondness for Congleton sack^[40], if we may judge from the frequency with which they were regaled with it.

The attack made by Sir William Brereton upon his relative, Lord Brereton, at Biddulph, furnishes a characteristic picture of the social disorder and confusion that prevailed in every rank and station of life during that unnatural struggle; the ties of consanguinity were forgotten in the bitterness of party strife, and relationship was no longer recognised as influencing families or individuals, except in so far that men oftentimes found their most inveterate foes were those of their own household.

In the depth of the inclement winter, after the relief of Nantwich, Sir Thomas Fairfax, in obedience to the orders of the Parliament, marched back into Yorkshire to join his father, Lord Fairfax, who was hastening to unite his forces with the Scottish army, which, led by Lesley, Earl of Leven, had crossed the border and marched knee-deep in snow upon the soil of England, preparatory to an attack upon York. Brereton, after the fall of Biddulph, would appear to have followed him, for in a contemporary document which Mr. Earwaker discovered among the Harleian MSS.—"Accompts made and Sworne unto by Sev'all Inhabitants of the Townshippe of Hollingworth in the p'ish of Mottram in Longdendale and County of Chester"—the following entry occurs:—

In the "Accompts" of Mr. John Hollingworth, of Hollingworth:

		li s d
Itm.	When Sr William Brereton Kt. marched wth his fforces towards Yorke there was quartered wth mee Seaven score horse whereby I was dampnified	8 0 0
Itm.	When Sr William Brereton marched towards Yorke wth Cheshire fforces ffor ye assistance of that County, there was 250 horse and rydrs quartered at my house; the damage I had by them in eatinge my meadowe, killinge my sheepe and plunderinge some of my goods privily, and consuminge my victuals they found in my house, to ye value att ye least of 20tie markes	13 6 8

These particulars give some idea of the losses and annoyance the people were then subjected to, and furnish some interesting details of the way in which the war was conducted.

Ere the month of June was ended, the fiery Prince Rupert, in obedience to the King's command, had marched from Lathom House, in Lancashire, and effected the relief of York. On the 2nd of July 50,000 subjects of the King met upon the heath and among the corn fields on Marston Moor, almost within sight of the walls of York city, where the boom of the distant cannon would strike upon the inhabitants as the death knell of friend or brother. For two long hours they remained gazing with silent, yet settled determination, each waiting from the other the signal of battle. The sun was sinking in the west on that warm summer's evening when the strife began. By the time it had set, and the twilight had deepened into night, the carnage was ended, and five thousand dead bodies of Englishmen lay heaped upon the fatal ground. The distinctions that in life had separated those sons of a common country seemed as nothing now. The plumed helmet and the rude morion, the glistening corslet and the buff jerkin, embraced as they rolled on the heath together, and the loose love-lock of the careless Cavalier lay drenched in the dark blood of the stern and uncompromising Roundhead.

On Marston Heath

Met front to front, the ranks of death;
 Flourished the trumpets fierce, and now
 Fired was each eye, and flushed each brow;
 On either side loud clamours ring,
 "God and the cause!"—"God and the King!"
 Right English all, they rushed to blows
 With nought to win and all to lose.

It was the first great battle in which Cromwell and his invincible Ironsides had borne a part, and it was their irresistible bravery that decided the day. Rupert was fairly swept off the field, and the hopes of Charles were completely wrecked. It was the greatest achievement of the war, and left the whole of the northern counties open to the Parliament's sway.

The discomfited Rupert, with the wreck of his army, retreated towards Chester, and thence into Lancashire, where he had the mortification to see all the strongholds he had recently gained speedily retaken, and among them the castle of Liverpool. Brereton was quickly marching in the same direction. Halton Castle still held out for the King, though, as we learn from a letter addressed by Goring to Prince Rupert, it was then threatened by the garrison of Warrington. It shortly afterwards surrendered, and on the 22nd July was taken possession of by the Parliamentary troops under Brereton. A few weeks later Colonel Marrow, the governor of Chester, with a small force marched from that city towards Northwich, "plundering some poor men's cattle by the way;" when near Hartford he was met by a party of Brereton's men. Marrow retreated towards Sandiway, and there faced about, when a skirmish took place. Fifteen of

Brereton's soldiers were captured, but the victory was dearly bought, for Marrow himself, "a most pestilent Atheisticall Royalist," as Vicars calls him, received a shot, from the effects of which he died the following day. This was on Sunday, the 18th of August. A few days later the Nantwich men, with the assistance of Brereton's cavalry and some troops from Halton, attacked the Royalists in their quarters near Tarvin, and defeated them, and on the 26th they were again engaged near Malpas, when the Cavaliers sustained some serious losses.

Hearing that Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, was besieged in Montgomery Castle, Brereton, with Sir Wm. Meldran, Sir Wm. Fairfax, and thirty-two troops of horse out of Lancashire, and other companies out of Staffordshire, in all about three thousand men, set out to relieve him. On Tuesday, the 17th September, they compelled the Royalists to raise the siege, which led to a desperate encounter on the following day, when the King's troops were defeated with a loss of five hundred slain and fourteen hundred prisoners, among the latter being that "*Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*," Major-general Sir Thomas Tyldesley. Among the slain on the Parliament side was Sir William Fairfax. A week after this exploit Brereton and his forces returned to Nantwich. In the scattered but authentic records of the period we get frequent glimpses of him hurrying hither and thither during the dark winter months. In February, 1644-5, the town and castle of Shrewsbury, with the ordnance, arms, and ammunition, and a considerable body of prisoners, surrendered to him, and, as the spring advanced, his forces began to gather by degrees round the castle of Beeston and the city of Chester, which still held out for the King; but news coming that the Princes Rupert and Maurice were approaching to the relief, his men fell back upon Nantwich, and the relieving force of Royalists, having accomplished their object, retired, first plundering Bunbury and burning Beeston Hall. Scarcely had they departed, however, when the siege of Chester was renewed. On the 7th of May the King left Oxford, and marched with his forces in the direction of the city, but when within twenty miles of it Brereton, hearing of his advance, raised the siege and retired into Lancashire. This movement left his Majesty free to commence operations in another direction, and he suddenly appeared before Leicester and carried the town by storm.

On the 14th of June the battle of Naseby was fought—the most decisive and disastrous to the King of all his military engagements—the Royalists losing all their artillery, baggage, the King's private cabinet, and eight thousand stand of arms, while the Parliamentarians were put in possession of nearly all the chief cities of the kingdom. The siege of Bristol followed; on the 9th of September the city was stormed and taken, and victory seemed everywhere to attend the movements of the King's opponents. Charles, who was now at Hereford, resolved on proceeding to Chester, hoping to reach it by a circuitous route over the Welsh mountains, and intending thence to make his way northward by Lancashire and Cumberland, to join Montrose. The march through that wild and inhospitable region occupied five days, the King and his party being exposed the while to many hardships and privations. He had arranged his plans in the full belief that Chester was safe from any meditated attack, but, to his dismay, on approaching the city he found the people in a state of excitement and alarm, Sir William Brereton having collected a powerful body of troops, including the force with which Colonel Jones and the redoubtable Adjutant-general Lowthian had been investing Beeston Castle, and was then preparing to attack it, having, indeed, on the very day his Majesty left Hereford, surprised and possessed himself of the mayor's house, and with it the sword and mace of the corporation, as well as of St. John's Church, Boughton, and some of the eastern suburbs.

On learning the position of affairs, the King ordered Sir Marmaduke Langdale—he who had fought so gallantly at Naseby—to cross the Dee eastwards above Chester, whilst himself, with his guards, Lord Gerard, and the remainder of the horse, would enter the city by the west, intending thus to dislodge the republican soldiers by a simultaneous attack upon their front and rear. But these plans were disconcerted by the unexpected appearance of Major-general Poyntz, who had been following in the King's track, and had advanced from Whitchurch to the help of Brereton's forces.

The King reached the city, on the night of Wednesday, the 24th of September, 1645, Sir Marmaduke Langdale having in the meantime crossed the river at Holt Bridge, and drawn up his men on Rowton Heath, some two miles distant. On the following morning Poyntz came upon the scene, when he was attacked by Langdale and repulsed with considerable loss, but a party of Brereton's men, headed by Colonel Jones and Lowthian, hastened to their assistance, when Langdale was in turn overpowered and compelled to seek shelter beneath the city walls, where the Royal Guards, commanded by the young Earl of Lichfield and the Lords Gerard and Lindsey, were ready to support them. The contest now became fierce and general. From the leads on the Phoenix Tower on Chester walls the ill-fated Charles watched the fluctuating progress of this last effort for the maintenance of the Royal power; amid the broken surges of the battle he saw his own battalions alternately retreating and rallying until at length, overpowered by numbers, they were compelled to retreat, and he saw, too, his gallant kinsman, Bernard Stuart, Earl of Lichfield—the third brother of that illustrious family who had sacrificed their lives in the cause—with many a gentleman besides fall dead at his feet, and all that had hitherto survived of his broken remnant of a host either taken prisoners or driven in headlong rout and ruin from the fatal field. "Thenceforward the King's sword was a useless bauble, less significant than the 'George' upon his breast."

Charles bore his misfortune with a dignity and composure that reminds us of his valorous predecessor, the fifth Harry, when in similar peril.

Upon his royal face there is no note

How dread a peril hath enrounded him;
Nor doth he dedicate one jot of colour
Unto the weary and all-watched night;
But freshly looks, and overbears attaint,
With cheerful semblance and sweet majesty.

Chester still held out, and its preservation was of the utmost importance to the Royal cause, for it was the only place at which the King could hope to land the reinforcements expected from Ireland. It was inexpedient, however, for him to incur the risk of being shut up within the beleaguered city, and so at the close of that fatal Thursday when the fight on Rowton Heath was ended, and the grey twilight of the autumn evening was deepening into the sombre gloom of night, the ill-starred monarch—a monarch only in name—accompanied by a small guard and a few faithful followers, passed over the Dee Bridge a fugitive on his way to Denbigh.

Everything which Charles or his friends attempted seemed to bear upon it the impress of a failing or utterly fallen cause. The defeated, powerless, almost friendless monarch was as unsuccessful in the business of diplomacy as he was in that of war; and whatever was indiscreetly planned was sure to be as rashly undertaken. Power had passed from his grasp; but suffering had hardly as yet wreathed its halo round his discrowned brow or

Lent his life the dignity of woe.

While at Denbigh, whither he had sought refuge on the discomfiture of his troops before Chester, he received the mortifying intelligence that Montrose had been surprised near Berwick by Lesley's steel-clad troopers, and that his men, after a brief but gallant resistance, had laid down their arms on the promise of quarter. All hope from that direction was now at an end, and the idea of moving northwards was abandoned. Turning his steps southwards, the fallen monarch, accompanied by a few broken squadrons, retreated by way of Chirk, Bridgenorth, and Lichfield to Newark: whence the march was continued until the evening of the 5th of November, when the tired fugitives entered the city of Oxford, Charles having, as his affectionate historian writes, "finished the most tedious and grievous march that ever King was exercised in."

On the 16th of November, three weeks after the defeat of the Royalist army on Rowton Heath, the garrison of Beeston, after bravely holding out for well-nigh twelve months, and undergoing the severest privations, surrendered to Sir William Brereton. The loss of the great Cheshire stronghold was a severe blow, but the hopes of Charles had not entirely vanished. Chester still held out, and through the long months of that dreary winter its gallant defenders persistently refused to yield. On the 10th of December Brereton's army was reinforced, in accordance with an order of the Parliament, by the Lancashire forces commanded by Colonel Booth, who were then flushed with their recent successes at Lathom House; but rather than surrender the loyal citizens elected to keep a "Lenten Christmas," and, as the old chronicler has it, "to feed on horses, dogs, and cats." On the 1st of January, 1645-6, Brereton sent a preliminary summons to the governor, Lord Byron,^[41] demanding that the city should be immediately given up; but the summons was disregarded; and subsequent demands were treated with the same contumely, until at last, on the 3rd of February, when the brave defenders had become reduced to the last extremity by famine, the city and castle were given up to Brereton, after having withstood a close siege for fully twenty weeks.

The following extract from a letter preserved among the MS. collection of Walker, the historian, of "The Sufferings of the Clergy," in the Bodleian Library, in which the writer, Mr. Edward Seddon, a native of Chester, describing the sufferings his father had to endure during and after the siege, gives a vivid picture of the hardships our forefathers had to face in that great struggle:

In pursuance of a promise I formerly made in a letter to Mr. Webber, I have here sent you the following account of my most honoured father's sufferings in the late times of rebellion and confusion, wherein, though, perhaps, I may be under some mistakes, in not adjusting every passage to its proper time, or mis-nomen of some persons mentioned in it, yet I have not willingly and knowingly trespas'd upon ye truth in any material part of my relation, which I hope you'l therefore peruse with candour as follows;—The Reverend Mr. William Seddon M.A. of Magdalen Coll. in Camb., being about the year of our Lord 1636, setl'd a preacher in one of ye parish Churches, I think St. Maries in ye City of Chester, was then also possess'd of a Vicarage at Eastham (about six miles distant from ye City, value 68li. per annum), where he liv'd with his wife and family in a very happy condition, till ye Civil Wars breaking out, and ye Parliament forces drawing on to besiege Chester, he was compel'd to withdraw his family and effects into ye City for succour, where his great and good Friend and Pastor, ye Lord Bishop Bridgman, then Lord Bishop of Chester, accomodated him with several rooms and lodgings in his own Palace; and yet the aged Bishop dreading the hardships of a siege, voiding the place, leaving my father in his Palace, who continued diligent in his ministry, and frequent Preaching to ye Garrison there. And the City being closely besieg'd and frequently storm'd, my Mother was on ye 12th day of Octob., 1645, delivered of me, her 9th child (all the 9 then living) and said to be ye last yt was publickly baptiz'd in ye Font of yt Cathedral there before ye restoracion in 1660. The City being surrendred upon Articles my Father was shortly apprehended and made Prisoner, and after some short durance was demanded by ye prevailing Powers, why he

had not, according to ye Articles of surrender, march'd off with ye Garrison to ye King's Quarters, to which he reply'd, yt he thought his Cassock had vnconcern'd him in those Articles, being a Minister in ye City, but above all he had a wife, and many small children there, which if he could see tolerably dispos'd of he would, not vnwillingly, accept the Articles. But many complaints being made against him, yt he had in his preaching reflected upon the proceedings of the prevailing party, had animated ye Garrison to resist even unto blood, &c., he was remanded to Prison again, and his house permitted to be plunder'd by ye souldiers, who despoil'd him not of his goods only, but of his books and papers, which they exposed to sale at a very low rate; and so by private directions to some of his friends, he repurchas'd some of the most necessary for his own use. But then an order was drawn up to export his wife and children out of ye City to Eastham (which accordingly was done, several of ye younger sort being put into a wagon with other goods which had escap'd the pillage) where though they had only ye bare walls of a Vicarage house to resort to, yet they found a hearty welcome from ye loial part of the parishioners there, amongst whom they dispers'd themselves, and in a short time after, my Father's confinement was somewhat enlarg'd and his escape conniv'd at, which gave him ye liberty of going in quest of his wife and children, whom he found in pretty good circumstances among his loial friends. But another minister (whose name and character I have utterly forgot)^[42] being despatch'd with orders from ye ruling powers at Chester to supply the vicarage at Eastham, and a rumour dispsd, yt my father must be apprehended again, and reduc'd as prisoner to Chester, he scamper'd about privately to the houses of ye loyal Gentry, to whom his character and condition were well known, and then despatched a letter to his elder Brother Mr. Peter Seddon of Outwood in Lancashire (ye place of my Father's nativity) who was then, at that rate of ye times, turn'd zealous Presbyterian too, and had a son a Captain in ye Parliament's army, acquainting him with ye storm he was under, and requesting him to cover either all or part of his ffamily, till he could weather ye storm; *to which letter ye main of ye answers he had was yt would he conform himself to ye Godly party, his own merits would protect and prefer him*, which so incens'd my Father yet he never more held any correspondence with him.^[43]

After the reduction of Chester, Brereton was free to turn his attention in other directions. Lichfield surrendered to his arms on the 5th of March; on the 21st of April Tutbury was delivered into his possession; seven days later Bridgewater yielded, and on the 12th of May Dudley Castle was taken. "These, with many other victories," says Rycroft, "hath this valiant knight performed which will to after ages stand a monument to his due praise."

Thus restless souls send to eternall rest!
 And active spirits in a righteous way
 Find peace within, though much with war opprest;
 This bravest Brereton of his name could say.
 And now triumphs, maugre those Nimrods dead,
Aston, Capell, Byron, and Northampton dead.
 The slaughter'd Irish, and his native soile
 Now quiet show his courage, love, and toile.

The Parliament was not slow in rewarding him for the important services rendered to the cause. In addition to being made Commander-in-Chief of the Parliament's forces in Cheshire, Staffordshire, and Shropshire, he had conferred upon him the chief Forestership of Macclesfield Forest, as well as the Seneschalship of the Hundred; he received other rewards, too, in the shape of grants of money and lands out of the sequestered estates of "delinquent" Royalists and Papists, and on the termination of the war had bestowed upon him the archiepiscopal palace of Croydon, in which he fixed his residence during the Protectorate.

Brereton, though professedly a Churchman, was notorious for his aversion to the episcopal form of Church government; anxious that his country should enjoy the blessings of the kirk discipline, he busied himself in the brief intervals he could snatch from his military engagements in the direction of the ecclesiastical affairs of his native county, and the accounts and other memoranda preserved in the parish chest of many a village church in Cheshire bear testimony to the suffering and misery inflicted on many a worthy clergyman by his rough and ready method of effecting reforms. Poor William Seddon was not the only one who felt the weight of his displeasure, for the Cheshire parsons had in many instances the mortification of seeing their churches and rectory houses sacked, their livings sequestered, and themselves driven from their flocks and their homes, and, being non-combatants, left powerless to help themselves or their families. Liberty had been clamoured for, but those who clamoured when they got the power, as Fuller says, "girt their own garment closest about the consciences of others." Presbyterianism was as bigoted as Episcopacy, and Independency, which followed, was as intolerant as either.

Brereton lived to see the restoration of monarchy in the person of Charles II., but he did not long survive that event, his death occurring at the palace of Croydon, April 7th, 1661. His remains were brought down into Cheshire for interment in the Honford Chapel attached to Cheadle Church, where many of his progenitors lie, but there is no record of his burial there, though curiously enough in the parish register there is an entry of his death at Croydon. As previously stated, there is no memorial of him in the church, and tradition accounts for the absence by the story that while the body was being conveyed to what was intended to be its last resting place a

river that had to be forded had become swollen by a storm during the night, and that, when endeavouring to cross, the coffin, with its ghastly occupant, was carried away by the surging waters and never recovered. Whether the deft and inquiring local antiquary will ever discover any genuine metal by the smelting of the rude ore of this old wife's fable remains to be seen.

That Sir William Brereton possessed great natural talents and abilities no one can doubt, for without any proper military training he rapidly rose to distinction, and was incontestably one of the greatest military characters that his county has produced. The exigencies of those times demanded military rather than political celebrities, and Brereton was one of the few men possessing the genius needed. It was the great upheaval in the national life that brought him into prominence and gave him the opportunity, and but for that it is more than probable he would never have attained to any special pre-eminence. His character exhibits a happy blending of adroitness and force, and illustrates in a strong degree the prodigious but coarse energy which marked that unhappy age. His thirst for freedom hurried him into open resistance to prerogative, while his religious feelings deepened into something approaching very nearly to fanaticism. The gospel as exhibited in Presbyterianism, and liberty as exemplified in the Parliament, constituted, in his belief, the cause of God and truth, and this was the secret of his influence. His discernment enabled him to gather around him those in whom the same sentiments were blended—stern, dogged, self-reliant Puritans, who believed in God and in the destinies of their leader—and by the master-power of his energy and zeal he succeeded in moulding them to his will. Clarendon speaks of the devotion of the lower orders to "Sir William Brereton and his companions, and their readiness to supply them with intelligence;" and, though he allows their education had but ill-fitted them for the conduct of a war, praises their execution of "their commands with notable sobriety and indefatigable industry (virtues not so well practised in the King's quarters), insomuch as the best soldiers who encountered with them had no cause to despise them." Brereton shared the opinion which Cromwell expressed to his cousin Hampden that an army of "decayed serving men and tapsters" would never be able to encounter "gentlemen that have honour and courage and resolution in them," and therefore he chose only "such men as had the fear of God before them and made some conscience of what they did." Such enthusiasts knew no fear, and had small respect for rank and power so far as outward demeanour was concerned; they had an ever-present belief that they were doing "the Lord's work," and, whether starving in a fortress or ridden down by men in steel, they would not be moved

With dread of death to flight or foul retreat.

Brereton was their chief, but he was their comrade also; if he trained and disciplined them he shared also their hardships, their dangers, and their privations. He was prodigal of his own safety, and his prodigality increased their faith and inspired their confidence, and thus enabled them not only to withstand the reckless daring—the chivalrous bravery of the Cavaliers—but eventually to overcome and scatter those who counted their lives as nothing in defence of their sovereign's cause.

Both Rycroft and Vicars^[44] give what purport to be portraits of Brereton, but they are rude and unsatisfactory, and there is a doubt as to their authenticity. An unfriendly hand ("Mysteries of the Good Old Cause," 12mo., 1663, p. 3) has described him as "a notable man at a thanksgiving dinner, having terrible long teeth and a prodigious stomach to turn the archbishop's chapel at Croydon into a kitchen, also to swallow up that palace and lands at a morsel."

The subsequent history of Handforth Hall is soon told, As previously stated, Sir William Brereton lost his first wife—a daughter of Sir George Booth, of Dunham—before the breaking out of the Civil Wars; he again entered the marriage state, his second wife being Cicely, daughter of Sir William Skeffington, of Fisherwick, in Leicestershire, the widow of his former comrade in arms, Edward Mytton, of Weston, in Staffordshire, but as no mention is made of this lady in his will the presumption is that she also predeceased him. At the time of his death there were living four daughters, two by the first and two by the second marriage, and one son, Thomas Brereton, the sole heir, who succeeded to the baronetcy, and who was then married to the Lady Theodosia, youngest daughter of Humble, first Baron Ward, of Birmingham, ancestor of the present Lord Dudley. This Sir Thomas, who was born in 1632, died childless on the 7th of January, 1673, and was buried on the 17th of the same month in the Handforth Chapel, at Cheadle, where there is now a handsome altar tomb to his memory with his recumbent effigy resting thereon. He is represented in the plate armour of the period, with the hands uplifted and conjoined as if in supplication; the figure is bareheaded, with the long-flowing hair characteristic of the later Carolinian period, and the head rests upon a helmet surmounted with a plume of feathers. At one end is a shield, representing the arms of Brereton impaling those of Ward, and on the side are two shields—Brereton with a crescent as a mark of cadency and the badge of baronetcy, and Ward, and between these on a tablet is the following inscription:—

Here Lyeth the Body of Sr Thomas Brereton of Handforth, Barronett, who Married Theodosia Daughter to the Right Honourable Humble Lord Ward and the Lady Frances Barronesse Dudly. hee Departed this Life the 7th of January Anno Dom: 1673

Ætatis Suae 43.



SIR WILLIAM BRERETON.

With the death of Sir Thomas Brereton the line once so firmly established in Cheshire terminated, and nothing now remains but the old ancestral home, the recollections of the name, and the memories that surround it. After the decease of his widow, who remarried Charles Brereton, and died in childbed, February 23, 1677, frequent disputes respecting the disposition of the estates arose between Nathaniel Booth, of Mottram-Andrew, who claimed as heir under a deed of trust executed in the lifetime of Sir Thomas, and William Ward, the eldest son of Frances Lady Ward, who claimed on the ground of kinship. Eventually they descended to Nathaniel Booth, of Hampstead, heir to Nathaniel Booth, of Mottram-Andrew, who succeeded to the baronetcy, and also to the barony of Delamere. On the 14th of June, 1764, the manor, &c., passed from this Nathaniel by purchase to Edward Wrench, of Chester, and his nephew and heir, Edward Omaney Wrench, sold the same in 1805, to Joseph Cooper, of Handforth, yeoman, whose trustees in turn resold it in 1808 to William Pass, of Altrincham, from whom it was purchased by the late Stephen Symonds, then of Handforth, but subsequently of Broadwater Hall, Worthing, the father of the present rector of Stockport, and James Cunliffe, who held the manor jointly until the dissolution of their partnership in 1875, when it continued in the sole possession of Mr. Symonds until the year 1878, when he resold it to Edward T. Cunliffe, who is the present lord of the manor.





THE "SWAN," NEWBY BRIDGE.



CHAPTER V.

NEWBY BRIDGE AND THE LAKE COUNTRY—AN AUTUMN DAY AT CARTMEL—THE PRIORY CHURCH.



T was Theodore Hook, if we remember rightly, who, when the *New Monthly* was in its prime and he was in one of his most playful moods, sang the praises of the "Swan" at Ditton. Our own memory recalls a pleasant visit to that quaint resting place, famous in the records of Thames anglers and Cockney pleasure parties, when, after much happy and harmless enjoyment upon

The rippling silver stream
That in the sunshine bubbles,

we steered our tiny bark through a small flotilla of boats, round the picturesque aits, and beneath the overhanging willows, to seek the much needed refreshment the ancient hostelry affords. But while we would not willingly decry the attractions of the "snug inn" that Hook's rhyming fancy has made for ever famous, or deny that—

The "Swan," snug inn, good fare affords
As table e'er was put on,
And worthier quite of loftier boards
Its poultry, fish, and mutton;
And while sound wine mine host supplies,
With beer of Meux or Tritton,
Mine hostess, with her bright blue eyes,
Invites to stay at Ditton,

we must confess that, for peaceful quietude, the beauty of the scenery without and the comforts to be found within, we give a preference to the "Swan" at Newby. The old mansion-like inn is familiar, if not indeed endeared, to everyone who has sojourned upon the green shores of wooded Windermere, and in the old coaching days, ere the shrill whistle of the locomotive had awoken the echoes in those peace-breathing valleys, it was as much in favour with the turtle doves and as much sought after by the votaries of Hymen as the "Low Wood" is at the present time. It stands on the banks of the Leven, near its outlet from the lake, and at the very foot of that bleak range of fir-clad melancholy hills that rise like a mountain barrier to guard the Lake country from the inroads of the treacherous sea. The clear river glides smoothly along by the front of the house, a quaint old bridge of five arches with queer little recesses on either side bestrides the stream, and, just below, its waters are dammed up by a weir, over which they fall in sheets of whitened

foam, making a perpetual music that awakes the drowsy echoes of the vale. Simple are the details, but charming is the combination—the old bridge, grey and weather-worn and lichen-stained, the white front of the pleasant old hostelry repeating itself in the still clear waters of the Leven, the little patch of unpretentious garden with a trim pleasure-boat moored to its bank, and the clump of tall trees at the foot of the bridge that bend gracefully over the stream and now and then dip their pensile branches in the current, together make up as attractive a picture as the eye of an artist would wish to rest upon.

If you have an hour to spare, you cannot better employ it than by climbing the wooded hill that rises from behind the inn, crowned with a square tower, the "Folly," as it is called, erected in memory of England's naval victories. From the top of Finsthwaite, for that is the name, you have one of the most varied and charming prospects that even the Lake country affords. Beneath you, lying like an outstretched panorama, may be seen the whole length of Windermere, with its verdant slopes, its green isles, its wooded hills, and heather-clad fells. The water, in the intensity of its blueness, rivals the azure dome above; and the eye, as it ranges along the placid surface, can trace the river-like course of the lake and note every jutting headland and every indentation along its shores. Just beyond the Ferry is Bowness, and, further north, near the head of the lake, is a cluster of mountain peaks, the advanced guard of the mighty Helvellyn, Wansfell, Loughrigg, and the twin pikes of Langdale rising prominently among them. From the summit of this tree-clad eminence the prospect is delightful at all seasons—in the early morning when the thin filmy mists of night are gathering up their skirts and stealing lazily up the mountain sides, or when evening comes on calm, and golden, and the slanting beams of the declining sun stream upon you with dazzling, almost blinding, brilliance. If you can choose your opportunity at the season when the summer's green is changing to the russet brown which tells of the waning of the year and are fortunate enough before the gloaming begins to catch the sunset effects as the warm rays tip with roseate hue the stony coronal of Gummer How, and shed a flood of golden light upon the wild fells already purpled with autumnal splendour, you will linger long to gaze upon the scene of ever-changeful beauty, and mark the varied combinations and the exquisite gradations of colour as the yellow light changes into a gorgeous crimson and the crimson deepens into purple until all becomes shadowy and vague.

Southwards the view is of an entirely different character. You may trace the course of the Leven as it winds its way beneath the precipitous hills, through the deep-wooded glen, and by the rocky gorge at Backbarrow, where there is a cotton mill that seems strangely out of place, to the shores of Morecambe Bay; the puffs of white steam that ever and anon steal through the umbrage mark the line of the railway from Lakeside to Ulverston, and show the close companionship the rail and the river keep. Eastwards, across the valley where the lower slopes of the bleak Cartmel Fells sink down into a carpet of verdure, is the little village of Staveley, with its modest house of prayer in which good old Edmund Law,^[45] the father of a bishop, the grandfather of two bishops and a Lord Chief Justice, and the great-grandfather of a Governor General of India (Lord Ellenborough), ministered for half a century in consideration of the modest stipend of £20 a year.

But we are wandering from our story, for it is not Newby Bridge and its surroundings, but Cartmel and its venerable priory church—the only monastic institution that escaped mutilation when the Defender of the Faith suppressed the religious houses—that now attract our attention. A part of the hamlet of Newby Bridge is in the parish of Cartmel, but the mother church lies on the other side of the Fell, and is at least six miles distant. If the visitor is stout in lung and strong of limb he cannot do better than make the journey afoot, taking the way over the breezy moors, where every turn of the roads reveals some new object of interest, and when he has scaled the last ascent he can look down into the peaceful valley, at the bottom of which the quaint old village with its ancient church, almost cathedral-like in its proportions, may be seen nestling in serene seclusion. The less adventurous will find a more easy way by rail from Lakeside to Ulverstone, and thence to Cark or Grange, from which places it is distant a couple of miles or so, though, to our thinking, the pleasantest way is to secure the box-seat on Mr. Rigg's coach, which calls every day at the "Swan" on the way to and from Grange. You are sure of a capital team and a chatty and communicative driver, who knows all the places of interest about, and possesses an inexhaustible fund of anecdote. For a distance of three miles the road is a continuous ascent, the country presenting little else than an undulating expanse of wild moors, relieved in places with plantations of fir and larch. At Newton, a little straggling village, cold, bleak, and stony looking, you come in sight of the valley through which flows the Winster, the Milnthorp Sands, and the broad expanse of Morecambe Bay. Then the road begins to descend; Buck Crag, at the foot of which Edmund Law had his dwelling, is on the left; presently the pretty little hamlet of Lindale—the scene of one of Mrs. Gaskell's most charming stories—is reached, after which you pass beneath the wooded heights of Blawith and Aggerslack, and a few minutes later reach the seaside village of Grange. From this place the walk is about three miles, and a good part of it is uphill. Passing along the steep straggling street that comprises what ever there is of town, you reach the church, a modest little Gothic structure crowning a grassy knoll that overlooks the bay, the groves of Yew-barrow, and the long stretch of coast that sweeps round by Silverdale and Carnforth towards the Lune. Here the road tends to the right, skirting the slopes of Hampsfell, on the summit of which is the well-known "Hospice," a square stone tower, built by a former incumbent of Cartmel, the Rev. Thomas Remington, for the comfort and convenience of those who traverse the lonely fell. Continuing for some distance along a pleasant tree-shaded lane, where the scenery is fresh at every turn, you come presently to the summit of the high ground where the road divides, one path leading to Allithwaite, another to Cark, and the third, taking a northerly course, descends into the vale of Cartmel. Hedgerows border the way, alternating now

and then with patches of stone wall, grey and jagged and lichen-stained, and half hidden in places with copse and brushwood. On the left the slope is steep, and at the bottom a small stream—the Ea—winds its way freakishly in and out, circling with playful eddies round the moss-clad stones that Nature's careless hand has strewn along its channel, and then hurrying on to go with the Leven to the sea. The plummy woods about Holker come well in view, and in front are the green acclivities of Broughton, backed by a cluster of swelling hills, with the Furness Fells and the range about Coniston—the Alt Maen or Old Man and its hoary companions stretching away into the shadowy distance. We meet few wayfarers, and, with the exception of a solitary homestead or two, we do not see a house until we come close upon the town. Near the entrance, on the left, is a small, unpretending building, half chapel, half school in appearance; a meeting house of the Society of Friends, which some would-be humorist has described as a centre of gravity. A few yards further on is the village school, and, passing this, we enter the town, which comprises a few groups of houses scattered irregularly round the grand old priory church, the lofty battlemented walls of which, whitened by the storms of six hundred years, tower above them with an air of solemn grandeur. It is a secluded out-of-the-world sort of place, with a quaintness about it that almost leads you to believe it has seen little change since William Mareschall, Earl of Pembroke, in the year 1188, gave its lands to the monks of the order of St Augustine—the same earl whose name is brought before us in Shakespeare's "King John," and whose recumbent effigy may still be seen in the round tower of the Temple Church in London.

Antiquaries tell us that the name Cartmel is of British origin,^[46] and signifies the entrenched camp of fortification among the fells, an opinion that is in some measure borne out by the number of British as well as Roman antiquities that have been discovered at different times. The site of the camp is supposed to have been in the fields on the bank of the little river Ea, now called the Beck, a little to the north-west of the church, and which to this day are known as the Castle Meadows. The earliest mention we have of it is in the Life of St. Cuthbert, written by one of the monkish historians, from which it appears that some time between the years 677 and 685, Ecgfrith, King of the Northumbrian Angles, having conquered Cumberland, Westmoreland, and the adjoining districts, gave to Cuthbert, whom he had caused to be consecrated Bishop of Lindisfarne, "the whole of the lands called Cartmel, with all the Britons in it," a phrase which goes to show that, though the aboriginal Britons had been reduced to slavery by their Saxon oppressors, they had for two centuries and a half been permitted to retain their ancient home among the hills of this wild and almost insulated tract of country. From this time a chasm of something like five centuries occurs in the history. Whether the monks retained possession of the lands after the death of Cuthbert, or whether the place was ravaged by the Danish invaders, is not known with certainty, but, as no mention of it occurs in the Domesday Survey, it is not unreasonable to assume that the place had been laid waste during some of the Danish incursions, and the church which Cuthbert reared destroyed. There is, however, undoubted evidence that a religious establishment existed at Cartmel before the priory church was founded, several of the deeds conveying lands to the neighbouring Abbey of Furness being attested by ecclesiastics of Cartmel; for example, in 1135 the name of "Willelmus Clericus de Kertmel" appears as witness to a deed of gift, and in 1155 that of "Uccheman, Parsona de Chertmel," occurs in a like capacity.

Some time during the reign of the lion-hearted King, Richard the First, William, Earl of Pembroke, influenced by the spirit of the times, conceived the idea of founding a house for a fraternity of canons regular of the order of St. Augustine, the brotherhood being so named to distinguish them from those secular canons who abandoned the practice of living in community. To carry out his purpose he obtained from John, Earl of Morteign, afterwards King John, a grant of lands in Cartmel for the permanent endowment of his house. Here tradition comes upon the scene, and with the warm colouring of romance fills in the cold outlines of historic fact. As in many other places, a marvellous story is related of the way in which Earl Pembroke's pious canons discovered and were led to make choice of this green nook hidden away among the bleak mountain solitudes. Wandering about, it is said, in search of a settlement, they somehow or other found their way into this remote corner of Lancashire, where they discovered a hill commanding an agreeable prospect and suitable in every way for their purpose. Having marked out their foundation, they were proceeding to build, when a mysterious voice was heard directing them to remove to another locality, described as "a valley between two rivers, where the one runs north and the other south." Why the particular spot was not more clearly defined the old monkish chroniclers have omitted to tell us, but the poor homeless fathers in obedience to the supernatural command, abandoned their work, and wandered up and down in search of a spot answering to the description so vaguely given. Failing in their efforts, they determined on retracing their steps; plodding their way wearily through the tangled forests, they eventually reached the pleasant vale of Cartmel, when, to their joy, they came unexpectedly upon a small stream, the flow of which was towards the north, and, crossing it, they arrived presently at another running in the opposite direction, the hill which they had originally selected being in close proximity. Here, then, midway between the two streams, they determined on erecting their church, dedicating it when completed to the Virgin. Afterwards they built a small chapel on the hill where they had heard the mysterious voice, dedicating it to St. Bernard, though St. Vox, if there is such a saint in the Roman calendar, would have been more appropriate. The church remains a lasting monument of their architectural skill, but the chapel has long since disappeared, though the tree-clad hill on which it stood still retains the name of St. Bernard's Mount.

Leaving the shadowy realm of legend and romance, and confining ourselves to the prosaic facts of history, we find that in 1188, when the pious Pembroke endowed the religious house at

Cartmel, he directed that it should be free and released from all subjection to any other house. With the view of preventing its ever being transformed into an abbey he further directed that from time to time, on the death of a prior, the canons should select two of their number and present them to him as the patron, or his heirs, and from them should be chosen the one that should serve as prior in succession, and who should have the name and office of prior only, and that an abbey should never be made of the Priory, the charter of foundation concluding in these words:—"This house have I founded for the increase of holy religion, giving and conceding to it every kind of liberty that the mouth can utter or the heart of man conceive: whosoever, therefore, shall cause loss or injury to the said house or its immunities, may he incur the curse of God, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the other saints of God, besides my particular malediction." How far the invoked curses of the Blessed Virgin or the "particular malediction" of William Earl of Pembroke tended to the protection of the Priory of Cartmel we shall hereafter see.

William Mareschall, Earl of Pembroke, the founder of the Priory of Cartmel, was a notable personage, and filled a large space in the history of his generation. His first wife was a daughter of the redoubtable Strongbow, the real conqueror of Ireland, and the one who in the reign of Henry II. first brought that country under the dominion of the English Crown. After her death, he married for his second wife a daughter of that faithless tyrant King John, a fortunate circumstance for both King and country, for the Earl became the trusted adviser of the sovereign, and by his tact and judgment won from him the great charter of English liberties, and in so doing enabled the recreant monarch to retain his crown.

When Pembroke founded his Priory of Canons at Cartmel the sturdy old warrior and statesman made ample provision for its future maintenance, for he endowed it with the manor and all his lands in the district of Cartmel, together with the advowson of the then existing church, the funds of that more ancient ecclesiastical foundation being merged in the Priory revenues, the parishioners in turn being permitted to retain a part of the Priory as their parish church, and one of the canons being required to officiate as their priest. The earl further bestowed upon his foundation the fishery of the Kaen, the church of Balifar, and chapel of Balunadan with its appendages, and the town of Kinross in Ireland, with the advowson of its church and all that pertained thereto. The "Priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Kartmele," as it was anciently written, was subsequently enriched by many grants, donations, and other "offerings of the faithful." When King John ascended the throne he confirmed by Royal charter the foundation grant of the Earl of Pembroke, the only thing he did for his son-in-law's foundation, for that not very religious, or at all events not very scrupulous, monarch was more anxious to "shake the bags of the hoarding abbots" than to add to their contents, and if we except the Abbey of Beaulieu, in Hampshire, and the monastery of Hales Owen, in Shropshire, there is no record of his having either founded or endowed any religious house during his lifetime. The charter confirming the foundation grant also ratified the gift of Gilbert de Boelton of lands on the rocky promontory of Hunfride-heved, or Humphrey Head as it is now called, where, as tradition affirms, the last wolf in England was hunted down; and also an acre of land there and the close of Kirkepoll, the present Kirkhead, which one Simon, the son of Ukeman, had bestowed.

William de Walton was appointed the first prior of the newly-founded house. Settling down in this quiet green nook in Lancashire—the very spot for a life of religious seclusion—under the protection of their pious patron, the powerful Pembroke, the fraternity continued to lead a life of sanctity and single-blessedness, and on the whole they must have had rather a pleasant time of it, for, if history is to be relied on, the monotony of a religious life was varied by a considerate attention to their worldly well-being; they tilled their lands, made home improvements, now and then they busied themselves in building a grange in which to garner their produce, and occasionally a mill, where they and their tenants might grind their corn. The prior seems to have been early imbued with the principles of free trade, for as far back as the year 1203 we find him "obtaining letters patent" empowering him to export corn from his possessions in Ireland; later on we find the same worthy in a court of law defending his fishery rights, when Ralph de Bethom had been poaching in the waters of the Kaen, and it would be unjust to the memory of the fraternity to say that they ever neglected any opportunity of augmenting the privileges or the wealth of their house. Numerous additions to the original endowments were made by pious benefactors, and, as an incentive to benevolent effort, Walter Gray, Abbot of York, promised an indulgence of twenty days of pardon to all who should charitably relieve with their goods the fabric of the church of St. Mary, of "Kertmell."

In 1233, Cartmel having submitted to the authority of the Holy Roman Father, received a special mark of his paternal regard. Among the duchy muniments, transferred some years ago to the Record Office, London, is a Papal Bull of protection granted by Gregory IX. "to his beloved children the Prior of St. Mary of Karmel and to his brethren, present and future, professing the religious life for ever." Mr. Herford, the editor of the second volume of Baines's "Lancashire," has given a careful translation of this remarkable document, which is of considerable length. It begins with the declaration that "It is fit that apostolic succour should attend those who choose the religious life, lest by chance some fit of rashness should call them back from what they have proposed, or take away the sacred power of religion. Therefore my chosen children in the Lord, we graciously assent to your just request, and have taken the Church of the Holy Mother of God, the Virgin Mary of Kermel, in which ye are engaged in divine service, under the protection of the blessed Peter and ourselves, and favour you with the privilege of the present writing." The grant then decrees that the church shall enjoy certain immunities, ordains that the canonical orders of St. Augustine shall be observed, and confirms to the church all its possessions, and, further, gives licence to perform, during a general interdict, religious service, provided it was done in a low

voice and without ringing of bells, those interdicted and excommunicated being excluded, and the doors kept closed—a general interdict being the occasion when, under the orders of the Sovereign Pontiff, public prayers and all ecclesiastical rites were to be laid aside, the sacraments to be no longer administered, except to infants and dying persons, and the dead to be cast into ditches by the wayside without any religious ceremonial. Power was also given to prohibit the building of any chapel or oratory within the limits of the parish, and any ecclesiastic or layman knowingly contravening the provisions of the Bull was threatened with the terrors of excommunication.

During the palmy days of its prosperity the head of the house at Cartmel was an important personage; his priory not only held the privilege of exemption from general interdicts, but he himself was free from the various spiritual and temporal ills that monastic flesh was heir to, and had, moreover, the right of holding his court and trying and deciding disputes within the manor, with liberty to inflict punishment upon offenders; and when his claim was disputed, as it was in 1292, though the rights to wreck of the sea and waifs which he had claimed were declared forfeit to the King, his demand of the privileges of sok, sak, tol, theam, infangthef, and utfangthef, as they are expressed in the jargon of the day, was conceded, which means that he was entitled to the privileges of a manorial lord to hold the pleas in his own court in matters arising out of disputes with his own tenants; of imposing fines therein and enforcing his decrees; of judging bondsmen and villeins as well as of punishing thieves found within his own lands, and requiring that those dwelling within his manor, if taken for felony beyond, be tried within his own court.

The time was, however, approaching when the iron rod of this disposer of the lives and liberties of those settled around him was to be broken in pieces and the people delivered from priestly domination. A mighty change in religious thought and action was taking place which gradually gained strength, and culminated in that great event which swept like a tornado over the land when the once zealous champion of the Romish system, to replenish his exhausted exchequer, became the plunderer of the Church that had bestowed on him the title of "Defender of the Faith," and swept away prior and abbot, pride, pomp and power, and shrines and relics from their ancient and accustomed places.

In 1535 the King ordered a general visitation of the religious houses. In the autumn of that year Leyton, Lee, and Petre, with Dr. John London, Dean of Wallingford, the commissioners, made their appearance and summoned the prior and monks to give an account of their worldly possessions. In the MS. surveys then made the total income varies in amount from £89 4s. 7d. to £91 6s. 3d., while Speed, the antiquary, rates it at £124 2s. 1d., the lowest computation being equal to an annual income of £2,141 10s. at the present day. In the following year the Act was passed confiscating to the Crown all the religious houses whose yearly income did not amount to £200, and Cartmel was included in the list of those doomed by the King. We need not dwell upon the way in which the Royal tyrant's edict went forth, or how the good and the bad, the honest and the corrupt, among the religious houses were ordered to be dismantled.

The brotherhood of Cartmel, however, made a vigorous protest against this invasion of their rights, and petitioned for a new survey on the ground that the previous valuation did not include the whole of the sources from which their income was derived. Commissioners were again sent down, when the Prior presented a return which included the income derived from lands and the tithes collected at the tithe-barns of Godderside, Flookburgh, and Allithwaite, and also the oblations made "at the Relyke of the Holy Crosse," preserved within their Priory Church, the total revenue being thus increased from £89 4s. 7d. to £212 12s. 10d. A copy of this survey is preserved among the Duchy Records in the Record Office, and is especially interesting from the circumstance of its giving the names of the canons on the foundation at that time, the number and names of the servants, artificers, and husbandmen employed about the establishment, with the nature of their respective occupations. Richard Preston was then the prior, and "of the age of forty-one yerys;" James Eskerige was sub-prior, and there were in addition eight canons. The "waytyng s'v'ntes" numbered ten "wayters," two "woodeleaders," two "shep'des," and one hunter. The "comon officers and artyfycers of the house" included the brewer, baker, barber, cook "skulyan," "butler of the ffratrye," "keeper of the woode," milner, ffysher, wryght, pulter, ffestman, and maltmaker, with two others whose occupations are obliterated in the manuscript, and in addition to these there were eight hinds, making a total of thirty-eight, in addition to the ten ecclesiastics, a number that seems out of proportion to the religious inmates of the house, notwithstanding that there were considerable demesne lands under cultivation. But the protestations of the Prior were of little avail. Thomas Holcroft had conceived a desire to become owner of the groves of Cartmel, and that mighty trafficker in church lands was a man not easily moved from his purpose; Cartmel was doomed, and Richard Preston had no choice but to surrender his high trust or run the risk of being hanged at the gate of his own Priory, as some ecclesiastics were who hesitated to avow their belief that Henry VIII. was God's vicegerent on earth, or who refused to voluntarily give up to his minions the fair places that had been their homes to become wanderers like so many Cains over the face of the earth.

Though the Act which authorised the suppression of the Priory was passed in April, 1536, it was not until the following year that the King's Commissioners proceeded to the accomplishment of their task. The Earls of Derby and Sussex, with their satellites, Southwell, Tunstall, Leybourne, Byron, Sandford, and Holcroft, were deputed to undertake the work; fit instruments they were, and very effectually they accomplished their purpose. They demolished the walls of the cloisters and levelled to the dust the other portions of the monastic buildings which then extended across the river on arches up to the tower gateway, the only vestige of the house which now remains.

The work of destruction fell less heavily upon the church, not because it was less suited to the purposes of the levellers, but because it was parochial as well as monastic, and the parishioners claimed it as belonging to them, though it must be confessed they had not done much to entitle them to consideration at the hands of the rapacious Henry. If tradition is to be relied on, they had urged their prior to join the insurrection instigated by the northern monks, commonly known as the "Pilgrimage of Grace," but that cautious and time-serving ecclesiastic fled to Preston, where the Earl of Derby was engaged raising an army for the suppression of the revolt, and claimed his protection, returning to his Priory only to be a few short months later ejected from it for ever. When the parishioners interposed, pleading that the church was parochial and therefore beyond the control of his Majesty's Commissioners, the matter was referred to head-quarters in these words:—

Item, for ye Church of Cartmell, being the Priorie and also ye P'ich Church, whether to stand unplucked down or not?

Answer—Ord. by Mr. Chancellor of the Duchie to stand styll.

It'm, for a suet of coopes (suit of copes) claymed by ye inhabitants of Cartmell to belong to ye Church thereof, the gift of oon Brigg?

Answer—Ord. that the P'ochians shall have them styll.

Item, for a chales (chalice), a Masse Booke, a Vestymnt, with other things necessarie for a P'sh Church claymed by saide P'ochians to be customablie found by ye P'son of said Church?

No answer.

Though the commissioners were restrained in their "unplucking down" of the church, much havoc and destruction had been done to the sacred fane before their hands were stayed. They destroyed the painted windows, mutilated the carved work, stripped off the roof of the Piper choir and other parts of the fabric, and thus effectually got rid of the inmates, and in that state the church was allowed to remain for a period of eighty years, when Mr. George Preston, of Holker, with some assistance from the parishioners, repaired the dilapidated edifice generally, and decorated the inside with a stuccoed ceiling, and the choir and chancel with a profusion of curiously and elaborately carved wood work.

In 1541 Henry VIII. granted the site of the Priory to Thomas Holcroft, an unscrupulous agent whom an unscrupulous master afterwards knighted, but he did not keep it long, having in 32 Henry VIII. exchanged it with the King for other lands in the south of England, when it again came into possession of the Crown as part of the Duchy of Lancaster, and so continued until the time of Charles I., when, with other lands forming part of the manor of Cartmel, which had been granted by King James to Thomas Emmerson and Richard Cowdall, it was conveyed to George, son of Christopher Preston, of Holker, whose great-granddaughter Katharine conveyed it in marriage to Sir William Lowther; and her grandson, also Sir William Lowther, dying issueless in 1756, the property passed to his cousin, Lord George Augustus Cavendish, from whom it has descended with other Cartmel property to the present Duke of Devonshire, who is also patron and lay rector; the advowson with the tithes of Cartmel, which, in 1561, were annexed to the see of Chester, having been granted in 1561 by the Bishop of Chester to the George Preston, of Holker, before named.

Cartmel has a quiet, staid respectable aspect, with a dignified and decorous serenity about it that almost leads you to believe the old place must be conscious of its claim to consideration. You might fancy it to be a minster town, the air of cloisteral seclusion that prevails so well according with the superiorities of the church. Many of the houses have an old-world look about them, and, with a searching eye, you may find bits of unmistakable antiquity—random corners and architectural phantasies—enough to store the note-book of any artist fond of crooked and accidental diversities of grouping. The market place, which, with one or two straggling streets, constitutes what there is of town, is an irregular square with a tall stone obelisk that serves the double purpose of market cross and lamp-post standing in the middle; the fish stones are on one side, and surrounding it are a few old-fashioned dwellings ranged in an in-and-out sort of fashion, as if elbowing one another for frontage. On market days, when the farmers and the country people come in from the surrounding villages, the place puts on an air of bustle and activity, but at other times it is quiet and dreamy enough for the grass to grow upon the pavement. But for a chance pilgrim from Grange or Cark you might look in vain for a passer by; the people, too, seem as if the railway had not yet accustomed them to the novelty of strange faces, for as you go by they peer at you from their windows, and the shopkeeper who deals in groceries, drapery, and hardware, and everything besides, comes out on to his doorstep to gaze after you, wondering what possible business can have brought a stranger to such a secluded by-way of the world.

On one side of the square is a picturesque relic of the middle ages, the ancient gateway that once formed the principal approach to the conventual buildings. It has fallen from its former dignity and been roughly dealt with by the modern Goths and Vandals, but in its forlorn and dilapidated state it retains the unmistakable hoariness of age upon it. The walls are of considerable thickness, and within them are queer recesses and secret passages that were, doubtless, intended for safety in time of danger. The groining of the arch has disappeared, and it is now covered with a coating of plaster; the niche which, doubtless, once contained the image of the Virgin is tenantless, and the window lighting the room in which it is said the priors of Cartmel

were wont to hold their manorial court and deal out a rough and ready kind of justice to their tenantry has lost its mullions, though happily the trefoil carvings still remain. After the prior and his canons had been turned adrift, the old gatehouse was purchased by the inhabitants from George Preston for the sum of £30 and converted into a "publike schoole-house," and for a period of one hundred and sixty-six years,—from 1624 to 1790, when another school was built—it continued to be used for that purpose, the children aforetime having been taught in the church by a "scriphener."

From the gateway you can trace the outer walls and note the general arrangement of the priory buildings, the area comprising all being about twenty-two statute acres.

But the old Priory Church is the great attraction of Cartmel. It is a noble monument of architectural skill, and we may thank the guardians of the centuries that the hand of Time has been restrained from pressing heavily upon it. It overshadows every other building, and gives an air of dignity and importance to the humble erections that gather round. Let us take our stand by the low wall that forms the boundary of the quiet graveyard while we gaze upon the venerable fabric and drink in the genius of the place. It is an October evening, and the sun is sinking like a great red ball behind the darkening hills; the woods are touched with russet and gold, and though the air is breathlessly calm a few leaves flutter down from the trees that skirt the churchyard wall. The ancient fane is worth going far to see—a huge pile of masonry, grey with age, and picturesque by its very diversities of style. It is cruciform in plan, with a low square tower—low by comparison, for the apex of the nave roof is nearly as high—rising from the intersection of the cross to a height of 85ft., and surmounted by another tower of smaller dimensions, also square in plan, but placed diagonally to the base of the lower one, as if it were an afterthought of the builder's, an arrangement so unusual that your attention is arrested by its oddness. The western front is good, but the master work is the choir, with its majestic window of nine lofty mullioned lights, and richly traceried head, 40ft. in height, and occupying nearly the whole of the eastern gable. A cursory glance is sufficient to show that the building has been erected at different periods—Norman and Early English—Decorated and Perpendicular mingling in curious combination. How thoroughly the old monastic builders understood their work. Whatever may have been their faults and frailties, they were imbued with a noble enthusiasm which in its religious development found vent in the sublime conceptions embodied in the magnificent structures which adorn the land, and which illustrate the rise, the progress, and the decay of Gothic art. Unfettered by the rules which curb and restrain the hand of the architect of modern days, their genius imparted its own spirit to the hand of the mason, whose skill is manifested in the glorious creations which command our admiration by the vastness of their proportions, the simple grace and beauty of their design, and the elegance of their ornamentation; while their sculptures and carvings, in which burlesque and satire oftentimes ran riot, were marked by a quaintness of conceit, every touch of the chisel seeming to impart a life and character and spirit that you look for in vain in the productions of the craftsman of modern times. Look with loving eyes upon the grand old pile as it reposes in the evening sunshine; a saintly stillness prevails, and a soft, shadowy haze is gradually shrouding the distant landscape from view. The mellowing light, as it falls on battlement and buttress, corbel and gargoye, brings out every projection and inequality with wondrous effect, and softens into beauty every scar and furrow which the corrosive hand of Time has made upon it. You long to linger upon the scene, and not without a wish that Time would retrace his steps and show you the place as it was in its pristine glory before the men of religion had begun "to draw too proud a breath" and General Aske and his 40,000 ragamuffins had entered upon that perilous enterprise "the Pilgrimage of Grace."

But our reverie is cut short; for while we have been gazing upon the scene of quiet beauty, William Lancaster, the parish clerk, has left his saddlery and brought his keys, in order to show us over the fabric, and an intelligent and companionable guide he is, neither fussy nor obtrusive, but possessing a fund of reliable information that is serviceable to the stranger who wishes to spend a pleasant hour in examining the details.

The first thought that strikes the visitor on entering is the loftiness of the interior, and the long perspective of the nave and choir. The pillars which support the central tower are of Norman character and of massive proportions, the arches springing from them being pointed and of somewhat later date. In the centre of the roof is a panel with the inscription, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo Aedif.*, 1188. *Renov.* 1850, upon a garter, and on the other parts are four heraldic shields, on which are blazoned the arms of (1) William Mareschall, Earl of Pembroke, the founder; (2) the Prestons, of Holker; (3) the archiepiscopal see of York; and (4) the arms of the see of Carlisle. The inscription on the centre panel shows that the church was renovated in 1850. The work has been thorough and complete, under the direction of Mr. Paley, of Lancaster, who, while carefully retaining whatever was worth preserving, has succeeded in bringing to light many interesting features that were previously hidden from view, and has thus entitled himself to the gratitude of every lover of mediæval art. The flat ceilings have been removed, the galleries cleared away, the walls stripped of their plaster covering, the triforium arcade reopened, and the carved masonry relieved of the paint and whitewash with which successive generations of churchwardens had industriously clogged every bit of ornament they could find, so that the building now presents much the same appearance that it must have done in its palmy days. The choir is of unusually large dimensions, and worthy almost of a cathedral. It is separated from the chapels by two circular arches of Norman character, with elaborately ornamented mouldings; above them is a fine triforium arcade of twenty-two pointed arches on each side, springing from cylindrical shafts, with a passage running behind that seems to have been originally carried round the east end. The

grand east window contains some remains of ancient glass, sufficient to show how exquisitely beautiful it must have been ere "Maister Thomas Houlcrofte" and his myrmidons made such havoc with it. The reredos occupying the space between the sill of the window and the top of the communion table is divided into panels and filled in with a series of frescoes in gold and colour that display considerable artistic skill; they are the work of Lady Louisa Egerton, the wife of Captain Egerton, R.N., and daughter of the Duke of Devonshire. An interesting feature in the choir is the series of stalls, twenty-six in number, that were used by the canons before the priory was dissolved; they are of Perpendicular character and handsomely carved, though unfortunately the ornamentation has been much injured by exposure to the weather during the long years the church remained unroofed. Each stall has its miserere or projecting bracket on the under side of the seat, which, as was customary in pre-Reformation times, works upon a kind of hinge, so that when turned up it would, without actually forming a seat, afford considerable relief to the ecclesiastics during those long services of the Roman Catholic Church in which they were required to remain in a standing posture. These seats will well repay examination; each is elaborately carved, and the artist has given full play to his fancy. One of them displays the emblems of the Saviour's Passion, but, in addition to the usual crown of thorns and the nails, we have the ear which Peter struck off the head of the High Priest's servant, the sword with which that rash act was performed, the basin in which Pilate washed his hands, the dice with which the soldiers cast lots for the Saviour's vesture, and the sponge that, when filled with vinegar, was presented to him while on the cross. Another seat symbolises the Trinity by the carving of three faces on one head; the favourite device of the mermaid with the usual attributes—the comb and mirror—also appears, and a common subject of mediæval sculpture—a pelican feeding its young, or "in piety," as the heralds phrase it—is also represented. The other carvings are for the most part grotesque heads, winged beasts, and foliage. The canopies over the stalls are of much later date, and were the gift of George Preston, of Holker, who in 1619 repaired and re-roofed the building. The columns supporting them have richly carved Corinthian capitals, and are interesting as showing that in that comparatively early period the classic forms of ornamentation had come into vogue in this remote corner of Lancashire, and that Grecian had then begun to take the place of Gothic art.

The year 1850 marked the inauguration of a happy era in the history of Cartmel; it was that in which the much-needed renovation of the church may be said to have begun. The zeal which prompted George Preston in 1616 to restore the ruined sanctuary to something like its pristine beauty found imitators. In that year Mr. Remington, the vicar, appealed for funds to enable him to put the decayed and crumbling edifice in a state of decent repair. His appeal was liberally responded to, and he had the satisfaction of seeing many of the hideous obstructions which past ages had crowded together removed, the flat plaster ceiling which disfigured the centre of the church cleared away, and the walls and pillars denuded of their accumulations of paint and whitewash. The work which he began was carried on with increased energy by his successor, Mr. Hubbersty, and extended throughout the nave and the north and south transepts. The progress was slow, but continuous; seventeen years were occupied upon it, and in the autumn of 1867 it was pronounced to be complete.

The windows—

All garlanded with carven imageries
And diamonded with panes of quaint device—

which once told the story of the line of Jesse and dyed the pavement with their many-hued reflections had been despoiled of their painted glass, not by the ruthless reformers of the sixteenth century, but, as Mr. Stockdale, the historian of Cartmel, with good reason affirms, many years before, when a portion of the glass was carried off to beautify the church at Bowness, where it may still be seen; the few fragments, however, that remained were carefully preserved and protected from further risk of injury. That monopoliser of Church property, Thomas Holcroft, took away everything he could lay his hands on, including, as the survey expresses it, the "Belles, Lede, and Goodes," destroying at the same time whatever in his opinion might be described as relics of superstitious devotion. What he left undone the Iconoclasts of a later date very effectually accomplished. It is worthy of note, however, that in the troublous times of the Civil Wars Cartmel suffered little as compared with many other churches in the kingdom, the only injury it sustained being the perforation of the door at the west end of the south aisle with a number of shot holes—the work, as the inhabitants assure you, of Cromwell's troopers, which, if the story is to be relied on, must have been in 1644, when Colonel Rigby and his men, after plundering Dalton, passed the night at Cartmel on their way to Thurland Castle. It is more likely, however, to have been some of Prince Rupert's soldiers who thus left their mark behind them, for though Thomas Preston, of Holker, the patron of the church, was a staunch Royalist, the parson and the people of Cartmel were attached to the cause of the Parliament; and John Shaw, the puritan rector of Lymm, records in his diary that when he was there for a time, "preaching and catechising in season and out of season," he had "frequently some thousands of hearers," and that "usually the churches were so thronged by nine o'clock in the morning that he had much ado to get to the pulpit." The diarist adds, "How the Prince Rupert's soldiers there caryed themselves at and near Cartmel, that country will tell to posterity," though, if it did, the "posterity" to whom it was told neglected to hand down the story.

It is only fair to say that some of the most reprehensible acts of vandalism to which the edifice has been subjected have been perpetrated within the present century. From the time of the Commonwealth until the Victorian era ecclesiastical architecture was comparatively neglected,

and it is perhaps fortunate for the present generation that it should have been, else we might have seen many a grand old Gothic pile of pre-Reformation date destroyed to make room for miserable monstrosities of brick of the fashion of the Queen Anne and the Georgian periods, a style that a wretched taste has within the last few years sought to resuscitate. Little more than two generations ago architectural art was at its lowest ebb, with little prospect of its ever being revived. Utilitarianism was the order of the day, and, much as we are disposed to blame country churchwardens for their misdoings, half our indignation vanishes when we remember that they only followed the example set them by their betters. Fifty years ago or thereabouts the "Improvers" were let loose upon the ancient fane at Cartmel, when, as Mr. Stockdale in his *Annales Caermoelensis* tells us, "the wooden rails of the Harrington monument, split with the axe out of logs of oak, before the use of the plane or the general use of the saw (indices of high antiquity), were torn down and committed to the flames, and a smart iron railing put up in their stead. The quaintly-fashioned old font, at which the whole population of the parish of Cartmel—generation after generation—had been christened for nearly seven hundred years, was subjected anew to the mason's chisel, and fashioned into its present shape, and a modern date (1832) cut in large figures upon it. The old Matin Bell, which had summoned the monks of St. Mary to prayers for three hundred and fifty years, and afterwards the townspeople of Cartmel and the neighbourhood to their duties on saints' days and Sundays for nearly three hundred and fifty years more, was torn down from its resting place, and sold to a neighbouring gentleman—not to call his workmen and labourers to their prayers, but to warn them that the hour for the commencement of their daily toil had arrived." Since then, however, happier days have dawned upon the place.

It is somewhat remarkable that a church of so much historic interest and antiquity should possess so few sepulchral memorials of pre-Reformation date. The oldest known to exist is the tomb of William Walton, the first prior; it stands beneath a plain pointed arch on the north side of the high altar, and is covered with a grey marble slab, in the centre of which is an incised cross of floreated character, and the following inscription in Longobardic characters carved upon the edge—

HIC. IACET. FRATER. WILELMVS. DE. WALTONA.
PRIOR. DE. KERTMEL.

There are some other memorials of departed priors, though the inscriptions are too much worn to admit of their being deciphered; but the most imposing is a canopied tomb on which are the recumbent figures of a knight and his lady, placed beneath an arch on the south side of the choir. It is commonly known as the Harrington monument, and has long been a source of perplexity to antiquaries; there is no date discernible upon it, and considerable doubt exists as to where it came from—for it is clearly not *in situ*—and which of the Harringtons it was intended to commemorate. It has been variously assigned to Sir John Harrington of Hornby, who was knighted by Edward III. in recognition of his services in Scotland; to Sir Thomas Harrington, who married a daughter of the house of Dacre, and fell fighting on the side of the White Rose at Wakefield on the 31st of December, 1460—a day fatal to the House of York and scarcely less fatal to the victorious Lancastrians—and also to his son, Sir John Harrington, the brother-in-law of the black-faced Clifford, who received his death-blow fighting by his father's side in the same battle.

For the benefit of those who are curious in epitaphs we quote the following from a marble slab on one of the walls of the south transept:—

1600
HERE BEFORE LYETH INTERRED
ETHELDRED THORNBVRGH CORPS IN DVST
IN LYFE AT DEATH STYLL FYRMELY FIXED
ON GOD TO REST HER STEADFAST TRVST
HIR FATHER JUSTICE CARVS WAS
HIR MOTHER KATHERINE HIS WIFFE
HIR HUSBAND WILLIAM THORNBVRGH WAS
WHYLST HERE SHE LEDD THIS MORTAIL LYFF
THE THYRDE OF MARTCH A YEAR OF GRACE
ONE THOWSAND FYVE HUNDRED NINETIE SIX
HIR SOWLE DEPARTED THIS EARTHLY PLASE
OF AAGE NIGHE FORTIE YEARES A SIX
TO WHOSE SWEET SOVLE HEAVENLYE DWELLING
OVR SAVIOVR GRANT EVERLASTINGE.

There are other parts of the church that bespeak our attention. The north aisle, commonly known as the Piper Choir—though how it acquired that name nobody seems to know—retains its original stone vaulting, and is lighted by Perpendicular windows, in which some fragments of mediæval painted glass still remain. The south aisle is perfect, and appears to have been widened at some period subsequent to its original foundation. In the church books it is described as "Lord Harrington's Queare," but is now usually designated the parish or town choir, from the supposition that it constituted the former parish church, which the prior and his canons had been obliged to enlarge owing to some dispute between the parishioners and themselves. The windows lighting it are of early Decorated character of varied design, and on one side is the original sedilia for the officiating priests, as well as the piscina in which it was their custom to rinse the chalice at the time of the celebration of the mass.

Having completed our inspection of the various chapels, the faithful custos who accompanied us, and who, by the way, though a *rusticus abnormis sapiens*, is an enthusiast about the church, led the way up to the triforium, and thence to the top of the lower lantern or tower, where we had an opportunity of examining more closely the peculiar disposition of the superstructure. It would seem that a century or two after the completion of the original tower the fraternity took it into their heads to erect a bell-tower, but instead of removing the parapet and raising the walls of the existing structure, as at Kirkstall, or building a new tower like that of prior Moon at Bolton Abbey, they determined on making the most of the one they possessed, and constructed four cross arches, each springing from the centre of the side walls, on which they reared their campanile with a result that said more for their originality than their regard for architectural effect. A few steps lead up to the roof of the second tower, whence a good view of the surrounding country is obtained, though the range is somewhat restricted by reason of the comparatively low position the church occupies and the nearness of the hills which environ the Cartmel Vale.

Descending again into the body of the church, we passed through the Piper Choir, and were next ushered into the vestry, where, to our surprise, we found in addition to the ordinary registers and churchwardens' accounts a library of some three hundred volumes, including many rare and curious works bequeathed to the parish in 1692 by Thomas Preston, of Holker, including a black-letter Bible in six volumes, printed at Basle in 1502; a copy of the works, also in black-letter, of Thomas Aquinas, printed at Vienna in 1509; an incomplete copy of Spenser's "Faerie Queene," dated 1596; a Virgil of the same date; a curious little volume, "Apophthegemes New and Old, collected by the Right Honourable Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, 1625;" and a folio copy of Foxe's Book of Martyrs. The old clerk sets great store by his literary treasures, and well he may, for they are such as few church libraries can equal, and are in themselves enough to make a collector covetous.

The parish registers, which begin in 1559, contain many curious entries relating to local families, and many a sad story of lives lost in crossing the treacherous sands of Morecambe Bay; one of the entries records the disaster which befel a pleasure party, of whom nine were drowned, while crossing the Leven Sands on their return from Ulverston Whitsuntide fair, where they had been to purchase the wedding garments for two of their number who were about to be married.^[47] The church accounts contain, among other things, a very complete record of the doings of the "twenty-four sworn men,"^[48] an influential body whose jurisdiction extended over a parish nearly fourteen miles in length, and whose duties were as multifarious as they were onerous, embracing almost everything, from exterminating mouldwarpes (moles) and choosing churchwardens to repairing organs and regaling fox-hunters. But there are other curiosities preserved in the vestry at Cartmel; among them is an umbrella of ancient date and cumbrous proportions, which our cicerone tells us was used in times past to protect the clergyman from the weather when performing the burial service in the graveyard.^[49] It is of immense weight, and has a thick oilcloth cover that reminds us of Swift's lines in the *Tatler*—

The tuck'd-up seamstress walks with hasty strides
While streams run down her *oiled umbrella* sides,

as well as of Gay's *Trivia*—

Good housewives all the winter's rage despise,
Defended by the riding-hood's disguise;
Or underneath th' *umbrella's oily shed*,
Safe through the wet in clinking pattens tread.

The twilight was deepening when we passed out of the stately old pile, and, bidding adieu to our pleasant, gossiping guide, turned to depart. The sun had gone down in the western heavens, and the mists were gathering thick among the surrounding hills, shrouding them in a dreamy obscurity; the lofty gables and broad squat tower clad in night's sober livery seemed to have gained additional massiveness and seen through the dun medium assumed a shadowy weird-like form; the old market-place seemed to have lulled itself into a still deeper quietude; a few of the villagers were lingering about their cottage doors, and as we passed on our way a light might now and then be seen glimmering from the casement of some humble dwelling, but there was nought to disturb the sense of calmness and repose. The stillness deepened as the light declined, and everything seemed to have become wrapped in slumber, save that now and then we could hear the faint gurgling of some tiny rill trickling down the hill side, or the baying of a watchdog at some distant moorland farm mingling with the subdued rumble of a railway train bearing its living freight across the Leven Sands. One by one the silent watchers came forth to begin their nightly vigil, guarding the slumbering earth as 'twere a sleeping child, and then the pale queen of night, rising slowly from behind the lonely fells, hung her silver crescent in the blue vault above, and spread a tender radiance on the tranquil world below. Keeping the dark woods of Holker on our right, a short half-hour's walk along a lonely road brought us to the little village of Cark, where—

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country seat—

Cark Hall, an old gabled manor house, for generations the residence of the Curwens and the Rawlinsons. Cark is a station on the Furness line, and a few minutes after our arrival we were

seated in the railway carriage and rolling along at a rapid rate beneath the wild limestone crags, over the wild estuary of the Leven, and through the devious windings of the valleys of Greenodd and Haverthwaite on the way to our comfortable resting place upon the shores of Windermere, bent on doing justice to the good fare the "Swan" at Newby Bridge affords, and with the mind stored with pleasant memories of quiet Cartmel and its grand old priory church.



CHAPTER VI.

DISLEY—A MAY DAY AT LYME—LYME HALL AND THE LEGHS.

LYME! What a host of memories are conjured up on the very mention of the name! What a world of legend and tradition; what tales of love and gramarye, of chivalry and romance gather round. To cross the threshold of the old mansion is to step back into the shade of vanished centuries; the spirit of the past breathes through the place; and as you pace the tapestried halls and panelled chambers visions of Crescy, of Poitiers, and of Agincourt float before the eye, for the lords of Lyme—men

Stout of heart and steady of hand—

bore their part in many a gallant exploit and in many a daring enterprise in the stirring times of the Edwards and the Henrys. Their dwelling place is a perpetual reminder of the England of yore, and, though its history may be more associated with peace and hospitality than with predatory war and feudal strife, the storied and poetical associations that are interwoven with its annals place it in the forefront of the historic homes of which the fair and fertile county of Chester possesses so many notable examples. Placed, too, in a district remarkable for its natural beauty, and on the very border-land of that great storehouse of English scenery—the Peak of Derbyshire—and withal within easy distance of the great hives of manufacturing industry, no wonder that it should have become one of the favourite resorts of holiday makers.

Why don't those acred sirs
Throw up their parks some dozen times a year,
And let the people breathe?

asks the Poet Laureate, in a spirit that savours of reproach; but here at least his desire has been anticipated, for by the kindness and liberality of the present worthy representative of the ancient lords of Lyme, not only the park, but the state apartments, with their many historic mementoes, are made accessible alike to peer and peasant, a welcome boon to the sons and daughters of toil, who may obtain health and amusement beneath the tall patrician trees, and intellectual enjoyment in the contemplation of the valued heirlooms and countless treasures that the mansion enshrines.



LYME HALL.

Disley is a convenient starting point for our visit; it is within a mile of the park gates, and can be easily reached by road or rail; it possesses, too, one of the pleasantest and cosiest inns in the kingdom, and that, to say the least, is a recommendation. The "Ram's Head," for that is the name, was a noted house of entertainment long ere the shrill whistle of the locomotive had broken in upon the peaceful quietude of this happy valley or a "line" had been thought of. It is a relic of the

pleasant old coaching days when the well-appointed Derby "mail" was an institution, and old Burdett, gorgeously apparelled in gold lace and scarlet, awoke the echoes with his bugle to the heart-stirring strains of "The girl I left behind me." Unlike many of its contemporaries, however, it still retains its popularity, and is in as high favour as ever, if we may judge from the numerous pic-nic and pleasure parties, the field flirtations, and what our Yankee cousins irreverently term "bug-hunters," who avail themselves of its hospitality. The house stands away back from the road, with the crest of the Leghs (the ram's head) carved in stone over its ample portal, and in the rear is an old-fashioned but pleasant and well-trimmed garden that a month hence will display quite a world of floral beauty—a tranquil resting place where, beneath the spreading trees or in the quiet shadowy nooks, you can calmly contemplate the natural charms of the surrounding scenery.

Very inviting is the open door of the old hostelry, but it is the ancestral home of the Leghs that claims our attention at the present moment, and we are not to be lured from our purpose.

The time of our visit is a bright sunny afternoon, and the month that one proverbial for its mirth and gladness; the one of which Milton sings—

The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.

A road leads up from the end of the hotel, and crowning the summit of a gentle eminence that rises on the left is the church, an antiquated structure, grey with the weather strains of more than three centuries, with an embattled tower and a curious porch that looks like an excrescence projecting from the front of it. It was originally a chantry chapel, dedicated to "Our Lady," and built in the earlier part of the Eighth Harry's reign by Sir Piers Legh, of Lyme, a gentleman, a soldier, and a priest, in atonement, as was long believed, and as popular tradition still affirms, for his having slain Sir Thomas Butler, of Bewsey; though trustworthy antiquaries of modern times assure us there is no foundation for the story, inasmuch as Sir Thomas had yielded up the ghost before Sir Piers was born. But this is an age of scepticism and unbelief, a time when our most cherished fancies are in peril of being dispelled by the prosaic logic of facts and the ruthless researches of unimaginative Dryasdusts, who would take as much delight in proving the Swan of Avon to be an impostor as they do in proclaiming that Robin Hood was a myth and "Cinderella and her slipper" only a Scandinavian conception.

A history

Handed from ages down; a nurse's tale
Which children opened-eyed and mouth'd devour,
And thus, as garrulous ignorance relates,
We learn it and believe.

The interior of the church well deserves inspection. There are some mementoes of the Leghs though none of ancient date, and the usual complement of sepulchral memorials. There are also some interesting examples of old foreign stained glass, collected by the late Thomas Legh, and placed here in lieu of some of heraldic character that were at the same time removed to the hall, where they may still be seen. But we must defer our examination of the old edifice for another opportunity.

For some little distance the road runs parallel with the railway, which lies below us on the right, and from our elevated position we can overlook the village and the wild expanse of country environed with the long ridges of bleak moorland that stretch away to the Peak country. Though May has come in, there is a chilliness in the atmosphere that reminds us that we have not yet done with the east winds Charles Kingsley affected to delight in, but the coldness is tempered by the warm sunbeams which steal down between the ponderous white cloud peaks that sail majestically overhead, looking like floating islands in an azure sea. What a change the refreshing rains of the last few days have brought about; it seems as if nature had undergone a transformation; Mother Earth has cast aside her russet robe and donned a mantle of brightest emerald. The fruit trees against yon garden wall are just beginning to put forth their snow-white petals, safe we would hope now from being, as is too often the case—

Nipp'd by the lagging rear of winter's frost.

On the wooded bank that rises from the opposite side of the pool which the railway intersects there is abundant evidence that the green is asserting itself over the grey, for—

The dark pine-wood's boughs are seen
Fringed tenderly with living green.

The oaks and the ash trees are almost as black and bare as they were in the depth of winter, and there are dark, unrelieved patches here and there, but the golden palm-like foliage depending in graceful festoons from the tall spines of the larches show with distinct vividness; whilst the luminous, almost golden, yellow of the poplars is contrasted by the sombre brown of the limes and birches, whose budding twigs have not yet

Spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air.

Presently the road descends, and we continue along a wild old wandering gipsy-haunted lane that

looks like an avenue in places where the trees almost meet overhead; the sun-light falls in leafy shadows and works a flickering pattern on every foot of the causeway, and the broad strips of grass on either side encroach upon it as if striving for the mastery. On the sloping meadow breadths the daisy—"day's eye," as the poets loved to call it—with its "golden bosom fringed with snow," displays a little galaxy of star blossoms, and helps to remind us of Chaucer's "Legend of Good Women;" of the unfortunate Margaret of Anjou, who chose it as her device, and whose nobles in the sunshine of her prosperity wore it embroidered upon their robes; and of another Margaret—she of Valois, the friend of Erasmus and of Calvin, the Marguerite of Marguerites, who had it worn in her honour. On the bank sides and beneath the hedgerows the

Dewcup of the frail anemone

peeps above the wreck of last year's vegetation. Here and there the pale primrose may also be seen lifting its delicate blossoms to the passing zephyrs, that prettiest of woodland flowers that folds its shamrock-shaped leaves when "the storm sings in the wind;" the wood sorrel—Alleluya, as the apothecaries of old times were wont to call it—studs the high banks, and if we thrust aside the tall grass and the crumpled leaves and withered bracken that yet remain we may see the young ferns unfolding their Corinthian scrolls.

The sun seems to have the same influence on the birds that it has on leaf and blossom. Every bush and thicket is vocal. Perched on the topmost twig of a spreading lime a thrush makes the welkin ring again with his mellifluous lay, challenging like a troubadour of old the admiration of his lady love, who makes responsive call from her nest near by; and high overhead—a speck in the blue above—a lark rains down his "harmonious madness;" the plaintive wail—"pewit, pewit"—comes clear and strong from the white-breasted plover, anxious to distract our attention from its nest in the thick grass, and from the distant copse the soft, mysterious, dreamy note of the cuckoo proclaims that the long looked for harbinger of summer has at last arrived.

O! Cuckoo, shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

Presently our ears are assailed by the merry voices of children, and a troop of youngsters come struggling through a gap in the fence, laden with buttercups and daisies, and laughing and crowing with infantile delight, as they bear their floral treasures away.

A few minutes brings us to the lodge entrance. Here the road forks, and passing through the gate we wind away towards the left, mounting the upper slopes as we advance. To the right the ground falls away, and in the hollow, between us and Elmer Hurst, a tiny rindle threads its way, after performing some little industrial service at the mill higher up. Across the green expanse there is a good sprinkling of trees, oaks and thorns, some of them aged, and wrinkled and weather-beaten enough to have borne the blasts of centuries; lime trees too are plentiful, sufficient to suggest the idea that they had given name to the place, did we not know that the true derivation was from the limes,—*i.e.*, the limits or confines of the county. Eastwards the ground rises in hilly ridges, backed by great treeless wastes of moorland that rise and fall like the heaving billows of a tempestuous sea suddenly arrested in their motion—a picture of bleak desolation, the dreariness of which is only relieved by a few patches of plantation, or a clump of storm-rent pines here and there dotting their heathy slopes. The green expanse before us lacks the fertility and richness of detail the southerner is accustomed to, and, when we remember that the park forms part of what was once the great forest of Macclesfield, we are apt to think that the forests of those days but ill accorded with our notions of what a forest should be.

As we round the shoulder of a grassy slope, Lyme Cage comes in sight—a square, grey, tower-like structure of stone, crowning an eminence on the left, that rises to the height of eight hundred and eighty-two feet. It is three storeys high, and flanked at each angle with square projections that rise above the roof in the form of turrets, and is surmounted by a cornice and open balustrade. The building is now occupied as a dwelling by one of the shepherds; when it was built, or for what purpose, is not known with certainty, but in all probability it was originally designed, like the hunting tower at Chatsworth, as a place where the ladies of Lyme might enjoy the pleasures of the chase without danger or fatigue, though tradition, which delights in the tragic, assigns a different origin, and, reckoning back its history for centuries, tells us that it was designed for the incarceration of offenders against the forest laws when Lyme Chase was in its glory, and its owners gave short shrift to those who made too free with their venison. The Cage forms a prominent landmark, and from the summit a delightful prospect is obtained in a westerly direction of the great Cheshire plain—a broad, picturesque panorama of villages and undulating meadows and pastures, including the high grounds of Alderley and Bowdon, and extending, when the day is clear, to the Frodsham Hills and Chester, and the line of Welsh mountains beyond. Northward, where the smoke overhangs the landscape, is Stockport, and sweeping round, we catch sight of the tower of Marple Old Church—the new church has not yet got its tower completed—standing, sentinel-like, on the summit of a lofty ridge, and the shadowy peak of Kinderscout—the highest point of the Peak range—rising far behind; while eastwards the view is shut in by Whaley Moor, and the long range of heathery wastes and lonely promontories that enclose the picturesque valley of the Goyt. The sunlight reveals every inequality and every indentation that time and storm have furrowed down the hillsides; it brings out, too, an infinite variety of colour that adds an ineffable charm, and we can note the changing effects of the cloud-shadows, as they slowly chase each other across the broad and breezy expanse. A few sheep are cropping the herbage on the uplands, and the "full-uddered kine" are grazing upon the sunny

slopes, and luxuriating in the lush pastures below; but the wild cattle for which Lyme was once so famous, are nowhere to be seen, the few that still survive being herded in another and more secluded part of the park.

The Lyme cattle, by the way, deserve a passing note, for, like the Lyme mastiffs, they are accounted among the peculiarities of Cheshire. Thirty years ago there was a considerable number of them, but since then, from various causes, the stock has been reduced, until now only very few remain, and there is danger that they may at no distant date become extinct, a circumstance that would be much to be regretted. These ancient British wild cattle are indigenous, and for centuries past have formed one of the features of Lyme; they are of a sand white colour, with red ears, and in some respects resemble the wild cattle at Chillingham and Chartley, and those at Gisburne, in Yorkshire. Unfortunately little is known about them, but from their peculiarities of form and their immense strength they are evidently of the buffalo type. They are untameable, and could never be brought to herd with the other cattle in the park, though occasionally cross breeds have been obtained, and so unmanageable are they that no keeper can ever approach them, a rifle being necessary whenever they have to be slaughtered for the table. These wild bovines are not, however, without their uses, for it is said that that part of the park in which they are placed, though literally overrun with game, is always secure from the predatory incursions of the poacher.

A treatise on natural history is not, however, our present theme, and so we resume our journeying. The birds are all alive, and are looking alive too, with no end of business which they are striving to get through with all possible alacrity. On the sunny sward below a company of rooks are grubbing away with commendable diligence, gathering food for their young offspring at home. A many-wintered crow who long has "led the clanging rookery home" sits aloft in a tree to give warning of the approach of danger; with quick eye he watches our movements, and as they are pronounced unsatisfactory, the alarm is sounded, when, in an instant, every bird is upon the wing and off in search of pastures new, with a sonorous, dignified cawing that sounds like a chorus of corvine laughter, contrasting oddly with the pert, consequential "jackle" of a self-assertive jackdaw who has attached himself to the community. The green expanses around us, if wanting somewhat in fertility, possess a charm in their natural wildness, and the bright sunlight adds to the sense of beauty. As we advance we notice a few rugged thorns by the wayside that have already put on their attire of fresh green leaves, but the ash trees close by are still nude, reminding us of the poet's pretty imagery—

Delaying, as the tender ash delays
To clothe itself when all the woods are green;

and we begin to furbish up our weather wisdom, and speculate as to whether it or the oak will leaf first, for, as the knowing ones tell us—

If the oak's before the ash,
We shall only get a splash;
If the ash precede the oak,
We shall surely get a soak.

A few minutes more and we come to a bend in the road, and then the stately mansion of Lyme, with its long lofty front, unexpectedly bursts upon the view, lying in a deep wooded hollow, and sheltered from the winds by the encircling hills.

Lyme Park was originally included within the bounds of the royal forest of Macclesfield—a vast tract of country that comprised little of wood and much of wilderness—and so continued until the time of Richard II., when it was granted to an ancestor of its present owner. Common report says there was a house here as early as the reign of King John, but the story is unsupported by any existing evidence; if there were a dwelling at all it could only have been a kind of hunting lodge. Certainly there was no "faire hall" existing before the close of the fourteenth century, and the earliest mention we have is in a Rental of the manor in 1466, when there was said to be "one fair hall with a high chamber, a kitchen, a bakehouse, and a brewhouse, with a granary, stable, and bailiff's house, and a fair park surrounded by palings, and divers fields and hays (*i.e.*, hedged enclosures)" of the value of £10 a year.

There is a widespread belief that the manor of Lyme was granted to Sir Piers Legh, commonly called Perkyn a Legh, for his good services at the battle of Crecy, where he is said to have taken prisoner the Count de Tankerville, the Chamberlain of France, and to have relieved the standard of the Black Prince when it was in danger of being captured by the enemy. But as Piers Legh, to whom, with his wife, the grant was made, was not born until 1361, fifteen years after Crecy was fought, it is tolerably certain that he could not have rendered any very distinguished services on that memorable occasion. Yet the story is generally credited. Like many another popular legend, it has floated down through the mists of centuries and become distorted in its transmission through various media. Everybody believes it, and the domestics who show you over the house accept it as unimpeachable history, which to doubt, even, would be rank heresy. They repeat the tradition with variations, with many embellishments, and not a few anachronisms; tell you how the valorous Perkyn a Legh cut down the standard-bearer of the King of France, for that is the popular version, and, if you venture to hint a doubt as to whether that functionary ever was annihilated, will show you the heraldic device of the arm and banner emblazoned on ceiling, wall, and window, and point with confidence and pardonable pride to the armour Sir Perkyn wore on that eventful day, to the golden spurs which the Black Prince gave him when he knighted him

upon the field, and, more than all, to the veritable sword, a huge, two-handled blade, with which the doughty deed was done—in their eyes confirmation strong as proofs of Holy Writ. This usually settles the business, even if it fails to carry conviction, though upon one occasion we remember a facetious unbeliever, taking up the ponderous weapon and the parable, exclaiming in the nasal twang which sight-showers seem to think indispensable—

This is the sword of Perkyn a Legh,
A blade both true and trusty,
That Frenchman's blood was ne'er wiped off;
Which makes it look so rusty—

when the stately cicerone strode out of the room, evidently offended at his unbecoming levity.

Poor old Flower, Norroy King of Arms, we fear has much to answer for in giving the stamp of his authority to, and thus perpetuating the fable. But in the days of the maiden Queen the heralds were somewhat credulous genealogists, and much less exacting than their predecessors in the stirring times of the Plantagenet Kings. In 1575, during his "visitation" of Cheshire, Flower was a guest at Lyme, when, influenced possibly by the sumptuous hospitality of his entertainer, he not only allowed the then lord of Lyme the arms his progenitors had borne, but added to them an honourable augmentation in the shape of "an escucheon or shield of augmentacon Sable, replenished with mollets Silver, therein a man's arme bowed, holding in the hand a standard Silver, to be by the sayd Piers and his posterity for ever hereafter borne and to be used as a testimony of his ancestour's good deserts." The "shield of augmentacon," which we now see so profusely displayed at Lyme, was a handsome and well-merited addition to the coat armour of the family, but the garrulous old herald—he was then approaching eighty—in granting it, unfortunately repeated the old story, which ascribed to Sir Piers Legh, instead of to his wife's father, Sir Thomas D'Anyers, the valorous deeds by which Lyme was won, and on the strength of that grant Sir Peter added the following lines to the inscription on the monumental brass of his ancestor, which may still be seen in the Lyme Chapel in Macclesfield Church:—

This Perkin serv'd King Edward the Third 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.

Raphael Hollinshead, the chronicler, a Cheshire man and a contemporary of Flower, in his work, published in 1577, repeats the statement with much circumstantial detail and an equal lack of accuracy. Describing the scene on that glorious August day, he says:—

When the Constable [of France] understood the good will of the people of the town [to go forth and fight the English outside the town] he was contented to allow them to follow their desire and so forth they went in good order, and made good face to put their lives in hazard; but when they saw the Englishmen approach in good order divided into three battles, and the archers ready to shoot, which they of Caen had not seen before, they were sore afraid and fled away toward the town, without any order or array, for all that the constable could do to stay them. The Englishmen followed, and in the chase slew many and entered the town with their enemies. The Constable and the Earl of Tancarville betook themselves to a tower at the bridge-foot, thinking there to save themselves; but perceiving the place to be of no force, nor able to hold out long, they submitted themselves unto Sir Thomas Holland.

But here he adds:

Whatsoever Froissart doth report of the taking of this tower, and the yielding of these two noble men, it is to be proved that the said Earl of Tancarville was taken by one surnamed Legh, ancestor to Sir Peter Legh now [1577] living, whether in the fight or in the tower, I have not to say; but for the taking of the said Earl and for his other manlike prowess showed there and elsewhere in this journey, King Edward in recompense of his agreeable service, gave to him a lordship in the county of Chester, called Hanley [Lyme Handley] which the said Sir Peter Legh now living doth enjoy and possess as successor and heir to his ancestor, the foresaid Legh, to whom it was so first given.^[50]

It is curious how many different versions of this notable incident in England's greatest victory have been given by the old chroniclers, and what a cloud of doubt and mystery they have in consequence created. To the statement that Sir Piers was present at Crecy, Dugdale adds that he acted as standard bearer to the Black Prince on that memorable occasion; equally fallacious is the statement given in Gregson's "Lancashire Fragments" that the augmentation was an honourable addition after the battle of Poitiers, in which he served under the Black Prince, for that battle was fought in 1356, five years before he was born, and two years after Sir Thomas D'Anyers had been laid in his grave. Gregson's statement was doubtless made on the authority of an old pedigree still preserved among the muniments of Lyme, and which, after representing him as receiving a free gift of Lyme and Hanley, for his valuable services at Poitiers, makes a curious mistake by assigning an erroneous day and year as that on which the battle was fought. It is somewhat remarkable that Froissart, who was a witness of many of the scenes he describes, and probably bore a part in the fight at Crecy, makes no mention of either Piers Legh or his father-in-law, Sir Thomas D'Anyers, but ascribes the capture of the Earl of Tankerville to Sir Thomas Holland, a Lancashire knight. He says:—

When the French were put to flight, the English, who spared none, made great havoc among them, which, when the Constable of France, the Earl of Tancarville, and those with them, who had taken refuge within the city gate, saw, they began to fear lest they themselves should fall into the hands of some of the English archers who did not know them. Seeing, therefore, a knight named Sir Thomas Holland, who had but one eye (whom they had formerly known in Prussia and Grenada), coming towards them in company with five or six other knights, they called to him and asked him if he would take them as his prisoners. Upon which Sir Thomas and his company advanced to the gate, and dismounting, ascended to the top with sixteen others, where he found the Constable and the Earl and twenty-five more who surrendered themselves to Sir Thomas.^[51]



WINDMILL AT CRESCY.

The omission of D'Anyers name may be accounted for by the fact that Sir Thomas Holland, who had married the heiress of Edmund Plantagent—Joan, "The Fair Maid of Kent," the future wife of the Black Prince—had a chief command in the Prince's army, and that Sir Thomas D'Anyers, who, we know, was in the retinue of the gallant young Prince, his engagement to serve being dated 18th May, 1346, may be assumed to have been in Sir Thomas Holland's company, and therefore one of those who ascended the tower and received the Earl of Tankerville's surrender. One thing is very certain; it was at Caen and not at Crescy that the French King's Chamberlain was captured, though it was at the last named place that the stalwart warrior, with his strong right arm, drove back the advancing host, and rescued the standard of the "Boy Prince"—his palatine earl—at the time when King Edward watched his exploits from a neighbouring height, refused his succour, and with more chivalry than sound generalship "bade his boy win his spurs and the honour of the day for himself." Amid all this conflicting evidence, there is one document that has been unearthed by Mr. Beamont, in which the services of Sir Thomas D'Anyers are duly recognised—the original record of the grant of land, made jointly to Sir Peter Legh and Margaret, his wife, which appears on the Cheshire Recognisance Rolls, now preserved in the Rolls Office, London, of which the following is a translation:—

Letters patent to Piers de Legh and Margaret his wife of a certain piece of land called Hanley.

Richard, by the grace of God, King, &c. To all to whom these presents shall come greeting. Know ye that whereas our well-beloved squire Piers de Legh and Margaret his wife the daughter and heir of Sir Thomas D'Anyers, Knight, deceased, have made known to us that our most honourable lord and father, whom God asoyle, for the good and gracious service which the said Thomas had rendered to him, not only by taking prisoner the Chamberlain de Tankerville, but also by rescuing our said father's standard at the battle of Crescy; by his letters patent had granted to the said Thomas forty marks a year out of his manor of Frodsham in the county of Chester, at the feasts of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael in equal portions, until our said father should provide him the aforesaid Thomas with lands of the value of £20 a year in some convenient place, to have and to hold to him and his heirs for ever as in the said letters patent of our said lord and father is more fully contained; the which said annuity of forty marks, after the death of the said Thomas, came into our hands (to pay) before any grant of the aforesaid £20 in lands or any part thereof, had been made him

according to the tenor of our said father's grant, as the aforesaid Piers and Margaret have given us to understand. Wherefore of our special grace and in consideration as well of what has been recited, as of the good and gracious service which the said Piers hath rendered and will render to us, and because the aforesaid Piers and Margaret are willing to give the said letters patent of our said father of the said annuity of forty marks to the said Thomas into our Exchequer at Chester to be cancelled We have given and granted to the said Piers and the aforesaid Margaret his wife a piece of land and pasture called Hanley, lying in our Forest of Macclesfield in the county of Chester, which aforetime was let to farm at twenty marks a year, as we are given to understand. To have and to hold the same to the aforesaid Piers and Margaret his wife and the heirs male of their bodies lawfully begotten, of us and our heirs by the payment of six pence to us and our heirs yearly at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel for all service in satisfaction of the said £20 of land and notwithstanding that the said piece of land is situated within the demesne of our forest aforesaid. Saving altogether to us and our heirs all oaks growing there, and also sufficient pasture for our deer there, as much as to the extent of land within our forest aforesaid appertaineth. In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters patent to be sealed with the seal of our Exchequer at Chester. Dated at Chester the fourth day of January in the twenty-first year of our reign (1398) By writ of Privy Seal.

In this grant we have incontrovertible evidence of the real hero whose achievements in arms are commemorated on the armorial shield of the Leghs, of Lyme, in itself a notable illustration of the true character and intent of heraldic blazonry. Sir Thomas D'Anyers, who bore himself so bravely at Caen as well as on the field at Crecy, when, if popular story is to be believed, "villainous saltpetre" was first employed and the roar of artillery first heard, fighting by the side of the gallant prince—

Who on the French ground play'd a tragedy,
Making defeat on the full power of France;
Whilst his most mighty father on a hill
Stood smiling to behold his lion's whelp
Forage in blood of French nobility—

was the representative of a family who owned lands at Bradley, in Appleton. William D'Anyers, who, in 1291, purchased lands in Daresbury from Henry de Norreys, married Agnes, daughter of Agnes, heir of Richard de Legh, of High Legh, by the first of her three husbands, Richard, younger son of Hugh de Limme, who took the name of Legh after his marriage. By him she had, in addition to a son, William D'Anyers, of Daresbury, Thomas D'Anyers, of Bradley, in Appleton, who, by his first wife, Margaret, daughter of Adam de Tabley, was the father of Sir Thomas D'Anyers, the hero of Crecy, and also of John D'Anyers, of Gropenhall, a soldier who for his services, likewise received a grant from the Crown. Sir Thomas D'Anyers, who must have been early initiated in the exercise of arms, was twice married; by his first wife, Matilda, he had no surviving issue, and at her death he married Isabel, the daughter and heir of Sir William de Baguley and his wife, Clemence, daughter and co-heir of Sir Roger Chedle, *alias* Sir Roger Dutton, of Chedle in Cheshire, who survived him, and by whom he had an only daughter, Margaret, who became his heir. After the battle of Crecy he appears to have retired to his house at Bradley, but the laurels he had won in his campaigns abroad had helped to shorten his days, and in 1354, while yet comparatively young, he was carried to the grave, having predeceased his father. An inquisition was taken after his death of the lands he held, and the jury found that his daughter, whose name they did not know, was his next heir. His estate, which was never at any time large, had not improved during his absences in the wars, and Margaret D'Anyers, who at the time of his death could only have been very young, succeeded to an inheritance that had become considerably attenuated, for in an extent of the manor the jurors found that "the messuage (Bradley Hall), with its enclosures, which had belonged to Sir Thomas, in Bradley, with the gardens there, was not worth anything; that the dove-house was not worth anything, being destroyed by a weasel; that the fishery in the moat round the house was not worth anything, being destroyed by an otter; but that there were two carucates of land there containing sixty acres, worth sixpence an acre."

Margaret D'Anyers, who was doubly an heiress, having inherited Clifton, Gropenhall, and a moiety of Chedle from her mother, was three times wooed and won. Shortly after her father's death she was taken from her mother by John de Radcliffe, who had obtained a grant of her marriage, and eventually married her himself. There was no issue of the union, and their married life must have been short, for before the month of April, 1382, he had died, and she had again bestowed her hand, her second husband being Sir John Savage, of Clifton. By him she had a son, John Savage, to whom, in 1415, she granted the heraldic coat of D'Anyers, without any difference, together with the white unicorn's head, the crest of her father—a coat he might well be proud of, though it was in reality that which his ancestress, Agnes de Legh, had inherited from her father, Richard de Limme, with the tinctures changed—and this coat continued to be borne by the Savages down to the reign of Elizabeth.^[52] Sir John Savage died about the year 1387, and in the following year negotiations were set on foot for a marriage between his widow and Piers, younger son of Robert de Legh, of Adlington, by his second wife, Maud, daughter and heiress of Sir Adam de Norley. As they were within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, Piers de Legh being descended from Agnes de Legh, by her third husband, William Venables, and his intended bride from the same Agnes, by her first husband, Richard de Limme, a dispensation for the

marriage was deemed necessary. This instrument, which bears date November 26th, 1388, was "given in the house of the Carmelite brethren at London," and within a few days of its being granted Margaret D'Anyers, successively the widow of Sir John Radcliffe and Sir John Savage, had become the wife of her kinsman, Piers Legh. Piers Legh was then twenty-seven years of age, and his wife, if not fat, fair, and forty, had at all events reached her thirty-ninth year. They became—he on the paternal, she on the maternal side—the founders of the house of Legh, of Lyme. Piers Legh's mother, as already stated, was the heiress of Sir Adam de Norley, the owner of the manor of that name in Lancashire, and she in her husband's lifetime had executed a deed conveying all her estates in trust for the benefit of her son upon his coming of age, and, in accordance with the custom of the time, Piers Legh on succeeding to his mother's inheritance relinquished his paternal coat and assumed that of Norley—*gules*, a cross engrailed *argent*, which has ever since been borne by the Leghs of Lyme, with the addition since Elizabeth's reign of the escutcheon of pretence, which old Flower, the herald, gave them.

Cheshire, which plumes itself on being "the seedplot of nobility," and of possessing a greater number of old county families than any other English shire, boasts no worthier or more ancient stock than the Leghs; their history is closely interwoven with the history of the palatinate, and they claim a high antiquity, tracing their descent in this country back to the time of the Conquest, when an ancestor came over in the retinue of Duke William, the Norman invader. The Leghs of Adlington, of which house was Piers Legh, the founder of the house of Lyme, were descended from Gilbert or le Galliard, the younger son of Eudo or Eules, the second of that name, Earl of Blois, Byre, and Chartres, and the ancestor of Stephen, Earl of Blois, who, on the death of Henry I., usurped the English crown. This Gilbert, who from the patronymic he adopted, Venables (*_venator abilis_*), we may assume to have been a mighty hunter, was in the retinue of William of Normandy, and for his bravery at Hastings was knighted by the Conqueror upon the battle-field. Afterwards, he had considerable estates bestowed upon him out of the newly-conquered country in requital of his services against Edgar Atheling and the Welsh, and when that singular compound of sensuality and ferocity, Hugh D'Avranches, more generally known as Hugh Lupus, the Conqueror's nephew, was made Earl Palatine of Chester, he conferred upon Gilbert Venables the barony of Kinderton. Sir William Venables, the sixth in descent from this Gilbert, had a younger son, also named William, to whom he gave the manor of Bradwell, near Sandbach. William Venables, the younger, was twice married, his second wife being Agnes, the daughter and heir of Richard de Legh, of the West Hall, in High Legh, and the widow of Richard de Limme or Lymm, the common ancestress of the Leghs of Adlington and the D'Anyers of Bradley. Their son, John de Venables, adopted the name of Legh, the maiden name of his mother, as well as of the place where he was born. He married Ellen de Corona, the great-aunt of Thomas de Corona, the last of the family of that name, who owned the extensive manor of Adlington, and about the year 1299 he purchased the estate of Norbury Booths, near Knutsford, where he fixed his residence. Thomas de Corona does not appear ever to have married; certainly he had no issue, and before his death he settled his estates, when, by an agreement made at Chester, October 7th, 1315, and another dated at "le Bouthes" in the following year, he granted all his lands at Adlington, after his death, to his grand-niece Ellen and her husband, John Legh, for their lives, with remainder to their son, Robert de Legh. Thomas de Corona died about the year 1323, and John Legh must have pre-deceased him, for at the time Ellen de Corona was a widow, and obtained the grant of a pardon from Isabella, queen of Edward II., who styled herself "Lady of Macclesfield," and who had claimed Adlington that it was held of her as of her manor of Macclesfield, and had been alienated without licence.

Ellen Legh survived her husband for the long period of twenty-seven years, and continued in the enjoyment of the manor of Adlington, which had been re-granted to her on the purchase of the pardon before referred to, until her death in 1350, when her son, Robert de Legh, succeeded, in accordance with Thomas de Corona's settlement, and became the ancestor of a family whose direct male heirs held the manor of Adlington for the long period of four hundred years. Robert de Legh was twice married, his first wife being Sybil, daughter of Henry de Honford, of Handforth, and after her death he espoused Matilda, the daughter and heiress of Sir Adam de Norley, of Norley or Northleigh, in Lancashire, who, according to an old MS. pedigree, was his second cousin and very much his junior. The eldest of the two sons of this second marriage was Piers Legh, who, as previously stated, in 1388 became the third husband of his kinswoman, Margaret, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas D'Anyers, the hero of Crecy, and the widow successively of Sir John Radcliffe and Sir John Savage, and from them descended the Leghs of Lyme and the Leghs of Ridge, near Macclesfield.

Concerning the mother of Piers Leigh, an incident is recorded which puts her character in an unfavourable light. Robert de Leigh, her husband, before his death settled certain of his lands in Broome, near Lymm (not Lyme, as is sometimes supposed), upon two of his sons by his first marriage. He died about the year 1370, and five years afterwards his widow was indicted for having, in conjunction with one Thomas Le Par, forged a settlement in the name of Adam de Kingsley, the trustee, in fraud of her two stepsons and in favour of her own son, Piers Leigh, and his two younger brothers.

Piers Leigh was a person of considerable importance, and held many offices of trust and responsibility. Shortly after his coming of age, in 1382, he was, with his brother John, appointed by Joan, Princess of Wales, once the "Fair Maid of Kent," and the widow of Edward the Black Prince, bailiff of her Manor of Macclesfield, and steward of all her courts within the hundred and forest, an office his father held previously. In the following year he obtained a lease of the herbage of Hanley within the forest, and was entrusted by the Princess with the conduct of her

affairs with other of her tenants within the manor and forest. In the following year he had a lease of the herbage of the forest of Macclesfield, and about the same time, the Princess Joan being then dead, he and his brother John were appointed attorneys to serve for the surveyor of the forest of Macclesfield.

In 1387, Richard II., who had then been ten years upon the throne, attained his majority. A self-willed youth, impatient of the restraint which had been imposed upon him while under the guardianship of his three uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster (John o' Gaunt), York, and Gloucester, he determined to free himself from their control. With a view of ingratiating himself with his Cheshire subjects, between whom and the sovereign, from the time when a king's son was first created palatine earl, there had been a close relationship, he made a progress into the county and remained some time at Chester, where he received many marks of popular favour. He confirmed many of the Cheshire men in the offices and emoluments previously conferred upon them by his uncle, John o' Gaunt, who was Constable of Chester and Lord of Halton, and amongst other things confirmed to Piers Leigh the annuity of Cs, which had been made to him by John o' Gaunt's son-in-law, John de Holland. In the following year, however, Piers Legh had the misfortune to fall under the King's displeasure. In that year the real struggle between Richard and his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, began. Under the pretence of removing the King's favourites, and especially Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, whom he had created Duke of Ireland—one of the five obnoxious members who had met at Nottingham, and all of whom had been accused of treason before the King at Westminster—he assembled an army at Highgate, whereupon De Vere fled into the north, and on the authority of the Royal letters summoned the Cheshire forces, and with them, and some auxiliaries from Lancashire, numbering in all about 5,000 men, set out to meet him. The two armies encountered each other at Radcot Bridge, in Oxfordshire, on the 20th of December, and a battle was fought in which the soldiers of the Duke of Ireland were completely routed. The Duke himself only escaped by swimming the Isis, and fled to the north, whence he sought refuge in the Low Countries. Piers Legh would seem either to have shared in the general indignation against De Vere, or to have been brought under the influence of the Duke of Gloucester, for he immediately seized the whole of the Duke of Ireland's movables in Cheshire and lodged them in Chester Castle. Angered at this treatment of his fallen favourite, the humiliated King issued his warrant, dated January 21st, 1388, commanding Piers Legh, under a penalty of £1,000, to surrender and restore the goods he had taken. Whether the mandate was obeyed and the goods and chattels restored is not stated, but probably the difficulty was removed by the death of De Vere, which occurred shortly afterwards.

While these events were transpiring negotiations were set on foot for a marriage, for which a dispensation was obtained, the contracting parties being, as stated, related in the fourth as well as the third degree of consanguinity, and before the year had closed Piers Legh had taken to himself a wife in the person of his kinswoman, Margaret D'Anyers, the widow of Sir John Savage.

By this time, or shortly after, he must have regained the King's favour, for in August, 1390, a commission was issued directing him and others therein named to hear and determine all felonies committed within the borough of Macclesfield, and a second commission empowered him to determine in like manner all felonies, misdemeanours, and breaches of the peace committed within the forest and hundred of Macclesfield. At that time the forest comprised about one-third of the entire hundred, and included within its limits the larger portion of the great parish of Prestbury. It had belonged to the Earls of Chester until the extinction of the local earldom in 1237, when it passed to the Crown, and was thereafter reserved for the Royal hunting and made subject to the forest laws, which were very severe against any who should presume to make free with the King's venison—the killing of a deer being accounted an offence as serious as the killing of a man, and punishable with equal severity.

A further evidence of the renewed confidence of the King is found in the fact that on the 6th April, 1391, Piers Legh was appointed by the Queen Consort—"the good Queen Anne," as she was called by the people—steward of her lands in the Macclesfield Hundred. In the month of August following, he was commanded to arrest all malefactors and disturbers of the peace within the hundred, and made one of the King's justices for the same, with directions to hold three courts itinerant or *in eyre*, the proceedings at which were of the nature of those at a court of assize, the penalty for non-attendance when summoned thereto being outlawry, with forfeiture of goods. In January, 1395, he was named equitator or rider of the forest, his special duties being to attend the King in person whenever he should hunt in the forest; and this office he had subsequently conferred upon him for life, and also, in conjunction with his brother, that of keeper of the park of Macclesfield.

The struggle for supremacy between Richard and his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, was now approaching a crisis, and, by a proceeding which resembled very much what is known in modern times as a *coup d'état*, he resolved to break the power of the turbulent Gloucester and his cabal of nobles. The Duke was surprised in his castle at Plashy, in Essex, hurried on board ship, and conveyed to Calais; at the same time the Earl of Warwick, while enjoying the royal hospitality, was seized and sent to Tintagel Castle, in Cornwall, and, simultaneously, and with equal duplicity, the Earl of Arundel was summoned to a conference, and, while there, arrested and lodged in Carisbrook Castle. A Parliament was immediately summoned to meet at Westminster, at which the fate of the three captive nobles—one a prince of the blood—was to be determined. Great were the preparations made, and a wooden building of large extent was erected near Westminster Hall for the reception of the numerous assembly. On the 17th September, 1397, the Parliament met; the assembly was surrounded by the King's troops, and the Sovereign himself

had a body guard, consisting mainly of his Cheshire archers, all of whom wore his cognizance of the White Hart lodged—the badge of his mother, Joan of Kent, which he had adopted—and there is every reason to believe that Piers Legh held a command among the feudal retainers—the archers of the Crown, as they were called—who rendered personal service on that memorable occasion; memorable as the time when the chief objects of the King's displeasure were condemned for high treason and a despotic power established under the sanction of Parliamentary forms. It is worthy of note that in this short-lived Parliament Cheshire was raised to the dignity of a principality, the King adding to his titles that of Prince of Chester; but the honour was not long enjoyed, the Act under which it was created being repealed in the first year of Henry the Fourth's reign.

In the following year Piers Legh had an annuity of Cs granted him by the King, probably as a reward for his services on the occasion just referred to, and about the same time the annuity of forty marks (£26 13s. 4d.) which had been granted to Sir Thomas D'Anyers was exchanged for the lands in Lyme Hanley—an exchange that may be said to have been the foundation of the fortunes of the House of Lyme.

In the succeeding year Richard had again occasion for the services of his trusty Cheshire Archers. To avenge the death of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, the presumptive heir to his crown, he determined on bringing the kingdom of Ireland to a more perfect subjection. With this view, and for the purpose of increasing the strength of his Cheshire guard, he had a levy made of the archers within the several hundreds of the palatinate qualified to serve, and with these he set sail from Milford Haven on the 4th June, 1399. While he was leading his forces into the Irish bogs and thickets to chastise the presumption of the native chiefs, Henry Bolingbroke, the son of the old Lancastrian duke, John o' Gaunt, who had been banished the kingdom, landed with a force at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, and marched southwards; castles and towns surrendered to him, and in an incredibly short space of time he had made himself master of half the kingdom. Rebellion had stalked unchecked through the land for weeks before the absent monarch could receive intelligence of Bolingbroke's designs, and ere he could reach the English coast on his return the revolution was accomplished. On the 9th August, little more than a couple of months from the time of his departure, he landed in Wales; a number of his faithful Cheshire men met him on his arrival, though Piers Legh was not of the number, being at the time in command at Chester, and this may have been the occasion when, as the old chronicler says, the Cheshire men exclaimed—"Dycon, slep security quile we wake, and drede nought quile we lyve sefton; for giff thou hadst wedded Perkyn, daughter of Lye, thou may well holde alone day with any man in Cheshire schire, i' faith." Piers Legh's daughter Margaret was then only in her infancy, but that must have been a matter of small consequence in the days when children were accounted as of marriageable age. The unhappy monarch, with a few followers, wandered from castle to castle, and at length found a resting-place at Conway. Meanwhile the victorious Henry was advancing by rapid marches through Gloucester and Herefordshire towards Shrewsbury, with the intention of occupying Chester, crying, "Havoc and destruction on Cheshire and the Cheshire men." On the 9th August, the day that Richard landed from Ireland, he entered the city and promised peace to the people, a promise, however, that was to be quickly violated, for on the next day he gave orders for the seizure of the King's loving and loyal subject, Sir Piers Legh, who must have been actively defending the interests of his master. Probably he had the command of the castle, though he is said to have been at the time Chief Justice of Chester.^[53] Whatever his office his motto was *loyal à la mort*, and, like Old Adam in "As You Like It," he might have exclaimed—

Master, go on, and I will follow thee
To the last gasp with love and loyalty.

To remove an obstacle to the accomplishment of his ambitious designs Bolingbroke hurried him away to execution. His policy, so our greatest dramatist tells us, was to—

Cut off the heads
Of all the favourites that the absent King
In deputation left behind him,
When he was personal in the Irish wars.

And the "absent King" had no greater favourite or more faithful follower than Piers Legh.

The Rev. John Wall, the translator of the French Metrical History of the Deposition of Richard II.^[54] in referring to his tragic end, says the King was at the time at Conway; and Daniel, in his "Civil Wars between York and Lancaster," thus alludes to the event:—

Nor thou, magnanimous Legh, must not be left
In darkness; for thy rare fidelity
To save thy faith content to lose thy head,
That reverent head, of good men honoured.

By the order of Bolingbroke, the head of Sir Piers was placed on the highest gate of the city, and there it remained for a time, when it was removed by the Carmelite Monks and buried with his body within their own church. Afterwards it was conveyed to Macclesfield, where, on the south side of the Lyme chancel of the old church, the following epitaph, once cut in stone, but now graven in brass, may still be seen:—

Here lyeth the bodie of Perkyn a Legh
That for King Richard the death did die
Betrayed for rightevsnes
And the bones of Sir Peers his Sonne
That with King Henry the fift did wonne
In Paris.

To which, as we have previously stated, after old Flower's grant of an heraldic augmentation, Sir Peter Legh in Elizabeth's reign added the apocryphal inscription regarding his doings at Crescy.

For loyally serving his fallen master and King, and while yet a young man, for he was only thirty-eight years of age, thus perished the first of the Lords of Lyme.

The distance between the throne and the grave of a deposed monarch is but short. Bolingbroke, finding himself everywhere enthusiastically received, resolved upon wresting the sceptre from the feeble grasp of his vacillating cousin, and within a few short months of the decapitation of Piers Legh, Richard of Bordeaux had lost both his crown and his life. When the revolution had seated the house of Lancaster upon the throne, Richard, on relinquishing his sovereignty, expressed the hope that his cousin would be "good lord to him," but the hope was delusive. He was deposed in September, and ere the snows of winter had melted his end had been accomplished, either by the pole-axe of the assassin, or the more protracted misery of famine.

Of a verity, those were stirring times, and whatever tenure men might have of their lands they had but little of their heads. Henry gained the throne almost without a struggle, but his daring act of usurpation was but the sowing of the seed which ripened and bore fruit in that "purple testimony of bleeding war," the fierce struggle of the Red and White Roses—a contest which, after having for well nigh half a century filled the country with commotion and drenched it in civil slaughter, left it in a state of exhaustion, with the flower of its nobility destroyed.

Piers Legh had not completed more than ten years of his married life when the unrelenting Bolingbroke caused his head to be placed on the highest pinnacle of the east gate of Chester. His widow, Margaret D'Anyers, survived him nearly thirty years, her death occurring June 24, 1428. The issue of the marriage was, in addition to a daughter, Margaret, who became the wife of Sir John de Ashton, two sons—Peter, who succeeded as heir, and John, who married Alice, daughter and heiress of John Alcock, of Ridge, an estate in the township of Sutton, near Macclesfield, and from them sprang the Leghs of Ridge, Rushall, Stoneleigh, and Stockwell; the last representative of the parent line, Edward Legh, up to the time of his death, which occurred only a few years ago, residing at the Limes, Lewisham, near London.

Peter, the eldest son of Piers Legh, could only have been a youth of some eight summers when his father met his untimely end. If—

Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,

it was well for him that he had a prudent counsellor in the person of his widowed mother. In 1403 she gave him her moiety of Gropenhall, which had been acquired by one of the D'Anyers in marriage with the heiress of Boydell, of Gropenhall and had come to her through failure of male issue in her father's family; and he, thereupon, quartered the arms of Boydell with his paternal coat, an augmentation that has ever since been retained. About the same time he added largely to his possessions by his marriage with Joanna, the daughter and heiress of Sir Gilbert de Haydock, of Haydock, near Newton-le-Willows, a wealthy Lancashire Knight; by this alliance he ultimately acquired the extensive estates of the Haydocks, viz.: Haydock, Bradley, Burtonwood, Warrington, Overford, Sonkey, Bold, Newton, Lowton, Golborne, and Walton-le-Dale, an acquisition that explains the close connection of the Leghs of Lyme with Lancashire. His mother was yet in possession of Lyme, and he therefore fixed his abode at Bradley, in Burtonwood, which became the principal residence of the family and so continued until about the year 1569, when the erection of the present mansion of Lyme was begun. Leyland, the antiquary, writing in the time of Henry VIII., says:—"Syr Perse de Lee hath his place at Bradley in a park two miles from Newton." The old house has long since disappeared, but the picturesque ruins of the arched and buttressed gate tower, which formed the principal approach, with a portion of the bastille above for the detention of offenders and doubtful visitors, still remain, a memorial of its ancient stateliness. The manor continued in possession of the family until after the death of Thomas Peter Legh, of Lyme, when it passed by settlement to his son, the Rev. Peter Legh, incumbent of St. Peter's, Newton, who sold it to the late Samuel Brooks, Esq., of Manchester.

Though Peter Legh was old enough to take to himself a wife it was fortunate for him that he was as yet too young to take part in the stirring scenes that marked the opening years of the usurper's reign, when

The blood of Richard, shed on Pomfret stones,

called for retribution, and the realm was filled with turbulence and disquiet, else he might have shared the fate which befel so many other Cheshire men, who, unable to forget the misfortunes of their former master, met at Sandiway, in Delamere Forest, and joined the valiant Hotspur, renowned in song and story,

Who was sweet Fortune's minion and her pride,

and Glendower, the Welsh chieftain, in their insurrection, when at the market cross of Shrewsbury, after the bloody strife on Hatley field, where Falstaff "fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock," and his ragamuffins got well peppered, the Baron of Kinderton and Sir Richard Vernon, the Baron of Shipbrooke, with the Earl of Worcester, paid the penalty of their revolt with the same horrible barbarities that a hundred years before had been inflicted upon David, Prince of Wales, the brother of Llewellynn.

Henry, Prince of Wales, the whilom roysterer and tavern brawler—Hotspur's "nimble-footed, madcap Harry"—was also Earl of Chester, and passed much of his time within his palatinate. Anxious, as it would seem, to make some amends for the wrongs his

Father made in compassing the crown,

he took the youthful Peter Legh into his favour. By a deed, dated 26 July, 12 Henry IV. (1411), he granted him certain lands in Macclesfield Forest, near to his domain of Lyme, called Heghleggh, together with the office of forester, which had been held by the Heglegghs and Savages successively, designing his gift apparently as a peace-offering and a token of his royal favour, and with a view probably to services that might be rendered him in the future.

On the 20th of March, 1413, the troubled reign of Henry the Fourth drew to a close. The throne of the usurper had proved but a bed of thorns, for no sovereign ever was more harassed by plots and insurrections. The violent animosities and contentions that prevailed during his reign reduced his frame to premature decay, and at the early age of forty-six he breathed his last in the abbot's lodgings at Westminster.

His son and successor, Henry the Fifth, was not slow in observing the dying injunctions of his royal father not to allow the kingdom to remain long at peace lest it should breed intestine commotion. Wise in his generation, he believed that a foreign war might divert the attention of his subjects from a too close examination of the justness of his own pretensions to the crown, and the excuse for such an enterprise was not far to seek. France was at the time in a state of deplorable disorder; and as the victories of Crescy and Poitiers were yet fresh in the memories of the English people and the favourite theme of song and story, France seemed to furnish the opportunity which the new King so greatly desired. Anxious to quarter its lilies with the lions of England, Henry, shortly after his coronation, resolved upon asserting the claim to the crown of that kingdom which his great grandfather, Edward the Third, had urged with so much confidence and success—a crown to which, it must be admitted, he had about as much right as Rob Roy had to the cattle he "lifted," or to the spoils of the raids and forays he engaged in. Parliament made him a liberal grant in aid of the expedition; free gifts were received from the clergy; he borrowed from all who could be prevailed upon to lend, and to procure money pawned his plate, jewels, and even his crown. With much diligence he collected men, arms, provisions, ships, and, in short, everything necessary to enforce his demands and aggrandise himself at the expense of his distracted neighbours.

The armies of the Kings of England in those days were made up of contingents, brought into the field by adventurous spirits, who entered into indenture with the Sovereign to serve in person with a certain number of followers for a fixed period, and on such terms as were agreed upon—men of strong limbs and daring spirit, who were influenced less by the abstract justice of the cause for which they were to fight than the consciousness that they would receive their due share of the *gaines de guerre*. Copies of many such indentures or contracts between the King and the persons who undertook to provide a stated number of men at arms and archers, as well as with those who agreed to procure carpenters, masons, waggons, bows, arrows, &c., are printed in Rymer's *Fœdera*, and these documents furnish much interesting information on the military arrangements of the age. Among the persons who entered into such a covenant was Peter Legh, of Bradley and Lyme, and in the muster roll printed in Sir N. Harris Nicolas's "Battle of Agincourt" we find him thus entered:—

Monsr. Piers de Legh, ov sa retenu,
Robert Orell
Hugh de Orell
Thomas Sutton
John Pygott
George de Asheley.

Those who formed his retinue, were probably archers; the two first named men, apparently Lancashire men, hailing from Orell, near Wigan, and the others, judging by their patronymic, were Cheshire men. Indeed, from the liberal contingents sent up, the two counties seem to have furnished a very large proportion of the eight thousand fighting men who mustered at Southampton. As the rhyming chronicler has it—

They recruited Cheshire and Lancashire,
And Derby hills that were so free;
Tho' no married man, nor no widow's son,
They recruited three thousand men and three.

Great was the bustle and preparation, and exciting were the scenes then witnessed. Michael Drayton, writing three centuries ago, thus describes the separation between those comprising the invading force and their relatives and friends:—

There might a man have seen in ev'ry street,
The father bidding farewell to his son;
Small children kneeling at their father's feet;
The wife with her dear husband ne'er had done:
Brother, his brother, with adieu to greet;
One friend to take leave of another run;
The maiden with her best belov'd to part,
Gave him her hand, who took away her heart.

The nobler youth, the common rank above,
On their curvetting coursers mounted fair;
One wore his mistress' garter, one her glove;
And he a lock of his dear lady's hair;
And he her colours, whom he most did love;
There was not one but did some favour wear:
And each one took it, on his happy speed,
To make it famous for some knightly deed.

Many of those engaged in the expedition entered into arrangements for their wives and families that they might have some safe retreat during their absence; in the case of Peter Legh's wife, however, the probabilities are that she would take up her abode with her widowed mother-in-law, Dame Margaret Legh. On the 7th of August (1415) the Royal standard was unfurled, the trumpets flared, and with all the pomp and circumstance of war, the King and his suite embarked on board the Trinity Royal. The ships cast off their moorings, and Peter Legh, with Fluellen and Williams, and Nym—who was hanged for stealing a "pyx"—a very motley force indeed, drifted slowly down Southampton Water upon their venturous quest. Fifteen hundred vessels were comprised in the fleet, and fifteen hundred sails were set; but more than a week elapsed before the voyage, which can now be made in a few hours, was accomplished, and the vessels had cast anchor in the Seine off Kidecaws (*i.e.*, Chef de Caux), about three miles from Harfleur, a place not unknown in Cheshire annals, for it was a knight of that country who bestowed honours upon the Du Guesclin, when he succeeded in capturing the great Cheshire hero, Sir Hugh Calveley.

After a siege of thirty-six days, Harfleur surrendered to the English King, whose triumph the poet sings:—

He sette a sege, the sothe for to say,
To Harflue toun with ryal array;
That toun he wan, and made a fray,
That Fraunce will rywe 'tyl domesday.
Deo gratias Anglia
Redde pro victoria.

The victory, however, was dearly bought, for while the siege was proceeding, dysentery broke out in the English camp from the overflowing marshes, and raged with such severity that about five thousand fell victims, among them being Peter Legh's kinsman, Sir Robert de Legh, of Adlington, who died five days after the city surrendered. On the 22nd September, the governor of Harfleur, having failed to obtain succours, opened the gates, exclaiming—

Our expedition hath this day an end.
The Dauphin, whom of succours we entreated,
Returns us that his powers are not yet ready
To raise so great a siege. Therefore, great King,
We yield our lives and town to thy soft mercy.
Enter our gates, dispose of us and ours,
For we are no longer defensible.

The Earl of Dorset was put in possession of the town and garrison, and, after a short rest, Henry moved forward with the remnant of his army towards Calais, intending to ford the Somme at Blanchetaque, where Edward III. had crossed before the battle of Crecy, but on arriving at Maisoncelle, on the evening of the 24th of October, he found an army of fifty thousand men prepared to dispute his further progress, their position being between the woods of Agincourt and Tramecourt. When the day dawned on the morrow, St. Crispin's Day, the two armies were face to face, but for some hours neither made any movement, when at last old Sir Thomas Erpingham, an English knight, grown grey with age and honour, flung his truncheon into the air, and called "Nestrocque" (now strike), and dismounted, and every man advanced shouting the national "Hurrah." The first discharge of the cloth-yard shafts by the Lancashire and Cheshire bowmen threw the enemy's men-at-arms into confusion, their horses became unmanageable, and the fight raged with uncommon fury; the English archers when they had discharged all their arrows, threw away their bows and fought with their swords and bills; the contest becoming more a slaughter than a battle. In three hours the struggle was ended, and more than ten thousand Frenchmen had been made to bite the dust.

Our great dramatist represents Henry as exclaiming just before he entered upon the fight:—

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers:
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me

Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition!

Peter Legh was one of the "band of brothers;" he was in the thick of the fight, shed his blood, and for services was knighted and made a banneret upon the field. As an old ballad expresses it:

Than for sothe that knyght comely,
In Agincourt feld he faught manly;
Thorow grace of God most mighty,
He had bothe the felde, and the victory.
Deo gratias Anglia
Redde pro victoria!

It is very commonly asserted that he died in Paris of the wounds he had received at Agincourt, but the statement can hardly be correct, for six years after the battle was fought his name occurs as party to a marriage settlement, and his death did not take place until 1422.

The wound he received at Agincourt did not incapacitate him from taking part a few years later in a foray that arose out of some quarrel between Sir Peter Dutton of Dutton, in Cheshire, and Sir William Atherton of Atherton, in Lancashire, knight, the two having made inroads on each other's possessions. The circumstance is related by Sir Peter Leycester, who says that—

Great contention fell between Sir Peter Dutton and Sir William Athurton, of Athurton, in Lancashire, insomuch that they made inroads and invasions one upon the other; and the said Sir Piers Dutton and his adherents, to wit, Sir Rafe Bostock of Bostock, Richard Warburton of Budworth, Thomas Warburton of Halton, John Done of Utkinton, junior, John Manley of Manley, Hugh Dutton of Halton, the elder, William Leycester, of Nether-Tabley, Sir Peter Legh of Clifton,^[55] and John Carington of Carington, were all sued by Sir William Athurton, for taking away forty of his oxen and forty cows, out of his closes at Athurton, and for beating of his servants. But the variance was composed between them by the award of John Duke of Bedford, Earl of Richmond and Kendal, constable of England, and regent of the kingdom in the absence of Henry the Fifth, dated 9 Aprilis 7 Hen. V. 1419, restitution being awarded on both sides: the horses and saddles taken by Sir William to be restored to Sir Piers Dutton, and the cattel taken by Sir Piers to be restored to the said Sir William.

Our ancestors, it is to be feared, were of a quarrelsome disposition, and, much as we may boast of "the good old times," it must be confessed that they lose much of their charm when from our modern standpoint we begin to examine closely the lives and habits of those who figured in them. There is no reason to suppose that Sir Peter Legh was more disorderly than his neighbours, similar outrages to those committed on Sir William Atherton's lands being then of common occurrence.

Sir Peter Legh was not the man to find happiness in repose. When, in the summer of 1417, the King embarked on his second expedition to France, he again unsheathed his sword and served under the standard of his Sovereign. He had returned to England in 1421, though his stay could only have been very short, for in the following year he was again with the army of the King, and took part in the protracted siege of Meaux, when Henry lost so many of his soldiers by epidemic sickness. The fortress held out for seven months, the garrison only yielding when starved out. In the attack, Sir Peter would seem to have received a wound which eventually proved fatal, his death occurring in Paris on the 22nd June, 1422, a few days after the festivities with which the public entry into that city was celebrated. His body was brought over to England, and buried in the church of Macclesfield, in the rebuilding of which he had in his lifetime been a liberal contributor, as evidenced by the prominent position assigned to his armorial shield on the west front of the tower. Thus the second of the house of Lyme died from the wounds he had received while fighting under the banner of the son and successor of the Lancastrian usurper who had condemned his father to the block for his loyalty to his lawful sovereign and the house of York.

Sir Peter Legh could have been little more than thirty years of age when he died of the honourable wounds he had received while serving under the standard of his king. Among those who had fought by his side at Agincourt was Sir Richard Molineux, of Sefton, a Lancashire knight of considerable wealth and influence.

Sir Richard was himself a widower at the time, and naturally felt compassion for his comrade's widow in her bereavement. His compassion, however, ripened into a warmer feeling; the feeling was mutual, and when the days of mourning were accomplished Sir Peter Legh's youthful relict bestowed her hand upon him, and thus became ancestress of the Earls of Sefton as well as of the Leghs of Lyme. She survived her second husband several years, her death occurring at Croxteth on the 31st of January, 1439. She was buried at Sefton Church, where a stately stone altar-tomb was erected over her remains, which may still be seen with a long Latin inscription upon it, now in part obliterated, but interesting as showing the extent of the possessions which she, as heiress of the house of Haydock, added to the patrimonial lands of the Leghs.

Hic jacet domina Johanna, quonda uxor
Petri Legh militis, et postea uxor Richardi
Molineux militis, quæ fuit dña de
Bradley, Haydoke, et similiter tertie

Partis villar. de Werington, Mikille
Sonke, et Burtonwode ac eciam dña
Diversarû parcellarû terrarû et
Tenement, infra villas de Newton,
Golborn, Lauton, Bold et Walton
Le dale. Quæ obiit in festo S.
Sulpitii Epi. A. Dni mccccxxxix
Cujus animæ ppitietur Deus. Amen.

Sir Peter Legh's only son, who bore his own baptismal appellation, was born at Clifton, near Halton Castle, a seat of the Savages, on the 4th of June, 1415, the eve of the father's departure to engage in the contest at Agincourt, and had therefore just completed his seventh year. When his mother remarried he was removed from Clifton and brought up in the household at Croxteth, where, in addition to his mother's guardianship, he had the advantage of the friendly interest and supervision of the head of the great Lancashire house of Molineux. In 1426 his grandmother, Margaret, D'Anyers, settled a portion of her Cheshire estates upon him, and the remainder, including Lyme, he succeeded to on her death, June 24, 1428. He had then, at the early age of thirteen, become the owner of large territorial estates, and for the better protection of the fair patrimony that had come to him his stepfather in the same year obtained the custody of all his lands in Cheshire until he should be of age, as well as the right of contracting him in marriage, a right he exercised by covenanting to marry him to his own daughter, Margaret, whom he had had by his first wife, Ellen, daughter of Sir William Haryngton, of Hornby. The year 1432 saw the contract carried into effect and the betrothed couple united. Doubtless it was a season of bustle and business, and we may suppose the stately halls of Croxteth to have been crowded with a gay company assembled to witness and do honour to the espousals of the young people.

Four years later he made proof of age, the inquiry being held at Macclesfield, and he was then put in possession of the splendid inheritance which, by their successful marriages, his progenitors had accreted. During his minority his patrimony had been greatly improved under the careful management of his stepfather, and in the critical times in which his earlier life was passed he appears to have acted with much prudence and caution, taking more interest in the development of his estate than in the fierce contests that were then being waged. It was a time when craft and subtlety had gradually superseded the old spirit of chivalry—when strength of arm was of little avail without astuteness of head in shifting from side to side in the changing fortunes of contending parties; and, living in this age of political chaos, the youthful lord of Lyme skilfully contrived to keep neutral between the factions into which the dominant party was split. Though holding no higher rank than that of esquire, his large territorial possessions gave him considerable influence in the two palatine counties; in the Cheshire records his name is of frequent occurrence, and, like many of his ancestors, he had various offices of trust in connection with the hundred and forest of Macclesfield. Though his father had received many marks of favour from, and had died in the service of, the Lancastrian King, he inherited a predilection for the house of York, from the representative of which, Richard II., his grandfather had received many substantial benefits, including the grant of the manor of Lyme. He was too shrewd and cautious, however, to allow his preferences to betray him into any act of open hostility to the reigning sovereign, though his intimate relations with a powerful Lancashire Baron, Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, who had married the sister of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and who, in opposition to the wishes of Henry VI. and his intrepid wife, Margaret of Anjou, had been made regent during the King's sickness, brought him under suspicion and resulted in a letter being addressed by the King to the Sheriff of Lancashire in 1454, commanding him to deliver letters of Privy Seal to "Thomas Pilkington and Piers Legh, squires," a significant warning which had the desired effect in restraining Peter Legh, for a time at all events, from engaging in any perilous enterprise or openly espousing the cause of either party.

A few years before this he had the misfortune to lose his wife, her death occurring at Bradley, May 13, 1450. She was buried at Winwick, in the chantry chapel which Sir Gilbert Haydock, her husband's maternal ancestor, had founded. In October of the following year Peter Legh again entered the marriage state, his second wife being Elizabeth, the widow of Sir John Pilkington, of Pilkington, and one of the daughters of Edmund Trafford, of Trafford, by his wife, Alice, eldest daughter and co-heir of Sir William Venables, of Bolyn.

The great struggle between the Red and White Roses was now in its birth-throes. The Duke of York had been expelled from the regency; thirsting for revenge, he levied an army in the north and marched to St. Albans, where he found the King's forces encamped in the town, which was assaulted with great fury. The battle lasted but one short hour, but it was disastrous to the cause of Henry; five thousand of his troops were left dead upon the field, among the slain being the Dukes of Somerset and Buckingham, the Earls of Northumberland and Stafford, and Lord Clifford, while the King himself, who during the fight had been wounded in the neck by an arrow, was made prisoner.

The blood shed at St Albans on that fatal 22nd of May, 1455, was the first that flowed in the bitter contest which came to an end only when thirty years had come and gone, when thirteen pitched battles had been fought, and the victory on Bosworth Field had been achieved—a strife so deadly that, as Michael Drayton tells us, the ties of blood and kindred were forgotten, and the nearest relations fought on opposite sides—

Then Dutton Dutton kills, a Done doth kill a Done;

A Booth a Booth, and Leigh by Leigh is overthrown;
A Venables against a Venables doth stand;
A Troutbeck fighteth with a Troutbeck hand to hand;
There Molineux doth make a Molineux to die;
And Egerton the strength of Egerton doth try.

Peter Legh doubtless rejoiced in the Yorkist victory at St. Albans, but the warning which Henry VI. addressed to him the year before had deterred him from bearing any part in it, and he appears to have acted with equal prudence four years later, when the reconciliation between the Duke of York and Queen Margaret—the "dissimulated unity and concord," as the city chronicler called it—came to an end and civil war broke out afresh. In that year (1459) the Yorkist forces were once more marshalled against those of the King. The Earl of Salisbury raised the standard of the White Rose, and with an army of 5,000 men marched through Cheshire into Staffordshire, almost within sight of Lyme, and then by way of Congleton and Newcastle-under-Lyme to Drayton. Before he could join the Duke he was overtaken by Lord Audley at the head of a superior force of Lancastrians, and on the 23rd September the battle of Blore-heath, where the head of the house of Stanley amused both sides with promises of support without venturing to strike a blow for either, was fought. The struggle was long and sanguinary, but victory again declared in favour of the Yorkists, Henry's adherents leaving 2,400 dead upon the field, many of whom were from Lancashire and Cheshire, among them being the brother of Peter Legh's first wife, Sir Richard Molineux, who fell fighting in the cause to which Peter Legh was in his heart opposed. At Northampton in July of the following year the fortunes of the Yorkists were again in the ascendant, and we read that Queen Margaret and her son, who had sought safety in flight, had a narrow escape of being captured near Chester by a retainer of the Stanleys.

The struggle of the Roses was now at fever heat, and in the short space of a single year no less than three great and bloody battles were fought. Peter Legh's prudence and circumspection failed him; his sympathy with the House of York could no longer be restrained, and, drawing the sword, he openly cast in his lot with the insurgent Yorkists who were then gathering at Sandal Castle in Yorkshire. Margaret of Anjou, repudiating the compromise by which on the death of Henry VI. the Duke of York was to succeed to the crown to the exclusion of her son, collected a numerous army out of Lancashire and Cheshire, and posted herself near Wakefield, whither the Duke of York advanced to meet her, but with a much inferior force. Conceiving that his courage would be compromised if he refused to meet a woman in battle, he, without waiting for his expected reinforcements, risked a contest, hoping by skill and daring to make up for deficiency in numbers. In that bloody fray Peter Legh "fleshed his maiden sword;" he was conspicuous for his valour, and for his daring deeds his princely leader made him a banneret upon the field. But the tide of success had turned; the Yorkists were entirely routed, and the triumph of the Lancastrians was complete. After performing prodigies of valour the Duke of York himself was slain. The Queen, proud of such a trophy, ordered the Duke's head to be struck off and placed upon the gates of York, adorned with a paper crown to indicate the frailty of his claims—

Off with his head, and set it on York gates;
So York may overlook the town of York.

An unfeminine speech that did not cause her much feeling of remorse, for afterwards, when gazing upon the terrible spectacle as she entered the city, she exclaimed to Henry—

Welcome, my Lord, to this brave town of York;
Yonder's the head of that arch enemy;
Does not the object cheer your heart, my lord?

And Lord Clifford—the "Black-faced Clifford," as he has been called—more sanguinary than his Royal mistress, when the battle was over plunged his sword into the breast of the Duke's youngest son, the Earl of Rutland, in revenge, as he alleged, for the death of his father at St. Albans.

If the battle of Wakefield was fatal to the house of York, it proved no less fatal to the victors, for the cruelties perpetrated by the Black Clifford were repaid a few months after with tenfold vengeance at Towton, a contest in which, there is reason to believe, Peter Legh also bore a part. On the 4th of March (1461), the young Duke of York assumed the crown and sceptre, but the ceremonies attendant upon his accession to the throne were few and brief. Queen Margaret was in the field with a powerful army, and on the 12th of March Edward marched out of London northward to give her battle. On the eve of Palm Sunday (March 29th) the opposing forces met on Towton Heath; at four o'clock the battle began; the hours of darkness brought no rest, and through the long night and until the afternoon of the next day, amidst a fall of snow, it raged with unrelenting fury. It was the bloodiest battle in all the wars of the Roses, and when the sun went down thirty-three thousand Englishmen lay dead upon the field. Some of them were buried in the neighbouring church at Saxton, but by far the greater number sleep where they fell, and the red and white roses which bloom on the field of their last strife form their touching and appropriate memorial.

The carnage of this terrible field is appalling. If we are to believe the statements of contemporary writers, for weeks afterwards the blood stood in puddles and stagnated in the gutters.^[56] Among the slain was the "Black-faced" Clifford, who slew Rutland at Wakefield, and of those whom the sword spared upon the field not a few fell beneath the headsman's axe. Well might Warwick,

dealing out a poetic justice, then say to the victorious Edward—

From off the gates of York fetch down the head—
Your father's head which Clifford placed there;
Instead whereof let this supply the room,
Measure for measure must be answered.

The fate of the Cliffords has been consecrated by the poet. The widow of the "black-faced" lord and her infant boy fled "to the caves and to the brooks;" the child led a solitary life—

On Carrock's side a shepherd boy—

wandering at will through "Mosedale's groves" and in "Blencathra's rugged caves" until the—

Weary time
That brought him up to manhood's prime.

When the victory at Bosworth again placed the Lancastrians upon the throne his estates and honours were restored. Though unable to read or write when called to Parliament, he had, during his shepherd life, learnt purer and wiser lessons than those through which his progenitors had brought destruction on themselves.

The triumph at Towton Field broke the hopes of the Lancastrian party, and left Edward unquestionably King. The services which Peter Legh had rendered at Wakefield and elsewhere did not long remain unrewarded; within six weeks of the fight he was appointed governor and constable of the Castle of Rhuddlan in Flintshire, for life, with a salary of £40 a year, and two years later he was made escheater of Flint during the King's pleasure. It was not long before his services were again called in requisition. In 1462 the unconquerable activity of the resolute Queen Margaret had once more inspired the hopes of the Lancastrian party. Having raised an army of adventurers in France, she landed on the northern coasts in October; Edward was quickly at the head of a great force to meet her, and among those who went out with him, on the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, as we learn from old Stowe the chronicler, was Peter Legh, of Lyme, who appears on the list as "Sir Peirce A'Leigh," and is included among the knights who engaged in the enterprise, from which it is evident that that honour had been conferred upon him either at Towton or immediately after.^[57] There was little occasion for his services. On the advance of Edward, Margaret escaped to her ships, which were scattered by a tempest, and a portion of her forces, being cast on Holy Island, were pursued and destroyed.

For a time the country was comparatively tranquil, and Sir Peter Legh, if he did not turn his sword into a pruning hook, was content to lay it aside and repair to his home at Bradley, where he employed his leisure in adorning his mansion and improving his estate. While so engaged he drew up a minute account of the territorial possessions of the family in Lancashire and Cheshire, which is still preserved among the muniments at Lyme. It is closely written in Latin on vellum, and forms a thick volume of 333 folios. That portion which relates to Warrington has been transcribed and translated for the members of the Chetham Society^[58] by Mr. William Beamont, and to the same authority we are indebted for the following description of Lyme, which shows that it had been emparked and that a mansion had been erected there as early as 1466:—

Rental of Lyme, its manor and park, with Over Hanley and Nether Hanley in the Forest of Macclesfield, in the parish of Prestbury and county of Chester, belonging to Sir Peter Legh, Knight, at the feasts of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist and St. Martin in winter, written and described on the 29 March in the year of our Lord 1466 and in the sixth of King Edward IV. after the Conquest.

In the first place the said Peter holds the aforesaid manor of Lyme, in the county of Chester, to him, his heirs and assigns for ever; that is to say, one fair hall with a high chamber, a kitchen, a bakehouse, and a brewhouse, with a granary, stable, and a bailiff's house, and a fair Park, surrounded by palings, and divers fields and hays (hedged enclosures) contained in the same park, with the woods, underwoods, meadows, feedings, and pastures thereunto belonging, which are worth to the said Peter xli (£10) a year.

The other lands belonging to the estate are then described, the total rental being set down at £42 9s., but no mention is made of any deer or of the famous wild cattle.

Occupied in more peaceful pursuits, we do not meet with the name of Sir Peter at Hedgeley Moor, at Hexham, or in any other of the contests that occurred in the subsequent years of Edward's reign. In 1468 a sorrow fell upon his home caused by the death of his only son, Peter Legh, which occurred at Macclesfield on the 2nd of August, and on the 4th April, 1474, his second wife was taken from him. Both were buried by the side of his ancestors at Winwick. Four years later he set about the fulfilment of a project he had long had in contemplation, the endowment of the chantry chapel of the Holy Trinity in Winwick Church, which his mother's kinsman, Sir Gilbert de Haydock, had founded. His charter bears date 16th November, and he must then have felt his end approaching, for he died at Bradley on the 27th of the same month at the age of 63; and a few days later, amid the sorrowing regrets of his dependents and neighbours, he was borne to his last resting place in the family chapel to which he had so recently been a liberal benefactor.

Sir Peter Legh's only son, who had predeceased him, and who bore the same baptismal name, married at a very early age a rich Lancashire heiress—Mabel, the elder of the two daughters and co-heirs of James Croft, of Dalton-in-Lonsdale—Sir James Croft, as Flower, the Herald, erroneously styles him—acquiring in right of his wife, as a note to an ancient Latin pedigree of the Leghs expresses it, "the inheritance of the manor of Dalton and ye presentation of ye parsonage of Claughton *alternis vicibus*," thus greatly enlarging the already extensive possessions of his house. Alison, the sister of Mabel Croft, conveyed her portion in marriage to Geoffrey Middleton, of Middleton in Kirby-Lonsdale. These two ladies were double heiresses, their mother being a heiress of the Butlers, who owned lands in Freckleton, within the parish of Kirkham. The alternate advowson which the Leghs thus acquired remained in their possession until 1807, when it was sold to the Fenwicks, and once more became united with the lordship of the manor.

While Sir Peter Legh was busied in repairing and enlarging the ancestral home at Bradley, his son Peter and his young wife took up their abode at Lowton, an estate inherited from the Haydocks. The times were full of trouble, for though Edward IV. was seated upon the throne, and, as Stowe, the ancient chronicler, solemnly assures us, an angel had come down from heaven and "censured him" when the crown was put upon his head in St Paul's, and the Pontiff had written him a letter of congratulation, the angry billows of civil war were heaving and breaking in different parts of the country and kept the government in continuous alarm. The King's secret marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, the widow of a Lancastrian, led to an estrangement with Warwick which threatened a renewal of internecine strife. The wise caution and far-sighted sagacity which had so often kept Sir Peter Legh from embarking in rash and dangerous enterprises was not exemplified in his son, who, forgetting the traditions of his house, would seem to have fallen under suspicion of favouring the Lancastrians and sympathising with the efforts made by the King-making Warwick to restore the same Henry VI. whom his father had helped to dethrone. Mr. Beamont inclines to the belief that for some imprudent act he had been bound over to keep the peace, and unable to find sureties had been committed to the gaol at Chester. We learn from the Cheshire Records that under date September 8th, 6th Edward IV. (1466), Peter Legh, of Lowton, Esquire, was lodged in the city prison in the custody of Agnes Darby—a fact we commend to the notice of the advocates of women's rights, for women must surely have been exercising their rights when one of them could hold such an important trust. The nature of Peter Legh's offence is not stated, but in an age when knights and gentlemen not unfrequently had recourse to acts of violence in preference to the slow processes of the law, in defence of their fancied rights, it is just possible that it was some such rough-and-ready dispensation of justice and not a political offence that subjected Peter Legh to the ward of Agnes Darby. In any case he must have quickly recovered his liberty and the King's favour as well, for in the following year he was free and had demised to him for a term of six years (18th October, 1467) the King's town of Vaynoll, with the pleas and issues of his court of the town of Rhuddlan, with the tolls of the markets and fairs (excepting the pleas of the Crown), and also the town of Bagilt—then written Baghegre—together with a corn-mill there with its toll and mulcture. His death occurred in the following year at the early age of thirty-five. His widow survived him a few years only, and died at Dalton, in 1474, where she would appear to have been living after his death. Her will, which has been printed by the Chetham Society, bears date 8th July in that year, and in it she names four of her sons, but omits all mention of the fifth, Robert, who is known to have been living in 1527.

It will thus be seen that Sir Peter Legh outlived both his son and his son's widow. After his death in 1478 an Inquisition was taken in accordance with custom, when it was found that Piers Legh, his grandson, then twenty-three years of age, was his next heir. This Piers or Peter, who was the fifth in direct succession bearing the same name, had succeeded to his mother's estates on her death in 1474. Seven years previously, and when he could only have been about twelve years of age, he had, with the consent of his father, been united in marriage, with Ellen, the daughter of Sir John Savage, of Clifton, an alliance that brought him in close connection with the Stanleys, his wife's mother being Katherine, daughter of Thomas Lord Stanley, of Lathom, and sister of the first Earl of Derby. They were in close kinship, and hence it was necessary, to make the marriage valid, to obtain a Papal dispensation, which was accordingly done.

In mediæval times mercenary considerations entered rather largely into matrimonial arrangements, and marriages were frequently contracted at a very early age, the parties most directly concerned being rarely consulted as to the choice of their respective partners, a practice that the then state of the law almost necessitated. Indeed, a prudent father generally deemed it a parental duty to seek out a suitable match for his heir and marry him in his lifetime, lest, in the event of his dying and leaving him unmarried, he might fall into the hands of some greedy courtier, who under pretence of taking care of his lands, but in reality to enrich himself, might obtain his wardship and dispose of him in marriage to the highest bidder without any regard to inclination or mutual liking. This state of things will sufficiently account for Piers Legh, the heir apparent to so large an estate, being married at such an early age.

The name of this Piers is unpleasantly associated with a tragic act alleged to have been committed at Bewsey Hall, near Warrington, the recollection of which tradition, that delights in passion and revenge, has preserved. Much mystery hangs about this terrible deed, and the versions that have come down to us through succeeding ages are manifestly untrue in many particulars, though the main facts are doubtless correct. In the Dodsworth MSS., in the Bodleian Library, the story is told as follows:—

Sir John Boteler, Knight, was slain in his bed by the Lord Stanley's procurement, Sir Piers Legh and Mister Willm Savage joininge with him in that action, corruptinge his servants, his porter settinge a light in a windowe to give knowledge upon the water (*i.e.* the moat) that was about his house at Bewsaye when the watch that watched about his house at Bewsaye where your way to ... (Bold?) comes, were gone awaye to their own homes and then they came over the moate in lether boates and soe to his chambre where one of his servants called Houlcrofte was slaine, being his chamberlaine, the other brother betrayed his mr. They promised him a great reward and he going with them a way they hanged him at a tree in Bewsaye Park. After this Sir John Boteler's lady pursued those that slewe her husband, and indyted xx men for that sarte (*i.e.*, assault), but being marryed to Lord Gray, he made her suites voyd, for which cause she parted from her husband, the Lord Graye, and came into Lancastershyre and sayd if my Lord wyll not helpe me that I may have my wyll of mine enemies, yet my bodye shall be berried by him, and she caused a tombe of alabaster to be made where she lyeth upon the right hand of her husband, Sir John Boteler.

Another paper in the Dodsworth collection represents the murder as being perpetrated in the reign of Henry VII., and assigns as the cause of the quarrel the refusal of the Botelers to wear the livery of the Stanleys on the occasion of King Henry's visit to his brother-in-law, the Earl of Derby, in the summer of 1496. The Earl is stated to have sent a messenger to Bewsey desiring its lord to wear "his cloath at that tyme," but, in the absence of Sir John, his lady, with becoming regard for her lord's dignity, said, "She scorned that her husband should wayte on her brother, being as well able to entertayne the King as he was." A note in the Shakerley Papers states that "sir Peter (Legh) slewe sir Thomas Butteler of Bewseye knight, and for the same was forced to build Disley church for his penalty at his own cost and charges 1527." The late Mr. Roby, in his "Traditions of Lancashire," has made the tragedy the theme of one of his legendary lyrics, and describes the struggle with much circumstantial detail; and since then a resident of Warrington, Mr. John Fitchett, in a poem of considerable merit, "Bewsey," has told the story, incorporating in it an incident traditionary in the neighbourhood, though not referred to in the Dodsworth papers—that when the assassins broke into the hall they were resisted by a faithful negro, who was killed in the *melée*:—

Tradition tells, a faithful negro brav'd
Singly their savage rage, and bold oppos'd
Their passage to the room where thoughtless slept
His dearly honour'd master, till at last,
O'erpower'd by numbers, and o'erwhelm'd with wounds,
Alas! he nobly fell. Their reeking hands
Unsated yet, had still to execute
Deeds of black import, and dire schemes of blood:
For ah! unarm'd, and in his bed surpris'd,
Vilely they butchered the devoted Lord!
Meanwhile a servant maid, with pious guile,
Bore in her apron, artfully conceal'd,
The infant heir; and many a danger brav'd,
Saved him uninjured from the ruffian's sword,
The Negro's valour fav'ring his escape.

The interest in the story has been rather increased than lessened by the recovery of the ancient ballad of "Sir John Butler," printed by the Early English Text Society from Bishop Percy's folio MS. (v. iii. p. 210). In the following ballad the story as related in the Dodsworth MSS. is adhered to with tolerable accuracy:—

Listen, lords and ladies fair
And gentles, to my roundelay.
List, youths and maidens debonnaire,
To this most doleful tragedy.

Of Pincerna, the noble race,
That Botiller was yclept, I say;
And Bewsey Hall, that goodly place,
Where traitors did the Butler slay.

Fatal the feud 'tween him and one
Whose sister was his wedded wife;
The proud Earl Derby, whose false son
Did plot to take the Butler's life.

Savage by name and nature too,
Piers Legh, that pierced all too free,
Join'd with Lord Stanley and his crew,
And bought the warder's treacherie.

A light shone from the warder's tow'r,
When all the house lay sunk in sleep,
To guide those murd'ers, fell and stour,

Across the moat, dark, wide, and deep,
 In leathern boats they cross'd and then
 The warder softly oped the gate:
 Bold fronted them the chamberlain;
 Holcrofte his master warn'd too late.

Him they slew first, and then the Knight,
 While sleeping, 'neath their daggers bled:—
 A faithful negro, black as night,
 Snatcht up the infant heir and fled.

The felon porter craved reward
 For treach'rous guiding in the dark:
 They paid him; then for his false guard
 They hung him on a tree i' th' park.

In vain they sought—the child was saved;
 But gallant Butler was no more:
 That night his wife in London dreamt
 That Bewsey Hall did swim with gore.

When that she learn'd the foul deed done,
 She pray'd they might have felon's doom;
 But might 'gainst right the struggle won;
 Then sigh'd she forth in bitter gloom:—

"If by my lord's fell foes and mine
 "My will in life is thus denied;
 "And I must live, bereaved, to pine,
 "Death nor the grave shall us divide,"

An alabaster tomb she made,
 To her lov'd husband's mem'ry true;
 And on her death her corpse was laid
 Close by his side, 'neath aged yew.

Mourn for the brave, the fair, and true,
 Sleeping in love, and hope, and faith;
 May ruthless ruffians ever rue
 Their murder foul, brave Butler's death!

The "alabaster tomb" in the Butler Chantry in Warrington parish church still exists, and the effigies of Sir John and his wife are recumbent upon it; and there also is an effigy of the faithful negro reposing near to that of his murdered master, or at least what common report proclaims as such, only that, unfortunately for the story, the darkened figure is that of a former lady of Bewsey, and not the faithful servitor of the Botelers, and is, moreover, believed to have been brought from Warrington Friary, since the time when Randle Holme made his Church Notes in 1640.

The tragic story of Bewsey, which is so involved in obscurity and contradiction, and overlaid with so much legendary exaggeration, has been a cause of perplexity for many a long year to local antiquaries. No one of the alleged actors, no one of the facts, and no one of the causes of the supposed quarrel can be true. Sir John Butler's death occurred before the Earldom of Derby had been conferred on Lord Stanley; when King Henry visited Lathom, the Earl's sister, Sir John Butler's widow, was sleeping her last sleep, and at the time of Sir John's death Piers Legh was a mere child of eight years, so that unless he was very precocious his share in the outrage is purely mythical, and we may therefore dismiss the story of his being sentenced, as a penance for his participation in the murder, to build Disley Church. And yet the story has, doubtless, a foundation in fact, though the *actores fabulæ* may be phantoms. Sir John Butler died on the 26th of February, 1463; the cause of his death is shrouded in mystery, but that he died by violence is not altogether improbable. In those days, when feuds were rife and outrages of daily occurrence, the crime of murder was held of small account, and one that oftentimes might be expiated by the payment of a sum of money. The Botelers had ranged themselves on the side of the Lancastrians. Lord Stanley, who was a consistent supporter of the party of good luck, was then a Yorkist, as was also his nephew, Piers Legh, and Piers Legh's brother-in-law, William Savage. Was the Boteler, whichever of the family he might be, whose life was sacrificed the victim of some political feud arising out of the contentions of the rival houses of York and Lancaster?

In the summer of 1482 England was in a state of commotion; Edward had quarrelled with James III. of Scotland and concluded a treaty of alliance with the Duke of Albany, the brother of the Scottish King, who was then aspiring to the royal authority, and had agreed to hold Scotland as a fief of England in return for the support that had been promised him. The Duke of Gloucester—so soon to become Richard III.—who was lord of the marches, had the chief command of an invading force and marched northwards. The wily chief of the house of Lathom, Thomas Lord Stanley, commanded the right wing, some 4,000 strong, and Piers Legh, of Lyme and Bradley, who four years before had succeeded to the full enjoyment of his patrimony, buckled on his armour and

marched under his banner. By July they had reached the old border town which overlooks the estuary of the silvery Tweed, the scene of so many stirring events—Berwick, which the "meek usurper," Henry VI., had surrendered when he fled to Scotland after his defeat at Towton. The town quickly yielded, but, as the castle held out, Gloucester, unwilling to lose time, marched northwards towards Edinburgh, leaving Lord Stanley and his force to prosecute the siege. On the 24th of August the garrison capitulated, and from that time to the present Berwick has remained severed from the sister kingdom. Peter Legh by his dash and daring gained golden opinions, and gained the right to wear his golden spurs as well, for he was made a banneret on Hutton Field.

Had Gloucester had sufficient discernment he might during that expedition have discovered how little reliance was to be placed on the fidelity of a Stanley. Tradition says that either in going or returning dissensions and jealous bickerings arose between the two commanders; the spirit of hostility spread to the ranks of their followers, and several frays occurred between Richard's and Stanley's men, in one of which, near Salford Bridge, the latter had the best of it and succeeded in capturing one of Gloucester's banners, an incident commemorated in Glover's rhyming chronicle

—
Jack of Wigan he did take
The Duke of Gloucester's banner,
And hung it up in Wigan church
A monument of honour.

On the 9th of April in the succeeding year Edward IV. died. Gloucester was at the time at York, and it is said that he attended the minster with a retinue of six hundred knights and esquires to observe the obsequies of his departed brother, and swear fealty to his nephew, the boy-King—Edward V.—the King whose death he was so soon to compass. Having performed these duties he hastened southwards with the intention of intercepting the King before he could reach London, and it is said that on his way he spent a night under Sir Peter Legh's roof at Bradley, when, in the hope, as it would seem, of securing the future services of his host, he granted him an annuity of £10 for life.

On the 6th of July Richard and his Queen, Anne, were crowned at Westminster, when, "the Lord Stanley bare the mace before the King, and my Lady of Richmond (his wife) bare the Queen's train," for the Stanleys were fated to flourish whatever party was in the ascendant. But "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," especially when the head is that of a usurper, as Richard had painful experience. His cruelties had made him unpopular with the people; the Lancastrian party, which still numbered many adherents, took heart in the hope of being able to displace him and seat Henry of Richmond, Lord Stanley's stepson, upon the throne, and ere long the standard of revolt was raised. In January, 1485, commissions were addressed "to all knights, esquires, gentlemen, and all other of the King's subjects" in the counties of Lancaster and Chester. The Cheshire commission notified all concerned that "the King hath deputed the Lord Stanley, the Lord Strange, and Sir William Stanley to have the rule and leading of all persons appointed to do the King's service when they be warned against the King's rebels, and if any rebels arrived in those parts that then all the power that they could make should be ready to assist the said lords and knight upon their faith and (al) legiances." The Lancashire commission required the "knights, esquires, and gentlemen, and others" of the county "to give their attendance upon the Lords Stanley and Strange to do the King's Grace service against his rebels in whatsoever place within this Royaume (realm) they fortun'd to tarry." Yet at that very moment Lord Stanley was pledged to Richmond's cause, and as steward of the Royal Household was sending him information of all Richard's plans. Thus did the misguided Crouchback thrust into the hands of the Stanleys the power which, a few short months later, upon the field of Bosworth, was to be used against him with such fatal effect.

The records of Lyme as well as the old annalists and chroniclers are silent as to the part which Sir Peter Legh bore in the great struggle on Redland Heath^[59] when the sun of the Plantagenets went down, and the claims of the rival Roses were finally decided;

but we may be well assured that when commissions were addressed to "all the knights, esquires, and gentlemen" of Lancashire and Cheshire, and Lord Stanley was to "have their rule and leading," Sir Peter would not be idle or allow his armour to rust unused. His house owed allegiance to the White Rose. Richard had been his guest at Bradley, and had then conferred an annuity upon him; duty and gratitude should, therefore, equally have bound him to the cause of his Sovereign, but whether he was with the "stout fellows in white surcoats and hoods" who followed his cousin Sir John Savage into the thick of the fight, or in the camp of Lord Stanley, who looked down upon the fray with calculating judgment, beguiling both combatants with promises and assurances of sympathy while waiting to see on which side victory was likely to fall, we have no means of knowing. At ten o'clock on the morning of that memorable 22nd of August, 1485, while the sun, mounting high in the heavens, flashed on pike, and corslet, and helm, and brightened every pennon that lagged in the lazy air, with a great shout and a rattling shower of arrows the fight began. "Lord! how hastily," says Holinshed, "the soldiers buckled their helmets—how quickly the archers bent their bows and frushed their feathers—how readily the billmen shook their bills and proved their staves, ready to approach and join when the terrible trumpet should sound the bloody blast to victory or death." The Duke of Norfolk, who led the van of the royal army, singled out the Earl of Oxford, and engaged him in a personal encounter, for in those days the leaders deemed it a point of honour to fight hand to hand; his vizor was hewn off by a single blow, an arrow from a distance pierced his brain through his broken helmet, and he fell

lifeless to the ground. The brave Surrey, hurrying up to avenge the death of his father, was overpowered by Sir John Savage, who led the left wing of Richmond's army, when he requested that his life might be taken to save him from dying by an ignoble hand. He was led to the rear, but lived to be the Surrey of Flodden Field, and the worthy transmitter of "all the blood of all the Howards," But the men whom Richard had loaded with benefits deserted him in the hour of his need with a treachery that proclaimed that the knell of chivalry was rung. Lord Stanley, who three nights before had held a secret interview with Richmond at Atherstone, stirred not a finger, nor moved a man, until the fate of the battle was decided, when he threw off his disguise and charged boldly against his master on his stepson's side. No strategy could now be of avail, and, in the effort of despair, Richard made the final charge upon his rival. Descrying Richmond, he put spurs to his horse, and with lance in rest rushed towards him, when, in the nick of time, Sir William Stanley, "with three thousand tall men," closed in and Richard fell overpowered, with wounds enough to have let out a hundred lives, and murmuring with his last breath, "Treason! Treason! Treason!" The royal army was but a rope of sand, and when the shout went up that Richard King of England had bitten the turf his troops, three-fourths of whom were ready to side with the strongest, rushed in inglorious retreat, the victors following in hot pursuit. The fight lasted but two short hours, yet on the morrow many a whimpled dame mourned the loss of her belted lord, and many a sobbing Joan and village Winifred grieved for husband and lover slain at Bosworth Field.

When the fight was ended, Lord Stanley, ever the faithful adherent of the party of good luck, led the descendant of Cadwallader to the slope of the hill at Stoke Golding, ever after called Crown Hill. A knight handed him the battered circlet of gold which adorned the chapeau of estate Richard had worn upon his salade or head piece, and, commanding the attendants to kneel, he placed it on the brow of the victorious Earl and proclaimed him "Conqueror and King." Meanwhile the stripped and mutilated corpse of him who at the morning's rise led a gallant army to assured victory, "trussed like a calf and naked as he came into the world," was flung across a horse and carried in triumph behind a pursuivant at arms to Leicester, where, after being exposed to the gaze of the scornful mob for two hot summer days, it was buried without ceremony in the church of the Gray Friars.

Henry of Richmond came out of the field of Bosworth a victor to ascend the throne of a nation bleeding at every pore, and the leading nobles of which had been swept away. He was not ungrateful. One of his first acts was to seize the estates of the adherents of the fallen Richard. With them he was able to reward his faithful followers, and the originally great possessions of the Stanleys became swollen by enormous grants out of the Yorkists' confiscated lands. The Leghs of Lyme fared but indifferently in comparison; at all events, there is no evidence of Sir Peter having come out of that struggle with any addition to his territorial possessions. On the 14th of January following the houses of York and Lancaster were united by the marriage of the King with Elizabeth of York, and on the 20th of September, with almost undue punctuality, the popular wish was realised in the birth of a Prince—a bud from the peaceful grafting of the White Rose upon the Red—for whom Lord Stanley, or rather Lord Derby, for he had then been elevated to the earldom, was one of the two sponsors.

But the partiality for the house of York was not yet extinguished among the men of Lancashire and Cheshire. As Lord Bacon says, the memory of the ill-fated Richard "lay like lees at the bottom of their hearts, and would come up if the vessel was but stirred;" it was not long before a spirit of resistance began to manifest itself, and Henry found himself threatened with the loss of his ill-gotten sovereignty from a source as unexpected as it was deemed contemptible. In 1487 a youth appeared in Ireland calling himself Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, but whose real name was Lambert Simnel. He was proclaimed as Edward VI., and the Duchess of Burgundy, favouring the imposture, sent over from Flanders an experienced captain, Martin Swartz, with two thousand men to his aid. In the "merry month of May" they landed on the barren island of Fouldrey, and took possession of the castle—the Peel of Fouldrey, as it was called—a fortress commanding the entrance to Morecambe Bay, which had been built by the monks of Furness as a retreat from the ravages of the Scots. Thence they marched southwards through Yorkshire into Nottinghamshire, where they were joined by Lord Lovel. Henry, with his usual promptitude, hastened to give the insurgents battle; Sir Peter Legh, who had again buckled on his armour, served under the banner of the King, and bravely bore his part in the battle of Stokefield, near Newark, where, on the 6th of June, the two armies were put in array against each other. The issue was quickly decided, and resulted in the complete overthrow of the insurgents, one half of whom were slaughtered. This appears to have been the last military exploit in which Sir Peter Legh had any share. The sword was returned to the scabbard, never again to be unsheathed, the remainder of his days being passed in more peaceful pursuits. It is not unlikely that his abandonment of the profession of arms thus early—for he was only in his thirty-second year when the battle at Stokefield was fought—was caused by the death of his wife, which occurred on the 7th May, 1491, at Bewgenet, a small village in Sussex, where she appears to have been staying, and where her body was buried.

Though wealth and honours were not lavished on Sir Peter Legh in the way they had been on the Stanleys, yet the services he had rendered at Stokefield and elsewhere were not allowed to go entirely unrequited, though it must be admitted that his reward came somewhat late. By letters patent, dated at Lancaster, 3rd March, 20 Henry VII. (1505), he was, in consideration of services he had rendered to the King, as the grant states, appointed successor to the Earl of Derby in the important and lucrative office of seneschal or steward of Blackburnshire, including Tottington, Rochdale, and Clitheroe, within the county of Lancaster—a vast tract of country embracing

within its limits the forests of Blackburnshire and Bowland. These forests or chases were extensive wastes inhabited by the roe, the stag, and the wolf, and also the wild ox, which latter is said to have been imported into these northern wilds from the Forest of Blackley, on the confines of Manchester. According to popular tradition, the wild cattle which still constitute one of the peculiarities of Lyme date their existence there from the time that Sir Peter Legh held the seneschalship of Blackburnshire, having, it is said, been conveyed by him from the Lancashire forests to his chase at Lyme.

Sir Peter continued in his office for a period of six years, and with the exception of an occasional lawsuit, when he was supposed to have exceeded his powers, he appears to have discharged the duties of his office to the general satisfaction of both sovereign and subject. In 1511 he resigned his post, the reason for which will hereafter appear. He was then verging upon sixty, and had been a widower twenty years; his sons had all attained to man's estate, and his only daughter had been suitably mated, her husband being Lawrence, son and heir of Sir John Warren, of Poynton. He seems, therefore, to have had a desire to withdraw from the more active duties of life, and to spend his few remaining years in peaceful quietude. The year which followed his wife's death was that in which her brother, Thomas Savage, was made Bishop of Rochester, from which see he was subsequently translated to London, whence he was elevated to the Archbishopric of York, and doubtless his brother-in-law's advice and counsel would be sought. Be that as it may, Sir Peter Legh determined upon entering the Church, and took orders, thenceforward describing himself as "knight and priest," and about the same time he set about the foundation of a chantry chapel upon his estate at Lyme—the present church at Disley. The time was one of much religious energy and life, notwithstanding that the faith might be in a dim lantern and obscured by not a few superstitions and scandals, but it must not be assumed that the only object of Sir Peter Legh's foundation was that prayers might be offered for the dead by the officiating priest. The place was removed from the mother church, which at some seasons would be almost inaccessible, especially to the aged and infirm; it would seem therefore to have been intended more as a kind of oratory or domestic chapel appurtenant to his manor house, and available for the neighbouring population, who would thus have some of the ministrations of religion if not all the public means of grace carried almost to their own doors. In the erection of it he took counsel with the parsons of Wilmslow, Prestwich, and Gawsforth, and also with Mr. Brygges, the master of Sir John Percival's Grammar School at Macclesfield, then just founded; but curiously enough no mention is made of the parson of Stockport, in whose parish it was to be situate, and who would claim sacerdotal superiority. Sir Peter died before his work was completed, but prior to his decease he bound his son by solemn promises to finish the work he had begun. His idea seems to have been to found a kind of Ecclesiastical College, with three priests and two deacons, but unfortunately he did not define the exact character of the foundation he contemplated, and the omission gave rise to protracted litigation and much ill-feeling between the executors under his will and his son and successor. It was of little consequence, however, for within a very few years the Act was passed for the suppression of the minor religious houses, and Sir Peter Legh's chantry chapel at Disley shared the common fate, the various lands and tenements belonging to it being seized into the hands of the King's Commissioners.

Sir Peter, who must have begun to feel the weight of years upon him, made his will in 1521, but omitted to name his executors. In the following year he executed two other wills, the latest of which, dated December 1, 1522, has been printed by Mr. Earwaker from the original in the muniments at Lyme, and is interesting from the very specific directions given respecting his funeral, the ceremonies to be observed at it, the monument to be erected over his remains, and especially the adorning of it "wt a pictor afr me and my wieff and or Armes," all which his executors carefully observed. Two years after the execution of his last will he is said to have erected the structure known as Lyme Cage, the precursor of the present building, the precise purpose of which it is difficult to define, unless it was intended as a stand from which the ladies of Lyme might, without fatigue, enjoy the pleasures of the chase. About the same time, too, he is found helping in the work of rebuilding the tower of Lyme Church, and inviting the "contributions of all pious persons," without whose help, so the appeal declares, "the parish was not able to finish the work." His death occurred at Lyme, August 11th, 1527, at the ripe age of seventy-two, and in accordance with his testamentary instructions his body was removed for burial by the side of his ancestors in the old church at Winwick, where a sepulchral brass, with the "pictors" of himself and his wife, was placed to his memory, which still remains in a tolerable state of preservation, and which is more than usually interesting on account of the peculiar character of his effigy. He is represented in the plate-armour of the period, with a sword upon his side, and wearing the spurs of knighthood; whilst over the armour of the soldier is represented the chasuble and other vestments of the ecclesiastic. His head is bare, with a tonsured crown denoting his priestly office. His hands are uplifted, though not closed, and between them is a shield of six quarterings. By his side is the effigy of his wife, habited in a long robe, and wearing a headdress with lappets that depend on each side; a girdle encircles her waist, and the hands are uplifted as if in supplication. At their feet are graven the figures of their several children, and there is also this inscription in black-letter characters:—

ORATE PRO AIAB' PROVI VIRI, DNI PETRI LEGH, MILITIS, HIC TUMULATI, ET DNÆ ELENE, UX. EJUS, FILIE JOHIS SAVAGE, MILITIS, CUJUS QUID ELENE CORPUS SEPELITR. APUD BEWGENETT 17^o DIE MENSIS MAIJ, ANNO DOMINI MILLESIMO CCCCLXXXJ. IDEMQ. PETRUS, POST IPIUS ELENÆ MORTEM I. SACERDOTEM CANONICE, CONSECRAT OBIIT APUD LYME I. HANLEY XI. DIE AUGUSTI AO. DI MVCXXVIJ.

Sir Peter Legh had issue five sons and one daughter. His third son, Galfred or Gowther Legh, who resided at Woodcroft, founded the grammar school at Winwick; his will bears date "Apryll

14, 1546," and a lengthy abstract from the original in the registry at York will be found in the "Lancashire Chuntries," edited for the Chetham Society by the late Canon Raines.

When Sir Peter Legh's body had been peacefully committed to the grave, and his executors, in accordance with his expressed desire, had provided the sumptuous tomb with its coverings of "marbull" and its "pictors in brass," an inquiry was held before the Escheator of the County of Chester respecting the lands he had held at the time of his death, and it was then found that Peter Legh was his son and heir, and of the age of 48. On the 22nd June, 1528, he had writ of livery granted him of his patrimonial estates, and he then entered upon possession. The document, which is on the Recognizance Rolls of Chester, is a lengthy one, and recites several family deeds and settlements, and gives a clear idea of the extent of the family estates at that time.

Peter Legh had then passed the meridian of life, and had been twice married. His first wife, Jane, daughter of Sir Thomas Gerard, of Bryn, to whom he had been contracted in marriage by his father in 1487, when he was only seven years of age, died on the 5th May, 1510, leaving him two daughters, the eldest of whom, Cicely, had been given in marriage three years previously to Thomas, son of Sir Thomas Boteler, of Bewsey, the match having probably been arranged with the hope of putting an end to the feud that had so long existed between the two families, just as in the year before the contention of the rival houses of York and Lancaster had been terminated by the union of the red and white roses; though if this were the expectation of the promoters of the match their hopes were doomed to disappointment, for the heads of the houses of Lyme and Bewsey had still to appeal very frequently to the law courts for help in the adjustment of their difficulties.

A year or two after the death of his first wife Peter Legh entered into a marriage with Margaret, daughter of Nicholas Tyldesley, and by her he had a numerous family—three sons and seven daughters. He is said to have been afflicted with lameness, the result, it is supposed, of a wound he had received at Flodden, in 1513, when his kinsman Christopher Savage, the valiant mayor, and so many of the burgesses of Macclesfield were numbered among the slain. Possibly the pain and inconvenience experienced from his lameness had tended to sour his temper, for he appears to have been of a more than usually litigious disposition if we may judge from the many occasions in which he figured in the law courts, sometimes at the instance of his neighbours, often in connection with the Botelers, and occasionally to answer charges brought by his father's trustees, who accused him of improperly receiving and retaining the rents and property belonging to the Chantry at Disley, which he had founded. How far these last-named accusations were well founded is not clear. Possibly the religious feelings of the son were not as intense as those of the sire, and hence the neglect of a duty on the delegated performance of which the father had partly rested his hopes of salvation; or it may be that he took a charitable view of things and believed that his father's faults were not of a very flagrant or inexpiable character, and therefore not requiring a continuance of the posthumous invocations he had provided for. Certain it is that when Peter Legh the younger made his own will in anticipation of his approaching end, he made provision for the services of a chaplain who should continue "only for seven years," evidently believing that that period would be sufficient for his probation in the purgatorial region.

Peter Legh ended his days at Bradley on the 4th December, 1541, and on the 24th January following, an inquisition as to his Cheshire estates was taken at Chester, when his eldest son by his second wife, who also bore the name of Peter, and was then aged twenty-eight years, was found to be his heir.

The year in which the battle of Flodden was fought was that in which Peter Legh the younger first saw the light. In 1518, while still an infant, for he was only five years of age, he was united in marriage with his kinswoman, Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Gerard, of Bryn, the Church's dispensation having been first obtained—a match that brought him, it may be hoped, more happiness than fell to the lot of his younger sister, Joan Legh, who when six years old was married to his wife's brother, the son and heir of Sir Thomas Gerard, from whom she was afterwards divorced. In May, 1544, two years after he had entered upon his patrimony, he joined the expedition headed by the Earl of Hertford to demand the surrender of the infant Queen of Scotland, whom Henry had intended uniting in marriage with his son, and in this way securing the union of the two kingdoms. The force marched upon Edinburgh, which was speedily captured, pillaged, and burnt. After this rough kind of courtship, and when they had plundered and destroyed the towns and villages in the neighbourhood, the army moved on to Leith, which was also demolished. Before taking ship on their return the Earl of Hertford distributed honours to those who had been conspicuous by their bravery; Peter Legh, of Lyme, was one of them, and was then advanced to the rank of banneret.

After the accession of Edward VI. he was entrusted with the shrievalty of Lancashire, and on the 17th November, 1553, the first year of Queen Mary's reign, he was appointed to the office of sheriff of the county of Chester, and re-appointed to the same office "during pleasure" in the following year, an evidence that he enjoyed the confidence of both sovereigns. The times were, however, troublous. A great religious revolution, the seeds of which had been sown by "the preacher of Lutterworth," attained to maturity in the time of Henry VIII. In the "infant reign" of Edward VI. the Reformation continued to advance with steady step, but at his death his sister Mary ascended the throne, Popery was restored, and many of the people returned to the religious observances of their fathers. The then Earl of Derby, acting upon the maxims of his family, had been able to accommodate himself to the changing circumstances of the times. Though a staunch

Protestant under Edward, he became an uncompromising Roman Catholic under Mary, orthodox in every article of the faith except the restitution of the property which he had filched from the Church, and about which his conscience was somewhat tender, restitution being, in his estimation, inconsistent with the traditional canon of "good luck;" his heresies on this head, however, were amply atoned for by his readiness to persecute those who adhered to the reformed doctrines. When George Marsh, the Lancashire martyr, was taken before Justice Barton, at Smithell's Hall, for preaching false doctrine in the church of Dean, the justice sent him to the Earl of Derby, at Lathom, for further examination. "Then was I called," says Marsh, "to my Lord and his council, and was brought into the chamber of presence, where were Sir William Norris, Sir Piers a Lee (Sir Peter Legh), Mr. Sherburn, the parson of Grapnel, Mr. Moore, and others. My Lord asked me whether I was one of those that sowed evil seed and dissension amongst the people; which thing I denied, desiring to know my accusers, and what could be laid against me, but that I could not know. Then he and his counsel would examine me themselves." Sir Peter does not seem to have liked the office of Inquisitor, for, though an active member of Lord Derby's council, he took care to absent himself when Marsh was brought up a second time for examination. Very likely his own religious opinions were a little undecided, and the patience, meekness, and tranquillity of the martyr may have inclined him towards the faith for which so worthy a man was to suffer so terrible a death.

In the year in which Sir Peter was appointed to the shrievalty of Cheshire a general muster of soldiers was ordered from the respective hundreds of the county of Lancaster, and his name occurs in the muster for West Derby as holding a command under the Earl of Derby. Three years later a commission was issued to array, inspect, and exercise all men-at-arms, and men capable of bearing arms, as well archers as horse and foot men, so that they might be arrayed in arms to serve their country in case of need. But all this preparation was of little avail, for, after a short siege of eight days, the fortress of Calais, which had cost the conquerors of Crescy eleven months to acquire, and which for two hundred years had been held as the key to the dominions of the the French King, was surrendered, and England found herself expelled from the continent of Europe. The loss filled the kingdom with murmurs, and overwhelmed the Queen with despair, and at the age of forty-two years she descended childless to the grave, leaving the throne to her half-sister Elizabeth, whose masculine habits and resolute will made her better fitted to wield the sceptre.

In the year of Elizabeth's accession Sir Peter Legh caused the church at Disley to be consecrated for Protestant worship, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. At the same time he added a peal of bells,^[60] one of which bore the following inscription:—

All people may behold and see
The works of good Sir Peter Legh.

and, as Bishop Gastrill states in his *Notitia*, the church was "made parochiall upon a composition between Sir Peter Legh of Lyme and other Inhabitants of Disley, and Sir Edward Warren, Patron of Stockport, and the Inhabitants of that Parish. The Inhabitants of Disley to repair their chapel, and to pay all dues to the mother church (of Stockport)." The building which Sir Peter's grandfather had caused to be erected would seem to have remained unoccupied, for between the legal disputations and the religious commotions that were simultaneously taking place the property intended for the endowment had never been actually conveyed.

Having performed this duty, Sir Peter next set about the improvement of his Cheshire estates, and obtained licence from the Queen to enclose and empark his estate of Lyme, and to have free warren therein, as well as in his adjoining lands. Hitherto the family had resided chiefly at Bradley, a larger and more stately mansion than Lyme, which, if a house of much antiquity, was one of comparatively small dimensions. Sir Peter Legh was a man of considerable culture; he was a scholar and an architect as well as a soldier, and during his time some important additions were made to his Cheshire home. With his love of architecture it was natural he should combine a taste for heraldry, and in the pursuit of this study he received considerable help from William Flower, Norroy King of Arms, who had previously held the post of Chester Herald. About this time Flower was making his "Visitation" of Cheshire; he was a welcome guest at Lyme, and, doubtless, he was equally pleased to find a congenial spirit, for in that age of religious zeal, persecution, and piety there were many who, acting upon St. Paul's advice to Timothy, avoided "giving heed to fables and endless genealogies which minister questions rather than godly edifying," and who were indifferent about preserving their distinctions of rank, and others who had no special taste for the investigations of their descent, and were unable therefore to render the professional herald any substantial help in the elucidation of their family lineage. Very pleasant, no doubt, were the discourses and learned the discussions of those two worthies as they roamed about the chase, wandered over the Knight's Low, or sauntered beneath the shadow of the Lyme Hills. But heralds are human, and are apt to be credulous when dealing with knights and gentlemen possessing kindred tastes and given to hospitality. Flower listened to the story of the former Peter Legh's supposed share in the victory at Crescy, accepted parole evidence, and endorsed the fable, giving it the stamp of official confirmation in the special armorial augmentation—the hand and banner to which we have previously referred—which Sir Peter caused to be so profusely displayed in his mansion; he would seem also to have rendered assistance in the tricking out of the fine series of heraldic shields that were placed in the church of Disley, but which were removed some fifty years ago to grace the windows of the drawing-room at Lyme, where they may still be seen.

But other and more urgent matters demanded the attention of the lord of Lyme. The country was

much divided on the subjects of religion and politics, and many of the old county families were anxious to see the Catholic faith re-established. In November, 1569, occurred the "Rising in the North," headed by the Earl of Northumberland.

Earl Percy there his ancyent spread,
The half moone shining all soe faire;
The Norton's ancyent had the crosse,
And the five wounds our Lord did beare.

No sooner was it suppressed than another abortive act of treason occurred. The Earl of Derby was at the head of the lieutenancy of Lancashire and Cheshire, and to guard against any fresh attempt to disturb the public tranquillity, levies of troops, armour, and money were made. Forced loans were also had recourse to—loans that might more correctly have been termed benevolences or compulsory gifts, for they were never intended to be repaid. In April, 1570, a letter under the Privy Seal was sent to Sir Peter Legh, requiring him as the owner of estates in Cheshire to furnish a "loan" of one hundred marks, and simultaneously, as a Lancashire landowner, to lend £100.

On the 24th October, 1572, died Edward, the great and munificent Earl of Derby, with whose death, in the opinion of Camden, "the glory of English hospitality seemed to fall asleep." The funeral obsequies were characterised with a splendour and magnificence that befitted the semi-regal state he had maintained when living. Such a funeral Lancashire had never seen before. The representatives of all the great county families, with their banners and other heraldic insignia, were there. Sir Peter Legh was present as one of the mourners, and was joined with another mourner in offering the deceased Earl's sword. It must have been a sorrowful day for him, for he had enjoyed a large share of the Earl's confidence, and often had they taken counsel together on the great questions that were then occupying the public mind. But the confidence which had been shown by the father was manifested in an equal degree by the son, and the letters still preserved among the Lyme muniments show that Sir Peter Legh's advice and counsel on private, as well as on public questions, was frequently sought by the "great" Earl's successor. In 1585, when the Spaniards were threatening a descent on the English coasts and the alarm of invasion spread through the country, Henry, Earl of Derby, was appointed by the Queen Lord Lieutenant of the two counties of Lancaster and Chester, with power to appoint his own provost marshal, whose duty was to enforce discipline and maintain order among the troops who were to be drilled and trained and kept in readiness to repel the common enemy. Sir Peter Legh owned extensive estates in both counties. He was the tried and trusted friend of the Stanleys, and to him, therefore, was committed the responsible office of provost marshal for the two shires. We next hear of him, in his capacity of "provost marshal and justice of peace for Lancashire and Cheshire," committing one Randolph Norbury—who had been charged with "uttering very heinous words" against the Queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, who had succeeded to the Lancashire estates of the Botelers of Bewsey—to the keeper of the Castle of Chester to be detained until he should be discharged by due course of law.

The storm which had long been threatening was now about to burst. The haughty Spaniard, impatient for conquest, and offended at Drake's threatening to "sing his beard," ordered the "Invincible Armada," as he presumptuously phrased it, to be prepared for sea. Great was the preparation and intense the excitement in England. All along the coast anxious watch was kept for days; from tower and turret and from every vantage ground warders scanned the horizon with eager eyes. At length the beacon fires were lit, proclaiming to Englishmen that the enemy was in view, and tongues of flame shot up from every cliff and hill—

For swift to east and swift to west the warning radiance spread—
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone—it shone on Beachy Head.
Far o'er the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.

Sir Peter Legh's kinsman, Thomas Legh, of Adlington, was the "stout old sheriff" of Cheshire that year. He himself was still provost marshal of the two palatine counties, and we may be sure at such a time he would be by no means idle. He was too old to again unsheath the sword, but if he were unable to render personal help he could yet render pecuniary aid, and that he readily did, for we read that in response to the Queen's appeal he contributed one hundred pounds—a substantial sum in those days, and a welcome addition to an exchequer by no means overflowing. It was almost his last public act, for before two more winters had passed over his head he had sunk peacefully to his rest, full of years and honours. He died at Lyme, on the 6th December, 1589, at the age of seventy-six; his body was carried to Winwick, and there buried in the family chapel where so many of his race had been laid before him.

What has been truly called the "great Eliza's golden time" seems to have been the golden era of Lyme as it was the golden age of England. The Sir Peter Legh of that day was a scholar as well as a gentleman, a courtier as well as a soldier; brave and generous, graceful and gifted, with a knowledge of the world, and a large experience, united with consummate prudence. He was the friend of Essex and of Leicester, and the trusted counsellor of two successive Earls of Derby; a frequent visitor at Lathom, he was familiar with the semi-regal state and munificence there maintained, and in his own house at Lyme he observed a dignity and bounteous hospitality such as none of his predecessors had equalled. The age was one of growing refinement and general activity of intellect, resulting from the growing opulence of the country. England had recovered

from the state of exhaustion in which the Wars of the Roses had left her, and men had more leisure for the cultivation of the elegances of life. While those daring spirits, Drake and Hawkins, and Howard, and Frobisher, were founding our naval supremacy, Sackville and Spencer, and Marlowe and Sidney were calling up a great native literature. Raleigh was in his teens, and in the yeoman's house at Stratford was budding into manhood he who was to

Show, sustain, and nourish all the world.

England had then become a true garden of the Hesperides; musical talent had spread from the Court to the people; literature was cultivated; and the drama, "which taught the unlearned the knowledge of many famous histories," was emerging from childishness into vigorous life, and producing its effect upon the national character. With the great diffusion of wealth men took pleasure and pride in adding to the stateliness and beauty of their permanent abodes. Architecture is said to mark the growth and development of human society, and to express the needs and ideas of changeful centuries. The age of Elizabeth was truly a building age; the day of the gloomy keep, the drawbridge, and the portcullis—the time

When men built less against the elements
Than their next neighbours

was passed. Property was secure; and the fortified castle had given place to the stately mansion, and in almost every parish the country gentleman had taken the place of the feudal barons or the mitred abbots who had previously been the owners of vast territorial districts. As William Brown, in his "Pastorals," remarked—

Here on some mount a house of pleasure vaunted,
Where once the warring cannon had been planted.

Sir Peter Legh, as we have seen, greatly enlarged, if he did not entirely rebuild, his mansion at Lyme; he greatly improved his estate, and had his demesne emparked, so that the fallow deer which tenanted it could be separated from the wild cattle that roamed over the moorland wastes of Macclesfield Forest. His progenitors for generations had been foresters in fee; he not only enjoyed the privilege, but, as the deputy of the Earl of Derby, exercised various offices in connection with the forest. Hunting was his favourite pastime, and he appears to have been generous in the distribution of game and venison among his friends and neighbours. In the "Shuttleworth Accounts" there are frequent references to Sir Peter's bounty. Thus we read—"Paid for twoe pounds of peper that wente to Lyme when the staggs were sent to London, 5s. 8d.;" "To the keeper at Lyme for killing two staggs, 4s.;" "Unto a man who broughte a shoulder of a stagge from Lyme, xijd.;" "Unto a keeper of Sir Pyeres Legh who brought venison, 5s." Later on we read—"Given unto a mane of Sir Peteres Lyghte which broughte rabettes and pigiones, xijd.;" "To a man of Sir Peter Lyghe, which broughte fisse to the Smytheles, ijs.;" "To a mane of Sir Peter Lyghe, which broughte a fatte buke to Smytheles, vs.;" "To Lytell Robin which brought smelts from my Ladie Lyge, iijjd.;" "To Sir Peter Lyghe's mane which brought a fatte buke to Smytheles, vis.;" "Sir Peter Lyghe's keeper, which brought the buke to Gawthorpe, xs." In 1584 the great Earl of Leicester, Elizabeth's favourite, is found writing to Sir Peter, thanking him for a hind he had sent, and also for a hound, probably one of the Lyme mastiffs, a breed that was famous it seems even then. We have already said that the lord of Lyme enjoyed the friendship of the Earl of Essex, Leicester's great rival. Essex was a guest at Lyme, and Wilson, the historian, who was in his retinue, in his journal records a curious incident respecting the hunting of the deer on that occasion. He writes:—

Sir Peter Lee, of Lime in Cheshire, invited my Lord one summer to hunt the stag. And having a great stag in chase, and many gentlemen in pursuite, the stag took soyle; and divers (whereof I was one) alighted and stood with swords drawne to have a cut at him at his coming out of the water.

The staggs there being wonderful fierce and dangerous made us youthes more eager to be at him. But he escaped us all. And it was my misfortune to be hindered of coming near him, the way being sliperie, as by a fall; which gave occasion to some who did not know mee, to speake as if I had falne for feare, which being told mee, I left the stag, and followed the gentleman who first spoke it. But I found him of that cold temper, that, it seems, his words made an escape from him, as by his denial and repentance it appeared.

But this made mee more violent in persuite of the stag, to recover my reputation. And I happened to be the only horseman in when the dogs set him up at bay; and approaching nere him on horseback, he broke through the dogs and run at mee, and tore my horse's side with his hornes close to my thigh. Then I quitted my horse, and grew more cunning (for the dogs had set him up again), stealing behind him with my sword and cut his hamstrings, and then got upon his back and cut his throate: which as I was doing, the company came in and blamed my rashness for running such a hazard.

Sir Peter Legh believed that—

The forest music is to hear the hounds
Rend the thin air and with a lusty cry
Awake the drowsy echo, and confound

Their perfect language in a mingled voice.

But though, like Percy, in Chevy Chase, he delighted—

To drive the deer with hound and horn,

hunting the stag was not the only amusement he provided for his friends. The Mysteries and Miracle Plays had then given place to "stage-plays, interludes, and comedies;" though the drama was only in its puling infancy, it was rising into popular favour. My Lord of Leicester had his company of players, who performed before the Queen at the Kenilworth revels in 1575, when the whole country side flocked to the great earl's great castle. Doubtless there was amongst the spectators the bright son of the well-to-do burgess of Stratford, who would probably there received his first impressions of the drama, as he witnessed the rude masques, the storial shows of Gascoigne, and the allegory of the Lady of the Lake. The great Earl of Derby had a company of players in Lancashire, who, according to the Stanley papers, relieved the dulness of the Puritan chaplain's preaching on the Sunday morning by a theatrical performance before the household in the same mansion on the Sunday evening; and Sir Peter Legh, not to be behind hand, had a company of his own. The severe moralists of the age were strongly opposed to stage plays, and accounted them greater abominations than drinking, dicing, bear-baiting, and cock-fighting, and the law defined as "vagabonds" all players who were "not belonging to any baron of this realm, or towards any other person of greater degree." Sir Peter Legh's actors not only performed at Lyme and enlivened the houses of his neighbours, but we read in the Shuttleworth accounts already referred to that in the "Armada" year they appeared at Gawthorpe and were paid for a performance in the hall there. Sir Peter's liberality and munificence added to his popularity, and caused him to be looked up to with reverence and respect as well by his equals as by the common people. As we have said, he died in 1589, at the ripe age of 76; but Dame Margaret, his wife, must have survived him several years, for among the family portraits at Lyme there is one of her, taken in 1595, when she was in her ninetieth year. By her Sir Peter had a numerous issue—five sons and two daughters. The youngest of the two daughters, Margery, married for her first husband Sir Robert Barton, of Smithells, in Lancashire, and concerning their union tradition tells a pathetic story which Mr. Leigh has enshrined in verse and given to the world in his entertaining "Lays and Legends of Cheshire," under the title of "The Loves of Sir Robert Barton and Margery Legh."

Sir Peter Legh outlived his eldest son, also named Peter, who died at Haydock about the year 1570, and was succeeded by his grandson, who bore the same baptismal name. He was born in 1563, and must therefore have been in his twenty-seventh year when he succeeded to the patrimonial lands. While yet a minor he had received a training well fitted to enable him to discharge the duties that would devolve upon him as the owner of extensive estates. He had been a frequent guest of the Earl of Derby, and in the lordly hall of Lathom and at the kingly court of Castle Rushen he acquired a grace and dignity of manner, and at Gray's Inn, where he entered as a student, he gained a knowledge of the laws which in due course he would be called to administer. When a youth of fourteen he acted as page to Henry, Earl of Derby, and held up his train when he made a visit of ceremony to the town of Liverpool, and seven years later he was in the same Earl's suite as "one of his gentlemen waiters," when, as Elizabeth's ambassador, he went to invest the King of France with the Order of the Garter. In September, 1585, four months after he had entered at Gray's Inn, he married Margaret, daughter of Sir Gilbert Gerard, of Bromley, Master of the Rolls. For some cause or other the marriage had been delayed, as the settlement bears date 1st June, 1579. In the following year he was called upon to bear his part in the Great Council of the Nation, being chosen one of the representatives in Parliament for the ancient borough of Wigan, his wife's kinsman, William Gerard, being his co-representative. The time was one of much anxiety, consequent upon the well-founded apprehensions of a Spanish invasion and the decisive indications of plots for the deposition of Elizabeth and the recognition of Mary's claim to the English crown—that in which the fierce indignation in England against the bigoted King of Spain led the Government to break through the superstitious love of peace and boldly encounter Philip on his own territory. In 1589 Mr. Legh was again elected one of the representatives of Wigan, and in the following year his grandfather, Sir Peter Legh, passed to his rest, when he succeeded as next heir male to the family estates. His wealth and social status marked him as a fitting person to be entrusted with the shrievalty of Cheshire, and in 1595 that dignity was conferred upon him. Proud of his ancestry, he was no less proud of the home of his ancestors. His grandfather had rebuilt the mansion at Lyme and spent much of his time there, maintaining great estate; the older mansion of Bradley had in consequence been comparatively neglected and allowed to fall into decay, and in 1597, as appears by an inscription on one of the beams, he set about repairing the ravages which time had made, thoroughly reinstated it, and at the same time adorned the wall of the great staircase with an heraldic shield of eight quarterings, which may be seen at the present day. On the 2nd July, 1598, just a month before the death of the illustrious Lord Burleigh, the hoary minister, in whom

Old experience did attain
To something like prophetic strain,

he attended at the Royal Palace in Greenwich, and there received the honour of knighthood at the hands of Queen Elizabeth. Two years later—43 Elizabeth—he was elected to represent the county of Chester in Parliament, in the place of Sir William Beeston of Beeston, Knight, his co-representative being Sir Thomas Holcroft, of Vale Royal, and the same year, having completed the restoration of his house at Bradley, he rendered the like good service to the church which his

ancestors had founded at Disley, re-roofing it and putting the fabric in a state of complete repair. While this work was going on he was busied in making important additions to his territorial estate, having entered into a contract with Roger and Hamer Bruche for the purchase of their ancestral domain of Bruche, with the hall and lands pertaining to it, which thenceforward formed part of the Legh estates.

On the 24th March, 1603, the most glorious reign in our country's annals was brought to a close; it was a sad day for "merrie England," for it was that on which, in the royal palace at Richmond, in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her reign, worn out with the cares of State and wearied with the fierce contest between her intensely womanly nature and her sense of duty as the queen of a great people, the most powerful and most beloved monarch in Europe, Queen Elizabeth, lay upon her cushions wrestling with death, and terminated a long life of power, prosperity, and glory. Within three short months of that day death had cast a shadow over the home of Sir Peter Legh. On the 23rd July, 1603, he had the misfortune to lose his wife, the Lady Margaret Legh, who was then in her thirty-third year. She appears to have been staying in London at the time, for her body was buried in the church of Fulham, in Middlesex, where a sumptuous monument with her effigy upon it was erected to her memory, and which may still be seen near the north door of the chancel. She is represented as seated beneath an arched canopy with an infant upon her lap and another by her side. Over the head is a shield of arms, and on the face of the tomb is the following inscription:—

To ye memy. or what else dearer remayneth of yt verteous Lady, La. Margaret Legh, daughter of him yt sometimes was Sir Gilbert Gerrard, Knt. and mr of ye Rolles in ye Highe Court of Chancery, Wife to Sir Peter Legh of Lyme, in ye county of Chester, Kt., and by him ye mother of seven sons, Pierce, Frauncis, Radcliffe, Thomas, Peter, Gilbert, and John, with two daughters, Anne and Catherine; of wch Radcliffe, Gilbert, and John, deceased infants, the rest yet surviving to the happy increase of ther house. The years she enjoyed ye world were 33. yt her husband enjoyed her 17, at which period she yielded her soul to the blessedness of long rest and her body to the earth, July 3rd, 1603. This inscription in ye note of piety and love by her sad husband is here devotedly placed.

Among the family portraits at Lyme there is one in the "state bedroom" of the deceased lady—a full length—"Sir Peter Legh's first lady that was Lord Gerard of Bromley's daughter, master of the rolls." She is represented in the costume of the Elizabethan era, with the large hooped petticoats, ruff, &c.

When James of Scotland was proclaimed as the successor of Elizabeth on the English throne, Sir Peter Legh deemed it expedient to sue out a general pardon; not that he was conscious of having done any wrong, but in those days it was a convenient mode of settling old scores, for by paying a fine into the exchequer a general absolution could be obtained for all sins of omission or commission, real or imaginary.

Having paid his money and obtained the bill of indemnity which enabled him to begin the new reign without a blot, he was free to take unto himself a second wife, and he found a suitable partner in the person of Dorothy Egerton, the daughter of Sir Richard Egerton, of Ridley, and the widow of Richard Brereton, of Worsley, in Lancashire, and Tatton, in Cheshire—the *quasi* sister of Thomas Egerton Lord Viscount Brackley, Elizabeth's Lord Keeper, and subsequently James the First's famous Lord Chancellor, the progenitor of the Earls and Dukes of Bridgewater that were, and the Earls of Ellesmere, and Lords Egerton of Tatton that are. The marriage settlement, which is among the Lyme deeds, bears date 11th March, 1604, Dame Brereton having then been a widow more than five years, while Sir Peter had been a widower only eight months. The match was in many respects a wise one; the lady was of good birth, richly dowered, kind hearted and benevolent, and, being childless herself, she had the good fortune to gain the affection and respect of Sir Peter's children. A few years after the marriage, Sir Peter, who united with the love of letters a love of art, had her portrait painted as he had previously had those of himself and his first wife. The picture is said, though on somewhat doubtful authority, to be the work of Cornelius Jansen; it is a three-quarters, and one of the finest in the collection at Lyme. The lady is represented as habited in the costume of the time, with a lace ruff and necklace of beads, and a pet dog sitting upon the table by her side. In one corner is depicted a shield, with the arms of Egerton, of Ridley, and three other quarterings, and in the opposite corner is the inscription:—*"Ætatissuæ 50, Anno Dni. 1615."*

For some years after his second marriage, Sir Peter seems to have led a comparatively uneventful life. When not engaged in the fulfilment of his duties as Lieutenant-governor, or Captain of the Isle of Man, he spent much of his time on his Lancashire and Cheshire estates; Lyme was his favourite residence, and was frequented by the best company, and often the scene of much gaiety and display. The only shadow that darkened his path was cast by his eldest son, Piers, who, while at Magdalene College, Cambridge, appears to have disappointed his hopes, or been guilty of some irregularity that necessitated his sending for him home, being, as he says, "enforced to do so for cause." This was not the only trouble, for about the year 1619 the young man married, presumably without his father's consent, and probably without his knowledge, though the lady was in every way of equal rank with himself, being the daughter of Sir John Saville, of Howley, in Yorkshire, the first Lord Saville of Pontefract. Mr. Beaumont inclines to the opinion that the great difference between the political views of the two houses of Lyme and Howley was very likely the reason which occasioned Piers Legh to marry Anne Saville without

waiting for his father's consent. Be that as it may, the father was much displeased, an estrangement ensued, and his intercourse with his son was never renewed. Piers Legh's married life seems to have been brief; little is known respecting him, and it is not known with certainty when he died or when he was buried, but it was commonly believed, though erroneously, as will hereafter be seen, that he predeceased his father some years, having by his wife, who survived him many years, one son and three daughters.

Sir Peter Legh attained to a greater age than many of his ancestors; born near the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, it was his lot to serve three successive sovereigns—the Maiden Queen, James the First, and Charles the First—and he appears to have been hale and strong until within a short period of his death, which occurred at Lyme on the 17th February, 1635-6. Three days after, his body was buried at Winwick in accordance with his expressed desire, and from the unusual haste with which the funeral arrangements were carried out it has been surmised that he must have fallen a victim to the plague or some other infectious disease. In his will, which was executed on the 18th January immediately preceding his death, he desired that his body might be buried with little pomp, and a stone with a brass placed over his grave. The brass still remains, the only memorial recording his burial, and bears this inscription:—

Here underneath this stone lyeth buried the body of Sir Peter Legh, Kt., who departed this life, February 17th, 1635. Ætatis suæ 73.

Sir Peter's *Inquisition post mortem* was taken at Wigan on the 18th April, 1636, and some idea of the extent of the territorial possessions of the family may be gathered from the following list of messuages, mills, lands, wards, rents, &c., in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Westmoreland, given as having been held by him at the time of his death:—Bradley Manor, Burtonwood Manor, Haydock Manor, Bruch Manor, and Hanley Manor; Halton, Pemberton, Norley, Bridgemore, Newton-in-Makerfield, Lawton, Golborne, Fernhead, Hindley, Kenion, Warrington, Sankey Magna and Parva, Overforde, Wolstone, Penketh, Garston, Ollerton, Much Woulton, Much Hoole, Walton-le-Dale, Ulnes Walton, Bretherton, Eccleston-juxta-Crofton, Bold, Childwall, Croston, Poulton, the advowson of Claughton-juxta-Horneby, the church of Shevington, and the church near Prescott. Lands, &c., in Westmorland, Lyme, Grapnall, Disley, Broome, Heatley, Sutton, Marple, Offerton, Norbury, Weyley (Whaley), Macclesfield, Latchford, Warburton, Kettlethulme, and Bridgemoor.

By the same inquisition it was found that Sir Peter Legh's next heir was his grandson, also named Peter, and that he was then of the age of thirteen and upwards. Being a minor, his mother, then describing herself as "Anne Legh, of Ripley in the countie of Yorke, widowe," obtained from the courts of wards and liveries the custody, wardship, and marriage of her son Piers, paying to the King the sum of £2,000 as the consideration. Before he had attained his majority the young Lord of Lyme was chosen as one of the representatives of Newton in the Parliament which assembled at Westminster on the 3rd November, 1640—the most memorable in the annals of England—the Long Parliament, which endured for thirteen years, and which has been the theme of the most extravagant hatred and the most exaggerated praise. He did not, however, long enjoy his senatorial honours, for happening to become involved in one of the quarrels so common in those days, a duel was the result, and he was mortally wounded in the encounter. The affair is thus referred to in "The Perfect Diurnall of Passages in Parliament," under date Friday, January 28th, 1641-2:—

This evening Sir Peter Lee, a member of the House of Commons, was hurt dangerously in a duell by one Master Mansfield.

There is an inaccuracy in styling him "Sir" Peter, for he had not received the honour of knighthood, and there is an error, too, in the name of his antagonist, whom Lord Herbert of Cherbury describes as his nephew, the son of Sir John Browne, and who, he says, "had the fortune to kill one Lee of a great family in Lancashire."^[61] He lingered for some days—sufficiently long to enable him to dispose of his affairs, as will be seen by the following copy of his will with the codicil annexed:—

28 January, 1641.—Peter Legh, esqr., being dangerouslie wounded maketh his desires and requests as followeth, viz. The barron of Kinderton to take the moneyes in his trunk which is about 70li. Desired him to speake to his unckle Frauncis to be good to his mother and sisters. Sir Willm. Gerrarde to have his dun nage.

1 February, 1641.—He desireth his unckle Frauncis over and above his owne bountie to his sisters, that he will for his sake give them cli. a peece. To his man Ralph Arnefielde the xiiijli. he oweth him to be made upe xlii. The boy here with him, Myles Leighe vli., his footboy at Blackley vli., and every servant at Blackley xs. a peece. Ralphe Swindells xli. He giveth his greye nage he had of Mr. Brathwates [his sister's husband] to Captain Broughton. His sword at his lodging in towne to Mr. Carrel Mulineux and praieth God he may make better use of it than he hath done, and his case of pistoles. His watche to his aunt Lettice Leigh. His cloathes to his three servants, the boy at Blakeley, Ralphe Arnfield, and Myles Leighe. Desireth his father to see his bodie buried at Winwicke, and Mr. Jones, who hath beene with him at his sickness, to preach at his funerall. To his brother Tom his sword at Blakeley, and a gray nage he bought of the barron. To his father his white mare and best saddle. Praieth his unkele Frauncis to consider the debts he oweth Sir Wm. Gerrarde and all the debts he oweth to others. To his friend Mr. Roger Moston his caen. To his unkele Frauncis the sword that was his

grandfather's, his great seale ringe, and his greate fowlinge piece. Desireth his unkle to give his mother cli. a year during her life if she give the porcon in money she hath to his sisters, which if she otherwaies dispose of them cli. in money.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'J. Legh', followed by a decorative flourish.

I say my hand.

Witnesses hereof
Raphe Assheton K.
John Jones
Roger Mostyn
Tho. Muncckas.
1641.

In this will he expressly mentions his father as then living, a statement that is in conflict with the decree of the Court of Wards and Livery of November 22nd, 1624, which represents him as having "dyed in his (father's) displeasure." The later years of the father's life are shrouded in much mystery, and it may be that after the quarrel with Sir Peter Legh he had disappeared, and, being for a time unheard of, was supposed to be dead; certain it is that he was not among the mourners at Sir Peter's funeral at Winwick, in 1635, and he is not named in the inquisition taken after his death, his son being therein named as the heir to his grandfather.

The "unkele Frauncis" whom young Peter Legh so affectionately remembers in his will was the second son of Sir Peter. He resided at Blackley Hall, near Manchester, which, with the demesne, had been conveyed to him in 1636 by Ralph Assheton, of Middleton, "in consideracon of the full somme of two thousand pounds of currant English money."

Peter Legh died on the 2nd February, the day after he had added the codicil to his will. His body was brought from London and interred in the family vault at Winwick, the burial being thus recorded in the parish register:—

1641-2 Feb. 14. Mr. Peter Legh grandchild of Sir Peter Lee of Lime, slaine in London by Mr. Browne, and buried at Winwicke ye 14 day.

Peter had never married, and by this fatality the direct succession to the territorial possessions of the family was broken after having passed uninterruptedly through eleven generations, in every one of which the eldest son bore the name of Peter or Piers.

On the 14th April, 1642, an inquisition was taken at Wigan before the Escheator of Lancashire. It is a lengthy document, and, after reciting many family deeds and settlements, states that Peter Legh had died while under age; that his sisters Frances, Margaret, and Elizabeth were his heirs, and that Francis Legh (of Blackley, his uncle) was heir male of the body of Sir Peter Legh, and then of the age of fifty and more. He did not long enjoy possession of the estates, his death occurring February 2nd, 1643-4. He had to wife Anne, the daughter and heiress of Sir Edward Fenner, of Hampton, in Oxfordshire, knight; but as this lady, who survived, bore him no issue, the estates at his death, reverted to his nephew, Richard Legh, the second surviving son of his brother, the Rev. Thomas Legh, D.D., rector of Sefton and Walton, in Lancashire, by his wife, Lettice, daughter and co-heiress of Sir George Calveley, of Lea, a descendant of Sir Hugh Calveley, the famous Cheshire hero, who fought so gallantly at Auray and Navarette in the days of the third Edward. Born on the 7th May, 1634, Francis Legh was under ten years of age when he succeeded to the family inheritance; his father had been dead five years, but his mother was still living, though she did not survive many years, her death occurring October 14, 1648. Her body was interred in the Lyme Chapel in Macclesfield Church, where, against the east wall, there is a black marble tablet to her memory bearing a long Latin inscription.

It was a fortunate circumstance that Richard Legh, when he so unexpectedly succeeded to the lordship of Lyme and the vast territorial possessions in Lancashire and Westmorland his progenitors had acquired, was too young to be entrusted with the control of his own affairs. He had not completed his tenth year at the time of his uncle's decease. It was an eventful period in England's history: the storm which had so long been gathering upon the political horizon had burst; eighteen months before, the shot which signalled the commencement of the great civil war had been fired at Manchester; Edgehill had been fought; and England's purest patriot had been laid to rest, uncentaphed but not forgotten, in the church at Great Hampden, beneath the shadow of the Chiltern Hills. Sovereign and subject were separated for ever, and each, wearied of the other, no longer sought for peace; the loud beating of the warlike pulse drowned the faint, decaying traditions of the miseries which had attended the ancient domestic feuds; hostile armies were marching and countermarching; every manor house was put by its owner in a position of defence, and every Englishman declared for King or Parliament and prepared himself for the struggle, never swerving for a moment from what he believed to be the path of honourable, though perilous duty. Amid these political distractions Richard Legh's youthfulness stood him in good stead; too young to take any part in the strife then being waged, he escaped many of the services and exactions he would otherwise have been subjected to had he been suspected of any

strong partiality either for the Cavaliers or the Roundheads. On the 7th May, 1655, he attained his majority, and in the following year he was returned as one of the members for Cheshire in the Parliament which assembled at Westminster on the 7th September, 1656, his colleagues in the representation being Sir George Booth, of Dunham; Thomas Marbury, of Marbury; and Peter Brooke, of Mere—a Parliament notable as that in which the ancient privileges were violated on the broadest scale, no member being admitted who could not produce a certificate that he was "approved by his Highness's Council." As Richard Legh was not among the excluded members, he must have satisfied the requirements of the "Council," and been therefore accounted one of the "betrayers of the liberties of England;" but he took little part in the proceedings, and when his name was called on the memorable occasion when it was intended that the Protector should be invested with the powers and the title of King he was reported to have gone away into the country "dangerously sick." After the death of Cromwell, in 1659, and when his son Richard had been proclaimed as his successor in the Protectorate, a new Parliament was called, and Mr. Legh was again returned as one of the members for Cheshire; John Bradshaw, the regicide, being returned with him. It had, however, but a very brief existence. The members assembled on the 29th January (1659); on the 27th April a proclamation was issued dissolving it, and the members returned to their own homes. With the fall of the Parliament fell Richard Cromwell; the sceptre which had proved too heavy for his grasp, was laid aside, and, as Thurloe wrote to Lockhart, he was "excluded from having any share in the Government," and "retired as a private gentleman." Mr. Legh appears to have been concerned in the Royalist insurrection—the "Cheshire Rising," as it was called—which occurred in the following year, when Sir George Booth appeared in arms and obtained possession of the city of Chester, the object being the recall of the exiled Stuarts, and he was for a time incarcerated in York Castle; but the unsuccessful "Rising" was quickly followed by the accomplishment of the design it failed in; Charles was restored to the Crown, and Mr. Legh regained his liberty.

On the 29th May, 1660, Charles the Second passed in triumphal procession through the streets of London. The delirium of joy manifested on that occasion was no mere exuberance of delight, but the expression of the nation's belief that the Government of England had again a solid foundation upon which peace and security, liberty and religion, might be established. Peace and good order being restored, Mr. Legh, who had now attained the age of twenty-six, had time to attend to matters affecting his own domestic happiness. On the 1st January, 1660-1, he took to himself a wife in the person of Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Sir Thomas Chicheley, of Wimpole, in Cambridgeshire, descended from a brother of Archbishop Chicheley, the munificent founder of All Souls', Oxford, and himself Charles the Second's Master of the Ordnance and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

On the 23rd of April following the King was crowned at Westminster, and it is not improbable that Richard Legh and his young bride were among the guests in Westminster Hall on the occasion when Samuel Pepys was so dazzled with the fine hangings, and the brave ladies, and the "musique" of the violins; though they could hardly have been among the "many great gallants, men and women," who laid hold of the garrulous diarist, and would have him drink the King's health upon his knees, kneeling upon a faggot, which he did. Certain it is that the lord of Lyme was in favour with the Court, and when Charles proposed to found the new order of the "Knights of the Royal Oak," in which only those distinguished for their loyalty were to be admitted, his name was placed among those on whom the distinction was proposed to be conferred. The order was, however, soon abolished, "it being wisely judged," as Noble, in his "Memoirs of the Cromwell Family," remarks, "that it was calculated only to keep awake animosities which it was the part of wisdom to lull to sleep."

In the same year Mr. Legh purchased from Sir Thomas Fleetwood the barony of Newton-in-Makerfield, or Newton-in-the-Willows, as it is more generally styled, thus adding considerably to the territorial possessions of his house as well as to his social status in the county. Newton, which in Saxon times was of sufficient importance to give name to one of the hundreds of Lancashire, by virtue of a charter granted in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, had the privilege of returning two members to Parliament conferred upon it, a dignity it retained until disfranchised by the Reform Bill of 1832. The nomination of members was in the Baron of Newton until the year 1620, when the franchise became vested in the burgesses possessing freeholds of the value of 40s. a year and upwards, but this was only a nominal change, for, the burgage tenures being chiefly in the lord of the manor, the election was as much in him after the right came nominally into the hands of the burgesses as it was before, the place continuing to rank among the nomination boroughs until the Reform Act, and thus the Leghs acquired with the barony a seat in the legislature whenever they might choose to seek that honour. Mr. Legh sat as one of the members for the borough in the Convention Parliament of 1660, and again in that which assembled a few days after the King's coronation. In the succeeding year (September 20, 1662) he was appointed a deputy-lieutenant of Cheshire, and on the 26th April the same office in Lancashire was, by the King's command, conferred upon him by the Earl of Bridgewater. It was while holding these offices that Mr. Legh found himself in a position of some difficulty with regard to a distinguished visitor who it was intimated had expressed his intention of becoming a guest at Lyme. The Duke of Monmouth, the eldest of the many illegitimate children of Charles II.—"the Duke whom," as Evelyn says, "for distinction they called the Protestant Duke, though the son of an abandoned woman the people made their idol," had suddenly returned from temporary exile and set up a claim to be considered the legitimate heir to the throne in opposition to the Duke of York, who, on account of his Popish proclivities, the Whigs of the time sought to disinherit. The vanity of the bastard son of Lucy Waters being inflamed by the enthusiastic demonstrations of the people, he made a "glorious progress" through the country, which is referred to by Dryden in his "Absalom

and Achitophel," who thus represents the Earl of Shaftesbury as remonstrating with him on his doubts and apprehensions when a crown was within his view:—

Did you for this expose yourself to show,
And to the crowd bow popularly low?
For this your glorious progress next ordain,
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train?

Cheshire was among the counties in which he sought to keep alive the political cry by appealing to popular opinion against the dreaded predominance of Popery, and in 1683 we find one of his partisans, Caryll, Lord Molineux, thus writing to Mr. Legh:—"At Chester they are in consternation how to treat the Monmouth Duke. You, I hope, are settled in your resolution of entertaining him when he comes to Lyme, which, I hear, will be very soon." But Mr. Legh was not so "settled;" on the contrary, we find him with two of his brother magistrates busied in taking the depositions of certain individuals respecting the Duke and his progress, and transmitting them to the Secretary of State, for which he received his Majesty's thanks.



Monmouth's progress through Cheshire was attended with considerable tumult, and he is said to have given countenance to riotous assemblies, whose violence was such that they forced open the doors of the Cathedral at Chester, destroyed most of the painted glass, and tore the surplices of the clergy into rags; they also broke the font to pieces, pulled down some of the monuments, attempted to demolish the organ, and committed other outrages. A memoir of his reception in the city mentions several arts to gain popularity not unworthy of notice. The infant of the Mayor was christened Henrietta, Monmouth acting as sponsor, and the following day (August 25, 1683,) it is said that he went to the horse races at Wallasey in Wirral, where he rode his own horse and won the plate, which he presented in the evening to his goddaughter.

While these events were transpiring Mr. Legh occupied himself with rebuilding the old Episcopal chapel of St. Peter on his Newton estate, and providing for the better maintenance of the incumbent. Two years later, on the accession of James II., he was reappointed Deputy-lieutenant of Cheshire, but he did not long retain the office, his death occurring at Lyme on the 31st August, 1687, at the age of 53. His body was removed to Winwick, and there interred in the family vault on the 6th of the following month, when a sermon, entitled "The Christian's Triumph over Death," was preached by the Rev. William Shippen, Rector of Stockport. This sermon, which was afterwards published, contains a brief sketch of his life and character, which Mr. Earwaker, in his "East Cheshire," thus summarises:—

The greatest Excellencies of his Ancestors seem'd to Concenter in his Person. The singular Piety of his Grandfather, Sir Peter; the extraordinary Charity and Benignity of his Uncle, Francis; the Constancy and Fixedness of Religion of his Father; the quickness and Gaiety of Spirit of his Mother. Educated at the University in his "Blooming Youth", and "refined and finished afterwards at City and Court," he was "rendered a most accomplished and useful gentleman both to his Prince and Country." He added "the Parliamentary Burrough and Barony of Newton" to his other estates, and his "Mansion House (Lyme Hall) he so far Rebuilt and Ennobled, partly in Effect, and partly in Design and preparations for its finishing." ... "There was such an Affluence of all things, so great a resort of Persons of Quality, ... that his house might very well be styled a Country Court, and Lime the Palace to the County Palatine of Chester."

He engaged in the Cheshire rising to restore his Exiled Sovereign, though being surprised by the Enemy, he was prevented from appearing in that successful Enterprise, of which both the Palatine Counties (the Stage of the Action) and York Castle (the place of his Imprisonment) are unquestionable Witnesses. "Although he was actually in every Parliament during his whole Reign (i.e., of Charles II.), yet he never joyn'd any Faction in the House." ... "His present Majesty (James II.) in his Royal Progress at Chester heard of his last fatal Indisposition." ... "He never fail'd of his Daily Service in his Domestick Chapel." ... "His Love and Zeal for the Church of England" are shown "in his Parish (Winwick) where he has at his own proper Charges built a Decent and Elegant Chapel, and taken care to Establish a Competent Maintenance for the constant Ministry therein for the Publick Worship of God."

In the church at Winwick there is a handsome monument to his memory with marble busts of himself and his wife, and in the hall at Lyme there are several portraits of both. By his wife, who survived him and retained her widowhood for the long period of forty-one years, he had a family of six sons and seven daughters, all of whom, with the exception of two daughters, Sarah and Anne, who died in infancy, were living at the time of his decease.

Peter Legh, the eldest son, who succeeded, though under age, had been married some few months at the time of his father's death, the lady being his own cousin, Frances, only surviving daughter of Piers Legh, of Bruche, and eventually heiress of her brother of the same name; the

Bruche estates thus becoming reunited with the patrimonial lands. Peter Legh, like his father, was a staunch adherent of the Stuarts, and after the abdication of James II. and the "Peaceful Revolution" had placed the Prince and Princess of Orange upon the English throne, it is not surprising that he should have been suspected of entertaining opinions hostile to the reigning family, and of opening communications with the Irish supporters of King James, with a view to the restoration of the exiled monarch. Many Protestant Royalists, whose fathers had fought for Charles the First, although opposed to the designs of James upon the Church, avowed their attachment to his inviolable person and crown, and professed themselves bound by their oath of allegiance, from which, as they affirmed, no personal misconduct of the King could release them. Some of the more enthusiastic armed their tenantry in defence of the Stuarts, and began to prepare themselves, as they had done fifty years before, to unite in rallying round the standard of their legitimate King. Suspicion having been excited by the landing of several Irishmen on the coast, and by the discovery of arms in transit from London to Lancashire, Lord Delamere issued a proclamation summoning the friends of liberty, and the new Government to meet him on Bowdon Downs, a proceeding that served to quell the spirit of disaffection among the Jacobites, and preserve the tranquillity of the two counties. At this time an attempt was made by a common informer, one John Lunt, to fix on Mr. Legh the charge of treason, in having, as was alleged, accepted a colonel's commission in King James's service. Mr. Beamont gives the following interesting particulars respecting his arrest and imprisonment:—

On the 19th of July, 1694, while Mr. Legh was still a very young man, a King's messenger, with Lunt, the informer, attended by fourteen Dutch troopers, each wearing a blue cloak, and armed with a case of pistols, arrived at Lyme, where Mr. Legh was living, between the hours of six and seven in the morning. The messenger, with one Oldham, their guide, and two or three of the troopers, immediately ascended the great staircase, and having found Mr. Legh, who was in his dressing-room and not yet dressed, they apprehended him under a Secretary of State's warrant, charging him with high treason. From his dressing-room they led him, attired only in his night gown, to his closet, where were Mr. Lunt and two or three more of the troopers. There the messenger and Mr. Lunt began to search his papers, and continued their search until noon, selecting and putting by from time to time, to be carried away, such of them as they thought fit. The alleged colonel's commission, had it been found, would have raised a damning presumption; and the only wonder is that, like the witness against Spratt, Bishop of Rochester, Lunt, who was evidently aware of this practice, had not so contrived as to hide where it should be found a forged commission somewhere in the house at Lyme. After being allowed to dress himself, Mr. Legh was taken downstairs into the parlour, and there left in charge of two of the troopers, while a search for arms was made in every part of the house; the result, however, must have disappointed the searchers, for, except a case of pistols and a carbine found in Mr. Legh's closet, which they seized and carried away, nothing whatever was found. Their quest being ended, Mr. Legh was taken from his house, and conveyed the same night, guarded by twelve troopers, to Knutsford, Lunt setting his own saddle on one of Mr. Legh's horses and riding away with it. From Knutsford Mr. Legh was conveyed by the troopers to Chester Castle, where he remained a prisoner until about the first of September following, when Lord Molyneux, Sir William Gerard, Sir Thomas Clifton, Philip Langton, Esq., William Blundell, Esq., and some others were conducted to London, guarded by four messengers, and an escort of twenty-one Dutch troopers, commanded by Captain Baker. On arriving at St. Giles's the prisoners were all committed to the custody of the messengers, who, at the end of three days, brought them, by command, before the Duke of Shrewsbury, his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, when his Grace, having heard and considered the charge against Mr. Legh, remanded him for three days, and then committed him to the Tower on a warrant, of which the following is a copy:—'These are in their Majesty's names to authorise you to receive and take into your custody, the body of Peter Legh, of Lyme, Esquire, herewith sent you, being charged before me for high treason in levying warr against their Majestys, and adhering to their Majesty's enemies; and you are to keep him safe and close until he shall be delivered by due course of law, and for so doing this shall be your warrant. Given at the Court at Whitehall, the 12th September, 1694.—SHREWSBURY. The Right Honourable Robert Lucas, Governor-in-Chief of the Tower, or his deputy.'



TRAITORS' GATE,—THE TOWER.

The closing years of the seventeenth century were distinguished if not disgraced by a succession of intrigues and conspiracies for the overthrow of the reigning dynasty. The country was in a state of political ferment, and the public mind, ever eager for some new sensation, caught with avidity and believed every story of real or pretended attempts to involve the nation in bloodshed. Plots were innumerable, and plot-hunting became as gainful a trade among unscrupulous knaves as witch-finding had been with their great-grandfathers nearly a century previously. That Peter Legh entertained strong Jacobite sympathies and desired to see the return of King James there can scarcely be a doubt, but that he took up arms or engaged in any treasonable enterprise against the person and government of the "Dutch usurper," as the disaffected styled the Prince of Orange, is extremely improbable. John Lunt, who seems to have taken the leading part in attempting to fasten the charge of treason upon him, was a miscreant of the most infamous type and actuated by the basest of motives; he had been a highwayman, one of his accomplices was a convicted cattle lifter, and at the time of the trial he made such a ridiculous figure that the jury were compelled to treat his evidence as altogether unworthy of belief.

For some time after his committal to the Tower Mr. Legh was subjected to very harsh treatment, and denied all communication with his friends or counsel. At no time could the Tower be said to be an agreeable place of residence, but lodged as he was in its worst room, with the atmosphere poisoned by the polluted exhalations of the surrounding ditch and the ague-giving marshes which then stretched east and west, and without any opportunity for outdoor exercise, the confinement must have been exceedingly trying, and especially to a constitution such as his, accustomed to the breezy moors of Lyme. Happily the rigidity of his imprisonment was after a while relaxed, and at the instance of the Queen permission was given for Mrs. Legh and a maid-servant to be with him if they were willing to share his confinement; and subsequently a further order was given that he should be allowed "such liberty of walking within the Tower at convenient times" as might be consistent with his safe keeping—conversation, however, being strictly forbidden. This latter injunction seems to have been strictly enforced, for it is recorded that when Mr. Legh's mother, Madam Legh, who was busied in getting up the evidence for his defence, came under the window of the room in which he was confined to inquire how he was, the sentinel pointed his musket and declared he would shoot her if she spoke another word. At length the order came that he was to prepare for trial at Chester,^[62] and, guarded by a party of horse, the gentleman porter, gentleman gaoler, and two warders of the Tower, he was reconducted to Chester Castle, when, without even being put on his trial, he was called to the bar and discharged, the evidence in support of the accusation which the informer Lunt had trumped up having, it would seem, been of so worthless and unsatisfactory a character as to leave no doubt of his innocence.

Barely eighteen months, however, elapsed before Mr. Legh was again arrested and lodged in Chester Gaol charged with similar treasonable offences, but no evidence was adduced, and when he was placed at the bar, no witnesses appearing, he was at once acquitted, and in accordance with the following order, dated June 2nd, 1696, and addressed to the High Sheriff directing his release, was discharged:—"Mr. Legh, charged with high treason and treasonable practices, in consequence of his Majesty's gracious directions."

The treatment Mr. Legh received at the hands of the State left upon his mind a sense of injustice that was never wholly removed, for in some directions respecting his burial, given nearly half a century after these occurrences, he wrote as follows:—

I would have no monument set over me, but a plain brass nailed to the wall to express my innocency in that wicked conspiracy (to ruin me) by false witnesses, imprisonments, and trials in 1694 and 1696, and that I die a member of the Church of England, looking on it to be the best and purest of churches; and that I do most sincerely wish it may continue for ever.

On the whole, however, it was perhaps not an unmixed evil that at so early a period of his career Mr. Legh should have had painful experience of the perils that political partizanship sometimes entails; for the remembrance of the dangers he had so narrowly escaped would necessarily have a salutary effect, and, on a later occasion, doubtless inspired that prudence which saved him from the ruin and destruction that befel so many of the partizans of the House of Stuart after the abortive rising in favour of the Chevalier de St. George in 1715. Certain it is that when in that year the members of the Cheshire Jacobite Club met to discuss the prospects of the rising in favour of the Stuarts, Mr. Legh's advice that they should abstain from taking any part in the revolt was acted upon, and, finding it difficult to harmonise their belief in the divine right of kings with their faith in the principles of the Reformation, they contented themselves with drinking the health of the King over a bowl of water, thus figuratively expressing their allegiance to the exiled monarch "over the water."^[63]

Though Mr. Legh never entered Parliament and took but little interest in the conduct of public affairs, not being even upon the commission of the peace, he was by no means neglectful of the social duties that lay nearer home. In him the reputation of the ancient lords of Lyme was well sustained, and the old ancestral home continued to be the scene of munificence and hospitality, being accounted the centre of whatever there was of society and life in the county. John Byrom, the laureate of the Jacobites, as he has been sometimes styled, was frequently a guest at Lyme at this time, and Mr. Legh, who was one of his shorthand pupils, is often named in his letters to Mrs. Byrom. Another visitor was the eccentric genius, Samuel Johnson, better known by his *sobriquet* of Lord Flame, who, in the epistle dedicatory of his play of "Hurlothrumbo" enumerates "the integrity of Leigh of Lime" among the many virtues possessed by his patroness, the Lady Delves. In 1699 Mr. Legh found employment for his time in founding and liberally endowing the school at Newton-in-Makerfield; and ten years later he was busied in erecting the Church of the Holy Trinity for the spiritual benefit of the tenantry on his Warrington estates, and, as the trust deeds recite, "upon trust and confidence, that the same might be used and employed for a chapel, for all the inhabitants of Warrington to resort unto and hear Divine service and sermons, according to the liturgy, rites and usage of the Church of England, as by law established."

In 1725 Mr. Legh had the misfortune to lose his son and heir, the only issue of his marriage, Piers Legh, who died unmarried, and was buried at Winwick on the 14th of June, and not long after (February 17, 1727-8) his fond and faithful wife, who had so cheerfully shared the privations of his prison life in the Tower, Madam Frances Legh, was called to her rest, her remains being laid beside those of her son on the 23rd February. Before the close of the year, having no direct heir, he made a settlement of Lyme and the other estates in favour of the four surviving sons of his younger brother, Thomas Legh, of Bank, who, in the event of his own death without issue, were to inherit in succession in tail male. These sons were Peter, who eventually succeeded; Piers, a merchant of Liverpool, engaged in the African trade, who died unmarried May, 1774; Ashburnham Legh, who became rector of Davenham, in Cheshire, and died at Golborne in 1775, and Henry, who died young.

Mr. Legh survived his wife several years, his death occurring in January, 1743-4, at the ripe age of 73, and on the 16th of that month his body was committed to its last resting place at Winwick.

Peter Legh, the second, but eldest surviving son of Thomas Legh, of Bank, who succeeded, was thirty-six years of age at the time of his uncle's decease, and had then been married several years, his wife being Martha, the only child of Thomas Bennet, of Salthrop, in Wiltshire. In November of the year following his accession to the estates the country was thrown into a state of ferment by the announcement that Charles Edward Stuart, the young Pretender, at the head of an army of Highlanders, had crossed the Borders, taken the city of Carlisle, and was then marching southwards—

The Stuart leaning on the Scot,
Pierc'd to the very centre of the realm,
In hopes to seize his abdicated helm.

In Cheshire the partizans of the exiled family were greatly excited, and a meeting of such of the members of the old Jacobite Club as still survived was held. Peter Legh was present, but, profiting by the experiences of his uncle, he counselled caution, and his counsel was acted upon, the more ardent spirits who had been anxious to don the white cockade having cause to rejoice that they had taken his advice. He subsequently entered Parliament as representative of the family borough of Newton, in November, 1747, and he was also returned to the Parliament which sat from May 31, 1754, to March 20, 1761, and in those which assembled in 1761, 1762, and 1768, the last-named continuing until 1774, the year which witnessed the beginning of the struggle between England and her Transatlantic colonies which culminated in American independence.

The year which followed Mr. Legh's second return to Parliament was a year of sorrow, for it was that in which he lost his only surviving son, Benet Legh, who died on the 8th July, aged eight years; his eldest son, Peter Benet Legh, who also died in childhood, he had buried a few years previously, and thus the lord of Lyme was again left without a direct heir to succeed him in the possession of the ancestral lands.

After his retirement from Parliament Mr. Legh took little part in public affairs, occupying his time chiefly in dispensing hospitalities and discharging those minor duties which devolved upon him

as a country gentleman. In the later years of his life he began the work of remodelling the mansion at Lyme, under the direction of the then famous architect Giacomo Leoni; a great portion was rebuilt, and what of the original was left was so altered as to entirely change its appearance and give it the characteristics of an Italian building. After fifty years' enjoyment of married life he had the misfortune to lose his wife, Madam Martha Legh, who died at Lyme on the 21st June, 1787; shortly afterwards (October 9, 1787) he made his will, and on the 20th May, 1792, having reached the patriarchal age of eighty-five, he was removed by death. His remains were interred in the church at Disley, where on the south side of the nave is a tablet to his memory, with a shield quartering the arms of himself and his wife, and the following inscription:

—
Sacred to the memory of Peter Legh, Esqre, once the owner of Lyme Park, and all its large appendages.... Obit May 20, 1792. Ætat 85.

Having no male heir, the entailed estates passed in accordance with the terms of the settlement to his nephew, Thomas Peter, the eldest son of his younger brother, Ashburnham Legh, rector of Davenham, by his wife, Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of Sir Holland Egerton, of Heaton Park, near Manchester. Mr. Legh was a bachelor of the mature age of forty at the time his uncle's death placed him in possession of the estates, and he had then sat in Parliament for several years as representative of the family borough of Newton, having been returned in 1783, in 1784, and again in 1790. He was a man of much public spirit, and on the breaking out of the war with France at the time of the Revolution in 1794, he raised a regiment of horse for the defence of the country. Reilly, the historian of Manchester, says, "He proposed to raise six troops of cavalry, and did so in fourteen days." Of this regiment, the Third Lancashire Light Dragoons, he had the colonelcy, and it is recorded that, in addition to the Government grant, he expended upon it no less a sum than £20,000 of his own money. He was again returned as representative of Newton, in the Parliament elected in 1796, but he did not long enjoy the dignity, his death occurring suddenly on the 7th August, in the following year, while serving with his regiment at Edinburgh. His body was removed to Winwick, and there buried in the family chapel. Colonel Legh, who was only forty-four years of age at the time of his death, had never married; having no legitimate issue, and his only brother having predeceased him, he bequeathed Lyme and the other possessions of the family, with the barony of Newton, to his eldest (natural) son, Thomas Legh, for life, with remainder to his issue in tail male, and on failure with like remainder to his second natural son, William Legh.

Thomas Legh, who thus succeeded as tenant for life of the family estates, was only four years of age at the time of his father's decease. He entered at Oxford, but before he had completed his curriculum in that University, hearing that Napoleon had escaped from Elba and was then at the head of a large army, he, like many other adventurous spirits, made his way to Belgium, and was at Brussels on the eve of the Battle of Waterloo where he offered himself as a volunteer, and served as an extra aide-de-camp to the Duke of Wellington during the whole of that memorable engagement. Shortly afterwards he went a voyage to Greece and Albania, whence he extended his researches to Egypt and Nubia. Early in his travels he was at Zante, where he witnessed the arrival of the celebrated frieze discovered in the Temple of Apollo, at Phigalia. In the excavation and removal of the beautiful sculptures composing that frieze, now one of the chief ornaments of the British Museum, Mr. Legh was largely instrumental, both by his purse and his active personal exertions, and he was fortunate enough to obtain a complete set of the casts of these sculptures, which, with the various other treasures of art and antiquity he collected in his travels, now adorn the corridor of the mansion at Lyme. He subsequently published an account of his journeyings in Egypt and the country beyond the Cataracts, in which he also drew attention to the slave trade, with its attendant horrors, as then existing in the country of the Pharaohs. In 1816, the year in which he attained his majority, he was returned to Parliament for the borough of Newton, and re-elected in 1818; but after the dissolution in 1820 he did not again seek Parliamentary honours, his tastes and inclinations leading him to prefer a more adventurous life in the exploration of distant and unknown lands.

He married, at Prestbury, January 14, 1828, Ellen, daughter and heiress of William Turner, M.P., of Shrigley Park, adjacent to Lyme, the innocent subject of the Wakefield abduction case,^[64] and by her he had an only daughter, Ellen Jane Legh, who married in 1847 the Rev. Brabazon Lowther, since deceased, the brother of her father's second wife, and on whom the Shrigley estates were settled. Mrs. Legh died on the 17th January, 1831, at the early age of 19. Her remains are deposited in the family vault at Winwick, where Mr. Legh erected a handsome sculptured monument to her memory bearing the following inscription:—

In the vaults of this chapel are deposited the remains of Ellen, the dearly beloved wife of Thomas Legh, Esquire, of Lyme Hall, Cheshire, and daughter of William Turner, Esquire, of Shrigley Park, in the same county. Born 12 Feb. 1811. Died 17 Jany. 1831. Leaving an only surviving child, born 20 Feb. 1830.

Mr. Legh again entered the marriage state, his second wife being Maud, fourth daughter of George Lowther, of Hampton Hall, Somersetshire, descended from William, fifth son of Sir Christopher Lowther, of Lowther, who, surviving him, married, secondly, A. J. Deschamps De la Tour, Esq., of Milford, Hampshire, but by her he had no issue. Mr. Legh, who was a magistrate and Deputy-Lieutenant for the counties of Lancaster and Chester, LL. D. and F.R.S., died at Milford Lodge, Lyminster, Hampshire, on the 8th May, 1857, in the 65th year of his age, and was buried at Disley, when the Cheshire estates, with the extensive properties in Lancashire, passed

to his nephew, William John Legh, the fourth but eldest surviving son of his younger brother, William Legh, of Brymbo Hall, in Denbighshire, and of Hordle, Hampshire, by his wife, Mary Anne, eldest daughter of John Wilkinson, of Castlehead in Furness, the celebrated ironmaster.

William John Legh, the present owner of Lyme, was born in 1828, and at the time his uncle's decease placed him in possession of the family estates, was serving as captain of the 21st Fusiliers in the Crimea, where he greatly distinguished himself; he was in the trenches, and also shared in the glories of Inkermann. At the general election in 1859 he was returned as one of the members for South Lancashire, and in 1868 he was elected senior representative of the Eastern Division of the county of Chester, a constituency for which he has ever since sat. Mr. Legh married in 1856 Emily Jane, daughter of the Rev. Charles Nourse Wodehouse, canon of Norwich, by his wife Dulcibella Jane Hay, daughter of William, fifteenth Earl of Errol, by whom he has, with other issue, Thomas Wodehouse Legh, born March 18, 1857, his eldest son, and the heir-apparent of the ancestral home and the broad lands of the historic house of Lyme.

The old ancestral abode of the Leghs—the lordly House of Lyme, as it is often styled—ranks among the more important of the "stately homes" that glorify and give dignity to the county which claims to be the Vale Royal of England. "Stately" it is from its architectural merits and peculiarities, its picturesque surroundings, its stores of natural beauties and acquired treasures, its historical associations, and, more than all, as a perpetual reminder of the eventful past, its memories being indissolubly linked with those of the leading heroes and worthies of the shire.

No precise date can be fixed as that of its erection, but well nigh five centuries have passed since the progenitors of the present owner first held sway over its destinies. Tradition tells us that a house—a hunting lodge, as it would seem—existed here in the days of King John, at which time the domain of Lyme was included within the limits of the royal forest of Macclesfield. From a document we have previously quoted, we know that a Sir Peter Legh had his "fair hall with a high chamber" here more than four hundred years ago, and, though since his day the house has received many additions and undergone many changes, it still retains some of its more ancient rooms in a state of excellent preservation. Thanks to the generosity of its owner, not only is the park open to all comers, who are free to make holiday and seek health and pleasure upon the verdant sward and beneath the shadow of the "tall patrician trees," but under certain regulations the public are admitted to the hall and shown the more interesting and attractive of its apartments. And much that is curious and interesting do those apartments contain. They are literally full of treasures of art—costly examples of the artists of the middle ages, as well as of those who have earned renown in more modern times; the walls are covered with historical portraits of fair women and brave men, that look down with stately dignity, and carry the mind back into the mists of bygone centuries; "storied windows" there are that glow with the rich colourings of their heraldic blazonries, and dye the oaken flooring with their rainbow hues; tapestries on which the Gobelins have lavished their skill and taste, relating in embroidery the stories of the gods; marble treasures from Egypt and the East; carvings, rich and rare, that have been produced by the magic hand of Grinling Gibbons; and specimens of English handicraft, the work of bygone days, when unstinted labour was bestowed on even the most common-place articles of every day use. There are stately apartments, rich in the grandeur of their fittings, their upholstery and their decorations; and there are, too, old and dimly-lighted chambers—panelled, roofed, and floored with oak, containing specimens of antique furniture that might serve as models for æsthetic revivalists of the present day; chairs, presses, and seats of various kinds, and stately beds withal that have been honoured with the repose of royal personages, so tradition alleges, the ill-fated Mary of Scotland being among the number; and where is the house of ancient fame in which that hapless Queen has not at some time or other sought repose? Armorial blazonries are displayed on wall and window, on ceiling and corridor, and the much-prized hand and banner, commemorative of the great deed at Crecy, meets the eye at every turn. Here, too, are examples of ancient arms and armour, suits of mail, helmets, breast plates, and battle-axes, with pikes, and pistols, and petronels, and two-handed swords too ponderous for anyone in these degenerate days to wield, but which, in the grasp of a stalwart Legh, may have been

Bathed in gore
On the plains of Agincourt.



As we have before said, the mansion in all its antique stateliness comes unexpectedly upon the view, being hidden from sight on all sides by the high grounds of the park and the bleak moorlands beyond that stretch away in the direction of the Peak hills. It looks, indeed, as if, in selecting the situation for his building, the architect had sacrificed effect to protection from the weather, and the noble appearance it would have possessed if built upon an eminence is entirely lost. The plan is quadrangular, enclosing an extensive court, and the architecture like that of many other old mansions, of different periods, a portion dating from the time of the last of the Tudor sovereigns, whilst another part—the south front, with its noble Corinthian columned portion—is a fine specimen of Palladian architecture, erected by Leoni, a century and a half ago; though the effect is greatly marred by a modern square lantern, with stone balustrades, that was

added by Wyatt in 1822.

The north front, which is first seen on approaching from the Disley side,—that by which visitors are generally admitted—is not particularly striking in appearance; it is approached through a square court enclosed by iron palisades, and entered by an arched gateway. The main entrance is in the centre of this front, which projects slightly from the main structure, and constitutes the oldest and most characteristic part of the building, having been left comparatively untouched by Leoni, his alterations having been restricted to the side wings, which are of more modern construction, and ornamented with Corinthian pilasters. A couple of hunting horns, relics of the old forestering days, depend from the wall, and over the rounded archway is a shield of eight quarterings, representing the principal heraldic achievements of the family, the arms being:—(1), Corona; (2), Legh, with an escutcheon over both representing the Crescy augmentation granted by Flower; (3), Boteler; (4), Croft; (5), Haydock; (6), Boydell of Poulscroft; (7), Boydell of Gropenhall; and (8), Ashton. The shield is encircled by a garter bearing the motto *En Dieu est ma Foi*, and over all is the ram's head, the crest of the family. A sun-dial is placed above the shield, and formerly the structure was surmounted by a lofty octagon lantern, which Leoni removed to an elevated part of the grounds, and replaced by a statue of Minerva.

A noble mastiff of the Lyme breed—a lion couchant in appearance—guards the entrance; a brief survey satisfies him, apparently, as to the harmlessness of our intentions, and we are permitted without molestation to pass through the archway, when we are handed over to the care of a prim and somewhat stately domestic, who obligingly condescends for the time to lionize us. The entrance communicates with a spacious quadrangle, round three sides of which a piazza is carried, the fourth, or east side, being occupied by a flight of stone stairs leading to the entrance hall, to which we are first conducted. It is a large and well proportioned room, fifty feet by forty-two, but much modernised, having been remodelled by Wyatt in 1822, the decorations being of the Ionic order. It is divided lengthways by lofty columns, and surrounded by a deep cornice, adorned with the horns of the red deer and other trophies of the chase. The stone chimneypiece was erected by Wyatt, but, though massive, it is poor in detail when compared with the one in the drawing-room, which dates from the time of Elizabeth. Over the fireplace, with one hand grasping his sword, and the other resting upon a helmet, is a portrait of Sir Peter Legh, the "founder" of the family, as our cicerone assures us, and the one who for his loyalty to King Richard, suffered decapitation at Chester in 1399, but which in reality represents Sir Peter, who was knighted at Leith in 1544, the friend of Flower, and the restorer and rebuilders of Lyme. We gaze upon the lineaments of the ancient worthy and think of the doughty deeds in which he bore a part, but our reverie is rudely dispelled when our garrulous guide informs us that the gorgeous frame in which the picture is placed belonged to the Duke of York, and was purchased at a sale of his Royal Highness's effects—a piece of information we would most willingly have dispensed with. A noteworthy feature in the room is an opening concealed by panelling near the centre of the north wall, that affords a glimpse of the drawing-room beyond; on one side of the panel which forms the door is a full length portrait of Edward III., armed cap-à-pie, and on the other a full-length of his gallant son, the Black Prince. In the same room we are shown some specimens of ancient armour, a pair of long-rowelled gilt spurs, said to have been presented by the Black Prince, and the famous two-handed sword—"the blade both true and trusty"—which credulous sightseers are gravely told is the veritable weapon with which Perkin a Legh cut down the standard-bearer of the King of France, and earned for himself the broad lands of Lyme; for here, as in many another "ancestral home," the attendants who undertake to enlighten you on the past fortunes of the house generally contrive to blend fable with fact in pretty equal proportions, so that the thoughtful enquirer is apt to become perplexed with the curious mosaic of history and romance that is put before him. The walls are hung with family portraits, some of them of considerable interest; two are believed to be those of the Sir Peter Legh before referred to, but taken at different periods of his life; on one side is a portrait of Richard Legh, who represented Cheshire in Parliament during the Commonwealth; there is also one of his wife's father, Sir Thomas Chicheley, of Wimpole, Charles the Second's master of ordnance; close by is a portrait of Richard Legh's son, Piers Legh, whose Jacobite leanings brought him into trouble, and occasioned his being charged with treason and imprisoned in the Tower; and there is another of the late Thomas Legh, the enterprising Eastern traveller, who is depicted in an Albanian costume, with one arm resting upon his horse's neck, and an Arab attendant reclining at his feet.

"Would you like to see the chapel?" inquires our guide. "Certainly," is the reply, and accordingly we descend from the entrance-hall by a flight of stairs to the domestic sanctuary of the lords of Lyme, which is situate immediately beneath the drawing-room, at the north-east angle of the building. The date of its erection is uncertain, but it was probably added at the time Sir Peter Legh re-edified and enlarged the hall, near the close of the sixteenth century. The font, in which for generations past the scions of the house have been baptised, is adorned with shields of arms, and is said to have been removed from the old home at Bradley; here are also preserved two ancient Runic crosses that were dug up on a farm at Disley about forty years ago; they are of sandstone, completely covered with the interlaced Saxon knot, and are exceedingly interesting, one remarkable feature being the Greek key, which is introduced as an ornament on the edge of each.

The drawing-room, to which we are next conducted, is a spacious apartment, forty-three feet by thirty, and remarkable for the richness of its decoration. The walls are covered with wainscot, elaborately carved, the lower stage being worked in a succession of intersecting arches. The mantel-piece, which reaches nearly to the ceiling, is a good example of renaissance work; duplicated columns of Ionic character support the entablature, and above that are caryatides

bearing a pediment, the intervening compartment being occupied with the Royal arms of Elizabeth—France (modern), and England, quarterly—carved in high relief; the shield is encircled by the garter, and has the lion and dragon for supporters. Additional beauty is given to this room by a deeply-recessed oriel, lighted on three sides by long windows filled with stained glass that is said to have been brought from Disley Church in the beginning of the present century. In the upper part of the central light appear the Royal arms of the Tudor period in old glass, but by an unaccountable blunder some modern herald has added the lion and unicorn, which were not assumed as supporters by the English sovereigns until after the accession of James. Beneath is a small portrait of the Sir Peter Legh at whose instance, no doubt, these heraldic decorations were originally designed, with the favourite cognizance—the hand and banner—on one side, and the ram's head, the crest of the Lyme Leghs, on the other, and beneath are several shields representing the alliances of the family. The two side lights are also enriched with heraldic shields, the greater portion being those of Knights of the Garter living in Elizabeth's reign. There are three other windows in this room similarly decorated, and, taken altogether, they form perhaps the finest and most interesting collection of heraldic insignia in glass to be met with in any house in the kingdom. We have not space at our disposal to enumerate even the ancient worthies whose—

Devices blazoned on the shield
In their own tinct

are here displayed. They are, doubtless, the joint production of Sir Peter Legh and Flower about the time of that famous herald's visit to Lyme in the sixteenth century.^[65]

TStag Parlour—an ante-room between the drawing and dining rooms—next invites our attention. It retains much of its ancient character, and is so named from the decorations upon the frieze and cornice, representing in twelve compartments the various incidents of the chase worked in stucco. One of these compartments, the one over the fireplace, has a representation of the hall of Lyme, as it appeared three hundred years ago, with a gay company of horsemen engaged in the exciting pursuit of "driving the deer," a custom that must have been observed at Lyme from the golden days of the Virgin Queen. The custom was usually observed about the months of May and June; the deer were collected in a drove before the house called the Deer Clad, and then made to swim across a piece of water, with which the exhibition ended. There is an engraving at Lyme by Vivarres, after a painting by T. Smith, representing this custom. The same custom is traditionally said to have been observed at Townley Hall, in Lancashire, formerly the seat of a collateral line of the Leghs. The ceiling of the Stag Parlour is panelled and the walls are draped with tapestry, and hung with family portraits, and other pictures. The central compartment of the chimney-piece has a shield representing the coat of Legh quartering those of the family alliances, the Crescy cognizance occupying one of the side panels, and the ram's head the other, the whole being surmounted by the Royal arms of James I., with the garter and motto, between two allegorical figures of Peace and Plenty. In this room we were shown the dagger of Charles the First, on which the name "Carolus" may still be discerned, and the gloves he wore; and another memento of the ill-fated monarch—six antique chairs, the coverings of which are said to have been made from the cloak in which he appeared when on the scaffold.

In continuing our examination of the interior of Lyme, we pass from the Stag Parlour, as it is called, to the dining-room, which extends along a portion of the eastern front. The general characteristics of this room are of later date than of the one we have just left; the ceiling is highly ornamented, and the walls are divided into panelled compartments, the upper portions being adorned with scrolls carved in high relief, that form a kind of frieze. Over the fireplace is an exquisite carving in wood by Grinling Gibbons, the finest we remember to have seen, except, perhaps, that in Trinity Chapel, Oxford, which, by the way, is from the same hand. The group comprises fish, fishing tackle, and wild fowl, so truthfully rendered that we may almost fancy them to have been just brought in by the sportsman, and that the unyielding wood is even yet quivering with life. Well might Walpole say of Gibbons:—"There is no instance of a man before him who gave to wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers, and chained together the various productions of the elements with a free disorder natural to each species." And surely no finer examples of the artist's skill are to be found either at Burleigh or at Chatsworth. The furniture in this room calls for little note, but the portraits which adorn the walls have especial interest. The melancholy visage of Charles I., painted by Vandyke, looks down from the framed canvas; there are portraits, too, of successive owners of Lyme, and one by Housman of the Lady Anne, daughter of Lord Keeper Coventry—the mother of the last of the Savilles who held the marquise of Halifax.

The ante-room through which we have to pass to the library is hung with tapestry of ancient date, illustrative of the rape of Europa, and we see—

The sweet Europa's mantle blue unclasp'd
From off her shoulder backward borne;
From one hand droop'd a crocus; one hand grasp'd
The wild bull's golden horn.

The library itself is a spacious apartment remodelled by Wyatt, and stored with—

Many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore.

It contains some basso-relievos brought from Greece by the late Mr. Thomas Legh, rare antiques from the East, and an ancient urn from Pompeii, that once contained the ashes of a semi-illustrious hero, but which is now applied to less sacred uses, being filled with dried rose-leaves.

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

On one side a deeply-recessed bay-window lures you to enjoy the quietude, and dream the hours away in the luxurious ease it offers. Delightful is the prospect from this window; in front are seen the smooth shaven lawns and terraces, with their richly-coloured parterres, and the water flashing in the bright sunlight; and, beyond, the natural landscape with its wooded slopes and the brown heathy wastes that shut out the view of the more distant hills.

But the time is passing rapidly, and we must not loiter, so we follow our conductress up flights of stairs, along galleries and corridors, and through interminable suites of rooms, where we have to look to our footing, the polished oak parquetry being perilous to walk upon. The grand staircase, which leads to a corridor above, resting on six Corinthian columns, is of oak, with a handsome ceiling adorned with pendants and armorial ensigns of the family. It is hung with pictures, two of them being by Sir William Beechey, and representing George IV. and his brother the Duke of York. Facing us as we ascend the first flight is an interesting portrait, a full length, of John Watson, the famous keeper,—an ancient servitor, who died in 1753, at the age of 104 years. It bears this inscription:—

Io Watson, who in the 26th year of his age, Anno 1674, commenced keeper of Lime Park; in wch service he continued 70 years, and Anno 1750, in the 102nd year of his age. He hunted a Buck, a chase near Six hours, at wch Hunting one gentleman was present whose Ancesters he had hunted with for four Generations before, he being the fifth Generation he had hunted with.

Watson, who was grandfather of the celebrated Rev. John Watson, M.A., F.S.A., rector of Stockport, and author of "Memorials of the Earls of Warren and Surrey," lies buried at Disley, where, in the middle aisle of the church, is a tombstone with an inscription to his memory. Concerning this ancient worthy we have the following obituary notice:—

Mr. Joseph Watson died in the 105th year of his age, and was buried at Disley in Cheshire, the 3rd of June, 1753. He was born at Mossley Common, in the parish of Leigh, in Lancashire, and married his Wife from Eccles, near Manchester, in the same County. They lived a Happy Couple 72 years. She died in the 94th year of her age. He was Park Keeper to the late Peter Legh, Esqre., of Lyme and his Father 64 years. He drove and shewed the Red Deer to most of the Nobility and Gentry in that Part of the Kingdom to the Surprise and Satisfaction of them and all others that saw that Performance, as he could command them at his Pleasure the same as if they had been common Horned Cattle. In the reign of Queen Anne Sqr. Legh was in company with some Gentlemen at Macclesfield, in Cheshire, amongst which was Sir Roger Moston then one of the Members of Parliament for the same County. For their merry Conversation Sqr. Legh said his Keeper should drive 12 Brace of Stags to the Forest of Windsor a Present to the Queen. Sir Roger, thinking it impracticable, proposed a Wager of £500 that neither his Keeper nor no other Person could drive 12 Brace of Red Deer from Lyme Park to Windsor Forest on any account whatever. Sqr. Legh accepted the Wager and immediately sent for his Keeper, who directly came to his Master, who told him he must directly prepare to drive 12 Brace of Stags to Windsor Forest upon a Wager. He gave his Master for answer, that upon any Wager or upon his Command he would drive him 12 Brace of Stags to Windsor Forest or to any other part of the Kingdom when he pleased to direct, upon forfeiture of his Life and Fortune. He was a man of Low Stature, not Bulky, fresh complexion, and pleasant countenance. He believed he had drunk a Gallon of Malt Liquor a Day, one Day with another, for 60 years; he drank plentifully the latter part of his Life, but no more than was agreeable to his Constitution and a comfort to himself. He was of a mild Temper, engaging Company, and fine Behaviour, and allowed to be the Best Keeper in England, in his Time. In the 103rd year of his age he was at the Hunting and Killing a Buck with the Honble George Warren, in his Park at Pointon, whose activity gave pleasure and Surprize to all Spectators then present. Sir George was the 5th Generation of the Warren Family he had performed that Diversion with in Pointon Park.

As we pass along the corridor our attention is arrested by two marble busts, one of the massive head and rugged features of the late Thomas Legh, the famous traveller, and the other that of his second wife, Maud Lowther. We are next ushered into the long gallery, a noble chamber one hundred and twenty feet in length and twenty-eight feet wide, fronting the east, and exhibiting the architectural characteristics of the Elizabethan era—one of those long narrow galleries that are frequently met with in mansions of that period, and, like the one at Haddon, used as a ballroom and on occasions of special festivity. The walls are of dark oak, elaborately ornamented, the panels being wrought in intersecting arches and relieved at intervals with flat pilasters; in the centre a huge fireplace reaches from floor to ceiling, it is handsomely carved and bears the arms of Queen Elizabeth with the lion and dragon as supporters, an evidence that it dates from that sovereign's reign. On one side we noticed an antiquated spinet that has been doubtless played upon by many a fair daughter of the house of Lyme. A few portraits adorn the walls,

among them one of the Lady Margaret Gerard, wife of Sir Peter Legh, holding in her arms her great-grandchild, Anne Legh, who afterwards married Richard Bold, of Bold. The picture bears the following inscription, apparently added at a later date:—"Sir Piers' lady ætatis suæ 90, A.D. 1595," and underneath the child—"ætatis suæ anno primo after married to Bold;" there is also a portrait of the Rev. John Dod, the decalogist, and another of the unfortunate divine Dr. John Hewitt, a son of Thomas Hewitt, of Eccles, who was chaplain to Charles I., and who for his loyalty to Charles II. was beheaded on Tower Hill, June 8th, 1658; here, too, are portraits after the style of Holbein, one of the warlike Henry IV., and another of Bluff King Hal, the first Defender of the Faith.

Continuing our tour of inspection, we are led from corridor to corridor and from room to room, pausing now and then, as a relief from the examination of the treasures within, to look upon the glad world without, where the sun is shining brightly on the green sward and the lush pastures. Then we are hurried on through tapestried chambers and state bedrooms with grotesquely-carved four-posters shadowed with a huge pomp of stiff brocade. In one of them we are shown the bed used by Mary Queen of Scots on the occasion of her visit to Lyme, with its original hangings of crimson silk, now, alas, much tarnished and dilapidated, and, if we are so disposed, we may refresh our memories with the tragic story of Hero and Leander as in part portrayed on the faded tapestry that adorns the walls of this and the adjoining dressing-room. There are other chambers on this floor that deserve inspection—the state bedroom, the mahogany, the velvet, and the yellow bedrooms, with their corresponding dressing-rooms, all hung with portraits more or less interesting. Then we pass to an oaken-panelled chamber called the Knight's Room, and to the stone parlour—two apartments that have remained untouched since Elizabeth's time—and so to the gallery which extends on the upper floor round the quadrangle, the walls of which are adorned with casts from the Phigalian marbles—antique friezes, representing the contest between the Centaurs and Lapithæ, and the Greeks and Amazons, which formerly ornamented the Cella of the Temple of Apollo Epicurus at Phigalia in Arcadia, and the originals of which are now in the British Museum, having been brought to England by the late Thomas Legh. Another chamber is pointed out which is said to be the oldest in the building, and on that account is called King John's Room, though we should be much inclined to doubt the fact of its having been in existence in that monarch's reign; then we are ushered into another apartment named after the Black Prince, which is also known as the Ghost Room, for Lyme, like every other old mansion of respectability, has its ghost story, as the talented author of "Lays and Legends of Cheshire," who, besides being laureate of Lyme, can claim kindred with its ancient lords, can tell us; and we are asked to believe that a secret passage leads from it to the "Cage," a mile away, though we cannot learn that anyone within the recollection of that respectable personage, the oldest inhabitant, has ever explored it, but such means of exit we are assured were necessary in the turbulent times when this part of the hall was built. Having completed our perambulation, we ascended to the gallery at the top of the house, from whence we can survey the country that lies spread like a rich panorama at our feet, looking more than usually fair and brilliant as the mellow sunlight brings out every inequality and brightens every object with its magical radiance. But we may not loiter, for there are yet other things to interest us, and so, having seen all that is usually shown to visitors, we take leave of our courteous attendant and wend our way across the park in a south-easterly direction and then mount the hill, on the summit of which is an ancient memorial that has long exercised the ingenuity of antiquaries to discover its age and purpose—the Bowstones, as it is called—two upright pillars, much worn with age, springing from a double-socketed base. They are believed to have been of Saxon or Danish origin, though some authorities incline to the opinion that they are of later date and were intended as boundary stones.

Half a mile westward of the Bowstones is a conical hill to which the name of "the Knight's Low" has been given, from a tradition that has floated down through long centuries of time that it was the burial place of one of the earlier lords of Lyme. The shaping power of the imagination has supplied the minor accessories of the story, and the dependents of the family delight to relate how that at midnight a muffled sound, as of a distant funeral peal, is often borne on the wind, and that at this time a shadowy procession of mourners may be seen wending its way towards the Knight's Low, bearing a coffin and pall, and followed by a lady arrayed in white and apparently in deep distress. To add to the mystery there is a tale that the shadowy form of the old knight's wife—the lady "draped in white and silver sheen"—issues forth at midnight from a field adjoining a stream that runs through the park, commonly known as "The Field of the White Lady," or "the Lady's Grave," and flits silently across the grass in the direction of the Knight's Low. Mr. Leigh has made the tradition the theme of one of his legendary ballads, "Sir Percy Legh," though to suit the purposes of his story he has dealt rather unceremoniously with history and dates, things the votaries of the Muses do not always stand much in awe of—

They buried him within the park
Which he had left so blithe of blee;
And followed in the mourners' track,
All gaily dressed, poor Agnes Legh.

They heaped a mound upon his corse—
A mound whereon the fir trees grow;
And many a wail is heard at night,
Coming from the good Knight's Low.

She rambled all the night forlorn,
She rambled forth all drearilie,

Till on the river's bank one morn
Was found the corse of Agnes Legh.

They buried her where she was found—
They buried her near the river's wave;
And ever since the land around
Is known but as the Lady's Grave.

At length our progress is ended. While the westering sun and the lengthening shadows remind us that evening is rapidly drawing on, we retrace our steps, passing by the north front of the hall, along the grassy slopes where the deer are crouching and the kine are ruminating at will, past Lyme Cage, through the gates by which we originally entered, and along the quiet tree-shaded road to Disley, and in a few minutes find ourselves in the cosy parlour of the "Ram's Head," with the mind laden with the lore of ancient days, and impressed with a succession of pictures of endless suites of rooms stored with carvings of cunning device, curious enamels, and cabinets of costly workmanship; with tapestry, pictures, and a wealth of natural and artistic treasures such as few, if any, of the "stately homes" of Cheshire can equal and none surpass.

We have not attempted in our notice of this old historic mansion to speak of every room, to notice every object of interest, and many details have been purposely omitted. In recounting the fortunes of the former lords we have endeavoured to call up visions of the past—to arrest momentarily the hand of Time, which is fast drawing the curtain of oblivion over bygone scenes, and, though our task has been but imperfectly performed, at least we may hope to have contributed something towards a better knowledge and appreciation of "Lyme Hall and the Leghs."



CHAPTER VII.

"JEMMY DAWSON" AND THE FATAL '45.

HO that has read Harrison Ainsworth's story of the "Manchester Rebels" can fail to remember the vivid picture he has drawn of the ferment into which the whilom Puritan town was thrown when, on the morning of the 28th November, 1745, a recruiting sergeant, with a drummer boy and a Scotch lassie, crossed the old Salford bridge into Manchester, passed along Cateaton Street and the Millgate, to the Market Cross, and after proclaiming "King James the Third," began beating up for recruits for "The yellow-haired Laddie," who on the following day joined them with the main body of the rebel clans; of the rejoicings and festivities, the illuminations and the fireworks; of the enthusiasm of the Jacobite ladies, who sat up all night at Mr. Byrom's at the Cross making white cockades, and the joyous excitement of John Byrom's gossiping daughter, "Beppy" Byrom, who, as she confesses, got completely "fuddled" with drinking the Prince's health in champagne after having had the honour of kissing his hand; when the orange plumes paled before the blaze of tartan in which female Manchester had arrayed itself, and Colonel Townley laboured with unwearying zeal in mustering and enrolling a Manchester regiment, and Parson Coppock and the irrepressible Tom Syddall exhorted their fellow townsmen in the name of their God to enlist in the service of their rightful sovereign. And who that has read Shenstone's pathetic ballad, "Jemmy Dawson," that tale

So sad, so tender, and so true,

but has "heaved a sigh" at the touching episode connected with Lancashire's share in the rebellion which it records?

But for Mickle's wonderfully woven web of truth and fiction,

The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall

and the sorrows of Amy Robsart would never have excited special interest; and had not Shenstone, with the same marvellous gift of nature, commemorated in imperishable verse the sad fate of the plighted fair one of Captain Dawson, our interest and our sympathy with the victim of that revolting tragedy might never have been awakened, and the name even of the amiable and unfortunate subject of the stanzas have become forgotten.

But who, it may be asked, was "Jemmy Dawson," where was his abode, and what was the name of the hapless maid whose fortunes were so sadly linked with his own? Mr. Robert Chambers, in his

James Dawson, the son of a Gentleman of Lancashire, was attached to a young Lady of good family and fortune, when some youthful excesses induced him to run away from College and join the insurgents. Had he obtained the Royal Mercy or been acquitted, the day of his enlargement was to have been that of his marriage. When it was ascertained that he was to suffer death, the inconsolable young lady determined to witness the execution, and she accordingly followed the sledges in a hackney-coach, accompanied by a Gentleman nearly related to her and one female friend. She got near enough to see all the dreadful preparations without betraying any extravagant emotions; she also succeeded in restraining her feelings during the progress of the bloody tragedy; but when all was over, and the shouts of the multitude rang in her ears, she drew her head back again into the coach and crying, "My dear! I follow thee—I follow thee! Sweet Jesus receive both our souls together!" fell upon the neck of her companion and expired in the very moment she was speaking.



MR. BYROM'S HOUSE AT THE CROSS.

The information thus given is of the scantiest nature, and, meagre as it is, it is inaccurate in some details. Of the family of "Jemmy Dawson" unfortunately but few particulars can be gleaned, but the little we know is sufficiently interesting to make us long to know more. Of the lady to whom he was betrothed we know absolutely nothing, and her name even has never been satisfactorily established. In the "Legends of Lancashire" (p. 159) it is stated, though on what authority does not appear, that her name was Katherine Norton, that she was an orphan, and that her parents had been of illustrious rank. "She had travelled," it is said, "with a maiden aunt, and as they were residing for a few weeks in the vicinity of Cambridge, she had met with young Dawson, and thus commenced an ardent attachment between them."

The Dawsons, who were a family of some note in Manchester, came originally from Yorkshire, where, at Barnsley, towards the close of the seventeenth century, was residing James Dawson, who is described as a trader, a phrase that had a different significance a couple of centuries ago than it has now, a trader then being equal in social status to the merchant or manufacturer of the present day. The trader of Barnsley in due time took to himself a wife in the person of Jane Wolstenholme, of Hopwood, near Middleton, and to this worthy couple was born on the 5th March, 1695-6, a son and heir, William Dawson, who, after he had attained to man's estate, settled in Manchester, where he practised as an apothecary, and was known to his neighbours as Dr. Dawson. He was successful in his profession, and eventually became the owner of a considerable real estate, including a house at Barnsley, which he had probably inherited from his father, and another called "The Cottage," in Manchester; the latter a dwelling-house with gardens and pleasure grounds attached, occupying the site of the present Concert Hall—then a pleasant suburb of the town, to which we shall have occasion hereafter more particularly to refer. Dr. Dawson appears also to have had in the later years of his life a town residence near the top of the present King Street, a fashionable quarter, where some of the clergy of the "old church" had located themselves, and which was then known as St. James's Square, a name that was abandoned when the Hanoverian sovereigns had finally asserted their prerogative against the claims of the Jacobite Pretender; the two squares—St. James's and St. Ann's—being memorials of a conflict which is now but a matter of history.

William Dawson, the apothecary, married for his first wife Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Mr. Richard Allen, a gentleman residing at Redivales, near Bury, the representative of a family of somewhat more than local fame, claiming descent from the stock of the same name seated at Rossal, in Lancashire, of which house was the well known Cardinal Allen, the apologist of Sir William Stanley's perfidy and treason in surrendering Deventer to the King of Spain, and a branch of which was located in Salford, their home being the quaint old black and white gabled building still standing in Greengate, and for many years past occupied as a tavern, and bearing the sign of the "Bull's Head." This match brought the young apothecary in close alliance with some of the best families in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Dawson's aunt, Dorothy Allen, had married the wealthy draper of Kersall, and she was, therefore, own cousin to his sons, Edward Byrom the younger, and John Byrom, the amiable and gifted poet and strong, though prudent, partisan of

the Jacobite cause. Her great-grandmother was the wife of the Rev. Isaac Allen, Rector of Prestwich, a staunch Churchman and Royalist, who, for refusing to take the Covenant, was turned out of his living during the Cromwellian period, but reinstated shortly after the Restoration in 1660.

The children of William Dawson, by his first wife, Elizabeth Allen, were James, the hero of Shenstone's ballad, of whom anon; William, who was educated for the law and entered at Lincoln's Inn, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah. In 1737, the year in which his eldest son entered at the university, Mr. Dawson had the misfortune to lose his wife, her death occurring on the 3rd of May, at the age of forty-one. Some time afterwards he married for his second wife Mary, the eldest daughter of William Greenwood, of Liversage Hall, previously of Middlewood Hall, near Barnsley, and the widow of Joseph Greenwood, of Leeds; but by this lady, who survived him nearly twenty years, and died January 25, 1782, he had no children.

James Dawson, the eldest son, the rebel captain, who was born about the year 1717, would, in all probability, receive his early education at the Grammar School of his native town, where Thomas Coppock, the pseudo Bishop of Carlisle, was also a pupil. In 1737, being then twenty years of age, he proceeded to Cambridge, where, on the 21st October, he was admitted to St. John's College, the register describing him as:—

Jacobus Dawson, Lancastriensis filius natu major Gulielmi Dawson pharmacopolæ Mancunii natus et literis institutus apud Salford in eodem Comitatu sub Magistro Clayton, admissus pensionarius minor Tutore et fide Jussore Magistro Wrigley, Oct. 21, 1737, anno Ætatis 20^{mo}.

The "Magistro Clayton" referred to was doubtless the Rev. John Clayton, of the Sacred Trinity Church in Salford, an ardent Jacobite, who preached in the church and prayed openly in the street in Salford for Charles Edward at the time of his visit to Manchester, and whose appearance in the pulpit of St. Ann's in the interval between the death of one rector and the appointment of another caused so much dissatisfaction to the Hanoverian worshippers that, as Miss Byrom in her diary tells us, some of them "went out of church because he preached." The story related by Chambers and others that young Dawson had been induced to run away from his college, fearing that he might be expelled on account of some youthful excesses, and that after leaving Cambridge he joined the ranks of the young Pretender, does not appear to rest on any reliable foundation. There is extant a letter written by the Registrar of the University of Cambridge, dated 24th October, 1833, which states that "the only document concerning him in the University Records is his signature on matriculation, which took place on the 17th of December, 1737, when he was matriculated as a pensioner. He wrote a bold hand. He never took a degree, nor does he appear to have been subjected to any punishment for irregularity in the University Court held by the Vice-chancellor."

A century had wrought a mighty change in the political sentiments of the people of Manchester. When the great struggle between Charles the First and his Parliament began, led by the eloquence of Warden Heyricke, they took sides against the King, but they quickly changed their opinions, and when Charles's son, the "Merry Monarch," was restored to the crown they were jubilant, and in the exuberance of their joy caused the conduit to flow with wine and the gutters to swell with strong beer. The sons of those men held by the political opinions of their fathers, and were, for the most part, ardent supporters of the hereditary claims of the House of Stuart. There were two factions in the town—Whigs and Tories, or Hanoverians and Jacobites as they were more commonly called, the latter being by far the more numerous and influential. They met at their respective taverns—the Hanoverians at the "Angel" in the Market Street Lane, and the Jacobites at "John Shaw's" and the "Bull's Head" in the Market Place—drank punch, a beverage for which they seem to have had a special partiality, and toasted the King, and denounced the Pretender with a mental reservation as to

Who Pretender was, and who was King.

Thirty years previously the town had been stirred to its inmost depths by the claims the first Pretender had advanced. Many of the sympathisers of '15 were still alive, and the old spirit of strife, though it might have slumbered, was still strong. James Dawson's kinsman, Dr. Byrom, who was then in the heyday of his popularity, was warmly attached to the cause of the exiled Stuarts, and was accounted the laureate of the party; his Jacobitism was, however, under the control of a cautious possessor, and in proclaiming his political faith he was sufficiently prudent to avoid imperilling either his personal or his family interests. He nevertheless exercised a marvellous influence over his fellow townsmen, and largely helped to fan the flame of disaffection. A wit, a scholar, and a poet, his playful epigrams and clever *jeux d'esprit* caused his society to be sought after by both parties, and linked him in close intimacy, if not, indeed, in close friendship, with men whose political creeds were at variance with his own. Byrom's versatile powers and refined and courteous demeanour acted as a charm, and enabled him, if not to turn Hanoverians into Jacobites, at least to bias their practice and take the sting out of their Whiggism.

Brought within the range of his seductive influence, we can scarcely wonder that Byrom's relative, young Dawson, then fresh from college, impressionable, impulsive, and enthusiastic, should have imbibed his Jacobite principles. The time was one of political excitement. England was in a state of agitation, and the rumours which had reached Manchester of the successful

rising in the North sufficed to stir the fire of youthful enthusiasm and inspire devotion to the Pretender's cause. The young Chevalier was in the field at the head of the Highland clans; France had promised substantial support, not because France had any particular liking for the Stuarts, but because she was not unwilling to pay off some old scores by finding occupation for her traditional foe; Sir John Cope had been beaten at Prestonpans, and the victorious Charles Edward was then at Carlisle on his way south. Francis Townley, a scion of an old Lancashire family, who had figured at the Court of Louis XV. and seen service and earned distinction abroad, was entrusted with a colonel's commission from the French King; the commission authorised him to raise forces on behalf of the Prince, and with that object he repaired to Manchester, the reputed stronghold of the Jacobite party, to beat up for recruits; the town was excited, the bolder spirits were jubilant and eager in their desire to don the white cockade, some money was raised and more was promised but never paid, and what is known to history as the "Manchester Regiment" was enrolled. In that regiment James Dawson was honoured with a captaincy; what that captaincy cost him we shall hereafter see.

Saturday, the 29th of November, 1745, was an eventful day for Manchester, and one the townsmen had cause long to remember, for it was that on which the young Chevalier, Prince Charles Edward, made his appearance, after having taken Lancaster, Preston, and Wigan, on his progress from the North. About ten o'clock in the morning the main body of his army entered the town; regiment after regiment, with their glittering firelocks, their tartan sashes, and gay and picturesque dresses, marched over the Old Bridge and into St. Ann's-square, then lately built, where they halted. It was an inauspicious moment, for at the precise time the remains of the first rector of St. Ann's, the Rev. Joseph Hoole, were being committed to the grave. As the men entered the square, the warlike notes of the bagpipes were instantly hushed, and, with instinctive reverence for the dead, the officers drew near the churchyard, unbonneted, and joined devoutly in the service while the coffin was being lowered to its final resting-place. It was an ominous incident, and seemed premonitory of the fate that was shortly to overtake so many of those assembled. As the historian of St Ann's observes:—"White cockade and black scarf were at one in the presence of death. Many a white cockade was laid low ere a month was gone."

Scarcely was the mournful scene ended than Prince Charles himself, dressed in Highland garb—the Stuart plaid belted with a blue sash, and wearing a light wig with a blue bonnet, in which was fixed a white rose, entered the town amid the applauding acclamations of the people. As he passed through Salford on his way, Parson Clayton, then one of the chaplains of the Collegiate Church, and previously young Dawson's instructor at the Grammar School, dropped on his knees, and in fervent tones prayed that the enterprise might be successful, and that the divine blessing would rest upon the Prince's head. Colonel Townley had made previous arrangements for his reception, and on his arrival he was conducted to his quarters at the house of Mr. Dickenson,^[66] a residence in Market Street Lane, thenceforward dignified with the name of "The Palace," a name still perpetuated in Palace Buildings, which mark the site. The head-quarters of the officers were fixed at the "Bull's Head," in the Market Place, then the principal inn in the town, and Lord George Murray, the Prince's secretary, stationed himself at the Dog Inn, in Deansgate, for the purpose of distributing the French King's commissions to officers who were willing to purchase. In the course of the day "His Majesty King James the Third" was proclaimed at the Market Cross, poor James Waller, of Ridgefield, a loyal subject of the House of Brunswick, who was content with monarchy as it stood, being compelled to pocket his political principles, and become the medium of communication between Prince and people, by conveying the demands of the rebel army to his fellow-townsmen for the payment of all the money they had collected for the taxes; and in the evening bonfires were lit, the streets were illuminated, drums beat, pipes played, and the bells rang loud peals from the Old Church steeple in honour of the event. No pains were spared to fan the flame of enthusiasm. Receptions were held by the Prince, and Jacobite sympathisers of both sexes, wearing tartan favours, thronged the house of Mr. Dickenson, anxious to be presented and to have the honour of kissing the Prince's hand. Recruiting, meanwhile, was carried on with energy; the Manchester Regiment was enrolled, and by the Chevalier's orders Colonel Francis Townley, who had joined the forces at Preston, was nominated commander; Thomas Coppock, the son of a Manchester tailor, residing in the Old Millgate, and a quondam companion of James Dawson, who had lately graduated at Brasenose, Oxford, where he had been an exhibitor from Hugh Oldham's Grammar School, was appointed chaplain; Tom Syddall, the son of a peruke-maker, who had been hanged and his head fixed on the Market Cross for the share he had in destroying the Cross Street meeting-house in 1715, and who, from the hour he had seen his father's exposed and insulted countenance, had conceived an implacable hatred for Dissenters, Whigs, and all the Hanoverian race, was made adjutant; and James Dawson was one of the first to be enrolled as captain.

Coppock, dressed in full canonicals, accompanied a drummer through the town, exhorting the people to take up arms in the Stuart cause, and his efforts were ably seconded by Dr. Deacon,^[67] the minister of a non-juring congregation assembling in Fennel Street, whose three sons, on the advice of the father, and with his prayers and blessings, were among the earliest to obtain commissions; but the number recruited through their efforts fell far short of their expectations, not more than three hundred men being added to the strength of the rebel army, and of those comparatively few were resident in the town. The people were noisy and enthusiastic enough, but they were not sufficiently ardent to risk their lives and property in the chivalrous defence of the antiquated doctrine of the divine right of kings. The reason may not be far to seek. Manchester men had thriven upon their manufacture of fustians and dimities, and become a comparatively wealthy community—they had something to lose; their interests were bound up with more

peaceful pursuits; insurrection and civil war do not generally conduce to the prosperity of trade, and hence they had little fondness for fighting.

The day which followed the Prince's arrival was a great day for the Jacobites. It was Sunday, and St. Andrew's day withal. The bells rang out from the old church tower; the streets were filled with Highland soldiers; Colonel Townley's Manchester Regiment mustered in the churchyard, the men in their blue and white cockades gathering round their flag, which bore on one side the inscription "Church and Country," and on the other "Liberty and Property." Never did the ancient fane itself present a brighter or more animated appearance; the nave was crowded with armed men, whose gaily-coloured attire and glittering claymores, targets, and other accoutrements produced a striking effect. The townspeople occupied the side aisles, and such a display of tartan had never before been witnessed; everybody wore Stuart favours, and the ladies were ablaze with tartan ribbons, shaws, and furbelows. The Prince occupied the warden's seat in the choir, his retinue being accommodated in the stalls close by. Warden Peploe, a staunch Whig, but lacking the spirit of his father, who, thirty years before, when the insurgents occupied Preston, had stood before the Pretender's soldiery and prayed for King George and the House of Brunswick,^[68] had consulted his safety by withdrawing from the town. Young Parson Coppock, the chaplain of the Manchester Regiment, supplied his place, and preached from the text, "The Lord is King; the earth may be glad thereof" (Psalm xcvi., v. 1); and from the same pulpit whence, a century before, Warden Heyricke, on his "drum ecclesiastic," had stirred the hearts of the Manchester people by his trumpet-tongued sermons, and roused them into active resistance to the Stuart King and the "Papistical malignants" who had gained possession of him, was now only heard a mild oration larded with flattering eulogies of his Popish descendant.

When the service was concluded, the Manchester Regiment was inspected by the Prince, and on the following day, with the rest of the rebel army, they set forward on their march southwards, advancing in two divisions by different routes towards Macclesfield, which had been fixed as the limit of the first day's march. At Cheadle Ford, where the bridge now bestrides the Mersey, a temporary bridge, formed of the trunks and branches of poplar trees, was constructed for the horse and artillery to pass over, and here the Prince, with two regiments, crossed, buoyant with hope and full of energy. On reaching the opposite bank he was welcomed by a number of the Cheshire gentry, who had come out to meet him; with them was the venerable Mrs. Skyring, of whom Lord Mahon relates the following affecting story ("Forty-Five," p. 84):—"As a child, she had been lifted up in her mother's arms to view the happy landing at Dover of Charles the Second. Her father, an old Cavalier, had afterwards to undergo, not merely neglect, but oppression from that thankless monarch; still, however, he and his wife continued devoted to the Royal cause, and their daughter grew up as devoted as they. After the expulsion of the Stuarts all her thoughts, her hopes, her prayers, were directed to another restoration. Ever afterwards she had, with rigid punctuality, laid aside one-half of her yearly income to remit for the exiled family abroad, concealing only the name of the giver, which she said was of no importance to them, and might give them pain if they remembered the unkind treatment she had formerly received. She had now parted with her jewels, her plate, and every little article she possessed, the price of which she laid in a purse at the feet of Prince Charles, while straining her dim eyes to gaze on his features, and pressing his hand to her shrivelled lips, she exclaimed with affectionate rapture, 'Lord! now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace!'" It is added that she did not survive the shock when, a few days afterwards, she was told of the retreat. The ancient lady, who is represented as somewhat irreverently employing the sacred words of the *Nunc Dimittis*, may be a pretty object to contemplate through the haze of a century or more, but the story Lord Mahon so pathetically relates is of doubtful origin, and should be received with caution.

On reaching Macclesfield the two divisions of the Prince's army were united, and the Manchester men were drawn up in the churchyard, when arms were distributed to those who had not previously received them. The rebel forces met with little encouragement in the town, and the next day, after having searched Adlington Hall and some other houses of note in the neighbourhood, and taken what arms they could find, they continued their march by way of Congleton and Leek to Derby, which town was reached on December 4th, having, incredible as it may appear, met with little or no opposition on the way. Of the subsequent movements of the Manchester Regiment we need not say much; the record of its doings is part of the country's history. Some who joined may have been led by a love of adventure, but others were influenced by higher considerations. Sincere and enthusiastic in their support of the exiled dynasty, they were willing to forfeit their lives for their Prince, and the forfeit, as we shall see, was rigorously enacted. Their progress was as disastrous as it was brief. Hearing, while at Derby, that the Duke of Cumberland, with an army of veterans, was in the neighbourhood, and distrusting the skill of their own officers, they beat a retreat northwards, carrying with them whatever in the way of booty they could lay their hands on. On the 9th December the advanced guard reached Manchester, where, instead of meeting with the welcome they had received ten short days before, they were assailed by a shower of stones from the mob; the regiment raised by Captain Townley was broken up, and many of the men dispersed, but Captain Dawson, with Coppock, Syddall, the three Deacons, and several other of the more resolute supporters of the Prince, determined upon sharing his fortunes, and pushed on with him to Carlisle, hotly pursued by the Duke of Cumberland. In opposition to the advice of Lord George Murray, it was determined that a garrison should be left in the border city. There was at the time a gloomy anticipation of the fate awaiting those who should remain, yet none hesitated to make the almost certain sacrifice; Colonel Townley volunteered for the desperate service, and was accordingly made governor of the city; with him were Captain Dawson, Adjutant Syddall, the Deacons, Coppock, who had been

dubbed Bishop of Carlisle, and the remnant of the Manchester Regiment, one hundred and twenty strong, with two hundred and seventy of the Highlanders and Lowland Scots, and a handful of French officers and privates. Soon after the Prince's departure the Duke of Cumberland, with Marshal Wade, appeared before the city, and summoned the garrison to surrender; after a brief resistance they were obliged to yield on the hard conditions that, instead of being put to the sword, they should be reserved for the King's pleasure. Coppock, after being imprisoned for some time, was executed at Gallows Green, Harrowby, about a mile south of Carlisle, meeting his death, as did his companions in arms, with firmness to the last, and expressing his belief in the justice of the cause he had embraced. The other officers, twenty in number, were conveyed in waggons under a strong guard to London. Great efforts had been made to inflame the minds of the populace against them by representing them all as Papists, who, if they had succeeded, would have roasted the Duke of Cumberland to death, burned the bishops, and destroyed all heretics—men, women, and children; and on their arrival in the Metropolis they were led in a sort of triumph through the streets, where the greatest indignation was offered them by the excited throng. As they had served under commissions from the French King, they expected to have been treated as ordinary prisoners of war, and that they would be regularly exchanged. Their fate, however, was far otherwise. Imprisoned first in the cells of Newgate, and afterwards in the New Prison in Southwark, they passed thence to the scaffold. The head of Syddall was sent to Manchester and fixed on a spike in front of the Exchange, near where that of his father had been fixed thirty years before. Captain Thomas Deacon was treated in like manner, and it is recorded of his father, the nonjuring divine, that he never afterwards passed the spot where the mutilated head of his son had been exposed without reverently raising his hat as a token of respect. A local poet has embalmed the memory of these Manchester martyrs in the following quaint lines:—

The Deel has set their heads to view,
And stickt them upon poles;
Poor Deel! 'twas all that he could do,
Since God has ta'en their souls.

It is with the fate of Captain Dawson, however, that we are more immediately concerned. It had been determined that the full vengeance of the law should fall upon the unfortunate victims belonging to the Manchester Regiment, and those who were in Newgate were, after a lapse of six months, ordered to prepare for trial previous to their removal to the prison of Southwark. Dawson, as previously stated, had while at Cambridge been betrothed to a young lady, a Miss Katherine Norton, it is said. She appears to have engaged all his thoughts, and it is stated that during his confinement he employed himself in writing verses on his unhappy fate.

The trials commenced on the 16th July, 1746, in the Courthouse at St. Margaret's Hill, before the High Commissioners appointed for the purpose. Townley, the colonel of the regiment, was the first arraigned. His behaviour during the trial was firm and undaunted, and when sentence of death was pronounced he was not in the least discomposed, nor did his countenance undergo any change of colour. The trials lasted three days, and the whole of the prisoners arraigned were found guilty. James Dawson was indicted for high treason (committed 18th November, 1745, five days before the taking of Carlisle by the rebels), and accused by witnesses for the prosecution of "having appeared as captain, at review, at Macclesfield;" "beaten up for volunteers at Derby;" "been at the head of company, at Penrith and other places;" "and also been one of the rebel garrison taken at Carlisle on the 30th December, 1745." He, like the others, was found guilty and sentenced to death, which was ordered to take place at Kennington on the 30th July, along with eight other officers of the Manchester Regiment. In the interval between his condemnation and his execution he employed himself in preparing a written declaration of the motives and sentiments which had influenced him in joining the standard of the Pretender, a copy of which, as made and signed by himself, we give herewith:—

Blessed are they that suffer Persecution for Righteousness sake, for theirs is ye kingdom of Heaven.—Mat. ye 5 and 10.

Friends, Brethren, and Countrymen,

I am come to this place (and it's with cheerfulness and resignation I say it) to lay down my Life in defence of my King, and in support of the liberties and properties of you his natural-born subjects, and blessed be the will of God, who (unworthy as I am) has deign'd to look upon me as no unfit Instrument of executing his Divine Pleasure. I am now on the very last scene of life, and shall in a very few minutes launch into eternity; I therefore solemnly declare, as I shall answer it at the awful and impartial Tribunal before which I must shortly appear, that I firmly believe, and in my conscience am persuaded, that James the 3rd is my only true, lawful, and indisputable Sovereign; that the present Possessor of this Crown and Kingdom is a usurper; that my taking up arms against him was so far from being a crime that it was my indispensable and bounden duty; if I had ten thousand lives, I ought sooner to devote them all to his and my Country's service than to see Right overpowered by Oppression, or Rebellion prevailing over Justice.

I die, my dear Friends, in the fellowship and communion of the Church of England, and in perfect love and charity with all men. I humbly ask pardon of all those whom I have in any shape, or in any manner, either injured, affronted, or offended, as I do from the bottom of my heart forgive all my Enemies, Persecutors, and Slanderers, and in an

especial manner Mr. Maddock,^[69] who has not only sworn away mine but several other innocent persons' lives (an unchristian-like return for relieving and supporting him when destitute of almost every necessary of life); but this I mention not to upbraid him, God forbid I should. No, my dear Countrymen, I only beg that this, his fatal unhappy delusion, may be a lively and instructive warning both to you and posterity, never to add cruelty to injustice, or to injure your Benefactors only for having partaken of their benefits. And I likewise here solemnly declare that I sincerely forgive the ... [illegible] of the Counsel, the partiality of my Judges, and the misguided zeal of my Jury.—"Lay not, O God, my blood to their charge, neither let this my murder rise up against them. Forgive them, Oh! my Father, for they not know what they do."

And now, Oh! my God and merciful Father, having thus addressed the Throne of Grace for mine Enemies, let me now supplicate thy mercy for my poor unworthy self. I now with humility prostrate myself before thee, and beseech thee of thine infinite goodness, to deign to forgive me all my sins, negligences, and ignorances; excuse the frailties and infirmities of my nature, and pardon every levity, excess, and indecency which I have committed against thy Divine Majesty; plead thou my cause, Oh, my sweet Saviour; Oh! let not the transgressions of my youth, or the faults which I have been betrayed into, either through fear, forgetfulness, or surprise, be alleged against me at the Great Day of Judgment. Let that precious blood which was spilt at thy most bitter death on the Cross be a sweet-smelling sacrifice to turn away thy wrath from thy servant, who is not only now persecuted, but going to die for truth and righteousness' sake. In proportion to the humility of my desires, and the purity of my intention, heighten, Oh, Christ, my reward hereafter. Into thy hands I commend my soul; vouchsafe to save all those whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood, and make me to be remembered with thy Saints in glory everlasting. Amen.

If we could close the narrative of Manchester's share in the dynastic contest of '45 without reference to the afflicting details of the barbarities the victors deemed it necessary to perpetrate we should not have necessarily to excite the indignation of our readers against atrocities for the commission of which neither passion nor party zeal can furnish even the shadow of an excuse. The 30th of July was the day on which Captain Dawson and the four officers of the Manchester Regiment were to be subjected to the hideous penalties the law had awarded for their active partisanship of the exiled Stuarts—a day not less of shame than of triumph to the ruling powers, and one constituting in itself a very black page in the annals of the country. On that day there was to be enacted a scene such as England had happily not witnessed for thirty years or more. When the Manchester men surrendered at Carlisle they were told that they would be reserved for the King's pleasure—their fate is a dismal memorial of his tender mercies. Indifferent to the dishonour he was bringing upon the nation, and unmindful of the odium that must attach to his name, the Elector of Hanover looked upon rebellion as a crime that could only be dealt with in a spirit of revenge, and by the perpetration of cruelties so exceptionally revolting that they could not be repeated without greater danger to the throne than the insurrectionary feeling they were intended to crush. On the morning of the day named the whole of the condemned men were bound on three hurdles, and in this ignominious manner dragged from the new gaol at Southwark to the place of execution on Kennington Common, escorted by a strong party of soldiers. A gallows had been previously erected, and near it were the hideous adjuncts of all executions for treason—a pile of faggots and a block on which was laid the executioner's knife. On their arrival the victims were unbound and transferred from the hurdles to a cart placed under the "fatal tree," and at the same time the fire was lit, the faggots blazing up and crackling, before the doomed men's eyes. Having spent some time in their devotions, they severally delivered the declarations which they had written to the sheriff, the cart was withdrawn, and they were launched into eternity, all dying calm and composed. At the end of five minutes after suspension—before life was extinct, and while the body was yet quivering—Captain Townley was cut down, stripped, and placed on the block, when the hangman with his cleaver severed his head from the body, and then took out his heart and bowels and cast them into the fire. Captain Dawson underwent the same barbarous treatment; the others in succession shared his fate; and when the heart of the last was thrown into the fire the grim finisher of the law exclaimed, "God save King George!" the assembled crowd answering with a loud shout.

Connected with this melancholy exhibition an incident is recorded that has a more enduring interest even than the catastrophe itself. Among the spectators of the tragic scene was the plighted fair one of Captain Dawson. When all hope of the royal clemency was at an end the inconsolable young lady, impelled by frenzy and despair, determined upon following her betrothed to the place of execution and witnessing the dreadful spectacle that was to be enacted. Accompanied by a relative she, with heroic fortitude, followed the sledges in a hackney coach, beheld the preparations that were being made, watched her lover mount the gallows, and saw his lifeless body cut down and placed upon the block to be mutilated, without betraying any extravagant emotion, but when the executioner flung his victim's heart into the flames the sight was more than human nature could sustain. Withdrawing her gaze, she leaned back in the carriage, breathed his name, and was no more. Shenstone has made the incident the theme of a ballad which has alike immortalised its hero and its author. The following version, which differs slightly from some of the printed copies, is from Percy's "Reliques":—

Come listen to my mournful tale,
Ye tender hearts and lovers dear;

Nor will you scorn to heave a sigh,
Nor will you blush to shed a tear.

And thou, dear Kitty, peerless maid,
Do thou a pensive ear incline;
For thou canst weep at every woe,
And pity every plaint but mine.

Young Dawson was a gallant youth,
A brighter, never trod the plain;
And well he lov'd one charming maid,
And dearly was he lov'd again.

One tender maid, she lov'd him dear;
Of gentle blood the damsel came,
And faultless was her beauteous form,
And spotless was her virgin fame.

But curse on party's hateful strife
That led the favoured youth astray,
The day the rebel clans appear'd:
O had he never seen that day!

Their colours and their sash he wore,
And in the fatal dress was found;
And now he must that death endure,
Which gives the brave the keenest wound.

How pale was then his true love's cheek,
When Jemmy's sentence reach'd her ear!
For never yet did Alpine snows
So pale, or yet so chill appear.

With faltering voice she weeping said:
"O Dawson, monarch of my heart,
Think not thy death shall end our loves,
For thou and I will never part.

"Yet might sweet mercy find a place,
And bring relief to Jemmy's woes,
O George, without a prayer for thee
My orisons should never close.

"The gracious Prince that gave him life,
Would crown a never-dying flame,
And every tender babe I bore,
Should learn to lisp the giver's name.

"But though, dear youth, thou should'st be dragg'd
To yonder ignominious tree,
Thou shalt not want a faithful friend
To share thy bitter fate with thee."

O then her mourning coach was call'd,
The sledge mov'd slowly on before;
Though borne in a triumphal car,
She had not lov'd her favourite more.

She follow'd him prepared to view
The terrible behests of law;
And the last scene of Jemmy's woe
With calm and steadfast eye she saw.

Distorted was that blooming face
Which she had fondly lov'd so long;
And stifled was that tuneful breath
Which in her praise had sweetly sung.

And sever'd was that beauteous neck
Round which her arms had fondly closed
And mangled was that beauteous breast
On which her love-sick head reposed;

And ravish'd was that constant heart
She did to every heart prefer;
For though it could its King forget,
'Twas true and loyal still to her,

Amid those unrelenting flames
She bore this constant heart to see;
But when 'twas moulder'd into dust,
"Now, now," she cried, "I'll follow thee.

"My death, my death alone can show
The pure and lasting love I bore;
Accept, O heaven, of woes like ours,
And let us, let us weep no more."

The dismal scene was o'er and past,
The lover's mournful hearse retired;
The maid drew back her languid head,
And, sighing forth his name, expired.

Though justice ever must prevail,
The tear my Kitty sheds is due;
For seldom shall she hear a tale
So sad, so tender, and so true.

Doubts have been entertained as to the genuineness of the story which Shenstone has narrated with such simple tenderness and pathos, and a belief expressed that for some of the more tragic details he has had recourse to the poet's licence. But apart from the circumstance that the incident commemorated has been a tradition in each of the three branches of the Dawson family, and accepted as an unimpeachable fact, there is extant sufficient contemporary evidence to remove any misgivings as to its authenticity. "Seldom shall you hear a tale so sad, so tender, and," as the poet adds, "so true." Shenstone, "whose mind," as has been said, "was not very comprehensive, nor his curiosity active," was content to take the event of his song from a narrative first published in the *Parrot* of August 2, 1746, three days after the "dismal scene" recorded. It is there stated that, "On the young lady being informed that Mr. Dawson was to be executed, not all the persuasions of her kindred could prevent her from going to the place of execution. She accordingly followed the sledge in a hackney coach, accompanied by a gentleman nearly related to her and a female friend. Having arrived at the place of execution, she got near enough to see the fire kindled that was to consume him, and all the other dreadful preparations, without betraying any of those emotions her friends apprehended. But when all was over, and she found he was no more, she drew her head back in the coach, and ejaculating, 'My dear, I follow thee! Lord Jesus, receive our souls together!' fell on the neck of her companion, and expired the very moment she had done speaking. Most excessive grief," the narrative adds, "which the force of her resolution had kept smothered within her breast, is thought to have put a stop to the vital motion, and suffocated at once all the animal spirits." The story is copied from the *Parrot* into the *Whitehall Evening Post* of August 7th, 1746, and the remark appended that, "upon inquiry, every circumstance was literally true."

It has been repeatedly stated, though incorrectly, that, after the execution, the head of Captain Dawson, with those of Syddall and one of the Deacons, was sent down to Manchester and spiked upon the old Exchange. Concerning the final disposition of the relics of poor mortality which were so long left to moulder in the sun and rain—the memorials of a barbarous and unchristian revenge—the following communication was some years ago addressed to Mr. Proctor, the author of "Memorials of Manchester Streets," and which, though somewhat lengthy, we venture to transcribe:—

I was dining some years ago, with the late Dr. S. L. (S. A.?) Bardsley. When the cloth was removed, the conversation took a more narrative character than is usual. Many personal recollections were told, and at length one of the guests incidentally mentioned the traditions of Manchester at the time of the Jacobite disturbances. Upon this our host observed how singular it was that the authorities of that day had never discovered the persons who had removed from the Manchester Exchange the heads of Jemmy Dawson (the hero of Shenstone's ballad) and the two deacons which had been exposed there, after their execution, as participators in the Jacobite troubles. He added that he was the only person living who could then solve the mystery. He went on to say, that many years previously (I forget the exact date) [1828] he was in attendance upon one Miss Hale (Miss Frances Hall?) who lived in King Street, and who had been a great partisan of Charles Edward. The old lady, who was then about ninety years of age, and believed herself to be dying, as was in fact the case, dismissed all her attendants from the room except the doctor; and having ascertained from him that she had not many hours to live, told him that her brother, who was then dead, was the person who had removed the heads in question, and that they were then buried in the garden at the back of the house in which she was living. She concluded by making him promise, that when she was gone, he would have them taken up and placed in consecrated ground.

I need hardly add that Dr. Bardsley strictly fulfilled her wishes. Three skulls were found in the garden, as she had stated, and they were placed, as I understand, in St. Ann's churchyard. This is the more probable as there are now tombs of the Deacons to be found there.

This note introduces us to a family that for a century or more occupied a prominent position in

the society of Manchester, and the members of which were in each generation distinguished alike for their public spirit and private worth. Richard Edward Hall, who resided in an old half-timbered house in Deansgate, at the corner of Bridge-street, and afterwards in Hulme, where he died September 13th, 1793, at the age of ninety, was an eminent surgeon at the time of the Pretender's visit, the friend of John Byrom^[70] and Dr. Dawson, and an ardent Jacobite withal. Two of his sons, Edward Hall and Richard Hall, adopted the father's profession, and were surgeons to the Infirmary, and it must have been one of them who removed the rebel heads from the Exchange. The survivors of the family were their two sisters, Frances and Elizabeth Hall, who remained unmarried, and died at an advanced age, the last-named in 1826, at the age of eighty, and Miss Frances Hall, June 4th, 1828, aged eighty-four. These two ladies, after their father's death, resided, with the other members of the family, in a house near the top of King Street, at the point where Spring Gardens has lately been carried through; their home was a large old-fashioned dwelling of stately exterior, with a spacious garden extending in rear to Chancery Lane, and a clump of tall trees, in which a colony of rooks had established themselves. The rookery remained within the recollection of the present generation, and only disappeared when garden and greensward were taken possession of by the builder, and the tumultuous occupants became but a memory of the past. When Prince Charles Edward passed through the town in 1745 Frances Hall was a child in arms, and had in all probability been held up to view the gay cavalcade; her brother Edward was then a youth of fourteen, and, inheriting his father's attachment to the exiled race, it is easy to understand his desire to remove from their ignominious position, the ghastly relics of those whose lives had been sacrificed for their devotion to the Stuart cause. The Halls were as wealthy as they were prominent, and when Miss Frances Hall died in 1828 she left by her will no less a sum than £44,000 to the Royal Infirmary, House of Recovery, Lying-in Hospital, Ladies' Jubilee School, and other charities in her native town. She is buried in the Derby chapel within the Cathedral, where a monument by Chantry was erected to her memory in 1834, which has since been removed to the Derby chapel.

It is stated in the communication we have quoted that three heads were removed from the Exchange—those of Jemmy Dawson and the two Deacons—but this is clearly an error. Dawson's head was not exposed in Manchester, and there is no record of more than two being placed upon the Exchange—those of Adjutant Syddall and Captain Thomas Theodorus Deacon. In the constable's accounts for the year the cost of placing them is thus recorded:—

1746: Expenses tending the Sheriff this morning for Syddall's and Deacon's heads put up. 0 1 6

And it is worthy of note that when the Exchange was pulled down in 1792 the two iron rods on which they had been spiked remained fixed in one of the stones.

The statements that have come down to us respecting the disposal of the heads of the unhappy Jacobites are singularly vague and conflicting. Baines adopts the oft-repeated statement that the head of Colonel Townley, with that of Captain Fletcher, another officer of the Manchester Regiment, was fixed on Temple Bar, the "City Golgotha" as it came to be called; but this statement, so far as Townley is concerned, is incorrect, that part of his sentence having, at the intercession of friends, been remitted, and an undertaker at Pancras allowed to take charge of his corpse, by whom it was buried. There were, however, two heads exposed on the Bar; one of them was Captain Fletcher's, and there is good reason to believe that the other was that of Captain Dawson. Walpole, writing to Montague, August 15, 1746, says:—"I have been this morning at the Tower, and passed under the new heads at Temple Bar, where people make a trade of letting spying-glasses at a halfpenny a look." For several weeks people flocked to the revolting exhibition, which afforded to many a savage pleasure, and a print, published at the time, gives a view of Temple Bar with the heads spiked on the top, and the following doggerel lines beneath:—

While trembling rebels at the fabric gaze,
And dread their fate with horror and amaze,
Let Briton's sons the emblematic view,
And plainly see what is rebellion's due.

Dr. Johnson relates the impression which the sight of these trunkless heads made upon him. "I remember," he says, "once being with Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey. While he surveyed Poet's Corner, I said to him—

Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur illis.

When we got to the Temple Bar, he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it, and slyly whispered

Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur *istis*."

Goldsmith's rejoinder is so charmingly witty that we make no apology for repeating it. After this we have little mention of these relics of the victims of Hanoverian vengeance—the lips that love had kissed, the cheeks that children had patted were left to blacken and rot until the 31st of March, 1772, when one of the heads was blown down, and shortly afterwards the remaining one was also swept down by a stormy gust; the cruel-looking spikes, however, remained until the beginning of the present century, when they were removed, and since then the Bar itself, with its ponderous gates—black, weather-worn, and dilapidated—successively a protection, an ornament, and an obstruction, have disappeared, and is now only remembered as belonging to the past.

The sun of the Stuarts went down with the rout and slaughter of the rebel army at Culloden. On that memorable 16th of April, 1746, a dynastic contest of fifty-seven years was conclusively ended in less than fifty-seven minutes; the visions of thrones and sceptres vanished, the hopes and aspirations of the youthful adventurer were blighted, and he who, one short hour before, had been a nominal king, was reduced to the condition of a luckless and forlorn outcast, shunned by every one except those who sought his destruction. Though the friends of the exiled house adhered to their mystically significant toasts, drank "The King over the water," and sang "The King shall enjoy his own again," Jacobitism as a principle, may from that time be said to have waned, and to have become extinct as a profession of faith with the death of Charles Edward in 1788; for though the Prince's younger brother, Cardinal York, issued a medal bearing his name as "*Henricus Nonus Dei Gratia Rex*," with the meek addition, "*Haud desideris Hominum, sed voluntate Dei*," his assumption of the regal title excited little interest or feeling among the English people. The Jacobites had a firm belief in the right divine of kings, and viewed the case of the Stuarts as that of a family deprived of its rights by unjust means. Influenced by that belief, their conduct in seeking to affect a restoration of the dynasty was both logical and generous. The effort they made in 1745 was in many respects a brilliant one, but it was out of time; the House of Brunswick had then become firmly seated upon the throne, and there was little chance of effecting its overthrow. From the first the enterprise was hopeless; the country gentlemen sympathised with it, but the great mass of the people were indifferent and had certainly no attachment or prejudice in favour of the House of Stuart. But while we may condemn an attempt dictated by youth and presumption, and conducted without art or resolution, we cannot but admire the heroic efforts, and pity the sufferings of those engaged in it.

Though the hope of a restoration of the exiled family was finally extinguished, the bitterness of party feeling long continued to manifest itself in Manchester, where political and religious excitement was maintained at fever heat by the two contending factions. The partisans of the House of Brunswick had regained the ascendancy; inflamed with the sense of victory, they made an ostentatious parade of their loyalty, and in their exultation treated their opponents with every contumely, accounting Jacobites, Tories, and Non-jurors as the equivalent of Jews, Infidels, and Heretics. The local magistrates were energetic in the discharge of their office, and as severe as they were energetic, everyone whose Hanoverian sympathies were not of the most pronounced character being compelled by them to take the oath of allegiance to the reigning sovereign. But the fiercest feuds must some time come to an end, for society cannot continue in a state of perpetual antagonism; if party principles were maintained, party feeling gradually subsided, and King *de facto* men and partisans of the Pretender eventually laid aside their differences and settled down to the calm enjoyment of social intercourse and the ordinary amenities of civilised life.

With the suppression of the rebellion and the renewal of active business life we may leave the story of the "forty-five," with all its painful memories, to note some few particulars respecting the family of the luckless Jemmy Dawson.

Dr. Dawson, the father of the rebel captain, as previously stated, had his town residence in the upper part of King Street—but then known as St. James's Square—a fashionable quarter, intended, originally, to be what the name imported, a square, and a rival in stateliness and substantial dignity, to the one lower down, named after the Hanoverian Queen. In addition, he had become the owner of a house called the "Cottage," which stood in the fields near the site of the present Concert Hall—a pleasant out-of-town abode, with a walled garden, orchard, and pleasure ground, contiguous to which, on the high ground called the Mount, stood an antiquated windmill that gave name to Windmill Street; Mosley Street, which commemorates the former manorial lords, and "the most elegant and retired street in the town," as Dr. Dalton afterwards described it, was then Mosley Street only in name, and the narrow alleys and streetlets leading into it had not come into existence. The lower part of the street, from the present Nicholas Street to St. Peter's Church (erected many years afterwards), was then called Dawson Street, and led directly to Mr. Dawson's house, standing within its own grounds in the open country. When the street came to be built upon, it was inhabited by some of the best families in the town, and numbered at one time among its residents Nathan Meyer Rothschild and the well-known Major Shakspeare Phillips. Mr. Dawson's family consisted, in addition to the ill-starred subject of Shenstone's ballad, of a son, William Dawson, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah. In the earlier years of his married life there was residing with him a lady, the circumstances of whose life are shrouded in much mystery—the Lady Barbara Fitzroy, one of the daughters of Charles Duke of Cleveland by his second wife, Ann, daughter of Sir William Pulteney, of Misterton, in Leicestershire—a lady in whose veins coursed the blood of the Stuarts, the Duke, her father, being one of the children which Charles II. had by the notorious Lady Castlemaine, a vain and volatile beauty, whose pretty face helped to undo a nation. Lady Fitzroy had withdrawn from her own family when she took up her abode with the Dawsons, but the circumstances which led to the alienation and her being disowned by her mother are not known, and we fail to discover by what means her fortunes became identified with those of the family of "Jemmy Dawson," though, doubtless, the connection helped to strengthen his attachment to the Stuart cause. She was born February 7th, 1695-6, and died January 4th, 1734, in her 38th year. Robert Thyer, the accomplished scholar and critic, writing to John Byrom under date January 20th, 1734-5, says "My Lady Barbara Fitzroy, that lived with Mrs. Dawson, and Mrs. Mort were both buried this week. My Lady has made Mr. Dawson her heir, if he can but come at the money." Mr. Dawson did not "come at the money," and neither he nor any of his family benefited by Lady Barbara's benevolent intentions. She is buried in the choir of the cathedral, where upon her gravestone, is a brass with the inscription—

Lady Barbara Fitz Roy, Eldest Daughter of the Most Noble Charles Duke of Cleveland and Southampton. Died January 4th, 1734.

Above the inscription on a lozenge shield are the arms of Charles II., differenced with a baton sinister flanked on each side with the usual emblems of mortality, a skull, cross-bones, winged hour-glass and scythe, and a candle nearly extinguished.

Dr. Dawson died at his house in King-street, then called St. James's Street, March 20th, 1763. He is buried in the cathedral by the side of his wife (who died before her son came to his tragic end) and one of his daughters. The gravestone is inscribed—

Guls. Dawson de Mancr. Gen. ob. 20mo Mar. A.S. 1763, æt 67. Eliz. Ux. Gul. Dawson ob 30 Maij anno salutis 1737, ætatis suæ 41. Saræ filia prædic. obt. 7mo Maij 1725.

Mr. Dawson was succeeded by his second but eldest surviving son, William Dawson, who, as previously stated, had entered at Lincoln's Inn and been called to the bar. He resided at the "Cottage" before referred to, and from the little that is known respecting him appears to have been a somewhat eccentric personage. When John Byrom's son, Edward Byrom, the banker, established himself in Quay Street and conceived the idea of founding St. John's Church, Mr. Dawson associated with him in the good work, but from some cause or other a dispute arose which led him to withdraw from the undertaking after contributing to the cost of the erection. While travelling in Italy he had purchased the picture by Annibal Carracci of "The Descent from the Cross," which he intended should grace the altar recess of St. John's, but when the misunderstanding arose the intention was abandoned, and some years after his death, when St. Peter's was erected in close proximity to his house, and became, by the attractiveness of its services, if not the carriage-way to heaven, at least the shrine to which the "fashionable idlers" and "genteel sinners" of Mosley Street and Dawson Street turned their steps one day in seven, the picture was placed there, over the communion table, where it still remains. Several years before his death he had engaged Mr. Bottomley, an engraver in the town, to inscribe the plate which he purposed having placed over his remains, and this, according to Dr. Hibbert-Ware, he kept in his room as a memento until the day of his death. *Sapiens, qui, dum vivat sibi monumentum parat.* He died unmarried at "the cottage, near the Mount," on Thursday, the 17th August, 1780, and was buried on the following Sunday in the grave in which forty-six years before his friend and patron Lady Barbara Fitzroy had been laid. The plate before referred to, which is placed on the lower compartment of the stone, bears the following inscription:—

Here are deposited the Remains of William Dawson, Esq., who died the 17th day of August, 1780, and in the 60th year of his Age.

He desired to be buried with the above named lady, not only to testify his gratitude to the memory of a kind benefactress: although he never reaped any of those advantages from her bounty to his family she intended.

But because his fate was similar to her's. For she was disowned by her Mother. And he was disinherited by his Father.

Above the inscription is a shield of arms and crest, but, by some unaccountable mistake, instead of the Dawson's those of the Allens of Redivales are depicted, a family from which Mr. Dawson was descended through the female line.

In Mr. Barritt's MSS. in the Chetham Library we have the following particulars respecting Mr. Dawson:—

This gentleman was buried agreeably to his request, in the following dress, ruffled shirt, and cravat, nightcap of brown fur, morning gown striped orange and white, deep crimson-coloured waistcoat and breeches, white silk stockings, and red morocco slippers. In his bosom was put a folded piece of white paper, which enclosed two locks of hair cut from the heads of two boys that died, for whom Mr. Dawson had a great regard; they being the children of Mr. Cooper, his steward, with whom Mr. Dawson lived, and likewise became his heir at his death.

Nothing is known of the circumstance that led to the differences between Mr. Dawson and his father; the breach, however, would seem never to have been healed, and the son, as the inscription on his grave evidences, retained an unpleasant recollection of it to the last. Mr. Dawson was a prominent figure in the Manchester society of the last century, and many were the stories that used to be told of his foibles and peculiarities. By his will he bequeathed the greater part of his property to Mr. William Cooper, the steward referred to in Barritt's MSS., and constituted him his sole executor. Mr. Cooper thus became the owner and occupier of the "Cottage," which thenceforward became commonly known as "Cooper's Cottage," a name it retained until half a century ago, when it was pulled down to make room for the present Concert Hall; and as the patronymic of its former possessor was commemorated in Dawson-street, so, in like manner, Cooper-street perpetuates the name of its subsequent owner.

In concluding our account of the Dawsons it only remains to notice one other member of the family,—Elizabeth, the younger of the two daughters of Dr. Dawson. The eldest daughter, Sarah, as we have seen, died unmarried in 1725; Elizabeth Dawson married some time before March 24, 1749, William Broome, the representative of a family which had then been settled for half a century or more at Didsbury, and the heads of which held the position of legal agents to Sir John

Bland, of Hulme, and also of the Barlows, of Barlow Hall. Tradition points to this lady, "Bessy Dawson," as the one who accompanied "Jemmy Dawson's" affianced bride on the morning of the sad 30th of July, 1746, to witness the terrible tragedy to be enacted on Kennington Common, and the same authority tells us that afterwards, having formed an attachment for the handsome young lawyer of Didsbury, and failing to obtain her father's consent to the match, she eloped with him and was married clandestinely, a procedure which gave such offence to her father that he never forgave her. The first part of this statement has such an air of probability about it that we would not willingly spoil the effect by questioning its accuracy, but the story of the elopement does not appear to rest upon any reliable foundation.

Elizabeth Dawson died February, 1764. By her marriage with William Broome she had several children; the eldest, named after his father, married and had issue a daughter, Mary, his heir, who became the wife of Henry Fielding, of Didsbury, and by him had a son, Robert Fielding, who married Ann, eldest daughter of Sir John Parker Mosley, of Ancoats. The eldest son by this marriage was the Rev. Robert Mosley Fielding, rector of Bebbington, in Cheshire, who died in 1862, leaving with other issue a son—Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Fielding, of Dulas Court, Hereford, high sheriff of that county in 1864, who is the present representative of this branch of the Fieldings, as well as of the old Manchester families of Broome and Dawson. Colonel Fielding married in 1858 his second cousin, Louisa Willis, fifth daughter of Joseph Fielding, of Witton Park, formerly M.P. for Blackburn, and sister of Major-general Randle Joseph Fielding, M.P. for North Lancashire, by whom he has a numerous issue.

In thus relating the story of "Jemmy Dawson," we have endeavoured to rescue from oblivion some few particulars respecting the life and family connections of one of the most notable of the Manchester victims of Hanoverian vengeance, and one whose tragic end forms a dark page in the history of the fatal '45.



CHAPTER VIII.

A MORNING AT LITTLE MORETON.

N that interesting old national record, the Dome Book, or Doomsday Book, as it is commonly called—a survey which William the Norman caused to be made of all the possessions of the Crown, and which for eight hundred years has been a perpetual register of appeal for those whose title to their estates has at any time been questioned—mention is made of the township or ville of Rode, which even at a period so remote as the Saxon era, as appears, had been divided into the two manors of Moreton and Rode, places that at a subsequent date gave names to two distinct families.

Moreton, or Little Moreton, as it is usually designated, to distinguish it from the adjoining township of Moreton-cum-Aucumlow, or Great Moreton, is situated at the extreme corner of Cheshire, in the midst of rich level meadow-breadths that stretch away from the foot of the wild moorland ridge that here divides the county from Staffordshire—a spur, so to speak, thrown out from the lofty Pennine range, or "back-bone of England," and which, in olden times, was included within the limits of the great forests of Leek and Macclesfield. These bold outliers of sandstone rock, from their coarse conglomerate and smoothly-rounded outlines towards the plain, show unmistakably that they were deposited in water and moulded to their present form by the great icebergs that in the glacial period swept past and ground down their rugged forms to mix with and enrich the soil below. Picturesque are they in appearance as they stretch away towards the north in wild heathery wastes, where, in the pleasant autumn time, the "hech-hech" of the startled grouse and the sound of the sportsman's gun may oftentimes be heard. Just above Little Moreton the well-known Mow Cop^[71]—the "high-crowned Mole Cop," as Michael Drayton calls it—rises to a height of 1,090 feet, its summit crested with an imitation ruin that, as tradition says, was built by Randle Wilbraham, of Rode, nearly a century and a half ago; and further north the range terminates in the bold promontory of Cloud End, which descends in a series of steep shelving crags towards the Dane, a gentle stream that comes down from the hills near Bosley, and, after performing some little acts of industry at Congleton, and receiving the indignities of that ancient borough in return, wanders freakishly onwards to add its tribute to the waters of the Weaver.

The notice in the Norman survey, brief though it is, gives us a side glance of the condition of the country in the far off days of Gurth and Wamba; it tells us of the woods that spread over the hill sides, of the aerie for hawks, and of the enclosures for taking wild deer; and as we read it we

picture in imagination the wild scenes of sylvan solitude when the serfs and bondmen of the Saxon thegn tended their herds beneath the wide-branched oaks, and the swineherd, winding his horn, gathered his scattered porkers to fatten on the luxurious banquet of acorns and beech-mast which the forest supplied. As Ben Jonson, in the "Sad Shepherd," says:

Like a prince
Of swineherds! Syke he seeks delight in the spoils
Of those he feeds, a mighty lord of swine!

But the reign of the country-loving Saxon came to an end. When William of Normandy came out of the gory field of Senlac a victor, and strengthened his claim to the English throne by his military successes, he, in conformity with existing usage, seized upon the lands of the vanquished Harold and his adherents, and bestowed them upon the hordes of needy adventurers who had in truth placed the crown upon his head, and who looked for their recompense in the unreserved plunder of the Saxon people; for the chief having taken what he could by force of arms, the knights who helped him took what they could of what was left: *chascun sur sa main forte*: the Saxons were to them, in fact, what the Arabs call "Damalafong," things to be plundered, and plundered they were by the unanswerable right of "*la main forte*," the strong Norman hand.

The Earldom of Chester was granted by the Conqueror to that pious profligate Hugh d'Avranches, better known from his savage characteristics as Hugh Lupus, or Hugh the Wolf, and he in turn distributed the lands among his feudatory followers. Rode has its reminiscences of the predatory adventurers who accompanied Duke William, for at the time of the survey it had been wrested from the possession of its Saxon owner and had passed into the hands of two Norman grantees, Hugh de Mara, progenitor of the Barons of Montalt, and William Fitznigel, Baron of Halton, a grandson, it is said, of that Ivo de Constance who encountered the English whom King Ethelred sent to France and slew them as they stepped ashore.

The manor of Moreton was held under the barony of Halton by knight service by a family who took their surname from their possessions. Some time during the long reign of Henry III. Letitia or Lettice Moreton, who, through failure of the direct male line, had become heiress, conveyed the lands in marriage to a neighbouring knight, Sir Gralam de Lostock, of Lostock Gralam, near Northwich, the fourth in direct descent from another Norman warrior, Hugh de Runchamp; and their grandson, also named Gralam, adopted his grandmother's patronymic. From this time the estate continued in strict male descent until the time of Sir William Moreton, Knight, Recorder of London, who died childless in March, 1763, when the estates passed by will to his sister's son, the Rev. Richard Taylor, Rector of West Dean and Vicar of West Firle, in Sussex, who, in accordance with his uncle's directions, assumed the surname of Moreton. He died in 1784, leaving, with two daughters, a son who succeeded as heir, the Rev. William Moreton, who died some few years ago, leaving two daughters his co-heiresses, Frances Annabella, of Maison Moreton, Pau, in France, widow of John Craigie, Esq., formerly sheriff-substitute of Roxburghshire, and Elizabeth Moreton, a sister of mercy at Clewer, near Windsor, the present owners of the Moreton moiety of the manor of Rode, and the picturesque old moated manor house that forms the subject of our present paper.

As already stated, the other moiety of the manor of Rode gave name to a family who were settled there as early as the reign of King John. Whether they were descended, like the Moretons, from the Lostocks of Lostock Gralam, as Mr. Ormerod seems to believe, is not very clear, but if they were their kinship did not strengthen the ties of friendship or put them on more neighbourly terms with each other, for the Recognisance Rolls and other public records bear testimony to the frequent feuds that arose between the two families, and tell of the many occasions on which the chiefs of each house were bound over in heavy recognisances to keep the peace towards each other. One of their disputes was of a sufficiently humorous character to make it worth recording. In the chancel of Astbury Church is a chapel or side aisle that appears to have belonged jointly to the two manors, and in the fifth year of Henry the Eighth's reign a quarrel arose between William Moreton and Thomas Rode, the owners of two moieties, as to "which should sit highest in the church, and foremost go in procession." It was a weighty matter, and Sir William Brereton was eventually entrusted by George Bromley, lieutenant justice of Chester, who had been joined with him in the arbitration, with the responsibility of determining which of these sticklers for precedence should have the highest seat in the synagogue, and, as we learn from the award, which is printed at length in the *Magna Britannia*, "the said William Brereton, calling to him xii. of the most auncyent men inhabiting within the parish of Astebery," somewhat comically decided "that whyther of the said gentylnen may dispense in landes, by title of inheritance, 10 marks or above more than the other, that he shall have the pre-eminence in sitting in the churche, and in going in procession, with all other lyke causes in that behalf;" a decision that is worthy of being classed with the direction given a few years later (1534) by one of the Townleys of Townley, who, when called upon to issue an order regulating precedence to the seats in Whalley Church, in Lancashire, decreed that the earliest comers should take precedence in the highest seats nearest the choir, observing that it might operate beneficially on "the proud wives of Whalley," who would not "rise betimes to come to church." The award signed by Sir William Brereton is preserved among the archives of the Moreton family, but which of the disputants outdid the other in liberality—acquiring priority by purchase—history hath failed to record.

The William Moreton who was a party to this pretty quarrel married Alice, one of the daughters of Sir Andrew Brereton, lord of Brereton, by whom he had, with other issue, a son, William Moreton, born a year or two after the accession of Henry VIII., and there is good reason to

believe that he was the one who began the erection of the present manor house of Little Moreton on the site of an earlier building, his son, John Moreton, who died about the end of Elizabeth's reign, completing the work the father had begun. A grandson of this John Moreton, Dr. Edward Moreton, who was rector of Tattenhall, Barrow, and Sephton, married a niece of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and by her was father of the Right Reverend William Moreton, Bishop of Kildare, in Ireland, and afterwards Bishop of Meath, who died in Dublin, November 21st, 1715, leaving an only son, Sir William Moreton, of Moreton, Recorder of London, before referred to, the last of the direct male line who owned the manor.

There were formerly in the Moreton Chapel in Astbury Church some altar tombs and other sepulchral memorials of this ancient race, but these have, in the course of ages, disappeared, with the exception of a monumental slab, east of the altar steps, which bears an inscription to the memory of the last male representative of the stock—"Sir William Moreton Knt. recorder of the city of London, who died March 14 1763 aged 67 and his wife Dame Jane Moreton (widow of John Lawton of Lawton) who died February 10 1758 aged 61." On the same tomb there is also an inscription to the memory of Sir William's mother, Dame Mary Jones, who died April 19th, 1743, aged 85, the second wife of William Moreton, of Moreton, who afterwards married Sir Arthur Jones.

King, in his "Vale Royal," referring to the ancestral home of the Moretons, says:—"Near the foot of that famous mountain called Mow Cop begins the water of the Whelock, making his first passage near unto Moreton, wherein are two very fair demesons and houses of worthy gentlemen and esquires, of most antient continuance—the one of the same name of Moreton, and which, as I have heard, gave breeding to that famous Bishop Moreton, who in the time of Richard III. contrived that project of the marriage of the two heirs of the Houses of York and Lancaster, from whence proceeded the happiness that we enjoy at this day." The old chronicler is here alluding to Cardinal John Moreton, or Morton, Master of the Rolls in 1473, created Bishop of Ely and Lord Chancellor in 1478, and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1486. Sir Thomas More, who was well qualified to appreciate his character, has given an account of this prelate in his "Utopia." Godwin and Fuller both incline to the opinion that he was a native of Dorsetshire, but differ as to the exact place of his birth, the former fixing it at Bere Regis and the other at St. Andrew's, Milborne; others say he was born in Cheshire, but there is no evidence, so far as can be discovered, confirmatory of King's statement that the old manor house at Moreton "gave breeding to that famous bishop."

From Mow Cop to Little Moreton is but a few minutes' walk. It may be reached by a short path across the fields or by the high road—the London road of the old coaching days, leading through Congleton and the Potteries—which is a little more circuitous, though not much. The country is for the most part level, the base of the hills being a mile or so to the eastward, and, though not pre-eminently beautiful or impressive, presents nevertheless many charms of situation and rural and scenic attractions enough to leave a pleasant impress upon the memory. The land is devoted to crops and pasture, and the pleasant green lanes winding in sun and shadow between meadows and corn lands, with glimpses here and there of rustic cottages and blooming apple orchards, call up thoughts and fancies ever new and ever beautiful.

It was a bright, clear morning, near the close of the pleasant autumn time, when our visit was made; a cheery November day, with an exhilarating freshness in the atmosphere that made us almost think the mild October was trying to hold its own, though the drift of withered leaves that crackled beneath our feet, the tall trees half stripped of their vernal pride, and the naked underwood and brambles told unmistakably that summer had passed away, and that winter was rapidly advancing in the background to—

Reign triumphant o'er the conquer'd year.

The red leaves rent from the shivering branches descended in flaky showers, reminding us of William Allingham's lines on "Robin Redbreast"—

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian princes,
But soon they'll turn to ghosts;
The leathery pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough,
It's Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
'Twill soon be Winter now.

Turning off the highway a gate admits us to a private road that leads across a pasture field in which a few stirks and young stock are grazing; the tall trees that border it, divested of their summer garniture, look gaunt and grim and bare; the intricate network of twigs overhead shows like a pattern in lace against the sky, and their nakedness reveals to us the many happy nests that in the warm summer time were

Upon those boughs, which shake against the cold—
Bare, ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

Below us a little rindle that comes down from the neighbouring heights, courses its way with many a freakish twist and sinuosity, and in front the long moorland ridge, sullen and sombre

looking, stretches across the plain towards Congleton Edge and the gigantic Cloud, its rugged slopes softened in places with patches of scrub and gorse. A few minutes brings us in full view of the curious old mansion we are in search of—the "Old Hall" as it is called, to distinguish it from the more pretentious residence hard by, which has vainly endeavoured to assume its name. It attracts the eye from a distance, but it is not until you are close upon it that you fully realise the effect of its picturesquely broken outlines, its projecting upper storeys and numerous gabled roofs, its quaint casemented windows, its curious columnar chimneys partially draped with ivy, and its walls chequered in black and white and diapered in patterns wrought in trefoils and quatrefoils and chevrons and lozenges upon the white ground of intervening plaster. It is a singularly interesting specimen of the half-timbered manor-house of the early part of the sixteenth century, and, though in a decayed and dilapidated state, still preserves more nearly its original form and features than perhaps any other example of domestic architecture of equal antiquity in the country.

Drawing near we see that it is encompassed by a moat, now partially choked with rubbish, which encloses altogether about a statute acre of land, and which on the south side is spanned by an antiquated bridge of one arch, with the arms of its owners carved in relief on a panel in one of the battlements. The south side constitutes the principal front, and presents a surprising variety and fancifulness in its parts. It is of three storeys, the uppermost being much narrower than the others, and rising like the clerestory of a church from the sloping roof of the lower apartments. From near the centre of the main structure a lofty gable is advanced towards the bridge, the ground story of which forms a covered gateway, giving admission to the inner quadrangle. The doorway merits special attention by the richness and profusion of its carvings; the framework enclosing the door is composed of an elaborate series of round, fillet, and hollow mouldings, and the huge outer posts are worked with double cable mouldings, enclosing an elaborate scroll work of foliage, the frieze above, which is supported by double brackets, having a running ornament of arabesque character. Above this doorway, divided by dwarf pilasters, is a double row of panels, with trefoiled heads, the spandrels of which are in each case enriched with carved work, and in one of them is placed an horologe of antique date. Surmounting them is a large square window, lighting the porch chamber, divided by moulded mullions into five rows of lights, double transomed. In the storey above, which slightly projects from a coved cornice, is another window of similar character but of larger dimensions: an overhanging gable with barge boards and carved pendants crowning the whole. The general effect of the exterior is light and graceful, exhibiting that picturesque irregularity of outline so favourable to external beauty which our ancestors knew how to produce without unnecessary sacrifice of internal comfort.

As we cross the threshold our attention is drawn to an old stone horse block standing in a corner behind the gate, from which, doubtless, in days gone by, many a stately matron and many a graceful maiden has mounted to her palfrey to follow hawk and hound. A door opens on each side of the gateway, one communicating with some small rooms, and the other admitting to a small chamber that has evidently served as the porter's lodge. At the opposite end, entering into the quadrangle, is a wide doorway, the sideposts of which are deserving of special notice; they are elaborately ornamented, the upper portion of each being adorned with the carved representation of a soldier holding a partisan or bill in his hand; and from the morion or head piece and the other accessories, we are able to fix pretty nearly the period when this part of the mansion was built. Within the covered porch a stair winds spirally round the trunk of an immense tree that reaches from floor to roof, giving admission to several panelled chambers—the State rooms, as they are commonly designated, though, alas! they have now little stateliness to boast of—and also to the gallery occupying the third or uppermost storey of the south front, extending, with the exception of a small withdrawing room, the entire length of that part of the building from east to west. The length of this gallery is seventy-one feet, with a width of twelve feet, and the height to the centre of the roof, which is of open timber work adorned with quatrefoils, is seventeen feet. The lower portions of the walls are covered with oak wainscoting, arranged in panels, and above is a continuous line of windows extending all round, with the exception of a space in the centre, where a small chamber projects over the gateway, the profusion of light thus gained reminding us of Lord Bacon's complaint that in his day the houses "were so full of glass that you cannot tell where to come to be out of the sun or the cold." The glazing of these windows is very remarkable; it is arranged in a kind of diaper work, and exhibits a marvellous variety of intricate forms. Scratched with a diamond on one of the panes we noticed the following couplet—

I stay here both day and night
To keep out cold and let in light.

The long gallery bears a close resemblance to the one formerly existing at Bramall Hall, near Stockport, and, though smaller, is not unlike in its proportions and general arrangement the grand gallery or banqueting hall at Haddon. It is difficult to determine what purpose it could have been intended to serve, for the width is hardly sufficient to allow of its being used for a dancing room. At the east end is a female figure representing Fate, holding a pair of compasses in one hand and in the other a sword, with which she is piercing a globe placed above her head, the following inscription being carved in two panel-like compartments; one on either side:—

THE SPEARE WHOSE RULER
OF DESTINYE IS KNOWLEDGE.

At the opposite end is another female figure in flowing drapery representing Fortune blindfolded, with the right hand raised above the head pointing to her wheel, on the rim of which is inscribed

—*Qui modo scandit corruet statim* (He who is climbing now will shortly be falling down), and at the sides are two panels inscribed—

THE WHEEL WHOSE RULE IS
OF FORTUNE IGNORANCE.

The small chamber leading from the gallery before referred to is wainscoted, and has an elaborately ornamented fireplace with the figures of Justice and Mercy on the sides, and between them a heraldic shield with the arms of Moreton quartering those of Macclesfield and surmounted by the Moreton crest, the quartering having allusion to the marriage of John de Moreton in the reign of Edward III. with Margaret, daughter of Jordan and sister and co-heir of John de Macclesfield.

Projecting at right angles from the building just described, and forming the eastern side of the quadrangle, is a long uniform wing of two storeys, extending up to the main body of the hall, and containing a number of small gloomy apartments now covered with dirt and dust and litter, and apparently appropriated originally to the use of the servants and retainers. At the end nearest to the entrance is the domestic chapel, extending in a direction east and west; it is approached by a separate entrance, and is of small dimensions compared with the other parts of the building, suggesting the idea that in former times the good people of Moreton, while taking up a very considerable amount of space for the transaction of their temporal concerns, were able to manage their spiritual affairs within extremely moderate limits. The entire length of the structure is thirty feet, but the chapel proper is not more than twelve feet by nine feet. The old sanctuary is now in a sadly dilapidated condition, and damp and dreary enough to remind one of Longfellow's lines—

What a darksome and dismal place!
I wonder that any man has the face
To call such a hole the House of the Lord.

The pavement is broken and dislocated, the walls are stained with damp and mildew, and altogether it exhibits signs of indifference and unseemly disrespect enough to sear the eye and grieve the heart of any one in whom the sense of veneration is not entirely extinguished. It is now made a depository for useless lumber, and has been applied to even baser uses, cattle having been stalled, where of yore the mass was sung and matins and vespers were said. This part of the hall is approached by an ante-chapel, the doorway of which is enriched with a series of half-round and hollow mouldings of late Perpendicular date; a part of the old oak screen separating the chancel from the nave remains, but from the upper portion, where the rood formerly existed, a plastered wall is carried up to the roof, which is flat and worked in panels. At the further, or eastern, end is a pointed window divided by mullions into five lights carried up to the head with a drip-mould protecting it on the outside. At the opposite end is a small square-headed window of four lights, and there are indications of another window having at some time or other existed on the south side. The plaster work of the chapel is enriched with an ornamentation of Renaissance character, and the walls in places are strewn with scripture texts in black letter characters and of earlier date than the authorised version, but they are now so much defaced as to be hardly decipherable.

Between architecture and history there exists a closer connection than is commonly supposed, for the former subtly expresses the needs, the habits, and the ideas of changeful centuries, epitomises much of the poetry and romance of the past, and marks the gradual growth and development of human society during successive centuries. In England's homes we may read much of England's history—the old dwelling-places of the people are the types and emblems of the changing life of the country, and even in their decay, when having outlived their vital purpose and they survive only in ruin, they serve as memorials to show us how men lived and acted in the days that are gone before.

Little Moreton, though not one of the most pretentious, is certainly one of the most complete and genuine relics of mediæval England. The exterior, as we have previously said, is remarkable for the variety and picturesqueness of grouping, but the interior is even more interesting. The master feature of the whole building, and that which most attracts the attention of visitors, is the portion extending along the north side of the quadrangle comprising the entrance, the great hall, and the principal entertaining-rooms. The effect of the entire facade, as viewed from the gateway, is very striking, and it is doubtful whether, for variety of design, peculiarity of construction, and excellence of workmanship, it is equalled by any other timber house in the kingdom. Upon this part the architect seems to have lavished all his ingenuity and skill, and to have endeavoured to combine as much lightness and delicacy of detail as was consistent with stability of structure. Projecting from the main line of frontage are two singularly picturesque bay-windows, each forming five sides of an octagon, but of unequal dimensions. They are each of two storeys, the upper range of windows overhang the lower, and they are in turn surmounted by projecting roofs that form a series of small gables, from which hang elaborately-ornamented pendants. The glazing of these windows, as in the case of those in the Long Gallery before referred to, is very remarkable, the panes being small and joined together by slips of lead in such a way as to represent stars, crosses, roses, and other devices as varied in form as the figures in a kaleidoscope. On a band ornamented with scroll-work carried round the upper tiers are the following inscriptions:—

GOD IS AL IN AL THING

THIS WINDOWS WERE MADE BY WILLIAM MORETON IN THE YEARE OF
OURE LORDE MDLII
RYCHARD DALE CARPEDER MADE THEISE BY THE GRACE OF GOD

Doubtless "Rychard Dale" was proud of the work to which he affixed his name, and just cause he had to be. It looks as if the taste of a life-time had been expended upon it, the delicate mouldings and rich carving evidencing the skill of the workman, and proving incontestably that our ancestors knew how to impart grace and elegance to whatever material they might employ in the useful or ornamental purposes of architecture. Beautiful it must have been in its pristine state, but it could hardly have possessed the charm of romance or have been so picturesque to look upon then as now. Time lovingly clothes with added beauty the decayed memorials of the past, and the peculiar warmth and richness of colouring which age has given—the sombre tints of the oaken framework, the creamy white of the plaster, the faded reds and yellows of the old roofs, and the sober green of the dark-hued ivy wrapping itself round the tall chimney-shafts being wanting in the days of its proud estate.

The entrance is by a porch, occupying the north-east corner, and advanced several feet from the main structure. What a wonderful old doorway it is that we pass through. On those clustered and twisted pillars that form the side posts Richard Dale, the "carpeder," seems to have lavished his greatest skill, every part of the timber work where the carver's tool could be employed being wrought with all the nicety of art; the spandrels of the low Tudor arch are adorned with figures of dragons, and the lintel over them has a running zig-zag ornament carved in relief. The space above is occupied with a double row of exquisitely-carved and moulded dwarf pilasters, the spaces between being filled in with quatrefoils, while over them, springing from a coved cornice, is a projecting window that reaches across the entire width of the bay, surmounted by a gabled roof. From the doorway a passage leads across the western end of the main structure, communicating on the one side with the kitchens, buttery, and other domestic offices, and on the other with the great hall which faces the entrance gateway. It is a spacious apartment 34ft. by 21ft., exclusive of the large bay which projects far out into the court-yard, and is open to the roof-timbers. It is in much better condition than the other parts of the fabric, and if adorned with tapestry, arms and armour, and family portraits would resume much of its original character. In the earlier days of the Moretons it was the principal entertaining-room, and many a scene of boisterous revelry has doubtless been witnessed within its walls in the days when "the two-hooped pot" was indeed "a four-hooped pot," and it was accounted fell felony to drink small beer. Though its glories are greatly faded, it is still a magnificent feature of the old mansion, and, being in part used as a living room by the present tenant, is better cared for than the parts unoccupied; it retains, too, indications of old English hospitality that once prevailed in its huge fireplace, and the ponderous dining table of carved oak, imposing in its very massiveness, and as antiquated in appearance as the building itself. The screen that once separated the room from the vestibule and the kitchens, and that customary appendage of an ancient dining hall, the musicians' gallery, which doubtless once existed, have gone with it. A cursory examination of the construction of the projecting oriel is sufficient to show that it forms no part of the original structure, but was added at a later date. In one of the lights is the heraldic coat of the Moretons, a greyhound statant. A passage behind the hall conducts to the parlour or drawing-room, 22ft. long and 15ft. wide. Like the dining hall, it is lighted by a bold oriel looking into the quadrangle; the walls are wainscoted, and the roof is covered with oak panelling arranged in squares. The fireplace is spacious, and reaches from floor to roof; in the space above the opening is displayed the heraldic insignia of Queen Elizabeth—France (modern) and England, quarterly with the lion and dragon as supporters—an achievement that by a curious mistake Mr. Markland (Britton's *Architectural Antiquities*, v. ii., p. 91) has described as that of John O'Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The window still retains some other of its ancient heraldic blazonries, among them being a shield representing the coat of Brereton with its quarterings, placed there doubtless in compliment to Alice, daughter of Sir Andrew Brereton, of Brereton, the mother of William Moreton, whose name is inscribed above the windows on the exterior. In one of the lights appears a greyhound, the coat of Moreton, and in another the crest of the family—a greyhound's head couped and collared with a twisted wreath. There is also displayed the red rose and crown, the badge of Lancaster, to the princes of which house the Moretons, as military tenants, owed allegiance.

A room of somewhat smaller dimensions opens out of the drawing-room, and there are several chambers on the upper story that merit examination. The glass in the windows of these rooms, as in the case of those below, exhibits the same variety of pattern, and they are rendered additionally interesting by the names and inscriptions traced upon the panes by former occupants and guests. On one of them is written the names of "Jonath'n Woodnothe" and "Marie Woodnothe," with the date 1627, and beneath is the following couplet—

Man can noe more know weomen's mind by kaire
Then by her shadow hede ye what clothes shee weare.

Jonathan Woodnoth was the heir of Shavington, and married Mary, elder daughter of William Moreton, of Moreton, but what made him so spiteful against womankind is a mystery that is likely to remain for ever unsolved. There are in other places the signatures of "Somerford Oldfield 11 of Apr. 1627;" "Henry Mainwaring. All change I scorne;" and "Margaret Moreton Aug. 3 1649;" the last named being doubtless the niece of Archbishop Laud, who married Edward Moreton, and was sister-in-law of Mary Woodnoth.

Though there is no evidence of the date when the present mansion was erected, the mouldings

and other architectural features show clearly that it cannot be of earlier date than that of the first of the Tudor Sovereigns; probably, it was built upon the site of a more ancient structure in the later years of Henry VII.'s reign, and most likely by the William Moreton who married the daughter of Sir Andrew Brereton, and that the house needing repair, or the space being too circumscribed, his son and successor, also a William Moreton, half a century later of thereabouts, added the beautiful oriel windows that give so much character to the house, completing them, as the inscription on the outside testifies, in 1552.

Within the moated enclosure, near the north-west angle, is a circular mound on which is placed a sun dial, and there were, according to Lysons, formerly standing in front of the house the steps of an ancient cross much resembling those at Lymm, but they were removed about the year 1806.

There is a tradition current in the neighbourhood that Queen Elizabeth was a guest at Little Moreton during one of her Royal progresses, and that she then danced in the Long Gallery, but the story we suspect rests on no better foundation than the creative power of the imagination which assigns a similar honour to Brereton Hall, a mansion a few miles distant, and to almost every old house of note in the kingdom; and to the same unreliable source we fear we must assign the story of the underground passages that extend beneath the moat, as well as the subterranean chambers to which, according to common belief, they lead. But Moreton has sufficient interest in itself, without the mythical attractions which village gossips so much delight in, to make it worth a pilgrimage. It is one of the few old places that have been preserved to our day "unimproved" by the modern "renovator," but Time has, alas made sad havoc among its beauties and peculiarities, and those who should have preserved it as the apple of their eye have unfortunately allowed it to fall into a state of dilapidation and decay. Let us hope that some effort may be made to arrest the further progress of needless destruction. Surely in this utilitarian age there may be found some who—

Passing by this monument that stoops
With age, whose ruins plead for a repair,
Pity the fall of such a goodly pile.

Unless some friendly hand is stretched out, and that without loss of time, to guard it from further injury, we may soon have to mourn the loss of another of the ancient landmarks of our ancestors.



CHAPTER IX.

WARDLEY HALL.

BYING away near the north-eastern confines of the great parish of Eccles, and within a distance of six miles of the manufacturing metropolis, is the little hamlet of Swinton, a place that, if not particularly attractive in its outward aspects, yet possesses historical associations that are neither few nor poor. A great part of the district was formerly held by that renowned military and religious brotherhood which for centuries had its *chef lieu* in Clerkenwell—the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem—and antiquaries have been puzzled to determine whether it derived its name from the fact of its being the abode or "town" of the Saxon swineherd, or that it may have, as is supposed, formed part of the possessions of the rainy saint of Winchester, the rival of St. Médard and St. Godeliève—St. Swithin. We will leave the learned Dryasdusts to settle the knotty point of Swinton's etymology and ferret out the evidences of its early dignity, if such are to be found, for it is not our present purpose to steal fire

From the fountains of the past,
To glorify the present,

or to picture the sylvan solitudes of the place in the days when the son of Beowulph tended the swine of Cedric, the Saxon thegn, in the primeval forests, and filled himself with the acorns and the mast that fell thick in the autumn time.



WARDLEY HALL.

Though a mighty change has been wrought in the physical aspects of the locality, which now presents an appearance singularly at variance with the associations awakened by the contemplation of the memorials of the storied past, the immediate vicinity is not without the indications of its former dignity and consequence. Within a short distance, running almost parallel with the modern railway, may still be traced the line of the old Roman highway—the Stanney Street—along which the victorious legionaries have oftentimes marched—

When Rome, the mistress of the world,
Of yore her eagle-wings unfurled,

The names which still cling to surrounding localities remind us of the "dark middle age" of our national history when the light-haired, blue-eyed Saxon held sway before the predatory Dane and the proud Norman, cognate tribes of the great Scandinavian stock, had successively established themselves as masters of the soil, or those offshoots of the Teutonic family had become welded in the one great, powerful, and noble race, that "happy breed of men," the English people. The halls of Wardley, Agecroft, Kempnough, Worsley, and Booths carry us along the dim avenues of the past to the days of the Plantagenet and the Tudor sovereigns, and they still remain the lingering memorials reminding us of the condition of social life as well as the condition of the country in this corner of the palatinate ere nature had been expelled by commerce, or the old easy-going manorial lords had given place to, or been elbowed out by, a race of striving money-getting manufacturers. The country hereabouts has lost much of its rural characteristics and pristine beauty. Cotton has little in common with Arcadia, and the Lancashire industries generally can hardly be said to be conducive to the picturesque, the tendency being rather to reverse the process which is said to make the wilderness blossom as the rose. The signs of busy life are everywhere apparent; far as the eye can reach it encounters little else than smoke and steam, the outward evidences of active labour—the beating of one great artery in the heart of England—and the tall spectral-like machinery, rising above the pit openings, for drawing to the surface the coal without which that labour would be of little avail in its efforts to clothe the nations of the world; while overhead the atmosphere is dense and heavy with vapour that leaves its blighting mark upon the country for miles around, withering the hedgerows, making the few trees that endure to grace the landscape stunted and sickly, and the fields as if they had never been clothed with a mantle of living green.

Uninviting as the surroundings are to the passionate lover of the open field and the clear sky, the antiquary may yet find much to interest him, and return with the belief that the time he has spent in a visit to this same little hamlet of Swinton has not been altogether unprofitably employed. Leaving the cluster of humble dwellings that constitute what there is of village, and continuing along the north or Chorley-road, a few minutes' walk brings him to a bye-road rejoicing in the name of Red Cat-lane; a quarter of a mile further a private road branches off on the left, leading down past a colliery, and following this for a short distance an old-fashioned timbered house comes in view. It is a quaint old mansion, patterned all over in black and white, with a broad arched gateway, flanked on each side by clustered chimneys that rise to a considerable height above the gabled roof, and is surrounded on three sides by a moat that spreads out considerably on the easterly side, assuming the character of a small lake, in which the diapered framework of the building, the overhanging cornices, the quaint casement windows, and the shrubs that partially environ it are distinctly reflected. Wardley Hall, for that is the name of the house, has its history; it has been successively the home of the Worsleys, the Tyldesleys, and the Downes, and many and various are the legends and romantic incidents associated with it. Of its earlier history we know little, and that little belongs as much to legend as to actual ascertained fact. The first possessors of whom any record has been preserved were the Worsleys, or de Workedeleghs, as anciently they wrote their name, or rather had it written for them, who were owners almost from the time of the Conquest. One of them, a certain Elias or Elizeus de Workeslegh, lord of Worsley, accompanied Duke Robert of Normandy in the expedition to the Holy Land projected by Peter the Hermit, when Europe sent forth the flower of its chivalry to do battle on the plains of Palestine for the recovery of the holy places from the Paynim foe; he was of such strength and valour as to be reputed a giant, and, according to the old scribes, was in consequence designated Elias Gigas, or Elias the Giant. Mention is made of this hero of ancient romance in Hopkinson's MS. pedigrees, and the quaint chronicler tells us "he fought many Duells, combats, &c., for the love of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and obtained many victories," and another writer^[72] adds that after many triumphs over the infidels he died at Rhodes, and was there buried. The son and heir of this

sturdy old warrior was Richard Workedeley, whose name occurs in a deed, without date, but apparently of the time of Henry I., conveying land in Pendlebury, or Penultsbury, as it was then called, and North Deyne, with the pasture of Swinton, to Adam de Penultsbury. The same Richard, with Roger de Workedeleg (probably his son), was one of the witnesses to a deed recorded in the Chartulary of Whalley Abbey, by which Gilbert, son of William de Norton, who married about the year 1220, Edith, lady of the manor of Barton, granted to God, St. Mary, and to the Church of Eccles, and to the clerks and to their men dwelling in that ville, free common throughout all his lands in the Parish of Eccles. The third in decent from this Richard was Geoffrey de Workesley, living in the time of Henry III., who by his wife Agnes had two sons—Richard, who succeeded as heir, and Roger, who founded the line of the Worsleys of Kempnough, an old half-timbered house, still existing, about a mile distant, and which in the time of Elizabeth obtained an unenviable notoriety on account of the supposed demoniacal possession for a period of two years of some members of the family then inhabiting it. Richard, the eldest son of Geoffrey de Workesley, who was living in 1276, had a son Henry, who succeeded as heir; Roger, who married Cecilia de Rowynton; and a third son, Jordan de Workesley, the first of the family whose name occurs as owner of Wardley.

The family were among the early benefactors of the ancient church of Eccles, in which parish both Worsley and Wardley Halls are located. By a deed, dated at Eccles on Sunday of the octave of St. Martin the Bishop, in winter (November 18th), 1293, Henry, the eldest son of Richard de Workesley, the one last named, gave to God and to the high altar (so called to distinguish it from the small altars in the chantries or side chapels) of the Church of the Blessed Mary of Eccles, yearly for ever, for the salvation of Joan, his wife, and of his father Richard, his predecessors and successors, and of the souls of all the faithful dead, at the feast of St. Martin, in the winter (November 11th), one pound of wax, faithfully offered (in fulfilment of a vow), so that whoever should be rector of the church might compel him, by ecclesiastical censure, or by the lesser or greater excommunication, to make the offering at the feast, if it should be neglected. The wax was no doubt intended for the large candles to be burned on the high altar and the other lights used during the services of the Roman Catholic Church.^[73]

Henry de Workesley had a son Robert, married to Cecilia de Bromhall, and living in 1292, to whom he gave five hundred acres of wood and five hundred acres of pasture, called the Boothes, and from him descended the Worsleys of Boothes, also in Worsley township. Of the same family was Helias de Workesley, who became Abbot of Whalley in 1309, but resigned his charge and died before 1318; and also Henry de Workesley, who about the time of Edward III. married Johanna, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Richard de Greenacres, and in her right became owner of half the manor of Twiston, in the parish of Whalley. Another branch of the family was located at Worsley Meyne, near Wigan, of whom, according to an epitaph in St. Mary's, Chester, was Ralph Worsley, yeoman of the wardrobe, (*pagettus garderobæ robarum*) to Henry VIII., who appointed him towards the latter end of his life to the wardenship of the Tower. The Worsleys of Manchester were another branch, a pedigree given in the Harleian MSS. (2,100, fo. 32), "collected," as it states, "from deeds of ye auntient family of Worsley of Worsley," connecting with the ancient stock Nicholas Worsley, of Manchester, living in 1598, the scion with whose name the pedigree in Dugdale's "Visitation of Lancashire" in 1664 commences, and who is said to have been the son and heir of Otwell, or Otes, Worsley, of Newnham Green, near Worsley, by his wife Cicely, daughter of Nicholas Rigby, of Harrock. A younger son of this Nicholas, Charles Worsley, diverged into trade, and established himself in Manchester as a "haberdasher," a phrase that had then a much wider significance than now. He married, at the old church of Manchester in 1586, Elizabeth, daughter of Ralph Gee, the sister of Alice, wife of George Clarke, the munificent founder of the Manchester charity that still bears that worthy's name; and, prospering in business, he, in 1614, purchased from Sir Oswald Mosley certain lands in Rusholme. His son and successor, Ralph Worsley, extended the business, and with such success that he was able in 1625 to add to the paternal purchase of the lands in Rusholme the estate in the same township called "The Platt," thus founding the line of the Worsleys of Platt, in the old manor house of which place was born to him, in 1622, a son and heir, Charles Worsley, who acquired distinction as the first member for Manchester in the Cromwellian Parliament, and who was one of the Protector's most trusted generals, and the immediate instrument of the famous *coup d'état* when Cromwell, dismissing the "Rump" Parliament, ordered General Worsley to "take away the bauble."

With Jordan, the younger son of Richard de Worsley, the brother of Henry, the benefactor of the church at Eccles, who, as we have seen, was lord of Wardley in the reign of Edward I., may be said to have begun and ended the line of Worsley of Wardley, for at his death, in the succeeding reign, the estate was conveyed in marriage by Margaret, one of his daughters and co-heiresses, to Thurstan, son of Thomas de Tyldesley, lord of the mesne manor of Tyldesley, and from this match sprang the several branches of the famous house of Tyldesley of Tyldesley, of Wardley Hall in Worsley, Morley's Hall in Astley, the Lodge in Myerscough Park, an outlying portion of Quernmore Forest, in Lancaster parish, and of Fox Hall, Blackpool, in Bispham parish.

The Tyldesleys were a family of considerable note and influence in the county, deriving their patronymic from the place of their abode, which was held by feudal service as the tenth part of a knight's fee under the Norman barony of Warrington. In the *Testa de Nevill*, or *Liber Feudorum* as it is sometimes called—a return of the Nomina Villarum, Serjeanties and Knights' Fees in the several counties, made, as is generally supposed, either in the the year 1236 or 1242 by Ralph Nevill, an accountant of the Exchequer, or Jollan de Nevil, of Weathersfield, a justice itinerant—Henry de Tyldesley, the great-grandfather of the Thurstan just named, is mentioned as being then in possession of the manor of Tyldesley, and as holding of William Fitz Almeric Pincerna or

Boteler, the seventh Baron of Warrington, the tenth part of a knight's fee, which Henry de Tyldesley (his father) held of the heirs of Almeric Pincerna, and he of the Earl of Ferrers, who held of the King. The name of the same Henry also occurs first on the list of jurors for the hundred of West Derby, or Wapentake of Derbyshire, as it is called in the return when De Nevill's Inquisition was taken. A younger brother of Henry de Tyldesley, the juror, Adam de Tyldesley, had a son Geoffrey, who became owner of Shakerley, a hamlet in the higher division of Tyldesley. Following the practice of the age, he assumed the name of the place in which he was located, and became progenitor of the family of Shakerley, now represented through the female line by Sir Charles Watkin Shakerley, of Somerford, Cheshire, Baronet.

To return to Henry de Tyldesley; his grandson Thomas, son of Richard de Tyldesley, as appears by an inquisition taken after the death of John Tyldesley, Dec. 1, 1410, married and had four sons, John, Nicholas, and Ralph, who each died issueless, and Thurstan, who, as previously stated, married the daughter and co-heiress of Jordan de Worsley; in right of his wife he became lord of Wardley, and by her was founder of the family of Tyldesley of that house. The first-born of this marriage was a son, Thomas de Tyldesley, who became serjeant-at-law to King Henry IV., but, dying without issue, the estates on the death of the father descended to his younger brother, Hugh de Tyldesley. From an early date a close intimacy had existed between the Tyldesleys and the Stanleys of Knowsley, who were then rapidly rising to power, having in the revolution which seated the house of Lancaster upon the throne contrived to add immensely to their territorial possessions. A steady shower of royal benefactions descended to them during Henry the Fourth's reign, not the least important being the transfer from the old Earls of Northumberland of the lordship of the Isle of Man, after the unsuccessful revolt of the Percies, and with it such an absolute ownership of soil and jurisdiction over the islanders as to make their position as Lords of Man little less than regal, the homage to be paid in consideration being the presentation of two falcons on coronation days. The intimate relations that long existed between the two families of Stanley and Tyldesley account for the frequent occurrence of the name of Tyldesley in the annals of the island. In 1405-6 Henry IV. granted a letter of protection to William de Stanley, Knight, John de Tyldesley, and others, on their going to the Isle of Man to take possession of the island and the castle, which had then been wrested from the Percies. In 1417 Sir John de Stanley, who is styled "King and Lord of Man," being called to England, left Thurstan de Tyldesley, "a wise and severe magistrate" as he is described, and Roger Haysnap, his commissioner, with instructions to settle the people. The Thurstan last named was, doubtless, the son of Hugh de Tyldesley, and the one who is commonly supposed to have erected the present hall of Wardley on the foundation of an earlier structure. His grandson, Thomas de Tyldesley, who died in 1502-3, left a son Thurstan, who succeeded as heir to Tyldesley and Wardley; he married Mary, the daughter of Henry Keighley, of Keighley and Inskip, the sister of Sir Henry Keighley, Knt.

Inskip was a manor in the parish of St. Michael-le-Wyre, in the hundred of Amounderness, held at one time by the Keighleys and Cliftons, but which subsequently passed into the exclusive tenure of the first-named family, in whose descendants it remained until about the reign of James I., when Anne, daughter and co-heiress of Henry Keighley, conveyed it in marriage to William Cavendish, afterwards created Earl of Devonshire. At the time of Thurstan Tyldesley's marriage with the co-heiress of Inskip his family had, in addition to the old manor house at Tyldesley and the more modern mansion at Wardley, a residence known as the Lodge, in Myerscough Park, in the neighbouring parish of Lancaster,—a part of the ancient forest land of the Duchy. In the reign of Henry VIII. the Earl of Derby was Keeper of the Park of Myerscough, which was in reality within the limits of the forest of Quernmore, and the Tyldesley's were "deputy keepers," "deputy master-foresters," and "farmers of the herbage," and in the proceedings of the Duchy Court of Lancaster it is recorded that in 1531 Thurstan Tyldesley was plaintiff in an action brought against Henry Keighley for "deer killing in Broks Gille, Mirescoghe Park." The defendant was, doubtless, his wife's kinsman, but whether father or brother, or what other relationship he stood in, is not known.

The Lodge in Myerscough, where the family occasionally resided, and to which we shall have occasion hereafter to refer, is now occupied as a farm house, but, though it has undergone many transformations, it still retains the evidences of its former state and dignity. Twice it has been the temporary abode of royalty, once in 1617, when James I. slept in it for a night or two in his progress from Edinburgh to London, and subsequently on the 13th August, 1651, when Charles II. "lodged one night at Myerscoe, Sir Thomas Tyldesley's house," on his advance from Preston to Worcester. The lodge stands a short distance from the hall of the same name, on the westerly side of the road leading from Preston to Lancaster, and within about three or four miles of the old home of the Keighleys at Inskip. It is approached by a small bridge spanning an expanse of water that appears to have been originally extended for ornamental purposes. A portion of the main building has been cased with brick, but in other parts the original timber framework remains exposed to view, with some of the old mullioned windows, the irregular gables, and the huge buttressed chimney stacks—the latter, from their peculiar construction suggesting the idea that they were intended more for the purpose of concealment in times of danger than for that which their outward form would seem to indicate. The principal entertaining-room is on the north-west side; it is wainscoted from floor to ceiling, and has a spacious fireplace on one side with a handsome chimney-piece of carved oak. The portion above the mantel is arranged in a double row of panels,—eight in all,—each of those in the lower stage being ornamented by a medallion head, encircled by a wreath and carved in high relief. On the first of the upper row of panels is a shield charged with the arms of Tyldesley—*Arg.* three rushhills *vert*, with the initials TT beneath. In the second shield are displayed the arms of the Isle of Man, with an eagle's claw—an ancient crest of the Stanleys—beneath. On an adjoining shield is a representation of the eagle and child,

the crest of the Earls of Derby; and on the fourth panel is a shield bearing the arms of Langton, which seems to fix the period when the work was executed as in the time of Thurstan, the grandson of Thurstan Tyldesley and Mary Keighley, who had for his second wife Jane, daughter of Ralph Langton, Baron of Newton, the initials on the first panel also answering to his name. Opposite the principal entrance a broad staircase of oak, with massive and highly-decorated balusters, leads to the upper chambers, one of which, at the east end of the building, is traditionally said to be that in which the two Kings slept on the occasions of their respective visits to the Lodge.

Thurstan Tyldesley, by his wife Mary Keighley, had a son, Thomas, who was Receiver-General and one of the Council of Thomas Stanley, first Earl of Derby—the wily soldier and astute politician whose fickle but far-sighted adhesions secured for his house additional wealth and power with every change of dynasty, and whose matrimonial affairs were managed with fully as much prudence and success—his first marriage making him the brother-in-law of a king-maker and his second the stepfather of a king. He married a daughter of Sir Alexander Radcliffe, the head of the knightly house of Ordsall, an alliance that is commemorated by a device in one of the windows of that ancient mansion—that lighting the room commonly known from its decorations as the Star Chamber—where still may be discerned the faint outlines of an heraldic shield charged with three rushhills, the Tyldesley coat. The issue of this marriage were, in addition to a son, Thurstan, who succeeded as heir, Thomas, and a younger son, Alexander, who became a monk at the Charter House, and a daughter, Ellena, the second of the two wives of Sir Alexander Osbaldeston, of Osbaldeston. This lady by her will, which bears date 1560, directed three stones with inscriptions in brass to be laid in the Osbaldeston chapel within Blackburn church over herself, her husband, and Thomas Tyldesley, her brother.

Thurstan Tyldesley, who succeeded to the patrimonial lands at his father's death, is mentioned as being in the Commission of the Peace and a Grand Juryman for the County Palatine of Lancaster in 1522. Following the example of his progenitors, he maintained a close friendship with the Stanleys of Knowsley, and in 1532 his name occurs as Receiver-General for the Isle of Man. He was twice married—in the first instance to Parnell, daughter of Geoffrey Shakerley, of Shakerley, descended from Adam, younger son of Henry de Tyldesley, living in the time of Henry III., whose son Geoffrey, as we have seen, assumed the name of Shakerley; in the second, to Jane, daughter of Ralph Langton, Baron of Newton; and by each he had issue. By his will, which bears date 6 Edward VI., he left to the children of his first marriage Tyldesley and Wardley, and to those of the second the estate at Myerscough.

Thomas Tyldesley, his son by the first marriage, was, doubtless, the one whose name occurs in 1540 as Deputy Captain of the Isle of Man, George Stanley being at the time Captain. About this time, as appears by Chalmer's Treatise of the Isle (Manx Society's Publications, v. 10), mention is made of a Robert Tynsley (a corruption probably of Tyldesley), but in what relation he stood to the Lancashire Tyldesleys is not clear. Thomas Tyldesley had a sister Alice, who became the wife of Richard Worsley, of the Booths. He died in 1556, and was buried at Eccles, having had by his wife Jane, daughter and heiress of Hugh Birkenhead, whom he married in 1518, six sons and three daughters. Thomas, the eldest son, born in 1532, married Margaret, daughter of Sir William Norreys, of Speke, who bore him, in addition to three sons, James, Gilbert, and Alexander, a son Thomas, of Gray's Inn, Attorney-General for the county of Lancaster, who received the honour of knighthood; he was one of the learned Council of the North, and added to the ancestral estates by his marriage with Anne, daughter and sole heiress of Thomas Norreys, of Orford, near Warrington, the issue of the union being—in addition to two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne, married respectively to Edward Breres, of Brockhall, and (1) to Thomas Southworth, of Sablesbury, (2) Adam Mort, of Preston—three sons, Thomas, who died in infancy, 1597; Edward, who also died in infancy; and Richard, who survived his father only a few years and died unmarried in 1639, thus terminating the male line of the elder branch of the family.

To return to the issue of Thurstan Tyldesley by his second wife, Jane Langton. Besides three daughters—Mary, wife of Ralph Standish, of Standish; Anne, wife of Richard Massey, of Rixton; and Dorothy, wife of Richard Brereton, of Worsley—he had a son, Edward Tyldesley, who, by a fortunate though clandestine marriage, about the year 1560, with Anne, daughter and sole heiress of Thomas Leyland, became, in right of his wife, owner of Morleys Hall, in Astley, in the parish of Leigh. Popular tradition has cast the glamour of romance around this marriage, and tells how that the young heiress of the Leylands, having formed an attachment for the younger son of the house of Tyldesley, in opposition to the wishes of her father, was confined in her room, but, verifying the truth of the old adage that love laughs at locksmiths, she contrived to possess herself of a rope, one end of which she fastened to her person and the other she threw from the window to her expectant lover on the other side of the moat; then, casting herself into the water, which was thirty feet wide, she was drawn to land, when the pair rode off, and before morning dawned, or the lady's family had become aware of her escape, the marriage ceremony had been performed and the twain made one.

Of the old mansion of the Leylands, which thus became an inheritance of the Tyldesleys, we have an interesting description in Leland's "Itinerary" (vol. v. pp. 78-9, Ed. 1711):—"Morle in Darbyshire [the Hundred of West Derby is meant] Mr. Leland's Place is buildid saving the Foundation of Stone squarid, that risith within a great Moote a vi. Foote above the water; al of Tymbre after the commune sorte of building of Houses of the Gentilmen for most of Lancastreshire. Ther is as much Pleasur of Orchardes of great Varite of Frute, and fair made Walkes and Gardines as ther is in any Place of Lancastreshire. He brenneth [burneth] al Turfes

and Petes for the Commodite of Mosses and Mores [near] at hand.... And yet by Morle as in Hegge Rowes and Grovettes is meately good Plenti of Wood, but good Husbandes keepe hit for a Jewell."

Nearly every old historic home is linked to romance by some story of love or adventure, and endeared to the memory by the image of some fair woman whose name is associated with some particular incident or bit of legendary lore that tradition has preserved, and which, if not actually attested fact, is yet not without some glimmering of truth that reflects light upon familiar history. At Morleys it is the tender tale of the loves of Anne Leyland, the heiress of her father's lands, and Edward Tyldesley, a young scion of the house of Wardley, that excites the interest and which has for many a generation furnished food for the village gossips. They had looked upon each other and loved. The spark that had been kindled in their young hearts was fanned into a flame, but—

Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear of tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth.

At Morleys it was the old old story. To prevent the tender passion ripening into a union an unsympathising father forbade the lovers meeting, and to prevent the chances of clandestine intercourse kept his daughter within the strict seclusion of her own chamber. The result may be guessed. Rather than be kept asunder from the object of her affection, Anne Leyland determined on braving the stormy temper of her father. Risking all dangers and throwing aside all obstacles, she cast herself into the moat surrounding her home, whence she was drawn ashore, and under cover of the darkness escaped in the arms of her expectant lover, and before night's candles had burned out and—

The first low fluttering breath of waking day had stirred the wide air—

the two were united in the indissoluble bonds of wedlock.

It may well be supposed that Thomas Leyland's ire when he learned the real circumstances of the case was not of the mildest character; be that as it may, his anger must eventually have been appeased, for in 1562, two years after the marriage of the runaways, he made his will, and in token of his affection for his infant grandson, gave "unto Thomas Tyldesley sonne unto my sonne in lawe Edward Tyldesley twoe silvr spones and one angell off gold." The old man was a staunch Papist and determined persecutor of heretics. When the brother-in-law of George Marsh, the martyr—"Jeffrey Hurst, of Shakerley, who was preserved by God's providence from burning in Queen Mary's time"—absented himself from his parish church because of the Romish ritual that had been reintroduced, and encouraged the teachers of the reformed faith to secretly assemble in his house "for sermon and prayer," "Justice" Leyland went with his "mass-priest" to Hurst's cottage to search for heretical books, and having found Tyndale's Testament, which was pronounced to be "plain heresy and none worse," and some Latin books which neither he nor the mass-priest could read, he, by a stretch of authority not unfrequent in those days, bound the mother and brother of Hurst in the penalty of £100 to produce him within fourteen days. Hurst appeared at the appointed time and was committed to Lancaster, but news of Queen Mary's death arriving about the same time, he was set free.

Thomas Leyland died July, 1564, at the age of fifty years. His end appears to have been very sudden. It is recorded that "in July, as the foresaid Thos. Lelond sate in his chair talking with his friends, he fell down suddenly dead, not much moving any joint; and such was his end; from such God us defend." His will, which bears date April 2, 1562, was proved on the 23rd September following his death, when his son-in-law, Edward Tyldesley, in right of his wife, succeeded to the estates.

From this union descended the younger branch of the Tyldesleys, a line that in successive generations manifested a devoted attachment to the cause of the ill-fated Stuarts. In addition to the estate of Morleys acquired through his wife, Edward Tyldesley inherited from his father the Lodge at Myerscough and also the paternal estate of Tyldesley, which, however, continued to pay quit-rents to Wardley Hall, probably in right of the appendent estate of Wardley, where the elder branch of the family was settled. He appears to have been the first, if not the only one, of the family who had any difference or dispute with its early patrons, the Stanleys of Knowsley and Lathom. In the proceedings of the Duchy Court of Lancaster, without date, but of the time of Edward VI. or Philip and Mary, Edward, Earl of Derby, "keeper of Myerskoo Park," and elsewhere called "master of the game," appears as plaintiff in an action against Edward Tyldesley, "farmer of the herbage," the dispute having arisen out of some claim to turbary or the right of cutting turves on the land of the superior lord.

Edward Tyldesley died in 1586-7, having had by his wife, Anne Leyland, a family of three sons and three daughters. Thomas, the eldest son, who succeeded as heir, enjoyed possession of the estate for four years only, his death occurring in 1590. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Christopher Anderton, of Lostock Hall, near Bolton, who bore him, in addition to three daughters—Anne, who became the wife of Sir Cuthbert Clifton, of Westby, Knight; Dorothy, who married John Poole, of Poole Hall, in Cheshire; and Elizabeth, who became Abbess of the religious house of Gravelines, in Flanders—one son, Edward Tyldesley, who was only four years of age at the time of his father's decease. He succeeded as heir to the Tyldesley estates as well as to Morleys and Myerscough, and entertained King James the First at the last named seat in August, 1617, on the occasion of his memorable visit to Lancashire—memorable for the reason that it was the

occasion of the presentation of a petition from a number of Lancashire peasants, tradesmen, and others while on his progress (some authorities say while at Myerscough) that led to the publication of the famous "Book of Sports,"—the beginning of a course of events which led through the Civil War and the temporary subversion of the Throne and the Church to the ultimate exclusion of the Stuarts from the Crown. Edward Tyldesley did not long survive the honour of entertaining his sovereign, his death occurring in the following year at the comparatively early age of 32. By his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Christopher Preston, of Holker, in Cartmel parish, an off-shoot of the Prestons, of Preston Patrick and Levens Hall, who survived him and re-married (1) Thomas Lathom, of Parbold, and (2) Thomas Westby, of Bourne Hall, he had, in addition to Edward, who died in infancy, a son, Thomas, who succeeded as heir, the most distinguished member of the family—a *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*—certainly the ablest soldier who fought on the side of the King in Lancashire during the Civil Wars, and probably the most active, resolute, and uncompromising partisan, for, as has been well said, if Lord Strange was the head of the King's forces in Lancashire, Sir Thomas Tyldesley was their right hand, or rather, their heart and soul, and living power. He was one of those Cavaliers whose deeds were more suited to the pages of a romance than to those of history, and who, by his dauntless courage, may be said to have cast a halo round the cause he espoused. Born near the close of Elizabeth's reign, he early embraced the profession of arms, and served with distinction in the wars in the Low Countries. A soldier by temperament, as well as by profession—brave, proud, generous, enthusiastically loyal—he raised and equipped troops at his own expense, and immediately on the breaking out of the war joined the King and served as lieutenant-colonel when the two armies were first put in array against each other at Edgehill, October 23, 1642. In the preceding month Colonel Tyldesley accompanied Lord Strange, afterwards Earl of Derby, to Manchester, and in person led the attack on the Deansgate entrance to the town, but, after firing a barn or two and destroying some trifling defences, his men were obliged to retire, and eventually, through the stubborn and successful resistance of the townsmen, were compelled to abandon the siege.

What Rigby was to the cause of the Parliament, Colonel Tyldesley may be said to have been to that of the King. Connected by birth and marriage with the best families in the county his influence was unbounded. Of indomitable zeal, irrepressible energy, and reckless daring, he became the head and heart and hand and almost everything besides in his own county, and took part in almost every important action. He served at the sieges of Bolton and Lancaster; defeated by Colonel Ashton before Wigan, he retreated towards Liverpool, but, collecting a considerable force, he again marched northwards, with the view of recovering Preston and Lancaster. Subsequently he distinguished himself at Burton-on-Trent by the desperate heroism with which he led a cavalry charge over a bridge of thirty-six arches, and for that display of valour, as well as his faithful adherence to the King, he received the honour of knighthood and was made a brigadier. At a later period in that sanguinary struggle he accompanied Prince Rupert into Yorkshire, and was present at the disastrous fight at Marston Moor, July 2nd, 1644, when Cromwell gained his greatest victory, and drove the Royalist troops in confusion from the field. Tyldesley, with his shattered force, retreated in hot haste into Lancashire, resolved to raise fresh troops and make a stand in the Fylde country. Sir John Meldrum was sent after him, and the first encounter took place on Freckleton Marsh. A fierce attack having been made upon their lines by the Parliamentarians under Colonel Booth, the Royalists broke and fled; Tyldesley rallied and reformed his men, but his efforts were unavailing. Victory followed victory, one position after another was forced, and one detachment after another was broken or dispersed. At that time, as Rushworth writes, "there remained of un-reduced garrisons belonging to the King in Lancashire only Lathom House and Green(halgh) Castle." Greenhalgh surrendered in 1645; and the subsequent fall of Lathom House and the surrender of the King to the Scotch army of the Puritans brought the contest, for a time, to a close in 1647, when Sir Thomas Tyldesley received instructions to disband the troops under his command.

In 1651 the second of the Stuarts was proclaimed King by the Scotch under the title of Charles the Second. In August of that year the Royal Standard floated once more over the battlemented tower of old John o' Gaunt—time-honoured Lancaster—and Charles was proclaimed King in the chief town of the palatinate. Sir Thomas Tyldesley, who had retired with the Earl of Derby to the Isle of Man, once more appeared upon the scene, and immediately set about arming his tenantry and collecting auxiliaries. Charles spent a night in his mansion at Myerscough, but under very different circumstances to those which had characterised the entertainment of his father in the same house thirty-four years previously. Before the month was over the force which he and Lord Derby had been able to raise encountered the Parliamentarians, under Colonel Lilburne, in a lane on the north side of Wigan. Tyldesley took the place he ever loved to take—at the head of his friends and in front of his foes. The fight was courageously sustained on both sides, and for more than an hour victory remained undecided. At the moment that Lilburne's horse seemed to be giving way before the unbroken firmness of Tyldesley's foot, a body of Parliamentary troops took up a position behind the hedges on both sides of the lane. A deadly discharge from their firelocks threw the Royalists into confusion; after a stubborn and desperate resistance their line wavered, when Lilburne's horse dashed up and drove the remnant of them in confusion from their position. The Earl of Derby escaped, only to be taken prisoner in Cheshire, after the retreat from Worcester, and suffer the fate of his former Royal master, but Sir Thomas Tyldesley was left dead upon the field. Thus fell the most heroic and most daring defender of the cause of the Stuarts in Lancashire. A large-hearted Nonconformist, Dr. Halley, thus sums up the character of the ill-fated Cavalier:—"The most active, the bravest, and in many respects the best of the Lancashire friends of Royalty. Never daunted, never weary in consultation, marching, or fighting, he was engaged in every intrigue, present in every conference, ready for every emergency, and

unreservedly devoting all he had to the cause of Royalty, and as he understood it, to the true religion. Beloved and trusted by all the members of his own party, he was respected by his enemies, and treated by them more leniently than the other malignants whom the fortune of war brought under their power." Memorials of him remain in the eloquent eulogy of Clarendon, and in the inscription upon the column which his "grateful cornet," Alexander Rigby,^[74] twenty-eight years afterwards, when he was sheriff of the county, erected upon the spot where fell, as a mark of esteem for his many virtues and gallant deeds, and as a "high obligation on the whole family of the Tyldesleys to follow the noble example of their loyal ancestor."

When the brave and popular Cavalier, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, sank down upon the blood-sodden ground in Wigan Lane the power of the Royalists in Lancashire was broken. Many a family in the palatinate had long cause to remember that day with grief, for there were few that had not some member killed or made prisoner. Tyldesley's body, covered with wounds, was found lying among a heap of slain when the fight was over, and a day or two later it was borne to its last resting place in the vault by the side of his fathers, in the old chantry of St. Nicholas, in the parish church of Leigh.

That late summer day was a sorrowful one for the supporters of the Stuart cause. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to picture that procession of true mourners—a little band of buff-jerkined warriors who had boldly confronted death on many a hard-fought field—weeping aloud, and not ashamed to shed tears, as they wend their way to the ancient fane to deposit therein all that was mortal of their much-beloved leader. Within a week from that day Worcester had been lost, and "Charles Stuart, son of the late tyrant," as the Cromwellians styled him, was a sorrowful fugitive, hastening for life from the fatal field in the endeavour to escape from his merciless pursuers. A tomb was afterwards erected in Leigh Church, over the grave which holds the ashes of the loyal soldier; but though the spot is still pointed out nearly every trace of the memorial has disappeared. It is of little consequence—

Praises on tombs are idly spent,
His good name is his monument!

No self glory stirred the mind of the chivalrous soldier, and no thought had he of "storied urn" to record his gallant deeds. The Earl of Derby felt keenly the loss of his old friend and comrade, and in his last solemn moments, when passing through Leigh on his way to the scaffold at Bolton, his earnestly expressed wish was that he might be permitted to dismount from his horse and go into St. Nicholas' chapel to cast a last long look upon the honourable grave where his faithful companion in arms lay at rest.

Sir Thomas Tyldesley had married in early life Frances, only daughter of Ralph Standish, of Standish, near Wigan, and by her had a son Edward, born in 1635, who succeeded as heir; Thomas, born in 1642, and living in 1702; Ralph, born in 1644, and living in 1694; and seven daughters. Edward, the eldest son, following in the steps of his father, was an ardent supporter of the Stuarts, and when Charles II., after the restoration of monarchy, proposed to create a new order of knighthood to be called the order of the "Royal Oak," as a reward to some of his more faithful adherents, Edward Tyldesley was one of the Lancashire men selected to receive the honour, and would have done so had not the project, from considerations of prudence, been abandoned. Having some cause to believe that he would, on the Restoration, receive from the Crown a grant of the lands in Layton Hawes, near Blackpool, in recognition of the services rendered by his father and himself, he began the erection of a residence near the south shore called Fox Hall, a portion of the walls of which may still be seen in the more modern erection known as the Fox Hall Hotel, placing over the gateway a sculptured figure of the device that had inspired the enthusiasm of his father's soldiers in many a hard-contested fight—a pelican feeding her young, or, as the heralds have it, in piety, surrounded by the motto *Tantum Valet Amor Regis et Patriæ*—and here he occasionally resided during the later years of his life. He was twice married, his first wife being Anne, daughter of Sir Thomas Fleetwood, of Colwich, in Staffordshire, who bore him two sons, Thomas, born April 3rd, 1657, and Edward, and two daughters. After her decease he espoused Elizabeth, daughter of Adam Beaumont, of Whiteley, and by her he had a daughter, Catherine, who died unmarried. His death occurred between the years 1685 and 1687, when the eldest son by his first marriage, Thomas Tyldesley, succeeded to the estates, with the exception of the lands in Tyldesley, which had been previously disposed of. In 1679, being then twenty-two years of age, he married Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of Thomas Holcroft, of Holcroft. This lady, who was only fourteen years of age at the time of her marriage, brought Holcroft Hall to the Tyldesleys. By her Thomas Tyldesley had a son, Edward, his heir, and four daughters. On the death of his wife he again entered the marriage state, his second wife being Mary, daughter of Alexander Rigby, of Layton, and the co-heiress of her brother, Sir Alexander Rigby, son and heir of the "grateful cornet" who erected the monument in Wigan Lane to the memory of the gallant Sir Thomas Tyldesley, and by her was father of three sons—Charles, Fleetwood, and James; and two daughters—Agatha and Winifred. To this Thomas Tyldesley we are indebted for the interesting personal records contained in a "diary" written during the years 1712-13-14, which has in recent years been published under the able editorship of Messrs. Joseph Gillow and Anthony Hewitson. He died in 1715, shortly before the breaking out of the rebellion, in the preparation for which there is good reason to believe he had been concerned, and was buried at Churchtown, near Garstang, January 26th,^[75] his eldest son Edward succeeding. On the Jacobite rising in 1715 Edward Tyldesley, with the representatives of many other of the old Catholic families who had upheld the banners of Charles I., hastened to support the cause of his grandson. For his share in the rising he was put upon his trial in London, but,

although the evidence of a number of witnesses left no possible doubt that he had led a body of men against the King's forces, he was fortunate enough to obtain an acquittal, a result which so provoked the anger of Baron Montagu, a sort of Whig Jeffreys, who presided over the court, that he openly rebuked the jury for their verdict, himself failing to see that the harrowing records of the "bloody assize at Lancaster" had produced a revulsion in popular feeling, and that the spirit of vindictiveness manifested by the government of the Hanoverian King had caused even Protestant juries to manifest a feeling of commiseration for those of their countrymen who still retained a feeling of devoted attachment for the head of the exiled house of Stuart, whom they looked upon as their legitimate sovereign.

At the time of his death, in 1725, Myerscough, which had been held for so many generations, had passed from the possession of the Tyldesleys, having, as is supposed, been sold to satisfy the demands of Thomas Tyldesley the father's creditors, but Holcroft Hall, inherited from his mother, as well as Morleys, still remained. By his wife Dorothy, who survived him, Edward Tyldesley had, in addition to a daughter (Catherine), a son (James), who succeeded as heir to both Morleys and Holcroft. True to the traditions of his family, he remained faithful in his adherence to the exiled dynasty, and when Charles Edward, the young Pretender, appeared in Lancashire, he took up arms and joined the rebel forces. From this time the fortunes of the family seemed gradually to decay. Myerscough, as we have seen, had been already alienated, and, in 1745, Morleys, which had been acquired two centuries previously by a marriage with the heiress of Thomas Leyland, was sold, and gradually the remnants of the once large estates were mortgaged or sold.

James Tyldesley died in August, 1765. His will bears date 8th of February, of that year, and was proved at Chester, April 23, 1768. Thomas Tyldesley, the eldest son, succeeded to Holcroft, the only estate remaining in the family's possession, the other issue being three sons and one daughter, all of whom seem to have drifted into a state of comparative poverty, their descendants being now to be looked for in a much lower position in the social scale than that held for so many generations by the owners of the proud name of Tyldesley.

To return to the old ancestral home at Wardley. As previously stated, Thurstan Tyldesley, who died in 1553, was twice married; his inquisition post-mortem was taken in the year of his decease, when, in accordance with the provisions of his will, the family estates were divided between the children of each marriage, Tyldesley and Wardley falling to the lot of Thomas, the son borne him by his first wife, and Myerscough to Edward, the issue of his second wife. In the early part of the reign of Elizabeth the Wardley estate, which had been held by the Tyldesleys for a period of three centuries, was sold in parcels, when the old manor house became the property of Gilbert Sherrington of Lincoln's Inn, a busy Lancashire lawyer, and at his death it passed to his brother Francis Sherrington, a successful trader and money-lender, who had been at one time located at Wigan. Subsequently Wardley became the property of Roger Downes, son and heir of Roger, a younger son of the ancient house of Downes, of Worth and Shrigley, in Cheshire, by a marriage with Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Alexander Worsley. Roger Downes, the younger, who was living at Wardley in 1613, twice represented Wigan—one of the four Lancashire boroughs entitled to send representatives to Parliament before the passing of the Reform Act in 1832—first in 1601, and again in 1620. On the 24th July, 1 Charles I. (1625), he was appointed by the Earl of Derby Vice-chamberlain of Chester, during pleasure (*durante bene placito*), an office he continued to hold under the Earl and his son, Lord Strange, until his death in July, 1638, when Orlando Bridgeman, son of the Bishop of Chester, was appointed by James Lord Strange his successor, much to the displeasure of John Bradshaw, the future president of the High Commission Court, who was then Attorney-general for Cheshire, and, as Seacombe affirms, had applied for the office.^[76] In the will of Sir Alexander Barlow, of Barlow Hall, near Manchester, dated 4th April, 1631, Roger Downes, of Wardley, is joined with Sir George Gresley, Knight and Baronet (of Drakelowe), as overseer, and is therein described by the testator as his "loving cosen;" and a few years later, when Richard Halliwell, landlord of the Bull's Head Inn, in the Market Place, opposite the Cross, in Manchester—a successful vintner, who had managed to accumulate a considerable landed estate—made his will (May 12th; 1638), he desired that his "friend, the Right Worshipful Roger Downes, Esquire," should act as his overseer.

Roger Downes was twice married, his first wife being Elizabeth, daughter of Myles Gerard, of Ince, by whom he had a son Roger, who predeceased him. His second wife was Ann, daughter of John Calvert, of Cockerham, and she bore him, in addition to a daughter, Jane, who became the wife of Ralph Snede, of Keele, in Staffordshire, three sons, Francis, Lawrence, and John. Concerning Francis, a curious story is related by Hollingworth in his "Mancunienses." He had, it seems, "revolted from the reformed religion," when his neighbour, Sir Cecil Trafford, of Trafford, who was known as "a cruel persecutor of Papists," resolved before he resorted to harsher measures to attempt the reconversion of his friend by the force of argument; but he reckoned without his host, for in reasoning the Catholic proved himself too clever for the Protestant, and so thoroughly argued Sir Cecil out of his beliefs that he abjured his own religion and became a convert to the Roman faith; and from that time the Traffords, who had been among the earliest adherents of the Reformed faith in Lancashire, have been steady and consistent Catholics.

Francis Downes, who represented Wigan in the Parliament of 1625, predeceased his father, and died issueless, as did also his brother Lawrence, the estates, on the death of Roger Downes in 1638, devolving upon the youngest son, John Downes, who had married Penelope, one of the daughters of Sir Cecil Trafford, an alliance that explains the anxious desire manifested by Sir Cecil to effect the conversion of his son-in-law's elder brother.

John Downes, who succeeded on the death of his father to the Wardley estate, was an ardent

adherent of King Charles in the unhappy struggle between that monarch and his Parliament, and in September, 1642, when Lord Strange, having completed his arrangements with the commissioners of array, appointed Warrington as the place of meeting, he armed and equipped his tenantry, and appeared with the host of other Lancashire chieftains to support the cause of the sovereign. Before the month had drawn to a close he was at Manchester, having accompanied Lord Strange and Sir Thomas Tyldesley in their fruitless expedition to secure the town for the King. He died in May, 1648, leaving an only son, Roger, his heir, then an infant a few months old, and a daughter Penelope.

Roger Downes, who succeeded as heir to the patrimonial estates on the death of his father, John Downes, in 1648, was the last of the family seated at Wardley. His history is not a pleasant one to contemplate. Living in an age when the people could take delight in the dissoluteness of the sovereign, he abandoned himself to the vicious courses of the time and became one of the most profligate of the profligate court of Charles the Second. The patrimony which had descended to him was wasted in riotous extravagance, and, to use the figurative language that Johnson applied to Rochester, "he blazed out his youth and his health in lavish voluptuousness," and brought his career to a violent and untimely end at the early age of twenty-eight. He was the Roger Downes of whom Lucas speaks, when he says that, according to tradition, while in London, in a drunken frolic, he vowed to his companions that he would kill the first man he met; when, sallying forth, he ran his sword through a poor tailor. Soon after this, being in a riot, a watchman made a stroke at him with his bill, which severed his head from his body, and the skull was enclosed in a box and sent to his sister at Wardley Hall. "The skull," adds the narrator, "has been kept at Wardley ever since, and many superstitious notions are entertained respecting it." The late Mr. Roby, in his entertaining "Traditions of Lancashire" wrought the incidents into a pathetic story, under the title of the "Skull House." Tradition, which always delights in the marvellous, took up the story, and many and incredible are the legends which the ghastly relic of mortality has given rise to. Certain it is that from time immemorial a human skull has had an abiding place at Wardley, carefully secured in an aperture in the wall beside the great staircase. According to popular belief, the grim fixture is as strongly averse to removal as the miraculous skull of "Dickey of Tunstead," which caused so much trouble to the engineers when constructing the railway near Chapel-en-le-Frith some years ago. Its rayless sockets, we are told, love to look upon the scenes of its former enjoyments, and it never fails to punish with severity those who venture to disturb or lay irreverent hands upon it. How the story originated it is impossible to say, but, though a skull, whitened by long exposure, is still exhibited, it is very certain that it never graced the shoulders of young Roger Downes. Thomas Barritt, the antiquary, in his MS. pedigrees, gives the following explanation:—"Thos. Stockport," he says, "told me the skull belonged to a Romish priest who was executed at Lancaster for seditious practices in the time of William III. He was most likely the priest at Wardley, to which place his head being sent, might be preserved as a relique of his martyrdom," and he adds, "The late Rev. Mr. Kenyon, of Peel, and librarian of the College in this town (Manchester), told me about the year 1779 the family vault of Downes in Wigan Church had about that time been opened, and a coffin discovered, on which was an inscription to the memory of the above young Downes. Curiosity led to the opening of it, and the skeleton, head and all, was there; but whatsoever was the cause of his death, the upper part of his skull had been sawed off, a little above the eyes, by a surgeon, perhaps by order of his friends, to be satisfied of the nature of his disease; his shroud was in tolerable preservation. Mr. Kenyon showed me some of the ribbon that tied the suit at the arms, wrists, and ankles; it was of a brown colour. What it was at first could not be ascertained." The name of Roger Downes is perpetuated on a massive marble slab affixed to the wall of Wigan Church, in which his remains are interred. It is surmounted by the arms of the family—*sable*, a stag lodged *argent*, and bears the following inscription:— Rogerus Downes de Wardley, Armiger, filius Johannes Downes, hujus Comitatus Armigeri, obijt. 27 Junij. 1676. Ætatis suæ 28. _

Roger Downes having died unmarried, the family estates, including Wardley, devolved upon his only sister and sole heiress, Penelope, who conveyed them in marriage (31 Charles II, 1679-80) to Richard Savage, of Rock Savage, who succeeded as fourth Earl Rivers of the new creation, a title that had originally been held by the father-in-law (Woodville) of Edward IV., the Savages deriving through the marriage of an ancestor with the aunt of a former earl. Lord Rivers took a prominent part in public affairs during the eventful reign of Queen Anne. As a soldier and statesman he displayed no mean abilities, and, possessing these qualities, he was not unfrequently employed on complimentary and diplomatic missions. In 1706-7 he was ordered to the command of the English forces in Spain, and at the same time received the appointment of ambassador to King Charles, and some few years later (1712) he was sent on a diplomatic mission to the Elector of Brunswick prior to the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, that famous landmark of modern history which put an end to the wars of Queen Anne, secured the Protestant succession to the English throne, and separated for ever the crowns of France and Spain. He did not long survive this last mission, his death occurring August 18th, 1712, the only surviving issue by his marriage with the heiress of Wardley being a daughter, Elizabeth, who about the year 1706 married James Barry, fourth Earl of Barrymore, who was then a widower, and by whom she had an only child, Penelope, of whom anon.

The career of Earl Rivers was not unmarked by the libertinism which formed so prominent a characteristic of society in the age in which he lived. In addition to the daughter by his marriage with Penelope Downes—Elizabeth Savage, who became heiress of her mother's estates as well as those of her father—he had an illegitimate daughter by Mrs. Colydon, who married, in 1714, Frederick Earl of Rochford, to whom it is said she conveyed a fortune of £60,000; he was also the reputed father of the poet, Richard Savage, a writer better known for his misfortunes than for

any peculiar novelty or merit in his poetry—the offspring of an illicit intercourse with the notorious Countess of Macclesfield, who acquired an unenviable notoriety as the heroine of the famous law case which followed upon the birth of her base-gotten son. Some curious particulars of this extraordinary scandal are to be found in the records of the time. The countess, under the name of Madame Smith and wearing a mask, was delivered of a male child in Fox-court, near Brook-street, Holborn, by Mrs. Wright, a midwife, on Saturday, January 16, 1697-8. Lord Macclesfield denied the paternity, and established the impossibility of his being the father of the child his countess had borne. A divorce was granted in 1698, but, as the law deemed the earl accountable through his own profligacy for the malpractices of his wife, he was required to repay the portion he had received with her on marriage, and with this she secured another husband in the person of Colonel Brett, by whom she had a daughter, Anne Brett, the impudent mistress of George I. The inhuman mother disowned her illegitimate offspring by Lord Rivers, Richard Savage, and had him placed under the charge of a poor woman who brought him up as her son, but Lady Mason, her mother, caused him to be removed to a school near St. Alban's and educated him at her own expense. Earl Rivers died without making any provision for his unfortunate son, a circumstance that was due, as Johnson says, to the fact that in the earl's last illness the degraded countess—then Mrs. Brett—had the inhumanity to state that Savage was dead, and through this falsehood the boy was deprived of a provision that was intended for him. It has been said that young Savage was an impostor, and the opinion was held by Boswell, the biographer of Dr. Johnson, who says: "In order to induce a belief that the Earl Rivers, on account of a criminal connection with whom Lady Macclesfield is said to have been divorced from her husband by Act of Parliament, had a peculiar anxiety about the child which she bore to him, it is alleged that his lordship gave him his own name, and had it duly recorded in the register of St. Andrew's, Holborn; I have," he adds, "carefully inspected that register, and I cannot find it." That Boswell should have failed in the discovery is explained by a reference to "The Earl of Macclesfield's case," presented to the House of Lords in 1697-8, from which it appears that the child was registered by the name of Richard, the son of John Smith, and christened on Monday, January 18th, in Fox-court, and this statement is confirmed by the following entry in the register of St. Andrew's, Holborn:—

Jany. 1696-7, Richard, son of John Smith, and Mary, in Fox Court, in Gray's Inn Lane, Baptised the 18th.

Notwithstanding the discredit that has been thrown on Savage's story, there can be little doubt of its truth. It was universally believed at the time, and no attempt was ever made by the countess to contradict or to invalidate any of the statements connected with it. Moreover, he was openly recognised in the house of Lord Tyrconnell, a nephew of his reputed mother, with whom he lived on equal terms, and who allowed him a sum of £200 a year until Savage quarrelled with him, when the peer stopped the allowance, and the hapless poet was again sent adrift upon the world. He was also on terms of acquaintance with the Countess of Rochford, the illegitimate daughter of Earl Rivers by Mrs. Colydon. Savage's folly and extravagance left him almost without a friend. Pope, whom he had supplied with the "private intelligence and secret incidents" that add poignancy to the satire of the "Dunciad," was about the last to withdraw his aid, and the poor fellow was eventually left to wander about in a state of destitution. He repaired to the West of England, and while in Bristol was arrested for a small debt, and being unable to find sureties was thrown into prison. During his incarceration he was taken ill, and on the morning of the 1st of August, 1743, was found dead in his bed, having been unable to procure any medical assistance. It is related that the keeper of the prison, who had treated him with kindness, buried him at his own expense.

Before his decease, Lord Rivers had executed indentures of lease and release, dated 13th June, 1711, by which his large estates in Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and Essex were vested in trustees for the use of himself for life and remainder to him in tail; remainder to the use of his cousin, John Savage, a Romish ecclesiastic, who inherited the earldom, but never assumed the title; remainder to his illegitimate daughter, Bessy Savage, afterwards Countess of Rochford; remainder to his own right heirs. From some irregularities in the disposal of the property, the will was disputed, and eventually an Act of Parliament (7th George I., 1720) was obtained for the disposal of the estates, which were declared to be vested in trust for the earl's son-in-law, James, fourth earl of Barrymore, with remainder to Lady Penelope Barry, the only issue of his marriage with the Lady Elizabeth Savage, and the granddaughter of Richard Earl Rivers and his wife Penelope Downes, the heiress of Wardley.

Lady Penelope Barry, who was a minor, in 1720 brought the estates of her family in marriage to General James Cholmondeley, second surviving son of George Earl of Cholmondeley. Her ladyship seems to have inherited the frailties of her father, for in 1737 her husband obtained a sentence of divorce against her for adultery with one Patrick Anderson, a surgeon. She died childless about the year 1742;^[77] General Cholmondeley, who survived her many years but did not remarry, died at the age of sixty-seven, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, October 19th, 1775, when, in accordance with the provisions of a settlement made in 1729, the estates passed to James Cholmondeley's great nephew, George James, fourth Earl and afterwards first Marquis of Cholmondeley, the father of William Henry Hugh, the present marquis, Hereditary Grand Chamberlain of England.

More than a century has elapsed since the historic house of Wardley was occupied by any direct descendant of its earlier lords. At one time it was in the occupation of a farmer, and subsequently was divided into several tenements, when it was allowed to fall into a state of decay, the humbler

dwellers caring little for its antiquity, and content if they only could protect themselves from the elements and keep a roof above their heads. From the last representative of the Downes family the hall was conveyed by purchase to other owners, and for many years past it has formed part of the estates of the Earls of Ellesmere, to whom the grateful acknowledgments of all antiquaries are due for the thoughtful care they have taken in protecting it from further injury, as well as for the judgment they have exercised in carrying out the work of restoration. Within the last half century important renovations have taken place, and some portions have been rebuilt, but whatever has been done has been in perfect keeping with the architectural peculiarities of the original structure. The old mansion is now in a good state of repair, and, notwithstanding its situation in close proximity to a mining and manufacturing district, it furnishes a picturesque and singularly interesting example of a somewhat rare class of building, the moated dwelling of a gentleman of the fifteenth century.



L'ENVOI.

To my friend JAMES CROSTON, ESQ., F.S.A.,
on the completion of his
"HISTORIC SITES OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE."

At length is done thy voluntary task,
Thy pleasant work, fruition of thy will,
Which in the past doth find its fondest lore.
As o'er the meads, the wilds, the plains, the woods,
Which form the glowing landscape 'neath our eye,
Our vision rests in well-pleased rhapsody,
How few remains are seen to tell the tale
Of deeds on which the memory doth dwell;
How few the relics that are strewn abroad
Of castled valour and the Church's pride:
A ruined keep, with now-defenceless walls!
A beauteous vision of the pomp that once
In glorious fanes paid homage unto God!
The ivy clustering o'er the mouldering walls
Doth hold together what alone remains
Of graceful arch, proud pinnacle, and pier
That mark where once man's noblest work had stood.
Nor these alone Time's saddest work reveal,
Mildewed and torn, rotting in damp recess
The records of their history remain,
Until some reverent hand doth bring them forth,
And give their wondrous tale unto the world.
Thine own, my friend, oft seeks their soiled page,
And from their blurred and faded writing tries
To fill again the mind-restored walls
With all the motley crowds that gave them life.
Long may thy pen its pleasant work pursue,
Resuscitate the mighty men of old,
Again enact the noble deeds that once
Made history, and living interest gave
To the sad monuments of earlier time.

JOHN LEIGH.

THE MANOR HOUSE,
HALE, CHESHIRE.



INDEX.

Abraham, Daniel, [30](#), [47-8](#)
" Emma Clarke, [49](#)
" John, [47-9](#)
" Rachel, [47](#)
" Thomas Fell, [49](#)
Acton, [220](#), [223](#)
" *Church*, [220](#), [228](#)
" *Vicarage*, [220](#)
Adlington, [78](#)
" *Hall*, [229](#), [410](#)
Aggerslack, [253](#)
Agincourt, [314-5](#)
Aikin, Lucy, [136](#)
Ainsworth, Harrison, [397](#)
" Mr., [170](#)
Albany, Duke of, [332](#)
Albemarle, Earl of, [228](#)
Alcock, Alice, [308](#)
" John, [308](#)
Alderley, [50](#), [68](#), [286](#)
" *Cross*, [53](#)
" *Edge*, [50](#), [62](#), [68](#), [78-9](#), [174](#)
" *Mere*, [65](#)
" *Mill*, [68](#)
" *Nether*, [75](#)
" *Old*, [50](#)
" *Over*, [74-5](#)
" *Park*, [62](#)
" *Rectory*, [63](#), [86](#), [89](#)
Aldithley, Adam de, [69](#)
Alençon, Duke of, [190](#)
Allen, Cardinal, [137](#)
Allithwaite, [253](#), [261](#)
Amsterdam, [202](#)
Ancaster, Duke of, [139](#)
Anderson, Patrick, [480](#)
Anderton, Christopher, [465](#)
" Elizabeth, [465](#)
Andrews, John, [147](#)
" Nicholas, [147](#)
Angier, John, [240](#)
Anglezark, [107](#)
Anjou, Margaret of, [319](#)
Anson, George Henry Greville, [406](#)
" John William Hamilton, [406](#)
" William, [406](#)
Arderne, John, [74](#)
" Margaret, [75](#)
Argles, Edward, [125](#)
Arnefelde, Ralph, [360-1](#)
Arnold, Dr., [101](#)
Arnside, [31](#)
Ascue, George, [115](#)
Asheley, George, [311](#)
Ashley Hall, [375](#)
Ashton, Colonel, [466](#)
" John, [308](#)
Ashurst, Henry, [119](#)
Aske, General, [267](#)
Askew, Anne, [10-13](#)
" John, [10-12](#)
" Margaret, [10-11](#)
" William, [12](#)
Aslington, [222](#)
Asshawe, Alice, [143](#), [147](#)
" *Hall*, [143](#)
" James, [143](#)
" John, [143](#)
" Lawrence, [143](#)
" Ralph, [107](#)
" Thomas, [169](#)
Assheton, Colonel, [10](#)
" Ralph, [361](#)
" Thomas, [375](#)
Astbury Church, [70-1](#), [230](#), [434-5](#)

Aston, Thomas, [213-15](#)
Atherton, William, [315](#)
Audithlegh, Adam, [70](#)
" Lyulph, [70](#)
Audlem, [227](#)
Aynesworth, Katharine, [141](#)
" J., [141](#)

Bache Hall, [224](#)
Backbarrow, [251](#)
Baddeley, [212](#)
Baguley, Clemence, [297](#)
" Isabel, [297](#)
" William, [297](#)
Bailey, J. Eglinton, [230](#)
Baltinglass, Viscount, [162](#)
Bamville, Joan, [70-2](#)
" Philip, [70-1](#)
Banner, Richard, [240](#)
Bantry, Baron, [162](#)
Barclay, Robert, [43](#)
Bardsley, S. A., [420](#)
Barkyng, Abbess of, [193](#)
Barlow, Alexander, [473](#)
Barnes, William, [38](#)
Barr Bridge, [228](#)
Barret, Thomas, [428](#)
Barrow, Thomas, [126](#)
Barry, James, [477](#)
" Penelope, [477](#), [480](#)
Barrymore, Earl of, [375](#), [477](#), [480](#)
Barthomley, [227](#)
Barton, Justice, [344](#)
" Robert, [353-4](#)
Bathurst, Bishop, [94](#)
Beam Heath, [211](#)
Beaumont, William, [192](#), [293](#), [324](#), [358](#), [369](#).
Beaulieu Abbey, [258](#)
Beaumont, Adam, [470](#)
" Elizabeth, [470](#)
Bechton, Richard de, [179](#)
Bedford, Duke of, [181-2](#), [315](#)
Beechy, William, [390](#)
Beeston Castle, [174](#), [226-7](#), [235-6](#), [238](#)
" Hall, [235](#)
" William, [355](#)
Belgrave, Elizabeth, [92](#)
Bell, Edward John, [93](#)
" Isaac, [93](#)
Bennett, Justice, [15](#)
" Martha, [377](#)
" Thomas, [377](#)
Benson, Gervase, [24-25](#)
Bertie, Elizabeth, [117](#)
" James, [117](#)
" Richard, [136](#)
Bethom, Ralph, [258](#)
Bewgenet, [331](#)
Bewsey Hall, [328](#), [330-1](#)
Biddulph, [231-2](#)
" Captain, [219](#)
" Hall, [219](#), [230](#)
Bindloss, Robert, [10](#)
Bird, Dr., [144](#)
Biron, John, [152](#)
Bishop Auckland, [162](#)
Black Prince, Edward the, [178-9](#), [301](#), [385](#)
Blackburne, Mr., [92](#)
" Mrs, [91-2](#)
" Vicar of, [152](#)
Blackley Forest, [338](#)
" Hall, [361](#)
Blackrod, [108](#)
Bland, John, [429](#)
Blawith, [253](#)

Blois, Earl of, [299](#)
Blore-heath, [320](#)
Blundell, William, [370](#)
Bodura, Mr., [170](#)
Bold, Richard, [185](#), [392](#)
Boleyn, Anne, [195-6](#)
Bolingbroke, Henry, [305-7](#)
Bolton-le-Sands Church, [187](#)
Booth, Colonel, [238](#), [467](#)
" Elizabeth, [238](#)
" George, [200](#), [205](#), [215](#), [220](#), [238](#), [244](#), [363](#)
" Lane, [227](#)
" Nathaniel, [245-6](#)
" William, [185](#)
Bordeaux, Richard of, [307](#)
Borwick Hall, [19](#)
Bosden, [174](#), [178](#)
Bostock, Ralph, [315](#)
Bosworth Field, [319](#), [337](#)
Boteler, John, [328-30](#), [332](#)
" Thomas, [185](#), [342](#)
Bottomley, Mr., [428](#)
Boughton, [236](#)
Bowdon, [286](#)
Bowness, [251](#)
Bowstones, The, [394](#)
Bowyer, Mr., [230](#)
Bradford, John, [149](#)
Bradley, Green, [230](#)
" John, [170](#)
" Thurston, [169](#)
Bradshaw, Dr., [109](#)
" Henry, [206](#)
" John, [30](#), [364](#), [473](#)
Bramhall, Captain, [213](#)
" Hall, [227](#), [440](#)
Brancepeth Castle, [156-7](#)
Brandon, Charles, [136](#)
Breeres, Mr., [170](#)
Breers, Thomas, [144](#)
Breres, Edward, [461](#)
" Andrew, [435](#), [445-6](#)
" Charles, [245](#)
" Dorothy, [198](#), [462](#)
" Eleanor, [145](#)
" Hall, [230](#)
" Jane, [198](#)
" John, [197](#)
" Katharine, [198](#)
" Lady, [231](#), [238](#)
" Lord, [116](#), [229-232](#)
" Margaret, [197](#), [199](#)
" Randle, [195](#), [198](#)
" Richard, [195](#), [197-9](#), [357](#), [462](#)
" Thomas, [244-5](#)
" Urian, [172](#), [176](#), [194](#), [196-199](#), [203](#)
" William, [172-246](#), [434-5](#)
Brett, Anne, [478](#)
" Colonel, [478](#)
Bridgeman, Bishop, [144](#), [203](#), [239](#), [473](#)
" Orlando, [473](#)
Bridgenorth, [238](#)
Bridgewater, Countess of, [133](#)
" Earl of, [119](#), [133](#), [366](#)
Briggs, Thomas, [24](#)
Brindle, Mr., [170](#)
Brindley, [227](#)
Bristol, [39](#), [41](#)
Bromhall, Cecilia, [454](#)
Bromley, George, [434](#)
Brooke, Lord, [216](#)
" Major, [10](#)
" Peter, [363](#)
Brooks, Samuel, [309](#)
Broome, Mary, [429](#)

" William, [429](#)
Broughton, Captain, [360](#)
" Thomas, [142](#)
Brouncker, Lord, [116](#)
Brown, John, [360](#)
" Mr., [362](#)
" William, [351](#)
Brownlow, Richard, [169](#)
Bruche, Hamer, [355](#)
" Roger, [355](#)
Brunswick, Elector of, [477](#)
Brymbo Hall, [381](#)
Buck Crag, [252-3](#)
Buckingham, Duke of, [183](#), [319](#)
" Earl of, [183](#)
Buerton, [227](#)
Bunbury, [213](#), [235](#)
Burford, [227](#)
Burghall, Edward, [208](#), [219-20](#), [222](#)
Burghley, Lord, [355](#)
Burgundy, Duchess of, [337](#)
" Duke of, [199](#)
Bury, Henry, [141](#)
Butler, Frances, [78](#)
" George, [78](#)
" John, [332](#)
" Thomas, [282](#), [329](#)
Byrom, Beppy, [397](#)
" Edward, [402](#), [428](#)
" John, [123](#), [376](#), [397](#), [402](#), [404-5](#), [421](#), [427-8](#)
" Mrs., [376](#)
Byron, [262](#)
" Lord, [227](#), [238](#)
" Richard, [238](#)
" Thomas, [217](#)

Calais, [304](#)
Calveley, George, [362](#)
" Hugh, [313](#), [362](#)
" Lettice, [362](#)
Calvert, Ann, [471](#)
" John, [471](#)
Canterbury, Archbishop of, [436](#)
Capel, Lord, [220-3](#)
Carey, Anne, [117](#)
" Philip, [117](#)
Carington, John, [315](#)
Carisbrooke Castle, [314](#)
Cark, [252-3](#), [264](#), [276](#)
" *Hall*, [276](#)
Carlisle, [25](#)
Carnforth, [253](#)
Carr, Ralph, [79](#), [81-2](#)
Cartmel, [252-9](#), [262](#), [264-5](#), [270-2](#), [277](#)
" *Church*, [256-60](#), [262](#), [265](#), [270-2](#), [275](#)
" *Fells*, [251](#)
Carus, Joshua, [273](#)
" Katharine, [273](#)
Castle Rock, [62](#)
Castlemaine, Lady, [426](#)
Cavendish, General, [112](#)
" George Augustus, [264](#)
" William, [458](#)
Chalgrove Field, [221](#)
Chambers, Robert, [398](#)
Chartley, [287](#)
Chatsworth, [286](#)
Cheadle, [175](#)
" *Church*, [171-2](#), [176](#), [185](#), [193](#), [197-8](#), [242](#), [244](#)
Chedle, Roger, [297](#)
Chester, [27](#), [211-2](#), [223](#), [225](#), [235-8](#), [241](#), [305](#), [320](#)
" Bishop of, [121](#), [144-5](#), [151-2](#), [203](#), [239](#), [264](#)
f *Castle*, [370](#)
" *Cathedral*, [367](#)
" Chief Justice of, [306](#)

" Earl of, [178](#), [180](#), [197](#), [299](#), [310](#)
" Mayor of, [204-6](#)
" Prince of, [304](#)
Chetham, Edward, [48](#)
" George, [32](#)
" Humphrey, [48](#), [170](#)
Chicheley, Archbishop, [365](#)
" Elizabeth, [365](#)
" Thomas, [365](#), [386](#)
Chillingham, [287](#)
Chirk, [238](#)
Cholmondeley, [220-1](#)
" Earl of, [480](#)
" General, [480](#)
" George James, [480](#)
" James, [480](#)
" Lord, [211](#)
" Marquis of, [480](#)
" Randle, [197](#)
" Robert, [375](#)
" Viscount, [205](#)
Chorley Hall, [77](#), [181](#)
Chorlton Hall, [203](#)
Clarendon, [243](#)
Clarke, Alice, [455](#)
" George, [455](#)
Clayton, John, [403](#), [406](#)
Cleveland, Duke of, [426](#)
Clifford, Lord, [321-2](#)
" Thomas, [116](#)
Clifton, Catherine, [465](#)
" Thomas, [370](#), [374](#)
Clinton, Edward, [111](#)
" Margaret, [111](#)
" Miss, [85](#)
Cloud End, [432](#)
Coke, Justice, [166](#)
Colydon, Mrs., [477](#), [479](#)
Commines, Philip de, [199](#)
Congleton, [331](#)
" *Edge*, [230](#)
Coniston, [254](#)
Constance, Ivo de, [433](#)
Conway, [305-6](#)
Cooper, Joseph, [246](#)
" William, [428](#)
Cope, John, [405](#)
Coppock, Thomas, [397](#), [403](#), [407](#), [409](#), [411-2](#)
Coppul, [122](#)
Corbet, Captain, [215](#)
" Vincent, [213](#), [219](#)
Corona, Ellen, [299](#), [300](#)
" Thomas, [299](#), [300](#)
Coupelond, Dawe, [70-1](#),
Coventry, Ann, [389](#)
" Lord Keeper, [389](#)
" Mr., [123](#)
Cowdall, Richard, [264](#)
Cowper, Thomas, [205](#)
Craigie, John, [434](#)
Cressiac, George, [138](#)
Crewe, [227](#)
" *Hall*, [227](#), [229](#)
Croft, James, [325](#)
" Mabel, [325](#)
Crompton, Thomas, [109](#)
Cromwell, Oliver, [26](#), [28-9](#), [112-4](#), [116](#), [200](#), [233](#), [455](#)
Cromwell, Richard, [46](#), [364](#)
Crook, Mr., [170](#)
Croydon, [242](#), [244](#)
Cumberland, Duchess of, [163](#)
" Duke of, [411-2](#)
Cunliffe, Edward T., [246](#)
" James, [246](#)
Cunningham, Mr., [44](#)

DALE, Richard, [443-4](#)
Dalton, [270](#)
" Dr., [425](#)
Darby, Agnes, [326](#)
Davenport, Henry, [122](#), [133](#)
" Hester, [122](#)
" William
D'Anyers, John, [296](#)
" Margaret, [297](#), [300](#), [302](#), [308](#), [317](#)
" Matilda, [297](#)
" Thomas, [290-292](#), [295-7](#), [300](#), [304](#)
" William, [296](#)
D'Avranches, Hugh, [433](#)
Dawson, Captain, [398](#), [411-13](#), [415-6](#)
" Dr., [401](#), [421](#), [425-7](#), [429](#)
" Elizabeth, [402](#), [427](#), [429](#)
" James, [398](#), [401](#), [403-407](#), [411](#), [413](#), [417-20](#), [422](#), [425-6](#), [429-30](#)
" Mrs., [402](#), [426](#)
" Sarah, [402](#), [427](#), [429](#)
" William, [401-3](#), [426-8](#)
Deacon, Dr., [408](#)
" Thomas, [412](#)
" Thomas Theodorus, [422](#)
Dean Church, [344](#)
" *River*, [175](#), [202](#), [207](#)
Deane, Thomas, [60](#)
Dee Bridge, [237](#)
Dr., [164](#)
" *River*, [236](#)
Delamere Forest, [228](#), [309](#)
" *House*, [75](#)
" Lord, [369](#)
De-la-Tour, A. J. Deschamps, [381](#)
Delves, Lady, [376](#)
" Thomas, [212](#)
Denbigh, [237](#)
Denison, William, [98](#)
Denton Hall, [199](#)
Derby, [15](#)
" Earl of, [69](#), [74](#), [142](#), [164](#), [190](#), [205](#), [219-20](#), [262-3](#), [344](#), [348](#),
[353-4](#), [465](#), [468-9](#), [473](#)
Derbyshire, Peak of, [278](#)
Dethick, Gilbert, [166](#)
Devonshire, Duke of, [264](#), [268](#)
" Earl of, [458](#)
Dewhurst, Robert, [169](#)
Dicconson, William, [374](#)
Dickenson, John, [406-7](#)
" Louisa Frances Mary, [406](#)
" Miss, [406](#)
Dieulacres Abbey, [68](#), [75](#)
Disley, [281](#), [395](#)
" *Church*, [332](#), [339-40](#), [345-6](#), [355](#), [378](#), [387](#)
Dixie, Beaumont, [117](#)
" Mary, [117](#)
Dobson, George, [152](#)
Dod, John, [392](#)
Doddington, [212](#), [227](#), [229](#)
Done, Henry, [194](#)
" John, [315](#)
" Margaret, [194](#)
" Randolph, [194](#)
Dorfold Hall, [220](#), [223](#), [227](#)
Dorset, Earl of, [314](#)
Downes, Edmund, [74](#)
" Francis, [474](#)
" Jane, [474](#)
" John, [474](#), [475](#), [477](#)
" Lawrence, [474](#)
" Margery, [74](#)
" Roger, [473-7](#)
Downham, William, [151](#)
Drayton, Michael, [312](#), [319](#), [432](#)
Drury, Captain, [26](#)

Duckworth, Mr., [170](#)
Dudley Castle, [241](#)
" Lady, [245](#)
" Lord, [244](#)
Dugdale, William, [143](#)
Dukinfield, Captain, [213](#)
" Colonel, [229](#), [231](#)
" Francis, [227](#)
" Robert, [206](#)
Dunbar, [28](#)
Durham, [28](#)
" Bishop of, [139](#), [144](#), [147](#), [153](#), [158](#), [162](#), [169](#)
" *Castle*, [159](#)
" *Cathedral*, [150-1](#), [166](#)
" Earl of, [380](#)
Dutton, Hugh, [315](#)
" Peter, [315](#)
" Piers, [315](#)
" Roger, [297](#)
Dyott, [216](#)

Ea River, [253-4](#)
Earl, Bishop, [155](#)
Eastham, [239-40](#)
Earwaker, J. P., [168](#), [179](#), [184](#), [198](#), [203](#), [232](#), [340](#), [368](#), [388](#)
Eccleshall Castle, [221](#)
Edgehill, [212](#)
Edwards, Alderman, [223](#)
Edinburgh, [28](#)
Edisbury, J., [206](#)
Egerton, Captain, [268](#)
" Dorothy, [122](#), [357](#)
" Elizabeth Charlotte, [378](#)
" Holland, [378](#)
" Louisa, [268](#)
" Lord, [375](#)
" Philip de M. Grey, [202](#)
" Richard, [122](#), [357](#)
" Thomas, [119](#), [357](#)
" William, [119](#), [133](#)
Elizabeth, Queen, [163](#), [169](#)
Ellenborough Lord, [252](#)
Ellenbrook Chapel, [122](#)
Ellis, Colonel, [215](#)
Ely, Bishop, [189](#), [191](#), [436](#)
Elmer Hurst, [285](#)
Emmerson, Thomas, [264](#)
Erpingham, Thomas, [185](#), [314](#)
Errol, Earl of, [381](#)
Eskrigg, James, [261](#)
Essex, Earl of, [115](#), [352](#)
Ethelred, King, [433](#)
Exeter, Bishop of, [147-8](#)
" Duke of, [199](#), [318](#)

Fairfax, General, [37](#), [228](#), [232](#)
" William, [234](#)
Farnworth Grammar School, [148](#)
Fearnside, Adam, [109](#)
Feeilden, Alexander, [146](#)
Fell, John, [10](#)
" Leonard, [38](#)
" Margaret, [12](#), [19-21](#), [23](#), [27](#), [30](#), [32-4](#), [38-40](#)
" Mary, [38](#)
" Thomas, [4](#), [8-10](#), [13](#), [20-1](#), [23](#), [25](#), [29-30](#), [39](#), [48](#)
Fenner, Ann, [362](#)
" Edward, [362](#)
Ferrers, Earl of, [456](#)
ffielden, Mr., [170](#)
Fielding, Colonel, [430](#)
" Henry, [429](#)
" Joseph, [430](#)
" Louisa Willis, [430](#)
" Randle Joseph, [430](#)
" Robert, [429](#)

" Robert Mosley, [429](#)
Finsthwaite, [250](#)
 Finlow, John, [78](#)
 Fisher, Mr., [124](#)
 Fitchett, John, [329](#)
 Fitton, Edward, [193](#)
 " Ellen, [193](#)
 Fitz-Nigel, William, [74](#), [433](#)
 Fitzroy, Barbara, [426](#), [428](#)
 "Flame, Lord," [376](#)
 Fleetwood, Ann, [470](#)
 " Thomas, [365](#), [470](#)
 Fletcher, Captain, [432](#)
Flixton, [107](#)
Flodden Field, [186](#), [188-9](#)
Flookersbrook Hall, [224](#)
Flookborough, [261](#)
 Flower, William, [290](#), [307](#), [346](#), [385](#), [388](#)
Fouldrey, Peel of, [337](#)
 Fouleshurst, Robert, [189](#)
 Foulkes, Martin, [123](#), [134-5](#)
 Fox, Christopher, [13](#)
 " George, 2, [4-49](#)
 " Margaret, [40](#), [43](#), [47-8](#)
Foxhall, [456](#), [470](#)
 Frensshye, Hugh, [180](#)
 Frere, Sir H. Bartle, [49](#)
Frodsham Hills, [67](#), [286](#)
 Froude, J. A., [196](#)
 Fuller, Thomas, [190](#), [219](#), [242](#), [436](#)
Furness, [1](#), [28](#), [31](#)
 " *Abbey*, [255](#)
 " *Fells*, [254](#)
 Fynes-Clinton, Elizabeth, [117](#)
 " Henry, [117](#)

Galliard, Gilbert, [299](#)
 Gargrave, Thomas, [162](#)
 Gaskell, Mrs., [253](#)
 Gaskell, Bishop, [122](#), [346](#)
 Gaunt, John O', [301-2](#), [305](#), [445](#)
 Gawsworth, Parson of, [340](#)
 Gee, Elizabeth, [455](#)
 Gee, Ralph, [455](#)
 Gell, John, [216](#)
 Gerard, Elizabeth, [474](#)
 " Gilbert, [354](#), [356](#)
 " Jane, [342](#)
 " Lord, [236](#), [356](#)
 " Margaret, [343](#), [354](#), [392](#)
 " Mary, [143](#)
 " Myles, [474](#)
 " Thomas, [342-3](#)
 " William, [354](#), [360-1](#), [370](#), [374](#)
 Gibbons, Grinling, [382](#), [389](#)
 Gillow, Joseph, [471](#)
 Gilmore, Major, [215](#)
Gisburne, [287](#)
 Gladstone, W. E., [93](#)
Glasgow, [28](#)
 Glendower, Owen, [309](#)
 Gloucester, Duke of, [302-4](#), [332](#)
Godderside, [261](#)
 Goffe, Major-General, [26](#)
 Goldney, Henry, [45](#)
 Goldsmith, Oliver, [423](#)
 Goring, Colonel, [234](#)
Gorton Church, [240](#)
 Grandison, Lord, [211](#)
Grange, [252-3](#), [264](#)
Grassendale, [49](#)
Gravesend, [40](#)
 Gray, Lord, [328](#)
 " Walter, [259](#)
 Green, John, [169](#)

Greenodd, [277](#)
Greenwood, Joseph, [403](#)
 " Mary, [402](#)
 " William, [402](#)
Gresley, George, [473](#)
Gresswell, Robert, [125](#)
 " Susanna, [125](#)
Grey, Jane, [148](#)
Grisedale, [15](#)
Grosvenor, Richard, [375](#)
 " Robert, [141](#)
Gummer How, [251](#)

Hacker, Colonel, [26](#)
Hales Owen Abbey, [258](#)
Hall, Edward, [421](#)
 " Elizabeth, [421](#)
 " Frances, [420-2](#)
 " *Hall o' th' Hill*, [107](#)
 " Mr., [208](#)
 " Richard, [421](#)
 " Richard Edward, [420](#)
Halley, Dr., [47](#), [124](#), [148](#), [468](#)
Halliwell, Ann, [119](#)
 " Lawrence, [11](#)
 " Richard, [474](#)
Hallstead, Mr., [170](#)
Halsey, John, [125](#)
Halton, [74](#)
 " Baron of
 " *Castle*, [74](#), [234](#)
Hamilton, Duke of, [10](#)
Hampden, John, [221](#)
Hampsfell, [253](#)
Hampton Court, [28](#)
 " *Hall*, [381](#)
Handbridge, [223](#)
Handforth, [172](#)
 " *Green*, [175](#), [207](#)
 " *Hall*, [174-5](#), [177-8](#), [189](#), [194](#), [197](#), [202](#), [244](#)
 " Margaret, [176](#)
 " William, [176](#)
Hankelow, [227](#)
Hanmer, [221](#)
Hanover, Elector of, [415](#)
Harfleur, [313](#)
Harrington, Henry, [162](#)
 " James, [142](#)
 " John, [162](#), [272-3](#)
 " Lucy, [162](#)
 " Thomas, [272](#)
Hartford, [234](#)
Hartleb, Samuel, [116](#)
Haryngton, Ellen, [318](#)
 " William, [318](#)
Haslington, [212](#), [227](#)
Hastings, Colonel, [212](#), [222](#)
Hatherton, [227](#)
Hatton, Richard, [120-1](#)
Haverthwaite, [227](#)
Hawarden, [223-5](#)
Hay, Dulcibella Jane, [381](#)
Haydock, Gilbert, [308](#), [319](#)
 " Joanna, [308](#)
Hayes, Maria, [49](#)
Haysnap, Roger, [457](#)
Heaton Park, [378](#)
Helvellyn, [251](#)
Hemingway, [205-6](#)
Herbert of Cherbury, Lord, [234](#), [360](#)
Herford, Mr., [259](#)
Hertford, Earl of, [197](#), [343-4](#)
Hewitson, Anthony, [471](#)
Hewitt, John, [392](#)
 " Thomas, [392](#)

Heyricke, Richard, [240](#), [404](#), [409](#)
Heywood, Nathaniel, [119](#)
" Oliver, [109](#), [119](#), [133](#)
Hibbert-Ware, Dr., [427](#)
High Bullough, [143](#)
High Legh, [65](#), [91](#)
Highgate, [302](#)
Holcroft, Eleanor, [471](#)
" Thomas, [262-3](#), [268](#), [270](#), [355](#), [471](#)
Holker Hall, [33](#), [38](#), [253](#), [263](#), [269-70](#), [276](#)
Holland, Colonel, [199](#)
" Henry, [199](#), [318](#)
" John, [302](#)
" Margaret, [198](#)
" Richard, [198-9](#)
" Thomas, [292](#)
Hollinshed, [335](#)
" Richard, [290](#)
Hollingworth, [232](#)
" John, [232](#)
Holme, Randle, [331](#)
Holmes Chapel, [227](#)
Holt Bridge, [236](#)
Holy Well, [62](#)
Holynworth, John, [199](#)
Honford, Geoffrey, [180](#)
" Henry, [178](#), [180](#), [300](#)
" John, [179-185](#)
" Katharine, [180](#)
" Margaret, [180](#), [189](#)
" Roger, [178-9](#)
" Sibyl, [189](#), [300](#)
" William, [180](#), [185](#), [187-9](#), [191](#)
Hook, Theodore, [249](#)
Hoole, Joseph, [406](#)
Hooton, [72](#)
" Margery, [72](#)
" William, [72](#)
Hopton Heath, [216](#), [219](#)
Hornby, [187](#)
Horwich Chapel, [121](#), [131](#)
" Church, [123-124](#), [134](#)
" Forest., [161](#)
Hospice, [253](#)
Hoton, Adam, [70-71](#)
Hotspur, Harry, [309-10](#)
Howard, Edmund, [187](#)
Hubbersty, Mr., [270](#)
Huddleston, Colonel, 9
Humphrey Head, [258](#)
Hurleston, [227](#)
" Brook, [228](#)
" Charles, [375](#)
" John, [215](#)
" Katharine, [198](#)
" Roger, [198](#)
Hurst, Geoffrey, [463-464](#)
Huskisson, Mrs., [92](#)
" William, [91](#)
" Lucy, [112](#)
Hutton, Serjeant, [147](#)
" Captain, [213](#)
Hyde, John, [180](#)
" William, [180](#)

Ince, Mr., [224](#)
Ingham, Mr., [222](#)
Inglis, Rev. Dr., [80](#)
Ipstones, Alice, [194](#)
" William, [195](#)
Ireland, Duke of, [302](#)
Isabella, Queen, [300](#)

Jansen, Cornelius, [357](#)
Joan of Arc, [182](#)

John, King, [257-258](#)
Johnson, Dr., [423](#)
" Samuel, [376](#), [478](#)
Jones, Arthur, [436](#)
" Colonel, [235-6](#)
" John, [361](#)

Keighley, Henry, [458](#)
" Mary, [458-60](#)
Kelsall, James, [175](#)
Kendal, [15](#)
" Earl of, [315](#)
Kent, Fair Maid of, [292](#), [301](#), [304](#)
Kenyon, Mr., [122](#), [476](#)
Kildare, Earl of, 3
Kinderton, [215](#)
" Baron of, [188-9](#), [194](#), [294](#), [360](#)
Kingsley, Adam, [301](#)
" Charles, [283](#)
Kingsmill, Alice, [158](#), [163](#)
" John, [158](#)
Kingston, Earl of, [112](#)
Kirkby, Colonel, [32-3](#), [37](#), [40](#), [42](#)
" *Hall*, [32](#)
" William, [32](#), [34](#)
Kirkhead, [258](#)
Knight's Low, The, [347](#), [394-5](#)
Knypersley Hall, [230](#)
Kyre, [65](#)

Lago, Mary, [13](#)
Lake Country, 1, [250](#)
Lakeside, [251-2](#)
Lampitt, [24](#)
Lancaster, [28](#), [34](#), [37](#), [42](#)
" *Castle*, [35](#), [40](#)
" Duke of, [301](#), [305](#), [445](#)
" William, [267](#)
Langdale, Marmaduke, [236](#)
" *Pikes*, [251](#)
Langley, [240](#)
Langton, Jane, [461](#)
" Philip, [370](#)
" Ralph, [459-61](#)
Lathom House, [233](#), [238](#)
" Thomas, [72](#), [465](#)
Laud, William, [435](#), [446](#)
Law, Edmund, [251](#), [253](#)
Lawton, John, [436](#)
Lee, [261](#)
" Peter, [360](#)
Legh, Agnes, [296](#), [298](#)
" Ann, [356](#), [359](#), [392](#)
" Ashburnham, [377-8](#)
" Benet, [378](#)
" Captain, [219](#)
" Catharine, [356](#)
" Charles, [78](#)
" Cicely, [342](#)
" Colonel, [379](#)
" Edward, [307](#)
" Elizabeth, [362](#)
" Ellen, [300](#)
" Ellen Jane, [381](#)
" Frances, [362](#), [369](#), [376](#)
" Francis, [356](#), [360-1](#), [368](#)
" Galfred, [341](#)
" George, [191](#)
" Gilbert, [356](#)
" Gowther, [341](#)
" Henry, [375](#), [377](#)
" Hugh, [296](#)
" Isabel, [181](#)
" Joanna, [317](#)
" John, [300-1](#), [307](#), [356](#)

" Madame, [374](#)
 " Margaret, [295](#), [307](#), [356](#), [362](#)
 " Margery, [353-4](#)
 " Martha, [378](#)
 " Mrs., [373](#)
 " Perkyn, [289](#), [305](#), [307](#), [386](#)
 " Peter, [122](#), [191](#), [289](#), [291](#), [295](#), [307-27](#), [334](#), [378](#), [381](#), [385-392](#)
 " Peter Benet, [378](#)
 " Piers, [282](#), [289-92](#), [298-309](#), [311](#), [313](#), [319](#), [328](#), [331-2](#),
 [345](#), [356](#), [358](#), [369](#), [376](#), [386](#)
 " Radcliffe, [356](#)
 " Richard, [296](#), [299](#), [362-8](#), [386](#)
 " Robert, [180-1](#), [298](#), [300](#), [313](#)
 " Thomas, [282](#), [356](#), [361-2](#), [376-381](#), [386](#), [390](#), [392-3](#)
 " Thomas Peter, [309](#), [378](#)
 " William, [379](#), [381](#)
 " William John, [381](#)
 Leicester, Earl of, [138-9](#), [349](#), [351-3](#)
 Leigh, Charles, [124-5](#)
 " Elizabeth, [77](#)
 " Honora, [119](#)
 " John, [77](#), [358](#), [393](#)
 " Lettice, [360](#)
 " Lord, [119](#), [133](#)
 " Mr., [125](#)
 " Thomas, [119](#)
 Leighe, Myles, [360-1](#)
 Leland, [309](#)
 Leonard, Stephen, [77](#)
 Leoni Giacomo, [378](#), [384](#)
 Lesley, [237](#)
 Leven, Earl of, [232](#)
 " *River*, [251](#), [253](#), [277](#)
 " *Sands*, [275-6](#)
Lever Hall, [148](#)
 " *Heath*, [147](#)
 " John, [148](#), [155](#)
 " Robert, [147](#)
 " Thomas, [147-8](#), [155](#)
 " Little Hall, [147](#)
Levy Beck, [2](#)
 Ley, John, [240](#)
 Leyburn, [262](#)
 Leycester, Catharine, [84](#), [100](#)
 " Charles, [100](#)
 " George, [84](#)
 " Maria, [84-5](#), [100](#)
 " Oswald, [84](#)
 " Peter, [315-324](#)
 " William, [315](#)
 Leyland, Ann, [462-3](#), [465](#)
 " Thomas, [462-4](#), [472](#)
 " William, [197](#)
Leyton, [261](#)
Lichfield, [238-241](#)
 " *Close*, [216](#)
 " Earl of, [236](#)
 Lilburne, Colonel, [468](#)
 Limme, Hugh, [296](#)
 " Richard, [296](#), [298-9](#)
Lincoln Close, [9](#)
 " Earl of, [3](#), [111](#), [117](#)
Lindale, [252-3](#)
 " *Close*, [9](#)
 " *in Cartmel*, [16](#)
 Lindsay, Earl of, [139](#)
 " Lord, [236](#)
Little Lever Hall, [147](#)
Liverpool, [27](#)
 " *Castle*, [234](#)
 Llewellyn, Prince, [310](#)
 London, [38](#)
 " John, [261](#)
Lostock Gralam, [433](#)
Loughrigg, [251](#)

Lovel, Francis, [142](#)
" Viscount, [142](#)
Low Wood Hotel, [250](#)
Lowe, Alice, [133](#)
" Thomas, [133](#)
Lower, Thomas, [38](#), [41-2](#)
Lowther, Brabazon, [380](#)
" Christopher, [381](#)
" George, [381](#)
" Maud, [381](#), [392](#)
" William, [264](#), [381](#)
Lowthian, Adjutant General, [236](#)
Lucas, Robert, [370](#), [374](#),
Lune River, [253](#)
Lunedale, [15](#)
Lunt, John, [369-70](#), [373](#)
Lupus, Hugh, [299](#), [453](#)
Lyme Cage, [285-6](#), [340](#), [393](#), [395](#)
" *Chapel*, [290](#), [307](#)
" *Chase*, [286](#)
" *Hall*, [278-9](#), [288](#)
" *Park*, [288](#)
Lymm Church, [340](#)
Macclesfield, [303](#)
" *Church*, [307](#), [317](#)
" Countess of, [478](#)
" *Forest*, [241](#), [288](#), [301](#), [303](#), [310](#), [382](#)
" John, [441](#)
" Jordan, [441](#)
" Lady of, [300](#), [478](#)
" Lord, [478](#)
" Margaret, [441](#)
" Mayor of, [188](#)
McDougal, James, [107](#)
Maddock, Ensign, [416](#)
Mahon, Lord, [410](#)
Mainwaring, Colonel, [213](#)
" Henry, [446](#)
" Mr. [212](#)
" Randle, [198](#)
Malbon, Thomas, [208](#)
Malpas, [27](#), [234](#)
" *Church*, [195](#)
Man, Bishop of, [152](#)
Manchester, [27-8](#), [219](#), [228](#)
" Earl of, [114](#)
Manley, John, [315](#)
Mann, Colonel, [324](#)
Manners, Frances, [111](#)
Mara, Hugh, [433](#)
Marbury, Captain, [213](#)
" Laurence, [185](#)
" Thomas, [363](#)
March, Earl of, [305](#)
Mareschall, William, [254](#), [257](#), [267](#)
Margaret, Queen, [320](#)
Marlborough, Duke of, [133](#)
Marple, [286](#)
Marrow, Colonel, [234](#)
Marsh, Esquire, [37](#)
" George, [344](#), [463](#)
" *Grange*, [10](#), [12](#)
Marston Moor, [229](#), [233](#)
Martindale, Adam, [240](#)
Mary, Queen, [197](#)
Mason, Lady, [478](#)
Massey, Ann, [461](#)
" Richard, [461](#)
Massie, Captain, [215](#)
Maurice, Prince, [235](#)
Medd, William, [44](#)
Melbourne, Lord, [94](#)
Meldran, William, [234](#)
Meldrum, John, [467](#)
Meredith, Amos, [375](#)

Middleton, Geoffrey, [325](#)
Middlewich, [213-4](#), [216](#), [227](#)
Milford Haven, [305](#)
Milner, Jane, [38](#)
Milnthorpe Sands, [253](#)
Milton, John, [203](#)
Minshull, Elizabeth, [203](#)
" Thomas, [203](#)
Mitford, Mary, [49](#)
Molineux, Richard, [316-17](#), [320](#)
" Lord, [367](#), [379](#), [374](#)
Molyneux, Caryll, [367](#), [374](#)
Monk, Colonel, [228](#)
Monks Heath, [60](#)
Monmouth, Duke of, [366-7](#)
Montagu, Baron, [471](#)
Monteagle, Lord, [190](#)
Montgomery Castle, [234](#)
Montrose, [235](#), [237](#)
Moon, Francis Graham, [231](#)
" Prior, [274](#)
Moore, Mr., [345](#)
Morecambe Bay, [16](#), [251](#), [253](#), [275](#), [337](#)
Moreton, Bishop, [436](#)
" Cardinal, [436](#)
" Edward, [435](#), [446](#)
" Elizabeth, [434](#)
" Frances Annabella, [434](#)
" *Hall Little*, [431](#)
" Jane, [436](#)
" John, [435-6](#), [441](#)
" Lettice, [433](#)
" Margaren, [446](#)
" Mary, [446](#)
" William, [433-6](#), [443](#), [445-6](#)
Morleys Hall, [197](#), [456](#), [462-3](#), [465](#)
Morris, Captain, [215](#)
Morteign, Earl of, [254](#)
Mortimer, Roger, [305](#)
Mosley, Ann, [429](#)
" Edward, [215](#)
" John Parker, [429](#)
" Oswald, [455](#)
Moss House, [220](#)
Moston, Roger, [361](#), [391](#)
Mostyn, [224](#)
" Roger, [361](#)
Mottram St. Andrew, [245](#)
Mow Cop, [432](#), [436](#)
Mulineux, Carrel, [360](#)
Munckas, Thomas, [361](#)
Murcal, John, [240](#)
Murray, George, [407](#), [411](#)
Myerscough Lodge, [456](#), [458-9](#), [461](#), [464-5](#), [467](#), [472-3](#)
Mytton, Edward, [244](#)
Naseby, [235](#)
Nantwich, [209](#), [211](#), [213-16](#), [220](#), [224](#), [227](#), [229](#), [234-5](#), [238](#)
Neville, Jollan, [456](#)
Neville, Ralph, [456](#)
Newark, [114](#), [238](#)
Newby Bridge, [248](#), [250](#), [252](#)
Newburgh, Lord, 9
Newcastle, [216](#)
" Duke of, [133](#)
" Marquis of, [111](#)
Newcome, Henry, [119](#), [203](#), [240](#)
Newton, [253](#)
" Robert, [180](#)
" Samuel, [130](#)
" William, [179](#)
Nicolas, N. Harris, [311](#)
Norden, Bertram, [179](#)
Norfolk, Duke of, [155](#), [335](#)
Norley, Adam, [298](#), [300](#)
" Matilda, [300](#)

" Maud, [298](#)
Normandy, Duchess of, [85](#)
" Duke of, [453](#)
Norreis, John, [137](#)
Norreys, Ann, [461](#)
" Henry, [296](#)
" Margaret, [461](#)
" Thomas, [461](#)
" William, [461](#)
Norris, Edward, [220](#)
" Henry, [195](#)
" William, [345](#)
Northampton, Earl of, [215-6](#)
Northumberland, Earl of, [319](#)
Northwich, [214-5](#), [219](#), [234](#)
Norton, Gilbert, [453](#)
" Katharine, [401](#), [413](#), [417-8](#)
" Richard, [156](#)
" William, [453](#)
Norwich Cathedral, [97](#)
Nottingham, [302](#)
Nowell, Alexander, [149](#)
Oldfield, Somerford, [446](#)
Oldham, Hugh, [147-8](#)
Orange, Prince of, [373](#)
Orell, Hugh, [311](#)
" Robert, [311](#)
Ormerod, George, [240](#), [434](#)
Ormond, Marquis of, [226](#), [229](#)
Osbaldeston, Alexander, [460](#)
" Chapel, [460](#)
" Ellena, [460](#)
Overleigh Hall, [224](#)
Owen, Captain, [99](#)
" Hugh, [78](#)
" Margarget,[typo "Margaret"?] [78](#)
Oxford, Earl of, [302](#)
Pageatt, Mr., [202](#)
Paget, John, [203](#)
" Nathan, [203](#)
" Thomas, [203](#)
Paley, Mr., [267](#)
Par, Thomas, [301](#)
Park House, [68](#)
Parker, Archbishop, [150-1](#), [161](#)
Pass, William, [248](#)
Pegge, Dr., [124](#)
Pembroke, Earl of, [255](#), [257-8](#), [267](#)
Pendle Hill, [15](#)
Penn, William, [41](#), [43](#), [45](#)
Penultsbury, Adam, [453](#)
Peover, [212](#)
Peploe, Warden, [409](#)
Pepys, Samuel, [365](#)
Percival, Richard, [208](#)
Petre, [261](#)
Pidgeon, Elizabeth, [125](#)
" William, [125](#)
Pierrepoint, Robert, [112](#)
Pilkington, Alice, [141](#), [161](#)
" Charles [147](#)
" Deborah, [162](#)
" Elizabeth, [319](#)
" George, [147](#), [169](#)
" Henry Mulock, [147](#)
" Isaac, [161](#)
" James, [105](#), [144](#), [147-8](#), [155-6](#), [162](#), [164-6](#), [169-70](#)
" John, [142](#), [147](#), [319](#)
" Joshua, [161](#)
" Katharine, [147](#)
" Leonard, [147](#)
" Ralph, [142](#)
" Richard, [107](#), [143-5](#), [147](#)
" Robert, [140-1](#), [143-4](#), [147](#)
" Roger, [141](#)

" Ruth, [162](#)
" Thomas, [142](#), [319](#)
Pincerna, Almeric, [456](#)
" William Fitzalmeric, [456](#)
Plantagenet, Edmund, [292](#)
" Edward, [143](#), [337](#)
" Joan, [292](#)
Plashy Castle, [304](#)
Pollard, H., [116](#)
Pollitt, Cooke, [126](#)
Poole, Dorothy, [465](#)
Pope, Alexander, [479](#)
Porter, Major, [31](#)
Poyntz, Major-General, [236](#)
Prayers, Margaret, [180-1](#)
" William, [180-1](#)
Prestbury, [275](#), [303](#)
Preston, [28](#), [263](#)
" Christopher, [264](#), [465](#)
" Elizabeth, [465](#)
" George, [263-4](#), [269](#)
" Katharine, [264](#)
" Richard, [261-2](#)
" Thomas, [270](#), [274](#)
Prestwich, Parson of, [340](#)
Proctor, Mr., [420](#)
Pulteney, Ann, [426](#)
" William, [426](#)
Pygott, John, [311](#)
Pytts, James, [76](#)
Raby Castle, [157](#)
Radcliffe, Alexander, [375](#), [460](#)
" John, [298](#), [300](#)
Radcot Bridge, [302](#)
Radnor Mere, [65](#)
Raikes, Henry, [89](#)
Ravensmoor, [211](#), [220](#), [222](#), [228](#)
Rawson, Mr., [100](#)
Redland Heath, [334](#)
Reilly, John, [379](#)
Remington, Thomas, [253](#), [269](#)
Renaud, Dr., [388](#)
Richmond, Earl of, [315](#), [336-7](#)
Rigby, Alexander, 3, 9, [468](#), [471](#)
" Cicely, [455](#)
" Colonel, [270](#)
" Mary, [471](#)
" Nicholas, [455](#)
Riley, William, [140](#)
Ripon, Major, 24
Rivers, Earl of, [205](#), [477-8](#), [480](#)
Rivington, [104](#)
" Alexander, [141](#)
" Chapel, [123](#), [130-1](#)
" Church, [107](#), [126](#), [143](#)
" Cicely, [141](#)
" Grammar School, [144](#), [166-8](#)
" Pike, [106](#), [131](#), [161](#)
" Richard, [169](#)
" Thomas, [169](#)
Roby, Mr., [329](#), [475](#)
Rochester, Bishop of, [339](#), [370](#)
Rochford, Countess of, [479](#), [480](#)
" Earl of, [478](#)
" Lord, [195](#)
Rock, Dr., [454](#)
Rode, Thomas, [434](#)
Roper, Thomas, [162](#)
Roscoe, Baxter, [124](#), [134](#)
" Ebenezer, [124-5](#)
" Helena, [124](#)
Rostherne Mere, [65](#)
Rothschild, Nathan Meyer, [426](#)
Rothwell, Eleanor, [119](#), [122](#)
" James, [120-1](#), [131](#)

Rowton Heath, [236-8](#)
Rudall, Mr., [170](#)
Runchamp, Hugh, [433](#)
Rupert, Prince, [233](#), [235](#), [467](#)
Rutland, Earl of, [111](#)
Rycroft, Josiah, [208](#), [241](#), [244](#)
Rylands, John Paul, [298](#), [388](#)
St. Alban's, [319](#)
St. Andrew's, Archbishop of, [188](#)
St. Bernard's Mount, [256](#)
St. Werburgh's, Abbot of, [191](#)
Salisbury, Earl of, [320](#)
Salmes, Mary, [136](#)
Sandal Castle, [321](#)
Sandbach, [227](#)
Sandford, [262](#)
" Thomas, [225-6](#), [228](#)
Sandiway, [234](#), [309](#)
Sandys, Edwin, [149](#)
Sankey, Captain, [227](#)
Salt Heath, [216](#)
Saunders, Mr., [170](#)
Savage, Bessey, [480](#)
" Christopher, [188-9](#), [342](#)
" Elizabeth, [195](#), [477](#), [480](#)
" Ellen, [341](#)
" John, [185](#), [195](#), [297-8](#), [300-2](#), [327](#), [335](#), [341](#), [478](#)
" Margaret, [185](#), [318](#)
" Richard, [477-9](#)
" Thomas, [328](#), [332](#), [339](#)
Saville, Ann, [358](#)
" John, [358](#)
" Lord, [358](#)
Sawrey, Justice, [19](#), [23-4](#)
Schofield, James, [164](#)
Scots, Mary Queen of, [137](#)
Scott, Walter, [188](#)
Scrope, Richard, [141](#)
Sedbergh, [15](#)
Seddon, Edward, [239](#)
" Peter, [240](#)
" Ralph, [240](#)
" William, [239-41](#)
Sefton Church, [317](#)
" Earl of, [316](#)
Seymour, Jane, [196](#)
Shaftesbury, Earl of, [366](#)
Shakerley, Charles Watkin, [457](#)
" Geoffrey, [460-1](#)
" Parnell, [460](#)
Shaw, Elizabeth, [125](#)
" George, [146](#), [169](#)
" Hannah, [124-5](#)
" Helena, [124](#)
" James, [147](#)
" John, [124-5](#), [270](#)
" Mr., [170](#)
" Peter, [143](#)
" Place, [123-4](#), [139](#), [143](#), [147](#)
" Thomas, [169](#)
Shenstone, [398](#), [416](#), [419](#)
Sherburn, Mr., [345](#)
Sherrington, Francis, [473](#)
" Gilbert, [473](#)
Shipbrooke, Baron of, [309](#)
Shipman, Abraham, [223](#)
Shrewsbury, [211](#)
" Duke of, [370](#)
Shrigley Park, [380](#)
Skyring, Mrs., [410](#)
Sidney, Philip, [135](#), [137-8](#)
" William, [162](#)
Silverdale, [253](#)
Sim, Richard, [144](#)
Simmel, Lambert, [143](#), [337](#)

Skeffington, Cicely, [244](#)
 " William, [244](#)
Skerton, [48-9](#)
 Smeaton, Mark, [195](#)
 Smith, Madame, [478](#)
 " John, [479](#)
 " Richard, [479](#)
 Smyth, William, [48](#)
 Snede, Ralph, [474](#)
 Somerset, Charles, [195](#)
 " Duke of, [184](#), [319](#)
Sound, [220](#)
Southwell, [262](#)
 Southworth, Thomas, [461](#)
 Speratti, Joseph, [231](#)
Stafford, [216](#), [219](#), [230](#)
 " *Castle*, [222](#), [231](#)
 " Earl of, [319](#)
 Standish, Francis, [478](#)
 " Ralph, [461](#), [470](#)
 Stanley, Ann, [192](#)
 " Arthur Penrhyn, [51](#), [59](#), [80](#), [90-1](#), [97](#), [99-101](#), [103](#)
 " Bishop, [190](#)
 " Catharine, [58](#), [59](#), [67](#), [327](#)
 " Catharine Maria, [101](#)
 " Charles Edward, [57](#), [97](#)
 " Edward, [57-60](#), [79-80](#), [83-6](#), [88-9](#), [92-9](#), [188](#), [190](#)
 " George, [461](#)
 " James, [78-9](#), [189](#)
 " John, [68-9](#), [72-3](#), [75](#), [189-94](#), [197](#), [457](#)
 " John Thomas, [57](#), [78-9](#)
 " Lord, [69](#), [75](#), [77](#), [79](#), [189](#), [332-6](#)
 " Margaret, [79](#), [192-4](#)
 " Mary, [57](#), [59](#), [90-1](#)
 " Miss, [68](#), [78](#)
 " Mrs., [91](#), [99](#)
 " Owen, [57](#), [86](#), [90-1](#), [99-100](#)
 " Rowland, [137](#), [374](#)
 " Thomas, [65](#), [68-9](#), [73-7](#), [142](#), [189](#), [327](#), [332](#), [460](#)
 " William, [57](#), [70-2](#), [137](#), [334](#), [336](#), [402](#), [457](#)
 Starky, Captain, [215](#)
Staveley, [16](#), [251](#)
 Steel, Captain, [226](#), [228](#)
 Stockdale, Mr., [252](#), [270-1](#)
Stockport, [227](#), [286](#)
 " Thomas, [476](#)
Stockton Heath, [219](#)
Stoke, [227](#)
Stokefield, Battle of, [338](#)
 Stokeport, Robert, [178](#)
Stone, [216](#), [222](#)
Stormy Point, [62](#)
 Strafford, Earl of, [114](#)
 Strange, Lord, [74](#), [334](#), [465](#), [473](#), [475](#)
 Strongbow, [257](#)
 Stuart, Bernard, [236](#)
 " Charles Edward, [377](#), [403](#), [405-6](#), [409](#), [420-1](#), [424](#)
 Suffolk, Duchess of, [163](#)
 " Duke of, [136](#)
 Surrey, Earl of, [187-8](#)
 Sutton, Thomas, [311](#)
 Sussex, Earl of, [262](#)
Swarthmoor, [3](#), [7](#), [21-5](#), [27](#), [30](#), [32-3](#), [41-2](#), [44](#), [47](#)
 " *Hall*, [9](#), [16](#), [20](#), [22](#), [25](#), [30](#), [43-4](#), [49](#)
 Swartz, Martin, [3](#), [337](#)
 Swetenham, William, [191](#)
 Syddall, Tom, [407](#), [411-2](#), [419](#), [422](#)
 Symonds, Stephen, [246](#)
 Tabley, Adam, [296](#)
 " Lord de, [84](#)
 Talbot, Lord, [183](#)
Talk o' th' Hill, [70](#)
 Tancrope, John, [181](#)
 Tankerville, Count, [289](#), [291-2](#), [295](#)
Tarporley, [214](#)

Tarvin, [234](#)
Tatton Mere, [265](#)
Taylor, Richard, [434](#)
Thalck, [70](#)
Thompson, Justice, [23](#)
Thornburgh, Ethelred, [273](#)
" William, [273](#)
Throgmorton, Nicholas, [155](#)
Throstle, Roger, [74](#)
Thurland Castle, [270](#)
Thyer, Robert, [426](#)
Tildesley, Thomas, [147](#)
Tinsley, Thomas, [471](#)
Tintagel Castle, [304](#)
Tiverton Town Field, [213](#)
Tower Green, [195](#)
Townley, Colonel, [397](#), [406](#), [408](#), [411](#), [413](#), [416](#), [422](#)
" Francis, [405](#), [407](#)
" *Hall*, [388](#)
Towton, Battle of, [322-3](#)
Trafford, Alice, [197](#)
" Cecil, [474](#)
" Edmund, [185](#), [193](#), [197](#), [319](#)
Traitors' Gate, [371](#)
Tunstall, [262](#)
Turner, Ellen, [380](#)
" J. Matthias, [93](#)
" William, [380](#)
Tutbury, [241](#)
Tyrconnell, Lord, [479](#)
Tyerman, John, [49](#)
Tyldesley, Adam, [456](#), [460](#)
" Agatha, [471](#)
" Alexander, [461](#)
" Alice, [461](#)
" Ann, [461](#), [465](#)
" Catharine, [470](#), [472](#)
" Charles, [471](#)
" Dorothy, [465](#), [472](#)
" Edward, [461-5](#), [470-2](#)
" Elizabeth, [461](#), [465](#)
" Fleetwood, [471](#)
" Geoffrey, [456](#), [461](#)
" Gilbert, [461](#)
" Henry, [456](#), [457](#), [460](#)
" Hugh, [457](#), [458](#)
" James, [461](#), [471-2](#)
" John, [457](#)
" Margaret, [342](#)
" Mary, [461](#)
" Nicholas, [342](#), [457](#)
" Ralph, [470](#)
" Richard, [457](#), [461](#)
" Thomas, [234](#), [456-60](#), [463](#), [465-473](#), [475](#)
" Thurston, [456-60](#), [472](#)
" Winifred, [471](#)
Tynsley, Robert, [461](#)
Ulverston, 1, [31](#), [42](#), [49](#), [251-2](#), [275](#)
" *Church*, [17](#), [20](#), [23](#), [30](#)
Vale Royal, Abbot of, [190](#)
Vaughan, C. J., [101](#)
Venables, Alexander, [181](#)
" Gilbert, [194](#), [299](#)
" John, [299](#)
" Thomas, [188](#)
" William, [298-9](#), [319](#)
Vere, Robert, [302](#)
Vernon, Dorothy, [70](#)
" Richard, [309](#)
Vicars, John, [208](#), [213](#), [234](#), [244](#)
Wade, Marshall, [411](#)
Wakefield, Edward Gibbon, [380](#)
Walker, John, [169](#)
" Mr., [121](#), [239](#)
Wall, John, [306](#)

Waller, James, [407](#)
 Walmsley, Bartholomew, [374](#)
 Walpole, [389](#), [422](#)
 Walton, [108](#)
 " William, [258](#), [272](#)
 Wansfell, [251](#)
 Wanstead, [201](#)
 Warburton, John, [185](#)
 " Moss, [185](#)
 " Peter, [75](#)
 " Richard, [315](#)
 " Thomas, [315](#)
 Ward, Baron, [244-5](#)
 " Lady, [246](#)
 " Mary, [78](#)
 " Theodore, [244-5](#)
 " Thomas, [78](#), [246](#)
 Wardley Hall, [449-452](#), [480-1](#)
 Warren, Edward, [346](#)
 " George, [391](#)
 " John, [339](#)
 " Laurence, [185](#), [189](#), [339](#)
 " Margery, [185](#)
 Warrington, [219](#), [220](#)
 Warwick, Earl of, [304](#), [326](#)
 Wase, Christopher, [168](#)
 Waters, Lucy, [366](#)
 Watson, John, [390-1](#)
 " Joseph, [391](#)
 Weaver, River, [220](#), [228](#)
 Webber, Mr., [239](#)
 Weever, [68](#), [75](#), [77](#)
 " Elizabeth, [69](#), [75](#)
 " Richard, [74-5](#)
 " Thomas, [69](#), [74](#)
 Wellington, Duke of, [91](#), [379](#)
 Wensleydale, [15](#)
 Wem, [223](#), [225](#)
 Werden, Mr., [211](#)
 West, Colonel, [23-4](#)
 " Wickham, [77](#)
 Westby, Thomas, [465](#)
 Westminster, [103](#)
 " Abbey, [192](#)
 " Abbot of, [192-3](#)
 Westmoreland, Earl of, [158](#)
 Weston, Francis, [195](#)
 Whalley, Abbot of, [454](#)
 " Vicar of, [152](#)
 Whitchurch, [220-1](#), [236](#)
 Whitelocke, [115](#)
 Whitney, Captain, [219](#)
 Whittal, Eleanor, [109](#), [118-9](#)
 " Hugh, [109](#), [118-9](#)
 " Ralph, [109](#), [169](#)
 Widders, Robert, [38](#)
 Wigan Church, [476](#)
 " Lane, Battle of, [468-9](#)
 Wilbraham, George Fortesque, [75](#)
 " Mr., [211](#), [220](#)
 " Randle, [77](#), [432](#)
 " Richard, [212](#), [221](#), [223](#)
 " Thomas, [228](#)
 Wilder Lads, [161](#)
 Wilders Moor, [161](#)
 Wilkinson, Mary Ann, [381](#)
 " John [381](#)
 Willoughby, Ambrose, [111](#), [118](#), [125](#)
 " Ann, [133](#)
 " Charles, [111](#), [117-9](#), [122](#), [125](#), [133](#)
 " Edward, [119](#), [122](#), [133](#)
 " Eleanor, [133](#)
 " Elizabeth, [117](#), [123](#), [125](#), [134](#)
 " Fortune, [125-6](#)
 " Francis, [111](#), [119](#), [122](#), [133](#)

" George, [117](#), [125](#)
 " Helena, [123-4](#), [134](#)
 " Henry, [111](#), [118](#), [125](#)
 " Hester, [133](#)
 " Honora, [108](#), [122](#), [133](#)
 " Hugh, [108](#), [110](#), [119](#), [123-4](#), [133](#)
 " John, [117](#)
 " Katharine, [135](#)
 " Lady, [116](#), [122](#)
 " Lord, [113-4](#), [116-7](#), [119-22](#), [124-5](#), [135](#)
 " Lord of Eresby, [135-9](#)
 " Thomas, [111](#), [118-9](#), [133](#), [169](#)
 " William, [111](#), [117](#), [125](#)
 Wilmslow, Parson of, [340](#)
Windermere, [250](#)
 Windham, Judge, [24](#)
Windleshaw, [81](#)
Winster, River, [253](#)
Winwick Church, [341](#)
Wirral Forest, [71](#)
Wizard, The, [62](#)
 Wodehouse, Charles Nourse, [381](#)
 " Emily Jane, [381](#)
 Wolsey, Cardinal, [192](#)
 Wolstenholme, Jane, [401](#)
Wolverhampton, [219](#)
 Wood, William, [124](#)
Woodhay, [212](#), [221-3](#), [229](#)
 Woodnoth, Marie, [446](#)
 " Mary, [446](#)
 " Jonathan, [446](#)
Worcester, [42](#)
 " Earl of, [195](#), [309](#)
 Workedley, Richard, [453](#)
 " Roger, [453](#)
 Workeslegh, Elias, [453](#)
 Workesley, Agnes, [453](#)
 " Geoffrey, [453-4](#)
 " Helias, [454](#)
 " Henry, [454](#)
 " Jordan, [454](#)
 " Richard, [453-4](#)
 " Robert, [454](#)
 " Roger, [453-4](#)
Worminghurst, [42](#)
 Worsley, Alexander, [473](#)
 " Charles, [455](#)
 " Elizabeth, [473](#)
 " General, [455](#)
 " *Hall*, [454](#)
 " Henry, [456](#)
 " Jordan, [456-7](#)
 " Margaret, [456](#)
 " Nicholas, [455](#)
 " Otwell, [455](#)
 " Ralph, [455-6](#)
 " Richard, [456](#), [461](#)
 Worth, John, [315](#)
 Worthington, Dr., [116](#)
Wrenbury, [227](#)
 Wrench, Edward, [246](#)
 " Edward Omaney, [246](#)
 Wright, Mrs., [478](#)
 Wroe, Dr., [121](#)
 Yeomans, Isabel, [39](#)
Yewbarrow, [253](#)
 York, Abbot of, [259](#)
 " Archbishop of, [151-3](#), [339](#)
 " *Castle*, [364](#)
 " Duke of, [319-20](#), [366](#), [390](#)
 Yorke, Rowland, [137](#)

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] Knight's "England.">
- [2] See pp. 7 and 8.
- [3] Sawrey was eventually drowned, an untimely end that was by some accounted a Divine judgment.
- [4] "The Fells, of Swarthmoor Hall," p. 139.
- [5] The fanatical outbreak of the Fifth Monarchy men in 1661 had been made the excuse for a proclamation for closing the conventicles of Quakers, Anabaptists, and other sectaries; and in 1662 an Act of Parliament was passed by which they were to be fined for assembling for public worship, and for a third offence to be banished.
- [6] *Præmunire* involved the forfeiture of all real estate during life, personal estates for ever, and imprisonment during the King's pleasure.
- [7] From a rare broadsheet in the British Museum, issued, as it would seem, in 1683, for the use of the Constables and Officers of the Peace, we find specified the nine following "unlawful meetings" of the people called Quakers: Bull and Mouth; Devonshire Buildings; Gracechurch Street; Quaker Street, in Spitalfields; the Peel, Clerkenwell; Tothill Street, Westminster; Savoy, near the church; Horsleydown; and Winchester Park, Southwark.
- [8] Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity, p. 258, ed. 1872.
- [9] A phrase that in those days signified a merchant or wholesale dealer, *i.e.*, a dealer in gross.
- [10] It is worthy of note that, according to Earwaker, while Mr. Turner was resident upon his benefice at Wilmslow he had under his tuition the present Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.A., the Bishop of Sodor and Man, and Sir C. A. Wood.
- [11] The occasion was that when Charles, untaught by the signs of the times, with almost incredible infatuation, accelerated the fatal crisis by going down to the House on the 4th January, 1641-2, and attempting to seize the five members of the Commons—Pym, Hollis, Hampden, Hazlerig, and Strode, on the charge of traitorously endeavouring to deprive him of his regal power, and subvert the fundamental laws and government of the kingdom.
- [12] Hunter's "Life of Oliver Heywood," p. 63.
- [13] Worthington's Diary, Chet. Soc.
- [14] William, third Lord Brereton, of Leighlin, in Ireland, and Brereton, in Cheshire, who married Frances, daughter of Lord Willoughby, and died in London, March 17, 1679.
- [15] Archæologia, V. v.
- [16] The Sir William Stanley here named was the eldest son of Sir Rowland Stanley, of Hooton, in Wirral, Cheshire, and the one who afterwards covered himself with infamy by his shameless violation of trust in the betrayal and surrender of Deventer to the enemies of his country while holding the commission of the Queen and charged with its defence—an act of perfidy that was only equalled by Cardin Allen's (a Lancashire man) attempted justification of it. He had accompanied the English auxiliaries under Leicester, and in a few weeks after the Earl's return to England he and Rowland Yorke entered into a treacherous correspondence with Baptisti Tasse, governor of Zutphen, and began to propose their measures for delivering to him the important fortresses that had been entrusted to their care, and in the beginning of February both Deventer and the fort opposite Zutphen were given up to the Spaniards. Stanley is said to have been concerned in Babington's conspiracy in favour of Mary Queen of Scots, and was probably betrayed by a dread of discovery into this unworthy conduct.
- [17] It is on record that, so late as the reign of Elizabeth, of the 30 "sworn men," a kind of select committee chosen by the inhabitants to take charge of the affairs of the parish of Kirkham, only one could write, and consequently in his absence the business of the parish had not unfrequently to be postponed.
- [18] The fire was really caused by the carelessness of the sexton, but it happening to be a tempestuous day the catastrophe was by him confidently affirmed to be caused by lightning, and was generally believed to the hour of his death; but he then confessed the truth of it, after which "the burning of St. Paul's by lightning" was left out of our common almanacks.
- [19] These desecrations, notwithstanding Pilkington's denunciation, continued long after, for 60 years later Bishop Earl in his "Micosmography," says:—"Paul's walk is the land's epitome, or you may call it the lesser isle of Great Britain. It is the great exchange of all discourse, and no business whatever but is here stirring and afoot.... It is the general mint of all famous lies, which are here, like the legends of popery, first coined and stamped in the church. All inventions are emptied here and not a few pockets. The best sign of a temple in it is that it is the thieves' sanctuary." The place was the common resort and lounge for idlers and hunters after news, wits and gallants, cheats, usurers and knights of the post; the font itself being used as a counter. It was here that Sir Nicholas Throgmorton held a conference with the emissaries of Wyatt; here, too, the bravoos who murdered Arden, of Faversham, were hired; Captain Bobadil was a "Paul's man," and Shakespeare's Falstaff bought Bardolph in Paul's.
- [20] Wordsworth, in "The White Doe of Rylstone."

- [21] It is a singular fact that even at the present day the wife of a bishop has absolutely no rank or title whatever, and is the only wife in English society who reflects none of the lustre of her husband's dignity, nor appropriates even by courtesy the feminine of his masculine titles. The wife of every other lord is addressed as "My lady," whilst she is never anything more than plain "Mrs."
- [22] Edited by the Rev. James Schofield, M.A., Regius Professor of Greek, Cambridge.
- [23] Brereton's Travels, Chet. Soc. v. I, p. 122.
- [24] Ibid. p. 161.
- [25] There is a tradition, unsupported, however, by any evidence, that so many of the burgesses of Macclesfield fell at Flodden that the survivors had to petition the King to grant the continuance of their charter, though they could not muster a sufficient number of aldermen to constitute a corporation.
- [26] Hynde Swyer—a courteous esquire.
- [27] Robert Fouleshurst of Crewe.
- [28] Kere—return.
- [29] It is an absurd mistake to suppose that Richard wore the Royal crown upon his helmet during the battle; he was too experienced a soldier to put on such a headgear, even supposing the crown could have been attached to the helmet. The story may have arisen from his wearing some distinguishing ornament, resembling a crown, such as was worn by Henry V. upon his helmet at the battle of Agincourt, and which then served to break the force of the stroke of the Duke of Alençon's battle axe.
- [30] *i.e.*, Fierce men, proud, furious.
- [31] The eagle's foot—"A fote of the faireste foule," was a cognizance of the Stanleys, and three eagles' feet were borne upon the shield of Sir John.
- [32] "Nooks and Corners of Lancashire," p. 314.
- [33] It may be mentioned that at his death, in 1637, Jonn Paget was succeeded by his brother Thomas, "a man of much frowardness," and able to create "much unquietness," as Henry Newcome affirms, who had been minister of Blackley, in Manchester parish, but deprived in 1631 by Dr. Bridgman, Bishop of Chester, when, to escape the fines imposed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, he fled to Holland and joined his brother, whom he eventually succeeded in the pastorate of the English Church. Brook, in his "Lives of the Puritans," says he "most probably spent the remainder of his days there," but this was not so; in 1646 he returned to England, was appointed to the rectory of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury, and remained there until 1656, when he was presented by the Commonwealth party to the rich rectory of Stockport. Thomas Paget's son, Nathan Paget, who practised as a physician in London, was the intimate friend of John Milton, and cousin to the great epic poet's fourth wife, Elizabeth Minshull, and also of Thomas Minshull, the Manchester apothecary and noted Nonconformist, whose name, as well as that of his residence, Chorlton Hall, in Manchester, is still perpetuated in Minshull and Chorlton streets, where he at that time owned considerable property.
- [34] The "Mr. Urione Brereton," who, according to the Cheadle registers, was buried there "Jan. 6, 1631," must have been another member of the family.
- [35] Peter Venables had been elected with Sir Wm. Brereton, but, being a Royalist, he withdrew, and was succeeded by George Booth.
- [36] An old portrait in oil of the loyal and intrepid mayor taken in 1657, when he was 61 years of age, was presented some years ago by Mr. J. Edisbury, of Bersham, near Wrexham, to the Water Tower Museum, at Chester, where it is now preserved.
- [37] Richard Percival, linen webster, of Kirman's Hulme, is said to have been the first person whose blood was shed in the great Civil War. The Manchester Register thus records his burial: "1642, Julie 18, Richard Parcivall, of Grindlowe."
- [38] This work, which has been commonly recognised as Burghall's, can be no longer attributed to him, the *bonâ-fide* author, as Mr. Hall, the historian of Nantwich, has recently shown, being Thomas Malbon, of Nantwich.
- [39] Sergeant-major Lothian.
- [40] Congleton has been noted for centuries for its confectionery and for the excellence of its sack. Among the recent celebrations was the hospitable reception given by the corporation to the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Francis Graham Moon, Bart., in 1855, when the entertainment well represented the ancient festivity. On the chairman's table lay the gold and silver maces of the borough, and capacious china corporation bowls full of sack, and flanked by large old two-handled silver flagons by which the sack was gradually drawn off and circulated among the company. On every plate was placed a "count cake," and the centres of the tables were covered with delicate cakes and confectionery, among which was pre-eminent the famous Congleton gingerbread and a profusion of choice fruit. The brewage of the sack was entrusted to Joseph Speratti, who boasts that he alone possesses the true recipe.
- [41] By that fatal coincidence which arrayed friends and kinsmen under the opposite banners in the contest, Sir William Brereton, both at Nantwich and Chester, the greatest scenes of his exertions, was opposed to Lord Byron, whose family was nearly allied to that of the Parliamentary general, his brother, and ultimate heir, Sir Richard Byron, equally distinguished as a Loyalist, having married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Booth, and the sister of Lady Brereton,—Ormerod._

- [42] Ormerod (Hist. Ches. v. 2), says the minister who ejected Seddon was "unquestionably" Richard Banner, but this is an error; the one whose "name and character" William Seddon's son "entirely forgot" was none other than John Murcot, the son of a Warwickshire attorney, and well known in the literature of Nonconformity. He was ordained by Warden Heyricke and others at Manchester, February 9th, 1647, and preceded Henry Necome as reader to the celebrated John Ley at Astbury. He had been there only a short time when he removed to Seddon's vicarage house at Eastham, and before he had been there a year he received a "call" to be minister of West Kirby, but, being dissatisfied with the condition of his congregation and refusing an invitation to settle at Chester, he crossed over to Dublin, became pastor of an Independent congregation, and died there before the close of the year 1654. Richard Banner succeeded him at Eastham.
- [43] Besides the Puritan brother Peter, who was an officer in the army of the Parliament, there was a third, a Ralph Seddon, M.A., who resided some time as probationer with the Rev. John Angier, at Denton, in Manchester parish, in order that he might have "the benefit of his grave example, pious instruction, and useful converse." He succeeded Adam Martindale as pastor of the Independent Church at Gorton, whence he removed to Langley, in Derbyshire, whence he was ejected in 1662.
- [44] It is from a portrait by Vicars that our illustration is taken.
- [45] The Rev. Edmund Law, who was curate of Staveley from 1693 to 1742, and master of the school there, resided at Buck Crag, in Lindale, about four miles distant. It has been computed that he must have walked 2,504 miles every year, and during the time he was curate and schoolmaster 122,696 miles, or a distance nearly equal to five times the circumference of the globe; and this for a pittance of £20 a year. Mr. Stockdale relates that about the year 1818 a grandson of the humble curate visited the house at Buck Crag accompanied by his secretary and a posse of clergymen, examined every part of the premises, and overwhelmed the then occupant with questions; the poor man when he had recovered from his amazement exclaiming in the vernacular "t' bishop inquir't t' dog tail oot a-joint."
- [46] From the Cymric *Caer*, an enclosure or camp, and *mell* a bare hill or fell.
- [47] Before the dissolution of the priory the canons of Cartmel maintained a guide to conduct travellers across the broad expanse of sand left by each receding tide, paid him out of "Peter's Pence," and, in addition, gave him the benefit of their prayers. Since the suppression of their house the expenses of the "carter," as he is locally designated, have been charged upon the revenue of the Duchy of Lancaster, but the office is now almost a sinecure.
- [48] The "sworn men," which answered in some degree to a select vestry, was an institution common in many parts of North Lancashire, though rarely met with in other parts of the kingdom.
- [49] In the churchwardens' accounts there is an item of 4s. for "painting the umbrella." In the church books of Prestbury, in Cheshire, there is an entry of a payment made in 1745 of £3 for an umbrella, from which it would seem that the article was not uncommon in country churches.
- [50] Chronicles, p. 376.
- [51] Froissart's Chronicles, I, p. 157.
- [52] The particulars of this grant are given in a paper read before the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, February 20th, 1879, by Mr. J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A., of Thelwalls, near Warrington.
- [53] Piers Legh was Chief Justice of Macclesfield Hundred, but the office of Chief Justice of Chester had not then been created.
- [54] Archæologia, v. xx.
- [55] Clifton, near Halton, was the property of Sir Peter Legh's mother, and there Sir Peter seems to have resided in the earlier years of his married life, for, in the proof of age of his son, taken in 1436, one of the witnesses, John de Worth, testified that he "was at Clifton, near Halton, where the said Peter (the son) was born; and when he was baptised in the church of Runcorn he held a burning wax candle in his hand near the font in which he was baptised."
- [56] It has been computed that the number of Englishmen slain at Towton exceeded the sum of those who fell at Vimeria, Talavera, Salamanca, Vittoria, and Waterloo.
- [57] Sir Peter Leycester affirms that Peter Legh was made a banneret upon the field at Wakefield, but Dr. Whitaker, with much show of reason, argues that from the hasty nature of the fight there the Duke of York could hardly have found time to confer the honour upon the field, and the opinion of Whitaker is strengthened by the fact that the annuity of xxli (£20), granted to him for life by the Duke of York out of the "issues, profitez, and renews of the lordship of Wakefield" was made in the name of "Perez Legh Esquier."
- [58] Warrington in 1465. Chet. Soc. v. xvii.
- [59] Redland Heath, on which the battle was fought, is three miles from Bosworth.
- [60] The bells were afterwards removed to Norbury and recast.
- [61] Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Life of Himself, p. 16.
- [62] Mr. Legh's removal to Chester is referred to in the following Treasury order signed by

William III.—"To Robert Lord Lucas, governor of our Tower of London, in satisfaction of so much expended and disbursed by him in sending down the gentlemen (late prisoners in the Tower) into Cheshire and Lancashire—to wit, Caryl Lord Visc. Molyneux, Sir Thomas Clifton, Sir William Gerard, Sir Roland Stanley, *Peter Lea of Lyme*, Bartholomew Walmsley, and William Dicconson, Esq.—and all other charges and expenses of the guards and attendants.

- [63] After the defeats at Preston and Sheriff Muir, which destroyed the hopes of the Pretender, the members of this Cheshire club "unanimously agreed to commemorate the fortunate decision," as they phrased it, which had been come to on Peter Legh's recommendation, by having their several portraits painted life-size. The pictures remained at Ashley Hall, near Bowdon, until about twenty years ago, when they were removed by the late Lord Egerton, to Tatton, where they now grace the upper panels of the staircase. The members of the club were Thomas Assheton, of Ashley; Sir Richard Grosvenor, of Eaton; James (Barry) Earl of Barrymore, of Marbury; Charles Hurleston of Newton; Amos Meredith, of Henbury; Alexander Radcliffe, of Foxdenton (Lancashire); Robert Cholmondeley, of Holford; John Warren, of Poynton; Henry Legh, of High Legh; and Peter Legh, of Lyme. The club was dissolved in 1720.
- [64] Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the perpetrator of this notorious outrage, died at Wellington, New Zealand, May 16, 1862. In after life he rendered good service to his country, and engaged in enterprises much more honourable than the one that cast such a stain upon his earlier career. He was largely instrumental in forming the important colonies of South Australia and New Zealand, and afterwards acted as private secretary to the Earl of Durham while Governor-general of Canada.
- [65] Mr. John Paul Rylands, F.S.A., of Thelwall, has made a careful examination of these windows, and with painstaking zeal, identified almost every coat and quartering. A list of the shields, as identified by him, is given in the second volume of Mr. Earwaker's "East Cheshire," and some interesting particulars are supplied in Dr. Renaud's "Ancient Parish of Prestbury."
- [66] Mr. John Dickenson, a wealthy merchant, who lodged and entertained the Pretender on the occasion of his visit to Manchester, purchased, in 1745 the Birch Hall estate, in Rusholme. His grandson, John Dickenson, had an only daughter, Louisa Frances Mary Dickenson, who married General Sir William Anson, Bart., K.C.B., a distinguished Peninsular officer, and by him was mother of Sir John William Hamilton Anson, who was killed in the railway accident at Wigan, August 2nd, 1873, and of the Venerable and Rev. George Henry Greville Anson, rector of Birch and Archdeacon of Manchester. It is stated that the bed on which the Pretender lay while Mr. Dickenson's guest, was removed to Birch Villa, where it remained until the death of Miss Dickenson, when it was sold.
- [67] Dr. Deacon's tomb and strange epitaph, describing him as "the greatest of sinners and the most unworthy of Primitive Bishops," may still be seen in the north-east corner of St. Ann's churchyard.
- [68] It is said that on the occasion referred to a soldier approached with a drawn sword and demanded that in the prayer for the King he should substitute James for George, when the intrepid divine, whose loyalty was afterwards rewarded with the Wardenship of Manchester, unhesitatingly read the prayer for King George and the House of Brunswick.
- [69] Ensign Maddock, who was admitted as evidence for the Crown.
- [70] It was to Dr. Hall, whilst paying his addresses to the lady who became his wife, that Byrom addressed the following epigram:—
- "A lady's love is like a candle snuff,
That's quite extinguished by a gentle puff
But, with a hearty blast or two, the dame,
Just like a candle, bursts into a flame."
- [71] The name is evidently a compound of the Celtic *Mole*, a hill, and its Saxon equivalent *Cop*, of which the modern designation is only a corruption.
- [72] "Kimber's Barons," vol. i., p. 84, Lanc. Famil. MS.
- [73] In pre-Reformation times wax was extensively used in the churches, and it was not uncommon for offerings of it to be made at the altar. Dr. Rock, in his "Church of our Fathers," says it was not unusual for our forefathers to make a vow when sick to offer to the Church, in case of recovery, a wax candle of their own height or that of the diseased limb from which they were suffering.
- [74] Cornet Alexander Rigby was of the house of Layton, near Wigan, but, though bearing the same name, was in no way connected with Colonel Sir Alexander Rigby, who rendered such distinguished service in Lancashire to the cause of the Parliament.
- [75] The entry is thus recorded in the burial register—"1714-15, January 26. Thos. Tinsley, of Lodge."
- [76] Seacombe attributed the execution of the Earl of Derby to the "inveterate malice" of Bradshaw, originated, he says, because of the Earl's having refused him the Vice-chamberlainship.
- [77] Some authorities give the date of her death as 1786, but the name is not mentioned in any of the family deeds later than 1742, and there is good reason to believe that her decease occurred in that year, or shortly after.

Variations in spelling, punctuation and hyphenation have been retained, but numerous minor typos and errors of punctuation have been corrected.

Page xv "DEAN OF CHESTER, The Very Rev. the, The Deanery, Chester." extra the, removed.

Page 97 Memorial to Edward Stanley. The first and last lines are printed vertically on either side in the original.

Page 116 Duplicate "tidings" removed.

Index reference to Jordan Worsley corrected to p454.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HISTORIC SITES OF LANCASHIRE AND
CHESHIRE ***

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