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A HISTORY OF DERBYSHERE.

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POPULAR COUNTY HISTORIES.

A

HISTORY OF DERBYSHIRE.

BY

JOHN PENDLETON,

AUTHOR OF 'OLD AND NEW CHESTERFIELD.'

LONDON :

ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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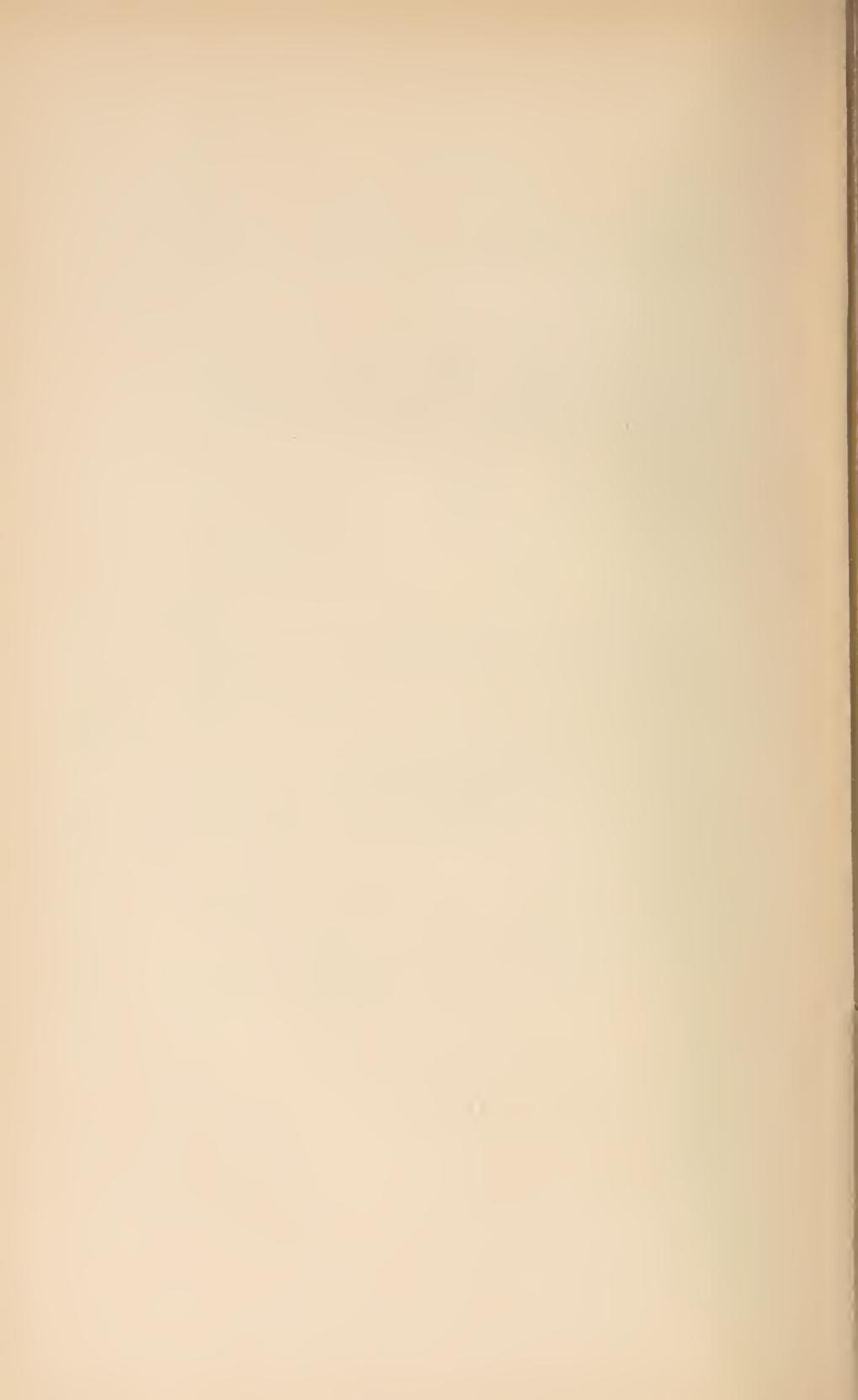
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INTRODUCTION.

IF Oliver Goldsmith's 'Discontented Wanderer' had continued his travels into Derbyshire, he would have been a happier man. The modest loveliness of the lowland meadows and country lanes would have calmed his querulous spirit. The wilder and grander beauty of the northern part of the county would certainly have excited his admiration even more than the writings of Confucius, which seem to have been his only luggage. True, he could not have met with such wonders as Othello spoke of to Desdemona—

‘The anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders ;’

but there are some strange sights in the Peak that could not have failed to excite his curiosity and admiration. Side by side with the flashing Dove, the rippling Wye, and the broader waters of the Derwent, are grotesquely shaped caverns, walled by glistening spar, and roofed by snow-white stalactites.

Great limestone crags, on whose rugged breasts lichens, and ferns, and wild flowers find scanty foot-hold, rear their huge heads high above the eddying streams and tender greenery of the picturesque dales in which they stand, like giants on guard against some Titanic foe. And away on the dark moorland that borders glen, and gorge, and wide-sweeping valley, are fantastic masses of hoary gritstone, within the grim circles of which the Britons gathered and buried their fallen heroes.

An erratic divine, bubbling with admiration for Derbyshire, once stated that it was a goodly land, where faction and division could not thrive, and the people delighted in love-feasts! The county has not, however, always had this character for amiability and peace. The successive races of Roman, Saxon, and Norman did rude work among the inhabitants in the earlier days of its history, and at a later period the sword of the Royalist and the pole-axe of the Puritan were far from idle, for the Civil War raged here as fiercely as in any other part of the land.

With one, at least, of the greatest events in England's history, Derbyshire is linked, for in it the Revolution of 1688 was planned, the plotters meeting secretly at Whittington, in a cottage that still stands, apparently so loth to fall into ruins that it might be conscious of the part it played in elevating the Prince of Orange to the throne.

The humble dwelling, old and moss-grown, is, however, only one of many historic houses in this

county. Philip Kinder, who, in the sixteenth century, said the country women were ‘chaste and sober, very diligent in their housewifery, hating idleness, and loving and obeying their husbands,’ also remarked that ‘no countie in England hath so manie princelie habitations,’ and there was no exaggeration in this assertion. Derbyshire, so interesting by reason of its scenery, antiquities, peculiar strata, rare fossils, and stores of lead, iron, and coal, is rich in castles and mansions associated not merely with legend and romance, but with the names of celebrated men and famous women.

‘Peveril’s place in the Peke,’ though shattered and roofless, still clings to its precarious site high above the mouth of Castleton Cavern; Haddon Hall, grey and ivy-clad, yet exists to tell the tale of Sir George Vernon’s hospitality, and to give reality to the familiar love-story that ended in the flight of his daughter, Dorothy Vernon. Chatsworth, the home of painting, sculpture, and literature, is associated with the lives of warriors and statesmen, and with a Queen’s captivity. The fortress at Bolsover, with its thick walls and pillared chambers, carries the mind back to the time when the amusements of the nobility were the chase and the tournament—to the period of the Conquest when many of the Saxons, ‘utterly refusing to sustain such an intolerable yoke of thraldom as was daily laid upon them by the Normans, chose rather to leave all, both goods and lands, and, after the manner of outlaws, got them to the woods with their wives, children,

and servants ;' and the ruin on the grass-grown terrace close by the turreted castle is quite as eloquent of pageant as the other part of the castle is of strife, for Charles I. feasted and revelled in its banqueting-hall.

Only domestic feuds have disturbed the serenity of Hardwick Hall; and this mansion, neither mutilated by soldiery nor dismantled for some senseless whim, is as perfect now as on the day it left its builder's hands. The Elizabethan mansion raised by 'Bess of Hardwick' to allay the superstitious fear created in her mind by a gipsy's prophecy, is 'a picture in stone.' Lord Bacon did not like it; and grumbling about its numerous windows, said: 'One cannot tell where to become to be out of the sun or cold ;' but his petulant complaint has not interfered with its beauty, and the great house, mellowed by time, and hallowed by many historic memories, is one of the most attractive mansions in the county—a house of vast, stately rooms, adorned with curious carvings, old paintings, rare tapestry, and needlework done by Mary Stuart, about whom we are told, 'All day she wrought with her nydill, and the diversity of the colours made the work seem less tedious ; but she contynued so long at it, till very payne made her to give over.' Wingfield Manor, again, is another of the historic houses in which the county is so exceptionally rich ; in it Mary Queen of Scots found another of her many prison-houses, which she only left on her

last journey to Tutbury, Chartley, Fotheringay, and the scaffold. Elvaston Castle, the seat of the Stanhopes, Earls of Harrington; Bretby Castle, owned by the same family, and known to history as connected with the ‘Earl of Chesterfield’s Letters;’ Melbourne Hall, from which the title of Lord Melbourne, and through that the name of the Australian capital Melbourne, is derived, are also conspicuous among the noted houses of the county.

Derbyshire has not only a history, but a literature of its own—a literature of ballads and songs, which, as is shown by the late Mr. Jewitt, in his ‘Ballads and Songs of Derbyshire,’ is whimsically imaginative, humorous, and pathetic. It is a county prolific in traditions and in legendary lore; and many customs, simple and quaint, prevail in its out-of-the-way villages. Even superstition lurks in the more remote parts of the Peak, where to some minds a white cricket leaping across the hearth bodes ill-fortune, and the howling of the Gabriel hounds is the herald of death. But in marked contrast to the ignorant credulity that exists off some of the beaten tracks, Derbyshire’s real, practical life stands out boldly. To this county the first introduction of the silk manufacture into England owes its origin; to it the world should be thankful for the invention of the cotton ‘spinning Jenny;’ and it was for a long time the most successful centre of porcelain manufacture, producing the finest wares, perhaps, of any locality.

Indeed, Derbyshire is insignificant neither in inventive power nor manufacturing progress, and reveals, like Yorkshire, as dauntless a courage in the face of its mining dangers as that of the bravest knight who ever rode with visor down, and lance in rest, to perilous encounter.





HISTORY OF DERBYSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

Derby—Its Early History—A Brave Princess—Pestilence—Some Important Events—Notable Buildings and Strange Stories—Celebrated Citizens—A Humorous Ballad—Modern Progress.

REPTON, the little Derbyshire village, noted for its ancient school—that successfully vies with those of Eton, Harrow, and Rugby—was once the capital of Mercia and the burial-place of Mercia's kings. But while it has for many generations been sleeping peacefully, like a wearied child, or a patriarch worn out with life's struggles, Derby, the county town, has been gradually but surely increasing, and steadily revealing the vitality that makes great cities. Standing on the western banks of the Derwent, in the heart of the Midlands, it is known as 'The Gateway to the Peak,' and not inaptly so, for it lies on the borders of the county's loveliest scenery—the huge limestone rocks, and fern-sprinkled chasms, and quiet restful valleys that were in Lord Byron's eyes as picturesque as Switzerland.

'A buck couchant in a park' is the chief feature of the borough arms; but there is uncertainty as to how the town got its name. The Saxons and the Danes knew it as *Northworthoigie*, the northern market, and *Deoraby*, the abode of deer; some students say the name comes from the Celtic, *Dwr*, water, and the A.S., *bye*, a habitation; and other philologists cling to the belief of its derivation from *Derventio*, the name given by the Romans to their station at Little Chester; or *Derwentby*, the town by the Derwent side.

Derby is a sort of Methuselah among towns, with this exception—it grows younger and more vigorous as its gets older.

Centuries ago the rapidly expanding borough was noted for its wool and malt marts, and its brewings of 'Darby Ale.'

As far back as 874, and again in 918, it was familiar with strife, and was the arena of rival invaders. The Danes, giving free license to their rapacity, had early conquered the place; but Ethelfleda, daughter of King Alfred, and princess and leader of the Mercians, bringing her forces across the river near the site of St. Mary's Bridge, fought a desperate battle, and not only drove the Danes behind their castle walls, but battered their stronghold and made the chieftain fly. It was not, however, until some years later that Derby was entirely liberated from the irksome dominion of the Danes by Athelstan's brother, King Edmund, and their acts of cruelty were well remembered, for it was long the custom of the Saxons to terrify their

children into good behaviour by saying ‘The Danes are coming !’

Notwithstanding the anxiety and fear prevailing among the inhabitants at this troublous period, they did not lose sight of ‘the main chance.’ A royal mint was established ; like the builders of the Temple, the Saxons fought with one hand and worked with the other, and eventually commerce won, developing even beyond payment in kind, for coins of Athelstan’s and Edgar’s reigns have been discovered, and they bear the name ‘Deoraby.’

In 1066, when King Harold vainly endeavoured to stop William the Conqueror’s progress, Derby sent her sons freely to defend the land, and the town was drained of its best archers, many of whom fell at the battle of Hastings.

In 1204 Derby (which had been a royal borough since Edward the Confessor’s time) was granted additional privileges, ‘such as Nottingham had,’ and these included the monopoly of dyeing cloth, the creation of a merchant guild, and the freedom of serfs unclaimed by their lords after one year’s residence.

In 1257 the burgesses joyfully paid ten marks into the royal exchequer for the luxury of expelling the Jews from the town ; and early in the same century they sent members to Parliament, the first representatives of whom any returns have been found being Johannes de la Cornere and Radulphus de Makeneye, who were sent as representatives to the Parliament of 1295.

The Sheriff of Nottingham and Derby, in the reign

of Edward III., was commanded to provide 200 white bows and 500 arrows for the King's use in the French wars.

In 1556 Joan Waste, a poor blind woman, learnt that the bitterest of all persecution is religious persecution, for she was burnt to death at Windmill Pit because of 'certain heresies.'

In 1585, Mary Queen of Scots rested a night at Derby, on her way, as a captive, from Wingfield Manor to Tutbury Castle ; and there have been many other royal visits both before and since that time. Charles I. visited the borough in 1635, and the corporation gave the Earl of Newcastle, by whom he was attended, a fat ox, a calf, six fat sheep, and a purse of money, 'that he might keep hospitality.'

And in 1665 came a more powerful visitor, bringing death and sorrow as his attendants. That visitor was the Plague, and the 'Headless Cross,' still preserved in the Arboretum, tells its own story by the following engraved inscription : 'Headless Cross or market-stone: This stone formed part of an ancient cross at the upper end of Friargate, and was used by the inhabitants of Derby as a market-stone during the visitation of the Plague, 1665.' Hutton, speaking of the calamity, says : 'The town was forsaken ; the farmers declined the market-place ; and grass grew upon that spot which had furnished the supports of life. To prevent a famine, the inhabitants erected at the top of Nun's Green, one or two hundred yards from the buildings, now Friar Gate, what bore the name of the Headless Cross, consisting of about four quad-

rangular steps, covered in the centre with one large stone. . . . Hither the market people, having their mouths primed with tobacco as a preservative, brought their provisions, stood at a distance from their property, and at a greater from the townspeople with whom they were to traffic. The buyer was not suffered to touch any of the articles before purchase, but when the agreement was finished he took the goods and deposited the money in a vessel filled with vinegar set for the purpose.*

In the Civil War, Derby gave comparatively little countenance to the Royalists, and Sir John Gell, who was so eager to harass King Charles's forces, had pretty much his own way in Cromwell's cause.

The Earl of Devonshire in 1688, after the secret meeting at the little roadside ale-house, the 'Cock and Pynot,' known in later history as the Revolution House, at Whittington, chose Derby as the place in which to express his sentiments in favour of the Prince of Orange. With his retinue of 500 men he marched boldly into the market-place, and declared that they were prepared to their utmost 'to defend the Protestant religion, the laws of the kingdom, and the rights and the liberties of the people.' Yet, strange as it may seem in the light of after events, the mayor was afraid to billet the Prince's soldiers, and they were, according to Simpson's History, taken to

* The same historian mentions as a singular fact that the Plague 'never attempted the premises of a tobacconist, a tanner, or a shoemaker.'

their quarters by ‘a spirited constable of the name of Cooke.’

In 1745 Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the ‘Young Pretender,’ penetrated as far as Derby and on to the picturesque old bridge at Swarkestone, from which familiar angling haunt he began the memorable retreat that ended in the battle of Culloden, and his own flight to the rocks and caverns of the Scottish coast.

The rising of poor stockingers and hand-loom weavers in Derbyshire in 1817 makes a sad page in the county’s history. Of work there was little ; men wanted bread, and they went about demanding it with pikes and swords in their hands. Jeremiah Brandreth, their leader, incited them to violence, saying

‘No bloody soldiers must we dread,
We must turn out and fight for bread.
The time is come, you plain must see,
The Government opposed must be.’

An insurrection, so foolish that it might have been born in Barnaby Rudge’s brain, was planned. Nottingham and Derby were to be attacked ; but after the rash men had forcibly entered several farm-houses, committed a few acts of pillage, and shot a labourer, their foolish enterprise came to a sorry ending. The most prominent insurgents were arrested and tried for high treason. ‘Some of them appeared in court in smock frocks, and others evinced by their clothing that they were the sons of poverty.’ Misery had rendered these men desperate, and all were pitied. But pity did not save them ; and according to one chronicler, when Brandreth, the ringleader, had been executed,

'a grim fellow stood up, and raised high with both his hands the head of the chief criminal, pronouncing, in different directions, "The head of a traitor."

The Reform Bill riots in 1831 resulted in the destruction of much property in Derby; the flood in 1842 was also very disastrous; but in 1846 a still greater hardship (in the opinion of many) had to be borne—the Shrovetide football carnival was suppressed. Great was the disappointment at the mandate forbidding the historic game. Football was the breath of life to the vigorous men and youths of the town, and they fought as heroically for a goal as the Athenians did for a laurel wreath. Business was suspended for this battle of strength, agility, and endurance, between the parishes of All Saints' and St. Peter's. And what stern resolve, and persistent effort, and reckless daring were exhibited by the football champions, who, ignoring bruised shins and broken heads, sometimes swam along the freezing Derwent, or penetrated into the slimy drains of the town in their anxiety to obtain the victory! And how sweet was the victory!—the conquerors became almost delirious with delight; and 'there is a tradition that on one occasion, when St. Peter's men and lads both won, the joy was so great, that both balls were hung by blue ribbons on one of the pinnacles of St. Peter's church tower.'

'Time consecrates; and what is gray with age becomes religion.' So says Schiller, and the sentiment is particularly applicable to many noted buildings in Derby. Its ancient castle, dismantled by the

Saxons in 918, has become as intangible as ‘a castle in the air;’ its old county gaol, erected ‘in a river, and exposed to damp and filth, as if they meant to drown the culprit before they hanged him,’ has been superseded by a more modern and better arranged structure. But here and there in the rapidly improving town remain, almost untouched by the march of progress, many mansions, houses, churches and other buildings that carry the mind back to the past, with its ruder customs and oftentimes stirring history. One of the oldest is the time-worn Free School, in St. Peter’s Churchyard, founded in 1160 by Walter Durdant, Bishop of Coventry, who established it in connection with the monastery of St. Helen, which had been founded by Robert de Ferrers and removed to Darley, where a fine abbey was raised. When the Liversage Charity Trustees laid down a new floor some time back, several skeletons were found beneath the plaster, and there is little doubt that the playground was formerly a part of the churchyard. St. Peter’s, close by, with its gray tower and crumbling walls and creeping ivy, quite comes up to Schiller’s ideal. It is one of the most picturesque churches in the county, and were it in some quiet old-world village, instead of on the borders of Derby’s chief street, one could easily imagine it had inspired Gray’s elegy. The Gothic edifice, given in the reign of Stephen to Darley Abbey, is an interesting study to the antiquary ; and in the chancel is a fine old Flemish chest, that looks as if it contained faded manuscripts and worn charters telling of its ancient

foundations. In 1530 ‘Robert Liversage, a dyer of Derby,’ says Hutton, ‘founded a chapel in this church, and ordered divine service to be said once a week, on Friday ; in which were to attend thirteen people, of either sex, each to be rewarded with a silver penny ; as much, then, as would have supported a frugal person. The porches, like those of Bethesda, were crowded with people, who waited for the moving of the doors, as the others for that of the waters. While the spiritual serjeant beat up for volunteers at a penny advance, recruits would never be wanting. A sufficient congregation was not doubted ; nor their quarrelling for the money. The priest found his hearers in that disorder which his prayers could not rectify ; they frequently fought ; but not the good fight of faith.’

The bridge chapel of St. Mary’s, a relic of the period when travellers stopped awhile to pray for their own welfare, is another of the older existing remains of the town. Of it the Rev. J. C. Cox, in his interesting work, ‘The Churches of Derbyshire,’ says : ‘The bridge of St. Mary’s would undoubtedly in the old days have a gate-house, for the purposes of defence as well as for the levying of tolls and other town dues, and it seems to us that this stood at the left-hand side of the chapel on leaving the town, with one side built into or formed by the chapel itself. It would be on this gate-house, if not on the actual chapel, that the heads and quarters of the priests who were martyred at Derby, on July 25, 1588, were impaled, and shortly afterwards piously

stolen for burial by two “resolute Catholic gentlemen.”

Exeter House, in Full Street, where the Pretender stayed two nights, was thoughtlessly pulled down in 1854 or '55; and Babington House, that sheltered Mary Queen of Scots on her journey from Wingfield Manor to Tutbury, has also been destroyed; but Derby has not lost all its old houses.

In the Wardwick is the remaining half of a charming old-fashioned dwelling, dated 1611, the other highly picturesque half of which was, not many years back, pulled down for the formation of a new street—Becket Street; in Tenant Street is a highly picturesque Elizabethan habitation; and around the Market Place are several business places, originally the mansions of noble families. One of these houses, noted for its painted ceiling, is also ‘historic on account of rendering quarters to the heroic ladies who followed the hazardous fortunes of bonnie Prince Charlie. Among these were Lady Ogilvie and Mrs. Murray, who were taken prisoners after the battle of Culloden in their ball-dresses, as they were about to celebrate the victory of the Young Chevalier’—a victory that turned out to be a decisive defeat when the truth was known.

Both Thackeray and George Augustus Sala have written gracefully of the time when the stage coach, the sedan-chair, and the link-boy were conspicuous features of English life, and the old assembly-room at Derby was in the zenith of its career when these institutions flourished. It was opened in 1714, and its balls and card-parties, to which only the county

families had invitation, were very magnificent, and so select, that the traders and plebeians never saw beyond the threshold of the ballroom.

In 1752 this curious entry was made in the account book kept in the building which so frequently echoed with revelry :

‘ August 4th.—Delivered up the assembly-room to the Right Hon. the Countess of Ferrers, who did me the honour of accepting it. I told her that trade never mixed with us ladies.—A. BARNES.’

And this frank admission was quite true, so far as Mrs. Barnes was concerned, for during the eleven years she was lady patroness, the accounts got hopelessly ‘mixed,’ and the funds became exhausted. The new assembly-room, built in 1763, on the east side of the Market Place, has grown somewhat old, too ; but it is elegantly appointed, and, like its predecessor, often opens its portals to the well-born and the wealthy.

The idea that it is possible to get to heaven by good works seems to have been deeply rooted in the minds of our ancestors, for they were ever leaving money to the poor, and establishing almshouses.

Derby has obtained its share of these benefits. In Full Street are the Devonshire Almshouses for eight poor men and four poor women, which were founded in 1599 by Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, better known as ‘Bess of Hardwick,’ the direct ancestress of the Dukes of Devonshire, by one of whom, in 1777, they were rebuilt and further endowed.

The little timbered cottages called the ‘Black Almshouses,’ that formerly stood in Bridge Street, were founded by Robert Wilmot, of Chaddesden, for ‘six poor men and four poor women of good and honest life.’ The peculiar condition of this charity was that the people enjoying it should wear a black gown, faced with red, and that the men should don a red cap. The old cottages, like their donor, have disappeared; but the charity still lives, and its recipients, housed in more modern dwellings, are now clad in less conspicuous apparel. Derby had once a Grey-Coat Hospital, something after the fashion of ‘Grey Friars,’ in which kindly Colonel Newcome ended his blameless life; and it yet owns the Liversage Almshouses, one of the most wealthy and best conducted of charities, opposite the Infirmary, and Large’s Hospital for Clergy-men’s Widows in Friar Gate—a wide, aristocratic-looking old street, although it has been robbed of some of its quietude and loveliness by railway enterprise.

At the bottom of St. Mary’s Gate, hiding away, as it were, from notice, is the County Hall, full of assize memories, of stern judges, of abject prisoners, and gaily dressed trumpeters playing the herald to justice. Only the façade of the original building remains, and vast changes have been made in the courts since the days when trees, as well as barristers, flourished in the quadrangle. The old hall, built in 1660, was ‘long the pride of the Midland Circuit, longer the dread of the criminal and the client, but the delight of the lawyer.’ And the new one, opened in 1829, possesses just the same characteristics; nevertheless, the more

recent improvements in the Courts, maintaining as they do the reputation of the hall as 'the pride of the Midland Circuit,' have been carried out with every consideration for the prisoners, who may at least console themselves with the thought that they have more accommodation than anyone else, be he judge, barrister, witness, pressman, or spectator.

Opposite the head of the dreamy thoroughfare—St. Mary's Gate—in which the Assize Courts are trying to conceal themselves, is All Saints' Church, which is looked upon as 'Derby's pride.' Its tower (174 feet high, exclusive of the pinnacles, which are 36 feet more to the top of the vane, thus giving a total height of 210 feet), 'stands as a prince among subjects, a giant among dwarfs;' and is distinguished not merely for loftiness, but for beauty of outline and delicate tracery. On the tower, which was completed about 1527, is the mystifying inscription, in old English characters, 'Young men and Maydens.' 'Popular tradition has it that the steeple was erected by the voluntary subscriptions of the youth of both sexes; and that when any maiden born in the parish was married, the bachelors always rang the bells in All Saints' tower.'

The body of the church is in a style of architecture 'lamentably incongruous with the tower;' and the interior of the edifice, notwithstanding its judges' seats, oak carvings, and alabaster slabs, has apparently few charms in the eyes of the archæologist, for Mr. Cox writes that the visitor had better spare himself the trouble of getting the keys, unless he

wishes to see ‘Bess of Hardwick’s’ monument. Beneath this mural splendour also lie the bones of her son, Colonel Charles Cavendish, of whom a romantic historian remarks: ‘This gallant and accomplished gentleman was killed at the battle of Gainsborough. Many fair eyes almost wept themselves blind for his loss, and his mother never recovered the sore heart-break of his death.’

The church, although erected for a sacred purpose, has somehow become associated with many comic incidents. ‘In 1732 an extraordinary feat was performed by a man who, having attached one end of a long rope to the top of the tower of All Saints’, and the other end to the bottom of St. Michael’s, slid down it with his arms and legs extended, and during his transit, which occupied eight seconds, he blew a trumpet and fired a pistol.’

Hutton, the historian, says: ‘This flying rage was not cured till August, 1734, when another diminutive figure appeared, much older than the first; his coat was in dishabille; no waistcoat; his shirt and his shoes worse for wear; his hat, worth threepence exclusive of the band, which was packthread, bleached white by the weather; and a black string supplied the place of buttons to his waistband. He wisely considered, if his performances did not exceed the others, he might as well stay at home—if he had one. His rope, therefore, from the same steeple, extended to the bottom of St. Mary’s Gate, more than twice the former length. He was to draw a wheelbarrow after him, in which was a boy of thirteen. After this

surprising performance an ass was to fly down, armed as before with a breastplate, and at each foot a lump of lead about half a hundredweight. The man, the barrow and its contents arrived safe at the end of their journey, when the vast multitude turned their eyes towards the ass, *which had been braying several days at the top of the steeple for food*, but, like many a lofty courtier for a place, brayed in vain. The slackness of the rope, and the great weight of the animal and his apparatus, at setting off, made it seem as if he was falling perpendicular. The appearance was tremendous! About twenty yards before he reached the gates of the County Hall, the rope broke : from the velocity acquired by the descent, the ass bore down all before him. A whole multitude was overwhelmed ; nothing was heard but dreadful cries ; nor seen, but confusion. Legs and arms went to destruction. In this dire calamity, the ass, which maimed others, was unhurt himself, having a pavement of soft bodies to roll over. No lives were lost. As the rope broke near the top, it brought down both chimneys and people at the other end of the street. This dreadful catastrophe put a period to the art of flying. It prevented the operator from making the intended collection, and he sneaked out of Derby as poor as he sneaked in."

Nor have scenes of excitement taken place outside the church only. On the accession of George I., the interior of the edifice presented a picture of disorder almost as great as that in another Derbyshire church during the Civil War when the Royalists were so

adroitly surprised and captured by Sir John Gell's soldiery. The vicar was the cause of the uproar. First he prayed for King James—then, eating his words, he said, 'I mean King George.' The congregation, enraged at his elastic conscience, loudly execrated him; indeed, 'the military gentlemen drew their swords and ordered him out of the pulpit, into which he never returned.'

Derby is peculiarly rich in old buildings and historic houses, but some of its most ancient churches have been superseded by new edifices—even St. Alkmund's, in which reposed the bones of the patron saint of the town. The parish register remains, however, and among others is this significant entry: '1592. The Plague began. Ninety-one died of the Plague in this parish. 1593. Oct. 4. The Plague terminated. Thanks be to God.'

Derby has been prolific in noted and also in eccentric men. John Flamstead, although not born at Derby, may be considered a native, for his parents only removed temporarily from the town to Denby, to escape the Plague. Born in 1646, he was educated at the Free School in St. Peter's Churchyard, and became a celebrated astronomer and mathematician. He was the first Astronomer-Royal, and 'gave us innumerable observations of the sun, moon, and planets, which he made with very large instruments, exactly divided by the most exquisite art, and fitted with telescopic sights.' Newton, Halley, and Cassini were among his friends, and he was, too, the associate of the wits of the time.

A facetious guest once gave the following astronomical description of one of his dinners :

' We here are invited to a *Zodiac* of mirth,
Where *Aries* and *Scorpio* do give it birth ;
Here *Leo* ne'er roars, nor *Taurus* ne'er bellows,
But, *Gemini*-like, we commence merry fellows ;
Here *Cancer* and *Pisces* agree with our wishes,
Whilst all round the table we drink here like fishes ;
Let *Libra* fill wine without old *Aquarius*,
Whilst quivers of wit fly from *Sagittarius* ;
And to crown all our mirth we will revel in *Virgo*,
And *Capricorn* he shall supply us with cargo.'

It was thought by the illiterate that Flamstead could foretell events, and a poor laundress, who had lost a parcel of linen, requested him to use his art so that she might find the property. With much mystery he began to draw circles and squares, and then told her, with the air of an oracle, that she would find the linen in a certain dry ditch. Gladly she went, and *found* what she sought. No one was more surprised than himself, and he said, 'Good woman, I am heartily glad you have found your linen ; but I assure you I knew nothing of it, and intended only to joke with you, and then to have read you a lecture on the folly of applying to any person to know events not in the human power to tell ; but I see the devil has a mind I should deal with him. I am determined I will not, so never come or send anyone to me any more on such occasions, for I never will attempt such an affair whilst I live.'

Edward Foster, born in 1762, at Derby, was not only a centenarian, but an artist of repute. In the

earlier part of his career he was a soldier, and accompanied Sir Ralph Abercrombie to Egypt; but he left the army on the day Nelson was killed at Trafalgar, and devoted himself to art. Queen Charlotte was his friend, and after his appointment as ‘miniature painter to the Royal Family,’ he was frequently asked to join the Royal circle at whist. A man of cultivated taste and great ingenuity, he invented a machine for taking portraits, and his cleverness has been immortalized in rhyme :

‘ But how to form machines to take the face,
With nice precision in one minutes’ space ;
To paint with bold unerring certainty
The face profile, in shades that time defy,
Where all allow the likeness to agree—
This honour, Foster, was reserved for thee.’

He was a patriarchal rebuke to all bachelors, for he lived to the age of 102, although married five times !

In the days when Sir Joshua Reynolds was a youth, before he had even begun to dream of art, or of the fame he was to win in his studio, another boy, destined to become a noted painter, was born in Derby. Like Reynolds, he was placed under Hudson’s tuition, and Joseph Wright—known as ‘Wright of Derby’—studied and worked until he achieved celebrity. ‘Some of his landscapes are equal to those of Wilson and Claude,’ and his portraits and historical pictures reveal at once great talent and versatility. When forty years old he visited Italy, ‘the artist’s paradise,’ then fixed his easel at Bath, but eventually settled in his native town, where he died in 1797.

Not long ago, at Derby, there was a ‘Wright Exhibition,’ when nearly everybody admired his work; and in 1885 his fame reached Burlington House. It is admitted that the man, who in 1781 declined the honour of R.A., was a genius, and he has hero-worshippers as enthusiastic if not so numerous as Turner. Certainly no man has painted Derbyshire scenery like him; his pictures of the High Tor, at Matlock, are a revelation—marvellous reflections on canvas of the limestone rocks, strangely riven, and foliage-clad, that rise high above the rushing waters of the Derwent; and there is a great fascination in his best known work, ‘The Orrery,’ with its wondrous light and shadows playing on the faces and forms of those who are listening so intently to the philosopher’s lecture.

Edward Blore, the architect; Cubley, the portrait painter; Rawlinson, the artist; Francis Bassano, the herald painter; William Billingsley, and John Keys, the flower painters; and many other artists of high repute, were also associated with this town.

In literary characters Derby has been rich in gifted men. Among these are Dr. Lemaire, physician to Henry VII.; the Rev. C. Allestry, divine and author; Sir Hugh Bateman, political writer; Benjamin Robinson, a presbyterian minister, who wrote in defence of the Trinity; Samuel Richardson, the novelist, and author of ‘Pamela,’ ‘Sir Charles Grandison’ and ‘Clarissa;’ Cotton, the puritan divine; Griborne and Milner, the poets; Robert Bage, the novelist; the Rev. Thomas Bott, a skilful pamphleteer, who was

born in 1688 ; and William Hutton, the historian and antiquary, who at the age of seventy-eight took a journey of 600 miles on foot, and traversed the entire extent of the Roman wall.

Derby has not been devoid of eccentric men. Among these, three may be named, ‘Jacky Turner,’ the walking stationer, was perhaps the most notorious. He was usually attired in a scarlet coat (adorned with gold lace), a blue waistcoat, leather breeches, and a hat with brim broad enough to delight William Penn. The penny press, with its insatiable thirst for news, did not then exist. But the people were always eager for intelligence, and when any great event occurred broadsides were printed, and sold in the street. It was then that Jacky Turner, leavening his eccentricity with shrewdness, made his harvest, for he had no difficulty in selling his papers, so humorously wagged his tongue. Here is a specimen of his style : ‘Come and buy. This is a thing that is witty, comical, and diverting, being a dialogue between the white coal-heaver and black dusty miller. Here’s six-pennyworth of fun, twelve-pennyworth of laughing, and one-and-sixpenceworth of diversion, all for the small charge of one halfpenny.’ The broadside related to some citizen who was both a coal merchant and a miller.* Turner also sold almanacs, and

* There is no scarcity of newspapers now in Derby ; nor has the town any need to complain of lethargy on the part of its press. The county papers published there—‘The Derby Mercury,’ established in 1732 ; ‘The Derby Reporter,’ first issued in

shouted through the thoroughfares ‘Almanacs, almanacs, Poor Robin’s almanacs ! almanacs new, more lies than true !’

Rowland Millington, another strange character, who always went about with a huge bag on his back and a brush in his hand, was a familiar figure in Derby streets about 1760, and was known as ‘Old Rowley.’

John Hallam, who lived in the county town at the time when Methodism was struggling into life, was very singular in his habits, but he was a friend to the poor, and obtained the noble distinction of being considered ‘the most honest man in Derby.’ Of him it is related that walking along Sadlergate one day, he saw some object glittering on the pavement. He picked it up, found it was a sixpence, and saying ‘It’s not mine,’ laid the coin on the causeway again. He was so honest, indeed, that he never forgot to return the books he borrowed ; consequently the best libraries in the town were open to him, and he frequently entered gentlemen’s houses, chose any book he required, and ‘walked off without saying a word.’ But he does not seem to have many

1823 ; and ‘The Derbyshire Advertiser,’ in 1846—have rapidly developed, greatly increasing in size, and vastly improving in all the departments that make a newspaper attractive. Indeed, all the old-established papers are conducted with much enterprise and literary ability. Two excellent evening papers are also issued—the oldest in connection with ‘The Derby Reporter,’ and the other from the office of ‘The Mercury ;’ and ‘Jacky Turner,’ the walking stationer, would have a poor chance now with his broadsheets, however glibly he wagged his tongue.

descendants—how the race of book-borrowers has degenerated !

Justice Bennett, although scarcely coming under the category of an eccentric character, was not without originality. George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, said of him : ‘ Justice Bennett, of Derby, was the first that called us Quakers, because I bid him tremble at the Word of the Lord, and this was in the year 1650.’ Bennett no doubt gave a very different version of the story, for it is asserted that he styled them ‘ Quakers ’ because of the trembling accents used in their exhortations.

Noah Bullock, the barber, who lived in Derby in 1676, not only named his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, but lived in an ark on the Derwent, just above St. Mary’s Bridge. Nothing so singular had been heard of since the flood, and Noah was frequently asked when he expected the second deluge ? Slyly he smiled at all badinage, for his little ship was a coiners’ den, which he kept afloat until he received a polite hint from Sir Simon Degge as to the nature of his ‘ new occupation.’

Some of the ballads of Derby are as singular as some of its men were eccentric. These have been collected by Mr. Llewellynn Jewitt, and published in an attractive volume entitled ‘ The Ballads and Songs of Derbyshire.’ ‘ The Unconsonable Batchelors of Derby,’ describing how several mercenary suitors pawned their sweethearts at Nottingham Goose Fair ; ‘ The Derby Hero,’ extolling a famous pedestrian ; and ‘ The Nun’s

Green Rangers,' detailing the triple alliance between an old sergeant, a tinker, and a bear, are all exceedingly amusing: but the most striking and imaginative ballad is 'The Derby Ram,' descriptive of the exploits of a marvellous animal that had been associated in verse and song with the town's history for more than a century:

'As I was going to Derby, sir,
All on a market-day,
I met the finest Ram, sir,
That ever was fed on hay.
Daddle-i-day, daddle-i-day,
Fal-de-ral, fal-de-ral, daddle-i-day.

'This Ram was fat behind, sir,
This Ram was fat before ;
This Ram was ten yards high, sir—
Indeed, he was no more.
Daddle-i-day, etc.

'The wool upon his back, sir,
Reached up unto the sky ;
The eagles made their nests there, sir,
For I heard the young ones cry.
Daddle-i-day, etc.

'The wool upon his belly, sir,
It dragged upon the ground ;
It was sold in Darby town, sir,
For forty thousand pound.
Daddle-i-day, etc.

'The space between his horns, sir,
Was as far as a man could reach ;
And there they built a pulpit
For the parson there to preach.
Daddle-i-day, etc.

' The teeth that were in his mouth, sir,
 Were like a regiment of men ;
 And the tongue that hung between them, sir,
 Would have dined them twice and again.
 Daddle-i-day, etc.

' This Ram jumped over a wall, sir ;
 His tail caught on a briar—
 It reached from Darby town, sir,
 All into Leicestershire.
 Daddle-i-day, etc. .

' And of this tail so long, sir—
 'Twas ten miles and an ell—
 They made a goodly rope, sir,
 To toll the market bell.
 Daddle-i-day, etc.

' This Ram had four legs to walk on, sir ;
 This Ram had four legs to stand ;
 And every leg he had, sir,
 Stood on an acre of land.
 Daddle-i-day, etc.

' The butcher that killed this Ram, sir,
 Was drownded in the blood ;
 And the boy that held the pail, sir,
 Was carried away in the flood.
 Daddle-i-day, etc.

' All the maids in Darby, sir,
 Came begging for his horns,
 To take them to coopers
 To make them milking gawns.*
 Daddle-i-day, etc.

' The little boys of Darby, sir,
 They came to beg his eyes
 To kick about the streets, sir,
 For they were football size.
 Daddle-i-day, etc.

* Milk-pails.

' The tanner that tanned its hide, sir,
Would never be poor any more,
For when he had tanned and retched it,
It covered all Sinfín Moor.^o
Daddle-i-day, etc.

' The jaws that were in his head, sir,
They were so fine and thin,
They were sold to a Methodist parson
For a pulpit to preach in.
Daddle-i-day, etc.

' Indeed, sir, this is true, sir,
I never was taught to lie ;
And had you been to Darby, sir,
You'd have seen it as well as I.
Daddle-i-day, daddle-i-day,
Fal-de-ral, fal-de-ral, daddle-i-day.'

This ballad was set to music, as a glee, by Dr. Calcott, and is still occasionally sung both as a glee and to its old humdrum ballad melody at public dinners in the town.

Rich as Derby has been in ancient houses, old thoroughfares, and historical associations, it has not allowed itself to rest idle in the lap of antiquity, but has progressed with a rapidity that few other boroughs have equalled. The town is, indeed, remarkable for its steady progress. In 1637 Charles I. granted the burgesses a new charter, and under it the corporation consisted of a mayor, nine aldermen, fourteen brethren, and fourteen capital burgesses, and it remained the governing

^o Derby races were formerly held on Sinfín Moor, which is only a few miles from the town.

charter until the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835. The first mayor under Charles I.'s charter was Henry Mellor, of whom the Derbyshire poet, Bancroft, in 1637 wrote :

‘ You seem the prime bough of an ample tree,
Whereon if fair expected fruits we see ;
Whilst others’ fame with ranke reproaches mee,
As Mel or manna shall your name be sweete.’

The first mayor under the Municipal Corporations Act, which came into force in 1835, was Mr. Joseph Strutt, to whose munificence the town is indebted for the Arboretum ; and his portrait adorns the Council Chamber, along with those of the Duke of Devonshire, and Mr. M. T. Bass, M.P., whose gifts to the town were princely.

The official insignia are interesting. The mace, which is of silver gilt, bears the arms of the borough, the date 1660, and motto, ‘ *Disce moriamundo vivere discere Deo.*’ The chain, a massive collar of SS.S., was the official collar of the late Lord Denman when Lord Chief Justice of England. ‘ In the Town Hall are also preserved some interesting documents and MSS. of an early date, many of them with the original seals still attached. There is also a curious and interesting old measure of the time of Queen Elizabeth. In the front of this quaint cup is a knot with the letters “ E. R.,” and the date 1601.’

In Queen Anne’s reign Derby had a population of 4,000, and Woolley, the historian, says at that time (about 1712) it possessed much valuable property, and many of the residents were people of quality,

who ‘kept coaches.’ The town has vastly improved since then. It has within the past few years added to its many buildings a fine Drill Hall, where private assemblies and public meetings are held; an Art Gallery stored with choice pictures; a School of Art of faultless arrangement; a pretty Theatre;* the Masonic Hall, and the Free Library and Museum. The latter, a very graceful structure in the Domestic Flemish-Gothic style, was presented to Derby by Mr. M. T. Bass, M.P., and is crowded with art and literary treasures. In one part of the library is arranged the large collection of books given by the Duke of Devonshire; and the walls of the committee-room are decorated with the oak panelling taken from the old house in Full Street where Prince Charles Stuart held his last council of war before retreating across the border. The Museum is a fine storehouse of knowledge, each gallery being devoted to a distinct branch of study, and the object of the curator has been to arrange the museum ‘so as to enlighten the most illiterate, and convert dry technical details into Tennyson’s fairy tales of science.’

* The Grand Theatre, erected by Mr. Melville at a cost of £10,000, had unfortunately only a very short life. It was opened on March 25, 1886, and destroyed by fire on the night of May 6 in the same year. Two lives were lost—those of Mr. J. W. Adams, of Bradford, a promising young actor, who was to have taken the part of Dr. Titus in the comedy, ‘In Chancery,’ and James Loxley, a stage carpenter. The former, in endeavouring to escape from the burning building, fell from the gallery into the pit, and was terribly injured.

Defoe styled Derby ‘a town of gentry rather than trade ;’ but its vast railway works and its trade in porcelain, silk, and iron have given the ancient borough another character. Derby, with its 81,000 inhabitants, is developing daily ; it is extending its industries, replacing narrow ways and tumble-down houses with fine, broad streets and handsome shops ; indeed, it is instinct with commercial vigour, and is one of the most important centres of business life in the Midlands.



CHAPTER II.

ASHBOURNE—A Quaint Town—An Illustrious Family—The Sculptor's Art—Dr. Johnson—Canning—Tom Moore—Ilam—Dovedale and its Beauties.

ASHBOURNE, the quaint old market-town north-west of Derby, has changed little since John Wesley preached from the steps on the east side of the market-place. In the reign of Edward VI. it contained 1,000 ‘houselying people of sixteen years of age and upwards,’ and its entire inhabitants now only number between 4,000 and 5,000. Yet few would like it to develop faster, for a hurrying, bustling throng would be out of character with its substantial red brick buildings, ancient streets, and comfortable, easy-going residents. The town, standing, as it were, on the threshold of Dovedale, has the distinction of being ‘in the very centre of England,’ but it has no thrilling history to boast of. War and cruelty have seldom played their hideous game there.

In 1644 a battle was fought near Ashbourne, in which the Royalists were defeated by Cromwell's soldiers; and in the following year King Charles

himself was at Ashbourne, and attended divine service at the church before continuing his march with his 3,000 men to Doncaster. In 1745 Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the 'Pretender,' passed through the town on his way to Derby, was proclaimed at the Market Cross, and with his principal officers took possession of Ashbourne Hall. He also passed through again on his retreat from Derby. There is a local tradition that during this retreat some Derbyshire men 'caught a Highlander, slew him, and found his skin so tough that it was tanned, and made excellent leather.' In 1803 General Rochambeau and about 300 French officers were sent to Ashbourne as prisoners of war; and in 1817 the most stalwart of the inhabitants, sworn in as special constables, stopped the progress of the Manchester blanketeters, who were going through the country to present a petition to the Prince Regent.

But Ashbourne has been linked rather with art and poetry than turmoil and rapacity. The grand old Gothic church, with its wondrous spire, was dedicated in 1241 to St. Oswald, and is a treasure-house of sculpture as well as religion. Its monuments of the Cokayne family tell a long story of the past. There are effigies of John Cokayne, in a gentleman's dress of 1372; of Edmund Cokayne, armour-clad, who fell in battle at Shrewsbury; of Sir Thomas Cokayne, who was knighted by Henry VIII. at the siege of Tournay; and under the marble monument, near the north window, reposes the dust of his grandson, 'the author of a short treatise on

hunting, compiled for the delight of noblemen and gentlemen.' It was to this family that Sir William Cokayne, Lord Mayor of London in the time of James I., belonged, and more than one statesman has borne their ancient name. In 1671 the Cokaynes sold their old-fashioned mansion, Ashbourne Hall, to Sir William Boothby, one of whose descendants was famous for her cultured friendship for Dr. Johnson, and drew from Miss Seward the scornful expression, 'Johnson had always a metaphysic passion for one princess or another.' 'Penelope,' the little girl whose white marble monument is the sculptured glory of Ashbourne Church, was the daughter of Sir Brooke Boothby. 'She was in form and intellect most exquisite ;' and when she died, in 1791, her parents, almost heart-broken with grief, inspired Banks, the sculptor, to chisel his masterpiece—the lovely childlike figure before which even Chantrey stood and wondered, and from which he designed his celebrated group, the two sleeping children, in Lichfield Cathedral.

'Nobody ever ought to overlook this tomb, as it is perhaps the most interesting and pathetic object in England. Simplicity and elegance appear in the workmanship ; tenderness and innocence in the image. On a marble pedestal and slab, like a low table, is a mattress, with a child lying on it, both being cut out of white marble. Her cheek, expressive of suffering mildness, reclines on a pillow ; and her fevered hands gently rest on each other, near to her head. The plain and only drapery is a

frock, the skirt flowing easily out before, and a ribbon sash, the knot twisted forward as it were by the restlessness of pain, and the two ends spread out in the same direction as the frock. The delicate naked feet are carelessly folded over each other, and the whole appearance is as if she had just turned, in the tossings of her illness, to seek a cooler or easier place of rest. The man whom this does not affect wants one of the finest sources of genuine sensibility ; his heart cannot be formed to relish the beauties either of nature or art.'

The Free Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth, founded by the 'Virgin Queen' in 1585, by Royal Charter, is one of noteworthy excellence and of high repute, having had masters of exceptional eminence, and turned out from its students many men of mark. In other ways too, not only the intellectual but the material needs of the inhabitants have received some consideration from the well-to-do who have passed away. The town is well provided with almshouses ; and some of the benefactors are exceedingly curious, 'one person leaving money for the purchase of gold-headed canes,' another for a 'solemn peal of bells,' to be rung annually ; and a third, who bequeathed a mill to the place, did not lose his customary forethought on his death-bed, for in his will he actually left money for repairing the mill-dam.

With the exception of the commodious Town Hall there is no pretentious public building in Ashbourne, and the florid style of architecture, glaring

in stucco, is not favoured by the people, who meet in the market-place, the cattle market, and the fair, instead of on the exchange, and do their business in an old English fashion, leisurely and prosperously, undisturbed by the commercial hurricanes that now and then sweep over larger and busier towns.

The quietude of Ashbourne pleased Dr. Johnson, and when temporarily tired of coffee-house life and shambling down Fleet Street, his thoughts often turned to the secluded Derbyshire town, where his old school-fellow, Dr. Taylor, who lived near the church, always gave him a sincere welcome. Boswell says: ‘There came for us an equipage, properly suited for a wealthy beneficed clergyman. Dr. Taylor’s large roomy post-chaise, drawn by four stout horses, and driven by two steady, jolly postilions, which conveyed us to Ashbourne, where his house, garden, stable—in short, everything was good, no scantiness appearing; and his size, figure, countenance, and manner were those of a hearty English squire, with the parson superinduced; and I took particular notice of his upper servant, Mr. Peters, a decent good man, in purple clothes and a large white wig, like the butler or major-domo of a bishop.’ Some of Johnson’s brightest hours were passed in the society of his old friend, to whom he confided many a story of his early struggles. And there were one or two exciting scenes in the parson’s study, when Langley, the Grammar School master, dropped in, ‘a Rupert of debate,’ and fearlessly argued with the great lexicographer. One can fancy

Johnson's thundering ‘No, sir,’ vibrating through the room until the glasses jingled, and Peters, notwithstanding his dignity, being nearly frightened out of his wits. It is easy to imagine Johnson's rugged visage, and Langley's angry face ; and also to picture Dr. Taylor, with a cloud of perplexity flitting across his jovial countenance, as he tried to make peace. No talk at the Mitre ever excelled these eloquent jousts in the Peak. In 1772 Johnson, writing from Ashbourne to Mrs. Thrale, says : ‘ Yesterday I was at Chatsworth. It is a very fine house. They complimented me by playing the fountain, and opening the cascade ; but I am of my friend’s opinion, that when one has seen the ocean, cascades are very little things.’ In 1775 and 1777 Johnson was again at Ashbourne, and Boswell, speaking of the latter visit, tells how he took a post-chaise from the Green Man Inn, the mistress of which, a mighty civil gentlewoman, presented him with an engraved sign of her house. Landladies were very kindly and considerate creatures then, and pushed business in a very graceful way, for the card contained these words :

‘ M. Killingley’s duty waits upon Mr. Boswell ; is exceeding obliged to him for this favour ; whenever he comes this way, hopes for a continuance of the same. Would Mr. Boswell name the house to his extensive acquaintance, it would be a singular favour conferred on one who has it not in her power to make any other return but her most grateful thanks and sincerest prayers for his happiness in time and a blessed eternity.—Tuesday morning.’

Canning, the statesman, was often a guest of the Boothbys at Ashbourne Hall, and before he became premier, and his heart was lighter, he gave them many evidences of his fun and irony. It was he who wrote the humorous skit upon the ‘Willy,’ the old coach that plied from Derby to Manchester:

‘So down thy slope, romantic Ashbourne, glides
The Derby Dilly, carrying *six insides*.’

Perhaps the most beloved of all the eminent men associated with Ashbourne was Thomas Moore, the poet, who composed his famous Oriental poem, ‘Lalla Rookh,’ in his little cottage at Mayfield, gracefully acted as steward at the Ashbourne Wellington Ball, and was ever ready to sing his own sweet songs at the genial country parties where his society was so much sought. The Derbyshire nook in which he passed so many working hours is still known as ‘Tom Moore’s Cottage,’ and by some, ‘The Poet’s Corner’; and writing of its surroundings he said, ‘This is a beautiful country, where every step opens valleys, woods, parks, and all kinds of rural glories upon the eye — this is paradise.’ A pleasant life the poet led here, gathering friends around him with his kindly ways and melodious voice; yet sometimes courting solitude, as on the night when, impressed with the tender music of the Ashbourne chimes, he penned the pathetic, touching song, ‘Those Evening Bells.’

Not far from Ashbourne, too, lived Jean Jacques Rousseau, when he was visited by David Hume,

and wrote portions of his ‘Confessions;’ Ward, the writer of ‘Tremaine;’ and Graves, the author of the ‘Spiritual Quixote.’

Ilam Hall, which is four miles from Ashbourne, is a beautiful house in the Elizabethan style, and especially during the life of Jesse Watts Russell, its late owner, when it was enriched by many rare paintings, was widely known to art lovers. In the grounds of Ilam Congreve wrote his ‘Mourning Bride;’ and of the lovely country surrounding the mansion, Rhodes said, ‘No glen in the Alps was ever more beautiful, more picturesque, or more retired.’

Near the hall is the church, built by Jesse Watts Russell, and noted for Chantrey’s skilful work in marble, the death-bed scene of David Pike Watts; and close by runs Dovedale, than which ‘Europe does not yield another picture so sweet in sylvan beauty,’ with its rippling river, and high fantastic rocks, and thick foliage, and lovely glades, where ferns and flowers find shelter from the boisterous wind’s rude touch.

What a prospect there is from Thorpe Cloud! About the summit of the ‘Little Mountain’ the mist still hovers, as if reluctant to be driven away; but in the dale the sunshine lights up the rugged features of the limestone cliffs, and plays on the red gravel and layers of black marble upon which the Dove has made its bed. Only when exhausted with its own glee or its own petulance does the stream stay to rest a little in the deep pools. Its pace, like that of modern

life, is rapid, and full of difficulties. How determined the river seems as it dashes against the sharp rocks and smooth stones that stand in its path; how it works itself into tiny foam-flecked fury, and leaps angrily against the stony-hearted obstacles that would bar its progress; then, glad of its escape, how joyously it races along past wooded slopes, and moss-covered banks, and strange-looking caves, and gigantic crags, talking merrily as it goes to the birch, the ash, the honeysuckle, the wild-rose, to the numberless trees and flowers that edge its banks, and trail their branches or their petals in its waters. Unmoved by the Dove's frolics, how impressively grand are the great rocks standing like sentinels in the sinuous dale that now narrows into rugged straits, and anon widens into pretty breadths. What an infinity of ingenuity was possessed by the Titanic architect who placed these rocks here, for the mighty blocks of mountain limestone resemble towers, churches, and grotesque figures, one of which is popularly known as 'The Lion's Head.' And are not the names of the other stony wonders of the dale familiar—'Tissington Spires,' 'The Abbey,' 'Reynard's Cave,' 'The Dove-holes,' and 'The Watch-box'? How they remind one of pleasant days passed in delightful wanderings in the glens, gorges, and caverns of this picturesque haunt, along which some of the country people believe 'Noah's flood once roared'!

Near the dale the Izaak Walton hostelry welcomes alike artist, angler, tourist, and traveller. It was kept for many years, from father to son, by a family

named Prince, noted for their kindness and courtesy. Their ‘visitors’ book’ overflowed with gratitude, even as the larder overflowed with plenty; and during the ‘Widow Prince’s’ reign, the following amusing lines were written in the house’s praise :

‘ King David said, “ In Princes put no trust,
Nor in the sons of men, who are but dust.”
Perhaps these warning words of inspiration
In David’s day required no confirmation ;
But we, in light of higher social graces,
With deference suggest “ conditions alter cases.”
Could Israel’s king, when by his son o’erthrown,
Wandering o’er Kedron’s brook, this vale have known,
And had he been induced this spot to halt on,
He would have rested at the *Izaak Walton* ;
Here, soothed by rest and free from tribulation,
He’d judge of men with kinder moderation ;
And taking down his harp, so long unstrung,
His new experience would thus have sung :
“ Bless’d is the man who much frequents this dell,
But thrice blest he whose home is this hotel ;
Here reigns a *Prince* whom you may safely trust :
Her laws are kindness and her charges just.” ’

In Dovedale—or rather in Beresford Dale—is the cave in which Charles Cotton hid from his creditors ; and not far away stands the greystone fishing-house erected by Cotton for Izaak Walton’s use. The little edifice, which peeps out of the trees on a tiny peninsula, bears over its door the inscription ‘Piscatoribus Sacrum, 1674,’ and the initials of the two friends. It was a charming retreat alike for the angler and the poet, and to Cotton’s description of it Izaak Walton modestly adds the opinion, ‘ Some part of the fishing-house has been described, but the

pleasantness of the river, mountains, and meadows about it cannot, unless Sir Philip Sidney, or Mr. Cotton's father, were alive to do it.'

Of the beauties of the river and of the dale, Cotton never tired of vaunting; and when he wrote—

'O my beloved nymph, fair Dove,
Princess of rivers, how I love
Upon thy flowery banks to lie,
And view thy silver stream
When gilded by a summer beam;
And in it all thy wanton joy
Playing at liberty!'

or,

'Such streams Rome's yellow Tiber cannot show,
The Iberian Tagus, or Ligurian Po;
The Maese, the Danube, and the Rhine:
Are puddle-water, all compared to thine.
And Loire's pure streams yet too polluted are
With thine, much purer, to compare;
The rapid Garonne, and the winding Seine,
Are both too mean,
Beloved Dove, with thee
To vie priority;
Nay, Tame and Isis, when conjoined, submit,
And lay their trophies at thy silver feet'—

he fully felt the force of the words he was writing, and gave but a true picture of the loveliness of his favourite stream.





CHAPTER III.

WIRKSWORTH AND ITS BORDERS—Singular Mining Customs—The Church and its Monuments—A Curious Epitaph—Homely Folks—George Eliot and ‘Dinah Bede’—Well-Dressing—A Giant’s Tooth—Tradition—Old English Life—A Marvellous Escape—Cromford and Sir Richard Arkwright.

EVEN more picturesque than Ashbourne is Wirksworth, a patriarchal-looking town, with its irregular streets, odd nooks and corners, and houses dusky with age and the weather’s freaks. It lies in a quiet, fertile valley, edged about with great limestone rocks; and although not many miles from Derby, it gives one the impression that it has been entirely overlooked by the eager go-ahead world outside, until you stumble upon the modest branch-line that connects the town with the Midland Railway system. As far back as 1086, Wirksworth possessed ‘a priest and a church,’ and was a place of some industrial prosperity. Its population, then numbering about 1,000 people, were chiefly engaged in lead-mining and in smelting, the ore being placed in wood-fires on the hills. Fuller says that Derbyshire lead is the best in England; good-natured metal,

not curdling into knots and knobs ; and if this be true, Wirksworth must have done a good business even at the time the manor belonged to the Nunnery of Repton. There is a curious record that in 714 the abbess of this religious house sent to Croyland in Lincolnshire a sarcophagus of Wirksworth lead, lined with linen, to receive the remains of the esteemed and dearly loved saint, St. Guthlac.

What tons of ore, of gleaming lead, and glittering spar have been turned out of the King's Field (the chief mining tract) since that time. A hundred years ago the produce of the mines was so great that the vicar's tithe alone reached a princely sum. Many quaint laws have sprung up (and some have died out again) since the Romans first worked these mines. Edward Manlove, one of the stewards of the Bargh-moot Court, composed a poem, published in 1653, descriptive of some of the liberties and customs ; and it begins :

' By custom old, in Wirksworth wapentake,
If any of this nation find a rake,*
Or sign, or leading to the same, may set,
In any ground, and there lead ore may get.
They may make crosses, holes, and set their stowes,†
Sink shafts, build lodges, cottages, or coes ;‡
But churches, houses, gardens, all are free
From this strange custom of the minery.'

* The 'rake' does not refer to a person of dissolute habits, but means a perpendicular vein of lead.

† 'Stowes' are small windlasses ; also pieces of wood placed together to indicate possession of the mine.

‡ 'Coes' are small buildings over the shafts, generally used for dressing the ore.

Afterwards the poet grows satirical about the vicar's tithe, saying the good man daily ought to pray ; for ' though the miners lose their lives, their limbs or strength, he loseth not, but looketh for a tenth.' The most singular part of this interesting mining record, however, is that dealing with the punishment for dishonesty ; a punishment barbaric in its cruelty, and now happily obsolete :

' For stealing ore twice from the minery,
The thief that's taken fined twice shall be ;
But the third time that he commits such theft,
Shall have a knife stuck through his hand to the haft
Into the stow, and there till death shall stand,
Or loose himself by cutting loose his hand.'

Ore is not so plentiful now at Wirksworth ; and such mines as 'Goodlack,' and others with odd but familiar names, have been ruthlessly stripped of their riches ; but the Moothall, where the courts for the regulation of trade have been so long held, still exists, and contains the famous 'Miners' Standard Dish.' This brazen vessel, which, according to Lowpeak custom, measures fourteen pints, was made in the reign of Henry VIII., with the consent of the lead-getting toilers, and has 'to remayne in the moote hall at Wyrksworth, hangyng by a cheyne so as the merchautes or mynours may have resorte to the same at all times to make the true measure after the same.'

Notwithstanding its restoration, from Sir Gilbert Scott's designs, there is an air of great antiquity about Wirksworth Church, which is dedicated to St. Mary. Its numerous monuments are full of

interest, giving as they do some idea of the lives and work of those who bore distinguished local names. Against the east wall is a tablet setting forth that Anthony Gell, late of Hopton, and sometime of the Worshipful Company of the Inner Temple, who died in 1583, founded at his only cost the free Grammar School, and Almshouses for five poor persons; while on the same wall is another tablet in memory of bluff Sir John Gell, the first baronet, who rode hither and thither with such zeal, and fought with such avidity wherever he found King Charles's soldiers, in the war that ended in Cromwell's victory and sent a monarch to the block. The memorials to the Wigwells, Lowes, and Blackwells are also curious and instructive. The latter is a very ancient Wirksworth family, and flourished long before 1524, when Thomas Blackwell, anxious about the future welfare of himself and relatives, left £10 to a priest to say mass for him, for the souls of his parents, and for the soul of his brother Henry, alternately at St. Edmund's altar and Our Lady's altar, Wirksworth, for three years from his death.

On one of the buttresses outside the church is this whimsical epitaph: 'Near this place lies the body of Phillip Shallcross, once an eminent quildriver to the attorneys of this town. He died on the 17th of November, 1787, aged 67. Viewing Phillip in a moral light, the most prominent and remarkable features in his character were his real and invincible attachment to dogs and cats, and his unbounded

benevolence towards them, as well as towards his fellow-creatures.

In addition to the ancient sculptured stone (representing in one part Christ bathing His disciples' feet), there is much food for the antiquary in and around this cruciform edifice, which possesses, moreover, a parish-register full of peculiar entries, such as, 'Paid to old Bonsall of Alderwastle, for a fox-head, one shilling;' and, '1688, June 14, for ale to ringers at birth of Prince of Wales, nine shillings.'

Wirksworth has the honour of being the place where the first Derbyshire county match was played; but it has apparently little ambition, nor does it grow hastily. The population in 1881 numbered 3,678, and had increased by 75 in the last ten years! The people who are born there like the peaceful health-giving town so well that they seldom leave it to seek better (or perhaps more harassing) fortune elsewhere. They are in the main content to grow up amid the scenes of their childhood, and to follow in the footsteps of their fathers. 'It is remarkable how the descendants of those who formerly lived and toiled in the dale three or four hundred years ago still live there. In the days of King Henry VIII. there lived the Steers and Vallances, the Elses and the Cadmans. The Steers have merged lately into the Wardman family. The Vallances are still there, and likely to be; also the Elses, strong enough in numbers to supply a regiment almost. These are a few instances which show the strong instinct and liking the families have for the haunts of their fore-

fathers, and also for their employment, as they are all connected with the lead business or getting of stone.'

It was among these homely folks that George Eliot came, and found the germ of her most striking character—the earnest woman who preached so fervently on the hill-sides of Derbyshire. The novelist's relatives, Mrs. Samuel Evans and her husband (whom Wirksworth people maintain were the 'Dinah Morris' and 'Seth Bede' of George Eliot's most popular story), then lived at Millhouses, just outside the town, and the authoress was only seventeen when she first visited their 'humble cottage.' But the impressions she got of her aunt, Mrs. Evans, were very vivid and lasting; for writing twenty years afterwards, she says: 'I was delighted to see my aunt. Although I had only heard her spoken of as a strange person, given to a fanatical vehemence of exhortation in private as well as public, I believed that I should find sympathy between us. She was then an old woman, above sixty, and I believe had for a good many years given up preaching. A tiny little woman, with bright small dark eyes, and hair that had been black, I imagine, but was now grey; a pretty woman in her youth, but of a totally different physical type from "Dinah." ' George Eliot contended, too, that the preacheress she sketched was different in individuality also; yet there is such a similarity in the real life of Mrs. Samuel Evans and the fictional career of 'Dinah Morris,' that the inhabitants of Wirksworth may be forgiven for thinking that one is a poetic ideal of the other. 'Both wore

a Quaker's bonnet ; "Dinah Morris" preached on Hayslope Green, Elizabeth Evans on Roston Green ; the former stayed in prison with "Hetty Sorrell" when she was lying under charge of murdering her child ; the latter stayed in prison with a young woman accused of a similar crime.'

Elizabeth Evans died at Wirksworth on the 9th of May, 1849, and the following interesting appeal for contributions towards a tablet to perpetuate her memory and that of her husband was made in 1873 :

"“ DINAH BEDE.”

'A generation has nearly passed away since the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Evans, who was distinguished for extraordinary piety and extensive usefulness. The remarkable circumstances of her personal history, her preaching talents, and her philanthropic labours have since been immortalized by a popular author in our standard literature. The name and doings of "Dinah Bede" are known over the whole world, and yet no memorial whatever of her has been raised in towns where she lived and laboured, or on the spot in Wirksworth churchyard where her ashes repose. We, whose names are hereunto placed, having an imperishable recollection of Mrs. Evans' gifts, grace, and goodness, are desirous of placing a memorial tablet in the Methodist Chapel at Wirksworth to perpetuate the memory and usefulness of the so-called "Dinah," and of "Seth Bede," her honoured and sainted husband. If you have any wish to participate in this graceful memorial

and monument of these honoured servants of Christ and benefactors of mankind, and desire to contribute even the smallest sum for this object, be so good as to communicate your intention to any of the undermentioned ministers and gentlemen as early as possible: Adam Chadwick, Steeple Grange; William Buxton, North End; Charles Wall, the Causeway; and Timothy Clarke, North End, Wirksworth.'

The appeal commended itself so thoroughly that subscriptions were obtained without difficulty, and now on the walls of the Wesleyan Chapel at Wirksworth is a tablet bearing the inscription:

‘Erected by numerous friends to the memory of Elizabeth Evans, known to the world as “Dinah Bede,” who during many years proclaimed alike in the open air, the sanctuary, and from house to house, the love of Christ. She died in the Lord May 9, 1849, aged 74 years. And of Samuel Evans, her husband, who was also a faithful local preacher and class leader in the Methodist society. He finished his earthly course Dec. 8, 1858, aged 81 years.’

One of the daughters of this noted Elizabeth Evans, living now at Sheffield, preserves with great care the Quaker bonnet, the white net cap, and the spun-silk shawl that were worn by ‘Dinah Morris’ when she went preaching. This descendant well remembers George Eliot’s visit to her mother in 1837; and until recently had in her possession a bundle of letters sent by the novelist to her parents at Millhouses. Being privileged to peruse these letters soon after George Eliot’s death, we wrote of them at the time: ‘The letters are signed by the talented authoress in her maiden name, “Mary Ann

Evans," and they are written from Griff and Foleshill, near Coventry, at which places she lived with her father during the years 1839, 1840, and 1841. Some of them are brown with age, and much worn at the edges, and in the folding creases. Others are in better preservation. The letters, at least those despatched in 1839, were sent to Wirksworth just a year before Sir Rowland Hill's scheme of penny postage was carried into effect, and before envelopes had come into common use. They are written on old-fashioned post-paper, and the address, "Mr. S. Evans, the Millhouses, Wirksworth," appears on the outer sheet. Most of the epistles are addressed to "My dear uncle and aunt," and all reveal George Eliot's great talents. The style is elegant and graceful, and the letters abound in beautiful metaphor; but their most striking characteristic is the religious tinge that pervades them all. Nearly every line denotes that George Eliot was an earnest Biblical student, and that she was, especially in the years 1839 and 1840, very anxious about her spiritual condition. In one of the letters, written from Griff to "Dinah Morris" in 1839, she says she is living in a dry and thirsty land, and that she is looking forward with pleasure to a visit to Wirksworth, and likens her aunt's companionship and counsel to a spring of pure water, acceptable to her as is the well dug for the traveller in the desert.' These communications, eloquent with the ardent feeling that distinguished George Eliot's earlier life, are now in the possession of Mr. Cross, and should he

give them to the public, they will shed considerable light on the most impressionable part of his wife's career, when 'Dinah Morris' was her friend, and she did not hesitate to write 'that love of human praise was one of her great stumbling-blocks.'

At Wirksworth, and other places in Derbyshire, following in the wake of Tissington, the pretty, innocent custom of decking the wells with flowers is fostered even in this practical age, and gives a very pardonable excuse for a bright, mirthful holiday. At Wirksworth, however, the custom is not in connection with natural springs as at Tissington, but is, as it is called, a 'Tap-Dressing' of the water-supply of the town. Seneca said : 'Where a spring or a river flows there should we build altars and offer sacrifices ;' and it is possible that from a spirit of thankfulness for the gift of pure water arose this innocent practice, which, as education spreads, is becoming a more delicate and beautiful art. The floral designs, the chaplets, and garlands, that decorate the Wirksworth taps and pipes on Whit-Wednesday are as attractive in their simple loveliness as the offerings the shepherds threw to the goddess Sabrina in Milton's 'Comus,' or 'the thousand flowers of pale lilies, roses, violets, and pinks,' the nymphs in Dyer's 'Fleece' spread on the surface of 'the dimpled stream.' And they have this advantage over the floral tributes of the poet's dream: they bring useful prizes that still further encourage a love of flowers.

The rocks and caves around the town have yielded something more marvellous than lead ore. Who

shall say, after knowing what wonders have been imbedded in their depths, that geology has no charm?

George Mower, a miner, discovered in a cave in the mountain limestone, at Balleye, near Wirksworth, in 1663, the bones and molar teeth of an elephant, and in a startling description of ‘how the giant’s tooth was found,’ wrote: ‘As they were sinking to find lead ore upon a hill at Bawlee, within two miles of Wirksworth, in the Peake, about the year 1663, they came to an open place as large as a great church, and found the skeleton of a man standing against the side, rather declining. They gave an account that his braine-pan would have held two strike of corn, and that it was so big they could not get it up the mine they had sunk without breaking it. Being my grandfather, Robert Mower, of Woodseats, had a part in this said mine, they sent him this toothe, with all the tines of it entire, and it weighed 4 lbs. 3 oz.’

Nor has this been the only geological prize obtained in the locality, for in another lead mine, poetically known as ‘The Dream Cave,’ about a mile from Wirksworth, was found in 1882 the skeleton of a rhinoceros, whose bones ‘were in a high state of preservation.’

Within a stone’s-throw, as it were, of the place in which George Eliot wandered in her youth, lie two historic mansions—Alderwasley Hall and Wigwell Grange. The former has long been the residence of the old county families, the Lowes and the Hurts, and a singular tradition attaches to a part of the estate

called ‘The Shining Cliff’—that it was granted to a previous owner by the King, in these words :

‘I and mine
Give thee and thine
Milnes Hay and Shyning Cliff,
While grass is green and berys ryffe.’*

Wigwell Grange has sheltered some illustrious people, and Sir John Statham’s description of it, more than a century ago, has never been excelled, so straightforward were the brusque knight’s words. In the district, he said, ‘was all the convenience of life—wood, coal, corn of all sorts, park venison, a warren for rabbits, fish, fowl in the utmost perfection, exempted from all jurisdiction; no bishops, priests, proctors, apparitors, or any such vermin could breathe there. Everyone did that which was right in his own eyes, went to bed, sat up, rose early, got up late, all easy. In the park were labyrinths, statues, arbours, springs, grottoes, and mossy banks; and if retirement became irksome, on notice to Wirksworth, there were loose hands, gentlemen and clergymen, ever ready at an hour, willing to stay just as long as you’d have ’em and no longer.’ Kindly John Statham. He understood the secret of hospitality, and although ‘the vile calumnies and envenom’d arrows’ of his enemies now and then excited his wrath, he did not let them interfere much with his pleasures.

Near the road leading from Wirksworth to Cromford is a famous mine, the scene in 1797 of a

* Plentiful.

disaster which gave not only a new illustration of the perils of lead-getting, but showed how great is the tenacity of human life. While Job Boden and Anthony Pearson were at work in the mine, the one at a depth of twenty yards, and the other at forty-four yards, there was a huge fall of earth, and a rush of water. The mine was choked to a depth of over fifty yards, and it seemed almost incredible that the men beneath could escape death. Yet, eager with hope, the miners not in the workings laboured for three days in emptying the mine of debris, and then discovered Pearson, who was standing in an upright posture, dead. At the end of eight days' digging they reached Boden, who, to their surprise, was still living, although he had been entirely without nourishment from the moment he was buried in the mine. When brought out he was terribly emaciated, but ultimately recovered from the effects of his adventure, and lived for many years to tell the story of his marvellous rescue.

Cromford lies amid charming scenery, and is within easy distance of Via Gellia, of the bold grit-stone rocks that singularly overlap the limestone at Stonnis, and the pretty village of Bonsall, where the rivulet, rippling past the cottages and beneath each doorstep, has prompted the saying that the hamlet has 150 marble bridges. But after all, Cromford is not so celebrated for its scenery as for its association with Richard Arkwright, the lowly barber and itinerant hair merchant, who invented spinning by rollers, and erecting his first cotton-mill in Matlock

Dale, in 1771, made such additional improvements in the process of carding, roving, and spinning, that despite grievous difficulties his ingenuity and perseverance were rewarded by wealth and fame. The manor of Willesley, which belonged in the time of Henry VI. to Richard Minors, was purchased by the successful cotton spinner in 1782, and four years afterwards he was knighted. And it seemed as if some good fairy had determined that he should have money enough to uphold the title, for his 'riches increased to such an enormous extent, that besides possessing, exclusive of his mill property, one of the largest estates in England, he was able on several occasions to present each of his ten children with £10,000 as a Christmas box.'





CHAPTER IV.

MATLOCK BATH—Man's Energy—The Bath Years ago—Lord Byron—The Water Cure—Rocks and Caverns—Matlock and its Church—A Remarkable Woman.

No such comfortable, contented serenity as satisfies Wirksworth is tolerated at Matlock Bath. There the inhabitants do not fold their hands and sit wrapt in admiration of the beauties of nature. They believe in ‘making hay while the sun shines,’ use nature to their own profit, and their enterprise is so great that ‘no man knoweth’ what delights may be in store for the excursionist in years to come! Matlock Bath’s chief street is fringed with fine shops, in which are displayed many clever examples of the spar worker’s art; its petrifying wells and caverns reveal marvels of nature, and show man’s ingenuity in turning them to profitable account; and its attractive pavilion, recently erected, indicates that the inhabitants are thoroughly cognisant of the needs of the time. But all this energy is almost entirely modern. Like the parvenu who secretly bewails his lack of blue-blood ancestry while he sports his sham crest, Matlock Bath is linked with few famous deeds,

and has little history. It was not until about 1690 that the place sprang at all into notice, and then not so much because of the wild beauty of its scenery as the possession of mineral waters, which, bubbling out of subterranean chambers, wrought such cures upon the debilitated and enfeebled that the people marvelled. Hitherto the dale scarcely contained any habitations except a few miners' huts, and 'presented only the appearance of a narrow gorge, walled in by stupendous crags and lofty eminences, overgrown with tangled brushwood and shrubs, beneath which flowed the dusky waters of the Derwent, seldom seen by the eye of man.' But with the discovery of the warm springs, 'raised in vapour by subterranean fires deep in the earth,' Matlock Bath awoke from its long sleep. The first bath, built and paved, it is said, by Mr. Fern, of Matlock, and Mr. Heyward, of Cromford, was ultimately purchased by Messrs. Smith and Pennel, of Nottingham, who not only erected two large commodious buildings, but 'made a coast-road along the river-side from Cromford, and improved the horseway from Matlock Bridge.'

'This bath,' said Defoe, however, writing in the eighteenth century, 'would be much more frequented than it is if a bad stony road which leads to it, and no accommodation when you get there, did not hinder.' Nevertheless, its development had begun. And the place had much improved in Lord Byron's time, for he wrote gracefully of Matlock Bath's loveliness, and spoke in praise of his quarters.

It was here that the distinguished poet, the gifted writer of ‘Childe Harold,’ met Mary Chaworth, the heiress of Annesley, and indulged in the hapless love-dream that only ended in—farewell. ‘Had I,’ he regretfully said, ‘married Miss Chaworth, perhaps the whole tenor of my life would have been different.’ Since the days when Lord Byron looked joyously through love’s spectacles at the bold cliffs and gently gliding river, Matlock Bath has become a kind of Pool of Bethesda, to which the grievously afflicted, and those who suffer for luxury and satiety, go in hope of finding relief. Matlock Bank and Matlock Bridge, modern offshoots of the older Matlock, are as thickly studded with baths as Rome during Diocletian’s reign of splendour; and Smedley, the local pioneer of hydropathy, and the builder of Riber Castle, on the summit of Riber, has had a host of imitators, who are gradually increasing the number of believers in the water-cure.

Lady Mary Wortley said her little chalet at Avignon commanded the finest land prospect she had ever seen, except Wharncliffe; and Derbyshire people, with equal truth, might affirm that Wales, with its tree-crowned heights, and mist-capped mountains, and swirling streams, contained the finest pictures of nature’s loveliness, except Matlock. ‘The great rent in the strata of Derbyshire,’ which has made the county so rich in crags, and peaks, and sheltered dales, exciting the zeal of the geologist and the wonder of the tourist, ‘first manifests itself in the neighbourhood of Matlock.’ And familiarity is

powerless to breed contempt of the beauteous gorge, with its gigantic masses of limestone, towering high above the white roads, and the petrifying wells, and the wooden boathouses. How mighty and rugged in its grandeur is the High Tor, rising perpendicularly more than 300 feet above the river's brink, its brow fringed with thick foliage, and its face brightened by mosses and ferns that have struggled into existence in crevices and rifts far beyond man's reach!

Less rugged in character, but equal in beauty, are the Heights of Abraham; and they have inspired much poetry—spontaneous and sincere, if not over-brilliant tributes to nature's lavish gifts. Robinson, in his '*Derbyshire Gatherings*,' gives an example, remarking that in an alcove on the heights about twenty-five years since, some would-be poet, no doubt after cudgelling his brains severely for a verse, wrote :

‘He who climbs these heights sublime,
Will wish to come a second time.’

But he goes on to say that beneath these words was added in another handwriting the scathing couplet :

‘And when he comes a second time,
I hope he'll make a better rhyme.’

What myriads of tourists have climbed these heights since the old mountain went by the name of Nestes, or Nestus, and Matlock was a Liliputian hamlet in the King's manor of Metesforde! Much of the tangled undergrowth and gnarled wood have been cleared from its steep sides, and about the zig-

zag paths that lead to the lofty tower. Cottages cluster, tier on tier, like the dwellings of an Alpine village. And higher still, nearer the summit of the pine-clad heights, far away from the chief street, are lovely walks, from which may be obtained delightful views of the loftier crags of Masson, of bold cliffs, wooded dells, and bits of emerald meadow skirting the gleaming river; while stretching beyond the dale is a pretty picture of hill and valley, of moorland and rich pasture, not framed by the horizon until the eye has roamed over five counties.

Then its subterranean mysteries are curious and almost fear-inspiring. The great caverns, reached through little doors in the mountains' side, remind one of the mysterious cavity into which the Pied Piper of Hamlin decoyed the children with sweet music and fair promises of a chimerical Garden of Eden. In their natural darkness these vast chambers, particularly the Rutland, the Devonshire, and the Cumberland, help one to realize the meaning of Chaos; but when illuminated by the candle's or the lamp's fitful gleam they reveal striking beauties of vaulted arch, of brightly flashing minerals, of trickling waters, of huge pyramids of stone, of gruesome recesses, and walls of such strange shape that they seem to be studded with grotesque faces. Nay, the thought arises—are they the faces of indiscreet miners, petrified just as they were chuckling, or indulging in grimaces?

Remembering its surface and underground beauties and wonders, there is little exaggeration in the

poetical description of Matlock Bath as ‘the fairy-land that wins all hearts, the paradise of the Peak.’

The modern resort of the health-seeker, Matlock Bath, stands on the western margin of the Derwent; the old village of Matlock, which Glover says is as ancient as the Conquest, is on the opposite side of the river, and cut off from the Bath by the huge Tor and its chain of connecting rocks. Both are thriving places now, and this is not to be wondered at, considering that such a vast number of tourists pour into the district during at least four months of the year, swooping down upon nearly every habitation and driving the caterers sometimes to their wits’ end.

Although the older portion of Matlock (which includes Matlock Bridge) has grown with some rapidity, it still adheres pretty much to its former ways of life. But the church, like many others in Derbyshire, has been restored, and the tower is the only part of the old edifice remaining. It is a ‘good example of the Perpendicular style at the beginning of the sixteenth century,’ and contains six bells. One of these, bearing the letters O.P.N. (*oro pro nobis*), was evidently cast before the Reformation, and Mr. Jewitt says it ‘is one of the oldest as well as most interesting bells in the county.’

In the church itself there is comparatively little to interest the antiquary, with the exception of an old chest, to which is attached a chain that formerly secured the parish Bible. But there is a tablet in this place of worship that might be studied with

advantage by all cynical bachelors who believe married life is made up of embarrassments and annoyances not conducive to longevity. The tablet is in memory of Adam Wolley, and Grace, his wife. They were married at Darley in 1581, and continued in wedlock 76 years. Adam did not die until 1657, when he had reached the age of 100, and Grace lived to be 110.

In the vestry are several relics of a pathetic custom —six white paper garlands carried years ago at the funerals of young maidens, and left in the church, *in memoriam*, by grief-stricken friends.

A very thin partition separates tears from laughter, so Phœbe Bown may be very appropriately introduced here. She was a remarkable woman who resided in a cottage near High Tor, and obtained considerable local celebrity. Hutton, the historian, who visited Matlock in the early part of the present century, says she was five feet six in height, had a step more manly than a man's, could walk forty miles a day, hold the plough, drive a team, and thatch a barn ; but her chief avocation was breaking in horses at a guinea a week : and with all these masculine tendencies she combined a taste for the works of Milton, Pope, and Shakespeare, and had a passionate love of music, playing the flute, the violin, and the harpsichord. She died in 1854, and her epitaph is almost as curious as her life :

' Here lies romantic Phœbe,
Half Ganymede, half Hebe ;
A maid of mutable condition,
A jockey, cowherd, and musician.'



CHAPTER V.

DARLEY DALE—Its Scenery—A Poetic Tradition—A Curious Will—The Darley Yew Tree—A Great Frost—The Peacock at Rowsley—Old Butcher the Angler—Which Way?

ONE of the fairest of Derbyshire haunts is Darley Dale. It stretches in peaceful, sylvan loveliness from Matlock up to Rowsley, where, dividing, the one arm, along which the Derwent flows, extends to and indeed beyond Chatsworth gates, and the other, through which the Wye winds, beyond Haddon Hall up to Bakewell; and in whatever garb it appears, whether clothed in the bright freshness of spring, the rich glory of summer, the deep russet-tints of autumn, or the hoar-frost and feathery snow of winter, it is always beautiful. Like a pleasing tranquil face upon which ordinary troubles make no impress, it never loses its charm. But perhaps it is most inviting in the spring-time, when the sunlight, coquetting with the Derwent, makes the river glisten like a streak of silver, when, the ‘gold of the buttercup and the green of the grass’ mingle, in the fertile meadows, and the hedges are powdered with sweet-smelling hawthorn.

The Duke of Rutland's old shooting-box of Stanton Woodhouse stands on one of the wooded slopes that rise from the plain ; nearly opposite to it is Sir Joseph Whitworth's residence, Stancliffe Hall ; while in another part, on the verdure-covered Oker—a lofty hill rising at its threshold from the Matlock end—are two solitary trees that have grown up in an atmosphere of tradition :

‘Tis said that on the brow of yon fair hill
Two brothers climb, and, turning face from face,
Nor one more look exchanging, grief to still
Or feed, each planted on the lofty place
A chosen tree. Then eager to fulfil
Their courses, like two new-born rivers they
In opposite directions urged their way
Down from the far-seen mount. No blast might kill
Or blight that fond memorial. The trees grew
And now entwine their arms ; but ne'er again
Embraced those brothers upon earth's wide plain,
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew,
Until their spirits mingled in the sea
That to itself takes all—Eternity.’

The venerable church of St. Helen, with its fine sepulchral slabs and its Crusaders' and other monuments, poses picturesquely in the bed of Darley dale.

It is a very ancient structure, but for all that it is but a youth when compared with the patriarch by its side—the world-famed ‘Darley Yew.’ The enormous girth of thirty-three feet round its stem has this ancient tree that casts its shadows across the churchyard. About four feet up, the trunk divides, and two separate trees rise from it, throwing

out a great labyrinth of branches, that overhang and shelter many a grave. Its life, like that of the ‘Wandering Jew,’ seems endless; but, unlike his restless career, the tree’s existence has been one of almost unbroken quietude and peace. This yew, which is supposed to be 2,000 years old, saw the early inhabitants of the soil subdued by the Roman invaders, and they in turn by the Saxons and Danes, and it must have been in its prime when William the Conqueror made his victorious landing in Britain! If this yew could speak, like Tennyson’s ‘Talking Oak,’ what a thrilling tale it could tell of the invader’s progress, of joy and sorrow, of changing manners and customs, of the great frost that began at Martinmas, 1676, and lasted until January 3, 1677, when ‘ye Derwent was actually frozen, and att ye dissolving of the frost a great flood and incredible quantities of ice were brought out of the water banks into tollerable inclosed grounds, and up to the churchyard steps;’ and it could tell, too, of much family history—of the time, for instance, when the eccentric Peter Columbell, of Darley, made the curious will leaving all his household goods to his son Roger, on the peculiar condition that the young man never touched tobacco.

‘Whatever may be the age of this tree,’ says Mr. Cox, ‘there can be little doubt that it has given shelter to the early Britons when planning the construction of the dwellings that they erected not many yards to the west of its trunk; to the Romans who built up the funeral pyre to their slain comrades

just clear of its branches ; to the Saxons, converted, perchance, to the true faith by Bishop Dinma beneath its pleasant shade ; to the Norman masons chiselling their quaint sculptures to form the first stone house of prayer erected in its vicinity ; and to the host of Christian worshippers who, from that day to this, have been borne under its hoary limbs in women's arms to the baptismal font, and then on men's shoulders to their last resting-place in the soil that gave it birth.'

No one will deny that it is the king of English yews. The Fortingal yew, in Perthshire, when vigorous, had a girth of fifty-six feet, but it is now only a skeleton of its former greatness. At Tisbury, in Wiltshire, there is a yew tree thirty-seven feet in circumference ; but the Darley yew far excels it 'in great stretch of limbs and luxuriant foliage.' A number of unthinking people, with a liking for relics, and a desire to hand down their names to posterity, began some years back to lop off its branches and cut their initials on its bark, but 'The Old Yew Tree' had a champion, who wrote to the *Times* in 1863, drawing attention to this Vandalism. The letter, which was written as if the tree was a human being, and could speak for itself, ran as follows :

'I am a helpless and much ill-used individual, and my friends have advised me to make my grievances known to you, as the most able and likely source to supply redress. To make my tale short, I belong to that class of national property which guide books

call "objects of interest," of which this old historic country possesses so large a share; but I am not an old abbey, nor an old tower, nor even an old cairn. I am simply an old tree. My residence is in a churchyard in a lovely valley in Derbyshire, called Darley Dale. From the reverence that has been paid to me for more generations than I care to name, and from the admiration which pilgrims from all parts of the world who come to see me bestow upon me, I perceive that I am no common tree. My trunk alone girths thirty-three feet, but from within the memory of men I have stretched my arms across one entire side of the churchyard, and forty years ago the young urchins of the parish used to climb from the outer wall into my branches, and from my branches on to the church leads. My age is fabulous, and learned naturalists now calculate that I must have been born 300 years before the Gospel was preached in this country; in which case I was probably associated with an old pagan building, the foundations of which are still discovered in digging graves in my immediate neighbourhood. If my memory did not fail me, of course I could tell all about this better than the naturalists; but age has made me somewhat lazy in that respect, so I must leave my origin to the genealogists to settle. Well, sir, with all these claims to reverence, is it not shameful that in this year of grace 1863 men should cut, break, and mutilate my poor old person in all inconceivable ways? Until tourists began to multiply, and excursion trains to run, I had scarcely

a single scar, other than time and tempest had left on my body ; but now the Snookeses and Tomkinses, and Joneses, have begun to immortalize themselves (as is the fashion of that race) by cutting their names all over my bark; and on Thursday last two fellows of this tribe commenced a still more cruel process. While one of them smoked his pipe and watched, the other drew out a saw, and actually set to work to cut out a great slice of my very flesh, which, but for the lucky intervention of the clerk, he would soon have accomplished. You may believe me, sir, when I tell you that I quite dread the sight of an excursion train ; and from all that I hear I am not alone in these apprehensions. My fellow “objects of interest” are crying out on every side of me, and all over the land, that the Goths are coming again. Oh, sir, can you not repel these barbarians ? The foe of all abuses, will you not make your potent voice heard to put an end to this abuse ?”

The consciences of the Snookeses and Tomkinses were pricked by this touching protest, and the Darley yew is no longer a victim to the tourist’s pocket-knife or the marauder’s pitiless grasp.

A couple of miles or so from Darley Dale Church is the village of Rowsley, where the Wye and the Derwent meet ; and the ivy-clad Peacock Inn, with its old-fashioned gables, mullioned windows, and curiously pretty garden, gladdens the wayfarer’s heart. In this widely known hostelry, travellers from all parts of the world have found not only a tranquil resting-place, but a cheerful home ; it was once a

farmhouse, now it is perhaps the prettiest inn in England. Its wide hall, broad staircase, cosy breakfast-room, and smoker's retreat, are familiar to some of our greatest men, who at one time or other have sought temporary rest beneath its roof away from the noise of political strife and the whirl of ambition. 'An album kept at the inn,' says Mr. Jewitt, 'contains many distinguished names; among them is that of the poet Longfellow; also the travelling name of Maximilian, sometime Emperor of Mexico, who spent here the last night of his sleep in England, previous to embarkation on his fatal voyage.' People of every nation visit the Peacock, and the American touring through the country in a spirit of restless inquiry is as much at home there as the angler, the painter, and the pressman. In the autumn, when jaded legislators have deserted St. Stephen's, and 'society' has fled from London, the quiet inn is a refuge—a sort of rural club—to many a metropolitan toiler; and the rods and creels, the sketch-books, and the pages of manuscript lying about, are tell-tale evidences of the character of its guests.

One of the local 'worthies' who often passed through the porch of the Peacock was George Butcher, the angler, carpenter, and preacher, who for so many years attended the fishermen on the banks of the Wye and Derwent. He was an authority upon angling, and was styled 'The Walton of the Peak.' 'Old Butcher knew every kind of fly upon the water, and all the places where fish lay. He was insensible to fatigue, and thought nothing

of walking from Curbar to Rowsley to attend an angler—some eight miles—walk about on the banks of the river all day, and at night walk back to Curbar.' His mind was stored with anecdote and proverbial philosophy; and when the trout declined to rise, he never let the angler's spirits droop. Of him, Mr. John Hall, a Yorkshire poet, has written:

'Old Butcher is young ; though he's nigh fourscore
He can tramp twelve miles across a moor ;
He can fish all day, and wade up stream,
And at night as fresh as the morning seem.'

'Old Butcher is young ; he can make a fly
With as steady a hand and as calm an eye
As though he were still in manhood's prime,
And never had known the ravage of time.'

'He can spin a yarn, or a sermon preach,
Or on special occasions spout a speech ;
He can fast or feast like a monk of old,
Though he likes the latter much best, I'm told.'

'He knows each pool of the stream about,
And every stone that conceals a trout ;
Some say that he knows the fish as well,
Both where they were born and where they dwell.'

'To those who have wandered in Baslow Vale,
Through Chatsworth's meadows and Darley Dale,
Or skirted the banks of the silvery Wye,
Where Haddon's grey towers rise steep and high,

'His form and garb will familiar seem
As the guardian deity of the stream,
With his oval face and his grizzly locks,
And his smile like that—of a sly old fox.'

When old Butcher died, in 1875, there was sorrow

in many a fisherman's heart; and over his grave, in Curbar Churchyard, his friends have placed as a tribute of regard an epitaph, in which he is spoken of as one 'who for many years of his life, amidst the beautiful works of creation, followed as a fisherman the humble occupation of Christ's disciples.'

So rich in the antiquarian, the historic, and the picturesque is the region about Rowsley, that tourists occasionally stand on the inn steps, perplexed and wondering which route to take. Up the hill, opposite the Peacock, lies Stanton Moor, with its stone circle, the 'Nine Ladies,' and its other Celtic remains. Near it is Birchover, with its famed Roo Tor Rocks, and the Bradley Rocks; and within a sparrow's flight as it were, are Cratcliffe Rocks with Hermitage; Robin Hood's Stride, or Mock Beggar Hall; Winster, with its quaint old Market-house; the remote village of Youlgreave, a place that clings tenaciously to old English life, and is full of interesting Derbyshire character studies; and beyond the time-worn Arborlows, a miniature Stonehenge, over which numberless archæologists have puzzled their brains.

On the banks of the Wye, to the right, nestles grey Haddon Hall, with its historic memories and air of romance. Over the bridge, to the left, is the road leading through Beeley to Chatsworth, the Duke of Devonshire's 'Palace of the Peak.' To which of these mansions will you go? To Chatsworth!



CHAPTER VI.

OLD CHATSWORTH—Mary Queen of Scots—The First Duke of Devonshire—Pulling a Colonel's Nose—The Revolution of 1688—New Chatsworth and its Treasures of Art and Literature—The Gardens and Park—Edensor and its Historic Graves.

'DERBYSHIRE,' says a quaint old writer, 'is a country wherein nature sports itself, leaping up and down as it were in pleasant variety, until, being weary, it recreates itself at Chatsworth, Boulsover, and Hardwicke.' Adopting this poetic imagery, it must be admitted by all who know these Derbyshire seats, that nature (especially human nature) shows its discrimination by recreating in such pleasant places. All three mansions are rich in history, tradition, and picturesque surroundings; but Chatsworth, with its palace of art-treasures, the most powerfully attracts both the scholarly and the illiterate, for the latter as well as the former have often a delicate sense of beauty.

The existing mansion is not the house Sir William Cavendish began to build, and which his widow, the famous 'Bess of Hardwick,' completed. That old English home, which superseded the more

ancient hall of the Leches and Agards, was a quadrangular building, with square towers, rude and mediæval in look compared with the modern fabric adorned by the art of Verrio, Laguerre, and others. Still it had great historic interest, for it was one of the prison-houses of Mary Queen of Scots ; and the moated, ivy-covered bower by the riverside yet recalls the days of her captivity, when, under the surveillance of the Earl of Shrewsbury, she was not allowed to ‘take the air on horseback more than one or two miles from the house, except it be one of the moors.’ The old hall was, too, the birthplace of the unfortunate Arabella Stuart ; and in the Civil Wars it resounded with the clank of armed men ; for Sir John Gell’s soldiers and the Duke of Newcastle’s cavaliers have both been on the defensive there.

It is authoritatively stated that one of the Duke of Devonshire’s ancestors, Sir John Cavendish, esquire of the body to Richard III. and Henry V., killed Wat Tyler in his conflict with Sir William Walworth, for which gallant conduct he was knighted by the King in Smithfield.

Chatsworth was purchased from the Agards by Sir William Cavendish, who by this act set a very commendable example of honesty in a somewhat lax age. Since then the noble house of Cavendish, which has *Cavendo Tutus* for its motto, has played a conspicuous part in the political and social life of the country. But among the long line of warriors, scholars, and statesmen who have borne

the name of Cavendish, none have been more gifted or celebrated than the fourth Earl and first Duke of Devonshire, who built the present mansion. Bishop Kennet says: ‘He was singularly accomplished; he had a great skill in languages; was a true judge in history, a critic in poetry, and had a fine hand in music. In architecture he had a genius, skill, and experience beyond any one person of any age.’ Like Henry V., however, he interspersed his youth with frolic, and one of his adventures bordered on tragedy, for he was nearly slain in the Opera House at Paris, in an encounter with three of the King’s guards. Later in life his high spirits and courage did not desert him. When he dabbled in State affairs, and was insulted in the Court of James II. by Colonel Culpepper, he led that officer out of the presence-chamber by the nose; but he is particularly remembered because of the important part he played in the Revolution of 1688. The fourth Earl of Devonshire, although often bedizened in ruffles and lace, was no mere drawing-room soldier. He was one of the noblemen who invited the Prince of Orange to this country, and on William’s arrival at Torbay, the Earl marched his tenantry to Derby and Nottingham, prepared, if need be, to uphold his Protestant principles with his sword. But the necessity did not arise; and his lordship, after escorting Princess Anne to Oxford, returned to Chatsworth, where he began to pull down the old house, and ‘erect these well-loved halls in the year of English freedom.’

And to the poor, who often toil and strive for so little, it must seem as if he had Aladdin's riches when he did it. What beauty, wealth, and delicate art are revealed even in the great hall, with its floor of polished marble, and walls and ceiling adorned with historical paintings! Beyond, the state-room and library stories contain treasures enough to arouse a Monte Christo's envy. In the sketch gallery are a multitude of rare original drawings by Titian, Rembrandt, Leonardo da Vinci, Raffaelle, Correggio, Salvator Rosa, and many other great masters. The state dressing-room is noted not only for Verrio's painting illustrating 'The flight of Mercury on his mission to Paris,' but for the most exquisite wood-carving. Here is what is known as 'Grinling Gibbons's masterpiece,' and the cravat of point-lace, the woodcock, the foliage, and medal of which it consists are wondrous evidences of the wood-carver's skill. Horace Walpole said: 'There is no instance of a man before Gibbons 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 if this group was the work of Gibbons, his panegyrist has been guilty of little exaggeration. Richer in appointment, and far more historic, is the state bedroom. Its walls are hung with leather arabesque, its ceiling represents 'Aurora chasing away the Night,' and over the doorways the talented wood-carver has been busy. One of the most valued pieces of furniture in this apartment is the state

chair and crimson velvet canopy so deftly embroidered and curiously figured by Christian, the wife of the second Earl of Devonshire, and close by are the chairs and footstools used in the coronation of George III. and his Queen Charlotte, and of William IV. and Queen Adelaide—pretty relics of past pageants and of courtly ceremonial in which high-bred dames and gallant gentlemen took part. Very different from the ‘Cave of Harmony’ in which Pendennis passed such agreeable nights is the music-room, decorated with mythological figures, and carvings of fruits, flowers, and musical instruments. Hanging over the door leading to the gallery is a marvellous violin. But no one can play it; no one can lift it off the peg. It is only a fiddle created by the painter’s brush; but it is, as Mr. Jewitt expresses it, ‘a fiddle painted so cleverly on the door itself as to have, in the subdued light of the half-closed door, all the appearance of the instrument itself hanging on the peg. The tradition at Chatsworth is that this matchless piece of painting was done by Verrio to deceive Gibbons;’ he probably did not realize what chagrin, fun, surprise, and disappointment that fiddle would yield to a tantalized posterity. Numberless fingers, of nearly all nationalities, have endeavoured to grasp it; but they might as well have tried to catch a sunbeam, or a shadow.

Gobelins’ tapestry, Verrio’s painting, Watson’s wood-carving, and Chantrey’s sculpture, beautify the state drawing and dining rooms, which are characterized by great splendour, both of furniture and

general adornment. The latter room contains a much-treasured curiosity, the rosary worn by Henry VIII. ‘Upon the four sides of each bead are four circles, within which are carved groups, each taken from a chapter in the Bible. Nothing can surpass the exquisite beauty of the workmanship of this relic of other days. Every figure is perfect, notwithstanding the extreme minuteness of their size; and the whole is from the design of Holbein, who has painted Henry in these identical beads.’ Did the bluff King, after so inconsiderately beheading his wives, succeed in quieting his conscience with these beads? If so, it must have been a wonderful rosary. At the back of the fireplace, in the dining-room, is a simple but equally interesting memento—the arms, supporters, motto, and coronet of the first Duke of Devonshire, bearing the date of 1695, a year after he, the fourth Earl (who so fearlessly declared himself ‘a faithful subject to good sovereigns, inimical and hateful to tyrants’) was created Marquis of Hartington and Duke of Devonshire by William of Orange. ‘The King and Queen,’ says the patent, ‘could do no less for one who deserved the best of them; one who in a corrupt age sinking into the basest flattery, had constantly retained the manners of the ancients, and would never suffer himself to be moved either by the insinuations or threats of a deceitful Court.’

Not the least novel apartment in Chatsworth House is, however, the ‘Sabine-room,’ which is covered—walls, doors, and ceiling—with cleverly

painted figures, the principal subject being ‘The Rape of the Sabines.’ When the doors are closed the room makes a complete picture, most adroitly treated: and the occupant, whoever he or she may be, must feel thoroughly enveloped by art. In Bolsover Castle are two rooms adorned in a similar style; but the figures, representative of Happiness and Misery, have been blurred, and in some instances nearly obliterated, by a coating of whitewash laid on thickly by some stupid Vandal.

In the gallery of paintings and the grand drawing-room it is easy to believe Miss Thackeray’s assertion that pictures ‘are strange, shifting things, before which people stand to wonder, envy, and study.’ Dead and gone Cavendishes, who have been distinguished in the senate, the field, and the sea-fight, look with steady, unflinching gaze out of the canvas. In the drawing-room is Sir Joshua Reynolds’s picture of ‘The Beautiful Duchess of Devonshire,’ the intellectual and fascinating lady who was so eager to secure Fox’s election that, according to tradition, she consented to accept a butcher’s kiss for the sake of securing his vote. Among the art-treasures in this apartment, too, are Rembrandt’s ‘Head of a Jewish Rabbi,’ Titian’s painting of Philip II., Holbein’s portrait of Henry VIII., Zuccherino’s picture of Mary Queen of Scots, and the famous sculptured figure of Hebe, by Canova, Toretti’s precocious pupil, who at the age of twelve placed upon the table of the lord of Passagno the form of a lion modelled in butter.

The rich men of ancient Rome had living libraries (trained slaves), who could repeat the ‘Iliad’ from memory; but the Duke of Devonshire has greater advantages than were ever possessed by these voluptuaries, for he is dependent neither on the caprices of slaves nor the monotony of the ‘Iliad’ for intellectual recreation. Like Charles Lamb, nearly all the Cavendishes have had an intense love of books; and the great library in the east wing of Chatsworth House is crowded with literature collected by successive generations of this noble race. There are books here that belonged to Sir William Cavendish, the husband of ‘Bess of Hardwick;’ there are black-letter books, volumes of ancient poetry, rare manuscripts, and multitudes of standard works in splendid bindings. One of the greatest gems in this rich library is Claude Lorraine’s collection of original designs, purchased by William, second Duke of Devonshire, and valued at no less than £20,000. The great painter, who began life as a pastrycook, was so passionately fond of art that he studied in the fields from sunrise to sunset. He was ‘in the habit of taking a faithful sketch of every landscape he painted, and on the back of each sketch he noted in his own handwriting the date of the painting, and the customer for whom it was painted. These sketches he kept in a book called “*Libro di Verita*,” and which, at his death in 1662, he left, entailed, to his nephews and nieces. Louis XIV. tried in vain to buy it through Cardinal d’Estrees. The Duke of Devonshire, however, after

considerable difficulty, succeeded in securing this Koh-i-noor of art as soon as the entail came to an end and the last owner was able to sell it.'

The student of history, the archæologist, the scientist, the theologian, and the lover of romance would delight to revel in this literary paradise; which contains, among other treasures, the rare Anglo-Saxon MS. of Cædmon, the Benedictionale done for Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester; and the prayer-book given by Henry VII. to his daughter, Margaret, Queen of Scotland, the latter bearing the King's autograph and the words, 'Remember y^r kynde and lovyng fader in yo^r good prayers. HENRY R.'

Literature and art are very nearly akin, and it is not singular that a mansion like Chatsworth should contain many examples of the sculptor's skill. Artemus Ward, the humourist, ridiculed the 'bust business,' and pilloried in fun those who made images of 'Bonaparte and other great men.' But if, as John Ruskin says, sculpture is the foundation and school of painting, ambitious wielders of the brush might find it advantageous to become more familiar with the sculpture gallery at the Duke of Devonshire's chief seat, for in it, on pedestals of porphyry and granite, stand or recline figures so exquisitely chiselled that, like Pygmalion's statue of Galatea, they seem to need only one other virtue—that of being endowed with life. Of rare beauty are Canova's figure of Endymion asleep; Schadow's statue of the spinning-girl; Albacini's wounded Achilles; and Tererani's Venus, out of whose foot Cupid is extracting the

thorn. And at least two famous sculptors of lowly origin have works in this gallery : Thorwaldsen, the son of the Icelandic sailor, who carved figure-heads for vessels to obtain a livelihood ; and Chantrey, the Norton farmer's boy, who declined to be a grocer, and during his apprenticeship to carving and gilding worked so assiduously in his humble studio at Sheffield that he was enabled ultimately to rely upon his pencil and chisel. What noble lessons of perseverance and ceaseless endeavours the lives of these men teach ! Thorwaldsen struggling for the grand prize in the Academy at Copenhagen, and carefully modelling the statue of 'Jason,' that landed him on the threshold of fame ; Chantrey digging clay out of a brick-hole in the steel-making city in his eagerness to attempt busts and figures, and finally gaining knighthood, as well as fame, by his art.

The Derbyshire home of the Chancellor of Cambridge University has many other charms and points of interest. It is delightful to wander in the orangery, and to loiter in the chapel, which is enriched with marble figures and wood-carving ; but perhaps the greatest treat is to get a privileged peep into the private library, in which the bookcases are surmounted by medallion portraits of the poets whose names are familiar in nearly every English household. Shakespeare is indicated by the phrase, 'Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new ;' Milton is 'A poet blind, yet bold ;' and Byron 'The wandering outlaw of his own brave land.' Humour revels on book-backs in this literary retreat, for on the

doors are painted fictitious volumes with fictitious titles, the outcome of Tom Hood's wit. The student, with eyes eagerly ranging over the books that fill the shelves, suddenly learns that his Grace possesses some very curious works, such as 'Wren's Voyage to the Canaries'; 'Minto's Coins'; 'Dyspepsia and Heartburn, by the Bishop of Sodor'; 'Merry's Gay'; 'Ray's Light of Reason'; 'Macadam's Roads,' and 'Beveridge on the Beer Act';—but, like Verrio's painted fiddle in another part of the house, they cannot be taken down.

The rugged, bramble-choked vale at Alton-Towers was converted into a luxuriant garden by the fifteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, and the inscription on the cenotaph erected to his memory appropriately says, 'He made the desert smile.' A similar tribute might be paid with equal justice to the owners of Chatsworth. Thomas Hobbes, the author of 'Leviathan,' early described how, behind the house, guarded by a lofty mountain from the rough east wind, 'a pleasant garden doth appear.' And Charles Cotton, after speaking of the wild prospects that gird the noted mansion, says :

'On the south side the stately gardens lye,
Where the scorn'd peak rivals proud Italy.'

When Izaak Walton's friend wrote his poem on the geological and physical beauties of North Derbyshire, these gardens, in which Dr. Johnson has wandered, and Queen Victoria has planted an oak, were very pretty; but they grew lovelier still under

Sir Joseph Paxton's care, and contain some of 'the sweetest walks the world can show,' whether one chooses to saunter into the quaint French garden, with its bust-crowned foliage-clad pillars ; past the great cascade, flowing over a temple's dome ; by the artificial willow-tree, which, like some hypocrites, can shed tears at will ; near the mighty Emperor's fountain, whose waters, rising nearly three hundred feet high, look in the sunlight like a column of crystal, shining through a canopy of lovely spray-showers ; along the broad paths of the Italian garden ; through the avenue of exotics in the great conservatory ; or in the humbler and more rustic ways, bordered by fern-dells, moss-covered rocks, and trailing plants. Vast changes have been effected since the old gardens were laid out by George Loudon, in 1688 ; and the skilful horticulturist and landscape-gardener have made this cultured vale south of Chatsworth House a paradise, 'shut in,' as Charles Cotton said, 'by black heaths, wild rocks, bleak crags, and wooded hills.'

St. Evremond, in one of his letters, said : 'I now write to you from the Earl of Devonshire's, where I have been this fortnight paying my devotions to the genius of Nature. Nothing can be more romantic than this country, except the region about Valois ; and nothing can equal this place in beauty except the borders of the lake.' And there are few lovelier pictures than Chatsworth Park, with its bright grass-clad acres, and ancient trees beneath whose friendly branches the startled deer find shelter. On

the wooded height that fringes the moorland stands the turreted hunting-tower, built in Queen Bess's days; so that the fair sex, and the gallants who hovered near them, could enjoy the chase without its fatigues and dangers. A short distance away is the Swiss Cottage, half hidden in the trees that skirt the lake; and on the opposite side of the park, beyond the grand old bridge, designed by Michael Angelo, is Edensor, the Duke's model village, an ideal village of beauty, peace, and contentment, such as the author of 'Modern Painters,' Ruskin, would possibly like for his Arcadian Guild.

In the churchyard, beneath a simple tombstone, lie the remains of 'the Good Duke,' who was always found 'on the side of humanity, justice, and popular rights.' On the accession of the Emperor Nicholas to the throne of Russia, he was the British ambassador entrusted with the message of congratulation to that Court; and his horses, equipages, and the magnificence of his retinue dazzled the people of Derbyshire as well as the subjects of the Czar. At St. Petersburg his Grace gave a ball to the Imperial family, and it was characterized by the greatest splendour. And throughout his delicate mission the Duke comported himself with such dignity that the 'Devonshire manner' became a current phrase among the Russian nobility.

By his side, in an equally lowly grave, Lord Frederick Cavendish is buried; his loyal life cut short by the assassin's knife. A dread scene was that in Phœnix Park, on May 6th, 1882—a tragedy

that robbed the Duke of Devonshire of one of his sons, and sent a thrill of mingled indignation and sympathy through the land; no nobler man has been ‘sacrificed to Erin.’

In Edensor church, built a few years back on the site of the old edifice, is a curious monument in alabaster. It is to the memories of Henry Cavendish, who distinguished himself among the English Volunteer commanders in the campaign in the Netherlands in 1578, and William, the first Earl of Devonshire, and the husband of ‘Bess of Hardwick.’ The armour of the one and the state-robcs of the other are sculptured in niches, and on the altar-tomb in front their effigies are calculated to remind the most thoughtless that life is fleeting, for Henry is represented as a skeleton, and William as wrapt in a winding-sheet. The most historic relic in the church, however, is the monumental brass to John Beton, grandson of Cardinal Beton, and taster and comptroller of the household to Mary Queen of Scots. ‘He, with others, bravely liberated the Queen from the chains of a cruel tyrant at Loch Leven;’ and during the captivity of his royal mistress at Chatsworth he was still devoted to her interests, and died there in her service in 1570. A steadfast servant was John Beton; a reproach to many modern servants, who scoff at fidelity, and prey like vultures on those they have promised to serve.



CHAPTER VII.

HADDON—A Feudal Mansion—‘The King of the Peak’—
Rough Justice—A Quaint Place of Worship—A Roman Altar
—The Banqueting-Hall—The Dining-Room and its Carvings
—The Long Gallery—A Night Flight.

‘As the crow flies,’ Chatsworth is not far from Haddon Hall; but the two mansions are a very great distance apart in their characteristics. The one is a modern treasure-house of art and refinement; the other a sturdy relic of a ruder age, when the baron was absolute master on his own domain, and the vassal was the slave of his will. Both places are intensely interesting, but in widely different ways; and the grey-stone turreted hall, rising, ivy-clad, among the trees on the eastern bank of the Wye, appeals particularly to the antiquary and to those who delight in romance and tradition. Its history ‘has from the first,’ as is well remarked by Mr. Jewitt, ‘been one of peace and hospitality, not of war, feud, and oppression;’ and its early lords, though their manners were rough and their culture slight, had kindly, generous hearts beating beneath their leather jerkins, and frequently gained the respect of their retainers.

At the ‘time of taking the Domesday Survey, when Bakewell belonged to, and was held by, the King, Haddon was a berewite of the Manor, and their one carucate of land was claimed by Henry de Ferrars. To whom Haddon belonged in the Saxon period is not clear, the first known owner being this Henry de Ferrars, who in 1086 held, by grant of the Conqueror, no less than 114 manors in Derbyshire alone, built Duffield Castle, and founded the Church of the Holy Trinity, near the Castle of Tutbury.’ It was afterwards held by tenure of knight’s service by William Avenell, who, while lord of Haddon, gave a portion of his land to the monks of Roche Abbey, the gift being prompted, maybe, in a spirit of propitiation to Him who is Lord of all. It is, indeed, a very conspicuous fact that these medieval knights, brave as Hector in battle, were filled with vague terrors about their ultimate destination, and not unwilling to lighten their pockets for the sake of their souls.

It was by marriage with pretty Avice, one of William de Avenell’s daughters, that Richard de Vernon became possessor of Haddon Hall; and his family, one of great antiquity, held the property for three centuries, until, by another and far more romantic marriage, it passed to the family of Manners.

Beneath the old gateway, and just behind the thick nail-studded door that gives ingress to the lower courtyard, is the huge rim of a brewing-pan—a memento of the time when Sir George Vernon

reigned there, and the mansion was filled with an almost perpetual odour of feasting. Succeeding to the estates in 1515, this hospitable knight, who understood the secret of getting to a man's heart by way of his stomach, was neither niggardly with his banquets nor turned the hungry away. As was said of Welbeck Abbey at a later period, 'Then, indeed, the porter had his work with carriages at the gate, and the trenchers in the servants' hall knew no peace.'

In such a liberal style did Sir George Vernon live, and so great was his sway, that he obtained from the people among whom he dwelt the title of 'The King of the Peak,' and occasionally he acted as if he were a despotic monarch. 'It is related that a pedlar who had been hawking his wares in the neighbourhood was found murdered in a lonely spot. He had been observed the evening before to enter a cottage, and was never seen alive again. As soon as Sir George heard of the crime, he had the body of the pedlar removed to Haddon, laid in the hall, and covered with a sheet. He then sent for the cottager, and questioned him as to the whereabouts of the pedlar who entered his house on the previous night. The man denied all knowledge of the stranger, when Sir George uncovered the body, and commanded all present to touch it in succession, and solemnly declare their innocence of the murder. The suspected man, when his turn came, declined to touch the body, and rushed out of the hall, running swiftly through Bakewell towards Ashford. Sir George

ordered his retainers to chase the fellow, and to hang him. The murderer was caught in a field opposite the Ashford toll-bar, and at once hanged. Sir George was summoned to London for thus indulging in lynch law, and when he appeared in Court was called upon to surrender as "The King of the Peak." But he declined to answer to that name, and was then called on as Sir George Vernon, when he stepped forward and said, "Here am I." As he had been summoned in the name of "The King of the Peak," the indictment fell through, and Sir George was merely admonished, and allowed to depart to his own domain.

The chaplain's room, a little to the right of the gateway, contains several reminders of the past—a pair of jack-boots, a leather doublet, a warder's horn, and some fire-dogs; and in the south-west corner of the building, at the further end of the quiet, moss-grown courtyard, is the chapel, with its Norman nave and pillars, and font of the same period. A worm-eaten staircase leads to the quaint gallery or rood-loft, and in the chancel are two curious, high-railed family pews, that look uncomfortable enough now, however cosy they may have been in the olden times, when fair ladies and brave knights worshipped there. Some portions of the chapel date as far back as 1160, and everything about this retired place of worship is very ancient. On the east window is an inscription to Sir Richard Vernon, who was 'Treasurer of Calais, Captain of Rouen, and Speaker of the Parliament of Leicester

in 1426,' and the walls are relieved by old-fashioned paintings, the centre figure of one being the infant Jesus.

On a bench in the porch across the courtyard is a worn Roman altar, bearing the inscription, 'DEO MARTI BRACIACÆ OS[IT] TIVS CAECILIANVS PRAEF COH I AQUITANO V S ;' which has been rendered, 'To the God Mars, Braciaca, Osittius, Cæcilianus, Prefect of the first Cohort of the Aquitani, in performance of a vow.' This altar, which is an object of great interest to archæologists, was dug up near Bakewell many years ago, and its mutilated inscription has puzzled the brains of numerous Solons, who have, after all, found more satisfaction in deciphering it than Pickwick and his friends when they made their famous archæological discovery.

On the left of the porch, at the end of a gloomy passage, ingress is obtained to the big baronial kitchen, with its huge fireless grate, and large chopping-block, and gigantic salt-box; and on the right is the famous banqueting-hall, the scene of much bygone conviviality. Its stone floor is uneven, its fire-bars are broken, the pictures of the servitors on the walls are mildewed, and going to decay; but this hall, which has so often echoed with loyal shouts, and hearty laughter, and minstrel lays, still contains two evidences of its former uses. One of these is the rusty handlock on the screen—an ingenious contrivance by which those who refused good liquor were punished. How? is the inquiry that naturally springs to the reader's lips. Every guest who

declined the wine-cup had his wrists slipped into the handlock, and the nectar he hesitated to send down his throat was poured into his sleeve. A barbarous practice, a clumsy jest, you will say; but it was seldom resorted to, for there were few Good Templars in that age, and precious little wine went down anybody's sleeve. The other evidence of this hilarious epoch, when men often reversed the adage, 'Live not to eat, but eat to live,' is the old oak banqueting-table, on the daïs at the upper end of the hall. It is no longer a festive board, and may never be ornamented with the boar's head and the baron of beef again. It has outlived all its friends, and stands in desolate pride alone. Mr. Jewitt says, 'This table is one of the finest examples of its kind yet remaining anywhere in existence. It is now worm-eaten and decayed, like those who once feasted around it; but still it stands a proud monument of those ancient times so long gone by.'

The dining-room, near the banqueting-hall, is a quaintly eloquent apartment elaborately wainscoted. Over the fireplace appears the motto: 'Drede God and honor the Kyng'; and the panels around the room are adorned with heraldic devices. The recess, which has a delightful outlook through an oriel window upon the moss-grown terrace and pretty lawn, is relieved with grotesque carvings of Will Somers the jester, Henry VII., and his Queen, Elizabeth of York, none of whom (presuming these heads are likenesses) were distinguished for personal

beauty. The wood-carver, indeed, was no respecter of persons, for he has made his Majesty's face as whimsical as the Court fool's. Considering so much trouble has been taken to adorn the wainscot, it is surprising that so little attention was paid to the doors, which are ill-fitting and of the rudest workmanship, worse almost than the jerry-building which is the curse of some modern habitations. In the *Archæologia* a reason is given for this careless carpentry. 'The doors,' it says, 'were concealed everywhere behind the hangings, so that the tapestry was to be lifted up to pass in and out; only for convenience there were great iron hooks (many of which are still in their places), by means whereof it might be held back. The doors being thus concealed, nothing can be conceived more ill-fashioned than their workmanship; few of these fit at all close; and wooden bolts, rude bars, and iron hasps are in general their only fastenings.'

The drawing-room and the Earl's bedroom are both noted for the beauty of their tapestry; but the ball-room, or long gallery, is far more celebrated than these apartments, not merely for its noble dimensions, but for its romantic associations. The semicircular steps of oak leading to it were, it is said, cut from one tree felled in Haddon Park; and this king of the woodland, if tradition may be relied upon, also yielded timber enough for the floor of the ball-room. This magnificent apartment is 109 feet long, and 18 feet wide. What a noble gallery it is, rich with wainscot carvings of the boar's head,

the crest of the Vernons, and the peacock, the crest of the Manners! What soft nothings have been whispered near the recessed windows! What love-making has gone on here under the eyes of the Queen of the Scythians, who is toying with the head of Cyrus, in a picture on the wall! What a flutter of excitement reigned in this room among the high-bred dames and courteous cavaliers on the memorable night when Dorothy Vernon stole away from the ball given in honour of her sister's marriage. Nearly everybody knows the story—Edward Stanley's futile wooing of Dorothy; her secret attachment to John Manners; the beautiful girl kept almost a prisoner by an angry stepmother; the night of festivity; the rustle of a lady's dress in the lord's parlour; the drawing back of bolt and bar; the meeting of the lovers on the terrace, and then the wild ride—the scamper across the country-side to the altar:

'It is night with never a star,
And the hall with revelry throbs and gleams;
There grates a hinge—a door is ajar—
And a shaft of light in the darkness streams.

'A pale sweet face, a glimmering gem
And then two figures steal into light;
A flash and darkness has swallowed them,
So sudden is Dorothy Vernon's flight.'

Haddon has many other apartments of interest to the student of history and the antiquarian. The state bedchamber with its historic bedstead and faded tapestry, and the roughly appointed archer's room, in which is the wooden frame formerly used

for stringing bows, are among these; but visitors linger longest in the lord's parlour, through which Dorothy Vernon stealthily glided, with fluttering heart, in her flight from home. The old door she unbarred, the threshold she crossed, are there still; and the terrace, on which she joined her lover, is almost the same as on the night she left it—except that it has a more softened beauty, a beauty of rare old yew trees, deep-green turf, moss-grown steps, and ivy-twined balustrade such as defies the artist's pencil and the poet's rhapsody.





CHAPTER VIII.

BAKEWELL—A Quiet Country Town—Its History—A Noted Church—Some Famous Tombs and Curious Epitaphs—The Stone Cross—A Strange Petition—An Extraordinary Marriage—Living without Food—A Pathetic Ballad—An Heroic Exploit.

BAKEWELL, ‘the metropolis of the Peak,’ is not a bit like a metropolis. It has no gigantic workshops, filled with pale-faced, half-stifled artisans; it has little of the business anxiety, the perpetual unrest, the great wealth, and the repulsive squalor that distinguish a capital. It has a quaint market-place, an historic church, some good public buildings, a prosperous-looking bank, and many comfortable inns. It is a clean town, consisting chiefly of two long streets, bordered by old-fashioned buildings; a town through which healthy moorland breezes sweep, and on the borders of which the Wye gently flows, making incessant music against the buttresses of the old bridge as it passes by. Except on market-day, or during some election campaign, Bakewell is a quiet place. Like the Haddon meadows through which it is reached, the town’s aspect is peaceful; its

talk is principally of agriculture and angling ; its thoroughfares are chiefly busy when tourists come in shoals to besiege the church, to wander through Haddon, or to explore the sweet dale of Lathkil.

Although only about an hour's railway ride from Derby, Bakewell has not become greatly imbued with the county town's go-ahead spirit ; and has made comparatively little progress through its long quiet life, extending very slowly, and increasing in population only at a snail's pace. After an existence that dates back to the time of the Romans, it is comparatively a small place yet, containing about 2,500 inhabitants. But, like Ashbourne, Bakewell seems perfectly satisfied with itself, and perhaps would not, if it could, emerge out of its ancient chrysalis into a city of stucco, and tramcars, and late hours.

Bakewell has long been celebrated for the purity and medicinal quality of its waters ; and its Baths and Bath Gardens, opposite the stately Rutland Arms, are a modern development of the more ancient baths, which were known to the legions of Rome, and probably relieved some of the warlike centurions from attacks of rheumatism.

For a thousand years or so there has been little to disturb the even tenor of Bakewell's way. In 924, Edward the Elder, after fortifying Nottingham, marched into Peakland, to the old town which derived its name from the Badecanwyllan, or bathing-well, and 'commanded a castle to be placed nigh there into, and garrisoned.' In 1280, John Peckham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, finding that the deacon

and subdeacon of the Church of Bakewell were so ill-provided for that they were obliged to beg their bread, ordained that they should eat at the vicar's table. And, according to an old record preserved at Derby, the witches of Bakewell were hanged in 1608. These are the three most prominent events in the town's history ; but the fine cruciform church, still bearing the impress of Norman and Early English builders, contains many memorials linked with Bakewell's past, of illustrious persons whose names are imperishable in the Peak.

One of the most ancient monuments is an altar-tomb, bearing the recumbent effigy in alabaster of Sir Thomas de Wendesley, who was slain at the Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403 ; and in the nave is an elaborate but delicately chiselled monument to Sir Godfrey Foljambe and Avena his wife, who founded the chantry of the Holy Cross in 1366. The Sir Thomas de Wendesley just spoken of was an exceedingly despotic knight, judging from the following strange petition in the Parliamentary Rolls : 'To the most wise Lords of the Council of our Lord the King, most humbly prays a poor and plain esquire, Godfrey Rowland, of the County of Derby, and complains of Sir Thos. Wendesley, knight, and John Deen, vicar of the Church of Hope, for that the said Thos. and John, with John Shawe, Richard Hunt, Reginald Wombewell, John de Sutton, Thos. Swynscowe, and John Swynscowe, his son, with many others of their bad associates, armed in a war-like manner, on the Monday next before the Feast

of the Translation of St. John of Beverley, in the 23rd year of the reign of King Richard, formerly King of England, came feloniously to the house of the said petitioner, at Mikel Longesdon, and the said house with force and arms broke into, and despoiled, and all his goods and chattels there found, as well living as dead, to the value of two hundred marks, took and carried away; and the said petitioner out of his said house, took and brought with them to the Castle of High Peak, and there imprisoned him for six whole days without giving him any meat or drink; and after six days they brought him out of the said Castle, and *cut off his right hand* wrongfully and against the peace, and to the perpetual injury and loss of the said petitioner; therefore be pleased in your most wise discretion to consider the shameful trespass and the bad example of those, the poverty and loss of the said petitioner, and to order said petitioner proper and hasty remedy according to your wise discretion, for God, and as a work of charity.'

The Vernon Chapel, however, possesses generally the greatest interest to all strangers, especially if familiar with the story of Dorothy Vernon's runaway marriage. In this chapel, which is divided from the south transept by a rare open screen of oak, lie the remains of Sir George Vernon, the 'King of the Peak,' and not far from the sturdy knight's altar-tomb is the monument to Sir John Manners and Dorothy his wife. Their romance is over. There is no reckless resolve in Sir John's

heart ; no flutter of hope or fear in Dorothy's breast. Some three hundred years have elapsed since they were both buried ; but posterity does not intend to let the story of their attachment die. People—particularly sentimental people—come long distances to look at the two kneeling figures, and read the inscription :

'Here lyeth Sr John Manners, of Haddon, Knight, second sonne of Thoas. Erle of Rutland, who dyed the 4 of June, 1611, and Dorothie, his wife, one of the daughters and heires to Sr George Vernon, of Haddon, Knight, who deceased the 24 day of June, in the 26 yere of the raigne of Queen Elizabeth, 1584.'

On the monument are various shields of arms of the quarterings of the families of Manners and Vernon, and the lower part is occupied by the effigies of four children of Sir John Manners and Dorothy Vernon, his wife.

There are other tombs 'sacred to the memory' of the Vernons and the Manners ; and about the edifice itself and in the churchyard are many curious inscriptions recording the demise and characteristics of humbler but perhaps not less known individuals. One of these, in remembrance of John Dale, barber-surgeon, of Bakewell, and his two wives, Elizabeth Foljambe and Sarah Bloodworth, 1737, thus curiously ends :

'Know posterity, that on the 8th of April, in the year of grace 1737, the rambling remains of the above said John Dale were, in the 86th yeaire of his pilgrimage, laid upon his two wives.

'This thing in life might raise some jealousy,
Here all three lie together lovingly,
But from embraces here no pleasure flows,
Alike are here all human joys and woes ;

Here Sarah's chiding John no longer hears,
 And old John's rambling Sarah no more fears ;
 A period's come to all their toilsome lives,
 The good man's quiet ; still are both his wives.'

Another epitaph, ‘blending in a remarkable manner business, loyalty, and religion,’ is as follows :

‘To the memory of Matthew Strutt, of this town, farmer, long famed in these parts for veterinary skill. A good neighbour and a staunch friend to Church and King. Being churchwarden at the time the present peal of bells were hung, through zeal of the House of God, and unremitting attention to the airy business of the belfry, he caught a cold, which terminated his existence, May 25, 1798, in the 68 year of his age.’

Not only the churchwarden but even the parish clerk of Bakewell seems to have been a man of superior ability, for the tablet ‘erected to the memory of Philip Roe,’ who died in 1815, bears these lines, which remind one, by-the-bye, that the ‘Amen’ of the parish clerk is fast dying out at all our country churches :

‘ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF PHILIP ROE, WHO DIED
 12TH SEPTEMBER, 1815, AGED 52 YEARS.

‘The vocal Powers, here let us mark,
 Of PHILIP, our late Parish Clerk
 In church, none ever heard a Layman
 With a clearer Voice say Amen !
 Oh ! none with Hallelujah’s Sound,
 Like Him can make the Roofs resound.
 The Choir lament his Choral Tones,
 The Town—so soon here lie his Bones.
 Sleep undisturbed, within thy peaceful shrine,
 Till angels wake thee with such tones as thine.’

Near the south transept of the church is one of the greatest curiosities Bakewell possesses—a so-called ‘Runic cross,’ that has been, and is still, a source of great interest to antiquaries. Although greatly defaced, it has yet much beauty, and bears on its front and back groups illustrative of Christ’s life, foliage in graceful scrolls, and figures of men and various animals. It is a remarkably fine example of Anglo-Saxon sculpture.

In the last, as in the present century, disparity of age was no bar to matrimony, and there were some singular weddings, especially in the out-of-the-way villages of Derbyshire. At Sheldon, near Bakewell, in January, 1753, a widow aged eighty was married to a boy of fourteen. The bride, owing to her infirmities, had to be chaired to the altar; but on her return she was preceded by a band of music and the Duke of Rutland’s hornpipe-player. Unable to dance, she beat time to the music with her hands, and on getting home shuffled about by the aid of her crutches, commanding her husband meanwhile to join in the festivities. The populace were ‘soundly drenched with showers of excellent liquor,’ and there was much rejoicing at this strange union, which did not last long, however, for in the same month the old lady died, and was buried in Bakewell churchyard, the funeral sermon being preached by the clergyman ‘who had lately performed the nuptial ceremony.’

The famous fasting girl, Martha Taylor, was born and lived at Over Haddon, near Bakewell. She began to do without food when she was eighteen,

and did not eat anything for fifty-two weeks. The very approach of meat or drink was a great trouble to her ; and once, when out of curiosity or a desire to eat if possible, she did swallow part of a fig, it so upset her digestive organs that she narrowly escaped with her life. An old pamphlet, printed in 1668, during her fast, styles the girl ‘a wonder of all wonders,’ and says that ‘this maid is still alive, and hath a watch set over her by the Earl of Devonshire.’ Her death, according to an entry in the parish register, took place in 1684, but whether she went on fasting to the end is not revealed.

Bakewell is linked with a most pathetic Derbyshire ballad, ‘The Parson’s Torr,’ descriptive of the fate of the Rev. Robert Lomas, a former rector of Monyash, a little village a few miles off. The incumbent, during a perilous night-ride in 1776, fell over a lofty cliff, and was found dead at the foot of the rock. The ballad, written by the Rev. W. R. Bell for Mr. Jewitt’s ‘Reliquary,’ and afterwards introduced into his ‘Ballads and Songs of Derbyshire,’ is vivid in description, and runs as follows :

‘The parson of Monyash, late one eve,
Sat in his old oak armchair ;
And a playful flame in the low turf fire
Ofttimes shewed him sitting there.

‘What was it that made the kind-hearted man
Sit pensively there alone ?
Did other men’s sorrows make sad his heart,
Or say—a glimpse of his own ?

‘Black dark was that night and stormy withal,
It rained as ’twould rain a sea ;

And round and within the old parsonage-house
The wind moaned piteously.

‘ Still sat he deep musing till midnight hour,
And then in a waking dream—
He quailed to hear ’mid the tempest a crash,
And eke a wild piercing scream.

“ “ Oh, mercy !” cried he, with faltering breath,
“ What sounds are these which I hear ?
May evil be far from both me and mine !
Good Lord, be Thou to us near !”

‘ No longer sat he in the old armchair,
But prayed and lay down in bed ;
And strove hard to sleep and not hear the storm
That scowled and raged o’er his head.

‘ But sleep seldom comes when ’tis most desired—
And least to a troubled mind ;
And the parson lay wake long time I ween
Ere soft repose he could find.

‘ As the dark hours of night passed slowly on,
He slept as weary man will ;
But light was his sleep and broken his rest,
And sad his foredread of ill.

‘ Thus restless he lay, and at early dawn
He dream’d that he fell amain,
Down, down an abyss of fathomless depth,
Loud shrieking for help in vain.

‘ He woke up at once with a sudden shock,
And threw out his arms widespread ;
“ Good heavens !” he gasped ; “ what ill omen is this ?
Where am I ?—with quick or dead !”

‘ Right well was he pleased to find ’twas a dream—
That still he was safe and sound ;
With the last shades of night fear passed away,
And joy once more again came round.

‘ The morning was calm, and the storm was hushed,
 Nor wind nor rain swept the sky ;
 And betimes he arose, for bound was he
 To Bakewell that day to hie.

‘ Old Hugh brought his horse to the garden gate,
 And saw him all safe astride ;
 “ Good-bye,” quoth the parson ; quoth Hugh “ Good-bye !
 I wish you a pleasant ride !”

‘ Forth rode he across the lone trackless moor,
 His thoughts on his errand bent,
 And hoped he right soon to come back again
 The very same way he went.

‘ The journey to Bakewell he safely made
 A little before midday ;
 But vicar and people were all at church,
 Where they were oft wont to pray.

‘ “ I’ll put up my beast,” quoth the parson, “ here
 At the White Horse hostelry ;^{*}
 And go up to church, that when prayers are done
 The vicar I there may see.”

‘ But ere he could reach the old Newark door†
 Both priest and people were gone ;
 And the vicar to soothe a dying man
 To Over Haddon sped on.

‘ ’Twas three past noon when the vicar came back,
 The parson he asked to dine ;
 And time stole a march on the heedless guest—
 Six struck as he sat at his wine.

‘ Up rose he from table, and took his leave,
 Quite startled to find it late ;
 He called for his horse at the hostelry,
 And homeward was soon agate.

* Now the Rutland Arms.

† The south transept door.

‘As he rode up the hill, past All Saint’s Church,
The moon just one glance bestowed,
And the weird-like form of the old stone cross
In the churchyard dimly showed.

‘Still higher and higher he climbed the hill,
Yet more and more dark it grew ;
The drizzling rain became sleet as he climbed,
And the wind more keenly blew.

‘Ah ! thick was the mist on the moor that night—
Poor wight ! he had lost his way !
The north-east wind blowing strong on his right,
To the left had made him stray.

‘And now he was close to lone Haddon Grove,
Bewildered upon the moor ;
Slow leading his horse that followed behind,
Himself groping on before.

‘Still onward and leeward, at last he came
To the edge of Harlow Dale ;
From his cave* Latkil a warning roared,
But louder then howled the gale.

‘On the brink of Fox Torr the doomed man stood,
And tugged the bridle in vain ;
But his horse would not move ; then quick started back,
And snap went each bridle rein !

‘Then headlong fell he o’er the lofty cliff :
He shrieked and sank in the gloom ;
Down, down to the bottom he swiftly sped,
And death was his dreadful doom.

‘The dead man lay cold on the blood-stained rocks—
The darkness did him enshroud ;
And the owls high up in the ivy-clad Torr
Bewailed him all night full loud.

* The Latkil is a noted trout stream, and flows out of a cavern opposite the Torr.

' Oh, little they thought in the old thatched cot
 Hard by the parsonage gate,
 Their master they never again should see,
 Nor ope to him soon or late.

' "This night is no better than last," quoth Hugh,
 "And master has not come back ;
 I hope he is hale, and safe housed with friends,
 And has of good cheer no lack."

' Quoth Betty, " I liked not his morning ride ;
 I fear he's in evil plight ;
 A Friday's venture's no luck, I've heard say—
 God help him if out this night !"

' At dawn of next day old Betty went forth
 To milk the cow in the shed,
 And saw him sitting upon a large stone,
 All pale and mute, with bare head !

' But a moment she turned her eyes away,
 A fall she heard and a groan ;
 She looked again, but no parson was there—
 He'd vanished from off the stone !

' Soon spread the dread tale through Monyash town—
 They made a great hue and cry ;
 And some off to this place and some to that
 To seek the lost man did hie.

' Bad tidings from Bakewell—no parson there—
 No parson could else be found ;
 'Twas noon, yet no tidings—they still searched on,
 And missed they no likely ground.

' At last the searchers went into the dale :
 And there at the foot of Fox Torr
 They found the parson, all cold and dead,
 'Mong the rocks all stained with gore.

' They took up his corse, and six stalwart men
 Slowly bore it along the dale ;
 And they laid the dead in his house that night,
 And many did him bewail.

'When time had passed over—a day or twain,
They buried him in the grave ;
And his bones now rest in the lone churchyard
Till doomsday them thence shall crave.

'Oh, dread was the death of the luckless man,
Not soon will it be forgot ;
The dismal story, for ages to come,
Will often be told, I wot.

'You may not now see in Monyash town
The dead man's sear tuft of grass ;
But still it is there in memory stored,
And thence it never shall pass.

'You may not now find Fox Torr by that name—
The swain thus knows it no more ;
But pointing thereto from Latkil grot,
He'll show you the Parson's Torr.'

Very different in sentiment from 'The Parson's Torr' is the humorous ballad 'The Tailor's Ramble,' the hero of which, a man named Eyre, thoroughly revealed by his valiant feat in 1797 the falsity of the adage that a tailor is only the ninth part of a man. This also we quote, as follows, from Mr. Jewitt's 'Ballads and Songs of Derbyshire':

'Come all you gallant heroes, of courage stout and bold,
And I'll tell you of a Taylor that would not be control'd ;
It happened in Derbyshire, as you may understand,
Five troops of the cavalry to take this noble man.

'So now I do begin to tell you of the fun :
Full twenty miles that morning this Taylor he had run ;
And when he came to Ashford, the people they did cry,
"Make haste, my jovel lad, for your enemies are nigh!"'

- ‘ This Taylor was a mighty man—a man of wonderous size,
 And when he came to Entcliff* Hill you would have thought
 he would have reached the skies ;
 And when he did climb those rocks that was so wondrous high,
 The cavalry came all round, and the Taylor they did spy.
- ‘ They loaded their Pistols with Powder and Ball,
 All for to take this Taylor that was both stout and tall ;
 He was near four feet high, and a mighty man indeed—
 You’d a laugh’d to have seen the cavalry ride after him full
 speed.
- ‘ In lighting from their horses, their valour for to show,
 Five of them upon the ground this Taylor he did throw ;
 They being sore affrighted, saying, “ We would shoot him if
 we durst !”
 But their Carbines would not fire, for their Balls they had put
 in first.
- ‘ Their captain, as commander, he ordered ranks to form,
 All for to take this Taylor the Entcliff rocks to storm :
 “ Prime and load !” then was the word their captain he did
 cry ;
 “ Cheer up, my jovel lads ; let us conquerors be or die !”
- ‘ These valiants being reinforced, they took the Tailor bold,
 And guarded him to Bakewell, the truth I will unfold ;
 At the White Horse Inn in Bakewell, as you may understand,
 It took full fifty of their troops to guard this noble man.
- ‘ The battle being over, the Taylor they have won,
 And this is the first prank our cavalry has done ;
 I tell you the truth, they cannot refuse,
 They are ten times worse than the runaway blues.
- ‘ Here’s a health unto the Taylor, of courage stout and bold,
 And by our noble cavalry he scorns to be control’d ;
 If he’d but had his goose, his bodkin, and his shears,
 He would soon have cleared Bakewell of those Derby volunteers.’

* Entcliff is about a mile from Bakewell on the way to Ashford.



CHAPTER IX.

SOME PEAK VILLAGES.—Ashford and its Customs—Little Longstone—Hassop—A Brave Royalist—Baslow—The Dog Whipper—Scenery and Health—A Pretty Valley—Stony Middleton—Chief Justice Denman—Rocky Grandeur—A Love-Sick Maiden's Leap.

SOME half-dozen Peak villages, old-world places, with old-fashioned inhabitants, and simple customs lingering on from generation to generation, cluster around Bakewell. Ashford-in-the-Water, with its clever workers in marble, lies a little to the north-west in a pretty fertile valley. It was a royal manor, and granted in the first year of his reign by King John to Wenunwen, Lord of Powisland. By Edward III. it was granted to Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Kent, and passed, by marriage of his daughter Joan, into the Holland family, from whom, on the death of Edmund Holland, Earl of Kent, in 1408, it passed to his sister, the wife of Lord Nevile. From Henry Nevile, Earl of Westmorland, about 1550, it was bought by Sir William Cavendish, and still forms part of the possessions of the Duke of Devonshire. A castellated residence, inhabited successively by the Plantagenets, Hollands, and Nevilles, once stood

in the village, but has, time out of mind, been demolished.

In the church, which has superseded a more ancient one, is part of the old porch, ‘on which is sculptured a wild boar and another animal, something resembling a wolf in a couchant position under a tree, which is thought to be allegorical of the ancient Peak forest, it being infested with those animals at the time the church was erected.’ A tablet in the same edifice records the death, in 1786, of Henry Watson, of Bakewell, who ‘established the marble-works near this place, and was the first who formed into ornaments the fluors and other fossils of this county.’

Ashford long kept alive the custom of carrying funeral garlands in front of the coffins of girls who died unmarried, and some of these memorials still hang in the church, where loving hands so long ago placed them. The custom of ‘sugar-cupping’ was also observed here on Easter Sunday, when both young and old ‘had the habit of taking sugar and water in bottles, and sitting on the banks around the village, drinking this mixture.’

William Harris, the founder of the Free Grammar School, was particularly anxious not only about the education of the children, but the eternal welfare of their parents, for by his will, dated 6th September, 1630, he ‘left the annual sum of twenty marks, to be issuing yearly for ever, out of the new grounds lying in the parish of Alfreton, in trust, that twenty

nobles, parcel of the said twenty marks, should be paid yearly for ever towards the maintenance of a free school, to be kept in Ashford, where the testator was born, for the instruction of poor children ; and the said testator gave £50 towards building a school-house and appointed that the other twenty nobles, the residue of the said sum, should be paid yearly for twenty sermons to be made yearly in the Chapel of Ashford or in the Chapel of Sheldon . . . in the parish of Bakewell, which the said trustees should think most expedient, they allowing to the preacher for every sermon *six-and-eightpence !*

Not far from Ashford, are not only Taddington, Sheldon, Great Longstone, but Little Longstone, with its numerous subjects for the artist's pencil and its old stone stoopes, the remnant of the degrading stocks, in which many a drunkard has sat until he became sober, jeered at and teased meanwhile by the rosy-cheeked children of the village.

In the same neighbourhood, again, is Hassop, with its antiquated grey-stone cottages, surrounded by evergreens, rose-trees, and flowers. Its noted hall—which was garrisoned for King Charles, in 1643, by Colonel Eyre, conspicuous for his bravery at the siege of Newark—the seat of the Earls of Newburgh, and to which, and other estates of the Eyres, many ‘claimants’ have arisen, is an unostentatious residence, and near by is the Roman Catholic chapel, resorted to from the surrounding Peak villages.

Baslow, one of the prettiest of Derbyshire villages,

lies only an hour's walk from Bakewell, along the pleasant tree-shaded road to the left of the worn bridge that crosses the Wye. Long before the pedestrian reaches the village, he can see it stretching a little way into the valley, and extending along the wooded hillside to the north ; and through the meadows at his feet flow the clear waters of the Derwent, on whose verdant banks ‘proud Chatsworth towers.’ Baslow, once visited, makes an indelible impression upon the mind. It is quiet, rural, picturesque ; and its hoary church, moss-grown graveyard, primitive shops, and homely cottages, brightened inside by out-of-date pictures and grandmotherly ornaments, and outside by laburnums, lilacs, and roses, make it an ideal English village, the repose of which has so far been undisturbed by the modern spirit of spoliation. It is true that lately a fine hydropathic establishment has been built on the slope fronting Chatsworth House, an establishment furnished in a somewhat æsthetic style ; but it is almost too grand for the grey-suited tourist whose boots are white with the dust of the limestone roads. So, as a rule, he prefers the old inns—the ivy-clad Peacock, the well-known Devonshire Arms, and the Wheat Sheaf, with its homely rooms and secluded, foliage-bordered bowling-green.

The church, dark and sombre with age, stands just off the main road through the village. ‘In the vestry,’ says Mr. Cox, in his work on the Churches of Derbyshire, ‘there still remains the weapon of the ancient parish functionary of whom we read in

so many churchwardens' accounts in almost every county of England—the dog-whipper. It was his duty to whip the dogs out of church, and generally to look after the orderly behaviour of both bipeds and quadrupeds during divine service. The whip in question has a stout lash some three feet in length, fastened to a short ash-stick with leather bound round the handle. It is said there are persons yet living in the parish who can remember the whip being used. We believe it to be a unique curiosity, as we cannot hear of another parish in which the whip is still extant.' This church was not at all singular in its possession of a dog-whipper. In the Youlgreave register there is an entry showing that in 1609 the sum of sixteenpence was paid to Robert Walton 'for whipping ye dogges forth of ye church in time of Divyne service ;' and at Castleton, in 1722, ten shillings were paid to the 'sluggard-waker,' a still more startling functionary, whose duty it was to awake drowsy members of the congregation by tapping them on the head with a long wand.

Baslow is noted not only for the beauty of the village itself, but for the rugged character of the hills that shelter it from the east and north winds. On the fringe of the hamlet, high above the wooded slopes, great rocks stand grandly out against the sky-line ; and one of these, 'the Eagle Stone,' was once a rock idol, the object of much adoration among the Druids. In a humble sort of way, Baslow is a health-resort, and in the spring, when the little gardens are bright with flowers, nearly every cottage

puts up its well-worn card, ‘Lodgings to Let,’ and every coach brings family groups, parents and children, joyous with the prospect of a long holiday.

But Baslow is chiefly used as the northern portal to Chatsworth, and all the year round it is frequented by Sheffield people who eagerly forsake the forge, the furnace, and the cutler’s shop for a day in the Peak. In summer they come in thousands, often tramping the entire distance, toiling up the steep to Owler Bar, and trudging past long stretches of moorland, either by the low road, or the more picturesque Froggatt Edge, with its winding tree-shadowed highway and glorious prospect, shouldered in the distance by the dark-looking hills that hob-nob with Kinder Scout. The view here is magnificent, so diversified is the scenery, the blending of hill and dale, of moorland glen and green fields, of tiny brooklet and broad river, of hardy trees growing, as it were, out of the stony hearts of scarped rocks, and of tender-looking plants that seem to thrive, like Micawber, upon nothing. Of this stretch of beautiful country, as seen from the road that dips towards Baslow, we have previously written:

‘On the left, Froggatt Edge rises above us bold and rugged. Out of its rough side jut huge rocks, giving shelter to thick foliage, ferns, and wild flowers. One of these rocks is said to resemble Mr. Gladstone’s profile, and another, boat-shaped, is known as “Noah’s Ark.” Over the moss-grown wall on the right of the roadway a finely-wooded declivity merges

several hundred feet below into the wide-sweeping valley—one of Nature's brightest jewels set in a wilderness of rock and heath.

' How restful and pleasing to the eye is the graceful expanse of fertile meadows, dotted here and there with grey stone cottages and modest farmsteads, and how toy-like the little gardens look far down in this sleepy hollow. The Derwent winds through the fields; and the white roads, forsaking the river at whimsical angles, lead one in fancy to the shadowed glades of Ashopton, and the old-world village of Eyam, an out-of-the-way paradise of health and beauty now—two hundred years ago a plague-stricken hamlet, in which the clergyman, Mompesson, taught posterity the real meaning of self-sacrifice. The rocky fringe of Bamford, the lofty peak of Winnhill, and the wave-like bend of dale on the opposite slope, make a lovely background to this splendid landscape, this charming picture of shifting lights and shadows, and varied colours tinting ridge and dell, of wooded hills, and flower-sprinkled pastures, and gleaming river.'

The Chequers Inn, a homely resort for artists and anglers, stands within the shadow of the rocks lower down the road; and either from this point or from Baslow, the secluded village of Stony Middleton is soon reached. The place is appropriately named. It is very stony; there is stone everywhere, and the habitations, like the house of the wise man in the parable, are built upon a rock. Very picturesque the cottages look, rising irregularly one above an-

other on the ridges of the mountain-side; but the lead-miner and the labourer, climbing to their eyrie-like homes, high above the roadway, think more about their aching backs and tired legs than the scenery. The Duke of York, who had a weakness for marching his men to the top of the hill and marching them down again, would very soon have grown weary of the pastime at Stony Middleton. ‘The hill in this town is so steep,’ wrote Dr. Pegge, ‘that it is said when Mr. Ashton was sheriff in 1664, he had no coach, and the judge asked why he did not bring one. He replied there was no such thing as having a coach where he lived, “for ye town stood on one end.”’

On the threshold of the village stands Middleton Hall, the seat of Lord Denman. The mansion is not attractive, except for its associations. The dull-looking habitation formerly belonged to the Fynney family, and passed by the marriage, in 1761, of Elizabeth, one of the coheiresses of Richard Fynney, gent., with Joseph Denman, M.D., of Bakewell. Dr. Joseph Denman was brother to Dr. Thomas Denman, the eminent London physician, who, marrying Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Brodie, became father of Thomas Denman, Solicitor-General to Queen Caroline during her trial. This Thomas Denman was made Lord Chief Justice, and called to the House of Lords as Baron Denman of Dovedale. He married Theodosia, daughter of the Rev. R. Veners, and was father of the present Lord Denman; of Admiral Denman; and of the present

Judge Denman. The Lord Chief Justice was noted alike for his legal knowledge, political power, and fine sense of justice. He dared even to brave the House of Commons itself in the cause of right, and one of his judgments contained those memorable words : ‘ Most willingly would I decline to enter upon an inquiry which may lead to my differing from that great and powerful assembly. But when one of my fellow-subjects presents himself before me in this court demanding justice for an injury, it is not at my option to grant or withhold redress. I am bound to afford it him if the law declares him entitled to it. Parliament is said to be supreme. I most fully acknowledge its supremacy. It follows, then, that neither branch of it is supreme when acting by itself.’ Nor is this fearless independence an uncommon trait in men brought up among the Derbyshire hills, though they may lack the talent that accompanied it in Lord Denman’s mind.

At the opposite end of the village (which contains a hot spring said to have been used by the Romans) stretches Middleton Dale, conspicuous for its rocky grandeur. On the right, bordering the road, the massive limestone crags tower to an impressive height, and give scanty shelter to the pertinacious foliage that clings to their rugged breasts. The rocks are perpendicular, and stand shoulder to shoulder, like a huge wall that might have been thrown carelessly together by giants. In places the crags are scarred and broken, but they are nevertheless full of majestic beauty, with their mighty stature,

and frowning summits, and shades of black and grey, relieved by the green and the brown of the foliage.

About one of these rocks Glover tells a romantic story in his ‘Peak Guide,’ written half a century ago: ‘A high perpendicular rock, called the Lover’s Leap,’ he says, ‘marks the first grand opening into the dale. From the summit of this fearful precipice, about the year 1760, a love-stricken damsels, of the name of Baddeley, threw herself into the chasm below; and, incredible as it may appear, she sustained but little injury from the desperate attempt; her face was a little disfigured, and her body bruised by the brambles and rocky projections that interrupted her fall; but she was enabled to walk to her home with very little assistance. Her bonnet, cap and handkerchief were left on the summit of the rock, and some fragments of her torn garments, that waved in the few bushes through which she had passed, marked the course of her descent; she therefore returned to her dwelling shorn of part of her habiliments. Her marvellous escape made a serious impression on her mind, and gave a new turn to her feelings; her fit of love subsided, and she ever afterwards lived in a very exemplary manner in the vicinity of the place which had been the scene of her folly, and she died unmarried.’ Lovers seem, judging from the number of rocks and localities so called, to have had a partiality for leaping into danger in Derbyshire; but being doubtless possessed of Cupid’s wings, they have seldom, it would appear, done themselves much injury.



CHAPTER X.

EYAM—An Ancient Village—Its Geological Peculiarities—A Hideous Pestilence—A Singular Story—The Eyam Cross—Eminent People—Quaint Customs—Eccentric Characters.

'THE Queen of the Peak.' 'A little Athens.' By such poetic phrases has Eyam been called; and it is perhaps the fairest of all the villages in the county which Charlotte Brontë has so appropriately described as 'a north Midland shire, dusk with moorland, and ridged with mountain.' An ancient place, it dates back to the time of Edward the Confessor, whose figure 'stood out bright in the darkness when England lay trodden under foot by Norman conquerors.' The village, which is almost a little town, with its more than 1,500 inhabitants, was christened, in the Saxon tongue, Eaham, a well-watered hamlet, or Eyam, a high dwelling-place. It is a village of venerable weather-stained houses, and of one quiet street, winding for a mile along the hillside; it is a village of pleasant pathways, pure springs and brooklets, and romantic dells; a village hemmed in by green slopes and majestic hills that only need climbing to reveal

delightful pictures of fern-glade, and moss-covered rock, and lovely woodland, and wide-spreading valley.

Eyam, which is not half an hour's stroll from Middleton Dale, is geologically eccentric. It stretches itself, being partial to variety, over several different strata. On the south side of its long street, the dwellings are built on limestone; across the road the habitations stand on shale and sandstone. Bordering the village are ranges of mountain limestone, honeycombed with caverns; intricate lead-mines, in which many a provincial hero has braved death for the sake of his fellows; great masses of shale and sandstone, capped with mill-stone grit; and on the moors round about are rocks and stones that tell not merely of freaks in the earth's formation, but of primeval worship and early superstitious rites.

The 'mountain village,' so attractive in its picturesqueness and geological peculiarities, is also historically famous. In 1665 and 1666 it was the scene of a fierce battle—not of lords, knights, and yeomen, striving with rash courage to take each other's lives; but of a nobler battle, in which the villagers, led by undaunted men, fought a foe more insidious and merciless than human enemies—the plague. The wakes, with their feasting, and dancing, and rural merriment, had just ceased. On a September day, in 1665, a box of tailor's patterns, in cloth, and, it is said, some old clothes, arrived at an Eyam cottage. The patterns and garments were, so tradition avers, a gift from the metropolis;

but in their folds lurked a hideous pestilence. A journeyman tailor named Vicars, by whom the box had been opened, noticed that the garments were damp, and held some of them before the fire; he was immediately seized with violent sickness, other symptoms rapidly showed themselves, and he shortly afterwards became delirious, and died.

The plague spread; nervous people stayed at home; mothers trembled for the safety of their little ones; old friends looked askance at each other in the street, fearing contagion. One by one the villagers were infected. Parents were rendered childless and children made orphans by the loathsome pest. Nor was the Angel of Death satisfied with a hasty visit to the village. He folded his wings, and stalked grimly into nearly every house. Like Shylock, ravenous for his pound of flesh, the plague showed no mercy. It claimed its victims in the bright autumn days, through the long wintry nights, in the fresh spring-time, and the succeeding sultry summer! Destitution and despair reigned in many a home; and the village would have been deserted altogether had it not been for the moral courage of the Rev. William Mompesson, the rector, and another divine, the Rev. Thomas Stanley. By their eloquence, self-sacrifice, and heroic example, they deterred the inhabitants from flight, and prevented the pestilence from spreading to other parts of the Peak.

But what heart-breaking sights they saw—what tears, what silent grief, what hysterical woe!

Ultimately, the listlessness of despair filled the hearts of the people. The labourer seldom went into the field, the lead-getter stayed away from the mine, and the shoemaker put aside his leather-apron, hammer, and last. Such food as could be obtained was placed on the boundary, outside the village, by kind-hearted folks from the hamlets near: and money never changed hands without being dipped in the springs, one of which retains to this day the name of ‘Mompesson’s Well.’

So rapidly did the infection spread, and so terrified were the people, that they dare not worship in the church. The old edifice, in which they had been christened and married, was closed; and the brave Mompesson, strong in his faith, though the villagers were falling like dead leaves around him, preached God’s Word in the open air, in the picturesque ravine once familiar as ‘Cussy Dell,’ and now known as ‘Cucklett Church.’

And death became so common, that interment took place without passing-bell or funeral rite. Bodies were buried in shallow graves in gardens and fields; and the moss-grown tombs and worn inscriptions on the hillside, outside the village, indicate where some of the plague-stricken victims were rudely laid. ‘The condition of the place,’ wrote the rector in one of his letters, ‘exceeds all history and example. Our town has become a Golgotha, the place of a skull. My ears never heard such doleful lamentations, my nose never smelt such horrid smells, and my eyes never beheld such ghastly spec-

tacles. Here have been seventy-six families visited within my parish, out of which 259 persons died.' It is more than two hundred years since the pestilence raged in Eyam, but it will never be forgotten ; and the villagers, if angered by their children or pestered by the importunate, even now relieve their feelings by saying, 'A plague on thee!' or 'The plague take thee!'

The restorer's hand has stripped the church of most of its ancient beauties ; and with the exception of the Norman font, and the curious sun-dial, there is little about the edifice to tempt the antiquary. An unobtrusive stone in the corner of the vestry is, however, linked with a very singular story. It 'records the death of Joseph Hunt, rector of Eyam, who was buried December 16, 1709, and of his wife Ann, who died six years previously. She was the daughter of a village publican, whom he had been obliged by the bishop to marry in consequence of his having gone through a mock ceremony with her in a drunken freak. This caused an action for breach of promise with a Derby lady to whom he was previously engaged. Some years passed in litigation, which drained his purse and estranged his friends ; and eventually he had to take shelter in the vestry (which some say was built for that purpose), where he resided the remainder of his life to keep the law hounds at bay.'

In the churchyard, a pleasant shadowed retreat, is the hallowed grave of Mrs. Catherine Mompesson, the wife of the rector, who, in the midst of her

devotedness to the people of the village and of her unswerving attention to her husband in that trying time, fell a victim to the plague. The tomb bears the inscription :

‘ Catherina, vxor Gvlielmi Mompesson hvjs Ecclesiæ Rect. filia Radvlphi Carr, nvper de Cocken iu comitatv Dvnelmensis, armigeri. Sepvlta Vicesimo Qvinto die mensis Avgti, Ano. Dni., 1666,’

and on other parts of the tomb are, ‘ CAVE NESCITIS NOVAM,’ and ‘ MIHI LVCRVM.’

Near, is what is usually known as ‘ Eyam Cross.’ It is about eight feet in height; and is one of the finest of its early period known. It is rich in quaint carving, in rudely sculptured figures of angels bearing crosses and blowing trumpets, and its sides are curiously adorned with scroll-work and interlacings.

Striving to account for the occurrence of crosses in all parts of the kingdom, a writer in the ‘ Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain,’ says: ‘ The cross became a part of the decoration of every altar. It was employed in every sacred rite, and occurred in the diplomas as an inviolable test of every compact; nor can we be surprised to find it sculptured on so many of our public monuments when designed to excite sentiments of piety or compassion; or on landmarks, which no man was for conscience’ sake to remove. It was frequently fixed at the entrance of the church to inspire recollection in those persons who approached, and reverence towards the mysteries at which they were about to be present. On the high-road the cross

was frequently placed with a view to call the thought of the passengers to a sense of religion, and to restrain the predatory excursions of robbers. In the market-place it was a signal for upright intention and fair dealing, and was in every place designed as a check upon a worldly spirit.'

Eyam has been the home of many eminent people, ancient customs, and eccentric characters.

John Nightbroder, the author, who founded the house of Carmelites at Doncaster in 1350, was born in this village, which was also the birthplace of Anna Seward, the gifted poetess, who was so precocious that at three years old she could lisp the 'Allegro' of Milton, and whose poems and letters are among the choicest of English classics. Here, too, the Rev. Peter Cunningham wrote much of his graceful verse ; the urbane Thomas Birds, the Peak antiquary, collected his fossils and relics of Roman occupation, now unfortunately scattered through the land, or perhaps altogether destroyed : and here Peter Furness, the Peak poet, and William Woods, the historian of the village, lived, and revelled in literary pursuits.

Of the old customs, once so common in Eyam, few remain. One of the prettiest was that of hanging bouquets of flowers outside the cottage-windows, or on the door-lintels, to denote any joyful event. Another was that of sprinkling May-dew on the foreheads of sick children, in the belief that it was a shield against death. And there was yet a third custom, observed until the last century, that of

guarding Ligget Road, the chief way into the village. Across the highway a strong gate was placed, and here ‘watch and ward were kept every night;’ the householders standing in turn at the gate, and questioning all who wished to enter the village.

With such entries in its parish register as ‘Old Robert Slinn, died November 26, 1692,’ one is prepared to find that very peculiar people have lived at Eyam, and the hamlet has certainly been familiar to some singular characters.

Michael Barber, the astrologer and parish clerk, was one of these. While with a villager one day Michael saw two teams ploughing in a field, and his companion, seeing the horses tugging over the furrows, said: ‘Now, Michael, if thou canst stop yon two teams I shall believe in thy astrology!’ Immediately Michael went through a grotesque incantation, and one of the teams stopped as if by magic. ‘There,’ said Michael, ‘I have stopped one, but the other I cannot stop.’ ‘How is that?’ asked the villager. ‘Because,’ said Michael, in solemn tones, ‘the ploughman said his prayers this morning, and I have no power over those who live in the fear of the Lord.’ John Gregory, of Kiley, was also a very eccentric man, chiefly noted for the extreme frugality of his diet, and his great knowledge of the abstruse sciences. Scarcely so whimsical was he, however, as Cornelius Brushfield, of the Hanging Flat, who lived like a hermit in a tiny cottage built on a ledge of rock, and never travelled a mile beyond Eyam!



CHAPTER XI.

TIDESWELL—‘The Cathedral City of the Peak’—A Curious Tenure—The Church—A Good Bishop—An Eminent Vocalist—The ‘Drunken Butcher of Tideswell’—An Amusing Ballad.

LIKE Eyam, the old market-town of Tideswell has a poetic name, and is often called ‘The Cathedral City of the Peak.’ But though it is a bishop’s birthplace, and possesses a noble church, it lacks both the size and ponderous pride of the Cathedral city. There is no pretension about Tideswell. Even the ‘Ebbing and Flowing Well’ that gave the place its name is now partially dried up. Like the modest violet hiding away beneath sheltering banks, the homely town (fringed on the south by the limestone grandeur of Cressbrook Dale and on the north by wide stretches of bleak uplands) takes some finding; but once discovered, the pedestrian and the traveller by carrier’s cart are loth to leave the out-of-the-way place, which is distinguished quite as much for its love of music and quaint ballads, as for its grand old church.

Tideswell, which lies only five miles west of Eyam, is a very small ancient town. Its market was granted

in 1250, and at the same time it obtained the right to hold a fair on the festival of the decollation of St. John the Baptist.

Twelve acres of land were held here by a very curious tenure—on the very easy condition that the precentor of Lichfield, after a first payment of fifteen marks, should render yearly to Sir Richard Daniel, of Tideswell, Knight, or his heirs, one pair of white gloves at Easter, and sixpence at Michaelmas. In olden time the vicar was not let off quite so easily. He had not only to preach, but was, like the virgins in the parable, responsible for keeping a lamp burning in the church.

This edifice, which is of singular beauty, with its grand proportions and graceful tracery, is in the Decorated style, and does not look unlike a little cathedral. The church contains many evidences of the deftness of bygone sculptors, and its ancient font, ornamented with cleverly chiselled devices, is a great treasure and much prized; but it went through a novel experience in 1824, when according to Mary Sterndale, it was ‘regularly used by the workpeople to mix their colours in when, they *beautified* the church with blue and mahogany paint.’ In the church are monuments to the Foljambe, Litton, De Bower, and Meverell families; but the most interesting relic is the fine brass in memory of Bishop Pursglove, with his engraved effigy, in vestments. A Tideswell boy, Robert Pursglove was sent to St. Paul’s school in London; and mounted the ladder of success so rapidly that in 1552 he was

consecrated Bishop of Hull, and in 1553 was appointed Archdeacon of Nottingham. An old manuscript states that he lived ‘in the most sumptuous style, being served at table by gentlemen only.’ But early in Elizabeth’s reign, when ‘all spiritual persons holding preferment were required to take the oath of supremacy,’ he refused to obey this mandate, relinquished his purple and fine linen, and returned to Tideswell, where he died in 1579, after founding the Grammar School there, and another at Guisborough in Yorkshire, and acting most benevolently in other ways. The inscription beneath his effigy on a brass plate is here given from a copy taken by Mr. Jewitt :

‘Under this stone as here doth *E*n *A* corps sometime of fame
in tiddeswall bred and born truely, ROBERT PURSGLOVE by name
and there brought up by parents care at Schoole & learning trad
till afterwards by UNCLE dear to London he was hid
who WILLIAM BRADSHAW hight by name in pauls whch did him place
and yr at Schoole did him maintain full thrice 3 whole years space
and then into the Abbeie was placed as *E*wish
in Southwarke call’d where it doth *E*n Saint MARY OVERIS
to OXFORD then who did him Send into that Colledge right
And there 14 years did him find, wh Corpus Christi hight
From thence at length away he went, A Clerke of learning great
to GIBURN ABBEY Streight was sent and plaed in PRIORS seat
BISHOP of HULL he was also ARCHDEACON of NOTTINGHAM
PROVOST of ROTHERAM COLLEDGE too, of YORK eak SUFFRAGAN
two GRAMER Schooles he did ordain with LAND for to Endure
one HOSPITAL for to maintain twelve impotent and poor
O GIBURNE thou with TIDDESWALL TOWN Element & mourn you
may
for this said CLERK of great renown *E*yeth here compast in clay
though cruell DEATH hath now dow’ brought this BODY we here
doth ly
yet trump of FAME Stay can he nought to Sound his praise on high
Qui legis hunc versum crebo reliquum memoreris
vile cadaver Sum inque cadaver eris.’

Around the slab, also engraved on brass, is the following inscription, and at the four corners are, relatively, the Evangelistic symbols :

'**X** Christ is to me as life on earth, and death to me is gaine
Because E trust through Jim alone salvation to obtaine
So brittle is the state of man, so soon it doth decay,
So all the glory of this world must pass and fade away.
'This Robert Purseglove somtyme Gishoppe of Hull decessed
the 2 day of Maii in the yere of our Lord God 1579.'

Many sweet singers has Tideswell produced, but none who have gained greater fame than Samuel Slack, the eminent vocalist. His talent was first noticed by Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, and she placed him under Spofforth, the great master of singing. Uncouth in gait, and fond of his pipe and glass though he was, Slack had an angel's voice, and whether in simple ballad or grander oratorio, thrilled the heart. Two amusing stories are told of him. He once had the honour of singing before George III., and was afterwards told by one of the lords in waiting how much his Majesty had been pleased with his efforts. 'Oh,' replied Slack, 'he wer pleased, wor he ? Ah, I know'd—I know'd I could dow't.' The refining influences of music were powerless to wean him from his early acquired habits ; and when attending metropolitan or provincial festivals, he seldom associated with other vocalists, but generally spent his nights in some pothouse. After one of his carouses, he staggered into a field, and lay down in search of rest and sobriety. At dawn he was observed by a bull, and

the animal, possibly under the impression that he was dead, turned him over on the grass. Slack immediately awoke, and after gazing in some surprise at the disturber of his slumbers, uttered such fearful sounds with his deep voice, that the bull, forgetting its inherent ferocity, turned tail, and ran off as though it were attacked by an army of gadflies! On his gravestone, in Tideswell Churchyard, is this inscription :

‘This stone was erected by the voluntary contributions of the Barlow Choir and a few other admirers of that deep-toned melodist, who died Aug. 10, 1822, aged 65 years.’

Tideswell is identified with at least two very humorous Derbyshire ballads, one of the drollest of which recounts the strange adventure of ‘The Drunken Butcher of Tideswell.’ It was written by Mr. William Bennett, the author of the ‘King of the Peak,’ and ‘The Cavalier.’

‘The legend is still so strong in the Peak,’ wrote its author, ‘that numbers of the inhabitants do not concur in the sensible interpretation put upon the phantom by the butcher’s wife, but pertinaciously believe that the drunken man was beset by an evil spirit, which either ran by his horse’s side or rolled on the ground before him faster than his horse could gallop, from Peak Forest to the sacred enclosure of Tideswell Churchyard, where it disappeared ; and many a bold fellow, on a moonlight night, looks anxiously around as he crosses Tideswell Moor, and gives his nag an additional touch of the spur as he hears the bell of Tideswell Church swinging

midnight to the winds, and remembers the tale of
 ‘ “ The Drunken Butcher of Tideswell.” ’

‘ Oh list to me, ye yeomen all,
 Who live in dale or down :
 My song is of a butcher tall,
 Who lived in Tideswall town.
 In bluff King Harry’s merry days,
 He slew both sheep and kine ;
 And drank his fill of nut-brown ale,
 In lack of good red wine.

‘ Beside the church this butcher lived,
 Close to its grey old walls ;
 And envied not when trade was good
 The baron in his halls.
 No carking cares disturbed his rest,
 When off to bed he slunk ;
 And oft he snored for ten good hours,
 Because he got so drunk.

‘ One only sorrow quelled his heart,
 As well it might quell mine—
 The fear of sprites and grisly ghosts
 Which dance in the moonshine ;
 Or wander in the cold churchyard,
 Among the dismal tombs,
 Where hemlock blossoms in the day,
 By night the nightshade blooms.

‘ It chanced upon a summer’s day,
 When heather-bells were blowing,
 Bold Robin crossed o’er Tideswall moor,
 And heard the heath-cock crowing :
 Well mounted on a forest nag,
 He freely rode and fast ;
 Nor drew a rein till Sparrow Pit*
 And Paislow Moss was past.

* Sparrow Pit is two miles from Chapel-en-le-Frith.

‘ Then slowly down the hill he came,
To the Chappelle-en-le-frith,
Where at the Rose of Lancaster
He found his friend the smith ;
The parson and the pardoner, too,
They took their morning draught ;
And when they spied a brother near
They all came out and laughed.

“ Now draw thy rein, thou jolly butcher :
How far hast thou to ride ? ”
“ To Waylee Bridge, to Simon the tanner,
To sell this good cow-hide.”
“ Thou shalt not go one foot ayont,
Till thou light and sup with me ;
And when thou’st emptied my measure of liquor,
I’ll have a measure wi’ thee.”

“ Oh no, oh no, thou drouthy smith !
I cannot tarry to-day ;
The wife she gave me a charge to keep,
And I durst not say her nay.”
“ What likes o’ that,” said parson then,
“ If thou’st sworn, thou’st ne’er to rue ;
Thou may’st keep thy pledge, and drink thy stoup,
As an honest man e’en may do.”

“ Oh no, oh no, thou jolly parson !
I cannot tarry, I say ;
I was drunk last night, and if I tarry,
I’se be drunk again to-day.”
“ What likes, what likes ! ” cried the pardoner then,
“ Why tellest thou that to me ?
Thou may’st e’en get thee drunk this blessed night,
And well shrived for both thou shalt be.”

‘ Then down got the butcher from his horse,
I wot full fain was he ;
And he drank till the summer sun was set
In that jolly company ;

He drank till the summer sun went down,
 And the stars began to shine :
 And his greasy noddle was dazed and addle
 With the nut-brown ale and wine.

' Then up arose those four mad fellows,
 And joining hand in hand,
 They danced around the hostel floor,
 And sung tho' they scarce could stand,
 " We've aye been drunk on yester night,
 And drunk the night before,
 And we were drunk again to-night,
 If we never get drunk any more."

' Bold Robin the butcher was horsed and away—
 And a drunken wight was he ;
 For sometimes his blood-red eyes saw double,
 And then he could scantily see.
 The forest trees seemed to featly dance,
 As he rode so swift along,
 And the forest trees to his wildered sense
 Re-sang the jovial song.

' Then up he sped over Paislow Moss,
 And down by the Chamber Knowle ;
 And there he was scared into mortal fear
 By the hooting of a barn owl :
 And on he rode by the forest wall,
 Where the deer browsed silently ;
 And up the slack till on Tideswall Moor
 His horse stood fair and free.

' Just then the moon from behind the rack
 Burst out into open view ;
 And on the sward and purple heath
 Broad light and shadow threw :
 And there the butcher whose heart beat quick,
 With fear of gramarye,
 Fast by his side, as he did ride
 A foul phantom did espy.

‘Up rose the fell of his head, up rose
The hood which his head did shroud ;
And all his teeth did chatter and grin,
And he cried both long and loud ;
And his horse’s flanks with his spur he struck,
As he never had struck before :
And away he galloped with might and main,
Across the barren moor.

‘But ever as fast as the butcher rode
The ghost did grimly glide :
Now down on the earth before his horse,
Then fast his rein beside :
O’er stock and rock and stone and pit,
O’er hill and dale and down,
Till Robin the butcher gained his door-stone
In Tideswall’s good old town.

““Oh, what thee ails, thou drunken butcher?”
Said his wife as he sank down ;
“And what thee ails, thou drunken butcher ?”
Cried one half of the town.
“I have seen a ghost ; it hath raced my horse
For three good miles and more ;
And it vanished within the churchyard wall
As I sank down at the door.”

““Beshrew thy heart for a drunken beast !”
Cried his wife, as she held him there ;
“Beshrew thy heart for a drunken beast,
And a coward with heart of hare.
No ghost hath raced thy horse to-night,
Nor evened his wit with thine :
The ghost was thy shadow, thou drunken wretch !
I would the ghost were mine !”

The other ballad, also a very amusing one, called ‘Tideswell in an Uproar; or, the Prince in the Town and the Devil in the Church,’ appears like the previous one in Mr. Jewitt’s ‘Ballads and Songs of

Derbyshire.' One Sabbath in 1806 the Prince of Wales, a short time prior to his coronation as George IV., stopped to change horses at the chief inn; and so great was the curiosity of the inhabitants to see their royal visitor, that the entire congregation, as well as the rector and the parish-clerk, deserted the church to watch the Prince pass by. And this is how the ballad describes the scene :

' Declare, O Muse, what demon 'twas
Crept into Tideswell Church,
And tempted pious folk to leave
Their parson in the lurch !

' What caused this strange disaster, say ?
What did the scene provoke ?—
At which the men unborn will laugh,
At which the living joke ?

' The Prince of Wales, great George's heir,
To roam once took a freak ;
And as the fates did so decree,
He journeyed through the Peak.

' But ah ! my prince, thy journey turn'd
The Sabbath into fun day ;
And Tideswell lads will ne'er forget
Thy travelling on a Sunday.

' The ringers somehow gain'd a hint—
Their loyalty be prais'd !—
That George would come that way, so got
The bells already rais'd.

' The prince arrived, then loudest shouts
The Tideswell streets soon rang ;
The loyal clappers straight fell down
With many a merry bang.

- ‘ To pulpit high, just then the priest
His sacred gown had thrust ;
And—strange coincidence!—his text,
“ In princes put no trust.”
- ‘ With man o’ God they all agreed,
Till bells went clitter-clatter ;
When expectation did them feed,
But not with heavenly matter.
- ‘ The congregation, demon-rous’d,
Arose with one accord ;
And, shameful, put their trust in prince,
And left the living Lord.
- ‘ They helter-skelter sought the door,
The church did them disgorge :
With fiercest fury then they flew
Like dragons to the George.
- ‘ As through the churchyard with tumult dire
And wild uproar they fled,
Confusion was so great, some thought
They would have rais’d the dead.
- ‘ The parson cried, with loudest lungs,
“ For love of God, pray stay !”
But love of prince more prevalent,
Soon hied them fast away.
- ‘ The demon, hov’ring o’er their heads,
Exulted as they pass’d ;
“ Friend Belzebub !” the parson cried,
“ Thou’st got a prize at last !”
- ‘ The clerk then to his master said,
“ We’re left behind complete ;
What harm if we start off for prince,
And run the second heat ?”
- ‘ The parson, with good capon lin’d,
Then ran with middling haste ;
Spare clerk was at his rear, who knew
“ Amen ” should come the last.

' Amid the mob they soon descried
The prince, Great Britain's heir ;
Then with the mob they both did join,
And play'd at gape and stare.

' Their wish the sovereign people show,
Impress'd with one accord ;
It was to turn themselves to beasts,
And draw their future lord.

' The prince put forth what's filled with sense—
It was his royal sconce :
Insisted they should act like men,
And break their rules for once.

' Steeds more appropriate being brought,
Huzzahs formed parting speech ;
The prince drove on, and people went
To swig with Mrs. Leech.

' Thy flock's frail error, reverend sir,
Did serve a loyal dish up ;
For which, if prince has any grace,
He'll surely make thee bishop.'





CHAPTER XII.

CASTLETON—Peveril of the Peak—A Tournament—An Old Custom—A ‘Breeches’ Bible—An Enthusiastic Geologist—The Devil’s Cave—The Speedwell Mine—Eldon Hole and a Peasant’s Adventure—The Blue John Mine—The Winnats and Mam Tor—Ferns and Fossils—A New Railway.

IF Eyam is the queen, Castleton is the king of Derbyshire villages. After struggling north-east over the few miles of rough country that separate it from Tideswell, its quaint stone houses and little gardens, enthroned amid the hills, meet the eye as suddenly as the dreary desert changes to the fairy palace in the pantomime. The village clusters at the feet of a majestic limestone rock, crowned by a ruined castle; it is shut in on the south and west by bluff hills, chasm-riven and undermined with vast caverns rich in nature’s freaks, and by Mam Tor, the strange shivering mountain that is always crumbling away, and never appears to get less; and away to the north spreads ‘the fruitful plain’ of Hope, a valley of sylvan beauty, leading to the more secluded loveliness of Edale, and the romantic village of Hathersage, the reputed

burial-place of Robin Hood's staunch companion Little John. As Charles Cotton says in his rhyming description, Castleton is :

‘A place of noted fame,
Which from the castle there derives its name.
Ent’ring the village, presently you are met
With a clear, swift, and murmuring rivulet ;
Towards whose source if up the stream you look,
Or on your right, close by, your eye is strook
With a stupendous rock, raising so high
His craggy temples towards the azure sky,
That if we this should with the rest compare,
They hillocks, molehills, warts, and pebbles are.
This, as if king of all the mountains round,
Is on the top with an old tower crown’d—
An antick thing, fit to make people stare ;
But of no use, either in peace or war.

The castle, though merely a shattered ruin now, was once a formidable stronghold, and when William Peveril, the Conqueror’s natural son, erected it, ‘over the mouth of the Devil’s Cavern,’ he knew perfectly well what he was about, intending as he did that the fortress should be a perpetual menace to his enemies. This feudal lord temporarily benefited perhaps more than any other person from the Norman Conquest. ‘He had in Nottingham forty-eight houses of merchants, twelve houses of knights, and thirty-nine manors with many dependent villages in Nottinghamshire : forty-four lordships in Northamptonshire, and two in Essex. He had one manor and a dependent village in Bedfordshire, two towns in Oxfordshire, eight manors and their dependencies in Buckinghamshire ; and besides the

Manor of Winfield, twelve manors and their villages in Derbyshire.' He lived in great pomp and splendour, and occasionally resided at his Peak Castle, in the vicinity of which a very chivalric tournament is said to have been at one time held.

Pain Peveril, William's half-brother, had two daughters, one of whom, possessing a valiant spirit, determined to wed no craven knight, but a hero who scoffed at danger, and delighted in the clash of arms. Her father encouraged the girl's resolve, and decided to give a lover's tournament at 'Peveril's place in the Peak,' declaring that whoever was the victor should not only win his daughter, but his bold castle in Salop too. The rough Derbyshire roads were soon thronged with knights in armour, and the guests could scarcely stir without 'stumbling over lances and battle-axes. The tournament was perhaps the most successful ever held in the days of chivalry. Knight after knight bit the dust, or retired crest-fallen before a more powerful foe. But not so Guarine de Meez, an ancestor of the Lords Fitz-Warrine. He vanquished the King of Scotland's son, and annihilated the Baron of Burgoyne, and as the flourish of trumpets in honour of his prowess ceased, he claimed the reward of his courage and knightly skill.

The church, which is dedicated to St. Edmund, and was anciently known as 'the Church of Peak Castle,' has been so frequently repaired and restored that scarcely anything remains of the original structure except the tower. This tower is inseparable

from a very old custom, always observed at Castleton on ‘Royal Oak Day,’ the 29th of May. ‘The ringers and others,’ says Mr. Cox, in his ‘Churches of Derbyshire,’ ‘parade the town headed by a man on horseback bearing a garland of large dimensions. When evening approaches the garland is carried below the church tower, and raised to the summit by a pulley. It is then placed on the central pinnacle on the south side (the other pinnacles having been adorned with oak boughs at an early hour in the morning), and there left to wither away till the anniversary of its renewal again comes round.’ The parish register proves that this custom is no modern whim, for in 1749 there is this entry: ‘paid for an iron rod to hang ye ringer’s garland in, 8d.’

In the church there is comparatively little to interest the antiquary, but the vestry is put to a novel use. It contains a library of rare books left by a former vicar, ‘to be lent out to the parishioners at the discretion of the minister.’ These volumes include Newcome’s ‘History of the Abbey of St. Alban,’ printed in 1793, and two early copies of the English version of the Bible. One of these is ‘Cranmer’s Bible,’ issued in 1539; and the other, bearing the date 1611, is a ‘Breeches Bible.’ In modern editions of the Word of God occurs this passage in the Book of Genesis (chap. iii. verse 7), ‘And they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.’ In the Castleton Bible the translation is, ‘They sewed figge leaves together and made themselves breeches’!

Elias Hall, the painstaking geologist, is buried in the churchyard. Possessing the indomitable energy that seems to be the characteristic of all self-made men, he conquered every obstacle that threatened to hinder his pursuit of this favourite science, and did much to make the peculiar strata of the county familiar to many who had hitherto turned with abhorrence from any word ending ‘ology.’ He died in 1853, and the simple headstone over his grave bears the inscription :

‘Born of parents in humble life, and having a large family to provide for, yet he devoted himself to the study of geology for seventy years, with powers of originality and industry rarely surpassed.’

It is to its caves and precipices, to the grandeur of its scenery, that Castleton owes its fame. Beneath the old fortress, that used to echo with Peveril’s despotic voice, the remarkable Peak Cavern, or Devil’s Cave, extends more than two thousand feet into the earth. A cleft in the mountain limestone is responsible for the huge cavity’s origin; but its present shape is chiefly attributable to the drip, drip of water, and to the subterranean stream that rushes nearly always with a torrent’s strength through its depths. The striking beauty of the deep ravine, with its towering masses of dark grey limestone, half-covered with ferns and tendrils, changes not, except in the verdure tints; nor does the vast yawning mouth of the cavern, where the twine-makers toil, alter much; but in the dark solitudes beyond, the forces of nature, like modern legislators,

are slowly effecting reform, either in the rivulet's banks, or the grotesque faces of the rugged rocks, or the great dome-like arches under which chaos seems determined to linger. The sunlight never penetrates the Devil's Cave ; and its gloomy passages, curious galleries, great halls, and even the ever-damp Roger Raine's house, with its ceaseless splashing of descending water, have a grandly weird, almost awe-inspiring look, in the feeble light of the tourist's candle, as he stumbles onward over the rough, low-roofed paths, or stands in surprised admiration in some of the loftier parts of the cavern.

'I had to cross in a boat a stream which flows under a rock so close upon the water as to admit the boat only to be pushed on by the ferryman, a sort of Charon, who wades at the stern, stooping all the time.' So wrote Lord Byron, in describing one of the incidents of his visit to Peak Cavern ; but it is unnecessary now to cross the waters of the Styx in this romantic fashion, a passage having been cut through the rock in order to avoid the journey in the old punt that formerly plied beneath the forbidding archway.

In the Speedwell Mine, however, at the foot of the Winnats, about half-a-mile away from the village, it is impossible to do without a boat, and the voyage is almost as full of adventure as Professor Lindenbrock's navigation of the subterranean sea, whose beach was of 'fine golden sand, strewn with the small shells in which the first created things had lived.' This cavern, notwithstanding its flashing veins of lead ore, is gloomy enough to stifle even

Mark Twain's spirit of fun and levity, especially if he were left in its dark recesses without guide or lamp. Passing down the steps to the waterside, and seating yourself in the flat-bottomed boat, you are ferried through a rock-bound channel, full of strange lights, and shadows, and mysterious noises. Penetrating some seven hundred yards into the cave by this waterway your voyage ends, and stepping upon a ledge, you are half bewildered at the prospect above, beneath, and around you. The chasm in which you stand has a roof so elevated that well-charged rockets have failed to touch it; to the 'blackness of darkness' below you there seems no limit; and into the deep gulf plunges, with reckless impetuosity, a spray-laden waterfall, on its wild career to the dark pool that fills the lower part of the abyss. It is a fear-inspiring cave, and they were hardy, venturesome men who first sought lead in its labyrinths.

These caverns, so marvellous in their formation, by no means exhaust the natural wonders in and around Castleton. Only three miles away, on the road towards Chapel-en-le-Frith, is Eldon Hole, the deep but not bottomless chasm down which the Earl of Leicester once induced a man to go with startling consequences, if Hobbes's poem is to be believed :

"Tis said great Dudley to this cave came down,
In great Eliza's reign, a peer well-known.
He a poor peasant for a petty price,
With rope around his middle, doth entice,

And pole in hand, like her, Sarissa hight,
And basket full of stones down to be let,
And pendulous to hang i' th' midst o' th' cave ;
Thence casting stones intelligence to have,
By list'ning of the depth of this vast hole.
The trembling wretch descending, with his pole
Puts back the rocks that else might on him rowl,
By their rebounds, casts up a space immense,
Where every stroke does death to him dispense,
Fearing the thread, on which his life depends,
Some rogue might cut ere fate should give commands.
Then, when *two hundred ells* he had below
I' th' earth been merged far as the rope would go,
And long hung up by it within the cave,
To th' earl—who now impatient was to have
His answer—he's drawn up ; but whether fear
Immoderate distracted him, or 'twere
From the swift motion as the ropes might wreath,
Or spectrums from his dread, or hell beneath
Frightened the wretch, or the soul's citadel
Were stormed or taken by the imps of hell,
For certain 'twas he rav'd ; this his wild eyes,
His paleness, trembling, all things verifies.
While venting something none can understand,
Enthusiastic hints ne'er to be scann'd,
He ceased and died, after eight days were gone.
But th' earl, informed how far the cave went down,
Tremblingly from it hastes, not willing now,
Nor yet this way down to the shades to go.'

A mile and a half west of the village is the celebrated Blue John Mine. Pretty and scarce is this Blue John, 'a fluor-spar coloured like amethyst and topaz by oxide of manganese,' and made into trays, ring-stands, brooches, and more elaborate ornaments. Notable, indeed, is the mine that contains this treasure, for it is a huge cavern with great vaulted chambers, which glisten with crystal forma-

tions, and from whose lofty arches hang numberless stalactites, like gigantic icicles that have experienced centuries of frost.

A mile away lies the Odin Mine, worked for lead in Anglo-Saxon days.

Nearer still is the wild mountain pass, ‘the Winnats,’* a gigantic rift in the limestone, through which the wind is nearly always howling, and along whose rock-bound road the lonely traveller always hurries at nightfall, for the ravine, gloomily romantic in itself, is associated with a terrible crime committed, it is said, many years ago—the murder of a loving couple, who were either going or returning from the church of Peak Forest, then the Gretna Green of the Peak.

Not far from the pass, Mam Tor rises to a height of 1,700 feet, and bears on its summit the remains of an ancient British fort; but the great hill of shale is chiefly famous for a peculiar characteristic—it is slowly but steadily crumbling away, and earning with ceaseless industry its appropriate title, ‘the shivering mountain.’

Castleton, sheltered by great crags and lofty peaks, is fringed, too, by many varieties of ferns, and rare mosses that ‘neither blanch in heat nor pine in cold,’ as they weave their ‘dark eternal tapestries on the hills.’ Out of its curious strata the mineralogist scoops elastic bitumen, and the fossil-hunter chips highly valued relics of a bygone period. In Cave Dale, whose rough weather-beaten

* ‘Winnats’—The gates of the wind.

rocks and wild beauty are overlooked by the crumbling castle, have been found the bones of the Celtic ox, the wolf, and the red-deer; and the limestone formations abound in shells and corals. Indeed, Castleton ‘is an epitome of all that the Peak of Derbyshire contains—hills, rocks, caverns, mines, fossils, and minerals are here congregated together, presenting a rich variety of materials for study and contemplation.’

And it will soon be much easier of access than it has been by coach. Powers have been obtained for the construction of a new railway through this remote part of the Peak; and the line, traversing the moorland from Dore Station, near Sheffield, to Chinley, on the north-west of the county, will skirt Hathersage, Hope, and Castleton, passing through a land conspicuous alike for natural beauty and historic associations—a pedestrian’s paradise, hitherto innocent of the locomotive’s voice, but now to be opened up for mineral traffic, and for rambles by many a worker in forge, factory, and mill, who knows how to wisely spend his ‘half-holiday.’





CHAPTER XIII.

BUXTON ONCE AN OCEAN'S BED—St. Anne and Lord Cromwell's Crusade against Crutches—The Ancient Baths—Curious Charges—Distinguished but Thirsty Visitors in Elizabeth's Reign—Mary Queen of Scots and the Tepid Waters—The Town's Popularity—Monsal and Miller's Dale.

BUXTON, the haunt of fashion and the refuge of the invalid, may be called the Scarborough of Derbyshire. It is a spa; it is a town of fine buildings, good promenades, ornamental gardens, and elegant baths. But it is a Scarborough without the sea! The waves never creep gently along its shore, nor dash boisterously against its barriers. Yet there was a time when the ground forming its wide streets and crescent paths was an ocean's bed, frequented by the oyster and humbler shell-fish, who passed their obscure lives contentedly in the very places where the bath-chair now trundles, and the donkey-boy yells, and the town-weary exquisite languidly inhales the ozone breezes that come down so freely from the hills.

The waters that ebbed and flowed in this huge Peak basin when the fossilized mollusc was alive

have receded, until Buxton stands high and dry, one thousand feet above the sea-level. But the resort so famed for its mineral waters is not denuded of all charm because the prehistoric sea has forsaken it. Buxton lies, as it were, in the bosom of the Peak country. At its feet the picturesque Wye winds wilfully through a romantic dell, walled in by giant limestone crags. Coombs Moss and Axe Edge rear their heads by its side, and away to the north beyond the dark masses of mountain, and the sloping hillsides, and the moorland summits of gritstone, lofty Kinderscout invites the strong-limbed to climb its rugged flanks and explore the glens and gorges that give it such wild beauty.

The Romans, traversing their military roads through the Peak in all kinds of weather, greatly valued the warm springs that issue from the base of St. Anne's Cliff; and no doubt the followers of the 'tyrant Maximian' were the builders of the ancient bath that formerly stood on the site of the Crescent. Up to three hundred years ago, St. Anne, the guardian saint of these waters, was devoutly worshipped, and there were credulous people who implicitly believed that this spirituelle lady enticed the soothing streams from the far-off river Jordan to cure their ailments. Sincere prayers were offered to the female Æsculapius for the miracles she wrought, and in the ancient chapel of St. Anne were hung the crutches and offerings of those who had found comfort, and were grateful for their release from pain.

But in the reign of Henry VIII. Lord Cromwell rudely upset some of the superstitious faith in St. Anne, as will be seen from the following letter written to him by Sir William Basset : ' According to my bounden duty and the tenor of your lordship's letters lately to me directed, I have sent your lordship by this bearer, my brother Francis Basset, the images of Saint Anne of Buckston and Saint Andrew of Burton-on-Trent, which images I did take from the places where they stand, and brought them to my house within forty-eight hours after the contemplation of your said lordship's letters, in as sober a manner as my little and rude will would serve me. And for that there should be no more idolatry and superstition there used, I did not only deface the tabernacles and places where they did stand, but also did take away crutches, shirts and shifts, with wax offered, being things to allure and entice the ignorant to the said offering ; also giving the keepers of both places orders that no more offerings shall be made in those places till the King's pleasure and your lordship's be further known. My lord, I have locked up and sealed the baths and wells of Buckston, that none shall enter to wash until your lordship's pleasure be further known. . . . And, my lord, as touching the opinion of the people and the fond trust they did put in those images, and the vanity of the things, this bearer can tell your lordship better at large than I can write, for he was with me at the doing of all this, and in all places, as knoweth good Jesus,

whom ever have your lordship in precious keeping.'

Lord Cromwell's ruthless crusade against the crutches did not wash out the fame of the Buxton waters, for a little later the Earl of Shrewsbury erected a house for the convenience of patients, and the building was thus quaintly described by Dr. Jones, an eminent physician, in 1572: 'Joyninge to the chiefe sprynge betweene the river and the bathe is a very goodly house, foure square foure stories hye, so well compacte with houses and offices underneath, and above, and round about, with a great chambre, and other goodly lodgings to the number of thirty, that it is and will be a bewty to beholde ; and very notable for the honourable and worshipful that shall neede to repaire thither, as also for others. Yea, and porest shall have lodgings and beds hard by for their uses only. The bathes also so beautified with seats round ; defended from the ambyent air ; and chimneys for fyre to ayre youre garmentes in the bathes side, and other necessaries most decent.'

At this time persons anxious to derive benefit from the baths were charged not according to their length of stay, but according to their social status. Every yeoman paid 12 pence, every gentleman 3s., every esquire 3s. 4d., every knight 6s. 8d., every lord and baron 10s., every viscount 13s. 4d., every earl 20s., every marquis 30s., every duke £3 10s., every archbishop £5, every bishop 40s., every judge 20s., every doctor and serjeant-at-law 10s., every chancellor and utter barrister 6s. 8d., every archdeacon,

prebendary and canon 5s., every minister 12 pence, every duchess 40s., every marquesse 20s., every countess 13s. 4d., every baroness 10s., every lady 6s. 8d., every gentlewoman 2s.; and of this money one half went to the physician, the other going towards a fund to enable the poor to get relief at the waters.

In Elizabeth's reign the baths were frequented by the rich and wealthy as well as by the poor, who flocked in hopefully from all quarters. The ambitious Earl of Leicester, with his head full of schemes to wed his own sovereign, soothed his throbbing brow with the famous tepid waters. Lord Burghley, according to the Harleian MS., had great faith in them, drinking copiously at the warm springs. And the Earl of Sussex apparently had unlimited confidence in their healing properties, for writing in 1582 he says: 'The water I have drunke liberally, begynning with thre pynts, and so encreasyng dayly a pynt till I shall agyne reterne to 3 pynts, and then I make an ende.'

Mary Queen of Scots, tortured by rheumatic pains, visited Buxton four times during her captivity. During her first stay in 1573, the Earl of Shrewsbury's surveillance was not very strict, and Mary had not only opportunities for bathing and exercise, but was allowed to roam through some of the picturesque spots that encircle the town, penetrating even as far as Poole's Hole, in which there is a huge stalactite, still called Mary Queen of Scots' pillar.

But in 1580 she was not so indulged, for Mr. J. D. Leader, in his gracefully-written and instructive work on ‘Mary Queen of Scots in Captivity,’ says: ‘Mary neither saw nor was seen by anyone but her own people, and those specially appointed to attend her. Not so much as a beggar was allowed to be in Buxton; and during the time the Queen was there, though she took the baths regularly, she only once came out of doors, and that was one evening when she walked for a short time in the close about the house to take the air.’ Notwithstanding the guards about her, and the strict precautions taken lest she should escape, Mary always derived benefit from her sojourns at Buxton, and admitted as much in her letter to Monsieur de Mauvissière, remarking: ‘It is incredible how this cure has soothed my nerves, and dried my body of the phlegmatic humours, with which, by reason of feeble health, it was so abundantly filled.’ It was in 1584 that she drank the waters for the last time, and the captive Queen, soon to ride through Derbyshire on her way to the headsman’s axe, had some prescience that the shadows of death were creeping very near, for she scratched with a diamond on the window-pane:

‘Buxton, whose fame thy tepid waters tell,
Whom I perhaps no^o more shall see, farewell.’

A singular proof of the popularity of the Buxton waters is found in a petition from the inhabitants of Fairfield, who in asking during the sixteenth century

for a grant towards the maintenance of their minister, chiefly accounted for their great poverty ‘by reason of the frequent accesse of divers poor, sick, and impotent persons repairing to the Fountain of Buxton.’

Then Lord Macaulay speaks, and with some irony too, of the eagerness of the affluent to rush to this noted spa. ‘England,’ he says, ‘was not in the seventeenth century destitute of watering-places. The gentry of Derbyshire and the neighbouring counties repaired to Buxton, where they were crowded into low wooden sheds, and regaled with oatcake, and with a viand which the hosts called mutton, but which the guests strongly suspected to be dog.’

Macaulay’s flippant description does not apply now. St. Anne, invulnerable as Achilles, was not offended at Sir William Basset’s discourteous treatment, and has remained faithful to the town.

For two centuries Buxton has been constantly improving. The old hall that sheltered Mary Queen of Scots has been so altered and enlarged that it retains only a few traces of the original building in which her Majesty was so carefully guarded by the Earl of Shrewsbury’s servitors. The interesting fabric, to which so many historic memories cling, is a noted hotel now, and probably confers as much happiness upon humanity by its practice of the art of cookery as by the tepid waters that still bubble and sparkle beneath its eastern corner.

Neither the gentry nor the poor need crowd into wooden sheds at Buxton now. The Crescent, with its stately freestone façade, fine hotels connected with the hot baths by covered ways, elegant apartments, and rusticated colonnade, curves gracefully in front of St. Anne's cliff. The Palace Hotel, standing in its own grounds of greater beauty than 'the pleasant, warm bowling-green planted about with large sycamore trees' that encompassed the Earl of Shrewsbury's good house, successfully tempts the luxurious; and on the hillside rises one of the noblest of Buxton's buildings, the Devonshire Hospital, where the poor, warped by rheumatics, and rendered irritable and querulous by pain, get relief at the expense of the generous, who understand the true meaning of charity. And for the accommodation of those who can afford to pay, but only moderately, for the health and vigour Buxton seldom withholds, there are many hotels and comfortable boarding-houses dotted about the amphitheatre of hills in which the town rests.

The 'Spa of the Peak' has nearly doubled its population in the last ten years. It has now over 6,000 inhabitants, and they depend, as a writer at the beginning of the present century quaintly remarked, 'not so much upon any regular employment as upon the crowds who assemble here during the bathing season.'

The fashionable and the ragged find Buxton necessary to their existence. It is the Mecca of Derbyshire. Wearied statesmen, languid society beauties,

and jaded business men saunter about its gardens, or listen with revived interest to the music in the pavilion ; dandies who have no malady except laziness, and look as if they had been dressed by Mr. Vigo, in Lord Beaconsfield's novel, move aimlessly about the terrace-walk ; working-men, liberated from the fetters of illness, stride briskly into the country, either along the 'Duke's Drive,' or the more hilly highway to the 'Cat and Fiddle ;' and all, from the gouty epicure to the struggling artisan, are so glad of their freedom from aches and twinges that there is no corner left in their hearts for gratitude. Very much the same spirit prevails now as when Hobbes wrote :

'Unto St. Anne the fountain sacred is ;
With waters hot and cold its sources rise,
And in its sulphur veins there medicine lies.
This cures the palsied members of the old,
And cherishes the nervous grown stiff and cold.
Crutches the lame unto its brinks convey,
Returning—the ingrates fling them away.'

'That valley,' says Mr. Ruskin, 'where you might expect to catch the sight of Pan, Apollo, and the Muses, is now desecrated in order that a Buxton fool may be able to find himself in Bakewell at the end of twelve minutes, and *vice versa*.' In such contemptuous language does the eminent art critic speak of the railway constructed through Monsal Dale ; but this line, penetrating huge limestone rocks and threading its narrow way over lofty bridges, past scenes of great beauty, is a real

blessing. Every lover of nature, journeying along its steel track, in the comfortable carriages of the Midland Railway Company, has cause to admire the railway enterprise and engineering skill that gives him such easy access to the lovely dales and glens of the Peak. At the risk of being called a Buxton fool, pray take this delightful run by pleasant slope, strangely-shaped rock, wooded height, rippling river, fertile pasture, and dark barren land.

There are many noted haunts around Buxton : Ludchurch, where the Lollards worshipped ; the valley of the Goyt, with its varied beauty ; Poole's Hole, the mysterious cavern in which the Wye springs into life ; but none of these places can compare in loveliness or grandeur to the country traversed by the railway that has so thoroughly aroused Mr. Ruskin's spleen.

Words convey little idea of the sylvan charm of Monsal Dale, with its broad sweeps of bright meadow, its restful green slopes, its silvery river winding gently beneath the lofty bridge, and by the feet of Fin Cop, whose thickly-wooded shoulder is in such conspicuous contrast to the barer, crag-fringed hills.

Miller's Dale is more rugged, but its stony paths, through glen and ravine, past forest and dell, lead to strikingly picturesque solitudes, in which the silence is only broken by the birds' song, the voice of the stream, or the rustling leaves.

Of this dale, so familiar to the artist and the angler, Mr. Bradbury says, in his cleverly-written 'Pilgrimages

in the Peak': 'It is wild and savage, and occasionally gruesome in its aspects. The river tumbles in a succession of waterfalls. Limestone crags rise from the water's edge, their sternness scarcely softened by the luxuriant foliage that smiles at their feet. The path is rough with stones. There is no sound save the brawl of the river, and one seems to commune alone with Nature in her own secret solitude. . . . At Chee Tor the impressive wilderness of Miller's Dale reaches the highest point of romantic grandeur. The Tor is a stupendous promontory of rock, convex in shape, and rising sheer from the edge of the river, an impending precipice over 300 feet high. A pendent tree, ash or hazel, here and there mixes its green with the pale grey of the lifeless limestone. Rooks, and daws, and jays hold a clamorous convocation in the rents of the rock above. The river is confined in a narrow strait, and the water rushes with an angry swirl through the rocky channel to the broader and more peaceful channel beyond. A corresponding bastion of limestone, though hidden by hanging foliage, rises opposite the giant Chee in the form of a crescent, which faithfully responds in size, and shape, and strata to the gigantic Tor, from which, in some pre-historic revolution, it must have been severed. There is a perilous path over the river, which is rushing with foamy agitation through the rocky abyss beneath. After this Alpine pass is left behind, the dale again widens, and the rocks are less bare. We tread knee-deep in ferns to Blackwell Mill. . . .

The dale here expands, giving way to sloping hills of an open and wild character, that impart the charm of variety to the scenery. The path now crosses the river over a wooden bridge of primitive planking, and then leads through a plantation of firs and pines and birches to the foot of Topley Pike, where the high road to Buxton is reached.'

And from this point the pedestrian is soon among the frivolity and fashion of the 'Spa of the Peak' again.





CHAPTER XIV.

AROUND KINDERSCOUT—A Sad Episode—‘Under the Snow’—‘The Apostle of the Peak’—A Staunch Royalist—Famous John Bradshaw—The Titan of the Peak—An Uncommon Occurrence—A Merchant and his Monument—Glossop—A Pretty Custom and a Curious Wedding—Over the Moors to Ashopton.

IT is a long, but never tedious, tramp through the varied country that lies at the feet of Kinderscout. The path is over hill and dale; it traverses at least two ancient towns; skirts many old-world villages; and goes through a vast tract of rugged and bleak moorland; a great heather-clad rough-rocked solitude, where the only sound is the cry of the moorcock, or the murmur of the stream.

The road from Buxton to Glossop, although it winds about picturesque uplands, and along wide-stretching valleys, is only on the edge of the Peak, and does not penetrate the heart of the lonely land, where the great piles of gritstone tower high above ‘a wilderness of heath.’ But it goes through a district rich in history, in story, and superstition.

Here is Fairfield, with its breezy common and old church, in which the monument to William Daykin,

merchant, of London, bears the emphatic inscription—the family motto of the Daykins—‘Stryke Daykine the Devil’s in the Hemp.’ On the left looms Coombs Moss, the great tableland that still bears on its lofty plateau both fosse and rampart constructed in the reckless time when the hardy Britons were fighting the foreign legions knee to knee, and striving with rude but futile valour to rid the soil of the invader.

On the right, in the little hamlet between the Great Rocks and Tunstead, James Brindley, the eminent engineer, was born. But it is not only as the birth-place of Brindley, the engineer, of whom so admirable a life has been written by Smiles, that Tunstead is famous in story, for it has a miraculous skull, whose exploits have formed the theme for many a verse and many a page of prose-writing. This human skull, preserved at a farm-house at Tunstead, has been there for several generations, and nothing is known as to how or whence it came there. It is known as ‘Dickie,’ or ‘Dicky o’ Tunstead,’ and occupies a position on a window-seat of the house. ‘No matter what changes take place to the other occupiers of the house,’ says Mr. Jewett, in his ‘Ballads and Songs of Derbyshire,’ ‘Dickie holds his own against all comers, and remains quietly ensconced in his favourite place. It is firmly and persistently believed that so long as Dick remains in the house unburied, everything will go on well and prosperously, but that if he is buried, or “discommoded,” unpleasant consequences will assuredly

follow. On more than one occasion he has been put "out of sight," but tempests have arisen and injured the building, deaths have ensued, cattle have been diseased and died off, or crops have failed, until the people have been humbled, and restored him to his proper place. One of the crowning triumphs of Dickie's power is said to have been evinced over the formation of the new Buxton and Whaley Bridge line of railway. He seems to have held the project in thorough hatred, and let no opportunity pass of doing damage. Whenever there was a landslip or a sinking of ground, or whenever any mishap to man, beast or line, happened, the credit was at once given to Dickie, and he was sought to be propitiated in a variety of ways.

' Hutchinson, who wrote "A Tour, through the High Peak," in 1807, thus speaks of the skull, and of the supernatural powers attributed to it : "Having heard a singular account of a human skull being preserved in a house at Tunstead, near the above place, and which was said to be haunted, curiosity induced me to deviate a little, for the purpose of making some inquiries respecting these *natural* or *super-natural* appearances. That there are three parts of a human skull in the house is certain, and which I traced to have remained on the premises for near two centuries past, during all the revolutions of owners and tenants in that time. As to the truth of the supernatural appearance, it is not my design either to affirm or contradict, though I have been informed by a creditable person, a Mr. Adam Fox,

who was brought up in the house, that he has not only repeatedly heard singular noises, and observed very singular circumstances, but can produce fifty persons, within the parish, who have seen an apparition at this place. He has often found the doors opening to his hand—the servants have been repeatedly called up in the morning—many good offices have been done by the apparition, at different times; and, in fact, it is looked upon more as a guardian spirit than a terror to the family, never disturbing them but in case of an approaching death of a relation or neighbour, and showing its resentment only when spoken of with disrespect, or when its own awful memorial of mortality is removed. For twice within the memory of man the skull has been taken from the premises, once on building the present house on the site of the old one, and another time when it was buried in Chapel churchyard; but there was no peace! no rest! it must be replaced! Venerable time carries a report that one of two coheiresses residing here was murdered, and declared, in her last moments, that her bones should remain on the place for ever.* On this head the candid reader will think for himself; my duty is only faithfully to relate what I have been told. However, the circumstances of the skull being traced to have remained on the premises during the changes of different tenants and purchasers for near two centuries, must be a subject well worth the anti-

* On examining the parts of the skull, they did not appear to be the least decayed.

quarian's research, and often more than the investigation of a bust or a coin.'" The following clever *Address to 'Dickie'* was written by Mr. Samuel Laycock, and first appeared in the *Buxton Advertiser*:

- ' Neaw, Dickie, be quiet wi' thee, lad,
An' let navvies an' railways a be ;
Mon, tha shouldn't do soa,—it's to' bad,
What harm are they doin' to thee ?
Deod folk shouldn't meddle at o',
But leov o' these matters to th' wick ;
They'll see they're done gradeley, aw know,—
Dos' t' yer what aw say to thee, Dick ?
- ' Neaw dunna go spoil 'em i' th' dark
What's cost so mich labber an' thowt ;
Iv tha'll let 'em go on wi' their wark,
Tha shall ride deawn to Buxton for nowt ;
An' be a " director " too, mon ;
Get thi beef an' thi bottles o' wine,
An' mak' as much brass as tha con
Eawt o' th' London an' North-Western line.
- ' Awm surproised, Dick, at thee bein' here ;
Heaw is it tha'rt noan i' thi grave ?
Ar' t' come eawt o' gettin' thi beer,
Or havin' a bit ov a shave ?
But *tha's* noan thi business, aw deawt,
For tha hasn't a hair o' thi yed ;
Hast a woife an' some childer abeawt ?
When tha'rн living up here wurt wed ?
- ' Neaw, spake, or else let it a be,
An' dunna be lookin' soa shy ;
Tha needn't be freeten'd o' me,
Aw shall say nowt abeawt it, not I !
It'll noan matter mich iv aw do,
I can do thee no harm iv aw tell,
Mon there's moor folk nor thee bin a foo',
Aw've a woife an some childer misel'.

' Heaw's business below ; is it slack ?
 Dos' t' yer ? aw'm noan chaffin thee, mon.
 But aw reckon 'at when tha goes back
 Tha'll do me o' th' hurt as tha con.
 Neaw dunna do, that's a good lad,
 For aw'm freeten'd to deoth very nee,
 An' ewar Betty, poor lass, hoo'd go mad
 Iv aw wur to happen to dee !

' When aw'm ceawer'd upo' th' hearston' awhoam,
 Aw'm inclined, very often, to boast ;
 An' aw'm noan hawve as feart as some,
 But aw don't loike to talke to a ghost.
 So, Dickie, aw've written this song,
 An' aw trust it'll find thee o' reet ;
 Look it o'er when tha'rt noan very throng,
 An' tha'll greatly obleege me,—good neet.

' P.S.—Iv tha'rt wantin' to send a reply,
 Aw can gi'e thee mi place ov abode,
 It's reet under Dukinfilt sky,
 At thirty-nine, Cheetham Hill Road.
 Aw'm awfully freeten'd dos t' see,
 Or else aw'd invite thee to come,
 An' ewar Betty, hoo's softer nor me,
 So aw'd *raythar* tha'd tarry awhoam.'

A little farther north is Chapel-en-le-Frith, the pleasant town of gritstone houses that sprang up around the ancient chapel of the forest. The old building, frequented centuries ago by the foresters and deerkeepers of the Peak, fell into ruins long since ; but the present church, dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket, has some thrilling historic memories. In 1591 it was used as a Court of Justice ; and in 1648, after the defeat of the Scottish army at Preston, fifteen hundred of these crestfallen

soldiers, weary with long marching, were thrust into this church, and kept prisoners there for sixteen days. What thirst, hunger, and stifling heat they must have endured; for forty-four of their number died before the army continued its march into Cheshire! The parish register tells a pitiful story of the havoc death made in their ranks; we quote the words from the '*Reliquary*' as follows:

'1648, Sept. 11.—There came to this town a Scots army led by Duke Hambleton [Hamilton], and squandered by Colonell Lord Cromwell, sent hither prisoners from Stopford [qy. Stockport], under the conduct of Marshall Edward Matthews, said to be 1500 in number, put into ye church Sep. 14. They went away Sep. 30 following. There were buried of them before the rest went, 44 pr., and more buried Oct. 2 who were not able to march, and the same day ye died by the way before they came to Cheshire 10 and more.'

The registers also contain a strange story of a maiden, named *Phœnix*, a parish apprentice, who in 1717 was overtaken by a storm, on her way to her master's house at Peak Forest. The entry, thus quaintly written, is thus printed in the '*Reliquary*':

'1717, March ye 12.—There came a young girl about 13 years of age, whose name was Alice Phenix, who came to this town to a shop for half a stone of tow for her master, being an apprentice to her master, Wm. Ward, of the Peak Forest. She went from this towne in the evening, and called at Peter Down's house, who liv'd then at Laneside. They

sent her away in good time to have gone home. She turned againe, and was found at the house when they were going to bed. Peter called her in and sent her to bed with his daughter. Next morning, calling her up very soon, he sent her away, but as they were going to plough found her again, and his son did chide her very ill, and she deemed then to make best haste home ; but sitting down betwixt two ruts in George Bowden's part on Paislow, sat there that day and next, and Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday till noon. Two of which days, the 15th and 16th, was the most severe snowing and driving that had been seen in the memory of man. This girl was found about one o'clock on Monday, by William Jackson, of Sparrowpit, and William Longden, her neighbour in the fforest. They carried her to the same house back again, to Peter Downe's house ; and after she had got some refreshment, a little warm milk, could warm herself at the fire afterwards, and could turn her and rub her legs with her hands, and after was carried to her master's house that night, and is now (March 25, 1717) quite well, but a little stiff in her limbs. This is the Lord's doings and will be marvellous in future generations. She had no meat these five days, but was very thirsty and slept much.'

It was to Ford, near Chapel-en-le-Frith, that William Bagshaw, 'the Apostle of the Peak,' retired when ejected from his living at Glossop, because of his nonconformity. Preaching in the wildest and most inaccessible places to the rudest and most

ignorant people, he was a thorough apostle ; but he was a student and a writer also, and when he died in 1702, ‘left fifty volumes on different subjects fairly written with his own hand.’ The best remembered of these is ‘*De Spiritualibus Pecci*,’ in which he tells, among other reminiscences of pious persons, how a Taddington curate was dragged up at Bakewell sessions in 1640, and ‘declaimed against as a Puritan or Roundhead.’ Christopher Fulwood, of Middleton-by-Youlgreave, a wise lawyer, was the chief magistrate ; and though a staunch Royalist, he released the hapless curate, and sharply reprimanded his accusers. Notwithstanding his clemency and mercy to others, there was a cruel fate awaiting this popular Derbyshire justice. In 1642 he raised a lifeguard of Peak miners to defend Charles I. ; another year elapsed, and he was hunted from his home by Sir John Gell’s soldiery, tracked to his hiding-place behind a rock, in the dale below the village, and ruthlessly shot because of his loyalty.

Chapel-en-le-Frith and the district is closely associated with the Bradshaws, a noted Derbyshire family, one of whose members represented the county in Parliament in the reign of Henry IV. John Bradshaw, a friend of Milton’s, and ‘an intrepid patriot,’ who sprang from the Cheshire branch of the same family, played a very conspicuous part in his country’s history. When a boy he wrote :

‘ Harry shall hire his father’s land,
And Tom shall be at his command ;
But I, poor Jack, will do that
That all the world shall wonder at.’

And so he did, for as President of the High Court of Justice that met at Westminster he sentenced Charles I. to death.

It is not far from Chapel-en-le-Frith to Hayfield. The little town of ‘scattered stone houses and isolated print-mills’ is not very attractive; but it lies on the threshold of Kinderscout, on the western edge of the high, rugged, and wildly picturesque tableland, always marked in the tourist’s maps ‘The Peak’—a land of moss and heather, of glen and gorge, of rock and ridge, and mountain streams and pretty waterfalls; a land whose loftiest point is Kinder Low, which ridicules its own name, as it rises to a height of 2,088 feet, the Titan of this upland country.

Hayfield, besides being the chief portal to Kinder, is not without some singular event to keep its name in remembrance. Indeed, it seems to have had a resurrection on its own account in 1745. Dr. James Clegg, a Presbyterian minister, who resided at Chapel-en-le-Frith in the middle of the last century, gave an account of the extraordinary occurrence in a letter to his friend, the Rev. Ebenezer Latham, then the principal of Findern Academy.

‘I know,’ he wrote, ‘you are pleased with anything curious and uncommon by nature; and if what follows shall appear such, I can assure you from eye-witnesses of the truth of every particular. In a church about three miles from us, the indecent custom still prevails of burying the dead in the place

set apart for the devotions of the living; yet the parish not being very populous, we could scarce imagine that the inhabitants of the grave could be straightened for want of room; yet it should seem so; for on the last of August several hundreds of bodies rose out of the grave in the open day in the church, to the great astonishment and terror of several spectators. They deserted the coffin, and arising out of the grave, immediately ascended towards heaven, singing in concert all along, as they mounted through the air. They had no winding-sheets about them, yet did not appear quite naked; their vesture seemed streaked with gold, interlaced with sable, skirted with white, yet thought to be exceedingly light, by the agility of their motions, and the swiftness of their ascent. They left a most fragrant and delicious odour behind them, but were quickly out of sight; and what has become of them, or in what distant regions of this vast system they have since fixed their residence, no mortal can tell. The church is in Heafield, three miles from Chappelle-en-le-frith, 1745.'

The church contains a monument to Joseph Hague, 'whose virtues as a man were as distinguished as his character as a merchant.' Settling in London in 1717, this Derbyshire lad, like a second Dick Whittington, succeeded in scraping together a large fortune; and he was not niggardly with his wealth; for he 'built and endowed the Charity School at Whitfield in the year 1778, and died at Park Hall in this parish on the 12th day of March,

1786, aged 90 years, leaving the annual interest of £1,000 to be laid out in clothing 12 poor men and 12 poor women out of the eight townships of Glossop Dale for ever; besides other charities bequeathed to Glossop and the Chapelry of Hayfield.' Still his life was not by any means a remarkable one; not nearly so remarkable as the experience of the handsome monument—the handiwork of Bacon the sculptor—erected to his memory. Originally the marble memento was placed in the church at Glossop, but during the rebuilding of the chancel the precious monument was put in the lock-up for safety! The precaution turned out unfortunate. Forgetting probably that the cell held this treasure, the police thrust a drunken man into the lock-up. Hague's bust irritated the heroic worshipper of Bacchus, and the tipsy prisoner knocked it about, until the head and face of the great merchant were considerably disfigured. A friend of the family, highly incensed at this outrage, insisted upon the removal of the monument to Hayfield Church, and the dinted bust was taken there. Some years ago a stranger begged hard to see the monument, and the parish clerk told him the story connected with it. 'Nobody,' said the stranger, 'knows that better than myself. I was the drunken man who knocked the monument about in Glossop lock-up. I have been abroad for many years, and only just returned to England. The damage I did to that monument has often troubled my conscience, and I determined that as soon as I set foot in England again, I would at once journey

to Derbyshire to see what had become of it; and now I am satisfied.'

A little north of Hayfield, some four miles, is Glossop, with its dull-looking stone houses, and gigantic mills stretching along the slopes, and hiding in the deep hollows of 'the remotest corner of Derbyshire.' The town, for years connected with the cotton-spinning industry, is also associated with many old customs. One of the prettiest was that of 'rush-bearing.' No sooner did the wakes come round than a cart bearing a pyramid of rushes, and decorated with flowers and garlands, was drawn through the streets to the church gates. There the vehicle was bereft of its gay burden, and the rushes and flowers, carried by the morris-dancers into the church, were strewn upon the floor of the edifice, the garlands being hung in the chancel.

There have been some curious scenes at Glossop since the Romans left the neighbourhood, and their stronghold, Melandra Castle, was deserted. Within the past century bulls were baited in the market-place; lovers raced on horseback from the out-lying villages to the parish church, to be married, and adorned their hats and bonnets with brightly coloured ribbons in honour of the wedding; and some eighty years ago there was quite a startling incident here in the way of nuptials—a woman persisting in going to the altar in her shift only, believing that by this novel expedient she would escape liability for debts contracted by her first husband. 'The wedding,' says the minister who officiated, 'caused a very high

degree of mirth in very many people. The woman undressed in the vestry. As soon as she was ready she came forth in a long shift, and she went through the ceremony as unconcerned as if she had been regularly dressed. As soon as it was over she went back to the vestry, and there signed her name. The church was crowded with people, but the greatest order and decency was kept, a constable being in attendance to prevent confusion and suppress any hilarity. It was with difficulty the spectators could control their sense of the ludicrous, and when the ceremony was over, there were a great many ‘laughing faces and shaking shoulders’ amongst the crowd.

Glossop is not a very inviting town. It can claim scarcely any architectural beauty, and even its more important thoroughfares, High Street and Victoria Street, are somewhat dreary. But it is worth while penetrating to this out-of-the-way place, either by road from Chapel-en-le-Frith, or by rail from bleak Dinting, if only to utilize it as a starting-point for one of the grandest walks in England, a walk through one of the wildest parts of the Peak, over the moorland that spreads between the cotton-spinning town and the fair vale in which Ashopton reposes, protected by the sheltering hills.

It is a terrible journey in winter, when the mountain road is covered thickly with snow, and the treacherous mist creeps over ridge and fell, rendering shadowy and indistinct the tall poles placed here and there to guide the traveller on his way. But in summer, when the sun is pouring its golden

light on the rugged summits of the hills, and chasing the cloud-shadows that flit about the broken slopes, purple with heather and golden with gorse, it is a revelation of loveliness. The walk, nevertheless, is for at least half the distance one long solitude. It is not until you have passed Featherbed Moss, and traversed miles of this moorland territory, that you reach the Snake Inn, the first habitation met with after leaving Glossop. One may traverse this road half a dozen times without seeing a human being. Even tramps avoid the little-frequented highway. It does not pay them to shamble over the solitary country-side. Their piteous tales, and mock humility, and transcendent deceit are useless here. They cannot beg, for there is no one about to pester for alms ; so experienced vagrants wisely choose other paths. The Snake, a homely hostelry, that derives its sign from a device of the Cavendish family, stands by the wayside, almost equi-distant between Glossop and Ashopton. Formerly it was a post-house ; now it has scarcely any customers except sportsmen and tourists. The little lime-washed tavern, gleaming white among the trees, is hemmed in by the hills. At its back stretch the stern wastes of Alport Moor ; opposite its doorway rises the heather-clad shoulder of Fairbrook Naze ; and just below tower the whimsically shaped rocks of Seal Edge ; but the road beyond winds through a land of less barren character. Indeed, at Ashopton, where the mountain stream and the Derwent mingle, under the shadow of Winhill,

the vale is sylvan rather than rugged—a delicious haunt in which to idle through a summer's day by aimless wanderings about the flower-studded meadows and cool woodlands and inviting country-lanes, or by the long reaches of the wide river, where patient men who have come down from the well-appointed Ashopton Inn, burdened with the newest thing in rods and creels, are whipping the water for trout that not only decline to be caught, but lie safely among the friendly rushes, chuckling at some new-fledged angler's folly.





CHAPTER XV.

HATHERSAGE—Little John's Grave—A Sorrowful Ballad—A Wild Country—A British Fort—Fox House—Beauchief Abbey—Banner Cross—A Glimpse of Sheffield.

THERE is such a diversity of scenery in the Ashopton district—so many tempting ways—that it is difficult to decide which path to pursue; whether to wander along the tree-shaded road to Derwent Hall, or the wilder and even more picturesquely bordered highway to Ladybower, or to traverse the turnpike to Hathersage, nestling on ‘the edge of the heather’ in the hollow vale so minutely described by Charlotte Brontë in ‘Jane Eyre.’ The latter shall be our route. It is a delightful walk, unfolding at nearly every step new beauties of hill and dale and river. In fact, the shining Derwent keeps us company all the way; and no sooner are the rocky slopes of Bamford Edge left behind than Hathersage is sighted.

The village, which is noted for its manufacture of pins and needles, is an old-fashioned quiet place, with ancient, weather-beaten stone houses clustering about its one long street, in which the Ordnance

Arms and the George Inn cater leisurely for travellers.

On the slope above the hamlet stands the church where Robert Eyre, who fought at Agincourt, lies buried; and in the churchyard is the grave of Little John. There is a widespread belief that the latter was born in the village, and returned there broken-spirited to die soon after Robin Hood had been placed in his grave at Kirklees. In the MS. of Elias Ashmole, dated 1652, is this record: ‘Little John lyeth buried in Hatherseech Churchyard within 3 miles fro Castleton in High Peake, with one stone set up at his head and another at his feete, but a large distance betweene them. They say a part of his bow hangs up in the said church. Neere Grindlef ord Bridge are Robin Hood’s 2 pricks.’ Just before Little John died he expressed the wish that his cap and bow should be hung up in the church. The wish was not disregarded, and some sixty-five years ago the green cloth cap once worn by Robin Hood’s faithful companion still hung in the chancel. The bow, which was one of the treasures of Hathersage Hall in the reign of Charles I., was afterwards removed to Cannon Hall, and then became one of the curiosities at Wharncliffe Chase. Little John’s grave, ten feet long, is still pointed out in Hathersage churchyard; and how he got there is pathetically told in the following ballad, which was written by Mr. Haines, and appeared in the ‘Reliquary.’

' When Robin Hood, by guile betrayed,
 In Kirklees' cloister died,
Silent his merry men dispersed,
 And never more allied.

' Some passed unknown or pardon got,
 And peaceful callings sought
Beyond the seas, while others fled,
 And 'gainst the Paynim fought.

' But Little John, as lonely through
 Their vacant haunts he strode,
Repented sadness in his soul
 Had e'er of old abode.

' As there beneath an oak his limbs
 Repose long failing found,
A shape thrice warned him in a dream
 To shun St. Michael's ground.

' Affrighted from the sward he starts—
 Deep shone the guardian night !
The moon the woods bowed motionless
 With plenitude of light.

' St. Michael's road, presaging nought,
 Leal John yestreen had ta'en ;
But now another way he chose,
 Lest there he should be slain.

' Northward, compelling soon his steps,
 Across the Tweed he hied ;
Thence sea and land to traverse far,
 A long and cheerless ride.

' For aye his heart in greenwood was,
 Wherever he might be ;
Till pleasing rose resolve, once more
 The forests fair to see.

' Yet bootless he retraced deject
 Each loved resort at last ;
 The birds were mute, the leafless wold
 Held drearily the blast.

' But as again John wandered wide,
 A fog so dense did fall,
 He could not see nor hill nor tree ;
 It closed him like a wall.

' That dismal night he roamed lost,
 Exhausted, sick, and cold ;
 The morn was long ere it was light,
 And long the vapour rolled.

' On every side came mighty stones
 About a barren moor ;
 Nor roof nor pale might be descried,
 As spread that waste forlore.

' At length, 'mid wreathing fog-smoke, swam
 The sun's blanched disc on high ;
 Mantled the ashy mists around ;
 Grew wide the rover's eye.

' When, singing blithe as he approached,
 A shepherd-boy met John :
 " Pray tell to me," the outlaw cried,
 " What ground I here am on ?"

" St. Michael's, gallant yeoman, this,"
 The boy made prompt reply ;
 " From yonder, Hathersage church-spire
 May'st plainly now espy.

" There hast thou knelled," said Little John,
 " The solemn bell for me ;
 But Christ thee save, my bonny lad ;
 Aye lucky shalt thou be !"

‘ He had not many steps advanced,
When in the vale appeared
The church, and eke the village sweet,
His foot had vainly feared.

‘ Descending, welcome straight he finds
The ruddy hearth before ;
Cried young and old, “ Among us dwell,
And weary roam no more !”

‘ Said Little John, “ No, never hence
Shall I fare forth again ;
But that abode is yet to found
Wherein I must remain.”

‘ He led them to the churchyard frore,
And digg’d therein a grave :
“ Three days,” said he, “ and, neighbours, this
The little inn I crave.

‘ “ Without a coffin or a shroud
Inter me, I you pray ;
And o’er my corse as now yclad,
The greensward lightly lay.”

‘ The morn ensued, as John foretold,
He never rose to greet ;
His bread upon the board was brought,
Beside it stayed his seat.

‘ They laid him in the grave which he
With his own hands had made,
And overspread the fragrant sod
As he had wished and said.

‘ His bow was in the chancel hung ;
His last good bolt they drave
Down to the nocke, its measured length,
Westward fro’ the grave.

'And root and bud this shaft put forth,
When spring returned anon ;
It grew a tree, and threw a shade,
Where slept staunch Little John.'

Although it sounds somewhat paradoxical, the best way to reach East Derbyshire is to go into Yorkshire; and the road from Hathersage lies through some of the prettiest scenery of the Peak.

Leaving the straggling village street, bordered by curious little shops and old houses, some of which are roofless, the path gradually ascends. On one side the high and rugged frontier of Millstone Edge, with its naked rocks, and dark fissures, and huge heaps of detached stone, stands out boldly against the sky-line; on the other, deep down in the hollow, far below the turnpike, is a lovely sweep of valley, through which the Derwent flows beneath arched bridges, past trees, and woods, and quiet homesteads, until its silver thread is lost behind the hills in the distance.

The highway creeping to the summit of the hill is here shut in for a short distance by the layers of rock that form part of the edge; then it winds through a stretch of moorland patched with green and grey and brown, and studded with great moss-tinted stones. On the left, by the wayside, is a huge rock resembling a reptile's head, and known as the 'Toad's Mouth.' A few paces further is the Burbage Brook, bubbling through a picturesque glen, in which the mountain sheep are nibbling the scant grass. More in the heart of the rocky wilderness rises the

bold form of Higgan Tor ; and near it, on the lower ridge, stands the ‘Carl’s Wark,’ an ancient British fortification, with breastwork of massive stones, and slanting banks of earth—a fort that must have been an ugly obstacle to the hardiest and bravest warriors in earlier times.

The country just around this earthwork is savage and wild ; but nearer the roadway, within the shadow of the moss-grown bridge, there are tender wild-flowers and fragile ferns thriving in sheltered nooks bordering the little stream. It is a pretty picture : a tiny garden set in a great stony fastness ; a modest oasis in the desert of rough ground and mighty boulders, about which a few bridle-paths twine with uncertain track, as if they had lost their way on the moorland.

Through the belt of trees on the right stands the Duke of Rutland’s shooting-box, with its windows one dazzle of ruby and gold, as the sunset-gleams flash across the wide expanse of heather-clad land sacred to grouse and its slayers.

On the left, at the junction of four roads, is Fox House, an inn that gives a cordial welcome, but needs rearranging or rebuilding, to more comfortably accommodate the increasing summer traffic to the Peak.

North of this inn, the way lies by patches of moorland and some pretty bits of softer landscape, but the scenery has no striking beauty. Descending the hill from Dore Moor to Whirlow, the Derbyshire border is passed, and the pedestrian treads Yorkshire

soil ; but the county he has temporarily forsaken still keeps in sight, as if loth to be forgotten. Across the broad vale to the right, just within East Derbyshire, can be seen the ruins of Beauchief Abbey.

Of the monastery, whose buildings once covered an acre of ground, there is little remaining except the western tower and a part of the church nave. But the grey crumbling walls of the ancient religious house founded by Robert Fitz-Ranulph, lord of Alfreton, look very picturesque lying within the shelter of the ‘fair, wooded headland’ from which, it is said by some authorities, the abbey obtained its name. A long line of abbots grew fat on this fair domain, with its ‘chapell, hall, buttrye, kyttchyn, bakhous,’ park, and fish-ponds; and one of their number was not satisfied with feasting, and with ornate worship aided by candlesticks, crosses, and rich vestments, for in 1458 Abbot Downham, ‘together with seven of his monks, was deposed for divers notorious crimes.’ The old error that Fitz-Ranulph was one of the four knights who murdered Thomas à Becket, and that he built the abbey in expiation of his crime, lingers no longer in the minds of history students; but there are two traditions still associated with the building. One is that ‘Oliver Cromwell blew off the top of the tower with cannon planted on Bole Hill;’ and the other relates ‘how “Big Tom of Lincoln” originally hung in this tower, and was stolen by night, being conveyed away by a team of six horses, with their shoes reversed to baffle pursuit.’

It is difficult to get rid of Derbyshire association along this highway, even after the ruined abbey is hidden by woods and ridges of the intervening country. Near the ivy-clad church at Ecclesall is the site of the old chapel in which the monks of Beauchief said their paternosters; and a little beyond, amid the trees, rise the gables of Banner Cross.

This mansion, which has a stone cross surmounting the roof, marks hallowed ground, if tradition is truthful. Once upon a time, so the story goes, a valiant chieftain unfurled his banner on the then wild slope, and bade defiance to his Saxon foes. Though hard pressed, he would not yield. Less and less grew the little band of brave men clustering round his standard. Undaunted by fierce war-cry or crash of battle-axe, they scorned to flee, preferring death to cowardice.

‘And a cross was rear’d on high
To their name in after years,
Where in death the heroes lie :
Banner Cross the name it bears.’

The Derbyshire associations of Banner Cross are not linked with this warlike period. They belong to a more peaceful time, in which the Saxon battle-axe was rusty, and the Norman invaders only lived in the pages of romance. The old house, superseded by the present mansion about sixty years ago, was in the last century the residence of the Brights, one of whom, John Bright, was mayor of Chesterfield, and high sheriff of the county. The new house was

long the home of Mr. George Wilson, one of Sheffield's shrewdest and most enterprising business men—the late head of Messrs. Cammell & Co., armour-plate and steel rail makers, a man who proved that urbanity was the siren of trade—and never lost his temper!

Opposite Banner Cross one catches the first glimpse of Sheffield; not of the town as seen by travellers by rail—not of gigantic mills, and dingy workshops, and demon-eyed puddling furnaces, and great chimneys pouring forth columns of blue-black smoke that dim the sunlight, and make the sky look blacker than the gathering storm; but a glimpse of one of Sheffield's prettiest suburbs. Across the valley the trees in Endcliffe Wood are clothed in tender green. The well-wooded slope beyond is dotted with white-stone mansions, the homes of manufacturers and merchant princes. Here is the stately residence of Sir John Brown; a little to the right, the luxurious house in which Mr. Mark Firth entertained the Heir-apparent; higher up is Thornbury, the art-adorned dwelling of Mr. Mappin, M.P.; and clustering all around are the habitations of men who with indomitable perseverance have already made, or are making, their "Fortunes in Business." But there is no sound of labour in this west-end of the cutlery hive; only the evidence, the result of wealth is here. The manufacturing part of the borough is concealed by the hilly pastures on the Sharrow side of the roadway; and the stranger, gazing with delight on the picturesque suburb of

Ranmoor and Broomhill that borders the more rugged beauty of Rivelin valley, would scarcely believe that away to the east extends a great centre of industry, with its miles of thick-populated streets; its crowd of work-shops, where the cutler and the edge-tool maker toil; its huge works, in which the white-heated armour-plate is deftly dragged from the furnace to the rolls, in which the steel rail is fashioned, and the Bessemer converter spurts out prodigal showers of brilliant sparks that fall like golden rain—works that tremble with the thud of steam-hammer, and resound with the clank of machinery, and the shouts of the fearless, brawny men who earn their bread amid the scorching heat and almost blinding glare inseparable from the manipulation of iron and steel. There is much to arrest the attention in this densely peopled corner of Hallamshire, where plain knife-making was considered an ancient handicraft even in Elizabeth's reign.* It is a town in which the spirit of invention never slumbers, and the skilful hand is seldom idle—a town commercially great, and one that is no longer neglecting culture, health, and street improvement.

* Fuller says: 'Nor must we forget that though plain knifemaking was very ancient in this country (Yorkshire), yet Thomas Matthews, on Fleet Bridge, London, was the first Englishman who *quinto Elizabethæ* (1563), made five knives.'



CHAPTER XVII.

TOIL AND SMOKE—A Thorough People—Sheffield Men and the Picturesque—A Pretty Glen—The Wyming Brook—A Moorland Path—Another Look at the Peak.

SHEFFIELD will, no doubt, be justly dealt with by another pen in ‘The County History of Yorkshire;’ but it would be folly to dismiss the great thriving town here with a word, for it is practically the capital of North Derbyshire as well as of South Yorkshire—it is the town to which the thoughts of every ambitious youth in the Peak naturally turn—it is a town in which many Derbyshire men have made not only a fortune but a name.

Charles Reade in his novel ‘Put Yourself in His Place,’ speaks of it as ‘this infernal city whose water is blacking, and whose air is coal;’ and other writers have gone out of their way to traduce the place, apparently because it throbs with industrial life in its incessant tussle with iron and steel; while the fastidious of the land, speeding in train past Brightside, are astonished at the cinder-covered ground, the great dingy-looking works, the forest of tall chimneys, the fierce glow of furnaces, the Bedlam of hard work, and most of all by the thick atmosphere

—an atmosphere impregnated with sand, soot, and steel filings—above which rises in silent but picturesque majesty the biggest, most strangely coloured, and most gracefully formed smoke-cloud in the world!

But the smoke, the noise, the labour-turmoil cannot be particularly injurious to health. Even the pale-faced, but sinewy, grinder who works in the damp shop, with his clothes looking as if they had been dipped in yellow ochre, often numbers as many years, though he cannot boast the complexion, of the agricultural labourer. The ironworker is a modern Hercules, with muscles as strong as the metal with which he toys. He is hardier than the gladiator, and quite as fearless, though his work is so dangerous that he scarcely earns a meal except, as it were, on the brink of death.

Apart from the terrible accidents, however, that sometimes occur in the steel works and grinding wheels, the people of Sheffield live perhaps as long as the people of any other large town. Nor is the secret far to seek. They do nothing by halves. They are a thorough people. While they are at work they think, they endure like martyrs, they put forth all their dexterity and skill. When they are at play, they play with the same intensity—laughing to scorn Shakespeare's croak that 'all delights are vain.' They are a people who revel in sport and pastime; and perhaps as some compensation for the dreary surroundings of their industrial lives, God has not only implanted in their hearts a love of nature, but given them the opportunity of satisfying that love.

Sheffield, to quote a more kindly expression of Charles Reade's, 'lies in a basin of delight and beauty: noble slopes, broad valleys, watered by rivers and brooks of singular beauty, and fringed by fair woods in places.' No traveller will believe it, looking out of railway-carriage window at the blurred and devastated landscape on the east side of the town; but he has only to alight at either railway station, saunter up High Street, forward to Glossop Road, tug up the steep to Crookes, and on to Rivelin—not more than half an hour's walk—to realize how greatly the Sheffield artisan has been favoured by Providence; what lovely pictures, what delightful landscapes, stretch out almost from the threshold of his humble home. And the Sheffield men appreciate the natural beauties by which they are surrounded. These men—many of them, at all events—are not refined; they can convert the rough iron into polished steel with greater ease than they can polish their own manners; they are often rude, boisterous, uncouth; they speak more emphatically than poetically, in a strange dialect something after this fashion: 'Ahr tha goin' dahrn t' Wicker? Ahr'll meat thi a t' weel, and if tha's nowt to do we'll go aht wi' t' tackle.* But they are proud of their industrial skill; they are true as steel for friendship's sake; they admire what is beautiful, and they know the hills, the glens, the

* Meaning, 'Are you going down the Wicker (one of the chief streets)? I will meet you at the wheel (the wheel or shed where the knife-grinders work), and if you have nothing to do we will go out with the tackle'—go fishing. The Sheffield working-men are adepts at angling.

woods, the streams on the border of the town as well almost as Ebenezer Elliott, who gave Black Brook that falls into Rivelin Valley, the poetic name of ‘ Ribbledin ’ :

‘ No name hast thou, lone streamlet
That marriest Rivelin ;
Here, if a bard may christen thee,
I’ll call thee “ Ribbledin.”
Here, where first murmuring from thine urn,
Thy voice deep joy expresses,
And down the rocks like music flows
The wildness of thy tresses.’

Black Brook—whirling after every storm in mad-cap glee into the grand, wide-stretching valley of Rivelin—cannot, pretty as it is, compare with the wilder beauty of another stream, the Wyming Brook, that tumbles recklessly down the fir-capped glen just beyond, opposite Hollow Meadows. This glen is one of the favourite haunts of the Sheffield workman. Here he is free from the grime of the workshop, and the excessive heat of the armour-plate mill—amid ‘ the sights and sounds of nature ’ he forgets for the moment his toil for bread, and his smoke-begrimed dwelling in Attercliffe or Brightside, or in the dreary region of the Crofts. He gets new breath, new life, new hope in this little hillside fastness; and it is such a lovely spot that after dragging you there, you will admit that however dismal Sheffield may sometimes be, it is a black diamond set in emeralds—a sooty Vulcan or Cyclops slaving on the borders of a paradise.

It is into the hollow, heath-bordered vale, just below the truant school at Hollow Meadows, that the Wyning Brook flows; and quitting the Ashopton turnpike for what is little more than a bridle-path, we are soon in the glen down which the pretty rivulet makes its persevering way from the high lands above. It is a delightful though rugged retreat, only half a mile long from entrance to exit; but full of beauty, reminding one of the Devil's Glen in County Wicklow, or of some of the most picturesque haunts in Wales. The brook, frothing and fuming over its rocky, uneven bed, is completely hemmed in by the high, thickly-wooded ridges that rise abruptly from its banks. Its course is winding, intricate, fantastic. One could imagine that Woden, the god of war, and Thor, the god of storm, had fought in this glen, hurling great rocks at each other. The huge stones—gritstone and granite—lie in curious positions, and are piled in strange confusion, right in the brook's course. Here and there they nearly baffle the little stream altogether, and after fretting and foaming in futile attempts to get free the water falls into some still pool, from which escape is uncertain. But it is only now and then the busy brook (which like some men has more than its share of impetuosity) gets so unkindly cooped up. It is a restless stream, full of resource and enterprise, full of ingenuity and daring. It dashes boldly over lichen-covered rocks in many a tiny waterfall: it charges into narrow fissures and emerges spray-crested to tumble bubbling and gurgling into rough basins; it creeps laughingly

beneath great boulders, and dives slyly into all sorts of crevices, making mysterious eddies and ripples in its struggles to get free. In one place it is like the stream spoken of by Mary Howitt :

‘ Up in a mountain hollow wild,
Fretting like a peevish child ;’

and in another it chatters merrily over its stony way, hurrying in joyous abandon past jutting crag and moss-grown block, proving with its never-tired voice with what appropriateness it has been called the Wyming Brook.

‘ A pleasant mountain stream
With a very pleasant name.’

‘ After sweltering in the town’s distempered glow,’ we are charmed with this bit of solitude, that is broken only by the musical murmur of the brook. The scenery right away up the glen is exquisite ; and though our path up the stream is hazardous (chiefly a case of stepping from rock to rock, and sometimes slipping ignominiously off the smooth stones into the water) we manage to see most of the rivulet’s way-side beauties. Every half-dozen steps we take the glen reveals some new phase of loveliness. By the brooklet’s side delicate ferns shelter in cool recesses ; the stitchwort, the bluebell, and the violet grow among the grass ; the heather and the gorse find scanty roothold, but thrive on the mere sprinkling of soil the winter’s flood has sparingly lodged about the huge pieces of gritstone ; and the hardy bilberry

clings to the grey, weather-beaten, water-dashed rocks, its wires reaching far in indescribable tangle. As we try somewhat perilously to balance ourselves on the sharp-edged or slippery moss-grown summit of some great lump of granite, we get fleeting glimpses of the green slopes, patched here and there with the brown of faded bracken. Now and then we have to bend low beneath the overhanging branches of the dark pine, or the brighter-hued beech, or the thorny hawthorn. Indeed, the brook is completely arched with foliage along the greater part of its frolicsome skip down the glen; and we are often in danger, of being caught and held in the branches. But we succeed, with some difficulty and the experience of a few scratches, in avoiding such a ludicrous mishap, and get to the head of the glen—a barren land, that looks bare and unattractive in the sunlight. After a lingering look at the brook that has prattled by our side so long, we soon reach the highway, and tramp to The Grouse and Trout, an inn familiar to sportsmen. Our hunger satisfied, we stroll down the field in front of the house, and enjoy the glorious prospect. At our feet are three huge reservoirs, that look like little seas, for the waters are rough, wave-tossed by the north-west wind. Beyond are wide sweeps of moorland that stretch away dark and sombre to the horizon. There is no ‘sylvan pomp of woods’ here, but a vast expanse of heather-clad, rush-covered country, that it would be foolhardy to attempt to traverse at night. Yonder, to the right, rising from a cairn, is Stanedge

Pole, put up to guide the traveller on his way over the rough track across the moors.

'Onward we climb and upward pass
By that old causeway track,
Where long, long went in oiden time
The pedlar with his pack,
With carrier horses, laden well,
Their progress cheered by jingling bell.'

What an invigorating tramp it is! Yorkshire is noted for the weird beauty of its moorlands and the brighter picturesqueness of its hills and dales; but there are few prettier or more health-giving walks than this from Stanedge Pole to the rock-bound edge, from which we again obtain a delightful view of the fair vale of Hope and the stern hills of the Peak.





CHAPTER XVIII.

SHEFFIELD YEARS AGO—The Cutlers' Feast—A Crestfallen Dignitary—The Parish Church—Singular Incidents—Poetry and Sculpture—Ruskin's Museum—The Mappin Gallery—‘Less Black than Painted.’

COMING back from this tramp over the moorland by way of Sandigate, it is not long before we are in Sheffield again. No one would imagine that ‘The Black but Famous Town,’ with its new wide streets, its steep, narrow thoroughfares, and dark alleys and grinding wheels and manufactories, was once free from the insatiable Juggernaut of Industry that so often crushes men, as well as material, in the modern striving for manufacturing supremacy and wealth characteristic of every great English city.

In the olden time, however, when Thomas Furnival was lord of the manor, Sheffield was a tiny village lying in the heart of an oak forest, and the cutler worked so leisurely at the thwitel, or rude knife of which the poet Chaucer speaks, that he never scrupled to chat with the swineherd or gossip with the warder. He led a semi-rural life, took an optimist view of existence, thought it was impossible

to further develop his own handicraft, and never dreamt even of the mottoed knives common in Shakespeare's time—poetic cutlery, that prompted the thought in Gratiano's mind :

‘For all the world, like cutler’s poetry
Upon a knife—“Love me and leave me not.”’

The knifesmith’s homely forge, about which the woodbine and the ivy grew, has now been superseded by the great shed, in which, amid the constant whir and flap of wheel-bands, and the hiss of the grindstones, the deft grinders fashion the blade. The clumsy wooden handle of the historic thwitel is no more. It has given way to handles of ivory, pearl, and tortoiseshell; stag, buck, buffalo, and other kinds of horn. Indeed the modern knife, with its finely tempered blade, and beautifully carved, embossed, or inlaid haft, is a triumph of art, far excelling in durable workmanship and design even the celebrated Italian cutlery of the seventeenth century.

It is only within comparatively recent years, however, that the town has made marked progress in this ancient manufacture. Nearly three centuries ago the Hallamshire cutlers seemed to have cared quite as much for fishing and deer-catching as the forge; and there is a curious record to the effect that the then Earl of Shrewsbury, who had one thousand fallow-deer in Sheffield Park, graciously allowed ‘a holiday once every year to the apron-men, or smiths of the parish, when a number of bucks were turned into a meadow near the town,

and the men were sent into it to kill and carry away as many as they could with their hands, and would sometimes slaughter about twenty, on which they feasted, and had money given to them for wine.'

'Early in September, by leave of their great chief,
These apron-men, the cutlersmiths, for bodily relief,
Were yearly sent to Sheffield Park, amongst the antler'd deer,
And told to slaughter what they could, and feast with wine
and cheer.'

Such was the origin of the 'Cutlers' Feast'; but it was not until 1624 that the Cutlers' Company of Hallamshire was incorporated, by an Act passed 'for the good order and government of the makers of knives, sickles, shears, scissors, and other cutlery wares.' The London Company of Cutlers existed long before that period; and the Sheffield knifemakers adopted their motto 'Pour y parvenier a bonne foi,' which Dr. Pegge translates, 'To succeed in business, take care to keep up your credit.'

No doubt the cutlers of Sheffield gave a feast of some sort when the Company was established; and they have kept up the practice ever since, making, by-the-bye, enough progress in the art of dinner-giving to reach the most exacting idea of what a great banquet ought to be. The earlier feasts of the Company were, nevertheless, only humble gatherings; and in 1749, when the dinner was spread in the quaint old hall (since demolished), the expenses of the feast only amounted to £2 2s. 9d. The provender supplied consisted of a rump of beef. 3s. 4d.; six fowls, 2s. 8d.; ham, 3s.; pies and

puddings, 2s. 6d.; hare, 1s. 6d.; loin of veal, 1s. 10d.; bread, 1s.; butter, 2s.; roots, 4d.; ale and punch, £1 os. 7d. The dishes were substantial, old English fare, and the guests seem to have had Micawber's weakness for punch.

In 1771 the feast had become more famous; and was attended by the Dukes of Norfolk, Devonshire, and Leeds, as well as by many others of the nobility. A kind of carnival was held in the town, and the *Courant*, an old journal, describing the event, says: 'The Cutlers' Feast was observed as a great holiday. The bells were kept constantly ringing during the three days it lasted; booths were erected in the churchyard, High Street, and Church Street for the sale of fruit and spices, and all business was generally suspended.' It was for years a banquet without stiffness, a feast to which old friends went with delight, and listened time after time to the same old songs. In his 'Memorials of Chantrey,' Holland says of Nicholas Jackson, the filemaker: 'Ancient guests at the Cutlers' Feasts will remember how his loyal songs formerly divided with those of another local worthy, Billie Battie, the applause of the Corporation when sung in the old hall in Church Street.'

What would the Master Cutler, in all the glory of his badge of office, and attended by the beadle liveried in chocolate and canary, think now if any manufacturer lifted up his voice in song! That era of genial conviviality has gone by, like the manners and customs of Captain Costigan's time.

The only canary tolerated at the feast is that adorning the beadle's form, and ale and punch have been banished in favour of Bacchus, who is worshipped in the wine-cup. The tables show a pleasant picture of tempting food ; of silver palm-trees, epergnes, and rustic stands, half hidden by fruit and flowers ; and the hall, decorated with the arms of the lords of Hallamshire, and medallions of Vulcan, Minerva, Apollo, and Mercury, is still further beautified with banners and drapery. The old songs are forgotten in the crash of military music or the sweet voices of trained vocalists ; and there are few sights more brilliant than the banqueting-hall on the Cutlers' Feast night, when the light from the great chandeliers falls with softened radiance on the throng ; when the ladies have entered the gallery ; and the toastmaster, standing behind the Master Cutler's chair, says in ringing tones : ' My Lords and Gentlemen,—Charge your glasses. Pray silence for the health of her Majesty the Queen.'

Sheffield has resounded with war-cries, been devastated by plague, convulsed by outrage, and greatly damaged by flood, and it is associated with some great names. It sheltered Cardinal Wolsey in his disgrace, the fourth Earl of Shrewsbury entertaining the crestfallen dignitary with marked courtesy at the Manor. ' When we came into the park of Sheffield,' writes Cavendish, the Cardinal's usher, ' my lord of Shrewsbury and my lady of Shrewsbury, and a train of gentlewomen, and all other his gentlemen and servants, stood without the gates to attend my lord's

coming to receive him. At whose alighting the Earl received him with much honour, and embraced my lord, saying these words: "My lord," quoth he, "your grace is most heartily welcome unto me, and I am glad to see you here in my poor lodge where I have long desired to see you, and much more gladder if ye had come after another sort." "Ah! my gentle Lord of Shrewsbury," quoth my lord, "I heartily thank you. And although I have cause to lament, yet, as a faithful heart may, I do rejoice that my chance is to come into the custody of so noble a person, whose approved honour and wisdom hath always been right well known to all noble estates. And howsoever my accusers have used their accusations against me, this I know, and so before your lordship and all the world I do protest, that my demeanour and proceedings have always been both just and loyal towards my Sovereign." It was at Sheffield, too, that Mary Queen of Scots passed a considerable portion of her imprisonment—occupying at various times both the Castle and the Manor.

The Castle, which was pretty well battered in the Civil Wars, has vanished; but the Manor, in which Mary Queen of Scots sighed in vain for freedom, has not been entirely demolished; and here and there about the town are other interesting relics that unmistakably link Sheffield with important events in England's history.

The parish church—the Church of St. Peter's—which dates from the fifteenth century, is not with-

out interest, though some years ago it was slightly spoken of as ‘a great heap of stones called a church.’ Since its recent restoration the edifice, which is in the Perpendicular style, is in every way worthy to be the parish church of the town. It contains a noble chapel, founded in the reign of Henry VIII. by George, the fourth Earl of Shrewsbury, whose altar tomb ‘is to this day a marvel of beautiful work, so finished in detail, so full of repose.’ Nor has the church been altogether free from curious incidents.

‘A story is told of the time of Vicar Drake, who held the living from 1695 to 1713, that might provoke both a smile and a shudder. Francis Jessop the younger, son of Francis Jessop, of Broomhall, had been ordained for the Church, and enjoyed the rectory of Treeton; but on one occasion he was worshipping in the parish church at Sheffield, when Drake, the vicar, was preaching. Whether Jessop disliked the doctrine, or whether he had a spite against the parson, we know not; but all at once he rose up from his seat in Mr. Jessop’s loft—as the seat of the patron of the living was called—and levelled a loaded pistol at Vicar Drake, calling out, “Duck, or Drake, have at thee, mollard!” The madman would actually have fired had he not been restrained by his friends. The vicar stooped down in the pulpit, and continued below for some time in a state of great trepidation, and we can well imagine that the congregation would be not a little alarmed.’

In the days of the Chartist, too, there were some

lively scenes in the sacred edifice, it being left on record by one of the churchwardens that on a certain Sabbath in 1839, during some squabble about the pews, the church ‘was like a bear-pit, with hissing, hooting, and shouting.’

There are one or two streets in the many-hilled town not unconnected with art and literature. ‘Not more than one hundred yards away from the Hay-market, where furnacemen and cutlers discuss the probable result of the handicap or the St. Leger, is the narrow thoroughfare, known as the Hart’s head, in which was the literary den of James Montgomery, the poet, a little room with a ‘most distressing outlook upon back premises, and dingy walls and roofs,’ a humble retreat in which he penned some very beautiful thoughts and did a great deal of spirited writing that sent him to prison as well as made him many friends. Almost within a stone’s throw of Montgomery’s abode was the simple, ill-furnished studio, in Hutton’s Yard, where the young sculptor, Chantrey, sketched and modelled in clay, laying the sure foundation of a widespread fame that will never die. In Barker’s Pool, not far distant, Ebenezer Elliott lived and strove. ‘I had to rock the cradle and stir the melted butter while I wrote my poetry. The poetry was spoilt, and the melted butter was burnt,’ he mournfully confessed ; nor was he much better off in his dingy warehouse, where ‘he had only one chair to offer to visitors, a chair which had no bottom and three legs, and which he jokingly likened to the British Constitution.’ Notwithstanding

the depressing and exasperating conditions under which he wrote, his poetry was not so bad as he made out. He was an intense lover of Nature, and did much by his rhymes towards making her beauties better known.

Sheffield is not only linked with the lives of sculptor and poet, but with Roebuck's political fame, and Sir Sterndale Bennett's musical genius. It is a town, too, that is singularly favoured by art. In contains, in the unpretentious stone-built habitation on the high ridge at Walkley, Mr. Ruskin's museum. The art critic has sent to the town a rich collection of Venetian and other casts, valuable enough to adorn any gallery, and his pictorial gifts are equally prized. The latter include the fine painting of 'St. George,' after Carpaccio, copied by Mr. Ruskin himself from the principal figure of the first picture in the Chapel of St. George of the Sclavonians, as well as a rough sepia sketch of the whole subject, showing the dragon the knight so valiantly encountered. There are also four works illustrative of 'The Victory of Faith over the Fear of Death,' as depicted in the legend of St. Ursula. The first, 'The Princess's Bedchamber,' has been copied by Mr. Ruskin, and the other three —'The King's Consent,' 'The Benediction,' and 'The Instant before Martyrdom'—by Mr. Fairfax Murray. 'The Lippi Madonna,' copied by the same artist; the 'Madonna,' by Verrochio, who 'was also a master in the art of metal work'; 'The Wreck,' by W. Small; 'The Funeral of St. Jerome,' copied by Murray, after Carpaccio; and 'Ehrenbreitstein,'

copied by Arthur Severn, after Turner, are all in the unpretentious room of the old museum ; but perhaps the most delicate art-work in the little apartment is Mr. Ruskin's 'Panorama of the Alps,' about which he wrote : 'I place it in the Sheffield Museum for a perfectly trustworthy witness to the extent of snow on the Breithorn, Fletschhorn, and Montagne de Saas thirty years ago.'

In the closely packed slides are many beautiful etchings by Albert Dürer, and clever sketches by Leech, and wondrous evidences of Mr. Ruskin's own delicate touch with the brush—notably the bright-hued tip of a peacock's feather, and the more sombre tints of seaweed and foliage. And what priceless books and illuminated manuscripts he has collected ! One of the most curious is Donovan's 'Insect Book,' the drawings in which were made from insects the artist was a quarter of a century in gathering. One of the most historic is the missal album of Diana de Croy, a member of the powerful family of Lorraine, that ruled in France in the sixteenth century. Many of Diana's friends inscribed their names in this album, and Mary Queen of Scots wrote the appended sentiment on one of its vellum pages :

‘ Since you appoint your friends herein to trace
Names that you love to have in memory,
I beg to give you, too, a little space,
And let no age cancel this gift to thee.
MARY Queen of France and of Scots.’

The lines must have been written between July, 1559, and December, 1560, when the unfortunate

Sovereign was both Queen of France and of Scots; and nearly all the signatures in the album were written between 1570 and 1590.

Not long ago Mr. Ruskin sent a rare old MS. on vellum, the supposed date being about 1160. It once belonged to the Benedictine Monastery of Ottobenern in Bavaria, and is a Lectionarium, or Book of Lessons, which was read to the monks at particular festivals. The MS., which is in excellent preservation, the gold and silver being singularly bright considering the age of the work, was bought by Bernard Quaritch, of London, for £550, and purchased from him by Mr. Ruskin at the same price. Among his more recent additions to the choice library at the museum are four leaves, in frames, from a beautiful book 'written by hand,' and illustrated with such exquisite pen-and-ink drawings by Francesca that Mr. Ruskin has given £600 for the volume of which these leaves are such an artistic specimen. And, however much truth there is in the remark that Mr. Ruskin's own writings are published at prices beyond the reach of the artisan, they may be studied freely enough here, and their contents are not entirely unknown to the new race of grinders and cutlers springing into manhood in Sheffield.

Of the precious stones, in which, perhaps, the museum is richest, little idea can be given in words. They crowd upon each other in drawers and glass cases, and flash, and sparkle, and gleam with beauty. Here are amethysts, emeralds, crys-

tals, opals, pearls, rubies, silver and virgin gold; and in a letter recently written Mr. Ruskin says: 'I have sent the museum such a piece of topaz in the water as Europe may be challenged to match—gave £100 for it of the Guild's money.' Nor do these treasures by any means exhaust the catalogue of Mr. Ruskin's gifts, for he is ever finding some new gem and sending it to enrich his refined hobby, the museum.

The Ruskin Museum is not the only home of art in Sheffield. In Weston Park—a charming little park that is called 'The Grinder's Garden,' and 'The Cutler's Playground,' and contains the town's museum of curiosities and local manufactures*—has

* The town's museum—or as it is styled, 'The Sheffield Public Museum'—is enriched by the valuable collection of British antiquities formed by Mr. Thomas Bateman, the author of 'Vestiges of the Antiquities of Derbyshire,' and 'Ten Years' Diggings in Celtic and Saxon Gravehills, in the Counties of Derby, Stafford, and York.' An enthusiastic Derbyshire antiquarian and archaeologist was Thomas Bateman, and his collection includes many interesting relics of the Celtic and other periods. Here is the bronze helmet of a Roman foot soldier; there a necklace of fourteen pendant ornaments of pure gold—eleven of them set in garnets—found in a barrow near Winster Moor; close by the remnants of a Saxon warrior's coat of mail, discovered in a mound at Benty Grange, Monyash; near, a little uninscribed Roman altar of sandstone, taken out of the wall of an ancient cottage at Middleton; indeed, the collection is so rare, so eloquent with stories of the past, that it has attracted the attention of some of the most noted antiquaries of the time and certainly proves one thing that cremation is no new-fangled notion, for it includes a number of urns, containing the calcined bones of Ancient Britons, who apparently had little objection to this fiery, but inexpensive, mode of interment.

been erected a beautiful art-gallery. It is in the Ionic style, and is to be the storehouse of many pictures—of the collection left to Sheffield by Mr. Newton Mappin, one of its most influential inhabitants. The paintings, which are valued at £80,000, include the works of many noted men. Among them are John Pettie's 'Drum-Head Court-Martial,' his 'Hudibras and Ralpho in the Stocks,' 'The Conspirators,' 'The Sally,' and 'The Sword and Dagger Fight;' John Phillips is represented by 'The Water Drinkers,' 'The Spanish Wake,' and 'Carnival Time;' Rosa Bonheur and Landseer by 'The Stray Shot;' Turner by 'Dunbar Castle;' Hillyard Swinstead by the pathetic picture 'When Trumpets Call then Homes are Broken;' and there are also choice examples of the work of John Linnell, Sidney Cooper, T. Creswick, J. Constable, Copley Fielding, as well as one of Marcus Stone's best efforts, the Shakespearian study from 'Much Ado about Nothing,' showing Claudio, when deceived by Don Juan, accusing Hero. The subject is taken from the first scene of the fourth act of the comedy, where Claudio says:

'O Hero ! what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been plac'd
About the thoughts and counsels of thy heart.
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair ! farewell,
Thou pure impiety and impious purity !
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eye-lids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.'

The grouping of this picture was arranged by Charles Dickens, and the painter has cleverly caught the realistic climax of the scene just as Hero swoons.

John Newton Mappin was brusque in manner, and apt to get very angry when asked about his grouse-shooting exploits; but he had many good qualities, possessed true art taste, and proved himself a great benefactor to the town when he bequeathed to it, in the words of his will, 'my large Florentine bronze called "The Keppel Shepherd," all my oil paintings, and £15,000 to be applied to the erection of a suitable art-gallery.'

Sheffield may, like the heroine in James Payn's novel, truthfully say that she is 'Less Black Than Painted.' If her industries are smudgy, she has some counterbalancing brightness—the beauty of her border land, and the recently acquired facilities for culture and technical education in her midst. Instead of being a town to despise, it should be lauded. It has destroyed trade outrage as effectively as Ulysses destroyed Polyphemus; it is outstripping ignorance with the speed of Atalanta; it has a robust, shrewd, industrious, skilful people, and there is undoubtedly for Sheffield a great commercial and social future, though the town is scoffed at by many, and has been libellously designated 'the ugliest place in Yorkshire!'



CHAPTER XIX.

IN DERBYSHIRE AGAIN—A Region of Iron and Coal—Chantrey's Birthplace—Unlucky Dronfield—A Strange Tradition—A Famous Cottage.

ONCE beyond Sheffield Moor (with its long line of shops, thronged pavements, and tram-car traffic), the Yorkshire boundary at Meersbrook is soon passed, and East Derbyshire reached. The country is entirely different in its character from that of the Peak. With the exception of Cresswell Crags, on the extreme verge of the county, there is little to remind one of the bluff limestone tors and stalactite caverns of Matlock and Castleton.

In some parts the landscape is disfigured by great slag-heaps, and lofty blast-furnaces sending forth mighty tongues of flame; by unsightly pit-hillocks of black shale, and gigantic head-gearing fixed over dark yawning shafts, down which the collier goes with his pick, braving the dangers of explosion, to get coal out of the shining seams in the far-distant workings.

East Derbyshire is prolific in mineral wealth. The people in long-past generations delved for its

coal ; and an old charter, dated 1315, tells how the monks of Beauchief obtained fuel from the pits at Norton and Alfreton. Iron ore was obtained in the county at a very early period ; and until the end of the last century, there remained at Wingerworth, two miles south of Chesterfield, one of the old charcoal furnaces (worked by a waterwheel) that were formerly used to smelt it.

The supply of minerals has never failed ; neither the coalfields nor the ironstone mines have yet given out ; they are far more lasting and exhaustless than Gilead Beck's marvellous oil-wells described in 'The Golden Butterfly' ; and those who obtain their livelihood by tearing these treasures out of the earth's crust, tolerate with great equanimity the ugly patches they make on nature's face in the process.

It must not be imagined, however, that this part of the county has its beauty entirely effaced by ironworks and coalpits ; for it possesses many grand stretches of hill and dale yet innocent of the furnace-man's and the miner's footsteps ; and it has a quiet sylvan loveliness that is, to say the least, a pleasing variety after the Peak's rugged grandeur.

Up Derbyshire Lane, just outside Sheffield's border, reposes the old-world village of Norton, a pretty hamlet of little cottages and country-houses gray and mellowed with age. Yonder in the valley is the whir of the grindstone, the throb of the engine, the roar of the furnace ; here, in the grass and moss-grown churchyard, in the tree-shaded pathways and sheltered nooks, all is silent and peaceful—no hurry

of business, no grabbing for gold, no struggling for life's bare subsistence. On the village-green rises a pillar of granite, bearing the simple inscription, 'CHANTREY.' The great sculptor, who was knighted by William IV., is buried in the churchyard close by. Norton was his home in youth. He was born in the village in 1781, and his first occupation was the humble but useful one of supplying milk to Sheffield households. But the lad's thoughts were not concentrated in his milk-pails ; they flowed into loftier channels :

‘Calmly seated on his panniered ass,
Where travellers hear the steel hiss as they pass,
A milkboy, sheltering from the transient storm,
Chalked on the grinder’s wall an infant form.’

Ebenezer Elliott, the poet, has thus indicated the dawning of art in young Chantrey's mind, and nothing could stifle his art fervour. When a lad shows any special aptitude, any particular talent, his friends generally endeavour to make him a grocer. Chantrey had to go through this distasteful experience ; but he could not tolerate the business, and was eventually bound to a carver and gilder. Step by step he got into the path most congenial to him. In his Sheffield studio he sketched and painted, developing meanwhile great skill as a modeller in clay. In 1804, when lodging in Norfolk Street in that town, he sought commissions in painting and sculpture. In 1811, a bust he sent, with anxious hopes, to the Royal Academy, secured him the friendship of Nollekens, and the exquisite sweetness of genuine

praise. A few years later, Chantrey was famous as a sculptor, and had himself become not only a member of the Royal Academy, but the associate of such men as Canova and Thorwaldsen, who, like the Norton milkboy, were kings of the chisel, and could make marble almost speak.

In the church, near which the noted sculptor rests in his simple grave, covered by a plain granite slab, are the alabaster effigies of the Blythes, an illustrious family, which for generations occupied the quaint old timbered house at Norton Lees, and sent two bishops to the Church in the fifteenth century. Without wishing to disparage these prelates, it is doubtful whether their preaching was as eloquent as Chantrey's—whether even by the aid of mitre and vestment they created such an impression as Chantrey does in Lichfield Cathedral still by his exquisite group, the 'Sleeping Children,' perhaps the finest fruit of his genius.

Norton is undoubtedly the prettiest village on Sheffield's border; and Chantrey's birthplace once explored, the road to Chesterfield is scarcely worth traversing by the pedestrian simply in pursuit of scenery.

The way lies through Dronfield, a somewhat dingy-looking little town, that is doleful just now because of the loss of its steel-rail making industry. Nevertheless, it may be some consolation to the inhabitants to know that their ancestors were in a much worse plight; for in 1643, these unfortunate people, being in sore need of spiritual counsel,

sent a petition to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, asking for the appointment of a regular minister, saying that they had not heard a clergyman's sermon for fourteen months, nor had the sacrament administered to them according to the rites of the Church of England for the space of ten years !

Dronfield shares with Norton the honour of giving rise to the Blythes. It was also the seat of the Fanshawes, the founders of the Free Grammar School ; and one of the members of this family was the celebrated Sir Richard Fanshawe, the ambassador and noted Royalist, writer of ' *Il Pastor Fido*, ' and husband of Lady Fanshawe, whose ' *Memoirs*' are among the choicest of books.

The six miles of country intervening between Dronfield and Chesterfield is scarred by pit-banks, colliery-plant, and blast-furnaces, but the turnpike, passing through Unstone winds very near, both picturesque and historic ground. Over the moorland to the right, near Barlow, stretches the wild and solitary Lees Fen, where, according to tradition, a town has been buried more completely than Pompeii ; hence the old rhyme :

‘When Chesterfield was gorse and broom,
Leasefen was a market-town ;
Now Chesterfield is a market-town,
Leasefen is but gorse and broom.’

The slope on the left of the highway, near Sheepbridge, hides the ancient village of Whittington, that lies on the track of the old coach-road to Sheffield.

By this wayside, on the fringe of the village, is the famous cottage in which the Earl of Devonshire, the Earl of Danby, and Mr. D'Arcy met in 1688 to conspire for the overthrow of King James—to bring about the ‘Great Revolution.’ How successfully they accomplished their object, and scattered the Stuart dynasty to the winds, has become a matter of history. The secret conclave in the little habitation that then hung out the swinging sign of The Cock and Pynot,* and was noted for the strength of its Derbyshire ale, led to the landing of the Prince of Orange on our shores, and to the flight of the unhappy sovereign, who, like King Lear, was even forsaken by his children.

* Pynot is, or rather was, the provincial name for magpie.





CHAPTER XX.

TAKING LIFE EASILY—The Revolution House—England Two Centuries Ago—The Conspirators at Whittington—The Dash for Liberty—An Historic Picture—A King's Flight.

WHITTINGTON, so well known for its historic possession, ‘The Revolution House,’ takes life easily. Having dabbled in revolution once, it is possibly under the impression that it has done enough for the country. There is an air of repose about the village as if its work was done; and it is apparently contented to drag on slowly in the old-fashioned ways. New Whittington, a mile away, has put up houses by the score, and extended here and there until it has far eclipsed in size the mother-village; and Whittington Moor, with its rows of flourishing shops and its many dwellings, that threaten to block up the racecourse—one of the oldest in England—has grown quickly; but Whittington itself cares little for commercial development—it prefers to retain its homely looking forge, its humble shops, and the little houses that cluster, as if for protection, around the village church.

The cottage in which the plotters met is isolated from the rest of the village. It stands alone, as if conscious of the important part it played in English history. The little house has a certain picturesqueness, but it is woefully dilapidated. It is untenanted chiefly because it is no longer fit for habitation. Its weather-stained walls are fast crumbling to bits: moss and grass grow with prodigal license on its thatched roof; the diamond-paned windows are half-hidden by foliage; the garden is a tiny wilderness. But tumble-down and unimposing as it is, there are few dwellings that have aroused so much interest. ‘I calculate we would gladly give you White House at Washington for this doll’s cottage,’ said an American once, as he peered about the ‘Revolution House.’ It has, and does still, excite more curiosity than many a stately home, than many a mansion, and has been seen by men from almost every land; in fact, many an Australian settler, Hindoo student, and Yankee sight-seer knows his way to ‘The Revolution House.’ From far-away Chili, too, people have come to see the famous cottage; but there is nothing particularly surprising in this, for Chili is nearly always in a state of revolution.

Resting with arms akimbo against the old wall that encircles the historic house, and smoking a cigar as an aid to thought, it is not difficult to imagine the scene here on the eventful day, nearly two hundred years ago, when England’s fate was decided, as it has turned out, so happily. There

had been much heart-burning for a long time among the people; much indignation at the arbitrary policy of King James II. His greatest admirers could not say he was a wise monarch. Indeed, little wisdom could be expected from a weak-minded, vacillating King, who was in the power of the existing priesthood. The age in which we live is a tolerant one. Every sect is allowed to go along its own road to heaven. But in the reign of King James, the Catholics, in fierce zeal, wished to push the tenets of their faith down unwilling throats. They wished their religion to be supreme, and were not averse to persecution in their endeavour to gain that supremacy. In the King they had just the tool for their purpose. He was King in name only. He was the Pope's slave. The seat of government was not at Westminster but at the Vatican. In every Protestant home there was dislike, or disgust, or hatred of the sovereign, who mocked at justice, and knew not the meaning of toleration.

Thackeray has, in his story, ‘Henry Esmond,’ given a faithful description of the bubbling ferment of the time—the time in which Lord Castlewood lived his careless, jovial life. ‘Great public events,’ he writes, ‘were happening all this while, of which the simple young page took little count. But one day riding into the neighbouring town on the step of my lady’s coach, his lordship, and she, and Father Holt being inside, a great mob of people came hooting and jeering round the coach, bawling out “The Bishops for ever!” “Down with the Pope!” “No

popery, no popery !” “ Jezebel, Jezebel !” so that my lord began to laugh, and my lady’s eyes to roll with anger, for she was as bold as a lioness, and feared nobody. It was a market-day, and the country people were all assembled with their baskets of poultry, eggs, and such things ; the postilion had no sooner lashed the man who would have taken hold of his horse, but a great cabbage came whirling like a bombshell into the carriage, at which my lord laughed more, for it knocked my lady’s fan out of her hand, and plumped into Father Holt’s stomach.’

A staunch Catholic was Lord Castlewood ; and at last he grew angry at the violence and jeering of the crowd, threatening to send his rapier ‘through a sneaking pig-skin cobbler.’

‘ God save the King !’ says my lord at the highest pitch of his voice. ‘ Who dares abuse the King’s religion ? You, you —— psalm-singing cobbler, as sure as I’m a magistrate of the county I’ll commit you !’

Such a scene may possibly have occurred at Chesterfield, the well-known market-town, only two miles from ‘The Revolution House.’ One could easily believe, indeed, that my Lord Castlewood lived his good-humoured reckless life at Wingerworth Hall ; that he had driven into Chesterfield, and confronted the crowd of angry excited people—including ‘the great big saddler’s apprentice’—say at the door of the Falcon Inn, on Low Pavement, or in the archway leading to the Old Angel in Packer’s Row. Anyhow, the country was in a tumult. The Protestants had

been oppressed, insulted, slighted beyond passive endurance. They recollect how the officers who professed their faith had been turned out of the Irish army; that judges, mayors, and aldermen had been appointed, and elected, not because of suitability, but because they were Catholics and Irishmen; and that no less than fifteen hundred Protestant families had fled from Ireland in dismay and terror. The trial of the seven bishops fanned the disaffection; their constancy to the Church of England and their acquittal aroused Protestant enthusiasm to fighting-height. The birth of the Prince of Wales, and the prospect of another Catholic King, did the rest. The country was on the verge of revolution!

There is a doubt, in certain minds, as to the month in which the conspirators, who invited the Prince of Orange over, met at Whittington. Some writers assert that it was in June; others that it was in November. At all events they did meet in 1688. Tradition favours November, and as sane sportsmen do not often go hunting in June, tradition for once may, one would think, be relied upon.

What were the thoughts of William, fourth Earl of Devonshire, as he rode away from the old house at Chatsworth on the eventful morning? He was a self-reliant nobleman, an aristocrat of skill and daring, who could use both tongue and sword. Danger was powerless to create fear in him. He had led a stirring life—a life in which he had crowded much hardy enjoyment, and some exciting incident. But he was starting on a very perilous

enterprise now. As he made his way on his strong steed, across the moorland, probably by Robin Hood, and Lees Fen, towards Whittington, he had ample time to fully realize the desperate nature of his venture. It was to dethrone a King: if he succeeded, the country's acclamation would be his recompense; if he failed, he had perhaps to look forward to an ignominious death. But he did not waver. 'A Cavendish for Liberty' would be his resolve as he settled himself in the saddle, touched his horse with his spur, and dashed after the harriers; for it was a hunting morning—so it was, in more senses than one; he was hunting a King. Nor was he alone in the hunt. He was followed by the Whigs, and the Earl of Danby by the Tories, and the pace, so far as the chase after King James was concerned, was getting break-neck. For once the family motto, '*Cavendo Tutus*'—secure by caution—was not acted upon: the Earl and his friends risked all on a single hazard for liberty.

Yet when they broke off from the hunt on Whittington Moor and made towards the village inn to begin the real hunt after his Majesty, no one, judging from the demeanour of the conspirators, would have had any idea of their important design. The plotters rode from the moor to the inn-door, seeking refuge, it is said, from the storm that had swept down from the Peak.

The only authentic reference to the secret conference is made by the Earl of Danby in his letters, where he reveals beyond all doubt that the meeting

at the Revolution House was no myth. He says, ‘The Duke of Devonshire also, when we were partners in the secret trust about the Revolution, and who did meet me and Mr. John D’Arcy for that purpose at a town called Whittington in Derbyshire, did in the presence of Mr. D’Arcy make a voluntary acknowledgment of the great mistakes he had been led into about me.’ This statement refers to the unjust accusations that had been brought against Danby to the effect that he was an emissary of France; but there is no actual record of the conversation in the plotting parlour about the Revolution.

Although the words uttered at the secret conference must remain a secret, it is not difficult to surmise the nature of the deliberation. You can picture the scene for yourself. The tankards would be refilled; the landlord bowed out; the door closed, D’Arcy perhaps with his back to the keyhole to guard against anybody’s prying. The Earl of Devonshire, sitting upright and stately in the historic chair still preserved at Hardwick Hall, would say how he was prepared to imperil his head for the sake of his country’s freedom, that he was willing and anxious to lead the true-hearted Derbyshire men against a recreant King. Danby, probably stretched on a rude bench by the wall-side, would thrill at the Earl’s words, and say he was ready to give the signal for the rising in the north, and fight to the death if need be for liberty. What a vivid picture would this meeting of conspirators make—an historic picture, that if once painted, would, no doubt,

have the place of honour in the Chatsworth gallery. It is a splendid subject. The unpretentious room of the inn, with a glimpse through the lead-framed window of the obscure village; the vigorous mud-bespattered forms, and grave faces of the conspirators, who spoke low and cautiously, for they were risking rank, wealth, honour—life itself. Perhaps Millais, who has given us ‘The Huguenot,’ and ‘Joan of Arc,’ and ‘The Princess Elizabeth,’ and wondrously painted faces like those of Salisbury, Gladstone, and Tennyson, will one day paint the real portraits of ‘The Conspirators at Whittington.’

These plotters did not say much, but it was enough to change England’s destiny. The plan they devised for the freedom of the people from the thraldom of King James and his policy of prejudice succeeded. ‘A free Parliament and the Protestant religion’ became the cry. The sovereign, who had posed as a despot, began to tremble for his personal safety. In the cottage, the nailmaker’s shop, the blacksmith’s forge, as well as behind the counter, and in the ancestral hall, there was the flutter of expectation—the anticipation of a crisis that might lead to another civil war.

By-and-bye the news flashed through the land that William of Orange had landed at Torbay, and that volunteers of all ranks were flocking to his standard. Then the King, dismayed, knew that his reign was over. Danby, proving true ‘to his secret trust about the Revolution,’ was prepared for defiant action in the north; and the Earl of Devonshire marched to

Derby with a retinue numbering five hundred men. There, prompted by hospitality that no peril could check, ‘he invited several gentlemen to dinner,’ and then in the market-place read to the Mayor the declaration of the Prince of Orange, and also the following manifesto :

‘ We, the nobility and gentry of the northern parts of England, being deeply sensible of the calamities that threaten these kingdoms, do think it our duty, as Christians and good subjects, to endeavour what in us lies the healing of our present distractions, and preventing greater. And as with grief we apprehend the sad consequences that may arise from the landing of an army in this kingdom from foreign parts, so we cannot but deplore the occasion given for it by so many invasions made of late years on our religion and laws. And whereas we cannot think of any other expedient to compose our differences, and prevent effusion of blood than that which produced a settlement in these kingdoms, after the late civil wars, the meeting and sitting of a parliament freely and duly chosen, we think ourselves obliged (as far as in us lies) to promote it ; and the rather, as the Prince of Orange—as appears by his declaration—is willing to submit his own pretensions and all other matters to their determination ; we heartily wish and humbly pray, that his Majesty would consent to this expedient, in order to a future settlement ; and hope that such a temperament may be thought of, as that the army now on foot may not give any interruption to the proceeding of a Parliament. But if to the great misfortune and ruin of these kingdoms, it should prove otherwise, we further declare, that we will to our utmost defend the Protestant religion the laws of the kingdom, and the rights and liberties of the people.’

The Earl’s manifesto, as stated in the chapter on ‘ Derby,’ aroused little enthusiasm ; but he and his band of faithful friends, by no means daunted, went on to Nottingham, and were joined by the Earl of Danby, who had faithfully ridden into York a few days before, and given the signal for the rising.

It was on November 5th, 1688, that the Prince of Orange anchored in Torbay, and entered Exeter with his plucky army of only 13,000 men. As Richard Green states in his history that reads like a romance, ‘Everywhere the plot was triumphant. The garrison of Hull declared for a free Parliament. The Duke of Norfolk appeared at the head of three hundred gentlemen in the market-place at Norwich. Townsmen and gownsmen greeted Lord Lovelace at Oxford with uproarious welcome. Bristol threw open its gates to the Prince of Orange, who advanced steadily on Salisbury, where James had mustered his forces. But the royal army fell back in disorder. Its very leaders were secretly pledged to William, and the desertion of Lord Churchill was followed by that of so many other officers, that James abandoned the struggle in despair. He fled to London, to hear that his daughter Anne had left St. James’s to join Danby at Nottingham. “God help me!” cried the wretched King, “for my own children have forsaken me!”’

He was hard pressed now, this monarch who had goaded so many to misery. He tried to escape from the country, but some fishermen, believing him to be a Jesuit, prevented his flight, and he was taken to London by a troop of Guards; but it was thought politic after all to let him go, and, like Don Cæsar de Bazan, he was permitted to leave his country for his country’s good—to depart without molestation to France.



CHAPTER XXI.

THE BENEFITS OF THE REVOLUTION—A Memorable Centenary—Festivities a Hundred Years Ago—The Coming Bi-Centenary—A Rollicking Song.

THE anxiety, the peril, the determined stand made for Protestantism by the fourth Earl of Devonshire and his friends, brought many benefits to this country. As Mr. Pebody says in his interesting little book on ‘English Journalism’: ‘We owe many things to the Revolution. It substituted an Act of Parliament for the theory of Divine right. It placed the rights of the people on a level with those of their rulers. It secured the Protestant religion, gave us a system of indirect taxation, brought the revenue and expense of the State under the control of the House of Commons, and, perhaps without intending it, conferred upon us a privilege which has in the long-run produced greater changes in the English constitution than all the principles of the Revolution put together—it established the freedom of the press.’

What wonder, then, that the memory of the Derbyshire patriot who was one of the leading spirits in bringing that Revolution about should be revered, or

that on November 5th, 1788, the centenary of that important event should have been celebrated at Whittington and Chesterfield with such great rejoicing.

'The Northern Star,' a curious old 'monthly and permanent register of the statistics, literature, biography, art, commerce, and manufactures of Yorkshire, and the adjoining counties, for the year 1818,' publishes the following quaint account of the festivities :

'The commemoration of the day commenced with divine service in the church at Whittington. The Rev. S. Pegge—afterwards Dr. Pegge—who was then rector of the parish, and had that morning entered into the eighty-fifth year of his age, delivered a sermon upon the occasion from Psalm cxviii. 24, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." This discourse was afterwards printed, at the request of the Committee, and dedicated to his Grace the Duke of Devonshire and other noblemen and gentlemen who were present at the time of its delivery. After service the company went in procession to view the room called the Revolution parlour and the old armchair, and then partook of an elegant cold collation, which was prepared in the new rooms annexed to the cottage. The procession then began to form, and moved in regular order to Chesterfield, where the remainder of the day was spent with the utmost cordiality and rejoicing. A number of constables with long staves headed the procession, for the purpose of forcing

a way through the crowd. Then followed the clubs with their wands and favours, many of them with uniforms, and all with gay flags and music. The flag of Mr. Deakin's club was blue with orange fringe, and the emblem a figure of Liberty bearing this motto, "The Protestant religion and the liberties of England we will defend." The flag of Mr. Bluet's club was blue, fringed with orange, the motto being "*Libertas quæ sera tamen respexit intertem;*" underneath was a figure of Liberty resting on the Cavendish arms, holding in one hand a cap, and with the other dropping a laurel wreath upon the head of Britannia, who was represented sitting on a lion, with the horn of plenty at her side, and in her hand a scroll bearing the inscription, "The Protestant religion and the liberties of England we will defend." The flag of Mr. Ostleffe's club was broad blue and orange stripe with fringe. In the middle were the Cavendish arms, with this motto, "The Protestant religion and the liberties of England we will maintain." The flags of many other clubs bore such mottoes as "The glorious Revolution, 1688," "Revolted from Tyranny at Whittington, 1688," and "The glorious assertors of British Freedom." The number of individuals composing these clubs was estimated at two thousand. Then followed the band of music belonging to the Derbyshire Militia, and the Mayor and Corporation of Chesterfield in their usual order, with their attendants. Next came the carriages, all in proper order, to the number of sixty or seventy, with servants attending them.

The Duke of Devonshire's coach, with six horses handsomely dressed in orange, headed this part of the procession. Then followed the attendants on horseback, with four led horses; the Right Hon. the Earl of Stamford's carriage and attendants; the carriages of Lord George and Lord John Cavendish, with their attendants; the Right Hon. the Earl of Danby and Lord Francis Osborne's carriage and attendants; the coach and six of Sir Henry Hunloke, Bart., and his attendants; the other coaches and six in proper order, with their respective attendants; the coaches of four, with their attendants; the chaises of four in like manner; hack post-chaises; gentlemen on horseback, three and three, to the number of five hundred, among whom were many persons of distinction; and lastly, servants on horseback, three and three. The procession extended above a mile in length, reaching from Whittington Bridge to the Stonegravels, near Chesterfield, and the company assembled is said to have exceeded forty thousand. The principal inns were all crowded at dinner, the Duke of Devonshire attending and dining at one house, Lord George Cavendish at another, and Lord John Cavendish at the third. Everything was conducted with great harmony, joy, and good-humour, owing to the judicious management of the Committee, which consisted of gentlemen residing in Chesterfield and neighbourhood. The principal toasts were "The Revolution," "The King," and "The Memory of those Patriots to whom Revolution was owing, particularly the families

of Cavendish, Osborne, and Grey, whose ancestors met at Whittington to concert measures for bringing about that glorious event." In the evening splendid fireworks were exhibited, and among them appeared a transparent painting of King William III. surrounded with glory. The festivity closed with a ball, at which were present above three hundred ladies and gentlemen, among whom were the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Elizabeth Foster, the Earl of Stamford, Lord George and Lord John Cavendish, the Earl of Danby, and his brother, Lord Francis Osborne, Sir Henry Hunloke and his lady, and many other persons of rank and distinction.'

The unknown writer to whom we are indebted for the description of the centenary festivity speaks as follows of the Revolution House as he saw it nearly seventy years ago: 'The cottage thus distinguished as the birthplace of the Revolution stands where the road from Chesterfield branches off for Sheffield and Rotherham, and has been called the Revolution House ever since the memorable event from which it takes its name. The second window from the door on the right hand belongs to the room which was occupied by this illustrious triumvirate, and which is to this day known by the appellation of "the plotting parlour." In this room an old armchair is still preserved, in which the Earl of Devonshire is reported to have sat during the conference, and which, from the marks of antiquity that it bears, may claim an origin of far earlier date than the period of the Revolution. The parlour, as it is

called, has no communication with the other parts of the building, the entrance being from a kind of back-door, which looks towards Sheffield Road. When last visited by the writer of this sketch, it was in the occupation of one William Mitchell, a facetious and intelligent old cobbler. The floor and walls were going fast into a state of decay, and the principal furniture, *with the exception of the venerable inhabitant himself* and his arm-chair, comprised a cobbler's stool, a few culinary articles in a side-cupboard, a Dutch oven, a broken pipkin, a clasp Bible, a copy of Wesley's hymns, and a few odd numbers of some religious publication.'

Five years ago—in December, 1880—the cottage, which for years had been the property of the Duke of Devonshire, passed out of his hands; but he has still a keen interest in its historic associations, for in the sale of the habitation by private contract to Mr. Mansfeldt F. Mills, [of Tapton Grove, Chesterfield, his Grace reserved to himself the right, in the event of the building being pulled down, 'to erect and maintain a stone to commemorate the site of the Revolution House.'

The cottage has, unfortunately, been robbed of its original dimensions; but the people of Derbyshire may be congratulated on the fact that the Revolution House, having gone out of the possession of the Cavendish family, has such a thoughtful owner—such a lover of the past—as Mr. Mills, who, writing three years ago, in contradiction of a statement about the probable pulling down of the cottage,

says: ‘On the contrary, it is my wish to keep the tottering old fabric together so long as may be practicable, and certainly, I hope, till after the bi-centenary in 1888, when no doubt a great gathering of Liberals will again be held on the spot to celebrate the Revolution of 1688. It is devoutly to be hoped that if among the then assemblage revolutionists there be, they will carefully revise their own tenets on the subject, and compare them with the motives of those who met in the now styled Revolution House, not for the purpose of demolition, but for the consolidation of the Church, the Crown, and the State.’*

* The story of the Revolution, as here given, is amended from a special article, ‘The Conspirators at Whittington,’ written by the author for the *Derbyshire Times*, the oldest bi-weekly and the first penny newspaper in the county, a paper that has done much towards making the history and antiquities of Derbyshire better known. As the bi-centenary of the Revolution will be celebrated in 1888, and there is certain to be considerable festivity again at Whittington and Chesterfield, the appended song, composed soon after the centenary, may be read with curiosity. It was a favourite ditty at local village feasts for many years, and is very emphatic, though not particularly poetic :

‘Let every honest heart rejoice
Within this British station ;
Give thanks to God with soul and
voice,
For His blessings to this nation.
Let each true Protestant agree
To celebrate this jubilee,
The downfall of the popery
And glorious Revolution.

‘Tis full one hundred years, I say,
The fifth day of November,
King William landed at Torbay—
Great cause for to remember—
When he had crossed the raging main,
In spite of Ireland, France, and Spain,
Our ancient rights for to maintain
By the glorious Revolution.

‘When James the Second bore the sway,
He ruled arbitrary,
And on his standard did display
The flag of bloody Mary.
He plainly showed his full intent ;
Seven bishops to the Tower he sent ;
But God his purpose did prevent,
By the glorious Revolution.

‘At Whittington, near Chesterfield,
That was the very place, sir,
Where the first plot was laid, I’m told,
To pull this tyrant down, sir ;
By Devonshire and Delamere,
Friends to our constitution,
Brave Danby, he was likewise there,
To form the Revolution.

'When Devonshire to Derby went,
And when that he came there, sir,
He boldly told them his intent,
Both scorning dread and fear, sir.
Derby agreed with heart and voice
To back his resolution,
This made his noble soul rejoice,
That formed the Revolution.

'Then, Devonshire to Nottingham went,
He went to speak his mind, sir ;
Some people looked at him quite shy,
And others used him kind, sir.
They seemed to like his business there,
But made a long evasion,
And offered him five hundred men
When there was no occasion.

'When James he found he could not hold
His tyranny much longer,
Neither by promises nor gold,
But found his foes grew stronger ;
And when he dare not show his face,
He England left in full disgrace ;
King William then enjoyed his place
In the glorious Revolution.

'No popish, nor no tyrant king,
Again shall ever rule us ;
Since now the scales they are quite
turned,

They never more shall fool us.
Therefore let every loyal soul,
Whose heart is free without control,
Pledge him in a flowing bowl,

That loves the Revolution.

'Now, Devonshire in All Saints' lies ;
Although his bones are rotten,
His glorious fame will ever rise,
And never be forgotten.
I hope his soul to Heaven is gone,
While here on earth so brightly shone,
Not only him, but every one
Who formed the Revolution.

'Now to conclude and make an end
Of this most faithful story,
No honest man it can offend,
And that is all my glory :
May God protect our gracious King,
While rogues and thieves in halters
swing ;
And with a flowing bowl we'll sing
To the glorious Revolution.'





CHAPTER XXII.

CHESTERFIELD IN THE PAST—Some obsolete Customs—About the Streets—The Memorial to George Stephenson—The Grammar School and its Noted Scholars—The Old Church—A Crusader's Prowess—The Crooked Steeple and its Traditions.

CHESTERFIELD—twelve miles south of Sheffield and twenty-four miles north of Derby—is an ancient borough. Camden, writing as far back as 1610, said it ‘was of good antiquity.’ It is also exceedingly rich in history; and there have been some strange sights in its fine market-place and worn streets since the first invasion of this country.

The Romans, whose main road to the north skirted its borders, were familiar with Chesterfield, which even at that time was an important mart for lead and wool; and in odd places about the town have been found several rare coins of the empire—one bearing Constantine’s inscription with a representation of Victory; another the head of Trajan, with the figure of Hope on the reverse side; and a third of the reign of Cæsar Maximian, inscribed with the words ‘Genio, populi, Romani’—‘To the genius of the Roman people.’ There is little doubt

that the adventurous warriors governed by the Cæsars had an encampment at Tapton Hill, on the north-east of the town; but to the Saxons belongs the credit of building the castle that once occupied the slope, and gave Chesterfield its name—‘the hamlet in the field of the fortress.’

Of Danish occupation there is also some proof, for to this day a tract of land on the southern border of the borough is known as ‘the Dane’s Field,’ and the large mound that still forms its most striking feature is supposed to be the burial-place of the invaders who fell in battle.

The manor, shortly after the Conquest, was owned by William Peveril, who seemed anxious, judging from his numerous possessions, to get the whole county within his grasp. It did not remain long in his family, however, for Peveril’s son, having aided the Countess of Chester to poison her husband, had to forfeit his estates and fly from the land in which his selfish iniquity had wrought his ruin.

Then Chesterfield became the property of the Crown, and was held almost uninterruptedly by England’s sovereigns until 1204, when it was given by King John to his ‘great and opulent favourite’ William Briwere. At the same time the town received its charter, the monarch also granting to the thriving place an eight days’ fair on the festival of the exaltation of the Holy Cross, as well as a market which continues to be the most important weekly event in the borough’s existence.

The town’s progress was somewhat checked in

1266 by a fierce battle, in which Prince Henry, the nephew of Henry III., conquered the Earl of Ferrers—a nobleman, who, after his defeat, hid himself among the bags of wool in the church cloisters, and was betrayed, like Samson, by a woman.

Notwithstanding the destruction of some of its buildings by fire, and the slaughter of its more valiant citizens, Chesterfield speedily recovered from war's relentless havoc, for in 1294 it boasted a guild of merchants, and was noted for its commerce and industry. In 1594 (eight years after the plague had brought death and sorrow to many a Chesterfield home) Ralph Clarke was made the first mayor of the town, and the Corporation consisted of six aldermen, six brethren, twelve capital burgesses, a town clerk, a master butcher, a master brazier, and other officials. The tendency of the time was towards feasting; and that the body corporate, in the earlier part of its career, did not hold aloof from the pleasant custom is evident from the fact that it owned 'a silver cup, a silver-gilt bowl, a plain silver bowl and a little new wine bowl'—vessels that tell in their titles of sumptuous banquets, and of bumpers drunk to his worship.

Although the members of this ancient council looked after their stomachs, they also looked after the town; and the curious bye-laws, dating as far back as 1630, show how rigid was their local government. 'No manner of person, or persons,' said these bye-laws, 'being a foreigner or victualler,

shall set up any stand or standing upon any markett-day, to forestall any shop or shops within the aforesaid towne of Chesterfield, in paine to forfeit for every such offence to the Corporation the sume of 3s. 4d. That no inhabitant within this towne shall suffer any person or persons dwelling forth of the towne, to sell any manner of graine upon any markett-day, in any house or chamber within the said towne, to the hindrance of the markett, before such time as proclamation be made for such purpose, or in the markett before the markett bell be rung, in paine to forfeit to the Corporation for every such offence, 2s. No inn-holder or ale-house keeper within this town shall keep or lodge any stranger above the space of one day and one night together without notice thereof first given to the mayor, in paine to forfeit for every time so offending, to the Corporation, 4os.' And even in the last century when Chesterfield, like Ashbourne, indulged in bull-baiting, prompted more by love of a cruel sport than by a desire to get their meat tender and wholesome, a bye-law existed by which every butcher killing a bull in the shambles was compelled to bait the animal previously in the market-place, or pay a fine of 3s. 4d.

Cromwell's soldiers, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, marched into the town in 1643, and their sanctimonious influence must have been very lasting, for twenty-eight years afterwards the Corporation, retaining only the loving-cup, bartered their punch bowls and other drinking vessels for a silver-gilt mace, which has ever since been the chief emblem

of the borough's dignity. Chesterfield, unlike the county town, cannot make a brave show of robed functionaries in processions municipal; but this mace, massive, rich and beautiful, exquisitely worked with national devices, demi-figures and foliage, and surmounted by an elaborately decorated, open-arched crown, attracts a crowd whenever it sees daylight. In company with the mayor's chain and badge, and recently presented robes, it goes to church once a year at the head of the Corporation; and there is no prouder man in England on that memorable Sabbath than the Chesterfield town-crier, clad in new livery, with the gorgeous mace, fifty-four inches long, gracefully resting on his shoulder.

Chesterfield, although it was one of the first towns in the provinces to adopt the electric light (which it has now abandoned), is an old-fashioned place. In spite of increasing population, new industries, and many improvements, it retains an old-fashioned look, and reminds one of the coaching-days, and of the many-caped watchmen who were in the habit of stumbling fearfully through its dark thoroughfares, hesitating at the shadows cast by their own lanterns as they cried the hour, or shouted with grim satisfaction that it was a wet, dreary morn. New streets have taken the place of many of the orchards and gardens forming such a pretty border to the borough half a century ago; the ducking-stool, that formerly reared its ungainly head a perpetual menace to scolding wives, has been removed from the silkmill dam; the ladies' bridle, with its framework of iron and

sharp cutting knife to silence prating women, was taken from the old poorhouse some decades back ; and the bull-ring—a source of torture to so many animals as they rushed furiously at the tantalizing dogs amid the laughter of the thoughtless—no longer disgraces the square.

But most of the streets keep much of their old character. They are for the most part edged with dusky brick buildings, roofed in some cases with heavy stone tiles ; while here and there are little-windowed, yellow-washed habitations, some of which are thatched and moss-grown, and have walls slightly bowed outward as if they were bending under the weight of years. Around the fine market-place, thronged with brisk traders and robust country people on market-day, are many venerable business places, in which shop-keepers, more particularly in the early part of this century, lived frugally and made fortunes. The majority of the buildings, it is true, have thrown a somewhat modern mantle over their ancient shoulders, and, like some vain old ladies, ape a remarkable juvenility ; but, despite plate-glass windows and other adornments, they cannot deceive the keen observer, who sees at once that they are really old friends with new attractive faces that unmistakably indicate a steady growth in Chesterfield's trade. Side by side with these rejuvenated shops are homely inns, hoisting old-fashioned signs, and keeping to old-fashioned ways ; and on the north, east, and south of the market-place are still larger buildings not ashamed of their age—buildings

with curious gables, and massive piazzas under which French prisoners lounged, when the big-raftered house that reaches on its thick stone pillars over the east end of Low Pavement bore the name of ‘The Falcon,’ and gave a warm welcome to travellers by stage-coach.

The most curious part of the town (with the exception of the crooked steeple) is the Shambles, a cluster of quaint-looking buildings, intersected with narrow passages, at the east end of the market-place. In ‘Old and New Chesterfield,’ we have described this ‘extraordinary jumble of peculiar property,’ saying: ‘It is a museum of dark-roomed taverns with swinging signs; and of curious butchers’ shops, with gigantic meat-boards, and thick sloping shutters, and heavy awnings that almost shut out the daylight from the pavement they overshadow as they try to shake hands with each other. It is a collection of many-storied houses, of antique cottages which have been thrust ignominiously into whimsical corners; of stone steps that lead into the oddest places; and of interesting oak carvings that carry the mind back to the time when the Knight Templars marched along its darkened ways, in their white habits, adorned with the red cross.’

The ancient town is not overcrowded with fine public buildings. Its market-hall is hybrid in architecture, and has a somewhat gloomy, desolate look, as if dissatisfied with its own shape and character. The municipal hall, which serves the dual purpose of council chamber and police court, is properly hidden

in a corner, for its discreet modesty is about its only becoming feature. Who would imagine that this square, grim, flat-roofed building of dingy stone, innocent of exterior decoration, was an edifice sacred to the eloquence of the local senate, and to the cause of justice?

The only structure with any pretension to grace and elegance is the Memorial Hall, standing near the parish church, at the northern end of St. Mary's Gate. It was built in 1879, as a tribute to George Stephenson, the founder of the railway system, who passed the last years of his life at Chesterfield, and died in 1848 at Tapton House, the red-brick mansion peeping above the trees on the slope to the north-east across the valley, and easily discernible from the hall erected in his honour. The memorial building, which cost about £14,000, is Gothic in style, and whilst pleasing in an architectural sense, is also attractive because of the usefulness of its object, for it is not merely an ornamental memento of the great engineer's worth, but a commodious home for nearly all the educational institutions in the town.

Perhaps no building in Chesterfield has more interesting associations than the Grammar School. It was founded in Elizabeth's reign, and endowed in 1594 by Godfrey Foljambe, who left the annual sum of £13 6s. 8d. towards the support of a schoolmaster. Among its benefactors also were James Lingard, of Brazenose College, Oxford, who, in 1612, left a sum of money 'towards the maintenance of a free school for the better education of poor men's children;'

and Cornelius Clarke, of Norton, who, in 1690, gave for ever the rents and profits of certain houses and lands to the purposes of education, one of his stipulations being that £15 yearly should be paid to the chief master of the Grammar School ‘for his better maintenance and encouragement in teaching, instructing, and educating of the children there in piety, virtue, and good literature.’ The School, which was rebuilt in 1710, and again in 1846, has been the intellectual nursery of many eminent men. Here was educated Dr. Darwin, the eccentric but accomplished poet-botanist, whose work, descriptive of ‘The Loves of the Plants,’ obtained great popularity, although it was ridiculed in a clever burlesque styled ‘The Loves of the Triangles.’ The pupils included Dr. Pegge, the noted antiquary, whose wanderings amid the mansions, and castles, and antiquities of Derbyshire localities afforded him material for much learned writing, some of which is preserved in the pages of the *Archæologia*. A diligent searcher into the past was this celebrated native of Chesterfield, and he is still remembered for his ‘History of Beauchief Abbey,’ his ‘Dissertation on the Arbelows,’ and various treatises on ancient coins, in one of which he says: ‘From the reign of Queen Elizabeth to that of Charles II. the tradesmen and victuallers in general—that is, all that pleased—coined small money or tokens for the benefit and convenience of trade. And for this there was a perfect necessity, since at that time there were but few brass half-pennies coined by authority, and no great quantity

of farthings.' Another boy educated at this School was Samuel Hallifax, a Chesterfield apothecary's son, at one time Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University, and afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph; but the most distinguished scholar whose name is linked with the old schoolhouse was Thomas Secker, the Nottinghamshire lad who rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury, yet never forgot the old town in which a part of his boyhood was spent; for writing from London, he says: 'All the variety and novelty of this great city would not equal the pleasure of an entertainment with an honest, learned, good-natured friend or two at such a place as Chesterfield.'

Strangers sometimes turn aside to see George Stephenson's grave in Trinity Church; but the edifice, apart from its interest as the resting-place of 'the father of railway-travelling,' is comparatively unattractive. The parish church—the church of the crooked steeple—is really the pride and glory of the town. It was built about the year 1350 on the site of an earlier fabric, and its crumbling stones, patched with new masonry, its worn porches, and belfry steps, uneven with the tread of generations of feet, tell a silent but eloquent story of the church's age. Even if it were not surmounted by the grotesque steeple, rising erratically 230 feet above the high, square tower, the edifice would still deserve to rank among the noted ecclesiastical buildings of the country. It is almost cathedral-like in its proportions, and only iconoclasts fail to admire its long nave, Gothic arches, pretty columns, and spacious

chancel, in which, beneath marble slab and alabaster effigy, knights and ladies rest. The monuments in this part of the church are chiefly in memory of the Foljambes, an ancient family which flourished at Walton in the sixteenth century, and indeed long before that period. Sir James Foljambe, who was High Sheriff of the county in the reign of Philip and Mary, was perhaps the most illustrious of his race, for his epitaph says he was ‘a man highly adorned by piety, by the integrity of his manners, by the heraldic bearings of his ancestors, and by his own virtues.’ And one of his descendants, Godfrey Foljambe, anxious, no doubt, to preserve the family’s character for piety and uprightness, left a yearly sum of forty pounds for ever ‘to a lecturer to preach and declare the Word of God openly in the Church of Chesterfield four times at least every month of the year, upon the Sabbath or some other festival.’ Nor would he have acted unwisely if he had left a small sum of money to preserve the memorials of his ancestors, for some of the tombs have their sculptured figures broken, and their alabaster effigies mutilated, and bear no indication of whose bones they shelter; in fact, they have become nameless graves.

In the chancel, which is bordered by richly carved wood-screens, hang the old-fashioned brass chandeliers, of Renaissance design, given to the church in 1760 by Godfrey Heathcote, one of the prominent inhabitants of the town; but the most extraordinary relic in the edifice is a gigantic bone, said to be one of the ribs of the Dun Cow slain by Guy, the Earl of

Warwick. This warrior's prowess has afforded theme for many a ballad. Shakespeare also refers to his might, and in Henry VIII. makes the porter's man say, 'I am not Samson, nor Sir Guy, nor Colbrand, to mow them down before me.' Colbrand, mentioned in the old romance, 'The Squyr of Lowe Degree,' was a Danish Giant, who spread terror throughout England in Ethelstan's reign. Sir Guy, returning from the Holy Land in a pilgrim's guise, determined to check the braggart's vanity, and killed the giant, after a valiant fight, at Winchester. With his sword weighing many pounds, the Earl of Warwick then went in quest of the terrible cow that had gone mad under some malignant witch's influence, and was wildly ranging Dunmoor Heath. Sir Guy had killed a green dragon and a ferocious boar, and had gone through numerous perils in Palestine ; but he was almost appalled by the Dun Cow, which, according to an old black-letter book of the sixteenth century, 'was a perfect monster, being six yards in length and four yards in height, with large, sharp horns and fiery eyes.' Nevertheless, the brave knight had not much difficulty in screwing his courage up to the sticking-point, and he wielded his sword with such skill and impetuosity that the mighty animal soon lay lifeless on the moor that had been shunned by all on account of the beast's fury. The cow's bones were distributed throughout the land as proofs of Sir Guy's achievement, and the famous rib on one of the Foljambe tombs in Chesterfield Church has done much towards extending the Earl of Warwick's fame. Local faith in this legend

is strong ; and although the bone bears less resemblance to a cow's rib than to a whale's jaw-bone, it would be idle to attempt to persuade some Chesterfield people that the curious relic is not part of the Dun Cow's remains.

The church is built in the form of a cross, and above the fluted pillars and fine arch, intersecting the two arms of the structure, rises the tower, bearing the crooked spire. The steeple, with its flecked ridges and fantastic twist and decided inclination towards the south, has been likened to a corkscrew, to the leaning Tower of Pisa, and to the uplifted tail of the Dragon of Wantley. It has for years been an object of curiosity, and people never weary of asking how it got askew. Tradition has done its utmost to denote the cause of the steeple's strange shape. It is said that the spire wrenched itself in bowing to a lovely, virtuous woman as she entered the church to be married ; that Satan, having been shod by a blacksmith at Barlow, was in such agony on his way home, that he kicked out violently on passing the church, and twisted the spire with his hoof : and there is another version to the effect that Lucifer, resting one day on the pinnacle of the steeple, had his nose tickled by the incense, and sneezed so inordinately that he shook the fabric into the grotesque form that has made it famous throughout the world.

On the other hand, it is contended that the steeple was always crooked, and this idea has been put into rhyme :

' Whichever way you turn your eye,
It always seems to be awry ;
Pray can you tell the reason why ?
The only reason known of weight
Is that the thing was never straight ;
Nor know the people where to go
To find the man to make it so ;
Since none can furnish such a plan,
Except a perfect upright man :
So that the spire, 'tis very plain,
For ages crooked must remain ;
And while it stands must ever be
An emblem of deformity.'

These traditions, although they do not touch the real cause of the steeple's grotesque form, serve one good purpose. They show what great fertility of imagination is possessed by Derbyshire people, and do something towards removing the aspersion :

' Derbyshire born, and Derbyshire bred,
Strong in the arm, *but weak in the head.*'*

The explanation of the spire's crookedness is simple. It was caused by neither an act of

* In the *Reliquary* for October, 1864, Mr. Walter Kirkland showed the falsity of this proverb, emphatically maintaining—in the Derbyshire dialect—that the rest of England has by no means a monopoly of brains :

' I' Darbyshire who're born and bred,
Are strong i' th' arm, bu' weak i' head ;
So the lying proverb says.
Strength i' th' arm, who doubts shall feel ;
Strength o' th' head, its power can seal
The lips that scoff always.

' The rich vein'd mine, the mountain hoar,
We sink, an' blast, an' pierce, an' bore
By the might o' Darby brawn ;

gallantry nor a Satanic kick. The steeple is constructed of wooden rafters, covered with lead; and it has, like some of the giants of the forest, been warped and twisted by the sun's heat and the tempest's power.

An' Darby brain con think an' plon
As well as that o' ony mon,
An' clearly as the morn.

' Strong i' th' arm, an' strong i' th' head,
The fou, fause proverb should ha' said,
If th' truth she meant to tell ;
Bu' th' union, so wise an' rare,
O' brawn an' brain, she didna care
To see or speak of well.

' The jealous jade, nor Darby born,
Where praise wor due, pour'd forth bu' scorn,
An' lying words let fau.
Bu' far above the proverb stands
The truth, that God's Almighty hands
Ha' welded strength an' mind i' one ;
An' pour'd it down in plenty on
Born Derbyshire men au.'





CHAPTER XXII.

BOLSOVER—A Tranquil Village—The Norman Fortress—Ivy-clad Ruins—Feasting a King—Sir Charles Cavendish—Another Railway.

THE country east of Chesterfield possesses none of the wild grandeur of the Peak, but it has a quiet, modest prettiness of dark woodland, verdant slope, flower-studded valley, and shadowed country lane ; and it boasts at least two historic houses famous as any in the land.

Bolsover Castle rears its grim turrets only six miles away from the town of the crooked steeple, and a health-promoting ramble over the steep hills, past the homesteads of Calow and Duckmanton, soon brings one within sight of the tall grey fortress. The village over which the stronghold stands guard is one of the quaintest left untouched by modern progress. Neither commercial activity nor political strife seems to have any footing here. There are few people in the streets ; what few there are, saunter along in happy ignorance apparently of the anxiety and struggling inseparable from most conditions of men. The antiquated square, bordered by serene-

looking houses, is almost deserted ; and scarcely a sound is heard save the murmur of voices wafted through the latticed window of the Swan, a comfortable inn, which, like ‘the Maypole,’ known to Barnaby Rudge, has ‘ceilings blackened by the hand of time, and heavy with beams.’ How secluded and tranquil is the village ! It seems almost incredible that Bolsover ever led any other life. Yet it has echoed with the noise of battle ; and five centuries ago it was a bustling market-town, celebrated for its manufacture of spurs, and of buckles so adroitly made of malleable iron that though the wheels of a loaded cart might pass over them they retained their shape and elasticity.

The ancient village was a place of importance years before ‘William of Coningsby came out of Brittany, with his wife Tiffany, and his maid Manpus, and his dog Hardigras.’ It was strongly fortified in the time of the Britons ; and the extensive earthworks and ruined watch-towers now surrounding the hamlet occupy the site of older defences put up by the Romans, who had a camp at Markland Gripps, in the adjacent parish. Nearly every inch of ground in Bolsover is historic—from the little Norman church, with its alabaster and marble tombs of long-dead celebrities, to the lofty castle rising, foliage-fringed, high above the precipitous rock.

Of the Norman fortress, built by William Peveril, there is no trace ; but it is mentioned in the Pipe Roll, where there is an interesting entry showing that in 1172 Reginald de

Lucy, the sheriff, accounted for 40s. expended in works, and for 53s. 4d. spent in victualling the garrison with 40 quarters of corn, 20 hogs, and 60 cheeses. Food was cheap in those days! The castle, strengthened in 1216 to defy the rebellious barons, entered upon a very stormy life. Its career during the tumultuous reign of Henry III., and indeed for years afterwards, was a chequered one. Like some men, who have a fatal capacity for treading in the footsteps of misfortune, it never prospered. When Sir Charles Cavendish, ‘reputed to be the first master of the age in the arts of horsemanship and weapons,’ purchased the manor of Bolsover from Gilbert Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, the castle was in ruins. But this illustrious knight did not let the fortress remain long in decay. He cleared away the loose cement and tottering stones, and began to lay the foundation of ‘the newe house at Bolsover,’ adhering to the familiar Norman character in the massive pillars and arched roofs of the lower stories. The figure of Hercules, supporting the balcony over the principal doorway, is an appropriate symbol of the castle’s strength. The square castellated structure is firmly bedded on the rock; no tempest has been able to shake its thick walls, and storms have swept against its corner-turrets and high tower in vain; and what is more, the fortress is habitable, and makes a very unconventional and picturesque residence, with its pillar-parlour ornamented with old-fashioned devices; its noble Star Chamber lined with sombre portraits of the twelve Cæsars, and

ceilinged with blue and gold to represent the firmament at night ; and its quaint bedchambers, two of which are covered with pictures indicative of Heaven and Hades, of happiness and misery—pictures of angels with harps, of angels reclining on clouds, or wandering in delightful glades ; and of angels of darkness, hideous of feature and writhing in torment. Some of the figures have been blurred with whitewash, and the tradition is that a former occupant of the castle, cursed with an uneasy conscience, was rendered so uncomfortable by the contemplation of these very differently situated seraphs that he took a limebrush, and ruthlessly wiped out both sinners and saints.

The splendid mansion on the grand terrace to the south of the plainer and more lasting stronghold, is far more picturesque, rivalling some parts of Haddon Hall in its beauty, but it is not habitable. The fine building, Elizabethan rather than Norman in its style, was partially built by Sir Charles Cavendish, and completed by his son, the Marquis of Newcastle. It had a short life and a merry one, and the mansion which has sheltered one of England's kings, and been the scene of at least one brilliant pageant, is a mere skeleton now. Owls and bats haunt its state apartments, trees grow in its galleries, carpets of grass cover its floors, and 'ivy creeps along its walls.'

But in 1633 its halls were wainscoted, and filled with works of art and beautiful tapestry. King Charles I. was then the Marquis of Newcastle's guest, and he was so magnificently entertained that

he determined to pay another visit to ‘the most loyal nobleman in England.’ In her ‘Life of the Duke,’ the Duchess of Newcastle says: ‘The King liked the entertainment so well, that a year after he was pleased to send my lord word that her Majesty the Queen was resolved to make a progress into the northern parts, desiring him to prepare the like entertainment for her Majesty, which my lord did, and endeavoured for it with all possible care and industry, sparing nothing which might add to the splendour of the feast, which both their majesties were pleased to honour with their presence.’ The Marquis ‘sent for all the gentry of the country’ to wait upon the King and Queen; the state apartments were filled with cavaliers, and gallants, and court beauties, and the Earl, at a cost of £14,000, provided rich banquets, and music, and play-acting. ‘Love’s Welcome,’ a masque, written by Ben Jonson, was played, the introductory part being given by three grotesquely dressed vocalists, whilst their majesties sat at the banquet. ‘The object of the play was to introduce a kind of anti-masque, a course of quintain, performed by gentlemen of the county, neighbours to this great Earl, in the guise of rustics, in which much awkwardness was affected, and much real dexterity shown.’ The actors were clad in rich costumes, and the performance, which was ludicrously diverting, included tilting with spears, dialogues, and dances by mechanics, and fantastical rhymes uttered by Eros and Anteros, two winged attendants, wearing garlands of roses and lilies, and

armed with bows and quivers—ethereal servitors, supposed to have brought the royal banquet from the clouds.

In this masque—the Earl of Newcastle being at that time Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire—it was for ‘Rare Ben Jonson’ to typify the union by way of a metaphorical marriage; the lady, typifying Derbyshire, being ‘Pem, daughter of Father Fitz-Ale, herald of Derby;’ and the gentleman, to represent Nottinghamshire, being ‘Bold Stub, of Sherwood.’ The idea was thus sought to be expressed :

‘ We come with our peers
And crave your ears,
To present a wedding,
Intended a bedāing,
Of both the shires.
Father Fitz-Ale
Hath a daughter stale
In Derby town
Known up and down
For a great antiquity :
And *Pem* she hight,
A solemn wight
As you should meet
In any street
In that ubiquity.
Her he hath brought
As having sought
By many a draught
Of ale and craft
With skill to graft
In some old stock
Of the yeoman block
And forest blood
Of old Sherwood.

'And he hath found
Within the ground,
At last, no shrimp
Whereon to imp
His jolly club,
But a bold *Stub*
O' the right wood,
A champion good ;
Who here in place
Presents himself
Like doughty elf
Of Greenwood chase.'

Bolsover Castle was garrisoned afterwards for the King; there does not seem to have been much bloodshed, however, for an old chronicle, after describing the advance of the Puritans from Sheffield to the 'strong house of Marquesse Newcastle's in Derbyshire, which was well manned with soldiers, and strengthened with great guns,' says, 'yet this castle, upon summons, was soon rendered up to my lord's forces, upon fair and moderate articles granted to them. It pleased God to give us in this Castle of Bolsover, an hundred and twenty muskets, besides pikes and halberts; also one iron drake, some leaden bullets, some other drakes, nine barrels of powder, with a proportion of match, some victuals for our soldiers, and some plunder.'

In the church are several noteworthy monuments of members of the Cavendish family, among which is that to Sir Charles Cavendish, 1617, which bears the following remarkable inscription :

'CHARLES CAVENDISH TO HIS SONS.

'Sonnes, seek not me among these polish'd stones,
These only hide part of my flesh and bones ;
Which did they nere so neat and proudly dwell,
Will all be dust, and may not make me swell.

'Let such as have outliv'd all praise,
Trust in the tombes their careful friends do raise ;
I made my life my monument, and yours,
To which there's no material that endures ;

'Nor yet inscription like it. Write but that
And teache your nephews it to emulate ;
It will be matter loude enough to tell
Not when I died, but how I liv'd—Farewell !

'HIS POSTERITIE OF HIM TO STRANGERS.

'Charles Cavendish was a man whom
Knowledge, zeal, sincerity, made religious ;
Experience, discretion, courage made valiant ;
Reading, conference, judgment, made learned ;
Religion, valour, learning, made wise ;
Birth, merit, favour, made noble ;
Respect, meanes, charitie, made bountiful ;
Equitie, conscience, office, made just ;
Nobilitie, bountie, justice, made honourable ;
Counsell, ayde, secrecie, made a trustie friende ;
Love, truth, constancie, made a kind husband ;
Affection, advice, care, made a loving father ;
Friends, wife, sonnes, made content ;
Wisdom, honour, content, made happy.

'From which happiness he was translated to the better on the 4th April, 1617, yet not without the sad and weeping remembrance of his sorrowful Lady, Katherine, second daughter to Cuthbert, Lord Ogle, and sister to Jane, present Countess of Shrewsbury. She, of her piety, with her two surviving sons, have dedicated this humble monument to his memory, and do all desire, in their time, to be gathered to his dust, expecting the happy hour of resurrection, when these garments here putting off shall be put on glorified.'

Since the period when the castle-yard was filled with men-at-arms, and the thick baily wall was crowded with soldiers, Bolsover's life has been placid and uneventful; but the Doe Lea Railway recently constructed at the base of the hill, and forming a connecting link between Bolsover and Chesterfield and the main line of the Midland Railway Company, will no doubt bring it not merely many tourists, but increased commercial prosperity.





CHAPTER XXIII.

HARDWICK HALL—The Old House—An Illustrious ‘Shrew’—
The Elizabethan Mansion—Its Relics of the Past—Some Old
Pictures, and the Stories they Tell.

FROM the high, lead-protected roof of Bolsover Castle, looking to the south, beyond the ruins and the quiet village, may be seen the towers of the stately Elizabethan mansion, Hardwick Hall, in a setting of fresh green park celebrated, like Welbeck, for its ancient oaks. A short stroll along country highways brings one to the Marquis of Hartington’s Derbyshire home—the grey, many-windowed fabric raised by the famous Bess of Hardwick, an historic building which time has touched gently, though its worn colonnades and faded tapestries tell of an existence to be counted by centuries. The hall, to quote Lord Byron’s words, is ‘a most beautiful and venerable object of curiosity.’ The ivy is creeping up its hoary walls and lofty towers, on whose summits appear the builder’s initials in open carved work—‘E. S.’ (Elizabeth Shrewsbury.) The house, which has a façade two hundred and eighty feet long, fronts a quadrangular court enclosing an old-world garden.

The broad stretch of turf opposite the gateway dips deeply into ‘a darkly shadowed glade,’ and beyond spreads the park and wooded vale of Scarsdale, backed by the hills of the Peak, that look like banks of cloud on the horizon.

A little to the south-west of the mansion is the ancient seat of the Hardwicks, a roofless, moss-grown, shattered building now, yet retaining some traces of its former grandeur in ‘the Giant’s Chamber,’ so called because of the colossal figures in Roman armour that stood sentinel against its walls.

The manor of Hardwick was in 1205 granted by King John to Andrew de Beauchamp; but in 1288 it was held of John le Savage by William de Steynsby, by the annual render of three pounds of cinnamon and one pound of pepper.

In the fourteenth century, after the estates had been in the possession of the Steynsbys for some years, they passed into the hands of the Hardwicks, who kept them for several generations, and by whom doubtless was erected the old Hall, which is noted as the birthplace of the Countess of Shrewsbury, more familiarly known as ‘Bess of Hardwick.’ The most remarkable woman of the age in which she lived, she was filled with ambition and stern resolve, and ‘she pursued a single object during a life which attained to extreme longevity—that of establishing her children in opulence as splendid and brilliant as it was uncommon.’ More fortunate than some ladies, she was led to the altar four times, and every one of

these marriages brought her greater wealth. Fuller speaks of her as ‘a woman of undaunted spirit;’ but he is scarcely correct in the assertion that she was ‘happy in her several marriages to great persons.’

To her first husband, Robert Barley, to whom she was married while yet in early girlhood, and who left her a widow only a few months after marriage, and to her second husband, Sir William Cavendish, she was unquestionably and devotedly attached, as possibly to a less degree she was to her third, Sir William St. Loe; but her relations with her fourth husband, George Talbot, the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, were somewhat strained. Flattered by Queen Elizabeth, who said, ‘There ys no Lady yn thys land that I better love and like,’ Bess of Hardwick became so arrogant that his lordship found her society almost unendurable; and when she added the torment of jealousy to the temper of a virago, and charged him with making love to his fair prisoner, Mary Queen of Scots, the Earl’s patience was exhausted, and he not only separated from his termagant spouse, but complained to the Queen of the slanders uttered by his ‘wyked and malysious wife.’

The Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry sought to reconcile the pair, and in a humorous yet kindly letter to the irritated husband he says: ‘Some will say in your behalf that the Countess is a sharp and bitter shrew, and therefore like enough to shorten your life if she should keep you company—indeed, my good lord, I have heard some say so. But if shrewness or sharp-

ness may be a just cause of separation between a man and his wife, I think few men in England would keep their wives long; for it is a common jest, yet true in some sense, that there is but one shrew in all the world, and every man hath her; and so every man might be rid of his wife that would be rid of a shrew.' Such reasoning as this, although prompted by the best motives, did little to calm the domestic storm, and the bickerings and revilings continued until 1590, when 'the Earl was withdrawn by death from these complicated plagues.'

Lodge, in his 'Illustrations of British History,' forms rather a different estimate of her character to that left on record by Fuller. 'She was,' he tersely remarks, 'a woman of masculine understanding and conduct, proud, furious, selfish, and unfeeling. She was a builder, a buyer and seller of estates, a money-lender, a farmer, a merchant of lead, coals, and timber. When disengaged from these employments, she intrigued alternately with Elizabeth and Mary, always to the prejudice and terror of her husband. She lived to a great old age, continually flattered, but seldom deceived, and died immensely rich, without a friend!'

Whatever her faults, she did not include in them that of laziness. Her life was an industrious one. She was always scheming and working—never idle. Her ceaseless activity and almost feverish desire to stud the northern portion of the county with mansions originated, says Horace Walpole, in a superstitious weakness. Told by a fortune-teller

that her death could not happen so long as she continued building, Bess of Hardwick, implicitly believing the gipsy's story, worked and slaved, fighting with stone, and cement, and trowel against the grim warrior who ultimately conquers every human foe. The crow's-feet gathered about her eyes; the wrinkles deepened on her resolute face; feebler and feebler she grew; but buoyed up by the Zingari's prediction, she persisted in her building mania. Three mansions rose at her behest—Chatsworth (the more ancient house), Oldcotes, and Hardwick. The Countess began to erect the latter hall in 1576, but she did not live to thoroughly complete it. Winter's icy breath checked the work; the labourers had to rest from their labours. Then Bess of Hardwick, outwitted and broken-spirited, gave up the unequal conflict, and died; and thus was the gipsy's prophecy fulfilled. In an old parchment roll of Derbyshire events is this curious record: '1607. The old Countess of Shrewsbury died about Candlemas—a great frost this year.'

The present mansion, which passed to the descendants of her second husband, Sir William Cavendish, is a fine example of the style of architecture which prevailed in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, when the thick-walled strongholds of a more barbarous age were giving place to houses composed of vast stately apartments, into which the light streamed through great windows, as if pleased that it had no longer to struggle through the old pierced loopholes, and fight with dark shadows in

gloomy chambers. Rhodes says the mansion ‘seems to have been designed to ascertain how little of stone and how much of glass might possibly be combined together in the formation of a splendid edifice.’ Its picture-gallery alone, which extends along nearly the whole length of the front of the house, is lighted by eighteen windows, each of which contains one thousand five hundred panes of glass; so there is some justification for the local distich :

‘ Hardwick Hall,
More glass than wall.’

One seems very near the dead past when wandering through this mansion, which is linked with many historic memories, and contains some curious relics of bygone times. In the entrance hall—which has a quaint gallery with balustrade of oak—is the old-fashioned chair in which the fourth Earl of Devonshire sat in the little cottage at Whittington, when planning the Revolution. Much of the needlework scattered about the house bears the initials of Mary Stuart, and tells of a queen’s captivity. Bess of Hardwick’s monogram, too, appears frequently on embroidered fire-screens, and elaborately-worked velvets, and silken draperies, showing that she had nimble fingers as well as a scheming, intriguing brain. And what a treasure-house of tapestry is this old Hall! the walls of chamber, chapel, and gallery are covered with it. There is richly coloured modern tapestry, indicative of the florid art of Rubens; and there is rarer and more time-dimmed tapestry that illustrates the story of Esther and Ahasuerus, depicts

the principal incidents in St. Paul's fearless life, and gives a vivid impression of the dangers encountered by Ulysses, the restless hero of Homer's 'Odyssey.' Then no mansion in England has a richer store of ancient furniture, of Tudor chairs, old cabinets, and carved chests—one of which, judging from the lettering upon it, belonged to George Talbot, the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury. Even older still is the presence-chamber door, furnished with an ancient lock, supposed to be the work of some Nuremberg smith; but undoubtedly the most attractive relic of a period long past is the table, inlaid with representations of musical instruments, playing-cards, chess and backgammon boards, and music with the notes familiar to those who are acquainted with the old style of writing it.

Not far from each other in the fine picture-gallery are the portraits of the rival queens—Elizabeth, with proud, imperious face, and figure hampered with fashion's absurdities; Mary Queen of Scots, in dark habit and white cap, looking grave and sad after ten years' captivity. Bess of Hardwick looks out of the sombre canvas with searching defiant gaze. And the furrowed brow and careworn features of her fourth husband are eloquent of the life he led. Here is a child's sweet face—Arabella Stuart's. 'No one,' says a sympathetic pen, 'can look on this picture and not glance forward through succeeding years, and see the pretty, playful infant transformed into the impassioned woman, writing to her husband, 'In sickness and despair, wheresoever

thou art, or howsoever I be, it sufficeth me that thou art always mine.' It was at Hardwick that she spent her girlhood. The old hall has echoed with her joyous laughter, and been a silent witness of her transient tears. No dark shadow was allowed to steal over her life so long as she remained in this secluded home. But what a miserable future awaited the infant who, doll in hand, peeps out of this faded picture-frame with such a bright look of innocence and trust! 'King James,' says D'Israeli, in his '*Curiosities of Literature*,' 'had decided from some political motive that the Lady Arabella should lead a single life; but such wise purposes frequently meet with cross ones; and it happened that no woman was ever more solicited to the conjugal state, or seems to have been so little averse to it.' Yet after crossing the threshold of womanhood she never enjoyed the sanctity of home, or the sweets of domestic happiness. Indeed, there is no more heart-breaking story in English history than the one of which she is the persecuted heroine—a story of love, of secret marriage to William Seymour, of wild, desperate flight, and of weary imprisonment in the Tower, from which she was only released by death.

Who is this haughty woman, with determined lips and fearless eyes? Mary Cavendish, Bess of Hardwick's daughter, whose fierce temper never brooked a slight. Quarrelling once with Sir Thomas Stanhope, she sent a herald to the knight with this emphatic message: 'My lady hath commanded me to

say thus much to you : that though you be more wretched, vile, and miserable than any creature living, and for your wickedness become more ugly in shape than the vilest toad in the world ; and one to whom none of any reputation would vouchsafe to send any message ; yet she hath thought good to send thus much to you, that she be contented you should live (and doth noways wish your death) but to this end : that all the plagues and miseries that may befall any man, may light on such a caitiff as you are.'

Probably the most treasured painting is that of the illustrious patriot, William, the first Duke of Devonshire, though he 'is so embroidered and bewigged, so plumed, booted and spurred that he is scarcely to be discerned through his accoutrements ;' and perhaps the most striking portrait is that of Thomas Hobbes, the great but eccentric scholar, who, during his tutorship of the Cavendish family, repeatedly made Hardwick Hall his home, and died there in 1679, when he was nearly a century in age. An extraordinary man was this philosopher, who smoked prodigiously, talked erratically, described the wonders of the Peak in Latin, and wrote the 'Leviathan,' a great work in which he insisted on the political equality of mankind. Just on the verge of the Park, by-the-bye, is the church of Ault Hucknall, where the 'Philosopher' lies buried, and it is well to make a pilgrimage to this quiet little church to see his sepulchre and those of the members of the Cavendish family. 'Leviathan Hobbes' lies under

a slab in the floor of the chancel, and on it are the words :

'CONDITA HIC SUNT OSSA
THOMÆ HOBBES,
MALMESBURIENSIS,
QUI PER MVLTOS ANNOS SERVIVIT
DVOBVS DEVONIÆ COMITIBVS.
PATRI ET FILIO
VIR PROBVS, ET FAMA ERVDITIONIS
DOMI FORIS QVE BENE COGNITVS
OBIIT AN° DOMINI, 1679,
MENSIS DECEMBRIS DIE 4°,
ÆTATIS SUÆ 91.'

The entry in the parish register is as follows :

Anno Regni } 31 Law. Waine, { James Hardwick,
Caroli Secund } Vicar. { Thomas Whitehead,
Churchwardens.

Hardwick | Thomas Hobbs Magnus Philosophus, Sepul. fuit,
et affidavit in Lana Sepoliendo exhibit, Decem. 6'
[or 8].

Nearly every canvas in the Hardwick gallery bears some prominent figure in England's history ; and the hall itself, with its dark oak wainscots, and curiously carved doors, and chimney-pieces decorated with texts and devices, is a link (though it may be a rusty one) in the nation's progress.*

* That Bolsover Castle, Hardwick Hall, Welbeck Abbey, and Worksop Manor, were greatly admired years ago is evident from the following curious rhyme contained in an old MS. :

Hardwicke for hugeness, Worsope for height,
Welbecke for use, and Bolser for sighte ;
Worsope for walks, Hardwicke for hall,
Welbecke for brewhouse, Bolser for all ;
Welbecke a parish, Hardwicke a court,
Worsope a pallas, Bolser a fort ;

Bolser to feast in, Welbecke to ride in,
 Hardwicke to thrive in, and Worsope to bide in.
 Hardwicke good house, Welbecke good keepinge,
 Worsope good walks, Bolser good sleepinge ;
 Bolser new built, Welbecke well mended,
 Hardwicke concealed, and Worsope extended.
 Bolser is morn, and Welbecke day bright,
 Hardwicke high noone, Worsope good night ;
 Hardwicke is nowe, and Welbecke will last,
 Bolser will be, and Worsope is past.
 Welbecke a wife, Bolser a maide,
 Hardwicke a matron, Worsope decaide ;
 Worsope is wise, Welbecke is wittie,
 Hardwicke is hard, Bolser is prettie.
 Hardwicke is riche, Welbecke is fine,
 Worsope is stately, Bolser divine ;
 Hardwicke a chest, Welbecke a saddle,
 Worsope a throne, Bolser a cradle.
 Hardwicke resembles Hampton Court much,
 And Worsope, Welbecke, Bolser none such ;
 Worsope a duke, Hardwicke an earl,
 Welbecke a viscount, Bolser a pearl.

The rest are jewels of the sheere,
 Bolser pendant of the eare,
 Yet an old abbey hard by the way—
 Rufford—gives more alms than all they





CHAPTER XXIV.

WINGERWORTH HALL—A Valiant Race—Curious License to Travel—The Roundheads at Ashover—A Frank Letter—Wingfield Manor—A Queen's Prison—Babington's Pitiful Prayer—The Civil War—Back to Derby.

ON quitting Hardwick Park by the lower gate past the inn, the Elm Tree at Heath is reached, along a pretty shadowed lane; and thence the pedestrian, walking through the village of Hasland, soon descends the hill to Chesterfield. The crooked steeple is still leaning over the town, somewhat in the attitude of a reckless wine-bibber. It bows to you more comically in this southern direction than in any other, and seems to say, ‘Come and share my hilarious life.’ If the crooked spire is unable to tempt you to re-enter the town, keep to the left after passing beneath the railway-bridge at the Horns, and go along the Derby road to Wingerworth, two miles away.

The square white stone mansion, the seat of the Hunlokes, has rather a deserted look, although it stands on the crest of a broad green slope, and is backed by a thick shrubbery, brightened here and there with double pink may. The Hall's silent

chambers are seldom occupied now, except by the portraits of the knights and ladies who once lived their butterfly life here. Its corridors, dark with oak-wainscot, and adorned with trophies of the chase, seldom echo with anybody's footsteps. But there are evidences in nearly every apartment of the past greatness of this family, which for three centuries made Wingerworth its home. The Hunlokes, who have for their arms three tigers' heads, are not only an ancient race, but have considerable claim both to loyalty and valour.

In 1623 Henry Hunloke, then Sheriff of the county, though tottering with feebleness of age, journeyed to Ilkeston* to meet King James I., and was so overcome with fatigue that he fell dead in his Majesty's presence, 'acquiring as much renown by dying in his duty to the sovereign, as if he had lived to receive the honour of knighthood which the King designed to confer upon him.' His son Henry was equally loyal, for he lightened his purse in the cause of Charles I., and fought so bravely for the monarch at Edgehill, in 1642, that the King knighted the valiant young cavalier on the battle-field, and afterwards made him a baronet. Such devotion as he showed to the luckless sovereign did not escape the keen observation of Cromwell's forces; and a year afterwards the Hunlokes were temporarily driven from the Hall, which was converted into a garrison for the soldiers of Parliament. Nor was

* A town on the south-eastern border of Derbyshire that is rapidly springing into industrial and commercial importance.

this the only annoyance and inconvenience the family have had to bear for conscience' sake. Half a century later, the then owner of the estate, also a Sir Henry Hunloke, was obliged, in consequence of his religious convictions, to procure a license from the justices of the peace to enable him to travel unmolested. One of these curious documents has been preserved. It is addressed 'To all Constables, Thirdboroughs, and all other their Majesties Officers whom these may concern,' and sets forth that, 'Whereas Sir Henry Hunloke, of Wingerworth, in ye county of Derby, Bt., being a reputed Papist, is by severall statutes (and by their ma'ties late proclamation to require the due observation of the same), prohibited to travell from the place of his abode above the space of five miles, without License so to do, according to the said Statute. Wee, therefore, their ma'ties Justices of the Peace, and one of us being a Deputy Lieutenant for the said county, doe hereby grant our License to the said Sr Henry Hunloke (he havg. taken before one of us his Corporall Oath that he has truly acquainted us with his businesse, and that he desires the said License for no other end and purpose) that he may freely and peaceably travell from his said house at Wingerworth to his Councell att Derby and Long Whatton in Leicestershire, and to his Estate att Chillwell in Nottinghamshire, and from thence to meet his Lady att Northampton, on her returne from London. In regard of which businesse we have thought fitt to allow him the space of Ten dayes

to go and returne in. Given under our hands and seales this . . . day of August, in the Third year of their Ma'ties Reigne, King William and Queen Mary, over England, etc., Annoq. Dni. 1691. (Signed) Mat Smith, J. Spateman. *Jurat cor' me,* J. Spateman.'

The Roundheads were unremitting in their attentions to East Derbyshire. They left the marks of their cannon-balls on the walls of Bolsover Castle ; they showed their long serious faces in Chesterfield's streets ; they made themselves at home in Wingerworth Hall, and they paid a memorable visit to Ashover, the quiet old village some four miles to the south of the seat of the Hunlokes—a village hiding in the lovely vale through which the Amber flows, past nook and dell and flower-studded pastures. The psalm-singing soldiers caused a great deal of commotion in the hamlet. They came to destroy Eastwood Hall, the ancient seat of the Wiloughbys and Reresbys. How they achieved their object is described with unconscious humour by Emmanuel Bourn, who was rector of Ashover in 1646. He says in a quaintly worded letter to one of his relatives :

' DEARE COUZEN,—As I have written divers letters to you since this wicked war began, and as yet received no answere, I begin to feare that some mischief has either befallen you, or that the waye has been soe interrupted that my letters and messengers have failed to reach you ; and that the

letters you have sent to me may have also miscarried.

‘ But this comes by the hand of a trustie friend who will try to find you out, and will also wait for an answer, which I praye God may be much better than the news I send you ; which news I will make as brief as may bee, but I have a long tale to tell of my losses and misfortunes.

‘ In the beginning of the yeare of grace 1642, when I saw bothe sydes bent on war and destruction, I made up my mynde to take part with neither, but to attend to my two parishes and leave them to fighte it out.

‘ Now in attending to my poor peopul I have had to forgoe many of my tythes and charges, and to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked, but in doing this I have been nobly helped by some of the good friends you know and have met at my table ; namely, the Gregories, the Broughs, and the Hopkinsones and others, not forgetting the bearer of this letter ; who, notwithstanding their own losses, have done all they could to help the poor and needy; for which I have thanked them and God. And indeed I have found that although this wicked war has brought out almost everything that was evil, it has also brought out much that was good, even kindness and Christian charity ; and men who have suffered much have done all they could to help those who had suffered more.

‘ In beginning the war I think both sydes were to blame ; the Parliament went too far, and the King

could not be justified ; for indeed he had done harm in favoring the Papists and in exacting taxes not sanctioned by Parliament ; such as the coate and conduct money, and worse than all, the tonage and poundage ; the shipp money and worse than all the benevolences, which were collected as an highwayman collects his plunder—namely, “ Your monie or your lyfe.”

‘ You will remember Sir John Gell, of Hopton, who was once on the King’s syde, and he when Sheriff did grievously oppress the pepul in collecting the taxes, and I never could bear the sighte of him since he starved Sir John Stanhope’s cattel to death in the pound for shipp money ; but now on the syde of Parliament he was trying to enlist the myners, a troupe of souldiers, in their favour, and he had also become a great braggart, and did pay the diurnals well for sounding his praises ; but when the King came to Darbie, Sir John thought him too near a neighbour, and did move to Chesterfield, and thence to Hull, to aske assistance of Sir John Hotham ; and when he was awaye the King did send Sir Francis Wortley to Wirksworth, with a company of dragooneers, to laye waste Sir John’s estate, and to collect benevolences, which they did with great goodwill, and left Sir John little to come to. And they did also committ great riott and excess in the country round ; but, thinking that either Sir John or Col. Hutchinson would some day or night be coming on them by surprise, Sir Francis did send some fifty men to Asher [Ashover] to watch the

Chesterfield road and keepe a look out towards Nottinghamshire, and also, as usual, to collect benevolences.

‘These men, on coming here, did take up their quarters at Eddlestone, but as Sir John Pershall was awaye at his other house in Staffordshire, they obtained no benevolences from him, but they lived at free quarters, and there was great slaughter of pigs and sheep and fowles ; they also did drink all the wine and ale in his cellars. They then, drunken and madd, did come down to the towne, and did do the same at the alehouses, but Job Wall withstood them in the doorway, and told them they should have no drink in his house, they having had too muche already : but they forsoothed him and did turn him oute and sett a watch at the doors till all the ale was drunk or wasted. They then came to me, and to Dakin, and to Hodgkinson, and demanded ten pounds from each for the Kyng’s use, and also smaller sums from the farmers and myners ; and when we did beg them to be content with less they swore we were Roundheads, and enemies to the king, and if we did not paye, they would burn our houses about our ears, which I believe they would have done, and we were glad to paye. Soon after this, however, Sir J. Gell did return to Chesterfield with a large companie of souldiers, borrowed of Sir J. Hotham, and by beat of drum he did raise many more in the neighbourhood ; upon which Sir Francis thought it best to retire, and so he withdrew his men from Eddlestone. And they, not liking to goe awaye

empty, did take all the cattel they could find on the hills awaye with them. Sir John soon tooke his place at Wirksworth.

‘ Now there is one Charles White, a native of Milltown, a man of mean birth and education, but glib of tongue, and making a great show of piety, did sett himself up to be somebody ; and he going into Nottinghamshire by some means did get himself chosen Captain of a troope of dragoons, and being sent to Wirksworth to assist Sir John, he did raise near a hundred more in that neighbourhood ; but having been sent for to help Col. Hutchinson, he did come by the waye of Asher, on purpose to spite his betters, and he demanded twenty pound eache from me and Hodgkinson, and said if we could afforde ten pounds for the Kyng, he would make us give twenty for the cause of God and the Parliament. Now, I did not feel inclined to paye soo much money to such a mean fellow, and I told him I would write to Col. Hutchinson, or some of his betters ; but he replied with an impudent face that he had noe betters, and that if I did not pay the money he would take all my cattel, in part payment, and do the same with all the others ; so at last we payed him, and were right glad to get rid of such a knave.

‘ Not long after this the Earle of Newcastle, with part of his armee, did come to Chesterfield, which soon made Sir J. Gell feel uneasy in his shoes, and he thought he had better be going with a whole skin, so he went to Derbie, and thence into Leicestershire. This left most of the county in the hands of the

Kyng's troopes, who like demons destroyed all they came neare, and left the poore to starve; but this wilful waste and destruction made the Kyng many enemies, and hundreds now joined Sir John either for revenge or to keep from starving, and in all these misfortunes we had a full share, and if it had not been for the lead myners, all would have been deserted and gone to ruin.

' I now honestly confess that I began to syde with the Parliament, and on the death of Laud I complied with all their ordinances, and laid aside both the surplice and the prayer book; and I even gave over praying for the Kyng in publique (for which God forgive me). I also left all the marriages to Justice Spateman, and when the Kyng's cause became hopeless I did accept appointment of Commissioner of Sequestration; thinking thereby to soften some of the hard measures dealt out to the Kyng's friends. This, however, caused me many enemies, and Sir John Gell and others say I am a malignant in disguise.

' After the battle of Naseby the Kyng retreated northwards with the remnant of his armie, about 3,000 horse, and met with and defeated Sir J. Gell at Sudbury and Ashbourne. He then tooke shelter in the high peake, and carried off a great part of the cattle remaining, and left us to starve. This I did hope would be the end of our trouble, and that we should now have peace; but in the spring of this yeare all the souldiers were wanted for Ireland, and Parliament agreed to demolish most of the castles to

prevent them again falling into the hands of the malignants, while the troopes were awaie ; and on June 23rd (1646), an ordinance was passed for the destruction of Wingfield Manor—which for its strength was not easy tooke, and had at last to be blown up with gunpowder. When the work of destruction was nearly done, one of the souldiers, who had once been in my employment, sent me word that I was to get out of Eastwood Hall, as it would be the next to come down, he having overheard order given to that effect. Soe I borrowed the myner's and farmer's cartes, and did make all haste to get my goods to the old rectory ; but by being in such haste great destruction was made of the beautiful carved furniture I bought with the hall.

‘ The next daye a companie of dragoones, under the charge of a Muster Master named Smedley, came to the hall and demanded possession in the name of the High Court of Parliament, which I at once did give, but I told them that I had done nothing against the Parliament, and that I was also holding office under their highnesses at the tyme, and that I should bring their conduct before either Fairfax or Col. Hutchinson ; but they replied with all civility that they had orders from their commanding officer to destroy the hall, and that he had also said he would not leave a nest in the countrie where a malignant could hyde his head. They, however, offered to assist in removing anything I set store bye.

‘ I now found that they had brought three small pieces of ordnance, which they drew to

the top of Ferbrick, and discharged them at the hall ; but the cannons being small (only two drakes and one suker) they did no harm beyond breaking the windows and knocking off the corners of the walls, and they soon tyred and sett the pioneers ; but the walls being thick and the mortar good, they made little progress, till at last, growing impatient, they did put a barrel of powder in the tower, and at once destroyed more than halfe the hall and left the other in ruins, so that it cannot be repaired. They then sung a psalm, marched to the church, and for fear they should injure the house of God, I did soon follow after, and to my great surprise did find the scout-master Smedley in the pulpit, when he did preach a sermon two hours long about Popery, Priestcraft, and Kingcraft ; but Lord ! what stuff and nonsense he did talke, and if he could have murdered the Kyng as easily as he did the Kyng's English, the war would long since have been over : then singing a psalm they prepared to go, but some of the pyoneers seeing the stayned windows once belonging to the Reresbys, on which was paynted the crucifixion, they said it was rank popery and must be destroyed : so they brought their mattocks and bars, and not only destroyed the glass but the stonework also. They then found out the prayer-booke, and surplice, and the old parish-registere, which had been hid in the vestrie, but the registere being old and partly in Latin, they could not read it, so they said it was full of popery and treason, and tooke the whole to the market-place, and making a fyre, did burn them to

ashes. They then mounted their horses and sang another psalm and rode awaye, and have not since been seen, and I believe they have gone to Chester to embark for Ireland.

‘ Wheatcroft, my clerk, who you know makes rhymes about almost everything, is still on the Kyng’s side, and he brought me the following doggerell, I suppose for consolation :

“ The Roundheads came down upon Eastwood old hall,
And they tried it with mattock and tried it with ball,
And they tore up the leadwork and splintered the wood,
But as firmly as ever the battlements stood,
Till a barrell of powder at last did the thing !
And then they sung psalms for the fall of the kyng.”

‘ The destruction of my house, however, has almost broken my heart, and I trust you will joyn me in praying for better times, and for grace and patience to bear my misfortunes with resignation. Pray come if you can to comfort me, and may God bless you.

‘ From your loving cousin,
‘ EMANUEL BOURN.

‘ Ashover, August 28th, 1646.

Cromwell’s soldiers, as this letter shows, had already acted similarly at Wingfield Manor, which they were in such a hurry to demolish that they did not even wait to sing a psalm before commencing the attack. The picturesque ruin—then a strong place of defence—stands not far from Lea Hurst, long the Derbyshire home of the Crimean heroine, Florence Nightingale. Across the valley, looking east, is the

market-town of Alfreton, that dates from King Alfred's time, and bears the name of that good-governing King. A winding road to the west of the main line of the Midland Railway Company leads through the village of South Wingfield to the Manor, which lifts its shattered walls above the trees on the summit of the hill. The building is roofless. Its towers, shaken long ago by rough engines of war, are now crumbling with age, and tufts of grass struggle for life in the deserted quadrangles where, to use a poetic phrase, 'antiquity enjoys a deep and mossy sleep.' The so-called 'crypt,' however, with its short massive columns and heavy, stone-groined roof, has undergone little change since knights and retainers gathered there.

The mansion has had some strange vicissitudes. It was built, but not quite completed, in the reign of Henry VI. by Ralph, Lord Cromwell, the Lord Treasurer, who was so doubtful about his future welfare that he ordered three thousand masses to be said for his soul. The Manor House was sold to John Talbot, second Earl of Shrewsbury, son of *Le Capitaine Anglais*, John, first Earl of Shrewsbury, the 'scourge of France,' whose titles are thus set forth by Shakspeare in his 'Henry VI.', and whose prowess and doings form so conspicuous a feature in that drama, where Sir William Lucy demands :

'Where is the great Alcides of the field,
Valiant Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury?
Created, for his rare success in arms,

Great Earl of Washford, Waterford, and Valence ;
Lord Talbot of Goodrig and Urchinfield,
Lord Strange of Blackmere, Lord Verdun of Alton,
Lord Cromwell of Wingfield, Lord Furnival of Sheffield,
The thrice victorious Lord of Falconbridge ;
Knight of the noble Order of Saint George,
Worthy Saint Michael, and the Golden Fleece ;
Great Mareshal to Henry the Sixth
Of all his wars within the realm of France.'

The second Earl, like his father, was a brave soldier, and fell in the Lancastrian cause at the battle of Wolverhampton.

The fourth Earl, though he did not shrink from warfare, led rather a more peaceful life, and died in one of the bedchambers at Wingfield Manor. That he was a diplomatist as well as a courtier and a soldier was evident from his delicate treatment of Cardinal Wolsey ; and he was thought much of by Henry VIII., who made him Lord Steward of the Household, and took him as attendant to the joust with Francis I. on the Field of the Cloth of Gold.*

Wingfield Manor has been a Queen's prison ! Twice was Mary Queen of Scots a captive there. What a wretched life of bondage, of wild schemes, high hopes, and agonizing fears, was hers. Conveyed from stronghold to stronghold—to Tutbury, Coventry, Chatsworth, and Sheffield, where, in the castle of the Shrewburys, her

* The fourth Earl of Shrewsbury died at Wingfield Manor in July, 1538, and his remains were removed to the Shrewsbury Chapel, in Sheffield Parish Church, in March, 1539.

Majesty was so zealously guarded that ‘unless she could transform herself into a flea or a mouse it was impossible that she should escape.’ And equally strict was the surveillance in 1584, when she was brought again to the old Manor. How idle were her dreams of liberty may be gleaned from the letters of Sir Ralph Sadler, her gaoler, who says the Manor had two guarded entrances, with ‘the gentleman porter ever at the one, with four or five of his company, and divers soldiers at the other.’ And the night watch was even more rigorous, for it consisted of eight soldiers, ‘whereof four at the least are always under the outward windows of her lodgings, and the rest walk about, which are visited nightly at ten and two, and furnished with shot and halberds, besides two that watch and ward day and night at the door going to her lodgings.’

In a very interesting historical sketch of Wingfield Manor by Mr. Wilfrid Edmunds, a talented Derbyshire journalist, the following reference is made to the Queen’s imprisonment: ‘Perhaps it may be well in speaking of Mary’s captivity to point out that her retinue was considerable, and it required a large building to accommodate the Queen’s attendants and the necessary guard. A curious State paper written by Sir Ralph Sadler, who succeeded Shrewsbury as Mary’s custodian, says that in November, 1584, there were in all 210 gentlemen, yeomen, officers, and soldiers employed in the custody of the Queen in Winfield. Sir Ralph also says that it would require 150 men to guard the Queen at Tutbury, as 15 or 16

must watch nightly. The domestic establishment of the Queen at Winfield is said to have consisted of “5 gentilmen, 14 servitours, 3 cooks, 4 boyes, 3 gentilmen’s men, 6 gentilwomen, 2 wyves, 10 wenches, and children.” The Queen had four good coach-horses, and her gentlemen six, and about forty horses were kept altogether. The same document states that the Queen had no “napery, hangings, bed linen,” of her own, but had to be provided by Lord Shrewsbury, that which had been sent by Elizabeth’s order being declared to be “nothing of it serviceable, but worn and spent.” In the same paper figures are given as to the price of provisions at Winfield at this time, and we learn that wheat was 20s. a quarter; malt, 16s. a quarter; a good ox, £4; mutton a score, £7; veal and other meats, reasonable good charge about 8s.; hay, 13s. 4d. a load; oats, 8s. a quarter; peas, about 12s. the quarter. The Queen and her suite drank ten tuns of wine a year—this would probably be claret or burgundy, which was much drunk in England in those and earlier days; perhaps owing to the fact that for about two centuries we possessed a great part of France.’

Mary fared much better than some Royal prisoners, for on fish and flesh days she could, if she willed, partake of sixteen dishes at both courses; yet she would, no doubt, have been contented with more frugal repasts could she only have had her freedom. Friends certainly were always scheming to effect her escape, but with the discovery of the Babington

plot hope died out of her heart for ever. It is a sad story, this sacrifice of a noble young life for a Queen's sake. Anthony Babington, who had 'a most proude and aspiringe mynde,' resided at Dethick, about four miles from Wingfield; and whilst Mary was a prisoner at the Manor he not only corresponded with her in cypher, but conspired to set her free. The plot failed, and Anthony, captured despite his disguises, was sentenced to death. Then he sent to Elizabeth the following eloquent petition, praying that his life might be spared: 'Most gratiouse Souvarigne, yf either bitter teares, a pensisve, contrite harte, ore any dutyfull sighte of the wretched synner might work any pitty in your royll brest, I would wringe out of my strayned eyes as much blood as in bemoaninge my drery tragedye shold lamentably bewayll my faulfe, and somewhat (no dought) move you to compassion; but since there is no proportione betwixte the quality of my crimes and any human commiseration, showe, sweet Queene, some mirakle on a wretch that lyethe prostrate in y prison, most grivously bewaylinge his offence, and imploringe such comfort at your anoynted hande as my poore wifes misfortunes doth begge, my childe innocence doth crave, my gyltless family doth wishe, and my heynous trecherye doth leaste deserve, so shall yr divine mersy make your glorye shyne as far above all princes, as my most horrible practices are most detestable amongst your beste subjects, whom lovinglye and happylye you governe.' But his petition made no impression

on Elizabeth's mind, and he was executed, with thirteen other conspirators, in September, 1586.

The captive Queen had even less chance of flight than Prometheus when chained to the rock by Jupiter's angry command. He was liberated by Hercules from the eagle's talons ; but every attempt at the imprisoned Queen's release failed, until in 1587 the headsman set her free, amid the pitiful shouts of the sympathetic crowd, above which rose the hoarse cry—‘ So perish all Queen Elizabeth's enemies ! ’

It was half a century after Mary Queen of Scots had ridden from Wingfield on her way to the scaffold, that the fierce storm of civil war beat about the Manor. In 1643 the Royalists obtained possession of it after a desperate assault ; but Sir John Gell at once determined to wrest the ancient place from the Cavaliers. His officer, Major Sandars, advancing towards the Manor with his dragoons, had the good fortune to surprise Colonel Eyre's regiment in Boylstone Church, capturing all their arms and colours ; then he marched to the stronghold garrisoned by the Royalists, but found the foe so stubborn that the help of Major-General Crawford and his four great pieces had to be obtained. The cannon, placed on Pentridge Common, soon made an impression not only upon the walls of the Manor, but upon the minds of its defenders, as will be seen from Sir John Gell's own account of the bombardment, for he says : ‘ Major-General Crawford, desirous to do the State and country

good service, came presently with his horse and foot thither, and so we planted ours and their ordnance together, and after three hours' battery they yielded themselves, being about two hundred and twenty; and so upon composition everyone marched to his own home.'

In the south-eastern portion of Derbyshire there are several places attractive to the archæologist and the student of history, notably Dale Abbey, now a picturesque ruin, and founded as far back as 1204; the legend being that the King granted to Prior St. Robert for a site as much land as he could circumference with a plough drawn by two deer, between sunrise and sunset. But Wingfield Manor, dismantled by the Roundheads in 1646, is the last spot of note in our pilgrimage. The steel track of the railway gleams in the valley; we leave the Manor, about which Mr. J. D. Leader has written so learnedly in his book, '*Mary Queen of Scots in Captivity*'; we stroll down to the unpretentious station at South Wingfield, enter a carriage, and the train speeds on its way. On the hill yonder is Crich stand, lifting its solitary tower high above the huge masses of limestone and millstone grit; we pass through Ambergate, with its graceful sweep of valley, along which the Derwent winds; then skirt Belper, the beautifully situated little town where the nail-maker still clings to his humble industry, and the cotton-mills, founded by Jedediah Strutt, give employment to many hands. By hamlet, homestead, and pasture, 'the engine puffs and tears'; by Milford, with its gigantic cotton-mills

—by the pretty village of Duffield, once one of the strongholds of the Ferrars—by ‘sweet Duffield vale,’ and the wooded slopes of Darley; and now catching sight of the lofty tower of All Saints, and the mass of buildings crowding about it, we cross the river, and are whirled into Derby, thus completing our somewhat erratic, though interesting circuit of a county that has aroused the enthusiasm of painter, poet, novelist, and antiquary, and is one of the loveliest in the land.





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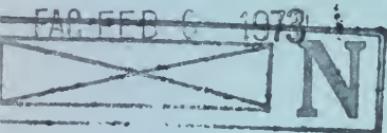
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