

THE WYE:




ITS ABBEYS AND CASTLES:



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THE WYE:

ITS

RUINED ABBEYS AND CASTLES.

EXTRACTED FROM

"THE RUINED ABBEYS AND CASTLES OF GREAT BRITAIN,"

BY

WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

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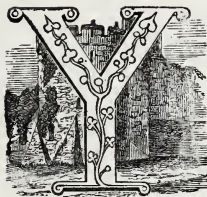
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PHOTOGRAPH OF THE WYE FROM CHAPEL HILL, by SEDGFIELD	<i>On Cover.</i>



CHEPSTOW CASTLE.

THE WYE.

Chepstow Castle.



YEARS ago, as I issued from the Bristol steamer, and was ascending the steep High-street of Chepstow, on a fine autumn morning, I became aware of a tall, stout, florid-looking man in middle life, also labouring up behind me. There was a crowd of other passengers who had descended from the same steam-boat, and were ascending the same street,—some before me, some behind me,—but I became, somehow, particularly conscious of the following of the large, stout man. There was his heavy, measured tread, always at a certain distance in my rear, which I neither left farther astern by quickening my pace, nor put ahead by slackening it, and this it was that, no doubt, soon made me especially sensitive to this ponderous sequitur. If I have a fidgety aversion to one thing more than

another, it is to have something pad, padding at my heels, like the Fakenham ghost. I often stop short to let a cart, or a carriage of any kind, that is going on grinding and jarring beside me, or a person who comes tramp, tramp, with an incessant, unvarying step, close behind me, go its, his, or her way. But this colossal humanity was not thus to be got rid of. To accelerate or lessen my speed only produced the same effect on my follower: there might have been a rod or bar of some kind suspended betwixt us, and regulating our distance. As no graduation of progression availed to remove the incubus, I suddenly stopped and directed my attention into a shop window; the huge man as suddenly did the same. I gave a side-glance at him, but he appeared to be profoundly contemplating a pair of bellows of no particular novelty of fashion. I sprang forward as abruptly as I had stopped, hoping that my great shadow was sufficiently attracted by the bellows, to adhere, and thereby, like the shadow of Peter Schlemyhl, fall away from me. Nothing of the kind. As if my removal was inevitably the cause of his, he turned gravely and renewed—his chase?—no; his pursuit?—no, it could not be said to be either, but his mechanical following. But he is fat, I thought; and thereupon I put, to use a Derbyshire phrase, my best leg foremost, and went up the steepest part of the street at a rate of at least five miles an hour. It was useless. The stupendous man, if he were not the

actual grey man of Peter Schlemyhl, had on, it seemed, his seven-league boots. With enormous strides, and the equally great accompanying stretches of a stout stick, he cleared the pavement wonderfully, and was still just two yards behind me.

“This is intolerable!” I said to myself, and, wheeling suddenly round, I stood and gazed down over the town, and over the Wye circling round its base, and over the Gloucestershire fields and woods beyond. The man wheeled round too, blew a large hot breath from his puffed cheeks—I had tired him a little then!—took off a capacious broad-brimmed hat, and, wiping a capacious forehead with a brilliant red and yellow silk handkerchief, revealed a gigantic head—what a head he had!—covered with a profusion of brown and curly hair.

“A very fine view,” he observed, still gazing round on the extensive scene of town and ships, and Wye and distant Severn. “Very!” I said, somewhat short. “Very, indeed,” he replied, with a much more amiable complacency. I went on, and so did the imperturbable inevitable stranger. Then, thought I, if he will stick to me, here he shall stand some time and cool his heels. I stood still, and stared him full in the face. He looked with a broad, frank look,—I could not call it a stare—also at me, and observed, “I take it you are for the Beaufort Arms?” “I am,” I responded. “Then I am for the Beaufort Arms, too.” It

was too much : I went on again, and as the great stranger entered the lobby of the house at the same moment, he observed, " I take it that you propose to breakfast here ? " " Just so," I replied. " Then I am for breakfast, too," he added ; " and so we may as well breakfast together."

The adhesive tendency of the stranger was singular, but he had nothing sinister or unpleasant in his appearance ; I was under no apprehension of bailiffs or spies, nor did he look like either ; on the contrary, he had an ample, open, good-natured and intelligent aspect. There was nothing to be said against his proposition. I sate down to a table ready spread, and ordered coffee and beefsteak. " The same for me," said the incomprehensible, and seated himself opposite to me. We breakfasted for some time in silence, then the great presence began to drop sententious remarks : the air in the early morning in the boat was chilly—the sun now was very cheering—this town stood on a very steep hill-side—a good inn this Beaufort Arms—and so on ; to all which I assented, for there was no denying the assertions.

We paid our bills, and rose simultaneously. " And now, I take it," said my chosen companion,—the choice being all on his inscrutable side,—" that you are for Tintern." " Exactly so," I said. " Then I am for Tintern, too," he remarked, " and so let us join at a chaise, or a boat. I don't mind which."

“But first,” I said, “I shall visit the castle here. “By all means,” he replied; “I am at your service for that.”

“And so,” I thought, as we began to descend again to the left towards the castle ruins, “my jolly Great Unknown, you are for Tintern,—six miles, and a good spell up-hill; and you dream of a boat up the Wye, or a chaise up the steep here—ha! ha! we shall see! I now perceive a coming divorce from my zealously attached one. If he *will* do as I do on the way to Tintern, I warrant him he never did such a penance yet; so, whatever the upshot, let us at all events be agreeable. A chaise indeed! A boat!”

I must in my internal amusement have said the last words audibly, for my great rosy friend remarked, “Ay, it will be a boat, I think, for we are descending.” At the next moment we stood before that great extent of ancient towers and walls, enclosed in their grass-grown ditch, and beautifully draped with ivy. I pulled out my guide-book; my great double, or rather quadruple, drew out one exactly the same. “What an extensive place,” I observed, and began to read; my friend—for I think I may call him so, for he showed a remarkable preference for my company—also reading in silence. “The castle was founded in the eleventh century by William Fitzosborn, Earl of Hereford, a relative of William the Conqueror. In the thirteenth century the greater part of the original

structure was taken down, and one, larger and of great strength, was erected. It is still a magnificent pile, towering upon the summit of a cliff whose base is washed by the classic Wye. The site occupies three acres of ground, and is divided into four courts." "That is probable," I observed,—“I mean, that it arose in the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, for it bears a wonderful resemblance to the old castle and town-walls of Conway, which were built in the eleventh. You observe these great round battlemented towers, with their straight battlemented walls, stretching from one tower to the other.” “I never saw Conway,” replied my friend; “that is interesting.”

But we need not repeat all our remarks. I will now awhile draw from more extensive sources than the guide-book, the chief particulars of the history of this castle. There have not been wanting those who have attributed the original structure to the Romans, simply because a few Roman bricks are visible in the walls of what is called the chapel. It may have been so; but the Britons at least had a castle here, which they called Castell Gwent, or Casgwent, as the town was called by the Saxons Chepe-stowe, or place of trade. But the Normans, who raised what remains now, termed it Striguil, and it appears in Doomsday-book as Castellum de Estrighoiel, and in ancient charters is named Striogul, Striguil, etc. It is divided into four courts, two of which are now used as gardens.

As you enter the great eastern portal you behold on your right hand a number of dilapidated offices, besides the lodge of the keeper, and on your left hand the south-eastern ancient tower or citadel, now called Marten's Tower. On your left hand in the third court stand the walls of a fine old gothic building, ninety feet in length, and thirty in breadth, which is called the chapel, but was probably the baronial hall. The style of the arches and niches which remain is more modern than the rest of the castle, and they possess much elegance. The fourth court was approached formerly by a drawbridge, long ago destroyed; and the entrance at the western extremity of the castle was also defended by a portcullis, and another drawbridge over the ditch.

The William Fitzosborn who built Striguil or Chepstow castle, fought, it seems, at Hastings, and in reward for his services was made justiciary of England, and received this property, as well as others. But it did not remain in his family beyond the next generation. His eldest son, like nearly all the Normans who came with the Conqueror who had estates at home, returned to them, and left landless adventurers to get estates in England. His second son was a monk; and his third son, Roger, rebelled against the king, and was put in prison. Whilst there the king sent him a suit of royal robes,—that is, a suit of his cast-off clothes,—which so offended him that he threw them

into the fire. This, again, so incensed the king that he vowed, "by the brightness of God," that the proud Roger should never come out of prison; and there Roger died. The king then gave his estate to Gilbert, surnamed Strongbow, brother of Richard, Earl of Clare. The original name of this Strongbow was Tonnebruge, a name which shows his Danish origin, Dannebrog being the great Danish standard. This Richard Tonnebruge, therefore, was doubtless descended from a stout northman, the standard-bearer of the Dannebrog, when the northmen seized Normandy. In the Norman transmigration the name had been corrupted into Tonnebruge, and in England soon became further corrupted into Strongbow. These Strongbows were fine fellows. Richard, the grandson of the original Richard, conquered Ireland, and married the daughter of Dermot, king of Leinster, and held Dublin, making over, however, his conquests to king Henry II. of England. His daughter Isabella married William, Marshal of England, and founded the illustrious family of the Earls of Pembroke. The husband of Isabel Strongbow, the first Earl of Pembroke, was one of the greatest men that England has produced. Dugdale says of him,—“This illustrious peer was the greatest warrior in a period of warfare, and the most loyal subject in an age of rebellion: by the united influence of wisdom and valour he supported the tottering crown of king John, broke the confederacy of the barons, who had

sworn allegiance to Louis, dauphin of France, drove away the foreign usurper, fixed Henry III. on the throne of his ancestors, and gave peace to his distracted country."

And all this is most true. For though it has suited our historians to go on affirming and re-affirming the tale that the barons won the Magna Charta from king John at Runnymede; and though, like parrots, we go on talking of "the barons of Runnymede," and of their winning Magna Charta; the truth is that they never did win Magna Charta, and that the charter of king John never was our Magna Charta, but the charter of Henry III. True, the barons *forced* John to sign a charter at Runnymede, but John well knew that, by all the laws of nations, a thing obtained by force is not a valid thing: therefore, no sooner was the charter signed than he repudiated it: and the barons, knowing quite as well that a *forced* contract thus repudiated was no contract at all, took up arms to compel him again to acknowledge their charter. But, so far from this, John, backed by the brave Earl of Pembroke, resisted, and beat the barons at every point. What then did these same much-lauded barons? They did a most shameful and unpatriotic deed. They offered the crown of England to Louis, dauphin of France, which, had he obtained it, would have reduced this country for ever to a mere province of France. But John beat both the barons and their king Louis of France: and when John died, there was

found in his pocket, says Carte the historian, a letter signed by forty of these barons, offering to resign all question of the charter, if he would restore them again to their titles and estates. Neither living nor dying, however, did John do this, but treated the barons as traitors.

When he was dead, the brave seamen of Dover, putting Hugh de Burgh at their head, and the brave archers of England, putting William de Collingham at their head, determined to settle the matter with the barons, and drive away their French king. At this time Louis and the barons held London and the south of England, and were powerfully supported by the King of Scots in the north, and the Prince of Wales in the west; but the freemen of England, the sailors and archers, beat them all, and compelled the Dauphin to flee into his ships at the mouth of the Thames. They destroyed all his ships except fifteen, with which he got him away. And then, these freemen of England, having saved England from a *French* as well as a Norman invasion, marched up to London, and compelled the king to grant them a new and better charter than that of John. The king, Henry III., was but a boy of ten years old, but this brave Earl of Pembroke was his guardian and regent of the kingdom, and by his advice Henry granted a new charter, containing a new clause, ordering the demolition of every castle built or rebuilt during the wars of the barons. This charter was not

now signed in the presence of the king and the barons only, but in that of the king and the united parliament; for the representatives of the burghs are expressly mentioned as sitting in the parliament of 1265. Besides the Great Charter, the people now demanded and obtained the Charter of the Forest—a mighty boon, by which all the forests enclosed since the days of Henry II. were thrown open, and the deadly forest laws were deprived of their bloody and capital power. This is the true story of the Great Charter of England, as related by Matthew Paris, Rhymer, Carte, and other historians: not won by rebellious and traitorous barons, who would have sold us for ever to France, but by the people of England themselves, who should not allow themselves to be lightly defrauded of their glory. This is what Dugdale means by saying that the brave Pembroke “broke the confederacy of the barons, who had sworn allegiance to Lewis, dauphin of France, and drove away the foreign usurper.” The great men of Dugdale’s time knew what was our true history, and would not allow it to be falsified: and Blackstone in his “Commentaries,” and in his “Essay on Magna Charta,” fully substantiates these great facts, and says that the charter of John never was our charter, but the far better charter of Henry III.;—that we had other and better charters than John’s, both before and after his time, and that his charter, which never became the charter of the realm,

would never have been heard of but for his war against the barons.

My stout and inseparable friend was greatly amazed at this revelation that the charter of Runnymede was of no more value than a bill drawn on a party who dishonours it; but I said, Think of that and talk of that at home, but now call to mind that extraordinary men have been prisoners within these walls. Here the good and learned bishop, Jeremy Taylor, was incarcerated in 1656, on a charge of being privy to an insurrection of the royalists. And here, I said, in the south-eastern extremity of the first court, you see the tower still called Henry Marten's Tower, where Marten, one of the regicides, was confined. This was one of the most determined republicans of his time. He was the friend of Harrington, Sydney, Wildman, Neville, and other men who had imbibed all the republican ideas of ancient Greece and Rome. He it was who, walking between the Parliament House and Westminster with Mr. Hyde, afterwards the famous Lord Chancellor Clarendon, long before the civil war, startled him by saying, "*I do not think one man wise enough to govern us all!*" He was the right-hand man of Cromwell, till Cromwell himself aimed at sovereign power. He it was who, when the high court of justice appointed to try Charles I. were puzzled on what authority they should try him, rose and said, "In the names of the commons and parliament

assembled, and of all the good people of England." And when Charles himself demanded on what authority they presumed to try him, he was answered in those words. He would have been executed with the rest of the regicides, but for his latter opposition to Cromwell. On that account his punishment was commuted to perpetual imprisonment.

Marten was a prisoner in this tower twenty years, but his imprisonment was by no means rigorous. His wife was permitted to reside with him ; he had the full enjoyment of his property, which was large, and was allowed to receive visits, and to pay visits, in company with a guard, to the neighbouring gentry, especially to a Mr. H. Pierre, at whose house a fine portrait of him was preserved.

Southey, in his early and democratic poems, drew a most gloomy and exaggerated picture of Marten's imprisonment here :—

*For thirty years secluded from mankind,
Here Marten lingered. Often have these walls
Echoed his footsteps, as with even tread
He paced around his prison. Not to him
Did Nature's fair varieties exist—
He never saw the sun's delightful beams ;
Save when through yon high bars he poured a sad
And broken splendour.*

The Rev. Mr. Coxe, visiting this castle in 1800, and having in his mind this doleful description, was, he says,

greatly "surprised to find a comfortable suite of rooms. The first story contained an apartment which was occupied in his time by Marten and his wife ; and above were the lodgings of his domestics. The chamber in which he usually lived was not less than thirty-six feet in length and twenty-three in breadth, and of proportionate height. It was provided with two fire-places and three windows, two of which appeared to be the original apertures, and the third was probably enlarged for Marten's convenience !"

A circumstance at which the public was greatly scandalized at the time, was, that when the judges who had tried Charles I. signed the warrant for his execution, Cromwell, taking up the pen to sign, daubed the face of Henry Marten, who sat next him, with the ink ; and Marten, when the pen was handed to him, returned the same compliment to Cromwell. Something of this levity continued to show itself in Marten, who lived to the age of eighty-seven. His epitaph, written by himself, may yet be seen in Chepstow church, and is curious, forming an anagram on his name.

HERE,

September 9, in the year of our Lord, 1680,
Was buried a true Englishman
Who in Berkshire was well known
To love his country's freedom 'bove his own :
But living immured full twenty year
Had time to write, as doth appear,

HIS EPITAPH.

H ere or elsewhere, (all's one to you, to me,)
E arth, air, or water gripes my ghostless dust,
N o one knows how soon to be by fire set free.
R eader, if you an oft-tried rule will trust,
Y ou'll gladly do and suffer what you must.

M y life was spent with serving you, and you,
A nd death's my pay, (it seems,) and welcome too :
R evenge destroying but itself, while I
T o birds of prey leave my old cage and fly.
E xamples preach to the eye ; care then—mine says
N ot how you end, but how you spend your days.

Having taken a view over the walls of the castle court, and at the Wye rushing far below at the base of the cliffs on which the castle stands, we set out for Tintern.



TINTERN ABBEY.

Tintern Abbey.



AND now for Tintern!" I said to my stout friend. "Ay, ay! for Tintern!" he replied gaily: "but first, my dear sir, for a boat." "For a boat! why, we are a full mile from the bridge. It would be a loss of time to go all the way down for a boat." "Well, then, let it be a chaise." "First," I said, "let us have a peep in at the gates of Piercefield. It is just above here, and we can see it better and with more time than with a chaise waiting for us." So, though with a dubious and misgiving air, my friend moved on with me. The ascent of the Monmouth road was pretty steep, but I endeavoured to beguile his attention by talking of Piercefield. This Piercefield, I observed, is one of the paradises of England. Here we are: we will take the liberty of just walking inside the lodge-gate—it is a show-place; they won't object. There! see what a charming spot! What a delightful stretch of woods and lawns, and park-like fields! What views out beyond! If we had

time to traverse these celebrated scenes—to view the majestic Wynd Cliff and the Bannagor Rocks opposite, and the bold peninsula of Lancaut, all towering magnificently above the Wye—to visit the Lover's Leap, and traverse the woods that skirt the river deep below, and take in all the varying views of dizzy heights and sylvan dells—you would wonder that any one ever left this place. Yet it has in not very many years passed through many hands. One of its various possessors was the generous Valentine Morris, governor of St. Vincent, in the West Indies, who first comprehended the beauty of the spot, and opened it up, by walks and drives, to the feet and the eye of the lover of Nature. Poor Morris!—imprudent as benevolent, and treated with the grossest dishonesty by a base government, he was as unfortunate as he was philanthropic; yet you will find his memory retained lovingly in Chepstow.

And here, too, it is pleasant to think that that good and gifted young woman, Elizabeth Smith, whom the last generation knew and admired, passed the chief part of her short life. Her father bought this place when she was eight years old, and, as she died about twenty years after, here she must have gathered up all that store of languages which she chiefly taught herself, with the exception of the two first:—French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, and Persian. Elizabeth was one of the first to make England acquainted with the

wealth of German literature, particularly with "Klopstock." Little is known of her now ; but she deserves to be remembered, were it only for one sentence occurring in her letters : "To be good and disagreeable is high treason against virtue."

As I was talking of these things, I had quietly quitted the park of Piercefield, and we were again mounting the steep road. Suddenly my companion exclaimed, "But where are we going? This is not the way for the chaise!" "Nonsense about chaises," I said; "Don't you see that we are now far on the way to Tintern? We shall be presently at the Wynd Cliff, one of the finest views you ever saw; we are better without a chaise, or any other bother." "Ha!" said the large man, "You are drawing me on! I see it; I see it. But no! it won't do. Why, to walk all the way to Tintern would kill me!" "All the way to Tintern, I suppose, is now about four miles," I replied; "and that can do you no harm, surely." "No harm! Why, sir, I have never for these twenty years walked four miles at a stretch. With my weight, my good stout horse, or my carriage and pair of greys, are much pleasanter. I never walk further than round my grounds, or to my factory and back." "So, you are a manufacturer?" and he then informed me that he was a cotton-spinner of Derbyshire. "Of Derbyshire! why then we are countrymen. And now look here. By not walking you make yourself

heavy, and lose one of the finest enjoyments of life. Here am I, older than you are, and I have just walked from Falmouth to the Land's End, and from the Land's End to Barnstaple, with many a goodly zigzag besides, here and there, in Cornwall; and as for a chaise, I should be ashamed to put my foot in one for such a mere stride. To be candid, I won't have anything to do with a chaise, and so I suppose here we must part."

"Astounding!" said the great man, for he was evidently given to wonder; "and you've really done that, and are all the better for it. But no; it may do for you, but it would not do for me. I could not think of it!" "Then good-bye," said I, extending my hand: "I thought we were just going to make a pleasant county acquaintance." He stood as taken quite aback. "Well, I had set my mind on going to Tintern with you, I don't know why—but four miles yet!" "Four fiddlesticks!" I said: "Come along, it will do you good, and we might have been half-way there now." He shook his head; but suddenly he said, "And you really think it will do me good?" "I do." "Then here goes," he said; and on we marched, with a good hearty "Bravo!" on my part.

"It was a stout climb to the Wynd Cliff, and my worthy and robust cotton-spinner perspired freely, and wiped his ample brow industriously, and exclaimed, "This is very severe; but it *may* do me good." Anon we stood on that

splendid height, the summit of the Wynd Cliff: and as my neophyte in peripatetics gazed down on the Wye far below, rushing with the inflowing tide between its lofty rocks, and then glanced on the scenes around, he burst forth with an emphatic "Glorious!"

"You are right," I said; "but button up your waistcoat and your coat, for the wind is cool here, and I will read you from the guide-book all the objects you can see from this spot. 'The extensive prospect commanded from this summit is generally extolled as one of the most beautiful in the island. The objects included are,—the new line of road from Chepstow to Tintern; the Wye winding in its circuitous course between its rocky and wooded banks; the pretty hamlet of Lancaut, with the perpendicular cliffs of Bannagor, and the whole domain of Piercefield; a little to the left, Berkeley Castle and Thornbury Church. On the right successively the castle and town of Chepstow; the majestic Severn, and the confluences of the rivers Wye and Severn; the Old and New Passages; Durdham Down, and Dundry Tower, near Bristol; the mouth of the Avon and Portishead Point: to the south-west, the Holmes and Penarth Point, near Cardiff: and far away in the north-west, the Black Mountains, forming a sublime background to the whole: thus embracing parts of nine counties, namely, Monmouth, Gloucester, Wilts, Somerset, Devon, Glamorgan, Brecon, Hereford, and Worcester. In the

words of Mr. Roscoe, "The grouping of the landscape is perfect: I know of no picture more beautiful."

My great friend rested in full enjoyment of this magnificent scene; *rested*, that made no small part of the charm, for he had found a seat. He would have dwelt on each point, and endeavoured by questions to identify every one of them; but I reminded him that he might take cold, and we proceeded on our way. But the great difficulty was now passed; the rest of the road was pretty level, and I endeavoured to keep up his attention by pointing out the beauties of the strangely-circling Wye to our right. I told him of the advantages people drew from walking; of the acquaintance it gave them with the people passing the same way, or as you sat awhile with them in their cottages. "Ay," said he, eagerly looking round, "that sitting in a cottage must be pleasant;" but there was no cottage visible. And I went on telling him of the many poems Wordsworth wrote from materials picked up in walking, or on the top of coaches ("I prefer the top of coaches, myself," said he); that Wordsworth, at Goodrich Castle, thus met with the little girl who gave him the idea of "We are Seven;" and also walking along the Wye from Builth to Hay, he fell in with "Peter Bell." The countenance, gait, and figure of Peter, he tells us, were taken from a wild rover, with whom he walked from Builth, and who told him strange stories. I then drew from my pocket the

small Paris edition of Wordsworth's Poems. "This book," I said, "gave great vexation to Wordsworth; for when he had not made fifty pounds in his whole life by the sale of his English edition, this pirated one had sold one hundred and twenty thousand copies in Paris. It annoyed him, but it will please us." And I began to read his

"LINES WRITTEN ON REVISITING TINTERN."

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! And again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruit,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
Among the woods and copses, nor disturb
The wild green landscape. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem,
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,

Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, have I owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
And passing even into my purer mind
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little nameless, unremembered, acts,
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes

Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye ! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee !
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again :
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led : more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite : a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,

And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur ; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss I would believe
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
- All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains : and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognize,
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart and soul,
Of all my moral being.

I read the whole, though we must not quote the whole here. "And these," I said, "are the pleasures that men, and women too, for the poet's sister was with him, seize

upon by quitting their lazy carriages, and entering on the finest estate which God and nature have given them, a vigorous pair of legs. These are the fine free thoughts ranging through woods and mountains, and by pleasant rivers, when age or sickness or other necessity shall have cut off all travelling, save in the enchanted regions of memory."

"It is very fine, very," said the great manufacturer, "and I am sure it will do me a world of good; but it is very severe"—and he wiped again his reeking brows, and flung open his ample waistcoat. "But here we are! See, there are the gables of Tintern, its broken walls and arched windows rising out of its wood of trees!" It was a scene of quiet, truly monastic beauty. The smoke ascended in the clear autumnal air from the hamlet cottages near, and the Wye, now brim full from the height of the tide, gave a perfecting charm to the landscape. We entered the interior of the beautiful ruin in silence. No one ever enters the place without being deeply impressed by its noble proportions, and the classical grace and chastity of its architecture. This abbey church was built in 1131, and presents a fine specimen of the early-English style, blending into a more ornamented character, as later editions were made or changes introduced. The roof is gone, but the walls are entire; all

the pillars, except those which divide the nave from the northern aisle, and the four lofty arches which supporting the tower spring high into the air, though reduced to narrow rims of stone, still preserve their original form. The western window, with its rich tracery, is extremely beautiful. "From the length of the nave," says Coxe, "the height of the walls, the aspiring form of the pointed arches, and the size of the east window which closes the perspective, the first impressions are those of grandeur and sublimity. But as these emotions subside, and we descend from the contemplation of the whole to the examination of the parts, we are no less struck with the regularity of the plan, the lightness of the architecture, and the delicacy of the ornaments. We feel that elegance is its characteristic no less than grandeur, and that the whole is a combination of the beautiful and the sublime."

What Coxe also adds is true, and gives a peculiar beauty to the place. "Instead of dilapidated fragments over-spread with weeds and choked with brambles, the floor is covered with a smooth turf, which by keeping the original level of the church, exhibits the beauty of its proportions, and heightens the effect of the grey stone. Ornamented fragments of the roof, remains of cornices and columns, rich pieces of sculpture, sepulchral stones and mutilated

figures of monks and heroes, whose ashes repose within these walls, are scattered on the greensward, and contrast present desolation with former splendour."

My weighty friend seated himself on a tomb; but I, observing an iron railing surrounding the top of the walls, looked for the ascent thither, and found that the walls were double, and that stairs ascended between them. I soon, therefore, stood aloft over my friend's head, and eagerly invited him to come up, and see the charming view all around, and the admirable perspective of the church below. "Not for the world!" he exclaimed—"Not for the world! My legs have done wonders to-day, but my head would never stand that." "Good," said I. He had done wonders, and I had done one too; for I had wiled him on to Tintern, six good miles, and up a long, steep hill, and now he *must* walk back. It was more than he had done for the last twenty years.

The history of Tintern contains nothing very remarkable. It was founded by the Strongbows, and became rich and hospitable. Edward II. sought refuge there for some time from the pursuit of his queen Isabella. At the dissolution it contained only thirteen monks, and was valued with its estates, according to Dugdale, at £132, but according to Speed at £256 per annum. It was granted by Henry VIII. to the second Earl of Worcester, and is now the property of the Duke of Beaufort.

When we set out to return, my companion, instead of exhibiting fatigue, sprang up from his sepulchral seat, as he remarked, "like a giant refreshed." He seemed inspired by a vivid sense of the feat that he had accomplished. "What would they say at Chapel-en-Frith if they could see me to-day! When I tell them that I walked to Tintern and back, eh? But I tell you what, my friend, I have been thinking of what you have said as I sate on the tombstone there, and I think you are right. One grows sluggish and stupid by riding and lolling in carriages. I will walk! I feel lighter already: and I will be lighter still. Why should not I be as agile as you? You walked up Cornwall. I am going to Devonshire, and I'll tramp it there as I'm alive!" And inspired by his new idea, the colossal man really became a Colossus of roads, for he strode along with a vigour, and with strides that required all my recent training on the moors and rocks of Cornwall to compete with him. He had found a new pleasure, a new power and I had to warn him not to abuse it. "Ah!" said he, "now I am putting you to your paces," and he stalked on with a prodigious activity that astonished me. Luckily it was downhill from the Wynd Cliff to the bridge at the bottom of Chepstow, where the steamer lay, or I might have found myself worsted in the rapid walk with my elated companion. But it was all very well, for the bell was already ringing on the steamer, and we had only time to

rush on board ere the plank was pulled back, and we were afloat. My stout friend sat down with a laugh, but I rather think, nevertheless, that he was glad the feat was ended, for he sat very persistently during the voyage. How little, when he had singled me out for his companion to Tintern, *did* he know what a day might bring forth!



RAGLAN CASTLE.

Raglan Castle.

Not farre from thence, a famous castle fine,
That Ragglan hight, stands moated almost round ;
Made of freestone, upright and straight as line,
Whose workmanship in beauty doth abound,
The curious knots, wrought alle with edgèd toole,
The stately tower, that looks o'er pond and poole,
The fountain trim, that runs both day and night,
Doth yield in showe, a rare and noble sight.—

CHURCHYARD'S *Worthines of Wales.*



AGLAN CASTLE, as in its greater part it is one of the most recent castles in Monmouthshire, so it must have been one of the most splendid as well as extensive. The ruins, including the citadel, occupy a tract of ground one-third of a mile in circumference. As Churchyard states, who describes the stately fabric as it stood in all its glory in the reign of Elizabeth, it is built of a fine light-coloured freestone, which was smoothly dressed, and is beautifully

grained. The stone has received little injury from time ; most of the elaborately carved masonry remains as sharp and distinct as when first executed ; and from the parts which, except the roofs, remain entire, you receive a lively idea of its elegance and splendour before it was dismantled by command of the parliament after surrendering to Sir Thomas Fairfax, and before its materials were plundered by the tenants to build houses for themselves. The foundations and remaining walls show it to have occupied an irregular square, enclosing two courts ; the main residence, including the great hall and chapel, and other splendid apartments, running between these courts entirely from north to south. This interior portion of the castle appears to have been built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, for it has all the characteristics of the architecture of her time, partaking more of the hall than the castle ; its windows being chiefly square and mullioned, and each successive story divided by a running band. In the hall, or banqueting-room, which is sixty feet long, and twenty-seven broad, you are struck with the gigantic size of the fire-place, and the singular structure of the chimney. At the upper end are the arms of the first marquis of Worcester, sculptured in stone, and surrounded with the garter, underneath which is the family motto :—“ Mutare vel timere sperno.”—“ I scorn to change or fear.” The towers of the external buildings are generally square, and not

battlemented, but machicolated, so that their heads expand, and give them an air of firmness and grandeur. In the walls you can trace the changes of different periods, but the earliest style is not anterior to the reign of Henry V., and the latest comes down to Charles I. The main part of the castle probably was built by Sir William ap Thomas in the reigns of Henry V. and VI., and his son William Herbert, created by Edward IV. Earl of Pembroke, and Lord of Raglan, Chepstow, and Gower, in 1469. From Dugdale's account it is scarcely possible to conceive in the present time the magnificence of the castle, and the greatness of the establishment maintained in it by this Earl of Pembroke. Yet the vast extent of the ruins, the evident grandeur and number of the apartments, the size of the offices and the cellars, give proofs of baronial magnificence and splendid hospitality. In a curious account of the castle, drawn up shortly before the parliamentary siege, and partly printed in Heath's account of Raglan Castle, the establishment of its then proprietor, the first Marquis of Worcester, the numerous officers of his household, retainers, attendants, and servants, appear like the retinue of a sovereign rather than a subject. He supported for a considerable time a garrison of eight hundred men; and, on the surrender of the castle, besides his own family and friends, the officers alone were no less than four colonels, eighty-two captains, sixteen lieutenants, six cornets, four ensigns, four quarter-

masters, and fifty-two esquires and gentlemen. The demesnes of the castle were of proportionate greatness : there were extensive gardens and pleasure-grounds, extensive parks well stocked with deer, and numerous goodly farms. The two courts of the castle were surrounded by offices of all kinds, and the eastern court contained extensive barracks. This court was called the Fountain Court, from a marble fountain in the centre, surmounted with the statue of a white horse ; but of fountain or horse no traces now remain. On the south side of the castle stood the citadel, a large hexagonal fortress defended by bastions, and surrounded by a moat, over which passed a drawbridge from the castle. It was called *Melyn y Gwent*, or the yellow tower of Gwent, and when entire must have been a magnificent object, for it was five stories high. From this tower a vast prospect was enjoyed of the surrounding country, bounded by the distant mountains in the neighbourhood of Abergavenny. The citadel was surrounded by raised walks, in which Charles I., when staying here during his wars, took great delight. Great care has been taken since the restoration of the monarchy, by its owners, now the ducal family of Beaufort, to preserve the ruins ; and the whole may yet be seen from some of the towers. The grand entrance is, perhaps, the most magnificent portion of these noble ruins. It is formed by a gothic portal, flanked by two massive towers, now beautifully hung with ivy. In

the porch are still visible the grooves for two portecullises ; and the spectator on entering is greatly impressed by the scene. A guide lives in one of the towers, and the Duke of Beaufort has promoted the accommodation of visitors by keeping the paths and stairs in good order, and by placing seats for necessary rest.

The great point in the history of Raglan Castle is the defence it made against the parliament in favour of Charles I. By its strength and the spirit of its possessor, Henry Somerset, fifth earl and first marquis of Worcester, the power of Charles was so long maintained in South Wales. It was nearly the last fortress in the kingdom that surrendered to the republican army. The traces of the outworks cast up in front of the castle and citadel, are yet visible in the remains of bastions, hornworks, trenches, and ramparts. The marquis who made this stout defence,—after the army which he kept up of fifteen hundred foot and five hundred horse under the command of his son, afterwards Earl of Glamorgan, was dispersed by the parliamentary generals,—was a great wit, and his smart sayings are preserved in a work called “Witty Apothems of King James, Charles I., and the Marquis of Worcester.” Charles I. made several visits here during his campaign against his subjects ; but when he was compelled at length to retreat from Monmouthshire, the castle was invested by

Trevor Williams and Colonel Morgan, and finally compelled to surrender by Fairfax himself. The marquis, and his son Glamorgan, are said to have lent to Charles I. at different times £300,000; and besides this they lost all their estates, valued at £20,000 a-year, which were confiscated; but restored on the return of Charles II.

The Strongbows seem to have been amongst the earliest possessors of Raglan. Richard Strongbow, the last male of the great family of Clare, according to Dugdale, conferred this property on Walter Bloet, or Blewitt, from whom by marriage it went into the Berkeley family, and so continued till it came into the possession of Sir John Morley, and, by Maud his daughter and sole heiress, into the family of the Ap Jenkins, *alias* Herberts, in 1438. Edward IV. commanded William, whom he created Lord of Raglan, Chepstow, and Gower, to continue the family name as Herbert, and not to change the surname at every descent in the Welsh fashion. To the custody of this Lord Herbert he entrusted Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., and he kept him in this his castle of Raglan till Jasper, then Earl of Pembroke, the uncle of this Lord Herbert, in his absence enabled Henry to escape, and fled with him to Britany. Edward IV. then attainted Jasper, and conferred the earldom on Lord Herbert. This is the same Earl of Pembroke that Wordsworth mentions in the

“White Doe of Rylston,” as having his head struck off in the porch of Banbury church, by one of the Cliffords. This Earl of Pembroke being a staunch Yorkist, was defeated and taken prisoner at the battle of Dane’s Moor, where he headed a band of his Welshmen. His sole heiress married Sir Charles Somerset, a natural son of Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, but in high favour with Henry VII., and from him his estate and titles have descended to the present Duke of Beaufort.

The family produced some remarkable men. This Sir Charles Somerset, who, though illegitimate, descended from John of Gaunt, was a man of great personal attractions, and equal prudence and ability. Prudence and ability were precisely the qualities to recommend him to Henry VII., by whom he was employed in various foreign embassies. He was equally in favour with Henry VIII., and had a high command in the wars against France. He negotiated the peace with France in 1518, and the peace betwixt Francis I. and Charles V. in 1521. He represented Henry VIII. at the coronation of the King’s sister Mary, the queen of Louis XII. of France; and betrothed Henry’s infant daughter Mary to the Dauphin. We have already mentioned Henry the fifth earl and first marquis of Worcester—his determined partisanship of Charles I.—his defence of Raglan, and his “Apothems;” one of which

was uttered when Charles showed, as he thought, too much lenity to his enemies :—“ Well, sir, you may chance to gain you the kingdom of heaven by such doings as these, but if ever you get the kingdom of England by such wayes I will be your bondman.” The old man was a stout Catholic : his estates were confiscated, and, contrary to the conditions of his surrender, he was committed to the custody of the Black Rod. When told, however, that he would be allowed burial in his family vault at Windsor, he exclaimed :—“ Why, God bless us all, then I shall have a better castle when I am dead, than they took from me when I was alive !” He died at the age of eighty-five.

The son of this Henry was Edward, the sixth earl and second marquis of Worcester, who was created by Charles I. Earl of Glamorgan. Like his father, he was a firm Catholic. This was the Glamorgan who was engaged by Charles I. to bring over ten thousand Irish to enable him to crush the liberties of England. The scheme failed ; he was arrested by the Marquis of Ormond and Lord Digby ; and Charles hastened to disavow the conduct of Glamorgan, though nothing is better ascertained than that he acted wholly in concert with the king. The transaction gave immense disgust in England, and did the greatest mischief to Charles ; even his staunch adherent, Clarendon, denouncing it in strong terms. Glamorgan followed the fortunes

of Charles II., and being sent to England on his concerns in 1652, he was discovered and imprisoned. To obtain his liberation, he offered to make important discoveries to Cromwell: and these, after some hesitation, were accepted. His son, who had hitherto lived in France, was permitted to return, enjoyed the confidence of Cromwell, and a pension of £2,000 per annum.

This was the famous Marquis of Worcester who wrote and published, in 1663, "A Century of the Names and Scantlings of such Inventions as I can at present call to mind to have tried and perfected." Horace Walpole sneers at this book, little dreaming what was to come out of it, and dubbed it "A list of a hundred projects, most of them impossibilities." One which the clever biographer of "Noble Authors" would doubtless have considered the most impossible of all, was the steam-engine, and in its train all our present great steam and railway systems. But in this work of the marquis was the following description of a fire-engine, in the sixty-eighth article of the "Century of Scantlings:"—"An admirable and forcible way to drive up water by fire, not by drawing or sucking it up, for that must be, as the philosopher calleth it, *intra sphaeram activitatis*, which is lost at such a distance. But this way hath no boundary if the vessels be strong enough," &c. He then goes on to describe how he has forced water up a strong

cylinder forty feet high, and how he could keep up the action by admitting cold water by a couple of cocks, so that as the water in one was being consumed, it could be supplied first by one cock, and then by the other, &c.

This certainly was not the first time the idea of exercising force by steam had occurred; for Gibbon, in his "Decline and Fall," relates how the architect of St. Sophia in Constantinople avenged himself of the annoyances of his next neighbour, a lawyer, by running pipes up his house-side, and introducing them under his roof, and continually shaking the house over his head by explosions of steam. Neither does it appear that the idea was an original suggestion of the marquis's own mind or experiments, but that in Paris he had seen the unfortunate Solomon de Caus, who was confined in the Bicêtre as a lunatic, for asserting the wonders that might be done with steam. We are afraid that the marquis, being of an experimental turn, listened to the poor man's supposed lunacy, and on his return to England made a number of experiments at his house at Lambeth, and boasted much of the wondrous power of his fire-engine. But if the marquis did not do proper honour to De Caus, he was destined to receive the same treatment. According to the "Experimental Philosophy" of Desaguliers, a Captain Savary bought up all the books of the marquis that he could lay his hands on,

burnt them, and started the idea as his own. In consequence of the number of the marquis's "Century of Scantlings" destroyed by Savary, the book is very rare, but the contents of it may be found in the eighteenth volume of the "Gentleman's Magazine." Thus from Raglan issued, if not the origination of the marvellous agency of steam, the great revolutionizer of the world, at least the revival of it.



GOODRICH CASTLE.

Goodrich Castle and Court.

Through shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,
Wandering with timid footstep oft betrayed,
The stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid
Old Time ; though He, gentlest among the thralls
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls
From the wan moon, upon the towers and walls,
Light deepening the profoundest sleep of shade.
Relic of kings ! wreck of forgotten wars,
To winds abandoned, and the prying stars,
Time *loves* thee ! At his call the seasons twine
Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead hoar ;
And, though past pomp no changes can restore,
A soothing recompense, his gifts are thine !

WORDSWORTH.



NE of the most striking beauties of the river Wye, is the tendency which it has to strike out fine circles in its course, sometimes almost as true as if struck by compasses. These, amid alternating rocks and woods, and verdant meadows, are not only delightful to the eye themselves, but give to the advancing traveller all the charms of rural beauty. One

of these fine sweeps occurs at Goodrich, about four miles from Ross, in Herefordshire, and on a bold promontory encircled thus by the beautiful stream, stand the remains of Goodrich Castle, till the time of the wars of the Commonwealth one of the strongest fortresses of England.

This castle was granted in the fifth year of King John to William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, who married Isabel, the sole heiress of the famous Strongbow, conqueror of Ireland, and succeeded to his vast estates. He was the same Earl of Pembroke who advised Henry III. to grant the Great Charter. It afterwards went into the family of the De Valences, from whom it passed by marriage to the Talbots, Earls of Shrewsbury, and remained theirs till 1616, when Gilbert, the seventh Earl, left three daughters his coheiresses. To one of these, Elizabeth, fell Goodrich, and she carried it by marriage to her husband, Henry Grey, Earl of Kent, who died in 1639 without issue. The castle and estate then passed to his next relatives, who became Earls and afterwards Dukes of Kent. At the demise of Henry, the last Duke of Kent of that family, it passed by purchase in 1740 to the Griffins of Hadnock; and a few years ago it was bought by Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, of Goodrich Court.

The castle is most famous for the stout resistance that it made in 1646, when it was held for the king by Sir Richard Lingen, against the parliament force under Colonel

Birch, to whom, however, it was eventually compelled to surrender.

It appears that Colonel Birch marched out of Hereford on the morning of March the 10th, with a party of horse and foot, and was joined at Goodrich by the horse of Colonel Kirle from Monmouth, and the firelocks of Rumsey. They fell on the stables and took sixty-four horses, with hay and other provisions. They burnt down the stables, and then went into the passage-house, seized the officers and soldiers in it, and invested the castle. The siege continued till the 31st of July, nearly four months. The castle was exceedingly strong, being built on a rock, and of the stone dug out of the ditch, so that the ditch was very deep, and the walls and towers were raised on massive pyramidal bastions, like some of the towers at Chepstow. The nearer approach to the castle was defended by a succession of gates and deep fosses and drawbridges. What these defences were may be imagined from this recent description : —“The body of the keep is an exact square of twenty feet. The additions made to this fortress down to the time of Henry VI. begin with the very strongly fortified entrance, which, commencing between two semicircular towers of unequal dimensions, near the east angle, was continued under a dark vaulted passage to an extent of fifty feet. Immediately before this entrance, and within the space enclosed by the fosse, was a very deep pit, hewn out of the

solid rock, formerly crossed by a drawbridge, which is now gone. About eleven feet within this passage was a massy gate. This gate and the drawbridge were defended on each side by loopholes, and overhead by rows of machicolations for pouring down melted lead, &c., on the heads of assailants. Six feet and a half beyond this was a portcullis, and about seven further a second portcullis; and the space between these was again protected by loopholes and machicolations. About two feet more inward was another strong gate, and five feet and a half beyond this on the right a small door leading to a long, narrow gallery, only three feet high, formed in the thickness of the wall, and which was the means of access to the loopholes in the eastern tower, as well as to some others that commanded the brow of the steep precipice towards the North-east. These works appear to have been thought sufficient for general defence; but a resource was ingeniously contrived for greater security in case they had been forced, for a little further on are massy stone projections in the wall on each side, like pilasters, manifestly designed for inserting great beams of timber within them, like bars from one side of the passage to the other, so as to form a strong barricade, with earth or stones between the rows of timber, which would in a short time form a strong massy wall."

In the days of mere bows and battle-axes this would have been found an unassailable stronghold, and even Colonel

Birch, with such cannon and mortars as they had in those days, seems to have been rather staggered by the sturdy strength of the place; for when he had lain before it till the beginning of June, he wrote to the Committee of Parliament begging for battering cannon; "or else," he said, "I may sit long enough before it." He had, up to that time, it appears, only two mortar-pieces, but the great iron culverin was going from Gloucester, and two guns from Ludlow. He reported the enemy very resolute within, and very careful of their ammunition, trusting to their strong walls. On the 1st of June he began to make regular approaches "within pistol-shot of the enormous rampiers, intending when they were finished to shoot granadoes in the mortar-pieces." The prisoners they had taken informed them that the besieged were well supplied with provisions, and depended much on the strength of the castle. On the 13th of June, Birch summoned them to surrender, offering them flattering terms, but they only laughed at them. Whereupon they began to storm with their granadoes, and tore down a piece of a tower. Still the besieged only laughed at them; and when they saw sappers at work preparing mines at the base of the castle, one of the Cavaliers called out, saying, "they cared not for being blown up, they could from the sky laugh at the flourishing Round-heads." On the 15th of June Colonel Birch complained that his ordnance was small, and had done but little execu-

tion. He had, therefore, sent for two great guns: all that had yet been done having been performed by the two mortar-pieces. But he reported that the mines were going on well. Another letter on the 18th of July, reported that they had made a breach in an upper wall, and that the granadoes had done much damage, but "yet they take no more notice of it than if no enemy were before it." Yet the writer flatters himself that the great mortar-piece and the mine would make them soon cry for mercy, and he trusts that the estate of Sir Richard Lingens would make amends both to the state and the besiegers. We must suppose that the great mortar-piece and the mine had all the effect that the writer anticipated, for on the 31st of July the besieged had surrendered on promise of their lives. This was the last castle which held out for the king, except that of Pendennis. The castle was dismantled by order of Parliament.

On the North side, where are windows for reconnoitring the Wye, there is a charming prospect over the adjacent country. On the West are the remains of the banqueting-hall: and on the East those of the chapel, with an ornamented Gothic window. Near the hall is a curious octagonal column, evidently the centre round which the grand staircase was carried, but that and the tower enclosing it are destroyed.

In the *Memoirs of Wordsworth*, we learn that the little

girl who is the heroine of his poem, "WE ARE SEVEN," the poet met with, not at Conway, where by poetic license he has laid the scene, but within the area of Goodrich Castle, in the Spring of 1793 : and thus the mystery is solved of the little girl speaking English, or the poet so fully understanding Welsh. Hence in vain, though "the grave is green, it may be seen," has the good woman of Conway, and no doubt many another person, hunted for it in Conway churchyard.

A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage girl,
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad :
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be ?"
"How many ? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they ? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we ;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

“Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother ;
And, in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea ;
Yet ye are seven !—I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be.”

Then did the little maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree.”

“You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five.”

“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little maid replied ;
“Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
And they are side by side.

“My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

“And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair ;
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

“The first that died was little Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay ;
Till GOD released her of her pain,
And then she went away.

“So in the churchyard she was laid,
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John, and I.

“And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide ;
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.”

“How many are you then,” said I,
“If they two are in Heaven ?”
The little maiden did reply,
“O Master ! we are seven.”

“But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in Heaven !”
’Twas throwing words away : for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, “Nay, we are seven !”

In the *Memoirs of Wordsworth* we also find this entry:—
“In the Spring of 1841 I revisited Goodrich Castle ; the river from its position and features is a most impressive object. I could not but deeply regret that its solemnity was impaired by a fantastic new castle (Goodrich Court), set up on a projection of the same ridge, as if to show how far modern art can go in surpassing all that could be done by antiquity and nature, with their united graces, remembrances, and associations.”

We may imagine with what astonishment our late friend, Sir Samuel Meyrick, would have read this paragraph,

had it been published in his lifetime. Sir Samuel, so far from endeavouring to cast into the shade ancient art by modern, was the zealous admirer of all antiquity. This building was designed and executed as an exposition of the principles of feudal architecture, and intended to contain those collections of ancient armour and other feudalities which he had accumulated at so much expense. It was projected to exemplify the style of architecture prevailing during the reigns of Edwards I., II., and III. It was designed by Blore, and the first stone was laid on the 23rd of April, 1828, by Llewellyn Meyrick, Sir Samuel's only son, who was not destined to live to inherit this charming place. Sir Samuel himself died in 1848, and the property passed to his nephew, Colonel Meyrick, of the Scots Fusilier Guards. Goodrich Court stands firmly on a bold promontory of the Wye, with a wood running down the steep bank to the river. It is backed by Coppet Wood and hills at some distance, giving it a position of peculiar beauty. Sir Samuel Meyrick, the author of the splendid work on "Ancient Armour," had filled this mansion with a collection of objects, which, if they had not won over the poetic mind of Wordsworth from censure to praise, would have enchanted the feudal tastes of Sir Walter Scott.

Goodrich Court is approached from the highway from Ross to Monmouth by an arched gateway, called the Monmouth Gateway, at about the distance of half a mile from

the house itself. Arriving, you pass over the moat by a drawbridge leading to a gateway, furnished duly with its portecullis, and flanked by two round towers. You then find yourselves on a fine airy terrace overlooking the Wye far below, and in front of the building, presenting a variety of round towers, gables, and turrets, full of detail, but somewhat wanting in elevation to confer on it the full dignity of a feudal fortress. In fact, with all its intended style of antiquity, there is a modern aspect about it, not merely resulting from its freshness, but from the mixture of gothic façades, more appropriate to a monastery than a castle. The chief tower is flanked with a strong bastion, machicolated, and furnished with lantern, turrets and spire.

The building incloses a spacious court, which is divided into two by the grand armoury. A porch on the left side of the inner court leads you to the entrance-hall. In a cavetto moulding over the archway in characters of the time of Edward II., is the following inscription:—

AUSPICE EDV. BLORE.

SUMPTIBUS S. R. MEYRICK.

A.D. MDCCCXXVIII.

In the spandrels of the arch, on each side, is a stone shield, sculptured with armorial bearings of the family. On the door is a bronze knocker, designed by Giovanni di Bologna, representing the destruction of the Philistines by Samson.

The entrance-hall is divided by an archway, and is adorned with arms, hunting weapons, stags'-horns, &c., displayed with great taste. The fire-place, of Painswick stone, is finely designed by Mr. Blore, the architect; but the great curiosity of the hall is a Bohemian pavoise, of the middle of the fifteenth century. The hall at night is lighted by a Greek lamp found in Herculaneum, rich in ornaments of female masks and horses' heads; a head of Janus forming the lid of the receptacle for the oil. On the principal door is a curious carving of George and the Dragon, of the time of Henry VII., in which the dragon holds his meat-dish in his paws, containing the king's daughter, ready to be devoured. In the part leading to the staircase is a fine oriel window, richly emblazoned with painted glass, representing Sir Samuel's ancestor, Meuric or Meyrick ap Llewellyn, of Bodorgan, in the island of Anglesey, esquire of the body to King Henry VII., with the family arms, crest and motto. From the hall a sallyport with draw-bridge leads to the Ladies' Terrace; thence by another drawbridge you cross the moat to the flower-garden, and thence you can descend through the wood to the river.

To the left of the entrance-hall you pass into the gallery of Henry VI., the length of which is one hundred and six feet. The window is an admirable specimen of German painted glass, representing St. George in fluted armour, with the date 1517. On the right hand, in a niche, stands

a figure accoutred in probably the most magnificent suit of armour in existence: beautifully embossed with bas-reliefs, and inlaid with gold. It belonged to the Duke of Ferrara, the patron of Tasso. It is one of those gleanings of the world with which Buonaparte intended to enrich Paris, and was designed for Malmaison, but did not reach France before Buonaparte was dethroned in 1814, and was purchased at Modena by Sir Samuel.

Quitting the entrance-hall on the right, you are introduced to the ASIATIC GALLERY, in which are arranged a great number of articles of costume, arms, armour, etc., from India, China, and other parts of Asia. The room is papered to imitate the walls of the Alhambra in Spain, and there is a figure in Moorish armour brought from Spain, made of pieces of hide cut into scales, and resembling the lorica of the Romans. In the centre is a Pindaree warrior on horseback. The chain-armour of the warrior and the trappings of the horse were brought by Captain Grindley from India, the head-gear being of solid silver. The whole group was prepared from a drawing by Captain Grindley. There are two glass cases filled with arms and armour from various countries of Asia, including China. Behind this, separated from the ante-room by a row of arches, is the ASIATIC ARMOURY, in which is a grand group of Indian figures on horseback, to exhibit varieties of Indian and Persian armour and costume. There is another glass-case

containing arms and other articles ; and two others, one on each side of the window, containing a variety of Hindoo deities and Chinese curiosities. Then comes the SOUTH SEA ROOM, similarly furnished with the weapons from the islands of the Pacific, including a grand war-cloak of feathers, brought from the Sandwich Islands by Captain Cook. These rooms are curious and instructive, but they are the least of all like what you are looking for in a British baronial hall: you enter with a more satisfied feeling the opposite suite of rooms.

The BANQUETING HALL strikes you as perfect. It is fifty feet long. Over the entrance is the Minstrels' Gallery, and on the dais or raised floor at the upper end is a billiard table, on one side of which folding doors conduct to a covered way leading to the stables ; on the other side, other folding doors lead to the HASTILUDE CHAMBER. The roof is of oak, high pitched, resting on stone corbels ; the floor and panelling are also of oak, and the chimney-piece is elaborately carved in Painswick stone, bearing on its pediment an alto-relievo of Aylmer de Valence, the owner of the castle in the time of Edward II., copied from his monument in Westminster Abbey. From this window there are fine views of Goodrich Castle, and of the valleys of the Wye and of Lea Bailey. Amongst the paintings in this room are Philip II. of Spain, by Coello, the Spanish Court painter ; his daughter Isabella, and her husband

Ferdinand; Lord Howard of Effingham; the Queen of James II., and Henry, Prince of Wales; Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, in armour, by Cornelius de Neve; a trooper of the Commonwealth, said to be Cornet Joyce, and portraits of Sir Samuel and his son.

In the HASTILUDE CHAMBER you find yourselves in the midst of a tournament,—men, steeds, spectators, lists, heralds, the royal box, and the whole costume and appurtenances of the same. You have also, in the same room, if our memory serve us right, the procession of Sir Samuel himself, when high-sheriff, with all his javelin-men in his livery. Near this is a CHAPEL, fitted as all chapels were at the supposed date, the time of our Edwards, in the Roman Catholic style. The carvings and figures are many of them of those times, others of Henry VI. The rich altar-cloth, the large candlesticks, the croziers, the reading desks, and other fittings, are all ancient and curious from their histories. But the especial room of the house is THE GRAND ARMOURY. It is eighty feet in length, and you have the history of ancient armour before your eyes on the backs of figures representing known warriors, ten of these figures on horseback. You have also ten glass-cases, containing a series of arms and armour, down from the Greek and Roman and the Ancient Briton, to the time when armour was exploded by that terrible explosive, gunpowder. Above these are ranged banners of many famous men;

and in the intervening spaces are eighty-four halberds, arranged in groups according to their respective periods. The oaken columns supporting the gallery are covered with weapons of all known kinds, including the most complete collection of the kind in the world. It was the possession of this unrivalled assemblage of arms and armour which enabled Sir Samuel to write and illustrate his superb work on the subject. We believe that it was from this armoury that the Austrians adopted the same arrangement in the great armoury in one of the palaces in Vienna.

It is an odd feeling that haunts you when walking amongst this extensive collection of instruments of death. You seem to have stepped out of the Christian world altogether, and entered one of animals, bent above all things on mutual destruction. What a wonderful exertion of the faculties, from age to age, to devise some newer and more efficient means of sending people out of the world! What an inveterate race of steel porcupines in the shape of men! If any one ever doubted of the fall, and that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," it would not, it seems to us, be possible to doubt it for half-an-hour in such a gallery as this. The ingenious inventions, and the costly productions, of many races and generations of people priding themselves at once on being Christians and exterminators of Christians: sons of the

Prince of Peace inveterately given to fighting. Such a display of the weapons of death seems, indeed, to substantiate the doctrine of the late actuary Finlayson, that "war is the *natural* condition of man, and peace is but the season of exhaustion, and of recruiting himself for fresh encounters of reciprocal murders. What a singular idea this gives us of the human race!—what a dismal illustration of universal history! That unhappy thing so happily called—'the great river of mingled blood and tears.'"

Goodrich Court is for the most part thrown open to public inspection, and is resorted to by throngs of deeply interested visitors: but it is only by those who, like ourselves, have spent some time in the house, that the vast extent of its treasures of art and antiquity can be known. There is a suite of apartments reserved for the family, and not opened to the public. There are the library, the dining, breakfast, and drawing rooms, the Doucean Museum, the Sir Gelly Chamber, the chambers fitted up in the fashion of and named after James I., Charles I. and Charles II's Galleries; William III.'s Chamber, with the Prince's, the Herald's, the Page's, and the Leech's Chambers, and the Greek Room. In these rooms are contained a wealth of articles of ancient art and vertu, of paintings and sculptures and gems, that fill a large catalogue. We may, however, mention one or two particulars. Miss Strickland, in the

“History of the Queens of England,” wonders what has become of a certain ivory box, carved in the shape of a rose, mentioned by Horace Walpole to have contained the miniature portraits of Henry VIII. and Anne of Cleves, painted by Holbein, and which, by the over-flattering likeness of Anne, occasioned so much mischief. This is securely deposited in a drawer of the library, and we must say that if Anne had been as comely-looking as there represented, even Henry could not have complained of her plainness. The library table is of the time of Henry III., and amongst the valuable collection of books is the original edition of 1521, of Henry VIII.’s *Assertio Septem Sacramenta, contra M. Luther*, which obtained for Henry the title of Defender of the Faith from the Pope; with a curious frontispiece by Hans Holbein. There are also other relics of Henry VIII., and portraits of Luther and his wife, Catherine à Boria. On the table of the drawing-room is a pair of enamelled copper candlesticks, seven hundred years old, with an inkstand and other articles of nearly the same age. The Doucean Museum contains the rich collection of works of art and antiquity, collected by Mr. Francis Douce, and bequeathed by him to Sir Samuel Meyrick, consisting of paintings of the Byzantine and Italian schools, tapestry, drawings, engravings, carvings in wood and ivory, enamels, cinque-cent bronzes, coins and

medals, crests, antiquities of Greece, Egypt, Rome, Mexico, Persia, China, and India. Besides this, every room has its appropriate fittings and objects of historic and artistic interest. During our visit at Goodrich Court we were lodged in the chamber of William and Mary.



LANTHONY ABBEY.

Anthony Abbey.



ANTHONY ABBEY, in the retired vale of Ewias, in Monmouthshire, presents in its remaining ruins one of the finest specimens of the Norman-Gothic. It was built in the year 1108, in the reign of Henry I., when the Norman rule, and the Norman taste in everything, prevailed. All who have seen the *Abbaye aux Hommes* and *Abbaye aux Dames* at Caen, in Normandy, built by William the Conqueror and by Matilda his queen, will be at once struck by the resemblance, especially in the squareness and massiveness of the outlines, and of the ample and square towers. In these fine old remains we have that mingling of the round arches of the past Saxon and the pointed ones then first introduced. The pointed arches, too, are of differing characters; some are acutely lancet, others of a more obtuse fashion. The building is divided at every separate height of window by bands running along the whole façade; and the west front in particular exhibits those unions of arches, and also blank arches, which marked the progress of Anglo-Gothic from the single round arches of the old

Saxon, into a greater freedom, airiness, and ornament. The northern side has the least mixture of the Norman pointed arch, and in the east are immense entrance arches of both kinds.

Lanthony, like Glastonbury and many other monasteries, had its literary monk, who became its historian; and from the monk of Lanthony we learn the following particulars, as preserved by Dugdale in his "Monasticon:"—St. David, uncle of king Arthur, finding a solitary place amongst woods, rocks, and valleys, built a small chapel on the banks of the Honddy, or Black Water; pronounced Honthy. He passed many years in this hermitage, but after his death it was deserted for several centuries. It still, however, retained the name of Lan Dewi Nant Honddu, or the church of St. David on the Honddy, since corrupted into Lanthony. But its restoration was by one William, a military retainer of Hugh de Laci, a great Norman baron of the reign of William Rufus, who, whilst hunting, suddenly discovered the mouldering hermitage of St. David, and was struck by a desire to abandon the world, and finish his days there. "He dismissed his companions," says the monk of Lanthony, "and devoted himself to God. He laid aside his belt, and girded himself with a rope; instead of fine linen he covered himself with hair-cloth, and instead of his soldier's robe he loaded himself with weighty irons. The suit of armour, which before defended him

from the darts of his enemies, he still wore as a garment to harden him against the soft temptations of his old enemy, Satan, that, as the outward man was afflicted by austerity, the inner man might be secured to the service of God. That his zeal might not cool, he thus crucified himself, and continued his hard armour on his body until it was worn out with rust and age."

He was afterwards joined by Ernesti, the chaplain of Maud, the queen of Henry I., and they built a small chapel in 1108. This was soon afterwards augmented by Hugh de Laci, earl of Hereford, the patron of William, into a priory of canons regular of the order of St. Augustine. Large gifts of money and land were soon offered, but the two brethren declined them, desiring to "dwell poor in the house of God;" and they were so earnest in defence of their poverty, that they put up constant public prayers against wealth, and deprecated its acquisition as a dreadful misfortune. But their pious resolution, like that of all other monks, was speedily overcome by the arts of a woman. "Queen Maud," says the monk of Lanthony, "not sufficiently acquainted with the sanctity and disinterestedness of William, once desired permission to put her hand into his bosom, and when he, with great modesty, submitted to her importunity, she conveyed a large purse of gold between his coarse shirt and iron bodice, and thus, by a pleasant and innocent subtlety, administered some comfortable relief

to him. But oh! the wonderful contempt of the world! He displayed a rare example that the truest happiness consists in little or nothing! He complied, indeed, but unwillingly, and only with a view that the queen might employ her devout liberality in adorning the church."

But the charm was broken; gold had found its way into the priory, and by its inevitable attraction abundance more flowed after it. Splendid buildings speedily arose, and in the midst of them a magnificent church. For a while something of the pristine discipline continued, however, and the monk of Lanthony describes the place and establishment in these terms:—"There stands in a deep valley a conventual church, situated to promote true religion, beyond almost all the churches in England: quiet for contemplation, and retired for conversation with the Almighty. Here the sorrowful complaints of the oppressed do not disquiet; the mad contentions of the froward do not disturb: but a calm peace and perfect charity invite to holy religion, and banish discord. But why do I describe the situation of the place, when all things are so much changed since its pristine establishment? The broken rocks were traversed by herds of wild and swift-footed animals; these rocks surrounded and darkened the valley, for they were crowned by tall towering trees, which yielded a delightful prospect at a great distance to all beholders, both by sea and land. The middle of the valley, although clothed with wood, and

sunk in a narrow and deep abyss, was sometimes disturbed by a strong blighting wind ; at other times obscured with dark clouds and violent rains, incommoded with severe frosts, or heaped up with snow ; whilst in other places, there was a mild and gentle air. The large and plentiful springs from the neighbouring mountains fell with a pleasant murmur into a river in the midst of the valley, abounding with fish. Sometimes, after great rains, which were extremely frequent, the floods, impatient of constraint, inundated the neighbouring places, overturning rocks, and tearing up trees by the roots. These spacious mountains, however, contained fruitful pastures, and rich meadows for feeding cattle, which compensated for the barrenness of other parts, and made amends for the want of corn. The air, though thick, was healthful, and preserved the inhabitants to an extreme old age ; but the people were savage, without religion, vagabonds, and addicted to stealth. They had no settled abode, and removed as wind and weather inclined them."

This is a sufficiently lively description of a location amid Welsh mountains at that period. The monks were doomed to feel the effects of the civil strife betwixt Maud and Stephen. The Welsh took refuge in the convent, and, in fact, seem to have taken free possession of it. They came with their wives and children, and quartered themselves in every part of it. The women took possession of the refec-

tory. They sang profane songs, and scandalized the holy brethren "by their light and effeminate behaviour." Complaining of this rude invasion to Robert de Betun, bishop of Hereford, he invited the monks to Hereford, and then prevailed on Milo de Laci to grant them ground at Hyde, near Gloucester, where they built a church in 1136. But this proved the ruin of Lanthony. The monks were too much attached to the populous and more civilized city, and refused to return to the old Lanthony when the troubles were over. The new Lanthony, as the Gloucester establishment was called, received ample endowments from King John and other benefactors. The monks were courted by the great, and soon revelled in every species of luxury and worldly pride. They claimed the pre-eminence of the new over the old monastery.

"When the storm subsided," says the monk of Lanthony, "then did the sons of Lanthony tear up the bounds of their mother church, and refuse to serve God as their duty required: for they said there was much difference between the city of Gloucester and the wild rocks of Hatyrel; between the river Severn and the brook of Hodani; between the wealthy English and the beggarly Welsh—*there* fertile meadows, *here* barren heaths. Wherefore, elated with the luxuries of their new situation, and weary of this, they stigmatised it as a place unfit for a reasonable creature, much less for religious persons. I have heard it affirmed

and I partly believe it, that some of them declared in their light discourse, I hope it did not proceed from the rancour of their hearts, that they wished every stone of this ancient foundation a stout hare. Others have sacrilegiously said, and with their permission I will proclaim it, they wished the church and all its offices sunk to the bottom of the sea. They have usurped and lavished all the revenues of the church; *there*, they have built lofty and stately offices; *here*, they have suffered our venerable buildings to fall to ruin. And to avoid the scandal of deserting an ancient monastery, long accustomed to religious worship, and endowed with large possessions, they send hither their old and useless members, who can be neither profitable to themselves nor others, who might say with the apostle, We are made the scum and outcast of the brethren. They permitted the monastery to be reduced to such poverty, that the friars were without surplices, and compelled to perform the duties of the church, against the custom and rules of the order. Sometimes they had no breeches, and could not attend divine service; sometimes one day's bread must serve for two, whilst the monks of Gloucester enjoyed superfluities. Our remonstrances either excited their anger or ridicule, but produced no alteration: if these complaints were repeated, they replied, 'Who would go and sing to the wolves? Do the whelps of wolves delight in loud music?' They even made sport, and when any person was

sent hither, would ask, 'What fault has he committed? Why is he sent to prison?' Thus was the mistress and mother-house called a dungeon and a place of banishment for criminals."

The old Lanthony never surmounted these usurpations of the new. Its library was despoiled of its books; its storehouse of its deeds and charters; of its silk vestments and relics, embroidered with gold and silver; and the treasury of its precious goods. Whatever was valuable or ornamental in the church of St. John was conveyed to Gloucester, without the smallest opposition, and at last the Gloucester monks carried thither its very bells, notwithstanding their great weight. Edward IV. made the Gloucester Lanthony the principal, but compelled the monks to maintain a prior and four canons at the original abbey. At the dissolution in 1539 the old Lanthony was valued at £71 3s. 2d., and the Gloucester monastery at £648 19s. 11d. At that period Richard Hempsted was the prior of Lanthony, and on his surrender he obtained a pension of £100 a-year. Anthony à Wood says that he carried away many ancient manuscripts from the abbey, and gave them to his brother-in-law. The abbey was sold to one Richard Arnold, and was purchased of Arnold's descendant, Captain Arnold of Lanvihavel, by Harley the minister of Queen Anne, and so became the property of the Earls of Oxford.

In 1806 Lanthony was purchased by Walter Savage

Landor, the celebrated poet and prose writer. For the estates of Lanthony and Comjoy he paid in purchase-money and improvements £70,000. His improvements were extensive. He for many years employed between twenty and thirty labourers in building and planting. He made a road at his own expense eight miles long, and planted and fenced half a million of trees, and had a million more trees ready to plant. But Lanthony was not destined to become more agreeable to him than it had been to the monks. According to his own statement to us, he received such infamous treatment from both his steward and his principal farmers, during his sojourn on the Continent, that he determined to abandon the place as a residence. He had built a house at a cost of £8,000, but he pulled it down, stick and stone, that his son might not be exposed to similar vexations by living there. Two farmers especially, brothers, whose united rents amounted to £1,500 per annum, refused all payment till compelled by law, and then fled to America. From these tenants the steward received £1,000; but Landor says he never saw a farthing of the money, and he was afterwards obliged to dismiss the steward too. He states that he had twelve thousand acres of land at Lanthony, much of it, of course, mountain; and that he had twenty watchers of game on the hills night and day, but that he never saw a grouse upon his table, though the game

cost him more annually than he lived at after leaving Lanthony.

Such is the history of one of the finest monastic ruins in one of the most monastic seclusions of the United Kingdom. Those who now visit it will find part of the priory buildings converted into a small romantic inn: and, whilst they contemplate the profound repose of its situation, will little suspect the passions and discontent which have agitated and embittered its history from the days of William and Ernesti to those of the impulsive author of "Ghebir" and "Imaginary Conversations."

Near the ruins of the abbey there is a subterranean passage, faced with hewn stone, about four feet six inches high. The people say that, according to tradition, it passes under the mountains to Oldcastle, which, if it were true, would connect it with another place of great interest—the house of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, the leader of the Lollards in the reign of Henry V., who concealed himself at this Oldcastle for some time, but was taken and burned in St. Giles's Fields in 1417; being, says Horace Walpole, "the first author, as well as the first martyr, amongst our nobility."

LANTHONY.

There may be mightier ruins ;—Conway's flood
Mirrors a mass more noble far than thine,
And Aberystwith's gaunt remains have stood
The ceaseless shock where wind and wave combine ;
Lone is Dolbadarn, and the lovely shrine
Of Valle-Crucis is a spell of power,
That stills each meaner thought and keeps enchained ;
Proud of that long array of arch and tower,
Raglan may claim a rude pre-eminence ;
Tintern is peerless at the moonlit hour,
Neath, Chepstow, Goodriche, each hath its pretence ;—
But mid thy solitary mountains, gained
By no plain beaten path, my spirit turns
To thee, Lanthony ! and, as yet untrained,
Freely to worship in thy precinct years,—
Now, left to nature's Pilgrims unprofaned !

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