The Brontë Country

THE
BRONTË COUNTRY.

See page 121.

Norton Conyers.

THE BRONTË COUNTRY:

ITS TOPOGRAPHY, ANTIQUITIES, AND HISTORY.

BY

J. A. ERSKINE STUART,
L.R.C.S., Edin.

"Thank God for the green earth."—KARL VON LINNÉ.

"Pan is the embodiment of the universe, and Echo is the mere talker about the universe. Let us go, therefore, to Pan himself, if we wish truly to know the universe; and to Echo, if we wish only to hear about it."—LORD BACON.

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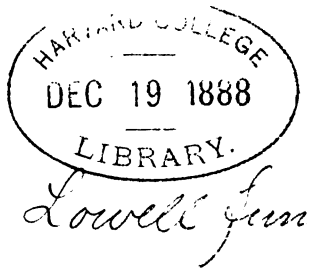
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.
1888.



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PREFACE.

THE country associated with the Brontës is of two kinds, the rural and the semi-rural or urban-rural. The first includes the scenes in Ireland connected with Patrick Brontë's youth; those in Essex where he held his first curacy; the Cornish scenes connected with Maria Branwell; Haworth and the Moors; Cowan Bridge, Tunstall, and Casterton. The latter embraces the scenes connected with Patrick's first Yorkshire curacy at Dewsbury, and his subsequent Yorkshire incumbencies at Hartshead and Thornton; the school scenes of the sisters; the houses they visited; all of which material is largely

drawn upon for the scenes in "Jane Eyre," and "Shirley."

Having resided for a few years in the Heavy Woollen District, which even to this day is redolent with memories of Charlotte Brontë, it would have been passing strange if I had not early manifested a curiosity in acquiring scraps of information and anecdotes regarding this marvellous woman and her no less talented sisters, whose school-days were spent in great part in the Mirfield and Dewsbury districts of Yorkshire, while she paid many happy visits in after life to the neighbourhood of Birstall. Soon after my arrival in Yorkshire, I was brought into contact with one, who, in her early days, was rocked in the cradle which Charlotte had formerly occupied, and from her I heard a great deal about this unique family, who were famous no less for their good brains than for their good hearts, and who were ever remembered by former dependants as kindly, justice-loving superiors, who were in no way

respecters of persons. Patrick Brontë's curacy at Dewsbury, and his incumbency at Hartshead, also interested me, and the result was that I finally essayed a new departure in Brontë literature, by sketching a few of the scenes connected with the family in a series of articles in the "Yorkshire Weekly Post," during the winter of 1886-7. When these articles were concluded, it appeared to me that with an extended range of subjects, a more complete work might be achieved, and this production, THE BRONTË COUNTRY, is the result of my labours.

The object of this book is to give to the reader a full description of the country which produced this talented family, and which fostered their genius, and it is hoped that from these pages will exhale a breath of reality in description which will put the reader, so to speak, into the position of the Brontës, and enable him to realise more easily the wonderful beauty of their descriptions of scenery, and of out-of-door life. At the same time,

antiquities and matters of historical interest pertaining to the districts treated of, will not be awanting, so that the volume will not be merely a picture-book with word-pictures appended, but will have such a variety of information combined within it, that it will be likely to prove interesting to anyone, be he general reader, antiquarian, or *litterateur*. In addition to the scenes, and the antiquarian and general matters relating thereto, there is a special chapter, entitled "Collectanea Brontëana," in which is arranged a number of anecdotes and scraps of information regarding the family, which have come to my notice during my researches in connection with the acquisition of information for the writing of the scenes.

In conclusion, I have to thank the editor of the "Yorkshire Post" for his kind permission to use the material of my articles in his paper. To many kind friends who have assisted me I return my best thanks. I have laid so many under contribution that it is almost

impossible to single out the most important. I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the whole body of subscribers in general, and particularly to those who have advised friends and relatives to subscribe. The Rev. Thomas Whitby, M.A., Vicar of Dewsbury, has been most obliging in helping me to throw some light on Patrick's curacy in his parish, hitherto an almost entirely forgotten aspect of Brontë biography. Mr. W. W. Yates, of the "Dewsbury Reporter," has also given me access to his writings on Brontë at Dewsbury. The Revs. H. W. Lett, Rector of Aghaderg, County Down, and W. Moore, Rector of Drumgooland, have thrown much light on the disputed point about the name "Brontë." Mrs. Taylor (*née* Martha de Garrs), sister of Nancy Garrs, of Sheffield, has contributed some interesting anecdotes of the inmates of Haworth Parsonage; and her sister, Mrs. Sarah Newsome, their old nurse, aged 80 years, has written from Crawfordsville, in the United States. There are other informants

whose communications have been of even greater value than the foregoing, but who, for various reasons, prefer to remain *incognito*. In conclusion, to all persons who have helped me by sending photographs, &c., I return my best and heartfelt thanks.

I am indebted to Messrs. Valentine, of Dundee, for the use of photographs of St. John's College, Cambridge, and of St. Michael's Mount; to Mr. Atkinson, of Great Bardfield, Braintree, for one of Wethersfield Church; and to Messrs. Berry of Gomersal, Cooper of Liversedge, Garrett of Dewsbury, and Smith of Batley, for various others; to Mr. Manley, of Halifax, for the use of his beautiful impressions of Kirklees Gate House and Robin Hood's Grave I am much indebted, and for that of Heald's Hall to J. G. Oddy, Esq., of Hallcroft House, Addingham. The artist, Mr. Shepherd, has entered *con amore* into the work, and he deserves my heartiest commendation.

J. A. E. S.

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THE BRONTË COUNTRY.

CHAPTER I.

IT will be well, before we proceed with our subject, to dispel one impression which may, perhaps, have lingered in the minds of some intending readers when they saw this book announced. This work will not be in any sense a key to the scenes of the novels. It will deal certainly with a few of these, but the writer has not gone out of his way to rake up scandals and curiosities which might easily have been secured and formed, no doubt, racy reading for some persons. No! we flatter ourselves we are going to provide better fare

for the mental digestions of our readers. To describe the country which produced the Brontës and fostered their genius shall be our task, to try to let the reader see it from a Brontë point of view, to attempt to show how, not simply the environment of lonely, heathery Haworth, but their other surroundings all through their lives, helped to build up those wonderful pieces of imaginative work which they produced. For after all they *are* works of imagination more than many people believe. In fine, we shall leave other people's business alone, and attend to our own, which is to give the reader a picture of the Brontë Country as it is in the present, and as it was in the past; in short to weave a fabric interesting to all and tedious to none, which will offend no one, and, we trust, will instruct and amuse all who read it. After all, if we succeed, although in a humble way, we have a praiseworthy task in hand, for to instruct and amuse is about the highest merit to which either human conversation or writing can attain. Charlotte Brontë says, when answering the letter of a Cambridge student, who had expressed admiration of her writings: "You are very welcome to take Jane, Caroline, and Shirley for your

sisters, and I trust they will often speak to their adopted brother when he is solitary, and soothe him when he is sad. * * * If they *can* (make themselves at home) and find household altars in human hearts, they will fulfil the best design of their creation, in therein maintaining a genial flame, which shall warm but not scorch, light but not dazzle." In like spirit would we commend these pages to the indulgent reader.

The Irish home of Patrick Brontë, the father of the illustrious trio of sisters, and of the talented, erring brother, was situated in the parish of Aghaderg, or Aghaderrick, near Loughbrickland, in county Down, a district noted for its high state of cultivation, and for the beauty of its scenery. It is a parish which fairly teems with relics, both ancient and modern. Three upright stones, "The Three Sisters of Greenan" (Druidical remains), apparently the remnant of an ancient cromlech, are to be seen on a gentle eminence about one and a half miles south west from Loughbrickland. Several interesting finds have been made at Meenan bog, such as a canoe of solid oak, evidently made by the aborigines. Near Scavagh, also in this parish, is

the "Danes' Cast," a deep ditch, now grass-grown. There are two lakes in the parish, Loughbrickland, and Loughshark, the former receiving its name from the speckled trout with which it formerly abounded. On the banks of Loughbrickland, Sir Marmaduke Whitchurch, to whom Queen Elizabeth granted the lands in 1585, built a castle, which was dismantled by Cromwell's army. William of Orange encamped in this parish in 1690, on his way to the battle of the Boyne, and Dutch coins are turned up by the plough to this day. The inhabitants are mostly farmers, the great part of the land being arable, but the linen manufacture is also carried on.

Patrick's parents resided originally, at least at the time of his birth, at Lisnacreevy, in Drumballyroney parish, now united to Drumgooland, and latterly in the town-lands of Ballynaskeagh, in Aghaderg parish. In Patrick's time the children were baptised at, and attended Drumballyroney church.

At Drumgooland church, not very far off, a handsome monument is erected to the memory of the Rev. Thomas Tighe, for forty-two years incumbent of this parish. This Mr. Tighe was Patrick Brontë's

patron, and he employed him as tutor to his boys. In the wall of the school-house was a very fine cross, built into the masonry, the shaft and cross being of porphyry, the plinth of granite. Captain Mayne Reid, the novelist, was the son of a Presbyterian minister of Drumgooland parish.

St. John's College, Cambridge.

Incited, it is supposed, by the encouragement of his patron, the Rev. Mr. Tighe, rector of Drumgooland, to seek an English University, we find him, in 1802, at the gates of St. John's College, Cambridge. His name is

entered as follows in the register of St. John's College, "Admissions 1802-35, fol. 1, No. 1235, Patrick Branty, Ireland, Sizar. Tutors, Wood and Smith. Oct. 1. Sub. 1802;" extracted by C. Taylor, D.D., Master of the College, January 22, 1887. In "Graduate Cantabrigienses," lately published by the University, Messrs. Deighton, Cambridge, p. 70, "Bronte, Pat., Ish., A.B., 1806;" extracted by C. Taylor, D.D. It is thus evident that "Branty" has been written by the University authorities, but that "Brontë" is his own signature, as is shown by the University books, both when matriculating and graduating.

Mr. Brontë, we are informed, had a brother, who was living some short time since in Belfast, and the family at Haworth were never aware that their father had passed under the harsh-sounding title of "Prunty." It is just possible that the whole story about the change of name is explainable by the vagaries of the age in regard to spelling, and that it was very far from the mind of Patrick to have coined such a high-sounding Greek name. In the registers of Drumballyroney church, in county Down, are the names of the brothers and sisters of Patrick,

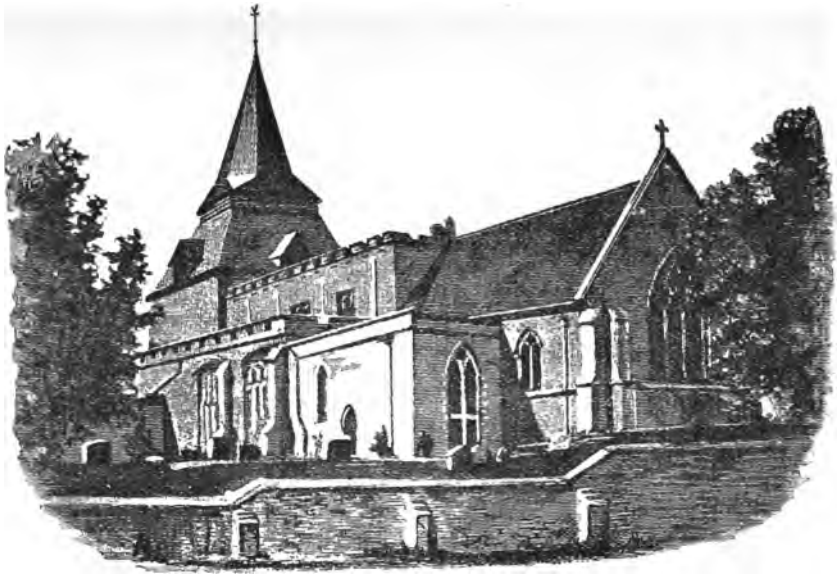
born between 1779 and 1791, and they vary in spelling from "Brunty," to "Bruntee."' The names of the younger members of the family are wanting, owing to a break in the registers; but Patrick's youngest sister, who is still alive, says their name was always Brontë, and nothing else, and there are at the present date several persons who spell their name "Brontë," residing in Armagh and other towns in that district. A cousin of Charlotte's remembers Patrick preaching in Drumballyroney church, after ordination. He was also in the habit of sending twenty pounds a year to his mother as long as she lived.

We have at least cleared up two or three points, viz., that the name "Brontë" is to be found not unfrequently in Ireland at the present day, and that Patrick neither forgot his parents nor his native country when he took up his abode in England.

St. John's College, Cambridge, is supposed to have been founded about the time of Henry I., and the charter of foundation was published in 1511. It has very extensive patronage. At the time of Brontë's advent there, the Rev. William Craven, D.D., was Master. Among the celebrities who have passed from

St. John's, may be named, Roger Ascham, William Cecil (Lord Burleigh), Dr. Martin Lister, the eminent naturalist; Matthew Prior, the poet, and in a later day, Heberden, the celebrated physician. We know little of Patrick at the University, but this is certain, that he drilled, along with the late Lord Palmerston and the present Duke of Devonshire, in a corps of volunteers, which was formed by the students of that time to resist the threatened invasion of England by Napoleon.

On leaving Cambridge, Mr. Brontë took orders, and in October, 1806, we find him established as curate of Wethersfield, in Essex. Wethersfield, or Weathersfield as it was formerly spelt, is a populous village situated on the Pant or Blackwater, about seven miles from Braintree. The inhabitants are mostly employed in straw-plaiting and in raising garden seeds, especially carrots. The Church of St. Mary Magdalen is a building of some note from an antiquarian point of view. It consists of a Norman tower, surmounted by a copper spire, which has assumed a deep verdigris hue from the action of the weather, a nave, north and south aisles and chancel. Inside, there is a fine



Wethersfield Church, Essex.

carved rood screen of oak, a very uncommon ornament in English churches, stone sedilia, piscina, and the effigies of two kneeling figures in marble, male and female, supposed to be members of the Wentworth family, who had great possessions here. This monument is believed to be three hundred years old. Wethersfield is surrounded by beautiful country mansions. Among these may be mentioned Wethersfield Hall, Codham, or Coldham Hall, and Gosfield Hall.* At Coldham Hall, two and a half miles south east from the church, picturesquely situated on the Pant, it is said that Butler wrote his "Hudibras." At Blackmore End, where a church was built in 1867, dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin, a moat may be traced which encircled the ancient seat of the De Nevilles. Amid such scenes did Patrick Brontë labour for two years and a half. His vicar the Rev. Joseph Jowett,† Regius Professor of Civil Law at Cambridge, was non-resident, and so the raw youth was raised to a position of some importance. How he fell in love, and lost his sweetheart through the machinations of a "cruel" uncle, we will leave the reader to discover

* For plates of these residences see "Excursions in Essex," 1819, Longmans.

† A native of Yorkshire, born at Leeds in 1750.

in the pages of Augustine Birrell's "Charlotte Brontë," where this amusing incident is brought to the light for the first time. It seems rather harsh treatment to the memory of the departed Patrick, that the events of his first curacy, the love passages of his early manhood, should be laid bare by the scalpel of the biographer, but such is the penalty of greatness, or of being the father of a race of literary geniuses. What position the Brontës might have taken in the literary world had their father married the comely blue-eyed farmer's daughter in Essex, instead of the little, delicate Cornish maiden, Maria Branwell, is an interesting problem for students of heredity.

Mr. Birrell's narrative informs us that Patrick Brontë left Wethersfield in the early part of 1809, the last entry in the register being that of a burial on New Year's Day. Mrs. Gaskell tells us that after leaving Essex, he next appeared as incumbent at Hartshead-cum-Clifton, a hamlet in Calderdale. Neither has Mr. Birrell been able to fill up this gap of nearly three years, from 1809 to 1811. The vicar of Dewsbury has kindly made a search of the registers of that ancient parish, and finds that Patrick Brontë officiated at, and

signed the registers at, most of the weddings celebrated in that church during 1809-10-11,* the then vicar, the Rev. John Buckworth, seldom officiating. The fact that Patrick Brontë was curate of Dewsbury for nearly three years has never been noticed in any of the biographical notices of the family yet published. Mrs. Gaskell, Wemyss Reid, F. A. Leyland, and Augustine Birrell are all at fault here, and yet this point could easily have been traced up from "Crockford" or any Clergy list, as the presentation to Hartshead is in the hands of the vicar of Dewsbury, and is usually given to the curate, if his age and experience are such as to sanction the appointment.

We are indebted for the account of Mr. Brontë's life at Dewsbury to the kindness of Mr. W. W. Yates of Dewsbury, who, several years ago, wrote a series of articles on "Dewsbury Parish Church: its History and Associations," in the paper with which he is connected, "The Dewsbury Reporter." This period of Patrick's life has an important bearing on the production of "Shirley," Charlotte's most pleasantly

* It seems he must have officiated at Dewsbury and Hartshead for some time after his settlement.

written novel, which describes various incidents which took place, and sketches several well known characters who came under the notice of her father during his residence in this ancient parish.

The Dewsbury of to-day is a very different place from the Dewsbury of Patrick Brontë's time. Now we have a large and important manufacturing town, reeking with smells of oil, shoddy, and chemicals, and through which flows an inky river, the Calder. In the first decade of the century the population only reached a fifth part of what it now is. Hand-looms were then the only machines in vogue. Steam and smoke were almost unknown, all round was a purely agricultural district, and the Calder was a clear, pellucid stream abounding in salmon and trout; riparian owners regularly fished with nets. But Dewsbury, though small in size, had stirring traditions of St. Paulinus preaching on the banks of the Calder in A.D. 627. It is believed that a stone cross was erected to commemorate this event prior to the establishment of a church. In a later day too, the Sunday school movement had found a home in this time-honoured parish, under the fostering care of the Rev. Matthew Powley, and

later on of the Rev. John Buckworth, Mr. Brontë's vicar.

It was to a parish redolent with memories of the Evangelical Revival of last century, and where active parochial work was in operation, that the late curate of sleepy Wethersfield, with its non-resident vicar, now betook himself. A greater contrast could not well be imagined. For the ploughboy's whistle and the milkmaid's song, for the cleanly, smiling farmsteads, and a happy peasantry, he exchanged the rattle and click of the loom, the untidy, toil-stained, crowded cottages and weaving sheds, and a people half starving, and soon to be driven frantic by the introduction of machinery, which, if in the long run it advanced the interests of trade, for the present at least, seemed to those ignorant, famishing men as meaning nothing but death. After the kindly courtesy and deference displayed to their superiors by the rural peasantry, the brusque, independent manner of the Dewsbarians must have come as a great shock to Brontë. He must have looked back on the smiling country around Wethersfield with regret, when placed amid the uncongenial surroundings of Dewsbury. How different the contrast

between town and country nowadays! In place of the farmers

> "Reaping golden harvests of wheat,
> At the Lord knows what per quarter,"

and the farm labourer feeling rich on ten shillings a week, with plenty to eat and drink, we have a despairing agricultural community, a gradually pauperised aristocracy, and a continual draining off by emigration of the best blood of the nation. On the other hand the manufacturer and the operative live on the fat of the land, and their prosperity is in great part due to the very cause which makes the farmer and the landowner poor, viz., free trade. The very thing which the maddened, suffering operatives dreaded, viz., the introduction of machinery, has been their salvation in the end. Thus does the whirligig of time work its revenges.

The Dewsbury of to-day is by no means an attractive town. It is situated in great part, at least all the business premises, in the vale of Calder, at a point where the Batley Beck joins the main stream. The residential part of the town, as it does in the neighbouring borough of Batley, seems to gradually leave the smoke and machinery below it in the valley and recede more

and more to the top of the eminences nearly investing this, the capital of the heavy woollen district. We are always reminded of Jerusalem with its surrounding hills, when we look down upon Dewsbury with its encircling girdle of sterile cliffs, the result of much quarrying and railway making.

What a contrast does this vale of Calder now present to what it did in the times of the Romans! The now dry, sun-baked, smoke-stained banks, almost entirely destitute of trees, were then clothed with an impenetrable forest of oak, birch and hazel, the very river (Calder*) taking its name from this latter tree. Only small patches of cultivated land were to be seen anywhere, and they were exposed to the attacks of wild deer, cattle and boars. The place names in this district show what was the character of the surrounding country. Such names as Oakenshaw, Birkenshaw, Heckmondwike, Liversedge, Thornhill and Mirfield, have all a sylvan ring about them, and speak of the time when all was forest, moor and marsh; when, as Charlotte Brontë says in "Shirley," it was "a region whose lowlands were all sylvan chase, as its highlands

* The hazel-water, from *dwr*, (B.) water, and *coll*, (B.) a hazel.

were breast-deep heather." That there were certain roads existing, the names of Hollinroyd, Boothroyd, Brookroyd, Nunroyd, Joanroyd, all go to prove. The Romans had a vicinal way passing near Dewsbury for the use of civilians. From remains found at Dewsbury, Gomersal and East Ardsley, it is evident that this led from the fifth and eighth Iter, near Pontefract, and ran by way of Ossett, Dewsbury and Kirklees to Cambodunum (Slack), where it joined the great military road from Eboracum (York) to Mancunium (Manchester), which followed the Calder valley for some distance and then proceeded over the mountains. We have the names "Ossett Street Side," and "Long Causeway" in Dewsbury, which point to this route as being the probable one; also a Roman camp at Kirklees, which was a mere temporary station. The Romans must have had a hard task before them in constructing these wonderful highways in this semi-mountainous, forest-clad, swampy district. They little thought that these impenetrable forests through which they slowly worked their way, with dint of axe, mattock, and spade, would one day be almost cleared away, leaving the country exposed, the dwellings bare to every wind that blows,

causing the summers to be drier and the winters to be colder. A few clumps of the ancient primæval forest are still to be seen around Dewsbury, some almost surrounded by chimneys belching forth their besmirching smoke. But planting is much wanted in this district, if the health of the inhabitants is to remain unimpaired. The poplar, which grows rapidly and soon runs its lease of life, can be kept in perpetual growth by continually putting in new roots. It seems to have an especial fondness for smoky districts, chemical vapours have little effect on it, and altogether it is much the best tree for a manufacturing country. The oak, the ancient denizen of the British forests, is one of the tenderest of our native forest trees, and soon succumbs to smoke and chemicals. There are very few to be seen in the Dewsbury district. Its permanent bark gets engrained with soot, and its leaves seem to be the most sensitive to foul vapours of any of our ordinary natives. If drainage and the denudation of large tracts of country of all trees is persevered in as it has been within the past twenty years; if the smoke nuisance and river pollution are allowed to do their baleful work unhindered, a day *will* come when the people of this

little island will find that nature has taken its own revenge, that existence for animals is impossible without plentiful vegetation, and *then*, ever too late to remedy matters, a wholesale planting will take place. If the "three acres and a cow" movement should become more popular it will have the effect of producing a sturdy peasantry, the pride of their country, and of retaining in cultivation many plots of land which might otherwise be occupied by great, smoke-belching mills, or rows of unsightly cottages.

A little settlement in a green valley, lay the ancient Dewsbury (the town by the water), when St. Paulinus came preaching in this veritable wilderness. The old clerics generally chose a well sheltered, fertile hollow for their settlements. Look at Kirklees, Kirkstall, Fountains, Jervaulx and Rivers. Baptism by immersion in the Calder, and the dispensation of the Sacrament were carried out by him in A.D. 627. It is not our place here to speak of the ancient cross at Dewsbury, with its well known inscription, "Paulinus Hic Prædicavit et Celebravit, A.D. 627." There have been at least three crosses of this description since A.D. 627. It is supposed that a Roman temple may have existed

here prior to the visit of the Primal Bishop of York, but whether that is so or not, certain Saxon remains show that there was a Saxon church of wood, which was probably destroyed by the Danes. "Deusberia" is mentioned in Domesday Book. Shortly after the completion of this vast work, the manor was granted, by the King, to William, Earl of Warren, who in his turn, bestowed the church on the Priory of Lewes, A.D. 1120, and appropriated to it. In 1348, it was given by the King to his chapel of St. Stephen, Westminster. It became a vicarage in 1349. At the dissolution, the patronage passed to the Crown, where it has remained ever since. The original parish of Dewsbury is said to have had an area of 400 miles, and to have included the modern parishes of Thornhill, Mirfield, Kirkburton, Almondbury, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, Bradford and Halifax, some of which still pay tithe to the mother church, viz., Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, Almondbury, Kirkburton, Bradford and Thornhill, the total annual amount being £11 5s. 6d.

The present church, now in process of restoration, only dates back as far as 1766-7. Various alterations have taken place since that time. The restoration is of a most

complete and tasteful character. It was commenced in 1884, when the corner-stone of the new chancel was laid by Mrs. John Wormald of Raven's Lodge. Since that time, a new chancel has been built, also transepts, north and south porches, morning chapel, vestries and organ chamber, at a cost of about £14,000, raised by public subscription. On September 30th, 1887, this new portion was consecrated by Bishop Carpenter of Ripon, who preached an eloquent discourse on "The Power of Human Kindness." The nave will also be improved, the unsightly galleries removed, new floors and oak pews being added.*

As we have no intention of giving wearisome antiquarian details, we will now leave the consideration of the interesting origin of this ancient parish and take up the next event which is worth recording, especially in connection with our subject, viz., the establishment of Sunday schools at Dewsbury in 1783. The Evangelical Revival of the Wesleys was at this period deeply stirring the Church of England, and the vicar of Dewsbury was no exception to the general body of the clergy. Things had, prior to this time, been in a very sleepy state throughout

* The re-opening of the nave has taken place since the MS. was sent to the press.

Dewsbury Old Church.

the churches of Great Britain. We are reminded of a Scotch parish minister who was a decided Moderate, and of whom it was currently reported that during all his life he had never written more than three sermons, which he used in rotation, but often altered the texts. This sort of thing was quite common. Non-residence, pluralities, the sale of advowsons, were all in full blast. The churches had sunk into a lethargy which, now-a-days, it is quite impossible to conceive of. Suddenly, as if by magic, the pendulum of church life, which after the sudden kicking of the beam in the time of the Protectorate had sunk low indeed, was unexpectedly roused to a new life. The instruction of the young, prayer meetings, and conventicles of all sorts and descriptions, were now the order of the day. The Rev. Matthew Powley, vicar of Dewsbury, secured as his curate in 1779, a young man of twenty-two years of age, who was highly recommended by that saintly man, the Rev. Henry Venn, rector of Yelling, in Huntingdonshire, afterwards vicar of Huddersfield. This was the afterwards celebrated Rev. Hammond Roberson, of whose life we shall hereafter give a short sketch. At Dewsbury he remained for nine years, and

during his curacy, Sunday schools were established here in 1783. These are claimed as the first Sunday schools north of the Trent; Bradford, Manningham, Catterick, Tadcaster and Horbury all lay claim to priority, but what is contended by Dewsbury Church people is, that Dewsbury school is the only one of these early ventures which is now in existence. The others were private classes in most part. The one at Bradford was started in 1773, seven years before Robert Raikes' inauguration of the movement.

The Dewsbury Sunday schools were founded quite independently of Robert Raikes' scheme. Roberson taught the children, to the number of three or four hundred, in cottages, the tenants of which were paid one shilling per Sunday for the use of their rooms. At this time drunkenness, dog-fighting, and bull-baiting were common amusements among the hand-loom weavers. Roberson tried to stop the bull-baiting, and summoned the principal offenders to the court at Wakefield. The magistrates refused to act, and dismissed the case. About this time the West Riding magistracy acted in a most pusillanimous manner. *e.g.*, in the case of the Luddite rioters. What the

local authorities lacked in pluck was, however, made up for by the assize judges at York, who passed some very severe sentences, almost reminding one of the "Bloody Assize" of former days. Roberson, as we have said, was unsuccessful in his efforts. He was hooted all the way back to Dewsbury; but, not to be daunted, he indicted the owner of the animal and the principal ringleaders to appear at York Assizes, and got a verdict against them. In 1802 a Bill was brought into Parliament to stop the practice, but was thrown out by a majority of thirteen against it.

In no part of England at the present day are Sunday schools more in favour than in the West Riding of Yorkshire. They are quite a feature of the Dewsbury district. The Sunday school anniversaries and the Whitsuntide processions and feasts are red-letter days in the Sunday school calendar. But in those days it was far different. The classes, spread all over the cottages of the district, required money to keep them up, and many and various devices were employed to get it. In 1787 we read that at Chesterfield the tragedy of "The Gamester" was performed by amateurs of the town, assisted by others from Sheffield, for the

benefit of the Sunday schools. We are informed the performance gave satisfaction to the most genteel and crowded audience ever known in the town. In 1807, immediately before Brontë's arrival in Dewsbury, a great Sunday school anniversary was held in a room in Aldam's Mill, lent by Mr. Halliley, whose

Dewsbury Church Sunday School Centenary Medal.

daughter Rachel afterwards became the wife of the Rev. John Buckworth, who was presented to the living in that year. The Halliley family figure in "Shirley" as the "Sykes" family, one of whom afterwards married the "Rev. Mr. Sweeting," a member of the immortal trio of curates. In June, 1880, the Dewsbury celebration of the centenary of Sunday schools took

place, when 5,000 scholars met at Crown Flats. A Mrs. Wharton, of Staincliffe, who attended the Dewsbury Sunday school before the end of last century, was still alive, although unable to be present. In 1883 Dewsbury held a special centenary for itself, and on that occasion a medal was struck, of which we give a facsimile, bearing on it effigies of the Rev. John Buckworth and the Rev. Hammond Roberson. Such was the foundation of Sunday schools in Yorkshire, and this subject provided Charlotte Brontë with a considerable amount of material for her realistic novel of "Shirley."

In 1788 Hammond Roberson resigned his curacy, and took up his residence at Squirrel Hall, Dewsbury Moor, a comfortable-looking stone house, with brick cottage adjoining, which he used as a schoolroom. Here he was married,* and his career as a teacher was a most successful one. In 1795, he purchased Heald's Hall, Liversedge, and after his removal thither, where he still carried on his school most successfully, he was

* His wife was a Miss Ashworth, a native of Gildersome, and a Baptist. It is said that he was so enraged at her continuing, after marriage, to ride to a Baptist chapel, that he shot her palfrey, so as to compel her to attend church.

presented to the living of Hartshead-cum-Clifton, two hamlets, situated about two miles from his residence. Here we will leave him, and will resume the thread of his self-sacrificing and eventful life when we are considering Liversedge and Hartshead, both of which

Squirrel Hall, Dewsbury Moor.

are intimately connected with the Brontë's, directly or indirectly.

Dewsbury has many interesting antiquities, and many old customs still linger about its famous church. For instance, "the Devil's Bell" is rung on Christmas Eve, in the belief that the Devil died when the Saviour

of the World was born. Some Shrovetide customs are very peculiar. At Caistor, in Lincolnshire, "the Pancake Bell" rings at 11-0 a.m., and the parson kicks off a football. The shop windows are barricaded, and a regular set-to takes place. At Duns, in Berwickshire, the Lord of the Manor, on Fastern's E'en (Shrove Tuesday) throws out a large hand-ball, with which the married and single men of the parish contend, the one to lodge it in the parish church, the others to take it to the nearest cornmill, which is at least a mile out of the burgh; shops are closed and a tremendous tussle takes place. At Dewsbury, a more extraordinary custom still prevails; when the Pancake Bell is rung the children of the parish assemble near the old vicarage, now used as the Church Institute, to see if a stone dog erected above the western gable will come down. The bells of this church are noted for their sweetness.

Dewsbury has advanced by leaps and bounds. From a small town it has grown into a great manufacturing centre. New and handsome buildings have been and are being erected, such as the new Infirmary, the Co-operative Stores, and the Town Hall. The restoration of the parish church is a worthy work for the

Jubilee year. In 1862 the town was incorporated, and for the interest of antiquarians we now add a description of the arms as seen on the civic seal; a striking example of the skilful combination of the ancient and the modern. The designer of this seal was, rather strange to relate, a noted antiquary, Mr. F. A. Leyland, of Halifax, the author of "The Brontë Family," an able work, in two volumes, more particularly addressed to the task of assigning to Branwell Brontë his proper position as a poet in the ranks of our minor sons of song, of which, however, more anon. The full description of the seal is as follows:

"Device, a heater-shaped shield between Gothic tracery work. The shield is cheque, and azure (the Arms of the Earls of Warren), charged with the original Saxon wheel cross, as planted by St. Paulinus, and described in the motto:—PAULINUS : HIC : PRÆDICAVIT : ET : CELEBRAVIT : A.D. 627, (Paulinus preached and administered the Sacrament here, A.D. 627) proper. Above the shield is a crest in a wreath, a sheep or fleece argent hanging from a cloud proper, with the Blue Cross of St. Edward the Confessor as a difference. In base a ribbon with motto:—DEUS : NOSTER : REFUGIUM : ET : VIRTUS (God our Refuge and Strength), Legend in black letter:—Sigillum Commune Municipium Dewsburiensis."

We now return to the original subject under consideration, Patrick Brontë. When he came to

Dewsbury in 1809, he lived with the vicar in the vicarage,* an unpretentious ivy-covered building near the church, now used as the Dewsbury Church Institute.

Mr. Brontë is still remembered by aged persons resident in the parish as a tall, large-boned Celt, strong and sinewy. He talked and preached with a marked Irish accent, but Dewsbury people were accustomed to this, for Irish curates were frequent. His dress in those days must have excited much amusement. A true son of Ulster, he wore a blue linen† frock coat reaching below the knee, and generally carried a shillelah in his hand, grasped by the middle in real Hibernian fashion. His diet was of an exceedingly frugal nature. He lived largely on oatmeal porridge, and he had a week's dumplings made at one time and consumed one every day. He was noted for his winning way with children, and for his stiff manner with the *nouveaux riches*. No doubt these latter intended to marry their daughters to him if they could, but Patrick's heart was in sleepy

* He had separate apartments.

† Linen factories are common near Aghaderg.

Wethersfield, and the damsels of Calderdale had no attractions for him. Not that he was morose and unsociable, far from that, he was fluent and entertaining in conversation, and under the stimulus of a glass of wine could rattle on apace. With the poor he was a great favourite, and he held cottage meetings regularly among them. He was noted for his "hot and impetuous temper, especially when he saw wrong done, and it was only the exercise of a resolute will that at times prevented an outburst." He was a great favourite of Mr. Buckworth's, whose name is revered in Dewsbury to this day, and when the vicar was once absent in search of health, Patrick's muse awoke and he addressed some verses to the Rev. J—— B——, which will be found in "Cottage Poems." This composition is in his poorest style, and in no way comes up to his later poem on the Eruption of Crow Hill Bog, where country scenes, animal life, and the signs of the weather are hit off to a nicety, and reveal, at least, a man of great observation, if not a true poet.

Many anecdotes are recorded of Patrick Brontë, three of which are worth narration. The first of these we shall give in Mr. Yates' own words; and here

Dewsbury Old Vicarage.

we would again acknowledge our obligations to this gentleman, who, along with the vicar, the Rev. Thomas Whitby, has furnished us with the most of the information regarding the Dewsbury curacy of the father of the Brontës. Mr. Yates says: "On one occasion his quick temper displayed itself publicly, yet won for him the admiration of those on whose behalf it was aroused. It was on Whit-Tuesday, 1810, the children of the Parish Church Sunday School, according to what was an annual custom, walked in procession to Earlsheaton, there to have, what was locally known as "The Sing," which among church people, at all events, was a great event in the village. As the scholars were marching up, a tall and lusty man, seeing them approach, deliberately planted himself in their path and would not move an inch. Mr. Brontë seeing this, walked quickly up, and, without a word, seized the fellow by the collar, and by one effort flung him across the road, and then walked by the procession to the Town's Green as if nothing unusual had happened, leaving the obstructionist agape with surprise." Such an occurrence, as may be expected, caused quite a stir in the district, and the Irish curate was the hero of

the hour. This incident has been made use of by Charlotte in her "Shirley," where Parson Helstone precipitates an obstructing dissenter into the ditch. Helstone is Brontë in nearly all the traits of his character, but the ideal presentation is our old friend Hammond Roberson.

Another story of Brontë illustrates his personal courage, a quality which was handed down to every member of his family, for a more dauntless group has been rarely heard of. During the winter of 1809-10, he was walking by the side of the Calder near Dewsbury, when he observed a boy, an imbecile, pushed either intentionally or accidentally into the river, which was in flood, by one of his companions. He at once jumped into the roaring water, and though unable to swim, succeeded, after being carried down about twenty yards, in bringing the lad to land. He then took the half-drowned little fellow in his arms to his mother's house at Dawgreen, some distance off. As he was hurrying home, shivering in his dripping clothes, he met the other lads and chid them sternly.

The calibre of the man is brought out in the next story. Previous to a bell-ringing competition, the

ringers at Dewsbury Church, being badly prepared, late one Sunday evening, after service, astonished the inhabitants who were resting in the cool of the day, by suddenly clashing out a merry peal, intending to put in an hour's practice. Brontë was perfectly horrified at the irreverence of this performance, and rushed, shillelah in hand, from the vicarage where he was calming his brain after the labours of the day, up the belfry steps, at once stopped the enthusiastic campanologists, and administered a stern rebuke on the levity of their conduct. We can easily understand how a curate of such athletic sinew, of such lofty courage, of such high principle and true piety would become a great power in the parish. We feel privileged in being able to bring to light this information regarding the early life of a man who has been if not grossly maligned, at least entirely misunderstood by several of the biographers of the Brontës.

CHAPTER II.

HARTSHEAD, to which living Patrick was presented July 20th, 1810, by the Rev. John Buckworth, vicar of Dewsbury, is a small hamlet situated on a commanding eminence overlooking Calderdale, about four miles west of Dewsbury. Hartshead has now been created a parish, but up till a comparatively recent date, it was a chapelry in the parish of Dewsbury, the gift of the living being, as it is at the present day, in the hands of the vicar of Dewsbury.

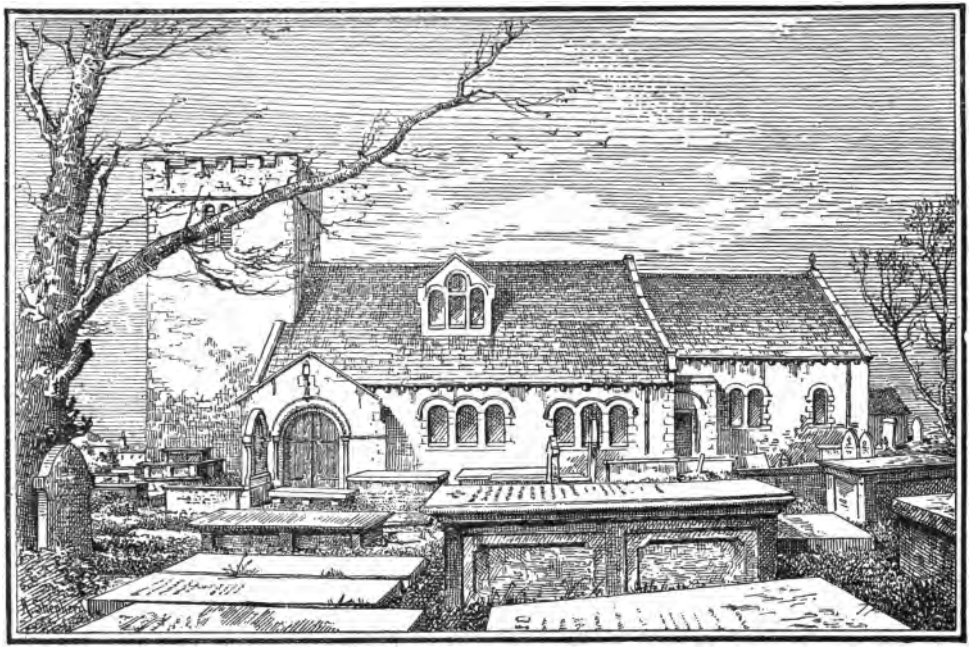
When Brontë came here, there was no parsonage house, so he put up, after his marriage, at a tall house at the top of Clough Lane, in Hightown, a neighbouring hamlet in the parish of Birstall. No doubt all round this commanding height the eye could range for many miles over an open, well wooded and well watered

Rev. Patrick Bronte's House, Highstown, Liversedge.

country. Now, nearly all the common lands are enclosed, the trees destroyed by smoke and chemical vapours, and the rivers and becks rendered foul by factory and mine refuse. Much of the moisture is also taken from the soil by coal pits, and springs existing from time immemorial have become mysteriously dry, as the hidden treasures of the mines have been secured. Still, at Hartshead much remains to please the visitor. The air is pure and bracing, and free from the noxious smoke wreaths which seem to cling to the valleys of Calder and Spen on either hand. The view down the Calder is charming. At one's feet lies the sunny park of Kirklees, with its ancient nunnery in the depths of the wood—remnant of British forest—with its great gnarled beeches, its ancestral yews and herd of deer, and the smoke of Kirklees Hall lazily mounting to the clouds from out an embowering canopy of trees. Not far off is the smoke and din of Brighouse, and Dewsbury and Huddersfield furnish their quota, coping in this sylvan retreat with a gloomy shroud. Here is an ancient country seat and religious house, set down amid the bustle and din of towns.

Hartshead Church, dedicated to St. Peter, with its weather-beaten Norman tower, and its old yew tree is well worth a careful study. When the second Earl of Warren granted the living of Dewsbury to the priory of Lewes, this church was then in existence, that is, about 1120. It has been restored quite recently, but it still retains its Norman characteristics in a striking manner. Its doorway and chancel arch, although not so highly adorned as the church at Adel, are well worthy of inspection. The old candelabrum of brass suspended from the ceiling, the finely carved reredos, and the quaint stained windows in great part erected to commemorate members of the Armytage family buried here, all take one's attention. The Armytage vault with their crest, a hand grasping a dagger, and the motto "Semper paratus," is seen in the floor of the church. In the vestry, Patrick Brontë's minute signature can be inspected in the register books which date back as far as 1612.

The churchyard has nothing very notable in it. The oldest stone is one to the memory of the Hilleley family of Clifton, and bears the date 1614. One bearing date 1756 has the following quaint inscription:—



Hartshead Church.

"John Fearnley, who died at Wakefield on
March 27th, 1756, aged 86 years.
Was born at Clifton, and as appears,
In Kirklees family lived seventeen years,
He at that place had seven baronets seen,
Here in his time had sixteen curates* been,
Lived fifty years at Hightown, there was married,
His first espoused was at Birstall buried,
Near to the other two he here is laid,
Waiting the resurrection of the dead."

Among the curiosities of this upland village are the remains of the stocks, close to the churchyard wall on the highway. An ash tree grew for about a quarter of a century atop of the weather-worn church tower. The remains of a genuine Saxon cross, styled Walton's Cross, are to be seen by the highway side leading to the common. The base is only now observable. Presumably this structure was in existence prior to the founding of the church.

The Rev. Patrick Brontë entered on his incumbency here on July 20th, 1810. He remained at Hartshead for five years, during which time he became deservedly popular as a preacher, so much so that when he exchanged with the Rev. Thomas Atkinson, incumbent of Thornton, the Hightown folks used often to walk over on a Sunday to hear their old clergyman preach.

* Incumbents.

Mrs. Gaskell tells us that during his stay here he was reputed as being a "very handsome fellow, full of Irish enthusiasm, and with something of an Irishman's capability of falling easily in love." During his incumbency here he married, in 1812, Maria Branwell, daughter of a Penzance trader. It is not the aim of

St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall.

this work to dwell on the biography of this much written about family. Whether he behaved well to Miss Branwell or not, we are not qualified to give an opinion, but the fact remains that they were married in the end of December, 1812. The following is a copy from the register books of Guiseley Church, near Leeds, where the ceremony took place:—

"The Reverend Patrick Brontë (Minister of Hartshead-cum-Clifton) of the Parish of Birstall, and Maria Branwell, of this Parish, spinster, were married in this Church by license, this Twenty-ninth day of December, in the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twelve,

By me, W. MORGAN, Offg. Minister.

This marriage was solemnised between { PATRICK BRONTE, MARIA BRANWELL,

In the presence of { JOHN FENNELL, ELIZABETH MARTON."

Miss Branwell's cousin, the daughter of Mr. Fennell, was married on the same day, by the Rev. P. Brontë, to the Rev. W. Morgan, at this time curate of Bradford Parish Church, and afterwards incumbent of Christ Church, Bradford. Through Brontë's intimacy with Mr. Morgan, he was led to an acquaintance with Miss Branwell, then on a visit to her uncle, Mr. Fennell, and thus the clerical friends married the two cousins from the house of Mr. John Fennell, who at this time was head master and governor of Woodhouse Grove School, near Apperley Bridge, and also a local preacher under the Wesleyan body. He afterwards became a clergyman of the Church of England, and died at Crosstones Vicarage, near Todmorden. His wife was sister to Mrs. Brontë's father. Her name was Jane Branwell.

Guiseley Church, where the parents of the immortal sisters were joined in holy matrimony, is worthy of note in passing. The church bears traces of both Saxon and Norman origin, but the greater portion of the building is in the style of the time of Henry III. The Rawdons of that ilk are buried within its walls. The church was restored and beautified in 1862. In the registers are to be seen entries referring to ancestors of the poet Longfellow, whose forbears were natives of this part of Yorkshire. We find the following:—"1666, Dec. 4th, William Laingfellow of Borelane, buried. 1706-7, Feb. 2nd, Wm. son of John Longfellow of Cawlane, buried."

We have little information regarding Patrick Brontë during his incumbency at Hartshead. We are told on excellent authority, that during his stay here, after his marriage, he was in a state of great impecuniosity, although Mrs. Gaskell seems to imagine that he was very comfortably situated. Here his two eldest daughters, Maria and Elizabeth were born.

One of the older residents of Hightown remembers Patrick coming to their house during his incumbency at Hartshead to read the "Leeds Mercury," which, at that

time, a weekly paper, was published daily on account of the war. This is the only scrap of information we have been able to glean about his Hartshead incumbency. In the early part of his time here, in his bachelor days, he lodged at a farm called Lousy, otherwise Bushy Thorn, between Hightown and Hartshead, with a Mr. and Mrs. Bedford, who, before marriage, had been upper servants at Kirklees Park, the "Nunneley" of "Shirley."

During the time that Brontë was living on the breezy heights, down in the valley hard by, at Liversedge, dwelt the sturdy Hammond Roberson, his, at one time, predecessor in the curacy of Dewsbury, and in the incumbency of Hartshead, which living he resigned in 1800.

Although Hammond Roberson has bulked largely as the model on the portrait of Matthewson Helstone in "Shirley," it must not be supposed that the immortal parson of that inimitable piece of West Riding life is intended as a caricature of the muscular incumbent of Liversedge. No! far from it. Helstone is Patrick Brontë hit off to a nicety. It was a bold stroke for a daughter to sketch a faithful picture of her father's

character, which she put into the body and clothed with the outside habiliments of another man. During Patrick's incumbency at Hartshead, the Luddite riots were in full swing, and we are told he acquired the habit of carrying firearms about this time, and no doubt when rector of Haworth, often recounted his reminiscences to an admiring circle of youthful faces. However, as Hammond Roberson was a noted figure in this district during the early years of this century, it is not out of place to give a short biographical sketch of a man who did more than anyone in his day for the cause of the Church in West Yorkshire.

Hammond Roberson was born at Cawston, a village in Norfolk, on February 5th, 1757. He was the son of Henry Roberson, a yeoman. Educated by a neighbouring vicar, he was, through the liberality of a pious merchant, entered on the books of Magdalen College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself by appearing in the Mathematical Prize Tripos, and was elected Fellow of his college in the same year. His career at Dewsbury we have already traced, and his coming to Heald's Hall, Liversedge, in the Spen valley. While riding to Hartshead from Squirrel Hall, Dewsbury

Moor, where he resided for seven years after resigning the curacy of Dewsbury, he was struck by the want of a church in the populous district comprising Heckmondwike and Liversedge, and with the irreligious character of the inhabitants. In his early struggles as a teacher, we are told, he made a vow that if ever he became moderately wealthy, he would build a church as a thank-offering. After many years' teaching, both at Squirrel Hall and Heald's Hall, where he had under tuition the sons of several high-class families, he acquired a moderate competence, and at once set about getting the main design of his life carried into effect.

The foundation stone was laid in December, 1812, by the Rev. W. M. Heald, vicar of the parish (Birstall). A pamphlet was issued shortly afterwards, entitled "An Account of the Ceremony of Laying the First Stone of Christ's Church, now building in Liversedge, with the Speech delivered on that occasion: By the Rev. Hammond Roberson, A.M., Late Fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge. Leeds: Printed by Griffith Wright, 'Intelligencer' Office, New St. End. Sold by Hatchard, London, and all other Booksellers. 1813."

The Luddite riots about this time were absorbing a

large amount of public attention; and Liversedge was the scene of one of the most determined attempts of these misguided, starving men to destroy mill property and machines. Within a stone's throw of Heald's Hall, lay Rawfolds Mill, where Cartwright made such a gallant defence with a handful of military against an immense mob. All this is now a matter of history. How Roberson assisted the mill-owner, both by his presence and by denouncing the riots from the pulpit, and what an amount of obloquy he encountered from the working classes thereby, is graphically set forth in Mrs. Gaskell's racy opening chapters of her biography of Charlotte Brontë; and in "Shirley" a fictitious account of this incident is to be found. In the spring of the next year (1813), the riots were well settled by the stern sentences passed at York Assizes. Cartwright was handsomely treated by the neighbouring manufacturers at the instigation of Roberson.

Liversedge (*lüf*, B., a flood), the overflowing sedgy pool, is now a considerable township, consisting of the hamlets of Millbridge and Littletown in the Spen valley, and Hightown and Robertown, on the heights. The church, which was the first Gothic ecclesiastical

building erected in England in the present century, was completed in 1816, and consecrated by the Archbishop of York, on the 29th of August, in that year. Besides defraying the entire cost of the building, (£7,474 odd) Roberson also endowed it with five acres

Liversedge Church.

of land for churchyard. The church is a very striking object, situated as it is on a rocky eminence among the reeking chimneys of the Spen valley. The edifice is in the style of the fifteenth century, with tower, nave, side aisles, clerestory, choir, and a crypt with cells for interments. It is a roomy building. There is

little stone carving about the structure, either outside or in, but the general effect is very pleasing to the eye. The generous donor, after all expenses were paid, wrote to a friend as follows:—"From the best judgment I can form, I am still solvent; more, I have no ambition to be. To pay my debts is my highest worldly ambition. There will be a shilling left for the sexton to level up my grave. And there is Liversedge Church. No other style of building at all respectable could be built for the same money, that is my opinion. However, I fall down on my face and say the 'General Thanksgiving.'" The musical peal of eight bells was added shortly afterwards. It may be interesting to the antiquarian to enumerate these. They were cast by Dobson, of Downham, in Norfolk, from cannon captured by the English at Genoa. The inscriptions on the individual bells are as follows:—

(1) Fear God and honour the King.
(2) Let us sing praises unto the Lord most high.
(3) This peal of bells was erected.
(4) Wm. Dobson, founder, Norfolk, 1815.
Regnat Deus, 1815. Wm. Dobson, Downham, Norfolk, fecit. (Roberson gave this bell.)
(6) My song shall be always of the loving-kindness of the Lord.
(7) These eight bells were cast in 1814 and 1815 with brass ordnance taken from Genoa.

(8) Dejectus Tyrannus Europa Liberata Pax jam annos XX. optata conventa Laus Deo 1814. (This was also Roberson's gift.)

These bells were pulled through the Spen Beck to the church by "strength of men." The tone of the Liversedge bells is noted all over the district, and they can be heard a long way, owing, it is supposed, to the rocky foundation on which the church is built. But Roberson's labours did not end here. He had also intended to provide a parsonage-house, and even went so far as to lay the foundation stone, but funds failing, the erection was suspended, and for twenty-one years it stood unfinished. However, towards the end of his life, his friends made a great effort, and the parsonage was completed. After the erection of the church, he employed himself actively in educational matters, Sunday and day schools receiving a large amount of attention. In 1830, he was appointed Canon of York. Not content with building a church himself, he incited others to do likewise, and it is stated that no less than thirty-five of his pupils built churches. Near Liversedge, he was instrumental in building churches at Cleckheaton, Robertown, Heckmondwike, and Birkenshaw, all in Birstall parish;

whilst in the neighbouring parish of Dewsbury, he was also the prime mover in the erection of those at Dewsbury Moor, Earlsheaton, and Hanging Heaton. At the consecration of Dewsbury Moor Church (St. John's) he preached. About March, 1830, immedi-

Dewsbury Moor Church.

ately after the foundation stone of the new Church of St. James had been laid, he wrote to his brother, Henry Roberson, near Norwich, as follows:—"If churches are not useful places, I have been one of the greatest fools in the north, for I have spent my strength, time, and money in church building."

After a long life spent in a good cause, he passed away on August 9th, 1841. An east memorial window has been erected to him in the church, bearing the following inscription :—"To the glory of God, and in memory of the Rev. Hammond Roberson, M.A., founder of this church in 1816, and its first incumbent, who died 9th August, 1841, aged 84 years," and his tombstone, in the churchyard, modest like the rest, bears the following inscription:—"The Rev. Hammond Roberson, founder of this church in 1816, died August 9th, 1841, aged 84."*

It may be thought that we are rather diverging from the main subject; but no account of the Brontë Country would be complete without a considerable sketch of this remarkable man, round whose name cluster memories of Sunday school founding and church building fame, which no doubt powerfully acted on the youthful mind of Charlotte Brontë, when resident at Roe Head in the immediate neighbourhood, and furnished her with stores of material for the production of "Shirley."

Among the independent, free thinking, rough

* We must acknowledge our indebtedness for a considerable portion of this biographical sketch, to an article on his great-uncle, written by the Rev. Canon Bailey, D.D., of West Farring Rectory, Worthing, in the "Heckmondwike Herald," for April 7th, 1887.

inhabitants of the district, Roberson was looked upon as a vile tyrant, and his name, even to this day, is mentioned with unqualified detestation by the great mass of the aged natives who remember him. "Thou'rt as wicked as Hammond," has become proverbial in the Spen valley, indicating a person of an obstinate and determined character. Still he did a great amount of good for the township; but he must be leader or nothing else, and he was thus continually coming into collision with the public. A great deal of this may have been due to the fact that he had been brought up under territorial influence, and the change from the civil and humble attitude of the agricultural peasant, to the boorish, brusque bluntness of manufacturing Yorkshire, must have been great indeed. It takes many men, making a change of this extraordinary character, a life-time to understand their surroundings and the population among whom they are situated.

While treating of Liversedge Church and its founder, it may be interesting to note, that when Roberson bequeathed the five acres for churchyard ground, he stipulated that all the tombs should be of one pattern, and also that the headstones should be of one height,

with a plain coping, and no ornamentation of any kind. One stone is still pointed out, which was, by the desire of the erector, ornamented with some elaborate scroll. The resolute cleric, hearing of it, repaired to the neighbouring quarry, borrowed a pick, and with it defaced the objectionable decoration. The stone remains to this day, despoiled of all embellishment, with the unsightly pick marks visible. His own stone is like the rest, and all in the old churchyard are of the same short, dumpy description. Mr. Roberson's idea was to keep out unsightly erections, but the rule also acts in preventing the introduction of beautiful stones. The grave of Cartwright, the hero of "Luddite" times, is in this churchyard, and the following inscription is placed over his ashes:—"Wm. Cartwright, of Rawfolds, died April the 15th, 1839, aged 64 years."

Some curious customs are kept up at Liversedge Church, no doubt instituted by the "Father of Church principles in the West Riding." For instance, Royal Oak Day (May 29th) is observed, the bells being rung at an early hour, and an oak branch is tied to the flagstaff or one of the pinnacles of the tower. This observance seems a most unheard-of thing in a district

where the ancestors of the mass of the people about were "Oliver's" men in the Civil War. Again, on Bonfire Day (November 5th), the bells are rung alternately with shooting, *i.e.*, the striking of all the eight clappers of the respective bells at the same instant. We are informed that on the evening of Gunpowder Day, the Rev. Hammond and his youthful pupils used to hold high revels at Heald's Hall, great bonfires, and grand displays of rockets and all kinds of fireworks going on for hours.

Many amusing anecdotes can be told of this extraordinary muscular Christian. Nearly all the stories somehow or other have a steed in them, Hammond and his horse being inseparable in more ways than one, for he always rode when abroad in his parish, and rode well, for he could sit the most skittish beast that ever reared or "buck-jumped." Even as an old man he was noted for his horse-taming. We have been told that when he resided at Squirrel Hall, Dewsbury Moor, he was riding out one day, when his horse reared, and by some extraordinary evolution became perched with his rider on the top of a high wall surrounding the yard. His legs having stuck fast

between the horse and the wall, he had to be assisted off, before the animal would condescend to come to *terra firma*.

He loved to terrorise over anyone he could get into a corner, but his bark was worse than his bite, for he threatened vehemently, but did not act cruelly at the finish. A lad stole his pigeons during the hour of divine service. The culprit was discovered, and he had him on the carpet many and many a time, threatening him with all the pains and penalties of the law, but nothing ever came of it. He must have had a curious disposition to torture a child in this way.

Another equestrian anecdote is worthy of permanent record. One Sunday, as he was riding to Hartshead to service, his horse became rather mettlesome and backed with its rider into a little coal cellar at a wayside cottage, constructed of upright flagstones. The more it backed the worse it slipped, and seeming frightened did not get out, but remained slipping and plunging, much to the delight of a crowd of loungers, who were enjoying the spectacle of "Hammond" being defeated by his horse. One man ran forward and said, "Will I take his head, sir?" "No," thundered Roberson,

nettled at his interference, "you may take his tail if you like; I'll manage his head." After a severe struggle, the unconquerable and patient clerical equestrian achieved his point, and trotted peacefully on his way.

Mrs. Gaskell tells a good story of him pumping water on the servant's would-be sweetheart, but the sequel is omitted. Two could play at practical jokes, and the half-drowned swain and a few kindred spirits paid a midnight visit to Hammond's yard, destroyed all the milk pans, and poured their precious contents on the ground as a libation to their god, Revenge.

As a concluding anecdote, let us give the following, as the circumstance narrated occurred at the end of his useful life, and showed the man in his true colours, brave to the last. He was so detested by a certain set of his parishioners that they, in bravado, said they would "roast an ox when he died." This having come to the Canon's ears, when near his latter end, he said, "I think you may tell them to get the ox ready." In such a spirit sunk to rest that valiant heart, which, ever true to its principles as the needle to the pole, cared as little for the applause as for the derision of men.

Such a man deserves to have his biography written. There are abundant materials for such a work, and there are relatives to whom the task would be an easy and a pleasing one. That he was an exceedingly eccentric man, there can be no doubt, but if it were only for his extraordinary perseverance as a pioneer in the extension of the Church in West Yorkshire, his eventful life is worthy of a permanent record. We have endeavoured to represent him in his true colours, a man of indomitable courage, perseverance, and tenacity of purpose, benevolent to a degree, self-sacrificing and generous, yet withal, an eccentric man with a hobby, in his case, a horse. When men become immaculate, we can look for perfection, but not till then, and in Hammond Roberson's case, it may be said that the good was not "interred with his bones," but has sprung to life again in church extension, which, since his time, has gone on without intermission in the Heavy Woollen District. He is still talked of as a "bad un," by the natives who never understood his excellencies, but a calm consideration of his character will convince anyone of candid mind, that he was a man of no common mould, a man before

his time, of whom the West Riding of Yorkshire has just reason to be proud.

Heald's Hall, the residence of Roberson, is situated on the other side of the valley, and is a substantial stone house, with a large park in front. Here the

Heald's Hall, Liversedge.

Rev. Hammond was wont to carry out his equestrian performances. The most tractable of his horses was one called Ruler, who could do anything at his master's call without the use of either bridle or whip.

The Hollows Mill, in "Shirley," is to be seen at Hunsworth, further up the Spen valley, but the events,

connected with the riot, took place at Rawfolds, about midway between Liversedge and Cleckheaton. There is nothing there to interest the curious, a large spick-and-span brick erection taking the place of the old mill. The skilful way in which Charlotte Brontë tosses about and transposes the actors, scenes, and circumstances involved in her story, is illustrated by this Rawfolds mill. The descriptions of the scenery and the mill correspond with the Hunsworth mills, the circumstances, with what occurred at Rawfolds. We shall devote some attention to the "Hollow," and "Hollows Mill" in another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

WE now come to the country which produced the members of the Brontë family, whose names have become famous; the country, in which the greater part of their uneventful lives was spent, where they were born, suffered, and died; the workshop where they fashioned and finished those masterly fictions, which will ever hold a foremost place in English literature. Hitherto, there have been but few allusions to the children. We have been occupied with the country of the father and mother, and the interest of the work must now deepen. We have reached the level line, having toiled up the wearisome incline of details connected with parents. We are fairly started on our journey through the scenes rendered immortal by the fact that they were the birthplace and home of the children—the

subjects for the landscapes which they have painted in imperishable colours, and peopled with a crowd of actors as various in character and appearance as the little folks of Queen Titania's court.

There is nothing very beautiful, nothing grand, or impressive, to be seen at either Thornton or Haworth. Under certain circumstances of season, weather, &c., as we shall afterwards show, this country appears to great advantage, and may delight a certain class of mind, but for the general tourist there is nothing to attract. He may "do" Thornton and Haworth, and feel woefully disappointed. To the true Brontë pilgrim, however, the scenes will appeal with stirring force, and in a Brontë fever the wayfarer may be pleased and instructed. Around the birthplace and home of the Brontës stretch bare heathery moors, with nothing to relieve the eye except here and there a verdant swamp, or a rocky height, here a rushing, brawling brook, and there an insignificant patch of ancient British forest. It is the sign of a great artist to possess the power to pourtray truly on canvas even a very uninteresting object, and just as George Eliot was able to idealise the prosaic surroundings of Gainsborough, Nuneaton, and

Bedworth, so have the Brontës succeeded in investing the moors with a new interest to their readers, and have shown that even these barren heaths are no unworthy theme on which to exercise the skill of the word-painter.

Thornton, the birthplace of Charlotte, Emily, Anne, and Branwell Brontë, is situated about four miles west of Bradford. It can be conveniently visited, along with Haworth, in an afternoon, by taking the rail (Great Northern) from Bradford to Thornton. On the right, as we approach the town, is the Old Bell Chapel, or correctly designated the Church of St. James, of which the Rev. Patrick Brontë was incumbent. It was built as a chapel of ease for the Thornton portion of Bradford parish during the vicariate of the Rev. Caleb Kemp, in 1612. Above the entrance is a notice board, bearing the inscription, "This chapel was beautified, 1818. P. Brontë, incumbent." The building is a mean-looking one, with an unambitious cupola and bell. It is in the Gothic style, but so bare and unpretentious, as to appear like an old dissenting meeting-house. There are two other chapels of ease in Bradford parish, viz., St. Michael's, Haworth; and Holy Trinity, Low Moor. Thornton is spelt "Torenton" in Domesday Book, "the

assumption being that the locality was covered with thorns or brushwood." The Thorntons were the first lords of the manor, which office is now held by Mr. W. S. Stanhope and Major Stocks. The principal land-owners are Messrs. Foster, of Queensbury, Mr. W. S. Stanhope, and Mr. F. S. Powell. Thornton is situated on a tongue of land bounded by the water-courses of two becks, which form the valleys of Pinchbeck and Bell Dean, and ultimately unite to form the Bradford Beck. It is an uninteresting-looking town, whose inhabitants are engaged in the cloth, shawl, and stone trades. Evidence is forthcoming to show that the cloth manufacture was carried on here five hundred years ago. In Mr. Brontë's time it was a mere hamlet of twenty-five cottages. Now it is a thriving little town, with 7,000 of a population, a railway station, free library, public baths, mechanics' institute, and handsome church.

The old parsonage,* the residence of Brontë, is situated in Market Street. It is now occupied by Priestley Jowett, a butcher, who has added a three-cornered shop to the front of the old dwelling. Over the doorway is

* For plates of the Parsonage and Old Bell Chapel, see Mr. William Scruton's "Birthplace of Charlotte Brontë."

the inscription, $J^{A}_{1802}S$, being the initials of the original owners, John and Sarah Ashworth. It must have been a comparatively new house when Patrick and his family came to Thornton. Its internal economy is much altered, but one can still see the room in which Charlotte first drew breath.

Mr Brontë, during his incumbency here, was an object of great curiosity to the dissenters. He kept himself very much to himself, as was his wont all through life, and consequently acquired a reputation for devotion to duty, and for sterling principle, among people whose good opinion was worth having. Among the general population, flighty, shifty, and fond of fuss, this independent position did not commend itself. One of the dissenters circulated a report to the effect that Mr. Brontë had been seen shaving at his bedroom window, on a Sunday morning, by the passers-by. On this story being brought to the incumbent's ears, he said, "I should like you to keep what I say in your family, but I never shaved in all my life, or was ever shaved by anyone else. I have so little beard that a little clipping every three months, is all that is necessary." This incident will serve to show the

difference between the beginning of this century and the end. In these days of Sunday trains, Sunday concerts, &c., people would hardly bother themselves whether their clergyman shaved upon Sunday or not. The anecdote reminds us of another, the scene of which was Glasgow, the Barony Manse kitchen door, 8 a.m., temp., 1848. *Milk Boy*, (to domestic)—"Is it true that the maister (Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D.) has broke (failed)?" *Domestic*,—"Na, na, naething o' the sort." *Boy*,—"A thocht as much, I got it frae the Frees," meaning of course, some member of the Free Kirk of Scotland.

Near Thornton are some old manor houses worthy of a visit. Thornton Hall, situated on the slope of the hill, below the church, has an old stone arbour in the garden, over which is the inscription, "Deus nobis haec otia fecit." The building is now divided into cottages. The old Leventhorp Hall, the ancient seat of the Leventhorps, who held the manors of Leventhorp, Horton, and Clayton, is also to be seen in process of transformation. Headley Hall, overlooking Pinchbeck, is an Elizabethan building, the inscription, "W. Midgley, 1589," being found on the western wing. The Midgleys were lords of the manor for about a

hundred years, from 1630. The estate has now passed into the hands of the Stanhope family.

Having inspected Thornton, we begin to climb up the road to Denholme, a distance of about two miles. Everything is bare and cheerless, great sweeps of pasture lands bounded by blackened dry-stone dykes. Over this very road in 1820 travelled the Brontë family, when removing to Haworth, and the procession of carts toiling slowly up Thornton Heights is still within the memory of the oldest inhabitants. Mr. Abraham Holroyd describes their progress thus in his "Currer Bell and her Sisters":—"Now and then the elder ones in the waggon are lifted out gently by the drivers, that they may have a run of half-a-mile or so, to "strengthen their legs" as the drivers term it, and then are gently lifted in again. Hour after hour passes, and they leave Old Allen, Flappit Spring, and Braemoor behind, and late in the afternoon the few inhabitants of the quiet village of Haworth behold them pass up their steepest of all steep streets, and halt at the door of the parsonage. Thus came the Brontës to Haworth, strangers among strangers."

Denholme, "the island of the Danes," is historically

important. Remains of Brigantine forts have been found in the neighbourhood, and a Roman road from Mancunium (Manchester) to Olicana (Ilkley) passes near this village. It came over Blackstone Edge and left Halifax on the right, and Cullingworth to the west. Between Cullingworth and Hainsworth the road was visible, and paved with neatly-set stones of the country, more than twelve feet broad, and is again found in several places on Harden Moor and on Rombalds Moor. It is styled in Drake's "Eboracum" "a Deva ad vallum." The lands of Denholme have passed through many hands within the last six hundred years. They belonged originally to Thorntons of that ilk. By that family they were given to the monks of Byland Abbey. After the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII., Sir Richard Tempest, who held a principal command at Flodden Field, was given them by his Sovereign. From the Tempests they passed to the Savilles, and later on to the Horsfalls. "Doe Park," where a compensation reservoir is now situated, received its name from being a portion of the deer park of the Tempests, which was several miles in extent. The history of modern Denholme is the history of Messrs. Foster's enormous mills.

After passing Denholme, we strike across the moors to Haworth. The path at first leads through swampy pastures, where in spring, the marsh marigold shines refulgent in all its golden glory, amid a galaxy of lilac lady's-smocks, and emerald blue forget-me-nots. On one occasion when we visited Thornton and Haworth, the air was heavy and the sky leaden; but this lovely trinity of the blossoms of marshland at our feet, and the joyous carol of larks overhead, seemed to dissipate the feeling of oppression which hung over the whole face of nature. After a short tramp through this moist ground, we find ourselves in a rough, narrow lane, which brings us down a steep hill to a snug little homestead, bearing the extraordinary name of Potovens.

After leaving this farm we soon reach the moors proper. There is nothing around us for miles but heathery expanses. The path through the heather is of sand as fine as that found by the seashore. The bilberry is scattered about the heath in great abundance, its porcelain-like flowers of purest pink contrasting beautifully in spring, with the blackened waste all around; while in winter, its evergreen leaves shine out with a tender verdure against the darker foliage of the

heather. Nothing but a few bilberry bushes, clumps of bracken, or a little white sand seems to relieve the blackness of the moor, and the only sound which breaks the stillness is the lark's shrill carol, or the hoarse cackle of the grouse as we rouse him from his heathy bed. From such meagre materials did Charlotte and Emily weave some of their finest word pictures. Charlotte, writing to a friend, says, "My sister Emily had a particular love for the moors, and there is not a knoll of heather, not a branch of fern, not a young bilberry leaf, not a fluttering lark or linnet, but reminds me of her."

From our own standpoint, we prefer the moors to the coast. The ocean is no doubt grander and more awe-inspiring; but the wonderful charm of the "heath-covered mountain" is this—that the one deep all-pervading colour below turns our attention to the sky, and impresses more on our minds the remarkable effects which are observable in the all-embracing curtain of the heavens. Thus we find that Charlotte, especially, had a remarkable power of describing clouds, the sun, and the moon. Her word-pictures are photographically correct, and yet imagination has full play. She says in "Shirley," "The moon rides glorious, glad of the

gale; as glad as if she gave herself to its fierce caress with love." Swinburne says that this sentence "paints wind like David Cox; and light like Turner."

Two miles walk across the heather brings us to the edge of a narrow well-wooded valley, backed by moors.

Haworth Old Parsonage.

This is the Worth valley, in which Haworth is situated. At our feet lies Oxenhope, snugly ensconed among trees. A short half-mile's walk brings us to Haworth, which begins in the valley, climbs up a steep hill, and extends along the hill-top. An American writer has described it as "one long unit of building, the whole

affair looking like some huge saurian monster, creeping up the hillside, with his head near the top, and his tail floundering at the base." This moorland village of grey stone is by no means the picturesque place that it is described to be. Several writers on the Brontës have painted it as a charming hill retreat, where the bees in heather time enter the village street; and the moors as a perfect treasure-house for the lover of scenery. Charlotte has told the truth about it:—"Mills and scattered cottages chase romance from these valleys; it is only higher up, deep in among the ridges of the moors, that imagination can find rest for the sole of her foot, and even if she finds it there, she must be a solitude-loving raven—no gentle dove." Haworth has, as Mr. Augustine Birrell says, been over-described, and we will let it pretty well alone.

The church and rectory of Haworth at the present day are in great part new erections. Since the day when the old church, redolent with memories of the Evangelical Revival, and of the Brontës, was swept away, Haworth has been nearly deserted by visitors. A few Americans still pay their devoirs at this literary shrine, now entirely robbed of all interest to Brontë

worshippers. The old church bore traces of great antiquity, and the proximity of the crosses at Stanbury and Oxenhope gives rise to the belief that Haworth had the right of sanctuary. The old rectory is now much altered, with a wing added, and surmounted by a

Haworth Old Church.

lightning conductor. Nothing remains of the old church, but the tower. The Brontë memorial tablet is also preserved. The present church is in the perpendicular style, of the same date as the base of the tower. It consists of a nave of six bays, with north and south aisles of five bays, and a chancel three bays long, with

north and south aisles, or chapels, of two bays. There is a beautiful rectangular panel of Derbyshire alabaster above the altar, a sculptured copy of Da Vinci's "Last Supper." The pulpit, font, and altar screen, are also of alabaster. Altogether, it is a fine country church. We

Haworth New Church.

feel how entirely out of place it is in this rough, radical, dissenting community. We would rather far have the old meeting house-like structure of Patrick Brontë's time, than this grandly upholstered, spick-and-span modern edifice. How the people of Haworth ever allowed the old place to be pulled down is something no fellow can

understand, for it attracted pilgrims from all ends of the earth, and brought money and trade into the stagnant little town. Now, we have a church in which all the local manufacturers of substance are held up to posterity in grandly emblazoned windows, with high-sounding inscriptions, while the little woman who did her duty nobly, both in her own circle and to the world at large, is commemorated in a little window of mean proportions, but of a peculiarly appropriate character.* If it pleases the Haworthians, well and good, but it has *dis*pleased that large and increasing class who love to associate certain places with gifted people, and thus to drink in the full meaning of their lives. The present rector of the parish has been much abused for his action in getting the old church destroyed, but there is a word to be said for him. Why could not the old church have been left and a new one built on another site? That he was bored by the crowds of visitors who poured into the rectory garden, and even wormed their way into his private sanctum, we have no doubt, but he might have adopted the easy method of allowing visitors to look round one

* The Brontë window was erected a few years ago, by an American citizen, "To the glory of God, in pleasant memory of Charlotte Brontë." It consists of six lights, illustrating the inscription, "Quamdiu fecistis uni his fratribus meis minimis mihi feristis."

day a week, and have been solaced by the thought that he was giving pleasure to thousands of worthy people.

In connection with Haworth Church, we propose to give a short biography of the Rev. William Grimshaw, the rector of Haworth from 1742 to 1763. Born at Brindle, near Preston, in Lancashire, in 1708, he was educated at the free schools of Blackburn and Heskin, and in his eighteenth year entered at Christ Church College, Cambridge, where he took his B.A. degree. He was ordained deacon in 1731. After filling curacies at Rochdale and Todmorden, he was presented to the living of Haworth, in 1742. In his youth he was idle and dissipated, and entered the Church, as he tells us, merely for a living, but became deeply impressed in 1738 with the responsibilities of his sacred calling. At Haworth, he found a most vicious, Sabbath-breaking population, and in a short time he almost worked miracles by his steady determination and earnestness. So much so was this the case that the Rev. John Newton, rector of St. Mary's, Woolnoth, the friend of Cowper, who wrote a life of Grimshaw, says that "Haworth is one of those obscure places which, like the fishing towns of Galilee, favoured with our Lord's presence, owe all their celebrity

to the Gospel." At this time the village was visited by the celebrated Countess of Huntingdon, Whitefield, the Wesleys, Rev. Henry Venn, Rev. John Newton, &c., all lights in the evangelical world of the day. Many amusing anecdotes could be told of Grimshaw. On one occasion the then Archbishop of York came to hold a confirmation service at Haworth, and to judge for himself how this eccentric divine divided the Word of God, set him a text and ordered him to preach from it. The prelate was so delighted and edified by the discourse, that he said to the assembled clergy, "I would to God that all the clergy in my diocese were like this good man." During his incumbency the number of communicants increased from twelve to twelve hundred. He often preached as many as thirty sermons in a week, staying at friends' houses and gathering a congregation. We have not space to enumerate the many anecdotes about him. He died in 1763, and his funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Henry Venn, vicar of Huddersfield, the Rev. Mr. Romaine preaching a similar discourse in London. The Rev. Mr. Berridge, writing to the Countess of Huntingdon, sets up "faithful Grimshaw" as a "model επισκοπος." Charles Wesley wrote two hymns on his death.

CHAPTER IV.

IN September, 1824, Charlotte and Emily entered the Clergy School at Cowan Bridge, situated near Kirkby Lonsdale, on the Leeds and Kendal road. We can fancy the stage-coach journey from Keighley by Skipton, past Eshton Hall, where lived Miss Currer, the benefactress of the school, whose surname was afterwards taken as the first part of the *nom de plume* of "Currer Bell," past Giggleswick, with its ancient grammar school, and Ingleton, nestling at the foot of gaunt Ingleborough, till the little hamlet of Cowan Bridge is reached, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Leck, a brawling brook, which rattles down a lovely valley to the Lune. Readers of Mrs. Gaskell must always retain a most unpleasant impression of this place. It is, in reality, a comfortable hamlet of whitewashed cottages, situated

among lovely pastures, and overshadowed by splendidly foliaged trees. More especially noticeable is a grand sycamore, which, in its spreading greenery, completely takes a cottage under its wing.

Cowan Bridge.

When we visited this hamlet, the air was redolent with spring flowers, and the apple blossom was in full glory—a snowy mass, pink-tinted—shedding a delicate aroma on the ozone-laden air. The Leck passes within a few yards of the building where the Brontës were at school. The Yorkshire Penny Bank is now located in one of the cottages into which this seminary has been

transformed. It seems a useful purpose to which to put so notable a building.

Charlotte Brontë's description of "Lowood" in "Jane Eyre," is Cowan Bridge to the life. She says, "Pleasure in the prospect of noble summits, girdling a great hill-hollow, rich in verdure and shadow; in a bright beck full of dark stones and sparkling eddies. * * * A bright, serene May it was; days of blue sky, placid sunshine, and soft western or southern gales filled up its duration. And now vegetation matured with vigour; Lowood shook loose its tresses; it became all green, all flowery; its great elm, ash, and oak skeletons were restored to majestic life; unnumbered varieties of moss filled its hollows; and it made a strange ground-sunshine out of the wealth of its wild primrose plants. * * * Have I not described a pleasant site for a dwelling, when I speak of it as bosomed in hill and wood, and rising from the verge of a stream? Assuredly, pleasant enough; but whether healthy or not is another question. The forest-dell where Lowood lay, was the cradle of fog and fog-bred pestilence, which, quickening with the quickening spring, crept into the Orphan Asylum, breathed typhus

through its crowded school-room and dormitory, and ere May arrived, transformed the seminary into an hospital."

The Leck is a mere runnel of water in summer, shallow and clear, but no doubt after winter rains,

Cowan Bridge, (from the Bridge).

or thaws, a mighty torrent, bearing down its channel the waters of hoary Ingleborough, which fills up the landscape behind the village. Leck's banks are befringed with hazels, alders, willows, and in its channel are huge blocks of limestone, which formation

here prevails. The whitewashed cottages under the umbrageous trees, the sweetly lying orchards in blossom, the sparkling, chattering Leck, the flower-laden air, and the trim, sleepy, comfortable look of everything and everybody in this out-of-the-way settlement, made up to us one of the nicest bits of rural England we had seen for a long time. As if to draw our minds away to man and his works, a train whisked past the hamlet as we were enjoying the quietness of the real country. We were informed at the post office that "a few folk from Yarkshire visited the place" to see the Clergy Daughters' School, as a memorial of Charlotte Brontë. That Charlotte was miserable all the time she resided here, was due, we are sure, more to the bad culinary arrangements of the seminary, than to the natural surroundings of the hamlet, for there is not a sweeter nook in the north of England, and we should advise Brontë lovers to visit this district in preference to Haworth.* Here they will see the little rustic settlement, and the picturesque church of Tunstall, where Charlotte worshipped. It is an infinitely

* An old cobbler, who contracted for the shoemaking and mending at the school, is said to have neglected his work shamefully, consequently leaking shoes produced bad colds.

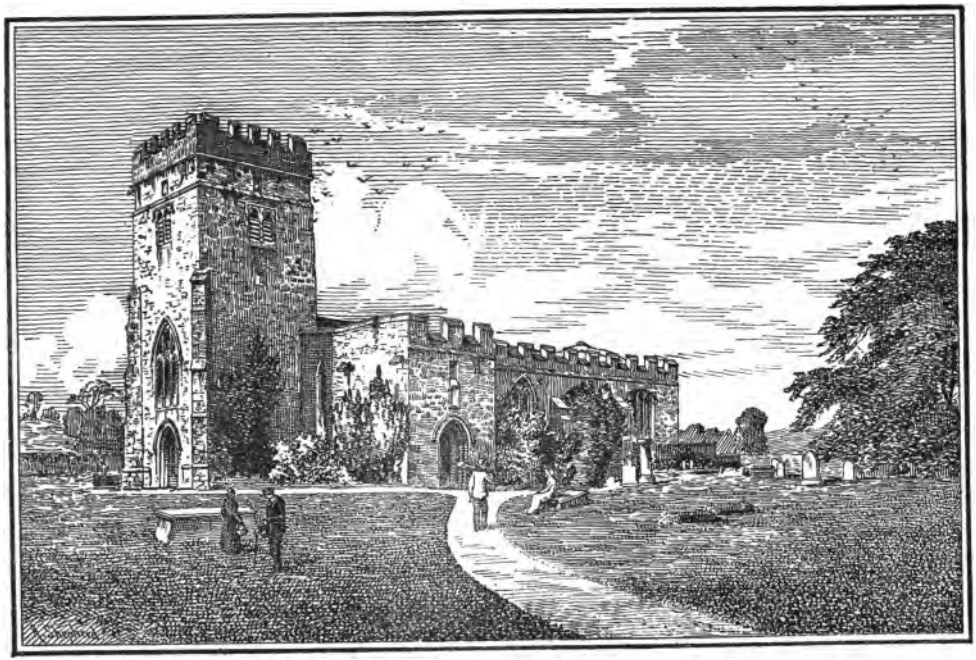
more cheerful place than lonely, heathery Haworth, and the amount of notice to be taken of these places is not to be measured by the fact that Charlotte was educated here, and used the school, its teachers and scholars in her immortal "Jane Eyre;" but over and above all that, the antiquarian interest of this valley, is much above the average. How fever should have made this breezy alpine region its home, and prostrated the pupils of the school, is amazing. Sheltered at the base of Ingleborough, surrounded by a finely wooded country, drained by quick running, sparkling streams, it is the beau ideal of a health resort. That the house was damp and sanitarily defective, may account for the advent of the fell destroyer.

The church of Tunstall is distant about three miles from Cowan Bridge, and the walk is one of the loveliest we have ever been privileged to take, through fields and lanes flower-gemmed, and instinct with a full chorus of animal life, enjoying the spring sunshine. The fields are gay with lambs sporting with their dams, the air alive with insect and bird music, the carpet at our feet strewn with the blossoms of May, the sky overhead a dome of stainless blue, the

sun shining in all his strength. Trees dot the landscape pleasantly everywhere by the Leck's banks, while behind rises the massive brow of giant Ingleborough, keeping watch and ward over all. Leaving the fields, we stray on by a lane bounded on one side by a park wall o'ergrown with ivy in its varied forms of lustrous foliage, and on the other by hedges of bird cherry which display its gorgeous milk-white spikes of dazzling splendour, and throw all around a grand soul-pervading perfume, only matched in our opinion by the delicious aromatic scent of the budding poplar, or the resinous odour of a pine wood. In the hedge bottoms, violets, primroses, buttercups, anemones, herb Robert, wood sorrel, starwort, and blue veronica luxuriate, and thrown against the background of the leafy hedgerow, gleam out in all their varied tints entrancingly. We soon reach the hamlet of Burrow, and the entrance to Burrow Hall. This is a delightfully secluded retreat, where a cluster of whitewashed cottages shine out beautifully in a clearing in the encircling mass of woods, a little stream crossing a bye-lane to the right. It reminds us of the forest scene in "As You Like It," and one almost expects to hear a

band of foresters bold, singing in chorus, "Under the Greenwood Tree." Burrow Hall is mentioned by Leland. It is the site of the Roman Bremontacæ. An altar was discovered here, dedicated to the Sabine deity Sangus, or Sancus. Urns, coins, and various vessels, a golden bulla, one of the Glein Neidoreth or Druid's amulets, were taken from the road leading from Bremontacæ. The Saxons probably occupied this place, as evidenced in the name.

After leaving Burrow, with the Fenwick Arms, a good inn, we again pass into the fields, and soon the turrets of Thurland Castle are seen rising above the trees, while within two fields' breadths, the tower of Tunstall Church comes into view, the edifice standing, with its surrounding graveyard, among fields, at some considerable distance from the village of that name. Hoary and gaunt is this ancient building, a contrast to the long wavy grass, the graceful many-tinted trees which surround the churchyard, and the dark hollies, elders, and yews which encircle its base. The church is dedicated to St. John the Baptist, but it is mentioned in the will of Sir Brian Tunstall, of Thurland, slain at Flodden in 1518, as the Church of St. Mychaell.

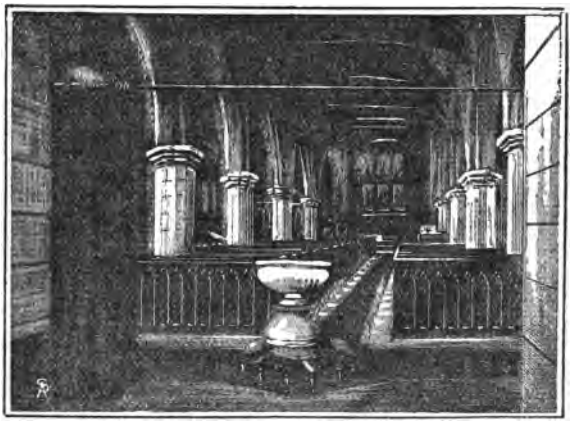


Tunstall Church.

Tunstall Church is mentioned in the Valor of Pope Nicholas in 1291. There are supposed to have been three churches on the site of the present one, which was built by Sir Thomas Tunstall, of Thurland, in the time of Henrys IV. and V. The edifice consists of a tower, side aisles, chancel, and spacious porch. The parapets are castellated, the windows ramified, the walls pointed, the columns angular and circled by broad bases. Over the south doorway are the remains of a coat of arms, as also in the hoary lichen-stained, weather-beaten tower, presumably that of the Tunstalls, of Thurland. The roof is almost flat, and great ugly gargoyles convey the water to the ground. Inside the church is the damaged effigy of Sir Thomas Tunstall, the founder of the present building. Some say that the monumental erection is intended to depict Sir Brian, killed at Flodden.

Thurland Castle, now the residence of Mr. Justice Manisty, was in former days besieged and ruined by the Parliamentarians, under Colonel Rigby, in October, 1648. The most noted of the Tunstalls was Cuthbert, Lord Bishop of Durham, the friend of Erasmus, who

died under confinement at Lambeth, November 18th, 1559. Sir Thomas More, writing of him to Erasmus says: "Tonstallo, ut nemo est bonis literis instructior, nemo in vita moribus, que severior, iter nemo est usquam, in convictu jucundior."



Interior of Tunstall Church.

Charlotte Bronte's connection with Tunstall Church* comes out in "Jane Eyre." Here it was that the Rev. William Carus Wilson, the patron of the Clergy School, was vicar, he being presented to the living in 1816, by

* "Brocklebridge Church" in "Jane Eyre."

Richard Toulmin North, Esq., and he resigned in 1828. He is the Rev. Mr. Brocklehurst of "Jane Eyre." He was succeeded by the Rev. Henry Currer Wilson in 1828, who was presented by Matthew Wilson, Esq. This latter was a near relative of Miss Currer, of Eshton Hall, whose name was used in the construction of the *nom de plume* of "Currer Bell." Charlotte may have here acquired some knowledge of the Currers, as she afterwards assuredly did, when resident at Haworth, and at Roe Head. Of this, however, more anon. One of the incumbents of Tunstall, the Rev. Ed. Tatham, objected to take the oath of allegiance to George I., and the Rev. Wm. Withers was appointed in his stead in 1718.

When we visited Tunstall, we lay down in the churchyard and listened to the voice of the wind, soughing and sighing in the circle of trees which fringed the enclosure, or stirring the long grass, waving at our feet; to the bustling, whirring flight of starlings, evidently feeding their young on the church roof; nothing in view but the blackened towers of Thurland, and the grand old battlemented church. We wished we could have chosen so calm a retreat where our

bones might rest after life's fitful fever. The words of Emily Brontë in "Wuthering Heights," came to mind:—"I lingered round them under that benign sky; * * * listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass, and wondered how anyone could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth."

The little gallery over the porch, where the Cowan Bridge pupils ate their mid-day meal between sermons, is still to be seen.*

Mrs. Gaskell paints this church as situated in a cold, unsheltered country; but either the face of nature must have changed since those days, or she must never have seen it, for we were struck by the beautifully wooded country, by the cosy lanes, the flower-spangled pastures and hedgerows, between Cowan Bridge and Tunstall Church. A much more interesting excursion is this, than that to Haworth. Now that Ingleton is so easily got to, Cowan Bridge and Tunstall are readily accessible to the Brontë pilgrim, and the whole surroundings of these places are interesting alike to the naturalist, the antiquarian, and the general tourist.

* See "Jane Eyre."

To see Casterton, to which place the Clergy Daughters' School was removed, one must go to Kirkby Lonsdale. After the removal hither, the seminary flourished, and Charlotte says in "Jane Eyre," "The school in time became a truly useful and noble institution." We give this extract to show that the eminent novelist had no animus against the Clergy Daughters' School as an institution; and there is no doubt, from her accounts of her free and easy rambles about Cowan Bridge, that life, like elsewhere, was not all "thorn" but that "flower" also showed itself at times.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER the death of her sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, Charlotte was sent to Roe Head School, on the Leeds and Huddersfield road, at that time presided over by Miss Wooler, who was always the valued friend of the little shy daughter of the moorland parsonage.

The country around Roe Head is very interesting, alike to the antiquarian, and to the observer of modern progress. The ancient and the modern jostle one another about in a strange medley. Here a ruined mansion or religious house, and there a great ugly block of mill buildings or rows of unsightly cottages meet the eye in all directions. Some general remarks on the district may not be out of place, as we esteem this our most important chapter, embracing, as it does,

the country depicted in "Jane Eyre" and "Shirley," and in it are the scenes not only of Charlotte's West Riding school life, but also of her life-long friendships. It may well be styled "The Shirley Country" as the greater part of that story, that wonderful realistic piece of West Riding life, was enacted in this neighbourhood, within a three miles radius of Roe Head School.

To see this stretch of country, one must mount the central table-land, which lies like an inverted bowl between the valleys of the Batley and Spen Becks, tributaries of the Calder. The top of Staincliffe Church, near Batley, or from Knowles Hill, Dewsbury Moor, will suffice as vantage ground to give one a complete view of this urban-rural landscape. After a heavy rain, and in a north wind, it is seen to perfection. The trailing smoke-wreaths are driven from the valleys, and the great sweeps of greensward, washed by the baptism of the heavens, shine resplendent in the sun; the towns black and grimy, like jewels set in an emerald background. This clearness of the atmosphere, in a manufacturing district, is a very rare occurrence, and it is the more appreciated when it is present. Everything in this life has its compensations. When we live in a

district contaminated with smoke and fog, where vegetation is soot-laden, and everything living is stunted and disfigured, we are thus led to look above our heads, where the heavens—bright with the glorious sun shining from a dome of stainless blue; or angry with the fiery fury of the storm; dappled over with fleecy cloudlets tinted by the soft, liquid, lambent shine of the moon; or blackened by the lowering night-cloud in deadly combat with the pale lamp of heaven—are ever present, uncontaminated, and impossible to deface. It was the living in lonely, heathery Haworth, and in this thickly-populated urban-rural district, which gave Charlotte her charming power of description in regard to the changes that are ever taking place in the firmament. As there are lights and shadows in human life, so there are lights and shadows in the landscape. If we have never tasted sorrow, we cannot really have felt joy. If we have never seen a smoke-grimed landscape, we cannot appreciate to the full the open, uncontaminated country. Thus the dwellers in towns have been ever the most charming describers of country scenes. The rare freedom of rural life seems to come upon them as a revelation, and they burst into an

almost ecstatic delight. To the dweller in the Heavy Woollen District, which we are about to describe, when the usually muggy atmosphere is clarified by wind and rain, and all natural objects stand out with a vividness and roundness to the eye, it is like a transformation scene. It is like a maiden fresh from her toilet, glowing and rejoicing in the sunshine. Features hitherto undistinguishable now shine out. Here and there a lovely bit of colour, a dimple, a pearly tooth, or an eye, bright with happy health, delight the eye, long tired with the grimy besmirchment of everything, and we are almost compelled to love our mother nature, who has returned once more to a semblance of her pristine beauty. The description of such a scene is intensely difficult, but we may say, that speaking generally, the Heavy Woollen District is a vast basin, formed by the valleys of the two already-mentioned becks. Great stretches of rolling pastureland, in which repose straggling ugly towns and villages, conterminous with one another—the factories huddled together, and the modern mansions of the *nouveaux riches* congregated over a neighbouring height, as far out of the reach of smoke as possible—here a corn or turnip field, there a

little patch of woodland, railways crossing the landscape in all directions, chimneys and pit heads to right and left, to north and south, to east and west, and you have a hurried picture of the Heavy Woollen District of to-day.

Yet it has its interest even to the æsthete. The play of cloud on these sweeps of greensward is sometimes very fine, the contrasts of nature and man at war, the strange mingling of the ancient and the modern, all give a peculiar charm to this part of the West Riding; and the connection of a novelist of the eminence of Charlotte Brontë, and her use of it in her novels, enhances its merits. We have no doubt, this statement, as to the natural beauties of the Heavy Woollen District, will be pooh-poohed by many of our readers; but we say this much, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and as a damsel with very ordinary attractions, may seem to one man an angel, and to another, a very ordinary-looking mortal; so our favourite district, "The Shirley Country," may seem to us a great deal better than it really is. The fact is that for years we have looked at it in shade and sun, in storm and calm, in shower and in shine,

by day and by night; have seen it under every kind of outward influence, and have found in its ever-varying face a solace and a blessing; have learned to love it as a child does its mother; have looked to see its aspect the first thing in the morning, and the last thing at night. It has sympathised with our sorrows, and shared our joys. It has been ever present, constant, and kindly. Can it be wondered then, that a true and tender affection has sprung up in the heart? Can it be wondered at, that that love must well up to the surface like the sparkling spring?

The Heavy Woollen District abounds in places of interest. Connected with the Brontës are Dewsbury, Hartshead, Mirfield, Birstall, and Dewsbury Moor Churches; Roe Head, Heald's Hall, Dewsbury Moor, Kirklees Park, Oakwell Hall, The Rydings, and Brookroyd, Birstall, and the Red House, Gomersal, Hunsworth Mills, &c. It is also rich in ecclesiastical remains, such as the Churches of Dewsbury, Batley, Birstall, Hartshead, Thornhill, and the old Priory of Kirklees. Among the mansions are Howley, Oakwell, Pollard Hall, Liversedge Hall, Kirklees, Carlinghow Hall, The Rydings, Thornhill Hall, Heald's Hall, and

Staincliffe Hall. There is also a battlefield, that of Adwalton Moor, and sieges were sustained by Thornhill Hall and Howley Hall, during the Civil Wars. Altogether, there is ample scope for a flowing pen, and we must leave this introductory portion and plunge *in medias res.*

Roe Head, as previously stated, stands on the Leeds and Huddersfield road, about five miles from Huddersfield. It is a roomy, comfortable-looking house, of Georgian date, with three tiers of old-fashioned semi-circular bow windows, looking out upon a sweetly-sloping country, backed by the woods of Kirklees—a little bit of uncontaminated nature among surroundings black and gloomy. When Charlotte was here at school, we are informed she was shy and plain-looking. It was here that she formed the life-long friendship with the "E." and "M." of Mrs. Gaskell's "Life," and here she acquired a great deal of the information used afterwards in the production of "Shirley." Roe Head is a place about which we have been able to glean very little information. It was built about the middle of last century, and is supposed to be haunted, the rustle of a silk dress having been heard at times in the upper

storey. When here, the Brontës attended Mirfield Church. Several of the girls, *e.g.*, "E." and "M.," had friends in the neighbourhood, and on market days at Huddersfield, their male relatives used to pitch parcels over the boundary wall into the sacred precincts of the school. In those days the old Leeds and Huddersfield road passed through the present yard, and so this feat was rendered easy.

The surroundings of Roe Head, no doubt, exercised a powerful influence upon Charlotte, and were used as material for the staging of the perfect West Riding drama of "Shirley." The manufacturing villages with their uncouth inhabitants, the sylvan chase of Kirklees, with its old world traditions, and the fine open country with its investing canopy of cloud, now lowering, now smiling as storm or sunshine rules the day, now casting its shadows over hill and dale, or bathing this rolling sweep of greensward in joyous radiance, all found a niche in this unique piece of literary workmanship. Here she began to be noticed as an observer of nature. Instead of joining in the games of her school-fellows, she used to "stand under the trees in the playground and say it was pleasanter. She endeavoured to explain

this, pointing out the shadows, the peeps of sky, &c. At Cowan Bridge, she used to stand in the burn, or on a stone, to watch the water flow by." Here also, the influences of the busy world touched the still life of the girls' boarding school. They felt in touch with Leeds and Huddersfield. The passing waggons and their teams, the manufacturers in their traps, or riding on horseback to the important markets at either end, kept this little female colony from altogether forgetting that there were within a few miles, great towns, instinct with busy life.

Miss Wooler's story-telling faculty, illustrating the walks in this exceedingly interesting district, with tales of olden times, made the little girl know this country well, and feel almost as much at home in it, as on the Haworth Moors. Her father's curacy at Dewsbury, and incumbency at Hartshead, close to Roe Head, had, no doubt, enabled her to have a pretty good general knowledge of the Heavy Woollen District, before she came into it; for the reverend gentleman was an apt story-teller, and used to delight to frighten his little fledglings by recounting many a ghostly legend of the Irish bogs, and doubtless the stirring times

of the Luddites during Patrick's incumbency at Hartshead, would form the theme for many an interesting hour around the rectory fire at Haworth. The being brought into contact with the girls of the district, who were mostly Radicals in politics, also sharpened her wits, and made her more ready to give reasons for her adhesion to the other side. Taken together with the next school where she was sent, the surroundings and influences at work upon her at Roe Head were exceedingly powerful factors in moulding her thoughts, and in our opinion were quite as important in their result, as the environment of Haworth and the moors, later on.

From 1832 to 1835, Charlotte remained at home, and returned in the latter year as a teacher to Roe Head, taking her sister as a pupil with her. During this second period at Roe Head, she paid frequent visits to her friends, "E." and "M.," at Birstall and Gomersal, these places being within easy walking distance. In 1836, Miss Wooler's school was removed to Heald's House, Dewsbury Moor, almost the next building to Squirrel Hall, the first residence and school of Hammond Roberson. At this time, Dewsbury Moor

was a moor indeed, with its green expanse dotted over with gorse bushes and clumps of bracken. Now, it is a strange medley of the ancient and the modern, old homesteads placed alongside spick-and-span new cottages and mills, the natural greensward being

Heald's House, Dewsbury Moor.

gradually covered by the building requirements of the age. This house is rather a noteworthy one, having been used by the followers of George Fox as a meeting place, and it was also the birthplace of the Rev. W. M. Heald, M.D., who is believed by some persons to be the original of the Rev. Cyril Hall, of "Shirley," from

which family it acquires the name of Heald's House. It is a large, comfortable-looking building of red brick, which always looks well in a manufacturing district, shining out against the greenery of the surrounding fields, and contrasting well with the blackened sandstone houses in the neighbourhood.* The windows of this residence have been altered since the days of Charlotte Brontë, but the house is in most part untouched. In the wall is a stone bearing the inscription, "Say God be Here. 1569. T. B. M." (the initials of the original owner.) Surrounding the building is an extensive garden and orchard, and we are told that while Charlotte resided here, a violent thunderstorm occurred, during which a fine poplar in the orchard hedge was struck by lightning, split in two, and the top part thrown into the adjoining pasture. Whether Charlotte made use of this incident in "Jane Eyre" or not we cannot say, but no doubt it made a powerful impression on her mind. Be this as it may, we shall have to consider another similar incident in connection with this district in this chapter.

* The elder Heald's father was a maltster. The kilns still exist at Heald's House.

During the stay of Charlotte at Heald's House, she is remembered by persons still living as being a diminutive, shy body, dressed in a little plain cloak. Anne was a pupil at Dewsbury Moor, Emily having had to go back from Roe Head to the moorland breezes of Haworth. The girls used to attend St. John's Church,* situated on Crow Trees Hill, Dewsbury Moor, which had only been consecrated some ten years previously by Archbishop Harcourt, the Rev. Hammond Roberson being the preacher on that occasion. On fine evenings they used to go to Dewsbury Parish Church, where the venerated Buckworth had just died, and been succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Allbutt, M.A., whose first wife was one of the Misses Wooler, at whose school Charlotte was now a teacher. On one occasion, Miss Wooler and some of her pupils were about to visit the first exhibition in Leeds, and the harness of the pony which pulled the covered country-cart broke, and they had to come home again. Mrs. Gaskell states that the air of Dewsbury Moor was not so bracing as the elevated region of Roe Head, but really, we think this is scarcely correct, for Heald's House is situated on the top of the inverted

* For picture of this building, see Chapter II.

bowl described at the beginning of this chapter, is an eminently healthy locality, and residence in the immediate neighbourhood for six years ought to entitle our opinion to some weight. The fact is, the dampness of the atmosphere, there being a heavy clay subsoil, was by no means the proper residence for a consumptive child like Anne. No doubt Charlotte spent many happy days here, especially when on Saturdays and holidays she visited her faithful friends, "E." and "M."

Before leaving Dewsbury Moor, let us recapitulate a little, and show again, in a connected form, what persons and places in this district are of importance. The institution of Sunday schools at Dewsbury, Hammond Roberson's curacy and residence at Squirrel Hall, almost next door to Heald's House, the Halliley family of Dewsbury, one of whom (the Sykes of "Shirley") married the Rev. John Buckworth, the connection of the Misses Wooler with Dewsbury Church, and lastly, the thunderstorm and the continual visits to school friends at Birstall and Gomersal; all may be grouped together as important facts in connection with the production of "Shirley." Charlotte's mind was so saturated with the progress of Church life in the Heavy

Woollen District, and by the tales of the Luddite riots, that the novel may be said to have been simmering in her inventive brain for years before it was penned.

It would be remiss in us, if, at this point, we omitted to say a few words on the pleasant houses where Charlotte spent so many happy days in this district. The Rydings, where she visited "E.," is a beautifully situated residence in the castellated style, standing on an eminence outside Birstall. In Charlotte Brontë's word-picture of "Thornfield" in "Jane Eyre," we have the description of this building given to the life. She says, "It was of proportions not vast, though considerable; a gentleman's manor house, not a nobleman's seat; battlements round the top gave it a picturesque look. Its grey front stood out well from the background of a rookery, whose cawing tenants were now on the wing; they flew over the lawn and grounds to alight in a great meadow, from which these were separated by a sunk fence, and where an array of mighty old thorn trees, strong, knotty, and broad as oaks,* at once explained the etymology of the mansion's designation.

* When Charlotte Brontë visited The Rydings, there were a number of fine double thorns, red and white, in the park.

The Rydings, Birstall.

* * * Hills seeming to embrace Thornfield. * * * The church of the district stood nearer Thornfield; its old tower top looked over a knoll between the house and the gates." Such is the Thornfield of "Jane Eyre" to-day, only the noise of machinery, the presence of long chimneys, and the making of new roads, &c., have robbed it of much of its quiet seclusion, and curtailed its grounds to a very modest field instead of a large park. In former times, before the Leeds and Huddersfield road was cut through the park, The Rydings was a beautiful residence, with pleasant surroundings, where grottoes, waterfalls, and fish ponds were constructed, and in whose woods blue-bells and starwort wantoned in spring-time in wild beauty; where game was abundant, and the hare, scampering from his leafy lair, was no unfrequent sight to the passer-by. Even yet, comparatively rare birds are shot in these woods, and occasionally game is observed even in this purely manufacturing district.

When Charlotte visited here, a tremendous thunderstorm occurred, during which a chestnut tree in the orchard hedge was struck by lightning and thrown to the ground. One of the most striking pieces of word-

painting in "Jane Eyre" is taken up with describing this; when Rochester proposes to Jane Eyre in the garden, which is redolent with "sweetbriar and southern-wood, jasmine, pink, and rose," all exhaling their delicious perfume in that peculiarly pungent manner so common before a thunderstorm. After she accepted him, she goes on to say, "But what had befallen the night? The moon was not yet set, and we were all in shadow. I could scarcely see my master's face, near as I was. And what ailed the chestnut tree? It writhed and groaned; while wind roared in the laurel walk and came sweeping over us. * * * A livid, vivid spark leapt out of a cloud at which I was looking, and there was a crack, a crash, and a close, rattling peal; and I thought only of hiding my dazzled eyes against Mr. Rochester's shoulder. * * * Before I left my bed in the morning, little Adèle came running in to tell me that the great horse-chestnut at the bottom of the orchard had been struck by lightning in the night; and to feel, through the open glass door, the breathing of a fresh and fragrant breeze. * * * The rooks cawed, and blither birds sang; but nothing was so merry or so musical as my

own rejoicing heart." The night before her intended wedding, she says, "I am feverish: I hear the wind blowing: I will go out of doors and feel it." She seeks the shelter of the orchard, and continues, "It was not without a certain wild pleasure I ran before the wind, delivering my trouble of mind to the measureless air-torrent thundering through space. Descending the laurel walk, I faced the wreck of the chestnut tree; it stood up black and riven; the trunk, split down the centre, gasped ghastly. The cloven halves were not broken from each other, for the firm base and strong roots kept them unsundered below, though community of vitality was destroyed—the sap could flow no more; then great boughs on each side were dead, and next winter's tempests would be sure to fell one or both to earth. As yet, however, they might be said to form one tree—a ruin, but an entire ruin. * * * As I looked up at them, the moon appeared momentarily in that part of the sky which filled their fissure; her disc was blood-red and half overcast. She seemed to throw on me one bewildered, dreary glance, and buried herself again instantly in the deep drift of cloud. The wind fell for a second round Thornfield; but far

away over wood and water poured a wild, melancholy wail; it was sad to listen to, and I ran off." Nothing seemed to escape the observant glance of Charlotte Brontë either in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, and the extraordinary manner in which she makes her characters, scenes, and weather seem to sympathise with one another is almost magical. We find the lightning-blasted tree again used as an image, when Rochester, blind and crippled, says he is "no better than the lightning-struck chestnut tree in Thornfield orchard." The lightning-struck tree was a favourite illustration with the Brontë family, for the father uses it in one of his sermons.

The Rydings is undoubtedly the Thornfield Hall of "Jane Eyre" but much of that story is derived from a legend connected with a well-known country mansion in North Yorkshire. In the deeds of The Rydings, which date back to the time of Edward IV., the names of such owners as Beaumonts, Popeleys, Batts, Greens, Hopkinsons and others, are there to be found. In the days of Justice Walker, who lived here in the early part of this century, a chairing was held, when Lord Milton, then M.P., was entertained

by the owner of The Rydings. We are informed by one who witnessed the ceremony that his Lordship was but a "red-headed lad" at the time. Courts were held at this house before Justice Walker, who was a retired court physician, and the first of four members of the family who have been medical attendants on royalty. He was the great-uncle of Miss Ellen Nussey, Charlotte Brontë's life-long friend, and consequently is worthy of interest to readers of this work. *

Although many persons are of opinion that The Rydings is the Thornfield Hall of "Jane Eyre," another party leans to the belief that Norton Conyers, near Ripon, the seat of Sir Reginald Graham, Bart., is the original. Norton Conyers is a three-storied manor house of the fourteenth century, and is battlemented, but not to the extent of The Rydings, the battlements being, at the present day, at least, mere shams, with the embrasures built up.

There is also the rookery and the gardens, but this

* On the occasion of Lord Milton at The Rydings, an old dame of Tory politics, happening to see the victorious Viscount passing her door in a carriage, surrounded by a cheering mob, called out, "Ger on wi' ya, ah'l Milton ya," at the same time flinging her pattens through the carriage window, happily occasioning no injury to the occupant.

is not all. The interior of the hall, oak-panelled and covered with portraits of men in armour, the brass handles and double doors, the untenanted upper storey, the position of the housekeeper's room, and the broad oak staircase, all answer to the description in "Jane Eyre." Again, the lovely prospect from the upper windows, of the broad park, dotted with its ancient timber, and the vale of Yore, the church at the gates (Wath), the distant hills, the *tout ensemble* of "grove, pasture and green hill," might rather apply to Norton Conyers than to The Rydings. However, the principal peg which connects this ancient manor house with the novel, is the fact that a mad woman was kept in close confinement in the third storey at some time during the last century, but as to who she was or how she came there, there is no record. At page 105 of "Jane Eyre," we read:—"Some of the third storey rooms were interesting from their air of antiquity. The furniture once appropriated to the lower apartments, had, from time to time, been removed here as fashions changed; and the imperfect light entering by their narrow casements, showed bedsteads of a hundred years old; chests in oak or walnut, looking with their strange

carvings of palm branches and cherubs' heads, like types of the Hebrew ark; rows of venerable chairs, high-backed and narrow; stools still more antiquated, on whose cushioned tops were yet apparent traces of half-effaced embroideries, wrought by fingers that for two generations had been coffin dust." We are informed that at the time Charlotte wrote her novel, the third storey of Norton Conyers exactly presented this appearance, the late baronet, Sir Bellingham, having sold the neighbouring estate of Nunnington, and stored the furniture in the garrets at Norton Conyers. Another link between this mansion and Thornfield, is to be found at page 294, where we find:—"The old time-stained marble tomb, where a kneeling angel guarded the remains of Damer de Rochester, slain at Marston Moor, in the time of the Civil War." Now Sir Richard Graham, the first baronet of Norton Conyers and of Netherby, Co. Cumberland, was mortally wounded at Marston Moor. *

It may be thought by many persons after reading the above paragraph, that there is not the slightest doubt as to the identity of Norton Conyers with

* In Wath Church is the tomb of Sir Richard Graham, and of Elizabeth, his wife.—See "Jane Eyre," page 294.

Thornfield Hall, but it is worth while to take the pros and the cons, and show how skilfully Charlotte hides the identity of her scenes :—

THE CASE FOR NORTON CONYERS.

(1) It is a three-storied house.

(2) The interior is entirely in unison with that of Thornfield.

(3) The story of the mad woman.

(4) The old furniture stored above.

(5) The knight slain at Marston Moor.

(6) The extensive prospect.

(7) The tomb of Sir Richard, and Elizabeth, his wife.

THE CASE FOR THE RYDINGS.

(1) It is a truly battlemented residence.

(2) The story of the thunderstorm during Charlotte Brontë's visit to her friend "E.," at this house.

(3) The presence of the double-flowering thorns in the park, and the naming of the mansion accordingly.

POINTS IN COMMON.

The church at the gates, the rookery, the sunk fence, and the gardens are all equally applicable to the one as to the other.

THE CASE AGAINST THE RYDINGS.

(1) It is only two-storied, and there is little prospect from its windows.

(2) It is not a house of the size and importance of Norton Conyers, and the garrets described in "Jane Eyre" are precisely like those at Norton Conyers.

(3) There is no story of a mad woman at The Rydings; nor

(4) Any connection with Marston Moor.

The picture in the illustrated edition of "Jane Eyre" is certainly The Rydings, with a storey added to it. It is quite possible that Charlotte paid a visit to Norton Conyers during the lifetime of the late baronet, when it was often uninhabited and open to visitors, and hearing the story of the mad woman and the slain cavalier, sketched a hybrid residence in the novel, answering to the appearance of The Rydings outside, and to Norton Conyers inside. Thus we find that many of her scenes are so skilfully intermixed with incidents which occurred elsewhere, that it is impossible to put your finger on the exact place, and consequently the identification of the localities is a work of great uncertainty and of comparatively little moment. We

still adhere to our opening statement that her works are in great part the product of a lively imagination, and there is no great end to be served by peering into such things. We have been induced to go somewhat deeply into this scene, on account of having had an opportunity of thoroughly inspecting this ancient manor house.

Apart from the Brontë connection, Norton Conyers is interesting to the antiquarian. We may say that the story of Cromwell having come there and insulted the dead body of Sir Richard after Marston Moor, is a fabrication. The Roundhead leader did assuredly pay a visit about this time to Ripley Castle, not very far distant, but he never came to the Grahams' mansion. There are reminiscences of a visit from James I., on his progress from Scotland to London for his coronation, in 1603, and the old oak bedstead on which he slept is still pointed out. Charles I. also stayed here five days waiting for supplies, but whether this visit took place when on his Scottish expeditions, or when in the time of the Civil War, does not seem to be accurately known. The bowling-green upon which he played is still to be seen.

When Sir Richard had galloped home from Marston, sick unto death with his wounds, he rode his trusty

charger through the grand old hall, and up the broad oak staircase into his bedroom, where he died. The mark of the horse's shoe is still to be seen on a portion of an old step retained in the present staircase. There is a full-length portrait of this loyal cavalier in the hall. He was Gentleman of the Horse to James I., and was created a baronet, 20th March, 1629, by the style of Sir Richard Graham, of Esk, County Cumberland. He purchased Netherby and the barony of Liddell, in the same county, of Francis, Earl of Cumberland. Sir Richard subsequently distinguished himself in the Royal cause at Edge Hill, where he lay wounded an entire night. A statue in the grounds of Norton Conyers commemorates this event. His eldest son, George, succeeded him at Netherby, and his younger son, Richard, was created a baronet of Norton, in 1662, on account of the services his father had rendered to the Royal House. At Norton, is to be seen the acknowledgment by Charles II., of a loan of £200 from Sir Richard the elder, and it is probable that, instead of repaying this debt with interest, the Merry Monarch created the second son a baronet.

Norton Conyers is beautifully situated in a large park, dotted over with some immense trees, many of them

shrouded in lustrous garlands of ivy. The great storm of October, 1881, caused sad havoc here as elsewhere, but many wood-giants still survive. The outlook from Norton is beautiful. To the left are seen the towers of Ripon Cathedral, three miles distant, while to the right stretches a green, sweetly undulating, wooded country, backed by the Wensleydale moors, through which slowly twist in serpentine convolutions the waters of the Yore. All about the house, peacocks are perched upon the walls, presenting a blaze of colour against the ancient rough-cast walls of the mansion. The statue erected to the memory of Sir Richard, with some bird of prey emblematic of revolution, fastening its talons on the head-piece of a warrior, looks calmly down upon this quiet scene—a happy contrast to the day when the brave knight, gashed with many a deadly wound, rode homewards from the fray at Marston.

It is very easy, to anyone acquainted with the Heavy Woollen District, after reading "Jane Eyre," to understand how Charlotte chose her names. For instance, "Fairfax" is well known around Birstall as the name of the Parliamentary leader at the neighbouring battle of Adwalton Moor, in 1643. The doctor, of "Jane Eyre,"

(Mr. Carter) bears a suspicious resemblance in name to a family, the members of which practised in this district for at least two generations, and one of whom attended the Brontës at Hartshead.

Birstall is a capital central point for investigating the "Shirley Country." As previously mentioned, around this town lie the houses which Charlotte visited on her Saturdays and Sundays, while at Miss Wooler's schools at Roe Head and Dewsbury Moor. In the immediate neighbourhood are the real Fieldhead and Briar Mains, and Birstall Church itself is the Briarfield Church of "Shirley." Anyone acquainted with Birstall must have had a rather obtuse cranium who could not identify such names as Briarfield, Red House Inn, Briar Mains, and Fieldhead, for there is a Briar Hall there, above The Rydings, while the Red House at Gomersal, the residence of the Taylor family, and Fieldhead, the birthplace of Priestley, are within a mile's walk of Birstall Church. Again, such names as Rushedge, Whinbury, and Nunneley are all suspiciously like familiar West Riding place-names. The names of the Yorkshire characters in "Shirley" have all a smack of the Heavy Woollen

District about them, such as Sykes, Mann, Ainley, Pearson, Armitage, Barraclough, and Scott. The clergymen, from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, as at the present day, and the inevitable Scotch doctor, MacTurk, all seem to fit in so well with the Briarfield of to-day, that it was no wonder that the *locale* of "Shirley" was so soon unearthed. Yet the characters and scenes had no connection in reality, and she peoples certain well-known houses with inmates who never lived there, and shoves about her characters till they are perfectly unrecognisable as the originals at all, and the conclusion we have arrived at is that none of her characters are portraits. They are simply imaginative studies worked up on a framework of fact, and this is true, not only of "Shirley," but also of her other works, with perhaps the exception of "Villette," where the true story of "her trivial life and misfortune" is sketched fearlessly. The scenes, however, are unerringly correct as photographs, as we shall show, and this is favourable for our design in writing this work, for in many instances the descriptions of houses and scenery can be given in her own words most fittingly, and these masterly sketches, dashed off in a few words, are

the *beau ideal* of what descriptive writing ought to be. *

Round Briarfield Church, cluster many of the principal events in "Shirley." There the valiant Helstone was rector, and ruled his parishioners well and fearlessly. Here resided at the rectory, Caroline Helstone. It was in Briarfield churchyard that Gerard Moore dodged Helstone after he had escorted Caroline home from Fieldhead. Here the Whitsuntide school feast took place. The ever-to-be-remembered dialogue between Caroline and Shirley in the churchyard about mother Nature, is one of the finest jewels in a work bright with the touch of real genius. Shirley says, "The grey church and greyer tombs look divine with this crimson gleam on them. Nature is now at her evening prayers; she is kneeling before those red hills. I see her prostrate on the great steps of her altar, praying for a fair night for mariners at sea, for travellers in deserts, for lambs on moors, and unfledged birds in woods. * * * I will stay out here with my mother Eve, in these days called Nature. I love her—undying, mighty being! Heaven may have faded from her brow when she fell in

* Dr. MacTurk, of Bradford, attended Charlotte Brontë in her last illness, in consultation with Dr. Ingham, of Haworth.

paradise; but all that is glorious on earth shines there still. She is taking me to her bosom, and showing me her heart." This grand outburst of natural affection, this rapt reverie on the dying day, is broken in upon by something really startling, for immediately a small company of red-coats ride past, and William Farren issues from the church with a child screaming lustily. Here, we have Charlotte Brontë at her best, descriptive writing of the highest class combined with powerful imaginative work, never tedious, for immediately followed by the narration of incidents of strong human interest. Here, Shirley and Caroline spent the night when the followers of King Lud were marching on Hollows Mill. The very amusing chapters relating to the visit of Caroline Helstone to Gerard Moore, when wounded, are also relating to the Briarfield district; and we have a peep inside the church, when Martin Yorke goes thither to communicate with Miss Helstone as to her lover's health, when we are told "all the lined and cushioned pews were empty; only on the bare oaken seats sat ranged the grey-haired elders and feeble paupers." We are also told that when the Opening of the Ports took place on June 18th, 1812, the ringers

cracked a bell in Briarfield Church. The final scene of "Shirley" is played out in this church, when Robert and Louis Moore are respectively married to Caroline Helstone and Shirley Keeldar.

Birstall Church.

Birstall Church and the old vicarage are, as we are told in "Shirley," "pleasantly bowered in trees," and are prominent objects from Oakwell Hall, the Fieldhead of "Shirley." Birstall is a very large parish, out of which several smaller parishes have in course of time been carved. It is the seat of a ruri-deaconry, and the vicar, the Rev. Canon Kemp, is the rural dean. The church

is a stone building in the Gothic style, has a nave, aisles, chancel, and fine embattled tower, containing eight bells. Three buildings are supposed to have existed previously to the present edifice, which is almost entirely new in 1870, the only portion of the church of Henry VIII.'s time remaining being the fine embattled tower. The advowson of Birstall belonged to the Priors of Nostel, and in 1312, we find William de Birstall, Prior of Nostel, resigning. On the north side of the altar is the burial place of the Nevilles, of Liversedge Hall, a powerful family in olden days; and on the south side, that of the Batts of Oakwell Hall, both families now extinct in this district. The restored church, costing £18,000, is one of the most beautiful ecclesiastical buildings in the Heavy Woollen District. There are many fine stained windows in the church, one treating of the Anunciation, the Birth of Our Saviour, Simeon in the Temple, and the Adoration of the Magi, is erected "To the Glory of God, and in memory of the Rev. William Margetson Heald, M.A., Hon. Canon of Ripon, for nearly forty years the beloved and faithful vicar of this parish, who died September 25th, A.D. 1875. This window is erected by the

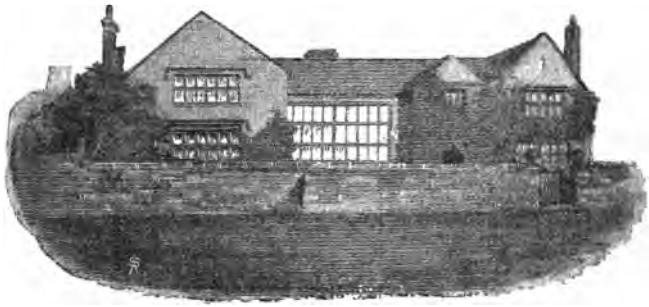
congregation of this church." There is also another window erected to Rev. William Margetson Heald, M.A., by parishioners and other friends. It consists of four lights, and treats of the Resurrection and Ascension. This, the predecessor of Canon Kemp, is supposed by many people to be the prototype of the Rev. Cyril Hall in "Shirley." During his lifetime, he never sought to repudiate the character, but said it might have equally been taken for his father, the Rev. W. M. Heald, M.A., M.D., who was vicar before him. The names, Heald's Hall and House, are already familiar to our readers, and as we have previously said, Charlotte Brontë resided at Heald's House when Miss Wooler's school was removed thither from Roe Head. It is easily understood that the birthplace of the older Heald should have had an interest to Charlotte, when she frequently attended Birstall Church with her friends, "E." and "M." The elder Heald was born at Heald's House on Dewsbury Moor, and educated at Batley Grammar School. He was primarily destined for the medical profession, and wrote a poem called the "Brunoniad," in favour of the "Brunonian Theory of Medicine," which in time swept away the indiscriminate use of the bleeding-lancet.

John Brown, M.D., the author of the "Brunonian Theory of Medicine," was a native of Berwickshire, and died in comparative obscurity in London, in last century. His theory has been the basis of much of our most truly scientific treatment in modern medicine. Dr. Heald was a liberal in politics, and was greatly respected in the parish.

There are many objects of interest in Birstall churchyard, for an account of which, we would refer the reader to Scatcherd's "Morley." We must adhere mainly to the subject proper, and never lose sight of the Brontës in our narration of historical particulars.

About half a mile from the church, is Oakwell Hall. This is the Fieldhead Hall of "Shirley." This old manor house stands on a considerable eminence overlooking Birstall, and corresponds exactly to the striking sketch given in "Shirley." In front of it are the remains of a moat, and the strong position of the building, as seen from the valley below, points out its time of erection, as one in which the danger of civil war or even invasion had not entirely passed away from the minds of men. The date over the doorway, overhung with glossy ivy, is 1583, and the whole

character of the building is Elizabethan. The best point of view from which to see this old hall, is from above in Fieldhead Lane, where, looking down into the valley, Oakwell, Birstall Church, and Gomersal, are all brought into one picture. A smoky haze may



Oakwell Hall.

hang over the mansion, but round about it are green fields, chattering brooks, and waving woods which after rain look fresh and beautiful, and whether in the verdant dress of spring, or in the days of the sear and yellow leaf, help to set off to perfection this gem of ancient times, with all its historic associations clinging to it. Everyone who has read Mrs. Gaskell's

"Life of Charlotte Brontë," is familiar with the families who owned this house and lands, the Batts and the Fearnleys. Fairfax Fearnley, the celebrated sessions lawyer, who resided here after the days of the Batts, in last century, held a great hunting match in the neighbourhood, in 1763, and the antlers of the stag killed on that occasion are still to be seen hanging in the panelled hall, and depending from them a card containing the names of the fourteen lucky ones who had enjoyed the chase and dined on the venison. Among them, were Sir Fletcher Norton, His Majesty's Attorney-General, who was one of the most discourteous men of his time. On one occasion he was pleading before Lord Mansfield on some question of manorial right, and unfortunately said, "My Lord, I can illustrate the point in an instant in my own person. I, myself, have two little manors" (manners). The judge immediately interposed in his blandest manner with the apt retort, "We all know it, Sir Fletcher." On another occasion, when, as Speaker of the Commons, presenting the Civil List Bill, he addressed the King in the following extraordinary language :—"Your Majesty's faithful Commons have now granted to your Majesty

an income far exceeding your Majesty's highest wants, hoping that what they have given cheerfully, your Majesty will spend wisely." Sir Fletcher afterwards speedily rose to be Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Speaker of the Commons, and Lord Chief Justice, and was created Lord Grantley, after his father's estates near Ripon.

Oakwell Hall is the most perfect specimen of an Elizabethan manor house in the Heavy Woollen District, and it is well preserved. For many years it has been used as a girls' boarding school, and it is not an unfitting purpose to put the old hall to, associated as it is, with one of England's greatest novelists, herself a teacher, and bound up with the history of the Civil War. That a semi-fortified old manor house, tenanted by the lords of wide acres, should come to be used as a school, is rather a curious coincidence, but in this immediate district, many old mansions have, at the present day, been put to a similar purpose.

Our space will not allow us to quote from "Shirley," the photographically correct sketch of Oakwell, with its latticed windows, its peach-coloured drawing-room, its oak-panelled parlour. The interest in this place, however, is only of an antiquarian kind. If Shirley

Keeldar had ever had an existence, if instead of being the dauntless Emily Brontë she had been drawn from a lady of the Heavy Woollen District, there would have been more to take up the attention in the connection of "Shirley" and Oakwell. Two circumstances, however, cause a certain amount of fame to attach to this locality. The battle of Adwalton Moor, called by Hume Atherton Moor, took place about a mile distant from Oakwell. In that fight, Captain Batt, of Oakwell, fought on the King's side. The majority of the West Riding men were Parliamentarians. Here, however, in the midst of their own supporters, the army of the Parliament was ignominiously defeated by the Earl of Newcastle, a man more noted for his literary wife, and for his feats in horsemanship, than for his military talents. At Atherton, the King's cause prospered well, Lord Ferdinando Fairfax and his son, Sir Thomas, afterwards the great Lord Fairfax, having to retreat, the former to Bradford, the latter to Halifax. A lane, styled Warren's Lane, which runs past Oakwell, was the route taken by Sir Thomas in his flight. The Royalist cause was at that time in the ascendant, but it was but a flash in the pan. The hour and the man had

not yet come, when the Parliament bore down all before them, and the brilliant, but short-sighted monarch, was a close captive in the hands of his enemies. Here it may be observed as a fact, not perhaps much dwelt upon by historians, that Charles I. was one of the greatest patrons of the arts who ever occupied the English throne, and during his reign artists flocked from all ends of the earth to the English court, where they received a noble welcome, and were well rewarded for their work. The Stuart period was one rich in literature and in art, and whatever virtues the House of Hanover may possess, they will never reign in the hearts of the people as did their predecessors. The lust for absolute power wrecked monarchs who were otherwise exceedingly popular, and, be it observed, no English court was more thrown open to the possessors of literary and artistic genius than that of the Stuart sovereigns.

In connection with the Battle of Adwalton, the following entry occurs in the register of baptisms at Birstall Church:—"1643. Memorandum, that from about the 6 of April being this month untill the 20th day of Julie followinge the Earle of Newcastle's armie did banish such ministers as took part with the Kinge

and Parliament, and so diverse children were omitted." Thus, the vicar at that time must have been a Puritan. The siege of Howley Hall took place on June 20th, and the Battle of Adwalton Moor on June 30th, 1643.

A fine portrait of Newcastle can be seen in the hall of the Drighlington Mechanics' Institute, presented by Colonel Tempest of Tong Hall, and we should advise the Brontë pilgrim to see this counterfeit presentment of the loyal cavalier.*

One of the most eminent men of science ever produced by Yorkshire, sprang from Fieldhead, close to Oakwell and Adwalton Moor, in 1733, in the person of Joseph Priestley, eminent no less as a chemical pioneer, than as a popular advocate of free thought in religious matters. He was the discoverer of carbonic acid, of oxygen and many other important gases. The son of a Calvinistic clothier, he was destined for the Nonconformist ministry, and became the pastor of an Unitarian chapel in Leeds. Here he discovered carbonic acid gas. He then became private librarian to the

* For full particulars of Adwalton fight, see the Duchess of Newcastle's Life of her husband, Lister's "Autobiography," Scatcherd's "Morley," and Markham's "Life of the great Lord Fairfax."

Earl of Shelburne, afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne, and during his stay in this nobleman's household, he gave a large part of his time to chemical researches. He again resumed his work as a dissenting minister in Birmingham, which has honoured him by the erection of a marble statue in 1874. He next became President of the dissenting college at Hackney, finally, owing to party bitterness directed towards him, becoming a resident in the United States in 1794, dying at Northumberland, Pennsylvania, in 1804. He was the first to render chemistry an exact science, and, although an uncompromising Unitarian, he was a zealous opponent of infidelity and showed a generosity almost unequalled toward those who differed from him on religious questions. The description of his death-bed scene by his son in his "Memoir," is most striking, showing how bravely this honest doubter met the dread enemy.

The Red House at Gomersal is about half a mile distant from Oakwell, and is a picturesque residence of the time of Charles II., surrounded by fine trees, and having in front a smooth, velvety lawn. This is the Briarmains of "Shirley," sometimes called Yorke's

House. Here, lived the Taylors, school companions of Charlotte's, and here, many a spirited discussion took place between the daughter of the Church, a true Tory to the backbone, and the family of red-hot Radicals, so typical of this district even at the present day. The characters of Yorke and his family will live for ever as true portraits of the best class of Yorkshire manufacturing families, cultured and warm-hearted, and yet withal, rough and uncouth. Joshua Taylor (Hiram Yorke), was a man of great energy, and became rich by trade, but was of a peculiar turn of mind. An ancestor of his built a chapel near by the house, but it is now converted into cottages. This is the celebrated Briar Chapel of "Shirley," where the ranting scene baffles all description, and is a true, if strangely drawn picture of religious excitement, such as is common among the toiling masses in this district. The Red House must always be an object of interest to the appreciative reader of "Shirley," for the scenes where Yorke and Mrs. Yorke figure, are among the most amusing, are the light and airy work which sets off to the full the grand solid masonry of Moore's struggles and Helstone's heroism.

Gomersal is not without its memories of a visit from Oliver Heywood in 1679. All this district is rich in Nonconformist memories, and is also associated with Luddism, for a maker of shear frames in Gomersal used to have his workshop guarded night and day during 1812. Yet, in this village, full of chapels and Radicals of the deepest dye, the Primrose League has lately founded the Shirley Habitation, and it bids fair to be a flourishing institution. This modern product of Conservatism, planting itself close by the whilom abode of Hiram Yorke, seems almost like a judgment upon his memory for the bitter anathemas which he hurled at the Church and State, and is one of the most extraordinary revenges which the whirligig of time has effected in this district. Shirley Keeldar was an uncompromising Tory, yet it shows considerable pluck for this organisation to have chosen Gomersal as a centre of operations. Charlotte Brontë little thought that a Conservative association would establish itself close by Briarmains, redolent with memories of Republican sentiments, stated in no measured terms.

The next building to Red House is Pollard Hall, a fine Elizabethan residence, almost lost among

surrounding trees, and nearly covered by wisteria and other climbers. This is notable as the residence, in the early part of the century, of Herbert Knowles, a youthful poet of no mean powers, who was patronised by Lord Spencer and Southey. His "Lines written in Richmond Churchyard" are of a very high order of merit. In the "Literary Gazette" of 1824, are to be found several of the poems of this Yorkshire Chatterton, who died at the early age of nineteen years.*

Brookroyd, where Charlotte visited her friend "E." on several occasions, is situated opposite the Rydings, on the hillside, but no particular interest attaches to the building, so we will dismiss this in a word. It was, we believe, while living here as a visitor, that she corrected the proofs of "Shirley," and yet made no sign to her friends of her intention of becoming an authoress. We have been informed by one who saw her here, that she had the smallest of feet.

Hunsworth Mills, near Cleckheaton in the Spen Valley, not far from Birstall and Gomersal, is the prototype of Hollows Mill, in "Shirley," and the valley of the beck, which forms one of the branches of

* See "Leeds Worthies," by Rev. R. V. Taylor, B.A., p. 266, &c.

the Spen, is The Hollow. Hunsworth is a truly retired retreat, standing on a little rising ground overlooking the Whitehall road from Leeds to Halifax. Round this little, quiet hamlet are several pretty bits of woodland, covering the slopes of pleasant dells formed by the tinkling rivulets which help to form the Spen Beck. In May-time, their banks are covered with a rich carpet of flowers. The garlic, with its lily-like leaves and its handsome milk-white blossoms, the lady's smock, with its lilac petals, contrast beautifully with the full golden glow of the marsh marigold, in the marshy hollows; while by the beck sides, blue dog violets and fragile wood-sorrel kiss the water, and shine out sweetly in the sunshine. Richard Jefferies says, "the wood sorrel, like the purest verse, speaks to the inmost heart." All round, the fields are spangled with purple-tinted wind flowers of delicate flesh colour, golden king cups, and lurid purple tuberous vetch, while in the hedgerows the freshly-green shoots of the bracken take away from the nakedness of the land. In spite of the surrounding collieries of the Bowling Iron Company, and the near proximity of Hunsworth Mills, many of these hollows are worth a visit. There are several

extensive woods, among these being Firdale, Hunsworth and Oakenshaw woods, all a medley of stunted oak, graceful birch and hazel trees. The Hunsworth Mills stand at the foot of the ravine which is The Hollow in "Shirley," and is described graphically as follows, in the chapter where Mrs. Pryor and Caroline Helstone make an excursion to its pleasant quiet:—"Here, when you had wandered half a mile from the mill, you found a sense of deep solitude; found it in the shade of unmolested trees; received it in the singing of many birds, for which that shade made a home. This was no trodden way, the freshness of the wild flowers attested that the foot of man seldom pressed them; the abounding wild roses looked as if they budded, bloomed, and faded under the watch of solitude as in a sultan's harem. Here you saw the sweet azure of bluebells, and recognised in pearl-white blossoms spangling the grass, an humble type of some star-lit spot in space." The Hollow is like this still, only it is soot-grimed, and in the immediate neighbourhood are railways, factories, blast furnaces and mines; while into the beck the Oakenshaw and Hunsworth Mills excrete a deep logwood and indigo mixture,

reminding us of the truth of Moore's prophecy in "Shirley," where he says, "I will pour the waters of Pactolus through the valley," and Caroline replies "I like the beck a thousand times better." Above Oakenshaw Mills the beck is as pure as crystal. Hunsworth Mills were built originally in 1785, by Mr. John Taylor, an ancestor of Joshua Taylor, the Hiram Yorke of "Shirley." Yorke Mills are mentioned in "Shirley," no doubt also intended for Hunsworth. About a mile above Hunsworth Mills is Oakenshaw, with a famous cross.

Looking north from Oakenshaw, is seen the massive front of Bierley Hall, the birthplace of the celebrated botanist, Dr. Richardson. Bierley ultimately passed into the hands of Miss Currer, of Eshton Hall, who owned one of the finest libraries in England, a part of which is still to be seen at Sir Mathew Wilson's residence at Eshton Hall near Skipton. Miss Currer was a great public benefactress to Cleckheaton, Oakenshaw, and district; and doubtless Charlotte Brontë heard much of this wonderful book collector, partly by her connection with the Cowan Bridge School and Tunstall Church, the name of Currer suggested itself

as a fitting christian name for the *nom de plume* of a bluestocking, and there was a masculine ring about it which no doubt had a fascination for a creative being like herself.

The prophecies in "Shirley," about rows of cottages and enlarged mill premises, &c., have all been fulfilled to the letter, but the neighbourhood of Hunsworth is still well worth a visit when the fields and hedgerows are gay with spring's blossoms, and every bush and tree is tenanted by a lively orchestra of feathered songsters—but such places are only passable in May, for later on, everything in a manufacturing district gets dried up, no flowering plants but the spring blossoms are worth seeing, and the foliage of the trees seems blighted almost as soon as it has got into full leaf—however, we may say that The Hollow is also worthy of being seen in autumn when the bracken, blasted and tawny in some places, in others a deep green, forms a striking setting for a wealth of oaks, beeches, guelder-roses, and maples, varying in shade from a dull brown, crimson and lemon, to the brightest green, as they are seen in exposed or shaded situations.

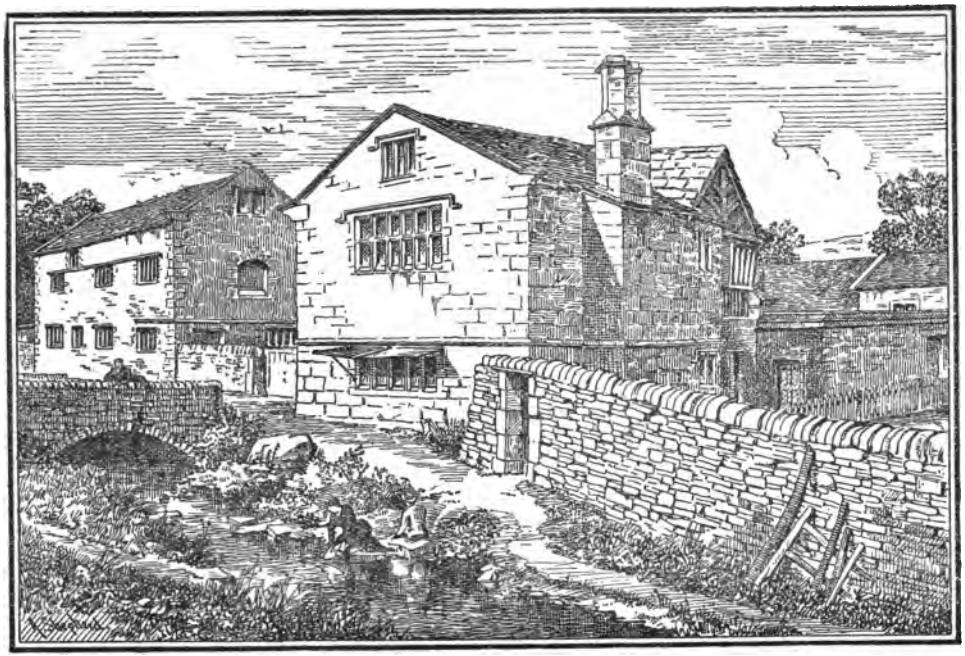
Kirklees Park, the seat of Sir George Armytage, Bart., situated near Roe Head, is made use of by Charlotte Brontë in two of her novels, viz., in "Jane Eyre," as Ferndean Manor, and in "Shirley," as Nunneley. We have here the Nunbrook and the Three Nuns Inn, and no doubt the name Nunneley suggested itself as not at all unlike "Kirkeleya," the old spelling of Kirklees.

It is not our intention to enter into a detailed description of this place with its interesting associations with Robin Hood and the old religious house founded by Raynerus Flandrensis in the time of Henry II. The subject has been written to death, and nearly all Yorkshire antiquarians have visited the graves of the bold outlaw, and of the nuns. Suffice it to say, that Robin Hood was no mythical character, but a real man, whose name can be found in the Wakefield manorial rolls of the time of Edward II. He is mentioned in Longland's "Vision of Piers Ploughman," in Fordun's "Scotichronicon," also by Fuller, Camden, and Drayton, but instead of being a hero of the twelfth century, he really existed in the fourteenth.

The old Gate House, from which Robin shot the arrow before his death, and his grave, a bowshot from the building, are still to be seen. As Dr. Whittaker says, "The noble beeches that overshadow the tombs, the group of deer that repose beneath, and the deep silence that is only interrupted by the notes of wild or the cries of domestic birds, all contribute to excite very pleasing sensations." Beyond the tombs and the remains of the old nunnery, there is nothing of definite antiquarian interest, but a Roman temporary post, on the road from Manchester to Tadcaster, situated near Robin Hood's grave.*

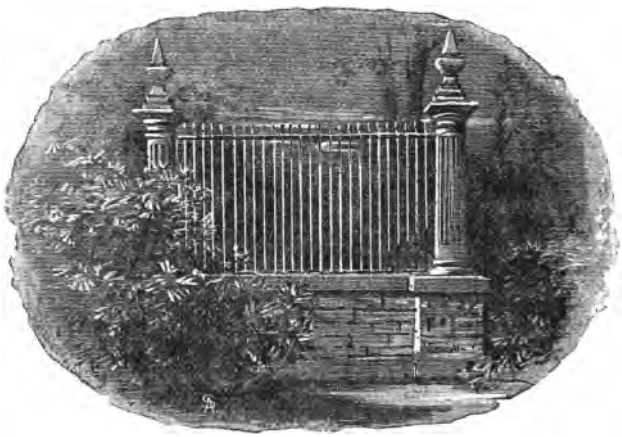
As we have said more than once Charlotte Brontë's descriptions of scenery are photographically correct, and this can be appreciated to the full in the account of Nunneley Wood in "Shirley." At the present day Kirklees is a fine English deer park, with encircling woods, set down amid the smoke of several large towns. Here is the picture from "Shirley:"—"On Nunwood—the sole remnant of antique British forest in a region whose lowlands were once all sylvan

* For particulars of Kirklees and Robin Hood, see Baines' "Yorkshire, Past and Present," Vol. IV., Smith's "Old Yorkshire," Vol. I., "Robin Hood Ballads," &c., &c.



The Gate House, Kirklees.

chase, as its highlands were breast-deep heather—slept the shadow of a cloud; the distant hills were dappled, the horizon was shaded and tinted like mother-of-pearl, silver-blues, soft purples, evanescent greens, and rose-shades, all melting into fleeces of white cloud, pure as



Robin Hood's Grave, Kirklees.

azury snow, allured the eye as with a remote glimpse of heaven's foundations. * * * To penetrate into Nunwood is to go far back into the dim days of eld. * * * That break is a dell, a deep hollow cup lined with turf as green and short as the sod of this

common. The very oldest of the trees, gnarled, mighty oaks, crowd about the brink of this dell: in the bottom lie the nuns of a nunnery. * * * I know groups of trees that ravish the eye with their perfect, picture-like effects: rude oak, delicate birch, glossy beech, clustered in contrast; and ash trees, stately as Saul, standing isolated, and superannuated wood-giants clad in bright shrouds of ivy."

Referring to Kirklees mansion house, we find in "Jane Eyre:"—"The manor house of Ferndean was a building of considerable antiquity, moderate style, and no architectural pretensions, deep buried in a wood. * * * Ferndean is buried, as you see, in a heavy wood, where sound falls dull and dies unreverberating." Such is Kirklees at the present day. It is not a show place in the general sense of the term, and it is useless to describe it further after the grand word-painting of the Nunwood which we have ready to hand.

Near the gates of Kirklees Park, on the Huddersfield road, is an extraordinary stone column generally called the "Dumb Steeple." It is said that this was the boundary of the sanctuary of Kirklees, and anyone

The Dumb Steeple, Kirklees.

outside this pillar was *doomed*. It being supposed that Dumb Steeple is a corruption of *Doomed Steeple*.

The Armytages of Kirklees, the present owners of the estates, are descended from John Armytage, of Wrigbowles, County York, living in the time of King

Stephen. The present baronetcy was instituted in 1641, but there was a new creation in the time of George II., and the present baronet is the fifth of the new creation, and eighth dating from Francis, the original baronet. The estates have been in the hands of the Earls of Warren, the Savilles, Deightons, Ramsdens, Gargraves, and finally, in the reign of Elizabeth, passed into the hands of John Armitage, of Farnley Tyas, yeoman, the founder of the present family.

Some Brontians affirm that the original of Ferndean Manor is to be found at Wycoller Hall, near Colne, a long eight miles walk from Haworth. This ancient seat of the Cunliffes is noted for its grand open circular fireplace, with stone benches round, in the fashion of the time of Henry VI. There used to be, some forty years ago, large woods surrounding this ruined settlement, situated on the upper waters of the Calder. It is a matter of indifference whether Kirklees or Wycoller is the original of Rochester's retreat.

Connected with Mirfield are many objects of antiquarian interest. In the old church, all of which is demolished except the tower, Charlotte Brontë

worshipped. The new church, after a design of Sir Gilbert Scott's, is one of the finest specimens of modern early English Gothic in the kingdom. An old building at the top of Shilbank Lane, called Paper, or Papist Hall, is worthy of a visit, as the house to which the last prioress of Kirklees retired in 1539.

One interesting reminiscence relating to Kirklees, in conclusion, is the fact that Chaucer's "Lytell Geste of Robin Hode" says,

> "Syr Roger of Donkestere,
> [And the pryoresse of Kyrkesley],
> There they betrayed good Robyn Hode,
> Through theyr false playe."

Again,

> "Cryst have mercy on his soule
> That dyed on the wode,
> For he was a good outlawe,
> And dyd pore men moch good."

CHAPTER VI.

IN a previous chapter Haworth in its modern aspect has been treated of. We now proceed to give a short sketch of its surroundings, the moors. Before leaving this serpentine settlement let us take a peep at the Black Bull Inn, a comfortable hostelry near the church gates, where the Brontë pilgrim will find good cheer and a kindly welcome. Here the unfortunate Branwell used to hold forth to the gaping rustics, sometimes writing a letter with each hand on different subjects and holding a conversation at the same time. The truth of this is vouched for by persons still alive. The chair which he used to occupy is still to be seen. Since the days when the old church and rectory were in existence, when two hundred visitors used to sit down to dinner on a

Sunday at the board of this celebrated inn, a great falling off has been observed in the numbers of Brontë worshippers at the shrine of Haworth Church. The village seems asleep, in comparison with Abbotsford for instance. The two most noticeable things about

Black Bull Inn, Haworth.

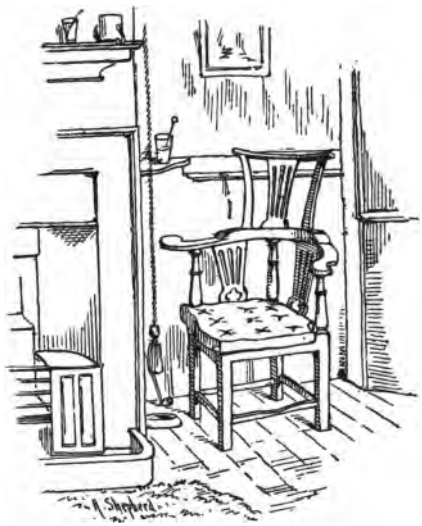
it are its clean streets and the superabundance of inns; the latter, no doubt, a remnant of the times, when this *ultima thule* attracted pilgrims from all ends of the earth.

As we have previously mentioned, there is nothing

about the Haworth moors, except their association with the Brontës, to attract the lover of scenery. Still, under certain conditions of weather and season, some fine effects are to be noted in the landscape. When Emily returned from Roe Head, suffering from *nostalgia*, like the young Swiss on foreign service, the bracing health-laden breezes soon restored her to health. These wilds will have ever a fascination for the Brontë pilgrim, although they had less to do with developing the Brontë genius than many people imagine.

We have visited the Haworth moors in spring, autumn, and winter; when the tender green of the heather had not yet appeared, and the rich colours of early winter were destroyed; when the purple wastes were fragrant with honey-laden heath bells; when the blackened heath was whitened over with the year's first snows, and the evergreen crowberry, bilberry, club-mosses, and lycopods, shone out verdant against a background of pitchy peat, blasted heather, tawny bracken, and mellow-grey boulders. Winter is the time to see these wilds to greatest advantage. In summer, the heather is gorgeous, animal life is active; but the black moors, resplendent though they are in places with

glowing pinks and purples cast against a peaty background, are nothing in comparison to the magnificent contrasts which are visible in early winter, when the



Branwell Brontë's Chair, Black Bull Inn.

frost has nipped the bracken, when the rocks are mantled with mossy greenery, and the moorland evergreens, done with fruit bearing, shine out verdant amid the surrounding blackness; when the becks are in

full song, and the sound of the waterfalls, replenished by melting snows, is highly musical.

Our winter visit, December 7th, 1886, to the waterfall at Ponden Kirk, is worthy of recording. Passing up the lane behind the rectory we pursued our way by a field bye-way of flagged stones, much worn, and standing deep with melted slush, and soon found the turnpike to Stanbury. As we entered the high road, a fine prospect greeted us. On our left, the moors were snow-besprinkled, giving them a distinctly piebald appearance. Over them hung heavy snow-laden clouds, which cast great drifting shadows here and there, while among these cloud shades, sunlit spaces gleamed out, lustrous with dark green heather, and the more verdant bilberry shining through it. On the right was the brook, flooded by the rains and snows of the previous night, rolling rapidly to the Aire, while, on either side, were its emerald-green pastures mapped out in plots by lichen-stained dry-stone dykes—a striking contrast. Over this stretched a dome of stainless blue; the sun shone brightly overhead, and the greensward sparkled brilliantly with countless glistening diamond drops of rain.

The road had little to interest about it, with its moss

grown walls, from the interstices of which, ferns peeped green in the short-lived, but brilliant wintry sunshine. On every side, the merry music of sportive, sparkling springs, bursting from the hillsides in all directions, was a perpetual feast for the ear.*

Before us was the little village of Stanbury, reposing peacefully on the top of a knoll, while further west a great bulk of moorland covered with its wintry mantle, reared itself gaunt and grim, at the head of the valley, and loomed out like a miniature mountain in its hoary grandeur amid the surrounding verdure of the lower part of the valley.

After a walk of about a mile and a half, we reach Stanbury, a neat little settlement with a Free School and a Wesleyan Chapel, which with its chimney stacks at either end, and its squat, substantial look, might easily be mistaken for a comfortable hostelry of the old coaching days. A very beautiful specimen of a Georgian house (date 1785,) with its solid masonry, its broad white lines of pointing, its roomy, contented look, the red curtains at the windows, and its trim old-fashioned

* Sladen Beck, crossed before reaching Stanbury, is the scene of what is generally known as the Brontë Waterfall; but one valley is very like another on these moors.

garden, all give one the feeling of home comforts, a warm fireside and a kindly welcome within.

Descending the hill from this hamlet, we soon reached a bridge over the beck, which here rushed along with full-toned vehemence. Having crossed the alder-bordered stream, we struck along its banks till we came to one of the reservoirs of the Keighley Corporation, where a splendid artificial water-shoot was showing to great advantage. A strong west wind was tossing the little lake into a wild confusion of miniature waves, breaking every minute pettishly on the banks. Immediately above the reservoir is Ponden, an extraordinary old place, where the road is so narrow that a long-armed man might almost touch the opposing walls of the houses an each side of it. Ponden House, the only respectable looking dwelling in the hamlet, bears the following inscription: — "The old house (still standing) was built by Robert Heaton for his son Michael, Anno Domini 1634. The old porch and peat house were built by his grandfather Robert Heaton, A.D. 1680. The present building was rebuilt by his descendant, R. H., 1801." Huge boulders scattered around this hamlet testify to the extraordinary results

occasioned by the bursting of Crow Hill bog, which took place during Mr. Brontë's incumbency, and was the cause of his preaching a sermon, and writing a poem.* A short walk across the fells to the left soon brings us to the lower part of the pass in which the waterfall is to be seen.

The Ponden Kirk† Fall is a retreat of rare beauty, as seen under a wintry, showery sky, such as overhung all nature when we visited this dreary solitude. The beck was in full flood, and the *tout ensemble* of this desolate pass, with its foaming staircase fringed with winter's evergreens, will never be forgotten. At the lower end of the pass the heathy banks are clad with hazels, thorns, birches, brackens, and brambles, the trees all gaunt and leafless, the bracken tawny and blasted, shining out against the dark green heather. A few blood-red hips gleam on the spiny briars, the only bit of bright colour about. All else is dark and sombre, gaunt and leafless. The beck, here, has left off roaring over the falls; and gurgles, sobs, and groans, as if tired and vexed with its efforts in passing the rocky

* Sermon and poem can be procured at Brown's bookseller's shop, Haworth. Price Twopence.

† Presumably the site of a Druidical temple.

staircase; as if out of breath with its precipitate flight from the moors to the happy green valleys beneath.

We ascended the pass by keeping as much in the bed of the stream as possible, crossing from side to side as the exigencies of the case demanded. By following this method of investigation, we could see all the nooks and interstices of this water-worn channel, all the foam-crested corners and little whirlpools, hemmed in by mellow-grey boulders and heather-clad banks.

About half-way up, we rested on a boulder and looked down the valley. We were shut in by an amphitheatre of hills, snow-speckled, and dismal, whose sides were perforated in every direction by countless springs, which poured their waters with a tinkling, trilling flow into the main stream, roaring lustily as it leapt from rock to rock. Scattered around us were great blocks of millstone grit, among which the heather, bilberry, crowberry, the bracken, and hardy northern fern, grew luxuriantly; the crowberry, bilberry, and fern as green as in summer, the heather and bracken, frost blasted and withered, black and tawny. Overhead, the sky was as changeable as a young lad's love, at one moment bright and sunny, at another frowning and threatening. Arrived at the

Scene on Sladen Beck, near the Waterfall, Haworth Moor.

top of this pass, we thought of the passage in "Jane Eyre," "The mountain shook off turf and flower, had only heath for raiment and crag for gem—where it exaggerated the wild to the savage, and exchanged the fresh for the frowning—where it guarded the forlorn hope of solitude, and a last refuge for silence." This is a masterly and rapid sketch of such a scene as Ponden Kirk.*

From a rising ground near a quarry above, the prospect towards Rombalds Moor was most captivating. The greenery of the lower part of the valley, with the sinuous brook shining here and there, the blackened wastes around dusted over with snow, the moors again beyond, with their varied purple tints, from the palest slatey blue to the deepest imperial purple, all made up a picture at once unique and unforgetable.

Crossing the beck, and passing a peat bed which bore traces of lately having been disturbed, we reached a rocky platform carpeted by turf, on which we are informed Charlotte wrote "Jane Eyre." Into the valley, she and her sisters used to come with a kettle, and having lit a fire, enjoy an outdoor meal in summer

* This description applies to a Derbyshire scene.

time. Looking down from this coign of vantage, we found that the best view was yet to come, for the play of cloud and sun upon the seething caldrons, and their rugged environment of rock and heath, was something to be remembered. A cackling grouse rose before us, as we left this dizzy height. But as the wintry day was drawing near its close, we had to betake us to the road, and as we neared Haworth took a last look at heathy hill, foaming fall, and stormy sky. Murky mountains of cloud big with storm hung portentously over the frosted, hoary height, while for a moment the sun peeping affrightedly over the hill "like ony timorous carlie," crowned these black storm-bearers with a glowing, golden edging, as they rested for a moment on a background of purest sapphire. Such was our winter view of the moors, and anyone who wishes to thoroughly drink in the desolation of these wilds must see them under similar circumstances.

Our autumn visit to the waterfall was on August 11th, 1887. The sportsmen were preparing for the next day, at the Black Bull. The air was clear and bracing. Swallows flitted past on pliant wing, the plover piped his dismal note, bees and butterflies were sipping the

The Brontë Waterfall, Haworth Moor.

sweets from the choice heathy blossom, as we wended our way to Ponden Kirk, now a rocky staircase innocent of water. The grass was burned to a brown, but still the bell and purple heather and ling were all in bloom. The yellow tormentil, the graceful feathers of the horse-tail, the fairy bells of the foxglove, the ruddy berries of the mountain ash, were all present to please the eye, but the verdant pastures, and the yeasty, frothy beck, were awanting. In quiet shady hollows, little dripping springs were sending pearly drops through tufts of quivering golden saxifrage, surrounded by a fitting framework of ferns, wood sorrel and verdant mosses. From the rocky platform, a few fine contrasts of pearly-pink bell heather, shining green bilberry and black peat were to be seen, but taken as a whole, the moors and waterfall were disappointing after the winter visit.

It was when walking, after her marriage, to see this fall in its wintry water power, that Charlotte caught a severe cold, from which she never thoroughly recovered. So a melancholy interest attaches to this desolate spot.

We recommend any real lover of scenery to see this region on such a day as we saw it, with its melting snows, its full-running, loud-tongued brooks, and its

grand war in the elements. Says George Searle Phillips:—"He who would understand nature must visit her in storm as well as in sunshine, in winter, as well as in summer. The ploughman driving his team, the hunter with his gun and dog; nay, even the very stone-breaker upon the king's highway, is dearer to her than all the poets and namby-pamby walkers of the drawing room."

Sowdens, where Grimshaw lived, and where there is an inscription similar to that "H. E., 1500," in "Wuthering Heights," is supposed by some Haworthians to be the real Wuthering Heights, but we have it on the best authority, that the original is some lone farmstead on the moors not far from the fall, so that anyone who visits Ponden during a snowstorm, as we did, will be thoroughly able to appreciate Lockwood's walk from Wuthering Heights to Thrushcross Grange.

We have not gone out of our way to hunt up the originals of either localities or characters, and we therefore adhere to our original determination, to let, as it were, a breath of Brontë-land in upon the reader, and thus place him in a position in which he can thoroughly enter into the spirit of the novelist.

CHAPTER VII.

THIS chapter will be devoted to odds and ends of scenes connected with the Brontës.

Emily was for six months teacher in a school at Low Hill, near Halifax, from which views of the Oxenhope moors were to be seen, and also of Kirklees and Hartshead. Here, as elsewhere, she suffered from an exaggerated form of home-sickness, and was glad to return to the superintendence of the kitchen at Haworth, where housewifery and study went on at the same time, and where occasional walks on the moors braced her for her household round of duties.

Charlotte was for a brief space of time governess in a family at Upperwood, near Rawdon, a district well known to her father. From Woodhouse Grove School,*

* The Rev. P. Brontë conducted the first examination of this school.

close by, he had married his wife, and the ceremony took place as before mentioned at Guiseley Church, in the immediate neighbourhood. Rawdon is pleasantly surrounded by woods, and besides Woodhouse Grove, there is the Baptist Training College, and the Ripley Convalescent Home, all beautifully situated in extensive grounds. Woodhouse Grove, where the Rev. John Fennell was first master, has been the *alma mater* of many men of eminence, including the late Sir William Atherton, Attorney General, Dr. Thomas Laycock, Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh University, the eminent psychologist, &c. The Friends have also a school at Rawdon. The Rawdons of that ilk were an ancient family, whose name became merged into that of Hastings; Francis, Lord Rawdon and Marquis of Hastings, an intimate friend of the Prince Regent, became K.G., Governor-General of India, and Governor of Malta. The "Terror," lost in the ill-fated Franklin Expedition, was commanded by Captain Francis Rawdon Moira Crozier, a relation of the Rawdon family.*

* See under "Rawdon," in Cudworth's "Round About Bradford," page 437.

Anne Brontë was a governess for a time at Green Hammerton, and also in the neighbourhood of Mirfield, but these are matters with which we have little to do. Her writings, at least her novels, are decidedly mediocre, and although she seemed to have the power of writing easily, "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall," and "Agnes Grey," will never rank high in English fiction. Her verses breathe a spirit of true devotion. She had little of the honest doubt which characterised Charlotte and Emily. Her belief was of a more orthodox character.

Quite lately a friend directed our attention to the following paragraph in the "Palatine Note Book:"—"Nor has the scenery of the latter portions of 'Jane Eyre' hitherto been rightly identified. Most people imagine those fine descriptions to have been inspired by the moorland solitudes surrounding Miss Brontë's own home at Haworth. But Hathersage, an obscure village in the Peak of Derbyshire, was the real source of her inspiration. The house called 'Moor House' in the novel, is still standing, and there are many other associations connected with Charlotte Brontë in this neighbourhood which the world knows nothing of."

On enquiry, we find that a family of the name of "Eyre" lived at Moor House, perhaps suggesting the title for the novel. Some of the finest word-painting in "Jane Eyre" is to be found in this part of the book.*

In Hathersage Church is the sepulchral memorial of Robert Eyre who fought at Agincourt, his wife and fourteen children. This old soldier is believed to have been a direct descendant of the warrior who saved William the Conqueror's life at Hastings, when unhorsed and with helmet so beaten as to be powerless and in peril of his life. The Rivers of "Jane Eyre" talks about his ancient lineage. Little John, Robin Hood's companion, is supposed to have been buried among the blue limestone rocks of Hathersage. There are Druidical associations connected with the rocking stones and rocky basins to be seen on these moors. The Vale of Hope is in this district, and is described to the life at page 359 of "Jane Eyre," in these words:—"I felt the consecration of its loneliness; my eye feasted on the outline of swell and sweep — on the wild colouring communicated to ridge and dell, by moss, by heathbell, by flower-sprinkled turf, by brilliant bracken, and

* See pages 330, 331, 332, 338, 412.

mellow granite crag. These details were just to me * * * so many pure and sweet sources of pleasure. The strong blast and the soft breeze; the rough and halcyon day; the hours of sunrise and sunset; the moonlight and the clouded night developed for me * * * the same attraction." It is a curious coincidence that Hathersage should be the scene of a large portion of "Jane Eyre," while Wirksworth is the scene of "Adam Bede," George Eliot's most popular novel.

Charlotte's visits to the Briery on Lake Windermere,* and also to Bridlington, Scarborough, and even to London, might have been included in this work; and no doubt much interest has been evoked from their consideration, but when we get to these well-beaten tracks, it is difficult to strike out a new and original line of description. We have endeavoured hitherto to open up "fresh fields and pastures new" to the Brontë pilgrim, and we now stick to our original design.

Descriptions of the country round Sowerby Bridge

* For descriptions and pictures of the Lake District see Professor Knight's recent work, "Through the Wordsworth Country."

and Luddendenfoot connected with Branwell Brontë will be found in Leyland's "Brontë Family."

Our topographical portion is now at an end. We have given three great periods due consideration. The scenes of childhood, of school life, and of adult life have been broadly treated. We have exercised no undue curiosity in peering into the originals of either the characters or the scenes in the novels, but we have given, as we imagine, a clear account of the surroundings of the family during all their life. The elder sister bulks largest in our pages, and worthily so. None of the other members of the family approached her in literary finish or imagination, and comparatively little is known about their particular surroundings. Their lives were short, and the applause of the world came too late. *Post cineres gloria sera venit.*

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Brontë genius, as displayed in the trio of sisters and in Branwell, seems to have had a Celtic origin. The dual Celtic marriage—between an Irish Hercules and a "frail and fine" Cornish Celt—produced at least two of the finest imaginative writers of the Victorian period of English literature. A Cornish and an Irish ancestry is a very uncommon stock, and the peculiar idiosyncrasies of the Brontë genius, so distinctive of the family, and of them alone, may be accounted for by the unusual union of two of the most dissimilar types of Celt. They are a strange mixture of the highly-strung, impulsive, imaginative natives of Erin, and of the earnest, pious Cornish people. That they owed much to their mother we cannot prove, but we insist that the coalition of all that is best in the Celtic

nature in the persons of Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell produced a family brimful of talent and intellectual force. In Ribot's book on "Heredity," the Brontë family occupies an unique position in the matter of hereditary genius. In almost no other instance did four members of one family shine more or less in one field, viz., literature.

We must never, in studying the Brontës, lose sight of their race. It has been well said, that "the Irish temperament is chaste, proud, passionate—a volcano under an iceberg." Does not this coincide with the accounts we have of this remarkable family, and can we not see that many of the characters in their novels bear a strong resemblance to themselves? The Yorkshire and Irish character is as wide apart as the poles. This accounts for the wonderful way in which the Brontës could hit off the West Riding folks to the life, and present typical portraits of the men and women about them. As we have said before, the dwellers in towns have been ever the most successful delineators and word-painters of country scenes, and the reason is obvious. "Familiarity breeds contempt," and the countryman by long usage becomes so accustomed to

the beauties about him that he does not appraise them at their true value. So the stranger can often strike off happy and life-like sketches of those among whom he has migrated, better than the natives themselves.

We have now a word to say on Branwell Brontë, who has met with but scant justice from the early Brontë biographers. It has fallen to the lot of Mr. F. A. Leyland in his "Bronte Family," to rescue the name of Patrick Branwell Brontë from the oblivion into which it had been sunk. Mr. Grundy in his "Pictures of the Past," an entertaining book of odds and ends, which, however, in other articles is full of evident exaggerations, gives a most caricatured picture of Branwell and his sisters; but a reminiscence of about the same date, 1840, from Mr. Leyland should be read alongside of it to really get at the truth. Mr. Leyland says:—"He was slim and agile in figure, yet of well formed outline. His complexion was clear and ruddy, and the expression of his face at the time lightsome and cheerful. His voice had a ringing sweetness, and the utterance and use of his English were perfect." This is a very different youth from the rough, vulgar bumpkin of Mr. Grundy's book.

Mr. Grundy's description is repudiated by persons who knew young Brontë well. Mr. Leyland's book does not, as some imagine, attempt to whitewash Branwell's character. No! no one can do that, but it seeks to show that he was a monomaniac, the victim of having allowed his passions to run away with him and land him in the bog of melancholic idleness and apathy, only to be roused by stimulants or opiates to anything like real life. Had he been sent to a retreat for dipsomaniacs under a watchful physician, the world would probably have heard more of Branwell's writings, for he had, undoubtedly, in him the making of something which he never became. "Manners make the man," *i.e.*, morals make the man, and woe betide the youth who flings aside the reins and lets his brute nature carry him away. We will draw a veil over his sins and think only of his woes. A man suffering from such extreme perversion of the emotions, living within a stone's throw of a public house where there was always a warm fireside and an appreciative circle of village companions, could not have been placed in a worse position. Branwell's verses show the true poetic afflatus, and no one who reads them can doubt

his undoubted gift. As to his having written part of "Wuthering Heights," it is denied by everyone who knows anything about the subject.

We would refer the reader to Mr. Leyland's "Brontë Family" for the verses, but a few may be specially mentioned, such as sonnets on "Landseer's Shepherd's Chief Mourner," an "Impromptu," "Caroline," &c. His lines on "Black Coomb" and "Penmaenmawr" are wonderfully powerful, especially in the last, where he goes on to encourage his drooping, heart-broken self, in the following lines:—

> "Let me, like it, arise o'er mortal pain,
> All woes sustain, yet never know despair;
> Unshrinking face the grief I now deplore,
> And stand, through storm and shine, like moveless
> Penmaenmawr."

His usual style, however, is gloomy and despairing, and almost always introspective. He is very pathetic in one piece entitled, "On Peaceful Death and Painful Life:"—

> "Why dost thou sorry for the happy dead?
> For if their life be lost, their toils are o'er,
> And woe and want can trouble them no more;
> Nor ever slept they in an earthly bed,
> So sound as now they sleep, while dreamless laid,
> In the dark chambers of the unknown shore,
> Where night and silence guard each sealed door.

So turn from such as these thy drooping head,
And mourn the dead alive—whose spirit flies—
Whose life departs before his death has come,
Who knows no Heaven beneath life's gloomy skies,
Who sees no hope to brighten up that gloom;
'Tis he who feels the worm that never dies—
The real death and darkness of the tomb."

When he wrote these lines he had long made up his mind to give a negative answer to the question "Is life worth living?" We cannot leave this subject without recommending everyone to see "The Brontë Family," and read the poems for themselves. That work has quite succeeded in placing Branwell Brontë among the front rank of England's minor poets.

In concluding our notice of Branwell, we cannot do better than write at the bottom "Pobre," an inscription carved on a rude cross in Spain, which is placed over the body of a murdered traveller, and means simply "poor fellow." Poor Branwell! poor fellow! thy mind murdered with self indulgence, has even left behind a few precious relics, by which we can remember thee and thy blasted, feverish, weary death in life!

We have been privileged to see several portraits painted by Branwell, and they show great artistic promise and ability. All the family were artistically

inclined. They were instructed by an excellent teacher, William Robinson, of Leeds, who became one of the foremost portrait painters of the day. The Duke of Wellington, and the Princess Sophia, both sat to him. In connection with this may be mentioned Charlotte's wonderful power of word-painting. So exact are her descriptions of flowers, that it is quite possible for a botanist to identify the species, after reading them. The father was a keen observer of nature, and so were all the family.

Emily Brontë is now accounted one of the minor poetesses of the Victorian era, having found a place in the "Poetesses of England" by Eric S. Robertson, M.A., and we hope before long to see Branwell's "Penmaen-mawr" acknowledged as worthy of a permanent place in poetical collections.

A story of Emily, which has never yet seen the light of day, has come to our knowledge, and it gives one a lively impression of how the parsonage girls amused themselves when their father was from home, and helps to dispel the idea, which many people seem to possess, that the Brontës were little priggish blue-stockings who never indulged in a good romp. It was the 29th of

May, the anniversary of the Restoration, Haworth Parsonage was in a state of noisy rebellion, the father was from home, young feet ran lightly over the house, and the sound of boisterous laughter echoed everywhere. They were celebrating the day right royally, by representing King Charles in the oak. Emily was "The Merry Monarch," and essayed to escape from her pursuers by stepping out of a bedroom window into the branches of a fruit tree which grew up the front of the house. Unfortunately the bough broke, and she came to *terra firma*, luckily however, unhurt. On the return of the father, he had the whole family on the carpet, but he could not by any amount of cajolery or threatening succeed in getting to the bottom of the affair. Emily, however, on her death-bed confessed to her father. It can thus be seen that the Brontës were just like other children, and even in after life, Charlotte, in the midst of death and disappointment, had always a few old school friends who were faithful unto death, so that in reality their environment had only a very small influence upon them. Letters were continually arriving from these friends, and what with household duties and literary work their time was well filled up.

Now that the church of the Brontës has been swept away, and the rectory restored and enlarged, it seems as if nearly everything possible had been done to stamp out "the Brontë craze," as some of the modern Haworthians seem to look upon the interest taken by the outside public in this immortal family and its home. Still, notwithstanding this, new books keep appearing, although critics tell us that the subject has been written to death. This volume has many imperfections. It has been written hurriedly, and often at long intervals, when a brief period of cessation from professional work happily presented itself to the writer. That must be the excuse for its inequalities, its omissions, and its want of continuity. It was impossible to settle down for a long spell of writing at any time without constant interruptions. On the other hand, it is the work of a lover of the Brontës' works and lives, and if this link with the past should be the means of intensifying and reviving the spread of enthusiasm and interest in this unique little family, it will not have been forged in vain. Many persons pretend to be satiated with the Brontës and their surroundings. In this book, we leave the well hackneyed theme of

Haworth, and travel about all over midland and northern England, and even into Ireland, and we hope that even those well satisfied ones will admit there is room for another Brontë book. For our own part, we desire a fuller biography of the family than has yet been written, and we trust, and are confident that such will yet appear, and that there are many surprises yet in store for students of this Celtic circle. We would, as a last word, commend the following quotations to the earnest study of those who feel satiated with Brontë literature:—Thackeray, in the "Cornhill" for April, 1860, says, "Which of her readers (Charlotte's) has not become her friend? Who that has known her books has not admired the artist's noble English, the burning love of truth, the bravery, the simplicity, the indignation at wrong, the eager sympathy, the pious love and reverence, the passionate honour, so to speak, of the woman?" Swinburne, in his "Note on Charlotte Brontë," thus ends a brilliant, enthusiastic encomium:—"Charlotte Brontë may be expected to be read with delight and wonder, and re-read with reverence and admiration, when darkness everlasting has long since fallen on all human memory of their cheap scientific,

their vulgar erotic, and their voluminous domestic school, when even 'Daniel Deronda' has gone the way of all waxwork, when even Miss Broughton no longer 'cometh up as a flower,' and even Mrs. Oliphant is at length 'cut down like the grass.'"

On the Beck, Haworth.

WALKING TOUR ITINERARIES.

I.—THE SHIRLEY COUNTRY.

TAKING Leeds as a centre, take train to Birstall (L. & N.W.R.), changing carriages at Batley, distance about 9 miles. From Birstall station, first inspect the Parish Church (half a mile), then Oakwell Hall (1 mile), near which are the battlefield of Adwalton Moor, and Fieldhead, the birthplace of Priestley. Thence by field-path to Gomersal, Yorke's House, and Pollard Hall, where at one time Herbert Knowles resided (2 miles), then passing Gomersal Hill Top on to Heald's Hall, Liversedge, and Liversedge Church, by

way of Huddersfield road (3½ miles). Near here is Rawfold's Mill. The route now goes by Hightown, in which P. Brontë's residence should be inspected, and then on by Lousy Thorn Farm, where he lodged, to Hartshead (5 miles), where inspect Church and registers, and also Walton Cross. A view of the ancient demesne of Kirklees, with its Nunnery, Gate House, and the Grave of Robin Hood, can be got by taking one of the field-paths which lead down to the Huddersfield road. Kirklees Park is not open to the public, except on rare occasions. The best route is by a path which takes down outside the park wall just below the Vicarage, and brings the tourist again on to the Huddersfield road, at the Three Nuns Inn, where excellent fare can be obtained (6 miles). The Dumb Steeple should be inspected, and then on through Mirfield to Dewsbury (10 miles). Here, after inspecting the Parish Church and old Vicarage, walk out to Heald's House and Squirrel Hall, on Dewsbury Moor (11 miles), and then return to Dewsbury station (total distance 12 miles). When at Birstall, The Rydings can also be inspected. The number of places to be visited requires a long summer day.

II.—TOURS FROM HAWORTH.

(*a*) Sladen Beck Waterfalls (3 miles, including return).

(*b*) Ponden Kirk Falls (8 miles total distance).

(*c*) Wycoller Hall, near Colne (17 miles total journey).

(*d*) Thornton, via Denholme, for inspecting Old Bell Chapel and birthplace of Charlotte Brontë (total distance 5½ miles). Train at Thornton.

(*e*) Over moors to Hebden Bridge, one of the best walks from Haworth for seeing the real wildness of the hills (total distance 8 miles). Train at Hebden Bridge.

All these excursions of course will include an inspection of Haworth, its Church and Parsonage. Mr. Brown, bookseller, supplies photographs, and all sorts of Brontë literature. Haworth is best reached by the Midland Railway, from either Leeds or Bradford, changing carriages at Keighley.

III.—COWAN BRIDGE AND TUNSTALL CHURCH.

From Ingleton Station (Midland from Leeds or Bradford), take Kirkby Lonsdale road for Cowan

Bridge. From thence by field-path via Burrow to Tunstall Church, and then back to Ingleton via Black Burton (total distance about 15 miles). This excursion requires a long summer day.

IV.—NORTON CONYERS.

Norton Conyers is distant 3 miles from Ripon, and Sir Reginald Graham is wishful for anyone interested in Brontë literature to inspect his ancient manor house. Wath Church, close by, has also associations with "Jane Eyre."

V.—HATHERSAGE.

Hathersage, with Moor Seats, and the Vale of Hope, is easily accessible from Sheffield.

NOTES AND ADDENDA.

NECESSARILY, owing to living out of town, reference libraries have only been available on rare occasions. Information has been coming in in most part from correspondents, and in fact, owing to lack of library facilities, the writer has had to depend on correspondents almost entirely. The book scarcely comes up to the size originally intended, but the indulgent reader must be content to accept three times as many pictures as originally promised, in lieu of printed matter. As a supplementary contribution, the following notes and addenda are furnished as a step towards keeping faith with the subscribers :—

1. *See Preface.* Mrs. Sarah Newsome, *née* de Garrs, at one time nurse to the Brontës, writes as

follows:—"The Brontës were well brought up, and were good, obedient children. They were very timid among strangers, but lively and cheerful in their own home. Mr. Brontë was a kind and loving husband and father, kind to all about him. Mrs. Brontë, before her death, requested me to remain with her children, and I stayed three years after her death. Charlotte came to see me when she was going to Brussels School, the second time, and that was the last time I ever met her. * * * Mr. Branwell, at eighteen years, was a very handsome young man." Mrs. Newsome was with the family ten years. She was the nurse who was out with the children on the moors when the eruption of Crow Hill Bog took place. They hid themselves under her cloak, and took refuge under a porch.

2. *See Chapter I.*—Wethersfield, where Patrick Brontë held his first curacy, had a certain connection with Yorkshire in this way, that its vicar was the Rev. Joseph Jowett, LL.D., who was born at Leeds, in 1750. He was presented to this living in 1794, succeeding Rev. Christopher Atkinson, deceased, brother of Rev. Miles Atkinson, incumbent of St. Paul's, Leeds. Dr. Jowett was non-resident, spending only his summer

vacations at Wethersfield, being also Professor of Civil Law at Cambridge. Dr. Mansell, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, wrote some amusing lines about a little fairy garden, with narrow walks of shells and pellucid pebbles, closed round by a delicate Chinese railing, after the style of the citizen's villa described by Lloyd. They run as follows :—

> "A little garden, little Jowett made,
> And fenced it with a little palisade;
> If you would know the taste of little Jowett,
> This little garden won't a little show it."

See "Leeds Worthies," by Rev. R. V. Taylor, B.A. It is just possible that Jowett's connection with Yorkshire had something to do with Brontë coming to Dewsbury.

3. *See Chapter II.*—Any mention of Penzance, the birthplace of Maria Branwell, has been omitted, but it is easily understood what a change it was which the little Cornish maiden made when she left her southern home, damp and showery, warmed by the Gulf Stream, where geraniums, myrtles, hydrangeas, and camellias flourish through the winter, and came to Hartshead, bleak, cold, and comparatively barren.

4. *See Chapter II.*—Rev. Hammond Roberson.—

It is stated by a personal friend of Mr. Roberson's that he *never* was appointed canon of York, but only a prebend. We take our information as to his canonry from a biographical sketch written on him by his great nephew, the Rev. Canon Bailey, D.D., of West Farring Rectory, Worthing.

5. *See Chapter II.*—We are informed by a native of the Heavy Woollen District that Hammond Roberson exercised his pupils in musketry drill, in anticipation of the rising of the Luddites, and their expected attack on Rawfold's Mill. Several old flint-lock muskets were kept at Heald's Hall for many years.

6. *See Chapter III.* — The Brontë window in Haworth Church.—We have omitted to acknowledge our indebtedness to the rector (Rev. John Wade, M.A.,) and churchwardens of Haworth, for permission accorded to have a photograph taken of the Brontë window erected by an American citizen. Mr. E. Feather, of Haworth, obtained this for us, and a very beautiful facsimile it is. Unfortunately, our artist could not treat it successfully, and it had to be left out. We have, however, no less pleasure in acknowledging our thanks for favour granted.

7. *See Chapter III.* — There is, by the way, a mention of the Haworth district in "Drunken Barnaby's Journal," as follows:

> "Thence to *Kighley*, where are mountains,
> Steepy, threatening, lively fountains."

8. *See Chapter IV.*—It will repay the visitor to Cowan Bridge to go on to Kirkby Lonsdale, where there is a very ancient bridge, said to have been built by the Devil in windy weather. As he was flying over Casterton, his apron-string broke, and he lost many stones, which accounts for the curious nature of the structure. The arches are of a ribbed sort. The rocks on the Lune are exceedingly grand, and seen in contrast with the rich, fertile country around, the water at their bases, and the numerous water-mills, a pleasant picture is made up.

9. *See Chapter IV.*—Casterton, to which village the Clergy Daughter's School was removed from Cowan Bridge, is pleasantly situated on the Roman road which ran to Appleby.

10. *See Chapter IV.* — Burrow, otherwise Overborough Hall, is the site of the Bremontacæ of the Emperor Antoninus, which was a Roman station and

garrison. This place is mentioned by Tacitus, and other ancient writers. In the grounds is a very beautiful glen through which flows the Leck, entirely shrouded by trees, nothing of water to be seen, but a sullen roar and murmur striking the ear. For a full account of Tunstall and Overborough see Baines' "Lancashire," also "Bremontacæ," by Richard Rauthmell.

11. *See Chapter V.*— In the register of baptisms at Birstall, in addition to the entry about the Earle of Newcastle's army banishing the Puritan clergy, we have the other side of the picture as well:—"1643.— Memorandum that the parliam^{t} armie returned into Yorkshire after ye battell at Namptwick and did drive away ye Earle of Newcastle's Armie from Hallifax, Bradford, Leeds: the Scotts armie entered into England joined with the Lord Fairfax in beseiginge Yorke: and did overthrow Prince Rob^{t} at Marsndon Moore." Prince Rupert, the dashing cavalier and brilliant general in many an affair of outposts, was called by the Parliamentarians, "Prince Robber." So it seems the Birstall vicar of that day has not quite hit on his proper name, but seems to have got confused with his nickname.

12. *See Chapter V.*—The "Shirley" Habitation of the Primrose League was instituted at New Hall, Birstall, the residence of Dr. Forsyth, July 22nd, 1886.

18. *See Chapter V.*—Norton Conyers was the seat of the Nortons from the Norman Conquest up to the time of Elizabeth. There are brasses in Wath Church commemorating members of that family. The effigies of Sir Damer de Rochester, and Elizabeth, his wife, have an angel presiding over them in "Jane Eyre," and a like monument is to be seen in Wath Church, dedicated to the memory of Sir Richard Graham, and Elizabeth, his wife; Sir Richard, like Sir Damer, slain at Marston Moor. Charlotte Brontë was a governess with the Greenwood family at Swarcliffe Hall, near Ripon. The Greenwoods rented Norton Conyers, and doubtless Charlotte Brontë had many opportunities of inspecting this ghost-haunted old manor house, which accounts for her minute description of the interior.

14. *See Chapter V.*—Near Gomersal are two artificial mounds of large size, said to be Brigantian forts, from which a clear view of the Spen and Calder Valleys is visible for many miles. Roman remains have also been found in Cleckheaton district.

15. *See Chapter V.*—Wycoller Hall.—For particulars and pictures of this ancient residence, situated on the Haworth and Colne road, see Baines' "Lancashire."

16. *See Chapter VI.* — About two miles from Haworth, lower down the valley, is Oakworth Hall, the residence of Isaac Holden, Esq., M.P. for the Keighley Division, where some splendid conservatories are to be seen on special occasions. The situation is decidedly elevated, about 850 feet above sea-level.

17. *See Chapter VII.*—For the following account of Easton, near Bridlington, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Holderness, of Driffield, who has supplied this, a portion of a work he is writing, entitled, "Rambles in the East Riding:"—

"Pursuing the direct road from Boynton to Bridlington, instead of wandering through the village and the wood, to the Wold Gate, a walk of a mile brings us to the little hamlet of Easton. It is pleasantly situated in the valley, but here we lose the more enchanting sylvan beauty of the supremely picturesque village of Boynton, with its fir-clad slopes, rendered still more attractive by the gushing melody of God's own harmonious choir of unpaid choristers. On the left we

pass Easton Bushes, a field studded with many extremely fine hawthorn bushes, white with fragrant blossom in spring, and glowing with bright red berries in autumn. These bushes are well known to the bird-nesters of Bridlington. The hamlet consists of two farm houses only. The one on the left hand is a comfortable Yorkshire residence, with the outbuildings and appendages of a large and well-kept farm. The other house, on the right hand, was the plainer of the two. From the earliest period of my recollection, it was inhabited by the kind-hearted Mr. Hudson and his amiable wife. Many years ago it was an exceedingly plain building, the windows having the old-fashioned leaden panes, but in squares, not diamonds; the doorway was utterly devoid of mouldings, or any other kind of ornament, and the house was entirely without spouting. But the old fabric was so much improved by the good taste of Mrs. Hudson, as to be hardly like the same place. Nothing gives greater interest to any locality than the important events which have transpired there, or the distinguished personages who have resided in or been in any way connected with them. The recollection of those events or of those persons hallows the spot,

and we pause, spell-bound, brooding over the scenes of the past; especially if the locality be so picturesque as the neighbourhood of Easton. This house will ever possess an interest with all the lovers of the great and the good, through its having been the spot where Charlotte Brontë spent a few of the happiest of her few really happy days. Hers was a life full of sorrow, and yet, amid personal and family afflictions, privations, and bereavements, she had that higher life which sustained her, and carried her nobly through them. In a letter to her friend "E." (Miss Nussey), written on the 4th of August, 1839, she says, "I think you and I had better adhere to our first plan of going somewhere together, independently of other people. I have got leave to accompany you for a week—or at the utmost a fortnight—but no more. Where do you wish to go? Burlington, I should think, from what "M." says, would be as eligible a place as any. When do you set off? Arrange all these things according to your convenience; I shall start no objections. The idea of seeing the *sea*—of being near it—watching its changes by sunrise, sunset, moonlight, and noon-day—in calm, perhaps in storm—fills and satisfies my mind." Mrs.

Gaskell, in her life of Miss Brontë, says, "She and her friend went to Easton for a fortnight, in the latter part of September. It was here she received her first impressions of the sea." In a letter to "E.," dated the 24th of October, she says, "Have you forgotten the sea by this time, "E."? Is it grown dim in your mind? Or can you still see it, dark, blue, and green, and foam-white, and hear it roaring roughly when the wind is high, or rushing softly when it is calm? * * * I think of Easton very often, and of worthy Mr. H. and his kind-hearted helpmate." It is not difficult to imagine that a mind like Charlotte Brontë's would be thoroughly entranced while gazing on the ocean for the first time, which she would most probably do from the top of Bessingley Hill, on her way to Burlington by the coach; and while doing so, little did she think that within ten years she would be the only relative who would follow the remains of her last-surviving and talented sister, Anne, to their last resting-place, near the rolling and roaring of that same ocean, in the burial-ground of the old Parish Church of Scarborough. In the detached portion of this burial-ground, at the east end of the church, is a headstone with the

following inscription:—"Here lie the remains of Anne Brontë, daughter of the Rev. P. Brontë, Incumbent of Haworth, Yorkshire. She died May 28th, 1849." [I copied this from the stone on the 16th of June, 1884.—Thomas Holderness, Driffield.] Some years ago the Hudsons retired to Bridlington, leaving their son on the farm. I am told that they had many little articles which Charlotte had given to Mrs. Hudson. Amongst them was a drawing, by Charlotte, of a group in the summer-house at Easton, which she drew while there."

18. *See Chapter VII.*—The George Hotel at Bradford, was a favourite resort of Branwell's when he resided in the town. There he met John James, the historian of Bradford, Leyland, the sculptor, &c. The late Abraham Holroyd mentions Mr. Brontë entertaining to dinner a large number of candidates for confirmation at the Talbot Hotel in Bradford, owing to a heavy snow-storm having set in.

19. *See Chapter VIII.*—It is remarkable to trace the West Yorkshire place-names in the proper names of some of the characters in the Brontë novels. In "Jane Eyre," we have Dent and Eshton, two well known places, and

in "Agnes Grey," we have Mr. Hatfield and Lady Meltham, both derived from place-names. Then again, such names as Ingram and Scatcherd in "Jane Eyre," are unmistakeably West Riding, in distribution, being as common as blackberries in these parts. If we take place-names, they are not all original. For instance we have Thrushcross Grange in "Wuthering Heights," and there is a Thruscross near Ripley, at the head of the Washburn Valley, again, we have Horton in "Agnes Grey," a well known place-name in the Bradford and Ribblesdale districts. Fieldheads are now legion in the West Riding, whether in memory of Shirley's old hall or not we cannot say; still Fieldhead near Birstall, the birthplace of Priestley, was there centuries ago. The Nunwood of "Shirley" is not an unknown place-name in the West Riding, there being a Nunwood near Esholt Priory in the district where Charlotte was a governess (Rawdon). A thorough study of the place and proper names in the Brontë novels would be rather interesting, and there is no doubt the *locale* of the writer must have been guessed at by many a one before the shy "Currer Bell" and her sisters were unearthed.

20. Our concluding note is a very fine word-portrait

of Charlotte Brontë, by Harriet Martineau, which we think worth putting before our readers as a last word:—

"There was a something inexpressibly affecting in the aspect of the frail little creature who had done such wonderful things, and who was able to bear up with so bright an eye, so composed a countenance, under not only such a weight of sorrow, but such a prospect of solitude. In her deep mourning dress (neat as a Quaker's) with her beautiful hair, smooth and brown, her fine eyes, and her sensible face, indicating a habit of self-control, she seemed a perfect household image, irresistibly recalling Wordsworth's description of that domestic treasure."

These Notes and Addenda are certainly an *omnium gatherum* of odds and ends, many of which, however, are worthy of record.

DETAILED INDEX.

(*Compiled by the Author.*)

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