BYGONE LEICESTERSHIRE

WILLIAM ANDREWS F.R.H.S.

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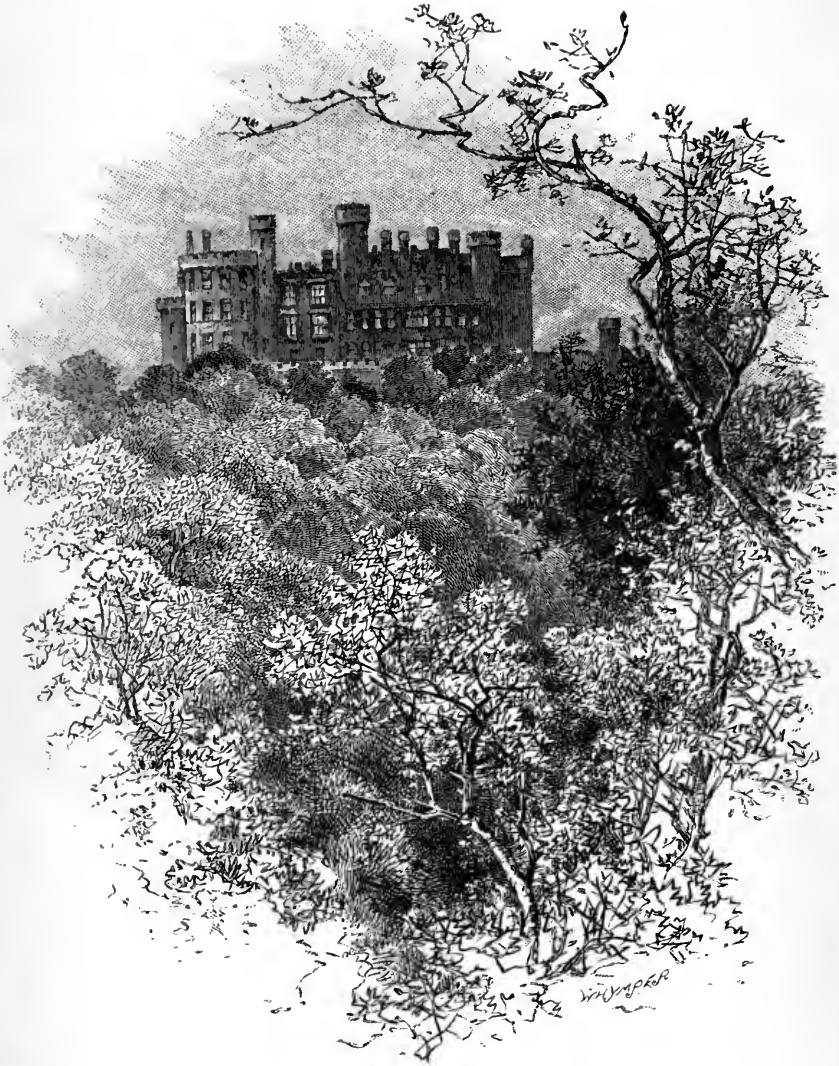

BELVOIR CASTLE.

BYGONE LEICESTERSHIRE.

EDITED BY

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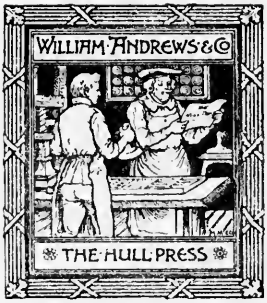
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Preface.

THIS volume, like others of the series to which it belongs, attempts to deal in a popular, and at the same time accurate, manner with many of the more interesting phases of local history, biography, and folk-lore of Leicestershire.

I am greatly obliged to my contributors for their kind help. Other friends, including Mr. George Clinch, of the British Museum, Mr. S. Firth, F.R.H.S., Mr. Thomas Harrold, and Mr. William Kelly, F.S.A., have also assisted me with important suggestions and notes. To these gentlemen I tender my thanks.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

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BYGONE LEICESTERSHIRE.

Historic Leicestershire.

By Thomas Frost.

AMONGST the Celtic tribes who inhabited England in the earliest period of our country's history of which there are any records, the Coritani held a position second to none. They occupied the counties of Leicester, Derby, Nottingham, Northampton, Rutland, and Lincoln. At the time when the Romans were gradually extending their dominion over the whole of the country, the greater part of Leicestershire was covered with trackless forests, extending in an almost unbroken line from Charnwood Forest on the east to the moors of Staffordshire. The Romans intersected this woodland region with one of their great lines of communication, called the Fosse Way, which ran in an almost straight line from the site of the present town of

Cirencester, in Gloucestershire, to a spot in the fertile valley of the Soar, on which they planted the colony and military station of Ratæ, where now stands the chief town of the county. Ratæ became, during the Roman occupation of the island, a more important town than its successor was for many years. Four great roads met there, and the civil and military institutions introduced by its enterprising rulers made it an advanced post of a stage of civilisation which, to the inhabitants of the surrounding country, was till then unknown. Evidences of its greatness in those days are still discernible. A fragment of Roman masonry still remains to attest the excellence of the cement used fifteen hundred years ago; and the paved floor of a Roman house, preserved by the care of local antiquaries, with the Roman pottery, implements, etc., found at various places in the neighbourhood, bear witness to the extent to which the arts and the refinements of life which the conquerors introduced were carried in England under their rule.

So much was Ratæ a Roman settlement that, on the withdrawal of the imperial legions and the civil functionaries of the empire from England, it

rapidly declined from its former prosperity and importance. The hordes of invaders from the shores of the North Sea and the Baltic, to whom historians have given the generic name of Saxons, laid the town in ruins, and spread themselves over the surrounding country. The evidences of Roman civilization almost disappeared before the flood of Norse barbarism, and the name even of the town was soon forgotten in that of Legecester, given to it by its new inhabitants, and which by a gradual process of corruption subsequently became Leicester. But the demolished houses were rebuilt, and an earthen mound was thrown up on the banks of the Soar to strengthen the defences of the new town, to which a castle was subsequently added.

With the consolidation of the Saxon conquests, came the division of England into seven kingdoms, in the largest of which, Mercia, was included the present Leicestershire, with the other counties originally occupied by the Coritani, and afterwards forming the province of Flavia Cæsariensis. Repton, in the adjoining county of Derby, though only a village, was the capital of this kingdom, and several of its kings were interred within the walls of the abbey which rose there after the

conversion to Christianity of the races from whose mixture the English nation had sprung. Leicester became, in 679, the see of a bishop, which was soon afterwards, however, removed to the village of Dorchester, and eventually transferred to Lincoln. The first of these ecclesiastical changes was brought about by the occupation of Leicestershire and other northern parts of Mercia by the Danes. The incursions of the new swarms of invaders were at first successfully repelled by the kings of Mercia, but in 874 the last of those petty monarchs gave way before the persistent inroads of the enemy, abandoned a contest which seemed hopeless, and retired to the Continent.

The heptarchy was at that time broken up, and its component parts were in course of incorporation in one kingdom, thereafter to be known as England. Four years after the Danish conquest of the north-eastern portion of Mercia, Alfred stayed the encroachments of the enemy, whom, however, he allowed to hold, on condition of acknowledging him as their sovereign, the districts in which they had settled. The records of the Danish settlements which have survived the mutations of time are very scanty, but the

existence of a hundred place-names terminating in "by," which is undoubtedly Danish, enables the extent of the locations of that people in Leicestershire to be determined. Ashby and Groby may be referred to as examples.

The position of the Danes in Mercia did not long remain unassailed. On the first signs of renewed hostility to their Saxon suzerains, Ethelfleda, a princess of the royal family, led a strong force into Leicestershire, recovered possession of Leicester, and drove the rebellious Danes into Lincolnshire, where their settlements had always been more numerous than elsewhere. The defences of Leicester were restored and strengthened, and for a long time the town and the county enjoyed peace. Misfortune fell heavily on both, however, when England felt once more the bitterness of a foreign yoke. The chroniclers of the period have not recorded the circumstances which drew upon them the wrath of William the Conqueror. Perhaps it was enough that sufficient territorial spoils could not be found elsewhere with which to reward and enrich the Norman officers who escaped the spears and arrows of the English at Hastings. However this may have been, the Domesday

survey shows that the greater portion of the lands of Leicestershire passed by confiscation into the hands of foreigners in his reign, and that in the chief town of the county not a single English freeholder remained. The castle was either rebuilt or greatly strengthened by William's orders, and its custody was given to one of his Norman followers, Hugh de Grantmesnil, who, as sheriff of the county, collected the royal dues.

Those old Norman earls and knights, however, though they owed their titles and possessions to the king, did not forget that it was themselves who had placed him in a position to distribute those rewards. The feudal yoke chafed them at times as much as it did the inferior vassals and serfs. The son and successor of Hugh de Grantmesnil gave the second William much trouble, and when reduced to submission sold his rights over Leicester to Robert de Beaumont, who, in 1107, was created Earl of Leicester. The new governor founded, within his castle, a college of canons of the Augustinian order, and built a church for them, which still remains as a portion of the present church of St. Mary. Monasticism had not then made much progress in the county,

but the abbeys of Osulveston and Launde were founded soon after that of Leicester, which dates from 1137, and several priories soon followed. The Cistercians had an abbey at Garendon, and an Augustinian nunnery was founded at Grace Dieu.

The second Earl of Leicester, undeterred by the fate of the second Hugh de Grantmesnil, raised the banner of revolt against Henry II. in 1175. Being defeated, he was imprisoned, and his possessions were confiscated to the crown. His castles of Leicester and Groby were demolished, and the earldom was conferred by the King upon Beaumont's brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort. The second earl of this name, he who made so much English history in the reign of Henry III., contracted a secret marriage with that monarch's sister, an alliance which, however, did not prevent him from putting himself at the head of the baronial league formed to repress the tyranny and misgovernment of his royal brother-in-law. The town of Leicester, the material prosperity of which had received a rude shock through the reverses of the second Earl Beaumont, had in 1201 recovered sufficiently to receive a charter from John; but it suffered again for the action

taken by Montfort, being besieged and taken by the King. The royal reverse at Lewes made the earl the virtual ruler of England, but the tide turned again at Evesham, and the earldom of Leicester once more changed owners, being given to Prince Edward.

During the two following reigns the county enjoyed peace, and made considerable advances in civilisation. The men of the towns pursued their commercial and industrial occupations in quiet, and throve accordingly; the farmers cleared the woodlands along the valley of the Soar, and encroached by degrees upon the limits of Charnwood Forest. The soil of the county being well adapted for sheep pasturing, Leicester became the centre of a considerable trade in wool; and the smaller towns of the shire, Loughborough, Melton Mowbray, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Market Bosworth, and Lutterworth, grew in prosperity as they increased in population.

The latter half of the fourteenth century was chiefly marked, so far as Leicestershire was concerned, by the foundation which was laid by John Wiclif for the preaching of the Reformation. The learning and eloquence of that famous student and preacher attracted the

notice of the Duke of Lancaster, who held with that title the earldom of Leicester, and who saw in him a powerful instrument for raising an anti-clerical party, and carrying out his contemplated civil and ecclesiastical reforms. Wiclif was introduced by him to Edward III., who was willing to favour the reforming priest so long as his learning supplied arguments for resisting the pecuniary claims of the Pope, and thus enabling him to use the funds so withheld for his wars with Scotland and France. Wiclif was presented to the rectory of Lutterworth, where he continued his bold course of preaching, and undertook his great work of translating the Bible into English. Filled with zeal for the cause of truth and righteousness, he boldly attacked the worldly and often immoral lives of the wealthy ecclesiastics, and questioned their right to revenues which they did not adminster for the good of the Church. It was a period of servile discontent, preluding the social upheaval of the following reign, and Wiclif was, in relation thereto, the precursor of the reforming priest, John Ball, and the bold Dartford workman who dared to teach Richard II. his duty. Such teaching was in advance of the age, however, and Wiclif

was accused of heresy, and but for the protection of the Duke of Lancaster, he would probably have been condemned to the stake.

The influence of Wiclif in Leicestershire was very great, and the town of Leicester, as well as Lutterworth, became a centre of the new doctrine, as it was called, though it was as old as the gospel. He continued to preach until his death in 1384, but five years later Archbishop Courtenay visited Leicester, to enquire into the prevalent religious and social heterodoxy, the holders of which were induced to acknowledge that they had been in error. Sixty years afterwards, in conformity with a decree of the Council of Constance, the bones of the reforming rector of Lutterworth were exhumed and burned, and the ashes cast into a brook, which, as Fuller says, carried them into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, and the Severn into the ocean, whereby they were borne, and with them the principles for which Wiclif had contended, to all parts of the world.

On the usurpation of Henry IV., Leicester became, through the influence of his father, the Duke of Lancaster, the seat of the Parliament when it was deemed inexpedient, on political

grounds, for the session to be held in Westminster. In 1414, 1426, and 1450 Parliament sat in the Hall of the Grey Friars, at Leicester. In the first of those years, London was disturbed by an abortive rising of the disciples of Wiclif, against whom repressive enactments were passed by the Parliament at Leicester. In 1426, London was disturbed by the quarrel of the uncles of the young king, Henry VI., the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Bedford, and Parliament was, in consequence, summoned to meet in the serener atmosphere of Leicester. The assembly was not more peaceful, however, than it would probably have been if it had been held in Westminster. Its members met in arms, and a prelude was afforded of the sanguinary strife that was soon to desolate the land.

After the death of the Duke of Lancaster, the Castle of Leicester was suffered to fall into decay. Notwithstanding the great influence he had, as Earl of Leicester, exercised in the town and county, the sympathies of the people were more with the legitimate claimant of the throne than with the Lancastrian faction. Sir William Hastings, who was one of the most important magnates of the county, was a staunch supporter

of Edward IV., who, in 1461, created him Baron Hastings of Ashby, where he built a castle. Another family of this county which rose into importance at this troublous period was the Greys of Bradgate, to whom passed the estates of the Ferrers family of Groby. Sir John Grey fell in the battle of St. Albans, and his widow became, in 1465, the wife of Edward IV. The quarrel which arose out of this marriage between Edward and the powerful Earl of Warwick forced the former to leave the country, but he returned the following year, landing at Ravenspurn, and marching thence to Leicester, where he was joined by Lord Hastings with four thousand Leicestershire men, who fought shortly afterwards in the sanguinary conflict at Barnet. Edward being again seated on the throne as the result of that victory, Thomas Grey, the queen's son, was created Marquis of Dorset; but on Edward's death, the Duke of Gloucester accused the Greys of conspiring to seize the crown for themselves, and the Marquis fled to the Continent. The arrest and execution of Lord Hastings, which quickly followed, constitute a well known incident in the history of the short reign of Edward V.

On the 19th August, 1484, Richard III. rode into Leicester from Nottingham, having learned that the Earl of Richmond had reached Lichfield on his way from Wales to London, and designing to intercept him on the march. He slept at an inn called the Blue Boar, on a bedstead which he brought with him, and in which, as was discovered a century afterwards, the sum of three hundred pounds—a very large sum in those days—was concealed in a false bottom. Two days later he marched out of Leicester with his army, and advanced to meet his foe, who was approaching Market Bosworth. On the 21st the two armies met on Redmore Plains, a mile south of that town, where the issue was decided by the desertion of Lord Stanley, with three thousand men, to Henry Tudor. Rendered desperate by his situation, and hoping to turn the tide in his favour by one well-directed stroke, Richard urged his charger into the thick of the fight, cut down Sir William Brandon, who bore Richmond's standard, unhorsed Sir John Cheney, and was within a few yards of the earl, when Lord Stanley's cavalry interposed, and, overpowered by numbers, covered with wounds, but fighting to the last, he fell. His corpse was thrown

across a horse and thus ignominiously was borne to Leicester, where it was buried, with scant ceremony, in the church of the Grey Friars. A spring on the field of Bosworth, from which Richard is said to have drank before going into battle, was afterwards enclosed by rough masonry, in a conical form, with an opening for access, and was known for centuries afterwards as "Richard's Well."

Less than fifty years afterwards, Leicester received a visitor of a different character, whose death preluded one of the greatest changes which the religious and social condition of England has ever experienced. On the 26th of November, 1530, that magnificent ecclesiastic, Cardinal Wolsey, having been arrested at Cawood, in Yorkshire, on an accusation of treason, and taken seriously ill on the road to London, was brought to Leicester, and lodged in the old Abbey. Three days afterwards he died, and was buried in the Lady Chapel, unlamented in death as he had been feared in life, and leaving the lesson of his career "to point a moral or adorn a tale."

Under the sovereigns of the Tudor dynasty the county enjoyed peace and prosperity. The changes brought about by the dissolution of the

monastic houses appear to have been little felt. The chief landowners profited by the secularisation of the monastic properties, and probably the trading and industrial classes of the towns did not regret the transfer. Henry VII. restored to the Marquis of Dorset the estates forfeited by the Greys in the preceding reign, and the second marquis held an important military command under Henry VIII. His son married a daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, a niece of that monarch, and succeeded to her father's title in 1551. The Hastings family also experienced the returning sunshine of royal favour, and resumed their place at Ashby-de-la-Zouch. In 1529 George Hastings was created Earl of Huntingdon, and the possessor of that title in the reign of Elizabeth served that imperious lady well in maintaining order in the Midland counties. Another family that rose to great territorial influence in this period was that of Manners, the head of which was created Earl of Rutland in 1525, and restored in great magnificence the ruined castle of Belvoir, which now ranks among the stateliest of the great mansions of England.

The Greys never recovered the position they

had held in the country in the reign of Edward IV. The ambition of the Duke of Suffolk, fed and encouraged by his connection with royalty, led him to his ruin. In conjunction with the Earl of Northumberland, he succeeded in prevailing upon Edward VI. to exclude his sisters from the succession to the throne, and to nominate Lady Jane Grey as his successor. The scheme did not succeed. Suffolk's unfortunate daughter was indeed proclaimed queen, but she reigned only nine days, and eventually suffered death for her father's unscrupulous ambition. The duke shortly afterwards followed her to the scaffold, and little pity was felt for him by the nation, though a thrill of horror had been felt at the cruel fate of his youthful and amiable daughter.

The prosperity enjoyed by Leicestershire under the Tudor sovereigns was interrupted by the civil war of the seventeenth century. The county was almost unanimously on the side of the Parliament, and in 1645 Leicester was besieged and captured by the Royalists, commanded by Charles himself, and given up to pillage. A long time elapsed before the town recovered its former prosperity, while the rural districts suffered from the ravages and exactions

of the troops that in turn marched across the country. The Castle of Ashby was ruined, and the Earls of Huntingdon did not restore it, but transferred their residence to Donington, a village in the same portion of the county.

With the more peaceful days which came in the last quarter of the century, and those of the two centuries that followed, Leicestershire recovered its prosperity, and has since retained it. The long and fine white fleeces of the Leicestershire breed of sheep was so admirably adapted for the manufacture of the finer descriptions of woollen goods, that Leicester had been, even as early as the first quarter of the thirteenth century, the centre of the woollen trade of the midland counties. In those early days woollen yarn was woven only into cloth, and stockings were made by cutting the parts out of the cloth and stitching them together, just as cloth gloves are now made. Even so late as the sixteenth century, knitted stockings were worn only by the upper classes. The liking for them spread, however, and the process of knitting by hand soon became too slow for the production of a supply commensurate with the demand. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, William Lee, a clergyman

in the neighbouring county of Nottingham, invented the stocking-frame, by the use of which hosiery could be manufactured much more rapidly. According to the popular tradition, the reverend inventor found his courtship of his future wife hindered by the excessive industry of the young lady, whose attention was always absorbed by her knitting. The lover, being a man of some ingenuity and mechanical skill, used both for the construction of a machine which might be worked without requiring such exclusive attention.

The stocking-frame did not, however, come into general use until long after the inventor and his generation had passed away. It was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that it became established, but from that time down to the present, Leicestershire has been the chief seat of the hosiery trade of England. As the stocking-frame could be worked by hand, the manufacture of hosiery was an industry that could be carried on at home, and it spread, therefore, over the whole of the county, and was not confined, like the later cotton industries, to the towns. Merchants bought the wool from the farmers, and the middlemen supplied the raw

material and furnished the machines on hire. There was no tendency, therefore, of the rural population to migrate into the towns, and manufacturing life thus became blended with rural pursuits, the two being carried on and flourishing side by side. It was long before the application of steam to the hosiery manufacture disturbed these conditions. But the time came at length when steam-driven machinery began to encroach upon manual labour, and by degrees the factory system, as we see it in operation to-day, superseded the cottage industry of former times.

John Wiclif and Lutterworth.

By John T. Page.

IT has been truly said that there is no name more dear to Englishmen of every shade of opinion than that of John Wiclif. The fearlessness of the man in the cause of truth, and the boldness with which he faced his persecutors, as well as the zeal and indomitable perseverance with which he carried out, amid the turmoil of his life, his grand work of translating the Bible into English, are qualities which cannot fail to excite admiration.

Though the issues of the battle fought by Wiclif on behalf of religious freedom are world-wide, yet it is a matter of profound interest to concentrate attention on the spot where the brave soldier not only bore the burden and heat of the strife, but also eventually laid down his life.

The birthplace of the "Morning Star of the Reformation" has formed a subject of controversy for many years.

There is no doubt as to his Yorkshire extraction, nor that he came of a very ancient and good family. The villages of Wycliffe and Hipswell both lay claim to his nativity, but the exact locality is matter of conjecture.

About the year 1335, young Wiclif appeared at Oxford, and was duly entered as a student, some say at Balliol, but others claim him for Queen's or Merton Colleges. Here he indefatigably studied logic and philosophy, and thoroughly mastered the civil, the canon, and the common law. In Latin, too, he became as proficient as in his mother-tongue.

In 1361, he received the appointment of Master of Balliol College, and a few years later that of Warden of Canterbury Hall. His degree of Doctor of Divinity enabled him to teach theology. And thus his sphere of usefulness constantly widened in the University.

It is a somewhat curious fact that Wiclif's first claim to national attention was in consequence of a pamphlet which he issued in 1366 against the political supremacy of the Pope. It has been inferred that he was at this time a member of Parliament, but such a supposition may be dismissed, owing to the fact that his name does

not occur in the list of "Magistri" summoned to any Parliament of the period.

In 1374, negotiations took place at Bruges between special commissioners sent from England and representatives of the Papal Court. These mainly related to the practice of "reserving" benefices in England, which was considered by patrons as an encroachment on their rights. Wiclif was sent to this conference as a Royal Commissioner, with the Bishop of Bangor and others, but no very satisfactory conclusion appears to have been arrived at.

About this time Wiclif was appointed to the rectory of Lutterworth, and three years later, in 1377, came the crisis of his life. The frequency and sharpness of his attacks against the pretensions and abuses of the Papacy had raised for him a bitter enemy in the person of Courtenay, Bishop of London. Before this prelate he was presently ordered to appear in St. Paul's Cathedral, on a charge of heresy. He obeyed the injunction, but came supported by two powerful friends, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and the Earl Percy. The interview between Wiclif and the Bishop speedily changed into a stormy altercation between the nobles and

the ecclesiastics, and the Court broke up in confusion.

In the following year (1378) the Pope ordered Archbishop Sudbury to summon Wiclif to Lambeth, to answer charges of heresy and revolutionary views about property in general and

JOHN WICLIF.
From Bale's "Centuries of British Writers" (1548).

Church property in particular. This time the people openly sympathised with him, and eventually a Royal message from the Queen-Mother quashed the proceedings.

As many as five bulls now arrived from Rome, addressed severally to the King, the Parliament,

the University of Oxford, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London. They demanded that Wiclif should cease from preaching, under a threat of excommunication, and also ordered his arrest and condemnation as a heretic. With rival Popes in the field, however, the Reformer was for the time comparatively safe.

From 1378 to 1381, Wiclif was busily at work, preaching in London, at Oxford, and at Lutterworth, and writing tracts and theological treatises in abundance both in English and Latin.

The Reformer now took a further step, and not only denounced the Papal supremacy, but also protested against the doctrine of the mass as being the central evil of the whole system. It was evident that strong measures must be resorted to by the authorities to stop the progress of the Reformer!

An appeal to canon law at Oxford resulted in a declaration of heresy, and Wiclif was virtually silenced and banished from the University. His old patron, John of Gaunt, offered him friendly advice, and under his protection he was allowed to retire to Lutterworth. Here he continued to carry on his work of writing and translating, and of educating his company of "poor priests."

"Yearning for some potent engine, like the printing-press, to diffuse the words of life as he transcribed them, he trained his hero band of Lollards, whose diligent and faithful pens made duplicates and copies of the priceless manuscript, and who read and taught its truths by the light they gathered from their master."

The energy of this "old man eloquent" was amazing. Not only did he expound the word, but his prolific pen produced a continuous stream of tracts and treatises, some of which have been published of late years, but many still lie hidden in the libraries of continental cities. All this time, too, his English Bible was being rapidly copied and eagerly read, and he lived to achieve the undying honour of having produced the first complete translation of God's Word into English, or indeed into any modern language. "Not only was Wiclif 'the Morning Star of the Reformation,' but he was the intellectual and spiritual luminary of the times in which he lived."

But the hour was now at hand when the great Reformer should enter into rest. While engaged in the services of his church, on the 13th of December, 1384, he was seized with a paralytic

fit, and on the last day of the year he died in the quiet rectory house at Lutterworth.

He was buried in the church he had loved and served so well, and for some time his body remained undisturbed within the sacred precincts. It was more than thirty years after his death that the malice of his enemies woke up to fresh effort. The Council of Constance then declared him to have been a heretic, and not only ordered his books to be burnt, but was malignant enough to add "that his body and bones, if they can be distinguished from those of the faithful, shall be disinterred, or dug out of the ground, and cast at a distance from the sepulchre of the church."

This occurred in 1415. It was not until 1428 that sufficient courage could be summoned to carry out the impotent decree. Archbishop Chicheley then came to Lutterworth to preside at so holy a function, and with many willing hands to help, the grave of John Wiclif was speedily rifled of its hallowed relics.

Tradition says that his bones were ultimately carried to a spot south of the town, just where a bridge now crosses the little river Swift, and that there they were publicly burned. However this may be, we know that his ashes were cast into

LUTTERWORTH CHURCH.

the little stream, and "thus," as quaint old Fuller puts it, "this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

This holocaust of John Wiclif was but the sowing of the seed of the Reformation, which in time grew up and ripened and brought forth fruit an hundredfold.

There is not much in the modern town of Lutterworth whereby the imagination can be assisted in its journey backward across the ages to the time when Wiclif resided there. A few old houses with projecting gables still remain to impart a glamour of antiquity to the street leading to the church, but beyond these there is very little of interest outside the church itself. The ravages of time have dealt leniently with the sacred edifice, and judicious restorations have preserved many mementos of the time when Wiclif's voice sounded within its walls.

The structure consists of a chancel, clerestoried nave with five bays, north and south aisles, a south porch, and a lofty tower, surmounted by crocketed pinnacles, at the west end. The

tower is comparatively modern, but the greater part of the body of the church is undoubtedly Fourteenth Century work. In the chancel are a priest's door, aumbry, and piscina; at the east end of the south aisle is another piscina; while in the north pier of the chancel arch a hagioscope still remains.

The name of Wiclif is held in remembrance by an *alto-relievo* monument of white marble, the work of the late Sir Richard Westmacott, R.A. It is well placed at the east end of the north aisle wall, near the spot where he is supposed to have been buried. Various figures, students, priests, and others are represented in an attitude of deep attention around the grand figure of the Reformer, who, with hand uplifted, is in the act of addressing them. The monument bears the following inscription :—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN WICLIF

THE EARLIEST CHAMPION OF ECCLESIASTICAL REFORMATION IN ENGLAND | HE WAS BORN IN YORKSHIRE IN THE YEAR 1324, | IN THE YEAR 1375 HE WAS PRESENTED TO THE RECTORY OF LUTTERWORTH: | WHERE HE DIED ON THE 31ST OF DECEMBER 1384. | AT OXFORD HE ACQUIRED NOT ONLY THE RENOWN OF A CONSUMMATE SCHOOLMAN, | BUT THE FAR MORE GLORIOUS TITLE OF EVANGELIC DOCTOR. | HIS WHOLE LIFE WAS ONE IMPETUOUS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE CORRUPTIONS | AND ENCROACHMENTS OF

THE PAPAL COURT, | AND THE IMPOSTURES OF ITS DEVOTED AUXILIARIES, THE MENDICANT FRATERNITIES. | HIS LABOURS IN THE CAUSE OF THE SCRIPTURAL TRUTH WERE CROWNED BY ONE IMMORTAL ACHIEVEMENT, | HIS TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE INTO THE ENGLISH TONGUE. | THIS MIGHTY WORK DREW ON HIM, INDEED, THE BITTER HATRED | OF ALL WHO WERE MAKING MERCHANDIZE OF THE POPULAR CREDULITY AND IGNORANCE : | BUT HE FOUND AN ABUNDANT REWARD IN THE BLESSINGS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN, OF EVERY RANK AND AGE, | TO WHOM HE UNFOLDED THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE. | HIS MORTAL REMAINS WERE INTERRED NEAR THIS SPOT : BUT THEY WERE NOT ALLOWED TO REST IN PEACE. | AFTER THE LAPSE OF MANY YEARS, HIS BONES WERE DRAGGED FROM THE GRAVE AND CONSIGNED TO THE FLAMES | AND HIS ASHES WERE CAST INTO THE ADJOINING STREAM.

The pulpit is, in many respects, the same from which Wiclif used to preach, and is therefore one of the chief objects of interest in the church. It is hexagonal in shape, and is constructed of thick oak boards, elaborately carved. No trouble has been spared to preserve this choice relic of bygone days.

Inside the communion rails stands Wiclif's chair, so called because he is said to have been carried in it thence to his home, on that last memorable occasion when he was stricken with the hand of death while participating in public worship.

Another Wiclif relic is his dining-table, which stands at the west end of the church. On it rests a case of books containing two volumes of

Wiclif's Bible, and an old edition, also in two volumes, of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," dated 1632. To the latter, part of an iron chain is still affixed.

In the vestry on the north side of the chancel, may be seen a fine oil painting of the Reformer, and there is also preserved here, in a glass case, part of a cope or vestment which once belonged to him. On the top of the case stand two candlesticks, which may or may not have belonged to the church in the time of Rector Wiclif.

When the church was last restored, in 1867-9, under the direction of the late Sir Gilbert Scott, some particularly fine frescoes were brought to light. The principal one is over the chancel arch, and represents the General Resurrection. Christ is seated in the centre, on a rainbow, supported by two angels on either side. Beneath His feet is the earth, with graves opening, and figures representing all grades of life —from the crowned king in flowing robes to the nudest skeleton—rising from their tombs. Fire is seen to be bursting from some of the coffins, which are gradually exuding their inmates. The effect is intensified by the ground being strewn with ghastly bones and grinning skulls.

The other fresco is over the north doorway, and consists of three life-size figures, said to represent Richard II., his wife, Anne of Bohemia, and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Richard stands on the left, fully equipped for sport, with hawk on hand. The Duke is in the act of speaking to the central figure, the Queen, the subject-matter of the conversation being, as visitors are informed, the request that the Queen will use her influence to induce the King to allow Wiclif to remain Rector of Lutterworth.

The scrupulous care with which this church has been restored, and the evident pride that is taken in preserving the memorials which are to be found there of Wiclif and his times, are both matters for sincere congratulation.

May it be long ere those Vandals who ruthlessly destroy relics of ancient days find a coign of vantage in Lutterworth Church! Time does its work quite fast enough, without the aid of modern innovation, but united they hurl down stone after stone, and beam after beam, until a new world rises all around, and men in time forget the spots made sacred by their fathers' dust, and urge their toil where formerly God's word was preached.

The Last Days of a Dynasty: an Introduction to Redmore Fight.

"O Redmore! then it seemed thy name was not in vain,
When with a thousand's blood the earth was covered red."
—*Polyolbion.*

IT is not necessary to relate that crimson chapter of history over which is inscribed the name of Richard, Duke of Gloucester; suffice it that he consummated his crimes by the usurpation by the crown of England, and by the bloody removal of his nephews, Edward V. and the Duke of York.

The ambitious nobleman who thus raised himself to the throne by the ruin of his brother's house, was eminently qualified to rule a numerous and bold people. Shakespeare has fixed him before us in a few nervous words:—

"Thy prime of manhood, daring, bold, and venturous,
Thy age confirmed, proud, subtle, sly, and bloody!"

Nevertheless had Richard inherited the crown, without the necessity of an unnatural usurpation, he would have passed as a wise ruler and a popular

monarch. Despite his crimes, he had a considerable following, and possessed a strong hold upon the affections of the citizens of York.

His wisdom in council, and his skill and courage in the field had been sufficiently tested. Sir Thomas More's description of him, as being "ill-featured of limb, crook-backed, his left shoulder being much higher than his right, and hard-favoured of visage!" is contradicted by the evidence of the Countess of Desmond, who had been Richard's partner at a ball, and regarded him as second only to his brother Edward, who was eminent for his manly beauty. Certainly his portrait gives the impression that he was a prince of handsome features, expressing mental powers of no common order: but the face and the acts of Richard convey the impression that his age largely exceeded the thirty-two years and odd months that made up the sum of his life when Stanley's trumpets ushered in its last moments on Redmore heath.

The reign so infamously commenced, had few gleams of sunshine to lighten its tumultuous days. A magnificent pageant was enacted at York, when Prince Edward was invested with the insignia of the Principality of Wales; but this

was quickly followed by the language of sedition, the secret defection of the nobility, and the open pretensions of a new claimant of the throne. The tragedies of the field were common to the time, but the murder of the boy-princes—the helpless children of their late and most popular monarch —deeply stirred the hearts of the people. A gentleman named Collingbourne gave expression, in the following epigram, of the popular hatred of the king, and contempt of his favourites, Ratcliff, Catesby, and Lord Lovel :—

> "The cat, the rat, and Lovel, our dog,
> Rule all England under a hog."

Richard had the too-witty Collingbourne executed, but the rhyme lived.

Death carried off the frail Prince Edward and his unhappy mother, the death of the latter being imputed to Richard, who had designed to have espoused his niece, Elizabeth of York, the sister of the murdered princes, but was diverted from this unnatural intention by the representations of his advisers. In this position, he declared the Earl of Lincoln—a descendant of the princely merchants of Hull, the de la Poles—the heir-presumptive to the throne. This was probably a stroke of policy, in so far that it served to bar the pretentions of

the Earl of Richmond, but inasmuch as the Earl could command no party sufficiently strong to trouble the king, he was not likely to contest the claims of Richmond in the event of Richard being overthrown.

Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond referred to, was descended from the illegitimate issue of John of Gaunt and Catherine Swynford, and although he might claim some little popular respect as the grandson of Owen Tudor and the widow of the national hero, Henry V., it is extremely improbable that he would ever have approached the throne had not the crimes of the House of York opened a pathway for him.

The first attempt against Richard was headed by the Duke of Buckingham, who was also, on his mother's side, descended from the Beauforts, and had been one of the most zealous partisans of the Duke of Gloucester. The restoration of Edward V. to the throne was the declared object of the movement, and was met by the King's announcement that Edward and his brother had died in the Tower. Upon this evil news reaching them, the conspirators brought forward the Earl of Richmond, and to strengthen his more than dubious claims, exacted an undertaking from him

that he would espouse the Princess Elizabeth, and thus unite the long conflicting claims of the houses of York and Lancaster.

On the 14th October, 1483, Henry VII. was proclaimed at Exeter, and Buckingham raised his standard at Brecknock; the disaffected also appearing in arms in Wiltshire, Kent, and Berks. Richmond sailed from St. Malo, with forty vessels, to support his friends, but was sorely buffeted by adverse winds, and compelled to put back. The attempt failed without the forces coming into collision. The Severn was swollen by heavy rains, the bridges destroyed, and Buckingham's advance arrested. Weary of inactivity, and doubtful of success, the insurgents lost heart, and dispersed. Buckingham, confiding in the devotion of a servant, Ralph Bannister, was betrayed into the king's hands, and carried to Salisbury. Richard, disregarding the duke's urgent request for an audience, commanded that his head should be immediately struck off in the market place.

The victory was an easy one, but the king's position was dubious. His favourites could command no following; and lords and commons were equally disaffected, for his majesty had

resorted to the unpopular expedient of raising supplies by forced loans from his reluctant subjects. The Duke of Norfolk was perhaps the only powerful noble who was faithful to Richard.

The Earl of Richmond landed at Milford Haven on the 6th August, 1485, six days after his embarkation at Harfleur. He brought with him 2000 soldiers, meanly equipped mercenaries, furnished by the King of France. The defence of Wales had been committed to Sir Rice ap Thomas and Sir Walter Herbert, but the former made no attempt to force an engagement, and the latter went over to Richmond with many of his friends and followers. The Earl's army was a mere handful when it entered Shrewsbury, but the young Earl, with his guardian, Sir Gilbert Talbot, welcomed the adventurer, and reinforced the army with 2000 of his retainers.

Royal proclamations had been issued, exposing the fictitious claims of Richmond, and exhorting "all true and good Englishmen" to oppose him in arms. Fixing his headquarters at Nottingham, on the 24th of July, the king impatiently awaited news of the landing of his enemy, yet a week elapsed ere tidings of that important event reached him. On learning that the Welsh had

not opposed, but had afforded some assistance to the Tudor, he resolved to march against the invader and force a battle, without loss of time.

A few years before huge armies had quickly gathered on the unfurling of the standards of York and Lancaster; the highways had been thronged by the vassals of the great nobles, and by tumultuary masses of half-disciplined Welsh infantry. On battlefield and scaffold had perished the flower of the barons, and Henry Tudor had no hold upon the enthusiasm of the people; the general detestation in which Richard was held furnished his only weapon. If Richmond's forces increased slowly, few men came willingly to the king's aid; and many of those who marched behind the standard of the unworthy son of Duke Richard were prepared, on the first opportunity, to go over to the little Tudor princeling. Warwick and Edward were at rest; no Margaret, no Prince Edward, aroused the loyal ardour of the poor remnant of the Lancastrian party. The doomed king alone moved in heroic guise to the field of Bosworth.

Richard was too conscious of his unpopularity, and of the disaffection of his barons; but, before all others, the suspicion of his guilty spirit rested

upon the two brothers, Lord and Sir William Stanley; and while these captains raised troops for his support, he retained Lord Strange, the elder Stanley's son, as a hostage for the father's loyalty.

Such was the position of Richard in the August of 1485, with an enemy before him, weak in numbers, inferior in military capacity, but strengthened by the knowledge that treachery was paralysing the energies of the usurper, and that he was regarded with abhorrence and hatred by the great mass of his subjects.

The Battle of Bosworth.

By Edward Lamplough.

KING Richard having so happily prevailed over Buckingham's revolt, was afterwards called upon to defend himself against the Earl of Richmond in person, that nobleman having landed at Milford Haven on the 6th of August, 1485, and pushed on for Shrewsbury, with the determination of at once bringing his claims to the arbitration of the sword.

The royal forces concentrated at Nottingham, and on the 16th of August the King marshalled his army in the market place, with great pomp and parade. Regally attired, and mounted upon a white war-horse, Richard appeared in the midst of his troops, escorted by his body-guard, that displayed his cognizance, the famous silver boar. The soldiers marched five abreast, with ensigns and banners displayed. On the 17th he issued out of Nottingham, and entered Leicester the same day, after a fatiguing march of twenty-five miles. That night Richard lodged in the Blue Boar, and on the following day marched

through the Westgate, over Bow Bridge, expecting to strike Richmond's advance on the Watling Street Road. His enemy not appearing, the King encamped at the village of Earl Shilton, his officers betaking themselves to the church for shelter. On the 19th of August he took up a position at Stapleton, entrenched his camp, planted his artillery, and impatiently awaited the approach of the enemy.

On the 20th instant Richmond reached Tamworth at the head of 6000 men. Deserters from Richard's army began to drop in, but the chief hope of the adventurer was in the treason of the brothers Stanley. Thus Smollitt, "In the neighbourhood of Tamworth he dropped behind his army, and in a fit of musing lost his way; so that he was obliged to lie all night at a village, without daring to ask the road, for fear of being suspected, and falling into the hands of his enemies. Next morning he made shift to rejoin his army at Tamworth, where, finding his friends had been greatly alarmed at his absence, he told them he had gone to confer with some particular noblemen, who did not choose to appear as yet in his behalf. That same day he privately visited the Lord Stanley at Atherstone."

On the morning of the 21st, the movement commenced in both armies, now almost within striking distance. Richmond encamped his forces at Atherstone, and Richard, declining to engage on the plea that it was the Sabbath day, was satisfied to maintain his camp near Bosworth, where the position may be "yet distinctly traced; though the ancient barren wild, without a hedge or tree, gleams and glows beneath the summer's sun with the products of cultivation." Nineteenth century changes are, however, numerous; a railway passes over the scene of the sanguinary struggle, and a canal has also been cut through the same historic soil. The most severe struggle is supposed to have occurred on the Ambian Hill, and during the heat of the engagement tradition states that the King quenched his thirst from a stream that has its source in one of the slopes of the hill, and the place yet bears the name of "Richard's Well." "Richard's camp was the most extensive, and, with the breastwork around it, covered eighteen acres. Henry's covered seven."

The King's mind was troubled as he reposed amid his host on that last night of his life. Conscience may have troubled his bosom, the

distrust of impending treachery certainly did, and the desertions from his army were too numerous to pass unobserved. His sleep was grievously troubled by evil dreams, wherein he lay at the mercy of devils, who sorely haled and pulled his limbs. When the morning dawned, his pallid face bore evidence of his internal suffering, but Cicily of York bore no coward sons, and casting off the influences of superstition and conscience, he arrayed himself in a splendid suit of mail—the panopoly in which he had stormed the Lancastrian entrenchments at Tewkesbury—and gallantly mounted, with a golden crown encircling his helmet, he dressed his lines as the battle formation was made. The light of earlier years had passed, the soldier was oppressed by the crimes and apprehensions of the King, and Richard moved not to his last field with the fire and daring of the past. Leaving his tents standing, he marched out of his camp. His army was disposed in two lines. The first was commanded by Richard Howard, Duke of Norfolk, who was seconded by his son Thomas, Earl of Surrey. Richard marched with the second line; and Henry, Earl of Northumberland, moved on the right flank with a powerful body of infantry.

An adventurous knight, Sir Simon Digby, having penetrated Richard's lines during the night, noted the preparations for an early advance, and carried the news to Richmond. It was the early dawn of the 22nd of August, and as the trumpets sounded, the warriors arose, and

RICHARD III.

assumed arms. Preparations commenced at four o'clock, but the warriors did not close until ten. Necessarily much time was consumed in buckling and bolting of harness where so many of the combatants were heavily mailed men-at-arms.

The mixed force that constituted the Tudor army was only 7000 strong. The 2000 foreigners

and the vassals of the Talbots probably formed the most perfectly accoutred and disciplined portion of Richmond's forces. The remaining 3000 men was composed of the deserters and adventurers who had come in under Griffith, Ap Thomas, Morgan, Hungerford, Bouchier, Byron, Digby, Hardwick, and other disaffected gentlemen.

Richard's camp flag exhibited a dun cow emblazoned on a yellow ground, but Sir William Brandon carried his private banner, of green and white silk, on which was depicted the famous red dragon of the ancient British monarchs. The disposition of his small army necessitated an extended, and therefore weak, line, to hold the more numerous enemy in check. The risk of being outflanked was thus guarded against, but the danger of the centre being penetrated was increased. John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, commanded the centre; Sir Gilbert Talbot led the right wing, and Sir John Savage the left. Henry, seconded by his uncle, Jasper Tudor, commanded the second line. The field was open, and unfavourable to his inferior army. Had the two Stanleys, who hovered between the armies charged him, his army must at once have been

destroyed; for Lord Stanley's division consisted of 5000 men, that of his brother of 3000.

The formation of the two armies was nearly the same: the archers were in the van, supported by the bill-men and ghisarmiers; the cavalry constituted the wings. The foot wore leather jacks and short doublets, with long hose. Their head armour consisted of pot-helmets and iron scull-caps.

Traitors were in the royal army, and few there had any heart in the usurper's cause. On the lodging of that honest veteran, the Duke of Norfolk, had been attached the following rude rhyme—doubtless the warning of an anxious friend:—

> "Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold,
> For Dickon thy master is bought and sold."

Now that the armies were drawn out, the Stanleys took post on either side of the dividing space between them, thus holding the flanks of either army at their mercy. Richard's commands to the Stanleys to join his army were imperative and urgent, and were seconded by the threat that the young Lord Strange should be immediately executed if the royal orders were not instantly obeyed. Lord Stanley's reply to his majesty's

messenger is thus reported "Should the King stain his honour with my son's blood, tell him I have more. I shall come at my convenience."

On receiving Stanley's defiance, Richard called for the headsman to perform his gruesome office, but was dissuaded from the act of vengeance by the representations of his advisers, who affected to believe that the Stanleys might possibly be awaiting the course of events, and would support the victors when the tide of battle turned. Eight thousand men, combined with the seven thousand of Richmond, would have solved the problem at once; or, by joining Richard, would have affected the ruin of the Earl's army; yet Richard affected to credit the representations of his counsellors, and Lord Strange was relegated to the custody of his guards. Smollitt narrowly censures Richard for not detaching troops to keep the Stanleys in check, but the king was too good a general to divide his 12,000 men to confront the 7000 of Richmond, the 5000 of Lord Stanley, and the 3000 of Sir William.

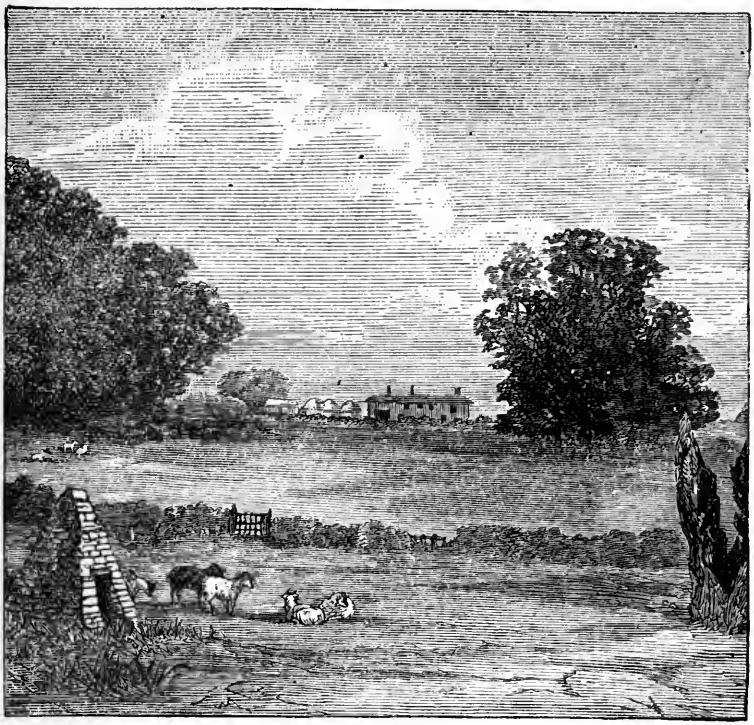
Fearing the worst for his son, Lord Stanley despatched an urgent message to Richmond to commence the advance. The dun cow was carried forward, trumpets sounded the charge, and

the two armies coming within bow-shot, a cloud of arrows was poured from and carried death into either van. As the centres closed with clash of bill and ghisarma, Oxford drew his slender lines into closer formation, and his warriors fought with the dogged resolution of men standing on the brink of ruin. Norfolk marked Oxford's actions, and extended his left with the intention of falling upon his adversary's right flank, but at this critical moment Lord Stanley reinforced Oxford with the whole of his division, and held Norfolk in check. This disheartening act of treachery did not, however, paralyse the energies of the royal army; no panic ensued, and, although distrust and apprehension pervaded the ranks, a severe engagement was maintained at close quarters for nearly two hours. The Duke of Northumberland regarded the conflict with apathy, and made no attempt to support Norfolk; nevertheless many brave men fought hardily for the king; and Sir Richard Ratcliffe and Sir Robert Brackenbury defeated the scaffold of its due, and fell gallantly under shield.

King Richard beheld the critical state of the field with the keen eye of an experienced soldier,

and rightly judging that he himself must make the decisive movement, advanced to the front, where, it is stated, a scout pointed out to him the position occupied by the Earl of Richmond, in the rear of an eminence, attended by a few knights and men-at-arms, amongst whom was the bearer of the dragon-banner. Fired by the prospect of surprising his hated adversary, Richard ascended the slope, and, on Richmond being pointed out to him, exclaimed, "I see the man; let all who are true knights follow me." Casting aside his lance, he unsheathed his sword, and spurred furiously upon the group. Richmond, moved to unusual heat, triumphed over his habitual timidity, and pressed forward to meet his ferocious assailant. But Sir William Brandon and the tall and stalwart Sir John Cheney spurred between the closing rivals. One blow of Richard's sword smote the standard-bearer to the ground, a dying man; a second blow hurled the stout Cheney from his war-steed, and the desperate warrior was thus hewing a bloody pathway towards Richmond, when Sir William Stanley burst in with all his lances and surrounded Richard, who, pierced by many weapons, and fighting fiercely to the last, with

his armour broken and dinted, and the crown smitten from his helmet, breathed out his fierce spirit in the midst of his enemies, some fifteen minutes after he spurred up the hill.



BOSWORTH FIELD.

The Duke of Norfolk had also fallen, and on the death of Richard being made known, his army broke and dispersed, leaving about 1000 of its number on Redmore Plain. Richmond's

army lost only 100 men; but this statement is difficult to believe, as the two armies were closely engaged for upwards of two hours, and apparently the vanquished were not pursued with great severity. On the scene of Richard's death-struggle, his crown was found, under a hawthorn bush, where it had rolled during the *melee*, and Lord Stanley, carrying the ensanguined trophy to Richmond, placed it upon his head, and hailed him King—first of the Tudor line.

"At the foot of the Ambrian Hill the last of the Plantagenet kings lay naked in the noontide sun amid a heap of slain."

The soldiers, elated by a victory that defection and treachery alone had made possible, took up Stanley's cry with enthusiasm, and from that moment Richmond was secure in the crown of England.

No great severity was exercised towards Richard's adherents, but Catesby and two others suffered on the scaffold.

Thus, after thirty years of sanguinary internecine strife, the famous War of the Roses came to a conclusion by the ruin of the houses of York and Lancaster, for it would be absurd to affect to regard the Earl of Richmond as possessing any

legal claim to the honours of the house of Lancaster, and although he bestowed his hand upon the Princess Elizabeth, King Edward's daughter, it was simply the absorption of the last poor claim of the house of York in the securing of the Tudor line. True, there was the young Earl of Warwick, but the Battle of Bosworth Field opened the gates of the Tower for that unfortunate nobleman, and the Tudor steel was ready to cut short his claim on the first suspicion of danger.

Scenes at Bosworth: The Blue Boar at Leicester.

SOME incidents of tragic or romantic interest associated with the Battle of Bosworth Field, or the fortunes of the two rivals, King Richard and the Earl of Richmond, may with propriety follow the account of the battle given in the immediately preceding pages of "Bygone Leicestershire."

The vicissitudes to which the ambition of Richard, Duke of York, committed his family when he advanced his claim to the throne, is strikingly illustrated by the fact that when his mangled and decapitated corpse was carried to Fotheringhay for interment, there met by his grave-side his child, young Richard, and Margaret of Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, the mother of Harry of Richmond. Not only as the mother of Richard's successful rival was the Countess fated to affect the fortunes of the noble child, but also as the wife of Thomas, Lord Stanley. No doubt her influence prevailed

over the Stanleys, to the ruin of Richard and the exaltation of her son. Sir William Stanley, who saved Richmond from King Richard's sword on Bosworth field, was afterwards condemned on a charge of treason, and confessed his guilt, when he was sentenced to death. His treason was not supposed to be of the deepest dye, but he was very wealthy. The king allowed him to perish on the scaffold, and then entered into the possession of his wealth.

King Richard's proclamation against the Tudors is an extremely interesting document, and deals trenchantly with Richmond's claims. Commines, although not correctly informed in all his historic details, graphically describes the fall of Richard in a few words:—

"This King Richard himself reigned not long, for God on a sudden raised him up an enemy, without power, without money, without right (according to my information) and without any reputation, but what his person and deportment contracted; for he had suffered much, had been in distress all the days of his life, and particularly as prisoner in Bretagne, to Duke Francis, from the eighteenth year of his age, who treated him as kindly as the necessity of his imprisonment would permit.

The King of France having supplied him with some money and about 3000 Normans, the loosest and most profligate persons in all that country, he passed into Wales, where his father-in-law, the Lord Stanley, joined him with 26,000 men, at the least; and in three or four days time, he met the bloody King Richard, fought him, slew him on the field of battle, crowned himself King of England, and reigns at this present time."

The mind of the doomed king was evidently overcast, by the apprehension of his defeat and ruin; but his pallid aspect, and his troubled slumbers, were not necessarily the consequences of a gnawing remorse, or the stingings of an awakened conscience; but maybe referred, with equal probability, to his impotent rage when he found himself drawn into a conflict with an enemy whose pretensions, military experience, and courage, he despised; but into whose hands he might fall by the treachery which undermined his strength, and against which neither his ferocious courage nor his cunning could avail him. Of all his nobles, probably the veteran Duke of Norfolk alone was faithful to his master.

Richard's natural ferocity showed itself at

intervals, and it was with difficulty that he was dissuaded from the execution of his hostage, Lord Strange. It is recorded that while on his rounds on the morning of the battle, he came upon a sentinel sleeping at his post, and that he buried

THE BLUE BOAR AT LEICESTER.

his dagger in the poor fellow's heart, with the bitter sarcasm, "I found him asleep, and I left him as I found him."

A few hours later, and the tyrant weltered in his own blood, betrayed and undone by the bitter

fruit of his own crimes—for the treachery of his nobles was the revolt against the usurper and the assassin, not against the king or the house of York. Thus Praed's "Red Fisherman:"

"From the bowels of the earth,
Strange and varied sounds had birth;
Now the battle's bursting peal,
Neigh of steed, and clang of steel;
Now an old man's hollow groan
Echoed from the dungeon stone;
Now the weak and wailing cry
Of a stripling's agony!
Cold by this was the midnight air;
But the abbot's blood ran colder,
When he saw a gasping knight lie there,
With a gash beneath his clotted hair,
And a hump upon his shoulder.
And the loyal churchman strove in vain
To mutter a Pater Noster;
For he who writhed in mortal pain
Was camped that night on Bosworth Plain—
The cruel Duke of Gloucester."

Better, perhaps not braver, men fell that day. A romantic incident of the battle may be briefly mentioned. Two close friends, Sir John Byron and Sir Gervase Clifton, K.B., were engaged on opposite sides, and were under a solemn obligation to each other that he who was on the victor's side should intercede for the other, or for his

family, if life was lost in the battle. In the first charge Clifton was borne out of saddle, and felled by his adversary, whereon Byron rushed, with extended shield, to aid his friend, and offer him quarter. Clifton was, however, mortally wounded, and with his last breath reminded his friend of their engagement, and expressed the opinion that the victory would fall to his party, that of Richmond.

After the battle, and the Tudor's solemn thanks to heaven, the victors entered Leicester in triumph, Blanche Sangleir, pursuivant-at-arms, having the body of the slain king in his charge.

The corpse was entirely naked, ghastly with many wounds, and stained with the blood and mire of Redmore, through which it had been dragged. It had been insultingly cast across the back of a horse, and was carried with the head and heels dangling opposite each other, a sorry spectacle indeed. The corpse of the father had been treated with indignity ; that of the son was not more fortunate. It was publicly exposed during two days, and insulted with barbarous indecency by the people, but ultimately received burial in the Abbey Church, where King Henry bestowed upon it the honour of a tomb of

variegated marble. When the Abbey fell into decay, after the reformation, the tomb was hidden by debris, briars, and thorns, and on being discovered, was rifled for the acquisition of the stone coffin, which long served as a drinking-trough for the White Horse Inn, in the Gallow-tree Gate of Leicester, but was broken up in the time of George I. and used for steps for a cellar.

The old Blue Boar Inn at Leicester was long regarded with interest, not only on account of its antiquity and characteristic style, but on account of its containing King Richard's camp bedstead, a heavy piece of wooden furniture, which had been used as a treasure-chest by its late possessor, for it was fashioned to contain a considerable sum of money, and was well furnished when Richard entered Leicester. When Henry's troops plundered the town, they no doubt gave due attention to the Blue Boar, but missed the King's hoard, which was afterwards discovered by and enriched the owner of the house, who throve on the usurper's gold and attained to the distinguished position of Mayor of Leicester. Years passed, and the ex-Mayor died, leaving his widow in affluent circumstances. The unfortunate woman retained in her service an old servant who was privy to

the discovery and appropriation of the money, and by this woman the old lady was murdered, when the whole transaction came to light. In 1830, the story of this historic bedstead was thus recorded, "About half a century since, the relic was purchased by a furniture broker in Leicester, who slept in it for many years, and showed it to the curious; it continues in as good condition, apparently, as when used by King Richard, being formed of oak, and having a high polish. The daughter of the broker having married one Babington of Rothley, near Leicester, the bedstead was removed to Babington's house, where it is still preserved."

Bradgate and Lady Jane Grey.

By John T. Page.

"How sweet 'neath thy far-spreading trees to lie,
Lulled by the murmur of thy haunted stream;
In gentle peace and calm tranquility,
O'er all thy storied past to dream and dream!"

IN most of our English counties, and particularly in the Midlands, there exist historic shrines to which ever and anon student-pilgrims make their way with the object of musing on the characters and lives of those whose memories are there perpetuated. These pilgrimages are fraught with much pleasure and profit, and many a useful lesson has been learnt through visits paid to scenes where noble men and women, whose names have become household words, worked and dwelt.

This is notably the case with Bradgate, or Broad Gate as it was called, when, long years ago, that beautiful and accomplished prodigy of amiability, Lady Jane Grey, was born there.

Bradgate Park lies about six miles north of Leicester, and originally formed part of Charn-

wood Forest. It is one of those select spots, still left in England, which can boast that never in its history has a ploughshare been known to pass over its surface. Far back in the distant prehistoric ages, the researches of science tell us, the country for miles around was the scene of continued volcanic eruptions, which accounts for the immense quantity of granite crags scattered over the face of the ground. Besides, therefore, affording study for the historian, the geologist has here a rare field in which to labour. The huge boulders have seemingly been thrown about haphazard by mighty giants at play, and in some places bald patches of sunken rocks are visible, which at present the grass refuses to hide. From this it will be easily seen that the surface of the ground, by the strange peculiarity of its wild beauty, cannot fail to command the interest of even the most casual observer.

The walk from Leicester to Bradgate is a treat to all pedestrians, so varied and attractive are the surroundings. Just beyond the town, on the right, stand the ruins of the venerable and once imposing Leicester Abbey, rendered for ever sacred as the spot where the great spirit of

Cardinal Wolsey departed from him. A little more than three miles brings us to the village of Groby, considered somewhat noted as being the earliest village settlement on the borders of the Forest. Seated by Groby Pool, the gaze wanders in a most cool and refreshing manner across its eighty acres of water. The sides are all strewn with boulders, which form rude but comfortable seats for travellers, where the road skirts the Pool.

About a couple of miles further on, rendered short and easy by the delightful verdure which fringes the road, and Bradgate Park is reached. In the month of June nothing could be more enchanting than to be allowed to ramble at will in its valleys, amongst the luxuriant fern, and beneath the impenetrable foliage.

A somewhat shallow, but in rainy seasons turbulent and dashing, trout stream meanders its way across the Park, and empties itself eventually in Groby Pool. Within sight of this stream, and in one of the prettiest parts of the demesne, stand the ruins of the house whose halls once echoed to the footsteps of "the nine days' Queen." It is of course around this spot that the principal interest centres. There is not much left, however, to

gaze upon, the highest portions being the remains of two towers, one square and the other an irregular polygon in shape, and a gable end surmounted by a chimney. A low wall connects these remnants of the once noble mansion, and on entering the enclosure a few of the rooms may be with ease mentally re-constructed. The Rev. J. Curtis gives, in his valuable "Topographical History of the County of Leicester," the following description of the place:

"The south side of the house consisted of the kitchen and servant's apartments. On the north side was the great hall, of which the remains, now overgrown with luxuriant ivy, are still to be seen. To the east of the hall a long range of buildings extended towards the north, enclosing the court on the east, and the hall and other offices on the south. The foundations of the buildings on the east, which seem to have been occupied as the private apartments of the family, are still visible; and on the south-east corner are the remains of an octagonal tower.

"The ruins . . . exhibit no signs of architectural grandeur; the house having been a large but low building in the form of a square, and turretted at each corner."

Such was the quiet and secluded country mansion of the Marquis of Dorset, in which Lady Jane Grey first saw the light in October, 1537. From her mother she inherited royal blood, being born into the world a grand-daughter of Mary Tudor, sister of the then reigning monarch, Henry the Eighth.

Her father was a lavish patron of the schoolmen of the day, and very early in his daughter's life entrusted her education to John Aylmer, who succeeded in producing from the willing materials placed at his disposal, one of the most singularly clever girls of that age. Day after day she pored lovingly over her books, and delighted to do this when walking in the leafy solitude of the Park.

"Musing with Plato, though the horn was blown
And every ear and every heart was won,
And all in green array were chasing down the sun."

Her time was spent in constant study at Bradgate until she was sixteen years of age, when it was arranged that she should marry Lord Guilford Dudley, son of the intriguing and ambitious Duke of Northumberland. The rest of her history is short indeed. Stirring events, of which she formed the centre, clustered thickly

around her, and on the death of Edward the Sixth, in accordance with a clause in his will, she was proclaimed Queen. Her nine days' reign is one of the saddest episodes of English History. The end speedily arrived, and it is hard to have to admit that the execution of such a beautiful and accomplished lady became absolutely necessary to the safety of Queen Mary. "Though Queen Mary of her own disposition was inclined finally to pardon her, yet necessity of state was such as she must be put to death." The sad story of her reign and death has formed the subject of poem and prose almost as frequently as any known event, but nowhere is it more graphically told than in Ainsworth's "Tower of London."

Standing before the old ruins of the once noble mansion of the Grey family, a tinge of sadness is imparted as we ponder over the blighted life of one who, but for the foolish ambition of her unscrupulous relatives, promised long to remain an ornament to the literature and learning of her native land. Her character and attainments are very aptly summed up by Fuller, as follows:—"She had the innocency of childhood, the beauty of youth, the solidity of middle, the gravity of old age, and all at eighteen; the

birth of a princess, the learning of a clerk, the life of a saint, and the death of a malefactor for her parents' offences."

From the time of Lady Jane's death the fortunes of the Grey family steadily declined, until King James the First again renewed them by creating Henry Grey first Baron of Groby. The family has ever since remained in possession of the estates at Bradgate, the grandson and successor of the first Baron ultimately receiving the additional title of Earl of Stamford.

The old mansion continued to stand until the commencement of the present century, when, according to Throsby's account, it was burnt to the ground by the then Countess of Stamford. Writing to her sister in London, in answer to a question as to how she liked the place, she replied "that the house was tolerable, that the country was a forest, and the inhabitants all brutes." Being advised, in a thoroughly sympathetic manner, to "set fire to the house and run away by the light of it," she is reported to have done so, and traces of the conflagration may still be found in various parts of the ruins.

Although it is a temptation to linger long amid these picturesque and broken walls, yet there

are other attractions at Bradgate by no means to be ignored. In the chapel, hard by, may be seen a fine monument to the founder of the present lineage, Henry, Lord Grey of Groby, who died on the 26th of July, 1614. This magnificent tomb, with its recumbent effigies is, however, the only relief to the monotony of the interior of this now disused structure. Wandering at length adown the steep and rocky slopes into the deep sequestered dales, many a gnarled and knotted oak is seen, beneath the shade of whose once wide spreading branches Lady Jane and her friend Roger Ascham may well have walked. Robert Hall thought of this when he visited the place, and very pertinently observed to a friend who bore him company: "What a delightful place to study Plato in! . . . a little more than four such lives as mine, and Lady Jane was walking here, with Plato in her hand, and Roger Ascham by her side."

The murmuring trout stream, the fish ponds, the broken and fantastic fragments of rock, and uprising from the scene "Old John" Hill, with its tower and mimic ruin, all combine, and help to make Bradgate one of the most enjoyable hunting grounds for the study of "Bygone Leicestershire."

Leicester Castle.

By I. W. Dickinson, B.A.

THE name Leicester is from the Anglo-Saxon Legecester, the Castle on the Leir, as the stream was known in British times which now is called the Soar, and Leir is identical with Lear, the unfortunate king whose tragic story in Shakespeare's hands forms the highest embodiment of the gloomy North Teuton genius. Indeed, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, the castle and town were founded by that monarch on the site of the Roman station Ratae, at the crossing of the two great roads the *Foss Way* from the mouth of the Ax in Devonshire to Lincoln, and the *Via Devana* which ran from Chester *(Deva)* to Colchester *(Camalodunum)*. It is another tribute to the faultless intuition of those wonderful road-makers, that one main factor in the phenomenal growth of Leicester in our own days is its central position at the crossing of three important railways. Of this Roman station relics have been found in

pavements, urns, and coins, and northward from the Castle runs the "Jewry Wall," over seventy feet in length, and in places twenty feet high, composed in part of Roman bricks. The "Jewry" in mediæval times was that quarter in a town where alone the Jews were allowed to dwell; the old Jewry in London is a familiar example. After 300 years indecisive oscillation in the struggle for supremacy between West Saxon and Dane, now Northumbria ruling Wessex, now Wessex forcing Northumbria to own her sway, the balance of power came to rest at Watling Street; by the treaty of Wedmore, England to the north-east of that line being declared Danish, to the south-west Saxon, and between these two essentially antagonistic elements was formed the strong Danish confederacy of the Five Boroughs —Derby, Lincoln, Leicester, Stamford, and Nottingham—to guard the marches. But the North was doomed to bow beneath the house of Cerdic, and within forty years the noble "Lady of Mercia," departing from the strategy all but universal with the Saxons, of open fight, and resorting to castle-building, closed round the Five Boroughs.

They fell in 917, and with them all North-

umbria. Twenty years later came Brunanburgh, "the last mad rush of the Sabine bull on the Colline gate," 937, and henceforward England south of the Cheviots was to be one and indivisible. After the Conquest, William, the great castle-builder, strengthened and enlarged Leicester, which must have been a novel proceeding, since in the vast majority of cases he had to build his castles *ab initio*, to the consternation of the English, who never took kindly to fighting behind walls, and still prefer the "cold steel," as many a splendid charge in our own day testifies. On the Conqueror's death the Castle of Leicester was seized by the Greutmaisnells, and held by them for Robert of Normandy; in consequence, it was taken by the Red King and reduced to ashes.

The Beaumont family next obtained the "Castle and honour of Leicester" in the person of Robert, first Earl of Leicester, who rebuilt the Castle. Robert, the second Earl, was a warm partisan of Henry I. in his contests against his brother Robert and the discontented baronage. This Robert founded the abbey of St. Mary de Pratis, outside the town. The third Robert lived during the stormy times of Stephen, the worst governed period in all our history, when each baron

entrenched himself in his castle, which he turned into a centre of lawlessness and cruelty past credence.

Henry II. put down these nests of robbery with a strong hand, at the outset of his reign, and among the castles demolished by this king is numbered that of Leicester. The town walls were thrown down at the same time, and never fully rebuilt. The fourth Earl, also Robert, died childless; his sister and co-heir, Amicia Beaumont, married Simon de Montfort, who thereby acquired the Earldom and Castle. The son of this marriage was the more famous Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, "Earl Simon the Righteous," the pure patriot whose name will ever be enshrined in the hearts of all true Englishmen. When King and Pope had conspired to fleece the flock they had sworn to cherish, and exaction after exaction had reduced the English to despair, Earl Simon stood in the forefront of the strife, and initiated the government of the country by Parliament, which since his day has been the unquestioned maxim of our constitution, and the model upon which all the civilized governments of the world are formed more or less closely.

The story of his death at Evesham—August

4th, 1265—is as pathetic as any in our annals. On that fatal August morning, his son was but nine miles away at Alcester, and as the light broke he at first mistook the soldiers of Prince Edward with which the heights in front of him were filled for those of his son. As he saw them coming on in the "wise order" they had learnt from him, he knew that his fate had come; he killed his war-horse before his troops as a sign that there was no hope. For three hours his terrible sword kept a clear path about him, and with the cry of "It is God's grace," he fell at last, "fighting like a lion for the liberties of England." He was attainted, and the Castle and Earldom granted to Edmund, Duke of Lancaster, second son of Henry III., and the Castle has since gone with the Lancaster property, and still forms part of the "Duchy of Lancaster," which, in accordance with an act passed by Edward IV., is still "held separately from all other hereditaments," the revenues being wholly exempted from control of Parliament.

The Dukes of Lancaster restored the Castle of Leicester, and must have done so on a magnificent scale, as under them it was frequently the scene of ostentatious pageants.

Thus John of Gaunt entertained his unfortunate nephew, Richard II. and his Queen, with his usual magnificence in 1390. When the House of Lancaster obtained possession of the throne, Leicester Castle, as belonging to the royal demesne, became of importance, and Henry V., the second monarch of that dynasty, twice summoned parliament to meet at Leicester. In 1414 it was held in the hall of the Greyfriars, the King staying in the Castle, and in 1425-6 Parliament met within the great hall of the Castle itself. A third time did Parliament assemble at Leicester, in 1450. With the fall of the cause of Lancaster at the field of Towton, Leicester Castle passed into the hands of Edward IV., together with fully one-fifth of England, the possessions of attainted Lancastrians, and since then has remained the private property of the reigning sovereign.

It was dismantled by Charles I., and most of the materials sold in 1645. At the present time this ancient and royal Castle is represented by a "modernised assize hall," and a round mound of earthwork, known as the Castle Hill, thirty feet high and a hundred feet across.

Death of Cardinal Wolsey at Leicester Abbey.

By I. W. Dickinson, B.A.

THE Abbey of S. Mary de Pratis, at Leicester, was founded by Robert Beaumont, second Earl Leicester, in 1143, for the Canons Regular of S. Augustine, from their habit, a long cassock with white rochet covered by a black cloak, often called the Black Canons. The monastery was richly endowed and enjoyed many privileges in various manors, such as the right of cutting fuel, and particularly from the De Quinceys, a claim of a tenth of the hay sold in Ade and Wyffeley, and the right shoulder of all deer killed in the Park of Acle.

The founder became a regular canon in his own foundation, in expiation of the miseries he had brought on the "goodly town of Leycestre," during the stormy reign of Stephen.

From 1143 to 1530 the long centuries rolled by, over the pleasant meadows on the Soar, to which the monastery owed its name, and each

midnight the black-robed procession passed from dormitory to church for *Matins*, chanting the *Nocturnae;* each sunrise was greeted with *Lauds;* each sunset heard the solemn *Vespers;* each day closed at *Compline* in asking protection through the night. Year by year the fraters cut their hay and piled their firewood, and claimed their dues: "Amicia Beaumont giveth two bucks annually;" "a buck annually out of Charnwood Forest;" the right shoulders of the Acle deer were duly consumed in the refectory; the poor were each day relieved at the great gate; brothers died and were laid to rest 'neath the chancel steps, new faces filled up the gaps, new gossip and chatter went on in the long *Fratry;* human lives were lived worthily or otherwise in that old monastery, of whom history makes no mention, and already the shadow of doom had fallen on the lichen-covered walls when on that memorable Saturday night, November 26th, 1530, it being dark, "the abbot with all his convent, with divers torches light," met at the doorway England's last Cardinal Archbishop, and across his face too the shadow of death was thrown. "Father Abbot, I am come to lay my bones among you," said the dying Wolsey, and the mule passed through the

gateway, across the courtyard with its workshops and tool houses, to the steps of the Hospitium, or guest chamber, where the Cardinal alighted, "then master Knyghton took him by the arm, and led him up the stairs, who told me afterwards he never felt so heavy a burthen in all his life. And as soon as he was in his chamber he went incontinent to his bed very sick."

Poor broken man! All day his mule had been stirring the dead leaves on the journey through the November light; when those same leaves were in bud last Easter "upon Palm Sunday he bare his palm, and went in procession with the monks" (at Peterboro') "setting forth the divine service right honourably. And upon Maunday Thursday he made his Maunday there in Our Lady's Chapel, having fifty-nine poor men, whose feet he washed and kissed,"—being fifty-nine years old, and now the dead leaves are rustled against the casement; some eight more Maundays shall come and Maunday Thursday and Cardinal-Archbishops, and Compline in England shall be of the past.

Next day, Sunday, the monks' droning comes faintly across the cloister as they chant high mass, and memories of splendour, and court life,

and the busy world he has seen for the last time mingle with the sound in the sick man's fancies. "Upon Monday, in the morning, as I stood by his bedside, about eight of the clock, the windows being close shut, and having waxlights burning upon the cupboards, I beheld him, as me seemed,

CARDINAL WOLSEY.

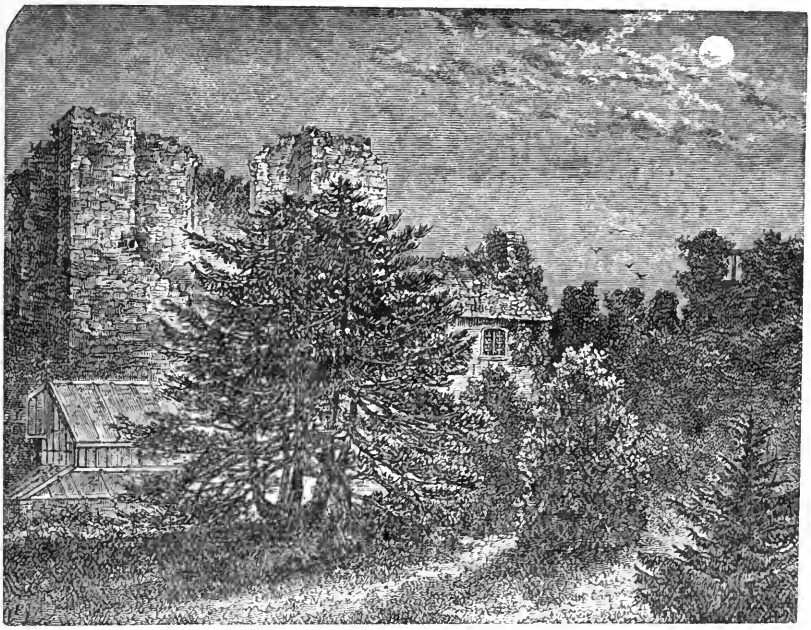
drawing fast towards death. He, perceiving my shadow upon the wall by the bedside, asked who was there.

"'Sir,' quoth I, 'I am here.' 'How do you?' quoth he to me. 'Very well, sir,' quoth I, 'if I might see your grace well.' 'What is it of the clock?' said he to me. 'Sir,' said I, 'it is past

eight of the morning.' 'Eight of the clock?' quoth he, 'that cannot be,' rehearsing divers times 'eight of the clock! eight of the clock! Nay, nay,' quoth he at last 'it cannot be eight of the clock, for by eight of the clock you shall lose your master; for my time draweth near that I must leave this world!' With that, one doctor Palmes, a worshipful gentleman, being his chaplain and ghostly father, standing by, bade me secretly demand of him if he would be shriven, and to be in readiness towards God whatsoever should chance. At whose desire, I asked him that question. 'What have you to do to ask me any such question?' quoth he, and began to be very angry with me for my presumption, until at last master doctor took my part, and talked with him in Latin and so pacified him."

In the course of the afternoon a messenger comes post haste from the king to inquire into some "fifteen hundred pounds," missing somehow, and so the worthy lieutenant of the Tower, Master Knyghton, must visit the sick man and make demand of the money. "Oh, good Lord," exclaimed the dying Wolsey "how much doth it grieve me that the king should think in me any deceit, wherein I should deceive him of any one

penny that I have. Rather than I would, Master Knyghton, embezzle or deceive him of one penny I would it were molten and put into my mouth,' which words he spake twice or thrice very vehemently.



RUINS OF LEICESTER ABBEY.

"'As for this money that you demand of me, I assure you it was none of mine, for I borrowed it of divers of my friends to bury me, and to bestow among my servants, who have taken great pains about me, like true and faithful servants.'" And

ere this business of the money was fully settled the abbot sends for Mr. Knyghton to his supper.

"Howbeit, my lord waxed very sick, most likely to die that night, and often swooned, and as methought drew on fast to his end, until it was four of the clock of the morning, at which time I spake to him and asked him how he did. 'Well,' quoth he, 'if I had any meat, I pray you give me some.' 'Sir, there is none ready,' said I. 'I wis,' quoth he, 'you be the more to blame; for you should always have meat for me in a readiness, to eat when my stomach serveth me; therefore I pray you get some; for I intend this day to make me strong to the intent that I may occupy myself in confession and make me ready to God.'" The faithful Cavendish sees that it is but the last flicker of the dying candle in its socket, and calls up the confessor and lieutenant.

Master Knyghton, we notice, does not relish being called up at four this cold November morning, after supper with the abbot, but after a little grumbling, goes like the worthy gentleman he is to see the Cardinal. Wolsey tastes the chicken cullace, and then remembering it is St. Andrew's Eve puts it from him and will eat no more.

He then confessed the space of an hour. And confession ended, his last words are spoken to Knyghton, the lieutenant. "'If I had served God as diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs. I pray you have me most humbly commended unto his royal majesty, and beseech him in my behalf to call to his princely remembrance all matters proceeding between him and me from the beginning of the world. . . . He is a prince of royal courage, and hath a princely heart; and rather than he will miss or want any part of his will or pleasure he will endanger one half of his realm.

"'For I assure you, I have often kneeled before him the space sometimes of three hours to persuade him from his will and appetite: but I could never persuade him therefrom.

"'Therefore, Master Knyghton, I warn you, if it chance you hereafter to be one of his Privy Council, as for your wisdom you are very meet, be assured and advised what you put into his head, for you shall never put it out again. . . .

"'Master Knyghton, farewell. I can no more say; but I wish, ere I die, all things to have good success. My time draweth on fast. I may not

tarry with you,' and even with these words he began to draw his speech at length, and his tongue to fail—his eyes being presently set in his head, whose sight failed him.

"Then began we to put him in remembrance of Christ's passion, and caused the yeoman of the guard to stand by secretly to see him die, and to be witness of his words at his departure; and incontinent the clock struck *eight*, and then gave he up the ghost." *

The abbot, hastily summoned, hurried up with his viaticum and anointed the body, let us hope before the breath was fully gone.

The abbot, Cavendish, and Sir William Knyghton, held a consultation and decided that the Mayor and Corporation of Leicester should be summoned to view the body, and thus prevent false rumours getting abroad. Accordingly he was placed in a wooden coffin in the chamber where he died, and over his breast the insignia that had been so dear to him in life, mitre, crosier, ring, and pall, and till five in the afternoon any who listed might see him "open and bare-faced."

At that hour he was taken in solemn procession down into the church, and "divers

* Cavandish.

poor men" with torches in their hands watched all night, while the Canons sang "dirge and other devout orisons." By four in the morning the whole abbey was astir; solemn mass was sung by the abbot; then the corpse was buried in the midst of the Lady Chapel, and by six that dark November morning he was alone at last—alone with his God. November 29th, 1530.

Thus died one of the greatest of all Englishmen. He stood on the dividing ridge of the ages. Behind him stretched a past that we of the present can never fully realize; all things were looked at from a standpoint whence they will never again be viewed; and before him an unknown land he could never have dreamed of already loomed in sight—the Europe of to-day.

Belvoir Castle.

PLACED upon the summit of a steep hill, five miles westward from the red-roofed town of Grantham, and so near the borders of Lincolnshire that the topographers of former times as often located it in that county as in Leicestershire, the noble seat of the patrician family of Manners commands an extensive view over the comparatively level country around.

Camden says:—"In the west part of Kesteven, on the edge of Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, there stands Belvoir Castle, so called (whatever was its ancient name) from the fine prospect on a steep hill, which seems the work of art." But Nichols, who is regarded as a better authority on topographical matters relating to Leicestershire, states that "the castle is at present in every respect considered as being within this county, with all the lands of the extra-parochial part of Belvoir thereto belonging (including the site of the Priory), consisting in the whole of 600 acres of wood, meadow, and

pasture land, upon which are now no buildings but the castle, with its offices, and the inn." It may be remarked here that whatever weight may attach to Camden's statement respecting the name Belvoir, it is ignored locally, the name by which the place is known in the surrounding district being pronounced Bever.

Though its history is not so rich in incident as that of many a baronial stronghold now in ruins, it nevertheless dates from as remote a period as the hoariest of them. It is said to have been founded by one Robert de Todeni, who bore the standard of Duke William of Normandy at the Battle of Hastings, and was rewarded for his services by the Conqueror with large possessions in the counties of Leicester and Lincoln. Of the structure erected by this fortunate Norman there is probably now remaining only the foundations. He was succeeded in its possession by a son whom the old chroniclers call William de Albini, and who distinguished himself on the side of Henry I. in the warfare carried on in Normandy between that monarch and his brother Robert. It may be conjectured that he proved loyal to Henry's daughter, the Empress Maud, when so many of the nobles ranged themselves against

her, for Stephen gave a grant of the castle and lordship of Belvoir to Ranulph de Gernon, Earl of Chester. This grant was confirmed by Henry II., but the property subsequently reverted to the Albini family.

William de Albini, the third of that name, was one of the bold men who signed the undertaking to maintain the Great Charter, the signing of which by John is the subject of one of the pictures mentioned by Brayley as in the Belvoir collection a century ago. The subsequent troubles of that reign afforded the King an opportunity to seize the Castle, which, however, with the estates, or a considerable portion of them, afterwards passed into the possession of Robert de Ros, Baron Hamlake, on his marriage with the heiress of the Albinis. The new possessors were, for several generations, more fortunate than their predecessors, Sir William de Ros, the third in succession from Robert, holding the office of Lord High Treasurer in 1402. His second son, Thomas, who succeeded John de Ros, on the latter dying without issue, was knighted for his deeds of valour during the French campaigns of Henry V.; but the next owner of Belvoir found his lines cast in evil times,

and adhering to the fortunes of the usurping House of Lancaster during the Civil War of the following reign, was attainted of treason, his estates being divided among the partisans of Edward IV. The castle and lordship of Belvoir fell to Lord Hastings, but on that nobleman attempting to take possession he was repelled by the friends of De Ros, and found it necessary to employ a considerable force to assert his claim. In the conflict that ensued the castle suffered so severely that Leland says "the timber of the roofs uncovered rotted away, and the soil between the walls at last grew full of elders."

The attainder was taken off in 1472, on the petition of Sir Henry Ros, and eleven years later his successor, then become Lord Ros, obtained the restitution of the estates. Dying without issue, his sisters succeeded as co-heiresses, and the eldest, Eleanor, marrying Robert Manners, of Ethale, in Northumberland, conveyed her share of the property to that family, in whose possession it has since remained. Their son, George Manners, received the honour of knighthood, and his successor, Sir Thomas Manners, was created by Henry VIII., Earl of Rutland, and

took an active part in the putting down of the disturbances which followed the suppression of the monastic houses.

The priory of Belvoir having been suppressed, he removed the monuments of the families of Albini and Ros to Bottesford Church, and also thoroughly restored the castle, which was afterwards greatly extended by Henry, the second earl.

Leland, writing of the castle at this time, says:—"It is a strange sight to see how many steps of stone the way goeth up from the village to the castle. In the castle be two fair gates; and the dungeon is a fair round tower, now turned to pleasure, as a place to walk in, and to see all the country about, and railed about the round (wall), and a garden (plot) in the middle. There is also a well of great depth in the castle, and the spring thereof is very good." The steps of which the old topographer writes still exist, and are cut in the red sandstone of which the hill on which the castle stands is composed.

Henry, the second Earl of Rutland, made considerable additions to the castle, so that it vied even at that time with the most palatial of the mansions of the nobles of the land. When

Queen Mary engaged in the unfortunate war with France, which resulted in the loss of the last of the English possessions in that country, the Earl was appointed captain-general of the land forces and commander of the fleet. Francis, the sixth earl, held several important offices of state. He was twice married, and by his second wife had two sons, who, according to the inscription on their monument in Bottesford Church, were murdered by Joan Flower and her two daughters, who were servants at the castle, and, having been dismissed, made use of "enchantments, spells, and charms" to obtain revenge for their grievance. Henry, the Earl's eldest son, died soon after their dismissal, but no suspicion of witchcraft arose until five years after, when the three women, who were supposed to have entered into a formal contract with the devil, were accused of "murdering Henry, Lord Ros, by witchcraft, and torturing the Lord Francis, his brother, and Lady Catherine, his sister." After several examinations before Lord Willoughby d'Eresby and other magistrates, they were committed to Lincoln gaol. Joan died at Ancaster, on her way thither, wishing the bread-and-butter she ate might choke her if she was

guilty. The two daughters were tried and convicted, having—and this is the strangest part of the story—confessed their guilt, and were executed at Lincoln. This horrible judicial tragedy was enacted in 1618.

Under the seventh earl, Belvoir Castle received the honour of a visit from Charles I. His successor sided with the Parliament, however, and the castle, in consequence, sustained several attacks from the forces of the Crown, with the result that it received considerable damage, and the estate was so wasted that the Earl, being "put to great straights for the maintenance of his family," petitioned the House of Lords for relief; and, as Lord Campden had been the principal instrument in the damage that he had sustained, Parliament ordered that £1500 a year should be paid out of that nobleman's estate until the Earl of Rutland had received £5000 by way of compensation. During this troublous period the castle was held alternately by the Parliamentarians and the Royalists. In 1643, a hundred and forty men of Belvoir were defeated by Colonel Wayte, who took forty-six of them prisoners and captured sixty horses; and in the following year the same officer attacked and

defeated another party. In this year Charles slept two nights at Belvoir.

In 1703, John, the ninth Earl, was created Duke of Rutland and Marquis of Granby, the second title being, in accordance with custom, assumed by his eldest son. Notwithstanding this high advancement, he preferred the quiet and retirement of the country to the splendour and gaieties of the Court, and resided almost entirely at Belvoir, never visiting London for many years before his death. His grandson was "the great Marquis of Granby," whose head appeared on so many inn sign-boards, and who, during the Jacobite troubles, raised a regiment of cavalry, became lieutenant-general, and eminently distinguished himself during the campaign in Germany. With more peaceful times came more encouragement to improve the castle and demesne than the earlier possessors of Belvoir had had, and the third duke, who died in 1779, was able to do much in that direction. A more complete restoration was carried out in 1807, under the direction of Wyatt, one of the most eminent architects of that period, and Belvoir Castle became, and has since continued to be, one of the leading show places of the kingdom. The

pictures with which its later owners had adorned the walls formed one of the finest collections in England, and still divide the admiration of visitors with the treasures it contains in the form of armour and tapestry. Besides a good collection of family portraits by Lely, Reynolds, and artists of lesser renown, the principal apartments are adorned with some of the finest works of Guido, Carlo Dolci, Claude, Poussin, Salvator Rosa, Murillo, Rubens, Teniers, Holbein, Vandyck, Kneller, Gainsborough, West, and Stothard.

Belvoir Castle has by some writers been said to resemble the royal residence at Windsor, but, whatever comparison may be instituted in other respects, the situation, upon the summit of a steep elevation, is more commanding. As altered and newly arranged by Wyatt, it consists of a quadrangular court, with towers and terraces, upon which latter its owner threatened, in the early days of the volunteer movement, to plant cannon for the protection of the castle, in the event of working men being enrolled in the force which is now regarded as an important and necessary addition to the military resources of the kingdom.

By an accidental fire in 1816, a large portion of the older part of the castle was destroyed, but the large sum of £60,000 was subsequently expended in repairs. The view from the terraces is very extensive, comprehending the whole vale of Belvoir and the adjacent country as far as Lincoln, including twenty-two manors of which the Duke of Rutland is the lord.

Concerning the princely hospitality which has been practiced at Belvoir, Timbs gives, "from a published account," the following particulars, which are said to apply to the period between December, 1839, and April, 1840:—Wine consumed, 200 dozens; ale, 70 hogsheads; wax-lights, 2,330; sperm oil, 630 gallons. Dined at His Grace's table, 1,997 persons; in the steward's room, 2,421; in the servants' hall, nursery, and kitchen department, including comers and goers, 11,312. Of bread there was consumed 8,333 loaves; and meat 22,963 lbs., exclusive of poultry, game, and fish. The value of the meat, poultry, and provisions, except stores, consumed during this period, is stated at £1,323 7s. 11¾d.—a very close calculation, and one which does credit to the book-keeping of those concerned. The quantity of game killed during the season over all the duke's

manors is said to have comprised 1,733 hares, 947 rabbits, 987 pheasants, 2,101 partridges, 776 grouse, 23 black game, 108 woodcocks, 138 snipes, 28 wild ducks, and 6 teal.

George IV., then regent of the kingdom during the mental incapacity of his father, visited the castle in 1814, on which occasion the ancient ceremony of presenting the Sovereign with the key of the Staunton Tower was observed.

The custom has come down from the time of the Conquest, when the castle was successfully defended by Sir Mauger Staunton against a Norman force, on which account the Conqueror, when firmly seated on the throne, allowed him, in acknowledgment of his bravery, to retain possession of the lordship of Staunton. This lordship is situated five miles from Belvoir, and seven from Newark, and is said to have been held by the Staunton family for more than thirteen centuries. The ceremony referred to was performed in 1814 by the Rev. Dr. Stanton, who presented the key upon a velvet cushion; and was repeated by the same gentleman in 1843, when the Queen and the Prince Consort visited the castle.

Robert, Earl of Leicester: A Chapter of Mediæval History.

WHEN the sons of Henry II., instigated by Queen Eleanor, first appeared in open rebellion against the royal authority, A.D. 1172, with the intention of partitioning the government of England and its continental provinces, among the first who assumed arms against the powerful and magnanimous monarch was that fiery son of Robert Bossu, Robert, Earl of Leicester, known by his surname of Blanchmains, or the white-hands.

The energy and military ability of the King secured a signal success to his arms in the opening days of the struggle. His Brabançons fought a pitched battle with the insurgents, routed them, and invested the Castle of Dol, in which the principal barons had thrown themselves after their defeat. The stronghold was speedily compelled to surrender, and a conference was opened for the adjustment of the quarrel between Henry and his rebellious sons and feudatories.

The perfidious Louis of France exerted himself to retard the conclusion of peace, and was furthered by the Earl of Leicester, who brought a large sum of money, raised on his English estates, to enable the princes to continue the struggle. This arch-traitor had recently renewed his allegiance to the King, but his insolence rendered an amicable adjustment of the dispute impossible. Not stopping at invective and insult, he threatened King Henry, with his hand upon his sword. Those around restrained him from drawing his weapon, but so fierce was the storm of passion thus excited that the conference broke up in the utmost confusion.

There was a fierce encounter between the chivalry of the two armies on the following day, when William de Mandeville conquered Ingelram, Castelan of Trie, and brought him prisoner to King Henry.

To further harass his liege, the Earl of Leicester prepared to carry the war into England, the borders of which were threatened by the Scots, whose barbarous hordes, easily incited to war, were accustomed to indulge their love of massacre and plunder when the throes of civil war convulsed England, and afforded them an

easy entrance into the kingdom. Blanchmains accordingly raised a powerful army of Flemings, and embarked for England, which he reached without opposition, and marched his forces to Framlingham Castle, where Hugh Bigot was in arms against the King. After receiving supplies and munitions of war, Leicester laid close leaguer to Ranulph de Broc's Castle of Hakeneck, which he speedily reduced, in the absence of any military force adequate to maintain the royal authority in that part of the island, the justiciary, Richard de Lucy, and the constable, Humphrey de Bohun, having conducted a military expedition into the Lothian.

Leicester's invasion was so formidable that the royalists at once concluded a truce with the King of Scotland, and marched into England.

Lucy and Bohun formed their camp at St. Edmunds, and being reinforced by the Earls of Cornwall, Gloucester, and Arundel, succeeded in intercepting the Flemings as they marched upon Leicester. The Earl, thus brought to bay, took up a strong position at Fornham, near the Church of St. Genevieve, where the marshy ground was calculated to retard the movements of his adversaries.

Then Humphrey de Bohun and the loyal Earls issued out of St. Edmunds, leading a numerous army, which included 300 knights, marching under the standard of the constable. Uniting loyalty and religion on that memorable day, the army fought beneath the banner of St. Edmund, King and Martyr.

The first onset decided the conflict. One fiery charge against Leicester's position broke the rebel ranks, and covered the field with a broken and fugitive army, on which the sword of vengeance descended with such unsparing rigour, that 10,000 Flemings were destroyed. Those who received quarter were even more unfortunate, being manacled and cast into dungeons, where they were permitted to perish of starvation, an act of detestable cruelty, not to be too severely reprobated.

Chief of the prisoners were the perjured Earl, his Countess, and Hugh des Chateaux. These were, with many others, carried to Normandy, and Henry condemned them to close imprisonment in the fortress of Falaise.

The cause of the rebel Earl was vigorously maintained during his incarceration, and the King of Scotland ordered his brother David to march a

division of his army to the defence of Leicester, where the Earl's constable, Anketill Mallory, maintained himself. The Scots were, however, forestalled by the justiciary and the Earl of Cornwall, who marched against and invested the town.

When the Norman garrison perceived the army of Richard de Lucy moving against the town, with the royal banner displayed, they retired into the Castle, to insure its safety, leaving the burghers of Leicester to make the best defence they could, albeit the quarrel was none of their making. Doubtless they had no alternative but to put on a bold attitude, therefore they manned the walls, and strove to keep at bay the fierce enemy that came on with spear and pike, and drift of deadly arrows, while, sheltered by the skill of the archers, many of the infantry toiled with pick and spade to undermine the walls. Success attended their efforts, and on burning the props that supported the undermined walls, great breaches were made, the huge fragments of which long remained in evidence of the tenacity of the mortar used in their construction.

Unable to keep the foe at bay, the doomed

burghers struggled long and gallantly with the fierce soldiers that poured upon them through wide breach and over rampart; but the storm ended in a scene of dreadful confusion and bloodshed. Blind, furious, indiscriminate was the massacre, but the wretched survivors at length purchased a safe retreat through one of the gates, and fled from their ruined homes, impoverished and bereaved, to find refuge on the church lands at Bury St. Edmunds and St. Albans. The stormers sacked the town, and burnt many houses to the ground. The church of St. Michael was overthrown, and the whole parish reduced to a mass of ruins: for many years this section of Leicester remained uninhabited, the streets being transformed into grassy lanes, and a later generation of burghers planted orchards on the sites of the houses.

Doubtless Anketill Mallory and his garrison endured the deepest bitterness of mortification and impatient wrath, as they witnessed the surge of battle sweep over the town, and the smoke and flame of burning houses spread around; but they were powerless to succour or avenge the Earl's vassals. Richard de Lucy made no attempt to reduce the castle; doubtless other and pressing

service demanded his arms, and forbad the tedium of a long and dubious siege.

The castellan sought compensation for the strokes of misfortune by inflicting useless injury upon the burghers of Northampton, A.D. 1174. He marched against, and engaged them in a conflict that entailed severe loss of life, and the captivity of two hundred burghers. Leicester's adherents made a similar attack upon Nottingham, being commanded by Robert, Earl of Ferrers. The town was stormed and sacked, and many of the burgesses carried off.

Henry arrived in England A.D. 1174, and brought with him his prisoners, the Earl and Countess of Leicester. His presence conduced to a speedy, but not permanent, settlement of the trouble. While tilting in Alnwick meadows, the King of Scotland was snatched from the front of his army by Ranulph de Glanville, and carried on the spur to Richmond Castle.

Leaguer was laid to Leicester Castle, and Henry is said to have held out to Anketill Mallory, as the alternative to its surrender, the threat of starving Robert Blanchmains and his countess to death.

Mallory had served his master with zeal and

devotion, and had perhaps passed the bounds of prudence; he wisely bent to the storm, made his submission, and surrendered into the King's hands the castles of Leicester, Mountsorrel, and Groby. The two last mentioned fortresses were afterwards dismantled.

In the treaty concluded between Henry and his sons, Leicester was excepted, as being among those who had made a prior and separate composition with the king. The Earl was justly deprived of the power to injure his monarch, although his lands were restored at the council of Northampton, in 1177. The castles were restored to him on the accession of Richard Cœur de Lion.

Leicester remained in a ruinous state for upward of twenty-five years, when a gradual change commenced. Houses were rebuilt; a new population began to form itself; but many years elapsed before the town regained its ancient prosperity.

Local Proverbs and Folk Phrases.

By T. Broadbent Trowsdale.

QUAINT old Fuller, in his "Worthies," Ray, Grose, and other ancient writers, devoted much attention to the collection of local proverbs. Among these we find several connected with the county of Leicester, and although they are now almost entirely obsolete,—some, indeed, being altogether forgotten,—they are full of interest as a part of the folk-lore of our ancestors. Many of them, too, are characterised by an element of coarseness; but we must remember that they were the popular sayings of a generation not privileged with the educational advantages of our later and more favoured age. Numbers of these colloquial phrases also shed rays of light on the history of the places to which they pertain, and the early associations of their inhabitants.

Foremost in this connection we must consider an appellation vulgarly applied to Leicestershire and its people centuries ago; and even yet not

quite relegated to the oblivion it deserves. We allude to the phrase, "Bean-belly Leicestershire."

It appears that the saying originated in the circumstance that the county was at one time the place *par excellence* for the cultivation of this useful vegetable. Fuller has a curious explanatory note anent the vulgar reproach. "Beans," says he, "are the most natural and plentiful crops grown in Leicestershire, especially in that part of it in the Sparkenhoe Hundred lying about Barton, thence called 'Barton-in-the-Beans,' where they are so luxuriant that towards harvest-time they look like a forest." "The Leicesterians are," continues Fuller, "indeed fond of beans, though in other counties they are food only for horses and hogs, except when eaten green, in this they are esteemed all the year round, so that the people have not only a pleasure in eating, but a profit on selling them to their neighbours." The poet Drayton, in his "Blazons of Shires," has a couplet which runs :—

"*Beane-Belly Leicestershire*, her attribute doth beare,
And bells and bagpipes next belong to Lincolnshire."

A common saying in the neighbouring counties used to be :—"Shake a Leicestershire yeoman by the collar, and you will hear the beans rattle in

his belly." Of course this was a humorous exaggeration of what was formerly a staple product of the shire. Popular nicknames and epithets have at various times been applied to the inhabitants of different counties and localities, to adhere with more or less pertinacity, in most cases having jocular or satirical allusion to some peculiarity of the district referred to, or the people who dwelt therein. In point of fact, however, there is no more fitness in the application of the phrase "Bean-belly Leicestershire"—at any rate in the present day—to the inhabitants of Leicestershire than there is in calling the men of Lincolnshire or the dwellers in weald of Kent "yellow-bellies," because the eels and frogs of the fens have the abdomen of that colour.

A famous old proverb relating to Market Harborough was :—

"A goose will eat all the grass which grows in Harborough-field."

This is explained by the fact that Market Harborough had no pasture lands belonging to it. Mothers and nurses used, according to Grose, to make common use of the expression :—

"I'll throw you into Harborough-field,"

in order to frighten refractory children under

their care into obedience, the circumstance of there being no field at Harborough entailing no obligation of carrying out the threat with which the youngsters were terrorised.

Two sayings, probably having reference to Grooby, near Leicester, are noticed by Gough :—

"Then I'll thatch Groby-pool with pancakes,"

is the first. This was locally made use of when any person boastingly undertook to perform anything having an air of great improbability. The other old proverb in connection with this presumably apochryphal pool, which, says Gough, is not mentioned by Burton, which :—

"At his death there will be many a wet eye in Groby-pool."

The meaning of this was that no one would weep for or regret the demise of the party alluded to. It was applied, of course, to persons not held in high esteem.

In alluding to Hocks Norton it was commonly customary, years ago, to say :—

"Hogs Norton, where pigs play on the organ."

A former organist of the parish church was blessed with the patronymic of Piggs, and, to give point to the phrase, Hocks Norton was corrupted into Hogs Norton, hence the origin

and application of this slightly witty colloquial saying.

The inhabitants of Carlton Curlieu were, a few generations back, known as "Carlton wharlers," because of a difficulty they experienced in correctly pronouncing the letter "r." Of this Burton thus speaks:—"I cannot here omit one observation, which, by some, hath been made of the naturalists of this town, that all those who were born here have a harsh and rattling kind of speech, uttering their words with much difficulty, and wharling in the throat, and cannot well pronounce the letter 'r.' It is, however, said that the present generation have got over the impediment."

An antiquated bit of weather wisdom, common in the north-east of the county of Leicester, and also in those portions of the shires of Nottingham and Lincoln adjacent to "Belvoir's lordly terraces," is:—

> "If Bever have a cap,
> You churles of the vale look to that."

The interpretation of this proverbial saying is that when dark masses of cloud are seen hovering over the towering ramparts of Belvoir Castle, it is a prognostication of much rain being about

to fall in the surrounding valley. The ancestral home of the Rutland family stands on a commanding eminence, and continuous wet weather is very unfavourable to agricultural operations in the contiguous low-lying country.

It used to be derisively said of any fellow conspicuous for his cowardice, but who, notwithstanding that he was constantly bragging of his pugilistic accomplishments, had never dared to engage in an actual combat :—

"The last man he killed keeps hogs in Hinckley-field."

An egotistical person, or, as Grose tersely puts it, "one that is past learning," had this proverb sarcastically applied to him :—

"He had gone over Assfordby Bridge backwards."

Grose was of opinion that the point of this saying lay in the equivocal word prefixed in the name of the parish cited. The Assfordby referred to is no doubt the place now known as Asfordby, situated close to Melton Mowbray.

"Put up your pipes and go to Lockington wake,"

was a command formerly given by the Leicestershire people to troublesome fellows. Lockington stands at the extremity of the shire, near the confluence of the rivers Trent and Soar ; and the source of annoyance having been removed to such

a distance from the greater portion of the county, would not of course cause so much inconvenience. The mention of the words pipes and wake would seem to indicate that the proverb was originally applied to a wandering minstrel. That race have always been regarded in the light of nuisances, and a wake or fair would be the most suitable place in which to ply their avocation.

"The same again, quoth Mark of Belgrave."

In common conversation, when a repetition of any sentence was made, or desired, it was usual to add "quoth Mark of Belgrave." Mark of Belgrave, so says tradition, was an officer of militia in the days of "good Queen Bess," who, whilst exercising the men under his charge before the Lord-Lieutenant, became so nervous after issuing the first word of command that he could remember no more of the order of his duty, but repeatedly called on his company to do "the same again."

A proverb allotted to the county of Leicester by Grose is :—

"What have I to do with Bradshaw's windmill?"

which is elucidated as being synonymous with "what have I to do with any other men's business?"

The same antiquary, who, by-the-bye, is the "note takin' chiel" immortalised by Burns, apportions two other old sayings to Leicestershire, referring to places which have not now any existence in the county, at least not by the names given :—

"In and out like Belledon, I wot."

This phrase was applied by Leicestershire people to anything crooked, and Belledon was, says Grose, probably a scattered irregular village; though, adds he, nothing particular respecting it occurs in Burton. Destitute wayfarers were known to the inhabitants of Leicestershire by the common designation of

"Bedworth beggars."

Bedworth, Grose remarks, is not mentioned by any of the topographical writers; but is probably some poor hamlet. The saying may have had reference to the parish of Bedworth, near Nuneaton, in the neighbouring county of Warwick.

"At Great Glen
There are more great dogs than honest men."

The above rhyme was formerly applied to the village of Glen Magna, and does not, we are afraid, reflect great credit on those inhabitants of

the place who lived there when the saying originated.

An active jumper was said to :—

"Leap like the Bell-giant or devil of Mountsorrel."

This proverb is derived from a very curious old Leicestershire legendary story. As this tradition is supposed to have given names to several places in the neighbourhood of Mountsorrel, we will briefly recapitulate it for the delectation of our readers. Here it is in the words of Peck :—"The country people have a story of a giant or devil, named Bell, who once, in a merry vein, took three prodigious leaps, which they thus describe :—

"At a place, thence ever after called Mountsorrel, he mounted his sorrel-horse, and leaped a mile, to a place from this circumstance since called One Leap, now corrupted into Wanlip; thence he leaped another mile, to a place called Burstall, from the bursting of both himself, his girths, and his horse; the third leap was also a mile, but the violence of the exertion and shock killed him, and there he was buried, and the place has ever since been denominated Bell's grave, or Bel-grave." Truly a marvellous story, but only one amongst a great number of a similar character

which have at various times during the reign of ignorance and superstition, in the dark ages of the past, found credence among the people of our land.

Another old Leicestershire saying sets forth that:

"There are more unfortunate women in Hose than virtuous ones at Long Claxton."

Hose and Long Claxton are two neighbouring villages in the vicinage of Melton Mowbray, Long Claxton being very considerably the largest; so that the assertion made in the proverb appears, on the face of it, to say the least, very strange. The saying is, however, really a play on the word "Hose," its true meaning being that there are more fallen women who wear hose than virtuous ones dwelling in Long Claxton. This coarse colloquialism was at one time retailed to every stranger who halted in the neighbourhood of Hose or Long Claxton; and much wonderment was excited in the minds of those unacquainted with the *double entendre* of the assertion it apparently makes.

An old writer on proverbs informs us that a hog-pudding was, more than a hundred years ago, spoken of as a "Leicestershire plover," but why, he makes no attempt to explain.

Ray, probably erroneously, places the following saying amongst the Leicestershire proverbs :—

"Like the Mayor of Hartlepool, you cannot do that."

Of course every school-boy is aware that Hartlepool is not in Leicestershire, but in the northerly county of Durham; still it may be—from the fact of Ray, who was an observant and generally reliable writer, having included the proverb in those belonging to Leicestershire—that it was in common use in the Midland county. Grose, too, following the earlier antiquary, deals with this proverb under the heading of Leicestershire, and informs us by way of elucidation that its understood sense was "you cannot accomplish impossibilities." The industrious captain adds a little illustrative story, which is, says he, the origin of the proverb. "A Mayor of a poor Corporation, desirous to show his old companions that he was not too much elated by his election to office, told them that though he was Mayor of the Corporation, he was still but a man, and that there were many things he could not do."

Such is a brief review and attempt at explanation of the most interesting of the local proverbial sayings of olden Leicestershire which have been handed down to the present day. The lapse of

time has deprived many of them of their original zest and application; but they are reliques of the popular folk-phrases of our fore-goers, and as such, deserving of the attention of all those who have any sort of regard for the associations of antique ages.

Festival Customs in Leicestershire.

By Henrietta Ellis.

TO our forefathers the year in its round brought a succession of festivities, now almost forgotten, or only very partially observed. Christmas rejoicings were scarcely over, and Twelfth Cakes but lately eaten, when on Plough Monday a band of merry yokels invaded the farm-house kitchen to execute a lively dance. Their presence was supposed to be a signal that field work was about to be resumed; they were probably entirely guiltless of having offered tapers to "speed the plough" at any shrine, but with some of their number in feminine attire, they would impersonate the ancient characters, and shout "good luck" on leaving to all who encouraged their sport.

A few weeks later, on St. Valentine's Morn, the children would be early astir, eager to go to the great house "for a valentine." Assembled in groups before the front door of the mansion they piped forth their greeting :—

"Good morrow Valentine,
A piece of bread and cheese,
And a bottle of wine;
If you've got a penny in *your* pocket,
Slip it into *mine;*
We used to come at eight o'clock,
And now we come at nine."

The children's reward consisted of halfpence or "Valentine Buns," always respectfully acknowledged by forelock or curtsey. T. R. Potter, in his "History of Charnwood Forest," says that on one such occasion he saw as many as "three hundred children with happy faces" going to Beaumanor. The art of making "Valentine Buns" is not yet forgotten in the neighbourhood of Melton.

Shrove Tuesday again was a day when the children felt as light and free as the very shuttlecocks which they sent into the air. An old custom of obtaining the half-holiday by "barring the master out of school" survived at Frisby-on-the Wreake until within the last forty years. The method of procedure was to entice the master by a pre-concerted manœuvre outside the door of the school-house, and then turn the key upon him. The youngsters within would then commence to shout vigorously:—

"Pardon, master, pardon,
Pardon in a pin,
If you don't give a holiday
We wont let you in,"

or :—

"Pardon, master, pardon,
Pardon in a spout,
If you don't give a holiday
We'll all keep you out."

No Leicestershire schoolmaster is now "pardoned out of school" when the Pancake Bell rings at Shrovetide, but in many places children are allowed a little special license at that season, and may be seen playing in fields (possibly the old common land of the village) usually deemed sacred from such intrusion.

In Leicester, a fair in the Newarke was a time-honoured Shrove Tuesday institution; and long after the fair had been discontinued, the presence of men known as "whipping Toms" caused considerable riot, though the carter's whips, with which they were armed, were supposed to be for the express purpose of controlling the mob and clearing the precincts of the castle. Their last appearance was in 1847.

The tradition which associates the hare with Easter is widely spread. Instances of it may be

found in Leicestershire in the Easter Monday hunt, which used to take place on the Dane Hills near Leicester, and the scramble for "hare pies," which still goes on at Hallaton. In the former case a dead cat, sprinkled with aniseed and trailed over the ground at the tail of a horse, did duty for the hare, the trail being made finally to end at the door of the Mayor, who was expected to regale the hunters at the close of the day. At Hallaton, lands known as "Hare Crop Leys" were left to the rector in consideration of his providing annually "two hare pies, a quantity of ale, and two dozen penny loaves." The pies, now made of mutton or veal and bacon, are carried, cut up in a sack, at the head of a procession, on Easter Monday, to a place called "Hare Pie Bank," on the outskirts of the village. The penny loaves are broken into fragments, and distributed by the way. Arrived at the scene of action, the contents of the sack are poured out, and scrambled for by the crowd. Part of the ale becomes the property of the men of any village who can succeed in kicking the wooden bottle containing it some five hundred yards across a brook, to a certain boundary; the rest is drunk with full honours at the market cross.

The First of May has been an occasion for gladness and rejoicing since earliest times. Maplewell (May-pole-well), near Woodhouse, is said to be the spot where the Forest celebrations of this festival took place. In the "Tablette Book" of Lady Mary Keyes (a sister of Lady Jane Grey), a quaint description is given of May-day at Bradgate, in the 16th century: "Then when the merrie May Pole and alle the painted Morris dancers withe Tabor and Pipe beganne their spritelie anticks on oure butiful grene laune, afore that we idel leetel Bodyes had left owre warme Bedds, woulde goode Mistresse Bridget the Tire-woman whom our Lady Mother alwaies commanded to do owre Biddinge, com and telle us of the merrie men a-dancing on the Grene." On May morning the milkmaids would repair to the fields with pails bedecked with flowers. In some villages, arches of evergreens were erected, in others a large May-pole was carried round (occasionally on Whit Monday), and an ancient doggerel shouted in chorus :—

"Riggany, raggany,
Ten pin flaggany;
Eighteen pole."

The first two lines of this apparently meaning-

less jingle were said very rapidly, the third with the syllables long drawn out,

WHIT MONDAY has long been a day of "cakes and ale." In Leicester itself during the Middle Ages an imposing spectacle was witnessed. A gorgeous procession, with an image of the Virgin borne aloft, set out from the Church of St. Mary, and gathering contingents from other churches as it passed down High Cross Street (at that time the High Street), it proceeded through the North Gate to the Mother Church of St. Margaret, before the High Altar of which two pairs of gloves were offered, one to the glory of God, the other to St. Thomas of India. At Hinckley, in much later times, a pageant took place known as the "Riding of the Millers." This was a procession of millers from different parts of the country, dressed out in ribbons, with the "King of the Millers" at their head, followed by representatives of various trades of the town, carrying signs of their calling. The chief personages in the show were a supposed Baron of Hinckley and his Lady, in picturesque costume. At Burrow Hill, the Races, held in much later times on the level ground within the earthworks at the top, drew together annually a large

concourse of people. Leland thus describes these sports: "To these Borowe hills every year on Monday after White Sonday, com people of the country thereabouts, and shoote, runne, wrestle, dance, and use other feats of like exercise." They have long been discontinued. At Enderby some curious observances are associated with the selling of the grass of a certain meadow. This piece of land, known as "The Wether," is said to have been given to the men of Ratby by John of Gaunt. After the sale, which always takes place on Whit Monday, the seller and his attendants ride to Leicester to spend the proceeds at an inn in the town. Not only do they order for themselves a sumptuous repast, but ten of the aged inmates of the Trinity Hospital are also treated to a luncheon, the principal dish at which must consist of calf's head. Originally the riders wore in their hats a tuft of the grass of the meadow, tied with a silver tagged lace, which was taken out and thrown among the populace on reaching the High Cross.

The Wake or Feast has long been a time of much holiday-making in every village. If held in the summer, the church would often be freshly "strawed," as is still done on the first and second

Sundays in July at Braunstone and Glenfield respectively. At Braunstone the hay used for the purpose is brought from a particular field adjoining the parish of Aylestone, and must be spread on the floor of the church by the clerk without using a fork, or the right to the produce of the "Clerk's Acre" would be forfeited. At Glenfield, the tradition is that Lady Glenfield, having lost her way, and being helped out of her dilemma by the parish clerk, bestowed on him, as a reward, the "Church Acre," from which the church might be spread with hay for ever. The "acre" is now used as grazing land, but hay is procured by the clerk elsewhere, and duly spread.

In September there were the Fairs, principal among them being the one at Leicester, granted by charter of Edward III., to be held "three days before and three days after the Feast of St. Michael." Smaller fairs were likewise held at Lutterworth, Husband's Bosworth, Hinckley, Kibworth, Hallaton, and other places. Farm servants were always hired for the twelve-month at the open air "statutes" at these fairs. Men and maids would stand in lines down the street, a waggoner with a knot of whip-cord in his hat; a thresher with a few wheat ears; a shepherd, a

bit of wool; a cow-man some hairs from a cow's tail; and so on. A hiring penny always closed the bargain by way of stipulation. On the north side of the county many of the fairs were held at Martinmas, as, for instance, at Market Bosworth, Sproxton, Castle Donington, and Loughborough.

Towards the end of the year preparations for CHRISTMAS began in good time. Pigs must be killed, and "chittering pies" made, or pasties of mince-meat in the shape of a pig, with tail of pastry and eyes of currants. "Mince pigs" were always favourite presents for absent members of the family, and were made in various sizes, large ones for the grown-ups, smaller ones for the children. They are not to be purchased at any shop, and but few Leicestershire house-wives now know how to make them. Finally the rejoicings of Christmas Eve brought round the mummers, with their thrilling representations of St. George and the Dragon, and a now forgotten song about the coyness of Chloe. Whether any such are to be found in the county now we know not, but in a village not far from Leicester they were to be seen about ten years ago.

"Thus times do shift, each thing his turn does hold;
New things succeed, as former things grow old."

Witchcraft in Leicestershire.

By J. Potter Briscoe, f.r.h.s.

SUCH was the ignorance and superstition which prevailed in Leicestershire in the summer of 1616, that, on the 16th July, nine females were executed at the gallows on the charge of having bewitched a youth of twelve or thirteen years of age, named Smith, of Husband Bosworth, in Leicestershire. It is stated that half a dozen of these poor creatures were familiar spirits,—one was like a horse, a second like a dog, another like a cat, another a fulmart, another a fish which was not described, and another a cod-fish, each of which tormented the youth! When the boy was possessed by the horse he would winny, and when the cat took possession of him he would mew. At these times he would go into fits, when strong persons were unable to keep him quiet. These attacks were witnessed by the best known people in the neighbourhood. After their trial by the judges of assize, the wretched women were ordered to be executed, which

sentence was carried out as we have already stated.

Here is an instance of the belief in witchcraft which existed in the same county a century and a half later. In 1760 a dispute arose in the little village of Glen between two old women, each of whom vehemently accused the other of witchcraft. The quarrel at last ran so high that a challenge ensued, and they both agreed to be tried by the ordeal of swimming. They accordingly stripped to their shifts, procured some men, who tied their thumbs and great toes together, cross-wise, and then, with a cart rope about their middle, suffered themselves to be thrown into a pool of water. One of them sank immediately, but the other continued struggling a short time upon the surface of the water. The mob deeming this an infallible sign of her guilt, pulled her out, and insisted that she should immediately impeach all her accomplices in the craft. She accordingly told them that in the neighbouring village of Burton there were several old women "as much witches as she was." Happily for her, this negative information was deemed sufficient, and a student in astrology, or "white witch," coming up at the time, the mob,

by his direction, proceeded forthwith to Burton in search of all the delinquents. After a little consultation on their arrival, they went to the old woman's house on whom they had fixed the strongest suspicion. The poor old creature on their approach locked the outer door, and from the window of an upstairs room asked what they wanted. They informed her that she was charged with being guilty of witchcraft, and that they had come to duck her; remonstrating with her at the same time upon the necessity of submission to the ordeal, and that if she were innocent all the world would know it. Upon her persisting in a positive refusal to come down, they broke open the door and carried her out by force to a deep gravel pit full of water. They tied her thumbs and toes together and threw her into the water, where they kept her for several minutes, drawing her out and in two or three times by the rope round her middle. Not being able to satisfy themselves whether she was a witch or no, they at last let her go, or, more properly speaking, they left her on the bank to walk home by herself, if ever she recovered. Next day they tried the same experiment upon another woman, and afterwards upon a third; but fortunately neither of the

victims lost her life from this brutality. Many of the ringleaders in the outrage were apprehended during the week, and tried before the justices of quarter-sessions. Two of them were sentenced to stand in the pillory and to be imprisoned for a month; and as many as twenty more were fined in small sums for the assault, and bound over to keep the peace for a twelvemonth.

William Lilly, the Astrologer.

By W. H. Thompson.

IN his "Hudibras," Butler has an astrologer whom he holds up to ridicule, under the name of Sidrophel. The poet, a man with a keen eye for the foibles and follies of his time, and coupled with it, a power of satire which has been rarely rivalled, doubtless had before him some particular character in actual life, when he drew the picture.

> "Quoth Ralph, not far from hence doth dwell
> A cunning man, hight Sidrophel,
> That deals in destiny's dark counsels,
> And sage opinions of the moon, sells;
> To whom all people far and near,
> On deep importances repair."

Professors of the occult arts were at that period by no means rare, for in the seventeenth century, Englishmen of all ranks, from the aristocracy downward, were quite commonly dabblers in astrology and the forecasting of horoscopes. There was, however, one astrologer whom the great satirist, with his Royalist sympathies, might be supposed

to take an especial delight in lampooning and putting to ridicule. Fortune-tellers there were many, but none that the Commonwealth had so delighted to honour as William Lilly. Not only was he imagined to have foretold a number of the worst disasters that had befallen the Royalist cause, but he boasted also to have had the friendship of some of the most prominent members of the parliamentary party. Says Ralph again to Hudibras :—

> "Do not our great Reformers use
> This Sidrophel to forbode news:
> To write of victories next year,
> And castles taken, yet i' th' air;
> Of battles fought at sea, and ships
> Sunk two years hence, the last eclipse;
> A total overthrow giv'n the king,
> In Cornwall, horse and foot next spring;
> And has not he point blank foretold
> What se'er the close committee would;
> Made Mars and Saturn for the cause,
> The moon for fundamental laws."

There was no man of the period beside Lilly, with his strange prophecies, his Roundhead partisanship, his accommodating to the desires of parliamentary wirepullers, as indicated in the lines :—

> "And has he not point blank foretold
> What se'er the close committee would,"

together with his great influence, to whom the words of Butler can be so aptly applied.

William Lilly was born at Diseworth in 1602. He came of a tolerably good stock; a family which had been "yeomen in that place for many ages." So far as education was concerned, he received a fair classical training at Ashby de la Zouch, although, as he himself somewhat quaintly says "his master never taught logic." Does this latter fact explain some of the vagaries into which the pupil afterwards fell?

Lilly's father having died, and his family being left in great poverty, the youth came to London in his eighteenth year, where he obtained a menial situation of some sort in the household of a certain old citizen and his wife. He succeeded in winning the good graces of both. The master died in 1627, and left him an annuity of £20 per year, and then not very long afterwards his mistress and he were married.

She died in 1633. At her decease, he came in for property of the value of £1,000, this representing a far larger sum in Lilly's day than ours, and he was now in comparatively easy circumstances. It was sometime about this period, having leisure on his hands, that he really began

to prosecute his occult studies. He read all the books on astrology that he could obtain, and began to try his apprentice skill. The breaking out of hostilities between the Royalists and the Puritan party, and the subsequent stirring character of the epoch came to him as a golden opportunity. It was then, he tells us, he "did carefully take notice of every grand action betwixt king and parliament, and did first then incline to believe that as all sublunary affairs depend on superior causes, so there was a possibility of discovering these by the configurations of superior bodies." And having "made some essays," he "found encouragement to proceed further; and ultimately framed to himself that method which he ever afterward followed."

Quickly he rose into great notoriety. His almanacs, forecasting coming events, had an extremely wide circulation, and by the common people he was looked up to as a veritable prophet. Further, it was not only amongst the unlettered populace that he was held in high reputation. If his own statement is to be believed (and there is no reason for doubting it), he was intimate in his astrological capacity with

a number of the most leading men of the times; Lenthal, the speaker of the House of Commons, Whitlock, Ashmole, the antiquary, even the learned Selden appears to have given him countenance. This latter fact affords us a curious illustration as to the state of intellectual thought then prevalent. Indeed the only important difference between Lilly and a large portion of his contemporaries seems to have been this: that the beliefs which they in a general vague sort of fashion held, he endeavoured to apply to the current problems of his age. Not but that there was a very considerable element of the "quack" in his make up. He may have been a sincere believer in the arts which he professed, but at the same time he was not above calling to his aid all the assistance which an intimate acquaintance with the political movements both at home and abroad could give him. He was as astute as he was credulous. Hence not only did he study the stars and planets, but he had also agents and informers everywhere.

In the present sketch it is impossible for us to give in detail all the various schemes or enterprises into which he entered. On one occasion, in the early days of his fame, he applied for

permission to ascertain, by means of divining rods, whether there was not extensive treasure buried beneath the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. Leave having been obtained from the dean, on the condition that he should have his

WILLIAM LILLY.

share of whatever might be found, Lilly "and thirty other gentlemen entered the cloisters one night, and applied hazel rods." After, however, they had disinterred a few lead coffins, a violent storm arose, which so alarmed them that they all took to their heels and ran home.

His first almanac was published in 1644, with the title of "Merlinus Anglicus, Junior," and such was the avidity with which the public devoured his prognostications, that the whole edition was sold out in a few days. To shew the importance attached to his forecasts, and what was their actual or reputed influence upon the minds of the people, Lilly was somewhere about this time arrested, by the Commissioners of Excise, as being the indirect instigator of certain insults which they had received. The Commissioners complained of "having their cloaks pulled on 'Change," and that the Excise Office had been burned down, both of which events were attributed to predictions contained in one of his publications, "The Starry Messenger." In this case it was proved the events had occurred prior to the issue of the treatise, therefore he regained his liberty.

During the contest between the King and Parliament, he was employed by the Royalists, with Charles's privity, to ascertain whether the King should sign the propositions of the Commons, and for this opinion he received £20. About the same period, however, he was serving the other side, being employed by them to furnish

"perfect knowledge of the chiefest concerns of France," for which information he received £50 in cash down, and the promise of an annuity of £100 per year. After 1645, until the Restoration, he was engaged exclusively in the interests of the Commonwealth party.

Up to 1660, he had the highest reputation, and his house in the Strand was the resort of all sorts of men of mark. Under the date of October 26th in that year, Master Samuel Pepys has the following entry in his diary: "To Mr. Lilly's, with Mr. Spong, where well received; there being a club amongst his friends. Amongst the rest Esquire Ashmole, whom I found to be a very ingenious gentleman. With him we sang in Mr. Lilly's study." But, with the Restoration, the famous astrologer, like many other worthies of the Commonwealth, passed under a cloud. Not only were his Parliamentary leanings regarded as a black mark against him, but a new era now had dawned. An epoch characterised by licentious levity, and mocking French scepticism, could be expected to have scant sympathy with studies, however mistaken, which dealt with the more serious problems of life. Hence arts, which some of the greatest minds of the earlier half of

the century had not considered beneath their attention, now sank into discredit and disrepute; their arch-professor with them. Pepys reflected in many ways the spirit of his age, under its less vicious aspects; and some years later we find him making fun of Lilly's prophecies. Under the date of 14th June 1667, we have this entry of his. "We read and laughed at Lilly's philosophies this month, in his almanac, this year."

Long, however the astrologer, retained his popularity amongst the credulous. When Charles the Second had indeed sat on the throne for several years, there were a number of men tried and condemned to death for high treason in 1666, for a certain conspiracy which they had initiated on the faith of one of Lilly's forecasts. And for evidence that superstition dies hard, may be quoted the fact that as late as 1852, a London publisher considered it worth his while to issue an edition of his "Introduction to Astrology."

Lilly's "Life" affords one of the most remarkable examples of credulity, combined with successful charlatanry and imposture, to be found extant anywhere. We may add that when no

longer the honoured person he had been during the Commonwealth period, finding his own star had ceased to be in the ascendant, he retired to Hersham, in Surrey. There, after living some years on the large fortune he had amassed, he died in 1680.

Gleanings from early Leicestershire Wills.

By the Rev. W. G. D. Fletcher, M.A., F.S.A.

THERE is perhaps no class of ancient documents which gives us a greater insight into the manners and customs of our forefathers in the Middle Ages than old wills. The wills of Leicestershire persons may be found either at the Leicester District Probate Registry, or at Somerset House; whilst some few are preserved at Lincoln, and at Lambeth Palace.

The wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings of the City of London are the earliest series of wills extant; they begin in 1258. The Lambeth wills commence in 1312. The wills and administrations of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury commence in 1383. The wills preserved in the Leicester District Registry commence about the end of the fifteenth century, and consist of two distinct series: the original wills, and wills copied into the Register Books.

Few persons care to read old wills, and yet they are wonderfully full of information of the

highest interest. For genealogical purposes they are simply invaluable: indeed they are almost the only records by which families of the middle class can trace their descent, prior to the introduction of Parish Registers in the sixteenth century. But it is for the insight they afford us into the habits of our ancestors, that they are of so great value. In this chapter I purpose to show how much we can learn about Leicestershire, and the habits of our Leicestershire ancestors, as deduced from their wills.

Pre-Reformation wills usually begin with a bequest of the soul to Almighty God, the Blessed Virgin, and all the saints; and a direction that the body shall be buried in a particular church, or before a certain altar or image. From this direction we can often ascertain the correct dedication of the church in or near which the testator is buried. Next comes a bequest "for my mortuary" or "principal," frequently of the testator's best beast, or according to the use and custom of the place. By the Statute of *Circumspecte agatis*, 13 Edward I., the clergy were permitted to sue in the Spiritual Courts for mortuaries, "in places where a mortuarie hath used to be given;" and the taking of mortuaries

or corse presents was further regulated some 250 years later by the Statute 21 Henry VIII., cap. 6. The Leicestershire testator would then bequeath a small sum to the high altar of his parish church, for tithes forgotten; if he were poor, 8d. or 1s; if he were comfortably off, 6s. 8d. or even 20s. He would also leave a few pence or shillings to the Cathedral or mother church of Lincoln.

After this, there frequently occur bequests of a few shillings to the various Gilds of the parish; to the religious houses in the neighbourhood; to the side altars of the church; to the building work or reparations going on at the time in connection with the church. Some article is not uncommonly given, instead of money. Thus, in 1518, John Gybbon bequeaths to the high altar of Loughborough, "an apron to make an amys of and a towell;" and in the same year William Stakes of Loughborough leaves to the chapel of Smalley a bullock, to St. Katherine's altar a towel, to St. Nicolas's altar a towell-cloth, and to the image of St. Margaret "my wyffe's second best Kerchoff." In the next year, John Wayttgode bequeaths "to Seynt Kat'yn aut' a schete." In 1521, Richard Ball leaves

"to the Church of Wemyswold halff a quart' of barly."

The speedy deliverance of the soul from purgatory was of course a very important matter in days when the fires of purgatory were commonly believed in; and so we find numerous bequests to priests to say masses for the repose of the testators' souls. A large part of the early wills is taken up with these bequests. The clergy were certainly consistent, and practised what they preached; for their private money was mostly given in this way. I give a few instances, to illustrate this. Christopher Burton, in 1503, bequeaths to Sir Nicholas Hawarte, seven marcs, that he may celebrate for one year. Alice Whetley, in 1515, leaves 10s. "for a trentall of masses for my soul in the church of Loughborow." Hugh Yerland, in 1521, leaves "to the three orders of ffreres in Leicester for fifteen masses, £5." Ralph Lemyngton, in 1521, bequeaths £30 for keeping his obit sixty years, 10s. a year; also "to the purchasing of XX. marc. of land by the yere, for to find ij. prestis, and to purchase ye mortemayne, £320." John Rygmadyn, in 1530, desires that a priest shall sing for his soul and all Christian souls for half a year. John Blower, in

1534, directs Isabel his wife "to cause a trentall off masses to be sunge" for his soul; and Alice Shylton in the same year directs that a priest shall sing and pray for her soul, her husband's, her father and mother, and all good Christian souls, for two years. Richard Sharpe, in 1535, directs that "at my buryall day mass and dirige after the custom of the towne, the parish priest to have viij*d.*, and all other priests vj*d.*, and every child that could serrves in the quire, and haith byn my skeller shall have j*d.* a peice, also at my burial xx*s.* in bread to the poor people;" and he leaves the residue of his estate in masses for his soul.

To shew that the clergy were consistent, I would cite the will of Sir Thomas Crosby, priest, in 1523. This good priest, after various bequests to his parish church, leaves xs. apiece to the convents of Garendon, Gracedieu, and Langley, for saying placebo, dirige, and mass; and "an honest p'st synging for my sowle, my ffaders, my moders, my bredyrn, my systers, and all crysten sowles, the space off iiij. years, every yer to haffe ye stypend ye sum of v*li.*, sm^{a} to do hyt w^{t} alt. xx*li.*" It was the custom for priests to leave their money for masses for their souls.

The Religious Houses came in largely for these religious bequests. Elsabell Lemyntun, in 1532, bequeaths 5s. each to the abbeys of Garendon, Ulverscroft, Gracedieu, and Langley. John Rygmadyn, in 1530, bequeaths "12d. to the gray ffreas in Lecester." Ales Shylten, in 1534, gives to the Abbot of Garendon, 3s. 4d., and to the convent, 6s. 8d. Alice Barber, of Langley, in 1526, directs that her body be buried in the Church of Langley, before the image of our Lady; and bequeaths "to the ffrerys howse off Dawby, 6s. 8d., to our Lady off Langley a Powe, and to the hyghe awter off lancton, 12d." Thomas Eyreke, of Leicester, in 1517, wills "that iij. orderis of freeris of Lecester bring my body to the grave, and every of them to haffe xx*d.*, and the Warden of the gray Freers to say v. messys at the entering of our Lady in the Frers, and to have xx*d.* for his labor."

Sir Rauf Shirley, Knight, of Staunton Harold, 1516, bequeathed 10s. to every house of Friars in Leicester, to pray for his soul. William, Lord Hastings, in 1481, bequeathed £10 to the Grey Friars of Leicester, and 100s. to each of the other two houses of Friars.

The early wills often contain the only records

we have of the mediæval Gilds, which played so important a part in the middle ages. The returns made in the reign of Richard II., and preserved in the Public Record Office, are, I believe, missing or lost, so far as Leicestershire is concerned. But from the wills we learn at least the names of these Gilds, for it was the practice of most tradesmen to leave small legacies to the Gilds of their town. And it is astonishing to find how numerous these Gilds were. Thus the little town of Loughborough, with its population of perhaps 2,000 or 2,500 people, had, in the early part of the sixteenth century, at least twelve Gilds. The pre-Reformation wills have preserved to us the names of these Gilds:—Religious or Social Gilds: Jesus, Corpus Christi, Our Lady, St. George, St. Katherine, King's Gild; Trade or Craft Gilds: Weavers, Carpenters, Shoemakers, Tailors, Cordwainers, and Smiths. The Religious or Social Gilds were dissolved in 1549, when the king seized their property. The Trade or Craft Gilds subsequently merged into the Trade Companies. As most men belonged to one or more Gilds, and members were expected to leave a legacy, the names of these Gilds have fortunately thus been preserved. Thomas Burton, the

founder of the splendid Loughborough Charities, by his will, in 1494, bequeathed "to the Gilds of Jesus, Corpus Christi, the Weavers, Carpenters, and to the King's Gild, twenty shillings, to be equally divided amongst them." Richard Sharpe, in 1535, left to the Church of Hallouten twelve pence, and to Corpus Christi Gild, in the same town, twelve pence. John Loveday, in 1419, made bequests to the Gilds of Corpus Christi, St. Cross, St. Thomas, and St. Katharine, in Leicester.

Bequests for repairing bridges and fords are very common; indeed legacies seem to have been the chief source of their reparation. The before-mentioned Thomas Burton left, in 1494, twenty shillings, and more if necessary, to the reparations of bridges and public roads within the the parish of Loughborough. William Smythe, of Cotes, bequeathed, in 1560, twelve pence "to mendinge of a forthe at Cotes brygge." John Fildyng, of Lutterworth, in 1403, left money for repairing the king's highway in Ly Bonde-end, and the bridge leading to the hospital. Thomas de Beby, of Leicester, in 1382, bequeathed to the reparation of the north and west bridges forty shillings each, and for the repair of the road

called le Wodegate, twenty shillings. Ralph Wooton, of Stoke-golding, in 1533, left "one land to the towne to dyge stone for reparacions of hyeways in the towne and fylds for evermore."

Bequests to the poor, though now very rare, frequently occur after the Reformation, and occasionally before. The dissolution of the Monasteries proved a great blow to the poor, and the Poor Laws were inefficient; and so in Elizabeth's reign and later, testators were charitably disposed. Loughborough testators, from 1520 to 1540, frequently left 13d., and sometimes as many black hoods, "to the xiii poor Beedes folke."

It was not rare for a testator to bequeath money or loaves to be distributed amongst the poor who should be present at his funeral. Ralph Wooton of Stoke-golding, in 1533, left a curious bequest of "a dole of fifteen loaves and fifteen herrings to the poor of Stoke every Sunday next Easter." To give a few more instances: John Adeson, rector of Loughborough and Caldbeck, in 1540, left "to every poore house in Lughborowe, fourpence; and four quarters of rye, and four quarters of barlye, to be disposed amongst them at the discretion of Richard Grene

and Sir William Fyshpicke, and four quarters of pese." John Stockes, of Beaumanor, in 1575, leaves 20s. to the poor of Woodhouse; Thomas White, in 1682, 40s. to the poor of Lutterworth; and Katherine Parker, of East Norton, in 1747, 40s. to the poor of Tugby for bread, and £5 each to the poor of Goadby, Hallaton, Billesdon, and other places. Thomas Damporte, sometime mayor of Leicester, leaves, in 1556, "£3 to be geven to poore folke the day of my buriall."

We can often glean a man's religious views from his will. Thus we find a rector of Loughborough, John Willocke, in 1585, directing that his body should "be buried christenly in the grounde without any Rynginge after my deathe, or any pompe, miche lesse without any Supersticon wheare my frends will." He was evidently in sympathy with the Puritanism prevalent in Elizabeth's reign. Another rector, Dr. John Bright, in 1695 directs that £100 or more should be spent upon his funeral and monument: but he was chaplain to the King and Dean of St. Asaph, as well as rector! In 1656, Dame Margaret Bromley, widow of Sir Edward Bromley, a judge, lived at Loughborough, in the house of the intruding Parliamentarian rector, and she directed

that she should be buried in the chancel by Mr. Trigg, and that none of her relations should be sent for but her nephew Abney, and no solemnity used, nor ringing of bells.

Sir Robert Hesilrige, Bart., in 1721, directs that his trustees shall educate his children in the same opinions he holds, and desires his son will never keep a priest of any religion in his family. John Browne, who describes himself as "an unworthy servant of Christ Jesus, and minister of his Word," in 1622, charges his son Joseph Browne "to feede the flock committed to his charge, and that he doe it *tam verbo quam exemplo.*"

Bequests of articles of dress are very common in sixteenth century wills. Such garments as a black furred gown with hood, a jacket of St. Thomas worsted furred with fox and lamb, a black gown, a scarlet gown, a murray gown, a doublet of chamlet, a black hood, a girdle, a kertyll of sylke and gold with frerys koutts, a greyn gowne, a peyr of sheyts with a pillow, my buckskyng doublet, etc., constantly occur.

Occasionally, but very rarely, we find a few books named in early wills, and these chiefly in the wills of the clergy. John Adeson, a priest,

in 1540, leaves to Sir William Fishpoll, St. Thomas super epistolas Paulli and the Bible in four volumes; to Sir Richard Grene, Summa Anthonini, sermones Richardi, St. Ambrose, Athanasius, Theophylact, Summa Angelica, sermones Jannensis; to Thomas Barnyngham my great Bible at London; and to John Bothe a Bible and Newe Testament in Englishe, and the Bishop's boke called the Institution of a Christian man.

John Willocke, in 1585, bequeaths to the Earl of Huntingdon, all my bookes of histories, Anthonie Sabellicus the towe volumes, Nawclerus, Pollydorus Virgilius, Sledanus, Paulus, Jovius Aventinus, the great concordance of the Byble, and my latten Byble, the Booke of Concells, and the Booke called the Code.

John Heyrick, of Leicester (the father of Sir William), left, in 1589, to his son Thomas, his Bible lying in the hall window, and the New Testament of Mr. Calvin's translation.

Thomas Brightwell, D.D., Dean of the new Collegiate Church at Leicester, in 1389, directs that all his books, which he had from Martynhalle, Oxford, shall be returned thither. William de Humberstone, in 1394, bequeaths to the abbey

a Bible complete in one volume. Richard de Spridlington, in 1382, bequeaths to Eston Chapel Portiforium and great Psalter, and his Ordinale; and to Bringhurst Church his great Portiforium. In 1391, Sir Robert de Swyllyngton, Knight, bequeaths his new missal to our Lady of Leicester. William de Wolstanton, in 1403, bequeaths to Sir John le Scrope, his Portiforium of the use of York. Four of these five last testators were priests.

We learn the burial places of distinguished personages from their wills. Thus Henry Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster, in 1345, directs that his body be buried in the Hospital of our Lady of Leicester, in the choir before the high altar. His son Henry, Duke of Lancaster, Earl of Derby, Lincoln, and Leicester, and Seneschal of England, in 1360, directs that he be buried in the Collegiate Church of the Annunciation of our Lady at Leicester, near the altar where his father is buried; and that the King, Queen, Prince, his wife Lady Isabel, and his sisters, be invited to his funeral.

There are preserved, with many of the early wills, inventories of the goods and chattels and money of the testators, which were filed in the

Court, and which throw great light on the domestic habits of our forefathers. Our ancestors lived in very much smaller houses than would satisfy their descendants to-day. An eight-roomed house would suffice for a country gentleman and his family. The furniture was very scanty. In the hall,—the principal living room,—there might be one folding table, a long settle, a throne chair, and a form. Then there occur beds in all the parlours, in every room except the hall and kitchen. Jugs and basins were unknown; perhaps only one basin and ewer in the whole inventory. There are no books or ornaments; but a fine collection of silver plate.

Let us look at the inventory attached to the will of a yeoman, one of the Herricks, John Heyrick of Houghton-on-the-Hill, in 1543. He has but four rooms in his house, viz., the hall, seller, kitchen or bruhouse, and barn. In the hall were 5 pots, 3 pans, 12 dishes, 10 plates, 4 saucepans, 2 salt-sellers, 2 spits, a pair of tongs, a table, 2 forms, a hamper, a board, a chair, 3 stools, and a pendyd cloth. His sleeping room was the seller, where he had 2 beds, with mattresses, sheets, coverlets, blankets, bolsters, pillows, towels, and candlesticks. There is no

mention of jugs, basins, baths, etc. This worthy yeoman's stock consisted of 10 horses, 19 kine, and five score sheep. His whole inventory amounted to £36 18s. He was evidently a religious man, for he leaves money for thirty masses, and a pyx for the Sacrament.

We often get a glimpse at current local events from the wills. Thus in July 1515, the plague was evidently raging in the neighbourhood of Loughborough, as we find Gefferey Salesbury's will was witnessed by the parish priest, "and no more for ffer off the plage off pest."

The following curious inventory, which is attached to the will of Raffe Warde of Loughborough, 1535, shows us what expenses he was put to at the burial of his wife Maud :—

"Exspenc' at the bereall of Mawd Ward.

It. payd to the presse for masse & dirige	ij*s.* iiij*d.*
It. payd to the belman, to thomas bedford	iii*d.*
It. payd the Ryngars . .	xv*d. ob.*
It. to the bedfolke . . .	ij*d. ob.*
It. payd In bred & Ayll' . .	vi*s.* ij*d.*
It. payd for belles & candyllstykes	xx*d.*
It. payd for the lyghttes . .	xviij*d.*

"It. payd for bred & Ayll to the
Ryngars . . . . . j*d. ob.*
It. payd for A man & A horsse
to Granth'm . . . . . xiij*d.*"

Sometimes much of a man's personal history can be gleaned from his will. Thus one John Bowes of Beccles in Suffolk, in 1523, mentions in his will that he was born at Ragdale in the Wyllowes, but received his early education until he was fourteen at Loughborough, and that his father, John Bowes, and his three brothers, Edward, Thomas, and William, were all buried at Loughborough.

Early wills are of immense value, from the vast amount of ecclesiastical information that they contain. We can get a very fair idea of the internal appearance of churches in pre-Reformation times from the bequests in the wills. We learn the correct dedications of the churches, and of the side-altars; what images were set up in the buildings; approximate dates of rebuilding, altering, or repairing the churches; gifts of communion-plate, bells, or goods; the names of the parochial clergy, etc.

The grand old parish church of Loughborough is now always known as All Saints; but this is

evidently incorrect, for in the sixteenth century many testators directed that their bodies should be interred in the church or churchyard dedicated in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul. In the same church, there were side-altars dedicated to St. Nicholas, St. Katherine, and our Lady, the last on the south side; and images of St. Margaret, our Lady, and St. Anne.

The Tower of Loughborough Church was evidently undergoing considerable rebuilding in the sixteenth century; as many testators, between 1521 and 1535, left money for the building of the steeple, the edification of the steeple, or the window of the steeple.

In Wymeswold Church, there was some representation of the Assumption; as Thomas Humston, in 1533, bequeathed "to kepyng a leyght before the ymage of the Assumption of our Lady in the hay quere of Wymundiswolde, ij kayne;" and Thomas Andyby, in 1530, bequeathed two shillings "to the hee altar of our Lady the Assumptyon in Wymyswold." Thomas Lufwyk, rector of Burton Overy, in 1390, bequeaths to Lufwyk parish church, a missal, a vestment, and a silver zone to make a chalice. William de Humberston, in 1394, gives a toft, to maintain a light at

the principal altar of Burstall Chapel, and twenty shillings for the like at Thurmaston Chapel. Thomes de Beby, in 1382, bequeaths 100 shillings to St. Mary's altar in Beby Church. Sir Ralph Basset, Knight, in 1377, desires that he be interred in the newly-built chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, at Sapcote; and makes a bequest to the high altar of St. John Baptist, of Sapcote. Amongst the bequests to Loughborough Church in the early part of the sixteenth century are these:—a table cloth to St. Nicolas's altar, a towel to St. Katharine's altar, "my wife's second best kerchoff" to St. Margaret's image, a gallon of wax to our Lady's altar. Thomas Burton, by his will, in 1494, left £13 6s. 8d. for the purchase of an altar "in honore Sancti Nicholai de fackur transmarium;" this shows the date of the erection of this altar, and its cost. John Malory, in 1516, directs that he be buried in the chapel of St. John Baptist within the church of Walton. John Porter, in 1517, will be buried before the image of St. John Baptist in the north aisle of the church of Thorpe edmer. William Ardern, in 1530, will be buried in the church of Knipton, before the picture and image of our Lady, and gives a "candylstyke of latyne of three

lights to be sett before the pyketor of all Saynctts" in the same church. John Jackson, in 1531, bequeaths twenty shillings to making of a new rose in the north aisle of St. Mary's, in Leicester.

These fragmentary gleanings from a few of the early wills will show what a great deal of ecclesiastical information we can find in them.

The wills were mostly made by the clergy, as they were often the only persons in the parish able to write, and were usually witnessed by them. They relate mainly to personalty, as, until Henry VIII.'s reign, a man could not dispose of his land as he wished, so as to leave it away from his heir-at-law. Besides appointing executors, it was also most usual for testators to appoint two or more overseers or supervisors.

I trust that the foregoing will help to show something of the interest attaching to early wills, and of the great amount of valuable matter that can be gleaned from their contents.

Punishments of the Past.

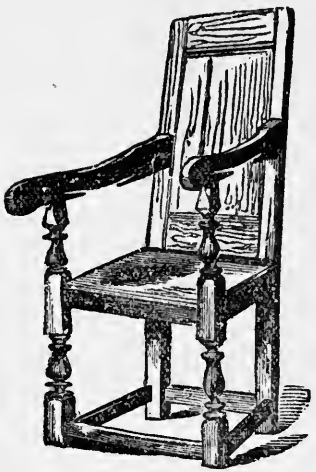
IN "the good old days of 'Merrie England,'" a scolding or shrewish woman was held to be a delinquent against the public peace, and various curious instruments were devised for her punishment. The chief of these old fashioned terrors of the virago was the cucking-stool. Several writers on old English customs have alluded to the use of the cucking-stool in the county of Leicester, so that we see our Leicestrian dames were addicted, in common with their sisters in other parts of their country, to occasionally letting their tongues run too freely for the public comfort.

The cucking-stool in the early history of England must not be confounded with the ducking-stool. They were two distinct machines. It appears from a record in the "Domesday Book," that as far back as the days of Edward the Confessor, any man or woman detected giving false measure in the City of Chester was fined four shillings; and for brewing bad ale, was

placed in the *Cathedra stercoris*. It was a degrading mode of chastisement, the culprits being seated in the chair at their own doors or in some public place. In 1467, the town authorities at Leicester directed that scolds were to be presented by the Mayor on a "cuck-stool" before their own doors, and then carried to the four gates of the town.

Mr. William Kelly, F.S.A., one of the most painstaking and able of Leicester antiquaries, who has paid much attention to obsolete local punishments, has some important notes bearing on this subject in a lecture delivered on the 24th February 1851, before the members of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society. "From the frequency," said Mr. Kelly, "with which payments for making Cucking-stools occur in the accounts, it is to be presumed that its use in this town was not rare. Throsby, writing about the year 1790, says in his *History of Leicester*, that there was at that time a Cucking-stool kept somewhere about the Town Hall premises, and adds that 'to the credit of the nimble-tongued fair it is now a long time since it was used.' On reading this passage, it immediately struck me that an oak chair in the Town Library (called by the Librarian,

'Alderman Newton's Chair,' but as I subsequently found, without authority), had very much the character of some of the ancient Cuck-stools of which I had seen engravings. I had not previously examined the chair closely; but on doing so, I at once found my anticipations confirmed, as it proved beyond doubt to be one of these instruments of punishment formerly in use in Leicester. A drawing of this Cucking-stool has been kindly made for me by Mr. Flower, from which the accompanying engraving is taken.



LEICESTER CUCKING-STOOL.

"It will be seen that under the arms are grooves, constructed for the purpose of receiving and retaining in their proper position the cords by which the instrument was suspended when immersion was resorted to; for which occasion also the seat is so constructed as to be removable at pleasure, in order that it should offer no obstruction to the passage of the chair through the water. The Cucking-stool itself may be seen in the Town Museum."

Mr. Kelly reproduced from the Chamberlains' Accounts the following items :—

	s.	d.
"1548. Item,—Paid to John Croft for makyng the Cookstolle - -	v	
1552. Item,—Paid for mendyng of the Cuckstole at tow tymes - -		viij
1558. Item,—Paid to Robert Crofts for makyng of the Duckstoole -		xvj
1563. Item,—for makinge the cucstoole - - - - - -		xvj
Item,—to Willm. Yates for making pynes and bands for the same - - - - - -		vj
1556. Item,—Paid to Robert Bylbrough for certen wood and bords for the repairinge of the Coockstole - - - - - -		xij
Item,—Paid to William Yates for ij longe pynns with collers for the same Coockstoole - - -		xij
Item,—Paid for nails for the same Coockstole - - - -		ij
1578. Item,—Paid for a newe Cuckstoole - - - - - -		xiiij."

In 1646, a new Cucking-stool was provided,

and in the following year an item as follows occurs in the accounts of the town :—

"Item,—Paid for making the
Cookestoole - - - - xvjs vjd."

This seems to indicate that more than one was in use at the same time.

Mr. Kelly found in the Hall-papers of Leicester the following account of an accusation and punishment :—

"27th June 1654, before Mr. Maior, Mr. Somerfeild.

"The informacōn of Mr. Thomas Goadbye against Ann Ramkin, widdow, sayeth as he was goeinge downe Redcrosse Streete, one Clarkes wife called him to her and shee tould him that one Ann Ramkin, widdow, did saye that the said Clarkes wife did pyne her husband in Goale, and as they were talkinge together the said Ann Ramkin came to them and did use many railenge words and called Mr. Goadbye knave, and did then say that Clarke's wife did pyne her husband in the Goale.

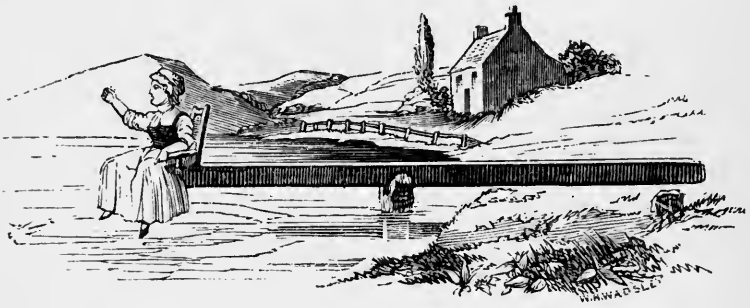
"*The said widdow Ramkin sent home in the Cuckstoole then.*"

The last entry bearing on this subject Mr. Kelly was able to trace in the old accounts of the town was as follows :—

"1768-9. Paid Mr. Elliott for a Cuck-
stool by Order of Hall - - £2 0 0."

When women were ducked at Leicester the operation was performed on or near the side of the West Bridge. Old accounts include items for carrying the ducking-stool thither.

An intelligent Frenchman, named Misson, visited England about 1700, and has left on



DUCKING-STOOL.

record one of the best descriptions of a ducking-stool that has been written. It occurs in a work entitled "Travels in England." "The way of punishing scolding women," he writes, "is pleasant enough. They fasten an arm chair to the end of two beams, twelve or fifteen feet long, and parallel to each other, so that these two pieces of wood, with their two ends, embrace the chair, which hangs between them upon a sort of axle,

by which means it plays freely, and always remains in the natural horizontal position in which the chair should be, that a person may sit conveniently in it, whether you raise it or let it down.

"They set up a post on the bank of a pond or river, and over this post they lay, almost in equilibrio, the two pieces of wood, at one end of which

DUCKING-STOOL—FROM AN OLD CHAP-BOOK.

the chair hangs over the water. They place the woman in this chair, and so plunge her into the water, as often as the sentence directs, in order to cool her immoderate heat." In some instances the ducking was carried to such an extent as to cause death.

We give two illustrations of the ducking-stool, one similar to that described by Misson and the

other from an old chap-book, without date, entitled "Strange and Wonderful Relation of the Old Woman who was Drowned at Ratcliff Highway a fortnight ago." We gather from the work that the poor woman was dipped too often, for at the conclusion of the operation she was found to be dead.

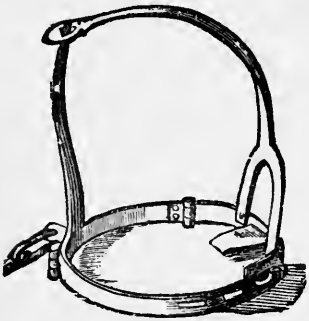
At Leicester there was another machine for punishing women who used their tongues too freely, called the Scolding Cart. In 1629 there is in the old accounts of the town a charge of two shillings for making two wheels and furnishing a bar for it. In many places this was known as the tumbrel. On this machine women were carted round the town before being ducked.

There was at Leicester another form of punishment not confined to women only, it was that of carting through the town evil doers. A man ringing a bell to attract attention attended the procession. The culprits usually had a paper on their heads setting forth the nature of their crimes. "Entries relating to this mode of punishment," says Mr. Kelly, "are far from rare, but they are generally of a nature unsuitable for quotation. The following, however, may serve to illustrate the custom :—

	s.	d.
" 1586. Item,—Payed for a Carte and to the Beadell for cartinge of twoe Harlotts abowte the Towne -	xij	
1598. Item,—P[d] to Whittel for his horse and Carte, and one that Led the horse and Carte abowte the town, to Cartt Marye Smythe, and one John Wylkynson glover	xij	
Itm. p to George Longley for paynetinge of ij papers sett on Marye Smithe's head and Wylkynson's [and other work] - -	iij	
1613. Item,—paid for A horse and Carte, three holberde men, and one other man to ring the Bell, when John Camden and his —— and allso Robert Webster were by order of the Sessions Carted about the Town - - - - -	iij	vj
1614. Item,—Paide to the Burneman for his horse and Carte, to cart a Knave and a Queyne, which came from Coventrie - - -	xij."	

The brank was an instrument planned for curing scolds. It was by some authorities

considered to possess greater advantages as a corrective measure than the ducking-stool. Dr. Plot, speaking of this artifice for the silencing of female speech, said "I look upon it as much to be preferred to the cucking-stool, which not only endangers the health of the party, but also gives the tongue liberty 'twixt every dip, to neither of which this is at all liable, it being such a bridle for the tongue as not only quite deprives them of speech, but brings shame for the transgression, and humility thereupon, before 'tis taken off, which being put upon the offender by order of the Magistrate and fastened with a padlock behind, she is led round the town by an officer to her shame; nor is it taken off till after the party begins to show all external signs imaginable of humiliation and amendment." The historian just quoted gives an illustration representing a pair of branks, as used at the end of the seventeenth century. They are formidable looking contrivances, consisting of hoops of metal passed round the neck and head, opening by means of hinges



LEICESTER BRANK.

at the sides, and closing by a staple with a padlock at the back; a plate within the hoop, projecting inwards, pressed upon the tongue, and formed an effectual gag. We give a picture of the brank formerly in use at Leicester. In the parish church of Walton-on-Thames one is preserved, bearing a date of 1633 and the following couplet:—

> "Chester presents Walton with a Bridle,
> To curb women's tongues that talk too idle."

It is asserted that a man named Chester lost a valuable estate he expected to inherit from a wealthy relative through a gossiping and lying woman.

The pillory was for a long time employed as an engine of punishment. In Leicester it stood in the Market Place. We may state that the pillory was for many ages common to most European countries. Known in France as the *pillori* or *carcan*, and in Germany as the *pranger*, it seems to have existed in England before the Conquest, in the shape of a stretch-neck, in which the head only of the criminal was confined. By a statute of Edward I., it was enacted that every stretch-neck, or pillory, should be made of convenient strength, so that execution might be

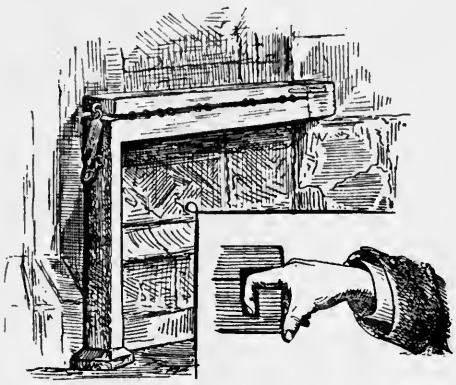
done upon criminals without peril to their bodies. The pillory in which Roger Ockam underwent his punishment for perjury in the reign of Henry VIII., consisted of a wooden frame erected on a stool, with holes and folding boards for the admission of the head and hands. An engraving in Douce's "Illustrations of Shakespeare" (vol ii., p. 147), taken from a MS. of the thirteenth century, gives an example of a pillory constructed for punishing a number of offenders at the same time, but this form was of rare occurrence.

R. OCKAM IN THE PILLORY.

The use of the pillory was brought to an end by an Act of Parliament, dated June 30th, 1837. As a mode of punishment it was so barbarous, and at the same time so indefinite in its severity, that we can only wonder it should not have been swept away long before.

In the church of Ashby-de-la-Zouch is a finger pillory. It is one of a few which have come down to the present time.

We believe the finger pillory was frequently employed in our old manorial halls. The interesting Leicestershire example has often been described and illustrated. An account of it appears in *Notes and Queries* of October 25th, 1851. It is described as "fastened at its right hand extremity into a wall, and consists of two



FINGER PILLORY, ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH.

pieces of oak; the bottom and fixed piece is three feet eight inches long; the width of the whole is four-and-a-half inches, and when closed it is five inches deep; the left hand extremity is supported by a leg of the same width as the top, and two feet six inches in length; the upper piece is joined to the lower by a hinge, and in this lower and fixed horizontal part are a number of holes,

varying in size; the largest are towards the right hand: these holes are sufficiently deep to admit the finger to the second joint, and a slight hollow is made to admit the third one, which lies flat; there is, of course, a corresponding hollow at the top of the moveable part, which, when shut down encloses the whole finger." Thomas Wright, F.S.A., in his "Archæological Album," gives an illustration of the Ashby-de-la-Zouch example, and we reproduce a copy. "It shows the manner in which the finger was confined, and it will easily be seen that it could not be withdrawn until the pillory was opened. If the offender were held long in this posture, the punishment must have been extremely painful."

Stocks were much used, and several pairs were in various parts of Leicester. They were placed at each of the four gates of the town, and in other localities. One pair was placed under an elm tree in the Market Place, and of course in the towns and villages of the county.

Whipping at the whipping-post was another common method of punishing persons in past times. From the Leicester Town Accounts of 1605, Mr. Kelly copied the following entries:—

	s.	d.
"Itm.—P$^{d.}$ to W$^{m.}$ Sheene for A poste for correction of Roages - - - - -	ij	
Itm.—P$^{d.}$ to Robert Ludlam, locksmythe for one Iron for same post - - -	xij."	

And in 1660 there was

"Paid to John Groce for setting up the Whipping-post and for ale - - - - -	00	08	06."

We learn from Machyn's Diary that it was also designated the *post reformation.*

"At this period," continues Mr. Kelly, "the law made no distinction of sex, with regard to the punishment of the lash, for by the Statute of the 21 Jac. I., c. 6, it was enacted that women convicted of simple larcenies under the value of ten shillings should be burned in the hand,* and *whipped*, stocked, or imprisoned for any time not exceeding a year; and the whipping of women was not abolished until the reign of George IV. Thus in the account for the year 1591 we find there was

'Paid for the whipping of a woman - 6$^{d.}$'

* In the account for 1599 there is a charge of sixpence "for a Brand to burne prisoners withal."

And this entry is followed by a charge for the 'whipping of a lame cripple,' and other instances of the same kind occur in subsequent years.*

A whipping-post stood beside the stocks in which Hudibras was confined, of which a burlesque description is given in the poem; whilst of the great number of them in use during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. we have a striking testimony in the works of Taylor, the water-poet. He says:—

> 'In London, and within a mile, I ween
> There are of jails or prisons full eighteen;
> And sixty *whipping-posts*, and stocks, and cages.'
> —*The Virtue of a Jail.*

One of these instruments is still standing, near the school-house, in the village of Keyham in this county."

In closing this paper we must not omit to state that the chief facts are drawn from an interesting lecture by Mr. William Kelly, delivered at the Literary and Philosophical Society, Leicester,

* "The general rule of all England," says the pamphlet, entitled "Stanleye's Remedy," published in 1646, "is to *whip* and punish the wandering beggars and to *brand them* according to the form of the new Statute, and so mark them with such a note of infamie, as they may be assured no man will set them on work." And the writer adds that "the poor may be whipped to death, and branded for rogues, and so become felons by the law, and the next time hanged for vagrancie." What a picture we have here of the tender mercies of the law at that period!

on 24th February, 1851, and bearing the title of "Ancient Records of Leicester;" from "Old-Time Punishments," by William Andrews, F.R.H.S., published at Hull, in 1890, and now out of print; from a carefully prepared paper from the pen of Mr. T. Broadbent Trowsdale; and we have also been supplied with notes by residents in the county.

Laurence Ferrers: the Murderer-Earl.

By T. Broadbent Trowsdale.

IN a folio volume issued in 1760 (the year of Lord Ferrers' execution), the full title of which reads:—"Trial of Laurence, Earl of Ferrers, of Breedon, in the county of Leicester, for the murder of his servant, John Johnson, before Ho. of Peers, with judgment for murder given against him," is given a full account of this extraordinary trial, which excited more public interest than almost any other on record. The father of the nobleman who forfeited his life to the offended laws of his country, was the Hon. Laurence Shirley, fourth son of the first Earl, and his mother one of the daughters of Sir Walter Clarges, Baronet. Through his grandmother, Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Lawrence Washington, of Garsden, his lordship represented a branch of the family which, in after times, gave to America her illustrious President, George Washington, and by female descent also he was the representative of Robert Devereux,

Earl of Essex, the romantic, headstrong, and unfortunate favourite of "Good Queen Bess." The estates inherited by Lord Ferrers were very large, his abilities of no mean order, and everything seemed to combine to brighten the prospects of his journey through life. But a violent temper, sometimes, sad to relate, maddened to fury by the influence of intoxication, marred all these gifts of fortune, and at last brought the unhappy Earl to an ignominious death at the hands of the executioner. Many, impressed with the strongest conviction of Lord Ferrers' insanity, have condemned the verdict which consigned him to the scaffold, and we feel assured that, in our own more lenient times, the doubt that did exist would have tempered justice with mercy. The main cause of the rejection of the plea of insanity was the extraordinary skill and acumen displayed by his lordship in the examination of the witnesses; and it must be conceded, even by the firmest advocates of the Earl's lunacy, that in most instances his fits of fury arose from the excitement of drinking, and that occasionally his mind exhibited great strength and clearness. Before entering on the story of the murder, we will give our readers a few particulars in exemplification of

the Earl's ungovernable passion. In the year 1752, he had married the sister of Sir William Meredith, Baronet, of Henbury, Cheshire, a lady of great beauty and accomplishments. With such cruelty did Earl Ferrers behave to his consort, that her ladyship was obliged to apply to Parliament for redress. The consequence of her petition was that an Act was passed, allowing her a separate maintenance, to be raised out of the estates.

Lord Ferrers ran his mare against a military friend's horse at the Derby races of 1756, for £50, and was the winner of the stakes. After the race he spent the evening with some gentlemen, and in the course of conversation, the Captain whose horse had lost the stakes for him, having been informed that his lordship's mare was in foal, proposed, in a jocose manner, to again run his horse against her at the expiration of seven months. Lord Ferrers was so affronted with this circumstance, which he conceived to have arisen from a preconcerted plan to insult him, that he quitted Derby at three o'clock in the morning, and went immediately to his seat at Staunton Harold in Leicestershire. He rang his bell as soon as he awoke, and a servant attending,

he demanded of him if he knew how the Captain came to be informed of the condition of his mare. The servant declared that he was ignorant of the matter, but the groom might have told it. That person being called, he denied having given the information. Previous to the affront presumed to have been given on the preceding evening, Lord Ferrers had invited the Captain and the rest of the company to dine with him as on that day, but they all refused their attendance, though he sent a servant to remind them that they had promised to come. Lord Ferrers was so enraged at this disappointment, that he kicked and horse-whipped his servants, and threw at them such articles as lay within his reach.

On one occasion some oysters were sent to his lordship from London. The bivalves did not turn out to be good, and the Earl thereupon directed one of the servants to swear that the carrier had changed them. The conscience of the servant would not allow him to take such an oath, and he declined to obey the order of his master. Lord Ferrers at once flew into a violent rage, stabbed the servant in the breast with a knife, cut his head with a candlestick, and kicked him with

such severity that he was under the surgeon's care for several years afterwards.

During a visit of the Earl's brother to himself and Countess at Staunton Harold, a casual dispute arose between the parties, and Lady Ferrers being absent from the room, the Earl ran upstairs with a large clasp knife in his hand, and demanded of a servant whom he met where his lady was. The man replied, "In her own room," and having directed him to follow him thither, Lord Ferrers sternly ordered the servant to load a brace of pistols with bullets. This order was complied with, but the man, apprehensive of mischief, declined priming the pistols. Lord Ferrers discovered this evasion, swore at the servant, and calling for powder, primed the weapons himself. He then threatened the now almost terror-stricken servant that if he did not immediately go and shoot his brother he would blow his brains out. The poor man hesitated, and his lordship pulled the trigger of one of the pistols, but it fortunately missed fire. Hereupon the Countess fell upon her knees, and implored her irate husband to appease his passion, but in return he swore at her, and threatened her destruction if she opposed him. The servant now

escaped from the room, and reported what had passed to his lordship's brother, who immediately called his wife from her bed, and they left the house, though it was then two o'clock in the morning.

The ill-fated Mr. John Johnson, the Earl's steward, whose life was sacrificed to his master's passion, had been connected with the family from his youth up, and was distinguished by the fidelity of his service, and the regular manner in which he kept his accounts. When the law had decreed a separate maintenance for the Countess, Mr. Johnson was proposed as receiver of the rents for her use, but apprehending that much unpleasant ness would accrue to the holder of the office, he declined to accept it, until he was urged to do so by the Earl himself. It appears that at that time Johnson stood high in his lordship's favour, but this state of feeling endured for a brief period only. The Earl soon conceived an opinion that his steward had combined with the trustees to disappoint him of a contract for some coal mines, and he came to a resolution, out of spite for this imaginary wrong, to put an end to his existence. The Earl's displeasure was first evinced by his sending notice to Johnson to give up a profitable

farm which he held under him, but upon Johnson producing a lease granted by the trustees, no further steps were taken in the affair.

After this Lord Ferrers behaved in so affable a manner to Johnson that the latter imagined that all thoughts of revenge had subsided, but on the 13th of January, 1760, his lordship called on Johnson, who lived about half a mile from his seat, and bade him come to Staunton between three and four of the afternoon of the Friday following. His lordship's family consisted at this time of a gentlewoman named Clifford, with four of her natural children, three maid servants, and five men servants, exclusive of an old man and a boy. After dinner on the Friday, Lord Ferrers sent all the men servants out of the house, and desired Mrs. Clifford to go with the children to the house of her father, at a distance of about two miles. Johnson coming to his appointment, one of the maids let him in, and he was ushered into his lordship's room. In about an hour after, a female domestic, hearing some high words, went to the door to see if she could discover what was going on. Listening, she heard the Earl say, "Down upon your knees, your time is come, you must die!" and shortly afterwards she heard

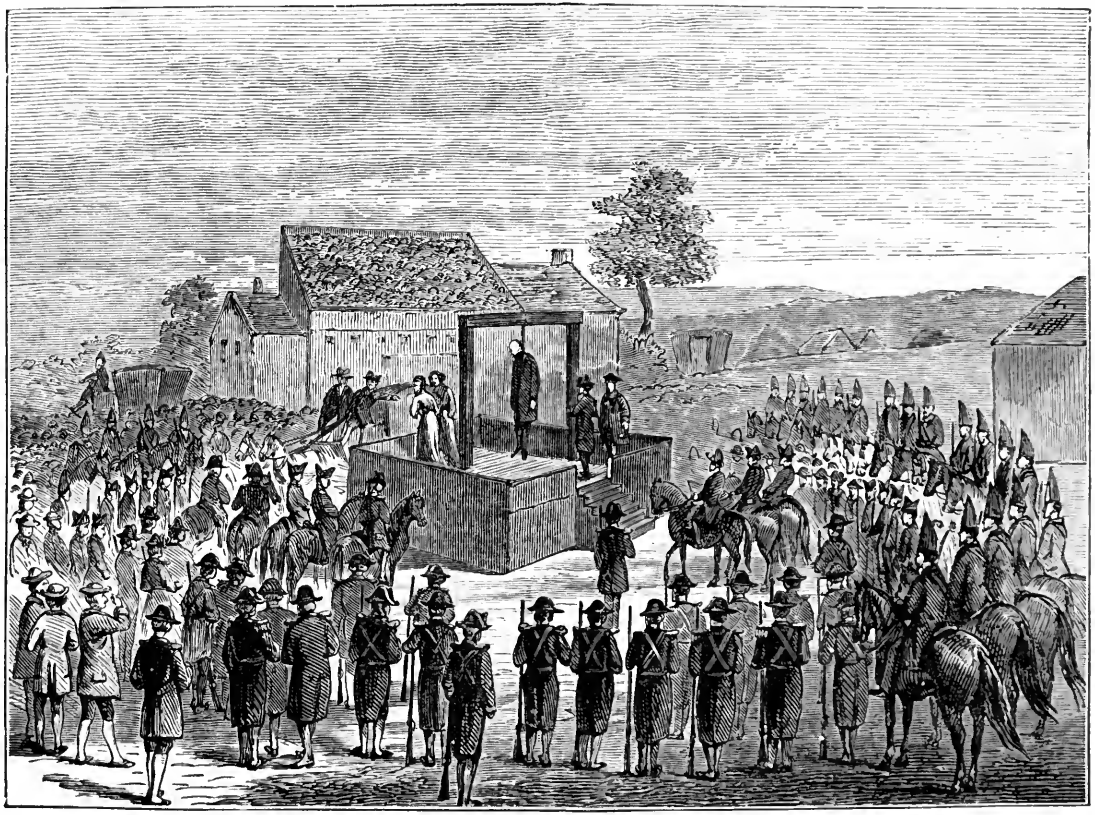
the report of a pistol. Then his lordship, apparently alarmed at the act he had committed, called for aid; and his servant, on reaching the room, discovered the steward shot through the body, and weltering in his blood. Lord Ferrers, under a momentary touch of compassion, gave directions that the poor man should be led to bed, and that Mr. Kirkland, the surgeon, should be brought from Ashby-de-la-Zouch. At a request of the wounded man a person was also dispatched for his children. Miss Johnson, the eldest daughter, immediately came, and was followed by the surgeon, to whom Lord Ferrers said, "I intended to have shot him dead, but, since he is still alive, you must do what you can for him."

The medical gentleman soon found that the poor steward had been mortally wounded; but, knowing the Earl's fierce disposition, and dreading similar consequences to himself, he dissembled the matter, and told him that there was no danger in the case. Hereupon the Earl drank himself into a state of intoxication, and then went to bed; after which Mr. Johnson was sent to his own house, in a chair, at two o'clock in the morning, and the poor fellow died at nine. Mr. Kirkland, being

really convinced that Johnson could not live, procured a number of persons to secure the murderer. When they arrived at Staunton Harold, Lord Ferrers had just risen, and was going towards the stables with his garters in his hand; but, observing the people, he retired to the house. He covertly removed about from one hiding place to another, so that it was a considerable time before he was taken. This happened on the Saturday, and he was conveyed to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and there kept in confinement until the following Monday, when a coroner's inquest having returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against Lord Ferrers," the Earl was committed to the Gaol of Leicester.

Lord Ferrers was kept in durance vile at Leicester about a fortnight, when he was allowed to proceed to London in his own landau, in order to take his trial before the House of Peers on the capital charge. His behaviour on the journey evinced the utmost composure. He was taken to the House of Lords, and the verdict of the coroner's jury having been read over before the assembled Peers, Lord Ferrers was committed to the Tower of London for safe custody.

His Lordship's place of confinement was the



EXECUTION OF EARL FERRERS AT TYBURN.
(From a print of the period.)

Round Tower, near the drawbridge. Two warders constantly attended in his room, and one waited at the door. At the bottom of the stairs two soldiers were placed, with their bayonets fixed, and a third stood on the drawbridge. The gates of the Tower were shut an hour before the usual time during his imprisonment. Mrs. Clifford took her four children up to London, and occupied lodgings in Tower Street, sending messages to his Lordship several times in the day; to these he at first replied, but the communication became so troublesome that the correspondence was much restricted. Whilst in the Tower, Lord Ferrers lived in a regular manner. His breakfast consisted of a muffin and a basin of tea with a spoonful of brandy in it; after dinner and supper he drank a pint of wine mixed with water. His conduct was generally becoming, but he sometimes exhibited evident proofs of discomposure of mind. His natural children were permitted to visit him several times, but Mrs. Clifford was denied admission after repeated application.

After the necessary preparations were completed, and Lord Henley, the Chancellor, was created High Steward, the trial came on before the House of Peers, in Westminster Hall, on the

16th of April, 1769. The proof of the fact was sufficiently clear, and by the unanimous voice of the tribunal of his Peers, Earl Ferrers was found guilty of murder, and the Lord High Steward passed sentence that he should be executed on the 21st of April. The condemned Earl, however, received a respite to the 5th of May.

The Earl made a will during his imprisonment, leaving sixty pounds a year to Mrs. Clifford, a thousand pounds to each of his natural daughters, and thirteen hundred pounds to the children of his murdered steward. The latter legacy, which should have been the first to be discharged, was for some reason or other never paid. His Lordship petitioned to be beheaded within the Tower, but as his crime was so atrocious, the King refused to interfere with the sentence of the law.

Through the influence of his family, however, he was not swung off into eternity from a common cart, as had hitherto been the practice with plebeian culprits. A scaffold was erected under the gallows at Tyburn, and covered with black baize. A part of the scaffold, on which the murderer was to stand, was raised eighteen inches above the rest. This arrangement may, we think, be regarded as the precursor of the drop.

"There was," says Horace Walpole, "a contrivance for sinking the stage under him, which did not play well; and he suffered a little by delay, but was dead in four minutes."

In his preparations for the execution, Lord Ferrers displayed another prominent feature of his character, his great vanity. His lordship was dressed in his wedding clothes, which were of a light colour, and richly embroidered with silver. When he put them on, he said, "This is the suit in which I was married, and in which I will die." He set out from the Tower to meet his fate at nine o'clock in the morning, amidst crowds of spectators. First went a large body of police, preceded by one of the high constables; next came groups of grenadiers and foot soldiers; then the sheriff in a chariot and six; and next Lord Ferrers in his landau and six, guarded by a strong escort of cavalry and infantry. The other sheriff's carriage followed, succeeded by a mourning coach, drawn by six horses, conveying some of the malefactor's friends. Last of all went a hearse, provided for the purpose of taking the corpse from the place of execution to Surgeon's Hall.

The procession was two hours and three-

quarters on its way. During the passage his lordship conversed very freely with Mr. Sheriff Vaillant, who joined him in his landau at the Tower-gate. That officer expressed to Lord Ferrers how disagreeably he felt his position in having to wait upon him on so awful an occasion, but promised to do all in his power to render his situation as little irksome as possible. The Earl replied, "The apparatus of death, and the passing through such crowds of people, are ten times worse than death itself; but I suppose they never saw a lord hanged, and perhaps they will never see another." Upon the Chaplain of the Tower, who also occupied a seat in the landau, observing that the public would naturally be inquisitive about his lordship's religious opinions, the Earl returned answer that "He did not think himself accountable to the world for his sentiments on religion; but that he always believed in one God, the maker of all things; that whatever were his religious notions he had never propagated them; and that all countries had a form of religion by which the people were governed, and whoever disturbed them in it he considered as an enemy to society." Respecting the death of Mr. Johnson, he said, "He was

under particular circumstances, and had met with so many crosses and vexations that he scarce knew what he did." He declared, however, that he had no malice against the unfortunate man.

Once during the journey, Lord Ferrers desired to stop to have a glass of wine and water; but upon the sheriff remarking that such a proceeding would only draw a greater crowd around them, the Earl replied, "That is true, by no means stop." Shortly afterwards, a letter was thrown into the carriage; it was from Mrs. Clifford, to tell him that it "was impossible, on account of the dense crowd, for her to get up to the spot where he had appointed she should meet and take leave of him; but she was in a hackney-coach of a certain number." The Earl begged Mr. Vaillant to order his officers to endeavour to get the hackney-coach up to his. "My Lord," said that gentleman, "you have behaved so well hitherto, that it is a pity to venture unmanning yourself." To this the Earl answered, "If you, sir, think I am wrong, I submit." After which he gave the sheriff a pocket-book, containing a bank-note, with a ring, and a purse of guineas, which were afterwards delivered to the unfortunate woman.

At the place of execution, the procession was met by another party of horse soldiers, who formed a circle round the gallows. His lordship walked up the steps of the scaffold with great firmness; and, having joined with the chaplain in repeating the Lord's prayer, which he called a fine composition, he spoke the following words with great fervency:—"O! God, forgive me all my errors, pardon all my sins!" He then presented his watch to Mr. Vaillant, and gave five guineas to the assistant of the executioner, by mistake, instead of the dread finisher of the law himself. The master demanded the money, and a dispute arose, which was promptly stopped by the sheriff. The executioner now proceeded to do his duty. Lord Ferrers' neckcloth was taken off, a white cap, which he had brought in his pocket, put on his head, and his arms pinioned with a black sash. On the silken rope being placed round his neck, the culprit turned momentarily pale, but recovered again in an instant. He then ascended the raised stage, and, within seven minutes of his leaving the landau, the signal was given for that part of the scaffold on which he stood to be struck, and the guilty spirit of the murderer-Earl passed into the presence of its Creator.

After hanging an hour and five minutes, the body was received into a coffin lined with white satin, and conveyed to Surgeons' Hall, there to be dissected. After the mortal remains of the Earl were again placed in the coffin, the halter and his hat were laid with him, near his feet. On the lid of the coffin there appeared these words :—

"Laurence, Earl Ferrers, Suffered
5 May, 1760."

After the body had remained some time at Surgeons' Hall for public inspection it was given up to the Earl's friends for interment. It would be an injustice to the memory of the unfortunate nobleman not to mention that during his imprisonment he made pecuniary recompense to several persons whom he had injured during the extravagance of those fits of passion to which he unhappily so often gave way.

The Last Gibbet.

By Thomas Frost.

THAT the exposure upon gibbets of the bodies of criminals who had suffered the extreme penalty of the law should have continued to be practised down to a period within the recollection of many persons now living ought not, perhaps, to cause much surprise in the minds of those of the present generation who remember that, within a time even more recent, men convicted of treason have been sentenced to be disembowelled and dismembered after the hangman had executed his odious office upon them. The time had passed, however, when a civilised and—nominally at least—Christian community could regard such horrors without a shudder, and the sentences to which reference is made were not carried into operation. It has been remarked that many of the generation of Frenchmen that perpetrated or gloated over the horrors of the great revolution of the last century may have seen Damien dismembered while living, after a vain

effort had been made to carry out the terrible sentence that he should be torn in pieces by horses attached to his limbs. That such barbarous punishments have a tendency to debase and brutalise those who witness their infliction, and thus to reproduce the crimes they were designed to repress, is now generally recognised, and with the recognition has come a penal code more humane, and yet no less efficient for its legitimate purpose.

In the first quarter of the present century, though the bleached skulls and blackened quarters of political offenders no longer were displayed on city gates, many a strip of green waste by the road-side, and many a gorse-covered common had its gibbet, from which swung in the breeze the clanking and creaking iron hoops encasing the grim and ghastly remains of what had been a man.

The writer has heard from his father a description of the demoralising scene which he witnessed on Putney Heath, on the Sunday after the execution of Jeremiah Abershaw, a notorious highwayman, when drunken revellers clustered round the gibbet, and drank to the ghastly form that depended from it, and from which one of the

wretches separated a finger, in order to make a tobacco stopper of the bone. He has heard, too, from a relative who had been an officer of the mercantile marine, of the shock which he received, when departing on his first voyage, from the hideous spectacle of the gibbets of pirates and murderers on the seas, which then studded the banks of the Thames, just below Blackwall. But the last gibbet was set up in the vicinity of Leicester, in which town there must be persons still living who remember the horrible circumstances connected with its erection.

Sixty years ago there resided with his parents in Wharfe Street, off Wheat Street, Leicester, a young man named James Cook, who carried on the business of a bookbinder at a workshop situated in the rear of the Flying Horse public-house, in Wellington Street. About eleven o'clock on the night of June 7th, 1832, some men who were passing the workshop observed a glare of light from one of the windows, and supposing the premises to be on fire, paused to ascertain the cause. They then became aware of a strong smell of burning, and having aroused some of the neighbours, they forced open the outer door and entered. A large fire was found to be burning

in the grate, and from this alone had proceeded the glare of light which had arrested their steps. Over the fire, the flame of which mounted far up the chimney, was a large piece of charred flesh, the burning of which had caused the effluvia which had reached their olfactory organs even before they entered the building. The singularity of this circumstance, and the risk which there seemed to be of the chimney being set on fire, prompted the men to send for the occupier of the premises. Cook came immediately, and on being asked for an explanation, stated that the flesh had been bought for a dog, but, as he deemed it unfit for even canine consumption, he had determined to burn it. To some of the persons present this explanation did not seem perfectly satisfactory, and a constable was sent for. On the arrival of this functionary the circumstances were related to him, but he did not deem them such as would warrant him in detaining Cook, who was allowed to depart.

The constable took possession of the premises, however, and the burning mass of flesh was removed from the fire, and submitted to the inspection of a local surgeon named Macaulay. That gentleman was unable to determine whether or not the flesh was that of a human being, but

some partially calcined bones which were found in the ashes under the grate he pronounced to be those of human fingers. Other suspicious circumstances came to the knowledge of the police on the following day. A stranger from London had dined at the Stag and Pheasant Inn, and had afterwards been seen to enter Cook's workshop; and no one could be found who had seen him since. A lad employed by Cook had been sent home earlier than usual that evening, and Cook had been seen washing the floor at an unusually early hour on the following morning. A warrant was thereupon obtained by the police for the arrest of Cook, but on their proceeding to execute it, it was found that he had left the town.

Intense excitement was produced in Leicester and the surrounding neighbourhood by these circumstances, and several persons joined the detectives in the search for the fugitive. The Town Clerk convened a public meeting, to consider measures for the assistance of the authorities, and it was determined to offer a reward of £200 for the apprehension of the murderer, several prominent residents in the town joining the magistrates in this offer. Search was,

in the meantime, made for the head and other portions of the victim, but without success, nothing being found beyond the ghastly relics of mortality already in the possession of the police.

Cook succeeded only for a day or two in evading the search that was made for him. The newspapers of the period give no details of his arrest or of the subsequent proceedings before the magistrates. Their absence may be accounted for partly by the comparative smallness of the journals of sixty years ago, and partly by the pressure upon their space caused by the debates in Parliament on the Reform Bill, and the intense excitement which they occasioned throughout the country. To this latter cause may be added the news, given almost as fully as that of the murder in Leicester, of the formidable insurrection in Paris, on the occasion of the funeral of General Lamarque. All that the public learned through the press concerning Cook at this time was that he had been visited in gaol by the magistrates, to whom he had confessed his guilt.

From the briefly related particulars which were given, it appears that the man who visited Cook,

and was seen no more afterwards, was a London tradesman named John Paas, with whom Cook had had business relations. The latter had received some goods from Paas, concerning payment for which a dispute arose, which was terminated by Cook seizing the iron pin of a binder's press and striking his victim a violent blow on the head with it. Paas called "murder!" and staggered towards the door, seizing a hammer, as if to defend himself; but he dropped it immediately, and fell on the floor. Cook struck him on the head two or three times more, and he never spoke or stirred again. The murderer then took from his victim's pockets £55 in gold and notes, and sat down to consider how he should dispose of the body. This he resolved to do by burning, and for that purpose he made a large fire, and then proceeded to decapitate and dismember the body. The magistrates and the police were of opinion that he had not disposed of the whole of the remains by fire, but he persisted in his statement that all had been burned except the portion discovered when the premises were broken into by the neighbours. He related these particulars with the utmost calmness, and added that if he "had not got

drinking before the job was completed," no trace of the crime would have been left.

The trial took place on August 8th, in a crowded court, the judge taking his seat on the bench at the unusually early hour of nine o'clock. It was perhaps expected that the proceedings would be of a protracted character, but to the surprise, and perhaps disappointment, of those present, the prisoner, who retained the calmness and self-possession he had evinced from the first, pleaded guilty, and then proceeded to read the New Testament, as if the formalities which remained to be observed had no interest for him.

"I suppose," said the judge, "you are aware of the consequences of that plea?"

"I am," replied Cook.

"And you make it deliberately and advisedly?"

"I do."

"Attend to me now, not to that book," continued the judge. "You can look at books afterwards. Do you mean to adhere to the answer you have given, and are you determined to persevere in it?"

"I am," replied the prisoner.

The judge then put on the black cap, and pro-

ceeded in a speech said to have been "most impressive," to pass sentence of death, with the addition that the prisoner's body should, after execution, be hung from a gibbet near the town. During the delivery of this address, the prisoner exhibited no emotion, and on its conclusion he gently inclined his head, made a movement of his right hand to some person on the bench, and was conducted to his cell, the whole of the proceedings having occupied no more than a quarter of an hour.

The sentence was executed three days afterwards, as was the custom at that time. Half-past nine was the time fixed for the execution, but long before the hour had struck, Welford Road, leading to the gaol, was thronged, and the dense mass of human beings that congregated around the scaffold was estimated at no less than 30,000. It was five minutes after the time announced for the dread event when the condemned man, having received the sacrament, walked to the scaffold with a firm step, displaying no more emotion than he had done on his trial. The authorities appear to have been still disposed to doubt the truthfulness of his statement that he had disposed of the whole of the remains of

the murdered man by burning, for he was again questioned on the subject just before his execution, and exhorted to make a further revelation, if there was anything more to be disclosed. To this appeal he replied: "I am now about to stand in the presence of my maker, and I declare that I destroyed the whole, except what was found." Good order is said to have prevailed around the scaffold, and the immense crowd dispersed quietly after the judicial sentence had been carried into effect. The body of the culprit, after hanging the usual time, was cut down and carried into the gaol.

The gibbet constructed for the due carrying out of the latter portion of the sentence was thirty-three feet in height, and was set up on a piece of waste land on the side of the road leading to Countesthorpe, and about a quarter of a mile from the toll-gate on the Aylestone road. Twenty thousand persons are said to have been present when the body of the murderer, dressed as he had been at the trial, and encased in iron hoops, braced together by transverse pieces of iron, was brought from the gaol in a cart, and suspended from the lofty gibbet by means of a ring in the ironwork enclosing the head, and a hook

in the arm projecting from the highest portion of the upright.

Some objectors to the observance of the barbarous custom made an application to the authorities for permission to remove the body from the gibbet and consign it to a more fitting resting-place in the earth. Whether any representation in support of this course was made to the Secretary of State for the Home Department does not appear; but the body had been only three days suspended from the gibbet, when an order for its removal therefrom was received from the Home Office, and was promptly acted upon. The residents in the neighbourhood were probably not sorry to see the horrible thing taken away, while every right-minded person in the kingdom must have received with satisfaction the knowledge that the last gibbet had been removed from the green waysides of England.

The Ancient Water-mills at Loughborough.

By the Rev. W. G. D. Fletcher, M.A., F.S.A.

ANY traveller going by train along the Midland line of railway from Leicester to Loughborough, can see on his right hand, just before reaching Loughborough Station, two water corn mills standing on the banks of the river Soar. These mills have long been known as the Upper and Lower Mills, and during a very long period the tenants and inhabitants of the Manor of Loughborough were compelled to take all their corn and grist there to be ground. This led to a number of lawsuits in the Exchequer, and the pleadings in these suits are preserved in the Public Record Office. I propose in this paper to show how the inhabitants of the manor asserted and eventually obtained the right to have their corn ground where they pleased.

The Domesday Survey mentions that Hugh Lupus, the Norman Earl of Chester, and nephew to William the Conqueror, held the Manor of

Loughborough; and that in the manor there were two mills of ten shillings value. There is little doubt but that the Upper and Lower Mills, which were long ago known as the King's Mills, occupied the sites of these two Domesday Mills. They followed the manor for centuries, and were the property of the Despensers, Beaumonts, Greys, and Hastings, successively lords of the manor, until the year 1810, when the then lord, Francis, Earl of Moira, sold the manor and all his property in Loughborough, and with them these ancient mills.

The Manor of Loughborough was in the 16th and 17th centuries held of the King, subject to the payment of a fee-farm rent of £115 16s. 6d. yearly. A few miles from the town was the Abbey of Garendon, which had for its benefit certain corn mills at Garendon and Dishley; and when this Abbey was dissolved, and its possessions sold, the millers of these mills not unnaturally sought to increase their custom, and this they did by offering to grind corn in a shorter time and at a cheaper rate than the millers of the old Loughborough mills.

Katherine, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, who was tenant for life under the settlement

made on her marriage with Henry, third Earl of Huntingdon, of "all those three auncyent milles called the Sore mills, the walke mill, and the ffishpoole mill, being all parcell of the mannor of Loughborowe," about the year 1610 commenced a suit in the Exchequer against Nicholas Gossen, father and son, who were millers of Dishley Mill, and Robert Traunter, miller of Garendon Mill, and several inhabitants of Loughborough. The countess alleged that the lords of the manor had from time immemorial the right of grinding all the corn of the inhabitants, but that the Gossens and Traunter had enticed many of the tenants and inhabitants to grind their corn at the Dishley and Garendon Mills, and had sent men and horses to carry it to and from the town, and took less toll than was charged at her mills. This was the first of ten successive suits that were brought within a period of eighty-eight years by members of the Hastings family against owners or tenants of adjacent mills; and, though I have not found any Decree, yet the defendants probably submitted, and matters were quiet for sixteen years.

The next suit was commenced by Henry Hastings, fifth Earl of Huntingdon, in the year 1626, against William Fowlds and eight other

freeholders and copyholders, tenants of the manor, and against Thomas Farnham, gent., owner of a water corn mill in Quorndon, distant two miles from Loughborough, and his four loadsmen. In his Bill of Complaint, the Earl alleges that from time immemorial "there have beene two water corne mylnes standinge uppon the river of Soare, and one mawlte mylne standinge within the saide Towne of Loughborough," on the Wood Brook, and that all the inhabitants and householders within the town owe suit and soke to the said mills, and are used to grind all their corn and malt that they spend in their houses, or bake or brew, at the Earl's mills. And that Fowlds and other tenants of the manor have ground their corn and malt at other mills, and have set up querns in their own private houses; and pretend that they have liberty to grind their corn when they please, and are not bound by any custom or tenure to grind their corn and malt at the Earl's mills. And that Farnham's loadsmen have carried corn and malt of various inhabitants from Loughborough to the said mill in Quorndon. I have not found any Decree in this suit; but no doubt again the defendants submitted.

The same Earl Henry commenced another suit

in the Exchequer, in 1638, against Henry Skipwith, of Knight-thorpe, Esq., and Symon Rugeley, Esq., Skipwith's son-in-law, and against John Nicholas, and certain tenants of the manor. He complains that Skipwith had newly built and set up a wind-mill within half a mile of the town of Loughborough, at which he had persuaded some of the tenants to grind their corn and grist; and that Nicholas had lately set up a common bakehouse in Loughborough, and had baked bread which had been sold to the tenants and inhabitants.

Nicholas, with Gertrude Dixon and William Fowlds, filed their Answer, in which they assert that excessive toll is taken at the Earl's mills, and that the toll should be a twentieth or twenty-fourth part of the corn ground; and that they have only sent their corn to other mills when, by reason of floods or droughts, the Earl's mills could not serve them. They assert further that Loughborough bakers are by ancient custom permitted to bake in their own ovens, or where they pleased; and that the Earl's tenants of the bakehouse used only to charge one penny for baking a strike of corn, but now charge three-pence a strike. Skipwith and Rugeley also filed

an Answer, in which they say that the old mill, situate in Mill Field, in the manor of Knight-thorpe, being decayed, Skipwith set up a new mill on the foundation of the old one.

The Depositions of witnesses taken in this suit at Loughborough, on 26th September, 1638, are preserved, and are interesting. From the evidence it seems that Skipwith's wind-mill at Knight-thorpe was built about 1611, on the site of "an olde ruynous wyndmyll," in a field called Neather Field, and on the Mill Furlong; and that corn was often taken there to be ground, as also to other mills at Dishley, Sheepshed, Quorndon, and Garendon, when the water was defective at the Earl's mills. The Earl's millers seem to have dealt ill with some of the customers, taking five, six, seven, or even eleven pounds out of a strike; and when they made complaint, met with abuse, not satisfaction.

A curious list of the stones in the Earl's mills is given. Opinions differed, however, as to whether the Earl's bakehouse was a common bakehouse, and the only bakehouse in the town, and whether all tenants were bound to bake their bread there. The raising of the toll for baking bread is attributed to the scarcity and dearness of

fuel, which thirty years back might have been had for little or nothing.

The cause came on for hearing on 4th February, 1640, before the Chief Baron and other Barons, who ordered that the tenants and inhabitants within the manor should grind all their corn and malt at complainant's mills, so that the same should be ground within forty-eight hours, and in default of this they might grind their corn and malt at any other mills they should think fit. The question of the common bakehouse was not touched upon, and, indeed, was never seriously pressed by the lords of the manor.

Matters now remained quiet for a few years; but Earl Henry dying on 14th November 1643, and his son, Ferdinando Hastings, succeeding to his title and estates as sixth Earl of Huntingdon, some of the tenants began to send their corn to certain mills at Quorndon, the property of Thomas Farnham, and to Dishley Mill, to be ground. Consequently Earl Ferdinando, in 1648, commenced a suit in the Exchequer against Thomas Farnham, gent., Henry Gosson, farmer of Dishley Mill, and against Thomas Whittaph, a copyholder, and several inhabitants of the manor, for taking their corn to be ground at

Quorndon and Dishley Mills. The defendants, in their Answer, simply deny that complainant has any exclusive right of grinding, Loughborough "beeinge of very lardge extent, and beeinge a great markett towne."

The Depositions of a number of witnesses, which were taken on 25th January, 1649-50, are full of interest. From these depositions it seems that the late Earl Henry "was a very powerfull man in the County, and especially at Loughborrowe," and the inhabitants were in much subjection to him; and that they did not carry the former suits to hearing, because he was "a great man, and one with whom they could not deal, else they would not have ceased their defence." The Earl's mills in the manor were three, and were called "the Walke Mill, the Malt Mill, and the Soare Mill near the Cotes Bridge," and had seven pairs of stones for grinding corn, etc. The Walke Mill lay ruined several years, and about twenty years ago was rebuilt by Earl Henry. It seems that when a Dishley loadsman came into Loughborough about fifty years ago with bells about his horse's neck, a loadsman of Loughborough cut off the bells and broke them. Some of the defendants' witnesses assert that for

many years the inhabitants of Loughborough have sent their corn to Quorndon and Dishley Mills at their own pleasure, also to Barrow and Sheepshed; one old man deposing that for seventy years the Farnhams have sent into Loughborough to fetch corn to grind at their mills in Quorndon. It is stated by the Earl's witnesses that most tenants took their own corn to be ground; but forty years since the penny bakers and others hired loadsmen, whom they paid a penny a strike for carrying; and afterwards Earl Henry provided loadsmen and horses for the use of the tenants at his own cost. The town of Loughborough is said to be "a very great markett towne, and there is very many ffamilyes there, perhaps five hundred."

When the cause came on for hearing on the 12th June, 1651, the Court decreed that the owners or occupiers of the Quorndon and Dishley Mills should not fetch or carry any corn of the freehold, leasehold, or copyhold tenants of the manor to be ground at any mill except the complainant's mills; and that the question whether the rest of the inhabitants of the manor are bound to grind at complainant's mills shall be decided in an action

at Common Law to be tried in the Exchequer of Pleas.

About this time Earl Ferdinando and his brother Henry, Lord Loughborough, sold some of their property in the manor, and in the conveyance a covenant was invariably inserted, that the purchaser should grind his own corn, grain, and malt at the Earl's water mills and horse mills.

Whether this trial at the Common Law, to test the right of the inhabitants generally, apart from the freehold, leasehold, and copyhold tenants, ever took place, I do not know. However, Earl Ferdinando died a few years afterwards, on 13th February, 1656, and then the Dishley millers began again to carry the corn of the tenants or inhabitants to be ground at Dishley Mill, situate a mile and a half from the town, and outside the manor. In 1664, Lucy, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, Ferdinando's widow, filed her Bill of Complaint against Bridgett Gosson, of Dishley, widow, tenant of the Dishley Mill, for fetching and grinding the corn of the inhabitants within the manor, and against Oliver Bromskill, clerk (the intruding but now deposed rector), and Elizabeth Towle, who had within the

last three years set up hand mills, and ground the corn of other inhabitants. From the pleadings in a later suit, it appears that Widow Gosson spent £20 in defending this suit, but the Countess of Rutland (who was owner of the Dishley Mills), not assisting her, she neglected further defence of the suit. So the question whether the inhabitants of Loughborough, who were not tenants of the manor, might grind where they liked was not yet brought to an issue.

The Manor of Loughborough now became vested in Theophilus Hastings, seventh Earl of Huntingdon; and a series of five suits in the Exchequer followed in rapid succession, until the question was finally determined. The Earl seems to have leased his ancient mills, in 1675, for a term of years to John Harrison and Benjamin Harrison; and they, in 1678, commenced a suit against William Freeman, tenant of the Dishley water corn mill, for fetching and grinding the corn of certain inhabitants of Loughborough at Dishley mill. Freeman in his Answer alleges that the Dishley millers have always fetched corn from Loughborough.

Three years later, in January 1680-81, Earl Theophilus also filed his Bill against the same

William Freeman; who, in his Answer, says that the Earl's mills are inefficient to grind the inhabitants' corn, and that the Earl had within the last three years erected a new windmill in the Lordship of Loughborough, and that he had constantly for four years fetched the corn of the inhabitants to be ground at Dishley mill.

In 1682, the Earl filed two Bills of Complaint against Anne Freeman, widow (William Freeman, the defendant in the former action, having apparently died), who was now the tenant of Dishley Mill, under George, Duke of Buckingham, at a rent of £31; and she in her Answer alleges that time out of mind Dishley millers have fetched corn from Loughborough, and the inhabitants have sent their corn to Dishley mill. Ambrose Phillipps, Esq., also puts in an Answer, and says that he lately purchased Dishley Mills with Garendon Manor, and has since let the mills at £25 rent, and he claims the general privilege of all Englishmen of going into Loughborough or grinding the corn of such customers as they can get. None of these suits seem to have been proceeded with, or to have come to a hearing.

We now come to the last and most important suit of all, sixteen years later. The inhabitants of

Loughborough still asserted their right to send their corn where they liked to be ground, and continued to do so, and the millers from all the country round regularly came into the town to fetch their corn. Consequently, Earl Theophilus filed his Bill, about 1697, against George Mugg and several other inhabitants of Loughborough, and against the tenants of mills at Garendon, Dishley, and Costock. The despositions were taken at the Bull's Head, in Loughborough, on 9th May, 1698; and a number of witnesses were examined. It seems that the horses of foreign millers were frequently impounded when they came into the town to fetch corn; and that one John Peake, thirty years ago, bought a quern, which he never used for fear of trouble, so sold it. Some of the witnesses complained that they were not fairly or honestly dealt with by Lowe, the Earl's miller; that the customary toll was for the miller to take four pounds out of each strike of wheat, but Lowe would sometimes take seven or eight pounds. One woman, who sent half a strike of white wheat to be ground, got back red wheat instead. Another sent a peck of rye, and got it back five pounds short. Some alleged that the Earl's mills were not able to grind in time of

floods, sometimes for two or three weeks together.

When the cause came on for hearing, on the 20th of July following, the court ordered that the matter in question be tried at the next Assizes to be held for the county of Leicester, the issue to be whether the inhabitants within the manor are obliged by custom to grind all their corn, grain, and malt at the Earl's ancient mills, and not at any other mills. The question was tried at the next Leicester assizes accordingly, and a verdict was given for the defendants, and it was decided that the inhabitants of the manor of Loughborough are not bound by custom to grind all their corn, grain, and malt at the Earl's ancient mills there, but at any other mills. On the 8th December the Earl applied for a new trial, but the Court of Exchequer, on 21st February, 1698-99, refused to grant it, and so the matter was finally disposed of.

Thus the inhabitants of Loughborough, after long litigation, extending nearly ninety years, during which there were no less than ten suits commenced in the Court of Exchequer, finally won the victory, and threw off the claim asserted by the powerful lord of the manor that they

should grind solely at his mills, and gained the right to grind their own corn wheresoever they pleased. No doubt, if the Records were searched, similar results might be found in the case of other places within the county.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch Castle and its Associations.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the French Prisoners.

By Canon Denton, M.A.

THOUGH its baths and other attractions are most of them of recent date, yet long before many of what are now great centres of population had an existence, Ashby-de-la-Zouch was a place of considerable note.

And although Sir Walter Scott has in his vivid and masterly description of the lists and the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, thrown a halo of chivalry and romance over the town, yet independent of the charms and fascinations of the pages of Ivanhoe, from its ancient remains, and its associations stretching far back into the past, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, or Ashby as it is generally called, may, beyond any other parts of the county, claim to belong to "Bygone Leicestershire."

The great Castle of Ashby, throughout the middle ages, was one of "the stately homes of

England," and its picturesque ruins at the present day, tell alike of olden days and of former magnificence.

Sir Walter Scott knew Ashby and its Castle and neighbourhood well, for he often stayed at Coleorton Hall two miles distant, and he thus writes in Ivanhoe—"Prince John (afterwards King of England) held his high festival in the Castle of Ashby. This was not the same building of which the stately ruins still interest the traveller, and which was erected at a later period by the Lord Hastings, High Chamberlain of England, a victim of the tyranny of Richard the Third, and yet better known as one of Shakespeare's characters than by his historical fame." William, Lord Hastings, to whom Sir Walter here refers, lived at Ashby Castle in almost regal state. He had no less than two lords, nine knights, fifty-eight squires, with twenty gentlemen of rank among his retainers. Yet how uncertain is the tenure of earthly greatness or the enjoyment of wealth and power! For though Ashby Castle and the old town of Ashby have seen many dark and gloomy days, —yet they have seen few darker ones than that when messengers conveyed the terrible news to

the inmates of his Castle—that William, Lord Hastings, High Chamberlain of England, one of the most powerful nobles of his day, had been beheaded!

As the first shock of loss, and the first burst of fierce rage abated in the Castle and town, knight and squire and dame would have their indignation renewed, when under the shadow of the great keep or in the reception rooms high up in it, they heard fuller particulars of their Lord's fate. Heard how on June 14, 1483, the Duke of Gloucester had accused William, Lord Hastings, of high treason, and had had him beheaded on Tower Hill, within a few hours of so accusing him, fulfilling to the letter his dastardly threat that "he would not dine until Hastings' head was off."

It would be a far brighter day for Ashby when the portals of its Castle, two years later, opened to welcome Edward, Lord Hastings, after the battle of Bosworth, where he fought with the victorious army. Bosworth field being only a few miles distant, early intelligence would reach it of the issue of the last great Battle of the Roses. And in Ashby and its Castle there would be but one feeling of rejoicing, that the man who had be-

headed William, Lord Hastings, who had waded to the throne through blood, had himself been defeated and slain, and that the crown of England had been placed on the head of the new king in the hour of his triumph.

And the rejoicings at Ashby over the Battle of Bosworth proved an earnest of the better fortune of Edward, Lord Hastings, who had in due course all his estates restored to him by Henry the Seventh.

As has been remarked, Sir Walter Scott speaks of the "stately ruins" of Ashby Castle, and few words better than "stately" could also have described what the castle was before it was a ruin.

Leland, the great antiquary, in his "Itinerary," written during the reign we have just referred to, that of Henry the Seventh, says, speaking of William, Lord Hastings—"This Lord built a very noble house at Ashby, intending it for the residence of his family, which it continued to be for about 200 years. The situation was at the south side of the town, on a rising ground having three parks adjoining thereto. The great Park which was ten miles in compass; Prestop Park for fallow deer; and the Little Park at the back

of the house for red deer, which were all well stored with wood. The house itself consisted of mixed buildings of brick and stone, the rooms therein being large and magnificent, and adjoining thereto a fair chapel, scarcely to be equalled by any private one, the Universities excepted. But that which was the greatest ornament were two stately large towers, with walls of Ashlar stone, covered with lead and embattled; which towers stand back and towards the garden in the south and south-west sides of the house, as it should seem, and by tradition it has been told, built in such a figure, that two more might be placed at convenient distances to equal them, the greater of these being an entire house of itself, consisting of a large hall, great chambers, bed chambers, kitchens, cellars, and all other offices.

"The other, much less, and standing westward, was an entire kitchen of so large dimensions as is scarcely to be paralleled, over which were divers fine rooms that was called the kitchen tower." It may be added that the outer walls of the kitchen tower were very strong; a large proportion of them now remain; they are in some instances nine feet thick, the ground floor containing one large kitchen with huge fire-places.

For two months, viz., from the middle of November 1569 to the middle of January 1570, Mary Queen of Scots was a guest, or rather a prisoner, in the Castle—and a spacious apartment, with an immense stone window, each of its many squares large enough for a tall man to stand upright in, is known as "Queen Mary's room." The present owner of the Castle and Lord of the Manor of Ashby, Lord Donington, to whose wife (the late Countess of Loudoun) a beautiful memorial cross is placed in the town, has lately caused the part of the Castle including Queen Mary's apartments to be especially cared for, and protected against the ravages of time.

If Queen Mary came to Ashby unwillingly, her son King James, by all accounts, came there willingly enough. When that King visited Ashby, the establishment at the castle was on a princely scale. Upwards of seventy persons daily dined and supped there, exclusive of strangers. The visit of King James the First added so much to the costliness and splendour of the style of living, that the expense of entertaining him is said to have materially crippled the property of the Earl. Indeed, the late Lady Flora, daughter of the First Marquis of Hastings,

concludes her poem on Ashby-de-la-Zouch, describing this visit of James the First to her ancestor, Henry, Fifth Earl of Huntingdon, as follows :—

> "The bells did ring,
> The gracious King
> Enjoyed his visit much ;
> And we've been poor
> Ere since that hour
> At Ashby-de-la-Zouch."

During the King's stay at Ashby Castle, dinner was served up by thirty-four knights in velvet gowns and gold chains, everything else being sumptuously magnificent. In the year 1617, preparatory to the Royal visit, the Corporation of Leicester presented the Earl of Huntingdon with a yoke of fat oxen. In the month of May, 1645, King Charles the First was the guest of the then Earl of Huntingdon. A gleam of sunshine at that time illumined the fortunes of the King in the Midlands.

Leicester was taken by the Royalist army, and, with the fall of the county town, the soldiers of the Parliament quitted the garrisons of Bagworth, Coleorton, and Kirby. At this seeming turn of the tide, sanguine hopes of ultimate success would inspire confidence in

the hearts of the good men and true in Ashby Castle. These hopes, however, were, we know, doomed to be disappointed, the king's troops had to leave Leicester, and the commanders of the garrison at Leicester rode straight to Ashby, which, in those troublous days, served as a place of refuge not only to combatants, but to non-combatants; among them being several learned and pious divines. We cannot now look at the Earl's tower, with its reception rooms at such an elevation as to be beyond the reach of rude assault or desperate onset, and not feel that Ashby Castle was well calculated to protect those who sought for safety within its massive walls, and right glad must they have been for the pleasant refuge they afforded them.

In June, 1645, King Charles the First came for another, and a very brief, visit to Ashby Castle. And it would seem that on Sunday, June 15, he left the castle about ten in the morning, on his way to Lichfield.

It is not difficult to conjecture how sad a day the 15th of June, 1645, was in the town. And as the King, with all his troubles before him, rode that June morning out of the castle, and passing the western doorway of the church, possibly

having already joined in its services, went down what is now the Market Place of Ashby. As he rode on, every inch a King, we can believe that while on all sides loyal homage was paid him, yet anxious looks followed his course, and that when they had seen their last of him, forebodings of coming evil would prevail in the town and in the castle. Forebodings all too soon realized, for on the surrender of the garrison at Leicester, the Royalist general, Lord Loughborough, according to Nicholls, returned to Ashby Castle, and the Parliamentary army, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, for months closely besieged both the town and castle, which strongly resisted them, and held out bravely for the Royal cause.

Eventually articles for the surrender of "the *maiden* garrison at Ashby-de-la-Zouch," so called as having never actually been conquered, were signed, and the castle doomed.

In 1648, we find the command of Ashby-de-la-Zouch given to Thomas, Lord Grey, of Groby, who was desired to take care for securing and safe keeping the Duke of Hamilton a prisoner there.

In the month of November that same year, it

was referred to a committee of the House of Commons "to consider of all castles, garrisons, and places of strength in the kingdom, what were to be kept up and what were to be slighted and made untenable," and on the same day it was resolved that the garrison and castle of Ashby-de-la-Zouch should be "slighted and made untenable," and that James, Earl of Cambridge, then a prisoner in that castle should be committed close prisoner to Windsor Castle for high treason.

"Thus," says Nichols, "was this noble structure soon after permitted to dissolve, with the downfall of the monarchy and the king's interest—these unworthy ends being affected by the Parliamentary Committee then sitting at Leicester, which committee having sent some of their members to view the place, employed divers persons to demolish these goodly towers by undermining. William Bainbrigg of Lockington in the said county, a general in the Parliamentary army, commanding a party of horse for the occasion, bearing the oversight thereof."

General Bainbrigg executed his commission with such zeal that the immensely thick walls were overthrown, and what was once a famous castle, great in its strength and resources,

has been from that day to this a famous ruin, beautiful, exceedingly, in its decay.

One hundred and twenty years after, in 1786, a visitor to Ashby thus writes respecting the castle:—"The castle, however, still preserves a considerable portion of its original grandeur, and fully merits the eulogy of its several panegyrists. It seems scarcely to have known any bounds either in the modes of arrangement, or in the altitude of the several stories."

We pass over many interesting particulars, civil and ecclesiastical, pertaining to Ashby in the years that have intervened since its castle was destroyed, and we will conclude this paper with a short notice of the residence of the French prisoners in the town, at the beginning of the present century.

It may perhaps not be always borne in mind, that during the long wars with France, this country had to receive within its shores a vast number of prisoners of war of all ranks.

There were, according to Sir Archibald Alison, in the year 1810, not less than 50,000 French prisoners in Great Britain. And relying on the same authority, Napoleon never remitted one farthing for their maintenance. The Emperor

thus left thousands who had fought his battles and won his laurels, either to starve or to be a burden on the British Government, which on the contrary regularly remitted the whole cost of the support of the English captives in France to the imperial authorities. Vast structures were erected at an enormous expense for the reception of the French soldiers, notably one at Dartmoor and two in Scotland, each of these being capable of containing six or seven thousand men.

While the soldiers were imprisoned in these and other places, the officers were quartered in various towns, and among them Ashby-de-la-Zouch received about 200, though not all officers.

The writer of this paper had many particulars respecting them given him by one who was in Ashby all through the residence of the French prisoners in the town, and who lived to a great age. He also has had access to a record kept by a well-known physician who lived in Ashby at that time.

It would seem that the first French prisoners arrived in the town on Friday, September 26th, 1804,—this first detachment consisted of forty-two officers, and other detachments followed. The French prisoners were in Ashby from 1804 to

1814, returning to their own country when Napoleon was sent to Elba.

We can readily imagine in those days when war was constantly being waged between this country and France, in the Peninsula and elsewhere, how strange it must have seemed to the good people of Ashby to have living in their midst 200 men who rejoiced when their neighbours sorrowed, and sorrowed when their neighbours rejoiced. In these "good old days" news of any kind travelled very slowly, and it might be that days would elapse after a battle was fought before the particulars reached Ashby. And when the postman who rode into the town on the Birmingham and Tamworth road, with gay ribands in his hat, the French prisoners who always went as far as they were allowed on the way to meet him, when they saw these outward signs of the tidings, were terribly distressed and disheartened.

And as the bells of the Parish Church rang out the news (some of the same grand peal of eight now in the tower), clashing out England's victory, as the great bonfires blazed, as other tokens of national joy were manifested,—the French prisoners dropped their usual *bonhomie* and retired to their rooms, and stayed there until

the rejoicing was over. On the other hand, rumours of the landing of Napoleon in England were frequent, and as the French residents in Ashby heard of them their manifestations of delight were demonstrative in the extreme.

The greater part of the French prisoners at Ashby were officers of the army or navy; there were, however, thirty civilians among them, "merchants" as they are called by Dr. Kirkland in his note-book, to which I have referred.

My aged informant, Mrs. Whyman, told me that the officers were allowed 10s. 6d., and the civilians 7s. 6d., a week for their maintenance, which was paid them on behalf of the Government by a Mr. Farnell. The French prisoners were allowed to go a mile in any direction outside the town, and no more, their favourite walk was what is now called "the Mount Walk," and they loved to gaze on the ruins of the Castle. It is said by some that they taught the inhabitants of Ashby the art of crochet work, and it must have been an advantage in many ways to the people of Ashby to have them,—and doubtless intercourse with them softened many of the existing and deep-rooted prejudices against the French. During the ten years the French

prisoners were in Ashby, some of them escaped, others were exchanged for English officers imprisoned in France, and many were ransomed, but the places of those who left were always filled, and the full number of two hundred kept up. Towards the end of their stay occurred the Battle of Pampeluna, and of the officers who had been shut up in that so long besieged city, and who surrendered to the English, several were sent to Ashby. Those who came from Pampeluna brought much money with them, which they had concealed in the soles of their "Napoleon" boots, and in the collars and cuffs of their coats. There were two dogs, rather distinguished in their way, belonging to the prisoners, one named Mouton, who came with the first party of prisoners in 1804, and went back in 1814, and another dog, which came with one of the prisoners from Pampeluna, the only dog who had survived the siege. Both animals were great pets, not only with the Frenchmen, but also with the people of Ashby.

The prisoners lived in lodgings, but the utmost resources of the town must have been taxed to accommodate as it did 200 additional inhabitants, some of them were married, and others took to themselves wives while in Ashby.

At least two duels are recorded as having been fought by the French officers during their residence in Ashby—one of them being a Captain Colvin, whose body, with its military cloak round it, was found early in the morning between Ashby and the neighbouring village of Packington. The officer who killed Captain Colvin, we are told, attended the funeral at Packington.

Dr. Kirkland has also the following entry in his records: "Monsieur Denegres, a French prisoner, killed in a duel, Tuesday, Dec. 6, 1808."

As we have already said, some of the French officers married while they lived in the town. Indeed, according to the registers of Ashby Parish Church from 1806 to June 1st, 1814, ten weddings took place between French officers and residents in Ashby. In all the entries the bridegrooms are described as "French prisoners of war resident in this Parish," or as "French prisoners of war on parole in this Parish."

Some of the prisoners also died, and were buried in Ashby Parish Churchyard, *e.g.*, on November 2, 1806, Etienne Lenon, "French prisoner;" on April 15, 1807, Francis Rabin, "French prisoner;" October 19, 1808, "French

prisoner" Xauvier Mandelier; and others were also laid to rest under the shadow of the church, which, with the Castle, is a great object of interest in Ashby. In the Registers of Baptisms there are several entries as being those of children of French prisoners. And these records show, among other things, that the prisoners of war who were quartered at Ashby, did not allow national prejudices to prevent them forming the closest ties with the inhabitants of the place of their captivity, who cordially reciprocated this feeling.

Nor at their departure was this good feeling lost, and years after Waterloo, and after Napoleon had been sent a prisoner to St. Helena, there were kindly memories entertained in many a French family of the hospitable English town, where for ten years the soldiers of the empire found their prison a home.

Miss Mary Linwood—An Artist with the Needle.

By William Andrews, F.R.H.S.

AMONG the worthies of Leicestershire, Miss Mary Linwood is entitled to a prominent place. She obtained with her artistic needlework more than local fame. "No needlework, either ancient or modern," says Lambert, "ever surpassed the productions of Miss Linwood." At the age of thirteen years she commenced her first picture with the needle, and continued to labour with much success until she had attained the ripe age of eighty-seven.

Needlework was not the only work of her long life; for many years she conducted a young ladies' school in Leicester, which her mother had established in 1764, in a house in the upper end of Belgrave Gate, and in this house Miss Linwood remained until her death in 1845.

She early in life became famous. "Strangers," says Mrs. T. Fielding Johnson, in her charming "Glimpses of Ancient Leicester," "passing

through the town would frequently break their journey, and miss a coach, by stopping to call on Miss Linwood, in the hope of an interview with the gifted lady, and perchance of being favoured with a glimpse of her finely-executed work." She was invited to exhibit her work before the Royal family. The papers of the period contain a report of the proceedings. "On Friday last," says the *Morning Post* of April 24th, 1787, "Miss Linwood, of Leicester, was introduced to her Majesty, at the Queen's House, where she had the honour of exhibiting several pieces of needle-work, wrought in a style far superior to anything of the kind ever yet attempted. She received from her Majesty the highest encomiums, whose attention and encouraging behaviour to this truly ingenious young lady reflects great honour on the royal Patroness. The Princess Royal, Princess Augusta, and Princess Elizabeth, who were present, were much pleased, and expressed great approbation at those admirable performances. His Majesty being then engaged, Miss Linwood was requested to leave them till the next day for his inspection." The pictures were removed to the Pantheon, Oxford Street, London, and in the *Morning Post*

of May 4th, 1787, an advertisement as follows appears :—

"AT THE PANTHEON.

AN EXHIBITION OF PICTURES IN NEEDLE-WORK, RESEMBLING PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS, IN THE MANNER OF SEVERAL ESTEEMED ARTISTS.

BY MISS LINWOOD, OF LEICESTER.

HONOURED BY THE APPROBATION OF THEIR MAJESTIES AND THE PRINCESSES.

Some of these works have been submitted to the inspection of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, etc., who presented Miss Linwood with a medal, in token of their approbation.

Commences to-morrow, and will continue open every day from Nine to Seven o'clock.

ADMITTANCE ONE SHILLING."

A notice of the collection appears in the *Morning Post* of May 12th, 1787, in which it is observed that, "The great number of Noblemen and Gentlemen who go to Miss Linwood's Exhibition at the Pantheon, do them credit as friends to female merit, which should ever find attention from the men, as well as from the ladies, who, to their praise, visit the Exhibition in numerous and respectable parties."

The editor of the *Morning Post* appears to have been greatly pleased with Miss Linwood's work, and most anxious that she should obtain

the patronage of the public at her exhibition. In his issue for June 30th, 1787, he again called attention to it, as follows:—"Miss Linwood's Exhibition at the Pantheon evinces the admirable effect of worsted properly disposed, as a resemblance of painting; with some slight exceptions it forms a beautiful scene. The amateurs of paintings may receive satisfaction from the comparison; this species of composition having been raised to some degree of rank among the arts, by the genius and skill of Miss Linwood, of Leicester, whose exhibition, now open at the Pantheon, should be inspected particularly by young ladies who are in town during the present school vacations, as ingenious and elegant exercises of the needle." Other journalists were equally favourable in their comments. "Miss Linwood," says *The World* of July 6th, 1787, "by the exhibition of her needle-work, has got much fame, but not as much as she deserves. The profits of the exhibition are all she gets, for none of the pieces are to be sold."

The pictures were removed to Hanover Square Rooms, and subsequently to Leicester Square, where they remained for many years one of the sights of London.

Her method of work has been several times described. On an upright frame was stretched thick tammy, woven expressly for her use. A sketch in outline of her picture was then made, and with worsteds, chiefly dyed in Leicester by her manufacturing friends and by herself, she set to work with great energy, and worked every stitch of her pictures. The only help she had was in the threading of her needles.

In her gallery sixty-four pictures were ultimately brought together, consisting chiefly of copies of paintings, the works of the great masters. The most prized production was *Salvator Mundi*, after Carlo Dolci. She refused for this one work three thousand guineas, and it was bequeathed to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. She presented to the Leicester Infantry Volunteers, in 1794, a beautifully embroidered banner.

Her pictures, in the year following her death, were sold by public auction by Messrs. Christie and Manson, and, remarkable to record, the prices received for them were extremely small. We reproduce the following particulars of the sale from Chambers's "Book of Days":—*The Judgment of Cain*, which had occupied ten years

in working, brought but £64 1s.; *Jephtha's Rash Vow*, after Opie, sixteen guineas; two pictures from Gainsborough, *The Shepherd Boy*, £17 6s. 6d., and *The Ass and Children*, £22 2s., *The Farmer's Stable*, after Morland, brought £32 11s. A portrait of Miss Linwood, after a crayon picture by Russell, R.A., brought eighteen guineas; and *A Woodman in a Storm*, by Gainsborough, £33 1s. 6d. Barker's *Woodman* brought £29 8s.; *The Girl and Kitten*, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, £10 15s.; and *Lady Jane Grey*, by Northcote, £24 13s. In the Scripture-room, *The Nativity*, by Carlo Maratti, was sold for £21; *Dead Christ*, L. Caracci, fourteen guineas; but *The Madonna della Sedia*, after Raffaelle, was bought in at £38 17s. A few other pictures were reserved; and those sold did not realize more than £1,000.

It is pleasing to record that, through the public spirit of two or three Leicester ladies, in April, 1891, Miss Linwood's picture of *The Nativity* was purchased, and placed in the Town Museum, Leicester.

Miss Linwood was one of the last persons in this country to use a Sedan-chair. A few years before her death she might often be seen in this once popular conveyance in the streets of Leicester.

She made an annual visit to London, and there, in 1844, she was taken ill, and was brought back to Leicester in an invalid carriage. Her health improved, and her life was prolonged until the following year, when she died of an attack of the influenza, at the age of eighty-nine years. She was buried at St. Margaret's Church, Leicester. Mrs. Johnson tells us that "either from a morbid fear that she would quickly be allowed to pass into oblivion, or from a desire to be constantly reminded of her own mortality, she had ordered her own name to be previously engraved on her parents' tombstone, and under it the words: 'died in the 19th century.'" A tablet, erected by her friends, bears the following inscription:—

"SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
MARY LINWOOD,
WHOSE GENIUS HAS SHED A LUSTRE ON
HER AGE, HER COUNTRY, AND HER SEX:
AND
WHOSE WORKS ARE A SPLENDID MONUMENT OF ART AND
PERSEVERANCE.
IN CALM AND GRATEFUL RESIGNATION
SHE CLOSED A LIFE OF UNWEARIED ACTIVITY AND BENEVOLENCE
ON THE 11TH DAY OF MARCH, A.D. 1845,
IN THE NINETIETH YEAR OF HER AGE."

"Her end," says the *Leicester Mercury*, in recording her death, "was approached with exemplary resignation and patience. By her death, many poor families will miss the hand of succour; her benevolence of disposition having led her to minister of her substance to the necessities of the poor and destitute in her neighbourhood."

Street Cries.

By F. T. Mott, F.R.G.S.

ONE of the most fundamental laws of the universe is the law of change. From hour to hour the Ages march along, and every step is marked by death, and every step by life. The old forms fade. The new ones blossom and fade in their turn. Not a spider's web, not a grain of sand, not a leaf in the forest, remains permanent for a single second. Even the stars come and go. The sun is a boiling cauldron full of storm and whirl and change; and as he changes so do his planets, and this world with all its living occupants. Not wildly nor chaotically. It is law, and every phase of it is law-bound, ordered, and unchangeable. All these complex and interwoven movements are waves that rise and fall in perfect rhythm, notes in the universal harmony. The history of man is a single phrase in the music of the spheres, but place that phrase under the intellectual microscope, and it unfolds into a complex universe, whose beginnings and

endings are out of sight, and whose minutest fragment it would take a volume to describe.

The species is broken up into races, the race into nations, the nations into provinces and towns, and each has its history of perpetual change, its epochs of rise and fall. The intellectual outlook of each social group changes as widely as its external conditions. Public opinion and public sentiment are never the same at the end of any century as they were at the beginning, and the changes of thought and feeling are necessarily marked by varied customs. There are epochs of poetic inspiration, of hard utilitarianism, of scientific research, of miserly acquisitiveness, of chivalrous generosity, of land hunger and glory hunger, of heedless vice, and of ascetic devotion. These social changes follow each other no doubt in varied, yet quite orderly, succession, though the law of their succession may be hidden from us, too large in its sweep for our small field of vision. But the recognition of the great fact that all is changing, and that all change is orderly, gives a deep interest to the small bye-ways of history, and makes even the street cries of a provincial town worth thinking about. Some persons wonder why the musical cries of the last century

are heard no longer in our English towns. It is due simply to the inevitable change of public sentiment.

The life-stream of the English race has reached a deep clean channel, in which the picturesqueness of the banks is sharply marked off from the steady flow of the mid-channel. "Let business be business," is the motto of the day. "What has trade to do with poetry or music? They are for holidays, and galas, and recreative evenings, not for shops or markets." The work of the day is crowded into fewer hours, but not a moment of those few can be spared to the graces of song.

> "Cherry ripe! cherry ripe! ripe I cry!
> Fresh and fair ones, come and buy!"

is a waste of time and breath, and must be shortened into :—

> "Cherries, tuppence a pound, tuppence a pound!"

If rural hamlets will still listen to the Dutch girl's pretty melody of "Buy a broom!" there is no room for her in the busy market-place, her trumpery besoms are of no practical use.

About the year 1700, there was a book published called "London Cries," with wood-cuts

of the criers and their wares, and some of these are reproduced in Hone's "Table Book" (1827). Even at this latter date the musical cries were dying out, and Hone mentions several which had been for some time extinct.

Several others which were still in existence were known in the streets of Leicester as well as in London.

> "Young lambs to sell! young lambs to sell!
> If I'd as much money as I could tell
> I never would cry young lambs to sell!"

was heard here occasionally about fifty years ago. They were frail little toys covered with white wool, with a bit of ribbon round the neck.

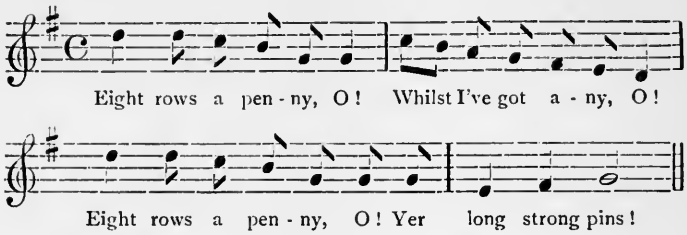
Hone gives the pin-man's cry as :—

> "Three rows a penny, pins,
> Short whites, and mid-dl-ings!"

But our Leicester pin-man made more than this of it. His well-known song was for many years almost a necessary element in the Saturday market, and only disappeared about thirty years ago :—

> "Eight rows a penny O!
> Whilst I've got any O!
> Eight rows a penny O!
> Yer long, strong pins!"

And sometimes he would vary the last line to "Yer fine London pins!"

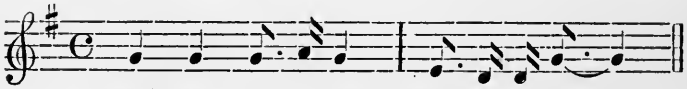


There was another notable cry which went out behind the Gates of Silence, about the same time as the old pin-song.

A very ancient, very dirty, and very weird-looking woman, used to trot about the streets, with her back bent at a right angle, and a dirty bag over her shoulder, and her cry kept time with her quick shuffling steps in a nasal chant:—

"Ainy ould shoes or ould boots to pairt wi'?
Ainy 'are-skins, rabbit-skins, doctor's bottles, ould iron, broken flint glass, bones, rags to pairt wi'?"

The cry of the night watchman, who went round the dark streets with his heavy coat and his lantern, ceased with the coming of the new police. It was a relic of the times when all things were done artistically.



"Hot cross buns" are still cried lustily by hundreds of small boys on Good Friday morning, but they don't trouble themselves to sing the well-known melody. It is simply a shout on one note, "Hot cross buns! Hot cross buns! One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns!" pronounced as rapidly as their careless tongues can do it.

Some twenty years ago there was a rather pretty Irish girl in Leicester who had a dainty way of crying: "Good lither laces, a penny a paire!" Her pleasant voice and manner and Irish accent attracted many customers.

Those who knew the Leicester Saturday Market twenty or thirty years ago will recognize the following familiar cries:—

"Ham sandwiches a penny each, a penny each!
Ham sandwiches a penny each!"

"Sold again! Four more a penny here, four a p'ny!"

These were plain round sweetish cakes, three inches across, convex on the upper side, and with three or four currants in the top of the convexity. They are still sold.

"Old Moore's book almanack! Old Moore's book almanack, one penny!"

This famous almanack still gets printed and

published, but it must be nearly pushed out by swarms of competitors. It used to have the field almost to itself.

"Six sheets of note paper and a packet of envelopes all for one penny!"

This cry cannot be older than the penny post, as envelopes were not used previously.

"Penny an ounce here! Two ounces for three halfpence!"

The sale of "rock" in the streets and the markets has greatly diminished, probably owing to the opening of innumerable shops for the sale of "hard confectionery."

"Half-a-dozen silver spoons, a knife and fork, a gold ring, and a cedar pencil, all for one penny!"

The adjectives in this cry were, of course, purely euphuistic; "tall talk" for tin, brass, and deal; but it seemed a cheap pennyworth, and many little boys and girls were made happy, no doubt, by such a gift.

"Pies hot here, a penny each! penny each, pies hot!"

The celebrated Leicestershire Pork Pie was here reduced to its lowest quality and smallest size, but it was sold by thousands.

There was a quack chiropodist who used to stand upon a stool and repeat a very short address about every five minutes, beginning with

the words, "Cutting your corns is the worst thing you can possibly do. Apply this plaster," etc., etc. Then he would sell a few pennyworths of his plaster, and begin again.

One Leicester man used to make a living by selling "Baked Wheat" about the streets. It was used for making "Firmity," a very ancient dish, and still enjoyed by children. His cry at night, or very early in the morning, was a kind of hoot—"Hot!—wheat!" in a deep monotonous voice, and so indistinctly pronounced, that only those who knew could make out what he meant.

The milkman's call was more of a shriek than a hoot. You heard the clink of the tin pail upon the doorstep, and then came "Milk O—Oh!" the last syllable jumping up two or three octaves at a bound, and "fetching" the maid wherever she might be. Milk-carts have now superseded the old pail.

Does anybody know what "ships' trotters" are? They used to be sold in great numbers in the Leicester market. A little old man had a little stall covered with them, and cried them to the passers-by.

They were sheeps' feet skinned and cleaned

and boiled, and very good little tit-bits they were when they were fresh; but if anybody once got a putrid one he remembered it.

"Catch 'em alive O!—catch 'em alive!" was the cry of a young man who wore a hare-skin cap to make himself conspicuous, and sold fly-papers.

"White herrings!—all *but* alive!" was chanted by a hawking fishmonger.

There was a man with a large box on two wheels, the edges of the box adorned with little windmills of coloured paper revolving in the wind, who cried "Rags and bones! Bring out your rags and bones!" and the children of the back streets would run out with hands full of rubbish and refuse, and get a windmill in exchange.

Finally there was the early morning cry of "Swe-e-e-ep!" repeated at your door with irritating monotony, until the servants woke and let in the black man and his climbing boy.

A notable sound in the Leicester streets for many years, more truly artistic than any of its cries, was the music of the Nottingham organ-grinder, with his pan-pipes. He was no common grinder whose business is just to turn the handle at an unvarying pace, and let the machine make

such music as is in it. He was an artist of taste and feeling, and the tones he drew out of his pipes to the organ accompaniment made many good judges pause and wonder. It was a treat to hear him play "Annie Laurie," or "Love Not." These were two of his favourite tunes, and were well suited to his instruments. It was a serious loss to Leicester when the old gentleman retired upon the little fortune he had accumulated.

There are still some cries in the Saturday market, but all the picturesqueness and the music is gone out of them. The vendors only want to be heard, and to sell their goods. They have no pleasure in their work. They shout, but they do not sing. Such pleasures as their hard lives admit are taken at night, when the day's work is over. In the old days, when it was easier to live, the work and the pleasure were mingled together, life was of a different pattern. Those times will not come back. History never repeats itself. But a century hence the pattern will have changed again, and the love of beauty and song will find development in some new form.

Minstrelsy in Leicester.

By Rev. Geo. S. Tyack, b.a.

THERE can be little question that Mediæval England was a music-loving land. Amongst the representatives of all classes, for example, that pass before us in the pages of Chaucer, the art of music in some of its forms is no uncommon accomplishment. Of the Squire we read that "singing he was, or floyting (fluting) all the day." The Friar is quite at home with song or harp, and the Miller can well "blow and soun" his bagpipe. "There never was," says Charles Knight, "a people apparently more keenly alive to the charm of music in connection with the services of the Church, with poetry, and with dancing." The oldest known specimen of the part-song is, as is well-known, a North Country canon of the early thirteenth century, "Sumer is icumen in," and we have it on the authority of Giraldus Cambrensis (1147-1216), that part-singing was in his day a peculiarity of the English nation. "The Britons," he says,

"do not sing their tunes in unison, like the inhabitants of other countries, but in different parts; so that when a company of singers meet to sing, as is usual in this country, as many different parts are heard as there are singers."

Another illustration of this same truth is the fact that nobles of that age thought it as much part of their necessary state to keep a company of minstrels, as to provide a retinue of knights and men-at-arms, and no house with any claim to rank was without its harper at the least; while corporations and other public bodies frequently had their musicians paid out of the revenues at their disposal. It is a matter of regret that our England of to-day does not more fully realize that it is but a narrow-minded and short-sighted practicalness which holds art to be so much more a luxury than a necessity of civilized life as to be almost beyond the pale of public assistance, while a host of grooms and stablemen are deemed a more needful adjunct to a great house than a company of musicians.

Leicester affords us good examples of the support which both private munificence and public policy rendered to the cause of music in days gone by.

As early as 1308, the Earl of Lancaster and Leicester kept a body of minstrels at his castle in the latter town, and expenses with regard to it occur from time to time in the records of the household. In 1381, John of Gaunt, one of the greatest of the Earls, founded a Court of Minstrels at Tutbury, which was by charter endowed with the legal powers of a court-baron over all musicians in the counties of Stafford, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, and Warwick; but in spite of the wide jurisdiction thus assigned to it, it is doubtful whether it could exercise any control over the Honour of Leicester, which was entirely independent of Tutbury, and one of the most important in the realm. With the accession of Henry of Bolingbroke, Gaunt's eldest son, to the throne, as Henry IV., in 1399, Leicester Castle ceased to be the chief seat of that house, and we hear no more of its minstrelsy.

But it was not only the great folk at the castle and their noble guests who had an ear for music; the busy burgesses and honest citizens of Leicester could enjoy round, and catch, and madrigal with the best of them, and that was indeed a poor wedding, or an ill-managed merry-

making, that had not its seasoning of music. Hugh the Trumpeter; Henry Howman, harper; Thomas Wylkyns, "wayte;" Thomas Pollard, musician; and Andrew Marsam, virginal maker, all appear in the guild-rolls of the town between 1314 and 1579, proving that there were musicians in Leicester of esteem and position among their fellow-citizens. The first mention, —not necessarily, however, the first institution, —of an organized body of town waits is in the year 1524, in the Chamberlain's annual accounts, when liveries were provided for three waits at a cost of 16s. This livery consisted of a scarlet gown trimmed with silver lace, and a silver chain with a "scutcheon" bearing the town arms, a cinquefoil. The number of these badges seems never to have been increased, but that of the waits grew from the original three to five in 1603, and then to six; their cloaks also were subsequently ornamented with gold instead of silver lace. Each of the waits was allowed a boy under him, who also wore a gown, and a badge, probably of inferior metal, hung about his neck by a green ribbon.

The primary duty of this company was no doubt to act as watchmen, crying the hours and

watching against fire or foe throughout the night, as their name implies; but together with all their bravery of scarlet and silver, they undertook more ambitious offices. Twice daily all through the year they were to play in some public place for the pleasure of the people, and they provided the requisite music on all occasions of municipal state, occupying, for instance, the minstrels' gallery, still existing at the Guildhall, at the mayoral banquets.

No fixed salary was assigned to them until 1581, before which time they seem to have depended upon the irregular support of gratuities. In that year, however, it was ordered that each inhabitant should be assessed by the mayor, at his discretion, in a quarterly sum for the maintenance of the waits; and in the following year further provision was made for them by the corporation taxing itself for the same object, the "Twenty-four" to the extent of 12d., and the "Forty-eight" to that of 6d. per quarter. At the same time they were granted absolute protection from all competition; for all other musicians, even if residents in Leicester, were forbidden to exercise their art in public, except at the general assizes, when they might play for

the amusement of strangers only. In return for these privileges the town waits, on their part, were bound to the aforesaid duties, and were prohibited from performing anywhere without the town, except, by the mayor's permission in each case, at fairs or weddings.

A further illustration of the support given by private individuals to companies of musicians meets us in the year 1583, when, the old waits having been dismissed, the musicians of one Mr. Griffin were appointed in their stead, on the same terms as their predecessors. The new waits held office for nearly twenty years, losing it at last owing to disagreements among themselves. In 1603, five waits were appointed, but their wages, so far as they were derived from the members of the corporation, were reduced by one-half, the two sections of that body paying quarterly only 6d. and 3d. respectively. In 1671, when Robert Rowe was leader of the waits, another irruption of discord ended in the dismissal of the company, and on the appointment of their successors a further change was made in their remuneration, £5 per annum being given to them collectively, together with their liveries. These, in 1677, cost £10 17s. 8d.

No doubt during all this time gratuities given at weddings and other private festivals, and contributions collected at fairs and such like, added considerably to the income of the waits.

The wandering minstrel, once the honoured guest at every hall or castle which he passed, had long since sunk into disrepute, so that, in a statute of the thirty-ninth year of Elizabeth, minstrels are joined with jugglers, bear-wards, fencers, common players of interludes, tinkers, and pedlars, in one general condemnation as rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars. The Leicester waits, protected by the prestige of municipal appointment, and by a regular employment, escaped the hue and cry that followed their less fortunate brethren, and lived on in all the dignity of lace and chains till the "Municipal Corporations Reform Act" of 1835, that foe to so much that, if objectionable, was picturesque, swept them away, with other things far less worthy of preservation. Mace-bearers, town waits, and others were involved in one common overthrow; and maces, town-plate, silver chains, "scutcheons and cinquefoils," and all, met the unhonoured doom of the auctioneer's hammer. From the catalogue of the sale it appears that the

"properties" of the waits consisted of two horns, two clarionets, four piccoloes, and a bassoon. One of the chains, with its badge, is now to be seen in the Town Museum.

It may well have been that the music of the waits of bygone days left much to be desired, and our concert-halls and assembly-rooms doubtless provide infinitely better food for the musical palates of the upper and middle classes than did the morning and evening performances of the Leicester town waits; yet one cannot help thinking that the Corporation of Leicester, and of every other town and city in our land, is responsible for much expenditure which is less justifiable that would be the provision of the free enjoyment of music by the poor amid the monotony and dinginess of our prosaic and "practical" life of to-day.

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